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Prologue

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“Earth to Mihlali”

Vuyo says waving her hand in front of my eyes, I chuckle hitting it

“Stop it!”

I say

“What's got your attention? Do you know who that guy is?”

She asks and I shake my head no

“You were drooling”

She says and I frown looking at her

“No!”

I say defensively

“I was not drooling!”

She shoots me that ‘really?’ sarcastic look I hate so very much

“What?”

I ask and she shakes her head with clear disapproval

“Whats gotten up your ass?”

I finally ask

“Hlali this thing you have with old men...”

She starts off and I know a lecture is coming my way, I literally roll my eyes

“Vuyo it was only one guy! It ended, can we move on”

I say annoyed

“You were literally checking out someone old enough to be your father. Friend you know I love you and I always got you but if you get with another old married man you on your own!”

She warns and I sigh

“Vuyo he said he wasn’t married and besides that relationship ended months ago”

I defend. You date an old married man once and suddenly it’s a thing you do. Girls can be so dramatic and judgemental

“I hear you friend but please, stay away from married people and old men in general!”

She says and I just nod with hopes we done discussing my one mistake that she holds against me every damn time.

“Hey ladies”

Says Phiwokuhle hugging each one of us

“How are you baby?”

I ask her and she smiles taking her seat

“I am awesome babies and how are you?”

She asks and Vuyo responds for the both of us

“We good babe, whats got you all happy and glowy?”

Phiwo blushes hiding her beautiful face

“Mystery man finally popped the question?”

I ask and she chuckles, Phiwo is dating a guy she doesn't want us to know let alone meet just yet because apparently its still new... 3 months aint so new if you ask me and beside she and this mystery guy have been banging since day 1 yet she still doesn't want us to meet him let alone see his picture

“is he ugly? I mean you know we wont judge if he is”

Vuyo adds and Phiwo shakes her head no

“He's dreamy. You guys last night and this morning were amazing. He fed me strawberries covered in chocolate and we had an amazing dinner all prepared by him. He's such an amazing cook! Anyway this morning he done did things that should be illegal!”

She says biting her lower lip probably reminiscing about this morning and last night

“Earth to Phiwokuhle!”

I say clicking my fingers in front of her face

“Just show us who the guy is already!”

Vuyo says and I nod agreeing with her

“I wanna tell you guys but you guys aren't gonna be happy for me”

She says and I'm shook, why the hell wouldn't we be happy for our own friend?

“Ladies, sorry to disturb but this bottle came from the guy

sitting at the bar”

He says holding a bucket with the bottle of Krone we’ve been drinking

“Uhhm thank you”

I say turning to look for this gentleman but I don’t see anyone

“He said to tell you not to hesitate to order whatever you and your friends want, the bill will be taken care off”

The waiter says that referring to me, I don’t know how to respond

“Does this person have a name?”

I finally ask, maybe if I got his surname then I’d know to trust his words or not

“I’m afraid for safety reasons I cannot tell you that but he did ask that you leave you name and number at the front desk and he would contact you himself”

The waiter responds and now I’m conflicted

“Tell me this, do you trust that his word is true?”

Phiwo asks and the guy nods

“He is a man of his word. He is one of our best customers and he gives the best tips”

He says with a very friendly smile

“No thank you, we’ll pay for our own food and alcohol”

Vuyo says ruining the whole mood

“I’m sorry but I’m not allowed to take any of your money”

He says and the shock on Vuyo’s face, well I think its shock

mixed with anger

“Look, thank you for the kind stranger’s gesture but we cannot and will not accept anything from someone we do not know and will not show his face to us.”

I finally say even though every part of my body is telling me just how dumb of a move that was but I have no choice because of Vuyo. The poor guy nods and walks away

“The hell was that about?”

Vuyo asks annoyed, we both shrug because none of us know what just happened.

“Phiwo you were still telling us about your mystery guy”

I remind her and she just giggles excusing herself to go to the loo. I quickly take her phone before it locks itself

“What are you doing?”

Vuyo asks

“Finding out who the mystery guy is”

I say while paging through her phone, I copy the number written “Bhabha” to my phone and before I even finish it, it shows Biko’s number.

“And?”

I am Mhlahikazi Siphwokuhle Langa, the daughter of Sinokuhle Mbana and Lunga Langa, mom changed her surname back after she and my late father divorced but this story is not about her, its about me. The granddaughter of Lwando and Ayola Mbana. Now every name I’ve mentioned screams money so yeah, you

guessed it. I'm from your typical South African rich family with my very own wealth. A girl like me sounds like she has it all right? I mean what could someone like me possibly need and why would I have a story to tell if not to brag about my wealth and wealthy family?

Sadly being me isn't all glam as it should be or rather as it seems from the outside

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people like me are considered to have daddy issues... or so my therapist says but I don't believe that I do. I mean yeah sure my biological father died when I was still young but its never affected me. As far as I know he was a great father and a good husband to my mom but due to circumstances he and my mother divorced before he died. And besides, my stepdad is the best father I could ever wish for. He stepped up and made sure I never felt that void of not having my biological father around. Mr Mtwá is an amazing father to me and my siblings.

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-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

"I think you should tell your sister"

Dad suggests, I'm home for the weekend. Mom is out with the twins

"You know how dramatic Mhllali is, she'll want me to end

things all because its her friend”

I say and he shrugs

“You shouldn’t have made a move on your sister’s friend”

He says frustrating me even more

“Why should I sacrifice my happiness all because Mihlali doesn’t want me dating her friends? Phiwo and I like each other dad”

I defend

“All I’m saying is that keeping this from your sister won’t end well. She has her own reasons for not wanting you to date her friend.”

He says and I sigh, I cant and wont end my relationship just because my little sister is a little uncomfortable with me dating her friend. I mean theres no law against it right? Even if there is, I’m not ending things!

“Mihlali will just have to deal. When’s mom coming back anyway?”

I ask and dad shrugs

“Your mother is meeting up with Saney, chances are she’ll be home late than usual”

I sigh out loud enough and dad laughs

“What about your actual mother?”

He asks, I shoot him a look

“What about her?”

I ask

“Lerato..”

He starts off but I cut him off

“Its Bikokuhle”

He chuckles

“Lerato! She is still your mother and she wants a relationship with her son”

Dad says and I chuckle

“Where was she all these years? She cant just show up now wanting a relationship with me after she left me. My mother is Sino and only her”

Dad lets out a heavy sigh

“Biko you cant stay mad at her forever. She gave birth to you...”

“Any woman can give birth, it takes a real woman to open up her home and her arms to another woman’s baby and love that child as if it were her own. Sino’s never made me feel like I was not hers and I wont betray her like that and build a relationship with a woman that just up’d and left without any explanation whatsoever”

Dad sighs, this conversation has me worked up

“Theres only one way to find out what her reasons were son”

Dad responds

“She’s your mother Biko, hear her out atleast”

Dad pleads

“I make no promises!”

I say hoping to end the conversation as it is, Ontlametsi is not

my mother and she never will be!

“Dad! Mom”

Mihlali’s voice shouts from the kitchen, dad looks at me and I shrug

“In here baby”

He responds and she walks in

“You home early”

Dad says

“YOU!”

She says noticing me sitting on the couch

“And then. Whats wrong with you?”

I ask calmly

“You dating my friend after I told you countless times that my friends are off limits”

She yells and I chuckle

“Hello Mihlali, how are you Baby? How was breakfast?”

Dad asks calmly, I’m really hoping he can calm her down. I cant handle Mihlali’s drama right now

“Dad...”

Dad shoots her look that makes her sit her ass down

“Hello daddy how are you?”

She says evil-eyeing me

“I’m good baby and how are you?”

She sighs

“Not fine”

She says

“Why? What happened?”

Dad asks so calm that its even annoying

“Your son is dating my friend. I told him that my friends are off limits and he still went after her like a f.. a vulture!”

She says spitting fire making me chuckle

“Phiwo likes me and I like her too”

I say

“Until you meet some new bitch and forget she exists”

“Language Mihlali!”

Dad warns and she lets out a sigh

“Dad please talk to your son, he’s playing her! When she gets hurt because of him we will be left to pick up the pieces”

She explains and I scoff

“Why are you so sure that I’m going to hurt her? I like Phiwokuhle!”

She rolls her eyes

“Honey your brother may have approached your friend but your friend wanted to be with him just as much as he wanted to be with her. It’s a two way street.”

She sighs in frustration

“ofcause you would take his side”

She says getting up but dad grabs her arm as she’s about to storm off

“Honey, sit down”

She looks at me and then at dad then sits down

“I’m not taking anyone’s side here. Your friend wants to be with your brother, let her. You cant control how two people feel about each other the same way we can’t control how you feel about whoever you currently dating”

Dad says, if only he knew that sweet Hlali was dating a married man while doing her matric then maybe he wouldn’t be this sweet towards her. I love my sister and I protect her however I can, part of me protecting her meant me keeping her relationship a secret from our parents. Atleast she called it quits as soon as she found out he was married or so she says. “fine. Where’s mom and the twins?”

She asks

“meeting up with your aunty at the mall I think”

I am Lerato Bikokuhle Mtwá, the son of Bantubonke Mtwá who is currently married to Sinokuhle Mbana Mtwá, mother of Mihlali and our two siblings Imange and Isenathi, they twins. I’m 19 years old and my sister is 18 and we both doing our first year in university. I’m studying Chemical Engineering and my sister chose Clothing Management at UCT and I at Stellenbosch, I wanted to have my own place and so far its been great.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I don't like that my best friend is dating my brother. Yeah sure dad has tried to make me see reason but I still haven't seen reason, it makes zero sense to me but its not any of my business.

"Dad I'm going to visit grandma"

I say getting up off my seat

"They gone for the weekend"

I stop in my tracks

"What do you mean? Where to?"

I ask and dad shrugs

"They called your mother last night saying they were flying to Mozambique or something, something about your grandfather taking your grandmother out"

He says and I won't lie I'm a bit sad that they gone and didn't bother saying a word to their very first grandchild ever, but then again I was in school so they probably didn't think I'd go home or something. I have an apartment near the campus, thanks to dad and also because I think they enjoy their own space without us. My phone rings and its an unsaved number

"Unknown number hello?"

I say getting up and walking to the back yard by the pool

"Siphowokuhle"

He says and immediately I'm annoyed

“What do you want? I thought I told you to never call me again”

I say angrily

“Baby I’m sorry”

He says, I chuckle sarcastically

“You must be kidding me right? I’m being pranked. You lied to me and said you weren’t married! Keep your apologies for your wife and NEVER call me again!”

I say dropping the call angrily. I really liked the guy, he was different and he treated me like a princess. He was the very first guy I ever dated that was over 20 and he made me fall for him really bad, he wined and dined me and did everything right. I knew he had kids, I mean what 35 year old nowadays doesn’t right? He said all the right things, did all the right things but this one night he and I were chilling in his house he got a call saying he needed to rush to the hospital his wife was in an accident. He thought I was sleeping but I heard the whole conversation and I took all my things and ubered to my friend’s home that night. I blocked him everywhere and broke all ties but he doesn’t give up. After his wife recovered, apparently his wife was away on business for like 3 months which was as long as our relationship, seemingly they have two houses because the one he always took me too didn’t have a female’s touch or whatsoever. Nothing about the guy screamed marriage and trust me I did my research but clearly he was just too damn good at hiding things about himself. Anyway that was my first

real heartbreak and I swear to you the guy looked too good to be over 25, that ended though and ever since the year started I've been focusing on me and my studies and nothing more and so far its been good without any male either than those in my family distracting me. I was startled by my phone ringing in my hand while I was lost in my thoughts, it was an office number "DID I NOT TELL YOU TO NEVER CALL ME AGAIN!"

I yell annoyed

"Am I speaking to Mihlali Langa?"

The baritone voice asks sounding so confused

"Yes this is she, may I ask who I'm speaking to?"

I ask more ashamed but definitely not apologizing for my way of answering the phone

"I uhm... You speaking to the guy that offered to pay your bill at the restaurant today"

He says and I'm in awe, how did he get my number?

"I don't usually do this whole stalker tendency thing but you really caught my eye and I just had to know you"

He says, I wanna laugh because he sounds so cliché but I hold back

"How did you get my number?"

I ask and he chuckles

"A normal person would want to know my name and get to that question after"

He says, my God he sounds so damn sexy I might just give birth

on the spot!

“I guess I’m not normal. Who are you and where did you get my number?”

he chuckles again, I don’t know whether he’s mocking me or something because I know I aint said nothing funny

“I am Bandile. I got your number from the restaurant”

He says

“And before you threaten to sue

please sue me instead for getting your details without your permission”

He says quickly making me giggle

“My grandmother is a judge, I’ll talk to her and get back to you”

I say

“Don’t you mean retired?”

He asks shocking me, how does he know?

“Excuse me?”

He chuckles

“I have a meeting I need to get to, talk to your later Miss Langa”

He says and ends the call leaving me confused. Did one of the girls give him my number? I don’t recall leaving my number at the restaurant ever let alone the hotel. What sucks the most about this is that I cant even save the number an check it out on whatsapp because it’s an office number. Smart move... Or maybe I could google it. I walk back in and throw myself next to dad

“Everything ok Angel?”

He asks and I shrug

“I don’t know. Dad you have an app that can find who a certain number belongs to right?”

I ask and he looks at me

“Yes, why?”

he’s already suspicious.

“its nothing dad, just wondering that’s all”

I say and he looks at me

“Is everything ok honey?”

He asks and I nod snuggling myself under his heavy arm

“if you say so. But Mihlali you do know that you can talk to me and your mother about anything right?”

“Yes I know daddy”

I assure and he kisses my head and we sit watching rugby. As I’m sitting like that I get a text from this guy I was dating last year with a video attached to it. I open the message and it reads ‘Unblock me or I release this video’. I sit up

“Everything ok my Angel?”

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-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

Judging by Hlali’s body language its safe to assume that she’s talking to the married guy

“Is everything ok with your sister?”

Dad asks noticing how tense and pissed she looks

“I don’t know, she’s still mad at me remember”

I remind and he chuckles

“Hlali will get over it. You should probably invite Phiwo over for dinner so that your sister can see how happy you and her friend are together”

He suggests and I quickly shake my head no

“why?”

He asks looking confused

“Its only been 3 months dad”

I say defensively

“Is that the only reason?”

He asks and I nod, dad has a way of looking at you in a way that will make you spill all your dirty secrets.

“I’m gonna head out to meet with some of my friends. Be back later”

I say and he just nods leaving me be. I get into my car and drive to Waterfront. The guys and I meet at a restaurant

“Sup”

Dan asks as soon as I take my seat. I’m not big on friends so I only have 3 friends whom I’ve been friends with from since I moved to Cape Town with my dad and those few I’ve met here in varsity

“nothing much”

I say and he eyes me

“How long have we known you?”

Phiko asks and I shrug

“Eish bruh I don’t know, I’m falling for Phiwo. Got me feeding her strawberries and shiit”

I say and the guys are all in awe because I’m not your typical romantic guy, in all honesty my sister is right. I’m only going to break her friend’s heart and that will be unintentional but its true. I’m a dick!

“She was supposed to be a distraction when you back for the weekends!”

Dan reminds me and I sigh

“I know”

I say

“What about Kim?”

Bayanda asks and I shrug

“Kim is my girl, always has been and she’s been there through every thing. She knows all my problems and doesn’t judge a...”

“She’s the perfect girl to take home to meet the family but you my friend are just not ready for such a commitment”

Dan finishes the sentence off for me making the rest of the guys laugh

“lets talk about something else!”

I say sipping on my drink and they all laugh at me

“You remember the girl I was with before Faith?”

Baya starts off

“Bomkazi?”

I ask and he nods

“she came by my apartment this morning”

“didn’t you end things with her like 2 weeks ago?”

Dan asks and he nods

“Well I wouldn’t say ended things but I kind of just ghosted her and told her we couldn’t be together without reason but she refuses to accept that its over between us”

“Because you weren’t honest with her. You were supposed to end things proper with her and tell her why you even ending things”

Phiko says

“Didn’t he tell her the real reason?”

I ask and Baya shrugs

“I told her we needed space, told her to take some time off and handle her shiit. How is that not a break up?”

He asks and I hit my head

“Because you giving her hope that maybe sometime soon you and her are going to get back together”

I explain and he shrugs his shoulders

“Anyway, she came to my place and knocked on the front door and when that didn’t work she knocked on the windows bra!”

“told you to get an apartment on the top floor”

Dan reminds

“Anyway! That happened and because of that situation Faith

thinks I'm still dating this girl and now she's mad at me and not answering any of my calls because of what happened this morning. Guys the bitch left after 2 hours pacing in the corridor knocking and shouting outside my door"

We all just burst out laughing at him

"So you made Faith prisoner for 2 hours?"

I ask

"Yeah, what was I to do? I panicked bruh. That was the last thing I expected, we stayed in the room in bed nobody saying anything to the other, she just started pressing her phone and could barely look at me. Mind you her flight was leaving at 11:30. She was so mad she didn't even say anything to me as I drove her to the airport"

He says frustrated

"Do you blame her? I mean you made her feel like your side chick"

Phiko points out

"You reacting the way you did proved her otherwise about you"

I add

"So what was I to do? Let my ex in and have them go at each other?"

He asks

"Obviously not but Kazi needs to know that shiit is over between you guys and that you have a girl in your life that you love so very much and will do anything for her. Besides, we all

know you loved Faith from since high school”

Dan says and he’s right. He’s been inlove with her for 2 years but Faith was in a relationship and that relationship ended sometime last year but she still didn’t get with him, she said something about rebuilding herself and all that other stuff about not wanting to make Baya a rebound... she said a lot of stuff girls say when they don’t want a guy but I will admit that she’s good for Baya, they good to each other

“So what now?”

I ask

“I don’t know, I’ve been calling her but she wont answer any of my calls or texts”

“Give her the space she wants but not too much of it because then it will be like you don’t care or you busy with the bitch”

Dan says and we all agree

2

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Just as I'm shook looking at my phone it rings and an unsaved office number pops up on my screen.

"Hello?"

I answer it walking out to the patio

"Hey Baby"

He says and I'm immediately numb

"What do you want from me?"

I ask unable to hide my frustration mixed with annoyance

"You honey"

He says sounding so smug I'm annoyed

"You see Hlali, you and I were good together and don't even get me started on the sex. I hope you see how sexy our sex was and surely you wont get that elsewhere"

He says making my whole body tremble with numbness.

"Please just leave me alone"

I plead

“I cant do that Hlali. I love you and I know you love me too. We can be happy together, I could give you the world”

He pleads

“I’ll send this to your wife. You the one with a better rep than mine. By the time I’m your age everyone would have forgotten about me”

I say hoping that my threat is enough to convince him to think otherwise about taunting my relationship

“You wont win this game you trying to play Hlali”

He threatens making me shiver out of fear

“Delete the video everywhere and wifey will never know about us”

I say

“I still have our DM’s, your nudes and I think those will be enough to ruin your reputation don’t you?”

The line goes silent and I check the screen only to find that he’s dropped the call on me. I get the time to view this video and this bastard took a video of us screwing each other. I wont lie the sex was lit and my moans are enough evidence but I don’t know what this would do to my parents if it ever came out. I quickly send it to my emails and then delete it from my phone. I walk back inside and join dad.

“Everything ok?”

He asks again and I nod all cuddled up in his chest. I text Vuyo telling her about the existence of the video and would you believe that she goes all motherly on me judging me and going off at how she warned me about dating the guy and now I’m in this mess because of him and my stupidity... yes that the term she used. As dad and I are sitting like that I get a call from mom

“Uphi?” (Where are you?)

She asks the minute I answer her call, her tone sounds like she’s ready to murder someone

“ndisendlini no Tata” (I’m at home with dad)

She drops the call on me

“And then?”

He asks

“Its mom asking where I am, she sounds angry”

I say

“Its probably nothing, you didn’t do anything wrong right?”

He confirms and I nod unsure. What if he sent the video to my mother? Sino will kill me! I go to my emails to recheck if I sent the email to the right email address and I find that I sent the video to mom instead. Her email address is Smbana and mine is

SMmbana, well my second email that I use to keep every rubbish. I am screwed!

“I think I messed up big time and mom’s going to kill me”

I say honestly. He sits up

“What could you possibly do that would make your mother kill you?”

He asks calmly, I sigh

“I messed up dad. I messed up really bad and you probably going to hate me too for what I’ve done”

I say unable to hide the fear of him being so disappointed in me. My father is not one to shout and do all that other stuff but he does however give you the silent treatment and ignore you so bad that feel how bad you’ve messed up. I would prefer him hitting me over the silent treatment any day but this man over here has never hit me not even once.

“Hlali I wont know how to help you until you tell me what’s going on”

He says, I take a deep breath and let it out

“Do you know of a business man named Daniel Khozi?”

I ask

“Yeah I know him, we once did business with him last year I think. What about him?”

Dad asks

“I met him last year at the gala dinner that was hosted to honour grandma. He and I exchanged numbers and we started talking and getting to know each other. I didn’t know he was as old as he was until we started dating and I swear I didn’t know he was married until his wife was involved in an accident and I called it quits that same night”

This whole time he’s listening to me attentively and nodding here and there.

“and all this was last year?”

Dad asks and I nod

“I called it quits with him and for a while he let me be. Today he called me, earlier when I went out; it was to answer his call. I told him to leave me alone and a while back he sent me a video threatening to post it if I didn’t get back together with him”

“What kind of video Mihlali?”

Dad asks and his tone is no longer that of a concerned father. I unlock my phone and go to my email and open it for him

“He sent me this and he called me threatening to expose me if I didn’t do as he said. Daddy I swear I didn’t know he filmed us”

He had already stopped watching the video the first 5 seconds in. He hands me my phone

“I know I messed up. I sent the video to my email but seemingly I sent it to mom instead of me and I think mom has seen it and she’s on her way to kill me”

I say speaking really fast but this man is quiet

“I know you disappointed in me dad”

His silence is too loud

“I need air”

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-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

My phone rings in my pocket, its my sister. I answer getting up from the table

“Yes”

She starts sniffing

“I didn’t know who to call”

She says and judging by her voice she’s crying. I love Hlali and I hate seeing her or hearing her cry. She’s my little sister and I’ll

always protect her when I have to, even when I don't have to
I'll always protect her.

"Mihlali what's going on?"

I ask concerned, worried about her. Its strange because I left
her with dad and I know dad would never hurt her

"I messed up Biko and mom is going to kill me"

She says

"Mom would never kill you. Just breathe and talk to me"

I plead worried out of my mind

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she sniffs and takes a deep breath

"There's a video"

She says finally, I'm so confused

"A video of what? You not making any sense"

I ask

"He taped us having sex"

She says and cries so more. I think one thing a guy never want
to imagine is his sister being banged especially by a 30-
something year old. It's a disgusting image to have in your mind
and I wouldn't even want to see such a tape of her. To me Hlali

is an angel and should always remain as one until she has a child of her own as proof that she has sex, either than that it should stay the way it is.

“and he sent the video to mom?”

I ask because it makes no sense how she would say mom is going to kill her

“he sent it to me and I mistakenly emailed it to mom thinking I was emailing it to myself”

She explains and it makes so much sense. I always told her to change her username but she doesn't listen to me

“I'm coming home ok. Where's dad? Has he seen the video?”

I ask

“He just left, I told him everything and he left Biko”

She says crying even harder worrying the shiit out of me.

“Calm down, I'm on my way ok”

I assure her and say my goodbyes to her. I go back to the guys and tell them I must go. We do this thing where one person takes care of the bill and the other takes care of it the next time and so forth to avoid splitting the bill and all that crazy stuff. I pay the parking ticket and get in my car and drive home hoping to get there before mom does. As I drive in, so is mom. I park

next to her and she's alone, I'm assuming the twins are with Aunty Saney.

"Mom"

I say walking up to her but she's pissed. I hug her squeezing her tight to distract her

"Hi Biko"

She says trying to break the hug, I allow her and close the door for her

"I've been wondering when you'd be home. Where are the twins?"

I ask standing in front of her

"I left them with Sanele. When did you get here?"

She asks, knowing her she hasn't forgotten

"This morning actually but when I was here you were already gone"

I explain and she nods. We walk to the door and I open for her to walk in and she thanks me

"MIHLALIKAZI"

She yells as soon as she's inside the house. I follow behind her to the lounge and my sister meets us halfway only to be met by

a hot slap. She's about to slap her again when I hold her hand standing between the two of them

"Biko SUKA" (Biko move) "ha.a Mama" (no mom)

She chuckles in disbelief "Biko its ok"

Hlali says still holding her probably pink cheek, that swing was painful. Mom takes self defence classes, her late husband showed her flames.

"No its not. Mom please just calm down and hear her out"

I plead

"There's nothing to listen to here Biko. Your sister is messing with a married man Bikokuhle. What's there to justify huh?"

Mom asks trying to get past me but I'm stronger than she is

"Mom just calm down please before you do or say something you will regret. Mihlali needs us now more than ever"

I plead hoping to get through to her "Hlali just give us space ok."

I say still looking at mom who is ready to kill my little sister

"if you dare walk out of here never come back!"

Mom threatens "Hlali go to your room please"

I plead and my little sister is now conflicted as to who to listen to “Mom I’m sorry”

She says and walks to the stairs but I hold mom until she’s disappeared from our view

“She knows she messed up. He sent it to her to blackmail her into dating him again. I swear to you she ended things the minute she found out he’s married”

I explain to mom who walks past me to sit on the chair and bury her face in her hands

“How could Mihlali date a married man? Why would she even do that Biko?”

She says unable to hide the hurt and disappointment in her voice

“What don’t we do for her that she would go on and get a blesser? She has everything. We give her everything Biko and she goes on and does this? What if she had sent that video to the wrong email address huh? Then what? The last thing this family needs is bad publicity”

She says, I brush her back

“she didn’t know” I say

“call her back. I won’t do anything to her”

3

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Hearing my mother think of the family's reputation more than what I'm going through hurts more than anything, makes me feel less important. I make my way down the stairs into the lounge because really I never reached my room anyway.

"come sit here"

Mom says patting next to her on the couch, I do as told.

"I'll give you guys space"

Biko says walking out. I'm left with my mother, I don't know what to expect from her

"What happened? I want to know everything from the very beginning to how you got here"

Mom says and I start off. If I'm going to tell you what happened then I'll have to tell it right.

*****FlashBack*****

THE PREVIOUS YEAR

I had just broken up with my boyfriend that morning and wanted nothing more than to stay in my room and cry. I received a picture of him kissing some girl from school, what

hurt me the most about the situation was that the asshole denied that there was ever anything going on between the two of them everytime I asked him. He always told me that the girl and him were cousins, he even introduced her to me and she was so sweet and kind to me that I actually believed her to be nothing but a cousin.

“Honey”

Mom shouted walking in giving me enough time to wipe my tears away

“Yes mom”

I responded

“I hope you haven’t forgotten, later on we going to your grandma’s function ok?”

She said

“Yes mom I know”

I said hoping to dismiss her

“Our outfits will be delivered around 12, please be here when they arrive. Your brother wont be home until 2 I think and twins are still in their rooms so please warm their food when they decide they hungry an...”

“mom its not the first time I’m left alone with the kids. I’ll handle things ok”

I cut her off and she chuckles

“ok then. See you guys later, I love you”

She says and I hear the door close meaning she’s gone. I did everything as she had instructed me and later on I showered and wore my red below the knee body hugging spaghetti red dress that left no curve unhugged looking sexy AF with a gold spaghetti straps heel. I looked amazing and everyone else agreed. I drove with Biko and the parents rode together, the twins were left with a baby sitter.

“He’s not worth your tears”

Biko said, I just nodded with a fake smile

“I know, its just that I didn’t expect this from him. I thought he loved me”

I said and he brushed my knee

“He’s a jerk and you’re a queen, not everyone can handle a queen”

I smiled. He always knew what to say to make me feel good

“Now give me a real smile and lets take amazing selfies and make these guys jealous”

He said and I chuckled because everyone in school knew he's my big brother

"Everyone knows you my big brother silly"

I said and he laughed

"at least you feeling better now"

He said and he was right, for a second I forgot what had happened. Throughout the night there was this guy whom was constantly checking me out and I won't lie I noticed him, I mean who wouldn't notice a sexy tall black gentlemen that smells amazing!!! I have a thing for tall dark handsome guys because even my ex was just as yum. I think I got it from grandma because my biological father and my step dad are both yellowbones.

"Champagne?"

He offered making me turn

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I just knew who it was. I chuckled

"I am underaged"

I said and he chuckled

"Yeah sure you are"

I scoffed

“I am only 17”

I said making myself clear

“I’m 25. Name is Daniel Khozi, who is the lovely miss?”

He said, I looked at him

“Siphiwokuhle Langa”

I said, that’s the name I only ever use when I don’t want people to know me let alone get used to me. Mihlali is just too friendly of a name.

“Nice to meet you beautiful”

He said kissing the back of my hand, he had placed the champagne glass on the table behind me.

“Is there no way I could get your number perhaps?”

He said taking out his phone, I took it and typed my number for him hoping that I’d block him when he called or maybe I’d just bang him to get over my ex and maybe also use him to get to my ex.

“Thank you miss Langa, I’ll see you around?”

He said and I nodded, then he walked away. I took out my phone and started chatting my friends bored out of my mind. They were comforting me on Sakhe issue and making me feel my worth, he on the other was calling and sending me

messages apologizing for the way things went. Your typical cheater apology. I never saw Daniel for the rest of the night and I won't lie I was a bit sad by it but not enough to cry about it. We got home and slept. The next few days I kept waiting for him to call me but he never did, the guy only called me a week later asking to take me out for lunch and who was I to easily say yes, I made him sweat a bit

"I see you weren't lying about being young. You're a bit childish. When you ready to go out for lunch you have my number"

He said and dropped the call on me, the hell had just happened? Ofcourse I called him back to give him a piece of my mind for him acting like a jerk

"Siphiwokuhle" He answered "I'm childish?"

He chuckled "If you weren't you wouldn't be so worked up about it. I know what I want from you and I feel like you also know what you want unless I'm wrong about you"

He said sounding ever so confident and smug about it

"And if I told you I wanted no strings?" I asked

"We'll play by your rules Miss" He said

"So do I still need to wine and dine you or we get straight to the fucking?" He asked

“I’m still a lady. I want it all” I said

“Great, when can I pick you up?” “1pm, not a minute late”

I said “See you then”

We said our goodbyes and I waited for the clock. It was one of those Saturdays where I didn’t have classes so I was free. I’ve gotten used to washing early and just being ready because things always show up in the last minute and I’m a punctual person so its always wise that I wash as soon as I wake up. I wore blue low cut skinny jeans, a white vest and white sliders. I made my way downstairs where my parents were cuddling in the lounge and my brother and twins nowhere to be seen. I greeted and told them I was going out with my friends and they were ok with it. My parents aren’t strict but they do have rules which we ought to follow. He called me at 12:56 telling me he was outside, I walked out and he was really outside waiting for me driving a Porsche, he must have been from those rich families to drive such a car

4

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

*****FlashBack*****

THE PREVIOUS YEAR

We went to the date but it ended quick because we got carried away and ended up going to his place.

“What do you do Daniel?”

I asked seeing his mansion as we drove in, he chuckled brushing it off like its nothing

“Nothing illegal”

He responded, I eyed him expecting a real answer

“Fine, I’m the CFO of Hlathi inc.”

He said

“You not really 25 are you?”

He shook his head no

“I’m 34, I lied because I was scared I would scare you away especially after hearing your age”

I was conflicted, caught in a dilemma

“If I am too old for you Siphowo then its fine we can end this, it is statutory rape in the eyes of the law”

He said and he was right

“You right, it could be viewed as Statutory rape”

I said

“But?”

He asked and I shrugged getting out of the car and he got out after me meeting me in his drive way. He had such an amazing house. He opened the house door which led us through the lounge, his house was manly and needed a woman’s touch.

“Nice place”

I said, he smiled

“Thanks, sorry its not girly enough. I don’t have someone to make it girly and my cleaner comes twice a week”

He said

“Its clean enough so don’t worry”

He said leading me to the lounge

“So you don’t drink at all?”

He asked and I chuckled

“I couldn’t drink at the party with my parents around and my grandmother being honoured”

I explained and he stopped in his tracks

“You’re Sinokuhle’s daughter, Mihlali?”

He asked and I nodded

“I see I’m not the only one that lied”

He said

“technically I didn’t lie, I just didn’t give you my other name and you never asked about my parents. How do you know my mother?”

I asked

“Our company did business with them. Can I offer you wine or champagne?”

he asked

“Champagne will do

I need to be a little sober-ish when I get home”

He chuckled at my response as he poured me champagne and himself wine. He gave me a glass and one turned into 2 and that into 3 and suddenly we were playing a drinking game of crazy 8, don’t even ask how the rules were because every rule

involved drinking since it was only the two of us. He kissed me and I didn't hesitate responding, he broke it

“Can we take this to the bedroom?”

I nodded and he picked me up and making me wrap my legs around his waist. He was really fit in order to carry me so easily. We got to his room ripping each other's clothes off of the other, by the time we got to the bed he was more naked than I was, remember I was wearing skinny jeans and that's all I was left with. He laid me on the bed and took off my jeans watching me just as I was watching him take off my jeans looking so damn sexy. I don't know if it was the alcohol or it was him but I definitely wanted him as much as he wanted me. He took off his jeans and came to bed kissing me from my feet all the way to my inner thighs and good lord it felt so damn good! He took off my underwear and then started kissing my inner thighs and then opened me up even further so I was bare to him. He nodded with a smirk and went for it with his tongue licking my clit, MY LORD IT FELT SO DAMN GOOD! He continued licking and sucking on my clit making me feel things that should be illegal! He went on to lick me between my folds sending me over the edge. My God this guy knew how to lick a girl. I was moaning non-stop with the way he was licking and sucking me all the right way. He took it to the next level when he started fucking me with his tongue, nigga got my toes curling and

causing a waterfall down there where the sun doesn't shine. It felt so amazing coming in his mouth and he didn't stop until he gave me 2 more orgasms. He got to my face

"Hey Beautiful"

He said kissing me, it was only then that I realised he was distracting me with the kiss from his enormous Dick. Well maybe for normal people that was average but for me it was the biggest I had seen considering I hadn't seen many dicks up close either than in porn. He went slow and was very patient with me and my tight hole

"Should I stop?"

He asked after a while of struggling and me being in serious pain.

"no, its ok"

I said because I wanted him so badly and I was willing to allow him to rip me apart just as long as I could get the right amount of satisfaction. He got off me

"I'm hurting you Hlali"

He said, I never could hide my feelings. I nodded

"Lets use a lube ok"

He said, seeing him naked in front of me I realized just how big he was. He walked to the drawer and came back with a lube and applied it on the condom that covered his dick. He came back and tried again

“You gonna need to relax princess”

He said that sliding his fingers up and down on the side of my outer arm distracting me and I wont lie it worked because he was in but not all in

“Don’t hold back”

I said as he went slow but it was like the movement only made the pain worse

“If I go all in I’ll only hurt you, I’ll go slow until you can accommodate me fully ok?”

He said and I nodded, he kissed me going really slow. So much for wanting no strings, slow intense eye locking sex will make you catch strings and make you forget what you initially wanted from a guy. He went slowly in and out making sure I was comfortable enough until he was all in and his balls were slapping against my butt. He continued until the pain was replaced with pleasure and the room filled with nothing but our moans and groans. I think I came atleast 2 times with his dick but nigga still didn’t cum. Its not often that you get a nigga that

takes more than 30 minutes to cum in the first round and I
wont lie I was impressed

“I cant hold back any more”

He said pumping me faster with my leg on his shoulder as he went in and out faster than his pace, I helped him moving in a rhythm of our own until he came and I came with him. He collapsed on top of me and I wont lie I had never had sex that AMAZING! Also maybe because I never had anything to compare my exe with until Daniel and I wont lie he was amazing. With my ex I only ever came once and that was on rare occasions, I always had the wrong perception of how sex should be and what an orgasm was like because of how he did me and led me to believe how sex was.

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

*****FlashBack*****

THE PREVIOUS YEAR – 3 MONTHS LATER

Things between us were good, you could even go as far as saying we were a couple because theres nothing couples did that we didn't do. He was so good to me and made me forget about my ex that broke my heart, he made me realize that guys my age were a little childish and he knew what he wanted from this relationship and me in general. Obviously my friends weren't so supportive at first until they saw how well he treated me and that being like a princess, not once did he ever make me feel like I didn't deserve the treatment he gave so generously, to say he was perfect was an understatement. That man deserved boyfriend of the year award! I was happy and he seemed happy too so there was no trouble between us and yes we had petty arguments but we made sure to not go to bed without resolving our problems, which was mostly about him being too busy at times but then again what was I expecting dating someone of his status.

“What happened to no strings?”

He asked laughing while brushing my hair, I was laying on his chest after an amazing workout

“I don’t know”

I said honestly, til date I didn’t tell him I had caught feelings for him and he never mentioned how he felt about me even though his actions were pretty clear that he was not just about the sex

“I like you Hlali, more than I think I should”

He said, I didn’t respond.

“Like is an understatement even. I think I’m inlove with you and this is not because of the amazing sex we have but because of everything. The way you carry yourself, how you look when I’ve said something stupid or the way you laugh when I say something that’s funny to you because we both know I’m not a comedian but I like that I can make you laugh without even trying, the way you calm me down when I’m dealing with a crisis at work and how you scold me when I don’t listen to you and things fall apart. I...”

We were disturbed by his phone ringing, he took it from the night stand

“I have to take this”

He said getting up off the bed

“Hello...”

He kept quiet

“Yes this is he.... She what? What hospital?”

I sat

“I’ll be there now”

he said and ended the call

“Everything ok?”

I asked

“My wife’s been in an accident”

He said shocking me beyond the word. I took my things and started getting dressed, I think it registered after he had said it that he just told me he’s married

“Hlali”

He said walking over to me

“DON’T! stay away from me, your wife needs you”

I said taking the rest of my things and walking downstairs requesting an uber, it was already late. I called Vuyo

“Friend?”

She answered

“He’s married”

That was the first thing I said to her as I made my way to the door

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I felt his grab my arm making me turn around to slap the daylights out of him

“Let go of me!”

“Mihlali I can explain”

He said in a pleading tone, I chuckled in disbelief

“Your wife needs you Daniel”

I said walking out the door. Luckily the uber was outside already. I walked over to him and he drove me to Vuyo’s home. Lucky me her parents weren’t around and she was left with her sister.

“Hlali”

She said welcoming me into her warm embrace, I just cried and she let me without saying anything judgemental for once. We went up to her room and slept with my phone off, the next day she woke me up with a cup of coffee.

“Wanna tell me what happened?”

She asked and I shrugged.

“last night we were cuddling and he was telling me that he loves me and counting the things he loves about me when a call came from the hospital I’m assuming telling him his wife was in an accident”

She couldn’t even hide the shock on her face

“How did he manage to hide a wife for 3 whole months? It makes no sense Hlali”

She said

“I also don’t know Vee, I really don’t know. I actually believed that he was genuine and loved me”

I said disappointed to the core and hurt

“I cant imagine you wouldn’t be, he lied to you. You have every right to be hurt”

She said that pulling me into her arms, I couldn’t even cry even though I could feel the lump in my throat

“I called Phiwo”

She said but I didn’t respond.

“Hey guys”

Phiwo said walking in, she walked over to me and hugged me tightly

“That jerk”

She said and then broke the hug

“How are you?”

She asked and I shrugged

“I don’t know, I’m more disappointed than I am sad”

I said

“What happened? You guys were perfect”

She said and I shrugged with a sarcastic chuckle

“I’m as confused as you are. One minute everything is good and the next thing he’s telling me his wife is in hospital”

I said

“I’m sorry friend, I know how much you liked him”

Phiwo said and she was being genuine because Vuyo never approved from the get go and she maybe hid how she felt but she couldn’t hide it well enough how she didn’t support my relationship with a guy that old.

“Atleast you found out before you were in too deep”

She said, her comment was long overdue anyway

“Thanks Vuyo”

I said getting up leaving them to go and shower and to just cry some more away from their eyes. When I was done I walked out and they were still in the room talking about something else. I switched my phone on and I had a dozen missed calls from him and a long ass SMS.

“Hey Hlali,

I know you probably want nothing to do with me and I don't blame you. I was a jerk.

I'm sorry for the way things played out. I may have lied about not being married but I never lied about how I felt about you. I really love you Mihlali Siphivokuhle Langa and I really want to be with you, these past three months were by far the best life I had ever lived and want to continue living.

I know I shouldn't but I cant just let you go just like this Mihlali. Atleast may I please explain to you whats going on here.

I got married when I turned 25 to my highschool/varsity bestfriend. My parents and hers were good business partners and I wasn't going to be allowed to run the company if I didn't marry her. Nwabisa is my bestfriend still and yes we married but we not together, she's a doctor who's always out of the country on those doctors without borders programs hence the way of living. She and I had an agreement that we were free to see other people as long as we were honest with each other

and so far its been working out for the both of us, she's met someone she loves just as I met you.

I know you probably wont believe me since I've already lied to you about everything else but this is the honest truth. I'm sorry baby"

I chuckled throwing my phone on the bed

"What?"

Vuyo asked "Read for yourself"

I said unlocking my phone and handing it to her, she read it outloud as I got dressed. "WTF?"

Vuyo said after she finished reading it

"He's mad" She added

"I think you should hear him out" Phiwo said

"You mad. He's married, Hlali should just block him everywhere and never talk to him and he needs to focus on his marriage. If he could hide a wife, what else is he hiding? The guy lied about everything!"

Vuyo said unbothered by how I might feel about the guy.

CHAPTER 6

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

THE PRESENT

Obviously I didn't tell mom every detail especially our sex life with Daniel.

"So you really didn't know he was married?"

She asks and I shake my head no

"I'm sorry for judging you without knowing the whole story, just that when I saw that video it scared me. Honey I don't want you to be famous over such things"

She says and pulls me into a hug, I finally break it

"that's not even what hurts, what hurts is you thinking about your reputation more than your daughter"

She clasps her mouth

"Oh honey its not my reputation I'm worried about but yours. Hlali your father did some things and many people tried to cover up his deeds including me"

She says confusing me, all I know about my father is what my mother has told me about him.

"the reason your father ended up in prison was because he kidnapped me, raped me, drugged me and even went as far as

leading me to a miscarriage with what he had drugged me with. That was only the tip of the charges.”

She explains shocking me because she has never told me this about him before. I shake my head no in disbelief, I can't believe my father would do such a thing because mom painted him as a good man. Mom only ever told me that dad was arrested for things like fraud and money embezzlement.

“No mom!”

I deny shaking my head no with tears rolling down my cheeks

“Its true baby. I met your father a couple of years after Bantu had ended things with me because my father told him to. I was ready for a relationship and he was conveniently there while Bantu was still based in Bloem. He and I tried things out and things between us were perfect but your grandfather always thought he was too perfect, too clean for his liking”

She chuckles at the thought of grandpa, yeah my grandfather can be a little too much. He makes things happen that man and he doesn't take nobody's crap.

“He started digging, he found someone to try and convince me that your father was not who he claimed to be but Lunga got to her first and scared her off by threatening her son so she didn't tell me anything which made dad seem like a liar. But my father loved me so much that he didn't drop it, he tried to get Bantu

involved but when you head over heels in love and ready to get married or are married to the most perfect man there is and have a child together you just not willing to believe every little bad you hear about him and Lunga was a master manipulator because he managed to turn me against my own father that at some point I almost quit”

She takes a deep breath in and lets it out slowly

“what I’m about to tell you might make you feel some type of way about your father but baby he loved you more than anything and he would have done anything for you.”

She says confusing me

“What could you tell me that’s worse than him raping and drugging you mom?”

I ask because to me that’s already enough to make me hate him and feel some type of way about him

“Dad got himself admitted into a mental institution and he wouldn’t let any of us see him. We all thought it was strange considering how much he loves mom and yet he wouldn’t even see her. Things went on for a while until one morning I received a video from an unknown number, it was a video of your father in his office with a child which was probably 8 if not less. He was doing despicable things to her, touching her inappropriately and he made her do things to him. So I took you

and got you to Saney, took the video to the police station only to meet his old friend and apparently someone he's been doing this with. Dad organised for me to go to the Eastern Cape but we didn't make it that far because Lunga drugged me and held me captive at the institution, when I tried to run I saw my little sister held captive to and so I made a choice to save her instead and let him do whatever he wanted to do with me as long as my sister was safe and unharmed. That's when he took me and kept me locked up in a deserted place that only he and his friend knew, they starved me

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kept me heavily drugged with illegal pills that were enough to cause a miscarriage. He tried to skip the country but he was caught just in time and in hospital they found that I had lost my baby and I had been raped. I tried to commit suicide but clearly I failed because I'm still here. Dad, mom and everyone were a great support system for me. It took some time but I got the healing I needed and when I could finally get out of the house, he called from prison and you answered the call. I think you were 6 then, that day he called you were abducted from the mall playground. We searched everywhere until the person who took you reached out and told us that he wanted to make

Lunga pay for having killed his child but luckily the guy didn't hurt you or do anything funny to you"

She lets out a heavy sigh, by the time she's done I'm a crying mess and couldn't possibly hate the man more than I do. Mom pulls me in for a hug tightly not letting me go as I just sob on her chest. The man I grew up loving whole heartedly despite his crimes turned out to be a pedophile and a rapist and everything bad you can think off

"its ok baby"

Mom says brushing my back. I don't know whether I'm mad at mom for keeping this from me for so long or I'm mad that she finally told me changing my whole perspective about the man whom I called my father.

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-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

I'm in the kitchen drinking water, I only heard bits and pieces of Mom's conversation with Hlali and I can only imagine how things went between the two of them. I refill my water bottle and return it to the fridge but stop in my tracks the minute dad walks in and his hands are bloody

"Dad what happened? Are you ok?"

I ask because my father is not a messy person, he's clean. He doesn't answer me but walks to the sink to wash his hands ridding him of the blood and as soon as they are clean he wipes them with a swab

"Dad are you ok? Are you hurt?"

I ask because he doesn't look like he's wounded even though theres blood on his clothes

"Its not my blood"

He says walking out to the lounge where mom and Hlali are

"Honey you have blood. Are you bleeding? Are you ok?"

Mom asks all these questions walking up to dad

"I'm fine Marhadebe. Its not my blood"

He says and turns to walk away but mom grabs his arm stopping him. Dad can barely look at Hlali knowing what he knows now and I feel sorry for her

"Bantubonke whose blood is this?"

Mom asks sternly, dad looks at mom's hand and then back to her face

"Its Daniel's"

He answers calmly

“What did you do?”

Did asks letting go of him

“we had a little altercation but everything’s been solved now”

He says

“He wont be bothering Mihilalikazi again”

He says and walks up the stairs leaving all of us confused.

“Mom what just happened?”

I ask because I need her to clear the confusion

“I’ll be back, I need to talk to your father”

She says and doesn’t even wait for any of us to respond. I walk over to Hlali

“Hey, you ok?”

I ask settling next to her

“Mom just told me about the kind of person Lunga was”

She says, I’ve never heard her call her biological father by name

“what do you mean?”

I ask cause she seems angry and disappointed

“he was a rapist and a pedophile”

She says shocking me. Yes I didn't know her father and never bothered checking the man out online but to hear her say this about the man she worshipped

"Surely that can't be right"

She shakes her head

"that man was a monster, he sought pleasure from kids. He kidnapped mom and aunty Saney. I cant call such a man my father! He deserved to die"

She says gritting her teeth

"I'm sorry"

I say brushing her knee and she doesn't respond. She gets up and leaves me going to the stairs. I decide to take out my phone and go online to search Lunga Langa and I get so much about the man. I find articles about him being a rapist, a pedophile who sexually abused the kids he was supposed to treat and a whole lot more which I'm assuming mom told Mihlali about. Its painful that this kind of man was married to such a phenomenal woman and took her for granted and did all those things to those people. Theres posts about people dragging mom's name in the mud and some defending her on posts about this man. The information is so gruesome that I'm lost in it and actually startled when my phone rings

"Hey baby"

Its aunty Saney

“Hey aunty how are you?”

I ask

“I’m good baby, I tried calling your mother but couldn’t reach her”

“She’s in the room with dad”

I say and she chuckles

“When they do finally come out, tell her to call me ok”

I laugh at what she’s probably thinking and chances are they probably doing what she thinks they are doing.

“I will mos def tell her. How are the twins?”

“Want to talk to them? I can switch to facetime”

She offers

“Yes please, its been a while”

“Hang on”

I hear her calling them in the background and they come in making noise. I feel sorry for her.

“Hey Bhuti”

They say together making me chuckle

“Hey guys, how are you?”

“Aunty Saney bought us new clothes and grandma said she’ll bring us gifts when they get back”

Imange says all excited

“look at my doll, aunty Saney bought us dolls”

Isenathi add interrupting her twin making me laugh at how frustrated Ima looks right now

“Isenathi I was still talking”

She says annoyed

“Girls please!”

They always do this. We talk with them telling me about their day with mom and aunty Saney and when they done they give aunty the phone and she reminds me to ask mom to get back to her.

CHAPTER 7

-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

I've decided to start cooking seeing that its tense around the house with everyone upstairs and all. I'm chatting to my girls on Whatsapp when my phone rings and its my biological mother. I haven't been answering her calls and blaming it on school but now it's the weekend and I have nothing to use as an excuse so I answer her

"Hi"

I say coldly

"Hey baby how are you?"

I sigh

"Fine Ontla, can I help you with something?"

I ask unable to hide how annoyed I am

"Lerato I am still your mother and I would like it if you would respect that"

She says making me chuckle

"nope, my mother is dad's wife Sino and she is upstairs right now"

She sighs defeated

“Honey please, I’m trying here”

She says and I cant help the sarcastic chuckle that leaves my lips

“You trying? We wouldn’t be here if you hadn’t run off with a man leaving me with dad to take care of me without any kind of excuse or whatsoever”

I say angrily gritting my teeth

“You lucky you even have my number! You not a mother, atleast not to me with what you’ve done”

I add

“Baby it was a long time ago, I didn’t know what I was doing and I didn’t know how to be a good mother to you. Lerato please can we just meet up for lunch and talk, I jus”

She pleads as I end the call not caring what more she has to say

“You know you have to talk to her at some point”

Mom says leaning by the door, I look up at her about to respond

“She is your mother baby”

She says walking over to me

“Hear her out and just find common ground. This anger you have towards her is not right. Yes I’m not saying what she did is

right but you are her son and she is your mother and she's reaching out to you"

She says sitting on the high chair opposite me

"I cant mom. You took me in and loved me like your own an..."

I start off but she cuts me off

"Biko I don't mind you having a relationship with your biological mother. She gave you life and I wouldn't have such an amazing son if it weren't for her. I know maybe her reaching out now may be wrong and all but look at it this way, its better late than never. Give her chance. Hear and her out and then decide whether you still want to stay mad at her or you want a relationship with her ok"

She says and all I can do is just nod

"fine mom, I'll text her to meet tomorrow"

I say

"That's all I'm asking for baby, just meet with her"

She says kissing my hand.

"Mom thank you for being a mother to me and for loving me and accepting me"

I say and she smiles in acknowledgement

“Whats it that I hear about you dating Mihlali’s friend? Does that mean you and Kim broke up?”

She asks and I shake my head no, I tell mom everything anyway

“I don’t understand”

I take a deep breath and let it out

“its complicated mom. I met Phiwo when Kim and I were not in good terms. Phiwo was supposed to be a weekend distraction but now I think I’m falling for her”

I try explain

“Honey you cant be dribbling two girls here. You have to pick one”

She says and I shrug

“Mom I love Kim and maybe its wrong but I love her and I don’t want to choose between them mom. Phiwo is sweet and I really want to explore with her”

She’s about to respond when I cut her off

“Please mom, don’t”

She just nods

“Aunty Saney called while you and dad were upstairs, she said get back to her”

“I completely forgot with everything that’s happened. Ok thank you baby I’ll call her right now”

She says that walking out

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I’m disturbed by a knock on my door, I don’t respond but stay with my face buried on my pillow. The person opens the door and I can tell by the cologne that its dad. I sit up. He walks over to my bed and joins me

“Angel”

He says

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I’ve never been so happy to hear him call me that

“I’m not proud of what happened but I can assure you that he will not be bothering you again”

He says and I don’t know how to feel about his tone

“NO I didn’t kill him”

He says making me chuckle

“I just roughed him up a little that’s all”

He says checking out his bruised knuckles, he sighs

“We cant help who we fall in love with and I wont hold it against you but honey next time be vigilant, have me or someone from work run a background check on whomever you go out with especially if you think you like him ok?”

I nod

“Yes daddy lesson learnt”

He pulls me in for a hug

“We love you Hlali and maybe we don’t get things right every now and then but we will always have your back my angel at all times”

He says and I break the hug

“Thank you daddy”

I say and he nods

“You may not want to hear this but he and his wife are only married on paper to make their parents happy”

He says shocking me

“I know, their kids aren’t his but his wife’s and her boyfriend. As much as I hate to say it but the guy really seemed to have loved you and she knew about you but honey I cant let you be with

such a man. For one he's way too old and secondly I can't have my daughter involved in whatever they call their marriage nor do I want you involved with someone who makes sextapes without your knowledge only to use them against you"

He says the last part kissing the side of my head. I smile

"Thank you daddy but Daniel is a closed chapter in my life and I want nothing to do with him"

I say defensively but he chuckles

"Oh honey, you still have a lot of growing up to do. You remind me of your mother when I moved to Bloem. She hated me for dumping her but with growth you learn that you can't hate someone you don't love. You may be angry at him for what he did but he's a guy and he won't let you go so easily and chances are you'll eventually want to hear him out and you guys are going to make up and there's nothing your mother and I can do about it"

I shake my head no at what dad is saying

"It will never get to that"

He laughs at me, as in he laughs as if I've just told him the funniest joke ever

"Honey I'm a guy and I can tell you this, once you love a girl you don't give up on her despite what she says or what anyone else

says for that matter. I beat Daniel up, yes but I don't think he'll be giving up anytime soon and honey when you do decide to try things out again with him please use protection and be careful ok?"

I chuckle

"Dad I'm serious. I will not be getting back together with him ever"

He just smiles and nods

"Just remember this conversation ok. I'm not in support of this relationship but baby if he makes you happy then so be it but don't lose focus of your studies and whats important"

He says and gets up off my bed leaving me confused. I hate Daniel and would never get back together with him especially after this. He kisses my forehead and walks out. My phone rings and its Vuyo, she's been calling and so has Phiwo but I haven't been answering their calls and thanks to dad I'm in a better mood to answer their calls

"Hey"

I say with a sigh

"Mihlalikazi you don't do that! You don't send me a sextape and then ghost me"

She yells

“Its been sorted friend”

I say

“You and Daniel made a sextape!”

She says and I roll my eyes, her voice is laced with nothing but judgement

“WE did not make a sextape, he did! He sent it to me blackmailing me to get back with him and forgive him for not telling me the whole truth. I didn’t know about it until I received it today”

I explain

“Oh Hlali I’m so sorry. But this is what happens when you date men older than you. They lie and take advantage of you”

She says and I roll my eyes annoyed, how is this person still my friend with how judgy she is towards my life choices

“Vuyo thank you for the call and enjoy the rest of your evening”

I say and drop the call without waiting for her response. The last thing I need right now is her judgement. Just as I’m sitting like that I get a phonecall from my grandmother. I smile and answer because I miss her so much and really just want to hear her voice

“Oku wam”

She says and I cant help the tears

“Khulu”

I say unable to hold back my sobs

“Oh honey. Talk to your grandmother”

She says in that concerned voice of hers that always gets to me

“I messed up Khulu, I messed up bigtime”

I say

“Your mother told me. You know its not your fault right? He messed up and not you”

She says comforting me

“But granny if I hadn’t messed with him then I wouldn’t be in this situation”

I explain, she chuckles

“Oh honey. Don’t beat yourself up about one little mistake you made. If I had listened when people told me to stay away from your grandfather then you wouldn’t be here today. In life you need to make your own mistakes in order to learn from them and to grow from them. Where to from here is all up to you”

She says

“I don’t understand”

“Honey you can either stay with him or leave, its all up to you. I am your grandmother and your happiness means everything to me. If this guy makes you happy then be with him”

She says confusing me, why does granny and dad think I’ll ever get back together with this person after what he’s done

“I could never get back with him after what he did”

She laughs confusing me

“I tried to stay away from your grandfather after I found out that he gave me hormones instead of the morning after but staying away only made me miserable. You are young and in love Hlali and nothing any of us say could make you think otherwise. No I’m not trying to convince to be with the guy here but I know how the mind of teenager in love works and I know that he will wine and dine you and you will forgive him when you less angry. Just be careful ok?”

She warns

“Dad said the same thing”

“Because he was once a teenager and he knows how the mind of a man works. The thing with love is that you never leave until you really fed up and have fallen out of love with that person”

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“How do you feel knowing what you know about your father?”

Aunty Saney asks, she called me this morning and told me to get ready she’s taking me out for breakfast. She dropped off the twins and her kids at mom’s place when she came to fetch me. We at my favourite restaurant right now sipping on cappuccino’s waiting for our breakfast.

“I don’t know Makazi, I really don’t know. It angers me that this person I grew up thinking and believing to be a hero was actually the opposite. Aunty he raped my mother and caused her miscarriage”

I say and the words alone leave this bitter taste in my mouth. She places a hand over mine and offers a pity smile

“He is still your father and he was a good man at some point and maybe we’ll never know what made him the monster he became but he loved you Hlali, he would have done anything for you”

She says and I chuckle sarcastically

“He was a paedophile. He raped kids. Who is to say he never did the same to me huh? I’m pretty sure mom left me with him an...”

“Your father never laid a hand on you not once. Do you hear me Mihlali? He loved you till the death of him. Yes, he wasn’t the best husband nor the best at his job, but he loved you and you were his world”

She defends him after cutting me off

“You don’t know that, none of you do. If he did love me then he would have stopped his ways upon my arrival don’t you think? Who is to say he never touched me or did something to me”?

I say as the thought alone terrifies me

“Mihlali we may not know that, and I hate that this is now how you feel about him, but baby don’t doubt his love for you and the lengths he would have gone to protect you. And yes, the thought had occurred to your mother at some point that’s she had you checked out at the hospital and they found nothing of such. Trust me your mother also confronted him, and he confessed to the other kids but swore he never did anything to you Hlali”

She says that brushing my hand and I just nod because what else can I say? Only he knows what he did, and he is dead

“Its just frustrating aunty you know? Growing up your whole life believing your dead father to be this certain person only to find out that it was all lies? And when I go online the internet

paints him out to be the best psychologist there ever was, it just pisses me off”

She lets out a deep breath and sips her coffee

“Makazi what aren’t you telling me?”

I ask because she’s trying very hard to avoid eye contact right now

“Your mother and father moved all the incriminating information to the last few pages of google”

She says

“I don’t understand. What do you mean?”

She sighs

“The only information you can find in the first 2-3 pages about him online is that about his work and school and the good he has done for people. The rest about what he did in his hospital was moved to the last few pages because we all know that nobody goes that deep when they are searching for information on someone. Your mother didn’t want you growing up exposed to such news about him and they didn’t want his crimes to be held against you”

She says and I can’t believe what I’m hearing right now.

“They could only hide so much. What about social media?”

“Honey this shouldn’t matter. You are safe from his crimes and that’s all that matters”

She says dismissively, I sigh dropping it cause what else is there to argue about?

“Will that be all?”

A waiter says after placing our plates in front of us

“This will be all for now, thank you”

Aunty Saney says thanking the girl who nods and walks away.

“Your mother told me about Daniel”

She starts off, she only knew that I was dating a guy named Daniel but I never told her everything including his age. I shrug stuffing my mouth with a piece of bacon

“Honey what happened? What went wrong? I thought you liked him”

She asks cause the last part is definitely not a statement

“I liked him, maybe even loved him but he lied Aunty Saney. He’s married but apparently he’s in an open marriage with his bestfriend because of their parents or some business deal, I don’t know which is which and honestly I don’t even want to know”

I say hoping to dismiss this conversation but knowing my aunt

its not over until she says its over

“Hlali I think you should hear him out”

She suggests and I shake my head no vigorously to show how serious I am and I probably look childish to the person watching us right now

“Hlali”

“No Makazi. He lied and then taped us having sex and had the nerve to use that tape to blackmail me. So NO! he and I done. We’re a closed chapter”

I say and she raises her hands up in surrender

“Fine, I hear you niecey. So what now?”

She asks and I shrug frowning unable to understand her question

“I mean sex, what now?”

I cant help but laugh, did my aunty seriously just ask me that?

“Aunt Saney Mahn!”

I say shoving her which she laughs at

“I’m only asking because I know when I’m going to be on my period and during and after I always want sex”

She explains carelessly

“eew! You have sex during your periods?”

I ask disgusted at the thought of bloody sex

“No, but I do get really horny a lot but my husband is so annoying that he thinks something will happen to me if we have sex while i’m on my periods. Worse I don’t even bleed that much, I barely even bleed, its like spotting and then its all over in 2 days or 3 max”

I just nod

“I respect him for that, he doesn’t want to put you in any kind of danger”

I says and she rolls her eyes

“whatever”

She says annoyed making me laugh at her. My aunty can be really childish at times, I even forget she’s my aunty every now and then because she is way too open and we look the same age. We eat over light conversation until we finish and request the bill

“Its already taken care off”

The girl says

“By who?”

Aunty Saney asks

“I am sorry but I cant tell you that”

She says innocently

“Well this is strange”

I say looking around for any farmiliar face or someone that maybe checking anyone of us out but I don't see anyone

“Can we atleast tip you then or you not allowed to?”

She chuckles at Aunty Saney's question

“You may tip ma'am and thank you”

She says. Aunty Saney hands her R300

“Thank you so much Ma'am”

She says all smiles, she was an amazing waitress anyway and her service was amazing

“I think you might have a secret admirer”

I say nudging my aunt who giggles

“I wish he'd just show himself”

She says

“Excuse me ladies”

A manly baritone voice smelling AMAZING!!! Passes by next to us, he's wearing a suit but his cologne definitely caught both our attention, we both look at only see his perfectly cut brush cut from behind. How could we have missed that? Aunty fans herself

"who was that?"

She asks

"You married!"

I remind her and she giggles

"Just because I already have one nice pair of shoes doesn't mean I cant shop for others"

she says confusing me

"Just because I'm married doesn't mean I cant look at other men. He smelt amazing!"

"Sir please wait"

A waiter calls out walking past us to the car the handsome man just got into, he leans by the window and hands him the jacket and then the car drives off.

"We just missed an opportunity to see him"

My aunty says looking and sounding disappointed

"You are unbelievable"

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-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

Its Sunday and I'm going back to campus, Hlali normally leaves on Monday or during the week. Don't even know why she has an apartment when she spends most of her time here at home. I call Kim because we normally leave for campus together

"Baby"

She answers

"Hey Sthandwa sam, ready?"

I ask

"you might just have to leave without me babe, mom offered to drive me back. Something about my aunt coming over and a meeting"

She says

"You cant possibly be serious"

I say

"I know babe and I'm really sorry. She walked into my room a while back and told me not to worry she'll take me to school herself"

I sigh loudly

“I’m sorry. I’ll make it up to you”

She says and I cant help the smile that creeps up on my lips

“Fine, ask her to drop you off at my place”

I say

“Obviously! I love you ok”

“I love you too. Bye Plumpy”

I say knowing how much she hates that nick name her parents gave her when she was young and still chubby or rather when she was still plump and not this skinny girl I met and fell in love with

“You know I hate that name”

She says sounding annoyed

“And you know I love it my cute Chubby Cheeks”

I say

“Bye Lerato”

she says dropping the call on me, I’m left laughing at how dramatic she is. I call her again and she answers as I’m about to give up

“Really babe?”

I ask

“Serves you right for calling me chubby cheeks and plumpy”

She says spiteful

“Ouch. I love you ok and see you later”

I say

“See you later, bye Biks”

She says and quickly cuts the calls before I can respond because she knows just how much I hate that nickname. I end up chuckling at how much of an idiot my girlfriend is.

CHAPTER 9

-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

Seeing that Kim is still home and will be for a while, I call Phiwo and she answers after a while

“Hey babe”

I say as soon as she answers

“Hi Bhabha, how are you?”

She says sounding ever so adorable that the guilt makes me feel terrible for a split second

“I’m good Nana yam. What are you doing?”

I ask

“Just got back from church”

She says

“Aren’t you making the family lunch?”

I ask and she giggles sounding even more adorable than a bird chirping

“Not today, mom’s cooking since I’m going back to campus and all. And what about you?”

“I am on my way to pick up my amazing ass probably beautiful girlfriend and taking her out for lunch before I leave”

She giggles

“I will get ready then, text me when you outside ok”

She says

“I’m probably 2 minutes away. So, get ready and I’ll meet you outside your home”

I say

“Ok babe, bye.”

She says and ends the call. I get there and text her to come out and she does wearing a burgundy pencil dress, gold open toe heels. I feel shabby and scruffy after seeing how formal and good looking she is.

“Hey Bhabha”

She says getting in the car

“Hey beautiful”

I say kissing her cheek because she’s got lipstick on.

“You look breath taking”

I finally say and she blushes sending me over the edge

“And she blushes”

I say making her blush even more

“Stop it. You look hot as always”

“You think I’m hot?”

I ask, and she shoves me lightly

“You know you are idiot”

“Not as hot as you though. So this is how good you look when going to church, you tryna charm the pastor or something”

I joke

“Or something”

She responds jokingly

“That had better be a joke, I’m territorial about my girl!”

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Its Sunday late and I’ve already packed up my things and am driving back to my place. I need some time away from home to just deal with the news I heard this weekend and maybe I just want to be away from mom for a while, be it embarrassment and anger for her lying to me all these years. Whichever it is I just want to be away from her. The more I think about it the more it really bothers me and gets to. I’m the kind of person

who barely reacts to a situation or news until later, let's just say my brain takes time to process certain news.

"Got everything?"

Dad asks taking my suitcase

"Yes, daddy thank you"

He closes the door behind me

"Hlali I know you. Don't shut us out especially your mother. Rather you tell her how you feel and tell her whatever it is that's bothering you instead of bottling it all up. This hurts her as much as it hurts you"

He says settling on the mini couch below my bed

"I don't know dad, I just need time to process everything and when I've processed it all I promise I will come back home. For now, I just need space and time"

I say and he seems to understand or rather the way he's nodding it seems like he understands the state I'm in.

"Can I get a bear hug from my little cub?"

He asks and I can't help but bury myself in his warm chest. He kisses the top of my head and then breaks it

"Call us when you get to your place ok?"

He says and I nod. We both get up and I take my car keys and purse then we walk out. We meet mom in the lounge and the twins are nowhere in sight

“Mom”

I say, she turns to me and gets up walking over to me

“Honey”

She says breathing out

“I’ll call when I get there”

I say

“Ok baby”

She says and pulls me into a bear hug. We then break it and they walk me to my car, and I drive off. My phone is connected to my car speaker, it’s a friend from campus and class.

“Lara”

I answer

“Hey honey bear. Where are you?”

she asks

“I just left home going back to my apartment”

“Amazing. Text me when you get home then”

she says quickly and all excited

“Am I missing something?”

I ask because I’m confused by how happy she is

“Not really but I do miss you. We’ll catch up when I see you”

She says and drops the call on me. Ok, she’s oddly in a good mood. I think to myself but she’s always like that sometimes I even think she’s drunk or high on something. I turn up the volume blasting hillsong music. Yes, I listen to gospel and I enjoy it especially when I’m on the road. When I get to my apartment, I see Lara’s car in the parking lot, I text her that I just got to my complex and she tells me we’ll meet at my door. I take out my things and make my way to my apartment.

“I didn’t know you had friend’s here?”

I ask after seeing her standing in front of my apartment door.

“Hello to you too honey Bear”

She says that pulling me into a hug

“Hey baby. How are you?”

I respond breaking the hug to open the door

“I’m amazing thank you and, how are you? How was home? Is your brother still a flame?”

She asks that dragging my small suitcase in after me

“I am good, and home was good, and I don’t know what you see in that stupid player called my brother”

I say and she giggles

“I see flames every time I look at him!”

“Lara you still haven’t answered me. Who do you know besides me in this building?”

I ask and she walks to the kitchen leaving me in the lounge, I don’t know with her. She has the concentration span of a 5-year-old.

“Bontle moved into here Friday I think, she leaves a floor below you”

She says and I nod

“That’s nice, finally someone to drive to campus with”

I say

“Where is she now?”

I add

“She’s getting ready. You should shower, we are going out”

She tells me because she is not asking

“Seemingly I don’t have a choice. Please take out clothes for me”

I say that walking to the room with her behind me.

“You look good by the way”

I remember to compliment her, I forgot to tell her with how talkative she is. She’s wearing a short gold open back dress with chains on the back and on the hips. She looks sexy and her skinny body and tiny curves makes her look all the better. For a white girl she sure has a sexy model body which she uses for modelling. She’s wearing slides so I’m assuming her heels are in the car. I take a quick shower and then walk out, she’s picked out a black body hugger for me and heels.

“Its like you had this outfit planned in your head”

I say and she chuckles

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there’s a knock on the door

“I will attend to that”

She says leaving me, I remember I need to call the parents before all else. I dial dad and he places me on speaker, I speak to everyone including the twins and then we end the call after 10 minutes at least, usually its longer and can go up to 2 hours with them. Bontle was the one at the door and she has a bottle of Krone Champagne. We hug, she’s wearing a nude pink short

jumpsuit and heels. I complement her outfit while Lara brings us glasses. I lotion my body and get dressed with Bontle chatting me up about how she got the apartment. Turns out her boyfriend bought it for her because he can't always visit his girlfriend in a commune or something

"So, you mean to tell me that it's in your name?"

I ask hooking my anklet

"yeah it's in my name"

She says

"What about your parents?"

I ask because I know her parents don't take shiit!

"I will deal with them all in good time babe."

I say

"I don't know Bontle, do you trust that this guy wont double cross you? I mean these apartments are like super expensive"

she rolls her eyes annoyed, Lara walks in

"Fine. I'm happy you close"

I say and she smiles faintly

"Yeah its awesome."

Lara adds popping the bottle open, she lives a street down from our complex in another expensive complex herself. With her its her parents who are filthy rich and spoil her and her siblings rotten. Bontle on the other hand falls under the middle class, she's not rich and she's not poor but she gets by. She's dating some lawyer guy who works at my grandmother's law firm and they met through me and some event we attended all three of us, but I don't know if the guy is genuine, but he spends a lot of money and spoils her rotten. Its only past 7pm, Biko left early around 1. Well he always leaves earlier than me because of his girlfriend Kim.

"We should go, we can't stay too long we have an 8am"

I say getting up because we almost finished with this one bottle already

"There's the boring party pooper Mihlali we all know and hate. Don't you know the right guys arrive around 9 at the club"

Lara says and I roll my eyes

"If I was man hunting, it would make so much sense but I'm not. I'm on a break"

I say proudly but instead they laugh at me

"So, does this mean you won't get drunk?"

Bontle asks

“Does this mean you not gonna be getting any?”

Lara asks and they share a high five, I see why she and aunty Saney get along.

“Let’s just go already!”

I say annoyed by them both. We drive in Lara’s Black Matte jeep, as I said before she is spoilt rotten. We get to the club and get in freely. Its loud and I can barely hear my friends, we make our way through the club and all the way to VIP thanks to Bontle’s boyfriend. We get in and its not as loud as it is down there but tonight I really want to get sloshed and be there with everyone. He gives Bontle his card and tells us not to get too drunk and to be careful, he’s leaving because he has an early meeting tomorrow. As soon as he leaves, I can drink proper and get sloshed without worrying about him. He bought us ice Tropez, I’m a champagne girl and I also love the brutal fruit spritzer, so I make my way down to get myself that and champagne.

“Cash or Card?”

The barman asks

“Tab”

A male voice says behind me and the barman just nods, I turn around and good LORD such a fine man should not exist, heck it should be illegal to look this good.

“Thank you but I can take care of my own bill”

I say pulling a straight face, who am I kidding? I don't mind him paying and right now my subconscious has killed me a thousand times for that blunt rude comment.

“I don't doubt that at all Miss?”

“Siphiwokuhle”

I say and he chuckles

“Nice name. Can I get someone to carry that for you?”

He asks and I look at him unable to understand because a normal guy or rather the guys I'm used to normally carry these for me

“Why do you have to get someone when you have two functional hands?”

He chuckles again and my GOD this person should not exist, maybe I'm dreaming, and he doesn't exist and he's just a figment of imagination.

“What the lady wants, the lady gets. Will this be all or?”

When a man that asks you this question and has a tab in the most expensive club you don't play around with the whole independent woman shiit. You let him and make it a point that he pays for the stuff.

“let’s add a bottle of Moet, ice Tropez, more of this and house of bng”

I say testing his limits, he laughs deeply

“I see what you trying to do miss and its fine.”

He calls a barman over and asks me to repeat my order then takes out an fnb black card and swipes everything then hands the speed point back to the guy leaving me shook.

CHAPTER 10

-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

Lunch with Phiwo was great, she is a really sweet and amazing person. I should feel bad for stringing her along but at the same time I'm selfish and I want her all to myself. The thought of another guy tapping that and getting the kind of love she gives and not to mention how sweet and respectful she is, how shy she can be and the blushing at the most stupid thing I say.

Not to say that Kim is any different, I guess its safe to say that I have a type and it's the cute innocent shy ones because she and Phiwo share the same qualities and I'd be an idiot to let any of them go. I literally just got back to my place and Kim is probably 2 minutes away from here because she texted a while ago when I parted with Phiwo telling me she was on her way to my place. I'm about to go and shower when theres a knock on my door and its no doubt Kim.

"Hello Sthandwa sam"

She loves it when I call her that

"Hey baby"

She says hugging me

"I break it, How are you my love?"

I say moving aside for her to come in

“She smells lovely on you thank you and how are you?”

she fires at me sarcastically walking away from me

“Kimberly I have a mother and 3 sisters. We spoke about this”

I remind her unable to hide the annoyed look on my face

“I’m sorry”

she says innocently looking down, I place my finger under her chin making her look up at me

“I would never do that to you. I love you too much and what we have means everything to me. I wouldn’t risk it one bit”

I say that kissing her cute pink plumpy lips which she responds to

“I missed you Plumpy”

I say that and she pouts

“Looks these pink plumpy lips though”

she tries to hide a smile

“Don’t deny me that beautiful smile I love so damn much”

I plead and the corners of her mouth start to curve into a beautiful smile

“There we go”

I say and plant a kiss on her lips

“You annoying”

She says eventually

“I was about to shower. Can my girl join me?”

I ask with that naughty smile of mine that always gets to her

“So now I stink?”

She asks playfully

“Yes, you stink and your man wants to wash that homely smell off of you. Its been too damn long”

I say that picking her up and she wraps her legs around my waist and her hands around my neck

“kiss me”

She says that pouting waiting for a kiss, I chuckle and kiss her lips leading us to the bedroom. I place her on the bed nicely while kissing her and nibbling on her lower lip. She lets out muffled moans on my lips, I hover over her helping her take off that dress and she allows me. Soon as the dress is off she attacks me with a kiss helping me take off my t-shirt and then unbuckling my belt, she is so hot for me right now and I crave her just as much. We kiss until we both naked and now my tongue is on her warm punani. She is so wet and so ready but

with her I always need to ready her with my tongue and fingers just so she is fully ready for all of me. Kim is really tight down there and if we haven't had any for a weekend then it's a struggle, feels like I'm breaking her virginity every time. I muff her and finger her until she's released at least 3 times before I can insert myself and her body is super relaxed.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

We walk to my table with 2 waiters following behind us and carrying my order. He greets the girls and places the things on the table.

"It was nice meeting you beautiful"

He says and then kisses the back of my hand and leaves with the waiters. I'm so confused right now and worse I never got his name

"And that?"

Lara asks

"That was a guy I met at the bar and never even gave me his name or whatsoever but paid for all this"

I say huffing and they both laugh at me

“So much for ‘I’m done with men’”

Lara says that mocking me. My friends are idiots both of them

“Look at her frustrated for not getting a name let alone a number”

Bontle adds and they both laugh at me annoying me to the core. I get up to take a peak downstairs with hopes to see him or spot him or something

“You ok?”

Lara asks as I down a whole brutal fruit like it doesn’t have acid in it

“I’m fine”

I say that coughing as the acid fights back at me for what I just did earning that wrenching laugh from them both

“that’s what you get for going on a man diet”

Lara says and leaves to go dance. I could either sit here and be bored thinking about that stupid guy or I could go and have fun downstairs and dance the night away and I choose the second option

“Hlali”

Someone shouts from the other side of the section standing in front of a bouncer, its some of our friends from school. Sean and Tshepo. I tell Bontle and walk over to them.

“They with us”

I tell the bouncer and he looks at me for a while and then he whispers something in his earpiece then looks back at me before allowing them in

“And that?”

Sean asks, I shrug because his guess is as good as mine. I look up looking for cameras or something but I don't see anything and also because the lights are blinding me. We chat a while before I ditch them with Bontle and make my way to the dance floor looking for Lara but I can't see her or whatsoever. I call her but remember she left her purse with Bontle. Now I don't know how to feel

“Lets dance”

A guy shouts close to my ear and I shake my head no and try walking away but stop as he grabs my arm. I try to yank it away from him but his grip is tight

“I said lets dance, Faith”

He says and normally I'd be confused by that but I've been called Faith so many times back in school because of my body

shape I guess and also being yellow I guess. Some call me Londie London so it's a thing I'm used to.

"Miss are you ok?"

A bouncer asks, when did he even get here? I ask myself

"Go away, cant you see I'm tryna dance with Londie London over here"

He says that unbothered by this huge bouncer

"Let the lady go sir"

The bouncer says and the guy looks at him and then at me and pulls me towards him painful

"I just want to dance with her that's all"

He says and I try yanking my arm away from him, its just painful now. The bouncer pushes his earpiece in and listens then turns to us

"Sir this is your final warning or you will be escorted out of the premises"

He warns and two more huge guys walk up to us and that's when he lets go of me

"What are you? Some kind of princess or something?"

he asks annoyed being escorted out by one of the bouncers

“You ok miss?”

He asks noticing me rubbing my arm and I nod. I take out my phone and show him a picture of Lara

“I’m looking for this girl

Advertisement

any idea where she may have went?”

He looks at the picture and then at me

“She was pretty drunk and I’m worried something might have happened to her”

I explain and he signals I follow him. I walk closely behind him, I should be scared but this guy just saved my life so he’s my only shot at safety. We walk down a dark hall and into a steel door where there’s dozens of monitors. He talks to the other in what sounds like French and then calls me to show them the picture again, he asks me to send it to the computer and then they run what looks like a facial recognition and then point on the screen, I nod.

“Your friend is still in the ladies, I’ll take you there”

He says and I don’t know how to feel right now. Happy or creeped out that he’s over helpful and too kind to me. We walk

to the ladies together and he leaves me by the door, I call out for Lara and she responds in one of the stalls. The line is long as usual. When she's done she walks out and I hug her tight

"I see you missed me"

She says so calmly and stressfree

"I was worried"

I say following her as she washes her hands

"Well I'm alive so whats up?"

She asks

"Next time tell someone or ask someone to accompany you!"

I scold and she just looks at me

"Geez sorry mom"

She says walking out, we meet the bouncer

"Theres toilets in the VIP area where you guys were seated and they safer. Next time ask one of us to accompany you"

He says

"Why? You want a taste?"

He chuckles

“No but the boss told us to keep an eye on you and your friends”

He says and I’m curious

“Your boss?”

I ask

“Are you ladies done?”

He asks and Lara nods walking out from the passage. We follow behind her and she and I dance and have fun while going to our friends go drink every now and then. We drink and dance until I can barely drink anymore, I don’t know how many shorts we’ve taken but I know I’ve finished all my spritzers and had a glass or two of champagne. I’m at the bar with Tshepo to get shots

“Maybe you should stop now. You have classes tomorrow”

that voice from earlier says close to my ear, so he’s back. I turn to him

“So you back? Where have you been?”

I ask unashamed, that’s the thing with alcohol. It loosens you up a bit or maybe too much cause if I were sober I would have never asked this man this question

“I had to be somewhere. As I said, I think you have had enough”

He says

“You don’t know me enough to tell me my limit!”

I say that turning back around to face the barman but stumble and laugh at myself for almost falling. The barman hands me water in that long beer glass

“I said another round of blowjobs!”

I yell but he pays no mind to me, I look around for Tshepo who seems to have left me, he was here a second ago

“I was with a guy with blond hair, any idea where he went?”

I ask the barman and he shakes his head no. I sigh turning to walk away but stagger and this handsome guy catches me

“you smell nice”

I say blabbing

“Thank you. Where do you live?”

He asks

“Home”

I respond

“I mean where is home?”

“In Cape Town”

I respond and giggle. I don't think I've ever been this wasted before! It feels good to let loose just this once. He leads me down a passage

"No! My friends first"

I say stopping him in his tracks, I am so sloshed I can barely do shiit

"Your friends are taken care off. They outside already"

He says dismissively, I shake my head no

"I want to see my friends first. Wheres that bouncer?
BOUNCER"

I shout but I doubt the guy would hear me in this loud as place, he signals for someone to come

"Yes sir?"

"Bring her friends outside, have Quan drive them home and call me Moses ok and have him bring us 2 bottles of cold water"

He orders

"Yes sir"

The guy responds

CHAPTER 11

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I am woken up by the urge to puke, I get up and stagger around looking for the bathroom and run towards what I'm assuming it to be because of the light coming from under the door and by the grace of God it's the bathroom. I puke until someone holds my hair back for me shocking the daylights out of me. He brushes my back until I've emptied everything out of my system. He lets go of me and pour water in a cup and hands it to me, I rinse my mouth and spit then drink some of the water only for it to go right back up. Cape Town water!!! I puke again until my stomach feels empty and my head feels light

"You ok?"

He asks reminding me that I am not alone and that I am not at home or my place

"Who are you and where am I?"

He chuckles, there's that voice from last night. I can barely remember the previous night

"I'm Bandile and you are in my house"

He says and embarrassment flushes over me

"How did we get here? Did we do anything? Where are my friends?"

I ask all these questions at once and then notice that I'm wearing an oversized t-shirt, he looks at me

"Trust me, you'd know if we did. Your friends are in the other rooms of the house. You need to shower and get ready for school. Your friend's car is outside, and someone will bring you things to change into"

He says

Walking out, I only realise then that he is topless and is physically fit and well built. I follow behind him

"Where's my dress and my shoes and purse?"

I ask

"Your purse is on the chair; your dress is in the washer and your shoes are next to the bed"

He says carelessly wearing a t-shirt and sweat pants over his boyleg that shows his dick print and I must say he was not lying about me probably feeling it if we had done something because Mr looks packed down there

"You could have asked to take a picture"

He says and its only then I realise that I have been staring at his package or rather below his waistline. I look away shyly and he giggles in such a manly voice it could make me cum.

“I am sorry for staring”

I say.

“There’s a door on your right when you leave this room, that’s where you’ll find Lara and Bontle and on the next door is where you’ll find the guys”

He says and get back on top of his unmade bed

“Did I do or say something embarrassing last night?”

He’s about to open his laptop but stops as soon as I finish my question and looks right at me

“if you call kissing me embarrassing then I guess you did, either than that you careful when you drunk but not careful enough. Mihlali next time don’t drink like that, whatever it is that you are dealing with it will pass”

He says and then opens his laptop

“We kissed?”

I ask because I don’t recall doing such a thing

“Yes, before you puked all over my shoes and your dress”

I hide my face in my hands

“I’m sorry about your shoes”

I say and he doesn’t respond. There’s a knock on the door

“Come in”

He says and an elderly woman wearing a cleaner’s uniform walks in

“Sir breakfast is ready. Ma’am here are your things and your friends are asking for you”

She says handing me a paper bag

“thank you”

I say, she nods and walks out

“Shower before you miss your class”

He says that and walks out leaving me dumbfounded. Who is he and how does he know this? Maybe I mentioned I had an 8am class? My head feels light yet so painful. I hate a hangover; therefore, I don’t drink like I did last night. I walk to the bathroom again and take a quick shower because its already 7:15. I hope those idiots have already showered. I finish in 5 minutes, brush my teeth and fix my hair and then wear the dress that was bought for me by the woman. It’s a maxi dress accompanied by shades and a denim jacket. How did he buy the right sizes? There’s also a pair of flat sliders. I wear those and take the rest of my things and walk out of the room following the noise coming downstairs

“You look fresh”

Bontle says

“Thanks friend. Why aren’t you guys ready?”

I ask settling next to Lara

“The class has been moved to 3”

Sean answers, I won’t lie I’m bummed out by these news. I take a plate and dish myself croissants, bacon, bangers, egg and anything greasy I can find on the table. I look around and I can’t see Bandile

“He went out to answer a call”

Lara says after noticing the disappointed look on my face

“He is so yummy! Did you guys do the deed?”

She asks

“we are also still here ladies please”

Tshepo reminds us making us laugh

“No Lara we didn’t do anything, but he did mention that I kissed him and then puked all over his shoes”

I say in embarrassment and earn myself laughs all over the table

“that is disgusting Hlali”

Lara says scrunching her face, we hear his voice before he even shows his sexy beautiful self

“We will talk about this when I get to the office”

He says and hangs up looking and sounding a little angry.

“Thank you for the breakfast but we should leave now”

I say that getting up without even finishing the food

“You welcome”

The others also mumble thanks and some compliment his beautiful house. He acknowledges all of us and then heads upstairs. I follow behind him because my purse is still upstairs in his room, the minute I walk in he is topless, and the t-shirt is on the bed. I clear my throat

he turns to me

“I forgot my purse”

I say walking towards him, and he picks it up for me

“Thank you again for your hospitality”

I say with my hand open for him to place my clutch bag. He pulls me to him and kisses me making me forget why I even came here to begin with. He breaks it as if not wanting to let go.

“you look good by the way”

He says handing me my purse. I don't even know how to respond. I thank him and turn on my heels confused AF! What just happened? I walk to my friends who wait for me anxiously. We walk to the car and all get in, Bontle sits with the guys at the back and I in front

“you look like you saw a ghost”

Lara says eventually, I only notice then that we've even left the yard and are on the road

“He kissed me”

I say touching my lips reminiscing about that kiss

“And? How was it?”

She asks, the ones at the back are conversing alone about last night and piecing the pieces together

“It was breath-taking”

I say unable to hide my blush earning a pleased smile from Lara

“So, will you be seeing him again?”

She asks and I shrug

“He didn't give me his number. All I know about him is a name and nothing more”

I say letting out a deep sigh

“don’t worry, we’ll find something about him”

She assures brushing my knee but not enough to distract me

“How when all we know is a name? there’s not even slips in these paper bags and its strange and weird that he knew my sizes without talking to me”

I say and she chuckles

“You worry too much. He got your dress size from last night’s dress and shoes from your heels bruh chill”

She says so carelessly. I’m frustrated by this person knowing so much about me and me nothing about him.

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-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

I wake up and our legs are tangled together with her pressed up against my body tightly engulfed in my arms. She’s so tiny when she’s asleep and so innocent. I try and remove myself from her to go and pee and the way she’s so out she lets me. I get to the toilet and take a piss then wash my hands and brush my teeth before making my way downstairs with my phone. I call Phiwo and we talk for less than 5 minutes, tell her I’m just

checking on her and will see her this coming weekend and she's more than happy. I tell her I'll be preparing for tests this week so she should please not call me as often, she respects my studies like that and really, she only talks to me when I talk to her. We say our goodbyes and I make us cereal to eat and take it upstairs with our bowls on a tray. I place it on a pedestal and sit on the bed to wake her, I kiss her all over her beautiful face and eventually she flutters her eyes open slowly giggling

"If this is not the best sight to wake up to then I don't know what is"

She mumbles making me blush

"hey, you not allowed to make a man blush"

I say pecking her tiny nose

"unless its my man then I'm allowed"

She defends sitting up

"Morning handsome"

She finally says stretching

"Morning Plumpy lips. How are you this morning?"

I ask and she smiles

"I feel amazing. Though I wont lie its painful and very hot down there, but it was definitely worth it. How are you?"

She asks

“I feel amazing, happy to wake up next to the love of my life”

I say and she gets up to go brush her teeth and wash her face. She walks back in the room and we eat together. She prefers Milo and I prefer weetbix. When we done, she takes the dishes to the kitchen and I go prepare us a bath putting in her bath salts and all that other stuff she likes. Her class is at 8 and mine start at 11:15 on Mondays. We wash together and when we done, she lotions her body while chatting me up and telling me about the meeting

“Imagine. They called a meeting because my aunty dreamt, I was pregnant”

She says annoyed and I can't help but laugh because she's on birth control

“Imagine, that time you on birth control”

I say and she chuckles

“I know right. It was just a dream”

She adds. She gets dressed in skinny jeans, a vest and sliders

“You look good”

I compliment as she looks at herself in the mirror

“Thank you, babe. You better remember that when you see another bitch!”

She says making me laugh

“Like I would ever look at another girl. I love my girl too damn much for me to even look elsewhere and where will I get her amazing punani? Her flawless skin and that beautiful face”

She’s a blushing mess when she turns to me. She doesn’t dry her hair today but applies conditioner and minimal make-up

“I’m glad you know that Babe”

She says proudly. I love how confident she can get and still look innocent and not sound so cocky. I walk up to her

“See you on campus?”

I ask and she shakes her head no

“No can do, I got back to back classes and I’m meeting up with my group to work on a project and I have an assignment that I need to start today and submit Wednesday” I sigh

“So, I won’t even see you later?” I ask disappointed

“No, I need to study. It’s going to be test week soon”

I pout

“Fine. I’ll come over but you going to help me with my assignments then”

CHAPTER 12

-BANDILE TSHAWE

“Sir”

Someone shouts startling me, its my PA Lona.

“Lona hi”

I say

“I’ve been talking to you for the past 10 minutes. Everything ok?”

She asks and i let out a deep breath

“Yeah everything is fine. You were saying?”

I ask returning all my attention to her, I’m in my office

“I emailed you the sales report you asked for yesterday. Mr Connor called about a meeting later. Also your mother told you to get back to her ASAP and Miss Kholwa gave me this file to give to you. She said you should go through it, she needs it before the end of the day”

She says the last bit handing me a file. I take it and thank her while going through the file but my mind is not at work one single bit. Ever since the say I saw Mihlali at the hotel with her friends I haven’t been able to stop thinking about her and having her in my bed last night and this morning doesn’t help

the situation. I know I should stay away from her seeing that she's only 17.

"Focus"

I scold myself returning my attention to the file before me. It's a business proposal for a new venture. I dial my mother's number

"Hello MamTshawe"

I greet as soon as she answer

"Bandile kunini ndikufonela!" (Bandile I've been calling you)

She starts off

"Xolo mama, I've been busy. Whats up mama?"

She sighs

"Its your brother. He was arrested last night a..."

I don't even let her finish when I cut her off with a question

"What for now?"

"I don't know, they wont tell me nor will they let me see him. Bandile I'm scared"

She says with visible sadness and terror in her voice

"Fine, I'm on my way with a lawyer"

I say and end the call without waiting for her. I grab my things and make my way out telling Lona to cancel everything I'll be back tomorrow. I text mom asking her the station she's in and she responds, I call my lawyer asking him to meet me there. I park my car and get out meeting my lawyer Troy on the way in.

"Troy"

I greet

"What are we dealing with?"

he asks and I shrug

"With him you never know"

I say as we make our way in. Mom runs to me and throws her arms around my neck sobbing.

"Mama you remember Troy right?"

I say that as we break the hug, she nods shaking his hand

"Where is he?"

He asks and mom shrugs. We walk to the front desk and ask that we see Bayanda and she calls the detective to talk to us

"I understand that you have my brother"

I say

"I am detective Luthando Phawu, how may I help you?"

He asks annoying the daylight out of me

“Sir you arrested my client and we would like to see him”

He chuckles

“Follow me. Only his lawyer please”

He says

“You mad. I am coming to see my brother. You already denied him seeing his mother already”

He doesn't respond and leads the way. We walk in the room and he's in cuffs, its not a new sight from my side and mom's. This is his third arrest. The first two times it was DUI and this time around I don't know what it is. This person is doing his 2nd year in varsity and is only 19.

“What is it this time?”

I ask settling on the sit opposite him, he shrugs

“Someone framed me Bardz”

I look at him expecting him to continue

“I don't do drugs and if I did why would I have them in my car boot? A whole bag of cocaine even?”

Well this is wasn't expecting

“You dealing coke?”

I ask

“Fuck NO! I don’t even deal, someone set me up ok and I need you to get me out of here! I have a test in less than 2 hours”

He pleads, I get up and walk out because this I really cannot deal with. This person is in university and is still messing up his life. Mom walks up to me

“Bandile what was he arrested for?”

She asks

“He was found with Cocaine. He claims he was framed”

She carries her hands over her head in frustration

“What is this child doing to me? Is he trying to kill me Lord? Did I not mother him enough?”

She asks all these questions breathing heavily. Ever since our father died she started having these heart problems every now and then so I had her moved to Cape Town so that she would be closer but I don’t live with her in the house.

“Mom breathe. Slow deep breaths in”

I plead while taking out my phone calling her doctor

“He’s trying to kill me Bandile. What did I not do for him to do this to me?”

Mom asks as I lead her out to my car

“Mom please just calm down, you know you have a heart problem”

I remind her opening the door for her. She gets in and I get in on my side and drive us to the hospital. She’s already heating up and barely breathing right. We get a doctor to attend to her, they wheel her away from me leaving me in the waiting area. I call our older brother Bakholise.

“Bardz”

He answers

“Bakho its mom”

I say

“Is she ok?”

He asks with concern

“She’s in hospital, I think its her heart again. Baya was arrested last night

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he was caught in possession of cocaine”

He curses under his breath. Bakho lives in the Eastern Cape but because of his job he’s always travelling hence I couldn’t leave mom in the Eastern Cape

“I am going to kill that boy Bandile I swear”

He grits angrily

“Not if I beat you to it”

I say just as annoyed

“Ok thanks for informing me, keep me posted ok”

He says

“Will do. Bye bro”

I say and we end the call.

Hi. I am Bandile Tshawe, the middle child out of 3 sons. I'm 24, my little brother is 19 and my older brother is 30. I own a string of hotels and restaurants around the Western Cape and a couple around Pretoria, Joburg and Durban and a marketing company here in Cape Town. Bakho wanted nothing to do with dad's marketing company and so I took over. My father groomed me from a young age to take over when he died so when he died 4 years ago I had to step up with the help of mom and his best friend. 2 years ago I got into the hotel business and the restaurant thing I wont lie its been going good. When God blesses you he shows off and I have seen that with me. My Mother is 50, we all close to her but amongst my brother I am the one that takes care of her financially and our little brother

lives with her in the house with a live-in helper and things are going good. This is my not so pretty life.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“Mihlalikazi Siphiwokuhle Langa”

Someone calls out my id name startling me

“Yes?”

I respond

“I have been talking to you for the past 5 minutes and you haven’t been listening”

Bontle says annoyed

I sigh

“I cant stop thinking about Bandile and I keep hoping he’ll call me but nothing. He hasn’t said anything all day”

I say sadly

“He will call you honey, stop worrying”

She says brushing my knee

“You were saying”

I say trying to focus on her instead

“I was saying he’s not answering my calls after last night”

I frown

“Why?”

She shrugs

“I don’t know, I called him when we got to Bandile’s place but he didn’t answer my calls and I tried again this morning but still nothing”

She says seemingly frustrated

“Then go to his office and talk to him. I mean he has no reason to ignore you”

I say that getting up, we sitting in the cafeteria waiting for Lara and the rest of our friends

“Hlali, Bontle”

Phiwo says settling beside B

“Hey baby”

“Hey Phiwo”

We greet in unison and she smiles

“How are you ladies, you guys look amazing”

She compliments and we look at each other and chuckle

“We definitely feel like shiit thou. How are you babies?”

Bontle responds for us both

“I am great. Biko took us out for lunch yesterday”

She says and I cant even hide my annoyance

“Hlali please”

She adds after seeing my reaction

“fine. Just be careful with him”

I say. Last night he posted a picture of him and Kim’s feet on his whatsapp status and maybe I should tell Phiwo but then I love and care about her and don’t want to hurt her plus Aka said to drink water and mind my own business

“he loves me and I love him too. He’s so sweet Hlali and he’s so perfect”

I chuckle at the “perfect” part. Biko is nowhere near perfect

“As long as you are sure then we good”

I say that and take out my phone letting them discuss their relationships. Just as I’m scrolling on my Instagram theres a post with my picture on it and the post is from Daniel with the caption “I done messed up the best thing going on in my life and saying Sorry wont fix things but I cant give up on you babe.

I lied about stuff I shouldn't have and I did shiit I shouldn't have done and for that I will live to earn your forgiveness no matter what it takes. I'm sorry babe"

By the time I'm done reading I'm chuckling bitterly at what I just read

"Everything ok?"

Bontle asks

"Nice picture"

Sean says that startling me, I turn and he walks around to sit next to me

"Daniel posted this on Instagram"

I say that handing my phone over to Bontle, they all scoot in and read whats on the post out loudly

"I don't understand why he would do this. Its low and will bring unnecessary publicity my way"

I say

"Its sweet if you ask me. He's trying Hlali and he feels bad"

Bontle says

"No, he's doing this to get a reaction and your attention. He did this knowing that it would get to you and you would probably retaliate"

Phiwo says. My phone rings in her hands

“Its your mother”

She says handing the phone over to me, I lock my phone because I know she probably saw the post or heard about it. It finally stops ringing, I text her that I’m in class and will call her later. I then log on my insta and deactivate my account, my facebook and twitter accounts too while at it. It rings again and this time its Vuyo

“What?”

I ask

“Where are you? I’m coming to you”

“I’m at the Cafet”

I say and cut the call. My God here comes drama. I send Daniel an Email asking that he take down the picture or else I will sue him for it and then wait for his response. My phone rings and its an office number, I don’t know if its Daniel or Bandile so I take a chance and answer it

“Hello”

I say

“Siphiwokuhle”

That voice that used to bring butterflies in my stomach a few months back makes me want to hurl right now.

“What do you want?”

I ask annoyed

“Can we meet for lunch or dinner and talk please Hlali?”

He says in a pleading tone

“So threatening me to post the sextape wasn’t enough for you?
Daniel please just leave me alone”

I plead myself

“I know you want nothing to do with me but please can we meet up so I can explain and then after that you can cut me off completely. I promise after this I wont ever bother you again”

CHAPTER 13

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I don't know how to feel about the call I just received from Daniel. I didn't give him a response though and I won't lie I am considering this meeting with him just to hear him out and hopefully never deal with him again after meeting up. I'm startled by Vuyo hugging me from behind. I won't lie I'm shook by this gesture from her

"I saw the post from Daniel. How are you? Are you ok?"

She asks settling where Sean was before, with concern in her voice. Did she bump her head when she woke up this morning? I look at her

"Friend are you ok?"

I ask feeling her forehead and she smacks my hand away from her face

"Why would you ask me that? I'm asking you that Mihlali"

She defends

"Well to be fair, you are not one to be this concerned where Mihlali and Daniel are concerned. The normal you would be all up in Mihlali's ass for the post Daniel posted and making it seem as if Mihlali made him post her"

Phiwo says coming to my rescue and the rest nod in agreement with Phiwo including I

“Ouch guys! Is that really how you feel about me Hlali?”

I just nod shyly

“You are judgey Vuyo and I haven’t even known you as long as they have”

Bontle says with a shoulder shrug and Vuyo just nods sadly. I pull her in for a side hug

“But I love you anyway my friend and I appreciate your friendship and the judgement that comes with it. You my best friend either way”

I say and she smiles faintly

“I will try and be better. How are you though?”

I shrug

“I don’t know. He called me and asked to meet me”

I say and her face tells me her response before she even says anything

“NO! Hell no Mihlali”

She says

“I think you should hear him out”

Phiwo says the same time Vuyo speaks

“No Phiwo it’s a terrible idea”

Vuyo defends

“I think you should meet him and hear the truth from him. It will give you closure”

Bontle says

“Am I the only one here who thinks you should block this person everywhere for your own good. He took a video of you guys having sex and blackmailed you with it just this past weekend Mihalikazi”

Vuyo reminds me so bitterly

“Be as it may. The decision lies solely on Mihalali and if where or not she wants to meet him and if she wants to see him theres nothing you can do about it Vuyo but to let her make her own decisions. Mihalali is a big girl and she doesn’t need you telling her who she can and cannot be with. My friend I think you should meet with him for your own heart’s peace! If that makes any sense”

Phiwo says and judging by her action of taking her phone and paying attention to it, she’s not open for any discussion

“Guys I appreciate all that you are trying to do but this is all up to me”

I say and get up leaving them sitting there. My friends can be too invested in my life and that's the last thing I need right now and maybe I involved them too much but sometimes they can be too damn much. I get to an empty lecture hall and videocall my brother

"Hlal'Okuhle"

He says, he's the only one that calls me that. A mixture of both my names

"How are you?"

I ask

"Better than you I'm assuming. You ok? You never call me at this time"

He says, I look at my watch and its just after 10, our next class starts at 11

"My friends are being too much. Daniel called me, he wants to meet up"

I say, Biko can be a great listener and big brother when it suits him

"And what do you want to do? You were pretty upset over the tape"

He says and I nod

“I don’t know what I want. The fact that he video taped us and used it to blackmail me pisses me off but for some reason I think I want to meet up with him and understand why he lied and then blackmailed me you know?”

he nods

“I get it, but Hlali nothing I say will convince you otherwise. He really hurt you but we cant deny the fact that you still love him. Hear him out and then decide ok? Whatever decision you make I will support”

He says sounding ever so genuine

“Thanks BK. I really needed this”

I say and it’s the truth

“Just be careful ok baby sis”

I nod

“So you and Kim...”

I start off and he smiles that naughty annoying charming smile of his

“You gotta stop stringing Phiwo along bro, I mean its pretty clear you love Kim”

I say

“And I love Phiwo too. It may not look like it but I love her baby sis and I enjoy the amount of time she and I spend together”

“Bk you my brother and Phiwo is my bestfriend. Its painful watching you play her and Kim is a great girl and none of them deserve this kind of treatment”

He sighs

“Sis please just let me be”

“Fine! Its your life and Karma will deal with you shame”

He chuckles

“Sis I have to go. As you can see I am on my way to school now”

He says dismissively

“Bye Bhuti, thank you again”

I say and he flashes me his charming smile.

“I love you baby sis and enjoy your day”

He says and blows me a kiss making me giggle. I wave and cut the call feeling much better than before. My brother is quite the looker shame and his good looks are so annoying because we'll be walking in the mall together and girls will be making eyes at him and he doesn't help but respond but I must say I never thought he and Kim would last this long. I mean he's flirted here and there but he's stayed loyal to her for 2 years

going to 3 this year except this year ofcause when he started seeing Phiwo. There must be something my friend has that other girls don't otherwise that guy really loves his white girl

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

"Mr Tshawe theres an emergency at the club"

My P.A says as soon as I answer her call not giving me a chance to tell her I asked not to be disturbed

"Lona I thought I told you that I had to attend something today"

I say annoyed walking to a more quiet place

"I understand that sir bu..."

I cut her off before she can finish her sentence

"Sort it out Lona!"

I say and cut the call. I walk back switching my phone off

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the wait is stressful. I take out my personal phone and call Troy

“Troy tell me you managed to get him out”

I say in a pleading tone

“He’s out on bail, he’ll have to appear in court though”

He says making me lose all hope

“What do you mean Troy? Does this mean he could have a record for this?”

He sighs

“Troy hit me with how bad the situation is”

I say intently

“Its bad B but I can try get him scot free”

He says

“Nothing out of the books T, get him out by the books and without anything that could jeopardize his future”

I plead, the last thing we need is this

“I will do my best. Maybe he needs a record to teach him a lesson”

He suggests and I wont lie he has a point but I cant watch my little brother suffer for making stupid mistakes.

“Let me talk to him”

I say and I hear him call him

“Bardz”

He says

“Next time you are on your own Bayanda. I cant keep bailing you out of such situations. Mom’s heart started acting up again because of you!”

I yell

“Mom is in hospital? How is she?”

He asks concerned

“I haven’t heard anything yet but Baya you need to get your act together before you kill our mother! These childish acts need to stop”

I reprimand hoping he listens this time around. He sighs

“I didn’t mean for this to happen but Bardz you have to believe me, I didn’t do anything this time around”

He says

“If you being here is going to continue risking mom’s health then maybe you should move back to the Eastern Cape!”

I cant even hide my anger and disappointment. I love our mother and would hate to lose her

“Bardz please. I promise to change my ways”

He says in a pleading tone

“I need actions more than words Bayanda. Another arrest and we are letting you rot in prison. Do you not want a future? Why the hell do you continue to destroy your life like this? None of us have ever spent a night in prison but you on the other hand you just have to. Whats next huh? Murder? Rape? What huh?”

“Bardz I promise you this was the last time”

He says

“Just give Troy the phone”

I yell and within seconds I hear Troy’s voice

“thanks again for this”

I say

“Well you paying me buddy so its nothing”

He says jokingly even though he is right

“Talk some other time ok”

I say and cut the call. I walk back in the reception and ask about my mother and they tell me she’s been admitted. Her pressure went up and she had a panic attack. I ask that they let me see her and they walk me to her room. I walk in and she’s facing up, I knock and she turns to look at me

“Bandile is my baby out of that place?”

I settle on the chair beside her bed

“How are you Mam’Tshawe?”

I ask and she rolls her eyes

“Bandile my baby, how is he? Is he out?”

I nod

“Yes mom he’s out and probably on his way to school. How are you?”

I ask

“I am fine now”

I sigh heavily

“You need to stop spoiling Bayanda. I’ll be taking his car keys for a month or so until I see change in him”

I say

“You cant do that, how is he going to get around?”

I shoot her a look

“You cant possibly be serious Ma. Yazin I’m not asking for permission on this one its already been decided. I am taking his car maybe he’ll eventually learn a lesson” She sulks

“Sulk all you want but this is the decision and I am sure Bakho will agree with me on this. When are you getting out of here?”

She shrugs still pouting

“You need a wife so you can stop focusing on your brother and me” She spits out making me laugh

“you my mother and I will always take care of you, as for Bayanda he needs to grow up and learn to be responsible. That boy is too spoilt, I might just get him a job at one of the hotels or restaurants, he needs something to keep him busy on weekends”

I suggest and she shakes her head no, my eyes shoot open in shock

“You cant do that Bandile. He has school to focus on”

I chuckle

“if he focused on school then he wouldn’t be getting arrested as often as he does. Doesn’t it bother you that none of us have ever seen what a prison cell looks like but your last born practically lives there. Its like his second home”

She turns around and looks the other way

“We both know that he wouldn’t have behaved like this if dad was still alive. You spoil him too damn much”

CHAPTER 14

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I am happy to say that he removed my picture on his Instagram so that's great. My classes go by swiftly, I get home and start preparing something to eat for supper. Its been a long day and Bandile hasn't called me, it's either he didn't like me, or he has a wife or girlfriend, or he was just being nice to a stranger. I wont lie I'm bummed out that I haven't heard from him. I decide to call mom while waiting for the water to boil. I walk to my room and strip out of the dress and jacket he bought for me and wear sweatpants and a t-shirt. I redial mom's number and it goes to voicemail again which is strange, so I call the house phone.

"Mtwa residence may I ask who I am speaking to?"

Its one of the twins answering making me chuckle at the formality

"Hlali?"

She says

"Hey baby sis"

I say eventually

"Hi Hlali, how are you?"

“I’m good nana and, how are you?”

I respond

“good thanks. Why you calling the house phone?”

She asks

“I wanted to speak to mom actually. Where is she?”

I ask

“She’s still at the office I think. Call her phone”

She says

“I wouldn’t call if I didn’t try her cell first. And where’s dad?”

“He only fetched us from school and then left. He didn’t tell us where he was going”

She says, I look at my watch and its past 6. Its either he and mom went out for supper or they had late meetings

“Ok nana, say hi to Isipho”

I say

“How do you this is not her?”

I chuckle

“I’m your sister, I know who is who! Bye nana”

I say

“Bye Hlali”

I drop the call and call mom’s office but nobody answers the calls until I finally give up. I return to the kitchen and chop potatoes and place them in the boiling water. I know I’m weird but I find the method to be quick. I return to the room and take out my things from the paper bag and they smell fresh, I place them in the wardrobe. As I’m about to walk out I notice a paper on the floor, I pick it up and it’s a card written Bandile Tshawe with 2 numbers, an office number and cell phone number. I contemplate calling him but end up dialling it anyway and settling on the couch waiting for him to answer

“Hello”

A woman’s voice answers, ok so he has a girlfriend

“Hello?”

She says again and I’m tongue tied

“Hi, this is uhm Mihlalikazi”

I say. I don’t know what I’m hoping to achieve because I called his cell phone number

“And I am Lona, may I help you?”

She says

“I think I dialled a wrong number, I was looking for Bandile Tshawe”

she chuckles

“When his phone is off his calls are diverted to me. May I assist you with something miss?”

“Langa. Please just tell him Siphivokuhle called him”

I say and quickly cut the call feeling like the idiot that I currently am right now. I walk to the kitchen opening the fridge and I don't seem to have any kind of alcohol in my fridge, so I switch off the stove and remove the pot then take my car keys and leave to go get wine and something to eat while at it. I get to the complex that has Pick n Pay liquor. I walk inside and head straight to the wine section with a trolley. I take 5 bottles, 3 dry red and 2 semi sweet white wine and then head to the champagne section, I'm about to take Krone when I land on a hand instead of a bottle.

“I'm sorry”

I say looking up from my phone, I've been trying to place an order on the McD app, but I can't seem to place the order or maybe I'm the dumb one and can't use the app. I'm already frustrated as it is

“Mihlali”

The person says and its Daniel. I try to walk away but he grabs my arm before I can fully turn away

“What do you want?”

I ask annoyed

“Can we talk please Hlali”

He pleads. I’m already annoyed as it is

“Please Mihlali”

He pleads. I sigh

“Fine”

“Thank you”

He says unable to hide his excitement. I take the champagne I was here for, I take 2 Kronas and 3 Bon Courage blush

“That’s a lot of alcohol for a Monday. Are you hosting?”

He asks

“Not that its any of your business but no I’m not. I’m out of alcohol”

I say

“You have 10 bottles already”

He says, I shoot him a look

“you right, it’s not my business”

He says that driving the trolley for me. I take 2 carry packs of Brutal fruit spritzer

“All this for one person?”

He asks

I shoot him another look. I probably look like an alcoholic but I’m not, but I rather have it for when I need it. I always buy my alcohol on a Monday because its always empty in bottle stores and I have friends that like to come over at my place and finish all my alcohol, so I always buy enough to accommodate everyone. I take 2 Corona 6 packs and then head to take 2 Tanqueray bottles and 2 Belgravia bottles

“If I didn’t know better, I would swear you having a party with this much alcohol, I shake my head no

“I have friends”

I say and then head to the till to pay, he offers to pay for everything, and I let him. If he wants to be a gentleman about this then who am I to stop him?

“Paying for my alcohol changes nothing”

I mention and he chuckles

“Of cause it doesn’t”

He says swiping everything including his Krone and St Raphael bottles. We drive the trolley to my car and place everything in the boot

“Will we use your car or mine?”

He asks

“Mine”

He chuckles and holds his hand out, I give him the key

“Where do you want to eat?”

Under normal circumstances I wouldn’t know where to eat because as a girl you don’t know the thickness of a man’s wallet but I want to leave a dent on his card so I pick the most expensive place I know and its this other hotel that serves amazing food!!!

“You really want to leave a dent on my card huh?”

I roll my eyes without giving him the response he’s looking for. He parks and hands the key to the guy at the door who goes and parks the car for us. We walk in and are escorted to a table for 2. He opens the chair for me, but I sit on the other one

“You really going to make things difficult for me huh?”

I don't respond. The waitress places menus in front of us both and asks us what we'll be drinking, I ask for a berry cocktail and he settles for gin and tonic. I browse through

"So how have you been?"

He asks

"My father really did a number on you"

I say and really, he's pink and blue on his face

"yeah he had no mercy on me"

He says

"I thought he told you to stay away from me"

I say

"I couldn't do that without talking to you and explaining what happened"

He says, I roll my eyes

"Fine. Talk"

I say

"My parents and Lethu's parents are friends and business partners who are very stingy with their wealth. Lethu and I were raised together, and we've always known since we were kids that she and I would get married for wealth purposes."

He starts off

“When she turned 21 and I 23 we got married, she was still finishing off her medicine degree. She graduated and we lived together for a year or two and realised that we couldn’t keep doing this. She went to the doctors without borders program and was accepted leaving me with everything, but we never ended the marriage because of both our parents and how they wouldn’t understand. She only visits every now and then like when our parents plan to visit us.”

The waitress places our drinks in front of us and we place our food orders then she leaves

“It wasn’t even 6 months with her gone when she called me telling me that she had met someone and she thinks she’s in love, it was then that we decided that this be an open marriage and be with the people we want to be while maintaining this façade of a marriage to our parents and so far its been working. She fell pregnant for him and things between them were good and are still good because they have 2 kids together.”

“Why should I believe you?”

He shrugs

“I can’t force you to believe anything I tell you, its all up to you whether or not you want to believe me, but I am being open

and being honest with you. I have everything to lose by being honest with you right now Hlali.”

I nod

“So far she and I have managed to keep the charade up until last year when she got into an accident. Our parents came and so did her boyfriend, we told them what was going on and they didn’t make it any easy on us, but they had no choice but to deal because I had fallen in love with you and she had 2 children by the guy she was seeing. She and I are currently in the process of a divorce so that she can be with the guy she’s been with. Hlali I’m sorry I lied to you, I realise now that I shouldn’t have lied to you and should have been honest from the get-go cause then we could have avoided all this mess”

He says. I have no response for him especially now. I don’t know what to believe but he seems sincere

“Daniel”

A woman says standing beside our table

“Lethu what are you doing here?”

He asks surprised to see her I’m guessing. She looks really beautiful and it makes no sense why he wouldn’t want to be with such a beautiful woman

“She is really beautiful. I’m Lelethu and your pictures don’t do you any justice”

She says with her hand stretched out to me, I place my hand in hers

“Thank you I guess”

I say

“I will see you around. Enjoy the rest of your evening”

She says and walks away from us, he watches her until she disappears

“That was my soon to be ex-wife”

I just nod

“I see that”

Our food is placed in front of us and I am barely hungry now that the food is here. I ask that they make it a take away and ask for a refill instead

“Aren’t you eating?”

I shake my head no

“I just want to drink and then go home and do my school work”

I say

“So, you have nothing to say to what I just told you?”

He asks and I shake my head no.

“Maybe tomorrow when I’ve processed everything”

I say. My drink is placed in front of me with my take away

“How’s university treating you?”

He asks

“Can we not do this? Acting like we friends when we not”

I say

“I see you still mad at me”

He points out

“Do you blame me? You blackmailed me Daniel. How do you expect me to just get over that? That was low of you”

“I know and I regret it deeply. I know I shouldn’t have done that, but I was really desperate and was hoping I could get your attention” He says

“And how did that work out for you huh? After the stunt you pulled, I don’t know how I could ever trust you again”

I say .“I understand and I don’t expect you to forgive me now, but we can work on it and build our way to how we were before” He pleads

CHAPTER 15

-BANDILE TSHAWWE

Its after visiting hours. I'm sleeping at the hotel tonight since its closer to the hospital and meeting a potential client at the hotel. Its after 7. I get to the hotel and the hostess greets me and I respond. I make my way through the restaurant calling someone to bring me something to wear from home and Lona to bring me my work files I spot someone who looks like Mihlali but she's far and all I can see is her from the side so chances are its not her. I must be going crazy to see her here when she lives on the other side of town anyway. I bump into one of the waiters

"Mr Tshawe"

He says

"Listen, I need you to have the kitchen prepare Lasagne and veggies and have them delivered at the hospital to room 3B"

He nods and I thank him walking to the till to pay for it and then go to the hotel receptionist

"Hi sir, your usual room?"

She asks and I nod

"Yes please. A driver will come with my things please send him up ok"

she nods and hands me the key card. I make my way to the elevator then click the top floor while calling Lona

"Any messages?"

I ask

“Theres a person named Mihlalikazi or something who called. Your older brother also called and asked you get back to him. I checked out the club and there was an accounting error wh...”

I cut her off

“How big of an error?”

I ask

“We almost lost millions but its been fixed. The money’s been reversed”

She says like its nothing

“What do you mean? Lona we cannot have such mistakes! Who handles the club’s accounting? Have them meet me in my office tomorrow at 8am sharp”

I yell

“Yes sir I will make sure of that. As I was saying, Don’t forget your meeting with Mr Khozi tonight at 8pm sharp at the hotel and I’ve sent someone to bring your things to the hotel and they should be there shortly. The file is on the pedestal with everything you’ll need for your meeting with Mr Khozi.”

She says

“Thank you Lona, will that be all?”

“Yes sir. Have a good night”

She says so kindly. I think she has a crush on me at times

“Thank you Lona, you too”

I say and cut the call dialling my brother’s number

“Bardz hey”

He answers

“Hey, whatsup?”

I ask

“Your little brother called me whining that you took the car”

He says that laughing

“He needs to learn a lesson. That one will be the death of our mother”

“I was calling to say good job that all. He needs to learn. I cant imagine mom was for the idea?”

He says chuckling

“No, she pouted and sulked looking the other side. You know how much she smothers him”

I say placing him on speaker so that I can take off my clothes and shower

“How is she doing anyway?”

“She was better than when she went it. The doctor said he’ll keep her for the week to monitor her progress. This one hit harder than the ones she’s had in the past”

I say, he lets out a loud sigh

“I don’t understand why she stresses so much about him”

he says

“He’s the last born and he’s an attention seeker. I told him the next time he winds up in prison he’ll stay there. He’ll never grow up as long as we keep bailing him out of these situations”

“Yah you right but mom will always bail him out doesn’t matter what we do or say about it. How’s work?”

I breathe out heavily thinking about the fact that we almost lost a lot of money

“The accountant at the club almost cost us millions”

I say

“What? You kidding. I hope you fired him”

He says. He and I own half-half of the club. He was the one who even suggested we get a club and that I manage it, said he wanted extra income for when he’s ready to retire

“I’m meeting him tomorrow. How’s work your side?”

“Work is work mahn. Listen I’m sending you a picture on whatsapp, tell me what you think”

He says, I check my other phone’s whatsapp and it’s a hand with a ring followed by another with a selfie of him and a beautiful girl

“Her name is Lukhona. We’ve been together for a year now”

He says as if its no big deal

“How do you hide a woman for a whole year Bakholise?”

He chuckles

“I’ll tell you all about it when I come that side this weekend, I’m coming to introduce her to the whole family”

He says

“You so sneaky! She’s beautiful bro, you’ve done well. Now I can marry”

He laughs

“So you were waiting for me? Does this mean that you met a girl?”

I laugh

“not yet but theres a girl I met last night at the club. Lwando Mbana’s granddaughter”

He laughs

“Isn’t that the same guy who refused to do business with you because you young?”

I laugh

“Bro I have to prepare for a meeting. Call you tomorrow”

I say dismissively

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he laughs at me saying his very own goodbye. We end the call and I go and shower. When I wear my clothes, I guess someone brought them while I was in the shower. I wear chinos and a golf t-shirt. I head downstairs and sit by the bar ordering something to eat, its only now that I remember I haven’t eaten since breakfast. I wait with a glass of wine. I get a text from Mr Khozi saying he just got to the restaurant. I ask that they bring the food to the table I will be sitting in.

“Daniel Khozi”

I get up stretching my hand towards him

“Bandile Tshawe. I must say you look younger than your

reputation proceeds you”

He says as we break the hand shake, I chuckle

“I’ve been told”

I respond as we both take our seats.

“Can I get you anything to eat or drink?”

I ask calling up a waiter

“just a drink, I was actually here a few minutes ago to grab dinner”

He says and places his drink order. Our waiter leaves and we discuss Business. He’s here representing the company he works for since he’s the CFO and all.

“My P.A will email you the contract tomorrow”

I say as we shake hands after both signing the contract. We both happy with the deal we just made

“I look forward to working with you”

He says getting up from his sit, I get up with him and walk him out. We say our goodbyes and then I had back inside. I call my mother checking up on her and then head to bed. Tomorrow will be a long day.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I drive Daniel to the complex we met in, he takes his bottle of wine and champagne and then heads to his car. Its safe to say that I heard him and I understand but I cannot put myself in a

situation like that. I am too young to even be dealing with such a relationship. At the restaurant I thought I saw someone like Bandile walk in but he was far so I didn't see him well and I believe that my eyes were deceiving me anyway. I'm a little tipsy but I still pour myself a glass of wine and then take a nice long bubble bath while sipping on my wine. My phone rings and its mom

"Mama"

I answer

"Hey baby, sorry I missed your calls. I was in a meeting and I only just got out now"

She explains

"Its ok Mah, how are you?"

I ask

"I'm good baby, just tired thank you. How are you my angel?"

"I'm also good. I was getting back to you since you called earlier?"

I say

"There was a post on Instagram that someone sent to me"

She says, I let out a distressed sigh

"I saw it. I deactivated my account straight after seeing it"

"Oh"

She says

"Yes, I went out to dinner with him and we spoke and no we are never getting back together. He is a closed chapter in my

life and also he removed the picture and I met his wife”

I say quickly

“I don’t know what to say baby”

She says

“How are you holding up with the news about your father?”

she asks

“I don’t know. Tomorrow I’m going to see my therapist”

“That’s good I guess”

She says probably not knowing what to say, the conversation is already awkward enough

“mom I should go and study”

I say

“I understand baby. Goodnight”

She says and I say my own goodbye and end the call. I soak myself until the water is cold, I get out drying myself and wear a gown then take my laptop and get busy with my school work.

CHAPTER 16

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I wake up and drag myself to shower. I prepare for school and then head to campus driving with Bontle

“So, did you guys talk?”

She nods

“I went to his office. He’s mad at me for not sleeping at his place and sleeping at some guys place”

She says

“Oh, and how can I forget. He’s not comfortable with me being friends with Sean and the guys. Says he got a call saying I was dancing with some guys. Imagine”

She annoyed

“He’s mad. Those are our friends and you guys went to high school together. Bontle this guy can’t dictate who your friends can be”

I say and she shrugs as if she’s considering this

“Don’t tell me you actually considering this Bontle”

She sighs

“Hlali he does everything and anything for me, the least I could do is stop hanging out with the people he doesn’t want me to”

She says

“And if he says stop hanging out with Lara and I?”

“I would never. You guys are my only friends here”

She says defensively, I breathe out

“Hlali if you can unfriend people you come from high school with, who’s to say we are not as disposable?”

I ask

“You guys are not disposable”

She says and I don’t respond. I never did understand girls that allowed their boyfriends to choose friends for them. All I’m seeing is dictatorship and not a relationship. This guy is doing all these things so that Bontle will feel compelled to do the “small things” he asks her to do for the sake of their relationship. Most rich men do that to control you and have some hold over you. I increase the volume on the news, I know its weird that someone my age listens to news, but I like to stay informed on the world’s issues, at some point my parents thought I’d be a journalist, but I ended in writing instead because I enjoy literature.

After class I drive to my therapist, I've been seeing one since I was 10, I think. I don't know why my mom thought it would be good to see one but hey its been good since I guess. I walk in and throw myself on the couch after greeting her

"So, what brings you here today?"

She asks

"Well there's been new developments in my life. I found out that the man I thought was my father was actually not who I was led to believe he was"

I say with my face buried in my hands, I'm laying back on the couch like I'm home on my bed

"What do you mean?"

She asks

"You remember I told you about Lunga right?"

"oh, first name basis"

She says, considering I normally call the man father or dad

"he doesn't deserve me calling him dad. He raped my mother and led her to a miscarriage"

She writes down something, well she usually records me and writes a few things down

"Mihlali, let's start from scratch. What happened?"

I sigh

“What did not happen? Daniel recorded us having sex and used the tape to blackmail me. I tried emailing it to me but accidentally emailed it to mom”

She chuckles

“You did what?”

I end up laughing myself at how stupid the mistake I made was

“I know, it was stupid of me. Our email addresses are similar”

I explain and she chuckles

“why would your email addresses be similar? You are Mihlali Langa and she is Sinokuhle Mtwá”

I shrug sitting up to look at her

“I realize how that can be weird but I have 2 names and my email address comprises of my initials, sm”

I say

“and our grandparents surname”

I explain and she nods

“Makes sense I guess. But Mihlali I am assuming you came here to talk about your father and how its affected you”

She says, I look at the time on the wall and she laughs

“I have all the time in the world for you Miss Langa.”

I lay back on the couch annoyed, I like to stall at times just so the time can fly by quick when theres things I am not ready to discuss with her

“This weekend I learnt the real truth about Lunga. He was a pedophile. The things written online about him are not true, he wasn’t a loving husband to his faithful wife. Mom allowed the media to write trashing articles about her marrying dad or dating him a while after Lunga’s passing just to protect his reputation and me finding out about the man he was”

I say annoyed

“What do you mean?”

She asks

“When you go online and search for Lunga you will find articles praising him and a few articles where my grandmother commented on about mom making her out to be this evil person who was never good for her son. It doesn’t help that Lunga’s father is the chief so obviously there are more articles that tarnish mom’s name than there are those that tarnish Lunga’s image. Mom and dad hacked into google so that those articles about him and the pedophile accusations are in the far pages rather than the first 2 pages for my sake and I don’t like that they went through such lengths to protect me from the

truth. To make me live a lie all these years believing that he was arrested for petty things or that he was set up and he died shortly before justice was served”

I vent with her writing a few things, I breathe out and wipe the tears that managed to escape

“I was lied to. How do I recover from that? My father was not the man I thought he was

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he was the complete opposite”

I say sobbing, I didn’t realise how much this affected me until now that I’m speaking about it

“I loved him, I worshiped him in death and now I hear that he raped my mother and killed what could have been my little brother or sister”

She hands me a box of tissues which I gladly accept a few wiping my tears

“I don’t even know why I’m crying. Its in the past”

“Its not in the past for you. You only recently learnt of the truth now and its ok for you to cry and vent and be angry, it wouldn’t make sense if you didn’t”

she says

“Hlali you need to open up to your mother about how you feeling”

“Mh”

I snort

“You angry at her?”

I shrug

“She lied to me. She kept the truth from me. How do I move past that huh? Had she been honest from the get go we wouldn’t be here right now”

After therapy I drive myself home and just take a nap. I need sleep after that session, when I wake up I drive to the complex to get something to eat, normally I’d use the drive through but I feel like having a solo date. I place my order and then go take a seat

“Is this seat taken?”

A voice asks, I look up. He’s cute and very much looks like a fuckboy... He has a this charming smile, something about him looks familiar.

“no”

He sits down not waiting for me to finish

“but I would like to be alone please”

I add

“nobody wants to be alone. I’m Bayanda”

He says with his hand held out to me, I look at it

“Mihlalikazi”

I say

“germophobe?”

I shake my hand

“you’re a guy and I don’t know where those hands have been”

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-BANDILE TSHAWE

“I want to talk to him”

Someone yells angrily barging into my office followed by Lona

“Sir I tried to stop him”

She says

“Listen sir there is an emergency I have to attend to. I will call you before lunch”

I say to the person I was talking to on the phone before I was rudely interrupted by my spoilt brat of a little brother.

“I look forward to it Mr Tshawe. Bye”

He says and I cut the call

“Thank you, Lona.”

I say dismissively and gesture to the chair opposite me for him to sit

“Hello Bayanda. How can I help you today?”

I greet

“You had my car taken and cut the contract on my phone. How am I supposed to pay for it?”

He asks angrily

“Get a job like any normal person”

I suggest

“Bandile I have school! How can I get a job when I have to juggle school?”

I chuckle

“You think this is funny?”

He asks

“And you think the money we always bailing you out of prison with grows on a tree? You are 19, its about time you learn to be responsible! Also, you moving to res and I’m moving in with mom”

I say returning my attention to my computer screen

“You cannot do that! I have a life! I cannot afford to live in a res Bandile. You are being unfair right now”

He says sulking and folding his arms in front of his chest

“If that will be all, I’d really like to get back to work”

I say

“Bardz come on. You can’t punish me for something I didn’t do”

He says in a pleading tone, I don’t respond to him

“Bandile this is not fair”

He says

“if you are looking for a job you can try Hotel Inn or Southern Ace”

I suggest, he grits his teeth

“I don’t want a f*cking job!”

I shrug

“Fine.”

I say, he stomps his feet and walks out leaving me laughing. Baya is so childish. I get back to work, Lona brings me lunch and sits opposite me with her pen and paper. We planning a launch party for the signed contract with Mr Khozi.

“So sir what exactly are you looking for?”

She asks

“Well I want the launch to be held at the hotel restaurant for starters. Tell them to cater for plus minus 200 guests. Book the place for Friday evening. The colours need to be black and gold...”

She cuts me off

“Sir we’ve already done black and gold before. Why not use his company’s colours? Grey and shades of blue”

She suggests and I nod

“I want a three course meal, we wont be there for long but everyone should atleast get the experience and the feel of the service the hotel has to offer. You deal with the décor and sending out the invitations. You know who I want to be there, call his office and have him send you a list of contacts he would like to invite.”

“Sir what about the sitting arrangements? I mean if we launching and you want them to serve a 3 course then there should be sitting arrangements”

She suggests, I think for a second

“ok lets do this. We don’t want this to last longer than it should. We launching not at some award ceremony. Have them serve starters, a veggie platter that waiters will be walking around with and a meat platter and something sweet for those with a sweet tooth. Have them set up a table with the same things that the waiters will be walking around serving for those shy people. There should be an open bar too. The waiters should all be dressed in black and white. Hire an MCee and a Dj too and the rest we’ll discuss along the way ok”

I say as my office phone rings, she excuses herself. It’s the restaurant “Yes” I respond

“Sir your brother hasn’t showed up” The manager says, I sigh

“just keep the post open for him. He’ll show up eventually and when he does I want him to start from the bottom and work his way up. Don’t make things easy for him Thulani” I warn

“Of cause sir.”

We talk a bit more discussing the restaurant and how he should inform the customers that the place will close early on Friday, we end the call.

CHAPTER 17

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“I see that Mihlalikazi”

He says retracting his hand. He takes out something from his fenny pack and it’s a hand sanitizer, he applies it on his hands

“Now that we are certain my hands are clean, may I have that hand shake?”

He says making me chuckle, he has an amazing smile. I hand him my hand and we shake hands

“happy?”

He smiles like an idiot. His phone rings and he looks at it and locks it. Ok! He has a girlfriend.

“The name is Bayanda”

He says, I nod. They call out my order number and I raise my hand. They place it in front of me and then leave

“You going to finish all of this?”

He asks and I nod stuffing my mouth with fries

“you beautiful”

He says, I chew and swallow

“Thank you”

I say, his order is called and they bring the food to my table

“you not a talker are you?”

He asks and I shrug

“its just one of those days”

He’s about to respond when his phone rings again, judging by his facial expression its not a pleasant call or one he was waiting for

“What do you want?”

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“I’m not getting a job Bakho. You and Bandile can go f*ck yourselves for all I care”

.....

“What? You cant do that! How am I supposed to live? Bakho you not being fair”

.....

“I’m going to tell mom what you guys are doing”

.....

“Fine. I’ll go by later”

....

“I said I’ll go there when I am finished with what I’m doing”

He cuts the call angrily. Well he sounds like a spoilt brat

“do you have older brothers trying to dictate your life?”

I shake my head no

“you lucky. Be grateful you don’t have my siblings”

He says, to not come across as a bad person I decide to ask

“What did you do? From my experience with having a big brother you do something in order for him to be “unfair””

I say the last word with air quotes

“yesterday morning my brother had to go bail me out of prison for cocaine possession and before you judge, no. its wasn’t mine. A friend of mine kept it in my car the previous night. I’m a black guy driving an expensive car in Cape Town, what are the odds of me not being stopped in the middle of the night? I was supposed to meet my friend at this other party so that he could take his stuff but I got arrested instead”

He narrates and all I can assume about him is that he is a rich spoilt brat, so entitled

“Now this was my third arrest following 2 arrests of dui, but that was a few years back. My brothers decided to punish me by getting me a job at the hotel. Imagine me working at a

flipping hotel?! I practically own that place for me to be working in it as a waiter”

He says making me chuckle. He’s bratty attitude is actually entertaining and partially annoying

“Maybe your brothers need you to learn a lesson and be responsible. When my brother or parents give such a punishment its usually for me to learn something from it, something that will help me grow and change my mindset. I don’t know you but it doesn’t take rocket science for me to know that you a rich spoiled brat who is so used to getting everything he wants when he wants it. You feel entitled as if the world or rather your family owes you something when they don’t. You’re a little young to have been arrested 3 times. You supposed to be in Varsity building your life but the fact that you have friends that keep cocaine in your car says a lot about you trying to destroy the life I’m sure your family is trying so very hard to give you. I suggest you take the job and stop being a bitch!”

I say and then sip my drink

“I’m not being a bitch”

He says defensively, I chuckle

“Whatever you say”

I say raising my hands up in surrender. After a few minutes of comfortable silence

“You don’t know me or what I have been through”

He says in a defensive tone

“I don’t need to know you. The little bit you have told me was enough”

I say. He gets up leaving his burger untouched

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all his been doing is venting and drinking his drink. I ask for a doggy bag for his food, theres this boy that lives outside my place who usually asks for food and usually I bring him some or cook for him and at times buy him a few things. He’s a sweet kid, he’s 14. I take the food and head to my car then drive back to my place, I give him the food and he thanks me so much. I get to my apartment and receive a call as I am walking in

“Hi?”

It’s an office number

“Hlali its me please don’t hang up”

Daniel says annoying me

“I thought you said you would never bother me again after yesterday”

I remind him

“I understand I said that. I just wanted to invite you to a business launch this Friday, you can bring a friend if you don’t trust me. I’ll have the invitations sent to your place”

He says

“I go home on Fridays Daniel”

I say

“I understand that but please consider this? I’m just a person you know who’s inviting you to a launch where you might get to meet your favourite authors”

He says, he had me at favourite. I take a deep breath in and let it out

“be as it may. I am going home”

I say and cut the call on him. This guy needs to leave me tf alone! I walk to my room to soak in a bath with a glass of wine.

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

After work I drive to the hospital to visit my mother

“Bandile what are you doing here?”

She asks as I walk in and she’s talking to my little brother. So he didn’t go for real to the hotel

“What am I doing here? I’m here to see you. Hello mother”

I say kissing her cheek and placing the food on the table

“Hi Baya”

I greet and he doesn’t respond

“you boys will be the death of me”

Mom says

“How are you Mam’Tshawe today?”

I ask settling on the other side

“I’m better than yesterday. I got a call from your Bakho saying he’s flying this side and he’s bringing a girl”

She says excitedly at the last part, I chuckle

“Bakho is bringing a girl? Who would want to marry someone that’s always on the road?”

Mom smacks his arm for that remark

“be happy for your big brother. He says he asked her to marry him”

I nod

“yeah he seems to love her. Says they’ve been together for a year”

She doesn’t seem surprised by my statement

“You knew about her and didn’t mention anything?”

I ask and she shrugs

“If Bakholise wanted you to know then he would have told you but he didn’t”

She says so relaxed

“Ouch mom. Did you go to the hotel?”

I ask that directing it to Bayanda and he shakes his head no

“you have until tomorrow to decide whether or not you want the job or Thulani hires someone else”

I say

“Mom talk to your son”

He says to mom who shrugs

“If I had a say my baby then you wouldn’t be in this situation but your brothers are trying to help you here. You need to be able to stand on your own two feet Bayanda”

Mom says and hopefully mom can get through to him. He sulks and takes out his phone

“So you just going to press your phone while mom talks to you?”

I ask and he doesn’t respond, I chuckle sarcastically.

“Honey how is work?”

She asks

“Work is normal, yesterday we bagged a contract with Daniel Khozi”

I say

“That is amazing baby, congratulations. When is the launch?”

She asks

“This Friday actually at the hotel’s restaurant”

She nods happily

“That is great news baby. When is your brother landing again?”

“Friday most probably late. He said he’ll make it in time for the launch. Will you be attending?”

She shrugs

“You want your old woman to cramp your style in front of your business friends?”

She asks making me laugh

“No but, you know I’d love to have you there plus I am pretty sure your friends will be asking about you”

I say hoping to convince. Its no secret that I wouldn’t be where I am without this woman. She nods

“Hows school?”

I ask Baya, he shrugs

“How did you manage to get me a room in res in March?”

He asks. I just look at him and don’t respond. I asked Lona to search for me these ads students put up when they renting their rooms out and looking to make extra money so the student and I made a deal. I take out the key from my pocket and a paper with the address

“Here is the key and the address”

He takes them unwillingly and looks at the paper

“Mom how could you let him do this to me?”

He asks

“Honey my health is deteriorating. My doctor says I might even need a heart transplant if my heart continues like this”

She explains to him and I know she’s lying because I spoke to her doctor and he said her heart is stronger than they thought just as long as she takes her meds and manages it. If she manages to convince her son then I’m all for it

“This kind of stress is not good for her Bayanda”

I say and he looks down embarrassed

“Bayanda whats the real story with the cocaine and don’t tell me shiit about being set up”

I confront him and he looks up at me shocked

“fine. We were at this other party. My friend asked that he put it in my boot because it wasn’t safe in his possession and asked that we meet at the next party we were going to. He asked that I bring it over so that he’ll take it there.”

I heave a heavy sigh, mom listens without responding

“I know I should have been honest but I was scared that you guys would think I’m doing or dealing it”

He says looking sincerely

“I swear mom I’ve never touched coke! I don’t do it or deal it, I was only keeping it for my friend”

He says. I take out a file from my bag

“Here”

I say handing it to him.

“Stay away from such friends Bayanda. You so much better than them. Being caught in possession of coke is a serious crime and I don’t want you to end up in prison for something you’ve never done. He set you up, he knew that there would be cops. He used you as his fall guy. You’ve been cleared of all charges. If I hear that you hanging out with him Bayanda I wont bail you out again. Its about time you fixed your life!”

CHAPTER 18

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Its Friday. My classes end early with the last two being cancelled I have enough free time on my hands. I head to the mall with Lara, she convinced me to go with her as my plus one. Says she wants to meet a rich handsome guy who'll spoil her more than she's already being spoiled at home. Don't even ask what that's about. I call mom to inform her that I wont be coming home this weekend. And she tells me she and dad are going away for the weekend and are already on their way to some resort in Durban, she's at the airport and they waiting for their flight.

"How does this look?"

She asks showing me a grey body hugging dress

"looks good babe but it's a little short"

I say

"fine. So what do you suggest?"

She asks and I shrug

"Lets just go look elsewhere. Options are limited here"

I say and she agrees going back to the fitting room to take it off. I opted for a floor length royal blue body hugging dress with

silver detail on it has lace covering my boobs and it's a long sleeve dress, it has a slit that goes up to my thigh, my shoes are silver. We walk to the next store. We find the perfect dress, its grey and has an open back. Its also a long sleeve and has a long side and a short one. Its slightly below the knee and sits perfectly on her. She has a black shoe to go with her dress. When we done she suggests we go to Southern Inn for lunch on her. The hostess leads us to the hotel lobby for a table for two telling us that the restaurant is closed for an event that will be taking place tonight at 6pm. We look through the menu

“Mihlalikazi”

A guy says startling me, I look up and it's the spoilt brat I met the other day

“Hi...”

I say having forgotten his name

“Bayanda. Ouch!”

He says and I chuckle at his drama

“Sorry Bayanda. This is my friend Lara, Lara meet Bayanda”

I say and he shakes her hand

“I see you took the job”

I say as he's wearing the place's uniform

“I figured I don’t have a choice”

He says and I nod

“Would it be wrong of me to ask for your number? I find you really beautiful Mihlali and I would really like to know you more”

He says startling me, Lara smiles

“Uhm...”

She cuts me off calling out my number to him. Yes she knows it by head because she’s always calling me whenever she’s in trouble or something.

“Mihlalikazi Langa”

She says and he nods thanking her with that smile of his

“What will the beautiful ladies be having?”

He asks

“I’ll have a long island cocktail thank you”

I say

“And I will have a berry jar, make sure you go hard on the alcohol ok”

Lara says winking at him. My friend the flirt, I mentally bang my head against my hand.

“I will be back for your food orders”

He says that taking the drinks menu's and placing the food menu's in front of us. He walks away

“And that?”

She asks all excited

“That is the rich kid I told you about remember”

She thinks for a while

“He is hot, you never mentioned he was this yummy”

She says

“He has a grey fade Lara”

I remind her

“His look screams fuck boy”

I say and she chuckles

“then he will fuck you right. You should bang him for both out sake”

She says and I shoot her a look stunned by this making her laugh

“What? He's yummy and is probably packed. You cant tell me you still hung up over Bandile”

She says rolling her eyes

“you called and he didn’t return your call, his phone was probably answered by his girlfriend or something”

She says shooting all my hopes, she’s right I am hung up over him. He made an impression ok. Shoot me!

“give me your phone”

She says

“Why?”

I ask, she holds her hand out to me for me to place my phone on. I take it out my hand bag and hand it to her sceptical. She goes through it and places it on speaker, the phone rings

“Mr Tshawe’s phone hello?”

A lady’s voice comes on

“Hi, may I please speak to this Mr Tshawe”

Lara says

“I am sorry ma’am but he is not taking any calls today, may I ask who this is?”

She asks

“Tell him its Miss Mihilalikazi Langa and its urgent that he talks to me”

She says in a very demanding tone

“tell him that he does not want to miss this business opportunity”

Lara says pulling a straight face

“Please hold on ma’am”

The line goes silent. Bayanda brings our drinks and takes our food orders and leaves us.

“Miss Langa?”

His voice comes on

“I waited for your call all week, if you didn’t want me to get back to you then you shouldn’t have left me your card Bandile”

Lara says shocking even me

“Is this a joke? Who am I speaking to?”

He asks

“Its Miss Langa”

She says adamantly

“I think I’d recognise Miss Langa’s voice and this is definitely not her voice”

He says and Lara shoves the phone at me

“Uhhm hi”

I say nervously removing the call from speaker

“Miss Langa hi, how are you?”

He says so calmly

“Are we going to pretend that I didn’t call you Tuesday and you didn’t get back to me? Anyway I only called to thank you for taking care of my friends and I Sunday and Monday morning”

I say

“You welcome Miss Langa. Will that be all?”

He asks, haibo whats going on with this guy?

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-BANDILE TSHAWE

Today its Friday and its hectic at the office and at the restaurant but Lona is handling most of the work and the rest of the staff is helping. I am on my way to fetch mom from the hospital when I get a call from Lona telling me a Miss Mihlalikazi Langa wants to talk to me and wont take no for an answer. I wont lie I didn’t expect that from Mihlali, she seems a little soft spoken to demand my time over the phone anyway. Judging by the voice its that white friend of hers talking to me and soon her voice

comes on reminding me of her beautiful face which I was beginning to forget. I won't lie I had given up on her ever calling me considering she never called me all week. I'm startled by her telling me she called me on Tuesday

I then remember Lona telling me a Mihlali had called, I don't even know what to say to her. With mom landing up in hospital and all these businesses depending on me I had forgotten to get back to her

"Enjoy your day Bandile"

She says sounding angry and cutting the call not waiting for me to respond. I look at my phone unable to fathom what just happened. I call her back and it rings for a while before its answered

"Mihlali"

I say as soon as she answers

"Hi"

She says coldly, I don't know how to go on from here. Please understand I last had a girlfriend the year my father died, she and I ended because she wasn't willing to accept my being busy taking care of my father's businesses, she complained about me neglecting her and being too focused on work.

“I am sorry for not getting back to you. I’ve been dealing with a lot this week, yes my p.a told me you had called me but it was amongst other things that needed my full attention and I am sorry for not getting back to you. Can I make it up to you tonight?”

I ask sincerely

“I’m busy tonight”

She says, God women just have to make things difficult for a guy

“And Sunday?”

I ask

“I wont be available then either, tomorrow I’m free”

She says, I cant do tomorrow with my brother and his girlfriend in town and all

“Can we meet tomorrow later then? I understand you mad at me and I really want to make it up to you please let me”

She thinks for a while

“No can do, I’m available from morning until 7pm”

She says.

“Ok then. Enjoy the rest of your day Miss Langa”

I say and end the call. I'm a little grown to be chasing after a first year anyway, if she wanted to see me she was going to but seems like she doesn't want to. I walk into the hospital a little distracted, this thing of Mihlali blowing me off is bothering me but theres nothing I can do about it

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-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

Its Friday and Fridays I always go home unless I have too much work. I've asked Kim to go home with me seeing that my parents wont even be home, besides they've both met her and liked her. My sisters also like Kim but they not around for the weekend, they sleeping at aunty Saney's. I park outside her res waiting for her to come out. I call Phiwo

"Hey stranger"

She answers

"Hey you, how are you?"

I ask

"Well I'll be fine when I know you coming back"

She says

"I will be back but I wont be able to see you."

“Why?”

She asks, I cant even think of a lie right now

“Baby sitting and all. My parents are out of town”

“Oh”

She says sounding disappointed

“I’d really love for you to help me but I don’t want to expose my little sisters to my relationship and all that, I hope you understand”

I say, she goes silent for a while

“Fine I understand. You’re a good big brother Biko”

She compliments, I see Kim walk out dragging a small suitcase

“Babe I have to go ok? Talk later”

I say

“Bye”

she says coldly, I cut the call and get out to meet Kim half way. I hug and kiss her then take her bag, I unlock the boot and it opens

“What do you have in here? Rocks?”

I ask putting it inside the boot

“No silly, its my things”

She says as I close the boot. I open the door for her and then close it then go to my side and start the car. We drive listening to music and catching up with each other’s lives. I call the parents when we get home telling them I’ve arrived safely and all that and they tell me that they also got there safely. Kim and I take a long bath with make out sessions in between and then go make something to eat in the kitchen. Our live in cleaner is in the house somewhere.

CHAPTER 19

-LERATO BIKOKUHLE MTWA

Kim is sitting on the counter wearing my t-shirt and I'm standing between her legs and we kissing when someone clears their throat at the door, we both turn and it's Phiwo. What's she doing here? I walk to the door to let her in, Kim jumps off and stands on her feet

"Phiwo what are you doing here?"

I am unable to hide the shock

"Mihlali said I could come and fetch a Maths text book in her room"

She says

"Babe this is Mihlali's friend Phiwo, Phiwo this is my girlfriend Kim"

I say and Kim smiles holding out her hand to Phiwo, she's hesitant to greet but she shakes Kim's hand

"Nice to meet you. You beautiful"

Kim says

"Thank you, you too"

Phiwo responds, they break the hand shake and Kim goes to attend the pots

“Babe I’ll show Phiwo to Mihlali’s room”

I say

“I can find it myself thank you”

She says heading up the stairs. I feel bad for what just happened but whats a guy supposed to do in such a situation?

“She’s really beautiful, whats with the hostility though?”

She asks

“She’s my sister’s friend, she probably has a crush or something”

She giggles

“Who could blame her. You should probably help her find that book, Hlali hides her things”

She suggest

“Don’t worry I got the pots covered”

She says, I make my way upstairs and all the way to Hlali’s room. I walk in and she’s looking in her closet. My sister has a book shelf on the wall, I walk over to the shelf and pull out the text book.

“Here you go”

I say startling her

“Thank you”

She says avoiding eye contact at all costs

“Phiwo I am sorry I lied to you. I didn’t mean for this to happen and most of all I didn’t mean to hurt you”

I say holding her hand with the book in it, she slaps me with her free hand, I don’t blame her

“I understand you angry and probably want nothing to do with me but can we meet up for lunch on Monday”

She chuckles sarcastically

“Like I would ever listen to any lie you have to tell me”

She says and yanks her hand away from me and walks out. I follow behind her walking her out, she says goodbye to Kim and I stop by the door and lock.

“So what? Does Hlali pick her friends via looks and sexy ass body?”

She asks and I chuckle

“Who knows?”

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

We settle the bill and give him a R150.00 tip, not that his service was the best or anything but because Lara thinks his cute and that he and I should go out on a date since Bandile seems to be an ass... We get to my place and she goes to the shower while I take a long hot bath with bath oils and bath salts. When we done I open a bottle of champagne, its already around 5pm and we only just got to my place, we had to start at Lara's home to get her a weekend bag. I pour us into champagne glasses and then hand her a glass while we both get dressed. My phone rings and its Phiwo.

“Hey honey”

I answer while wearing heels

“I just left your home”

She starts off

“Did you find that text book?”

I ask, she had called me up asking that I borrow her a maths text book for her assignment. She doesn't know what happened to her high school text book.

“I did after meeting Kim”

She says, I freeze

“As my friend I would have expected you to tell me that your brother is cheating on me”

She says sounding more hurt than angry

“Phiwo it was not my place to tell you”

I explain

“You know I would have told you if your boyfriend was cheating on you because that’s what friends do Mihlali”

She says

“To be fair I warned you not to date him”

I say defensively

“I thought you were my friend. Friends don’t lie to each other”

She says and cuts the call on me leaving me stunned. How could Biko do this? I call him and he answers after a while, Lara on the hand rushes me telling me that we going to be late and right now I don’t care, its not like I even wanted to go to this thing.

“Baby sis”

He answers

“You took Kim home with you?”

I ask

“Its not like it’s the first time”

He says sounding as if he did not just hurt my best friend

“I asked you not to hurt her and you went on and did the exact same thing”

I yell

“I didn’t mean to hurt her. It just happened”

He says

“And Kim?”

I ask

“I told her she’s your friend and was here to fetch something”

He says, I hit my forehead. My brother is an idiot and will never stop. I just cut the call on him because its no use. I make my way out of my apartment and lock following Lara

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I meet her sitting in the passenger seat of my car. I get in apologising and explaining what happened

“to be fair you should have told her, she’s your best friend Hlali”

She defends

“What was I supposed to say? Oh watch out Phiwo my brother already has a girlfriend and is just playing you”

I ask and she shrugs

“not like that but you could have atleast warned her”

She says

“She didn’t even tell me they were together until I stole her phone and dialled mystery man’s number only to find out its my brother’s number. I told her he wasn’t right for her but she didn’t listen and sadly she’s now paying for it”

I say with a shrug focused on the road

“oh well...”

She says without a come back. We get to the hotel and get out of the car and hand the key over to someone to park the car for us, we produce the invitation card and walk inside. The décor is amazing. Its grey, blue and white. We are offered champagne and who are we to say no. Daniel spots us and walks over to us, I roll my eyes

“Ladies”

He greets

“Lara meet Daniel, Daniel this is my friend Lara”

I introduce them and he holds his hand out to Lara who just looks at it

“nice to meet you”

She says and he retracts his hand

“Hlali told me everything about you. Thank you for the invitation but it doesn’t change how I feel about you”

She says. Trust Lara to tell you how she feels about you.

“I understand and I don’t expect you to like me cause really I f*cked up and will live to regret what I put Hlali through. Please make yourselves comfortable and enjoy yourselves. I will see you ladies around”

He says and leaves us, I look at Lara who gulps her champagne like she did not just go off at the guy. I chuckle to myself. We walk around and stand by a table looking around like lost puppies

“Ladies. Twice in one day I must definitely be lucky”

Says Bayanda offering us snacks

“hi, didn’t know you’d be working this event”

I say

“You must know rich people for you to even attend such an event”

He says

“Baya please come with me theres some peop... Hi”

He says stopping in his tracks

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

The event seems to be exactly what we were hoping for. I've fetched Bakho and met his amazing girlfriend. They got here in time to shower and dress up for the event. Baya is working as a waiter tonight but I also want to introduce him to a few people in his field of study. My little brother is studying Analytical Chemistry, don't even ask. Spoilt and bratty as he is, he is actually smart. Mom is socialising with guests her age and dad's old business partners.

"I want you to meet my little brother, Bayanda. He's really smart and I'm sure he would like to meet someone in his field of study"

I say talking to a Chemist that has a drug lab somewhere in the Western Cape

"Where is he? If he's your brother then I am sure he's as interesting as you"

She says flirtatiously. Mrs Milton is 30 years old but she's a real flirt and she and her husband recently divorced last year. I look around and sport him talking to girls.

"Let me go and find him real quick"

I say and walk to the table where he seems to be entertaining these ladies, as I make my way through the crowd people are greeting me and some want to have a word with me until I get to him and speak without paying attention until I raise my eyes and see Mihlali and her white friend.

“Hi”

They say in unison, I’m tongue tied and did not expect to see them here. Who must have invited them because I definitely didn’t. But then again Mihlali comes from a rich family and chances are someone here invited them. I take a deep breath

“Ladies may I please borrow Baya for a minute or two”

I say and they nod looking as shocked as I am to see them

“Ladies please excuse me, Hlali please don’t leave without saying”

He says and then was leave them, Mihlali’s eyes are on me as mine are on her. We walk over to Mrs Milton, I brief him on what Mrs Milton does.

“Hey, I am sorry to disturb. This is my little brother Bayanda”

I mention while my eyes return to the table where Mihlali is and I don’t see her. How does my brother know her? But then again Bayanda knows all pretty girls in Varsity, he makes it his duty. I guess Mihlali is off limits.

“Bardz”

My little brother nudges me,

“You were saying?”

I say returning my attention to these 2 people

“I was saying I would like for him to visit the lab one of these days and come see what we do, maybe have him spend a day at our lab so that he can have a feel of what we do”

She suggests and my little brother’s smile is enough to sell me into the idea

“He’ll have to talk to his boss about taking a day off. Will you guys excuse me”

I say and leave them to talk while scanning the room for any sign of Mihlali or Lara but don’t see any of them. Ouch!

“Bro come here”

My brother pulls me to the group of guys he’s standing talking to and laughing with

“Guys you know my brother Bandile, Bardz I went to high school with these guys”

He says and they each introduce themselves

“The work you doing here is great for someone your age”

I chuckle

“Thank you, I couldn’t possibly do any of it without my family and staff.”

I say, someone taps my shoulder and I turn to find Lona

“Sir please come with me theres something I need to talk to you about”

She whispers in my ear, I excuse myself and follow her to a quiet spot. She tells me about an emergency at the other hotel that I have to attend to myself. I manage to slip out of the party and go attend the emergency. When I come back Mr Khozi is on stage and talking to the crowd about our contract and what we hope to achieve.

CHAPTER 20

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I did not expect to see Bandile here tonight, does this mean he and Daniel know each other? I don't need this drama in my life. Oh God. Do you ever do something to a person and then see them and regret washes over you like a wave? I feel bad for the call we made to Bandile, it was childish of me and unnecessary now that I am seeing him in his amazing charcoal 3-piece charcoal suit. I look around for him and I don't see him anywhere.

"Hlali"

Daniel greets

"Hey"

I say coldly

"Thank you for coming, it means a lot to me. May I introduce you to a few people"

He says, I don't know what to make of this, but I nod. Lara left me to socialise and put herself out there

"I see your friend is enjoying herself. I guess I have her to thank"

He says

“Yeah, she likes to put herself out there and also she’s hoping to meet a rich guy who will spoil her”

I say jokingly and he chuckles

“she’s interesting”

He says as we make our way through the crowd. We stop in front of these two people talking

“Hey guys”

He greets and they turn to us

“Mr Khozi, hi Miss”

They greet

“Miss Langa”

He responds for me as we shake hands

“This is Destiny Nkandla, she runs a book publication company”

I smile at her

“And this is Donald Nkandla her husband, he has a PHD in literature and he has published quite a number of international sellers”

“Nice to meet you both”

I say

“this is Mhlahikazi Langa a literature student at UCT”

He introduces

“Which year?”

The wife asks

“still doing my first”

She smiles

“That’s nice, is it something you’ve always wanted or?”

I smile

“No, not quite. I think growing up my future was mostly inspired by my family. My mother study computer science and fashion while my father was a psychologist. Growing up with such parents who were both striving in their careers it was kind of hard to choose where I want to go until I got to grade 7 and fell in love with books. I fell in love with reading and I knew that someday I would like to have my name on the front page of a book”

I say

“That’s nice”

Donald says

“Maybe you can come shadow my wife and I at the company and see where you want to major when you done”

I can't help but smile

"You are kidding me"

I say unable to hide the excitement

"No not at all. If you would like to intern with us then here is my business card, you can call me on Monday and we'll find a way to work around your school timetable"

she says, Daniel smiles at how excited I am

"Thank you so much"

I say shaking both their hands like a love-struck fan, Daniel excuses us from them walking with me

"thank you so much"

I say and he just smiles

"Don't thank me yet. There's still a few people I want you to meet"

He says as we make our way through the crowd

"Daniel Khozi"

A woman says making us both stop, when I turn it is the one and only. My favourite writer of all times.

"Sharon Nyezi"

Daniel responds giving her a hug. He knows how much I love her!

“I would like you to meet Mhlahlikazi Langa, she idolizes you”

He adds making me even more shy, she smiles

“Its always nice to meet a fan of my work. How are you?”

She asks shaking my hand

“I am honoured to actually be standing in front of you. Your work is amazing! I have read all your books”

I blab like a true fan

“Which one was your favourite?”

She asks

“If I had to choose one book, I still can’t put down till date then it would have to be A Distant Memory. That book made me cry, it made me laugh, it made me angry, it made me feel so many different emotions all at once and it still does till date”

I say and she chuckles

“I am glad to hear that, it is my best seller nationally and internationally. What are you currently studying?”

She asks

“Literature at UCT”

She nods

“That’s amazing, and how are you finding?”

I shrug

“Its interesting. Last week we were actually discussing your other book, Mirror-Mirror on The Wall”

She giggles

“Not many people liked the style of that book”

She says

“to be fair the ending was not your strongest point. I mean you left us hanging. I mean all that drama and action only to find out that its all just a dream?”

She laughs at me

“I know and I understand why people would be mad, but I really wanted to take a different direction with it you know? As a writer you can’t always give a reader what they want and expect of you. Sometimes you need to shock them and maybe piss them off a bit”

She says the last part with a naughty smile

“I loved it though

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it was a real twist. Nothing like anything I've ever read before."

She chuckles

"do you write?"

"yes, I do actually. Well not like you obviously but I do run blog where I post a chapter a day and interact with readers. I also write poetry pieces for this online magazine a friend of mine runs"

I mention

"That is very interesting, what's your friend's magazine name so that I could check it out some time and share it if I like what I read"

She says and I feel Goosebumps, she wants to visit Lara's magazine and read the things we post

"Also, the name of your blog of cause"

I give her my card which has all my details and Lara's card

"My friend is actually here but I seem to have lost her somewhere"

She chuckles

"its fine, the night is still young. Its nice meeting you Mihlali"

“It was a pleasure meeting you too Miss Nyezi”

I say and she gives me a hug. We part ways and I’m left looking like an idiot, Daniel is welcomed on stage and is about to make a speech. I make my way to the nearest lady’s room while dialling Lara’s number. I get into the stall and start to pee while calling this girl.

“Friend?”

She answers

“Babe, where are you?”

I ask

“I am by the champagne table”

She says

“meet you there in a few”

I say cutting the call. I put the phone in my purse and then flush walking out. I wash my hands and dry them then walk out. As I am walking out, I bump into someone and drop my bag.

“I am so sorry”

He says picking up the clutch for me, he hands it to me

“Mihlali”

He says

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-BANDILE TSHAWE

I walk out to answer a phone call when I bump into someone, her clutch falls and I pick it up for her only to be met by Mihlali.

“Bandile”

She says utterly shook to see me I guess

“How are you?”

I finally ask after a while of staring at each other

“I am good thanks and, how are you?”

She asks

“I am good thank you. I didn’t th...”

I’m cut midway by my phone ringing. It’s the club

“I am sorry I have to take this; can we talk after?”

I ask pleadingly, while answering the call

“Talk to me”

I answer, she’s about to walk away when I grab her arm making her come to a stop. I listen to the manager talk.

“Fine I’ll be there now”

I say and drop the call.

“Would it be wrong of me if I stole you away from here for a few minutes?”

I ask, I would really like to find out what’s going on with her and my brother

“I... I don’t know you that well”

She says making me chuckle. I let go of her wrist

“I think we way past that considering you called me today going off at me for not calling you back don’t you think?”

I ask and she’s tongue tied

“I have to attend to an emergency, so you are coming?”

I ask, she looks around and then nods

“fine”

She says. We walk out and my car parks in front of us, I open the passenger door for her and then close it then go to my side

“I need to call my friend”

she says, and I nod, she calls her friend telling her she’ll be back. When she’s done, she doesn’t say anything.

“You and the waiter, is he your boyfriend or something?”

I ask and she chuckles

“Bayanda? No. Wait why do you ask?”

I chuckle

“I see”

I say

“Why do you ask?”

“I thought that maybe he’s the one that invited you to the event”

I say

“No, a friend did. Who invited you?”

She says and then asks

“Mr Khozi did”

I say dismissively

“Daniel? How do you know him?”

She asks curiously

“We friends. How do you know him?”

She shrugs

“He’s did business with my parents”

She says looking outside, something tells me there’s more to the story than what she lets on. I park outside the club

“You are coming with?”

I ask before opening my door

“Ok”

She says and I get out and I’m about to open her door for her when she opens it herself. I lock the car and allow her to walk before me. Damn this girl is a real beauty and those lips are a real distraction.

“What are we doing here?”

She asks as we walk in

“business”

I say as we make our way through the crowd to the passage leading to the office. I could have parked at the back but there’s a truck delivering new stock

“Mr Tshawe”

My manager greets

“What’s going on?”

I walk in and there’s a lady sitting on the couch, she looks up and runs to me wrapping her arms around my neck.

“Bandile I’m so glad to see you”

she says. I remove her arms

“Unathi what are you doing here?”

I ask, she’s a crying mess. I really don’t need this now especially with Mihlali here. Remember the ex that broke up with me because I was too busy for her liking? Well this is her.

“sir there was an incident. We found her outside the club fighting with some guy. He said she owes him a lot of money. She said she knows you and that we should call you”

The manager explains. Mihlali is now standing by the office desk watching us intently.

“Unathi what’s going on?”

She just cries. I never know how to handle a girl that’s crying, I ask that they bring her water. I walk her to the couch and sit her down. The water comes and I open it for her and hand it to her to drink

“thank you”

She says in between her gulps of the water. I mouth ‘sorry’ to Hlali who doesn’t react or respond.

CHAPTER 21

-BANDILE TSHAWWE

Unathi couldn't have possibly come back in the worst time of my life. Why now? No don't get me wrong I got over her but she's my ex and knowing her the way I knew her she's a good person and I can't not help her out. She looks up at me and then at Mihlali.

"I'll be at the bar"

She says and doesn't even give me the chance to respond. She walks out leaving me with my ex.

"What happened?"

I ask again

"When we broke up, I was seeing someone."

She starts off, I always suspected it, but I was too busy to even think much into it.

"Things started off good, he was sweet and gave me all the attention I could ask for. He spoiled me rotten, I was happy Bandile. He made me happy and loved, something I barely felt from you when we were together"

She says, I don't respond.

“Early this year I found out that he was dealing shady, he’d been dealing shady these past years, but he just hid it well, I guess. I threatened to report him, but he begged me not to and that he would stop and get out of the business and I believed he was out until a week ago he got arrested. A few days ago, some men came to my house angry saying he owes them R1.5 million”

She says and breaks down again

“Bandile they said they’d kill me if I don’t give them their money by the end of next week.”

I let out a sigh,

“That’s a lot of money Unathi”

I say, she wipes her tears with the back of her hands

“I can work it off. Please just help me out Bandile, I had nobody else to turn to and his friends have all bailed-on us”

She says crying. I hand her tissues

“Eish Unathi. I’ll have someone take you to my place, we’ll talk about this tomorrow morning ok”

I say getting up, she also gets up

“Thank you Bandile”

She says throwing herself at me, I hug her briefly and break it.

“Wont it be a problem with your girlfriend?”

She asks after I break the hug, I don't respond and make my way out. She's not at the bar.

“Didn't you see where the lady that was here went?”

I ask

“She said she's leaving sir”

He says. I run out and the guard at the door tells me she left in an uber.

“Dammit!”

I say angrily to myself. Why did Unathi have to show up now at all times. I drive back to the party hoping that she maybe went back there. I get there and search for her but don't see her anywhere, I do however spot her friend.

“Lara hi”

I greet

“Bandile hello”

She greets

“Any idea where Mihlali could be?”

I ask

“She went home. What did you do to her?”

She asks

“I swear I didn’t do anything to your friend. Can I please have her address?”

I ask and she shakes her head no

“No”

She says, not that I don’t have her address, but I don’t want to seem like a creep showing up unannounced.

“Thank you”

I say and excuse myself, I meet with my brother

“You seem disturbed”

Bakho says, I sigh

“Unathi showed up at the club today”

I say and his jaw drops to the floor

“Doing what? Wasn’t she in Joburg with her boyfriend?”

I shrug

“Apparently she’s in Cape Town now. Her boyfriend got arrested and left her in debt”

I say

“I know what you are thinking and don’t do it Bandile!”

He warns

“Don’t do what?”

Mom asks behind me

“Nothing mom. How are you? Can I drive you home?”

I ask and she nods

“Yes, baby I am tired and just want to rest”

She says

“Honey I will see you guys at the house”

Mom says that referring to my brother who hugs her goodbye, she and I walk to the door but are stopped by Bakho’s fiancé asking to join us. Mom loves her, she’s really sweet.

“the heels are killing me”

She says as we get inside my car. Mom is sitting in the back and the fiancé joins me in front. We drive talking about the event and how much it was a success. My mind is on Unathi and how Mihlali just left without saying anything. We get home at my house and I park, we all get off.

“I need a foot rub”

Mom says as we walk inside the house

“We can go to the spa tomorrow”

Lukhona suggests and mom agrees

“So, we not having a family breakfast tomorrow?”

I ask and the ladies chuckle

“I want to bond with my daughter in law without you boys”

Mom says. This woman

“So, you guys are ditching us like that?”

“Honey call Lona and have her book us an appointment at the spa”

Mom orders at me. Ouch. My cleaner walks in and greets us all, after mom and Lukhona walk upstairs chatting

“Sir there’s a woman named Unathi that was dropped off by one of the club drivers”

She reports

“Is she in the guest bedroom right now?”

I ask and she nods

“I think she might be sleeping too. Should I go and check on her?”

She asks and I shake my head no

“Bakho might come back any time

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tell him I'm at the club with friends. When and if Unathi wakes up please keep her away from mom at all costs, Mam'Tshawe hates her"

I say and she laughs at how I say it. I say and walk up to my room to change into something more comfortable. I call up a few friends to meet at the club.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Watching Bandile with her and how caring and sweet he is with her makes me jealous hence I excused myself. I shouldn't be considering he's not even mine but seeing them together, how she cried on his chest tells me enough. Its either its his girlfriend or an ex he probably never got over and I can't compete with an ex. I sit and order a blowjob shot and down it, followed by a springbok shot and down it too.

"You ok Miss?"

The bartender asks and I shrug looking at my watch, its past 8pm

“I’m fine. Please tell the guy I came here with that I’ve left”

I say and then get up off the chair after paying the bill. I request and wait outside for the uber. As soon as it arrives, I get in and call Lara.

“Hey honey where are you?”

She asks

“I’m on my way to the apartment babe. Sorry for ditching you”

I say

“Why you ditching me? Everything ok?”

She asks concerned

“Its fine, I just want to get wasted now”

I say throwing myself on the bed

“I’ll request and come over ok?”

She says

“No, you don’t have to, enjoy yourself”

“No, I am coming over.”

She says and ends the call on me. I take off my dress and go take a quick shower and then wrap a towel around my body. I go and open a bottle of Brutal fruit. I call Phiwo but she doesn’t

answer my call, I try again and still nothing, so I call Vuyo and she answers after a couple of rings

“Hey babe, what’s up?”

She answers

“hey, have you spoken to Phiwo?”

I ask

“No, why? Everything ok?”

She asks concerned

“She went to my home to fetch a text book and she met Biko and his girlfriend”

I explain

“What do you mean Biko’s girlfriend?”

She asks, I never told her Biko was dating Kim

“well Biko never broke up with his girlfriend”

“You should have told her Hlali”

She says

“I know and I feel bad, but it wasn’t any of my business. Besides I warned her”

I say

“Yeah but you didn’t tell her that your brother already has a girlfriend”

I sigh loudly

“Which part of it was not my business? Vuyo I didn’t want to hurt Phiwo”

The same way I wouldn’t tell you if I saw your boyfriend busy with someone else – I think to myself. I’m a firm believer of minding my own business, always been about that life

“Wow Hlali, some friend you are”

She says disappointed

“Biko is my brother and Phiwo is my best friend but having to choose between them, I can’t Vuyo”

I explain

“Ay whatever Hlali. What are you doing tonight?”

She asks

“I’m at my place drinking”

I say

“I’m coming over, get dressed we going to the club”

She says shocking me, its unlike her to want to go to the club

“You ok?”

I ask and she chuckles

“Its been a hectic week, I just want a vibe”

She says

“Ok babe sees you when you get here”

I say and then we say our goodbyes. I take a sip of my drink while listening to music, I get a text from Biko inviting me to go out with him and his friends and girlfriend. I shouldn't but then he's my brother and I enjoy every moment I spend with him and his friends. I text Vuyo telling her Biko is coming to pick me up and she says ok. I text Biko telling him I'm with Vuyo and Lara and he tells me he'll pick us up in 2 hours. I text Lara telling her we are going out in 2 hours. Vuyo arrives and pours herself wine, that's all she drinks anyway. She doesn't drink acidic drinks. We catch up and I tell her about tonight

“Does this mean Daniel and Bandile could be friends?”

She asks and I nod

“Damn, and this Bayanda guy?”

I shrug

“I don't even know how they know each other”

I say taking a sip

“What if they brother's?”

She suggests laughing

“That would be funny”

I shoot her a look

“I doubt they related, I mean they don’t even look alike”

I say and she just nods

“It’s a small world. We didn’t think Daniel knew Bandile but look at where we are now. Let’s stalk Bandile”

She suggests taking my laptop and typing out Bandile Tshawe on google. His info pops up and we go to the pictures and there’s not much, we go to his Wikipedia info and they mention he has 2 brothers and his father died 4 years ago. We also find out that he’s 25 this year and his birthday was on the 29th of January.

“It says here his brothers are Bayanda and Bakholise Tshawe”

She reads out, I look at her shook

“click on their names”

I say and she starts with Bakholise and he looks like Bandile but an older version of him

“Ok, next”

She says that going back and clicking on Bayanda’s name.

“That’s the Bayanda from the restaurant and tonight”

I say and she laughs her ass off loudly and annoyingly.

“Wow Hlali! Dribbling 2 brothers”

She says still in stitches. I’m annoyed by her laugh, I’m grateful when there’s a knock, I go and open and its Lara. She’s a little too happy.

“And then?”

I ask

“I met a guy, he’s amazing and we are meeting him at the club tonight”

She says all excitedly

“why you so glum?”

She asks

“Bayanda is Bandile’s little brother”

CHAPTER 22

-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

After amazing rounds with Kim, I receive a call from the guys saying we should hit the club tonight and bring Hlali along so that she can bring her friends, yes, the guys still do that whole thing. She's wearing a short gold dress and looks sexy AF!

"You look sexy"

I point out

"Thank you, baby. You look awesome yourself"

She says. We head out while she calls my sister, she drops the call. We drive over listening to her music, girls are bullies anyway. We get to my sister's complex and call her, she tells them to let us in and then we head to her apartment. Its Hlali, Lara and Vuyo. They greet each other and they bond over alcohol. They seem a little tipsy

"You guys seem tipsy"

I say while heading to the kitchen, they don't respond and just laugh at me. I pour us Gin and Tonic, Kim loves Gin anyway. I hand her a drink and she thanks me

"We should get going, the guys are getting impatient"

I say gulping my drink. They finish their own and then we drive to the club. The guys are sitting in the VIP, Hlali and I head to the bar while the rest go up.

“What do your friend’s drink?”

I ask

“What we were drinking at my place and wine for Vuyo, it’s all she drinks.”

She says

“Baya says he ran into you on Tuesday”

She thinks for a while

“Wait Bayanda Tshawe?”

She asks and I nod, I think they’ve only met once or twice because Baya barely hangs out with the rest of us with his friends from school and all.

“Yeah him. He saw your picture on my status”

I tell her, Wednesday I had made her a WCE and he commented telling me about how he had seen her. I barely ever post my sister on WhatsApp anyway.

“He’s a brat”

She says and I can’t help but laugh

“What did he do now?”

We take the bucket after paying and head up to the VIP with her telling me about how things went when they met. She tells me that she also met her older brother Bandile and he seems cool.

“will he be coming?”

She asks and I shrug

“Do you want him to come?”

I ask with a raised eyebrow and she shrugs

“He’s your friend.”

She says carelessly. We get to the table and the guys are drinking while the girls dance. Its Dan, Phiko and Milani. He’s in town for the weekend and leaving on Sunday, he’s here for a family thing that’s taking place tomorrow and he’s invited us to attend.

“Mila you remember my little sister, right?”

I ask and he nods shaking my sisters’ hand. We all sit down and drink over light conversations. At least the girls are getting along, I would have enjoyed having Phiwo here but she’s ignoring my calls and texts.

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-BANDILE TSHAWE

I'm here in the VIP section with Simamnkele, Bulumnko, Troy and Mark. We went to Varsity together and do business together every now and then. Sima and Bulumnko are the only ones married while the rest are dating. I see Mihlali's friends walk in the VIP section and join this group of guys, if memory serves, they friends with my little brother. Bakho said he wasn't going to join us as he's tired and all. We are catching up, but my eyes are scanning for Mihlali.

"Where's your mind at?"

Sima asks nudging me

"Eish bruh, there's this girl I like Mihlali but now today Unathi showed up crying and stuff. Mind you I was with this Mihlali girl"

I explain gulping down my henny.

"Woah back up, there's a girl you like?"

Troy says sarcastically making the guys laugh

"Back up to the part where Unathi showed up. What does she want?"

Lumnko asks and I shrug

“She needs money. Her boyfriend got arrested and left her in debt”

“She’s an ex for a reason. Let her stay there”

Mark says intently

“Mark has a point. Its not your business to bail her out. She left you for the guy while you were still grinding and now that you are one of the youngest Billionaires in the country!”

He points out proudly.

“Not yet”

I interject and they all chuckle

“Stop being modest! You almost there and with the way you going

Advertisement

this year might just come to an end with you a Billionaire”

Troy says making me chuckle loudly

“You guys are missing the point. You are not helping Unathi out!”

Lumnko says but I don’t respond, Mark nudges me

“You not helping this girl out! How much does she need anyway?”

“A mil”

I say quietly hiding behind my drink, their mouths drop open in shock

“No ways!”

“F*cking delusional. You not giving it to her”

Mark and Troy say. I just nod

“Bardz I know you. You always want to help out”

Lumnko says and I shrug

“You want this Mihilali chick, right? Cut ties with your ex, heck burn bridges with her and never rebuild shiit with her. She’s a gold digger!”

Sima reminds, I finally spot her from the table her friends are occupying and she’s laughing with a guy I’ve never seen her with before. What’s the deal with Hlali? Is she dating? Does she have a f*ckbuddy? What’s going on?

“Bardz”

Someone waves their hand in front of me, its Mark

“What?”

I ask

“Who are you looking at?”

He asks looking in the direction I was looking at.

“That’s thee Mihlali. The one with the white vest”

I point out

“Beautiful”

He compliments and I nod like a love-struck idiot. She’s so simple and beautiful. She gets up off the chair and makes her way through the crowd towards the rest room with her friend I saw her with the first time I laid eyes on her at the restaurant. I excuse myself, I know I seem like a creep, but I really need to talk to her tonight even. Make my intentions clear.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I’m having so much fun with my brother and his crew. I’m sitting between Biko and Phiko, my God Phiko is crazy and funny too and very much a flirt. He’s always flirting with me and I wont lie its quite fun, but he has a girlfriend and our flirting only ends in person. I get up and excuse myself asking Vuyo to accompany me to the ladies and she gets up and joins me. We

walk through the crowd and make our way to the ladies. We walk in and the line is not that bad

“you seem distracted”

Vuyo points out and I shrug

“I thought I’d see him here tonight”

I say unable to hide the disappointment

“Who? Bandile?”

I nod like an idiot.

“He owns this place and the last time we spent the night at his house we had met here”

I say and she brushes my back

“He’s probably busy at his other club or hotel”

She says and I sigh. Finally, its my turn and we walk in the stall together, I pee first and then she pees after me while I leave her in the stall. I wash my hands and then wait for her. She walks out and washes her hands and fixes her weave. We make our way out chatting but are disturbed by someone calling out my name

“Mihlali”

The voice calls out and we both turn and its Bandile standing by the wall. We in the passage that leads to the bathrooms

“Were you waiting for us?”

I ask and he smiles shyly with a nod

“Yes. I am Bandile Tshawe”

He says with his hand held out to Vuyo who takes it into hers with a full teeth blushy smile

“I’m Vuyo. Nice to meet you. Hlali I will meet you at the table”

She says letting go of his hand and running out of the passage. Well this is a first considering she never approves of the guys I seem to like but I guess Bandile is just yummy and has this presence she likes. I giggle alone and he looks at me confused

“She’s usually not that friendly with strangers”

I point out and he chuckles

“I guess I’m different. You just left without saying anything”

He says and I shrug walking slowly and he walks with me

“I know, I didn’t want to be disturbed. Whatever that was seemed important”

I say

“I appreciate you giving me space and all but Hlali please don’t give me space I did not ask for”

He points out and I won't lie I'm impressed by this energy he gives off.

"I understand that, and I will try not to do it again"

I say and he smiles.

"You look beautiful Mihlali"

He compliments and I blush like a little school girl

"Thank you"

I say

"I'll get straight to the point."

He starts off scaring me, I halt to a stop and so does he.

"Mihlali I like you. From the very first time I saw you at Southern Inn with your friends. I offered to pay the bill, but you and your friends denied, I couldn't come and introduce myself to you guys because I was rushing to a meeting same as the day I bumped into you and your aunty at Northern Inn... Now I'm just blabbing"

He says talking really fast, he takes a deep breath and speaks again.

"Mihlali I like you and I would really like to take you out and get to know you more than a friend."

He says taking me by surprise. Did he just ask me that? I don't know if I like him like that? I mean he's charming and all but what if there's more to him than meets the eye?

"I uhm.... I'm free tomorrow as I said earlier"

He nods

"Can I take you out for breakfast?"

He asks, I raise an eyebrow

"I thought you couldn't do tomorrow?"

I ask and he looks down

"Well my big brother and his fiancé are in town, thought we'd be spending the day as a family, but his fiancé and my mother are booked for a morning spa date"

He explains

"And what about your big brother?"

I ask

"He'll understand. So?"

I nod

"I guess I will see you tomorrow then"

I say and he smiles again, my God his smile is just something else.

“So, who are you here with?”

He asks walking me to my table

“My brother, his girlfriend, his friends and my friends. You?”

I ask

“With my friends. Can I see you before you leave? My table is right over there”

He says pointing at a table with 2 black guys and 2 white guys that look as handsome and beautiful as he does. I nod

“Will do. Bye Bandile”

I say as we get close to my friends, he waves and turns around. I turn to my friends and Lara and Vuyo are smiling like idiots

“And?”

They say in unison

“Who was that?”

The big brother mode in Biko has been activated

“That was a guy I like, and he is taking me out for breakfast tomorrow”

I say excited and the girls scream as excited as I am. They get up and drag me downstairs to dance with them

CHAPTER 23

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I am sloshed and having an amazing time until Biko suggests we leave. Says he and Kim are ready to call it a night. He's friends want to club hop, but I want to stay here and keep stealing glances at Bandile as he does the same to me.

"Mihlali you drunk and should probably call it a night"

He says sternly standing in front of me. His friends are already gone and 2 of Bandile's friends are missing from their table.

"No! Biko you can leave, we'll request"

I say yanking my arm away from him. He can be so brotherly when he wants

"NO Mihlali! I am taking you home."

He says angrily grabbing my arm

"Bikokuhle leave me the f*ck alone"

I yell at him yanking my arm away from him.

"Is everything ok here miss?"

A bouncer asks having seen what's going on

"NO"

"YES"

We say together at the same time and the bouncer looks at us confused. Bandile walks over

“Everything ok?”

He asks

“No, he wants me to go home and I am not ready to just yet”

I say and pout

“She’s my little sister and she’s acting like a brat right now. I got this handled please go back about your business”

Biko says to both of them dismissively

“Your sister is in the safest club in the Western Cape. When she needs to go home one of our drives will drive her home”

Bandile says trying to manage the drama

“See, I’m safe”

I say

“Honey Mihlali can take care of herself”

Kim says with pleading puppy eyes at my brother

“Drink water and sober up! I don’t feel comfortable leaving you in a club as drunk as you are Mihlali”

He says sounding more concerned. I roll my eyes and sit down and open a bottle of water to drink

“Happy?”

I ask annoyed and he smiles. He kisses my cheek and says his goodbye to us. Bandile sits next to me, Vuyo and Lara are downstairs dancing.

“You ok?”

He asks and I nod

“I’m annoyed honestly”

I say and he chuckle

“I feel sorry for your brother, drunk you is really stubborn”

He says and I glare at him

“Sorry. Come join my friends and I. You safer close to me than you are here”

He says and he’s pretty convincing. Or is it his smile? His beautiful face maybe?

“You really handsome”

I say with a giggle. As I said before, alcohol does things to me

“and you are really drunk”

He says and I giggle

“yes, I am”

I admit and he chuckles helping me sit down

“You must be Mihlali. I’m Troy”

The white guy says with his hand held out to me, I shake it with a nod

“I am Bulumnko”

The black guy says, and I shake his hand, he’s married judging by the ring on his finger. Bandile is sitting quietly next to me. Someone brings our buckets of alcohol and puts them on the table. Lara and Vuyo come to our table hand in hand

“You moved?”

Vuyo says throwing herself on the couch and I nod drinking my water because future bae wants me to sober up a bit.

“These are my friends, Vuyo and Lara”

I say to the guys

“Bandile, that’s Bulumnko and that is Troy”

He says pointing to each and the guys shake the girl’s hands.

“You ok?”

Lara asks me and I nod

“Just drunk AF!”

I say and they all laugh at me.

“I should go home.”

Lumnko says getting up

“Ladies it was nice to meet you all”

He says and fist bumps with his friends then leaves us.

“Come let’s go dance”

Lara says pulling Troy and Vuyo with her. My friend and playing Matchmake.

“Are you comfortable?”

Bandile asks and I nod

“Yes, I am, I really want to kiss you right now. Can I kiss you?”

I ask unashamed and he chuckles

“You sure?”

I nod getting close to his lips, he meets me halfway and we lip lock. Its slow and unrushed, I don’t want it to end and I’m assuming he doesn’t want it to end to with how slow our kiss is, he dips his tongue into my mouth and our tongues dance to a tune of their own. For a minute I forget our surroundings and just live in this moment he and I are in and its so amazing. He breaks the kiss and shifts uncomfortably, and I wont lie I’m just as uncomfortable as he is, I’m pressing my knees together because I don’t trust myself not to cum right now. I don’t think

I've ever been this turned on by a kiss as I am right now. What is this man doing to me? His phone rings and he looks at it before declining the call.

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

After my kiss with Mihlali I won't lie I am super hard right now and my jeans feel a little too tight than they should. And Troy calling me right now doesn't help the situation, he's the last voice I want to hear right now.

"You taste amazing"

I say and she blushes looking more adorable than she already is. I like and enjoy drunk Mihlali but not more than I like the sober her. When she's sober there's just something about her and I don't know what it is yet and I am probably going to find out what it is all in good time but for now I just want to protect her, drunk or sober I want to protect her and keep her safe from any kind of hurt.

"So, do you"

She says with her voice a bit hoarse. She grabs her water and gulps it down making me chuckle

my phone beeps a message and its Troy. I open it

“Took the girls home. – T” the text message reads, and I chuckle, I should have seen this coming. They definitely ditched us.

“Troy just texted me telling me he took your friends home”

I say and her eyes shoot open in shock

“they ditched me?”

She says and I nod

“Should I drive you home or you still want to stay?”

I ask because it’s the right thing to ask, I guess.

“you are coming home with me?”

She asks giving me her adorable puppy eyes that make me nod my head yes as if compelled to

“Can we go now”

She says and I nod getting up, I hold my hand out to her and she takes it and I pull her up. She stumbles a little and I hold her to me, she giggles. I call a bouncer to have someone clear the table and bring the car around to the office entrance. I also ask that he bring us 2 more bottles of water in the car. We make our way through the crowd, I’m holding her so tightly as if someone would steal her from me with how packed it is here.

We make our way to the office and she asks to pee, I stop by the door and she walks into the toilet and does her business while I wait. I text my brother that I won't be sleeping home and to be on the look out for Unathi. She walks out and we make our way to my car, I'm not sober enough to drive so I have a driver driving us to Mihlali's apartment, she's resting on my shoulder quietly after giving me her address. We drive to her place and she tells the complex security to allow us in, my driver drops us off and hands me the car key and leaves requesting an uber. We head up to her apartment, she unlocks the door and lets us in

"Make yourself comfortable"

She says and runs into the passage. I sit down on the couch and wait for her to come back, she comes back and sits next to me cuddling herself under my arm

"You smell amazing"

She says making me blush. I like how open she gets when she's drunk. When she's sober, she's not this talkative.

"So, do you. You ok?"

I ask and she nods

"Can I offer you something? Please understand that I am tired and will only tell you where to get things"

She says making me laugh, I nod

“Water?”

I ask

“In the fridge. Please bring me a glass too. The glasses are in the top cupboard next to the fridge”

She says, I’m about to get up when she pulls me in for a kiss that lingers. She ends it and I head to the kitchen. What is this girl doing to me? I pour us the water in separate glasses and head back to the lounge. I hand her the glass and drink my very own. When we done, we sit and she switches on the tv putting on a movie. She keeps yawning in between, I don’t even know why she suggested watching a movie when she’s clearly tired.

“You should go to bed now”

I finally say after she’s yawned countless times in literally the first 20 minutes of the movie.

“Yeah I want to cuddle”

She says yawning again getting up from the couch this time, I get up with her and we make our way to her room. She strips out of her clothes not minding me being here. She has an amazing flawless body. Not that its my first time seeing her body but this time around she’s conscious and very much sexy and confident with her body. She heads to the bathroom

wearing nothing but her matching black lace underwear. I don't think I've ever seen any sight sexier. I decide to strip out of my jeans and t-shirt being left in my briefs only. When she walks in, I excuse myself to go a pee. When I'm done, she's already under the covers, reminding me of the time she slept at my place. I switch off the lights and join her, she scoots closely to me pushing her ass to my dick, its really hard to not react right now. She places my arm under neck and sleeps facing away from her so I'm spooning her. I listen to her sleeping and snoring lightly.

CHAPTER 24

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I feel his cologne and heavy arm on my waist before I even open my eyes. I open my eyes and he's really here. I thought I was dreaming but he's really here, he's in my bed and he's sleeping beside me looking so handsome. I just watch him sleeping looking so innocently and so damn sexy in his sleep. I need to pee so badly but I'm also afraid I'll wake him.

"Why are you staring?"

A voice startles me bringing me back from my thoughts, he's awake but his eyes are closed. I don't respond

"Mihlali"

He says and this time he opens his eyes slowly

"I could get used to waking up to your face everyday"

He says and I still don't respond, what do I even say? That I'd also like to wake up to his handsome face? I would though I mean this nigga is yum!!!

"I'd like that too"

The words literally slip out of my mouth, he smiles. I get up

"I need to pee"

I say leaving him in bed. I should be embarrassed by what I just said to him but I'm not. He's really good looking and I can't help but be comfortable around him and safe too. When I'm done, I wash my hands and brush my teeth then head to the room with a towel wrapped around my body.

"I should also pee"

He says getting up from the bed

"Good morning"

He says walking past me. What is it about this man? I look around for my bag and find my phone. Its just after 8am. No hangover in sight!!! I sit on the couch and go through my texts and the girls did text me last night telling me Lara would be back tomorrow at my place and that they are leaving with Troy.

"You really have a nice place here"

He says. My apartment is a 2 bedroom and so is Biko's, I don't even know why the parents got us 2 bedroomed apartments but I aint complaining.

"Thank you. Can I offer you something to eat?"

I ask

"Cereal will do"

He says and I nod getting up the couch. I head to the kitchen and Lara calls me as I walk in the kitchen.

“Hey baby”

Lara greets

“Hey honey, you guys just ditched us”

I say, she chuckles

“I’m sorry baby but we wanted to give you guys needed the space. So how was last night?”

I giggle

“Well he slept over”

I say and she screams in my ear, I remove the phone from my ear waiting for her to finish.

“Hlali”

She screams again, I can’t help but laugh at her drama. I pour milk in a cup

“Calm down Lara. Nothing happened”

I say

“Close enough. I hope you making him breakfast in bed”

She asks

“I’m about to make us cereal”

I respond, you know that feeling you get of someone watching you? That’s exactly how I feel right now, I turn my head and he’s leaning by the door dressed in yesterday’s clothes. He looks amazing still.

“Lara, I have to go. What time will you be home?”

I ask

“I’m on my way actually. Call you when I’m at the gate”

She says. We say our goodbyes and drop the call.

“So... I kind of have to go”

He starts off and I can’t even help the change of my expression. He walks over to me

“I hate to leave right now but I really need to get home”

I just nod

“We still on for breakfast”

He says that making me look up at him. He places a kiss on my lips

“it’s ok, I understand”

“Also, I’m lactose intolerant”

He says with that smile of his

“Well this sucks”

I say and he chuckles

“You didn’t know, its ok”

I just nod, he looks at his watch

“I should really get going. I’ll fetch you at 10?”

He asks and I nod

“You are making it really hard to leave you right now”

He says and I shrug

“Its ok, you have to go. I’ll see you at 10”

I say pouting. He takes my hand and leads me to the door, he stops outside my door step

“This is where you stop.”

He says and I’m assuming that’s based on the towel around my body. I wrap my arms around his neck so tightly not wanting to let go.

“I’ll be back nje Bhabha”

He says in a pleading tone, I nod trusting he will be. I break the hug

“Bye Bhabha”

he says and walks away, I see Lara approaching as he walks away. They greet each other on the way, and she walks over to me. We get inside the flat and she's all happy.

"Where did you sleep?"

I ask

"At Vuyo's. I'm going out for breakfast with the guy from the launch. Tino"

She says

"Why is Bandile leaving?"

She asks

"He has something he needed to attend to, but he'll be back at 10"

I say as we walk into the kitchen.

"What time are you leaving?"

I ask

"In an hour"

She says after looking at her watch. Everyone is just leaving me this morning.

"I was making cereal"

I say

“he didn’t eat?”

she asks, and I nod

“He’s lactose intolerant”

I say mixing my Milo cereal with warm milk

“That sucks. I should get dressed”

She says that heading out, I follow her asking her about last night. She tells me about how Troy told them about Bandile liking me and wanting to know me more than a friend. Her exact words were “he said he doesn’t want to be your friend” she said that laughing

“you lying”

I say and she laughs at me

“I’m serious

that guy likes you”

She says, I chuckle

“Yeah he does, and I like him too. I’d really like to get with him Lara and not as a friend”

I say and shove a spoonful of cereal in my mouth

“Go out for breakfast first and then see if you still want many more breakfasts with the guy. That’s what I do when I like a guy”

She says

“And I also sleep with him first to see if his dick is something, I want to continue having sex with him”

She says and I laugh out loudly, Lara is crazy

“Whatever. I need to call Phiwo”

I say getting up off her bed. I head out to my room dialling Phiwo’s number. She doesn’t answer still. I send her an SMS apologising and also pleading for her to get back to me. I place my dish on the table and go shower. When I’m done, I try calling Phiwo again but still don’t get a response. I call my brother instead

“Mihlali”

He answers

“Hey, I got home safely”

I say

“That’s good to hear. Next time drink wisely don’t cause a scene like you did last night”

He says

“Biko I usually drink and get drunk more than I did last night with just the girls. I didn’t need you playing big brother”

I spit out annoyed

“Mihlali you are my little sister and I will worry about you especially in a club”

He says, I roll my eyes

“Fine. I was just calling to tell you I got home safely”

I say

“Good. Bye sis”

He says and cuts the call on me. A text pops up on my phone and its from Bandile. I read it out loudly to myself

“I can’t stop thinking about you. – Bandile”

I literally smile alone hugging my phone. I respond

“I can’t wait to see you. – Mihlali”

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

I get home and park my car in the yard. I can’t stop thinking about Mihlali, she’s so beautiful and so damn sexy. She made it so damn hard to leave with those big sexy eyes of hers she

makes when she pouts. That hug when she didn't want me to leave, I just want to spend the day with her in bed talking and making out in between.

"Bandile you home"

Someone says the minute I walk in, its Unathi. I'd even forgotten she was here.

"Hi Unathi"

I greet

"Where were you? You didn't sleep here last night"

She says, I look at her frowning

"Where's everyone?"

I ask and she shrugs

"I haven't seen anyone since I woke up"

She says, I nod leaving her in the lounge. I make my way upstairs and bump into mom

"Bandile"

She says and her tone is not so friendly

"Morning mom"

I greet

“What’s that girl doing here?”

She asks

“She needed a place to crash and she’ll be leaving soon”

I explain

“Why here? Bandile I don’t like that girl. She’s always been after your money and she still is”

She says

“She was in a tight corner Mah”

“I don’t care! She needs to leave!”

She says, haibo this woman? Whose house is this kanti?

“Mom come on. You ready for your spa date?”

I ask

“I know what you doing! When I come back, she better be gone!”

She demands. I chuckle

“A driver will be picking you guys up or Bakho will drive you?”

I ask

“Lukho will drive us, she wants to know Cape Town. She and Bakho might be moving this side soon”

She says, I'm shocked by this information

"What do you mean?"

I ask

"Well I want my daughter in law close and your brother's job is bringing him this side"

She explains, we walk up to my room with her

"Where did you sleep? Are you seeing someone?"

She asks as we walk into my room, I laugh

"Wow mom. I slept at a friend's place. I was too drunk to drive"

I say and she laughs

"She smells amazing on you"

She says resting on the couch

"Mom please, I need to shower and prepare for my breakfast date"

I say that taking off my t-shirt

"Fine"

She says getting up

"She better be pretty and nothing like that Unathi"

Mom spits out walking out of the room. She's something else. I take off my clothes and wrap a towel around my waist. I text Mihlali and then go shower. When I walk out of the shower, I have a text from Mihlali, I smile alone while reading it. I get dressed and head out looking for Unathi, she and I need to talk anyway. I get to her room and she has a towel wrapped around her body "Bards what are you doing here?"

She asks with a smile "We need to talk"

I say sitting on the couch, she sits next to me "Sounds serious"

She says "Yes, it is. You know I don't beat around the bush."

She nods "I can't help you with the money you need but I will offer you a job to help lighten Lona's load. She's my P.A but she needs someone who will help her with the job load. That's all I can offer you. The pay will be good. You can stay here for the next 3 months until you are able to stand on your own"

I say that getting up "Will your little girlfriend be ok with that?"

She asks with a sarcastic tone

"Obviously she won't but you need all the help you can get, just stay out of mom's way while you here"

I say and walk out

CHAPTER 25

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“You early”

I say as he walks into my apartment carrying a bunch of pink and white roses.

“I didn’t know what you might like so asked them to mix them”

He says nervously handing me the flowers. I smell them and they smell amazing.

“Thank you for these”

I say taking the flowers heading to the kitchen

“I’m not early, you are running late”

He says and my eyes automatically go to the clock on the wall, he’s right. I’m running late

“Oh flip, I’m sorry”

I apologise embarrassed. I pour water in a vase and put the roses in

“Its ok, I’ll wait”

He says, I turn around and he offers to carry the vase for me

“Where should I put these?”

He asks

“Follow me”

I say leading him to my room, its got better light anyway. I ask him to set them on a table near the window

“I want these to be the first thing I see when I wake up”

I say with a smile. I head to the closet and slip into a white loose dress and a denim jacket then wear black sliders. I like them and I like being comfortable anyway. I take a black sling bag and head out of the closet

“You look beautiful”

He says as soon as I step out

“Thank you. You look good in shorts”

I say, he’s wearing a white t-shirt and blue shorts and vans. He looks so good and his legs are toned and sexy AF!

“Thank you. Ready?”

He asks and I nod, he walks out, and I lock my room. We make our way out of the apartment. He opens the door to the car he left in this morning, it’s a black Mercedes. It smells like him on the inside. He closes the door and goes to his side.

“So where do you want to eat Miss Langa?”

He asks, I never know how to answer this question because I never know how big or small the guy's wallet is, but this guy is filthy rich and there's more than enough of places to go.

"Camps bay?"

He asks and I just nod, he's the one that wanted us to go for breakfast.

"Can't speak anymore?"

He asks

"I can but I never know how to answer the question where to eat"

I explain

"I understand but you should just pick any place you like or would like to go to but never had the chance to"

He says, could this guy get any better? He's perfect

"Well there is this restaurant around Camps Bay, Italian Bay"

I never went because its crazy expensive and my friends aren't big in trying out new places

"I love their food!"

he says

"You've been?"

I ask and he nods

“Yeah, I think I’ve been to most restaurants around the Western Cape”

He says

“that’s amazing B. I’d like to have the time to go out and explore restaurants but with school and all I never really have the time and most of them are expensive and my friends aren’t big on trying out new places”

I explain, and he nods

“Well you have me now and we can explore all these places together”

He says and I can’t help the smile on my face

“That is good to know”

I say not even sure how to respond. We drive into the parking lot and he parks the car then he opens the door for me, and we head in hand in hand, something he insisted on which I don’t mind of cause. We are taken to a table for 2, the names of the food are in Italian but the things in the food are in English at least. I look through the menu and opt for your usual eggs and bacon type of breakfast. He orders himself a breakfast pizza with a side of fries

“I’m sorry but I really love their fries”

He says after the waitress has left

“I aint judging. I love fries myself”

I say

“So, tell me about yourself?”

He says

“Well I don’t know. I guess with me its not a what you see is what you get or, so I’ve been told a thousand times. I’m a huge foodie and I enjoy cooking but just don’t force me to cause then I’ll make shiity food but not on purpose”

I say quickly and he chuckles

“I’m a literature student doing my first year, I’m turning 18 this year. My big brother is studying Computer Science at Stellenbosch and I’m studying at UCT. I have 2 other sisters, twins and they still in primary. I love Fashion, if I wasn’t studying Literature, I’d probably be studying Fashion. One day I hope to publish and be an internationally recognised author”

I say thinking about just how much writing is an escape for me

“Id like to read your stuff. Do you write online?”

He asks and I nod

“Yes, I have a blog and I have a section in my friends online Magazine. I also write on this other website Visionary Writings. I’m really just trying to put my stuff out there”

I say

“Aren’t you afraid of people stealing your stuff and publishing it on a book?”

I shrug

“Well it is possible but who still does that? I mean I think my stuff on VW is safe and with my number of profile views and book views I trust that my readers would let me know if someone somewhere did such a thing you know”

I say proudly. I have a good relationship with my readers, and I trust them

“So why haven’t you published yet?”

I shrug my shoulders

“I don’t know honestly. I just enjoy writing at the moment for the fun of it and the little pay I get from it. I understand that publishing would help me reach a wider audience but for some reason I’m scared of the critics. I can take the critics from my friends and readers, but I can’t handle the kind of pressure that comes with publishing. Having to write something and it having to be perfect enough for book reviewers and stuff”

I say and he nods

“Well I would like to believe that critics are always going to be there

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its up to you whether you take something from it, or you don't. I mean you can't impress everyone but as long as your readers enjoy what you write then it shouldn't matter what some stranger posts in a magazine or blog. Do you Hlali and you'll be the happiest you'll ever be in this world we live in”

He says and I can't help but smile. Our food is delivered with our drinks, we thank the waitress

“They pretty quick”

I compliment and he nods

“and their food is amazing too”

He adds while digging into his pizza. Its bacon, cheese, egg, peppers and I don't know what else, but it looks yummy but so does my plate. I dig into mine and the first bite alone gives me life, my God he was right, the food is amazing!

“Enjoying your plate?”

He asks and I smile

“Very”

“Here, have a taste of this”

He says placing a slice for me on a plate

“I thought you lactose intolerant”

I remind

“I am but this pizza is actually catered for us lactose intolerant people”

He says and I nod, I cut a piece and put in my mouth. It’s delicious

“Wow”

I say after swallowing

“Told you, now try these”

He says holding out a fry to me, I take a bite and its just as good. Whatever spice they use it’s so nice

“You were right. Can’t I get my own?”

I ask and he chuckles

“yes, you can Bhabha”

He says hailing a waitress over, I place my order and she tells us that our waitress will be bringing the order.

“We’ve been talking about me. Tell me about you”

I say, he chuckles and takes a sip of his drink

“well I’m a simple guy. I recently turned 25 this year in January. If workaholic was a person then it would be me. I don’t even know what rest is anymore, I literally have to switch off both my phones if I want some time away from business but even that never works because work always finds me”

He says with a chuckle

“But I enjoy every bit of it. I have 2 brothers only, my father died 4 years back and ever since its been my mother, my brothers and I taking on the world. My older brother is currently working in the Eastern Cape and my little brother is studying and working. He’s a pain in the ass”

I chuckle

“What’s the poor guy done?”

I ask

“Bayanda has a way of getting himself into trouble and I always have to bail him out. If not me then its mom getting him out of trouble. Worse he’s so smart Hlali and I hate that he wastes his time with the wrong people”

I nod

“I think I understand”

I say

“But we not here to talk about him”

He says

“I’m also not one to beat around the bush and I may come on too strong, but Muhlali I like you and I’m enjoying this time we are spending together and would really like to be your boyfriend”

He says catching me off guard

“And I understand that girls usually need time to think about all this. I’d like to give you a week to think it through but I won’t lie I’m such a busy person and I tend to forget things at times so as much as I’d like to woo you through out until you decide whether you want this or not I’m scared I’ll probably forget or stop halfway through the week”

He explains and I can’t help but laugh at how nervous seems right now but yet so confident at the same time.

“Let’s try this and see”

I say

“I am a super busy person, but I promise you I do make time for someone I’m dating and maybe not enough time as you girls would like bu...”

I place a hand over his

“We can try this Bandile”

I say and he looks at me stunned with a smile

“You sure?”

I roll my eyes and he chuckles pulling my hand to his lips and kisses it

“Thank you, Miss Langa, I hope I don’t disappoint or make you regret your decision”

He says and I smile at him. We finish eating over light conversations getting to know each other. I never had favourite flowers, but I think I do now. When we done eating, he requests the bill.

“Mr Tshawe ma’am would like to have a few minutes of your time”

Our waitress says as he signs the bill

“Ok, where is she?”

He asks

“She’s in the office but will be out in a bit she’s still busy with a phone call”

She says and Bandile nods as she hands him the speed point. When we done paying, we get up and the waitress leads us to where I’m assuming is the office. He knocks and walks in with my hand in his. The lady is on her feet

“Bandile hey”

She greets

“China hey. This is Mihlali”

He says and I wave with a smile, she returns a fake one.

“Bhabha this is China, we went to varsity together. She studied culinary and this is her restaurant.”

I nod

“Your place is beautiful, and the food is amazing”

I compliment

“Thank you. Bardz have you spoken to Unathi?”

She asks

“Yes, actually and she’s currently at my place”

He says and the girl seems shocked to hear this bit of information

CHAPTER 26

-BANDILE TSHAWWE

China and I went to Varsity together and then later I found out she and Unathi are friends. Obviously, nothing ever happened between China and I because she was Unathi's friend and also, I never saw her in any other way either than just a friend. She left in her second year and came back last year to open her restaurant and that's how we met up, she had asked me to help her get investors. I offered to help but she said she wanted to work with strangers instead. Hlali and I sit down on the couch and sits on her table

"She called me today telling me what happened. Is she ok?"

She asks and I nod

"I think she's a little shaken that's all. I offered her to work with Lona, I'll hear from her later"

I say

"I offered her to come and stay with me and she said she would think about it, I even offered to give her half of the money just as long as she pays it back"

She says

“And when did you guys have this conversation because she didn’t mention anything to me. Worse mom lives at my place now with her sick and all”

“Ma went back to hospital? Is it her heart again?”

I nod

“But she’s fine but I’m keeping her at my place to keep an eye on her”

She nods

“I wanted to talk about Unathi, but we can talk some other time. Also, Lona is looking for you”

She says as I get up with Hlali

“She never takes a break does she”

I say that with a chuckle

“When you run more than 3 companies you bound to be needed at all times Bandile. You can’t just disappear”

She says walking us out

“It was nice to see you China. I’ll call you later”

I say as we leave, and she says her goodbyes. We get into the car

“I’m sorry about that”

I apologise as soon as I close the door

“She doesn’t seem to like me”

Hlali says and I chuckle

“Who? China? No man. She’s the most sweetest person I know”

I say but she doesn’t respond

“As much as I don’t want this day to end but I have get back on the radar or else people will die”

She chuckles

“I understand”

She says

“Can I see you later?”

“Yeah, you have my number. You’ll call me”

She says

“I thought you said you had plans later?”

I ask and she giggles

“Well I needed to make you sweat and make time to see me in my own time”

She says proudly making me laugh

“I like that.”

I say and she chuckles

“liar!”

She says poking me

“No really I like that. I think I’m used to people juggling their time around mine and I appreciate having someone who makes me work around her schedule just this once”

I say and it’s the honest truth. Most girls fall at my feet and its annoying over time.

“Can I get you something for lunch?”

I ask and she shakes her head no

“no thanks but can I call you when I want something for lunch?”

I chuckle

“My phone will probably be off or on silent so I can’t make any promises. Let’s do this, how about we place an order in a restaurant of your choice and have the food delivered at your place?”

I ask and she nods

“Yes”

She responds happily. We drive to the hotel here in Camps bay and place an order, 4 different meals in case her friends join her.

“This is too much B, there’s only 2 of us”

She says shyly as I finish paying

“You like food and I enjoy feeding you”

I say taking her hand into mine. We go back to the car and I drive her to her apartment. I park and she takes off the safety belt and turns to me

“Thank you for breakfast, I really enjoyed my time with you”

She says and I smile

“I will call you ok when I get the chance. I’ll be with family throughout the evening”

I say bored and she giggles

“Enjoy the time you spend with them tyini. Thanks again for today and last night”

She says, I lean in close and she meets me halfway. We share a kiss and its shorter than yesterday’s one only because we are disturbed by my phone ringing. Bakho’s timing sucks!

“Sorry about this but I have to take it”

I say and she nods

“You have to go anyway. See you later”

She says kissing my cheek and getting out of the car. I answer Bakho's call

"Your timing is impeccable"

I say and he chuckles

"We are waiting for you here"

He says

"fine. I'm on my way"

I say and we end the call. I drive home and mom and her koti are still not back.

"Hey"

I greet Bakho who's sitting in the lounge

"Hello. She better be worth it"

He says and I chuckle throwing myself on the couch next to him

"Oh, trust me she is. So, mom and koti still not back?"

I ask and he shakes his head

"I don't know how to feel about their newly found friendship"

He says and I laugh at him

"She doesn't have a daughter of her own so let her be. Mom mentioned you might be moving this side"

I say and he nods

“Well I this morning I went to view our offices this side. I signed the contract and will be heading the division this side”

He says, we shake hands and fist bump

“That’s awesome news Bakho. And what about Lukho?”

“she was already originally moving this side. She is supposed to start next month and now so will I”

He says, I’m happy I’ll have my brother here

“We’ll be moving in with mom until we can stand on our own two feet”

He says

“Come on we both know that you guys need not move out. Mom would love to live with you guys.”

He nods

“Yah but I like a place to call my own you know”

I say

“That’s stupid because that house is practically yours!”

I say rolling my eyes, well its not really his considering our father built it for mom before he died. It was supposed to be our family home this side.

“Hahah no, that’s mom’s house. Plus, we both know mom will leave the house in Baya’s name”

He says and I nod yes, he’s right. Mom is very much capable of doing that.

“Anyway

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when is Unathi leaving? Bandile you shouldn’t even be entertaining that girl”

He says and I roll my eyes

“Where is she anyway?”

I ask and he shrugs

“I don’t know, I think she must be in the room”

He says. I get up and make my way to the room she is in. I knock and she tells me to come in. I walk in and sit on the couch

“hey”

I greet and she sits up

“Hi. You look nice”

She says and I thank her

“I saw China today”

I start off

“Oh, and?”

I shoot her a look confused by her response, what does that mean?

“Meaning?”

I decided to ask and she shrugs

“What did she say?”

She asks

“That she offered to pay half of the money as long as you pay her back”

I say with furrowed eyebrows

“yes, she did but that was after you offered me a job”

She explains

“And what about her offering you a place to stay?”

She shrugs

“Honestly Bandile I never stopped loving you and I really just want to fix things between us”

She says, I am shocked by this

“Unathi I...”

I start off but she cuts me off

“Bandile I know I messed up and it sucks that this is what it took to open my eyes and see that you are what I need and always needed. I am sorry Bandile I f*cked us up and I would really like to work things out”

I chuckle scratching my head

“Unathi I only took you in because I felt you needed a friend. I’m sorry if I gave you the wrong impression. I have a girlfriend, you met her last night and she would not appreciate you living with me. So please call China and accept her offer to move in with her and to help pay your debt”

I say and she sniffs

“I’ll have someone drive you to her place ok”

I walk up to her and kiss her forehead.

“I’ll call Lona and give her your number”

I tell her and walk out. I change into jeans and head downstairs.
Baya is here

“Well hello little brother”

I greet

“Hi Bardz, where to?”

He asks

“Bakho and I heading out, we’ll meet mom and Lukho for lunch”

I say, the time is just after 1pm

“Oh”

“Join us, we haven’t had some bro time in ages”

Bakho says

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Lara is back, she’s sitting on the couch and busy with her laptop. We have an assignment to submit a book review paper on a book we’ve been doing this week. I throw myself on the couch beside her and smile alone, she pokes me

“I know that look”

She says and I don’t respond

“You like-like-like him”

She says and I cover my face with my hands

“You’re annoying”

I mumble and she giggles

“I love seeing you happy, you deserve to be happy”

She says pulling my hands away from my face and I just nod with a full teeth smile

“Thank you, babe. What about you? What’s going on?”

I ask and she smiles

“he’s sweet and I think I like him, and I want to get to know him more”

She says and I smile pulling her ear playfully

“Stop that. But on the real he’s sweet”

There’s a knock on the door, I tell her I’ll get it and when I get to the door its Bontle

“Hey baby”

I say hugging her and she greets back

“How are you?”

I ask as we head to the lounge. She greets Lara and we all chat until my phone rings, I smile alone when Bandile’s name shows up on my screen

“Bhabha”

He says and I blush leaving the lounge but Lara and Bontle sit me down making me laugh

“Hey babe”

I say holding back laughter

“I’m sorry, these idiots I’m with don’t want me to leave the room”

I say and he chuckles

“Its good to hear you laughing, you happy and I love that”

He says and I blush even more.

“Your lunch will be delivered at 2pm. You still good?”

He asks

“Yes, I am babe. Are you?”

I ask

“I miss you. I miss seeing your face”

He says and I smile again and the girls giggle, I probably look ridiculous right now, but I don’t care.

“You literally saw me like an hour ago”

I say and he chuckles

“I don’t think that means I can’t miss you though. I want to see your adorable face before I spend the rest of my afternoon with my boring ugly brothers”

I laugh

“You dramatic. Go and enjoy your time with family Bandile.
Bye”

He chuckles

“Ouch. Bye Bhabha, see you later”

He says and I also say goodbye and end the call. The girls laugh at me and start poking me to talk and tell them about my breakfast.

“his ex-lives in his house”

CHAPTER 27

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“he what?”

Lara asks and I shrug my shoulders

“And he wants to start a relationship with you?”

I nod yes to Bontle’s question

“Hlali he needs to deal with his baggage before bringing you into his life”

Lara points out

“Yeah but it’s not like I’ve told him what’s going on in my life”

I say

“Its too soon for him to know what’s going on in your life”

Bontle says defensively

“Yah but its not like he was the one to tell me all this, yesterday she showed up and needed his help. Today we met her friend who runs the restaurant we went to for breakfast and apparently, she had offered to help this Unathi girl, but she seems to not have wanted China’s help. Also, China gave me a stink eye for some reason”

Lara laughs, as in an annoying irritating laugh

“Have you seen how beautiful and sexy you are? I gave you a stink eye the first time I met you”

She explains herself and I laugh, she’s right. She didn’t like me the first time we met. It was the first day of class, I arrived 2 minutes late and sat in front. Our lecturer asked a question and she answered but I disagreed with her response and then we started arguing until the lesson was over. From that day on she kept disagreeing with my responses until we found out that we loved the same author and have read all her books. Apart from Phiwo and Vuyo, she was my first best friend in Varsity.

“Whatever Lara. But on the real, Bandile needs to sort these ladies out if he wants something serious with you”

Bontle says and sips on her cider, she came with a 6 pack of brutal fruit spritzer, Lara is about to respond when my phone rings and its an unknown number.

“Hello?”

I say

“Mihlali hi, its Bayanda”

He says, this I was not expecting

“Hi”

I say unable to hide the shock in my voice

“You busy?”

“I kind of am, what’s up?”

I ask

“I wanted to take you out for lunch, tomorrow I guess”

He says with clear disappointment. We say our goodbyes and I return my phone on the table, the girls give me that “Spill it” look

“That was Bayanda, he wanted to take me out for lunch”

I say

“And you said no, why?”

Lara asks, I shoot her a look

“Hello! She’s in a relationship with the guy’s brother. Anyway, how is this supposed to work anyway? Bandile introduces you 2 or you tell him?”

Bontle asks and I shrug

“That’s the thing, there’s nothing going on between Bayanda and I. I on the other hand am dating his brother”

I explain and Lara chuckles

“You are in some situation there miss. So, what now?”

I shrug my shoulders and sip on my cider. There's a call on the house telephone, its probably the gate. I go and answer and they tell me that there's a food delivery for me at the gate. I wear the closest shoe and go fetch the food, the delivery guy is carrying a bunch of flowers with my food. I thank him and tip him then head back. Bandile is turning me into a flower person. This time around its red roses, I'm smiling alone all the way to the apartment. I walk in and head to the kitchen to put the flowers in a vase then place the flowers in a table in the passage. I take 3 plates and cutlery then take the things to the lounge.

"And this?"

Bontle asks

"Bandile bought us lunch after our breakfast and he sent me red roses"

I say smiling

"On top of the flowers he had delivered this morning. He's a keeper, too perfect"

Lara points out and I don't allow her comment to get to me. I like that he's too good to be true. A guy can love a girl without ulterior motives, we can't always fall for a person expecting the worst of them.

"I prefer him perfect"

I say dishing out for each one of us. Its lasagne and veggies and pizza and other food but I only dish out the lasagne and veggies. I hand them the food and they each thank me. I settle on the couch and take out the assignment paper and read from it about what our assignment is about. We start working on our assignment and when we done eating and doing the dishes around 6, I take an uber to Phiwo's home. She and I need to talk. I knock and her sister opens.

"Hlali hi"

Her little sister is 15.

"Hey sweetie. How are you?"

I respond as we break the hug

"I'm good thanks and you?"

"I'm good, is Phiwo around?"

She nods

"In her room"

I thank her and walk to Phiwo's room. I knock on her door, but I don't get a response, so I let myself in.

"hey"

I say walking in

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but she just looks up at me and back to her books. Ouch. I sit on the bed

“Chomam I am sorry for not telling you. I probably should have told you, but you know me Phiwo, I can’t involve myself in you or my brother’s business. You my best friend and Biko is my brother. I couldn’t say anything without either of you being mad at me”

I try and explain but she just writes what I’m assuming is her homework or assignment. I sigh

“What will it take for you to forgive me because I really don’t like this”

I ask, she sighs out loudly and sits up

“Mihlali you my best friend, have been since we were kids. I expected you to tell me something like this or a heads up at least so that I know what I’m getting myself into. Seeing them together and how sweet and nice she is hurt Mihlali because then I couldn’t even cry to my own friend because she knew and kept the truth from me”

She says and I realise how hurt she is by all this

“My friend I am truly sorry, and I understand you not wanting anything to do with me. I just came to check up on you”

I say and I'm about to get up when she puts her hand over mine
"I forgive you"

She says and I smile and pull her into a bone crushing hug
thanking her. This is what I love about Phiwo, she has a
forgiving heart. We break the hug

"How are you holding up? What now?"

I ask and she shrugs

"I don't know. I'm mad that he lied to me but for some stupid
reason I want to hear him out. Am I wrong for wanting to hear
him out?"

She asks, she's asking the wrong person because I know Biko
more than anyone and my brother won't break it off with Kim,
instead he will date both of them and make one of the two
understand and its definitely not going to be Kim. I let out a sad
sigh

"Phiwo Biko likes you, maybe he loves you but honestly
speaking. My brother loves Kim more, they've been together
for 3 years I think if not 4 this year but they have been pushing
and I don't see him breaking things off with her anytime soon
and as much as I hate to say this, but he really loves her and has
introduced her to the whole family already"

She looks down

“I love him Hlali”

She says with her voice breaking

“I know friend”

I say pulling her in for a hug

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

Spending the day with my brother’s actually went better than I thought it would. Baya went to work at 5pm. I like that he’s taking this job thing serious but with Baya you can never be too certain. When we got home Unathi was gone with the little she had, I tried calling her but reached her voicemail. I try calling China.

“Hey, this is a surprise”

She says

“Hey, have you heard from Unathi?”

I ask

“Yes, she moved into my place a while ago”

“Ok China thank you”

I say and cut the call. At least that is handled. I make my way back into the lounge where dinner is about to be served. Its 7pm on the dot.

“Is she gone?”

Mom asks as soon as I walk in and I nod

“Good. I never want to see her again!”

She spits out making us all laugh

“Mah why do you hate her so much?”

Lukho asks

“I’ll tell you later. Just know that she’s a gold-digging bitch!”

Mom says, I can’t believe she just called her that! Its so unlike her to call people b*tches but I guess Unathi earned it.

“Bandile when are you taking a wife?”

She asks catching me off guard such that I choke on my drink

“Haibo Mah”

Bakho says but mom’s attention is on me

“So? When can I expect a daughter in law from you? You know, I married your father at 20 and we worked together to build a legacy for all you kids”

She says and I roll my eyes

“Mah I’m too busy for marriage. I have 3 hotels to run, a media company, 3 restaurants and an international Marketing company. Where will I get the time?”

I ask and my brother chuckles

“You forgot to mention the club”

He says knowing how much mom hates the club. She never wanted us to get the club to begin with

“That’s exactly why you need a wife. To help you handle all these businesses, Bandile you are over working that poor child”

She says that talking about Lona

“Lona enjoys her job, when I called her about hiring Unathi she wasn’t happy. She went as far as saying she doesn’t need anyone to lighten her load for her”

I say

“You hiring Unathi?”

Mom asks and I nod

“Lona could use the help and Unathi has a degree in PR”

She shakes her head no

“I know you don’t like her, but she needs the job and Lona needs the help”

I say getting up

“And where are you going?”

Mom asks

“I need to make a phone call”

I say leaving the table scrolling to Mihlali’s contact.

“Hey you”

She says, just hearing her voice creates butterflies in my stomach

“Hey Bhabha, are you busy?”

I ask

“I was visiting my friend but I’m about to head to my place”

“You driving at night?”

I ask, I’m concerned in all honesty

“No, I’ll request”

“Can I fetch you instead? Its safer”

I say and she giggles

“Yes, you can fetch me. I’ll send you my location when I’m ready to leave”

“Great. See you in a while then”

I say and we say our goodbyes ending the call. I head back to the dining room and continue eating in silence until 20 minutes later Mihlali sends me her location on WhatsApp. I take my dish to the kitchen and say my goodbyes to the family. I get into my car and drive to the location Mihlali is in, after 30 minutes or so I'm parked outside calling her to come out to the car. She still looks as beautiful as when I saw her but now, she's wearing sweatpants, a white vest and long wool cardigan with sneakers.

"You look amazing"

"and crusty"

She adds and I chuckle

"I don't think you capable of looking crusty. You ok?"

She nods

"Yep I'm good, are you?"

She asks

"Very. So straight home or?"

I ask

"Would it be wrong of me if I said I wanted to spend the night with you again?"

She asks innocently and who am I to say no? I nod like a school kid offered candy

“I enjoy having you in my arms Hlali. Have you had dinner?”

I ask and she shakes her head no

“I did eat lunch and I still full”

She says and I nod

“Do you need anything at your place?”

I ask and she says yes

“Toiletries and something to change”

I nod and drive to her place. We park inside the yard and head to her apartment. She packs an overnight bag and then we leave.

CHAPTER 28 – 3 MONTHS LATER

-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

These last 3 months have been amazing, things between Kim and I have been good. Yesterday she left Bloem, she lost her father and that's where he'll be laid to rest next week Saturday. We've been talking since morning and she is not ok, I don't know what to say to her to make her feel any better, I've only ever lost my father's parents, so I don't know what kind of pain she's going through.

When we done talking my phone rings and its Phiwo. You probably already hate for this, but she and I worked things out last month after a lot of pleading and begging. She told me that she loved me and couldn't just let me go or her love go just like that so yes, we got back together, and she understands or rather she pretends she's ok with sharing me with Kim as long as I respect her and give her my time.

"Hey pretty thang"

I greet

"hey babe, we still on for Lunch?"

She asks

"Of cause Babe, I'll fetch you ok?"

my phone beeps indicating an incoming call. It's my biological mom

"Listen baby I have to go, my mother is calling me"

I say and she says goodbye sounding disappointed

"Honey hi"

She says

"Hey"

I say coldly

"How are you Rato?"

She asks and I roll my eyes

"Good thanks and, how are you?"

I ask

"I'm ok. I just landed in Cape Town"

She says happily

"Doing what here?"

I ask unable to hide the disapproving tone in my voice

"Lerato my mother is sick"

She says and I don't know how to respond. I probably met her mother when I was still young, but I have no memory of her or whatsoever.

"I'm sorry to hear that"

I say, last time I checked she was in Lesotho for work, but I guess her work trip was cut short.

"Thank you. Can I see you for lunch? Please before I leave"

She pleads

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-BANDILE TSHAWE

Things between Mhlali and I have been amazing. We've been in our own little bubble for 3 months now and counting. I've officially met her brother, but I haven't met the rest of her family the same way she has met my mother and hasn't met Bayanda yet. Well they know each other but she told me that nothing happened between them and that they only friends and I believe it although Baya has told me about Hlali and how he likes her more than a friend. I don't know how to tell him that she and I dating without hurting him. He's been so well behaved lately that we ended up giving him back his car last

week. Mom is back in her house living with Bakho and his fiancé.

Unathi has been doing a good job and I'm happy to say she respects me and seems to have accepted that she and I will never be although Hlali feels like Unathi doesn't like her. With ladies you never know, I think it's that drama between the ex and the current but Unathi and I spoke, and she promised to be more nicer to Hlali and to never forget sending her flowers on a Wednesday as I normally do.

I've been meaning to promote Lona, its long overdue anyway and she deserves a promotion after all the work she has done but I don't know what to promote her to since she knows my work all too well. I'm thinking of making having her handle half of the work I already do, I've been grooming her, and I believe she has learnt more than enough while working for me. I call her into the office.

"Mr Tshawe you called"

She says walking in, I offer her a seat opposite me

"Relax I'm not firing you"

I say and she breathes out loudly

"ok sir"

She says and I chuckle.

“Lona you’ve been more than an assistant to me for the past 3 years, I know I should have done this earlier but with the amount of work we’ve both been juggling I always forgot, or we didn’t have the time. Thank you for being more than a P.A to me, thank you for being the pillar of all my companies actually. You’ve trained Unathi well over the past three months and I’m happy with the job she is doing and the job you have done. Lona, I want to promote you”

She goes from nervous to jaw dropping as soon as I say the last line

“You deserve it. I don’t know what to call the position I’m giving you, but I’ll be raising your pay. You are going to help me manage everything. There’s an office next door that Unathi has been setting up for you for the past few days now and I believe its ready for you. Here is a contract explaining your job description and everything else. Please tell me you’ll accept and if you want to negotiate your pay then I’m open to negotiations”

I say nervously, I’d hate to lose Lona. She’s the next best thing after me. I can’t imagine anyone better suited for the job than her and the fact that she recently completed her Business Analysis degree last year is an added advantage. This year I had her take a business short course and she passed everything so

there's no better time to promote her than now. She has all the experience for the job and I of all people would know

"Mr Tshawe, I don't know how to thank you for this"

She says sniffing, I chuckle and walk over the table to her, she gets up and throws her arms around my neck

"Thank you so much sir. I promise not to disappoint you ever."

She says and I chuckle breaking the hug

"You are welcome. Have a lawyer review the contract and have it on my desk by Monday ok"

I order and she nods yes

"Of course. Thank you so much sir"

She says and I excuse her to call my girl

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its just after 9am, she should have gotten her flowers.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

It's on Wednesday and usually on Wednesdays I receive a bunch of flowers from my boyfriend, feels so damn good calling him that. Bandile has been what one would call a blessing in my not so fairy-tale life. I have met his mother during this time and she's sweet and I think she loves me. I haven't had any run in's with Bayanda at Bandile's house so that's good, though Bae did tell me that he lives in res and if he's not at res then he's at his mother's place. So that's a bullet I keep dodging, Baya knows I have a boyfriend he just doesn't know its his brother yet.

During the period of receiving flowers every Wednesday, we found out I'm allergic to lilies. I did not see that one coming, but I am, and it sucks so to make up for those, Bae got me those fake plastic lilies.

During this time, I told him about Daniel and I, but I never mentioned the sex tape and he told me about his relationship with Unathi, of cause I'm not happy that he hired her as his second P.A but what choice do I have? At least I don't have to deal with her unless Lona is unable to do something then I'm forced to deal with her and let me just say things between her and I have not been on a good note. She's made it clear that she doesn't like me. I remember this one Wednesday I didn't get my flowers and her response was that she forgot so from there on Lona made it her duty to send me flowers every morning at 9am.

Bandile shows me love I've never experienced before, and I don't think I have ever loved a guy the way I love him. I am sure you guys are dying to know about the sex? Well I don't think I'd stay with a person who doesn't hit right. That's all I'll say for now. I'm making breakfast for the family when there's a knock on the door, it's the florist. He's carrying White orchids. I smile and take them from him thanking him and signing his board. I smile alone smelling the flowers, it's become a thing to sniff them. I sneeze right after, that never happens. I place them on the counter and go fill the vase while sneezing. My phone rings as soon as I'm about to put the flowers in the vase. I answer

"Bhabha"

He says, I sneeze again

"Hey Baby"

I say in between sneezes

"Are you ok? Is it flu?"

He asks with so much concern. Well Cape Town winter is super cold so it's possible

"I don't know. I just got the flowers thank you Chocky they beautiful"

I say again in between sneezes, it's what I call him because his flawless dark skin reminds me of chocolate.

“Should I be worried? This how you sneezed the last time you received lilies”

He says with so much worry and concern in his voice

“Chocky I’m fine. I was about to put them in the vase, can I call you when I’m done with breakfast?”

I say

“Ok Bhabha I’ll be waiting for your call”

He says and I end the call. My hands are itchy as they were when I had a reaction to lilies. I remove them from the plastic and place them in the vase as itchy and sneezy as I am, I find a lily in the flowers hidden. Explains why I’m acting up. I run upstairs and take my allergy pills before this gets worse. I return downstairs and mom’s in the kitchen putting the flowers in the vase

“These are nice honey”

She says, I sneeze

“Thanks mom, they from Bandile”

I say, she knows I’m dating Bandile, but I haven’t introduced him to them yet.

“Honey are you ok? You reacting to something”

She says worried

“I’m fine, I came in contact with a lily hidden in the flowers.”

I explain in between sneezes and scratching my face and hands

“Hlali where are your meds?”

She asks

“I just took them mom, I should be fine in an hour or so”

I say unbothered but busy scratching and sneezing

“Baby I’m worried”

Mom finally say unable to hide the concern in her voice and face.

“Biko”

She calls out, he comes in running. I’m sitting on the high chair attending my now itchy arms and neck

“Bring Hlali’s meds in her room”

Mom says, my phone rings and its Bandile. Mom answers it for me because I can’t, my hands are swollen and now so is my face

“Hi”

Mom greets and puts him on speaker

“Uhm... hi? Can I speak to Mihlali?”

He says, he is the one person who can tell my voice apart from mom's. Apparently, she and I sound the same.

"I'm rushing her to the hospital. She's having a reaction to the flowers"

Mom says, normally I'd roll my arms at how dramatic she's being right now because apart from the swelling and itching I'm fine.

"Which hospital Mrs Mtwala?"

He asks, my boyfriend worries too damn much! Biko is about to help me drink my pills when I collapse

CHAPTER 29

-BANDILE TSHAWWE

Hearing that Mihlali is in hospital is by far the second most scariest thing, the first being my mother hospitalized. The last time she landed in hospital because of lilies the doctor said she wouldn't be so lucky next time. Mind you this person's face was swollen and so was the rest of her body, she was pink even. I won't lie I was so scared to lose her. It doesn't even make any sense because both Lona and Unathi know she's allergic and its Lona's duty to send her the right flowers in a store that doesn't even sell lilies. I rush to the hospital and meet her mother in the reception with her brother. I've never met her before, so I don't know how to handle this situation.

"Mrs Mtwala Hi"

I greet walking over to her

"Hi, Bandile?"

She asks shaking my hand, I nod yes

"how is she?"

I ask

"We only just got her here. How could you get her lilies when you know she's allergic?"

“I would never do that. I love Mihlali and my p.a’s take care of the flower deliveries”

I explain to a concerned angry mother, she sighs loudly

“and they don’t know that she’s allergic?”

She asks

“Both of them know, but t...”

She cuts me off

“No, your ex is definitely responsible for this”

She spits out, does Mihlali tell her mother everything?

“What? Unathi? No, Lona is the one that takes care of the flowers and she would never. The flower shop must have made a mistake”

“If that’s what you want to believe”

She says and walks to the receptionist. I walk to a quiet spot and call Lona.

“Mr Tshawe”

She answers

“Mihlali is in hospital”

I start off

“What? How? What happened to her?”

She asks with so much concern

“You tell me, where did you order the flowers?”

“Sir I was running a little late today, so I called Unathi and asked her to take care of it. I even sent her the name of the place and the kind of flowers to get”

She says, Lona is loyal, and she wouldn't lie.

“Ok thank you Lona”

I say and drop the call. I need to deal with Unathi, even the last time she had a reaction it was her who placed the order. I head back and sit next to Biko, he places a hand on my knee

“My little sister is a fighter, she'll pull through”

He says confidently

“Thanks, I don't know what I'd do if I lost her”

I say honestly and sadly

“and I know she loves you just as much. Don't mind mom, she's just worried about her daughter that's all”

He says and I just nod

“She has a point, maybe I shouldn't have my ex working as my p.a especially if it always puts Mihlali's life in danger like this”

I say with a heavy sigh. Worse she's so good at her job apart from not telling me every now and then when Mihlali calls the office. The seconds of the clock tick by and still nothing.

Mihlali's step father walks in

"Honey"

He says as soon as he reaches his wife, she throws herself in his arms

"What happened?"

He asks as concerned

"lilies"

She says breaking out of his embrace.

"How is she? Have you guys spoken to her doctor?"

He asks and she shakes her head.

"Mihlalikazi Langa"

A nurse shouts

"Yes"

Her parents respond. Biko says we should get close

"How is my baby?"

Mr Mtwá asks

“She’s stabilizing and the swelling is going down”

She explains

“Can we see her”

Biko requests

“She’s sleeping but 2 people can go in at a time”

She says, her parents go in first. We head over to the ward’s waiting area.

“And her meds?”

I ask Biko, he shrugs

“She did take them, but nothing happened”

He says, I frown

“That’s strange. The doctor gave her the same meds and they worked instantly”

He shrugs again. I let out a breath, the wait is dreadful to say the very least. After about 10 minutes or so her parents say we may go in and see her, she’s sleeping peacefully and the swelling is not that bad either than the pink spots, I kiss her forehead and sit on the chair next to her bed taking her hand into mine

“I am so sorry”

I say kissing her hand continuously.

“You must be the boyfriend”

Someone says placing a hand on my shoulder, I look up and it's her father, I'm about to get up when he says I shouldn't bother. He sits down next to me

“she's a real beauty, isn't she?”

I nod

“I'm Bantu Mtwana”

He says, I obviously know her parents. Who wouldn't know the most richest family in Cape Town?

“I'm Bandile Tshawe”

He shakes my hand

“I know who you are, chain of hotels and restaurants around the Western Cape”

He says and I nod

“She means everything to me and if you dare hurt her, it won't matter who you are. She may not be my biological daughter, but she means everything to me, and her mother and I would kill any guy that hurt her”

He says

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I nod

“I understand that sir, I would do the same”

I say nervously

“No need to scare my boyfriend dad”

She says with a very hoarse voice.

“You’re awake”

I say and she tries to smile

“yes, hi daddy”

She says sounding ever so innocent. Her father gets up and hugs her

“Still want to be with someone who looks like this?”

She jokes, I kiss her hand

“I wouldn’t be with anyone but this someone”

She smiles

“I should get your mother”

I say that getting up, but she doesn’t let my hand go, she looks at her father and he chuckles

“Fine”

He says and walks out

“You want them to kill me”

She giggles

“When did you get here?”

“Right after you were brought in. How are you?”

I ask

“I feel fine, I guess my meds didn’t do the trick”

She says

“I’ll have them checked out just in case”

I assure and she shakes her head

“That’s a little dramatic don’t you think?”

She asks and I shake my head no

“I found out that Unathi placed your order because Lona was running late”

I say that brushing her hand

“yeah but my meds stay in my purse unless I’m home”

She says, it then hits me. What if she switched them when Mihlali came to the office?

“You really think she would go that far?”

I shrug my shoulders

“Don’t fire her, just have her moved to somewhere else and get a new P.A”

She says

“Even I can step in while we wait for schools to open”

She says squeezing my hand

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Waking up to my man’s handsome face is by far the best thing ever. Bandile is always there when I need him the most and that’s just one of the little things, I love about him. Every time I’m on my periods he makes sure that I have everything I need and knowing him he is considering firing Unathi and as much as I would love that, but I am not that evil of a person. If he fires her, she might hate me even more than she does already, and I don’t need that. And maybe working as his p.a is stupid of an idea but at least its lightening his mood. He smiles, finally

“You’re a distraction”

He says and I giggle

“no, I’m not. Ok fine, you need a p.a and my friend needs a job”

I suggest and he furrows his eyebrows

“What friend?”

“Bontle”

He eyes me

“Bontle needs a job? She’s in her first year, what does she need a job for?”

He asks confused

“Well she doesn’t come from a rich family and with the guy she is dating I think its wise she gets a job”

I suggest

“As much as I would like to help your friend out, Bhabha she needs to be the one job hunting. Plus, did she say she needs a job?”

He asks and I shake my head no

“Oh, Hlali baby”

My grandmother says walking in throwing herself at me, I let go of Bandile’s hand and focus on her.

“Kitten I’m fine”

I assure breaking the hug

“gramps”

I greet my grandfather

“You sure you ok Kiddo?”

He asks and I nod

“I am fine, and I should be getting out of here soon”

I say confidently

“What happened?”

Kitten asks settling on the chair Bandile was sitting on. I narrate everything that happened

“You almost died! We are suing the florist!”

Kitten says, she can be so dramatic at times

“But I didn’t die and no need to sue anyone. Kitten, Gramps. This is my boyfriend Bandile, Bandile these are my grandparents Ayola and Lwando Mbana”

I say and they shake Bandile’s hand greeting him, I can’t miss the threatening glare my grandfather is shooting at Bandile

“He is a cutie”

Kitten says, we all call her Kitten because of a nickname our grandfather gave her.

“Gran control yourself”

I say poking her and she chuckles

“I’ll see you later?”

Bandile says and I nod, he leaves, and it gives the family enough time to discuss him and how successful he is. Gran says I should keep him because he has enough money but I’m not those girls that are phased by money. Never have been anyway but we cannot deny that men with money love me...

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-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

Hlali’s reaction is not as scary as we thought so they discharged her today. We drive home with her and I shower and join the family in the lounge. It’s the grandparents, our parents and Hlali. The twins slept over at aunty Saney’s.

“Where you off to?”

Mom asks as I walk in

“Ontlametse called this morning”

I say

“And you going to Bloem with her?”

Dad asks and I shake my head no

“She asked to meet for lunch so I’m on my way to meet with her”

I say settling on the free single couch. Hlali has her feet on top of grandma and mom has her feet on top of dad on the double couch

“Glad to see you finally meeting up with her, how do you feel?”

Mom asks and I shrug my shoulders

“I don’t know how to feel”

I say honestly, I don’t even know what to expect out of this meeting anyway

“well best of love honey, and send her our condolences”

She says, I nod. I get up and say my goodbyes heading out to my car. I dial her number and she tells me she’s at Spur. I park outside and go in the restaurant, she waves and I walk over to her table. She’s drinking coffee.

“Hi”

I say sitting down opposite her

“Hey baby. How are you?”

She asks

“Good thanks and, how are you?”

She shrugs

“Coping, I guess. Thank you for see me Rato”

She says and I nod

“Mom and dad send their condolences. When is the funeral?”

“We haven’t decided yet, but it will probably be next week Friday. How is everyone at home?”

I raise an eyebrow

“Everyone is fine except Hlali was hospitalized this morning but she’s out and she’s fine”

I say

“I’m sorry to hear that. Is she ok?”

I nod

“Ontla why am I here?”

CHAPTER 30

-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

“Rato you are my son and I barely even recognized when you walked through that door, if you didn’t look like your father, I probably wouldn’t have recognized you at all. Its been so long since I saw you”

“And whose fault is that? You ditched me with my father at a very young age, what did you expect would happen?”

I interrupt as she speaks, she sighs

“Honey life is short, if losing a parent has taught me anything. I know I f*cked up and I live to regret what I did but Lerato I am sorry for failing you as a mother. If I could turn back the hands of time, I swear to you I would, but I can’t. All I can do is try and make up for the time I lost”

She says in a pleading tone. A waitress asks what I’ll be drinking, and I ask her for a beer and a burger with fries and onion rings.

“I just want to know why you did it”

She sighs

“Biko please”

I shake my head no

“Dad told me, but I want to hear the truth from you. I want to know why you did it”

She looks down

“I was young and didn’t know what I was doing. Tumelo wanted to marry me and he didn’t know I had a child. You were visiting your father for holidays when he asked for my hand in marriage. I know the right thing to do would have been to tell him that I have a child, but I didn’t. Mom and dad said I shouldn’t mention having you if I really wanted to marry him and that’s what I did, I didn’t tell him I had a child and things between he and I were good for a while. He and I got married and years later we had your siblings, he found out about you and had me reach out to you”

I chuckle

“So, if your husband hadn’t convinced you to reach out to me then you wouldn’t have reached out to me?”

I ask with a raised eyebrow and she looks down embarrassed. That’s enough of an answer for me

“I’m sorry”

She says trying to touch my hand, but I remove it quickly

“you chose marriage over me! How do you expect me to forgive that?”

I ask

“Biko honey please. I know I messed up and saying sorry wouldn’t make things better, but baby please can we try”

I drink the beer that’s just been placed in front of me

“Biko please. You are my son, my first born and I live to regret my mistakes a...”

I shoot her a look

“Mistake? A mistake is when you don’t know what you doing but you knew what you were doing so it doesn’t count as a mistake!”

“I understand you angry at me, I am willing to let you be angry until you ready to talk to me and for us to build a relationship”

She says in a pleading tone, I gulp down the rest of the beer and stop midway then place it back on the table

“Enjoy the rest of your day. Bye”

I say and head out calling Phiwo

“Mmmh?”

She answers not so pleasantly, I sigh

“Are you busy?”

I ask

“I don’t know Biko, you ditched me!”

She spits out angrily

“Phiwo I cancelled to meet up with my mother whom I haven’t seen in 14 years! I’m sorry”

“Yeah sure, I’m supposed to believe that right? How convenient Biko”

I let out a heavy sigh at her accusatory tone

“Kim is in Bloem, she lost her father Monday to an accident. Phiwo can I see you?”

She goes silent for a while

“I don’t know”

She says after a while

“Ok”

I say and cut the call. I don’t need this drama, not right now. I call Kim and she answers after a while

“Hey baby”

I say

“Hey, my love, how are you?”

“I should be asking you that. How are things at home?”

I ask

“You don’t sound so good”

She points out

“I just met up with my biological mother. How are you and the family?”

She sighs

“mom has it the worst but the rest of us are dealing with it the only way we know how I guess. Tell me how it went with your mom?”

She says. I narrate everything that happened, and she listens

“But babe she regrets what she did. She’s grown now and she wants to make things right with you”

She says, I don’t respond

“Babe, I just lost my father and he and I were good with each other and there’s nothing I would change about our relationship. Losing a parent sucks and its really painful and I would give anything and everything just to be with him again. My point here Biko is that make things right with your mother before you lose her and regret today’s meeting”

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

I walk into the office and tell Unathi to follow me.

“Bardz what’s up? How’s Mihlali?”

She asks, I raise an eyebrow turning to her

“Everything ok?”

She asks walking closer to me

“Did you have them place a lily flower in Mihlali’s flowers today?”

She fakes a shock

“What? No. Why would I do that? Bandile how could you even accuse me of that?”

She says with her hand over her mouth

“We both know you don’t like Mihlali, from you not passing on her messages to me and messing up today’s delivery on purpose and I know you switched Mihlali’s allergy pill the last time she was here”

She shakes her head no

“I would never stoop that low Bandile, you know me”

She says in a pleading tone

“ok, how about we call the security to pull up the footage from the office from the last time Mihlali was here”

The blood in her cheeks drains same time making her look pale

“Bandile there’s really no need for that”

She says nervously

“Why? She’s never done anything to you”

I ask but she doesn’t respond

“Yazi she asked me not to fire you over this but instead to have you moved to another department for reasons know to her”

She raises her eyebrows shook

“It’s taking everything in me not to fire you right now because she asked me not to. I’m letting you off with a warning and I’m transferring you to PR management. I want you gone by the end of next week Friday!”

I say dismissively

“Bandile please”

She begs

“No

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I can't work with someone who is a threat to my girlfriend. Be happy you even still have a job. Get out of my office"

I say and she gets up and walks out looking like she's about to cry. I huff in frustration. I decide to get some work done while I wait for Mihlali to text me when she's out of the hospital. I send her phone a text to not forget to have her pills tested. After an hour or two I drive to my mother's house, it's not like I can concentrate on work with my girlfriend still in the hospital

"Mam'Tshawe"

I greet walking in

"Shouldn't you be at work?"

She asks and I nod

"I should but then Hlali had to be rushed to hospital this morning"

I say throwing myself on the couch

"What? Is she ok?"

She asks concerned, mom really loves Mihlali for some reason, but I don't blame her because Hlali is really sweet and respectful

"She seemed fine when I left the hospital, she should be discharged no later than lunch time. She had another reaction"

She furrows her eyebrows shocked

“What? How?”

“Unathi had the florist add a lily in her flower delivery”

I say

“I told you to fire that girl Bandile! Now you see you almost had the poor girl killed”

She points out

“I know mom and I could never forgive myself if anything ever happened to Mihlali. She asked me not to fire Unathi and to have her transferred to another department”

Mom is in shock

“Mihlali is too good! You don't deserve her”

She spits out and I chuckle

“Ouch mom. You know I love Mihlali”

“I know but as long as that bitch still works for you, I feel like she will always do something to jeopardise your relationship with Mihlali. I love Mihlali for you Bandile, she's a well-mannered girl and is too mature for her age”

She compliments and I can't help the smile on my face, she's right. She is all things good.

“Which Mihlali?”

Baya asks walking in

“Mihlali Langa”

Mom responds proudly

“She’s such an angel”

She adds

“Bandile is dating Mihlali?”

“Yes, how do you know her?”

Mom asks, the way she’s so defensive you would swear its her daughter in law already

“She’s my friend’s sister and the girl I like. What do you mean Bandile is dating me? How long has it been going on and why am I only hearing about it now?”

He asks with a bit of hurt in his voice I suddenly feel bad

“Its been 3 months, we started dating the Saturday after the event we hosted at the hotel restaurant”

“Wow Bandile! You my brother, she’s 17 for heaven’s sake. What you doing is wrong!”

He spits out

“Why can’t you be happy for your brother? He’s happy! She makes him happy and you should be happy for your brother”

mom says in my defence

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

When I get home, everyone is treating me like an egg that’s about to break any second. Dad places me on the couch and grandma settles beside me placing my feet on top of her lap, he hands me my phone and I have a text message from Bandile. My test results came back, and they showed results of penicillin which I so happen to be allergic to. Who would have thought? Apparently, it’s the reason I fainted and now I actually believe that Unathi switched my pills. That girl is out to get me for some reason. If Bandile didn’t treat me so well, I’d probably end things with him instead of having to deal with his crazy ex-girlfriend but Bandile knows how to boyfriend so well. After Biko leaves I decide to go and change out of my night dress, imagine I was taken to hospital in my night dress. Yes, I showered and wore my night dress, the kitchen at home has a heated wooden floor so it wasn’t so cold in the kitchen or anywhere around the house. I get to my room and change into

sweat pants and something warm. When I'm done I videocall Bandile, its after 2pm

"Bhabha"

He answers making me blush, even after 3 months him calling me Bhabha still makes me a blushing mess.

"Hey Baby, how are you?"

I ask

"I should be asking you Miss, how are you? What did your doctor say?"

He asks, I smile

"Baby I'm fine. Apparently, I'm allergic to penicillin and doctor said they found that in my system, its probably what made me collapse"

I explain and his face switches up to concerned same time

"Sthandwa sam I'm sorry you even in this situation. I could still fire her you know"

I smile at him and he returns the smile

"You don't have to nje Sthandwa sam. I didn't die"

I assure him

“The thought of losing you Hlali, I know it’s early, but I can’t afford to lose you”

He says with so much worry in his face and voice. Am I not blessed?

“I’m ok, when am I seeing you anyway?”

I ask

“When do you want to see me Angel?”

“Now”

He blushes

“I’m on my way, anything specific you want?”

That’s Bandile for you, always wanting to feed me

“Nothing thank you, the parents got me something to eat when we left the hospital. I just want to see my man and get cuddles”

CHAPTER 31

-BANDILE TSHAWWE

While my little brother pouts over me being with Mihlali, my phone rings and its just her. I walk away from him and mom answering her call, I myself am allergic to penicillin and to hear that my lady is also allergic sucks. I feel sorry for her to discover all these allergies on my account. The right thing to do would be to let her go and be about her life but I'm selfish with Mihlali. I love her too much to let her go over this Unathi thing. After the call I'm in a lighter mood, I walk back into the lounge and Bayanda is nowhere to be seen.

"where's Baya?"

I ask

"He stormed out, he was pretty upset over this thing. Bandile did you know your brother liked Mihlali?"

I shake my head no

"I only ever saw them speak at the event, I didn't know he had his eye on her"

I say honestly, with Bayanda you never know when you see him with a pretty girl because most of the time, they random f*cks or just his friends

"And Mihlali, are you certain you the only one she's dating?"

I shoot her look

“Mama do you know how ridiculous you sound right now? I trust Mihlali that I’m the only one”

I say proudly and annoyed that mom would even imply such

“Bandile these girls play brothers against each other and I would hate for you to lose your relationship with your little brother over a girl”

I let out a deep breath to calm myself down

“Mihlali is not that kind of girl! Please excuse me”

I say and walk out with her shouting my name, I can’t stand someone speaking ill of my loved ones even if that person is a loved one herself. I get inside my car and drive over to Mihlali’s home. I park opposite her home and call her

“Bhabha”

I say

“Hey babe, my grandparents say come inside”

She says and I chuckle and stop midway

“You kidding right?”

I ask

“Sadly not. Grandpa says with all these girls going missing on a daily he wants to see you and make sure he knows who I left the house with”

She says, I sigh nervously. Lwando Mbanana scares me shitless, I’ve heard all the stories about him, and I don’t doubt any of them

“I’m sorry”

She says innocently

“Come and fetch me by the gate then”

I say unbuckling my safety belt.

“Coming right now”

She says and cuts the call. I’m sweating and nervous as hell, her father is not that scary but her grandfather on the other hand. I get out of the car when I see her approach the gate. The gate opens and I walk towards her, it closes behind us. She hugs me

“You nervous”

She points out breaking the hug

“Your grandfather scares me”

I say and she chuckles

“I’d like to say he’s harmless but he’s not shame. But you and him have one thing in common, you both care about me”

She says with her innocent charming smile, I don't even respond. We make our way through the drive way and into the lounge. Its her parents and her grandparents.

"Hello"

I greet walking in

"Can I get you anything to eat or drink?"

she asks, and I shake my head no, it would probably go down the wrong pipe anyway.

"Please sit I'll be back"

She says leaving me with her family. I sit down on the single couch

"So, what do you want with my granddaughter?"

Her grandfather asks and I am taken aback by that question

"I don't understand your question"

I say honestly

"your intentions"

Her grandmother points out with a kind smile

"definitely not to waste her time. I love and respect Mihilali and would really like to go further in our relationship"

I say

“But Mihlali is only 17 turning 18 in October and you are what 25 right? You one of the countries richest bachelor, you the second richest person after my family. And in all honesty, you are above her league”

Her grandfather says

“Dad please, that is not true”

Her mother says

“I don’t understand how I’m above her league, if anything she is the one above my league. Mihlali is a great person with a beautiful personality and honestly she deserves goodness only in her life and I believe I am good enough for her, heck most times I feel like I’m not good enough for her nor do I deserve her.”

“That’s sweet Bandile, my daughter is lucky to have met someone like you”

Her mother says with a smile

“More like he’s the lucky one”

Her father says and he’s right, I am lucky to have Mihlali

“Ready to go?”

She says walking in with an overnight bag, I don't even know why she still brings one considering the clothes she has in my place

"Mom and dad, I'll be back tomorrow morning"

She says and goes to hug her grandparents thanking them for coming to see her. I get up when she's done hugging her parents

"Don't forget to take your meds Hlali"

Her mother says and she rolls her eyes

"She wont Mr Mtwana and I'll make sure of it"

I respond and she rolls her eyes at me making us all laugh at her. We walk out

"I heard what you said, and I don't think it gets any better than you"

She says kissing my cheek making me blush

"You blushing"

She points out

"Shut up!"

I say poking her playfully. We walk to the car and I open the door for her

“Aren’t you tired of doing this already?”

She asks settling on the passenger seat, I open the back seat placing her bag

“How does one get tired of being a gentleman?”

I ask and she chuckles

“Fine charmer. So, what’s new Chocky?”

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

My bag was never in the room, instead I went to drink water, on my way I heard my grandfather asking him about his intentions and decided to eavesdrop. Don’t judge me! I want to know his intentions too. He’s so sweet, Bandile makes me fall for him every time and he’s words are everything. What I love most about him is that he’s not just a talker, but his talk is followed by actions.

“Baya found out you my girlfriend and he’s hurt”

I didn’t think he would

“I’m sorry”

I say brushing his thigh

“don’t worry about it, he’ll get over it”

He says carelessly

“Bhabha I know it bothers you, talk to me”

I say and he sighs

“He’s my little brother at the end of the day and honestly I didn’t even know he had a crush on you or liked you like that. He was so hurt when he walked in on my and I talking today”

He explains

“He never said anything to me when we met or went out. He’s always been friendly with me and I never thought otherwise of it”

I say

“Its ok Bhabha. He’ll be fine, I’ll sit him down and make him understand”

He says

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he’s so calm about this

“You sure?”

I ask and he nods

“Yes, now stop worrying, Baya is a big boy and he can take care of himself”

He says

“Anyway, tell me how you managed to get a driving licence when you only turning 18 in October?”

He asks

“Well, when your grandfather is Lwando Mbana and practically runs the province then it’s possible”

I answer honestly, hence I only drive around the Western Cape. My licence has his surname so that when I do get stopped, I don’t get asked many questions. Yes, this is the country we live in where money is power.

“Wow, that’s uhm”

He starts off and I cut him off

“Trust me I know how it is. I’ve just learnt to live with it. This is how society is anyway, with money comes power”

I say and he nods

“I guess you have a point”

He says

“So, when did you learn how to drive?”

He asks

“at 15, got my learners and licence at 16. What about you?”

I ask

“Learnt how to drive at 15 too, got my learners at 16 and then got my licence at 18”

I nod

“Should we cook, or you want to eat out?”

“if you are cooking then I’m in”

I say and he chuckles

“You so lazy”

He says

“I got out of hospital, I’m allowed”

I say pouting and he laughs

“So, you going to use that against me for the rest of the day?”

I shake my head no

“For the rest of the week actually”

I say proudly and he laughs. He opens the gate with a remote and drives in

“Fine, next time I will handle your flower delivery myself. You not allowed to complain when they arrive late”

He says and I raise my eyebrows

“so, does this mean they would probably come after 6pm?”

I ask and he chuckles answering yes

“That is so not fair”

I say that folding my arms in front of my chest, he laughs

“You so adorable. Let’s go inside pouty”

He says getting out of the car, he opens the door for me still.

Yep, I am blessed! He takes my bag and we walk in, his cleaner is in the kitchen chopping

“Hey Mah”

We say in unison and she chuckles

“Hello baby, hi sir”

She responds

“why do you call him sir? He’s younger than you”

I say sitting on the high chair

“Please ask her Bhabha nam I’d like to know”

He says that walking out leaving us laughing

“He’s my boss, what else should I call him?”

She asks and I shrug

“Bandile or something”

She shakes her head

“He may be young, but he is my boss and I respect him”

She says and I smile

“Another reaction?”

She asks and I nod

“Oh, my baby, come here”

She says and pulls me into a hug, I love how motherly she is towards me

“I’m fine Mah, apparently Unathi switched my pills with penicillin which I happen to be allergic to too”

I say and she’s so shocked by this

“She almost killed you. I hope Bandile fired that girl”

She says and I chuckle, she’s not an angry person in general so trust me it’s funny

“She asked me not to”

He says walking in

“what? Why?”

He shrugs his shoulders

“You too good Mihlali”

She says and Bandile kisses my neck making me giggle

“I don’t want her to hate me more than she already does. I have the guy she loves and if I didn’t love him too, I’d probably hand him over”

“You just said you love me”

Bandile says and judging by his tone he is definitely smiling, I hadn’t said the words to him yet

“You kids are so cute”

Mah says

“Mah Mihlali just said she loves me for the first time”

He says and my stupid boyfriend starts dancing doing the pouncing cat, he looks so ridiculous singing and dancing while singing that Lorch song.

“You make him happy”

She whispers placing a hand over mine, I smile

“He makes me just as happy”

I say

“Hay stop dancing now, you are making noise too and Mah needs help”

I say and he pouts

“You’re a buzz kill”

“and you acting like a baby. Help Mah out”

I say turning around to face Mah and he comes behind me and kisses my neck. Bandile is not afraid to show affection. He helps Mah out while I watch them, his phone rings

“Chocky your phone”

I say

“Answer it Bhabha”

I take it on the counter and answer it

“Bandile’s phone hello?”

“Mihlali is that you?”

I remove the phone from my ear and it’s an office number

“Uhm yes, who is this?”

I ask confused, I can’t even recognise the voice

“Daniel. So, its true, you dating Bandile?”

CHAPTER 32

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“So, who is it Bhabha?”

He asks stopping in his tracks, I probably look more pale than I should

“Can I help you with anything?”

I ask

“please hand the phone over to Bandile, he and I have some business to discuss”

He says sounding a little angry

“He’s a little busy right now, can he call you later?”

I ask

“No, this can’t wait Siphwokuhle”

I remove the phone from my ear

“It’s Daniel”

I say handing it to him, he takes it and walks out

“You ok?”

Mah asks

“yes mah”

I say

“Are you sure baby?”

I nod, what if he tells him about the sextape? Or worse he emails it to him? At this point I am panicking out of my mind

“please keep an eye on the pots, I have to go fetch my clothes outside”

She says, I nod. I get up and open the pots, it smells amazing. I smell his cologne before I feel his arms wrap around me

“Bhabha”

He says kissing my neck

“this smells amazing”

I say turning to him

“Of cause I’m in the kitchen kaloku”

He says and I chuckle at his cockiness

“Where’s Mah?”

He asks

“She went to get her clothes outside”

He nods, I walk back to sit where I was before. I’m tempted to ask him what the call was about, but I believe he would tell me if it was any of my business, so I don’t ask.

“How far are you with your book?”

I’m about to respond when my phone rings in my pocket, I take it out and check and its Daniel, I decline the call

“Everything ok?”

He asks and I shrug

“It’s Daniel”

I say because the number looks like the one that called Bandile

“And you don’t want to hear what he has to say?”

He asks, I can’t read the tone of his voice because he’s turned back to the pots

“No, what could he possibly say that he never got to say? When he called you, he asked me that I was really dating you”

I say

“And the last thing I want to talk about is my relationship with you with my ex”

“I understand Bhabha”

He says and then turns to me, he walks up to stand on the other side of the counter and takes my hand into his

“he really hurt you”

He says kissing my hand, I nod. I only told him about the wife and the dinner that followed but I never mentioned the sextape

“I’ve forgiven him and I’m over everything and as much as I want to tell you, I’m afraid it will change how you feel about me and how you see me”

I explain looking down and he slips a finger under my chin and makes me look up at him

“Sthandwa sam nothing would make me feel any different about you”

He assures me and places a kiss on my parted lips, I respond until Mah clears her throat. We break the kiss, I’m a blushing mess

“the bedrooms are upstairs kids”

She says and we both laugh

“Hay mah allow us tshini”

He says and she giggles returning to the pots. He sits opposite me and smiles

“Why are you smiling?”

I ask and he shrugs

“Because today is my day. You told me you love me, and I got a call telling me that we got the contract for this other land”

He says, I'm confused

"But you into media and marketing?"

I say with a raised eyebrow

"Daniel and I went into business together a few months back and we applied for this other construction site contract"

"Still, Daniel isn't into construction and neither are you"

I point out, he chuckles

"Daniel came to me with a proposal to buy land and build a mall. Obviously, there's other people involved but it's our baby which I'm handing over to Lona"

I'm astonished,

"isn't Lona a p.a?"

"not anymore. I promoted her, I could use the help plus this will help her grow"

He says

"And did you speak to Daniel about it?"

I ask and he nods

"We spoke about it and he's not so happy about it, but he looks forward to working with her. I just need to let Lona know that this is her baby"

I nod

“Isn’t that pressure for her kengoku”

I ask and he shrugs

“Lona is a big girl and I’ve taught her everything she needs to know, and I’ll always be there to help her. How is she supposed to grow if I don’t let her do this herself?”

“I guess you have a point”

I say with a shrug, my phone rings again and its Phiwo

“Honey”

I respond and Bandile raises an eyebrow

“Hlali”

She says sounding really down

“honey what’s wrong? Is everything ok?”

I ask worried my brother must have done something

“He ditched me Hlali, he cancelled our lunch to meet with her”

She says

“Phiwo Kim lost her father, she’s currently in Bloem”

I say, this cannot be my life. She sighs

“he may be lying to Kim but he’s not lying to you. What did he say was his excuse for cancelling?”

I ask

“He said he met his mother for lunch”

She spits out

I’m assuming she’s air quoting

“When he left home, he went to meet his biological mom, she’s in town but she’s leaving today late I think for Bloem or something”

I say

“So, he wasn’t lying about her being here?”

“No, his mother lost her mother, his grandmother I think so she landed here and will be flying to her hometown later”

I explain

“How convenient that she’s from Bloem”

She says sarcastically and now I’m just annoyed by her attitude

“Phiwo if you can’t do this with my brother then I suggest you take it up with him. You agreed to be with him regardless of his relationship with Kim and when you accept such a situation you

ought to understand that you won't have all of him when you want him. I'm sorry to come across and mean but it's the truth, don't start acting like you got into this situation blind. You knew what you were getting yourself into. You either live like this or you cut things off with him"

I'm sick and tired of getting calls from her complaining about my brother. I understand I am probably the only one in the squad who knows she got back together with him but my God its annoying having to cover up for him or having to confirm what my brother has already told her. She sighs

"I'm sorry for the way that came out bu..."

And I only apologise because of the look Bandile is giving me right now

"It's ok Mihlali. I understand. Enjoy your afternoon"

She says and cuts the call on me. I sigh out heavily

"You were pretty mean"

He points out

"But Bhabha I can't always do this with her. She knew what she was getting into where she said to my brother, she was willing to look past Kim"

I say and then get up from the barstool. I need to rest my ass on something more comfortable anyway

“Haibo Bhabha”

He says as I get up

“I need to rest, preferably on the couch”

I explain because this boyfriend of mine thinks I’m mad at him. Bandile is so quick to think I’m mad at him when he have a disagreement

“Or on the bed?”

He suggests wiggling his eyebrows at me with that naughty smile of his

“Hay Bandile, the child said she needs to rest!”

Mah intervenes and he fake sulks

“Hay Mah, drink water and mind your business. Doctor ordered she rest and which better place to rest than on the bed?”

He asks, this one thinks he’s smart yaz!

“if you say so. Should I bring the food to your room?”

She asks

“yes please. She needs to eat and drink her pills anyway”

He says and I roll my eyes walking out leaving them. Well he’s right, I do need to eat and drink my meds.

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-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

After my conversation with Kim and how she has made me see reason I drive home, when I get home, I'm told Hlali left with Bandile. He's a great guy for my little sister, now obviously I'm worried about her, but I feel like she's in safe hands with Bandile. He cares about her as much as we do and wants to see her happy at all costs.

"How did it go?"

Mom asks patting next to her, dad is somewhere in the house, I guess. I sit next to her

"I thought your husband sat here"

I say and she shoves me

"Does it matter? Stop avoiding my question wena"

She says and I chuckle

"Well she told me what happened. She said her parents told her to marry her husband and hide having a child out of wedlock"

I narrate the whole meeting with Ontla

"How are you?"

She asks and I shrug my shoulders

“I don’t know how I feel mom, when I left her there, I had this anger and then I spoke to Kim and she kind of made me see reason”

She smiles

“She’s a great girl. So, what now?”

Mom asks

“I’ll call her before her flight leaves. Shiit! I don’t even know what time she leaves”

I say panicking and mom hands me her phone

“Call her”

She says and I take it and scroll on mom’s contact list, would explain where she got my number. I call mother Ontla

“Hi Sino”

She answers, I clear my throat

“Hi Ontlametse”

Mom shoots me a look, but I don’t pay her any mind

“Biko hi”

She says sounding surprised to hear from me

“Need a travel buddy?”

I ask and I see my mom smile, full teeth and all

“I’d love that, but I don’t think we could get seats next to each other now”

She says

“My flight leaves in an hour”

She adds

“We’ll drive down together, cancel your flight”

I say

“Are you sure Lerato?”

She asks

“Yes, I’m sure, cancel it and take an uber to my home. I’ll send you the location”

I suggest and mom nods with approval

“Thank you, son,”

She says, I say my goodbyes to her and hand the phone over to mom who pulls me in and kisses the side of my head

“I’m proud of you”

She says while I try to break free from her

“Because I left you for a few minutes you move onto my son,
hay Sino”

Dad says walking and mom laughs and so do I

“That is disgusting dad”

Mom throws a pillow at him and he ducks

“he is my son and I am allowed to kiss him”

She defends and I chuckle

“So, what’s he done to deserve my kisses?”

I laugh at how possessive this man is, I wish to have such a marriage with Kim someday. Yes, I said Kim, Phiwo has proved to be a little childish after what happened today. She knows Sino is not my biological mother and yet she acts out when I cancel our date. I needed her and she couldn’t pull through for me. Really starting to think I should just focus on Kim and stop messing around. “I’m driving up to Bloem with Ontlametse”

I say “Still no mom? Or at least mother?”

Dad asks and I shrug “She needs to work for the title”

I say leaving him with his wife before he asks more questions. I send Ontla the location and then start packing a bag

CHAPTER 33

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I settle on the bed and Mr closes the windows and curtains and then switches on the tv and plays us Frozen. Before you judge, he knows how much I love the movie. DON'T JUDGE ME! I'm sick and I'm allowed to watch whatever I want. He takes off his clothes and wear his pj pants and a t-shirt then joins me in bed and presses play. I'm pressed up against his chest

"Are you comfortable?"

He asks

"Yes, I am Chocky thanks"

I say and really, I am.

"Need any snacks?"

He asks and obviously I do but I don't want to him to get up

"no"

I say and I know my response is not convincing, he chuckles

"I know what you are thinking Mihlali"

He says and I chuckle

"What am I thinking?"

I ask proudly

“You don’t want me to disturb you in this position. I’m ok with that but that means you’ll have to go and fetch them downstairs”

He says and I pout, you know how when you finally find that one comfortable position on the bed? That’s how I feel right now, I don’t want to get off this huge bed.

“You the one that wants snacks. Should we call Mah to bring them ke?”

He asks and he knows how I feel about sending her things I can do myself, I slightly turn my head to him

“You so adorable”

He says kissing my lips, they within range anyway. I pout and this guy laughs at me.

“so, what will it be? Will you allow me to go downstairs or?”

He asks, I don’t want him to leave...

“Fine go”

I say sitting up and he chuckles, he’s so annoying but I love him anyway. He walks out and leaves me, just then I get a call from my brother and he tells me about his meeting with his mother and how Phiwo reacted, I also tell him about our phone call

“I’m sorry she dragged you into this little sis”

He says genuinely, I could always tell when he was being genuine

“So, what now?”

I ask

“I’m going to Bloem and if I tell her then she’ll make a fuss about it as she did to you. I thought I could juggle 2 girls but Phiwo is too much work for me and very much childish for me little sis”

He says

“I know you not saying what I think you saying Biko. She loves you”

I say unable to hide the shock in my voice

“And I like her too, I thought I loved her but today she proved me otherwise. Hlali I have to go neh?”

He says

“Safe travels bhuti wam. I really hope you and your mother work things out. Are mom and dad attending the funeral?”

I ask because I’m thinking of going to support my brother

“Yeah they said they’ll fly over the night before the funeral. Dad has some things he needs to take care of and so does mom”

He says

“If you guys need any help call me ok and I’ll fly over”

Bandile walks in as I say that

“Thank you, little sis. Recover ok? And Bandile better take good care of you”

He warns making me chuckle

“Trust me he is taking good care of me. Bye Biko”

I say and he says his goodbye.

“You leaving me?”

He asks

“My brother met up with his mother today and he’s driving to the Free State with her. They going to bury her mother, so I offered he call me if they need any help”

He nods, he brought snacks

“That’s sweet of you Bhabha. Anyway, Mah said she’s about to dish up so we shouldn’t eat snacks before she brings food”

He says and I roll my eyes knowing he’s right

“Fine, join me kaloku I’m cold”

Which is a lie because the heater is on and I’m warm, but I miss his warmth. He walks over chuckling and places the snacks on the pedestal next to him and settles behind me as before. Ay I

won't lie I appreciate my boyfriend. Once we both comfortable I press play. The way I know the movie word for word is embarrassing, it should be, but my boyfriend enjoys my being childish every now and then. There's a knock, he shouts come in and Mah walks in

"I brought you guys food"

She says walking in, she places the tray next to Bardz and then walks out. I sit up and he hands me my plate and we say grace then eat. Its nothing fancy, just spaghetti and meatballs. It tastes amazing! When we done, I hand him the plate and he gets up to take my meds for me in my purse then hands them to me, Mah came with juice after the food and water for me to take my meds. I drink the pills and then we get back into position. There's a knock and its Mah coming to fetch our plates. When she leaves, we return to our movie snacking on popcorn and sweets.

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-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

After the phone call with Mihlali I finish packing just enough clothes. I call Kim and tell her I'll be driving up with mommy dearest and she supportive. As for Phiwo I'll handle this when I get back. She called me while I was on the phone with Hlali, but

I couldn't drop the call with my sister because of her. I head down when I'm done, and mom is here in the lounge talking to my parents like good old friends. I greet and she responds

"Ready?"

I ask

"Yeah I am"

"Hay can't you see that we still talking here. Disrespectful child"

mom says that throwing a pillow at me, Sino is something else.

"Where's my plate? How come ya'll didn't call me to come eat?"

I ask that getting up

"Lucky you who has a maid to call him when he is hungry"

Dad says sarcastically, I roll my eyes walking to fetch my plate. I walk back with my plate and spoon

"So, when is the funeral?"

Mom asks

"It will be Friday"

"Why so early? Didn't she die this past Sunday?"

Dad asks

“Well she did but my family doesn’t believe in that whole keeping a person in the mortuary longer than 5 days”

She explains

“And your siblings? Did they agree to that?”

Mom asks

I didn’t even know she had siblings

“They are the ones that called me telling me she’s gone and that the funeral is going to be Friday because apparently there’s already a funeral that will be held on Saturday”

“Well that’s not fair, you should have been included in the discussion”

I point out

“When you the only girl amongst 3 guys and uncles then you don’t have a voice or whatsoever”

She says

“I’m sorry”

Mom says and Ontla fakes a smile

“If you need any kind of help don’t be scared to hit us up ok”

Dad offers

“Thank you, Bk, but we have things covered. The rest of my family is flying in tomorrow”

She says. I finish eating while they converse about other things, I take my plate and theirs to the kitchen then come back, the time is around 3 anyway

“I think we should get going”

I say walking in

“yeah we should, it’s a long trip”

She says

“Sino thank you for welcoming me into your home, you too Bantu”

She says getting up and so do my parents, they shake hands

“Don’t mention it. Hopefully all goes well for you guys”

Mom says hugging her

“Thank you”

Ontla says as they break the hug. I leave them taking my bag and Ontla’s to my car. They all come out chatting. Mom comes to me while dad talks to Ontla

“I trust that you will behave”

She says in a more threatening tone

“I will behave mom but if her brothers are.”

She places a hand on my lips

“It doesn’t matter how her brothers are. You are there for her and not them”

She says

“Yes mom. Bye”

I say pulling her into a hug. She breaks it and then dad shakes my hand and then we get in the car and drive out of the yard.

“Need anything for the road?”

I ask

“I should be asking you that Rato”

I chuckle

“Can’t blame me, parents taught me to take care of women”

I say and it’s the truth. We drive into the garage and she offers to pay for my petrol while I go and get us snacks for the road. I come back with what I think should be enough for us both. I drive us out.

“I need to warn you; my family is not so welcoming. My brothers are dick’s”

She explains

“in what manner?”

I ask curiously

“they spit hateful words. They backwards in a way, they don’t believe a woman should have a say unless its about something that involves the kitchen”

She explains and mentions other things about how they can be violent and abusive towards her

“And your husband? He just stands back and let them do as they please to you?”

I ask

“No, he’s actually an amazing guy and he comes to my rescue where they are concerned. Biko just stay out of their way and we’ll have a smooth week”

She says in a pleading tone, I just nod. They better stay out of my way and we’ll be good.

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

One-minute missy is singing along to her frozen and the next its silent, I take a peak and she’s out. Must be the pills, move her so that her head rests on my chest and she’s more comfortable.

I turn down the volume and take my phone, I have quiet a number of emails and texts. Mostly our investors angry because I've handed the project over to Lona, Daniel has to have told them. Worse I haven't even spoken to Lona about this and now I'm forced to tell her this because they've called an urgent meeting for tomorrow 12 O'clock. I call Lona and ask her to come over to my house. I call Unathi to have someone deliver the file from my office together with my work laptop and she tells me she'll bring it herself. After 30 minutes or so there's a knock on my door and its Mah telling me that Unathi is here waiting downstairs. I wear a jersey and head out wearing slippers.

"Bandile"

She says as soon as I'm in view

"Hi Unathi"

I say walking down the stairs. I reach her

"Thank you."

I say taking my work bag from her

"Everything you asked for is in there"

She says, I nod

"How is she?"

She asks

“Have you posted an ad for your position?”

I ask the same time she asks me about Mihlali

“Mihlali is still alive. So that ad?”

I ask

“yes, I posted it online and had it sent to newspaper companies, it will be available tomorrow”

She says

“thank you. That will be all for now”

I say dismissively, just then Lona walks in from the kitchen

“Sir you called. Oh, hi Nathi”

She greets

“Yes, I did, please follow me to the office. Unathi you’ll show yourself out right”

She nods. Lona follows me to the office while we catch up.

“So, what was so urgent”

She asks

“You remember the project I was working on with Daniel?”

She nods with furrowed eyebrows

“I know I should have spoken to you first but today we got the contract. I told Daniel it would be your baby and I’m assuming he ran and told our investors and now they want a proposal”

I say

“What do you mean they want a proposal? They want it from me?”

She asks panicking

“Yes, but don’t panic, I will give you what I already had, and you can make any changes you wish to make. Make calls to our marketing research team and have them help you with everything you need.”

I walk over and stand in front of her

“Lona I wouldn’t give you such a big project if I didn’t believe you could handle it. I know you and I trust that you will make this what it needs to be.”

She nods slowly

“I don’t know what to say. Thank you, sir,”

She says, I nod and walk over to my side

“Here is the file with all the ideas I had for the project. Look through it, make any changes that need to be made. You present tomorrow at 12”

She looks at me

“You can’t possibly be serious?”

I chuckle

“I sadly am but don’t worry, we got this Lona. We’ll work on it together, but you will present it”

I say

“This could take the whole night”

she says worriedly

“I will have clothes delivered for you, just tell me your sizes and what you need. Lona this is big, and I am trusting you to make this what it needs to be”

I say and she nods

CHAPTER 34

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

When I wake up, I'm all alone in the bed, I look around and he's not here. I get up and go pee then come back and check the time and its around 7pm. I wear my cardigan on top and then head downstairs. He wouldn't leave without telling me that's for sure. I call out his name

"Bandile?"

"You're awake"

Mah says walking in, I smile shyly

"Yes Mah, is he around?"

I ask and she smiles

“yes, he’s in the office with Lona. Come eat, the food is ready”

She says taking my hand into hers leading me to the dining room. She opens the chair for me.

“I’ll go and call them”

She says and leaves me alone. I decide to use this time to check my messages and I have a ton of them from my friends. I respond to a few until I feel his kiss on my cheek

“You’re awake”

He says

“and you weren’t next to me”

I say pouting as he takes a seat next to me

“Hi Hlali”

Lona says walking in behind him

“Hey, how are you?”

I ask

“Drained, stressed, panicking... How are you? Mr Tshawe told me about you landing up in hospital”

She says sitting opposite me

“He worries too much. I’m ok thanks, my meds knock me out”

I say

“You not as bad as the last time so that’s good”

She says, I think its based on my appearance. I haven't checked myself in the mirror out of fear. My face feels like its swollen so I'm not ready for that sight

"You look better"

Bandile says, I brush his hand with a smile

"Your meds are working. Tomorrow it will be like nothing happened"

He assures so confidently. Just then Mah places our plates in front of each of us and then brings hers and Lona's then sits next to her. We eat over light conversations and light laughter, when we done, I offer to pack the dishes and to pop them in the dish washer. I pour them drinks and myself water for my meds then head back into the dining table. I excuse myself to drink my meds and my boyfriend offers to accompany me. He's dramatic. We get into the room

“I’ve missed my girl”

he says that pulling me to him for a kiss, I break it

“You ditched her to bond with Lona”

He chuckles

“Yeah but Lona is not her. I don’t get kisses from Lona or get to do this”

He says that squeezing my ass a bit and nibbling on my neck.

“even if I left a hickey right now, it wouldn’t show with all these pink spots on your body”

He says

“Hay don’t mark me”

I say pushing away from him

“I’m here to drink my meds and wash”

I say that taking my pills

“I’d so love to join you, but Lona and I have so much work to do”

He says apologetic

“I’m assuming you told her about the project?”

I ask and he nods

“Yep, she has to present ideas tomorrow at 12”

I furrow my eyebrows confused

“She’s only just got the project, how is that possible?”

I ask

“Well Mr Khozi told our investors about me handing the project over to Lona and they demanded a meeting tomorrow. So, I’m helping her with the presentation”

He explains, I wrap my arms around his neck and pull him to my level

“I’m sorry”

He says, I raise my eyebrows confused

“I’m sorry I have to work instead of nursing you back to health”

He says and I smile kissing him. I break it after a while

“It’s ok Bhabha”

He sighs

“Let me at least join you for a bath”

He says and I smile, how could I say no to such a tempting offer?

“Fill up the tub while I inform Lona to continue without me”

He says and I nod. He leaves me while I strip out of my clothes and wear a gown then go fill up the tub. I put in my bath salts and oils, they smell like Lavender. He walks back in as I’m getting into the tub, he has a towel wrapped around his lower body

“That was quick”

I point out

“I met her by the stairs, she’s going to take a quick bath and wear comfortable clothes”

He says

“You abusing Lona. You lucky she doesn’t have a boyfriend”

I say poking him, he’s opposite me facing me while massaging my feet

“What was going to be the problem if she had a boyfriend?”

He asks looking confused

“Would you want me working late with my sexy ass boss?”

I ask and he smiles cockily

“You think I’m sexy?”

I roll my eyes

“Answer me idiot”

I say and he chuckles

“I guess I’d mind but then I’d also understand that you work for one of the most successful people in the country and you have to impress”

He says and I hit my forehead with my palm

“Whatever”

I say

“come sit in front of me, I need to wash you and make sure you are clean”

He says and I don't even argue with him, he always prefers me close to him. I sit in front of him with my back facing him, he takes a sponge and dips it in the water and squeezes it on my shoulder

“I needed this”

He says and then brushes it on my back

“you and me both. The water feels amazing, I might just fall asleep”

“On top of the allergic reaction you want to add flu? Hay Mihalikazi”

He says in a serious tone which I know he means well. We wash and then get out, when we get to the room, he has a visible boner, I chuckle to myself

“you so mean”

He says

“says the one with a boner for a poker dot body”

I say and he laughs

“you my poker dotted girlfriend. Can’t I get a quickie that will be sure to knock you out?”

He asks and that alone is enough to make me wet

please understand that he’s still dripping water on his upper body and he looks sexy AF right now so of cause I want some. I sit on the edge of the bed and spread my legs open, he bites his lip and walks over then kneels in front of me and devours my nookie like its his last meal on earth. When I’m wet enough, he enters me slowly, I let out a moan

“God that feels so good”

“You so nice and ready for me”

He says that and nibbles on my neck making me wetter and building up my orgasm real quick than intended. Yes, my neck is my weak spot, or rather it is for him. He slowly pulls out but not all the way out and then smashes into me again with his eyes locked into mine. I can't help the moans escaping my lips right now. He increases the pace and I feel him grow inside me making my orgasm intense, my toes curl and nails dig deep on the bed and I cum, he pulls out and cums on my thighs. He takes a towel and wipes us both clean. Usually we use a condom but today I guess we both couldn't wait. He didn't lie about knocking me out because my pills are really doing a number on me right now.

“Bhabha wear something before you sleep”

He says, that time I can barely feel my limbs. Its not even the quickie but it's the pills. He gets dressed and hands me his old t-

shirt from varsity which I sleep in when I'm here. He opens the blankets for me and tucks me in then kisses my forehead.

"I'll see you later"

He says and I just nod.

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

When I get to bed, she's sleeping so peacefully on my side of the bed, why do you women do that anyway? I take of my things and I'm left in my boxers then get behind her and spoon her. Its 3am, yes that is how long it took to prepare everything. Had to ask Lona every possible question they might throw her way and I'm happy to say she is prepared.

I wake up at 6 and email Unathi that I will be coming into the office late than my normal time. I'm woken up by Hlali standing in front of me with a tray

"Morning"

She says, I'm barely awake

"Morning Bhabha. When did you wake up?"

I ask trying to sit up

"a while ago. Go brush your teeth and come eat"

She says sitting on the bed, I follow her orders and brush my teeth, when I'm done, I return to the room, she blesses the food and we eat over light conversation

"I'm sorry I woke you up"

She apologises after I tell her I got into bed at 3am, it's just after 7

“Don't worry about it Bhabha, I need to shower anyway and prepare for work”

I say kissing her cheek

“will you be here after work or you going home?”

She shrugs

“I think I'll go home. I want to go and visit my grandparents, its been a while since I spent some time with them”

She says and I nod

“You never talk about your biological father or his parents”

I start off testing the waters because she never mentions anything about them

“There’s nothing to talk about. My father died in prison when I was still young, I don’t know about his parents”

She says in a dismissive tone

“I’m sorry I asked Bhabha”

I say brushing her knee, she fakes a smile

“It’s ok”

She says and shoves food in her mouth. I take it upon myself to not ask any further questions

“So, you’ll be with your grandparents all day?”

She nods

“Yep, and my little sisters”

I nod

“What time will you be leaving work?”

“3pm, I have to visit the hotel and the club”

I say

“Can I come with you?”

I look up at her, she’s never wanted to come with me when I do my rounds

“What?”

She asks

“You’ve never wanted to accompany me before, what’s changed?”

She shrugs

“I don’t know, I’d like to see how you do your rounds that’s all. Its ok if you don’t want me to tag along”

I place a finger under her chin and make her look up at me

“I’ll have my driver fetch you around 2 and bring you to the office. I won’t be able to fetch you myself”

She smiles

“Awesome”

We finish eating and shower together then I get dressed and leave home with Lona, her clothes were probably delivered this morning but all I know is that she's wearing all the things she asked me to get her.

We just got out of the boardroom and I couldn't more happier with the work she has done. She made quite a few changes to what I had and let me say it works! The investors are happy and so am I, they said she should look into construction and design full time.

"Well done. I didn't think you'd pull it off last minute"

Daniel says to Lona, we standing together

"Thank you, sir. Mr Tshawe I will see you around"

She says and leaves me with Mr Khozi

“I didn’t think she’d do it”

He says with a chuckle

“I trained her well. I know this was all your doing”

I say, he shrugs

“I needed to know if she can work under pressure”

He says calmly

“Whatever vendetta you have against my relationship with Mihlali, keep it away from my work and my staff and deal with me personally”

He shoots me a look with raised eyebrows

“I have nothing against Mihlali and you”

I chuckle sarcastically

“She told me about you and how you spoke to her when you were trying to reach me. Stay away from my girlfriend Daniel. You messed shiit up and it’s your own problem”

He chuckles

“I can’t believe you letting a new pair of fresh panties to ruin our new partnership. She better be worth it”

He says and walks away, it takes everything in me not to punch the daylights out of him. I’m still in the office and the investors are still here so there’s nothing I can do about it at the moment.

CHAPTER 35

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“KITTEN WHERE IS IT?”

I shout from my mom’s old room. There’s a cardigan I’m looking for in mom’s closet that she said I should ask grandma about. Its an old beautiful vintage looking cardigan that gramps gave to mom. We were going through old family pictures when I spotted it.

“Check in the closet Mihlali”

She responds in the other room, I’m frustrated already as it is. I look up in the top shelf and I see what looks like it, I pull it and a diary falls hitting me on the head, and it opens.

“Ouch”

I mumble to myself picking it up. I close it and its more of a novel than it is a diary and its titled "The Unplanned – Life of Lunga Langa" I read it to myself and curiosity gets the best of me.

'I never wanted to hurt you Sino. It was never my intention. There's no justifying any of the things I put you thro....'

"What are you reading?"

Imange asks startling me that I drop the book on the floor

"Imange mahn!"

I say that getting on my knees to pick it up with the rest of the things that fell

"Mihlali what is this? Isn't this mom's?"

She asks reading the cover and its written 'To Sinokuhle Mbana Langa'

"it fell while I was looking for that old jersey"

I explain grabbing it from her

"What are you doing here anyway?"

I ask packing things in the box

"Grandma said to tell you its in the bottom shelf"

She says innocently while helping me pack

"Don't worry I got it, you can leave"

I say dismissively and she doesn't protest or whatsoever, she walks out. I take out the book again and go put it under the bed

where I know I will be able to take it before I leave. I look where Mnage told me to look and I find it and wear it then head back to Kitten's room

"I see you found it"

She says the minute I walk in

"Yes, granny thank you, it smells fresh"

I say

"Of cause, I have those clothes washed every once a week"

I look at her frowning

"Why?"

She shrugs

“I don’t know, for you I guess. You and her wear the same size when she was your age”

I just nod.

“where are the twins?”

I ask and she shrugs

“They went downstairs. I think your grandfather is back”

I nod

“Your mother told me about telling you about your father”

She starts off

“Yep she did, that was three months ago gramps”

I say brushing it off

“I know that, but you and I never got to talk about it. How are you now that you know the truth? You avoided going home for 3 weeks Hlali”

I sigh

“I just needed a break back then but I’m fine with everything”

She raises an eyebrow

“Are you really?”

I shrug again

“I don’t know gran, Mah said she could give me journals from him if I wanted but I still haven’t been able to bring myself to

want them. I don't know what I'm afraid of considering she told me what happened"

I explain

"don't rush yourself into anything ok. When you ready you know what to do"

I nod

"Kitten what happened to his parents?"

I finally ask, I don't think I've ever wondered about them before until Bandile's question today. I've always been content with mom's parents and my step father's mother as my second grandmother.

"I have no idea baby. Last time we checked they were in Limpopo; your grandfather was a chief and your grandmother was a normal Xhosa woman from the Eastern Cape"

“So, you guys haven’t heard from them?”

She shakes her head no

“the last time your grandmother ever tried to contact you was after your father’s death. She wanted to take you from us”

She lets out a sad sigh

“After we found your mother lying in the pool of her own blood, she was rushed to hospital. We found out she had miscarried and was raped, when she was told as to what had happened to her she tried to commit suicide in the hospital, but she failed. When we brought her back home, she went through depression, she didn’t eat, she didn’t talk she was a shell of what my daughter used to be. She lost so much weight during that period”

She lets out another sad sigh

“I was slowly losing my daughter, she saw things that weren’t there. She went through so much in such little time, the crimes Lunga had committed haunted her. We thought we would have to have her admitted. At the time you lived with your Aunty Saney”

I frown confused

“Why did I live with her?”

“It was safer for you there than here baby. Your mother would have never hurt you yes, but she was so absorbed into the guilt of what Lunga had done to all those children that she thought you were safer anywhere else except wherever she was. It was during that period she called Lunga’s mother to take you from her, but we fought for you to stay with us.”

She says quickly and brushing my thigh, hearing the things my mother went through because of my father only pisses me off more than it saddens me. The hate brewing inside of me that I have for that man cannot be put into words. He almost killed my mother.

“Before schools closed, I applied to have my surname changed to Mtwā”

I say sniffing

Advertisement

she looks up at me

“Hlali”

I shake my head

“I couldn’t live with sharing a surname with him Kitten”

I say and she pulls me into her arms

“I understand my baby. Does your mother know?”

I break the hug and shake my head no wiping my little tears

“I spoke to dad and he accompanied me, its meant to be a surprise for mom”

I say and she smiles

“that’s really sweet but baby your mother and your father were married when they had you. You were made out of love; do you really want to erase the last remaining thing you have of him?”

She asks and I shrug

“Don’t make angry decisions you might later regret in life”

She says, I just nod. What response am I supposed to give?
After the heart to heart moment with my granny I ask one of the drivers to drive me to Daniel’s office. He and I need to talk. I walk straight into his office ignoring his receptionist following behind me

“Sir I tried to stop her”

She says yelling behind me

“Mihlali”

he says shocked to see me, he waves her off

“You have a problem with me and not my boyfriend, whatever vendetta you have against me talk it out with me and leave him and his business out of this”

He chuckles doing a slow clap, I’m confused and annoyed

“I applaud you and young Tshawe. Did you guys plan this last night or something?”

He asks confusing me

“He gave me the same talk after the presentation. You must really love him to come here to tell me this”

“Daniel what do you want? We had a good thing going but it was all a lie. You fucked it up even further when you blackmailed me with a sextape!”

“I know I messed up with the sextape but to date my business partner Mihlali? Seriously?”

He says sounding decent if I can even say that

“I did not know you two were doing business together, and even if so. Why the hell does it matter? Dan...”

I don't even finish my sentence when he pulls me in for a kiss cutting me off from whatever I was saying. I push him off without responding to his kiss. I slap him

“Mihlali I love you and I will never let go of you and that's a promise”

He says, I storm out of his office still in shock of him kissing me. Do I tell Bandile what he did? I'd hate for him to lose this because of me. What do I do? I get to the car and wipe my lips angrily. I apply my lip balm on my lips.

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

“Hey handsome”

Mihlali says walking into my office, I look up from my screen and smile at her. She looks better than she did this morning though it will take some time for the spots to clear.

“Hey beautiful”

I say as she walks, she sits on the couch

“You ok?”

I ask

“yeah I’m fine”

She responds while pressing her phone, the time is 14:50

“You sure honey? You seem a little distracted”

I say that while packing up my things

“Yeah I’m sure”

She says, if I didn’t know better, I’d say she’s avoiding looking at me.

“Let’s go then”

I say with my hand held out at her, she places her hand on mine and we walk out together

“here are your last messages for the day”

Unathi says handing me my messages, we walk out to my driver and he opens the door for us. She gets in and I get in after her.

“You’ve been on your phone ever since you came to the office”

I finally point out. She sighs turning her attention to me

“I went to see Daniel”

She starts off, I wait her to continue

“He kissed me”

She says and I don't know how to respond

"I probably shouldn't have gone to see him, but I had to. I don't like what he did to you because of me"

she says looking down

"I'm sorry"

She adds, my driver halts to a stop. I look out and we outside our first stop

"It's ok"

I say eventually and step out of the car, I'm not mad at Hlali but at Daniel. I also don't like that she went to see him. We walk into the hotel and meet with the manager who updates me on everything in her office. Our next stop is Northern Inn hotel. When we done, we walk out

“Bandile, Mihlali”

My little brother says behind us, we both turn

“Hey Baya”

I say

“Hi Baya, how are you?”

She asks

“You didn’t tell me you are dating my brother”

He says

“Baya please, you at work and we don’t need this drama”

I say

“Shall we?”

I say directing that to Mihlali, we walk out to the car. Our driver drives us out

“If I knew you wouldn’t be talking to me over this then I wouldn’t have told you”

She says, I sigh

“I’m not mad at you”

I say

“you sure? Doesn’t seem like it”

She says looking down

“Hlali I don’t appreciate you going to see Daniel especially about my business. I don’t need you fighting my battles for me”

I say

“funny because he told me you did the very same thing after your meeting”

I let out a deep sigh

“Business is business and we bound to disagree every now and then.” She huffs

“Fine, next time I won’t interfere in your business”

She says looking outside the window. Well this didn’t go as it should, I guess. I don’t know how I’m supposed to respond to hearing that some guy kissed my girlfriend.

CHAPTER 36

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I don't understand Bandile's mood, so should I have kept it to myself? I feel like Daniel was going to tell him or spite him with this stupid kiss. Why can't he be his normal understanding self about this?

I don't think I've ever felt unwanted by Bandile before and right now that's how I'm feeling and it's painful. I get onto WhatsApp and chat with my friends, Kayla, my aunty Layla's daughter who lives in Pretoria with her family is back for holidays and she wants us to go out for Supper later today. I decide to call her, we driving to the next hotel and my boyfriend is busy going through the files he took from Southern Inn.

"Kay"

"Hey honey bear. How are you?"

she says sounding all excited

“Dude you back”

I point out

“Yeah, I am, so you game?”

She asks

“Of cause I am, I’ll be back home in a while and I’ll call you ok”

I assure

“Amazing, we have a lot to talk about! Bye honey”

She says

“Bye Kay.”

I drop the call with a smile, I missed her so much. Yes, we spoke on WhatsApp and phone calls every now and then, but we haven't seen each other in a while. When she was 10, she and her parents moved to the states, but they moved back last year, she's a couple of months older than I am.

I feel him stealing glances at me, but I don't say anything and return to my texting

“Plans tonight?”

He asks

“Yes”

That's all I say without removing my eyes away from the screen. If he wants to talk, he will but until then I'm not saying shiit to him. The car comes to a stop

“Coming with?”

He asks

“No, I’m good. I think I’ll go home, I need to prepare”

I say. He closes the door that’s open by his driver

“Hlali I’m sorry for the way I reacted. I don’t know how I’m supposed to react to my girlfriend telling me that she went to see her ex in his office and that very same ex kissed her”

He says and I sigh

“At least my ex is not trying to kill you every chance he gets”

I mumble. I’m not a petty person

“Huh?”

He says with a raised eyebrow

“Nothing. I’m sorry and it won’t happen again.”

I say, and he nods

“I don’t like arguing or disagreeing with you. Daniel is out to get me, and he will do whatever it takes”

He says

“The same way he was probably going to use this to get to you. Hence I told you because I knew that if he told you then he was going to make it sound as if I came on to you”

He sighs and takes my hand into his, he kisses the back of it

“I’m sorry for overreacting”

He says sincerely

“Please forgive me Bhabha”

He says with a smile I can’t say no to, I find myself smiling back at him

“You forgive”

I say and he plants a light kiss on my lips

“Still want to go home now?”

He asks pulling puppy eyes on me

“Not that I want to but while you were being mad at me, I made plans”

I say, and he pouts

“Ouch”

He says faking a sad face

“Remember Kayla, my mom’s best friend’s daughter?”

He nods

“She got back today, and she wants us to go out tonight and catch up”

“So, you ditching me for a girl?”

He says with a pout and I can’t help but laugh at him. He’s so cute

“You so adorable”

I say kissing him

“You can pay for our dinner”

I say with a smile and he chuckles

“You want to suck me dry, I see you Miss Langa”

He says and I laugh

“You love me, and you want me to be happy”

I say with a pout

“To punish you, nope. I’m not doing that, unless”

He says, I look at him and he has that naughty smile of his

“What do you want?”

I ask with a raised eyebrow

“I want my girl to sleep over for the rest of the weekend”

I chuckle

“After the funeral then”

I say and he smiles and shakes my hand

“Then you got yourself a deal Miss Langa. Now are you coming?”

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

“Phrasing”

She responds with a laugh, something we picked up from watching a cartoon series named Archer

“Whatever. Let’s go!”

We walk out and get into the hotel, after this stop I get off at the restaurant and my driver will drive Hlali to her home and while I head to the next stop. We meet up with the manager and go talk in his office about everything. After the meeting we go to the car and drive to the restaurant

“I’ve never been here before”

She says as we halt to a stop in front of the restaurant

“They make nice food”

I say and she raises her eyebrows

“Don’t all your places serve nice food?”

I chuckle

“Yah but this one is different, its cheap with amazing food. Plus, it’s convenient”

“I guess Kay I will try it out. Was this always here?”

I shake my head, it only opened last month

“Wait how did you miss the opening? What were you doing?
How did you not know about it?”

I ask and she thinks for a while

“Is this the one that opened and launched when I was writing my first exam paper?”

I nod

“Oh right

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now I remember. I don't know how I have not yet brought you here since then”

she shrugs

“Between work and helping your brother out with the negotiations, there hasn't been time. Bhabha I should go. I need to shower and look pretty”

I raise an eyebrow and she giggles

“I’m your girlfriend, I have a reputation to uphold”

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-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

Being here hasn’t been so pleasant. I’ve tried to be respectful and abide by their way of living, but I can’t do it. Call me a brat or whatsoever but I just can’t. I’ll be honest with you right now, I’m not a village boy, I’ve never lived in the village. The furthest I’ve gotten close to village life was when I went to initiation school in the Eastern Cape last year. I didn’t do that whole wearing of the weird clothes and walking with certain people. I just couldn’t.

I’m not liking the environment I’m in at all, these men are quite disrespectful to be quite honest with you and I don’t stand for it. Because I have a car, I’m supposed to run around taking

them wherever they want to go like petrol grows on trees or something. They are everything mom said they would be. I spoke to Sino and she thinks living to stay in a hotel would come across as disrespectful and looking down on them and maybe she has a point, but I can't continue living like this, they are intolerable and the way they drink like there's no tomorrow doesn't help. I also don't like that my mother can't give her mother the funeral she would have liked to have. Did I mention that one of her brother's slapped her all because she didn't agree with him on how the program should run? I obviously did not stand back but she pleaded that I stay out of it. It's only been 2 days here and already I'm fed up.

Her husband should be arriving today, they couldn't fly in yesterday because there were heavy storms where they are. I can't wait to meet my siblings, I don't know what kind of people to expect. With Mange and Nathi its different because they grew up in front of me, so I know them well enough but with Ontla's kids its just different. Her eldest is 14 years of age, the other is 12 and her youngest is 8 years old. There's a knock on the door, I open and its mom

"Hey"

I say

“Hi, ready to go?”

She asks walking in, I just finished getting dressed. We supposed to go grocery shopping with the eldest wife

“Yep we can leave”

I say getting out with her in front. I open the car door for her, and she gets in, the eldest wife comes, and mom is about to get when I shake my head no, I open the back door for her. She can grab the front seat in her son’s car.

“Kids of today”

She says, I close the door and go to my seat and drive out

“So where will we be starting off?”

I ask mom

“We still need to get mom an outfit, they don’t like the dress I bought for her”

She says

“What? Why?”

I ask

“It’s not appropriate!”

The wife spits out

“She’s gone, its not like she’ll see it or wear it anywhere else. The funeral is tomorrow, where will you find the perfect dress

for her. Shouldn't you have taken the dress to the funeral parlour already?"

I ask and mom shrugs

"Biko lets just do what they want ok and get it over with"

She says with a heavy sigh. We stop at the mall and we all get out. We shop for this dress and still don't get it; the wife settles for something ugly and cheap while mom pays for it. I suggest that we split if we want everything to be done by today. I'm obviously with mom and that old hag is alone. I suggest she gets groceries while we take the dress to the funeral parlour.

"Mom is not getting buried in this dress"

Mom says pulling out the dress she had bought out of her handbag and stuffing it into the paper bag of the new one while we leave this one in the car.

"Your brothers are going to throw you in there with her"

She pokes me laughing as we walk in. We do everything and she picks a different casket for her mother, its white and looks 10x better than the one the brothers had picked out

“You are being rebellious and for some weird reason I like this you”

She chuckles as we leave the parlour. We get into the car and drive back to the mall, we call her, and we meet her where she said she is. Mom’s phone rings and she answers it then she turns to me

“That was my husband, they just landed. He’s renting a car and I told him to meet us here”

She says and I nod. We continue shopping around until kids run towards us screaming “mommy”

“Oh, my babies”

She says hugging them all at once

“Hello”

The man following behind the greets, must be the husband

“Hi”

I respond

“I am Masego Kgosi”

“Bikokuhle Mtwana”

I say shaking his hand

“Oh, you Lerato, nice to finally meet you”

He says and I nod, he turns to his wife and shares a hug with her.

“Guys, this is your big brother Bikokuhle Lerato Mtwá, Biko this is my eldest Puleng, this is Pontso my last born and this is Lebohang”

Pontso hugs me happily and with all smiles greeting me. She’s cute and she’s the last born. When we break the hug her big sister Puleng is giving me this cold shoulder and cold ‘hi’, Lebo shakes my hand and we fist bump... This ought to be interesting. Its always been me and my sisters, now I’m a big brother to 3 more people.

CHAPTER 37

-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

Its around 5am and I just finished washing. My family should be landing at 7am, the funeral is set to start at 9-10am. Lebo and Pontso were easy to get along with but Puleng on the other hand just isn't willing to come around and I can't beg her to. I haven't worn my suit yet considering there's still some work to be done around here, I wake Lebo up after I've finished with everything. I've already poured him water to bath in a washing basin because the bathrooms are packed.

"Morning Bhuti"

He greets stretching his arms

"Morning, here's your water"

I say and settle on the bed checking my messages. I call Kim while leaving him to shower

“Hey baby”

She says

“Hey love, how are you Plumpy?”

I ask

“I’m ok babe and, how are you?”

she responds

“I’m ok babe. Will you be coming today?”

I ask

“Yes, I will but I won’t be able to stay after with the funeral tomorrow and all”

She explains

“It’s ok I understand my love. I’ll see you when you get here, call me ok”

“I’ll call you Babe. Bye”

She says and I head towards the mini kraal that’s been put up. People are running around like headless chickens

“Honey have you eaten?”

mom asks, and I shake my head no

“Come, lets go get you something to eat before everyone else wakes up”

She says and I follow behind her making light conversations

“Is your brother awake?”

She asks worriedly

“Yes, mom he’s awake. Puleng doesn’t quite like me”

I point out and she chuckles

“being a mother and all, I shouldn’t tell you this, but she has a crush on you”

She says that laughing and I can’t help but laugh too

“What?”

I’m in awe

“Yep, Pontso snitched on her. That one wakes up too early and sleeps late, she told me she heard Pule talking to her friend on the phone and she was telling her about how good looking her new big brother is”

I laugh out loudly

“You kidding, she’s my little sister”

I point out and she shrugs her shoulders

“Don’t mention anything to her, you’ll only embarrass her. But then again, I don’t blame her because I myself couldn’t get over your father’s good looks”

She says and I furrow my eyebrows

“Mom!”

I warm

“What?”

She asks innocently like she doesn't know what I'm talking about

“You still have a crush on dad!”

I point out and she blushes

“I'm your mother and I can still hit you”

She threatens and I laugh out loudly at her, who would have thought?

“You married. Have been for 14 years now!”

She pokes me and I chuckle

“Whatever you say Miss”

I say with my hands raised out in surrender and she laughs. Ontla is not what I thought she was that much I'll say, and her husband is just as cool as she is. We all get along and Puleng's attitude towards me suddenly makes sense. She makes me and the rest of her family cereal and I help her take the things to the rest of the family.

“Morning”

Puleng says walking in, mom eyes me walking out to call her husband

“Morning little sis, how are you?”

I respond

“Fine”

she says and takes her dish

“I don’t know what’s going on or why you have this attitude towards me but little sis I am not here to take your place or whatsoever. I’m your big brother and I would like to be just that to you and the others”

I say, I’m not going to pry on her having a crush but rather I make it about the usual sibling rivalry.

“I know, sorry I for the attitude”

She says

“Do I scare you?”

I ask because she’s avoiding looking at me at all costs

“No, just that you really good looking”

She says and quickly covers her mouth, I chuckle. She runs out of the lounge leaving me laughing. Pontso walks in with Lebo. We greet each other and they take their food and dig in. My phone rings and its shockingly Phiwo.

“Hello?”

I respond not hiding the shock in my voice

“Hey Biko, how are you?”

She asks

“Good thanks and, how are you?”

“I’m good too thank you. How are things? Mihlali told me the funeral is today”

She says

“Yes, it’s today”

She sighs, I don’t know what else I’m supposed to say

“Ok then, hope everything goes accordingly and condolences to your mom”

She says

“thanks, Phiwo. Can we talk when I’m back? I’ll be back on Sunday, but can we meet for breakfast on Monday?”

“Ok. Bye Biko”

She says and cuts the call. Well that was awkward and its only around 6:30. When we done with everything I prepare to go and fetch my family.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Kayla offered to come with us to the funeral. When we land Biko is already waiting for us in the waiting area. I run to him carrying my overnight bag and jump on him, he spins me around

“You look better than the last time I saw you”

He says and I chuckle getting off of him

“I feel better. How are you?”

I ask

“I’m good little sister. Where did you guys pick her up?”

He asks referring to a Kayla walking over to us with our parents

“She got here yesterday actually”

I respond and he nods, she jumps on him the minute she gets to us and they share a hug while he spins her around. Its been ages since they last saw each other.

“You look amazing”

He says to her and she giggles

“Thank you. Am I still not your type?”

She asks and he laughs

“I’m not answering that. Mom

dad”

He says hugging each of our parents. He and Kayla like to flirt but they are like brother and sister despite the flirting in between. Their relationship was always funny and annoying for me. We head to Ontla’s home, everything seems set up. Biko takes us to greet the elders of the family and introduces us to his family, there’s whispers going around about us being with a white girl. After meeting those Biko takes us to a different house where his family is. When we walk in there’s a guy sitting on the single couch and kids, I don’t see his mom. He introduces us to all of them. He told us about his sister having a crush on him, she is so cute and looks so innocent, but she seems like a little brat to me. His little brother and little sister are so adorable and welcoming unlike her.

“I like your hair”

Pontso says playing with my hair and I smile, she has a cute afro tied into pom-poms

“Thank you but I like yours better”

I say that cupping her pom-poms

“You too cute”

I say and she blushes. Ontla walks in and we greet her with smiles and hugs. She looks prettier than in her pictures that Biko sent.

The funeral service goes well, Kim attended and was there for Biko. She left right after going to the cemetery. Kim loves my brother and he loves her, I think Phiwo was a distraction for him. He just dropped Kim off at Bothaville and now we are driving back.

“You really love her”

I point out and he smiles

“More than you know”

He says

“And Phiwo?”

He shrugs

“I’m done with your friend little sis.”

“Why would you cheat on Kim to begin with? That girl worships the ground you walk on Biko”

Kayla says shoving him

“Ouch! I don’t know Kay, Phiwo is a pretty girl”

He says

“Obviously. How did ya’ll even start anyway?”

Kay says

“Well Hlali was hosting a sleep over early this year, she and I met in the kitchen. She was wearing those sexy pjays you girls wear that show off half of your ass, we spoke a bit and when she was passing by her ass rubbed on my dick a little. We met a couple more times after that until Hlali asked her to bring her something from her room when Phiwo was going back to school, I offered to drop her off on my way to SU and after that we never stopped talking.”

I never knew the story, Phiwo only ever told us that she met him when she had gone out shopping. So yes, it shocks me that while we were waiting for water that she offered to go and get she was rubbing her ass on my brother’s dick.

“She never told us that version of the story”

I point out and they chuckle

“Calm down sis”

He says

“No, I always knew she had a crush on you back in school, but I didn’t think she’d go as far as seducing you. I told her to wear a gown that night because she might bump into you and she brushed me off as paranoid and said you didn’t see her that way, so it didn’t matter. She wanted you to notice her and you did just that. You let your dick do the thinking for you”

I say poking him annoyed and Kayla and he laugh at me

“Does it matter now? What’s done is done and she and I done now. I asked to meet her for breakfast Monday morning”

He says

“And don’t you think that is a bad idea? Why don’t you just call her and call it quits like any normal person instead of meeting with her”

Kay suggests and honestly, I’m with her on this one. Phiwo wears her heart on her sleeves, I can’t imagine she’d be able to hold it in until she gets home. I’d prefer he not dump her in a public space

“Kay has a point”

I say with a nod and he sighs

“Phiwo is more fragile than you think. The last thing you could ever do to her is dump her in a restaurant on a Monday morning Biko”

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

Today is busier than it should be, I'm sitting in on the interviews for my p.a. Its Unathi, Lona and me. If I'm going to be working with this person then I need to see them instead of meeting them on the job. A guy walks in and sits down then crosses his legs. I think to myself that he is probably gay, and I'm proven right when he starts speaking introducing himself as Luniko.

We ask him a couple of questions and what I like about him is that he's fresh out of university. I like giving graduates an opportunity, yes, I don't know the struggle of job hunting but with the number of unemployed graduates I always like to hire them and its mostly for them to gain experience. I like fresh minds anyway. Of all the people we interviewed today he is by far the best candidate for the job and as much as Mihlali is not jealous, but I know that she would like him.

"He seems interesting"

I say putting his CV in the accepted pile

“He’s too gay”

Unathi says

“I didn’t take you for a homophobe”

Lona points out, she shrugs

“I don’t know. We don’t want someone who’ll be an office clown and all”

She says and we chuckle

“Rather an office clown than a stuck bitch”

Lona points out. We both looking for PA’s as she will need one from hereon. We ask Unathi to call in the next candidate and I’m shook to see Mihlali’s friend Bontle, I guess she told her about the job. She’s well dressed for the job, she sits down, and we ask her a couple of questions.

“I like her”

Lona says

“Yeah but she’s still in school and we need someone who will always be in the office”

Unathi says and yeah, she has a point

“Yeah but she wouldn’t be here if she didn’t need the job”

Lona points out

“Look, she’s a good candidate but Unathi is right. We need someone who will be available here in the office 24/7. Let’s keep looking and I will send her CV to other places that are looking for part-timers”

I say. Lona came with the suggestion that we tape our interviews for future references, and I must say it’s a great idea, especially if you have more than one company. The gay guy is definitely hired to be my p.a. I excuse myself because it’s almost 3 and mom invited me over to the house to have family dinner with the rest of the family. I go home and freshen up, when I get to the room my phone is ringing and its Mihlali.

“Sthandwa sam”

CHAPTER 38 – 18SL

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“I want you here”

I whisper while still kissing him, we in the garage standing in front of his car. We just came back from the club and we are both as tipsy

“whatever the lady wants”

he says that places me on top of the car bonnet. He breaks the kiss and looks into my eyes

“FUCK you so beautiful”

I can't even contain my blush; my cheeks are pink. He buries his face on my neck and sucks and licked it together at once making me even hornier than I was

“oooooh” I let out a muffled moan unintentionally

“if you keep moaning like this Mihlali I won’t have time for foreplay”

He says massaging my boobs over my bra. Gosh the sensation feels amazing, at this point I’m not even sure whether I’m drunk or tipsy but there’s definitely a lot of alcohol in my system. He takes off my bra letting my twins spring freely and my nipples aroused by him.

“FUCK! You look perfect Bhabha”

He curses at the sight of my twins. He starts squeezing my first one while sucking on my nipple, I can’t help but roll my head back in appreciation of him appreciating me, Bandile worships my body and he knows exactly what to do and where to touch to get the right reaction from me

“Please”

I plead with the need to feel him inside of me, his hot tongue. We took off my underwear in the car while we were driving home. Man's decided to finger the daylight out of me on our way here and it's safe to say I've already had my first orgasm for the night and I'm about to get my second one with the way he is playing with my boobs and rubbing on my clit right now.

“Bandile”

I whisper with desperation in my voice unable to hide the need to release

“Bhabha”

He mumbles in between sucking my other boob

“I'm going to cum”

My voice is more hoarse and lower than intended too. See what he does to me? He makes me so horny and makes me lose all senses when we get like this

“don’t cum just yet”

He commands and I swear I almost push him off, does this guy know how it feels to be deprived of cumming when you so desperately want to cum? He goes down to my nookie and I am soaked, he looks up at me with that naughty smile of his that gets me every damn time. I’m resting on my elbows watching him intently, I used to not be interested much in watching a guy eat me up but Bandile wants me to watch him, he wants me to see him eating me like his last meal. He pulls me to the edge of the bonnet so that my legs are dangling and I watching him perfectly as he kneels before me. I’m digging on his head, the sensation I am feeling right now is beyond word description. Unable to hold myself back anymore

“Bandile I’m cu-mm-ingggg”

I moan releasing into his mouth and my man sucks me up leaving me clean. He gets up and looks me with that hunger look that tells me he about to beat it up. I can't wait to have him inside of me already. He opens me wide and enters me slowly watching me react to his length and width

“Oooohh-aaaaah”

I scream as he enters me, and my insides stretch to accommodate all of him

“Dammit you feel good Mihlali”

He says slowly pulling back and pushes back in again slowly, he doesn't break our eye contact. See this be that kind of sex that could possibly get you pregnant but with my senses haywire I don't care right now. He's grounding me so I can't even meet his strokes half way but I'm not complaining. He goes on until I cum again and right after I cum he increases his paces groaning and grunting in pleasure. He pulls out and cums all over my thighs, I lay back on top of the car and he chuckles

“We not done missy”

He says and then goes to the car and comes back with a couple of wipes and wipes me clean then wipes his dick.

“Let’s go continue this inside the house”

He says

“I don’t think I can still walk”

I admit without the little strength to raise my head, he chuckles and goes back to the car and takes something then comes back to me. I don’t even know when he pulled up his pants. He picks me in bridal style and walks us inside the house. Mind you I am naked right now

“What did you take in the car?”

I ask

“Our phones. Everything else is in the car”

He says. It’s a good thing that Mah goes home every Friday and comes back Monday morning. We get to the lounge and he puts me on the couch. I am forever grateful this man lives alone in this big house. Imagine someone walking in on us. I could never recover if Mamzo walked in on us doing the deed.

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

We got home around midnight and now its just after 2pm, I don’t think we’ve ever had this much sex. She’s sleeping and I’m just as tired, I pick her up and take her to our room, I open the blankets and put her in the get in beside her and pull her into my arms. I’m woken up by light entering out room. It’s a

cold day in Cape town but there's a bit of sun, I open my eyes and they land on this beautiful lady watching me sleeping.

"Morning creepy"

I say and she chuckles because she knows I'm talking about her watching me sleeping

"My boyfriend is handsome; do you blame me?"

She defends and I chuckle, more like I'm blushing

"stop trying to make you man blush"

She giggles

"If I don't make you blush then who will?"

She asks with her eyes wide open, I chuckle

“You my love. What’s the time?”

I ask

“it’s Sunday, relax”

She says, I get up and make my way to the loo. I need to pee anyway. I end brushing my teeth after. I walk back into the room.

“So, how are you?”

I ask

“sore but I’m ok. How are you?”

She asks, I suddenly feel bad. I know she's always sore after an intense night with me and I hate that there's nothing I can do to make our sex better. I mean I can't shrink my dick now.

"Should I run us a bath?"

She chuckles

"Chocky I'm fine really. Anyway, the time is just after 11"

She says dismissing the topic

"Should we wash first, or should we eat?"

I ask

"Let's eat first, I'm super hungry"

She says

“As long as you are preparing the breakfast then I’m in”

I say and she pouts

“I have Mr D on my phone, we’ll order in. Wimpy or Spur or the restaurants?”

She asks

“Mugg & Bean, it’s been a while. Something filling please”

I say, I’m laying in bed with her and she’s laying on my chest. She places our food orders while I switch on the tv and play us a movie. We watch quietly snacking on chips and sweets

when our order arrives, she wears my gown and her slippers and goes downstairs to fetch the order then comes back after a while, the food is on plates and the drinks are as cans. She

hands me my plate and we eat while sitting up and enjoying a nice romcom she picked out.

“Biko is calling it quits with Phiwo”

She starts off

“I thought he liked her”

I say unable to know how to respond

“Yeah he likes her but with the way Phiwo overreacted with him cancelling their lunch date to meet his mom, he decided she was childish and couldn’t continue any longer with the relationship”

I nod

“I’d dump you too if you acted like that”

I say jokingly because I'd never put myself in a situation of hurting two women

"So, you'd cheat on me?"

She asks and I laugh it off

"No, where would I get the time? I barely have enough time for you, where would I get the time for someone else?"

I ask honestly, there's times where we even go for 3 days without seeing each other but instead we talk on the phone to make up for it and sometimes we even go 2 days without talking or seeing each other when its super hectic at work of cause. So no, I don't have the time.

"Plus, you expensive as it is, imagine"

I say playfully hitting her nose and she giggles

“That had better be true Mr Tshawe!”

I chuckle

“Would you cheat on me if I didn’t have time for you and the company was suffering beyond my control?”

She doesn’t even think twice before responding confidently

“No”

“Oh, is it? Even if I barely had sex with you?”

She chuckles

“I’m not in this for the sex, I love you and if that changed then I’d call it quits instead of wasting your time and mine stringing you along. Wait, am I really expensive?”

She asks frowning and I laugh

“of cause not, I enjoy spoiling you and spending money on you. I love seeing you happy and if money is required for you to be happy then so be it”

She frowns

“I’m not buying your happiness Hlali, I know its such moments that make you the happiest when we both laying around all Sunday and watching movies, when we cook together, when we pillow fight, when we chase each other around the yard with the dogs outside in the back... just the little things”

I add saving my ass above all else.

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-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

My siblings and I exchanged phone numbers, its safe to say that Puleng got over her crush on me over the weekend because when I left this morning, she was no longer acting some type of way towards me so I'm happy. I took her out for lunch yesterday and we got to know each other, I guess it was the amount of people that were there that overwhelmed her because when we were alone in the car she got to open up and she told me about the mini crush she had on me and assured me that its was over. She's a cute funny, shy weird kid. I promised to visit them the week before I return to Varsity. I'm driving alone to Cape Town, I decide to take Kayla and Mihlali's advice and call it quits over the phone instead of in person.

"Hi Phiwo"

I greet

"Hi Biko"

She says

“How are you?”

I ask

“Good thanks and yourself? How did the funeral go?”

“I’m good and the funeral went well. Phiwo I can meet up with you tomorrow”

I start off, she lets out a loud sigh

“Look Phiwo, you’re an amazing girl and all but after the stunt you pulled when I cancelled our lunch date, I realised that the way you reacted was how its always going to be. You lost your trust in me and I don’t blame you for it, I can’t hold it against you because it’s my fault, but I can’t live like that. I can’t be with someone who will always question my whereabouts and always worry and live the way you are living by being with me. I really liked you Phiwo, I still do but we can’t continue with this

any longer. I wronged you and I am sorry for doing this to you especially over the phone. You deserve better, someone who will be yours and yours alone”

She sniffs

“I’m really sorry Phiwo”

I say and cut the call unable to bear her sniffing. I convince myself that I made the right decision for the sake of my relationship with Kim and for her sake

CHAPTER 39

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

Do you ever watch your man, no I'm not mistaken. Do you ever lay in bed on your tummy and just watch him get ready to conquer the day? His sexy ass banging body to the way he wears his briefs that do little to hide his amazing package such that you find your clit vibrating at the mere sight of knowing what's tucked inside those briefs? I mean do you ever watch your nigga and just get wet? Have you ever watched your nigga standing in front of you in nothing but white Calvin Klein briefs and suddenly want to suck the daylights out of him? Yes? No? If no, you are definitely missing out but don't worry because I never used to feel like this until I met Bandile Tshawe the man who stands before me. I can hear him speaking to me, but I would be lying if I told you what he just said. I get off the bed and walk over to him slowly

“You look horny right now”

He points out and I batter my eyebrows at him innocently

“So, what if I am?”

I ask that kneeling before him so that I am eye level with his crotch. He looks down at me as I lick my lips looking up at him

“You going to make me late”

He says, he’s probably right but then again, he is the CEO and he’s allowed to be late. I don’t respond but instead I pull down his briefs and his dick twitches in response

“He doesn’t seem to mind”

I respond taking him into my hand, he chuckles

“This child Lord”

He says hoarsely. I take him into my mouth slowly and I feel him grow semi-hard. I twist cautiously while slowly pulling back making him groan in pleasure and his dick responding all too well to the warmth of my mouth. I go slow sucking him like my favourite lolly pop, in and out of my mouth until I gag, my eyes have not left his and his have not left mine as he watches me with so much intent. I continue and this time I cup his balls and massage them slowly with one hand while twisting the shaft with the other. He lets me move in my own pace enjoying every moment with gags in between and that alone is enough to make him look up in pleasure enjoying every bit of me sucking and twirling my tongue around his tip, there's this sensitive spot on the tip that gets him every-damn-time! I continue until I feel him grow in my hand, I shove all of him in and suck harder milking him with my mouth. I enjoy pleasuring my man.

“Bhabha I'm going to cum”

I feel his balls tense up, I don't pull back but shove him right down my throat swallowing him and that sets him, and he shoots his cum inside my mouth. I try and swallow most of it, but the rest leaves the sides of my mouth. I wipe the corners of my lips and then he pulls me up and kisses me passionately like it's his last day on earth. I finally break the kiss

“You going to be late Mr Tshawe”

I point out looking all innocent like I did not just suck him; he chuckles while blushing

“You’re a tease Mihlalikazi Mana”

He says shaking his head

“Go to work”

I say that turning away from him, but he pulls my arm making me crash into his chest

“What?”

I ask with a wide smile

“I love you even though you torture me”

He says and kisses my forehead, you would think he'd kiss my lips, but he's set out to be unpredictable when it suits him.

“I'm a sucker for your misery”

I say and he chuckles

“Ouch! You mean”

He says with a gasp putting his hand over his heart dramatically making me laugh

“I'm kidding, I love you too much”

I say walking away from him. He chuckles and continues getting dressed while we converse about his busy day and my day with my friends.

“So, you guys are going to be cuddled up in bed and gossiping about men being trash?”

He says after I mention my friends and I going to be indoors at Kayla’s home

“Maybe if she had a man then we’d probably talk about that”

I say

“So, I’m trash?”

I laugh out loud

“One girl’s trash is another woman’s treasure”

I say proudly and he laughs

“I will take your word then”

He says that fixing his tie. He walks over to me; I kneel on the bed so that we are eye level

“Enjoy your day with your friends. I love you and see you tomorrow”

He says and I frown

“Wont I see you later?”

He shakes his head

“Sorry Bhabha, got a lot of work I need to sort out. I will call you though”

I nod pouting, he kisses my lips

“I’m sorry”

He says and I nod, yes, I’m a baby. Shoot me!

“Enjoy your day vah”

He says and kisses my forehead then takes his things and leaves. I get back under the covers and cuddle up alone pressing my phone chatting with all my other friends.

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

I get to the office and am welcomed by my new receptionist. He’s so fly and for some reason I like that. He brings me my coffee as I settle down on my chair.

“How does my day look?”

I ask as he settles opposite me

“Hectic. You have back to back meetings and the only time you are free today is for an hour at 2pm. There’s that conference in Joburg which you still haven’t RSVP’d to a..”

I cut him off

“Conference? When?”

I ask confused to the core

“Well there’s a conference this weekend and they still waiting for you to confirm”

He says and I sigh, this weekend I'd planned to go to Durban with Hlali. It's a trip we had to postpone with the funeral at her brother's other home and every other problem that arose.

"I have a trip planned for this weekend"

I say with a sigh, this will definitely hurt her feelings

"Why don't you take her with to Joburg?"

He suggests and it's not a bad suggestion

"ok listen set it up. Book two rooms, one for Lona and the other for Hlali and I"

He nods writing it down

"So

I will send you the details and everything you will need. Should I book you guys a flight, or you are taking the PJ?”

“Just book us business class tickets please. Now I need to convince Miss to want to go to Joburg”

I say to myself and he chuckles

“Get her chocolates to sweeten the whole conversation and I chuckle

“Not Mihlali, she’s not that big on chocolate. Argh I’ll think of something”

I say and he shakes his head

“Love is cute, how long have you guys been dating?”

“3 months actually”

I say

“That’s so cute. She’s a lucky girl to have such a catch”

He says and I chuckle

“I’m the lucky one. So, what else?”

“There’s that trip to the states for October, you supposed to work there for a month?”

He asks

“A month? When did I plan that?”

I ask, and he shrugs

“It’s here on your notes. Said something about placing a new CEO, the one there is leaving and stuff”

He says and I sigh

“When do I have to be there?”

I ask

“Well the old CEO is stepping down month end of September, so you need to step in until you guys find a replacement”

I sigh heavily

“What’s wrong sir?”

“It’s Muhlali’s birthday in October 11”

He sighs too

“That’s sad. So, what now?”

I shrug

“I need you to send an email to the other board of directors so that we can conference call and discuss this thing further. I can't be in the states for a whole month”

He writes it all down

“I will get onto it; I'll email you the rough draft and you'll make any necessary changes”

I nod

“Anything else that might just get me dumped?”

he chuckles

“I'm sorry sir that is all for now”

He says and we wrap things up then he leaves and heads back to his station. How do I tell my girlfriend that I'm going to miss her birthday? When I agreed to step in, I didn't have a girlfriend and I didn't have anything better to do with my life. I always go to the states to make sure that company is still afloat, and everything is still in place. My phone rings and I answer it, it's my big brother talking about meeting up for lunch

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

When I wake up, I shower and do everything like tidying up the room and packing the things I'm going to need and then head downstairs where Mah is watching tv and drinking tea

“Morning Mah”

I greet placing my bag on the couch

“Morning Bhabha, your food is in the microwave and the juice is in the fridge”

She says

“Thank you Mah”

I say and head to the kitchen, it’s an omelette and croissant. I pour myself juice and take my food to eat in the lounge. I thank her and then dig in, it’s amazing as usual. She’s watching Muvhango

“Why are you leaving so early?”

she asks

“I have to meet up with my friends Mah”

I say

“And your things?”

I chuckle

“I can’t keep leaving my clothes here. What if Bandile wants to bring a girl over and that girl uses my things for witchcraft or something”

She laughs out loudly

“Your mind works overtime. There is no other woman in his life besides you and his mother”

She says

“He respects you and he loves you. He would never do that to you my baby and he would never disrespect me like that”

She says confidently and I chuckle

“Haibo Mah”

I say and she giggles

“I’ve known that boy all his life, I am like a second mother to him”

She says and I nod

“I hear you Mah”

“trust me, he loves you Mihlali and he wouldn’t risk your relationship like that. He’s the happiest I have ever seen him with you, and I think you love him just as much if not more. I know real love when I see it”

She says and sips her tea returning to Muvhango leaving me speechless. She's right, I do love Bandile and I show him every chance I get. I always send him a good morning note on Mondays. I don't even know how it became a thing the same way I don't know how the flower thing became a thing, but these things are a thing to us both. Bandile is a loving man that is not afraid to express his love and I on the other hand am just like him. I finish eating, wash my dish and then say my goodbyes taking my things and head home. When I get home Biko is in the lounge watching tv with the twins

"Morning"

I greet

"Morning, how are you?"

He responds as I settle beside him

"Good thanks, you?"

He nods

“Kids”

I say

“We good too Hlali”

They say both focused on whatever is playing

“What are you guys watching?”

I ask

“a movie”

Mange answers, I don't ask any further because clearly, I won't get anything

“Where are the parents?”

I whisper asking Biko

“they left for Joburg, said something about some conference this weekend and meeting up with their friends”

He says

“Mom said you babysitting this weekend. I’m going to visit my mother in Lesotho”

CHAPTER 40

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“Ha. a Biko I can’t babysit. I’m going to Durban this weekend”

I say and he shrugs

“Take it up with mom, I’m just the messenger”

he says, I’m annoyed right now.

“When are you leaving?”

I ask

“tomorrow”

I get up and walk to my room with my things. I dial mom's number, its answered after a while as I'm about to give up

"Hlali"

She answers

"Mom I can't babysit this weekend. You know I'm going to Durban with Bandile"

She lets out a sigh

"Can't you guys go some other time? Durban will always be there baby"

"Mom you knew I had plans. These people have a babysitter"

I point out

“And she can’t babysit this weekend, there’s a funeral at her home. Your grandparents are leaving Friday. I’m sure you and Bandile can at least wait for a week to screw each other’s brains out in Durban”

She says shocking the daylights out of me

“Mom!”

“What? It’s not like I’m talking about something you not already doing with the guy. I hope you on contraceptives Mihlali, you too young to have a baby and you still in your first year”

She says. You ever not know how to respond to something because there’s literally nothing you can say. That’s how I am right now

“You are babysitting, Bandile can come and see you but he better not sleep there”

She warns

“Yes mom”

I say

“Also, don’t starve my kids. Your friends can sleep over but no party in my house and you better not leave my kids alone!”

“Yes Ma’am”

I say

“Good. Bye Baby”

She says and cuts the call. My mouth is on the floor with everything else she said. Ok so maybe every now and then we forget to use the condom, but I am on contraceptives, I take them every morning. I call Kayla

“Hey honey”

She says

“Hey friend”

“You sound down. What’s wrong?”

She asks concerned

“I’m stuck babysitting this weekend.”

I say

“Aren’t you going to Durban?”

She asks

“Not anymore. Biko is leaving tomorrow going to visit his other family”

I say and she chuckles

“I’ll talk to mom and come stay over while everyone is gone”

She suggests and I can’t help but smile

“Thank you, my friend,”

I say

“Don’t mention it”

Unlike me Kayla is her mother’s only child. Her stepfather can’t have children so her mother and him never had a child together, but she has 4 siblings from her father’s side of the

family which she barely visits. She and her stepmom don't get along, so it's put a strain on her relationship with her father and the rest of the siblings. We continue talking and cut the call.

When we done, I decide to get under the covers and catch up on sleep.

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-BANDILE TSHAWE

"I don't know whether to tell her now or before I leave"

I say to my brother frustrated. We are having lunch at a coffee shop near my workplace.

"Rather you tell her sooner than later. At least she'll be mad and get over it but if you procrastinate then it will hurt her"

He says and sips his coffee

“Eish I don’t know Bakho. I love her and missing her birthday in general is going to hurt her”

I express sadly

“Either way you going to the states and you have to tell her. Why don’t you leave with her?”

He asks

“Because she’s a student and has school”

I say rolling my eyes

“I guess you screwed. Ay nawe what are you doing dating a freshman?”

I shoot him a look and he chuckles

“fine I’m quiet. You and Baya still fighting?”

I shrug

“well he’s ignoring my calls, so I guess”

I say

“What’s so special with this one that he of all people would be mad at you?”

He asks and I shrug my shoulders

“I don’t know, he probably sees what I also see in her”

He nods

“And what about her past with Daniel?”

He asks, I told him about what happened

“Daniel is a threat to my relationship, but I trust Mihlali”

He sips his tea

“I hear you bro but watch out. If really this happened, then chances are the guy is not going to let her go just like that. Unathi, what’s her story?”

I shrug

“I have a new P.A so all is well for now”

“I still think you should send her to the states, as far away from you as possible. She’s bad news and will probably try and get between you and Mihlali”

He says, I sigh

“Unathi is over me”

I say

Advertisement

he raises an eyebrow

“Need I remind you your girlfriend landed in hospital just last week because of her. Watch out for Unathi little bro”

I nod. We continue chatting about his upcoming wedding and heading to the Eastern Cape to finish off the negotiations. When we done, we head our separate ways. Its back to business and more meetings. There’s a knock on the door before my next conference call in 30 minutes

“Come in”

I say and my Luniko walks in and sits opposite me carrying a tab

“Well look what I found”

He says placing the tab in front of me. It’s an outfit

“Just say the word and it will be here before the day ends”

He says proudly making me chuckle

“How do you know she’s going to like this?”

I ask with a raised eyebrow

“Because Boss Bae. I know fashion and also, I stalked your girlfriend. Tell me her sizes and I’ll order everything”

I chuckle

“fine, she’s a size 34 with a small waist. Her shoe size is a 4”

He writes them down

“Should it be delivered to the office or her home?”

“Office, I need to talk to her in person if I want her to really come with me on this trip. Has Lona confirmed?”

He nods

“Yes, sir she has. I’ve booked your suites and your flights”

He says, I think this guy and I are going to get along just well.

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“Well what are you going to do?”

Vuyo asks after I tell her and Kayla my situation. Phiwo is still not talking to me so she didn't come over

“I'll tell him later when he calls me”

I say

“Nope, text him and ask him to come over. You can't tell him such over the phone Hlali!”

Kayla says and I just nod. She's playing with my hair while Vuyo sits on my bed munching

“What about aunty Saney?”

Vuyo asks

“They left for a family holiday last week Friday”

“well that sucks”

Vuyo says and I nod pouting

“Its all going to work out”

Kayla says

“Enough with my misery, what’s new with you guys?”

“Well I met this guy last weekend at the club and he and I have been talking and he’s taking me out for lunch tomorrow”

Vuyo says excitedly

“I was beginning to think you gay”

I admit and she throws a pillow at me laughing

“Fuck you Mihlali!”

She says as Kayla and I laugh

“Well she has a point, when last did you like a guy?”

“you guys are annoying I swear! Phiwo still not talking to you?”

Vuyo asks

“Nope, she hasn’t responded to any of my texts or whatsoever. I swear when Biko broke it off with her he also broke off my friendship with her”

I say sadly

“Phiwo is being childish. We told her not to mess with your brother. Matter of fact let me call her”

Vuyo says unlocking her phone I’m assuming

“Vuyo come on don’t”

I plead but the phone is on speaker and its ringing

“Hello”

Phiwo says

“Hey, what’s the deal? Mihlali tells me you’ve been ignoring her texts and calls”

She lets out a heavy sigh

“Vuyo please, I don’t need your drama right now. I need my friend”

She says sounding annoyed

“you mad. Mihlali is not the one that dumped you, her brother whom she warned you about by the way is the one that called it off with you. Phiwo you and Hlali were friends before you got pipped down by her brother. Don’t let this jerk come between you guys”

Vuyo scolds, voice so stern and motherly mode activated

“I need a break Vuyo, I need space”

“You my friend and I love you and you’ll probably hate me for this, but you knew what you were getting yourself into the second time you got with the guy after we begged you not to. Phiwo don’t let this break up hold you back from enjoying your holidays. When you ready to face any of us, you have each of our numbers neh”

She says and they say goodbye to each other

“Remind me to never tell you about the bad decisions I’m about to make. You are brutal”

Kayla says

“You haven’t seen anything. She crucifies for defying her and going against her advice this one”

I point out and Vuyo rolls her eyes at me

“What kind of friend would I be if I didn’t tell you the truth? Like now, Bandile is by far the best thing to ever happen to you.

He's not that older than you and he seems to love you, either than his ex of cause. But he is perfect"

She compliments, I smile

"Unathi is no longer his PA"

"So, she no longer works at the company?"

I shake my head no

"She still works for him but in another department"

She rolls her eyes

"Bandile should fire the bitch. Would he like you working as Daniel's PA?"

Kayla asks and I shrug my shoulders knowing the answer to that question

“I trust Bandile”

Vuyo raises an eyebrow

“Trust him all you want but Unathi tried to kill you, she switched your meds Mihlali. Who is to say she won’t do far worse some other time?”

I shrug at Vuyo’s question

“Look you have a kind heart hence people take advantage of you. Talk to your boyfriend and have him fire the bitch!”

Kayla adds

“Before she becomes a problem”

CHAPTER 41

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

As soon Bandile's "I'm outside" call drops I wear my gown and slippers then make my way outside to his car, he's parked in front of the yard, it's just after 8pm. It's so cold the heater is on even. I hug him and we share a kiss.

"How was your day?"

He asks

"It was good, spent the day with Vuyo and Kayla. Phiwo's still not talking to me"

I say, he brushes my chin

"Phiwo will come around when she's ready. Give her time ok"

I nod

“Besides Phiwo, what did you girls do?”

He asks taking my hand into his

“We were mostly catching up. So how was your day?”

He sighs and kisses my hand

“That bad?”

I ask

“Not bad, just long and tiring. I could really use a massage”

He says

“I’m sorry Sthandwa sam”

He nods

“About Durban”

He starts off and my heart breaks

“We’ll have to postpone again”

I don’t respond but wait for him to continue. He lets go of my hand and takes something from the back seat

“I hate doing this but circumstances beyond my control require me to. There’s a conference being held in Joburg and I need a date”

He says handing me a big enough black box

“What’s this?”

I ask

“Open it”

He says waiting for me, I untie the ribbon and open the box. There’s a pair of heels, earrings, a ring, perfume, lipsticks, mascara, clutch and a dress”

“So, will you be my date this weekend? We’ll go to Durban even if it’s during the week next week or a weekend when schools are open”

He says looking really nervous. I return everything in the box

“I know you mad and I am really sorry Bhabha for doing this to you. I know how much you were looking forward to the trip and everything”

He says touching my cheek and I lean in on his touch, he wipes a tear with his thumb

“Uxolo kaloku Sthandwa sam”

He says, I can't even speak with the lump on my throat right now. He takes the box and returns it to the back seat and pulls me to him. I just cry, I don't even know why I'm crying. This alone is sweet that he went out of his way and bought me a whole outfit. It hurts that I won't be going with him, it hurts that my friend is not on speaking terms with me... Everything just hurts.

“I'm really sorry”

He says sincerely trying to calm me down brushing my back soothingly. When I am calm, I pull away from him

“You don't like the outfit?”

He asks concerned and I shake my head no

“I love it, but I can’t go with you. I’m stuck on babysitting the twins”

I say pouting and with a heavy heart

“Is that why you crying? Bhabha its ok. Your sisters are more important”

He says, I look up at him

“Honestly, as much as I would have loved to have you there with me supporting me as you always do but you have to do this and its ok. We will attend many events together in the next coming months and years”

He says wiping away the remaining tears from my cheeks, he’s too sweet

“I’m sorry you went through all this trouble for someone who won’t even go with you”

I say

“It’s not troubles at all. I should have asked you and besides, all this is yours. you’ll wear it some other time elsewhere”

He says, I wrap my arms around his neck

“Thank you, baby,”

I say and he breaks the hug

“Can I see that smile I love so much?”

He says and I can’t help but smile. He returns it

“See, no harm done a...”

His phone rings, it's his work phone

"I have to take this"

He says and I nod

"Bandile Tshawe"

He answers so formally. He talks for about 30 minutes and judging by how tense he is right now the call was not so friendly

"You have to go"

I say and he nods

"sadly. But is my girl ok?"

I nod

“Yes, I’m ok Chocky, go handle business”

He sighs

“Can I get my goodnight kiss and then I will leave a happy man or rather less pissed”

He says and I chuckle getting close to him. We share a kiss until we disturbed by his phone again. Its days like this I wish my man wasn’t this successful. he groans as I break the kiss

“A nigga can’t have a moment with his girl without these people disturbing him”

He says annoyed locking his phone

“The world would collapse without you. You should go Chocky”

I say, he takes my box and hands it to me. I will see you tomorrow at Lunch neh my love”

He says as I’m about to get out

“Ok baby. Bye”

I say closing the door. It’s raining outside so I run back inside the yard. When I walk in

I take off my gown because its wet, it’s raining cats and dogs. Trust Cape Town winter to not disappoint. I leave my slippers by the door and head to the lounge with my box

“And this?”

Biko asks

“it’s from Bandile”

I say opening it, the car light doesn't do these things any justice. Everything is beautiful and the twins think so too

"Wow, he knows your style"

Biko says and I blush

"They so pretty, who bought them?"

Ise asks

"My friend"

I respond dismissively, they need not know I have a boyfriend and even if they know it's not their business. I take a picture of everything in the box and post it as a status on WhatsApp with the caption "Could your boyfriend ever?" with in love faces and messages start to flood in but one in particular catches me off guard, its Baya and it reads "So you chose him because of the money? I never thought of you as that kind of girl Mihlali" I have to read it two more times to actually believe that my eyes

are not deceiving me. Is this guy for real? I used to post the flowers too and I still do every now and then. Us girls like to brag when in love. I post a picture I took of Bandile; it was from this morning when he was sleeping and then caption it "With a smile like that he better be dreaming about me. MCE" and add hearts. I then go and respond to Baya

"Unlike you Bayanda. Bandile made his intentions clear from the get-go. You are childish and an entitled brat, I could never be with someone that immature. First impressions are everything, next time watch what you say to a potential. PS, in case you did not know I'm the granddaughter of Lwando Mbona, I have all the money in the world!"

I then log out of WhatsApp annoyed. I take my things to my room and watch a movie on my laptop instead to distract me from over thinking until my phone rings in the middle of my sleep, I don't even check the screen

"Mh"

I say

“Sthandwa sam I just got home”

He says

“Ok Chocky, sleep tight and I love you”

I respond in my sleepy voice

“Goodnight my love”

He says and drops the call. I’m about to return to sleep when it rings again

“Forgot something?”

I respond thinking its Bandile

“Mihlali Hi”

A voice I'm unfamiliar with comes on, I open my eyes and its
Bayanda

"Bayanda what do you want?"

I ask annoyed

"You Mihlali"

I chuckle in disbelief

"I know you don't believe me but it's the truth. I want you
Mihlali, I've wanted you from the very first time I saw with your
brother. Us meeting at the restaurant that day, I thought I was
going to shoot my shot the next time I saw you but that day I
was dealing with some stuff and just needed to vent and I am
sorry I came across as a spoilt brat. Mihlali I can't lose you to
my brother of all people!"

I sigh, I really don't need this drama right now

"Are you done?"

I ask unable to hide my annoyance

"Mihlali please just give me a chance to prove to you that I can do better than Bandile. I can love you better than he can"

I chuckle to myself right now.

"Is there love better than the one Bandile shows me? My boyfriend does everything and anything for me not out of obligation but because he loves me, he scolds me and sets me in place whenever I seem to go astray, he supports my dreams and studies. I'm telling you that guy wakes us up at 2 am to help me study for a test and then he takes question papers and tests me based on what I studied for. He doesn't demand my time and attention the same way I don't demand his too because I understand how busy he is, and he understand when I am busy. Whenever I see him its like I'm seeing crush every

damn time, my reaction never changes towards him even when he pisses the daylights out of me, I still want him and still want to see him. Baya I'm not telling you all this to be jealous or to try and top what he does but I'm telling you so that you understand the nature of my relationship with your brother and that nothing you say will convince me otherwise about him. Now can we please never have this conversation again, Bandile is your brother and you should be supporting him rather than trying to get with his girl behind his back and because I want you and him to be fine again and return to normal, I won't tell him about this because it will only piss him off and already he is dealing with a lot from work. He doesn't need this drama of yours! Bye Bayanda"

I say and cut the call annoyed to the core.

I know I should probably tell him but Baya and Bandile are brother's, the last thing I want is to be the reason 2 brothers fight and lose contact with each other. I value family more than anything and that is probably because I grew up in a loving family orientated home and I want the same for everyone.

I go try to sleep but I can't, so I get into WhatsApp and Bandile is online

Sthandwa sam"

I text him

"Hey beautiful, you're awake?"

He says, I chuckle because I wouldn't be texting if I was sleeping

"Video call?"

I ask switching on my bedside lamp and he calls right then, the time is just after 11pm

"Why is my girl still awake at this hour?"

He asks

“Because my man woke me up and now, I can’t sleep”

He chuckles

“he wanted your voice to be the last thing he hears before he sleeps”

He says and I blush

“Are you ok?”

He asks and I frown confused

“Of cause, why?”

I ask

“Because the last time I saw you I saw you cry for the very first time and I didn’t like it. It broke my heart and I never want to see you cry again after that”

He says and my heart melts, his face on its own screams concern right now

“I won’t scare you like that again”

He chuckles

“I only ever want to see tears of joy on your face Mihalikazi Mbana”

I blush again, there’s something about him calling me by my full name that does a number on me every damn time.

CHAPTER 42

3 MONTHS LATER

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

It's been a long hectic 3 months and they have been a blissful ride. Bandile and I grow stronger by the day, if he asked me to marry him, I would say yes without hesitation because really that is how much I have fallen in love with him. I know I should tell him about the sextape, but I'm scared it will ruin everything and besides dad took care of everything so by the grace of God it doesn't exist.

I spoke to Bandile about getting rid of that Unathi girl and he was more than willing to fire her and get her a job elsewhere, we had an argument about him getting her a job. She's an ex, he doesn't owe her shiit, but my man has a good heart and he can't help it.

I've been working closely with my favourite writer and its been amazing, we started when schools opened and I'm happy to say that I write a piece on their magazine every week so yheeyi!!!

School so far has been good, it's the last week of September, we just finished writing a test. I get out of the paper and call Bandile

"Bandile Tshawe's office"

Luniko answers, he's so sweet and funny and a free spirit. Its never a dull moment when I go to the office because I sit with him and we gossip until Bandile is done with his meetings. He never makes the mistake of lilies; I'm assuming my boyfriend made it pretty clear to him or even threatened him if he ever made such a mistake

"Hey bear. How are you?"

I respond

“Hey sweetie, I’m good thanks and, how are you? How was your paper?”

I chuckle because I never mentioned I was writing today

“Bandile told you”

I say rolling my eyes and he chuckles

“Yes, he did, I have a way with our man”

He says and I laugh

“I wrote well, and I passed”

I say excitedly

“That’s awesome babe. Anyway, our man is currently stuck in a meeting and should be out in 30 minutes or so”

“Well that sucks. Tell him I’ll be at my place later ok and that he should get back to me”

I say

“Of cause babe, enjoy the rest of your day there’s a call coming through”

He says

“Bye boo, you too”

He cuts the call and I sit next to Lara; she’s smiling and all blushy-blushy with her phone

“Troy?”

I ask startling her

“Yes babe”

I nod then nudge her

“You really like him huh?”

She blushes making me chuckle because she is not one to date

“He’s an idiot but that’s what I like about him”

She says and I nod. She and Troy started dating sometime in May before we closed after hanging out one too many times after we met at the club that night, we went with Biko and his friends. They started off as close friends until Troy confessed to having fallen for her only to find out my friend felt the same way about him.

“I’m happy for you my friend. I wish you nothing but the best”

I say pulling her into a bone crushing hug knowing how well those annoy her

“Ok enough now Mihlali”

She says pulling away. I laugh at her

“So, when last did you talk to Baya? I bumped into him the other day”

I roll my eyes

“I last spoke to him a couple of months back and then I blocked him everywhere. He was being childish and unnecessary for my liking”

She chuckles

“he told me to tell you he’s really sorry for disrespecting you the way he did”

She says, I just nod. He and Bandile are back on speaking terms, apparently a few days after our call Baya apologised to Bandile for overreacting and the way he acted thereafter. They good now and I couldn't ask for anything better.

"It's all good. I'm over it"

She laughs

"That is good to know, you and Bandile are good thou?"

I nod

"Yeah we happy babe, we argue every now and then but its always petty things that never last"

She smiles

“I’m glad you happy Hlali, you deserve all the happiness. We should thank Daniel for inviting us else you wouldn’t have met your soulmate”

She says laughing and I look at her annoyed and click my tongue making her laugh even more

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

It’s been three whole months, making it September and I still haven’t told my girlfriend about leaving for the states at the end of this month. Seeing her cry that day broke my heart into a million pieces, I could never be able to bear Mihlali’ s tears and I understand that me procrastinating this is only making it worse but what can I do? I love her too damn much and I never want to see her hurt. We’ve been out a couple of times to formal events and we finally went to Durban and it was

amazing. Lona and I ended up going with Luniko to the Joburg conference, I met Mihlali's parents there and they were also guest speakers as I am. Her father and I spoke a bit and he's a pretty cool person business wise and so is her mother.

I leave for the states in tomorrow night and will thankfully stay there for 2 weeks and then someone else takes over. Its Friday and I've asked Mihlali to come sleep over. I park outside her complex and go inside, the security knows me by now because I always come over. I walk to her apartment and knock

"Coming"

She shouts from the other side of the door

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after a few minutes the door opens, and she smiles

"Hey beautiful"

I greet hugging her and picking her up in the process, she closes the door

“Hey handsome”

She says kissing me, she breaks it and I walk us to the lounge asking her about how she has been today and how her test was

“It was easy. We wrote that paper we practised last night”

She says proudly. I’m sitting on the couch with her on top of me

“I’ve missed you”

She blushes

“you always miss you”

“As if you don’t miss me”

I fire back and she giggles

“whatever. Can I get you something to drink?”

I shake my head no

“You don’t afford the stuff I drink”

I say jokingly and she laughs

“Oh, is that so?”

I nod

“Mmmh ok Mr You don’t afford the stuff I drink”

She mocks and I laugh at her

“Shall we go Miss Mbana?”

“Yes, let me just take my things from the room”

She says getting up off of me. She comes back after a while with her purse and weekend bag then hands them to me.

“So, what do you want to eat?”

I ask as we walk to the elevator

“I don’t know, hasn’t Mah cooked?”

I shake my head no

“She’s gone home”

She nods

“And when will she be back?”

“After 2 weeks”

She shoots me a look

“Will you manage?”

I nod avoiding eye contact as much as I can

“Miss decide what you want to eat cause mna I’m not cooking today”

She sighs

“Fine, Panarottis pasta will do”

She says

“Please place the order on Mr D”

“should I get us drinks?”

She asks, I chuckle because I have an open bar at my house and a wine cellar.

“Oh right, open bar”

She says hitting her forehead with her palm. My phone rings and its Bakho

“Bhuti wam?”

I answer

“Have you packed for tomorrow?”

He asks and I wish the ground could open up and swallow me right now. Why is my phone connected to the car again?

“yes, I’ll call you later neh”

Mihlali has even stopped ordering us food. I cut the call not waiting for him to continue.

“Sthandwa sam”

I test the waters

“packed?”

She asks confrontationally, I nod

“Can we talk about it properly when we get home”

I plead and she nods

“I’ll have bolognaise”

I say

“ok”

She responds coldly and ordering us food. I don't even know what to say anymore because I know she is mad at me right now. We get home and she gets off first without even waiting for me to open the door for her. Now I know I've messed up. I follow behind her with her things and I find her sitting on the couch watching tv. I put her things on the other couch and sit next to her

“Sthandwa sam”

I start off, she looks at me. I take a deep breath in and let it out

“Tomorrow night I'll be flying out of the country”

She doesn't flinch or say anything

“Our CEO has resigned, and I need to step in until the next one comes in”

She looks at me and I don't even know whether to continue or do what

“This was discussed and finalised before I met you, I offered to step up and a couple of months ago I asked that I only stay for 2 weeks so that I can come home to you early”

“A couple of months ago?”

She asks and I nod

“How long is a couple of months ago Bandile?”

“Yoh”

I say to myself, she's pissed

"3 months ago"

"So, you've known for 3 months that you going to be gone for 2 weeks and you didn't see fit to tell me?"

She asks sternly

"I didn't want to upset Sthandwa sam"

I plead

"And how's that working out for you right now huh Bandile?"

I shrug

"Sthandwa sam I am sorry. I tried to get out of it, but I couldn't, and I hate myself enough for having to miss your birthday"

Her phone beeps indicating that the food is here

“I’ll go fetch the food”

I offer getting up, its really to run and allow her to cool off a little. The security brings the food to the door and I take it thanking him. I take it to the lounge with bowls and forks. I place them on the table

“Sthandwa sam”

She doesn’t flinch or whatsoever

“Mihlali I’m sorry”

“I’m not even mad about you leaving but the fact that you kept this from me for 3 months Bandile”

She says and gets up off the couch

“Hlali please”

I plead trying to grab her arm, but she yanks it off and goes upstairs leaving me to pick up the pieces of my own broken heart. My phone rings and its Bakho, I can't even blame him because he didn't know

“Everything ok?”

He asks as soon as I answer, I let out a heavy sigh

“When you asked, I was in the car with Mihlali. I just told her I'm leaving and now she's mad at me. This was not how things were supposed to go Bakho”

I say

“I told you to tell her sooner Bardz, you should have told her sooner rather than the day before you leave. You love this girl and you want to make her your wife someday, the least you could do is let her know such things before time”

He scolds

“I know Bakho, I know”

“So, what now?”

I sigh at his question

“I don’t know bro; I really don’t know. I can’t leave with us on such terms”

“For a smart person you really are an idiot. Talk to her and fix things. At least don’t go to sleep without fixing this”

I let out a breath

“I doubt this will be that easy, she’s really mad bro and I did that”

CHAPTER 43

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I get to the room and close the door behind me. The packed bags in front of the closet don't make things any better but instead they are nothing but a reminder of how he is leaving me tomorrow morning for 2 weeks if not more. How could Bandile keep something like this from me for this long? 3 whole months? I'm hurt, disappointed, sad that he's even leaving me for this long. I'm feeling all these emotions at the same time but most of all is sadness. I allow the tears to roll down my cheeks, I wasn't ready for this. I knew he was going to have to leave for the states at some point but I didn't think he'd leave now, close to my birthday. I don't even care about him missing my birthday but the mere fact that he kept this from me hurts me.

He knocks on the door after a while but I don't respond. He opens and comes in with a plate.

"You have to eat"

He says sitting beside me below the bed, I look up at him. He cannot possibly be serious

“I understand you mad at me but please eat and then be mad at me after”

He pleads, guys can somebody teach me how to give this man what you ladies call the silent treatment because me other me is tempted to take the plate and answer him but the other stubborn me doesn't want to. I'm so hungry but I know me not eating will show him just how serious this is.

“Please Sthandwa sam”

He pleads and my stomach grumbles, he chuckles alone

“Punish me all you want but please eat Mihlali”

He begs holding a fork full of pasta in front of my mouth, I open and he inserts it in and I pull the food with my teeth and he removes the fork holding back laughter. He's so annoying. I chew quietly. He keeps feeding me in silence until my plate is empty.

"Juice?"

He asks and I don't respond, he takes my hand into his and kisses it

"I know I should have told you earlier but I was afraid of this happening. If I had known the outcomes then I would have told you earlier. I have no excuse for having kept this from you this long and I am sorry Sthandwa sam"

He says sounding so sincere but the bitch in me tells me to just sulk more

"I'm willing to do anything right now to hear your voice, yell at me, swear at me. Just say something please"

He begs but I still don't respond. I get up and take my clothes off and then go and shower, he joins me and even offers to wash my body, I let him.

“Sthandwa sam”

I don't respond. I think this is the first time I have ever gone this long without talking to him and what's worse is that he is leaving tomorrow but I want him to learn from this and to never keep something like this from me again. We wash and finish, he wipes my body and hands me a big towel to wrap around my body while he wraps one around his lower body. We get to the room and I wear my pjays then get under the covers with my phone. At least reading will help me not respond to him. He sighs and gets in beside me and pulls me to him, mentally I'm fighting but my body seeks comfort from this very same man so I give him and rest on his chest while reading the Enslaved series by Marissa Honeycutt.

“That's a nice book series and very much messed up”

He comments and he's right, it's the second time i'm reading it. I'm a sucker for a good novel and this one has a weird twisted storyline and I cant help but enjoy all 5 books so I end up talking

"Its an amazing series. If she made a movie it would be a best seller"

He kisses my head

"I'm sorry again"

He says and I look up at him

"Bandile you really hurt me"

"I know Sthandwa sam an I promise you it will never happen again"

He says pleadingly, how could I ever stay mad at this man before me?

“Kiss me so I know you forgive me”

He says pouting and I cant help but chuckle, I look up at him and kiss him

“I haven’t quite forgiven you for this but the last thing I want is for you to leave with us not being on good terms”

I explain and he nods

“I will do anything for you to forgive me”

He says, I return my attention to my phone.

“Have you finished packing?”

I say looking at him in front of the closet

“Yes I’m done Sthandwa sam, my ticket has been booked for 8pm, I have a meeting tomorrow morning at 9am and will be back home around 10 or 11”

He says and I let out a sigh

“I know Sthandwa sam, I promise you after 11 I’m all yours!”

He says kissing my head

“Allow me to at least make up for it”

He says and I know what he’s implying. He grabs my phone from me and places it on the pedestal next to him and then flips us over so that he is hovering over me looking at me in the eyes.

“I am sorry”

He says and kisses me on my neck, a moan escapes my lips. I didn't know I needed him this much until now. He moves from my neck and traces kisses down all the way to my boobs and from there all the way down and as they say, the rest is history.

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-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

I went to my mother's house for the holidays in June and I must say I enjoyed my time with her family more than I expected. Her husband is so loving and sweet and kind to her, he accepted me as his own. He took me out for lunch and he and I got to talk and got to know each other more and its now its safe to say that we have a relationship with each other and its going so well

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they call me every now and then and I call them and we talk for long over the phone. I'm glad Ontla reached out, she's a great parent.

I'm home for the weekend but Mihlali is only coming back next week. I got a call from Bandile asking to meet me for breakfast, he and I aren't friends so I don't even know what to expect from him. I wake up its on a Saturday morning, I prepare to meet up with Bandile at a restaurant. I get to the restaurant and Lara is here together with Vuyo.

"Ladies"

I greet

"Hey, what are you doing here?"

Lara asks

"I'm here to meet Mihlali's boyfriend, and you guys?"

I ask

“same, whats Bandile up to?”

Vuyo asks and I shrug sitting down with them, I call a waiter and order myself breakfast.

“Hi guys, I am sorry I am late”

Bandile says sitting down, he also places an order and then the waiter disappears

“Why are we here?”

Lara asks

“Mihlali’s 18th birthday is coming along in a weeks time and I’ll miss it. I have business to attend to overseas and I wont be back for 2 weeks or so”

He says

“I called you three because you know her better than anyone else”

He adds

“Well obviously, but what can we do?”

Lara asks impatiently

“I want you guys to help plan her 18th birthday party. It can either be done at my house or at the club. I don't know which she prefers but I know she likes intimate get together type of vibes”

I nod

“Your house would be a better option because really as much as my sister like to drink and have fun, for her birthdays are intimate and are to be spent with loved ones”

I say and he nods

“So my PA Luniko will arrange everything with your help I am hoping. I want it to be a surprise. Just because I cant be there doesn't mean she shouldn't have the best birthday ever. I want her to forget I'm not even there to celebrate with her. I have already got her a gift and it will be delivered to you Lara so I'm trusting you with it”

He says

“Of cause, don't worry about it”

“Vuyo you know her friends so please, communicate with Luniko about the guest list and everything else she prefers. Biko please make sure she shows up. My house keeper has the keys to my house but I will give Luniko a pair for the décor and

everything. Lara please make sure she doesn't go to my house for any reason or whatsoever, she has a key"

We all laugh, I know my sister and if she wants to go nobody will stop her

"She's persistent and suspicious"

Lara says and we all nod in agreement

"Yes but this has to be a surprise. The less people that know, the better hence you 3 and Luniko"

I like what he's planning for my sister and I just know she will appreciate it

"I like what you doing but she'll still miss you and wish you were there"

I say and he nods

“I understand that much but I will call her everyday and every night. I will keep in touch with you guys every now and then”

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-BANDILE TSHAWE

We didn't sleep sexing all night and all morning, I left her still sleeping, we slept this morning around 4 I think if I'm not mistaken. After meeting up with her friends I settle the bill and leave them, when I get to the car I call Luniko and update him on everything, I send him each of their numbers and then we end the call while I drive home with breakfast for Hlali and i. When I get inside she's cuddled up on the couch watching some reality show

“Morning beautiful”

I say kissing her cheek

“Morning”

She says sounding drained

“Still tired?”

I ask settling beside her and she nods putting her head on my lap

“Does this mean you don’t want to go anywhere today?”

I ask

“no, I want to stay inside with you and eat and have sex and eat some more”

She mumbles making me chuckle

“I don’t think you can handle anymore sex nje Sthandwa sam. Have you taken your contraceptives?”

“Yes babe I have. I just need a nice long bath and I will be fine. How did your meeting go? You came home earlier than I expected”

She asks

“It went well, it was nothing major. Just needed to update the staff on a few survival tips for when I’m gone”

She chuckles

“Look at you Mr all powerful”

I laugh at her sarcasm. I did update the staff about me leaving and how my brother and mother will pop in every now and then to check on things in each of the places I run so I know the

hotels, clubs, the company and restaurants are all in good hands

“So who’s handling things in your absence?”

“My mother and brother”

She nods. We eat breakfast over light conversation and how she plans to spend her birthday most probably cuddled up in bed binging on movies and videocalls with me.

“That’s cute but you should go home or spend it out with your friends

I suggest

“I’ll probably go home, I don’t even know if I want to celebrate turning 18”

She says and I kiss her cheek

“You ought to celebrate every birthday Mihlali”

CHAPTER 44

-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

“You wont even be there mos”

I say pouting

“And I will live to make up for me missing your birthday. You only turn 18 once”

He says kissing my cheek

“I’ll see what I’ll do with my family”

I say dismissively, the last thing I want to do is talk about a birthday he will not be around for. It hurts me that he won’t be there on my day but what can we do? Work comes first

“So, you sure about wanting to spend the day indoors?”

He asks and I nod

“I don’t want to share you with anyone for the next couple of hours”

I say selfishly

“Let’s start right now then”

He says switching off his phones

“Bandile you can’t do that. What if someone needs you?”

I ask stunned by this

“My girl needs me more”

He says kissing me unexpectedly. He breaks it and continues eating his breakfast. When we done eating over light conversations

“Let’s shower and then head to the pool, it’s a good day for a swim”

He says getting up with his hand held out to me, I place mine in his and he pulls me up. We throw the things away and then head upstairs. He pours us water in he bath and all the baths salts and what not.

“But you’ve already washed”

I remind him

“I want to wash with my woman”

He says proudly making me blush. I brush my teeth while the water fills up. When the water is enough, he closes the tap and gets naked, so do I, well I was wearing just a gown. He gets into the water and I get in front of him and rest my back on his chest. I needed this so damn much. It feels amazing.

“I’m gonna miss this”

I admit

“I’m gonna miss it too”

He says placing a kiss on my shoulder

“Let’s not dwell on that, for now let’s enjoy every little moment”

He says that pouring water on my boobs, I don’t respond. He’s right, thinking about such is only going to make me sad

“You should ask that friend of yours to sleep over at your place while I’m gone”

He suggests

“Lara?”

He nods

“I don’t want to inconvenience her. She’s got a boyfriend now”

I say

“You have other friends mos”

I nod

“Yeah but Vuyo can’t stay together for long, we’d end up arguing and probably our friendship over”

He chuckles

“I thought she was your best friend”

“She is but Vuyo is too motherly for my liking. I love her and a weekend with her is more than enough”

He laughs

“Wow, ok”

He says

“Bhabha what’s the deal with Troy and Lara?”

I ask and wait patiently

“I don’t know, he likes her as far as I’m concerned but he feels like she’s too young for him and that the age might be a problem”

He says carelessly, I turn my head to look at him

“what do you mean? How old is Troy kanti?”

“He’s 30”

I nod

“But still, why should age be a problem, Lara is 18”

He chuckles

“I don’t know Bhabha. Your friend can be a little too much”

I frown

“So Troy is just wasting time with my friend?”

I ask, he breathes out

“Hlali wam, we enter no where in other people’s relationships the same way your friends enter no where in mine and yours”

He says and I furrow my eyebrows

“Meaning?”

I decide to ask to clear my own confusion

“Your friends are your friends alone. My friends are my friends alone and that’s how it should remain. I don’t want them meddling in our business the same way we shouldn’t meddle in their business. A relationship is for 2 people only”

He explains

“Fine”

I say and sit silently

“I know how you girls like to share personal things that happen in a relationship and I don’t dispute you sharing but limit the things you share with friends. Not all of them wish you good and want you to be happy. Also, I wouldn’t feel comfortable with your friends knowing what we do in our own time behind closed doors”

He says

“I don’t share our sexual experiences with my friends”

I say honestly. Yes, I used to tell them about Daniel but with Bandile I don't share what he and I do in the bedroom. He's gorgeous and I don't want my friends wanting to taste my man. I trust them but you can never be too certain with girls though.

He kisses my shoulder

"I believe you Bhabha"

He says, I don't even have to ask him because I know he's not that open when it comes to sex talks when we have them with our friends. He keeps quiet and I on the other hand only comment here and there.

When we done washing, he drains the water and I clean the bath then we head to the room and I wear my bikini and he wears his swimming trunks then we head out to the pool.

"I'll go get up some snacks ok"

He says and heads back into the house while I get inside the water. Its so cold and yet so refreshing. I do a couple of laps around the pool until he comes back and joins me with a fruit platter. He places it on the edge

"How's the water?"

He asks, I splash him with it, and he laughs

"Oh, you doing this to me?"

I giggle

“You asked mos”

I say swimming back as he dives in

“I’m going to get you shame”

He says swimming after me, I’m laughing like a little kid trying to get away from him until he catches me

“I’m sorry Bhabha”

I apologise and he places me on the corner of the pool

and he stands between my legs

“We’ve never done it in the pool”

He points out and I chuckle

“You’re a horny”

He chuckles

“Do you blame me? Look at you! Please don’t ever wear this one to the beach without me”

He pleads and I laugh at him. It’s a high waist G-string bikini bottom. My boyfriend is something else I swear! He parts my legs and moves my bikini to the side and goes in with his tongue

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-BANDILE TSHAWWE

We spent the day doing what Miss requested. Sexing all over the house, eating and napping in between. I just finished getting dressed. I'm comfortable in my sweatpants, t-shirt and sweater. She's laying on the bed with her stomach watching me. I walk up to her; she looks like she's about to cry

"Sthandwa sam"

I say sitting next to her, she sits up and crosses her legs

"Mh"

She responds

"Please don't look so sad. I'm gonna be back before you know it"

I plead and kiss her pouted lips, but she doesn't respond

"Bhabha please"

She wraps her arms around me and starts crying. My breaks into a million pieces all over again, this saddens me. I hate to see her crying, I hate to hear her sobs

"I'll be back soon, and we will go wherever you want us to go when schools close ok"

I say brushing her back, but she doesn't quiet down. It's around 7pm

"Bhabha I have to go"

I say and she pulls away from me

"Travel safely and call me the minute you land ok?"

She says in between sobs, I nod

"Of cause Sthandwa sam"

I say

"Now can I get a kiss from my beautiful girlfriend"

I plead; she nods. I cup her face and kiss her like my life depends on it. I break it

"Goodbye Bhabha"

I say getting up

"bye"

She says holding back tears. I take my bags and head down. I rather she not accompany me to the airport because then it will hurt even more. My driver drives me to the airport. I get a call from Mom

"Mam'Tshawe"

I answer

“Bandile where are you?”

Now I’m worried, the tone of her voice tells me something else

“I’m on my way to the airport, why what’s going on?”

She cries

“Its Bayanda. He was stabbed”

I sigh heavily

“What do you mean he was stabbed?”

She sobs even harder

“They are rushing him to the hospital Bandile, I don’t know what happened”

“Mah have you called Bakho?”

I ask,

“no not yet. Bandile I’m scared. What if my baby dies?”

She says with visible terror in her voice

“Bayanda will be fine. I’ll call Bakho and tell him to meet you at the hospital”

I say and cut the call, Bayanda always finds a way to get himself into trouble every damn time! I call Bakho

“Bhuti”

I say as soon as he responds

“Hey, you on your way to the airport?”

He asks, I’m even contemplating leaving now because of mom more than my brother.

“Bayanda will be the death of mom I swear”

I start off unable to hide my anger

“What’s he done now?”

He asks

“He went and got himself stabbed. I don’t even know what the fuck happened”

“Bardz calm down ok, breathe little brother. Where is mom now? Why didn’t she call me kanti”

You’d think that she would call the deputy parent instead of me, I guess mom is too used to having me around when these things that she didn’t think of calling the person she lives with

“She’s on her way to the hospital”

“Don’t cancel your trip, I’ll handle this. Just give me the number of who to call ok and I will keep you posted”

He says as if knowing I’m considering it

“Bakho what about mom? Her heart is not strong enough for this”

“Bandile go, I will take care of the family. You young and shouldn’t be carrying all this weight alone. I will handle everything ok, I will keep you posted should it be worse than we thought ok”

He says assuring, I sigh out loudly

“Fine, keep me posted though. I want to know everything Bakho”

He chuckles

“I’m the big brother here”

He reminds and I don’t even have the energy to laugh

“Bye bro”

I say and cut the call. I call Troy

“Shouldn’t you be on the plane?”

He answers

“My little brother was stabbed tonight. I need to know what happened”

I say

“You do realise I am just a lawyer right and not a journalist?”

I roll my eyes

“Troy!”

I warn

“Fine, I’ll call my people and get back to you”

He says and we end the call. Troy has people that can find out things so whenever I need information or files, I always call him up, no I don’t play dirty when it comes to business even though some people play dirty with me. I don’t put myself in a position to lose my morals because of a mere business deal, I believe my works speaks for itself and if someone doesn’t want to work with me then its their loss anyway. I decide to call Hlali, I need a distraction

“Sthandwa sam”

I say as soon as she answers

“Hey Bhabha”

She says

“How are you?”

She sighs

“I just got a call from home saying Biko was involved in a fight and is being rushed to the hospital”

She says sounding really stressed

“I’m assuming you on your way there?”

“Yes”

She says

“I’m sorry about your brother”

I say

“It just doesn’t make any sense, Biko is not someone with a temper”

She says sounding scared and worried

“He will be fine Bhabha. Go to the hospital and I’ll keep calling ok”

I assure

“I’d appreciate that. Bye Babe”

She says

“Bye Sthandwa sam”

SEASON FINALE - CHAPTER 45

-BIKOKUHLE LERATO MTWA

It's a Saturday and the guys suggested that we go to this other tavern or something in Khayelitsha. Mind you I've never been to that part of the Western Cape, call me a snob or whatever but I've never been and never wanted to go but apparently there's this other tavern that's lit there or so Baya says. Its him, myself and Phiko, the minute we walk in all eyes are on us and they make me nervous as this place is shady AF and dirty and there's just this weird smell. The hairs on the back of my neck spring to life out of fear. I don't know why they are looking at us like this, it's either it's because they know we don't belong here or our expensive clothes, I don't know which is which. I tell myself to breathe and this is not a bad place but my subconscious wont here none of that, its screaming for me to turn around and get TF out of here right now.

"You sure about this place?"

I whisper to Baya

"Of cause bra chill, we just meeting someone and then we'll leave"

He says and I nod, Phiko is as uncomfortable as I am. We continue to walk though in between the crowd and its no lie that we are all good looking and the girls are eyeing us as we

make our way through the crowd. We walk all the way in and sit in corner table

“I thought we weren’t here to stay?”

Phiko protests and I nod

“We not but we are waiting for someone. I’ll go order us something to drink while we wait”

He says and gets up leaving me with an unsettled Phiko

“This guy is going to get us killed one day”

Phiko murmurs

“When that day comes, I will kill him myself”

He chuckles

“did he finally give up on your sister?”

I nod

“I think so, Hlali never entertained him and she called him a spoilt entitled brat”

He chuckles

“She’s right though”

“Molweni bakhona abantu enihleli nabo apha?” (Hello, are these seats taken?)

A sweet squeaky voice speaks making us both look up, Phiwo is angelic and so is Kim but the girl standing before me right now surpasses both of them combined. I rarely give dark skinned girls a chance, nothing wrong with them, they pretty and all but I always go for white girls or fair in complexion girls but never a melanin queen.

“Hi”

The word rolls out of my lips

“Hey, yeah our friend is at the bar”

Phiko responds and I nudge him to shut up

“You can join us if you like”

I say and she smiles

“No thank you, I’m with my friends and boyfriend. We just needed the chair”

She says and is about to walk away when I risk it and grab her arm, she turns

“I’m Bikokuhle”

She looks at my hand on her arm and then back at me

“Yonela”

She says and yanks her arm and walks away

“And that?”

Phiko says bringing me back

“You can’t cheat on Kim again Biko”

I chuckle

“I didn’t. did you see how beautiful she looks bruh?”

He chuckles

“Her boyfriend will probably stab the shiit out of you. Where the hell is Bayanda?”

He says getting up and looking around, I shrug my shoulders

“I’ll go look for him ok”

I volunteer using that as an excuse to bump into Yonela again, he laughs at me as I walk away. I go straight to the bar and he’s not there. How can someone just disappear? This is why I don’t hang out much with Bayanda at night because he disappears! The last time he disappeared he landed up in prison for drug possession. I walk towards the toilet to search for him there, when I walk in 2 guys are beating him up, he’s on the floor and they are kicking him. I immediately push the guys off him, one hits the wall and the other stumbles

“Listen, we can talk this through ok. There’s no need for fighting”

I plead handing Baya a hand to pull him up

“Biko leave”

He says, as if I’d leave him when these people clearly want to kill him

“yela ngubani le nkwenkwe icinga fansba iyasazi?” (And who does this one think he is)

One of them says pointing at me

“Yela andiyo nkwenkwe mna. Bayanda masgoduke” (Listen, I’m not a boy. Baya lets go home)

I say sternly and frankly mad, I’m about to walk when this guy that was calling me a boy attacks me with a fist. I return my very own. I am not a violent person, but I could never stand back and let someone beat the shiit out of me and not defend myself. He takes the blow and stumbles back a bit, that clearly angers him because he comes at me with all he has, and I also don’t let him. We hit each other until he is on the floor, when I turn around Baya is on the floor bleeding and the other one standing on top of him is holding a bloody knife, he swings it at me, and I duck but it grazes my stomach a bit

“Hela hamba apha okanye ndzofounela amarhada” (Leave or else I’m calling the cops)

I threaten and he wipes his knife

“Xelete lentwana ba ndiyayfuna powder yam!” (Tell this boy that I want my powder)

He says and walks towards his friend and pulls him up. I walk over to try and help Baya only to be struck with something on the back of my head making me lose consciousness and the last thing I hear is them chuckling

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-MIHLALIKAZI LANGA

I’m hugging Bandile’s pillow tightly missing him so very much cuddled up in bed when my phone rings startling me

Advertisement

I’m hoping its Bandile, so I answer happily without even looking at the caller ID

“Chocky”

I answer

“Hlali its Biko, he’s badly injured”

I look at the caller ID and its Phiko

“what do you mean? How?”

I ask sitting up, all I'm thinking is that he was involved in some kind of accident

"I don't know what happened Hlali, I found him on the floor in the bathroom. Looks like someone beat him up"

The tears I'd been holding back from Bandile leaving make their way down my cheeks

"Have you called an ambulance? What about my parents?"

I ask

"I've already called an ambulance and your parents said they would meet us at the hospital"

He says

"Ok, I'll meet you there"

I say and cut the call. How could Biko be involved in a fight? It makes no sense! Biko is kind and nice to everyone, he has no enemies or whatsoever. I get dressed and take my phone and car keys then head out locking the house. I rush to the hospital and on the way, I receive a call from Bandile. I get to the hospital and my parents are in the reception pacing up and down. I run to them and they both squeeze me tightly. I finally break out of their embrace

"Where is he?"

I ask

“The ambulance is not here yet”

Dad responds.

“What the f*ck is taking so damn long?”

Mom yells angrily, dad pulls her into his arms

“Its going to be here soon Sthandwa sam”

He says, I look around and there’s no Phiko.

“That’s what you told me 30 minutes ago. What the hell was Biko doing in Khayelitsha Bantu?”

Mom cries out buried in dad’s chest. Well Phiko did not mention that little detail. Nurses asks us to clear the passage and two people are rushed in on beds, I see Biko and then Baya right after him. Shiit! Does Bandile know? Just then his mother walks in followed by Phiko.

“Mihlali?”

She says as soon as she spots me

“My brother was also rushed in with Baya”

I explain because I’m assuming that’s what she wanted to ask

“I am sorry baby”

“I’m also sorry Mah”

I say and she hugs me. She then breaks it, Phiko is seating on the chair quietly. I excuse myself and walk over to him

“Phiko what the hell happened?”

I ask

“I don’t know Hlali. Baya suggested we go to a tavern and so we went, he said we wouldn’t stay for long and then he disappeared. Biko went looking for him, about 15 minutes or so some girl came to me telling me that my friends were in the bathroom badly injured and that she called the ambulance. When I got to the bathroom, I found them both on the floor with Baya stabbed but still conscious and Biko not, so I called your parents and you. It looks like they were mugged or something. The people took their phones and money in their wallets”

He narrates looking very much concerned

“They going to be fine”

I assure him, he looks shaken. I can’t imagine finding my friends all beat up and one of them stabbed so I understand.

“Mama”

Someone says walking in and its Bakholise, Bandile’s big brother with his wife

“Where is he? What happened?”

He asks directing the question to his mother, she shrugs

“Mihlali? Did Bandile call you?”

Wait? Bandile knew and didn't think to call me?

“No, my brother was also rushed in with Baya” I say

-BANDILE TSHAWE

Our flight has been delayed and we'll be leaving at 10. Its already past 8:30pm. I'm worried because no-one is saying anything about Baya's condition. Sometimes it may seem like I don't care about him, but I care a lot about my little brother, its just that the things he puts himself into scare the shiit out of me. Whenever I get a call about Baya I always fear that it's that one phone call that will tell me that he's gone and we never going to see him again. I worry about him; mom wouldn't be able to handle losing him. We all know that last borns are the most prized possessions to our parents and Baya is no different. I'm sitting catching up on the news when I get a phonecall from Troy. “Hey”

I say unable to hide the sadness I'm feeling right now

“So, my contacts got back to me and it's about the drugs. You remember when he got arrested? Well turns out that the guys want their coke back, he tried paying them off all the money, but they don't want the money, they want the coke and will only accept payment as coke, and it should be double of what

the cops confiscated. Apparently, he has a month until the month end of October to pay them back else they kill him”

He says, I should have known this had something to do with him

“That is not all, Mihlali’s brother was with him and he was hit in the head”

I can’t even hide my gasp in shock. It all makes sense

“Shiit!” I exclaim

“I know” He says

“Troy how do I get him out of this mess?”

I am all out of options and desperate to put an end to this

“look, your girlfriend’s grandfather is a mafia God. Seek his help” He suggests

“Sniper is the only one that can help you right now Bandile plus I know he won’t be happy to hear that his grandson was involved in this because of Bayanda”

I don’t know much about Lwando Mbana, but I have heard stories and not so pleasant ones while at it. The last thing I want to do is to owe such a man and Baya has just pushed me into a corner to owe him.

“how? He can’t be happy that his grandson was beaten up for my brother’s problems” He breathes out

“I don’t know Bards but you have to think of something. The last thing you want to do is to deal with dealers. If Baya does manage to get them their coke, they will never let him go. They will always find something to hang over his head so that he never gets out of this. Swallow your pride and talk to Sniper about this”

.....**THE END**.....

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