



## **Prologue**

Growing up in a poverty stricken home was never easy, being the eldest child I had to be responsible and I had to take care of my siblings. Some of you have it easy out there, but for us maintaining life as a teenager is a mission itself. Where do I get the time to socialize? Where do I "chill" and relax with friends?

Have I ever dated, experienced young teenage love? Well as I said sometimes we aren't destined for the same things. Things weren't always this way we used to be one of the richest families around.

My father owned a well-developed business; well it all went wrong when my dad went into partnership with a white unknown business man. At first business went well and we lived the luxurious life but after some time Mr. Clifton (Unknown business man) turned against my father. He committed fraud and stole my father's shares in the business and then he fired my dad. All went downhill, we had to stop attending at our model C schools and attend public schools. We

practically lived on our savings my dad could no longer afford to pay the bond and our beautiful home was taken away from us . We moved from living in one of the major suburbs of Cape Town to living in a rural area called e-Mbumbulu , just outside eMlazi .

My dad didn't want his enemies to find him or see our downfall which is why he took us so far away. It was a foreign land for us

- we knew nothing about the place , we had no friends and we couldn't even speak isiZulu well . We do speak isiZulu at home sometimes but English has always been the language we use the most .

This is the journey of how I Phawulothando Zekhethelo Zulu grow and develop in a village . How I tackle difficult obstacles , get hurt to what feels like a million times and then finally get freedom for my dad. One day Clifton Incorporated will take its original name which was Zulu kaMageba Incorporated. That's a definite promise!

Allow me to introduce myself : I am Phawulothando Zekhethelo Zulu , 14 years of age. This is my journey ♡Fasten your seats it's gonna be a long ride!

## Chapter 1

### Phawulothando's POV

I woke up at 5 am as usual and started the fire. Once it was properly set up I poured water into a big pot and put it onto the fire . I have 4 younger siblings; 2 boys and 2 girls . Thandiwe is the second eldest ,she is 13 ,I do most of my chores with her and we get along well but sometimes she slacks(like in the mornings) just because she is younger, even if its just one year. Sthembiso and Sthembele are my 2 twin brothers who are 10

years old . My youngest sister is Nkanyezi and she is 5 years old

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We are indeed a huge lot . We live in eMbumbulu as I have mentioned, my mother used to be a trophy wife when we were rich but she now works as a nanny in a town nearby. We live in a basic small 4 roomed house and one round hut .The round hut is the kitchen and the 4 roomed main house consists of the main bedroom which is used by our parents , a small lounge /sitting room and the two bedrooms are shared by all of us children.

The girls sleep in one room and the twins sleep in the other room. My father couldn't find work as a businessman because Mr Clifton ruined his reputation. He now works as a clerk at the clinic .Its a small clinic so it doesn't really pay much.We only arrived here a month ago , my father was lucky to find a job fast

. My mom only found a job 2 days ago so she won't be getting paid this month. We'll have to try and make ends meet just like we did , it was a long month filled with torture but we'll make it I guess.

Back to the scenario occurring now , its now the first day of school in January. My father managed to find us a spot in some public schools here, its not far from home so we don't need transport

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not that we could afford it anyways. I will be attending Buhlebezwe High School and doing grade 8 this year, I don't know anything about it so I guess I will see today . Thandiwe is in grade 7 , and the twins are in grade 4 at Langelihle Primary School .Nkanyezi will be attending at the local creche and my parents will have to pay . The water was now ready I woke everyone up and while they were bathing I made our breakfast.

Me: As always he's the first one done

Sthembiso: Time management skills are the key in life , its the first day of school . Im just excited to see my new school and make friends

Me:Im sure you'll make lots of them , just be friendly. Here is your breakfast and tell the others its ready because I have to bath now

Sthembiso: So we are always going to be eating porridge now sis?

Me: Sthembiso this is our new life now , we are no longer rich . We have no money so we all have to accept that and get used to it . But I promise you one day I will get us all out of this poverty

(I leave him like that and go to my room)

I bath then lotion myself and wear my school uniform. Im actually proud that my parents were able to buy us all new uniforms even though we are broke. I wore my uniform with pride ,it felt like the start of great things .I checked on my siblings .

Nkanyezi:Where is my mom?

Me: Mom and dad leave early for work baby but they will bring you sweets when they get back later . (To the rest) are you guys done?

Twins: Yes sis

Thandiwe : I still have to brush my teeth ,let me finish up eating

Thandiwe is always late so I have gotten used to it overtime . I give the twins their money, R2 each and Nkanyezi R1 and tell them to rush to school

Sthembele: From R20 to R2 I literally give up on us guys this is bad (laughing )

Me : Sthembele please go to school and stop making fun of our situation. We will be okay soon . I don't even know why you are complaining because you will get a free meal at school

He just mumbles something under his breath, he is the rude naughty one so I just let him be and they leave. Thandiwe is done finally , I give her money and she leaves . I lock up and then take Nkanyezi to the creche . I get into the school gate of Buhlebezwe just as the bell rings . Ohh okay that was a bit close!

## Chapter 2

### Phawulothando's POV

I got inside the school and went to this large open space where I saw learners gathered around. I was actually rushing because I

saw some teachers heading to the assembly area , I assume. I bump into a girl nearly causing her to fall

Me: Hey , sorry for bumping into you I was rushing to the assembly area

Girl: look where you are going wena mxm! (Rudely ) she undermines me and leaves me standing there.

Wow way to go Phawulothando Zulu , its my first day here and Im already making enemies, I wonder how I will even make friends. I rush to assembly , looking carefully this time. The principal delivers this long speech since its the first day of a new year. A teacher came and took us to our new classes , I was in grade 8A and my teacher was Miss Khumalo . Miss Khumalo is friendly and kind , I adored her from the first word she said.

We all introduced ourselves, people were fascinated at my name , they always are because its unusual. Lessons carried on for the day and I found myself settling in and enjoying myself . I even made a friend in class and we share a desk . Her name is Samkelisiwe Ngcobo. Soon it was break , I chilled with Samke

Samke: Why aren't you coming to get lunch?

Me: Im sorry I'm not used to this , at my old school we didn't do this

Samke : I don't mind showing you , I have always known this school because all my older siblings were here . Let me give you a tour but first we have to get lunch

Me: Thank you lets get to it then

We went around and stood in the line , people were looking at me because I was new and it was so awkward. Okay I know I'm pretty and all but really guys !!!okay well Im joking but on a serious note all the stares just made me uncomfortable. We finally got our lunch ( rice and fish) and we sat down and ate . I enjoyed my meal and I was glad that I ate a decent meal because at home we have really limited food. Samke took me

on the promised tour and I now knew exactly where everything was .Hopefully I won't get lost . We saw the girl I bumped into and her squad

Girl : So the newbie got herself a friend, How amazing, hopefully she will now stop bumping into people

Samke : If I can remember well we are all new here , we are in grade 8 . Highlight that and leave us the hell alone .

Girl:Aike wena Samke, we are new here but we know each other from around . She is new we don't know her

Samke : Yes she is and you guys don't need to know her.

Me: Samke leave her alone , this is not worth our time . Im sorry once again for bumping into you accidentally. I didn't know that it has now made me your enemy, Samke lets just go

Samke : Yeah she aint worth it

Girl : whatever nerds .( her squad laughs )

We just leave her and spend the rest of break together

Me: so you don't have other friends?

Samke: They all went to different high schools and I had to come here because its closer to home

The bell rings and we head back to class , the day goes by fast and then its time to go home . Samke and I walk home together

- she actually lives two houses away from me and I didn't see her before because she went to visit her family when we arrived.

I fetch Nkanyezi from the creche and get home to find Thandiwe and the twins already preparing food. I quickly change we do our chores and spend the afternoon laughing and talking about our day , it seems as though Sthembiso and Thandiwe are settling in well

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Im sure Sthembele will settle in too but at the moment he's busy acting like a spoilt brat. Samke calls me and we go to the tap to fetch water . I enjoy having her as my neighbour and friend , she's amazing and we get along well . We have so much in common even though I have only known her for a day .

After that it gets late and we eat together and tell our parents about our day. I am closer to my father than mom , I have always been daddy's little girl . Mom used to be too focused on spending dads money to actually bond with us , but I love her regardless.

Mom: I have an announcement to make

Dad:whats happening now ? We all look up and listen

Mom: Ill be moving to town , my boss asked me to become a stay-in-nanny.

Dad: what kind of wife are you ? You have children and you have to take care of them .you have wifely duties but you have never done them , here I was thinking that moving here will make you change but no you just choose to abandon your family to live a glorious life in town . Youll be living the rich life while we are drowning in poverty

Mom:Well my mind is made up .Im sorry if you are disappointed, I guess I wasnt made for this life . Let me go pack my bags Im leaving tomorrow. I will visit at the end of the month if I can , I will send money If I can but you know that I have to take care of myself so don't expect much .

Phawulothando umdala manje (you're grown now) you'll take care of your siblings well I know

Me: Mom please don't do this , Im still a teenager Im not ready for such a responsibility

Thandiwe: Let her go Phawu , she doesn't love us vele . She will go and she won't come back . In Cape Town she used to be too busy spending dads money that she didn't even notice us living with her .Now she will spend her own salary alone and she

wont come back or notice us . She doesn't even know our favourite colours or favourite food . Only dad loves us

Sthembele : Mom please don't leave us , we still need you in order to overcome this poverty

Sthembiso : Mommy don't go please

Dad : Look your children are begging you to stay but you are just staring at them saying nothing

Mom: Wena Thandiwe I won't entertain you , you boys just grow up .I SAID I'LL VISIT HAWU

and wena Phawulothando , grow up and start being responsible

She gets up and heads to her room to pack her clothes .

Nkanyezi starts crying but Mom practically ignores her ,

Thandiwe takes her and they go to sleep .The boys also go to sleep. Trust mom to dampen all our moods , now everyone is either sad or angry. I wash the dishes with a lot of thoughts, yes I know my mom has never took much care for me .She always thought money could buy love and she hired staff instead of taking care of us .

I really get it that she has no time for us but I thought somewhere deep in her she loves us . But today she has proven that she doesn't, she is abandoning us , my own mother is leaving all of us at a time where we need her the most. I feel some tears as I hear my dad argue with mom , my dad is such a good person but mom always takes advantage. I go to bed heartbroken and sad , who will be there when I have my first period?

Who will be there when I have my first boyfriend or kiss if my mom leaves me ?Who will be there when I have my first heartbreak? No no no guys I still need my mom , she has to take care of us .The twins need her even Thandiwe does, who deserves to have their mother taken away from them at a young age .No one does.

I somehow fall asleep, still crying, broken and tortured at heart...

Chapter 3

Phawulothando's POV

I woke up early the next day, prepared the water and started breakfast. Mom woke up everyone and said goodbye and just like that she left. I did enough crying before I slept now I will simply face this and grow up for the sake of my siblings. My father also leaves for work ,looking as broken as ever . I really despise what's happening but its cool we'll be okay.

Times went by and we managed to survive, Dad was working really hard for us. Its been two months now and we still haven't heard or seen Mom . She doesn't even send us money, we all expected this .Im pretty sure she forgot that she had children and a family here. The twins are doing well in school ,even their academics are amazing. Thandiwe is also doing well, she has started being more responsible and she cares for Nkanyezi well . Nkanyezi seems to have forgotten about mom and its safe to say that we are doing okay now, considering the situation.

As for me I enjoy school too,last term I came number one in the grade . Miss Khumalo has been a good teacher, she instantly filled the absent space of a mother to me .I have lots of friends but my bestie is Samke of course and I'm always with her.The mean girl I once bumped into is Saneliso

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well she now hates me along with her squad but I really don't care because life is going well. Who knew that coming to eMbumbulu would bring such peace and joy to my heart.

My dad and I are closer than ever now .

On this typical morning we wake up as usual and head to school. I walk with Samke and as we get to class people start complimenting how beautiful I look . Well I have really long hair but I always used to just tie it up or do simple styles ,yesterday Samke plaited my hair. She did this amazing style and its fascinating people .I was so happy ,I love looking pretty and being the centre of attention. Classes continued and during break I had to take some books to Miss Khumalo who was in another class. I was rushing because Samke hates it when I leave her alone .I bumped into this guy and all the books fell

down. Luckily they didn't get dirty and the guy helped me ,as I got up our eyes met

Guy :Im so sorry for making you drop all your books

Me: No I'm sorry because I bumped into you and I wasn't even looking because I'm in a rush

Guy: Well it's cool ,my name is Mongezi

Me: I am Phawulothando .

Mongezi: I have heard of you and I'm glad to have finally met you.

Me: I hope you heard good things about me ( I was enjoying this ,Mongezi is a really cute guy . One of the most popular grade 8s . I even forgot that I was rushing )

Mongezi: I heard amazing stuff about you, they were right when they said you are beautiful

Me : Thank you (I am blushing now and people are staring at Mongezi and I)

Samke pops out of nowhere and tells me to hurry and drop off the books before break is over .

Me: well See you around Mongezi ,my first lady has spoken

Mongezi: Ill be looking forward to it ... bye (he leaves)

I leave the books and head back to Samke.

Samke :Awu friend so you really had to disappear for so long .what happened?

Me : Mongezi happened (I told her everything )

Samke: Way to go Phawulothando Zulu,this bumping game of yours is out of this world . You now bumped into the most popular boy in the grade and you managed to get a conversation with him. I have seen how most try and fail

Me: Well ke I don't look at him in that manner, yes hes really cute and handsome. I even enjoyed talking to him but baby girl Im not thinking about dating

Samke: That's what they all say babe

Me: well I will show you then

The bell rung and we made our way to class.

Chapter 4

3 years later

Phawulothando's POV

Im now in grade 11 and I am doing commerce. Samke is also doing the same. Thandiwe is in grade 10 and she's in the science class. The twins are now in grade 7 and Nkanyezi is in grade 2 . Life at home has been tough ,at times we slept without food and only relied on the meal we get at school , we are struggling more because my dad started expanding our home and that took a strain on us. He's adding 3 more rooms , and we recently installed electricity and he bought us a stove and tv. Im trying to get a job to help out but its been really tough, Im also trying to focus hard on my schoolwork because I will be in matric soon. My parents divorced and mom went back to Cape Town, she never loved us anyways. I no longer care about her , to me she's dead.

Samke and I are proud maidens, we get tested by an elderly lady at the chiefs home once a month. We even went to kwaNongoma for the reed dance . My father is very proud of me for respecting my body. Ngiyinkosazane yomzulu mina

ngiwuMageba uMaZulu so I really respect myself. Living in a society that is so into sex doesn't change who I am and my decisions . Ill let them do whatever they like but I will carry on abstaining even when they talk about me because of jealousy .

Mongezi and I were friends in grade 8-9 . Last year he started acting weird and he started avoiding me . This year it seems as though we are strangers because we hardly talk but I guess I should accept that people are temporary .Let me finish my homework ,this accounting balance sheet won't balance itself.

Thandiwe's POV

Life has been okay ,mom left us years ago but we are doing well . Well I am doing really well

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I have a boyfriend and he comes from a rich family. He takes care of me ,we have been dating for a year now and I think its pretty serious. His name is Andile Ndamase ,he matriculated last year and hes taking a gap year while working in town . He even brought me a phone, I lied to my sister and said its from my friend.

My sister looks suspicious but I can't tell her I have to be extra careful. My sister is too strict , she let Mongezi go . THEE MONGEZI...hottest guy in school . Sometimes I don't

understand her. Im glad that she is always busy in class doing schoolwork or with Samke or she would see that I no longer eat food from school ,I get money from Andile and use it to buy snacks and good stuff from the tuck shop.

Dad tried getting me into the virginity testing stuff but I backed away because Im no longer a virgin. Andile and I have been sexually active since the beginning of the year. I love him so much and when he said he'll leave me if we don't do it I agreed. I cannot lose the man I love after dating for a year and be like the boring Phawulothando no . I will have to sneak out and see my man later on.

I have a maths and physics test but I will study in the morning . We did most of the stuff in class so Im sure it won't be that bad right? Oh well I won't fail anyways ,Thandiwe Zulu always finds a way

I carry on texting my man with a smile ,no one notices me here they are all busy with their books . Trust the Zulu kids to focus

more on stupid books than live life like normal teenagers. I suddenly feel like eating peanut butter and tomato sauce. ..wierd right but I really wanna eat it. Like urgently

I get up make my peanut butter sandwich and add the tomato sauce, Sthembele gives me a wierd look but I snap at him before he says something and he leaves apologising .

Andile is busy, another excuse. I wonder what's going on because I haven't seen him in ages.

I sleep and wake up around 4am, no one is up. I feel nauseous and rush quickly to the toilet. Why am I vomiting so early in the morning?

Chapter 5

Phawulothando's POV

I woke up at the sound of my alarm .I prepared water for everyone and woke them up .Dad left for work .I got Nkanyezi ready .Soon the twins were ready and they left for school.I

went to check on Thandiwe, she hasn't been herself lately. She's always moody.

Me: Thandi are you okay darls?

Thandiwe : Yeah I think so

Me: Please hurry up and finish or you'll be late

Thandiwe: I'm tryna study just leave me alone , I'll lock up when I'm done .

Me: Hawu babe don't be so harsh , I was just trying to reach out

Thandiwe : well leave me alone Phawulothando Zulu

Me: Tjoo sisi don't bite my head off , let me go to school

I leave her like that , honestly I do my best trying to reach out but Thandiwe always pushes me away . I really don't know what to do now. I take Nkanyezi to school and walk with Samke to Buhlebezwe.

Thandiwe's POV

Phawulothando is such a pain in the neck , she honestly won't leave me alone and what's worse is that I haven't been feeling well this morning so I couldn't even study well . Im really worried about these two tests , it could get complicated and I could mess up .

Well I'll think of something. My phone starts ringing, I answer without looking at the name

Me: Can I help you?

Andile: so now we answer the phone like that? I didn't know

Me: Im so sorry babe Im just stressed because I'm trying to study for two tests and I might fail . How are you doing babe?

Andile: I would be okay if I saw you , you've been scarce

Me: but baby you're the one who has been coming up with excuses . Ill see you after school

Andile: I was hoping that you could bunk school for me , Im coming over now

Me: But Andile I'm writing today

Andile: You just told me that you might fail , I know you Thandiwe you probably didn't study yet you are doing science. Hehe you'll fail baby girl .So since you'll fail the tests rather stay with me than go to school to waste your ink and time

Me : Andile school comes first. I know I didn't study but Ill make a plan

Andile:Open up I'm at the door

Me :Already ...

I hang up and head over to him . I hug him and we share a deep passionate kiss . I instantly melt down and forget about my worries and sickness. Andile apologises and He begs me to spend the day with him . I tell him about my sickness and he tells me that its probably something I ate and I shouldn't worry

.

Indeed I don't worry and I spend the day with him . Going to school is pretty useless as he said because I will fail those tests. I kiss my man and we lock the house and head to my room.

## Mongezi's POV

As normal I chill with my friends during break . I go to our spot and I don't find them there , I wonder where the gents are , let me go look for them . I walk around school listening to music and chatting. I bump into Phawulothando, I wasn't really focusing on where I was going

Phawulothando : 3 years later you decide to take your revenge for bumping into you in grade 8

Me: Im so sorry Phawu

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I didn't mean to do that . Haha those were the good old days and no Phawulothando this isn't revenge it was an honest mistake

Phawulothando : No its cool Mongezi I understand

Me: You have always been so understanding and kind thats why I like you so much ( oh damn I wasn't supposed to say that )

Phawulothando: you know me well .. you didn't tell me you like me that much Mongezi

Me: You're too sweet Phawu , anyways it was nice seeing you . Enjoy the rest of your day!

I leave her really confused and rush to my boys . Never have I enjoyed seeing them than now , I wasn't even mad at them I was just glad to be away from Phawu . I have always loved Phawu , from the day she bumped into me in grade 8 . I fell in love with her sweet smile , her beautiful dimples and her in general.

She's amazing, she's beautiful and shes kind .I really want to be with her but I guess I won't. In grade 8 -9 we were too young and she was dealing with a lot , poverty , her parents divorce, having to take care of her siblings and being abandoned by her mom . She was sad , hurt and alone . I figured that it would be best to just be her friend and be her shoulder to cry on . By being more close to her , I fell deeply in love with her.

I distanced myself from her last year and we practically became strangers because I feel that if Im far from her I won't love her this much. I have never been so wrong because being away

from her makes me love her even more . I don't want to let her know my feelings and I was hoping that they could somehow disappear because I don't think I'm good enough for her . Phawu is different and she's not like the other girls , she's been through a lot and she doesn't deserve to be hurt . She deserves all the love in the world and Im scared , I don't know if I will be able to give her that .

She now seems okay , happier actually. She could be emotionally stable for a relationship, I still love her like crazy . Could this be the right time to confess my feelings to her ? Would she agree to be mrs me after I ignored her for a year ? Would I be able to accept her decision? Thoughts circulating my mind I head to my boys to enjoy what's left of my break.

## Chapter 6

### Phawulothando's POV

Its another typical Monday ,I do my morning duties while thinking about school. The June exams are approaching and soon Ill be in matric,well I'm not worried about my marks because I have been doing well.Then there is the issue of Mongezi . Since the day he bumped into me we have been spending time

together, I enjoy being around him and I really missed his affection. Mongezi is acting wierd though ,hes extra friendly with me and he's ummm .. now how can I put this ,well hes now very loving . I sometimes catch him staring at me and smiling madly . When I ask him ,he just tells me that he's glad we are close again. Trust Mongezi to always confuse me

,but its cool hey . I took Thandiwe's phone away and now she's not talking to me . Well I really had to do something because her teachers have been complaining that she is failing but all she ever does is stay on that phone of hers. Speaking of cellphones my dad bought me a cellphone last week . Its a Samsung galaxy J5 prime ,the gold one . I can finally chat with my friends and my classmates and Mongezi. Well sometimes Mongezi even calls me and we spend ages talking.... Wait why am I thinking about Mongezi again? Why is he making me smile? Ay Ay this guy though! Anyways I found out that

Thandiwe is dating and she has been sleeping with the guy . The nerve of that girl ,I wonder how she was able to give off with her body so easily. She has gained a lot of weight and she keeps vomiting in the morning. I tried asking her if they used protection but she won't talk to me . Im taking her to the clinic later on and then we'll tell Dad. She'll probably hate me for good but its for her own benefit. I woke the twins up and helped Nkanyezi get ready for school . Thandiwe dragged her

feet as usual,I didn't mind . I locked up and told her to wait for me after school and left with Nkanyezi.

Thandiwe's POV

Dammit Phawulothando ,she managed to find out about everything and now she wants to tell dad, so in simple words I'm doomed! Dad will probably kill me especially after he begged me so much to join Phawu with the virginity testing ish. He'll really be disappointed in me ,now I really don't know what to do. Phawulothando is messing up my life , she even took my phone . Now I cannot text my babe and meet up with him . Andile will be so annoyed . I hate my sister now. I wonder what the doctors will say about my vomiting condition, I read somewhere that its a symptom of pregnancy. I was still trying to research it but ke . I really hope its not that. How will I face everyone?

Chapter 7

Thandiwe's POV

We head to the clinic after school ,Phawulothando explains to the nurses why we are there and they take my blood to check if there were any diseases I got sexually. This is actually just a

waste of time Andile loves me ,he wouldn't do something to put my life in danger and if he had some freaky disease he would tell me . Just as I am excited to go thinking we are done the doctor tells me to pee and do the pregnancy test. Okay now Im in fear I quickly do it and return to the doctor

Doctor :lets just wait for a few minutes then it will confirm my suspicions

Phawulothando :So doctor you also think she is pregnant? Oh wow Thandiwe , way to go mntase! Now bringing an innocent baby into our lives. A baby deserves so much better than what we can offer at home

Me: shut up wena I ain't pregnant. Both of you are wrong

Doctor : and done. ..let me check the results

Phawulothando : let us know doctor.

Me : wena Phawulothando one would swear that the doctor is about to announce that we have won money the way you are so excited. Mxm stop being so forward

Doctor : she is pregnant, it seems like its still early but please come and fetch the test results next week to get more information about it .You will also do the scan next week .

Phawulothando : thank you doctor, Thandiwe lets go . We walk home in silence, I have never seen Phawu so disappointed and hurt . Im disappointed in myself yes but Im hurt that I now hurt my sister .

When everyone finds out I will be a disappointment to the whole family . How could I have been so stupid , I should have got some sort of contraceptives but I guess I just didn't expect myself to fall pregnant . For Pete's sake Im only 16 !

Phawulothando's POV

We get home from the clinic and I go and lock myself in our room . I think about this Thandiwe scenario , I wonder where I may have went wrong . I tried so much to take care of all my

siblings, I was strict on all of them because I want whats best for them but no it wasn't enough . I feel like I failed Thandiwe , it wouldn't be so bad if she had just got her virginity broken but pregnancy thats a lot . Babies are expensive , yes things are better here at home because dad got a promotion but still we

have too many expenses. We are done expanding the house but we still have to get furniture , thats expensive itself.

I don't know how we will cope . I ask myself again where I went wrong , how I failed to see what was happening right in front of my eyes . I hear my dad coming back from work , the twins and Nkanyezi are playing outside its now the perfect time to let him know . I get up and find Thandiwe in the kitchen cooking . I greet dad and ask to talk to him with Thandiwe .

Thandiwe slowly makes her way to us , she has pleading eyes. Oh well there is nothing I can do dad will find out sooner or later and he will be angry to know that we kept this a secret . Thandiwe made her bed now she has to lie in it

Dad: why are you girls looking so serious? And why are you still in your uniforms ..don't tell me you just got back .

Me: this is a serious matter dad . Please sit down . Yes we just got back , thats why Thandiwe is still cooking.

Dad: but its late now, why did you guys come home late? You are really scaring me now

Me : We came home late because we were at the clinic

Dad: are you sick ? What's happening girls ? And you Thandiwe

- you're always a chatterbox but today you suddenly have no words whatsoever

Me : Dad Thandiwe has something to tell you . Speak Thandi .

Thandiwe : Dad I ummm . Im sorry

Dad: What have you done?

Thandiwe : I just want you to know that im sorry and I didn't mean to do it because it was an honest mistake

Dad: Thandiwe talk before I loose it

Thandiwe : please don't kill me Dad .I love you .

Dad: (literally shouting with anger) THANDIWE TALK !

Thandiwe : I'm pregnant dad

Dad: (starts laughing sarcastically ) someone tell me this girl is kidding with me . Okay joke over now talk

Me: Dad the doctor at the clinic confirmed it . She said that...

Dad: Phawulothando please keep quiet, I want your sister to tell me exactly what she has done .

Thandiwe: dad you are scaring me now , the doctor said that I can do the scan next week and I will get more information next week when the blood results come back

Dad: Thandiwe I'm disappointed in you , I raised you better than this. I am really disappointed because I begged you so many times to follow Phawu and remain a maiden . The ladies at the chief's home would have taught you better than this .

Thandiwe : Im sorry dad

Dad: well Im sorry too because your apologies mean nothing to me . You have now brought an innocent baby into the world , what kind of mother will you be because you are still a kid yourself? You want to fail your child just like your mother failed you guys?

Thandiwe : I won't fail my child dad, I'll work hard and be a good mother . Ill change my ways and become responsible. Im sorry dad , it was a mistake

Dad: a mistake? Thandiwe Zulu a mistake is breaking a glass accidentally, a mistake is Nkanyezi dropping my cellphone and making the screen crack . A mistake is forgetting a textbook at home but my baby , getting into bed with a guy is not a mistake its a choice . Phawulothando you are excused.

I get up and leave the room its still tense . I carry on cooking while chatting on whatsapp . Dad and Thandiwe stay in the sitting room talking for hours .We ate and even went to bed , sometimes we would hear dad shouting and Thandiwe crying . The kids kept asking and giving me wierd looks but I told them to not worry and go to sleep because tomorrow is a school day I head to my room , do my homework and then sleep. I pray before I sleep . This whole Thandiwe situation is still in my mind , what will happen to us now ?How will the baby affect our lives ? Have I really failed Thandiwe? If I failed Thandiwe then what kind of mother will I be ? Maybe Ill also fail my children. My thoughts are disturbed by a text message

“Mongezi: Goodnight beautiful .Sleep well so that you are able to wake up tomorrow and brighten up my day . Just a smile from you makes a dull day a good one you are amazing MaZulu I appreciate your presence in my life !”

I smile and text him back . Mongezi is amazing ,I fall asleep still thinking about him.

Chapter 8

Phawulothando's POV

The following day we woke up and did the whole morning process. Dad went to work early well he probably didn't want to face us . We all eat breakfast together

Sthembiso: So Phawu soon we will have a farewell function at school . Im so excited

Sthembele : Dad even promised to get us new clothes, we are going to look very handsome sis

I laugh at how confident they are about their looks , my twin brothers are cute Im very proud of them

Me: The Zulu boys won't disappoint! I know that you guys will be the talk of the whole school

Nkanyezi: Sisi Phawu Sthembele said that girls will be after them and they will get girlfriends

Me: You boys think all the girls are crushing on you?

Sthembele : Come on Phawu whats there not to like , we are handsome , we are twins . We are popular and one of the coolest guys in school . Dammit we are amazing .

He gets up and imitates how he walks at school and how amazing they are and Sthembiso helps him while shaking his

head (agreeing with his twin ) in a very funny way. Nkanyezi and I burst out laughing, trust my brothers to act like comedians and act out some comedy for us in the morning . Well I love my brother's and I know that I did a good job on them, they are respectful and thoughtful. Even Sthembele changed his ways and stopped being arrogant and rude. I have been strict on them but I will now let them enjoy their last year of primary .

Me: well my very handsome and did I make that clear? No I think I didnt , my very handsome brothers please enjoy your last year of primary school. Enjoy the farewell function and get yourself pretty dates but boys don't rush into dating. There are consequences and some arent so nice. Don't complicate your lives.

Thandiwe clears her throat loudly and clicks her tongue rudely . She has been quiet all this time , I don't even think she ate . She just gets up ,takes her schoolbag and leaves without saying goodbye . Ohh well shes probably still angry . I don't know why she is angry at the world because its not like we sent her . We didn't tell her to go and get pregnant at such a young age

Sthembiso: Don't mind her sis she is always moody . And don't worry about us , you taught us well , I even remember those days you were teaching us about dating and all the consequences I aint gonna complicate my life anytime soon. Thank you for raising us well Phawu and for everything you taught us . You filled moms place and did better than she could have ever did even if she tried . We love you Phawu

Sthembele: Yeah sis you're amazing, you're the coolest ever well except for the fact that you're strict but its cool because we love you like that and we dont mind . We laugh at how you shout sometimes

Nkanyezi: Yes sis Phawu , you are amazing and I never knew my mother so you are my mother. I love you too

Trust my siblings to make me cry in the morning, well they have just made my day . I love them so much and they mean the world to me

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hearing them say such sweet words heals my heart .

Me: I love you too Nkanyezi . And my handsome brothers you guys are amazing . Its an honour to be your sister

We share a group hug and then we head to school before we get late

Thandiwe's POV

I am so annoyed . Phawulothando and her stupid siblings were busy being lovey dovey at breakfast . No one bothered to even notice my existence, they were just excluding me . I got annoyed when Phawulothando talked about dating and consequences yeah yeah she directed that to me . Well I really don't care , if they wanna hate me so be it , I ain't gonna beg them .

They can all go jump in the lake for all I care .. all of them . Especially that Phawulothando Zulu , she totally messed up my life. I would have at least got an abortion or something and dad wouldn't have found out and got so disappointed in me .

Phawulothando is happy about this because she gets to stay as daddy's perfect daughter, his beautiful maiden . Not me the disappointment, bringing shame to the family for being pregnant . Dad and I talked last night, for hours actually. I told him exactly what happened and all about Andile, he said that on Saturday we'll go there and report the pregnancy and Andile has to pay damages . I wanted to at least warn him but no Dad said that is unnecessary , we'll arrive there unannounced .

Andile will be so shocked because he doesn't know that Im pregnant . He probably has been trying to call me but hey Phawulothando doesn't want to return the phone . And worse she gets to chat and get calls on her fancy cellphone . Clearly there is favouritism at home , Phawulothando gets a fancy new phone and the boys get promised fancy new clothes for their farewell .

This isn't fair what do I get, silent treatment and bad looks from dad . Falling pregnant isn't such a big deal they should just get over it . They should accept it and life should go on .

Mongezi's POV

So I told my best friend about Phawulothando, he encouraged me to go for it . I think I am ready to ask her to be my girlfriend now , I just hope she agrees I love her so much . She enjoys being with me yes but would she accept me as her lover ? I guess I will find out . Im smiling just thinking about her .

MaZulu puts a smile on my face I will ask her to be mine during second break , the bell rings snapping me out of my thoughts . I head to class still smiling as I think of Phawu.

## Chapter 9

### Mongezi's POV

The day goes by fast , I cannot believe it but its finally second break. Im so nervous its like Im gonna break down , should I really do this though? I told Phawu to wait for me at our usual spot yesterday. I bought her a gift , chocolate, a pink notebook along with a pink pen (she'll love it because its her favourite colour and she loves writing ) and a rose . I hope she loves it and she doesn't get the wrong idea that im tryna buy her love. I

really love her she makes me happy and I don't want to mess this up .I head over to her , its rude to keep a lady waiting.

Phawu: Hey Mongezi

I greet her back and I hug her , I love being in her arms , its the safest place I could ever be.I love her warmth and the fact that she's shorter than me and she gets to always rest her head on my chest . She keeps looking at the gift and smiling. I give it to her .

Me : I got you something beautiful. I just want to see you smile

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Phawu: Thank you so much Mongezi, No one has ever done something so nice for me

She hugs me tightly . We hug for some time and then finally she lets go . This is going better than planned. She looks at me deep in the eyes , she has beautiful brown eyes . MaZulu is amazing guys. She looks up, for a moment I think we are going to kiss . I prepare to kiss her but she starts talking. I quickly hide my disappointment . I love her a lot so I will wait for her to be ready and I wont rush her into things

Phawu: Thank you so much Mongezi , I really needed the notebook. Nkanyezi decided to use my old one as her drawing book , I really love my sister but she messed it up so I let her keep it. I was still going to buy another one

Me : Its no issue honey . Your smile brings joy to my heart and Im so glad you love it .

She tells me all about what Nkanyezi did with her old notebook and we laugh madly. I love listening to her talk , especially when she talks about her family . Her face just lights up brightly and she looks more beautiful. I love her

she amazing on all aspects!

Phawu: Earth to Mongezi , are you even listening to me ?

Me : Im so sorry Phawu, I was just thinking about something but now Im focused. You were saying?

Phawu: am I boring you ? Are your thoughts more important. I could go over to Samke and leave you to your thoughts

Me: No no no please don't do that , yes my thoughts are important because I was thinking about you and you're very important to me but please don't go

Phawu : what exactly where you thinking about

Me: The real reason why I asked you here is because I wanted to confess my feelings for you . I love you Thando

She looks at me straight in the eye , I get more nervous. That's one of the things I love about Thando she's straightforward and direct . I carry on as nervous as I am

Me: I have always loved you Thando , from the day You bumped into me in grade 8 . I loved you the day I first laid my eyes on you , you're amazing Thando , you're beautiful , your

interior and exterior is amazing. You bring a smile to my face . You make a dull day good

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your smile brings joy to my heart . I love you maZulu. I have seen you on your worst days , I have been with you even on days you didn't feel beautiful . I have seen you cry , I have seen

you smile and I have also heard your beautiful laugh. You complete me honey, you make my day . You give me purpose to live. I want to love you everyday , I want to love you on your good days and also on your bad days .I don't promise perfection but I promise you genuine love . Please be mine Mageba Omuhle

She just hugs me and cries in my chest . I love her so much , I keep telling her that and kissing her forehead

Phawu: Can I please think about it

Me: Take as long as you need , I love you and I will wait for you . I wont rush you into anything

The bell rings disturbing us and completely ruining the moment

Phawu : Thank you so much Mongezi you just made my day

Me: It's cool sweetheart, a smile on your face means joy to my heart . Let me walk you to class

We walk together still talking, Im in love with her. We get into class and the lesson begins.

Thandiwe's POV

The day ends finally. I wasn't even concentrating today because Im going to see Andile , hes probably worried sick but I know that he will be happy to see me . I know that today he is not working because its a Wednesday and on Wednesdays he used to always make me bunk school and spend the day with him .I leave school in a rush and take a taxi because if that Phawulothando sees me she'll stop me from seeing Andile. The taxi gets to the other side of the village, this is where all the rich people live . The houses here are nicer and it's closer to town. I get off and pay the driver. I saved for a week in order to afford this trip and I hope it was worth it. I spot Andile chilling with his friends and I ask him over

Andile : So you finally remember that you once had a boyfriend this side how nice

Me: Im so sorry my love , Phawu took my phone which is why I couldn't contact you

Andile: Don't hit me with lies girl , it's been three weeks dammit.

Me : I know Andile , Im sorry hey .My life was complicated and I missed too much schoolwork so I had to catch up

Andile : you are lying . You probably got yourself a new boyfriend. I tried texting and calling you but you ignored me and then you sent a text saying that I should leave you alone

Me: My sister probably sent that . I would never do that to you baby I love you . I would never cheat on the father of my baby . Please calm down you're scaring me

Andile : Thandiwe what crap are you smoking now ? Actually don't even tell me , Im tired of your pathetic lies and excuses. You have the audacity to even chat with men using my phone . Shame on you . We are done

Im literally crying now , I have to fix this I cannot loose Andile I love him with all my heart I cannot loose him , especially not

now when we are expecting a baby. This is Phawulothando's fault

Me : baby im not lying, I am pregnant with your child Andile lets fix this my love

Andile : Forget it Thandiwe . Keep that phone I don't want it anyways . Delete my number and never ever come this side looking for me .we are done. And Thandiwe stop smoking that crap , its messing up with you. You're not pregnant with my child. You cannot sleep with various men and then think the baby is mine haibo . Abort that rubbish because you cannot afford it and leave me alone please Im really happy with my new girlfriend .

And with that said he left , I tried calling him but he just left. I stood there for what seemed like forever and cried hoping that he'll come back for me but he didn't. I got into a taxi because I don't want to arrive late and get into trouble. I got home and saw Phawulothando already cooking, she looks so happy . I tell her I hate her and I curse the fact that we are related . I run to our room and lock it then I cry loudly.

Phawu tries to open saying stupid stuff like she loves me and she wants whats best for me . That she wants to support me and I shouldn't push her away. Mxm as if she really cares. If she cared about me she wouldn't have messed up my life.I really do

hate her. I look for some aspirin, I have a terrible headache but then I see lots of pills .

Phawulothando keeps all the pills together because she doesn't want Nkanyezi to play with them. Luckily there is water around, there are lots of pills... Suddenly an idea comes to mind. A perfect escape. I decide to do it ...

## Chapter 10

### Phawulothando's POV

So I'm finally done cooking and we all enjoyed supper . Thandiwe came here and said hurtful stuff to me and then she locked herself in our room. She was crying loudly and I tried to enter but she didn't want to open up. I just left her alone because I assumed she needed space , she is going through a lot of shame . But hey it's been hours now , let me check on her. I get there and it's dead quiet. I try banging up the door but she still doesn't want to open up , I'm now worried and something feels wrong. I ask Dad to come and try get her to open up , after 30 minutes of trying to get her to open we decide to break down the door . We get inside and get the worst shock ever. Thandiwe is lying on the floor lifeless, dozens of pills are around her she must have tried to commit suicide. Dad calls the

ambulance quickly and we check her pulse , its faint but its still there. I let out a sigh of relief. I didn't know things were this bad

- yes I love Thandiwe and Im mad at her for messing up but still she doesn't deserve to die. I still need my sister and seeing her there looking so lifeless, she practically looked dead, broke me.

I literally started crying nonstop . It felt like the world has abandoned me , I was hurt once again just like the time when my mother left us . I need her , I really do . What if she's trying to kill herself because of me ? If she dies I won't ever forgive

myself. She is taken by the ambulance and Dad leaves with her, I have to stay with the kids and ensure that they sleep early . We will get updates from Dad. The twins are worried and they keep asking me questions about Thandiwe .I just tell them that hopefully she will be okay and they leave me alone because they can sense that I am in no mood for small talk, they head to their rooms and do their homework. Nkanyezi starts crying she didn't like seeing her sister being taken away like that and she didn't like it when she called for Thandiwe and she didn't answer ..in between tears she talks to me.

Nkanyezi: Sisi Phawulothando why didnt Thandiwe talk to me ?

Me: Baby Thandiwe was just sleeping, she didn't hear you

Nkanyezi : But Thandiwe wakes up when I call her , what kind of sleep is that ? Its different than the normal sleep

Me:yes its different baby because she is unwell so she is sleeping deeply. She has to be in hospital but soon before you even notice it she will be back

It seems like Im trying to convince myself more than Nkanyezi. Im trying so hard to believe that she will be okay . She was in there for nearly two hours so Im worried but I hope she will be okay . The baby... oh my I forgot about it.I know that everyone was angry about it at first but I would love to be an aunt . It would give me responsibility and I would really love to support

my sister through it all. Auntie Phawu , check that it sounds nice .Nkanyezi starts crying again and I just comfort her

Nkanyezi :what if Thandiwe's sleep is the one my friend told me about at school, im scared of that kind of sleep

Me: what kind of sleep is that?

Nkanyezi : Its a deep sleep , you never ever wake up. My friend said that it happened to her cousin. They had a funeral and burried her and they never saw her again. Will I ever see Thandiwe?

I cried just hearing that , Im glad Nkanyezi is in my lap and she won't see my tears .

Me: No baby , you will see Thandiwe again . She will be okay I promise you .

I hated promising that , because I aint sure myself but I had to say something to stop her from crying. I comforted her and she finally fell asleep . I put her into bed and went to sleep in mine , I looked across and saw Thandiwe's bed I instantly started crying again. I miss her so much, yes the past few weeks have been terrible and I regret being angry at her but I really tried reaching out and she kept pushing me away.

What if its really my fault, I took her phone away and she couldn't contact him .she needs him for support and I pushed him away . I have been too hard and strict on her now I will

never get a chance to fix my mistakes. My own sister will die because of me . Im literally a murderer , How will I face Nkanyezi?

Her heart-breaking tears and questions? And the last words Thandiwe said kill me even more . As I try sleeping , I think of them again and cry hysterically ." Phawulothando I hate you , I curse being related to you " ...

**As available chapters.....**

**.....The End.....**