



For daily latest books please visit <https://novelsguru.com/>

And also visit my Facebook page, and like and share it

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345453369055623>

Thank you guys for downloading this book from my site please keep visiting <https://novelsguru.com/> for supporting me and also don't forget to share it with your friends.

Dear Friends please download these books direct from <https://novelsguru.com/> bookmark this site for latest African books, and also supporting me Thanks.

My Knight: Dakota's Second Chance by Minenhle Nkosi

CHAPTER 1

“So tell me about him. When are you guys going on your first official date?” Londy says and I roll my eyes while I continue stuffing my face with this delicious bunny chow. I take a sip of my juice and look at my best friend who is forever curious.

“Come on Dee, you have to give me something. Anything to hold on to. Please.” I just laugh.

Mpisi tried to phone me after the restaurant accident to arrange up a date, but I just ignored him. He even dispatched his personal assistant, who made arrangements for me to visit a spa. Of course, I went since who wouldn't take advantage of a free spa day? I don't believe I'm ready for a relationship. Sure, I'm in need of some TLC and sex, but there are so many people who would be disappointed if I pursued a relationship with him,

and I'm simply not prepared for the backlash. I've been ignoring him for a month, but he refuses to give up. He gives me money, gifts, gift cards to spas and clothing and food stores, and pretty much anything that a male would buy for his girlfriend. He simply refuses to take the hint.

“Just leave me alone Londy. I don't wanna go out with him.”

“But why?” she does that pouting thing that Yamihle does when she wants something and you are refusing to give it to her.

“I don't want to. Isn't that reason enough?” she shakes her head.

“Unfortunately for you, I know your friend and I know you like him very much. What is it that you are afraid of?” I huff and sit back.

“My parents, in fact my entire family, is apprehensive about dating outside our race. Tristin may not have told you, but he battled tooth and nail to keep you in his life. They even tried to hook him up with a couple of white girls, but he stood firm in his desire for your affection. Mpsi is an older black man. My family will undoubtedly believe I have gone insane and will undoubtedly execute an exorcism on me.” she looks shocked. I

guess it is the Tristin part. Shit. She wasn't supposed to know about it.

"When did that happen?" gosh. Why did I open my big mouth?

"Londy please. This is in the past. They like you now and they have accepted you. Please don't ask Tristin about this because he made me swear not to tell you." she sighs and stands up.

"Londy come on."

"I need some air." She heads out. Tristin is going to be so pissed on me, but I can always blame it on the hormones. Yeah, that would do the trick. I take my phone out and quickly call Tristin. He answers after a few rings.

"Hey D. can't talk right now. Call again later."

"No. this can't wait. I may or may not have blurted to Londy about mom and dad setting you up with white girls just to get rid of her. Just a heads up." I quickly hang up and within a matter of seconds he calls back. Didn't he say he was busy? But who is going to answer this call because it ain't me. I stand up and tidy up my desk. I might as well go home because I am going to be bored without Londy at the office.

I grab my belongings and leave. I get in my car and head to the shopping center. It's time to put one of Mpisi's vouchers to use. A voucher for Woolworths Food. In addition, I'm desiring various ice cream flavors. As an apology, I'm also going to acquire a tub for Londy. When I get to Woolies, I load up my trolley with fruits and other delights so that I won't be condemned for buying too much ice cream. I then proceed to the frozen foods section. I start with Londy's absolute favorite flavor, Italian pistachio ice cream.

I then take cookies and cream, triple caramel, stracciatella and Belgian chocolate flavours for myself. I go pay for my grocery and head out. While searching for my phone in my bag, I bump into someone with my trolley. I quickly look up.

“I am so sorry for that. I am so clumsy. Please forgive me.”

“It’s nothing to worry about Miss.” The man in a black suit says.

“MOMMY!” a tiny voice shout and before I know it, I am nearly knocked to the ground. I look at this creature who has mistaken me for her mother and my lips automatically stretch out into a

wide smile when my eyes land on Ahlelelwe Mpisi. I stand up straight and hug her. "I thought I would never see you again." God these hormones, now I am tearing up. I quickly wipe them before Ahlelelwe can see that I am crying.

"I am so sorry for ghosting you my love. Mommy has been so busy and very sick lately. But I promise I will make it up to you."

"How about taking me out for lunch?" the man in the suit chuckles. I then realize that it's her bodyguard.

"Is that okay with you?" I ask him.

"Mr. Mpisi doesn't have a problem with you hanging out with the princess, so it's okay." He answers so professionally. I remember his surname. It's Mr. Mngadi.

"Okay then. Let's go grab something to eat angel." I push the trolley and Mr. Mngadi quickly offers to push it. We walk by Truworths and the princess gushes over the dress that is on display. I know I am going to regret this but she is looking so cute right now. "Do you wanna go inside?"

“Yes mommy. I just want that dress only. It would look so pretty on me.” she says patting her afro causing me to laugh. She is such a drama queen.

We enter and she goes insane when we reach the category for females aged 8 to 14. Well, this impulsive purchasing won't deplete my bank account because I'll use the money her father provides me from time to time. She takes a pink jogging dress, two linen shorts, an A-line skirt, two t-shirts, and a printed pinny set. We then proceed to pay. Truworths is ridiculously pricey. She then drags me to Toys R Us and forces me to purchase a Rose Gold Amplify Sports Athletic Series Fitness Watch. Thank goodness I wasn't compelled to buy dolls or anything like that. The princess, it appears, is a sportswoman. I'm out of breath as we walk out of the store.

“I could've warned you.” Mr. Mngadi says and I laugh.

“Next time, please do.” he also laughs.

We take a stroll to McDonald's. I chose it since you don't have to wait long for your food, and I know the princess will be playing in the play area. She dashes off to the play area as soon

as we finish ordering, as expected. I take a seat at one of the open tables, and Mr Mngadi takes the seat across from me. I don't know what to say to him, so I just play with my phone. Our order has finally arrived, and the princess has returned. She approaches me and rests her head on my shoulder. She's adorable. I can't help myself from taking a couple selfies with her. At night, I'll definitely deliver them to her father. When Mr. Mngadi's phone rings, he rises and moves a few steps away from us to answer it. I assume it's Mpisi, probably asking where Ahlelelwe is.

“Hhee phela we mommy, this other night dad came home with this other woman. She just said ‘I am your new mommy’ and I told her that I already have a white mommy. You could’ve seen the way she shouted at daddy. She even left at night. Yoh.” Ahlelelwe tells me and my eyes pop out. So the bitch ass nigga has been entertaining bitches and he even has the nerve to bring them in front of the kids. She is doing those dramatic gestures including the dramatic clap. I am pretty sure she would’ve placed her hands on her waist if she was standing.

“What did your father say about her being your new mommy?”
I investigate.

“Dad wasn’t interested in anything she had to say. He just gave her-her things and told Bab Mngadi to drive her home.”

“Has there ever been any other female friend that your father has brought home the past month?”

“Another two before the self-appointed mommy. Well the other two didn’t introduce themselves, so no drama there.”
OMG! Buy a child a meal and they will tell you all you need to hear. When I see Mpisi, I want to squish his balls. He can't keep it in his pants any longer. He's busy courting me, but he's also occupied with these other ladies. He irritates me greatly. Ahlelelwe, on the other hand, talks far too much for her age. When I was her age, I don't recall being this nosy and outspoken. Mngadi returns to the table and resumes his meal.

“Is everything okay?” I ask.

“Yes. Mr. Mpisi was just asking where we are because we should’ve been home by now. But I told him the princess ambushed you for a girls’ afternoon out and he didn’t have a problem with that.” he says and I laugh at the ambushing part. But she did ambush me.

We finish eating and just as we are about to head out, we bump into Mpisi at the door. Ahlelelwe jumps into his arms and I walk past him without even greeting him. He holds my upper arm and places Ahlelelwe down after kissing her forehead. He pulls me to the parking lot and encircles my waist with his arms.

“You look so beautiful wifey. Our baby is doing wonders to your beauty.” I roll my eyes and look aside. I am so angry at him for cheating on me. Well we aren’t together but he is courting me, so he has no right to sleep with other women. “Why have you been punishing me this past month? Do you know how miserable I was without seeing you?” He asks as he rests his head on the crook of my neck and begins kissing me softly. My body is reacting to his affection and touch. I'd like to confront him about his cheating habits, but I'm not sure a parking lot is the best place to do so.

“I am tired right now and I just wanna get some rest.”

“We can go and rest together at my house.” I am tempted to say ‘where all your bitches sleep’ but as I promised myself, I am not about to cause drama in a parking lot. Especially in front of Ahlelelwe.

“Maybe some other time.” I remove his arms around me and I feel the void the minute they are not around me. He looks at me in disbelief.

“What do I have to do to prove to you that I wanna be with you?”

“We are not about to have this talk in a parking lot Ndabe.” He smiles. Probably because this is the first time I have called him by his name. I walk to Ahlelelwe and hug her. “I will see you soon angel. Probably this weekend. Maybe we can have a girls’ day out, neh? And a sleepover at my place afterwards.” She jumps for joy.

“I would love that mommy. I can’t wait to spend more time with you. I can just imagine the fun we are going to have. Tshedza is going to be so jealous of this.” I frown and she notices my confusion. “She is my older sister. Anyways I love you mommy. See you on Saturday.” She hugs me once more and then walks to her father’s car. I sigh, turning to Mpisi.

“She is such a great kid.” I say.

“And her happiness amplified when she heard you were going to be her mother. Please don’t disappoint her.”

“Don’t use your daughter to get to me Mpsi.” I walk away and Mngadi accompanies me to the parking lot where I parked my car. He packs my groceries in the boot and then closes it.

“Have a great evening Miss.” I smile.

“Thank you.” I climb inside the car and he walks away.

.

.

.

#DakotasSecondChance

#MyKnightSeries

2

Arriving at home, one of the helpers help me carry my grocery to the kitchen. MaKhanyi was fine with me moving sister Lwah's bar fridge to my room because I am pregnant and you never know when cravings will strike. So I go put some of my stuff in my makeshift bar fridge, including my tubs. Because I noticed Londy's car in the garage, I figure she's at home, so I ask Rain where she is, and she tells me she's at the farm. When she needs to be alone and think, she goes there. Sighing, I walk to her favourite spot and find her laying on the ground facing the sky.

“I would join you but I don't think I will be able to stand once I sit down.” She chuckles and looks at me.

“You seem a bit annoyed or angry. What's eating you?”

“That asshole is cheating on me.” I lean on the tree and carefully sit my ass on the grass.

“You're dating?” she seems shocked by this.

“Mpisi is cheating on me. His daughter was more than generous to tell me about his shenanigans.”

“How is he cheating on you when you are not in a relationship?” I look at her in disbelief. “Don’t give me that look Dakota. He has been courting you for over a month now but you have been flat out ignoring him. I would take that as a hint that you don’t want me and move on with my life.”

“But I like him, so he doesn’t get to just move on with his life.”

“Then give him a chance. It’s actually pathetic to see you lonely like this. It’s also sad. Just give him one chance. You will deal with your family drama later. I mean what do you have to lose?” I sigh and close my eyes. She is right, but first I have to confront him on his cheating ways and him exposing his children to one night stands or flings. I scream and nearly jump up when I feel a kick on my belly. I hold it. Londy is next to me in seconds. “What’s wrong? Is it the baby?”

“I think she just kicked.” I say with a smile, looking at her.

She also smiles and places her hand on my belly. That strong kick comes again and we both scream. I guess my baby is a late bloomer, because at 6 months, this is the first time she is

kicking. I am also very careless. I think the last time I went to the doctor was 6 weeks ago. I also missed this month's doctor's appointment. Londy is the one who always encourages me to go, but this month she was at Tristin's apartment. So that's why she didn't fuss about it.

"So did you talk to Tristin?" she sighs.

"Like he would go an hour having to know that I am sad or anything?" I chuckle. "He came to work and we talked things through. After that

Advertisement

he fucked me and then went back on set." I scream.

"SBWL that quickie moment." I say licking my lips.

"Who said it was a quickie?" she asks wiggling her eyebrows and I laugh. "Wena you have a hunk at your disposal. I mean friend, all that piece of meat. Yuh it could never be me." I even choke on my laughter. "Anyways let's go back to the house, you don't want mom saying I am risking your life by taking you to where a snake can just come out of the blue and bite you."

“Her drama though.” We both laugh. She helps me stand up and we walk back to the house, greeting the farm workers along the way.

“Sisi!” she shouts and I look ahead to see Sis Lwah talking to one of the farm managers. She is wearing black cargo pants with a western tan long sleeve shirt and black rubber farm boots. She is also wearing a Barmah foldaway leather suede farmer hat. She sure does look like a farmer now, a sexy one for that matter. I didn’t even know she was around. But she literally comes to check on the farm at least 4 times a week. She smiles and waves at us. She concludes the conversation and then comes to us.

“How are you guys?” we both hug her as we exchange greetings. “How is the white baby treating you?” she asks as she rubs my belly. I laugh. They always say I am black and the baby daddy is white, hence the white baby nick name.

“She is doing great. She even kicked today.”

“For the first time?” I nod. “What aren’t you feeding this child Dakota? She was supposed to start kicking weeks ago. Do you

go to your checkups regularly?” I smile awkwardly and look at Londy for back up.

“Ow hell no, don’t tell me you forgot to go to your last checkup. Dee that’s being careless. You don’t want this baby to be healthy neh?” I sigh and shake my head. Sis Lwah looks at me and shakes her head.

“Tomorrow I am taking you to my gynae. I am going to be there throughout the whole appointment. You can’t afford to be careless when you’re pregnant Dakota.” I pout and look away. Her phone beeps. She takes it out and looks at it for a minute before turning back to us. “Anyways I think Rain has prepared some late lunch for us. Let’s head back to the house.” Just like that, she has changed from being Lwah the mother hen to Lwah the chilled lady. I chuckle shaking my head as we walk to the pool area where goodies are set up in a table. We settle down. Yamihle comes running from the house.

“Mama!” she shouts as she goes to Lwah’s arms. She picks her up and places her on her lap. “Hello ncane.” She says when she sees me and Londy. Her speech is increasing. She is 2 years old now.

“When is she going to start attending crèche?” Londy asks. I grab a bowl and start dishing up the fruit salad.

“Yoh I don’t know. Her father treats her like a vase that can break at any time. This one time we were arguing, he even said ‘I will stop going to work every day and stay home to take care of her’.”

“Drama.” They both laugh while I chuckle as I chew on my salad.

--

My phone rings waking me up from my deep slumber. I take it from underneath my pillow and answer it.

“Speak.”

“Hey child. That’s no way to talk to your mother.” I grunt and sit up. I check the time and huff.

“For God’s sake, it’s 7 am mom and I am pregnant. I am allowed to sleep as long as I want. My baby and I need some rest.” She sighs.

“And you will get that rest and so much more at the comfort of your home.”

“Ma we talked about this. As much as you and dad say you have forgiven me for having a baby outside marriage, I know you haven't. You are very much disappointed. I love you guys, I really do but I need to surround myself with positive energy for my health and for the baby's sake.”

“Are you telling me that you will live at the farm even after giving birth?”

“It is very peaceful on the countryside mom, but no. I am going to look for an apartment. I am old now and I need my own space.”

“You should come home so that we can have this conversation as a family.”

“I will come for dinner tonight but please know that I am really going to look for my own apartment and there is nothing you can do to stop that. I love you guys and I appreciate all the things you have done for me, but a bird has gotta leave a nest at some point and that point for me is now.”

“How is my grandchild treating you?” I smile and brush my belly. The little monster decides to greet me with a kick. I gasp and giggle. “What’s wrong? Is everything okay?”

“No mom. Everything is perfect. The baby was just kicking. I guess she is happy that her grandmother is asking about her.”

“It’s a girl?” I can hear excitement in her tone. I smile.

“I am hoping for one but I will find out at today’s appointment and maybe bring you a scan.”

“Please do. See you tonight. I love you Irene.” I grunt and she laughs. She knows how much I hate that name. It means peace but I just don’t like it. It sounds like an old lady’s name.

“Bye Martha.” I hang up before she can insult me. Martha is a woman my father had an affair with. It broke my mother’s heart but she healed and we are now in a place where we can joke about the affair. We always call her Martha when we wanna piss her off.

3

Getting to the lounge, I find everyone there. Even sis Lwah and Yamihle. She has become her human purse. I have to find a way to convince bhut Luvuyo to allow her to go to crèche because hanging out with too many adults and two toddlers won't teach her anything. I greet them and sit down.

"How are you feeling this morning?" MaKhanyi asks.

"I am feeling good ma, even better now that I spoke to my mom this morning."

"That's great. What did she say?" Londy asks.

"She was just checking up on me. I am thinking of going back home next month but I am definitely going to permanently move out to my own apartment when my baby is three months old. I want to be independent and learn this thing called life alone, well with the new person on the way."

"Wow, okay. So have you found a place yet?" sis Lwah asks.

"No, but I am going to make sure I look for it and just get everything settled before I give birth."

“Or you can just go and stay at Thandeka’s old apartment. There you won’t even have to pay rent monthly. I am pretty sure she can sell it to you at a discount. All you will have to do is cover your monthly bills.”

“Thank you very much. And no, Londy, you are not moving in with me.” everyone laughs.

“I didn’t say I was.” She sulks. “I am not even going to visit you because you are so forward.”

“Says someone who is going to be spending every weekend there.” MaKhanyi says rolling her eyes and we laugh.

“Whatever.” Londy sulks and drinks hot coffee which burns her. She screams a little and drinks water fast.

“Soli nane.” Yamihle says looking at Londy with a sad face. OMG! She looks so cute. Can I please get a baby girl? A boy will also be cute, but a girl, made from my very own image, that would be so cool. Doing some twining with her all the time. By the way, Yamie means Ncane. She also calls me ncane but sometimes if she wants, she calls me tota and that’s her version of Kota.

After eating, we bid farewell to everyone. Sis Lwah, Yamihle and I going to the doctor while others are headed off to work. When we get to the doctor

we wait for a few minutes before heading to the consultation room. The doctors does all the checking up and then tells me to sleep on the examination bed. He plugs in the machine and does the ultra sound. The thudding sound indicating the beating heart makes me smile.

“There is you bundle of joy.” the doctor says with a smile. “Can you tell us the gender?” sis Lwah asks and the doctor nods.

“Well let’s see.” She moves the object she is carrying around my belly. “It seems like you have a princess on the way. A healthy bouncing baby girl.”

“Do you hear that nana? A new princess is joining the family. Are you excited?” sis Lwah asks Yamihle. The doctor wipes my belly and I button up my shirt, tucking it in my jeans.

“Okay.” She says unbothered and we just laugh at her. The doctor prints out the scanned pictures and hands it to me. I smile as I stare at them. She also hands me the prescription and

we head out. Sis Lwah goes to settle the bill while I go fetch the prescription. We meet at the reception and then head to the parking lot. Luckily we came here using different cars.

“See you soon baby mama. Don’t tell anyone the gender. We are having a gender reveal party next week at my house. Can’t wait. Gosh I am so excited. Bye baby.” Sis Lwah kisses my cheek and then walk to her car. Yamie is busy waving at me with a smile on her face.

I climb inside my car and then drive off. I think about Mpisi and then just decide to fuck it and drive to his company. He has an office there but he doesn’t do much work. He just chills and sign some documents that need him on that day. I am hoping he is there. When I get to his building, I park in his 2nd parking space. A security guard quickly rushes to me but when he sees me, he smiles a bit.

“Miss Millers”.

Londy and I always come and visit bhut Sizwe, so most guards know me here. I smile at him and then head inside the building.

I don't even sign in or take the visitors' tag. We never do. I know that Mpsisi's office is on the last floor. So I ride the elevator which takes me to his floor. The elevator door opens and I step out. There is a reception desk and only 2 rooms which I assume are offices. I open the first door and a long table with chairs come to view. I guess it's the boardroom. I move on to open the second door, it's slightly open so I walk in. he is talking to a certain woman. He then closes a file in front of him and hands it to the woman. She turns back to walk out but stops when she sees me.

"Can I help you?" she asks with some attitude.

"Glad to know you aren't sleeping with this one, because if you are, then lady consider this your last day working here." I fold my arms to my chest, tilting my head to the side and staring at her.

"Hey wife. Anele please excuse us." he says looking at me with a silly smile plastered on his face. The lady walks out but without giving me a mean look. "I am so happy to see you. You have finally decided to give me a chance?" he is standing behind his desk. I walk in and place my bag on his desk.

“Hold your horses Mr. you think I wasn’t going to find out about the bitches you have been fucking the past month? You have the fuckin nerve to shower me with gifts and tell me that you love me while having a bitch warm your bed every fuckin night. You disgust me.” I take a stapler and throw it his way. Unfortunately he ducks it. I didn’t even know I was this angry until now.

“Baby calm down.”

“Don’t tell me shit. Don’t tell me what to do or how to react. You cheated on me.”

“Well basically it’s not cheating because we are not in a relationship. Dakota I am a man and I have needs. How do you expect me to survive because the man down there has to eat?” I take the desk phone and throw it at him. “Baby come on. Stop what you’re doing right now. You are going to hurt me.”

“I don’t give a fuck. You are not remorseful and you deserve every lash.” I walk to him and as I am about to slap, he grabs my hand, brings me closer to him and smashes his lips against mine.

“You don’t know how much I have been waiting to do that.” he murmurs into my mouth as his hands travel all over my body. I have been craving his touch for so long. I just decide to give in to the deep desires. My ager dissolve like Enno in water the minute he grabs my boobs. The princess decides to make an appearance as she gives one hard kick which makes me scream and giggle at the same time. He felt it because he stops kissing me and drops to his knees, placing his hands on my belly. “Was that...” I giggle and nod.

“That’s the princess greeting you.” he smiles.

“It’s a princess?”

“Yes, I found out the gender this morning but I am definitely going to have a gender reveal party just for control and not a baby shower.” He is still smiling. He stands up and hugs me tight.

“I love you so much. So are we good now?” he looks at me. I sigh and nod.

“But you need to apologize for cheating on me.” he chuckles.

“I am sorry for cheating on you baby. Allow me to take you out tonight to show you how sorry I am.” He licks his lips and I laugh.

“God you’re so horny.”

“Do you blame me? I mean have you seen how sexy you are?” he checks me out biting his lips and I just continue laughing. “So see you tonight neh?” I nod. “No, in fact don’t leave. Stay here with me because I am not doing anything.” I chuckle.

“What if bhut Sizwe walks in?” he huffs.

“Konje we still have to cross that bridge?”

“And many other bridges. One of the reasons why I didn’t wanna let you in. there are so many people who are going to be against our union. My parents will be the first ones to object to it. I don’t know how we are going to deal with this.” he kisses my head.

“We are going to deal with this together, as a family.” he rubs my belly and the princess kicks once more but this time the kick is soft. He chuckles. “I love you too my baby.”

4

One of the few things I hate about pregnancy is the numerous trips to the loo. Even at night. Like right now, it's like the princess is pressing my womb. I sit up and look at the digital watch on my bedside table. I sigh when I see that it's 3:49am. I go and relieve myself and as I head back to the bedroom, I suddenly feel hungry. I walk out of bedroom and as I am about to descend the stairs, I hear some sounds coming from downstairs. Nobody does some midnight snacking in this house expect from me. It has to be a burglar. Even though this farm house is a smart house and it's easy to detect an intruder.

I quietly walk back to my room and retrieve my 9mm. I take my silencer from my drawer and attach it in my gun. I walk out of my room and I hear heavy footsteps ascend the stairs. I wait with my gun cocked and ready for action. As soon as he makes an appearance, he takes a few steps and I release that it is indeed an intruder. I aim at his thighs and shoot both of them. He grunts as he goes down. I walk closer to him. He is even wearing a balaclava. He looks at me with his eyes widening. He raises his gun and I quickly hit him with the back of the gun, rendering him unconscious. I rush to Londy's room and find it empty.

“Fuck.” I now have to drag this man all by myself. I go to wear my robe, take my car keys and head out. I drag him with his legs. When I get to the garage, I struggle to put him in the boot, but I finally do and I close it. I walk to the servants’ quarters and knock on Rain’s door. After a few minutes, she opens. She frowns when she sees me.

“What’s wrong? Is it the baby?” she asks with her voice alarmed. I swallow hard.

“Nothing is wrong. Please go and clean the blood from the stairs to the garage.”

“What happened?”

“Please clean it before anyone wakes up.” I walk to my car and send a message to sis Thandeka. ‘SOS ALBERTON’.

I then drive out. When I get to the warehouse, cars are already driving in. I park with my car boot facing the front door. I get out of the car and go open the boot. I drag the culprit out of the boot and drag him inside. I place him at the centre of the main room and everyone stops what they are doing. Sis Thandeka and bhut Sizwe walk in after a few minutes.

“And then? What is this?” sis Thandeka asks kicking the burglar.

“He tried to break in at the house but luckily I was going for my midnight snack. Which reminds me, I am really hungry.” I brush my belly and they laugh. “I also shot him, so he might bleed to death without telling us why he broke in. I am even shocked that he made it to the stairs without being detected.”

“He got inside the house?” bhut Sizwe asks and I nod. “How? Where the fuck were the guards?” I shrug. “SO you going to give me gestures because you’re hungry?” everyone laughs and I pout. “Asher get her something to eat.” I look at Asher with a smile and he laughs and heads out.

“Audrey, stop the bleeding so that he doesn’t die on us.” T-bone says. Aubrey heads out and comes back with her medical bag. She does a few things to him and the bleeding stops.

“Wake him up.” Squash opens his bottled water and splashes the water at the burglar. He wakes up gasping. He looks around and his eyes pop out.

“Morning babe. How are you doing?” Popi asks with a smile squatting to his level.

“Who are you people?” he asks with his eyes still wondering around.

“Oh no honey. You don’t get to ask the questions here. We get to ask, and right now, how are you doing this morning?” Popi asks again. He swallows hard.

“I am feeling pain.” We all laugh.

“You think we care?” Perry asks dragging a chair to where he is. She lifts him up and places him on the chair. “Now honey boo, what were you doing at the farm house?” he keeps quiet.

“You know if you are a normal burglar we won’t do anything to you.” Popi says removing the balaclava. “Mmm you look cute.”

“I can just do some facial recognition if he doesn’t wanna talk because we honestly don’t have all morning.” Nicki says walking in with some machine. She scans his face and goes to tap on her computer. Asher comes back with a bowl. I smile when I see some wings with fries. I thank him and start munching. “This is going to take 5 minutes. So it’s either you tell us who you really are, or in 5 minutes we will find out ourselves

and trust me, we are going to kill you after that.” he still keeps quiet.

“I don’t have all morning mina ke.” Sis Thandeka says as he walks towards him. Bhut Sizwe stops her. “Why? He is wasting our time. Now we are all going to wait for 5 minutes just because he doesn’t wanna talk?” she breaks out of his hold and goes to give the burglar a mean punch which makes him scream. “That’s only the beginning. I am sure you have felt that my punch wasn’t a normal once. Well it was amplified and I can release it anytime.”

“Kwanele Mnisi, 26 years, unemployed and has been charged with house breaking, hijacking, assault and attempted murder. Has been arrested multiple times. Has 3 kids from different mothers. Lives in Alexandra. Usually does jobs with his accomplices, Siyanda and Philani. He is a bad guy really. Killing him would be a blessing to the country.”

“No. please. As you have said, I have kids to take care of.” He pleads for himself. I go sit down and continue eating.

“How did you pass the sensors? How did you go undetected?” Courage asks. “Dakota leave.” Well I know that what is going to

happen, is death. So I stand up and remember that my car may be covered in blood.

“Can someone please borrow me their car? I can’t drive a car that is covered in blood.” Bhut Sizwe throws his keys at me. I catch them and hand my car keys to Squash. I head out and scream when I see that bhut Sizwe came in his Maserati. “YOU ARE NEVER GETTING THIS BACK!” I shout and I hear laughs from the inside.

“YOU CAN KEEP IT!” bhut Sizwe shouts back and I laugh as I make my way inside. Damn I am already feeling blessed. I bring the engine to life and it roars like a beast. Power. It screams power and you just feel powerful behind the wheel.

∞∞∞

Londy went crazy when I showed her the Maserati I was borrowed. She was also shocked when she found out about the burglar. One of the few things I will never share with Mpisi is that I am part of Pride. We made an oath that we would never disclose this information because it might land in wrong hands one day.

Mpisi has been asking about the actual date, venue and time of the gender reveal party. By the way, sis Lwah got two new interns from our company to plan it just to test them. I hope they don't disappoint. With regards to Mpisi, I am not sure if I should invite him. My whole family and friends are going to be there and there is no way I am going to be able to restrain myself from showing some affection. So I don't know if inviting him is a great idea.

Which is why I am now driving to see my uncle Josh. He married a Ndebele woman and was officially labelled as the black sheep of the family. Literally all the elders turned their backs on him. No one from our side of the family went to his wedding. I was like 15 years or something. I know for sure if I had rebelled to go there, my parents would've sent me to a boarding school overseas.

I pull up at his warehouse and head inside. He owns his own brand of wine. Plumy lips. I am not sure how he came up with that name. Maybe his wife's lips inspired it. He has a vineyard in Cape Town but has warehouses all over South Africa where his wine is delivered at and transported from there, straight to

shops and restaurants. He is busy wrapping up a box. He is one of those bosses who like to be hands on when he is at work.

“Uncle.” I shout standing not far from where they are working. Almost everyone turns to look at me. He raises his eyebrows and a frown forms in his face but eventually dissolves into a smile when he sees that it's me.

“OMG! Irene look at you.” He rushes to hug me. He is the only one allowed to call me by that name. And I don't get angry at him. “You have grown so much and I notice you have a bun in the oven. How old are you again?” I roll my eyes and he laughs.

“23 years uncle.”

“You still look like that quiet little girl who distanced herself from noise and always ran to chill at her treehouse all by herself. Are you still like that?” he asks leading me outside. We go sit by the benches which have a gazebo over them.

“Ow come on uncle. I would definitely harm my baby if I were to do that. Besides I am too old. Nowadays, I just climb inside

my car and drive far away and only come back when I have cooled off.”

“Which means you haven't changed a bit. You just adapted.” I chuckle. “So what brings you here?”

“I missed you and I also wanted some relationship from you because you have been in the position I am in right now and you totally understand my situation.”

“Let me guess, you are dating a black man?” I chuckle nervously.

“And he is in his late thirties.”

“Wow child, just commit suicide already.” He says playfully and I laugh.

“I am not saying become a rebel or whatever, but follow your heart. Do what makes you feel happy. You can't let go of someone who you assume may be your soulmate just because you are afraid of the criticism and possible disownment from the family. Look at me for example. I followed my heart, married a black woman and they turned their backs on me. I didn't focus on that. Instead I loved my woman, still love her,” he smiles a little. “I focused on my career and look at me flourishing and I am happy. I am even gaining weight.” He pokes his belly and I laugh. “You are going to be fine my baby. Just love your man freely and ignore whatever things people may say about your love. They will always talk but they won't make you happy. He will.” I sniff a bit and wipe the falling tears. “Pregnancy hormones. You are just like my wife when she was pregnant with our lastborn.”

“You guys have kids?”

“Two. A girl who is 7 years old and our baby boy who is 3 years old.”

“I wish to see them. Maybe you can bring them on my gender reveal party. I am sure sis Lwah and sis Thandeka are going to bring their toddlers.”

“Who are those sisters you're referring to?”

“I have a black best friend who is also my business partner. So her family treats me like one of their own. I am actually crashing at her home for now. I am going to look for my own apartment when I have given birth.”

“When is this gender party?” I giggle.

“On Sunday at the Sithole mansion. Give me your number so that I will send you the GPS coordinates.” He gives me his number, I type it and save it on my phone. “Okay. Now I am hungry and Ndabe promised to cook for me, so I better get going.”

“Who is Ndabe?”

“Your son in law who is your age mate.” I laugh standing up and he also laughs.

“I will see you on Sunday. Take care of yourself.” We hug and then I go to my car.

Driving to Ndabe's place, I think about the advice my uncle has given me. I have really grown to love Ndabe. It's not like I haven't had suitors courting me but I have never been taken by a guy the way I am taken by Ndabe. He has that smile of his that he shows when he is happy. That even reveals one of his broken teeth which I usually tease him about. He said one of the reasons why he never repaired it is because it carries history. We haven't been together for so long but I am really hoping for the best. I want to let him in fully and I know this will come with challenges and many oppositions as if it's the elections but I am ready to defend our love. Even if we don't last, I want my parents to learn to accept any partner that we may come with, from any race, without discriminating or looking down upon them.

I get to the house and park my car in the driveway. He made a comment about me driving yesterday but I ignored it. He said a pregnant woman shouldn't drive because anything can happen on the road and he doesn't want his princess and queen involved in an accident. That would break his heart. I go inside and then shout his name. I am too tired to climb up the stairs and look for him.

“Babe! Ndabe!” he comes to the lobby wearing just shorts and a vest. He is barefoot. OMG

his whole look is making my toes curl. Just like everyday, he is bald and his head is so shiny.

“Babe! Ndabe!” he imitates my voice and I just giggle. “How are you doing today?”

“I am doing good. Great actually. I just had a very insightful meeting with someone and it shed a light on many aspects of my life.”

“Okay. Let's chat about that meeting over a meal.” He leads me to the backyard in one of the permanent gazebos by the pool. There are a lot of goodies and real food in the table. By real food I mean food that can make you full. We sit down and I start digging in almost immediately. He chuckles and also start eating. I don't even wanna make small talks. I just wanna finish this delicious food in front of me and then maybe digest it nicely in the pool. “Am I going to be blueticked baby?”

“We will talk after I finish eating.” I say after downing the food with a glass of cold passion fruit juice.

When we are done eating, I just stand up and take off all my clothes except for my matching underwear. “Baby what are you doing?” he asks with his eyes popped out. This is his first time seeing me naked. I shrug and get inside the pool using the steps. I just sit on the steps and allow the water to cool me off. “Baby what if you slip and fall or drown?” I roll my eyes.

“You are too paranoid and too afraid. Come inside and let loose. Don’t you wanna swim with me?” I give him the puppy look and he just grunts taking off his vest and joining me inside. He moves closer to me and then wrap his arms around me. “The main aim of getting inside the pool was to cool myself off but now you are making me heat up.” He chuckles.

“And you are making me hard?” he brings his body closer to mine and rubs his dick against my thigh. I swallow hard and try to compose myself. I am sure my cheeks are red like tomatoes right now. I clear my throat and he chuckles while moving his hand up and down my back slowly. Even this small gesture is making me so hard. I can feel my nipples harden under my bra. “So what was the meeting about?”

“I met up with my uncle. He told me a lot about his relationship and life. He also told me to follow my heart, fuck everybody else.” He smiles.

“I think I am going to like your uncle.”

“I am sure you will get along very well with him. He is your age mate.” He laughs and shakes his head. “On that note, I would like to officially invite you to the Princess's gender reveal party. Both you and I know it but many people don't. That's why sis Lwah is hosting it at her house. I also don't want a baby shower. So this is a great time to shower me and my baby with gifts.”

“What should daddy buy?”

“Something neutral, preferably white.”

“So are you going to continue living at the farm after giving birth?”

“I wanted to go back home but I am not sure I will be welcomed after Sunday. My plan was to go home during my last month, have my baby there and move into my own apartment when my baby is three years.”

“Mmm. You know you can come live with me, right?”

“Come on. We are not at that stage of a relationship where we can just move in. I haven't met your family or your friends and I don't know much about you except what everyone knows. So I have to know the man behind the mask before I commit myself further into this relationship.” He sighs and nods.

“How old are you again?” he asks in a sarcastic tone and I splash water all over his face. He gasps and looks at me laughing. “I can't drown you but I have other ways to punish you.” His hands travel to my pussy and he cups it. “This big pussy, all mine, I am one lucky son of a gun.” I laugh and gasp when he starts rubbing from outside.

“MOMMY! YOU'RE HERE!” the little nosy Mpisi princess shouts coming to the poolside and Mpisi immediately drops his hand. I am pretty sure he is wishing he never introduced us in the first place because his big baby has just disturbed what would've been an intense moment had she not arrived. “Mommy are you good?” she asks kneeling next to the pool. She is still wearing her school uniform.

“I am good princess. Let me get out of this pool so that I can give you a big hug.” I say as I climb the stairs.

“Let me fetch a towel for you ma.” She runs inside.

“Shame, maybe you will punish me next time. For now you can masturbate.”

“I am never going to masturbate when I have a woman.” He says arrogantly and I just laugh.

6

If I was responsible for what I am going to wear at the gender reveal party, I would be super stressed out. But luckily I have a best friend who loves me to death. She just told me to relax and that she will handle my dress and shoes. All I have to do is just shower and stay clean before she arrives with the make up artist. It's Friday and my initial plan was to just binge some shows on Showmax, preferably Love Island but Mpisi has other plans for me. He just told me to pack a small weekend bag. We are going to come back from wherever we are going to tomorrow evening or Sunday morning.

“Don’t forget to pack some lingerie.” Londy says making herself comfortable in my bed. I roll my eyes and take the new lingerie which she bought for me a week ago. It's one of those mesh tops with a matching thong. It's really sexy, especially for a pregnant woman. “You are finally going to get laid.” She climbs into the bed and jumps up and down for a few moments. I just laugh at her.

“How does my brother tolerate such foolishness?” she chuckles.

“Well he loves me, all of me. He doesn’t care if I am happy today, childish tomorrow, mature, next week. He just loves me the way I am.”

“Aww true love.” I say sarcastically and roll my eyes. She laughs and lays down on the bed.

“I hope Mpisi is going to fuck all this bitterness out of you. Anyways did really shave or you just did some highlights just because you couldn't reach other places?”

“Fuck you.” I throw a towel at her and she laughs loudly.

“When you get to you destination please start singing, ‘I wanna make love in this bed eyy’. You will see, he will fuck your brains out before you even settle in.”

“I am not as thirsty as you hoe.” She chokes on her laughter.

“Ow honey, me and thirstiness, can never be on one sentence because I get fueled up anytime I want some sperms. Even now, if I were to send him a naughty sticker, he would sneak out of work for a quickie and then rush back.”

“Wow. I am so jealous.” I roll my eyes once again.

“You are going to kill me with laughter.” My phone beeps and it's in her hand. She checks out the notification. “Anyways your man is here. Let's go get you laid.”

“Stop it Londy.” She laughs and takes my bag. We both head outside and find Mpisi parked on the driveway. Thank God for bab Gareth. Because of him, we get to go out on weekends without informing MaKhanyi because they are always together, whether in his house or exploring the country. Mpisi climbs out of the car and comes to where we are standing. He looks a bit shy right now. Don't tell me he is afraid of Londy.

“Hi Mpisi. My best friend is a really good person. Treat her right because if you don't

I have a gun and I am not afraid to use it.” She gives him that intimidating smile before handing my bag to him.

“Thank you for trusting me with her. I am not perfect but I am going to live the rest of my life proving just how much I love her and how much she means to me.” That's so sweet of him to say. His words have a way of making you melt because most of the time, they touch even the most evil heart.

“No need to say your vows now.” I say making my way to the passenger seat. “And Londy, keep your virginity just for the weekend.” She raises her middle finger and I laugh. Mpisi quickly comes to open my door. I slide in and he closes the door after me.

“By the way, I am going to drive the Maserati this whole weekend.” She shouts and I just laugh. I am pretty sure Mpisi is confused by how Londy is.

“Sizwe's sister is open.” He says as we drive out of the farm. I laugh.

“I am sure that’s your polite way of saying she is forward.” He laughs and shakes his head.

“I never said that. You are just incriminating me.” I laugh and roll my eyes.

“Where are you taking me?”

“It's a surprise.” I pout.

“I am too old for surprises.”

“But that pout says otherwise.” I chuckle and look outside the window.

I don't ask many questions when we drive to the airport. We are flying with bhut Sizwe's private jet. I wonder why he hasn't bought his own jet because he can afford it. We board the plane and it takes off. After take off, he pulls me to sit on his lap and starts kissing me. I giggle and break the kiss.

"You can't wait till we reach our destination?" he smiles and shakes his head. "When am I meeting the rest of your kids?"

"Schools are closing today so they are coming home on Sunday. They always spend the next day after school closes with their friends and then come back a day after."

"Do you think they are going to like me?"

"They have to love you. You are sweet, kind, gentle and friendly. You are going to be their mother for the rest of their lives, so they will soon adapt. You would have to be patient with Tshedza. She was very close to her mother. So it might take some time for her to be comfortable with you, but never let her disrespect you. She is a child and you are an adult. Plus you already have Ahlelelwe in your corner." I laugh and he also laughs. She is the only one who knows how to get in between him and I and he sometimes hate it when she disturbs us in sexual moments like the one in the pool.

We continue talking about his kids. He is telling me about how they are individually and how naughty they are collectively. After an hour or so, the plane lands in the Mother City. Mpisi is very sneaky. I look at him as we sit at the back of an SUV and he just laughs.

“You are so sneaky. Why didn’t you say we were coming to Cape Town?”

“And ruin the surprised look on your face right now? Sorry but no. I love seeing this face.” He has that satisfied grin on his face. I smile while shaking my head.

The driver finally pulls up at Delaire Graff Estate. I gasp as he drives in. Pictures don’t do justice on this place. It looks so amazing. I never imagined myself spending some time here. Booking for one night per person is not less than 15k. So unless I got myself a blesser, I didn’t see myself visiting this resort. Of course I fantasized about it and spent hours on their website just admiring it and causing myself heartache. Mpisi opens my door from the outside. I laugh when I realize that I didn’t notice that the car had stopped.

“Good day beautiful people and welcome to Delaire Graff Estate..” the doorman says with a wide smile. I smile back at him as Ndabe leads me to the reception area.

We check in and we are handed our key cards. Walking to our suite, I can't help but admire everything which is in this Estate. It is so elegant, classy and you can just tell that it is super expensive. The staff member accompanying us opens the door to our suite and allows us to get in first.

“Wow.” I am in awe of this beauty. Kill me for being childish but everything in this room is spectacular and I love it.

“Enjoy your stay with us and if you need anything, don't hesitate.” The staff member says and walks out after not getting a response from us.

“So do you like it?” Ndabe asks looking at me with a smile. I can't help but smile back at him.

“I love it so much. It is so beautiful and classy. I already feel like a queen without even having to sleep on those Egyptian sheets.” He laughs. I walk to the sliding door that leads to a breathtaking terrace which has a pool. Can I just live here forever? I can literally see the Table Mountain from the terrace. “How long are we staying here?”

“Depends on you but we have to be back in Joburg in time for the gender reveal party.”

“I love this place already. Can we just please come back next time and maybe spend a week? We can even bring the kids but they will have to come with a nanny so that we can also have quality time together.” He smirks as he slowly walks to where I am standing.

“We can come back anytime you want. I am happy that you are including my children in your planning.” He encircles his arms around me and just as I am waiting to feel his lips on mine, they don’t come. Instead I look up to see him staring down at me with a serious face. “I love you and I want to start a family with you. I am going to marry you as soon as possible so that we can raise our children together and even have more if we want.” I place my hand on his head and keep rubbing it. He chuckles.

“I love you too, but now I am really horny.” He laughs.

“Ow yeah? And what do you want?”

“I want your dick buried deep inside my vagina, when I say deep I mean balls deep with me squeezing your ass so tight while you deliver deep long strokes.” He swallows hard and his hands drop to cup my ass. I laugh. Men are so predictable. “Let me call Mr. Mngadi so that he can connect me to Ahlelelwe.” I say trying to move away from him but he squeezes my ass and I gasp.

“I don’t think so. You have to finish what you started Miss Muller.” He says in a deep voice while breathing hard against my neck.

7

The amount of sex we had last night is not healthy. He was super worried to such an extent that we went to the doctor this morning just to check if the baby is fine. Well I was super relaxed and I laughed at him all the way because he was panicking so much.

“What if the baby got harmed by all the fucking from last night and this morning?” that’s the statement that made him panic. He rushed me so much that I didn’t even lotion my body. I just got dressed and we went to the doctor.

The doctor laughed at him. She checked the baby, the princess was just fine and she was taking a nap. She the told us that only rough intense sex can be harmful to the baby and then recommended the type of foods I should familiarize myself with. Getting back at the Spa, he was less anxious and we had a really fun day. From breakfast at the terrace, couple's spa, touring and all. I can safely say that this has been the best baecation I have ever been too. Which is why I am crying as we are checking Sunday morning. He keeps on laughing at me while the staff is busy saying we're cute.

“I promise you that we will come back here next month with the kids baby. Now please stop crying. You will have a headache and won't be able to attend your own party.” He say embracing me and kissing my forehead. I sigh and stop crying. He wipes my tears and we walk out of the resort. I look at it one more time as we drive away from it. “I love you.” He kisses the back of my hand. I smile and look ahead.

《 《 《》 》 》

Arriving in JHB, we first drive to Ndabe's house so that he can get his outfit for the party. He had already bought it before we left for Cape Town. Getting to his house, I don't make the mistake of going inside because I know I am going to be delayed by either him or Ahlelelwe. And I also don't wanna risk meeting his other kids in a rush. Londy has been texting me nonstop since I am not answering her calls. She is panicking. She is even a bit pissed that we didn't come back last night as promised.

“But why can't I see her?” God, I thought I hid well from her and Ndabe wasn't supposed to tell her that I am here with him. She is walking side by side with her father. She is looking so cute in jeans, a t shirt written AHLE MPISI and white sneakers. I

might as well climb off and greet her. “Mommy.” She exclaims as soon as I step out of the car. I have concluded that she is one loud kid.

“Hello beautiful princess. Have you been behaving?” she smiles and nods.

“Yes I have. Auntie even rewarded me with candy.” I wonder what aunt she is talking about.

“That's good.”

“So can I join you?” she gives me puppy eyes. I think she knows that these eyes can get her anything she wants. I look at Ndabe and he shrugs. I sigh.

“Well you can go and change the jeans and sneakers to a tutu skirt and sandals if you have one.” I am hoping we can sneak out while she is inside but she surprises me when she snatches the keys from Ndabe and run inside the house. I gasp and burst out laughing. This child is so clever. “What the fuck?” I exclaim looking at Ndabe and he just laughs. “she is sneaky like you.”

“Hhaybo love I am such an innocent man. I am even shy, unlike Ahle.” He places his outfit in the boot. “Please get in. Your

princess will be very quick.” He opens the door for me and I slide back in. “That ass, I would like to tap it before we go to the party.” I laugh and shake my head. He opens the door for Ahle and she comes running wearing a purple tutu skirt, carrying a small bag and sandals on her hands.

“Thanks daddy.” She says as she hands her father the car keys. Ndabe chuckles and closes the door after her. He also gets in and we drive out. “So where are we going?”

“To a funeral.” Her father responds.

“You can drop me off at the gate. Uncle will drive me back to the house.” She says very fast and we laugh.

“Relax my angel. We are going to mommy's party. I don't know who you will play with because your age mates won't be there.” She rolls her eyes and I laugh. She is just a dramatic child but she is amazing.

We get to the farmhouse. Three unfamiliar cars are parked outside. As we head inside, Londy grabs my arm and leads me to the lounge. She keeps on reprimanding me and I am just laughing because she looks so funny right now. At the lounge, I meet the make-up artist, the nails technician and the hair

stylist. Londy tells me that they are going to do me all at once. I wonder how that is going to work out.

“Auntie, my name is Ahlelelwe Mpisi and that right there is my mommy.” This child though. Londy just laugh.

“I am Londeka Mnguni, your mother's partner in crime. Do you wanna meet my younger siblings?”

“Yes please.” They both walk out.

“Babe what am I supposed to do while these people are busy with you?” I didn't know Ndabe can be a sulking baby. I roll my eyes and the ladies here laugh.

“You can go do something about that growing hair of yours. Maybe cut it and trim your beard. Just do something nje baby.”

“I love you.” He comes to perk my lips and then he is gone.

“That was so cute.” The make-up artist says and I smile.

《 《 《》 》 》

Londy is the one dressing me up. I look like a doll. A pretty doll at that. I love the makeup and the way they did my hair. My

dress is a Missord feather pattern slit thigh sequin tube dress. I am Pairing it with silver Block heels which I know Ndabe will freak on them once he sees them because they are too high. He even made me wear sandals last night while we were having dinner at a top class restaurant. Lapho I had prepared really nice heels to pair with my dress. He didn't wanna risk me falling and hurting his princess. Drama. Londy somehow got Ahlelelwe a dress that matches with mine in such a short period. She is looking super cute in white and ivory black dress with silver sandals.

“Mommy you look really beautiful.” I smile. This mommy word has grown on me.

“Thank you my baby. You also look so pretty.” I hold her hand and we walk outside. Ndabe is waiting for us anxiously. He is wearing a black shirt with black pants and a black and white blazer. I know Londy has everything to do with his outfit.

“Wow.” that’s the only sound that manages to escape from his lips. He swallows hard and I just laugh. “I am speechless.”

“Just tell her she looks beautiful daddy.” Ahlelelwe says and Ndabe laughs.

“You look beautiful Mrs. Mpisi.” I smile. We climb inside the car and drive to Sandton. On the way

he keeps on looking at me with a smile. When we get to the Sithole mansion, there are so many cars parked outside. Most of them belong to PRIDE members. “I will go in first so that you can have your moment to shine.” I laugh and roll my eyes. He parks the car and we get off. He heads inside the house with Ahlelelwe and I take a moment just doing some breathing exercises. There are going to be two revealing moments today. The baby gender reveal which everyone is excited about and the partner reveal which nobody is expecting. I hope it all goes well. Even though that’s just wishful thinking.

“There you are.” Sisi Lwah walks out of the house and comes to me. As always, she is dressed to kill in a short champagne satin dress with white heels. “You look gorgeous by the way.”

“Thank you sisi. So do you. Is my family inside?”

“Most of them. Now let's go in.” God don’t forsake me at this hour. We walk inside the house and she leads me to the backyard where there is a huge marquee. “Before you complain about how I turned something small into a huge celebration, just know that you and that precious baby deserve it. You

deserve all the love you can get and you deserve to be spoiled.” I sniff and she quickly wipes my tears. “we don’t want you ruining that perfect make-up with your tears, especially today.” I giggle and shake my head.

We go inside the marque and everyone screams “WELCOME”. I smile as I hug almost everyone. I am led to the front where there is a big beautiful couch. I settle down and sis Lwah puts a crown on my head. An artist opens up the event and after the performance, starters are served. These people read my mind.

“Hello everyone.” Ow it's sis Nolby at the stage. “Since we don’t know the gender yet, we are just going to refer to the baby as Gram for now.” We all laugh. She is crazy. “Anyways we are happy that Gram is joining our big family. Gram is going to be one of the most spoiled kid but will also know how to respect elders and how to behave properly. Dakota, congratulations. For baby Gram and for just being successful. You are an angel with a kind and big heart. May people and circumstances not change you. We love you.” I go hug her and then go back to my seat.

“Hey baby Gram.” Lindy says and I just laugh. I think Gram is going to be Princess's first ever nickname. “I can't wait to spoil you with my NSFAS allowance.” We all laugh. “I am going to be your rich auntie and drive in my RS8 to fetch you from varsity.”

“I figured I would talk while you're less grumpy so that you can hear me well.” I laugh. That would be my brother, Taylor, the eldest who lives at Free State with his wife and kids. “I am proud of your success little sis. You never asked for any help or assistance. You just started your own thing from scratch and that's a power move. To baby Gram, your uncle loves you.”

“I am proud of you baby sis.” Tristin says. “Thank you so much for always being there for me even when people turned their backs on me. I love you and Baby Gram. I promise to be always there for you even when you don't need me. I will even hold your hand at the labour ward.”

“AWW” Most ladies say and I just stand up to go hug him. I also love him so much.

The speeches carry on and they also serve the main course. I am very happy to see PRIDE members here. I know we are family, but them attending my party means so much to me. I can see Ahle playing with Lande and Lwando with the little twins and Yamie. Ndabe is laughing with Bhut Sizwe. He catches me looking at me and winks at me before going back to his conversation with Sizwe. Mom comes and sits next to me. Everyone is busy eating and listening to music. Some catching up with others.

“You look really beautiful today my baby. So how do you feel? And how do you know all these people? Last time I checked, you had only one friend and it was Londy. Who are all these people?” I smile.

“This is my family ma. All of them. Should you guys choose to disown me or die on me, just know that I will be taken care of and I won't ever be lonely.”

“Why would we disown you?” I feel the urge to pee, so I stand up.

“I have to go to the restroom. You also look stunning today mother.” I walk inside and rush to the restroom that's near the lounge. I do my business and just as I am about to head out,

Ndabe walks in and gives me that hunger look. My eyes pop out. "What if somebody saw you?"

"Good for them." With that, he pins me against the cold wall tiles and kiss me with so much hunger and desire. His hand travel to my butt and he squeezes it. I whimper.

"We have to go before this escalates." I say breathlessly after breaking kiss. He takes his hand and places it on his semi hard dick. "I will take care of that later." He laughs and fixes his pants. I walk out and he follows me. I almost fall when I see sis Lwah and Thandeka standing outside the door.

"I knew it." Sis Lwah says laughing.

"This is no laughing matter Lwandeka. Sizwe is going to kills him and her after giving birth." Sis Lwah hasn't stopped laughing.

"I am pretty sure he wouldn't kill his boss." She walks closer to me and fixes a loose strand of hair that had fallen on my face.

"Go back to your party while we have a little grown up chat with your man." I look at Ndabe and he gives me an assuring look. I then nod and head back to the marque.

8

Going back to my seat, I am no longer comfortable. I am dishing out fake smiles only. I know I still have to introduce Ndabe to everyone but now I am just so nervous. I am sweating like crazy. Londy comes and sits next to me. I wipe my sweaty hands on my dress and she gives me a quizzical look. I shake my head and look at the artist who is performing. Ahlelelwe comes running to me.

“Mommy Yamihle spilled juice on my dress. But she is just a baby, so I am not mad at her.” I smile.

“You can wear the clothes you were wearing earlier on.”

“They are in daddy's car. Where is he anyway?” she looks around.

“He is inside the house. When he comes out, you can ask him to fetch those clothes for you.”

“So when are we cutting the cake?” she asks adorably and I laugh.

“Hello princess.” Bhut Sizwe says standing in front of me. The look he is giving me right now, I wish the ground can open a big

hole swallow me. Ahlelelwe turns and goes to hug him. “Why didn’t you come and greet me?”

“Why didn’t you come and greet me?” she imitates him and we laugh.

“Where is your father?”

“Mommy said he is inside the house.” He frowns looking at both Londy and I.

“Who is mommy?”

“Daddy.” Ahlelelwe screams walking to Ndabe who is chatting with Soma and bhut Luvuyo. Bhut Sizwe gives us an intimidating look and then walks away.

“You're in deep shit.” Londy says and hands me bottled water. I need it. In fact I need a whole 2l because I feel like I am going to pass out.

“Attention everyone!” Zethembe says in the mic. I didn’t even know she was here. She waves at me and I wave back. “I have appointed myself as an MC because I can see this is getting out of control.” Everyone laughs. “So we are just going to ask just these four ladies to come up the stage and say a few words to the expecting mother. 1 minute each. Mrs. L Sithole, Mrs. T.

Mnguni, Mrs. Muller and Mrs. N Mnguni. Just a few words. Don't get too emotional." We laugh once again.

"Dakota I just wanna say I love you so much but baby Gram is going to decrease that love because I will love her more." Sis Lwah says and I giggle. "Motherhood is no walk in the park, especially when you don't have someone to help you with the baby. I am talking about a life partner not a nanny. But I pray that you find your special someone soon, so that he can change the diapers." We laugh once again. I look at Ndabe and he just shrugs laughing.

"Baby Gram is lucky to have you as a mother and we will make sure that he or she knows just how lucky he or she is. I will borrow you the twins for a week, just so you can practice on them." Sis Thandeka says and I laugh. I love them, I really do but they are so chaotic and problematic, especially now that they have started walking. They are also so naughty. You never leave them alone in a room unattended because you will probably find it upside down.

“I gave birth to 4 beautiful children but God decided to bless me with a white child a few years ago.” MaKhanyi says and I smile. She is so warm and kind and caring. You cant help but love her because what's there to hate on her. “Motherhood is tough my baby. From the moment you give birth to Gram, everything will be about Gram. You will even forget to wash your hair, but cosmetics or even spoil yourself because every time you go to a store, you will just think about Gram before anything else and before you know it, your life will revolve around Gram. Ingane yama 2k, yini nje u Gram?” we all laugh. “I just hope and pray that you don't lose yourself to motherhood and that you become a good mother to your child. You know how I feel about you. No need to say it in front of all these people.” Everyone laughs once again.

“I didn’t know that your presence in people's lives has made such an impact. This is the first family gathering I have been too which has this high number of gathering. Even at our wedding, we never reach this number. When I asked both you and Londy who are all these people

Advertisement

you both replied with “They are our family”. Well I am proud of the woman you have become and I wish you nothing but the best in life. I can't wait to meet and spoil my grandchild. Dear

Gram, granny loves you.” Mom is making me emotional right now. I go hug her and then go back to my seat. Zethembe takes the mic once again.

“Now the part we have all been waiting for has arrived. We will eat dessert after this. Please stand up mama ka Gram.” I chuckle and stand up. These heels are tiring me. “Relax, after this, you can sit down the whole evening.”

“Thank you.” She laughs.

We all walk outside the marquee. There are three big balloons hanging on this small gazebo.

“Three balloons. Only one contain the powder which represents the gender of the baby. Pink princess and Blue for prince. Now would you like someone to help you pop these balloons?” Zethembe asks. I look around and my eyes land on Ndabe who is holding Ahle's hand.

“Him.” I point at him and he laughs. He lets go of Ahlelelwe and comes to where I am standing. I don't even wanna look at other people's eyes or faces because I can feel by the change of the atmosphere that some have put together some pieces.

“Am I allowed to ask you relation to this handsome strange man?” I giggle and nod.

“He is Ndabe Mpisi and he is my man, not boyfriend.” Most people laugh.

“So you are going to pop these balloons together so that you can all get dirty and go wash together to save water.” We laugh. They hand us pins. “We are going to do a countdown from 3 to 0 for each balloon. Work with me here people.”

“3.2.1” we pop the first balloon and nothing comes out.

“3.2.1.” we pop the second balloon and within a few moments, pink powder splashes all over us. Everyone cheers.

“Baby Gram is a princess.” Zethembe shouts excitedly. Almost everyone comes to hug me and congratulate me. They go back to the marquee and others are taking pictures. I steal a glance at my parents and I can see them talking to themselves.

“Irene!” a voice shouts from behind me. I turn to find Uncle Josh with his wife and kids. I rush to hug him.

“You made it.” I smile at him.

“Couldn't miss you being rebellious in public.” We both laugh. I greet his wife and kids. I lead them inside the marquee. I will deal with my parents later.

“You have dug your own grave.” Squash says laughing as I pass him. I show him the middle finger and he laughs louder. I catch Zethu reprimanding him. He looks like a puppy right now. I just laugh and go back to my seat.

“Lets cut the cake and be merry.” Zethembe says. “I need to get paid for this gig.” I laugh. I cut the cake and eat the first large piece. It's so delicious.

“Time for pictures.” Londy says and she pulls me outside where there is a set up and a camera crew. “Just a few by yourself, with Mpisi, with Mpisi and Ahle, with your family, with the Mnguni family, with PRIDE and with our staff members.”

“Yoh, you call that a few?” she laughs.

The photo session come and go. You can see just how uncomfortable my family is. The ones with Ndabe are too cozy and when I took the ones with the Mnguni family, bhut Sizwe just told me straight ukuthi he is keeping it together for the

sake of the kids and people who might make him trend.
Zethembe calls me back to the front for the vote of thanks.

“Earlier this week, sis Lwah took me to a doctor's appointment because I was careless and I don't wanna look at Ndabe's murderous look right now.” Everyone laughs. “I missed last month's appointment because I was lazy and I didn't wanna go alone. So when we went to the doctor, she told us that I am carrying a girl. Sis Lwah immediately said we are going to have a gender reveal party. So to anyone who thought the invite was a short notice to them, it was a short notice to everyone else, not you only.” They all laugh. “My feet are killing me right now so I am just going to do this quickly. Thank you all for coming to this very special occasion of me and baby Gram. It means a lot to me, so thank you very much. I have so much PRIDE in me today. I love you all. Thank you.” They all clap and cheer. I walk out of the marquee. Ndabe meets me halfway and hands me sleepers. I smile and thank him. He helps me take off the heels and I put on the sleepers.

“If you go home with me, I will give you a full body massage.” I giggle.

“You first have to buy a new bed because I am not going to sleep in a bed where you slept with other bitches.”

“I thought we were past that.”

“We are. I just want a new bed.”

“So much drama Dakota.” Sis Lwah says from behind me. I laugh and turn to look at him. “Vuyo and Sizwe are inside the house. They didn't wanna risk killing you both in public.” She says laughing. She is having so much fun with this drama.

“Relax. Your day for the beatings will come but not today. It may be tomorrow.” She shrugs and walks away laughing.

“I never knew she was this savage.” Ndabe says chuckling. Our parents come to where we are standing.

“We are leaving now. We will talk about this stunt you just pulled tomorrow. Come home.” Dad says.

“It's not a stunt. I really...” mom cuts me off.

“We don't wanna cause drama and whatever you were hoping to achieve by bringing Josh here didn't work. Come back home with all your bags tomorrow or else I will drag you kicking and screaming from that farm house.” They walk away. I turn to look at Ndabe and I can see that he is fuming.

“I can take all the beatings anyone chooses to give me but nobody is going to touch you or my baby. I won't allow them.” He says with a serious tone.

NARRATED

Ndabezimnandi entered his office and placed his bag, keys and phone on his desk. He walked to the floor to ceiling window and watched busy city below. His mind drifted to Dakota and he smiled. He was smitten by the young white woman and he couldn't believe it himself. She was feisty, stubborn and very outspoken but it was those qualities that charmed him. Her beauty and brains were a bonus. His smile grew widely as he thought about baby Gram. He was a bit sad that she found her already pregnant but he was ready to claim the baby as his. In fact he wanted them to get married before she gave birth so that all his children can bear the Mpisi name. His thoughts were disturbed by someone banging the door. He turned and shoved his hands in his pockets when he saw who the intruder was.

“I have been waiting for you.” Mpisi said with his head tilted to the side. Sizwe walked in and stood in front of him.

“Screw that you're my boss and you're my friend. The shit you're doing right now is not on. How could you do something like that?”

“I love her. So now I must leave her just because she is your sister?” Sizwe didn't give him a chance to utter another word. He punched him and Mpisi staggered back a little. He didn't wait for him to gain composure. He gave him another punch followed by another on his stomach. He crouched down and Sizwe kicked him three times before he squatted to his level. Mpisi raised his head to look him. His nose was already bleeding. “I am not going to let go of her just because of you. Nobody is going to keep me away from her. Except if you decide to kill me.”

“You are nothing but a womanizer. Soon she will see you for you truly are and leave you.” Mpisi coughed a bit.

“I won't make myself seem better than anyone but I am trying and I know I am going to be the man that she deserves. I know it's not easy to see your sister with another man, especially a man way older than her but I am not going to let her go. She loves me and she chose me. Deal with it.” He sat up and leaned against his desk.

“Words. Those are just words Mpisi. You still have to prove yourself to my family, her family and practically everyone else. Good luck.” Sizwe stood up and walked out. Mpisi sighed and

reached on top of his desk. He took his desk phone and pressed a number.

“Sir is everything okay?” Anele asked from the other line.

“Call Dr. Vukani and tell him to come immediately. Don’t let anyone through after him. Even Miss Muller.” He said breathlessly.

“Sir. You're worrying me. Is everything okay?”

“Just do as I ask Anele and everything will be okay.” He placed the phone back on the desk.

《 《 《》 》 》

LWANDEKA

Vuyo is still pissed off about last night. He is being dramatic, if I must say. Dakota is an adult, she is even pregnant for god’s sake. If she wants to be in a relationship, they should let her be. Even with umfana ona 50. It's her choice. If she likes them old, they shouldn’t stand in her way because she might just never talk to them again and I know how irrational pregnant women can be.

“I did give him a few punches sbari.” I hear Sizwe voice from the speaker. Vuyo is at the gym. His phone is on loud speaker. Let me just eavesdrop and then throw a tantrum when he is done.

“Why didn’t you invite me Mnguni? I also deserved to throw in a few slaps here and there. Your friend is very disrespectful.” Vuyo responds with a chuckle.

“Hhay, I didn’t want him thinking we were cowards by ganging up on him.”

“But I won't go alone because he might just tell Dakota who might tell my wife. And you know how your sister gets when she is angry.”

“Luckily your sister is on both sided here. She is not happy about the relationship but she also doesn’t have a problem with it. So I won't be thrown against the wall if she founds out what I did.” Vuyo laughs.

“See you soon sbari.” He hangs up.

“You are such a bully, do you know that?” he quickly turns and his eyes pop out when he sees me.

“It's not what it looks like my sweet rose.” He is trying so hard to keep his eyes on mine but he is failing dismally. When I woke up naked, I just put on a short silk night gown and upon entering the gym

I left it open, just to torture him.

“Ow yeah? What does it look like? Both you and Sizwe are bullies. Why don't you beat each other up because you are fucking each other's sisters?” he swallows hard and tries to get closer to me. “Stop right there.” He immediately stops.

“But my sweet rose, what Mpisi did was wrong. He is more than 10 years older than Dakota. He is not the right man for her?”

“And who is the right man for her Jobe? Tell me. Who is the perfect man for Dakota?” he clears his throat.

“There is no such thing as a perfect man my love, but she should've went for her age mates.” I chuckle angrily and shake my head.

“I guess I should also go for my age mates and leave this nearly 30 years old man in front of me. How about that?” he quickly shakes his head.

“No. You wouldn't do that. You were made for me and nobody is going to take you away from me.”

“Mpisi was also made for Dakota. Now allow them to navigate this ship without meddling in their affairs. Nobody meddled in ours, even when you brought the evil Lilian into the equation.”

“Are you ever going to forgive me for that mistake which wasn't even my fault?”

“Until you give Dakota and Mpisi some space and freedom to date, then I might just start all over and be angry about you dumping me after I got shot by your girlfriend's brother and sending me back to a comma.”

“Baby come on. I am sorry. I will back off from now.”

“No. You're not sorry. You haven't felt your punishment yet. You can look.” I raise my gown and twirl for him. “But you can't touch, for a week. That's your punishment. No sex will give you a lot of time to think and maybe you will decide to never meddle in people's relationships.” I walk out and he quickly follows behind me.

“Baby let's talk.” He turns me and I catch a glimpse of his boner. I laugh.

“It's going to be a long week.” I move away from him and rush to our bedroom. Sometimes you gotta teach them a lesson. As much as they are the heads of the family, you control everything that occurs under your roof. “OWW AND I WILL MAKE SURE YOUR FRIEND IN LAW GETS A VISIT FROM SILO TONIGHT!” I shout from the top of the stairs.

“BABY PLEASE DON'T DO THAT!”

“TOO LATE MY LOVE!” Yamihle walks out of her nursery and comes to me dragging teddy bear.

“Mama I'm hungry.” I chuckle and pick her up.

“Good morning to you too angel.” She giggles.

“Morning mama.” This child though. She always does this every morning. Ask for food first and greet later.

“How about we take a warm bath first before eating my princess?” she smiles and nods. She is always looking cute. I walk inside the bathroom and fill the bathtub with warm water. I then pour my lavender foam bath which she loves very much. At almost 3 years, she already has a favourite scent. These kids are too clever. I undress her and then put her inside the bathtub. As I stand straight and take off my gown, this pervert I

married decides to grab me from behind and rub his hard dick against my naked butt. "Respect you child, Luvuyo." I turn to look at him with my arms folded to my chest. His eyes pop out when he sees Yamihle. He never wants her to see us being sexual. When she is around, he only perks my lips, forehead and cheek.

"Hey daddy." She waves with a smile. I climb inside the tub and sit down next to her. "Join us." That's not a request and Vuyo knows it. I laugh when I see that his dick is back to behaving.

"Okay princess." He climbs in and sits behind me. "This is pure torture." He mutters under his breath and I laugh. Serves his right. He will learn. Next time he will think twice before meddling into other people's businesses.

10

This is just weird. Normally he is the one who usually calls like all the time to check up on me but today he is just responding to what I am saying and his late responses are killing me. It's Wednesday and I last saw him on Sunday when he dropped me off at home. Well Monday I was super busy with work but I thought he would be romantic and bring me lunch or send flowers. But I guess I was just too ambitious. That weird behaviour of his started on Monday. The last proper text from him was a romantic morning text and after that, the relationship just hit the iceberg. Nigga can't do me like this after I have literally declared war against my family. I am sure they see my actions as treason or something.

You won't believe what my aunt said. She sent me a long voice note, swearing at me in Afrikaans for a whole 3 minutes. She even said she blames Londy because if I didn't hang around black people for too long, I wouldn't be attracted to them. What I can say is that if someone who is black would listen to her voice note, they would probably think she was a Police Captain in the apartheid era because her hate for black people is just too much. Maybe her husband or soulmate left her for a black woman. That's always the case with these bitter old woman who can't just seem to mind their own businesses.

I am really pissed off with Ndabe's behaviour. Which is why I am packing my bags just before lunch hour. I know I am not coming back here. I am too tired, so after seeing him, I am going to retire for the day. I pass by Londy's office and inform her that I am leaving. She just chuckles and shakes her head. We have an event to co ordinate on Saturday. I have made sure that all the final preparations have been made. All that's left is to make some final payments and all other small things. I hand her my notes and then drive to Ndabe's company. Arriving there, I go straight to his floor. I find Anele on her desk. She just rolls her eyes and stands up.

“He is not in today. He last came to work on Monday. I was expecting you to know that, wife.” She says the last part in a mocking tone. This girl doesn't know me. I am not from the ghetto but I can be savage if I want to. I go check his office, just to confirm that he is really not in and then I drive to his house. I am happy that I won't bump into Ahlelelwe. I love her

Advertisement

I really do, but I am not in a good mood to entertain her right now. Ndabe told me that his kids are staying over at his sister's place since it's the holidays and they will be coming back on

Friday. I am still not ready to meet them. I just told him that it would be better if I meet them on their next school holidays. I barge into his house shouting his name. After shouting it nearly 10 times, he makes an appearance. He is limping a bit but he is trying to hide it.

“And then? What happened to you?” he shakes his head.

“Nothing. Just a silly fight between men who can sometimes be boys.”

“Just a silly fight? How can it be a silly one if you're limping? And is that a black eye? What happened Ndabe? Who hit you?” he keeps quiet looking at him. I don't cower away from his stare. He chuckles.

“What brings you here?”

“So now I am not supposed to check on my man if he is suddenly being weird after the romantic and hectic weekend we had? I even thought you had some bitch over. And that's why you didn't come to see me or even be a bit romantic on the phone.” He smiles a bit

“I am sorry if I made you feel like that. Nothing has changed. I still love you the same way I did on Sunday. I Just wanted to

heal from my wounds because I knew you would ask questions.”

“You haven't even hugged me or asked how your princess is since I came in here.” He sighs and steps closer to me. He opens his arms and I go hug him.

“I love you.” He kisses my head.

“I love you too.”

“Now how is my princess doing?” I giggle and shake my head.

“She is doing okay. It's just that she is hungry.”

“I think MaSimelane has already prepared my lunch. She always make sure that it's more than enough. Let me go check...”

“Ow no baby. Go sit in the lounge. I will go check if there is lunch prepared and if it's enough for the both of us.” He nods and then heads to the lounge. I walk to the kitchen and find his helper placing a plate on the counter. We haven't been formally introduced but I know that she is here every time and only goes home on December, Easter and Winter Holidays. “Hello. I am Dakota.” She looks at me and nods. Why do I feel like I am being judged here?

“You can go sit down. I will bring both your lunches at the lounge.”

“Ohh okay. You already know who I am?”

“When you're the talk of the house almost everyday, it's compulsory to know you. Ahlelelwe won't shut up about you and Mr. Mpisi also talks about you sometimes.” Okay. This is weird.

“I will be in the lounge then, MaSimelane.” She nods. I walk to the lounge and go sit next to Ndabe. He places his hand on my belly.

“Hello baby Gram.” He bends down a bit and kisses it. He then raises his head and looks at me.

“Don't get too serious with me. I am hungry, so I might not value anything you say.” He laughs. He brings me closer to him. I can see that he wants us to cuddle. So I put my leg over his lap and place my head on his chest. His hand travel to my butt and it stays there. “What did you want to say?”

“I thought you were hungry.” I laugh and he also laugh. “I lost my wife almost 3 years ago. I never thought that I would find

happiness and love again in life. But all that changed when I saw this beautiful girl at a hospital. She was carrying a baby boy. She looked at me with a smile and said, 'you are rude big bro. How can you come with a person and not introduce him?' I swear your voice fired up something in me. I loved you since then. And you know how people say 'men always know when they have met the women they want to marry and spend the rest of their lives with.' Well I knew that I had been given a second chance in love and life in general because I was partly dead inside. I even lived in a penthouse and hardly saw my kids. Buy after meeting you for the first time, I came back home. I took Ahlelelwe out and I went to visit Tshedza and Asimbonge at their schools. It's like seeing you made me alive again. So I am grateful for your presence in my life and don't be surprised if I pop the question soon." He perks my lips. I am shocked by all of this coming out from his mouth.

"Aren't you bothered about the drama with my family? And I haven't even met your family. What if they don't like me or accept me? What if your other kids hate me or think I am trying to erase their mother? I mean even Ahlelelwe calls me mommy. That might be a problem."

"My kids will love you. Even if they don't at the beginning, they will learn to love because you are lovable and you are an

amazing person. You need not to worry about my family. Them liking you or not liking you doesn't matter to me. They will have to deal." I chuckle. MaSimelane brings food and she places it on the coffee table. It's chicken salad with fries and juice.

"Here is your lunch Sir and Miss Dakota." She smiles a bit. I move away from Ndabe and he sits up.

"Thank you KaMagutshwa." She smiles and heads back to the kitchen.

"She was giving me weird vibes but I guess I am just paranoid." He chuckles looking me. He hands me his plate and takes mine.

"Just in case she decided to poison you. Better be me on the hospital bed rather you and the baby." I laugh and shake my head.

"Where would she get the muti so fast?"

"You may never know." He wiggles his eyebrows and we both laugh.

FORTUNATE

Both Thandeka and Lwandeka are busy, so they asked me to come take Yamihle to the farmhouse. Well I heard them talk about this and I kind of offered because I wanted to keep myself busy with something, even if it's for a few minutes. Driving to the Sithole mansion, I think about how miserable my life is. People may have labelled me as a drunkard but they don't know the real reason why I have become a habitual drinker.

Life is not all roses and sunshine. When I met him, I thought he was different from other men. Turns out he was really different. At first he treated me so good, like a princess. He would spoil me like crazy and give me anything I wanted. It became worse when I conceived our daughter. He would spend almost all his time with us. I was happy to have such a supportive man in my life. We were both happy, or so I thought.

When my maternity leave was about to end, I spend 3 weeks getting rid of the body fat and as a result, I got the most desired

body by most females. My body became fit and firm and extremely sexy. I was used to wearing tight and short clothes. So after my baby, I continued with my dressing style but that didn't sit well with him. At first, he would just go shopping without my knowledge and tell me to wear those clothes to work. He bought long umbrella skirts, blouses, A-line dresses, shirt dresses and all those non-tight type of clothes.

This one time, I came home from work and found all my tight and short clothes missing. I asked him where they are, and he just said he gave them up for charity. That made me so angry and it led to our first big fight which left me with one big black eye which couldn't even be concealed by heavy make-up. The controlling just multiplied from there. He chose the friends I hung out with, places I went to, basically anything I did around my free time. Whenever he wanted to start with his bullshit

Advertisement

he would make sure that he ships our daughter off to his mother's house.

Why didn't you leave him?

That's a million dollar question. His parents were and still are lawyers. His father is a judge in the Constitutional Court and his mother is a Master of the High Court. He has his own law firm and most of his siblings work there. Whenever I would threaten to leave him, he would always remind me that I would never see my daughter again and he would make sure of that.

One night, he forced himself on me. He raped me. For the first time. Then he went to bed and slept like a baby. I couldn't sleep that night. I wanted to cry so badly but the tears wouldn't come. I packed all my shit and went to Khwezi's apartment which she said I could utilize at any moment. He called me the next evening but I didn't answer any of his calls until Monday morning when he sent me a message which stated that I won't be able to see my daughter for a whole month. I thought he was bluffing, until I got proved right when I went to visit her at his parents' house. When I told the police, they just told me bullshit and practically laughed at my face.

I went back. After a month. Not for him. But for my Hlaluminathi. The abuse multiplied for a month, the rape never stopped. After three months, he toned down a bit. He was normal. I was happy that everything was back to normal. Then I found out that he was cheating on me with an intern. I didn't

say anything, even when I caught them fucking in his office. He bought many gifts just to apologize but he didn't need to because I didn't put his ways to heart. That angered him and that's when he started verbally abusing me. He would degrade me and say all types of mean stuff to me.

Whenever he was away on business, I would turn to alcohol but making sure that the princess is not there. He finally decided to discard me like a used toilet paper after 3 years of being together. I was very relieved but very sad when he served me custody papers which stated that I only got to spend quality time with my daughter during school holidays and on some weekends if he permits. I agreed to those terms because I wanted to be free from him. But I could never really be free from that monster. Whenever I would get a new man or a hook up, he would always send his goons to roughen that person up or threaten him. I was free but not free at the same time.

A knock on my window startles me. I look up to see Danvers standing outside with a concerned look on his face. I didn't even realize that I have arrived at the mansion. How long have I been here? I climb of the car and give him a small smile.

“How are you?” I ask.

“I am good. How are you doing?” I brush him off and head inside. I hate it when someone asks how I am doing because I am dead inside. I have been dead for so long and there is nothing anyone can do to change that. Even therapy would be a waste of money on my case. I find Yamihle at the lounge playing with Zethu. “Hey guys.” They turn to look at me.

“Hey Nate.” Yamihle says adorably. I smile.

“You can take her now and don’t let her guilt trip you into buying her candy on the way.” Zethu says and I laugh.

“Roger that. Let’s go princess.” I hang her bag over my shoulder and pick Yamihle up. I look at Zethu who looks a bit offish. “Are you okay?” she gives me a weak smile.

“Nothing I can’t handle. Squash is coming to fetch me soon.”

“Okay. See you.” we walk out. On the way to the car, we meet Danvers.

“Bye uncle.” Yamihle waves and Danvers wave back.

“I hope one day you can tell me about whatever that is bothering you so that we can find a solution to it.” He says looking at me with a serious look. He is being too serious for my liking and he is usually the one always shy around me.

“Sure.” I place Yamihle in Hlalumi’s car seat and then we drive off. “What do you want before we go see the twins?”

“Aa-trim.” She says and I laugh. She loves ice cream but it always go against her soft fragile teeth.

“Ice cream it is. But don’t tell on Me.” she laughs. I doubt she understands that.

My phone rings as we settle down at Angel Berry’s. It’s Lwah. I answer it.

“Please don’t tell me you guys are getting ice cream.” She says as soon as I press answer. I laugh and shake my head. “God, the little devil manipulated you, didn’t she?” I continue laughing.

“She asked nicely.”

“There is nothing such as nicely when it comes to Vuyo’s manipulative daughter.”

“I will only but her a milk shake then.” She sighs.

“That’s better. Thank you for offering to take her home.”

“I also wanted to get away from this hellhole called my life.”

“You know, one of these days, you and I are going to have the serious talk and if you don’t wanna talk to me, I will unleash Flame on you.” I laugh.

“There is no need for that. Next thing you know, she will be asking on her partner in crime Silo to assist on the interrogation.” She laughs.

“Kiss the princess for me.”

“Will do.” she hangs up. I purchase two milkshakes and then we leave.

Yamihle is such an entertainer. She is singing to every song on my Spotify playlist, not caring if she knows the song or not. She is a whole mood. When we get to the farmhouse, she quickly rushes inside with the little milkshake left. I follow behind with her bag. She screams when she sees the terrible two twins. God those are such a headache and I would wanna baby sit them plus Yamihle.

“Hello dear.” Rain says coming from the kitchen. “Are you staying for lunch?”

“Ow no. I am in a hurry. Pass my greetings to everyone.” I hand her the bag. “Bye musketeers.” They don’t even pay attention to me. I just chuckle and head out.

Ever since that gender reveal party, my parents have never contacted me. I am a bit sad that they are not very welcoming to my partner, but the heart wants what it wants. I can't let go of the love I have for Ndabe just because my parents don't approve of him. Out of all the family members, except for Uncle Josh and his family, only Tristin has been in communication with me.

Right now I am on my way to see dad. Mom is very dramatic and I know she is going to blow things out of proportion. But dad can be soft when he is alone. Getting to his work place, I head to his office and find him talking with a young man.

"Miss Muller." The young man says with a smile. He knows me, but who doesn't around here? I am daddy princess and he has this huge portrait of me on the wall while he has small framed pictures of the rest of our family on his desk. I nod, acknowledging the young man. He keeps his eyes on me longer, like he is admiring me. Then his eyes pop out when he realizes that I have caught him staring at me. He clears his throat. "I will come back later Mr. Muller." He quickly stands up and rushes out.

“He is quite a young humble man.” my dad says regarding me with a small smile that doesn’t even last for 3 seconds.

“How are you doing father?” I settle on the chair across him, placing my bag in the desk.

“I am fine. How is my granddaughter doing?”

“I am not sure, considering the amount of stress I had been under since the gender reveal party.” He frowns.

“Have you been experiencing some physical pain in your abdomen?”

“Some few cramps here and there. I went to the doctor before I came here and she told me to take it easy because my baby feels every pain and emotion I go through.” He sighs.

“But how can you do this to us Dakota? What are you looking for from that old black man? He has lived a lot. Why can’t you just go for your age mates? What’s wrong with them? Why are you doing this Dakota?” I close my eyes and exhale loudly. “You can have any man you want. Wayne is a good man. He is single and he is 4 years older than you. He doesn’t have any baggage

and has never been married before, unlike that old pathetic black man.”

I open my eyes and look at the portrait of myself mounted on the wall. Dad always change it after two years. This one was taken on my first day at the college. I didn't even know there was someone capturing the moment as I was making my way inside the building with a huge smile on my face. My life was less complicated back then.

“I love Ndabe daddy and I am not going to sit here and convince you to see him the way I do. I am hoping that one day you will realize the love we both share and you will stop being racist.” His face immediately changes. I know he is getting angry.

“I am not racist Dakota. I just don't want my only daughter imprisoned without cuffs by a black man who will make you take care of his offsprings. Dakota his firstborn is a few years younger than you. What makes you think she will respect you or even give you the love or respect that you deserve? Think about it. Also his family is not going to accept you. I am not trying to talk down at you. You know how much I love you. Baby do you know how barbaric black in-laws are? They will

abuse you so much, you will cry alone because you would be running away from the 'I told you so'. Please break up with this man. He doesn't deserve you." I sigh and take my bag.

"I really thought you, as my father, would understand me or my feelings for Ndabe. I am disappointed that you are willing to lose me just to prove a stupid point." I stand up. I can see worry in his face but he has too much pride. I never knew that it could play a huge role in our relationship.

"Come back home princess. We can just leave all this behind and move on with our lives. You will give birth to a beautiful healthy baby like you and you will find a man who is suitable for you." I chuckle and shake my head. I thought I was getting through to him but I guess I can never change his racist mentality

Advertisement

even if I wanted to.

"I feel like this is the part where you disown me or something like that. But I will make things easy for you. You know how much I love you. You are the first man in the world to ever give

me unconditional love and to ever show me that I deserve happiness in life. Today, I am choosing to follow my heart. I am not choosing Ndabe over my family but I am choosing my own happiness. If you guys really do love me, you will open your hearts and accept our relationship, but I am not going to beg you to do that or try to convince you. I am out of here and tell mom that I won't set foot at home or any other gathering that doesn't involve my siblings. Until you guys have accepted my life choices, this is goodbye. Please don't contact me if you are still trying to convince me that Ndabe isn't the right man for me. I will notify you once I have given birth. Goodbye father." I walk out feeling like my entire world is about to crumble.

"DAKOTA!" my father calls out from behind me. "Don't do this. Don't forsake your family because of a man you haven't even known for that long. He is going to turn on you. He is going to hurt you. He is going to make you his playground because you have made him a priority and you have chosen him over your own family." I turn and give him one final look before I rush to the elevator. I climb inside the elevator and watch him as the door closes slowly. He is giving me a pity look but you can also see some tears in his eyes which he doesn't wanna let go of.

"Bye dad." I whisper softly and the elevator door finally shuts.

My body shakes as the elevator descends. My eyes are heavy with tears and I know the moment I let them fall, I won't be able to control or stop them. I stumble my way to the car. Opening it and sliding inside, I let out a huge breath. My lower lip is quivering like I am feeling cold but I know it is yearning to let out a painful scream. With my shaky hands, I drive out of parking lot. My heart is torn into pieces. He doesn't care about my feelings or my heart's desires. He thinks all this is just a phase that will pass. He doesn't have faith that I have the power to build and turn Ndabe's house into a home. He doesn't believe in me and he doesn't want to see me happy, well he does but with someone he approves. Preferably white or loyal, like Wayne.

I shock myself as I park on the driveway of the Mpisi household. He doesn't know I am coming. What if he is not here? What if he has guests? What if his kids are here? What will they say about me? All those questions are ringing inside my head but I ignore him as I strut towards the door. I need him now more than ever. I need his chest to be my pillow as I am about to cry out all these tears. The first breakdown moment happens when my eyes land on his. He is sitting at the lounge with a child in

his lap. He raises his eyes and they meet mine. He immediately puts the child down and walks to me.

“Ndabe.” That comes out as a whisper. Before he can even reach me, I throw my hands on his neck and release a loud cry.

“Baby, what’s going on? Please talk to me. What happened?” I don’t miss panic in his voice but I can’t bring myself to utter a single word. When he establishes that I am not going to say anything, he picks me up and we head to his room. He places me on the bed, takes off both our shoes and as we lay down, he brings me closer to his chest. “Baby please talk to me. I am getting really worried right now. Did something bad happen?” I nod and shake my head at the same time. I know I am confusing him but I have suddenly lost my voice or ability to speak. All I am doing is wail.

“Why is mommy crying? I want to see her.” that’s the voice that wakes me up from my deep slumber.

My whole body is aching and I have a throbbing headache. I force myself to climb off the bed and walk to the sliding door that leads to the balcony. I sigh as I think of the events that led to me coming here in tears. If it wasn’t for Ndabe, I think I would still be a crying mess even now. He held me, listening to my cries, until I fell asleep. I can’t believe my father said that to me. His words may have not been harsh but they hurt me very much. I chose Ndabe. I made my choice on broad day light. I knew the consequences of going for a man like him but I didn’t think dad would be like that.

“Baby.” Ndabe’s voice calls out. I walk back to the bedroom and he smiles a bit when his eyes land on me. “How are you feeling?” I shrug. He comes and wraps his arms around me. He kisses my head. “We are going to be fine. We will prove everyone wrong and we will be the family that they are not expecting. I just need you to trust me. Can you do that?” I sigh and nod. “Now come.”

He leads me to the bathroom. I wash my face and dry it. I then look at him. He chuckles and steps out of the bathroom. I relieve myself and wash my hands. I walk to the bedroom and take off my dress. He unhooks my bra and hands me his oversized t-shirt. I put it on with his boxers and follow him to the dining room because I am starving. My eyes pop out when I see sis Lwah, Thandeka, Londy, bhut Sizwe, Luvuyo and Tristin in the dinner table. I give Ndabe a look and he chuckles.

“I figured you needed some emotional support and a few of people who love you surrounding you at this time. Maybe you will see how much we love you and you will have no choice but to blue tick depression.” I smile and shake my head.

“What am I going to do with you?”

“You can kiss me.”

“Okay that’s enough.” Bhut Sizwe says standing up and comes to hug me. “How are you doing my princess?” I blush and look up at him.

“I am okay. Better now that you guys are here. This means a lot to me.”

“Please don’t start with the tears.” Londy says standing up. She also comes to hug me. I just laugh. They all come to hug me and we settle down around the table.

“Just say the word and I can go deal with your family fast.” Sis Thandeka says and I chuckle.

“Karma will deal with them.”

“I can be karma. I don’t mind.” I just laugh and shake my head. Ahlelelwe enters the dining room. Her eyes wonder around the room and they settle on me. She smiles and comes to me.

“Are you okay mommy?” my heart immediately melts. She is turning 9 next month and I wanna throw her the biggest party. She is so loving and she does it effortlessly. You know that love from a child

Advertisement

which is just pure.

“I am fine angel. I was just too hormonal because of the baby earlier on. I am okay now.” She smiles and indicates that she wants to sit. I laugh. “Babe please fetch her chair.” Ndabe rolls his eyes but he does go and fetch her a chair. She sits down and we all start eating.

“Why didn’t you bring baby Yamihle aunty?” she asks sis Lwah who smiles.

“She was already sleeping when we left home and we didn’t wanna wake her up.”

“Ohh okay. Maybe mommy and I can come visit her during the day when she is not sleeping.”

“Yeah. You can come anytime.”

We eat dinner while engaging in small interesting conversations. Ahlelelwe is very entertaining and keeps us on our toes. When we are done, she finally exits the dining room but not without reminding sis Lwah of the visit. Ndabe goes to tuck her in while we all move to the lounge. He comes back and sits next to me. I look at him and smile. He catches me and gives me a questioning smile.

“What do you want?” he asks and I laugh. I shake my head and he raises his eyebrows.

“Fine. Can you please get me ice cream?”

“I knew it.” He stands up and heads to the kitchen.

“I was about to suggest that he pays lobola but I think with the amount of abuse he is subjected to, you should be the one paying it.” Bhut Sizwe says and we all laugh. I wasn’t even thinking about marriage. It’s too early for us. We haven’t even been dating for a month. We can’t be talking about marriage at this stage of our relationship.

“Even though I am being abused, I would definitely pay double the lobola for her.” Ndabe says walking in with a small bowl filled with ice cream and a bottle of a chocolate syrup. He places both things in the coffee table and brings it closer to me. He then sits down next to me.

“I don’t think my family would accept ilobola. Well firstly because it’s not our culture and because they are not very fond of you right now.” Tristin says and I swallow hard. I take my ice cream, pour the syrup in and start eating. “But you guys aren’t planning on getting married soon, so maybe by the time you think of taking things to the next level, things with the family would be normal.”

“I don’t plan on delaying my marriage to Dakota. I want our child to be born in a marriage and be called a Mpisi. I don’t want her to feel like an outside with her different surname. I want her to know me as her father from the get go. So Dakota and I are getting married in two months.” My eyes pop out. What the fuck? Why would he do that to me? Why didn’t he discuss that with me first before deciding for the both of us? I have no problem with Gram bearing the Mpisi name but he should’ve discussed the marriage thing with me first.

“And here I thought I would be the first one getting married between the two of us.” Londy says laughing. “God works in mysterious ways.” She continues laughing and sis Lwah joins them. Thandeka just chuckles and sits back. “Where can we get something to drink around here?” she asks already standing up. Ndabe chuckles.

“There is alcohol over there. I hope you find what you are looking for.” He points at the bar fridge in the corner by the TV stand. She stands up and quickly dashes there.

“Let me help you with those.” Sis Lwah says standing up. They serve everyone drinks. “Shame. Look at you not drinking.

Consequences of unprotected sex right there.” everyone laughs.

“Leave me alone.” I say pouting and eating my ice cream. Gram decides it’s best to kick right this moment. I gasp and giggle handing Ndabe my bowl and placing my hands on my belly. “Hello baby Gram.”

“Is she kicking?” my brother asks already standing up from his seat and kneeling before me. I nod with a smile. I take his hand and place it on my belly. Gram is just kicking with no rest. He smiles widely and places his ear on my belly. I laugh shaking my head.

“Out of the way.” Sis Thandeka says pushing him away and also kneeling in front of me. We all laugh at her. Gram’s kicks amplifies when sis Thandeka places her hands on my belly. “Hello baby Gram. This is your favourite rich auntie. I will buy you a house as a welcome to the world gift.”

“Pressure wele.” Sis Lwah says as she also kneels near sis Thandeka. They both fuss over the kicks and end up playing with Gram, neglecting everyone in the room. I smile looking at these wonderful women kneeling before me and the other

important people in this room. I realize that even if I don't reconcile with my family, I have people who love me and who will support me every time I need them.

“In two months? Really?” I ask Ndabe as we climb inside the bed after our guests have left. He smiles shrugging and switches off the main light. “No. you are not going to ignore me like that. We need to talk about this. Now Ndabe.” He takes off his clothes and comes to join me wearing only boxers.

“Okay babe. Talk. I am listening.”

“How could you drop a bomb like that on me? How are we even going to get married while I haven’t fixed things with my family? I haven’t even met your family.”

“There is nothing you should fix with your family. They are the ones who should fix things with you because they wronged you. And relax. Whenever you want to meet my family, just say the word. But they are not important. My kids are the important people in my life. It would make me so happy if you were to get along with them but I don’t want you to force things or strain yourself while trying to make them love you. I don’t care if they love you or not. As long as they acknowledge you as the number one woman in my life.” I nod and stare at the ceiling. I am not really worried about Asimbonge but I am shit scared

about meeting Tshedza. Where am I going to start mothering a 16 year old?

“So what kind of a ceremony did you had in mind when you planned this quick wedding?” he laughs. “No, tell me.”

“Okay. I am not sure what kind of a wedding you are going to like. I am flexible with whatever you choose. I have been to the altar before, so what I want doesn’t really matter.” I frown and turn to him.

“Bhuty this is both our wedding. My first and hopefully your last. So your opinion is very much needed. First things first, are we going to have the Zulu ceremonies?” he chuckles.

“What do you want us to do baby? White wedding? Zulu traditional wedding? Or both? What do you want us to do?” I sigh and shrug.

“I know most if not all Zulu men love the traditional wedding more. So we can do it but skip the lobola part because my family doesn’t believe in that and I don’t want them to be an obstacle standing in the way of us getting our perfect wedding.” He nods.

“I would really love to see you in isidwaba with gall on your head just to indicate that you are a Mpisi wife officially.” I giggle and shake my head. I knew it.

“So who is responsible for the planning because I am not going to put myself under stress and plan a wedding in 60 days? I can’t afford to get stressed because that might endanger Gram’s health.”

“Kaboentle and Marica are the ones responsible for the planning. We have a brunch meeting with them tomorrow.” Kaboentle and Marica work under our company and they are almost as good as Londy and I.

“You have everything figured out neh?” he laughs and nods. “Well I guess buying an apartment will be a waste of money and looking for one will be a waste of time.”

“I can buy you an apartment as a wedding gift. You may need some time out from time to time and you can go there just to catch a breather. I don’t want you to feel like you are not allowed to go out and be free every once in a while just because you are married. You are still young. You are allowed to experience life and even party. Just don’t cheat.” I laugh as I wrap my arms around him. My bump is making me very

uncomfortable but I want Ndabe's closeness, so the slight uncomfortableness will have to deal. I love that he wants me to continue being myself even after getting hitched. "So do you have some demands to be met before we tie the knot?" I laugh. Demands? Really?

"Well there is one demand I would like. But it doesn't have to be met. It's not that important." He frowns and sits up.

"What is it?" I snort and pull him back to his sleeping position.

"Chill tiger. I don't know, but I don't think I would feel completely comfortable in a house that was once occupied and ran by another woman. I don't want it to be like I wanna erase her memory or something, but I would like us to start afresh, in a new house. It's not compulsory. So you don't have to move if you love this house." He just chuckles and shuts me up with a kiss.

"I honestly don't mind a new house and I get you my love. Starting over is very important if you want to build something solid. So I will definitely have my PA look into houses. What kind of a house would you like? A mansion? Tuscan style? A cabin? Courtyard? Manor?" I look at him in astonishment.

"How many type of houses do you know?" he smirks.

“Enough. Now tell me what kind of a house you would like to live in and I will make it happen. But can it please be situated here in Gauteng? I don’t even mind moving to Pretoria.” I smile.

“Well, there is a 14m courtyard house in Sandhurst Woodside Avenue. It’s really beautiful.” I say in a small voice and he chuckles.

“The only thing I heard was 14 my love. Then you went mute after that.” I giggle shyly. “So please speak up baby.” I clear my throat and look at the ceiling.

“There is this R14 million courtyard house in Sandhurst, 2 Woodside Avenue. It is really beautiful. But we can also settle for a single story house also in Sandhurst which is about R7 million.” He looks at me and plays with my ring finger.

“You are going to be Mrs. Mpisi soon. Everything you want, you are going to get. Even if it’s R50 million. So we are going to go look at that courtyard house. How many rooms does it have?”

“One for each of the kids, including Gram, a master bedroom and a guest bedroom. It also have a huge pool and a nice

backyard. I really love it. Well I fell in love with its photos. Maybe I won't like what I saw live." He smiles.

"I will tell my PA to make an appointment with the agent."

"Thank you, Chelekazi." He breaks into laughter and caresses my cheeks.

"Say that again." I shake my head. "Please love. I promise I won't laugh. You just surprised me, that's all. Now how do you know my clan names?"

"I did my research." I say proudly and he perks my lips.

"My little researcher." I giggle.

«««»»»»

Luckily this morning, we are not woken up by the human alarm Ahlelelwe. Maybe she has gone to school. I then remember that I also have to be at work. I sit up from the bed and stretch my arms yawning. That causes Ndabe to stir from his sleep but doesn't wake up. If I wake him before taking a bath, he might delay me or even make me skip work. I climb off the bed and rush to the bathroom. Morning pee is always the worst. After relieving myself, I fill the bathtub with warm water and then

brush my teeth in the meantime. I put on a shower cap and then take a bath.

When I am done, I dry my body and then style my hair into little curls in the ends. I head to the walk in closet where most of my stuff is at. After lotioning, I get dressed in a black Helmut Lang asymmetrical alpaca poncho sweater, patched up skinny jeans, black vest underneath and black sandals. I pack some of my stuff in my handbag and when I enter the bedroom, I frown when I don't find Ndabe on the bed. Instead I hear the shower running. I decide to wait for him on the already made bed and check my messages. After a few minutes he steps out of the bathroom with only a towel wrapped around his waist. He smiles when he sees me. He comes to stand in front of me and kisses me.

"How is my future wife and baby doing this morning?" I smile and stand up.

"We are doing really good daddy. How are you?"

"I am more than fine. Seeing you smiling early in the morning is a great way to start my day." He is such a smooth talker.

"Anyways let me quickly get dressed and we will go eat breakfast downstairs." He walks to the walk in closet, giving me

his back to feast at. Damn he is too sexy for an old man. His sexiness should be banned really. When he emerges again, he is wearing a black tight t-shirt, jeans and black sneakers.

“You are such a copycat.”

“I don’t care.” He says pouting and I laugh. He takes my handbag and we head downstairs. We go straight to the dining room and I nearly collapse when we find all Ndabe’s children sitting and waiting for us or rather him. I even forgot they were here. Good God. Can someone quickly come and fetch me from this trap I just walked into? “Good morning good people. It’s good to see you all alive and well.” He goes to hug all 3 of them. Ahlelelwe is the only one smiling at me. The others are looking at me like they have seen an alien. Ndabe opens a chair for me and I sit down. He sits down next to me. “Well my beautiful children, this is Sis Dakota, my future wife. Baby that’s Asimbonge and Tshedza.” I clear my throat.

“Nice to finally meet you, Asimbonge and Tshedza. Your father and Ahlelelwe always talk about you.” I say in a controlled voice.

“Well I can’t say the same about you. In fact this is the first time I am hearing about you.” Tshedza says in a tight smile, taking a sip from her juice.

“Tshedza, that’s no way to speak to an adult. Respect her, start now, or else we are going to have a problem. Or do you want us to have a problem?” her father asks with a sharp tone.

“No daddy.” Tshedza says quickly and keeps her eyes on her food.

Ndabe is impossible. He refused for me to drive my own car and practically forced me to drive with him. He said he is going to play chauffeur today but from the time of his voice, I don't think he is going to allow me to drive my car anytime soon because of baby Gram. We get to work and we both head inside since we are meeting up with Kabo and Marica. We find them waiting in the small boardroom where most client meetings are usually held.

“Mr. Mpisi and Miss Muller, thank you for trusting us with your perfect day.” Kabo says with a smile and I just laugh. Ndabe opens a chair for me and after settling down, he takes a seat next to me. “So we would like to know what kind of a wedding you guys want. Small or big celebration? Countryside or in a luxurious hotel? Morning or evening wedding and are you guys going to have a Zulu wedding?”

“Just paint a picture for us and we will see what we mix with that.” Marica says. I clear my throat and lean towards the table.

“I have never really thought about my dream wedding like in deep detail but now that I am tasked with that, I would like or

wedding to be a simple but classy wedding, preferable in vineyards. I want it to be cozy but big at the same time. I want people to feel free not to dress to impress or even find themselves hiring gowns just for this occasion. So guests should be allowed to wear what they want but no skimpy clothes, please.” Everyone laughs. “So first things first, find a vineyard in Cape Town which can accommodate our wedding. Check the availability because everything revolves around the venue.” They nod and note a few things down.

“What about the colours of the day?” Kabo enquires.

“I love grey. I don’t know what Ndabe things but I would love a 50 shades of Gray theme without the kinkiness of course.” Ndabe laughs.

“I don’t mind the kinkiness love.” he whispers in my ear and I giggle. “I love gray, so I have no complains about the colour.”

“I also want the wedding to be an outdoor wedding. Meaning the reception will also be outside. So whatever venue you find, make sure it has a great outdoor area. If it’s a hotel, the reception should be by the pool for great pictures. But also make sure to have a backup indoor venue because Cape Town weather can be very unpredictable.” I comment and Marica nods. “Please ask the décor team to mix something vintage and

glam and then show me the results. I want my wedding décor to be glamorous but I also love a touch of vintage in it.”

“I don’t think I could’ve pulled off a surprise wedding.” Ndabe says and I laugh at him. I would’ve appreciated a surprise wedding but I think there were going to be many things I would’ve not preferred and would’ve loved to change there.

“So you want a rustic-chic plus boho-vintage?” Marica asks and I nod. “I think we should make sure that the vineyard produce at least a crate of non-alcoholic wine, if there is such.” I laugh and nod.

“I would really love to be accommodated.” I state. “And I need the menu to be flexible. For both vegetarian and non-vegetarian people. You don’t need to worry about my wedding gown and his suit. We will sort ourselves out. We will also buy the rings. As I have said, everything revolves around the venue. Our in-house caterer will cook if the venue is independent. Also our photographers will cover the wedding.”

“Should we have it published on the ‘I DO’ magazine like always?” Kabo asks and I nod. “The cake?”

“I want a simple 3 tier cake with chocolate, carrot and Ndabe’s favourite flavour.” I turn to him and he smiles.

“Caramel.” He says. “Also include two separate 1 tier cakes for our parents. I need a live band to perform throughout the wedding and maybe 2 famous artists to entertain the guests, also a poet.”

“Which artists would you like to perform on your wedding? And which band would you like to play for you and your guests?” Kabo asks.

“Who is your favourite artist my love?” Ndabe asks. I look at him and bite my lip. “Even if he or she is from overseas, if you want him or her to perform at our wedding, I will make things happen.”

“Jehovah, sbwl.” Londy’s voice says and we all turn to look at her. She is leaning at the door. “Why am I not present in this meeting? Don’t my opinion matter?” Ndabe chuckles and he sits back. She walks in and sits on a vacant besides Ndabe.

“Anyways my best friend’s favourite artist is Aurora who is well-known for that song that trended on Instagram which is titled Runaway. She is from Norway, Europe. You don’t have to book her for the wedding but you guys can, however, visit Norway in your honeymoon and maybe go to one of her concerts.” She says with a cute smile

Advertisement

blinking her eyes rapidly and I just laugh. Londy is very dramatic. “For now you can book Demi Lee Moore. She is an amazing artist and Dakota’s number 2.”

“Is that true my love?” Ndabe asks brushing my arm lightly.

“Yes. She is very talented and I love her music. Who is your favourite artist?”

“Mnqobi Yazo for now. And Nduduzo Makhathini. I know you guys don’t know him.” Ndabe says with a chuckle.

“We actually know most artists than you can think of. We don’t only organize events for youngsters.” I say with a smirk. “To prove you wrong, I do know Abdullah Ibrahim, Jonas Gwangwa, Louis Moholo and others.” He laughs but there is a sense of pride in him.

“I guess the artists’ part is settled.” Kabo says and pages her notepad. “So let’s talk guest list. How many people do you guys want at your wedding and do you want hard copy of the invites or something digital?”

“I don’t have much people on my side, so I think I will submit a list of like 30 people.” I state. Londy frowns at me and indicates the ring on her index finger. God, how can I forget about

PRIDE? “Okay, make it 80 people from my side. I have extended family.” Ndabe gives me a questioning look but doesn’t comment.

“I think most of my family will fully attend the traditional wedding. So I will give you a list of maybe 150 people including them, my staff and some clients.” Ndabe says.

“Okay. I think we will make sure the venue accommodates at least 250 people. I guess that concludes our meeting. It’s easy because we work with Dakota, so we will update her with our findings and the progress.” Marica says and they collect their things. “Till next time, Mr. Mpisi.” They both head out. Londy looks at me with her head tilted to the side.

“Your duty is to search for an affordable wedding gowns’ boutique here in Joburg and make an appointment for me as soon as possible.” I say with a pout and she chuckles.

“Just because you’re my friend, I won’t reject the task and don’t worry about the affordability. We are going to use Tristin’s card. It’s high time he starts paying for chowing Me.” she gives Ndabe an apologetic smile and heads out giggling.

“Your friend is crazy like you.” Ndabe says laughing and he stands up. He also helps me stand. “I will come fetch you and

we go out for lunch.” He encircles his arms around me and I place my hands in his shoulders.

“I love the sound of that.” I say biting my lip. He bends down and also bites my upper lip, causing me to giggle. He kisses me and then leads me to my office. “Are you working today?” he shakes his head.

“I am going to task Anele with a few tasks and then attend to some things that need me. After that I am going to get a haircut and come fetch you for lunch.” He perks my lips and then leaves.

«««»»»»»

After our lunch, Ndabe drops me off at the farmhouse and before he could even drive out of the gate, my heart betrays me and starts to miss him. Sulking, I head inside and find Ma’Khanyi cooking with Lande. I smile and greet them with hugs.

“I thought you had left us for good sisi.” Lande says and I chuckle.

“I am not leaving you guys. Well not anytime soon. Lande, can you please give ma and I a few minutes? There is something I want to tell her.” she nods and after wiping her hands, she walks out. Ma’Khanyi turns her whole body to face me.

“You have my undivided attention.” I giggle. I am suddenly all shy around her. “Let me guess, the bald man asked for your hand in marriage?” I laugh and nod. Why is ma referring to my fiancé as a bald man?

“Yes he did ma, but there is no ring.” She rolls her eyes with a smile.

“How are you guys going to do things? Is he going to pay lobola for you or just take you for free?” I laugh and shake my head.

“We don’t do lobola in my culture ma and I had a major fallout with my father yesterday which led me to believe that I am no longer welcomed at home. So I would like you to talk to Ndabe with anything that concerns tradition.” She frowns.

“What made you argue you’re your father?”

“The fact that I am with Ndabe. Nobody in my family supports my relationship with him except for my brother, Tristin and my Uncle Josh. So I don’t think they would assist me with Umabo or even be there for my wedding.” She sighs and guides me to one of the bar stools.

“Families can be impossible sometimes but you have to choose your happiness and you don’t need all this stress you’re your condition. Relax. I will make sure everything goes well in the traditional aspect of your wedding. But don’t worry, your family will come around eventually. So how is baby Gram?” her hand travels to my bump and she brushes it. I smile. How I wish my mother was smothering me with love like this?

“Till now, no engagement ring?” sis Thandeka asks while laughing. I just chuckle and shake my head. I go sit down at her chair and bhut Sizwe laughs. We are at a Pride briefing. Some of the members were on a mission and now we are going to get feedback on it. “I am very disappointed in your friend Sizwe. But I guess birds of the same feathers flock together because the way you popped the question was very questionable. But at least there was a ring.”

“Babe don’t talk like that about my friend. Maybe he is going to formally pop the question soon like I did.” Sizwe says and Thandeka rolls her eyes. The team who went on a mission walk in the main room looking like they just survived the war. Asher was the one leading the mission but he doesn’t walk in. I stand up and cradle my belly.

“Where is Asher?” I quickly ask and Popi shakes her head.

“He didn’t make it. We were rushing him to a hospital and he took his last breath on the car seat. He is outside.” Popi says and Cleo quickly stands up from T-bone’s lap.

“You are kidding right?” Cleo asks in an anxious voice. “Tell me you are kidding.” Popi shakes her head. “What the fuck happened?”

“The Brands’ Thieves tried to hijack the package and then a battle broke out. We took down many of their soldiers but they also got us. Only Asher didn’t survive in our team.” Lutho says with a sigh, he sits down on the floor. Audrey heads out and quickly comes back with a first aid kit box, her personalized one. She makes eye contact with Lutho who quickly removes his shirt. His upper body is filled with stab wounds and one gun wound. Audrey swallows hard before she starts treating him.

“What do we know about these Brands’ Thieves? How did they find out about the package? Unless there is a loophole in our security system.” Cleo says and Nicki snorts.

“Not in this lifetime. But they might have tailed one of you guys or they might have known about the arrival of the package. Don’t blame Courage and I for any of you guys’ negligence.” Nicki says folding her hands to her chest.

“Repeat that again, I dare you.” Cleo says taking a step closer to her.

“What are you going to do? Beat me up? I would like to see you try.” Nicki says unfolding her arms and stepping closer to Cleo.

“Cut it out you two.” Squash says with a stern voice coming between them. “Did you guys get the package?” Popi nods.

“For now we just need to take care of you guys, bury Asher and then get our revenge on these gangster wannabes.” Everyone nods. Feeling a slight discomfort on my lower abdomen, I balance myself with bhut Sizwe’s hand and sit back down. He looks at me with a frown.

“Are you okay?” he asks. I shake my head with a small smile.

“I am fine.” He nods but doesn’t take his eyes off me.

“Maybe you should go home to rest. This is not good for a woman in your condition. We don’t want something bad to happen to you or the baby. Consider this your maternity leave.” I scoff and he quickly shakes his head. “My word is the law in here white girl, so are you planning on going against it?” I shake my head.

“No boss.” I stand up and quickly balance myself on my feet.

“Neva-Neva, take her home.” Sizwe says and Neva-Neva quickly comes to me. He holds my arm and leads me out. At the door,

“Seeing Asher’s body was too much for her.” Neva-Neva quickly says before I can ask him. I open my arms and he places Dakota in them.

“Audrey.” I call out walking to the basement and she follows me. I place Dakota in one of the examination beds and Audrey quickly attends to her.

I head to my office and settle down on my chair. I can feel Silo creeping in, wanting to take control but I won’t let her. Not now. It’s not the right time anyway. I look at my Pride ring and twist it. Being at the top and being feared has made us think we are untouchable. I mean the last time we had one of our intense training sessions was that time we went to the battle of the gangs. The door opens and Lutho walks in shirtless with bandages covering half of his upper body. He stands near the door and looks at me.

“We weren’t expecting an attack and those guys came on too strong for us. Popi shot at them without taking cover and Asher dealt with her shooter but it was too late for him because one of the guys had fired a shot on his head. 4 of them managed to escape but we shot 7 of their people. I don’t think they could’ve tracked us boss but I think we might have a mole inside Pride.” I

frown looking at him. Who would have the guts to betray me for a few thousand rands? He places the briefcase he has been carrying all along and opens it. About hundred if not more or less blue diamonds and other precious gems are inside. I give him a tight smile before closing the briefcase and placing it on the safe.

“Like Squash said, we should cater to your needs and make sure you guys are healed. After that, we bury Asher and then come up with a plan to deal with these thieves. I want you and your team to assess these thieves, know their everyday moves and who their leader is. But first we are going to test this mole theory of yours and if it proves to be true, then I think that person will know why I am really called Lioness.” he nods. We head back to the main room. I stand on a high platform and the noise dies down.

“Today we lost one of our own. A loyal and a strong soldier. It will never be the same without him but we are Pride. We don’t cower away, we don’t bow down and we don’t succumb to any challenges. Asher will be missed dearly and we will honor his memory. His family will be the one to communicate with us his funeral arrangements.” I exhale, giving a quick glance at Lutho and then turn back my attention to everyone. “In the

meantime, I want everyone to be healthy. I need all those who went on this mission to be attended by the medical team.” I step off the high platform and walk around the room in between the soldiers.

“You guys are Pride, right?”

“YES BOSS!”

“And you pledged your loyalty to Dark Eagle and Lioness?”

“YES BOSS!”

“It has come to my attention that I might have a traitor in our mist. When you guys pledged loyalty to Pride, you didn’t just become soldiers but you became our family. We don’t deal well with traitors. You betray us and we will end you but first we make you watch as we eliminate every member of your family, just so you know never to sell out anyone even in hell. I don’t wanna entertain the mole rumour because I have reason to trust you guys, but if we have a traitor, they won’t meet their end by blade or bullet. But I will let my inner beast deal with him or her.” I give everyone my evil smile and then my eyes settle on Cleo. “Contact Asher’s family or better yet, deliver the news to them face to face.” She nods. “Everyone can leave now

except for those who need medical treatment.” Sizwe looks at me and I nod.

“We will contact everyone in two days. Cleo will hopefully have an update on the funeral and you will be informed. I hope for everyone’s sake that there is no traitor amongst you. After the funeral, we will have the 48hour training and then decide where to go from there. You are dismissed.” Sizwe says and most of the people head out while the injured soldiers head to the basement with the medical team. When it’s only us in the main room, Cleo sinks down on the floor and screams out in anger and grief. I understand her frustration very much because she has been working with Asher for a long time. Their relationship was like mine and T-bone’s. Sizwe takes my hand and leads me to the basement. “I really hope we don’t have a mole in our mist.” He says with a pained voice.

“I hope so too.”

‘You’re sure you don’t want me to be that child’s stepfather or better yet, his actual father?’ Asher asked and I gave him a mean stare. Of course that didn’t intimidate him because he laughed. “Come on,” Asher continued annoying me. “I’m white, you’re white, nobody is going to ask questions.” I took my car keys from the table and threw them at him. He laughed as he ducked the throw. He picked the keys from the floor and tucked them in his jeans.

“You are married for heaven sake, you idiot. Stop bothering me.” I said rolling my eyes.

“I can make you my second wife.” He said with a smirk. “I know it is not common in our culture, but I believe that we can make things happen. What do you say? We create history?” he said placing his hand on my belly and I hit it. He laughed and took a step back. He placed my keys before me and whistled his way out. He stopped at the door, turning to give me a wink before walking out.

“You have to stop letting him get under your skin. He likes teasing you and he just loves being close to you because of the

pregnancy. He has a thing for babies. He was like that when I was pregnant but less flirty.” Sis Thandeka said laughing. I just rolled my eyes and stood up.’

«««»»»»»

“Are you sure she is okay? Check again, Audrey. We don’t want anything bad happening to baby Gram.” Sis Thandeka says to Audrey who is placing down her stethoscope.

“She is fine, boss. She was just shocked. All she needs is a rest and less stressful environment.” Audrey says helping me sit up.

“Thank you. What time is it?” I ask putting on my jacket.

“9 am. Your man has been calling you nonstop since last night. I even told Londy to tell him that you are sleeping. Of course he called again first thing in the morning. I doubt he slept a wink. Have you told him about Pride?” bhut Sizwe asks and I shake my head. “Good. He doesn’t need to know about your involvement. Maybe you will tell him once you’re married, but not now.” I nod.

“Where is my phone?” he retrieves it from his pocket and hands it to me. 10 missed calls from Ndabe, only from this

morning. This old man is dramatic. I dial his number and he answers almost immediately.

“Thank God you’re alive. I was even thinking of sending a search party or even going to the farmhouse uninvited because I thought I did something wrong. What’s up?” he talks so fast. I climb down the bed and walk out of the ward.

“My blood pressure was up last night, so I had to spend the night at the hospital for observation. But I am fine now and I am driving back home.” I say biting my lip, hoping that he is going to buy these lies and not ask any questions. I hear him breathing deeply on the other end of the line.

“But why didn’t you tell me, Dakota? I could’ve been there for you and even spent the whole night with you at the hospital.” I climb inside the car and connect my phone to the car’s Bluetooth audio. I then drive out.

“I am fine, baby. It was no big deal really. Please calm down. If it will make you feel any better, you can come and see me at home in about an hour.” He sighs but ends up agreeing. We say our goodbyes and I drive home with a heavy heart. I got along so well with Asher. He was very humble and easy going, but when he was on gangster mode, he was very intimidating. I just

hope that his killers will be found and get the punishment they deserve for their actions.

«««»»»»»

Getting home, I first take a shower and then get dressed in comfortable clothes. I take my tablet and some documents and then head to the lounge. I get some work done before I hear the door bell ringing. I hear the door opening and footsteps getting closer. Rain comes in followed by Ndabe. She smiles at me and then disappears to the kitchen. Ndabe comes to sit next to me and kisses my head.

“How are you doing right now?” I smile.

“I am good now. That trip to the doctor really helped me.”

“What happened? What led to your BP spiking up?”

“I just found out that a friend of mine passed on. So I didn’t take the news really well. But I am fine now.” His face softens and he moves even closer to me.

“I am so sorry to hear that, my love. I am going to accompany you to the funeral if that’s okay with you.” I give him a tight smile.

“That would be great. I will inform you once I know the actual day for the funeral.” He nods and brushes my belly. Baby Gram decides to greet her daddy and Ndabe smiles widely. He takes out something from his pocket. My eyes pop out when I see what it is. He doesn’t even say anything, he just slides it in my ring finger.

“You can’t be someone’s fiancé without a diamond on your finger now, can you?” he says jokingly and I just laugh. What am I going to do with his on and off romantic self?

«««»»»

NARRATED

Cleo sat in her car for almost an hour just gathering her thoughts and figuring what she was going to say. Asher was more than an employee to her and her right hand man. When they first met

Advertisement

he was just a street fighter who participated in cage fights maybe twice a week in order to make ends meet for him and

his family. He had a wife, 2 kids and his younger brother who was in high school at that time.

While sitting and reliving past memories, a car parked next to hers. Lutho got out of his car and came to her window. He knocked and Cleo lowered the window. "I had a feeling you hadn't gone inside yet." He said with a small smile. Cleo exhaled loudly before he opened her door and climbed out. Another car parked next to Lutho's car and Nicky climbed off. She came to where they were and no words were exchanged. They were all dreading delivering the news to Asher's family but it had to be done. They started the long walk to the main door. Lutho knocked once and Irene opened the door. One look at them, she knew that something was wrong.

"Where is he?" she asked trying to mask her worry with a show of strength. Cleo cleared her throat.

"May we come in?" she asked. Irene nodded and made way for them. The house was quiet, meaning the kids were at school. Lutho, Cleo and Nicky sat on a 3-seater couch and Irene sat across them. "This is not easy, Irene. You know how dangerous our line of work is. We go out there, risking our lives for the soft

life. When we go out, we never know the outcome of the mission, but we always hope that we come out alive.”

“Is he dead?” Irene asked, her voice already breaking. Cleo sighed and nodded. Irene swallowed hard. “What happened?”

“He was shot on our last mission. Before he took his last breath, he told me to tell you that he loves you so much and he will protect you, even when he is not there. Keep him in your heart and he will always comfort you.” Lutho said and Irene started sobbing. Cleo stood and went to sit next to her. She wrapped her arms around Irene and she wailed.

“We are so sorry, Irene. We didn’t wish for this outcome. But trust me, we will avenge his death and please know that you will never go hungry while Pride is still standing and thriving. We will take care of you and your children. We are family now and you will never suffer as long as we live.” Cleo said brushing Irene’s arm.

“He left a lot of money for you. We will talk about it after the funeral. If you need any help with the preparations, please don’t hesitate to ask us.” Nicky said. She was trying to stop her tears from falling. Irene wiped her tears but it was futile because they kept on falling. She cleared her throat.

“If it won’t be much trouble, please organize the funeral for me. I don’t think I am going to be strong enough for this. You guys are like family, our family and the only people who I trust with my life.” she said and Nicky nodded.

“When do you want him to be buried?”

“On Sunday.”

“We will make sure to give him a dignified and honorable funeral.” Cleo said.

“With a touch of Pride.” Irene said in a shaky voice, chuckling because that’s something Asher said almost all the time when he was involving the gang. They all chuckled. “Thank you for notifying me, now can I please be left alone?”

“Okay. We will be on our way now, but we will check up on you regularly.” Cleo said and Irene smiled. They bid farewell to her and they left. After closing the door, she slid down, her butt landing on the floor and screamed. Her heart couldn’t handle the pain she was feeling.

“WHY? WHY DID YOU HAVE TO LEAVE ME, ASH? YOU PROMISED THAT YOU WON’T LEAVE ME! WHY?” she continued screaming and wailing.

I huff and throw my last black dress on the bed. It doesn't fit me. Nothing does with this big baby bump. When Londy said she is going shopping for a funeral outfit, I just said I will wear something from my closet, but turns out I have nothing which is black and proper for a funeral that fits me. We are traveling with Ndabe's private jet. Sometimes I forget how rich he is. If he didn't inherit some of his wealth from his father, I would've said he is a gangster because wow. I put on a floral maxi dress, black sandals and a blazer. After packing some of the things I might need in my bag, I head downstairs and Ndabe frowns at my outfit.

"I thought..." I raise my hand to stop him from continuing.

"We are going to pass by Noluh's boutique. I have nothing to wear." I come to a halt in front of him. He smiles and takes my bag.

"You should've just came with me yesterday. You wouldn't have encountered this predicament." Londy says making her way down the stairs. She is wearing a pencil skirt, a blouse, stiletto heels and a blazer.

“You look good.” I say and she smiles. We head out and climb inside Ndabe’s car.

“You will direct me to this boutique.” He says and I nod. “And the Sitholes are coming with us. Jobe asked me last night if he could ride with us. We will meet up with them at the airport.”

“I have no problem with that.”

We make small conversation along the way and we finally get to the boutique. He parks the car and we head inside. I choose a black mock neck heart mesh sleeve bodycon dress which hugs my bump and makes it look so cute and adorable. I pay for it and then we head out. We start by buying some food for the flight because a pregnant lady is always hungry and I didn’t eat breakfast.

When we get to the airport, we find sis Lwah and Luvuyo already waiting. We exchange pleasantries and then board the plane. After take-off, I eat a burger with fries and then doze off.

«««»»»»»

Cape Town is a really beautiful city. Sometimes I just wish to tour the Mother City for a whole week but I don’t have time for

that. A big tent greets us as we turn to the street where Asher's house is situated. I guess they didn't opt for going to a hall or church. That's okay because I don't think some Cape Town gangs wouldn't have wanted to provoke us, thinking we are at our lowest. People don't know that when a gangster is grieving, they are not down and out. They are just looking for an easy predator to make them forget about the pain for a time being.

We climb off the car and head inside the tent. Seems like the service has already started. Someone ushers us to the third row and we get settled there. Someone who looks so much like Asher is talking at the podium. He shares some of Asher's jokes which makes people chuckle but you can't mistake the sadness in his eyes.

One of the few things I won't miss about being pregnant is the constant need to go to the toilet. Gosh, it's like the fucker is stomping at my bladder. I take my bag and stand up. Ndabe asks where I am going and I mouth 'toilet'. I am definitely not going to use the public toilet, not in my condition. I walk inside the house and greet some of the Pride members on the way. The second door inside the house is the toilet. I sigh in relief as I get inside. I quickly pee and wash my hands. Just as I am about to open the door to head out, a voice stops me.

“Yeah, I am inside. I just told them I need to use the loo. You know these bouncers would be fooled by a female batting their eyelashes on them. Hang up so that I can go look for a safe. I am pretty sure that while fucker left at least a few millions lying around for his bitch.” a female with a coloured accent says. I take out my gun from my bag, put a silencer on and take it out of the safety mode. Hiding it with my bag, I step out of the bathroom. The lady is standing is opening a door not so far from where I am. She turns to me and smiles. “I was actually looking for the loo.” I give her a fake smile and point at it with my head. “Thank you.” she comes closer to me and as she is about to pass, I press the gun on her chest and pull the trigger. She gasps with her eyes popped out.

“Pride style.” She tries to hold on to me but I push her away and she falls down. I grab the back of her blouse and shove her inside the bathroom. I lock it from the outside and head back to the tent. I tip toe to the second row where Thandeka and Sizwe are seated. They frown when they see me. “There is a dead bug in the house.” I whisper. A dead bug is a code for a dead body. I then back inside the house with them following me. I hand bhut Sizwe the key and he opens door. He curses when his eyes land on the woman in the bathroom floor. “She was contacting

someone else. I don't think she came here alone." He takes her phone and hands it to Thandeka who taps on it for a few moments and puts it on her purse.

"Go back to the tent before your fiancé gets suspicious." She states looking at me and then gives me a small smile. "I really love your commitment to the gang and the fact that you don't cower away from danger just because you're pregnant."

"Being a member of Pride is not temporary. The pregnancy is." I respond and she chuckles. I head back to the tent and when I settle in between Ndabe and Londy, my best friend gives me a questioning look. "There was a dead bug in the toilet." Her eyes pop out and then she quickly covers her shock with a scowl.

"I hope they took care of it."

"They did."

The service continues with more family members and loved ones paying tribute to Asher and uttering words of condolences to the family. Time comes when his kids are finally called to the podium. The eldest is 10 while the youngest is 7 years. They understand what's happening and hearing their words is just

painful. My mind quickly travels to some of the moments I shared with dad when I was 10 years old. I sniff and quickly wipe my tears. The youngest kid reads a poem in Afrikaans. It is written in English in the program.

You can shed tears that he is gone

Advertisement

Or you can smile because he has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that he'll come back

Or you can open your eyes and see all he's Left

Your heart can be empty because you can't

See him or you can be full of the love you shared

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday

Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday

You can remember him only that he is gone

Or you can cherish his memory and let it live on

You can cry and close your mind

Be empty and turn your back

Or you can do what he'd want:

Smile, open your eyes, love and go on.

By the time they go back to their seats, I am sobbing like crazy. The poem really touched my heart. But I think these stupid pregnancy hormones exaggerates my tears. Now I look like Asher's pregnant side chick. Lord hide me. Thandeka graciously walks back in and sits where she was seated. Cleo stands up and walks to the podium. She is wearing a black pantsuit with a black hat and black heels. She looks so powerful. She clears her throat.

"I wasn't going to say anything. Of course my name was written on the program, but my grief made me stay glued to my seat because saying something in front of everyone would just prove how real this is and that my best employee is gone. But the poem that Farrah just cited, gave me the courage to come and say a few words about my friend.

Asher had a playful side and he loved annoying me. He would do it almost every day because he knew his worth and he knew that I wouldn't fire him. Sometimes he would dare me and Lutho and Nicky would just laugh at him. We have had our fun, shed a few tears together but something I am going to miss the most about him is his loyalty and commitment to his job. He has left a huge gap on my right hand because I don't know who is going to be able to fill in his position. I never told him I loved him in a serious manner. I would always say 'you stupid idiot, I don't know why I love you so much' and he would always laugh at that. When we got drunk together, we would take away his phone because he would call Irene like a hundred times in one night just to say 'remember me? Yes, it's your husband. You love me right? Even though I can be bad sometimes?' and when she says she doesn't love him, he would actually cry." We all laugh. Asher was such a character. Irene is also laughing but there are a few tears coming out of her eyes.

"You will be missed dearly my friend and nobody will replace you in Pride. You are and will always be my best employee. Rest in peace and assured that we will take care of your family. Even though we might not be able to fill in your shoes and do at least half of the things you did, we will be there for them when they need us." she steps down on the podium, goes to hug Irene for

a few moments and goes back to her seat. In that moment, Irene stands up and goes to the podium. Wow she is brave. I don't think I would even have the strength to stand on such a sad day.

"I also got the courage to say a few words from the poem my baby read and from Cleo's words. My husband was a really funny man and was very spontaneous and adventurous. His work kept him busy but whenever he had time, we would go visit a place we have never been to. The last time we went on a vacation was 4 weeks ago in Puerto Rico. We had so much fun and even renewed our vows while drunk. I will miss him so much. I will miss his cuddles, his random kisses, his jokes, his 'cheer me up' moments and absolutely everything about him, the good and the bad. My love," she looks at the photo on top of the coffin and she smiles. "You know and understand the depth of my love for you. I love you and sleep well. We will meet again." She blows a kiss and goes back to her seat.

Ndabe squeezes my hand and I look at him. His eyes are red but he hasn't shed any tear. Then it hits me. This reminds him of his wife's death. I lean closer to him. "I am sorry. I didn't think this would trigger your loss." He smiles and shakes his head.

“I thought about that for a few moments and my mind went to you. I don’t wish for you to die. I don’t think I will bear the thought of losing another life partner.” I squeeze his hand.

“You won’t. In fact I will be the one to outlive you and remarry a ben 10 and we will misuse your money.” He chuckles and shakes his head.

“You’re crazy.” I am glad I could cheer him up. There is movement around us. People are standing up. Lutho moves to the front and places Asher’s favourite blades set on top of the casket. It’s about to go down and I am in to state to witness a gangster funeral. I might find myself mixed on the crossfires and possibly endanger baby Gram. I take Ndabe’s hand and we move out of the tent using the nearest exit. “What’s up?”

“I am hungry.” He smiles and leads me to the car we came here in with. Rest in Peace, Asher. I hope we find whoever’s responsible for your death and I hope he or she suffers a lot before departing this earth.

NARRATED

Ma'Khanyi had asked for a Ndlovu- Mnguni family meeting because she wanted to officially tell them about Gareth and also inform them about the engagement. Gareth had proposed to her a month ago but she decided to keep it a secret until she had told the two families. She knew the possibility of the families not agreeing with her decision, seeing that Gareth was white, but she was determined to get this done and over with.

She was in her house at Umzimkhulu when cars started arriving. She was only meeting with the elders and would inform her kids once she was back in Joburg. The Mnguni family were the first ones to enter and later the Ndlovus entered. They settled in the lounge and she brought drinks with cakes for them. She also sat down.

“What a warm welcome, makoti. If I didn't know better, I would say you are bribing us for something.” Babomdala said teasingly and they all chuckled.

“Not bribing per say, but I wanted to inform you about something very important.” Nokukhanya said and everyone gave her undivided attention. She exhaled. “It's been 9 years

since my husband, Ntokozo, passed on. I loved him so much and I still do, even now. Spending 17 years with someone, they become a part of you that can never be taken away, even if they die. He lives within me and I feel his love and warmth every day. So don't let what I am about to tell you make you think that I don't love him anymore."

"Talk dude, we are listening." Bongani said as he leaned forward. Most of the people in the room had a slight idea of what she wanted to say but they decided to let her talk.

"When I moved to Joburg, my main aim was to be closer to my daughter and her small family. To be there for my granddaughter whenever she needed me. But then I learnt that my presence and my close proximity made all my kids feel safe and more loved, so that's why I also moved the twins. Within a few months in Jozi, I caught the attention of a very handsome and kind man. We started dating and when I could see that he had pure intentions, I decided to introduce him to my kids. Well it wasn't really a planned decision, Lwandeka caught us and I had to come clean because I wasn't ashamed of him." they all laughed.

“Ntokozo’s daughter is exactly like her father.” Muzi said and Ma’Khanyi giggled.

“So the man’s name is Gareth Walker. He is a divorcee and has 5 kids.”

“He is white?” Lindiwe asked appalled and Nokukhanya nodded.

“Both you and him together with your kids can play against Bafana-Bafana without any assistance.” Babomdala said and Nokukhanya laughed because she caught on. Babomdala cleared his throat and leaned forward. “Makoti you don’t have to worry. Whether you move on or not, you will always be a Mnguni wife. We love you and you are family. Even if you moved on months after our brother had died, we wouldn’t have tried to stop you or bullshitted you into some tradition. Our brother is gone and is never coming back, so you are free to do whatever you want.” Nokukhanya smiled as she tried to stop the tears.

“So you and your daughter have a thing for white men?” Bongani asked and everyone laughed.

“When are we meeting Van Vyke?” Muzi asked and Nokukhanya broke into laughter.

“He is not an Afrikaner. His home language is English and his family is originally from the UK. Are you guys sure you’re ready to meet him? Because he is here.” she said.

“You can call him in makoti.” Babomdala said as he went back to eating. Nokukhanya stood up and went to the bedroom. She found Gareth laughing with someone on the phone. She decided to eavesdrop and what she heard made her heart swell. Gareth was on a video call with Yamihle and she was making meaningless conversation but it was so cute to listen to. Gareth saw her and he wrapped up the call. He stood up and went to her.

“So, do we have their approval to move forward with everything?” he asked and he placed his hands on her wide hips. She smiled.

“You know I didn’t need their approval. I just wanted to inform them in a dignified way. And I have, now they want to meet you.” Gareth exhaled held her hand. They both walked to the lounge and they sat down on the vacant two seater couch.

“Mnguni and Ndlovu family, this is Gareth Walker. Gareth, this is my family. Ntokozo’s older brother and his wife; Muzi and his

wife, Lindiwe who also happen to be my sister; my brother Bongani and his wife.”

“Nice to finally meet you all. Khanyo told me about you.”

Gareth said feeling a bit intimidated but didn’t show.

“Really?” babomdala asked with his eyebrows raised. “What did she say about me?”

“She said that you have been like a father figure to her children ever since her husband died and she appreciated that very much. And she also said that you are the easiest to talk to in the Mnguni family

Advertisement

after Ntokozo of course.” - Gareth.

“You don’t have a problem with her loving another man?” Muzi asked. “Because I think I would be very jealous if my woman talked about her dead ex often.” Gareth chuckled.

“We are both old and matured. We are way past feeling jealous about things that we can’t change. When I separated with my wife, I never thought that I would love another woman the way I did with her or even more, but I do now. I no longer love my ex-wife but I do care for her, even though she wronged me.

Ntokozo never wronged Khanyo or left her, so she doesn't have to force herself to get over him. I know she can love us both but she loves me more because I am the present and the future." He said confidently and Nokukhanya held his hand, smiling at him.

"Well I am happy if you are happy, MaNdlovu. With the way you loved our brother and the time it took for you to move on, we didn't think you would open your heart for someone else again, but we are happy that you are giving yourself another chance at love." Babomdala said with a smile as he stood up and extended his hand to Gareth who stood up and shook Babomdala's hand. "Welcome to the family, Walker. Don't hurt our daughter in law because we know how to punish those to harm our loved ones. Also if she gives you trouble, feel free to tell us. We will resolve any issue you have."

Gareth smiled. "Thank you for the welcome." The others also stood up and shook his hand. Lindiwe even hugged him.

"I am happy that my sister has found love once again. I wish you all the best and Gareth, from now on you're family. If you need us, don't be shy to ask for help. If we also need you, we will contact you." Lindiwe said and Gareth nodded.

“Well since everyone is still in a good mood, I would like to invite you guys to our wedding dinner / celebration which is in three weeks. Seeing that we both have made it to the alter, we just wanted to go for something different. Something intimate and simple. That’s one of the reasons for this meeting. Gareth wanted to know if he is required to pay lobola or not.” Khanyo said when everyone settled back down.

“Culturally, he is supposed to pay lobola to the Mnguni family but because of our cultural differences, we won’t force our traditions down your throat. You don’t have to pay for lobola, but you can if MaNdlovu wants you to.” babomdala said.

“I am fine with anything, bhuti.” Khanyo said.

“Since your wedding is not going to be a big thing, I assume that you also won’t have a traditional wedding, so I also think lobola is not necessary. Just go and enjoy yourselves. Go to your honeymoon, travel the world and just keep on loving each other.” Bongani stated with a smile. Khanyo stood up and went to hug him.

“Thank you bhuty.” She went back to her seat. “So the dinner will be at Gareth’s house in Joburg. You will get your invites tomorrow.”

“What is the dress code?” Muzi asked.

“Just dress to impress, bhuti. You can even wear your wedding suit.” She said and he laughed.

“That one has been ravaged by the rats. Sizwe will have to buy me a new one and a hat with a feather.”

“You are not going to the Feather Awards, so there is no need for uphaphhe.” Lindiwe said rolling her eyes and everyone laughed. “Idrama babakhe.” She said giggling and Muzi just pouted, sulking and that earned him even more laughs.

I am in my seventh month and honestly everything is a struggle. Waking up is a struggle. Sitting up straight is a struggle. Walking is a struggle. I even struggle to lie down or find the perfect sleeping position. Luckily one of the gifts from the gender reveal party were pregnancy pillows. So they really help with the sitting and sleeping part. But one thing which is a major problem is the fatigue. I am always fuckin tired. Like every single hour of the day and then insomnia hits me every night when the clock strikes 00:00. Luckily I have taken a maternity leave because I would've honestly fallen asleep at work with the way my body is functioning these days.

Apart from the tiring pregnancy, I managed to get a wedding dress but the designer said I should come after every two weeks for measurements, just so my dress isn't too tight or too big on my wedding day. I am sure she would've told me to go on a diet if I wasn't pregnant. I opted for a blush sleeveless princess gown with rhinestones. Well people will think they are rhinestones but they are actually real pink diamonds. At Pride, we never run out of those. So when an opportunity presents itself, we have to shine. And what a better occasion to do it than on my wedding day? This wedding is not going to be my dream wedding because I will probably look like a fat cow.

When I told Ndabe that we are going to redo our wedding on our first anniversary, he laughed but he said he is going to give me whatever I want. I am going to be one spoiled wife, I am telling you.

Today is the wedding dinner of Ma'Khanyi and Gareth. She invited my family but I don't know if they are going to show up. They have officially cut ties with me and blocked me everywhere. Tristin, who often visits them, told me that they don't even talk or ask about me. They just consider me dead. I swear if I was given an opportunity to choose parents right now, I would choose Ma'Khanyi and Gareth. They are so caring and they always check up on me. Whenever Gareth is going to come over to the house, he calls first to ask what I am craving. Honestly he is father goals and I am really happy for him and Ma'Khanyi.

Finding an outfit for the dinner was very hard. If I was the old Dakota, I would've bought a cute mini dress and paired it with beautiful heels. But now I am only limited to maxi dresses and sandals. Life of a pregnant woman. I should really star in a reality show and show people how hard pregnancy is so that they won't hit it raw without any back up plan.

Londy comes in with my dress. It's a print long sleeve stand collar fashion regular dress. At least it's not floor length. It only stops on my knees. I smile as I stand up and put it on, with her help of course. She also helps me put on my yellow sandals and hands me my yellow handbag.

"You look really cute today, baby mama. This dress is doing wonders on you. I am sure Mpisi is going to be drooling the entire evening." She says with a wide smile. She is wearing a 'Daniella' lemon floral balcony corset dress with point toe chain décor clear stiletto heels. She looks stunning.

"I am sure my brother is the one who won't be able to keep his eyes off you today." She giggles and rolls her eyes.

"Come on, let's bounce." She takes my baby bag and we both head out. She is riding with the twins and Tristin who is already waiting for her in the driveway. Ndabe is also here with Ahlelelwe.

We all exchange greetings before Londy hands my baby bag to Ndabe. We climb inside the cars and drive off. Ahlelelwe is not her usual chatty self today, but that's because she is watching her favourite cartoons from her new tablet which her grandmother got for her as an early birthday present. Her

birthday is next week. I was really keen on planning it but my condition stopped me, which is why I asked Londy to help me. Honestly, I don't know what I would do without that Mnguni girl. I still remember the first time we met. It feels like yesterday but it's actually close to three years ago.

"What is it that's got you smiling like this?" Ndabe asks squeezing my hand gently. I smile at him.

"I am just thinking about Londy. She is more than a friend to me. She is like my sister and I am really grateful to have her in my life. If I could, I would open my heart so that she can see how much I love her." he smiles.

"She knows baby and she feels the same way about you." he looks at Ahlelelwe in the mirror and then focuses on the road. "How are the plans coming along for next week?"

"Everything is perfect. Londy has everything under control. Are Tshedza and Asimbonge coming?" he had to ask for permission to get them at their schools and last I checked, he didn't have it.

"Well their school agreed, so they will come on Friday evening and leave on Sunday evening or early Monday morning." I nod. I still don't get along with Tshedza. That girl doesn't even give

me an ounce of respect. If I wasn't pregnant, I would maybe go on some adventure with her just to show her that I am not a bad person and I am not trying to take away her dad but I think I would honestly fall asleep within the first 30 minutes of us hanging out. And I also don't want to risk anything in my condition. Asimbonge doesn't really care if I exist or not. He only cares about his school work, playing with his baby sister and video games. If I were to try win him over, I think he would be the easiest target than Tshedza. "You are thinking about your relationship with them

aren't you?" he asks. I sigh and lean my head back.

"Ndabe you accepted my child before you even met her. I have also accepted that you have three kids but it's really hard to know that you will get along with Gram but I won't get along with Tshedza and Asimbonge. I don't even know how they will react to Gram once she is born. Will they love her like one of them or hate her like they hate me?" he clenches his jaws and I see his hands tightening on the wheel.

"They will never discriminate Gram. I will make sure that they know she is their baby sister. And I will also make sure that they love, accept and respect you baby. Leave it all to me." I huff.

“I don’t want you fighting my battles and end up being hated by your kids. I told you I will handle this but not now. I will handle it after giving birth.”

“But ugotshwa usemanzi love. Meaning we have to deal with a situation while it’s still early before it becomes something huge and uncontrollable.” I exhale loudly and close my eyes. “Don’t worry about it. I will make sure that you all get along very well before Ahlelelwe’s party starts.” He looks at his daughter once again before focusing on the road. I think she is his favourite child and I don’t think he would ever allow her to go to a boarding school and I know she won’t ever agree to separate with her father also. They are too attached.

«««»»»»»

The distance from Krugersdorp to Fourways is not that much but driving with a pregnant fiancé can turn an hour drive to 3 hours because of the restroom stops and some munching on the way. I swear I am more fussy and troublesome than Simi and Miso who are sort of banned from attending events which are not family events because that duo is just too much. They always drive Nkosingiphile crazy and no one ever volunteers to watch them except for their grandmother, Ma’Khanyi. She is so in love with her triplets and I don’t know how, but they are so well behaved around her. When she is spending time with her,

they follow her around, play with her, get fed by her without any hassles and actually adhere to their normal nap times.

We finally get to the Walker household. There are already so many cars outside. And here I thought it was just an intimate dinner. We walk inside and at the door, we are welcomed by Briella, Gareth's second child who is married and lives in Greece. She smiles and warmly welcomes us. She is the most loving amongst the Walker children, followed by Eileen and Andrea. Charlotte is a spoiled brat and Darren is too much of a rebel but they actually get along with Ma'Khanyi which isn't a wonder because she gets along with everyone.

"OMG! Look at you. You are glowing. This pregnancy is treating you so well. I am honestly jealous because when I was pregnant, I looked like a scary monster who wasn't friends with baths. And is that a ring?" Briella gushes over my ring. "Who is the lucky man?" I point at Ndabe.

"This is Ndabe. Babe this is Briella, Gareth's oldest daughter and second child."

"Nice to meet you." they shake hands and she leads us inside the fortress.

I honestly thought there will set up something in the backyard seeing how many guests are here, but they actually decorated the huge lobby. People are already dancing and having wine and cocktails. Ahlelelwe quickly rushes to Lande and Lwando. We head to where the Mngunis are and we greet before I head to the buffet and place a few kebabs and sticky wings on my plate. I pour a juice for myself and go sit down on my labelled chair. Ndabe is chatting to Sizwe and Luvuyo and I am really glad for that. They have squashed whatever bad blood they had. While paying attention to my delicious starters, Fortunate comes and sits next to me.

“Have you ever been constantly abused by a boyfriend before?” she asks. I have a feeling she is in need of someone to talk to and I guess the pregnant lady who is stuffing her face with meat is the great target. I swallow and then take a huge sip at my juice before turning to her.

“I wouldn’t really call it abuse, but my ex-boyfriend used to really hurt my feelings. When I was with him, I wasn’t experienced with sex. So he would always say mean stuff to me. He was my virginity breaker, so he was supposed to make me feel comfortable about myself and teach me some things without having any expectations but he was such a dick. Most

of the times I cried myself to sleep because of his actions, but I am glad it never got physical.” She laughs a little and nods.

“You were very lucky.” She leans forward on the table before she tells me every single thing Qhayiya has done to her. By the time she is done, I even have hiccups from the silent crying.

“Don’t cry for me, please. I am okay. I have found a coping mechanism. Qhayiya is a predator and I honestly think he would abuse me even when he is dead.” I turn to her.

“Why the fuck aren’t you utilizing Pride to help you?” I whisper harshly. “Pride is family. You are family and family looks after one another. What are you expecting me to do with this information? Smile about it? Well I can’t. I can’t continue life knowing the kind of shit you go through every day.” She shakes her head. “No. don’t give me that shit, I will make sure that your problem is taken care of.” She sighs.

“He knows people in high places.”

“And we are the people in higher places. Let Pride deal with his cowardice ass once and for all.” someone clears their throat to the mic and we all turn our attention to the front. Andrea is the one holding the mic. “This is not over.” I whisper to Fortunate

who stands up and walks away. I sigh before turning back to Andrea.

“Without wasting any more time, ladies and gentlemen, let us all officially welcome Mr. and Mrs. Walker.” Andrea announces before Ma’Khanyi and Gareth walk in looking stunning in white. Everyone claps and reach out to hug them. I also stand up and clap my hands. I can’t get what Fortunate told me off my mind. Luckily if I have ears in my eyes and cheeks, I will just blame them on the hormones.

The dinner goes on smoothly. It’s really a perfect occasion. Their kids are given a chance to speak and all 9 of them have some good things to say about their parents. Well 10 if you are counting Luvuyo who is basically Ma’Khanyi’s second son. I really pray and wish that I can be like Ma’Khanyi so that my child can have only good things and crazy funny moments to say about me.

I really wanted to sort many things out before giving birth. I also wanted to have a talk with Ndabe's older kids. I didn't mind them hating me but I couldn't have them hating on Gram. I know people fall in love with newborns but I hoped to clear that out with the Mpisi children before anything else. It was already Friday and Ahlelelwe's birthday was tomorrow. Tshedza and Asimbonge were going to arrive at the airport in an hour and their father had asked me to fetch them, hoping that we could clear some things out. He obviously didn't like me driving with this huge bump of mine but I didn't want no driver, so he let me go.

The Fortunate issue has been on my mind since the night we spoke about it. I took her advice about not involving Pride but I had to find a way to resolve all of this. So here I am, driving to the Sithole mansion. I am not sure if he is going to help me, but I am hoping for the best. I drive in and park bhut Sizwe's Maserati before climbing off. He hasn't asked for it back, so that's why I am still driving it around. I walk inside the house and find bhut Luvuyo, Soma and Danvers around the kitchen counter laughing about something.

"Hello everyone." I greet. They all turn around and Luvuyo smiles when he sees me. He stands up and comes to hug me.

“How is he letting you drive around with this belly? I am sure it touches the steering wheel.” He says and I laugh. He leads me to a barstool and I settle down. Yeah I can’t stand for more than two minutes because I will have swollen feet but the swollen feet thing is very compulsory shame and it’s tiring.

“It was either the chauffeur or this. So you can imagine my choice.”

“You are so stubborn. I don’t know where we get these stubborn women from.”

“I hope you are not including me in those stubborn women you are talking about.” Sis Lwah says entering the kitchen and Luvuyo laughs.

“Phela wena my sweet rose you are one of the executive members of the Stubborn Women Association.” He says and sis Lwah takes a dish cloth and throws it at him. He continues laughing. She comes to hug me.

“To what do we owe this visit?” she asks.

“I am actually here to see the only white man in this house.” I say pointing at Danvers with my head. He frowns.

“I wonder what is it that you wanna talk about. We will leave you to it. Don’t do something that might get him killed though.” She states with a straight face before pulling her husband and walking out of the kitchen. Soma follows them. Danvers clears his throat.

“Hey Danvers. I am just going to cut straight to the chase because I don’t have a lot of time. Do you have feelings for Fortunate?” he frowns. “Tell me, I won’t tell her. I just want you to answer that question before I move on to what exactly brought me here.”

“She is a wonderful woman with a very strong personality. I won’t say I like her but I don’t hate her. I just acknowledge her as a person who is friends with my bosses.” He speaks with his deep voice which you just can’t get used to. It’s alluring really and exotic sometimes. But I am no whore and I love my Zulu man so much.

“I am sure you know that she likes you, right?” he chuckles.

“She has made that quite clear a number of times before.” I nod.

“Who is your boss? And I am not talking about the Stholes, I mean your actual boss. I know you are in the mafia or some

gang. So I need to know who your boss is. I am not asking on behalf of mine but this is a matter of life or death and the situation at hand is really stressing me out. And you know that a pregnant woman cannot be stressed because that might harm the baby.” he looks at me for a full minute without even blinking and he sighs.

“Beast is my boss.” I am taken back by this. “And before you ask, she didn’t hire me to keep the Mrs Safe. I have been working for her since the beginning.” I nod.

“Well, as you know, Fortunate really likes you. But besides the flirting we all know her for, she wouldn’t take things father with you guys. You know her baby daddy, right?”

“I have seen him, twice I think.”

“He has been abusing her for a long time. He would always use their kid against her because he knows she doesn’t have a powerful or influential family like his. When I say abuse, I am talking about all forms of abuse. Physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, basically any type of abuse a man can inflict upon a woman.” I look at his body language. His fists are already clenched and his breathing pattern have changed. “I am not saying do anything, but I really love her as a friend and I

wouldn't want her committing suicide because of an abusive asshole like Q. she is already depressed, so I think she is not far from suicide and if it wasn't for her daughter, she would've killed herself a long time ago. Her coping mechanism is alcohol."

"Why are you telling me this?" he asks in a strained voice. He has turned red. Good. That's the beast we all don't know that I wanted to unleash.

"She doesn't wanna endanger Pride." I am only talking openly about Pride because I know he knows about us. "She says Q is very well connected but he can't be above Thabi. I am not saying go and avenge her but what would you do if he would end up killing her or worse, her committing suicide? I am an expecting mother but I already know that a presence of a child heals most scars and brings happiness. If she were to reconnect with her daughter, she would slowly but surely heal." I stand up. "If you really care about here

though, you will do something." I smile before walking out of the kitchen. I find Luvuyo and Lwah cuddling on the couch laughing about something. Yamihle is sleeping in her bean bag. They notice me and they stop laughing.

“You’re already on your way out?” sis Lwah asks.

“Yeah, I am fetching the step kids from the airport.” They both laugh.

“Already doing some step mother duties?” Luvuyo asks teasingly. These two are making fun of me.

“I started step-mothering even before Ndabe and I were official. Ahlelelwe is an easy child but the older two is a headache. I just want them to accept Gram before she is born because I don’t want my child to have enemies before she has even arrived in this world.”

“Don’t worry, they will warm up to you. I swear if Vuyo had kids before me, I wouldn’t suck up to them that much. I would just show them how much I love their dad. They would’ve eventually seen that I am not going anywhere.” Sis Lwah says and Luvuyo smiles at her. “I am not saying bite more than you can chew but boarding school kids tend to have some mentality that their parents don’t want them, that’s why they sent them away. I know that Mpisi sent them away because he wanted to deal with grief in his own way, but you are here now to make his household a home again. Ask these kids how would they feel about coming back home. They have to see how you are

with their father. Maybe they will eventually warm up to you.” I smile and nod.

“Thank you for the advice sisi. No wonder you are always happy in your marriage, you are wise and very loving.”

“Weeh, this one can be evil when she likes.” Luvuyo said and that earns him a mean stare from Lwah. I just laugh.

“I will see you guys tomorrow at the party.” We say our goodbyes and I leave.

«««»»»»

Making my way inside the airport, I am in time to see them walk out of the airport. Their father has a jet, so they are used to how things are done in the airport. I greet them and they answer reluctantly before climbing inside the car.

“Is this car yours?” Asimbonge asks. I chuckle as I drive out.

“It belongs to my brother. But I think it belongs to me now because he has many cars, so he is not even missing is.”

“Sleek. Your brother doesn’t care about a Maserati? He must be really monied then.” He responds. He is sitting on the

passenger seat and Tshedza is at the back. She hasn't said anything past a small hello.

"Are you guys hungry? We can start at a restaurant before driving you home. Well I actually insist because I am super hungry."

"Only if we are going to Galaxy Bingo." Asimbonge says. I guess he is the only person I am going to make conversation with in this car. I catch Tshedza rolling her eyes at the rear-view mirror. I guess she gets tired of her brother suggesting this place. I stifle a giggle before driving to Greenstone Shopping Centre. Greenstone is not that far from Linden, which is where Mpisi's house is located.

Getting to the mall, we head to GB and soon after placing our orders, Asimbonge goes to the gaming part of the restaurant. Leaving me with the teenager who hates my guts. I clear my throat and she stares straight into my eyes.

"I am not going to bullshit you with some boring speech about not replacing your mother or any shit like that. What I want you to know is that I love Ndabe very much. The age gap between us means nothing. He treats me like a queen and he keeps our

relationship so interesting. He is able to make me blush from day in to day out. You wanna know something?" she huffs and nods. "My family hates him. In fact they hate it when we mix with black people. They say they are not racist but in actual fact they are. My brother, Tristin, brought his black girlfriend home and my parents tried so hard to make them break up. They even set him up with white girls just to make him change his mind."

"That's sick." She says.

"Yeah, it is. It hurts when someone doesn't accept the love you have for your partner. I came out to my whole family at my gender reveal party and told them about Ndabe. They said I was just pulling a stunt and we will talk later. Dad even suggested some young employee of his. When I stood my ground, they didn't wanna talk to me, so I disowned my own parents for love. I am not trying to guilt trip you or something. But I want you to understand the kind of problems I am faced with right now. My entire family, except for my brothers and uncle, are against my relationship. I would try to make them understand but I can't do anything that will stress me, especially in my condition. So if you want to continue hating me, go on. But just know that your attitude is not only hurting

me, but also your father. He loves you and he would really love you to get along with the woman in his life. It's really up to you. If you really love him, you will give me a chance and not discard me without even getting to know me." I state as I sit back and wait for the food. She takes out her phone and busies herself with it.

Well I have laid down all my cards. It's up to her now. I am not going to go around sucking up on her. It's all up to her now.

NARRATED

Danvers got into the underground club where most of the gang members were gathered. It was literally built underground. It is almost 20 feet below the ground level. It took a lot of money and time to have this built and the end result made all the trouble seem worth it. He walked to where Thabi was talking with one of her underbosses. They were laughing about something. He cleared his throat as he stood in front of them. Thabi quickly straightened up then dismissed the underboss.

“Is everything okay? Did something happen to sosha?” Thabi asked with a worried tone.

“No. she is okay. I just have a fish to catch and I need your permission to go fishing because the waters I will fish on might be too shallow with dangerous predators.” Danvers said.

“Nobody is more dangerous than me, D.” Thabi said with a smirk and Danvers chuckled. “Now who do you want to go after?”

“You know Fortunate, right?”

“Thandeka’s friend?” Danvers nodded. “Ohh yeah. I do know her. Are you still smashing that chick?” Danver’s eyes popped out but he quickly recovered, not quickly enough though because Thabi had seen him and she laughed at him.

“We have never smashed, boss. Not even once. The thing is, I have some feelings for her but I never went for her because I thought she was in a happy relationship with her baby daddy. But I recently found out that she broke up with him ages ago. He has been abusing her physically, sexually, emotionally while still together and after they have broken up. I hear he is well connected. So I wanna take him out bur first I want to make sure that Fortunate is reconciled with her daughter.”

“So you want to kidnap the kid, deliver her to her mother and then kill the father?” Thabi asked with a mischievous smile on her face. She loved stirring up trouble and this seemed like an adventure to her.

“Yes. That sounds about right.” Thabi nodded.

“We can do it tomorrow night. We will go to his house with guns blazing. Take the kid, drug her before she sees anything and then tie up the fucker before burning him alive with the

house. But we will make sure he has taken his last breath before leaving. We don't want his half dead ass coming to bite us back in the ass." Thabi said with a wide smile as she was already picturing the image she has painted and she could hear the man's screams.

"Should I tell Fortunate?" Danvers asked.

"No. don't count your chickens before they hatch. We are pros and we never fail, I know that. But I think telling her afterwards will be more nice. I can already imagine the headlines." She said laughing and Danvers just shook his head. His boss could be a bit unhinged at times but he was used to it.

«««»»»»»

I slept at Ndabe's house so that I wouldn't have to drive here early in the morning, just to wish my angel a 'happy birthday'. Yesterday before coming here, I went to fetch a miniature cake at Nuluh's place for the morning celebration. Waking up, I pat next to me and my hand comes up empty. Where the hell is this man so early in the morning? Anyways today is not about him.

I climb off the bed and go shower. 2 months left and the time seems to be moving too slowly now that I am supposed to give birth. Baby Gram is getting heavier each day. Anyways today is also not about her. I get dressed in leggings, Ndabe's oversized t-shirt and sleepers. My hair is such a mess. I am supposed to go on a hair appointment with Ahlelelwe at 9 am. So I am hoping the hairdresser will sort out this mess. I take a doek and put it on.

I walk downstairs and find Asimbonge with Ndabe chatting about something. I greet them and they greet me back. I take out the miniature cake from the fridge and place it on the island. I then put 9 candles on it and light it up.

"Let's go wake the princess up." I say to the two Mpsi men.

"Let me quickly get the paper plates. Good morning everyone." Tshedza says in a rather good mood. We didn't further our talk from yesterday but she didn't say any rude remarks or anything disrespectful after it.

"Don't forget the knife and the plastic forks." Asimbonge says climbing off the counter. Once Tshedza grabs what she was looking for

we all head to Ahlelelwe's room. She is sleeping like a starfish. I giggle quietly as we step in. Asimbonge goes to shake her. She stirs up and opens her eyes. We start singing.

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAD AHLE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY."

She sits up with a wide smile. She claps her hands cheerfully before climbing off the bed and climbing into her dad's arms. They both hug. This baby is making me emotional because this moment makes me tear up. When they are done, she hugs her siblings before she comes to stand before me. I bend to her level and she squeals.

"Happy birthday princess. Make a wish and blow your candles."

"I want to be the first one to hold baby Gram." She says before blowing the candles. She is not supposed to say it out loud but

she is a kid, so we won't hold it against it. But her wish makes my heart swell.

"Don't worry princess. After the doctor, your dad will make sure you hold baby Gram first. Now, cut your cake so that you can have the first big piece." Tshedza hands her the knife and she cuts the first slice very clumsy. I take it out and feed it to her. She chews it and nods multiple times before swallowing.

"This is really delicious." She says in a grown up tone and we laugh at her. I then cut a slice for everyone before we all sit on the floor and enjoy this miniature cake.

"Dad said you were going to the salon with Ahlelelwe after breakfast." Tshedza says looking at me. "Can I come with you?" wow. Okay. Is this a good sign that good things are coming?

"I don't mind. But we are not going to have breakfast here because the house is about to get really busy and nosy." I respond and she nods with a smile. "So what are you hoping for angel? What present are you looking forward to?" I ask Ahlelelwe.

“This.” she points around. “Last year my birthday wasn’t celebrated because of mom. The year before that it wasn’t celebrated again. So I just wanted a birthday without any disturbances and I finally got it. It’s all because of you. So thank you mommy.” She comes to snuggle up next to me and I wrap my arms around her. Such strong words from a child. Loss of a parent can really mess you up.

After that pre-party celebration, we all head to our rooms to prepare and of course preparing, for Ndabe, means fucking his pregnant fiancé until her legs shake and until she is out of breath. I lay breathlessly on the bed after that exercise and yena he is moving around the room, naked and making calls. He finishes the last call and looks at me with a smirk.

“I am not going to allow you in, Ndabe. No. not today.” He laughs.

“But baby look at how hard I am.” He points at his hard rod.

“Well that’s why God created self-service.” I get up from the bed and go take another shower. He joins me and just pins me on the wall.

“I will do the whole thing. You don’t have to move an inch. All you have to do is moan.” He says balancing me and shoving his cock deep inside me. Holy fuck.

«««»»»»»

We all go out for breakfast at A Class restaurant. Ndabe is also going to the barber shop with Asimbonge and he said he is going to collect Ahlelelwe’s present after that. He drops us off at the salon and says we should contact him after we are done. He left us with one of his cards. I wanted to drive myself but I got a dick threat and gave in because my pussy is sore from this morning. The amount of sex I have had with Ndabe ever since we started dating exceeds the number of times I have slept with previous partners. The guy love sex so much and I am not even complaining because he knows how to lay it down.

Entering the salon, we are ushered to our seats. I don’t even know what hairstyle to do, so I just ask my hairdresser to dye my hair grey and curl it. I know dying the whole head and not just highlight it can make people not even recognize you. But I like being bold and making a statement. I also tell the hairdresser to make it curly. While waiting for the dye to sink in, the nail technician gives me a cute short grey manicure and

pedicure. The hairdresser comes back to finish my hair. Wow I look so beautiful and so different. Like a whole new Dakota. They also do my make up and take tons of pictures when they are done.

Tshedza opted for a tribal pondo and some nail therapy. They also do natural make-up on her. For Ahlelelwe it's a really cute straight up decorated with hair beads. They put on some glitter nail polish on her nails and she can't stop gushing about it. I pay for all of us and we step out of the salon, finding Ndabe already waiting for us. He compliments his daughters and they climb inside the car. He stands before me and looks at me from head to toe. He clears his throat.

"Hey Miss. Did you see my pregnant fiancé inside? She is really short, has brown hair and a really cute smile." He says charmingly and I laugh. "I am at a loss of words baby." he places his hands on my hips. "Saying you look beautiful would be an understatement because the word doesn't do you any justice." I smile. "Let's just go home."

"Well you look handsome with you bald head." he smiles and touches it. "And the beard too." He laughs.

"Thank you." he kisses me and helps me climb into the car.

This is a child's party and the people we invited were the kids in her class which their parents were going to drop off, her friends, the Mpisi family, my family (Mnguni/Sithole and Pride) and some of Ndabe's friends and colleagues. I didn't think it would be this full. It's like a full blown adult party. And people are actually dressed to impress. Like they are going to some cocktail event. Anyways I head to Ahlelelwe's room and help her get dressed in a yellow tutu dress with black shoes. That's the theme. She also urged everyone in the house to stick to it. So Ndabe is wearing a yellow gold t-shirt with black jeans and yellow Bathu sneakers. He doesn't own a single pair of colourful shoes except for this one, which I forced him to buy so that he can stick to the theme.

"I look so pretty." Ahle says twirling in front of the mirror. I chuckle. The child has so much confidence. She doesn't mind complimenting herself even though she wants people to compliment her from time to time. She said she didn't want a kiddie's tiara to make her look like a kid. Instead she asked her father to get her a real one. That's why she is wearing a gold tiara from Etsy with matching earrings, necklace and a bracelet. "Go get changed mommy so that the party can start."

“It can start without me, princess.”

“But I don’t want it to.” she says pouting. Luckily Tshedza comes to my rescue. She is wearing yellow cotton shorts with a black crop top and black heels. I don’t know if Ndabe will be comfortable about his sixteen year old daughter dressed like this, but I am not going to say anything.

“Come, Ahle. Let’s go take some pictures together while sis Dakota gets dressed.” Wow. I have upgraded to sisi. That’s an improvement. I smile at her and head to Ndabe’s room. I take off the clothes I was wearing and lay in the bed for a few moments, just catching my breath.

I hear the door opening and closing before hearing Londy’s voice. “Oww please don’t tell me you’re sleeping. Dakota we don’t have time for that. People are literally waiting for you outside.” I grunt before sitting up.

“Help me get dressed ke.” She rolls her eyes.

“Sit up.” she goes to take my black Bathu sneakers and helps me put them on first before helping me with my yellow tutu dress which is short at the front and has a long trail at the back.

“I swear this is your baby shower or something, and I love what you’ve done with your hair.” She touches it. I smile.

“Thank you.”

“Let me brush it a bit and then we will be good to go.” She goes to take a brush from the dressing table and brushes my hair. “I saw Mpisi’s older daughter. She didn’t look like she had the bitchy attitude anymore. Are you guys cool?” I shrug.

“Sort of. I opened up to her yesterday. Now I don’t know if she is being genuine or being fake. But today is not about her, so I don’t care about her feelings. It’s Ahlelelwe’s day. The only person in this family, besides the one I am screwing, who has loved me and been real with me since day one.”

“Now let’s go to her party before she starts crying.” we both laugh.

I take my phone and we both head out. I made sure to lock Ndabe’s room before heading to the lounge. Asimbonge is the only one whose outfit I didn’t see. He is dressed like his sister. A black golf t-shirt, yellow cotton pants and black Bathu sneakers.

That's my doing though. Bathu should make us their ambassador coz wow.

"Family goals shame." Londy says smiling before walking out.

Ndabe comes to me and perks my lips before placing his hand on my back and leading me outside. We go take many photos as a family before heading to the tent to join the party. Ahlelelwe gets settled in her high chair. Ndabe and I sit on our table, with Tshedza and Asimbonge, not far from Ahlelelwe.

The programme starts and her mates say the cutest messages ever. After that, people are served starters. Her aunt, from her mother's side also comes to speak. I didn't know Ndabe's late wife's family is going to come. But they are Ahlelelwe's family, so it's not a big deal. Two of the Mpsi family members also speak. Then the main course is served. There is also some entertainment suited for the kids. Asimbonge and Tshedza also say a few words. Then Ndabe is called to the front. He kisses my cheek before standing up. He takes the mic.

“Good day everyone. No offence Asi and Tshedza but out of all of my kids, Hlehle has been the most affectionate child and the most loving child. She has the biggest heart and is very kind. She is just like her late mother. It’s like she sees nothing wrong in this world and I love her so much. I don’t wanna talk too much because I know you will get bored.” People chuckle. “2 months ago, a woman entered our lives and have made a huge impact. Hlehle loved her from the get go with no questions asked. She didn’t even care about her race. In fact that’s what’s amplified her love for the woman more. Dakota, please come up here for a few seconds. I know you’re tired.”

I roll my eyes and people laugh. Londy helps me stand, I don’t even know where she came from. I go stand next to Ndabe and he holds my hand.

“Hlehle and I both love you so very much and we are grateful to have you in our lives. You are so important and hold a huge space in our hearts.” I look away to blink back the tears. I am not in the mood to shed any. “Ladies and gentlemen, this is my fiancé and Ahlelelwe’s mommy, Dakota Muller.” People cheer but some don’t seem very comfortable. “How about you say a few words before the Miss Party says her speech?” I smile and nod. He hands me the mic.

“Baby girl,” I say turning to Ahlelelwe who smiles widely. “You look so beautiful today.”

“Thank you mommy.” I smile.

“I love you so much and I wanted to do something nice for you. That is why I hosted this party for you. Don’t thank your dad, this is all me and a bit of his money.” She laughs and Ndabe also laughs. “I want you to know that even if our family grows you will always be my princess and I will always have time for you.” I blow her a kiss and she catches it. “Thank you for everyone who honored the invitation. The programme is about to come to an end and all the kids will move to the garden where there is more entertainment from you. By kids I mean from 0 to 18 years. That also includes you Tshedza.” She laughs. “Anyways thank you all once again, and travel safely when it’s time to go home.” I head back to my seat.

Ahle is given the mic. She just thanks everyone and quickly goes back to her seat. I think she is more interested in the garden session now. The programme director closes the programme and the kids all move to the garden. I ask some of the catering crew to help with moving the gifts and lead them to Ahlelelwe’s room. They place them all in the floor and head out. As I am

heading back outside, I am stopped by Ahlelelwe's aunt from her mother's side. I didn't even catch her name. She looks at me from top to bottom and raises her eyebrows.

"You are so young. Are you here for the money?" I frown looking at her and then just burst out laughing.

"Young or old, I am the woman in Ndabe's life right now and all of you will have to learn to live with it. He has grieved his wife and he is now finally moving on. If you are not comfortable with me, honey build a bridge and get over it." I say with a smile.

"And don't act as if you care about him or even your sister's children. Ever since I came into their lives, not even once has Ahlelelwe mentioned you or received a phone call from you. So don't pretend like you care about her. You don't and we all know that. Now can I please pass?" she clicks her tongue before walking past me. I chuckle.

I walk out and go check on the kids first before checking on the adult guests. They are drinking and chatting with people they are with. I don't see Ndabe though. I smile widely when I spot my brother in what looks like a cute argument with Londy. I try

hugging him from behind but my bump makes that impossible. He turns and laughs at me before hugging me.

“How close are you?” he asks.

“Only 8 weeks left.”

“Can’t wait to see my niece.” He brushes my bump and I smile.

“Londy please call the photographer so that he can take pictures of me and my brother.” She smiles before going to look for the photographer. “When last did you visit the folks?” he sighs.

“A week ago. They don’t talk about you but your pictures are still in the walls, so I guess there is a chance for some reconciliation in the near future.” I smile and hook my arm on his. Londy comes back with a photographer and he takes pictures of both my brother and I. Londy joins in and I become a third wheel, only for a while because Ndabe also appears from nowhere. He joins in on the session and gets called by someone. He pulls me inside the house to the lounge which is full of elders. We go sit on the vacant couch.

“Bo Mpisi, this is my future wife Dakota and I intend to marry her next month.” He announces and gets no cheering.

“How are you going to do that without honoring our traditions? We understand they don’t have any, but you have to pay lobola for her. Umbondo, umkhehlo, umgcagco. All those things must be done. There are no shortcuts, whether it’s your second marriage or last marriage.” An old man who looks a lot like him says.

“Baba I understand that, I do. But I think there should be compromises in a situation like this.” Ndabe pleads. Ohh, this is his father. I have seen pictures of him before. His dad shakes his head.

“You can get married in court in order for the child to be born in the marriage and bear the Mpisi name but you will officially get married after both of you have done all there is to do, all the ceremonies. You know we don’t do shortcuts.” His dad’s face softens when he looks at me. “Welcome to the family, makoti.”

“Thank you.”

“DAKOTA!” someone shouts and I think it is sis Lwah.

“Go tend to your guests.” Ndabe’s dad says. I nod and stand up. I head down the corridor and see sisi Lwah balancing herself with the wall.

“Too much alcohol too soon?” she grunts.

“Do you have pads and pain killers? I think I am having my periods which is odd because it’s not even close to my date. Where is the bathroom?” I open one closest to us and she gets in but falls to the floor. She is bleeding, heavily and her mustard dress is now drenched in blood.

“Sis Lwah, are you sure these are just normal periods? Do you usually bleed this much?” she looks at her legs and she freezes when she sees the blood. She starts moaning and crying softly. She is in deep pain, you can see that. “I am going to call bhut Jobe.” I close the door and try by all means to run, even though I look funny. I pass by the lounge and Ndabe quickly gets up.

“What’s going on?”

“Please go call Jobe for me. Something is wrong with sis Lwah. We in the common bathroom.” He nods and runs out. I go back to the bathroom and find her lying in the bathroom floor holding her tummy. She is crying silently. I carefully kneel next to her head. “Sis don’t close your eyes. It’s going to be okay. Stay awake. Please.”

“Something is wrong.” She says in a scratchy voice. After a few moments, the door opens and Jobe freezes when he sees the state she is in. he is followed by bhut Sizwe.

“MaMnguni, what is going on?” Sizwe asks. Jobe kneels down and carefully picks up his wife.

“Sbali please go start the car, ASAP.” Jobe says with a shaking voice. They all rush out. Ndabe comes in and helps me up. Please God, let this not be what I think it is.

LUVUYO

They said the miscarriage was because of Hormonal Abnormalities. Something about low progesterone levels and fibroids or a uterine septum, embryo nton-nton. Honestly I didn't care about all that explanation. I was sadder about the actual reality that my wife and I lost our second child, the one we didn't even know about. I was very heartbroken about our loss but what broke my heart more was the fact that my wife was more worried about me and my feelings, seeing that I was the one who wanted the second child so badly. She was approaching her third month, so some parts had already formed.

I enter her ward with a paper bag and she sits up. Her eyes are red and swollen. Which means she was crying in my absence. I place the paper bag on the table and go hug her without any explanations. It doesn't take much time for her walls to break down and she starts wailing. I rub her back and she cries even more. She is even shaking.

"We didn't deserve this, Vuyo. We didn't. How could God do this to us? What did we do to deserve being deprived to being

parents for the second time? Why?" I don't answer. Instead I wait for her to calm down. After what seems like forever, she stops crying and breathes out loud. She sits back on her pillows and looks at me while wiping her tears. I sit on the edge of her bed and hold her hands.

"We are not perfect. We are just human beings. These things happen all the time. Love, life, loss, grief, disappointments, happiness amongst others. God never said we will only experience good things, but we also have to go through tough times in order to say 'we have made it in the –for better or for worse- stage of life'. It is hard, trust me, we are experiencing the same pain. But what is important is that we should appreciate what we have. We are allowed to grieve our loss and not rush it. But at the same time, God has blessed us with a beautiful princess who knows nothing about what we are going through. She is expecting hundred percent love from us and we are going to give her that, but we are not going to ignore the fact that we lost our child and I will not allow you to prioritize my feelings more than yours." She sniffs and nods. "We should go to Barkly West for cleansing and the naming ceremony. We can just spend a few days away from people and maybe come back when we have healed." She gives me a weak smile before nodding.

“Owenkosi. That is going to be his name. Owenkosi Sithole because he belongs to God.” she says with a smile while tears stream down her cheeks. I wipe them and kiss her forehead.

“We will get through this, together, as a family.” she nods. “I love you mama wabantwana bami.” She blushes.

“I love you too baby daddy.” I raise my eyebrows and she laughs. “Okay, fine. I love you too my munchie.” I smile and she continues laughing. “God, you’re so petty.”

«««»»»»

DAKOTA

We couldn’t go see Lwah and Jobe last night because I was tired and I couldn’t leave our guests. Jobe totally understood. I was beyond heartbroken when I discovered sis Lwah actually had a miscarriage. I know I didn’t want baby Gram in the beginning. Heck, I even tried to get rid of her but now I love her to bits. I can understand the pain of losing a child. What’s worse is that she didn’t even know about it. But I think she would’ve been more heartbroken if she already knew about the pregnancy.

Anyways

Advertisement

many incidents happened last night. One major being the fact that Ndabe's family wanted us to do things properly before officially tying the knot. They didn't care about me being white and my family not being familiar about some of the Zulu traditions. That's what you get for marrying into a Zulu family. They will force their traditions down your throat without even caring about how you feel about them. Marry a Zulu man, they said, but they never elaborated on the stress that comes with a Zulu wife title.

Anyways, the Mpisi family spent the night and it looks like they are going to spend the entire day in here. I am so happy that Ndabe's ex-wife's family left. After that encounter with Ahlelelwe's aunt, I honestly didn't feel comfortable around them. I was even starting to feel paranoid. So I wake up, Ndabe isn't even in bed anymore. I wonder where he is in this big house. Probably chatting to his family. I go shower and get dressed in a three-quarter sleeve V-neck colour block regular dress and sandals. I tie up my hair and put on some lipstick. I head to Ahlelelwe's room first and find all three of the children

there. I then think about the chat I had with sis Lwah earlier this week.

“Hey guys.” I say and they greet back. I go sit on the couch and Ahlelelwe immediately comes to sit next to me, cuddling with me. Honestly I think if I wasn’t pregnant, she would be sitting on my lap like every time, not even caring if she is heavy or not. “So there is something I want to ask you guys before you leave.” Both Asimbonge and Tshedza nod. “How comfortable are you at the boarding school? Do you like it there? Do you want to come back home? Like your father and I are going to be married and I will turn this house into a warm home. Do you want to come back and live like Ahle? See your dad every day and actually bond with him?” they both keep quiet looking at me. Asimbonge sighs.

“I think it would be really cool to come back. I love living with my old man and sometimes I get a bit sad when I have to leave home. I get homesick and at times I don’t wanna call home because I don’t wanna bother dad so much. So that’s why I focus my attention on the video games. They comfort me when I am feeling lonely. So yah, I would love to come back and study in a school around here.” he says with a smile and that warms

my heart. He is actually warming up to me and that feels so good.

“What about you Tshedza?” I ask.

“I only have a year and a few months left in my school. It would be very unrealistic of me to move back here. But I did promise dad that I will study in UJ or UP and live here when I am done with high school.” she says and I nod.

“That’s cool then. So let’s go have breakfast.” I say already standing up. Ahle squeezes my hand.

“Can I get a hug from you?” Asimbonge asks and I giggle, opening my arms. He comes to hug me and even kisses my bump. Gosh that makes my heart swell. “It’s baby Gram, right?” I laugh and nod. “Hey there baby Gram. This is Asimbonge, your big brother but you can call me big bro in order to avoid biting your lip. So behave and don’t trouble your mother.” OMG! I am literally blushing right now and holding back tears. He smiles at me and then we all head downstairs. There is so much noise and it’s so busy in the kitchen. The kids go their separate ways while I go greet the people in the kitchen and the lounge. I then go out in search for Ndabe and find him sitting in the patio with

his father. Not wanting to interrupt them, I start walking back inside but he calls me.

“Babe, come here.” he says and I walk to them. I sit on a vacant chair and greet them.

“You look beautiful, makoti.” Mpisi Senior say and I blush before thanking him. “So my son is telling me about how fucked up your relationship with your family is right now.” I nod. “So is there anyone else we can pay lobola to and do other ceremonies with?” he enquires and I nod.

“I have an uncle, my dad’s younger brother and he lives here in Joburg and he is married to a Ndebele woman so he is more open and welcoming about different cultures.” I say and Mpisi Senior nods.

“So he wouldn’t have a problem with us coming to pay lobola for you next week?” he asks and my eyes pop out.

“Isn’t that too soon?” I ask before I can even stop myself. Both the men chuckle.

“You are already pregnant and close to your birthdate MaMuller, so this should be done as soon as possible. My son

wants the child to bear his name, so it would make us more comfortable if he at least paid lobola for you before forcing his name on you and the child.” Mpisi Senior states and I nod. The MaMuller part is amusing though. Is this how they are all going to call me after I have married Ndabe traditionally?

“I hope I am not being rude or noisy, but where is Mrs. Mpisi Senior?” I question and they both laugh. Okay, what’s funny about what I am asking?

“She is that woman who asked about the gender of the baby during dinner last night.” Ndabe answers and my eyes pop out.

“That Halle Berry Bombshell looking creature?” they laugh at me again.

“That’s not a compliment I get most of the time, so thank you MaMuller.” A voice says behind me and I turn to find the bombshell behind me looking like Naomi Campbell, Tyra Banks and Halle Berry all combined. Fuck. Mpisi Senior has taste.

FORTUNATE

I didn't drink last night at Dakota's stepdaughter's party. I just didn't feel like it. My soul was down and I could hardly stomach anything but I pretended to be fine. Only this time I didn't have my every shield to protect me, alcohol and tipsiness.

I drag myself out of the bed and go brush my teeth before heading to the kitchen. I grab bottled water from the fridge and then go throw myself into the couch, tuning into the Morning News. I am weird, I know, but I am a news' person. I raise the volume a bit just to see what's happening this morning. A reporter appears reporting about some fire that occurred in a house of some influential man. The house looks familiar, too familiar.

"I am Nozithiya Mbomvu, reporting live at the home of the late Mr. Qhayiya Kheyizana. Mr. Kheyizana was a famous businessman who owned a couple of properties and a media publishing house. He is also the son of Mr. Bayeza Kheyizana who is a Police Captain in Port Alfred and Mrs. Hlalumi Kheyizana who is a Judge at the Magistrate Court in Port Alfred. It has been said that Mr. Kheyizana was attacked in his home

last night and he was burnt alive. This was a direct and personal attack. It has not been confirmed if his daughter was inside the house but numerous unidentified bodies were found at the kitchen in Mr. Kheyizana's house. That is all for now. Please tune in on the next hour for more updates. I am Nozithiya Mbomvu, reporting live."

I freeze and my mouth goes dry. I feel myself sweating everywhere in my body. I am shivering. I am unsure if I am still dead or alive. I feel my breath being cut off and I can't breathe. I am trying so hard to find a breathing pattern but I am failing. I hear nothing but the sound of burning flames and how she may have possibly screamed on her last moments. My daughter. My only daughter. She is presumably dead and it's all because of one man who has managed to screw me over from time to time. I hear every sound I can think of, ringing in my head. I can't breathe. Help me breathe. I am sinking into a dark hole. I don't know if I will be able to get out without anyone pulling me out. Somebody pull me out. Please.

-Ding Dong-

The bell works like magic. Like it was the only sound I was waiting for in order to snap out of whatever trance I was in. switching off the TV, I drag my feet to the door and open the door with the little strength I have left. There is no one there. I am in the delusional stage, this early? I look down and I nearly jump back when my eyes land on my daughter in her car seat sleeping peacefully. My heart beat fasts out of my chest. What is happening? What the hell is happening? I look around and on my right I spot 3 pink big suitcases and boxes. Is this some kind of a joke? My baby makes a small sound and then she opens her eyes. She smiles when she sees me.

“Mommy.”

《 《 《》 》 》

DAKOTA

She smiles at me before going to sit on her husband's lap. He adorably wraps his arms around her waist and brings her even more closer than she is. She perks his lips and turns her attention to me. This kind of old love is goals.

“Don't worry about it. These two don't care about PDA. I have been subjected to this from when I was only a day old. Even porn. I once saw them shagging in the bathroom and I was 15 months then.” Ndabe states and his mother rolls his eyes while his father cracks up.

“You are being dramatic, son. And it's funny that you remember the sex but don't remember kissing that ugly girl when you were 5 years old.” Mrs. Mpisi Senior says with a giggle. This woman ages really well. Her first born is 36 years old but she doesn't even look like a woman in her forties or even fifties since I don't know her real age.

“Mom come on. Why are you embarrassing me in front of the mother of my children?” Ndabe says practically hiding his face with a newspaper. Both his parents laugh at him and I giggle.

“Anyways I want us to go out for brunch before I leave. We need to get to know each other better. You are my son's future, so we have to get along as the women in charge of expanding the Mpisi clan.” Mrs. Senior speaks so gracefully. Like she is Michelle Obama or another honorable lady.

“We can go now. Let me quickly grab my purse.” I stand up and Ndabe also stands. I frown at him. “Where are you going?” he chuckles.

“Where you are going. Are you hormones acting up? I haven't even received some morning glory or even a quickie. Ngifuna ikhekhe.” He licks his lips and I turn pink due to embarrassment. This man. I rush away leaving them laughing. I head to the bedroom and hear many beeps from my phone. I take it and see a dozen of messages and calls

Advertisement

all from Fortunate. Just as I am about to call her back, she calls again. I answer it and she doesn't even wait for me to speak.

“Dakota what the fuck? Who the hell did you tell about Qhayiya?” she whispers harshly and I frown. I walk to the bathroom and lock it before sitting on the shower bench.

“What are you talking about?” I am so confused.

“He is fuckin dead. He was burnt alive and left for everyone to see.” I swallow hard

“What about your child?” I am even afraid of the response.

“Someone brought her here. She was strapped on her car seat with all her toys and clothes on the veranda. Who did this because if it was Thandeka, she would've wanted me to know she did it.” Her voice was less harsh now but still demanding answers. I clear my throat and lower my voice.

“You got what you wanted, Fortunate. Your baby back and Q dealt with. Now what is the problem?” she exhales loudly.

“I just want to know whom I owe.”

“That shouldn't worry you. Just be happy that your child is back and safe.” I hear Ndabe calling me from the bathroom. I stand up. “I need to go. Will come as soon as I get time so that I can see your angel.” I hang up.

I sigh before flushing the toilet and washing my hands. I head back to the bedroom and find him already lying on the bed, naked. Aibo. I laugh and shake my head. “I am not riding you, Ndabe. Not today.” He chuckles and gives me one look that is strong enough to make me take off all my clothes and climb into the bed.



My future mother in law and I walk inside the mall. I don't even know what she does for a living but she looks like a certified real housewife. We walk into the first clothing shop and she pulls me to the women's section. She whistles looking at the shop assistant and the assistant quickly rushes our way.

“Get me a basket.” She says with a straight face. This woman. She could've grabbed it at the entrance. She is so dramatic. The assistant leaves and comes back with a small trolley after a few minutes. Mrs. Mpisi Senior smiles at her before turning to me. “So pick a few items, stylish ones.” I laugh before walking around. I pick a few dresses, some jeans, t-shirts and jerseys. She also picks a few things for herself and we go to the teller. She takes out a black card. “My husband has too much money. Sometimes he doesn't even know what to do with it.” She pays for all the clothes and we walk out. “Let's go to Truworths.”

We head there and the moment we enter, she pulls me to the Earth Child sections. She takes numerous baby clothes, pink, blue, yellow and purple. “Don't mind me. I am just excited about my newest grandchild. Even though I look too hot to be a grandma.” I chuckle.

“What products do you use?” I really want ask her age but you don't ask a woman that question. She rolls her eyes with a smile.

“Ever heard of a phrase that says ‘Black don't crack’. That's just what it is.” I laugh and also pick a few stuff for baby Gram. She pays for the clothes once again and we head out. We grab brunch at some high class restaurant before our men call, wanting us to come back. Drama.

LWANDEKA

Losing a child is hard. It is not something I would wish even upon my worst enemy. It's even worse for me. I never got to feel him kick. I never got to experience any cravings, any weight gain. I never got to experience anything with him, except for loss and that hit me hard. That is why my husband and I decided to go down to Barkley West. So that we can focus on ourselves and grieve our child without any pressure.

“We don't have to pack Yamie's toys baby. Have you forgotten that back home we have a play room full of every toy the royal kids always demand?” Vuyo asks and I chuckle before placing back Yamihle's toys and only taking her favourite stuffed animal. “We are going to be okay, my sweet rose. Everything takes time. That's why we are going home, so that we won't be rushed by anyone or even receive looks of pity every single day.” I smile and hug him.

“I don't know how I would've survive something like this without you by my side. I don't know how Hlomu did it.” He laughs.

We take our bags and head downstairs only to find our friends on the foyer carrying paper bags.

“You didn’t think you’d leave without saying goodbye now, didn’t you?” Nolby asks with a smile already coming to hug me. “I am going to miss you. Steven and I are going to take over your fashionista couple title while you are away.” we all laugh. Nolby has the power to make you laugh even in grief. She is just a ball of energy.

“We decided to get you some food for your journey and a few other things we thought you might need.” Thandeka says. I nod.

“Let the gents pack those things while you ladies catch up. I know you want to talk about a few things in private.” Vuyo says and he kisses my cheek before heading out with our bags. The men head out with all the paper bags and gift bags.

“Fortunate, are you okay? I saw that house accident that killed Qhayiya.” She nods with a smile.

“I got my baby back and I am so relieved and happy about that. It’s like a huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders.”

“We are definitely going to celebrate once we are back.” We both hug.

“I will absolutely hold down the fort on the clubs and host some events with the help of boss lady. We wanna make you proud.” Aviwe says.

“I can’t believe I am saying this, but I will check on the farm regularly.” Londy drawls and we all laugh.

“I will help. I have taken a maternity leave, so I will have more time on my hands.” Dakota states.

“How is everything with your in-laws?”

“Well Ndabe’s parents adore me and his kids are warming up to me. So I don’t care what others say. As long as his parents and kids love me, all is well.”

“Your parents are dramatic though.” Nolby says rolling her eyes and Dakota is the first one to laugh before we all follow suit.

“But I know my family, in fact the whole Jama nation will freak if they ever find out about my relationship with a white man. I am also ready to go to war but I won’t even disown the rents because I know they also wouldn’t. Just hold old, I know a birth of a child has a way of bringing people together. Maybe Gram

will also do that. Otherwise you can take her back to where she came from if she doesn't do that because that will mean she is a devil's agent." We break into laughter. God u Nolubabalo.

"Okay, I think that's enough catching up." Vuyo says getting in and we continue laughing. Anyways I hug all my friends.

"You are going to be fine

Advertisement

Sosha. You are strong and brave. You can conquer anything, even war against any mafia queen." Thabi says and I hug her once again. We all walk out. Vuyo straps Yamihle into her car seat.

"Bye everyone." We all climb inside the car and drive off.

«««»»»»

DAKOTA

Nobody spoils me like Ndabe. I swear this man makes me blush like crazy every day with the way he treats me. I just fall for him every single day and I am not even afraid to let go or hold back.

He took me out for lunch and now we are just taking a stroll in the mall, holding hands. It's evening and it is less crowded.

"So I had a talk with the kids." I start off and he looks at me but we keep on walking.

"Go on."

"Asimbonge wants to come back and study locally. He says he gets home sick and honestly he misses you and his sister. So can we please register him to a private school around for the next academic year?" he smiles.

"I am proud of you. I know one of the reasons he is coming back is because of your presence in our lives. He is a sucker for affection, so the amount of affection and attention you give him, he loves it. I am happy you are making effort to getting to know them better. What about Tshedza?"

"She said moving won't be a wise step for her right now. Rather wait for her to finish high school and then she will register at a university here in Joburg and she will stay at home instead of students' residence." He holds my hand firmly to stop me from

walking. He doesn't say anything, he just attacks me with a kiss.

"You never cease to amaze Me." he says breathlessly. "Thank you and I love you."

"DAKOTA IRENE MULLER!" that voice quickly snaps me out of the fantasy land I was in. I turn to find my aunt standing not far from us with her hands on her waist. She is fuming. "So, is dit wat jy nou doen? Rondgaan en ape soen in 'n openbare plek sodat almal jou kan sien? Het jy nie respek vir jouself nie? Dink jy nooit aan die manier waarop jy ons as jou gesin verneder nie? Gee jy nie om dat jy ons naam in die modder sleep nie? Wat de fok is fout me jou? Wie is jy? (So, is this what you do now? Going around and kissing monkeys in a public place for everyone to see you? Don't you have respect for yourself? Don't you ever think about the way you are humiliating us as your family? You don't care that you are dragging our name in the mud. What the fuck is wrong with you? Who are you?)" I swallow hard.

"Antie kaimmer asseblief, en moet asseblief nie my verloofde 'n aap noem nie. Ons gaan 'n probleem hê. (Auntie please calm down, and please don't call my fiancé a monkey. We are going

to have a problem.)” She chuckles angrily and even clap her hands dramatically.

“Calm down? Calm down? You are stressing your parents. They are even losing weight. They don’t know what is happening in your life but here you are, walking around with this sin. Don’t you care about your mother’s health? What is going on with you child? Did these black people bewitch you? because that can be the only explanation you have for disrespecting people who brought you in this earth and made sure you are well fed and taken care of for 23 years. Is this how you repay them?” there is even a crowd around us right now and I can see in the corner of my eyes some taping all of this. I breathe out loud.

“Auntie stop disrespecting my fiancé. I chose him because I love him. If you are family and you claim to love me, you will accept him and treat him with respect and kindness you would’ve shown a white man. Right now you are being racist. Love knows no race or boundaries. That’s one of the reasons why you will always stay bitter. It’s because you think love is only found among your race. Who knows? Maybe your soulmate is a Chinese guy but you are too ignorant to see that. Instead you are going around insulting my man like it’s nothing. Don’t ever do something like this again or else I will have you arrested.”

“I don’t give a fuck. You are marrying a bloody kaffir and I am not going to apologize for that. You are an ill-mannered child and I wish this man can slaughter you for his own wealth so that you can regret your decision.”

“That’s enough now, ma’am.” Ndabe chirps in.

“Don’t fuckin talk to me. You are going to rub off that charcoal skin of yours on me. Know your place.” She turns to look at me.

“You will regret this.” she sees the crowd gathered against us.

“I don’t give a fuck if you all make me trend. People must know that you don’t date a person out of your race. That’s a disgrace and a shame. Black people should know their lane and stay there.” she roughly pushes away some of the people as she walks away. I feel myself sweat all over. I am experiencing some minor pains. This confrontation is not something I was expecting and I am even ashamed to look at Ndabe. What must he think about my family? How could aunt humiliate him like that in front of all these people?

“Are you okay?” Ndabe asks. I am not. I am feeling cramps on my lower abdomen and a headache.

“I think you should take me to the hospital.” He doesn’t ask any further. He just picks me up and rushes to the parking lot.

“Miss Muller you are lucky that whatever happened didn’t cause any strain in your body. But please, you need to take it easy. You know how critical your condition is. Nothing bad happened, you are just too stressed. We will have to keep you overnight for observations and also monitor your blood pressure because it is too high. If something like this happens again, I will have no choice but to admit you. Please don’t force me to do that.” the doctor says removing his glasses and looking at me. I sigh and nod.

“I hear you doctor.”

“Good. Now please relax and rest. We will do another ultrasound tomorrow to ensure that we didn’t miss anything.”

“Thank you.” he nods and then heads out. I turn to Ndabe. He is standing facing the window with his hands on his pockets.

“Babe.” He turns to look at me for a nanosecond before turning to stare outside the window.

“I am not a bad person, Dakota. But I don’t play when it comes to my children. I did tell you that I don’t care if your family talks

shit to me but if their actions harm my child in any manner, we are going to have a problem. I don't mind making enemies for my children's safety. I would even commit treason for them." he says coldly and I almost run out because his voice is so thick and scary.

"Babe, please relax. Our child is safe and healthy. Nothing is going to happen to her and I will have a safe delivery. Now how about you go get me something to eat in the meantime because I am super hungry?" he looks at me and then sighs.

"What do you want to eat?"

"Surprise me." he chuckles.

"I will see you in a few minutes." He comes to perk my lips, kisses my bump and then heads out. I breathe out loud and take my phone. I dial dad's number and it takes him a few rings to answer.

"Muller, hello."

"I don't even care that you have deleted my number. I just want to tell you that your sister almost killed my child today with her words. Even if we were to reconcile in the future for

whatever reason, I don't want her anywhere near me and my family. I am officially disowning her. Because of her, I am lying at a hospital bed this moment. Please pass that message to her."

"Dakota..."

"That's all Mr. Muller. Bye." I hang up and huff.

He calls me back and I just reject his call. He sends me a message. *'In watter hospitaal is jy? (Which hospital are you in?)'* I just ignore his message and inform Ma'Khanyi about my whereabouts but don't explain what happened. She asks where I am at and I tell her the name of the hospital. My phone rings and I smile when I see who is calling. She left two days ago with her small family. I know I didn't see them every day but knowing that they are hours away from us makes me miss them so much. Especially the savage Yamihle with endless requests and pleas.

"Sis Lwah."

“OMG! Are you okay? I have seen the video. No scratch that, videos. What that aunt of yours did was unforgivable. She made me wanna hitchhike a flight to Jozi instantly.” I frown.

“Where did you see the video sisi?”

“You are trending. All over the internet. There is a racists’ battle on twitter and your race seems to be losing. It’s not going well for your aunt. I think people are going to cause more than just a cyber-attack towards her. I am suspecting a physical attack because the words she was directing to Mpisi were harsh and very personal.” I sigh.

“I don’t want Ndabe trending in that manner. I am already in a hospital bed because of aunt’s actions. I don’t need any unnecessary attention.”

“Hospital? Gosh. Is baby Gram okay?”

“Yeah, for now. But they are keeping me overnight for observation.”

“Yoh, I wish I was there now. Don’t worry about this. They are trolling your aunt and sympathizing about you. if she sees the things they are writing about her, she will have no choice but to

apologize, whether she means it or not. None of this is going to reflect badly on you and Mpisi. Just relax and please take care of my niece.”

Advertisement

sans-serif">“Take care, sis Lwah.”

“Will do so. Yammy and Vuyo says hi.” We say our goodbyes and hang up.

«««»»»»»

Ndabe and I argued about me wanting to return to the farm house but we ended up coming to an agreement that I will move in with him once we have gone to Home Affairs to get married. He didn't have a problem with that. In fact he said we should go there now just after I have been discharged. Imagine driving such an old man this crazy in love. It's cute. We are now in the farmhouse driveway and he is dropping me off. Well after the wedding dinner, Ma'Khanyi moved in with Gareth and the twins left with her. They adore Gareth so much. So that's why they moved with their mother. Plus they are still teens. They need some guidance and monitoring because Londy and I

are always with our men and we spend less nights in the farmhouse. So now it's just Londy and I residing in the farmhouse, well with the servants and some of the farm workers but they have their own house.

"Can we please go sign after my next checkup?" I suggest.

"You will be eight months then?" I nod. "Well that's two weeks away, so I can compromise. But if ever I feel cold, I am fetching you earlier than agreed." I laugh smh. Ndabe though. Now I am his body warmer.

"I will buy a blanket on takealot and have it delivered in your house for cold rainy days." He laughs.

"Let me walk you in." he climbs off and comes to open the door for me. He helps me climb off the car, takes my bag from the back seat and then we both head inside the house. We find Londy and Tristin dry humping each other in the lounge. Ndabe clears his throat and looks away. I chuckle.

"HEY YOU KIDS! THAT'S ENOUGH PORN FOR THE DAY!" I shout and they both jump off each other. Londy even lands on the floor with her butt and I break into laughter.

She stands up. “Fuck you Kota and hello sbali.” Her tone changes when she greets Ndabe. It’s respectful. Something I will never do with my brother. I continue laughing. She looks so uncomfortable.

“Hello MaMnguni. Hey Tristin.” Ndabe greets and he and my brother shake hands. He comes to hug me.

“Are you okay?” he asks keeping me at arms’ length. I smile.

“I am fine, brother. Aunt’s words didn’t move me but I guess Gram caught feelings.” He chuckles.

“Heard Taylor was at home last night and he gave aunt his peace of mind. He said he wanted your address, that he will come see you today and asked me to send him your address.” I nod.

“What did he say to aunt?” I enquire.

“You will have to hear from him.”

“I guess that’s my cue then. I will see you soon babe.” Ndabe says. I lead him to my room and he places my bags on the

couch before coming to me. “I don’t trust you to cook, so I will send someone to deliver some take outs.” I chuckle.

“We do have Rain my love. Now go and bond with your last born. I will see you when I see you.” we both kiss and he takes out his phone. He taps on it for a few moments and my phone beeps.

“Just for being a cute fiancé.” He winks before heading out.

I check my phone and laugh when I see a bank notification. R35K has been deposited on my account, just for being a cute fiancé. Yoh having a millionaire for a fiancé is nice. This is actually the first time he has sent me money for absolutely no reason. He always buy stuff for me. I rush to the lounge and find the couple in a less sexual position. They are just cuddling.

“Babe we are going shopping after my power nap. My first fiancé allowance just came in.” I scream and Londy quickly comes to me.

“How much?”

“Five Figures.” She screams.

“What are we buying?”

“Your departing outfit to Krabi.” Tristin answers and we both turn to look at him.

“Who is in Krabi?” Londy asks with a frown and Tristin chuckles. I don’t even know what Krabi is. Is it another name for crabs?

“Our vacation after the arrival of baby Gram. It’s long overdue. Krabi is in Thailand.” He answers and Londy’s eyes pop out.

“You are taking me overseas?” Tristin nods with a smirk.

“OMG!” she turns to me. “Babe we are so going shopping after your nap. I am super excited for this. Now go rest.” She pushes me to my room and I laugh. “I need to show my man some appreciation.” She whispers and I laugh even more. My friend is crazy.

Londy and I did go shopping and we shopped many things, even a few things for Gram. Okay I am lying, we bought a lot of things for Gram and I sent them to be delivered at Ndabe's house. I know he is going to be pissed because he wanted us to do Gram's shopping together. He didn't want me to use my own money for baby Gram. But he will have to deal because Gram is also my child. Ndabe can be just too dramatic where Gram is concerned. Anyways I also bought a few things for Ma'Khanyi and Gareth. They are going to their honeymoon next week. They couldn't leave straight after their wedding because they needed to sort out some family shit that stirred up. I think Gareth's kids brought up some drama but Ma'Khanyi told us not to worry about it.

Anyways I have a lot of time on my plate since I am on my maternity leave, so I have decided to look for a proper private school for Asimbonge. His father can afford any school. I am also thinking of putting him and Ahlelelwe at the same school but I will have to ask Ahle how I feel about that.

Following my recent big fallout with my family, I have officially decided that Uncle Josh is the only family member who is going

to help me with any of the wedding preparations and ceremonies. I know my brothers are going to back me up. But I also need to warn Uncle Josh about everything beforehand. My brother, Taylor, did come to visit and he actually forced me to go on an ultrasound scan so that he can see his niece's growth live. He was so happy and he gave me some allowance when he left. I think I love being pregnant. The joy of receiving allowances randomly for no reason.

I get to Uncle Josh's warehouse and we exchange greetings before heading to a nearby café. It's frustrating sometimes that people think that pregnant women are always hungry. Sometimes you just wanna snack on something, like a burger or cake or ice cream, not eat until you're full. So when we get to the café, I order a slice of bar one cake and a glass of milk. Don't judge, baby Gram loves milk so much.

"Interesting choice of drink." uncle Josh remarks and I roll my eyes. He laughs.

"It's what my baby wants."

"As long as it's not cow poop, then I am fine." He says shrugging and I become disgusted instantly.

“Eww, who would ever eat such a thing?” he chuckles.

“You would be surprised by what these bundle of joys make you crave. They can be impossible sometimes.”

“Well I am glad my baby is behaving.” A waiter brings my cake and milk. “Thank you so much my love.” she also hands uncle a cup of coffee and a muffin and then she leaves.

“I suppose this isn’t a social call.” He states looking at me and I sigh. I first chew on my cake, take a sip of my milk. Fuck the combination is so delicious. People should really try it.

“I don’t know how familiar you are to social media.”

“Ohh you mean that stunt my sister pulled? She can be such a bully sometimes. You should tell your man to arrest her. She insulted her in public. It’s not a strong charge but I am sure he can pay the cops to keep her for a weekend just to teach her some lesson.” I laugh.

“Uncle that’s evil.” He shrugs smiling.

“She deserves it.” I continue laughing. Uncle Josh is like one of those people who lives life according to his own rules and

doesn't give a fuck about what else is saying, except for his wife. He values her opinion so much. He is unapologetic.

“So Ndabe’s family wants to come and pay lobola before I give birth. Preferably in the next few weeks. After that we will be free to go get married at Home Affairs. And then we will do all the many Zulu ceremonies after I have given birth. This lobola has to be done fast because Ndabe wants Gram to be born and carry the Mpisi name from birth.”

“And you want me to carry out these negotiations?” I nod. “We are family, my darling. And I know this Zulu man of yours, so I wouldn’t have turned them away even if they showed up at my doorstep without you warning me. So tell them to send the letter anytime, preferably soon because babies have a tendency of coming earlier than expected.” I smile and squeeze his hand.

“Thank you uncle. So that early arrival

Advertisement

talking from experience?” he laughs before nodding.

“My lastborn actually came while we were attending a parent-teacher conference. He was set to arrive 3 weeks later. It was so random, I had to rush my wife to the hospital. She was busy screaming and Gemma kept on asking ‘is it time?’ ‘Is the baby here now?’ ‘Why is mommy screaming?’ I swear she was just adding to my stress.” I laugh.

“I am pretty sure Ahle will also be like that if Gram comes while she is present. She is too curious for her age.” He smiles.

“You must really like her.”

“I have grown an attachment to Ndabe’s kids just like he has fallen deeply for Gram. I swear sometimes it’s like he loves her more than he loves me.”

“I know how that feels and my wife has accused me of such. But what happens is that men love their women more than they love their kids, well most of them. They just don’t admit it. I have seen that guy and how he looks at you like you are the only breathing thing in the room. He is hooked and I am sure he would trade all of his wealth just for you. So never doubt his love for you and also don’t be jealous if he shows Gram more affection. Gram is you, she came from you. So he is basically showing you more affection.”

“You are very wise.” He laughs. “Well I will tell him to tell his uncles to send the letter. I don’t know which date they will pick. You will just have to inform me about it.”

“Okay then. You should definitely visit me, seeing now that you have free time on your plate. Even sleepover. I am sure your cousins would appreciate spending some time with you.” I smile.

“That seems like a plan. Although it will have to be on a weekday because weekends are for me and Ndabe.” He frowns.

“You guys don’t live together?”

“No. not that he doesn’t want that, he does, desperately. But I told him that I would only move in with him after the signing.”

“Wow. You are wise.” He says mocking me and I laugh.

.
.

LONDEKA MNGUNI

I am informed by the receptionist that there is a matured woman here to see me that I don't have an appointment with. Well since I have a free slot, I tell the receptionist to let the woman in. a few minutes later, the woman walks in. I quickly stand up when I see who it is. Mpisi's supermodel of a mother. She is more beautiful up-close, kinda like my own mother.

"Mrs. Mpisi. What a lovely surprise. Dakota is not in by the way. What can I get you?" I mutter nervously and she chuckles.

"Relax. I am not here to see her. I know she is on her maternity leave." I breathe out but I am still not comfortable not knowing what brings her here. "And please call me MaMcambi."

"Okay MaMcambi. You can sit, please. Do you need something to eat or drink?"

"Oww no, I am fine. I just had lunch before coming here." she says sitting down and placing her expensive designer bag on the desk.

"So what can I help you with?" she smiles.

"I believe that you haven't planned any baby shower for my daughter in law. Mainly because she has already had a gender

reveal party but I want you to plan one for her. An over the top baby shower and invite everyone who she will be comfortable having in her party. Male, female or gays, the gender doesn't matter. You know all her people because you two are best friends, right?" I nod. "I want it to be a huge celebration and I want it done on the day they will be going to Home Affairs for the signing."

"Ohh wow. I am pretty sure she will be very happy about this."

"She better be." She chuckles and I laugh a bit. "Don't worry about the costs. Just send me your bank details and I will transfer the money instantly."

I take out our card that contains our banking details and contact details and hand it to her. She takes it and taps on her phone for a few moments. The company phone beeps, indicating a six figure amount being deposited. My eyes pop out and I swallow hard. That's a huge amount of money and its most people's wedding budget, well those who are living a standard live.

“Please do inform me if it’s not enough. And Londeka I am trusting you because this is your best friend and you come highly recommended in this industry.”

“Thank you for trusting me, MaMcambi.”

“Have a great day then.” She stands up and heads out. Wow. I wish to have a mother in law like that. Dakota is so lucky.

FORTUNATE

I am disturbed by a knock from my deep slumber. Hlalumi is such a busy child. The entire week has been so busy. She wants to play every single moment. I only get rest when she is taking a nap. I am planning on getting her into a school nearby because I don't trust anyone in her previous school. Anyways I get up from the bed and take my gun from the top shelf in my closet. I walk to the lounge and stand before the door.

"Who is it?"

"It's me, Danvers." I frown and open the door without hiding my gun. He eyes it first and chuckles. "I am harmless, I swear." I nod.

"Come in." I step back and he enters. I close the door after him. He goes to sit on the couch and I stand a few feet from him.

"What can I help you with?"

"You can start by putting the gun away. I am not here to harm you or your child. I am sure you wouldn't be comfortable with her seeing you carrying that." I frown.

“What do you know about my daughter?” he smiles.

“Who do you think brought her home?” my eyes pop out.

“Chill. I don’t want anything in return. Okay, maybe a chance to get her to know her mother better. But other than that, I don’t want anything from you.” I sit down on the floor and stare at him. I hear a door opening and small footsteps nearing. I quickly slide the gun under the sofa.

“Mommy, where are you?” she asks before appearing in the lounge dragging her small throw. She is so cute. She is only 5 years old and she just completes me.

“Hey baby. Come here.” she has that cute frown on her face and she is rubbing her eyes.

“Why are you sitting on the floor?” I chuckle. She comes and snuggles herself on my lap. “Who is he?” she asks in a lower voice her eyes travelling between me and Danvers. Danvers chuckles.

“He is my friend.” She nods. “Have you brushed your teeth?” she shakes her head. “How about you go brush them now and I go make us something to eat?” she nods.

“Nice to meet you, mommy’s friend.” She stands up and goes to shake Danvers’ hands before heading out leaving Danvers smiling like a kid in a candy store.

“She is so beautiful and just perfect.” He says.

“Yeah, wait till she gets used to you and makes you play 12 hours a day, only resting when she takes a nap.” He laughs.

“But it must be nice to have her back. I am sure you enjoy even the annoying moments.” I smile and nod. “Anyways I am here to take you to Q’s funeral and before you say no, you need this. Your child need this and please don’t worry, I have a team of guards to escort you there.” I sigh.

“Thank you. What time are we supposed to leave in?”

“In an hour.” I nod.

“Do you want something to eat?” he nods.

“I will have whatever you’re making.”

“Even umfudumezo?” I ask with a smirk and he frowns.

“What is that?” I laugh before standing up and heading to the kitchen. He follows me.

“So Dakota is the one who approached you?” he nods. “How much did she offer you?” he chuckles.

“I have a soft spot for the pregnant twin, so” he shrugs and I laugh.

«««»»»»»

SQUASH

My girlfriend has been sick for a while now. We have been to the doctor multiple times and they have said it's just migraine, nothing hectic but I can see that whatever that is going on with her is killing her. She likes to bury things and move on. Most importantly, she likes her job so much. So that's why she went to work, even with the Sitholes away.

I get to the Sithole mansion and head to the lounge. I find her sleeping on the couch. I go shake her and she opens her eyes and looks around.

“Gosh I must've fallen asleep while watching the TV.” She says when her eyes meet mine. I frown.

“But love the TV was not on.” She squints her eyes at the TV and back at me.

“Ohh, I didn’t realize. Let me get my bag so that we can leave.” She stands up. She is shaking and it looks like she is dizzy. I quickly catch her before she falls back to the couch. “Nice catch.” She says breathlessly.

“I am taking you to a hospital right.” She just smiles at me.

“You are really handsome, do you know that?” she asks giggling lightly. I pick her up and go place her in the car. I ask her colleague to fetch Zethu’s bag and she comes back with it after a few moments.

“Please take her to a doctor. She is really sick. At first I thought she was pregnant but no, she is sick and it’s really serious.” The colleague says and I nod.

“Thank you. I think I will force her to take a week off, well until the Sitholes are back.” She smiles.

“Please do that.” I say my goodbyes and head to the car.

“Were you two gossiping about me?” Zethu asks as soon as I start the car. I chuckle.

“The world doesn’t revolve around you

Advertisement

love.”

“Oww really?” she gives me a challenging look and I laugh.

“You know that my world revolves around you.”

“Good to know.” I continue laughing. Even when she is sick, she has a sense of humour.

On the way to the hospital we speak about a lot of things, even the possibility of us tying the knot soon. I love Zethu so much, so I will definitely pop the question once she has recovered. When we get to the hospital, her breathing is shallow, almost as if it’s hard to breathe. She gets admitted immediately and I sit in the waiting room, cracking my fingers, trying so hard to calm myself down. My phone rings after a few minutes of sitting down. I frown when I see who is calling.

“Minaj what’s up?”

“Juice what are you doing in a hospital?”

“Why are you tracking me?” she chuckles.

“That’s literally what I do. Keep tabs of all of you guys all day and night. Now stop dodging the question. What are you doing ehosi?” I sigh.

“Zethu has been admitted.”

“Is she still sick?”

“Yes.”

“Yoh, I hope she gets well soon. Look I have to go. I will check up on you guys later.” She hangs up.

Nicki doesn’t do small talks or sympathy talks. She can be emotional sometimes but she just doesn’t love feeling different emotions. They overwhelm her. After a few hours a doctor walks in the waiting room.

“Mr. Hlatshwayo?” A doctor says looking around. I stand up.

“That’s me.” she smiles.

“Miss Thahane is awake and doing fine. She is breathing normally and her blood pressure is on the right track. She would like to see you.” I nod with a smile.

“Please lead the way.” We head to Zethu’s ward. She is sitting up and staring at the TV. “Love.” she turns and smiles when she sees me. “You look so much better than you were when I brought you in.”

“I feel better and I even have more strength now.” I go sit on the chair near her bed and hold her hand. “I am sorry for scaring you.” I smile and shake my head.

“As long as you are fine now. I don’t wanna go through what I went through the last few hours, not knowing what is going on with you.” she smiles and cups my face.

“Never again. I am going to be fine babe. Plus I have you in my corner. Even the devil is afraid of you.” I break into laugh and she also laughs. I bring her face closer and kiss her. “I love you.” I smile.

“I love you too.”

“We should name our first born Sivuyile, it rhymes with your name.” I chuckle.

“You are right.” We continue speaking about many things and even planning for our future. She starts yawning and I stand up. “I will see you when you are up again.” She shakes her head.

“You need to go rest babe.”

“I will only rest once you have been discharged. Now rest.” She kisses me and hugs me for a long time. “I am not going anywhere.”

“Okay.” Our eyes lock. “I am going to be okay, right?” she has fear in her eyes. I sigh and take off my shoes. I climb onto her bed and her eyes pop out. “What are the doctors going say?” I shrug.

“I don’t care.” I snuggle next to her. “Now sleep. You will find me here when you wake up.” she smiles and closes her eyes. Her hand is on my chest. After a few minutes I hear light snores. My phone rings and I huff when I see that it’s Sizwe. I answer it.

“What the fuck man? Where are you?” he doesn’t even wait for me to speak. I know he is pissed that I have ghosted him.

“I am sorry grootman, my woman is in the hospital so I am spending time with her.” he keeps quiet for a few moments and then speaks up.

“What is wrong with her?”

“I still don’t know.”

“Ohh okay. Which hospital are you in?” I tell him. “Okay I will pop by later on. I hope she gets well soon.” he hangs up. I wrap my arms around her and close my eyes.

«««»»»»»

I am woken up by someone shaking me roughly and a loud lone beep that can’t stop ringing. I open my eyes and I am surrounded by doctors.

“Sir, you need to get off the bed and get out so that we can do our job.” One of the doctors say.

I look at Zethu in my arms. She looks so peaceful and she is even smiling but she is not breathing. I look at the heartbeat monitor and it is showing the straight line which means there is

no pulse. I freeze and it takes a team of a few medics to get me off the bed. They usher me to the door and the doctors get busy around the ward.

“There is nothing we can do. Time of death- 21:39.” One of them says after a while and I swear my whole world just stops. I regain my strength and push the door open.

“NO! She is not dead! She can’t be dead. Fuckin do your job and wake her up!”

“Can someone please usher him out?” one doctor says. Someone takes the sheet and covers Zethu’s face.

“DON’T DO THAT! YOU ARE SUFFOCATING HER! STOP DOING THAT!” they push me out and this time I fight them with all my strength. Really strong arms grab me from behind and I catch his scent in the air.

“Give us some space.” He says once and all the medics hurry away. He turns me. “Ndoda.”

“They are killing her grootman. They are killing my woman. They covered her with a sheet and stated her time of death. They can’t do that. Please stop them. She was fine, just a few

hours ago, she was fine.” He doesn’t say anything. He just wraps his arms around me.

“I am sorry. I am really sorry for your loss.”

It then dawns me, right that moment that my woman is gone. My love, my heart in a human form, the source of my joy and the woman I was planning to spend the rest of my life with. I feel my body getting loose and I sit down on the floor before wailing. Is this the punishment for all the crimes I have committed? For all the people I have killed? But couldn’t God punish me by taking me? Why did he have to rip out my heart like this?

LWANDEKA

An urgent call about Zethu had me driving a 4 hour distance in less than 2 hours. Zethu is family, so hearing a call about her being at the hospital didn't sit well with me. My husband didn't even comment about my gangster driving skills this time around. He just made sure that our daughter was strapped in and he actually gave her panado to knock her out before we left. I don't even know how many speeding tickets I got on the way and I don't even care. Getting to the hospital, we quickly head inside and manage to locate Squash in the waiting room with most of pride members. He is weeping and bhut Sizwe is trying to comfort him. My body momentarily freeze. A cry of a man can only mean one thing. That shit has really went down and it's so bad.

"Sbali what happened?" Vuyo asks with his hands on my waist. Bhut Sizwe looks up and sighs. His eyes are red.

"Zethu died in her sleep a few hours ago. The doctors haven't told us what the cause of her death was. I think they are doing an autopsy right now." Bhut Sizwe say and I can't believe the words coming out of his mouth.

I shake my head. “That’s not true. She was okay a few days ago. Yeah she cried about a headache but come on. Don’t joke like that bhuti.” I am already a shaking mess. He sighs and stands up.

“She died in Squash’s arms. There was no pulse. No heartbeat. She was brought in crying about a headache and dizziness. It’s still unexplainable because her symptoms points out that she could have been healed.” My emotions are so high right now, I don’t even feel Flame taking over. I am shocked by Vuyo releasing me abruptly.

“You are really hot.” He says stepping away from me.

I smirk at him and walk out of the waiting room down the corridor to Zethu’s room. I barge in and find her body uncovered. Even from where I am standing, I can see that she is dead cold.

“You are not supposed to be here, miss.” One of the doctors say. I look at her with my head tilted to the side.

“I want answers. My friend died under your watch and you have the guts to keep us in the dark. I want answers and I want them now.” I can feel anger coursing through my veins and I am trying so hard not to burn this whole godforsaken hospital down. The doctors seem nervous right now.

“I promise you miss, we will come and update you in a few moments. We are just finishing up here.” I look at him and just feel like burning him up but I stop myself when I see him sweating like crazy.

“I am giving you two minutes.” I turn around and walk out. Before heading back to the waiting room, something tells me to stop and turn back, so I do that and I spot Zethu or rather Zethu’s spirit. She is standing not far from me. She is looking at me but you can see that she wishes she is in the waiting room with the weeping man who hasn’t stopped crying. “Why did you leave him? Why did you leave us?” our eyes meet and it is only then I see that she is in pain. She is crying silently.

“I love him so much. We had plans for the future. We wanted big things together. It hurts to hear him cry like that about me. I didn’t want to leave him. But you know you can’t do anything.

When the angel of death has come, you can't turn it away. Please tell him that I love him and I will always keep him in my heart." She wipes her tears and disappears.

I swallow hard and head back to the waiting room. Flame goes to rest and I balance myself with the wall before sliding down and screaming. I can't believe this. I am finally believing it now that I have seen her spirit. I scream and wail, trying to pull my hair from my skull. This is all just so unbelievable. Squash stands up and comes to kneel in front of me.

"Please don't cry. We are going to be okay." He says placing his hand on my shoulder and squeezing it. He is comforting me whereas I should be comforting him. I sniff and wipe my unstoppable tears. I clear my throat.

"Flame saw her." he frowns. "Flame woke up and she saw Zethu's spirit. She was shattered just as you are. She said that you guys had plans for the future. You wanted big things. It broke her heart to see you crying like that and not be able to touch you or comfort you. She didn't want to leave you but her time had come. She just told me to tell you that she loves you."

he sits down flat on the floor and covers his face with his hands.

“I have never experienced so much pain in my life. It feels surreal. I am hurting so much. I wish for time to stop so that I can take a breath but I know that as soon as I get out of this hospital I will have to man up and not show weakness. I will have to go to her parents and tell them how their daughter died in my arms and I didn’t do anything to protect her or keep her safe.” I shake my head.

“None of this is your fault. You shouldn’t blame yourself.” The doctor enters the waiting room and his eyes widens when he takes in the number of people inside. He composes himself.

“Thahane family.” he says and Squash raises his head but doesn’t stand up.

“You can talk now doc. We don’t have all day.” bhut Sizwe says and the doctor swallows hard.

“Miss Thahane suffered a Sudden Cardiac Death. It was due to cardiovascular cause that occurred a few moments after both

she and Mr. Sixolile dozed off. Her heart stopped beating and she died in her sleep. When she was brought in

Advertisement

she was showing symptoms of a migraine. Which is why we gave her migraine medication. We noticed how irregular her heart beat was and made sure to monitor it. I guess we should've paid more attention to it. We are really sorry for your loss." He says and quickly walks out. I exhale and look at Squash. He wipes his tears and stands up. He walks to Sizwe.

"Indoda ayikhali." He says before walking out. But Sizwe sighs and follows him. Soon after all the pride members which were in the waiting room also follow after them. Vuyo comes and helps me stand.

"Let's go home." He says. I don't respond. I just wrap my arms tightly around him and weep in his arms. He sighs and sniffs. "I don't know what I would do if I were to lose you. I would be without a heart because you are my heart."

...

We get to the house and find all of our staff members and friends already there. After Zethu's funeral, we are going back

to Barkly West. We did do the cleansing but there is something about Barkly West that just soothes your soul and heals your heart. I thought we were done with grief but Zethu's passing has opened old wounds and created new ones. We walk inside the house and they come to bombard us with hugs. They are happy to see us but I don't think they will still be happy after we deliver the bad news. Mom is also here with Gareth. She takes a sleeping Yamihle from Vuyo's arms and kisses her cheeks.

"Can everyone settle down please?" I request and they sit down.

"Babe why are your eyes red?" Nolby asks and I clear my throat.

"We have lost Zethu. She suffered a Sudden Cardiac Death. Her heart stopped beating and she died." I announce and the whole room goes silent.

"You are joking, right?" Dakota speaks up after a few minutes of silence. I shake my head.

"I am afraid not and please don't call Squash to confirm. He is very devastated. She died in his arms while he thought they were taking a nap kanti Zethu is closing her eyes forever."

“But she was getting help. Squash took her to the hospital. She was supposed to get help. How did she end up dead, just like that?” Nandi, one of our helpers, asks in a shaky voice.

“Squash is on his way to announce the death to her family. This is difficult to all of us. Zethu wasn’t just our employee, but she was family and we loved her so much. It is going to be hard to pick up the pieces and move on without her. I just want you guys to know that you can take the week off and to mourn in your own ways and you don’t have to worry about my wife and I. we will be staying at the farm house.” Vuyo says. His words are followed by sniffs and cries from most females in the room. These past few months have been really hard on us. First Asher, our unborn baby and now Zethu. I just hope God is going to give us a break now because we have suffered enough loss in such a short space of time.

«««»»»»»

NARRATED

He got to the Thahane residence and he was let in. Zethu’s parents were really fond of him because they knew how much he loved their daughter and how much their daughter loved

him. They led him to the lounge and offered something to drink but he declined it politely.

“I won’t waste your time ma no baba. As I am sitting here in front of you, I am powerless and I am trying so hard to stay afloat and breathe but I am struggling. My heart has been removed from my body and my wind pipe has been roughly and unexpectedly taken out of Me.” he said and his voice was already shaking. Zethu’s mom could sense that something was wrong but Zethu’s father was a bit clueless and was confused what the poet of a boy was trying to say.

“Son, speak. What is going on?” Mr. Thahane asked with a voice full of concern.

“I know she told you about the headaches, fatigue and the dizziness that she had been experiencing for the past few weeks. Well only because I forced her to. Today she suffered a Sudden Cardiac Death. Her heart stopped beating.” Repeating the doctor’s words just made everything seem so real. Tears dropped from his eyes and Mrs. Thahane screamed while Mr. Thahane froze on his seat.

The death of Zethu really hit everyone hard. The fact that her sickness didn't seem serious is what makes this whole thing hurt the most. Squash has been like a walking zombie. Bhut Sizwe was even worried that he might harm himself, so he took away his weapons and also made him stay with one of the gang members.

We all thought that Zethu's family was going to blame all this on Squash but they did the opposite. Apparently her maternal grandmother also died of Sudden Cardiac Death and even though they were hurt by this, they had been told that the illness could be passed down from generation to generation. They were heartbroken but that comforted them in a way. Bhut Luvuyo worked together with bhut Sizwe to make sure that all the funeral preparations were going well.

Well I haven't been well ever since I heard about Zethu's passing. So Ndabe took me to the doctor and I was told that my feelings affect the baby. So even though I am sad, I should think of my baby and try to relax and think positive thoughts. Which is why my future husband checked me to a hotel and booked a spa session for me. I could've asked Londy to come with me but

she had work to do. I was lucky that Lindy was in town, so I asked her to come with. She is Londy's other best friend. They went to varsity together when Londy did one year at the University of Zululand. Their friendship hasn't stopped booming. Even though they are separated by distance, they stay connected.

We just came out of the spa and we are currently having lunch at the terrace.

"You are lucky though." She says taking a sip of the champagne. I am having water. Sometimes too much sugar is not enough for me. Pregnancy shame. I can't wait to give birth.

"What do you mean?"

"This man just loved you and accepted your unborn baby just like that. If you were black I would've said you bewitched him because I have never heard of such cases where a man just asks out a pregnant woman and gives her the world. That is why I say you are lucky." I smile.

"Our relationship hasn't been a simple walk in the park. I lost my relationship with my family. The only people who are still

communicating with me are my brothers and my uncle. So sometimes, he tries twice as hard to be there for me and spoil me just so he can close the gap I have in my heart for my family.”

“I am sorry. I didn’t know.”

“It’s okay. Now forget about my semi happy semi unhappy life. What’s happening with you?” she sighs.

“I have finished my degree but securing a job this side hasn’t been easy. Dad tried and actually found a job for me at his workplace. I have been working there for a few weeks. The boss is so sexy and is a single parent with one child. He has a reputation of dating successful women though, so I am not in his league.” She huffs and I giggle.

“You have a crush.”

“No I don’t.” she answers quickly.

“I am not asking.” She rolls her eyes and I laugh. “Aren’t you in a relationship or something?”

She shakes her head. “The guy I was dating broke up with me because he got a job in Thohoyandou. He said the distance thing won’t work. So that’s how it ended.”

“Shame. He was a jerk though. I know I haven’t been in many relationships but I would say no if Ndabe wanted to break up with me because I love him. But yeah that won’t happen anyway because he is his own boss.”

“Levels.” We both laugh. “At this point I wouldn’t even mind being a billionaire’s surrogate.” I break into laughter.

“You read too many novels.”

“But I am sure there is a man out there looking for an heir. Honey I have the eggs, the womb and the body. I qualify.” I laugh so hard, I even run out of breath.

“Shut up, you’re killing me.” she laughs. Ndabe chooses that moment to walk in. I didn’t even know he was around.

“Hello love.” he kisses my lips. “Hey Lindy.” He kisses Lindy’s cheek.

“You missed her that much?” Lindy asks with a smirk.

“I can’t stay away. Her love portion is too strong.” He says and we laugh at him. “Are you guys done here?” I shake my head.

“What else do you want to do?” I shrug.

“I don’t know.”

“Well how about you go shopping for yourself and the kids? I will send Mngadi to you so that he will help you with the bags.”

“Okay love.” he hands me his black card. He then kisses me and walks away. “What’s the limit?” he laughs.

“What is that?” he walks out leaving us laughing.

“Levels, I told you.” Lindy says and I chuckle.

We finish our lunch and go change before driving to the mall. We start by buying clothes for Tshedza, Asimbonge and Ahle. When we are done with them, I also buy a few stuff for Ndabe and also Lindy since she is accompanying me. I think about buying clothes for Gram but I wanna do that together with Ndabe. When we are done, I choose an outfit for the funeral tomorrow.

Mngadi arrives when we are finished and he loads all the stuff in his car, except for Lindy’s. Since I am pregnant, you know the struggle. I always wanna eat. We head to this expensive restaurant and when we get to the entrance, the hostess stops us with a smile.

“Do you have a reservation?” we both shake our heads. “Well I am afraid I can’t let you in. otherwise have a good day.”

“Let them in, Thato

Advertisement

they are with me.” a deep voice says behind us. I turn to find this very fine specimen standing behind us with a smile. “Can we get in now?” his question is directed to the hostess.

“Mr. Dube, we will have to sort out your table first.” He huffs.

“As you can see, my sister in law is pregnant. Do you want her to stand until her feet are swollen before you actually lead us to a table?” she swallows hard.

“Please follow me this way.” She walks away and we follow her. She shows us a table and we settle down. “A waiter will be with you soon.”

“Thank you for that, Mr. Dube.” Lindy says with a shy smile. Okay. What’s going on here?

“No biggie, Lindelwa. How about you introduce me to your friend?” they know each other? Okay what am I saying? Of

course they do. How else would she have known he is Mr. Dube?

“This is Dakota Muller, soon to be Mrs. Mpisi. She is my friend. And Dakota this is Mr. Zweli Dube, my boss.”

“The one you have a crush on?” my mouth says before I can even stop myself. Her eyes pop out and it’s even too late to say I am joking. “That came out wrong.” I look at the boss and he is just giving her an uncomfortable smirk.

“A crush, huh?” he asks but you can detect some mocking in his tone. Luckily Lindy is saved by a waiter.

“Can I please have a bubblegum milkshake, two slices of bar one cake for sit down, one cheese cake slice for takeout and three purple velvet cupcakes for a takeaway?” I smile at the waiter.

“We could’ve just gone to Enhle’s Sweet Tooth for all of this.” Lindy says rolling her eyes and I laugh.

“I love their bar one cake here. Anyways what are you having?”

“I already ate at the hotel, so can I please two margarita cupcakes and a glass of water?”

“Do they have alcohol in them?” Zweli asks and we all laugh at him, even the waiter.

“What will you be having, sir?” the waiter asks Zweli.

“Hake and calamari platter for one. Also a glass of coke.” The waiter nods and then she leaves. “So, a crush huh?” his smirk is back on and here I thought we were past this. I chuckle.

“I don’t blame her though. You are hot but not as hot as my fiancé. Maybe you know him, Ndabezimnandi Mpisi.” He gives me a genuine smile.

“I know him. I have been meaning to get a sit down with him and just get to know each other. Men like us should be well acquainted.”

“If I didn’t know better, I’d say you have a crush on my man.” he laughs.

“Not really. I actually like the silent woman sitting with us on this table. I just don’t know how to tell her.” he says eyeing Lindy who seems really shocked right now.

She clears her throat. "You are only saying that because you heard I have a crush on you." he chuckles.

"Do I look like a pushover to you, Lindelwa? If I really like someone, I am not afraid to say it, just like I have said." The waiter brings our drinks and luckily that ends the tension in the table. A little whole. Imagine your crush also crushing on you.

LINDELWA 'LINDY' NINELA

“Schucks, I need to leave.” Dakota says after checking out a message from her phone. She is already halfway through her second cake slice. I have just finished my first cupcake. I will definitely eat the other one at home.

“What’s the rush?” I ask. She frowns a bit.

“This man I am marrying says it’s past my nap time. He can be too much sometimes.” I chuckle. She quickly finishes her cake.

“He is the one who is here to fetch you? What about your car?”

“One of his guards is here for me. He will sort out the car issue. That car is boring me though. So Monday we are going to go car shopping. I am not returning his card. He won’t know what hit him, Mr. no limit.” I laugh. “Maybe I will get an expensive watch or handbag for you just for being my acquaintance for the day.” this girl is killing me.

“Thatha real housewife of Joburg.” She breaks into laughter.

“Goals, love.” she calls for the waiter and he comes. “My takeaway please. I am leaving in a minute.” The waiter nods and then walks away. “Anyways let me leave you two love birds to figure out whatever shit is happening between you. And you,” she points at Zweli, “I am only going to connect you with my fiancé if you two are together. Like a double date affair.” She winks before standing up and taking her half-done milkshake. She walks to the bar and leans in, talking to the lady at the bar. She is such a whole mood.

“So, you like me?” Zweli asks leaning back with a smirk. I roll my eyes.

“I think we have already established that but if you are going to be a jerk about it, maybe my feelings for you will miraculously deplete, leaving you saying ‘I blew it’.” He breaks into laughter. “I am serious. Yeah sure, I like you but the ball is in your court now.” He nods with a smirk. He takes a sip in his drink and sits back.

“I fell for you on that day I saw you with your friend. The day we even had lunch together with Nancy. It might have looked like I was interested in your friend but truth be told, I was more

attracted to you. But you were a lot younger back then. I just told myself that I should wait for you to grow up and damn, look at you now.” He says checking me out and biting his lip. Typical man behaviour.

“Could you not make it obvious that you are checking me out?” he laughs and raises his hands in surrender.

“I can’t help it though. You look really sexy.” The butterflies in my stomach though. I can’t spend another minute with this man without making a complete idiot of myself.

“I should get going.” I put my phone in my bag. He quickly grabs my hand.

“Don’t go. Let me settle the bill and maybe we can take a stroll around the mall. I want to get to know you better. So please, a chance.” I sigh and nod. He settles the bill and we both head out. He is walking behind me. “But that ass, Lindelwa. Damn.” I laugh. I have even forgot about my cupcake but I am definitely going to order him to buy a pack of them from Enhle’s Sweet Tooth since it is his fault that I forgot my cake.

“You are sexualizing me and that’s not a good feeling.”

“Sorry.” He catches up with me, holds my hand and we continue walking. I am feeling giddy and I think I am going crazy, but his hand on mine feels ticklish. If I wasn’t in public, I am sure I would’ve laughed like an idiot right now. That’s how much I like him. When I get home, I am definitely going to relive this moment. He squeezes my hand and I look at him. “Did you hear what I just said?” I shake my head.

“Sorry

Advertisement

can you please repeat it?”

“Wow, am I that dreamy?” I giggle and shake my head. “So what do you want to do?” I look at him with my eyes popped out.

“Hey, you’re the one who said you want to spend time with me. I am sure you had something in mind.”

“Is there a new movie that you would like to watch? I am sure we can go to the cinema and catch it in time.” He suddenly sounds nervous. I am sure that’s not because of me.

“Marry Me.” he frowns and I laugh. “Not you silly. The name of the movie I would like to watch is Marry Me. it stars Jennifer Lopez.” He smiles.

“For a second there I thought you were proposing.”

“You are stupid.” He chuckles. We head to the cinema. “You owe me cakes by the way.” He frowns and I laugh.

«««»»»»

THANDEKA MNGUNI

Zethu’s death really hit us. She was like a sister to me. She worked for us for close to 6 years. She was practically family. So her passing really broke my heart. Sizwe has been very supporting towards Squash who is like a zombie. I can’t imagine what he is feeling.

But my boys don’t know whether it’s winter or summer, night or day. They just want attention and they actually have preferences now. There is a park not far from where we stay. It has a jungle gym and they love playing there. Like now, they are crying, wanting to go there. I dress them up in joggers, long sleeved tees and sneakers. They look so cute. So many girls are

going to have sleepless nights because of them. I pack a few snacks in my backpack and we head downstairs. Because they can be fussy and want to be carried at times, I am taking the twin pram with me.

I strap them in and we walk out. My husband parks his car not far from us and climbs off. He looks super drained. Today they were supposed to go fetch Zethu's body from the morgue to her home, her parents' home. I can imagine how Squash was.

"Where are you boys taking my wife?" he asks unstrapping Miso and carrying him. I giggle.

"We are going to the park. I figured they need some fresh air." I respond and he nods with a smile.

"Okay. Let me quickly freshen up and then come with you."

"Babakhe I am sure you are tired. Plus you are not invited. This is a mother-sons outing." He laughs.

"I don't need an invite. If you don't wanna wait for me, then I will take Miso inside and I am pretty sure Simi won't have fun in the absence of his brother."

“You are evil.” He laughs again. He comes to kiss my lips and then walk inside with Miso. I chuckle smh. He is so annoying. I unstrap Simi and kiss him. “How about a mini photoshoot, my prince?” he smiles adorably and nods.

I am sure he didn't understand a work I said. I place him on the hammock and start taking pictures. The triplets (my twins featuring Yamihle) they are used to people taking photos of them. So the moment you indicate that you are taking pictures, they always strike a few hilarious poses. I ask one of the guards to take pictures of both my son and I. Sizwe and Miso come to join us. After we are done, we walk out of the yard, leaving the pram behind.

“How is everything at the Thahane household?” I ask and he sighs.

“As sad as you can expect it to me. Squash is a mess. He hasn't had much sleep the whole week. It's tough. I don't wish to go through what he is going through. Please make sure I die before you.” I laugh.

“As if I can control how and when you die? But I am sure I will live longer because of Silo.” He smiles and blows a kiss. Simi

catches it and we just laugh at him. We get to the park and the minute we place the twins on the ground, they rush to the jungle gym.

“Another one, mama wabantwana bami.” I frown looking at him and I finally get what he is saying. I punch him lightly on the forearm.

“You’re crazy. Andizi love.” he laughs. I go join the boys.

We allow them to play for about half an hour. They finally get tired and we carry them. We walk to the nearby ice cream truck. The way my kids love ice cream from this truck, the owner was even forced to order smaller cups for them. Sizwe buys ice cream for all of us and we chill at the bench eating it.

“Nice.” Miso comments and we laugh at him. That’s the only word he has mastered apart from mama, baba, dodo (gogo) and nani (auntie).

“Yes.” Simi chirps in. that is his signature word. The owner packs up two small ice cream containers and hands them to Sizwe. “I know they will want them tomorrow.” She says with a smile and we chuckle nodding because we know she is telling the truth. In fact they can demand them the moment we get home. We bid farewell to her and head home.

Zethu's death was very sudden and it surprised everyone. She was part of Pride in a way, so the gang mourned her. Her funeral was very dignified but also too emotional. Everyone was crying. I could even see sis Thandeka wanted to cry, she had red eyes but she didn't let the tears fall. When she was called to the front, she spoke so bravely, her voice full of emotions but she didn't break down. She stood strong and tall. Jobe was also emotional as he spoke. I understood their pain. I mean I have lived with Rain for a few months but I know how broken I would be should she die. Sis Lwah didn't even hide her emotions. She cried every chance she got. And I actually commend her for that because crying is a means of releasing the pain inside you. I didn't go to the cemetery but I heard that Squash lost it when he saw the coffin being lowered to the ground. He screamed so much that bhut Sizwe had to walk away with him to calm him down. They only went back when everyone was gone and Squash managed to say his last goodbyes.

He has completely isolated himself to the world. the only way we know he is alive is that he makes sure to send bhut Sizwe a good morning text every morning and they even call each other, even though he says nothing beyond a cold 'morning'

every time. Ndabe understands his pain, so he decided that we should go see him so that he can talk to him, even though he knows chances of him responding are slim. He comes to fetch me from the farmhouse and we drive to Squash's house.

"Are you hungry?" he asks and I huff. I feel myself getting annoyed by his question. Like what the fuck? Do I look hungry or starved to him? Fuck men.

"So that's what's going on in your mind? A pregnant woman breathing and suddenly she is hungry. Wow." I exclaim, dramatically raising my hands in the air and he rolls his eyes.

"A simple yes or no would've sufficed. No need for the theatrics." He responds, his tone cool.

"Are you saying I am dramatic because I am voicing out my opinions? Wow, what a fiancé I have." He chuckles. He seems to be unbothered about my sentiments right now and I am hurt.

"I know that's not you talking, but the hormones." I gasp.

"So every time I am being hormonal you are just going to ignore me or make me seem like a fool?" I ask my voice already breaking. He steals a glance at me and frowns immediately.

“Baby, I am sorry. That’s not what I am saying. Don’t twist my words.”

“There you go again, making it all about you.” I fold my arms to my chest and look outside the window, sniffing. I wipe my tears, frustration filling me. He is such an idiot and I hate him.

I feel the car parking but I don’t climb off because we seem to be in a shopping mall. He mumbles something inaudible and kisses my cheek before climbing off the car. He can go fuck himself for all I care. Lindy sends me a text informing me about her upcoming date with Zweli. I am happy for her. I congratulate her and just put on some music. I come across Taylor Swift – look what you made me do. I play it on full blast, ignoring the looks I am receiving from car owners coming to and from the mall.

The car door opens and he puts his head in first, frowning at my choice of music. “Is it safe to come in?” he asks in an amused one and I scoff, rolling my eyes. “I bought a peace offering.” He says handing me a paper bag and a bubblegum milkshake. I give him a stern looking before snatching the paper bag from him and taking the milkshake to place it on the cup holder. He

climbs inside the car and starts the engine. My lips betray me by stretching wide when my eyes land on the bar one slice inside the paper bag. I look at him and then take out my slice. That look is a 'thank you'. He shouldn't expecting anything more.

"Why did you buy only one? It's never enough?" I ask already taking a bite and experiencing the unexplainable sensation the cake leaves on my mouth. It's just delicious, period.

"So you are back to talking to me?" I ignore him and take three bites before covering it. I take my milkshake and drink it. After about 30 minutes of listening to Taylor Swift, we finally get to Squash's house. The gate opens and we drive in. after killing the engine, we climb off the car. I don't leave my cake behind. We ring the bell and he opens after a few moments looking like he was run over by a truck. He smells like a brewery, it is taking all in me not to puke right now. He is only wearing sweatpants, nothing else.

"You look ugly and smell like shit." I blurt out before I can even stop myself and he chuckles. I give him an innocent smile.

"Anyways, can we come in?" he laughs a bit before opening the

door wide. We enter and all head to the lounge which is surprisingly clean.

“You were expecting it to be filled with bottles?” he asks.

“You read my mind.” We head over there and get settled on the couch.

“I am here to talk to you. Or I can talk and you will listen without responding.” Ndabe states and then looks at me. “Can you excuse us

Advertisement

love?” I scowl but don’t answer. Instead I stand up and head to the kitchen. The lobby is an open plan, so when you’re in the lounge you can see or hear what’s happening in the dining room or kitchen without actually being there. I sit on the car stool and look at them. “I won’t ask how you’re feeling. I know how you feel, I have been there and I always felt like killing whoever asks me how I am, how I am feeling or if I am coping.” Squash nods.

“Today I woke up numb.” Squash states honestly and my heart breaks for him.

“Death can never be easy and you can never prepare for it. Even when your wife is sick with a terminal illness, you always have hope that a miracle will just happen, she will be healed and you will go back to your lives. You never accept the chances of her dying. You look for a second, third or fourth option. Rather exhaust all your options than accepting your life partner is about to leave you.” I can literally feel Ndabe’s pain. It’s like he is reliving his wife’s death.

“Grief consumed me and it actually won. When my wife passed on, I couldn’t handle it. I sent my kids to boarding schools and my mother had to come fetch my last born since I was in no state to live with a child. My life was boobs and booze all day in and out.” Squash chuckles painfully. “I moved into a hotel. You knew how my life was. You remember how I grieved. I knew that if my wife were to see me, she would be so disappointed in me. I had given up in life and I had forsaken out kids. I was the only parent they had left but I was too busy wallowing in my grief to pay any attention to them.” he swallows hard and looks down.

“You are not the one who is supposed to be crying.” Squash states and Ndabe chuckles.

“Anyways, fast forward, I met this amazing woman at a hospital one fateful day. I actually wanted to be a better man, for her, without even knowing her or actually knowing I had a chance with her. I rebuilt my relationship with my kids just because I saw light at the end of the tunnel. I know right now it’s all dark and it seems like you won’t find a way out. Don’t force yourself to heal or move on fast. Grieving is an ongoing process and the wound of losing a life partner, never completely heals. If it does stop bleeding, it gets stitched, closes up but there is always a scar to remind you that you once shared your life with that person.” He squeezes his knee.

“It won’t get better now. In fact it will seem like your life is going backwards. You will find yourself trying so hard to stay afloat but some force will be pulling you down and wanting to drown you and consume you wholly. In that moment, don’t try to forget her. In fact think about her. Make the happy moments you had with her, anchor you to life, pull you out of the dark hole. Tell me about the first time you had the courage to walk up to her and confess your feelings.” Squash chuckles and leans

back on the couch. I make quick sandwiches for them and place them on a tray with juice.

“You know how Jobe and his wife loves hosting parties.” They both chuckle. “So this other event, I went there with Sizwe. This beautiful lady walks in carrying trays. She serves us whiskey with a smile and makes small conversation with Sizwe before walking away. That was the first time I saw her.” he smiles but it doesn’t last long. “The next time we met, it was another event. I needed something from the kitchen, so I went there and saw her. She was trying to compose herself. She was actually blushing and mumbling stuff to herself. Till today, I don’t know what she was blushing about. We exchanged greetings before I just straight on asked her out. She gasped but blushed before giving m her number willingly. That was the start of a beautiful journey which ended tragically.”

“Whenever you think of her, try not to think about her ending. Savor the good moments together. Even allow yourself to have wet dreams of her. We grieve differently.” Squash breaks into laughter and Ndabe smiles. I think it’s safe to head to them now. I take the tray and head to them. I place it on the coffee table and go sit closely to Squash.

“Hey, why are you crowding me when you man is right over there?” he asks in an amused tone.

“So I also disgust you? Wow.” I stand dramatically and his eyes pop out.

“Don’t mind her. Her hormones are on overdrive today.” Ndabe says eyeing me with a smirk and I click my tongue before walking out of the room.

Sis Thandeka decided that we should take the kids out for a play date. She also invited Fortunate. So it's her, sis Lwah, sis Thandeka and myself. Hlalumi and Ahlelelwe are already besties, despite the age difference. The triplets are causing havoc and just destroying everything in their way. I am getting married tomorrow, well at the Home Affairs, so after the play date, we are going to spend a few hours at the salon, doing our hair, nails and facials.

So our first stop is the Fun Company. There are so many games here. Ahlelelwe pulls Hlalumi to the spin zone bumper cars the moment they get a go ahead from Thandeka. Sis Lwah take the triplets to the arcade games. We make sure the guards are watching them before we go bowling. We change into the provided shoes and head to the bowling area.

"A few minutes away from them is so peaceful." Sis Thandeka mumbles exhaling loudly and we laugh. Yes, the twins are troublesome, but they are worse when there is Yamihle.

"Yammy is a bad influence." I point out and sis Lwah is the first one to break into laughter.

“I always say that to Vuyo. I tell him that Yami is better when she is alone. She just follows me around and complains about most things but when she is with Miso and Simi, Jesus Christ, they can even burn down our house.”

“I think I should send Hlalumi for a sleepover at your house. Maybe she can tone down her energy because it’s too much.” Fortunate complains and we laugh at her.

“Being a full time mom is no joke, lapho Sizwe wants a daughter. He has been hinting about it and the love he has for Yamihle makes me soften a bit but yoh. You guys know what bringing a daughter in the world would mean.” I frown.

“What are you talking about?”

“You forget I am not Lioness only name. So my daughter risks having a lioness inside her and something like this has never happened before. What if she comes out looking like one or what if she has major anger issues and resorts to violence every time? How will I be able to handle a child like that?” she mistakenly throws the ball too harsh and we all jump back, shocked by the impact.

“Come.” Sisi Lwah takes her hand and they walk away. Fortunate clears her throat and I look at her.

“Thank you for getting Danvers to help me with getting my daughter back.” She says shyly and I nod.

“We are family and family help each other all the time. Plus I used his crush on you to get him to do my bidding.” She giggles.

“He did ask me out but I didn’t put much thought into it. I thought maybe he was just being a man and failing to control himself in front of a hot lady.” I laugh.

“That’s not the case. He has asked us about you on occasions but always found a way to downplay it so that we won’t dwell into his questions. He is a sly fox.” She blushes and looks away.

“Oww, I forgot that you had a major crush on him or has that turned into something more?”

“Stop being noisy.” She picks up the ball and I just laugh, sitting down on one of the benches. “I am hungry.” My stomach grumbles and she just laughs.

“I think I have some biscuits for Hlalumi in my bag.”

“Honestly I would settle even for Miso’s purity right now.”

“NO!” I hear Miso squealing behind me and we just laugh. I pick him up and place him on the space next to me.

Advertisement

serif">“You don’t wanna share with me?” he shakes his head. Fortunate hands me biscuits. “I am not going to give you even one.” He snorts and wave at Simi. I wonder if their relationship will be this tight when they are older. I take a bite on the first biscuits and the little monster stretches his hand.

“Napha.”

“Don’t give it to him.” Thandeka half shouts walking towards us.

“I wasn’t. He didn’t want me to eat his purity.” She laughs. All the kids come join us and after watching for a few minutes, they start complaining about hunger. “I am also hungry. Let’s go eat.”

“As if you would say no to food.” Sis Lwah murmurs and I chuckle.

We head to Spur and eat lunch before heading to the salon which has a baby spa. The kids get their hair done before they receive massages while we doing our facials, hair and nails. By the time we are done, we find them napping. I carry one of the twins because they are less heavy than Ahlelelwe. We place them in their car seats and then drive to Noluh's boutique. She is the one designing my dress and it has to be formal since there is a lunch after the signing. We get there and they quickly bring my dress to us.

"Can I fit it?" I ask and she nods.

"Sure." She leads me to one of the more spacious changing rooms. I change into my dress. It's a white square neck puff sleeve milkmaid dress that reaches just below my knees. It is really cute and it covers my belly wonderfully. I head back to the lounge and they clap their hands for me when I twirl.

"I love it. It fits you perfectly and you look so cute." Sis Lwah comments and I smile.

"Let me quickly change then so that we can leave."

"Wait. I have a dress for you. Consider it a wedding present." Sis Noluh says and quickly comes back with a white flounce

sleeve mermaid hem lace panel dress. “Just in case you stain this one.” I can’t stop my tears from falling.

“Thank you sis.” I hug her and she giggles.

“Now go fit it.”

I take the dress and quickly dash to the fitting room. I put on the second dress. I look so cute with my baby bump. I will not show it to everyone. It is going to be a surprise when they see it. I take it off and put on the dress I came in here wearing. I heard back to everyone and they boo me when they see that I am not wearing the dress. When I am done paying and getting a pair of beautiful sandals, we head out. It’s already 17:30 and I know Ndabe is home. I drive to there and I am shocked to find so many cars in the yard. It’s just a small lunch, no need to invite the whole family. But I guess I should get used to many people attending a small gathering. There is no such thing as a small lunch in Zulu families. Ahlelelwe is still sleeping and I don’t wanna wake her, so I put her on my back and head inside. She is so heavy though.

“You are going to break your back. Bring her here.” Mrs. Mpisi shouts and walks to me as soon as I enter the lounge. She takes Ahlelelwe. “She wasn’t that heavy, mah.”

“Even a cat is heavy in your condition.” I laugh. She is exaggerating. “She is not one to fall asleep so easily. What did you give her?” I shrug still laughing.

“We went to play games, eat lunch and then we did her hair before taking her to a spa. That’s where she took a nap and has been sleeping ever since.”

“Let me go put her down and then we will catch up. You look beautiful, by the way.”

“Thank you ma but I am not staying. I came to drop Ahlelelwe and I was hoping to sneak out before her father can see Me.” she laughs.

“Shame, all your hope down the drain.” The man I am fucking says before hugging me from behind. I chuckle. So much for sneaking out.

“I guess I will see you tomorrow then.” Mrs. Mpisi says before walking away. I turn to Ndabe.

“You are not supposed to see me before the wedding day.”

“Well tomorrow is not our official wedding day.” I roll my eyes.

“You know what I mean.”

“So you were going to leave without greeting me?” he asks already bending down. “You are so beautiful. I love you.” he whispers and my cheeks turn red. He is so charming.

Walking out of Home Affairs after being declared Mrs. Mpisi feels so fuckin good. I look at my husband who has been smiling since morning. It feels good to finally call him that. 'My husband'. He is mine alone and I would definitely kill any chick who would think about taking him away from me. The nice thing is that I wouldn't even go to jail. Benefits of being a member of PRIDE. Which reminds me, I should probably tell him about that part of my life. I know we are sworn to secrecy but he knows about Sizwe being Dark Eagle, so I don't think he will make a big deal about me being a gangster.

"Love." he glances at me and back at the road.

"Yes sthandwa."

"There is something I wanna tell you."

"I am all ears." I clear my throat.

"I am part of a gang called PRIDE which is led by Lioness and Dark Eagle." He looks at me like I have grown horns and then breaks into laughter.

"Wow babe, you have jokes." He says breathlessly as he slows down the car on the STOP & GO.

“I am serious. Look.” I show him my PRIDE ring and he frowns. He keeps quiet and drives until he stops the car at a bus stop and turns to me. He gives me the ‘explain’ look and I swallow hard.

“Since when?”

“It has been a few months now.”

“Why?”

“We were recruited in order to be able to protect ourselves from dangerous situations because Lioness can’t always be there to look after us. She has her own family.” he doesn’t say anything, he just keeps looking at me. I am starting to think telling him was a bad idea. Can someone borrow me a rewind remote?

“How much of the gang’s activities do you participate in?”

“None because of my condition and that won’t change after giving birth. I am part of PRIDE but it is merely for my own protection. I will only assist if I am really needed which I doubt will happen since there are so many members of the gang. I am only asking one thing from you. Don’t tell bhut Sizwe that I told you and don’t ask him to kick me out of the gang because that

would be like signing my death certificate. Yes, they are involved in criminal activities but they are like my family. They are always there when I need them and they are important to Me.” he sighs and buries his face in his hands.

“Do you always carry a weapon?” he mumbles and I sigh.

“Yes, but you will never see it because I am very discrete and our kids will never know about this other part of me. You are my husband now. I ask that this stays between us. I shouldn’t have told you from the beginning but you know Dark Eagle, so that’s why I told you.” he exhales loudly and we are disturbed by his beeping phone. He checks it out and places it back on his pocket.

“So I have no say about my wife being part of one of Mzansi’s most dangerous gang?” he asks as he starts the car and join the main road.

“There are some things which we cannot control. We just have to live with them and hope that they don’t bite us back in the future.”

“But you are so young...” I chuckle.

“I am not the youngest one in the gang. You need to relax. I can handle myself and I can be very discrete. You will never have me leaving you in bed to participate in a heist unless it is really important and I will inform you prior if something like that happens.” He doesn’t say anything and I also exercise my right to remain silent. There are so many things I can say but I just want him to be able to think without me distracting him.

We finally drive in his house or our new home. I am stunned by the number of cars parked inside and outside the yard. I turn to Ndabe.

“Are we having a bash?” he laughs.

“It’s weird to hear a white person saying ‘bash’. Usually you guys go for ‘house parties’ or whatever shit.” I roll my eyes.

“That’s just stereotype.” He chuckles and parks the car at the vacant spot. I am sure his parents’ cars are inside the garage. He climbs off the car and comes to open my door. He helps me climb off and holds my hand as we walk towards the front door. We enter and I don’t find what I was expecting. We find no one in the lobby and it looks deserted. I turn to Ndabe.

“Where is everyone?”

“Probably in the backyard. Let’s head there.” I nod and allow him to lead me to the backyard.

I am too busy fiddling with my phone, I am stunned and I drop it when I hear people shouting SURPRISE. I look up and see the Mpisi family and some of my loved ones standing there with wide smiles. Ahlelelwe runs to us and picks up my phone. I am still shocked and frozen to one space. My mother in law comes to me and hugs me.

“Welcome to your baby shower, makoti. I know you said you don’t want one but I figured I should do something for you and my first white grandchild since I am your only mother in law.” She places a sash on me and then kisses my cheek. That makes me unfreeze and I just break down. I can’t hold myself.

“Come here.” I hear Ma’Khanyi and she pulls me inside the house, to the lounge. She makes me sit down and rushes to the kitchen. She comes back with a glass of water and I drink it. I calm down a bit and wipe my tears. She sits next to me and side hugs me. “We are here for you. We love you and we care about you and Gram. Your life matters. Blood doesn’t make you

family but loyalty does. Don't be too sad about your family being present. Until they come back to their senses

Advertisement

we will be here with you every step of the way and even if they come back, I will still be your number one." I chortle and she smiles. "Now wipe those tears and come enjoy this amazing party your mother in law organized for you."

"She did?" I am surprised by this.

"Yes. She gave Londeka the money to organize everything."

"Wow."

"Now let's go so that you can thank her properly." She helps me stand up and we head back to where everyone is at. My mother in law is the first one to come forward again. This time I hug her first.

"Thank you so much for this."

"Oww, his card did all the talking." She points at her husband and I giggle. I greet most of the guests and Lony leads me to the big couch at the end of the tent.

“You sure know how to keep a secret from your best friend.”
She laughs.

“I had to.” I roll my eyes but I am grateful because everything looks stunning. I sit down and Ndabe comes to sit next to me wearing Gram’s daddy sash. He brings me closer to him and kisses me. “Okay, we know you’re married now but there are still kids here.” Londy breaks us up and we laugh at her.

“Go to Krabi already.” I mutter and she laughs.

A waiter brings some finger foods and I almost kiss him because I am super hungry. I devour the food immediately and Ndabe just chuckles. The programme starts and all the speakers wish me well and their words touch me. There is also entertainment. Ahlelelwe comes to me and gives me a small cake.

“This is for my little sister, not you mommy.” I laugh.

“But I will also be eating it because she will get it via Me.” she frowns and turns to her dad who is stifling laughter.

“Then daddy can have it.” Both Ndabe and I burst out laughing. You gotta love children’s logic though.

“He and I are married now. So whatever that he has, he must share it with me.” she huffs and walks away, leaving us laughing our asses out. She can be so dramatic but she is my favourite. My mother in law stands up and takes the mic.

“I am so happy that my son has found someone to share his life with for the second time. I loved u MaMuller from the first time I laid my eyes on her. I could see her raising my son’s kids and actually turning their house into a home. She is very young but she is so humble and so warm. I love how she loves your kids and yesterday when I saw her carrying Ahlelelwe on her back, my heart swelled. She is heavily pregnant but she carried a nine year old on her back because she wanted her to carry on with her nap. If you weren’t already married, I would say ‘son, wife this girl’.” I giggle while Ndabe smiles with pride on his face. “I wish you safe delivery and I can’t wait to meet baby Gram. Hopefully you already have a name for her.” I laugh, but my laugh comes to a halt when my eyes travel to the entrance of the tent where I spot my parents standing there. What are they doing here?

I am glad that the speech session is over. The only thing left is a surprise from Londy, as stated on the programme. So I don't make a big deal of my parents excusing me from the party. We settle on the lounge and I can see my mother looking around and nodding in approval. I am just going to sit here and wait for them to start talking. But I make eye contact with Ndabe when my tummy grumbles. He laughs before standing up and heading out.

"I am sorry, my child. I was an idiot and I was stupid." My father starts off. I somehow knew he would be the one to speak out first since he loves me more than my mother does. And I know he missed me more. He clears his throat. I can see how this talk is making him uncomfortable. "I allowed my stupidity to cloud my judgement and I abandoned you at a time where you needed me the most. I know how vulnerable and needy pregnant women can be. I have experienced it first hand and I should've known better. Please forgive me." his words melt whatever ice that was inside my heart. I give him a small smile. Ndabe returns with a plate and my mouth instantly waters. It contains creamy samp with beef curry and a few salads. My

current favourite. He hands me the plate and bottled water which he always encourages me to drink.

“There is a fight I have to break between Ahle and Asi. They are fighting over the cakes.” I laugh. Those two love sugar. When Asimbonge isn’t too invested in video games, he loves consuming sugar. There is plenty of cakes in the cake bar but I am sure they are more than happy to fight over one particular cake.

“It’s okay. You can go.” He perks my lips before walking away. I start digging in.

“Josh came to see us a week ago.” Mom starts off.

“Did he now?” I mutter sarcastically and she sighs.

“He told us about the Mpisi family coming to pay for your dowry. He said a lot of things. But he also did say that he put the dowry money in a trust fund for baby Gram. We are sorry that our hate for black people made us abandon you. We love you so much and we wanna be there with you and our granddaughter, only if you will let us.” I sigh and drink some water.

“I hear you but today is a really special day for me. I just got married and I came back to find out that my mother in law threw a surprise baby shower for me. I don’t need all the heavy talk. Maybe tomorrow.”

“But do you forgive us?” my dad asks and I chuckle.

“You know forgiveness is not a switch that you can just turn on and off anytime. You did hurt my feelings and broke my heart. It will take time for me to come around. Hopefully it will be before Gram because I want her to come to a warm world where she is loved and accepted by everyone in her life.” Dad quickly comes to sit next to me. He places his hand on my shoulder.

“You don’t have to worry about your child. She will receive all the love she deserves. No one will is going to treat her otherwise.” I smile.

“I know.”

“So he married you without getting my blessing?” I roll my eyes.

“I am pretty sure you would’ve set the dogs on him if he came home to ask for them.” he chuckles.

“I am not that bad. I just want what’s best for my daughter.”

“And he is what’s best for me. I love him and I see a future with him. He is a great father and I know he will be an even better father to Gram.”

“Couldn’t he be a tad younger?” mom asks in a low tone and dad throws her a stern glance. She pouts and sits back.

“Are we done here?” I realize that that came off harsher than intended. “You can come join the party. In fact I am sure Mrs. Mpisi will be delighted to host you.”

Mom shrugs. “I suppose we can stick around for an hour or so.” I chuckle and then stand up, taking huge bites of my food. I walk to the kitchen with an almost empty plate. I find Mpisi’s sister laughing with Ndabe’s ex-wife’s sister. Okay. I greet them and place the plate on the sink. Someone will surely wash it.

“So you finally held him down?” the ex’s sister asks. I don’t even know her name and I don’t think I will get along with

Mpisi's sister if she is friends with someone who clearly hates me.

"Why?" I ask with a smirk. "Were you hoping to be the one warming his bed? Shame, pity he likes them young and fresh nowadays."

"That abomination in your belly won't be welcomed by the Mpisi ancestors, ever." Mpisi's sister speaks up and I actually laugh. I thought she hated me in private but I can see that she doesn't care about showing her hate for me even in public.

"I don't really care about what ancestors do or think about in their time because I am sure they are always bored. I don't believe in them and my child won't be affected by any of their 'doings'. Now if you would excuse me, I have a party to get back to." I walk away. Ndabe's sister has the nerve. At least I know who I shouldn't leave my baby with.

"What did those old ladies say to you?" Sis Thandeka startles me as I step out of the corridor.

"Gosh, don't scare me like that. But I am sure you heard them with your super hearing." She laughs.

“You want me to deal with them?” I quickly shake my head.

“They are not worth it.” She nods.

“But if they threaten Gram’s wellbeing

Advertisement

I will deal with them fast.”

“I know you will.” She chuckles. We head back to the tent and I giggle when I see a piñata hooked up in the middle of the tent.

“This was your husband’s idea. Everything in there is yours.”

Londy beams as soon as she sees me. She hands me a bat and I swing it but it misses the target. Everyone laughs. “That’s cheating. I have to blindfold you.” I roll my eyes and she chuckles.

“What if I fall and hurt myself?”

Ndabe comes forward. “I got you, love.” I smile and let Londy blindfold me. Ndabe gently pushes me forward. “You can hit now.”

I swing the bat a couple of times before finally hitting it. I feel a rain of sweets and something solid hitting me. Ndabe takes off the blindfold and I blink a few times before looking on the floor around me. I laugh at the R200 notes on the ground. That is so Mpisi. But what puzzles me is keys in the mist of the money and sweets. Bending in my condition is very hard but I do so because I am curious. My eyes pop out when I realize that it is car keys and what I think is a key for opening a room. I scream when I see the logo on the car key. I don't even care about the money right now. My head is set on the keys.

"You bought me a Jaguar!" he laughs.

"A little birdie told me you wanted to buy a car using my card. Luckily you didn't ruin my plans because I had planned to buy you one a while ago." I take his head and literally drag him excitedly like a kid rushing to an ice cream date.

"I wanna see it. Now." Everyone laughs, he also laughs and leads me to the driveway but we go around the yard. I gasp when my eyes land on the silver Jaguar F-Pace. I take it all in and tears just stream down my cheeks. Great. Another

breakdown. He wraps his arms around my waist and kisses my temples.

“Happy Wedding Day, Mrs. Mpisi. This is the start of our journey. Just know that every year on this day, you will get a gift from your new husband. Possible a new car every time.” I giggle while wiping my tears. I turn to face him.

“I love you.”

“No, I love you.” he states kissing me and I laugh. “Now how about you check out your new car but you are not taking it for a spin.” I roll my eyes still laughing.

This dramatic charming husband of mine. I approach my car. I smile, seeing the number plate ‘MRS MPIS’. I open the door and climb inside. I take a deep breath and just look around. Out of curiosity, I turn on the engine and when it roars, I squeal before giggling. I slide out and go hug Ndabe.

“*Asibe Happy muntu wami.*” He laughs and dances with me, not minding that there is no music.

“What’s the other key for?” I ask, taking a step back from him. He smiles and turns to our guests.

“We will be back after a few minutes.” He leads me to my car.

“If we are going somewhere, please let me drive.” I whine and he chuckles shaking his head. I know I am just taking a chance. There is no way in hell he is going to let me drive. Even if it’s my brand new car. My present. He opens the passenger door and I huff before climbing inside. He slides in the driver seat and takes the car keys from my hands before bringing the car to life and driving away. It feels like I am in a plane. Being inside my car is so unreal. I find myself giggling while running my hands through any touchable surface. I hear him chuckling and I turn to look at him.

“I am happy that I am able to make you this happy. I promise to always try and keep a smile on your face. I know I will annoy you sometimes, but your happiness is going to be my number one priority from this day on.”

“Don’t say your vows. You are going to make me cry.” He laughs. “I also promise to be there for you whenever you need me, even when you don’t need Me.” he snorts and shakes his head. “After the kids, you are my number one priority.” I reach up to kiss his cheek and he blushes. I don’t comment on it because I don’t wanna make him uncomfortable.

After some time, we pull up in this really beautiful house. My heart immediately stop when I recognize it from pictures. I turn to look at him and he has a stupid grin plastered on his face. We drive in and I am in awe of the beauty of the exterior. How beautiful is it on the inside? I don’t even wait for him to open the door for me. I jump down and practically run to the front door. He stops me, laughing as he wraps his hands around my waist.

“Stop running. You will trip and fall.” I pout and he kisses me before leading me to the front door. He hands me the key and I excitedly open the door, jumping up and down in excitement. God, I am like a kid with all this happiness. I finally manage to unlock the door and we step inside. I don’t dare utter a single word as I walk around, taking in the breathtaking view of the house. “Welcome to your home, Mrs. Mpisi.” I turn to him and

just hug him tightly, with Gram making the hug very uncomfortable.

“I thought I was still going to go view it and see if it’s okay for us.”

“I wanted to surprise you. This is also your wedding gift because the house is under your name.” I stare at him in complete shock. He smiles. “I know it might be a lot to take in but we still have guests back at our old house. So let’s go back to our party. We will come check our house properly tomorrow.”

“I don’t know what to say.” My voice is suddenly shaky, breaking.

“You don’t have to say a word.” He kisses my forehead. “I love you. I won’t get tired of telling you this every day and I wanna keep that smile on your face for the rest of your life.” I blush and wipe away my falling tears. He takes my hand and we head back to the car.

We arrive at our 'old house'. There are more cars in the yard now. He parks the car and I quickly head upstairs to change into my second dress. I join the party. Most of the adults, pensioners, are chilling at the patio. Mom and Mrs. Mpisi seem to be besties because they are chatting and laughing. I don't bother going to them. Instead I go join the other couples in the gazebo. They are drinking and smoking hubbly which they quickly get rid of when I get to the table. I go sit on Jobe's lap and they all laugh while Ndabe rolls his eyes with a smile on his face.

"I am not even going to say anything. I don't wanna be on the receiving end of your hormones." Sis Lwah stated and we all laugh.

"I'm sorry for being late, Mrs. Mpisi." A voice distracts me and I smile when I see Zweli with Lindy. "Congratulations and hello everyone." We all greet back and his eyes pop out when they land at sis Thandeka who is busy massaging her husband's head. I think she is the only female allowed to touch his dreads.

"Do you guys know each other?" I question looking between sis Thandeka and Zweli. He gives me a small smile and then nods.

Sis Thandeka raises her head and she frowns when she sees Zweli.

“Do I have to kill someone?” bhut Sizwe asks causing us all to laugh.

“Zweli and I have a bit of a history. We fooled around a long time ago, while Khwezi was still alive. So you can imagine how long was that.” Lwah chuckles. “Anyways

Zweli, this is my husband and partner in crime, Sizwe Mnguni. Babe, he owns Mthente Holdings.”

“One cow for fucking my sister.” Jobe teases and we all laugh. The tension immediately dies down. I go sit next to my husband and cuddle him.

“Missed me?” he asks in a low tone and I smile before nodding. He brings me even more closer to him and rubs my bump.

“What are your thoughts on **ukungena?**” Nolby asks and I frown. The only ukungena I know is entering a door or entering anything.

“What is that?” I quickly ask and she chuckles.

“When your husband dies, it's tradition that his younger or older brother takes over his household. Marries you and your kids call him daddy.” My eyes pop out. I am shocked by this. What kind of fuckery is this? I would never do something like this.

“God I would die before I sleep with my husband's brother. It would be too gross for me. God, no. If he were to die, I would take the kids and we would move to another country because as much as I would like to keep some things, it would be too painful for me to move on while still sleeping at the same bed we shared.” I answer honestly and Ndabe kisses my temple.

“I am not leaving you. We will grow old together and we will die together.” He whispers and I smile.

“Ukungena was cool, less dramatic and complicated in the past. Women were born and raised to be submissive. To be

controlled by their husbands and in laws. Devoted to keeping the house warm, no matter what the circumstances are. That's why ukungena was not a big deal in the past. Now people kill each other for inheritance. If u Vuyo's had a brother and then the brother kills him, knowing he will marry me and then gain all Vuyo's assets, that would be too much and I would surely kill him. So if I were to be allowed to contribute my 2 cents advice, I would say they must do away with that practice, also ukuthwala.” Mrs. Sithole explains and we nod.

“For me, I am madly in love with my husband and I would die inside if he were to die. So if his younger brother were to come with the intention of taking over his assets, I would squeeze the life out of him without a single thought.” Sis Thandeka states in a stern voice.

“Yeah, we know.” Audrey chirps in and we laugh because we know just how true Thandeka’s statement is.

“What about the royalty marries royalty rule?” I enquire looking at Nolby. “If your family were to suggest that you marry a Xhosa prince or king, would you do it or would you elope with Stevens?”

“I would elope because I live for that white dick.” Stevens looks away shyly and we break into laughter. Trust Nolby to make her boyfriend uncomfortable like that.

“When are you popping the question?” Fortunate asks looking at Stevens and he takes something out of his pocket.

“How about now?” he opens the small box on his hand, revealing a rose gold beautiful diamond ring. The ladies scream while Nolby just stares at him looking so shocked. First time seeing Nolby speechless. Did Stevens plan this with Fortunate?

LWANDEKA

Thandeka is my best friend, my sister and confidante. So I was pained when I saw her break down because of the possibility of her future daughter having a live lioness inside of her. That's why I called aunt Thembelihle and told her about us coming to see her. She didn't mind, and so I borrowed the jet from bhut Sizwe. Thandeka and I took the kids because you may never know how long your trip can be. You can plan on returning home by evening only to find out that there are some pressing issues to attend to before heading back home. So that's why we packed overnight bags for us and the kids.

These kids are used to traveling by plane, so they are not even fazed. Instead, they are cooped up in their sitting area and pretending as if Thandeka and I don't exist. That's another thing about them. When they are together, they seem to shut everyone out and then it's just the three of them. The twins' vocab have very few words but somehow they communicate well. We would've come to Swaziland at a later stage but we didn't want to miss the birth of baby Gram. Yeah, she has

reconciled with her family but she is like our little sister. So we want to be there for her and with her when the time comes.

“I think one other kid is enough for me and then I retire.” I mutter and Thandeka laughs.

“That’s not what my brother wants. At least four kids. When we grew up, it was just the two of us. So we got lonely sometimes. I am sure he doesn’t want the same fate with your kids.” She states and I shake my head.

“The beauty of everything is that the kids won’t ever be lonely. We should maybe get pregnant the same time the next time, so that the next pair will be inseparable like those three.” She chuckles. “One boy and then I am done.” She looks at me with a small smile. I can see the longing in her eyes. She wishes to have a baby girl but she can’t bring herself to say it because of the many complications she might have in the pregnancy and the life her baby girl may live.

“Nolby’s reaction was priceless though.” She starts off and I laugh. I know my friend. She is very outspoken and hardly shy. So when Stevens popped the question randomly like that, we were all puzzled by her temporary mute state. I am worried

about her family though. I don't think they are going to accept Stevens. Worst is that he is white. I think it would've been a lot better if he was black.

We finally arrive at the Swaziland airport and we drive to the mall first to pick up a few things. We then drive to aunt Thembelihle's house. You would think the kids would be asleep by now, but no. these trouble makers are wide awake and they are very curious. Asking questions all the way and expecting answers even though we don't understand half the shit they say. We get to the house and head inside to find Charity watching TV. She immediately stands up and comes to hug us.

"Sanibonani. I am so happy to see you guys. How are you doing? How was your trip?" she beams already picking up Yamihle and playing with her. They are familiar with each other, so she doesn't throw any tantrum.

"Hello Thithi." Yammy says in an adorable tone and Charity smiles. That's how Yamie calls Charity.

"We are doing pretty great and our trip was short and sweet." Thandeka states as we take our seats on the couch.

“Let me get you something to drink. You must be thirsty from all the travelling.” Charity says and then places Yamihle down. She heads to the kitchen and the triplets follow her. We hear her laughing. I am sure she wasn’t expecting the toddler company she is having right now.

I take my phone and text my husband

Advertisement

telling him that we have arrived. He calls immediately. Thandeka rolls her eyes and I laugh before answering the call.

“My munchie.”

“Hello my sweet rose.” My cheeks heat up instantly. 2 years of marriage and the nickname still forms butterflies in my belly. “I am glad to hear that you arrived safely. I miss you though. Knowing that you are hours away from me, it makes me sick.”

“Well that makes the two of us.” he laughs. He and I are always together, well most of the time. Even when there is a business trip to be taken, I always come with him. So traveling without him feels very weird. I should definitely focus on the A-Class restaurant so that we don’t feel this bad when one of us take a

trip outside the country. But I know my husband is going to turn down that suggestion.

“Where is my princess?”

“She is besties with Charity now.”

“Let’s hope she won’t start singing for her.” Now it’s my turn to laugh. Thandeka’s phone rings and she steps outside to answer it. I am pretty sure my brother is the one calling her. “Can you call her for me? I just wanna hear her not so angelic voice.” I chuckle.

“YAMIE! YAMIE!”

“MAMAZI!” I hear her shouting before she makes her way to the lounge. I laugh at the given name. Siphamandla and Zethembe are the ones who usually call me by this name and my baby has a sharp memory.

“Daddy wants to speak with you.”

“Okay.” She wipes her dry hands on her jeans and takes the phone. She loves imitating everything I do. “Mantshi.” I die of

laughter. I am done with this girl. She sits on the vacant chair and continues chatting with her father.

“I assume she is chatting to Luh.” Thandeka states matter of factly, walking in. I laugh and nod.

When Yamie is done talking to her father, she brings back the phone. Charity comes back with a tray containing juice and cupcakes. She places it on the coffee table and then sits down. The kids sits next to her. We thank her and indulge on the delicious cakes.

“Where is auntie?” I enquire because if she was really here, she would’ve come to greet us by now.

“She went on a date. She said you guys aren’t in a hurry. She should be on her way back now.” I frown.

“Auntie dates?”

“So I don’t deserve orgasms just because I am always with abaphansi?” auntie asks walking in and we just laugh at her. It feels weird though. Yeah, she has kids but I have never seen her with a man or heard that she is in a relationship. So this is all new to me and I am definitely going to tell mom.

“That’s not the reason. You’re old. Seeing you all lovey dovey feels so weird.” She rolls her eyes and sits down next to Yamihle.

“Sitting next to her or carrying her always makes me cringe. Her future is really bright but just like everyone, she is going to go through many challenges. Downside of being destined for greater things, you face even greater troubles.” I shudder and she smiles at me. “Don’t worry. It’s all part of her journey. It shouldn’t scare you.” she picks up a cupcake and eats it.

“Didn’t you eat on your date?” I tease and she laughs.

We chat about general things and then freshen up. We also put the kids to sleep and the head back to the lounge.

“We can go to my consultation room.” aunt states. She has already changed to her sangoma clothes. We nod and then follow her outside. She enters the room and we take off our shoes and then follow her inside. She sits down and we sit on the grass mats by the door. She chuckles a bit, shaking her head. “Look at you worried about bringing a baby girl to this world who might be abnormal while she is already inside of

you.” I frown and Thandeka gasps. Does that mean she is already pregnant?

“How is that possible? I am on contraceptives.” Her voice is weird. It carries a lot of fear in it. She can’t even mask it.

“When you died and came back to life, from there on, nothing was ever going to be normal in your life. You’re lucky you didn’t get pregnant earlier. Also you know how most animals always carry and give birth to multiples. That might also be the case with you. The girl is already in your womb but she is going to be as normal as Yamihle when she comes to this earth. She will only transform for the first time after her 12th birthday. The transformation may be triggered at an early stage though. You can never be too though. You just have to treat her like a normal child. Don’t give her special attention or don’t try to make her happy all the time because that would be controlling her. You know how animals get when they feel controlled or crowded.”

Thandeka looks so uneasy. She is breathing quick short breaths and she is worrying me. She shakes her head and then collapses on the floor. I scream.

“Don’t worry. She is going to fine. It’s just the shock. Call her husband.” I swallow hard and nod. “You also shouldn’t worry about the child you lost. God will bless you with another soon. You did the good thing by cleansing yourself and naming the child.” She looks down and keeps on nodding at something. I take out my phone and quickly text my brother.

THANDEKA

Opening my eyes, I am shocked by the Rasta who is cuddling me. Now that was fast. When did he get here? His breathing pattern is normal which means he is not in deep sleep. I cough and he smiles before opening his eyes. That's how I usually wake him up.

“Are you okay?” he asks quickly, bringing me closer to him. He can't function when there is space between us. I chuckle and nod. “I was worried sick about you. When Wawa called saying you had passed out, I literally ran out and left an important meeting. What's wrong baby? You are the healthiest person I know. Now how come you fainted? It doesn't make sense.” I smile at him. I know I should be telling him this now but I still wanna wrap my head around it. I also have so many questions to ask aunt Thembelihle, so I would rather tell him later, when I have all the answers to his questions which I know he is going to ask.

“It was just shock, my love. I am fine now. You don't need to worry.”

“Oww but I do worry about you. You may think that I am cool as a cucumber when it comes to your safety because you are not normal but I worry about you a lot. Even lionesses are preys to some creatures, so I worry about your safety and wellbeing 80% of the time.” My heart melts at his confession. I blush and look the other way, while finding a way to stop the tears that are forming in my eyes.

“Not that I want you to worry about me the whole time, but I am happy you said something like that. I love you so much.” I turn to him when I have my emotions in order and then kiss him. He smiles and kisses me back while climbing on top of me. Trust my husband to think about sex when I had just fainted. This one time I got dizzy and he fucked me ‘for balance’.

“MANI! MANI!” a bang on the door makes us both freeze. Only one person calls me MANI and I know she won’t leave until I attend her. Sizwe groans before climbing off me. I laugh and sit up. That’s when I actually take time to look around.

“Where are we?” he chuckles.

“Charity’s house. She learnt it to us for a few days because we can’t be shagging each other in aunt’s house, that’s disrespectful. Worse for Jobe.” I frown.

“He is also here?”

“Yes. Probably the reason why Yami is at our door and not on theirs.”

“MANI!” the bang comes again and I laugh before sliding off the bed and opening the door. She is standing there with this adorable smile on her face. You can’t even reprimand her when she has that face on. That’s her ultimate weapon. I crouch to her level.

“Yes baby.”

“Lambile. (I’m hungry)” she brushes her belly.

“Where is your mother?”

“With dada.”

“And your brothers?”

“Sleeping. Morvite.” I know she is done talking. She looks behind me and her smile widens. “Lasta.” She rushes to the

bed. Her memory is the worst. She always chooses to store those crazy names which people hate, in her mind. I know how Sizwe hates being called by Rasta but he can't say anything to the Sithole princess. I laugh shaking my head.

“Don't you wanna keep me company while I make you food?” she quickly shake her head and raises her arms to Sizwe who chuckles before picking her up. Seeing him with Yamihle warms my heart. My hand automatically goes to my belly. I know he is going to be the best father to our daughter.

It's easy to spot a kitchen, so when I get there, it takes me a bit of time to actually find the Morvite. I prepare it and allow it to cool down a bit. My brother walks in wearing only dark jeans.

“So this is your home now?” I tease and he laughs.

“Are you okay?”

“I am fine. You don't have to worry about Me.” he gives me a hard look and I chuckle. “Okay, do worry about me, but not too much.” He nods.

“Congratulations by the way. I know you are going to be a great mother. Just don’t teach your daughter how to be savage.” I laugh.

“Your wife told you?” he shakes his head.

“She didn’t need to. I dreamt of both our parents carrying newborns in their arms. I thought it meant our baby is in a better place but when Princess called and told me you had fainted, I put two and two together.” I nod.

“Thank you.” he hugs me and kisses my cheek.

“I will be there for you whenever you need me but not for dipper duty.” I break into laughter and he chuckles.

“Let me quickly go feed Yamie before her porridge gets cold. You go do you with Lwandeka.” He laughs. I take the small bowl with a spoon and then head back to the bedroom. I find Sizwe and Yamie looking at a video on Sizwe’s tab. I am pretty sure it’s Yamihle’s favourite cartoon show, Miraculous Tales of Lady Bug and Cat Noir. “Baby, your food is ready.” She looks up and smile. I go sit next to Sizwe and she straddles my lap. I feed her while she is busy watching the cartoons. She is a multitasker.

“Anyways, we finally caught the last of the Brands’ Thieves. One of them told us who the mole is.” I frown, looking at him.

“Who is it?”

“Swati. He fled the country two weeks ago. He has no family so there is nothing we can blackmail him with.”

“But I am a member of the African Mafia, maybe if I put word out that I am looking for him, he is going to be found very soon.” he nods.

“Yeah, do that.”

I finish feeding Yamihle and carry her to the kitchen. I clean her up and she heads to the lounge. I clean up around the kitchen and head outside for some fresh air.

“I was hoping to catch you alone.” Aunt Thembelihle appears from the back yard. “Let’s go sit under that tree.” She points at a tree not far from the gate. I nod and we head there. We sit down on the grass and she plucks out one, plays with it. “You have many questions. I am here to listen.” I sigh.

“You talked about multiples but yet you said ‘your daughter’. I want clarity on that first.”

“When I mentioned your daughter, I hadn’t consulted. I just said something which I saw in my visions. Then I did consult. You are going to give birth to two healthy baby girls with enhanced everything.” She says chuckling and I nod. “You know how twins are. They have opposite personalities. The other one is going to be kind while the other one will be, well not evil but is not going to get along with people, except for her family. The kind hearted one will have anger issues and get involved in fights. The semi-evil one won’t have anger issues, well they come with the territory but she won’t resort to violence most of the time. She is just going to cut off many people and live in her own bubble. She is likely to be depressed or mentally stable. Whatever you do, never give the other more attention than the other. Just treat them the way you are treating Miso and Simi.”

“You think Joburg is a great place to raise such kids?” she smiles and shakes her head.

“Joburg people are annoying and love meddling in other people’s business. That might annoy the twins a lot. So I

suggest you move back to your old home town, Barkley West. That is going to be a great town to raise special kids like these.”

“And when was I going to be told about all this?” Sizwe’s voice startles us. He is standing not far from us. We are so invested in this talk, we didn’t even feel someone sneaking up on us.

“Come sit son. Don’t be dramatic.” Aunt Thembelihle says and Sizwe grunts before moving closer to us. He sits in front of me, facing me. “Your wife came here seeking answers. She didn’t know she was pregnant. She just wanted to know what kind of a life her daughter would have if she were to be brought into this earth, since umakoti is not normal. I laughed because she was already pregnant. She just wanted answers before she delivered the news to you. How much did you hear?”

“Enough to know that I am going to have very special daughters.” Aunt smiles and nods.

“I wish you all the best and so much luck. You are going to need it. And also makoti,” I look at her. “No transforming for the rest of your pregnancy. Which means you have to control your

anger and stay happy. One transformation will kill your babies.” My eyes pop out. “I hope you can be able to control your anger and put your children’s wellbeing and safety above yours. Also keep my granddaughters alive and well.” She stands up. “Now if you will excuse me, I have a date to get back to.”

Sizwe frowns. “A date?”

“Do you want me to go out with you instead?” he cringes and I laugh while aunt chuckles. “Well see you soon kids. Also, you have to go back to Jozi soon. Dakota’s baby is going to come earlier than expected.” She walks away.

“So I scored, once again?” he smirks. I roll my eyes.

“Let me go check on our other kids.” I attempt to stand up and he holds me down.

“They are still sleeping. Come here.” he cups my face and gives me a deep kiss. “Thank you for making me a father for the second time. You are the most amazing woman in the world and if I were to choose again, I would choose you to be my wife over and over again.” I sniff and he wipes my tears. “So an

emotional Thandeka for 9 long months? I wonder how that is going to play out.” he teases.

“Maybe next time try keeping it in your pants.” He laughs.

“As if you would let me.” he is right though. Ever since I gave him that blowjob on one of our first encounters, I have never imagined myself without his dick in my mouth or inside me. He looks at me and laughs. I know he can see what is going on in my mind, figuratively.

I haven't had a sit down with mom ever since we kind of mended the fence. So when she called asking to do lunch, I was a bit skeptical but looking forward to the free lunch. I am married to a millionaire but there is nothing I love more than freebies. Mrs. Mpisi senior is also joining us. she said she is in town until I give birth which will happen in a few weeks, so that's why she is going to be dining with us. I just think she is bored though. She and I climb into a car and she drives off.

"Are you ready for labour?" she asks and I chuckle.

"Can anyone ever be ready for an experience like that though?" she giggles.

"Yeah, I have been there at least 4 times but you can never get used to that kind of pain." I frown.

"You have other two kids?"

"Other three. You have met only one. Ndabezimnandi. The other three stay overseas. They only come back on important family occasions. I think they will be here for your wedding." Now I am confused.

"Isn't Nontle your kid?"

“God no.” she then chuckles. “I love how you pronounce her name. anyways, no. I can never mother a sneaky and disrespectful child like her. she was a result of a one night stand that made me nearly divorce my husband.” I gasp.

“That’s terrible. How long did it take for you to forgive him?”

“Well it was the early 2000s so he bought me a house in Durban. We were staying in the rural areas and we could afford the city life because of the money he and his father had. Well I was just going to walk out on him and never look back because divorce is a modern age thing. So when he bought me a house, I changed the locks on my second day there when I moved in with my kids. Then I took the kids and we went to visit my sister.” My eyes pop out.

“That's cold.” She laughs.

“If your man cheats on you and is being remorseful about and you really wanna work things out, you don’t need to go easy on. Deliver the worst punishment that you can think of, but never cheat. Fighting evil with evil is never good. Just find someone to break his bones nje.”

“I can do that and more, on my own.” She chuckles.

“And people wonder why I like you.” We both laugh.

We get to the restaurant and head inside. We quickly place our orders because I am always hungry. Mom comes in after 5 minutes and we exchange hugs. When I sit back down, I feel a bit of discomfort on my belly. It's not painful, just not comfortable. Maybe the baby is moving or something. Mom notices and she frowns.

“Are you okay, honey?” I nod with a smile.

“I am fine. You know how pregnancy is. Sometimes even breathing is uncomfortable.” They both chuckle.

“How is the pregnancy treating you?”

“I love hoe everyone spoils me. As much as the baby is tiring me, I just wish she could hold on a bit because I am loving this 5 star treatment I am receiving from everybody. I know once Gram is here, everything will be about her. Every phone call will be about her.”

“Well babies always grab everyone's attention but relax, no one is going to invalidate you just because of Gram's presence. If they do, just deny them access to her. Also don't let anyone

outside your inner circle carry her, maybe they can do so after inkaba yakhe has fallen. Don't worry, I will explain all that to you once the baby is here." Mrs. Mpisi Senior states and I am just grateful to have her here. Her wisdom is everything.

"Do you have a nanny in mind for her already?" mom asks and I shake my head.

"I am going to stay home for at least 6 months after birth. This will help me bond with my baby and I will also get back in shape without any pressure. Ndabe also have helpers around the house, so I am sure one of them won't mind the duty of being Gram's nanny." She nods. The food arrives and I smile widely. "Finally. I was starving." I dig in the moment the plate is placed in front of me.

serif">

"You're that hungry?" mom asks and I chuckle before nodding.

"So what do you do for a living?" Mrs. Mpisi asks, taking small bites of her food.

"I am an assistant manager at some company and what about you?"

“I am a housewife and a money spender but before that, I was an actress and a model. It actually took my husband a whole year to get me and hold me down. I was a wanted back then. Everybody wanted a piece of me and every agent wanted to sign me. On the year we met, I had an opportunity to do a modeling gig overseas. Of course I took it and went there. When I came back, the nigga came on pretty strong and I ended up caving.” Mom and I both laugh. Imagine calling a respected Zulu man a nigga.

“How is Ndabe treating you?” mom asks and I blush before putting down my fork and knife. “If talking about him can even make you stop eating, then he is good, damn.” I giggle and shake my head.

“He is such a perfect gentleman. Always patient with me and never forces me to do something I don't like. Like for instance, his kids. He didn't force me to get along with them. I did that on my own. He has just been perfect. We have a long journey ahead of us but I believe that we will overcome any challenge we may face. And I will kill any bitch who looks at him in a seductive way.” They both laugh.

“Let's hope your killing tendencies will stop after giving birth.” Mrs. Mpisi teases and I chuckle. We continue chatting and laughing about stuff. It feels good to have a decent conversation with my mother after so long. I have missed her so much. She looks at me and just smiles because I think she is also thinking the same thing.

“OMG!” I gasp feeling some pain on my lower abdomen and I feel pee pressing on. Both these women stop what they are doing and look at me.

“Are you okay?” mom asks in a concerned voice and I nod.

“I am fine. I need to go to the loo.” I stand up and I don't even take three steps before I feel my underwear dampen and hear water drops fall on the tiled floor. My eyes widen. Did my water just...?

“Okay. Relax. Breathe. Everything is going to be fine. Let's get you to the hospital.” Mom says standing up and holding my hand. I look at her, my eyes still wide like a damsel in distress.

“I want Ndabe.” My voice comes out shaky and she smiles.

“He will be there the moment we get to the hospital. Right, Mrs. Mpisi?”

“Yes. Now let's move.” She gently pushes me forward and I exhale loudly before moving forward and out of the restaurant. People are already watching us and I don't care about them, I am just a bit worried about the baby. We climb onto Mrs. Mpisi's car because the back seat is much more spacious. She drives like a mad man while making calls. After a few moments my phone rings and I dig it out of my bag, placing it on my ear.

“Baby, are you okay?” his voice comes out rushed. It's like he is running. That's when the actual pain comes and I start crying. “My love, please talk to me. what's wrong? Where does it hurt?” I hear a car engine coming to life.

“It hurts and I am scared I feel lonely because you're not here with me.” I sniff and he sighs.

“Please bear with me, baby. I am sorry for not being there with you right now but we are going to see each other after a few minutes and I will make sure I kiss away every pain. I promise.” I nod as if he is seeing me. “Will you be able to hold on for a few minutes?”

I swallow my cries. “Yes.”

“That's it. You are my strong warrior, my superwoman, my everything. This is nothing. Just a way of bringing our precious angel to life. You are going to be fine because you have me with you. Now I want you to focus on your breathing, try to calm yourself down. It may not be easy, but please try.” I wipe away my tears and focus on his voice. A hard contraction strikes, causing me to scream out. “I am not going to hang up. I am here with you babe. Every step of the way.”

NARRATED

By the time they pulled up at the hospital, they had had enough of Dakota's screams and cries. Her contractions were closer and she couldn't stop calling out Ndabe's name. He was already waiting for them standing with two porters who were ready to wheel Dakota in. when the car parked at the front of the main entrance, the porters moved quickly and helped her out of the car, into the stretcher before rushing inside. When her eyes landed on Ndabe, she just wailed and that broke his heart.

After a lot of administration, he finally rushed to the labour ward and found her sitting on the cold floor in a hospital gown. He sat before her and held her hands. "My love." she raised her head to look at him. She was drained, her face red and it showed that she had recently stopped crying.

"I am here. I am not going anywhere. I will be here with you every step of the way." She sniffed.

"I don't wanna go through this again." Her voice was so low, like she was defeated. "I wanted to give you another child but I

don't think I can handle this pain ever again." He brought her into his arms and kissed her head.

"I understand, baby. I have enough kids. I don't need more." she sighed and moaned when another contraction hit her. Which was followed by an intense one that made her scream and push him away. "Shall I call you a doctor?" he asked, his voice full of concern.

"No. I want a holiday house." She breathed heavily. "A honeymoon around the world." she cradled her belly. "Shares in your company. Everything. I want you." He smiled a bit with his head tilted to the side. He had experienced his late wife making crazy demands during labour and even though she was going through pain, he was a bit amused.

"Everything I own is yours." He responded and she let out a small scream.

"I want that necklace. In fact hand it over, and your phone." her tone was stern and he laughed as he took off his necklace, making her wear it and also handed her his phone. "Good. Ahh!" she screamed and dropped the phone. "I feel the urge to push."

That brought Ndabe back to his senses. He carried her over to the bed and went to the corridor, screaming for everyone to hear as he called for help. After a few moments doctors and nurses made their way inside the labour ward and attended to Dakota as they checked how dilated she was.

“Mrs. Mpisi, we are so close to the finish line. I just need you to control your breathing and push. Do you need your husband to hold your hand?” the doctor asked in a polite smile. Dakota just nodded, staring at the ceiling. The doctor looked at Ndabe and he came closer, taking his wife’s hands into his. “Now Mrs. Mpisi, your child’s life is literally in your hands. I need you to push for me, as hard as you can. On the count of three, push.”

She tried pushing until the baby came out, wailing like someone had pinched her. The medical team stitched Dakota up and cleaned the baby before placing it in Dakota’s chest. Baby Gram had stopped crying and her eyes were wide open.

“She is perfect.” Ndabe said and Dakota was just awestruck. She couldn’t believe that her baby is finally here.

“Elmira Isiphile Mpisi.” Dakota murmured and Ndabe smiled widely because of the Zulu name Dakota had thought of.

“I didn’t know you were going to give her a Zulu name.”

“You are her father and half of her family is Zulu. They should be comfortable with calling her by her Zulu name and not create one just to bully her with.” She yawned and the nurse took the baby from Dakota.

“Mr. Mpisi

Advertisement

would you like to hold her?” the nurse asked as Dakota dozed off. Ndabe smiled widely before nodding. The nurse passed baby Elmira to Ndabe and they finished with Dakota before she was moved to a normal ward. Ndabe was mesmerized by Elmira’s beauty. It was love at first sight and he didn’t want to put her down.

“If you don’t mind, we would like to get her checked out.” the doctor said politely to Ndabe. He turned to look at the doctor.

“Is it weird that she has replaced her mother in my heart? That she is now the number one girl in my life and heart?” the doctor giggled and shook her head.

“It is not weird nor strange. Babies have that effect, especially newborns and I have helped deliver many to understand your feelings.” Ndabe smiled and handed Elmira to the doctor even though he didn’t want to.

“Can you please set up a cot next to her mother’s bed?” he requested and the doctor nodded with a smile. He walked out and headed to the waiting room where his mother and mother in law were waiting. He was shocked to see his father, father in law, Tshedza and brother in law who was with Londy.

“How is she, daddy? And how is baby Gram?” Tshedza asked, her voice full of concern. Ndabe smiled before hugging his daughter. He then turned to everyone.

“She is fine. They are both fine. I have another daughter now. Her name is Elmira Isiphile Mpisi.” He boasted and one by one, they congratulated him.

“Who came up with the second name?” Londy asked.

“She did.” Ndabe answered. “She is resting now. I think you guys will have to come back in the morning, so that you can be able to see both of them awake.” They all agreed before leaving.

«««»»»»»

DAKOTA

I can't even feel my joints. I am super tired but I wanna stay awake. I wanna meet my daughter officially because I hardly saw her last night. I open my eyes and sit up, stretching my arms. My body is very sore. I look around and spot Ndabe sleeping on the couch with the baby in his arms. I am already replaced. I clear my throat and he moves a bit before opening his eyes. He looks at Elmira before raising his head to look at me.

“She is the new love of your life.” He chuckles and shakes his head.

“I do have a wife, thank you for asking.” He teases, pouting his lips and I giggle. I climb off the bed and feel dizzy instantly.

“Take it easy, love.”

He places Elmira in her cot before coming to escort me to the bathroom. He helps me bath before I change into fresh new cotton pajamas. He brushes my hair and tie it to a funny looking bun. I just laugh because I don't have the strength to redo it. We walk back to the room and he helps me sit on the bed before handing Elmira to me. It's like she can ready my mind because she opens her eyes and looks at me before bringing her small cute hands to her mouth and sucking them.

"Gosh, she is the cutest thing ever." I kiss her forehead and cheeks. No wonder Ndabe is hooked. Her beauty is hypnotizing. "She is a hypnotist." He laughs. "Why is she sucking her hands?"

"She is showing you that she is hungry. You have to feed her."

"Don't babies usually cry when they are hungry?"

"You are yet to witness her cry. Don't rush it." I chuckle.

"Can you help me?" he chuckles before walking closer to us. He has three children, so he knows how feeding is done. He guides me and it takes a few moments before Elmira gets the hang of things and starts sucking my boob. The action is tingling and

strange but not sore. “Hello Chelekazi. Hello Faku. Hello Nyawuza.” I kiss her cheeks and she closes her eyes, enjoying the breast milk.

“You continue amazing me every day.” Ndabe states and I smile, not knowing how to respond to him. He bends and kisses my temples. “I can’t wait to fuck you hard without worrying about hurting my baby.” my mouth goes dry and he smirks.

“MY BABY PLEASE! I WANT TO SEE MY BABY!” I hear Londy’s voice before I even see her face. Elmira starts fidgeting and I look at Ndabe.

“She is full. Let me help her burp.” He takes her from me and places her head on his shoulder before I hear a small burp. Gosh, I think everything she does is cute. The door opens and Londy is the first one to walk in followed by our families and friends.

“My Elmira.” Londy gushes before dropping everything she is carrying on the floor and moving closer to Ndabe. He hands her over. “My God. Babe, your genes are strong.” She kisses Elmira before coming to sit on the edge of the bed. “How are you holding up?” I smile.

“I am doing okay, just a bit tired.”

“You are not going to get pregnant again, right?” Sis Thandeka asks in an amused tone.

“Never ever again.” They all laugh.

“Hello little sis.” Tshedza moves closer to Londy and takes Elmira’s small hands. She kisses it and my heart melts.

“You wanna hold her?” Londy asks and Tshedza nods before extending her arms. She kisses her.

“MaQhelekazi.”

After spending a full day at the hospital, Elmira and I are finally discharged. Luckily I am healthy and so is she, so there was no reason for keeping us longer. The amount of gifts she received in her first day is ridiculous. I don't even understand these people. They bought gifts for her on the gender reveal party, on the baby shower and now they have bought more gifts. I am pretty sure I would have to give away some of her clothes because there is no way she will wear all of them. The kid actually has an outfit for each day for the next three months. That's how dramatic people surrounding her are.

Ndabe arrives at the hospital looking handsome in a navy tight shirt, navy dress pants and black shoes. I am jealous of the females who have been staring at him since he entered this hospital. This time around he comes straight to me and hugs me before kissing me.

"Hello my beautiful wife. How are you doing this morning?" he is so charming. I just smile and look the other way. "My charming game is too much?" I giggle and nod.

“I am good. Apart from her cries,” I point at Elmira who is sleeping on the bed next to me. “I am doing okay. They are not too much but I am glad I will share the responsibility with you.” he chuckles.

“Not that I need to, but I am off work for the next four months, so I am going to be there for you guys all the way.”

“Thank you, love. Now how are you doing this morning?”

“I am going to sleep with my wife in my arms tonight. Guess how I am?” I chuckle. “Anyways, Ahlelelwe is mad at us.” I frown.

“What did we do?”

“Remember her birthday wish?” I try remembering and I chuckle when I finally remember her wish.

“We will find a way to manipulate her.” he laughs before picking up Elmira.

“Hello, my angel.” He kisses her and rocks her back and forth even though she is sleeping. “You guys are good to go, right?” I nod and take the only bag left.

We make our way out and I don't miss the glances he receives from most females we pass. At that moment, his only focus is on the treasure in his arms. We get to the parking lot and he opens the back seat of my car. I slide inside and he places Elmira in my arms before going to enter on the other door. Before I even ask, a man clears his throat in the driver seat.

"Good morning, Mrs. Mpisi." He says before bringing the engine to life and waking Elmira in the process.

"My love, this is your new driver, Vhuthu. He is going to be with you guys for the first six months and will drive you anywhere you want to go if I am not available or if I wanna chill with you in the backseat." I chuckle. "You may choose to relieve him of his duties or keep him around after six months. Totally up to you." I nod.

"Nice to meet you, Vutu

I am Dakota. Ow I guess you already know that." both men chuckle. Ndabe takes Elmira from my arms and plays with her a bit. "She can't even hear what you're saying." He chuckles.

"In due time, she will." I frown when I see that we are driving towards an opposite direction. "Where are we going?"

“To your house.” He responds carelessly and it actually takes me a few moments to realize which house he is talking about. An automatic smile spreads on my cheek and he winks at me.

We get to our new house. The kids are already waiting outside. They are with Mr. and Mrs. Mpisi senior. The moment the car comes to a halt, Ahlelelwe is the first one to sprint towards it. I climb out and she attacks me with a hug.

“Mommy! I missed you so much. Where is Elmira?” and here I thought she was angry.

“She is with your father but you will only see her once we are inside because she will get cold outside and she will be forced to go back to the hospital.” She nods.

“Why are we going inside? Whose house is this?”

“This is our new home.”

“Foreal?” I nod. She screams and runs to the front door which is wide open. Mrs. Mpisi comes to greet us and we all walk inside the house.

“I would do anything for a hot cup of coffee right now.” I murmur looking at Ndabe.

“Let me get it for you.” his father chirps in and my eyes pop out.

“No. you don’t have to baba. I will get it for myself once I have settled down.” I am ashamed right now. He smiles.

“Don’t worry. My wife was also craving for one when we pulled up. How many teaspoons of sugar do you like?” I look at Ndabe and he nods.

“4 teaspoons of white sugar and please add the creamer.”

“Can I please also have one?” Ndabe requests and his father gives him a death stare. “But dad I am carrying precious cargo.”

“Give the baby to Ahle, she has been dying to carry her.” he walks to the kitchen. We head to the lounge and find the kids already sitting. Ndabe places Elmira in my arms and walks away. I walk closer to Ahlelelwe who looks like she can’t contain her excitement.

“Meet Elmira Isiphile Mpisi.” I sit next to her and show her how to handle the baby. Her smile widens and I take the opportunity to snap a few pictures which come out looking so adorable. After a few minutes, Elmira starts fidgeting and lets out a small cry. Ahlelelwe hands her over and I give her my phone while I shush Elmira. The Mpisi men walk in with 7 cups in their trays.

“Let me hold her while you sip your coffee.” Ndabe states after handing the other cups to Tshedza and Asimbonge. He places two cups on the coffee table and takes Elmira. He goes to sit next to Asimbonge who quickly places his cup on the table and holds his sister.

“Your friends wanted to come and see Elmira but our culture doesn’t permit that. We told that to wait at least a month before they can see her. Inkaba would have fallen by then.” Mrs. Mpisi comments and I nod. Ma’Khanyi explained this to me. She actually said it can take up to three months before people can see the baby. But since our generation likes this, it usually takes less now.

“I understand ma.”

“Once she has been cleared for travelling, you have to come to KZN so that we can introduce her to the ancestors. She can’t bear the Mpisi surname and not be introduced to the ancestors. She is not our blood but she is one of us and she deserves protection by our ancestors. Maybe you can have the traditional wedding earlier than the white wedding. We can have Elmira’s ceremony on the first weekend after she turns three months and then on the same month, umkhehlo and umembeso. You can have the traditional wedding on the following month.” Mr. Mpisi states looking at Ndabe who looks at me.

“We will have to discuss this with my wife in private and then get back to you.” Mr. Mpisi nods. “Do you need to rest?” I sip on my coffee and nod. “We will see you guys later.” He stands up. I look at Mrs. Mpisi.

“I will have someone deliver food for lunch and super.” She chuckles.

“Don’t worry, dear. I have everything covered. Just go rest.” I nod and follow Ndabe upstairs with Ahle on our tails. She used to be our baby, I wonder how she is going to feel now.

We get to our room and I smile when I realize that there is no wall between the nursery and our room. The nursery looks so neat. I wonder where the other stuff is. Ndabe sits on the edge of the bed. I take off my shoes before I climb on the bed and cover myself with the blanket.

“You’re cold?” he asks and I nod.

“Mommy, here is your phone.” Ahle hands me back my phone, goes to kiss Elmira and walks out, shutting the door behind her. I am amazed by her level of maturity. Ndabe joins me under the blanket. I feed Elmira and when I am done, I put her between us. It doesn’t take long for her to doze off. Newborns are lazy AF.

“What do you feel about what ubaba said?” he asks and I sigh.

“He is the head of your family, so what he says goes. I love you and I don’t mind doing the traditional wedding even though I don’t know half the shit that’s done there.” he chuckles.

“First of all, don’t swear in front of my baby.” he threatens and I feel some butterflies in my stomach.

“What are you going to do about it? Spank me?” his eyes darken and he smirks.

“You are giving me an idea, but I don’t wanna rush your healing process. But trust me, you will receive a lot of spanking and fucking after 6 weeks.” My mouth goes dry again. I don’t think I can’t handle any more dick threats from him. “Speechless Dakota? I think I like that. Anyways, I will explain to you all the procedures and the ceremonies to be done prior to the traditional wedding. Just stick with me and I will take you places.” I roll my eyes and he laughs.

LONDEKA MNGUNI

Everyone was looking forward to the arrival of baby Elmira. I felt a strong connection to her. Mrs. Mpisi, the supermodel, didn't mind that I visited her every day. I'm completely smitten with her. Pity I couldn't post her, but as soon as she's cleared, I'm going to start an Instagram page for her and turn her into my little model. She'll soon be my toddler in a tiara. She's a month old now, and her placenta has dropped, so she can have more visitors, but she'll be going to the bundus soon. It's also time for me and Tristin to leave for our trip, which I'm really looking forward to.

When I told my mother, I expected her to be against it or at the very least concerned, but the woman encouraged me. She even bought me a nice dress, which she said I should wear on our last night together, wherever this man of mine takes me.

“What Tristin is doing is so cute.” Lwah beams, sitting on the edge of my bed. She is one of the few people to see me take off. But instead of helping me with my last minute, she is

sipping on some champagne. But I am glad she is here. “She reminds me of Vuyo. So romantic.” I smile.

“I actually thought I will lose him at some point.” She gives me that ‘elaborate’ look. I sigh. “An ex of his once came hard at him. This one time we were chilling at his apartment and she showed up. She didn’t even acknowledge me. She just squeezed herself in between Tristin and I, then she said she was the perfect woman for him. He didn’t deserve a little girl on his corner, rather a strong woman. So I dumped him and he came back to his senses.”

“I understand exactly what you’re saying. A man must know your worth and must acknowledge it. If not, he is not worth your love.” her statement is short but so true.

“I don’t think I would’ve been preparing for a trip like this if I didn’t stand my ground.”

“How did he ask you out?” I laugh when I remember how our relationship started.

“He just claimed me as his from the get go.” She smiles.

“Adorable.” She looks around. “I think you have all that you need.” She stands up and retrieves a small gift bag from her handbag. “Don’t open this until you get to your destination.”

“Is it a bomb?” she laughs.

“If I wanted to kill you, I would’ve done so a long time ago.” I take the gift.

“Thank you, sisi.” We both hug and she helps me with my luggage. We head to the entryway where my siblings are waiting with mom and Yamihle. “Don’t cry. I am only leaving for a week.” they laugh.

“Travel safely, my child.” Mom is the first one to hug me, followed by my siblings. Well Yamihle mirrors their actions. I am pretty sure she has no clue of what’s going on.

“When is she starting crèche?” I ask. My sister laughs.

“I think mom should register her. Vuyo won’t say no to you.” Lwah states and mom laughs. She bends to pick up Yamihle. “We should leave now if we don’t want you to miss your flight.”

They see me out and help with packing my luggage in Lwah's i8. She straps in Yamihle in the backseat and we both climb inside. She plays some music before driving off.

"Where is bhut Luvuyo?" I ask and she smiles.

"He is in Durban but he is coming later tonight. He knows I can't sleep without him by my side." It's one thing to read about a perfect marriage but seeing it everyday near you just gives you hope that yours will be like that. Bhut Luvuyo has proved that he loves Yamihle more than sis Lwah but he can't survive 24 hours without his wife and they never sleep on separate houses.

We arrive at the airport and as we climb off the car, I spot my boyfriend standing with his brother. I unload my luggage and wheel them to where he is standing.

"Hey Londie." Taylor smiles and steps forward to hug me first. I hug him back with the same enthusiasm.

"Hey, Taylor. It's nice to see you." sis Lwah and Yamie also come and stand next to us. I scream when I spot Dakota behind him carrying little Elmira. "Babe. OMG! I was not expecting to

see you.” I take Elmira from her hands and side hug my best friend.

“You are looking superfly babe. You are honestly making me feel ugly and jealous.” She complains, sulking and I chuckle.

“Honey, I am going to Thailand. I can’t be looking like a stoned chick with untidy dreadlocks.” She laughs.

“I am still here. Waiting for my greeting. Or am I not important?” my boyfriend chirps in and we all laugh at him.

“Let me see that cutey.” Sis Lwah extends her arms and I hand Elmira to her. I move to Tristin’s side, hug him and place a kiss on his cheek.

“So I am coming back for the Peaky Blinders themed wedding. I can’t wait to plan it.” Dakota beams and I frown. “Oww don’t be like that. I still receive work emails.” I chuckle. My best friend is the biggest Stan of Peaky Blinders. She has a serious crush on Tommy Shelby. I don’t know if Mpisi is aware of her crush.

“What about Elmira?” I question.

“It will be a good time to introduce her to our empire. One day, she and your child are going to run it.”

“Already thinking about the future, huh?” she giggles.

We chat a bit with everyone, bid farewell and go board the plane.

.
.

We arrive at Krabi Airport after several hours of travel. Despite the fact that I slept during our flight

I am jetlagged and feel extremely sticky. When we arrive at the hotel, the first thing I'm going to do is take a long, warm shower. We arrive at the hotel after about 30 minutes, and Tristin checks us in. I must admit that I am exhausted, but the hotel is simply magnificent. Everything about it is simply breathtaking. We're led to our room, and as soon as we're alone, I pull my phone from my bag and record a video of the breathtaking scenery in front of me. Our suite has a view of the ocean, and the sea breeze is delightful. It is a Premium Deluxe Suite with an Ocean View. Where are my haters?

“I thought you were tired.” Tristin states behind me. I chuckle.

“How can you be tired if there is a view like this?” he laughs.

“Yes it is beautiful but it can’t compare to your beauty.” He wraps his arms around me.

“Even when I am smelly and sticky?” he snorts.

“You can never be smelly, my love. Even after hours of working out.”

“You are just trying to get into my pants.” He chortles.

“How about you go shower while I order dinner for us? I don’t think we are in the mood to go out because we are too tired. We will explore the province tomorrow.” I nod and place my phone on the bed before unpacking my toiletries.

.

.

We spend the entire week exploring the province of Krabi, from secluded private beaches to boat rides and waterslides to simply enjoying Thai food and having the time of our lives. That includes having public sex, which I am grateful we were never

caught doing. The amount of sex on our holiday, yoh. I think I might've just gotten pregnant.

"I have booked you to the spa downstairs, babe. How about you go get relaxed while I take care of some things?" he says as soon as I step out of the bathroom after drying my dreads. I frown. This is our last full day here. Tomorrow evening we are taking a flight back to SA and he wants to do 'some things'.

"Don't tell me you have found some Thai mistress you wanna marry." He actually laughs.

"I wouldn't dream of leaving you for any woman on this planet. I would never abandon all that ass." His eyes travel to my ass.

"Eww, you pervert." He chuckles before coming to kiss me and then heads out. I sigh before wrapping a robe around my body, taking my phone and heading to the spa room. I greet the ladies inside and start my session.

"I have seen you around." My masseuse states, rubbing my lower back.

"That may be correct. I arrived here on Monday evening."

“What took you so long to get here?” she teases and I laugh.

“My boyfriend and I were exploring. This place is simply amazing and breathtaking. I never wish to leave but I have a business waiting for Me.” she chuckles.

“This place is like paradise. Even after years of working here, I can’t get over its beauty. So where is your boyfriend?”

“He is out doing God knows what but I warned him. If he dare cheat on me, I will bankrupt him.” she laughs.

After my session, I go change and grab a cocktail from the bar. It’s only late afternoon when I get a call from my supposed boyfriend.

“Yes.”

“Where are you?”

“Ohh, so now you care? After abandoning me for the whole day?” he chuckles.

“I had some things to take care of. Now I am all yours. Where are you?” I roll my eyes.

“I am at the bar. I will be in our suite in a few minutes.” I hang up and leave my drink.

I get to the suite and find him looking really handsome in a white formal shirt, mint green chinos and flip flops.

“Why wear formal when you’re going to ruin your outfit with flops?” he chuckles.

“We are having dinner at the beach. So wear your best dress. I will be waiting.”

“What were you up to all day?”

“You’re about to find out.” I grunt and head to the closet.

Since mom said I should wear her dress on my last night here, I retrieve it from the hanger. Luckily it doesn’t need any ironing. It’s a yellow off shoulder puff sleeve ruched slit hem bustier dress. Mom is a real fashionista. This dress is a work of art and it belongs in the Oscars red carpet. I freshen up and put on my dress pairing it with nude studded décor ankle strap sandals. I put on minimum make up and head back to my secretive boyfriend.

“Wow, babe. You look beautiful.”

Okay. When he compliments me, I even forget why I am angry because the tone in his voice... God. He takes my hand and together we walk to the beach. We have our dinner. As much as I love Thai food, I am just glad that we are having normal ribs with wings and fries. Apparently he hired a photographer to our last dinner. And they say I am dramatic. We finish eating and take a stroll on the beach sand, barefoot.

“Remember when we first got acquainted?” he asks and I frown.

“Yeah I do. You said I will be your wife.” He stops walking and holds both my hands in his.

“You are an amazing woman. You always call me out on my bullshit and you aren’t afraid to tell it like it is. You don’t give a damn about my fortune. You just love me for who I am and you always support me. You are the kind of woman I wanna spend the rest of my life with. You are amazing, loving and perfect for me. So Londeka Mnguni,” he goes down on one knee and I gasp

in shock. “Will you do me the honors of becoming your husband? Will you marry me?” he takes out a small box from his pocket and reveal a beautiful 9ct White Gold Diamond & Tanzanite Trilogy Ring. Fuck, it’s perfect.

“OMG! That’s why you brought me here?” I think out loud and he laughs.

“Partly. Now can I please have my answer?”

“Why are you impatient?” he groans and I laugh. “Yes, I will marry you.” He smiles widely and slips the ring on my finger before standing up and engulfing me in a deep kiss.

The past few months have been long and tiring. Having a newborn is no joke. At the beginning you think they are nice and quiet but all that changes as they grow bigger and longer. It's safe to say that my baby is a siren. She cries all the time. The only time she is quite is when she is well fed, taking a bath or when someone is holding her. She doesn't mind waking us up at dawn just for us to stare at her. She is such a drama queen. I can't wait for her to reach 1 year then I send her straight to crèche. She is Ndabe's favourite person in the whole world. He once even went with her to the office and she hardly cries when she is in daddy's hands. She is the biggest sellout after those corrupt politicians.

On the other news, my best friend and my brother are engaged. When she called me in the middle of the night to inform me, I screamed and that woke up the Mpisi diva. My brother is paying for the dowry soon and then they will have a Swati traditional wedding. A white wedding will follow next year, although Londy made it clear that she doesn't want the white wedding. She will only participate because it's part of our culture.

I, on the other hand, recently had my traditional and white wedding. It was a very joyous occasion which my rude aunt didn't attend and I was so glad for her absence. I told Ndabe my feelings about his late wife's sister and he promised me that they will never attend any Mpisi event or ceremony unless it includes the kids because they are the only ties they have with the Mpisi family. I thought he wasn't going to like that but he proved me wrong. It is one thing for your husband to listen to you but it's a whole different thing when he understands you and sees reason.

Fortunate and Danvers are officially dating but I don't know about wedding bells soon. Sis Thandeka is glowing in her pregnancy but she is so short tempered. I have witnessed one of her episodes. She just gets violent and starts shouting at everyone when things don't get done her way. When she is done with the tantrum, she sits down on the floor and wails. If I were bhut Sizwe, I would never get her pregnant again because wow, her hormones are on overdrive. The only people who are capable of calming her down and the twins, Yamihle and Elmira. When her eyes land on those innocent souls, her whole rage disappears into thin air. Pregnancy is not normal, I tell you. Sis Lwah and her husband are, well those two are so obsessed with each other. They have become conjoined twins and I have

been hearing hints about them moving to Barkly West permanently because, apparently they love the quiet the little town provides. I am happy for whatever decision they take.

“Babe, she is sitting on her own.” A voice startles me and I turn to see Elmira sitting on the sink in her grey hoodie gown, playing with her feet. She has nothing balancing her.

“OMG! The little devil angel looks so cute right now.” I beam and Ndabe laughs.

“Keep calling my baby a little devil angel and your vagina will be hot as hell within an hour.” He threatens and I just roll my eyes before moving towards Elmira. She smiles when she sees me and extends her arms. She loves being in someone’s arms.

“Take your little angel, I have to get dressed.” I say looking at Ndabe and Elmira screams as soon as I turn my back on her. God, my daughter is such a drama queen. I huff and pick her up. She giggles and places her tiny cute hands on my cheeks. How can I not melt with that giggle? “Don’t say a word.” I threaten Ndabe as I pass him and he laughs.

I head to the nursery and lotion my baby's body. I get her dressed up in a white baby mock neck tee and maroon puff sleeve bow front dress with white tights and burgundy sneakers. I put on a hairband on her heads and spray her with a little bit of baby perfume. My baby looks like one of those kids who appear in ads. She is my mini model. I place her on the cot with her favourite toy and then back her bag. When I am done, I carry her to my bedroom and hand her to Ndabe. I don't care if he is not done getting dressed.

I head to my walk in closet, put on a maroon floral lace Bardot teddy bodysuit which Ndabe has classified as lingerie, white denim shorts and maroon Nike sneakers. I apply a bit of foundation

Advertisement

mascara and lipstick on and then fix my hair. When I head back to the bedroom, Ndabe literally eye-fucks me. I pack a few things on my handbag and take Elmira's baby bag.

"We can go now." I announce and he clears his throat before standing up. I laugh at the visible growing bulge on his pants. "You are going to traumatize my child." I place the bags on the bed and take Elmira from him. "Control yourself, sir." I head

out, making sure to shake my mini ass as I walk and I hear him groan. I get downstairs to find Tshedza wheeling in her luggage. “Ow hey baby. I wasn’t expecting you until tomorrow. What happened to the girl’s trip?” she chuckles before taking Elmira from my arms. We share a hug.

“Hey, mom.” Yes. I upgraded to mom after the white wedding. I guess she saw that I wasn’t going anywhere and she had no choice but to fall in line. “Hey baby sis.” She kisses Elmira’s mouth.

“Talk to me.” she sighs and walks to sit on the couch. I sit next to her.

“I found out that Simon has been sleeping with Miranda for a while now and the whole crew knew about it.” Fuck that’s bad. Simon is the guy she has been seeing but they haven’t engaged in any sexual activities. Miranda is like her best friend, or was her best friend. High school drama never changes.

“That’s awful. I am sorry.” I hold her hand and squeeze it. She exhales loudly.

“I am just glad I didn’t give myself to him early. I am glad that I got to know about his true intentions before I made the dumbest decision of my life.”

“Don’t beat yourself up about this. Giving yourself to him wouldn’t have been dumb because you believed he loved you.” I sigh. “Just tell him to run and never look back because when I get my hands on him, I will make him regret messing with my baby girl.” She chuckles.

“That sounds bad ass.” I laugh. Her father descends the stairs.

“You can join us. We are having brunch then heading to the zoo because Elmira apparently ‘loves’ watching monkeys.” I say that loudly and Ndabe laughs.

“She does.” He defends. He is the one who actually loves visiting the zoo. I don’t know where his obsession comes from. “Hello my angel.” He kisses Tshedza’s forehead.

“Hey dad. I will have to pass on that offer. I have a date with Lande and Lwando.” You would think that the more they grow, they would actually grow apart, but the Mnguni twins just love

each other's company. They even have sleepovers at each other's rooms. It's crazy. They are those type of twins who wouldn't survive if the other were to die.

"Okay. We will see you later." I side hug her and take Elmira.

"Maybe we will take a mini road trip, just the two of us and leave your daddy with the troublesome daughter." She laughs because she knows her father would not agree.

.

.

When we walk out of the restaurant after having brunch, the Mpisi princess wakes up. She looks around and then lays her head on my shoulder. She never throws any tantrums when we are in public. She always behave herself. I don't know how she does it.

"OMG! Your baby is so cute." A young lady smiles at me as she walks besides me.

"Thank you." I smile at her.

"She looks just like my younger sister when she was around her age. What's her name?"

“Elmira Mpisi.”

“Mpisi?” she questions with raised eyebrows.

“Her father is a black man.” the lady nods but she still looks confused.

“Kerry, stop bothering that nice woman.” a familiar voice says from behind me and I turn only to find the woman who once insulted me at a restaurant full of people. This time around she is not alone, she is with her husband. My eyes meet with Elmira’s sperm donor and he looks like he is about to shit himself. “You look familiar.” I smirk.

“I am the woman you accused of sleeping with your husband not so long ago.” I state with a smile. “By the way, this is my daughter, Elmira Isiphile Mpisi and that’s my loving husband, Ndabezimnandi Mpisi. It was nice bumping into you.” I smile and turn to walk away. I feel Ndabe’s arm on my lower back and I chuckle. My husband is so possessive. “Don’t be jealous. Elmira’s sperm donor has nothing on you.” he clenches his jaws.

“Next time I will break his jaws. His sight disgusts me.” does anyone else have a husband as jealous as mine? I stop and place my hand on his cheek. I stand on my tiptoes and plant a soft kiss on his mouth. I feel him relax a bit and I step back. He smiles and licks his lips.

“Jealousy looks good on you.” he snorts.

.

.

We get to the zoo and the husband forgets that he is actually not alone. He gets so hooked on the exotic animals, he doesn't even notice us settling on one of the benches away from the animals. Staring at him being so carefree and happy makes my heart swell. At the end of the day, marriage is not about the wife's and the kids' happiness. The husband's happiness also matters. I made it my life mission to know about my husband's hobbies and visiting the zoo is one of them. It's weird, a man in his thirties who enjoys being in a zoo but when you see him interacting with the animals, you can't help but smile.

He is in his zone and carefree. I love him so much and I am grateful for the second chance I got in love. This time around, I got it right. Went for the man who knows how to treat me

right, who loves me unconditionally and who embraces all my flaws. I wish all women can find someone like that in life. Someone who knows your worth and someone who treats you the way you deserve to be treated.

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

For daily latest books please visit <https://novelsguru.com/>

And also visit my Facebook page, and like and share it

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/3345453369055623>

Thank you guys for downloading this book from my site please keep visiting <https://novelsguru.com/> for supporting me and also don't forget to share it with your friends.

Dear Friends please download these books direct from <https://novelsguru.com/> bookmark this site for latest African books, and also supporting me Thanks.