

Intro

Amahle Zungu is my name I'm 20 years of age. I live life according to my rules, I hate being controlled, I just do things my way. No man could handle me as they always told me that I don't need a man as I am a man myself. Life has taught me to be strong at a very young age, so I thought I was strong, I thought I could handle anything and everything until I made a mistake of allowing a man to be part of my life. He proved that I was weak.

Insert One 😊

Man it's hot. I know its summer and all but does it have to be this hot. My mom didn't make it any better, she just had to make me go all the way to Joe's Tuck Shop. It's like 5 km away from my house. Worse part is, all of the high profile gangsters' chill over there. My life could be in jeopardy right now. My mom really needs this flour and baking powder because tomorrow she has to go to a church thing so she has to bake these cakes before the day ends. It is really hot, and I am wearing my shortest short and a very tight t-shirt, it reveals my back. I don't really like wearing things that cover my body. My mother has no problem with it so I don't care what other people think of me.

Finally I am here. All these boys start to whistle and cheer and hoot, I pay them no mind. If they come anywhere near me I will kill them. The neighborhood we live in, is not safe, especially for us girls therefore my great-aunt has taught me how to protect myself. She was a police officer so she taught me everything there is about defense. I have never killed anyone before but I have been involved in many fights, mostly with boys. Almost everyone fear me in my neighborhood. But here, no-one knows me, they could easily take advantage of me. I have a very short-temper and I am always ready to kick someone's ass. I wasn't abused or raped or anything, my aunt brought me up like that. Kids use to tease me and I always came home scared. My aunt said I shouldn't allow a person to tear me down. I shouldn't fear anyone, I should only fear God. She taught me to toughen up and stick up for myself. My mom never liked the idea but she's proud now that I let no man take advantage

of me. I have never let a man to be part of my life, I just don't trust those bastards. I am 20 years old and I have never really had a proper boyfriend and I am not looking.

Thank God I am getting out of this place, I have to walk another 5 km. Lord! Now I am carrying 10kg of flour. It's not heavy yet but as I walk it will get heavier. A man comes my way, I hope he doesn't try to have a conversation with me.

Him: Can I help sis?

Me: No thanks. I am just fine.

I hope he leaves me alone, right now before he sees the real me. I am being polite as I can be, he must not push me.

Him: That thing looks heavy and I have a car...

Oh no, he didn't.

Me: So what if you have a bloody car? You thought I would jump if I knew you had a car. Well newsflash, I wouldn't even care if you had a horse. Now move tu! It's freaking hot.

He looks offended, well I don't give a damn.

I push him out of the way. I don't believe him, he has a nerve to tell me he has a car. He didn't even greet! Bastard!

In 20 minutes time, I was home. I am dripping wet. I don't sweat a lot.

But who wouldn't sweat, it's 31 degrees and I walked for about 10km. I am tired, I just want to sleep right now.

Me: Mama, I am home.

I take the flour and place it on the kitchen table.

Ma: Oh my baby, what would I do without you?

She hugs and kisses me.

Me: You would have to walk 10 km mommy and buy the flour for yourself.

She laughs and takes out all the ingredients she will need.

Ma: Are you not going to help me?

Me and the kitchen? That's two things that will never ever mix.

Me: Aah no mama, you carry on with your baking and I will go take a shower. Okay?

Ma: No not okay. You always do this. Someday Amahle you are going to be married, have your own family. You have to learn kitchen duties my baby. So you can take care of your family.

No not this again. I don't like having this conversation with anyone especially my mother.

Me: Mom, for the 100th time, I am never getting married, ever!

She looks at me with worry, I feel for her, I do but I have put myself first. I have told her a million times before that I feel nothing for men. I am not lesbian, I just don't like boys, period! I don't like the idea of being in a relationship. It has destroyed my mother, I don't

want to be like her in the next 20 years. Being soft and pray every chance I get and go to church every Sunday. A man destroyed her, a man made her weak. I don't want anything like that happening to me.

Ma: But Mahle, you haven't met the one you love. Once you do, you'll change the way you think.

I want to leave now.

Me: Mom, you have other kids, so you will gladly get a chance to

marry one of them off, just not me, sorry.

I grab an apple and left. I don't ever want to have that conversation with her again. I don't like arguing with her. Why is worried of me having a husband, she should be glad that I won't leave her and be someone else's daughter, someone who didn't even raise me. I don't understand my mother. I have a lot of things to worry about then to worry about finding myself a husband.

I have to go iron my uniform. I am working tomorrow and I have to be at work by 8. I don't even like going to work, I hate my job but I have no choice because I want to use the money to pay for my studies. My mother works and Anele also works but it's just not enough. All of the young ones are still in school. I did my first and second year in University of Johannesburg, I was studying BCom but I had to drop out because apparently the bursary I got couldn't fund

me anymore. Not because I was failing, I was doing pretty well. I never understood why they ditched me. Mom offered to continue paying but I didn't want to stress her so I decided to go job hunting.

Mom wasn't happy about it but she had no choice because I am stubborn and when I want to do something no-one can stop me. I make my own decisions, it's my life I live it how I want to. So I got a

job at Spur's as a waiter. I have been working there for almost a year now. I don't like the long hours and the rude customers I meet almost every day. Which is really hard for me because I have to compose my anger, no matter how frustrated I am, the customer is always right.

I am done with my apple I should go take a shower now.

I am all done and refreshed. Just what I needed after that long walk.

The kids are back from school, more chaos. I am just going to lock myself up in my room for the rest of the day. I love my little brother and sister but I am in mood for them today. My mom has been a single parent for the past 10 years. My father passed away in a car

crash when I was young, 10 years old. My mother never re-married. She has had her no good boyfriends but me and Anele have always

managed to chase away those scumbags. They were just no good for our God-fearing, honest, harmless and loyal mother.

I come from a stable family but the income we receive is not

enough for me to go to college or university. I do plan to go study

but not now. I still want to make sure my mom and her kids are taken care of. My mother has 4 kids. Anele, 24, Amahle, 20, Andile, 16, and Ziningi, 10. She has 2 boys and 2 girls. But then she always say that I should be considered as the 3rd boy because of my behavior. I am

hot-headed, always ready to attack and according to her, I am far most the strongest woman she has ever met. When my father

passed, Anele took the role of being a man, he has always been

tough. He became like my father. My father was a very strict man,

hot-headed, stubborn and short-tempered. My mom says me and

Anele remind her too much of my father, especially me. Well, she

should thank her sister-in-law. She made me like this, she toughened me up. She made me this woman, who is always ready to strike, who always fight her way to victory and who let no-one stand in her way.

Insert Two 😊

I hear a car parking outside. Anele is here. What is he doing here?

On a weekday? Not that I am complaining. I missed his crazy, strict

arse. He greets mom in kitchen, who is still busy with her baking. It's 6p.m woman. I rush to the kitchen and hugged Anele.

Me: And what do we owe this pleasure?

It's so unlike him to come and visit us during the week. He probably

has some news to deliver. Hope he didn't come with that

girlfriend of his that I hate. She is just too much. She tries too hard to befriend me, it's like she using me to fit in with the family. She knows Anele and I are close, so my opinion matters. It is not working one bit. She is a know-it-all, she wears too much make-up, she is bubbly, and she even wears pants when she comes here. Who wear pants to her in-laws? She always has fake long nails, fake hair and fake long

lashes. She is loud and talks a lot. She is just not right for my brother. She is the total opposite of him.

Him: Can't I just visit my loving family with no reason?

Me: Uh... no.

I take an apple out of the fridge. I have a thing for apples, especially green ones. I just love them. They're juicy and crunchy.

Him: Why not?

Me: Because, you only come here when you have trouble with that bitch girlfriend of yours.

Mom: Amahle! Language!

He knows I don't like that girl. I have been calling her names since the day I met her. He doesn't have a problem with it either because he knows that her is too much. I also know if I happen to have a boyfriend now, he would kill him first before he could even touch me. That's what he always say. Lucky for him, I ain't planning on having one.

Him: Well, I am planning to marry that 'bitch' girlfriend of mine.

What the...

My ears are playing tricks on me. I burst out in laughter. I almost chock on the apple. I look at him and mom. They look serious. I stop laughing immediately.

Me: Ohh... you're serious.

Him: Yes I am. In fact, that's what I came to talk about mah. I want to marry Zanele.

My mom looks happy. I thought she didn't like the girl either. How can she be happy about the crap this brother of mine is talking? This is bullshit!

Her: It's about time! My son is finally becoming a man.

Me: Big brother, are you okay?

I touch his forehead.

Me: you must be catching flu or something because you are talking crap.

He removes my hand from his forehead.

Him: No I am perfectly fine and yes lil sis, I want to make her my wife.

He is not laughing. That can't be good. He can't marry her. He can't make her a part of this family. My mom is still over the moon.

Me: Mah, you are also allowing this madness?

Her: Amahle, marriage is not madness. Yes Zanele is not perfect but who is? We have to allow your brother to marry whomever

he wants to marry. He is old enough and mature to make he's own decisions.

Anele sticks out his tongue at me.

Her: Ok, maybe not mature but he's an adult. If they love each other, who are we to stand in their way?

What the hell? We always gossip about this bitch when we are alone, now she's allowing his son to marry her? Just like that?

He doesn't even have that much of a money.

He's just a freaking police detective at a lousy police station. Why can't she go for a rich man? And leave my brother alone.

Me: That's bull!

I leave the kitchen.

Mom: Amahle!

I am not going to talk to that woman until she tells me what the hell is wrong with her. I am sure she hates that girl with her life but she

allows this to happen. There are so many amazing girls out there that would be perfect for my brother. Talking about love. What does

Anele know about love? Love my foot!

As always I am dragging my feet to go to work. I will just never get

use to this job. But what choice do I have? If I just sit around and do

nothing I will go crazy. My job alone drives me crazy. Working in a restaurant is really not for a person like me. I try really hard to

compose my anger. The manager is mean, especially if you're

black. They make us work twice as hard. I don't even want to

mention the customers. They are abusing the rule that says, 'a

customer is always right.' Who came up with that dumb rule

anyway? It just doesn't make sense. Good, it's lunch. Away from all

the drama. The best time of my day is lunchtime and knock-off time.

I am just sitting at the canteen with my girls, Nosipho and Zitha.

We've been pals since forever. They are the only people in this world that get me, that can take my madness and the only people that never judge me.

Charles: Amashle Zungu. See me now.

Charles is my boss. What have I done now? I look at Nosipho and Zitha, they shrug. I follow him to his office.

Me: Yes Charles.

Him: Close the door.

I do as he says. I can see I am in deep shit. Judging by the look on his face, I am in big trouble.

Him: Sit.

I obey him again. He looks at me in a very uncomfortable way. I am sure he's eyes are staring at my boobs right now. I don't have big boobs, so I wear push-up bras. I unbutton the second and first button of my shirt, so my cleavage is showing a bit. If he called me just look at my boobs, I am going to smack him. Boss or not. I click my fingers. He looks at me finally. He clears his throat.

Him: Um... sorry. I was just daydreaming. Amashle, I need to speak to you.

Me: Can you call me Amy.

Him: Oh right, so Amy, I need to discuss something with you.

Me: What is it?

Him: Your dress-code.

Me: What about it?

Him: Amy, your uniform is too close to your skin. Those tight pants and your shirt is always unbuttoned. How do you expect customers to concentrate on their food while you being all sexy.

Me: I don't get it. What do you expect me to wear Charles? All of my pants are tight.

I don't even have a big ass. It's just the right size for my body. I am slim and I don't have huge curves. I am just slender. I don't get how I am disturbing customers. Nosipho has huge ass and curves, she should be sitting here with this man, not me.

Him: I guess you have to buy new pants.

Me: What? That's crazy. I don't have money Charles. I can't just buy 6 new pants.

Him: I will borrow you money...

Me: No, I don't need your charity.

Him: Okay. I am giving you a month's notice then. Button up your shirt.

Me: No! You said you're giving me a month's notice. I will button it up after a month.

He smiles and shakes his head.

Him: You're stubborn Amy. I like that. Everyone here is shit scared of me yet you stand up to me and speak your mind.

Well, I am not scared of anyone. We are practically like 4 or 5 years apart, I have no reason to be scared of him.

Me: Oh, I am sorry. I am just like that.

Him: No. Don't apologize. You can leave now. That's all I wanted to discuss with you.

I stand up and head for the door.

Him: Oh wait Amy. Palesa said a customer in table 5 requested to be served by you.

What? Who could that be?

Me: But it's my lunch.

Him: He said he will wait. He won't leave until he's served by you.

Me: Ok. I will attend him now.

I leave his office wondering who this man could be. On my way out I bump into Palesa.

Her: There's a man who...

Me: Yes I know. Charles told me.

Her: Oh ok. I tried to be his waiter but he said he wanted Amahle

Zungu. You're lucky Mahle. The guy is hot, most probably the hottest guy in here. He's hotter than Charles. Imagine that.

Who asked her? She thinks every guy is hot. She has this huge crush on Charles. Actually all of my girl colleagues have a crush on

Charles. According to them, he's yummy and hot. He is good-

looking, I don't want to lie. He's far most the hottest white man I

have ever came across with. Not even Zac Efron is that cute. Ok, I

am lying. Argh! Now I am admiring my boss' looks.

I go to the canteen, fetch my apron, pad and pen.

Nosi: Why did boss yummy call you?

Me: Can't talk. Tell you later. Duty calls.

I grab my things and rushed out. Zitha calls my name, but I ignore her.

I get to the restaurant. Took out my pad and pen. I see a man sitting in table 5. I can't see his face but I am sure I have never seen him before.

Me: Goodday sir. What can I get for you?

I say without looking at his face. My eyes are on paper, ready to write down his order.

Him: About time.

What does he mean about time? He's the one who insisted on waiting for me. I lift up my head. No, no, no! This can't be happening. Never in a million years would I ever thought he's the one who would want me to waiter him. He doesn't even know me.

Me: Oh look. It's the guy with a car.

Him: (smiles) no need to be so mean to me like you were yesterday. I am customer. It's in your job description to be nice to me.

Me: May I take your order, sir?

Him: Better. Even though I don't like you to call me sir, no formalities.

Can you join me for lunch? I know it's your lunch break.

Me: How do you even know that? And no, I will not have lunch with you.

I must say it as much as I hate to say it. Palesa was right. This guy is H-O-T. He's Michael Ealy kinda hot. He's muscular, fair in complexion, he has a smooth skin for a man, he's voice is amazing, I like it. It's polite but deep. He's teeth are white, he's beard is nicely trimmed.

Judging by the clothes he's wearing, he's loaded. He's watch is a freaking Rolex. Yes, I am examining him. I have no idea why. I like the way he's dressing. He even has tattoos on his right arm, they're very sexy.

Him: Why not?

Me: Because I don't want to. Now what can I get you?

Him: You really know how to crash a man's ego.

I don't care! Right now I want to crash his hot stupid face.

Me: Man, are you going to order? If you gon' waste my time like this I will get you another waiter.

Him: Ok fine Amahle, water would be lovely.

What the... he has got to be kidding me. This ass made me miss my lunch for stupid water. He must not push me. If we weren't in a restaurant, I was going to smack some sense to him. I am just looking at him. I am trying really hard to not show him I'm mad. And wait, how does he know my name?

Me: How do you know my name?

Him: It's written on your tag.

Me: But you knew me before I got here. My colleague said you requested for Amahle Zungu.

He is looking at me and it is making me very uncomfortable. He has china eyes but right now they are waaaaaay smaller. He is looking at me from head to toe.

Him: Oh yeah. I know a lot about you Miss Zungu. Not just your name. You only met me yesterday but I have known you for like a month. I haven't had courage to speak to you.

Me: Why is that?

He raises his eyebrows. I know I have a bad reputation and all but I am not all bad.

Me: Ok fine Mister, I get why. I will go and get you water.

This is dumb though. Why would he come to Spur's just for freaking glass of water? I give him his stupid water.

Me: Anything else?

He looks at me again and he bites his lower pink lip.

Him: You're beautiful.

I roll my eyes. This guy is really ticking me off. I leave him there and went back to the tills.

My lunch is almost over so I might as well go start working. I chat a bit with Clement, the cashier.

I go back to table 5. He's gone. Weird. There's money on the table.

He wrapped it with a serviette. Why did he even leave money? He only just had water. Whaaaaaat? R500? For what? Just having water. I did say he's loaded. Who pays for water? He written something on the serviette as well, "Thanks for your service. It was wonderful. Here's a tip, it's not much but it's something. Hope to see you soon. P.S I'm Tukelo, enough with the formalities." It reads.

Modesty!

He tipped me off with R500 and he says it's not much? My service was terrible. Why did he tip me? He is something else.

My day is over. Thank God! I thought it would never end. I had a pretty long day. I decided to treat my girls with drinks, since I was tipped with R500. I didn't tell them about the Tukelo guy as yet. I told them about Charles and the sudden hatred about the way I dress.

They just said he wants me and most probably he gets an erection every time he sees me. Seriously, he never had a problem with the way I dress, why now? But I am sure he doesn't want me like that, my friends were just being crazy as usual. He is happily married from what I have heard, he has a daughter at that. So he gets enough sex at home, he wouldn't go around and look for it elsewhere. But men are dogs! You will never know with these bastards. Though, Charles seem like a decent guy.

We got to the club and settled down at a table. I promised them one cocktail each, I still have to save some of the money. I texted my mom and told her I will be a little late today. I told her I am working extra hours. I just don't want to speak to her or Anele, they really pissed me off last night. I will be home late. I haven't spoken to Anele since last night. We call each other every day, I guess he's also mad at me.

Six cocktails later, these girls are sloshed. The one cocktail was not enough, they decided to buy more. I didn't stop them. Although I am in no mood for drinking. I just had the one I bought when we came here.

Nosipho is by the dance floor, dancing her ass off. She is also good at it.

Me: Zitha, I think we should go. It's getting late.

Her: It's only 6pm Amahle. Come on. We'll leave. It's not like you have anything better to do.

That's her nice way of saying, I have no life, no boyfriend. To them, boys are everything. Yet, they always run to me when they have boyfriend troubles. I am the one who has to teach those no good boyfriends of theirs a lesson.

Me: 7pm we're leaving no arguing. If you don't want to leave. I will leave you here! Now I regret bringing you guys here.

They know I won't leave them but I had to put on a threat. Somehow, both their parents trust me with their kids. They know if they're with me, they're safe. You'd swear I am older than them. Me and Zitha we're the same age and Nosipho is 22. Yet, I think and act like I am 10 years older than the both of them. I am sitting here chatting with Zitha but something keep on disturbing me that's happening on the dance floor.

Her: Ok mom. We'll leave. I think I will need another round of strawberry daiquiri before I leave.

Me: Fine. Just don't get too drunk. I don't want you to get into trouble with your dad again.

What I am seeing right now is really disturbing me. I am trying very hard to ignore it. I am talking to Zitha but I am looking at the dance floor. I am trying so hard to tell my mind that my eyes are playing tricks on me.

Her: What are you looking at?

No, I can't no more!

Me: I will be back.

I get up and headed for the dance floor. Zitha is confused.

Insert Three 😊

I grab the guy and push him hard.

Him: What the fuck is wrong with you?

Me: I have been watching you from there, can't you see the lady doesn't want you to touch her, yet you bastard keep on forcing yourself on her!

I am really angry right now. Nobody messes with my friends, I mean nobody!

Him: Eyi, bitch, mind your own business!

He push me aside and went to Nosipho again. I am fuming right now. He shouldn't have pushed me like that! Or called me a bitch. Now I am going to murderlize him. I tap on his shoulder, he turns around.

Him: Bitch what do...

I punch his stupid perverted face before he can finish his sentence, he's down. He's weaker than I thought. People are around us already.

Me: Let me show you what this 'bitch' can do. Get up!

He tries to get up, but I see that he's struggling. I grabbed him by his clothes, gave him another punch and another and another. Zitha

and Nosipho keep on shouting my name. They can't come any closer when I am in this state, they know better. The rest of the people are whistling and cheering. I am just punching he's stupid face. Now I am on top of him, punching the hell out of him. After several punches on his face, I get up and started kicking him. He keeps on coughing, badly.

Nosi: (cries) Amahle stop! You're going to kill him!

As I am kicking the hell out of him. Someone grabs me by my waist and carries me over his shoulders. Like a sack of potatoes. Probably one of the bouncers. I keep on trying to set myself free, he is holding me tightly and taking me outside.

Me: Let me go!

He's not giving in. When we are outside and a little bit far from the club he puts me down.

Him: What the fuck is this Amahle? You go around hitting people now?

Shit! When did he get here?

Me: He was harassing my friend.

I don't understand. I am angry right now. Is he following me around?

It's like everywhere I go he's here. And where the hell did he get the nerve to pick me up like that? I am on rampage right now. No-one dares to even come close to me when I am like this. Who is he coming in between me and my rage?

Him: He's a man, he could have killed you. How do you know if he wasn't armed?

The loser couldn't even stand on two feet, I am pretty sure he wasn't armed, the loser couldn't even fight back. Not that I gave him any chance to.

Me: What are you doing here?! You're following me around? Answer me!

He looks confused. Why the hell is he confused? He is the one who keep on following me.

Him: Can we get in my car so we can talk?

Me: Is there something wrong with your head? How many times must I tell you? I will not sit my ass on your fucking car.

I am angry. I keep on moving up and down. When I am this angry I can't stand still.

Him: Can you calm down?

Me: Who are you? My father? You can't tell me what to do! Leave me alone, geez! You're suffocating me!

I try to walk away but he grabs my arm.

Him: I am not going to let you set a foot in that club while you this angry. You might finish of what you started.

If he doesn't stop playing hero, I will punch his face too.

Me: The bastard could be harassing my friend as we speak. Let go of my hand you idiot!

He is so strong. I am trying so hard to be free but his grip is really tight.

Him: Man you're feisty! Calm down Amahle, please.

He pulls me and I land on his chest, he put his dirty hands around me. Now I can't even move. I am fighting him but it's no use, this man is strong. He's arms are big. After minutes of fighting him, I finally give in. Somehow, I am calmer. I am no longer fighting him. I am just lying on his chest.

Him: You're calm now?

Me: (silent)

Him: Amahle?

Me: Yes I am calm. Now can you let me go?

He lets go slowly. I step back a little.

Me: I have to go check on my friends.

I turn my back to leave.

Him: Yes sure. Of course. Hey Tigress, no more fighting please. You ladies go home. I could take you but you said you won't sit your ass on my fucking car.

Geez, now I am tigress.

Me: Yes that's right, Mr. Tukelo.

Him: I said no formalities.

I give him the 'whatever' look.

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Zitha: What happened to you? We were worried sick about you.

Me: I went to calm myself down. Where's the bastard?

Nosi: No, I don't think you calmed yourself down if you still asking about him.

Me: I am calm Nosi.

They don't believe me. I want to go inside the club but they keep on blocking my way.

Me: Girls I am calm, I want my things, that's all.

Nosi: Already got them. Zitha has called a cab, we are leaving now.

Now it's them that is mothering me. I am not a monster, I will not hurt the bastard even though he deserves it. The cab is here, we go inside the cab and left. No one is saying anything. They're hiding something from me. I know them very well, they don't just keep quiet. It's either, they're mad at me or they are hiding something from me, they look nervous too.

Me: Guys, what is it that y'all hiding from me?

Zitha looks nervous, I hope that bastard didn't threaten them.

Nosi: Nothing.

She is lying, I know Zitha won't lie to me.

Me: Zitha?

She hesitates but she speaks anyway.

Zitha: Amahle, you shouldn't do what you did today. You scared us.

Me: But the guy was touching Nosi and she wasn't okay with it. What was I supposed to do? Watch him harass her?

Zitha: No but you shouldn't have hit him like that. Now you're in deep shit.

Deep shit? Don't tell me I killed the guy. God knows I would never kill anyone, never! I was just warning him to never touch a woman by force ever again.

Me: What deep shit? Is he dead?

Nosipho is trying to shut Zitha up. But she has already spoken.

Me: Speak Zitha! What shit?

Zitha: The guy's friends came to help him and he was lifeless Amahle, he was practically dead. The friends asked who did this, they didn't get an answer and they said they will find whoever did this and they were going to kill that person. They looked like they were gangsters, they were armed. They are capable of finding whoever harmed their friend.

I don't know why but I am not shaken by this at all.

Me: Those were empty threats Zitha. Chill.

Nosi: Empty threats? Didn't you hear Zitha? Those guys looked dangerous.

I was helping you idiot. If I didn't intervene only god knows what he would have done to you.

Me: Girls listen! They don't know I did it, right? That bastard who harassed you doesn't know who I am. So nothing happened today, we didn't go to that club. Do you hear me?

They nod. They worry for no reason.

I am still mad at my mother. I know I am a little unfair but Anele can do better. Zanele is just not for him. We hardly speak, we just greet and ignore each other for the rest of the day. I always come home late. Anele hasn't spoken to me either. He hasn't called or texted me. I haven't called either. I heard that Anele want the wedding to be as in yesterday. He really determined to marry this girl.

For the past three days, this Tukelo guy has been having breakfast, brunch, lunch and even dinner where I work. All the time he request for me, I waiter him but I haven't been nice to him at all. Seems he forgotten about the incident that happened that night, he hasn't spoken or asked about it. He's all sweet and nice to me and he tips me well but I am not buying any of his shit. He just wants to have

lunch with me. He ain't getting none of that.

Palesa: Your loyal customer is back.

I was about take a bite of my delicious peanut butter and egg sandwich. Trust me, it's tastes better than it sounds. He has gone too far, this has to stop. He even has the audacity to always disturb my lunch. I got up and went to the restaurant.

Me: What do you want?

Him: You.

He said that so easily. I freeze.

Him: Can you have lunch with me, please MaNcwane?

The looks he gives me, it's very sad. For the first time since I have met this guy, I don't know what to say. Without any warning, I find myself sitting across him. He's shocked too, believe me I am also shocked by this. He hands me the menu.

Me: I don't need this, I work here. Remember?

He smiles and takes it back. I am not even sure if this type of behavior is allowed, having lunch with a customer. But it is my lunch break so it doesn't matter who I have my lunch with or where.

Him: So Amahle Zungu, how long are you planning on being mean to me and pushing me away?

Me: How long are you planning on following me around?

Him: As long as it takes for you to be mine.

Me: Keep dreaming buddy, because that shit will never happen.

Him: Oh we'll just have to wait and see about that. I mean, I did convince you to have lunch with me, I am sure I can still convince you to be with me.

Me: Why are you so determined?

Him: Why are you so stubborn?

Me: You do know I can still change my mind about this lunch thing, right?

He quickly signals for the waiter. He knows I am serious, I can change my mind. It's funny that he has known me for like 4 days but he hasn't asked for my number. He prefers to stalk me. Like really? Who does that? Oh great, Palesa is going to be our waiter.

Her: Hi guys. I am Palesa, I will be your waiter. What can I get for you?

She looks at Tukelo. She is actually drooling over him.

Him: I will have whatever the lady wants.

Me: But the lady doesn't know what the man likes.

Him: He likes whatever the lady likes.

Me: So if I am having snails, you'd join?

Palesa: We don't sell snails silly, you work here surely you know that. Me: That's beside the point Palesa.

Him: Trust me, I would order them. I like trying new things, eating snails would be good experience. But I am pretty sure that you would gag at the first bite.

Me: Really? Is that a challenge Mr. Tukelo?

Him: No formalities.

Me: Says the man who calls me by my clan name.

Him: (laughs)

We are having this conversation and Palesa is just looking at us.

Him: So are you up for the challenge Tigress? Because I know a great Chinese restaurant that sells snails and all that shit. We can go right now.

Me: (laughs)

Him: And finally, I make the lady laugh. I am winning.

Me: I was only joking. No snails or all that shit. Original spur burger would be lovely.

Palesa: Drinks?

Me: Orange juice.

Him: Whoa, I ain't having no orange juice. Castle lite please.

Who drinks alcohol at this time of the day? Only a handsome, sexy, pink-lipped, china eyed and yellow boned man would drink at this

time of the day. I took time to look at him. What? Just because I don't like the guy, it doesn't mean I wasn't looking at him and it doesn't make look less handsome. He is good looking.

He is the most handsome man I have ever seen. I like his voice. I wonder when he works because he spends half his day

here. I am sure that he has a job. The clothes he wears says it all. I

don't understand his swag. Sometimes he wears like a hip-hop star.

Those swag pants, sneakers, high-tops and those vests. Sometimes he dresses formally, those formal pants, those designer shirts. Though he never wears a tie, the first and second buttons are always unbuttoned. Guess he has the same problem as me. I like it when he wears casual. Just t-shirts and shorts or pants. But he always wear branded clothes. He's a fan of G-star RAW. He is been wearing a lot of jeans and t-shirts of G-star RAW. I see that he's loaded. Who wears different Rolex watches almost every day? I have never seen his car that he always fusses me about but I know he drives a BMW judging by his car keys.

Now whywould a guy like him want a girl like me? I mean the guy is good-looking, has a sexy body, he's loaded, he wears branded clothes and he's a nice guy. And me? Ok we have two things in common, the looks and the body. I know I am good-looking, and even though I am slender, I have an amazing body, and I have curves that are just right for my body and an ass that is just the right size. But either than that

we're totally different, I don't wear branded clothes yet I look sexy when I wear them and I don't look cheap but deep down I know I am cheap ass who buys at Mr. Price, yet this guy who wants me so bad probably doesn't know what Mr. Price is. I have to find out what he's game is.

Insert Four 😊

Me: So Tukelo, what is it with you following me around?

He blushes or smiles. I don't know with this guy.

Him: I don't know Tigress, you tell me.

Me: How can I know? You the one who decided to become my biggest fan.

Him: I also don't know MaZungu. There's something that's keep on making me want to follow you around. So you tell me, why do I keep following you around?

Me: (shrugs) Maybe you're a little delusional.

Him: (laughs)

Palesa comes back with our drinks.

Her: Orange juice for the lady and Castle lite for you, sir.

Him: Thanks... um....um

Palesa: Palesa.

Him: Yeah right Palesa. So you think I am delusional?

Me: Yes. You are crazy. What would a guy like you, like about a girl like me? Like seriously?

Him: You mean what would a guy like me want in a sexy, crazy, hot and amazing girl like you?

Did he just call me hot? That made me blush a little. Just a little. Palesa leaves.

Me: Yet, you haven't made an effort to ask for the sexy, crazy, hot and amazing girl's number.

Him: (laughs)

I am being flirty now, right? It must be the orange juice. Yes, it must be the orange juice because it's not me talking.

Him: What make you so sure that I don't have the girl's number?

My eyes are big as tennis balls!

Me: What are you blabbering about?

Him: I do have the girl's number, I just haven't had the balls to call her because she has being mean to me since the first day I spoke to her.

Me: OMG! I never imagined a guy like you could fear girls. You have what people call 'igwababa'. Who would have thought? (Laughs)

Him: Don't laugh Tigress. I have a serious problem. I never had this type of problem before. When I see her I get frightened. My heart skips a beat but somehow I always manage to talk to her. I dial her number, then quickly hang up when I hear it ring. I don't know Tigress, maybe you can help?

He looks serious AF.

Me: Maybe you should try and call the girl. See what happens. If she's mean to you than it's clear she doesn't like you. I have to go now. Thanks for the orange juice. I will have my burger later. I have to go back to work now.

Him: Wait... just a few more minutes. I am sure your boss won't mind. I will talk to him.

Me: I am sure he won't, but he's not in today. The manager is mean as hell, he will eat me alive when he finds me here.

Him: Is he?

I nod.

Him: Mmmmm.

Me: I really have to go.

I rush towards the canteen.

Him: Amahle? So if the girl is not mean to me when I call, that means she likes me?

This guy is crazy, everyone here is looking at us now.

I smile and nod. He smiles and winks. I run inside the canteen. For some reason I can't stop smiling. I cannot believe that it took this guy 5 days to soften me up. I hope I am not falling for him, which would be dumb.

I haven't told the girls about him yet but I better because I tell them, since I am already having lunch him. They have been distant since that night, I better give them an apology because I don't want to lose them. You'd swear I am married to them. Geez!

Knock-off time. I am dreading to go home. But I can't avoid this any longer. I will talk to Nosi and Zitha tomorrow because they already left me.

When I got home, Anele's car is parked on the yard. He's here. I also see 4 other cars. Shit! My uncles are here. I have to wear a skirt now. I don't even think I own a proper one. I knock once and entered. I

meet my mom and Anele in the kitchen. I greet and went to my room and quickly changed into a skirt. I come back, took an apple out of the fridge. I took a bite, I am just eating my apple. I won't do the talking. I might say something I will regret. There's a knock on the door, I went to open. It's the last person I ever wanted to see today.

Why is she here? She went in and I got out. Mom calls my name. I don't answer. I just want to calm down before I say something I will regret. I ate my apple and finished it. I went back inside. They're all sitting in the lounge now. I went there. There's silence. My mom says I must sit. I first looked at her and did what she said.

Anele: (clears throat) thank you all for coming. I am sorry again I called up a meeting this late, but you know the type of job I do. This is the only time I get. I will get straight to the point without wasting anyone's time. It is up to me now to build up my father's house. I am the only man in this family. I want to expand the Sengwayo clan. I am not getting any younger and mom needs someone to help her around here. I want to settle down. I have done what was expected of me, I think I need someone to stand by me and help me with my responsibilities. I want to marry this woman right here. I want to make her my wife.

Uncle Mandla: Those are big words you're using son. I want you to be sure about all the decisions you are making. I don't want you regretting it later.

Anele: I am very sure Bab'ncane.

Uncle Themba: Do you love her?

Anele: With everything that I have.

Uncle Hlomla: Do you want her to be the mother of your kids?

Anele: More than anything.

Uncle Thulani: Son, are sure you ready for this? You both still very young.

Thank you! At least someone has a brain around here.

Anele: Baba, I love her and she loves me so I don't want to stall or waste any time. I want to make her mine, officially.

Uncle Mandla: If that's the case, then who are we to stop you.

Uncle Hlomla: Wait Mandla, I want to hear Zanele say it.

Zanele: All I can say baba, is that I love Anele more than anything. I always wanted to be his wife. I am ready to be his wife.

Uncle Themba: Have you spoken to your parents about this?

Zanele: No baba. They would love it if we did things traditionally.

Uncle Thulani: So you're ready for marriage?

Zanele: Yes baba, I think I am.

Uncle Thulani: I don't know about this. I hear both of you but I don't think this is a good idea. Anele, you're only 24 and she's like 21 and you've been dating for like what? A year? And already you talking about marriage.

That's right Bab'ncane, tell them!

Uncle Themba: Bafo, they want to do this. I don't see why not. You got married at a young age as well.

Uncle Thulani: Yes, my point exactly. I regret that. I love my wife but sometimes I feel like I didn't get to enjoy my youth.

Uncle Hlomla: We didn't come here to talk about you and your wife. We came here to talk about these two kids, which I personally think they're making the right decision. Anele needs to man up and make a legacy, expand the family. I don't see why's that a problem.

Uncle Themba: Yes I think so too.

Uncle Mandla: I don't see why not either.

Uncle Thulani: Fine then. But so you know, the word 'divorce' is forbidden. I don't want any of you calling a family meeting and telling us about getting divorced. The only family meeting we want is when you came to tell us that you're expecting. Either that, you don't even think about a divorce.

Uncle Mandla: Guess we're having a wedding then.

Ma: (ululates)

Who gets married at 24? This is madness. This bitch over here is looking like a real makoti. She even has a doek on her head. She must have known that the uncles are coming. I know if my aunt was here, she wouldn't have allowed this madness. God rest her soul.

Ma: Amahle and makoti, make us something to drink.

She calls her makoti now. She's such a traitor. We stood up and went to the kitchen. Anele and Zanele can't seem to get their eyes off each other. Man you'd swear they're still kids.

Zanele: Yoh! I thought this day would never come. I am so excited, I will be your skwiza, officially.

I know she ain't talking to me. I just look at her and carried on with what I am doing.

Her: I was so nervous about today Amahle, on my way here I was literally shaking.

Who asked her?

Her: Mrs. Zanele Zungu. Mm sounds amazing, am I right?

She better stop talking, I am getting angry and that can't be good

Her: You got to help me with the dress and the...

Me: Shut up! Shut up Zanele, gosh. I can't even hear myself think.

You busy talking non-stop.

She blinks endlessly. I take the tray with tea and gave to mom and her guests. They were still discussing the bullshit wedding and dates.

Me: Mah, I have to go somewhere. May I be excused? I will be back.

She nods.

I leave the house. I have to calm down and process all of this madness.

There's an incoming call.

Caller ID: Restricted number.

Who could that be?

Me: Amahle, hello.

Him: Tigress, hi.

I cannot believe my ears.

Me: So the guy with the car, finally has the 'balls' to call me.

Him: (laughs.)

I like the way he laughs. It's kinda cute.

Him: Eyi at long last. I had to pray first before I dialed your number.

Me: (laughs) were your prayers answered?

Him: Yes. You answered my call and you're not mean to me. Hey, does that mean you like me?

Like really? He remembers that. And this guy has a beautiful telephone voice. I can listen to him all day and night.

Focus Amahle!

Me: A little bit.

Him: I will take what I can get

He takes a deep breath.

Him: So, I know what you said but I will ask until I get the answer I need. Can you have lunch with me?

Me: I had lunch with you today...

Him: No. I don't mean that, I mean like on a date.

Is he asking me out? Has he met me?

Me: No. I can't go on a date with you. But I will get in your car, that's what you want, right?

Him: Mm technically yes. You can't go on a date with me or you

won't?

Me: I just can't Tukelo.

Him: Why?

Me: No more questions please.

Him: Ok fine. I understand. You did agree on getting inside my car.

So when can that happen?

Me: Even now.

I need to get out of this house until all of this nonsense is over.

Him: Are you serious? No don't answer that. I am on my way now.

He hangs up.

Me: Wait... I didn't give you my address...

And he's gone. Well he'll call back as soon as he realizes that he doesn't know where I stay.

Insert Five 😊

I went back inside. Mom is in the kitchen with her 'makoti'. I guess oBab' ncane are talking with Anele. As soon as I enter, the room becomes dead silent. I open the fridge.

Fuck! No apples.

Me: What? Who finished my apples?

I look at them and they both look guilty. Mom knows very well that nobody touches my apples. No-one!

Zanele: Umm... sorry skwiza, I had to use them to make dessert.

I feel something boiling inside me. The only thing that's stopping me from hitting this bitch, is because my brother 'loves' her. If I ever harm her, he will sure hate me forever. I close the door fridge very hard.

Me: This ain't your house yet! So don't come here and play wife. You come here, use my damn apples just to impress your in-laws. Dessert? Dessert for what?

I am fuming right now. I hope my uncles don't hear me.

Zanele: Amahle, I will buy your apples, I just thought...

Me: You didn't think at all Zanele. You should have thought twice before using my apples to make your stupid desert.

She looks like she wants to cry. Well I don't give a damn!

Ma: Amahle, that's enough.

Me: Stay out of this Mah. And oh you, never call me your skwiza again. Because I will never be.

I leave and went to my room to change to something proper.

I can't go out looking like a Gogo. I changed to a tight denim high-waisted jean and a crop top with long sleeves. Wore my passion

plum lipstick, little bit of make-up and I tied my hair into a bun. I have pretty long hair so my bun look perfect. My skin tone is not fair or dark, I am just light. What I like about me is my figure and dimples. They're cute, well at least that's what most people say and by most people I mean my mom, my brother and my friends.

I have been in my room for almost an hour and I haven't heard from Tukelo. He probably forgotten about me, he hasn't even called to ask for my address. Why am I even surprised? That's what men do.

I have an incoming call.

Caller ID: unknown number.

Me: Yes.

Him: I am outside.

Me: Wait... how do you know where I live? You didn't ask me where I live.

Him: I told you Tigress, I don't have to ask you anything. I know a lot about you. I see you didn't believe me.

Me: That is weird.

Him: I am weird I know. Now get your ass outside woman!

Me: Ok, ok. Geez!

He hangs up.

I will just conclude that he is not the type that greets or says goodbye. Rude! I quickly gather my staff, and when I say my staff, I mean my sling bag, my lipstick, powder and wallet. But I doubt I will be paying for anything, men and their pride.

I quickly dashed to the kitchen and found mom and her newly found daughter having a blast. Went to the fridge and only to find there

are no apples. Shit I forgot. I gave this makoti a very bad look. If looks could kill, she would be six feet under right now. She shied away and looked down.

Me: Mah, I am going out with Nosi and them. Will be back by 8. Say goodbye to oBab' ncane for me.

She smiles and nods. I can't even fake a smile right now. I slam the door and went to the street.

I look around and saw a black BMW 5 series parked a few houses away from my house. I did see him carry BMW keys so I bet that's

him. I went towards the car. The idiot switch on his car lights and it's bright. I block my face. He peep out the car window.

Him: Sorry, was just enjoying the view (smiles)

I roll my eyes and open the passenger seat.

God, this car is awesome! The seats are comfy, it looks new, and it's clean and smells fresh. It's black but inside it's red. Everything from steering wheel to cup-holder, it's red with a touch of black. It looks amazing. I love it!

Him: I can't believe this.

He has this shock on his face but he manages to smile.

Me: Well believe it buddy because finally, I am sitting my ass on your fucking car.

Him: (laughs) do you always talk like that?

He starts the car.

Me: Yes. I am like this, love it or leave it.

Him: Well I love it!

I smile. I have hopped into a man's car yet I didn't even ask where he's taking me.

Me: Where are we going Tukelo?

I can't believe myself right now. I am owning this passenger seat yet I don't know this guy's last name, I don't know where he lives, I don't

even have his phone numbers. Which is really weird. He might be a serial killer. He might kill me right now. But no killer wear Rolex

watches, G-star RAW jeans and Timberlands, right?

Him: Wherever you want to go Tigress.

This guy is something else. Can't he make a decision on his own?

Me: Last time I chose. This time it's your turn.

He looks at me and smiles. This guy smiles for no reason.

Him: Yes. I know that but I want to do something that you're comfortable with, something you love to do. I am sure I will be okay with it.

Does this guy know who I am? Does he know that I am ghetto?

Which means I do ghetto things. He look like a cheese-boy, he won't handle it.

Me: You won't handle my lifestyle Tukelo.

Him: (frowns) are you sure about that? I am man Amahle, I can handle anything. Like I said before, I like trying out new things. So tell me what you like and what you like to do during your free time.

Me: Good to know there's something you don't know about me for a change. I love food, any kind of food, count me in. Now, what do I like to do? I like watching street-fights, drag racing, car drifting and riding motorcycles.

He looks amazed and fascinated.

Him: Wow, so you like living on the edge huh? You own a motorcycle? Nice.

Me: I wish. I don't own one. One of my guy friends has one. He borrows me once in a while.

His face changes immediately. I think he's kind of angry. What's his problem?

Him: A guy friend?

Me: Yes. Lungelo, he lends me his bike once in a while.

Him: Why don't you buy your own?

Me: Really now? Are you trying to disrespect me?

Him: Sorry. So are you going to tell me where we going?

Me: Ok, I know a place. I will direct you, keep driving.

.....

I thought he will be disgusted by this place and would want to leave ASAP. He's enjoying himself actually. He is even making friends all over. The guy is even dancing, which he's really good at. I thought he was going to be all judgmental and want to leave but he is doing the total opposite. He caught me by surprise, I am actually impressed. He's interacting, being all nice to these people and he is even buying meat and beers for them. They even like him, but I know they like him for his money.

It's getting late now. I don't want to worry my mom.

Him: You failed.

He holds my waist from my behind. I remove his hands away from me, turned around and stepped back. What is he talking about anyway?

Me: I failed what?

Him: You bought me here thinking I might hate it.

Me: Oh, so you liked it? (Smiles.)

Him: Yes, this Shisanyama is great.

Me: I am glad you liked it but we have to go now.

Him: To where? Another one of your spots?

Me: No. that's enough for today. We're going home.

I stand up. He's looking at me smiling.

Him: So you want me to meet your parents already?

He stands up.

Me: Argh man! You know what I mean. You go to your house, I go to mine and besides you haven't really asked me out so what will I introduce you to my mom as? As "Tukelo something that has a car, wear branded clothes and buys me lunch"? No thanks.

Him: (laughs) it's not like you actually gave me a chance to ask you out. You don't do dates, remember?

Me: So what? You gon' give up just like that? You won't make any efforts?

I take my jacket and head for the door. He runs after me and grabs my arm. He gotta stop doing that.

Him: What do you want me to do Amahle?

Me: I don't know Tukelo. But what you doing is not enough.

I am sounding ridiculous right now I know.

Him: You making it hard for me to do anything.

Me: Well then stop trying so hard Tukelo if I am making things hard for you.

I am getting a little loud now.

Him: Are we arguing right now?

Me: No! We not. We are just talking!

I get inside the car. He also enters.

Him: What's wrong Amahle? Because I know you didn't just argue with me like that just because I am not making any 'efforts'. Now tell me. What did I do wrong?

What is wrong with me? Because I know I'm not mad at him. Now he probably thinks I'm a psycho or something.

I sigh and look at him

Me: Nothing. I don't want to talk about it.

I fold my arms and look the other way. He strokes my chin and make me face him.

Him: I know I am just a guy you just met a few days ago and you yet haven't trusted me and I am still just a guy with a car to you and who wear branded clothes but trust me I am a good listener Tigress, try me.

Me: (sigh) I know you will probably think I am crazy and unfair but my big brother is marrying this girl that I don't like.

Him: Does your brother love the girl?

Me: Seems like it.

Him: Why don't you like the girl?

I don't like being interrogated. But I scolded him for no reason so the least I can do is answer his questions.

Me: I don't know, she gives me bad vibes, it's like she is a gold digger and she is in it for the money.

Him: So your brother is rich?

Me: No, he's just a police detective.

His eyes are all out.

Him: Police detective? Mm Officer Zungu is your brother? The one that works at Alex Police station?

Me: (confused) You know him?

Him: No.

Really? The guy just described my brother and he says he doesn't know him. I narrow my eyes.

Him: I have heard about him but I don't really know him. Carry on.

Me: Yeah that's about it. I don't want them together.

Him: Are you close with your brother?

Me: Yes. He's my best-friend, or I can say he was my best friend. He took care of me since I was a child. When I lost my dad, he became my father, he loved me and never crucified me. Always comforted me on my worse days, helped me get through tough times. He's my pillar of strength you know. He understands me. I love him.

Him: There's your answer Amahle.

I give him a questioning look.

Him: You don't want to lose all of that Amahle. You feel as if this girl is taking all of that away from you. And that's not the case. It's your brother's duty to fulfil your father's wishes, he needs to expand the Zungu clan. It's his job as a man. I think you hate this girl because you think she will take your brother away from you.

Gosh now he is sounding like those uncles of mine. What is so hard to understand here? I just don't want him to get married to that girl period.

Me: It's not like I don't want him to get married Tukelo, I just don't like that girl.

Him: Ok, I get it. But your brother love her, it doesn't really matter that you like her or not. He'll marry her anyway, the sooner you accept the better. With you hating the chick it will cause problems for you and your brother because nothing can come between a man and what he loves, I mean nothing.

I roll my eyes, said 'whatever' and look out the window.

Him: Is it really worth it losing your brother forever? Because of the hatred you have for this girl?

I look at him.

Him: You can at least pretend that you like her for your brother's sake.

Me: I don't do pretense at all. It's either I like you or I don't. There's no in-between. Enough about me now. Tell me about you, I literally know nothing about you.

He smiles and clears his throat.

Him: What do you want to know?

Me: Everything.

He smiles or blushes, I still haven't figured out this expression of he is.

Him: That means you like me?

Me: (laugh) just talk man!

Him: Mm, where do I start? I am Tukelo Brian Mokoena. I am 25. I am originally from Lesotho but I have moved here in Jo'burg. I have 6 siblings, 3 older brothers and 3 younger sisters. I am the last born of the brothers.

That explains this guy's broken Zulu and why he speaks so much English, he's Sotho. All along I just thought he was being a cheese boy.

Me: So you're a Wednesday.

Him: (smiles) yes I am. I am an entrepreneur. I own a couple of businesses here in Jo'burg and in Durban. Also have shares in different companies and own a few properties.

Wow. This guy is busy.

Me: So what kind of businesses do you own?

Him: Mm, different types Tigress, but I am mainly in Logistics, transporting merchandise from different cities and sometimes countries. So where are your parents?

Me: I live with my mom, dad passed away a long time ago. You?

Him: Oh yeah, sorry to about that. Both in Lesotho along with my sisters.

Me: What about your brothers?

Him: All married. Two live here in Jo'burg and one in Durban.

For the first time ever, we are having a meaningful conversation, we are not arguing, I am not being mean to the poor guy and we are not talking about something silly either. We are both being sincere.

Me: So, all of them are married? Like all of them?

Him: Yes all of them and I am not married, if that's where you going. I am the only bachelor.

I nod.

Him: I am single and not looking because I think I have found what I was looking for.

Me: Really?

Him: Yes, sure thing.

He bites his lower pink lip. We look at each other. He's closer now.

How did he's face get so close to me so fast. He holds my cheek, we share a lip-lock. Fuck! I come back to my senses. I push him away. I came back to my senses a little too late. Did we just kiss?

I clear my throat and moved back.

Me: Please take me home. My mom is going to be worried, I told her I will be back by 8.

Him: Yeah sure.

We've became quiet now. No-one is speaking.

What just happened?

He's eyes are on the road and he's driving really fast, guess he wants this trip to end as much as I want it to end too.

In a matter of minutes he's parked by my house. I open the door. He opens his too. I say bye and turn around wanting to leave, he grabs my arm. He seriously have to stop doing that!

Him: I am sorry Tigress, I shouldn't have... you know...

I am so mad right now. How can I let him kiss me on our first date?

Flip! It wasn't even a date.

Me: Can you let go of my arm?

He lets it go and put his hands in his pockets.

Him: Um sorry. I don't want to ruin whatever this that we have. I just got caught up in the moment.

Me: What it is that is going on Tukelo?

Him: I don't know.

Me: I will tell you. Nothing is going on. So don't apologize. This ends today. Please don't call, send messages or come at my work. Please Tukelo. Thanks for today.

I left him standing there.

I have no idea where those words came from but I had to put a stop to this madness once and for all. He just happen to come when I needed someone to talk to. That doesn't give him the right to kiss me. I am very far from him but I can feel that he's still standing and looking at me.

As soon as I close the door, I hear a car taking off really fast. He has to stop driving like that. I find my mom and Zanele washing the dishes in the kitchen. I look around and Anele and the uncles have left. So Zanele is sleeping over? Great just what I needed. I greet them and went to my room.

Ziningi: Are you ready Sis Amahle? Are you? Are you?

Ready for what? I look at her confused.

Her: Aah! Don't tell me you forgot. My spelling Bee competition.

Shit! There's that! Tomorrow is Saturday. I completely forgot about it.

Me: No silly, how can I forget? I will be there.

I completely forgot that she has to go to a competition and mom forces us to go, whether we have plans or not, she doesn't care. We all must attend to show support.

She claps excitedly and rushes out. Great! Now I have this stupid competition to attend. My life sucks.

Andile: I ain't going, and you are going to cover for me.

Andile rushes in and closes the door.

Me: Doesn't anybody knock, geez? Manners people. What do you want punk?

Him: I need a favor.

Andile always want favors from me. What's new?

Me: Talk. I don't have all day.

Him: Ok. I have to attend this party of this girl that I like tomorrow, I don't have time for Ningi's stupid spelling bee. I mean, can she even spell?

Me: What makes you think I will agree? I have way important things to do tomorrow. Yet I have be there, I don't want to go so that means you also have to go.

Him: Please Mahle. I will do anything, I beg. I will do dishes for the next 2 weeks.

He's making me an offer that I can't refuse.

Me: Mm, make it 3 weeks and you got yourself a deal.

Him: (smiles) deal!

He leaves.

One day girls are going to drive him crazy. My little brother is good looking and all but that doesn't mean he should play with girls like this. Oh well, kodwa nabo bayathanda! (They also like to be played!). I have lost count on how many girls this sick brother of mine have played. Two girls even fought for him. Like really? He was happy about it. He even says he even forgot that he was dating one of those girls. Imagine fighting over a guy that even forgot that he was dating me. I understand why mom is so happy about Anele's wedding because it seems it's the only one she will ever get to attend.

Thinking about Anele's wedding, I can't stop thinking about what Tukelo said. I can't help but to think that he's right. I never had a reason to hate Zanele, maybe that's how I felt, that she's taking

away Anele. If that is the case then the poor girl deserves an apology. I am not at all a bad person, I just speak my mind. I have to go find her before she goes to bed. I went to the kitchen, they're not there. I went to check at the sitting room and they all sitting there watching T.V. Anele is also here. I didn't hear his car coming in. The room went dead silent as soon as I enter. Zanele is sitting next to Anele, looking all cozy and lovey dovey.

Me: Zanele can I talk to you?

She hesitates but stands up. The poor girl probably thinks I am going to shout at her. We went outside.

Her: Amahle, if it's about the apples, I told Anele to go and get them for me, they're in the...

I stop her.

Me: It's not about the apples Zanele. I just want to apologize to you.

She looks shocked. She should be really happy right now because I don't do apologies at all.

Me: I won't come here and lie to you, I don't like you, never did and probably never will but we both care and love the same person, Anele. For him, I am willing to compromise. I don't want to lose him.

He hasn't spoken to me since the day I told him that I think this marriage is madness. But I don't ever want to come between his

happiness. If you guys love each other as you say you do then go for it. I am sorry for ever making you feel unwanted and I am willing to be nice to you and stand with you guys every step of the way.

Thank God that's over. This has been the hardest thing I ever had to do.

Her: Wow, that's the most insulting yet sincere apology I have ever heard. It's okay Amahle. I forgive you. I forgave you a long time ago.

Thank you.

Me: Ok, cool.

Her: Skwizas?

She says smiling and opening her arms. I think she didn't hear the part where I said I don't like her. But what the heck? For Anele. I hug her. We went back inside. I went straight to my room. I need a good night sleep.

My phone rings. Caller ID: Unknown number.

Me: Talk to me.

Tukelo: Amahle. Thank God you picked up... I am...

I thought I told him to fuck off! I have to save his number so I will know when it's him that's calling.

Me: Tukelo. I thought I told you not to call me.

I hang up.

I can't even call my girls and tell them about this guy. They still mad at me, I have to apologize tomorrow.

It is Saturday. I have to go to work and then come back by 6 and go to this competition. She even woke me up in the morning and reminded me. She is really excited about this. I hope she is good as she say she is. The Tukelo guy has been calling me and leaving

numerous messages. After I sent him a very mean message, he hasn't contacted me ever since. I don't know what is wrong with me but I just don't want to see him. Last night shouldn't have happened. I stop at Spar to buy apology gifts for Nosipho and Zitha. Just a Lunch Bar and a packet of Lays for Nosipho and Doritos and T.V bar for Zitha. I really hope they will forgive me. I went all out. I bought them their favorite snacks plus teddy bears written 'I'm sorry' on their bellies. I got to work, greet them and they gave me a cold 'hi'. I figure they still mad.

Me: Nosi and Zee. I am sorry.

They just look at me.

Me: Ok. Look what I have bought my two best friends.

I gave them their parcels. They jump with joy and literally grabbed the gift bags away from me. They scream.

Nosipho: All is forgiven.

Zitha: Thank you so much Amy.

Me: Now that's over. I have a lot to tell you, like a lot.

They look at each other.

Me: Ok. First let's go and work. I will tell you later.

Man! I want this shift to end. I am tired now. I can't wait for my lunch break but it is like 15 minutes so it won't be pleasant. I found myself looking for Tukelo, he didn't come today. I don't know why I checked. I think he finally got the message.

I feel something inside me boil. I am sure I am going to blow up right now. I cannot believe my eyes. Tukelo is coming in with a girl. And man she is hot, she has those expensive weaves on, 6-inch heels, wearing those expensive dresses and have fake nails on. She is a phony but she looks like a girl in Tukelo's class. She is well-built, thick and has a huge ass. He helps her with her coat and opens a chair for her. I feel like screaming.

Palesa: Isn't that your man?

I gave her a bad look and left her standing there.

I find myself standing in front of their table. My legs didn't warn me. I might as well be their waiter now that I am here. I give Tukelo a look.

He keep on avoiding eye contact, his eyes are glued on the menu. I took out my pad and pen.

Me: What will you be having?

The lady looks at me like I disgust her.

Her: No greeting? No formalities? Rude.

I roll my eyes.

Me: Good-day Miss, can I take your order?

Her: First of all it is Mrs. You better swallow up your pride because I am not going tip you.

Did she just say Mrs.? I can't believe this. I look at her fingers and she is wearing a ring. The bastard lied to me. I feel betrayed and hurt. I have no idea why.

Me: Trust me, I don't need it. Now, may I take your order?

She gasps.

Her: You're waitress honey, you do need it.

I look at Tukelo, he is not even looking at me. He is glued to that menu.

Me: Just because I am a waitress Mrs. It doesn't mean I need your money. Now for the love of peace, may I take your order?

She clicks her tongue and looks at the menu.

Her: I will have a beef burger, with no onion rings and side of chips and a strawberry daiquiri. You Tukelo?

I take down her stupid order.

Me: Don't worry, he will have whatever the lady is having, right Sir?

I say sarcastically and left. He calls my name, I carry on walking. I have to do something to teach that bitch a lesson. I don't even give a flying fuck if it costs me my job. I came back with their food.

Me: Anything else?

This is becoming really hard for me. I feel anger and rage building up. I want to punch his face and hers.

Her: You are rude shame.

Me: Ncooah really? Thank you, I am taking that as a compliment actually.

Her: What is your problem?

Me: Ask your husband.

Her: My husband?

She asks looking confused and I left her confused face.

Tukelo: Amahle!

I chose to ignore him again. I hear the bitch screaming and asking for water. I smile and feel satisfied with myself. I see a waiter rushing to their table and giving her water. Tukelo is patting her back and helping her drink water. He looks at me. I went to the kitchen. He follows me. What is he doing? His wife is dying and he is running after me. He grabs my arm. Flip! He better stop doing that. Nobody even tried to stop him when he entered the kitchen. He pulls me until we're outside. He looks a little angry. I may have went overboard here. Maybe I shouldn't have put so much peri Peri sauce in her burger.

Nah, I don't care.

Him: What is this Amahle? Why are you doing this? What is wrong with you?

I fold my arms and looked away. He strokes my chin.

Him: Look at me. What is wrong?

He looks upset now. I can't believe myself, it seems like every time I decide to do something crazy, he is there to watch the

show.

Me: You brought your wife right in front of me and you lied to me! So no, nothing is wrong!

Him: Wife?

Me: Don't even try to defend yourself. On top of that she been rude to me. You just had to bring her here, there are so many places here in Jo'burg, why here?

Him: She wanted to come here, I thought you wouldn't be in today because...

He must not interrupt me, I hate that!

Me: Yeah right, you wanted to rub it in my face! You kissed me yesterday, remember that?

Him: Yes, but you said...

Me: I don't have anything to say to you Tukelo Mokoena.

I say leaving, he grabs my arm again. He pushes me into a corner.

He has totally blocked my way, I can't move.

Me: Let me go! I don't want...

He covers my mouth.

Him: God! Amahle shut up! Are you done scolding me? Can I talk now?

I try to fight him but this guy is strong, I can't move, he totally has me cornered.

Him: Now please, don't talk or shout, give me a chance to speak,

please. I will remove my hand, don't say anything, and listen to me.

I nod. He removes his hand.

Me: Geez! Dude, you can't...

He covers my mouth again.

Him: I said, not a word.

I roll my eyes and nod. He moves his hand but still has me cornered.

His both arms are holding on to the wall. I am stuck between them.

Him: Now Amahle, my 'wife' is not my wife.

I give him a confused look.

Him: She is my colleague. We work together, nothing more and nothing less. She is also my friend's wife, not mine. I am not married Tigress, I will never lie to you.

I never felt so embarrassed. I feel like an idiot now.

Me: Oh.

Him: That's it? You just going to say Oh?

Me: What do you want me to say? I mean what happened back there convinced me that you're married to her.

Him: Okay, I get that but aren't you forgetting something?

Me: Mmm, no, not that I can think of.

Him: Tigress?

Me: Okay, okay, I am sorry.

Him: Thank you. Now let's talk about you.

Me: What about me?

Him: I ain't no girl expert Tigress, but I am pretty sure that you were jealous.

Me: Argh! No. I was just pissed that you lied to me.

Him: No, you were pissed before you even knew she was my 'wife'. Is there something you not telling me? Do you like me?

He gives me this sexy look, and it sends shivers to my body.

Me: Get over yourself Tukelo. No I don't.

Him: Yes you do. You just risked your job for me. You like me, a lot. But don't worry about your job. She won't press any charges.

Me: Ok. Can I go now?

He shakes his head.

Him: Not until you admit that you like me.

He's joking right? I punch his stomach, he crouches, and I set myself free.

Him: Hey! If you think I like you less now, you're mistaken. I like the jealous type.

He says and winks.

Me: I was not jealous.

Him: Yeah right. I will call you.

I smile and left him. I am actually looking forward to his call. I think I like him. Yes I think I do. But I cannot admit that to him just yet.

When I enter the restaurant the woman is gone. I really wanted to apologize to her, she is the one who deserves an apology, she did nothing wrong. What I did was very wrong and impulsive. I hope

Tukelo will smooth talk her, he is a charmer. I mean he made me soft, he made me fall for him. I am mission impossible but he managed to accomplish it.

During lunch I told Nosipho and Zitha about Tukelo, they screamed and hugged me and said this calls for a celebration but I had to

disappoint them because of the competition and I want to play very

far away from clubs, we all know what happened last time. They also thought I should show this guy how I feel or else he will run. Well I don't care. Or do I? I really don't know, this is all new to me. I find myself smiling when I think about him and I find myself missing him. Maybe they're right, I should give this dating thing a try. How bad can it be?

Insert Six 😊

I am running late! Its 18:45 and I have to be at the hall at 19:00.

I rush home, when I get there they have all left. I quickly changed and lock all doors. I really hope I make there in time. I have been

standing here for the past 15 minutes and no taxi is coming. It is only a 1km walk so I can manage. I am athletic so I bet I can run all the way. As I am running, a car come speeding, parking in front of me and almost knocking me down.

Me: What the hell idiot?!

He rolls down the car window. And it's him. Seriously, he gotta stop stalking me. I fold my arms and looked at him. He smiles.

Him: Come in, I don't want you running like that. I am your man, I am here.

I laugh.

Me: You my man now?

Him: Mm, after the stunt you pulled today I'm pretty convinced.

I roll my eyes and carried on with my running. He follows me, and he drives slowly. He keep on hooting. He's headlights are on bright.

Him: Damn girl!

I stop. Bloody pervert. I didn't realize that he's hooting because he's seeing my back view.

Me: Geez Tukelo! How can I ever get rid of you?

I start walking now, he drives slowly too.

Him: Never baby.

He looks at me from head-to-toe. The things I am wearing are making things even better for him. I am wearing a short and a high-low t-shirt, it is long sleeved and is kind of a net at the back. So he is seeing all of me.

Me: No doubt about that.

I look down 'there' and dear lord he has a boner. I laugh my ass off. I don't even know what made me look there. He's eyes are way smaller than usual too. I laugh. Yoh! I can't!

Him: How can you laugh at my pain? Woman, you are evil.

I laugh even more.

Me: Serves you right! You bought it upon yourself.

He scratches his head.

Him: And I will suffer like this because there no way I am getting what this 'dude' needs.

Me: Shame! I know some hookers downtown.

The look he gives me! I would be dead right now if looks could kill.

Him: I would rather stick pins in my eyes then share a woman or sleep with a woman that I know has slept with numerous men.

Me: Then have a girlfriend. Dude, you're 25 for crying out loud, get a girl.

Him: I could ask my girl, the thing is, she keep on playing hard to get and I am not the type that likes forcing things but I am the type that gets what he wants.

Self-absorbed much? Really this guy is dreaming. Even if we do end up together, we can never last. We come from two very different worlds.

Me: Mm shame man. Good for you.

Him: Yes. Since you will not allow me to take you to the competition, can you at least go on a date with me? Just one.

He will never give up unless I give what he wants.

Me: I told you I don't...

Him: Go on dates, yeah I get that. All I ask is just for one date, how bad can it be? I promise I will be nice, we won't do something you don't want to do.

Me: Well fine. Just one date.

Him: Or two.

Me: Don't push it.

He laughs.

Him: Ok just one. I will text you the details. Bye pretty face.

He winks, blows a kiss and takes off. This guy loves winking I have noticed.

Which is not really hard for him because he has small eyes. But I like his china eyes.

I get to the competition almost an hour late. I find my family and sat next to them. Luckily, it hasn't been Ziningi's turn yet. Me and Tukelo have been texting each other since we separated. I am warming up to him and he's also warming up to me. I regret being to rude to him because he seem like a nice guy. I am crazy right? I have known this guy for like a week but now I think he's nice? He is definitely playing his cards right because never in a million years would I have thought that I would ever talk to a guy without insulting him, let alone a guy like him.

Mom: Where the hell is Andile? I thought he was coming with you.

She whispers in my ear.

Me: Oh, he at the par... at Patrick's house. Studying, he didn't tell you?

Mom shakes her head. Shit! I almost busted him.

Me: Oh he must have forgot to tell you.

I quickly texted Andile and told him what I told mom in case she asks him when he comes back. Oh finally, Ziningi's turn. We can finally get over this. She comes to the stage and waves at us. Oh, Zanele is here, I didn't notice. Anele couldn't make it I think. Speaking of him he said he wants to talk me first thing tomorrow. I was shocked too.

But I agreed. Wonder what he wants. I can't help but feel like we can never have that bond we shared before. It will just never be the same again.

We sit and wait for Ziningi's turn and she performs perfectly. She didn't seem to have any trouble with the words. She just spelt them out correctly. Everyone seem to be impressed by her. I am also impressed. She is the last student. Oh good. We can finally go home.

They announce that they have to take a break, to count the votes.

Really?

Ma: Who is that man?

I turn around. I see Ziningi with Tukelo. He seems to be telling her joke because she can't stop laughing. Kill me! Why is he stalking me?

Zanele: Mah, I don't think Ningi should be talk to strangers, go and get her from that man.

Me: Relax, he's my friend. I will go get her.

Zanele frowns.

Her: You know that guy?

I just said he is my friend, which means I know him. Tukelo comes toward us carrying Ziningi.

Me: Yes, now shush. We don't want him to see that we are talking about him.

He come to us and he takes a long hard look at Zanele. Which is making me kind of jealous. Oh, don't judge. This man is goddamn gorgeous, he looks hotter than most ladies so I have every right to be mad if he looks at another.

Him: Hi family.

He doesn't take his eyes off Zanele and she keep on avoiding eye contact.

Me: What are you doing here?

He finally takes off his eyes of Zanele and looks at me. He smiles.

Him: You invited me, remember?

Me: No I didn't.

Him: Yes you did.

Ziningi: I like Tukelo sis' Amahle. He's funny.

Ma: Ay Ziningi, don't call an elder by name.

Him: It's okay Ma. I told her to call me by name. She's my friend so it's okay.

Ziningi: Yes mommy. He's my friend.

Me: Oh Tukelo, this is my mom, Buyisiwe Zungu, and my soon-to-be skwiza, Zanele Khuzwayo, my brother's fiancé. Everybody, this Tukelo Mokoena, a close friend of mine.

Tukelo frowns at me and smiles. He is more than happy that I finally introduced him to my family.

Him: Nice to meet you family, and Zanele.

Zanele looks down. Why did he do that? There's definitely something going on here. The way Tukelo is looking at Zanele, it is making me uncomfortable.

Ma: Nice to meet you too future mkhwenyana.

We all look at her in disbelief and she is grinning.

Me: Mom, geez! No. We are just friends, nothing more.

Tukelo is actually smiling he is happy about this.

Tukelo receives a phone call and asks to be excused. He put Ziningi down and went aside. I just cannot believe that my mom would say something like that. Can this break be over already? How long can it take to vote for the winner seriously? It is really dark outside. Tukelo comes back and says he has to go. Ziningi doesn't look happy about that.

Me: I will walk you out.

I am just tired of standing in one place. He says his goodbyes and I walked him out.

Him: Mmmmm, future mkhwenyana. I like that.

My mom has really stepped over the limit. I nudged him on the stomach.

Me: That was just my mom talking crap. Don't get any ideas.

Him: Aah Amahle, stop fighting it. I know you like me, even your mom sees it. Just give me a chance to prove to you that I can be your knight in shining armor, your prince charming, your Aladdin, your Hercules. I just want one chance, just one.

Damn! This guy reads a lot of fairytales. We stared at each other.

For a second there, I swear I was going to agree but something stopped me, I don't know what.

Me: I have to go Tukelo.

I turn around and he grabs my arm. Seriously! He gotta stop doing that. I look at him. He's grip it always tight but this time, I felt something. I don't what it is, I think it's what they call 'butterflies' or a spark but I felt something happening inside my body. I look at where he is holding me, he lets go and says sorry. I didn't want him to let go.

Him: Ok, I won't push it. Tomorrow is our date. I will SMS you the details and have your dress delivered. Bye Amahle.

He turns to go. My what now?

Me: Wait Tukelo, what dress? And tomorrow is a Sunday.

He looks at me and comes closer.

Him: I know Tigress. Don't lie to me and tell me about going to church because I know you're not a religious person.

How is it even possible that he knows so much about me? Yet I only know the basics.

Me: I don't wear dresses.

He doesn't seem shocked to what I have just said.

Him: (sighs) I know that too. I am sure you will like this one. It just says you. This might be the only date I will ever have, I want to make it special. Don't say no, please.

He gives me very sad eyes.

Me: Okay fine. Now stop sulking.

Him: I wasn't sulking.

Me: Yes you were, you always give me those sad eyes, just to get what you want.

Him: I wasn't sulking. Men don't sulk. You just have a soft spot for me.

Me: Keep dreaming buddy.

We said our goodbyes and I left him and went back inside. There was some cheering and screaming and Ziningi was on stage carrying a trophy. My mom was jumping and cheering. Ziningi won. I am so happy for her. I clapped and whistled. I cannot believe I missed this moment. I took a picture of her and sent it to Tukelo on

Whatsapp. He went online, read my message and didn't reply.

Which kind of pissed me off. Ziningi climbed off stage and we congratulated her.

We got home, there was a very unusual car parking by our house. It was a black Range Rover. Everything was black, the windows and even the rims.

Ma: Anyone expecting someone?

We all said no. What was the car doing in front of our house. We got off the car and my mom told us to not look at the car because everything about it is very suspicious. A man wearing a black suit and black sunglasses came out. Why is he even wearing glasses, it is very dark. He was buffy and tall.

Him: Is there a Ziningi Zungu?

The man says in a very deep and scary voice. My mom hid Ziningi behind her.

Her: What do you want with my baby? Nobody is going to take my baby away from me.

Me: Ma, calm down. No one is taking Ziningi.

I say and gave the man a very bad look. The man removed his glasses and smiles.

Him: Mam' no one is taking her, I just came here to deliver a package for her.

He open the boot and took out a beautiful pink bike. The man gave it to her.

Ziningi: This is for me?

Ziningi asks in excitement and jumps up and down. She always wanted a bike. My mom always promises her one but never buys it.

Him: It has your name on it so yes.

On the bike, it is written 'Ziningi' in big bold purple letters. She jumped in excitement and hugged the man.

Her: Thank you mister.

He didn't hug her back, instead he pushed her off and said he should go. Everyone was happy for Ziningi but they forgot one thing.

Me: Sorry, who is it from?

The man looks at me.

Him: My boss.

He drives off.

Me: Who the heck is your boss?!

I shout after him. I doubt he even heard me. Everyone was inside

admiring the bike. It was very pretty. Who could send a bike to her though? This is not a mistake, it has her name on it.

Me: Ma, you just going to accept this bike? You don't even know where it comes from.

Her: Amahle, she has been pestering me for years for a bike, if someone decides to buy her one then good for me.

I cannot believe mom right now. Am I the only one finding this thing weird?

Zanele: Maybe Anele bought it. He probably feels guilty for not showing up.

No it cannot be him. Anele is not sweet.

Me: I doubt. Anele didn't show up at Andile's 15th birthday, he never felt guilty. I doubt he will feel guilty that he missed Zee's spelling bee competition. I will find out who it was.

Ziningi: Y'all all wrong. Tukelo bought it for me. He promised me that he will buy me a bike if I win.

Me and Zanele: He did?

Ziningi: Yes.

Ma: If it's the nice guy that bought her the bike, I don't see a problem. Thank him for me Amahle.

I nod.

Ma: Is Andile back?

Me: I will go check.

I go to his room, I don't find him there. Where the heck is he? It's fucking 10pm and he's not in the house. if mom finds out about this, she will freak. I go to her room and I lie to her face and say, he's in his room sleeping. She says okay. No I have to find Andile, and make sure he's home before mom gets off that bed and find out that I lied to her. I walk up and down my room thinking of a person that can help me find him, and I can only think of one person and one person only. I dial his number and answers on the first ring. Like he was expecting me to call.

Him: To what do I owe this pleasure?

Me: I just wanted to thank you for the bike.

Him: Bike? What bike?

I keep quite.

Him: Oh yeah sorry, now I remember, Ziningi's bike?

Me: Yes, I thank you on behalf of Ziningi. She loves it.

Him: No sweat. It's just something I promised to do.

Me: Okay. I also need your help on something. I can't think of anyone but you... please...

Him: Why? What's going on Tigress?

Me: My brother. My brother is missing. He said he's going to a party, and he's not back until now.

Him: You worry too much, he's a guy, and he'll be back tomorrow morning or later today.

Me: He's 16 Tukelo. I have a really bad feeling that something bad happened or will happen to him. Please I need your help.

Him: I am on my way.

He hangs up. I get ready and change into a jean and hoodie. I go

check on my mom. She fast asleep. I check on Ziningi, she's also asleep. I sit and wait for Tukelo's text. 10 minutes later, he texts me and says he's outside. I go to him, he opens the door for me. This is no time for him to be a gentleman. I get in anyway. He also gets in and he drives off. Really fast.

Him: Did you try calling him?

Me: Yes but he's not picking up.

Him: Ok. Did he say where he was going?

Me: No, he just said he's going to some party.

Him: Okay.

He dials a number. He connected his phone to his car's Bluetooth.

Me: Who are you calling?

Him: Dankies, he's my friend. He can help.

Dankies: Tukelo, what the hell?

Tukelo: I need your help. I wouldn't be calling so late if it wasn't important.

Dankies: Okay, what's up?

Tukelo: I want you to trace a number for me. I will send it to you.

Dankies: Okay.

Tukelo: ASAP, stop whatever you were doing and do this for me.

Dankies: Haa Tukelo, I was in a middle of something, can't I get it done first?

Tukelo: No! Get this done.

Dankies: Fine but you owe me.

Tukelo: Yeah, yeah.

Tukelo hangs up.

In the meantime, I call his friends and none of them know where he is. Now I am really worried but also getting angry at the same time.

Me: If he's alive and well, he is so dead.

Him: You worry too much, he's a guy and this is what guys do.

Me: No. He's my little brother and this is not what my brothers do!

Him: Okay, calm down.

Me: Don't tell me to calm down because I will not calm down by you telling me to calm down!

Him: okay. We will find him though.

Tukelo's phone rings. He answers.

Dankies: He's at 40-40 club.

Tukelo: Oh.

Dankies: Tukelo do you realize that's our...

Tukelo: Thanks Dankies, talk later.

Tukelo hangs up.

Me: 40-40? He's at 40-40? Tukelo that place is best known for having hookers, so he's with hookers?

Him: I don't know.

Me: Drive faster!

He speeds up.

Me: He is so dead.

I clench my fists. Tukelo looks at me and shakes his head.

We get to the club, we can't find him. We go upstairs, he's nowhere to be seen. I start panicking and shouting at anyone who tries to talk to me.

Him: He has got to be around here somewhere. Dankies never makes a mistake. We just have to keep looking.

I nod.

We ask people but they have not seen him. Me and Tukelo part ways. I don't know what made go to the men's room but I find him lying on floor with his pants half way down. I go crazy, I don't know what to do. He looks so peaceful, so quiet and so... so... so dead. I rush to him, feel his pulse. It's still there. Thank God. I call Tukelo.

Me: Men's room, now!

Him: Okay.

He comes in seconds later. He rushes to us. He gives Andile a few slaps, he doesn't respond, he feels his heartbeat. He looks at me with worry. He make Andile opens his eyes.

Him: I thought as much.

Me: What? Thought what?

Him: He's high.

Me: High? As in like, high on drugs?

He nods.

Me: And how do you know that? You no doctor.

Him: Yes but I am no idiot either. We have to rush him to hospital.

Me: Hospital? Tukelo, what are you saying to me?

He carries Andile and walks out with him. I follow behind. He gets to his car, he put Andile on the backseat. I go in with him. Tukelo closes the door and drives off.

Me: Andile, please wake up. I beg you. Just open your eyes.

Nothing.

Me: Andy, don't do this to us. Think about our mother, this will kill her.

I slap him slightly. Nothing.

Me: Fuck Andile! You can be stupid sometimes!

Now I am getting angry all over again. Tukelo looks at me on the rearview mirror.

Me: Is he alive?

Him: Yes.

Me: But he's not breathing.

Him: He has a pulse. That means he's alive.

We get to the hospital. Tukelo goes out and comes back with a doctor, two nurses and a stretcher. They help me with Andile and they rush with him inside. I follow them behind, but they stop as soon as they enter the theater.

Me: But he's my brother!

Nurse: Mam', you have to wait here. Let the doctors do their job.

Tukelo: Amahle, we have to wait here.

Tukelo pulls me away.

Me: Tukelo, that's my little brother in there. He needs me.

Him: I know but he also need medical care. That's why you have to allow the doctors to do their job.

Me: Fine.

He sits down. I can't sit down. I walk up and down the hall.

We have been sitting here for hours and still, nothing. It's getting late, it's close to 1 am now. I don't even know if I should call my mom or

Anele but Anele would freak, he would even go as far as having his own brother arrested. So, I decide not to tell anyone. I just hope Andile will be out of here before anyone notices that we both not home.

Him: Do you need anything? Food?

Me: No, I am fine. You should go though. You have been great help.

I am sure you're exhausted.

Him: No not at all. I want to be here.

Me: Thank you Tukelo. I don't know what I would have done without you. I appreciate it.

The doctor comes out. We rush to him.

Doctor: You must be the boy's sister?

Me: Yes.

Doctor: I'm Doctor Hadebe. Can you come to office to discuss your brother?

Me: Yes sure.

Tukelo: I will wait here.

Me: Okay.

Me and the doctor left and went to his office. He closes the door, he sits down and I sit across him.

Him: Uhm right. We found drugs in your brother's body. A very dangerous drug. He's body didn't respond well, hence he collapsed.

Me: Is he fine now?

Him: Yes, he's okay now. He's still unconscious but it's due to the drug we gave him. He will wake up anytime now.

Me: Thank God.

Him: You managed to rush him in hospital in time before the drug could spread to the rest of his body and into his vital organs. He was minutes away from death.

Me: Can you tell me the kind of drug you found in his body?

Him: Heroine.

Me: Jesus.

Him: No damage was done but I advise you to take him to rehab before he kills himself.

Me: But he's not an addict. It was he's first time.

Him: Let's make it his last time.

Me: I will make sure of it.

Him: Okay good.

Me: Can I see him?

Him: Yes sure. He should be awake now.

We leave the doctor's office. I tell Tukelo everything that the doctor's said. He didn't have much to say, he just nodded. When we were on our way to Andile's ward, Tukelo stopped me.

Me: What?

Him: I know you're probably raging right now, and you have a lot of questions to ask him but please not tonight. Don't scold.

Me: I wasn't going to scold.

Him: I know you.

Me: Okay maybe a little.

Him: Right now he needs your support, not you shouting at him. He doesn't need you stressing him because you will lead him back to those drugs.

Me: But I want to know why.

Him: You can ask him nicely.

Me: I will try.

Him: Tigress.

Me: Okay fine.

We get to Andile's room. He didn't look weak at all, he was staring blankly at the ceiling. He turns our way as soon as we closed the door.

Me: Hi.

Tukelo: (whispers in my ear) be nice.

Andile: Hi.

I go closer to him and sit next to him. God knows I am trying really hard to not show my anger.

Me: How are you feeling?

Andile: Better.

Me: You look better.

Andile: Thanks I guess.

Silence.

Tukelo: Do you need anything Andile? Are you hungry?

Andile looks at him quizzically.

Me: That's Tukelo, he helped me find you.

Andile: Oh. Yes, I would love something to eat.

Tukelo: Amahle?

Me: An apple would be lovely.

Tukelo smiles and leaves.

Me: why Andy? Why?

Him: (tear escapes).

Me: I won't shout at you. I just want to know why.

Him: I don't know sis' Amahle. We were all drunk, next thing this guy sells drugs to us. So they bought it. I don't remember what happened after that.

Me: Andile, you gave me a scare.

Him: I am sorry.

Me: Don't do that to me again. When I saw you lying on the floor, I

thought you were dead.

Him: (cries).

I hug him, he cries on my chest.

Me: Shush. Don't cry. It will be okay. You can't remember who sold you the drugs?

Tukelo: They were sold to him?

I let go of Andile and turn to look at Tukelo, I didn't realize he was back.

Me: Yes. At 40-40.

Tukelo: Who?

Andile: I don't remember who.

Tukelo: Shit!

Me: (confused) what?

Tukelo: Nothing. I will be back, I need to make a phone call.

He put the food on the side table and leaves.

Me: Weird.

Him: Who is he vele?

Me: No-one important.

Him: I am not a kid sisi.

Me: So you have to tell me what to tell mom.

Him: No I can't kill her, this will kill her. She can't know. I am feeling better now. Tell the doctor to discharge me.

Me: I don't know Andile.

Him: Please. Mom cannot know about this.

Me: Okay. I will be back.

I kiss his forehead and left his room. I find Tukelo outside on a phone, he looks angry.

Him: Find out who was there! ... I don't care who it was, tell him he's dead... give me all the names... I don't care if they were 100 of them, I will kill all of them!

He hangs up. He turns around and see me.

Me: Is everything okay?

Him: Yes.

Me: Do you know who did this to my brother?

Him: No.

Me: You're lying to me.

Him: I'm not. You don't know me that well, you cannot tell if I am lying or not.

Me: That maybe the case but I am not stupid.

Him: I don't know who did that to your brother okay? If I knew I would tell you. This phone call had nothing to do with your brother.

Me: Okay. I need to speak to Andile's doctor.

Him: Why?

Me: I want to know if he can discharge Andile today.

Him: What's the rush?

Me: Mom cannot know that he's here. It can kill her.

Him: Understandable. I will go have a talk with your brother. You go find the doctor.

Me: Oh, okay.

I find the doctor in his office, I knock once and he lets me in.

Me: Sorry to disturb but I need to discuss something with you.

Him: Okay, sit.

Me: Thank you.

I sit down.

Me: I will just get straight to the point, I want to know if it's possible that my brother can be discharged today?

Him: No, that's not possible Miss Zungu.

Me: Why not?

Him: We still need to make sure he's 100% okay. We still need to examine him.

Me: But he looks fine. He's normal.

Him: I know that, and he's only fine because of the medical care.

We cannot discharge him today.

Me: When can you?

Him: I don't know.

Me: What do you mean you don't know?! You the doctor here!

Him: Miss Zungu, calm down.

Me: I need him out of here. This will kill my mother, if she happens to know.

Him: I am afraid you need to tell her because I can't discharge him.

Me: Can you at least estimate when you can discharge him?

Him: In 2 or maybe 3 days' time.

Me: Fuck.

Him: I am sorry.

Me: It's fine.

I leave his office. Now I am angry all over again. What am I going to say to my mom? I move up and the hallway trying to think of a plan but nothing. Tukelo comes out the room and he stands next to me.

Him: what's wrong now?

Me: The doctor won't discharge him. What am I going to say to mom?

Him: That's bad.

Me: I know.

Him: Okay, sit down. You've been on your feet for hours.

Me: no, everything is a mess. Fuck Andile!

I punch the wall.

Him: I will talk to him. Now calm down.

Me: What makes you think he'll listen to you?

Him: Oh he will. No-one says no to me.

He leaves. I go back to Andile's ward. I find him sleeping. His cheeks are dry, he's been crying, a lot. Tukelo what did you say to my

brother?

30 minutes later Tukelo comes back with the doctor. I was half asleep on the chair, I stand up and look at them.

Tukelo: Well, he's discharging him.

Me: Really?

Dr.: Yes but on one condition. He will get treated at home by a

private nurse.

Me: That's even worse, mom will...

Tukelo: She won't know because Andile will be staying with me.

Me: What?

Tukelo: Andile will go home today, he will inform your mom that he has an important test to study for and he's staying at his friend's house.

Me: I don't know if mom will agree.

Tukelo: That's where you come in, you make her see that he needs to trust Andile and he has to go to his friend's house. Mothers always listen to their daughters.

Me: Well okay but who will pay for a private nurse?

Tukelo: Don't worry about that.

Me: Tukelo you don't have to...

Him: I want to

He smiles.

Dr.: Now that's settled, I will go get his discharge forms.

The doctor leaves.

Me: Tukelo, I don't know what to say. I don't know how I can thank you.

Him: You can thank me by going out with me.

Me: Oh God.

Him: (chuckles) bathung! Will it be so bad going out with me?

Me: This is not the time to talk about that.

Him: I'm joking. I am helping because I want to.

Me: Well thank you. What did you say to Andile? Look like he's been

crying.

Tukelo: Let's just say you will never worry about him using again.

I look at him shocked, he laughs. Insert Six 😊

I am running late! Its 18:45 and I have to be at the hall at 19:00.

I rush home, when I get there they have all left. I quickly changed

and lock all doors. I really hope I make there in time. I have been

standing here for the past 15 minutes and no taxi is coming. It is only a 1km walk so I can manage. I am athletic so I bet I can run all the way. As I am running, a car come speeding, parking in front of me and almost knocking me down.

Me: What the hell idiot?!

He rolls down the car window. And it's him. Seriously, he gotta stop stalking me. I fold my arms and looked at him. He smiles.

Him: Come in, I don't want you running like that. I am your man, I am here.

I laugh.

Me: You my man now?

Him: Mm, after the stunt you pulled today I'm pretty convinced.

I roll my eyes and carried on with my running. He follows me, and he drives slowly. He keep on hooting. He's headlights are on bright.

Him: Damn girl!

I stop. Bloody pervert. I didn't realize that he's hooting because he's

seeing my back view.

Me: Geez Tukelo! How can I ever get rid of you?

I start walking now, he drives slowly too.

Him: Never baby.

He looks at me from head-to-toe. The things I am wearing are making things even better for him. I am wearing a short and a high-low t-shirt, it is long sleeved and is kind of a net at the back. So he is seeing all of me.

Me: No doubt about that.

I look down 'there' and dear lord he has a boner. I laugh my ass off. I don't even know what made me look there. He's eyes are way smaller than usual too. I laugh. Yoh! I can't!

Him: How can you laugh at my pain? Woman, you are evil.

I laugh even more.

Me: Serves you right! You bought it upon yourself.

He scratches his head.

Him: And I will suffer like this because there no way I am getting what this 'dude' needs.

Me: Shame! I know some hookers downtown.

The look he gives me! I would be dead right now if looks could kill.

Him: I would rather stick pins in my eyes then share a woman or sleep with a woman that I know has slept with numerous men.

Me: Then have a girlfriend. Dude, you're 25 for crying out loud, get a girl.

Him: I could ask my girl, the thing is, she keep on playing hard to get and I am not the type that likes forcing things but I am the type that gets what he wants.

Self-absorbed much? Really this guy is dreaming. Even if we do end up together, we can never last. We come from two very different worlds.

Me: Mm shame man. Good for you.

Him: Yes. Since you will not allow me to take you to the competition, can you at least go on a date with me? Just one.

He will never give up unless I give what he wants.

Me: I told you I don't...

Him: Go on dates, yeah I get that. All I ask is just for one date, how bad can it be? I promise I will be nice, we won't do something you don't want to do.

Me: Well fine. Just one date.

Him: Or two.

Me: Don't push it.

He laughs.

Him: Ok just one. I will text you the details. Bye pretty face.

He winks, blows a kiss and takes off. This guy loves winking I have noticed.

Which is not really hard for him because he has small eyes. But I like his china eyes.

I get to the competition almost an hour late. I find my family and sat next to them. Luckily, it hasn't been Ziningi's turn yet. Me and Tukelo have been texting each other since we separated. I am warming up to him and he's also warming up to me. I regret being to rude to him because he seem like a nice guy. I am crazy right? I have known this guy for like a week but now I think he's nice? He is definitely playing his cards right because never in a million years would I have thought that I would ever talk to a guy without insulting him, let alone a guy like him.

Mom: Where the hell is Andile? I thought he was coming with you.

She whispers in my ear.

Me: Oh, he at the par... at Patrick's house. Studying, he didn't tell you?

Mom shakes her head. Shit! I almost busted him.

Me: Oh he must have forgot to tell you.

I quickly texted Andile and told him what I told mom in case she asks him when he comes back. Oh finally, Ziningi's turn. We can finally get over this. She comes to the stage and waves at us. Oh, Zanele is here, I didn't notice. Anele couldn't make it I think. Speaking of him he said he wants to talk me first thing tomorrow. I was shocked too.

But I agreed. Wonder what he wants. I can't help but feel like we can never have that bond we shared before. It will just never be the same again.

We sit and wait for Ziningi's turn and she performs perfectly. She didn't seem to have any trouble with the words. She just spelt them out correctly. Everyone seem to be impressed by her. I am also

impressed. She is the last student. Oh good. We can finally go home.

They announce that they have to take a break, to count the votes.

Really?

Ma: Who is that man?

I turn around. I see Ziningi with Tukelo. He seems to be telling her joke because she can't stop laughing. Kill me! Why is he stalking me?

Zanele: Mah, I don't think Ningi should be talk to strangers, go and get her from that man.

Me: Relax, he's my friend. I will go get her.

Zanele frowns.

Her: You know that guy?

I just said he is my friend, which means I know him. Tukelo comes toward us carrying Ziningi.

Me: Yes, now shush. We don't want him to see that we are talking about him.

He come to us and he takes a long hard look at Zanele. Which is making me kind of jealous. Oh, don't judge. This man is goddamn gorgeous, he looks hotter than most ladies so I have every right to be mad if he looks at another.

Him: Hi family.

He doesn't take his eyes off Zanele and she keep on avoiding eye contact.

Me: What are you doing here?

He finally takes off his eyes of Zanele and looks at me. He smiles.

Him: You invited me, remember?

Me: No I didn't.

Him: Yes you did.

Ziningi: I like Tukelo sis' Amahle. He's funny.

Ma: Ay Ziningi, don't call an elder by name.

Him: It's okay Ma. I told her to call me by name. She's my friend so it's okay.

Ziningi: Yes mommy. He's my friend.

Me: Oh Tukelo, this is my mom, Buyisiwe Zungu, and my soon-to-be skwiza, Zanele Khuzwayo, my brother's fiancé. Everybody, this Tukelo Mokoena, a close friend of mine.

Tukelo frowns at me and smiles. He is more than happy that I finally introduced him to my family.

Him: Nice to meet you family, and Zanele.

Zanele looks down. Why did he do that? There's definitely something going on here. The way Tukelo is looking at Zanele, it is making me uncomfortable.

Ma: Nice to meet you too future mkhwenyana.

We all look at her in disbelief and she is grinning.

Me: Mom, geez! No. We are just friends, nothing more.

Tukelo is actually smiling he is happy about this.

Tukelo receives a phone call and asks to be excused. He put Ziningi down and went aside. I just cannot believe that my mom would say something like that. Can this break be over already? How long can it take to vote for the winner seriously? It is really dark outside. Tukelo comes back and says he has to go. Ziningi doesn't look happy about that.

Me: I will walk you out.

I am just tired of standing in one place. He says his goodbyes and I walked him out.

Him: Mmmmm, future mkhwenyana. I like that.

My mom has really stepped over the limit. I nudged him on the stomach.

Me: That was just my mom talking crap. Don't get any ideas.

Him: Aah Amahle, stop fighting it. I know you like me, even your mom sees it. Just give me a chance to prove to you that I can be your knight in shining armor, your prince charming, your Aladdin, your Hercules. I just want one chance, just one.

Damn! This guy reads a lot of fairytales. We stared at each other.

For a second there, I swear I was going to agree but something stopped me, I don't know what.

Me: I have to go Tukelo.

I turn around and he grabs my arm. Seriously! He gotta stop doing that. I look at him. He's grip it always tight but this time, I felt something. I don't what it is, I think it's what they call 'butterflies' or a spark but I felt something happening inside my body. I look at where he is holding me, he lets go and says sorry. I didn't want him to let go.

Him: Ok, I won't push it. Tomorrow is our date. I will SMS you the details and have your dress delivered. Bye Amahle.

He turns to go. My what now?

Me: Wait Tukelo, what dress? And tomorrow is a Sunday.

He looks at me and comes closer.

Him: I know Tigress. Don't lie to me and tell me about going to church because I know you're not a religious person.

How is it even possible that he knows so much about me? Yet I only know the basics.

Me: I don't wear dresses.

He doesn't seem shocked to what I have just said.

Him: (sighs) I know that too. I am sure you will like this one. It just says you. This might be the only date I will ever have, I want to make it special. Don't say no, please.

He give me very sad eyes.

Me: Okay fine. Now stop sulking.

Him: I wasn't sulking.

Me: Yes you were, you always give me those sad eyes, just to get what you want.

Him: I wasn't sulking. Men don't sulk. You just have a soft spot for me.

Me: Keep dreaming buddy.

We said our goodbyes and I left him and went back inside. There was some cheering and screaming and Ziningi was on stage carrying a trophy. My mom was jumping and cheering. Ziningi won. I am so happy for her. I clapped and whistled. I cannot believe I missed this moment. I took a picture of her and sent it to Tukelo on Whatsapp. He went online, read my message and didn't reply. Which kind of pissed me off. Ziningi climbed off stage and we congratulated her. We got home, there was a very unusual car parking by our house. It was a black Range Rover. Everything was black, the windows and even the rims.

Ma: Anyone expecting someone?

We all said no. What was the car doing in front of our house. We got off the car and my mom told us to not look at the car because everything about it is very suspicious. A man wearing a black suit

and black sunglasses came out. Why is he even wearing glasses, it is very dark. He was buffy and tall.

Him: Is there a Ziningi Zungu?

The man says in a very deep and scary voice. My mom hid Ziningi behind her.

Her: What do you want with my baby? Nobody is going to take my baby away from me.

Me: Ma, calm down. No one is taking Ziningi.

I say and gave the man a very bad look. The man removed his glasses and smiles.

Him: Mam' no one is taking her, I just came here to deliver a package for her.

He open the boot and took out a beautiful pink bike. The man gave it to her.

Ziningi: This is for me?

Ziningi asks in excitement and jumps up and down. She always wanted a bike. My mom always promises her one but never buys it.

Him: It has your name on it so yes.

On the bike, it is written 'Ziningi' in big bold purple letters. She jumped in excitement and hugged the man.

Her: Thank you mister.

He didn't hug her back, instead he pushed her off and said he should go. Everyone was happy for Ziningi but they forgot one thing.

Me: Sorry, who is it from?

The man looks at me.

Him: My boss.

He drives off.

Me: Who the heck is your boss?!

I shout after him. I doubt he even heard me. Everyone was inside admiring the bike. It was very pretty. Who could send a bike to her though? This is not a mistake, it has her name on it.

Me: Ma, you just going to accept this bike? You don't even know where it comes from.

Her: Amahle, she has been pestering me for years for a bike, if someone decides to buy her one then good for me.

I cannot believe mom right now. Am I the only one finding this thing weird?

Zanele: Maybe Anele bought it. He probably feels guilty for not

showing up.

No it cannot be him. Anele is not sweet.

Me: I doubt. Anele didn't show up at Andile's 15th birthday, he never felt guilty. I doubt he will feel guilty that he missed Zee's spelling bee competition. I will find out who it was.

Ziningi: Y'all all wrong. Tukelo bought it for me. He promised me that he will buy me a bike if I win.

Me and Zanele: He did?

Ziningi: Yes.

Ma: If it's the nice guy that bought her the bike, I don't see a problem. Thank him for me Amahle.

I nod.

Ma: Is Andile back?

Me: I will go check.

I go to his room, I don't find him there. Where the heck is he? It's fucking 10pm and he's not in the house. If mom finds out about this, she will freak. I go to her room and I lie to her face and say, he's in his room sleeping. She says okay. No I have to find Andile, and make sure he's home before mom gets off that bed and find out that I lied to her. I walk up and down my room thinking of a person that can help me find him, and I can only think of one person and one person only. I dial his number and answers on the first ring. Like he was expecting me to call.

Him: To what do I owe this pleasure?

Me: I just wanted to thank you for the bike.

Him: Bike? What bike?

I keep quite.

Him: Oh yeah sorry, now I remember, Ziningi's bike?

Me: Yes, I thank you on behalf of Ziningi. She loves it.

Him: No sweat. It's just something I promised to do.

Me: Okay. I also need your help on something. I can't think of anyone but you... please...

Him: Why? What's going on Tigress?

Me: My brother. My brother is missing. He said he's going to a party, and he's not back until now.

Him: You worry too much, he's a guy, and he'll be back tomorrow morning or later today.

Me: He's 16 Tukelo. I have a really bad feeling that something bad happened or will happen to him. Please I need your help.

Him: I am on my way.

He hangs up. I get ready and change into a jean and hoodie. I go check on my mom. She fast asleep. I check on Ziningi, she's also asleep. I sit and wait for Tukelo's text. 10 minutes later, he texts me and says he's outside. I go to him, he opens the door for me. This is no time for him to be a gentleman. I get in anyway. He also gets in and he drives off. Really fast.

Him: Did you try calling him?

Me: Yes but he's not picking up.

Him: Ok. Did he say where he was going?

Me: No, he just said he's going to some party.

Him: Okay.

He dials a number. He connected his phone to his car's Bluetooth.

Me: Who are you calling?

Him: Dankies, he's my friend. He can help.

Dankies: Tukelo, what the hell?

Tukelo: I need your help. I wouldn't be calling so late if it wasn't important.

Dankies: Okay, what's up?

Tukelo: I want you to trace a number for me. I will send it to you.

Dankies: Okay.

Tukelo: ASAP, stop whatever you were doing and do this for me.

Dankies: Haa Tukelo, I was in a middle of something, can't I get it done first?

Tukelo: No! Get this done.

Dankies: Fine but you owe me.

Tukelo: Yeah, yeah.

Tukelo hangs up.

In the meantime, I call his friends and none of them know where he is. Now I am really worried but also getting angry at the same time.

Me: If he's alive and well, he is so dead.

Him: You worry too much, he's a guy and this is what guys do.

Me: No. He's my little brother and this is not what my brothers do!

Him: Okay, calm down.

Me: Don't tell me to calm down because I will not calm down by you telling me to calm down!

Him: okay. We will find him though.

Tukelo's phone rings. He answers.

Dankies: He's at 40-40 club.

Tukelo: Oh.

Dankies: Tukelo do you realize that's our...

Tukelo: Thanks Dankies, talk later.

Tukelo hangs up.

Me: 40-40? He's at 40-40? Tukelo that place is best known for having hookers, so he's with hookers?

Him: I don't know.

Me: Drive faster!

He speeds up.

Me: He is so dead.

I clench my fists. Tukelo looks at me and shakes his head.

We get to the club, we can't find him. We go upstairs, he's nowhere to be seen. I start panicking and shouting at anyone who tries to talk to me.

Him: He has got to be around here somewhere. Dankies never makes a mistake. We just have to keep looking.

I nod.

We ask people but they have not seen him. Me and Tukelo part ways. I don't know what made go to the men's room but I find him lying on floor with his pants half way down. I go crazy, I don't know

what to do. He looks so peaceful, so quiet and so... so... so dead. I rush to him, feel his pulse. It's still there. Thank God. I call Tukelo.

Me: Men's room, now!

Him: Okay.

He comes in seconds later. He rushes to us. He gives Andile a few slaps, he doesn't respond, he feels his heartbeat. He looks at me with worry. He make Andile opens his eyes.

Him: I thought as much.

Me: What? Thought what?

Him: He's high.

Me: High? As in like, high on drugs?

He nods.

Me: And how do you know that? You no doctor.

Him: Yes but I am no idiot either. We have to rush him to hospital.

Me: Hospital? Tukelo, what are you saying to me?

He carries Andile and walks out with him. I follow behind. He gets to his car, he put Andile on the backseat. I go in with him. Tukelo closes the door and drives off.

Me: Andile, please wake up. I beg you. Just open your eyes.

Nothing.

Me: Andy, don't do this to us. Think about our mother, this will kill her.

I slap him slightly. Nothing.

Me: Fuck Andile! You can be stupid sometimes!

Now I am getting angry all over again. Tukelo looks at me on the rearview mirror.

Me: Is he alive?

Him: Yes.

Me: But he's not breathing.

Him: He has a pulse. That means he's alive.

We get to the hospital. Tukelo goes out and comes back with a doctor, two nurses and a stretcher. They help me with Andile and they rush with him inside. I follow them behind, but they stop as soon as they enter the theater.

Me: But he's my brother!

Nurse: Mam', you have to wait here. Let the doctors do their job.

Tukelo: Amahle, we have to wait here.

Tukelo pulls me away.

Me: Tukelo, that's my little brother in there. He needs me.

Him: I know but he also need medical care. That's why you have to allow the doctors to do their job.

Me: Fine.

He sits down. I can't sit down. I walk up and down the hall.

We have been sitting here for hours and still, nothing. It's getting late, it's close to 1 am now. I don't even know if I should call my mom or

Anele but Anele would freak, he would even go as far as having his own brother arrested. So, I decide not to tell anyone. I just hope Andile will be out of here before anyone notices that we both not home.

Him: Do you need anything? Food?

Me: No, I am fine. You should go though. You have been great help. I am sure you're exhausted.

Him: No not at all. I want to be here.

Me: Thank you Tukelo. I don't know what I would have done without you. I appreciate it.

The doctor comes out. We rush to him.

Doctor: You must be the boy's sister?

Me: Yes.

Doctor: I'm Doctor Hadebe. Can you come to office to discuss your brother?

Me: Yes sure.

Tukelo: I will wait here.

Me: Okay.

Me and the doctor left and went to his office. He closes the door, he sits down and I sit across him.

Him: Uhm right. We found drugs in your brother's body. A very dangerous drug. He's body didn't respond well, hence he collapsed.

Me: Is he fine now?

Him: Yes, he's okay now. He's still unconscious but it's due to the

drug we gave him. He will wake up anytime now.

Me: Thank God.

Him: You managed to rush him in hospital in time before the drug could spread to the rest of his body and into his vital organs. He was minutes away from death.

Me: Can you tell me the kind of drug you found in his body?

Him: Heroine.

Me: Jesus.

Him: No damage was done but I advise you to take him to rehab before he kills himself.

Me: But he's not an addict. It was he's first time.

Him: Let's make it his last time.

Me: I will make sure of it.

Him: Okay good.

Me: Can I see him?

Him: Yes sure. He should be awake now.

We leave the doctor's office. I tell Tukelo everything that the doctor's said. He didn't have much to say, he just nodded. When we were on our way to Andile's ward, Tukelo stopped me.

Me: What?

Him: I know you're probably raging right now, and you have a lot of questions to ask him but please not tonight. Don't scold.

Me: I wasn't going to scold.

Him: I know you.

Me: Okay maybe a little.

Him: Right now he needs your support, not you shouting at him. He doesn't need you stressing him because you will lead him back to

those drugs.

Me: But I want to know why.

Him: You can ask him nicely.

Me: I will try.

Him: Tigress.

Me: Okay fine.

We get to Andile's room. He didn't look weak at all, he was staring blankly at the ceiling. He turns our way as soon as we closed the door.

Me: Hi.

Tukelo: (whispers in my ear) be nice.

Andile: Hi.

I go closer to him and sit next to him. God knows I am trying really hard to not show my anger.

Me: How are you feeling?

Andile: Better.

Me: You look better.

Andile: Thanks I guess.

Silence.

Tukelo: Do you need anything Andile? Are you hungry?

Andile looks at him quizzically.

Me: That's Tukelo, he helped me find you.

Andile: Oh. Yes, I would love something to eat.

Tukelo: Amahle?

Me: An apple would be lovely.

Tukelo smiles and leaves.

Me: why Andy? Why?

Him: (tear escapes).

Me: I won't shout at you. I just want to know why.

Him: I don't know sis' Amahle. We were all drunk, next thing this guy sells drugs to us. So they bought it. I don't remember what happened after that.

Me: Andile, you gave me a scare.

Him: I am sorry.

Me: Don't do that to me again. When I saw you lying on the floor, I thought you were dead.

Him: (cries).

I hug him, he cries on my chest.

Me: Shush. Don't cry. It will be okay. You can't remember who sold you the drugs?

Tukelo: They were sold to him?

I let go of Andile and turn to look at Tukelo, I didn't realize he was back.

Me: Yes. At 40-40.

Tukelo: Who?

Andile: I don't remember who.

Tukelo: Shit!

Me: (confused) what?

Tukelo: Nothing. I will be back, I need to make a phone call.

He put the food on the side table and leaves.

Me: Weird.

Him: Who is he vele?

Me: No-one important.

Him: I am not a kid sisi.

Me: So you have to tell me what to tell mom.

Him: No I can't kill her, this will kill her. She can't know. I am feeling better now. Tell the doctor to discharge me.

Me: I don't know Andile.

Him: Please. Mom cannot know about this.

Me: Okay. I will be back.

I kiss his forehead and left his room. I find Tukelo outside on a phone, he looks angry.

Him: Find out who was there! ... I don't care who it was, tell him he's dead... give me all the names... I don't care if they were 100 of them, I will kill all of them!

He hangs up. He turns around and see me.

Me: Is everything okay?

Him: Yes.

Me: Do you know who did this to my brother?

Him: No.

Me: You're lying to me.

Him: I'm not. You don't know me that well, you cannot tell if I am lying or not.

Me: That maybe the case but I am not stupid.

Him: I don't know who did that to your brother okay? If I knew I would tell you. This phone call had nothing to do with your brother.

Me: Okay. I need to speak to Andile's doctor.

Him: Why?

Me: I want to know if he can discharge Andile today.

Him: What's the rush?

Me: Mom cannot know that he's here. It can kill her.

Him: Understandable. I will go have a talk with your brother. You go find the doctor.

Me: Oh, okay.

I find the doctor in his office, I knock once and he lets me in.

Me: Sorry to disturb but I need to discuss something with you.

Him: Okay, sit.

Me: Thank you.

I sit down.

Me: I will just get straight to the point, I want to know if it's possible that my brother can be discharged today?

Him: No, that's not possible Miss Zungu.

Me: Why not?

Him: We still need to make sure he's 100% okay. We still need to examine him.

Me: But he looks fine. He's normal.

Him: I know that, and he's only fine because of the medical care. We cannot discharge him today.

Me: When can you?

Him: I don't know.

Me: What do you mean you don't know?! You the doctor here!

Him: Miss Zungu, calm down.

Me: I need him out of here. This will kill my mother, if she happens to know.

Him: I am afraid you need to tell her because I can't discharge him.

Me: Can you at least estimate when you can discharge him?

Him: In 2 or maybe 3 days' time.

Me: Fuck.

Him: I am sorry.

Me: It's fine.

I leave his office. Now I am angry all over again. What am I going to say to my mom? I move up and the hallway trying to think of a plan but nothing. Tukelo comes out the room and he stands next to me.

Him: what's wrong now?

Me: The doctor won't discharge him. What am I going to say to mom?

Him: That's bad.

Me: I know.

Him: Okay, sit down. You've been on your feet for hours.

Me: no, everything is a mess. Fuck Andile!

I punch the wall.

Him: I will talk to him. Now calm down.

Me: What makes you think he'll listen to you?

Him: Oh he will. No-one says no to me.

He leaves. I go back to Andile's ward. I find him sleeping. His cheeks are dry, he's been crying, a lot. Tukelo what did you say to my

brother?

30 minutes later Tukelo comes back with the doctor. I was half asleep on the chair, I stand up and look at them.

Tukelo: Well, he's discharging him.

Me: Really?

Dr.: Yes but on one condition. He will get treated at home by a private nurse.

Me: That's even worse, mom will...

Tukelo: She won't know because Andile will be staying with me.

Me: What?

Tukelo: Andile will go home today, he will inform your mom that he has an important test to study for and he's staying at his friend's house.

Me: I don't know if mom will agree.

Tukelo: That's where you come in, you make her see that he needs to trust Andile and he has to go to his friend's house. Mothers always listen to their daughters.

Me: Well okay but who will pay for a private nurse?

Tukelo: Don't worry about that.

Me: Tukelo you don't have to...

Him: I want to

He smiles.

Dr.: Now that's settled, I will go get his discharge forms.

The doctor leaves.

Me: Tukelo, I don't know what to say. I don't know how I can thank you.

Him: You can thank me by going out with me.

Me: Oh God.

Him: (chuckles) bathung! Will it be so bad going out with me?

Me: This is not the time to talk about that.

Him: I'm joking. I am helping because I want to.

Me: Well thank you. What did you say to Andile? Look like he's been crying.

Tukelo: Let's just say you will never worry about him using again.

I look at him shocked, he laughs.

Insert Seven 😊

As planned, Andile came to mom and told her that he had an important test coming up. She didn't agree at first but after I convinced her, she did. Now my brother is going to staying at a man's house, a man I hardly even know but right now I don't have much of a choice. I look at him pack and this punk is actually excited about it.

Me: You're happy about this huh?

Him: I'm not happy about the whole overdose thing but at least I'm going to stay with your boyfriend and he looks like he's loaded.

Me: He's not my boyfriend. He's just a friend.

Him: Yeah, who happens to be a boy so that makes him your boy-friend.

I roll my eyes.

Me: Yeah whatever. Please behave Andile, this man is doing a huge favor for us please try and be in your best behavior.

Him: Okay.

Me: As you don't want to tell me who gave you the drugs or who you were hanging out with, I hope you'll open up to Tukelo since he's a guy.

Him: I already told him everything I knew.

Me: You did?

Him: Yes. He actually made me talk. He didn't give me much of a choice.

Me: What did he say?

Him: Ay sisi, I can't tell you that. Just know that I like him and I approve of him. Should you decide to date him.

Me: Argh! Leave me alone.

Around 10am, there was car waiting to take Andile. Mom and Ziningi already left for church. I accompany Andile.

Me: Be safe. Stay far away from drugs, I will call and check up on you everyday.

Him: Okay sisi.

Me: I love you.

Him: I love you too.

We share a hug.

He gets in the car and they take off. I go back inside.

I don't even know when I fell asleep but I woke up when Anele was shaking me. I even fell asleep on the couch. I even

forgot that he wants to speak to me. I quickly got up, went to the bathroom washed my face and brushed my teeth then went to the sitting room. He was watching soccer and drinking coffee. Geez, him and coffee, they will never separate. I greet him and sat down. He ignores me, he just looks at me.

Him: I miss watching soccer with you. I miss telling you how crazy you are. I miss laughing with you. I miss teasing you. I miss telling you how much you annoy me. I miss arguing with you. I miss making fun of your skinny ass. I just miss being your brother. I miss you Amahle.

I just didn't know what to say so I looked down and played with my fingers.

Me: I miss you too Anele. I am sorry about...

He stops me.

Him: Don't apologize. I know how hard it is for you to apologize. Zanele told me everything. That's all I ever wanted from you, apologizing to her. Don't ever feel that she is taking me away from you, I will forever be your brother. That will never change. Ok?

I nod.

Him: Come here.

He opens his arms.

Me: I don't do hugs.

He laughs, we did our secret handshake instead. Yes, we even have a secret handshake, that's how strong our bond is. We started talking about the current game that's playing. We were back to laughing and teasing. He was a Pirate supporter and I was a Chiefs supporter, so you can imagine the arguing and the teasing there. I don't know if I should tell him about last night or not, I decide not to. Anele will kill him.

Time was really moving fast, it was 2:30pm already. Anele left around 1:30pm. He got a phone call and he said he had to rush somewhere. Tukelo hasn't spoken to me as yet. The dressed hasn't arrived. I am getting anxious now. But I decided to be patient. Zitha is on her way to do my hair and I am here

thinking that the date is not happening anymore because of Tukelo's silence. At around 3pm. There was a knock on the door and it was yet another guy in a black suit and sunglasses.

Him: Miss A. Zungu?

Me: Yes.

He didn't say anything else, he just gave me a box and left.

What the hell?

Me: Hey, what am I supposed to do with this? I am talking to you!

He ignores me and takes off. I close the door and went in my room.

I open the box. Shut the fridge! What am I seeing? I have never seen

anything like this before. I am not a fan of dresses but this one is

definitely something I could wear. It's sliver, short and has a zipper at the back that starts from the neck all the way to the ass. It isn't tight, it is beautiful. And the shoes! They're amazing! They are also silver

stilettos. This guy sure has good taste. This is definitely something I could wear.

I was busy admiring the dress and shoes and Zitha, Nosi and Palesa walked in. As soon as they enter, Nosi and Zitha screamed.

Nosi: Girl! Are these from him?

They scream again.

Palesa: All of it?

I nod.

Zitha: Wow, your man has taste girl.

Me: Yes he does.

Palesa: But this is not you, Amahle.

She takes the dress as if it was some sort of trash.

We all look at her.

Palesa: I mean, designer dresses, stilettos. That is not you.

I think this man is trying to change you. He doesn't like the Amahle that you are, he is changing you into someone that you're not. He wants you to fit in his world.

What is it with her?

Zitha: I don't think that's that case Palesa. Come Amahle let me do your hair before he comes and fetch you.

Me: Aah, I think let's wait for him to tell me before I do anything.

Really? Imagine dressing up and he cancels. I haven't even spoken to him as yet.

Nosi: The man is coming Amy, relax. He did send the dress.

Nosipho has a point. Why would he send for the dress and not show up.

Me: Ok. Let me text my mom first and tell her that I am leaving.

She informed me earlier and said she was in a church meeting and these meetings can take forever.

I went to take a shower and came back, Zitha was doing my hair.

Within a few minutes I was done. Man, I look H-O-T. She curled my

hair and it looks like I have a weave on. Perks of having extremely long, healthy hair!

I have my dress on and shoes and I look astonishing. I swear I cannot recognize the person I am seeing. What if Palesa was right? What if he's trying to change me? But nah, that was her being jealous. We decided to wait for Tukelo. The wait was killing me. It is now 6pm. No call. No text. Nothing. Maybe he stood me up. I was starting to feel disappointed.

Palesa: Is your man still coming?

Me: Why is she here?

I had to ask. This question has been bugging me the moment she stepped in.

Nosi: Amy, don't get angry. This is your big night. Ignore her.

I seriously don't want to get angry now. It is now going to half pass. Nope this man is not coming.

Me: I think Palesa is right. I have been stood up. It's almost 6pm now.

I start taking off my shoes. I feel like screaming and crying. But I don't cry for silly things.

The last time I cried was on my father's funeral and that is like 8 years ago. I was still a kid.

Palesa: Of course I am right. I told you Zee and Nosi that this was too good to be true. Maybe she is lying.

Zitha and Nosipho gave her a very bad look. So that's the whole reason she came here. She is so childish and immature.

Nosi: Just get out Palesa. I don't why we allowed you to come here.

Nosipho says dragging her out.

Palesa: Gosh, let me go. I am leaving.

Nosipho left with her. Nosipho came back screaming. Zitha and I stood up quick.

Me: What is it?

Her: There's a black G63 outside your house.

Me and Zitha: What?!

Her: I'm seriously serious. Come check. I think its here for you.

Me: Nosi, don't joke like that.

Her: Dude I'm not joking. Come

I quickly put my shoes on and followed her outside and indeed there was a G63 outside my house. Actually on my driveway. As soon as we came closer, a man wearing a suit and glasses comes out the car. Not Tukelo.

This time he wore like a chauffeur. Long coat, white gloves and all. The man asks if I am Miss Zungu. I nod, nervously. He opens the door for me. These shoes are not making things easy for me. I want to take them off as in now. I hugged the girls. I went inside the G63 and it took off. I feel like Rihanna or Zendaya. I feel important. The guy wasn't even speaking to me.

He was just driving.

We were out of Alex now and heading to Sandton. Me and Sandton? OMG! I never even dreamt of coming here. The houses here were beautiful. But there's one that I see from afar that's standing out. It was beautiful. It was white, everything was white. The fence, the house, the walls, they are white. The gate was silver. I really like it. It was really huge.

The G63 enters that house, whoa. I don't know if it's a house or a hotel. It is really beautiful. There was even a water fountain in the front. The chauffeur opens my door. I got out. He leads me to the door, as we got closer to the doorstep, there was a small bridge and

underneath there are fish, small fish. Wow, the grass is really beautiful and really green. The man opens the door. What I see is beyond me.

I have never seen such beauty. Everything inside was white and

silver. The stairs were beyond me, they were silver and they twirl. The couches were white and big, the chandelier was really beautiful it

looks a million dollars. The man tells me to feel at home, Mr.

Mokoena will be here. With that he leaves me. I am all alone in this

humongous house. The house didn't have much furniture, everything was set out perfectly. It wasn't crowded with furniture. Everything in

here looks Italian. Everything looks expensive. I have

to see the kitchen. What did I expect? It is amazing. What took my

breath away is the fridge. It was huge and it had a mirror on it. I have seen fridges with mirrors before but this one, you cannot easily tell

that it is a fridge, it looks like a huge mirror. What made me see it's a

fridge, it's because of the water filter and ice filter. I mean I can't

even see the handles.

Him: Like what you see?

I jump and let out a scream. He scared me.

Me: God Tkelo! Don't do that. You almost gave me a heart attack.

Him: Sorry.

He comes closer. He freezes, looks at me. From head to toe.

Me: What?

Him: What are you doing to me MaNcwane?

I give him a questioning look.

Him: You look beautiful.

I blush.

He also look amazing, he's wearing jeans, G-star RAW, Gucci boots, white designer shirt and a waistcoat. The waistcoat was the same color as my dress. He folded his shirt sleeves and he is not wearing a tie, first two buttons are unbuttoned. He looks sexy. Simple but sexy.

Me: Thanks. You not so bad yourself.

He looks at me again. He is not speaking. I have to say something before he faints.

Me: Is this your house?

He shakes his head.

Him: It's my friend's, he let me use it because mine is not even close to being this awesome.

That's just stupid.

Me: Oh... Ok. So Andile is at your house?

Him: Yes.

Me: But I thought we're going on a date. Why did you bring me here?

I say rolling my eyes.

Him: You like doing that neh? Rolling your eyes? Don't do that, I hate that.

Who is he? My father?

Him: Want a quick tour?

He says reaching out his hand. I hold his hand.

We take a walk around the house. Everything in this house is awesome. There's even a bar, more like a pub in the basement.

Who has a pub in their basement? There's even a freaking cinema here. There're like 7 bedrooms. I didn't get to see all the rooms because there was no way I was going to go around in these shoes.

Him: Ok, now the outside. Then we'll go on our date.

He opens the sliding door.

Him: And we're here.

Oh my god. There's a table set on the porch. Red petals on the floor, red and white candles all around the floor, they lead to where we're supposed to sit. No lights, just a fancy lantern on the table. The table is covered with a red cloth and there are two silver plates and silver cutlery. There's even soft music playing. When I look around there are two people playing violins. This is so beautiful. He opens the chair for me. I sit down and say thank you. I am amazed about all of this. The garden is so beautiful. There's also a lake not far from us. This house is amazing. He notices that I am amazed by all this. He went all out.

Me: Who did this?

Him: I did.

He cannot be this creative, this is five-star.

Him: I mean, of course I paid people to do it but I gave them an idea of what I want.

Me: This is beautiful.

I say looking around.

Him: Just like the person sitting in front of me.

I look at him, he is not taking his eyes off me. I finally shied away and looked away.

Him: Can we order?

Order? Are we in a restaurant or what? I look at him confused. He smiles and signals like he is signaling for a waiter. A man dressed like a chef comes and ask us what we will be having. I am still confused because there's not even a menu.

Him: Aah, we'll have roasted rice, roasted chicken and a few salads on the side. Orange Juice for the lady and a Castle Lite for me. Is that okay with you?

He looks at me and I nod. The chef takes the order and leaves.

Him: I was so worried that the dress won't fit and the shoes also because I didn't know your size.

Me: Well you did a great job, well except for the shoes. They're too

tight.

Him: Oh I am sorry. You can take them off.

Oh good, I don't hesitate, I took them off. They were killing me.

We are really bonding, we're talking about almost everything. It's like I have known him for years. What I can tell about him is that he really loves his family. He talks about them a lot. He's very fond of his

brother, Itumeleng, he is talking about him a lot. He said they're just 2 years apart so they practically the same. They're into same things

and staff. The chef comes and give us our food. He starts to dig in.

Me: Wait, aren't you going to pray?

I am not a religious person but I always pray before I eat. My mom taught me like that. He looks at me shocked.

Him: Ok sorry.

We hold hands and I said a short prayer. He sure was hungry because in a matter of minutes he was done and I was only half way through my meal.

Me: Yoh! You were hungry.

Him: Yes, I had a pretty long day, I haven't really had time to eat.

Me: Oh, work?

I ask taking a bite of my food.

Him: No, you. You'd swear I was the girl here. I was so stressed and worried about tonight. I even called Tumi. I was really stressed. He had to calm me down. I wanted everything to be perfect.

Me: And everything turned out beautifully. You can be calm now.

Him: Yeah, thank fuck for that. I couldn't even call you, yeah that's how nervous I was.

I laugh. He is really crazy. It's just dinner. Not his wedding day. He is seriously overreacting.

Me: Are you being serious?

Him: Yes. I mean this is my first date. Of course, I was nervous.

I laugh. So that makes two of us.

Me: You're a man. And you're 25, and you never been on a date?

Him: Yes. I never really took a girl out on a date.

I smile.

Him: So what are your future plans? You're not planning on being a waiter forever, right?

I found that highly offensive but of course I never plan on being a waiter forever.

Me: Yes Tukelo, I don't plan on being a waiter forever, I always wanted to be a Accountant or a Financial Advisor but then life happened. I lost my bursary while I was doing my third year. Right now, I am saving up money so I can continue.

He nods.

Him: Why did you lose your bursary? If you don't mind me asking.

Me: Not at all. They couldn't fund me anymore. Not because I wasn't performing well. I was doing great, I never knew the reason why they decided to stop funding me.

Him: Why didn't you apply for another bursary?

Me: I just lost hope Tukelo. I got so mad that I decided to just quit everything.

Him: Giving up is never a solution. You should try again. You should go back to school.

Me: I don't know Tukelo. I was shattered when I lost my bursary, I want to go back but I want to pay with my own money. Can we talk about something else?

Him: Okay fine.

We talked about his family, again. I finish my food and dessert was served. I have no idea what this is but I can taste apples.

Him: I have heard about your love for apples so I have prepared that dessert just for you.

Oh I get it now. Andile helped him plan this, only he can tell him that.

Me: (smiles) Thank you. It is really delicious.

Him: I made it by the way.

Me: You're lying.

Him: I am serious. I have no idea what that is but I googled it.

I laugh.

He went as far as googling this. Really? He wanted this to be perfect shame.

Me: Aren't you going to have some?

He just ate about two spoons and left it there.

Him: No I am cool, I am not the dessert kinda person.

Men and their silly tendencies.

I finish my desert and we take a walk around the garden. We are joking and teasing around and even running around and playing.

We are like kids, I am walking barefoot. We sit on grass and face the lake.

Me: Don't they get tired?

I ask pointing the violin people.

Him: I pay them so no they not tired. No-one gets tired of money.

Ok make sense. But the poor people have been playing since I got here. He rests on the grass and face the sky, I join him.

Him: Beautiful night, isn't it?

He says wrapping his arm around my neck, I rest on his chest. This is really comfy. We are cozy. I am really getting comfortable around him.

Me: Yes it is indeed.

Him: Do you believe in constellations?

Me: No. You?

Him: Yes I do. And I believe those stars are trying to tell us something.

I laugh.

Me: That's crazy.

He smiles.

Him: I am serious. Look carefully, those stars are in a shape of two people kissing. Look. And that will be us.

I laugh, I see no shit like that. This man is crazy.

Me: You're crazy.

Him: Maybe I am but will it be so bad if we do?

He looks at me.

Me: If we what?

I know exactly what he's talking about and a part of me wants to kiss him so bad.

Him: Kiss.

I don't respond.

We look at each other. Next thing I know. We're kissing. This time, it's different. I am enjoying it. He lifts me, now I am on top of him. I have never been kissed like this before, it is so slow and passionate. It's like we moving with the music. His hands are all over me, he moves his hand under my dress. He keep

on brushing my ass. I am feeling something I have never felt before. I am feeling tingles all over my body. He turns me around, now he's the one on top of me. His hand is still under my dress. It is going somewhere else now. He first brush my cookie. Now his hand is entering my panty. I quickly came back to my senses. I hold his hand.

Me: Tukelo, no. Not here.

He stops and continues kissing me.

After a few minutes of kissing, we stop. He got off me. He was breathing heavily and nnow he has a boner. Geez! Really?

Him: I have never been kissed like that.

He says looking at the sky.

Me: Me too.

I cannot believe I just admitted that.

Him: Imagine being kissed like that every day.

I don't respond.

Me: I need water.

I say getting up. He also gets ups and says we could go inside.

As we enter, he goes to the violin people, I think he's telling them to go. He comes in, I am just sitting on this long stool by the kitchen counter.

Him: So refrigerated water or tap water?

Me: Do you have apples perhaps?

He laughs.

Him: But I thought you needed water.

Me: Well now I need an apple.

He laughs. I just said I needed water because I wanted him to change the topic. I couldn't say I want an apple, and that would have sounded weird.

Him: You're impossible.

He opens the fridge. There're no handles, you just slightly push the door fridge and it opens. Wow, who would have thought? He took out an apple and a beer for him. I am eating the apple and he's staring at me, sipping his beer, leaning on the kitchen counter. He is not even talking, he's just looking at me.

Me: What?

Him: Fuck this.

He lets go of his beer down to the floor, it break, there's glass all over. He rushes to me, grabs the apple and throws it away and kisses me. Everything happened so fast.

Oh god, that feeling is back again. He carries me from the kitchen all the way to the lounge. We kiss on the couch, the kiss is getting

intense and passionate. I think I am turned on. Fuck no! He's taking

of my dress, the zipper is undone.

When did that happen? He's also shirtless.

How did that happen so fast?

He kisses me on my neck. I am enjoying this, I really am but god

knows I have to stop this.

Me: Stop... wait...Tuke...

I can't even talk. No, I have to stop this. I can see he has an erection, I have to stop before it gets worse.

Me: I am... a vir...

I can't talk. Geez! But no, I am stronger than this, I can fight it.

Me: I am a virgin! Stop please!

I finally manage to stop him. He stops and looks at me.

Him: You're a what?

He must not make me repeat it again because he heard me.

Me: You heard me.

He got off me and says he will be back. I wonder what will happen now. He comes back a few minutes later. I am still sitting on the very big white Italian couch.

Him: I am sorry. I didn't know.

That I didn't expect. He sits next to me and we cuddle. He kisses my forehead. I am really enjoying being on his chest. It's like I belong here.

I wake up and I notice I am not in my room. Oh shit! This cannot be

happening. I realize I am not wearing the dress I was wearing. I am wearing a plain white t-shirt that's way bigger than me. Shit! What the heck happened last night? I didn't even drink alcohol. What did this man do to me? I get off the bed, I am panicking. I have to go check myself in the bathroom.

Him: Man, you're heavy, I had to use a wheelbarrow to get you here.

He scares me again.

Me: Stop sneaking up on me like that. What the hell happened? What did you do to me?

He looks confused.

Him: Calm down Tigress. We just chatted a bit and you dozed off in my arms. I couldn't wake you up. You were too beautiful sleeping. So I carried you here. We didn't do anything. Nothing happened.

Ok good. I was worried.

Him: Trust me if we did something, you wouldn't be able to walk right now. Your virginity is still safe.

I laugh. This guy is crazy. He just had to say it like that. Wait... my mom. I have to call her.

Me: My mom, I have to call my mom. She must be worried sick.

I say panicking again.

Him: Relax, I called her.

What the fuck?!

Me: You called my mom? Are you nuts?

He smiles and drinks his coffee.

Me: Tukelo, I am talking to you!

Him: Amahle, does a day goes by without you scolding? Relax. If she asks you had a good time at Nosi's house and you spent the night

there. Now come eat, your breakfast is getting cold.

He leaves me confused.

It's 7am and luckily I am on night shift this week. I got to the dining area and everything was ready. The table is full of food. I settle on two slices of toast, eggs and bacon. I can't eat like I am crazy now.

We finish breakfast and Tukelo goes and take a shower. I have nothing here, I don't know what I am going to bathe with or what I am going to wear. I am just wearing this plain white t-shirt. It's like I am wearing a very short dress. I am just gazing at the lake, eating an apple.

Him: You like this house, don't you?

He hugs me from behind and kissing my neck.

Me: A lot. It's amazing.

I reply without turning to look at him.

Him: Good then. It's yours.

He says kissing my cheek and going back inside. Did I hear him correctly? I rush back inside.

Me: What? What do you mean it's mine?

He smiles.

Him: I live here so this house is automatically yours.

He is confusing me now. We're not even officially a couple. Wait... last night he said it's his friend's house.

Me: But last night you said, your friend live here.

He clears his throat.

Him: Well... it is technically still his house. I bought it from him like 2days ago. I had to redecorate the entire house, the man had no taste. I haven't really signed all the papers and I haven't paid him in full, I was waiting for your opinion so since you like it, I will contact my banker to transfer the money into his account.

I am amazed. I don't even know what to say to this guy. Who buys a house in less than 2days? I don't even know what to say to him.

Insert Eight 😊

I have had the longest day or should I say longest night of my life. I have known this guy for like a week and somehow I think I am

catching feelings. We kissed every chance we got and we got cozy

anytime. We haven't even made things official yet but we are totally

comfortable with one another. I am losing myself, this is not me at all. I don't fall easy for guys, this is the first guy that I let him kiss me, touch me the way he did. What makes him so different? Is it because he has money? No, it cannot be that. My mother raised me better than that.

This guy just doesn't stop amazing me. He left and came back with a jean and a nude long sleeved crop-top. He said I must wear it

because we don't want my mom to see that I didn't sleep at

Nosipho's house. I tried asking him about what exactly did he say to

my mom but he's refusing to tell. He just kept on saying 'just tell her

you slept at Nosipho's house if she asks anything.' I couldn't help but wonder what exactly happened last night. I know he didn't rape me

or drug me but it's just so unlike me to doze off like that.

He takes me home and parks 6 houses away from my house.

Me: Well, thank you for the lovely night. I had the best time.

I look at him and he smile-blushes.

Him: I should be the one thanking you Tigress. You gave me a chance to prove to you that I am not a bad guy after all.

And he is definitely right about that. I totally mistaken him. He's totally the opposite of what I thought.

Me: You will never stop calling me Tigress. Will you?

He laughs.

Him: I will only stop once you stop acting crazy, scolding me for no reason, stop being stubborn and stop fighting those feelings you have for me.

I look away. Is it that obvious? I know I am feeling something and I

know for sure that I don't want to feel like that.

Me: Stop flattering yourself Tukelo because I don't have feelings for

you.

I say that without even looking at him.

Him: Yeah, right. Look at me and say that.

I look at him. I have to be strong for this.

Me: NO! I don't have feelings for you Tukelo.

I quickly look the other way again.

Him: Damn! You're stubborn. There's only one thing I know, you wouldn't have kissed me like that if you don't like me one bit.

Yeah, he got me there.

Me: I have to go now.

I open the door.

He holds my hand.

Him: Wait, I know the deal was one date but Amahle,
I can't get enough of you. Can we please have another date, this
time on an actual restaurant? I beg.

I look at him and the way he looks at me makes it hard for me to say no.

Me: We'll talk.

Him: So I guess that's not a no.

Me: It's not a yes either.

He smiles and says okay. He let's go of my hand. That felt hard, I have no idea why but I just felt a 5 second pain when he let go of my hand.

Me: Bye Tukelo. Tell Andile I will call him before I sleep.

Can you believe that he didn't allow me to go see my brother? He said something about him needing time alone, I will get to see him when he's fully recovered and I don't even know where he is but I trust him. I called Andile last night and he assured me that he is okay.

Him: okay will do. See you.

I get off the car and run to my house.

My phone rings, I stop.

Caller ID: Tukelo Mokoena.

Geez! I was just with him 5 seconds ago. What does he want now?

Me: what now?

Him: Stop running, you're going to fall.

I turn around. He's still parked behind me.

Me: You're crazy yazi.

Him: But damn girl your ass when you run, do you do squats?

I laugh.

Me: Don't you have a job? Or anything better to do?

Him: There's nothing better than what I am looking at right now.

He is quiet a charmer. I smile and hang up.

I turn around again, he blows a kiss, I take the kiss and stomp it on the ground. He laughs. I smile and wave goodbye, he waves back. I start to run again.

I got to my house and I find mom sipping tea. I greet her, she greets back with a huge smile on her face.

Me: Someone is the good mood.

Her: How can I not be when my baby is finally doing what's right.

I am really confused, I didn't sleep at home last night yet she's praising me instead of shouting at me.

Her: I can see you're confused. I mean the college applications silly.

That's why you stayed over at Nosipho's house last night because you two were applying for next year, right?

What the hell is this woman on about? I am trying not to act confused now. Tukelo has a lot of explaining to do.

Me: Of course mom. We're trying our luck, we're tired of being waitresses.

She hugs me in excitement.

Me: Mom it's not like I got in, I am still waiting for the response.

She didn't hear a word I said, she was still excited.

Her: I know you will get in! With your results. You're already in.

Me: Yeah sure mom. How did the meeting go?

She is talking but I am not actually listening to her. I can't help but think about what my mom told me is really confusing. I am trying really hard to listen to my mom but this is all news to me and upsetting. What did that man say to my mother?

Her: ... And there were arguments about who will be in charge of the money now since our treasurer stole all of our money. Yazi I kept on asking myself ukuthi where did MaMtshali get the money to buy new leather sofas, hhheee kanti lomthakashana udla imali yesonto.

I hear my mom say, I nod and asked to be excused. She accepts.

I rush to my room and make a call. It rings once, he answer.

Him: I must be dreaming.

Me: What did you say to my mom?

Him: What are you talking about?

Me: Last night, what did you say?

Him: (sighs) oh yeah. Can you not scold at me?

Me: Just talk!

Him: Eish, okay. So last night you dozed off, I didn't know what to do, I was worried about your mom so I acted fast. I called my sister,

explained everything to her and begged her to pretend to be

Nosipho. Long story short, she told her you guys are busy with college applications so you have to spend the whole night at her house so yeah, that's about it. Please don't shout.

Me: What? What if she finds out I didn't apply?

Him: But you did.

Someone talks in the background.

Him: I have to go. Call you later.

He hangs up.

What is he talking about? What does he mean I already did? Does he mean he... no can't be. He applied for me? But when and how?

I have to see him.

It was 6pm when I was getting ready for work when I decided to call Tukelo to come and pick me up. He was more than excited to do so. When I got out of the house he was waiting for me a few houses away from my house. I enter the car and give him a cold greeting.

Him: Look, I know you mad at me for what I did but I did it because I really care about you Amahle. Can we not fight about this?

Me: (silent)

Him: Please I beg.

Me: How did you do it?

Him: (clears throat) Mm, I just did a little bit of research and filled in the application for you. We're just awaiting for the response.

Me: How did you get all of my details?

Him: It doesn't matter. What matters is that sometime next year,

you'll be in Varsity finishing off your degree. If not for you then please do it for your mother. You're not getting any younger Tigrass and so is your mother. She might leave this world anytime, let her be happy that her daughter is working towards her goals. I know you can do this.

I can't help but to think that he's right.

Me: Still Tukelo, I can't pay for my fees.

Him: Leave that to me. Just make me and your mother proud.

Imagine being an Accountant or an auditor in the next 2 years to come. Think about it.

Me: (smile) Thank you. I will make her proud.

Him: I know you will.

He drops me off at work. We get off the car, he leans on the car bonnet and pulls me closer to him and wraps his arms around my waist. I don't even fight him anymore because it's pointless.

Him: You'll think of me, right?

Me: (smiles) I don't know, should I?

Him: (smile-blushes) Of course you should, hhebana!

Me: Thing is, I really don't know what exactly to think you know. You haven't really given me the reason to think about you.

Him: Lemme give you a reason ke, or better yet lemme show you.

He strokes my chin and kisses me. I kiss him back. I don't care who is watching, right now I don't want to let go of this man. Every time I kiss him, I just get this feeling, like I am in my own world, like I am in small heaven. The way he holds me, the way he moves his lips, it's just indescribable. Where has he been all my life? He was definitely right when he said, I want to be kissed like this every day. This is paradise people!

He lets go.

Him: I want you to be mine. Scratch that, you're mine, I just want you to be mine forever.

He hugs me tightly.

Me: Me too.

Whoa! Did I just admit that? It couldn't be me saying that. Something must be wrong. It must be the kiss. Oh who am I kidding? I meant it. I am getting this feeling that I would die if he touches another woman the way he touches me.

Him: I am yours.

Me: Please don't let me down. I am letting you in, please don't disappoint.

Him: I won't baby.

He kisses my forehead.

I came back to planet Earth and realized that I have to go to work. I let go of him and said my goodbyes. It was really tough letting go. I guess my mom was right, when you meet the one you love, you'll just know it.

Him: Tigress!

I turn to look at him, he blows a kiss and winks. This time I take the kiss and place in my heart. I don't know why I did that. He laughs.

I clock in and change to my uniform. I go and sit with my colleagues in the canteen because it was still early, our shift haven't yet started.

Everyone who's on night shift was here, except Nosipho and Zitha, they were on day shift. Even Palesa is here.

Pearl: Whuu! Girl, you are on fire!

Pearl is one of my colleagues. I look at her confused.

Pearl: Phela uBoniswa told us that she saw you with big boss on the parking lot kissing.

What is she talking about? I was kissing Tukelo, what does she mean the big boss?

Pearl: Since when you date? But shame you scored there! He's loaded, young and damn he's hot!

Boniswa: How do you do it?

Me: Aybo Boni, I didn't do anything.

Boniswa: Ay, you must have done something, with the big boss pho? That man is even worse than Mohammed.

Mohammed is the mean store manager. Why do I get the feeling that they know Tukelo?

Me: How you know him?

Pearl: Aybo kahle wena Amy, how can we not know him, he owns part of this restaurant. I think he owns the most of it.

He owns what now? I cannot believe my ears. I am beyond shocked. But it all make sense now. He had all access to my information, my address, phone number and even my name. It was easy for him to get it. How come I didn't know this? I don't know whether I am angry or just disappointed.

Pearl: Don't tell me you didn't know.

Me: I didn't know.

Palesa: What do y'all talk about? You're probably just one of those girls he wants to play with, he didn't trust you enough with the information so he kept it to himself. He just wanna screw you then leave you, I know men like him.

I decide to ignore her and leave that canteen. This man has a lot of explaining to do.

xxxx

Tukelo said I can call him when my shift is over. It doesn't matter what the time is, he will be here, I am his 'woman' now, what I want,

I get. It's now after mid-night. My shift is over. I am hesitant to call him but he said anytime, midnight is also anytime right? I still haven't asked him about the being my boss thing, I decided to ask him face-to-face. I dial his number. He doesn't answer, I call like 5 times and he finally answer.

Him: (hoarse voice) Yes.

Shame he was sleeping. Well, I don't care. The staff taxi has already left so he has no choice but to fetch me.

Me: My shift is over.

Him: Eish, ok. I am coming.

He hangs up. This man doesn't like saying goodbye I noticed. He just hangs up, and I don't want to lie, I hate that.

I wait for like 15 minutes and I see his car approaching. I gather my staff and went to the car. I greet him and look away. I am still a lil mad at him for not telling me that he is my boss.

Him: No kiss? Dang! I wasn't missed.

He starts the car. He's driving and no-one is speaking. Only the radio is playing. Fetty Wap- My way.

I also noticed that he loves Hip-Hop music. In his car, he's always playing hip-hop and I did say that from time-time he dresses like a hip-hop artist.

Him: OK, what did I do now?

Me: Nothing.

Him: I know by now that you look out the window when you mad and you're quieter than usual. What's wrong?

Me: (silent)

Him: You won't talk?

Me: (silent)

Him: Fine then.

He makes a U-Turn, going away from my hometown. What the hell?

Me: What are you doing?

Him: (silent)

Me: Where are you taking me?

Him: (silent)

He turns up the volume and starts singing.

Him: Baby won't you come my way? Got something I want to say.

Cannot keep you out my brain, but first off I'mma start by saying this ayy. All headshots if you think could take my bitch, ayy. And I'm too

turnt when I shoot, swear I won't miss ayy...

I roll my eyes and the look he gives me. Well, I don't care.

We're in Sandton now. I guess we are going to the Mokoena residence. I can't believe this. He's totally crazy. He opens the gates and parks the car inside the garage. What the fuck is he doing? He still got to take me home so no need to park the car in the garage.

He gets off and locks the car. What the fuck? He locks me inside the car! Is he crazy? I call him. He answer after 3 missed calls. This man is testing my patience.

Him: Amahle.

Me: Are you crazy Tukelo? You locked me inside your car.

Him: Oh really? I didn't know yazi. All along I thought I was travelling alone since I was talking to myself.

Me: Is that what this is about?

Him: Amahle, you can't just ignore me, I am talking to you and you're just quiet now I have to beg you to talk? Ay Amahle. Call me when you're ready to talk to me.

Me: Unlock the car. Otherwise, I will break these windows. You know I will.

Him: Knock yourself, those windows are unbreakable. They're bullet-proof.

Me: Ok please unlock the car. I will talk.

I hear a beep sound and the lights flashes.

Me: Thanks.

He hangs up.

I get off the car and enter the house. He's sitting on the high chair by the kitchen counter and drinking beer. Really? At this time of the

night? I rather not say anything because as it is, he looks pissed.

Me: Can I have an apple?

He goes to the fridge and tosses the apple to me. We're just looking at each other, no-one is speaking.

Him: Are you going to talk or?

Me: Why didn't you tell me that you're my boss?

Him: (confused) your boss?

Me: Yes. You're the owner at where I work, right?

Him: Oh that. Modimo! That's why you were mad at me Amahle?

Me: Ohh, so you didn't think I had the right to know that you're my boss? You didn't trust me enough to tell me?

I let Palesa get in my head I know. Now, I am sounding ridiculous.

Him: Hhelang bathong. It wasn't like that at all. Why does it matter that I am your boss Amahle? Would have you agreed to be with me if you knew I was your boss? Amahle, I wanted you to love me for me not for what I have or what I do for a living.

Me: But still, you were supposed to tell me.

Him: You're overly dramatic yazi.

Me: OK, whatever. Can you take me home now?

Him: No. I am going to sleep now.

He says going upstairs. Is he crazy? Why did God have to make me be with this man? I know He is punishing me for not praying as often but I think it's too much.

I run up the stairs and enter his room. He's lying on his bed and I know he ain't asleep. I switch on the lights.

Me: Tukelo, take me home now.

Him: First of all, I am sleepy and secondly, I don't drink and drive. You saw me drinking just now.

He's not even looking at me, he's facing the other way. He only had a sip of that beer. I cannot believe him. I don't even know what to say. This man is making me weak, I can't even go all crazy and savage on him. I don't know why but it just ain't happening.

Me: Come on, my mom will be worried.

Him: Does she know you're doing night shift?

Me: Yes.

Him: Does she know when you knock-off?

Me: No.

Him: Get in bed. I will take you home first thing in the morning. I will drop you off when I am headed to work.

Me: No. I am not getting in bed with you.

Him: Suit yourself.

He turns on the air-con. It's not even hot. This guy is really absurd.

Something is wrong with him.

The room ice cold now. He's the one who turn on the A/C but he has covered his entire body with blankets. I am feeling cold. I don't know what to do.

Him: Come here, before you freeze to death.

Me: Give me your shirt.

He throws it to me. I switch off the lights and took my clothes off.

Him: I have seen your body, you know.

Me: Shut up.

I change into his shirt and got in bed. I am ice cold.

Him: Yoh! You're so cold.

He switches the air-con off. He cuddles me from behind.

Me: Well played.

He chuckles and kisses the back of my neck. I turn to look at him, we kiss, passionately. I leave this world again, I am on my own universe.

What is this man doing to me? I want him now. But lord knows I can't.

I want to give him all of me but I just can't. He realizes that this kiss is too intimate, he lets go. He stands up and goes to the en-suite

bathroom. He comes back.

Me: Why do you always go there after we kiss? What do you do? I

am just asking out of curiosity.

Him: Catch rabbits. What do you think? (Sarcastic)

I laugh. I laugh so hard and I was so close to tears.

Him: (smiles) I love it when I make you laugh. To think you were mad at me just a few minutes ago.

He cuddles me again.

Me: Ay hawu, I still am.

I force myself to look angry.

Him: In my defense babe, I did say I own shares in big companies.

Me: But you didn't say where.

Him: It ain't my fault you didn't ask.

Me: Mxm.

He laughs and starts kissing me again.

Me: Do you want to go and catch rabbits again?

Him: (laughs) Goodnight babe.

He kisses my forehead and switches off the side lamp.

xxxxxxx

Him: Wake up, Amahle. Wake up.

He shakes me.

Me: Mmhh?

I say without opening my eyes.

Him: Get your lazy ass up

He grabs the duvet away from me.

Me: What the hell?

I am wide awake now.

Geez! I forgot, I ain't in my house. I stretch myself. Wait, it's still dark outside. I check the time, it fucking 4am. He's all dressed and ready to go.

Me: It is 4am Tukelo. Why do you hate me so much?

Him: First of all, you know that I love you.

That's actually the first time I hear him say that. He usually says he likes me.

Him: Second, I don't want you to be in trouble with your mother. So that's why I woke you up early so you gon' be home by 6.

Couldn't he wake me at least 5am? This is complete torture. I wonder what time he got up.

Me: Why are you up so early?

Him: I couldn't sleep. So I decided to go for a jog and get ready for work.

Me: Jog? So early in the morning. They could have killed you.

I yawn.

Him: No one can kill me. And besides, I am always armed. Now get up and go take a shower, I bought you a towel and girly staff, they're in the bathroom.

He leaves the room.

I was stuck at the part where he said he's 'always armed'. What does he mean by that? If he means what I think he means then who goes jogging carrying a gun?

I get home and Ziningi is getting ready for school and my mom is still sleeping.

I go straight to bed, Tukelo disturb my sleep so I have to get some rest. Maybe sleep for an hour or two. I am working night shift again today.

Insert Nine 😊

Andile

I have been staying with Tukelo for the past week and I have to say, the man is not bad at all. Though he leaves me here alone quite alot. I will have the house to myself, it will be just me, the guard, the housekeeper and how can I forget the hot nurse. I will forever be grateful to him for hiring a hot nurse for me. I mean the woman is gorgeous, she cares about what I eat and what I do. Her name is Nonhle Khumalo, she is 23. Yes she is even older than my sister but that didn't make me turn a blind eye on how hot she is. She is fair in complexion, has a great body, she is not big but she's not slender either, she's just normal size. She has a flat stomach and curvy hips and a huge ass. I love her dimples and her sweet pink lips. I haven't tasted her lips yet but I can just tell that they're sweet. She has an amazing personality, she laughs at my jokes and she is just perfect, way too perfect if you ask me. Of course, I've made a move on her, since the day I got here but she always turned me down. She played the 'I have a boyfriend' card and the 'You're too young for me' card. She always thought I was joking but she never realized that I was indeed serious and I was feeling something for her.

My sister nags me everyday with calls and my mom also. My mom wants me to come back and lucky for her today is my last day in Tukelo's house and I am no way close to having Nonhle's tens. Today I refuse to go to bed without having her number. I will just have to find a way to get them. It's Friday and I'm sitting by the pool, as usual I'm alone with the guard and housekeeper. Even Nonhle is out today. I'm just here sitting on this beach chair, thinking, thinking of ways to make Nonhle see that I'm not the boy he sees, I can be a man and I am serious about her. To her I'm just a 16 year old boy who has a huge crush on her but to me, I see my wife.

Tukelo: oh there you are. I have been looking for you.

He sits next to me. I look at him.

Me: You have?

Him: Yes and I've been calling for your name and MaHlela told me I'd find you here.

MaHlela is the housekeeper.

Me: Oh sorry. I was just thinking, I didn't hear you calling my name.

Him: It's okay. So are you excited about going back home?

Me: Going back home? Yes. Going back to school? No not so much.

Him: You're worried because the learners might give you a hard time about what happened in that club?

Yes that. But mostly, my girlfriend. I am not ready to hear her long lectures because she warned me not to go to that party but I did go anyway because I wanted to be with the girl I liked but I don't think I like her now because She's the one who introduced the drugs to me but I didn't tell Tukelo or my sister that.

I look at Tukelo and nod.

Him: Don't worry yourself too much about that. Just focus on your studies. Forget about drugs and alcohol, avoid the bad crowd. Your sister tells me you're smart, don't let that go to waste.

Me: Trust me when I say, you will never see me doing drugs ever again. For a moment there, I thought I was going to die.

Him: I'm glad to hear you say that.

Me: And you inspire me to do better. You're so young but already have accomplished so much.

Him: (chuckles) Yeah neh. It wasn't easy I can tell you that. I worked so hard to be where I am today.

Me: How did you do it?

Him: Well, I can't tell you that but all I can say is that you just stick your head into your books, you'll be fine.

Me: I will do my best. And thank you so much for helping me. I don't know how to thank you.

Him: Just thank me by doing better and keeping your sister happy.

Me: I will do that.

This guy really does inspire me. Its the way he dresses, the way he walks. You can tell that he is loaded and he is so young but I have so much respect for him. He has this amazing aura around him. He would be great for my sister, I really do like him.

Him: I'm leaving now. Just came here to check on you.

Me: Hawu! You're leaving and going where?

Him: My house in Sandton.

Me: You have a house in Sandton?

Him: Yes. Where do you think I sleep every night?

Me: I always thought you came back here in Melrose every night and leave early again for work.

Him: no but I do come here and leave again. I'm sorry that I've been such a terrible host.

Me: Are you kidding? You've been the best. I got to live in this amazing double storey house, been taken care of and plus I have this hot nurse taking care of me. I mean bra Tuks that woman is just the best.

He laughs.

Him: You do know that woman is way older than you like way older?

Me: Yes I do but that doesn't mean she is not hot.

Him: (laughs) Yeah I guess you're right.

Me: So you'll give me her number?

He looks at me with disbelief.

Him: Are you serious?

Me: Yes. I mean I could ask her but we both know she'll think I'm just a boy.

Him: Aren't you a boy?

Me: I mean yeah but I can be a man for her.

He laughs at me again and shakes his head.

Him: You cant be serious.

Me: Well I am. So you'll give me her number?

Him: Wow. Well okay. I will give it to you.

I couldn't believe my ears. My heart literally jumped for joy.

Me: Really?

Him: Yes.

Me: Thank you so much.

I could tell that I was smiling like a love sick puppy right now. He called out her number and I saved it in my phone and he said he had to go he will see me tomorrow when he takes me home.

I leave the pool, went back inside to take a shower in the en-suite bathroom. Its been a very hot day and I've been sitting in the sun the whole day. I come out the shower naked. I turn as soon as I hear a woman screaming.

Her: God!! Will you put on some clothes.

She blocks her face. I smile and looked at her. Man, this woman is gorgeous.

Me: What? Never seen a man naked before?

Her: Gosh Andile!

She turns for the door, I act fast and I went to the door and locked it before she got there. She unblocks her pretty face but quickly turns the other way as soon as she realize that I'm still naked.

Her: Are you crazy? Open the door!

Me: Nope. Not until you allow me to take out on a date.

Her: If you're not going to open the door then please put some clothes on.

I take a towel and wrapped it around my waist.

Me: You can turn to look at me now.

Her: Put on some clothes first.

Me: Hawu! Just look at me. I am no longer naked.

She slowly turns. She relaxes once she sees that I wrapped a towel around my waist.

Her: Now open the door.

Me: No

Her: What?

Me: You heard me, no.

I stepped closer to her. The closer I got, she backed away. She moved until she reached the wall. Now she had nowhere to go. I love this, I have her cornered. Just as I wanted. I can smell her expensive cologne. Now we're just looking at each other. Her breaths are hot and she's breathing heavily. Her eyes are so peaceful and so brown. She also has bubbled eyes. She's not even blinking, she's just looking at me. She may be older than me but I am taller than her. So I'm just looking down on her. I take a chance and moved my lips closer to hers. As soon as I was just inches away from kissing her. There was a knock on the door.

Shit!!

She quickly moved away from me.

Guard: Is everything okay in there, Andile? I heard screams.

Me: yeah yeah. Everything is okay.

Guard: Open the door. Why's the door locked?

Me: I was just taking a shower.

Guard: Open the door now.

Geez. What's his problem?

Nonhle: Just open the door Andile.

Me: And if he sees you here?

Nonhle: It really doesn't matter, I'm your nurse after all.

Me: Well okay.

I opened the door. Nonhle rushed out. The guard looked at her quizzically.

Him: Oh.

This buff, scary comes in and starts searching the whole room.

Me: I told you everything is okay. I was just taking a shower.

Him: I see. You can carry on with what you were doing.

How can I? You chased the girl away.

Me: Sure. Thank you for checking on me.

But I sure hate you for ruining my only chance of kissing the girl of my dreams.

Him: okay. Is there anything that you need? Or anything I can do for you?

Can you maybe at least bring back the girl you chased out?

Me: No. Nothing. Thanks.

Him: Okay. See you later than.

Me: Okay.

He leaves. I sigh loudly and threw myself on the bed. I couldn't believe that guard ruined my only perfect chance. I am so irritated right now..

I got to the dinner table, MaHlela and Nonhle were laughing, having a flowing conversation through a meal. I joined them. We all had a flowing conversation, but I could see that Nonhle was no longer comfortable around me anymore. She kept on avoiding eye contact with me. We were all done with our meal. MaHlela was now packing the dishes.

Nonhle: Don't worry mah. I will do the dishes tonight.

MaHlela: Really?

Me: Yes. And I will help her. You go and rest.

Nonhle looked at me in disbelief.

MaHlela: Oh thank you so much you kids. I really need to rest today. It was a hot day.

Me: Yes. So you can go to bed.

MaHlela: Ngiyabonga mfana wami

MaHlela left the dinning table and went to her room. Which was outside. Nonhle took the dishes to the kitchen. I followed her.

Her: You really don't have to help me, I can manage.

Me: I know that I don't have to but I want to.

I smiled at her, she just nodded.

She washed the dishes and I rinsed and packed them. I tried breaking the ice by talking to her about random things. She was cold in the beginning but she finally warmed up to me. She is laughing again and teasing me again. She was back to her nonstop talking self. She also loved laughing alot. I was just listening to her, until I couldn't listen to her anymore. I just wanted to kiss her. When she was least expecting it, I went closer to her and kissed her. I was expecting her to push me away but she didn't. I expected her to slap me but she didn't. She was actually kissing me back. Just as I suspected, her lips were indeed sweet, they were soft too. I lift her up and put her on the kitchen counter. She wrapped her legs around my waist. My hands were all over her. I realized that I wanted more than to just kiss her. As my body wanted more of her. This is also risky, I wouldn't want Tukelo walking in on us so I backed away. She looked at me, I could also see that she wanted me, just as much as I wanted her.

Me: Come to my room. I will wait for you.

I kissed her cheek and walked away. I wasn't even sure that she was going to follow me but I could only hope. I got to my room, changed into my boxers, got in bed and waited for her.

Waited....

Waited....

Waited....

Waited....

As soon as I realized she wasn't coming, I switch off the lights and tried falling asleep which was really hard for me because I had a boner. As when I was seconds away from falling asleep. I felt cold arms hugging me from behind. I turned to look at her. I didn't waste anytime. I kissed her. I was now on top of her, kissing her softly and passionately.

Me: Did you lock the door?

She nods.

I carry on kissing her. I take off her clothes, she took off my boxer. As i was ready to feel her inside of me, I had to ask.

Me: Are you sure you want this?

Her: More than anything.

That's all I needed to hear. I was about to prove to her that I'm not the boy she thinks I am. I too can be a man. Man enough for her....

Insert Ten 😊

I couldn't believe that I had this woman in my arms. What I'm feeling right now is indescribable. I don't remember the last time I was this happy. I look at her, she's beautiful even in her sleep. She was sleeping on top of my chest. I kiss her lips slightly, she moves a bit. I kiss her again, this time she smiles and open her eyes.

Me: Good morning.

Her: Morning.

Me: How was your sleep?

Her: With you here, I barely slept at all.

I chuckle.

Me: So, you still think I'm a boy?

Her: Yes. A boy that is really great when it comes to sex.

Me: (laugh) wow. So I'm great?

Her: I can't remember the last time I had a session like the one we had.

Me: You see, I can handle you. If I am good enough to satisfy you sexually, then I'm pretty sure I will make a good boyfriend.

Her: Andile, I have a boyfriend.

Me: Yes I know that.

Her: And you're only 16!

Me: Do I look 16?

Her: No but you do look younger than me. Look Andile, (she sits up), what happened last night shouldn't happen again. I let you in because at that time I needed comfort.

Me: So you used me?

Her: Don't say it like that.

Me: So how must I say it?

Her: (sighs) you have to understand that we can never work. I'm 6years older than you for crying out loud.

I stand up.

Me: I hear you, I will ask you one question and I want you to be honest.

She nods.

Me: You feel nothing for me? Because your mouth is saying one thing but your body and eyes is saying something totally different.

Her: It doesn't matter what I feel okay, but I have to be real with you. Last night was great and I don't regret anything but all I'm saying is, it can never happen again and it won't happen again.

Me: You didn't answer my question.

Her: Andile, you're a great guy. You're funny, considerate, good looking, well built and caring. Any girl would kill to have a boyfriend like you, but I'm a woman. You don't need a woman in your life.

Me: You don't know what I need and don't need Nonhle, you don't. So you can't just come here and tell me that I don't need a woman but I need a girl, that's crap and you know it. Stop beating around the bush and tell me how you feel about me!

I am raging right now. How can she just come here and talk the bull she's saying. What pisses me off more is that she used me.

Me: You can't talk now Nonhle! Huh?

Her: Can you calm down?

Me: Yeyi! You can't tell me that! You used my dick as your stress reliever? My dick?

Her: Can you stop shouting, I'm not deaf.

Me: Hhe, this woman. I asked you a simple question, you can't even answer it. In case you didn't hear me, I will repeat it for you. Do you feel nothing for me?

Her: I can't answer that.

This woman must not test me, she must not!

Me: Why Nonhle?! Why?!

Her: Because I don't know, okay!! I don't know how I feel about you. All I know is we shouldn't be doing this.

Me: Nxa! Fine Nonhle. Get out.

Her: What?

Me: You're not deaf, you heard me.

I left her on the bed and went into the bathroom. I slammed the door. I couldn't believe her. The way she was leading me on last night, I was convinced that in the morning she wouldn't be talking such crap. I took a long hot shower. I was definitely not looking forward to going back to my life.

I leave the bathroom and she's gone. I know I chased her out but I didn't think she would actually listen to me. I was hoping to find her there. I got dressed and started tidying up my room. I find her bra on the floor. I take it and packed it along with my staff. How can she leave and not notice that she isn't wearing a bra? My phone rang.

Caller ID: Nobuhle.

Me: Babe?

Her: Don't babe me! I called you last night and you didn't pick up, why?

Me: I was busy Buhle.

Her: Oh! And when you saw my missed calls you didn't think about getting back to me?

Me: I just woke up. I was going to get back to you.

Her: And what were you busy doing that stopped you from taking my calls? Were you with a woman Andy?

Me: I don't have time for your insecurities. If you don't have anything to say to me, its best you drop the call or I will do it for you.

Her: Heee! Since when you talk to me like this? Ever since you went to that house in Melrose, you've changed! You don't call or text.

Me: I've only been away for a week. I had to focus on myself but now you have nothing to worry about because I'm coming back today.

Her: Really babe?

Me: Yes.

Her: Great. I can't wait to see you.

Me: me too.

Her: I've missed you alot.

Well, I don't think I do miss her.

Me: Yeah me too.

I hear Tukelo calling my name.

Me: Er, listen babe, I have to run. Talk later.

Her: Okay bye. I love you.

Me: Yeah, of course you do.

I hang up.

Tukelo: Ready to go?

Me: Yes. I've packed all of my staff.

Him: Okay let's go.

Me: okay.

He helped me with my stuff. We got downstairs and Nonhle was busy making food. Tukelo left with my bags.

Her: You're leaving already?

Me: Yeah.

Her: Oh, I made you breakfast.

Me: I can't have it now. I have to leave.

Her: Can't you at least take it with you, I wouldn't want you leaving on an empty stomach.

Me: Why do you care?

Her: Hawu, I do care Andile. You're my patient.

Me: oh, so you have sex with all of your patients? Some nurse you are.

Her: Can we not do this here.

Me: Screw you Nonhle.

Tukelo comes back.

Him: Okay. Everything is packed. We can go now. Your sister is waiting for us in Sandton. Is everything okay?

I guess he notices the tension that was in the room.

Me: Yeah everything is fine. We can go now.

Him: Okay. MaKhumalo, don't leave, wait for me to get back.

Her: Okay I won't.

Him: Let's go Andile. We dont want to keep your sister waiting. You know how she is.

Me: (chuckles) yeah.

.....

Tukelo: so did you manage to convince her that you're not a boy?

We were on our way to Sandton now.

Me: Nah, I just realized that I was being crazy. She was just a crush and it is best that she remains that, a crush.

Him: (laughs) I'm glad you over her. Your sister was going to freak.

Me: But does it really matter Bra Tuks? That she's older than me? I mean why is it weird to like a woman that is older but we can love woman that are younger?

Him: That's how things should be. I mean women age quicker than us, there are women out there who are the same age as me but look like they're 5years older. So imagine dating someone who's older, by the time you reach 50, it will be like you married your mom.

Me: Yeah I guess you right. But look at me, I don't look 16. I'm tall, buff plus I'm mature. I can date an older woman.

Him: What's wrong with girls your age?

Me: Some of them don't know what they want. They're crazy, shout everytime and they want to be in control of everything and anything. I just want a woman who's mature, have ambitions, goals. Because I know what I want.

Him: You know what I think?

Me: What?

Him: I think you should focus on your studies. Focus in making your family proud before even thinking about getting a woman. Want to get where I am, right?

Me: Yeah sure.

Him: Then stay in school kid.

Insert Eleven 😊

I got home, I was frustrated and exhausted. After we picked Amahle up in Sandton, we went to Gold Reef city for lunch. I got to know Tukelo more. That man is truly an inspiration. The house he has in Sandton is far better than the one he has in Melrose. How can he afford his life? He is only 25. But I get it, he has successful businesses. Just that what he has can take a life time to achieve but it seems like it only took him a few years, maybe a year even. He said if I want to be like him, I should stick by him so he can show me how things are done. I promised to visit him more often. I wonder how will Anele feel once he finds out that Amahle is dating now. My mom was more than happy to me. The smile on her face said it all. She asked me about the important test and I lied to her and said I aced it. She was so

happy, I hated myself for lying to her. She calls me for dinner. I got to the dining area and everyone is there, even Anele and Zanele. We pray and sit down to eat as a family.

Anele: So how was your test Andile?

Me: it was great bhuti.

Anele: I just don't get it though. Why did you have to go all the way to your friend's house to study? You never had any troubles, you're a straight A student.

Me: Well, there's a section I couldn't understand in Maths and most of my test covered that section so I asked for my friend's assistance.

Anele: You? Had a problem in Mathematics? You?

Amahle: Hawu Anele, he's no Einstein. He can't know everything.

Anele: I know that but Amahle, he's a straight A student, he never had trouble with Maths. Why now? What's distracting him?

Amahle: Aybo Anele, why you're assuming the worst?

Anele: Which section gave you a problem?

Me: Financial Maths.

Anele is a police detective, he can easily tell if I'm lying and right now I could see that he's not buying my story one bit.

Anele: Financial Maths?

Mah: Aybo weeAnele, this isn't not your interrogation room. Why you're attacking Andile with so many questions?

Anele: I just don't get it Mah.

Zanele: Babe, if he felt he needed help, its good that he asked his friend for help. No problem there.

Anele: Mmmh.

He carried on with his eating. I couldn't even eat as I couldn't get Nonhle out of my mind. I was just playing with my food.

Amahle: So when is the big day?

We looked at her in disbelief. We were all shocked that she was actually asking that question.

Amahle: What? Don't look at me like that.

Anele: I'm just shocked you're asking that. I think we all are.

Amahle: Well, I am asking it so am I getting an answer?

Zanele: Uhm, we thought we will start with the negotiations next month. He will write a letter to my parents then the rest will follow but the big day will probably be next year, as there are so many ceremonies to do before the actual wedding.

Amahle: Oh okay. I'm going to bed, I had a long day plus I'm working day shift tomorrow.

Mah: Yeah, you go rest. And did you tell your brother that you're thinking of going back to school next year?

Anele: Hawu really? She didn't tell me that.

Amahle: That's because nothing has been confirmed yet. I was going to tell him mom, when I get accepted and once I'm sure that I get financial assistance.

Anele: But I'm proud that you're trying. I thought you'd never go back.

Amahle: Well yeah I'm going back.

Mah: Andile, why don't you put your food away because I can clearly you have no intentions of eating it. You're just playing with it.

Me: Yeah, I think I will go to bed. I'm tired. Goodnight family.

Them: Goodnight.

Its close to 10pm but still I couldn't sleep. What is so special about this woman? Why can't I stop thinking about her? I care about her alot and she doesn't, I want more from her and she doesn't want that. The heart is the stupidest organ, my brain understands the situation but my heart still doesn't want to give up on her just like that. I log on WhatsApp and I see her number, she's online. I get tempted to text her.

> "You left your bra in my room. I hate that." <

I find myself writing those words to her. I seriously didn't know what else to say. I may care too much for this woman but I won't beg her to be with me. That is something I don't do. She reads it and types almost immediately.

> "Oh, I've been looking for it. I left in a hurry, didn't mean to leave it behind. Sorry." <
> "Cool. Come get it." <
> "You're still in Melrose?" <
> "No. I'm in Alex. You'll come to my house if you need it back" <
> " Haybo! That cannot happen and you know it. " <
> "Oh. Then if you don't come get it. I'm burning it" <
> "You can't be serious Andile" <
> "I'm dead serious. Come get it by the end of the week or else I'm burning it" <
> "Why did you even take it?" <
> "You wanted Tukelo to find a bra in the room that I was using? Don't you think that would have gave me problems? Look, I don't like repeating myself. Either you get it or I burn it. Simple" <

I log out. I don't know why but talking to her made things better. Even though we weren't being sweet and all but at least I was speaking to her and that was enough for me. I could even feel that I was starting to fall asleep. I didn't even get time to call Buhle, she's going to go all crazy on me tomorrow. Ay, I don't care anymore. I switch off my phone and tried to fall asleep.

xxxx

Amahle

It's been three months now. Me and Tukelo spend more time together. He picks me up at work, he drops me off. We do what couples do but we haven't made love. He has been understanding and not rushing me, which is what I admire about him. I even met his brother, Itumeleng, he's quite a character. I get a very different vibe when I get to work, the staff is treating me very differently now. I am labelled as the 'boss' wife'. They even thank me for having Mohammed fired. Apparently, Tukelo fired

Mohammed because I once complained that he's mean to us. In my defense, I complained before I knew that he was my boss so it's not my fault that the dude is now jobless. I spend my free time with him, on weekends we're together and on my day offs too.

I have never been to his office, all I know is that he is a CEO at T.B.M

Logistics. It is one of the biggest companies here in Jo'burg. He also own shares in big companies, he owns property and he import and

export merchandise so he's quite a very busy man. He always say the T.B.M company is for he's own legacy, he does it for the sake of

doing it not because he loves it.

I love this man with everything that I have. I never thought I would be able to love but he taught me how to love and how it feels like to be loved. I would do almost anything for him. He knows how to make me feel like the only girl in the world. He may drive crazy at times but I wouldn't trade him for anything in the world. The man doesn't even mind that I can't cook, yet he's the best when it comes to cooking. I have promised myself to teach myself because he's speaking about me meeting his parents and I am not looking forward to that. Oh, I go on dates now. Like a lot.

Anele and Zanele are getting married soon. Everything is done,

lobola paid, everything is done. We're only awaiting the wedding

day. Andile is doing good, he hasn't slept out or went to any party. I also believe that he's been playing far away from drugs. Though, I still think something is bothering him, each time I ask, he just says he's fine, just school stress.

Tukelo: Baby!

He shouts from the en-suite bathroom.

Me: Yes hone!

Him: I forgot the towel, can you please bring to me.

Me: Aybo Tukelo, just come out of the bathroom. What do you have

to hide? I am doing my hair.

I say brushing my hair.

Him: Just say you wanna see me naked, no need to be all rude and skeptical about it.

Me: (laugh) I have seen you naked a bunch of times, what will be different now?

He comes out. I look at him, damn! This guy has the sexiest body, smooth skin, not even one pimple or a black spot. He's muscles are just the right size, his abs Jesu! They are to die for. I did say he's a Michael Ealy, my Michael Ealy. When I told him about it he laughed and said, what planet is he from. He has never heard of him. But I swear, they have the same type of body, same skin tone. They both have sexy eyes, just that Tukelo has small china eyes. They both have pink lips.

Him: Baby, close your mouth. I know I am sexy but no need to drool over me like that.

Me: Mxm!

I look at the mirror and comb my hair. He laughs and lotions his body. I can still see him on the mirror.

Me: So, babe, what are your plans for today?

Him: Eish babe, I have back-to-back meetings and I am closing this deal with the Dlundu's that I told you about.

Me: Oh the important deal?

Him: Yes babe. It is going to be a long day for me.

Me: Don't worry my love, I know you got this.

I say kissing the back of his neck. He gets an erection same time.

Me: Aah babe, really?

Him: Don't touch me like that my love, you know what your touch do to me.

I laugh and backed away.

Me: So when will you be free?

I have a day off today so I want to surprise him at work.

Him: Mm, around 3. Why?

Me: Just curious.

Him: Okay.

He has left for work and I am left all alone in this house. The helpers come on Tuesday, Thursdays and Saturdays only but the salary they get, it's twice the salary I get. But these past few months I don't have money issues. Tukelo deposits a lot of money into my account every month. I even dress better now. I haven't changed my dress-code, I

just look much more expensive if I may put it like that.

So next week is Tukelo's birthday and mine is the following week after that. He was so excited when he found out we are born on the same month, he just said we're a match made in heaven. Well, it is kinda cute. Anyway, I have no idea what I should get a man who already has everything. It is going to be a tough one. Itumeleng told me that Tukelo never celebrates his birthdays, I tried asking why but I never got a straight answer. Regardless of what I know, I still want to do something special for him. Even if it means it will be just the two of us.

My phone beeps.

Text message: "I am coming for you!! Your days are numbered."

WTF?

Someone is trying to scare me? They can do better than that. I

ignore the message and went to take a shower. I can't wait to see

Tukelo's face when I show up in his office.

It's 4:15. I hope he's not busy. I have called a cab. He has offered to

hire a driver to take me wherever I want to go but I put my foot

down and said no to that shit. What will my mom say? This guy I only met months ago, none of our parents know about our relationship

yet he wants to act like my husband and dictate my life? He should

think twice.

I arrive at his work place and I go straight to the reception. It feels like I am entering a five-star hotel.

How can a man this young achieve what take years to build? We have a lot to talk about. We have to have a serious conversation, our silly talks have to wait. He knows so much about me yet I still feel like he's not being totally honest with me.

Me: Hi, I am Amahle Zungu and I am here to see Mr. Mokoena.

This lady looks at me. Oh yeah, she's a phony, weave, long nails and

too much make-up but it suits her. She looks, pretty. But aren't they

all? All receptionists have to look pretty, they are the face of the

company after all.

Her: Oh, do you have an appointment?

Oh shit! There's that kombe.

Me: No I don't.

Her: Lady, you can't just come here and request to see Mr. Mokoena with no appointment. Didn't they teach you that?

She says with an attitude. Ok, aren't they supposed to be nice too?

Me: Excuse me?

Her: You got ears missy, use 'em. Make an appointment just like everybody else. Now sit and wait for me to tell when you can see him.

1...2...3...4 calm down Amahle, she's not worth it.

I am trying really hard to compose my anger but she is really pushing my buttons. I am not good with words, I so wanna punch her face right now. But I will not do it, I can't embarrass Tukelo like that.

Me: Just call him and tell him that I am here.

I am trying my best to be nice to her even though she's all bitchy to me.

Her: Who are you to give me orders? Now please for the last time, sit down, I have a lot of work to do.

Ok, does she know that I can get her fired? I tried reasoning with her but she is being bitchy. First of all, she doesn't know who I am. I could be one of the important clients of this company but she decided to be all nasty to me.

I do as she says and whatsapp Tukelo.

> "Baby are you busy? I am downstairs. At your office."<

Seems like he's not busy at all because he types immediately.

>"No babe. You're here? Come up, the receptionist will direct you."<

I know he ain't talking about this bitch right here. Should I save her the trouble and show her the texts? Or should I tell Tukelo everything? Nahh... I am not nice, I won't start now.

>"That's the thing my love, she doesn't want to let me in because I didn't make an appointment. She's being all rude and bitchy."<

He doesn't reply and the receptionist's phone rings. She answers. She's being polite and nice now. Huh? She can do that too? Who would have thought? Looks like whoever is talking to her is shouting at her. She keep on saying 'yes sir'. I can even see fear in her eyes. She is finally done. She comes to me.

Her: Oh I am very sorry Mam'. Why didn't you tell me who you were?

She has this big smile on her face. We all know she's faking right?

Me: Did you bother to ask?

I stand up and giving her the same attitude she gave me.

Her: I am sorry. Follow me.

I follow her.

We get in the elevator and she presses 11. And that is the last floor.

Her: Again I am sorry, just that I am having troubles, I guess I took it out on you and I know that was a bit inappropriate of me. I wasn't

thinking at all. I don't know what got to me.

Oh she's making conversation with me now? Is she really? I look at her, she can't even look me in the eye.

Me: I see.

That's all I can say.

Finally we arrive at the 11th floor. Seems like there's only one office in the whole floor. How's that even possible? The whole floor is quite. I see a glass door written in big bold letters, 'Mr. T. Mokoena'. The office looks spaced out. Everything is far away from everything. Everything inside is white. I can tell it is very beautiful and even the view behind him is amazing. I can see him sitting by his desk concentrating on some paperwork. I thought he said he wasn't busy.

This receptionist is leading me to the office, she opens the door for me. Tukelo looks up and he has the biggest smile on his face.

He stands up and hugs me tightly. The woman is still standing by the door. I hug him back. I missed him.

He kisses me slightly on my lips.

Him: I missed you.

Me: Me too.

He let go.

Him: You can go Phume.

Her: Thank you sir. Again, I am very sorry Mam'.

Me: It's fine.

Him: No, it's not fine. We're still going to talk about this Phume. Don't leave without seeing me.

Her: Yes sir.

She leaves.

Me: Babe, she said she's sorry.

Why am I defending her?

Him: No Amahle, she had no right to disrespect you without knowing who you were.

He walks back to sit on his big white chair. I follow him and sit on the chair opposite him.

Me: Yes I know my love but then she was doing her job, I didn't make an appointment. It was my fault.

Again. Why am I on her side?

Him: You didn't have to make an appointment. Even so, she had to tell you nicely and not be rude to you. Not you!

Yeah she screwed up there. For the months I have been with the guy I have come to realize that this man would do anything for me.

Me: But Tukelo...

Him: Amahle, we are not arguing about this.

I know for a fact when he says that, he wants the topic to be closed and his word stands.

Him: So, what do I owe this lovely surprise?

He smiles.

Me: I made my bae lunch.

I put the lunchbox on the table, all excited and smiling.

Him: You made your bae lunch or you bought your bae lunch?

He says with a smirk on his face.

Me: Argh! Yazi wena Tukelo. You had to spoil my mood.”

I say folding my arms and looking away.

He laughs.

Him: I was joking.

Me: It wasn't funny.

I try my best to look angry.

Him: Oh yeah, punish me.

He gives me a naughty smile.

I know what he means by that.

Every time when he makes me angry, I give him a hand job, just so

he can get horny and he will ask me why the hell I am doing this him, I would say I am punishing him for making me upset.

I stand up.

Me: Oh yeah?

He smiles and he nods.

I cat walk to him and sit on his lap. I start kissing him passionately. He tries to hold me but I slap his hand. I don't want to be horny too

hhehaha!

I kiss him down his neck, I unbutton his shirt, and damn he smells

good. I kiss his chest. He moans softly. Seriously dude? I go lower and kiss his abs. I am on my knees now. I don't know what the heck I am doing. I find myself unbuckling his belt and unzipping his pants. The magic stick is up and ready to do the job. Sorry, not now papa. I

take the magic stick and rub my hand, up and down, gently. I look at him, he has his eyes closed and moaning softly.

Me: You like it?

I ask, more like a whisper though. He doesn't respond. I

find myself giving him a blow job. He's moans are getting tense and louder. I have never thought I would do something like this, ever in my life.

Him: Fuck Tigress! What are you doing to me?

That means I am good at this? Yeah of course I am. I have accepted Tigress as my second name. I don't even ask anymore.

This thing start shooting, I stop immediately. He groans. I stand up and just look at him suffering, I am pretty satisfied with myself.

He gets up, everything that was on that table lands on the floor, even the food. Is he crazy?

He picks me up, place me on the table. He starts kissing me

passionately. My body starts betraying me, I have the urge of wanting him, as in now. He also goes down on me. Luckily I am wearing a skirt. Fuck! Why am I saying 'luckily'? There's nothing lucky about this. I start moaning, I have my legs wide open and his head

in-between my legs. This is something I have never felt before. I want him. Now!

He comes back and kisses me lips. My underwear is on the floor, his pants is half way down his legs, this can't be good, and my legs are wide open. He starts whispering something I don't understand. A language I don't understand and it's turning me on. Make me want him now. I pull him closer. He bites me ear gently and carry on

whispering. I am trying as hard as I can to make out what he's saying but I can't seem to understand... wait a minute... this is Italian! He's

speaking Italian! I feel his penis way to close to my cookie but I don't want him to stop. He kisses me and then back away.

Him: Shit! I am sorry.

He leaves me on the table with my legs wide open.

Imagine!

Why did he apologize though?

He enters some sort of room, I didn't even notice that his office had another room. It seems like it's a toilet because I hear a flush.

I get up and cleaned myself up. I am still confused as to why he

apologized. I look around, damn the floor is a mess. I start cleaning

up. It's a good thing the food didn't mess up the papers. There could be something important here. Dang! This nigga even threw the telephone on the floor. I hope it ain't broken.

Him: Leave that, I will get people to clean that up.

I look at him.

Me: No babe it's okay. I got this.

Him: I said leave it.

Him: Gee, okay.

I get up and he sits on his big chair and makes a call.

He asks Phume to come to his office in 10 min, actually he more like commanded her to come. He just said, 'be in my office in the next

10 minutes.' And he hangs up. I bet she didn't even get the chance to respond.

Me: Why did you apologize?

I didn't plan to ask him like that but curiosity is killing me.

Him: Didn't you see what almost happened Tigress?

I just don't understand why he apologized. He didn't do anything wrong. I give him a questioning look.

Him: Amahle, we almost had sex. You almost lost your virginity because of my carelessness.

Me: No babe, don't feel guilty. I am bound to lose it anyway. I wouldn't have blamed you if it happened. I didn't stop you.

I wrap my arms around his waist.

Him: No baby, you didn't come here to have sex with me. Even if you wanted to, it's not supposed to happen like this, not here. I want your first time to be special.

He strokes my chin. I kiss him. I hope it doesn't take things too far, again. Someone behind us clears her throat. We let go and look. It's Phume, she look at us and smiles. I quickly let go of Tukelo. She looks at the mess we made and look us again and smiles. I am embarrassed she probably thinks we had sex. Now, I am the one who can't maintain

eye contact with her. There's awkward silence.

Him: Phume, please sort out this mess. Consider this as your first warning.

I can tell that he always keep his relationship with his staff strictly professional. Not once have I seen him smile at Phume and Phume is shit scared at him. I can tell, it's written all over her face.

Her: Yes, sir.

She starts picking up some papers.

Him: Baby let's go.

He takes my hand. We leave the office and head to the elevator.

Me: Tukelo I am so embarrassed.

I say as we enter the elevator. He looks at me confused.

Me: Your receptionist probably thinks we had sex in there.

Him: So?

Me: So, what does that make me? She will bad mouth me.

Him: Hhelang Amahle, I don't care what she thinks, I really don't and you shouldn't care too. You're my woman what I do with you and where, is really none of anyone's business.

I don't respond, I just looked at him and he shrugs. We get to the ground floor.

Him: I forgot to ask, how did you get here?

Me: Oh, I called a cab.

Him: Hhelang! What's wrong with you? You don't listen to me when I talk to you.

Me: Tukelo, I will not be chauffeured. That will look wrong. What will my mom say?

Him: Oh yes. Don't you have a driver's license?

He's trying to mock me right? If I had one, he would know by now.

Me: No I don't. I only have a motorcycle license.

Him: You need to get a driver's license because no wife of mine will get on that thing.

He kisses my cheeks and leave me standing there. I am still astonished by the 'wife' part.

Him: Oh and thanks for the lunch, it was really yummy.

He shouts at me and give me a mischievous look. But he didn't eat... oh, I know what he's talking about. This guy.

Insert Twelve 😊

Tukelo's birthday is in 2 days' time and I still haven't decided on what I should get for him. During lunch, I will have to ask the girls for

advice. He's not even excited about his birthday, he's not even

talking about it. I am not even sure if it's appropriate to give him a

gift because his brother made it clear that he doesn't want to

celebrate his birthday, but what if he feels bad that I didn't get him anything. I will buy him something if he doesn't like it well too bad for him, but I did my part. I still don't know much about this guy, all I

know for sure is that he has expensive taste. So that's what I will do,

buy him an expensive gift and I know for sure that on my birthday, he'll go all out. I already feel he's hiding something from me. I hope he didn't buy me an island Jesu! Believe me, he's capable of doing that. I wouldn't be surprised.

Me: You guys I am dead serious. I am clueless. I have no idea what to get him.

I say to Nosi and Zitha as we are eating in the canteen.

Zitha: Buy him a watch.

Me: No, he has ton of those and besides he wear Rolex watches. I don't have that kind of money.

Nosi: What does he like?

Me: Umm... expensive things.

Nosi: And?

Me: Uhm, he also like Italian things. He wear Italian shoes sometime, he has an Italian car, he's house is full of Italian furniture, he even

once took me out to an Italian restaurant. Damn! The dude even speak Italian.

Nosi: Then buy him Italian clothing and take him out to the best Italian restaurant.

Nah boring. I want to make this special but Nosi just gave me a good idea.

Me: I will think about it. There's another thing.

I really have to get a second opinion. This thing is troubling me. I have to get someone else's point of view.

Zitha: Yes.

Me: He never says he loves me. Well, he said it once, and I think he didn't notice that he said it. I mean we do everything together, except sex of course. We kiss, talk, and go on dates, call and text each other like all the time. We even call each other 'babe' and all but he never said he loves me and I never say I love him. Is it bad?

Nosi: Whoa but I think he just doesn't know how to say it, maybe he rather show you that he love you. His actions says it all mos.

Zitha: Yeah I agree. Amy think about it, if he was in it for the cookie, he would have left you a long time ago. He would have found

someone who was willing to give him the cookie and your man is attractive dude, no offense but he is hot. He can have any girl he wants but he chose you. No man do what he does to a girl he doesn't love.

Me: But I want to hear him say it.

I say whining. Zitha and Nosi laugh.

Nosi: He will. When he has found the right way to say it.

xxxx

Me and the girls we decided to the mall after work to shop Tukelo's gift. I have decided to buy sexy lingerie stockings, some heels and a thong. Come on, the guy has been 'punished' long enough. I don't

know if I am doing the right thing here but somehow it feels like it.

These girls have been giving me tips all day along and some of them are crazy. They telling me things like, I should drink milk with

cinnamon. Like wtf? I ain't doing none of that shit. We enter at Just Undies buy white sexy lingerie, a white thong and white stockings. I have also noticed that he likes the color white. I want to go all out. I want to be the reason that will make him celebrate his birthday again.

We are in Edgars now, paying for pair of sexy heels. I don't even know if I will be able to walk in these shoes. They are way too high for my liking and they are quite similar to the ones Tukelo bought for me on our first date. That's the main reason why I chose them.

Him: Amahle, hi.

Someone says behind me. I turn around and see Itumeleng.

Me: Oh hey you.

This guy look like Tukelo and it's freaky. He's like the darker version of Tukelo, he's a dark chocolate and Tukelo is light.

Him: I see you girls did some shopping.

He points at the packet I am carrying and I am carrying the Just Undies packet. Yet again, I am embarrassed.

Me: Um...yeah.

I say shingly.

Him: Mm I see. Are you done? I can gladly give you guys a lift.

Me: No we're fine...

Nosi: Amahle no need to be rude. We just need to pay for these and we are done. You can wait for us outside.

Him: Ok sure.

Tumi smiles at Nosipho.

Ok did we miss something? Me and Zitha look at each other. Tumi leaves.

Me: And that?

She just smiles and look the other way. We definitely missed something here.

I get home and quickly rush into my room. I don't want my mom asking questions about the packets I am carrying. I don't think she would have noticed though, she is with her daughter, Zanele. Things are better at home, I must say. I am getting the use to the idea of having a 'skwiza'. My brother and I are close again. So nje almost of everything is okay.

I go to the kitchen and I find my mom and Zanele preparing dinner.

Me: Can I help anyhow?

They both look at me shocked.

Me: What? I just want to try this cooking thing.

Mom: You and cooking?

Me: Yes. I mean I will not live in this house forever and next year I

might be going to Varsity and I will be all alone.

Mom: Mm maybe next time my baby. We are almost done here.

I shrug.

I want to ask my mom something so I can pull off the surprise I planned for Tukelo. I really hope everything will go according to plan. I got tips from the experts. I really hope I can pull this off.

Me: Mommy.

Mom: What do you want Mahle?

Me: Hawu mah.

Mom: What? I know you call me "Mommy" when you want something so what is it?

Me: So Zitha is having a small gathering tomorrow, and it will be just a girls' night. Can I join? I promise I will be back Saturday.

She looks at me and smiles.

Mom: Ok. But I will call you every five minutes to check on you.

Oh mommy please don't.

I go to my room and Zanele follows me. Strange. She even closes the door.

Her: Talk Amahle.

What is she on about? I give her a questioning look.

Her: I know you were lying to Ma, now tell me where you going? Are

you going to him? To Tukelo?

What the heck? Who died and made her my mother? She may be older than me and I may have 'accepted' her but she has no right to interrogate me like this.

Me: No offense Zanele,

It is funny how people say no offense right before they offend you

Me: but what I do with my private life is really none of your business and why would you assume that I am going to Tukelo? You only met him once.

Her: I am not a fool Amahle. I saw you getting off his car yesterday.

Me: What the hell? Are you keeping an eye now?

Her: No. Amahle look, I know I am not your favorite person but I really care about you, I really do. Tukelo is not a good guy. He uses girls and he changes girls like you change your underwear. He will use you, hurt you and dump you.

Me: Zanele, you have nothing to worry about because there's nothing going on between me and him.

Her: Well if there was, I just want you to know that don't ever think he loves you because he doesn't care about you. He is also dangerous

Amahle, very dangerous. He is involved in shady things and he is not a good man, run while you still can...

Me: Shut up Zanele! How do you know all of this?

Her: He use to date one of my friends. I am telling you he's just...

Me: Thank you for caring Zanele but I can take care of myself. I don't need you to look out for me...

Her: He hits women Amahle. My friend almost died because of him.

I don't know what or how to respond to the bombshell she just dropped. I don't know whether or not to believe this. I have noticed

that he has anger issues. He quickly gets mad but I have never seen him being violent, with me that is. He has a really bad temper

though, this one time we were in a restaurant having breakfast, he left for the man's room. This guy decided to come sit with me because he thought I was 'alone'. When Tukelo came back he was so furious. He hit the guy so hard and nobody even dared to stop him, I was the one trying to break the fight, even when the manager came he threw the dude out and not Tukelo. That doesn't mean anything, right? I refuse to believe it.

Me: Thanks for caring Zanele really. I appreciate it but you have nothing about because like I said, nothing is going on between me and Tukelo.

Her: That's what family is for. I hope you are being totally honest with me as I was to you. I better go, Ma is waiting for me.

She leaves

What now? I knew it! Love is for the weak. I am strong, well that's what I believe, why did I fall in love. Yes, I love Tukelo. I love him a lot.

Today is thee day! Tomorrow is Tukelo's birthday and I am carrying out the mission today. I am so nervous. I don't know what to feel, I am so scared. For the first time ever I am scared. But I have promised myself that I will do this and I will do it. I have thought about what Zanele said to me, and it is haunting me. I don't know what to believe, I know that if I confront him, he will tell me otherwise. It will be really unfair of me to spoil the mood the day before his birthday.

I took a day off at work. Tukelo doesn't know that I am coming over.

I already called and checked if he left for work and he said yes. He gave me the spare keys, he said I should come over whenever. I

really hope he doesn't suspect anything because I really want to surprise him.

I get to his house and started cleaning up. Not really much to do here, the man is a clean freak. Even though he has staff that helps around, when they're not here the house is clean. Luckily, today it's their day off, I can prepare in peace.

I order food from his favorite restaurant, Franco's Pizzeria & Trattoria, he loves that Italian place. I order his favorite, Ai Frutti di More, it's a seafood pizza. I don't why he loves that thing, it makes me gag but anything for him. I want to make this special. I also order lasagna, and a few of Italian dishes. Now for dessert, Aceto dolce, now that is something I am looking forward to, it's fruit preserves made with vinegar, honey and grape. It sounds disgusting I know but trust me, it is very much delicious.

In the meantime, I start decorating the place. I spread roses all around the place. We are going to have an indoor picnic. I can't wait for tonight, I am starting to be excited. The food has not yet arrived and I am starting to get bored. I decide to take a shower. I pass this room that is always closed, I have never went in there.

What's in there? I shouldn't go in, maybe it's prohibited. Nah, he never said anything about not going in there.

I find myself turning the knob, seconds later I am in. What I see is beyond me! What the hell! This guy has a lot of explaining to do. He never said anything about his love for art. There are painting all over this room, beautiful paintings might I add. What is disturbing is that

these are portraits of half-naked women. Different women. Some have towel over their bodies, some don't have towels over them but have their privates covered. I look carefully and I see T. Mokoena signed on all of the portraits. So he painted these? Wow, it's like every day I find something new about this guy. I have a whole lot of questions running through my mind. I hear the buzzer of the intercom. It must be the food. I quickly run downstairs. I take the order and placed it in the oven. I don't want it to get cold.

I go take a shower and wore the sexy lingerie and heels. I go downstairs, turned on the slow music. Some Kenny G. I switch off the lights, the room is dark now. Only the light of the candles and the lanterns are on. It's close to 6pm. He will be home soon. I feel nervous again. What if he goes to one of clubs and celebrates with one of the boys? No, he doesn't celebrate his birthday. He's coming. He tried calling me but I have been ignoring his calls the whole day. I know for a fact that he's pissed.

It's 7pm, I hear a car driving in. Oh my god, he's here. My whole body start to shake. Calm down Amahle. You can do this. I take down 4 shots of vodka. Fuck the rules! The rule is, I never ever drink alcohol in his house but I'm sure that he will understand. I hear the kitchen door open. My heart is accelerating. He takes a few steps then he stops. He must have noticed that something is odd.

Him: Baby! Are you here?

I ignore him.

Him: Tigress.

I hear him start walking, slowly. He's in the living room. Oh My God!
What am I doing?

Him: Baby?

Me: I am here.

I place my leg on top of the glass coffee table. He looks at me and drops his bags, files and car keys on the floor. He looks at me from head to toe and bites his lower lip. He comes closer to me, I step back.

Me: No, no, no. Easy tiger.

I lead him to the living room.

Me: Sit.

He does so.

He hasn't said anything since he saw me. He's having the expression I want him to have. He's eyes want me. I play Beyoncé's Dance for

you. I start dancing for him. All those music videos that I have

watched all these years have finally paid off. I know I am nailing this, I can tell by the look on his eyes. I start stripping off my clothes, all I

am left with is the thong. The look he gives me, this guy is going to kill me.

I am done with my play. He tries to get up but I push him back to the chair. I handcuff his hands and feet. He has this confused look on his face.

Me: (whisper) Trust me.

Dang! I have never seen this guy this horny. I start kissing him, from the mouth to the chest, stomach...down... down... down. Until I find

what I want and suck it like I never did before. I play with the tip then suck it slowly. He moans. As I went on and on the moans turned into groans. He is fighting now. Trying he's best to get off the chair.

Nothing seems to work. I stop and look at him, the man looks like he's going to die. He's breathing heavily and he's sweaty.

I stand up, I am proud of myself. I hear something break. What the fuck?! He's free. The woman said they're unbreakable. Well, I guess

they're not Tukelo proof. He breaks the ones on his legs. The minute he stands, he start kissing me. This is it. Here comes the hard part.

He throws me on the couch. My body start to feel some things. The

kiss is getting intimate. I want him. I have never felt like this before, I have never had the urge of wanting a man like this. I never thought

I will ever feel like this but there's no going back now. I want him. I start to undress him. He stops and looks at me.

Me: (whisper) Make love to me.

He is shocked, he backs up a little.

Him: (whisper) are you sure?

I nod, he smiles and starts kissing me again. He picks me while kissing me. He walks towards the stairs, we're still kissing. As he take the first step, I jump a little.

Him: I am not going to let you fall.

I kiss him.

He leads me to the bedroom. He throws me on the bed. He gets on top of me, he starts kissing me intimately. He undress me, I do the same. We both naked. If I say I am in cloud 9 right now, it would be an understatement. I don't know how to describe this feeling. He goes down on me, I moan with pleasure. He inserts fingers in my property, I let out a small scream. He kisses me on my lips, and he starts whispering to me in Italian. Something like: "Ti desidero." I don't know what that means, but it's turning me on.

Him: (whisper) I will be gentle, I promise.

I scream, loudly. It's in oh lord, it's really happening. This is not being gentle at all. He's moving slowly but the pain I am feeling right now is worse than period pains, worse than any other pain. I feel like

something inside me is breaking, like something inside me is ripping.

He kisses me slowly. I don't want any kisses. I want this pain to go away. He notices, he stops kissing me. How is it possible that you enjoy something but at the same time it's the worse pain you've ever felt? It's painful but I don't want him to stop!

He's done. He gets off me and sleep besides me. We are both breathing heavily. We are just quiet. I did it. I gave it to him. I gave him all of me.

Me: Happy birthday my love.

Him: (smiles) was that my present?

Me: Yes. Your days of catching rabbits are over.

Him: (laughs) you're wild Tigress, you are crazy. This the best presentever, thank you babe.

He kisses me.

I am tired now. I am still new at this sex thing and I have already done like 3 rounds in one night. I am so proud of me. It's almost midnight which means it's almost this guy's birthday. We didn't even get to have our little picnic because he said he doesn't want food.

He wants me. Oh and by the way, I asked about the 'ti desidero' thing, he laughed and said it's Italian for 'I want you.' Seriously, what's with this guy and Italy?

We cuddling now. It feels right laying on his chest. I feel safe.

Him: I have a confession to make.

Me: Yes.

Him: That was the best sex I have ever had.

I blush. Was I really that good? Or is he being polite?

Me: Yeah me too.

Him: That's the only sex you ever had.

Me: But it was the best and that's the only sex I will be getting.

I kiss him slightly on his lips.

Him: That's right. Thank you babe. I know this must have been hard for you to make this decision. Thank you for trusting me. I will not let you down. I can't promise you the world but I will try to be the man that you deserve. I will try my best to make you happy. Thank you.

Geez! Why is he praising me like this? It's just sex. Chill. All I do is smile because I don't know what else to say.

Me: Can I ask you something?

I say while playing with his fingers.

Him: Yea sure.

I have so many questions in my mind right now. I don't know which one to ask first.

Me: Do you love me?

Him: (clears throat) Why do you ask?

What the heck?! It doesn't really matter why I am asking now does it. I feel like he's dodging the question.

Me: I don't know, because you never say it.

Him: (sighs) Well Tigress...um... (Sighs)

Why is he sighing so much? What's hard about this damn question just a yes or a no? God!

Him: Amahle, you are the first thing that pops into my mind every morning, the last thing I think about before I sleep. You're constantly in my mind. When I see you, I feel like my world is complete. You make me the happiest man without you realizing it. I worry about you, I would catch a bullet for you, fuck that, I will kill for you. I have never met someone like you. You managed to make me fall for you in less than a day. I always asked myself how the fuck did you manage to do that but I am glad that I did fall for you because right now, with you, I feel complete. Sometimes I just look at you, and my heart start beating fast, my whole world make sense. I just feel you were made for me, you were made to make me happy.

He stops and sighs.

Him: If that's what love is Amahle then I am crazy, madly, insanely, dangerously in love with you. I love you.

What the hell? I haven't cried in such a long time and this make me emotional. Really? I wipe the tear and look at him. I don't know what to say to him.

Me: Why don't you say it though?

Him: I am not good at these things Amahle, I rather show it to you. I wasn't going to state the obvious.

Me: Even though Tukelo, I have to know it even if I know it, you feel me?

Him (laughs) I feel you babe. I will be honest with you. I have told girls I love them, but really, I didn't love them. It was easy for me to fool them, and just say what they want to hear but with you, it's different, I can never describe what I feel for you, I can never. If it's just a simple 'I love you' is what you want then it's okay

because I really do love you, a lot.

Me: How do I know you ain't fooling me?

Deep down I knew he's being sincere but I have to hear him say it.

Him: Amahle first thing you should know is that I never let a woman I don't love in my bed, like never. So what does that tell you?

Me: If that's the case, then I love you Tukelo. I have never thought I would ever tell a man this but it's true, I tried hiding it but look where that got me.

I am enjoying this, being in his arms like this.

Him: Then we both on the same page.

Me: So we're a couple now?

Him: (laughs) well to me, we've always been a couple. I told you since the day I saw you carrying that flour you were my woman already. Just that you were in denial.

Me: I just wanted to clarify things.

Him: Are things clarified now?

Me: Yes Mr. Mokoena.

He holds me tighter and we cuddle in silence. He starts to laugh.

Me: What?

Him: You should have asked me this a long time ago. Before we even had sex, what if I told you otherwise. You're a risk taker Tigress.

Me: I was willing to take that risk. At least I lost my virginity to the man I love, that's what matters right?

Him: (laughs) Ncooah babe.

I punch him playfully on his stomach.

Him: And she's an abuser.

It's November 18. Tukelo's birthday. I woke up earlier than him. He's still in bed, he's not a deep sleeper, unlike me but I guess he's tired after last night. I, myself I am still drained but I have to make this a special day for him. I want everything to go according as I planned. I really hope he likes what I still have in-store for him. I warm up the food I ordered last night that we didn't get to eat. I redecorate the whole place again, minus the candles and the lanterns. This time I use white roses. I set the two tables on the back porch. The same place we had our first 'date'. My phone beeps. A text message from an unknown number.

Unknown: "I know where you are!! I am coming for you Amahle!!"

Who the fuck is this? I decide to ignore it again and carry on with what I was doing. Some people get bored. If you know where I am, come to me then.

I take the food outside but I meet Tukelo before I even got outside.

Him: What are you up to now?

Me: (sings) Happy Birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear baby, happy birthday to you.

I kiss him slightly on his lips.

Him: (smile-blushes) thank you babe. What's in there?

He tries to open the container but I quickly take it away from him.

Me: Nothing. Now please join me at our spot in the next two minutes. Don't take a shower. I want you like that.

I don't know why but I find him sexier in the morning, in his pajamas and his deeper voice, I just get turned on. As usual he laughed at me and he said he loves my weirdness but I tell you guys, you would love it too.

Him: Yes Mam' (salutes)

He's phone rings.

Him: Excuse me babe. I have to take this.

He answers his phone.

Him: Sho Dankies.

He goes upstairs. Dankies is he's best pal, they're tight. Well, he's real name is Syabonga. I have seen them together and what I have seen is a true example of bro love. Even in him and Itumeleng, they look out for each other, they care and love each other even though they won't admit it to each other.

It's been almost 20 minutes and he still hasn't come down. I hope he didn't take a bath. I go upstairs. I find him in our room, talking to the phone in the balcony. He took off he's pajama shirt. Jesu!

I don't think he see me. I know it is rude listening to someone else's conversation but it is also rude disturbing them. So I might as well wait for him.

Him: Look, I don't give a fuck. I told you I don't want any loose ends.

Do what you have to do, I don't want any of this shit coming back to me. I paid your men. Sort this out, now.

He listens to the person who's on the other line.

Him: Good. Don't let mistakes like this happen again Dankies. When I assign someone to do the job, I know the reason why I chose that

person. I don't give a fuck what personal shit came up! Rather cancel the whole mission.

He sounds really upset.

Am I the only one finding this conversation a lot shady? What mission is he talking about? He finally hangs up. He lets out a loud sigh. He bends over, he balance on the rails. He's elbows are on the rails and he covers his face with his hands. He look like he's in deep thought and I don't know whether to comfort him or just let him be.

Me: Babe, are you okay?

I hug him from behind.

Him: (sighs) now I am.

Me: Wanna talk about it?

Him: Nah babe, I don't want to bore you with all the details. Just work staff.

He turns to look at me and he wraps his arms around my waist.

Him: How about that surprise Italian breakfast you made. It looks delicious.

But how did he know... I give him a questioning look.

Him: I saw it from up here (smiles).

Me: I won't scold you because it's your day.

We go to the porch. He say a prayer, I taught him well. But it was something like: 'Bless this food. Amen.' But it's still a prayer no matter how short it was but he prayed. I was really proud of him.

Him: When did you order this?

Me: Will you stop with the questions and eat. Bon appetit.

Him: Baby, that's French.

Me: Ay same thing.

Him: No baby it's not. You were supposed to say 'boun appetito' because we're having Italian breakfast.

The way he said those Italian words was just a turn on!

Me: (laughs) whatever. It still means the same thing.

Him: (smiles) you hate being corrected don't you?

Me: You know me too well (smiles).

Him: You do know I love you right? I don't care whether you can't cook or do what wives do. I didn't bring you here so you'll be my maid. Yes, I will appreciate your cooking every now and then but I don't want you stressing over that.

Where did all of that come from? I guess he also noticed that thing of not being able to cook is getting to me.

Me: Tukelo, I wish I listened to my mom. Right now, we would be eating what I made, not something made by some foreign man.

Him: Don't sweat it babe. I really appreciate your efforts. I don't even celebrate my birthday but you changed that. I don't even remember someone giving me birthday wishes but you were able to do something special for me. Something really special. Thank you.

He really knows what to say to me. I smile.

Him: Dang babe! I didn't know you had moves like that. You never told me you dance.

Me: (laugh) well, that's because I don't. I didn't even knew I could do that. I was shocked as you were.

Him: Man, I wish it's my birthday everyday if it means I get to see you in that lacey thing of yours, and those heels. And I don't even want to mention the sex. I never knew chowing a virgin is that great?

He calls my sexy lingerie a 'lacey thing'? What did I do to deserve this? I can't help but laugh at his madness.

xxxx

Him: It's my birthday, I don't understand why we are in a mall. You don't even like shopping.

Me: Says the man who didn't celebrate his birthday. We are not shopping, we are going to the movies, then lunch. Now stop sulking.

I had to do a lot of begging for him to come here but I need him here so I can commence with phase two of my plan. I really hope things go as I had hoped, but I trust Nosi, Zitha and Itumeleng will do as I instructed. I don't know how he is going to react but I hope he will appreciate my thoughts.

Him: I could think of better things we could do (smirks).

Me: Dude, you humped me like crazy last night even before we left the house. I know I won't be having sex for a very long time.

He stops walking and the look on his face is priceless. I laugh.

Me: I am joking. Now please hurry, I don't want us to miss this movie.

I pull his arm. We get to the Cinema, I choose the longest movie and it's a chick flick.

Him: No, you can't do this to me. Are you being for real?

He's looking rather annoyed by my choice. He will thank me later, hopefully.

Me: Can you please go buy the snacks my love? If it's boring we'll

leave I promise.

He sulks and drags his feet and went to the snack bar.

We get to the theatre, it's empty. Just me, him and this old guy. The movie is boring even to me. We are just taking crazy selfies and making out. We are not even concentrating on the movie. The guy turns around and give us an ugly stare.

Him: I bet you a million dollars babe, that guy lives a sad life, no wife or he had a wife, he screwed up, got divorced. He's kids want

nothing to do with him, he has money and he spends it on useless things.

Me: (laugh) and how did you come to that theory?

Him: Tigress, that guy looks 70. Yet he's in a movie theatre. He should be spending time with his family. I mean he could die anytime soon.

I laugh so hard that the man give us an ugly stare and he stands up and leaves. I laugh even harder. This one is not even laughing, he will get me into trouble.

I text Zitha: "Is everything ready?"

She replies immediately, "Yes. We were waiting on you."

Me: Let's go babe. The movie is boring anyways.

I stand up but he pulls me back down and makes me sit on his lap.

Him: No, not quite yet.

He rubs his hands on my thighs, which is quite easy for him because I am wearing a skirt. He kisses me on my neck. He knows what those kisses do to me. He goes down kisses my breast, pulls my t-shirt up

and sucks on my nipples. I turn to look at him, I open my legs and they're on either sides of him. I kiss him. The

touches he give me, make me want him, as in now. He stops kissing me, he goes back to my boobs. His hand is now in my cookie, he keep on rubbing it gently whilst kissing me.

He stops to look at me.

Him: Ok, now we can go.

He make me stand and he leaves me, just like that.

What was that about? For a minute there I thought we were going to have sex in there, a quickie perhaps. I am still standing, horny and shocked. I tidy myself up and went out. He's standing by the snack bar with a smirk on his face. He hold my hand.

Him: So where are we going to have lunch?

Me: We are going home. Lunch is cancelled.

He laughs.

We are getting closer, I text Zitha that we're almost there. As he drives closer, my hearts is accelerating. I am really nervous. We finally get to his house.

Him: What the fuck is Itumeleng doing here? And who the heck gave him the keys?

Him: He even blocked my way in! He's so dead.

He gets out of the car and rushes to the door. I stand by the car and let him be.

He opens the door. Everyone yells "SURPRISE!" I so want to see his reaction but I am too scared to see how he'll react. Everyone is laughing. I wonder what stunt he pulled.

I walk slowly towards the house.

He looks at me.

Him: You!

He runs towards me, I also run. Now he's chasing me around the house. Everyone is laughing at us now. He outruns me and catches me, he holds my waist and hugs me from behind, tightly. I laugh. I turn to look at him.

We look at each other.

Him: I love you.

I don't respond, he kisses me.

Everyone say "Ncooah". I quickly let go of him.

We go inside. Wow, everyone is here. Including his sisters. I

specifically instructed them that I don't want a big crowd. Just his siblings and close friends. I don't have money to cater for a large number. I haven't yet formally met the sisters and I am scared. I

know their names. It's Oratile, Nkatiseng and Bontle. I have spoken to Oratile before over the phone, and apparently she's the one who

called my mom that night. Even the big brothers are here, Thabang and Pitsi. I am not looking forward meeting them.

Everything turned out as I intended. Décor is amazing, the food looks good. The booze! Geez! I can never. I am just glad that everything is

going according to plan so far.

Ever since we got in the house he hasn't let go of my hand. I am

being introduced to everyone we meet, I have met his other friends,

Sphelele, Mandla and Mzamo. Now we're walking towards the

sisters. He hugs all of them and I do so too.

Him: No introduction needed. You guys know my queen.

Oratile: Finally we meet this beauty. You weren't lying bro, she is quite a catch. Daddy is gonna be proud. Please tell me you gonna marry this one.

They all laugh.

Tukelo: Of course Oratile. No doubt.

He winks at me, I smile. More like a blush though.

Bontle: Stop it you guys, you making the poor girl shy. I'm Bontle.

She's so pretty. She's like the girl version of Tukelo. She has china eyes, the same complexion as Tukelo even has his smile. I don't mean to be all judgey-judgey but she is the prettiest of them all and no not because she looks like my man, even the way she dresses, she's classy and she's also the young one. Probably my age or older but she's in my age group. I don't like make-up but hers, simple, look natural and she slays it with that weave. She's hot nje like my man.

Me: (smiling) Nice to meet you. Nice to meet all of you.

Nkatiseng: Nah, I liked Nthabi better. I mean she cute and all but Nthabi was the one.

I look at Tukelo, he looks at me blank. Ain't he gonna discipline his sister? Nxa!

Bontle: Nkati is crazy. Don't mind her. She had a long flight, she is still a bit moody (smiles).

I smile back.

Me: Excuse me.

I leave them with awkward silence.

I cannot believe Tukelo, he just kept quiet while he's sister disrespected me like that.

Nosi asks for everyone's attention, she's the MC? Oh my god, that can't end well. I go and stand next to Zitha.

Nosi: First of all, thank you all for coming at such short notice because Miss Thang, decided to tell us a week before but anyways we handled it quite well as you can see. Now, we ask of you to take your seats so we can officially start.

Everyone start taking seats.

Her: You and Tukelo seat here on the king and queen chairs.

Is this a wedding or a party? Really? Why are they making this about us because it's about him? Tukelo held my hand and led me to where we suppose to sit.

Her: Can we have Miss Zungu over here so she can welcome us and tell us exactly why she called us over here?

Now I have to talk? Nobody said anything about me talking in public like this. I look at Tukelo, he shrugs. I stand up. I look at everybody, I take a deep breath.

Me: Greetings to you all. Um, first I would like to thank you all for coming. I really didn't expect such a turn out especially those coming from Lesotho. You guys had better things to do but you chose to be here with us, I really appreciate that. I first had this idea when his brother, Tumi, told me that Tukelo doesn't celebrate his birthday. I wasn't sure about it, I was actually nervous because I didn't know how he would react so I discussed the matter with Tumi, he wasn't sure about it either but we decided to go ahead with it anyway. Despite the fact that he might kill us, our lives were on the line here.

The crowd laughs.

Me: Because I knew that Tukelo can be very suspicious at times so I let my friends Zitha and Nosipho do the planning along with Tumi. I can never thank you enough guys. Now to you, life partner, my love, my rib, I did this because I love you. Nothing can ever express what I feel for you. You have done so much for me and I wanted to do something special for you. I still feel this isn't enough but I hope you appreciate my efforts. Happy birthday my love.

I kiss him on his cheek and gave him a small paper bag. He takes it and looks at me confused.

Me: Open it.

He does so and the look on his face, if he was a woman he would be crying right now.

Him: It's a Guess watch (softly)

Him: And it has my name on it.

The crowd says 'ncooah' and applauded. The look on Tukelo's face make want to burst into laughter, he can't seem to take his eyes off

the watch. He stands up and give me a kiss.

Tumi: Get a room!

Everyone laughs. He let's go of me and just looks at me. We finally sit down and Tukelo still hasn't taken his eyes of the watch. Chill bru! It's just a simple watch with a 'T. Mokoena' written on it.

Him: I love you (whispers in my ear)

Now I am the one who's doing all the blushing.

Nosi: Tukelo you would be crazy if you don't marry this girl.

Everyone laughs. Tukelo just looks at me.

Her: Up next, is one of the brothers, Tumi. Please say something nice about your brother for once.

Nosipho though. But it's true. They never say anything nice about each other, if they not teasing each other, they're bad-mouthing each other.

Tumi stands up and goes to the podium.

Him: Dumelang. I am Itumeleng Emmanuel Mokoena. The big brother of this hood-rat here. Most of the people think we're twins but really no, I mean look at me, this can never be duplicated.

Everyone laughs.

Him: Anyway, me and Tukelo have always been close, we were

inseparable, we still are. Wherever you go you'd find us together, although we were two different people, but we had one thing in common. Girls. Yoh me and Tukelo we loved girls!

The crowd laughs. I look at Tukelo, he looks away.

Him: Sorry, Hle, but I have to say this. Me and Tukelo loved chicks. Even in our hometown, we had every girl wrapped around our fingers. We would get any girl we wanted, that was back then. But when Tukelo told me about Ausi Hle, I knew he had found the one, the way he talked about her, he's face changed. I thought he was going crazy, I have never seen Tukelo being like that. He told me about her, like four months ago. He said, 'Tumi, I found her. I found my woman.' Which was crazy because he hasn't even talked to her yet. He chased her for like a month or so, I told him to give her up but he said he can't because he loves her. I was shocked because

Tukelo never say he loves a girl and he never chases after a woman. I am glad you didn't listen to me bro, this is what a wife do. She is

wife material. Not because of what she did today but because of what she's turning you into, you're becoming a man. She's changing you for the better. I am proud of you and her. Thank you.

The crowd applauds and cheers.

He steps down but comes back again.

Him: oh and Happy Birthday.

Everyone laughs.

Tukelo: You know that's the first time he wished me a happy birthday.

I look at him and smiled.

Nosi: Sibonge Tumiza.

The way Nosi looks at him, it is making me very suspicious. There's definitely something going on between the two.

Her: We are coming to the end of our short program, to join us again is Siyabonga Dlamini.

Dankies steps on the podium.

Tukelo starts whispering things to me.

Him: (whispers) how did you pull this off?

Me: Shhh.

Him: What's with the presents?

Me: Shhh Tukelo. I am trying to listen to Dankies.

And guess what? He doesn't listen to me.

Him: But no present will beat the one you gave me yesterday and this morning (smirks).

Me: Tukelo man.

Him: I will get it again tonight? Right?

Will he shut up?

Me: If you shut up, maybe you will.

He immediately kept quiet. Like someone pressed his mute button.

Good. Dankies steps down. Now I didn't hear a word he said. Thanks to big mouth.

Nosi: Short and sweet I like. Last but not least, Mr. Party, usingaye, Bae waAmahle, Tukelo. Can we hear what you have to say?

He looks at me, I shrug. He stands up and goes to the podium. He stands there for a while, looks at everybody. Man, I didn't realize he looked this sexy.

Him: (clears throat) um... I don't know what to say, I am speechless.

But first I would like to apologize to you guys what I almost did to y'all back there, just that y'all scared the shit out of me.

The crowd laughs. I wonder what he did.

Him: Um... Tigress was right when she said I never celebrate my birthday. For the first time, I don't know in how many years, she was the first one to wish me a happy birthday. I thought it was going to end there, I really didn't expect any of this. I was really surprised. Here, I was mad at my babe for taking me to the mall and even 'punished' her for nothing.

He looks me, I smile. Oh, that's what he wanted to achieve at the movie theatre.

Him: Not knowing that she had yet another trick up her sleeve. I can never thank her enough and to be honest I didn't expect anything from her but she gave me something that I can never replace, she gave me her love and I really appreciate that babe. I don't know when last I saw my sisters and my other brothers but this queen of mine made it possible for me. Nosi is right, I would be crazy if I don't wife this woman. I would have failed as a man.

He turns to look at me.

Him: My sweetheart, my Tigress, my crazy one, my life, my rib. First I wanna say to you is that I told you so.

I give him a questioning look.

Him: I told you that I would make you my woman, you didn't believe me.

Me: (laughs)

Him: Now I am telling you, I am going to wife your ass. Believe me when I say that, it will happen sooner than you think.

He comes closer and make me stand.

Him: I love you more than words can say, I will love you forever and always. Thank you my love.

Him: Your birthday is coming next week and now I feel intimidated.

Everyone laugh.

Him: But I am a man, I am up for the challenge.

He says and kisses me slightly on my lips and we sit down. Jesu! I am so curious, I want to know what he has planned for me!

Nosi: You guys are making me so jealous. Look now you've ruined my make-up.

She wipes her tears with a tissue. Ncaah man!

Her: Anyway, party must go on. The party can officially start. Rules of this party, what the heck, there are no rules. Break whatever you want to break I am sure Tukelo can afford almost anything.

This chick though! Everyone laugh. I look at Tukelo, he's also laughing his head off.

Her: One more thing, to all the single guys out here tonight, I am single! So, make sure you don't sleep alone tonight.

This woman is crazy. And since when is she single?

Her: Let the party begin!

The DJ starts playing the music. I stand up, Tukelo holds my hand.

Him: Where you think you going?

Me: Uh, to the party.

Him: No kiss?

Me: Tukelo, you couldn't control your sister when she was being

mean to me and you expect everything to be fine? Who the heck is Nthabi?

I was still very angry by that incident, I couldn't show everyone I was pissed.

Him: I thought we were passed that.

Me: Maybe you are but I am certainly not.

Him: Can we not do this tonight?

I roll my eyes. He lets go of my hand.

Him: Are we going to fight about this now? On my birthday? Really?

Why is he making he's birthday a big deal now? A few hours ago, he didn't care it was he's birthday.

Me: See you around Tukelo.

Him: (sighs) oh boy.

I stepped down and went to my girls. They already had wine in their hands. What's new?

Me: Thank you so much you guys.

I hug them both.

Me: This is amazing.

Zitha: Nah, it was nothing. Wait till you see the disco lights when it's

dark outside.

I knew they would go overboard. What does something small and simple mean Kanti?

Me: Who said anything about disco lights?

Nosi: Ay don't be a bore. We had to go all the way for our sbari, I mean it might be the only sbari will ever get.

They laugh.

Me: Yeah you right. You guys, don't scream but I did it.

They look at me confused. I give them the 'you-know-what' look.

They scream and hug me. Didn't I say they mustn't scream?

Zitha: But I thought you were giving it to him tonight.

Me: No. I gave to him yesterday like 4 times and two times today.

They scream again. I cover my ears. I can't take their screaming + the loud music.

Nosi: Oh my gosh girl. You are on fire! You're a woman, finally.

Congrats Amy.

Okay, I said I had sex with the guy, I didn't say I am pregnant or getting married.

Zitha: How was it? Is he gentle?

Me: I can't discuss my man's dick with you.

Nosi & Zitha: And why not?

Me: Geez! Because I just can't do that. Next you'll want to have it for yourselves.

Nosi: He's that good huh?

Me: Yep!

Zitha: You did use protection, right?

Me: Yes and I will be on contraceptives as of tomorrow.

Nosi: Good.

As I am talking to the girls, Tukelo wraps his arms around me and kisses my cheek. He's drinking already? I can smell alcohol and it sickens me.

Him: Hey you. I miss you (whispers in my ear).

Me: (silent)

Him: Can I steal her? Just for a little while?

He looks at Zitha and Nosipho.

Me: I can't leave my friends alone Tukelo.

Nosi: Yes, sure. She's all yours.

Really? And they call themselves my friends.

Tukelo takes my hand and walk me towards these two men, OMG!

The brothers!

Him: I want you to meet my brothers.

As we approach them my heart beat even faster. My meeting with the sisters didn't go well so I pray that this goes well.

Thabang: Tuks!

They man-hug.

Thabang: Aah this must be the pretty Amahle.

He kisses my hand.

Me: You must be Thabang?

Thabang: The one and only.

Pitsi: I am Pitsi by the way.

He shakes my hand. I smile at him.

Tumi: I am Itumeleng.

Me: (laugh) Nice to meet all of you.

Tumi: Likewise Miss.

Thabang: So Miss Amahle, when are you coming down to Lesotho to take care of your father-in-law?

Tukelo: This is my woman not my dad's. That means she'll take care of me only.

Tumi: You know, if you get married to her, she'll be our wife. Not yours only.

Tukelo: That's bull.

Thabang: It's true. It's just the Mokoena rule.

Tukelo: You're crazy. My woman is only mine.

Pitsi: Ntate will tell you the same thing.

Tukelo: I will tell him the same thing, that he's crazy.

They laugh. I have a feeling that they always gang up on Tukelo because he's the youngest, shame poor him. But him being him, seems like he never backs down.

Thabang: I missed you lil bro. You and stubborn self.

He brushes Tukelo's head but Tukelo quickly moved his hand away.

Tukelo: Don't say that. That's gay.

Thabang: Little bro, you have done pretty well for yourself. I am very proud.

Pitsi: Yes, this house is lit. I never thought in a million years that you'd turn up like this at such a young age.

Tukelo: Yeah, you know when I truly want something, I always get it.

This is nothing, I am still going to show you flames.

Thabang: I know. Ntate is going to be proud.

Tukelo: (sigh) one can only hope.

Pitsi: When last did you speak to him?

Tukelo: Can we not talk about him. I don't want to ruin my night.

I never knew Tukelo had problems with his dad. This guy needs to open up more.

Thabang: Did he even call?

Tukelo: No. Mme called though... that's all that matters to me.

My phone beeps. Fuck, it's mom she wants to know if I will be back.

Tukelo: Is there something wrong my love?

Me: My mom is asking if I am coming back.

Him: Tell her no.

Me: What?

Tukelo: It's my birthday, you can't leave me alone on my birthday. Come on.

This guy didn't celebrate his birthday. Why is he making a big deal

about it now? I don't want his brothers to see my crazy side so I do as he says. I step aside and call my mom.

She had no problem at all. I cannot believe this. She said I can take

as long as I want, but I must be home by Monday. Tukelo must thank his lucky stars.

The party has really officially started. Everyone is drunk. I have never seen Tukelo this drunk, he can barely even talk. It seems I am the

only one who is sober. This 'small' gathering turned into something

big. I see people I don't even know. They are all over the house. I

wonder what the neighbors are saying by this loud noise. Every type of music is playing, from house to igqomu to amaPiano to hip-hop to rnb and even jazz. I have never even seen Tukelo dance but today he showed his true colors. He's not really the best at dancing to igqomu and house music but man can he break dance! I never knew he can but that explains he's love for hip-hop music and his 'swag'.

I don't believe my eyes. I see Tumi and Nosi all over each other. This guy is married mos! I go to them, they don't seem to mind because

they're still all over each other.

Me: Shouldn't you be going home to your wife?

Him: What wife? I don't have a wife.

He's not even wearing a ring. This bastard! But I won't get involved,

Nosi can take care of herself. I just leave them.

I am alone now. Tukelo is busy with his brothers, Zitha with some guy and Nosi with Tumi. I sit on the high chair and just watch everybody go crazy. It is funny to watch, especially Tukelo's not-so-good dance moves.

Insert Thirteen 😊

Him: This is a nice party.

I don't believe my eyes. Who even told him about this?

Me: Charles? What are you doing here?

Him: Me and Tukelo are business partners and good friends.

This is uncomfortable. Imagine seeing your boss in your boyfriend's house, on top of that seeing him drunk. It is really uncomfortable.

Me: Oh yeah.

Him: So you pulled this off? For him?

The way he asks me, it's like he's about to say, you shouldn't have done it.

Me: Mm I organized something small but as you see it turned out to be something crazy.

And to be honest, things didn't quite turn out as I hoped. I don't know if it turned out better or worse. Alcohol just ruined everything but it is okay. As long as everyone is having a blast it's okay with me.

Him: You love him don't you?

Me: Charles, no offense but you are my boss, it will be uncomfortable for me to speak to you about these things.

Him: He's your boss too.

Me: Yes I know that but I didn't know that, I only found out a little

later.

Him: Can you just answer me?

I look at him. He looks serious. Why is he so inquisitive? Why does he want to know?

Me: If you must know, yes I love him.

Him: I see.

He sips his whiskey. More like gulp on it.

Me: Whoa Charles, you better slow down. Last thing I need is seeing you drunk.

I see Tukelo coming our way.

Him: Be careful Amy. He's dangerous. He isn't who you think he is and who he claims to be.

Before I can ask any further, Tukelo hugs me from behind and kisses my neck.

Tukelo: Charlie. I didn't get to speak to you since you got here, how are you?

Charles: Oh I am living.

Charles get off the chair and went back to the party. I thought they were good friends. That was awkward.

Me: What was that about?

Him: Ah, don't mind that. So, are you still mad at me?

Me: (silent)

Him: I will take that as a yes. Come with me.

He takes my hand and leads me upstairs. We enter our room, he locks the door. I have a whole bunch of questions in my mind but the one that worried me is why people warned me about Tukelo. First, Zanele now Charles. He comes closer.

Me: No Tukelo, we need to talk.

He sighs and steps back.

Him: That can't be good.

Me: I am serious Tukelo. I have a lot of questions and I want answers.

Him: Kiss first.

I give him a look.

Him: (sighs) ok shoot.

I can see he is still not taking any of this as seriously as he should.

Me: Be serious tu

Him: Babe, I am drunk. You can't seriously expect me to be serious.

Me: Ok fine. I will just get straight to the point. Who's this Nthabi?

He has this expression of rolling his eyes but not actually roll his eyes, you know.

Me: Answer me Tukelo.

Him: Nthabi is my ex. Are we done now?

Me: No Tukelo. There are things I want to know, we are far from being done.

Him: What do you want to know Amahle?

I feel like he's being annoyed by me, judging by the tone of his voice.

Me: Like, why do you carry a gun around? Why are people constantly warning me about you, saying you're dangerous? What was that shady phone call I heard earlier about? And why in the hell do you have portraits of half-naked woman in the room next door?

All this time he buried his face in his hands.

Him: Are we seriously doing this right now? We have guests. Can we do this later?

He stands up and heads for the door. I block his way.

Him: Amahle, please move.

I don't move. I fold my arms instead.

He grabs me aggressively and pushes me out of the way, I almost fall but managed to keep balance. If he wasn't drunk as he was and he had all his strength, I was sure going to hit the floor hard. He storms out and slams the door. Firstly, Tukelo has never laid his hand on me and he has never spoken to me like he did. This has officially been our first fight and something tells me, it won't end here.

I go downstairs and pretend everything is okay. The party goes on, everyone look happy, I try my best to enjoy myself and try as hard to avoid Tukelo. Well, either than that little fight we had, I was quite enjoying myself.

People start leaving around 1am. I am tired as hell. Around 2am, everyone has left. It's just me, Tukelo and his brothers and sisters. They all drunk except for me. They all go to sleep. I tidy up a little and went to bed. I find Tukelo fast asleep and all over the bed. He even has shoes on. I take off his shoes and his jeans. He reeks of alcohol.

Geez! He's opens his eyes slightly.

Him: Amahle.

Me: (silent)

I tuck him in bed.

Him: I love you.

Me: (silent)

I also get in bed. He wraps his arms around me.

Me: Tukelo man.

He's asleep again. I slowly unwrap his arm and turned my back on him. I thought I would never find myself in these kind of situations. Yet, here I was lying next to the man I love with every bone that's in my body, who showed me that he's capable of laying his hands on me. Funny though because the thought of 'running while I can' never came across my mind. I am way stronger than this.

xxxxx

I wake up at 6am. Tukelo is still fast asleep. I wake up and went to take a shower. When I was done, Tukelo was still fast asleep. I got

dressed and went downstairs. Everyone was still sleeping. I cleaned up, washed the dishes and decided to try and make breakfast. I just

hope it won't turn into a disaster. I am sure I can handle eggs, bacon and toast. It was already 8am and no-one was up yet.

Breakfast was ready. Hopefully it tastes as good as it looks. I am even scared to even try it out. My phone rings. Caller ID: Nosipho.

Me: Talk to me.

Her: Babe, how are you?

Me: I am okay. You?

Her: Yoh, Amy. I have a really bad hangover. Is there any booze left?

Me: Bitch, you have a hangover yet you still wanna get drunk, are you crazy?

Her: Hoe, the only way to get rid of a hangover is to stay drunk.

Me: (laughs) that's bull. Have you spoken to Zitha yet? She left without saying goodbye yesterday. Or should I say this morning.

Her: I tried calling her but no answer. Phela she left with the guy she was busy with yesterday.

Me: You lie!

Her: I swear. I was maybe drunk but I sure saw her getting in a silver Mercedes.

Me: Yoh! Who did you leave with?

I hear someone shuffle behind me, I turn to look and it's the big brother, Thabang.

Me: I have to go. Talk later.

Her: Ok. Let's meet for lunch.

Me: Sounds like a plan. Call Zitha. I will try to call her too.

Her: Sharp.

I hang up.

Thabang: Morning.

He's already busy eating with the breakfast I made.

Me: Morning, slept well?

I know I said no-one scares me but this guy scares the hell out of me. I don't know if it's because he's like 10 years older than me but nje there's something about him that scares me.

Him: Yes. I slept like a king.

I smile at him and I start being busy with I don't know what but I am moving around the kitchen, looking for I don't know what.

Him: Crazy night we had. Girl you sure know how to throw a party.

Me: First, it wasn't a party. It was just a small gathering but I am glad if you guys had a blast.

Him: (laughs) Small gathering? How I wish to see how you throw a party then.

Me: Well, you will just have to wait and see.

He smiles.

Him: So how's Tukelo treating you?

Gosh. I don't know how to answer that question but it would be inappropriate of me to tell him about yesterday.

Me: Like a queen, sure he has his flaws but he tries his best to make me happy.

I hope that answer is good enough.

Him: I have never heard him talk about a girl the way he talks about you, I can see through him that he truly loves you. If he had an argument with you, he would call and ask me what to do. He really loves you Amahle. All I ask is for you to stick by him because I know how possessive and controlling he can be. Men are screw-ups, they just need strong partners to stick by them no matter what.

Yoh! But I don't think I will manage being someone's punching bag though. Mom raised me better than that.

Me: I hear you Aubuti Thabang. I will try my best.

Him: Good.

He continues with he's eating. The sisters enter the kitchen. They greet, well, except Nkatiseng who's busy with her phone.

Him: You don't greet now Nkati.

He gives her a very bad look.

Her: Oh sorry. Morning aubuti.

Thabang doesn't greet back. He just continues with his breakfast.

Me: Breakfast is ready guys.

Bontle: Thank god. I am starved.

I give them their breakfast, they say grace and immediately dig in. Geez! Things alcohol do to people.

Pitsi: How can y'all eat without me?

Everyone laughs at him.

Oratile: That's what you get for over-sleeping.

They also just woke up mos. It's already 10am, Tukelo is still sleeping. It's so unlike him to sleep like this. I want to wake him but I decide not to.

Pitsi: You guys are mean.

Me: Relax, I wouldn't let them finish it off without you. Here,

I give him his plate.

Pitsi: Thank you ausi Amahle, that's why you my favorite.

He plays with my cheeks. I smile.

Me: Where is Tumi?

Pitsi: Probably with some chick in some hotel.

Me: Aybo, isn't he married Kanti?

Bontle: Well yes and no.

Me: Huh?

Oratile: He's married yes but he always say he has no wife. He lives his life the way he wants to.

Ay ke, I give up! What does his wife say? I feel sorry for this Thandiwe chick. I have heard about her but never met her.

Thabang: Have you ever seen him wearing a ring?

Me: Well no.

Thabang: Exactly.

Why would he get married if he's not ready? This is just unfair to his wife, he's holding her back and wasting her time.

Tukelo enters, he looks horrible I must say. This is not my morning sexy looking Tukelo. It's just someone else.

Tukelo: Morning.

He goes straight to the fridge.

Pitsi: Talk about being ugly.

Tukelo: Shut up man.

He takes out water and gulps on it.

Nkatiseng: Aren't you going to have breakfast?

Tukelo: No. I don't think I will be able to take in any food.

Oratile: Wow. Looks like someone had too much to drink.

Tukelo: You don't know the half of it.

He sits on a chair and drinks his water. He looks at me. I stand up and went to the sink to wash my plate. He's eyes move with me.

Thabang: Thank you so much for breakfast Amahle, it was amazing.

Pitsi agrees with him. I take their plates and wash them as well.

Tukelo: Tigress made this?

Pitsi: Yes and you sure missed out.

Tukelo: Wow, I sure did.

He looks me shocked. Everyone was done with breakfast, I clear up the table and start washing dishes.

Tukelo: Babe, can I talk to you for a sec?

Me: I am busy Tukelo. We can talk later.

Tukelo: Oratile can you please finish off the dishes?

Oratile: Aah Tukelo, why me?

Tukelo: Because I said so.

He gives her a very bad stare. Oratile stands up and murmurs something.

Tukelo: What was that?

Oratile: Nothing.

Tukelo: I thought so.

Tukelo is such a bully, ay man! Oratile takes over the dishes, looking annoyed as fuck.

Me: Sorry.

I whisper to her and pat her back. She smiles at me.

I dry my hands and follow Tukelo to his study. He closes the door and locks it. Why does he like locking the door so much? He leans on the table, folds his arms and looks at me.

Me: What is it?

Him: I want us to talk.

Me: So now you want to talk?

Him: Amahle please, I didn't bring you here just to fight with you. I am ready to answer all your questions. I shouldn't have reacted the way I did yesterday and I shouldn't have pushed you like that. I woke up today and that's the first thing I remembered and I felt terrible. I still feel terrible, the last thing I want is laying my hand on you. Just that you attacked me.

Me: So now you pushing the blame on me?

Him: No, that's not what I meant at all. Can we not fight? I hate fighting with you.

Me: So you say, you ready to answer all of my questions?

Him: Yes.

Me: All of them?

Him: (sighs) yes. I want us to walk through that door with everything resolved. Us being back to being what we were before.

Me: Ok. You have to answer them honestly. No matter how much

the truth hurts.

He nods.

Me: Why do you need a gun Tukelo? Guns are for killing.

Him: I know that.

Me: So you kill?

Him: (silence).

Me: Talk. I need to know.

Him: Look, I need the gun for protection.

Me: Protection from what?

Him: Some things you better not know.

Me: Are you being serious? I asked honesty.

Him: Yes but I don't think I can be totally honest with you.

Me: Why?

Him: For your own protection.

I roll my eyes. We are both stubborn as hell so it is best I leave it.

Me: Moving on. What's with all those portraits in that room?

Him: Eish, must you know everything?

He says scratching his head. I give him a look.

Him: Fine. I paint.

Me: I figured.

Him: Then what do you want to know?

Me: Those women. Who are they?

Him: (smirks) are you jealous?

Me: No. but I am sure if you find half naked men in my house, you'll have questions too.

Him: I'd kill you first then ask you.

So typical of him! If I were to do things to him, he would freak but then he expects me to understand. SMH.

Me: My point exactly.

Him: Ok, to be honest, I don't know who they are. I just paint women. You can't seriously expect me to paint men.

Me: That's bull! Those are fucking portraits! You can't tell me those are women just popped from your head.

Him: Don't raise your voice at me.

Me: Or what?

He sighs and put his hands in his pockets.

Him: I don't know what you want me to say because I am being serious. It was just my way of passing time. I will take paint and a brush and just paint what I think of at that given moment. I don't just paint women, I paint a lot of things. Just that you saw what you wanted to see.

Me: What does that supposed to mean?

Him: Nothing.

Me: People who are warning me about you?

Him: Who are those people?

Me: Does it matter?

Him: Yes.

Me: I ask questions here, in case you've forgotten.

Him: Fine. I have a past Amahle, a past that I am not proud of. I guess those people who told you those things belong in my past. I did bad things to people but I promise you, I am no longer part of that.

Me: What did you do?

I don't even think I want to know.

Him: Amahle, if I tell you. You going leave me.

He looks away.

The way he says that, it breaks my heart. Why would he thinks I would leave him after all the things I have done for him? Does he not trust me?

I step closer and hug him.

Me: Tukelo, don't you trust me? I have given you all I've got, I gave you my heart. I gave you all of me, do you still think I will leave you? I don't think my heart will let me.

He looks at me. We stare at each other. He hasn't hugged me back, he's hands are still in his pockets.

Him: Tigress, I am trying to forget my past and move on, please don't take me back.

I can tell something bad must have happened. I won't push him.

Me: Ok. You will tell me when you're ready.

Him: Thank you.

I kiss him. He still won't barge. I continue kissing him. He finally gives in. We share a very passionate kiss, he holds me tightly. The kiss is getting more intense and more intimate. He takes off my t-shirt, I take off his too. He lifts me and place me on his table. Like he did in his office. I lay on my back, we continues kissing. While he was taking off his pants, someone knocks on the door. He ignores it, continue kissing me and undressing me.

Me: Babe, the door.

Him: They will go away.

His voice has gone husky now. The knocking doesn't stop.

Me: Tukelo.

I try to push him off.

Him: Go away!

Pitsi: It's for Amahle!

He shouts from the other side of the door.

Me: It might be my mom.

Tukelo: Fuck.

He gets up dresses himself and tosses me my shirt. He looks pissed, yeah that's what a wasted erection do to men. He opens the door.

Him: Great timing dude.

He says that while passing Pitsi, Pitsi laugh at him.

I also get out and he hands me my phone. Shit! It's already 1pm and

I am supposed to meet Zitha and Nosi. I have 6 missed calls from them both. Damn! I am so dead. I quickly go upstairs to find Tukelo. He's busy getting ready to take a shower. He has his towel wrapped around his waist. He looks so dreamy, those muscles and those abs do him good. He looks at me and smiles.

Him: Will you ever get used to this? Every time you see me naked, you drool.

Oh my god, I didn't realize I was staring.

Me: Dude it's not every day I see a naked guy in front of me, so excuse me.

Him: Came here to finish off what you started?

He wraps his big arms around my waist.

Me: You know I love you right? (Smiling)

Him: (sighs) what do you want?

Me: Why would you assume I want something?

He gives me the 'I know you' look.

Me: Ok fine. I am going out with friends for lunch. I am already late so...

Him: Are you asking or you telling?

Me: I'm asking.

Him: Are you? Because to me that sounded more like a statement than a question.

The possessive Tukelo strikes again! Why do I always feel like I have to run every single detail pass him? I have a life of my own you know. I just don't understand him at times. Now I have to ask for his permission to see my friends? Come on.

Me: Tukelo. I am really late.

Him: It's just lunch with your friends?

Me: Yes.

Him: No clubbing?

Me: No clubbing.

Him: Fine.

He lets go of me.

Him: Need cash?

Me: Um well... I am kinda bankrupt because of you so... yeah... I think so.

Him: Is 5k okay? I don't have enough cash with me right now. Or should I transfer it in your bank account? Or better yet, take my card.

I did say I am going to lunch with friends, right?

Me: I don't think I will need that much money.

Him: Oh please, girls shop like crazy.

That's just being stereotypic.

Me: In case you haven't noticed, I am not like most girls. You, dear sir, got yourself a very different lady.

I do a 360 turn and he spansks my bum.

Me: Ouch!

Him: Ah come on you liked that.

I take a pillow and hit him on his head.

Him: Aw! What was that for?

Me: Ah come on, you liked that.

He laughs at me and shakes his head. We went to take a quick shower, we tried our best to behave.

After our shower, he gets dressed and I am left alone still wondering what to wear. Damn! I have one sexy man! He is wearing those

Redbat swag pants, those long Redbat vests, Gucci sneakers and his Relay Jeans cap. He looks like a hip-hop star. What kind of a CEO is

he? What if he bumps into one of his staff dressed like Lil' Wayne.

Me: And where are you going all dressed up?

Him: I am taking my siblings to the airport, I didn't tell you?

Me: No. They leaving already?

Him: Yes. They have wives to get back to and the sisters, Ntate wants them back as in yesterday.

Me: And you're going to the airport, looking that sexy?

Him: (smirks) so she thinks I am sexy and what's wrong with being sexy, you're sexy all the time. Me: But you're guy. Girls will drool over you.

Him: So it's okay for men to look at what's mine?

Me: No but knowing me babe, I would kill them if they tried anything.

Him: And that is what makes me sleep better at night.

Me: (laugh)

I unwrap my towel.

Him: Are you being for real?

I give him questioning look.

Him: Couldn't you wait for me to leave?

Me: Aybo, now I can't get dressed because you're here.

I drop the towel on the floor. Now I am fully exposed.

Him: Are you tempting me?

He looks at me from head to toe.

Me: Is it working?

Him: Oh it definitely is.

He says rushing to me and kissing me like it is the first time he's kissing me. It is amazing how just a few minutes of kissing him could get me so turned on. He picks me up and I wrap my legs around his waist. He moves with me and make me lean the on wall. He continues kissing me, the kiss is getting more intense. I can feel the 'dude' is up and ready to attack! He takes off his pants, only half way down though. I am still wrapped around him. He inserts his finger in my cookie. I let out a soft moan. I feel the 'big man' coming. He first plays 'it' around my cookie. That's making me yearn for him even more, I pull him closer. The 'dude' goes in. I moan. He movesslowly, then his pace starts to increase. I couldn't take it anymore, my moans turned into screams. He was also pounding and groaning. He had his hands around my waist. I was getting tired. He continued pounding me, he notices that I am tired, he lets me down. I couldn't feel my legs for a few seconds. I was breathing heavily so was he.

I finally open my eyes to look at him, he is smiling. This arse!

Me: You do know there's a bed behind you, right?

Him: (laughs) No, my poor bed has suffered enough. I wanted it to rest a bit.

Me: What are beds for kanti?

I hit him playfully on his chest. I went to the closet to look for something to wear. I took out a pair of jeans and a crop top and some sneakers.

Me: Yoh! I seriously need to go shopping.

Even though I don't like it one bit.

Him: See. That's why I said take my card.

Me: Not happening dude, but I will take that 5k.

Him: Fine.

xxxx

I am so late. They are going to bury me alive. But it is really not my fault, Tukelo decided to have a quickie. I had to say goodbye to his brothers. There was a lot on my plate. It was now going to 14:00. We were supposed to meet at 13:00. To make matters worse, I am not answering their calls.

I got to Wimpy, they were sitting and looking pissed as hell.

Me: Girls I can explain.

They just sip their juice and pretended that I wasn't there.

Me: Tukelo wouldn't let me go.

I am so sorry babe. That's the only way I can get out of this, but it is technically his fault, however, I don't remember complaining.

Me: The lunch is on me.

I know that will definitely get them talking.

Nosi: Now you're talking.

Little gold diggers. I feel sorry for their boyfriends' shame.

Zitha: So what took you so long?

Me: You can't seriously expect me to discuss every single detail I do with my man now.

Nosi: Well, you don't have to tell us anything. Your face says it all.

We all laugh.

I am having a good time with the ladies, it has been awhile since we have spent quality time together. Apparently, Nosipho left with Tumi last night. They even slept together. SMH. I didn't judge though it wasn't my place, I just kept quiet even though I was annoyed as hell.

Nosipho would be the one who gets hurts in the end but I have learnt to butt out. Well our 'innocent' Zitha left with one of Tukelo's

rich friends, Mvelo or something. A lot happened last night, things I didn't even notice. I didn't tell them about my fight with Tukelo though but I was having a blast. It's heading to 4 now. I start saying my goodbyes to the ladies because I want to pass Tukelo's house before I head home.

Nosi: Not so fast pretty girl, we are going to the salon and the mall.

You need to go shopping, you have a man now.

What? Are they being serious?

Me: It's getting late.

Nosi: Yeyi wena. Don't be stubborn, it ain't our fault that you came late.

I want to protest, I really do but before I could say anything, they grab my arm and we head to Factorie. They start shopping like crazy. From skirts to tops to jeans and dresses. Whoa! I have to draw the line here.

Me: I don't do dresses. Y'all know that.

Nosipho: Amy. You are someone's woman now. So you have to dress appropriately.

Me: Nosi, Tukelo found me like this. I will not change just because he's in the picture. No!

Zitha: What if you see or meet his parents'. You can't go around them dress the way you dress.

Me: And what is wrong with the way I dress?

I am starting to get angry now. I know they're trying to help but they shouldn't take it this far.

Zitha: Nothing. Just that... you show too much skin.

Nosi: And if you not showing skin, you're wearing something way too tight. How do I put this? You're way too sexy.

Me: So?

Zitha: Too much of everything is bad, which means if you're too sexy, it's a bad thing.

Why do I feel like they've been discussing this behind my back?

Me: Fuck man. No! If we do shopping for me we'll buy something I am more comfortable with.

I am furious right now. I start taking out all the dresses they chose and left the tops, jeans and skirts. I kinda like them. I pay and we leave. We go to the salon and they choose they choose this Malaysian Hair Straight weave and dang it's expensive. I just sit back and watch. They look at me like they want to say something. They then look at each other like they're debating about something but they don't use words.

Me: Out with it.

Zitha: Before you say no, just think about it. We were thinking that maybe you will try this weave on.

Me: The fuck?

Nosi: Come on Amahle, it wouldn't kill you. Just try.

Me: Fuck no.

Zitha: I beg you. Don't get us wrong, we are not trying to change you. Take this as an experiment.

Me: First, y'all took me shopping, then y'all wanted me to wear a flipping dress now this. It looks like y'all are trying to change to me.

Besides, I am will be using Lungelo's bike this week so a weave on my head it's a definite no, no.

Nosi: Damn you're so stubborn Amahle.

Me: Thank you.

Zitha: Please Amy, I beg you. I swear if you don't like then you will take it off.

I look at Zitha and she just gave me a look that makes it almost

impossible to say no. I know I will regret this.

Me: Flip, ok fine.

Nosi: Thank you.

Zitha: (smiles) you won't regret it.

Me: I think I am regretting it already.

I stood up and they start doing my hair. Lord! Be with me. What will people say? How do I explain this to people? Here I was judging people who're phonies and now I am doing the same thing.

Fuck! Kanti how long does it take for one to put a weave on? I have

been sitting here for more than two hours. My butt hurts, I don't know how people stand this. Finally, the lady is done. It is really late now. I haven't checked my phone I am sure my mom is worried sick. I get up, I don't even look in the mirror to check myself out. I go straight to my bag. I have 16 missed calls. 13 from Tukelo and 3 from my mom. I just text mom that I am on my way and I step outside to call Tukelo, he answers after the 4th ring.

Him: Amahle.

Me: Baby, I am really sorry. I got caught up.

Him: Mmm.

Me: I am done now.

Him: So?

Me: Geez, no need to be so harsh. I was hoping you can pick me up.

Him: Why don't you call a cab like you always do?

Me: You know, you could have just said you don't want to.

Him: I was asking.

Me: You don't want to Tukelo?

Him: Did I say that?

Me: Fuck, what is it with you? Just because I didn't pick up your

calls? That's why you this cold?

Him: Don't swear at me or...

Me: Or what Tukelo? You are going to lay your dirty hands on me again? I am not one of your exes that will let you do as you please.

Him: Nxa. We'll have this conversation when I get there.

He hangs up.

Was that supposed to be a threat? Who does he thinks he is threatening me? If he plans on laying a hand on me again,

then he had another thing coming. I will not stand it. He may be the

man in this relationship but I will not let him take advantage of that. I go back inside looking pissed as hell. I sit my ass down and wait on

Zitha and Nosi. They come to me.

Nosi: Damn girl. You're rocking that weave. You look amazing.

Zitha: Yes girl! Tukelo is going to drool over you.

Me: Really?

Nosi: Yes. Come see for yourself.

They take my hand and we all stand in front of the mirror. They're indeed telling the truth, I cannot recognize this person that I am seeing. I look amazing. I look hot.

Me: I'm ayt.

Nosi & Zitha: Just ayt?

Nosi: Bitch, you crazy. You look amazing.

I just smile because deep down I know that I look amazing. I got a text from Tukelo. I tell the girls that he's here and we go outside. We

find him in the parking lot leaning on a black Jeep and eating a lollipop. I never knew he owned a Jeep. He looks at me, like he's undressing me with his eyes. He even has his mouth open and the lollipop drops on the floor.

Me: Tukelo, you dropped your lollipop and stop drooling.

Him: You look... amazing.

Me: Thank you. I love your car.

Him: Really?

Me: Yes.

He still looking at me like he's going to eat me.

Nosi: Aybo, Tukelo. What about us?

Zitha: Yes are you only going to notice Amy?

Tukelo: (laughs) Hi, Zitha and Nosi.

Nosi. No we mean how do we look silly?

Tukelo: Um... okay, I guess.

Zitha: Okay? That's just mean.

Me: (laughs)

Tukelo: Sorry ladies, I am only programmed to notice my woman. Nosi, why don't you ask Tumi?

Nosi: Argh, you know how to spoil a girl's mood.

Nosi goes in the car, we just laugh at her. Zitha also follows her.

Tukelo looks at me again, like he doesn't believe his eyes.

Me: Aren't you going to kiss me? Or At least let me in your car.

Him: Yeah, right.

He kisses me on my cheek and opens the door for me. The ride home is rather long because I know Tukelo is still totally mad about that phone call. We both just didn't want to show the world that we are not in a good place. Only Zitha and Nosi is doing all the talking. I am just answering what they ask me. We drop Zitha first then Nosi.

Now it's me and him. He still hasn't said anything since we came in the car.

He's driving really fast, not that I mind though, I also want this trip to end. He parks at his usual spot. I look at him, he doesn't say anything. I guess we are not going to talk about it, I say bye and try to open the door but he locks it. What the fuck? I look at him.

Me: Tukelo, the door.

Him: What is it with you Amahle, why do you always have to disrespect me?

Me: Are we going to do this today?

Him: Your behavior is really starting to tick me off.

Me: I guess we are doing it.

Him: The hell Amahle, for fuck's sake, what is your problem?

Me: My problem? My problem is I will not be your puppet and do whatever the fuck you want.

Him: What are you talking about? When have I ever dictated you? And I think that's the problem, you do whatever you want and I say no shit.

Me: I am not one of your exes Tukelo, I am not scared of you.

Him: What? You are not making any sense. What is it with you bringing up my exes? Last time I checked, you don't even know any of exes.

Me: Oh don't be too sure about that.

Him: Can you please stop talking in riddles, and say whatever you

want to say.

Me: I have nothing to say Tukelo.

Him: Seem to me you have a lot to say.

Me: Can you open the door?

Him: No.

Me: (sigh) what is that you want me to say?

Him: I want to know what the hell is wrong with you.

Me: You really want to know Tukelo?! My problem is you and your dark past. Your past with women. You fuckin' beat woman Tukelo! I didn't want to believe that but after last night, I don't know what to fuckin' believe. I will not allow you to do that to me, I will not allow you to dictate my life, and I don't want to be added to the list of the women you've beaten.

Him: You done?

Me: Yes I think I am.

He unlocks the car.

Him: Get the fuck out of my car.

Me: What?

Him: You heard me! I said get out!

Me: Aren't you going to say anything?

Him: What do you want me to say? You have already concluded everything. It is clear to me that you will always listen to all the bull people feed you. You never ask me, you just believe all the shit you hear. That's not how relationships work. Seem to me you're not ready to be in a relationship. I don't have time for your bull and all your childishness. I think we're done here, there's nothing left to discuss. I have a lot of work to do, now for the last time, get the hell out of my car.

Me: What does all of that supposed to mean?

Him: Exactly that.

Me: Tukelo...

Him: Amahle, I don't like repeating myself.

Me: Fine.

I got out. He drives the car at a very high speed. Which really scares me, he's really mad. I hope he doesn't get into an accident. I process everything and I think Tukelo broke up with me. No, that's impossible. He wouldn't do that to us. But what does he mean when he said "we are done" and when he said "you're not ready to be in a relationship."

Now I am really worried.

Insert Fourteen 😊

I haven't spoken to Tukelo in 4 whole days and my birthday is coming up this weekend. I understand he's really mad at me but the least he could do is try to act like he cares about us. I did try calling him the day he sped off but he rejected all of my calls. That was a bit of a relief because it told me that he was still ok. I want to talk to him so badly but my pride will just not let me drag my feet to his house.

My day at work has been rather awful, I am messing up everything. I was messing up the orders and I am just grumpy, even to the customers. This thing of me and Tukelo is really getting me. I understand that he was mad but couldn't he call me just to check up on me? I always knew that being in a relationship is hard but I didn't think it will be this hard.

I am summoned to the big office, again. I know it's because of my behavior. I shouldn't bring my personal problems to work now Charles will eat me alive. I enter his office and closed the door

behind me.

Him: Amy, are you okay?

Me: Yes I am fine Charles... I mean Mr. Le Roux

Him: (smiles) call me Charles. I can see you're not. Now tell me, is it
Tukelo?

Me: No, I am fine really.

Him: Amy, I really care about you. I really do, not just as my
employee but as my friend's girlfriend. If he's giving you any trouble,
you can tell me.

Me: It's not him Charles. It's me. I just can't accept the fact that I am in a relationship. I mess up
everything. Now, he's not talking to me and I don't know what to do.

Him: If you're not ready Amy, then why did you agree to be with him the first place?

Me: Because I love him.

Him: (clears throat) I see. I know it's not entirely your fault, he also has a hand in this. He's never been
good with girls, he always mistreat them. He's also very good at making you see that you're at fault.

Me: But I know I was wrong. He didn't make me see anything.

Him: Well if you say so. If that's the case why don't you swallow your pride and talk to him?

Me: I am planning on doing so.

Him: Good.

Me: how is he? Have you spoken to him lately?

Him: Yes in fact I was with him a few hours ago. He seemed fine to
me.

Me: That's nice. Lemme go back to work now.

Him: Ok.

I stand up.

Him: Amy...

I turn to look at him.

Him: Have lunch with me?

Me: I don't think that's a good idea. What will the staff say?

Him: Will have it elsewhere. Today is your half-day, right?

Me: (nods) but...

Him: No buts. I will meet you at Café Del Sol Classico at 3.

What's with these people and Italian food?

Me: Fine.

Him: You look beautiful by the way.

Me: (smiles) thanks.

I leave his office and wonder to myself... what the fuck just happened? Now I am having lunch with my boss? Wow...

The rest of my day was okay. After that chat I had with Charles, I felt a lot better. I was going to talk to Tukelo and try and sort this shit out once and for all. My day was finally over, I told Zitha and Nosi that I am meeting up with Tukelo and we're sorting things out. I just couldn't blurt out that Charles is taking me to lunch. That would have made things a lot awkward.

I arrive at the place and I find Charles sitting at the far-end tables.

Him: Punctual. I like.

Me: (smiles) have I ever been late to work?

Him: (smiles) No ways. I have ordered for the both of us, hope you don't mind.

Me: Not at all. Tell me honestly Charles, what's this lunch about? I don't want to get special treatment just because I am dating one of the bosses.

Him: Don't look at it like that. Take as just a lunch between two friends.

Me: Friends?

Him: Yes. You're dating my friend, right? That automatically make us friends.

Me: Friends with the boss? And dating a boss?

Him: I told you, don't think of it like that.

Me: I hear you.

Him: Just know that when we are at work, I am your boss.

Me: (laughs) got it. So, 'friend' tell me about your wife and your marriage.

Him: Please let's not ruin our lunch.

Me: I am just making conversation.

Him: Rather we not talk about her.

Me: Why?

Him: I love my wife, just that I am not in love with her, know what I mean?

Our order arrives.

Me: Thank you.

Waiter: Anything else?

Charles: We okay for now.

The waiter leaves.

Me: Yes, I so get what you mean, but why, from what I hear, she's the bomb.

Him: Yes she quite is. Just that I fell for someone else and she didn't take it very well. I asked her for a divorce and she rejected me one.

Me: Wow, that's tough.

Him: Yeah, I know.

Lunch was not as bad with Charles as I thought it would be. He's quite funny and easy to talk to. I have spent almost an hour with him and I think it's time for me to leave now. My phone beeps. It's text message from an unknown number.

"Having fun with big boss, I see. I will kill you! Your days are numbered."

Now this is starting to freak me out. Who the fuck is this? Why are they trying to scare me?

Him: Are you okay Amy?

Me: I am fine. Just got a disturbing text.

Him: Let me see.

I give him my phone.

Him: Does Tukelo know about this?

Me: No. I didn't want to worry him about stupid things.

Him: This is not stupid Amahle. You have to tell Tukelo about this. He has to know.

Me: Fine.

Him: I mean it. Tell him or I will and trust me when I tell him he will freak.

Me: I said fine.

My phone beeps again. Charles give it to me. I cannot believe what I am reading. I don't know how to feel. I am very excited. I just got a text that says I am accepted in UCT.

Him: (smiles) Congrats.

Me: (smiles) thank you. I have to tell Tukelo.

Him: Sure. See you tomorrow.

I left and took a cab to Tukelo's house. I know we are bound to have an argument before I can tell him the good news. It's still early maybe his still at work but either way I am going to wait for him. I got to his house and it's open. I enter, I call his name but he doesn't answer. Instead a very good-looking young woman comes down.

Her: May I help you?

I don't know what to feel. I am very angry. How could Tukelo could just move on just like that? What happened to him not bringing women in his house? It only took him 4 days to just forget about me.

Me: Who are you?

Her: I should be asking you that.

Me: Is Tukelo around?

Her: Who wants to know?

I am very angry as it is. This girl is making things worse, but I don't think I have the energy to fight with her.

Me: Fuck this, never mind.

I was about to leave when I bump into Tukelo.

Him: Babe? What are you doing here?

Me: I was leaving. I made a mistake coming here.

Him: No, don't leave. Come let's go talk upstairs.

I follow him. Who's this woman? I look at her and she just gives me a bad look. We get to his room, he locks the door.

Him: So what can I do for you?

Me: Tukelo, I came here to apologize but I don't see the need now because it's clear that you've moved on.

Him: You're doing it again.

Me: Doing what?

Him: Jumping into conclusions without asking me.

Me: Why should I ask the obvious?

Him: (sighs) you're something else. For all it's worth, I didn't move on.

Me: Who's she?

Him: She's ausi Mavis's daughter. She's sick so she sent in her daughter to help me around here.

Me: Oh. Couldn't she send her sister or someone older?

Him: What's wrong with her?

Me: I don't know she's just too pretty and too young for my liking.

Him: (chuckles) jealous much?

Me: I am not jealous.

Him: (smiles) yeah right. Don't you owe me something?

Me: I owe you something?

Him: Yes. An apology.

Me: Ohh yeah right. I am sorry Tukelo, just that I am new to this. I get it, I am supposed to ask you before I jump into conclusions and all

that. I get it.

Him: Wow, you not really good with apologies huh?

Me: Yeah. But you get what I mean. I just need you to be patient with me. I really love you Tukelo. I don't want to lose you.

Him: You won't lose me.

Me: Then why haven't you called me for the past 4 days?

Him: I wanted to. I was busy, I was in Pretoria in the past 3days, and working my ass off. And besides, I wanted you to realize on your own that you made a mistake.

Me: Oh okay.

Him: Missed me?

He comes closer and wrap his arms around my waist.

Me: You have no idea.

Him: Mmm. Show me how much you missed me.

Me: (smiles)

I wrap my arms around his neck, I kissed him. He kisses me back. We are hungry for each other. We missed each other. He picks me up, I wrap my legs around his waist. He throws me on the bed.

Him: You're so dead. You made me miss you so bad, now you have to suffer the consequences.

Me: (smiles) bring it on.

He made love to me like he never did before. He was rough and crazy. I keep on pulling and pushing him. I was actually screaming. He took a pillow and covered my face.

Him: Shh, you're making noise.

Me: You're killing me.

I try pushing off the pillow.

He continued humping me like crazy. My cookie hurts like fuck, it's actually throbbing. After that rough session, he collapses his whole body on mine. I take the pillow off my face. We were both breathing heavily.

Me: Tukelo, you're heavy.

He gets off me and lies next to me. We were both staring at the ceiling.

Him: That's my way of punishing you.

Me: You're mean.

Him: Thank you baby.

He kisses my forehead.

Him: God, I missed you.

Me: Me too hone.

Him: Let's not fight again.

Me: We'll just have to see about that.

Him: Yeah Neh.

Me: Guess what?

Him: What?

Me: Aah a babe, I said guess if I tell you what then that wouldn't be guessing now would it?

Him: (laughs) well my love I am not good with guessing games so you might just tell me.

Me: Fine. I got in!

Him: Got in where?

Me: UCT!

Him: UCT?

Me: Yes. I thought you would be happy for me.

Him: But I didn't apply for you in UCT.

Me: Yes I know, I did.

Him: Amahle, UCT is in Cape Town and Cape Town is in another province.

Me: Yes, I know that.

Him: Then why would you apply in UCT?

Me: Baby, I wanted to keep my options open.

Him: I told you I had everything under control, now didn't I? Why can't you trust me with that? I told you that you're going to UJ and that's where you're going.

Me: But...

Him: End of discussion.

Tukelo is being a real jerk right now. I can't believe he just told me what to do. I got up and started getting dressed.

Him: Where you going now?

Me: Tukelo, I can't stay here while you're busy dictating my life and making decisions for me.

Him: You didn't even want to go to Varsity, I am the one who pushed you.

Me: Wow...

I gather my things and headed for the door. He grabs my arm.

Him: Baby I am sorry. That came out wrong.

Me: Can you leave me alone?

Him: Baby look, try to understand. If you leave, that would mean it's over for us.

Me: Are blackmailing me?

Him: No. Babe listen to me for once. Things would change if you leave. Trust me, we would see each other maybe twice or three times a year. Do you want that?

Me: No but...

Him: Then stay.

Me: How do you know that I am going to get in?

Him: You will. Just trust me.

Me: Okay.

Him: I love you.

Me: I love you too.

xxxx

Tukelo takes me home. It's almost 19:00. For a change I will be home a little early. I was really glad that we sorted everything and he got his Tigress back and I got my Michael Ealy back. I was okay with the fact that I wasn't going to UCT, as long as I go to school next year which he promised me that I will so I was okay with staying here with him. He parks at his usual spot.

Me: Oh I almost forgot, I had lunch with your friend today.

Him: My friend?

Me: Yes, Charles.

Him: What? And why would you do that?

Me: He asked me and I didn't see why not.

Him: He did?

Me: Yes babe.

Him: What did y'all talk about?

Me: You and we talked about his wife and the problems they have.

Babe, did he tell you that he wants to divorce his wife because he loves someone else?

Him: Y'all talked about that?

Me: Yes. Is there a problem babe?

Him: No. When are you resigning?

Me: What?

Him: You're going to school soon so I thought you are going to resign.

Me: Yes I will.

Him: When?

Me: Hawu Tukelo. Soon.

Him: Why not now? It's not like you need the money and you hate it there.

Me: Yes but what will I do with my time?

Him: I don't know, but I think you should quit.

Me: Oh.

Him: Babe, I was just making a suggestion if you don't want to then you don't have to.

Me: I see.

Him: You mad at me now?

Me: No not at all.

Him: Okay.

Me: Bye. Call me.

Him: (smiles) I will.

I got out and went to my house. I find my mom cooking and I decide to help her. I am even watching cooking shows, I am learning little

by little. I am even thinking of going to a cooking school. I think I

should check some schools nearby and maybe resign as Tukelo said and focus on learning how to cook.

Insert Fifteen 😊

Tukelo

What Amahle told me scared the heck out of me. What is Charles game? What does he want? I know he's still probably mad at me for what I did to him but it's not my fault that I fell in love with Amahle, it was never my intentions to fall for her. It just happened. Knowing Charles, he's going to want to get back at me. He will try to destroy what we have and the only way he could do that is if he tells Amahle the truth. I see that he's trying to bring her closer to him. If Amahle comes to know about the kind of job that I do, she'd definitely leave me. Not that I would let her leave me, she's my life. My phone rings. Caller ID: Ntate. I cannot believe this.

Me: Ntate.

Him: Moshemane.

Me: U kae?

Him: Ke teng, wena o kae?

Me: Nna ke teng Ntate.

Him: I see you weren't expecting my call.

Me: Yes I wasn't at all. It's been quite some time since we've talked.

Him: Don't over exaggerate. It's only been 5 years.

Me: Yes Ntate, I am over-exaggerating.

Him: So son, Nkati told me about all of your successes and how well you're doing.

Me: Yes, I am sure she did.

Him: Na u khanna?

Me: Yes.

Him: Okay let me not distract you, I will just get straight to the point. She also told me you have found someone.

Me: Yes I have.

Him: Things are pretty serious?

Me: Yes they are.

Him: Why don't you bring her here so we can meet her?

Me: I don't think that's such a good idea.

Him: Why?

Me: You know exactly why.

Him: I want to see her. I will do no harm.

Me: Ha ke tsibi Ntate.

Him: At least think about it.

Me: I will.

I hang up before he could say anything else. Don't get me wrong, I

love my woman and I wish for her to meet my family but knowing my family it would be a huge disaster. According to them, they

expected me to marry a Sotho woman that would match my

'standards'. I have a crazy ass Zulu girl so that means it would take a lot for them to accept her, if they ever happen to accept her. That's

what made cut all ties with my dad, he wants us to live life the way

he wants to. He never let us make our decisions. I didn't stand that, I was rebellious as fuck and decided to just run away when I was only 16. I didn't know what the heck I was doing, I just stole about M10000 in his safe and took off. I was clueless but I did what I had to do. Look at me now. I may have struggled a lot before I got where I was and did things I was never proud of but it helped me a lot in the end.

I got to my house and it feels empty without Tigress. I just feel lonely. I find Lerato, Mavis' daughter, having coffee in the lounge. I greet her and she greets back. I head for the stairs but she calls me, I turn to look at her.

Her: Aren't you going to join me?

Me: No Rato, I had a pretty long day and I just want to have a beer and get some sleep.

Her: I can also join you on that beer.

What the fuck? She is my fuckin' employee, we may be like the same age and all but she has no right to join me for beer. I just look at her.

Her: Oh I am so sorry aubuti Tukelo. That was very inappropriate of me.

Me: It's okay. I will just go take a shower then get some work done.

She nods.

Me: Oh and another thing, don't ever question Amahle again, you hear me? She's my woman so she will come and go as she pleases, are we clear?

Her: Ok cool.

I quickly get upstairs and took a shower. It gets really boring here now that Amahle is gone. I start keeping myself busy with work but it's not working. I get a text from Tumi inviting me for drinks. I know that things will go from bad to worse if I happen to join him so I ignore him but minutes later, I get a text from Dankies. Oh what the heck? I am bored anyway. I call Amahle first.

Her: Babe.

Me: Hey baby.

Her: Miss me already?

Me: (sigh) you have no idea. Is there any chance you can come over or I come there?

Her: (sigh) baby if I don't sleep at home any of these nights, mom will start getting even more suspicious. You know when I got home

today, she just said 'who is he?'

Me: (laughs) please tell me you didn't tell her anything. I don't want your brother killing me.

Her: I just told her she's hallucinating and she just gave me a suspicious look.

Me: She knows.

Her: Don't worry about her.

Me: Well okay. So babe, I am going out with the boys' tonight, if you can't get hold of me. Try to understand.

Her: Aah Tukelo, do you have to?

Me: Babe, I am bored.

Her: Do what all men do, masturbate.

Me: (laughs) I have a girlfriend.

Her: But your girlfriend isn't around, now is she? That's why I am saying, masturbate.

Me: (laughs) I will do no such. It's either I go out or I spend my night with Lerato and we're alone.

Her: Enjoy your night with the boys.

Me: (laughs) thank you babe.

Her: Ok. Behave Tukelo. I trust you.

Me: Please do hone because I promise you I will only drink a few beers and that's it. I will call you when I am back.

Her: Ok.

Me: I love you, sending you kisses.

Her: I love you more.

We hang up and I gather my things and went downstairs.

Her: Going out?

Me: Yes.

Her: You are going to leave me alone? In this big house?

Me: you'll be fine. This house is secured, nothing will happen to you.

Her: So you will leave me alone here, every night?

Fuck this chick!

Me: No, my chef is coming back on leave tomorrow.

Her: You have a chef?

Me: Yes. Now bye.

Her: Wait... can't I come with?

Now she's seriously getting on my nerves.

Me: Look, my mom and your mom maybe friends and we may come from the same village but that doesn't make us friends. You're my employee and my employees never go out with me, got that?

She nods.

Me: Good.

I leave the house and head to the club.

I find these two already drunk. I don't waste any time. They order 7 shots of vodka for me. They dared me! So I couldn't let down a

challenge. What could go wrong?

After almost 15 shots, I am out. The whole world starts spinning. Who is going to drive me home? I move from shots to beers. The hangover I will have tomorrow! But that's tomorrow's problem. Right now I am just enjoying the night out. We move to the VIP area and there are half-naked and sexy girls everywhere. I may be a lot drunk but I had promised my woman to behave. This sexy woman starts doing a lap dance for me.

Me: I am good.

Tumi: Come on, don't be a bore.

Dankies: Yes man.

Me: I have a woman to do that for me.

Them: And we don't?

Tumi: Come on man, it's just a onetime thing. It's not like you gon fuck the girl and besides what Amahle doesn't know won't kill her.

Dankies: Is she controlling you?

Me: What? No.

Tumi: Seems like she is if you scared to even touch another girl even though she's not around to see it.

Me: Fuck off.

Dankies: The Tukelo I know would be fucking the girl as we speak, looks like this Amahle chick got you by the balls.

Me: Shut up. I just promised her that I will behave.

Tumi: And you will, it's just a lap dance.

Me: That could lead to fucking.

Dankies: (laughs) wouldn't be a bad thing.

Tumi: Prove to us that Tigress as you call her, is not controlling you.

Me: I don't have anything to prove to you idiots.

Dankies: They got him. They got him bad.

Me: Huh?

Tumi: It's clear you know nothing about relationships little brother,

woman are the smartest creatures, they can make you do things you don't want to do and they can make you they're lap dog

without you realizing it.

Me: I am nobody's lap dog.

Dankies: If you're nobody's lapdog, we wouldn't be having this conversation right now.

Tumi: Exactly.

Oh what the heck? I let her dance for me. I would be lying if I am saying I wasn't turned on. I am man after all. I look around, Dankies and Tumi are making out with their women. This one leans to kiss me, I don't kiss her back at first but eventually I kiss her back. Amahle immediately pops in my mind. I push the girl back.

Her: What's wrong?

Me: I'm sorry I can't.

Her: Why? Dude, I am not looking for a relationship, take me as one of your one night stands.

She tries to kiss me again. I push her off and got up. Tumi calls for me, I ignore him. I go down to the bar and order another set of shots.

Now I am really drunk. After that, everything is a blur.

xxxx

I wake up and it's morning. Fuck! I have a really bad headache. I wake up and realize I am not in my room. I am in one of my spare rooms. Why the heck I am in one of my spare rooms? I sit up and rub my eyes. I cannot believe this! How did this happen? How did she get here? I immediately jump off the bed. I shake her.

Me: Lerato. Lerato get up!

Her: Mmm.

Me: Get the fuck up!

Her: What is it?

She stretches herself and sat up. I am walking up and down trying to remember what the fuck happened last night.

Me: What the fuck happened last night?

Her: You don't remember?

Me: If I did, I wouldn't be fuckin' asking you, now would I?

Her: Well something that should have happened long time ago, happened last night.

Me: No!

Her: (smiles) Oh yes.

Me: You mean... we...

Her: We made love.

Me: We didn't make love if what you saying is true then we just had sex not make love.

Her: Call it whatever you want.

Me: Fuck! This is fucked up! You have to leave.

Her: So you got what you wanted now you want me to leave?

Me: First of all, I never wanted to sleep with you. It was never my intentions to do so but now that the damage is done, you have to leave. I can't have you around Amahle.

Her: That's all you talk about, Amahle, Amahle, Amahle. What about me? Even when we made love, you just kept on shouting for her name while I was the one riding you! (Cries)

Me: Look, what happened last night shouldn't have happened. I am sorry.

Her: (cries) to me it was never a mistake. I love you Tukelo. I always have. Since we were kids.

Me: Lerato look, try to understand, I am not in love with you. Bringing you here was a mistake.

She cries louder and starts hitting me with pillows. I leave the room and locked her inside. I dialed Mme Mavis' number. Luckily she picks up on the 3rd ring.

Her: Ntate Mokoena.

Me: Dumela mme.

Her: U kae?

Me: I am good. How are you and when are you coming back?

Her: I am better now. Was thinking of coming back next week?

Me: No! You have to come back, today.

Her: Why? Is there a problem?

Me: No, don't mean to be rude but Lerato is kinda lazy.

Her: Oh I understand. I should have never sent her but she insisted.

Me: It's okay mme, when can you come down? I can get one of my drivers to come get you today.

Her: Yoh! Okay.

Me: Thanks. See you later.

Her: Bye-bye.

I hang up. Now I have to make sure Lerato shuts up. I go to her room and I find her curled up in bed.

Me: Now listen and listen to me very carefully because I am only going to say this once. You will not open your mouth, you don't tell your best of friend and you will not even tell your cat about what happened because I swear Lerato, I will kill you with my bare hands and you know I will. Don't open your big mouth, got it?

She nervously nodded.

Me: Good. Now pack your things, you're leaving in an hour.

Lerato: An hour?

Me: Yes. Is there a problem with that?

Her: No.

Me: Thought so now pack.

She picks up her pajamas and got up. I stop her, those pajamas look familiar.

Me: Hold on. Give me those PJ's.

She does so. I sniff them.

Me: These are Amahle's PJ's. What the hell are you doing with her pajamas?

Her: What? They must look the same.

Me: I bought her these and they are goddamn expensive and I know you wouldn't afford them besides, they have her scent.

She looks down. I immediately got up, strangled her and pushed her to the wall.

Me: How many times have I told you to stay away from her and her things? What the hell were you doing in our room?

She tries to talk but couldn't. I tightened my grip.

Me: Don't ever come back here again! Do you hear me?

She nods. I see her face getting green, I let of her and she coughs badly.

Me: Now pack! You better be done when I come back.

I leave her trying to catch her breath.

This is really bad. I get to my room, I throw myself in bed and try to process the shit that just happened. How could I be so careless? How will I face Amahle after this? I feel so guilty, I feel like taking a gun and just take a bullet through my brain. I know for a fact that if she finds out about this she's going to kill me and Lerato. Why am I beating myself up over this? I have done this many times before. I can sure lie to Amahle's face and pretend everything's cool. But this is my woman we're talking about, I love her. How can I do this to her?

I take a quick shower and wash all of my sins away. I got out and got dressed. I still feel miserable. I am just glad I didn't let her in our bed.

My phone rings. Caller ID: My Tigress.

I cannot get myself to answer her call. I just look at it ring. My hands start to shake, my heart beats faster. I look at my phone until she

gives up and dropped the call. Shit! I have 20 missed calls. Most are from her. She's going to be so mad at me. But I better call her before she gets suspicious. I have to man up. I dial her number and she picks up on the 1st ring.

Her: Hey.

My heart starts beating fast, words fail me.

Her: Hello?

Me: Babe, hi.

Her: Hi Brian.

Shit she called me Brian. That means she's mad.

Me: How are you?

Her: (silent).

Me: Babe?

Her: I called last night.

Me: Eish, yeah baby, I am sorry I couldn't take your calls.

Her: Yes I know that, what I want to know is why?

Me: Baby things got out of hand a bit and I took a cab home, when I got home I dozed off.

Her: I see.

Me: I am sorry, can I make it up to you?

Her: No, it's fine Tukelo. I understand.

Me: Really?

Her: Yes.

Me: thank you babe.

Her: So you had fun last night?

I feel a big lump in my throat.

Me: Yes, but I missed you a lot.

I am trying to change the topic here before I blurt out anything

because the guilt is killing me.

Her: If you missed me you would've called.

Me: Babe don't.

Her: Don't what?

Me: Pick a fight.

Her: I am not picking any fights, from where I am standing you the one who's picking fights by not calling me when you had promised to.

Me: Tigress I said I was sorry.

Her: Fine Tukelo. You do as you please anyways.

Me: (sigh) it's your birthday tomorrow.

Her: I am aware.

Me: Can you sleep-over? Today?

Her: What?

Me: I want to be the first to wish you a happy birthday.

I didn't plan for things to go like this but I have to make it up to her to make myself feel better.

Me: Please baby, I beg.

Her: Fine.

Me: Thank you. I will pick you up at 5.

Her: You or one of your drivers?

Me: Me.

Her: Okay.

Me: I love you.

She hangs up. Ouch! That's just cold!

Lerato walks in.

Her: I'm done.

Me: Good. Did you take out all the sheets from that bed we used?

Her: I was supposed to do that?

Me: Yes, from the linen to the sheets, heck even the curtains. Take everything out and burn them.

Her: You're jerk, you know that?

Me: Thanks, and keep those PJ's. I don't want my woman wearing them.

She rolled her eyes, god I hated when people do that!

Me: Now when you done, go downstairs to the garage, the driver is waiting for you.

She walks out. I have to get everything ready before Amahle gets here.

Bonus Insert 😊

Andile

Me: So how long are we going to keep doing this?

I look at her as her beautiful body was laying on top of me, I brush her hair slowly. Yeah, she came back to me. We've been seeing each other for almost three months. After I told her to come fetch her bra, we met in Maboneng and somehow I managed to convince her to come home with me, it wasn't easy convincing her because she is not a naïve girl but by the grace of the lord, she did. When we got to my house, she spent the night and she kept on coming back to me ever since but she made it very clear to me that we're not dating and I've made peace with that.

Her: Do you want us to stop?

Me: Of course not, I'm just wondering. I mean we have been seeing each other for three months now.

Her: Wow, has it been that long?

Me: Yes Nonhle.

Her: Look, all I know is I'm loving whatever it is that we're doing. Arent you?

Me: How can you even ask me that? You know I do.

Her: Then we shouldn't worry about anything else. We'll only stop when we get caught.

I laugh.

Me: Whoa, so I'm guessing we will never stop because there's no way we're getting caught. We're too careful.

We only meet in hotels and never during the day. We never check out together. She first leaves then I leave after her. It's exhausting but I'm used to it now. We never go on dates or eat out like normal couples but that's the thing, we're not a normal couple so we can't do what normal couples do.

Her: Exactly. I never thought I'd say this but I'm enjoying what we're having.

Me: Yeah me too but I wish I can shut down the feeling I have for you and just see you as my sex mate.

Her: Ndile please, let's not label anything for now. Let's just go with the flow. We both know that if we tell people about us, they'll never let us be.

Me: Oh cut the crap because you're scared of your boyfriend.

She gets off me and looks at me.

Her: I am not scared of him.

Me: You are.

Her: I am not.

Me: Oh yeah? Then tell him about us.

Her: What? No. He's going to kill me.

Me: My point exactly. You're scared of him.

Her: Aren't you scared of your girlfriend finding out?

Me: Nah, I don't care really. I can even call her now and tell her.

Her: Are you crazy?

Me: About you? Yes.

She blushes.

Her: I shouldn't be feeling this way about you Ndile. It's so wrong in so many ways.

Me: If loving you is wrong Nonhle, then I don't wanna be right.

Her: I cannot believe I scored myself a Ben 10. A hot one at that!!

She laughs, I also laugh at her madness.

Me: Hey, you're lucky this Ben 10 is a man, I'm not after your money or anything. So I didn't score myself a sugar mama, I scored myself a woman.

Her: That's right. So I'm seeing you again tomorrow?

Me: Uh, I'm not sure babe, because it's my sister's birthday tomorrow so I have to be home.

Her: Oh.

Me: Don't be sad now, I didn't say I won't see you. I just said I'm not sure.

Her: No its okay, be with your family tomorrow. I will see you some other time.

Me: Okay. I will tell you when.

Her: Okay.

Me: You still on the pill, right?

Her: Oh my God Ndile, I forgot to bring them today. I didn't take them.

Me: Relax, it's just today. You'll take it tomorrow.

Her: I'm not supposed to miss a day.

Me: And we didn't use protection.

Her: Fuck! But you withdrew right?

Me: I don't know.

Her: What do you mean you don't know?

Me: I mean I don't know Nonhle. Relax, we'll get the morning after pill.

I knew for a fact that I didn't withdraw, I just hope nothing will happen.

Though she can never admit that I make her happy, though she always deny that she loves me. I know she does because her body betrays her everytime. Her big eyes says it all. I hope and pray that one day our relationship can be out in the open because this is the first time I've ever felt this way about a woman.

Insert Sixteen 😊

Amahle

I am having a pretty long day at work. Have ever mentioned that I hate my job? Well I do. I just can't wait to get out of this place, I am even considering resigning early as Tukelo mentioned. Right now, I am changing an order because the client said she wanted ice in her drink but she clearly said no ice. She is really starting to tick me off. I went and changed the order and gave her drink.

Her: This burger is dry.

Me: What?

Her: I'm saying this burger is dry, I won't eat this. I want steak, maybe it won't look this sad.

She gives me her plate.

Me: You have got to be fucking kidding me. Look, I have gone back and forth because of your ass, now I am tired of you! Get your own stupid steak!

This one has pushed my buttons.

Her: What? I am a customer...

Me: That's all y'all know! Have it ever crossed your mind that I am human too. Yet you're treating me like your own personal slave? Has it ever crossed your mind that maybe if I get an order wrong I will have to pay for your order? You fucking abusing your rights man!

I see Charles coming our way.

Him: Is there a problem here?

Her: Yes, there is. This woman is being really rude.

Him: Amy, what has gotten into you? In my office now!

He turns and look at this bitch.

Him: I am sorry mam' I will get you another waiter.

Charles pulls my hand and we go in his office. He closes the door.

Him: What has gotten into you?

Me: If you have seen the way she was treating me.

Him: It doesn't matter what she did or said, you swore at her that was unprofessional and completely uncalled for so I have no choice but...

Me: You know what, I will save you all the trouble, I quit.

Him: What? I wasn't going to fire you, I was going to give you a verbal warning.

Me: No need. I quit.

Him: Amy are you sure about this?

Me: Positive. In case you haven't noticed, I hate this job and I want out.

Him: But why?

Me: I don't need it.

Him: Oh, it's Tukelo, right?

Me: What does Tukelo have to do with any of this? You see I am the one who's standing in front of you. I am the one who's quitting.

I leave his office. I am glad that's over. I go to the canteen and start packing and gathering my staff. Nosi and Zitha enter.

Nosi: Girl, what was that all about?

Me: I quit.

Them: What?

Me: Yes. I want to focus on getting to school next year, this job was just adding to my stress.

Zitha: But you need the money.

Me: No I don't anymore.

Nosi: Tukelo told you to quit, right?

I just carried on packing.

Nosi: Babe, don't allow him to take your dependency away from you. Once he starts providing for you, he will start to control you and make you live under his demands. Don't let him do that. Me: Geez

Nosi, you know me better than that. I will not allow him to do that.

Zitha: Nosi is right, I don't feel good about this.

Me: Will you just relax. You guys know that I hated this job, now that I am going to school next year, I don't need it anyway.

Nosi: I hope you know what you're doing.

Me: I hope so too.

They walked me out and I went straight home. I find my mom and Zanele making lunch. She's always here now. I don't even say anything, I just ignore her.

Ma: You home early.

Me: Yes, had a half day. Can I help?

They look at me like I am crazy.

Me: What?

Ma: Baby sit down, I need to talk to you.

I sit down.

Ma: I know you've found someone, so just tell me who he is.

Me: Not this again ma.

Her: I know you Mahle, you're my baby I gave birth to you. Since when you help around? You have this fake hair on and you always come home late. That's not you. So there's got to be a man involved now tell me and you know I would be more than happy if that was the case.

Me: (sigh) I guess it's true when they say a mother is always right. Well yes mom, I have found someone.

Her: (smiles) really?

Me: Yes.

Zanele: Who?

Me: I won't say as yet, just know that there's someone.

Ma: Wow Mahle and all along I thought I would never hear you say that. You have to invite him over for dinner. I want to meet him. He

must be a decent man if he managed to change the way you think about men.

Me: Yes ma, he's quite different.

Her: Invite him over.

Me: Ah mom, I can't do that as yet.

Her: Why?

Me: It's still too early and he's always busy.

Her: Don't be silly if he loves you, he will make time.

Me: Ok mom, I will talk to him.

My mom just can't stop smiling and Zanele is looking at me confused.

Me: And mom tonight my friends are taking me out since it's my birthday.

Ma: Or the mystery guy.

I may have confessed to my mom but I am sure as hell not going to update her about the things me and Tukelo do.

Me: No man! He's away on business.

Ma: Okay.

I help them with preparing lunch and I have to say, I learnt a thing or two. If I keep this up, I would be an expert in no time.

At 4, Tukelo calls and tells me to get ready because one of his drivers is picking me up. I thought he was the one coming, but I don't say anything. I quickly took a shower.

When I was done with my shower, I decide on wearing the clothes I bought with oNosi the other day. I haven't had a chance to wear

them. I decide on wearing my brownish fringe boots and brownish fringe skirt and a long sleeved cropped top. I tie my weave into a lazy bun. I apply a little bit of make-up and by 5 I was done and waiting on the driver. I took a good look at myself and dang I was hot. I never knew I could clean up this good.

I get a text from Tukelo. I just don't get why the drivers couldn't have my numbers, it was dumb that they had to tell Tukelo that they have

arrived and Tukelo would have to pass the message to me. The

insecurities this guy has. SMH. I say my goodbyes to mom and Zanele then went outside to the car.

I see the driver leaning on the black Mercedes. How many cars does this guy have? Funny though because I only see the BMW parked in

his garage. What's with him and black-dimmed cars? That's just creepy. I greet the guy he nods and opens the back seat door for me.

Me: I want to sit in the front.

He looks at me shocked.

Him: But the boss...

Me: I don't see your boss here.

I walk to the front and open the door for myself and got in. He also enter, looks at me nervously and starts the car.

Me: So what's your name?

Him: (silent).

Me: I asked a question. I mean you've picked me up for the past 3 months yet I don't know your name.

Him: (he looks at me and smiles.) I'm Sabelo.

Me: Are you usually this quite?

Him: It comes with my job description mam'.

Me: Please don't call me that. I'm Amahle.

Him: Mam' my boss will...

Me: Enough about your boss. I want you to call me Amahle.

Him: Umm... okay... Mam' Amahle.

Me: (smiles) close enough.

We talked about general stuff, he starts opening up to me and he tells me how much he wished to become a Mechanical Engineer one day but couldn't pursue his dream because he had to take care of his sick grand-ma who's now no more. His story is a bit sad. I felt really bad for him. We had something in common as well, our love for soccer and our love for fast cars. We even had a debate on which is the fastest car. We arrive in the house he parks the car outside, apparently Tukelo instructed everyone to take the rest of the weekend off.

Him: The boss will definitely freak and fire me if he hears about this.

Me: What Tukelo doesn't know won't kill him (winks).

Him: (smiles) Bye Mam' Amahle.

Me: See you around buddy.

I got off the car and he drove off. I get in the house and the whole house is dark. I call Tukelo's name but nothing. Please don't tell me he will do the same thing I did. I can't even imagine Tukelo dance for me and strip for me. I chuckle and brush that thought out of my mind. I call him again, still nothing. I decide to switch on the lights.

The first thing I see is a portrait on a wall in the lounge. It's so big and bright. I look closely and it's me. I cannot believe this. I look at it closely again. I am sleeping and I am covered in a throw, it's sexy. I love it. I touch it and tears fill up my eyes. I quickly wiped them off.

Him: You like it?

I didn't even see him there. I look at him then the portrait.

Me: I love it.

Him: Good. I worked hard on that and I have to say this is my master piece. This is far most the best painting I have ever painted.

Me: It's beautiful.

Him: Just like the person on it.

Me: (smiles).

He comes closer and kisses me.

Him: Hey babe.

Me: Hey.

Him: You look amazing.

Me: Thank you. You look good too.

Him: Just good?

Me: And sexy.

Him: That's right.

He kisses me again. This time the kiss has a lot of passion and intimacy. He lifts me up, I wrap my legs around his waist. He walks with me towards the kitchen. He places me on the kitchen counter. He lets go and I am horny as fuck.

Him: Ok, let's eat.

Me: Eat?

Him: Yes.

Me: I am not hungry.

Him: But I am.

He goes to the stove and starts dishing up.

Him: I cooked by the way.

Me: In that case, dish up for me.

Him: (smiles)

Tukelo is such a good cook. I can't not eat his food. He dishes for me and give me my plate. I eat while sitting on the kitchen counter, he eats while standing in front of me.

Him: Are you still mad at me?

Me: No not really. You have to make it up to me, remember?

Him: How can I forget? (Smiles.)

Me: What are you waiting for?

He smiles and places his plate on the kitchen counter and starts

kissing me. So much for dinner. He picks me up and this time carries me to 'our' bedroom. When we get there, he puts me down and

turns the lights on but it's still a little dim. The room looks amazing.

There rose petals all over the floor, a bunch of flowers on each side

of the headboard tables. There's even music playing: Chris Brown-

Sweet Love. On the bed, it's written 'I love you' with the rose petals. I look up, I see another painting, this time it's me and him, looking at

each other. I remember this picture. It's the first picture we took together and it's beautiful. I look at him and kissed him.

Me: Man, you're good.

Him: (smiles) I'm a man of many talents.

Me: Show me what else you're good at.

He kisses me and throws me on the bed. He starts singing along with the song whilst kissing me, and that's kinda turning me on.

Him: 'Baby let's naked, just so we can make sweet love. All these sensations, got me going crazy for you. Inside on top of you, grinding inside and out of you. Baby I know what to do, baby I know what to do. So come on baby girl let's take our clothes off...'

I am so turned on. He kiss me, undresses me while singing along. He's not even a bad singer! He's actually good. Geez! What can't this

man do?

When the song was over. He kisses me like he never did before. I

undress him. He makes love to me. I have to say, this time it was

different. Not a bad different, and not a good one either. It was just

different. It was like he was hesitating having sex with me. He kept on stopping and looking at me. It was like something was bothering him.

He get off me and sleeps next to me.

Me: What's wrong?

Him: Nothing.

Me: Don't lie to me.

Him: I am not lying to you.

Me: Then tell me what's eating you.

Him: (sigh) my father wants to meet you.

Me: What? How does he even know about us?

Him: Nkati told him. You know, I want to strangle that girl. She had no right to do so.

Me: Why? You never wanted your family to meet me.

Him: No babe, that's not what I meant. Of course I want them to meet you, just that they're not the kinda of people you look forward on meeting.

Me: I figured that you have problems with your dad.

Him: Yeah we're more like rivals.

Me: But why?

Him: Babe, I don't want to talk about it.

Does this man want to talk about anything?

Me: Oh ok.

We sit in silence and listen to this music playing. Suddenly I remember something.

Me: Babe, krump and break-dance for me.

Him: (laughs) what? No.

Me: Why not?

Him: I don't dance.

Me: But you do. Heck, you even sing.

Him: (laughs) that stays between us.

Me: (laughs) your secret's safe with me. Now dance.

Him: No!

Me: But it's my birthday.

Him: It's not your birthday yet.

Me: But it's my Birthday Eve.

Him: (laughs) does that kinda thing even exist?

Me: Well there's Christmas Eve, New Years' Eve, then why not Birthday Eve.

Him: (laughs) you crazy, you know that?

Me: Yeah, yeah. Now dance.

He smiles, looks at me and stands up. He put on his boxers only, switches the radio a little louder and turns on Chris Brown's Party. He starts dancing, I look at him cramp. I look at him break-dance. Man

he's good and that's kind of a turn on that he dances like that.

Especially when he does in slow motion. When he was done, he was sweating and breathing heavily. He throws himself on the bed. I wipe his sweaty forehead and kissed it.

Me: You're good babe. I had no idea that you danced like that.

Him: Thank you. Now shall we get the real party started?

I laugh and nod.

He kisses me hungrily, he kisses me from my neck, down, down, down... till he reached my cookie. He inserts his tongue, I moan. He bites it gently while sucking it, I push his head in. He tries to back away but I push him back. He continues pleasuring me, when I decided it was enough, I pull him up. I undress him, he's in between my legs. My legs are wrapped around him. We kiss until I feel 'him'

inside me. He pounds me, no the correct term here would be that he fucked me hard. I moan and scream. He groans. He gets off me and I get on top of him, I ride him like it was my last. He is groaning and I am moaning like crazy. Until I couldn't take it anymore, I collapse on top of him. We try to catch our breath and I am listening to his heart beat and that was music to my ears.

Tukelo

I see this woman lying on top of me and I just know that I have everything I needed. The guilt was killing me but I can't afford losing her that will kill me as well. I have never felt like this about a woman before, yet I was here lying to her. I can't afford hurting this woman, she deserves better. If it meant I would lose her then so be it but I can't keep on lying to her like this. She will find out about the truth eventually.

Me: Babe?

Her: Mmhh.

Me: Are you awake?

Her: Mmm.

Me: Good. I need to tell you a few things about me. Just promise not to leave me, I know it's a bit selfish of me to tell you this on you

'Birthday Eve' but the guilt is killing me.

Her: (silent).

Me: (sigh) first of all, I am not who you think I am. I run an illegal

business but I also have a legit business T.B.M Logistics but I'm also into illegal dealings. I have tried leaving that kind of life but it's not easy. It made me who I am today, it made TBM, it's not easy to just up and leave. (Sigh) not only that, I kind of... I... cheated on you.

Well, I think I did... I... babe?

I thought, she would huffing and puffing right now but she's just silent. I look at her and great! She's asleep. Where the heck will I get the balls to do that again? I get her off me and lay her beside me. I kiss her forehead and wrap my arms around her. She just had to fall asleep now!

Insert Seventeen 😊

Amahle

When I wake up it's already morning and Tukelo is not next to me. I stretch myself and I see him on the chair looking at me and smiling.

Him: Happy birthday my love.

He hands me a blindfold.

Me: (smiles) this is my present? A blindfold?

Him: (laughs) are you naturally slow or you do that on purpose?

I take a pillow and throw at him, he ducks and laughs.

Him: Put it on.

Me: How am I going to get downstairs?

Him: You have me to lead the way.

Me: Ay, I don't trust you.

Him: But you trust me with your pussy.

I take another pillow and throw it at him, he ducks again.

Him: (laughs) and I am the abusive one. Now get up.

Me: Let me take a quick shower first.

Him: No, just wash your face and brush your teeth.

Me: Oh Ok.

I go wash my face and brushed my teeth. I come back and he's still sitting on that chair. He give me the blindfold.

Me: Are you serious about this?

Him: Yes.

I put it on and he takes my hand and leads the way. We get down the stairs, I hit my toe on the stair wall.

Me: Ouch! See what happens when I trust you? I get hurt.

Him: (chuckles) sorry.

We get downstairs and he takes me outside the house. He takes a deep breath.

Him: Ready?

Me: Yes, yes, yes. Now take this thing off, curiosity is killing me.

He goes behind me and takes it off. My vision is still a little blurry, I wait for my eyes to function again. I cannot believe what I see. I look at him.

Me: Are you serious?

Him: Yep.

I scream and hug him, more like jump on him. He catches me and I wrap my legs around him.

Me: Tell me you're joking!

Him: I wish I could say that but I would be lying.

I scream. I'm sure the entire neighborhood heard me.

Him: Geez! My ears.

Me: Baby, that's a fuckin' Ecosse Titanium Series FE TIXX. The most expensive bike! I didn't even know they had in South Africa.

Him: They didn't, I had shipped here.

A tear escaped my eye, he wipes it with his thumb and smiles.

Him: So you like it?

Me: Like it? Baby, I love it!

Him: Good, because that thing cost me a fortune.

Me: Aah babe, you didn't have to.

Him: I wanted to.

Me: But I thought you said no 'wife' of yours will get on that thing.

Him: But you love bikes, and I love you so I had to make you happy.

When you happy, I am happy.

Me: Ncaah babe, thank you so much! I cannot wait to show this thing off.

I scream again, he just looks at me and I could see that he was satisfied with himself.

I kiss him. I get off him and went to check my bike. I walk around it, admiring it. I never saw one live, now I own one!

Me: Baby, these wheels are ecstatic! Look at the perfection! I can already see myself riding it and I will feel like I am flying.

Him: Whoa! Easy tiger. Now you're worrying me.

Me: Relax. Now give me the keys, I want to take it for a spin.

Him: You're taking a bike for a spin? That sounds dangerous.

Me: Well my handsome boyfriend, you should have thought about that before you bought me this bike. Now the keys please.

Him: Well my beautiful girlfriend be careful, please.

Me: I will because you're coming with me.

Him: (laughs) me on that thing?

Me: (laughs) you sound scared.

Him: I am not.

Me: Are to.

Him: No I'm not.

Me: Then come with me.

Him: I will have my arms wrapped around you?

Me: Of course.

Him: Shouldn't it be the other way round?

Me: It should but you my dear sir, can't ride a bike to save your life.

Him: (laughs) touché. But I can learn.

Me: Yeah right. It's not something you can just learn overnight.

Him: But how hard can it be?

Me: Harder than you think.

Him: We'll just have to see about that.

He comes closer and sits on my bike.

Me: What are you doing?

Him: What does it look like I'm doing? I am taking you for a spin.

Me: No.

Him: Yes.

Me: Tukelo.

Him: Amahle.

Me: You forgot one tiny detail.

Him: And that is?

Me: (whisper in his ear) you can't ride a bike.

Him: (laughs) you're going to teach me.

Me: Are you nuts?

Him: Just trust me and tell me what I should do.

Me: I don't know about this.

Him: Just trust me. I'm a fast learner.

Me: I will regret this.

I tell him exactly what to do and I hopped on behind him and wrap my arms around him.

Him: Ready?

Me: No.

Him: Okay, here we go.

He starts the bike like a pro. He takes off, he doesn't seem to have trouble at all. He's riding really fast. We go out the house, I am holding on to him like my life depends on it, how ironic! We go around the neighborhood. This man lied to me! There's no way a first timer can ride a bike this good. He's even did donuts. I was having the best time actually. After our ride, we got to his house and he parked the bike.

Him: And?

Me: And what?

Him: Did I do well?

Me: You lied to me. You know how to ride a bike, don't you?

Him: (smiles) well...

Me: Jerk!

Him: (laughs) it was a long time ago when I learnt, I didn't think I still had it in me. I never loved a bike, when I had an accident, I vowed

to never ride a bike ever again.

Me: Whatever.

I got off and went inside the house. When I got there, everything was beautiful, the house was decorated, there was a table for two set in

the living room. The couches were gone, just a man and woman

playing violins and a beautiful table. It had roses around it and lanterns. There is banner that says 'happy birthday my love.' I look

behind me, he's standing and smirking.

Him: Breakfast is served.

He takes my hand and leads me to the table and opens the chair for

me, I sit. He also sit across me.

Me: You never cease to amaze me.

Him: (smiles) I live to please.

Me: This is amazing.

Him: Thank you.

Me: No thank you.

Him: (smile-blushes) are you hungry.

Me: (in a British accent) I'm starved.

Him: (laughs and clicks his fingers)

A man shows up with our food.

Me: Italian? Again?

Him: I thought you like Italian food.

Me: You like Italian food, not me.

Him: (laughs) well fine then. Francisco, can you please bring this lady something else to eat. What would you like babe?

Me: Steam bread and tribe.

Him: (laughs) you heard the lady.

Me: What? There really is steam bread and tribe?

Him: No but we would have made a plan.

Me: I was joking. I will have this.

Him: Are you sure?

Me: Yes.

Him: Good because there's nothing else for you to eat.

I gasp and he laugh.

We had our food then we went to take a shower together. We had a little session in the shower, I didn't even think that having sex on the shower floor would be possible, we did it anyways. When we were done we got ready and wore matching outfits, I wore a ripped boyfriend jean, white t-shirt and a black leather coat with my timberlands. He wore ripped jeans, white t-shirt as well, black leather jacket and his timberlands. We looked fly. We took a lot of pictures. . I almost forgot, I go take my pill. The look Tukelo gives me as soon as I swallow the pill.

Him: What's that for? Are you sick?

Me: No. It's just contraceptives.

Him: Contraceptives? You're taking contraceptives and you didn't think about telling me?

Me: I didn't think it was important.

Him: You've been killing my babies and you didn't think I should know that?

Me: Don't exaggerate Tukelo. There are no babies for me to kill.

Him: Why are you taking them?

Me: Tukelo, I'm 20, I have my whole life ahead of me and I am going back to school soon so a baby is the last thing that I need.

Him: Still. You should have discussed this with me.

Me: Are you mad at me now?

I go closer to him and wrap my arms around his waist.

Him: No.

He looks away. I turn his face so he can look at me.

Me: Hey, we will have baby okay, just not now. Now stop sulking.

Him: I wasn't sulking.

Me: Show me that you're not sulking.

He looks at me, smiles and kisses me.

We go to the car, he opens my door, I got in, and he closed it. He

went to his seat and starts the car. I log on Instagram to post the pics and I see that he beat me to it. But this is a picture of me outside the house jumping for joy when I saw the bike the caption was: 'and she loved it!' I look horrible, my weave was all messed up and my eyes were all out but it looked cool.

Me: Baby, I look horrible in this pic.

Him: But 1000 likes say otherwise.

Me: whatever.

He continued driving. I asked him where we going he said I will see. I gave up asking. We finally arrived and we were going skydiving, I

was so happy, I always wanted to go skydiving. I was so excited.

After skydiving, we went paragliding then bungee jumping and lastly we went paintballing. For the first time in forever, I was enjoying my birthday. He was shit scared of everything. Even though he didn't want to admit it, he was scared, I could see it. We were taking pictures, making out, taking more picture and made out even more.

I received the threats from that number again.

“1 2 3 ... someone is going to die tonight... 4 5 6... I am coming to get you... boom! Boom! Boom!”

This time I got really scared, I throw the phone on the floor. What scared me was that I didn't know who this was. I could be attacked by anyone. Tukelo looks at me quizzically and takes my phone.

Him: How long has this been going on?

Me: I... I don't know... quite some time.

Him: And not once did you think about telling me?

Me: I thought they would stop okay?

Him: Did they?

He looks pissed right now, he's making me feel worse.

Me: No... I didn't want to worry you unnecessarily.

Him: Amahle, you think this is a joke. Looks like this person was following your every move! If you don't tell me about things like these how do you expect me to protect you?

Me: Protect me from what?

Him: Nothing. Come.

He pulls my arm and we walk towards the parking lot where we parked his car. I grab my arm away from him and stopped.

Me: Why are you so afraid?

Him: I am not afraid.

Me: Tukelo, I know you. Why did that message scare you? Are you

hiding something?

Him: Tigress, someone is threatening your life, and has been doing so for a long time but you decided to shut your mouth. How can I not be scared if someone is threatening my woman's life? How can I sit

back and wait for him to attack?

Me: How can you find him if we don't even know who this is.

Him: I will find out tonight.

He pulls my arm and led me towards the car.

Me: Tuke...

Boom!

Tukelo tackled me and we both land on the ground. I close my eyes. My head starts spinning round and round. My heart beats fast. I can't breathe. I can't get myself to open my eyes, I am too scared to see what might have happened.

Him: Tigress? Open your eyes. Babe, please, open your eyes.

He slaps me slightly. That means he's okay. When I open them, he's

on top of me. I see him smile. How can he smile at a time like this? I look around I see fire behind him. Someone planted a bomb in his

car. He gets off me and makes me stand. We both dusty. He dusts me.

Him: Are you okay?

I freeze. I am still trying to process what just happened. He clicks his fingers.

Him: Babe? Are you good?

I nod. He also nods and steps aside to make a call. How come he's not moved by this? His car that he loves so much, his BMW, his baby is in flames. He seems chilled and not worried. I am just glad we parked a little bit far from the paintballing center, otherwise people would've been hurt.

Him: Can you come and pick us up... yes we still there... my car's in flames dude... some asshole decided to bomb it... oh you know for sure... yes we good. Now stop with the fucking questions Tumi and come pick us up.

He hangs up. A lot of people are around the car, I can even hear sirens of the fire engine. Tukelo starts chasing people away. That's rude of him. I am still dirty and frozen. Thinking the worse. The fire engine arrives.

Him: Man, I have everything under control here. Don't put out that fire.

Fireman: Just let us do our job, sir.

Him: No! Go do your job elsewhere, I have everything under control.

Fireman: Are you a fireman? You don't know how dangerous that fire might be, it can spread and cause a lot of damage. We also want to know what cause the car to explode like that...

Him: It was bombed! That's all you need to know. Now please, leave!

Fireman: sir, if you just...

Him: I hate repeating myself! This is my fucking car! I will decide what I want to do with it, now for the last time. Take your men and leave.

Fireman: We are trained for this, we can put out the fire without anyone getting hurt.

Me: Tukelo...

Him: You! (Referring to me) stay out of this! Firemen, I am sorry but you're not needed here. Leave. I will have my men look into this.

The firemen gave up and started to leave. I don't understand why Tukelo was so rude. He moves up and down and eats his nails, he does that when he's thinking deeply.

Me: You're making me dizzy.

Him: How can you not say anything about this? How can you shut up about this? We could've been killed because of your selfishness and carelessness Amahle! Look at my car! Look at my fucking car! It's in

flames, all thanks to you!

Me: Tukelo, how is this any of my fault? How do you know that this is related to the messages I have been receiving?

Him: It is related. You receive a message that you're going to die, and next thing, my car is bombed! Of course it's related! If this was meant for me, that person would be dead by now. No-one dares to mess with me if they know what's good for them. So this, was definitely not meant for me.

Me: How was I supposed to know that someone wanted me dead? I have no enemies.

Him: That doesn't mean anything! You kept quiet! That's what ticks me off, you didn't talk to me. You told no-one.

Me: I told Charles.

Him: Oh wow, so you tell my friend but can't talk to me? To me Amahle? I am your man for crying out loud! Why don't you understand that? I am here to protect you! Things like these shouldn't happen when I am around. I should prevent things like these from happening but you never give me the chance to do that! Instead you run in Charles's arms.

Me: It wasn't like that. You know what, never mind.

Him: Talk! Say it!

Before I could say anything, Tumi's car parks next to us. He gets off and laughs.

Him: They did this to your car?

Tukelo: Yeah man.

Tumi: (laughs) man I feel sorry for the assholes who did this.

Munt'wethu, how are you?

Me: I'm alive.

Tumi: That's what matters. I can see your birthday was a 'bomb' (laughs).

Me: Why are you laughing at our misery kodwa?

Tumi: You want me to cry? I am just happy that someone is going to die tonight, it's been awhile since I pulled a trigger...

Tukelo: Tumi, don't say things like that in front of my woman.

Tumi shrugs and sipped his juice.

We get in the car and Tumi drives off.

Me: So you're gonna leave your car in flames like that?

Him: Yes.

Me: Why didn't you allow the firemen to do their job?

Him: I said I will handle it, I know what I'm doing.

Me: How are you handling it if you leaving your car in flames like that?

Him: Fuck Amahle! Will you stop asking a million questions!

Tumi: Don't talk to her like that.

Tukelo: Don't tell me how to talk to my woman! It's her fault that we're in this mess. I don't care about the fucking car! Important documents were in that car. My merchandise worth 2milli was in that car! I just lost 2milli Tumi, 2milli! You get that? Just because she chose to shut up and tell her boyfriend Charles instead!

I try to speak and say something but Tumi looks at me in the rearview mirror and shakes his head, I decide to be quiet. Tukelo is fuming, he is cursing, shouting and punching what's in front of him. I have never seen him this angry before.

Tumi: Maybe I should take you guys to hospital. Have y'all checked, maybe the fire affected you somehow.

Me: I also think...

Tukelo: No! I am fine, she's fine, no-one is going to see no doctor or go to hospital.

Tumi: I think what's important here is that y'all both okay. Nobody died.

Tukelo: But we could have. If she didn't stop me and talked to me, I don't know what could have happened. We would that car.

Tumi: So in a way she saved your lives?

Tukelo: After putting it in danger.

Tumi: Tukelo, chill. We will find those bastards tonight. Nobody messes with my little brother and gets away with it.

Tukelo: Thanks Tumi, but I have this under control.

Tumi: I know you do but let me help.

Tukelo looks at him and he nods.

Tumi: I don't get it, where was Sphiwe and Rufus? They should be with you 24/7. They could've seen what happened or who did that to your car.

Tukelo: They took a day off. I didn't want to be disturbed.

I wanted to ask who Rufus and Sphiwe is but I decided to shut my mouth. I don't want Tukelo shouting at me again, and blaming me for everything that happened. How was I supposed to know that these people would want me dead that badly. He's words really hurt me. He should be comforting me and telling me that everything will be okay but he decided to blame everything on me.

Tumi parks where Tukelo usually parks, I get off. Tukelo gets off as well, he stands in front of me.

Him: Listen here, don't leave that house unless I tell you to. If you see anything suspicious, call me.

I nod. Here I was thinking he came out to apologize but he's still throwing commands.

Him: Oh and I need your phone.

Me: Why?

Him: Just give me the bloody phone.

Me: (roll my eyes) argh! Take it.

I throw the phone at him and it lands on the floor. He gives me a death stare, clicks his tongue and picks up my phone.

Him: How many times have I told you to not roll your eyes at me?

Me: Whatever Tukelo.

I get him out of my way and head to my house. So much for enjoying my birthday.

I get home, mom, Andile, Anele, Ziningi and Zanele starts to sing for me. They have a cake on the table and a few snacks. I smile as they continue singing for me. When they were I done, thanked them and gave each one of them a hug.

Ziningi: Blow the candles and make a wish.

Me: (laughs) I am too old for that.

Anele: Yeyi wena! As long as you can't catch up with me or be older than me, you will always be my little sister and you're never too old to blow the candles.

I laugh, blew the candles and made a wish. They clap and mom starts cutting the cake. Now this is what I call a birthday celebration. Having fun with my family and eating a delicious cake that mom baked. Anele and Andile start the fire outside, we are having a small braai. This 'small' gathering turned into something else. Anele's friends were all over the house so I decided to call my friends also.

The music was pumping and there were people around the house. It was turning into a small party. People were getting drunk also, there was no way I was drinking in front of mom.

Nosi: So how was your day out with the man?

Zitha: Yes tell us everything, don't leave anything out.

Me: Well it started amazing, breakfast in bed, crazy sex, and all lovey dovey, throwing amazing words at each other and oh, bought me

an Ecosse Titanium Series FE TIXX as a gift.

They look at each other, which means they don't know what I am talking about.

Me: A bike.

Them: A what?!

Me: A bike, the most expensive bike.

Nosi: How rich is this guy?

Me: Filthy. We went to do activities, paragliding, bungee jumping and even skydiving.

Zitha: Oh my word! You have the best boyfriend ever! Looks like you had the best day ever.

Me: Yeah well...

I couldn't exactly tell them what happened after that, it would just freak them out. Nosi's phone rings, she smiles and picks it up.

Nosi: It's for you.

She hands me the phone.

Me: For me?

She nods and I take the phone.

Me: Hello?

Him: Hey, Mahle, it's Tumi.

Me: Oh.

Him: Ouch! Looks like you expected someone else to call.

Me: No, don't be silly. How can I help?

Him: Look Amahle, I want to apologize on behalf of my brother.

What he did today and said was completely unacceptable and out of place.

Me: I see.

Him: Look, Tukelo is like that when he's under pressure. He gets pissed over shit, he swears at people and looks for someone to blame.

Me: So basically he's an ass?

Him: (chuckles) yes you could say that.

I step outside. I don't the girls to hear me talk about this.

Me: What did I do Tumi? Tell me what I did so wrong for him to say those hurtful things towards me?

Him: Like you said, he is an ass when he's under pressure. He's sorry though, I know.

Me: I think he should be the one saying all of this to me not you. He should be the one explaining this behavior of his to me, not you.

Him: I know. If he could find the right words, he would apologize to you. Right now, he's still trying to find those guys who blow up the car.

Me: What are you going to do to them?

Him: It doesn't matter.

Me: It does. Who are you people? Because you're definitely not the Tukelo and Tumi that I know.

Him: We're still the same people, we just have a dark past.

Me: Can someone enlighten me about this dark past? Maybe, just maybe I can understand what's going on.

Him: I can't tell you all the details. You just need to talk with Tukelo.

Me: There's nothing left for us to talk. I will not be Tukelo's punching bag and I will not be the one he can blame and curse whenever things don't go his way.

Him: What do you mean his 'punching bag'?

Me: (silent).

Him: Mahle?

Me: He laid his hand on me okay? I will not allow him to go any further, I refuse.

Him: Shit! He did?

Me: He just pushed me, really hard but it could've been worse.

Sometimes the way he looks me, it's like he wants to kill me. I don't want to have thoughts like that. He shouldn't make me feel that way. He's commands me and dictates my life. I don't think I want to be part of that.

Him: Yoh, I hear you Amahle. But he loves you.

Me: I don't think so.

Him: Why?

Me: Because he shows it in a very weird way. Sometimes I believe he does, sometimes I don't, you know. Like he doesn't want me to meet your family, he's ashamed of me. That means he's not serious about

me. I am not saying he should marry me or anything but just to show commitment. I doubt the love he has for me at times.

Him: Does he know that you feel like that?

Me: Tukelo and I never really have a talk. Like a real talk, whenever we talk about something serious, he always changes the subject. So no, he doesn't know how I feel.

Him: Maybe you should let him know, please you guys need to talk. I am not good in relationships myself, but I think what you need is a

good talk.

Me: (sigh) I doubt that will help.

Him: Just try.

Me: Okay. Thanks for listening to my whines. Even my friends don't know about this and I want to keep it that way. Don't tell them about the explosion.

Him: Okay I won't. Hey, I am always here for you. Call whenever you need someone to talk to.

Me: Okay I will.

Him: Bye now and wipe those tears.

Me: (laugh) I wasn't crying.

Him: I know you were.

He was right. Tears were running down my face. I don't know where I got so much tears from. I usually don't cry this much.

Me: I wasn't.

Him: Yeah right. See you tomorrow. Bye.

Me: Bye.

I hang up. I go back inside, everyone was still on 'party mode.' I was having none of that. At around 11, Nosi and Zitha wanted us to go out and celebrate in the club. I was in no mood for that, I let them go without me. I just went to bed and tried to fall asleep. At midnight, everyone was gone. The house is a mess, mom was cleaning. I decide to help.

Insert Eighteen 😊

Tumi

After talking to Amahle, I went back inside the warehouse. This is where we do our illegal deeds, we built it in the middle of nowhere. Its a very hard place to spot, you won't even find this warehouse on the Satellite. We hired the best team, we asked them to make it to be discreet. You can never track it down, I guess that's why we got away with everything we did. It's been awhile though since we came here, we were too busy focused on our legit businesses to even worry about going back to crime. But tonight we had to come here, Tukelo was determined to find the guy who threatened Amahle's life.

Dankies: Bingo!

Tukelo: Got him?

Dankies: Yep!

Tukelo: Took you long enough

Dankies: He's in Soweto as we speak.

Tukelo: Then what are waiting for? Let's go get this fucker!

Me: Calm down Tukelo. Rufus and Sphiwe will go get him. Then will deal with him once he gets here.

Tukelo: No Tumi, we are not going to deal with him, we are going to kill him!

Me: Can you calm down?

Tukelo: Itumeleng, this man almost killed my woman and you're busy here telling me to calm down? What I want you to do is go there and kidnap him. Bring him here and stop telling me to calm down!

Me: I will get Rufus and Sphiwe on it.

Tukelo: Do that. I will go get the chamber ready.

He left.

'The chamber' is where we tortured and killed our enemies.

Dankies: Its been awhile since I've seen him this upset.

Me: Yeah me too. And we both know that when he's this angry, we better not stand in his way so you go give Rufus and Sphiwe the guy's location and ask them to bring him here as in yesterday.

Dankies: On it.

He left.

Its been almost an hour since Rufus and Sphiwe left. Tukelo also been busy in the chamber, when I went to check on him, he chased me away and asked to be left alone so I let him be. I'm just sitting on the couch with Dankies having beer.

Him: so how's the wife?

Me: Please don't ruin my mood by making me talk about her.

Him: Hawu! Trouble in paradise?

Me: The trouble I'm having is that I can't love my wife, no matter how hard I'm trying.

Him: even now? Tumi, it's been almost 9years. You can't tell me that you can't find one thing you love about her.

Me: I don't know how, its clear that she isn't my soul mate. Yet I'm feeling things I shouldn't be feeling for Nosi.

Dankies: (laughs) you can't be serious

Me: I don't know, she's just what I've been looking for

Him: This is messed up. She's your brother's girlfriend's friend.

Me: I didn't ask to feel like this but it just...

We heard a man screaming in agony outside. We quickly got up and we found Tukelo beating a man. We know better than to stop him. He has unlocked his inner beast. The best way is to talk some sense into him not hold him or try to stop him because he might lose it.

Me: Tukelo! Stop it! You're going to kill him before he can give you answers.

Seems like it fell into deaf ears because he plumping the man.

Me: Tukelo. You deserve to know why he has been doing this, and you won't find that out if you kill him without questioning him.

That got him to stop.

Him: Rufus, get him up! I will meet you in the chamber in the next 10mins.

Sphiwe and Rufus got the man up and left with him.

Tukelo: Recognize him Tumi?

Me: You messed up his face Tukelo, I couldn't see him.

Tukelo: That's Senzo, Gabela's son.

He left me standing there. Gabela and Tukelo have been enemies since forever. I thought they made peace, now that his son has started trouble with Tukelo's woman, I know world war 3 is about to begin.

I follow him inside. They have Senzo strapped into a chair. I could see he was in pain.

Tukelo: So are you going to talk or must I make you talk?

Senzo didn't say anything.

Tukelo: Cover him.

Rufus put a sack over Senzo's face and Tukelo poured water over his face. Senzo was gasping for air. I just enjoying the show sipping my beer. Rufus removed the sack. Senzo coughed badly.

Tukelo: Talk!

Senzo: I.. don't even know what this is about? Who are you anyway?

Tukelo: (chuckles) this idiot is mocking me. You know exactly what this is about! Did your father send you?

Senzo: My father? Look man, I don't even know who you are. Is it money you want?

Tukelo: I don't want your stupid money! I want to know why you were harrassing my woman and why you planted a bomb in my car!

Senzo: (laughs then coughs) that was this is about? Its about that bitch?

Oh, you probably shouldn't have said that.

Tukelo raged. He first punched his face countlessly, he took a two tasers from Sphiwe and fried Senzo. He screamed. That didn't stop Tukelo. If we don't stop him now, he might kill this guy. Oh well, I don't care.

He stopped, he took out a gun from behind his waist.

Tukelo: Give me one good reason why I shouldn't blow your brains out.

Senzo: In case you haven't met me, I'm Senzo, Gabela's son so a gun doesn't scare me.

This ass doesn't know Tukelo. He thinks he won't shoot if he acts brave. Tukelo shoots his leg, he screams.

Tukelo: Talk.

Senzo: Okay, okay. She beat up my friend in the club, he was lifeless. He had fractured ribs. We won't going to let her get away with it. We just wanted to scare her that's all. I for one didn't want to plant the bomb, it was the others, I swear.

He was speaking so fast and panting heavily.

Tukelo: Where will I find your friends?

Senzo: I don't know.

Tukelo shot him on his other leg, senzo screams.

Dankies: We don't have all day man, just talk and make things easy for all of us.

Me: Yes, some of us have wives to get to.

Senzo: They're in our spot in Meadowlands.

Tukelo: Never ever mess with my woman again.

Senzo: Learn to control your woman.

Tukelo points the gun to his head.

Me: If you kill him, you will cause problems for us, his father will hunt you down.

Tukelo: I'm not scared of Gabela.

Dankies: Think about Amahle man, you really want to put her life in danger?

Tukelo: One last question, how did you find Amahle? How did you get ahold of her?

Senzo: We spotted her on the CCTV footage and it was easy to get her numbers. I swear I didn't know she was your girl.

Me: Even so, you shouldn't harass any woman the way you did.

Tukelo: See you in hell motherfucker.

He shoots him four times.

Me: Bathong! Get ready because world war 3 is yet to begin.

Tukelo: Rufus, get rid of this body. Then find his friends, kill all of them. Don't ask questions, just shoot.

Rufus: Sho boss.

Sphiwe and Rufus left with Senzo's body.

Me: You're one crazy asshole.

Tukelo: Thanks. I have to clean myself up. I have to go and see Tigress. Give me your GTI car keys.

I give it to him

Me: Its late Tukelo. Why would you want to wake Hle up?

Tukelo: I have to see her otherwise I will go crazy.

Me: Do you think she will want to see you after the way you shouted at her?

Tukelo: She will see me. I know her.

Dankies: Let me drive you then..

Tukelo: No I will be fine. I'm no longer mad. See you tomorrow. Last one out locks all doors

He left.

Me: Dankies follow him. Make sure he gets to Amahle safe.

Dankies: He'll be fine. Let me drive you home to your wife.

Me: Oh yeah neh.

He laughs.

Insert Nineteen 😊

Amahle

I was woken up by Andile handing me his phone.

Him: Here, it's for you.

He throws me his phone and leaves.

Me: Mmm

Him: Babe, hi.

Me: Mmhh.

Him: I am sorry did I wake you?

Me: No Tukelo, its 3am, you didn't wake me. I was up and waiting for you to call.

Him: Sarcasm doesn't suit you.

Me: What do you want?

Him: Come outside so we can talk.

Me: What? Are you crazy? I can't do that.

Him: Baby please. I wouldn't ask you to come here if it wasn't important. I won't take much of your time.

I hang up. I wear my slippers and a hoodie. He calls again.

Me: I am coming.

I hang up.

I tip toe out of the house and I spot a black GTI right in front of my house. I guess it's his car. I just say a small prayer and hope that mom doesn't find out about this. I find him sitting on top of the bonnet, smoking.

WTF? Tukelo doesn't smoke.

Me: Hi.

He just looks at me and switches of his cigarette. Oh my word! He was smoking weed.

Him: Hey Tigress. How are you?

Me: Just get to the point. It's freezing out here.

Him: But you wearing long pajamas plus a hoodie.

Me: Tukelo, I don't have all day. Why am I here?

Him: Yoh, okay. Babe, I am sorry that your birthday was ruined like that. Things shouldn't have turned out the way they did.

Me: That's all?

Him: Yes... I mean no. I am also sorry that I blamed everything on you. It wasn't your fault.

Me: Okay. Can I go now?

Him: Wow, do I irritate you that much?

Me: I just don't understand why you had to wake me up this early.

We could have done this in the morning.

Him: But it is morning.

Me: You know what I mean.

Him: Just that I hated being so far apart from you. I hated myself for the way I have been treating you. I didn't realize I was such a bad

boyfriend. I want to make things right and I will do that by telling the truth.

Me: I am waiting.

Him: (sigh) promise not to leave me.

Me: Tukelo why do you always say that? I will not leave. Get that

through that big head of yours gosh.

Him: Okay. I don't know where to start. The thing is, me and my father, we're practically enemies. He use to dictate our lives, make us do what he wants. He never allowed us to make our own

mistakes. He always said we live under his roof so we will do as we're told. I was sick of that life so I decided to run away at the age of 16. Thabang was still living here in Jo'burg by that time. He was the only person I knew. I was just a kid, lost, I didn't know what I was doing. When I arrived here, I find Thabang dealing with illegal stuff, that's the life he knew. The only thing he could do to feed his family. He didn't want me in this business but I went behind his back and did it anyway. When he found out he was mad, but he soon realized that I was smart and he needed me. I always did a clean job. We joined forces because it was either we worked with each other or against each other. I still continued with my studies. When I was done, I used the money I had on starting my own legitimate business, TBM. Thabang left this life, I was automatically made the 'boss' because I was Thabang's second-in-command. He moved to Durban with his family, I was given the responsibility to take charge. I did what I had to do. Now I hope you understand everything, why I am not excited to introduce you to my family.

Me: I hear you Tukelo and I understand everything but what I didn't hear you say is you left that gangster life and you didn't tell me what type of business you do.

Him: I was into... gold smuggling.

Me: Gold smuggling? Tukelo! Really?

Him: And car hijacking.

Me: Fuck me! What the hell? But you done with that life, right?

He looks at me.

Me: Right?

Him: It's not easy Tigress.

Me: My God!

Him: Listen to me, I don't really steal or hijack, I call the shots.

Me: That doesn't make it right!

Him: I know but I will leave that life, as soon as I get my shit together I will.

Me: You got your shit together. You have everything. You have a successful business, and have shares in different companies. Sure

you can leave that life easily. With no stress.

Him: Amahle that life made me who I am today. A lot of people depend on me, I can't let them down.

Me: So you've killed people?

Him: What?

Me: You've killed people? I am sure you've killed someone, you live a dangerous life.

Him: I can't answer that.

Me: Why not?

Him: Because I don't want to.

Me: And you beat women?

Him: Fuck, again with that shit?

Me: What's so hard about what I've asked?

Him: Who's feeding you with all of that bull?

Me: Just answer the damn question!

Him: Yes! Yes I use to beat women, are you happy now?

I look at him blankly.

Him: But I don't anymore. I learnt my lesson when I... I... almost killed a woman, okay? I swore that I will never ever lay a hand on a woman again.

Me: But you pushed me. Very hard.

Him: I know but that's nothing compared to what I did to the other women. Look babe, I love you, a lot. I will never want to hurt you. You're a part of me, I don't ever want you to shed a tear of sadness because of me. I love you way too much. I know I can be an ass at times, all I ask is for you to be patient with me. Love me unconditionally. I will do the same.

Me: When exactly where you planning on tell me this?

Him: I did. I kinda did.

Me: What do you mean?

Him: (sigh) I tried confessing but you fell asleep while I was talking to you.

Me: You could've woke me or told me when I was awake.

Him: I lost the courage to tell you.

Me: Whatever. I don't think I can do this Tukelo.

Him: No don't do that to us, don't. I will do anything, tell me what.

Me: Quit the dangerous job.

Him: Only once I sort out my things and then I will leave I promise.

Me: Things like what?

Him: Like marrying you.

Me: What? You want to marry me with blood money?

Him: Well it's still money.

I look at him shocked.

Him: So am I forgiven?

Me: I don't know. There's a lot to take in.

Him: Come on babe, we can make this work.

Me: I don't know.

Him: But you promised not to leave me.

Me: And I won't. As much as I think I should, but my heart won't let me.

Him: Come here.

He opens his arms. I went closer and got in between his legs. He hugs me and kisses my forehead.

Him: We can make this work, we will make this work. Just allow me to make things right.

Me: How Tukelo?

He strokes my chin and makes me look at him.

Him: Just trust me.

He kisses me, I kiss him back. I smell weed, I push him back.

Me: Since when you smoke?

Him: I only smoke when I am stressed out.

Me: I discover something new about you almost every day.

Him: (laughs) and that's a good thing. Let's go in, I am starting to feel cold.

He opens the backseat of the car.

Me: Why we sitting at the back?

Him: You not planning on going home with me, right?

Me: No and if you think we'll have sex in the car, you're clearly mistaken.

Him: (laughs) gosh Tigress, get in the car.

Me: I will not have sex with you in the car.

Him: (laughs) geez! Who said you will?

Me: I was just saying.

I get in.

Him: You're something else.

He also gets in and closes the door. I lay on the seat with my head on his lap. He keep on brushing my head and playing with my hair.

Him: So I was thinking.

Me: Oh boy.

Him: Babe I'm serious. I want you to meet my family, officially.

Me: But you and your dad...

Him: Maybe it's time I make things right with him. I was serious when I said I want to marry you.

Me: That was your proposal?

Him: Sort of.

Me: (laugh) you could do better dude.

Him: I will. I just want you to meet my family so you could understand better.

Me: When?

Him: Next week.

Me: What? So soon?

Him: I want to get it out of the way.

Me: I will speak to mom first.

Him: Oh right.

Me: She also wants to meet you.

Him: She does?

Me: Yes. This week.

Him: Fuck. Really?

Me: Yes. Is there a problem?

Him: I am going to Cape Town this week.

Me: Oh.

Him: But I will make a plan.

Me: No you don't have to.

Him: Tigress...

Me: It's fine Tukelo. Whose car is this anyway? Did you hijack it?

Him: (sigh) relax. It's Tumi's car. I don't use the cars we hijack, we sell them. And please, I don't want you to know about these things.

Me: How many cars do you have? Because I saw you driving a Jeep once.

Him: I have 3 cars. Well, now 2. A Mercedes and that Jeep.

Me: How come I only saw the BMW in your garage?

Him: I loved that car Tigress, I loved it so much that I never wanted to let it out of my sight. It was the first expensive thing I owned.

I can see that he's hurt by this. I feel really bad. He's making me feel guilty.

Him: I keep the Jeep and Mercedes in the undercover parking.

Me: You have an undercover parking?

Him: Yes.

Me: Geez! So did you find the guys that... you know...

Him: Yes and you won't believe who it was.

Me: Who was it?

Him: The guy you knocked out at the club. Remember? The one that was harassing Nosipho.

Me: No way.

Him: Yes way.

Me: But how did they find me?

Him: He saw you on the CCTV.

Me: How did you find them?

Him: He was dumb enough to use a number that can be traced. Not that I wouldn't have found him, I would have. He just made things easy for me. So I tracked him.

Me: What did you do to them?

Him: Amahle... I don't want you to know these things.

Me: You killed him?

Him: Them, all of them.

I sit up and look at him.

Him: Baby, it was either them or you and I wasn't going to allow that to happen.

I look at him not knowing what to say. Will I be able to be with a killer? Will I handle it?

xxxx

I wake up when I feel a hand covering my mouth. I open my eyes, I see Tukelo. Shit, I fell asleep in his car. I look at him, he put his finger on his mouth, indicating I should be quite. I am confused. He points outside. I see my mom standing next to the car. Fuck! I sit up.

Him: (whisper) don't say a word.

Me: (whisper) Tukelo what if she sees me?

Him: (whisper) she won't.

Me: (whisper) how you know?

Him: (whisper) the widows are dimmed. We can see her but she can't see us.

Me: (whisper) fuck.

Him: (chuckles)

I hit him on his arm.

Me: (whisper) why didn't you wake me?

Him: (whisper) you were peaceful. Didn't want to disturb.

Me: (whisper) always your excuse.

Him: (chuckles) (whisper) you should stop falling asleep in my arms and on my lap.

Me: (whisper) your fault.

Him: (whisper) how's it my fault?

My mother is still near the car, talking to some woman. Looks like she says her goodbyes then she comes closer to the car.

Me: (whisper) Oh shit.

Him: (laughs)

She walks around the car. She looks at it quizzically, she shakes her head and goes back inside the house.

Me: How am I going to go back?

Him: Will you relax? It's still early. It's only 7am. Just sneak back into your room and she won't notice anything.

Me: Easy for you to say.

Him: (laughs) will you just do it?

Me: I am so going to get you for this.

Him: I don't understand why you blaming me while you the one that fell asleep on my lap. I should be the one complaining here, I was the one sleeping while sitting with your big head on top of me. Making things harder.

I hit him playfully on his chest. He laughs.

Me: I hate you.

Him: I love you more.

Me: Argh.

I try to open the door but it's locked.

Him: Were you going to leave without saying goodbye to your man?

Me: Bye Tukelo. Now open.

Him: That's not how it's done.

Me: How is it done?

He pulls me and make me sit on top of me, with my legs on either side of him. He looks at me.

Him: Like this.

He kisses me. I kiss him back. He has his arms under my hoodie, rubbing his hands all over my body. He's hands are rubbing my boobs now. I feel the 'dude' poking me. This kiss is heating because I also feel sensations all over my body. I also rub my hands all over his muscular body. I take off his t-shirt. I make him lie on his back. I'm on top of him now. He lowers his hand down to my cookie. I grab it and I stop kissing him. He looks at me with hunger and desire all over his face.

Me: Bye babe.

Him: Huh?

Me: That was just payback.

Him: You can't be serious.

Me: I am. That will teach you to wake me up next time.

Him: Tigress you can't...

Me: (smiles) oh I can.

I get off him, take the keys out of his pockets and unlock the car.
The disbelief on his face. I laugh and kiss him slightly on his lips, he
doesn't respond.

Me: I love you.

He keeps quite.

I got off the car and closed the door. I sneak in the house.
I find mom busy in the kitchen. I greet her. She greets back.

Her: Did you see that car outside our house?

Me: There's a car outside our house?

Her: Yes. Go see, I thought maybe it's for you.

I look through the window and he's not there anymore.

Me: Nope.

Her: Oh, guess he was just parking there.

Me: Yeah maybe.

Her: Ok. Now go wash your hands and come help me bake.

My mom and baking kodwa. Lord knows I am still tired and still need more sleep but I don't protest, I go
wash my hands and helped her.

Insert Twenty 😊

This is it. Today is D-day. I have waited for this day my entire life. I
never thought it will be possible but through Tukelo, he made it
possible for me. I have been with this man for five months now and

it's like I fall in love with him more and more each day. It's because of him that I am going to be going back to school today. I am excited but yet nervous at the same time. What if I don't remember the things I learnt years ago but Tukelo encouraged me and told me that he will be here with me through it all. I can never be able to thank him enough for the things he has done for me. Sure he has his flaws but he tries his best to be the good man for me. He's still living the gangster life, I have tried talking to him but nothing seems to work, I played the sex card, he still wouldn't back down. I just hope and pray that I will never receive the call that says he's in hospital or I have to bail him out of jail.

Well, he has met my family, officially. My mom said she knew it that it was him all along. She loved him from the word go. I was relieved.

She said she doesn't want us having sex yet, Tukelo just nodded and didn't know what to say. He wanted to tell her but I talked him out of it.

I haven't met his family yet, we kept on postponing. But he said this weekend it is happening and I am not looking forward to that. Only because of all the stories Thandiwe told me about Tukelo's mom.

Yes, I am friends with my best-friend's boyfriend's wife. It felt so awkward but Tukelo said if I just kept my mouth shut, everything will be fine. I just don't understand why they making me be friends with

her. The way this Thandiwe chick love me, she even called me to wish me good luck today. The way I am used to the situation now, I don't even feel guilty when I talk to her. I really don't know what game Nosi and Tumi are playing. I can see they love each other but they won't admit it. Tumi doesn't love his wife anymore, I can see it when he talks about her but when he talk about Nosi it's a different story.

Andile and Tukelo are very close. It's kinda making me jealous

because sometimes I feel left out. This other time they went to watch soccer in Durban and they left me behind. They say it was a guy's night out. I was so jealous. I am used to it now though. It gets better with time.

Here I am now, Tukelo's taking me to school. He wouldn't let me use my bike. I don't know why he bought me the damn thing if I can't

use it. I get to use it when he's not around. Mom is also against it and told me to return it but I told her it was a gift and I am not returning it. I still don't get to use it as often as I should. I am just stuck here in this big car. Yes, he bought a Range Rover Evoque. He was so happy, he said if I bomb it again, he will kill me. Well, I don't give an ass fuck, I just want my bike.

Him: why you sulking?

Me: I want my bike.

Him: You still mad about that?

Me: I just don't get it. Why did you buy me a bike if I can't use it?

Him: But you use it.

Me: Not as much as I should.

Him: Why you so moody these days?

Me: I'm moody? Maybe it's because you're an idiot these days!

Him: (laughs).

Me: What's so funny?

Him: Nothing.

Me: Then what are you laughing at?

Him: I wasn't laughing.

Me: Yes you were.

Him: I wasn't.

Me: Mxm.

Him: We're here.

Me: Thank God.

I get off the car. He grabs my arm and wraps his arms around my waist.

Him: I love you.

Me: You're an idiot.

Him: And you love this idiot.

Me: (sigh) yes I do.

He smiles and kisses my forehead.

Him: Behave.

Me: I will.

Him: Tell whoever tries their luck with you that you have a boyfriend that owns a gun and he kills without thinking twice.

Me: (laughs) well, I would have to kill them first because I won't let anyone touch me.

Him: That's my girl.

He kisses me. We share a very slow, passionate kiss. I pull back as soon as I realize we're outside and everyone's watching.

Me: Now go. You're going to be late for work.

Him: I don't want to go.

Me: Baby...

Him: I can't let you go, have you seen how sexy you look?

Me: Ha.ana not that again.

Him: I just don't feel comfortable with you in that tight jean and that revealing top.

Me: Will you relax?

Him: Ok fine.

Me: I have to go babe, I don't want to be late on my first day.

Him: No guy friends.

Me: Yoh! Okay. Now go.

Him: Okay. I love you and I mean it.

Me: I love you, forever and always.

We baby kiss. I walk to school and I say a small prayer that everything turns out well. He watches me until I am in the school premises, then he leaves. My phone rings.

Gosh. This guy.

Me: Babe.

Him: Are you good?

Me: Yes. I am still in one piece.

Him: Great. Did I say I love you?

Me: Yes but I would love to hear it again.

Him: Okay. I love you, I love you, I love you and I love you a million times more.

Me: (chuckles) if you love me that much, let me use my bike.

Him: See you at 1.

He hangs up. Argh! This is so frustrating. How can he be such a jerk!

As I was sitting during my break, a girl comes to sit with me.

Her: Hi.

Me: Hi.

Her: Is this seat taken?

Me: No, not at all.

She sits down.

Her: I'm Thobekile.

Me: Amahle.

Her: Nice to meet you Amahle. I can tell that you're new. I am new too, I was hoping that maybe we can hang out together?

I look at her and she's way out of my league. She's, I don't know, too much of a farm girl.

Me: Yes sure.

Her: So what course do you do?

Me: BCom in Accounting.

Her: What are the odds? Me too. First year?

Me: No, 3rd year.

Her: Oh, then why don't you have any friends?

Me: You just met me, how can you tell that I don't have friends?

Her: You wouldn't be sitting here all alone if you had friends.

Me: Oh. I just started today.

Her: Oh okay. Is that your boyfriend who dropped you off this morning?

What the hell?!

Me: Are you spying on me?

Her: What? No! Why would I do that?

Me: Look lady, I don't mean to be rude or anything but I sat here alone because I wanted to be alone so please stop with all the questions. I feel like you're interrogating me.

Her: No, I am not. I was just making conversation.

She opens her lunch tin, I could smell that it had chicken and immediately I felt nauseous. I run to the toilets and threw up. The

smell was like stuck in my nostrils, I kept on puking. I hear Thobekile knocking on my door saying my phone is ringing. I flush and went out. I go rinse my mouth.

Her: Are you okay?

Me: Yes, I don't know what happened.

Her: Your phone has been ringing.

I take it from her.

Me: Thanks.

I see a missed call from Thandiwe, I call her back, and she picks up immediately.

Her: Hey girl, how are you?

Me: I am okay, you?

Her: I am fine too. How's your first day?

Me: Okay just that I have been puking.

Her: What? Why?

Me: I don't know, I think it's something I ate.

Her: Okay, did you tell Tukelo?

Me: No, I am puking, but I don't feel any pain.

Her: Still you should tell him.

Me: No I will be fine, I don't want him worrying unnecessarily.

Her: You got that right, he will fly there.

Me: I know right. I don't know what he thinks I am made of. It's like I'm glass or something.

Her: (sigh) yeah. I was thinking we could go out after your classes. Me: Um... I can't I am going out with Tukelo.

Her: Oh I should have known. Silly me.

Me: Are you okay, Thandi?

Her: Yes, why?

Me: I can sense that you're not fine.

Her: I will be fine.

Me: What's wrong?

Her: Tumi, he didn't come home last night.

Me: What?

Her: Yes. I can even feel that there's another woman.

Oh shit! I knew that this day would come.

Me: How do you know that?

Her: I'm maybe a nice person Amahle but I am not dumb. He's

always happy, he doesn't bother what I do with whom and where.

He doesn't take me out, compliment me, make me feel special and

all he sees me as is his sex machine. I know Tumi doesn't love me, he never did but for him to treat me like this, it is unfair. I have been

telling him to let me go but he doesn't want to because he doesn't

want to let his father down.

Me: What's his father got to do with this?

Her: (sigh) we had an arranged marriage.

Me: What?

Her: Yes. Our families forced us to get married but I fell in love with

him. I love him Amahle. He's been with me for 9 years but nothing, all he does is mistreat me.

Me: Can we talk about this face-to-face? This is juicy. It needs wine.

Her: (laughs) okay. I will wait for you.

Me: See you later.

Her: okay.

I hang up.

I didn't even realize that this Thobekile girl is still here. We leave the toilets and she goes to her lecture and me to mine. Her behavior is really starting to tick me off.

I am done with my lectures. I see Tukelo on the parking lot with my bike, two helmets and two biker jackets. I didn't realize how much I missed him until I jump on him he catches me and I wrap my legs around his waist. I don't care if people are watching, I missed my man.

Him: Someone missed me.

Me: You have no idea.

I kiss him, it is a short kiss though.

Him: Let's go, so you can show me how much you missed me.

Me: No babe, I promised my mom that I will not sleep with you.

Him: But you already did, and you also slept with me last night.

Me: I know.

Him: Don't tell me you're abstaining.

Me: Well I am.

Him: Okay.

Me: Just okay?

Him: What do you want me to say? But we both know that won't happen.

Me: What do you mean? Are you calling me a sex addict?

I get off him.

Him: You said that, I didn't.

Me: But you're not denying it idiot!

Him: I didn't call you a sex addict, why are you getting worked up?

Me: Because you're being jerk.

Him: What did I do? You're being crazy.

Me: First I am a sex addict and now you calling me crazy?

Him: You're putting words in my mouth, I didn't say that. You know what, never mind, let's go.

Me: I am not getting in that bike with someone who thinks I am crazy.

Him: Are you being serious? Stop this madness and take this.

He gives me the helmet and the biker. This is cool, the helmet has my name on it and the biker too, it's written with pink bold letters. I look at him and smile.

Me: They're amazing.

I hug him.

Him: Not mad anymore?

Me: I never was.

Him: Yeah right, now jump in.

I got on the bike and sit on the front.

Him: What are you doing?

Me: Riding my bike.

Him: There's no way I am having my hands wrapped around you.

Me: Why not?

Him: No. You know what, I am not going to argue with you.

He put his helmet on and sits at the back. He put his hands on the handles and starts the bike.

What the...

I look at him. He shrugs and takes off. He's at the back but he's the one riding the bike. This is stupid. If people see us, they will think we're stupid. He leaves town but he's not taking me to my house and not taking me to his house either. I wonder where we're going. We finally arrive at this huge block of flats. The place look lovely and expensive. The gate opens and he enters. He parks at the undercover parking.

Me: Why are we here? I thought you were taking me out.

Him: Just come with me.

He takes my hand and we go to the elevator. This place is amazing, I even see there's a pool. We go the last floor, which the 5th floor. He

leads me to room 5B. He unlocks the door. He still hasn't said anything. He opens the door. I enter the place is amazing and big.

Again, everything is white and silver. I see twirling stairs.

Everything looks expensive and Italian. Oh no, he owns it.

Him: Welcome to your new home.

I look at him. This place is amazing and all but it doesn't come close to his house.

Me: Babe, you have a huge house, why would you buy this apartment?

Him: Oh no, that's where you're wrong, it's not mine. It's yours.

My eyes are big as tennis balls. I am shocked.

Me: I don't understand.

Him: I bought this apartment for you, it's in your name. You just need to sign a few papers to officially make it yours.

I don't know what to say. I just burst into tears.

Him: Tigress, what's wrong? You don't like it?

He looks at me worried.

Me: No baby, I do. Just that...

I cry even harder. What the heck is wrong with me?

He comes closer and hugs me.

Me: I love it, I don't know what to say.

He looks at me smiling and cups my face.

Him: You don't have to say anything my love, your tears are doing that for you.

He wipes my tears.

Me: But I thought I was staying at the school's residence.

Him: No! You're not staying there, you're staying here.

Me: My mom will never allow this.

Him: For now, you don't have to tell her anything. As time goes on, you'll tell her you got an apartment in town.

Me: You have it all figured out, huh?

Him: (smiles) don't I always?

Me: Thank you so much my love.

I hug him tightly.

Him: It was my pleasure. You're going to need your own space now.

I don't want anything disturbing you from achieving your goals. I bought this for you so you can focus on your studies.

Me: That's very thoughtful of you. What did I do to deserve you?

Him: I should be asking that, since you came to my life, you changed me, loved me for me and not for what I have. I became a better

man, you gave me all of you, and because of you I was able to see my sisters that I haven't seen in years. You making me fall for you each day, just by smiling and being beautiful. You loved me despite my flaws and wrongs, you stayed with me even on the worst of times. You drive me crazy, literally. Baby, I love you. I love you my Tigress and I mean it.

Me: (smiles) I love you, forever and always.

He smiles. Tears can't stop running down my face. He wipes them and kiss me. One thing lead to another and we make love on this white Italian couch. Now I am lying on top of his chest, we both

naked. Here I was saying I am abstaining, few hours later, I am on top of this man's chest, naked.

Him: So, you're abstaining huh?

Me: Shut up.

Him: (laughs).

Me: Your fault.

Him: You always blame me for your weaknesses.

Me: I am not weak.

Him: Babe, I touch you and I feel your body shaking and your knees trembling.

Me: Oh, you like that don't you?

Him: A lot.

Me: Oh kill me.

He chuckles and kisses my forehead.

Me: I'm hungry.

Him: Me too. What do you want to eat?

Me: Veggie burger.

He looks at me awkwardly.

Him: Veggie burger?

Me: Yes.

Him: Since when?

Me: Since now.

Him: Yoh, I am not having that shit, I will order me some beef burger.

He calls the delivery guy and he orders food. Once he was done, he comes back to the couch, cuddles me whilst playing with my hair.

Him: Baby, when are you going to do your hair?

Me: Why? What's wrong with my hair?

Him: You have nothing on, I thought maybe you would want to put a weave on or whatever that thing is called.

I sit up.

Me: Are you saying I'm ugly with my natural hair?

Him: No, no, no baby, you always beautiful.

Me: If I'm always beautiful then you wouldn't have asked me that stupid question.

Him: Tigress I was just saying...

Me: Save it Tukelo!

I stand up, he holds my hand.

Him: Baby, what did I do? I was only curious. I can't have a conversation with you now without you blowing up for no reason.

Me: How can you ask me such a question Tukelo?!

Him: What's wrong with what I've asked?

Me: Oh my god! Everything Tukelo. How would you feel if I ask you when you getting a haircut? The first thing that will cross your mind is that you're ugly with hair. Right?

Him: No, I would get the impression that you like me better with no hair.

Me: Oh! So you like me better with a weave on?

Him: Geez Amahle, I was only making conversation. I didn't realize you were going to be offended.

Me: Well I am offended Tukelo.

Him: Okay baby, I am sorry.

Me: Go kill yourself.

I was about to leave, he grabs my arm.

Him: Baby, I am sorry okay? You look amazing with or without a weave on. You always look beautiful in front of my eyes. I was an idiot for asking you that, I'm sorry.

He baby kisses me.

Him: Askies baby neh?

I nod. He smiles and kissed my forehead.

The doorbell rings. Must be the delivery guy. He lets go of me and goes to the door.

Me: Tukelo!

He turns to look at me.

Me: Baby, you have no pants on.

Him: Yeah right.

I chuckle. I throw him his boxers and he wears them. He comes back with food. I also get dressed and we go the dining table to eat. I say

grace and we dig in. I don't what I was thinking ordering this veggie burger. I can't stand it.

Me: Baby, I don't want this.

Him: You have got to be kidding me.

Me: No I am not. This burger is tasteless and stale. It even smells bad.

He takes my burger and takes a bite.

Him: It seem fine to me.

Me: No, it's not. If you find mine okay, can I have yours?

Him: Ha.ana Amahle.

Me: Please.

I pout. He sighs and gives to me.

Me: Thanks. So, why didn't you tell me that Thandi and Tumi had an arranged marriage?

He chokes on the food and starts to cough.

Me: Hone, are you okay?

He shows me thumbs up, signaling that he's fine. He takes a sip of his drink, I wait for him to come back. And he's back.

Him: Who told you that?

Me: Thandi.

Him: Oh.

Me: So?

Him: So what?

Me: Why didn't you tell me?

Him: I didn't think it was important.

Me: What? It is important. Why did your father do such a horrible thing?

Him: I told you, he's the kind of person that dictates people's lives and what he says, goes.

Me: Yoh! I haven't met your father yet but I don't like him.

Him: (laughs) that means you'll hate him once you get to meet him.

Me: Oh God. What if he hates me?

Him: I love you, right?

Me: Yes.

Him: Then you shouldn't care about what people think or feel because what matters is that we love each other.

Me: I know baby, but I want your father to like me just like my mother loves you.

Him: Mmm.

Okay that last statement scared me. Can it be possible for his father not to like me at all? I am his last son's girlfriend after all.

Me: I am going to see Thandi today.

Him: Why?

Me: Because of your stupid brother.

Him: I don't understand this, Thandi knows that Tumi doesn't love her, why is she still bothering herself with what he does?

Me: She loves him.

Him: Well, shame.

Me: You can be an ass you know that? You and your brother.

Him: What did I do?

I suddenly feel nauseous. I ran towards the bathroom. I throw up, again. What the hell is wrong with me? I feel Tukelo's hand on my

back.

Him: Baby, are you okay? What's wrong?

I shrug. I throw up. Tukelo give me a glass of water. I drink it. As soon as I feel better, I flush, close the seat and sit on top of it. Tukelo looks at me worried. He feel the temperature on my forehead.

Him: What's wrong baby?

Me: I don't know, I have been puking a lot lately.

Him: Have you seen a doctor about that?

Me: I don't feel any pain.

Him: I didn't ask you that, I asked you if you've seen a doctor or not?

Me: This is no time for you to be a jerk.

Him: Wow, that's what I am to you these days, a jerk or an idiot.

Me: Whatever. Take me to Thandi's place.

Him: No, you're sick.

Me: I'm fine. It's that burger I ate. Told you it tasted funny.

Him: We should go see the doctor, this might be serious.

Me: No, I think its flue or something.

Him: Okay fine, if this continues then tomorrow we're going to the doctor. I will drag you there if I have to.

Me: Fine Tukelo, if that will make you sleep better at night. Now take me to Thandi's place.

He leaves so I can take a shower. After my shower I go to my room and I find my clothes already in my closet and I see a lot of brand new clothes. From sneakers to branded clothes and even underwear. When he gave me a 'tour' he didn't show this part. He's lying on the bed looking at me.

Me: You didn't tell me about this.

Him: Wasn't important.

I roll my eyes.

Him: Don't do that.

Me: Who did this? Because I know you didn't.

Him: Your maid.

Me: My what?

Him: Maid. Oh no, you didn't think you were going to stay here alone now did you?

Me: Where will you be at?

Him: I have a house, remember?

Me: Oh.

I go back to applying lotion on my body.

Him: Don't be sad now. You know your mom will never like it if we move in together. That's called co-habiting.

Me: I know that.

Him: And you know what they say about co-habiting, the man will never marry you. He's going to keep fucking you for free.

Me: Stop. You starting to sound like my mom.

He laughs.

Me: So me and the maid.

Him: And bodyguards.

I saw that one coming. I look at him.

Him: What? I have bodyguards so you will to.

Oh by the way, later on I learnt that Rufus and Sphiwe are his bodyguards. They are very discreet though, you will never see them unless you know them. That's why it took me 4 whole months to know about them.

Me: They have to be discreet.

Him: They've always been.

Me: What do you mean? Are you saying I always had bodyguards?!

Him: You're my woman. I have to keep an eye on my property.

Me: You're unbelievable.

Him: Well, believe this. I have to keep a closer eye now that you're...

He stops.

Me: I'm what?

Him: Staying alone.

Me: I am not a baby you know.

Him: Yes but you my baby.

He stands up and kisses me.

Me: No more sex I am drained out. Let's go.

Him: (laughs) who said anything about sex?

Me: I know that kiss.

Him: Well it wouldn't hurt to...

Me: No! Let's go.

I grab my purse and we left the apartment with his Range Rover, he loves this car, he even named her Doris. What's with men giving their cars female names?

We get to Tumi's house and I find Thandi all curled up on the floor playing soft music with wine by her side. Tukelo doesn't even care. He goes to the fridge takes a beer and he walks out. I go to her and she just break down in my arms.

Me: Shush, I'm here.

I am such a bad person. I am busy comforting this woman yet I know the person that's bringing all the troubles in her marriage and that person is my best-friend. She finally calms down and I let go of her.

Her: (smiles) wine?

Me: Please.

She pours me and herself a glass.

Me: So how are you?

Her: I'm terrible Amahle. I can only take this much of Tumi's bull. I have had it.

Me: What did he do?

Her: Tumi has mistreated me since we gotten married and that's 9 years ago. I know he doesn't love me but for him to do this to me it's unfair. He can at least show me respect.

Me: Help me understand Thandi. Tumi seems like a decent guy to me, he is not even capable of hurting a fly.

She laughs.

Her: Well he has killed my soul. Tumi has never laid his hands on me but the emotional abuse is too much. He has never shown me

affection, he comes home late every night sometimes he doesn't

come home at all. The cheating hasn't stopped. This one time I

caught him red-handed, it was on his cellphone, he didn't even try

to deny it. He just said what I see is what it is. I found what I was looking for. He talks to girls on his cellphone for hours in front of me, well he will think I am sleeping but I am awake. He only shows me affection when we're in public or we're in front of his parents or mine. He becomes the best husband ever.

Me: Oh my god, that's why we don't see all this you're talking about.

Her: Yes.

She has been crying throughout this conversation, I don't want to

embrace her. I want her to tell me everything. I am nosy I know.

Her: I even ask him why he cheats he just laughs and says it's not called cheating if the person you're married to doesn't love you. He

thinks I don't love him, he always say we're doing this for our parents so if I want someone that can make me happy I should do so but I

don't want that Amahle, I want him to hold me, kiss me, miss me, rub my feet and make me feel safe, make me feel like a woman. Is that

too much to ask?

Me: No, he doesn't know what he's missing out on because you're a

great woman. You're beautiful, elegant, classy and strong. I don't

think he has given himself a chance to even get to know you better

because I know for a fact that he would've fallen in love with you a

long time ago.

Her: He will never love me.

Me: he will.

Her: I have been with him for 9 years. I am the one who cooks for him, cleans for him, help him get ready for work. I am the one helping him build his so called 'empire'. I am the one who knows what he likes and what he hates, I know his allergies, his favorite food, favorite soccer team, favorite holiday, everything. I know everything about him everything! Heck I even know things that can take him to jail, things that will cause him to lose his job as a Lawyer. What does he know about me? Nothing. He doesn't even know the size of my shoe. Yet he has the nerve to love another woman who knows nothing about him! I have been there through his raises and his falls. Me! Yet he goes and fucks another woman while he left me here alone with no one to embrace me.

She's crying and shouting, I don't know what to do except to nod. I let her take out all of her pain that she has been bottling up.

Her: He has hurt me so much. I have lost 3 babies because of him! I had to go through that horrible experience alone. While he's busy with another woman out there. I had to suffer the deaths of our children alone.

Me: Whoa... I know Tumi is not a monster he wouldn't do that except if he didn't know about the pregnancy, now did he?

Her: He didn't know but what difference will it make? It wasn't going to change anything.

Me: It was. He's not a monster, he would have loved being a father, I have seen him with kids and he's loves them and they love him. Maybe he would have become a better man.

Her: No Amahle, he should become a better husband first before I can trust him to become a better father.

Me: This is so frustrating.

Her: Yeah that's how I have been feeling for the past 9 years.

I don't understand Tumi. Thandi is an amazing woman, she's beautiful, flawless, and sexy, she is a 'yellow bone', her body is well toned and her dimples do wonders for her. When she has a weave on, she's drop-dead gorgeous. What more does he want? Men would kill for a girl like her, she doesn't deserve this treatment.

Me: Tumi is crazy if he thinks that he will get away with what he's doing. He will get a piece of my mind.

Her: No don't say anything please. He will take it out on me.

Me: Oh he'll have me to deal with then.

It was around 8pm when Tukelo came to fetch me. I was fuming, I don't know why but I was raging. I say my goodbyes to Thandi and she's far better than what I found her in. She was a lot drunk but she was better.

Thandi: Thank you so much my love for today. I feel better.

Me: That's good to hear.

She walks me out because Tukelo was waiting for me in the car. She almost fall but manage to keep balance, she's even walking barefoot.

She goes to Tukelo and she hugs him. Tukelo doesn't hug back, instead he pushes her away.

Her: Thank you Aubuti Tukelo. I had fun with your woman. She's the only friend I have. I trust her and I love her. Keep her well for me. Take care of her, don't be a Tumi.

Him: You didn't give my woman wine, right?

Her: Nope! She was a party pooper, she didn't want any. She said it smelled bad.

Him: Okay good.

Her: Anyway I have to go back to my miserable life. Thanks again sweetie.

She hugs me, said her goodbyes and went back inside.

Me: When you see Tumi tell him to see me ASAP.

I give Tukelo a bad look and went inside the car. He also comes in.

Him: So you're going to believe the lies that crazy woman tells you?

He start the car.

Me: That woman is not crazy Tukelo! She is not! She is hurt, miserable, sad, lost and depressed all thanks to your stupid brother! All she needs is for your brother to let her go so she can find someone that will love her. So you better call your brother!

Him: How many times must I tell you to not get involved? Do you realize that your best-friend is involved too?

Me: Right now I don't care who's involved, I just want this madness to end. The poor woman is suffering because of my best-friend's selfishness. I told her that Tumi is married, she didn't care. Tumi must let Thandi go man, if he loves Nosi so much.

Him: He can't do that.

Me: Why not?

Him: It's complicated.

Me: Your family always have complications, if not then you don't

want to talk about it. Oh it's getting old man!

Him: Will stop shouting at me. I am not deaf.

Me: Argh! Fuck this!

He brakes so suddenly that I got a fright. He grabs my wrists aggressively, he looks pissed.

Him: How many times have I told you to talk to me with fucking respect?

Me: You're hurting me.

His grip tightens, I let out a small scream.

Him: When I tell you nicely, you don't listen. I don't like the thought I'm having, don't push my hand.

Me: Tukelo you fucking hurting me!

I feel one hot slap across my face.

Him: Don't use swear words at me, you got that?

I am shocked. My wrists are burning, my cheeks are hurting. I don't know what to do. I feel a tear escape my eye. Why do I have to cry in front of him? He still holding on to my wrists.

Me: Tukelo let go.

Him: I don't ever, I mean ever want to have this conversation with you again.

I look at him, I don't see the Tukelo that I love so much. I don't see my man. I see a monster. He finally let go. My wrists are red and burning. He starts the car and speeds off. I look out the window, more tears start pouring out. The dangerous man that everyone was warning me about is starting to show.

We get to the apartment, we both haven't said a word to each other. He opens the door and I go inside first leaving him behind. I go straight to my bathroom and went to take a shower. I take a very long time. Thinking to myself the worse, I can't let him do this to me. I always told myself that if he were to abuse or hit me, I will always fight back but today, I just froze. I didn't expect him to hit me. Why did he hit me?

When I was done showering, I go look myself in the mirror, I see finger marks across my face. I look at my wrists, they still red and burning. I look for a first aid kit and took out a bandage. I bandage both of my wrists. I leave the bathroom, I find him on my bed, lying on his back, facing the ceiling with his hands covering his face. I ignore him and went to the closet, took out my PJ's. I lotion my body then dressed into my PJ's. I took a pillow and tried to leave the room but it's locked.

Me: Tukelo, the key.

He uncovers his face and looks at me.

Him: Huh?

Me: Key. The door is locked.

He sits up.

Him: Baby, I'm sorry.

Me: Tukelo, I just want the keys.

Him: Can we talk about what happened?

Me: No.

Him: Why?

Me: I don't want to talk about it.

He stands up and comes closer. I don't want to step back, let him try again, this time I'm ready.

He looks at my wrists.

Him: Can I see?

Me: What's there to see? There's nothing for you to see here.

Him: Tigress, I don't know what got into to me. I don't know what happened. I got too angry. I am sorry.

Me: What happens the next time you get too angry Tukelo? I told you, I will not be your punching bag.

Him: And you're not. Baby just that you became too much. I didn't mean to be that aggressive towards you. I regret it.

Me: But you were and it's the second time.

He touches my face.

Him: I did that?

Me: What do you think? These finger marks weren't here before.

Him: Shit! I am sorry Tigress.

Me: Open this door Tukelo. Now!

Him: Where are you going?

Me: I don't know but far away from you.

Him: Don't leave. I will be the one leaving.

Me: Good. And tell your banker or lawyer or whatever that I will not be signing any papers.

Him: What do you mean?

Me: I mean I will not stay in this apartment anymore.

Him: But why? You're not leaving me, right?

Me: I am! You must be crazy if you think that I will stay with you any longer. You promised me! You promised me that you'll never lay your hands on me but you did! And you most likely to do it again!

Him: Baby, I will never again. I will change, do anything, whatever it takes just please, don't leave.

Me: No! I want you out of my...

I suddenly feel dizzy. I sit down on the bed.

Him: Babe, are you okay?

He comes closer, he holds my hand but I yank it from him and I go stand next to the dressing table.

Me: I'm fine! Just get out! Get out Tukelo!

Him: But I have to make sure you're okay...

Me: If you leave I will be just fine. Now leave! Now!

Him: But Tigress...

I take a picture frame that was on the dressing table, I throw it towards him, and he ducks. It hits the wall.

Me: Leave!

Him: Okay. Call me if you need anything.

Me: Go!

He looks at me like I'm the one who has hurt him. He unlocks the door and leaves. I throw myself on the bed and cried myself to sleep.

Insert Twenty-One 😊

I don't know when I fell asleep but I was woken up by a phone call. I didn't check the caller I.D. I just picked it up.

Me: What?

Him: Wow someone woke up on the wrong side of the bed.

I check the caller I.D.

Me: Oh, Charles hi. I am sorry, I didn't check the caller I.D.

Him: it's okay. We don't always have to wake up happy. So how are you?

Me: I am fine. You?

Him: I am okay. How was your first day at school?

Me: (laugh) oh my god you making it sound like it was actually my 'first' day at school.

Him: (chuckles) wasn't it?

Me: Not really, I have been to school before but to answer your question it was amazing, a bit challenging but you know me, I am always up for a challenge.

Him: That's good to hear. Why don't we meet up for lunch so you can tell me all about your first day?

I see Tukelo on the mirror, he's standing by the door carrying a tray of food.

Me: Look, let me call you back. I will think about your offer.

Him: What's the rush now?

Me: I have to get ready for school.

Him: Okay. I will wait for your call.

Me: Okay.

Him: Have a good day.

Me: Thanks, you too.

Him: I will try to. You just have to make my day and meet me up for lunch.

Me: (laughs) oh my word bye.

I hang up.

Tukelo comes closer and he places the food on my lap. He tries to kiss me but I lean back. He also step back.

Him: Morning babe.

Me: Hi.

Him: How're you?

Me: Fine.

Him: You were laughing and talking to the phone just now why you being cold towards me?

Me: You do know that when I said leave, I meant leave the apartment, right? Leave this building.

Him: You weren't really specific.

Me: You knew exactly what I meant.

Him: Maybe.

I sigh and try to get off bed but he holds my hand.

Him: Aren't you going to eat?

Me: I am not really hungry. I am going to be late.

Him: Tigress, I am really trying here. I am making efforts, I went all out to cook you this breakfast. And besides schools starts in the next two hours. Please.

Me: Nothing Italian?

Him: (laughs) Nope.

Me: Sure?

Him: I cross my heart I hope to die.

I want to laugh at that but I stay strong and kept a straight face.

Him: I know you want to laugh, why you holding back the laughter?

Me: You want me to eat this breakfast or not?

I get in bed. Next to the flower that's on the tray, I find a letter. I look at him. I open the letter and it's written: 'I'm sorry' in big bold letters. I look at him, we stare at each other. There's awkward silence.

Me: I hope you're not trying to bribe me with this breakfast because you know I love your cooking.

Him: No, not at all. Thought I should do something nice.

Me: Let's see what's in here.

As soon as I open the cover, I feel nauseous. The smell of the eggs gets to me. I try to ignore it. I drink the juice but still.

Him: Are you okay?

I get off bed and ran to the toilet to throw up. What the heck is happening? I feel Tukelo's hand brushing my back as I throw up. He gives me a glass of water. I drink it but I feel nauseous again, I throw up. When I was done I flush and rinse my mouth.

Him: We should go see a doctor babe.

Me: I'm fine.

Him: Remember our deal?

Me: Oh yeah.

Him: I will pick you up at 2 and we will go together.

Me: I can take myself to the doctor.

Him: Our deal was, I take you to the doctor.

Me: Fine. See you at 2.

Him: Okay.

Me: But that doesn't change anything. It is still over between us. I am still leaving you and this apartment.

He looks at me in disbelief. I leave him and went to take a shower. I

take like 30 minutes in the shower. I go to the mirror I see the finger marks, I touch my face. At least it's not sore anymore but my wrists

were still a bit sore. But they look better.

I leave the bathroom, I find the room cleaner than I left it. My bed

was made, windows were open. I could feel the fresh air. Everything

was tidy. Okay, I know that Tukelo is sorry and all but I am sure as hell that he didn't do all of this. Even the glass of the picture frame were cleaned out but I see the picture on my bed. I take it, it's my favorite picture of us. I smile, we looked so happy. We had silly faces on, he was my best-friend. He had to ruin a lot of that. I feel a tear running down my face.

A lady walks in. I quickly wipe the tear on my face.

Her: Oh I am sorry mam' I didn't realize that you were done with your shower.

Me: No it's okay. You must be the helper?

Her: Yes mam'. I'm Unathi Dhlamini.

Me: Well, I'm Amahle, and I would like you to call me that.

Her: Yes mam' Amahle.

Me: Stop. Call me Amahle, or else you're fired.

She smiles.

Her: Okay, sis' Amahle.

Me: Man, you're stubborn.

She looks older than me yet she is showing me so much of respect.

She looks like she's in her mid-30s, she is beautiful, she had dreadlocks on.

Me: I will get dressed, I will tell you when I'm done.

Her: Okay.

She leaves. I decide on wearing jeans, long sleeved white t-shirt, a body warmer and long boots. It's quite cold outside. I go sit on the chair and did my make-up. I am not even a fan of this thing but I have to hide this man's shame. I don't look bad, at least the fingers marks are not visible anymore.

I can sense that he's behind me, I can smell his perfume but he still hasn't said anything.

Me: I should be trying to hide hickies, not finger marks Tukelo.

I get up and he has his head bowed down. I try to pass him but he holds my hand.

Him: I'm sorry.

Me: Fine.

Him: I should have never hit you, I will beat myself up for the rest of

my life because of that.

Me: That won't make me feel better. Look, since we've been together we have never stayed apart. We're always together almost every day. Maybe what we need is time apart.

Him: No, we don't need time apart. We need to work through this together, as a team.

Me: I can't Tukelo...

He kneels in front of me with tears in his eyes.

Him: Please don't leave me.

Unathi comes, guess she didn't expect to see us like this. She is shocked.

Me: Get up Tukelo.

Him: Please. I am not getting up until you forgive me.

Me: Okay, I forgive you. Now get up.

Him: For real?

Me: Yes, now stop being a baby and get up.

He smiles and gets up.

Him: I will make it up to you.

He hugs me and kisses my forehead. Unathi clears her throat. She smiles.

Her: Mr. & Mrs. Mokoena, the driver is here.

Me: Oh no I'm not...

Him: We're coming.

She leaves.

Me: You enjoyed that didn't you?

Him: (chuckles) what's wrong with being called Mrs. Mokoena?

You'll end up with being a Mrs. Mokoena anyways.

Me: I won't comment on that. Well, we better get going.

Him: You better get going, I still have to take a shower. The driver is waiting for you.

Me: Oh.

Him: Don't be sad now.

He cups my face and kisses my lips softly.

Him: See you later. I love you and I mean it.

Me: Love you, forever and always.

He kisses me.

My day was going okay but I felt horrible and I sure was looking

horrible. This Thobekile chick is still following me around and I must say she looks much better today. She wasn't as bad as I thought.

She is easy to talk to, funny and sweet. I spend all my free time with her. Right now I was having lunch with her. We have talked a lot.

Although I don't know her that well, she has told me so much about herself. She's from Matatiale and she doesn't come from a rich

family and apparently she's the first one in her family to go to Varsity. I still don't trust her though, the way she's kissing my feet, it's making me very suspicious of her but I let her be.

Her: So how're you feeling today?

Me: Horrible.

Her: What is wrong with you?

Me: I don't know Thobe, I have been puking a lot. I get dizzy and I just hate everything.

Her: Whuu, if I didn't know any better girl, I would say you're expecting.

Me: Expecting? As in pregnant?

She nods. I laugh so hard.

Me: Don't be silly. I am on contraceptives and I use protection once in a while.

Her: You do know that they're not 100%, right?

Me: I am not pregnant Thobe, I can't be.

Her: Well okay but it wouldn't be such a bad thing, you have a very rich and very handsome boyfriend.

Me: How do you know about him?

Her: He dropped you off yesterday and considering what he was wearing and what he was driving, I could tell that he's rich.

Me: Were you checking him out?

Her: Maybe (laughs)

Me: (chuckles) hey, stay away.

Her: (laughs) don't worry about me, you're gorgeous yourself. I wouldn't even dare try to compete with you.

Me: (laughs) you're too sweet.

My phone rings, caller I.D: Big Brother.

Me: Bro.

Him: Hey lil sis, how're you?

Me: I am okay, you?

Him: I am good and school?

Me: School is amazing, I am getting used to it. And the wedding preparations?

Him: Ey Amahle, that's what I want to talk to you about.

Me: I'm listening.

Him: Zanele is on another level, that woman is going to drive me to bankruptcy.

Me: (laugh) that bad?

Him: You have no idea. She wants helicopters, doves, fireworks and a fucking boat.

Me: (laughs) what's the boat for?

Him: She wants a beach wedding.

Me: But this is Jo'burg, there are no beaches.

Him: (sigh) we're not getting married in Jo'burg.

Me: Where will it be?

Him: Cape Town.

I laugh.

Him: Don't laugh, it's bad.

Me: Really bad. I am so sorry big bro.

Him: I am even thinking of calling off this wedding.

Me: That will drive her insane.

Him: I don't care. She thinks she is marrying a billionaire. My job is even stressing me out as it is.

Me: why?

Him: I don't want to bore you with details but I was this close of capturing the people who smuggle gold. I have always been after them, but they always slip away. The captain is on my throat.

I freeze. Is my brother after Tukelo's gang? This is bad, like really bad. I am not even scared for Tukelo, I am scared for my brother.

Him: Amahle? Are you still there?

Me: Yes, I'm here.

Him: What happened?

Me: Nothing, I have to get to class.

Him: Okay. See me later on this week I miss you.

Me: Okay I will.

I hang up. How didn't I see this coming? This is a disaster. I start feeling hot, I feel sweat dripping on my skin. I fan myself.

Her: Are you okay? Amahle, you're sweating.

Me: I am fine.

Her: No you're not. It is freaking cold and you're sweating.

Me: I need water.

She takes out a bottle of water from her bag and gives to me. I open it, I drink some of the water and the rest I pour it on my face.

Me: I feel a little bit better.

Her: I think you should take the rest of the day off.

Me: No, I am fine. Let's go.

I attend the rest of my lectures. I keep on saying I am okay but I don't feel okay at all. Thank god, it's time to go home. I meet up with Thobe as I was about to go to the parking lot.

Her: Better now?

Me: Yes, thanks.

Her: Please think about what I said. Go and check.

Me: Not again with that.

Her: I am serious. When was the last time you had your period?

Me: Uhm... I think... oh shit!

Her: See.

This cannot be, it can't happen. No. Not now. How can Tukelo be so careless?!

Her: Who's that guy?

She points at a car behind us. I turn around.

Me: (sigh) Tukelo's driver, Sabelo.

Her: You're chauffeured? Girl you're living the life.

Me: Trust me, it annoys the living daylights out of me. I have to go.

See you.

We share a hug and I go towards the car. Someone taps on my shoulder, I turn around and I see Charles.

Me: Oh hi. What are you doing here?

Him: I waited and waited for your call.

Me: (laughs) were you serious about that?

Him: Yes.

Me: I would love to have lunch with you but I can't.

Him: Is it Tukelo?

Me: No. Why do you always bring him up?

Him: Because I know how he can be.

Me: I have heard you guys boasting about being 'good' friends but I haven't seen none of that. You don't even come to his house, I have never heard him talk to you over the phone. What's up with that?

Him: I am not friends with traitors.

Me: What? What happened?

Him: You shouldn't worry yourself about that.

Me: But I want to know.

Him: He took what was meant to be mine, okay?

Sabelo comes to us.

Sabelo: Mam' Amahle, we have to go.

Me: I am coming.

Sabelo: We have to go. You have an appointment with the doctor at 2.

Charles: Doctor? Why?

Me: I have a stomach bug. That's all.

Charles: Stomach bug?

Me: Yes. I have to go, guess I will see you around.

Charles: Guess so.

Sabelo opens the back seat door for me. For the past 5 months that I've known him, he still hasn't learnt a thing. I look at him and go in

the front seat, he smiles and shakes his head. He gets in the car and drives off.

Him: You are going to get me fired.

Me: (laughs) I don't understand why y'all are so scared of Tukelo. He doesn't bite.

Him: You don't understand. Boss has done so much for me, actually for all of us. He makes sure that we are well taken care off, he pays way too much and we even have medical aids, can you believe that?

Me: Wow, I didn't know.

Him: Yes, he may be hard on us but he does care about us but he won't admit it. All he ever asks is for us not to touch you, talk to you or even look at you.

Me: (laugh) you have got to be kidding me.

Him: Serious. Rebel and Gundi have been following you around yet you didn't even know it.

Me: Rebel and Gundi?

Him: Yes. Your bodyguards.

Me: (laugh) does Tukelo do all of this to all of his girlfriends? Gosh.

Him: Nope. You must be special.

Me: I am starting to think so too. But how come I never met this Rebel and Gundi?

Him: Like I said, he doesn't want any of us talking to you. If it were up to him, you wouldn't see me too.

Me: (laugh) Tukelo is crazy.

Him: Crazy in love.

Me: Can you do me a favor?

Him: Anything.

Me: Can you not take me to the doctor? Please, take me home.

Him: But Boss said...

Me: Forget about what your boss said, what he doesn't know won't kill him.

Him: I don't know Miss.

Me: Let me deal with him. Just take me home.

I am too scared what the doctor might tell me. I am scared that what Thobe said might be true. What will I do? What will I say to my mom? This is bad. Plus this Anele situation is stressing me out. How can my life turn into such a mess in less than 2 days?

I was interrupted by Sabelo when he was telling me we're here. He help me with my bag and takes me to my apartment. As soon as I enter the apartment, I go straight to the fridge and took out polony, mayonnaise, sausages, tomatoes, patty burger, fish fingers, tuna and nutuella. I start frying and Sabelo has been looking at me like I am crazy.

Me: What?

Him: You're going to eat all of that?

Me: Yes. Have a problem with that?

Him: No miss. Well I am leaving now.

Me: No don't leave yet. Who's going to keep me company?

Him: (laughs) you really want me to lose my job?

Me: Mxm, you're such a bore. Well, leave.

Him: (laughs) you'll be fine. You have Unathi.

Me: Oh, I forgot about her.

Him: (chuckles) I will be leaving now.

Me: Bye.

He takes his keys and leaves.

As I was about to fry my patty, Unathi comes down from upstairs.

Her: Oh sis'Amahle I had no idea that you're back.

Me: Well, I'm here.

Her: Why didn't you call me? I would have made you something to eat.

Me: I have two hands and a brain, right? I can make myself food.

Her: I am sorry sis'Amahle. I didn't mean to disrespect you.

Me: (sigh) I am the one who should be sorry. I shouldn't have spoken to you like that.

Her: It's okay.

Me: Now go rest, I am sure you've been working all afternoon.

She smiles and leaves. I carry on making my food. When I was done, I took out 6 slices of bread and went to the lounge to watch T.V. My phone rings as I was about to sit down.

Caller I.D: Babe.

Me: Hey.

Him: What is it that I hear about you not seeing a doctor?

Me: I was feeling okay. I didn't see the need.

Him: That's not an excuse. You can be so careless at times.

Me: Why are you shouting at me? It is my choice whether I want to see the doctor or not.

Him: What did I say to you? Didn't I say go see him whether you feel okay or not.

Me: Why do you want to control me? Why does it matter that I went to see the doctor or not?

Him: Amahle I cancelled a very important meeting for this! Only to

find that you told the driver to take you home. I had to wait two hours for you! Couldn't you at least call and tell me you're not coming.

Me: I didn't say cancel meetings. I was just sick, not dying.

Him: You don't get it do you? You can be a child sometimes, you know that? You sure act a lot younger than your age!

He sounds really angry. I don't know when the tears came but I felt them rolling down my cheeks.

Him: Amahle? Are you still there?

Me: (sniff)

Him: Amahle, babe. Are you crying?

I kept quiet.

Him: I am sorry babe, I am sorry. I shouldn't have scolded you, okay? I am sorry.

Me: You're jerk.

Him: Yeah I know. I am sorry. Can I make it up to you?

Me: Bring Tumi here.

Him: Again with that?

Me: Tukelo, I am not letting this go. I have a lot of things to deal with as it is, this is just adding to my stress.

Him: What things?

Me: Just please do as I say.

Him: (sigh) okay. I am coming.

Me: With Tumi.

Him: With Tumi.

Me: Okay good.

Him: Okay. I love you.

Me: I love you more.

I hang up.

Tukelo

I don't know exactly what Amahle was playing at but all I knew is that Tumi is in deep shit. One thing I have learnt about Amahle is that she is not the type to nag or whine but when she does, it's never nice, she say hurtful things and she screams and shouts. Take out all her anger, she even cries. She's not the type that cries too, when she does, she's really hurt and you screwed up bad. I never want to see that woman cry, ever! Not unless she's happy. When I heard her cry over the phone, I decided to do what she asked. Right now I am on my way to pick up Tumi from work. I find him with some girl in the parking lot, making out. I hoot, he jumps and I laugh.

Him: Don't fuckin' do that man.

Me: What are you doing?

Him: What does it look like I am doing?

Me: Hop in. My woman is waiting for you.

He kisses the girl goodbye and he gets in the car.

Him: Any idea why she called me?

Me: Nope, not a clue.

I am not going to alert him because I know he will want to run.

Him: Nosi isn't pregnant right?

Me: (laughs) for your sake, I hope it's not that.

Him: Ntate will kill me.

Me: Mmm.

In exactly 10 minutes, I was at Amahle's apartment. I park and we went straight to her apartment. We find her in the lounge, having ice-cream, and potato chips and there's a half-eaten burger on the side. It's fuckin' cold outside and this woman has the whole tub of ice-cream on her lap. We greet, she just looks at us and doesn't greet back. She stands up and heads to the kitchen. This woman must be crazy, she has a short and my top on. She comes back from the kitchen.

Her: Are you hungry?

Tumi and I look at each other.

Her: Are you going to stare at each other all day or you're going to answer me?

Tumi: I would love something to eat.

Me: Yeah me too.

She disappears to the kitchen again. Me and Tumi haven't dared to say a word to each other. We settle in the lounge and we watch soccer. She comes back with our food. We thank her and we dig in.

She just sits and looks at us. I must say, she's really becoming good at cooking. The cooking classes she took really helped. We eat in silence. Which is really good for me because I don't know what was coming and I was definitely not looking forward to it. As soon as we're done. She takes our plates and takes them to the kitchen. She comes back and switches off the T.V. Here we go.

Her: What game are you playing Tumi?

Him: I don't understand...

Her: Oh don't give me that crap. You know exactly what I am talking about.

Him: Ausi Mahle, I am clueless.

Her: When will you grow up and be a man? Take care of your wife?

Tumi keeps quiet.

Her: You do realize that you're playing with the hearts of two people that I care about? And that's not okay with me. You have a wife yet you busy screwing my friend.

Him: Whoa, me and Nosi are just fooling around no big deal.

Her: No big deal? No big deal?! As much as you and her don't want to admit it, you love each other. I can see that.

Him: No, that's not true.

Her: So you don't love Nosi?

Him: No, I don't.

Her: What about your wife? Have you loved her? Have you shown her care? Affection? Have you ever kissed her goodnight or good morning? Have you ever told her that you love her?

Him: As much as I don't show it to her but I do care about her, deeply.

Her: If you cared about her Tumi man, you would have been there when she had a miscarriage! When she felt like you were using her, when you made her feel useless and unworthy. You didn't seem to care.

Me: Wait, Thandi had a miscarriage?

Her: Yes. 3. Because of you Tumi, you didn't give the love she

deserved. You didn't show her any affection. You didn't give her your attention! You just used her to make your father proud, right?

Him: That's not true... I...

Her: When she needed you, you weren't there. Instead you were busy gallivanting with Nosi and your other side chicks. That woman has suffered a lot because of you yet she still takes care of you yet you have the nerve to tell her that she must go and look for love elsewhere but she loves you! Are you that dumb?

Tumi has his head bowed down. Amahle is fuming and she's sweating.

Me: Baby, calm down. Please.

Her: No! He needs to know how he has failed as a husband, as a father and as a man in total. He's over 25 yet he still has a mind of a young man. He has grown up, he should take responsibility.

Tumi keep on rubbing his eyes. Fuck me! He's crying. If the circumstances were different, I would be laughing right now.

Her: That woman sleeps alone almost every night yet her husband is all over Jo' burg partying and fucking women. If you fail to make her happy then you should let her go, she deserves better. You don't deserve her tears. You're just...

She stops and touches her forehead, like she's feeling dizzy.

Me: Baby, are you okay?

Her: I'm okay, I am just feeling...

And she hits the floor. Tumi and I stand up immediately. We go to her. I look at her lying on the floor, not knowing what to do. Tumi is shaking her and trying to pick her up. I am just feeling numb.

Him: Snap out of it Tukelo! And help me with her.

I freeze, tears roll down my cheeks.

Him: Fuck Tukelo! Man up! Crying isn't an option now. Unathi!!

Unathi comes downstairs.

Him: Thank god, can you help me with her? My brother is completely out of it.

I hear them and see them but I can't get to move my feet.

Everything just came back, the fear of losing someone I love comes back, the flashbacks, I feel the pain again. They take her and they leave. I gather all my strength, I snap out of it and I go to the sink and drink a lot of water and follow them...

Amahle

I feel weird, hungry and a little dizzy. The lights are making things even 10x worse. I notice that I am in an unfamiliar place. I look far ahead, I see Tukelo sitting on a chair with his face buried in his hands and Tumi sleeping on the little couch. Everything start coming back and I realize I am in hospital as soon as I see a drip on my arm. I just remember being in my apartment talking to Tumi and Tukelo, the rest is a blur. I try sitting up and Tukelo quickly looks at me. He looks horrible, like he hasn't slept for days. He's eyes were way smaller and red. He stands up and comes to me.

Him: Hey.

Me: Hi.

He kisses my forehead. For some odd reason he looks happy.

Him: How're you feeling?

Me: Dizzy.

Him: Aah babe, you'll be fine.

Me: And him?

I point at Tumi.

Him: He didn't want to leave, he felt like you fainted because of him.

Me: Oh that's what happened to me.

Tumi wakes up.

Tumi: Sis' Amahle, hey, I am really sorry, I didn't mean to...

Me: Look Tumi, I just woke up. I can never blame you about what happened to me. I just have to find out what the hell is wrong with me.

Tumi: You didn't tell her yet?

Me: Tell me what?

Tukelo just can't seem to stop smiling.

Tukelo: Nothing's wrong with you. You're just two months pregnant.

Me: What?!

As much as I also had my suspicions but I didn't want to find out like this and I definitely didn't want Tukelo to find out before me. How

can I be so careless? How can Tukelo allow this to happen? I am

stressed out. What am I going to say to my mom, to my brother? I just returned to school and now this happens. I don't know how to feel about this. I don't know what to say. Tukelo and Tumi are just looking at me confused.

Me: Isn't I am the one who supposed to hear these news first? What happened to doctor-patient confidentiality?

Tumi: That shit don't work with Tukelo. He made the doctor talk.

Me: What did you do?

Tukelo: Nothing.

Me: Tukelo...

Tukelo: I just asked him nicely.

Tumi: If you call grabbing the doctor by his shirt and pinning him to the wall and swearing at him nice? Then you definitely asked him nicely bro.

I give him a deadly look.

Tukelo: What? He wouldn't tell me what's wrong with you so I went crazy.

Me: I can't be pregnant.

I say softly.

Tukelo: Well, you are.

Me: Why are you happy about that?

Tukelo looks at me shocked.

Tumi: I will leave you two. If you need me, I will be in the car.

Tukelo: Sure.

Tumi leaves.

Tukelo: How can you ask me that Amahle?

Me: It's nothing to be happy about.

Him: What do you mean?

Me: Tukelo, I'm 21. I just started school. I know nothing about a mother, I can't bring a child in this world. We're both very young. We can't be parents.

Him: Says who?

Me: Baby, what am I going to say to my mother? She expects a lot from me, I can't disappoint her like this.

Him: I will fix things. Babe, I am also scared. I don't have any experience with kids but I know we're going to be the best parents.

Me: It's easy for you to say, you're not the one that's going to walk around with a big stomach. You're not the one that will have to give birth and you're not the one that has to put their life on hold because you have to take care of a child.

Him: (sigh) so what do we suggest we do?

Me: That we...

I don't even get to finish my sentence he's already on his feet.

Him: No! I am not killing my child. No!

Me: Tukelo you have to understand, we have our lives ahead of us,

we can try again. We can't have a baby right now.

Him: Are you hearing yourself? You asking me, Tukelo Mokoena, to kill my child?

Me: I can't take care of a baby Tukelo. You have to understand.

Him: You must be crazy to think I would agree to that. Do you realize that you're carrying my first child, my heir, and you want me to get rid of that?

Me: Don't make me feel bad as I already do.

Him: You're right, you should feel bad. You have the nerve to ask me that bull!

Me: I also don't want to do it but I have no choice.

Him: You are right about that, you have no choice but to keep that baby because I swear on my life Amahle, if you kill my baby, I will mourn two deaths, I will kill you with my bare hands. Don't test me.

He kicks the chair and storms out. I just cuddle with a pillow and cry my eyes out.

Tukelo

Amahle must be out of it to ask me shit like that. To say I was angry would be an understatement, I was fuming and shaking. I rush to the car, I need to breathe, I need to get out of here. I find Tumi and

Unathi asleep in the car. Well it is close to 2am so I understand why they're tired. I start the car and speed off. Tumi wakes up.

Him: Whoa, slow down. You're going to kill someone.

Me: That's the idea.

Him: Well, I definitely don't want it to be me so slow down.

Me: Fuck Amahle!

I punch the window and it cracks.

Him: Calm down Tukelo, what happened?

Me: Nothing.

Him: Tukelo, I can see you're fuming and ready to kill someone. Now what's up?

Me: I don't want to talk about it Tumi! Just know that I was this close to hitting the crap out of that girl.

Him: No Tukelo! You promised me that you wouldn't do that shit anymore, remember what happened last time?

Me: Yes, yes, yes I know! But maybe that's why Amahle doesn't show me any respect. She needs good beating.

Him: Tukelo no. I will pull the trigger myself if you touch her.

Me: If you know what she did, you would ask yourself why I didn't hit her.

Him: Get that crap out of head right now. There's never a reason to hit a woman and plus she's carrying your precious cargo, your son that you've always wanted.

Me: She asked me to kill my baby Tumi! My baby?! She must be crazy!

Tumi's eyes are all out.

Me: Exactly.

Tumi: She's just in shock, she didn't mean it I'm sure.

Me: You didn't see her, she was very sure. She was certain.

Him: Give her time to process this.

I don't respond, I just hit the accelerator even harder. The more I think and talk about this, the angrier I get. Tumi surrenders and goes back to sleep. I first drop off Unathi, I wake her up and give her the keys.

Her: Is sis'Amahle going to be okay?

I just drive off. The look Tumi gives me, I don't care, I don't even want to hear Amahle's name right now.

Me: Let's go have fun.

Him: Fun? I know what you mean by that and I thought you want out.

Me: Tumi, this is my life, I love it and I only said that because of Amahle.

Him: Tukelo, yesterday you said you don't want to do crime anymore and you're done.

Me: I know what I said and I know what I'm saying now.

Him: We'll talk once you're not this mad.

Me: You know I work best when I'm mad.

Him: I said we'll talk once you've calmed down.

Me: You're no fun.

I drop Tumi at his house.

Him: Go straight home.

Me: Yes dad.

Him: I mean it.

Me: Okay, I got it.

I drive off at a very high speed. I am just driving yet I don't even know where I am going but I am sure as hell not going home. I find myself in Vooslorus parking in front of this big house. I don't know what I am doing here but I need to be calm. I hoot, the gate opens and I drive in. She stands in front of my car, she's also shocked to see me here. She doesn't know what to do, whether to hug me or not. I know I am not in my senses but I just did what my heart told me to do.

Her: Oh my God Tukelo.

Me: Nthabi, hi.

Insert Twenty-Two 😊

Andile

Her: (sniff) how can you say that to me?

Me: I'm sorry babe, I was an ass. I shouldn't have said that.

Her: (cries) but you said it Andile!

Me: I know but I didn't mean to offend you. Forgive me MaMntungwa.

I try to hug her but she pushes me away. I never know how to deal with her mood swings anymore. We were laughing and joking around just a few minutes ago. Now she's crying because I called her fat. Yes, she's 3 months pregnant. At first I didn't know how to react to it, I was scared I don't want to lie. A part of me was hoping the baby is not mine but we worked it out and came to a conclusion that the baby is mine. She wanted to abort but I talked her out of it. I don't know what I will do when the baby is born as I'm still in Matric and have no money in my name, how can I take care of a baby? Noone knows about us yet. None of her family members and none of mine. Her boyfriend hasn't seen her that she's pregnant yet, she worries about him yet he is the least of my worries right now. I don't have a plan but I won't be a coward about it, I didn't just want to give up on my baby just like that.

Her: Don't even touch me. I am fat, right?

She storms off and locks herself in the bathroom. I sigh. I seriously don't know what to do. I knock on the bathroom door.

Me: Babe

Her: Go away!

Me: Sthandwa sami, ngiyaxolisa. I swear MaMntungwa kushelele ulimi, mayidle iyshiyele mntomuhle.

Her: Don't smooth talk me.

Me: I am not, I'm being honest. I won't be as dumb as I was again. Please open the door.

Her: I want Orange juice.

Me: (sigh) babe, we are out of orange juice. You finished the whole 2litre last night, remember?

Her: Andile I am not leaving this room until you tell me that there's orange juice.

Me: Okay, I will go get it.

Remind me to never get someone pregnant again. I am seriously pissed off right now but I don't want her to throw yet another tantrum. I leave the room and head downstairs. I go to the nearest shop and got her orange juice. As I went back to the hotel, I spot Tukelo with another woman. I didn't expect to see him. What is he doing here? Before I jump into conclusions, let me just go to him, maybe its not what I think.

Me: Bra Tuks.

He turns and he is shocked to see me too.

Him: Oh, Andile.

We man-hug.

Me: What are you doing here?

Him: I'm here on a business meeting, what are you doing here?

Me: Oh uhm... I'm just here with a friend.

Him: A friend?

Me: Yeah.

Him: Where's this friend of yours?

Me: She's upstairs.

Him: Oh, it's a she?

I chuckle.

Him: Can I perhaps meet this friend?

Me: No!!!

He looks at me confused.

Me: I mean you can't meet her today, maybe some other time. I wouldn't want you to keep your lady friend waiting.

I point at the woman behind him, he looks at her.

Him: Oh, that's just Nthabi. My business associate, nothing much.

Me: Where is Amahle anyway? I tried calling her last night but her phone went straight to voicemail.

Him: uhm... She's not feeling okay. I'm going to check on her right now, when I'm with her, I will tell her to call you.

Me: Okay. What's wrong with her though?

Him: I am not sure, woman things.

Me: Oh yeah.

Him: Anyway, I have to go. Will see you some other time.

Me: Sure.

He leaves with his "business associate". I rush upstairs to my problem. She still locked herself in the bathroom.

Me: Babe, I'm back.

Her: With my orange?

Me: With your orange juice.

I hear the door unlocking. She comes out and her face is all puffy and red. I don't even want to comment on that because she will throw another tantrum.

Her: Thank you.

She sits down and poured herself the juice.

Me: So am I forgiven?

Her: Yes, sure.

My phone rings. Caller ID: Buhle.

Shit! If I don't answer it, Nonhle is going to start asking questions and it will lead to an argument. If I answer it, Nonhle is going to be all grumpy and moody. Yet I have to understand when her boyfriend calls. I look at my phone ringing.

Her: If you're not going to answer that phone, switch it off. Its annoying the heck outta me.

I pick it up.

Me: Yes.

Buhle: (cries)

Bakithi!! Why do I have to deal with crying women today?

Me: What is it? What's wrong?

Buhle: You don't love me anymore.

Me: Hawu. I didn't say that.

Buhle: You didn't have to! You never with me, you never call, you never text, you never want to see me. If we're together, its because I wanted to be with you. You never make any efforts!

Me: Are you drunk?

I could hear by the way she was speaking. I have been with this woman for almost 5years so I know how she talks when she's drunk.

Buhle: That's all you can ask me! It really doesn't matter Andile, it doesn't. I just want to know if you still love me!

Me: Uhm.. Can we talk when you're sober?

Buhle: Why can't you talk now? Because I might be drunk but I know exactly what I'm saying. You can even ask me tomorrow what I said and I will tell you so we can talk even now.

Me: I can't talk to you whilst you're this drunk. Where are you anyway?

Buhle: I don't know.

Me: What do you mean you don't know?

Buhle: I am out with my friends, I don't know where we are right now.

Me: Haven't I warned you about these friends of yours?!

Okay, I may love another woman now but I still care deeply about Buhle. We've been through alot together. I will always have a soft spot for her. I guess my last statement made things obvious that I was talking to Buhle because Nonhle took her orange juice and left.

Buhle: This is no time for you to lecture me. At least my friends still care about me.

Me: Buhle, I care about you. You know that.

Her: Then why are you distant?! When was the last time you told me you love me?

Me: I love you Buhle, just that I've been busy lately. I'm sorry okay, I will make it up to you.

Her: I need you Andy, I need you. I'm dying without you. I thought I could handle it but the pain is just too much. What did I do wrong?

Me: (sigh) nothing.

Her: Then why am I getting this treatment? I thought we were doing great. But ever since you came back from Melrose, you just acted funny. Andile, I forgive you for that incident. I can never crucify you for it. You're mine. I just want my man back. The person who used to look at me like I'm the only girl in the world, the man who use to buy me gifts for no reason, the man that made me feel special. I want that man back! Not this heartless person you've become.

Me: I'm sorry.

Her: You don't want me anymore?

Nonhle comes back, she goes straight to the fridge. I don't know how to answer Buhle's question now.

Buhle: Answer me Andy.

Me: Uhm... I do.

Buhle: You do what?

Really? This had to happen to me. I decide to leave the room and went to the balcony.

Me: I do want you Buhle. Just that I've been caught up in my own problems. I didn't realize that I was neglecting you. Forgive me MaKhanyile.

Her: It's hurts Andile.

Me: I know and I'm sorry. I will make it up to you. I promise.

Her: Okay.

Me: Now wipe those tears and go home.

Her: I will.

Me: I love you, okay?

Her: I love you too.

Me: I have to go now. I will call you later.

Her: Bye.

I hang up. I sigh. Like I'm lost now. I have never been this clueless in my life. I know I don't want to hurt Buhle, that woman has taken way too much of my bull but I don't want to lose Nonhle either. Is it possible to love two people at the same time?

I go inside, I find Nonhle on the bed with food on her lap. She's eating way too much food. I have learnt to keep my mouth shut. I threw myself in the bed.

Me: Mama

I kiss her cheek and she giggles.

Her: Yes daddy.

Me: You know I love you, right? Actually I love you both.

I brush her tummy.

Her: We love you too.

Me: And we may not have clue about what is going to happen when Jnr arrives but I promise to be by your side always, I won't let you guys down. I don't care if your boyfriend is the president of gangsters but I will not let anything happen to the both of you. I will protect you. I will be there.

Her: I know babe and I will be there to fight with you. If it was easy leaving Mandla, I would have done it a long time ago. Just that he's not the man that you decide to leave. He will make my life a living hell.

Me: Don't praise him too much. He hasn't met me.

Her: (chuckles) that's sweet babe but Mandla kills and you wouldn't hurt a fly.

Me: Let him mess with what's mine, then you can see what I'm really capable of.

She laughs.

It's 8pm. It's time to go now. I know I have to beg her to calm down because everytime we go our separate ways, she sulks and starts tearing up.

Me: Hhayi Nonhle.

She was already in tears as she was packing her bag.

Her: I don't want to go. I don't want to go back to him.

Me: I know babe but right now we don't have a choice. You have to, it will get better. I promise you.

Her: Can't it get better already? I want to walk on the beach with you, be able to brag about you, for you to meet my family so they can see how amazing you are. I want to go with you to the doctor, I want you to be a part of your son's life.

Me: (sigh) that's what I want too but we both know that's impossible right now. But I swear sthandwa sami, it will happen. I'm sure of it. Now stop crying, you're hurting me.

I wipe her tears and hug her.

Her: I love you Sengwayo wami, I love you so so much.

I kiss her forehead.

Me: I love you more MaMntungwa.

When I got home, I found mom already asleep. I went to my room to change. I have to go and see Buhle now. I have to make sure she got home safe.

Ziningi: Bhuti.

She rubs her eyes.

Me: What are you doing up? Go back to bed.

Her: Why did come so late? I have been waiting for you.

Me: I'm sorry kid. I have been busy with schoolwork.

Her: Mama told me. Where are you going now?

Me: To a friend's house.

Her: you'll be back?

Me: Yes I will be back. I promise you.

Her: Okay. And Bhuti Anele came to look for you and he looked mad when he didn't find you home.

Me: Why? What did he want?

Her: I dont know. I'm going back to bed now. Bring me sweets.

Me: (laughs) okay.

I dialed Buhle's number when I was outside her house.

Her: Hello.

She sounds like she was asleep.

Me: Come outside.

Her: Andile its so late and I have a headache. Can't we do this in the morning?

Me: No! You were complaining saying I don't make any efforts... Now I'm here making an effort and you're telling me to go?

Her: Yoh fine! I'm coming Andile.

I wait for a good 15mins and I see her coming towards me. I kiss her as soon as she approached me. This kiss is long and full of passion. I didn't realize I missed her so much.

Me: hey.

Her: Hi.

Me: Before you even start scolding and shouting at me, I'm sorry babe. I didn't realize I was so distant. It only came to my attention when you mentioned it. I won't do it again, can you forgive me?

Her: I'm over it Andile. I'm glad you realized your mistake and apologized to me.

Me: So am forgiven?

Her: Yes.

Me: Thank you.

I kiss her slightly on her lips.

Me: So, who were you drinking with?

Her: Please don't shout at me.

Me: I won't promise you that. Just tell me.

Her: I was with Candice.

Me: What?! The same Candice that introduced drugs to me? That Candice?

Her: I was hurt and mad. I didn't know what else to do.

Me: So you decided to call Candice? Out of all people?

I know she used to be my crush but ever since the drug incident I hate her with every bone that's in my body.

Her: I know I screwed up but you were stressing me out...

Me: So you are going to make this my fault?

Her: No, babe can we not fight about this? We just mended things.

Me: She didn't try to give you drugs?

Her: No

Me: Buhle, if I ever hear that you even spoke to Candice, I swear, there will be hell to pay. Stay the hell away from her.

Her: Okay, I got it.

Me: Good.

My phone rings. Caller ID: MaMntungwa

Why does this always happen to me?

Me: hello.

Nonhle: Come by your gate. Now.

Me: What?

Nonhle: You heard me.

Me: I can't come now.

Nonhle: Ndile, I wouldn't have come here if it wasn't important.

Me: I know but I'm not at home.

Nonhle: Where are you Andile?

Me: I'm coming. Im just a few minutes away.

I hang up before she can ask further.

Buhle: Was that a woman?

Me: No. I mean yes. It's Amahle. She's home and she needs me so I have to go.

Her: Oh okay.

Me: I will call you before I sleep.

Her: okay.

xxxx

I see her car parked outside my gate, I get on the passenger seat.

Me: So what's up?

Her: Hey MaMntungwa, how are you? I'm fine Sengwayo and how are you?

Me: I dont have time for all of that Nonhle. Just tell me what's up.

Her: So you don't even have time to ask how your baby is doing?

Me: Nonhle, I get that you're pregnant and your hormones are all over the place, I get it. But I can take this much of your tantrums, and this is what I won't tolerate, calling me and telling me you have something important to discuss yet you're wasting my time. I will not tolerate that! I won't.

I open the door.

Her: Mandla knows that I'm pregnant.

That got me to freeze. I turn to look at her. Does that mean he knows about us too?

Me: What? How did he find out?

She keeps quite.

Me: Don't make me repeat my question Nonhle.

Her: He was suspicious. He started to notice that I'm never home, I always have an excuse to leave the house and be away for days. He started questioning me, he wanted my phone and I didn't want to give to him, he lost it. He then slapped me, I still refused to give him my phone. He took out his gun and aimed it at me. I had no choice but to tell him Andile, I had to save my baby.

Me: I understand babe, you had no choice. So how did he take it?

Her: what do you mean?

Me: How did he react when you told him that baby is not his? Or you didn't tell him?

She doesn't respond.

Me: Bye Nonhle.

She starts crying.

Her: You have to understand Andile, I had no choice. He was going to kill me.

Me: So what does this mean for us?

Her: I dont know but I don't think it would be wise if we continue with our affair. At least not now because now that he knows that I'm pregnant, he's going to keep a close eye.

Me: Are you breaking up with me?

Her: I don't want to Andile but I have no choice right now.

Me: So you want to go play happy family with my child? My child? You must be crazy to think I'm going to allow that bull.

Her: Andile, try to understand please....

Me: Yey Nonhle! If you want to leave me, gladly do so but leave my child with me. You'll figure out what you'll say to your boyfriend but I'm not going to allow another man raise my child. You got that?

She couldn't stop crying. Well I don't give a damn. Right now I'm pissed beyond measures.

Her: I don't want to do this Andile but...

Me: Save me your lame excuses! What I've said, stands! If you don't tell your boyfriend that you're carrying my child, I will gladly do so. I'm giving you 6 months to tell him. Otherwise, I'm coming to get my child. Don't test me!

I open the door.

Her: Andile, wait. Please.

I slammed the door and left her screaming my name. She had the nerve to ask me such bull.

Insert Twenty-Three 😊

Amahle

I am getting discharged today and man I am glad. I have been in this bed for 2 whole days and yes I am still very pregnant. Yesterday I went for my first scan and my baby is alive and well. The doctor just told me to take it easy otherwise I will be in this bed sooner than I think. I haven't heard from Tukelo since we had a fight. I tried calling but he's phone has been off. I understand that he's mad and all but he wasn't there for his baby's first scan but Tumi checked on me every day, he still think it's his fault that I landed in hospital. We both have been trying to reach Tukelo but no luck. Thandi has also been there for me, it seems like Tumi and her are trying to make their marriage work. I haven't told my friends yet and worse, my mother. I don't even think I will tell her, she will just have to see for herself. As I was packing, I felt someone behind me. I won't look until they decide to speak. I am hoping to be Tukelo.

Him: Getting out already?

Me: Oh yes.

I turn to look at him.

Me: How did you even know I was here?

Him: I went to your house and your housekeeper said you're here.

Me: How do you know where I live?

Him: I have my ways. Where's your boyfriend?

Me: He's away.

Him: Away? Shouldn't he be the one picking you up?

Me: Well, he's busy.

Him: Too busy to come pick up his sick girlfriend?

Me: I'm not sick anymore. I'm fine.

Him: I can take you home.

Me: No, thank you. I'm going to take a cab home.

Him: Don't be silly, I don't mind. And better yet, we could go and have lunch, remember you owe me.

Me: (smiles) you don't forget do you?

Him: Nope.

Me: (smiles)

Him: You have a beautiful smile, do you know that?

Me: (chuckles) had no idea.

Him: Well you do, and you're beautiful, very beautiful and it's freaky.

I just look at him without knowing what to say. The way he looks at me, makes me very uncomfortable.

Him: Well, let's go sign those discharge papers and we can leave.

He helps me with my bags, we go to the reception, and he pays the remaining bill. I had no idea that Tukelo didn't cover all the costs, it's so unlike him. I don't know what I was going to do if Charles didn't show up. I feel so embarrassed.

Charles escorts me to his car and we head to the mall and have lunch at John Dory's. I was craving fish.

Okay let me tell you something about Charles, he's dreamy, young, hot, has sexy green eyes and the haircut he has on do wonders for him. Everywhere we go, girls stop and stare at him. He's a sexy white man and he has sexy pink lips, they look really soft and he licks them every five seconds. He smells and dresses really well. He's simple and elegant. I can tell under that shirt there are sexy abs.... yes I have been checking him out but still Tukelo is still the sexiest man in my eyes. Charles has nothing on him.

So now we're sitting at John Dory's having lunch and I can't help but

think that he's being rather flirty. Maybe I am overthinking here but he's been holding my hand and brushing my cheeks and saying

the cheesiest things but I don't want to say anything, it must be him being 'friendly' and I would just ruin things by mentioning that he's being flirty.

Him: So how are things between you and Tukelo?

Me: They're good.

Him: Don't lie to me.

Me: (sigh) well, they're rough.

Him: Why? What did he do?

Me: Nothing, thing is... I'm... pregnant.

He chokes on his food and coughs.

Me: Are you okay?

Him: You're what?

Me: Please don't tell anyone.

Him: Excuse me if I'm crossing the line here but how can you be so stupid? So careless.

Me: Don't judge me okay. I have been very careful Charles, on my

pills, I don't know what happened.

Him: How far are you?

Me: 8 weeks.

Him: Geez! You guys can't bring a child, Tukelo can't be a father I mean considering the kind of business he does.

Me: I know, that's what I've been trying to explain to him, that's why he's mad at me.

Him: So you know?

Me: Yes he told me.

Him: And you stayed?

Me: I love him.

Him: (sigh) still, you can't bring a child in his crazy world.

Me: I know. Can you talk to him?

Him: No bad idea, like I said we're not in good terms. We only do business, strictly business.

Me: So you're also a criminal?

Him: Was. I left a few months ago.

Me: Why can't he do that?

Him: It's not easy. Especially for him as he is the leader.

Me: Oh God.

Him: Maybe you should go behind his back and say it's a miscarriage. Miscarriages happen all the time.

Me: (laugh) now you mad. Tukelo is smart and crazy, he will need proof, he will investigate, dig and find out the truth and I am dead meat. He did say he'll kill me should anything happen to his child.

Him: He really wants this baby?

Me: More than anything.

My Phone rings. Caller I.D: Itumeleng.

Me: Tumi.

Him: Where are you? I came to pick you up and they said you left.

Me: Oh yes, I left early. I hated being there. I am just at the mall.

Him: Mall? In your condition?

Me: Tumi, I am pregnant not sick.

Him: And who the heck is Mr. Le Roux? He made the payment.

Me: Charles.

Him: You with Charles?

Me: Yes, why?

Him: Get the hell out of there now! No in fact, stay there, I am coming to get you.

And he hangs up. What's that about? I look at my phone confused.

Him: Is everything okay?

Me: I think so. Tumi is coming to get me.

Him: Is he?

Me: Yes.

Him: Nice.

Okay, what the heck is going on here? Something doesn't make sense. And there's something going on. In exactly 10 minutes Tumi tells me to come at the parking lot. What the heck? How does he even know which mall I was in. I don't protest, I stand up and Charles walk me out. He gives a hug and a kiss on my cheek. O-kay. I get at the parking lot and see Tumi and I go to him.

Him: What were you doing with him?

Me: Aybo Tumi, he just took me to lunch, no big deal.

Him: Let's see if Tukelo thinks like that too.

Me: You told him?

Him: No but I am pretty sure he knows by now.

Me: Why does he care vele? I know he won't be there when I get home, he's been AWOL this whole week so really I don't care what he thinks.

Him: Well, he's the one who called me to come fetch you from hospital. I didn't even know when you're getting discharged.

Me: Oh so he can call you but can't call me? He even knew I was getting discharged but he didn't care to show up? He didn't even check on me to see how I was doing. He's going to make me lose this child that he care so much about.

I leave him standing there and went inside the car. I was fuming. Tukelo can be an ass if he wants to. Tumi enter minutes later and takes off. We drive in silence, which is good because I am in no mood to talk. He drops me off at my apartment and leaves. I go in and I smell he's scent, so he's here or he's been here. I find Unathi in the kitchen.

Her: Oh my word sis'Amahle, you're back.

She hugs me.

Her: How're you feeling?

Me: I am fine Unathi.

Her: God, you gave us quite a scare. When I saw you lying on that ground, I thought the worse only to find out you carrying a little

Mokoena.

She brushes my tummy and I fake a smile. Tukelo enters and he just look at us.

Him: Hi.

Me: Hi.

Awkward silence.

Her: Well, I have to go.

She leaves us with awkward silence. Tukelo comes closer.

Him: How're you feeling?

Me: If you cared, you would have showed up.

Him: I do care Amahle, just that...

Me: Just what?

Him: (silence).

Me: You know what, I don't have time for this. I have to go and shower. I am tired.

I leave him and went to my room to take a shower. As I was showering, I look at my tummy.

I feel it, it feels hard and it is weird that there's a person growing

inside of me. I smile when I start to imagine how my baby would look like. I sure hope she looks like me. Yes if I am having a baby, I want it to be a girl. I can't have another Tukelo to deal with, the one I have is hard work as it is.

I take almost an hour in my shower. I got out and went to my room to lotion my body. As I was getting dressed Tukelo comes in and sits on the floor and leans on the bed.

Him: Can we talk?

Me: Do I have a choice?

Him: No.

Me: Then why did you ask me in the first place?

Him: Can we not fight, for once, can we have a civilized conversation.

Me: What do you want to talk about?

Him: Why you mad? You the one that threatened to kill my baby.

Me: I didn't threaten you Tukelo. I was making a suggestion.

Him: You wanted me to be happy and gladly approve?

Me: You have to understand that this is hard for me okay? You think I want to kill my baby? A person who's a part of me? You think I want that?

Him: Then why did you even suggest?

Me: The baby caught me off-guard and I am scared Tukelo, we are not fit to be parents. I know nothing about being a mother and you're a criminal. I don't want my baby to grow up in that type of environment.

Him: And he won't. I will protect him. Do you think I will expose my child to danger? I will take care and protect him no matter what.

Me: How do I know that? You weren't there to meet him for the first time! You weren't there to hold my hand when I needed you.

Instead you sent your brother to do that for you.

Him: I am sorry Amahle, I didn't know.

Me: If you cared you would have found out like you always do.

Him: I found out when it was too late, but I have his scan. I have met him, I saw him.

Me: It's not the same!

Him: I know that and I am sorry, okay? Please forgive me. Come here.

I stand put. He pulls my arm and make me sit on top of him with my legs on either sides of him.

Him: I am sorry, okay?

He cups my face. I nod.

Him: I love you.

He kisses my forehead and hugs me. We stay in that position for like 10 minutes. I am tired now, and the floor is not comfortable. I let go of him and I just look at him.

Him: What?

Me: Where were you?

He scratches his head.

Him: Um... I just kept myself busy with work but kept a close eye on you. I even know about the date you had with Charles.

Me: Geez, it wasn't a date.

Him: Oh yeah? What was it?

Me: He took me out for lunch because he saw I was upset, that's all.

Him: Mm okay but Amahle, stay away from him.

Me: (confused) why? I thought you were 'good friends'.

Him: Yes. It's a bit complicated. I just don't trust him anymore.

Me: Care to share?

Him: Ha.ana babe, I don't want you knowing about my dealings.

Me: I already know too much so just tell.

Him: Okay. Charles was also involved in the business that I do, but when things started to go wrong, he decided to leave and someone gave me a heads up that someone snitched us to the police so I just think he has a hand in that.

Everything came back. I remember what my brother said. No, this is bad.

Him: Baby, are you okay?

Me: No Tukelo, there's something I have been meaning to tell

Him: What's up?

I keep quiet, I don't know how to say this.

Him: Tigress, talk.

Me: My brother is on to you.

Him: What?

Me: Yes, he called me before I went to hospital, he said something about investigating gold smugglers and being really close to catching the culprits and...

I say everything so fast and my breathing is out of control.

Him: Baby, calm down, breathe. Now talk.

Me: I am scared Tukelo, what if he catches you. And I have seen on movies how criminals kill police and detectives. Tukelo, don't kill him please.

Him: Relax. He won't bust me and I won't kill him.

Me: How do you know that he won't bust you?

Him: Because you are going to help me.

Me: what?

Him: Yes, you're going to find out what he knows.

Me: Are you mad?

Him: Baby listen, this is the only way I can save me and save him too because even if I don't kill him, the others will. So you have to keep

this between us.

Me: Oh my god, now you making me your accomplice.

Him: No, it's nothing like that. Just do that for me. God knows I don't want to involve you in this but I have no choice.

Me: I don't know. We don't usually talk about his work. He only spoke about it because he was stressed.

Him: You have to be smart about this, don't ask too much. Just ask a few questions. What I want to know.

Me: I don't know.

Him: Just try please because if I do this myself. It won't be good.

Me: You're scaring me.

Him: I am sorry but it's true.

Me: (sigh) when you want me to meet with him?

Him: Right after we come back from Lesotho.

Me: What? We're still going?

Him: Yes, tomorrow. I was also thinking of rescheduling but now that you're carrying my first child, I have to introduce you to my parents.

His face lit up every time he talks about the pregnancy. I just smile.

Him: Can I talk to him?

Me: Why are you saying it's a 'him'?

Him: I just know baby.

Me: Well I want a girl.

Him: Nooo, I can't deal with another you.

Me: (laughs)

Him: (chuckles) god I missed hearing that laugh.

I smile.

Him: So can I?

Me: Yeah sure.

He picks me up and puts me on the bed, I lay on my back but my legs are still dangling. He kneels and his body is in between my legs.

Him: Hey boy, so you have been making mommy go all crazy on me, making mommy hate me. Don't be too hard on her okay, don't

make her stubborn, grumpy. I don't like her when she's like that.

Mommy and daddy will love you with everything that they have, you

will mean the world to us. We will protect you from all evil, we will be there whenever you need us. I will play soccer with you, play station

and I promise to take you to Disney Land every year. I will love you,

take care of you and be the best father a son could ever ask for.

Just promise me one thing, you will take care of mommy and protect her when you're older and always love her because I know she will

love you too.

He kisses my stomach and looks at me. I smile. He kisses my stomach again this time he leaves traces of kisses on my body until he reaches my breasts. This whole time I have my eyes closed. When he's right on my face, I open them.

Him: Told you I will make it up to you.

I look at him confused.

Him: After that incident that I did, I told you I will make it up to you. I made you a mother.

I chuckle. He starts kissing me. The kiss starts off as passionate and slow and then we kiss like we're hungry for each other. He undresses me. He kisses me from my neck, he goes down... he takes off my pajama pants. Then takes off my panty using his teeth. He spreads my legs.

Him: Yoh Amahle!

I laugh and cover my face with my hands.

He chuckles.

Him: I haven't even started yet and you already wet?

Me: Just do it.

Him: You ruined it for me I can't eat on this.

Me: Then make love to me already.

He laughs and he comes back and kisses me while fingering me. I moan softly. It feels really good. He kisses my neck. I don't know when he undressed himself but I feel his chest on top of mine. He spread my legs wider. I feel him enter me, slowly. Then the pace started to increase. I scream and he groans. He pounds on me until I couldn't take it, but I could tell that he wasn't about to stop yet. He take both my legs and shift them on the side, he kneels on the bed and pounds me from behind. He keep on spanking my butt. He pounds me until I feel sweat dripping. I feel nothing but pain. I have had enough. My moans turn into screams, he keep on groaning and calling out my name. I try escaping but he turns me around. Take my legs wrap them around his neck and pounds on me for dear life. My upper body is on mid-air now. I feel hot, I feel pain

and I am worn out. He puts me down and starts to kiss me, and after sometime he collapse on top of me. We both try to catch our breaths. We sit in silence. Minutes later, I hear a snore. God, really? He had to fall asleep while on top of me. I am totally stuck, I can't seem to move a muscle. Luckily the duvet is next to me. I take it and put it over us.

xxxx

My whole body aches. I ended up falling asleep while he is on top of me. Tukelo is not the type that tosses and turns if he slept on the position, he will wake up like that. I move and try to get him off, nothing. I have to be smart about this.

Me: Ouch!

He opens his eyes, okay good.

Him: What is it?

Me: It hurts on my stomach, get off.

He jumps and gets off the bed.

Him: Where exactly does it hurt? Were you feeling the pain all night? Is it because we had sex?

And I break into laughter. The look on his face killed me.

Him: Fuuck! Don't do that.

Me: I am just joking with you, you were sleeping on top of me, and I just wanted to get you off.

I am still laughing my head off.

Him: You think that's funny?

Me: It's hilarious.

Him: Lemme give you a real reason to laugh at.

Me: No!

Him: Yes.

He gets on the bed and starts tickling me.

Me: Stoop.

I say in between my laughing. He doesn't stop. I feel pee coming. I just wet myself. A little bit.

Him: (laughs) Shit!

He gets off the bed.

Me: I told you to stop now look what you did.

Him: (laughs) me??

Me: Yes, you and your son.

Him: Leave him out of this, he didn't say piss yourself.

Me: Well it's his fault that I have a weak bladder.

Him: Are you done?

Me: With what?

Him: Peeing.

I take a pillow and smack him with it.

Him: (laughs) I was just asking babe. In case you are not done, you can go finish your business in the toilet. You know, where you were supposed to pee in first place.

Me: Argh!

He laughs.

xxxx

Tukelo drops me off at school. He's still mad at me, he thinks I should take some time off. But I feel okay, now that I know I'm pregnant, I will take good care of myself. But I wish this puking could stop. I hate it.

I get off the car Tukelo is still not talking to me.

Me: Bye babe.

Him: (silent).

Me: I love you.

Him: (silence).

Me: Tell you what, I will take important notes and try catching up and then I go straight home. Him: Promise?

Me: I promise my love.

Him: Okay. I will be home by 4 max and we'll leave as soon as I arrive.

Me: We still leaving?

Him: Babe, we already had this conversation.

Me: We did?

Him: Yes we did.

Me: But I am not ready.

Him: Me too but we have to. It's now or never.

Me: Oh okay.

Him: I will see you.

I close the door and he drives off. I have so much of shit to deal with.

I attend all of my lectures, I know I said I will take important notes but I had a lot of catching up to do.

At exactly 14:00 Tukelo's driver came to pick me up. We left the school and went to my apartment. Unathi has already packed for me. Tukelo arrives at 16:00, I take my luggage and we left for the airport. We find Tumi and Thandi already waiting for us. We go outside and I see a jet. Okay. We go inside and I am shocked at what I see. The jet looks amazing, everything inside looks Italian.

Everything inside was white with a touch of gold. We settle in, we sit in what looks like a lounge. Tumi and Thandi disappear somewhere.

Me: What's this?

Him: A jet.

Me: You never told me that you have a jet.

Him: Baby, if I had to count all the things I own, I will never finish.

I didn't even know what to say to him. I was shocked!! I know he was rich and he owned a lot of things but things like jets, you talk about.

What kind of a man is he? He's way too secretive and that was starting to piss me off. I just look at him and he chuckles. I don't even entertain him, I just make myself comfortable. He tries to sit next to me, I shift a little.

Him: Bathong Tigress, you mad now?

Me: Do I look mad?

Him: Yes.

Me: That's just me being ugly then because I'm not mad.

Him: This is going to be the longest 7 months of my life.

Me: Then leave! I don't need you!

Him: What? What are you on about?

Me: it's clear I'm a nuisance, then go!

Him: The hell Amahle! Who said anything about leaving?

Me: You don't want me no more, you don't want to be with me, then leave. If I'm making your life hell then please do us all a favor, leave. I don't need a man keeping secrets from me anyway.

Him: Okay, this is getting more and more weird, what secrets?

Me: Just leave me alone Tukelo.

Him: Is that what you want?

Me: Yes, leave me the hell alone.

Him: Nxa, fine.

Thandi comes our way before Tukelo gets up.

Her: What's going on here? I can hear you arguing all the way from our room.

Him: Ask your friend.

He gets up and leave. I just feel defeated. Thandi sits next to me and comforts me.

Tukelo

I love Amahle with everything that I have and even more but right now she was being crazy and she was starting to get on my nerves.

She knows I hate the talk that someone will leave, yet she brings it up every chance she gets. I find Tumi playing a PSP. He doesn't even notice that I'm here. I sigh, he looks at me and continues playing. I sigh again. He looks at me and puts the PSP on the table.

Him: This better be good, what's up?

Me: Amahle is something else. She's always on my case, she's driving me crazy. She's always nagging, always crying, and fussy and she's getting on my last nerve.

Him: What did you do to her?

Me: That's the thing, I didn't do anything to her, nothing at all. It's like she's always ready to fight with me.

Him: That's where you're wrong, you did do something to her.

Me: Like I said Tumi, I didn't do anything, I swear.

Him: Wrong answer, you made her pregnant.

Me: Fuck!

I bury my face in my hands.

Him: Yes. Your job is not to stress her, tell her she's always right and comfort her. Make sure you don't fight her, no matter what.

Me: That's going to be hard, given that I am short tempered myself.

Him: I know but you made her like that. Now suffer the consequences. Compromise.

Me: How do I do that? She practically hates me.

Him: She's supposed to hate you. You are the reason why she won't be herself for almost nine months.

Me: Hhelang, she is also part blame for this.

Him: True but it's mostly your fault. It also took a while for me to get this but I'm finally getting the hang of it.

Me: What? Thandi is also pregnant?

Him: (sigh) no, she's not.

Me: Then who is?

He gives me a look, like he's telling me something but not using

words and I get what he's saying.

Me: The hell Itumeleng!

Him: I know.

Me: But how? How long?

Him: She's four months.

Me: What?! And you're telling this now?

Him: I was going to tell you when I was tell Thabang in Lesotho.

Me: But I'm not just anybody! You always come to me first.

Him: I know.

Me: How can you be so careless? Do you even love her?

Him: No... yes... I don't know okay. I'm just a lot confused. She is carrying my first child.

Me: Amahle is going to kill you. You cheat with her best friend, you fuck her then make her pregnant?

Him: Shut up. I was planning to stop our affair and work on my marriage, until she told me that she's pregnant, it changed everything and I wasn't going to let her abort. I have to make things right before she starts showing dude.

Me: But how?

Him: I don't know. Was thinking of making her my second wife?

Me: (laughs)

He keeps he's serious face on.

Me: Ohh, you're serious?

Him: Yes.

Me: Dude, you're 27 for crying out loud! You're already married, now you're thinking of getting a second wife? Are you nuts?

Him: That's the only way to fix this.

Me: Will Nosipho agree? Or better yet, will Thandi agree? Your father? Thandi's parents?

Him: I don't know. But I can't let another man raise my child, I have to fix this.

Me: Good luck with that.

Him: Good luck on introducing Amahle to your father.

Me: Oh fuck.

The Pilot announces that we're about to take off. I leave Tumi and

go to the snack bar to get Amahle her favorites as a peace offering.

I find her sleeping on Thandi's lap, I kneel and kiss her slightly on her soft lips, and she moves a little.

Her: Tukelo man.

She says softly but doesn't open her eyes, Thandi chuckles.

Me: Baby, wake up. The jet is about to take off.

I kiss her forehead. She opens her eyes.

Her: What is it?

Me: Wake up.

Her: Why?

Me: We're about to leave.

She sits up and Thandi leaves. We buckle up and the jet takes off.

She closes her eyes as it takes off.

Me: First time flying?

Her: Isn't it obvious?

Me: (sigh) babe, I don't want to fight with you.

Her: Are we fighting? I didn't know that, it's news to me.

This is going to be harder than I thought.

Me: Okay my love, I was wrong and you were right. I'm sorry, I was stupid.

Her: And a jerk.

Me: And a jerk.

Her: And an idiot.

Me: And an idiot.

Her: And rude, mean and an ass.

Me: Whoa, let's not get carried away now. I was wrong to make you feel the way you did. I am new at this, just like you but I will try and make you feel better, make you feel like the queen that you are.

Her: Let me think.

I take out her favorites, cheese curls, nectarines, chocolate and a veggie burger.

Her: All is forgiven.

She literally grabs the snacks away from me and I just laugh at her. She eats like she hasn't eaten for days but she ate like an hour ago. When she was done, she looked tired. I cuddle her and she lay her head on my chest.

I must have zoned out too because I was woken up by the pilot announcing that we're about to land. I wake her up and we buckle up. We land and we find our driver, Lucas, already waiting for us at the airport. He helps us with the luggage and we drive off to my father's place, a place I used to call home.

I don't want to lie, as we were getting closer, my heart was

pounding. I don't care what my father will say, I am just worried what will happen to Tigress if she senses any type of rejection. My Family is too much, they expect too much and I know it's going to be a long

weekend for me.

Her: A penny for your thoughts.

Me: Mmmh?

Her: What's wrong?

Me: Huh? Nothing's wrong.

Her: I can see that you're lost in your thoughts, what's up?

Me: Nothing. Just that it's been awhile since I have been here.

Her: Oh, okay.

I could sense worry in her voice.

Me: What's wrong with you?

Her: Baby, I'm scared.

Me: Of?

Her: What if your family doesn't like me?

Me: So? That's their problem. What really matters is that I love you.

Nothing and no one can change that, not even them. Screw what they think, you shouldn't care what they think either.

Her: You sound like my mother.

Me: I must be right then.

Her: But I want them to like me, welcome me and my baby.

Me: Tigress, stop stressing over nothing, it's not good for the baby. They will like you, what's not to like?

Her: (sigh)

I comfort her and make her head lie on my chest. I rub my fingers up and down her spine.

Her: (whisper) you're making me horny.

Me: (chuckles) sorry.

Amahle

As soon as the car parked at this huge, beautiful house with the gate written "Mokoena" on it, I knew we have arrived. My heart was

pounding and even though Tukelo won't admit it, I knew he was

scared too. I could see it through him. Okay, he must have a huge

family because this house is huge. There was a double story on the middle and many beautiful smaller houses near it. The yard was

huge, the grass was so green and they a beautiful water fountain at

the front. I was blown away. The car drives in and it drops us off at

the front door. It's quite a distance from the gate to the main house.

Since we've arrived, no one has said a word, not even Tumi. As the

car door opens, there were people, about 6 people, standing on

either side of the porch. I just stood there confused. Tukelo holds my hand tightly, they were sweaty, he's really nervous. As soon as we

walked in, the people started chanting and saying things in Sotho,

things I couldn't understand.

When we enter the house, I was just blown away. This house is

extremely beautiful and extremely huge. Not quite what I imagined.

We get to what looks like a living room and I see this handsome

middle-aged man sitting on this big chair, like he's king or something.

Thandi goes and kneels before him and greets in Sotho. I am just lost.

I look at Tukelo but he's not paying attention. I try to go to where

Thandi is but he holds my hand tighter and shakes his head. I look at this man, he looks like the older version of Tukelo and for a man with 7 kids he sure looks young, he looks like he's in his mid-40's and sure looked really handsome. Tukelo and his father have a little stare

contest and father stands up and walks towards us. Tukelo takes a step back. His father hugs him, he lets go of my hand and hugs I'm back. Wait a minute, I realize now that his father was sitting on a throne. Is he king or something? No can't be. Tukelo would've told me, but then again, this is Tukelo we're talking about, he loves keeping secrets.

Tukelo's dad: So this is the man who stole my money and took off?

Tukelo: (scratches his head) Ntate.

Ntate: After so many years my son?

Tukelo: I was busy.

Ntate: Even for me?

Tukelo: I'm sorry Ntate.

Ntate: You owe me M10 000 boy.

Tukelo: I will pay it back, even now. But first, I would like for you to meet my woman, Amahle Zungu.

He looks at me, not a friendly look might I add. I can't even maintain eye contact.

Ntate: She's beautiful.

Tukelo: Yeah I know.

Awkward silence.

Tumi: I'm also here you know.

Ntate: Oh Tumi, the son who actually listen to me.

Tumi: Ntate, not now.

His father chuckles and they man-hug. A lady comes in and says the food is ready and she leaves.

Ntate: I know you probably tired but I want Amahle to meet the rest of the family first. Please do make yourselves comfortable.

All this time we were on our feet, only Thandi was sitting on the floor. Tukelo pulls my hands and we sit on the couches. With Tukelo next to me of course. I feel like I'm being disrespectful because Thandi was sitting the floor and here I was sitting on this comfortable couch.

While we were waiting, there was a random conversation going on, though I couldn't a word that was being said. His father is speaking Sotho or English. While Tumi and Tukelo mixed Zulu, Sotho and English. Though I must say, Tukelo's Zulu was getting better. Tumi is good in Zulu, he spoke it fluently.

The family finally arrive. The sisters walked in, they kneeled down before their father and they also sit on the floor next to Thandi. Bontle smiles and waves at me, I smile back. Then Thabang and his wife, Gontse, arrive also. Then in comes this modern and beautiful woman but you could that she is a little old but she looked so amazing. She was wearing a Gucci dress, which was hugging her body, her make-up was on point and she covered her had with a doek and she rocked it! She first bows before Ntate then she sits on the big chair next to Ntate's.

Ntate: Okay, now that we're all here, we can begin.

Begin what?

Ntate: I called this meeting because my long lost son has returned. After so many years of not coming home, he finally came back and he didn't come alone but he bought us this lovely lady over here, Amahle. Which he claims to be his woman. He wants us to welcome her, make her one of us, make her part of the Mokoena clan, isn't that right son?

Tukelo: Yes Ntate.

Ntate: Okay family, you hear the boy. I didn't want to hear this alone but I want you all to be the witness of this.

Nkati: You want to marry her?

Tukelo: Maybe not now but I want to marry her, someday.

Classy lady: Are you sure? I mean is she even one of us?

What's that supposed to mean?

Tukelo: She may not be one of us as you put it mme but she's a part of me.

So this woman is Tukelo's mom, She looks so young though.

Mme: So you love her?

Tukelo: A lot.

Mme: Tukelo, you're only 26, what do you know about love? You're way too young and this girl looks way younger than you, you're both clearly lost.

Tukelo: We may be young but we both old enough to understand that what we feel in our hearts.

Mme: I give up.

Ntate: No don't.

What the hell is going on here?

Thabang: I'm hungry.

Tumi: Yeah me too.

They both stood up.

Ntate: Let's all go and eat, we shall talk later about this.

Everyone stood up and headed to the dining table. I take time to process this. Tukelo held my hand and helps me stand.

Me: (whisper) what's going on here?

Him: (whisper) I don't know babe.

We get to the dinner table and it's so long and huge. There are about 20 chairs around it. The place is beautiful though. Tukelo opens a chair for me, I sit. He sits across me and Bontle sits next to me. I don't know if I'm paranoid or what but I feel a bad vibe when I'm around this family. The looks I'm getting from his parents are just unpleasant. The chef dishes up for everyone and they start eating, while me on the other hand, feel nauseous, chicken disgusts me. They eat over meaningless conversation.

Mme: So Hlengiwe...

Tukelo: Amahle.

Mme: Whatever. What do you do for a living?

That question though! Am I the only one who finds it highly offensive?

Me: I study.

Mme: Study what?

Me: BCom in Accounting.

Mme: Then how did you two meet if you're studying?

Tukelo: Mme, please, not now.

Mme: I'm sure she doesn't mind telling me, right?

Me: Uhm no. We...we met where I use to work. He use to come at my workplace.

Mme: Where do you use to work?

Bontle: Mme, do you really have to interrogate her?

Mme: I am not interrogating her, I'm just curious. That's all. So do tell.

Me: Spur's.

Mme: Oh God help me. As what? A manager? Supervisor?

Pisti: Mme, can you stop.

Mme: Shut up. So?

Me: As a waitress.

Ntate: A waitress????

Me: Yes.

Ntate: Son, you must be out of your mind. You leave a well-educated woman, who has everything for a complete nobody?

Mme: So who pays for tuition?

Tukelo: Mme stop!

He bangs the table, everyone is in complete shock.

Tukelo: Why does it matter what she do for a living? Or who pays for her fees? Doesn't my happiness matter?

Ntate: Tukelo, you're a prince, you'll take over my throne one day...

And just like that, I hit the floor and blacked out.

Insert Twenty-Four 😊

I wake up and I'm in this big room. Wow, this room is the size of my kitchen and sitting room combined, that's how huge it was and it was spaced out perfectly. I sit up, Tukelo rushes to me. Everything starts coming back, Tukelo is from a royal family.

Him: Baby, you gave me quite a scare.

Me: Don't... just don't.

Him: Babe please...

Me: Don't fuckin' babe me! Didn't you think that at some point I will find out?

Him: That I'm royal? Why does it matter?

Me: Why does it matter? Why does it matter Tukelo? Your family think I'm a complete nobody and you're sitting here asking me why it matters!

Him: If I told you or not, would it have made a difference? Would I stop being royal?

Me: No but it would have given me the heads up! What I should expect.

Him: I don't like this title that I'm given, I am not a prince and I am not royal. I'm the same Tukelo you know and love, I am the father of your child.

Me: No you're not! I always discover some shady shit about you almost every day, it's driving me crazy!

Him: Tell me, if you knew I was royal, would you have agreed to be my woman?

Me: (silent)

Him: Exactly. I just wanted you to love me for me.

Me: You don't get it!

Him: Make me get it!

Me: (sigh) your parents hate me. They look down on me and they think I'm not good enough for you.

Him: I don't fuckin' care what they think. They didn't even raise me, they have no right to make decisions for me. What really matters here is that I know that you're enough for me, screw whoever thinks

otherwise.

Me: Tukelo...

Him: No Amahle, I will not take any of their shit. You're carrying my baby, don't stress.

Me: (cries) this is all just too much for me.

He wipes my tears.

Him: Babe, don't let them get to you. I will not leave you and I will definitely not be a king one day, expect being yours of course.

I couldn't stop crying, this is not me at all. Tukelo wraps his arms around me.

Him: Baby, you're hurting me. Stop with all the tears now.

I look at him and he is also crying, I wipe his tears.

Me: Now, you're hurting me.

Him: (smiles) let us stop hurting each other then, agree?

Me: But how do I handle all of this? It was hard enough for me to take you in considering your status, now I have to deal with you being a criminal/prince/rich, it's just too much.

Him: What are you saying?

Me: You know what I'm saying.

He stands up.

Him: No, no. Don't say what I think you're about to say.

Me: Okay I won't say it but you know what I'm about to say.

Him: Why does this feel like a goodbye?

Me: I don't want to but...

Him: If you don't want to then don't. Amahle listen, I love you a lot. You're my life, my rib, my everything. I can't live without you, I don't think I will be able to live without you, don't do this to me, to us. Give me a chance to fix this.

Me: fix what actually? You can't stop being royal and you can't stop your parents from hating me. Its not just your parents Tukelo, your sister hates me. I am pretty sure if I get to meet any of your family members, they'd hate me as well. They didn't even get the chance to know me.

Him: Thats what I'm going to fix.

Me: You can't make them like me.

He doesn't say anything.

Tumi knocks once and enters without us telling him to.

Tukelo: Dude, you gotta stop doing that. What if I was naked?

Tumi: I have seen you naked many times before.

Tukelo: What if we were having sex then?

Tumi: Then it would have been your carelessness for not locking the door.

Tukelo: What do you want?

Tumi: Hows my favorite person in the world doing?

He sits next to me and kisses my forehead.

Me: I'm okay physically but I'm not too sure emotionally.

Tumi: Don't mind that woman.

Me: Yeah easy for you to say.

Tumi: I know the feeling, trust me.

Tukelo: Babe, are you hungry?

Me: I'm starving. I just want a...

Tukelo: Veggie Burger?

Me: Yes babe.

Tukelo: Coming right up. Tumi, come with me.

Tumi: Sure.

He stands up and they leave but Tukelo comes back.

Him: (whisper) hey Tigress.

I look at him.

Him: (Whisper) I love you and I mean it. (winks)

I blush.

Me: (whisper) I love you, forever and always.

Him: (whisper) take care of yourself.

Me: (whisper) okay but why are we whispering?

Him: (chuckles) (whisper) I don't know.

I laugh and he also laughs and leaves.

I'm going through a lot of emotions right now. I'm having a baby with someone who's a gangster and he's a prince and his family hates my guts, they can't even hide it. I am all alone in this country and my mommy the one person I need is miles and miles away from me. I don't even think I should call her. She would tell me to come back immediately. I need someone to talk to and I need someone who gets me. I end up dialing Nosi's number and she picks up on the third ring.

Her: Bitch.

Me: Hoe, where have you been? You're AWOL.

Her: I'm AWOL? Girl the last time I saw you was at that epic New Year's party. After that, you just disappeared.

Me: Yeah, I have been busy with school and other things.

Her: What other things?

Me: Like Tukelo, my pregnancy, meeting up with Tukelo's family and...

Her: Whoa, back it up! What did you say?

Me: I am meeting Tukelo's family...

Her: No before that.

Me: I'm dealing with Tukelo..

Her: Bitch, after that.

Me: My pregnancy.

She screams. I had to move the phone away from my ear.

Her: Girl! Why didn't you tell me? How come I'm only hearing this now?

Me: I just found out. I was still shocked myself.

Her: How far are you?

Me: I'm 2 months.

Her: Wow and I am...

Me: You're what?

Her: Very happy for you.

Me: Wish i could feel the same way.

Her: Why now?

Me: His parents hate me. How can I have a baby if me and my baby are not welcomed in this house or palace or whatever.

Her: Palace?

Me: They're royal, can you believe it?

Her: Royal? What do you mean?

Me: I mean the Mokoena's are from a royal family.

Her: What??!!!

Me: Yes I know.

Her: This is great.

Me: How is great?

Her: That means your baby will be well taken care of

Me: Didn't you hear me? They hate my guts. They think I'm a nobody.

Someone clears their throat. I look behind and it's Thandi carrying a tray.

Me: Nosi, I have to go.

Her: Okay. Call me later.

Me: Okay I will. Love you.

Her: Love you too.

I hang up.

Thandi: Sorry to disturb you. I figured since you didn't get to finish your dinner I would bring it up for you.

Me: Thank you but Tukelo has gone out to get me a Veggie burger and besides that chicken looks under cooked so no thank you.

Her: (laughs) true. How are you feeling?

Me: I'm fine Thandi. So you knew?

Her: (sigh) yes I knew.

Me: But you couldn't tell me?

Her: it wasn't my place. I wanted to but Tumi said Tukelo has his reasons for not telling you.

Me: What else are you hiding from me?

Her: I am not hiding anything else.

Me: I don't want any surprises Thandi. I just embarrassed myself in front of his family. I fainted because my so called boyfriend was not completely honest with me so you have to tell me if there's anything else.

Her: Nothing I swear.

Me: You better be telling me the truth.

Her: Well, I'm also royal.

Me: Un-fucking-believable.

Her: Look, me and Tumi were forced to get married because my father and his father had to keep a promise they made to each other, many years ago. I think he believes that royal should marry royal in order for his legacy to go on.

Me: Thats dumb.

Her: I know. Thats why Tukelo was delaying so much coming here because he knew that this would happen.

Me: Fuck that. There's more that he's not telling me. Tonight he has to be honest with me.

Her: Good luck with that.

Me: What do you mean?

Her: I've been trying to get Tumi to open up to me for many years but no luck. I had to dig in order for me to find out that he lives a double life. What kind of a lawyer is he?

Me: I ask myself that question almost everyday.

Her: Well I would love to sit and chat but I got work to do downstairs.

Me: Okay. I will take a shower and come down.

Her: okay.

She leaves. I go to the the bathroom and take a shower. When I was done I lotion myself and got dressed to a hugging dress that was just below the knee and a doek. I am never getting use to this. I was still scared to even go downstairs. I find Tukelo's Mom having whiskey with slightly older ladies. As I walking pass one of the ladies called me.

Me: Yes.

Lady: Can you please get ice, these ones are melting.

She hands me an ice bucket.

Me: Oh OK.

Lady2: Rebecca did you get new staff, I don't know her.

T.mom: Mm, something like that.

Me: Oh no I'm not...

T.mom: Hlengiwe, get us the ice please. I don't want you talking to my guests.

I got so frustrated, I grab the ice bucket from the lady and went to the kitchen. I find this old lady busy cleaning.

Her: Oh hi mam', I don't think we were formally introduced. I'm Mme Gladys and I help around here.

Me: Oh hi. I'm Amahle...

Her: Oh I know who you are, Tukelo has told me a lot about you.

Me: He has?

Her: He never shuts up. Whenever I call him, he always talks about you. I was so anxious on meeting you.

Me: (smile) I hope you've heard the good things.

Her: Only the best. And he was right about one thing.

Me: what's that?

Her: You're beautiful and it's freaky.

Me: (laugh) well thank you mme Gladys. Where can I find ice?

Her: The fridge over there.

This place was heaven. The kitchen was amazing, everything was black and silver. It looked like a million dollars. I get to the fridge took out ice and put on the ice bucket.

Her: You're giving that to Mrs. Mokoena?

Me: Yes.

Her: Give it here. I will give it to her, Tukelo would be mad if he finds you working especially when you're expecting.

Me: You know?

Her: Yes... me and Tukelo talk like everyday. I am the one who helped him escape this hell whole. Give me that, I will give it to them.

She dries her hands and takes the bucket away from me.

There's something about her that I just love and she reminds me a lot of my mother.

I leave the kitchen and went outside and it was already dark. I went to sit by the pool side and the view is amazing. The pool was big and in an odd shape, the lights inside were changing, from blue to purple to pink. It was just breathtakingly beautiful. I sit by the pool side and I just think about how my life has turned upside down in just a matter of months. Before Tukelo, my life was just simple but now I don't know who I am anymore. I am pregnant with a baby that I am not even sure I want. I have studies and I'm just completely lost. I don't know what to do or how to handle all of this. This is why I kept my distance from relationships because of the unnecessary stress. I was disturbed by someone touching my shoulder when I turn to look it was Rebecca. I try to stand up but she pushes me back down.

Her: No sit. We don't want you fainting again.

OK, why is she so mean to me? She sits next to me and just looks at me with disgust all over her face.

Her: You do know that my son won't end up with you?

Me: excuse me?

Her: You heard me. You're just a nobody that's warming up his bed once he's tired of you, he's going to leave you and never look back.

I don't say anything.

Her: No man wants a woman that will milk out his money, a woman who has nothing to her name.

Me: You think I'm here for his money?

Her: How can a girl like you end up with him? I have heard about you Zulu girls, I won't let you do that to my son.

Me: What are you talking about?

Her: I'd be damned if I let my son throw away his future because of a loose girl like you.

Me: okay.

Her: He belongs with Nthabi and I will get rid of you even if I have to kill you.

With that she stands up and leaves. Fuck! Did she just threaten me? Nobody threatens me! She doesn't know me! But after all, she is Tukelo's mom I can't go all Amahle on her. I don't even know how to react to this. I don't know whether to let Tukelo know about this, I'm just all confused. But I would be damned if I let her get to me. And to think I was admiring her just a few hours ago! I hear laughter behind me and two adorable kids were chasing each other. She runs but I am not too sure if she sees where she's going and splash! She falls into the pool.

Older kid: Help! She doesn't know how to swim!

I quickly get in the water swim to her. She's kicking and screaming.

Me: It's okay. I got you.

Nkati: What are you doing Amahle?!

Me: Shut up! I'm trying to save her.

I get the child out and she is cold and looks lifeless. I do CPR.

Gontse: Whats going on here? Oh my God!! My baby! What are you doing to her?

I continue doing CPR. She kneels in front of us and she starts crying and screaming.

The kid coughs and opens her eyes.

Gontse: Thato? Are you okay?

Thato nods.

Gontse: what happened?

Nkati: Amahle drowned her!

Me: What?!

Gontse: You monster! You tried to kill my baby?!

Me: I didn't...

Thato gets up and she hugs me. Gontse grabs her and hides Thato behind her.

The older kid: Why you lying?

Nkati: Shut up! I know what I saw, Amahle was drowning Thato.

Me: I wasn't!

Gontse: but why?! How could you be so evil?!

Everyone was out now, Thabang, Ntate, Bontle, Oratile, Mme Gladys and that evil witch Rebecca.

Oratile: Whats going on?

Nkati: Amahle was drowning Thato.

Thabang: What?!!

Nkati: Yes aubhuti.

Gontse: Where did Tukelo get this evil bitch from?! Why would she kill my baby?! She should go back to the hell whole she crawled from! We don't want her here! We all hate her anyway! She should leave!

Thabang: Gontse! That's enough. Amahle would never do that.

Gontse: How do you know that?!

Bontle: I know her, she's incapable of doing such.

Oratile: Yeah. Why would she want to hurt a kid?

The older kid: We were just...

Nkati: Puleng! The elders are talking.

Ntate: So Tukelo's witch tried to kill my granddaughter?

Thabang: Don't call her a witch Ntate. She did nothing wrong.

Gontse: Stop defending her! She tried to kill my baby, our baby!

This woman saw me trying to save her daughter's life just a mintue ago.

Bontle: why don't we ask Thato so she can tell us what exactly happened?

Nkati: So you don't believe what I say?! I know what I saw?!

Bontle: I didn't say that.

Thabang: Nkatiseng shut up man!

Rebecca: Tukelo brings all the tramps around that dirty city and they try to kill us.

Oratile: Mme please.

Gontse: I will kill you Amahle! I will hurt you so bad!

She tries coming closer but Thabang held her. Okay, does she know that I would fuck her up? I know she's hurt and all but i can only take this much of this family's bull.

Thabang: Gontse! Calm down! Noone tried to kill Thato.

Gontse: Then why is this bitch wet and I saw my baby lifeless.

Thabang: Watch your language! There could be another explanation for this.

I was tired of hearing them arguing about me like I'm not even here. I just got back inside and Thandi calls my name. I ignore her. I get to my room and I lock the door and cried myself to sleep.

I was woken up by a loud knock on my door. I check the time and it's 3am.

Him: Babe!

I get up and I open the door and Tukelo is drunk, he can't even stand still. He gets in and closes the door. He tries to kiss me but I push him back.

Me: Where were you?

Him: Eish baby, I'm sorry. I got caught up.

Me: In what?

Him: I was with the guys.

Me: I thought you were going to get me a Burger?

Him: Um... I was. Can we have this conversation in the morning?

Me: It is morning you idiot!

Him: But it's still dark outside.

Me: Mxm!

I got in bed. He took all of clothes off, I mean all of them and he got in bed. He wraps his arms around me and starts to kiss my neck.

Me: Stop it Tukelo! You smell like a brewery.

Him: I want you so bad.

Me: Leave me alone Tukelo.

Him: Come on baby... look at me... I'm desperate here.

Me: Tukelo fuck off and I mean it.

He gets on top of me.

Me: Tukelo, i said no!

Him: Just one round baby please.

Me: Tukelo! I said no! I am not in the mood. Don't piss me off.

He gets off me.

Him: Fuck, I should have fucked those girls that were throwing themselves at me if I knew I would get home to this.

That hurt me deep down. Even being accused of killing someone didn't hurt me so bad.

Me: What stopped you?

Him: As matter of fact, I don't know.

That hurt me even more.

Me: Then go Tukelo! I don't care! As long as you give me some peace, just leave!

Him: Ok. Lemme go get me some sex.

He starts getting dressed.

Him: Love you baby.

He goes out. As soon as he closes the door, tears started pouring out of my eyes. I don't know what's worse, the fact that Tukelo just admitted that he's cheating or being accused of being a murderer.

.....

TUKELO

I was woken up by Tumi hitting me.

Me: The fuck Tumi?

I get off bed and I was suffering from a really bad headache.

Him: Whats going on in that head of yours?

Me: What did I do?

Him: Oh, you did something bad, really bad.

Me: What are you talking about?

Him: You enjoy killing Amahle slowly, neh?

Me: Tumi can you get to the point.

Him: First you leave her with your family the whole day, they accuse her of being a killer then you....

Me: Whoa. What?

Him: Yes. Apparently Thato drowned last night and Amahle had to save her and your sister, Nkati, came and started accusing Amahle of trying to kill Thato.

I felt anger boiling inside of me.

Me: Nkati did what??!

Him: You heard me. They all accused her, your father, Gontse and your mom.

Me: Im going to kill her and don't you dare try to stop me.

Him: Before you do that, you hurt the poor girl last night.

Me: Me?

Him: Yes you. You came back drunk and she refused you sex and you claimed to go look for it elsewhere. Are you dumb?!

Fuck! I forgot about that!

Me: Shit! I forgot about that, i was only playing with her. I came to this room, I thought i was going to stay here for a couple of mintues then go back to her. I must've fallen asleep.

I hate myself right now!

Him: Do you want her to lose that baby? She was in tears when I found her. She was shaking Tukelo, I have never ever seen her like that.

Me: I screwed up.

Him: Big time.

Me: I am going to check up on her.

Him: No, bad idea. When Thandi told me about what Nkati did, I went to check up on her and she was not in a good state, it took me awhile to calm her down, she's asleep now. I don't think she barely slept. Let her rest.

I feel like a jerk! I feel like killing myself right now! I don't know what i could do to fix this mess. I screwed up bad. How can I fix this? No amount of cheese curls can get me out of this mess. Knowing Amahle, I'm dead meat, she'll never ever forgive me for this.

I storm out and went straight to Nkati's room. I don't even knock I barge in. Before she could say anything I smack her right across her face. She's in shock.

Her: Aubhuti...

I smack her again. I grab her with her pajama shirt and pin her on the wall and strangle her.

Her: Mama!

I tighten my grip.

Me: Listen here, and listen clearly because i will only say this once. You have had it in for Amahle since you've known her, I have noticed. now, i have had it with your bull. Mess with her again I will kill you Nkati and I swear I will. I managed to fuck my own sister then I sure can kill my own sister so don't you dare test me. You got that? Stay away from her and I fuckin mean it!

I feel someone grabbing me from behind. It was one of Ntate's bodyguards. Mme ran to Nkati who was gasping for air.

Mme: Oh my poor baby. You're all just watching and you don't do anything to help.

Bontle: Oh she deserved it.

Mme: What was that?

Bontle: Nothing.

Mme: Get her water.

The bodyguard let go of me and I was still mad as hell.

Me: I hope i made myself clear Nkati! And that goes to all of you! Stay the hell away from Amahle!

I leave them all standing there. I went to my room, I find Amahle sleeping peacefully. I just wished she stayed like that until she can't remember the pain she is feeling. I wish the pain she felt is felt by me instead. I have done so many bad things in my life, I deserve suffering. I just pray that I'm able to fix this before its too late. I brush my teeth and washed my face. I go to the closet and took out my jogging attire and put them on. I kiss Amahle on her forehead and I left. I need to clear my mind and hear myself think.

After my jogging and went back home. As I got in I find Gontse and Mme Gladys in the kitchen.

Me: Dumela Mme Gladys.

Her: Dumela my son.

She gives me a kiss on my cheek. I always loved this woman, she is more of a mother to me than anyone, she practically raised me and she helped me get out of this place.

Gontse: Hi Tukelo.

Me: Mme I'm hungry, is my food ready?

Mme G: It's the microwave, i made your favourite breakfast.

Me: Toast with pork sausages?

Mme G: Yeah.

Me: You remembered.

Mme G: How can I forget?

I hug her and gave a kiss on her forehead.

Me: Thank you Mme.

I went to the microwave took out my food, i sit on the high chair and I start digging in.

Gontse: Tukelo I...

Me: Gontse I'm eating so please.

Gontse: I am sorry Tukelo. I wasn't thinking straight, I shouldn't have accused her without any proof.

Mme Gladys leaves. Good, now I can give her the piece of my mind.

Me: You were stupid to think that Amahle was a murderer, to even think she was capable of hurting a kid, a kid Gontse, come on she's not evil and wicked like you.

Her: When Nkati told me I went crazy, I couldn't get my facts right.

Me: So you thought it's best to accuse my woman for a crime she could never committ? We may all be murderers, including you but she's not okay? She doesn't have the courage to kill someone.

Her: I'm sorry Tukelo, I really am.

Me: The person you should be apologizing to is upstairs.

Her: I will apologize to her...

Me: No don't. I don't want any of you people getting close to her. We're leaving today.

Her: What? Why?

Me: Don't act like you care. That's what you all wanted.

Her: That's not true I...

Me: Just shut it. I have lost my appetite. I'm going to check on Amahle.

I leave the kitchen and I bump into Bontle.

Her: Aubhuti Hi..

Me: Hi Bontle.

She tries to say something but I leave her. Thats my one sister who's still innocent and who I still trust but I am not in the mood. I get to my room and I find Amahle all curled up in bed and she keep on sniffing which means she's crying. Oh man. I hate hurting her like this. How do I even fix this?

Me: Babe..

Her: (silent)

Me: Tigress, I am sorry...

I try to touch her but she hits my arm.

Her: Don't touch me.

She still hasn't looked at me. I don't think I could live with myself if I could see her broken face.

Me: Baby, I don't know how to fix this or to make you feel any better but all I do know is I'm really sorry. Tigress, I could never take away your pain or erase your memory but at least let me try and fix this. I screwed up bad...

She turns around and looks at me and my heart just shreds into a million pieces.

Her: You screwed up?! You call sleeping around and telling it to my face screwing up? Oh no dude, you fucked up! You fucked up bad is what you should be saying because no amount of words could fix us. Nothing.

Me: I know what I said last night hurt you but I swear, I didn't do anything...

Her: Don't lie to my face Brian, don't! Be a man and fess up your deeds. You had the guts to tell me when you were drunk, tell me now when you're sober! Say it!

Me: i know what i said but I didn't do anything. I only said that to hurt you...

Her: Well great job! You did that very well, are you happy?

Me: No.. it was stupid of me. I thought I was going to come back to you but I fell asleep in one of the guest rooms.

Her: With your hoe?

Me: No. Babe, listen, I didn't go anywhere last night after I came back. You can ask one of the guards or check the surveillance cameras, I swear I didn't leave.

Her: So, since you've been with me you never cheated?

And Lerato came flushing back. Then the girl I fucked the other night. Then Nthabi.

Her: Answer me!

Me: No, no. I didn't cheat. I swear.

Her: Okay. Give me your phone.

Me: What? No. Since when you go through my phone?

Her: Since you had the guts to tell me that you're fucking around.

Me: I'm not. I made a mistake, I shouldn't have said that. I am sorry Amahle. Forgive me Ncwane.

She turns her back on me. I hug her from behind. She cries her eyes out.

Me: Baby please...

Her: Take me home Brian. Just take me home.

Me: We are going home tonight before this place destroys us. I am sorry you had to go through what you went through last night without my presence but I promise you they will pay. I have sorted out Nkati.

Her: I don't want anything to do with you or with your family, I just want to go home.

Me: You don't mean that.

Her: I do.

Me: No you don't. I love you Amahle with every bone that's in my body. I can't lose you.

Her: I am...

She winces in pain.

Me: What's wrong?

Her: Nothing.

She touches her stomach. She cries in pain.

Me: What's wrong Amahle?

I sit up and look at her.

Her: It hurts Tukelo.

She cries louder.

Me: Where baby? Where?

I make her face up and I look at her, she's pale and looks like in a lot of pain. She's crying in pain and I don't know what to do. I call Thandi and she rushes in.

Thandi: What's wrong?

Me: I don't know she's crying in pain and I don't know what to do.

Thandi checks up on her.

Thandi: Oh my god!

Me: What?

Thandi: She's bleeding.

Me: What? She's on her periods?

Thandi: You idiot! A woman is not supposed to bleed when she's pregnant.

I feel like taking a gun and just kill myself. Between her cries and all the blood that's on my bed, I'm convinced that I have lost my baby.

Thandi: Don't just stand there! Help me take her to the car so she could go to hospital.

Amahle: Aahhhh! It hurts Thandi! It hurts so bad!

Thandi: Calm down baby, everything will be okay.

I help Thandi with Amahle. We carry her and the whole family is on their feet when they saw us carrying her to the car.

Mme: What happened?

We ignore her.

Mme G: Tukelo, what's going on?

Me: She's bleeding mme.

Mme G: Modimo!

Oratile: Why is she bleeding though?

Thandi: We have to get to hospital.

Amahle hasn't stopped crying and each cry breaks my heart. We get to the car and they get in the back seat and I drive in a high speed. I have never heard a woman cry this much.

Me: Baby hang in there just hold on.

Amahle: Shut up! Just shut up and drive!

I never spoke after that. Within 15 minutes we get to hospital. We put her on the wheelchair and we get to the reception.

Me: Can you please get my wife the best doctor.

Receptionist: What's her name?

Me: There's no time for all of that, she's in pain.

Receptionist: Sir, there's procedure to follow...

Thandi: She's bleeding and she's pregnant!

And the mayhem starts.

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AMAHLE

The last time I woke up in a room like this I found out I was pregnant. What happened? Blood. I remember blood. No, my baby. I touch my stomach. I cry.

Me: My baby. No.

Tukelo rushes to me.

Me: My baby.

Him: Calm down babe. The baby is fine.

Me: He is?

Him: Yes he is. We almost lost him but the doctors managed to save him, just in time.

Me: Are you sure?

Him: (smiles) positive.

I don't know why but I felt some type of relief. For a moment I was scared of losing my child. Am I finally falling in love with him?

Him: I'm sorry babe.

Me: Not now.

Him: If not now, when?

Me: Do you want me to lose this baby for real?

Him: Of course not.

Me: Then shut up.

Silence. I look at the waist band on my waist. The fuck?!

Me: Amahle Mokoena?

Him: (smiles) I didn't write that.

Me: But you told them.

Him: I didn't I swear..

Me: did you even try and correct them?

Him: Um.. are you hungry? Its been awhile since I've seen you eat.

Me: Idiot. Yes I'm hungry. You went out to get me a Burger but never came back with it.

Him: This time, I will come back with it. I promise.

Me: Good. I don't just want a Burger, I want cheese curls, nectarines, prawns, oysters...

Him: Oysters?

Me: Just shut up and listen. I want chocolate and make sure it doesn't have nuts and I want avocado juice.

Him: Is there even such thing as avocado juice?

Me: I don't know. Blend avocado if you have to. I want to drink avocado and mix it with yoghurt.

Him: What the??

Me: Go get me those things Brian.

Him: Yes mam!. I will leave once the doctor gets here.

Me: We are hungry Tukelo.

Him: But I don't want to leave you alone.

Me: But I'm not alone

I brush my tummy. He smiles.

Me: I got my warrior right here.

He kneels down, lifts my shirt. He kisses my tummy and I get horny same time. I hate being pregnant!!!

Him: Hey boy. You gave me and mommy quite a scare. I thought I lost you. I know I have hurt mommy so many times but I love her. I love you both a lot (tear escapes). My heart beats for you two, you all I have and you all I live for. Take care of mommy okay? She's mad at me right now but I know she loves me, and I love her 10 times more.

I chuckle.

Him: it shows you're a true Mokoena, you're a quite a fighter.

Lady: He's quite a fighter.

We didn't even notice she's here, we turn to look at her.

Her: I'm doctor Moonsamy. How are you Mrs. Mokoena?

Me: Zungu. Miss Zungu but I'm fine. I feel okay. How is my baby?

Her: He's okay. We almost lost him, if you didn't get here sooner. I don't know what might have happened. Miss Zungu, you're pregnant and you have to take it easy. Means don't stress and no pressure. I don't want your blood levels rising up again. You have to take better care of yourself and we will be best friends.

Me: When can I go home?

Her: You look fine and the baby as well but I would like to keep you here for another night.

Him: No doc, we're leaving tonight.

Her: For?

Him: South Africa. So can't you recommend her to one of your colleagues that side and she can finish her treatment there.

Her: I don't think it's best for her to travel.

Him: I know but we've already booked our flights and it was hard to even get those flights so we have to leave tonight.

I look at him. He's such a liar.

Her: Since you put it like that I will get her discharge papers ready but please take it easy Miss Zungu, whatever you feel the baby feels. When you're stressed, the baby is also stressed. I don't want your blood pressure raising again, got it? Mr Mokoena, take care of her, please.

Him: I will.

She smiles and leaves.

Me: Why are you still here? I want my food Tukelo.

Him: OK.

He kisses my forehead and leaves.

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Bonus Insert 😊

Andile

It's been two months since I last spoke to Nonhle. Even thinking about her makes my blood boil. After I stormed off, she tried calling me, I didn't pick up any of her calls. She resorted to texting, I didn't respond. I blocked her on WhatsApp and on Facebook. What pissed me off more was the fact that even when she saw I didn't entertain her stupid idea, she was still begging me to agree. How can I let another man raise my child?! That's crazy. A criminal at that! I still haven't spoken to anyone about this not even my best pals, Patrick and Samkelo. I would be lying if I say it wasn't stressing me out, the stress is killing me. I think about my child everyday, I'm dying to know how she or he is doing, yet I can't even call the mother and ask her how our baby is doing. That kills me everyday. Well, at least Buhle makes me happy, we are really trying to make our relationship work. We were taking baby steps and we were slowly getting back to what we were before. Nonhle distracted me so much that I even forgot how wonderful Buhle was. She had her days, trust me, she had her days but above all, I know she loves me and I can always count on her. I rushed into a relationship with a woman and look what she did, she ran away with my child.

On other news, Anele and Zanele are getting married soon. The wedding is in Cape Town, I'm definitely looking forward to that. Amahle has been AWOL, she hasn't been home for the past two months. She gave us an excuse saying school is keeping her busy. She calls almost everyday though.

Sam: Boy, smoko?

Pat: Yeah, you have been acting weird lately.

We were chilling at the park after school eating icelollies.

Me: I have?

Sam: Yeah, it's like something is distracting you.

Me: Ah, I'm just worried about next year. Like what's next? What will happen?

Pat: Dude, it's still May.

Me: And next month it's June, the month after that it will July then August and before you know it we're writing our trial exams. I don't want to waste anytime. This time next year, I want to be in Varsity and I also want to start a small business.

Sam: What kind of business?

Me: I don't know man, any kind but I just don't want to sit around. I need money.

Sam: Haybo Andz, where's this coming from? I've never heard you speak like this. Is Buhle pregnant?
(laughs)

Pat: Don't joke like that. I may have made peace of you dating my sister but I will kill you if you impregnate her.

Yeah, I'm dating my best friend's sister. I broke the guy code big time! It did cause a drift between me and Pat, he even went as far as picking a fight with me. We tried hiding it from him but he found out anyway, we didn't plan to fall inlove, it just happened. Even if he knows about us, we always make sure he never sees us together, we still show him some respect. It took Pat a whole year to get use to the situation. He saw how Buhle was happy with me. It's still very hard for me because when I decide to cheat, I should make sure Pat doesn't find out. I love Buhle though, alot. I never mean to hurt her but I'm a guy, it just happens.

Me: No, she's not. Come on.

Sam: Then why you're so serious?

Me: I'm just thinking ahead Sam, I don't want to sit around next year. Plus, I have a good influence and that's Tukelo.

Pat: Your sister's boyfriend?

Me: Yeah.

Sam: I don't like that dude, I don't trust him at all. Everything about him is just too good to be true.

Me: I don't care how he made it but I also want to make it. I mean how many millionaires do you know that comes from Alex? I want to make a difference, make a name for myself.

Pat: You're right though.

I got home, I found mom working on the garden.

Me: Ntombi yami noBheki.

She smiles. My mom is beautiful though, I would do anything for this woman. She's the one person I prevent hurting. I never want her to shed a tear of sadness because of me.

I kiss her sweaty forehead.

Me: How was your day kodwa mkami?

I call her my wife ever since I was a kid. I saw how sad she was when she lost my dad so I told her I will be her husband so she mustn't be sad no more, it started as a joke, now I'm used to it.

Her: My day was long and I still have to bake.

Me: You overwork yourself and I don't like that. You need to rest now, you're not as young as you use to be.

Her: Hey, I'm not old either.

Me: (laughs) no you're not mkami but you shouldn't put so much strain on your body, Bheki wouldn't want that.

Her: He wouldn't want you calling him by name either. Help me here so I can finish.

Me: Ah, would love too but I have alot of schoolwork.

Her: Vila!

Me: (laughs) I'm serious mamzo. Let me leave you neh

Her: Okay. You should call your brother, he's been looking for you.

Me: He has? Kanti what does he want from me? He gave me a lecture about school and getting into Varsity, I heard him so what does he want now?

She looks me confused. I get that Anele is older and wiser, I get it but I hate it when he acts all self-righteous and want to play the role of my father and makes himself looks good in front of mom but he's never there. He only wants to see me when he wants to lecture me.

Her: Haybo Andile, don't talk about your brother like that.

Me: I'm sorry mkami. I will call him before I go to bed. Like I said, I have alot of schoolwork and studying.

Her: Okay.

I get to my room and did my work, and studied a little. With all the pressure I was facing and the stress, it was really hard to even concentrate but I'm working this hard for my son. I was dead serious when I said I'm going to get him, I can't let another raise him but I seriously need to talk to someone about this and I couldn't think of anyone except for Amahle. My phone beeps. I get a text from Buhle saying she's outside my house.

It was around 6pm. I leave the house and go to her. I find her leaning on a rock, wearing a short and her tight vest. She is eating a lollipop. She looked sexy. Let me tell you something about her, she is a thick woman, flawless skin, a true example of 'indoni yamanzi', she's really beautiful, pearl white teeth, brown eyes, curves, she has a really bright future behind her, she's blessed there I don't wanna lie. She's just a really beautiful black woman and when she smiles, my heart jump for joy, she has an amazing smile. She has a tattoo on her chest and a nose ring.

Me: Wait... Don't move. Stand right there.

Her: What? Why?

She looks at me confused. I take out my phone and start taking pictures of her. She smiles, and she starts posing for the camera. About 10 photos later, I stop and smile at her.

Her: (smiles) You're crazy, you know that?

Me: Hey babe.

I kiss her slightly on her lips.

Her: Hey. How are you?

Me: I'm good thanks, and you?

Her: I missed you.

Me: Babe, you saw me today at school.

Her: Yes I saw you but I wasn't like with you, you know?

Me: Yeah but things are tight, I have some many assignments and work.

Her: Eish, sorry. That means I will get limited time now?

Buhle was doing grade 11 but we attended the same school.

Me: Yeah but don't be too sad, I will be with you whenever I'm free. I'm sure you can bear with me.

Her: Yeah I understand.

We took a walk around our neighborhood. We talk and catch up. I enjoy spending my time with her, she has everything that every man needs in a woman, I don't know why I ever cheat on her. We go get drinks at Joe's Tuck shop then I accompany her home.

Me: Thank you for coming to see me, I missed your pretty face.

Her: (chuckles) I'm going to miss your handsome face.

She kisses me.

Me: I love you Buhlebendalo Khanyile.

Her: I love you Andile Zungu.

Me: I will try to make time for us to go out, its been awhile.

Her: I would really love that.

I kiss her goodbye. As she turned to leave, I spank her butt and she giggles. I jog back home. I have my meal, spend a little time with my little sister and mom then went to bed.

I was woken up by my phone ringing, I check the time its 1am, I let it ring. The person is persistent as my phone rings again. It's private number.

Me: Yeah.

Silent.

Me: Hello?

Silent

Me: Haybo

I look at my phone, the call is still on going.

Me: Hello?

Then I start hearing sobs. And it didn't take me long enough to realize that its Nonhle's cries. I don't say anything. I listen to her cry.

Her: Ndile...

Me: Yes.

Her: He's going to kill me. I told him everything, I couldn't take it anymore, I was missing you so bad. He was going to find out anyway so I decided to tell him. I ran away from our house, he's looking for me as we speak. I'm sorry that I even suggested that stupid idea. I hate myself for it. I know how much you want to be a part of your baby's life, it was wrong of me to deprive you from that. I want you back, can we fix things? Please.

I don't say anything.

Her: Aren't you going to say anything?

Me: What do you want me to say Nonhle? You decided to leave me, so now that you want to come back, what should I do? Welcome you back again? So you can fuck with my feelings again?

Her: No I won't. I had no choice, Mandla was...

Me: Mandla, Mandla, Mandla... That's all you ever talk about. I also had a girl but you never heard me speak about her, not even once. I bet you don't even know her name. When I'm with you, I'm with you. But I felt like I was in a relationship with you and Mandla

Her: Andile, you have to understand....

Me: No Nonhle! I've been trying to understand for way too long. Now it's time for you to understand, I want you to understand that I want nothing to do with you. You leaving Mandla was your own decision, don't involve me. Just give birth to my child and give him to me. That's all I will ever need from you.

Her: Andile how can you say such?

Me: I've said it ke Nonhle. I wanted to be with you, but you decided to go to your boyfriend, now that you want to make thing work, what must I do? Jump? Because you know I love you. Ayi cha-ke sisi, Andile doesn't work like that. Ngeke ngizwe ngawe, uyezwa?

Her: This is not a game Andile. Mandla is going to kill me and if I die, your baby that you care about, dies with me, in case you haven't noticed.

She hangs up before I can respond. Shit! I try calling her back but her number leads me straight to voicemail. Her last statement gave me a wake up call. I don't want her to die and I definitely don't want to lose my kid.

What do I do now?

Insert Twenty-Five 😊

Andile

Still no luck in getting ahold of Nonhle. I left messages, inboxed her on Facebook, even on WhatsApp. Man! What has this woman done to me? No matter how much I try, I cannot seem to get over her. I only realized yesterday that I still care deeply about her. I don't know if its because she's carrying my first child or I'm still inlove with her.

Mom: That's tuna Andile, you're allergic to fish.

I only realize now that I'm spreading tuna on the bread and not butter.

Me: Oh, I thought I'm spreading butter.

I take that sandwich and gave it to Ziningi.

Ziningi: Ay bhuti, I already ate.

Me: Just eat the bread Ziningi or you want us to waste food and throw it away?

Ziningi: Haybo Bhuti its not my fault that you decided to spread tuna instead of butter.

Me: Yey Ziningi! Are you back chatting now?!

Mom: Ay Andile, why are shouting at Ziningi? Don't take out your frustrations on her, uze ungisize.

Me: Sorry.

Mom: No, apologize to your little sister.

Me: I'm sorry Ziningi, I didn't mean to shout at you.

She nods.

Mom: Where's your mind at Andile?

Me: Mkami?

Mom: What's going on with you?

Me: Eish, I have alot on my mind mah, with everything that's going on, school and this wedding. It's just too much.

Mom: You know I gave birth to you, right?

Me: Yes I know but what's that got to do with what we talking about?

Mom: it means I can tell if you're lying.

I don't respond.

Mom: What's wrong Andile? You know you can talk to me about anything.

Me: Mom, I don't want to talk about it.

Mom: Is it something serious? Are you in trouble of some sort?

Me: Don't push the situation, I just told you I don't want to talk about it.

She looks at me shocked.

Me: Sorry mkami, I didn't mean to talk to you like that but I want you to understand that some things I rather handle on my own without always having my mommy by my side. Some things I have to face head on as a man.

Mom: You're not a man yet Andile.

Me: How can I be a man if you are always treating me like a kid?

Mom: Hee, so all of my kids don't need me anymore?

Me: What do you mean?

Mom: First it was Anele, he left me when he was only 20years old and he never looked back then Amahle, I haven't seen her in the past 2 months and now it's you. It's clear my only child now is Ziningi.

She stands up.

Me: Mah...

Mom: Let's go to school Ningi.

She pulls Ziningi's arm and they left me standing. I could see what I said hurt her, but she has to understand that we all grown up now which means we won't need her like we used to. I finish eating then I left for school. I find Buhle already waiting for me in our usual spot where we meet and walk to school together.

She hugs me and kisses my cheek.

Me: How're you?

Her: I'm okay and you?

Me: I'm fine.

Her: Does your mom know about us?

Me: No, why?

Her: Just that I greeted her this morning and she didn't respond but I know for a fact that she heard me.

Me: Oh? Maybe she didn't hear you.

Her: She did babe, Ziningi even told her that I greeted her but she still didn't respond.

Thing is my mom never liked Buhle, I never told Buhle that. She thinks Buhle is too forward and when Buhle got a tattoo and a nose ring, that just made things even worse. She doesn't know that we're dating, she just knows her as my friend's sister. I don't know how she'd take it if I tell her that she's my girlfriend.

Me: Just that we had an little argument before she left.

Her: So what's that got to do with me? She will take her frustrations out on people on the street?

Me: Don't talk about my mom like that.

Her: I was just asking.

Me: Don't ask me stupid questions, especially if it's about my family.

Her: Oh okay.

We walk in silence. My mind is all over the place right now. I'm worried what if Nonhle is in danger for real but what if she's here to mess up my feelings again. How do I even search for the truth?

Her: So, your matric dance is coming.

Me: I'm aware.

Her: You're taking me, right?

Me: You're not even in matric Buhle.

Her: I know but they do take people in lower grades. I am your girlfriend after all.

Me: Your brother is also going to be in that dance.

Her: I know that.

Me: Then you should also know that I can't take you.

Her: Why not?

Me: I won't be comfortable, I won't be able to do what I want to do with you if he's around.

Her: But he knows about us.

Me: I know but we made a promise to show him some respect, remember? Which means we make sure he never sees together.

Her: So you're going to take some other girl? And you think I'm going to allow that?

I don't say anything. She's about to whine and throw a tantrum so it's best I let her and don't say anything.

Her: Aren't you going to answer me?

Me: Don't you trust me?

Her: What?

Me: Your previous statement clearly shows that you don't trust me.

Her: It's not even about that! How would you feel if I go with some other dude? Wouldn't you ask me the same questions? But knowing you, you'd probably say, "hlala phansi Buhle, awuyi lapho"

She is starting to tick me off. I'm having a bad morning as it is and she's adding with her silly tantrums.

Her: Say something

Me: Ey ey ey Buhle! Can you just stop! Why don't you ask me something useful like when I'm starting my finals? Or have I started studying? Or have I applied for Varsity? And stop asking me useless stupid questions! Has it occurred to you that maybe I'm not going?

Her: I was just...

Me: Save it! I don't want to hear another word coming from your mouth.

I walk faster. By the way things are turning out, I can already tell that I'm going to have a bad day. First it was Nonhle, then mom now Buhle. The women in my life are going to drive to insanity seriously! I get to school. I tried avoiding people as much as I can because I don't want to lash out on anyone again. I know how I can be when I'm pissed. How is it possible that one person can mess up my entire life? Do I care about her that much?

I attend all my classes and after classes, then went straight home. I don't even want to see my mom yet. I go straight to my backroom. I throw myself on my bed. My life is sure messed up. I am so lost and so confused. I don't even think I will be able to study right now. As I was lost in my thoughts, my mom storms in my room and she looked pissed. I look at her.

Me: Mom if it's about this morning, I'm...

Before I can even finish my sentence, I feel one hot slap across my face. I know I was a bit rude but I know for a fact that my mom wouldn't slap me over that. I look at her confused.

Her: So you think you're a man now?! You?! A man?

I look down.

Her: Answer me, man! Angithi mina sengikhuluma nendoda, ngiphendule ke ndoda! (I'm talking to a man now, right? Answer me man)

Me: Ngingamphendula uMah uma ngingazi ukuthi uMah ukhuluma ngani. (I would answer mom, if I knew what mom is talking about)

Her: Usuyigintsa manje wena? (You're a gangster now)

I look at her confused.

Her: Don't look at me like that and answer me.

Me: No mom I'm not. Why would you think like that?

Her: There was a man here looking for you and he claimed to be your friend. That man looked like a gangster. What are you involved in?

Me: Wait, what? A man? What man?

Her: Yey! Don't ask me stupid questions wena! And answer me. That man wasn't lost, he clearly asked for Andile Zungu and when I asked him what business he has with you, he said you're his friend. You have what's his and he was coming to claim it back. What's that Andile?

Oh shit! I hope for my sake that mom is not talking about Mandla. I can't deal with shit like that now.

Me: He's clearly mistaken mom, I don't owe anybody anything.

I try not to panic or look scared.

Her: Must I tell your brother?

Me: mom no! I don't know what that man is talking about. Did he perhaps say his name?

Her: I didn't even ask him. I was still trying to figure out what his deal. He looked scary and he wore those leather jackets, and those gold chains and he had scars on his face.

Me: I don't know anyone like that, I promise you mkami. Don't worry Anele unnecessarily.

Her: You better be telling me the truth Andile.

Me: would I lie to you MaButhelezi?

Her: I don't know what to believe, between you acting weird and lashing out on everyone in the house then in comes this mysterious man. I really don't know what to believe.

Me: Trust me mkami, I'm not lying to you. But I will check with all of my friends and see who was here.

Her: If it happens to be one of your friends tell him to never ever come here on these premises and you better stay away from friends like that.

Me: Okay but I'm sure it was a mistake because I know noone like that.

Her: Okay fine.

She leaves.

Now I can panic in peace. What was Mandla doing here? If it was him then what did he mean when he said he came to claim back what's his? Did he mean Nonhle? Was she really telling the truth when she said she ran away from him?

I had all of these questions in my head but noone to answer them. That's when I realized that this is bigger than me, I couldn't just sit around and wait for this Mandla guy to strike, I have to do something. Its quite obvious that I can't handle this alone.

I took off my uniform, took a quick shower, got dressed then left. I have no plan whatsoever but this is no time for me to be a coward but deep down I know I'm scared, I'm scared for my life, now that this Mandla person knows where I stay. I'm scared for Nonhle, as I don't know where she is or how I can get ahold of her but most importantly I'm scared for my child's life. I find myself in front of this big building. He's the only person I can think of who can get me out of this mess. I go to the reception and I see this beautiful woman on the desk.

Me: Hi, I'm here to see Mr. Tukelo Mokoena.

Her: Goodday sir, I'm sorry but Mr. Mokoena is unavailable at the moment. His busy.

Me: Can you please tell him I'm here to see him, it's really urgent.

Her: I really can't...

Me: Please Ma...

I read her name on her desk, Phumelele Ndlovu.

Me: MaGatsheni, it's really important. It cannot wait.

Her: (sigh) what's your name?

Me: Andile Zungu.

She dials.

Her: Goodday sir, I know you said not to disturb you but there's someone here to see you and he says it's urgent, it cannot wait..... His name is Andile Zungu.... Okay sir.

She hangs up.

Her: Follow me.

She stands up from her chair and I follow her. Damn this woman is beautiful, she dressed perfectly, she wasn't too skinny or fat. She had the perfect shape, her make up was on point and she had this weave on. Her perfume smelled expensive. I don't know but there's just something about a woman who smells amazing. Focus Andile! You're in this mess because of a woman so this is no time to be admiring another woman but she was indeed gorgeous. We get to Tukelo's office, she opens the glass door for me.

Me: Thank you.

She smiles and leaves. And I have to say, this guy is living the dream, this place looks amazing.

Tukelo looks at me, he smiles and stands up. We exchange greetings and man-hug.

Him: So to what do I owe this pleasure?

He sits on top of the table.

Him: Please sit down.

I sit on a chair.

Me: Uhm... I need a gun.

He looks at me shocked then he laughs.

Him: No seriously, what brings you here?

Me: I'm serious Bra Tuks, I need a gun.

Him: Why would you need a gun Andile? And why would you come to me if you need a gun?

Me: come on, you are rich and there's no way you don't have enemies. And you have bodyguards, there's no way you don't own a gun.

Him: Touchè. Why would you need a gun? Are you back to using?

Me: No! I just have this huge problem and I think I'll need a gun.

Him: Do you even know how to use a gun?

Me: No, angithi you're going to teach me then give it to me.

Him: You want me to get arrested? No forget that, you want your sister to kill me?

Me: You won't tell her, right?

Him: Just tell me why you need a gun, maybe I can sort it out without anyone getting hurt.

Me: This one will definitely need a gun, someone will get hurt.

Him: Just tell me.

Me: Well you remember Nonhle? My hot nurse?

Him: Uhm.. Yeah.

Me: Well, I got her.

Him: As in like, got her to agree to be your girlfriend?

I nod.

Him: No fuckin way.

Me: I'm serious. Long story short, she's pregnant now, her boyfriend is a gangster and I think he's looking for me.

Him: Whoa, whoa, whoa. She's pregnant? Please tell me the baby is not yours.

Me: Well it's mine.

Him: Fuck. This sounds interesting. Tell me everything, don't leave out any detail.

He gets off the table and sits on his big white chair.

I tell him everything and didn't leave out any detail.

Him: Are you sure it's him that came to your house?

Me: Yeah, I don't know anyone who wears what my mom described and he did say he came to claim back what's his and by that I think he means Nonhle.

Him: Did you say his name is Mandla?

Me: Yeah. Do you know him?

Him: I am not sure but I think I do, I will look into this. You have absolutely nothing to worry about.

Me: How can I not worry Bra Tuks when I don't know where Nonhle is, I don't know what this Mandla person looks like.

Him: Just trust me Andile. Relax, I will have this sorted by Monday.

Me: But it's Thursday today.

Him: I know. Just go home, I will get one of my bodyguards to look out for you.

Me: But I want to sort it out. This is my family we're talking about, I want to protect them.

Him: Fine. I will just look into it then you'll decide what you want to do.

Me: Thank you.

Him: No sweat. Man, you like trouble Andile.

Me: (chuckle) more like trouble likes following me around.

Insert Twenty-Six 😊

Tukelo

After Andile left, I called Tumi to come over. I know I said I will take care of this and I probably will but this kid got himself in some serious shit if it's the Mandla I'm thinking of. They called him Butcher, well simply because he kills without thinking twice and he kills using a butcher knife, he slaughters you to death. He's not the type of man to mess with. We never crossed paths, we respected each other and never messed with each other's territories. Now I'm about to mess with his, which means trouble for me but I have no choice now, I have to protect this kid before he gets himself killed. Andile reminds me so much of my younger self, he has that fighting spirit, the braveness, that determination and the courage, I use to have when I was his age.

Tumi: Don't tell me you're in some of trouble and I have to represent you in court because I'm in no mood for that.

He storms in my office without even knocking. Idiot.

Me: Do you always have to do that?

Him: Do what?

Me: Entering without knocking.

Him: We have no secrets, so I really don't see the need. I mean I know your darkest secrets, you know mine.

Me: But you still decided not to tell me about Nosi's pregnancy.

Him: Hhelang, we're still there Tukelo? Really?

Me: We never left.

Him: Ay, don't be a woman Tukelo and tell me why am I here.

He sits down on the couch. I join him.

Me: Well, I think Butcher is after Andile.

Him: Butcher? Butcher Mngomezulu? Is after Andile? Amahle's brother? That Andile?

Me: Yes.

Him: Why would he want Andile? It just doesn't make sense.

Me: It's quite a long story but to cut it short, Andile slept with his woman and impregnated her.

Him: (laughs) Whoa! That kid has balls, he's a man! Infact he deserves a Bell's.

Me: Tumi focus, you forgetting the point here. That kid is in great danger and we have to protect him.

Him: We Tukelo? We?

Me: Have you gone deaf?

Him: He was the one out there pounding the girl, what do we have to do with any of that?

Me: I wouldn't want anything to hurt Amahle so I have to protect everything that she loves and if anything happens to that kid, she will be tarnished and I wouldn't be able to live with myself knowing I could've done something to protect the kid and I did nothing. Besides, I'm very fond of him.

Him: I hear you Tukelo. But I still don't get where Tumi fit in all of this.

Me: Hhebanna!

Him: Seriously Tukelo, I don't want to be butchered to death.

Me: Are you scared of Mandla? Itumeleng Mokoena scared?

Him: I'm not scared, I'm just careful.

Me: That's what a scared person would say.

Him: I am not scared.

Me: Fine Tumi, I'm going to help this kid with or without your help.

I stand up. I'm not going to sit around and beg Tumi. I don't do that. I have no plan on how I'm going to deal with this but I have to find a way and fast.

Him: Don't do anything stupid Tukelo, you can't afford to have enemies on your tail, a few months ago you killed Gabela's son, remember that?

Me: I do remember that Tumi but I can't just let this kid get himself killed.

Him: What if you get yourself killed? Did you perhaps think about that?

Me: I'm un-kill-able.

Him: This is Butcher we're talking about here.

Me: Tumi, I've handled situations far worse than Butcher, this is nothing. Stop giving me excuses and tell me, are you in or out?

He thinks for awhile.

Him: If he kills me, I'm going to haunt your un-kill-able ass and I'm going to make your life miserable. I swear Tukelo.

I laugh at him.

I got to Amahle's apartment and I find her sleeping. Her head was on her desk, guess she fell asleep while studying. I pick her up and put her in bed. This woman is a deep sleeper, the house would be on fire and still she won't wake up. I go take a shower, after my shower I still find her asleep, I lotion my body and wore my boxers. I shake her awake.

Her: Ha.ana Tukelo.

She still had her eyes closed.

Me: Tigress wake up.

Her: But why?

She opens her eyes

Me: I miss you.

Her: Don't tell me you woke me up for sex.

Me: No, I just said I miss you, I didn't say anything about sex.

She sits up, and lays on my chest. I cuddle her.

Her: I missed you too babakhe.

Me: How was your day?

Her: Tiring and long... Yours?

Me: Crazy. Your brother came to see me today.

Her: Andile?

Me: Yeah.

Her: Why?

Me: What do you mean why?

Her: What was the reason for his visit?

Me: He just came by to see me. What's wrong with that?

Her: Nothing, he doesn't even call me but he has time to visit you.

Me: (chuckles) Are you jealous?

Her: No.

She pouts

Me: Modimo, you're jealous.

Her: No babe, I just don't get it, I call them everyday but they don't.

Me: I thought you wanted to keep distance since you don't want them to find out that you're pregnant.

Her: I know but that doesn't mean they should stop calling.

Me: I will tell him to call you.

Her: No don't!

Me: (laugh) why?

Her: Why can't he check on me?

Me: I still think you should tell them about your pregnancy, that way they'd check on you and you'll get the attention you need.

Her: No, mom will lecture me. I'm not ready for that.

Me: So you'll avoid them till when?

Her: Till I give birth.

Me: (laughs) impossible.

Her: watch me.

She looks serious, I just shake my head.

Me: You know I love you, right?

Her: Yes babe, I know.

Me: I would do anything to keep you happy all times.

Her: Yet you fuck up everytime.

Me: (sigh) I know and it's never intentional. Just that I try so hard to hide my other life from you and keep you away from it but I end up screwing up. But I just want you to know that even if I hurt you, that doesn't mean I love you any less.

Her: I know Tukelo. And even when I shout at you, hit you and even swear at you, I love you Mr. Mokoena.

She kisses me slightly on my lips.

Her: We are going to have sex though, right?

I look at her shocked then I laugh at her.

I was woken up by a text. Its 2am. I carefully take Amahle off my chest and reach for my phone.

Dankies: <We have Butcher. Get to the warehouse stat.>

I quickly got dressed, kissed Amahle's cheek and left. I drive off in a very high speed. It's about an hour drive from Town to the warehouse but it only took me 45mins. I park in the undercover parking. I find Tumi, Dankies, Rufus, Rebel, Sphiwe and Gundi outside the chamber.

Me: You just had to wake me up. Couldn't we do this in the morning?

Dankies: We have no time to lose, we have to act fast before his goons start looking for him.

Me: You didn't touch him, right?

Dankies: No, we just sedated him.

Me: But he's awake now?

Tumi looks at his watch.

Tumi: He should be.

We go inside. He's tied up on a chair, he is awake but he looks a little woozy. I take a bucket of water and splashed it over him. He wakes up immediately and he coughs.

Me: Wakey wakey.

He looks at me.

Him: Ruthless?

I haven't heard anyone call me by that name in years. Back in the days, when all I knew was crime, I had a name, Ruthless, we all did. Tumi was called Slayer, Dankies was called Blade.

Me: In the flesh.

Him: What the hell man?

Me: I won't waste your time and mine, I left my girl on the bed and I'd like to get back to that ASAP. I'm sure you go staff to do too.

Him: Just get to your point Ruthless.

Me: Look, I respect you Butcher, I do. I wouldn't want for us to be enemies but when you mess with people I care about, I will strike and I wouldn't care what you're capable of. Just because I respect you, it doesn't mean I'm scared of you.

Him: I'm messing with people you care about?

Me: I get that the kid fucked up, he messed with what's yours but he's just a kid, he doesn't need you messing with him.

Him: You're talking about the boy that made my woman pregnant? You know that kid?

Me: Yes. He happens to be my girl's little brother.

Him: I don't care if he is your brother or your pet or whatever but he messed with what's mine, I'm not going to let him get away with it, that's not how I work.

Me: He's just a kid

Him: That didn't stop him from getting my woman pregnant, I'm pretty sure if the sane thing happened to you, you would have reacted the same way.

Yeah he's right there, that person would actually be dead by now.

Me: We agreed that we won't mess with one another, right now you're messing with someone I care about so I think it's best if you just accept what happened and move on.

Him: (chuckles) You must be crazy. That kid will get what's coming for him and noone will stop me from doing that. Not even you Ruthless. Even if you kill me now, you know that it will cause problems for you because my people will hunt you down and you'll all be dead by tomorrow midday.

Me: You think that scares me? Nothing scares me Butcher, not even you. Look, I don't like repeating myself, I've said what I needed to say and I won't repeat myself, stay away from that boy.

Him: Or what? You won't do anything to me Ruthless, nothing at all.

He smirks. He's right about that too, I can't afford to make any enemies. If I kill him, I'm causing more trouble for myself and I can't put the people I care about in danger just because of a mistake Andile made but at the same time, I need him to get my message.

Me: Don't be too sure about that, I'm good at covering my tracks and you know that.

Him: You think I'm stupid? I have a tracker on me so if anything happens to me, my goons will find me with no trouble at all

Tumi: You also think we're stupid? We found that tracker and removed it, so as far as your goons know, you're in Germiston.

Me: So I can kill you right now with no hesitation. Just cooperate with me and we go our separate ways.

Butcher: You're really crazy to think I'd agree to that.

Me: You leave me no choice then. I will leave you here, think about what we discussed, you'll call one of my bodyguards should you change your mind.

Butcher: Hhe, wena mfana womsuthu ucabanga ukuthi you rule this world, you think everything revolves around you. I will do things the way I want to. Noone tells me what to do. Should you keep me here, I will be found in the morning, trust me on that.

Me: we shall see. Rebel and Rufus, stay here with him, make sure he doesn't get any food or water. Don't even open for him when says he wants to use the toilet, only call me when he says he wants to cooperate, got that?

Rebel&Rufus: Sure boss.

Me: And you, tomorrow I will bring your new-found friend here, Andile, and he'll decide what we do with you.

He just looks at me and we leave.

I go back to the apartment and its close to 5am. I find Amahle still sleeping, man this woman. I get inside the covers and tried going back to sleep.

Insert Twenty-Seven 😊

Andile

I see a black G63 parked outside my school, as I got closer, Tukelo comes out. I go to him.

Me: Bra Tuks...

We man-hug

Me: What brings you by?

Him: Well, I found what you were looking for?

I look at him confused.

Me: You mean... You got Mandla? That quick?

Him: We don't have time to lose Andile, we have a baby to think about here. I told you all of this will be sorted by Monday.

Me: Wow, I see that you meant it.

Him: So you haven't heard from your baby mama yet?

Me: No I've been trying to call her for the past few days but her phone leads me straight to voicemail.

Him: Where could she be? Even Mandla is looking for her.

Me: she came to me for help and I just shut her out, I hope she didn't do anything stupid.

Him: Don't worry, we'll find her. Now, let's go meet Butcher.

Me: Butcher?

Him: Mandla. Don't let his name scare you.

Me: Why is he called butcher?

Him: Why don't you ask him when you meet him. Let's go.

Me: I can't go with my uniform.

Him: We'll pass by your house, you'll change then we'll go. Like I said Andile, we don't have time.

I get inside the car and he drives off. He starts by my house, I change then tell my mom that I'm going to see Amahle with Tukelo, she had no problem. For some reason, mom liked Tukelo and she trusted him. I don't know how to feel about meeting this Butcher, maybe I should've just let Tukelo deal with this alone but I know this is not time for me to be a coward. I should just deal with this as a man that I always claim to be. We are in the middle of nowhere now, he drives into the bushes, I want to ask questions but I rather not. I see some type of house in the middle of the bushes. There's nothing around it, it's just surrounded by trees. Never in a million years would I have thought there's a house around here. He finally parks his car in the undercover parking.

Him: Are you ready?

Me: No.

Him: Good. Now let's go.

Me: Where's this place?

Him: It's best you don't know Andile.

Me: We're still in Jo'burg though?

Him: The less you know about this place, the better. Now can we go?

He opens his door. I'm left astonished, I had so many questions but maybe he's right, it's best I don't know.

I also get off and I follow him. There are so many security features in this place. He first punched a code, then a retina scan, face recognition then finally a fingerprint scan.

Me: Wow, do you always do this when you come here?

Him: Yes.

Me: Why?

Him: I'm going to repeat this again, the less you know the better.

I follow him and I see two buff guys standing in front of this steel door.

Him: Rebel, Rufus, this is the boy Andile.

They nod.

Him: You did what I asked?

Rufus: Yes grootman and his rats are all over Germiston looking for him but it won't take them long enough before they realize that its a wild goose chase.

Him: We better start having fun then.

He smirks. He opens the steel door. I see a huge man strapped on a chair, I swallow hard. The man is terrifying, he's the Hulk himself. How do even begin to compete with such? He lifts his head to look at me.

Tukelo: Surprise! Look who I brought. Your number one enemy, what do Zulus say? Oh, okushaye ngestina, here he is, a kid. A 16year old kid.

Me: 17.

Tukelo looks at me.

Me: I'm 17.

Tukelo shrugs. I can tell that the man is raging just by looking at me and Tukelo is making things ten times worse.

Butcher: What do you want to achieve by this Ruthless? Huh? You never kick a man when's down, you of all people should know that.

Tukelo: And you of all people should know that you never mess with the people I care about. Yes, he made your girl pregnant, so what? It's never about the age, it's about the dick game, if your dick game is weak then...

The man raged, he shook himself from the chair and roared.

Tukelo: Whoa take it easy, you're going to break my chains and I will blow your brains out, we're just making conversation here.

What is Tukelo trying to achieve by this? I'm already frightened of the the dude and he is making matter worse.

Tukelo: Let me just shut up before you break my chains. Andile, talk to the guy.

He takes out his cigarettes and he leaves the room. What the fuck? Now I am alone in the room with this man beast. I look at him and he chuckles. I swallow hard. I know that I'm scared, I feel scared but I can't let him see that.

Me: I just want to know one thing and one thing only. Where's Nonhle?

Him: I can tell you one thing, don't feel empowered just because Ruthless is here and he has your back. The sad truth is, he won't be always here to protect you. Don't do anything you'll regret.

Me: I won't do anything, I just want my kid.

Him: Tell Ruthless to release me and you'll get your kid.

Me: You have Nonhle?

Him: (chuckles) after she fucked up you think I was going to let her get away with it? Just like that? You clearly don't know me.

Me: Look, I don't seriously care about what happened between you and her, I just want to know if she's safe. I wouldn't want anything harming my kid.

Him: What makes you so sure that the kid is yours?

I frown.

Him: I mean she was fucking you, then came home to fuck me. She could've been fucking some other guy so you can never really be sure that the baby is yours.

Then that got me thinking. Why am I so sure that the baby is mine?

Me: There's only one way to find that out right? If Nonhle lives.

Him: I don't just let people get away with fucking with me, Nonhle will get what's coming for her, I don't care if she loses her baby.

Me: What if it's yours?

Him: I don't care. I don't want to have a kid with her, she's as good as dead to me.

Me: If you feel that way, why don't you just let her go, save us all the trouble.

Him: You seriously want me to let her get away with what she did? Let you get away with it? I'd be damned!

Me: Don't be a coward Mandla, killing a defenseless woman is a sign of weakness. You just told me that you don't care about her, just let her go man, please.

Tukelo enters.

Tukelo: Did you just beg him? No, we don't do that Andile because he'll do what we tell him to, no questions asked. He'll tell us where he hid Nonhle and he will leave you alone and all of that will happen without us having to beg him.

Butcher: What makes you so sure?

Tukelo: In a few minutes, you'll be the one begging me. You'll just see, because I have yet another surprise for you.

Butcher: (laughs) now you're crazy.

Tukelo: You see what I have here.

He shows him a file.

Tukelo: It's evidence. You're not as smart as I thought you were. So many, many loose ends.

He says reading through the file.

Tukelo: The building that burnt down in President Street a few years ago, the police detective you killed, nci nci nci nci, the ATM Bombed in Eloff Street and in Bree Street too. Oh oh, here's my favorite part, the drugs you have stashed in your basement, the illegal weapons too. The list goes on and on.

Butcher: How did you get ahold of that?

Tukelo: Like I said you have so many loose ends, you were smart enough to fool the police but not smart enough to fool Ruthless. You know who would love to get ahold of this information? Detective Anele Zungu.

Tukelo smiles.

Me: My brother?

Butcher : Zungu is your brother?

Tukelo: You see how naïve you can be Butcher? You didn't even do a background check on the boy. Zungu has been on your neck for the past 5 years, I'm sure he'd love to see you behind bars. With the information I have I'm sure you can get at least 20-30 years in prison without any chance of parole and trust me I will make sure of that.

Mandla keeps quite.

Tukelo: So are you ready to cooperate?

Butcher: All of this for that bitch?

Tukelo: Hey, I'm just doing a favor for a friend.

Me: Another man's bitch can be another man's wife.

Tukelo smiles at me.

Tukelo: Exactly.

Butcher: Fine, she's not even worth it. You can have her. Now get me out of here and destroy that.

Tukelo: Ah ah, you forgot the magic word.

Butcher: Please.

Tukelo: Man I like it when I'm right. Didn't I say he'd beg me in a few minutes.

He smirks. This guy.

Butcher: Now get rid of that.

Tukelo: I'd be stupid as hell if I do that. I won't know when I might need it again so you can go but the evidence stays.

Right now we were on our way to Mandla's house. It was me, Tukelo, Mandla and Tumi in the car. Rebel and Rufus were following us behind with Dankies. I hope Nonhle and the baby are okay. We get to his house in Orlando East. It was surrounded by men carrying guns. As soon as Tukelo parked in front of his house, they all aimed the AK47s at us.

Tumi: You better get your men to put their guns down before hell breaks loose.

Tukelo: Get out so they can see you.

Mandla opens the door and ordered the men to put their guns down. They did. Tukelo drives in. We all got off the car. We entered his house, the dude might be evil but his house is awesome. We all go to the lounge

Tumi: Ey we're not here for cakes and coffee, get the woman so we can leave.

We are all in our feet. Mandla disappears somewhere. I start looking around the house, does this also mean that Tukelo is capable of doing what Mandla is doing? It seems like Mandla is also rich as Tukelo, I don't even want to judge him. Though it has been a crazy day, I still think highly of him. I still want to be where he is one day. I don't want to be a criminal, I'm sure he did what he had to do. I was disturbed when I hear a woman screaming in the hall way, I immediately snapped out of my thoughts. Mandla was holding Nonhle aggressively. She looks like a mess.

Me: Nonhle.

I try to go to her but Tumi holds my arm. Nonhle also tries to be free from Mandla's grip but she fails.

Her: Andile.

She cries.

Tukelo: Let it be the last time that we cross paths Butcher. I don't want to be doing this with you again in future.

Butcher: I don't want to see their faces either. You! (Refers to Nonhle) don't ever come back here. Even if the baby is mine, you can keep it. I don't want anything reminding me of you.

Me: Fine, now let her go.

He looks at her with disgust, spits on her face then throws her on the floor. I quickly ran to her and held her tightly. She cries in my arms.

Me: It's okay, I'm here.

She couldn't stop crying.

Butcher: Get the hell out of my property before I blow your brains.

I carefully got Nonhle up and I realized when she got up that she was limping. I picked her up in bride style and we all walked out. We got in the car and Tukelo drove off. Me and Nonhle got in the backseat and Tumi on the front. Nonhle had her head laying on my shoulder.

Me: I don't know how to thank you Bra Tuks.

Tukelo: Just never, I mean ever ask for me for shit like this ever again.

Tumi: Stay out of trouble Andile, you have to act responsible now, you have a kid on the way.

Yeah neh, I can't help but wonder if it's really mine. I don't want to lie what Mandla said got to me. I never had doubts before but now I'm just wondering if the baby I tried so hard saving really is mine.

Me: Yeah I will.

Tukelo: What now?

Me: I don't know but I think we should take Nonhle to hospital she is limping....

Her: No! No Andile please don't take me there, what if Mandla comes and finishes me off? Please I don't want to be left alone.

Me: Babe, relax. He won't. We also have to make sure that the baby is okay.

Her: We can go to the Doctor for a check up but please no hospital.

Tumi: it's late, no Doctors are open now. We have to get you to hospital.

Tukelo: We will make sure that you don't get admitted.

Her: Can they do that?

She looks at me.

Tumi: Trust me, you'll be surprised on what power a Mokoena man has.

Her: Fine we can go.

Tukelo: But what I meant to ask is, what happens now? What are you planning? You'll tell MaButhelezi? Amahle? That's what I want to know. What's the next step?

We look at each other. Shit! We both know don't know what's next for us. She may have got rid of Mandla but I still have Buhle. Reality starts sinking in for the both of us.

Me: We'll just book into a hotel tonight, then we will talk.

Tukelo: Well okay. Should you need anything, my door is open.

Me: Thank you. And please can I be the one to tell my family about this.

Tukelo: It's not my place. Plus I'm good at keeping secrets.

Tumi: And ask Amahle she'll tell you.

Tukelo looks at Tumi.

Tumi laughs.

We get to the hospital and they check on Nonhle, luckily the baby is unharmed and he's okay. The doctor asked us if we want to know the gender and we decided that we want it to be a surprise.

Me: Doctor, is it possible to know about the child's paternity before birth?

Nonhle looks at me shocked.

Doc: Yes it's possible but it's risky to the baby's life. You can even lose the baby.

Me: Oh.

Doc: Why would you ask?

Nonhle: Yes, why would you ask?

Me: I'm just curious, nothing much. So you'll give her ointment for her ankle, right?

Doc: Yes. And please remind her to take her medication, I would give her painkillers but I wouldn't want to harm the baby in any way. Just rub her back every night and her ankle as well and she will be fine in no time.

Nonhle sprained her ankle, she said she was trying to run away from Mandla, when mandla wanted to hit her and she had bruises on her back. Mandla hit her with a belt countless times. I could see he did more but she didn't want to say so I let her be. We left the hospital and Tukelo dropped us off at the hotel. We check in and went to our room. Mind you, we had no clothes with us. I text my mom and told her I'm sleeping over at Tukelo's. She had no problem. I help her out of her clothes. For the first time I saw her bruises, she was severely hurt.

Me: Shit! This man is heartless. I'm so sorry you had to endure all of that.

Her: It is okay Andile. At least I came out lucky, some women aren't as lucky as me.

Me: Are you trying to tell me that he did this often?

Her: (nod) I can't remember the last time I was happy with Mandla.

Me: Why did you stay?

Her: Can we not talk about this now, please. I need to rest. I had a rough week.

Me: Okay. I will get your bath ready, just sit back and relax. Order some room service, I'm sure you're hungry..

She smiles. I go to the bathroom and run water in the bath tub, added some foam and bath salts. I find her still ordering some food. I wait for her to finish. And it's like she's ordering everything that's on the menu I tell you, and she's done. I go to her, pick her up and she giggles.

Me: I'm going to wash your body.

She smiles. I get her in the tub, she jumps at first. I think its because of the bruises, because the water is a little hot. I gently wash her back. She flinch in pain. I wash her entire body with care. All this while she had her eyes closed. I take my time to admire her beautiful body and her beautiful body. Man, I scored myself one hell of a lady here. She's just amazing. She lies on her back, now I can see her pretty face. Her eyes are still closed. I just don't get this Mandla nigga, this woman is beautiful, why would he want to mess things up with her? I brush her baby bump, she opens her big brown eyes.

Her: What?

She smiles, and there's this beautiful smile.

Me: I love you MaMntungwa.

She blushes and sits up.

Her: I love you Sengwayo.

She kisses me. Her lips still sweet and soft. Now I want more of her, this kiss is just not working for me. I pull back.

Me: Let's get you dried up, will finish this later.

She chuckles and gets up. I dry her body then carried her to bed. I apply lotion on her body, then massage her body with the ointment. She kept on flinching in pain. She had knots in her shoulders too. I massage her entire body. There was a loud knock on the door. Nonhle jumps and hides behind me.

Me: Who is it?

Him: Room service.

Nonhle relaxes. Wow, Mandla destroyed her.

Me: I'm sorry babe okay?

She nods. I go to the door and got the food.

Me: Nonhle, listen I meant it when I said I will protect you. You have nothing to be scared of and Tukelo's bodyguards are watching over us so nothing will happen.

She starts crying.

Her: I'm just really scared Andile, I just don't think he will let me go that easily.

Me: He did torture you the entire week.

Her: That's nothing. I thought he was going to kill me and I'm sorry that I called you the other night, he made me do it. He wanted to track you down, he had a gun on my head. I had no choice Andile, lord knows I wouldn't...

Me: Shhh.. It's all over now. You have nothing to worry about.

I cuddle her until she calmed down.

Her: We're hungry.

Me: Okay let's eat.

We say grace and start digging in. After our meal, I went to take a shower. I came back and I could tell she was tired, I remember that I didn't massage her ankle.

Me: Let me rub your ankle.

She sits up.

Her: Be careful though babe, it's painful.

Me: Will do sthandwa sami.

I rub her ankle, I ended up giving her a foot massage.

Her: So tell me really, what's the plan?

Me: (sigh) I don't know.

Her: I do have a plan.

Me: Let's hear it.

She hesitant to talk so already I have the feeling that I won't approve if it.

Her: I will go away.

Me: Go away? As in leave me? Again?

Her: Just hear me out babe, I'm not breaking up with you this time. I'm just saying I will go home in Pietermaritzburg.

Me: Pietermaritzburg? In KZN?

Her: Yes. Babe, it's just for a while, just until I give birth. I don't need anything else stressing me out, I don't want to lose my baby.

Me: Mandla is out of your life, what else can stress you?

Her: You.

Me: Me?

Her: Yes. I'm sure you haven't broken up with your girlfriend.

I don't respond.

Her: See. I don't need unnecessary stress, I just want a peaceful pregnancy. As I'm away, I will give you time to sort out your things, like telling your family and your girlfriend. Then when the baby is born, I can come back.

Me: Uhm... Don't be offended with what I'm about to ask babe...

Her: You want to know about the child's paternity?

Me: I mean, why you're so sure that the baby is mine?

Her: That's why you asked the doctor that question?

Me: Just answer my question Nonhle and don't answer my question with a question.

Her: Fine. That's because when I found out that I'm pregnant, I was a month pregnant and I haven't been intimate with Mandla for almost 2months. That's why I'm sure.

Me: So you didn't sleep with anyone else except me and Mandla?

Her: Oh my god! I cannot believe you right now! You think I sleep around? Is that what you think of me? FYI, I never cheated on Mandla, ever! You are actually the first person I cheated with. I cannot believe you!

Me: Okay, okay, can we not fight about this? I shouldn't have asked. I'm sorry.

Her: Whatever Andile.

Me: I'm sorry babe, okay?

She nods.

Me: So you can go to KZN. I will call you and text you everyday.

Her: You can even visit.

Me: Really?

Her: Yes.

Me: I will definitely visit.

Her: Don't do it often though, I know you're crazy enough to do that.

I laugh. Yeah, she's right about that.

Her: It's only going to be 4 months.

Me: It's going to feel like forever. I'm going to miss your whiney baby self.

I let go of her foot, I climb on the the bed then I start kissing her, she giggles.

Insert Twenty-Eight 😊

Amahle

I am now four months pregnant and I feel my baby grow each day and I am starting to show but my mom still has no idea that I'm pregnant, actually none of my family members know. Tukelo's family know, when I came back from hospital Tukelo was forced to tell them and they didn't take it very well. Rebecca thinks I'm using this baby to trap Tukelo, Tukelo's father wants me to abort and Nkati thinks it's not his. I don't know what those three have against me. I understand Tukelo's parents but Nkati, she was being crazy, I seriously don't understand what she had against me.

I have been avoiding my family for the past two months, they've been insisting on seeing me but I've been using school as an excuse. I am not ready to tell them about this, I don't know how they'd feel.

Mom strictly said no sex and here I was pregnant.

Oh and Nosi is also pregnant and she's fucking 6months and yes the baby is Tumi's. I was so shocked when I saw her, she wasn't even planning on telling me, I had to see for myself. I didn't know how to handle all of this. I can't face Thandi, I have been avoiding her. What if Tukelo also does this kind of staff behind my back? Tumi and Tukelo are practically the same person. I don't know how I would handle it if Tukelo was cheating. I'd probably kill them both.

It is Saturday, I am at Tukelo's house and Tukelo is not home. I was all alone with Tukelo's shirt on and his socks. I was doing some cleaning. I don't know but I always want to keep busy. If I'm not tidying up, I

am at the gym. That pissed Tukelo off. He hated seeing me doing chores especially now that I'm pregnant. This one time after we had sex and clothes were all over, I picked them up and washed the clothes and sheets, by hand. Tukelo almost killed me. I just hate dirty and untidy places now. It must be the baby.

I am tidying our room and I find Tukelo's bag open and untidy.

Should I?

No, it will lead to an argument. But it looks so filthy and not in order. Oh what the heck! I take the bag and I take out all his documents but I still feel there's something inside and it seem heavy. I open all of the zippers, nothing. I find this zipper inside the bag, I didnt even think there would be a zipper there. And I don't believe my eyes. I take it out.

Him: Baby!

I hear him but I don't find it in me to respond.

Him: Tigress, I'm home.

I hear footsteps coming towards our room. He opens the door.

Him: Baby I have been calling you and...

He stops as soon as he sees what I'm holding in my hands.

Him: Amahle, I can explain.

Silent.

Him: Its not what you think.

Me: Not what I think?! I find a bag of cocaine in your bag and you have the guts to tell me that it's not what I think?!

Him: I can explain.

Me: Are you using?

Him: No I'm not using.

Me: Then how do you explain this?!

Him: It's not mine and were you going through my stuff?

Me: That's not important right now. Just answer me!

Him: it's not mine. I'm not using.

Me: Don't fucking lie to me. I'm not your fool.

Him: have you ever seen me high?

Me: If you're not using then...

Him: Amahle.

Me: You're selling!

Him: Tigress please...

Me: This thing almost killed my brother! Are you aware of that?! And you're out here selling it right under my nose!

Him: Amahle please.

I am crying now. I have never felt so stupid and so betrayed.

Me: This does it! I have tolerated way too much of your bull. This is the last straw.

Him: Baby, please. I can explain.

Me: Explain what?!

Him: Everything.

Me: All I want from you is just one answer, are you selling, yes or no.

Him: Amahle..

Me: Yes or no?!

Him: Yes but..

Me: That's all I needed to hear.

Him: Amahle, please...

Me: Fuck off. I mean it all makes sense now, how it was easy for you to find the people that gave Andile drugs! How do I even know it wasn't you that sold them to him.

Him: That's bull! I wouldn't hurt him, you know how fond I am of your brother.

Me: I don't give a damn! All I know is I want you out of my life. For good, I don't want anything to do with you or your shady business.

I was crying and shouting, I have had it with Tukelo's bull. I am done with him.

He tried coming closer, I took a vase and threw at him, he ducked and it hit the wall. He steps closer again, I took a frame and threw it at him, he ducked again. I was cursing, screaming and crying.

Him: Baby, calm down. You're stressing the baby.

Me: If you care about this baby so much you wouldn't be involved in this shady business. I want you out of my life!

I started taking out my clothes and throwing them on the bed, I took a suitcase on the top shelf and I started packing. He came closer and tried stopping me.

Me: Let me go Tukelo.

Him: No baby, I can't.

I turn around to take more clothes, he unpacks the one I've packed.

Me: Don't annoy me.

Him: I can't let you leave. Don't leave.

Me: I'm tired Tukelo. I have had it! I want nothing to do with you.

Him: I will tell you everything, I promise.

Me: that wont help now because I'm leaving you, how many times have I asked to be honest with me?

Him: Baby, please.

He tries touching me but I slap him hard. His eyes goes from regretful to pissed in a matter of seconds, he hits me back, strangles me and pushes me on a wall.

Him: I know you're pissed but don't ever, I mean ever hit me again, you got that?

Me: Tuke...lo.

Him: You hear me Amahle?!!!

I hear the door swing open and someone holds Tukelo. I feel dizzy and my throat hurts, I cough badly. I see Dankies and Tumi hitting Tukelo, Tukelo is not fighting back. I sit on the floor and watch them beat Tukelo up, and my heart just breaks but I don't have the energy to fight for him.

Tumi: Are you fucking crazy Tukelo?!!!

Dankies: How many times have we warned you about this?!!

They keep on beating him up.

Me: Stop...

I say softly.

Me: Tumi, please stop. You're going to kill him.

They ignore me.

Me: Tumi!!!

Tumi looks at me. He runs to me and sits next to me.

Tumi: Are you okay? Did he hurt you?

Me: I'm fine.

Tumi: The baby?

Me: I don't know.

I cry on Tumi's shoulders. He comforts me and kept on rubbing my back. I look at Tukelo and he was fucked up. He had a blue eye and he's cheeks look swollen and he is bloody. Dankies is sitting next to him and they're talking, I can't make out what they're saying but I could tell it was serious.

Tumi: Everything will be fine.

Me: No, it won't be fine Tumi. I want to leave.

Tumi: And go where?

Me: Home. I don't want to be here. Next to him.

Tumi: what about school?

Me: I will travel from home to school everyday. I just don't want anything to do with Tukelo for now.

Tumi: Understandable. Look, Hle, I'm sorry. I don't know what got into his head.

Me: Don't make excuses for him. Tumi, he hit me, while I'm carrying his baby. He didn't care about that but he hit me anyways.

Tumi: Ahh, I know but he loves you. He will die if you turn his back on him.

Me: No, he didn't just lose me but he lost this baby as well. I would be damned if I have crazy, gangster for a baby daddy and I would be crazy to have him as a boyfriend.

Tumi: You're just saying that because you're mad.

Me: I'm not mad. I am hurt Tumi, it hurts so bad.

I couldn't stop crying. I never felt so weak, so lost and so hurt.

Tumi: I know. It shall pass. Time heals.

Someone starts shouting from downstairs.

Her: Where is she?!!! Where is my friend??!!!

I knew right then that it's Nosi's voice. The door swings open and she rushes to me. I am all confused, how did they all get here?

Her: Baby, what happened?

Tumi let go of me and he leaves.

Me: We just got into a small fight.

Her: What do you mean it's small? What about all the blood?

Me: Its his.

Her: You beat him up??

Me: No, Tumi and Dankies did. I don't understand, how did you all know?

Her: Ausi Mavis called Tumi and Tumi called me.

Me: You shouldn't have came. I don't want you stressing. You're pregnant remember?

Her: And so are you. What happened Amy?

Me: I want to go home Nosi. Please take me home.

She just hugs me.

Me: Help me pack.

Her: Okay.

We stood up and started packing. Tukelo kept on looking at me and his eyes we're filled with regret and sadness. Lord knows I wanted to run to him and hug him, wipe off his blood but my pride wouldn't let me. As I was packing I noticed the way Tumi and Nosi were looking at each other. No matter how hard any of us try, we can never separate them. The love is there even though they won't admit it.

Tumi leaves. Nosi looks at him, and I know she wants to follow him.

Me: Go.

Her: Huh?

Me: I know you want to go to him, so go.

Her: Umm.. no I don't want to.

Me: I know you want to.

Her: I... I... don't.

Me: Mmm.

Her: But I do want to go to the toilet.

Me: (chuckle) yeah right.

Her: I'm serious.

Me: (laugh) oh fuck off.

Her: You will be fine?

I look at Tukelo.

Me: Yes, I will be fine.

Her: You sure?

Me: (sigh) yes.

Her: okay. I will be back.

She leaves. Tukelo whispers something to Dankies. Dankies looks at me then at Tukelo and he leaves. I carry on with my packing. Tukelo stands up, he struggles to get up. He closes the door.

Me: No, don't.

He looks at me confused.

Me: don't close the door.

Him: Really Tigress? I won't hurt you.

Me: Just don't close the door Tukelo, please.

Him: (sigh) fine.

He leaves it open.

He helps me with packing. He tries to fold my clothes but he's doing it terribly. I don't say anything though. Through it all, we haven't said two words to each other.

Him: You taking everything but by you're only going to be away for a few days.

Me: You think I'm coming back here?

Him: Of course you are. This is your home.

Me: No, my home is where my mother is. My home is somewhere faraway from you.

Him: Babe, I fucked up bad. I shouldn't have laid my hands on you but to be fair, you weren't supposed to lay your hands on me either.

Me: I'm pregnant Tukelo. You could've killed my baby. Didn't you think of that?

Him: I know I screwed up, I'm sorry. If you lost him I was never going to forgive myself.

Me: Just give me time.

Him: I will but I won't give up on us. Never.

Me: There's nothing left Tukelo. You destroyed what we had and I'm never coming back to you.

Him: It can be fixed.

Me: No. Don't even try fixing this because it won't work. It can never work.

Him: (sigh) OK.

I don't want to lie that cut deep. I didn't expect him to give up so easily.

Me: Are you okay?

I touch his face, he wince in pain.

Him: I will be fine. I deserved it.

Me: You didn't even try fighting back.

Him: I wasn't supposed to fight back. I wanted them to hit me because I made a promise that I will never lay a hand on a woman again. I fucked up Amahle, I wasn't supposed to hurt you and I'm going to beat myself up for that every single day. I don't know if I will ever be able to fix this but please don't cut me off our son's life. I would die. I'm going to be the best father, I promise you babe.

Me: I don't know Tukelo.

Him: Don't please.

Me: (sigh) OK. But between us, there's nothing left. Its over.

Tears just poured out of his eyes. I have never seen him cry this hard. I carry on with my packing. He just sat on the floor, with his head between his legs. I could hear sobs, I would be lying if I said that didn't break my heart. I was done with packing.

Me: I'm going to take a shower.

He looks at me, his eyes are blood shot red.

Him: okay.

He bow his head again.

Me: Want to join?

He looks at me shocked. I know I called things off but having breakup sex won't hurt. Trust me, people do it all the time. Plus it's this baby, everytime I see Tukelo, my cookie gets excited.

Me: Are you going to answer me or you're just going to stare at me?

He didn't answer me, he just stood up and we went to his en-suite bathroom. I run us the shower. He tries taking off his clothes but I could tell it was a bit of a struggle.

Me: Let me help.

I take off his clothes, slowly. Wow. They fucked him up badly, he had bruises all over his body.

Me: Are you sure you're going to be okay?

Him: Yes.

We go in the shower, the water was hot. He was in pain, even though he didn't say but I could tell. I took some dettol and I washed his back, he jumps.

Me: don't be a baby.

Him: I just... never mind. Carry on.

I wash his back, then eventually his entire body. Damn, this man is sexy. I keep on admiring his sexy body and if I'm not mistaken, I think I'm turned on.

Him: What?

Me: Huh? What?

Him: You were staring. What is it?

I didn't even realise I was staring.

Me: Umm.. nothing.

Him: (chuckles) you will never get use to this huh?

Me: Don't flatter yourself Brian.

Him: How I love it when you call me that.

Me: I know you do.

Him: I love you.

He steps closer, I just stare at him until he's right in my face. He cups my face, he looks at me and for the first time today I see the man I fell in love with, the man that loves me unconditionally. Before I could

stop him, I find myself kissing him. The water is still running. Everything happens so slow and so passionately. We are the shower floor and he's humping me like there's no tomorrow. We both cum at the same time and he collapses on top of me.

Me: You're heavy Tukelo.

Him: Sorry.

He gets off me and lies next to me. The water was now cold.

Me: don't get any ideas.

Him: (chuckles) what did I say?

Me: I'm serious Tukelo. I'm leaving you.

Him: (chuckles) okay.

Me: ha.ana I'm serious.

Him: (laughs) okay Amahle. What did I say? Listen babe, no matter how hard you try, you will never get rid of me. As long as I still have this 'dude', you will always come back to me.

Me: You think I love you for your dick?

Him: So you love me?

Me: Yes I do.

Him: Why you leaving then?

Me: You're going to kill me if I stay. I love myself and my baby more.

Him: (laughs) I'm going to kill you? Wow.

Me: I don't want to talk about this now.

Him: I love you, you love me. Why do we have to be apart? I don't understand.

Me: Sometimes love isn't enough. Love comes with commitment, trust, loyalty, honesty and faith.

Him: don't we have all of that?

Me: We don't have it. You lie, lie, lie and betray me and hurt me.

Him: We can fix that.

Me: When Tukelo? When?

Him: Now.

Me: Its too late now.

Him: Is it? Amahle, we have a baby on the way. Doesn't he deserve to see his parents together and happy?

Me: Don't patronize me.

Him: (sigh) I just want to fix my mistakes, is that too much to ask?

Me: I'm feeling cold.

He helps me up and closes the shower. He takes a towel and he dries me of. We wear our gowns and we leave the bathroom. We find all of them sitting on our bed. By the look on their faces I can tell that they are anxious and curious. I go to Nosi and he goes to the guys.

Her: And? Did you fix things?

I shake my head. Tears started pouring out of my eyes.

She hugs me. Something I have been longing for, a warm hug from someone who genuinely cares about me. We break the hug and she wipes my tears.

Her: You're going to be okay. Everything will be back to normal. I promise.

Me: I want things to be okay now. I want him now Nosipho. I want us to be back to normal but I just can't allow that to happen.

Her: Why not?

Me: He hit me Nosipho.

Her: What?

Me: But I hit him first.

Her: Don't make excuses for him. Thats why Tumi and Siya hit him?

I nod.

Her: Well he deserved it.

I laugh.

Tumi: Mind sharing the joke?

Nosi: Yes. Why should you stick your nose in our business?

Tumi: You know you... one day is one day.

Nosi: To do what?

Tumi: Oh you will see.

Nosi: You're a nuisance you know that? How I wish you weren't the father of this baby.

Tumi: How I wish you don't exist.

Nosi: (growls) how I wish you go out right now and a bus hit you. So me and my baby can be rich. You'll actually be more useful if you're dead.

Tumi: I would be crazy if I leave a dime for you.

Nosi: You would be crazy not to because I swear on our baby's life that I would dig up your corpse and smack the life out of you if you don't.

Tumi: (laughs) oh God, I love you though.

We all look at him shocked. He looks shocked too. What the hell just happened? There's awkward silence.

Tukelo: (clears throat) We should get dressed.

Tumi: Um yeah. We will leave to it.

They all leave.

We get dressed in silence. I wear a dress that is twice my size. I don't want mom suspecting anything just yet.

Him: You do know you have to tell her sooner or later.

Me: I know.

I snap him.

Him: (sigh) I'm sorry.

Me: I don't want any of your apologies, I have heard enough of them.

Him: I am a proud man Amahle, when I say I'm sorry, I truly mean it.

Me: I don't care Tukelo. Just take me home please.

Him: Okay.

He helps me with my luggage. We find Tumi, Nosi and Dankies having a chat in the lounge. Tukelo takes all of my luggage and he put 'em in the car.

We all wait for Tukelo to get back through light conversations. I could sense the tension between Tumi and Nosi but I didn't want to ask anything and I'm no longer getting involved. When Tukelo was done with packing my luggage, we all leave, while Tukelo was locking up, I hug Nosi goodbye and she leaves with Tumi and Dankies. Tukelo opens the door for me, I get in, he goes to his seat and drives off. We drive in silence, only Chris Brown's music was playing and it just brought back all the memories. From the time I gave myself to him to the time he bought me my bike. I feel tears running down my cheeks. I quickly wipe them before he sees. I look out the window. I just think about everything, till I hear the music playing really slow. I drift to sleep.

.....

TUKELO

We get to her house and I park at her gate. She looks so peaceful and so beautiful in her sleep. I didn't want to wake her up. I hated myself for the pain I was causing her. I tried my best to hide my other life from her but it seems she always has her ways of finding out about my shady business. I'm trying to protect her from my way of living but she is getting closer and that scared the living day lights out of me. As I was about to wake her, she moves a little and opens her eyes.

Her: Why did we stop?

Me: we're here.

Her: Oh.

She sits up and stretches herself.

Me: Hey.

Her: Hi.

Me: Slept okay?

Her: ah.ha, I need my bed though.

Me: You left it in Sandton.

Her: Haha, very funny. I prefer the one in Soweto, the one I can feel comfortable in.

Me: Okay then.

Her: Shit! I forgot my books, I need them Tukelo, I'm about to start with my exams.

Me: Okay. I will go get them and bring them. Is there anything else?

Her: I want cheesecurls and a pizza.

Me: Okay.

Her: And mint chocolate.

Me: Okay.

Her: And a yoghurt and...

Me: Avocado?

Her: (smiles) yes.

Me: Coming right up.

Her: Are you going to be okay? I'm worried about your bruises.

Me: Don't worry babe, I will be fine.

Her: You should see a doctor.

Me: I will be fine Tigress.

Her: Okay, but you should take painkillers at least. And oh, bath with dettol every day and night.

Me: Yes mam'.

Her phone rings. She looks at me then her phone. I look at her caller I.D.

Me: The fuck Amahle?! Why is he calling you?

Her: I don't know Tukelo.

Me: I thought I told you to stay far away from him!

Her: Aybo Tukelo, don't shout at me.

Me: You still have his number! Why?!

Her: I forgot to delete it, why are you getting worked up over shit? He's just calling. It's not like I'm fucking the guy.

Me: I told you to stay away from him, I don't want him near you.

Her: Why?!

Me: I told you why! Why is it so hard for you to do as I say?!

Her: I told you I'm not going to let you dictate me, what's going on between you and Charles is really none of my business. You shouldn't involve me.

Me: But it is about you!

Her: What do you mean?

Me: Nothing Amahle. If you want to answer it, go ahead.

Her: Keeping secrets again!

Me: I'm not keeping anything from you. You didn't want to hear what I had to say, why do you care now?

Her: we are not together anymore, I don't understand why are we arguing.

Me: Then get out of my car. I have to be somewhere.

Her: Where? To one of your hoes?

Me: Maybe, maybe not.

Her: Fuck you Tukelo.

She opens the door, gets out and bangs it. I drive off in high speed. I am pissed beyond measures. I don't understand why does Amahle have to be so stubborn. I don't want her near Charles, why can't she understand that? I know I haven't really been truthful but all I want from her is respect and obedience. My phone rings, caller I.D: 'My Tigress'. I let it ring to voicemail, she kept on calling. After 4 missed calls, I answer. Its connected to the car's Bluetooth.

Me: Yes.

Her: My luggage.

Me: Oh. I will bring it along with your books and food.

Her: OK.

Silence.

Me: will that be all?

Her: Yes.

I hang up.

I know she is expecting me to plead and beg her but today is not the day. I am too pissed for that.

I drive and again I find myself in front of Nthabi's house. Maybe this time the guilt won't be there, i mean she did end things with me. I hoot and she opens the gate. I park my car and I get off the car. She's standing on the front porch with a wide smile on her face. I know I've hurt this girl way too much, I have used her, played her, embarrassed her and I've never loved her but she's always respected me, loved me and obeyed me through it all. She the one girl I wished I've loved but I just can't, Amahle has my heart. Since the first time I saw her in that Spaza shop. I get to her and I hug her, she hugs me back. We kiss, I carry her inside the house while kissing her. I close the door behind me. I lay her on the couch, I strip her naked. I look at her and appreciate her beautiful body. I just don't understand, this girl is gorgeous, she is thick, her body is flawless, she has an heart of an angel. I just don't understand why I never loved her. I can be crazy. I look at her, she is shy. She kept on hiding her face while giggling. I remove her hands away from her beautiful face. She had dimples and her skin is yellow and spotless. She is just perfect. I look deep into her beautiful light brown eyes. She's beautiful but she's not Amahle.

Her: (giggles) What?

Me: What what?

Her: You're staring.

Me: You're beautiful.

Her: (giggles) and you're handsome.

She touches my face, I kiss her. She strips me naked. I play with her cookie and she moans softly.

Me: No one has touched here, right?

She shakes her head.

Me: Good girl.

I insert a finger, she moans loudly. I play with her until she was wet. I muff her, play with her cookie, entered a finger while muffing her. She was moaning and moving around.

Her: Tukelo please.

Me: Please what?

Her: Make love to me.

Me: Let me enjoy, you're way too nice.

Her: No, please.

Me: Well, you asked for it.

I spread her legs wide and fucked her. She was screaming and hitting me and scratching my back. My body was still in pain from the beating but I had to endure the pain. When I've reached my climax, I came and collapsed on top of her.

Her: Lets go to my room.

Me: I'm tired Nthabi.

Her: But you're heavy.

I just remember Amahle, she always complain when I'm on top of her like this.

Me: Okay.

We go to her room, I get under the cover. I try to fall asleep but Nthabi kept on kissing my back, neck and touching me.

Me: I'm tired Nthabi, I want to sleep.

Her: Its way too early. Its only 7pm Tukelo come on. I've missed you.

Me: I gave you what you wanted right? Now let me sleep please.

Her: What I want? You haven't given me what I want Tukelo. What I want is you, you haven't given me that. But you chose that Zulu girl over me, over us.

Me: I'm here with you right now, am I not?

Her: But tomorrow you will be with her.

I get up and look at her.

Me: She is the mother of my child, what do you want me to do?

Her: What about the babies you told me to abort? Because you're not ready to be a father and blah blah blah.

Me: I was 17 Nthabi!

Her: I also wanted to be the mother of your kids Tukelo. I also wanted to give you your first heir but you chose her over me.

Me: (sigh) I didn't choose, you left me.

Her: Because I saw the way you were Tukelo, every time you went to her you came back happy and cheerful, I saw a different Tukelo. I knew that I wasn't needed anymore, I couldn't compete with her. She's sexy, beautiful, young and slim. Look at me, I'm a balloon.

She starts crying. Oh God, how I hate dealing with a crying woman.

Me: Babe, look at me.

I lift up her face so she can look at me. Her face is red and puffy.

Me: You're beautiful, sexy and attractive. I have told you too many times that you're not fat, you have an amazing body. You're...

Her: (sniff) I'm Pretty, Hot And Thick.

Me: Awesome. Thats you. Any man would love to have you as their partner, someone out there will appreciate you, love you, care for you and give you what you deserve.

Her: But I want that man to be you.

Me: (sigh) come here.

I hug her.

Me: I am not that man Nthabi. I love you, yes but I can never make you happy. Look at you, you're crying because of me.

Her: But you do make me happy, in your own weird way.

Me: But you cry tears of sadness all the time because of me. Nthabi, we can never be...

She gets off me.

Her: don't say it. Why her? What does she have?

Me: I love her Nthabi.

Her: but you love me too, don't you?

Okay, how do I get myself out of this?

Me: I do, just not as much as I love her.

Her: But I have known you all my life. Our parents want us to get married, I grew up knowing that you will be my husband one day. But you have failed me and my parents and your entire family.

Me: Thats what's confusing you Nthabi. You're doing what you're told, have you asked yourself what you want? Maybe it's not me. Just stop and think if I'm your ideal man. You're doing what you think is right so you could please your parents which is not okay.

Her: I love you Tukelo. My parents may have an influence but I know what I feel, I know what love is and I know that I love you Tukelo.. I know it.

Me: okay, I get it. But you need to move on because we can never happen. We tried Nthabi, for 9 whole years but it didn't work. All I brought to you is pain.

Her: I don't care, I love you.

Me: I'm tired of talking about this. I want to sleep.

Her: Tukelo... (sniff)

Me: Fuck Nthabiseng! Since when you became nagging and disobedient. For the love of God, I want to sleep. We've been talking about this for way too long. I want to sleep.

I throw myself on the bed. She curls up on the bed and I could hear soft sobs.

Me: When you done being a baby, switch off the lights and come have a cuddle with me.

She didn't move. I try to drift to sleep, after what seems like forever. She switches off the lights and gets in bed. I cuddle her and kissed her head. I drift off to sleep.

I wake up the next morning with Nthabi in my arms, looking beautiful and peaceful. I get off bed and went to take I shower. I think about all the bad things I'm doing, the people I hurt and the people that are affected by my actions. After a long shower, I wrap myself with a towel on my waist and I got out. I find Nthabi busy with my phone.

Me: What are you doing?

Her: Your Tigress was calling non-stop.

Me: You didn't answer, right?

She kept quiet.

Me: Right??

Her: No I didn't... I was trying to switch your phone off.

Me: Why? That woman is carrying my first child. My phone needs to be on at all times.

Her: This time is for me, you will attend her later.

Me: And your time is over. Give me my phone.

Her: Tukelo...

Me: Now!

She throws it at me and goes back to sleep.

I go through my phone and I find 10 messages all from Amahle and 30 missed calls. She has called since last night. Even Nosi tried calling me.

Me: Shit! I forgot about her luggage and food.

I started getting dressed and I realize that I have hickies on my neck and scratches on my back. Even Amahle is not dumb enough to see these are not bruises. I get dressed, I kiss Nthabi on her cheek and left. I go to my car and I take off in high speed. I start at Spar and buy all of her goods, then went to Debonairs then off to my house to get her books. I have been calling her since I left Nthabi's house but it went straight to voicemail. I call Andile. He picks up on the 3rd ring.

Him: sho bra Tuks.

Me: Where's your sister?

Him: I left her at home, I'm on my way to school.

Me: is she going to school?

Him: I'm not too sure. She's been couped up in her room since yesterday, she said she's not feeling okay.

Me: Okay thanks.

Him: Is everything okay?

Me: Everything is okay, kid.

Him: You're not lying to me, are you?

Me: Have I ever lied to you?

Him: No of course not.

Me: Good. Listen, talk later. Have a good day.

Him: Thanks, you too.

I hang up.

I can't go to Amahle while I look like this. She would see right through me. I call Tumi.

Him: What?

Me: I need a favor.

Him: What is it now?

Me: I need you to drop off some goods at Amahle's house.

Him: I'm busy Tukelo. I'm fixing the mess you made.

Me: What mess?

Him: You were supposed to show up yesterday and close the Dlundla deal but you never did.

Me: Shit! I forgot about that. I was going to show up but I had a crisis at home, remember?

Him: They waited for you for about an hour. Even the business proposal is a mess, I had to step in and fix it. Your team is worthless and lazy.

Me: I was going to fix it...

Him: But you didn't! I am tired of fixing your mess! If you're not beating up women, you're messing up at work. You need to grow some balls Tukelo man! I can't be a lawyer then a CEO at your company. Wake up Tukelo! Wake up!

He hangs up.

Yoh! Tumi is never mad. I know I screwed up. I guess I have no choice but go to Amahle myself. I am not looking forward on seeing her that's for sure. I can't even send one of my drivers, she told me to never do that again because apparently her mom thinks it's one of her boyfriends. I arrive at her house, I call her but it goes straight to voicemail. I try and try but nothing. After about 20 minutes, I get off the car and I take out all of her food. I knock at her front door and Zanele opens the door.

Her: Oh hi Tukelo.

Me: Hi Zanele.

Her: What do you want?

Me: I am here to see my woman.

Her: What did you do to her?

Me: nothing but I don't see how's that any of your business. What goes on between me and her is really none of your concern.

Her: Well it is. She's my sister-in-law.

Me: You should focus on your husband okay, and leave my affairs alone. I didn't do anything to Amahle. She called me here.

Her: I hope you're not using her like you used me, like you used to beat me up.

Me: Oh, so you're the one that's plotting these ideas in her head? You're Zanele and she's Amahle, that means, y'all are two different people. So does that answer your question?

Amahle's mom: Zanele who's at the door?

Zanele: Tukelo ma.

Amahle's mom shows up.

Amahle's mom: Oh why don't you let him in? Mkhwenyana, hi.

She hugs me.

Me: MaButhelezi, how're you?

Ma: I'm fine my son, how are you? and what happened to your face.

Me: I'm living, just had a little accident, nothing major. Is Amahle home?

Ma: Yes. Come in.

She takes the groceries and place them on the kitchen counter. We all go in the lounge.

Ma: Zanele, go and call Amahle.

She gets up and leaves.

Her: What happened Tukelo?

Me: Ma?

Her: I know that something is going on between the two of you. Why would she come home in the middle of the year and her exams are coming up soon.

Me: What did she say?

Her: Nothing. Thats what worries me.

Me: There's nothing wrong Ma, don't worry. She's just stressed out with exams.

Her: I love you Tukelo, like my own son but if you ever hurt my baby, I swear I will kill you. I have never seen her so down, so lost and drained.

Me: I don't know what to say but I love your daughter MaButhelezi, she's my everything. I wouldn't hurt her on purpose.

Her: What about your family?

Me: What about them?

Her: She told me everything Tukelo.

Me: Ma, I will sort them out. Everything will be fine she just have to trust me.

Her: I have seen you two together and what y'all have is beautiful. I am glad that you want to man up and fight for your love. You shouldn't let anyone get in the way of what you have. You fight for what you believe in.

Me: Thank you for trusting me Ma.

Her: Don't let me down.

Me: I won't.

Her: You haven't done what I told you not to do, right?

Me: Ma?

Her: You haven't been intimate, I mean sexually?

Flip! How do I answer that when I already made her daughter pregnant. She completely caught me off guard.

Me: Um...

Amahle and Zanele show up.

Talk about good timing. Amahle looked awful I must say. She is wearing a baggy pants and T-shirt. I know she's trying to hide her pregnancy but she's over doing it. I mean she's hardly showing. Her weave is messy and she looks like she's been crying a lot. What I see is breaking my heart into a million pieces.

Amahle: Hey.

Me: Hi.

Ma: Zanele, can you get us something to drink?

Zanele: Yes ma.

Me: No Mah, not for me. I can't stay long I have a lot to take care of.

Ma: Make me something to drink then.

Zanele: Okay.

She goes to the kitchen.

Ma: Listen here you two, I know you probably think I don't know what's going on here but I know something is not right between the two of you. I was also young and I can see the way you're acting Amahle, I can see that you're broken. Now tell me what is going on.

Me: Um... we are going through a rough time ma, like any normal couple. But we will be fine.

Ma: What is the matter though? Amahle?

Amahle: Nothing mom, I don't want to talk about it.

Ma: I understand but if you don't talk nothing can be resolved.

Amahle: I don't want to talk about it, so leave it mom, please.

Me: Amahle.

Amahle: What?

I give her a warning look and she just looks away, like she doesn't care.

Ma: I can never understand you young people... back in our days, things were never this complicated. Amahle, it helps to talk about these things so we could find a way forward.

Amahle: Mom, with all due respect, what happens between me and Tukelo is really none of your business. We will resolve our own issues when we want to. Right now, we have nothing to talk about or resolve.

Me: Amahle, don't be rude

Amahle: Tukelo, I have nothing to say to you so please don't even think about saying anything to me.

Ma: Amahle I understand that you're mad but that's not how you talk to the man you love, we only trying to help.

Amahle: I don't need any help! I am fine. Can't you see that I'm okay?

Ma: Babygirl, you are not okay. If you don't talk to us, who else will you talk to?

Amahle: MaButhelezi, there's nothing to talk about so please let it go. Tukelo did you bring my luggage?

Ma: Luggage? What about school?

Amahle: Did you bring it?

I give her a look, but she's not bothered

Me: She said she wants to be home for awhile mah. I will make sure she attends every class.

Ma: Mmm.

Amahle: Can you please fetch my luggage? I have a lot of studying to do.

Me: Okay. They're in the car.

Amahle: Lets go fetch it then I don't have all day.

Ma: What is wrong with you?

Amahle: Nothing mom. Lets go.

Me: I'm sorry Ma but I have to go now. I myself have a lot of work to do.

Ma: it's okay. I know how busy you young people can be but do see me one of these days, I want to discuss something with you.

Me: I will be here on Saturday.

Ma: Its a date then.

Amahle: Argh! (Rolls eyes)

She gets up and leaves. We look at each other and we share a laugh.

Me: Let me go.

Ma: Okay.

I leave. I go outside and I find Amahle really upset, I don't understand what her problem is. I open my car boot and took out all of her luggage. I give it to her. She literally snatches it away from me.

Me: Okay what the fuck is your problem?

Her: Bye Tukelo.

She turns to leave, I hold her arm, she tries to yank it but I tighten my grip.

Her: let go of me.

Me: What is the matter with you?

Her: Nothing. Now let me go!

Me: I will let you go if you promise me that you will calm down.

Her: I am calm.

Me: You're the one who ended things with me, I don't understand why you're mad.

I let go of her.

Her: Tukelo, I'm starting my exams soon. I really don't want to do this, I really don't want to fight with you.

Me: okay. I won't stress you. When's your next appointment?

Her: Tomorrow.

Me: Okay.. I will be there.

Her: But who will entertain your hoes?

Me: Huh?

Her: Tukelo you smell like a woman, you're wearing yesterday's clothes and you weren't taking my calls. I'm not your fool.

Shit! I knew I had to change. I close my eyes for a few seconds and open them again. I look at her, I don't say anything. She's more disappointed than hurt.

Me: Babe...

I try to touch her but she moves back.

Her: Don't touch me.

Me: Please, let me explain.

Her: There's nothing to explain Tukelo, we're not together anymore so you don't have to explain yourself to me anymore.

Tears filled her eyes.

Me: She didn't mean anything.

She closes her eyes and tears came flooding down her cheeks.

Me: Baby, please you're hurting me. Don't cry.

Her: I don't want to Tukelo, I don't want to feel like this.

Me: I would do anything, I don't want you hurting like this.

Her: Can you take this pain away?

Me: (sigh) I could try.

Her: No you can't... you know why? Because you will just cause me more pain.

I hug her, she resists at first but finally warmed up to me. She cried on my arms for a couple of minutes. I ended up crying as well. After some time she pulls back. I wipe her tears.

Her: I have to go. Your cheap woman cologne sickens me.

Me: Babe please.

Her: I will text you the time of my appointment and please don't send your drivers to take me to school, I have it covered.

Me: Who's taking you? I don't want you taking taxis.

Her: I won't be. Charles is taking me.

Me: Charles? What heck Amahle?! I thought I told you that I don't want you anywhere near him.

Her: And I didn't listen to you. Look, I don't tell you who to sleep with and who not to sleep with so I expect you to do the...

Me: You're sleeping with him?!

I cut her off.

Her: Maybe I am, maybe I'm not. Thanks for the luggage.

I felt like hitting Amahle for dear life. It took everything in me not to hit her. I end up punching my car window and it cracks.

Her: dude, go to the gym. There are punching bags.

Me: You're hurting me Amahle and when someone hurts me, someone has to pay. And someone will pay!

Her: Oh your threats do nothing to me.

Me: Oh that wasn't a threat. When I make a threat, people get scared. That was a promise and I don't break my promises, especially if someone has to die.

Her: What do you mean?

Me: Exactly that.

I wipe my tears and I get in the car and took off in high speed.

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Insert Twenty-Nine 😊

AMAHLE

What Tukelo said scared the living day lights out of me. I have been trying to call him for the past 2 hours but he's not taking any of my calls. I dont want him doing anything stupid. The other side of Tukelo that I'm seeing scares me. I know he won't do anything to me, only because I'm carrying his baby.

Its Charles I'm worried about. How can I be so stupid? How can I say something so stupid. Maybe I should check on Charles. He answers on the 3rd ring.

Him: Hey beautiful, what a lovely surprise.

Me: Oh thank God. You're alive.

Him: Huh?

Me: Nothing. Are you good?

Him: Yes but why do I sense that you're not. What's going on?

Me: Nothing I was just calling you.

Him: To check if I'm alive?

Me: Yes.

Him: Thats just weird Ms Zungu. Now tell me what's going on before I come there.

Me: (sigh) I got into a fight with Tukelo and this time it's pretty bad.

Him: Whats that got to do with me?

Me: I may have said things that made him think that we're sleeping together.

Him: (laughs)

Me: Its not funny. I wanted to hurt him.

Him: (laughs) looks like you did a perfect job if you thought he was going to kill me.

Me: he said really scary things.

Him: Don't worry babe, he won't do me no harm.

Me: How sure are you?

Him: Trust me, I'm more useful to him alive.

Me: what's going on Charles?? I thought you two were best of friends.

Him: You're right, we were. I told you what happened.

Me: Not really. You just said he took what's yours.

Him: He did.

Me: What's that?

Him: You.

I froze. I didn't see this one coming. I wasn't ready for this at all! Why didn't anyone warn me? I don't know what else to say. This feud between Charles and Tukelo is about me??

Him: Amy? Are you still there?

Me: What do you mean Charles?

Him: I can't talk about this over the phone. Lets meet tomorrow and I will explain everything.

Me: I don't think it's a good idea.

Now I understand why Tukelo said I must stay faraway from Charles because he knew that Charles has been crushing on me.

Him: Then you will never know what happened.

A woman calls him in the background.

Him: Coming Baby!! Look, I have to go, if you ever change your mind, call me.

Me: Okay.

I hang up.

This is bad. Now I get it when Tukelo said I'm the cause of all of this. I don't understand, I have been working for Charles for months he didn't seem like he was interested in me. This is all just weird. I have to get answers.

I go to the kitchen and I find Anele, Andile and Zanele in the kitchen.

Me: Hey people.

Them: Hi.

Anele: Is this for you?

He points at the groceries Tukelo bought.

Me: Most of it.

Anele: This dude spoils you rotten, i wouldn't do this.

Zanele clears her throat.

Anele: Except for you baby.

They laugh.

Andile: Is it me or you're getting fat Amahle?

Me: Mind your own business.

Anele: You're right. I can even see an ass growing in there.

Me: Geez! You two are disgusting, checking your sister out.

Andile: don't flatter yourself. You're not my type.

They laugh.

Me: Yeah you into big girls like the one you dated few months back. What we use to call her?

Anele: Biggy Mindy (laughs)

Me: (laughs) Yeah, right. What happened to her?

Andile: We were not dating. She was just my study buddy.

Me: And Tukelo is my tutor. Bro, you were falling for that kid and you were falling hard.

Anele: Yes, you dressed up for her, called her all the time.

Me: Heck, you even brought her into this house...

Shit! I regret saying that the mintue i said it. That was supposed to be our secret.

Anele: He did?

Andile: It... it wasn't anything like that big bro, we were studying.

Anele: Studying my ass, you brought a girl into this house, in our father's house. Have you no shame?

Andile: You bring Zanele all the time.

Anele: She's my wife. Are you going to wife Mindy?

Andile: Dude, I'm 17.

Anele: Yet you had the nerve to bring a girl here.

Me: Chill Anele, I was here so nothing happened.

Which is a lie. I caught them in this house but Andile begged me to not say anything. I vowed to keep my mouth shut, just like I vowed to not say anything about the drugs. Anele would have killed him.

Anele: If you say so. I trust you wouldn't lie to me lil sis.

Me: Me? Lie to you? Never.

Anele: I know you won't.

Anele turns his attention to Zanele. They start whispering things to each other and holding each other, which was disturbing.

Andile: (whisper) nice save, traitor.

Me: (whisper) I'm sorry, it just came out.

Andile: (whisper) Why would it just come out? You swore on your life. You have few days to live.

Me: (whisper) I don't think that's how it works.

Andile: (whisper) it doesn't matter! You're still a traitor.

Me: (whisper) it's not me, it's this freakin'...

I stop. I almost blurted out, again. God, this baby in me.

Andile: (whisper) what? Talk woman.

Anele: What are you two whispering about?

Us: Nothing.

Anele: okay. Well me and Zanele are off. I have a long day tomorrow.

Me: Still haven't caught those gold smugglers?

Anele: Uh no. But I'm close.

That's what he said two months ago.

Me: Oh okay.

Anele: Entlek, why the sudden interest in my work?

Me: Can't a sister worry about her brother? And be more interested in his work?

Anele: Uh... no.

Me: Why not?

Anele: That's not how we work.

Me: Whatever, I'm also off. But first I need avocado.

Them: Avocado?

Me: Yes.

Andile: Since when you eat Avocado? Last I checked, you loved apples.

Me: Well now I love avocado.

Anele: Okay you're getting more and more weird lil sis. I'm gone. Night monkeys.

He holds Zanele's hand and they leave. I unpack all the groceries Tukelo bought. I take the avocado and the yoghurt, mix them together.

Me: You guys seriously need to buy a blender, I can't even mix this properly.

Andile: This ain't the suburbs, why would you need a blender... the fuck Amahle?! What the hell is that?

He looks at my avocado.

Me: Just a healthy snack.

Andile: Well it's disgusting.

Me: I don't care. Now leave me alone.

I take my snack went to my room, locked the door and did some studying.

I wake up in the morning with a sore neck. I fell asleep on my desk while studying. I stretch myself and went to take a quick bath. I change into a boyfriend Jean and a tank top that's twice my size, I leave my weave loose. I love the way this stomach is behaving, you can barely tell that I'm pregnant, you can see if you know that I'm pregnant. I tidy up my room, pack my bag and went to the kitchen. I find my making breakfast.

Me: morning mom.

Her: Morning baby. Slept well?

Me: Yes thank you but I'm really hungry.

Her: Okay. I'm making an English breakfast so wait for a couple of minutes I'm almost done.

Me: Okay. Where are the kids?

Her: Already left. It's just me, you and Zanele.

Me: Okay.

When she was done with making breakfast, we eat through light conversations. When I was done, I did the dishes and took my snack.

Mom: I like what Tukelo is doing to you.

Me: Huh?

Mom: He's turning you into a woman.

Me: (chuckles) come on mom, it's not him.

Mom: It is. You see it, Zanele?

Zanele: Uh... yes.

Mom: And I'm really happy for you baby.

Me: well thank you mommy.

A car hoots outside.

Me: I have to go to school. That would be my ride.

Mom: Okay. Have a good day.

Me: Thanks.

I leave and I find Charles car parked by my house. Oh don't judge me, I wasn't going to let Tukelo bully me. He does shit all the time, I'm just doing a lil payback. I get in the car and we exchange greetings and he drove off.

Me: What happened to your face?

He had a swollen cheek and a blue eye.

Him: Nothing.

Me: Did Tukelo do that to you?

Him: (sigh) just let it go.

Me: So it was him.

Him: Yes, it was.

Me: Oh God. I'm really sorry.

Him: It wasn't your fault.

Me: It was. I don't think we should hang out anymore... he might kill us.

Him: He won't kill us.

Me: How did he even get to you?

Him: Tukelo is a thug, he even pointed a gun at me.

Me: What?!!

Him: I don't get why you're still with him. If he didn't take you away from me, I would treat you like a queen.

Me: Tell me what do you mean by "taking me away from you"?

Him: (sigh) I've always love you Amy. Since the first day you came with your friends to ask for a job. You were just amazing, I loved you since then. When I told Tukelo about you, he said he was determined to get you, for me, since I was married. He said he will make you realize that I'm the man for you and he was good at that too, he did the same with my wife. I was even ready to leave her for you but when you came to that spaza shop everything changed.

Me: you were also there?

Him: Yes.

Me: Wow.

Him: Anyway, I told him who you are. He said he will go talk to you and he did. When he came back he started complementing you. I warned him to not fall for you and he said he won't. But he started talking about you all the time, showing up at work, and having lunch with you. He still made me believe that he's talking about me but then this one time, he told me that he likes you because you challenge him. I warned him again to not fall in love and he said he won't, he wouldn't do that to me. Next thing, he's telling me you're dating and he loves you. That's when we started having this feud.

I want to say something but I can't think of anything, I can't think of anything to say. I just look at him.

Him: Say something.

Me: I don't know what to say.

Him: Was hoping you were going to say how of a jerk Tukelo is.

Me: and you were dumb enough to think I would be your side chick.

Him: Uhm...

Me: Is that how little you think of me?

Him: I was going to divorce my wife.

Me: Oh that's just crap. You don't love me that much.

Him: I love you that much Amy, I really do.

Me: That's ridiculous. We have to stop seeing each other.

Him: Why? Is it Tukelo?

Me: No, it's you. I don't want to be stuck between whatever is going between you and Tukelo. I don't want to be part of it.

Him: You don't have to be. You could leave him and come to me.

Me: what? Are you crazy? Tukelo is the father of my child, I can't just leave him.

Him: Amy, do you want to be stuck with a man who's possessive, violent and who is capable of killing.

Me: Yes, I still prefer him to a married man.

Him: I don't even love my wife anymore. What we had is all gone. She knows that.

Me: what sure do I have that you won't do what you're doing to your wife to me?

Him: I wouldn't do that to you. I love you way too much.

I didn't say anything after that. The ride was uncomfortable and silent. He arrives at my school, he parks outside the school. I get off the car.

Him: Please don't shut me out now.

Me: Bye Charles.

I close the door. Talk about a way to start your day. It was just way too much to take in. My former boss is in love with me. It's just whack.

My day was going okay, had a lot of classes and a lot of studying to do but I managed to get through it.

It's been almost a month since I haven't seen Tukelo and I would be lying if I say I was taking it well. I have even started on my exams, so far, so good. I missed him but he called almost everyday to check up on the baby. He never even want to talk about us and to be honest I didn't want to either. I was just not ready to have another big fight with him. The girls have been begging me for days to go talk to him but I'm just not in the mood. He even came here this one Saturday to see my mom, he showed up at the appointment but never will he look at me the way he use to or beg me to come back to him. The only time he talked about us he only told me that he knows that I was lying about the whole Charles thing. I just nodded. We never spoke about us ever again. I couldn't sleep or do anything. I just thought that he maybe moved on. Which didn't sit well with me.

I was at home having my avocado when Zanele came to sit next to me.

Her: you have been having that a lot.

Me: I just love it.

Her: Are you pregnant Amahle?

Me: what?

Her: I'm a woman Amahle, I know how these things work. I won't say anything, I just want to know.

Me: Yes. I am.

Her: And Tukelo's the father?

Me: Yes he is.

Her: Are you crazy Amahle? That man is not cut out to be a father.

Me: And how would you know that?

Her: I told you how he is.

Me: Your friend dated him, he use to hit her, big deal. That doesn't mean you know him Zanele.

Her: Is he even excited about it?

Me: He's very happy. I've never seen him that happy.

Her: Mmmm

Me: Please don't tell anyone for now. Especially Anele.

Her: Okay I won't.

Me: I trust you Zanele.

Her: (smiles) thank you. And I won't tell anyone I promise.

Me: (smiles) thank you.

Her: Do you need anything?

Me: No, I'm good.

We watch t.v while talking about random things. Later on Anele came and she abandoned me and spent her time with him. I just went a did my studying.

The time was 2am when I received a call from Tukelo.

Me: Hello?

Him: Hi.

Me: How are you?

Him: I'm good and you?

Me: I'm good.

Him: I'm glad.

Me: Is that all?

Him: Come out.

Me: What?

Him: I'm here by your house.

Me: Its late Tukelo.

Him: I know you're still up, your lights are still on.

Me: I'm studying.

Him: I won't keep you. I really need to see you.

Me: You haven't seen me in like a month Tukelo. Why now?

Him: You told me to stay away. I did what you wanted.

Me: (sigh) why do you sound so down?

Him: Just come please don't make me beg.

Me: Okay give me a minute.

Him: Thank you.

I hang up. I change my PJ's and wore my sweat pants, a hoody and my uggs. I leave the house and I see him outside his Mercedes, sitting down on the floor, leaning on his car, Chris Brown is playing in his car. O-kay. I sit next to him. He looks so down and so lost. He looks at me and when I least expect it he kisses me. God knows I've been missing his touch. After minutes of kissing, he picks me up and make me sit on top of him. He puts his arms inside of my hoodie, he brushes my back. I pull him closer, he hands go down until they reach my cookie, I moan. He brushes my cookie then he inserts a finger. My moan got louder. He plays with my clit, then inserts two fingers. If he doesn't stop right now I am going to cum. I could feel that I'm wet. He implants kisses on my neck, then behind my ear, those were my weak spots. He goes back to my boobs, he plays with my nipples, drawing circles around them with his fingers. I was getting honier by the minute. I pulled him closer and kissed him for dear life. He makes me lay on the grass. Oh dear me! I can't have sex in front my house, outside! Na.ah! But I don't have it in me to stop him. He takes of my sweatpants and goes down on me. I moan softly. He takes me of muff town, he plays with my clit using his tounge. My moans got louder when he inserts his tounge on my clit. He inserts his finger and his tongue at the same time. I push his head deeper. He kisses my stomach then comes back to my mouth and kisses me slowly and passionately. He stops and looks at me. He smiles, he's eyes have gotten smaller and red.

Him: Hey.

Me: Hey.

He stands up, gives me his hand, i take it and he helps me stands up. He pulls up my pants.

Him: Still weak as I remember.

Me: Shut up.

I hit his arm.

Him: (laughs) and abusive.

Me: So what brings you here Tukelo?

Him: Can't I see my two favorite people?

He brushes my stomach.

Me: In the wee hours?

Him: I miss you Amahle. The past few weeks have been tough without you by my side. I never felt so lost and confused in my life. I screw up everything at work and I'm a mess, as you can see.

Me: What do you want me to do about that?

Him: Nothing. I was just letting you know that you mean a lot to me. I love you Amahle, you're the pillar of my strength, the cheese in my pizza and the raisins in my nuts.

Me: (laughs) the fuck?

Him: I'm serious babe, I need you to know that whatever I do is to secure a future for you and my child, because I won't be alive forever.

Me: Wait... what do you mean?

Him: I mean I love you Tigress. I don't want you to ever see that I failed you as a boyfriend and I failed you as a baby daddy. I want to take better care of you even when I'm not around.

Me: You're scaring me Tukelo.

Him: Don't be scared. I am just telling you the facts.

Me: Stop telling me those facts, I don't want to hear them.

Him: But it's the truth.

Me: why does it feel like you're saying goodbye?

Him: I'm not. I'm just letting you know that I love you babe, you and our kid. You two mean the world to me and I will take better care of you from now on.

Me: Tukelo, you've been the best to me and our son. I'm sorry if I didn't show it but you're the best thing that has ever happened to me. I love you so much. I know you're not the best boyfriend in the world but you'd be the best father in the world, I just know it.

Tears started falling down his cheeks. Now I'm really worried.

I wipe his tears with my thumb.

Me: Hey, what's wrong?

Him: I love you.

He kisses me, I could feel my face getting wet and I knew those were not my tears. I pull back.

Me: Tukelo, what is it?

Him: I screwed up Amahle, now I have to pay.

Me: What do you mean?

Him: Nothing. Go back inside, I don't want you catching a cold.

Me: I'm not feeling cold.

Him: I don't care. Go back now.

Me: Talk to me Tukelo please don't shut me out.

Him: (sigh) when I come back, we will talk I promise.

Me: Back from where?

Him: In 2 hours I'm leaving for Russia.

Me: Russia? As in like overseas Russia?

Him: Yes.

Me: What for?

Him: Business.

Me: The legal one or illegal one?

Him: I will...

His phone rings. He answers.

Him: Yes... I will be there... I won't screw up... I will be... OK fine... I'm coming now....shots.

He hangs up.

Him: I have to go.

Me: How long will you be away?

Him: Just a couple of weeks.

Me: Please be careful Tukelo.

Him: I will be.

He kisses my forehead.

Him: I love you and I mean it.

Me: I love you, forever and always.

He baby kisses me.

He kneels down and kisses my stomach.

Him: Take care of mommy champ, don't give her a hard time while I'm away, please. I love you.

He gets up and we kissed. We pull back. He gets in his car.

Him: I will face time you when I get a chance. Now go in, I don't want to leave without seeing you getting in that house.

Me: Okay. Be safe.

Him: I will be. I will send guards to look after you while I'm away. Don't give them a hard time, please.

Me: Tukelo you can't...

Him: Its not up for discussion. I will also send a driver, they will take you where ever you want to go.

Me: They have to be discreet though Tukelo. I don't want men all around me like I'm some kind of queen.

Him: But you're my queen. They will be discreet though, don't worry.

Me: Okay. See you.

Him: Bye babe.

I ran inside my house. I only hear the car leave when I'm in bed and my lights were off.

It's been 2 days since I last saw Tukelo and I am writing my final paper today and I am feeling like crap. I had this bad feeling that I can't seem to shake off. I tried calling Tukelo for the past 2 days but it says that he's number doesn't exist. That what made me worry more. I am on my way to school, the driver picked me up as Tukelo said. I am ignoring everyone, I'm not in the mood for people, I just want Tukelo. That's all I want. I get off the car and the driver doesn't leave.

Me: Don't tell me you'll be here all day.

Him: Boss's orders.

Me: Oh God.

He chuckles and I leave.

Campus was campus. I was done with my exams and Thobe was busy begging me to go out and celebrate, I didn't feel like celebrating. I was walking with Thobe when I spot Zitha and Nosi arguing with the driver.

Thobe: What's going on over there?

Me: I don't know. Lets go check.

We rush to the car.

Zitha: She knows us fool, why won't you let us in?

Nosi: You will regret messing with us, I can get you fired within a blink, you know that?

Me: Whats going on here?

Them: Girlfriend!

They both hug me.

Me: I can't breathe.

They let go.

Zitha: Oh my word, you look amazing. The pregnancy is doing wonders to your skin.

Me: I look like a pig.

Zitha: A very sexy pig.

Me: What are you doing here?

Nosi: Since you done with exams I thought we would go out and celebrate.

Me: Dude, you're about to pop that baby anytime, and yet you are talking about celebrating.

Nosi: I'm only 8 months. Just because I'm pregnant it doesn't mean I shouldn't celebrate.

Zitha: Yes. Now let's go you pregnant women.

Me: Is it safe for a woman as pregnant as you to go out?

Nosi: Now you sound like Tumi, I didn't say we will go partying or clubbing we will just go for lunch.

Me: I don't think I would be good company. I'm not in the mood.

Thobe: I have been begging her all day, maybe you can get through her.

Nosi: She can be a bore. I'm sorry Thobe that you stuck with her almost everyday.

Zitha: Yes, we're very sorry.

Me: Can you not talk about me like I'm not around.

Nosi: come on friend... we want you to get your mind off things. Its been a while since we had a girl's day out.

Me: Guys I would love to but I can't. I am not in the mood for company.

Nosi: You know we won't take no for answer so let's just go.

Zitha: Please.

Thobe: Pretty please.

Me: Gosh, okay fine.

They squeal.

We get in the car. The driver takes us to the mall, we end up having lunch at John Dory's.

Me: You and your cravings of sea food.

Nosi: Its not me, it's Tumi's big headed baby.

She says with her mouth full.

Me: at least swallow first.

We laugh.

Nosi: Shut up.

Me: But I'm craving for a burger.

Nosi: At least try this sea food, it's actually kind of nice.

Me: No thank you. It actually makes me want to vomit in my mouth. I will get my burger.

I dial Sabelo's number.

Him: Boss lady.

Me: Hi, can you get me a Burger at Spur's please.

Him: Coming right up. Will that be all?

Me: Yes for now.

Him: Okay.

Me: Thanks.

I hang up.

Zitha: Perks of being the girl of a rich boy.

Thobe: Now that's the kind of lifestyle I could get use to.

Me: it's not always glits and Glam, it also get tough.

Zitha: Tough? Like maybe if you can't find your red bottom heel or your diamond necklace, that's how tough it can get.

Nosi: She's just being modest. Her life is amazing, just that she's too proud to let Tukelo provide for her.

Me: I'm not proud, I just don't like depending on him too much. He might find another woman, and forget all about me.

Thobe: Leave you? Na.ah girlfriend, that man loves you, actually he worships you. he's crazy about you. I have never seen a man love so hard like he does.

Me: You guys don't know what I have to go through. So that's why y'all think everything is amazing. Yes fine he love me and I love him lord knows I do but he's too much work, he comes with a lot of baggage.

Nosi: Honey, every guy comes with their baggage and it all up to you whether you change him or you accept him as he comes but be careful when you try to change him, he might resent you for that. So you just have to try and accept him. No man is perfect. So stop trying to look for the perfect guy because you'd end up alone.

Thobe: True that. If you love him like you say you do, you just have to try and work around your issues. Don't prove his parents or anyone that doesn't want to see you together, that y'all weak. You have to be strong and not leave him every chance you get. He may lose interest and think of you as weak.

Zitha: Thats right. Now stop being stubborn and let the man love you.

Me: Geez. What happened to my friends? When did I get in the therapy session?

They laugh.

Thobe: We're only trying to help.

Me: I know you guys and thank you for that. But enough about me, what about you huh? You and your crazy baby daddy.

Nosi: Oh you know us. We hate each other while loving each other.

Zitha: I give up on them. They keep on saying they want nothing to do with each other but seconds later they all over each other, kissing and staff.

Nosi: Thats how we are. We don't have pure love like normal couples, we just like it rough and fiesty you know.

Thobe: That's crazy.

Nosi: Yeah, we like it crazy.

Zitha: So does the wife know?

Me: I doubt, she would have called me by now.

Nosi: Tumi is so afraid of his father. Every time I tell him that he needs to come clean, he brings up his father.

Me: Whats that old hag got to do with anything?

She shrugs her shoulders.

Nosi: I'm tired of waiting on him. He promised me long ago that he would leave the wife for me but still nothing. I have this baby in me now. I even suggested that I abort, he almost killed me.

Me: I know right. Tukelo almost ate me alive when I raised that issue.

Zitha: He was supposed to hit you. Killing the baby for what? He got no wife.

Me: I wasn't ready. I just think they children mean a lot to them.

Nosi: Yes. Tumi calls me everyday. I get what I want whenever I want it.

Me: And I'm the spoilt one.

Nosi: Yes you are. Even Tumi makes you his priority. Those brothers care about you, alot.

Me: Yeah yeah whatever.

Around 2, we were done with our lunch. I had my burger and I paid, we left. We decided to do a little shopping, they made me buy baby clothes. I don't know how I was going to hide these from my mom. I still didn't know the sex of the baby, I was going to find out on my next appointment so I bought unisex clothes and toys. We went to Cotton On, we almost bought the whole store. I have been trying Tukelo's

number, still nothing. I was getting worried but I didn't want to show it to the girls. After shopping, we decided to go home it was late anyway. When the driver dropped off the girls, I decided to call

Tumi. He answered on the 4th ring.

Him: MaSengwayo.

Me: Tumi, hi.

Him: Are you okay? You sound down.

Me: How can I be okay when I can't get a hold of Tukelo.

Him: He's away on business.

Me: I know that but he said he'd call and he hasn't. Actually it says he's number doesn't exist.

Him: Yes. He is overseas, so it's expected.

Me: But I have this bad feeling Tumi, what is going on?

Him: Nothing is going on Hle, stop worrying.

Me: Tumi, you're hiding something from me. Tell me now.

Him: I'm not hiding anything.

Me: Is he doing illegal things there in Russia? If so, you need to tell me.

Him: Amahle, you're over thinking this. I don't want you to stress, it is not good for the baby.

Me: Stop telling me what I need to do! And tell me where the heck is Tukelo!

He keeps quite.

Me: Sorry. I'm just really worried.

Him: Its okay. Tukelo is fine, I spoke to him like an hour ago. Tell you what, tomorrow I will come to your house and I will try my best to get a hold of him.

Me: (sigh) okay.

Him: Now stop stressing. He's fine.

Me: Did he sound okay when you spoke to him?

Him: He was a bit annoying but ain't he always?

Me: (chuckles) yeah. But I don't understand why hasn't he called.

Him: he will. He's a lot busy and he only called me because he wanted to clarify something.

Me: Well okay.

Him: Go get some sleep.

Me: I will. Bye.

Him: Bye.

I hang up.

I have been checking my phone for the last hour and still nothing. Not even a text from him. I have only been receiving calls from Charles and I have declined everyone of his calls. Thats what he's been doing for the past few weeks. I don't understand what he wants from me. I told him to stay away still he won't listen to me. He's being a nuisance.

After dinner I decided to go sleep. My family could tell that I wasn't okay but I just told them that I'm tired. I went to bed and I couldn't sleep. I really had this bad feeling. I tried falling asleep and finally I did.

I was woken up by my phone ringing. Someone wanted to face time me. I switch on the lights, went back to bed and took the call.

Him: Talk about being ugly. (Laughs)

When his face appeared on the screen I felt like jumping on the bed.

Me: Shut up. You woke me up from my beauty sleep.

My hair was messy, and my eyes were still a little sleepy.

Him: I'm sorry baby. I can call later.

Me: No!

Him: Geez, you missed me that much?

Me: You have no idea.

Him: But I was with you two days ago, I think.

Me: Yes but you promised to call me but you never did.

Him: I just landed babe.

Me: But you called Tumi.

Him: To ask him which hotel he booked for me. I didn't even use my phone.

Me: Why does it say your number doesn't exist when I call you.

Him: Oh, when I travel I use another phone.

Me: Why?

Him: I can't explain but I just can't use my real number.

Me: Are you doing illegal things there?

Him: Baby...

Me: Please Tukelo, you need to tell me. I already know so just tell me.

Him: It doesn't matter that you know, I just don't want you getting involved.

Me: So I'm right, you are.

Him: Can we not fight? For once please.

Me: I'm not fighting with you, I just want to know.

A tear escapes my eye.

Him: Please don't cry now.

Me: I'm just really worried Tukelo. I'm worried that one day I might receive a call telling me you're dead or arrested. I don't think I can deal with that.

By the time I finished that sentence, tears were pouring down my cheeks.

Him: (sigh) That will never happen. I know that I have you and my son on the way so I wouldn't risk my life like that. Stop crying now.

Me: How sure... are you...that...that won't happen?

I even had hiccups and a runny nose.

Him: Just trust me babe. I love you, okay?

Me: I love you too.

Him: I know you don't believe me but I will come back to you and our son. I love you guys way too much then to leave you guys just like that.

Me: Promise me you won't get hurt.

Him: I promise babe. Promise me that you're going to stop worrying and you're going to stop crying. I need you to be strong Tigress, I need a strong woman by my side, can you do that for me?

Me: Yes I can.

Him: I know you can. Now wipe those tears.

I did.

Him: Smile for me.

Me: Ayi.

Him: Please.

He smiles, I eventually did too.

Him: That's my girl. I love you and I mean it.

Me: I love you, forever and always.

Him: Now kiss daddy.

He pouts, I laugh.

Me: You're crazy.

Him: Come on, I know you want to.

Me: But I will be kissing the screen not you.

Him: Use your imagination. Now come.

He pouts, I baby kiss the screen.

Him: Man, I miss those soft lips of yours.

Me: Tell me about it, I miss that dick of yours too.

He laughs so hard.

Him: Don't. Because when I come there, I feel sorry for you. You will pay for all the weeks you sent me to hunger.

Me: I didn't hear you complaining.

Him: I had to masturbate for weeks because you decided to leave me.

Me: TMI dude, TMI.

He laughs.

Him: I'm serious though.

Me: You should've called one of the hookers.

Him: And risk my balls being chopped off, no thank you.

Me: (Laughs) Good to know that you know I'm capable of doing that.

I once told him that if he ever cheats on me, I will chop of his balls, set his house on fire and shoot the girl's brains.

Him: (chuckles) God, I miss you.

Me: Me too.

Him: You're moving back to your apartment when I get back, right?

Me: Uh...

Him: Please. You've punished me long enough.

Me: I will think about it.

Him: Come on.

Me: Don't push me.

Him: OK. Listen babe, I love talking to you but I have to go now.

Me: Oh okay.

Him: Don't sound sad now. I will call you after I get this job done.

Me: Alright.

Him: Love you.

Me: Love you too.

He blows a kiss and hangs up.

I know Tukelo told me not to worry but I can't shake off the feeling. I try to ignore it and went back to sleep.

<<<<< This is it. Its finally happening. I am finally doing this with the man of my dreams. I am wearing a beautiful white wedding dress and Nosi is busy with my hair, Zitha with my make-up.

Mom: Hurry up! The groom is waiting for you.

Me: We're almost done mom.

Mom: Time is flying. Hurry!

She leaves the room.

The girls are finally done. I stand up and took a look at myself on the mirror. No! What is this? My wedding gown has blood all over it. No! I take steps back.

Me: Blood.

Zitha: What is it?

Me: There's blood all over my dress. You have to go dry clean it Zitha!

Zitha: What blood? Look, there's no blood.

She takes me back to the mirror and the blood is gone.

Me: Oh, I was just being paranoid I guess.

Nosi: Yes you are. Now stop worrying. You look amazing, you're marrying the man you love, you have no reason to worry.

They did alterations on my dress and I was ready to do this.

I look at him standing on the altar, waiting for me. I cannot see anyone else but I just see him. He looks amazing in his three piece suit. I see him wiping his eye, and I knew I was gorgeous myself. Anele takes my hand and walks me to him. I hear the song play and I feel myself getting closer but yet I feel like I'm far away from him. Anele let go of my arm, takes out a gun and points it at Tukelo. I scream. As that wasn't enough, he shoots at him.

Me: No! Tukelo!!!

Tukelo falls down. I run to him while crying.

Me: No! Tukelo!! Don't leave me! No!

People held me, I see him lying there lifeless and I can't do anything about it. I feel blood running down my legs as well, I look myself and my dress has blood once again. I don't even care. I am worried about Tukelo who's lying in his pool of blood. I can't stop crying.

Me: You promised me Tukelo! Now get up!!! Tukelo!!! <<<<<<<<<<

Insert Thirty 😊

I feel someone shaking me. I open my eyes slightly. I feel hot and sweaty.

Andile: Wake up Amahle. It was just a dream.

I jump out of bed

Me: No Andile. It felt so real. I need to go.

I am breathing heavily and panicking. I can't get my mind right. That wasn't just a dream. It was trying to tell me something. I know so.

Me: Where are you going? Its 1am.

Him: Aybo, nowhere.

Me: Then why are you all dressed up?

He was wearing jeans and a T-shirt.

Him: Uh...

Me: You know what, I don't even care. I need to go to mom.

Him: Sisi, what is going on? Tell me what's wrong.

Me: I have to go.

I wear my gown and uggs.

Him: Calm down, and talk to me.

I leave him in my room and went to wake up mom.

Me: Mom. Mom, please open up.

I keep on knocking on her door.

Me: Mom, it's urgent please.

Her: I'm coming.

I hear shuffles and she opens.

Her: What is it?

Me: Is there someone in there?

Her: Did you wake me to ask me that?

What goes on in this house when I'm asleep?

Me: No, mom I need to go. Tukelo is great danger I need to save him.

Her: What are you talking about?

Me: I had this really bad dream. I know that he's life is in great danger. I need to save him. He needs to know that he's in danger. I can't lose him.

I was talking really fast, walking up and down.

Her: Calm down, you need to be calm first. I can't let you go it's the middle of the night.

Me: He needs me mom, I can't let him down.

Tears were pouring down my cheeks.

Her: Call him but I'm not letting you go at this time.

Me: I have never been wrong mom, I know for sure that he's in great danger.

Her: I know baby but you need to calm down.

Me: No mom, I can't calm down. I can lose him mom, don't you get that? I can't lose him.

Her: You won't. What can happen to him?

Me: Anele can shoot him.

Her: Anele? Now you're sounding ridiculous.

I feel sharp pain on my abdomen. I wail in pain.

Her: Whats wrong baby?

Me: Mom...

I scream.

Her: Blood. You're bleeding. Are you on your periods or something?

Me: I'm not supposed to bleed mom. I'm pregnant.

I scream again. I have never felt so much pain.

Her: What?!!!

I feel my body failing me. I feel weak. My body hit the ground. Mom holds me.

Her: Andile!! Anele!!! Come help me!! Hang in there baby.

I hear voices but they sound really far.

Her: Amahle! Don't close your eyes! Don't! Hang in there.

Me: Mom... I'm... so...sorry....

Her: Shush baby, save your energy. Don't talk.

I feel weak. As much as I try to hang in there but I feel my body failing me. I finally decided to let it happen. I close my eyes.

Her: Amahle!

I feel like she's far. I zoned out after that.

.....

I wake up and the light brightens my eyes. I feel like closing my eyes again. I try to remember what happened and I don't like what I'm thinking right now. I don't even have the guts to touch my stomach because I already feel light, like a part of me has left. I touch my stomach and I feel nothing, there's nothing there anymore. No, this can't be happening to me. I let out a loud cry. Tumi rushes to me. He holds me close.

Him: Shh Hle. Its going to be okay.

I can't stop crying, I'm kicking and screaming.

Him: Thandi call the doctor!

Me: Nooo!! I want my baby Tumi!!! Where is my baby??!!!

Him: I'm sorry Hle.

I was hoping he is premature or something but as soon as he said those words,I knew my baby is no more. I can't stop crying.

Me: No! Tumi, I want my baby! Where is my baby?!!

The doctor came in. Tumi let go of me.

Dr: Calm down, Ms. Zungu.

I just scream and cry louder.

Dr: We have to sedate her.

Tumi nods.

Me: Bring me my baby! Please.

I feel a slight pinch on my arm. Then I felt a little bit drowsy and dizzy. Lights out.

xxxxxxx

TUMI

I don't know how I'm going to deal with things like these. I don't know what to do. I have never felt so lost and so confused. Both Tukelo and Amahle are lying in a hospital bed. How do I explain to a woman who just lost her baby that her man is fighting for his life. If only Tukelo listens to me, I wouldn't be finding myself in this difficult situation. Even though my family are on their way, I still have to tell Amahle the news. I'm looking at her sleeping peacefully. I just wish there was a better way for me to deliver the news to Amahle, but I can't think of anything.

Thandi: Here's your coffee baby.

I take it from her.

Me: Thank you.

Her: Everything will be okay. We will get through this together.

Me: I don't know Thandi, it's going to be difficult to get through this.

Her: We will beat this thing.

Me: Thandi, my brother got shot! His girl lost her baby! Now tell me, how am I supposed to deal with this???! When Amahle gets up, she will have to learn that Tukelo is in ICU and when Tukelo get up, he has to learn that he lost his baby! You get that?!

Thandi: Yeah I get it but don't beat yourself up like it's your fault.

Me: I'm the one who sent Tukelo to that deadly mission, knowing very well how dangerous those Russians are.

Her: But you didn't send them to shoot him.

Me: If he didn't go, he would be okay.

Her: Tumi...

Me: Stop telling me that everything will be okay! As you can see that they won't be! So just give me space to at least breathe. I don't even want this freaking coffee!

I throw it in the bin. I know I am being a jerk right now but that is how I get when I'm stressed out. As we sit in silence, Nosi and Zitha got in.

Oh shit! This just got messed up!

You never want your wife and baby mama in the same room, that's some awkward shit. Especially if your baby mama is crazy as fuck and your wife doesn't know that you even have a baby mama. They greet, Thandi greets back. The look Nosi gives me, I would be ten feet underground if looks could kill.

Zitha: How long has she been unconscious?

Thandi: She woke up this morning but the doctors sedated her because she freaked out.

Zitha: My poor friend.

Nosi: She was supposed to freak out, I would lose it if I happen to lose my baby.

She brushed her stomach, I cleared my throat.

Thandi: Where are my manners? I'm Thandi, Tumi's wife.

She offers Nosi a handshake, she just looks at her.

Zitha: Uh... I'm Zitha and this is Nosipho. But you can call her Nosi.

They shake hands.

Thandi: Nice to meet you, finally. Amahle always talks about you guys. Have you met Tumi?

Nosi: Oh we've met, trust me, we've met a million times before.

She gives her a fake smile and looks at me. I look away.

Thandi: O-kaay. So how far are you?

Nosi doesn't answer, she just took the flowers they bought and put them in a vase.

Zitha: She's 8 months.

Thandi: She must be excited. She's weeks away of meeting her baby.

Zitha: She's excited, I can't wait as well. I'm tired of her cravings and mood swings.

They laugh.

Nosi: Don't you have kids, Thandi?

Thandi: Uhm...

Me: If she had kids, they would be mine and you'd know them, right? Since we've met a million times before.

Nosi: I was talking to Thandi. So Thandi?

Thandi: No I don't.

Nosi: But why? You're married, and young what are you waiting for?

Thandi: Me and my husband are trying to but no luck.

This was getting awkward and uncomfortable for me. I went and poured myself a glass of water.

Nosi: Oh wow, really?

Thandi: Yes.

Nosi: How long have you guys been trying?

Thandi: Uh... I have no idea.

Nosi: Maybe he's infertile.

I choke on my water and I cough.

Thandi: Hone, are you okay?

I nod while coughing.

Thandi: Are you sure?

Me: Yes babe.

She smiles at me.

Thandi: I can tell that your baby will be beautiful, judging by your looks, I really hope she or he looks like you.

Nosi: Me too. The father looks like a cow, the ugliest man I have ever seen in my life, I don't know what I saw in him. He's my worse mistake.

Thandi is laughing and almost in tears. If only she knew that Nosi was talking about the man she married.

Me: Thandi can you get me a sandwich downstairs, I'm hungry.

Thandi: But babe...

Me: Now Thandi.

She rolls her eyes. I hated that! She stands up and leaves.

Me: Uh, Zitha...

Zitha: I know, I know. You don't have to cook up some lie to kick me out. Just don't kill each other.

She leaves.

Me: What the hell was that?

Her: What are you talking about?

Me: The way you're talk to my wife, being all buddy-buddy.

Her: You should be glad I didn't tell your wife what type of a liar, wicked and sick man you are.

Me: We can't afford her knowing. It will ruin the plans I have.

Her: What plans? I'm not some high school girl Tumi that you can promise the world to.

Me: I know that. All I asked you was to be patient with me.

Her: I have been patient long enough. What's going to happen when my baby is born? Is he going to be fatherless?

Me: I told you that won't happen. I would be involved in his life. I just can't tell my wife as yet, just give me three more months. Thats all I'm asking.

Her: three more months?

Me: Yes.

Her: Ok fine. After that I will tell your wife myself, you know I will.

Me: Yes I know.

Her: Good.

She turned her attention to Amahle.

Me: So, I'm ugly, huh?

She chuckles.

Her: You don't know that?

Me: Remind me that when you call out my name when I am fucking you.

I wrap my arms around her waist.

Her: Your wife can walk in any minute.

Me: A minute is more than enough to do what I want to do.

I turn her around and we kiss.

We pull apart when I feel a small kick on my stomach.

Me: Your son hates me.

Her: (chuckles) no he doesn't, he just feels it when he's daddy is around. That was his happy kick.

Me: (chuckles) how did you figure that out?

Her: Me and my baby talk.

I laugh.

Me: Okay.

Thandi walks in with 4 sandwiches.

Thandi: Where's Zitha?

Me: She went out.

Thandi: Okay.

We ate our sandwiches in awkward silence. Zitha came back when the visiting hours were almost over.

When the visiting hours were over, we decided to go have a bath and come back later. My wife being good hearted as she is offered Nosi and Zitha a lift.

Can things get any worse for me?

So we were all driving together. Nosi started sending text messages on my phone.

>' Can we finish what we started, I'm horny af '<

I read it then went back to driving.

>' So my place? I will wear that red lingerie you like '<

I clear my throat.

Thandi: Babe, can you forget your phone and focus on the driving?

Me: Uhm... yeah.

I hear Nosi giggle.

My phone beep again.

Me: One more time, it's uh... business.

Thandi nods.

>' is that a yes? Hoot the car if it's a yes '<

I hoot.

Thandi: Aybo Mokoena, what was that for?

Me: Sorry, it was a mistake.

Nosi laughs.

I look at her on the rear view mirror, she smiles and winks. I smile and look away. We drop both Zitha off first then Nosi.

I get home I take a quick shower and got dressed in a Guess T-shirt, Gucci jeans and timberlands. I spray on some perfume and wore my Rolex watch, actually it's Tukelo's watch, that kid has expensive taste. I wouldn't buy such an expensive thing. I look at it and I remember all the memories we've shared, good and bad. I can't lose my brother now, it will kill me. I say a small prayer.

Me: God, I know I don't pray as often as I should but if you truly exist please save my brother and Amahle. They are way too young and have their life ahead of them. Give me the strength to face this. As hard as it is. I've done some terrible things in my life but I don't deserve losing my brother. Please save them. Amen.

I get downstairs and I find my wife making lunch.

Her: Where are you going all dressed up?

Me: I have to sort out a few things.

Her: But your parents will be here soon.

Me: I will be back.

Her: Okay.

I kiss her head.

Her: I love you.

Me: Yeah me too. I will be back before you know it.

I get to Nosi's house. I use my keys to open the door. Yes I have my own keys. She is the mother of my child after all. I find her sitting in the lounge stuffing her face with ice cream.

Me: What the hell?

Her: What?

She says with her mouth full, she's not even wearing that lingerie. She is just sitting on that couch wearing Tracksuits.

Me: What are you wearing?

Her: Tumi, I'm pregnant, don't tell me you seriously were expecting me to wear lingerie. It doesn't fit me anymore.

Me: Why did you call me here?

Her: I'm in need of a manly touch. I just want a cuddle.

Me: A cuddle? I drove all the way from Sandton for a cuddle?

Her: Yes. Now come have ice cream with me and hold me.

Me: First of all, you done feeding my baby that.

I take it away from her.

Her: Hey, but it's your baby that's making me eat it.

Me: And I say that's enough. Do you want to make my baby sick?

Her: Get me sea food then.

Me: Oh God.

.....

My mom can't stop crying and my dad is just being dad. Ever since my mom entered Tukelo's ward she can't stop crying. I have Bontle in my arms, she also can't stop crying. Everyone is just devastated, even Pitsi and Thabang keep on giving me death stares. I think they blame me. They have been warning me and Tukelo to leave this business since we have all the money we need now. But it's not easy and they know it.

Thabang: Tumi, a word.

Me: You're going to be okay Bontle?

Her: I just want my brother Tumi. I want him to get out of that bed. He looks so lifeless. He's body is connected to way too many machines.

Me: He's going to be fine. You know he's strong. But he needs you to be strong for him, if you are, he will recover soon.

She nods.

Me: I will be back.

I stand up and we leave the room.

Thabang: Talk.

I look down.

Him: Now Tumi!

Me: He went to Russia to cut a deal with them, that they give us the territory that's in SA, to make things easy for them. So he wouldn't have to travel, according to Tukelo they didn't agree with those terms. I told him to leave it and come back. You know he's stubborn, he decided to push them and even told me he would do whatever it takes. My guess is, he pulled a gun on them. You know how he can get.

Him: But he was shot here in SA.

Me: That's what confuses me too. Maybe they followed him here to SA. But Blade is on top of it.

Him: Look, I'm going to find out who did this to him and they better start running now because if I find them, I will kill them.

Bontle: Torture them first, make them beg for mercy.

We didn't even see her there. We look at her.

Him: I don't want you getting involved Bontle.

Her: Too late, I'm already involved. It's not like I haven't pulled a trigger before.

And with that she leaves. See, that is the thing with our family, no one is innocent. The business we do has forced us to be strong and forced us to do whatever it takes to survive. Tukelo may not know that Bontle can handle a gun, but she can. He would kill all of us if he were to find out. He loves Bontle with everything he has and maybe more.

We have been sitting in Tukelo's ward and nothing has changed. He's still unconscious, still the same. Ntate has been on a phone since forever, I think he's also trying to find out who did this.

Mme: Do you know who did this Tumi?

Me: Mme?

Mme: You heard me.

Me: No I have no idea but we will find them.

Mme: You better.

Me: Pitsi, Thabang. Outside please.

I have to let them know about Amahle, with everything that's going on, I never really had the chance. We close the door and we sit on the bench outside the ward.

Pitsi: What is it now?

Me: it's bad. Things are pretty bad for us.

Thabang: Talk boy.

Me: Amahle was pregnant.

Pitsi: Yeah we know and how is that bad? That's great news!

Thabang: Yes, that's great... wait a minute, you said was.

Me: Yes. She lost the baby.

Them: What?!

Me: Yes, she's in this same hospital and even though she's up but she won't talk to anyone, eat or get off that bed. She's devastated and to make matters worse, she doesn't know about Tukelo.

Pitsi: Oh God, we are surrounded by a dark cloud. Why bad things are happening to this family?

Thabang: We need to go see her.

Me: No, not now. Her family is there and they didn't know she was pregnant, they only found out when she was having the miscarriage. The same day Tukelo got shot, is the same day Amahle lost the baby.

Pitsi: But she didn't know about Tukelo?

Me: No.

Thabang: What caused her miscarriage?

Me: I don't know yet.

Thabang: This is going to kill Tukelo.

Pitsi: It sure will.

Me: There's more.

Pitsi: Modimo.

Me: I'm going to be a father.

Thabang: At least something to celebrate, congratulations bro.

Me: Thandi's not the mother of my baby.

Pitsi: Amen!

Thabang: Who is?

Me: Nosipho.

Pitsi: Nosipho? That hot friend of Amahle? Dang bro, I'm happy for...

Thabang gives him a death stare before he can finish.

Me: Yes her.

Thabang: Are you crazy Tumi?

Me: I think I love her. You both know I never loved Thandi, I care about her a lot but love? No.

Thabang: Why didn't you run off like Tukelo did? You know that man inside that Ward is going to bury you alive. You made a promise Tumi, to Thandi's family that you will provide for her, love her and care for her. What goes on in that big head of yours?

Me: I thought I was going to make it work like you made it work with Gontse, like Pitsi made it work with Karabo.

Them: Leave our wives out of this.

Me: I'm just saying, I thought I had it under control. I have tried, really tried to love her but I can't Thabang. My heart won't let me. I love Nosipho, and I realized that when I saw my baby on that screen. She's the woman for me. She drives me crazy yes but that's why I love her.

Pitsi: Did you at least tell Thandi?

Me: No, she doesn't know yet.

Thabang: You got yourself into deep shit and I don't think you'll ever get yourself out.

Me: that's why I told you guys, so you can help me out.

Thabang: No, we're not getting involved.

Me: What happened to "one for all and all for one"? What happened to "your problem, is our problem"?

Pitsi: He's right Thabang, we have made a pact that we will always be there for each other, no matter what.

Thabang: (sigh) yeah. We will help where we can.

Me: Thank you.

Thabang: You really messed up.

Me: I know.

When the family decided to leave because they were exhausted. Me, Pitsi and Thabang stayed behind to try and fix Tukelo's mess with Amahle's family. We first went to the shops to buy things for Amahle, we went to Foschini bought pajamas, slippers, gown then some toiletries. We went to Spar, got some fruit, yoghurt and all sorts of healthy food. Our last stop was at MacD, we got her an extra large Big Mac meal. I really hope she eats it, last I checked she was a big fan of the Big Mac. We bought some get well soon balloons and flowers.

We get to her ward and we find her family all around her room. Even little Zee. She sees us.

Zee: Uncle Tumi!

She runs to me and I pick her up.

Me: How are you doing?

Zee: I'm fine. Are these all for me?

Me: (chuckles) no, they for Sis Amahle.

Zee: Ooh okay.

Me: But I did buy you this big teddy bear.

Zee: Really? Can i see it?

I put her down and gave her the teddy.

Zee: Thank you so much.

She hugs me and runs to show her mom.

Me: Hey Family.

They greeted back.

Me: Ma, these are my older brothers, Thabang and Pitsi.

She just nods.

Thabang: I'm sorry Mme for what had happened to your family.

MaZ: I'm also sorry for what happened to your family.

Thabang: Me and my brother here would like to have a word with you, outside.

MaB: Does it have to be now? As you can see I'm trying to get my daughter to eat.

Me: Don't worry mah, I will take care of her.

MaB: (sigh) okay. Take care of my daughter, Tumi.

Me: I will.

She leaves with Pitsi and Thabang.

I look at Amahle, she has her eyes open but she's just staring into space. She looks so weak and fragile, I can tell she's been crying a lot.

Me: Andile, has she eaten anything at all?

Him: No. All she does is cry and ask where Tukelo is.

Me: (sigh)

Me: Hle.

She keeps quite.

Me: Hle, I know you can hear me, please talk to me. Please look at me.

I brush her hair. She looks at me.

Her: Tumi.

She says that so softly, I barely hear her.

Me: Yes, it's me. Please eat Hle, I'm not leaving here until you eat. Look at how weak you are.

Her: Where's Tukelo? I need him.

Me: He's in Russia. I haven't been able to get a hold of him. But I know he would want you to eat and he would kill me if he sees you this weak and I didn't do anything about it.

She tries to smile.

Her: He wouldn't.

Me: You know he would. Now eat up.

She nods. She presses a button, her bed adjusts and she sits up.

Me: Now I'm going to feed you.

Her: I'm not a baby.

Me: I just want to spoil you.

I feed her the yoghurt.

Me: Don't get use to it though.

She smiles and rolls her eyes. I feed her until she finishes the whole thing. Then I give fruits. She eats the grapes only. And after that she looked a lot better.

Her: Does your family know yet?

Me: Lets not talk about them, you know how they are so I don't want anything upsetting you.

Her: I have accepted Tumi. I know that my baby is gone, I know that your family will never like me so don't hide anything from me. I just have this really bad feeling about Tukelo. Its him I'm worried about.

Me: Uhm... I'm sure he's okay.

Her: When he calls you, don't tell him. I want to be the one telling him.

Me: okay.

Her: Do you think... (sigh) do you think he will hate me for this?

Me: What? No. He won't. Tukelo loves you with his whole heart, he's crazy about you. He can never hate you even if he tried. It's not your fault Amahle, don't ever feel like that again. I'm devastated that you lost him but it's not your fault.

Her: I don't even want to bury him Tumi. I don't have the guts to see his little casket.

Me: You have us. We are your support system, you don't have to be strong. We will do that for you. Just hang in there.

Her: Thank you so much. I appreciate that you are here for me but it would have been even better to hear Tukelo say those words to me.

Me: (sigh) I know but you know, me and him, we are the same thing. You always say I'm the darker version of Tukelo, just picture me light skinned, and you will see him.

She smiles.

Me: Glad to see you smiling again.

Her: Is there ever a dull moment with you?

Me: You know I never allow that. I'm always here to brighten up your day.

Her: (smiles) You the best brother-in-law a girl could ever ask for.

I kiss her forehead.

Thabang, Pitsi and Amahle's mom come back.

MaB: Amahle, my baby. You look better.

She kisses her forehead.

Amahle: Guess I needed to see the darker version of Tukelo to keep me going.

Her mom smiles.

Thabang: Tumi, we need to get going. Ma, we will see you on Saturday.

MaB: Okay.

Me: Take care Amahle. See you tomorrow.

Amahle: Okay.

We leave the ward.

Thabang: Amahle's mom is... nice.

Me: What did you say to her?

Pitsi: Nothing much, but we've agreed on paying the damages on Saturday, the day of the funeral.

Me: Ha! Wait till you meet her uncles.

Thabang: They can't be worse than Amahle's mom.

Pitsi: That woman shouted us like we the ones who made her daughter pregnant. If I were Tukelo, I wouldn't wake up from that coma just yet.

We laugh.

XXXXXXXXXX

Now it's been almost two whole weeks and that sucker still hasn't woken up from that coma. He was starting to annoy me. I was running out of answers to give to Amahle. Even though she was out of hospital and acted strong, I know she would break if she found out about Tukelo. But we had to tell her. Thing is, she was speculating and saying Tukelo doesn't care about her since he let her bury their child alone. The funeral was sad, it was just close family. The casket was small and I didn't even know that they made caskets that small. Amahle tried to hold herself together but cried her eyes out when she saw the casket going down. That broke my heart, I know this is going to kill Tukelo. He lost his son and he wasn't even there to bury him. I made sure that I checked on Amahle everyday. They named the baby Nkanyiso.

Well, I haven't told my parents about my problem and Nosi is close to giving birth and dang she was giving me a hard time. I had to spend two days in her house because she was in need of a manly touch. Even though I hired a team to look after her, just in case she gives birth, she was still giving me a hard time.

I am on my way to Amahle's house. I get to her house and I find her busy washing dishes.

Me: Hey.

Her: (smiles) hey, how you doing?

She hugs me. She was doing a lot better now. I know she was acting strong but she did that perfectly.

Me: I'm fine. You?

Her: I'm alive, that's what matters after all. So what brings you here this early?

I looked at my wristwatch. I realized that it's 8am and it is early indeed.

Me: We have to talk.

Her: About?

Me: we need to sit down for this. Where's your mom?

Her: in the living room. Tumi, you're scaring me. Whats going on?

Me: Let's go to her.

She looked shocked but we went to the living room. I greet her mom and she greets back.

MaB: Tumi, do you need anything? I can make you tea or perhaps breakfast.

Me: No ma, I'm fine. I just need to tell you something.

Amahle: Tumi, talk, you're scaring me.

Me: (sigh) there's no easy way to say this. I have been trying for two weeks to tell you this but I can't seem to find the right words. I have to tell you now before things get out of hand.

Amahle: Please talk Tumi.

MaB: What is it, son?

Me: Uhm... The reason Tukelo hasn't been around is because...

Amahle stood up in a flash.

Amahle: What happened?! Speak up Tumi man!

MaB: Calm down baby.

Me: He was shot.

Them: What?!

Amahle: How bad is it? He's okay though, right?! He's alive?

Me: Yes. He's in a coma. In the same hospital you were in.

Amahle: The fuck Tumi?! And you didn't have the audacity to tell me that he's on a death bed? Fuck! How selfish can you be?!

MaB: Language Amahle! Control yourself. You were a mess yourself, it would have been selfish of him to tell you while you're going through some things yourself.

Amahle: I told you mom. I'm never wrong. I knew something bad has happened to him.

Me: What do you mean?

MaB: The day Amahle lost Nkanyiso, she had claim she had a bad dream about Tukelo and demanded me to take her to him. That's why she lost Nkanyiso, because she was stressing, her b.p levels were too high.

Me: What? All of that over a feeling you had?

Amahle: Stop talking and take me to him now!

She leaves the room.

Me: This is strange. The same day Amahle lost Nkanyiso, is the same day Tukelo got shot.

MaB: These kids have a connection, a really strong connection and it scares me.

She also leaves. Wow, this is really scary.

Insert Thirty-One 😊

Andile

>Two Weeks Ago<

Me: I'm sorry babe, I really can't make it. I was on my way but I had a crisis at home

Her: Why? What happened?

Me: My sister lost her child.

Her: What do you mean Andile?

Me: She had a miscarriage.

Her: She was pregnant?

Me: Yeah. We were all shocked too. She didn't tell anyone.

Her: My deepest condolences, I'm pretty sure she's devastated.

Me: Yeah she's not taking it well. I've never seen her this vulnerable.

This whole Amahle situation didn't sit well with me. I was at the hospital, she is just lying on her bed not talking to anyone, she wasn't eating. What frustrated me even more was the fact that Anele didn't care, he wasn't around, he didn't even come by to see how Amahle is doing. He just drove her to hospital and that was it. Tukelo too, he is nowhere to be seen. My mom is busy trying to get her to eat.

Her: It's understandable.

Me: Yeah, but I will try to make time and come see you guys. I miss you so much.

Her: We miss you too but don't leave your sister, she needs you more than we need you.

Me: Okay I won't. You guys are okay though?

When Nonhle left, I was upset at first, even Buhle noticed, but now I'm used to it. I'm falling for this woman and I'm falling hard. Though I don't even have the guts to tell Buhle about her or any of my family members or friends. She's just my little secret.

Her: We're okay daddy. And how are you holding up?

Me: Im fine mama, I'm just alot worried about my sister.

Her: She'll be okay babe, you need to let her grieve the way she wants to. Don't push her.

Me: I won't babe, I wish she can just stop being so stubborn and let us help her.

Her: If you let her grieve the best way she knows how, she'll be better in no time you'll see.

Me: Okay.

Her: Uh Andile, I know your family is facing a crisis now but did you tell them about your baby? I mean, I am 6 months pregnant now. My family knows about you and they're pretty upset that your family isn't coming through or reaching out to them.

I don't want to lie. I still have my doubts, I can't just tell my family then boom, the baby is Mandla's. I was planning on telling them once the baby is born but Nonhle kept on asking me this question and I kept on giving excuses. The more she asks, the more I kept on doubting. Even though the baby is not mine, I'm not planning on ending things with her. I will love her with her baby but I won't tell my family about it.

Me: Uh, yeah I know. I haven't had the time to tell them, with everything that's going on but once all of this dies down, I'm going to let them know, I promise. Right now, the focus is on Amahle, I don't want to steal her spotlight.

I see Tumi approaching with his brothers but I don't think they can see me.

Tumi: I really don't know how to face Amahle. Tukelo had to get shot now!

They pass me and entered Amahle's ward.

Wait.. What? Tukelo got shot?

Her: Tukelo got shot?! When? How?

Me: You heard that?

Her: Of course I heard! My god, I hope Mandla is not behind this.

Me: That's what I'm thinking too. Look babe, I have to go. I will call you later.

Her: Okay. We love you.

Me: I love you both too.

I hang up and entered the ward.

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AMAHLE

>TODAY<

I have never felt scared of losing someone before. I can deal with losing Nkanyiso but I can't deal with losing Tukelo, no I just can't. As much as I hate him for the pain he's been causing but he's still a part of me. Still the man I love, I can't lose him. I just can't.

Me: Tumi, drive faster man!

Mom: Amahle, we don't need to rush anywhere. You will see him and we will get to him.

Me: Tell me that he's going to be okay mom.

Mom: I can't promise you that because I don't know his condition but I can tell you that everything will work out, you will see. The man you love is fighter and he will fight for you. Just believe in him and pray for him.

Me: I'm so scared mom, I can't lose him. I can't lose both of them.

Mom: You won't my child.

She hugs me.

We get to the hospital and we find his family sitting outside his ward. I mean his whole family, the whole of Lesotho came out. Even that bitch Nkati.

My mom greet them, I don't have the time. I just rush into his ward.

The doctor stops me.

Me: I need to see him. He needs me.

Doc: I'm sorry ma'am, visiting hours are over. He needs to rest.

Me: I need to see him! Don't you get that?!

My mom tries to hold me back.

Me: No mom, I have to see him! He needs to know that I'm here.

Tumi: Doc, can't you let her in for at least 10 minutes. She only found out now about his condition.

Doc: I'm sorry but I can't let her in.

Pitsi: Can't you make an exception Doc? This is the love of his life, he needs her now more than ever.

Bontle: She has to see him. She might be the one to help him. Its been 2weeks with no progress, maybe if he feels her presence, there might be change.

Mme: This ain't a movie Bontle, that doesn't work in reality.

Doc: Actually it does ma'am. I have seen it many times before. Patients heal faster if they're surrounded by their loved ones. I am only giving you 10 minutes, not a second longer.

Me: that's all I need. Thank you so much.

I go in, the doctor follows me and what I see breaks my heart into a million pieces. He is lying in that bed, lifeless. He looks so pale and his lips are dry.

Me: Can he hear me?

Doc: I believe that he can. Don't tell him any sad news. I will give you two some space.

She leaves.

I take his hand and held it with both of my hands.

Me: Hey babe. It's me, Tigress. I'm sorry I couldn't see you sooner, I have been dealing with a lot of stuff lately. A lot has been going on in my life but I will tell you all about it once you're awake.

A river of fresh tears started to pour down my cheeks.

Me: This is so hard for me. It pains me seeing you like this. The last time we spoke I knew there was something wrong, I knew you were hiding something from me but I'm not here to talk about the bad stuff. I just want to say I really miss you and I need you to get better. You need to get out of this bed now, I want you to touch me, hold me with your big strong arms and tell me that everything will be okay.

I laugh my pain away.

Me: If you could see me right now, I know you'd probably say, "Tigress, you're hurting me, stop those tears right now."

I try to mimick his voice.

Me: Or you will be crying also. You're such a baby though, you know that? Even if you keep on your manly face, and make people scared but I know that you're softy and you have an heart of an angel. I can't lose you just yet, I still need someone to love, someone to love me, someone to fight me, someone to give me a headache, someone to tease me, I still need you. So be a man and fight for me. I know that you will fight for me. We may have not been on good terms but I swear I will try to work on us and I will be less stubborn and I follow your every command. Just wake up for me, open your eyes. Or at least squeeze my hand if you can hear me.

I wait. I hope that he does so but nothing. I sigh, I bow my head down and cried. I feel his hand move. I look at him. Did that just happened?

Me: Baby? Did you just move your hand? Move it again.

I wait. Instead of moving his hand, machines start beeping and he start having what seem like a seizure or fits. I get scared. No this can't be happening.

Me: Oh my God! DOCTOR!!!! Nurse!!!

I press the button the panic button. A nurse and a doctor came rushing in.

Me: Whats going on?!!

Doc: Ma'am, you need to leave.

Me: No! I can't leave him no!

Fresh tears ran down my face.

Nurse: You have to leave. We need to save him, he's going to be okay.

Me: I have to be here! What if I leave and he dies!

Nurse: He won't. Now please go.

She goes back to Tukelo, who's still having a seizure. I try to take a step closer but I feel someone holding me from behind, taking me outside. I didn't even have the energy to fight him.

Mme: Whats happening in there Tumi?! Why are there doctors running inside Tukelo's Ward?! What did this witch do?

Mom: Excuse me? You called my daughter a witch?

Mme: Yes, so? Maybe she gets it from you, who knows?

Mom: I'm not a person of violence or vulgar language but for you I can make an exception.

Me: Mom please, she's not even worth it.

Tumi is holding me because I don't think I am able to stand on my own. What I saw really scared me.

Me: I feel like I'm losing him Tumi.

Tumi: Everything will be okay.

Mme: If anything happens to my son, you will be the blame and I will make you pay even if it is the last thing I do.

Tumi: Don't listen to her please.

Me: She doesn't even get to me anymore.

Tumi: Good.

Bontle: Where's her husband anyway?

Tumi: Who knows? He's human too, he also gets tired of that.

We were having this conversation softly.

We have been sitting here for almost an hour and still nothing. Well, Tukelo's mom is insulting me every chance she gets, even her husband was back and the looks he was giving me. I really didn't care anymore, I just wanted that man to get up. Tumi and Pitsi went out to get us food, I was sitting with Bontle and Oratile now.

Me: What's taking the doctors so long?

Oratile: They're doing their job, he will be fine. You will see.

Bontle: Yes. Aubhuti loves you way too much Amahle, he won't leave you just yet.

Me: You really believe so?

Oratile: (smiles) yes babe.

I wipe my tears.

Me: You guys are way too nice, how come you're related to that?

I point at their mom and Nkati.

Bontle: Well, we're not really related.

Me: What?

The doctor came out of that door. I get up fast and got to her before anyone else could.

Me: And?

The doctor looks at me, then she smiles.

Doc: I guess the talk you had with him worked, I guess he felt your presence.

Me: So he's awake?

She smiles and nods.

The family cheers and they say their praises.

Doc: I don't know what you did or what you said but he reacted to what you said or did and he's out of that coma. That doesn't mean he's fully recovered, it just means that he's out of danger. I still have run some tests.

Me: As long as he's out of danger, that's all I wanted to hear. Thank you so much Doctor.

Doc: I just did my job. We have a problem though.

Me: What is it now?

Doc: He keeps on saying, "Tigress", does he have a pet Tiger or something?

Bontle and Oratile laughs.

Bontle: No, it's the name he calls Amahle by.

Doc: (smiles) so he's actually asking for you?

Me: (smiles) I guess so.

Tukelo's mom: Can't we see him?

Doc: You will see him but I think it's best if we give them space for now. Just at least 10 minutes.

T.mom: No, the last time she went in that room, my son's life was in danger.

Doc: He was just waking up from a coma mam.

Me: It's fine Doc. They can see him. I will come back later.

Mom: Are you sure honey?

Me: Yes. Bontle, tell him I will come back later.

Bontle: You don't have to leave we can go in together.

Doc: I wouldn't advise that, I don't want him being overwhelmed when he sees too many people around him. Just three at a time will be fine.

T.mom: And that would be me, his dad and Nkati.

Bontle: No the last time he saw all of you, he was mad at you. I doubt he will want to see any of you.

Doc: I don't want anything upsetting him.

T.mom: Nothing will upset him. They being crazy. Lets go.

They all went in. This witch, I didn't want to admit this but I fucking hate that woman. Yerrrrr!

.....

TUKELO

My head is pounding and my arm hurts like fuck. These painkillers are not helping at all. This doctor need to up the dosage. I felt like I was dying when I felt those bullets hit me, I knew for sure that I was dead. I kept on fighting but I knew I was losing the battle. I was hit on my upper arm and 3 times on my back. I was in the airport, coming home from Russia. The person who did this, is definitely someone who knows my every move, someone who knew that I had no guards with me. I was all alone, he used that time to get to me. This person definitely has a death wish because I wont rest till he is dead. I wonder who and why. As I was lost in my thoughts, I saw mme, ntate and Nkati entering my room.

Ntate: Son.

Me: I don't mean to be rude but you were the last people I wanted to see.

Mme: Tukelo...

Me: Where's Amahle?

Nkati: She left.

Me: Why?

Mme: Tukelo that woman doesn't care about you. She was just after your money, I don't understand what you saw in her. You should be asking, where's Nthabi, she cares about you.

Me: Not this again. You see this is the reason why I didn't want to see you.

Ntate: Stop it ma'Nkati, I'm here to see my son. I really don't care who he loves or he dates. I'm just really happy that he's alive and well. Not to forget that Amahle is the one who helped this boy.

Me: She did? How?

Ntate: I don't know what she did, but she came in here spoke to you and you woke up.

Me: I knew she was here, I felt her. But why did she go?

Ntate: I don't know. She just said we should go in first and she will come back later.

Me: But I want to see her Ntate. I need to know if she's okay, and my baby is okay too.

Mme: Your baby? Is that baby even yours?

Me: I just need to see her. Ntate, please.

Ntate: (clears throat) I will call her here, don't worry. She will see you later.

Me: Okay.

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AMAHLE

I don't know how I was going to deal with this. I wanted Tukelo to wake up so bad but now that he has to know that his precious cargo is gone, I am not too sure if I'm as excited about him waking up.

Nosi: Hey, why are you crying?

I didn't even realize it.

Zitha: You should be happy that he's finally up, why are you all down?

Amahle: He doesn't know guys, I have to be the one to tell him.

They hug me.

Nosi: Shh, don't cry. He will be hurt yes but he will get through it.

Zitha: Yes, you also learnt to accept. He will too and men heal faster than us.

Me: You don't get it you guys. He loved him while he was in tummy, he bonded with him. He was so happy. Now that he's gone, I feel like he will blame me.

Nosi: He won't. It's not your fault, don't ever think like that.

Zitha: Yes. Now wipe those tears. Calm down.

Me: Oh God. This is so hard.

Zitha: I know babe but he loves you and you guys are stronger than this. You will go through it together.

While we were talking, Ntate walked in my room. Who let him in? Wait... how does he even know where I live? But then again, he's a Mokoena, they know everything and they don't ask. He doesn't greet, he just looks at us.

Ntate: My son needs you. You need to come with me.

Me: Huh?

Ntate: I don't really like repeating myself.

Me: OK ntate, I'm coming.

I reply in Sotho, he smiles and leaves. I may not be fluent in Sotho but Tukelo has taught me some of the words, I also help him in his Zulu.

I am walking behind this man and his bodyguards all around us. Which made me rather uncomfortable. We were on our way to Tukelo's Ward and it's not even visiting hours. We are just walking in silence. We go in and the doctors don't even try to stop us. I notice that he was in his single Ward and no longer in ICU. I find his entire family, I wonder what happened to the "3 people at a time" rule. But then again, these are the Mokoenas we are talking about. I greet everyone, they greet back.

Tukelo: Tigress.

I go closer to him and sit next to the chair next to his bed.

Me: Babe.

I cry alot these days, fresh tears escape my eyes. He uses his thumb to wipe them

Tukelo: Don't do that babe, you know what your tears do to me.

Me: I'm sorry, I'm just really glad that it's all over.

Tukelo: You thought I was going to leave you just like that?

Me: I don't know, I was so scared.

Tukelo: I won't leave you, ever. We will die together. I always tell you this.

Me: I know but when I saw you lying there with all those machines...

He cuts me off.

Tukelo: It's all over now. Don't think about it because you're only torturing yourself, and you're torturing my baby.

I look at his family behind me. Why haven't they left? This is supposed to be our private moment. They're just being really noisy.

Tukelo: Don't worry they know. I told them, remember?

Me: Told them what?

Tukelo: That we're pregnant.

I don't respond. I feel tears pouring down my face. I feel like screaming. I let out soft sobs.

Tukelo: Amahle what is it? Baby?

He sits up. He's still in pain because he winced in pain while trying to get up.

I can't say anything, I'm just crying.

Tukelo: Amahle, you're killing me. Why all the tears now?

He cups my face.

Tukelo: Talk to me, what's wrong.

Tumi: Family, I think they need privacy to sort out their issues, let's leave.

Pitsi: Yes. Lets leave them to be together.

They all leave. I still haven't stopped crying.

Him: You can talk to me now baby, what's up?

Me: I'm so...rry Tu...Tu...kelo.

Him: Look now, you even have hiccups. You're scaring me.

Me: He's...he's gone.

Him: Who?

I think he knows what I'm talking about, he's just in denial or wants to confirm.

Me: Nka...Nkanyiso.

Him: Who's Nkanyiso?

Me: Our son.

Him: He's gone where?

Do I have to spell out everything to him?

Me: I...lo..lost him Tuke...lo.

Tears roll down his face.

Him: Amahle, you know I hate jokes like these, don't joke like that.

Me: I'm not joking. He's gone. I miscarried our son.

Him: No, no. This can't be happening, there got to be some mistake.

I shake my head. He touches my stomach then lifts up my t-shirt, he feels it.

Me: He's not there anymore babe, he's gone.

He pulls down my T-shirt. He lies down and faces away from me.

Me: Say something.

Him: I have nothing to say.

Me: We have a lot to talk about, I am also hurting like you.

Him: Are you? How do I know that you didn't abort him?

Me: What? How can you accuse me of such crap.

Him: You wanted to do it before. Maybe you thought I was going to die, you didn't want my child standing in your way.

Me: Are you hearing yourself?

Him: Yes. You failed to keep my baby.

Me: You're hurting me Tukelo.

And he was, he's words were cutting really deep down.

Him: I want to be alone.

Me: Tukelo...

Him: Please Amahle Zungu, I want to be alone.

Me: For all it's worth, I'm sorry.

He ignores me. All I could hear were his soft sobs.

I stand up, when I was by the door he calls me.

Me: Yes.

Him: Tell everyone to go home. I don't want to see any visitors for the rest of the day.

Me: okay.

I leave the room. I don't even want to talk to anyone. I run out of the hospital. Tumi calls out my name, I don't respond. He runs after me, he catches up and holds my arm.

Him: Hey, what is it?

Me: He blames me for everything. Didn't I tell you that he will?

Him: He's just hurt.

Me: I'm also hurt Tumi. I didn't want to lose my child too. I had to bury him alone, I had to feel him die. I couldn't save my child, I will forever feel like I failed him.

Him: Don't feel like that. Tukelo is just going through alot of emotions, he doesn't know how to react to this. As soon as he's in senses, he will come around.

Me: Tukelo needs to stop thinking that the world revolves around him. He can be so senseless and selfish!

I continue with my running.

Tumi: Amahle!!

I ignore him.

Insert Thirty-Two 😊

TUKELO

I'm feeling all sorts of emotions. I know I was a bit irrational about the whole situation, I probably shouldn't have shifted the blame on Amahle, just that I didn't expect to receive these kind of news, how do I even accept that I lost my child that I was looking so forward to have? I wasn't even there to bury him. I'm so lost and confused as to how do I move on from this.

Tumi: How can you be so inconsiderate?

He barges in my room

Me: Some things never change. Would it have killed you to knock?

Him: And I thought maybe almost dying would make you a better person but no, seems like you became worse.

Me: If you're talking about Amahle, please turn around and leave.

Him: I'm not going anywhere because you're going to listen to what I have to say to you. Tukelo you're one selfish bastard.

Me: You done?

Him: No! That woman loves you, did you even care enough to ask what caused her to miscarry?

I don't say anything.

Him: She also lost her son Tukelo, she is also hurting. She needs you now more than ever! You're here acting like you're the only one that's hurting. Man up Tukelo! Do you really think the miscarriage was her fault? If you think like that than I'm ashamed to call you my brother! Ungrateful piece of shit!

Me: I've said what I wanted to say, and I won't repeat my statement. I told you to leave, I don't understand why you're still standing there ranting. I don't even care what you have to say.

Matter of fact, I do care about what he said and I can't help but to think that he's right. I am being unreasonable

Him: Do you even love Amahle?

Me: What?

Him: You heard me.

Me: Tumi, you all of people know how much I love her, I have never loved another woman as much as I love her.

Him: Okay, do you want to keep her?

Me: Can you stop asking me ridiculous questions and get to your point.

Him: My point is, you acting as someone who doesn't care about losing Amahle, right now, she can leave your ass and never look back. She can take all the bull, your shady business, your anger issues, your pathetic family but she can never take the blame for something she had no control over. We get it, you're also hurt, I'd be also devastated as you but never will I shut out the person who needs me the most. Grow some balls Tukelo!

Me: You're busy here lecturing me about shit but I'm pretty sure you're nowhere near finding the culprit who put me on this death bed.

Him: Hhelang, the selfish, inconsiderate Tukelo strikes again! Are you even listening to a word I'm saying? Losing your child is shit? We only cared about you waking up, we only cared about Amahle who just lost your son. Of course there was no time to chase some asshole who has a death wish, because at the end of the day, we will find him. Can you focus on what's important? And not worrying about yourself for once! Think about Amahle, think about her dude.

Me: I'm not even fully recovered yet but you're here lecturing me, what if you stress me out and you lead me back into a coma?

Him: I don't care! Maybe that's what should happen, you should go back to that coma because right now, I can't stand your sight! I can't believe I prayed for your ass!

The doctor walks in.

Her: Mr. Mokoena, I have your test results back.

She looks at Tumi.

Me: No, you can say whatever you want to say Doc, I tried chasing him away, as you can see, he didn't listen to me so I doubt he'll listen to you so you can speak.

Her: Uhm, okay. Things are not good. As I've told you and your family, you lost too much blood and it's quite a miracle that you made it out alive. The bullets that hit you on your back, affected your vital organs, including your liver. It's badly damaged and you're going to need a liver transplant.

Me and Tumi: What?

Her: I'm sorry Mr. Mokoena, but its okay because not like kidneys, a liver can grow back but in order for that to happen you need a donor. I'm going to start by testing your family members, should we find a match, we will take it from there....

Him: No need Doc, I'm his match.

Her: Are you sure? Just because you're his brother it doesn't mean...

Him: I'm sure doc.

Me: Yeah, we once tested.

Her: So you'll donate?

Him: He would have done the same for me so yeah, whatever.

He leaves the room. The doctor looks at me. I smile at her.

Me: He'll do it. Don't worry.

.....

AMAHLE

I haven't heard anything from Tukelo in days. I haven't been to hospital to see him as well. Tumi did call and tell me that he had to go into surgery, I didn't even ask why. I mean he did say he wanted to be alone and I must stay away so I'm doing just that. I am done crying over him, he's not worth my tears anymore. I have allowed him too many times to make me weak, my mom raised me better than that. I don't have to feel like this because of him, Zitha was right, he's a stinking cow and a cold-hearted bastard. I understand that he's hurting but I am too, he's being really selfish right now. He chased me away when I needed him most, he treated me like some wicked person. If I ever see him again I will give him the piece of my mind.

He happens to be standing behind me in my kitchen right now. I haven't seen him yet but I can smell his scent. I turn around before he can say anything.

Him: The door was open so...

Me: You decided to let yourself in?

Him: Were you going to let me in if I knocked?

Me: Of course not.

Him: You see why I let myself in.

Me: You're out?

Him: Yes. You think I escaped or something?

Me: I wouldn't be surprised if you did.

Him: (chuckled) I was discharged.

Me: When?

Him: Yesterday.

Me: Oh. Is your arm painful?

He had a sling on.

Him: nah, I have survived worse.

Me: Okay. Why are you here?

Him: Well, we need to talk. Not just you and me but our families as well.

Me: Your family is here?

Him: Just my brothers and Ntate.

Me: To talk about what?

Him: Are you seriously asking? My brothers went behind my back and paid damages, without my consent, then you bury my child in some ditch I don't know and you give my child, my child a Zulu name.

I have been waiting too long to say this but uTukelo uhlaza gha!!!

I look at him shocked.

Me: You were in a freaking coma Tukelo and what's wrong with a Zulu name?

Him: He's a Mokoena Amahle, you can't give him your surname.

Me: He's a part of me too. Doesn't that matter?

Him: Of course it does but since my brothers paid the damages, you were supposed to give him my surname and a Sotho name. What does Nkanyiso even mean?

Lendoda!! He must not test me, not today! Pulizi.

Me: I was alone, confused and hurt so I really didn't have the time to think any of my decisions through.

Him: (sigh) okay. Can you get your mom so we can all talk?

Me: I don't get how's that's going to help because what's done is done.

Him: Just stop being Amahle about this whole thing and go get your mom.

Me: Fine, whatever.

I leave him and went out to call my mom.

When she sees him she starts hugging him, I really didn't like this relationship between my mom and Tukelo because I don't think what me and Tukelo have will last any longer and I don't want to be the kind of girl that introduces different men to my mom but then again I can't stay with Tukelo because my mom approves him. As they were talking, my mom gives Tukelo a hot slap out of the blue, as he was surprised, I was too, my mom hits him again.

Me: Mom!

Her: What did you promise me Tukelo? What did we talk about? Have you forgotten everything that we talked about?

Tukelo looks down. I was confused, I don't know what was going on.

Me: What is...

Her: Stay out of this Amahle.

I never spoke again.

Him: I tried MaShenge, I really did but things got out of control. But I will make it right, I will never betray your trust.

Her: You have already betrayed me! I thought you were different.

Him: But I won't leave her. I will still care for her, trust me what we have is more than just... the sin we caused.

Her: It's not about that, I trusted you, I thought you were going to respect me. You are way too young but you already have a dead child. This is why I told you to stay away from things that are not meant for you. Your time will come, all you had to do is wait.

Him: I'm sorry MaShenge but I will make it right, I promise.

She just leaves.

Him: (whisper) this is your fault.

Me: (whisper) my fault? I don't know what's going on here.

Him: (whisper) if I remember correctly, you the one that seduced me.

Me: (laughs) that's what this is about? Well, in my defence, you didn't stop me.

Him: Now your mom hates me.

Me: Oh please, my mom can never hate you.

The meeting was held in my living room and my uncles was here and nothing good can come out of that. The meeting went along, they agreed on doing some sort of ceremony, where they will change his surname, and they will carry his spirit to Lesotho. I didn't get anything, I found the whole thing pointless and a complete waste of time and money. What is the point? None of that will bring my baby back, it's just causing me more heartache because I'm trying to move on from all of this.

Ntate: Are you kids happy about the decisions made?

Me: Do we have a choice?

Mom: Amahle.

Me: I'm sorry mom, I just don't see the need of all of this. It's just pointless.

Tukelo: Amahle, don't talk like that.

Me: Whats it to you? You blamed me for losing him right?

Mom: Tukelo is that true?

Me: I just want to move on from this, I want my life back but how can I do all of that if you constantly remind me that I lost him? Its been almost 3weeks, can we move on, gosh.

Tukelo: can we talk, privately?

Me: Now you want to talk?

Uncle Themba: Amahle, you better move your little bum from that chair and talk to this boy if you know what's good for you. It seems like you two have a lot of issues.

I sigh and stand up, Tukelo follows me. We end up on my backyard.

Him: Look I know I said some bad things to you that I will forever regret saying, but you didn't have to lash out like you did. It was way out of line and disrespectful...

I try to say something, he stops me.

Him: I'm not done. Never, I mean never speak to your mom like that ever again. Especially in front of people or me, I will sort you out myself. I know you're mad but don't be disrespectful, my father was warming up to you but after what you did I'm not too sure, he had his disappointed face on.

Me: Okay fine, I'm sorry, maybe I was completely out of line. I guess you're right, I should apologise to them. Its just that I want so hard to forget. When my baby died, I had to be strong alone.

Him: You don't have to be strong anymore, I'm here now. I know I was a jerk by saying those mean things. Just that, it's how I grieve, I don't take these kind of news really well. You know what, let me make it up to you.

Me: How? We're not really together anymore, remember that coma boy?

Him: (chuckles) coma boy? That's what I am now? Okay. But look here, I know we have a really, really hard and difficult relationship but we can still work on our issues. We just need to be more honest with each other.

Me: by "we" you mean you.

Him: Yeah right. I know I'm a screw up but I have never loved this hard before, I have never been so committed to someone and that's why it's so hard for me to be this perfect guy.

Me: I don't want you to be perfect, I want you to be honest with me. I want us to be a normal couple, you know. What we have is more of a war then a relationship.

Him: I really don't know what a normal relationship is but I promise you babe, I will try to be different, be the man you deserve. Give me a chance to prove to you that I can be that man.

Me: I have given you too many chances.

Him: Give me a last one then.

I sigh.

Him: Please.

He goes on his knees.

Me: So you'll do this everytime you screw up?

Him: I can try to be the man you deserve, just give me a chance to prove to you that I can be what you need and treat you like the queen that you are. I know I have my flaws and I don't promise you a flawless relationship but I will try to give you what you deserve, I will be your Knight in shining armor, I will be your Aladdin, I will be your Clyde, can you please be my Bonnie?

I think for a while.

Me: Break my heart one more time Tukelo, you will wish you never woke up from that coma.

Him: (laughs) so is that a yes?

Me: Yes, yes, I will be your Bonnie. Now stop begging, it doesn't look good on you.

He smiles, gets up. He picks me up with his good arm and spin me around. Yeah, that's how light I was. I giggle like a little girl, he stops and I wrap my legs around his waist.

Him: I love you and I mean it.

Me: I love you, forever and always.

We kiss.

Mom: No you kids. Not in my house.

He quickly puts me down. We look at my mom and she just smiles.

Her: Food is ready.

Me: Okay mom. We coming.

She goes back inside. As I was about to leave, Tukelo pulls me back. He wraps his arm around my waist.

Him: I know we won't be able to talk once we go back in there, so I want to ask you this now.

Me: What is it?

Him: I want us to getaway from all of this, at least for a week. A lot has happened and you deserve a break.

Me: Had any ideas in mind?

Him: I was thinking Durban.

Me: Durban? So far.

Him: You need to getaway from all of this chaos and feel the sea breeze.

Me: When are we leaving?

Him: Weekend.

Me: Can't wait.

Him: Tell me about it. I can't wait to have you all to myself. I have been abstaining for so long that I'm not even sure that this dude can work anymore.

Me: We'll have to wait and see.

He gives me a naughty smile.

Him: Can you believe that I'm walking around with Tumi's liver inside of me?

Me: (laughs) Are you serious?

Him: Yeah. I needed a liver and he was kind enough to give me a portion of his. Now I'm never hearing the end of it.

I laugh.

XXXXXXXXXX

TUKELO

I cannot wait to go with Amahle, only a few days left before we can go and leave all of this behind. My arm was still a little sore but I wasn't about to let that stop me from being with her. And my father doesn't approve of her since the tantrum she threw during the meeting. My father demands respect, it's the one thing he really looks for. If you don't have respect, he can never like you. So he thinks Amahle is ruthless, rude, uneducated and lacks morality. We both agree on one thing though, Amahle is beautiful, she's freakishly beautiful and has an amazing body. He thinks that's what blinded me but it is not that all, it's more than that. Amahle challenges me and I like that about her. She doesn't depend on me and I never really had a girl like that. All of the girls I've dated always loved me for what I have and not for who I am.

Pitsi: So you're taking her to Durban?

We were having a lil braai at my place.

Me: Yes. She needs the break, we need the break.

Tumi: What about your arm?

Me: I will be fine. Its healing.

Tumi: But how will you give to her while one-handed?

Dankies: I was just about to ask that.

Me: What I do with my woman in the bedroom is none of your business.

Pitsi: You're going to let her take charge?

Me: Can you stop?

Dankies: I mean, it's nice to have a woman take over once in a while but for her to be in charge for the entire week, that's just torture.

Me: Do I do sex with my arms?

Tumi: No, but you need your arms.

Thabang: Can you give the poor boy a break.

Me: Thank you.

Tumi: (chuckles) We just joking with him. Hey lil bro I hope you have the time of your life, remember what the doctor said, I won't be donating anymore of my organs to you so be healthy and stay away from bullets.

Me: I'm never hearing the end of this.

They laugh.

Tumi: and you have nothing to worry about, we took out your enemies.

Me: What enemies?

Dankies: Leonardo.

Me: What? Why would you do that? He's not my enemy.

I was on my feet now.

Thabang: He tried to kill you, we weren't going to let him live.

Me: Leo is not the one that shot me.

Them: What?

Me: Yes, what would give you that idea?

Tumi: Well you did say you were having troubles convincing them about the deal and you'd do whatever it takes to get through to them. I thought you pulled a gun on them or acted violently and they avenge themselves.

Me: Tumi, the Russians didn't try to kill me, we closed the deal. After I persuaded them, without using my gun, they agreed to my terms. I was shot in SA in case you forgot.

Pitsi: We thought they followed you back.

Me: That's ridiculous. I am pretty sure they were not the ones that tried to kill me.

Thabang: So the one who did it is still out there?

Me: Yes. And it could be anyone, right now I don't trust anyone. He could be in this room as we speak.

Pitsi: Thats ridiculous.

Me: I'm just saying that it could be anyone. I'm also lost as you all but I'm sure as hell that Leo died for no reason.

Pitsi: Fuck.

Tumi: You screwed up Thabang.

Thabang: Me?

Dankies: Yes. You pulled the trigger.

Thabang: Well, you tracked him.

Dankies: Tumi and Pitsi kidnapped him.

Tumi: Lets focus on the one who pulled the trigger.

Me: It doesn't matter who killed him, tracked him or kidnapped him. Just be ready because there's a storm coming our way. The Russians will not rest until they find Leo's killers.

Tumi: We're not scared of them.

Me: Well you should be because those guys are dangerous. They are involved in many shady businesses, dangerous jobs that we don't do.

Thabang: Human trafficking?

Me: Yes, and loads more. I don't know the details but what we do is child's play to them.

Thabang: Shit.

Me: Well, congratulations you fools, now my life is really in danger and yours too.

I leave them shocked and confused. This is really going to be a war, I know the Russians will fight back and worse part is, I don't know when they're going to strike. Knowing them, I know they didn't cover their tracks properly. Thing is in this shady business, we all play our parts. Dankies is good with devices, tracking people and finding whoever, wherever. Tumi is good with hijacking and kidnapping. Me with guns and covering tracks so nothing comes back to us, I also lead them. Now because I wasn't there, I know for sure they did something wrong. By now the Russians have a lead. Pitsi and Thabang are no longer part of us, but Thabang was good with guns also, he never misses, he always shoot on target. Like me, he's the one who taught me anyway. Pitsi was dealing with drugs, he always gave us contacts, delivering and supplying the merchandise. Now as you can see, we all have parts to play, we all need each other to do a clean job, always. Although we have boys who do most of the work but we are backbone of this whole operation. These are some of the things Amahle doesn't know about me and in my opinion these are things that makes us drift apart because I wasn't completely honest. I am planning on coming clean about everything this weekend, except the cheating. That will make her leave me for sure.

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TUMI

We were sitting at Tukelo's big dining table and we were having dinner. I didn't even have the appetite, I am a bit drunk too. We had a lot to drink during the braai and I have a lot of shit on my mind right now so food is the last thing on my mind. Nosi called me and told me a life changing situation. I am sitting here looking at all of them thinking of a way to say this but as much I'm thinking, I can't find the right way to say this. I look at Ntate as he's making jokes and everyone is laughing at whatever he said. To make things even worse for me, Thandi's parents are here too. I look at Thandi, she smiles at me, I fake a smile.

Me: I'm going to be a father.

I say as they were busy laughing and talking.

Ntate: What is that son?

Me: I said I'm going to be a father, ntate.

Thandi's mom: Oh my God! Congratulations baby, it's been a long time coming.

She touches Thandi's stomach and hugs her.

Me: Oh no I didn't...

Thandi's dad: Why didn't you say anything Thandi?

Thandi: I don't know what is Tumi talking about.

My brothers were all looking at me, like waiting for me to say what I mean. They were all grinning because they all knew hell was about to break loose.

Me: Family I'm sorry, especially to you Thandi. I know I have failed you as a man and as a husband. I care about you Thandi. I would be lying to you if I said it was a mistake because it was not. There's no easy way to say this, no matter how I say it, it's going to sound bad. Thandi (sigh)... family... the mother of my child is on her way to hospital, to give birth as we speak.

Mme: Alfred, what is your son saying?

Ntate: Mosimane, what did you just say?

Me: Ntate, I'm saying I got another woman pregnant.

Thandi's dad: This was not part of a deal Kgosi!!

Ntate was on his feet and Thandi is crying silently next to me, her mother also had tears in her eyes.

Ntate: Tumi, are you crazy??!! Have you lost your bloody mind?!

Me: Ntate, I will not apologize for this, I will not apologise for bringing a child into this world.

Ntate: You have a wife for that! Couldn't you make her pregnant?

Me: We've been trying but it's been nine years still nothing. I am not getting any younger.

Mme: So you thought making another woman pregnant is the best option?

Me: I didn't mean to make her pregnant but when she told me she was, I couldn't be happier.

Thandi's dad: Your son has really crossed the line here!

Me: With all due respect Ntate'Moloi, this was an arranged marriage, me and Thandi we've been trying to make this work but still no success. I am a man, I have needs, I need to be with the woman I love.

Mme: So you love this woman?

Me: Yes I do

Mme: Alfred, handle your son.

She leaves. Dad comes my way, I stand up too. If he's going to hit me, I swear I will fight him back.

Ntate: Don't even think about bringing that bastard child here and don't you dare give him my surname.

Me: He's my blood, your blood, so he will use your surname whether you like it or not.

Ntate: You think you're man now? You grew some balls, you're standing up to me!

Me: I am man Ntate, I've always been a man.

Ntate: I don't know what has gotten into your heads! You and Tukelo!

Tukelo: Haa, leave me out of this.

Me: I don't have time for this, I'm having a baby.

Thandi gets up and leaves.

Ntate: Look at what you did, you like seeing her like that?!

Me: You know what, Thandi will be fine, she will forgive me. We will move on from this, we will get through this together, as a team. And I know she will love my child. What about you Ntate? You will cut me off and kick me out like you did with Tukelo?

Tukelo: I said, leave me out of this.

Ntate: You better watch how you talk to me boy!! I'm still your father!

Me: Then start acting like one! Stop trying to control everything and everyone. I am your son, treat me like one and stop dictating me. Tukelo was right, you always been more of a king to us than a father.

Tukelo: Is anyone listening to me?

Me: Enough has been said, the mother of my child needs me. I have to go.

I leave them and I rush to my room. Yes I've said it, my room. In our houses all of the brothers have their own room. I find Thandi sitting on the floor, crying.

Me: (sigh) Thandi.

She cries louder.

Me: I'm sorry Thandi, I didn't mean to hurt you. Believe me, it was never my intention.

Her: You could've at least warned me Tumi.

Me: Yes I know, I just didn't know how to tell you.

Her: And you thought announcing it in front of the family like that, is best?

Me: It was the only way I saw fit.

Her: You embarrassed me Tumi, in front of my parents, your family.

Me: I know and I'm sorry for that but I will not apologize for what I did.

Her: Just go Tumi, she needs you.

Me: Are you going to be okay?

My phone rings, I check the caller ID and it's Nosipho's number.

Her: Yes. Just go, she's calling you now. You need to be there for her.

Me: I'm really sorry that I've hurt you.

Her: Take the call.

I answer it.

Me: Yes.

I hear screams and shouting.

Her: WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU IDIOT?!!! THIS BABY OF YOURS IS GIVING ME A HARD TIME. GET YOUR ASS OVER HERE NOW!!

Me: (chuckles) I'm coming. Hang in there.

Her: HANG IN THERE???!!! ARE YOU FUCKING HEARING YOURSELF?! HOW CAN I HANG IN THERE WHILE THIS BIG HEADED BABY OF YOURS IS KILLING ME. THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT! I FUCKING HATE YOU ITUMELENG!!

Me: Baby, calm down. What did the doctors say?

Her: MAN DON'T PISS ME OFF!! GET YOUR ASS HERE SO YOU CAN FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF!!
AAAAAHHHHHHH!!!!

Me: Whats wrong?

Her: Tumi, I need you.

She sounded calmer now.

Me: I'm coming baby.

She hangs up.

Me: Thandi...

Her: Just go Tumi.

Me: Okay. Don't wait up for me, this might take whole night.

She doesn't respond. All I hear is her silent sobs, I feel like a jerk leaving her like this but I had no choice. I leave the room. On my way out I bump into Oratile. They've always been close, her and Thandi. I hope she can get through her.

Me: Ausi, please talk to Thandi. Calm her down. I'm worried about her.

Her: You're a jerk you know that aubhuti?

Me: Lecture me later. Just go check on my wife, please.

She nods. I leave using the Backdoor. I didn't want to bump into Ntate or Thandi's parents. I get to the garage, I find my brothers there.

Me: What are you guys doing?

Tukelo: We are not about to let you go through this alone. I know how it feels so we are going to support you and be there for you.

Me: Thanks.

Pitsi: Now go, your woman needs you. We going to meet you there.

I quickly get in my car and took off in high speed. The security open the gate for me. I speed off. My phone rings. I connect it to the car's Bluetooth.

Me: What?

Tukelo: Geez man, slow down.

Pitsi: Yeah, you're going to end up in hospital too if you carry on like this. And I have had it with hospitals.

Me: Will you leave me alone? I'm driving here.

Tukelo: We would leave you alone, believe me I hate hearing your husky deep voice but you didn't say which hospital she's in.

Me: Our voices sound the same fool, anyway, aren't you following me?

Thabang: We would be but these two monkeys had an argument about who's driving my car.

Tukelo: And I won.

Pitsi: Dude, you punched me.

Tukelo: Thabang said we must fight like men not like two bitches.

Pitsi: I still don't hear the part where he said you must punch me.

Me: Wouldn't have been easy if you drove your car Thabang? You know what, never mind, don't answer that. I will text you the details.

I hang up. I arrive at the hospital, as soon as i got there, i rush to the reception. I don't even think I parked my car right. I was directed to were Nosi was. I find Amahle and Zitha outside the Ward.

Amahle: She was waiting for you. She refused to give birth without you here.

That pleased me but I quickly realized that it's not supposed to happen like that. She's putting the baby's life on danger. I quickly rushed in.

Me: Baby.

She is sweaty and breathing fast.

Her: Where were you?!!

Me: I'm here now. Baby, you need to deliver this baby, Im here.

She screams.

Me: What's happening?

Nurse: We need to take her to the labor ward now. To deliver this baby.

Me: What are you waiting for? Take her.

The nurse rushed to us and she pushed her out. I'm by her side, she's holding on to my hand, and damn! Her grip was tight.

She was screaming, shouting and cursing.

Her: Don't touch me this is all your fault!!!

Me: Baby, you're the one holding my hand.

Her: We're going through this together, I'm not going through this alone!!

Me: Okay. I will be here.

We get to the labor Ward and they give me some sort of uniform. I put over my clothes. It was a mission getting Nosi to let go of my hand. As soon as I was done, I rush to her.

Doc: Okay, she's ready. Miss Mbatha, I need you to push.

She screams and she pushes. The more she pushed, the more she tightened the grip.

Me: You're doing great baby.

Her: How would you know you ain't no doctor!!!

Me: I was just...

Her: Just shut up!!!

I never spoke again.

Doc: I see the head, give me another push.

She did.

Doc: Breathe Nosipho, breathe.

She breathed in and out heavily and pushed.

Doc: Now push as hard as you can. Give it your all.

The room was filled with Nosipho's screams as she pushed as hard as she can.

Doc: Good. You're doing great. Now you're one big push away from meeting the little one. Give me one big push.

Nosipho did as told.

After a few seconds, I hear small cries. I knew that was my son's cry.

Doc: It's a beautiful, healthy baby boy.

I couldn't believe it. I was a father. On the 27th of July, I officially became a father.

I looked at Nosipho, she passed out. I go and meet my son for the first time. I hold him in my arms. He was still watery and sticky.

Me: My Thapelo. I'm going to call you Thapelo.

I kiss his watery forehead and the doctor take him away from me.

.....

Insert Thirty-Three 😊

TUKELO

We are sitting in Nosi's room and we've been sitting here for almost an hour but I haven't met my nephew as yet. Nosi is awake but she is morose. And I have never seen Tumi this excited. Since we got

here, all we've been talking about is Thapelo. I have also noticed that Amahle wasn't okay. When I asked what's wrong, she said nothing. I didn't want to push her.

Nosi: Where's my Thapelo kanti Tumi?

Tumi: He's coming. The doctors are still checking up on him.

Nosi: Is there something wrong with him??

Tumi: No. Its just a routine they do. The doctor said he's healthy.

Me: I still can't believe that your ass is a father.

Pitsi: Tell me about it. I'm still hoping to wake up from this dream.

Tumi: If this is a dream, I don't ever want to wake up. I want to stay right here because it's where I want to be. This is the best feeling ever.

Nosi: Ncoah babe, I don't ever want to wake up from this too.

Tumi kisses her forehead.

Pitsi: Who knew parenthood would make Tumi a chessy ass.

Thabang: Parenthood changes people. I'm happy for you lil brother, don't mind these fools.

Tumi: Thanks aubhuti.

Pitsi: The worse is yet to come, changing diapers and all that shit. The continuous crying, sleepless nights. This one night I had a big presentation at work to prepare for, Keletso couldn't stop crying, Karabo didn't know what to do, she ended up crying as well. Now I had two crying women to deal with.

We laugh.

Pitsi: Yeah. Raising a child is not easy but it's the best thing in the world. I wouldn't change it for anything in this world.

Thabang: Yes, knowing that there's a little you running around somewhere is something special and amazing.

As we were talking, in comes the nurse with little Thapelo.

Nurse: Someone needs feeding.

Nosi: Did you bring the formula?

Tumi: I told you. You're breast feeding.

Nosi: Tumi, I have work. I can't do that.

Tumi: You're leaving that crap hole anyway. Besides, breast feeding is the best method. I read it somewhere.

Me: You were reading baby magazines?

Tumi: Yes.

Pitsi: Dude, that's staff is for women.

Thabang: Yes. What's wrong with you?

Tumi: Shut up you fools. I'm right though, akere nurse?

Nurse: Yes. I would advise you to breastfeed Miss Mbatha, it's healthy plus it gives you time to bond with the little one.

Nosi: okay. Give me my baby already.

The nurse hands her Thapelo.

She takes him and her face lights up.

Nosi: Hey baby. Hey mommy's prince. I finally get to meet my soccer star. Morning my little Thapelo.

Amahle: Excuse me.

She gets up and leaves. Zitha gives me a look. I run after her.

Me: Babe.

She's walking fast, she kept on wiping her face. That means she is crying.

Me: Amahle babe, wait up.

She doesn't listen to me. I run and finally caught up to her.

Me: Hey baby, what's wrong?

Her face was pink, a lot of tears were running down her face. I wipe her tears.

Her: I can't Tukelo. I can't do it.

Me: Talk to me. What is it?

Her: I can't pretend to be happy while I'm not. I can't be happy for my friend and your brother when I just buried my baby a few weeks back. It's just all too much.

I couldn't say anything. I didn't know what to say, I had no words of comfort.

Her: Am I such a bad friend?

Me: Let's sit down.

I pull her to a bench, I sit and I pull her, she sits on top of me.

Me: No babe, you're not. It's understandable. It will take time for us to get through this. I know it's hard but we will go through this. It's even hard for me too.

Her: I don't see that. The only time I ever saw you broken was when you were in that hospital bed.

Me: Just because I don't talk about it and I don't show it doesn't mean I'm not hurting. I have to put on a strong face for the both of us. If we both weak, then we will fall apart.

Her: I'm not weak.

She hits my bad arm.

Me: (chuckle) okay you're not babe. But do you know how many times I cry myself to sleep because of this? How I feel guilty for letting you both down? How I beat myself up because I wasn't there to say my final goodbyes to my son?

Her: You were in a coma Tukelo.

Me: I know but I just wish babe that I saw him there, lying in that coffin. Maybe I would have believed that he's really gone, right now, when I see you, I still hope to feel a bump on your belly. I still hope you'd call me and tell me that you have an appointment with a doctor. For you to tell me that this is all a bad dream, our baby is still growing in that tummy.

She wipes a tear that I didn't even know was there.

Me: I'm still in denial, still in shock. But with you by my side, I know I can be strong again, I know I will overcome the shock. Just by seeing you, I get the strength I need, to fight, move on and accept. Slowly, I will be fine, we will be fine. So stop feeling like you're a bad friend to Nosi, you're still healing, trying to get over what has happened to us. I don't think this was a mistake. It was just one of God's ways to test our love, he's testing our faith. Lets just be strong my love and try to accept God's doings and let Him take care of our little Nkanyiso.

She smiles and kisses me. We pull apart when we hear people talking.

Her: Thank you so much babe. I needed those wise words. You're not dumb after all.

Me: (laughs) so you thought I was dumb? I happen to have 5 successful businesses not mentioning the ones that I part own, I'm talking about my very own businesses. I also happen missy to have a huge house, resorts, renches, a jet and a penthouse. Do you want me to continue?

Her: (chuckle) okay show off, I get it, you're rich.

Me: Now do dumb people get rich? And I happen to have the most beautiful, amazing thing in this world.

Her: Whats that?

Me: You. I know the smartest decision I made was to fall in love with you. I was smart enough to get you, a hard to get.

Her: (smiles) okay baby, I see it now. You would've been really dumb to let me go.

Me: I would have been an idiot.

She wraps her arms around my neck and baby kisses me.

Me: Do you want to get out of here?

Her: Yes. I would rather leave. I will see the baby when I'm ready.

Me: Okay babe. Let me go tell them that we're leaving. Go in the car.

Her: Okay.

I give her the keys. She gets off me and I go back in the Ward.

Me: We're leaving. Amahle is not okay.

Nosi: Yes I understand. It was selfish of me to ask her to come here. I wasn't thinking straight. I'm sorry.

Me: It's okay Nosi. She will be fine. She just needs time.

Nosi: Tell her I will call her later.

Me: Okay. Will see you guys later.

Thabang: Which car are you using?

Me: Which car did I use to get here?

Thabang: Mine.

Me: You just answered your own question.

Thabang: Tukelo, don't use my car, give it back.

Me: Relax, I won't scratch it.

Thabang: It's my fucking Maserati. I love that car more than I love my wife! So give me my keys.

Me: You know Italian things is my type of thing so don't worry, I will take care of it.

Thabang: No I'm not comfortable.

Me: Relax Thabang Thabong, I will take of it. Will you trust me?

Thabang: How will we get home?

Me: Call an Uber.

Pitsi: Why don't you call an Uber?

Me: Me in an uber? Oh please.

I leave them cursing and calling my name.

Thabang: Tukelo!!

I turn to look at him.

Thabang: A scratch on that car, you're dead. I swear.

Me: You worry too much grandpa. Relax.

.....

AMAHLE

I wake up next to the man I love. He's still asleep, and I just love watching him sleep. It just brings joy into my heart. I give him a soft Peck. He smiles.

Me: You sneak.

Him: What are you doing?

He still had his eyes closed.

Me: Just admiring God's creation.

He opens his eyes.

Him: Morning beautiful.

Me: Morning handsome.

Him: Slept okay?

Me: With you here, I barely slept at all.

Him: (chuckles) I missed you.

Me: Yeah I get that but don't you think you over did it just a little bit? You almost tore my pussy apart.

Him: I didn't you hear you stopping me. All I heard where your moans and you going "yes baby, yes"

He tries to mimick my voice.

Me: (laugh) I do not sound like that.

Him: Oh once you this 'dude' inside of you babe, you do.

Me: Oh God stop.

Him: Make me.

I hit him with a pillow. He hits me back and we end up having a massive pillow fight.

We were disturbed by his phone ringing. He goes and answer it.

Him: What you fool... Okay, what time.... so early... yes I will bring it.... no I didn't scratch it...no we are in a hotel...okay I'm coming.

He hangs up.

Him: Nosi is getting discharged today.

Me: Okay, I will go see her later on.

Him: Babe?

Me: Relax I'm fine. I was just a bit emotional yesterday. I'm okay now, I can handle it.

He gives me those 'are you sure' looks.

Me: I will be fine really. You worry too much. Don't you see that I look and feel better?

Him: If I knew that I had to fuck you to get the old you back, I would have done it a long time ago.

I throw a pillow at him and he ducks, it hits the wall. We laugh.

Him: Lets go take a shower.

Me: Okay.

We showered, did some love making and we went out. We came to this hotel because he's family was still in his house. He said he wanted me to relax and wanted nothing stressing me out. Which I thought was the best idea. I had no energy to deal with his family. We checked out and went to the undercover parking. He unlocks the car.

Him: Oh shit!!! No no.

Me: What is it?

Him: I'm so dead.

Me: Baby what is it?

I look at what he's looking at.

Me: What are we looking at?

Him: That.

He points to a scratch.

Me: when did that happen?

Him: I don't know. All I know is, it wasn't there before and Thabang is going to kill me.

Me: It's barely noticeable.

Him: Yes but Thabang will notice. I know him.

Me: Can't you fix it?

Him: Yes I will fix it before he sees it. Lets go.

He opens the door for me, I go in. He goes to the driver's seat and he takes off.

Me: I've been thinking.

Him: Oh boy.

Me: It's not something bad, just listen.

Him: I'm listening my Tigress.

Me: I want my bike back.

Him: Why?

Me: School's opening soon. I will need my bike.

Him: You have me.

Me: No, I want my bike Tukelo.

He doesn't say anything.

Me: Why did you buy me the thing if I can't ride it?

Him: I didn't say that. I just enjoy taking you to school.

Me: I understand but I miss my bike.

Him: I will think about it.

Me: Tukelo man..

Him: I said I will think about it.

I roll my eyes and look away.

Him: Don't do that. You know how much I hate it.

Me: You're being a dictator and I hate that!

Him: Fine Amahle! You will have your stupid bike!

Me: Don't shout.

Him: (sigh) sorry. Okay babe, I will get you your bike back.

Me: Thank you.

We drive in comfortable silence. We listening to Chris Brown, as always. He drops me off at Nosi's place and says he will be back, he needs to fix the scratch. I go inside, I find Zitha, Pitsi, Tumi, Nosi and Thabang in the living room.

Nosi: Hey you.

Me: Hey, everyone.

Them: Hey.

Me: Guys, I'm really sorry about yesterday, especially to you, Tumi and Nosi. I know that was a special moment for you guys and I ruined it.

Nosi: Don't be silly, you didn't ruin anything. The one who should be apologizing is me, I should have known it would be hard for you.

Tumi: Yes. We understand Hle, don't feel guilty and beat yourself up for nothing.

Me: Thank you guys for understanding. Where's the little one anyway?

Nosi: Right here, next to mommy.

I didn't even notice him there, he was lying on the couch wrapped around in a blue baby blanket.

Me: Can I hold him?

Nosi: Sure.

She hands me the baby.

Me: Wow, he's a lot heavier than I thought.

Zitha: That baby is really heavy, I don't know what Nosi was feeding him.

Me: He's so beautiful. Hey, little Thapelo, meet your aunty Amahle.

I kiss his soft little cheek. This baby is adorable, he's too cute for words.

Me: Unfortunately, he looks like Tumi.

Tumi: He does, doesn't he?

Nosi: I don't see myself there, I just hope at least he has my brains.

Tumi: Oh no. I can't afford my baby being as expensive as you.

Nosi: But baby, you can afford.

Tumi: You're right. I can.

Thabang: Where's your man?

Me: Uhm... he... he said he went to take care of something.

Pitsi: You didn't ask him what it was?

Me: Uhm... no I didn't. So Nosi, have you told your parents?

Nosi: Yes. They just said it's because I moved out without their blessings, this is my reward. My mom won't even help me with the baby.

She looked all sad and disappointed. I give Tumi the baby, I go to her. Me and Zitha hug her together.

Thabang: This is our que to leave. They will start crying and all that shit.

Tumi: Yes. Let's leave them to it. Baby, we will be in patio if you need us.

Nosi nods, they all leave with baby Thapelo. We pull apart.

Nosi: I just don't understand why they're being so cruel towards me.

Zitha: Nosi, you moved out and you're only 22 years old, you don't have a proper job and you're already a mother, it's their job to worry.

Me: Yes they have to worry about you.

Okay, here's what happened to Nosi. When Tumi found out that she's pregnant, he wanted her to live in a comfortable home and for him to be able to see her whenever he wants to. So as you all know, the Mokoenas don't really ask, now do they? They tell. One day, he told Nosi that he bought a house for her in Germiston. It's a really beautiful home, with three bedrooms, two garages, a huge kitchen and a living room. I'm in love with the backyard. It has an amazing view with a big pool. So when she told her parents that she's moving out, they didn't take it really well, especially her father. Nosi being her, she moved out anyway despite her parents telling her not to. Even though her mother knows who's taking care of her, she was still against the idea of Nosi being in love with a married man. She begged her not to leave but she did anyway. She hasn't seen her parents since the day she moved out. She speaks to her

mom over the phone though. She hasn't spoken to her dad ever since. Now she lives in this big house all alone, with a maid and two security guards.

After we've comforted Nosipho, we decided to order a pizza. We were all too lazy to cook. It's been almost two hours and Tukelo hasn't arrived yet. The pizza arrived, we called the boys inside. I dished up for everyone, we sit in the kitchen, some standing, some sitting on the high chairs. Its been 3 hours, nothing from him now I'm really worried.

Thabang: Where is your man with my car?

Me: I don't know either, have you tried calling him?

Thabang: Yes, he won't answer.

Me: Let me try.

I dial he's number and it goes straight to voicemail.

Me: Voicemail.

Thabang: He better be here in the next hour because if he's not, I swear I will kill him.

Thabang really looked angry and his brothers were laughing at him, which pissed him off even more. Me on the other hand I'm thinking that Tukelo is somewhere with another girl, I know for a fact that he's cheating on me or he was. Either way, I know there has been some girl along the way. I get rid of that thought.

Nosi: Boo, are you okay?

Me: Yes, I'm fine. Is it painful?

She was breast feeding Thapelo.

Nosi: Well, yes. He sucks too hard but I have to feed him.

Me: Why don't you get a breast pump? And feed him on a bottle.

Nosi: I will tell Tumi to get it later.

Me: I can give you mine. Tukelo bought way too much things for Nkanyiso. You can have it all.

Tumi: Tukelo destroyed it all.

Me: What? What do you mean?

Pitsi: When he got to his house, the day he was discharged, he went to the nursery and he destroyed everything. He smashed, torn and even burnt some of things.

Me: Is he crazy?

Tumi: He even took out a gun and started shooting everything. He almost destroyed the house.

Nosi: And you idiots didn't even think about stopping him? You enjoyed the show?

Pitsi: You don't want to be near Tukelo when he's in that state. He just go crazy. We only stopped him when he pointed a gun on his head.

Me: He tried to kill himself?

Tumi: He wasn't going to kill himself. He run out of bullets anyway.

Me: And how did you know that?

Tumi: When he pulled the trigger.

Me: You saying that he would have died if he didn't run out of bullets?

Tumi: Well, there's a 50% chance, it could have gone either way.

Nosi: You such idiots!

They laughed.

Tumi: We joking. Thabang snatched it away when he pointed it to his head but he wasn't going to kill himself.

Me: I won't even ask him about it.

Pitsi: Don't. Tukelo is not really good with expressing his feelings, he doesn't like talking about things.

Me: But how can he go through it without talking about it?

Thabang: Once he smashes something or shoots something, he will be fine.

Me: So you're telling me that if he have one of his bad days, I should be prepared that he could smash the whole house or shoot at something?

Them: Yep!

Me: (sigh) what did I get myself into?

Zitha: I think y'all a much made in heaven. That's how you get when you're mad, you'll want to fight someone.

Me: I don't use a gun, I use my fists.

Thabang: So it's true that you kick some ass.

Nosi: And she sure can, she doesn't even fight girls, she only fight men.

Me: You guys stop, I don't do that.

Girls: Yes you do.

Me: I don't anymore.

Zitha: Can we prove that?

Me: How?

My phone rings and its Tukelo.

Me: Excuse me.

I take my phone and I step aside.

Me: Where are you? I have ran out of answers to give to Thabang.

Him: Baby, I have a huge problem and Thabang is going to kill me.

Me: What is it now?

Him: The car is black now.

Me: What do you mean? The car was blue.

Him: I left it with my car painter, I told him to paint the scratch and this idiot painted the whole car black.

Me: How can he misunderstand that?

Him: He's Italian.

Me: Oh God.

Him: But I specifically told him to paint on the scratch.

Me: Why did he paint it black?

Him: I always come to him to repaint my cars and all of my cars are black.

Me: Then ask him to paint it blue.

Him: No can do, it takes a really long time to paint a car, I can't wait any longer.

Me: You're dead.

Him: I know.

Me: Where are you now?

Him: I'm driving in Nosi's house.

I look out the window and I see him and the car is indeed black.

Me: Well see you.

Him: Okay. I love you.

Me: I love you more.

He hangs up.

Thabang: Is that your man?

Me: Uhm... yeah.

Pitsi: Well where is he?

Me: Outside.

Thabang: About Goddamn time.

Tukelo walks in. He greets and kisses me. He makes me stand, he sits on my seat and I sit on top of him.

Thabang: Where's my car?

Tukelo: Huh?

Thabang: I asked you where's my car.

Tukelo: Uhm.. outside.

Thabang: Okay.

Me: Have you eaten?

Tukelo: I don't really have an appetite.

I laugh.

Pitsi: Dude, are you okay?

Tukelo: Yes.

Tumi: You look pale.

Me: Can you two leave my man alone, he said he's fine.

Pitsi: Okay, I don't want you kicking my ass.

Tumi: Tukelo, did you know that your woman is a man beater?

Tukelo: Yes.

Pitsi: And you're still with her?

Tukelo: You monkeys, mind your own business.

Me: Yes please. Leave us alone.

They laugh.

We go to the lounge and we sit on a couch, we end up watching soccer. Zitha and Nosi were bored and had no idea what was going on. Thabang's phone ring, he stands up. I'm sitting with Tukelo on a two seater couch, we're actually cuddling on the couch. Tumi is with Nosi and Thapelo. Zitha is sitting with Pitsi and Thabang. It was just a nice, chilled afternoon. Thabang comes back and he looks a little disturbed.

Thabang: Boys, there's been trouble. We need to leave.

Tukelo: Whats about?

Thabang: The Russians issue.

Tukelo: Fuck! I knew it!

Pitsi: Something went wrong?

Thabang: You don't know the half of it. Lets go now. Tukelo, keys.

Tukelo: Keys?

Thabang: Yes, my car keys.

Tukelo: uhm.. okay.

He reaches into his pockets and takes out the keys. He gives them to Thabang. He leaves.

Tukelo: Okay, this gives me enough time to run.

He gets off the couch and starts wearing his shoes.

Me: You better run now babe.

Pitsi: What did you do?

Me: He screwed up. Long story short, Thabang's car is now black.

Boys: What?!

Pitsi: Dude, go hide now. Or better yet, take my gun, kill yourself before he does.

Pitsi throws his pistol at him, Tukelo catches it.

Nosi: Hide that thing away from my baby.

Tumi: He's only a day old, he can't see.

Zitha: Don't you think you're over exaggerating?

Tukelo: Trust me, we're not.

Thabang starts shouting from outside.

Tukelo runs, and leaves the house using the back door.

Thabang rushes in and he looked pissed.

Thabang: Where's this motherfucker??!!!!

He even had a gun on his hand.

Zitha: Does everyone in this family always carry a gun with them?

Thabang leaves using the back door too.

I stand up, running after him. I have never seen Tukelo run that fast. Thabang was running after him with a gun on his hand, Thabang was cursing and shouting. Everyone's outside watching them chasing each other. Thabang starts shooting.

Me: Thabang stop!!

Pitsi: Relax, nothing is going to happen.

Me: The man is shooting at him and you're telling me to relax!!

Tumi: He won't shoot him. That's how it's always been with them. Tukelo also shoots at him if he's pissed at him. It's just how they roll.

Me: That's crazy! Thabang put that gun down!!!

He hasn't stop shooting. Tukelo doesn't seem moved by this too because if I'm not mistaken, I see him laughing. While I feel tears running down my face.

Me: Thabang you're going to kill him!!

Nosi: You idiots do something!!

Tumi: We never get involved.

Thabang shoots at him again and the bullet hits a tree that's way too near Tukelo. I feel weak immediately, I just drop on the floor.

Zitha: Amahle!

I'm just sitting on the floor with tears pouring down my face. I am not too sure what goes on in front of me, everything is blurry. I feel people around me but I can't hear what they say. Until, I hear Tukelo's voice.

Tukelo: Amahle, come back. Baby, snap out of it.

I finally come back to my senses and back to reality.

Tukelo: What's wrong?

Me: I don't know what happened.

Tumi: When she saw Thabang shooting that tree, she just sat on the floor and started staring into space.

Tukelo: I'm okay, you see. He didn't shoot me.

Thabang: I wasn't going to shoot him.

Me: I just got really scared. I know what the feeling of almost losing you feels like, I don't want to feel like that ever again.

Tukelo: We're sorry baby.

Thabang: Yes, I didn't think about your feelings, I'm sorry. I was just so pissed at this idiot. Dude, what happened to my car?

Tukelo: I will explain later. Right now, I need to make sure that my woman is okay.

Me: I'm fine.

Nosi: Here, drink this. It's sugar water.

Tukelo takes it.

Tukelo: Will it help her?

Nosi: Yes.

He makes me drinks it. I finish the whole glass.

Tukelo: How do you feel now?

Me: Cold.

It was getting chilly outside. It was getting late anyway. He lifts me up and carries me inside.

Me: I can walk you know.

Tukelo: I'm not taking any chances of you falling again.

Me: I didn't fall. Besides, you're hurting your arm.

Tukelo: My arm is fine.

He puts me on the couch.

Nosi: You guys should stop these dumb games now. There's a kid in the house, I don't want my child to be around a gun.

Tumi: Baby, he's a day old.

Nosi: I don't care if he's an hour old, I just don't want a gun around me and my son. Meaning, if you come here, you leave your guns at your houses.

Tumi: But babe...

Nosi: No buts! I've talked. My house, my rules.

She takes Thapelo from Tumi and goes upstairs.

Tumi just smiles and shakes his head.

Zitha: Well, I had a good day. Let me leave now before my mom starts blowing my phone.

Pitsi: Let me drive you home.

Zitha: It's okay. I will take a taxi.

Thabang: Yes she can. Have you people forgotten that we have to go, we have a situation at hand.

Pitsi: Okay. Let me walk her out then.

Zitha: I'm fine really.

Pitsi: If I don't walk you out, I'd feel less of a gentleman so just let me.

Zitha looks at me, I pretend like I wasn't paying attention to what they were saying.

Zitha: Oh okay.

They walk out.

Me: Tukelo, what is it with your brothers?

Him: What do you mean?

Me: They always after my friends.

Him: He's just walking her out.

Me: First he offered her a lift, now he's walking her out? I saw the way he was looking at her.

Him: You're over exaggerating.

Me: He's married and has kids. I don't want him near my friend, he should stay away.

Him: Okay fine, I will talk to him.

Me: Okay.

Pitsi comes back.

Thabang: Let's go.

Tumi: Whats this about actually?

Thabang: You'll find out soon enough. Tukelo, call Blade and tell him to meet us at our usual spot.

Tukelo: Okay.

Tumi: I'm not leaving my woman and kid, not knowing where I'm going or what's the sudden meeting about.

Thabang: You might never see your woman and kid again, you might go to jail if we don't leave this instant. Will that get you going?

Me: Jail?

I stand up immediately.

Tukelo: Baby, calm down. No one is going to jail. At least not me.

Me: Are you sure?

Tukelo: Positive. Now take your apartment keys, I will get my driver to pick you up. Go to your apartment, I will meet you there.

I take the keys

Tukelo: Call your mom, tell her you are not coming back.

Me: Okay.

Tukelo: I love you, okay?

Me: Yeah, I love you more.

He kisses me.

Thabang: Okay lovebirds, we need to leave. Now.

We pull apart, he gives me a peck.

Me: Be careful you guys.

Them: Okay.

Thabang: I'm still not over the fact that you turned my car black.

He put his arm around Tukelo's shoulder as they're walking out.

Tukelo: You may shoot at me, be mad at me but we both know that it looks dooper now.

Thabang: Ummm, yeah it does.

They share a laugh.

The driver arrived shortly after they left. I said my goodbyes to Nosi and the baby. As soon as I got to my apartment, I called my mom and she didn't have a problem with it but told me to arrive early tomorrow so I can help with arranging for the small ceremony that would be held on Saturday. The same day that me and Tukelo are leaving. I went to take a shower, I got dressed in Tukelo's shirt and his boxers, I packed everything the last time I left. I look at the big beautiful painting on my bedroom wall, our picture. I'm flattered that despite what was happening between us, he never takes it down.

I get in bed and I receive a call from an unknown number.

Me: Hello?

Her: You think you won, huh?

Me: Excuse me?

Her: As soon as he's tired of you, he will come back to me. He always does.

Me: Woman, what are you talking about?

Her: Ask your man. Where do you think he goes every time he decides to leave you?

Me: At least he always come back to me. You'd just let him heal, you be like he's punching bag, you help him forget that he's hurting.

Her: Don't get cocky. I am coming for him. He's mine, he's always been mine.

Me: Dude, I'm really tired. Are you done?

She just hangs up.

See now ladies, that's how you handle side chicks. As much as it hurts you and eats you up inside but you never let her see that. Don't give her a fight, just put her in her place, let her know where she stands. Now, I may not know who's this bitch is but I'm willing to find out and I wasn't about to let Tukelo know that I'm on to something. I don't want him lying to my face, then he'll go behind my back and try to shut the girl up. If I want to find out the truth, I need to calm down, think and try to figure this out.

I don't even know when I fell asleep but I was woken up by Tukelo taking off his clothes. I slightly open my eyes. I check the time on my phone and it's 3:40 am. He notices that I'm up.

Him: I'm sorry, did I wake you?

Me: Where have you been?

Him: Go back to sleep.

Me: Is that blood?

I noticed blood stains on his shirt.

Him: I'm going to take a shower.

He goes in the bathroom. I wake up and I notice that he left his phone by he's bedside. I am tempted to go through it. I take it and I realize it has a password. I don't know it. I try everything, from his name, my name, our son's name, his birthday, my birthday but no luck. Until I decide on typing "Tigress" and I go through. I go through his sent messages, I find absolutely nothing. I go to his inbox. I find an unsaved number and this girl is rather pushy, she is being all Flirty and begging Tukelo to come back to her. Until I find a message that tears my heart into pieces, "Missing you already, I had an amazing time last night" when I check the date, it was just a month ago. So this girl was right. Tukelo has been sneaking on me and going to see this girl. I wonder who it is. I hear a shower close. I quickly lock his phone and put it exactly where I found it.

He comes in with a towel wrapped around his waist. His body was still wet, he was drying out his hair.

Him: Why aren't you sleeping?

Me: I don't feel like sleeping now.

Him: What do you feel like doing?

He smirks.

Me: Oh God Tukelo, I didn't mean it like that.

Him: What did I say?

Me: I know what you thinking though.

I watch him as he dry his sexy body and he lotions it then wore his boxers then came to bed. He wraps his arms around my waist. I turn my back on him, he cuddles me from behind.

Him: Baby, you smell good.

I don't respond.

Him: I can't wait for Saturday.

Me: Me too. What happened today?

Him: Can we talk about it in the morning?

Me: Will we?

Him: Yes we will. I'm really tired.

He's voice did sound sleepy.

Me: Okay.

Him: I love you my Tigress.

Me: I love you too.

A few minutes later, I hear soft snores. After Tukelo came back, I never slept a wink. I kept on thinking about this mystery woman who just popped out of nowhere. What I knew was, I wasn't going to let it affect me, I was going to deal with this my own way.

.....

TUKELO

It is finally the day me and Amahle leave for Durban. The ceremony of Nkanyiso Tumelo Mokoena went well and my family was leaving later on tonight. I have never been happier. I hated every second they spent here, I love my family but my mom, ntate and Nkati made Amahle's life very difficult. It pissed me off. I am really glad that they're leaving. As I was packing Ntate summoned me to the living room. I finished up my packing and went downstairs, I see all my family sitting in my lounge but what shocked me was seeing Nthabi and her family. I just knew things weren't looking good for me.

I greet them and I sit next to Bontle.

Me: what's going on here?

I whisper to Bontle. She shrugs her shoulders.

Ntate: Tukelo, I'm only going to say this once and I'm not going to repeat myself. You're going to leave that girl and marry Nthabi.

Me: I'm not going to repeat myself also, I will not marry Nthabi.

Mme: My son, do you realize what will happen if you don't?

Me: I don't care what happens. I will not marry Nthabi and that is final.

Nthabi's mom: You don't just go around sleeping with my daughter and tell us the nonsense you're telling us.

Ntate: You did what Tukelo?

Me: Ntate it was....

Mme: Don't you dare say it was a mistake! Tukelo I thought we said no sex before marriage.

Nthabi's dad: First, you ran away with our daughter then you take away what she prides herself in and you leave her! It doesn't work like that son! You have to marry her or else...

Me: To be fair ntate'Molefe, your daughter followed me here, I didn't ask her to come with me and as for her virginity, I will pay for the damages but I can't marry her.

Mme: Son, you don't have a choice here. You've caused too much damage and a lot is at stake.

Nthabi's mom: We will do what we said we will do Alfred. Your son has made us wait for too long, we're running out of patience. Your son has disrespected us, humiliated us and it's about time we returned the favor.

Me: What are you talking about?

Nthabi's dad: If you don't marry my daughter, we will take your fathers land, we will not have peace at Lesotho we will declare a war.

Me: Can they do that Ntate?

He nods. I look at his face and I could see that he was very much serious. I don't want to marry Nthabi but I would never forgive myself if my family go homeless and it will be all my fault.

Me: (sigh) all I have to do is marry Nthabi?

Mme: Yes Tukelo. Its been a long time coming.

Me: Nthabi?

Nthabi: Yes.

Me: After all the pain I've caused. After all the drama and misery I have brought upon you. The tears, heartaches, shame and disappointment I have brought and despite the fact that I can never love you in that way, do you still want to be my wife?

Nthabi: More than anything.

I was hoping that she says no and for her family to see that I'm the ideal man for their daughter but all I saw was a smile on their faces.

Me: (sigh) then okay. Okay, I will marry Nthabi.

My brothers looked at me like I just said something crazy while my parents and her parents looked happy and pleased with my decision.

Ntate: This calls for a celebration.

Me: Count me out, I have to be somewhere in an hour.

Mme: What? Are you crazy? You have to be with us during this joyful time.

Me: I have business to take care of. Excuse me.

I stand up and my brothers follow me outside.

Tumi: The fuck Tukelo??!

Me: I know but...

Pitsi: I thought you said you were never going to go through this.

Me: I know, I just...

Thabang: How can you let them manipulate you like that?

Me: I didn't. I felt like...

Tumi: Amahle is going to kill you.

Me: She won't. I won't tell her, just yet.

Them: What?!!

Tumi: She will find out. This is something that can easily come out.

Me: Guys! I know what I'm doing so chill.

Insert Thirty-Four 😊

AMAHLE

I am so late and Tukelo will be here any minute. He called and said he's on his way. He's so going to be mad at me that I'm still packing. Forgetting the fact that it was super busy today and I had a lot to do. It wasn't as hard as I thought it would be. Things between me and Tukelo were going okay, we were both trying and he was more honest. To my surprise, that night he went on to persuade my brother to not investigate any longer. From what I know, Anele was on to them and he knew that him and his brothers had something to do with some dead Russian. Thabang wanted to kill Anele but when Tukelo realized that it was Anele, he ordered them not to. They actually kidnapped Anele. They managed to get him on their side but Anele is not talking to me. He knows everything now, from the gold smuggling, the drugs, the hijacking. Even today, he's been avoiding me and I understand he's frustration. I just hope he doesn't say anything to my mom.

Andile calls me to say Tukelo is waiting for me outside. I take all of my bags and said my goodbyes at home. I find Andile and Tukelo outside a black Lamborghini, talking.

Tukelo: Geez babe, we're only going away for a week.

Me: Can you come help me with my luggage and stop talking nonsense.

They take my bags and put the bags in the boot.

Me: And the Lambo?

Tukelo: Got it yesterday. You like?

Me: Argh! No.

Andile: Come on sis, this car is amazing. I just took it for a spin.

Me: You let Andile drive your car? But you don't let me.

Tukelo: Babe, you don't have a driver's license. Actually we need to fix that.

Me: He doesn't too.

Tukelo: He's a guy.

Me: What does that suppose to mean?

Andile: It means, I'm a natural when it comes to cars.

Me: That is just stereotypic.

Tukelo: You have a bike.

Andile: And you never let me use it.

Me: I am not even allowed to use my own bike dude.

Tukelo: Don't worry, this week, you'll do whatever. Bunjee jumping, skydiving, paragliding whatever you want.

Me: Even dirt bike riding?

Tukelo: Whatever.

I scream and I jump on him, he catches me and I wrap my legs around his waist.

Tukelo: My arm.

Me: I love you.

I kiss him.

Andile: Get a room.

We pull apart.

Me: Go inside.

Andile: Let me leave you two. Have fun. And Bra Tuks, we friends and all but don't mess with my sister man. She's my life. I will use your gun to shoot you.

Me: He knows you have a gun?

Tukelo: uhmmm... I will sure take care of her don't worry man. We have to leave now.

He puts me down.

Andile and Tukelo do their secret handshake. Andile leaves.

He opens the door for me and I get in. He gets in as well and we leave.

Me: He knows that you have a gun?

Him: Nice weather isn't it?

Me: Tukelo.

Him: He saw it.

Me: Why would you carry a gun around?

Him: I always have a gun with me.

Me: even now?

Him: I always have a gun with me.

Me: Lord help me.

Him: Trust me babe, I need it and you will too. That's why I was thinking to get you a gun.

Me: Me and a gun?

Him: Yes. You're not scared are you?

Me: of course I'm not.

Him: Then you will allow me to get you a gun.

Me: I don't even know how to use it.

Him: I will teach you. I know you're capable of handling a gun.

Me: Well alright.

Him: Don't get too excited. I'm only going to let you use a pistol.

Me: I am sure I can handle a pistol.

Him: I know you will.

Me: So we're taking a jet or booked us a flight?

Him: We're driving.

Me: What?! Babe, it's 6pm.

Him: I'm a fast driver and that's why I bought this Lamborghini. We will be there before you know it.

His phone vibrates. He looks at it and doesn't bother answering.

Me: Your phone is ringing.

Him: I can see that. I'm not in the mood to entertain anyone. I just want to be with my woman with no disturbance.

Me: Why is it on vibration?

Him: Like I said, I don't want to be disturbed.

Me: Mmm.

Him: You don't sound convinced.

Me: No. I am. Trust me.

I wasn't convinced. Tukelo always has an answer to everything. You don't ever want to confront him without any proof because he will always defend himself. He should've been a lawyer. We drove for hours. I pulled my seat back. I was dead tired. We talked, joked around, took tons of selfies and sang together. I was a horrible singer, while Tukelo was an amazing singer. I didn't care though. We even did a video singing. I was already having fun with him.

I feel someone kissing me. I don't know when I fell asleep. I slightly open my eyes.

Him: Wake up sleeping beauty.

Me: What time is it?

Him: 9pm.

I stretch myself and rubbed my eyes.

Me: We're here?

Him: Yes. We are. I have already took luggage inside so let's go already.

He goes outside the car and he opens the door for me. I got out, he helds my hand and we go in. I notice that he's a little disturbed, he keep looking behind us.

Me: Babe, what's wrong?

Him: Huh?

Me: What is it? Don't make me look crazy because I can see that you're looking for something or someone.

Him: I don't know Tigress, I feel like someone is following us.

Me: What do you mean?

Him: Maybe I'm being paranoid. Let's go.

We go inside this beautiful beach house. I thought we were going to some hotel. We go inside and what I see is beyond me. This house is amazing, everything is blue with a touch of white. It's vintage and it has a wooden floor. The view is amazing and I just love everything about it.

Him: Do you like it?

Me: It's amazing babe. Beautiful.

As we were going in our room, I saw this big picture of us on the wall.

Me: Its yours?

Him: Yep.

Me: You never told me you have a beach house.

Him: Well, I never really thought I would use it again. I even forgot about it. Nthabi bought...

He doesn't finish his sentence

Me: You have got to be kidding me.

Him: She only designed it and I bought it for her. Well, it's in my name.

Me: You brought me to a house that you use to fuck your ex?

Him: We never used it. She use to come here and do whatever, she could've been fucking some other guy. But we never came together, I swear.

Me: Still. It's something you bought for your ex.

Him: I can buy you another one if you want.

Me: So you can bring your future girlfriend to my house, no thank you.

Him: Rubbish. You're my last.

Me: For your sake, I hope so.

Him: I cross my heart I hope to die.

I look at him and he looked serious, I just laugh.

Me: No wonder this place look so dull.

Him: You liked it before you knew who designed it.

Me: I didn't say I like it.

Him: You said it's amazing.

Me: That doesn't mean I like it.

Him: (chuckles) let's agree to disagree.

We settle in. We decide on having a picnic in our room. It was an amazing night. After our picnic, we decided to cuddle in bed. I was tired and so was he.

I was woken up by the smell of delicious food. I notice that Tukelo's not next to me. I dress in his shirt. Now Tukelo is twice my size so the shirt was big, it looked like a dress but I looked sexy in it. I go downstairs, I find him singing a Chris Brown song while cooking. I don't think he knows I'm watching him. I lean on a wall and I look at him singing and dancing. Until he burns himself and I laugh. He turns to look at me.

Him: How long have you been standing there?

Me: Long enough to damage my ears and eyes.

Him: (chuckles) come on baby, you know I'm a good dancer and a good Singer.

Me: So now you admit it?

Him: Um... no I don't.

Me: But you did.

Him: Whatever. I was hoping that you stay in bed so I can bring you breakfast.

Me: You should have woken up a bit early. I mean, it's 8am.

Him: But you sometimes wake up a lot later than that.

Me: When you're not with me. I just felt the bed cold and I decided to wake up. What are you making?

I got closer, I tried opening the pots but he smacked my hand.

Him: Don't touch. It's Italian breakfast.

Me: Again. Baby, I always eat your foreign things, it's time I eat something I'm use to.

Him: Don't you enjoy it?

I don't enjoy it one bit.

Me: I do enjoy it but I miss my ordinary food.

Him: I was joking, I'm making English breakfast. Bacon, eggs, sausages and toast.

Me: Yumm, can we eat already.

Him: Okay Miss I-miss-my-ordinary-food. Just sit down, relax and I will give you your food.

I sit down and he gives me the food. We have breakfast and went to take a shower. We got dressed then left to start our adventurous day. We decided to go Bunjee jumping. Its not his first time but he was so scared, even though he didn't want to admit it but he was shit scared and to be fair, I was too, that cliff was way too steep. We did it together and I decided to do it again, alone this time. He didn't hear none of that. I enjoyed it the second time. After that, we went to have lunch on the restaurant nearby. It was amazing and yes it was an Italian Restaurant. I can't even pronounce what I ordered. I don't know what I'm going to do if it's something I can't even eat. Our orders came and mine looked disgusting while his looked delicious.

Me: What the hell did I order Tukelo?

He looks at my food.

Him: Oh that's an alligator baby.

Me: The fuck! See why I never want to come to these restaurants of yours. I can't eat this.

Him: Trust me, it's delicious, just..

Me: I'm not eating this.

Him: Babe trust me. You will enjoy it.

Me: No. What are you having?

Him: This is just rice and grilled chicken.

Me: Why am I eating an alligator and you eating chicken? We have to trade.

Him: you ordered it.

Me: Why didn't you warn me that I was ordering this?

Him: I thought you knew what it was.

Me: Really?

Him: Do you trust me?

Me: Uh.. I do.

Him: Trust me when I say that dish is amazing.

Me: Oh okay.

We started digging in. As much as I hated admitting it, I was enjoying this. He even saw it and he was grinning. He even took pictures of me eating. After our lunch, he decided to take me to a shooting range. I was actually excited about it. They first told me the dangers of having a gun, how to handle a gun and they demonstrated on how to hold a gun, the body posture and how to aim. They gave me a revolver and they gave Tukelo a pistol, he wasn't happy about that but he had no choice since he's arm is not 100% okay. Tukelo goes first, he puts on those glasses and ear plugs. He starts shooting and I see a whole different side of him, I see a beast that I didn't know exist. He's whole face changes, I just see a monster. When he was done, I notice that he didn't miss his targets. I was shocked and scared me because he only aimed for the head. I look at him.

Him: (chuckles) why do you look so scared?

Me: I'm not.

Him: Yeah right. See that, I never miss a target, so think twice before you fuck me over.

I just look at him, I don't respond.

Him: (laughs) I'm joking, I'd never do that to you.

He hugs me and kisses my forehead.

Him: Your turn.

My heart was pounding. I take the gun, I put on the glasses and earplugs. I aim on the dummy. I close my eyes and looked away and took a shot.

Mosley(the instructor): No, don't look away like that. You have to look at your target. Let me show you.

He held me from behind and he shows me how to do it. I take shot after shot before I knew it Mosley wasn't behind me anymore and I was doing it on my own. I was actually enjoying it and Tukelo looked pleased and proud. After I was done we decided to call it day and headed home.

Me: I can't believe you talked me into this.

Him: But you enjoyed it.

Me: Yes I did enjoy it. I was hoping we go there everyday.

He looks at me shocked.

Me: What? I want to own a gun as well.

Him: I don't like the sound of that.

Me: But you suggested it.

Him: Yeah I know but it sounded better when I said it, when you say it, I just get scared.

The rest of the week was amazing, for a change me and Tukelo haven't fought even once. We did activities everyday, and after each activity we go to the shooting range. I was having the best time in Durban. Every night we would stroll on the beach and have silly talks and even take a walk to the pier. The small vacation was doing me good. I was slowly accepting what has happened and I felt better. Today was our last night and we agreed on being honest with each other. We were walking on the beach, it was quite windy tonight but I was enjoying my time with him. It was getting late and he was delaying and didn't want us to go back.

Me: Babe it's freezing.

Him: It's the last night, can't we enjoy the beach one last time?

Me: Are you avoiding the chat we supposed to have?

Him: What? No. We will talk, I just want us to enjoy the beach one last time. After tonight, I go back to my busy life, the work stress and my family. I just want to relax.

Me: Okay.

We take a walk to the pier. He decides on taking pictures of me, then we take pictures together. Suddenly, he looks nervous. Now there's definitely something going on, come to think of it, he's been acting weird all day.

Me: What is up with you?

Him: What do you mean?

Me: You look nervous and you've been acting weird.

Him: I was?

Me: Yeah.

Him: You know I love you, right? More than anything. I would move oceans for you Amahle, I would kill for you. Heck, I would even sacrifice my life for you. I don't want to lie, you drive me crazy, like literally but I have never felt like this for a woman before. You make me feel things I didn't know I could feel, you gave me a shot at love, something I never thought I would have. You changed me, completely.

Me: Where is all of this coming from?

Him: From my heart. I need you to promise me that you will stick by me when days get tough when things go bad, you will be there whenever, you will never leave my side. You will be my queen, my strength and my weakness. Just promise me that.

Me: Tukelo...

Him: Promise me, please.

Me: I promise babe. I will be by your side and I will never leave, no matter how tough things get.

Him: Then you will allow me to do this.

He goes down on one knee. I was taken by surprise. I gasp.

Him: MaSengwayo, I want you to be mine forever, I would kill a guy that would even look at you. I know I own your heart and you own mine but I want to make things official. I don't want to imagine the rest of my life without you, it would mean nothing to me. I have realized that I need you in my life. You're my heart, it's impossible to live without you. When I look at you I see my future, I see the mother of my kids and I see my queen. You're my past, my present and my future.

I could see tears in his eyes and I was also tearing up.

Him: With that being said.

He takes out a box.

Him: It has been a year now since that day that we met in that Spaza Shop. The memory is still fresh in my mind and every time I relive the moment, a small smile starts to lay itself out along my lips. This then leads to more memories, all leading me back to you! So many times we all hear the same advice, "you will know when the person you have in front of you is THE one". It's funny, before you see and feel it for yourself, it's impossible to imagine how that can even be possible ... but its true, something happens in a flash of a moment, when your mind is unable to take over and your whole body just lets you know that its ok ... this person is finally THE ONE. Well... that is how I feel about you, I know I should probably be telling you all these deep, heartfelt feelings of mine, over a romantic dinner I have slaved over for the better most part of the evening, but here I am, on my knees, on a pier, without any soft music playing nor just a simple bouquet of flowers. A part of me just felt I would rather get it out right, in your eyes, just once, rather than later, I would bumble a mess of nerves when all my thoughts were seemingly locked in my heart and mind. I'm in this for a long ride, I'm here to make you laugh and smile, I'm here to stand by you at every corner, I'm here to go on a lifetime journey with you till the end of time, I'm here now and forever. I believe it would be best if we were no longer boyfriend and girlfriend but rather husband and wife... Mama kaNkanyiso, will you...

He doesn't finish he's sentence and I just nod with tears in my eyes.

Me: Yes. I will. Yes.

Him: I haven't even asked you yet.

Me: Dude, you're on one knee, you have a ring in your hand and you just said the most cheesiest thing. What else were you going to ask?

Him: I could think of many things actually.

I hit his arm.

Him: (chuckles) okay. I want to be you to be mine, officially, will do me the honors of being Mrs. Mokoena?

Me: I already said yes. Now put a ring on it already.

He smiles and he puts on a beautiful diamond ring. I look at it and I just scream. He gets up, I wipe his tears and wipes mine. We share a passionate kiss. He lifts me up and I wrap my legs around his waist. He spins me around.

Him: I can't wait to call you Mrs. Me

Me: Amahle Mokoena, that doesn't sound good actually.

Him: Haha, you have to deal with it because you will be Amahle Mokoena for the rest of your life.

I look at him. I see the man I fell in love with, I see my future in his eyes. I forget about his flaws, I just see someone who's perfect for me.

Him: I can't believe you forgot our first year anniversary.

Me: In my defence babe, I never agreed to be your girlfriend. It just happened.

He smiles.

I can't believe it. I'm ENGAGED!! Tukelo is my fiancée, geez! I never saw that coming.

He gives me a piggy back ride until we reach the house. He puts me down by the doorstep. He tells me to open the door. I do and I see the most amazing setting. The whole house was empty, where there was to be a lounge, there was a picnic set. Slow music playing. It was so beautiful and so romantic. The house was decorated with red and white. I look at him.

Me: You're full of surprises today.

Him: Do you like it?

Me: Its amazing babe. I love it. Thank you.

We share a passionate kiss.

We sit on the floor and started enjoying the food. After our meal, we decided to make a toast.

Him: To our new life, new beggings and new drama. To us.

Me: To us.

We made the toast and started drinking the champagne. I was getting a little drunk.

We were now lying on the floor looking at the sky. The house had a roof top so we could see the beautiful sky.

Him: Since you're about to become my wife, it is only fair that you know the real me and where I come from.

Me: At long last.

Him: (chuckles) you have to know that it is not easy for me. Talking about my past and my life is something really hard for me. I never talk to anyone about it. It's the first time I'm telling my girlfriend this.

Me: I'm flattered.

Him: So, I'm Tukelo Brian Mokoena and I come from a very strict family in Lesotho. My family is royal. My father had two wives and he has 7 kids, as you know all of them, but we don't have the same mother.

Me: What?

Him: Yeah. Me, Tumi and Bontle we share the same mother. Pitsi, Thabang and Oratile have their mother.

Me: Wait, what about Nkati?

Him: She's not my father's kid. She's Rebecca's kid, well Rebecca adopted her.

Me: This is all confusing. Isn't Rebecca your mom?

Him: No she's not my mother. My mother... my mother...

Tears started pouring down his face. I get on top of him and I wipe his tears.

Me: You don't have to talk about it.

Him: No, I want to talk about it. I have to. My mother passed away when I was 11 years old. She died right in front of my eyes Tigress and I couldn't do anything to save her.

Me: You were only a child Tukelo, there's nothing you could do.

Him: She shouted for my name Amahle, I just stood there and watched her die.

Me: Don't blame yourself for your mother's death because it's not your fault.

Him: Ntate blamed me, Rebecca blamed me.

Me: Don't listen to those wicked people, you told me not to. You shouldn't either.

Him: They manipulated me, they made me believe that I'm the one who is responsible for the death of my mother. I was just a kid.

Me: They knew you would believe anything they said, you know better now, you know your mother's death is not your fault.

Him: (sigh) anyway, all my life I was told that I would rule my father's lands one day and all my life I knew that Nthabiseng will be my wife. That's what I was told and I ended up believing it. We started hanging out but since I've been with her, I always known that something is wrong, I never felt anything for her.

Me: How did she end up here? I mean, it looks like you guys had a thing, you even bought a house.

Him: I had money, I bought her whatever she wanted, just to get her out of my hair. When I decided to leave Lesotho and start a new life, I told her about it, she said she's coming with me. I tried talking her out of it but she refused. So when I was 16, I stole about 10000 from dad and ran away with her. I had no idea what the heck I was doing but I knew that I had to getaway from those people. I found Thabang in Jo'burg and I stayed with him. It was tough back in those days, Thabang had to hustle for the three of us. I never knew where he got the money because he didn't work and I never asked. Until one day, I saw him with a stack of cash and guns. I started asking questions and he told me about his gangster life.

Me: So that's where it all started.

Him: (chuckles) yes. I was still in school though and so was Nthabi. When Thabang got shot, he couldn't work for a few weeks. I asked to join and take his place for awhile but he refused so I went behind his back and started my own hustle. When he found out, he wanted me to quit but he saw how good I was and I always did a clean job, eventually I joined his side. We worked together ever since.

Me: Wow. A lot of things make sense now. But you never said, why you had to leave your home.

Him: I never wanted to be a king, I never wanted to get married at an early age and I was tired of dad manipulating me.

Me: I dont get this, shouldn't Thabang be king? Since he's the oldest?

Him: My dad said he saw me fit to rule, I had the leadership that his people needs, while I couldn't see that.

Me: Yoh, okay. How did Thabang end up in Jo'burg? Wasn't he married?

Him: Well he was but when he got married, he told dad that he wants to be his own man and dad let him be. He moved to Durban, he left his wife there and went to Jo'burg to "work" and if you ask me, I just think he was running away from his wife. He was also against being with Gontse but eventually he loved her. That didn't work with me.

Me: And with Nthabi? How did you break up?

He takes a deep breath.

Him: Nthabi has been there for me since day one, she's stuck by my side, she was there when things were tough. During the bad days, she was there. She supported every decision I made, she always believed in me, respected me and always did what she was told, I appreciate that but she wasn't the woman for me. I have tried so many to love her but I just couldn't. All I did was cheat on her repeatedly and when she confronted me about it, I wasn't even sorry. I made her feel worthless, useless and less of a woman. Still, she didn't leave. She saw me as her man and while I saw her as my sex slave. I know it was wrong and I told her many times to leave before I destroy her but she always told me that she will wait for me, she knows I will love her one day, no matter how long it will take, I will love her.

Me: Why did she end up leaving then?

Him: You came along. According to her, she couldn't compete with you because she saw how much I loved you. Have you ever fell in love with someone and you end up telling your partner about it? That's what happened to me, I talked about you with her. To my surprise, she even gave me advice on how to win you over.

Me: Did you use her advice?

Him: I'm here with you, am I not?

Me: Wow.

I want to ask something but I'm not sure if I want to hear the answer.

Me: We're being honest here, right?

Him: Yes.

Me: No matter how much the truth hurts, you're going to tell me, right?

Him: (clears throat) er...yes.

Me: Ever since we've been together, have you ever cheated?

He started being restless. I get off him and he stands up.

Me: Where you're going?

Him: I need water.

He goes in the kitchen, I follow him.

Me: What do you need water for?

Him: Because I'm thirsty.

Me: So you did cheat on me.

Him: I didn't say that.

Me: But you didn't deny it either!

He drinks his glass of water.

Me: I'm talking to you!

Him: What? What is it Amahle?

Me: I asked you a damn question!

Him: Just because I was honest with you and told you about my past immediately you assume that I cheated on you?

Me: If you were me, you would want to know too!

Him: Can you let it go?

Me: Why are you dodging this?

Him: I'm not!

Me: Then answer the fucking question, it only needs a yes or a no!

Him: Can you stop shouting at me? I'm not a kid.

Me: Well, did you?

Him: What difference will it make if I tell you or not?

Me: To me, it will make a difference. I will know where I stand.

Him: Really Amahle? On our engagement night?

Me: I want to know what I'm getting myself into and if I could handle it or not.

Him: You know what kind of a man I am and that will not change, I will be that man even after we're married. If you can't handle that then leave now!

Me: I just want to know if...

Him: Dammit Amahle!

He throws the glass on floor, it breaks and that startled me but I won't back down.

Him: Can you let this go! Please!

Me: I won't! Why are you getting so worked up if you didn't cheat?! Why is it so hard for you to answer me?!

Him: Fine! I did cheat! Okay? I cheated on you! Are you happy now?!

How can he ask me if I'm happy? He just ripped my heart into pieces, how can I be happy? I didn't expect tears to be pouring out of my eyes. I thought I was going to go all crazy and give him a piece of my mind, tears I didn't expect. I was just standing there, crying my eyes out. He was looking at me with regret written all over his face. He tries coming closer but I take a step back.

Him: Baby, please...

Me: No! Don't touch me!

Him: I'm sorry.

Me: Don't you ever say those words because you don't mean them! How can you do this to me Tukelo?! What haven't I given you? I gave you my heart, I gave you everything I have and what did you do? You took my heart and you played with it!

Him: (silence)

Me: Here I was, thinking I own your heart, I'm the only person you think about, yet you're busy fucking your hoes!

Him: But you do, you own my heart...

Me: Don't lie to me! You've already confessed so don't lie to me.

Him: It was a mistake...

Me: if I didn't ask you about it, I would still be an idiotic fool!

Him: I'm sorry I never meant it. It meant nothing to me.

I take a glass, I throw at him, he ducks.

Me: I hate you!

I just cried my lungs out. He comes closer and tries to hug me. I fight him but I eventually let him comfort me. He is the one who caused the damage anyway. We sit on the floor and I cry on his shoulder. He comforts me and kept on repeating those three annoying words, 'I am sorry'.

Me: It hurts Tukelo, it hurts so much.

Him: I know and I am sorry, I really am.

I cried until I ran out of tears. We sit in silence. He brushes my back until I felt sleepy.

Me: I want to go to bed.

Him: Do you want anything? Maybe painkillers?

Me: No amount of painkillers can take away the pain I'm feeling. My heart is beyond repairs, you completely destroyed it.

Him: I know but...

He was disturbed by gunshots. He makes me lie down on the floor. He takes out a gun that was behind his waist.

Him: Stay down.

BANG! BANG! BANG! Was all I could hear. Tukelo starts shooting too. He takes out another gun and throws it in my direction.

Me: What am I supposed to do with this?

Him: Shoot!

Me: What?

Him: Now Tigress!!!

I take a gun and I start shooting as well. I don't even know who I'm shooting at and I can't see who's shooting in our direction.

Him: I will cover you. I need you to go upstairs.

Me: What about you?

Him: I will be fine. Just go upstairs. Take whatever you can and go to the parking.

Me: Okay.

Him: See someone, shoot, don't ask questions. Whatever happens don't come back here.

Me: But Tukelo...

Him: Do as I say Amahle! Now in a count of 3, you go upstairs.

I see him take a much bigger gun under the kitchen counter and he starts shooting.

Him: 3!

I run upstairs and I start taking whatever I can. I use the Backdoor and I go to the parking lot. I can still hear gunshots in the house. I look around me and I see no one. The parking is a bit far from the house and I was starting to worry. It's been almost 20 minutes and Tukelo wasn't coming out. I said a small prayer. Then BOOM! The house is in flames. No, no, not again.

Me: Tukelo!

I start to run towards the house but someone holds me from behind.

Him: I said no matter what, don't go back to the house.

I turn around and I see him.

Me: Babe!

I hug him for dear life. He hugs me back. We pull apart after some time and I slap him, hard.

Me: Don't ever scare me like that again.

Him: (smiles) okay, I'm sorry.

Me: What happened in there? Who was shooting at us?

Him: I don't know babe but we need to get out of here, now.

We go inside the car and we take off. He makes a call, he's phone is connected to the car's Bluetooth. He calls Tumi.

Tumi: This better be good.

You could tell he was asleep, judging my his voice. It was after midnight.

Tukelo: You're sleeping there with your woman while me and my woman were under attack.

Tumi: What?!

He was wide awake now.

Tukelo: Yes. Someone attacked us at the beach house.

Tumi: When did this happen?

Tukelo: Now. The house is in flames as we speak.

Tumi: They bombed the house?!

Tukelo: No, I did.

Tumi: What? What did you do that for?

Tukelo: Those assholes came into my house and attacked me, I wasn't going to let them live.

Tumi: Do you have any idea who was behind this?

Tukelo: What do you think?

Tumi: The Russians?

Tukelo: Yes. You heard what Anele said they are hungry for our blood and from his experience, they get what they want and always get away with it.

Tumi: We need to get rid of them before they get rid of us.

Tukelo: We will talk as soon as I get there. I'm on my way.

Tumi: Okay. Did you at least get the chance to ask her?

He looks at me and smiles.

Tukelo: I did.

Tumi: And what did she say?

Tukelo: What do you mean what did she say? Of course she said yes.

Tumi: Thats my man!!! I have to say though, you guys should stop going out on these trips because something always get bombed.

Tukelo: Bye Tumi.

Tumi: Wait, before you hang up, is my liver okay?

Tukelo: Voetsek Tumi man!

Tukelo hangs up.

We drive in silence. Despite everything, I was still mad and hurt inside. Tukelo betrayed me, he cheated on me, beside me knowing that he did, but when he said, it just hurts 100 times more. I can't get myself to forgive him but I still love him and I still care for him. I didn't even notice that was wounded,

he had a scratch on his face and he was a bit dusty. I can see he wanted to say something but he didn't know how to say it.

Him: Are you hungry?

Me: No.

Him: it's going to be a long drive, we need to grab something to eat.

Me: Just pass by a drive thru and buy something.

Him: What would you like to have?

Me: Just get anything Tukelo.

Him: (sigh) I know I betrayed you but it was never my intention to hurt you. I made a mistake...

Me: Not now please. I had a long night, I just want to sleep.

I made the chair go a little low and I rested my body. I want so bad to fall asleep but for the life of me, I couldn't sleep. I started replaying everything that has happened and I start asking myself questions, for the first time, I was shot at, I held a gun and I saw Tukelo killing in front of my eyes. Do I really want to involve myself in this? I hated my heart right now, no matter what, I couldn't get myself to hate him. I eventually fell asleep.

Insert Thirty- Five 😊

I feel the light hitting my face, it was the sun. I wake up. We were still driving. I open my eyes.

Me: How long was I out?

Him: Since we left Durban. Are you hungry?

Me: I'm starving.

He gives me a Takeaway from MacDonald's and I started eating. We sit in silence again until we reached Jo'burg. We got there at 7am. As soon as we got to his house. I go inside, I was tired and needed a hot bubble bath. We didn't even have luggage anymore. I just rush in, I find Nosi, Zitha, Gontse, Thandi and Karabo. What the heck happened when I was away? I was away for a week, Thandi and Nosi are in a same room. I greet, they greet back. Nosi and Zitha come to me and they hug me. I hug them back.

Nosi: How're you feeling?

Me: I'm fine.

Gontse: We heard what happened, I'm really sorry Amahle.

Me: It's okay. What matters is we both okay.

Karabo: Tukelo doesn't look okay.

I turn to look at him and she was right, he looked miserable.

Me: He was driving all night and he was fighting for his life so he won't look like himself.

I fan myself because it was so damn hot.

Nosi: Oh my God!!! Is that a... oh my God!!!

Me: What are you...

Zitha: I think it is...(screams)

Me: What is it?

Nosi: He popped the question!!

Me: Oh that. Yes he did.

Zitha and Nosi scream.

Me: My God.

Gontse: Tukelo proposed?

Me: Yes he did.

Zitha: Oh my God Chommie, I'm so happy for you.

Karabo: How can he propose when he...

Thandi: Let me see the ring.

She takes my hand and everybody starts staring at it. They even take pictures of it. Not to brag but that ring was gorgeous, it was every girl's dream to have a ring like that.

Gontse: Wow. That ring is amazing.

Thandi: Yes. It's gorgeous.

Karabo: I still can't believe Tukelo proposed.

Tukelo: Why's that?

Tukelo comes in and takes a bottle of water in the fridge.

Karabo: Um...I... er...

Tukelo: Stop stuttering and meet us in the lounge, now. All of you.

With that he leaves. I just don't understand why Tukelo was always harsh and these wives were shit scared of him. They couldn't even hide it. We go to the lounge and we find, Thabang, Pitsi, Tumi, Dankies, Anele, Rufus and Rebel. We all sit opposite them. There was silence.

Thabang: There's no secret that our family is in great danger. There's a man out there who's hungry for our blood. The attack that happened in Durban wasn't just an ordinary attack, it was personal. The man who is responsible for that attack won't stop until we are all dead. He's dangerous and would do anything to destroy us.

Gontse: Can I ask why?

Thabang: No you can't. We will be leaving in the next couple of hours to hunt them down. You will not leave this house until we get back. This house is surrounded by guards and everything you need is in here. You will stay here with the kids.

Nosi: Is it guaranteed that you will survive this?

Tumi: We're only hoping Nosi.

Me: You have got to be kidding me. You can't seriously expect us to sit and wait for you to get back! How do you expect us to feel?

Tukelo: Calm down Amahle.

Me: You can't tell me to calm down. I might lose my brother and my fiancé so don't fuckin tell me to be calm.

Anele: You won't lose us. We will be careful and we know what we're doing.

Me: Why are you in this? You're bloody cop!

Anele: I can't explain Amahle but please be calm.

Karabo: She's right though, we can't be waiting on you all day and night. One of us might learn that we lost our husband.

Thabang: Women (sigh)

Gontse: Thabang. We have children to think about, can't you hire people to do this?

Tukelo: That will take time and we don't want to involve people who has nothing to do with this. And we were telling you that we're leaving, we weren't asking for your permission.

Me: You need to protect my family.

Tumi: What do you mean?

Me: These attackers perhaps know who I am and who Anele is, they might go after my family. Anele, you need to tell mom to come here.

Tukelo: Tigress is right. They might be in danger

Anele: But they can't come here. Mom will ask questions and be suspicious.

Me: Yeah you're right.

Tumi: We will organise guards to go there and look after them.

Me: They have to be discreet.

Tukelo: They will. Rufus, send security at Amahle's house.

Rufus: On it.

He leaves with Rebel.

Dankies: We need to get going. We have lot to do.

Pitsi: Yeah, you're right.

Tukelo: Amahle, can we talk, upstairs.

Me: Sure.

He leads the way. We go inside he's room. He locks the door behind him.

Him: Are you okay?

Me: I'm okay, I guess.

Him: I'm terrible.

Me: You're about to go risk your life so yeah it's expected.

Him: I'm not even worried about that. It's the least of my worries. I'm worried about us.

Me: Can we not talk about this?

Him: If not now then when? We have to talk about this now. This thing is destroying me, it's making me miserable. It's the only thing I can think about it. It's eating me up.

Me: It should eat you up. You didn't think about me when you were sleeping with another woman. While you were riding her you didn't consider my feelings.

Him: It didn't happen like that.

Me: How did it happen? Ooh she was the one riding you?

Him: Amahle please!! It was a mistake, it only happened once.

Me: I don't care if it happened once or twice or even a hundred times. It doesn't change the fact that you cheated on me.

Him: Can you let me explain? I know it won't make me less guilty but I want you to hear my side of the story.

Me: You have a minute.

Him: That's all I need. So, we were out with the guys and things got a little out of control. I think we had an argument so I had one too many drinks. I don't know what happened but I woke up next to a woman. I seriously don't remember what happened that night.

Me: Do you expect me to believe that?

Him: I don't expect you to believe it, I don't even believe it but it's what happened, it is the truth. Look, I know I messed up, but I will do anything to make up for this mistake. My biggest fear is losing you, I beg you, please don't let this destroy us.

Me: What happens the next time we have a fight? You get drunk and you end up in another woman's bed?

Him: when we fight, I will stay far away from alcohol. I promise, it won't happen again. That woman meant nothing to me.

Me: What about the one on your phone?

Him: The one on my phone? You went through my phone?

Me: Don't make this about me and just answer me.

Him: She's been harassing me with calls and texts ever since that night.

Me: And do you always run to her when we have problems?

Him: What? No. I don't.

Me: That's not what she said.

Him: You called her?

Me: She called me.

Him: She did? What did she say?

Me: That you hers blah, blah, blah and I should stay away blah blah blah. I really didn't have the energy to listen to her.

Him: When was this? And why didn't you tell me?

Me: I thought she would. She is your mistress after all.

Him: I haven't spoken to her since that day, I swear.

Me: So you say.

Him: I swear on our son, I didn't talk to her ever since that day.

Me: Okay.

Him: Amahle if I can turn back the hands of time I would, if I can undo the mess I made, I would but I can't. I made a mistake and I regret it everyday. You have no idea how much I wish I can undo that night. I beat myself up every single day.

He had tears in eyes. He steps closer and holds my hand.

Him: All I ask is for you to forgive me MaSengwayo, I'm not an expert at love. I can't be perfect all the time but I will try my best to keep you happy. Please, forgive me my love. I didn't put that ring on your finger for nothing, I did it because I love you and I want to spend the rest of my life with you. You're my life, I can't live without you. Don't make me live without you.

During this time, tears were pouring his face, this one always manipulates me with his tears.

Me: You really hurt me Tukelo. It will take a really long time for me to trust you again but you're my heart, I love you too and I don't want to live without you. So I'm giving you a chance, please don't blow it.

He smiles.

Him: I won't. I love you and I mean it.

Me: I love you, forever and always.

We kiss. The kiss starts to get intense, he takes off my clothes and I do the same. He picks me up and he lies me on the bed. He gets on top of me. I push him off a bit. He looks at me confused.

Me: Condoms.

Him: What? Amahle we've been using protection the whole week. What is it? We barely used it before.

Me: Well that was before I knew you're cheating.

Him: You have got to be kidding me.

Me: I am not. Besides you cheating, I'm not ready.

Him: For what?

Me: To fall pregnant again.

Him: (sigh) But baby I want you now. This conversation is pointless and it's time wasting.

He tries to kiss me, I block him.

Him: Amahle Fuck! You don't want to have sex with me?!

Me: I do but you have to understand where I'm coming from.

Him: I'd be on my 3rd round now, you know that?

Me: Liar. Now go get the Condoms.

He angrily get up and took a condom from the drawer.

Me: Now was that so hard?

Him: when we leave this room, I'd be sure that you can't even walk properly.

Me: Just because I made you take the condom?

Him: Just because of that

He jumps in the bed and kissed me hungrily.

Just as he promised, when he was done with me, I couldn't feel my vagina. I couldn't even get myself to get off bed. He was getting ready to take a shower.

Him: Get off that bed Hle.

Me: Hey, only Tumi calls me that.

Him: Well now I'm calling you that.

Me: But it's his name for me.

Him: Whatever.

Me: Anyway, I'm tired.

Him: Baby, you smell of sex, you have to shower.

Me: You made me this tired. I can't even lift a finger.

Him: Lucky for you, you have a very buff strong fiancée, man that feels so good to say. I will lift you up.

Me: Oh lucky me.

He smiles and he picks me up. I giggle like a little girl. We go in the bathroom. He puts me inside the shower and opens the water, cold water. I was naked!

Me: Tukelo!!!

Him: It will wake you up.

Me: Close the water now!

He made the water a little warmer. I didn't even cover my head, now my weave was all wet.

Me: Look now you messed up my hair.

Him: (chuckles) sorry.

Me: Are you even sorry?

Him: No.

I give him a death stare and this idiotic boyfriend of mine just laughed.

Me: I so hate you right now.

Him: I so love you right now.

I stick my tongue out and he bites it.

Me: Ouch! You such an idiot.

Him: I'm your idiot.

Me: Yeah, yeah. Whatever.

He closes the shower door and kisses me. He pins my on the wall.

Me: Ha.ana I'm tired.

Him: I will be gentle.

Me: No Tukelo.

Him: Well okay.

He let's me go and we take a shower while playing around. Tukelo makes it impossible for me to take a nice hot shower. He's a troublesome. If he's not playing with my hair, he's tickling me or touching me or asking me silly questions like, why are my boobs not the same size, how am I supposed to know that?

I look at him and my eyes land on his scar that was on his upper arm. Reality kicked in, he's going out there again, he's going to be in danger, again. Tears started running down my face. He's talking to me, I don't think he notices that I'm crying because my face is wet anyway. He's smiling and talking to me but I can't hear a word he's saying. These thoughts kept clouding my mind.

Him:I'm telling you babe, Tumi can be crazy at times. Sometimes I even ask myself if we're even related maybe he's the one adopted. I should ask Ntate.

He smiles. I smile back. He looks at me with worry.

Him: Are you okay?

I nod.

Him: Don't lie to me. Are you crying?

I sniff.

Him: Hey baby, what's wrong?

I just sob. He cups my face.

Him: Was I too rough?

I chuckle because I could see that he was seriously thinking that might be the problem.

Me: What if you don't come back to me? What if you get shot again?

Him: Babe...

Me: I don't think I can deal with that again.

Him: You don't have to deal with anything because I will come back to you. The last shooting was a misfortune, I didn't expect it but now that I know that someone's hungry for my blood, I will make sure that he dies first before he gets to me. Nothing will happen to me.

Me: Can't you let the police take care of this?

Him: They slow, by the time the police catch them, I would have lost a family member or my life and I will not allow that to happen. Knowing that your life is in danger too, it makes me uneasy. I can't sit around and do nothing. I have to do everything in my power to protect you. If anything happen to you, I would die. Your safety is my main priority and everything else comes second. Allow me to protect you, if you don't allow me to do this, my heart won't be ease. Knowing that I left against your wishes and I left you in tears, I can get distracted because I would be more worried about how you're feeling. I don't ever want to leave you hurt or in tears, so allow me do this.

Me: (sigh) as hard as it is, I will allow you.

Him: (smiles) Thank you.

Me: Don't thank me just yet, I have two requests.

Him: Yes mi'lady?

Me: Don't get shot and most importantly don't die.

Him: (chuckles) okay I won't.

Me: I'm serious.

Him: Me too. Let's go out of here.

Me: Okay.

He opens the door and throws me the towel. We go in our room and we dry our bodies. After that we got dressed and he wanted to dry my hair since he's the one who made it wet. He is terrible at it, he wasn't even holding the hair dryer right but I decided to shut my mouth. Within 15 minutes he said he's done and my hair was still a lot wet. He try tying my hair into a messy bun and let's just say, my messy bun was too messy!

Him: This is usually how you tie your hair. I even did it better than you.

Me: Um... yes you did better.

I say in a sarcastic tone.

Him: You should let me do your hair from now on.

Me: Noooo. I mean you're good baby but not that good.

Him: (laughs)

Me: You stick to your guns and I will stick to my hair.

Him: (chuckle) we could take turns.

Me: I will be fine babe, don't worry.

Him: If you say so.

Me: Yeah. I look amazing, thank you.

In fact, I looked like I was in a fight with the monkey, and the monkey won but it's the little things that matters the most, right?

We went downstairs and we find everybody eating a pizza.

Tukelo: You baboons, you don't call us when you're eating.

Tumi: You were busy eating each other, who are we to disturb?

Tukelo: No we were not.

Pitsi: Dudes, we heard y'all.

Oh God!

Thabang: And remind me to never leave my kids with y'all. I don't want them hearing y'all sexing.

Tukelo: Stop it, you're making my girl shy.

Tumi: She weren't shy while she was busy calling out your name.

Me: My God!

I stand up to leave and they laugh.

Tukelo: They joking babe. They heard no shit, these walls are sound proof.

Tumi: So y'all did have sex?

Tukelo: Whats that got to do with you?

Nosi: Babe, what happened to your hair?

Me: Tukelo happened.

Tukelo: doesn't she look amazing?

He hugs me from behind.

Zitha: No, she looks like she was in a fight with something.

Nosi: Or there's something is living inside that hair, it's all over the place.

Tukelo: don't listen to them baby, you look amazing. They just jealous.

He kiss my head.

Karabo: I think it's cute. It was thoughtful of him.

Thabang: Cute?

Pitsi: Girls find everything cute nowadays.

Nosi: But KB is right, Tumi you never do something like that for me...

She stops and looks at Thandi. Tension hit the room.

Tukelo: (clears throat) I think we should go upstairs and discuss today's plan.

Tumi: Yeah yeah let's do that.

Tumi was up in matter of seconds and already leading the way. Tukelo let's go of me, he kisses me and follows the guys.

Me: So I was thinking we do something to take our minds off things, since the guys are going out.

Zitha: Good idea. We can't sit here all night and wait on them.

Nosi: Count me out, I have an infant, remember?

Me: But he has a nanny.

Nosi: Tumi is not going to like the fact that I'm going out while I have a child you know how he gets.

Thandi stands up and leaves

Nosi: Shit, I always forget that she's here.

Gontse: I will go check up on her.

Me: No, let me go check up on her.

Gontse: I don't think she wants to see you right now.

Zitha: Why?

Karabo: She's the one who brought Nosi into our lives and she is the one who knew about Tumi and Nosi's affair.

Nosi: You can't blame her for what happened between me and Tumi. She had nothing to do with it.

Zitha: Yes. It's not Amahle's fault that Tumi became weak.

Karabo: Still. She knew about it but she didn't say a word to Thandi.

Zitha: It wasn't her place.

Nosi: She tried so hard to break us up but failed. Me and Tumi thought it's just a fling, we had no idea that it would lead to this.

Gontse: Just because you couldn't keep your legs shut, it broke someone's marriage apart.

Nosi: Oh no you didn't.

She tried to attack Gontse but we stopped her.

Me: Nosi! Calm your ass down.

Zitha: You have a son now.

Me: I know that I am part to blame for this but we don't need to be all psycho about it. We can fix this. And you two, I know you don't like me and newsflash, I'm not a fan of you two either but we can still be civil with each other for everyone's sake. Thandi is the only one who welcomed me when I was treated as an outsider, I should've at least warned her. I feel terrible, trust me, I do but let's be honest, I had no control over what happened. I couldn't tell an old man with big ass balls what to do. I will forever feel like I'm to blame for this and I will try and make it right. I will start by apologizing to her.

Thandi: No need. I heard everything.

She was standing by the doorway. She comes in and sits with us.

Thandi: Karabo and Gontse, Amahle is right, she couldn't tell Tumi what to do. We all know that the Mokoena men do whatever they want. Amahle, though I'm still disappointed in you but I can't be mad at you, in fact I'm not mad at you at all. It wasn't your place to tell me but it will take a long time for me to trust you again. And Nosi, I'm glad that you gave Tumi something I couldn't give to him. He loves his son more than anything in this world, you made him complete. I have never seen him so happy. I may not like you but I will tolerate you, we can try and make this work. For Thapelo's sake and Tumi's sake.

But you have to respect me as his wife, I don't want to know what you do with him, Tumi may not love me like he loves you but he's still married to me.

Nosi: I hear you Thandi and I'm really sorry about what happened. I didn't mean for any of this to happen. If I can turn back the hands of time I would, I don't like the fact that I was happy on the expense of some woman's tears, my mom raised me better than that...

Nosi starts crying.

Nosi: But I can't be sorry for bringing a son into this world because I don't want to think of my son as a mistake, I love him more than life itself.

Thandi brushes Nosi's back.

Thandi: I don't want you to be sorry for that. I also like the little guy.

She smiles. Nosi also smiles.

Thandi is the most amazing woman I have met. She's truly heavenly sent.

Me: You're an amazing woman Thandi.

Thandi: I don't have time to be dwelling on the past. She gave me chance to be a mother too. If Nosi allows me to.

Nosi: (smiles) of course, I would love you to.

They hug.

The boys come in the kitchen.

Tukelo: Okay, what did we miss?

They were all looking at Nosi and Thandi.

Thandi: Nothing much.

Tumi: Are my wives making out?

Nosi: Wives? Oh no Mister, you have a wife and a baby mama, thats where it ends.

Tumi: We'll just have to see about that. We're leaving now.

Thabang: Please try not to kill each other.

Pitsi: And no parties or anything crazy.

We look at him confused.

Tukelo: Yes we heard you Amahle.

Me: You were eavesdropping?

Tukelo: Not us but Rufus was.

Me: My lord. So you expect us to be cooped in here thinking the worst?

Zitha: That's not fair. Can't we at least have something in here, we won't invite anyone over, it will be us.

Pitsi: Well MaGumede, that won't be possible because your lives are in danger remember?

Zitha: don't you have the whole place surrounded with guards so nothing will happen to us.

Me: And we won't leave. Please my Tiger.

I go to him and whisper something to his ear. He clears his throat.

Tukelo: The girls can have a party.

Me: Thanks baby.

I kiss his cheek.

Thabang: Tukelo, how can you allow that?

Tukelo: Hey, my house, my rules.

Tumi: Amahle has you wrapped around her finger.

Tukelo: No, that's not true.

Nosi: He's just a gentleman.

Tukelo: Yeah that's it.

Thabang: Let's go.

Thabang, Pitsi and Tumi leave. I look at Tukelo, I start being teary again.

Him: Ha.ana Amahle, don't start.

Me: I am just really scared.

Him: I know but don't be because nothing is going to happen to me.

Me: Okay. Where's Anele?

Him: He had to leave early, he had to take care of something before we leave.

Me: He's also really into this huh?

Him: It was a right thing to do otherwise he would've been dead by now.

Me: Don't talk like that.

Him: I'm being honest.

Me: I don't want you to go.

Him: We've had this conversation Amahle. And I told you, I need to leave you happy, that way I can't and won't be distracted.

Me: You know what will make me happy?

Him: Don't say if I don't leave because that's entirely impossible.

Me: No it's not that.

Him: What is it then?

I whisper in his ear.

Me: one round.

He laughs.

Him: As soon as I get back.

Tumi: The fuck Tukelo! Let's go!

Tukelo: I'm coming.

Tumi leaves.

Tukelo: I have to go before Thabang chases me with a gun, again.

Me: (smiles) Okay.

He kisses me.

Nosi: Hello! We're still in the room.

We pull apart laughing.

Him: Take care of yourself.

Me: I should be saying that.

Him: don't drink too much.

Me: don't get shot.

Him: (smiles) okay I won't.

He kisses my forehead and leaves.

I go sit with the girls on the high chairs.

Nosi: You two are like kids.

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

Tukelo comes rushing in.

Him: I forgot something.

Me: What is it?

Him: I forgot to tell you I love you.

I chuckle.

Me: You still haven't said it.

Him: Well, I love you and I mean it my tigress.

Me: I love you, forever and always my tiger.

He winks and leaves.

Nosi: Still don't know what I'm talking about?

They all laugh.

Zitha: You guys are too in love.

Nosi: You guys are cute and you have what we call fairy tale love.

Thandi: They're just the cutest thing ever, Amahle got one of the good Mokoena men.

Me: Oh no no no, he's not all innocent and we're not always like this. Sometimes it gets ugly, like really ugly. Even though our fights don't last long but they're always the most dangerous and we get physical at times.

Gontse: He hits you?!

Me: Not really. Sometimes I throw furniture at him, he can be really frustrating at times.

Karabo: But he loves you.

Zitha: Yes. We can see it deep down that he loves you with his whole heart, he would kill for you.

Thandi: He worships the ground you walk on.

Me: Stop it you guys, now I'm blushing. I love him too, I mean he is my first.

Gontse: What do you mean your first?

Me: My first in everything. My first boyfriend, my first love and my first sex partner, hopefully my last.

Karabo: You mean to tell us that you only slept with Tukelo only?

Me: Yes.

Gontse: Wow. I didn't see that coming, no wonder he loves you so much.

Me: One of the reasons. Okay enough about me and my man, let's get drunk already.

Nosi: Count me out, I breast feed, remember?

Me: Yeah right.

We take out red wine. Me, Gontse, Zitha, Thandi and Karabo, we start getting drunk. At around 10 everyone was out of it. Nosi was sitting with Thapelo in the lounge. The nanny was busy entertaining the other kids. We're just sitting on the floor, all of us, having a meaningless conversation.

Gontse: I was wrong about you Amahle, just that Nkati painted this evil picture of you and we all believed that you're bad.

Zitha: Amahle? Bad? She is a lot of things but evil and bad is not one of them.

Gontse: I can see it now. I'm really sorry Amahle.

Karabo: Yeah me too. Just that we never gave you a chance, we just believed every crap that an adopted child says.

Nosi: Nkati is adopted?

Gontse: Yes. Rebecca adopted her without Ntate's knowledge.

Me: I thought Tukelo was joking about that.

Karabo: No he wasn't.

Me: But why did she adopt her? They have kids together.

Gontse: We all have no idea. We never know what goes on in that old woman's head.

Zitha: she's crazy shame.

Karabo: and evil. It might be the alcohol talking but I hate that woman.

Gontse: You and me both sister.

They high five.

Me: The adopting part just doesn't make sense, her and Nkati look alike. You could swear they're related.

Karabo: We were all confused, she just rocked up one day and said she adopted a 15 year old.

Me: Did she even show you the adoption papers?

This just didn't make sense at all.

Karabo: I don't know but come to think of it, that Nkati can't be trusted! She did have sex with Tukelo...

Gontse: Karabo!

I choke on my wine.

Nosi: The fuck?!

Karabo: I mean not the Tukelo y'all know, another one. Come on now. Lets dance.

She turns up the music and they all started dancing. I was slowly getting sober. Nosi came to sit next to me. This was shocking. I didn't know how to digest it. Every time we try to fix things, something always pops up out of nowhere. I'm starting to think that we're not meant to be. We never have peace.

Nosi: Baby, are you okay?

I nod.

Nosi: No you're not. Babe, it must have happened before you came along. Don't let this get to you.

Me: I know but he should've told me about it.

Nosi: if he didn't tell you about it then it means it's not important to him.

Me: I need sleep.

Nosi: You do that.

I stand up to leave.

Nosi: Hey, I love you, okay?

Me: I love you too.

I went up in my room and I started crying myself to sleep. This is just whack. When will we be happy? I don't even want to ask him about it because it will lead to more heartache. This is not a relationship, it's too much now. I look at this big ring on my finger, is this how my life is going to be after marriage? Most importantly, do I want to be a part of it?

I was woken up by cold hands holding me from behind. I don't even know when I feel asleep. I smell his scent.

Me: Ha.ana Tukelo, you're cold.

Him: That is not the kind of response I was hoping for.

Me: But you're cold.

Him: Sorry, I just took a cold shower.

Me: what time is it?

Him: Just after 3. Why did you leave the party downstairs?

Me: I wasn't feeling okay.

Him: Why? What's wrong?

Me: A headache nothing much.

Him: Okay.

I turn to look at him.

Me: Tukelo.

Him: Beautiful.

Me: You didn't get hurt?

Him: Nope. Just as promised.

Me: Noone got hurt?

Him: We lost a few men, Dankies got shot on the knee, Tumi got a few good punches but all in all, we won the war. We took care of all of them.

Me: Is Dankies and Tumi going to be okay?

Him: Yes. Tumi is fine, Dankies is in hospital.

Me: So it's over?

Him: Yes. Its all over.

Me: What about my brother?

Him: He was great help. With his police skills, we did the job faster. We needed someone like him.

Me: He's been after you guys for years, now that he finally got you, he's on your side?

Him: Yes. He had no choice.

Me: Okay. When will you leave all of this? Is this how it's going to be when we married?

Him: Amahle, it's not easy but I don't plan on living like this forever. I will leave as soon as I settle down and start a family with you. I wouldn't want to put my children's lives in danger.

Me: Okay. Let me go back to sleep.

Him: Hhaaa, you can't do me like that. I kept my promise, now keep yours.

Me: What promise?

Him: Let me remind you.

He starts kissing me and immediately I imagine him on top of Nkati. I push him off.

Me: I have a headache Tukelo.

Him: One round, I will be quick.

Me: No and please don't beg.

I turn my back on him. He gets up irritably and start to put on his pants.

Me: Where you going?

Him: I might as well get drunk.

And to be fair, I couldn't care less.

Me: Okay.

He leaves and bangs the door. I go back to sleep.

The cries of Thapelo woke me up, it was only 7 am. I realize that Tukelo wasn't next to me. I get up make the bed and went to take a shower. I got dressed in my sweat pants and Tukelo's T-shirt. I tie my weave into a messy bun. I go downstairs and I realize that ausi Mavis is back. She was in the kitchen making breakfast for the kids. It was her, Keletso, Thato and Puleng. Keletso was Karabo and Pitsi's kid, and the baby looked a lot like Pitsi mann. Puleng was Thabang and Gontse's oldest daughter, she was approximately 9. Keletso, she was 5 and Thato was 7. They were all sitting on high chairs and as soon as I got in, they greeted me.

Me: Morning kids. Morning ausi Mavis.

Mavis: Morning.

Me: Where is everyone?

Thato: Mom, ragadi Nosi, Karabo and Zitha are still sleeping.

Me: What about your dads?

Thato: I don't know.

Keletso: Papa said he's going to buy me ice cream last night but he never came back.

Me: You saw him last night?

Keletso: Yes. I even saw papa Tukelo.

Me: Well, I'm sure they will be back with your ice cream Nana.

Keletso: They have been gone for too long.

Puleng: She's been nagging us all morning about ice cream.

Me: Don't we have ice cream in the house ausi Mavis?

Thato: She doesn't want it, she wants a magnum.

Keletso: Yes.

Me: (smile) Finish up your breakfast, we will go get you that ice cream.

She smiles happily and squeals. Akhona, the nanny, comes down with Thapelo crying.

Me: Whats wrong with him?

Akhona: we ran out of milk. His mother is still sleeping.

Me: Doesn't he feed on formula?

Akhona: No. He spits it out.

Me: Okay. I will go wake his mother up.

I woke up Nosi and she went down to feed the baby while I took out the other babies for ice cream. And may I just say, I will not have kids anytime soon, they trouble. We didn't just go for ice cream, we end up eating at Spurs, watching movies and doing shopping and I was in my sweat pants and Tukelo's T-shirt. I wasn't really looking my best. Tukelo has been calling me for the past hour but I haven't taken none of his calls. After a tiring day, we decided to go home. We arrived at around 2 o'clock. All the cars were outside. We find the girls in the kitchen, I don't know where the boys are. The kids run to their parents and they started going on and on and on about their day. I was tired so I decide to go take a nap.

Karabo: Amahle.

She called me before I could leave the room.

Me: Yes.

Karabo: can we chat?

Me: Okay.

We leave the kitchen and go to the backyard

Her: Amahle what I said last night was inappropriate, I shouldn't have said it. It was not my place to.

Me: But you weren't lying.

Her: Its something that happened years back. I don't know why I brought it up.

Me: You're right, it wasn't your place to tell me but I'm glad that you did.

Her: You shouldn't have heard it from me. If this comes out...I...I don't know.

Me: I won't tell Tukelo that you told me if that's what you're worried about.

Karabo: (smiles) Thank you.

Me: Why are you all scared of Tukelo anyway?

Karabo: We're shocked that you're not. Tukelo is something else, he has a bad temper but you stand up to him, he listens to you. Whereas his previous girlfriends didn't question what he said, if they ever question him, he would flip out. He's never like that with you, he must really love you.

Me: I know he does.

Her: He really do. I mean never have I thought Tukelo would want to marry someone.

We share a laugh.

Me: I know right.

Her: You must be different.

Tukelo: She's not different, she's special.

We turn to look at him. We didn't even realize that he was here. He comes closer and kisses me from behind.

Him: Hey babe

Me: Hey.

He smelt like a brewery. Karabo leaves.

Karabo leaves.

Me: I'm not in the mood so please.

Him: Not in the mood for what?

Me: Dealing with you.

Him: Dealing with me? What's that suppose to mean?

Me: Tukelo you're drunk, you didn't sleep with me last night and you expect me to be okay with that?

Him: You denied me what's rightfully mine, what was I suppose to do?

Me: whats rightfully yours? What's rightfully yours Tukelo really? I don't belong to you! I don't have to give myself to you!

Him: What did you want me to do? I'm tired of your silly tantrums. I sensed that you're not in the mood last night and I don't even know what I did. When I left you're okay, when I come back you're all moody.

Me: You didn't ask me what's wrong with me! You didn't care enough to ask me!

Him: I asked you Amahle, you said you were fine. You wanted me to beg to talk?

Me: This is getting old. I'm sick of it!

Him: Stop shouting.

Me: Or what?!

Him: Amahle, why are you acting up?

Me: First I'm throwing tantrums, now I'm acting up?!

Him: I said stop shouting at me. I'm not deaf.

Everyone came out.

Tumi: What's the problem?

Thabang: You're scaring the kids.

Me: I'm sorry but he just knows how to push my buttons.

Tukelo: That makes the two of us.

Tumi: What's going on?

Tukelo: Nothings wrong.

Me: I will tell you what's wrong. Your brother sleeps around and he expects me to be okay with it.

Tukelo: She can't trust me. She never appreciate my efforts.

Me: Well you make it very hard to trust you.

Tukelo: What's love without trust? Why are you marrying me if you can't trust me?

Me: Good question.

I take off the ring.

Nosi: Amahle no.

I see Tukelo go pale.

Me: I can't marry someone I can't trust, I can't marry someone who can't respect me.

Tumi: Let's not make heisty decisions. Let's all calm down and talk like adults, I'm sure we can resolve this.

Me: There's nothing left for us to talk about. This matter cant be resolved. I have had it with Tukelo's bull.

Zitha: Come on Amahle, let's think this through.

I look at Tukelo, he's quiet and I can see his eyes is filled with tears. One blink, a river of tears go down his cheeks. Whereas I feel tears coming down my face.

Karabo: Amahle, don't do this to yourself. Don't hurt yourself like this.

Me: I'm not hurting myself. I'm just preventing myself from getting hurt even more.

Gontse: Tukelo, say something.

Tukelo: You heard her, there's nothing to talk about.

He takes a bottle of whiskey in the cupboard and with that he leaves. I feel defeated. That hurt me more than anything. The fact that he didn't fight for me, hurts. I leave the kitchen hurt. I just want to be alone.

.....

TUKELO

When Amahle took off that ring, I felt like something inside of me is breaking. I felt like a piece of me is breaking. I felt like my world is shattering. I just didn't have any energy left in me to fight, worse part is, I don't know what I did. When I left last night everything was okay but as soon as I was back, I sensed she was moody. Heck! I didn't even do anything wrong while I was out, I actually turned down the guys when they wanted us to go to a strip club because I wanted to be with her but she just went cold. Now I'm just sitting by the pool, with feet inside the water, I still have shoes on but I don't care. I'm even wearing long pants. I didn't even bother to make them into shorts. Right now I don't care about anything, I just want to finish this bottle of whisky that I have in my hand and get drunk asap.

Tumi: Dude, get out of that water.

Me: Voetsek Tumi.

I take a sip from the bottle that its in my hand.

Him: Tukelo

Me: Tumi, I said VOETSEK!

Him: You know you're just wasting your time shouting right? 'Cause we both know that I won't go.

I don't respond. I just gulp down my whiskey.

Tumi sits next to me and lights a cigar. He also has his feet in the water, with shoes on.

Tumi: Do you want to talk about it?

Me: No.

Tumi: Okay then since you won't talk about it then I will. I understand where both of you are coming from, you're just two people madly inlove with each other, you have everything every couple dreams of but you know what you lack? Trust and Respect. Those are the most important things in a relationship, without trust, there's no respect. How can you respect someone you don't trust? Those two things are the foundation of a relationship, they make a relationship work. Now tell me, how can you build a house when the foundation is faulty. Do you think that house will last? Sure it will stand for some time but it will end up collapsing. Same thing applies to a relationship, you have to build a strong foundation in order for your relationship to last. Do you get me?

Man I hate it when he's right. That's where the problem always been between me and Amahle, we don't trust each other. And we end not being able to respect on another. But how does one fix this? I never not once gave Amahle a reason to doubt me, sure I have be unfaithful a couple of times but she never found out about it. Or did she?

Me: I said I don't want to talk about it.

Tumi chuckles.

Him: But I'm sure you understand me. Now pass me that bottle of whiskey before you destroy my liver.

I shake my head and give him the bottle then I think about he just said. As much as I hate to admit it but he's 100% correct. Trust has always been an issue between us. Sure I've made a mistake before, but why can't she just trust me? Have I been such a bad boyfriend? I can't lose her over this, I refuse.

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Insert Thirty-Six 😊

AMAHLE

I have been couped up in this room for the past hour. Everyone tried knocking but I never let anyone in. I just want to be left alone, I want to think about what I've just done. Have I made the right decision by calling off the wedding? Heck! We haven't even been engaged for at least a week but already we're calling it quits. I just knew that this relationship thing is not for me. But I can't help but love him. As much as I hate it but I do love him with everything in me. I'd kill for him but I refuse to let him kill me. Already I'm losing myself because of him. I've gone soft, vulnerable and weak. I need to pull myself together and get back to my old self. First things first, no more tears. I refuse to cry because of him. I've had it. I need to get back to gym and get myself fit, I'm sure as hell that I'm going to get my feisty self again.

I was woken up by a knock on my door. I don't even know when I fell asleep. I look outside and its dark. Shoot. I slept through the day. I check my phone and its already 8pm. The knocking doesn't stop.

Me: Go away.

Nosi: Please Amahle, open up for me. We're worried about you.

Me: I'm fine.

Nosi: But you've been in there for the whole day, you haven't eaten. At least eat.

Me: I'm not hungry.

Nosi: I promise I'll leave you alone once you've eaten.

I stand up and open the door. She's standing there with a plate of food in her hand. I let her in.

Her: Wow you look horrible.

Me: Thanks.

Her: So I cooked your favorite.

She smiles and gives me the food. I take it and to be honest I don't have any appetite.

Me: Thank you mngani.

I fake a smile.

Her: I know you faked it but I'll take what I can get.

I roll my eyes.

Her: So how are you?

Me: Please don't feel sorry for me.

Her: Amahle stop it. You've always been like this, always bottled up your feelings and that's not good. Talk to me Amahle, let me in. I'm your friend, you're always there for me now I want to be here for you. Don't push me away.

Me: (sigh) to be honest Nosi, I don't know how I feel. I have mixed emotions. I don't know why I did what I did, I don't know if it was a good decision but at the same time I know that me and him won't work. Our relationship is toxic. There's always something new popping up. We never get to be happy. So to answer your question, I'm just lost, confused but I know I'm mad at him.

Her: But do you love him?

Me: Sometimes love isn't enough. Even though I love him but I need to love myself more and know when to walk away and just save myself from all the drama and heartache.

Nosi: But you truly love each other I'm sure you can work things out. You can learn to live with each other. Amahle, you love that man I know it. You can't runaway all the time you have troubles. I know you hope he's going to chase you which I know he will because he's crazy about you but one day he'll get tired of chasing you. Don't run, talk about your issues. Work it out.

Dang, I hate it when she's right. And she makes sense.

Me: Get out of here, I don't like admitting that you're right. So just leave so I can think.

Nosi: (smiles) I know I'm right. He loves you Amahle more than anything in this world, he'd move mountains for you. Sure, there'd be hoes, he's a man after all, he gets tempted but he knows where his heart lies and he's not going to ruin that and he won't let anyone ruin that. Just be patient with him, he can change for you. Don't be weak Amahle. Its just not you. The Amahle I know fights for what she loves, you do that.

She's right about one thing, I never knew I was this weak. I thought nothing could hurt me, nothing could make me cry and ge vulnerable but I was wrong. I'm not as tough as I thought.

Me: I know Nosi. How do I fix this?

Nosi: When he walks through that door don't chase him out don't be hard on him. Love him, stop fighting him.

Me: (sigh) what if he doesn't?

Nosi: Well, you go and get your man.

She wants me to chase him? No ways!

Her: Well let me leave you. And please eat.

Me: Okay I will..

She leaves. I decide to eat and I didn't realize I was this hungry until I finished the plate. I go take a shower and wore my short pajamas then went to bed. Instead of falling asleep I kept hoping that Tukelo would walk through that door, it's already 1am but nothing. I check my phone and no missed calls or a message. I give up and try falling asleep.

I wake up the next day feeling horrible. I take a shower and went downstairs. I find everyone there having breakfast, except for Tukelo. I greet and they greet back. I see that they want to ask me questions but I'm glad that they decided to let me be. Things go normal with Tumi cracking jokes and Thabang making fun of everyone. Life was going on as normal. While I kept wondering where the heck is he. I'm half way through my meal when Thabang decide to talk to me.

Thabang: Aren't you going to school today Amahle?

Shit! I didn't realize that its my first day back to school today.

Me: Uhm, its still the first day I'm sure I won't miss much. I will go back tomorrow.

Thabang: Okay. We are all also leaving today. The kids have to go back to school as well, they've also missed a week of school.

Me: Okay, I will also go back to my apartment.

Pitsi: You're sure that's a good idea?

Me: Yeah. Sure it's been awhile since I've been alone but I can't be alone in this gigantic house. I'd go crazy.

Tumi: You can stay with Nosi, I'm sure she won't mind, right babe?

Nosi: Of course, I'd love to have you around.

Gontse: Yeah I think its best that you stay here with Nosi.

Me: Guys really, y'all are fussing over nothing. I will be fine.

I fake a smile. Hope they're all convinced. Tumi changed the subject, I can always rely on him. After breakfast, everyone decide to pack and by 1pm everyone was leaving. I was still upstairs packing. I come downstairs to say goodbye to everyone. We said our goodbyes and everyone left. I start packing some of my things. Tukelo is no show, no calls or messages. I don't know where he is. I call Sabelo and he took me to my apartment.

Well I'm having a rough day. I feel and look like a mess. Why is it so hard for me to accept Tukelo as he is? I just can't get myself to trust him though I know for sure that I would die should we decide to end things forever. I'm lying on my bed with my pajamas on, I'm playing with my diamond ring. I look at it and wonder if I'm ready to go through with this or am I ready to let him go? I'm just conflicted. I know for sure that I didn't mean it when I said we should end our engagement but at the same time my pride won't let me beg him or run after him. I should be busy getting ready for school but I'm here, daydreaming about my fucked up relationship. My phone has been ringing for the past hour, it was either Nosipho, Zitha or Tumi. I know they mean well but I'm not in the mood to speak with any of them. Until I decided to just switch off my phone.

Someone knocks on my door.

Me: Come in.

Unathi steps in.

Unathi: Sis' Amahle, there's someone here to see you.

Me: Who is it?

Unathi: it's Mr. Mokoena.

I literally jump off bed. I look at myself in the mirror, I straighten my hair.

I go downstairs, I find him watching soccer with beer in his hand. He turns off the TV once he sees me coming down.

Me: Hey.

Him: Sit.

I do as told

Him: I'm sick of it.

Me: Excuse me?

Him: I'm sick of you running away when things go bad.

I don't respond.

Him: is this how you're going to behave should we decide to get married? I will have a weak wife beside me, is that it?

Me: Tukelo what do you want me to do? Everytime there's something shady about you, its driving me insane.

Him: (chuckles) what you know is nothing compared to what you don't know yet.

Me: What do you mean?

Him: There's a lot more you don't know about me Amahle, alot. Your behavior shows that you can never love me enough to accept who I am. You're causing all this drama because of my past? Really? Did you even bother to ask me what happened? Or you just made conclusions on your own, again?

I keep quiet.

Him: I warned you about this and I told you that I won't tolerate it. The way you were shouting at me yesterday was completely uncalled for, worse thing is, you did it in front of my brothers. What do you want them to think about me?

Me: I didn't mean to shout at you Tukelo, I got pissed...

Him: Pissed over shit!

He bangs the table. I startle.

Him: You've hurt me Amahle, way too many times. I'm done chasing after you. I know you're new at this but you're overdoing it now, you need to grow up, be reasonable man!

Me: Did you come here to fix things or shout at me?

Him: Fix what? Tell me, fix what exactly? You broke off our engagement, right? What did you think would happen? I would run after you and beg you to come back? Oh no, I'm tired running after you Amahle. You're taking advantage of me because you know I love you. U ntloela hampe wena!

Me: I don't have time for this.

I stand up

Him: Do what you do best Amahle, run. Be a coward.

I turn to look at him.

Me: What did you just call me?

Him: A coward. That's what you are! You never want to face your challenges, as soon as things get too challenging for you, you run! And I run after you, I'm sick of it!

Me: Then stop running after me!

Him: Maybe I should.

I'm too hurt for words, tears start pouring down my face.

Me: I'm also tired Tukelo, I'm tired of finding something shady about you, something I can't handle. Tukelo I love you, I know I do but I can't handle your past, your dark past. I thought I knew what kind of a man you are but clearly I don't. Tell me, would you feel okay if you find out that I'm a gangster? My family don't like you? And you find out that I had sex with someone you thought was my brother?! How sick is that?

Him: if you can't accept me Amahle, maybe you made a good decision by ending our engagement.

I turn to leave.

Him: I will continue paying for your fees, you can keep the apartment, I will pay the staff, you can keep everything, even the ring. I will continue giving you your monthly allowance. Should you need anything, call my office. I'm not saying I'm ending things with you but I'm just giving you time to figure out what the hell you want.

I couldn't respond, all I did was cry. I didn't know how to react to what he was saying. I just listen to him speak

Him: I will be away for awhile, hope by the time I get back you would've made up your damn mind.

Why is telling me all of this? As he keep on saying those words, more tears just came running down my face. I don't respond, I leave him standing then ran upstairs. I got to my room, threw myself on the bed and I cried my eyes out. Is it really over? For good this time?

I wake up and it's morning already. I refuse to dwell on this today, I have to get up and get my shit together.

I got up went to take a shower. I got dressed so beautifully that no one even notice that my life is upside down. I had no appetite so I just grabbed an apple and left. I find Sabelo waiting for me outside. I go to him.

Me: don't worry, I'm taking my bike.

Him: But Mam' Mr. Mokoena gave us strict orders that we take you where you want to go.

Me: and I'm giving you strict orders that I don't want to chauffeured, I will take my bike. If you take me without my consent that means you're kidnapping me.

Him: Fine mam' but I will follow you where ever you go.

Me: Fine suite yourself.

I get on my bike and head to school. I go there and realized how much I missed being around here. As I parked my bike I feel a girl hugging me from behind and I realize that its Thobe. I hug her back. I haven't seen her in forever. We did talk from time to time but throughout the holidays, I haven't seen her, not once. We both walk to class together.

Her: So what's new?

Me: Oh lord, there's alot new.

Her: Why? What happened?

Me: Will talk later

We attended all of our classes. Then at 2 we were done. We decided to go have lunch and catch up. We ride my bike and we settled in Spur's.

Her: So girl tell me. What has been happening?

Me: Where do I start? Well, I'm not pregnant anymore, Tukelo got shot, I found out that Tukelo is cheating, we broke up and oh what's the other thing, I don't know if he broke up with me or I broke up with him. It's just alot confusing.

Her face is astonished.

Her: So much drama in two months?

Me: Yeah I know. My life is just full of drama.

Her: Explain more.

I tell her everything that has been happening in my life. Even about that mystery woman who called me the other night. I still haven't got anywhere with that. I haven't even told the girls about it.

Her: Wow, I don't know what to say and where to start. I'm really sorry about Nkanyiso, I should've been there. Such a bad friend I am.

Me: I even forgot to call you, my mind has been all over the place, I'm just glad this didn't happen while I was busy with my exams.

Her: Yeah luckily. So you have no idea where he is.

Me: Nope, he just told me that he'll be away for awhile. I haven't heard from him since yesterday. I just hope that wherever he is, he's okay.

Her: That's messed up.

Me: I know bru.

Her: What's with all the guys around us?

Me: When Tukelo's away this is how my life gets, security be tight. Even when he went to Russia, it was like this.

Her: That's just crazy.

Me: Tell me about it.

After our lunch we meet up with Nosi and Zitha and we decided to go shopping. I decide on using Tukelo's credit card, I know where ever he is, its reporting to him that I'm using up his money, well I don't care. Nosi looks amazing, you can't say she just gave birth her body is slamming hot and she doesn't have baby weight. She even left Thapelo with Thandi, she's saying that Thandi loves that kid like its her own. Ever since the Nosi and Tumi saga me and Thandi we're not as close as we use to be. I don't think she trusts me enough to confide in me and I just think its for the best. I even bought things I don't even need. While at Factorie, I feel someone blocking my eyes. I try figuring out who it was but had no idea, when he decides to let go, I see someone I didn't expect I'd see.

Me: Charles.

Him: Hey.

Me: Umm, what are you doing here?

Him: Its a Mall. So I'm doing what everybody does in a mall.

Me: Oh right.

Him: Nosi, Zitha.

Them: Mr. Le Roux.

Him: So it's been awhile Amy, are you avoiding me?

Me: Why would say that?

Him: Uhm, you haven't been calling me, when I do call, you don't answer, you don't respond to my texts so yeah I think you're avoiding me.

Me: Avoid is such a strong word, I'd use the word ignore.

Him: (laughs) so why are you ignoring me?

Me: I rather not say.

Him: Aahh, its Tukelo, right?

Me: Not that again please.

Nosi: If you don't mind, as you can see we are having a girls day, don't you mind doing this some other time?

Him: Oh I'm sorry, didn't mean to intrude. One more thing Amy, if you need anything, I mean anything don't hesitate to call.

Me: I will keep that in mind.

Him: Well let me leave to it then. Ciao ladies.

He leaves.

Nosi: What's the deal between you and him?

Me: Nothing.

Thobe: That didn't look like nothing.

Zitha: Are you screwing him?

Me: The hell Zitha? No man, sies! We hanged out once or twice, Tukelo found out about it and we stopped that's all.

Nosi: So you liked him?

Me: Geez no! Can you stop with all the madness? I have better things to worry about then him. Like finding out who this mystery woman is.

Nosi: Oh we will find that bitch. We will just get Rufus to find her. I'd ask Tumi or Dankies but Tukelo would know about it too so we wouldn't risk it.

Zitha: Rufus won't tell?

Me: I don't think so. Nosi, you get him to look for her.

Nosi: On it.

After spending Tukelo's money, I went home to that big empty apartment. I even gave Unathi some time off, I just want to have the whole house all to myself. As I was busy studying, I hear a knock on my door. I rush downstairs and I find Tumi at my door.

Me: Oh hi.

I hug him and let him in.

Him: Get dressed because I'm here to take you out.

Me: Tumi, its 6pm. Why didn't you call first?

Him: Well I did but your phone if off.

Me: Oh yeah right, I totally forgot to switch it on.

Him: It doesn't matter anymore because il'm already here. Get dressed.

Me: I hope you're not here to lecture me as well.

Him: Who else did?

Me: Your brother was here yesterday.

Him: He was? But I'm not here to talk about him, I'm here to take you out.

Me: We wont talk about him?

Him: Pinky swear.

I laugh.

Me: Well since you pinky swore on it, let me go and change so we can go.

Him: Okay.

I go upstairs to change and we head to the mall. We eat at his favorite restaurant, Ocean Baskets. I don't know why can't they love normal food. While Tukelo is all crazed up by Italian food, Tumi loves seafood.

We have a normal dinner and have a flowing conversation. As promised he doesn't bring up Tukelo. Instead we're talking about stupid things and soccer. As we were about to order dessert, I see his face turn into a serious face. And I just know what he's about to say.

Him: I'm not good at keeping promises.

Me: Even a pinky promise?

Him: Even a pinky promise.

Me: Oh, go ahead.

Him: I'm worried about you guys.

Me: Don't be. We just have learn to live without each other.

Him: You can't do that Amahle. You love him and he's crazy about you.

Me: Its not enough. We've hurt each other repeatedly, he cheated on me. We're just not good for each other. Maybe this is how things should be.

Him: he's a man Hle, he's not perfect. He will lose his way and expects the love of his life to make him see the light. He didn't propose to you for no reason. You must mean something to him. You changed him and let me tell you something Tigress, a man don't change for any woman, he changes for one woman. Just one.

Me: How did I change him?

Him: Yoh. Tukelo was a party animal, he changed women like I change my underwear, he was trouble, he even once fucked one of our friend's mother. He's partner at that time cried to us all day everyday and we couldn't do anything to change Tukelo because we knew no matter how hard we tried talking to him, he won't change. But ever since you came along, its like he sees the light. He's not as grumpy as he used to be. He's always happy and thanks to you we now see him more often before we use to see him like once a month.

Me: I hear you Tumi but I don't think that's how Tukelo sees it. Its been a year and we've already broken up like 10times.

Him: That's because all the time when things heat up, you decide to run. Stay with him even when things are bad, I mean that's what unconditional love is right?

Me: (sigh) I guess. But he hasn't called me since our argument and told me he's leaving, I don't even know where he's going.

Him: Have you tried calling him?

Me: No.

Him: Instead you were waiting for his call?

Me: (sigh) Yeah.

Him: You should call him.

Me: I will. Something tells me you know where he is.

Him: He's like my twin brother so yeah I know where he is.

Me: Is he okay Tumi?

Him: Honestly, no. He looks like he had died a million deaths.

Me: Where is he?

Him: why don't you call him and find out.

He gives me my phone. I didn't even know that he had it. I take it and dial his number don't want to lie, I'm nervous. It goes straight to voicemail. I hang up.

Me: Voicemail.

Him: Why don't you leave a message?

I swear Tumi is going to be the death of me. I dial again and I leave a message.

Me: "Hi Tukelo. Its me Amahle. I just wanted to know if you're good. I'm worried."

I hang up.

Tumi looks at me like he expected me to say more.

Him: Well that's the start. So, shall we order dessert?

Me: About time.

After dinner with Tumi he takes me to the movies, we watched cartoons. Not my pick. And to my surprise, I had fun. Well, Tumi made it fun with the jokes he made. After the movies it was already 10pm. Tumi took me to my apartment.

Him: Are you sure that you're going to be good?

Me: Yes. I have to prepare for school anyway.

Him: Well you do know you're not alone.

Me: Yes. I have an entire army surrounding my apartment.

Him: (laughs) Yes. Plus you have me, your very own Hercules. So whenever and I mean whenever call me if you see or hear anything suspicious.

Me: I live alone, sure I will always feel a little scared. I can't call everytime I feel intimidated.

Him: Yes you should. I promised Tukelo that I will keep you safe.

Me: Oh.

Him: Anyway let me leave now.

Me: Well okay.

Him: You know what, put my number on speed dial, just in case..

Me: (laughs) Yoh! There's no need Itumeleng. I will be fine.

Him: You know that if anything happens to you Tukelo is going to kill me right?

Me: You're scared of him?

Him: Just a little.

Me: stop worrying I will be fine.

Him: Okay. Let me love and leave you.

He hugs me for a long time, and for once I get the comfort I needed.

Him: You're going to be okay?

Me: Geez, yes.

Him: Well okay.

He lets go.

Him: Bye now.

Me: Will you leave already.

He smiles and leaves.

Insert Thirty-Seven 😊

TUMI

Thandi has been acting up lately. I dread to go home, yes she's over the fact that I got someone else pregnant, she's even loving Thapelo like her own but she's been very moody towards me. We are more like roommates now, she was even sleeping in the guestroom. She was really starting to tick me off. Yes I know I screwed up but I have been apologizing to her, what more does she want? I drive in my house. I sit for a good 15mins inside the car. I get out, I find her sitting on the couch, with food on her lap.

I greet her, she doesn't respond. I hiss and went to the kitchen. When I got there, the place was a mess, dishes on the sink and to top it all off, there was no food for me. Okay, she can do whatever she wants to do but she didn't cook for me? She was really overdoing it. I raged. I rush to the lounge.

Me: Thandi, didn't the chef and maid show up today?

Her: I gave them a leave.

She wasn't even looking at me, her eyes were glued to that T.V screen.

Me: What? Who are you to tell them that?

Her: Your wife, in case you forgot.

Me: Okay then why didn't you clean? The kitchen is a mess and why didn't you cook for me?

Her: Oh, I thought you weren't coming back.

Me: That's what you're going with? Really?

Her: Tumi, you spend most of your time with them so excuse me if I thought you weren't going to show.

She stands up and went to the kitchen. I follow her.

Me: Well then, since you can see that I'm here, you can't seriously expect me to go to bed on an empty stomach?

Her: You have hands right? Use them to cook for yourself.

Me: I am your husband! You can't speak to me like that?

Her: Oh so now you know that? But you didn't know that when you were busy cheating on me, partying every night and you never even thought of letting me know that you aren't coming back? You didn't know that when you decided to make another woman pregnant, leaving me in this house every night with no one to embrace me? So now you want to play the husband card with me? You must be crazy Itumeleng.

Me: What is wrong with you?

Her: You're what's wrong with me! I'm tired being this good wife to you but you can't even do one thing right. Nine years Tumi, well actually it's Ten years since you forgot our anniversary, did you even know that Tumi? That it's our 10th anniversary today!

Oh shit...

Me: Thandi I...

Her: Save it Tumi. I don't have time for this, I have somewhere to be.

She turns to leave.

Me: Where you're going? It's almost midnight.

Her: If you're not planning on celebrating our anniversary, well I am planning on doing that.

She goes upstairs. What has gotten into her? I decide on making food for myself, I look at the sink, it was full of dishes, I ain't touching that. Though I had dinner earlier with Amahle, I still needed to eat a home cooked meal made by my wife. She decided to act all crazy now I don't know what to do. I settle on bread and Nutella, made coffee. I went to the lounge and watched soccer. As I was halfway through my meal, she comes downstairs looking all sorts of gorgeous. I have never seen her clean up this good. I look at her. I almost choke on my food. She was wearing a really short, tight dress with heels. My wife is light skinned, she has fresh thighs, flawless skin, no spots. The way she was dressing made me really uncomfortable. I stand up and block her way, she rolls her eyes.

Her: Move out of my way Tumi.

Me: Now where do you think you're going dressed like that?

Her: I don't see how's that any of your concern.

Me: (chuckles) hhe, u ea hlanya keng? Have you lost your bloody mind Thandiwe?

Her: This is no time for you to play the role of a good husband and pretend as if you care about me because you don't. Now move tu!

Me: You're right, I don't even know why I'm bothering myself with you.

I move out her way.

Her: Good, don't wait up for me hubby.

Me: Don't even think of using any of my cars.

Her: Don't flatter yourself Tumi. I can get anywhere I want without me having to use any of your cars.

I just look at her without responding and she leaves. I go back to my eating.

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THANDI

I look around and I dont see him, dont tell me that he stood me up. He flashes his lights and I see his car waiting for me a few houses away from mine. I go to him and I get in in his Porsche. I greet him and he greets back.

Him: Took you long enough, hubby didn't want to let you go?

He smiles and starts his car.

Me: Argh, don't worry yourself about him. I can handle that man.

Him: How did you convince him to let you go at this time of the night?

Me: Like I said I can handle him.

I smile and look at him. I know what I'm against what my mother taught me, she always told me that no matter what, I shouldn't never compete with a man but here I am right now, cheating on my husband because he hurt me. I know it's not right but I've had it with Tumi's crap, I've been patient way too long. I've begged him for years to love me but he just can't. Just when we were ready to make things work, he goes and give another woman what I've been longing for, a child. I may have accepted Thapelo and Nosi but I am still crazy mad at Tumi, he embarrassed me again. I still love him though, alot just that I need a distraction and this hunk over here, just came in the right time. Let me tell you how I met this hunk, I was out buying clothes for Thapelo when I bumped into him, spilled his coffee on my blouse, I was so mad. He offered to buy me another shirt then take me out for lunch. He was a gentleman and he made me smile throughout our whole meal, he made me feel like a woman, something Tumi failed to do. Its hard not to fall for him, he's funny, handsome and a gentleman plus he's loaded. I don't know whether he's married or what and to be fair I don't care, I'm not planning on catching any feelings or anything, I just want to be distracted. I wasn't planing on telling him that I'm married either, he saw a ring on my finger and I didn't deny but he doesn't seem to have a problem with it. We've been calling and seeing each other for the past week and I'm enjoying every second I spend with him.

Him: So it's clubbing then my place, right?

Me: Uhm... Ive never slept out before, I don't know if that's such a good idea.

Him: Hawu, you did say that you can handle your husband and besides you're already out I'm sure you can make up an excuse

Me: I don't know.

Him: Come on Thandi, I just can't seem to get enough of you. I just want you all to myself for one night. I will bring you back first thing when the sun is out.

Me: I'll think about it.

Him: What's there to think about? We wouldn't do something you don't want to do, I promise.

Me: okay, fine Mandla, just don't push me into doing anything I don't want to do.

Him: I will be on my best behavior, I promise.

He smiles, I smile too.

TUMI

I wake up to get ready for work and I realize that Thandi is not back yet. It's fucken 6am, where's this woman? I call her and her phone rings unanswered, I click my tongue. I take a shower, got dressed and rushed downstairs. I make breakfast, as I was sitting enjoy my bread with Nutella, in comes Mrs.

Mokoena. She walks in the kitchen looking all sorts of horrible. She couldn't even walk straight, her hair was all over the place, her shoes were in her hands and her make up was messed up. She walks to the fridge took out a bottle of water. Then she realizes she wasn't alone, she decided to greet me. I just look at her.

Her: I greeted you.

Me: And I heard you

Her: Oh so you'll be all grumpy now?

Me: Who said I'm grumpy?

Her: I know you Itumeleng, you're always happy in the morning.

Me: I have to get to work.

I get off the high chair.

Me: Oh when I get back, make sure this house is squeaky clean if you know what's good for you and take a shower, you smell like a man.

I leave for work. I don't like the woman she's becoming one bit. She has never behaved like this before hence I don't know how to deal with her. Why is her behavior affecting me? Does this mean I'm finally falling for her? Seriously, after 10years? Impossible. But I can help but feel a little hurt by her sudden change. Where was she last night? With who? Doing what? I have to find out. But no, maybe that's what she wants, she wants my attention. I got to work. I own a law firm, Mokoena Attorneys. My P.A. updates me about what I have to do for today and to be fair, I am in no mood to work.

Me: Lisa, please cancel all of my meetings and don't let anyone in my office, even if it's an important client. I'm unavailable.

Her: But sir, you an important meeting with Mr. Luthuli, you've been postponing for way too long, if you cancel now, you might lose him as a client.

Me: Oh there's that, get Lungani on it. He must drop everything and prepare for the meeting with Mr. Luthuli.

Her: Yes sir.

Me: I don't want to be disturbed, even if the building is on fire, don't notify me. Let me burn.

Her: (chuckles) got it.

She leaves. I lock myself up in my office. I start with handling some paperwork, I soon realize that I couldn't concentrate. I need to talk to someone, I dial Tukelo's number. It rings unanswered. I know he said he needed some time away but he's overdoing it now. I carry on doing some work. At around 1pm, there's a knock on my door, I look up.

Her: I know you said not to disturb you sir but there's a woman here who's insists on seeing you.

Me: Name?

Her: Nosipho Mbatha.

Me: Oh, please let her in.

Her: Okay sir.

She leaves.

Nosipho comes in while pushing baby Thapelo on his pram. I met them halfway and I kiss Nosi.

Me: Hey you two.

Her: Hey daddy.

Me: What are you doing here?

I go back to my seat.

Her: oh we just thought we come by and see daddy at work.

She sits down.

Me: Nosi, Thapelo is not even a month old but already you're taking him places?

Her: Babe, it's not like we walk around town. We just got in the car, came here. We haven't been anywhere else. Plus we're bored, we have nothing to do. I have noone to talk to.

Me: Why don't you call Amahle over?

Her: She wants to be alone, she doesn't need anyone.

Me: Oh, she is going through a tough time, maybe you should try harder reaching out to her.

Her: I tried Tumi, she won't take my calls or respond to my texts. Why don't you tell this idiotic brother of yours to stop hurting her like this.

Me: They will be fine. I never want to be involved in such affairs, I believe they will sort out their own affairs, should they see the need to.

Her: Yeah, I guess you're right. How are you anyway? You don't look too good.

Is it that obvious?

Me: No, I'm okay. Work stress.

Her: Are you sure?

Me: Yes babe. Since you're here, let me treat you for lunch?

Her: Hawu! I thought you had work to do.

Me: Nah, work can wait. I need to clear my head. Let's go.

I grab my car keys, wallet and we left. We settle in at John Dory's and we had our lunch through light conversation. Just what I needed to get my mind off Thandi's sudden change of behavior. I was here with my family, just the three of us. It felt right being with them, they're the missing piece I've needed all these years. After lunch, Nosi decided to do a little shopping for Thapelo. Now I regret suggesting coming to the mall, she was busy taking me from one baby shop to another. At 5pm, she was done and we headed to Germiston. I decided to not go back to work, I can't even concentrate anyway. We got to Nosi's house and Thapelo was already sleeping in Nosi's arms. She took him to his room and came back with the baby monitor. She sits next to me in the two seater couch. We cuddle.

Me: Babe, I have been thinking.

Her: Yes.

Me: I think maybe it's about time you made peace with your parents.

She sits up.

Me: I mean, I want to make things right, pay for the damages and all. Make Thapelo officially mine. Then I can go with him to Lesotho and introduce him to my ancestors.

Her: I thought we agreed that we will do that once he's a year old.

Me: I know but what if he falls sick because he doesn't know his sense of belonging

Her: That won't happen.

Me: Well, i'm not taking any chances. I want to make things right Nosi because right now, I'm pretty sure your family hates me and they probably think I don't want to take responsibility.

Her: But they want nothing to do with me Tumi, my father told me to leave and never come back. My mother is disappointed in me because I'm in love with a married man. I'm a disgrace to them

Me: That's not true babe, and you know it. They only said that because they were mad, not because they meant it. Now that you've given them time, i'm sure they won't be as harsh.

Her: You don't know my dad, that man is mean.

Me: Just try reaching out. I'm pretty sure once they see how much this married man loves you, they won't be as disappointed. Besides, I also want you to be my wife one day.

She laughs.

Her: Usuyahlanya ke manje Tumi. (you're crazy now Tumi)

Me: But I'm not joking. Don't you want to get married someday?

Her: Well yeah...

Me: Who else will you marry except for me? We have a kid together. Do you seriously think I will allow you to marry another man? You're the crazy one if you think that.

Her: So what will happen? You'll divorce Thandi?

Me: You're know that is out of the question.

Her: So I will be wife number 2?

I nod and she laughs again

Me: I'm serious Nosi. By this time next year, you'll be my wife.

Her: Do you think Thandi will agree to that? I know that we're good and all but I doubt she'll ever agree to this.

Me: Forget about Thandi, I can handle her. Will you agree?

She looks at me.

Her: You're serious Tumi?

Me: As a heart attack.

Her: Well, let me think about it.

Me: Take all the time you need.

She lays on my chest and I kissed her head

I got home around 8pm and I find Thandi ready to leave, again. She was busy in our room fixing her hair. She was wearing tight pants this time and a revealing top. She was sexy, don't want to lie.

Me: Tell me when I'm living with a hooker under the same roof.

Her: Good Evening to you too Hubby.

Me: You didn't cook for me, again?

Her: You didn't say so, you just told me to clean the house and take a shower. That's exactly what I did.

Me: Tell me Thandi, we're going to live like this, till when?

Her: Don't you dare start lecturing me Tumi. You started all of this, I'm just finishing it off.

Me: I thought we were working on our marriage, now you're behaving like this?

Her: I thought so too, until you decided to embarrass me, again.

Me: Im trying Thandi, I really am

Her: Try harder.

Me: What do you want from me, Thandiwe?

She gets from the chair, walks to me.

Her: A child.

Me: What?

Her: Give me a child Tumi, and all of this will be over. That's all I ever wanted from you. After that, you'll have your wife back. For now, this is how its going to be around here, until I get what I want.

Me: Thandiwe, you're not even sleeping with me these days, do you know how a child is made?

Her: Don't act smart with me Tumi, you'll let me know when you're ready to give me what I want then I will come back to this room. Right now, I have somewhere to be. Don't wait up.

With that she leaves. I'm left confused. She wants a child?

Insert Thirty-Eight 😊

AMAHLE

I haven't heard or spoken to Tukelo for almost 2weeks. All I do is go to school come back, eat, sleep, gym, cried and cried some more. My friends have been great, they've been there for me and I can never thank them enough. I'm not mad or hurt anymore. I'm healing. I even got to find out who the mystery woman was and it was Nthabi. I didn't even entertain that shit. I knew Tukelo was hiding something from me, I knew he was screwing over, I'm just hurt to find out that he did it with his ex. But maybe I'm the one who drove him to it. My friends asked me if I knew her, I said no because I knew if I told them I knew her, they'd wanna attack the bitch. I just don't want any drama now.

Hours became days. Days became weeks, weeks became a month, I take it in day by day and finally I'm living my life like I haven't before. After 2 whole months of not communicating with Tukelo, I'm healed. I don't cry myself to sleep anymore, I'm even going out more. I know I shouldn't be saying this but I've gotten close with Charles, we're just friends nothing more. I believe to be single anyway so I can do whatever I want. Well Tumi was always on my case, somehow he always knew what I do but I don't care, his brother decided to go in hiding so screw it. As promised, I still receive monthly allowance from him but everytime I try to call him and thank him, it always leads me straight to voicemail. I ended up giving up. I'm busy studying when I hear a loud knock on my door, I check the time, it's close midnight. Who could it be?

Me: Who is it?

They don't answer, they just continue knocking. I stood up from the couch and took my gun from the safe. Yes I own a gun now. I just felt the need of having it.

Me: Who is it?

They don't answer. I open the door slowly with the gun behind me. Andile comes rushing in.

Me: Fuck, Andile. What the hell?

I put the gun behind my waist. Andile is panting and already I know that he's in some trouble.

Me: What have you done now?

Him: I'm a father sisi, shout at me later but i'm a dad.

Me: You almost got shot for that?

Him: Shot? What do you mean? You own a gun Amahle?

Me: Forget about that, you're a father? What do you mean?

He smiles.

Him: I mean I'm a father sisi.

Me: why are you fucken happy about that?

Him: Hawu

Me: Don't "klawu" me here wena. Did you stop to think how you're going to support that baby? You don't have money Andile! You want mom's BP to shoot up? Do you have any idea what this will do to her? What are condoms for kanti Andile?

Him: I thought I said shout at me later, right now I'm so excited. I just needed to tell someone else about this.

This brother of mine is sick. Does he know how much babies cost?

I just look at him on disbelief.

Him: I don't have everything figured out yet but I need for you to support me

Me: Support you? I don't support crap mina. I may have had your back all these years but this time Andile, you're on your own.

Him: Can you at least see her picture? She looks alot like you.

Me: No I don't want to it... Wait, did you say she looks like me?

He smiles

Him: Yeah

He takes out his phone and gave it to me.

And he's right, the baby was too cute for words, and I saw a little me.

Me: She's so cute.

Him: I know right?

Me: Andile, who's the mother? Don't tell me it's Buhle. She's too young to be a mother, this will cause a huge drift between you and Pat...

Him: Relax, it's not her.

Me: The who?

Him: Well... I don't think you know her.

Me: Just say her name

Him: Nonhle Khumalo

Me: Nonhle Khumalo? No I've heard that name before, it's not the first time I'm hearing about her. Can you perhaps describe her?

Him: Well for starters, she's hot, great physique, amazing woman

Me: Nonhle Khumalo... No, no Andile... Your nurse?

He keeps quiet

Me: Are you being for real? How did that happen?

Him: It just happened okay, I didn't plan for it to happen, it just did.

Me: That woman is even older than I am

Him: I know Amahle, I know

Me: And still she dated you?

Him: Yeah

Me: That's sick!

How wicked is this? Never in a million years did I think I would ever hear such crap! Andile dating an older woman and now they have a kid together?

Him: But I love her, does that matter?

Me: You're stupid, do you know that? Stupid! You're in matric in case you've forgotten, but now you're here telling me that you have a baby with an older woman! This will surely send mom into the ICU. Do you ever stop and think about the consequences of your actions?

Him: I didn't mean to make her pregnant but now that it happened, i wont be a coward about it. You scolding at me won't change the fact that the baby is here.

Me: Okay fine but I will ask you this, what's going to happen now? How are you going to support the baby?

Him: I don't have everything figured out but what I need right now is support from my family, until I can stand on my own two feet.

Me: I can't make such decisions alone, call a family meeting so you can tell them.

Him: I know but there's reason why I came to you first before I tell them, I need you to have my back during that meeting, because you know how your brother and uncles can be. They'll bury me alive, I just want to sit there, knowing at least someone has my back.

He's right about one thing, Anele takes no shit, he won't condone any of this, I am pretty sure he won't even try to support Andile in this. He has noone to support him, except for me.

Me: Can you leave so I can just think.

ANDILE

After I got back from Amahle's apartment that night, I didn't sleep a wink. For the life of me I couldn't believe that my ass was a father. To a beautiful baby girl. My doubts cleared out when I saw Lisakhanya's face, she was a replica of Amahle. I knew right there and then that she's mine, I even

named her Nosihle, Amahle's second name. Lisakhanya is her mother's name. I just couldn't wait to hold her in my arms. Right now, I'm getting ready for the meeting. I'm definitely not looking forward to it. I'm pretty sure everyone's anxious as to why I called a family meeting as I never did so before. My phone rings, Caller ID: Mama kaKhanya.

Me: Sthandwa sami

Her: Babe, how are you?

Me: I'm nervous as fuck.

Her: Calm down, I'm sure everything will go okay.

Me: I know but things will really go South once I tell them you're six years older.

Her: Oh yeah right.

Me: The person I'm worried about is my mom, she's fragile. I don't know how she'll react to this.

Her: My parents didn't take it well either, my father is always on my side but my mom flipped, saying "Bese kuphele amadoda yini kodwa Nonhle"

She tries mimicking her mother's voice and I laugh.

Her: Don't laugh babe, she was seriously pissed but at least she was happy that I finally left Mandla.

Me: Yeah, I'm also happy that is out of the way.

Her: Andile, the challenges we've faced are nothing compared to what we're about to face and I'm scared.

Me: Don't be. As long as you're by my side and I have you by my side we'll be okay. We should just stick together no matter how tough things get for us.

Her: I don't want to ever lose you Andile, you the best thing that has ever happened to me and you gave me the most beautiful daughter. I will forever be grateful for that.

Me: You won't lose me babe, I love you way too much and I also love my daughter, I will take full responsibility for what happened. Just trust and believe in me. Things will work out for us, I'm sure of it.

Her: I hope so.

My mom shouts for my name.

Me: uhm... I have to go babe. I love you both.

Her: We love you too and good luck

Me: Thank you. Kiss my daughter for me.

Her: Haybo, what about me?

Me: (chuckles) I have a new special lady in my life so you have to understand and don't be jealous.

Her: (giggles) wow.

Me: Ngiyadlala wena babe, you're my queen, you know that.

Her: Ay, I can't wait to have a son so you'll understand how I'm feeling right now.

Me: Oh so we'll have more kids?

Her: Yoh! Go, before I start putting ideas in your head.

Me: (laughs) I was just asking.

Her: Bye Andile Zungu!

She hangs up. I look at my phone and smiled. Then reality starts sinking in, I have to go and face my family.

Amahle: Mom has been calling you, Andile.

I turn around to look at her.

Me: How long have you been standing there?

Her: Long enough to know that you really love your kid and your baby mama

Me: Yeah I really do.

Her: I still think you were stupid though, I'm sure the entire family will think like that too. It was a careless move I must say.

I look down.

Her: But I'm really proud of you that you didn't run away like all the other boys do and you are willing to take responsibility.

Me: Mom raised me better than that.

She smiles.

Everyone is here and they are waiting for me to speak. I am so nervous. I can't say a word, I can feel sweat dripping on my skin. I have been staring at them for the past 10mins.

Bab'ncane Hlomla: Are you going to talk boy or you're going to stare at us all day,?

Anele: Andile, I got things to do. Don't waste our time.

Amahle: Maybe we should give him time, whatever he has to say looks serious.

Bab'ncane Themba: Yey wena Amahle, this child brought us all here because he had something to say now that we here, he can't say it. I won't stand such.

Ma: Ay Themba, shouting at him won't help, we need to hear him out.

Anele: If he got himself into trouble then I don't even want to hear it, he always gets himself into trouble and expects us to bail him out

When has he ever bailed me out?

Amahle: Can we at least give him a chance to speak.

Bab'ncane Thulani: We gave him a chance he chose to just stare at us. He has to understand that we have lives to get to. I left work because I thought it's something important

Bab'ncane Hlomla: Yes we all did

Ma: By shouting at him, you're making him more nervous.

Bab'ncane Themba: Ay Buyi, ay Buyi, zosijwayela kabi phela lomfana.

They start arguing about me like I'm not even there.

Me: I'm a father.

I say finally. Whew! Finally. They all stop and looked at me.

Bab'ncane Themba: Yey wena mfana, uthini?!

Me: I'm saying, senginomntwana bab'ncane (I have a child)

Anele: Amen!

Bab'ncane Hlomla: Uze uthi usynomntwana nje, uyakwazi nje ukulala nomuntu wesfazane? (You are saying you have a child, do you even know what it's like to be intimate with a woman?)

How do I even answer such a question. I decided to keep quiet.

Bab'ncane Themba: Uyihlo ubuze umbuzo man! (Your father asked you a question)

Me: Yebo baba, ngiyakwazi. (Yes dad, I know)

Bab'ncane Hlomla: What do you know?

Me: What it's like to be intimate with a woman.

Bab'ncane Thulani: Uyazibona ukuthi ungakanan wena? Uyingane ehlaza cwe! Tell me, how are going to raise a child when you're a child yourself?

Anele: This is unbelievable Andile! Un-fucking-believable, you know how hard we work in this house so you can have a better future but uBusy utshala iyngane, yazi awuphilile, awucabangelani wena! (You're busy impregnating, you're inconsiderate)

I don't care about the lectures I'm getting from these people, I'm just alot worried about my mom, she is quiet and that's scaring me.

Anele: Did you stop to think about how this will affect you? Or perhaps, the girl's future?

Bab'ncane Themba: Wherever my brother is, I'm sure he's turning in his grave.

Bab'ncane Thulani: I didn't expect this from you Andile. I'm highly disappointed in you.

Anele: We all disappointed! How can you be so reckless? Even I never did such a mistake because I knew the consequences of it while you....

Amahle: Stop! Everybody just stop, that's enough Anele. Don't come here and start acting all self-righteous, don't make Andile feel bad as he already do. This is no time to lecture him, yes he made a mistake, we should be discussing a way forward. Lecturing him won't help right now.

Anele: Did you know about this Amahle? Because we all look shocked but you seem to be taking the news well

Amahle: I recently found out Anele.

Anele: And you decided to keep the news to yourself?

Amahle: It wasn't my place to tell you Anele, I made him call this meeting. Right now, Andile needs us, he's facing a challenge in life, what we need to do is be there for him. That's what families are for, right?

Anele: No Amahle! He did this on purpose. Breaking a plate, is a mistake, breaking a glass is a mistake, stepping on someone's foot that is a mistake. This is no mistake! Look at mom, she's shattered right now, she can't even speak. Will he be able to fix that?

I look at mom and she did look broken.

Bab'ncane Hlomla: And he needs to learn from his mistake, if we assist or 'be there' for him, will he ever learn? He decided to become a father, he should know what it feels like to be a father.

Amahle: Bab'ncane, I'm not saying you should support him to raise his child, all he asks for is support.

Me: Mkami...

She looks at me.

Me: I'm sorry mama

She gets up from her chair and left. I try going after her but Amahle holds my hand.

Amahle: Let her cool off first.

Bab'ncane Thulani : I think we should all leave. We shall discuss later a way forward, when everyone has calmed down.

They all agreed to that and they started leaving. I went to my room and threw myself on my bed.

Me: That went well.

I sigh. I check my phone and I have a few missed calls from Buhle. Then I remember that I have to break the news to her as well. She can never handle this. It's going to break her heart. Anele is right, I didn't think how this is going to affect other people. I only saw the good side of it, what I wanted to see, not

the bad side. I thought I had it under control, but realistically speaking, I have no clue on how to handle this.

AMAHLE

It's a Saturday, I'm just wearing my shorts and a crop top, my music is pounding and I'm cleaning the apartment. It's my way of passing time. Plus this whole Andile issue is getting to me. He called me earlier saying mom is still not talking to him, whenever he tries to speak, she never responds. As she is not taking this well, I wonder what will happen when she finds out that the mother is actually way older than Andile. I'm not looking forward to that.

I hear my phone ring, I turn down the volume and answered it.

Me: Charles, hey.

Him: Are you busy?

Me: Well sort of, what's up?

Him: I'm just thinking that maybe we go out tonight.

Me: What's the occasion?

Him: No occasion, I just miss seeing your face that's all.

Me: I'd love to see your face too but I can't, I have a test on my Monday so I have to study.

Him: Bummer, I can come over and help you study.

Me: No can do. I can't study with you around.

Him: Why?

Me: You'll distract me.

Him: How?

Me: You will just be yourself, and that's enough to be a distraction.

Him: I will behave, I promise.

Me: (laughs) you cannot, even if you tried.

Him: Let's just see who's right between me and you.

Me: (laughs) wouldn't you like to...

I hear a knock on the door. I go to the door and open it without noticing who's at the door.

Me: I just don't think its a good idea dude.

Him: I will bring apples over.

I laugh but as soon as I realize who's at the door, my smile fades.

Me: Can I call... Call you back?

Him: why? Amy? You seem disturbed what's up?

Me: I will call you back.

I don't wait for him to respond, I just hang up. We look at each other. I always asked myself what I'd do if this day arrived, I thought of a million things but now that the day has arrived, I'm not sure what to do. I want to scream, cry, shout, throw a tantrum but I'm shocked when I find myself hugging him for dear life. He's like a statue, he doesn't respond. I think he's shocked. I am too but I really want to hold him and never let go.

Insert Thirty-Nine 😊

Tukelo

Sure, I expected Amahle to chase me out, curse me or perhaps hit me but I sure I didn't expect her to hug me. Not in a million years. It takes forever for me to respond to her hug because I was shocked. I missed her so much. We have alot of issues to resolve, alot of things to talk about. I know she'll still give me a hard time and would want to know where I've been these past few months but she can scold me later. I'm not even sure if she'd forgive me after what I've done while I was away but I hope she will give me a chance to hear me out.

She let's go after what seems like forever. She looks at me and I see some sort of relief in her eyes. Lord, how I missed seeing her beautiful brown hazel eyes, those pink sexy thin lips, her dimples, her beautiful smile, those pearl white teeth, her flawless skin and her soft curly hair. I don't know if she'd let me but I want to kiss her, kiss her like I never did before. It was like she read my mind. She leaned in and kissed me. I don't hesitate, I kiss her back. I lead her inside. I close the door with my leg. I pick her up and lay her on the kitchen counter. We kiss like we never did before. I didn't realize I missed her this much, up

until I see her. She unbuckles my belt and unzips my pants. I take off her top and shorts. I take time to admire her beautiful body. I look at what I've been missing on.

Me: No one has touched this body?

Her: Never.

I smile. I kiss her all over her body and every kiss comes with a moan. I get turned on more when I hear her making those soft noises. I go down on her, her moans gets louder, she rubs my head, and pushes me in. I eat on her, like she's my dinner. I twirl my tongue around her clit, I finger her whilst licking her. She go crazy, I know she likes it when I do that. I feel her body shaking, I know its for me to go in but I just want to toy with her first. I go up and kiss her while fingering her, she holds me tight. Like her life depends on it. She kept on making those soft noises with her mouth. I feel her about to cum.

Me: No not yet babe, not yet.

I stop fingering her. Her clit is wet, hot and mushy just the way I like it. I enter her slowly. Then I start pounding her, the kitchen is filled with her screams. I try to quieten her by covering her mouth with my hand but she bit me. So let her be. Her moans and screams are music to my ears. When her screams get louder and louder, I slow down. I look at her and her hair is all over the place, she's breathing heavily and she's sweaty, so am I. She gets on top of me, she looks at me and smiles. I smile back. She rides me like a bitch. Now I'm the one doing all the groaning. I hold her waist. She starts twirling around my dick and that drives me crazy. Lord I missed this woman. I cum inside of her. We both reached our climax and she collapses on top of me. We both breathe heavily. We look at each other and we laugh.

Me: Hey.

Her: Hi.

Me: Thank you for that.

Her: Thank you for coming back.

And reality sinks in. We are about to have an argument, I just know it.

Me: I'm sorry for leaving like that just that...

Her: Don't be. You did what you wanted to do. You did what you thought was best.

Me: It wasn't like that.

She sighs. I know when she does that, she's trying to calm herself down. She is looking up, like she's thinking of murdering me or something.

Her: I'm cold.

She gets off the counter and started dressing up, I did too. She's going to go all Amahle on me now, good lord. After we were both done getting dressed, I feel World War 3 coming.

Her: So where were you?

Me: Can we sit?

She nods. We go to the lounge and we sit on the same couch. She switches off the music and looks at me. Where do I start? I don't want to be me right now. I wish she can read my mind and understand where I'm coming from and I hope she understands.

I take a deep breath.

Me: Firstly, I want to level things up here. Amahle, you called off our engagement, why?

Her: Tukelo I was mad okay? I don't know what I was thinking. I don't know what went over my head but as soon as I did it, I regretted it.

Me: You did?

Her: Yes. I beat myself up everyday. If I didn't do what I did, you wouldn't have left like that.

Me: I thought you didn't want me no more. Amahle, you can't just leave me every chance you get. You can't expect me to run after you all the time, its not how relationships work.

Her: I know that now. I'm sorry that I called off our engagement. I shouldn't have but the things you do, they're just too much for me to handle. When I found out about you and Nkati, I just lost it

Me: Who told you about that anyway?

Her: It really doesn't matter anymore Tukelo. How can you do that? She's your sister.

Me: She's not, you know that. It happened years ago. I was still a teenager, she tricked me into it.

Her: I don't think I even want to know Tukelo.

Me: But Amahle, you should know. I don't want you thinking the worst of me.

Her: I know she's adopted and staff but you should treat her as your own sister.

Me: Not even a drop of my blood run through her veins so she's not my sister.

Her: You're just saying that to make yourself feel better for what you did.

Me: oh just because I'm a guy and she's a girl, immediately, its my fault? Is that what you're saying?

Her: No but...

Me: Can you listen to me?

She keeps quiet.

Me: Thank you. So what happened was, I came home really drunk. I was about 16 or 15 years. I had way too much to drink so when I got home, Nkati was in the kitchen, half-naked. She started flirting with me, seducing me. We end up kissing and one thing led to another. I woke up the next morning regretting everything. My dad was going to kill me, I broke her virginity. He trusted me with her and I did such horrible deed. After that, she pleaded me to have a secret relationship with her otherwise she's going to tell dad that I had raped her. I had no choice but to play by her rules, it was my word against hers.

Her: So how did everyone end up knowing about this?

Me: (sigh) Aren't you going to tell me how you found out?

Her: Just answer me.

Me: Nthabi caught us together. That was when Nkati told her she'd make sure me and her end up together if she kept her mouth shut.

Her: wow. So all of this drama started off because of your affair with Nkati?

Me: (sigh) yeah

Her: This is sick.

She gets up and started pacing up and down.

Her: This is all making sense now. Now I get why Nkati doesn't want us to be together. She knows that you can never love Nthabi the way you love me.

Me: Exactly.

Her: She is obsessed with you Tukelo.

Me: She hasn't made a move on me since we were kids.

Her: But I've seen how she looks at you, the way she talks to you, the way she talks about you. All along I thought it was all innocent but it all make sense now.

Me: Maybe you're over thinking this.

Her: I'm not. What if I end up dead because of this?

Me: Don't be silly. Nkatiseng is not that crazy

Her: Her mother threatened me Tukelo. She threatened to kill me.

I stood up in a flash.

Me: What?

Her: Yes. By the pool when we were in Lesotho, she said if I don't stay away, she'd kill me.

Me: The fuck Amahle?! And you didn't tell me this, why?

Her: I thought it was an empty threat. And it probably is, she hasn't done anything to me.

Me: You were supposed to tell me about it!

I was fuming. No one threatens the life of my loved ones, ever!

Her: Tukelo please, don't do anything to her. Don't even ask her about it.

Me: Why?

Her: She was only threatening me, she hasn't done anything to me.

Me: So you're expecting me to sit and wait for her to do something?

Her: No. I'm just saying let it go. Let's focus on fixing us. First.

Me: Okay.

Her: So where were you?

I sit down.

Shit! There's this question I am not ready to answer. I never want to do what I'm about to do. I never want this woman to lose another set of tears because of me. I don't think I'm ready to do this. But I hope she hears me out and understands where I'm coming from.

Me: (clears throat) Lesotho.

Her: Oh.

Me: Amahle, I know you'd probably walk out of here hating me but baby please, hear me out. Don't judge me without hearing the whole story, please listen to me.

I kneel down between her legs.

Me: I don't ever want to hurt you. I love you so much. You're the only woman for me, the only one that I love and I never want to lose you. I don't ever want to imagine life without you in it. Love is hard and always will be, just remember that someone loves you and that someone is me.

Her: Just talk.

The way she said that. She knows I'm about to hurt her, she just knows it. I hold her hands and look at her.

Me: Amahle... I... (sigh)... There's no easy way to say this. (sigh)

I scratch my head then I close my eyes for a couple of seconds. I open them again.

Me: I am getting married... to someone else.

She slowly remove her hands away from mine. She looks at me and don't say anything. I know that look, that look tells me that shit is about to hit the fan.

Me: But listen to me, I can fix this. I have everything under control. Just trust me. Hear me out.

She keeps quiet and she just looks at me.

Me: Amahle please understand, if I don't do this, my family will lose their land. And it will all be my fault. I can't allow that to happen, I'm all they have. I know that my family have hurt me and displeased me but I can't let them get embarrassed like that, they're still my family.

Nothing.

Me: Baby, please. Understand where I'm coming from. I have no choice.

Nothing.

Me: Say something. Please.

Her: What do you want me to say?

Me: Anything. Shout at me, throw a tantrum, whatever. Do something. Just don't be quiet, you're scaring me.

Her: I have nothing Tukelo. Nothing. You drained me. I have no energy left in me. I can't scream, shout or even cry. My tears have dried out all thanks to you. You've hurt me repeatedly. Just as I'm ready to forgive you, you go and hurt me, again. Until when Tukelo? Until I'm six feet under? I can't. This is way too much.

Me: I know that. But please listen to me.

Her: I've heard enough.

Me: Amahle.

Her: No. I don't want to Tukelo. I don't want to do this with you now.

Me: But you said you'd stop running, you'd stick with me and we'd look for a way forward.

Her: A way forward? There's nothing we can do. Absolutely nothing.

Me: I have an idea.

Her: If you're thinking of making me your second wife or mistress, forget it.

Me: Well, I don't want to lie, I thought of that but no, I have another idea.

Her: Well let's hear it.

I know it is crazy but there's nothing I can do. I can't lose Amahle but at the same time I can't let my family suffer. I hope Amahle will work with me and not fight me. It will be hard yes, but it is the only way.

Her: Ususangene ngampela wena.

Me: Amahle, it's the only way.

Her: You're marrying Nthabi, the woman who loves you and you think this stupid idea of yours is going to work?

Me: I know it's a lot to ask for but I have this under control, just work with me, please. Do your part and leave the rest to me.

Her: No Tukelo, leave me out of this.

Me:

Babe, I can't lose you.

Her: You should have thought of that

before you proposed to Nthabi. I'm sorry Tukelo but I can't... This time it's really over. I have let you go.

Me: Amahle no, don't talk like that.

I could see it in her eyes that she's had enough but I can't lose her, no. Definitely not over this, I love this woman way too much.

Her: what more can I say? You made your choice. You chose her over me, over us.

Me: You know that's not true. Amahle please, give me time to fix this.

Her: How many second chances have I given you? What more is it that you want from me? You won't be satisfied until you see me crashed and burn.

Me: Babe, I know that things seem impossible now but just trust me.

Her: Get out.

Me: What?

Her: Tukelo Brian Mokoena, get the hell out!!

I didn't want to leave her but I could see that my presence angered her.

Me: Sthandwa sami...

Her: I won't repeat myself.

She stands up and goes to her room. I try to follow her but she slams the door in my face and locks it. I knock.

Me: MaZungu, ngiyaxolisa.

She didn't respond. All I could hear were her soft sobs, which means she was nearer to the door. As I could hear her cry again because of me. I hated myself for every pain that I've brought into her life. I sit

down on the floor, as I couldn't take it anymore, I found myself crying as well. I didn't make any sounds, tears just ran down my face. I try to think of a way forward but I soon realized there's nothing I could do to get out of this mess as Amahle was refusing to work with me. I had to man up!! I sit there for about 20mins, she still hasn't opened the door and she never responded when I apologize. I stand up.

Me: I love you MaSengwayo.

I leave her premises.

AMAHLE

I couldn't believe that Tukelo was doing this to us again. As much as I wanted to hate him for all the pain he was causing but I couldn't. I did everything for him and even after everything I did, he still didn't belong to me. I hate fighting for him, now I'm done... I am done fight for a man who's not worth fighting for. How can he go and just marry another woman just like that? Without even fighting for me? I hate him for that.

I remember that I've slept with the man and I was stupid enough to not use protection after months of not seeing him. Argh!!! I take my phone to call Zitha. She answers on my second attempt.

Her: Yes girl

She sounds like she's been sleeping.

Me: Ah! Its almost 2pm and the queen is still sleeping.

Her: Shut up, I had a long night hey.

Me: Working?

Her: (yawn) yeah, after that I went partying with Palesa and them.

Me: You're friends with Palesa now?

Her: Hawu! What was I supposed to do since you and Nosi decided to leave me?

Me: Ay chommie, you should leave that place now.. Maybe go to school.

Her: Ayy, I'm pretty sure that's not the reason why you called me..

Zitha will forever hate school. When we all decided to work, she was the first to second that idea.

Me: Um yeah. I needed a favor from you, now that you say you're tired, I'm not sure if I should ask.

Her: Aybo, you're my friend and I'd do anything for you so do tell. What is it?

Me: Eish... Mngani, I need morning after pills. No questions.

Her: What??!!!

Me: I said no questions.

Her: Aybo weeNja. You cannot drop such a bomb and say no questions. You cannot.

Me: I need those pills, I'd go and get them myself but I'm not really in a good space and I still have to study so going to town wouldn't be advisable right now. I was hoping that you're in town or something.

Her: I hear all that but you're not telling me what I want to hear. Who's doing you?

God this child!!! If she knew what I'm feeling right now, she wouldn't be asking me such stupid questions.

Her: have you moved on from Tukelo?

Me: No... I mean yeah. Can you just do this for me? Or should I ask Thobe?

Her: No I will do it. And please tell me you are not doing Charles?

Me: No!!! I'm not crazy.

Her: Then who?

Me: Woman! Just do as I have asked.

I hang up.

I don't want to talk now because if I tell them its Tukelo, they'd think we're back together but they'd have to learn that he's getting married to someone else in a few months. Though this was hurting me, I promised myself that I won't dwell on this. I have an important exam to study for. I get up from the floor, switch off my phone and I start studying.

It was around 4pm when I heard a knock from my door. I get up to go attend to it. As soon as I saw her I didn't waste anytime, I grab the plastic she was holding, I look for the pills, I swallow it then drank water after. Zitha was just looking at me.

Me: Thanks.

Zitha: Wow, the dude must be ugly then, you not wanting his child so bad.

Me: Come on Zitha, that's not the case. Having a baby now is not advisable plus I'm still not over what happened to Nkanyiso.

Zitha: Yeah I hear you. So you're ready to tell me who was doing you?

Me: I don't want to talk about it Zee.

Zitha: When do you ever want to talk Amahle? 'Cause even after you broke up with Tukelo, you never spoke to anyone about it.

Me: Zitha please! You've done what I've asked and I'm grateful for it. The money is on the kitchen counter, take it and leave.

I see that she wanted to speak but she decided not to. I leave her and went back to my studying.

I just couldn't take it anymore. He promised me, he promised me that this wouldn't happen. How can he just give up on us like this? I can't let this get to me. Exams are coming up, I don't have time to dwell on this but it hurts so bad. The thought of him being with someone else, makes my whole body ache. How is it possible that one's actions can affect your entire life. Right now, I don't see how I'd move on from this.

I was woken up by a knock on my door. I don't even know when I fell asleep. I get up from the chair and opened my bedroom door. Charles walked in.

Him: I've been knocking for the past 20 mins, I'm sorry that I let myself in, the door was opened...

Me: Its okay Charles. I was asleep I didn't hear your knocks.

Him: Are you okay? Have you been crying?

Me: I'm fine.

Him: Amy, you don't look fine...

Me: Charles I'm fine! If you can see that I'm not fine then don't ask me anything any further. You can clearly see I don't want to talk about it!

I snap at him, he keeps quiet.

Me: (sigh) I'm sorry Charles, I didn't mean to snap at you like that

Him: It's okay. I was worried about you after that phone call, I thought maybe something happened.

Me: Seriously I'm okay, I just want to be alone for awhile...

Him: That's not going to happen, I will be here until I see a smile on that beautiful face.

I force a smile

Him: That was forced, and you know it.

I chuckle

Him: That's more like it. Now let me cook for you so you'll feel much much better.

Me: Charles...

Him: Allow me to do this because I will feel less of a gentleman should I leave you in this state.

I look at him, he gives me sad eyes and he pouts, I laugh.

Me: Okay fine. You can cook.

Him: Good because I wasn't taking no for an answer, now let's get you downstairs and you can watch me work my magic.

I smile and we went downstairs. He puts on the apron and starts taking out the ingredients he will need. He starts cooking and I'm just sitting on the high chair and watching him cook. He was cracking jokes every now and then soon, I was forgetting that I was ever hurt just a few minutes ago. I was laughing with him and enjoying having him around. After almost an hour, he was done. He dished up for the both of us, he gave me my food and it smells amazing.

Him: Dinner is served.

Me: Hmmmm, it smells and looks delicious. Let's hope it tastes as good as it looks and smells.

Him: (laughs) trust me, it tastes as good. Take a bite.

Me: Uhm, I will take your word for it.

I take a fork and tasted the food, indeed the food is amazing.

Me: This is good, really good.

Him: I told you.

He sits on a high chair next to me and he eats too. We eat through light conversation. After our meal, he suggests that we go to the lounge and watch a movie. We decide to watch a comedy. He was indeed making me feel better this is what I needed. I was here laughing with him, and not feeling sorry for myself. The movie was even over, we were talking. We were sitting on the same couch.

Me: (laughs) you got to be kidding me

Him: I'm seriously serious, I also thought one day i'd turn out to be one of the greatest chef, have my own TV show and all but hey life had other plans for me.

Me: How did you end up being a businessman?

Him: Well after my mother died, my father lost it. He was a drunk, he lost all his fortunes, including the house and his businesses so there was noone to pay for my fees. In University, I met the Mokoena Brothers, we got close. Those people had noone but they always had everything they needed, the cars, the house, the money and the girls so I wanted to know more on how they did it all. They introduced me to the life of crime. So I used that money to pay for my fees, after that I decided to start my own businesses, so I can cover up my life of crime. So the course I did in Varsity, was completely useless but I dont regret anything.

Me: Wow, you've had quite the life huh

Him: Yeah. Being white doesn't necessarily mean that everything works out for you, you live a lavish lifestyle. I have had my struggles.

Me: So whatever happened to your dad?

Him: Uh... He's in a hospital for crazy people.

Me: What? That's so bad.

Him: Yeah, my mom meant everything to him. He still haven't recovered from that. My mom died 10years ago but till today he asks where she is.

Me: He must've really loved her..

Him: Yes he did. Enough about sad news, so tell me about you and your man. that should enlighten the mood.

I start feeling sad all over again

Me: Uhm,, can we rather not talk about him

Him: Why though?

Me: Huh?

Him: Why would he hurt you? I mean so beautiful, you have an amazing soul, you're understanding, considerate. You have an amazing smile, and I don't even want to mention your flawless, amazing body. If you were mine...

Me: Charles, please

Him: No listen to me, if you were mine, I would always make sure that I see that smile almost everyday. I wouldn't hurt you like he does.

I look down and play with my fingers. He strokes my chin and make me face him

Him: He doesn't deserve you. You're too precious for him. I hope one day, you'll see your worth and get what you really deserve.

We have a little stare contest. Next thing I know. We're kissing. I don't want to stop him, I want him to take away the pain I'm feeling. He has his hands all over me, I wrap my arms around his neck. I sit in a squat position on top of him. He takes off my top, I do so too. I'm feeling things I shouldn't be feeling right now. He stands up, I have my legs around his waist. He makes me lie down on the couch and he gets on top of me. His kisses are fast and wet. I have never been kissed like this before. I'm enjoying the way he holds me, the way he brushes my thighs. I want him now. He starts unbuttoning my shorts, I slightly open my eyes. I see a different man, an unfamiliar face. I come back to my senses. I push him off.

Me: Stop!

Him: What? Why? I thought we are on the same page here.

Me: No.

I stand up. I take my shirt and cover my breasts.

Me: You have a wife, Charles. Please go back to her.

Him: Amy...

Me: Please, leave.

Him: I can leave her...

Me: Now Charles! Close the door on your way out.

I rush upstairs, went to my room and locked it. What a fucked up day I had.

Bonus Insert 😊

TUMI

For the past three months, my life has been rather stressful. I get that Thandi wants a child and I totally understand where she's coming from but I couldn't do that. I asked her to wait as Thapelo is still young, he needs my attention. How will I do that when there's another newborn? She told me that she hears me but she will only start acting like a wife to me, only when I fulfill her wishes. So she's been sleeping out, coming home late and sometimes come home drunk. I don't know why I cared so much about her reckless behavior, but truth be told, this behavior of hers was really getting to me. I kept myself busy with work. Even Nosi was starting to notice that something's eating me up. I know for a fact that Thandi has a man in her life, thing is I don't have no clue who he is. I don't think I even want to know because I'd kill them. I'm starting to realize that all the care I've been claiming to have for Thandi, it's not just care, it's actually love. The more she acts distant and recklessly, the more I realize that I actually love my wife.

I'm at work, Tukelo comes barging in. He looks horrible might I add.

Me: ah, the long lost son has returned.

Him: Don't start please. Give me whiskey, neat.

He sits down. I pour whiskey for him. He gulps it down on one go.

Him: Another one

I pour it for him, he gulps it down.

Him: More Tumi.

I pour it again. He gulps it down, I look at him.

Him: Again

Me: Aowa wagafa, u batla ho nqetela yona.

I close the bottle and put it back in the shelf.

Me: I guess you finally told Amahle and she broke up with you.

He nods.

Me: What did you expect Tukelo? That she'll agree your stupid sick plan?

Him: What choice do I have Tumi?

Me: Fight for your woman Tukelo.

Him: There's no time for all of that, I needed her to support me, she couldn't do that. I have save my father's lands, do you get it?

Me: What did you want her to do? Allow you to marry another while you promised her marriage? How do you even know that they're telling the truth?

Me: I was also not sure, while I was in Lesotho, they showed me the papers and they're legit.

Me: I'm your lawyer Tukelo, you were supposed to pass that by me and I will see if its legit or not.

Him: Tumi, I don't care about any of that right now, I'm just worn out that I lost one thing that matters the most to me.

Me: You had it comithis. I told you that this is what would happen but do you ever listen to me?

Him: Well, I don't have time to dwell on this. I will just have to deal with Amahle later.

Me: Do you think she will ever take you back?

Him: She won't have a choice because in the next few weeks, she might find out that she's pregnant.

Me: What? Tukelo no, you didn't.

Him: I had no choice okay, I needed something to make sure that when I've sorted things out in Lesotho, she will forgive me and come back to me.

Me: And if she doesn't fall pregnant?

Him: I'm just hoping that she does.

We chatted about random things. I need to tell someone about my problem also, otherwise I'm going to continue messing things up at work and I can also see that I'm losing myself in the process.

Me: My wife is cheating on me.

Him: Your wife? Thandi?

Me: Tukelo, how many wives do I have? Of course I mean Thandi.

Him: Why do you care that she's cheating or not? I mean you don't love her, so you shouldn't care

I keep quiet

Him: Or you do love her?

Me: Tukelo, does it really matter? I mean she is my wife, I paid makgadi for her

Him: You or your father?

Me: That's beside the point Tukelo.

Him: And you still haven't answered my question Itumeleng

Me: yes I love her Tukelo, I think I'm finally inlove with my wife.

Him: Are you serious?

Me: I can't answer that because I'm not sure yet but all I know is that the idea of her being with another man makes my blood boil.

Him: Did you try and investigate who's her new man?

Me: No, I don't think I want to know, I can't waste my time on this.

Him: So you'll do nothing? Someone out there is screwing your wife and you're going to do nothing? Are you serious?

Me: I didn't say I won't do anything, just that she gave me a condition.

Him: A condition? What condition?

Me: She wants a kid.

Him: So if you give her a kid she'll stop cheating, that's what she said?

Me: Well, basically.

Him: Jwale osotla otlwa ka mosadi? Come on Tumi. Can't you control your woman?

Me: I've only just realized that I actually love her so I don't know how to deal with her yet.

Him: First find the guy, then will take care of Thandi's needs later.

Me: Aowa Tukelo...

Him: If you won't, then I will.

THANDI

It's 6pm, Tumi is still not back from work. I'm getting ready to go out on a date with Mandla. No, I haven't had sex with him yet, I just enjoy being with him. He gives me whatever I want, he has my time and he always make me smile. I don't even love him, I'm just doing all of this to spite Tumi. I want him to feel what I was feeling for the past 10years. I don't even think he notices though because he stopped asking where I'm going and he's never mad when I come home late. Maybe I'm going about this the wrong way. I've even stopped cooking for him, doing his laundry. We're basically roommates now. I even sleep in this guest room. We never really discussed the whole baby issue ever since I've raised it.

He comes in my room, he looks at me, shakes his head then leaves again. I follow him out

Me: If you have something to say then say it.

He stops and turns to look at. He put his hands in his pockets.

Him: Is he making you happy?

Me: Excuse me?

Him: Your boyfriend, is he making you happy?

I keep quiet.

Him: Why don't you ask him for a kid?

Me: I'm married to you Tumi

Him: But you have the nerve to sleep with another man, while you're wearing my ring?

Me: You sleep with other women while you're wearing my ring.

Him: Oh, so you're competing with me Thandiwe? Oso oyipapisa lenna?

I don't respond.

Him: Listen here Thandiwe Mokoena, as long as you're still married to me, you won't even dare to try and compete with me. You'll break up with that man of yours and you'll come back here and you'll start acting like a wife! Unless if you don't want to be married to me anymore?

Me: I didn't say that...

Him: Well you're sure acting like you don't want to be married. I'm telling you now, go break up with him, today. Or else Thandiwe... I will look for him and I will kill you both then I will feed your bodies to the dogs, you hear me Thandiwe?

I keep quiet

Him: Oa nkutlwa Mrs. Mokoena?!!

He roars and I startle.

Me: Yes.

Him: Now leave.

He walks down the stairs and leaves me standing. I go back to my room. If I break up with Mandla, it will surely mean I'm going back to my miserable life but then I know Tumi, he is capable of killing so I wouldn't want to risk Mandla's life like that. I take my things and went downstairs. Tumi was just sitting on the couch sipping beer. I leave the house. Instead of finding Mandla, I find a man outside my house, driving Mandla's car.

Him: Mrs. Mokoena?

Me: Yes.

He covers my mouth with some type of cloth, I try to scream but I suddenly feel drowsy and sleepy then lights out.

Insert Forty 😊

AMAHLE

Test week is over! Thank God for that. Right now I'm in my apartment, packing. I'm going home, I have to check on my mom and Andile. They are still giving each other silent treatment.

I'm still not doing okay, but I've learnt to live with the pain. It will get better as time goes by. I have decided to just cut Tukelo out of my life completely. He has been pestering me with calls, texts and I've never returned any. I'm even thinking of changing my number. What does he want from me really? He's the one who decided to marry another woman, where do I fit in all of that? As for Charles, I haven't heard from him since the day we kissed and I really hope it stays like that.

Unathi: You're leaving sisi?

Me: Yes I'm going home for the weekend

Her: Oh okay, undibulisele kumama.

Me: Will do so and please you can take time off.

Her: No sisi, it's okay. I can't really afford not coming to work.

Me: Tukelo will pay you regardless, besides I won't tell him that you took time off. You deserve the break.

Her: Enkosi sisi, I will go pack.

Me: Okay but be sure you're back by Monday.

She smiles and leaves. I carry on with my packing. When I was done, I grab an apple, said my goodbyes to Unathi then left. As soon as I got to the parking lot, I see Charles standing near my bike. Argh! Now I have this man to deal with. I rush towards my bike and get on it. He stands in front of me.

Me: Charles I have somewhere to be, please don't annoy me

Him: I only need 2 mins of your time.

Me: 1min 59secs

Him: Geez okay. Look Amy, I'm sorry that I took advantage of you the other night, I saw how lost and broken you are and I used that to my favor. I shouldn't have treated you like that. You deserve better.

Me: 45secs

Him: Please, forgive me. Give me a chance to prove to you that I'm not like any other man. Just that I love you so much, I saw an opportunity to be with you and I grabbed it with both hands, I guess I went about it the wrong way.

Me: Your time is up Charles

I start my bike

Him: Please, let me make it up to you.

Me: I will make this clear one more time, I will not be your mistress. What is it with men thinking that I deserve to be second best? Do I look that cheap?

Him: What do you mean?

Me: Move Charles.

I accelerate my bike. He doesn't move out of my way, he's actually holding tightly on the handles.

Him: Please, don't cut me out of your life. I've lost way too much, I don't want to lose you too.

I realize there's no easy way out of this, if I move this bike, this stupid man is going to get hurt so I gave up and turned off the engine. I get off.

Me: Charles Le Roux, leave me the hell alone!

I start walking towards Sabelo's car.

Him: My wife and I, we're filing for divorce.

I stop and look at him.

Me: What's that got to do with me?

Him: Nothing, I was just saying...

Me: Listen here, you leaving your wife was your decision, not mine so don't come here and start telling me crap. Just because you're leaving your wife, it doesn't necessarily mean that I will be with you

Him: Yes I know that but I was hoping that maybe it will make you realize how much I love you and how much you mean to me

Me: Don't guilt trip me, don't! I just broken up with the one man who I truly love so please give me space to breathe.

I leave him standing. I get in Sabelo's car.

Me: Take me home please.

Him: Okay boss lady.

He starts the car. I am starting to think that I will never have peace in my life. Why did my mother send me to that spaza shop to buy her flour? This is all her fault basically.

I got home and I find my mom in the lounge watching her favorite show.

Me: Mommy.

I kiss her on the cheek, she smiles at me. I sit on the couch across her.

Her: I was starting to think that I'm daughter-less

Me: You have Ziningi nje mah.

Her: What about my eldest daughter? Doesn't she need me anymore?

Me: I will always need you MaShenge, you know that. Just that school...

Her: Yes, I know. School has kept you busy.

Me: And I'm starting my final exams soon so I need to be focused but that doesn't mean I love you any less.

Her: I know my baby. So how have you been?

Me: Ah, you know me mom, I'm okay...

Her: Don't lie to me Amahle. You don't look and sound okay. Don't lie and say its school.

Me: We will talk about me later, let's talk about you. How are you holding up? Don't you think you've been mad for too long?

Her: (sigh) I'm not mad Amahle, I'm hurt and disappointed in Andile. I didn't think that he'll do something so stupid.

Me: I know mom but there's nothing to be done now. The baby is already here, let's not punish the poor Khanya for something she had no control over. She needs to know her family.

Her: I guess you're right but how do we support the child? Amahle, you know we're not wealthy. I don't even work anymore.

Me: Mom, you and dad raised us well. We didn't come from a rich family but look at us now. You always tell me that, a happy home makes a happy child, right? As long as we shower the baby with love, she will grow up to be just like us. Mom, you've done a wonderful job in raising us. You have 4 beautiful kids, who are respectful, trustworthy, honest, generous, fearless and loving. Okay maybe Anele is the opposite of what I said

She chuckles

Me: But mom, you did a great job in raising us and you gave us something money can't buy, a happy home. I know Andile is alot of things but I'm sure he'll love his child and he will do right by her, just like you taught him. He's a good kid and you know it. He just got tempted like all the other teenagers and made a silly mistake but that doesn't make him a bad child. Don't ever doubt him, just trust him and forgive because believe me, he is indeed sorry for hurting you the way he did.

She sighs.

Andile: I really am sorry mkami

We look at him, we didn't even notice that he was standing there. He sits next to me.

Him: I know, no matter what I say or do, it won't make up for the shame I've caused, but believe me, it was never my intention to hurt you. Just trust me when I say, everything will work out and you'll love your granddaughter because she's the cutest thing.

She smiles.

Her: She is?

Me: Yes mom, she looks exactly like me.

Her: Really?

Him: Yes, I even named her after her aunty, Nosihle.

Her: Now, I want to see her.

Andile took out his phone and gave it to mom.

Her: You're right, she looks so cute and looks like Amahle when she was young. How old is she?

Him: She's two weeks.

Her: She looks so big, what was her mother feeding her?

We laugh.

Her: I think we need to do right by her family and pay whatever we need to.

Him: (clears throat) that's going to be a challenge mom since her family is from KZN.

Us: What?

Her: how did you meet her then?

Him: Uhm... That's a story for another day mkami but right now, I will talk to her and hear what she has to say.

Her: Okay, you talk to her and give me her number so I can ask to speak with an elder.

Andile gave mom Nonhle's number. She stood up and left.

Him: Thank you so much Amahle, I know I can always count on you.

Me: You're my little brother, I will always love you and I will always be there. Just please, stay out of trouble Andile.

Him: I will. So you'll talk to her again when she learns that Nonhle is 6 years older?

Me: Ha!

TUMI

Something is not right. It's been two whole days and Thandi is not home. She has never done anything like this before. Maybe she decided to leave me? No can't be, that woman loves me, she wouldn't do that. Or maybe she would, maybe she loves her new man more. There are too many maybes. I have to know for sure. I now know for sure that losing her for good, its going to kill me.

Nosi: Itumeleng!

I quickly snapped out of it.

Me: Huh?

Her: I've been talking to you and you're just staring into space. Were you even listening to me?

Me: Ah, yeah

Her: Oh really? What did I say?

Me: Uhm... Sorry. I'm just really stressed out babe.

Her: What's bothering you? I have noticed that these past few months, you're not yourself. What is it babakhe?

She sits on top of me.

Me: (sigh) it's Thandi.

Her: What about her? She still can't accept that you can never love her?

Me: I never said I never loved her. She's my wife Nosipho, she's been there since day one. I just didn't want to accept her. Now that she's acting up, I now realize that I love her and I don't want to lose her.

Her: You love her? You love her Tumi? What about me?

Me: Nosipho don't be crazy, I love you too. You know I do.

Her: I thought you wanted to leave her.

Me: I thought too but when Amahle pushed us into making our marriage work, I realized that she means a lot to me, just that I was mad at my father for forcing me into marriage at a young age and I took my anger out on Thandi. She loved me regardless of how I was treating her.

She gets off me and carried on with what she was doing.

Me: MaMbatha, I love you, please don't ever doubt that. I love you and I love my wife. To prove to you that I love you, I want to make things right. I want to make you my wife also.

Her: Were you serious about that?

Me: Yes. You and Thapelo mean everything to me, you're my family. I don't want to ever lose you.

Her: I said I will think about it.

Me: Come on Nosi, you're still thinking about it? I've given you say too much time to think about it. Now, I want to know whether or not you want to be my wife.

She keeps quiet.

Me: Nosipho.

She looks at me.

Her: Tumi, I'm not cut out to be anyone's wife.

Me: What?

Her: I'm 23 Tumi, already I have newborn baby, I'm dating a married man and you also want to make me your second wife? I didn't picture my life like this. It's just a lot to take in.

Me: I know, life works in mysterious ways. I also didn't think I'd ever want a polygamous marriage but I'm here, pleading you to be my wife because I don't think I'd ever want to imagine my life without you and my son.

Her: You're sure we are going to make this work?

Me: Positive.

Her: (sigh) then okay. I'm going to be your wife.

Me: Babe?

Her: I'm going to be your wife Itumeleng.

I hug her and spin her around, she giggles. I put her down.

Me: Thank you so much Sthandwa sami.

Her: Where's my ring?

Me: What?

Her: How can you propose to me without a ring Tumi?

Me: Relax mamakhe, we will get it. You hear that Thapelo, mommy agreed to be my wife.

I pick up my son. He starts making gibberish sounds.

Me: Yes my son, she did agree. I'm so happy. We can be a family, officially.

Thapelo sneezes.

Me: Mokoena. You see that babe, that was our ancestors, they are also happy about this.

Her: (laughs) There's no such thing.

Me: I'm serious baby.

My phone rings, I hand the baby to Nosi. I take the call.

Me: What do you want?

Tukelo: You can never ever guess who's screwing your wife.

Me: Tukelo, you went behind my back and investigated? After I told you not to?

Him: Relax, you'll thank me later. Don't you want to know?

Me: I told that I don't want to know. She was going to break up with him anyway.

Him: Do you want to know or not? Trust me this is very interesting.

Me: I told you that I don't want to know, u tlwa jwang?

Him: Well I don't care, I'm telling you anyway. It's Butcher.

I feel my blood boil.

Me: What?

Him: Yes.

Me: Do you think this is some sort of revenge?

Him: I don't know but when was the last time you heard from your wife?

Me: She hasn't been home for the past two days.

Him: Oh shit. Just as I thought, I think he has her kidnapped or something because I told one of my men to keep a close eye on her then next thing, she's off the grid.

Me: off the grid??? My wife is off the grid? And Tukelo you didn't think about telling me this?

Him: I thought you said you didn't want to know.

Me: Screw that! If a hair is missing on my wife's head I swear I'm going to kill Mandla.

Him: Calm down.

Me: Don't fuckin' tell me to calm down and meet me at the warehouse. Get everybody there, I mean everyone Tukelo. Hire people who kill before even thinking twice. You hear me?

I hang up.

THANDI

I wake up and my head is pounding, my whole body is numb. I try to get up and I realize that I'm in an unfamiliar room. I look around, my hands and legs are tired and I have a gag on. I sit up, there's only a bed in this a room and a bucket, nothing else. I've been kidnapped! I start panicking. I try breaking free but I soon realize that I'm just wasting my energy, I try screaming. A man walks in.

Him: Shut up! You're making noise.

I stop screaming and I try to recognize his face, but I've never seen him before. What does he want from me?

Him: I thought you'd never wake up, you've been out of it for two whole days, you must be hungry.

I just look at him

Him: I will take the gag off and boss will do the honors of feeding you. Don't even waste your breath and try screaming because noone will hear you.

He takes off my gag. I have never been this scared.

Then in walks the shock of my life. I couldn't believe what I'm seeing with my own two eyes. How is this even possible?

Mandla: Good Morning Baby.

He grins, he tries to kiss me but I back away.

Me: Mandla, what is the meaning of all of this?

Mandla: Maybe you should ask your husband when he gets here.

Me: My husband? What's this got to do with anything? He told you to kidnap me?

Mandla: Don't be silly. I'm sure that by now he knows you're missing and he will try playing the role of a good hubby and he will look for you but I doubt that he'll find you alive.

Me: What do you mean?

Mandla: Your husband took away one thing I adore, and I'm just returning the favor. Actually, I wanted to hurt Tukelo but his woman is not as loose so I knew she's mission impossible so I had to work with what I had.

Me: So you used me to get to Tumi and Tukelo?

Mandla: Yep and thanks to you, I now know they every move.

I look at him confused.

Mandla: Oh, those necklaces and diamond earrings I always got for you, were bugged. I even put the bug in your purse so now, I will not only destroy their lives but their reputation and businesses as well.

All thanks to Tumi's loose wife who just couldn't wait to get a new man in her life. Too bad I never got to know how that cookie taste. But nah, I don't care.

How could I be so naïve? So stupid! I know I wanted to hurt Tumi but never did think it would go this far. I'm so stupid. I feel tears running down my cheeks.

Mandla: I will go get you something to eat, I wouldn't want to starve to death, I want to do the honors of killing you.

He stands up to leave.

Me: You're wasting your time with me! Tumi doesn't care about me, he won't even bother looking for me.

Him: We'll just have to wait and see about that sweetheart. I know those Mokoena men, they like playing hero. They will get here, fall right into my trap and I will kill them all.

He grins then leaves with his goon. I will never ever forgive myself should anything happen to Tumi. I say a small prayer. Protect him o'Lord. Don't make him come here.

Insert Forty-One 😊

TUMI

Me: Do you even know how to do your job Dankies?

They all looked me, it was just me, Dankies and his IT men. Tukelo was busy with the other troop who were getting ready to ambush Mandla's place. They have to understand my frustrations, its been hours and they have nothing. Absolutely nothing!

Me: Don't look at me like that! We've been sitting here for the past 2 hours and you have no lead, you have no clue what's her last known location, you have nothing!

I couldn't even sit, I was walking up and down with a gun in my hand.

Me: That man could be terrorizing my wife as we speak! Or she could be dead...

Dankies: Tumi, we're trying our best. We have nothing to work with. Seems like this Mandla guy had everything planned out. He covered his tracks perfectly.

Me: Yey! There's no such thing, leave no stone unturned. Check every footage around Jo'burg, even the ones in ATMs.

Dankies: That can take time Tumi...

Me: Hire a team of IT specialists! I don't care! Do what you have to but I want my wife next to me in the next 24 hours, you hear me Siyabonga?

Dankies: Yoh! What we need right now is a miracle.

I just couldn't be in the same room with them anymore so I decided to leave and get some fresh air. The more they told me that they have nothing, the angrier I become. How is it possible that it took me so long for me to realize this love I had for this woman. The thought of her dying, makes my blood boil. I just knew it, I knew that Mandla wasn't going to let this go. Look now, my wife's life is in danger. All because of Andile!!! I need to release this anger before I lose it. I go to the gym, I put my gun behind waist and put on my boxing gloves. I start punching the bag. With each punch, I release a roar. I could even feel tears streaming down my cheeks. I'm actually hurt and scared for my wife. I can't lose her now, not over this.

Tukelo: I knew I'd find you here.

I don't respond, I continue punching the bag. He holds it for me.

Him: We'll find her, don't stress.

I don't respond

Him: Then we will kill Mandla and all of his goons, simple. Why you're stressing because you know that's what will happen.

Me: If Amahle was the one in Thandi's shoes, would you be calm?

Him: Touchè but I'd eventually relax because I know for sure that in order for me to kill these bastards, I should have a clear head. Your number one priority is to make sure Thandi comes home safe

Me: What if he harms her in any way?

Him: Listen, Mandla wants us, Thandi is just his bait. He wants us to look for her because he knows we will find her, he needs her alive.

I stop punching the bag.

Me: I want to be the one to put the bullet through his head.

Him: I will let you do the honors.

My phone rings, I look at it and I let it ring. I start punching the bag again

Him: aren't you going to answer it?

Me: If its important, they'll call back. Right now I need to focus on getting my wife back.

Him: So you love her now?

Me: Tukelo please, not now. All I know is I don't want to lose her, the thought of losing her is driving me crazy.

My phone rings again.

Him: Take the call Tumi. It could be important.

I stop and take my phone.

Me: Who could it be? Whoever it is, can't they see that I don't want to talk.

Him: It could be Mandla.

Me: You right.

I answer.

Me: What?

Her: Oh my God Tumi, thank God. I thought you were never going to pick up

Me: Thandiwe, where are you?

Her: Tumi I don't know, I don't even have much time. I just convinced one of his goons to untie me and he did, I knocked him out with a brick. He's still moving, he might wake up anytime.

She said those words so fast, she was panting heavily. I could tell that she was scared.

Me: You did great babe, we don't have time. Please give me something to work with. Look out the window and tell me if you see something

I leave the gym and rush to Dankies, Tukelo follows me.

Her: I can't see anything, I'm really scared Tumi

Me: Everything will work out, I will find you. Hang in there for me, please. They haven't hurt you in any way?

Her: No but they might as soon as they realize that I've called you

Tukelo: Trace this call right now Dankies!

Me: As soon as you see that he's getting up, hang up and give him his phone. They shouldn't find out that you called me.

Her: But he will sure hurt me because I've... Oh my God, he's waking up. Please come get me Tumi, please.

She hangs up.

Me: Dankies, please tell me you got something

Dankies: Yeah, got him

THANDI

I have this phone in my hand, I quickly get rid of the dialed call. Now what do I do with this phone. I find myself throwing it in his direction. I look at him as he tries getting up. His forehead is bleeding. I feel my heart pounding, my body is shivering, I feel sweat dripping on my skin, I'm even breathing heavily. I'm scared of what he might do to me. He gets up straight, I slowly start backing away. I don't even know where I'm going. He looks at me.

Him: You bitch!

He gathers all his strength and comes to me. He grabs me by my hair, I scream. He drags me out of the room

Him: Let's see what Butcher thinks about the stunt you pulled.

He continues pulling me, as his grip got tighter, I scream louder.

Him: Where's Butcher?

He asks one of his pals.

Him: He left saying he had some things to take care of. If you need him, he said we shouldn't hesitate to call.

The man dragged me back to the room where they kept me. He pushes me so hard that I hit my body on the floor. He locks the door. I sit up and I see him unbuckle his pants. He takes the belt and he starts bashing me with it. I scream in agony, he ignores my cries and he continues to bash me, he hit me on my back, on my legs, arms, thighs, everywhere around my body. My body is aching, my screams are getting louder with every bash. I look at him, he doesn't even care that his hitting a woman, I can see it in his eyes that he has no mercy.

Me: I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. Please stop.

He doesn't.

Me: Please I'd do anything, just stop.

He stops and looks at me.

Him: Anything? Take off your clothes.

Me: What?

Him: You said you'd do anything right, take off your bloody clothes.

Me: Please, no...

Him: You want me to do it for you? It won't be as pleasant if I do it.

Me: Why should I take off my clothes?

Him: Just do it!

I slowly take off my top, I realize that I have bruises on my arms and stomach. I even have blood. I am left with my bra and pants. I cover my breasts.

Him: Your pants.

Me: Do I really have to...

Him: Just take off your pants!

I slowly take off my pants, I had bruises also on thighs and legs. I am bleeding. He looks at me in a very uncomfortable way, I can see where his mind is at. He comes to me, he unzips his pants.

Me: Please, don't do this please.

He smirks and slowly walks to me. I back away, he comes closer. He grabs me aggressively and throws me on the bed. I scream, he pins my body on the bed with one hand and uses his free hand to take off his pants, I try to free away from his grip but he's stronger than me and I have no energy as I'm still feeling pain. I try fighting him off, kicking and screaming but that didn't make any difference, I was just wasting my energy. His pants were halfway down, he tries kissing me, I fight him off.

Him: Stop resisting! You'll make things difficult.

I try to push him off, he takes off my bra, he caresses my breasts and brush them with one hand while sucking on my nipple. I cry and beg him to stop. He forces his whole body on top of me. I feel his whole weight on top of me. I suffocate from his smell of tobacco and his heavy breathing. Why forsake me now dear Lord? He tries taking off my panty, I try to fight this time. I can't let this happen to me. My body is failing me, I am running out of energy. As soon as I was about to give up, I hear someone banging the door.

Him: Open the door!!

Thank you Jesus. My husband is here to save me.

TUMI

Me: Tukelo break this door! Now!

We had this entire place surrounded. It's weird that they were few men around here, security wasn't even tight. Tukelo kicks the door open. I see this man on top of my wife, I instantly lost it. I shoot at him, Thandi screams and runs towards me. She hides herself behind me. I continuously shot the guy until I was sure that he was dead. I put the gun behind my waist. I take a sheet and cover Thandi's body.

She throws herself at me and cries.

Me: Shh, don't cry. It's all over.

Her: I'm sorry Tumi. I'm so sorry.

Me: I'm the one who's sorry. I will make sure to never put your life in danger like that, again. I love you Thandiwe, I love you so much.

She hugs me tighter and continues to cry. I brush her back.

Tukelo: I'm sorry to break this love fest but we need to get going now. We still have no idea where Mandla is.

I let go of her.

Me: All of his men are dead so he's completely harmless.

Tukelo: Whatever but we need to go.

He leaves.

Her: Yeah, he's right.

Me: Thandi, what happened to your body?

She had bruises all over.

Her: That man... Before he could... He could...

Tears start pouring out of her eyes.

Me: I'm not leaving without killing Mandla!

I try to leave but she holds my hand

Her: No Tumi, we need to go now. We can't wait for him to get back.

Me: No! I have to find him and kill him right now! Tukelo!

I turn my back on Thandi one second then I hear a gunshot, before I could even blink I hear another. I'm afraid to even look behind me. I slowly turn, I see Thandiwe lying in the pool of her own blood, I feel my whole world crushing down. I run towards her, she still had her eyes open. She looks weak though.

Me: Babe, look at me please. Don't close your eyes Thandiwe please.

I see Butcher getting up and running away.

Tukelo: Stay with Thandi, get her to hospital, we'll get Butcher.

Tukelo, Dankies, Rufus and Rebel run after him.

Me: Thandi please don't leave me.

I tear the sheet and pressed on her wound. I picked her up and ran towards the car. I could see that I was slowly losing her.

Me: Thandiwe please don't do this

Her: Tumi... I

Me: Don't say anything. Just hang in there.

Her: I... Love you... Tu... mi

She closes her eyes.

Me: Thandiwe no!!

Insert Forty-Two 😊

AMAHLE

My mom is back to her normal self again. I couldn't be happier, she's making jokes, laughing again, it's like she was never sad. I spent my vacation week with them and I'm leaving tomorrow, going back to my lonely sad miserable life. My mom as always, she asked me about my Tukelo but I just couldn't get myself to tell her what happened, I'm scared of how she might react to it, she is really fond of him. Anyway, my mom has spoken to Nonhle's family and they made arrangements that they would come here in a few weeks, my mom is still unaware that Nonhle is 6 years older. I am not looking forward to that. It's 9pm, I'm in my bed. I have been neglecting my phone, I decided to log on WhatsApp. Messages

came flooding in. What caught my attention is Nosi's text, saying Thandi has been shot! What the hell? It can't be. I go through statuses and I see Tumi's post, saying Thandi must get well soon. No, why? I call Nosi. She picks up after some time.

Her: Hello?

Me: What do you mean Thandiwe has been shot? How? When? And why?

Her: We've been trying to call you for past week, and we never got through to you. Where have you been?

Me: That's not important right now, what I want to know is, what happened!

Her: She was kidnapped, I don't know why or who shot her. Tumi is not in a good state to talk about it.

Me: Poor Thandi. Is she okay though?

Her: No, we've been visiting her everyday and she's still unconscious.

Me: I wonder what happened.

Her: I'm also wondering.

Me: I will find out though. Thanks for letting me know.

Her: Okay.

I hang up and called the one person I wasn't looking forward on talking to. He picks up on the first ring, like he was expecting my call.

Him: What a lovely surprise.

Me: Hey.

Him: how are you?

Me: I'm okay. And how are you?

Him: I'm fine, but you don't sound fine.

Me: Yeah, I'm worried about Thandi, I just heard that she was shot, what happened Tukelo?

Him: Uhm... She was kidnapped

Me: Why would anyone want to kidnap her?

Him: You remember Butcher?

Me: Butcher? Who's butcher?

Him: Mandla, Nonhle's boyfriend

Me: Oh no Tukelo

He hasn't told me the whole story yet but already I know what this is all about.

Him: Yeah so he thought he can avenge himself because we are the ones that helped Andile.

Me: And Thandiwe had to pay with her life?

Him: Unfortunately yes but she'll be just fine, don't worry about it.

Me: I sure hope so, I don't know if it's a good idea to come see her

Him: I'm sure she'd love that, I can come pick you up and we'll go together...

Me: No, what would your wife say

Him: Don't be like that

Me: Be like what? I'm just being realistic

Him: So can I?

Me: No you can't, I can get Sabelo to drive me there or I can use my motorcycle

Him: Well okay then. Guess I will see you there

Me: Guess so.

I hang up. I couldn't believe this. How cruel can men be? Why would you want to shoot a woman? Thandi is an amazing woman, she doesn't deserve this. She had to endure all the pain Tumi caused and now this. All because of Andile's stupid mistake. I leave my room and go to his. I find him sleeping, I take the blanket away from him, I literally snatched it away from him.

Him: The fuck?

He sits up.

Me: You see now what your affair with Nonhle has done?

Him: What?

Me: Because of you, a woman's life is in danger!

Him: Who's life? Nonhle's life is in danger?

Me: Can you stop being selfish and focus! No, not hers, Thandiwe's life

Him: Thandi? Tumi's wife? Where does she fit in all of this?

Me: This Mandla person wanted to avenge himself, so he used Thandi to get to Tumi and Tukelo.

Him: Fuck...

Me: You didn't think this one through

Him: Does this mean, Nonhle's life is also in danger?

Me: What? I'm talking about Thandi here! An innocent woman who had nothing to do with this and you still worried about her? This is all her fault, just because she had no morals, she got involved in a relationship with a minor, knowing very well how dangerous her man is.

He keeps quiet.

Me: I hope for your sake, Thandi makes it or else, you'll have Tumi to deal with

I leave. I can never understand how his mind works, even after everything, he's worried about that woman! I also need to call her, so I can give her the piece of my mind.

TUMI

Losing Thandi, that would be a hard pill to swallow. I still want her, I want to tell her how I feel about her, I want her to know that I will always be there when she needs me, I want to embrace her, give her the love she deserves. I don't want her to die now, but the doctors said the longer she stays in that coma, the more her life is jeopardy.

Nosi: Please try to eat Tumi. I haven't seen you eat in two whole days.

Me: How can I eat when my wife is on that death bed? How can I live my life and act like everything is okay, while she's in danger? Tell me, how do i do that? Her family blames me for everything, my father thinks I've failed as a husband, everything is a mess. Tell me, if you were in my shoes, would you be able to eat?

Nosi: I know it's hard babe but you need the strength, should Thandi wake up from that coma...

Me: Don't say should, because she will wake up from that coma.

Nosi: Okay, when Thandi wakes up from the coma, she need to see you strong, and where will you get the strength if you don't eat? Please Mokoena, do it for Thandi

Me: Nosipho! I don't want to eat! I just want my wife, do you get that?

She looks at me with tears in her eyes, she stands up to leave. I held her hand.

Me: I'm sorry, I didn't mean to lash out like that Maka-Thapelo. I'm just really frustrated

Her: So you taking your frustrations out on me?

I don't respond.

Her: I'm trying Itumeleng, I really am. I got into a relationship with you, knowing you don't love your wife but you love me. Now that you love her this much, I don't know how to digest it but I'm trying, yet you're pushing me away.

Me: I'm sorry okay? Please sit down, I will eat.

She wipes her tears and sit down. I ate her food, I didn't realize I was this hungry until I actually ate the food.

Me: So you spoke to your parents?

Her: I spoke to my mom, she said she'll only speak to my father if you do things the right way.

Me: Like sending a letter to them?

Her: Yes.

Me: As soon as this whole Thandi situation dies down, I will.

My phone rings. I answer it.

Me: Please tell me you found him.

Mandla has been on the loose for the past week.

Tukelo: No we haven't, that's not the reason why I called.

Me: Are you even looking for him?

Him: We're trying Tumi but its like he just vanished but he's also human, he will make a mistake.

Me: I can't wait for him to make a mistake dammit! My wife's life is in danger because of that bastard, I want him dead.

Him: I know and he will die. Those men are doing they best, they will find him. I promise you.

Me: Okay fine. You said that you didn't call me to talk about this, so why did you call?

Him: Oh yeah. I want you to be my best man at my wedding.

Me: What?

Him: What what?

Me: You want me to be your best man at your crap wedding?

Him: Yes, what's wrong with that?

Me: I won't do that. You know for a fact that I'm not supporting this but you have the nerve to ask me that? Do you think I'm even going to attend.

Him: I was the best man at your wedding, I didn't complain.

Me: This is totally different and you know it.

Him: I don't see the difference

Me: What about Amahle?

Him: Can we not talk about her. I told you, I know what I'm doing

Me: Well from where I'm standing, seems like you have no clue about what you're doing.

Him: Just trust me.

Me: Either way, you lost Amahle, probably for good. I will be the best man at your wedding, only if you marry Tigress, either than that, forget it.

I hang up.

Nosi looks at me shocked.

Me: What?

Her: Tukelo is getting married???

Me: You didn't know that? Didn't Amahle tell you?

Her: No I didn't know. You know how she can be, she shuts everyone out.

Me: Well yeah.

Her: Wow.

She claps her hands once.

Her: So I guess they both moved on since Amahle slept with some dude a few weeks back.

Me: What?

Her: Well yeah, she called Zitha to get her a morning after pill. According to Zitha, she looked freaked out.

Me: I don't blame her though, Tukelo has put her through hell. I just hope this new guy she found won't hurt like my stupid ass brother did..

Her: Yeah me too.

It's 2am when I received a call from an unknown number.

Me: Hello.

Her: Hello, can I get Mr. Mokoena on the line?

Me: Speaking

Her: Sorry to disturb you sir but it's about your wife.

I immediately wake up and sat up straight.

Me: What's wrong?

Her: Please get to the Hospital as soon as you can.

Me: I'm on my way.

I hang up.

I quickly got off the bed and started getting dressed.

Nosi: What is it babe?

Me: Go back to sleep. I have to get going, I will be back.

Nosi: Is there something wrong?

Me: I have to get to Thandi, the hospital called.

Her: I'm Coming with you

She puts on her uggs

Me: No babe, you better stay with Thapelo, I wouldn't want him to leave the house at this time of the night. I will update you should there be change. I love you.

I kiss her on the cheek and left. I called my brothers and asked them to meet me at the hospital. We may not get to be together as often but I know that I can count on them no matter what. We are always there for each other. As soon as they heard about Thandi, Pitsi and Thabang left everything and came to Jo'burg. They're over at Tukelo's house. I get to the hospital and rushed over to Thandi's doctor.

Me: I'm here doctor. What is it?

My brothers came closer, I didn't even realize that they got here before I did.

Doctor: Oh, Mr. Mokoena. We are very sorry to trouble you but you did say to contact you at any time should there be any change.

Me: Just tell me what's up

Doctor: Well, your wife is out of the coma but still unconscious

Me: That's great news.

Tukelo: I sense a 'but'

Doctor: We have a problem

Thabang: What is it now?

Doctor: When she's conscious, there's a possibility that she might be paralyzed from the neck down.

I cannot believe this, I heard what the doctor said but I can't say a word. I'm out of words.

Pitsi: Did we hear you correctly?

Doctor: Yes Mr. Mokoena, in situations like these we usually ask the spouse if they wish to keep the patient alive or...

Me: Or what? Kill my wife?

Doctor: It's just an option

Me: You're telling me to kill her? Do you think i'm going to allow such bull??

Tukelo: Calm down Tumi

Me: No! I will not calm down because this doctor is talking nonsense.

Thabang: Wait, you said there's a possibility, so it's something you're not sure of yet?

Doctor: Yes but the possibilities are high and...

Me: You're not sure but you're asking me to kill my wife!!!

Pitsi: Tumi...

Me: Listen here, keep my wife alive. I don't care even if she has no head but I want her alive, she's still my wife. Do you hear me?

Doctor: I am sorry, I didn't mean to upset you, I was just making a suggestion...

Me: Well you're talking crap!!! Keep my wife alive.

I leave them and rushed out, my brothers called my name, I ignore them, I'm pissed beyond measures. I cannot believe the nerve to even suggest such crap!

Insert Forty-Three 😊

AMAHLE

We're on our way to see Thandi. It's me, Andile and Anele. They picked me up from school, I was definitely not looking forward on seeing her. I don't know whether I'm scared of finding out how bad her situation is or how Tumi might react when he sees Andile. According to Nosi, Tumi is madly inlove with Thandi now, he's not coping at all without her.

Anele: So I'm getting married on the 2nd of November.

We looked at him shocked.

Me: What? Don't you think it's too short notice? And why are you telling us here? Shouldn't you call a family meeting and announce this?

Andile: Amahle is right Bhuti, couldn't you at least notify us 6 months before?

Anele: You guys knew I'm getting married this year, we just didn't announce the date. Now we've decided on a date and I'm telling you here because I wanted my siblings to know before anyone else did. Is there something wrong with that?

Me: No but I still think its way too soon.

Anele: I don't want to keep my woman waiting any longer.

Me: Is the wedding still in Cape Town?

Anele: Yeah.

Andile: So we'll fly to Cape Town for the White wedding, then come back again for the traditional wedding? That doesn't make any sense, I'm sorry to say that.

Anele: Transport is arranged, we don't want a huge crowd for the white wedding but for the traditional wedding, everyone is welcome.

Me: You don't want a huge crowd or she doesn't want a huge crowd?

Anele: I said 'we', didn't I?

This is just selfish, why go all the way to Cape Town for the stupid white wedding?

Me: So how will we get to Cape Town?

Anele: Tukelo's jet.

I choke on my own spit.

Me: What?

Andile: Alright!

Me: Don't say "Alright" wena Andile. Why Bhuti?

Anele: What is wrong with that Amahle?

Me: I just don't get it

Anele: He doesn't mind, why do you have a problem?

Me: Why trouble him? You want the wedding in Cape Town, you organize transport for us. I just don't get why you have to trouble Tukelo

Anele: He suggested it and I couldn't be happier.

Me: I'm pretty sure Zanele is going to love this.

They just looked at me and I shrug my shoulders.

We got to the hospital and everyone's there including Thandi's family. We greet and they greet back. The tension that was in the room, you can cut it with a knife. We were just sitting in the waiting room. I go sit next to Tumi.

I didn't know what else to do except to hug him, he hugs me back.

Tumi: Thank you so much for coming

I let go

Me: Its my pleasure. How is she?

Tumi: She's... It's pretty bad Hle, like really bad

Me: I'm so sorry.

Mrs. Moloi: I just don't get why you had to make this decision alone

Mr. Moloi: Not this again Ma'Thandi

Me: What is she talking about?

Mrs. Moloi: I wouldn't want to see my child paralyzed, not being able to do anything for herself, I wouldn't want to see her suffer like that

Tumi: So you'd rather have her dead?!

Tukelo: Tumi please, don't say anything...

Tumi: No Tukelo! I've been quiet long enough, I couldn't just let my wife die!

Mrs. Moloi: You've killed her already, you're too late for that

We are just quiet listening to them ranting. I'm just out of words, Thandi is paralyzed and her parents wished she could have died but Tumi saved her. How sick is that? I thought Tukelo's family is sick but Thandi's mom takes the crown.

Mrs. Moloi: She is in this state because of you, right? Then why don't you just kill her at once!

Thabang: Mme, I understand you're frustrated and confused, but no parent should wish this upon their child.

Pitsi: My brother just did what any husband would have done.

Mrs. Moloi: Don't you think it's a little too late for your brother to be a good husband to my child? She's as good as dead!

Mr. Moloi: Mosadi! Shut your mouth, this is my daughter we're talking about here, we all get you're mad but what do you think our daughter will say if she hears that you're speaking like this.

Tumi got up and left, Tukelo followed him. A few minutes later Tukelo came back.

Nosi: Is he going to be okay Tukelo?

Tukelo: He's going to be fine, he just needs to clear his head.

Nosi: He's not driving, right? He can't drive while he's that mad

Tukelo: His car keys are with me, don't worry Maka Thapelo.

Nosi nods. We all just sit in awkward silence.

Tukelo: Tigress, can I talk to you?

Everyone looks at me and they wait upon my response. How can he do this to me now? And what does he want to talk about? I stand up and I lead the way, he follows me and we find a quiet place for us to talk.

Me: What is it?

Him: How are you?

Me: How am I?

Him: You heard me mos

Me: Tukelo, you're about to get married to another woman, so how do you think i'm doing?

Him: I gave you an alternative

Me: An alternative?! You call dating you in secret, while waiting for you for a whole year so you can divorce your wife, while tricking her into signing some title deed documents, so she can hand over your father's lands back your family, an alternative?! You're clearly sick in the head Tukelo. What if in the long run you fall inlove with her? Where does that leave me? Doesn't it mean I wouldve wasted my time with you?

Him: Please stop shouting.

Me: You make me sick.

Him: Listen here Amahle, for what its worth, I can never love another the way I love you, I still love you believe me when I say this, I love you MaSengwayo, just that I have no choice right now...

Me: No, you had a choice Tukelo and you made your choice so please save me all your crap.

I try to leave and he blocks my way

Me: Please, let me go before I lose it.

Him: Wait for me, that's all I ask

Me: For how long?

Him: I don't know

Me: We have nothing to talk about then. For the last time, move out of my way Tukelo

Him: Please Amahle

Me: I said move out of my way!!

He moves out of my way.

I couldn't believe him. The nerve he has, he will carry on wit his life and act like nothing happened, while I wait? When I got to the waiting room, I find Nthabi there. Great, just great! I greet her and she greets

me back. Tukelo comes in seconds after me, Nthabi goes to him and they hug. I try to look away but it is so hard not to look. This is so hard for me, I try to act strong and talk with the others but I'd find myself looking at them. When I realized its just too much, I left the room and went to the restroom. Luckily noone was there. I locked the door, sat on the toilet seat and cried silently. This is too much, I thought I could handle it but the thought of him with another, its driving me crazy.

There's a knock on my door

Him: Tigress

The hell? This is the woman's restroom. I forgot how crazy he can be. I decide to keep quiet and not say anything

Him: I know you're in there, please open the door.

I ignore him again

Him: I will break this door, you know I'd do it. I'm giving you 5 secs.

I don't respond

Him: 5.... 4.... 3.... 2....

I open the door

He looks at me and cups my face.

Him: Were you crying?

Me: No

Him: I know Amahle. Look, I'm sorry you had to see that. I didn't know she was coming...

Me: there's no need to explain yourself Tukelo, I'm not your fiancée, she is.

Him: But you're the woman I love

Me: Yet she's the one wearing your ring

He closes his eyes for a few seconds and open them again

Him: She bought it, I didn't get for her...

Me: Tukelo, no need to explain. Just that... I didn't know it would be so hard...

Tears start pouring out, I didn't want him to see me this vulnerable. I didn't want him to know that it still hurts. I didn't want him to see that I still care.

Him: Please don't cry.

He uses his thumb to wipe my tears.

Him: I will come back to you and that is a promise

Me: Please don't promise me that Tukelo, please don't because you're not sure. I can't sit around and wait for you. I also want to look for someone who'll love me whole heartedly, who won't leave me for someone else.

Him: But I love you Amahle

Me: Not enough Tukelo. You love me but not enough to fight for me.

He hugs me and kisses me on the top of my head. I cry on his chest.

I want him to embrace me. I want him to take away the pain I'm feeling. I just want HIM, why can't he understand that?

Him: I know things seem impossible right now babe, all you have to do is trust me.

Me: No, I don't want you to hurt me anymore Tukelo. I'd be stupid if I do that. I want to stop loving you, do you hear me?

He sighs and hugs me tighter

Me: It hurts, it hurts so bad.

Him: I'm sorry.

Me: Don't say that because you'll do nothing about it.

He keeps quiet. We hug each other for a good 10mins. I just listen to his heart beat, I just want things to stay like this forever. But I know as soon as we leave that door, its back to reality, He belongs to someone else.

I finally let him go.

Me: Thank you, I needed that.

Him: Anytime. I love you, don't ever doubt that.

I don't respond, I just look at him. He leans in for a kiss, I want to push him away but I want him, just as much as he wants me. Before our lips could touch, Nosi comes barging in. We quickly back away.

Her: Oh, sorry. I didn't mean to disturb.

Me: Don't be silly, you didn't disturb anything. I was just leaving.

Him: Yeah me too.

Her: What were you doing here in first place?

Him: Ey, leave me alone.

Nosi laughs. Tukelo and I left.

Me: That could've been your wife walking in.

Him: Yeah neh

Me: So please don't follow me. We shouldn't be left together in a room...

Him: (smirks) because you know you're weak when I'm around you?

Me: Argh!!!

I walk faster and leave him behind, this ass laughs.

Insert Forty-Four 😊

TUMI

My wife is coming home today! I couldn't be happier, its been two whole weeks, she's finally awake and ready to go home. This has been the hardest two weeks of my life, I have never been this scared of losing someone ever in my life. Though she's conscious, she doesn't want to talk or eat. We always have to beg her to eat, I don't know how to cope with this. Nosi has been very supportive, she's been here for Thandi, though she has a newborn but she volunteered to be the one to look after Thandi when I'm away. Maybe this polygamous marriage wasn't a bad thing after all. Last night, we prepared a room for Thandi, Nosi even suggested that I build a ramp inside the house, to make things easy for Thandi to get upstairs and I'm considering that. She's been very helpful. Till today, we have no clue where Butcher could be, but that's not my main focus right now, I just want to focus on getting my wife better. Right now, we're on our to hospital to pick her up. It's just me and Nosi, we find her parents inside her room, trying to get her to eat.

Mrs. Moloi: Please Thandiwe, kea gopela, try to stomach something.

Thandiwe is just staring into space and not saying anything.

Me: Dumelang Mme, ntate.

Mr. Moloi: Dumela moshimane.

Me: Has she eaten at all?

Mrs. Moloi: If she has eaten, I wouldn't be begging her right now, right?

I keep quiet

Mr. Moloi: Ma'Thandi, hhe eh, why do you always want to start an argument even when there's no need.

Mrs. Moloi: This boy is disrespecting us Ntate, he's taking our daughter away. He even came here with his mistress. What if she poisons my daughter?

I chuckle in disbelief. I better not say anything because if I do, it might upset Thandi and that is the last thing I need.

Mr. Moloi: Our daughter loves him, we handed her over to him, she doesn't belong to us anymore, she's a Mokoena, she has to leave with her husband. We just have to trust him with her.

Mrs. Moloi: How can you say that ntate? She is my daughter, she belongs to me, she will always be my daughter.

Wow! Is she the same woman who was lecturing me saying why did I keep her daughter alive? She's talking such nonsense now? I can never understand women, I don't think I ever will.

Mr. Moloi: Just because we're leaving her behind, it doesn't mean we love our daughter any less. She knows we love her, but she has to be with her husband. I'm sure she would've wanted that.

The doctor enters.

Her: Oh, Good day Mr. Mokoena, Miss Mbatha. I didn't know you've arrived already.

Me: Goodday Doctor, we've just arrived. So, can I take my wife home now?

Dr: Yes you can but I have a few instructions. She has to come back here every 2 weeks to see our physio therapist. So we can try to help her to work her limbs again.

Me: So her being paralyzed is not permanent?

Dr: I can never know Mr. Mokoena but we can try to help her, we can never tell whether her paralysis is permanent or not but all I can say is, it wouldn't hurt to try. Her state is not that bad, maybe her arms can work again but I can't really say anything about her legs, that's why she has to come back here every 2weeks so I can test her and be sure.

Me: Thank you Doc. I will make sure to bring her by.

Nosi: Wouldn't it also be easier if we can get her a therapist to work with her at home? Who will work with her everyday?

Doc: That's a good idea Miss Mbatha, but I don't want to excite her too much, it might damage her and put a strain on her body but maybe if you get a therapist who'll come see her maybe twice or thrice a week, it can also help. If we see progress, we can get the therapist to come often.

I look at Nosipho impressed. Why didn't I think of that?

Me: Doc, can she talk? Or maybe hear or see us?

Dr: Yes she can talk, see and hear us. Guess she's just overwhelmed with all of this. Just give her time, she needs to adjust and let her process all of this. Being in her situation is not easy but it will get better with time Mr. Mokoena, I assure you that.

I nod.

Dr.: now let me go get her discharge papers so you can take her home.

I smile and nod, the doctor leaves. Nosi takes all of her bags to the car.

Mrs. Moloi: Your mistress better take good care of my baby if she knows what's good for her.

Me: With all due respect Mr. Moloi, trust me I'm saying this with high respect, Ntate please control your wife.

Mr. Moloi shakes his head and shrugs. When everything was filled in and packed. I wait outside for Thandi. A nurse comes pushing her with a wheelchair. I smile as I noticed that she looked better, she was all cleaned up, I don't see my wife in there, this person is just sad and empty. I want to see her smile and laugh again but I guess it's going to be a process. She finally gets to me, I kneel before her.

Me: I'm finally taking you home sweetheart

She just looks at me and not say anything.

Me: I know things are difficult for us but we will make this work, I promise you. We will get through this, together.

I hold her hand, she still hasn't said two words to me. I kiss both her hands, I then kiss her forehead. I thank the nurse, she then left. I pushed my wife and Nosi and helped her inside the car. The ride home was rather awkward and quiet. I didn't know how to cope with this or how to accept it. My phone rings, and it's my annoying brother. I connect it to the car's Bluetooth. I hope he doesn't say anything stupid.

Me: Twin

Him: I'm not your twin and I will never be, don't ever say that

Me: Yeah whatever, what do you want? I'm driving here

Him: Guess you're coming from hospital to pick up my wife?

Me: She's not your wife

Him: Oh, whatever happened to what's mine is yours and what's yours is mine?

Me: Not when it comes to women.

Him: Not when it comes to pussy, you mean

Nosi laughs. I look at Thandi and I see her smiling, I eventually smiled too.

Me: Do you ever say anything appropriate?

Him: I'm just telling it like it is.

Me: (chuckles) true.

Him: So really, how is she?

I look at Thandi next to me, she's just looking out the window. I brush her thigh.

Me: She's going to be okay.

Him: I know she will be. I will come by later to check on her.

Me: That would mean alot.

Him: See you later then

He hangs up.

The rest of the drive was quiet. We got home. We helped Thandi out of the car, as soon as we entered. Everyone yelled "Surprise". It was just a few people, Amahle, Zitha, Pitsi, Thabang and Dankies. Tukelo said he couldn't make it because he had to take Nthabi to Lesotho for whatever reason. I was at awe at house they redecorated the whole place. They even printed the banner, saying "Welcome home Thandiwe". Thandiwe was just smiling at everyone not saying anything. They hugged her, wished her well. She just looked at everyone. I was starting to think that everyone here was just making her feel worse as she hated the fact that everyone felt sorry for her. When everyone was eating, I told them that Thandi needs to rest. I pushed her to her room, I moved all of her things to the downstairs bedroom to make things better for her, I made sure that I make it comfortable for her.

Me: Do you want to rest on the bed or you're okay?

She just looks at me

Me: Thandiwe please say something. You're scaring everyone as you're quiet.

Nothing.

I sigh and I start undoing her bed so she can rest. I pour warm water on the bucket, I wash her feet and legs. I change the water and I wash her face. I help her out of her clothes. I then help her get in bed. I moisturize her entire body then I put her in her pj's.

Me: You good now? Do you want food?

She shakes her head.

Me: Please sthandwa sami, say something.

I hold both of her hands. She just looks at me. I sigh and let go of her hands. I get up to leave.

Her: Why didn't you let me die?

I stop. I slowly turn to look at her.

Me: What was that?

Her: Tumi, I hate depending on people and being a barren.

Me: Who said you're a barren? Even if you were, you are my barren! Noone else's.

Her: Soon, you'll get tired of taking care of me, what happens then Tumi?

Me: Who said I will get tired? I made vows to you didn't I? Through sickness and in health, didn't I say those words to you Thandiwe?

She sighs and keeps quiet

Me: Didn't I?

Her: You did but we both know you didn't mean them.

Me: Don't act smart with me, maybe at that time I didn't mean that but I never make promises I can't keep.

Her: I'm sorry but it's just how I feel. I don't want to live the rest of my days as a cripple. Don't you get that?

Me: So you think I was just going to let them kill you?

Her: That's what I would've wanted.

Me: So if it was me on your shoes, you would've killed me?

She keeps quiet

Me: I asked you a question Thandiwe!

Her: Probably not but...

Me: Then shut up. Stop talking nonsense. Se ka ntenna (don't annoy me)

I leave the room and slammed the door on my way out. I couldn't believe she expected me to make that kind of decision. How can she think so low of me? I find everyone having a blast on the porch, just a small braai and a few beers on the side. I join them. Nosi notices that I'm not okay.

Nosi: What is it babakhe?

Me: Nothing.

Nosi: You're quiet and that's not normal

Me: Can you believe that Thandi expected me to kill her?! She thinks that low of me, really?

Nosi: How do you know that? Unless...

Me: Yes, she spoke.

Amahle: That's amazing news Tumi

Me: I wish she can go back to her quiet self if she's here to say things that can annoy me

Pitsi: Dude, don't talk like that.

Me: I'm sorry but I'm just really really annoyed.

I gulp down my beer.

Nosi: Calm down babe, I will go talk to her.

We all look at her.

Nosi: What? It wouldn't hurt trying.

She stands up and leaves.

Thabang: What just happened?

Me: Don't ask because I don't have answers.

THANDI

I'm crippled. Thandiwe Mokoena, crippled? I cannot believe this. I knew even before the doctor told me. I couldn't feel anything, I couldn't move any of my limbs so I just decided to pretend to be unconscious, I wasn't ready to face reality. I soon realized that, faking wasn't going to help, at some point I had to get up and be a big girl about it. I heard everything that was happening around me, I heard the argument my parents had with Tumi about me, whether I should die or not. I seriously don't know how to feel about that. My parents wished I could've died, while Tumi saved me. Why did he save me? So I can suffer? I'm useless, why would he want to hurt me like this. I don't want to live, I wished that those bullets killed me on the spot. How do I even move on from this?

There was a knock on the door.

Me: Tsena (come in)

Nosi appears. I hope she didn't come here to gloat or anything. I just can't stand the sight of her right now. She finally has the man all to herself like she always wanted. I am completely useless.

She sits next to me on the bed. I just look at her.

Her: How are you holding up?

Me: I'm okay, I guess.

Her: We were all worried about you, Tumi mostly. Don't scare us like that again

I don't respond

Her: I know you probably don't fully trust me as yet because of obvious reasons but I just want you to know that I am here for you, should you need anything. Tumi loves you Thandiwe, I know you may find it hard to believe because of the way he was treating you all these years but his stupid ass just figured out that he loves you.

Me: Why are you telling me this?

Her: Because I want you to know that you're not in this alone. We are all here for you and we care about you deeply. Don't ever wish that you could've died because that would've killed Tumi. He wouldn't cope without you

Me: I'm useless to him now. I'm good as dead.

Her: No, you're not. Look, knowing that he will come back to work and find you here, that will bring him joy and his heart will be at ease. There's still hope for you Thandi, it's not over. Don't say you're useless, because you're not. You're a precious gem in Tumi's life.

I couldn't believe this. Am I really receiving such advice from my husband's baby mama? It's just unbelievable.

Me: Thank you Nosipho, I really needed to hear that.

Her: You're an amazing woman Thandi, you deserve to be treated as a queen. I know how hard Tumi can be, but he means well. He's just being tough because he loves you. Try not to give him a hard time.

I smile.

Me: Don't worry. I won't.

Her: Okay. I'm glad we spoke. I hope you'll get some rest, before I leave, do you need anything?

Me: Switch off the lights and please tell the guys to keep it down, I'm trying to sleep.

She chuckles and nods.

Her: Will do. Have a good sleep.

Me: Thanks.

She gets up, switches off the lights and she leaves. She may seem like a nice person, and she has a good heart. I still don't want her staying in my house and sleeping on my bed with my husband. She mustn't disrespect me like that.

Insert Forty-Five 😊

AMAHLE

No! No! This cannot be happening to me. Not now! What do I say to mom? My entire family? What do I say to Charles? I can't hurt him like this. How could I be so stupid?

It's been two months now and today we are finally meeting with Nonhle's family, we finally get to see baby Khanya. My brother has been hella excited since the beginning of this week. A lot has happened in the last two months. I'm finally over my last relationship! He made things way easier for me since he hasn't called nor checked on me. I haven't even seen or bumped into him and I'm so glad that it's over. He has moved on and so have I. Yes! I'm in a new relationship now. Oh don't judge me. The day Charles came to my apartment to let me know that his divorce is finalized, one thing just led to another. Before I know it, he's my boyfriend. I wasn't in love with him yet but he has been so amazing, not once have we argued nor did he want to dictate my life. He let me do what I want to do, whenever I want to. I just wish I can fall for him already. I want to but I just can't. Maybe I'm just too scared to let him in because of what happened between me and Tukelo. No one knows about us yet, it's still early to announce anything, it's only been a month and we also haven't been intimate. I was just not ready to jump in bed with another man. Also, Anele is getting married next weekend. Everything is done and yes we are still going to Cape Town and we are still using Tukelo's jet. Sigh.

My phone rings, I look at it. It's Charles calling. What do I even say to him as I'm still holding this thing in my hands. I'm sitting on the toilet seat with my knees wobbling and my hands shaking. My heart is racing. I noticed weird things happening in my body for the past two months but I didn't pay no mind. I knew I had to do something when I realized I didn't go to my periods for the past two months. Now here I am with the results in my hands, all three are positive and saying two months. Which means I'm two months pregnant! How? I used the pill on time. Why didn't the pill work? Now I have to bring this man back in my life again? My mom will be disappointed, it hasn't been a year since I buried Nkanyiso but here I am again, pregnant.

There's a loud knock on the door. I quickly hid the tests.

Me: What?

Andile: We are all waiting for you, what are you doing in there?

Me: Can't you start without me?

Him: No Amahle, come out please. Nonhle's family is almost here, she just texted me saying they will be here in less than 15 mins.

Me: Okay I'm coming.

Him: Hurry up.

I hear him leave.

I don't know how to feel about this. I'm having mixed emotions. When I was pregnant with Nkanyiso, I was so looking forward to being a mom when I lost him I was devastated, here again, I'm given another second chance, another shot at being mom but how do I be excited when the father has already moved on with his life not to mention me. We both have new partners, this baby definitely has no timing. I always get pregnant when I least expect it, it's always an unwanted pregnancy but I'm definitely going to do my best to keep this baby, I don't think I can survive another loss, no. I get up from the seat, I look at the results again, I shake my head and I put them inside my cosmetic bag. I leave the bathroom.

Mom: I thought you died in there, come help me take these to the dining room.

My mom overdo things though, where was the need for her to cook so much food? We are here to discuss the baby, not asking for a hand in marriage. Did she really had to go all out? I decide not to say anything, I helped her with taking the food to the dining room, when we were done, I asked to be excused to I can change to something proper. I change into a long skirt, a vest and a coat. I look at myself in the mirror, its funny that I just found out a few minutes ago that I'm pregnant but already I feel something inside of me, I see a bump. I smile at the fact that I'm going to be a mother again, right now I don't care who's the father, I don't care about Charles' feelings, I don't care about what my mom will say, I don't care about anyone else except this baby I'm carrying. I brush my belly and I smile to myself.

Me: I don't care how you came about but I promise to take care of you, love you and give you everything you need. You also have to promise me one thing, promise not to leave me like your brother did. I will get to meet you, hold you in my arms and love you. Please stay.

Zanele: Who are you talking to?

I turn to look at her, I didn't even see her there.

Me: Uh, it really doesn't matter. What are you doing in my room?

Her: Oh, mom is calling you. She said the Khumalo's are here.

Me: Okay I'm coming.

She leaves. I take my phone and left. I see Nonhle sitting in her car with the baby. I decide to go meet the baby, I'm not needed in the negotiations anyway. I leave the house, the car was parked outside our house. I knock on her window, she looks at me and rolls it down.

Me: Can you let me in?

She unlocks the car, I sit next to her, she was sitting on the backseat.

Me: Hey.

Her: Hi

I can see that she was a bit uncomfortable around me

Me: Can I see the baby?

She hands her over to me. She's the cutest thing ever!

Me: She's so grown

Her: Yeah and she's a lot of work

Me: That's not true, she looks so innocent

Her: Hee! Don't let her cuteness fool you, she's trouble this one.

I smile at her and played with the baby. The more she grows, I see Andile in her too.

Me: Looks like she's a hypocrite too, just a few months back she looked like me and now I see her father

Nonhle laughs.

Her: I thought I was the only one seeing that but I still see you in her. She got your dimples.

Me: I hope she takes my feisty personality. Right baby, you'll be feisty like your aunty?

She makes baby sounds.

Me: I will take that as a yes.

I kiss her soft cheek.

Her: She must really like you, usually when another person holds her, she starts crying

Me: I'm her blood, she feels that she's with her aunty. You guys did a good job though I must say, this baby is beautiful

Her: (smiles) thanks.

Me: She does have a good looking mom and her father is also not that bad

She laughs.

Her: Yes, plus her aunt is H-O-T

Me: Oh yeah.

We both laugh.

Me: Look, I'm sorry about the other day.

I called her, and I did say some things that weren't pleasant to her, I was just mad about the fact that Thandi was shot and kidnapped because of them.

Her: it's okay. I understood your frustrations. Please believe me when I say this, I never wanted things to go this far, it just happened. I didn't know that Mandla would go as far as hurting someone who has nothing to with this. I thought he'd go after me...

Me: No need to explain yourself Nonhle. If you love someone, there's nothing anyone can do, even Mandla won't do anything about it. You love Andile, right?

She blushes, and I already got the answer I needed.

Me: You don't even have to answer, your face is doing that for you.

Her: I do love him, with every bone that's in my body. Him and Khanya, they mean alot to me. I live for them.

Me: (smiles) then that's all that really matters.

Her: (clears throat) do you have any idea what happened to Mandla? Did Tukelo maybe give you any entail?

Me: Uhm, I'm sorry. I don't know anything but all I know is that the Mokoena brothers won't rest until he's dead.

Her: (sigh) I don't want him dead, I just want him to leave us alone.

Me: That won't happen sweetie, trust me when I say Tumi will kill him.

She doesn't respond. I get it, the man abused her emotionally and physically but they've been through alot together, she wouldn't want to see him dead.

Me: But don't worry yourself too much about him. Just focus on your baby, she is the only thing that matters.

Her: (smiles) I guess you're right.

Andile opens the front seat door.

Him: Okay, it's time.

Me: For what?

Him: I was talking to my woman and kid.

Me: hhee! Look at this, just because he's a father he thinks he can be cheeky with me.

They laugh.

Him: I'm sorry sis. But they are needed inside. The family wants to meet them. Give me my daughter

Me: Haybo!

Him: What?

Me: I'm still holding her nje na Andile.

Him: You've had her since they got here, now she wants me

Me: And how do you know that?

Him: I just know it, give her to me

Me: Ah! What will I say, fathers and their kids.

They laugh.

I give him his daughter.

We went inside the house, they went in the sitting room with the baby, I stayed behind in the kitchen. I realize that I had tons of missed calls from Charles. I made a mental note to call him when everything is done. It was just me and Zanele in the kitchen, we were just having a random conversation. It was around 11am when mom said we can serve the food, everything is done. I could see that she wasn't okay, guess it's the fact that Nonhle is older. My mother though! She has too much on her plate. Her youngest son impregnated an older woman, her eldest son is getting married in a far away city and then there's me, I'm pregnant, again! Twice in one year. She has so much to deal with. We serve the Khumalo's food. They ate and around 2pm they said their goodbyes to the family and they left. Now it was just us thee Zungu's.

Uncle Hlomla: Ay Andile, you and your shenanigans! Why didn't you tell us that the woman is older than you?

Andile: Eish bab'omncane, I didn't know how.

Uncle Themba: Uyaqhubeka lo mfana ngosihlaza nokusdelela. (This boy is continuously disrespecting us and humiliating us)

Anele: I have never ever heard of such. You never cease to amaze us

Uncle Thulani: Ay suka! You can talk all you want but my boy scored over there. That is some woman. You saw how beautiful she is? I can already see her as our makoti

Mom: Haybo Thulani, don't give the boy any ideas.

Uncle Thulani: I'm just being honest.

Uncle Themba: My brother is right though, we can talk all we want but Andile got himself a woman, you can see that she's well educated plus she's respectful. They even have a beautiful daughter together.

Andile: (smiles) thank you bab'ncane

Uncle Hlomla: So what are your intentions with this woman?

Andile: Well, I do love her and my kid as well but it's still early to talk about anything serious

Uncle Hlomla: Hhe, what does this child mean now? You want your child to grow up with the mother?

Andile: For now, I don't see anything wrong with that

Uncle Themba: She has to know your roots, your customs and traditions, how are you going to do that while she's living with the mother? We're going to pay everything's that's needed so we can make her officially ours

Andile: I know that but that doesn't necessarily mean I can separate the mother and her child

Uncle Hlomla: You don't have to do that, unless you marry her.

Mom, Anele, Andile and Me: What?!!

Uncle Thulani: It's the only thing that makes sense.

Andile: Whoa, bab'ncane, I still have university, my whole life ahead of me, I can't afford having a wife.

Uncle Hlomla: Well, you should've thought of that before even impregnating the woman.

Mom: I'm not going to allow such madness Hlomla, no. He has to focus on school, he doesn't need this kind of pressure.

Andile: I'm not saying I won't marry her some day, trust me I will, but not now, that's in my five year plan. When I'm done with university

Uncle Themba: Well, plans change all the time, I am sure you didn't see yourself having a kid at an early age with an older woman

Andile: Yes but...

Uncle Thulani: No buts, talk to your woman and see what she has to say about this.

Andile looks at mom and mom shrugs.

TUMI

It's been months and my wife is still the same, what's changed though is her attitude, she's cranky. She is always angry, she always shouts and I'm getting tired of that. I don't understand why she's so angry at the world. She even gives the therapist a hard time, she even thought of quitting but I begged her not to because she's highly recommended, she's the only one who can help my wife. Sometimes she even refuse going to the doctor for her check ups, I literally have to drag her there. I'm trying my best to support her, I even built the ramp for her but all of my efforts always go to waste because she criticizes every effort I make. I want her to get better soon, that's why I contacted an overseas specialist so she can help her to heal. I don't know whether my wife will agree to go overseas but I'm hoping that she

does because I'm trying the best I can to help her heal. I am even neglecting my son, I haven't spent my time with him in weeks but Nosi understands and I appreciate her for that. I'm on my way home now to tell my wife about the specialist overseas. I find her with the therapist, Jessie, she was working with her arms but I could see it in Thandi's eyes that she didn't care..

Me: Good Evening

Jessie: Good Evening Mr. Mokoena

Me: How are you?

Jessie: I'm fine

Me: And you Thandiwe?

Thandi: I'm fine Tumi, still crippled but fine.

I sigh. Jessie looks at me. I see the crap the poor therapist has to take.

Me: Can I have a word with you?

Jessie: Sure.

We leave Thandi's room and went to the lounge.

Me: How's she?

Her: I don't get it Mr. Mokoena, by now she's supposed to be able to work one of her limbs, at least her arms but it's been 2months with no progress at all, the doctor said her situation is not that bad.

Me: Could it be because she's not cooperating?

Her: it could be.

Me: (sigh) well I want my wife to get better so I found a specialist overseas, in France. He has advanced equipment to help her recover, he has worked with cases like this before, I'm positive he can help my wife.

Her: So he's coming here?

Me: No but she's going overseas and she can't go alone, I can't go with her either because of my commitments at work but I was hoping that you'll go with her.

Her: Me? Do you really think she'll agree?

Me: I don't know but one can only hope.

THANDI

My husband wants to get rid of me? So he is tired of me, I told him, I told him that one day he'll be tired of taking care of me but he promised me that he will. Yes, I heard everything that he said. I can work my arms and upper body, so I pushed the wheelchair a little closer to the lounge so I can hear what they're talking about. And no, noone knows that I'm recovering and I didn't want them to know. I wanted to see how far can Tumi take it and now he's getting rid of me, just like that? When I realized that I can move my upper body, I was alone and I couldn't be happier. I didn't want to get their hopes up so I decided to fake it until I'm sure that I'm healed. I just wanted one day when he least expects it, I wake him up with breakfast in bed, I wanted him to see me walk. I didn't want to get him all excited, only to find out I can never walk again but now, he's getting rid of me? I hear them walking closer to my room, I quickly go back to where they left me.

Insert Forty-Six 😊

TUMI

Breaking the news to Thandi won't be easy. I know she will fight me and won't hear a word I say, I bet she won't even give me a chance to explain why. I just want her to get better and I skyped with the Doctor, he said it can take a month or even more. Depending on Thandi's cooperation and situation but he guaranteed that she will come back better. He didn't ensure me that she will be fully recovered but he promised that he will work with her and she will come back better. Now, it's going to cost me a lot but I have no choice right now. I still have to write a letter to the Mbatha's plus I haven't even told Thandi that I'm thinking of getting married again, I still have to speak to my father about it. I know he won't mind, he will see it as the right thing to do, as for Mme, that woman, I know she will give me a hard time, but I have to raise the issue after Tukelo's crap wedding. According to him, everything is done and he's getting married on his birthday. SMH. I don't even want to know who's idea was that.

I'm sitting on the lounge thinking of ways to break the news to Thandi. I need to man up. I gulp down my beer and left for Thandi's room. I knock, she tells me to come in, I take a deep breath and I open the door. I find her laying on the bed.

Me: Hey

I sit down next to her. I told Jessie not to come today, she deserves the break.

Her: Hi.

Me: You look beautiful today.

I kiss her cheek.

Her: (smiles) Thank you. You're not so bad yourself

Me: (chuckle) I try.

Silence.

Me: Uh, so the doctor is telling me that there's still a long way to go.

I brush her thighs

Her: The doctor or that therapist?

Me: That therapist? Why do I sense that you don't like her?

Her: I didn't say that, I just don't think she's doing her job right.

Me: What do you mean by that?

Her: I would be walking right now, right? If she knew what she was doing.

Me: you're not working with her Thandiwe and I want you to get better, I really do

Her: I also want to get better Tumi, you think I'm enjoying my life right now? I like being like this, huh?

Me: (sigh) I didn't say that Thandiwe all I'm saying is, you should cooperate with her, she is just doing her job.

She doesn't respond.

Me: Which brings me to my point, I found a doctor for you, who is determined to help you get better.

Her: What doctor?

Me: Dr. Lorenzo

Her: Never heard of him.

Me: Yes, he's in France

Her: France? Overseas France?

Me: Yes Thandiwe.

Her: Oh. So he's coming all the way from France, just to help me?

How do even explain this to her? She's so stubborn, I know she will want to argue with me, I just know it.

Me: um... No, you're going to him.

She just looks at me and not say anything

Me: You heard me?

Her: Loud and clear.

Me: So you're leaving in a week, everything's done. All we have to do is pack a few things you'll need and...

Her: So you were telling me Tumi?

I look at her

Her: Don't you think you were supposed to discuss this with me first before making any decisions

Me: I thought you wanted to get better, just as much as I want you to. There's really no need to discuss anything, you just should be happy that you got this opportunity to go there and heal faster...

Her: I guess I should be happy as well that you're getting rid of me.

Me: Getting rid of you? Where's that coming from?

Her: Admit it Tumi, you're tired of taking care of me, yet you promised me that you won't get tired.

Is this woman hearing herself when she speaks? I have done everything, everything in my power to help her but she's here speaking such nonsense.

Me: Thandiwe what is it that you want from me? What? I have done everything for you, anything I could to help you recover yet you're telling me that I'm tired of taking care of you? What do you want me to do? You want me to be the one that bathes you, clothe you, feed you, you want that? I hired a whole team to take care of you, and I'm here every night by your side to console you, I'm even hiring the world's most expensive specialist to help you recover quicker and you are telling me that's not enough?!

Her: Why send me so far away then? You want to bring your little family here in my house while I'm away? So you can play happy family in my house Itumeleng? In my house?

I know that she's going through alot and she's probably not making any sense of what she's saying but her words are fucken pissing me off.

Me: When did you become this self-centered? You care about that? And not about getting better? Well, for your information, I haven't spent quality time with my son in weeks because I have to make sure I get to you on time. I don't want to miss any detail about your healing process. Nosi is the one to complain because I haven't been with her in weeks but instead of complaining, she understands. Ever since you got injured, you've become selfish! You push everyone away and I'm sick of it, stop feeling sorry for yourself and accept what happened, I have, you should too. Focus on what to do in order for your situation to get better, don't dwell on what happened because that won't get you anywhere, it will only drag you down.

Her: It's easy for you to say, you're not the one who can't do anything for yourself. I have to depend on someone for everything, I hate that.

She starts crying. Well I can't console her and I won't, i'm too pissed for that.

Me: But you're not doing anything about it! That's what ticks me off, that you're busy thinking about that instead on focusing on getting better. Listen I won't sit around here and argue about this with you. You are going to France, you know why, because I want my wife back!

I stand up to leave, as I was about to turn the door knob, she calls my name. I turn to look at her. I see the shock of my life, I'm stunned! I'm at awe. I don't know what to say! My wife is sitting, my wife that couldn't move any of her limbs a few minutes ago, is sitting? No, I can't believe this.

Me: How did you... When did you...

I can't even say one sentence.

Her: A few days ago, I know you'll probably be mad, asking why I didn't say anything but I wanted to be sure first, I didn't want to get your hopes up.

I went closer to her. I touch her arm

Me: Can you feel that?

She nods.

I pinch her and she jumps.

Her: Ouch!

Me: Oh my god, she can really feel it

Her: You just had to pinch me, I told you that I can feel your touch, didn't I?

Me: You did but I just wanted to be sure babe. I am so happy, you're finally getting better.

I hug her tightly. She giggles and hugs me back. I let go

Me: it's like I'm dreaming. Please tell me, I'm not dreaming

Her: (laughs) No you're not. I'm really sitting on my own, my arms are working again

She waves her arms on the air. I couldn't believe it, I was happy beyond words.

Me: What about your legs? Do you feel anything?

Her: No, nothing yet.

Me: Are you sure?

Her: Yes, you can pinch me all you want, I won't feel a thing.

Me: My God! Can I kiss you?

She laughs at me. I lean in for a kiss, she kisses me back, I feel her arms around my neck, its miracle. It's weird that I was actually enjoying her arms all over my body than the actual kiss. I pull back.

Me: I need to call my brother.

I take out my phone and dialed Tukelo's number. He picks up after some time.

Him: What?

Me: Dude, my wife... She can move her upper body

Him: Are you serious?

Me: As a heart attack!

Him: Mokoena oa Molibeli! Oa ma-Khooanyane'a Mashabela, Khooanyane ke kubu, ngoan'a Letsipa la Mashabela. Kapa u ka thella joana... (Mokoena praises). That's great news man

Me: Dude, I know. My heart is literally jumping for joy.

Him: Yeah, I can hear that. It is a relief to hear such amazing news, what about her legs though?

Me: She said she still can't feel a thing.

Him: You're still sending her to France though? Right?

I look at her. I mean should I? She is making progress, she doesn't want to go and I don't want her to go either but I want her to get better.

Me: Uhm... I don't know.

Him: Monna, you already paid the specialist half the money he requested. I'm talking about thousand and thousand of Euros, I don't even want to mention rands...

Me: Tukelo, it was never about the money and you know it.

Him: Yeah I know, you may have money Tumi but you can't waste it like this.

Tukelo has always been the stingy one.

Him: Besides your wife is not fully recovered yet, maybe this doctor can help her recover fully.

Me: Yeah, I will think about it

Him: What's there to think about? Hey wena Tumi, when I get back to S.A I want to see my wife walking so you better get her the help she will need.

Me: Okay fine Tukelo.

Him: Good. I will tell Ntate the good news.

Me: Okay thanks. Aren't you coming for Anele's wedding? They are using your jet.

Him: Imagine attending the wedding of your ex.

Me: (laughs) Oh! I forgot that detail. Does Anele know?

Him: Nah, and I wanna keep it that way. Can you imagine that Zanele called inviting me to her wedding? Like a personal invite, where was the need for that?

I laugh

Him: No seriously, her husband called me and I bet she knew that but she still called me and asked me if I'm happy or what, started making small talk.

Me: That woman did love you. Like she was crazy about you.

Him: Ay, I don't care. She has a husband now, she should focus on that.

Me: Yeah, I guess you're right, so you really won't attend?

Him: I will be there. I have to do it for Anele plus I get to see Amahle so I'm definitely not letting that opportunity pass

Me: You'll leave your wife behind?

Him: Of course I'm leaving her behind, I don't want any awkwardness.

Me: Will she agree to that?

Him: I won't be asking, I will be telling.

Me: Yoh! Okay. I will see you during the weekend I guess.

Him: Shots.

I hang up.

Me: Look at that, my wife is still sitting on that bed looking beautiful as ever.

She chuckles softly, in a very cute way. I jump in bed and I start kissing her.

AMAHLE

This is what I hate about preparing for a wedding! The walking up and down. It's been hours, the walking around is killing me. I can't even say, 'mom I'm pregnant please take it easy on me, I can't take the heat plus I'm craving for ice, not ice cream but ice'. I'm just taking it but I am unable to can! We did the dress fitting, the cake tasting, checked the venue, plus grocery shopping, all in one day. Thank the lords that we are doing our last bits of shopping but I'm exhausted, I just want my bed.

Now we are waiting for Anele to come pick us up, about 30mins ago he said he's just around the corner but still no sign of him. I was slowly getting pissed and Tukelo's baby is not making things easy on me! After an hour of waiting, Anele arrives. We load the groceries, we hop in and left.

Me: Anele please, turn on the AC.

Him: Ay, open the window Amahle

Me: That won't do, I need cold air, if I open the window I will be just inviting hot air in. It's way too hot today.

He turns on the AC

Me: Don't you have any ice in car perhaps?

They looked at me.

Me: What? I'm just feeling hot

Anele: I don't have any ice

Me: Pass by the garage and get me ice, please.

Anele: Aibo Amahle, we still have things to do and I have somewhere to be in an hour.

Me: Ha! you cannot tell me that, you made us wait in this heat, I didn't complain so you shouldn't either.

Anele: I have other commitments Amahle

Me: Mah, listen to your son

Mah: Anele just get your sister ice

Anele: But Mah...

Zanele: It's just ice Anele, I'm sure it won't take much of your time.

Anele sighs. I know when Zanele has spoken, it shall be done! Thank you sister-in-law. He pass by the garage and he buys me a whole 5kg ice pack! I just look at him.

Him: What? You wanted ice, now you have your ice, now you're going to complain and say it's too much, don't give me that, I beg.

I just look at him shocked.

Him: Don't ever ask me for ice again, for the rest for your life.

He starts the car, mom and Zanele laughed at me. I open the pack and I start eating the ice, they look at me weirdly, I just shrugged and continue eating the ice.

I got home and I started packing. I miss my own space plus I want to spend my time with Charles, I can't really see him when I'm at home. I lied to my mom and said I have assignments to submit so I had to go to my apartment and she understood. I took my back pack, said my goodbyes and hopped in my bike and left. The way the Zungu residence is busy right now, since the beginning of this week, I'm glad I'm leaving, I need some time off. I'm exactly 20mins, I was unlocking my door. I couldn't be happier, I missed being around here. I freshen up, and just wore my tee and short, took ice and sat in front of the TV. My phone rings, and it's Charles.

Me: Hey you

Him: Babe, are you back?

Me: Yes, I'm in my apartment as we speak.

Him: Okay, I'm coming to pick you up.

Me: Already?

Him: Yes, is there a problem?

Me: No but I just got home, I was hoping to relax a bit

Him: You can do that in the hotel, I'm on my way.

He hangs up. Not that I wanted to relax, I'm just not ready to be intimate with him, yes we spoke about it and he probably thinks I'm ready but I'm definitely not. I get up and packed an overnight bag. I change into something appropriate. As I went downstairs, I find him already waiting for me.

Me: Oh, that was quick

Him: I missed you alot.

He comes closer than he kisses me, I kiss him back. Though I'm not ready to sleep with him but I do enjoy his kisses and his touch. He let's go, he wraps his arms around my waist.

Him: Ready to go?

Me: Yes all packed and ready

Him: Awesome. Let's go. I hate being around this apartment.

I laugh

He lets me go, took my bag and left. He hates this apartment with passion, he even offered to buy me another one, and I didn't allow such madness. I cant just allow every man I meet to buy me an apartment. I lock up and left.

The ride to the hotel was just dry. Usually, me and Tukelo we used to sing to the music that's playing and take selfies. Here, we're just enjoying the car ride, quietly, no music playing. I'm just bored. No Amahle, no. You're with Charles now, you can't think about Tukelo now. We got to the hotel, we checked in and

we went to our room. Just like he doesn't want to be in my apartment, I don't want to be in his house where he used to be with his wife.

We got in, I sat on the bed and took off my shoes.

Me: Yoh, I'm exhausted.

Him: Let me help you with that..

He unbuckle my shoes.

Me: Thank you

Him: Long day?

Me: Yeah, this wedding is going to be the death of me serious. Today we walked around the whole of Johannesburg.

Him: (chuckles) sorry babe, but at least it's going to be all over soon.

Me: Thank God for that. And you're sure you understand why I can't afford having you there?

Him: Fully. Don't worry about me but you also promise me that you'll be with me after the wedding.

Me: Yeah and that will be on Sunday because we have two wedding ceremonies.

Him: Yes the white wedding and umebho

Me: (laughs) umabo babe.

Him: (laughs) Whatever. When we get married, we are also doing that ceremony, it sounds interesting

Me: Umabo hone, is when the bride give gifts to the groom's family, will your family allow that?

Him: They just have to because I want to do everything right, I will respect your culture, just like you'll respect mine.

Me: It's just the white wedding Charles

Him: (chuckles) It's still my culture.

Me: There are so many rituals you have to do in order to make me officially yours.

Him: And I will do them all

I laugh and shake my head.

Him: I love that sound of your laughter, but I love you more.

I keep quiet. He kisses me, I return the kiss. The kiss gets more intense, he starts undressing me. Am I ready for this? No, I'm not but I don't know how get myself out of this. He caresses my breasts, he takes off my pants. He's so gentle and he does everything slow with care, but lord knows I can't do this, as soon as his hands lands on my underwear, I jump. He looks at me

Him: are you okay?

Me: Can we do this tomorrow, I just can't.

Him: What? What did I do wrong?

Me: You did nothing wrong, I just want to sleep. I have a slight headache.

He gets off me and sits next to me. I get inside the covers.

Him: I don't have any medication with me, maybe you should get some rest.

Me: I think I have painkillers in my cosmetic bag

Him: Oh okay, I will get it for you

Me: Thank you.

He goes inside the bathroom. I decided to switch on the TV and order some room service. I even asked for ice, it's not even that hot here but I need ice.

It's been almost 10mins he's still not back, I take a gown and wore it.

Me: What are you doing in there?

He doesn't respond.

I got up from the bed and headed to the bathroom.

Me: I have been waiting so long for you, what's keeping you?

He's just quiet he's not even looking at me.

Me: You wouldn't have made it as a doctor you know.

Now his silence is worrying me.

Me: Charles? Babe, what is it?

He turns to look at me and shit!

Him: When were you going to tell me this?

I don't respond.

Him: I'm talking to you Amy, when were you going to let me know!

Me: Charles, I was going to tell you, just that....

Him: Just what? What?

Me: I recently found out, I didn't know how to tell you...

Him: Save me your lame excuses, I just want to know one thing, is it his?

Me: Charles please...

Him: Is it his?!

He roars and I startle.

I slowly nod and face down.

He hisses and leaves the room, I follow him.

Me: Charles please calm down, I didn't know how to tell you and believe me I didn't plan any of this. It happened way before I agreed being in a relationship with you

Him: Does he know?

Me: I haven't told him yet...

Him: Didn't you think about aborting?

Me: What? No, I lost my first child, I'm not losing this one too.

He takes his car's keys and heads for the door, I hold his arm.

Me: Charles please, don't leave, you can't leave while you're this mad.

Him: That man takes everything away from me, first my business, then you now this! Even when he's not in your life, he's still making my life difficult. How do I deal with this, tell me Amy, how?!

I don't respond. He snatches his hand away from me.

Him: I need to clear my head. Your sight sickens me.

He leaves the room and slams the door. Shit! That happened.

Insert Forty-Seven 😊

AMAHLE

Finally, Anele is getting married today! I'm exhausted though, I didn't sleep a wink. I was busy helping my mother because her good-for-nothing sisters don't want to do anything, all they know is alcohol. They arrived here on Thursday but it's just me, Zanele, my cousins and mom who's doing all the work. It's straining. The catering company only showed up yesterday. Now we're packing for Cape Town. Everyone is excited about that, except for me and Andile. We still think it's a waste of time and money. But what else can we do? It's 7am and we are running really late, we supposed to be there at 10am but I doubt that we will make it in time. The bride is still packing her stuff. I know it will take time to pack that wedding dress of hers, it's just too huge for my liking, it's beautiful though.

Mom: Are you done Amahle?

Me: Yes I'm done, we're just waiting for Zanele, she's the only one who's still busy with packing.

Mom: Yoh, this bride, she just had to get married in Cape Town. Did you pack everything you'll need?

Me: Yes mom

Right now we're in a guesthouse, the bridal party, mom, me and my cousins. The groom and his party, are in a different guesthouse but its not so far away from where we are. We all agreed to meet at the airport at 8am but by the look of things, we're running late. My phone rings. It's Anele.

Me: Bhuti

Him: I've been trying to get ahold of Zanele since morning, what's happening? She's not having second thoughts is she?

Me: (laughs) relax Bhuti, she's just getting ready. I'm pretty sure that her phone is the least of her worries right now

Him: Can I please talk to her?

I have never ever heard him this nervous

Me: Isn't it bad luck for the bride and groom to talk before the wedding?

Him: Geez, no. It's not like I'm seeing her. Give the phone to my wife Amahle, please.

Me: Well alright... Hold on.

I knock once and entered her room. The place was a mess and Zanele is no halfway done. She hasn't packed her dress yet. She is just walking up and down looking for, I don't know what.

Me: It's for you

Her: Whoever it is, please tell them to call back later, I'm alot busy right now and I'm running late...

Me: It's your husband.

She stops and looks at me.

Her: If that's the case give it to me.

She literally snatched my phone and walked out.

Me: Wasn't she running late a minute ago?

They laugh. Her bride's maids were her three friends, Lucia, Pearl and Phindile. My cousins who came through were, Simthandile, Thandeka, Nolwazi and Bongiwe. Simmy is Bab'Hlomla's daughter, Thandeka is Bab'Themba's daughter. Nolwazi is my aunt's daughter, from my mother's side and so is Bongiwe. We aren't really that close, we only meet when there's a big family function.

Phindi: That one, she stops everything she does when she has to speak to Anele.

Pearl: But we are running late. Look at the mess in this room and its her mess

Me: Has she even bathed yet?

Thandeka: No, can you imagine.

Lwazi: She was crying so we had to calm her down

Me: Why was she crying?

Bongji: Nerves I guess.

Me: What is she nervous about? She's marrying the man of her dreams.

Lwazi: Well...

Zanele came in, looking a little bit better than what she was before.

Zanele: Isn't I'm the one who's supposed to be nervous about today?

Lucia: Technically yes...

Zanele: This husband of mine is a total nerve wreck. I have never ever heard him so nervous, the guy is panicking

Me: Well it is the first time he's doing something this big

Zanele: It's the first time I'm getting married too. He needs to calm down.

She gives me my phone back.

Thandeka: Let's get packing Zanele.

Me: Let me leave you to it.

Lwazi: I'm coming with you Amahle, wait for me

We leave the room and went to where I was sleeping, I had to make sure that I have everything.

Lwazi: I don't like that bride.

She sits on my bed. I am just tidying up the room

Me: What has she done to you?

Her: She's just not right for Anele. Anele needs a woman who has class, that woman is using him.

Me: What makes you say that?

Her: Come on Amahle, I've only been here for 3 days, already I've picked that up, don't tell me you haven't noticed? You see her almost everyday

Me: Well, I don't like her either, but I've learnt to tolerate her. Anele loves her and there's nothing anyone can do about it.

Her: But if he finds out the truth about her, he might change his mind.

I stop what I was doing and I looked at her.

Me: What truth Nolwazi?

Her: She's using him...

Me: That won't stop him from marrying her, he won't buy that.

Her: No, you didn't let me finish. She's using him to get over an ex she's still madly inlove with.

My eyes were as big as tennis balls. What is she talking about?

Me: How do you know that?

Her: She was crying this morning about that

Me: Were you there?

Her: Not really but I was coming from the toilet in the morning, I think it was around 4am. I heard her crying and talking to her friend, Lucia so I eavesdropped.

Me: What were they saying?

Her: I can't really say word-for-word but she did say something about an ex she can't get over, she thought that by now she'd be over him but she still loves him. Anele is just someone who's there to help her forget. She's not sure she's doing right by marrying him blah blah blah, stuff like that.

I'm at awe. I couldn't believe what I'm hearing. I knew it though! I knew that she's just too good to be true. It's just too bad that I got ahold of this information on his wedding day.

Me: Are you sure?

Her: Yes. I was a little drunk but I sure heard right.

Me: Oh okay.

Her: Okay? Just okay Amahle?

Me: What do you want to say Lwazi? He made his decision. I warned him about her but he didn't listen to me, what can I do now?

Her: I don't know, maybe tell him what I told you

Me: He didn't listen to me before, why would he listen to me now? He'll just think I'm trying to ruin his day and he'll be bitter because of me. He will not believe. It will be just accusations and speculations with no proof. At least if I had a recording of her saying what you told me, he might believe me but right now, it will be my word against hers.

Her: So you're going to let your brother walk into a marriage with a woman who doesn't love him?

Me: He made his bed, now he must lie in it.

Her: You guys used to be so close when we were little and he used to trust your judgment, what happened?

Me: I guess he doesn't trust my judgment when it comes to women. He will think I'm trying to sabotage his wedding, he will never believe me.

Her: Then I will be the one to tell him

Me: No Lwazi, he will think I sent you, that I'm the one who's feeding you this information. Just let it go, he will see for himself how sick his woman is. I want him to learn from his mistake.

Her: Yoh, now I get why you weren't excited about this wedding.

Me: I'm glad someone gets it!

I don't know if I'm doing the right thing about letting this slide but what choice do I have? Anele won't believe me anyway. I just need proof and I need to know more about this ex of hers, and I can think of one person only who can help me. I dial his number and he answers after some time.

Him: Tigress

Me: hey, I need a favor

Him: anything for you. What is it?

Me: I called you because you're the only one who can help me get this information.

Him: Now you're worrying me

Me: Don't worry, its nothing major. You know that I'm not a fan of Zanele, right

Him: Yes

Me: My woman intuitions are never wronged me, I always knew that there's something fishy about her. Now I got to find out that she's not inlove with my brother, but inlove with some ex of hers. My brother is just a distraction I guess

He keeps quiet

Me: Tukelo? Are you still there?

Him: Uhm... Yes, yes. I'm still here. So what do you want me to help you with?

Me: I want to know everything about her. Do a background check on her, while you at it, find this ex of hers that she can't seem to get over. She's been with my brother for almost two years but she's still inlove with someone else?

Him: Uh... Do you really want to get involved?

Me: Yes. There must be a reason why she's with my brother, if not for love then what?

Him: Money?

Me: Please, Anele is not rich and he's the stingiest person on this planet, I can't help but to think there's more to it than that.

Him: Why don't you talk to him about it?

Me: He won't believe a thing I say, maybe if I get something on her, he will finally see her for what she is.

Him: Just let it go, I mean your brother is old enough to take care of himself

Me: He has no clue what he's getting himself into so I have to help him see it. I know he would have done the same for me. If you're not willing to help me, then I will find someone else who will.

Him: Uhm.. No don't worry. I will see what I can do.

Me: Okay. Thanks.

I hang up.

Lwazi: Who was that?

Me: Noone important but he can help us get the information we need.

Her: How soon can he do that because I'm leaving soon

Me: (chuckles) yoh! You love gossip. I will tell you what happened as soon as he can tell me.

Her: (laughs) I sure hope so.

Me: And please let this stay between us.

Her: It will, don't worry.

In exactly 10am, we were heading for the airport. We are so late. Anele arrived at 9am, he has been calling me and shouting at me, I had nothing to do with this, he was supposed to call his wife, she's the one who's late. Ever since Lwazi told me what she told me, I started to notice that Zanele is not as happy as every bride should be, she's just normal. But maybe I'm just imagining things. We got to the airport, everyone was there already, guess it's true when they say the bride is always late. They took our staff into the jet, when everything was packed, we left for Cape Town.

As soon as we landed, we didn't have any time to waste, the bridal party went to the hotel to change, so did the groom and groomsmen. The rest of them were transported to the venue. We got to the hotel, and we changed.

At 2pm, we were leaving for the wedding. I don't want to lie though, I hate the woman but damn, she looked gorgeous in that dress, her make up was on point, her hair. She just looked amazing, and so did her braids maids. Actually we all looked amazing, I was against this make up thing and this whole dress thing but now that I'm actually wearing the dress and have make up on, I look like one of them celebrities, I swear.

We got to the beach house, everything looked a million dollars. Especially the wedding venue, the setout was on the beach and everything looked expensive and amazing. The bride did her final touches and off to the wedding.

The turn out is not that huge, just close family and close friends, then the Mokoena Brothers, only Pitsi is missing. Even Thabang came through. I'm just surprised that Tukelo didn't come with his wife. The ceremony is over then off to the reception, my favorite part because there's food involved. They went to take pictures, I told them to count me out. We went to the hall and wait for them to get back. Okay, I see why she wanted to have her wedding in cape town, everything about this place is amazingly beautiful.

We wait for them to get back, they did their choreography then we started eating. It was buffet. I dished up everything, I was farmished. When I went back to my seat, Tukelo was sitting on it. I hiss and moved closer.

Me: Lwazi, why didn't you tell this man that the seat is taken?

Her: Amahle there's no need to be rude

Bongi: Yes you can take a seat elsewhere, no big deal.

Me: Excuse me?

Thandeka: Yeah, he is good company, no harm there

Simmy: And he was just telling us about his family

Me: Oh, so I assume he told you about his wife as well.

They went quiet and looked at each other. I leave the hall, his sight just irritated me, I have no idea why. I sit by the trees, between the sea breeze and the wind thats blazing, I suddenly feel nauseous. I run to the bin and throw up. I feel someone brushing my back.

Him: Are you okay?

I nod. As soon as I heard his voice, I throw up again.

Me: I'm fine.

He give me a serviette, I wipe my mouth.

Him: You don't seem fine to me.

Me: It's just something I ate.

Him: Since when you eat something and your stomach gets upset?

Me: I'm not made of rock, I can also get food poisoning. Maybe I ate something that's out of date.

Him: Oh okay. You fine now? You don't need water?

Me: Tukelo, I'm fine. Stop fussing!

Him: Why are you shouting?

Me: Sorry. I'm just really frustrated. So, did you find what I asked for?

Him: (clears throat) I haven't really had the time

Me: You don't have time? Then get Rufus on it. My brother needs to know what of a woman his getting married to.

Him: He's already married to her.

Me: Yes I know that, maybe if he gets ahold of this information, he can get rid of her.

Him: And if he doesn't? Look Tigress, I don't want you to ruin your relationship with your brother, is it really worth it?

Me: My brother is important to me, I can't watch him die slowly because this woman will destroy him, you have to help me.

Him: (sigh) I will see what I can do.

Me: I don't want you to see, I want you to do it.

Him: Fine Amahle, as soon as we get back. I will get you what you need.

Me: Thank you.

Silence.

Him: You look beautiful by the way. I love your dress.

Me: (smiles) Thank you. And that Tuxedo, is doing wonders to your butt.

He turns to look at his butt then looks at me

Him: My butt?

Me: (laughs) Yeah. It looks firm

Him: This is the most expensive Tuxedo I own, it's tailor made and the first thing you noticed, is my butt?

Me: (laughs) I know it's sound weird but it's true.

Him: That was not the impression I was hoping for but thank you, I guess.

Me: It's my pleasure. So how's the wife treating you?

I sit down and start eating, he sits next to me.

Him: She's okay. And you? How's Charles treating you?

I choke on my food.

Him: Oh, you thought I didn't know? Look Tigress, you can't hide anything from me, nothing. Just make sure he doesn't get too comfortable with my woman. And stop inviting him to your apartment.

I'm just shocked I didn't know what else to say.

Him: Don't look shocked, just don't make a mistake of sleeping with him. Then he'll be signing for a death wish.

He kisses my forehead and left. Will I ever get rid of him?

The person he's even talking about is not taking any of my calls and I haven't seen him since that night, he hasn't called or made any contact and really, I couldn't care less. He's being all dramatic he's acting like I cheated or something. I'm not about to sit around and beg a man. Can this day just end already.

Insert Forty-Eight 😊

TRADITIONAL WEDDING

AMAHLE

Okay I don't think I can. I have been on my feet since I got back. This is just torture, last I checked a pregnant woman shouldn't overwork herself like this, but here I am going up and down. And this Jo'burg heat is not making things easy on me. I just wanna die right now. The bride and her party, a few of my cousins are by the river, I flat out refused. I wasn't going to survive.

Andile: You look horrible.

Me: Oh geez, tell me something I don't know.

I had what they call 'ibovu' on my face because I didn't want the sun to hit on my face too hard, it's like the sunscreen of the Zulu people.

Andile: Don't you think you should go get ready? I mean you can't afford your boyfriend to see you like this.

Me: My boyfriend?

Him: Yes, Tukelo.

Me: Didn't I tell you? He's not my boyfriend anymore.

Him: What? No. Why? What did you do?

Me: What did I do? What makes you think I did something?

Him: Because you'll be insane leaving a man like him, where will you get a man like that?

Me: Aybo Andile, just because he's rich and he did everything for me, it doesn't mean I should settle for less. I love myself way too much.

Him: But you guys have been through so much together, you have dodged bullets together, the bombings, you guys are like the Bonnie and Clyde of SA.

Me: (chuckles) well, all good things come to an end, right? And bad ones too. It was just not working.

Him: Uhm, I hear you. Have you told mom about it?

Me: (sigh) No, I haven't. I will tell her when this crappy wedding is over.

Him: (laughs) I seriously cannot believe that Bhuti is married.

Me: Dude, he really went through with it.

Him: I'm just glad it's almost over.

Me: Me too, I've overworked myself way too much, I need sleep.

Him: Tell me about it, I'm also strained. Let me leave you to what you were doing before the Bridezilla comes and be all mad that you're not done ironing that dress.

Me: This is not hers, it's mine.

Him: That's yours?! Whoa Amahle, for a second there I thought it's Zanele's. Damn, are you trying to look more beautiful than the bride? That alone can drive her to insanity.

Me: Aybo, it wouldn't be my fault that I have taste and she doesn't.

Him: (laughs) let me go get ready as well.

He left. I finish ironing my dress then went to take a shower. At 11am I had people singing, guess they back from the river. I started getting dressed, taking my own sweet time. Did my hair, applied a little of make up, I had to keep it as natural as I could. It is a traditional wedding after all.

Okay maybe Andile is right, I ocerdid it with the outfit, I only realized now that I'm wearing it. It is actually a long skirt with it's cropped top. The skirt had a slit from my thigh all the way down. I still looked traditional, I mean I even have a doek on. It's the same materiel used on the skirt and the cropped top. I am even wearing heels today. I checked myself out and dzamn, I nailed it. I leave the house when they've already started with handing out gifts.

I felt all eyes on me. I go stand next to my cousins.

Lwazi: Damn girl, you look amazing.

Me: Thank you.

Thandeka: I didn't know that you can clean up this good.

Me: Well I try. You too guys, you look good.

Them: Thank you.

All formalities were done, then off to the tent for food. There was a tent for just us family, then for friends then the rest of the community. All of these tents were traditionally decorated and I have to see the catering crew, they did a wonderful job. Everything is five star material. I look at the couple and they looked so happy. Man, Zanele is so good at faking. I just have this urge of confronting her. I dish up my food, and sat down. My cousins look at me like I'm crazy.

Me: What?

Simmy: Are you going to finish all of that?

I look at my plate and only then I realized that it's a mountainous plate of food. Certainly not what a normal person would eat. Especially a woman.

Me: I dished it up, didn't I? Then yes I will.

Thandeka: it's like you got everything and there's like 15 different dishes on that buffet table.

Bongiwe: A lady doesn't eat like a pig Amahle, especially on occasions like these, how will you score yourself a boyfriend?

Me: I don't need a boyfriend.

I say with my mouth full.

Lwazi: Ay Amahle, you're embarrassing us, at least eat like a lady. Boys won't come to our table if you eat like that.

Simmy: Maybe she should go sit somewhere else, I mean that hot guy from yesterday came here when she wasn't here and left when she came.

They laugh.

Me: Which hot guy? You mean I chase boys away?

Them: Yes!

Me: Pssh please, you think everything revolves around men. I don't need a man to complete me. I am fine.

Thandeka: But we are not... And oh my God, heres that guy.

Me: What guy?

Simmy: From yesterday.

Bongiwe: Go away Amahle.

Me: So, all four of you, are after the same guy?

Lwazi: Yes, we made a bet on who's getting him and we only have today to achieve that so please go away.

Me: I won't chase him away. Infact, I wanna see this handsome hunk of a man that got you all acting crazy.

Thandeka: No, you'll scare him away, that's what you always did.

Me: Dude, I was like 15. I know better now. So, show this guy already.

Bongiwe: Okay, don't look now but he's sitting next to that woman on a wheelchair.

I turn my head.

Bongiwe: I said don't look now...

And oh no! They're talking about him. Really? Him?

I turn back to look at them.

Me: Really? You guys can do better.

Lwazi: What?! That man is the most handsome man I've ever laid my eyes on and today, damn, he looks amazing in that traditional attire.

Bongiwe: I wouldn't mind waking up next to that every morning.

Simmy: I just wanna meet his parents and thank them for giving birth to that.

Thandeka: And when he spoke Jesu! I got wet same time.

We all looked at her, then we laughed at her.

Me: But you guys do remember me telling you that he's married, right? Happily married.

Lwazi: Wii, I don't mind being a side dish. That's some snack!

Me: (laugh) Ay, I give up.

Bongiwe: Guys, don't scream or start acting crazy but he's coming this way.

Simmy: Really?

Bongi nods. They start putting on lipstick, applying make up and cleaning themselves up. I just shake my head and went back to my eating. All of this for Tukelo, really? These girls love dick.

Him: Ladies. Amahle.

Why did he do that? Is he implying that I'm not a lady? That alone pissed me off.

Ladies: Hey.

Him: Uhm, my brothers and I, we are very bored, as you can see our table is just dry. Wouldn't you mind keeping us company?

They didn't even respond, they just jumped and went on to sit in their table. I just sat there observing everything.

Him: What about you? Aren't you joining us?

Me: No, I'm good.

Him: I was hoping you'd say that.

He sits next to me.

Me: What are you doing?

Him: Sitting down.

Me: I can see that, but you called my cousins to come sit with you

Him: My brothers will kill me for that, I was just chasing them away.

Me: Why?

Him: Well, I can see that they're crushing on me.

Me: (laugh) Are you for real?

Him: Come on, I am sure you also noticed.

Me: Don't worry, I told them that you're married.

Him: Why did you do that?

Me: Hawu, what? Arent you married?

Him: No, not yet. I might actually like one of your cousins.

Me: What?

I felt my stomach turn, I know it's still early for this baby to kick but I swear I felt like something kicked me on my stomach.

Him: I'm still a bachelor, I still have a wandering eye.

Me: Wow. When are you getting married anyway?

Him: On the 18th.

Me: Of this month?

Him : Yes.

Me: You're getting married on your birthday?

Him: Oh, look at that, she remembers.

I roll my eyes.

Him: I still hate that.

I don't respond, I carry on eating.

Him: Look, we here talking about irrelevant things, I forgot to even say you look beautiful today. I really love your outfit. And they way you have that doek on, you look like a true Zulu Woman.

Me: Thank you.

Him: And you get more beautiful each day. You're just glowing.

Me: Now you're exaggerating

Him: I'm serious.

Me: And you're also rocking that Zulu attire. Are you...

I was disturbed by gunshots. We quickly get under the table, people start screaming and running away. Tukelo takes out a gun behind his waist. He uses the table to cover us and he starts shooting too. I reach for my bag took out my gun. He looks at me shocked.

Him: You have a gun?

I start shooting too. I can't even see who I'm shooting at, but whoever is shooting at us hasn't stopped.

Me: Yes I have a gun.

Him: Since when?

Me: Can't remember.

Him: Is it licensed?

Me: Yes.

Him: Why do you have a gun?

Me: Should we be really having this conversation right now?

Throughout this entire conversation, we are just shooting. I'm worried about my family.

Tukelo sits down.

Him: Shit! I'm running out of bullets. I have a bigger gun in my car, cover me.

Me: What? You're leaving me behind?

Him: You not alone, Tumi, Dankies, Thabang and Anele they're right behind you.

I turn and indeed they were. Andile was busy getting everyone to safety. I cover Tukelo and he runs. I can't see my mom, where's my mom? Everything is just happening so fast. Tukelo comes back minutes later and starts shooting, he didn't stop. He just continuously shot where the gunshots were coming from. Eventually, the shooting dies down. I get up from my position and the place is a mess. I look around and I notice bodies on the floor, shit! I go to the others, this family is messed up, everyone had a gun on their hands but they all looked at me, I know they all wanted to ask.

Me: Is everyone okay?

Thabang: Yes we good. And are you okay?

Me: I'm fine. Where's Thandi?

Tumi: She's safe, don't worry.

Me: Okay. What just happened?

Tukelo: We're also as clueless. We don't know.

Anele: No Tukelo, we do know. That man beast, Butcher is still out there, he's hungry for my brother's blood. This is all his doing!

Tukelo: it could be him but wherever he is, he is powerless. We took down everything he owns. He wouldn't be able to pull this off.

Thabang: Tukelo has a point.

Anele: Then who the fuck did this?!

Dankies: Calm down, we will get to the bottom of this.

Anele: Blade, my wife's life was threatened! My family! I had important people attending this wedding. And now I have dead bodies on my yard! Do you know what will this do to my reputation? I'm pretty sure it will be on all the headlines.

Tukelo: We will try and control the matter, keep it out of the press.

Anele: You better.

He is raging, veins were popping out of his head. I see a man, trying to get up. I'm almost sure that's one of the shooters. These men are busy arguing to even notice what's happening. If he is one of the shooters, they will need him to get answers. I aim for his leg and I take a shot, they all look at me then they looked at the man that I just shot.

We all walked to him. He was screaming in agony.

Tumi: Okay, I've been quiet for way too long, who the hell taught Amahle how to shoot?

Tukelo: That really doesn't matter right now, she just did a great job. Rufus, Rebel, get this man to the chamber. ASAP.

They get the man up and load him in the van. A few minutes later, there were ambulances on my yard and police. Mom was panicking. I'm just glad she wasn't hurt and she didn't see me handling a gun.

I've seen everyone, except for Andile and Ziningi. Where are they? I leave them and search for them. I find Andile outside an ambulance and a paramedic busy with him. No, no, not again. Nonhle is next to him and I could tell that she's crying. I quickly marched to them.

Me: Andile, are you okay?

Him: (sigh) I'm fine, you see I'm okay.

Her: How can you say that when you're shot.

Him: It's just a flesh wound.

Her: Flesh wound or not, you're still hurt Andile.

Him: (sigh) Sis, can you please tell her to calm down. I'm going to be okay, no tell her that I'm okay.

Me: Is he going to be okay?

I ask the paramedic.

Her: He's fine. I just needed to clean his wound and apply ointment on it. He will be okay, his wound is not that deep.

Him: I told you, it's just a flesh wound. Now stop worrying makaKhanya, and you too sis.

Nonhle couldn't stop crying. I wonder what would have actually happened if he was really shot. She probably would have fainted.

Him: Ah.ana, stop crying Nonhle.

Mom: Oh my god my baby!

Him: Oh no, here comes another worrier.

Mom: What happened? Were you shot?

Him: No mkami, I just got a slight cut as I was running away, no big deal.

Mom: Oh Nkosi. I wonder who would want to hurt our family like this. You Amahle, are you okay?

Me: I'm fine mom

Mom: Good, you makaNosihle?

Nonhle: I'm okay mah.

Mom: Were you crying?

Nonhle: I was just worried about Andile, but now that I see that he's okay. I will be okay.

Me: Mom, where's Ziningi?

I haven't seen or heard about her since the mayhem began.

Mom: No, no. I haven't seen her.

Me: We have to look for her.

Me and mom we start calling for her name. I see a paramedic slowly pushing a small body bag towards the ambulance. I ran to him.

Me: Open this body bag. Please.

He looks at me.

Me: Please, I'm looking for my sister. She's only 11 years.

The paramedic opens the body bag. No! Why oh lord? This is going to kill my mother. I can still hear her shouting for her name. I still can't seem to move my legs, how to break such news?

Me: Are you sure that she's dead?

Him: I'm sorry mam'.

I cry hysterically. I feel someone holding me from behind. I smell his scent. Why my little sister? She's just so young. Why not me? I hear my mom's cries as well. Why such bad luck?

Tukelo: It's going to be okay Tigress.

I couldn't make sense of what he was saying. How is it going to be okay? My little sister is gone and died of a gun wound. She had her whole life ahead of her. He hugs me tightly. I couldn't stop crying. My Ziningi, is gone. Just like that.

Insert Forty-Nine 😊

AMAHLE

It has been a tough week for all of us. My family and those families who lost their loved ones during that shootout. Imagine going to a wedding, then go back home as a corpse. 9 people died that day, Ziningi included and 5 were injured. I couldn't believe that such has happened to us. Never in a million years did I think I'd ever bury my sister at such a young age. Couldn't have been me instead? She was just a child. I know it's been said to never question God's doings but right now, he's being really unfair to us. Haven't I suffered enough?

We were a trending topic on social media. I don't know how many journalists have called me to ask for a statement. Tukelo handled that situation, and we didn't make it to the headlines. Thank god for that. But you can't really stop the people that are talking on social media. Tukelo said we shouldn't entertain a thing they say, we shouldn't feed their curious minds but the things they were saying were really irritating.

My cousins came over for a wedding but they had to also stay for the funeral. We are just all in shock, I still can't believe that I just buried my little sister. The boys assured me to find out who did this, I want to be the one who kills those bastards. The guy I shot is still held captive, they trying they best to keep him alive, he will be dealt with and I want to be the one who pulls the trigger.

My mom is shattered, she's been refusing to eat ever since we got back to the cemetery. We are trying our best to support her during this tough time.

Mom: Are you pregnant Amahle?

I freeze. I was in Ziningi's room, busy packing all her stuff in boxes. Luckily I was alone. I'm even afraid to turn and look at her.

Mom: I asked you a question Amahle.

I slowly turn to look at her

Me: What makes you think like that mah?

Mom: So you're going to answer my question with a question?

I keep quiet.

Mom: Amahle...

Me: (sigh) I'm sorry mom

Tears escapes. She just leaves me standing there. I throw myself on Ziningi's bed and cried my eyes out. What do I do now?

TUKELO

Things are spiraling out of control now. People are getting too comfortable with getting away with harming us. They're messing with my territory and that's starting to drive me insane! I'm mad as hell, I have been for the past week and I will be okay once Ziningi gets her justice. Who would do something so crazy? Everyone is getting ready for a war because hell is about to break loose.

Everyone's mad and when we all mad, people die. I feel bad for the guy we're about to interrogate.

It's 6pm and right now I'm on my way to get Amahle. She insisted to be involved, I don't want to but right now, I don't have much of a choice. I'm scared of her now that she knows how to handle a gun. Anele couldn't care less on who's involved, he needed all the help he can get to get justice for her sister.

I call Amahle to tell her I'm outside, she tells me she's coming. I wait for about 10mins then I see her coming, she's wearing all black. Black leather jacket, black vest, black leather pants and black heels. I look at her in awe 'til she gets in. I'm just amazed at how gangster she looked.

Her: What?

Me: Nothing.

I start the car.

Her: Is it because of what I'm wearing?

Me: Yes. Why are you wearing like that?

Her: Just let me be Tukelo.

I never said a word again. I also noticed that she's not okay, I couldn't read this expression of hers but she's definitely not herself.

Me: Are you okay?

Her: I'm fine.

Me: Amahle I know you, more than you think and I can see that you're not okay. What is it?

Her: I just lost my little sister, what do you think? Of course I won't be okay!

Me: No, it's not that. You're mad about that, not hurt. Right now, I can see that you're hurt so what is it?

Her: Tukelo, I'm mad at the people who killed my baby sister and I'm hurt that I'll never get to see her again, ever!

She's even crying now.

Me: Uhm... It'll be okay Amahle. It will get better with time, you'll see.

I'm never good at comforting people ever!

Me: I know killing the people who did this won't bring your sister back, but it will make it less painful until eventually the pain is numb.

Her: Seems like I'm just losing people this year, first Nkanyiso then you and now this. All the people I love and care so much about, they just leaving me. I don't think I can handle it anymore, it's all just too much.

Okay, I walked myself right into this one. What do I say now?

Me: Uhm...

My phone rings. Thank the lords. I connect it to the car's Bluetooth.

Me: Yeah

Tumi: Dude, where are you? We've been waiting for you for the past hour

Me: I'm on my way

Him: You said that 30 mins ago!

Me: Yes I know but I had to pick Amahle up...

Him: What do you mean pick Amahle up? You really involving her in this? Can she handle it?

Me: She insisted on coming. This is her little sister we're talking about here..

Him: I get that, but she doesn't need to be involved. We don't need a woman here, there's no place for a woman here. . She had to trust that we will pull this off.

Her: Oh, just like Thandi trusted you to get her justice. If I may ask, how far are you from getting that Mandla guy? As far as I know he's still roaming around. And in case you forgotten, it's all thanks to this woman that you even have a lead so save me your stereotypical crap because whether you like it or not, I'm coming there. You hear me, Tumi?

Him: Uh, I didn't mean it in a bad way, I was just...

Her: Maybe it's about time you had a woman in this bloody operation of yours, maybe things will be slightly less different and there'd be change. Now, instead of you talking to me, make sure every gun in that place is loaded, every knife is sharpened and gather whatever weapon you have. I hope I made myself clear Itumeleng.

She hangs up. I cannot believe what just happened. I have never ever seen her so angry.

Her: You better not say anything Tukelo because if you do, so help me God, I will cut your balls off.

I kept quiet. Now I'm really scared of her.

We got to the warehouse, I haven't said anything to Amahle ever since she snapped at Tumi. I punched the code, then did a retina scan, face recognition and finally the fingerprint. We get in and we find everyone sitting in the lounge. Everyone is looking at Amahle, I can see it through their eyes that they had questions.

Her: I need to use the restroom.

Me: First door on your left.

She leaves.

Me: Whatever you do, don't ask her anything. Just keep quiet.

Tumi: Yes, I should know

I laugh.

Me: Did any of you interrogate the man?

Anele: They wouldn't let me in.

Me: And that's understandable. We don't need an angry person in there, we can't afford you killing him before we get answers.

Dankies: We are trying our best to keep him alive but he lost so much blood, he needs the hospital.

Me: Why didn't you get a doctor?

Tumi: We can't just get any doctor Tukelo. Dr. Pillay is away on a family trip.

Me: Couldn't he recommend another?

Dankies: That's too risky, what if the doctor talks? We only trust Pillay, if we can't get ahold of him then we have no choice but to try and save him ourselves.

Anele: That man is weak, he can die any time soon.

Me: Let's go and have fun then.

We wait for Amahle to get back and we went to the chamber. They were right indeed, the man looked pale and ready to die.

Amahle walked closer to him, he rotates around him then stand in front of him. She's looking as calm as ever. She punches him hard on his face, the man screams. She lits a cigarette. We all look shocked at that, since when she smokes? Anele tries to go to her but I hold him back.

Me: Just let her be.

She puffs the smoke on his face, the man coughs. She puts her high heeled foot on top of the man's thigh. He flinches in pain.

Her: Now, I know we won't have problems here. You'll give me what I want and I will give you what you want. I want to know who was involved in that shootout that occurred a week ago and you want to go, right?

The man keeps quiet.

Her: Right?

She presses harder on his thigh. He nods.

Her: Well, that can only happen if I get what I want. I will only ask once, don't make me repeat my questions because hell will break loose. Should you refuse to cooperate, you see these men behind me.

She points at us.

Her: These scary buff men behind me, they won't do shit to you. I will be the one who'll send you to hell.

The man chuckles.

Her: Oh, you think this is a joke? It's all a joke to you. You've already messed with me, mess with me one more time and I will sure show you what I'm really capable of.

She takes her cigarette, and placed it on his gun wound, then switch it off. The man screamed in agony.

Her: I want to know who called the shootout?

He doesn't respond.

Her: Tumi, hand me that knife.

Tumi doesn't move.

Me: You better do what she says monna.

Tumi gives her the knife. She takes it and cuts him on the cheek, he screams.

Her: I asked you a fuckin' question.

Him: I don't know.

Her: (laughs) You don't know?! How typical. You just went to a place and started shooting innocent people? That's what you're trying to tell me.

The man is in pain, he's not giving the answers Amahle needs.

Me: This should be really interesting.

I pull a chair and sit down. The guys look at me.

Me: What?

They just shook their heads, I shrug.

Her: You want me to repeat what I asked? Because clearly the answer you gave me isn't satisfying.

She's so calm and that's scary. She goes to the refrigerator and takes out the apple.

Her: I don't have all day.

She takes a bite of the apple.

Him: I'm serious, I don't know. There are so many people involved, I was just instructed by my boss, him too, he has people who are above him.

Her: Okay, let's start here, who's your boss?

She takes another bite. He doesn't respond, she cuts his thigh, he screams.

Him: Please, make her stop.

Anele: Just give her what she wants

She throws the apple on his face and she goes to the cupboard and comes back with methylated spirit, and pours on the wound, he screams. She lits on the wound and it burns up. Whoa! She means business. He screams in pain, he tries breaking free, but its no use because he's strapped on that chair.

Him: Please... Stop! Okay! I'll talk.

Amahle extinguished the fire on his thigh.

Her: Talk.

Him: I work for... Gabela.

Shit! I get up and stand on my feet. How did I miss this?

Her: You said something about your boss having someone above him, now I know you know something about that.

Him: I don't know much about that.

Her: But you know something

Him: I just know he works with the Russians and a few days ago he had a meeting with someone named Butcher and he looked shady.

Again, shit!

Her: We're getting somewhere. Anything else?

Him: There's also a woman involved, I don't who she is but she seems dangerous and she definitely had something to do with that shootout. That's all I know, I swear. I don't know why he called a shootout that day, all I know is that Butcher had something to do with this because after he left, he requested for a shootout, I don't know why but Boss was mad after the meeting he had with that Butcher. He was ready to kill. Aaaahhh!!!

He was panting and speaking so fast. He is in extreme pain.

Her: I hope this information is useful to some of you because this makes no sense to me.

She looks at us. We keep quiet.

Her: (sigh) I will take your silence as a big yes.

To be honest, I'm even afraid to answer.

Her: Is there anything else?

Him: No, I swear. That's all I know. Please let me go now.

She stands up.

Her: Oh, I said I'd let you go? After, you are responsible for killing my baby sister, my 11 years old baby sister. She died of gun wounds, 3 gun wounds, now im looking at one of her killers and I said I'd still let you go, I said that?

Him: You said you'd let me go if I give you what you want

Her: Well I lied, Tukelo blow his brains off.

Me: With great pleasure.

I take my gun behind my waist and shot his brains. He was good as dead anyways. Someone please tell me, why did I leave this woman?

After I shot the guy, she runs out of the chamber.

Tumi: Whoa, remind me to never ever mess with Amahle ever again!

Dankies: Now I get the whole 'Tigress' thing.

Tumi: Have you seen her like this Anele?

Anele: Can you see how shaken I am? That was not my baby sister there, she just transformed into some monster.

Tukelo: I always knew she can be crazy but not in a million years did I think she'd be that crazy.

Tumi: We definitely need someone like her.

Me&Anele: No!

Dankies: Why not? She's crazy. She's just the kind of crazy we need. She's almost as crazy as you.

Me: Have you forgotten that we agreed on leaving this life behind? And this time seems like we are in shit because as you can see our enemies are working together.

Tumi: Shit.

Me: Yeah, get rid of this body. I don't want Amahle coming back to see it.

I leave them standing there. I find Amahle sitting down on the floor, leaning on a tree with her head inbetween her legs, she's panting. I sit next to her and brush her back. She turns to look at me, she hugs me and cries on my shoulders.

Me: Shh.. It's going to be alright.

Her: I just killed a man, how's it going to be okay?

Me: No you didn't kill him. I did.

She let's go and looks at me.

Her: But I told you.

Me: Stop feeling guilty. I would've killed him whether you told me to or not. He deserved to die.

Her: He may be a killer to us but he meant something to someone. He could've been a father or a husband. And I called for him to be killed. How do I move on with my life knowing I have blood on my hands?

Me: Hey, listen to me, because of that man, our Ziningi is gone. Alot of innocent people died. So he couldn't just get away with that.

Her: Oh my God Tukelo. Stop making it sound better because it's not! Thinking about this, makes my stomach turn.

She gets up and runs. She throws up. This is going to be hard. I just hope she doesn't have any nightmares about this.

Insert Fifty 😊

TUKELO

Amahle scared the shit outta me tonight. I've never seen her so ruthless, so fearless and so dangerous. What scares me more is the way she's so quiet now. She's just looking out the window and not saying anything, but I understand her frustrations, I for one was this scared and confused when I killed my first victim, it took time for it to sink in but I just pray and hope that it won't take much time, she will be over it soon. I can't help but think she's worried about something else but I decided not to ask anymore.

I park five houses away from her house. She gets off, I do so too. I lean on the car bonnet, she stands in front of me.

Me: So, you'll be okay?

Her: (sigh) I don't know.

Me: Just don't be too hard on yourself, think about Ziningi. You did this for her.

Her: She was way too innocent Tukelo, she wouldn't have want me to do this.

Me: But you had to.

Her: So what about all the other people who are actually involved? You'll kill them too?

Me: (sigh) I don't know Tigress. We need to prepare ourselves for a war because these people they're very dangerous and they'll do whatever it takes to see us dead

Her: I might lose someone I love, again?

And she's crying again. Why is she so emotional? I get that she's scared but she's never this emotional, unless...

Me: Calm down Tigress, we will get through this.

Her: How Tukelo? How? When I have to look over my shoulder everytime?

Me: Amahle, listen to me, you got me, okay? As long as you got me, nothing, I mean nothing will ever harm you. I will always have your back. Now stop worrying and crying, everything will be okay.

Her: What if you die?

Me: Whoa, I won't die. Just relax.

I hug her, she sighs.

Me: Please, I got you babe, I always have.

I kiss her on top of her head. She looks at me.

Her: So I can count on you, always?

Me: Always.

I try wrapping my arms around her waist and she jumps. I look at her confused.

Her: Uhm, we shouldn't be doing this.

She moves away from me.

Me: Come on, it's not like we're doing anything, I was just embracing you.

Her: Yes I know and thank you. I have to go before my mom notices that I'm gone.

Me: Oh okay.

Her: See you around.

Me: Guess so.

She runs towards her house.

Me: Hey, Tigress.

She turns and looks at me.

Me: I love you and I mean it

Her: Ay, voetsek man

I laugh.

She starts running again. I look at her until I'm sure that she's safe I get in the car and I start thinking about the mess we're facing. I had to put on a brave face for Amahle but I'm also not sure on what to do or how we're going to move on from this but we need to deal with this before we lose another one of us.

I take my phone and I realize that I have tons of missed calls from Nthabi.

Sigh.

I call her back.

Her: Oh look at that, dear husband decided to call me back.

Me: (sigh) babe...

Her: Don't babe me! I have been calling you for the past hour, why weren't you taking any of my calls?

Me: Nthabiseng, I was busy...

Her: With what? Tukelo what was so important that prevented you from taking any of my calls?

Me: I had to take of something...

Her: What Tukelo? What? Are you aware that we're getting married next week? But you still in South Africa doing god knows what!

Me: (sigh) can you just...

Her: I don't want to hear any of it! I just want you to tell me that you're on your way back to Lesotho.

I keep quiet. I seriously don't know how to deal with her tantrums and they're annoying the shiitt outta me.

Her: And he decides to not answer me, you're testing me today, neh?

Me: What do you want me to say Nthabi? I'm trying to explain to you but you're not willing to listen to me.

Her: Okay fine, talk

Me: Ziningi passed away during a shootout that occurred in Anele's wedding so we were out there hunting down her killers, so that's what's keeping me here in SA

Her: Who's Ziningi?

Me: Amahle's sister.

Her: Oh! Her again? You promised me Tukelo, that you'll never ever associate yourself with her, but you're busy there looking for her sister's killers? What's that got to do with you?

Me: didn't you hear a word I said? I said a kid was murdered and you care about the time I've spent with Amahle? Are you being serious?

Her: Couldn't you let the police handle it? I mean I feel sorry for her, noone deserve what she went through but there was no need for you to play hero. That's what you'll do all the time? When she's in crisis, you'll run to her rescue?

Me: If that's what you want to hear, then yes! I will always be there when she needs me, you just have to live with that.

Her: How can you admit something like that?

Me: I'm just being truthful. I cannot believe how selfish you can be. That child died for my sins, she didn't deserve to die. Those bullets were meant for one of us, not her. And you wanted me to turn a blind eye on that?

Her: I didn't say that but...

Me: I think we're done talking here. I won't come back now, just be glad that I will at least be there for the damn wedding.

I hang up.

I'm marrying one selfish woman!

I start the car and took off in high speed.

TUMI

Dear wife is so stubborn. I have been begging her for weeks to go to France but she flat out refused. I don't know what she's so afraid of but at least she allowed me to get her an electric wheelchair, now it's easier for her to move around and she also attends her physio regularly, plus there's Jessie. I also have a problem with Nosi, she called me crying saying I don't love them anymore, I don't get to spend my time with them and I understand her frustrations, I have been neglecting them. All my attention was directed on one person, then this whole Ziningi saga now we have enemies on our tail. There's just no time for peace.

Me: Babe, you want your coffee with or without milk?

Her: Without!

She shouts from the living room. I'm serving her her favorite breakfast so she won't be as grumpy when I leave for Nosi's house. I take the breakfast I made and gave it to her.

Her: Thank you husband.

Me: It's a pleasure wife.

Her: But I can't help but think that this is a bribe.

She takes a bite of her food.

Me: Whaaat? No, it's not.

Her: I know you. This is definitely a bribe. If its about the France thing, forget it Tumi. I'm not leaving.

Me: Trust me, I got that loud and clear.

Her: So what do you want?

She says with her mouth full

Me: Ay man babe, that's not cute at all.

She laughs.

Me: Uhm... Thing is babe...

I scratch my head

Me: I haven't spent time with Thapelo in ages, I kind of...

Her: You asking permission to go spend time with your son? Really?

Me: Uh, yeah. I don't want them to feel like I'm neglecting them or I don't care.

Her: Don't ever ask me such bull Tumi, you don't need my permission to go spend time with your son. As a matter of fact, why don't you ask them to come move in with us.

Me: What?

Her: Yeah, why not? With everything that's going on, they need you to protect them, as much as I need you. Now you can't protect the other while you're with the other so it will just be easier if we are all in one place.

Me: I don't think I'm hearing you correctly.

Her: You're hearing me well. I'm saying ask Nosi and Thapelo to come move in with us, well until this whole thing blows over.

I don't know how to respond to this, I find myself hugging her.

Me: Thank you so much.

Her: I can't breathe

I chuckle and let her go. I kneel before her.

Her: Look I know how much family means to you so being far away from your son must have killed you and Nosi was there for me through my worse times, she took her time to take care of you while she still had to take care of a baby. I'm just doing something any good woman would do.

I kiss both her hands.

Me: You're truly heavenly sent Mrs. Mokoena. I know I've been a scumbag throughout the years, I can't take away the pain I caused or bring back the babies you lost but I can at least try making good new fresh memories and be the best husband I can be.

Her: (smile) I know you're trying monna nnaka, I mean, you could've easily got rid of me when you had the chance to do so but you saved me instead, gave me a shot at life. You're working so hard so I can get better and be able to use my legs again, I will forever be grateful for that.

Me: I love you.

Her: I love you too.

We share a brief kiss.

Me: Let me go and get our son then.

Her: Okay.

Me: Please don't give the staff a hard time, I beg Thandiwe.

I get up and put on my watch

Her: (chuckle) I will try being a good girl, no promises though.

Me: I will take what I can get.

I kiss her forehead and headed out. I needed to be extra careful now, so I had alot of men surrounding my house and a few cars following me around. I couldn't afford being the next victim, I have a family to think about.

I got to Nosi's house, I use my keys to get in and I find her breastfeeding Thapelo.

Me: My two favorite people.

Thapelo starts crying.

Her: Argh Tumi, you see now what your deep voice has done, he was falling asleep.

Me: Yoh, I was expecting a much more warmer welcome

Her: I'm sorry baby, I'm just really exhausted. He's becoming really restless at night. The only time I ever get to relax is during the day.

Me: Maybe he's just missing his daddy, give him to me.

She hands me the baby.

Me: You're just growing up so fast monna. Why are you troubling mommy? Look at her now, she's all ugly and her hair is all messy, she didn't even dress up for me, and it's all your fault. Why?

Nosi gives me a death stare

Me: She's even giving me bad looks, you've made her all grumpy. Stop troubling her so much, she will age so fast and when you're older, people will think she's your grandma, do you want that?

Thapelo giggles.

Me: (chuckles) of course you don't.

Her: Seems like he loves you more than he loves me.

She starts picking up his toys

Me: There's no such thing.

Her: Then why is he so quiet when he's with you but when you're not here, he's so restless.

Me: Hawu, that doesn't mean he loves me more, you're his mother. Maybe he just missed my face.

Her: If he loves me so much, he wouldn't be troubling me like this. Even the nanny doesn't know what to do anymore.

Me: We can hire another nanny if needed.

Her: Ah! Your child is crazy Tumi, he wouldn't behave himself even if we hire 10 nannies for him

She leaves the room, we follow her to the kitchen.

Me: That is not true, look at him, he's so quiet now.

Her: Yes I know, he's making me sound like I'm crazy. Your son has me trapped Tumi, I can't go anywhere, I couldn't attend my friend's brother's wedding, I couldn't attend my friend's sister's funeral. He's totally destroying my social life.

Me: Come on, Amahle will understand.

Her: Yes! She does! But I don't! I don't want to understand. I'm totally trapped in this house thanks to this big headed baby of yours.

Me: Don't talk about my son like that.

She didn't respond, instead she chopped those veggies, aggressively. Poor veggies.

Me: Whoa, calm down. You'll hurt yourself.

She keeps quiet. I could see it right through her that she's exhausted. I've never seen her like this, being a mother changed her. I don't know if it's for the best or what. I don't want her to be miserable because she might end up resenting her child.

Me: Maybe he needs to home. Like I said before, I have to make things right. I have to introduce him to my ancestors so they'll watch over him, maybe that way he'll stop being restless.

Her: I spoke to my mom, she said she'll speak to my father and she'll get back to me.

Me: That's great

Her: She said that two weeks ago, my guess is my dad didn't want to hear any of it.

Me: Babe, don't be so negative maybe she'll get back to you. And if she doesn't, I'm doing things my way.

Her: What is your way?

Me: I will go there, negotiate with him. Give him whatever he wants

Her: That man can't be bought Itumeleng

Me: Every man has his price, even the tough ones like your dad. I want to do things the right way for the well being of my child, but he's being stubborn about it

Her: He thinks I'm a home wrecker.

Me: You told him that I'm married?

Her: My mom did. Its just all a mess, he won't let it go that easily.

Me: I also won't let it go that easily. If he's not willing to negotiate, then I'll just deposit whatever amount in his account and tell him that I'm marrying you with or without his consent.

Her: You think he'll warm up to you if you do that?

Me: I don't want him to like me, I just want him to name his price so I can make you both officially mine

Her: (sigh) have you spoken to your wife about it?

Me: (clears throat) No, I haven't.

Her: You have got to be kidding me.

Me: I never really had the time, look babe, she's going through staff, it will be really selfish of me to mention something like this now.

Her: Seems like my dad won't be the only problem, there's still your wife, not to mention your family...

Me: Don't worry yourself about those people. I know my dad would support me. He too was in a polygamous marriage, so he'll understand. And my wife, she won't give us any problems

Her: What makes you so sure?

Me: Uhm, for starters, she suggested that you guys move in with us, as you can see, I'm here to pick you up.

She stops what she was doing and looked at me.

Her: What?

Me: Yeah, she told me to come pick you up.

Her: She said that?

Me: Hawu yebo Nosipho, kumele ngize ngithini kanti? (What must I say now?)

Her: yoh! I didn't expect something like this.

Me: Now, go pack so we can leave.

Her: But I will need my personal space, I cannot be gallivanting around another woman's house

Me: It's Thapelo's home and besides, you need all the help you can get. You'll get the time to yourself and relax as you'll have me and Thandiwe around. Look at you, you're exhausted

Her: (sigh) you're right. What about the people who work here?

Me: They'll come with us, not all of them though. We have so let some of them go. But all the guards are coming.

Her: Wow. I don't know what to say. So who will you sleep with?

I laugh. I couldn't actually believe that she was concerned about that.

Me: I will have my own room and so will you. Thandiwe has her own room as well.

Her: I don't think you understand my question Tumi, let me put it like this, what will happen if I want sex?

Me: You know, you shouldn't be speaking like this in front of my child.

Her: Ay suka!

Me: Besides, aren't you supposed to wait for like 6 months? Since you're breastfeeding?

Her: Argh. Nevermind Tumi.

She starts chopping.

I laugh.

Me: Relax babe, just two more months.

Her: Whatever.

TUKELO

We agreed to all meet at the warehouse after work but here we are, waiting for Tumi to get here. It's been almost two hours. Even Pitsi and Thabang got here before him. What's pissing me off is the fact that he's no longer answering our calls. Nxa!

Me: Can't we begin without him?

Dankies: We all need to be here because when he gets here, he will want us to brief him, now who's going to do that?

Me: I need a smoke.

I left the lounge and went outside. I lit up the cigarette and smoked. It's really strange that I never smoke when I'm okay, I just smoke when I'm stressed out and I never crave for it either, not unless when I'm under pressure.

I see a car coming, followed by 3 other cars. Don't tell me, we're under attack. I soon realize that it's Tumi's car in the front. What the heck?

He parks right in front of me. He gets off. He takes my cigarette and smokes it.

Me: Whats with the army of men following you around?

Him: I'm not taking any chances, what if they attack me next?

Coward.

Me: You're really stupid, you know that? You really think they'll attack now? Of course they won't because they know we're expecting them. They will attack when we least expect it so you're just wasting your time and money with hiring so many men

Tumi: Rather safe than sorry.

He's always been a coward.

I go back inside, he follows me.

Pitsi: Finally, we've been waiting for you. Where have you been?

Tumi: I had to take care of a few things but let's not waste any time on asking about my whereabouts, let's just get to business.

Me: People have been getting away with everything when it comes to us. They think we've gone soft, they think they can get away with anything and everything. It needs to stop. Till today, we have no clue on who shot me on my way back here in SA, we have no idea about the shooting that occurred in Durban. We all thought the Russians were behind that, now I'm not so sure.

Dankies: Didn't we get rid of the Russians?

Pitsi: We did, but we don't know who survived and who died.

Tumi: Do you really think someone survived?

Me: Yes! Who else is Gabela working with?

Thabang: You did kill Leonardo for nothing, surely he had a lot of people working for him, they're out there looking for his killers and they probably found them.

Me: And it's no coincidence that our enemies are working together. They must all have a common goal, and that's taking us out. Trust me, they won't rest till we're all dead.

Thabang: And why is Gabela after us, again? Didn't you make peace with him Tukelo

Tumi: He did, until he decided to kill his son.

Thabang&Pitsi: What?

Wow. I thought this guy had my back.

Me: His son was terrorizing Amahle, I wasn't going to let him get away with it.

Pitsi: Do you ever learn anything Tukelo? We always told to leave your emotions aside, when you're dealing with such cases. Sure there will be people who'll mess with your territory but that doesn't mean you should entertain all of them, you just enjoy making enemies.

Me: Pitsi, you know how this work, it's either kill or be killed. I don't care who's son he was but I don't regret putting a bullet through his head.

Thabang: Blade, don't you ever talk some sense into him?

Dankies: We all tried but he was breathing fire. Nothing could've stopped him.

Me: And talking about this won't solve our problems. We should be talking about a way forward.

Tumi: We need to kill them, there's no other way.

Me: Thank you brother.

Thabang: Kill them? That's just making more enemies, there will be someone out there who'll want to avenge their death, what will happen then?

Me: We will kill them too. Look Thabang, I know you've gone soft but I haven't. I won't let Ziningi's killers live, I won't allow such madness.

Pitsi: You're becoming too emotional

Me: I have to become emotional! An innocent child was murdered. How can you expect me to not be emotional about it?

Tumi: He's right Thabang, if we don't kill them. They will kill us. One by one

Me: Exactly. We need to teach these bastards a good lesson, making sure that the others think thrice before even messing with us again.

Thabang: (sigh) what's the plan?

I thought he'd never ask....

Insert Fifty-One 😊

ANDILE

Losing my little sister is the hardest pill I ever had to swallow. They say men don't cry, that's shittest saying I've ever heard. What do we do in such situations? We are not made of stone. I just couldn't hold back my tears. God is just testing our family this year. There are so many bad people he could take away,

but he just had to take away an innocent soul. How do we move on from this? How does my mother move on from this?

I'm halfway through my exams and I can gladly say that I haven't faced any challenges thus far. I know I will make it. The only problem I'm facing, is Buhlebendalo. She still has no idea that I have a kid, and I'm inlove with the baby mama. I don't how to break such news to her, I can't break her heart like that. I don't want to lose her but I know for sure that if she comes to know about me and Nonhle, she will freak and she'll definitely leave me.

She's been great help ever since I lost my sister. She even attended the funeral, so did Nonhle. I have two amazing women in my life, who I just can't live without. My uncles are still saying I should marry Nonhle, I'm not ready for such commitment, marriage? I'm only 17.

Well my mom, she didn't want to comment about that. Actually, she doesn't want to talk about anything, she's just quiet and it's scary. Sometimes I dread going to her room because she never respond to anything I say.

Right now I'm in my room, lying on my bed, chatting to Nonhle and Khanya in a way. Nonhle sends me VNs of her making baby sounds, I told her that I don't want to miss anything. Being a father is the best thing that has ever happened to me.

There's a knock on my door, I check the time, it's 10pm. Who could it be at this time of the night? I get up to open the door. I didn't expect to see this face.

Me: Hey, what are you doing here?

Her: Aren't you going to let me in?

I was still shocked at what she's wearing. She's wearing those long coats and long heels, she has make up on, and a very long weave. I'm just still admiring her beauty, never have I ever seen her this gorgeous.

Her: Andile?

Me: Oh um sorry. Come in...

I'm lost for words. I move out of her way. She comes in. I lock the door. When I turn, she took off her coat and damn! God is testing me right now. How does one resist such a temptation? She's wearing a lingerie, a sexy lingerie that shows off her curvy body, and hugs around her body, showing off all the right places.

I gulp.

Me: Buhle... Um... What is this?

Her: Hawu Andy, this is obvious. I'm here to see my man.

Me: Yes I can see that but why are you dressed like that?

Thing is, me and Buhle, we haven't been intimate yet, she's still a virgin.

Then why is she here, dressed like that? I don't get it. She's just here to tempt me, the devil is the one tempting me. My mind is already having thoughts, I shouldn't be having.

Her: Andile, can you stop with all the questions and come kiss me.

I'm still standing where she left me, I couldn't move. If I start kissing her now, I wouldn't be able to control myself and I don't think she knows that.

Me: Uhm...

Her: Or you want me to come to you?

I don't respond.

Her: Fine then.

She cat walks to me and she starts kissing me. I kiss her back. Not even a minute has passed but already I want more of her. It's the way she smells too, it's turning me on. I lift her up and placed her on my bed, I take my time to admire her amazing body on that lingerie.

Me: Damn, you look and smell amazing.

Her: (giggles) I figured. The way you were looking at me, it was priceless.

I chuckle and I kissed her. I'm hungry for her, but I know better than to take things far. I take off her lingerie, I play with her clit, she moans softly. I have fingered her many times before but today, it's different. I lose my focus a bit, I look at her.

Her: What?

Me: No, nothing.

I carry on. She wraps her legs around my body, I penetrate her with a kiss. She takes off my boxers, I had a huge boner. She plays with it, until I couldn't take it anymore. I knew I had to stop this because my body was heating up, wanting more. When things were getting intense, I could sense that she wanted me as much as I wanted her.

I stop.

Her: Andile, what is it now?

Me: Buhle, we can't do this. Not now. Remember, we agreed that we'll wait until you're done with your matric. I can't allow this to happen.

Her: But babe, I'm ready.

I look at her shocked.

Her: Yes, I am ready.

Me: Can we talk about this in the morning because I can see right now that you're not yourself. You're not in your senses.

Her: Andile come on, I came here all dressed up for you so I know what I'm saying. I thought about it and you've waited way too long.

Me: Are you sure?

She nods with a smile.

Me: I mean, are you sure sure? Once we do this, there's no turning back Buhle.

Her: Yes sthandwa sami, I'm 100% sure.

Me: Fine then.

I try to get up but she holds me.

Her: Where are you going?

Me: To get condoms

Her: Ay! I can't have my first time with a rubber over it, I want it raw. I want to feel it.

I chuckle.

Me: You are something else. But right after this, you will be on the pill.

Her: Okay.

I kiss her hungrily. She holds me tightly. I take off all of her clothing, more like ripped it off. Now she's naked, so am I. She opens her legs widely, I get ready to penetrate her.

As soon as, I enter, she screams but to me, it felt different. Not what I anticipated. She is tight, and I'm enjoying her but this, this is not what I expected at all. I'm doing it nice and slow, with every pound she digs her nails deeper in my skin.

As I was about to cum, I withdraw. I lay next to her.

That was something. She's panting, she lays her head on my chest I look at her and not cuddle her. Does she think I'm stupid?

Her: So that was sex.

Me: Mmm.

Her: If I knew sex was this good, I would have given it to you a long time ago.

Me: I hear you.

Her: You seem distracted, what is it?

He, she even has the nerve to ask me such bull. Knowing very well what she did.

Me: Buhle, you do know that I've had sex with virgins before? Right?

Her: Uh... What do you mean by that Andile?

Me: I mean I know how it's like having sex with a virgin.

She keeps quiet.

Me: Do you really think I'm stupid? Nx!

I get up and started getting dressed.

She sits up and covers her breasts with the blanket.

Her: Where are you going Andile?

Me: So you made me wait for nothing?! All these years? Knowing clearly that you're not a virgin

Her: Andile, it wasn't like that at all.

God knows I'm trying my best not to hit her lying face right now. I know that it's her choice on who she chooses to sleep with but to lie to me like this, it's just not on! I'm mad beyond measures.

Me: Don't make me look stupid Buhle, because we both know that you've been lying to me! Where was the need for you to lie?

Her: I didn't lie to you Andile.

She starts crying.

Me: Don't give me those fucken crocodile tears! Don't! And give me a good damn reason as to why you lied to me before I really lose it.

Her: Please Andile, just hear me out...

Me: What did you think would happen? That I wouldn't feel that there's another dick that got there before me, you really think I'm that gullible?

Her: No, I didn't mean for any of this to happen... I was just...

Me: Save me your goddamn excuses. The only reason I'm allowing you to sleep here, it's because I know you have nowhere to go but you better leave before the sun comes out. I don't want to find you here.

Her: Andile, please, let's not fight about this. Just give me a chance to explain

Me: Yey Buhle, I don't want to hear any of it. Nothing can justify what you did. Please never contact me again, what we had, has come to an end and don't even try to beg me because I won't change my mind.

Her: Andile no, don't do this to me.

She stands up.

Me: You are the one who did this to yourself. Have you no shame?

Her: Andile please just...

She tries to touch me, I step back.

Me: Don't touch me.

She just looked me, all she did was cry and that was annoying me to bits. Her sight alone was annoying me to bits.

Me: Your sight disgust me. Take whatever shit you have here when you leave. When I get back, I don't want to find you here. I hope I made myself clear.

Her: Where are you going?

Me: None of your goddamn business.

I leave her, crying as she is. I slammed the door. I cannot believe she'd do something like this to me. She made me wait for 5 years, 5 whole years. Only to find it was all for nothing. Why would she deceive me like this?

I don't know whether she cheated on me or I found her already not a virgin, and it really doesn't matter, truth of the matter is, she lied to me.

I get in the main house using my keys, went to Ziningi's room and fell asleep almost immediately.

I wake up and I'm hungry as hell, I take my phone to check the time, it's 8am and I have several missed calls from Nonhle, I decide to call her back. She picks up almost immediately.

Her: Sthandwa sami

Me: MaMntungwa

Her: How're you?

Me: I'm okay. How's my princess?

Her: She's fine, just that she kept me up all night.

Me: Sorry babe. I realized that you called me last night, sorry I couldn't take your calls.

Her: It's okay, how's your wife?

Me: (sigh) ei babe, she's not getting any better. Her behavior is scaring me. She doesn't want to eat, she doesn't want to talk. We don't know what to do anymore.

Her: I understand how she must be feeling. Losing a child is not something easy. I would also die should anything happen to Khanya. Maybe you should get her professional help.

Me: Maybe you're right. I will suggest that to my siblings and hear what they have to say.

Her: how are you holding up?

Me: (sigh) it's hard babe, knowing that I won't see her face anymore, I won't be able to tease her or play with her. It's just so hard. But I'm trying to accept day by day. Even as we speak, I slept in her room. I just felt closer to her.

Her: I'm so sorry babe, everything will be okay you will see.

Me: Yes I know.

Khanya starts crying.

Her: let me attend to your daughter, I will call you later.

Me: Okay, I love you both.

Her: We love you more.

I hang up.

I start thinking about last night, immediately I feel my blood boil. Never have I been betrayed by a woman, a woman whom I loved so much. Nx.

I get up, made the bed and went to the kitchen. I find Amahle making breakfast.

Me: Make some for me too.

We never say good morning to each other, like ever.

Her: You have your girlfriend here but you're asking me such crap? Wavuya Sophie.

I turn to look at her, how does she know about that?

Her: You slept in Ziningi's room and I heard her crying last night. What did you do to the poor girl?

Me: Why you assuming that I did something?

Her: The way she was crying dude. Where's the baby anyway?

Me: (clears throat) That's not Nonhle.

Her: Amen. It's Buhle?

I nod.

Her: I thought you said you'll break up with her.

Me: I did, last night. She didn't take the news really well.

Her: So you told her about the baby?

Me: No, I didn't.

She stops eating and looks at me.

Her: So you just broke up with her? How can you be so selfish? No girl will accept that, a breakup with no reason.

Me: You wouldn't understand Amahle, it's much more complicated than that.

Her: No I understand perfectly, my brother is a jerk like all the other boys in this world.

She takes her food and leaves. I sigh and went to my room.

I really hope for her sake that she left as I told her to. I open the door and the woman is still on my bed snoring. Mxm. Well, she is a deep sleeper.

She had tissues around her and she looked horrible. I go to my wardrobe to look for something to wear, her phone beeps.

I take it, I have to know how long has she been hiding this, I'm sure she told one of her friends. I knew her password, it was my birthday.

I went in and started reading her texts.

Women are crazy creatures! How can they be so evil? They talking about drinking warm milk with cinnamon, and a whole bunch of crazy shit. Women are dangerous I tell you. There are ways to make a pussy tight? I had no idea such a thing exist. Women cannot be trusted, they can get you killed I tell you.

She then cried to her friend saying it didn't work, I didn't get to know when did she actually lost her virginity or to whom but I got the confirmation I needed.

I shake her awake.

Her: Ha.ana

She still had her eyes closed.

Me: This isn't your house Buhlebendalo.

As soon as she heard my voice, she woke up immediately. She stretches and sits up. Regret, pain and hurt was written all over her face.

Me: Get dressed and leave.

Her: Hawu Andile, can't I at least take a bath? I look and feel like a mess.

Me: That's not my problem. I want you to get up and leave.

Her: Andile, are you still mad?

Me: Of course I'm mad! I'm furious!

I roar and she startled.

Her: Please babe, calm down. Let me explain...

Me: There's nothing you can do or say to make what you did sound better. So its best you just leave before I really lose it.

She stands up and comes closer.

Her: Andile please...

Me: Buhle! Just do as I say.

Her: I cannot leave while you this mad...

Me: How can you do this to me Buhle, to us? How can you betray me like this? After everything we've been through?

Her: It was a mistake...

There's no such thing!

Me: A mistake?! How having sex with someone be a mistake?!

Her: He didn't mean anything...

Me: Yet he took what you promised me?!

I don't know what annoys me more, the fact that she's crying or she made a fool out of me or her lame excuses!

Her: Andile don't do this to me, I love you...

As soon as she said those three words, I lost it. I slapped her, she screams and falls on the floor. I couldn't hold my anger any longer. I pulled her by her hair, I start kicking her, she cries begging me to stop. I had no mercy, I took an electric wire, I beat her with it. Her cries got louder. That didn't make me stop, I had to take out all this anger I had.

Her: Stop, I'm sorry...

That didn't stop me either, I continuously bashed her with the electric wire. She was naked, I see blood spots on her body. I couldn't care any less.

Me: You made me a fool?! Me? I'm going to teach you a lesson you'll never forget!

I throw the electric wire aside. She tries running away, I tripped her, she falls hard on the floor, I pull her with her leg. I get on top of her, I slap her countless times. She tries blocking her face, I hold both her hands with my one hand, I hold out a fist, as I was about to punch her, someone grabs me from behind and takes me away from her.

It's Amahle. She slaps me hard.

Amahle: Are you crazy? You hit women now?

Me: I told her to leave! I fucken told her to leave, now look what I've done!

I look at Buhle, she was all curled up on the floor, crying. Amahle goes to her.

Amahle: Buhle, are you okay?

Buhle shakes her head repeatedly and cries in Amahle's arms.

Amahle: Shh... It's going to be okay. Andile, go clear your head. Get the hell out of here.

Me: You're throwing me out of my own room?

Amahle: Yes. Get out, I will tell you when to get back. Just clear your head.

Me: When I get back, I want to find her gone!

I kick a chair and left. I have never ever laid my hands on a woman but today, I couldn't control my anger. As bad as this may sound, but I don't regret ever hitting the crap out of her.

...

AMAHLE

I fail to understand Andile sometimes. Does he know the trouble he will get himself into? It's good thing Buhle promised not to lay out a charge. I think that boy needs Jesus. How does one get himself into so much trouble? I get that he's mad but there's was no reason for him to hit that poor child like that.

I had to beg her to leave because she didn't want to leave, saying she cant leave without talking to him. I wonder what really happened. I text Andile to come back.

I make my mom breakfast and went to her room to give it to her.

She was still silent not talking to anyone, we never even spoke about my pregnancy ever since she asked me about it. I find her in her room going through Ziningi's baby pictures. Why is she hurting herself like this?

Me: Good Morning MaShenge.

I kiss her cheek. She doesn't respond, she's just going through the pictures, it's like she doesn't even notice that I'm in the room.

Me: I made you breakfast. Maize meal porridge, I made it just the way you like it. With lemon.

She keeps quiet for a while.

Her: Ziningi liked it like that too.

Me: (sigh) mom, why are you hurting yourself like this?

Her: My baby is gone, my princess is gone.

She's not even looking at me.

Me: Yes mom, I know it's hard. I fail to digest it also but I know we will get through this, as a family. Ziningi short lived her life but we should be grateful for the years we got to spend with her. God wouldn't give us something we can't handle, He knows we have faith in Him. We just need to believe that he'll heal us. Do you know who taught me that?

She finally looks at me.

Me: You did. You taught us to be believers, to never question God's doings. Have you lost faith in your God mom?

She looks at me and doesn't respond.

Me: I know Ziningi will be an amazing Angel and she will watch over us. She wouldn't want to see you like this. You need the strength to get through this, please eat.

Her: (sigh) I guess you're right. When did you become this wise?

She put the pictures aside and takes the bowl of porridge.

Me: (chuckle) I've always been wise mom.

She starts eating and I watch her eat until she finishes.

Me: Good girl

I take the bowl away from her.

Her: (chuckles) I'm not a baby Amahle but thank you for taking care of me.

Me: I always will mom. I love you, we all love you.

Her: I love you all.

We hug each other.

Her: So who was the girl screaming in the morning?

Me: Uhm... There was a girl screaming? I didn't hear anything. Maybe it was next door.

Her: Oh, maybe. So, you're pregnant, again.

Me: (sigh)

I'm not looking forward to this conversation. Already I feel like a disappointment.

Her: Didn't you learn anything when you lost Nkanyiso?

Me: I did mom.

Her: Then what happened Amahle?

Me: I don't know, I was on the pill. I was extra careful I don't know how it happened.

Tears start pouring down my cheeks.

Her: That means it was meant to happen. I'm a little hurt by this too but I can't call this child a mistake, maybe its time for you to be a mother. Who am I to judge you? You shouldn't feel guilty either.

Me: Mom, I'm only 22. I know nothing about being a mother.

Her: When the baby is here, you'll know what to do, trust me.

Me: I'm so sorry mom.

Her: Don't apologize, we lost a life but God gave us another.

I smile and wiped my tears.

Her: So how does Tukelo feel about this?

Me: He doesn't know.

Her: Don't tell me he's not the father.

Me: He is the father.

Her: Then why haven't you told him?

Me: Thing is, we are no longer together.

She looks at me shocked.

Her: What? Why? What happened?

Me: He... He's getting married next week. To someone else.

Talking about this to mom, brought back all the pain and hurt. I find myself crying again.

Her: No Amahle, tell me you're lying.

Me: I'm serious. He proposed to me, then we had a big fight, I called off the engagement. He left for a few months, without letting me know where he is or even calling me. He came back, he told me he's getting married to someone else.

I didn't realize that it still hurt this bad, I didn't realize that I still care about this. Talking about it now, I realized that I'm still actually hurting.

Her: Oh, my poor baby.

She hugs me tightly, I cried in her arms.

Her: don't do this to yourself, he doesn't deserve your tears. I'm pretty sure you've cried, alot. Now stop crying.

Me: But it hurts that I still love him so much. Why do I still love him? He's hurt me in the worst possible way.

Her: it's not easy controlling what your heart feels about someone, no matter how much they've hurt you. You'll always love them, even when they're not worthy of your love. But it will get better with time.

I was just listening to her, I found comfort in her arms. I needed this.

Her: My poor child, you were suffering so much without us knowing.

Me: I thought I could handle it.

Her: You handled it well then, we didn't see that you were suffering.

She brushes my hair, she always did this when I was a baby and it always calmed me down. I now realize that I will always need my mother no matter how old I get.

Her: You still need to tell him about your pregnancy.

Me: No mom.

I sit up.

Me: No, I don't want him to know. He'll want to a part of it and we'll end up fighting all the time, he will stress me and I will lose my baby. I can't handle that again. Please, I want a peaceful pregnancy.

Her: I don't think oBab'omncane will allow that.

Me: I will figure out something to say to them but I don't want Tukelo to find out about this pregnancy. I don't know what his crazy family would do, now that he's getting married. I can't stress over that, please try to understand mom.

Her: (sigh) I hear you. And I will respect your wishes.

Me: (smile) Thank you mom.

Her: How far are you?

Me: Three months.

Her: I can't believe I'm going to be a grandma.

I laugh.

.....

I go to the kitchen, I find Andile eating. I look at him.

Him: Not now, please.

Me: Are you crazy? Why did you hit the poor girl like that.

Him: I don't want to talk about it.

Me: What if she lays out a charge? Or she tells her family. Do you think Pat will let you get away with hitting her sister like that? They will come here and start causing trouble

Him: Then I will tell them that they raised a hoe.

With that he takes his food and leaves. What does he mean by that? Does that mean Buhle cheated on him? I didn't see that one coming.

Insert Fifty-Two 😊

AMAHLE

For the first time since I found I'm pregnant, I'm going for a check up. I don't know why but I'm just scared to go for a check. I will see him or her on that screen and I will fall inlove with him only to lose him a few months later.

My mom is being really supportive, I didn't think she will ever come back to us. I thought she will be mad at me for years before warming up to the fact that i'm pregnant again but she's rather supportive, I appreciate her for that.

As for Andile, he's not himself these days, whatever Buhle did, it must've been something big because he's completely shutting us out, he no longer talks to us. He just stay in his room and play really depressing music. I just hope this don't interfere with his exams.

Oh and Tukelo is getting married tomorrow, good for him.

I get in the car and Sabelo drives off.

Me: Please put on soothing music.

He is playing house music and that was killing my ears.

Him: Oh, sorry sis' Amahle.

He changes to much more soothing music

Me: Don't you have shifts? Or a day off?

Him: (chuckles) like I told you before, Mr. Mokoena trusts noone, he assigned me as your driver and noone else will be your driver except me.

I shrug and checked my beeping phone. It's a Whatsapp text from Charles.

Wow.

After so long, he contacts me now? I ignore his text. He calls.

I look at it, and wonder, what does he want to say to me? He ignored me and wasn't there when I needed him. So what does he want from me?

After 4 missed calls, I decide to answer.

Him: Tell that car to stop and get off.

Me: What?

Him: Amy, just do as I say.

Me: I have somewhere to be so why would I do that?

Him: Because I need to talk you.

Me: Where are you?

Him: Behind you.

I turn around, I see his car following us.

Me: Are you following me?

Him: Yes. I have been for the past few days.

Me: Why? That's just creepy.

Him: Just get off the car, so I can explain

Me: Explain what exactly? You decided to cut me out of your life, why come back now?

Him: Don't make me do something stupid and you'll have to do some explaining to your driver.

I always associate myself with a crazy man, why?

Me: (sigh) fine.

I hang up.

Me: Sabelo can you please stop the car.

He looks at me confused

Him: I know I'm not supposed to question you but why do you want me to do that?

Me: You shouldn't question me so please don't and do as told.

He parks the car on the side road. I get off and walk to Charles car.

Me: What?

Him: Get in.

Me: No, listen here I have somewhere to be so you better make it quick and say whatever it is you need to say.

Him: Do you really think that this the best place to talk? You're surrounded by your ex's guards.

I look around

Him: Don't tell me you didn't know that. Just get in, I won't take much of your time I promise.

I don't respond

Him: Please.

I open the front seat door and got in.

Him: Thank you.

Me: Talk.

Him: first of all, I want to apologize for being away. I just couldn't handle the truth, knowing that Tukelo will be a part of our lives again, it just drove me crazy.

Me: Who said I will let him be a part of my life again?

Him: I just thought...

Me: Look, I can't stand Tukelo, I don't want him to be a part of my life and my baby's life. I'm not planning on letting him know about this pregnancy.

Him: You can't be that naïve Amy.

I raise my eyebrows.

Him: The man is watching your every move, he will find out about your pregnancy. I wouldn't be surprised if he knew already

Me: He doesn't know, yet.

Him: You clearly don't know him.

Me: I know that man, if he knew, he would be pestering me with calls and disturbing my peace.

Him: But trust me, it won't take him long before he finds out about this.

Me: It will take a long ass time before he finds out, he's occupied with his wedding and a whole bunch of other things. I'm the least of his worries

Him: That may be the case but he still got his eye on you. Why do you still use his money anyway? How's that supposed to make me feel?

I look at him, we fought about this before. I feel another argument coming.

Me: I'm not using his money.

Him: I know that he still deposits money in your account every month, you're staying in his apartment, you're using his cars, the motorcycle.

Me: Wait... How do you know that he's depositing money in my account? Are you spying on me?

Him: Does it really matter? I am talking about the fact that you don't want to cut ties with your ex. Do you still love him?

How do I answer such a question? I love Tukelo, after everything, I am still inlove with him. I don't know how to get over him, I've basically tried everything. But how do I tell Charles that?

Me: It's not like I'm asking him to deposit the money, he does that willingly.

Him: That's because you let him! He's disrespecting me and our relationship, you're not doing anything about it.

Me: What do you want me to do Charles?

Him: Tell him to back off.

Me: I've told him to leave me alone, and he did. What more do you want? It's not like he's coming at my place or he checks on me.

Him: You have to tell him to stop sending you money, the staff that works for him, they need to leave and lastly, abort that baby!

Now he's really crossing the line. How can he ask such crap! I look at him with disgust

Me: What?

Him: You heard me. If you want a baby so bad, I will give you one. Just get rid of his.

And he says something even more insane. Okay, does he know that I feel nothing for him? And he wants me to get rid of the baby that belongs to the man I really love?

I chuckle in disbelief.

Me: You're sick! How can you ask me something like that? I told you before and I'm telling you again, I'm not getting rid of this baby. How selfish can you be?

Him: No, you're the selfish one here. You're dating me but you're carrying another man's child. What do you call that?

Me: It's not like I cheated, you found me pregnant Charles.

Him: So what does this mean for us? I will father his child?

Me: Noone asked you be my baby's father, you have your daughter. Just let me focus on my child and never ask me such crap ever again. What if I tell you that I never want your daughter to be a part of my life? Wouldn't you start questioning my character?

Him: (sigh) I'm sorry. Just that, I can't seem to stomach the fact that you're carrying Tukelo's child.

Me: Look, what really matters here is that, I don't want him to be a part of this baby's life and most importantly I don't want him to be a part of my life. You shouldn't worry about him so much. He's no threat to you, anymore.

Him: You mean that.

Me: (smile) Yes I do. Besides he's getting married tomorrow. He will probably move to Lesotho to be with his wife and they will build a life there, so you seriously have nothing to worry about.

Him: Look, I risked alot to be with you. I just want to know if you're 100% with me, you won't decide to leave me one day.

I just look at him not knowing how to respond to this.

Me: (clears throat) I won't leave you Charles. I want to be with you.

I smile and hold his left hand. He takes my hand and kisses it.

Him: That's all I needed to hear.

He let's go of my hand and starts his car.

Me: What are you doing?

Him: I'm taking you where ever you want to go. I told you, you're no longer using anything associated with Tukelo and you're moving out in that apartment.

He drives to the main road, I turn and I see Sabelo following us.

Me: Uhm, just that I'm so fond of them. I can't just let them go. Some of them come from very difficult backgrounds, they really need this job.

Him: That doesn't mean anything, Tukelo will take them back.

Me: He will fire them. I know him, he hired them especially for me. If I don't need them anymore, he'll fire them. As for the apartment, he maybe the one that bought it but it's in my name.

Him: But he has access to it Amy.

Me: Yes I know but he never comes. If it will make you feel any better, I will change the locks.

Him: (sigh) fine.

Me: Thank you hone.

I kiss his cheek and he chuckles.

Him: So where are we going?

Me: To the doctor.

Him: Oh okay.

We drive in comfortable silence.

I look out the window and I start having thoughts. I hate what I'm thinking right now, the fact that Tukelo's getting married tomorrow, it's not sitting well with me. Have I really lost him forever?

Sometimes I just hope that someone will wake me up and tell me that it was all just a terrible dream...

TUKELO

Him: Tukelo! Tukelo monna! Open the fucken door.

Someone keep banging on my door. I'm just too lazy to get up and open for him.

I slightly open my eyes, I feel a really bad headache.

Shit.

My eyes are failing me, I can't open my eyes for too long. This headache is going to be the death of me.

The knocking doesn't stop, much to my irritation.

Me: Go away!

Him: I would but you're getting married today, remember that?

Oh.

I dragged my feet to the door, that's when I realized that I had a woman next to me.

I went to the door and opened for these idiots that I call my brothers. They were all dressed up already.

Nice.

Pitsi: I have never ever heard of such, the groom being late.

Thabang: What the hell is wrong with you?

Me: I have a really bad headache, please don't shout.

To be honest, I was still a lot drunk. It was a mission standing on my own two feet.

Tumi: Look at this drunkard, he can't even stand on his own. Tell me, how are you going to get married while this drunk?

Me: Trust me Tumi, I need to be like this so I don't go crazy. As a matter of fact, I feel myself getting sober. I need another bottle of whiskey.

Last night I had way too much to drink. The guys threw me a little party last night, a bachelor's party. Things got out of control, I don't know how they managed to get up so early and look fresh. My head is pounding and I'm no way near being sober.

Thabang: Oh no, you need to go take a shower, get dressed and get married.

Me: They say the best way to cure a hangover is to stay drunk. I cannot get married while I have hangover from hell.

Pitsi: Just go take a shower, your father will be here any minute now. He can't find you like this.

Me: What does he want? I'm marrying the lady he chose for me, so what does he want to say to me?

Thabang: Just go and get ready Tukelo and stop asking me such stupid questions.

Woman: What is going on?

She comes in the living room wearing my T-shirt only

Pitsi: Are you serious Tukelo?

Me: No time to act all self-righteous Pitsi. I need to get ready.

I go to the bedroom, the woman follows me.

Me: Look, thank you so much for last night, how much money will you need to get home?

She sits on the bed and smiles at me. I now realize that she looks young, she looks 16! How could I? She's beautiful though. But I swear she looked a lot older last night, this makeup these women wear will get us arrested I tell you.

Her: Just get me a cab. I will be fine.

Me: You sure you'll be safe?

Her: Yes I am.

Me: Nah, take this. I will call a cab for you, this money is just a little thank you gift for last night.

I give her about M1000, she takes it.

Her: Thank you. I gave you my number last night, use it.

Me: (chuckle) okay I will....

I don't even remember her name, I think she knows that.

Her: I'm Boitumelo.

Me: (smile) okay I will Boitumelo.

Her: Amahle is a very lucky woman.

I pause. How does she even know about her? I frown at her.

Her: You called her last night. And you spent about an hour telling her how much you love her. The things you said were too sweet.

Oh, there's that. I totally forgot about it.

Me: Oh, thanks I guess.

She nods. I really need to ask her this, otherwise I will ask myself this question everyday.

Me: Uhm, how old are you? And please don't lie to me.

Her: Uh, I'm actually 17.

Modimo! I swear last night she looked at least 23.

Me: Oh okay.

Her: I hope this doesn't change anything.

Oh it does! It changes everything. Never will she receive my call.

Me: No it doesn't but right now, I need to get ready for my wedding.

Her: Okay. By the way, Happy Birthday.

I smile at her.

Me: Thanks.

I left her on the bed and went to take a shower. I take my own sweet time. I'm not ready for this. I don't want to do this. I'm not even sure that I had this under control. I feel fresh tears streaming down my face. What made me so sure that this plan of mine will work? I have never felt so useless.

Someone knocks on my door, more like bang it.

Pitsi: You better get out the shower before I break this door down. You've been in there for the past 30 mins.

I close the shower, took a towel and wrapped it around my waist. I find all of them sitting on the bed and the girl is gone.

Me: Where did she go?

Thabang: I called her a cab.

Me: oh okay.

Thabang: That was a kid Tukelo. She's old enough to be your niece. You fuck young girls now?

Me: She looked older last night. I didn't know that's she's a kid, I swear.

Pitsi: He's right, I saw her last night too, she didn't look that young. She had alot of make up on.

Thabang: Did you have sex with her?

Is he seriously asking me that question?

I just look him.

Thabang: Okay let me rephrase, did you use protection?

Me: Yes I did. Now can I please get ready for my wedding?

They all left so I can get dressed. I took out my suit and laid it out on the bed. I look at it. Wow, I'm really getting married.

I leave the room, all dressed up and smelling good. The guys start whistling and cheering.

Me: What?

Thabang: You cleaned up good.

Me: Oh yeah? I wish I feel as good as I look.

Pitsi: Don't worry, you'll get used to it.

Thabang: Your father wants to speak with you. He's in his car.

Me: (sigh) okay fine, I will be with him shortly.

I put on my watch. The one that Amahle gave me on my birthday last year. I cannot believe my brothers didn't wish me a 'happy birthday'. These assholes.

Pitsi and Thabang left.

Tumi: Do you still have this under control, bro?

I don't respond.

Him: Why are you doing this to yourself?

Me: I know what I'm doing Tumi. I also know that you would've done the same thing if you were in my shoes. The fate of our lands is in my hands. I'm his only hope.

Him: Where does that leave Amahle?

Me: I love Amahle Tumi, you know that but she couldn't understand when I told her what I'm facing. She decided to leave me and find comfort in my enemy's arms.

Him: What did you want her to do? Tukelo you're smart, you would've figured out a way to get both Amahle and your father's lands but you took the easy way out. Now I regret giving your sorry ass my liver, nxa.

He just leaves me standing.

I sigh.

He's the only person who doesn't want to understand, instead of him supporting me, he's just judging me and thinking about Amahle. My hands are tied here. Why can't he get that? Why can't he trust me when I say, I know what I'm doing. Him of all people should know when I say 'I got this' I really mean it.

I take a bottle of whiskey and gulped it down. I was sobering up and I'm hating it. I sit down and drank the bottle. I didn't even need a glass, I just want to be drunk as in now.

My phone beeps from my pocket. I take it, I see dozens of missed calls from Nthabi. I'm not calling her back. Then there's a WhatsApp text from Amahle. I thought she blocked me.

Its just a simple 'Happy Birthday' text. No sweet message or anything, just a plain 'Happy Birthday'. No heart emoji, nothing. I don't know why but I'm happy that at least she remembered. I reply.

Me: >Lol thanks<

She types again, my heart races.

Her: >Have a good wedding day and treat her right<

I don't know how to respond to this but I've already read it so I might as well reply.

Me: >Thank you. I will try my best.<

Sent. She reads it and logs out. What did she want me to say? I log out also.

I'm halfway through my bottle. I check the time and it's 10am, I'm supposed to be at the hall by this time.

Shit! I gather my things and rushed out.

I get in my dad's car. He's just sitting on the backseat busy on his tablet.

He puts it away when he realizes that he's not alone.

Me: Ntate.

Him: Moshimane

Me: Uhm, Tumi said you wanted to see me.

Him: Yes, I've been waiting for you for the past hour, where have you been?

I clear my throat and scratch my head. Whenever I do that combo, just know that I'm about to lie.

Me: I was praying.

Him: Oh. With a bottle of whiskey near you?

Eish. I don't respond, I just look down.

Him: Look, I know what you're going through and I understand that you only doing this for our family but I don't want you to end up hating us for this.

Me: You're right Ntate, I don't want to do this but I will never forgive myself if you end up having nothing yet I could have prevented all of that.

There's silence.

Him: You can take her as your second wife.

Me: Ntate?

Him: Your girlfriend, take her as your second wife. I did the same thing and Tumi is about to do the same thing.

Me: She will never agree to that.

Him: You love her, right?

Me: Yes Ntate.

Him: Make her your second wife then, you will make her see that you had no choice but to do things this way. Otherwise, you'll always come home drunk as you are now and you'll never be happy.

I don't respond.

Him: I know I've been always been tough on you and we never had a good relationship but I love you my son, never ever doubt that.

Me: I won't Ntate. If you don't mind me asking, why the sudden change of heart? Why you're warming up to Amahle? And asking me to fight for her.

Him: Don't tell this to your other siblings but we both know that you were your mother's favorite. She loved you so much and she loves Amahle. Ever since you decided to marry Nthabi, she's been visiting me in my dreams, telling me to bring the girl back. Why did I allow such a thing to happen, so I figured she's speaking about Amahle. So if your mother approves of her, she must be a good woman. You know she was a good judge of character.

Me: (chuckle) yes she was. Why didn't she come to me? I would've prevented this a long time ago.

Him: I don't know but it was selfish of me not to mention such a thing. I just thought it was just a dream. My advice to you is, after the wedding, fight for your woman.

Me: But I don't want two wives Ntate. I don't think I can handle that kind of stress. I just want Amahle, that's all I want.

Him: It's too late now son. After this wedding, you can't divorce Nthabi. So you have to take Amahle as your second wife.

Me: Why can't I divorce her?

Him: That means everything that belongs to you, will belong to her as well so I will lose my lands either way.

Fuck! This is messed up. What do I do now?

Me: I hear you Ntate.

Him: Now go get married son.

I chuckle and left. What my father told me, changes everything. I have to commence with plan B. I decide to call my lawyer.

TUMI

Tukelo is one sick bastard. I regret ever agreeing to be his lawyer. Now he's dragging me to his sick plans. I did what he as asked but I don't get how's that going to solve his massive problem.

Now we are here listening to their fake vows. Nthabi said something heartfelt and warm while Tukelo repeated what the priest was saying. They are pronounced husband and wife. The turnout was amazing, the whole of Lesotho came out, I swear.

We left for pictures but Tukelo somehow convinced Nthabi to go for pictures after reception. It would've been a really beautiful union, if any of this was actually real. We did the dance routine and we entered the hall. We sit in our designated seats. We wait for the bride and groom, they did their thing and they sit on their seat.

Tukelo was out of it, he was as drunk as he was yesterday. As I'm enjoying my meal, Tukelo text me and ask me to meet him outside. Guess he's really doing this. But why did he have to disturb me while I'm still enjoying my meal. Talk about bad timing.

I got up and went to where he told to meet him. I find my brothers there and the bride also

Nthabi: What is this about?

We don't respond.

Nthabi: Maybe he has a surprise for me.

He has a surprise for you alright.

Nthabi: Maybe a car!

She excitedly said that. I just shook my head and looked at my brothers, they shrug.

Tukelo comes with a cigarette in his hand.

Tukelo: Thanks for coming.

He switches off his cigarette.

Nthabi: Since when you smoke?

Tukelo: I do smoke Nthabi. There's alot you don't know about me.

Nthabi: Oh. So dear hubby, why did you call us here?

She wraps her arm around Tukelo's arm

Tukelo: First of all, I'm not your husband.

Tukelo removes her arm. She looks at him confused.

Nthabi: We just got married.

Tukelo: Like I said, there's alot you don't know about me. You thought I was going to let you and your family get shit from us?

They all confused. Except for me.

Tukelo: You see this.

Tukelo takes out documents and gave them to Nthabi, she reads them. Already I see tears in her eyes.

Nthabi: I didn't sign this.

Tukelo: But you did dear wifey.

Nthabi: How? I don't remember signing this

Tukelo: That's not your signature?

Nthabi: It is but... I don't remember signing this

Tears ran down her face.

Tukelo: I'm asking you one more time. Is this not your signature?

Nthabi: It is my signature Tukelo.

Tukelo: That's all I needed to hear.

Pitsi: What the hell is going on here?

Tukelo: I will tell you what is going on here, I'm not married to Nthabi and she gave us full authority to my father's lands so I don't have marry her in order for her in order to get the lands back.

Thabang: wait wait wait, what? What do you mean you're not married to her? We all witnessed you getting married.

Pitsi: Elaborate Tukelo.

Tukelo: Gladly. There's no proof that we're married.

Nthabi: What? We signed papers and everything, we are married Tukelo!

Tukelo: I destroyed those papers. They're burning as we speak.

Nthabi: Do you know what this mean Tukelo? Your father's lands, did you think about that?

Tukelo: But you're holding the documents in your hands, you gave those lands to me. Your parents were stupid enough to give those lands to you, they should've kept it for themselves. Now they made things easy for me.

Nthabi: This cannot be right.

Tukelo: It is what it is. So save yourself the humiliation, tell your parents that you willingly gave me my father's lands back because you didn't want to marry me anymore.

Nthabi: Why would you do this to me? You know I love you.

Tukelo: I've been telling you that there's only one woman for me. You forced things, now I had to do it this way.

She cries and runs away.

Pitsi: Wow. I didn't see this one coming.

Thabang: I guess you knew about this since it looks like you're not shocked about what just happened.

Me: I only found out this morning.

Pitsi: How did you pull this off?

Tukelo: it was simple actually. I just took the land documents hid it under the marriage documents so when she signed, I could easily forge her signature. After I got her signature, I destroyed the marriage papers. So we are not married.

Thabang: Aren't you supposed to give those papers to the priest? How did you end up having them?

Pitsi: Let me guess, the priest was in on this too?

Tukelo smirks.

Pitsi: Oh well. I knew you wouldn't go through with this, I'm not really surprised. You're one crazy ass.

Thabang: What if she has you arrested? That you forged her signature?

Tukelo: She wouldn't even try. I have a recording of her admitting that this is her signature. I just need Dankies to edit the recording to make it look legit.

Pitsi: You had this all figured out, huh?

Tukelo: Yep!

Thabang: What about your father? Mme?

Tukelo: No offense Pitsi and Thabang but I don't care about what your mother thinks.

Pitsi and Thabang: None taken

Tukelo: And as for Ntate, after the talk we had earlier on today, he won't mind.

Me: What did he say?

Tukelo: He basically told me to fight for Amahle. He suggested that I take her as my second wife.

Me: He will just be happy that he has his lands back.

Pitsi: No he doesn't, Tukelo has those lands.

Tukelo: And I will be more than happy to sell it to him.

We laugh.

AMAHLE

I had a long day today. I got my results back and I can say, I did exceptionally well, I even got one distinction. Even after the rough year I had, I still managed to do well in my studies.

My friends decided to cheer me up and also celebrate my achievements. Tukelo is probably married by now and that didn't sit well with me. Though my friends tried really hard to cheer me up, I just couldn't get rid of the thought.

My baby is alive and healthy, I couldn't be happier. That's the one thing I'm really looking forward to, being a mother.

Right now I'm on my way to my apartment. I just felt like sleeping there tonight.

I got there and I realized that the lights are on. The door is slightly open which means someone is here. I take my gun in bag. I slowly got in.

The room was filled with his scent and Chris Brown is playing. Sweet Love. I put the gun back in my bag. I got to the living room. I see him smoking weed, he's facing the ceiling. I don't even think he notices that I'm in the room, the music is too loud. He's still wearing his wedding suit but what is he doing here?

Me: How did you get in?

He startled and looks at me. I chuckle. I thought nothing can scare this guy.

He gets up and walks to me.

Him: Did you really think changing the locks will keep me away?

Me: I know nothing can keep you away.

I roll my eyes.

Him: Even after knowing me for so long, you still haven't learnt a thing.

I frown at him and not respond. He's way too close and his weed smell is suffocating me.

Him: I hate it when you do that.

He kisses me, I am way too weak to stop him. I've missed his touch, I missed his soft lips, the way he embraced me, the way he made me feel.

Now I know why I wanted to come sleep here tonight because I knew I'd find him here.

He picks me up, I wrap my legs around his waist. He walks towards the stairs, he climbs them then we went to my room. He throws me on the bed. He takes off my t-shirt and short. Right now, I don't even care if he sees my belly bump. I just want him to embrace me one more time. He kisses me from my neck, he traces his kisses from my neck all the way down to my clit. He takes me to muff town. I moan softly, only he can make me feel the way I do right now. I'm just in my own little universe.

He comes back and penetrates me with a kiss. I take off his jacket, I unbutton his shirt. He unbuckles his belt and takes off his pants. I'm ready for him. He slowly enters. As he pounds me, the faster he went, the louder my moans got.

After minutes of satisfying each other, he let's out a loud groan and we both reach our climax. He gets off me and lies next to me. I lay my head on top of his chest, he kisses me on top of my head.

Him: I love you.

Me: I love you too.

This is not me talking, it's the sex, it must be the sex, it just came out, I couldn't control it.

Me: Why did you come back?

Him: Babe, I'm tired, I know you tired too, so let's sleep.

Me: I just want to know.

Him: Ha.ana Amahle. Sleep.

I hear him snore softly, that was quick. I eventually drifted to sleep too.

I wake up when I hear him talking with his phone in the balcony. I check the time it's 3 am. It's probably the wife. I could only hear him because he didn't close the sliding door but I can't make out what he's saying and I'm not about to eavesdrop.

After a few minutes, he comes back. He closes the door and comes in.

Him: I'm sorry did I wake you?

Me: No, you didn't. Don't worry.

Him: Oh okay. Good Morning beautiful.

He kisses me on my cheek.

Me: Only a crazy person would give someone a morning kiss at this time.

Him: But it is morning, is it not?

Me: (chuckles) it is. Can you at least switch on the lights.

Him: You want to see my face?

Me: Don't flatter yourself Brian.

I switch on my side lamp.

Me: Better.

He smirks.

Me: So you're ready to answer my question.

Him: What question?

I narrow my eyes.

Him: You always do this. You need to choose your moments Tigress, we had an amazing night together, now you want to ruin it by arguing with me? Because I know we'll fight about this.

He lies next to me. I fold my arms and he looks at me.

Him: Okay fine. You probably wondering why I'm not with my wife.

Me: Yes, exactly.

Him: I couldn't do it Tigress.

I raise my brows.

Him: I couldn't marry her, I didn't marry her.

I'm shocked beyond.

Me: Aybo Tukelo, what about your father's lands?

Him: Don't worry too much about that, I got them back. I tricked her into signing them back to me.

Me: But you're wearing the ring.

Him: Argh, I didn't even realize that I had it on.

He takes it off, he gets up, opens the balcony door and he throws it away. I laugh.

Him: See, I'm not married.

He shows me his hands. I chuckle.

Me: Okay, I see it now. But I have a boyfriend Tukelo. You know that, right?

Him: Yes I do. And you're breaking up with him tomorrow.

Me: I can't do that.

Him: (laughs) why? Because you love him?

Me: I'm not answering that. I just can't.

Him: You know what, let's not ruin our night. We'll talk about this later.

He gets in bed and cuddles me from behind. Why do I always put myself in such situations? Now I have to break someone's heart?

Sigh...

Insert Fifty-Three 😊

AMAHLE

I watch him sleep, he look so cute when he's asleep. One would think he's not rude or he never say stupid things. He told me, when he called me on his wedding night, he told me he would come back to me, he told me he won't marry Nthabi, I just didn't think he meant it. I thought it was just the alcohol talking.

Now he's here, he's really here and I couldn't believe it. I know I love this man, but do I really want him back? He almost ruined my life, he has hurt me in the worse possible way. What if he hurts me again? I will be stressed and I lose my child. No I can't allow that to happen to me again. I have to put me and my baby first but then again, he left her for me, he came back just like he promised. I'm just alot confused right now.

He opens his China eyed eyes, I smile.

Him: How long have you been staring at me?

Me: Good Morning to you too.

Him: The way you're staring at me, one would think you're planning on killing me or something.

Me: That thought did cross my mind.

Him: (chuckles) you wouldn't do that.

Me: Trust me, I would.

Him: Oh konje she knows how to shoot now.

Me: (laughs) Yes and never forget that.

Him: I won't moratuwa

He kisses me and I know that kiss, that kiss would lead to another hot steamy session and I'm too tired for that.

Me: I'm hungry.

I say inbetween the kisses.

Him: For me?

He continues kissing me.

Me: (laugh) Geez no! For food.

I push him away from me.

Me: I've had enough of you.

Him: There's no such thing.

Me: But for today, I'm good. I can barely feel my cookie, thanks to your big dick.

I get off the bed and he laughs.

Him: Wow, I'm always the bad one here but if I remember correctly you too woke me up a few times.

Me: Yes I woke you up, I didn't say have sex with me.

Him: Hawu! Why disturb my sleep then?

Me: I just wanted to talk.

Him: 2am? You wake me up at 2am just to talk to me? You cannot be serious.

Me: I am.

Him: I know you'd be complaining right now if I didn't wake up, we'd actually be having an argument about it. Or you would've been grumpy all day.

Me: (laugh) you making me sound like a sex addict.

Him: Your words, not mine.

Me: Whatever. Are you coming with me?

Him: In a minute babe, I still need to make a few calls.

Me: Okay. You will find me downstairs.

He nods and start dialing on his phone.

Him: Sho Dankies...

That's my que to leave. I take a quick shower and brushed my teeth. I wear his T-Shirt and socks, I find him still on his phone.

I go to the kitchen and I start making breakfast. I reminisce about the night we had, it was amazing. I find myself smiling alone. Yes, he's not perfect, but he makes me happy and I love him, I'm sure as hell that he loves me too. So why not try again?

About 20mins later I'm done making breakfast. I made his favorite, toast with pork sausages. That's what Mme Gladys told me.

Me: Tukelo!!

He shows his face, he's still upstairs though and he has a phone on his ear. How long does it take for one to finish up a phonecall?

Me: Breakfast is ready.

Him: I'm coming baby.

Me: You'll finish up later, it will get cold.

Him: Babe this is really important... Wait, I smell pork sausages and I smell toast.

I just smile at him.

Him: Monna, I will get back to you.

He hangs up.

I don't think the other person on the other line even got the chance to respond.

He literally runs down the stairs, I laugh at him.

Me: Slow down you'll fall.

Him: Can you please make me coffee too?

He sits on the high chair and starts digging in.

Me: Did you at least wash your face?

Him: I washed my hands.

Me: I asked, did you wash your face?

He totally ignores me and takes a bite of his food. I make his coffee.

Me: So, are anywhere near finding out dirt about Zanele and the mysterious ex?

He chokes on his food. I quizzically look at him.

Me: Are you okay?

Him: I'm fine. Why do you want to know so much about that anyway?

Me: I will take your response as a no.

I give him his coffee.

Him: Thank you. Not entirely, I just didn't have time, I'm still trying to figure out a way to get to Ziningi's killers.

Me: You still haven't figured out a way to get to them? It's been weeks Tukelo and you have nothing?

Him: I didn't say that. I don't want you being involved, I will tell you once everything is cleared out. Just that I'm not dealing with amateurs here, these guys are way dangerous so we have to be smart about it, we can't just do things without a solid plan.

Me: After that, you'll find the ex?

Him: (sigh) after that, I will find the ex. I promise you babe.

He gets up and kisses me on my forehead.

Him: You know I love you, right?

Me: Yes I know.

Him: and I would do anything to keep you happy. Whenever I hurt you, it's never intentional.

I wrap my arms around his waist.

Me: I know that Mokoena.

Him: Good.

We let go and he goes back to his breakfast.

Him: I mean this in a good way babe, but I think you need to go back to the gym.

I freeze and look at him. I was walking to the sink.

Him: Don't give me that look

Me: Why you're saying that?

Him: You're getting fat.

He sips his coffee. I gasp.

Me: How can you say that?

Him: Look at that ass babe, what size you wear now?

I look at my bum. How can he be so rude?

Me: The same size, I'm not getting fat Tukelo.

Him: Yes, you are. Not that it's bad thing though.

I don't want to lie, what he said really hurts me. How can he call me fat? I just walk to the sink to wash dishes.

Him: Are you mad at me now?

I don't respond, I just wash the dishes.

Him: Hawu, Tigress, I didn't mean it in a bad way.

Me: You never ever call a woman fat, Tukelo.

Him: Okay babe, I'm sorry. I thought I was laying out a compliment.

Me: Oh, so you like it more when I'm fat? You hate it when I'm not?

I turn to look at him, he was just holding his toast, not knowing what to say. I walk to him and took his plate.

Him: I wasn't done with that.

Me: I don't care.

I walk back to the sink.

Him: I was just saying.

Me: Well you don't just say something like that.

He decides to keep quiet. Good because the sound of his voice was starting to irritate me anyway.

I finish off washing the dishes, when I turn, he's gone. He even left the mug on the table, would it have killed him to give it to me because he could clearly see that I was washing the dishes, nxa.

I take the mug and washed it too.

I find him in the lounge watching soccer. I sit next to him, I lay my head on his shoulders and he cuddles me.

Him: I thought you were mad at me.

Me: Yeah well, I can't stay mad at you for long, you know that.

He chuckles.

Him: When are you dumping your boyfriend?

I gulp. There's that.

Me: I don't know.

Him: What do you mean you don't know. Amahle, what's so hard about it?

He let's go of me and I sit up.

Me: Charles, he looks sensitive and I don't want to hurt him.

Him: Bullshit.

I raise my eyebrows.

Him: That's bullshit and you know it. Why did you even go find comfort in his arms? You know me and him don't see eye-to-eye but you decided to date him? How crazy is that?

Me: I didn't know what else to do, okay? He was there when I was going through my worst. I didn't plan to go to him, it just happened.

Him: It just happened, she says. There's no such thing, how could you be with a man who isn't me?

Me: How could you be with a woman who isn't me? It's not nice when the shoe is on the other end now is it?

Him: So you were competing with me?

Me: (sigh) I didn't say that, I was just trying to forget about you.

Him: Well, did it work?

Me: No, it didn't but it was worth trying.

Him: You know what, I made a mistake by asking you when you're breaking up with him, I should've told you. You're breaking up with him today.

I try to say something but he raises his hand.

Him: it's not up for discussion.

I don't respond.

Him: now come have a cuddle with me.

I don't move, I just look at him. He grabs my arm and I land on his chest. I giggle.

Him: I missed this. Though I was with another woman Amahle, not a day passed without me thinking about you. I thought about you every second. I told you I will come back to you, you were supposed to trust me.

Me: I didn't think you would.

Him: Next time when I tell you something, just listen to it. Look at the position you put us in now.

Me: Can we just enjoy each other's company, we'll worry about Charles later.

I look at him, he smirks.

Me: I didn't mean it like that.

He chuckles.

Him: What did I say?

Me: I was just saying.

Him: You know, I had a weird dream last night. That's why you found me awake at 3am.

Me: What is it?

Him: I saw you holding a crying baby.

My heart races.

Him: Do you perhaps think Nkanyiso's soul is not at peace?

Me: Uhm... No, actually Tukelo, I'm...

Just as I was about to say it, his phone beeps. He reaches for it.

Him: Sorry to disturb the moment but I need to go.

I get off him and he stands up.

Me: What's wrong?

Him: It's my dad. He needs me in Lesotho as in now. He probably found out what I did. Don't wait up for me, it might take hours but I will be back probably late though.

Me: You're flying or you'll drive there?

Him: I will fly there. I need to go take a shower.

He kisses me slightly on my lips and he rushed upstairs.

Maybe this is a sign, that it's not the right time to tell him.

I get up and I start tidying up.

He comes back 30 mins later all cleaned up and looking good.

Him: It's a good thing you kept my clothes, otherwise right now I would be having a serious problem.

I laugh.

Me: Was thinking of burning them today actually.

And that was the truth.

Him: You should burn the suit I was wearing yesterday

Me: (laugh) Gladly.

Him: I'm leaving now babe. I better get here and you did what I told you to do.

Me: Yeah sure whatever.

Him: Call him, don't you dare go see him.

Me: Yes, sir.

Him: Good. See you later.

He kisses me on my cheek, he rushes out.

I couldn't believe that I was happy again. I carry on with my cleaning while the music is playing. I'm singing and dancing along.

I hear the door opening and closing again. I go the kitchen.

Me: Did you forget something?

Instead of seeing Tukelo, I was met by a gun. A woman pointing a gun at me. How sick is that? I couldn't believe it. I gulp.

Me: What do you want? I will give you anything, whatever you want just tell me what you want....

The woman takes off the wig and the sunglasses off. I see the shock of my life. Nthabi. I was crazy to think she'd let this go.

Her: Sit.

I don't get it though. How did she get pass all the security?

I do as she said. I sit on a chair.

Her: Raise up your hands

I do that too. She comes closer. She put the gun behind her waist.

Her: Don't do anything stupid.

She takes out a tape, she straps me on the chair, tying my legs and arms. I could see it in her eyes that this woman is crazy.

I say a small prayer in my heart, she can do whatever but please she mustn't kill me.

After she's done, she slaps me.

Her: Did you really think I would let you get away with humiliating me?

Me: Are you scared of me?

Her: What?

Me: Why strap me on a chair if you're not scared of me?

Her: Oh don't flatter yourself you pig, I'm trying to make sure you don't lose that baby you're carrying.

How did she know about that? I look at her and not respond.

Her: You can't keep anything away from me sweetie. I know everything and I also happen to know that our precious Tukelo doesn't know about that pregnancy. How long are you planning on hiding that from him?

Me: Are you spying on me? Are you that obsessed with me?

She slaps me again.

Her: No! I'm not. You think you're all mighty just because you know that Tukelo loves you and he can protect you.

Me: That's because he does and he can.

Her: But he can't protect you from people like me. I can easily kill you right here, right now.

Me: Even if I'm dead, he can never love you Nthabi.

Her: Yes he will! He will! He will! He will! He will love me!

She screams like a mad woman.

Me: You need help.

Her: No! What I need is for you to stay away from him. The only person who's in my way is you! If you're dead, he will come back to me.

Me: No, he will look for my killers until he finds them and he finds out it's you, you'll be as good as dead. We both know that's what will happen.

Her: Shut up! Tukelo does love me, he's just alot confused. You're confusing him!

Me: Okay fine, if that will make you sleep better at night.

Her: I can see you think I'm here to play.

She takes out her gun again and points it at me.

Her: You'll do exactly what I say. You will break up with Tukelo, make up an excuse and you continue with your little affair with Charles.

Me: If I don't do that?

Her: We will have a big problem. I will make your life a living hell and you'll end up losing that baby. I will visit you everyday, we will have this talk every single day until you do as I say.

Me: You're insane.

Her: Oh yeah? Let me show you how crazy I really am

She shoots me on my thigh. I scream.

Her: Do we have a deal?

I couldn't answer her, I was in excruciating pain. How can a woman be this evil? She knows I'm pregnant but she shoots me? Does she even have a heart?

Her: I will shoot your brains if you don't shut the fuck up!

Where are these guards when you fucken need them? They're always in my business when I don't need them to, now that I need them, they're nowhere to be seen?

Her: Shut up! I don't know what's worse, your screams or your stupid face! I thought you were a Tigress, but you can't take one bullet, how pathetic!

Me: Take me to the doctor! I can't lose this baby Nthabiseng. Please.

Her: No! Not unless you leave Tukelo alone! If I can't have him, then nobody else should. I will ask you again, do we have a deal?

I feel light headed. I'm losing way too much blood...

TUKELO

My dad must learn to choose his moments seriously. I was planning on spending my day with Amahle and now I have to be in Lesotho. I miss her already. I will call her when I land.

At 13h00, the jet landed. I find Lucas already waiting for me at the airport. I get in the car and he drives me to my dad's palace.

I decide to call Amahle, it rings unanswered. I try again, this time it goes straight to voicemail. That's weird.

Before I know it, I'm in my father's place. I go in. I see one of the help.

Me: Uhm, where's dad?

Her: Prince.

She bows. I hate that, one of the reasons why I don't want to come here.

Her: The last I saw him, he was heading to his office.

Me: Okay. Thank you.

I run up the stairs and indeed I find the man in his office, on a conference call. I wait for him to finish up.

As I was waiting, I try calling Amahle again, voicemail again. That was starting to tick me off. My dad finishes up his call.

Him: Son.

Me: Ntate, before you say anything. I just did what my heart told me to do and my heart is not with Nthabi, I couldn't marry her, she's just...

He stops me.

Him: I'm not going to lecture you Tukelo. You did what you thought was best for everyone. You did a smart thing too, you saved us the humiliation. This is just between us families.

Me: Oh. So how did her parents take it?

Him: Well, I ended things with them, we are no longer in business. Now that I have my lands back, they have nothing against me.

Me: Point of correction Ntate, I have those lands.

Him: (laugh) and you can keep them.

Me: Are you serious?

Him: Yes. After how I've treated you and Amahle, you deserve it. Take it as my apology, you can build a legacy for your children.

Me: Thank you so much Kgosi.

Him: It's my pleasure.

Me: So how did Mme take it?

Him: You know your mother. She didn't take it very well. She's still not talking to me.

I can never understand that woman. I'm even starting to think it's was never Ntate's plan for us to have arranged marriages, it was actually hers. Why would she want us to marry people we don't love? She married someone she loves.

Me: Oh, she will be fine.

Him: Yes she will. I thought you would be in Jo'burg already, with Amahle. What's keeping you here?

He stands up and sits on top of the table.

Me: I was in Jo'burg but you told me to fly here, it's urgent.

He looks at me confused.

Him: I said that?

Me: Yes you did. I think you're getting old.

I take out my phone and show him his text.

Him: I'm maybe old but I didn't send you this message.

I frown

Me: You didn't?

Him: No, I didn't.

He gives me back my phone. If he didn't, then who did. Shit!

Me: Ntate I have to go.

Him: Is there something wrong?

Me: Yes, no, I mean I don't know. I need to make a call.

I leave his office and I dial Tumi's number.

Him: Monna

Me: I need you to go to Amahle's apartment, now.

Him: Why? Is there something wrong?

Me: Tumi please go to Amahle's apartment, and tell me if she's okay.

Him: Why can't you go? I am still at work.

Me: I know that but I wouldn't be asking you this if it wasn't important.

Him: Why can't you go?

Me: I'm in Lesotho but I'm on my way back now.

Him: I thought you flew back yesterday

Me: Yes I did but I received a text from Ntate saying I should come back to Lesotho, when I got here, he said he never sent me that text.

He keeps quiet for a while.

Him: Shit! I'm on my way to her apartment.

He hangs up.

I get in one of dad's cars, I take off in high speed. I can't be driven to the airport, I would go crazy. Already I'm thinking the worst. The only person who would send me this text, is someone who wanted me to be faraway from Amahle. But who?

I get to the airport, I text Lucas to come get the car. I get in the jet, I wait for the pilot and the wait is killing me. He comes in minutes later and we leave for South Africa.

As I was about to land I receive a text from Tumi.

Him: >She's shot man. I found her lying on the ground unconscious with a gun wound on her left thigh.<

Fuck! I couldn't control my tears.

Me: >Don't take her to hospital. Call Pillay.<

Him: >Shots<

I throw my phone on the wall. I just felt my whole world crashing down....

AMAHLE

I wake up in my bed and my head's pounding. My thigh is throbbing, why didn't they give me painkillers? If they did, they need to up the dosage. And why the hell didn't they take me to hospital?

I sit up, Tukelo rushes to my side. He's been crying, his eyes are red. He's such a baby.

Him: Please, don't get up. Relax.

I'm not worried about me, I'm just worried about the baby I'm carrying. If I'm even still carrying it.

I hate that I'm lying on this bed because of him. I hate that I got shot because of him. I first lost my sister because of him and now I'm on this bed, with a gun wound on my thigh.

I remember trying to break free from that chair as soon as that woman left me there to die, as soon as I was free, I try to remove the bullet with a knife, then tied a cloth around my wound to stop the bleeding. After that, I blacked out.

Me: What time is it?

Him: 11pm. Do you need anything?

Me: Water.

He gets me water and helps me drinks it.

Him: Don't worry about the baby, he's fine.

I choke on my water. He puts the water down and brushes me on my back.

Him: How long were you planning on hiding this from me?

Me: Can we not talk about this, I just got shot.

Him: I'm sorry baby. You gave me quiet a scare. I thought I lost you forever. I'm sorry you had to go through all of that alone, I shouldn't have left you.

Me: It's fine Tukelo. You had to leave, what I don't get is, where were the guards?

Him: (clears throat) they were all shot dead.

What?! How crazy is this woman? She is capable of killing? She had a chance of killing me but she didn't. Why?

Him: Do you have any idea who did this to you?

Me: Actually it was...

My phone rings, Tukelo hands it to me. It's an unknown number.

Me: Hello?

Her: She's alive! Good.

She starts laughing. My heart starts racing, now I'm really scared of this woman.

Her: Now listen to me, don't you dare tell Tukelo about the little meeting we had. You do what I told you to do. Remember that?

Me: Uhm, yes.

Her: You do that. I'm sure by now Tukelo knows you pregnant, I don't care how you break up with him but it needs to be done, whether he knows or not. If you want that baby of yours to live, you'll do exactly what I say. If I can kill 7 guards, you're nothing to me. I could've killed you when I had the chance but I decided otherwise. I want to see you suffer like I did. Death would've been easy. I want you to see that man happy with another woman, and I want you to feel exactly what I felt. I will not rest until I see you suffer. You'll lose that baby and Tukelo.

Me: What do you mean by that?

Her: I mean, I will kill that baby and Tukelo. Just to see you suffer.

Me: You can't be serious...

Her: I am.

Me: I thought you loved him.

Tukelo looks at me.

Her: I do. But if I can't have him then you shouldn't too.

Me: There's really no need for all of that.

I'm really trying my best not to sound scared but my heart is racing.

Her: Then just do as I say!

She hangs up.

Him: Who was that?

Me: Just Thobe. She's complaining about her boyfriend.

Him: That's very selfish of her.

I look at him.

Him: You were shot and she's here stressing you with her boyfriend troubles

Me: She doesn't know.

He shrugs, and start fixing my pillows to make me comfortable.

Me: Uhm, the reason I didn't tell you about my pregnancy, it's because the baby is not yours.

He stops and looks at me.

Him: I don't think I heard you correctly, what did you say?

I don't respond, I could see he was getting angry.

Him: I asked you Amahle, what did you fucken say?!

Me: I'm sorry Tukelo...

I feel tears, I can't believe I'm going to hurt him with this. But right now I don't have much of a choice. This is the only way he will leave me.

Him: You mean, you're carrying Charles' child? Is that what you're trying to tell me?

Me: I didn't mean for it to happen...

Him: Don't say that! Don't fucken say that! You weren't supposed to sleep with him!

He kicks a chair and I startle. He's also scaring me now. I hope he doesn't beat me up.

Him: But no, no. You wouldn't do that. You're carrying my child Amahle. You're carrying my fucken child!

Tears ran down his face, that broke my heart even more.

Me: I'm 2 months pregnant Tukelo.

I'm actually 3 months.

He sits and thinks for a while.

Him: No, no. No Amahle! No!

Me: I am sorry Tukelo.

Him: Don't say that!

He takes a vase, he smashes it on the wall. I close my eyes and I cry.

If only he knew that this is hurting me more than it hurts him. Are we alone? His behavior is scaring me. He might hit me, this man can't control his anger. Tumi barges in followed by Nosi. Thank the lords.

Tumi: Tukelo, what the hell?

Tukelo: I hate you Amahle Zungu, I fucken hate you!

He leaves the room

Me: Tumi please follow him, I don't want him doing anything stupid. Please.

Tumi rushes out.

Nosi: Babe, what is it now?

Me: It's all a mess Nosi, it's all just a huge mess.

I cry my eyes out, she consoles me.

Her: It's going to be okay. He didn't mean those words, we both know he loves you.

If only she knew the hell I'm facing....

Insert Fifty-Four 😊

ANDILE

I never knew women can be this evil. I never thought that one day I will sit on my bed all day, listen to depressing music all day and feel tears running down my cheeks sideways, all because of a woman.

I've done everything for her, yes I've been unfaithful to her but I always made sure that she never found out about it. I risked losing my best friend, all because I wanted to be with her and this is the thanks I get? She hurts me like this.

All the love I had for her just faded when I found out that she lost her virginity to Smanga, the one person I hate. We've had our differences ever since I started high school. Not only that, she's now

pregnant with his child and wanted to pin that pregnancy on me. I had to find all of this out from Smanga himself.

Buhle did not only hurt me but she embarrassed me and now I'm crucified because I beat her up, what was I supposed to do? Sing and dance while she fucked me over, hell no!

The way I'm so down, I don't even have the energy to talk to Nonhle, she's mad at me for whatever.

My mom barges in my room without even knocking. I quickly wipe my tears.

Me: Mkami, you can't just come in here, what if I was naked?

Mom: Yey wena, you forget that I was the one that gave birth to you so I know that thing of yours when it was smaller, when it couldn't even make babies yet.

Me: Mom jeez

She laughs.

That makes me smile too. I've been so caught in myself lately, that I didn't even take note that my mom is recovered. Seems like she's back to her old self.

Her: What's wrong Andile? And don't lie to me and say its nothing.

Me: (sigh) I don't want to talk about it mom.

Her: Only a woman can drag down a man like this.

I keep quiet.

Her: Who's that's hurting you?

Me: There's noone, I'm just sad about Ziningi, I can't just get over what happened.

Her: Look at me

I look at her.

Her: Do I look like an idiot?

Me: Uhm no.

Her: I can see that there's more to it than that so what is it? I don't want to lose another child. I've suffered enough Andile.

Me: Now what gives you that idea Mkami? Because you won't lose me

Her: This generation commit suicide every day, I don't want that happening to my own child.

Me: No matter what I face mom, I will never, I mean ever do that because I know how much that will hurt you. I can never do that to you mkami.

Her: Then talk to me. Is it Nonhle? Are you facing problems?

Me: No mom, Nonhle is a good woman. I'm the problem. I know that I shouldn't have impregnated her but I don't want to marry her, I'm not ready for that. Everytime I see her face I'm reminded of what oBab'omncane said then instantly I be mad.

Her: (sigh) Ey noBabncane. They weren't supposed to tell you this. Look at how it's affecting you.

She brushes my thigh.

Her: Did you perhaps talk to her about it?

Me: I don't want to give her any ideas. What if she wants to do it? She'll be hurt if she comes to know that I don't want to marry her.

Her: Do you love her though?

Me: Mkami, just because I don't want to marry her, it doesn't mean I don't love her. I do love her, alot. I'm just not ready for that kind of commitment. I still have my whole life ahead of me. I still have varsity mom. Imagine getting married at 17? How bizzare is that?

Her: I know mtanami, it's crazy.

Me: Can't you talk to them?

Her: You know how stubborn your uncles are. Nothing can change their minds. It's even worse if they all agree on the same thing.

My mom is right. What they say goes, they just enjoy dictating our lives.

Me: In times like this, I wish dad was still alive. He wasn't as wicked as they are

Her: Don't speak like that Andile.

Me: It's the truth mom. Yes I made a mistake but I don't deserve to be crucified like this! If dad was alive he wouldn't allow such madness. OBabncane are behaving like this because they know I'm fatherless and I have noone to defend me. The one person who's supposed to defend me, is my brother but I know he won't because he'll be too busy kissing their asses!

I was on my feet now. I'm mad beyond measures. I'm mad at Buhle, I'm mad at my uncles and I'm mad at myself.

Her: Can you please calm down Andile, I will try talking to them if that doesn't work, I will get Anele to talk to them.

Me: That won't work mom and you know it! Anele is selfish, he's always been selfish. When was the last time he came to see you ever since he got married? He last came here during Ziningi's funeral, he hasn't come back here ever since. I'm pretty sure he didn't even call to check on you, that's how selfish your son is.

Her: Don't talk like that about your brother, he may not be perfect but I know that he loves you.

Me: He has a weird way of showing it. All Anele ever does is judge me. He won't defend me and you know it.

I leave the room, she calls my name and I ignore her. This is why I never ever want to talk, I know I get angry easily and I end up lashing out on everyone. Keeping my emotions to myself is just best for the whole universe.

I'm pretty sure mom is hurt because of the things I said and I will probably have to apologize to her later on but I need to clear my head before I go crazy.

I find myself in the play ground not far away from my house. Noone was there. I sit on a rock and I just think about how crazy my life turned in just a matter of months.

Her: You look like you could use a smoke.

She hands me a cigarette. I look up and it's Candice. I look at her and not respond.

Her: Relax, it's not drugs.

I take the cigarette.

Me: Thanks.

Her: What are you doing here anyway?

She sits next to me.

Me: Just needed to clear my head.

Her: Baby mama drama?

I quizzically look at her, how does know about Nonhle?

Her: I know that Buhle is pregnant.

Me: Oh.

Her: I also know that the baby is not yours.

Me: So I guess the whole school knows?

Her: No, she told me when she was drunk. I don't even think she remembers that.

Me: You two have been hanging out alot.

Her: Yeah guess she enjoys my company just as I enjoy hers.

Me: Please don't introduce her to drugs like you did to me.

Her: After what she did to you, you still care about her?

I just smoke the cigarette and not say anything.

Her: Look, Buhle doesn't deserve a man like you. You're too much of a man for her to handle.

Me: And who can handle a man like me?

Her: A girl like me.

I chuckle

Her: Look, I know you want me, just as much as I want you so let's just skip all the formalities and jump right into the fun part.

Me: (laugh) and what's the fun part?

Her: This.

She kisses me. I kiss her back. I let go of the cigarette. As soon as the kiss got intense, I lay her back on the grass and went on top of her. She takes off my t-shirt. This should be interesting. She's wearing a short skirt, I softly brush her thighs.

She stops.

Her: Let's go finish this off at my place.

I got up and she hands me my t-shirt.

Me: After you.

She leads the way.

As soon as we got to her room, we didn't waste any time. I throw her on the bed and kissed her hungrily. We enjoy each other's lips, until my shaft couldn't take it anymore. It wanted more.

Me: Do you have condoms?

Not making the same mistake three times.

Her: First drawer.

I got up and took the condoms.

After 3 rounds I was exhausted, this woman is a beast. She definitely knew her way around a dick. She's my kind of wild. I am panting heavily.

Me: This never happened.

Her: Come on, a girl doesn't kiss and tell.

She winks and I smile. I got up from the bed and started dressing up.

Her: But we will be doing this again, right?

Me: Most definitely. If you promise not to catch feelings.

Her: Yeah I get it, I am also not looking for a relationship.

Me: Then we cool. Anyway, I have to go.

She nods. I kiss her on the cheek.

Me: And thanks, I needed that.

Her: (chuckles) I could tell.

I said my goodbyes and left.

It's getting late, it's close to 8pm. I ran home, the weather wasn't good either. It was raining heavily.

I got to my gate, and I find Buhle sitting outside my gate. She's not even wearing appropriate clothing for the rain. I closer got to her. She is shivering.

Me: What are you doing here?

She quickly stands up and starts crying.

Her: Sthandwa sami please listen to me, it really meant nothing to me. Please don't hurt me like this. I can't do anything. I'm sorry for betraying you, I didn't mean for any of it to happen.

Me: Buhlebendalo, don't embarrass yourself like this. There's nothing you'll say or do that will make me change my mind.

Her: Andile we've been through alot don't give up on me, not now please.

Me: You're carrying his child Buhle, and you wanted to pin that pregnancy on me.

Her: I'm sorry I wasn't thinking straight. Please Andile, I can't lose you

Me: Well you should've thought of that before opening your legs for that airhead. Him? Out of all people? Why him?

Her: I was stressed out because you were neglecting me, he was just there...

Me: Don't give me that lame excuse. So you're going to blame your bitchiness on me?

Her: No, I'm sorry. I just don't know what else to say. I'm really sorry Andile, I wasn't thinking straight, I thought I was losing you and I ended up doing something really stupid.

Me: It has happened Buhle, there's nothing we can do about it. You need to forget about me, focus on your baby and your new boyfriend. It's funny though, I always told you how Smanga was always after you, but you just told me that I'm seeing things but now he broke your virginity and you're carrying his child. Nice.

Her: I didn't plan all of this, I swear.

Me: But he did. You could've prevented all of this but you played right into his trap. I'm sure he planned all of this.

Her: Tell me what I should do, I would do anything

Me: There's nothing you can do Buhle. Just go home before you catch a cold because you're clearly wasting your breath begging me.

Her: I will abort his child.

Me: That won't change anything.

Her: Don't do this to me Andile. I'm sorry, I really am.

She kneels before me and holds my arm, I yank it.

Me: Go home Buhle.

I turn to leave.

Her: I will kill me myself, if that's what you want me to do. I will do it.

Me: Go ahead and do it. I don't care.

I don't even turn to look at her.

As soon as I enter my house, I hear a car hoots loudly, brakes immediately and a huge thud after that.

No can't be...

I rush back to the street. I see Buhle laying on the street lifeless.

Me: Buhle!

I rush to her, I try shaking her but she was just lifeless. She had blood all over her face.

Me: Please don't do this Buhle, wake up.

I slap her slightly on her face.

Me: Don't joke like this. Please. Buhle!!

I feel tears threatening to come out.

I see the asshole inside the car, the fact that he's not even coming out to check on her was enough to piss me off. I find myself walking to his car, I open his door, I drag him out. This ass reeks alcohol. I punch his face, he falls down. I get on top of him and I punch his face continuously.

Him: I'm sorry man, I didn't see her there. I'm so sorry.

Someone shouts my name and tells me to stop. I ignore her. I couldn't control the anger I had.

Her: Andile!!! You'll get arrested.

Someone grabs me from behind, it's one of my neighbors.

Mom: Andile, what is wrong with you?

Me: He knocked her down with a car, she could be dead.

Mom: Who?

Me: Buhle, she is on the side of the road, lifeless.

Mom: Thixo. Call an ambulance.

She rushes to Buhle, the driver was still on the floor. I rush to Buhle too.

Me: Is she going to be okay mom?

Her: Her condition is not good. She has a weak pulse

Me: That means she's still alive, that's good.

Her: Call her family. Or her brother.

Me: We can do that later, I need to make sure she's safe.

Her: She will be okay baby, don't worry.

The street was full of people when the ambulance arrived. I couldn't believe how this night has turned out. I certainly did not think that my day would end like this.

The paramedics do a check up on her then put her in the the stretcher. They get in the ambulance and they drive off.

Mom: Haybo, what really happened Andile?

Me: I don't know mom, I just found her lying on the street. I need to go to her house to let her parents know.

Mom: Why don't you take a shower first, you have blood all over.

Me: When I get back.

I run to Buhle's house. How do I deliver such news to her parents? What was she thinking? Even though the driver was drunk, there's a possibility that she jumped in front of the car, if that's the case, she made a really selfish move.

It normally takes me 20mins to get to Buhle's house but today, it took me less than 10 mins.

I knock on their door. Seems like they were asleep, all the lights are off. I continue knocking. Until I see the sitting room lights come on.

Mr. Khanyile opens the door.

Him: Andile, what is it?

My breathing was out of control, I was trying to catch my breath.

Me: Buhle... Buhle was...

Him: Calm down son, take a deep breath and try speaking again.

Mrs. Khanyile comes too

Her: Dumisani, who was at the door? Andile... What are you doing here at this time of night?

Him: Come in. Phumzile, get him water.

Mrs. Khanyile disappears. Mr. Khanyile leads me inside and we sit on the couch.

Him: Now you're really worrying me, what's with all the blood all over your t-shirt? And you all wet, what's happening?

Me: I will explain when Mrs. K gets here.

Him: Were you in a fight? Your knuckles are bleeding also.

Me: Something like that.

Mrs. Khanyile comes back with the water, she gives it to me.

Me: Thank you.

I drink it in one go.

Me: There's no easy way to say this, it's Buhle.

Mrs. K: What about her?

Me: Uhm, a car came out of nowhere and hit her.

Mrs. Khanyile got up in a flash.

Mrs. K: Hit her? Hit her how? Buhle is in her room sleeping, how can a car hit her if she's in her room.

She leaves the room, guess she is going to check for Buhle.

Mr. K: Are you sure Andile?

Me: Yes. The blood that's on me, it's hers.

Mr. K: When and where did that happen? Is she okay? Where is she now?

Me: it happened around 8pm, near my house, she's on her way to hospital.

Mr. K: What she was doing near your house at this time of night?

Before I could answer we hear Mrs. Khanyile crying hysterically. We both rush to her. Mr. Khanyile tries to calm her down.

Her: Take me to my child Dumi, take me to my daughter.

Pat comes running.

Pat: Mom, what happened? Dad, why's mom crying? And What are you doing here? Why do you have blood all over you? Can someone please answer my questions!

Mr. K: Get dressed son, we're going to hospital, your sister was hit by a car.

Pat: What?!

TUMI

This is a moment I want to forever cherish. Seeing both of my women working their way around the kitchen. That's how it's been for the past weeks. I'm a happy man. Sometimes they act like I'm not even there. All they ever care about is Thapelo. Even now, they're laughing at whatever, they're not aware that I'm in the room.

Me: Good Morning ladies.

Zanele: Good Morning

Nosi: Are you hungry?

Me: You're asking me?

Nosi: Yes. Why do you look so shocked?

Me: That's because you've been neglecting me for the past few days. The both of you actually.

Thandi wheels herself closer.

Thandi: Oh dear hubby, you can be such a baby sometimes.

Nosi: Yes, we can't baby you and Thapelo, come on, that can never work.

Me: Whatever but to answer your question babe, yes I'm hungry.

Nosi: Okay

Me: And I hope you're ready to go to your parents.

Nosi: Oh that's today?

Me: Yes Nosi, that's today. Why are you delaying?

Thandi: I mean she did say her father is a hard nut to crack.

Me: But delaying things won't make things better. Thapelo is growing each day, my father wants to meet him and I can't do that while I haven't made things right with Nosi's parents.

Thandiwe is still unaware that I'm planning on marrying Nosi and I seriously don't know how she will react to that.

Thandi: Tumi has a point Nosi, we should at least try getting through to him. We will fail knowing that we've tried.

Nosi: You don't know that man Thandi. I doubt he will even let us in.

Me: Just like Thandi said, we can't just give without trying. This is my child we're talking about here.

Nosi: Fine Tumi.

She gives me food.

Me: Now go get ready.

She sulks.

Me: Don't give me that face MaMbatha.

Nosi: My daddy is so scary. It's like he's devil's agent

Me: and I'm the devil himself. I won't tell you twice.

She drags herself upstairs. I carry on eating.

Thandi: I'm really proud of you Tumi, for doing the right thing.

Me: I love my son more than anything Thandi. I want to make him mine.

Her: And I'm really proud of you babe.

Me: Thank you hun. Before I go, I'm taking you to your physio.

Her: Babe, I went there yesterday...

Me: I wasn't asking, I was telling. What will you do all day?

Her: Tumi you're so unfair

Me: I love you too baby.

I blow her a kiss, she rolls her eyes.

I have a peaceful meal, I wash my dish. Miss Mbatha taught me that.

Speaking of MaMbatha, she's been upstairs for way too long. I go to the lounge to look for her, instead I find Thandi watching TV.

Me: Did Nosi come down yet?

She shakes her head. She's not even paying attention to me.

Nosipho is really testing my patience. She's been up there for the last 30mins.

Another person who's testing my patience is Tukelo, he's starting to tick me off. It's like he's the first person to be heartbroken. He needs to pull himself together before it's too late. TBM Logistics already lost 2 important clients. Seems like he doesn't care about that, all he does is drink alcohol. He will drive that business to bankruptcy. He hasn't been to work for the past two weeks. It's like he doesn't even care about what's happening around him. As long as he's drunk. Everything is complete in his world.

I enter her room and all of her wardrobe is on top of her bed. I look at her confused.

Her: I can't figure out what to wear.

Me: Babe, you're going to see your father, you're not going on a first date.

Her: I don't want to give me a reason to criticize me.

Me: You're just stalling. That's what you're doing.

Her: No I'm not...

Me: I will make things easy for you, wear that floral dress.

Her: Ah!

Me: I won't repeat myself. Wear that floral dress and be downstairs in the next 10 mins. Is Thapelo ready?

Her: Akhona is busy with her.

Me: Good. Now get dressed.

I left her and went to check on Thandi. I swear these women will drive me to insanity.

Me: And then wena? Why are you still staring at the TV?

Her: The show is about to finish.

Me: No, we are going to get dressed.

Her: Tumi...

Me: I have spoken.

I wheeled her out of the lounge and in to her room

Me: So what would you like to wear, wife?

Her: Anything Husband.

I take out a blouse for her and a jean. I help her out of the clothes she's wearing, then help her get dressed. We do this in silence.

Me: When are we trying for that baby?

Her: Huh?

Me: I asked, when are we trying for that baby?

Her: Tumi, I'm crippled.

Me: Your pussy isn't.

She chuckles.

Her: Can I even fall pregnant?

Me: I don't know but we will ask the doctor, won't we?

Her: Are you ready to give me a child? I don't want to give me a child just because you feel sorry for me.

Me: I really want to Thandiwe. I'm really curious to know how our baby looks like.

Her: If you're ready then let's do it.

I kiss her on the cheek.

We leave the room and we find Thapelo and Nosi waiting for us. Thank God for that.

We all leave, I first drop off Thandiwe then off to Alex to Nosi's house.

I park in front of her gate, like right in front. I go out and open the door for her, she sits for a while.

Me: Really Nosi?

Her: Tumi, I'm scared.

I literally see her knees wobbling.

I sigh.

Me: Baby, you have nothing to be scared of. You have me. I will be by your side, I put you in this mess, I will get you out. Just trust me. He may not be willing to listen to me today but eventually, he will listen to me. We will get our happy ending. I will fight for the both of you.

I kiss Thapelo on his forehead and he make baby sounds.

She sighs.

She gives me Thapelo and she gets out. She slowly walks to the gate, and she opens it. I follow her behind. She takes her own sweet time to knock on the door.

Woman: Come in.

She slowly turns the door knob. She gets in.

Woman: My baby.

She rushes to Nosi and hugs her for dear life. I guess it's her mother. They both start crying. Now I'm standing behind them, not knowing what to do.

Nosi: I'm sorry mama, I'm so sorry.

Nosi's Mom: No need to be sorry baby, I'm just so happy that you finally had the courage to come home.

They let go. Nosi's mom wipes Nosi's tears.

Nosi: I couldn't have done it if Tumi didn't force me into it.

Man: Who's that MaNgubane?

A man comes storming in, whoa! Nosi didn't say that her father looked like one of those bouncers you find in clubs. The man is huge.

Nosi quickly hides behind her mom.

Nosi's dad: What is she doing here?

Nosi: Daddy I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.

I don't know whether to leave or sit down, I'm just conflicted because it seems like they needed a family reunion before I came along.

Nosi's dad: You have the nerve to bring this man in my house, my house Nosipho! And this child! I told you maNgubane that I don't ever want to see this man or this child.

That pissed me off.

Me: With all due respect Ntate Mbatha, you can talk to me however you want to but don't address my son like that. He has a name and his name is Thapelo.

Him: Well take your girlfriend and your Thapelo and leave my premises! Now!

Me: Ntate Mbatha...

Him: Don't ntate me wena! I will never be your ntate.

Me: Mr. Mbatha, I came here in peace, I know that I wronged you and this family but I'm willing to make things right. I will pay whatever amount there is and do things the right way.

Him: You think it's money I want? I don't want your money. I have enough of that. This child humiliated me! She fell pregnant for a married man! No amount of money can fix that. I don't like repeating myself, take your girlfriend and your Thapelo and leave fucken house. Before one of you leave with a bullet wound.

He leaves us standing.

Nosi runs out.

Nosi's mom: (sigh) I'm sorry. That's how my husband is.

Me: It's okay mah. Let me go and check on Nosi.

Nosi's mom: Can I please see the baby before you leave?

I hand her Thapelo.

Nosi's mom: How old is he now?

Me: 4 months.

Nosi's mom: What is Nosi feeding him? He's so heavy. Hey baby, you're growing up so fast aren't you? I'm sorry you had to see yiur grandpa like that but I know he will accept you. I love you.

She kisses his cheek.

Her: He's just too cute for words and he looks alot like you. He's just growing up so fast.

I smile.

Her: Let me not keep you.

She hands me Thapelo.

Me: Why don't you secretly meet with your daughter? And spend time with Thapelo secretly, without your scary husband finding out?

Her: I would love that but he always have ways of finding things out. I won't hide this for long before he finds out.

Me: Leave that to me. Only if you want to.

Her: I'd love that.

Me: You'll hear from me then. Let me leave you.

Her: Okay. Please tell Nosipho that I love her.

Me: Okay. I will.

I left the house, I find Nosi crying in the car. She's sitting on the backseat. I don't say anything, I just give her the baby. She takes him. I start the car.

Nosi: I told you Tumi. I didn't want to go there, you forced me.

I don't respond.

Her: You're so fucken stubborn.

I hear her sobbing softly, that just broke my heart.

Instead of responding to her rants, I take out my phone and sent a text to Dankies. Nosi wasn't lying when she said her father is the devil's agent. Well I also said I'm the devil himself.

Me: >Find some dirt on Jabulani Mbatha, Nosi's dad<

Dankies: >On it<

There's something shady about that man. I can't shake off the feeling that he's into shady business, he too has skeletons hidden in his closet. Now I have to do things the hard way in order for him to do what I want....

Insert Fifty-Five 😊

ANDILE

I can't remember the last time I had peace in my life. There's always something disturbing my peace. Just when I thought Buhle is out of my life for good, I'm here now, praying for her to get better. She's really injured, she suffered a concussion and she fractured most of her bones but the doctor said she will be okay, she will wake up some time this week. Her face is swollen, she had a bandage on all over her face. The only thing that puts my heart at ease is the email I got last night. I was accepted at UKZN, to study medicine. I couldn't believe it

I'm on my way to school, writing my last paper but how the hell am I supposed to concentrate?

My phone rings. I check the caller I.D, I sigh.

Me: Mama kaLisakhanya.

Her: Andile, how are you?

Me: I'm fine and yourself.

Her: I'm not and you know that.

Me: Why? What's up?

Her: What's up? What's up Andile? Are you being serious?

Me: Nonhle, I told you that I'm writing exams.

Her: Oh that's why you can't answer my calls, or get back to me when you see my missed calls?

I keep quiet.

Her: Are you that busy Andile that you can't even take 5 mins to call and check on your daughter? She's been needing you, her father. She has been sick Andile.

Me: What? I didn't know that.

Her: You would've known that if you actually took any of calls or actually had the time to check on your daughter.

Me: I'm so sorry, why didn't you text me? Or left a message for me.

Her: I didn't know you cared

Me: Are you serious? Like really Nonhle? You know I love my daughter, of course I care. What's wrong with her?

Her: She had a really high fever and she was restless. She was even vomiting.

Me: Do 2 month old babies vomit?

Her: Argh, don't bore me with your stupid questions. Look, I knew that at some point we will get to this. I knew one day, our relationship will take a sharp turn and you'd end up not caring about me but I didn't think you wouldn't care about your daughter too.

She hangs up.

I try calling her back, it rings unanswered. I try again, it goes straight to voicemail. I send her a text.

Me: >It's not that I don't care babe, I do. Just that I've been going through alot, I didn't realize that I was neglecting you and Khanya. I love you both, alot. Never doubt that. I promise to try harder.<

I sit down on my bed and think about my life, the drama just never ends. I get up and go the main house.

I find Amahle limping in our kitchen, busy making breakfast.

Me: When did you get here?

She turns to look at me

Her: Last night. I heard about your girlfriend, how's she now?

Me: She's still unconscious but out of the coma. That's what we should be thankful for.

Her: That's great. And the driver? What happened to him?

Me: He was arrested

Her: Was?

Me: Yeah, got out on bail.

Her: I just never understand how the justice work in this country. He was drunk and driving, he knocked down a girl but they granted him bail?

Me: Yeah, apparently Buhle jumped in front of his car. She just came out of nowhere.

Her: Still, he's the one that was drinking and driving, if he was sober, he would have seen her.

Me: I really don't care too much about that, I just hope she recovers soon.

Her: So you still love her?

Me: I don't think so, I just still care about her.

Her: Oh okay.

Me: What happened to your leg?

Her: Nothing.

Me: Then why are you limping?

Her: I fell.

Me: I don't believe that.

Her: I got shot, do you believe that?

Me: Uh, no.

Her: Ayi ke, angazi ke.

She takes her food and leaves. I grab an apple and rush to school.

TUMI

Tukelo is sick in the head. I just never know how to deal with his childish ass. I'm packing my stuff before he does anything stupid.

I just got a text from him saying he has Gabela. We had a plan, a full proof plan. Now he's going to ruin all of that.

I call Pitsi. He picks up after my second attempt.

Me: I really don't know how your brother's brain works.

Him: What has he done now?

Me: He kidnapped Gabela.

Him: What?

Me: You better get here, I want you to witness me killing him and I will do so with my bare hands.

Him: as much as I'd love to see that, I can't come there now. I'm taking Keletso to her dance recital.

Me: A dance recital? Really? Pitsi, I left an important meeting for this, I literally walked out of the boardroom when I received his text and you're talking about a dance recital?

Him: I promised to take her.

Me: You know what, nevermind Pitsi.

I hang up.

Dance recital. Nxa.

I try calling Thabang but it rings unanswered. I text Dankies.

Me: >Warehouse, stat.<

Him: >Shots<

I will definitely get a ticket the way I'm driving. I know Tukelo, I know how crazy he can be when he's in that state. I wouldn't be surprised when I find Gabela already dead.

In 15mins, I get to the warehouse. I park near Tukelo car. I get in, I find him smoking in the lounge with a lot of beer bottles in front of him. Who drinks on a Tuesday?

Me: Where is he?

Him: Chamber.

He has no care in the world, I can see it in his face that he doesn't care about what's happening around him.

Me: Tukelo, we had a plan, a solid plan. Now why ruin it?

Him: Well, it was a dumb plan.

Me: It was your plan.

Him: I just couldn't wait any longer. The more I thought about him, the more my blood boiled.

Me: You're causing us trouble. You're putting us all in danger.

He doesn't respond, he just smokes his cigarette. I look at the ashtray, the guy smoked an entire 20, I swear. I can also smell weed.

Me: Did you even think this through?

Him: I gave it a lot of thought actually. Today, I'm putting an end to all this madness. I've been saying people are getting away with screwing me over, not realizing it's because I let them. Now that all ends today, I'm going to start with that old man in there, he's going to tell me everything I need to know. After I'm done with him, that asshole Charles, is next.

He switches off his cigarette and gets up. It's really a mission to calm him down when he's like this, I know whatever I say, he won't change his mind. He will do whatever the hell he wants.

Dankies comes in.

Him: What's up? Whoa, seems like you gents had a party and didn't invite me.

He looks at the beer bottles that were all over.

Me: Tukelo was having a party of one.

Him: Where is he now?

Me: Chamber. With Gabela.

Him: The hell?

Me: I know. He had him kidnapped.

Him: When?

Me: I don't know. Let's go and find out.

We go to the chamber and indeed Gabela is strapped on a chair.

Tukelo: Ah, look who finally decided to come in and join the party.

He even had beer in his hand.

Gabela: Tell Ruthless to let me go, if he really knows what's good for him.

Tukelo: No, what would be good for me is when you tell me what I want to know. Who called the shootout that occurred at Anele's wedding?

Gabela: You clearly forgot how I operate, I won't just talk.

Tukelo: I can make you talk.

He leans on the wall behind Gabela.

Tukelo: I won't even torture you. I don't want to get my hands dirty with your blood.

Gabela: What makes you think I will give you what you want?

Tukelo: Maybe if I tell you that your wife and daughter are on their way to the spa right now.

Tukelo phone beeps.

Tukelo: Would you look at that, they just got there. When they leave, they'll be met by bullets on their foreheads. All it will take, is just one shot and they'll be goners. Even your not so tight security won't be able to stop my men, as a matter of fact they won't even know where the bullets came from.

Gabela gulps, he gets sweaty same time.

Gabela: They have nothing to do with Ruthless.

Tukelo: Interesting choice of words. They have everything to do with this. You killed innocent people at that wedding, they also had nothing to do with this but you didn't care about that. A 11 year old girl was murdered. 11 years, she had nothing to do with this but you killed her.

Gabela: I swear, if anything happens to my family, your woman will be as good as dead also.

Tukelo: Oh go ahead, I don't care. That woman screwed me over. If anything, you'll be doing me a favor. And you better get to her before I do.

Gabela: Please Ruthless, leave my wife and daughter out of this.

I never thought I'd actually live to see this day. Gabela begging?

Tukelo has him right where he want him to be.

Tukelo: Then save yourself all the trouble and tell me what I need to know.

Gabela doesn't respond.

Tukelo: Your family leave that spa in an hour so tick tock.

Gabela: (sigh) what is that you want to know?

Tukelo: Now we're getting somewhere.

Tukelo stands in front of him.

Tukelo: I want to know what was Butcher doing in your place, what's your deal with the Russians and who's this woman you're working with? I know that you're responsible for that shootout, I want to know, why.

Gabela: When Butcher told me that you killed my son, my only son. I lost it, I had to get back at you. I couldn't let you get away with that.

We all looked at each other, how the hell did Mandla find out about Senzo?

Tukelo: Why did you believe Butcher? What makes you so sure?

Gabela: I'd hear your voice from anywhere Ruthless, he need not to tell me who's voice was that.

Dankies: So he had a recording of Ruthless confessing to killing Senzo?

Gabela: Yes, I couldn't make out as to who he was talking to but the other person's voice sounded more or the same as his.

Oh shit, that was me.

Me: The asshole bugged us.

Gabela: I don't know and I really don't care but you Mokoena asses, you killed my son. Why? Why?!!

I see a tear escape his eye.

Tukelo: Your son wasn't a saint, he harassed my woman. That's what you taught him? To harass women?

Gabela: You still had no right to kill him!

Tukelo: I didn't know he was your son. I only found out when it was too late.

Gabela: Don't lie to me.

Tukelo: Okay I'm lying but your son was messing with what was mine, I wasn't about to let him get away with it. You would've done the same thing. Actually, you did the same thing. You also killed someone I cared so much about so we're even.

Gabela: But it wasn't your son! You better kill me now because if you let me go, you're dead.

Tukelo: Listen here old man, you wouldn't even dare. If I even get a mosquito bite, I will hold you responsible for it and you'll bury a family member every weekend. Don't test me.

Gabela keeps quiet.

Tukelo: Now, only 45mins left before they leave that spa. Tell me about your deal with Russians.

Gabela: They know that you killed Leo.

Tukelo: So you're working with them to destroy me? Man, am I that big of a threat? Even after you joined forces, you just can't bring me down, can you?

Gabela: Don't think so highly of yourself.

Tukelo: And the woman? Who's this woman you're working with?

He doesn't respond.

Tukelo: All it takes is a phonecall and they die. So you better cooperate.

He keeps quiet

Tukelo: Oh so you rather protect this woman than your family? Is she your mistress or something?

Gabela just looks at him and not say anything.

Tukelo: Okay, fine then.

Tukelo takes out his phone and makes a phone call

Tukelo: Rebel, are they done? Oh okay... What were they wearing again? Wait... Wait, I want to our guest to hear this.

He puts the phone on loud speaker

Tukelo: You can talk now

Rebel: The wife is wearing a white dress with yellow high heeled shoes, carrying a brownish bag, a Louis Vuitton bag to be specific and the daughter is wearing a jean short with a white top and flip flop carrying a blue sling bag.

Tukelo: Isn't what they left wearing this morning Gabela?

Gabela gulps.

Tukelo: Uh, look here Rebel, when they leave that place, shoot and make sure you don't miss. Just take clear a shot. One bullet each. On the forehead.

Rebel: Sho boss.

Tukelo: Good, if you miss, the bullet that was meant for them, you'll get them, I will gladly pull the trigger through your head.

Rebel: Got it.

Tukelo hangs up.

Tukelo: All it takes is a name. I can see that you're scared, just talk or else they die.

Gabela: Okay fine, I will talk

Tukelo: Talk.

Gabela: The woman you're talking about is Zanele Zungu.

Us: What?!!!

I did not see this coming...

ANDILE

Finally, exams are over. I never thought this day would come, school's over for me. I wasn't even in the mood to go out and celebrate. I just want to be home. All of my friends went out to celebrate, including Pat. I just needed my bed and some sleep.

I see Amahle limping and she looks upset.

Me: Awu Oscar Pistorius.

She gives me a deadly look.

Her: Shut up.

Me: Where are you going?

Her: I just can't be in that house.

Me: What's happening now?

Her: OBab'ncane came there and now they think they can rule my life.

Me: They're marrying you off to someone else too?

Her: Worse. They want me to fix things with Tukelo and tell him about the pregnancy.

I look at her shocked, all my eyes are out.

Her: You know, I don't understand why they have to always have to dictate our lives. I have reasons why I left him and I don't want him to be a part of my life.

Me: Wait, back up, you're pregnant? Again?

Her: Yes, I have sex too, deal with it.

Me: Why don't you want to let Tukelo know about the pregnancy?

Her: He knows, he just thinks it's someone else's baby.

Me: Why would he think that?

Her: Because that's what I told him.

Me: I don't understand, why would you do that?

Her: I don't want him to be a part of my life Andile! I can't have two miscarriages in one year. He's just not good for my health. I just want a peaceful pregnancy.

Me: Let's go home so you can tell me what's really going on.

Her: No, I can't go back in there. I will lose it again.

Me: So where you going?

Her: I don't know.

Me: Let's just go home. Maybe I can talk to them and you'll explain your reasons to them because you don't know what they're capable of. What if they go behind your back and they tell him?

Her: You're right. They can do that. Let's go.

She limps back to the house. I just chuckle, she is walking funny. I follow her.

Oh would you look at that, even the big brother is here. We get in the lounge where they were sitting, I greet them, they greet back. I sit next to Amahle

Bab'ncane Thulani: You have some nerve storming off like that Amahle.

Amahle: Sorry.

Bab'ncane Hlomla: How were the exams Andile?

Me: They were okay.

Anele: Just okay? What bab'ncane wants to know is if you'll make it or not.

Me: I will pass Anele.

Bab'ncane Thulani: Back to the issue at hand, wena Amahle, you better tell Tukelo about that baby.

Amahle: Bab'ncane, I don't want him to know. That's final, please respect my wishes.

Me: She has her reasons, if you just listen to her maybe you'll understand.

Anele: This issue doesn't need you Andile, you're way too young to be involved in family meetings.

Me: But my sister needs me, I'm just doing what any good brother would do and that is supporting his sister.

Anele: What are you trying to say about me Andile? Is that I'm not a good brother to Amahle?

Me: If the shoe fits.

Mom: Stop it you two. This is not what this meeting is about, this is about Amahle and her baby. Which I personally think is doing what suits her best. If she doesn't want the father to know yet then so be it.

Bab'ncane Themba: Are you serious Buyi? This child will fall sick, he will need amasiko akubo, what will happen then?

Amahle: Bab'ncane, I'm not saying I won't tell him. I just don't want him to know now. I just want a peaceful pregnancy. I will only let him know when the baby is born.

Bab'ncane Hlomla: How will you hide the stomach from him?

Amahle: He knows that I'm pregnant, he just thinks the baby belongs to someone else.

Bab'ncane Thulani: I don't get this! Why hide it from him?

Amahle: He's just not good for my health. He will stress me and I can't afford having another miscarriage.

Bab'ncane Themba: if he doesn't believe that the baby is his?

Amahle: We will a DNA test if need be. I just don't want him around me during my pregnancy.

Bab'ncane Thulani: Your kids are doing whatever they want. Amahle is having her second baby at the age of 22, she's having her second baby? What do you teach these children?

Me: Don't you dare say that Bab'ncane, don't. My mother has been an amazing parent to us and you know that. Never question her.

Amahle: Yes, she raised us alone when our father died. She didn't get any help from any of you so don't you dare judge her.

Me: We may have made mistakes but she's not to blame for that. It was the choices we made and we learnt from our mistakes.

Bab'ncane Thulani: She fails to control you, look now you're being rude to us but she's not saying anything. Of course she's to blame for your ruthless behavior.

My mom starts crying.

Me: You're upsetting her. I think its best that you all leave.

Amahle: Yes. Leave now.

Anele: Amahle...

Amahle: Shut up Anele. This is our house and you've overstayed your welcome. Leave now!

They gathered their things and left. Only Anele stayed behind.

Amahle and I, we sit next to mom.

Me: I'm sorry mkami, please don't listen to them.

Amahle: Yes mom, don't let them get to you.

Anele: Was there a need for all of that? Chasing your own fathers out?

Me: Why didn't you leave with them if you love them so much?

Amahle: So you wanted us to keep quiet as they were continuously upsetting mom? Huh, big brother?

Me: You can't even defend your own mother. I mean I get it when you neglect us and take their side, but this is your mother we're talking about.

Amahle: It's like they have you under a spell or something.

Mom: Can you please stop fighting, please.

We keep quiet.

Mom: Maybe they're right. I failed you as a mother.

Amahle: Mom, that's not true. You're amazing. You raised us well, never ever doubt that.

Mom: Then why do I feel like a failure?

Me: That's because you let them get to you, don't do that.

Amahle: When you had nothing, when you lost your husband, they turned their backs on you. You had to pick up the pieces alone.

Me: You raised four kids all on your own. We may seem as a disappointment now but we will make you proud mom, I can promise you that much.

Amahle: Yes, you deserve all the happiness in the world MaShenge.

Me: And did I tell you that I got accepted at UKZN, Durban, for medicine?

Mom: Really?

Me: Yes. I will make you proud mom. Imagine uBuyisiwe Zungu having a son who's a doctor.

Amahle: That's amazing news little bro. Why didn't you tell us sooner?

Me: I got the email last night.

Amahle: So you're going to Durban?

Me: Yep!

Anele: Make us proud man and congrats.

Me: Thanks.

Amahle: This calls for celebration.

We all look at her.

Amahle: What? We need to unwind after the hectic day we all just had.

She's right about that....

TUMI

Our heads are spinning. We couldn't believe the bomb Gabela dropped. What was she after? What did she want really?

We still at the warehouse, in the lounge. Trying to get our heads around this.

Tukelo is walking up and down, biting his nails. He does that when he's stressed out or doesn't know how to deal with a situation. And it annoys the shit outta me.

Me: Can you sit down, please Tukelo.

Tukelo: How did we miss this?

Dankies: Do you think she's here to destroy us?

Me: Could be. But what is her motive?

Tukelo: She could personally be after me, only.

Me: There's a possibility.

Tukelo: But how do I deal with her? I don't kill women.

Dankies: We don't have to kill her, we can just scare her.

Tukelo: She's Anele's wife in case you forgot. How do we tell him this?

There's that.

Me: what I don't get is, why would she be part of that shoot out? Why would she sabotage her own wedding?

Tukelo: Amahle did tell me something interesting. She did say she overheard Zanele crying to one of her friends saying she doesn't love Anele but she's still inlove with her ex.

Dankies: And that ex is you?

Tukelo: Exactly.

Me: Then why would she want to destroy you if she's still inlove with you?

Dankies: Maybe she's just a bitter ex.

Tukelo: No, she has a motive. There's something she's after and it could not be me. We just need to figure out what it is.

Dankies: Can't we ask Gabela?

Tukelo: He doesn't know. He just works with her, he has no idea what she's after. We just need to pay Zanele a visit.

Dankies: What about Anele?

Tukelo: We will do it without him finding out the truth.

Me: He's a cop Tukelo. What if he figure it out?

Tukelo: Then that's good for him but I won't be the one telling him the truth about his wife. What if he finds out that I'm her ex then he will think I just wanted to ruin their marriage, no I don't need that kind of drama.

Me: Guess you have a point.

Tukelo: First, let's deal with the big dogs. The Russians. We will deal with Zanele later.

He takes his phone and makes a phone call.

Tukelo: Rebel, find the Russians and kill each and everyone of them. Gather men, 100s of them and kill. Don't talk, don't ask, just kill. I don't even want to see their dog alive. Got that?

He hangs up.

Me: Do you ever think any of your decisions through?

Tukelo: We don't have time to think. We only have time to act and fast.

He leaves us standing. Ruthless has been activated and there's no way of stopping him.

Insert Fifty-Six 😊

ANDILE

I got a call from Pat telling me I should rush to hospital. What could be the problem now? I'm on my way to the hospital. I was walking like a maniac as soon as the cab dropped me off. I was so worried, my palms were sweating, my breathing is out of control and my heart wants to come out of my chest. I really hope it's not bad news, I can't deal with that right now.

I find Pat and her parents sitting in the waiting room. They look, dull.

Me: Is she okay?

As soon as they saw me, Pat rushes towards me and wants to fight me but his father hold him back.

Mr. Khanyile: Calm down boy, this is not the time for all of that.

Pat: You promised me! You promised me man that you wouldn't impregnate her. You said you'll wait for her!

Oh so they found out about her pregnancy. I don't even think this is the right time or place to say, the baby is not mine.

Pat is raging, he's even crying.

Pat: I will never forgive you for this! Never! You mean nothing to me no more, never ever call yourself my friend.

Mrs. Khanyile: This is not the time or place to be talking about this. And you Andile, I'm very disappointed in you. I certainly didn't expect this.

Me: Mah, it's not what you think.

Mr. Khanyile: What do you mean by that Andile? Buhle is awake now and she's busy shouting for your name, how can you say it's not what we think?

Me: (sigh) it's more complicated than that...

Pat: You dated my little sister! Against my wishes, now she has your baby!

Me: Can you just give me a chance to explain..

Pat: Explain what?!

Mrs. Khanyile: Did you or did you not have sex with Buhlebendalo?

Me: Mah...

Mr. Khanyile: Answer her.

Me: (sigh) yes I did but...

Before I could finish my sentence, Pat came flying to me, he punches me and I hit the floor. His father hold him back again.

Pat: I hate you wena! You're dead to me!

Mr. Khanyile: I told you to calm down, this is not the place Patrick!

Mrs. Khanyile: Take him outside Dum, so he can cool off.

Pat: I'm fine!

Mrs. Khanyile: Dum, take him outside.

Mr. Khanyile pulls Pat and they leave. I get up from the floor and wipe the blood that was on my lip.

I sit on the bench, Mrs. Khanyile sits next to me, I shift a little.

Mrs. Khanyile: I trusted you with my daughter but instead of you seeing her as your sister, you saw her as some girl you can use and sleep with.

Me: I didn't use her...

Her: Let me finish, I am really disappointed in you Andile. I didn't expect this from you. My daughter has suffered alot, all because you two decided to do something really stupid? Did you ever think about what it will do to you? Your family?

Me: I am sorry, I didn't think.

Her: She's only 16 Andile and already she has to deal with losing her baby?

Me: She lost her baby?

Her: She lost your baby.

How do I even get myself out of this mess? How do I explain to a hurting mother that her daughter is a hoe? It's just all a mess.

Me: I don't know what to say.

Her: There's nothing you can say Andile. Just go in there, my daughter needs you.

She gets up from the bench and leaves.

I take a deep breath and I go in her ward room. She's facing away from the door.

Me: Buhle.

She turns and looks at me. She had bruises on her face and her left cheek is swollen.

Me: Are you okay?

She tries sitting up but I can see that she's facing difficulty.

Me: Let me help you.

I help her get up, I adjust her pillows and made sure she's comfortable.

Me: Are you okay now?

She nods.

Me: Good. Uhm... I'm sorry about what happened, to you.

I never know what to say in such situations and she knows that.

Her: I need... water.

I got up and poured water in a glass. I put the straw in and help her drink.

Her: Thank you.

Just by looking at her face, I feel anger boiling. I don't know why.

Me: I'm sorry for your loss.

Her: What loss?

Me: Uh, your baby.

Her: Oh that.

I could see it in her face that she didn't care too much about that.

Me: So did you tell Smanga? He must be devastated.

Her: No I didn't, I don't see the need of him knowing about it.

Me: Why not? It's his baby.

Her: I don't want him Andile, I want you.

Not this again.

Me: We can't talk about this now Buhle.

Her: If not now, then when?

Me: Not now, not ever. I just came here because I care about you, not because I still love you.

I see a tear escape her eye. Usually that broke my heart but today, I didn't feel anything.

Me: Look Buhle, what you did to me is a deal breaker and I told you before that I don't give second chances.

Her: How many second chances have I given you Andile?

Me: It's not the same Buhle and you know it. My advice I'd you is that you should focus on yourself for now. Focus on getting better, forget about me.

Her: I can't Andile.

Me: What's the point of holding on to something that has no value anymore?

Her: So you don't love me anymore?

Me: I've moved on Buhle so did you.

Her: You've moved on Andile? That quick?

Me: Listen, I have a 2 month old baby.

Her: What? Andile, you've been judging me and crucifying me for the same mistake you did.

Me: I didn't do it with someone you hate.

Her: But you still did it Andile! It doesn't matter with who but you did.

Me: I didn't plan for it to happen, it just did.

Her: And you think I orchestrated this? You really think that low of me? What if I tell you that he raped me? Did you even care enough to ask me what happened but instead you judged me.

Me: Calm down Buhle.

I could see her veins popping. That cannot be good because of the state she's in.

Her: You can be really selfish. You waited 11 months to tell me that you have a baby with someone else?

Me: I loved you Buhle, with everything in me. I didn't want anything destroying what we had. Nonhle was just a moment of weakness, right now I'm not even sure that I love her but I love my daughter with everything in me and more.

Her: What you're saying to me is irrelevant, what I'm saying is, you did the very same thing I did the only difference is that I was drugged when it happened and you did it in your sober senses.

Me: You were drugged?

Her: I told you to let me explain but you weren't willing to listen to me.

Me: I was pissed, noone would want to hear you justifications.

Her: If you really cared about me, you would want to know what really happened because you of all people should know me. I love you Andile, I would never make a mistake of cheating on you. We've been dating for 5 whole years, why would I cheat on you now? We talked about my first time almost everyday now why would I go do it with someone else? While you know very well that I'm crazy about you and I wouldn't do anything to hurt you. You should have known that something is not right.

Me: I wasn't in my senses. Do you really think that I had time to think all of that? But let's get back to you being drugged. Why are you so sure that you were drugged?

Her: That's because after I woke up next to Smanga I couldn't believe it, I know I wouldn't do something like this, even if I was drunk. So I went to test and the doctor said I had bremelanotide in my system.

I hear what she's saying but it just doesn't make sense to me.

Me: Back it up. Start from the top, why were you even drunk? Tell me how you even ended up in his house.

Her: (sigh) I was hurting, stressed and confused because of the way you just became distant. I told Candice about it, she suggested we go Smanga's party, I was against it at first but she managed to convince me. I regret ever going to that party Andile, that night, my whole life changed. I remember telling Smanga about how you're so distant, he was so comforting, and he made me feel better. I just didn't think he would do what he did. He told me to get drunk so I won't feel any pain. That's the last thing I remember, I swear.

I look at her not knowing what to say. I'm just not convinced and I'm not too sure if I should buy her story.

Her: Andile, say something.

Me: And say what?

Her: Anything. Tell me you believe me.

Me: I would be lying to you Buhle.

Her: I have proof Andile. I couldn't believe either so I decided to go see the doctor the next day. The night I got hit by a car, I was going to show you proof that I got from the doctor. It was in my jeans, maybe they're destroyed because of the heavy rain but please go home and look for those jeans, you'll find it there.

Me: Why didn't you report him? If what you're saying is true then you should've reported him. He practically raped you.

Her: I couldn't do that. There's no proof of that. The pills they gave me made me sexually driven so I made the moves on him

She's crying now, her face is pink.

Her: Do you think the police would buy my story?

Me: I'm not even buying your story.

Her: I'm not that smart Andile, you know that. Do you really think I'd know the word such as bremelanotide?

Me: I don't know Buhle...

Her: We're in a hospital Andile, a place full of doctors, do the research yourself. Then go home and go find those jeans. Please.

Me: I need some air.

I walk to the door.

Her: You know me Andile, please believe me, I can't lose you over this.

I listen to her but I leave without responding.

This is some crazy shit. I can't wrap my head around it. She's right, I know her, she wouldn't do me like that, that's why I was so hurt by it, a part of me couldn't believe it. A part of me believes her story but also another part of me thinks that this is crazy.

I pass by a doctor's office, I get tempted to enter and research more about this. I find myself knocking and he tells me to come in, I did so. He tells me to take a seat, I sit down.

Him: I'm doctor Zwane, how can I help you Mr...

Me: Zungu.

Him: Oh, how can I be of help Sengwayo?

Me: (clears throat) I'm actually here to ask about something.

Him: Okay, go ahead.

Me: Uh, what can you tell me about the drug called bremelanotide?

He quizzically looks at me.

Me: What?

Him: I'm sorry, I didn't expect you to ask me such a question but about the drug you're asking about, it is somewhat similar to medications used to treat erectile dysfunction in men, in that they are meant to be used on demand, when a person wants to be sexually intimate. But that's where the similarity stops. Erectile dysfunction drugs work by increasing blood flow to a man's genitals. Bremelanotide, on the other hand, works by targeting a woman's brain chemistry. You understand?

Me: I'm not sure I do, so when a woman takes this drug, she will be sexually driven?

Him: Yes. Let me put it like this, women with low sex drive tend to have higher levels of brain chemicals that increase sexual inhibition and lower levels of chemicals that lead to sexual excitement. Bremelanotide work to balance out those chemical levels. It's about trying to restore this balance and tipping it in the direction of excitation when a woman wants it.

This is alot to take in. I don't know whether to believe Buhle that she was really drugged or what. But how do I move on with her knowing that she has a dead child with Smanga?

Me: Okay, I get it now. Thank you doc, that's all I needed to know.

Him: it's for women only.

Me: (chuckles) don't worry I got that. Thank you Zwane.

Him: You welcome.

I got up and left.

Next step is finding those jeans, which won't be easy...

TUMI

We've been here for the past 3 hours and we still haven't figured out a way to find out what game Zanele is playing. We can't even figure out how to get to her. I think maybe it's because we've never ever dealt with a woman before.

It was just me, Dankies and Tukelo. We even had Pitsi and Thabang on a conference call but still they also can't come up with anything.

Dankies: Maybe we're over thinking this. I mean she's a woman

Tukelo: Yeah so?

Dankies: I'm just saying we shouldn't be thinking of complicated plans, we should just get straight to the point.

Thabang: I think you're on to something.

Pitsi: Talk monna.

Dankies: We all know she's crazy about one thing, right?

Tukelo: I don't think I follow

I think we've all figured out what Dankies is talking about including Tukelo.

Me: Yes we do Dankies, I think I like where this is going.

Dankies: So why not use it as bait?

Tukelo: What?! No ways!

Pitsi: Dankies is right, it's our only shot. We can't kidnap her, we can't kill her so we have to figure out a way to know what she's up to without hurting her.

Me: It won't be even long before she spills the beans.

Tukelo: How do I do that?

Thabang: Come on, you're a charmer, you'll figure something out. It won't be even that hard to convince her. She is madly inlove with you.

Tukelo: How do I convince to have an affair with me, she us married now

Me: Did you hear the part where Thabang said she's madly inlove with you? Of course she will agree.

Dankies: I wouldn't be surprised if she loved you more than she loved her husband.

Me: It's like that vele. On her wedding day, she was crying for Tukelo.

Tukelo: You can't keep a secret can you?

He gives me a deadly look.

Thabang: Then it's settled.

Insert Fifty-Seven😊

ZANELE

I just can't stand looking at his face anymore. I've been pretending for the past 2 years. I just can't do it anymore. Now he wants me to have his kid? No, I don't think I would want to have his child. Having his child would be a living nightmare.

My plan just took a very sharp turn. I didn't think that my plan would backfire like this. Things I did for love.

He comes in carrying a bag full of groceries, I just look at him. He puts the bag on top of the counter, he tries kissing my cheek and I back away. He sighs.

Me: Don't give me that attitude Anele. You're the one who came an hour late.

Him: Oh, I had to pass by my mom's house.

Me: For what? You didn't inform me about it.

Him: So now I need an excuse to go to my mom's house.

Me: You're forgetting that it's your turn to cook today.

Him: (sigh) I know that babe, that's why I brought takeaways.

Me: Takeaways? You didn't even ask me what I want. I don't even feel like having pizza tonight.

Him: What do you want?

Me: if you cared enough, you would've called and asked me.

I leave him standing, went to our room and slammed the door. I just can't stand his sight any longer. I swear my head is going to explode one of these days.

He starts knocking.

Him: Zanele, open the door. I will go get you what you feel like having.

Me: I'm fine Anele, just... Just please leave me alone.

Him: Babe, why are you acting like this?

Me: Leave me alone Anele!

Him: Where am I supposed to sleep?

Me: We have a guestroom.

Him: But I have a bed, why would I be a guest in my own house?

Me: Then sleep on the couch, I don't want you next to me tonight.

He doesn't respond, I hear footsteps. Guess he is leaving me alone, thank God.

I hate my life right now. I'm married to this man that I hate to the core, it's been hard so hard but now that I'm married to him, I can finally kill him and take away everything away from him, just like he took away everything from me.

My phone beeps, I check it and it's Tukelo. My heart skips a beat, I feel goosebumps all over my skin, I feel my palms sweating. Still after everything, he still makes me feel like this. I am even afraid to read his text.

I take my phone and I open his text.

Him: >Meet me for lunch? Say tomorrow 1:30 pm?<

I can't believe what I'm reading. Never did I think that this day would come, I have been waiting for it for the past 2 years.

I reply.

Me: >Sure. See you tomorrow I guess<

I don't want to sound desperate but my heart is literally doing back flips right now. I thought he was still under Amahle's spell. Guess Nthabi's plan worked after all.

TUMI

I just knew it! I knew that Mbatha wasn't as clean. He is shady and dumb too. For someone that scary, he's not as smart as I thought he would be. It was easy getting the information I needed. He's been arrested at least 5 times, everytime his dockets go missing so he must have someone working for him on the inside. I don't even think his family knew about his arrests though. To them he's just a responsible, loving father who owns businesses and I'm not about to burst that bubble. This man is into drugs, car hijacking, card scamming and he even owns a brothel. The man is busy.

Right now I'm on my way to meet him. He thinks he's meeting a client. I spot him sitting on the far end of the restaurant. I insisted on booking the entire place, he agreed with me. He doesn't see me approaching me, he's just busy on his phone.

I sit across him and place the file I had right in front of him.

Him: It's about goddamn time, I've been waiting for you for the past...

He raises his head and our eyes meet.

I smile.

I see rage on his face same time.

Him: What are you doing here?

Me: I wanted to be the one that personally delivers this parcel to you.

Him: What is this?

Me: Take it, and read it.

He looks at me confused, I chuckle. I'm going to enjoy this.

He takes the file and start reading through it. Immediately I see his forehead getting sweaty. He looks at me and back at the file. I'm pretty satisfied with myself right now. I know for a fact that I have him right where I want him.

He unbuttons his first shirt button. I chuckle.

Me: It's getting hot in here I see.

Him: Where did you get this?

Me: Wrong question. What you should be asking is that, when am I coming to your house and pay whatever you want and do things the right way.

Him: (chuckles) that's what this is about? You went through all that trouble for what? For them?

Me: They're my family. What kind of a father are you?

Him: She embarrassed me!

Me: So? It's not the end of the world. Look, I tried doing things the easy way, now we're doing it my way. The fun way.

He looks at me, the look is quiet pleasing to me.

Him: Who are you?

Me: Just someone you wouldn't want to make enemies with. I'm pretty sure your wife has no idea about the real Mbatha, right?

He looks at me and not respond.

Me: I will take that as a no and we wouldn't want her finding out now would we?

Him: Just tell me what you want.

Me: Allow me to pay for my child and marry your daughter

Him: Now you're out of your bloody mind.

Me: If you refuse working with me, you'll not only have your wife to deal with.

Him: Are you threatening me?

Me: only cowards make threats, that wasn't a threat, it was a promise. Just because you think nothing can have you arrested, doesn't mean that I can't have you arrested.

Him: (chuckles) do you even know who I am?

Me: Do you know who I am? Right now, I know you have 5 men surrounding this place, two at the back and three at the front. Should anything go wrong they strike. Let me tell you a fun fact, I have 10 men surrounding your men, should you refuse working with me, they strike. So don't make a mistake.

I see him gulp.

This is not how I planned to make the first impression to the father of the woman I love but right now I don't have much of a choice.

Him: You just want to marry my daughter? Aren't you married?

Me: Yes I am. She's going to be my second wife.

He laughs. Like he's watching one of Trevor Noah's shows.

Me: Did I perhaps say something funny?

Him: You've completely lost your mind. Will even Nosipho agree to that?

Me: She did.

Him: If she did then why are you talking to me?

Me: I want to do things the right way. I don't want to feel like I'm owing some man. I can't marry my wife on debt, that's madness.

Him: No what you're telling me is madness. You think coming to me and threatening me is the right way?

Me: I am only going to say this once, it's either we do things my way or the fun way, you choose.

He doesn't respond.

Me: I have somewhere to be. I'm giving you 24 hours, starting now. Try anything funny, I won't hesitate having your ass locked up and making sure that dear wife finds out about it. Don't test me Mbatha.

I gather my things and left. I hope this does the trick because seriously I have no clue what will happen if this doesn't work. All that's left is to talk to Thandi. Which I'm hoping won't be much of a challenge since she's fond of Thapelo and Nosi.

ANDILE

My life is a mess. No, my life is fucked up. I just never know how to deal with the situations I face. It just gets tougher each day. Now that I know that Buhle was indeed telling the truth, I'm just stuck. I have the proof with me. It wasn't easy getting these jeans, I had to break in her room but I guess it was worth it.

I know what Buhle said and what the doctor said, and I understand perfectly what these papers are saying but in my head all that is ringing is that Smanga raped my girlfriend. That makes my blood boil.

I get up and I storm off. I have to find this bastard.

I find him at his usual spot with his friends. I push off his friends, I grab him.

Him: What the fuck man?

I punch his perverted face.

He hits the floor, he tries getting up, I don't give him a chance to. I start kicking him.

His friends try getting me away from him but I push whoever tries even touching while punching this airhead.

He keeps on groaning and asking me what he did. That alone is pissing me off. I get on top of him and I punch him countlessly.

His pals soon realize that Smanga is losing the battle, they start ganging up on me. They grab me and throw me on the floor. I start receiving punches all over. I try fighting them off, but they are way too many. They make me stand, one of them hold me from behind and some start punching me on my stomach.

I hear a car tyres screeching then a gunshot. They all fled. I hit the ground. I start coughing up blood.

Him: Andile, what the hell?

I raise my eyes, I see Tukelo. Man this dude has perfect timing. For a minute there I thought I was dying.

Him: Are you okay?

He helps me get up.

Me: Yeah I'm good.

Him: What was all that about?

Me: Long story.

Him: Get in the car.

He leaves me standing and got in, I follow him. He starts the car.

Him: So tell me, what was that all about? I thought you said you'll stay out of trouble Andile.

Me: He raped my girl, I wasn't about to let him get away with it.

Him: What? Nonhle was raped?

Me: No not her.

Him: Then who? In fact I don't care, you could've reported him not taking matters into your own hands.

Me: It's not easy. It's just all complicated

Him: Oh well, you just got a beating, a good one at that. Was it worth it?

Me: I will be fine but what about her? She will be traumatized forever. She was a virgin, she got pregnant and lost her baby.

Him: Whoa.

Me: Exactly.

Him: Okay I understand your frustrations but now you just made things a whole lot worse, you just scored yourself some new enemies.

Me: I don't care, I wasn't going to let him get away with it.

Him: There are ways to deal with people like him. And you usually come to me when you're in trouble, what happened this time?

Me: There wasn't enough time to think, I had time to act. Besides, sometimes I need to fight my own battles without having to ask anyone for help.

Him: You must really love this woman then.

I sigh. Do I?

Me: I did. I'm not sure now.

Him: What about your baby mama?

Me: I love her too but with all the drama that's happening I've been distracted, I just don't have time for her and that's drifting us apart. The fact that my uncles want me to marry her, it's driving me even more crazy.

He laughs.

Me: I'm serious. I'm not ready for that kind of commitment.

Him: I'm not even ready for that too. You're only 17, are your uncles insane?

Me: They're nuts.

Him: Does Nonhle know about this?

Me: No she doesn't. I can't tell her, what if it hurts her when I tell her that I don't want to marry her, yet?

Him: I don't think it will, she will probably think that's absurd too.

Me: You can never be sure with women. She might throw a tantrum and over think this.

Him: Yeah, you're probably right. But I'm sure you can make her understand.

Me: I don't even want her to even find our about it.

Him: But you do plan on marrying her one day?

Me: One day, yes but not now. I still have varsity and I want to start on a business venture. I was hoping you'd help me with that Bra Tuks?

Him: Me?

Me: Yes. I trust your judgment and you're my idol. I want to start something next year, I want to support my kid.

Him: I like your thinking. Why don't you draw up a business plan, then we can talk.

Me: Serious?

Him: Yeah.

Me: Thank you. You'll get it before this year ends.

Him: Great.

This is the best news I've received in a long ass time. Despite the pain I'm feeling all over my body, I can say I'm happy with what I've just heard.

Me: So tell me, what happened to Amahle's knee?

Him: There's something wrong with her knee?

Me: Come on bra Tuks, I know that you know.

Him: In case you haven't noticed, I'm done with your sister. So whatever happens to her, it's none of my concern anymore.

I could see it in his eyes that he meant every word. Whenever he spoke about her, you'd always see a smile on his face, now I see hatred, hurt and anger. Wow, Amahle is really being selfish right now, the man is hurting worse part she's keeping his baby away from him but I think she is old enough to know what she's doing.

Me: But that doesn't change anything between us, right?

Now I see his smile

Him: Of course it won't. Otherwise, I was going to let them kill you if I didn't care about you.

Me: (chuckle) I had that under control though.

Him: I'm sure you did.

He laughs. I laugh along with him.

Insert Fifty-Eight☺

AMAHLE

I never felt so empty. It's the start of the new year now and I'm only 6 months pregnant but I feel fat and huge. One would think I'm 9 months pregnant, I'm just too huge. The doctor said my baby is just a little overweight. This baby is going to be the death of me I swear. I just hope I won't have any complications when I give birth. The thing I hate about him is that he's making me all moody, grumpy and mostly emotional. I just cry for no reason sometimes, I just throw a tantrum for no good damn reason.

I feel sorry for my family sometimes, mostly Charles though. The reason I feel this empty it's because I feel like something missing, a part of me is missing. At least I'm having a peaceful pregnancy. I'm sitting

on the veranda outside my house, on the floor by the way. This baby is making me do crazy things. Sometimes I feel like staying in the toilet the whole day. I find that soothing. I have no idea why.

Andile: Mommy!

He hits me on my thigh and sits next to me. I look at him.

Me: You just had to hit me.

Him: You look bored, I came here to keep you company.

Me: I'm never bored with this baby inside of me

Him: When's he popping vele?

He brushes my tummy

Me: Three more months

Him: What? It looks like you're about to pop that baby anytime soon.

Me: Yes I know. I don't get why he's so huge because I don't have much of a appetite.

Him: You should see your doctor about that.

Me: I did. She said he's perfectly fine, there's nothing wrong with him, he's just a little overweight and indeed he's so heavy.

Him: you cannot sit around here all day, let's go out. Just us, it's been a while.

Me: But I don't feel like going out. In fact I don't want to. I can't go out there looking like a pig.

Him: Your man never treats you wena, no wonder you look like a pig.

I give a deadly look..

Him: No I'm serious. When Nonhle was pregnant, I treated her like a queen, she wouldn't be lying on the floor like this.

Me: That's because I'm not carrying his child, remember? Help me get up.

He stands up and helps me get on my feet.

Him: Even so, he loves you, so he says, so now he must make efforts and love your kid too.

Me: I doubt that will ever happen Andile.

Him: Why you're with the nigga Amahle?! Seriously! Why? There's a man who loves you more than anything in this world and you're keeping his baby away from him? Come on.

Me: It's alot complicated than that. I don't want you to understand and I don't expect you to understand. Just take me to the mall and get me ice-cream because now I'm craving for it! And stop talking nonsense.

I leave him standing.

I hate people who will judge me without knowing the real reason behind my actions. I hate explaining myself too. They just don't get it, if I stay with the man, my baby dies. I can't afford that, I suffered alot when I lost Nkanyiso and I will never ever forgive myself knowing I lost my baby while I could've done something to prevent it.

What if Tukelo fails to save me, again? I was shot and he wasn't there to protect me. What if he fails again? The only reason I'm with Charles, I want to convince Tukelo that he's not the baby daddy. I just don't need Tukelo right now. I don't need complications. Yes I love him so much and I miss him everyday but I can't be with him until there's assurance that he can protect me.

As soon as we got to the mall, immediately I wanted to leave. The place was too crowded and I feel like people are staring at me.

Me: I want to leave.

Him: Hawu! We just got here. We haven't even had ice-cream yet.

Me: I don't care. I just feel like everyone is watching me.

Him: Yeah that stomach of yours is really grabbing attention

I give a death stare.

Him: I'm only joking. These people don't know who you are so I'm pretty sure they're not staring.

Me: Andile...

Him: No sis, we came here to relax and can you stop stressing over nothing.

Me: Just get me my ice cream then.

Him: You will get your ice cream, first let's do something fun.

I roll my eyes.

We end up having lunch at Spur's after that he had to take me to play some video games. It's just something we always did when we were growing up but I have to admit, my day is turning out just great.

Andile suggested we go shopping for the baby, but I'm against that. I am just not ready for that. I will start when I know for sure that this baby won't leave me. We go shopping for Khanya instead.

Me: When last did you see her anyway?

Him: Yoh! It's been awhile. I last saw her on Christmas. Things between me and her mom are not so good.

Me: Trouble in paradise?

Him: I guess you could say that.

Me: Why? What happened?

Him: I'm the problem. I don't know, this whole Buhle saga just distracted me. I know I love Nonhle and I don't want to lose her but for the life of me, I can't do anything right. Whatever I do for her is just not enough anymore.

Me: Try making some efforts. Treat her like you use to treat her before Khanya came along. Don't let what happened to Buhle distract you and also don't let what your uncles told you get into your head. If you want to marry her, you will but at your own time not because you're being forced to.

Him: Yeah. I wish it was that simple.

Me: Kanti ke, it is that simple. You guys tend to over think things whereas we like things simple. I'm pretty sure a little candle light dinner, flowers, chocolates and a heart felt apology will do the trick. She will forget she was ever hurt.

Him: (smiles) I guess you're right sis', thank you.

Me: My pleasure, I really hope...

Before I could even finish my sentence I see something really disturbing.

What in the hell??

I blink quite a few times hoping that my eyes are deceiving me but nope! What I'm seeing is what it is.

Tukelo and Zanele? Holding hands? Looking all lovey dovey?

I feel hot, I feel dizzy, my whole body starts heating up, my breathing is out of control.

Him: Amahle, Amahle... Are you okay?

I look at him and I nod.

I don't think he saw what I saw.

Him: You don't look okay. You're all sweaty. What's up?

Me: I'm fine, I just...

I suddenly feel nauseous and I run to the toilets to throw up.

Just when I thought I was having peaceful pregnancy, this happens! Why does Tukelo's behavior get to me? But I didn't expect that he can cheat with my brother's wife! They may didn't kiss or anything but what I saw shows that they're way too close and there's definitely something going on.

I leave the toilet and went to the sink to wash my mouth and face.

Andile starts knocking.

Him: Sis', are you okay?

Me: I'm fine.

Him: You're worrying me.

Me: I was feeling a little nauseous but I'm fine now.

I open the door.

Me: See I'm okay.

I try faking a smile.

Him: Good. Now that we're done shopping for Sihle, we can go get you ice cream.

Me: No. Let's just go home. I've had enough fun for one day.

Him: You're sure?

Me: Yes I am.

Him: Okay then. Let's go.

He carries all the paper bags and we went to the parking to wait for the cab. Again I see these two walking to Zanele's car. They share a hug, Tukelo kisses her on the cheek. My insides turn, my knees wobble. He opens the door for her, she gets in and leaves.

What the hell is going on?

Tukelo walks in our direction, our eyes meet. He stops walking and looks at me. He couldn't care less that I saw him with my brother's wife. I could read it through his eyes and body language. He starts walking again, he lites a cigarette gets in his car and leaves.

Andile: Amahle!

Me: Huh?

Him: I've been calling you. The cab is here. What is wrong with you seriously? You seem alot distracted.

Me: I'm fine. Let's go.

We get in the car and driver takes off. Andile is talking to me and I am not even paying any attention to what he's saying. I'd be lying if I say what I saw didn't get to me, it did and it hurts asf.

I just hope it doesn't affect me way too much. What honestly hurt the most, is the fact that he didn't care that I saw him. He just carried on like nothing happened.

My phone rings, it's Charles. I roll my eyes. I'm not in the mood for him so I let it ring.

Andile: Amahle, your phone.

Me: Yes I see it ring. I'm just not in the mood for him.

Him: Oh okay.

I look out the window and I start reflecting on how miserable my life is. I thought this would be easy but this is so hard.

Me: Stop the car!!

I cannot believe this. The driver brakes immediately.

Andile: What now? Don't tell me your water broke.

Me: What? No you idiot! I just... You know what just shut it.

I take a closer look. Things are just revealing themselves to me today. Only if Anele listened to me about this wife of his.

What the hell is Zanele doing with Nthabi?

Entlek, what the hell is going here?!

TUMI

I am so swamped with work. I had a lot of personal problems that I ended up neglecting my work, now I'm just a lot busier. I've been in my office since morning and I have to attend a court case in less than an hour. I have to prepare for that too.

Finally! Me and MaMbatha, we are getting married, I couldn't be happier. It did cause a little drift between me and Thandi but she finally made peace with it. She told me that she was expecting something like this to happen anyway. What's left is for me to tell my father to send uncles to the Mbatha's.

About her father, he had no choice but to agree to everything I say. I couldn't care less that he didn't like me. I'm not a fan of him either, I'm just more than pleased that my family is finally coming together.

Lisa comes barging in, followed by my ass brother.

Lisa: I'm so sorry sir, I tried explaining to him that you're busy and you don't need any visitors today but it fell on deaf ears.

Tukelo: I'm deaf now? I heard you loud and clear, I just didn't care about what you had to say.

Me: It's okay Lisa. You can go.

She gives Tukelo a nasty look and leaves. Yes, they have a history. A one-night stand sorta thing. I suspect Lisa caught feelings.

Me: What are you doing here?

I carry on with what I was doing. I really don't have time for him because I know for sure that there's absolutely no reason that brought him here.

Him: Can you stop what you're going and pay attention to me.

Me: Some of us have kids to feed.

I was busy with some paper work. I quickly realize that came out wrong but I am not going to apologize and he knows that I won't.

Me: What do you want anyway?

Him: I was around and I thought I'd come by and see you.

He sits on my white couch, he relaxes his body, he puts his feet on arm rest with shoes on. Idiot.

Me: Really? That's crap and you know it.

Him: Well that's how it is.

Me: Don't you have work to do? Your companies aren't doing so good.

Him: I don't have kids to feed so why bother

We are having this conversation not looking at each other. He's busy staring at the ceiling throwing a ball up and down, I'm doing work.

Me: Come on, don't take what I said personally, it came out wrong...

Him: Yeah I know but I just don't see the need of working on my companies. The only reason I ever worked so hard was so I can build a legacy for my kids. Now that the woman I thought was the one who will carry my kids did what she did, I'm done committing or even trying to have kids. The money I have now, is enough to last me a lifetime.

Me: Don't talk like that Tukelo. I mean, why you're so sure that the kid is not yours?

Him: What do you mean? You were there when she told me that she's carrying Charles' baby.

Me: Yes I know but come on, why did she wait so long to tell you? She gets shot and only then she decides to tell you? There's something going on here.

Him: She just wanted to hurt and she did that successfully.

Me: Wake up and smell the coffee Tukelo. Amahle is carrying your baby, if I were you I'd be looking for ways to prove that not sitting down and sulking.

Him: I don't have the energy to deal with her anymore. If she's keeping my baby away from me then so be it. I'm tired running after her.

Me: What if someone's threatening her life? There must be reasons behind what she's doing. You know that woman Tukelo, she wouldn't do you like that. Just investigate. Will you ever forgive yourself if you lose your second child? Worse, losing your child's mother?

He doesn't respond. He just keep on throwing that ball. I know for a fact that he's considering what I'm saying, judging that he didn't argue with me but he's just emotionless. I can't read his feelings.

Him: By the way, I saw her today.

Me: Oh?

Him: Yes at the mall. I was with Zanele that time.

Shit! I look at him.

Me: She saw you with her?

Him: Yeah.

He's not even bothered by that. He just doesn't care.

Me: This can ruin our plans, what if she tells Anele, after all the efforts made...

Him: Relax. She won't.

Me: Why you're so sure?

He looks at me

Him: You're the that told me that I know her right? Yes I know her and I also know that she won't say a word to her brother so just relax.

He goes back to throwing the ball. I hate him when he's like this. He's just too serious and he doesn't have any care in the world.

I wish they can just bypass all this quarreling and just have peace because they're miserable without each other....

Insert Fifty-Nine 😊

AMAHLE

I don't know what to do how to deal with this. It's been 2 whole days since I saw Tukelo and Zanele together. I haven't told anyone about it, it's hard falling asleep too. Why would he do this? It's just so unlike him. My pride stopped me when I dialed his number because I know for a fact that he will say something that will piss me off. Though, I really want to know.

I don't know when I dialed his number but my heart beats faster the moment I hear it ring. He picks up when I was about to hang up.

Him: Hello?

My throat becomes dry, words fail me. Hearing his voice just brought everything back. I feel goosebumps all over my body, my heart races, why am I doing this again?

Him: Amahle, are you going to talk or should I drop this call?

He uses that tone of his that makes me scared to even answer any of his questions.

Me: Don't pretend as if you don't know the reason why I'm calling.

Him: (sigh) if it's about what you saw 2 days back, keep in mind that

I don't have to explain myself to you anymore.

Me: Waze wawakhuluma amakaka umuntu emdala (Now you're you're talking crap). This is my brother's wife we're talking about here, of course you have some explaining to do.

Him: I'd understand if it was your brother calling me but right now, I don't have to explain anything to you.

Me: Are you being serious right now?

Him: As a heart attack. Don't think I'd apologize for what you saw. You dated my friend, fucked him, I never asked you to explain anything to me. You did what you thought was best, I'm doing what I think it's best.

Me: Oh?! So you screwing my brother's wife is best? That's what's best, really? What's he got to do with any of this?

Him: This has nothing to do with you so stay out of it. Focus on yourself and your child.

Me: I thought Anele was your friend, how can you do such?

Him: I'm an adult Amahle, and so is Zanele. We both well aware of what we're doing so there's absolutely no need for you to lecture me. Yes I know he's your brother's wife, I'm fully aware of that, there's no need for you to remind me.

I ever regret calling him now. I feel my insides turn, my blood boiling.

Me: How do you sleep at night?

Him: I sleep like a baby, thank you very much for asking.

His responses are pissing me off. What is he trying to achieve by this?

Me: You are sick in the head, do you know that.

Him: Ey, you're telling me about irrelevant things, if you have nothing else to say please, I beg you shut the hell up and drop the call. Make sure you never call me to ask me shit like this again.

I don't respond, I just feel tears running down my cheeks.

Him: I guess you've said it all, can I hang up now? Wait, but before I do I'm going to ask you something and it will be the last time I'm asking you this, you better be fucken honest.

Me: What?

Him: Tigress... I mean Amahle, are you carrying my child?

Now he's humble as ever, he's so calm and the rudeness in his tone is gone. I silently cry, I couldn't take it anymore the pain and hurt is just way too much. A part of me wants to tell him what's really going on but a big part of me knows better than to tell him the truth.

Me: For the last time, no I'm not.

He hangs up.

I let out a loud cry. Why is it so hard? Noone told me it will be this hard. My mom comes in.

Her: Amahle baby, what is it?

She sits next to me and brushes my back.

Me: It's hurts mom, it hurts so bad. I want him, I want to go back to him.

Her: Then why can't you? If that's what you want then you should do it.

Me: It's not that simple mom. There are so... so many complications. I just want this love I have to fade so I will be able to move on. I just want to move mama...

Her: Shhh baby, it's going to be okay. Just give it time. You will see, you will find happiness. It won't always be like this. Just cry and let the pain out.

She hugs me tightly and I just cry on her arms. I never thought I'd ever find myself in such a position.

..

I'm such a baby, after my mother consoled me, I fell asleep. My vibrating phone woke me up. It's a call from Nosi.

Me: Hello?

She starts screaming. I had to remove the phone away from my ear.

My God this child!

Me: What the fuck?

Her: I'm so sorry. I just couldn't hold it in. My friend I'm getting married. Can you believe that?!

Me: What? To whom?

Her: Are you seriously asking me that question? To Tumi.

Me: Tumi? Tumi is married, oh no don't tell me he's divorcing Thandi.

Her: No he's not.

Don't tell me that...

Me: You'll be his second wife? You his wife number 2?

I don't even give her a chance to explain, I just laugh at her.

Her: Hawu, Amahle, I thought you'd be happy for me.

Me: I didn't expect something like this from you Nosi. Wow.

Her: Well, I've agreed to it and it's happening.

Me: I mean, how did Thandi take it?

Her: It was hard at first but she's okay with it now. She's even helping plan for the wedding.

Me: You lie!

Her: I'm serious. I just can't believe that I'm getting married.

Me: How did your father agree to this?

Her: I don't know what Tumi said to him and I couldn't care less, he just called me and said he's giving me his blessing so now this weekend, Tumi's family is going to my family to start negotiations.

Me: But please tell me you're getting married in at least 6 months time. I can't attend your wedding with a huge stomach.

Her: Yeah don't worry, I can't have my matron of honor looking like a pig.

I laugh.

Me: Wow, what a fun way of asking me.

Her: That's because I wasn't asking, I was telling.

Me: And it'd be a great honor. I just can't believe that you're getting married, to Tumi.

Her: I can't wrap my head around it either. I'm going to be someone's wife.

Me: You're okay with it though? I mean sharing a husband.

Her: (sigh) That's not how I planned my life as well but what can be done now because I love him, he's the only one for me. If I let him go then I know I wouldn't be able to survive. So I'd rather have half of him then have nothing at all.

Me: I hear you babe, as long as you know what you're doing and as long as you happy then I will support you.

Her: Thank you. So what about you? How are you holding up?

Me: I'm breathing Nosi.

Her: It will be okay Amahle. I know you never planned on having Charles's baby but nothing can be done now if Tukelo was meant to be yours he will come back regardless of you having another man's child.

Yeah even my friends have no idea that I'm carrying Tukelo's child. I wasn't planning on telling them either.

Me: If you don't mind, I don't want to talk about this.

Her: I understand, maybe we should meet up for drinks.

Me: This pregnancy is totally destroying my life, I never want to be around people.

Her: I so get it. How about I bring lunch to you?

Me: Now that would be lovely.

Her: Okay see you.

Me: Bye.

She hangs up. This is some crazy ass shit. Now Nosi is getting married to Tumi? Didn't see that coming.

TUKELO

I have never been this hurt by a woman before, maybe it's because I've never loved this hard before. What Amahle did to me was unexpected and I'd be lying if I say it didn't get to me because it did, it affected my entire life, my sex life included. I just fail to satisfy another woman now. I just have sex, for the sake of having it not because I want to. The woman destroyed me. Never thought I'd ever say those words.

My phone rings. A call from Lesotho.

Me: Hello?

Her: Hey, can I speak to Tukelo?

Me: Uh, speaking.

Her: Thank God, I've been trying to get ahold of for months but I never got through. You're speaking to Lerato.

Me: Lerato?

Her: Yes. Mavis' daughter.

Me: Oh. Can I help you?

Her: Yes, Tukelo I have a daughter now.

Me: Oh, congratulations.

Her: Let me rephrase, we have a daughter.

Me: Now you're speaking rubbish.

Her: She's 7 months, her name is Rethabile.

Me: Yey! Don't talk nonsense here, I don't have a kid with you.

Her: I don't have much time, my mom told me not to contact you but I need you to be there for our baby, I can't take care of her alone, I'm struggling Tukelo. I need you, your baby needs you.

Me: You're talking crap, I don't have a baby with you. Why wait so long to tell me?

Her: I was scared okay, I thought you wouldn't want her but please believe me. She's a replica of you. Allow me to show you.

Me: I don't have time for this. Don't ever call me again and talk such fuckery.

I drop the call and block her numbers same time.

I know I want a kid but I can't have a kid with her. She's talking nonsense anyway, I did not impregnate her.

Look now, I'm even late for my lunch date with Zanele. I've been seeing her for months but still I can't figure out what she's up to. We need to be rough with her now, I'm tired of this game we are playing.

As soon as we meet with the guys, we have to come up with a plan to kidnap her and put an end to all of this.

ANDILE

As Amahle suggested, I'm planning a little candle light dinner for Nonhle. I'm trying by all means to make things right between us because I don't think I want to lose her, no I can't lose her.

It took alot of convincing to get her to agree. She is really mad, I don't want her to label me as an irresponsible parent which lead us to even more fighting. Everything is ready for her I'm just waiting for her to arrive. If my mom barges in now and see this, I'm in deep shit and I will have to do alot of explaining.

There's knock on my door.

Me: Who is it?

The person doesn't respond but continues knocking. She did she will be here by 10pm, it is close to 10pm, so it has to be her.

I open the door and my sister with her huge ass stomach walks in. She starts laughing, I just look at her.

Her: Someone decide to take my advice I see.

Me: What are you doing here?

Her: I knew something was up, as soon as you asked me to cook a special meal. So I had to come see what's up.

Me: That's called being nosy.

Her: I can never know with you. Does mom know about this?

Me: No and you're not going to tell her.

Her: Oohh, that's going to cost you.

She sits on my bed that had roses and she starts helping herself with strawberries, I rush to her and took them away.

Me: You and your baby will start eating whatever you see here so please leave and get off my bed Amahle.

I pull her up.

Her: But I'm hungry.

Me: What's that got to do with me? Go make yourself some food.

Her: I'm craving for wings.

Me: call your boyfriend but I want you to leave. Nonhle might walk in any minute now.

Her: Come on Andile, I can see you have wings here, please spare me some.

Me: What? No! They are not for you. Amahle, I'm warning you for the last time, get out.

Her: Oh, Hi Nonhle.

I turn and I see her smiling behind me. Great! Just great! Now all that I have planned has been ruined.

Nonhle: Hey, I saw the door opened so I let myself in...

Me: No, it's okay. Amahle was leaving, right Amahle?

Amahle: I'm not leaving until I get what I want.

She sits on a chair.

Why? Why me? I could see it that she's dead serious.

Me: Fine! Fine Amahle, take the damn wings.

Her face lit up, she takes the bowl that had wings and she starts eating. Why isn't she leaving?

Me: Just take the whole bowl and leave.

Amahle: (squeals) really? Thank you! You guys have a goodnight.

She kisses my cheek and leaves.

I lock the door.

Me: I'm sorry about that.

Her: (chuckles) it's okay. I understand how hormones work.

Me: But I just don't get why she has to trouble me and not her boyfriend.

Her: I guess she enjoys it more when you're her target.

Me: Ay, I need to tell mom about this. Anyway, how are you doing?

Her: (sigh) I'm okay Andile, you?

Me: I'm living. You can take sit.

Her: (chuckles) Where?

Me: Oh right, Amahle ruined things. You were supposed to arrive here with the lights off, and a blindfold on, but we can sit on the floor, we are having an indoor picnic.

I take her hand and lead her to where we are supposed to sit. She sits down and I sit across her.

Her: We are having takeaways right?

Me: No, I cooked for you.

Her: You? Cooked? For me?

Me: Hawu babe, yes I did.

Her: I don't buy that.

Me: Okay, my sister cooked but I helped her.

Her: (laughs) it's a thought that counts, I guess. And the food smells amazing, even this setting is amazing. I didn't know you can be this cheesy and romantic.

Me: Well, I try.

Awkward silence.

I may have planned this whole picnic but I made a mistake of not rehearsing a heartfelt apology. I now realize that I don't know what to say.

Me: So, let's start digging in.

I dish up for her and myself.

We start eating through a light conversation.

As time passes my heart beats faster each minute. What do I say to her? I don't want to end up having an argument with her. How do I make sure that I don't end up saying all the wrong things? What I've realized about this woman is that she's very sensitive so I don't want her to end up crying because of the wrong things I said.

After our meal, I open the bottle of wine, maybe if I'm a little tipsy, I will get the courage I need. We drink wine, whilst having strawberries and chocolate.

2 bottles of wine later, she's out if it. I mean I get it, she's not used to alcohol I guess that's why it was easy for her to get drunk, while I still feel like I need something stronger.

She starts telling me stories about Khanya, already I feel like I'm missing most of her life.

Her: I'm telling you Andile, your daughter is something else. She's only 4 months but already she wants to crawl.

Me: (smiles) That proves that she's a true Zungu. She doesn't gave time to waste.

Her: She's just growing up so fast, you know. Before I know it, she will going to school. We'll be attending her dance recitals and all.

Me: Or her soccer matches.

She looks at me awkwardly.

Her: Ay Andile, no daughter of mine will play soccer.

Me: You may never know sweetheart, her aunt is a great footballer, I'm also a great footballer so she might inherit that.

Her: I will talk her out of it.

Me: You can't keep her from doing what she loves.

Her: Let's not talk about this, we will just have to wait and see what she's good at.

Me: I guess you're right. Uhm, Nonhle, I think you know why I called you here. I want to fix us.

Her: You broke us.

Me: Yes I know that's why I'm the one doing the fixing. I had alot of things going on in my life and I ended up neglecting you and I'm deeply sorry for that.

Her: What can be more stressful than raising your child? What's so important Andile? And please don't lie to me.

Me: (clears throat) I had a friend who was going through hell, she had to...

Her: She?

Me: Please listen to me.

She keeps quiet.

Me: She had to learn that she was raped and got pregnant, after she found that out, she was knocked by a car. I had to be there for her. She has done so much for me, I couldn't just neglect her. I had to make sure that the people that did this to her pay.

Her: So in that way, I was neglected? Your daughter was neglected? Even if she felt sick, you didn't care? But you cared more about this friend of yours?

Me: I know there's no excuse for running away from my responsibilities, guess I failed to juggle everything. I'm sorry babe.

Her: This friend of yours must be really special then.

Me: Uhm... She is, I mean she was. You won't have to worry about me caring about her wellbeing anymore. I know now that I should put you guys first in everything that I do, everything else should come second. I don't want us to fight over this again. Nonhle Khumalo, I love you. I don't want to lose you, I can't lose you.

Her: Doesn't she have a name?

Me: Huh?

Her: This friend of yours, doesn't she have a name?

Oh boy, we will argue about this.

Me: She does.

Her: Then tell me her name Andile.

Me: Uhm... It's Buhle.

Her: Oh! So we were neglected because you had to nurse your girlfriend and play hero!

Me: It wasn't like that! It wasn't like that Nonhle. I won't lie to you, I didn't break up with her at that time but now it's over between us, I swear. You won't have to worry about me caring about her.

Her: Do you still love her?

I don't know.

Me: I don't love her anymore. Nonhle, if she meant something to me, I wouldn't be bothering myself with you. I want to be with you MakaKhanya. I want to build a future with you. I love you, trust me when I say that. I'm sorry that I've hurt you, it won't happen again. Please forgive me.

Her: You've hurt me Andile.

Me: Yes I know, it won't happen again. I won't promise you a perfect relationship but I will try my best to be irresponsible, and I will be the best boyfriend to you and and even better father to Lisakhanya. I'm new at this, please bare with me.

Her: (sigh) I love you too Andile, I can't imagine my life without you in it. Please try not to hurt me, I don't want us fighting about your exes.

Me: It won't happen again, I promise. Now come here.

She comes closer and sits next to me. We kiss, the kiss is filled with passion and hunger.

Me: I'm sorry okay?

Her: Yeah yeah. Let's have sex already.

Me: (laughs) so that's the only thing you missed about me.

Her: No but as soon as I walked in, I realized that I need sex.

Me: I still want to talk to you.

Her: Can't we do that after sex?

Me: No because you'll be tired and you won't hear a word I say.

Her: So what do you want to talk about babaKhanya?

She sits on top of me, with her legs on either sides, she wraps her arms around my neck. I feel a boner

Me: You know I'm leaving for Durban next month.

Her: Argh, you have to remind me that...

Me: No listen, why don't you come with me?

Her: What? I have work Andile.

Me: Ask for a transfer.

Her: That can take months

Me: I know, but I can speak to Tukelo, I'm sure he can pull some strings. Speed up the process.

Her: What about Khanya?

Me: I'm starting a business soon, Tukelo has my business plan. He didn't say anything yet but I could see that he was impressed. When that approves, I will be working whilst studying. We will have enough money to get ourselves a home.

Her: You're saying we should move in together?

Me: Yes.

She laughs.

Me: Hawu, what's so funny?

Her: You're serious? Andile, that can never work. We will argue and we end up drifting apart.

Me: Okay, maybe we won't move in together but we can get an apartment that belongs to us and use it on weekends. Or whenever we want to see each other.

Her: That's not a bad idea.

Me: Like you said, that can take months but I want you and Khanya to follow me.

Her: We'd love that.

Me: When you're going back to work anyway?

Her: Next week actually.

Me: As soon as you get back, ask for a transfer.

Her: We'll do that sthandwa sami. Now can we have sex?

Me: (chuckles) now we can have sex.

Her: Yey!

I laugh.

She starts kissing me. She gets on top of me and showers me with kisses. I've missed her lips. She takes off my shirt and my pants. Feeling her warm body on top of mine, made me realized how much I really missed her body on top of me. I strip off her clothes as well and damn, I got one hot baby mama, you can never tell that she gave birth a few months back. Her body has shape, her stomach is flat, she has no stretch marks on her body. She's still flawless and spotless. I see she wants to take charge, so I might as well just let her take charge. I'm going to enjoy this.

She starts on a slow pace, I know she will pick her pace, she likes it fast and rough. Before I know it, she picks up her pace. I enjoy it more when she's on top, the woman knows her staff. We switch positions, I ride her from the back, with each pound, the room was filled with her moans and screams. I feel her body shaking, I turn her body, she faces up. I fuck like her like I never did before.

Me: This is what you wanted, right?

Her: Stop... now you're... you're killing me dammit!

As soon as she said that, it's like she told me to pound her faster. Her screams got louder. Her whole body is sweaty, she's slippery. I can't even caress her breasts.

Her: Get off me Andile...

I'm only half way done. I pound her even faster. She cries, I literally see her tears running sideways. I chuckle. I reach my climax, I cum. I lie beside her and she's still crying, like crying crying.

Me: (chuckle) are you okay?

She doesn't even answer me, she's just crying.

Me: Ah babe.

I pull her arm and she lies on my chest, I comfort her.

Me: I'm sorry, okay?

I brush her back. How do you comfort someone who's crying because she had sex? Worse part, she's the one that asked for it.

Me: But you asked for it.

Her: I didn't say kill me you asshole!

She hits me on my chest.

Me: (laughs) I'm sorry babe okay?

Her: Are you even sorry?

Me: No but what do you want me to say?

She chuckles.

Her: I know I'm not having sex anytime soon

Me: Aybo! The night is still young.

Her: Forget it.

I laugh at her.

We cuddle, until I hear her snore slightly, in a cute way too. I'm too tired to pick her up and I don't want to wake her up, she's sleeping peacefully.

I take the throw that's on my bed and I use it to cover our bodies. I kiss her goodnight and I drift to sleep also...

Insert Sixty 😊

TUKELO

I think this has gone too far, I'm done playing Zanele's boyfriend. Now it's time to strike. It's been months and I have absolutely nothing. I can't get her to open up, I think she knows I'm on to her. She's way to careful I guess.

Today if I can't get anything tangible, I'm kidnapping her. I'm tired of long complicated plans, sometimes you just need to get straight to the point.

I find her in the hotel room, where we usually meet. I find her in a lingerie with the room decorated. I didn't feel anything, instead I just felt annoyed.

Me: What's this?

Her: Hawu Tukelo, this is called being romantic.

Me: Where's the need for all of this?

Her: Are you being serious right now?

Me: I just don't see the point, I just want sex Zanele. I had a long day, now I have to strip off that lacey thing of yours, which seems like a lot of work might I add.

Her: Aren't you used to being romanced?

Me: No, I am. But like I said I don't need all of that right now, take that thing off and get ready for me.

Her: Tukelo you can't talk to me like that

Me: Well I just did. Take that thing off.

I took off my shirt and headed for the bathroom. I wash my face.

I can't believe how my life has turned out, I have a half naked woman on the bed and I just don't want to have sex with her. Whenever I see a woman like that, I'd go crazy on her but right now, all I want is my Tigress. It's really hard moving on without her. I have to keep on reminding myself that she screwed me over, though a part of me refuse to believe that she'd do that to me. That's why I'm doing a little investigation as Tumi suggested.

I sit on the toilet seat and text Dankies.

Me: >So, anything yet?<

Him: >You won't believe this, Charles never attend any of the appointments<

How's that any help?

Me: >You only found that out? I asked you two days ago to dig up for me and you can only tell me something as useless as that?<

Him: >It's not useless, I mean think about it, if the baby is his, wouldn't he want to be a part of everything? Including attending doctor's appointments?<

He has a point but I need something more than that.

Me: >Find out more<

Him: >She's 6 months pregnant<

Last I saw her she said she was 2 months and she said that 3 months ago. She's supposed to be 5 months now, why would she lie to me?

Me: >Are you sure?<

Him: >Positive<

Me: >Okay. Keep me posted should you find any new information.<

Him: >Shots<

I swear on my ancestors, if Amahle is keeping my baby away from me, I will kill her. She can mess with me however but she has really crossed the line by hiding my baby away from me. I hope for her sake that she's not hiding my baby away from me.

I get up the seat and went to Zanele. I find her naked on the bed. Better.

Our session was just a session, it lacked passion and excitement. I can't keep on doing this, I'm going with my plan now, fuck what the others think. They jump off a cliff if they have a problem with what I'm about to do.

I sit next to her and gave her a glass of wine.

Her: Thanks. Tukelo can I ask you something and you better be honest.

Me: Uhm, okay.

Her: Do you honestly love me?

Me: Listen Zanele, I think it's best if we don't label anything, I mean you're married.

Her: Yes I know that. Just that I don't love my husband at all.

Me: Oh. Then why did you marry him?

She takes a sip of her wine.

Her: I did it for you, for us. Hoping to get you back. I did crazy things.

I think we're getting somewhere, this could be her opening up.

Me: What crazy things?

Her: Like making Anele fall inlove with me so he can get off your back and... and....

Me: And what?

And she's out. These drugs had to work now. I need to get her to the car, without anyone noticing. Okay, maybe I didn't think this plan through. I get a text, I hope it's Dankies. And it's Amahle.

Her: >I wonder if you're well aware that your ex is working together with your mistress but you told me you're know what you're doing and I must stay out of your business.<

What is she talking about? I'm conflicted on whether to call her or not. I end up dialing her number. She picks up and doesn't talk.

Me: What are you talking about Amahle?

Her: So now you care about what I have to say?

Me: If you don't want to elaborate more about this, then why bother even telling me?

Her: Because I still care, that's why!

Me: If you care then tell me.

Her: I'm talking about Nthabi and Zanele.

Me: What? Why you think they're working together?

Her: I saw them together Tukelo. The same day I saw you with Zanele.

Shit! Is that what I could be missing? Why were they even be working together?

Me: And you're telling me this now?

Her: You told me to stay away and that's exactly what I did.

Me: Well, thanks for letting me know, because I care I'd also like to let you know that your boyfriend is still married.

She keeps quiet.

Me: Didn't he show you divorce papers? Or you just didn't care enough to find out whether or not he's still married?

She hangs up.

Well I did my part, it's up to her now.

What are these women up to? I look at my problem at hand. How do I get her out of here?

I dial Tumi's number. I know he'll lecture me before he actually do what I want him to do. He picks up on my second attempt.

Him: What Tukelo? What?

Me: I have a problem.

Him: What now?

Me: I drugged Zanele.

Him: Why would you do that?

Me: I'm tired of this, I want to put it to an end.

Him: So what's the problem?

Me: I have no idea how I'm going to get her out if this hotel room.

Him: You drugged her in a hotel room? Are you mad?

Me: lecture me later, right now get here so you can help me get her out of here.

Him: You always involve yourself in some shit and expect me to bail you out.

Me: Hhebanna, I do the same mos.

Him: Ay voetsek man

He hangs up.

I know he's on his way as we speak.

I'm still cracking my head trying to figure out what is Zanele and Nthabi up to. I can't think of anything. They have one thing in common and that's being my ex. Could they be working together to bring me down? There is a possibility. I shouldn't be speculating, I should just get to the bottom of this.

Tumi arrives 30 mins later. He helps me get her out of the building unnoticed and we drive to the warehouse. Throughout the entire drive, he was lecturing me saying how stupid I can be and I always make decisions without consulting then, and so forth. He's making a stupid decision by taking a second wife, I never said anything about that, so I let him rant.

We arrive at the warehouse and we put Zanele in the Chamber, we strap her on a chair.

Him: What drug did you give her?

Me: It's just sleeping pills.

Him: That can take her forever to wake up.

Me: I have time. I want her to tell me exactly what's her deal with Nthabi.

Him: What's Nthabi got to do with any of this?

Me: I just recently found out that she's having meetings with Nthabi.

Him: Are you for real?

Me: Yes. I got the information from a trusted source.

Him: Who's that?

Me: You don't have to know everything about me you know.

I leave the chamber and went to the lounge. I need beer and weed. I take a six pack of Castle lite on the fridge, I start crashing.

Him: You'll get addicted to that.

Me: I don't care, it's the only thing that's able to keep me sane.

Him: Mmmm

Me: So, I'm conducting an investigation as you told me to.

Him: Really? Got anything yet?

Me: Not much. Just that Charles is never there for the doctor's appointments, never attended even one. And when she told me about her pregnancy, she said she's 2 months but she was actually 3 months.

Him: You better shut down the investigation

I look at him confused.

Him: I mean you have all the proof you need that she's indeed carrying your child. Why would she lie to you though?

Me: I'm not convinced Tumi, I don't want to get my hopes up but if she is carrying my child, she better start running now because when I get to her, hell will break loose.

Him: She might have her reasons.

Me: Stop vouching for her. There's absolutely no reason for her to hide the fact that she's carrying my baby.

Him: Can we just let her explain?

Me: No! I won't hear any of her explanations. Don't even try getting in my way Tumi.

What could be a reason to torture me like this? She's hurting me beyond and Tumi thinks I'm going to let it go, just like that? No ways!

As I'm half through my blunt, we hear a woman screaming for help. Guess our guest is awake. We both stand up and went to the chamber. She's crying and begging for help.

Her: Tukelo babe! Help me get out of here, please tell me you're here to save me.

I chuckle.

Me: Ey wena! I'm not here to save you, I'm here to kill you.

Her: What? Kill me? For what?

Me: For deceiving me.

Her: I don't know what you're talking about...

Tumi: Don't talk nonsense! What about the shootout that occurred at your own wedding? Your deal with Russian and Gabela?

Me: Not forgetting your meetings with Nthabiseng.

She keeps quiet.

Tumi: So you better start talking now if you know what's good for you. You know how crazy Tukelo is, don't unleash his inner beast.

Instead of talking she burst into tears, that annoyed the hell out of me.

Me: Ey ey Zanele! Don't start! Please I beg, don't start!

I roar and that startled her.

Her: Okay, okay. It wasn't my idea okay, it was all Nthabi. The shootout wasn't meant for any of you, Amahle was the target.

Me: Amahle? My Amahle? That Amahle? You better be talking about someone else. Tumi she better be talking about someone else.

I move up and down. Why would they go through all of that trouble just to get rid of Amahle?

Tumi: There's more to it than that so you better start talking.

Her: It all started back when I was dating Tukelo, you know how much I loved him. I knew he had a woman but I couldn't just let him go. When he broke up with me, I lost it. I wanted to kill that Nthabi. I knew in order for me to get him back, I need to do something big for him so he'll feel be in debt so I had to destroy his biggest threat and that's Anele, we all know he was way too close to getting a warrant of arrest for Tukelo, in fact all of you. I also had an agenda because I also hated his guts. He took everything away from me.

Me: So when he asked you to marry him, why did you agree?

Her: I had to destroy him Tukelo, I wanted to take everything away from him, just like he did.

Me: Where do I fit in all of that?

Her: At first, it was about you but when Nthabi came to me and told me that you also left her for Amahle, we had a common goal, that's bringing down the Zungus.

Tumi: So after everything, who was going to get Tukelo?

She keeps quiet

Tumi: (laughs) You women are stupid. Do you realize that you were going to turn on each other should this plan of yours succeed

Me: You're also stupid to think I would've agreed to go back to any of you.

Her: I just did it out of love Tukelo. I know it may look crazy and I may sound crazy but I really do love you. I did this for us.

Me: When Nthabi gets here, she will also say the same thing. Move on from me. Even if Amahle dies, I will not go back to you

Her: Don't say that.

Me: Well I've said it! How wicked can you be? I'm starting to think that bullet that hit Ziningi was meant for Amahle and Anele, you were already married to him so in that way you can take whatever you claim he took away from you. Am I right or am I right?

She doesn't respond.

Me: I rest my case.

Tumi: I still don't get it, Gabela wanted to kill you...

Her: They weren't going to kill you

Me: Oh?

Her: Those maybe Gabela's men but we paid them extra to make sure that they don't aim in your direction. So in a way, you saved Amahle's life.

Tumi: You're sick, all those innocent people? That innocent kid, Zanele! All because of what? A crush? I'm starting to think Tukelo has a magnet that attracts crazy women.

Me: I'm starting to think so too monna. I'm never going for a hot lady ever again! These things are crazy.

Her: Please don't kill me. I can get whatever information you need please don't kill me.

Me: Who shot me?

Her: I don't know, I swear I don't but I can find that out.

Me: Tumi, outside.

We leave the room.

Me: Do you think we should trust her?

Him: As your lawyer, no we shouldn't, that's a dumb idea, don't do it but as your brother, we don't have much of a choice, I say we should use her to get all the information we need.

Me: Uhm, I'm listening to my brother this time around.

I leave him and went back to Zanele. I don't know if i'm making a right decision but this is the only way to an end to all of this madness.

AMAHLE

Three Months Later...

I'm never getting pregnant ever again! My feet are swollen and I'm walking like a fucken penguin. I can't even see my feet. I always asked my doctor about this huge ass stomach, she told me that the baby is okay, I have absolutely nothing to worry about but I worry everyday. What excites me though is that I'm 9 months pregnant! I can't wait to meet my angel. I am expecting to meet him some time next week and yes it's a him. Rolling my eyes. Tukelo would've been thrilled to hear that.

Charles is absent throughout the entire pregnancy, he clearly told me that he will only come back once the baby is born, which wasn't a problem for me. I didn't even ask him about what Tukelo said and to be fair, I couldn't care less. I just need him so he can chase Tukelo away and I think that's working in my favor because I haven't heard from him in months.

I'm on my way for my final check up. I am always looking forward to that. I always attend my appointments with Andile but he's in Durban now. I miss him like everyday but I'm getting used to it. I'm also going back to school right after I give birth. Last month my friends threw me a surprise baby

shower, I seriously didn't expect it but I really appreciated their efforts, it showed that I wasn't facing this alone. I get to my doctor's office, we have a light conversation then she does a check up. As always, my baby is okay. I get off the bed and sit on chair.

Her: You seem to be doing great.

Me: I feel great too. He behaved himself must I say, I had a normal and peaceful pregnancy though I'm worried about his weight.

Her: I cannot explain it either but he seems to be fine and growing accordingly.

Me: I hope so too.

Her: I know its not any of my business but where's the father?

Me: (sigh) he's around. He's not aware that I'm pregnant.

Her: Why hide it?

Me: It's alot complicated doc. I just wanted a peaceful pregnancy, he was going to stress me. I had a miscarriage last year so I couldn't afford losing this baby too.

Her: that's understandable. I'm pretty sure you'll let him once the baby is here.

Me: Uhm, maybe. He's just too much to handle. I don't think I need him.

Her: I hear you. Well I think we are done here. Take your medication and take care of yourself.

Me: Thank you so much. You've been amazing.

We said our goodbyes and I leave.

I text Andile and I told him about his nephew. I miss him really, he played his part. He replies almost immediately

Him: >We are meeting him next week?<

Me: >Hopefully, I'm tired now. He's heavy.<

Him: >Don't worry sis. It's going to be fine. I love you both.<

Me: >We love you more. I will call you later<

Him: >Shots<

A car parks in front of me, a man comes out and grabs me aggressively.

Me: What in the hell?! What are you doing? Let me go!!

I try kicking and screaming, it's no use. He pushes me in the car and the car takes off. Some people are crazy, why kidnap a pregnant woman?

Me: Where are you taking me? Answer me dammit!!

The asshole doesn't respond.

I have never been this scared ever. The car is on high speed. Why would anyone kidnap me? And for what? Please God keep my baby safe. The only person that I can think of is Nthabi. I was so happy, I did what she wanted! What more does she want from me? God, if you truly truly truly exist please protect me and my child. Some people are cruel...

Insert Sixty-One 😊

AMAHLE

I wake up and I'm in this unfamiliar room. The place is really comfy for someone who's kidnapped. I get up and try looking out the window. All I see is trees. I'm just in the middle of nowhere.

My stomach growls, I just had to fall hungry now. I look around for a phone but I couldn't find it. I soon remember that it fell when they abducted me.

Bastards!

I'm clueless on who could pull this off and why. My mom must be really worried about me, it was getting dark.

I hear footsteps coming towards the room I'm in. My heart races, my knees wobble, I feel my whole body shaking. I try looking for something I can use to defend myself but there wasn't anything, not even a vase.

The door opens.

Him: Oh, look who's finally awake.

I'm shocked beyond. I didn't expect to see his face. Why would he kidnap me?

Him: Are you hungry? You must be hungry. I got takeaways. I couldn't decide on what you'd like so I got almost everything.

He takes the plastics he had and placed them on the table. I'm just looking at him unpack everything. I'm at awe.

Him: Want me to dish up for you?

Me: No, I want you to take me home.

Him: I'm afraid that's not happening.

Me: How long am I going to stay here?

Him: You're not leaving here until you give birth to that baby.

Me: Are you insane? You're committing a crime, are you aware of that?

Him: You started all of this Amahle! You hid my baby from me!

Me: It's not your baby! Why would I hurt you like that?

Him: I've been asking myself the same thing. If what you're saying is true then you won't have a problem of giving birth in front of me.

Is he fucken serious? He can't be serious.

Me: Tukelo, I'm only giving birth next week.

Him: Then you're only going home next week, only if that baby is not mine. If that baby belongs to me, then I'm going to kill you and taking my baby away.

Me: Tukelo you can't keep me here!

Him: I can and I will.

Me: My mom is going to be worried, think about her.

Him: Right now, nothing you say will make me change my mind. You're staying here until you give birth. Stop begging me.

Tears start threatening my eyes. How can he be so mean? What will happen to me should he see that I'm actually carrying his child? Will he really kill me?

Him: Spare me those crocodile tears, you brought this upon yourself.

Me: I didn't want any of this to happen.

Him: Then you wouldn't have lied to me! I loved you Amahle, with everything in me. As matter of fact, I still do but you decided to hurt me like this?

Me: I'm sorry, okay? I didn't mean to hurt you. But what can be done now? I still love you too Tukelo, alot. Being away from you hurts me too but we have to accept what has happened and move on. We're just not good for each other. Look at this, you kidnapped me, is that normal?

Him: You made me do this. If you were just honest with me, we wouldn't be here. Now I'm done talking about this, eat.

He leaves and locks the door on his way out. I sit on the floor and I cry my eyes out.

What will it take for him to leave me alone? He's always here to hurt me, now he has me kidnapped? He stooped that low? He claims to love me but he has a weird way of showing it. He always look for new ways to hurt me but today, he has crossed the line. I just hope nothing happens to my baby. I don't even have an appetite anymore, but I try eating for the sake of my baby. Lord, if I end up dead, it's okay but please let me deliver this baby and let him be healthy and alive.

ANDILE

I've only been in Durban for 3 months but already I miss my woman and kid like crazy, I check on them everyday though. My mom and sister as well. I'm trying to start a new life here but its not as easy as I thought it would be, I haven't even made friends yet.

What's tempting though, are the girls. I'm telling you, Durban girls are just something else, you'll find them in all shapes and sizes. The thought of cheating though, haven't even crossed my mind. Women screwed me over, I'm not making the same mistake twice. School only started a few weeks ago but already I'm swamped with assignments.

I am on my way back to my dorm room, it's a single, thank God. I love my own space. The thing I'm never getting used to is cooking, I hate cooking maybe it's because I can't cook.

There's a knock on my door. I'm surprised because I never get any visitors. I get up to open.

I find Buhle on my door, looking beautiful and better than ever but how did she even find me? She's fully recovered. She has her beautiful shape back, the scars are gone, she is just back to her normal self.

Her: Are you going to let me in?

I didn't even realize that I opened the door and just stared at her without saying a word.

Me: Oh, sorry.

I move out her way and she comes in, I close the door.

Me: What are you doing here? Wait before we get to that, how did you even find me?

She sits on my bed.

Her: I have my ways. How long were you planning on avoiding me?

Me: I wasn't avoiding you.

Her: Oh? Then why aren't you taking my calls or even replying to any of my texts? I had to come all the way here.

Me: Buhle, what do you want me to do? I told you that we're done. What more do you want me to say to you?

Her: We are not over Andile, so stop saying that. How did I wrong you?

Me: (sigh) Can you stop embarrassing yourself like this. There's nothing that will make me change my mind.

Her: I didn't do you wrong Andile, I'd understand if I did but I didn't. How many times must I apologize for something I had no control over.

Me: You're not the problem, I am. I don't want to hurt you Buhle. I know I won't love you like you need to be loved. I'm just saving you from the heartache.

Her: Aren't you hurting me now? What you doing hurts me more than you can ever imagine. Let's just try, if I can see that I can't handle it then I'll let you go.

Me: I don't know Buhle. I told you that I have a kid now and I love them, I can't ruin what we have.

Her: (chuckles) You love her? That woman is old enough to be your mom!

Me: She's only 6 years older.

Her: Still! She's old.

Me: How do you even know her?

Her: Facebook.

Me: You're stalking her?

Her: No I wasn't, I just wanted to see her. Your kid is cute though.

Me: Thanks. I still don't get how you found me.

Her: does it really matter?

Me: Yes it does.

Her: Tell me Andile, if you feel nothing for me, if you don't love me anymore, tell me now, I will leave.

Why is so hard to answer this question? I just don't know how I feel about her.

Her: Talk Andile.

She stands up and walks to me. She gets close, way too close like right in my face.

Her: I know you still want me Andile, stop resisting. Let's worry about us now, we will talk about your baby mama later.

She wraps her arms around my neck, she wraps her leg around my waist. She takes my hand and placed it on her thigh. She was wearing a skirt that had a huge slit so her thigh was now revealed.

Her: Make love to me.

She whispers in my ear.

As soon as she said those words, I find myself kissing her. I pick her up, she wraps both her legs around my waist. I place her gently on the bed.

Me: You sure you want this?

Her: More than anything.

I strip off her clothes, she strips off mine and the rest is history...

....

I wake up and Buhle is still asleep next to me. I decided to go make myself coffee. How did she find me? My time with her last night was amazing, it just brought back all the good memories we shared, I felt a spark, it was there.

I look at this woman, who am I kidding? Yes, I still love her. I sit on a chair and look out the window. I have two beautiful women in my life, which I'm sure I love. How do I deal with this?

Her: Good Morning.

I turn to look at her.

Me: Oh, you're awake.

Her: Yes.

She gets up the bed, wraps her arms around my neck and kisses me on top of my head.

Her: How did you sleep?

Me: I slept okay, you?

Her: Like a baby. I have never had sex like that, it felt like my first time.

Me: Oh, so you didn't enjoyed it the first time we did it.

Her: (chuckles) No, I did, just that it lacked something...

Me: Passion, excitement, spark..

Her: Exactly!

Me: I was alot distracted, so don't blame me.

Her: Let's not even go there babe. I want to treasure this moment because I don't know when I'm having it again. So, what can we do for fun around here?

Me: You want us to go out or stay in?

Her: Argh don't be such a bore babe, you know I'd enjoy it more if we go out. How about clubbing?

Me: Clubbing? I have assignments due on Monday Buhle, that's just out of the question. We will just order something and we cuddle all day.

Her: And sex all day

Me: And watch movies

Her: And sex even more

Me: (laughs) Yes and sex.

Why am I stuck with women who love sex?

Her: But first I would love to cook for you.

Me: (laughs) are you serious?

Her: Yes. Can't you see how skinny you are? Doesn't your sugar mama feed you? Or at least cook for you?

She let's go of me. She wants to start an argument now.

Me: You want to ruin our moment by talking about her?

I wrap my arms around her waist, she's busy making the bed. I kiss her on her back.

Her: I was just saying.

I turn her so she can face me.

Me: There's no doubt that I love you Buhle but you have to understand that I love her too. She gave me my first child.

Her: So that's the only reason you love her? Because she is the mother of your child?

Me: No, I loved her even before that. I can't describe this, I know I love you but I know I love her too... You know what, let's not even talk about this. Let's just focus on us.

Her: So now I'm your side chick?

Me: Buhle...

Her: Okay, okay fine. I understand Andile.

Me: (smile) Thank you.

I kiss her...

AMAHLE

Haven't I suffered enough? What more does this man want from me? He won't rest until he sees me completely destroyed. No matter what I do, he just can't seem to leave me alone. What more can I do? I don't want this no more, I don't want to feel like this. Why don't I die, instead of suffering like this?

I've been crying ever since I got here and this man couldn't care any less. He's lying next to me, snoring even. I can't find any sleep. I haven't slept in two whole days. All I do is cry and beg. Tukelo has no mercy, he is not bothered. I don't know what he means when he says I will stay here til I give birth, will

he deliver this baby? I wouldn't be surprised if he suggests that, he's crazy enough to do it. I haven't made any contact with the outside world for 2 whole days, all I do is eat and cry all day.

He even has a nurse take care of me when he's out during the day. I can't even get to ask her questions, she also has no clue where we are, Tukelo took away all of her gadgets, she also can't contact anyone from the outside, she also says this whole place is surrounded by plus minus 50 armed men. So basically, I'm stuck here.

I shake him awake.

Him: What Amahle what?

Me: I want to go home.

Him: You wake me up for such nonsense?!

He sits up and switches on the side lamp.

Me: I just want to go home Tukelo, it's really no use keeping me here.

Him: I thought I made myself clear when I said you're not going anywhere until you give birth to that baby, you hear me?

Me: But the baby is not yours, what's the use keeping me here?

Him: Then it's not a problem, as soon as I realize that the baby is not mine, I will simply let you go.

Me: You can't stress me like this Tukelo, I can't afford losing this baby. Please.

Him: Why are you stressed? It's not like I'm torturing you. You're in a comfortable place, I feed you, you have everything you need here, tell me, why are you stressed?

Me: My mom, I'm worried about her.

Him: That's your problem. You should have thought about her before bullshitting me. I want to sleep Amahle, don't wake me up and ask me nonsense. There will be consequences.

He switches off the lights and gets under the covers.

I cry silently.

What have I done to deserve such pain?

Insert Sixty-Two 😊

TUMI

I never want to be part of the wedding planning. Just tell me when I'm getting married and where, I will be there. I just don't want to be part of the planning, my wife-to-be doesn't want to understand that though. She wants to involve me in everything, from the smallest detail such as choosing a center piece. I don't need to be a part of all that, but whenever I try to explain that to her, she throws a tantrum.

Sigh.

Everything is done, lobola paid, now we're planning and waiting for the big day which will be on the 9th of September. I don't get what's the fuss about now, it's only March. All the other traditional ceremonies will be done on the same weekend, I just want to get everything out of the way and have my family together. I know that Nosi and Thandi get along just fine but I need to buy a new house for her.

For the past few months, me and Thandi, we've been trying for a baby, we did see a doctor and he said Thandi can have kids, but still there's no luck. She is making progress though. I'm hoping she'll be able to use her legs before this year ends.

I'm busy in my study with some paperwork. I also use work as my scapegoat.

Her: Babe.

Nosi knocks on my door.

Me: I'm busy Sthandwa sami

Her: I know but Anele is here to see you, he says it's urgent.

Me: Oh, let him in.

What could possibly be the problem now?

He comes in and already I could tell that the man is stressed out, he looks like he hasn't had any sleep in a while.

Me: Have a sit Monna

He sits across me

Me: Babe, can you please get us something to drink.

She nods and leaves.

Him: You're really having two wives, huh?

Me: (sigh) a man's got to do what a man's got to do. So what can I do for you?

Him: Amahle's missing.

Me: What?!

Him: She has been for the past two days, I tried looking for her but I'm nowhere near finding her.

Me: Have you tried calling her? Maybe she's with Charles

Him: He also has no idea where she is. Her phone is off. My mom said she left to see the doctor and never came back.

Me: Did you try investigating this?

Him: I tried man, I looked at every CCTV that was around her last known location but nothing. We see her getting in the doctor's office, she leaves the office but after a few seconds after she left, the camera jams.

As much as I don't want to say this to him but this has Tukelo written all over. I know how he works, this is his doing. He kidnaps and never leaves a trace.

Me: Why would anyone want to kidnap a pregnant woman?

Him: I don't know, that's why I'm here. Please help me find her, I know that you will. Get your men on it, get Tukelo on it, I know if you get involved, she will be home before the sun sets.

Me: I don't know. They clearly know what they're doing, it might take time to find Amahle..

Her: Find Amahle? What do you mean by that?

I didn't even hear her coming in. She places the tray that had our beverages on the table.

Her: Don't look at me like I didn't ask you a fucken question!

Anele: Uh, she's missing.

Her: Missing?! How can she be missing? She's pregnant dammit!

Me: Calm down babe. We will find her

Her: You better find her! She's already going through so much, she doesn't need this, she can't lose her baby again.

Me: I will do my best to make sure that she comes back safe.

Her: Tukelo can find her, he is the only person that can find her.

Tukelo is the person that has her.

Me: I will tell him about it. Stop stressing, she will be okay. Both her and her baby.

Her: Find her Tumi!

She leaves.

Me: (sigh) How far are you with the investigation?

Him: I'm nowhere near finding her like I said

Me: So you have nothing?

Him: We do know that she was kidnapped when she left the doctor's office

Me: So basically Anele, you have nothing

Him: Yeah, basically.

Me: Leave everything to me. I'll find her.

Him: By tonight? My mom is really worried, she's been crying all day and night.

Me: By tonight, I'd know where she is.

Him: Please do keep me posted, I won't also stop the investigation

Me: I will update you should I find anything.

He said his goodbyes and left.

This is not what I meant when I said Tukelo should do whatever it takes to find out the child's paternity. I take my phone and dialed his number. He takes his own sweet time to answer.

Me: Where is she? I know you have her.

Him: She's right next to me.

Me: Have you gone mad Tukelo?

Him: You said to do whatever it takes, this is me doing whatever it takes.

I knew this bastard was going to use this against me.

Me: You could get arrested.

Him: That's impossible and you know it.

Me: Just tell me where you are, her family is worried about her

Him: That's not happening. She's not going anywhere until she gives birth

Me: Tukelo there's really no need to do all of this. This is madness no, this is bullshit!

Him: I don't care how you call it but I'm saying she's not going anywhere until she gives birth to my son.

He hangs up.

I try dialing his number again but it leads me straight to voicemail.

Shit!

My brother can be idiotic at times. This is a stupid act and he will suffer the consequences of his actions. I take my car keys and leave. I don't have a clue on how to find them but I'm going to do whatever it takes to find them. I know how crazy Tukelo is. I wouldn't be surprised if I find Amahle dead....

AMAHLE

I was woken up by pain I'm feeling, this excruciating abdominal pain I'm feeling. I've been feeling this pain since afternoon but now the pain was getting sharper and even hard to bare.

Dear Lord, no not again. Please, I tried my best to keep this baby alive, don't take him away now as I'm about to meet his angelic face. Not my baby, take me instead. I check the time and it's close to 3am.

Tukelo is snoring next to me, I'm even afraid to wake him up. He roars whenever I speak, I don't need anyone scolding me, right now I could feel that I need to get to hospital and fast.

I get off the bed and I start walking up and down. Hoping the pain will be numb, but it doesn't get any better. I feel liquid running down my legs. God no! I'm even afraid to look. I get the courage to check and no! Fuck!

Me: Tukelo!!!

He doesn't respond

Me: Tukelo!!!

I shake him awake.

Me: Tukelo! Please please please wake up.

Him: Hhhmmmm

Me: Tukelo my water fucken broke! Get the fuck up!

He gets up in a flash and stands up.

Him: What does that mean?

Me: What?! You seriously asking me that fucken question?! It means I'm about to give birth you idiotic fool!

I scream. The pain was too much, I have never experienced such pain ever! I'm never ever having sex again! Ever!

Him: You're about to give birth? As in like now?

Me: Yes! How stupid are you?

Him: What am I supposed to do?

Seriously? This is the father of my child? Let my baby not have his brains please.

Me: Call a fucken ambulance! Aaaaahhhhhh!

Him: Amahle, we are in a middle of nowhere, it will take forever for an ambulance to get here. You can't even locate this place on the GPS.

Me: You're really fucken stupid!!! You know that! How the hell were you going to get me to hospital?!

Him: You said you're only giving birth next week.

Me: Idiot! Idiot! I fucken hate you right now! Do something!

Him: Wait I will be back. Can you hold it in?

So help me God! I'm going to murder someone's child tonight!

Me: You sound so fucken stupid right now!

Him: I will be back.

He leaves.

Me: Idiot! Where're you going? I'm going to die!

The pain keeps getting worse. With every scream I say a small prayer hoping and praying that my baby makes it. What worries me more is that I feel weak.

My vision is becoming blurry and my pulse is getting weaker. I sit on the floor, no I have to stay strong for my baby. I have to fight for him, I don't care about me right now, as long as he makes it.

Tukelo comes back.

Him: Are you okay? Please tell me that you're okay.

Me: I'm not okay! I'm not fucken okay!

Him: Amahle please calm down. The doctor is on his way, he will be here.

Me: I need to deliver this baby now! Where is that nurse when you fucken need her

Him: She's on leave.

Me: Jesus!

Him: Lie on your back and spread your legs.

Me: What?

This man must not test my patience.

Him: I said lie down and spread your legs.

Me: What do you know about child birth Tukelo?

Him: There's Google.

What in the hell?

He takes out his phone and start pressing on it. Is he seriously serious? If the circumstances were different, I'd actually be laughing at this. The panic on his face is priceless, he's seriously searching on

the internet. Whilst I'm feeling pain. I'm trying my best to breathe, I've read somewhere that the important thing is to keep on breathing.

Him: Okay I think I got this. Amahle, lie down, I'm going to get towels and hot water.

He leaves.

This is seriously happening? Tukelo is going to deliver our baby. This is some crazy shit. He comes back minutes later carrying towels and hot water.

Him: Amahle, get up.

I'm screaming and trying to breathe, I have strong, long, frequent contractions. They're less than five minutes apart. I have this huge urge to push. I couldn't even get up. Tukelo notices, he picks me up and lands me on the bed.

Him: Spread your legs.

I do that too.

Him: Uhm.. Do you have the urge to push?

Me: Yes...

Him: Push.

I push, with every power in me. I'm feeling weak, I'm trying my best to deliver this baby healthy and alive. I have to keep on fighting for him but my body is failing me. Tukelo keep on encouraging me to push, whilst with every push, I'm getting weaker. I can feel that I'm losing this battle.

Him: Amahle please, don't give up now. You can't give up. Fight. Push with every strength.

I try pushing harder. My screams filled the room. I give one big push, I hear my baby cry, I see Tukelo using a razor cutting the umbilical cord. He uses the towel to cover the baby.

Me: I have the urge to push again!

Him: What?

I scream. He puts the baby down and attends to me. What the hell is happening? I keep on pushing. I'm giving birth to another baby? But how? I try pushing harder, until I feel another baby coming out.

Him: We're having twins.

I hear pure joy coming from his tone. I feel way weaker now, I have zero strength, I can't even open my eyes. Now that I've given birth to his babies, he pays no attention to me. I'm getting weak. I want to shut my eyes. This cannot happen. I still want to meet my babies. I try fighting but it's no use, I finally let it happen...

TUMI

I've been trying so hard to calm Nosi down but she's been crying ever since she heard that Amahle is missing. I couldn't sit around and console her, I had to go out there and look for my idiotic, stupid, ignorant, immature, asshole brother.

I have no clue on how to find him, I literally have no clue. I'm meeting with Dankies to try and figure out on how to find him. Dankies tried tracing him but there was no luck. I hope wherever they are, Amahle and the baby they're okay.

We meet at the warehouse, hoping if we use the equipment that there, it will be quicker and easier to locate them

Dankies has been on the computer for almost an hour now, he can't locate them!

Dankies: This is no use. Tukelo knows how I work so he covered his tracks perfectly

Me: There's no such thing, look for them, try finding out how he took her, something Syabonga! Something!

Dankies: I'm sorry Tumi. We just have to wait for him to make a mistake or for them to come back.

Me: Tukelo won't make a mistake! You know him, he won't just come back either. We have to find them.

Dankies: Why are you stressed? He won't kill her, he loves her.

Me: No, Tukelo loves Amahle. Ruthless doesn't, actually he doesn't care about anything so he might kill her. I don't trust Tukelo when he's like that, he can do whatever without thinking about the consequences of his actions. So we must find them!

Dankies: (sigh) fine.

My phone rings, who could it be at this hour?

Me: Hello?

Tukelo: Monna, I'm a father of two.

Me: Where the hell are you?

Him: Don't ask me that, what's important right now is that Amahle just gave me two beautiful, healthy baby boys.

Me: Uh, congratulations I guess.

Him: You don't sound happy for me?

Me: How can I be happy when you abducted the girl? You won't even tell me where the hell you are.

Him: Can we not focus about that, let's be happy that now you're an uncle.

Me: I will only be happy when you bring those babies here with their mother. Where is she anyway?

Him: Uhm... Oh shit!

He hangs up.

I wonder what's happening now.

Dankies: I think I've located them.

Music to my ears...