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Bayanda's redemption by Ndumiso

I should be asleep getting the best rest so I can wake up fresh as daisies. Tomorrow will be difficult and draining and no matter what I need to be on my A game. I happen to represent the good, the bad, the deserving and the not so deserving but heck I am no God to walk around judging people.

I think being a lawyer should be listed as one of the fastest way to selling your soul to the devil. Some of the things I do for my clients haunt me to this day.

I guess once you go bad there's no turning back and the thrill of being the best and untouchable gets to your head.

My feet touch the cold wooden floor and it's only now that I feel awake.

I quietly walk to the bathroom and rinse my face deeply exhaling it's that darn dream again messing with me.

I can still hear the door shutting and my mother sinking to the floor screaming her lungs out.

I can still hear the car speed of and me running after it till it was out of sight.

I even remember the date and what we did on that particular day.

The sun was scorching hot and I could feel the sweat break from my afro all the way to my forehead down to my lips.

Baba looked down on me and handed me his handkerchief wiping my sweat.

He was the tallest man I had ever seen and one day I dreamed of marrying a man tall as him.

He took me out for icecream and the best part is that I got to have more than one serving. I even had all the different toppings and not once did he scold me about the amount of sugar I had.

We went to the toy shop and I chose the most unlikely bear instead of a doll.

I was never predictable then and definitely not now. I still remember reaching for the ugly yet cute in a way cookie monster look alike bear.

I swear I fell in love with it at first sight my own cookie monster and that was the best part.

As old as I am I still carry the thing with me it's the one thing not tainted from that day, the only good part I am still holding on too.

How my father laughed and picked me up at the shop and spun me around.

We decided to head home because we had done the most for our date.

The car came to a halt right in front of the gate and my father sighed deeply rubbing his forehead.

He would do that only when he was stressed or reading up a case and had his eye glasses on.

"Gogga I love you so much whatever happens you and your brother mean the world to me" he said kissing my forehead.

"Even in the dark daddy will come and chase the monsters away" He said smiling..

That was our saying and whenever he said that I felt safe my father was my hero.

I jumped out of the car and scurried to the house only to find my mother drinking from the bottle with another bottle under the table.

I had never seen her like that because you see she was always elegant even in the way she carried herself with grace.

"Mama" I said quietly tugging at my bear.

"Ayana ka mamakhe" she said looking up.

I had tears welling up she wasn't my mother or maybe this was always her and I never noticed.

"Go to your room Ayana" she said before burping her eyes shut..

"Mama what's wrong" I asked.

"I said go to room Ayana" she shouted.

I turned and bumped into my father who smiled and ushered me half way to my bedroom.

I didn't close the door the curiosity got to me and so I left it open.

"You can't leave me Bukhosi not like this" Mama said begging.

"Not now Zo we talked about this" Baba said.

"Bukhosi please don't break our family apart I am begging you" Mama said pleading.

"You did that all by yourself and now my kids have to suffer" he said dragging his bags to the door.

I had already gotten out of my bedroom and stood there watching all this unfold.

Mama stood up and started pulling his bags like a mad woman she was only trying to stop her husband from walking out on his family.

My father pushed her to the floor and she landed on her buttocks.

I rushed to her side and looked at my father.

"Baba please don't go" I begged.

"I have to go Gogga but I promise I will come back for you" he said.

"No take me with you baba please don't leave. I promise to be good and I won't ask for icrecream dates again" I bargained.

"Mama say something" I said looking at my drunk mother.

"If your whore of a father wants to leave then let him be we don't need him" she said.

That was a lie we needed him, I needed him and she was pushing him away.

I pulled one of his suitcases hoping he would stay but he knelt down and I flung into his arms.

"Baba please" I said.

"You are Bayanda Ayanna Zulu my beautiful baby girl and I will always love you" he said.

"Then take me with you" I said.

He looked at my mother and wiped his tears..

"I have to go Ndabezitha" he said standing up.

He walked out and closed the door.

I looked at my mother and ran after my father's car till it disappeared into the street.

I had no choice but to run back to the house and found my mother crying and thrashing the house.

Her anger had tripped and I was also on the receiving end.

"You will not cry for that man, you will forget he's your father uyangizwa. He walked out because he doesn't love us, he doesn't love me or you the only person he cares about is Busani" she said shaking the good memories out of me my head almost snapped.

I wanted to stop myself from crying but the tears wouldn't stop.

"Stop that nonsense will you Bayanda" A slap landed on my face and that quickly shut my mouth up.

I watched her let go of my shoulders and go back to drinking from her bottle to then sinking back to the floor.

This is the one dream that always comes back over and over again.

What seemed like such a beautiful day turned out to be the most horrible day ever one that changed my life.

"Come back to bed" Liv says wrapping her arms around my waist..

"Give me a few minutes" I say shutting my eyes.

She moves her hands up to my breast playing with them then leaving small kisses down my neck.

"Liv not now" I say shrugging myself off her hold.

I should be home with Nsindiso right now in his big arms laying on his chest, crying my eyes out and him soothing me back to sleep.

I love that man he's what you call my safety net always there to catch me when I stumble and fall.

I love him and he loves me too but life is happening and I find myself drifting to a fantasy.

I shouldn't be here but everytime I go through something or leave work late I always find myself right here screaming out Liv's name because of her magic tongue.

She lets go and walks back to bed leaving me to breathe..

I enjoy her company and how she makes me forget most of the time.

Our thing wasn't meant to last it was just fun but then again forbidden fruits have always been the best.

I walk back to the bedroom reach for my phone and listen to my many voice massages.

Baby where are you please call me

That one is from a concerned Nsindiso.

Bayanda where the hell are you huh Nsindiso is looking for you answer your damn phone That one coming from my mother.

Hey I don't know what's going on but baby I am worried about you please call me when you get this he says..

*I told him you are with me Bayanda call me" That one from my mother.

I breathe easy knowing that my mother covered for me although she will talk my ear off tomorrow.

I wash my face once again and rinse my mouth using mouth wash.

You would think I would forget about the man as my mother said I should but I can't.

There are so many questions I have about that day and events leading to that day but we never talk about that day.

We don't even mention the man or my brother that's just how it is.

I don't know why I do this to myself but I jot everything down from missed birthdays to every important milestone he's ever missed.

16 years and counting yet I am still stuck in the past and the thorn of my father leaving is still there.

My best friend believes all my life choices have to do with my longing for a father in my life.

But I see myself as adventures and living in the moment.

Sure I don't follow the masses or do things by the book and I carry my demons everywhere but at least I think I am happy.

#001

I didn't sleep much last night after hearing Nsindiso's voice messages to a point where I stayed up and looked out through the window.

I wanted to call him and ask him to fetch me but what explanation would I give.

I know he's worried sick about me that's what he does most of the time worry about me.

I reach for my phone contemplating whether to call him or not and decide to rather send a text.

I press send then fix my dress looking at Liv running around like a headless chicken, she barely keeps time something we have in common.

"Coffee" she says passing me a cup.

I shake my head this will only delay me and I can't have that.

"I can't I need to get home see Nsindiso then head to the office" I say.

She snorts and shakes her head.

"Are things always going to be like this me playing second fiddle to a bloody cock" she says through gritted teeth.

Liv is what you call a Butch in lay man terms the one who takes charge more like a man.

"One of these days you're going to have to chose me or him" she says.

"Don't you go there Olivia because you won't like it" I say putting on my shoes.

"I just don't like this back and forth of yours one day it's me then the next its him. I love you Bayanda and you know that so why can't we be together" she says.

This just took a turn for the worst I didn't expect her to say the "L" word.

"It's true I love you" She says softly.

"I have to go" I say grabbing my things.

She blocks my way and holds my waist pulling me close.

"Bayanda Zulu I love you and I want to be with you" she whispers in my ear.

"You know this was just supposed to be fun nothing more" I say pulling away.

She nods her head moving out of my way relationships are complicated but this is beyond me.

I don't see myself having some coochie all the days of my life.

I rush through traffic and head to the office before my client does.

It's a good thing I had a change of clothes and surprisingly I am not that late which is a good thing.

I can't have Mr Hadebe arriving early and doubting my abilities, speaking of that man he's one of the case I had no interest in taking I don't believe in his so called innocence but because this is my job I have to do it and pull a trick out of my magic hat.

That man is a flirt and can't take no for an answer

he withholds information and is implicated in more criminal cases than I can count.

Thinking about him gives me a headache and he should be walking in right this moment but the door opens and Pam my assistant walks through holding a cup of coffee.

She's quite a beauty and has brains and if she keeps her head down and learns then she will go far.

"Bossy lady here's your coffee" She says smiling.

"Thank you Pam" I say.

She runs me through my day and gives me messages for the day.

"And before I forget Mr Hadebe called to cancel" she says jotting something down.

"Thank goodness" I say breathing out.

She laughs throwing her head back.

"Let me leave you to your work" she says walking out.

I go through Mr Hadebe's case and sigh this man was caught on camera leaving the crime scene although he wasn't seen committing the crime but still.

Deep down I know he did it but that doesn't count because I don't answer to myself.

"Calms you down doesn't it" Nsindiso says startling me.

I look at the black necklace and smile it has a black pendent that has a roaring lion.

I picked it up from the park well bench to be precise and somehow it has kept me sane ever since.

I don't know who left or lost it but I just couldn't leave it there and so I took it.

I stand up to give him a hug.

"I am sorry about last night" I say tightly holding on to him taking in his manly scent.

I shove the guilt down and put on my best smile.

"It's okay I know work has been stressful but baby you need to talk to me" he says pulling away.

His dark skin makes me drool and the way he looks at me makes me weak in the knees.

He pulls my hand and occupies the empty couch making me sit on his lap.

He smiles and my heart flutters just looking at this beautiful man of mine..

He runs his hands and places them on my belly making my whole body tense up badly.

"I think one of these days we will be having Mphemba Junior playing around" he says laughing.

"Hau kodwa Mphemba" I say trying my best to ease up.

We have been trying for a a baby and it's been a year now without any success.

"I promise to work less and eat more healthy then maybe we might get lucky" I say forcing a smile.

"Baby its okay there's no rush" he says running his hand up my thigh.

"Hey what's wrong" he says kissing my hand.

"Nothing" I say.

That's a lie everything is wrong, I want nothing more than to give him a baby but I can't and I have been lying to him.

I wouldn't call myself a pathological liar but I lie occasionally to get myself out of sticky situations.

"I don't like seeing you like this so I am taking you to lunch" He says showing off his beautiful dental front.

I give him a kiss that lingers and soon gets heated having him move my panty aside and pushing his finger in and out of my vagina.

If there's one thing I love about Nsindiso is his body and the way he carries me with ease and the way he loves my body.

Liv crosses my mind ruining the moment or any chance of me coming.

"I think we should go home" he says whispering in my ear.

I shut my eyes biting my lip as he uses one hand to squeeze my arse.

This man has been with me through thick and thin.

He loved me even when I laid my hand on him, he stayed even when I called him names and told him he was nothing.

"I love you Mphemba so much" I say.

"I love you too Mazulu" he says.

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Nsindiso drives me to my mother's place and my heart is pounding this woman can be difficult at times.

"I promise to be home early today" I say.

He laughs looking relieved.

"And I will get us dinner" he says.

"Baby" he looks at me smiles.

"Yes my love" he says.

"I love you and thank you for everything" I say.

"I would do anything for you Mazulu" he says.

He kisses me before I step out of the car and walk inside my mother's house.

I knock and enter before she can answer me.

I find her wearing her reading glasses while staring at her laptop.

"Mama" I say.

She looks up and takes her glasses off standing up.

"Where have you been" she says.

"I was out with Buhle" I say.

"I called Buhle and she didn't know where you were" she says.

Now I feel like I am back in high school.

"Where were you Bayanda the poor boy was looking for you"
she says.

"Mama I not a child so please" I say.

"And I didn't raise a whore" she says slapping me.

I close my eyes feeling the sting of her open palm.

"And you wonder why I don't come home often" I say holding
my cheek.

"Bayanda I didn't raise you to walk around opening your legs
for any man that smiles your way or gives you some attention"
she says.

That hurts but she's telling the truth problem is I am opening
them up for Liv.

"That boy loves you" She says softly.

"Just like you didn't raise a drunkard or a liar right" I say.

Tears well up in her eyes.

"Bayanda" she says quietly.

"Even when I told you he was touching me you said he didn't, you said I was dreaming that he wouldn't" I say feeling my anger intensify.

"We are not talking about that right now we are talking about you and Nsindiso" she says diverting she's actually good at that I am starting to think it's a skill of some sort.

I should be glad that man never got a chance to hurt me even though he had plenty of chances too.

"Oh you want to speak about Nsindiso well he wants kids did you know that" she covers her mouth using her hand.

"And I can't even give him that" I say.

"I am sorry" she says attempting to touch me.

"Don't even try because it won't make me have babies now will it" I let the tears fall uncontrollably.

"You knew I couldn't have them and you said nothing" I say.

I went to the doctor after I realised we weren't getting pregnant like any normal healthy couple would.

I found out that my womb was damaged scarred and I would never be able to conceive.

After my father left mama had a new man. The man was nice at first but then he changed and started hitting her and then one day I came back from school only to be ran over by his bakkie.

He had stabbed my mother and was running away if it wasn't for our nextdoor neighbour then I don't know what would have become of us that day..

That day I became less of a woman and my value depreciated.

"I love you but every time I come here you make it difficult for me to stay" I say.

I was hoping we would have tea and I would listen to her beautiful stories about her cancer survivor drive.

Even after the chemo she's still the most beautiful woman I have ever laid eyes on.

At some point I used to be her punching bag nothing major a few slaps here and there I guess that's why her slap didn't even faze me.

"Thank you for covering for me" I say taking my handbag.

"Ayana wait don't go I knew you would come and I cooked your favourite" she says.

I shake my head kissing her cheek.

"Ayana suhamba" she says just as I close the door.

I stand by the gate and take out my phone calling Nsindiso.

"Mphemba" I say.

"Baby what's wrong" he says..

I swallow the burning lump and breathe out.

"Please come and get me" I say.

"I am in a meeting Mazulu" he says.

"Baby I need you please" I say.

"Listen I am on my way okay just don't go anywhere and please don't do anything stupid" he says.

I know he's referring to me drinking.

#002

I have not seen or talked to my mother in a week that being seven full days and life goes on as usual.

I mean you would expect that a tiny bit of me would be affected right but nothing in fact I think I needed the space and time to myself.

My mother is that one person I love and hate at the same time it's hard to explain but it's just how it is.

She can be extra sometimes and that stands in the way of us building anything solid when it comes to our already broken relationship.

Nsindiso has been begging me to talk to her but even he can't fix us and that's okay.

He tried numerous times to get me and my mother to talk and I mean really talk but there was always something she would say and I would just realise somethings are better left unsaid.

I mean I know my mother like the back of my hand and she likes deflecting throwing the I raised you alone card at me.

It's funny how I became the mother in this relationship

how I cleaned up after her and made sure she didn't fall apart even more.

How I had to handle her cancer and watch her lose strength and all her will each and everyday.

How I had to fight this monstrous disease on her behalf because she's the only parent I have.

I spent days crying till I couldn't and then I would spend days praying for her recovery. And then there were days she couldn't wake up from bed and all her hair had fallen out.

Those were the days I would pray God takes her and spare her of the pain she was going through.

It was the two of us against the world but still she can't even afford me the truth about my own father her husband.

I play with my necklace and I swear every time my fingers brush against the pendant my soul calms down.

I let go and look at Nsindiso snoring he's a peaceful man and always has been.

I run my fingers on his brows and cringe when my finger brushes the small scar that looks intentional yet it's not.

I put it there with my own two hands. I was drunk and he didn't sleep at home that night and I had called a thousands times like an obsessed person would.

I hit him and my nail clawed at his eye and the look he gave me made me hate myself even more.

I remember the first time I met him he was in his best suit looking like a dream and he wouldn't take his eyes off me.

I was in a coffee shop and he was sitting in the table across me and when our eyes met I knew he would be my safe place.

He pursued me for weeks till I gave in and gave love a chance.

I gently kiss his forehead careful not to wake him up.

"I hate what I am doing to us because I know in the end it's going to cost me.

But the truth is I don't deserve your love I keep pinching myself thinking this is a dream how can you love me when I am this torn.

I don't know what you see in me but I don't want it to stop.

I wish I could give you as many kids as possible but I can't and that is eating away at me Mphemba.

I am not woman enough to bear you heirs and I am sorry my love" He snores even louder making me chuckle he's a heavy sleeper barely hears a thing.

I wipe my tears sniffing going through my phone.

Liv sent me raunchy pictures yesterday asking to see me and I was tempted to go but then Nsindiso surprised me with dinner and I couldn't just leave my man hanging.

A text comes through and Liv's name pops up.

"Want to meet up" the text says.

"When" I type eagerly waiting for her response.

"I was thinking tonight I really miss you and I am sorry if I came on to strong it's just that I have never left like this about anyone else" she says replying.

"You know I am looking at my my man right now and he doesn't deserve this" I type back.

She types deletes then types again.

"What do you mean Bayanda" she types.

"I don't think I can carry on with this anymore having you in my life is going to cost me way more" I type fast before I my fingers decide otherwise.

"You're breaking up with me" she texts back.

Technically we were never a couple to begin with and I always assumed she knew this was nothing more than a shagging situation.

"It's for the best" I type back.

"You know what do you Bayanda whatever ever makes you feel batter even if that means breaking my heart" she texts.

I switch off my phone and deeply sigh it was always going to end up like this me choosing Nsindiso.

Although there was a time I had thoughts of Liv screaming out Nsindiso's name seeing her under Mphemba's hold and sharing him with her vice versa.

Thinking about it now sounds twisted and knowing Nsindiso he would have fipped and at the end I would lose them both.

I put my phone away and snuggle up against him.

"Mphemba" I say shaking him.

"Baby vuka" I say waking him up.

I know he's fully away when he sighs and covers me up with his arm.

"Are we pregnant because that's the only reason you would wake me up so late" he says clearing his throat

"I just wanted to say thank you for putting up with me and I love you" I say.

He slightly pulls away and looks at me.

"You know when I first saw you I knew you were the one" he says kissing my forehead.

"Why do you love me this much" I ask..

"Because you make me feel alive and the way you look at me makes me believe I am the luckiest man on earth" he says.

"Now can I go back to sleep" he asks.

I nod after getting a kiss on my forehead.

He holds me close to his chest.

The office is quite busy today we're preparing for one of our big case's.

I still have to deal with Mr Hadebe and his uncomplete statements. I fail to understand how will I help him if he doesn't tell me everything about that night.

I remove my glasses and rub my forehead looking at him.

"So what's the verdict" he asks leaning back on the chair.

"The camera footage shows you leaving the hotel room and after a few hours the cleaners are seen entering the same room only to discover a dead body" I say.

"So what's that got to do with me" he asks.

"Everything and it doesn't look good all the evidence is pointing at you even those expensive cufflinks you left behind" he shakes his head.

"We could easily say they are not mine" he says confidently.

"And what about your initials" I ask.

"Ms Zulu I believe I am paying you to get me out of this situation and believe me you will" he says.

"Sir I am not a magician and this won't go away at the snap of a finger" I say.

"Well turn into a magician buy someone make that evidence disappear I don't care just get me cleared of all charges" he says standing up coming to my side.

"I don't want anything happening to this pretty face of yours" he says running his thumb down my face.

"Are you threatening me Mr Hadebe" I ask looking up.

"Its just a friendly warning" he says laughing.

I open my draw and pull out my gun cock it and aim it his man manhood.

"You try that ever again and I swear I will blow your balls up" I say pressing it hard against his manhood.

He swallows hard and I think sweat just broke from his forehead.

"You chose me because I am the best and I am good at what I do. So don't mess me with me and if you pull that stupid pathetic warning of yours I promise you will spend the rest of your miserable days in prison playing wife to another man" I say not moving my eyes off his.

His eyes grow before he can open his mouth.

"I believe in your capabilities Ms Zulu" he says nervously.

He looks at me warningly and walks back to his chair.

"I believe we are done here and please give my regards to your wife and kids" he nods hardening his face and walks out.

I breathe easy when the door shuts that man will not let this go.

Although it was just the two of us I embarrassed him but he shouldn't have tried that.

The door opens and Pamela walks in looking pretty in a yellow dress.

I wish I had her life she's always happy and her love life is just bliss.

"Hey boss lady" she says piling up my desk with case's.

"Mr Cowan has asked for a meeting with you to discuss an important case" she says.

"And what about Mr Hadebe" I ask.

"I think I heard him say someone else will take the case" she says shrugging her shoulders.

I wonder what could be so important Cowan would easily give my case to someone else.

"And you heard all this how" I ask.

She smiles and breathes out heavily.

"Fine I overheard him talking to Mr Naidoo" she says.

"But the meeting request he told me himself" she says.

"Would you like some coffee" she asks.

"Yes please and please order me something to eat please" she nods walking out.

I look at my phone after it beeps for the second time.

"I need to see you please" Liv says.

"We need to talk" Another one comes through.

"Ayana please you owe me that at least" the last one says.

The door opens as I am about to respond to Liv's text messages.

"You don't love me anymore" Nobuhle says walking in.

I scream meeting her for a hug and not letting go.

I missed her so much and seeing her makes me happy.

"I missed you so much" I say.

She pulls away and looks at me from head to toe.

"You haven't been eating right" she says shaking her head...

"I have but you know how demanding my work is" I say..

"I will let it slide but only if you tell me everything that's been bothering you" she says pulling me to the couch.

"Well I just pulled a gun on a client" I say.

Her eyes widen and she blinks.

"What Bayanda why" she asks softly.

"He threatened me Buhle" I say.

She talks my ear off and tells me what's right and wrong she's always been more than just a friend.

"And how are things between you and mom and Nsindiso" she asks.

I tell her everything including the Olivia saga.

"So you didn't end things the first time" she asks sounding disappointed.

"No I couldn't" I say.

"You do know that when he finds out he will never forgive you" she says.

"I ended things now and I truly hope it stays that way" I say.

"I don't understand why you got involved with Liv in the first place knowing how much Nsindiso loves you" she says.

"Have you ever thought of breaking things with him and allowing him to be happy" she says..

"You are not seeing this but you're breaking him and he's staying because he loves you" she says.

"And I love him too" I say.

"But not enough to to stay faithful" she says shaking her head.

"So you want me to let him go so you can have him" I say..

She looks at me dumbfounded but I have always know that she feels something for Nsindiso.

The way she looks at him when she thinks I am not looking.

"I have always known Nobuhle" I say.

"I am sorry" she says.

"It's okay I mean you have never acted on your feelings" I say.

"You knew but you said nothing or call me out on it" she says.

"Buhle what did you want me to say huh my bestfriend is in love with my boyfriend" I say chuckling.

"I don't love him like that" she says looking down.

I know my best friend and right now she's not telling the truth.

It hurts seeing her cheering for me while her heart longs for the man who holds and covers me each night.

"I want to tell him the truth but if I do then I will definitely lose him and I can't" I say.

"And what truth is that" Nsindiso's voice says from behind us.

I jump up and look at him.

"What truth is that" He asks.

I look at Buhle and bite my lip he can't know the truth not now.

"Bayanda what truth is that" he asks.

"She lost the baby and she didn't want you to know" Buhle says.

I look at her and start shivering.

"Baby" Nsindiso says sounding gutted.

"Ngyaxolisa Mphemba" I say.

I have just dug another grave of lies.

#003

I have lied my way through life even cheated death once and none of those acts bothered me as much as lying to Nsindiso does.

I wanted to call my mother and ask for her advise she's practically a pro in keeping things but my anger wouldn't let me.

I don't know why I didn't say something or anything when Buhle told Nsindiso I lost the baby.

This has been eating away at me and I can't take it anymore.

These couple of days have been draining the life out of me and I have been mopping around crying and mourning my relationship.

Mphemba thinks I am cut up about the baby but that's not the case.

He's been taking really good care of me it's so amazing and I think that's what makes everything hard.

I have never lied about loving him but maybe if we met at a different time and I was a completely different Bayanda then things would have ended differently.

I started having problems expressing myself and being honest the day my mother stopped believing me.

I snap out of my thoughts when Luke slams the door to my office so hard the whole building hears him.

"You better have a good reason for slamming my door" I say still seated.

"Bayanda what is this" he asks placing my resignation letter on the table.

I wasn't planning on resigning but my life is is complicated I need time to reflect and find myself.

"I believe that's my resignation letter with immediate effect if I may add" I say.

He looks at me raising his eyebrow.

"I can't accept this" he says shaking his head.

"Well it is what it is" I say shrugging my shoulders.

"Why are you doing this" he asks settling down.

"You don't look good talk to me just don't leave work like that" he says.

"I won't be any good to you or the firm if I stick around" I say.

"You are one of the best and on the verge of making partner please don't do this. We have one of our biggest cases coming up and I need you by my side" he says.

I wish he would stop being vague and just tell me who the client is.

"You keep saying big case but I haven't seen anything on my table" I say.

"It's big trust me and the family wants you representing them" he says.

"Tell you what I will give you some time off delegate most of your work and you can come back when you're ready" he says.

"Fine but I am not promising anything" I say.

"I really hope you get through whatever is troubling you" he says standing up.

"Thank you" I say.

"Don't just stand there come get a hug" he says opening his arms.

I give him a hug and pull away smiling Luke has always been a bully.

I left work early and stopped by the hospital to see my babies.

This has become a ritual of some sort for me, coming here and look through the glass window and just smile.

I know I will never have one of my own but seeing these babies smiles and hearing them cry fills up my soul.

I always make sure to stop by and get a few things for both mother and baby.

Coming here I learned that some of these young girls don't have much but they are mothers and they are happy with the little they have.

I place my hand on the window looking at this young girl feed her baby, I shouldn't be doing this but it soothes me.

I remember when I heard I couldn't have kids and the first thought was to buy someone's baby.

I wipe the stream of tears coming out of my eyes and swallow hard breathing out.

"Those are the eyes of a woman who longs to hold the fruit of her womb" An old lady says next to me.

I smile going about my viewing not paying much attention to her.

"You may not see it now but your tears are the seed to the soil that will produce endless rewards" she says holding my hand.

If I didn't know better than to get ahead of myself I would say she's mistaking me for someone else or she has a few screws loose and is seeing things.

I feel like she's invading my space but surprisingly I am not afraid or anything like that.

A nurse makes her way to us and takes the old lady's hand.

"I hope she wasn't brothing you" the nurse says.

I shake my head and watch them walk down the passage.

The night has suddenly grown more quieter and I am getting more nervous with each hour that passes by.

I am in my track suits gulping down Nsindiso's beer closing my eyes as the taste lingers and swirls around my mouth.

I am trying my best to take the edge off and it's not working.

My palms are sweating and my heart is racing pounding I can hear it on my ears.

I bite my lip till I taste blood and say a small prayer for what I am about to do.

I look at the pictures beautifully placed in these white sand papered frames taking one and hugging it.

These are memories I shared with this man whose heart I am about to shatter.

"Daddy please don't go I couldn't take this lonely world without" I sing to freshlyground and find myself chuckling wishing my father was here.

I think this is a bad idea coming clean usually ends up in two ways they either forgive you or the worst happens you lose them and stay miserable.

I stand up and stumble on the empty beer bottles

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a memory of my mother drinking herself to oblivion comes up and tears stream down my cheeks.

I am just like her she couldn't keep a man and I can't keep one too.

What do people say the apple doesn't fall far from the tree right oh better yet I have a great one like mother like daughter that's sounds more like it.

I pace up and down and come to a standstill then panick mode when I hear his car outside.

I am one person who is afraid of change and when Nsindiso asked me to move in that was a huge ask.

I bite my nails and walk to the door waiting for him to get inside.

I hear him whistling and his key unlock and I pray to God he keeps my soul from right this point anything might happen.

He walks in and finds me waiting for him.

He look so handsome in his white shirt and blue pants sleeves rolled up and the first two buttons of his shirt undone.

I salivate just looking at him this man has given me so much more.

"Baby" he says giving me a kiss.

"Whoa what's going on" he asks pulling away because of the stench of alcohol.

"Mphemba" I say.

He looks behind me and see the bottles.

"You're drinking hard again" he says sounding disappointed.

"Bayanda I thought we were past this stage" he says in more stern tone.

"I know losing the baby was hard but baby this isn't on" he says.

"That's not why I am like this" I say looking up.

"We need to talk" he brings his eyebrows together. "Well I need to say something and I need you to listen" I say.

"What did you do Bayanda" he asks.

"Bayanda" he shouts to my silence.

"Wenzi Ayana that is so bad you can't even look at me" he says.

"I don't know where to begin" I say with my lips trembling.

He backs away and shakes his head.

"Mphemba I cheated" I say.

"What" I look at him and he has his hands running over his head.

"I am sorry" He charges towards me and stops himself from hitting me withdrawing his hand.

"There's more" I say crying softly.

"No you are not doing this" he says with his chest heaving.

"I can't have children and I only found out a few months ago"
His back hits the wall and he slumps down to the floor.

"And my baby" he asks.

"There was never a baby" I cry out.

"Who is he" he asks roaring startling me.

I move back because I have never seen him this angry.

"It's not a he but a she" I say.

He stands up and I run to stand behind the couch.

"You cheated on me with a bloody cunt are you serious Bayanda. What else haven't you lied to me about Bayanda" he says through gritted teeth.

"Did you ever love me" he asks.

"I have never lied about that ngiyak'thanda and that is the truth" I say.

"I cheated yes I don't deny that, I omitted the truth about having a baby yes but I love you" I say.

"You lied to me" he says and you can't take away the pain from his voice.

He cries and stumbles to the couch burying his face in his hands.

I slow move to where he is and kneel down trying to touch him.

"Don't you even try" he says pushing me off.

"Please forgive me" I plead.

God knows I have only kept these two things from him and nothing else.

I stand up and find myself running to the door.

"Mphemba please don't leave" I say.

He looks at me and smiles.

"You are not the woman I fell in love with" he says closing the door behind him.

I take one of the bottles and smash it against the door screaming.

"I will change I promise I can do it" I whisper to myself.

I look for my phone and find it dialling my mother's number.

It rings only once before she picks it up.

"Mama" I hear her breathe on the other end.

"Sana lwam' "She says.

"Mama everything is a mess I told him everything and now he left, he walked out on me mama and it hurts" I say.

"Oh yini sanalwami" she says sniffing.

"Come home Bayanda" she says in a shaky voice.

I say nothing and just cry till I have control of my hiccups.

"Ayana" she says softly.

"Mama" I say breathing out calming down.

"I am coming to fetch you okay" she says softly.

I nod even though she doesn't see me but talking to her just made a difference.

#004

I don't know how I got through the past month without hurting myself trust me it happens.

Living with my mother has had its up and downs and at one point we were close to killing each other.

I am glad work has been keeping her busy and that she called for reinforcement.

My Aunt came the following day apparently to look after me.

Things have been okay bearable since she came and there's been peace here at home.

I don't know how or when things went wrong between my mother and I but they did.

I don't want to call her toxic but she is in her own way and what I hate most is that she doesn't own up to her shit.

I love her so much but there are days I wish she wasn't my mother.

I am glad she fetched me from Nsindiso's house but once I was over the shock of being walked out on.

The insults came blazing "You should have kept your mouth shut but no you had to ruin a good thing"

For a moment I thought she was going to be proud of me but not Zoleka Zulu

"I didn't raise a whore and don't try to deny it because that's what you've become"

"People your age are getting married having families and you're jumping from one partner to another

you need to grow up Bayanda and fast"

I think these are the words she used to get me out of bed.

I didn't like most of them but her punch speech worked and I was up and ready to fix my life the following day.

I haven't gone back to work because I don't believe I am fully ready and I really miss Mphemba so much it hurts.

I may always put on a brave face and act all tough but I am the biggest cry baby ever.

I plate up for everyone and make coffee starring outside the window.

Today I plan on going by to Nsindiso's place and maybe try to fix things.

Mama followed by my Aunt grace me with their presence and settle down.

"Morning my baby" Mama says.

"Morning Gogga" My Aunt say jolly as ever.

I think I am old for that name but let her be.

"Morning" I say.

"You look okay" My mother says making my Aunt give her the look.

"I mean she's the Bayanda I know and I am happy" she says smiling.

"I know being around me has been a pain but all that is changing" I say.

"I am glad you're getting better there are many more fish out there's and with your beauty and brains you will find any man" My aunt says.

Mama clears her throat.

"I don't think she's ready for that she just needs to fix things with Nsindiso" Mama says nodding her head.

"Zoe you shouldn't treat Bayanda like she's one of your students" Mama sighs standing up.

"I will see you guys later I have an important staff meeting" she says kissing my cheek.

"I love you and I am proud of you" She says grabbing her things.

"I love you too mama" I say genuinely smiling.

She heads for the door leaving me with my Aunt.

"I know what you're thinking but" she raises her hands before I can say anything more.

"But nothing Bayanda you hurt that boy and trust me once you go down that path there's no fixing it" she says taking my hand into hers.

"You don't think he's going to forgive me" I ask softly.

The thought alone has been killing and this past month has been torture.

"I don't think so Gogga he's a man and they don't easily forgive" she says tilting her head.

"I need to try" I say.

"Don't force things look at your parents for instance" she says pressing her lips together.

"So mama cheated" I ask.

"No that's not what I said" she says.

I nod my head because that's about it I mean that's all I will get from her.

"Ncane please help me find him" I say.

She stands up shaking her head.

"No and beside I don't even know where he is" she says.

"Memories are fading Ncane and I know mama says he didn't want me that he walked away because he didn't love me but I need to know" I say.

"Don't do this to yourself" she says.

"I have a big brother out there whom I might bump into and not realise" I say.

"Your father loved you that's all that matters okay" I give her a confused look.

"Tell you what I will make your favourite tonight and I promise you will feel much better" she says smiling.

I had the longest talk with my aunt but still she couldn't take me out coming here.

I have on my best dress matching heels and his favourite perfume.

I had a glass of Bombay before coming here to take the nerves off.

I take a huge deep breaths before knocking on the door.

It takes a while before he opens the door making my heart skip a few beats.

He's wearing pants only looking fine and making wonder why I ever looked Olivia's way.

"Mazulu" he says looking shocked to see me.

"Mphemba" I say nervously smiling.

He stands rooted not moving which I find to be rude but given our current situation I say nothing.

He inhales and shuts his eyes slowly opening them.

"What are doing here" he asks.

"Can I come in" I ask swallowing.

His face hardens and my heart sinks.

"Mphemba I am sorry I know that I messed up but I love you so much please forgive me" I say allowing myself to breathe.

"Baby I can't find my shoes" A sweet voice says from behind him.

He turns and I get the chance to view the woman.

"Your PA" I say feeling my stomach turn.

My mind tells me to walk away but my feet move towards the woman but stop when I spot the small yet visible bump.

I turn and look at him and my smile turns into a chuckle I wish I had my pistol.

"You know I came ready to grovel and beg you to take me back because I know I made a mistake but I never lied about loving you" I say.

"Baby" he says coming towards me.

"Does he also call you baby" I ask looking at his woman.

"I wonder who started first you or me but judging by this" I say pointing at her baby bump.

"Bayanda it's not what it looks like" he says.

I bite my lower lip and let the tears fall.

"I shouldn't have come but I am glad I did and I am happy that she's giving you something you've always wanted" I say.

He holds my hand but I yank it ofd him.

"I understand trust me" I say heading for the door.

I close it and feel the air leave my lungs making me balance to the wall.

I have always suspected something was going on be he always assured me nothing was.

I listened to him but all along he was banging her probably in his office too or dingy hotels we all know how office affairs work.

I just lost the man I love and he's building a family now.

I rush out get inside my car and drive but stop on the side of the road trying to calm myself down.

I bang the steering wheel till my hands hurt.

We both lied was what we had a lie? I can't even help my self from the thoughts I am having right now.

A loud tap on the window startles me as I jerk up and look outside.

I don't know the person but roll the window nonetheless.

"And then" I say wiping my tears.

He smiles and for some reason his smile looks familiar.

"I saw how you were driving and I wanted to make sure if you're okay" He says.

"What's it to you" I ask stepping out of the car and the man is tall good looking and everything.

"You shouldn't allow the world to get to you" he says.

He has an accent and I can't pick up which is it my mind is foggy and messed up.

"Can I drive behind you just to make sure you're okay" he says.

He doesn't look bad not the scary type but you never know.

"No thank you" I say.

He searches his pockets and comes out with a piece of paper handing it to me.

"Then please call me when you get home safe" He says still stretching out his hand.

I hesitate but take the paper with his numbers written on it.

"I don't know your name" I say looking at the nameless paper.

"My name Busa.." he scratches his head laughing.

"Call me Busaphi" he says clearing his throat.

He opens the door for me and helps me inside watching as I drive off.

I am not like this with strangers considering the way things are in this country but his smile was warm and his aura wasn't heavy nor dark.

I get home and run into my Aunt's arm.

I cried enough on my way home and now I feel light and the tears are gone.

My heart is heavy that I will admit but the truth is I put that man through so much and because he loved me at some point he stayed and took it all.

"I am letting go of everything Ncane" I say.

"What happened" she asks pulling away.

"He's moved on and I think he's happy" I say.

It's hard to admit and I can't believe these words are coming out of my mouth phela I am the queen of finding it hard to let go.

"I hope you didn't hurt the poor girl" she says looking horrid.

"I would have but I forgot my gun" I say laughing.

"Don't joke like that" She says slightly hitting my shoulder.

"I wanted to but it wasn't worth it" I say.

"You have to get rid of that gun" she says.

I raise my eyebrow and laugh hell now that is my baby.

"You know what I think that I should get you and mama matching one's" I say looking at her.

"Jehova ngenelela" she says.

"I swear shooting one of those dummies is therapeutic" I say shrugging my shoulders.

"You have always been the risker taker" she says smiling.

"I met someone" I say with a huge smile.

"Oh no when I said there are a lot of fish there I didn't mean today" she says putting a hand over her mouth.

"Ncane that's not I what I meant either he just made sure I was okay and gave me his numbers to call when I get home" I say dangling the carrot I took from the fridge.

"So the number of women going missing didn't scare you one bit while you were busy strangerising" she says.

"Is that even a word" I ask laughing.

"It is now" she says putting a hand over her hip.

I look at her a smile my aunt is short, and right now she looks pretty feisty and cute can't really take her serious now.

#005

I still can't believe Mphemba was playing me all this time and I was a fool in love to believe all those late meetings were work.

Haa he had me good and I fell for it hook line and sinker but that's in the past right.

I am starting afresh and I have a feeling life will be good going forward well that's if I behave.

A few days ago I had the most unexpected visit which resulted in more tears than I had thought.

Nsindiso's mother came to see me and we had a talk.

This woman has always been in my corner supportive and rooting for my relationship.

I guess having her pay me a visit was expected and long overdue.

I remember when I first met her she was warm and welcoming probably the most kind and loving person I will ever meet.

As always she looked beautiful and her beautiful smile never leaving her face.

"Bayanda" she said after letting go.

I will miss her hugs and that's the truth.

"Mama" I said helping her down.

"Why are you doing this to me" she asked.

"So he told you" I said deeply sighing.

"He loves you and I don't know why you can't fix things" she said.

"Mama I cheated and there's no fixing us" I said.

Honestly I had a chance to ponder over what my aunt said and she was telling the truth.

Nothing will ever be the same between the two of us and if I think otherwise then I am a fool.

"I know but he also told me what he did Bayanda my son isn't okay he misses you" she said.

"I miss him too but now there's a child involved and that's also another issue I need to deal with" I said.

I know I will never give Mphemba kids and what happens should he want more.

He will go out there seek a surrogate proving his manhood while I sit at home twiddling my thumbs.

"You don't love him anymore is that it" she asked.

I laughed a little not mockingly but because this was far from the truth.

"I love him so much that letting him go is the best thing I could ever do for him. I will always love Mphemba mama and you will always be a second mother to me but I won't fight for him, I am sorry" I said wiping my tears.

"No more shopping sprees or tea in the garden" she asked wiping her own tears.

"I will call" I said not knowing if "Yes, no more this or that" would be appropriate.

"Angiyifuni leya ngane you can tell she's after his money" she said shaking her head.

"If that's the case then heartbreak will come and he will learn we all do" I said standing up.

"I think tea will make you feel better" I said.

"No bring me something strong" she shouted.

"Hayibo mama I don't want Baba to think I am corrupting his wife so tea will do" I said.

I made tea and came back to find her on the phone with her husband.

"I wish things didn't have to be this way but it is what it is. And I know the man whose heart you will capture will be the luckiest man alive. You're amazing, kind, humble and loving Bayanda but

my son messed up and I will not force you to try again" she said reaching for her tea.

"Thank you" I said joining her.

I am glad that's out of the way and I truly hope he is happy and that the child really is his.

I don't wish him bad we had a good run and the way he used to love me was just amazing the man is gifted everything you would wish for in a man.

Sex with him was spontaneous and wild we have christened that house so many times I would laugh and choke when one of our friends ate on the table or just slept of the couch.

"And that smile" Mama asks sitting next to me.

"I was just thinking about work" I say.

"And how are things at work" she asks.

"Things are okay and soon I will be working on a big case" I say excitedly.

"I hope it's not one of those criminal things of yours that keep you up at night" she says sounding concerned.

My mother tends to over reacts which leads to her preaching.

"Relax mama it's not" I lie.

Nothing makes my heart pump like my job.

"I was hoping to take you out to lunch" she says.

I scrunch my nose slowly shaking my head.

"I can't I am heading out to meet a friend" I say.

"Oh maybe we can do some massages then" she says.

"Sure" I say.

She looks at me and runs her her hand down my cheek.

"I love you Ayana" she says smiling.

"I love you too mama" I say.

She nods not moving her soft hand.

"Mama what happened between you and dad" I ask.

"Life happened and your father left" she says moving her hand.

"Why" I ask.

I am old enough to know that there are always two sides to a story.

"I told you why and I don't understand why you keep asking about him" she says sounding irritated.

"I don't want to fight with you" I say.

"Then stop asking about your deadbeat of a father because he wasn't here I was. I raised you all alone took you to the best schools isn't that enough that I am here.

You have everything you need Bayanda and don't want for anything" she shouts.

"But I long for a father's love" I say softly.

"Well tough because I am sure he's dead wherever he is and you're not the first child to grow up without a father and it definitely won't end with you" she says.

Her voice is a few octaves high and she is getting mad real fast.

"And what about your son don't you miss him

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don't you long to hold him just one more time" I ask.

Tears well up in her eyes and I regret starting this conversation.

"You always talk about how much Baba is the bad guy but you never mention Busani" I say.

"I think it's best you go to your lunch now" she says.

"Mama please he's your son don't you miss him. Years have passed and you didn't bother looking for him what kind of a mother does that" I ask.

"You don't know anything Bayanda I tried but I couldn't find even a single trace of your father or my baby boy. You don't know anything" she says holding her chest.

"How will I know when you won't tell me huh" I ask.

"He didn't want you he left because he didn't love you, he took my son and fled are you happy that I am crying because of you hayi maan Bayanda" she says.

"If you value having a mother then you will stop asking about the past" she says living my mouth ajar.

"You hate him that much" I say.

"Your choice me or him" she says.

I nod my head grabbing my handbag.

"I am moving out tomorrow morning" I say.

She gasp frowning.

"I always knew that you loved your father more than me" she says.

"Ncane will be back late and I don't know when I will be back" I say.

"I will never trouble you again with this father nonsense thing" I say forcing a smile.

I enter the restaurant Busaphi said we should meet at.

I have been spending most of my days with him having either breakfast or lunch. I called him this one time when I was stranded and he came to the rescue.

At first I was convinced he was following me I mean we met coincidentally more times than I can count.

But he talked me out of that silly thought and told me to shut down the lawyer instincts.

See I believe everyone lies it's just a matter of how, when and why that's all.

He stands up and gives me a hug and I hold on longer than I should.

"Hey what's wrong" he asks.

"Nothing just a small tiff with my mother" I say.

He tilts his head cautioning me to tell him more.

"Story for another day" I say.

"Come talk to me" he says.

"We just had an ugly argument that ended up with me telling her that I am moving out" I say.

He listens attentively and keeps nodding his head.

"You and your mother don't get along much do you" he says.

"I think we are so much alike that's why we but heads most of the time" I say.

"So am I still welcome to help you move" he says.

I nod quickly, I happened to tell Busaphi first that I was moving and he offered to help me take things back to my apartment.

"You know I have a brother" I say.

He smiles and just looks at me.

"What" I ask.

"Nothing you remind me of someone" he says.

"Tell me about your brother" he says.

"There nothing much to tell he lives with my dad or so I heard" I say the last part softly.

"Your parents are divorced" he says.

I shake my head.

"Actually no I don't think so" I say laughing.

"Want to share or is it a long story" I laugh and he laughs too flashing that smile of his.

"Long story" I say.

"Okay miss long story" he says.

"You know I can stand in for your brother or maybe we can be friends" He says.

Busa has been amazing and I feel this connection to him plus he's been acting like a brother, friend and protector mostly.

"I would like to have a brother from another mother" I say.

"And my first job as brother is to buy some chocolate cake to cheer you up and one of those crazy puff treetts" he says.

I laugh at how he said puff treat well its one of a kind puff pasty pie stuffed with home made jam and some cream ontop topped with anything you like.

"Where's the respect" I ask blinking.

"Ayana that thing is for kids and well those who refuse to grow" he says confidently.

"You just called me Ayana and I never told that name" I say.

He nervously laughs and clears his throat.

"I googled you, you are pretty famous and a power house in the making. I am sorry if I crossed the line by doing that" he says.

"Its okay I also looked you up and I couldn't find much" I say.

He only has one profile and there's nothing to read there apart from the fact that he's single and all his academic accolades.

"I am a private person" he says.

"And family tell me about your family" I say.

"Both parents still alive but divorced and I am the only child" he says.

I think he just lied to me and it's not the first lie.

I let it slide we are human after all and we all tell tales for different reasons.

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I don't have much so packing is not that hard a few boxes and I am done.

Ncane walks in holding a cup of coffee and hands it to me.

"Thought I should make you coffee as a goodbye present" she says laughing.

"How nice of you" I say taking it.

"Are you sure about this I mean I could always come stay with you" she says.

"And leave your sister alone" I say.

"She wouldn't survive neh" I nod.

"Part of why she called was because she misses you more than she wants to admit" I say.

"You're strong you know that" she says.

"I come from line of strong resilient and badass woman so yeah I know" she laughs and throws herself on my bed.

"I should get going before your mother comes and drags me out of this room" she says.

"Kuyiwaphi" I ask.

"We are going out" she says with a smile.

"I guess I will move these boxes to my place then come back to fetch you guys so you can help me pack" I say.

"The nerve of this child" she says.

"I love you too" I say.

My mother isn't happy with me moving out but I know she'll come a around eventually .

Busa arrived a few minutes after they left and I offered him my mother's stew and he asked for seconds.

"That was delicious" he says.

I know it was he looked like a kid who just came home after a long day at school and mama made his favourite.

"Is this your mother" he asks looking at a frame.

"Yes" I say.

"She's beautiful" he says running his finger on the frame.

"Thank you" I say.

I can tell he is miles away when he doesn't answer me.

He grabs another one with both mama and I wearing bandana's on our neck with our heads shaved .

"She had cancer and I was standing in solidarity with her" I say.

"I didn't know" he says softly.

I am starting to think he's an emotional being this one.

"It's okay she fought and she conquered" I say proudly.

"Cancer not only takes away from you physically but emotional and mental too.

I had to watch her lose her hair and this beastly thing take away a part of her leaving a scar" I say.

He takes a sit and deeply sighs.

"Must have been hard" I nod those were trying times.

"Did you lose someone to cancer" I ask.

"A close family friend" he says.

"I am sorry" I say.

He holds on to the picture looks up and smiles.

"You can take it if you want although it would be weird having my mother around your place" I say cracking up.

"I don't mind" he says.

"Okay you can have it and maybe it will remind you that not everyone succumbs to this thing" I say.

"Thank you" he says.

"Now come get a hug so we can start moving" He stands up and gives me a hug.

"This means a lot" he says.

I think he lost someone close to him and not a 'family friend' but I won't push.

#006

I think everything is falling into place and for the first time in such a long one my life is taking shape.

I am okay and I don't waste time thinking about things I can't change.

I have gone back to work and I think things between my mother and I will be okay.

Having my aunt around has been amazing that woman knows how to restore peace between us.

And the moving issue is water under the bridge and I am glad because I hate not being able to talk to my mother even though our talks usually end up with us screaming.

Things have been hectic though in the work front so much to do and very little time to do it.

Luke did delegate most of my work drafting which is great because some of the work I do can be tidies sometimes.

And on other news Busa has been hanging around my place a lot.

I still don't know much about him apart from the fact that he owns property and that he's single plays around and doesn't have a child.

I really like him but not like and he's turning out to be one awesome brother which makes me miss my actual brother.

But as I said I am no longer dwelling on the past or crying over spilt milk.

And just the other day he talked me out of drunk calling Mphemba, the guy did say he will always be there for me and I think that night I needed him to put me to bed if you know what I mean.

And the fact that he's been calling me hasn't made things easy. He calls to check up on me and sends me messages to find out if I am okay and that alone makes me want to take him back and try to make things work but I won't.

I won't allow the devil to use me like that although I want him too but I won't.

I rub my eyes then my forehead looking at the supposed big case we need to prep for.

"I don't get the the whole secrecy what's up with that" I ask.

"Well this is not just anyone but the Mngadi's" Luke says making the hair at the back of my head stand.

"You mean the Mngandi we all know" I ask.

"Yes except this time it's his son the eldest one" he says.

I look at him and I can feel the tension surrounding his whole body. I think he needs a whole body massage yes that will relax him.

"They can have anyone they want why us" I ask.

The family is rich notorious and known for so many things they are like walking mafia God's they run the biggest cartel in the underworld.

"You" I pop my eyes blinking.

"What" I say.

"It's is you that they want and we are taking the case" he says handing me a folder.

"Just like that and why me it's not like I am a magician of some sort" I say.

"Well because you're youngest best young thing and this will put us on the map for life" he says.

I open the folder and my heart sinks and I think it stops for a few seconds before pumping blood again.

Luke quickly comes to the rescue with my office bin as I puke inside it.

"I am sorry" he says.

"What the hell is this" I ask using my hand to wipe my mouth.

"That's the defendant

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victim and the witness to this whole case" he says shaking his head.

"He's alive" I ask shocked.

It can't be this man should be dead buried and mourned by his loved ones.

"That's the incredible thing he's alive and recovering under police protection and should be ready for trial in the next coming months" he says.

I look at the photos one more time and feel myself get sick once again.

Who does this to another human being and sleep at night.

The man in the photos is brutally bruised badly beaten and is barely recognisable.

His hand is missing a few fingers and his throat is slit so I can't believe how he's still alive.

"Now Mngandi's son is facing assault to cause grievous bodily harm and attempt murder" he says.

"He's facing real jail time and we need to make sure he walks away with only a slap in the wrist" he says.

"I don't think we can" I say shaking my head.

"That's not true and you know it" he says standing up.

I nod this is going to be hard I hate my job sometimes.

Even though I have seen the evidence and still to face the wife and kids of that man. I am still going to have to discredit the man and cross examine him.

Luke tells me there's more evidence a video and no matter what my weak gut says I need to watch it.

Today was probably one of the longest and most draining of days.

I am still going to have late nights but the only difference being I won't be coming home to anyone.

I came home from work took a bath and called Busa to come over for our smores date.

He makes he best ones and he's a great listener.

He nudge me and smiles looking at me.

"You haven't said much today's what's wrong" he asks.

See this guy cares and if I didn't know better I would say he wants more than to be a brother.

But I know better and he hasn't tried anything funny with me which I respect and appreciate.

"Just my line of work Busa" I say heavily sighing.

"What about it" He asks blow torching the marshmallows

"I don't know sometimes I wonder If this is my calling and if I am doing the right thing" I say.

I remember growing up I fell in love with justice and fighting for what is right.

But now anything goes I no longer fight for the good but for those who witg money.

"I don't know what's going on but just remember why you fell in love with work in the first place" he says.

I nod my head giving him a hug.

"Thank your for everything I know we're not blood related but you are the best brother any girl could ever wish for" I say.

He wraps his arms around me and chuckles.

"And you're not bad at this sister thing" he says pulling away.

"I think it's time you met my mom and my aunt of course" I say.

His face changes and he goes back to fixing smores.

"If you don't want then that's okay" I say.

"I would love that but I think you should meet my dad first" he says.

"And here I was thinking you lied about having parents" I say.

He laughs nervously and shrugs his shoulders.

A knock comes through and I think Busa is relieved to see me jump from the chair and head for the door.

The door opens before I get to it and a smile grows on my lips.

I hug Nobuhle not letting go this girl has been scarce.

"Okay kill me and get it over and done with" she says giggling.

I let go and watch her twirl for me.

"You me the club and lots of sexy guys to drool on" she says laughing.

Busa makes an appearance and Nobuhle's mouth falls to the floor.

"Pick it up you're embarrassing me" I say.

"Busa this is Buhle my friend" I say.

He extends his hand and give that mischievous side smile..

I hope he's not seeing one of his play things I can't be caught between these two.

She pulls me to the side and squealing.

"New man" she asks.

I shake my head watching her face frown.

"Brother from another mother long story I will tell you all about it later" I say.

"Bubu I can't go as you see I have a thing going on" I say.

"We haven't been out in such a long timw I thought I would cheer you up and tomorrow is a weekend" she says sulking.

I look at Busa and he nods.

"I can even drop you off if you want" he offers.

"I don't want to bother you and if anything goes wrong I will call you" he nods relaxing.

"Okay but I will stay till you get" he says.

I quickly change into a dress and heels with a black leather jacket.

I should have asked where we are going today but I was too excited to ask till I found myself standing outside forbidden and my inner person jumped in joy.

When she said men I didn't think she meant literally.

Forbidden is an exclusive club for both men and women where you get to feast your eyes.

Only the best come here to have the time of their lives.

There about five sections to this place all sophisticated and raunchy in their own way.

Nobuhle drags me to the dance floor and my body relaxes to the beat as the music flows through my veins channelling the Beyonce in me.

I start twerking and feel completely embarrassed when a circle opens up and Buhle stops to cheer me on.

"I knew getting you out of the house would work" she says screaming.

I put my hands over my face and go by the bar getting myself something to drink.

I look at the top and find myself heading to the show room.

I peak through the men's and settle for some tatties.

I don't miss Liv or anything but since I am here I might as well watch a nice show.

A lady wearing the club's uniform comes to me and offers me a drink.

"I didn't order anything" I say.

"The gentleman over there paid for it mam" she says.

I look at the gentleman in question and the lights seem to have hidden his face.

I am drunk but I know a drink no longer is free these days.

"Tell him I can buy my own drink" I say declining.

She disappears and Buhle joins me telling me we need to leave.

"Can you believe the nerve of that guy buying me a drink" I chuckle standing up.

She comes back with another drink Gin this time neat.

"Let's just leave" Buhle says.

I take the glass and gulp it down shutting my eyes.

I open them up and see the same guy who brought me this drink make his way to me.

I can't see him clearly and I am lazy to look up.

"I can buy my own drink but nonetheless thank you for your kind gesture" I say.

"You're quite a mover and a shaker" he says.

I look at Buhle who nods her head smiling like a retard.

This man's voice happens to be everything or maybe being drunk plays to it. I feel more heat generating down there and I can't help close my eyes.

"Just because you bought me a drink doesn't mean we're friends okay and judging by your sleazy cheap tactic you're nothing to write home about" I say confidently.

"In fact I should call my man right now" I say.

Buhle looks at me like I am crazy.

"Yanda you don't have a man remember" she says whispering.

"He doesn't know that and whose side are you on kanti" I ask.

"Yours" she says.

I take out my card and attempt to pay but have him hold my hand.

"Your bill is already paid Ndabezitha" he says.

I run out of words and focus on his warm touch, Lord I am about to hit a home run down there.

#007

Busani sat across the his father having coffee, they hadn't done this in a long time as his father was still busy settling in and once again finding his feet.

His mind was far that his father noticed and wondered what was bothering his son.

Things were different and the day he left his house he swore to always keep his son happy.

Busani watched as his father rubbed his eyes and then forehead deeply sighing.

This was it he was seeing his sister when reading a difficult case or generally upset about something.

He wanted to tell his father the truth that he found his mother and so much more.

That his little sister was beautiful beyond words and that the stories he heard about his mother's beauty didn't do justice to the real thing.

"Busani you haven't touched your coffee" Bukhosi said looking at his son.

"If something is troubling you then come out with it boy" He said not taking his eyes off his son .

Busani cleared his throat his father was a hard man yet loving and caring at the same time.

Bukhosi was a father any child would be eternally grateful to have and that's all Busani knew his father's love that remained constant.

His heart broke when he thought about all the hardship his sister went through.

He couldn't help feel angry at the fact that they went there to protect her from all the bad things that happened.

"Busani I won't ask again" his father said getting angry.

Bukhosi hated asking questions only not to be answered or made a fool of..

This man had evolved over the years accumulated more wealth and had built a legacy and empire his kids would be proud to be a part of.

He was no longer the Bukhosi he was 16 years ago.

"Baba I did something" Busani said gathering all the strength he had.

"What have you done now" his father asked.

He looked at him not knowing how to tell him this .

This was going to break him and he didn't have the guts to tell him.

"If you don't speak then I will beat it out of you" his father said looking at him dead in the eye.

He knew his father was telling the truth and pushed hard enough he would do it.

But Busani couldn't understand how his mother could do something like this.

"Busani Zulu" his father warned one last time.

"I found my mother" Busani said finally.

Bukhosi could feel himself get weak and his hands tremble Zoleka was the last thing he expected Busani to bring up.

"Why would you do that" Bukhosi asked.

Zoleka was the love of his life they were highschool sweetheart and they parted ways badly and right now she wasn't a topic he wanted to visit.

"I wanted to see her" Busani said.

That was the truth but she didn't expect to find Bayanda and he never regretted looking.

For the longest time his father lived for him and today all that was going to change.

For years he listened to his father talk about his baby sister but not without having teary eyes or the pain in his voice.

A father had lost his daughter and that pain never went away no matter how much Bukhosi tried he couldn't forget about his beautiful Ayana.

"There's more baba" Busani said.

"Khuluma Busani" he said still digesting the news that his son found his mother.

"Bayanda is alive" Busani said feeling this huge weight being lifted off his shoulders.

He watched his father break out into a huge laugh then different emotions portray on his father as he saw how serious Busani was.

Bukhosi shook his head Zoe wouldn't do that to him she just wouldn't.

"I saw her with my own eyes and she's a spitting image of you" Busani said.

"My daughter died" Bukhosi said not wanting to believe.

"She's alive baba and she's broken she's been through a lot"
Busani said feeling tears nearer.

Bukhosi shook his head his daughter was ran over by a car and she died but he couldn't attend the funeral as a protection order against him was put out.

Busani took out his phone and showed him pictures he took with Bayanda.

Bukhosi took the phone and saw himself in his kids his baby girl was alive.

"She's alive" Bukhosi said looking at his beautiful daughter smile.

Busani then showed him the photo Bayanda gave her and his father ran his thumb down the frame.

"I haven't told her who I am because I wanted to speak to you first" Busani said.

That was the truth he had lost count of the number of times he stopped himself from telling her truth.

"She's alive" Bukhosi said laughing like a mad mad scaring his son.

Busani then showed him a video he took when Bayanda was laughing and cooking while he shared jokes.

"Zulu, Mageba, Ndabezitha" he said praising his daughter.

"Her soul blazes like fire baba she's fighter just like us" Busani said.

He watched tears fall from his father's eyes for the first time ever then continued laughing till his wife came running to the outside.

"Baba" Celiwe said softly looking at her husband.

For all the years he married this man he had never seen his tears, not even on their wedding day which scared her.

"Its okay mamncane he's okay" Busani said.

Bukhosi stood up and broke everything that was on the table anger had consumed him.

"She's going to pay I will make her pay" he said breathing heavily.

"Bukhosi whose going to pay what's going on" his wife asked.

"Not now Celiwe" he said walking past them.

"Baba you can't act haste she had cancer and so much more happened" Busani blurted out.

He didn't mean too and not in front of his stepmother.

Bukhosi stopped on his tracks pain rushed to his heart no matter how long the years went by he still loved his Zoe.

And that's what Busani couldn't understand how a person could love

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want and long for another person after so many years.

If this was love then he didn't want it he was okay be just sowing wild oats and living his best bachelor life.

The day went by quickly and Busani found himself parked a few blocks away from Bayanda's place with his father in the car.

He wanted to see with his own eyes and he couldn't believe how tall and beautiful his daughter was just like her mother.

He watched her pick up a box that was heavy and mumble something to herself and frown in frustration.

He laughed to himself and shook his head looking at his son.

"That's your sister right there" he said.

"What are we going to do" Busani asked.

"I am going to get my daughter back" Bukhosi said.

"And what about mom" Busani asked.

"What about her" He asked.

Out of all the things Zoleka did this one took the cake after everything he had forgiven for this wouldn't be able to.

She lied and said their daughter died only that one fact wasn't true.

"We need to approach this cautiously you can't hurt mom and if you tell Bayanda the truth then that's what's going to happen" Busani said.

"She spent her life hating me so why can't the tables turn" Bukhosi asked.

"Baba please" Busani said.

"No Busani she's mine and she's going to come home I don't care at what cost" Bukhosi said.

"And what about Mamncane are you going to tell her the truth" Busani asked.

"When the time comes yes" his father said.

"As you wish Zulu" Busani said driving away.

"Baba what did mama ever do to you" he asked .

"I know you had differences but what really happened" he continued.

"Life, work and life happened" Bukhosi said looking out the window.

All he could think of was facing Zoleka and meeting his daughter after such a long time.

He still had to tell Celiwe his wife about the news he received and sad part was that Celiwe knew deep in her heart that her husband belonged to another woman.

Although he never said it she could tell he wasn't hers alone.

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As if I didn't have the worst week ever now my day gets ruined and there's only so much complaining one can do.

I planned this day all week and I won't let this stupid tire get me down.

I could call Bubu to come but she won't be much help and she knows nothing about changing tires.

And I really can't call Busaphi because he ghosted me soon after I dropped the meet my mom bomb.

Here I was thinking it only works on male's you're in a relationship with.

I hate confrontations but because I value what we have and truly speaking he would make a great addition to my family.

I mean we have those friends whom we regard as more than just friends but family.

I called him and all his answer's were vague.

"Hey I just wanted to find out if you're okay" I said as soon as he picked up my call.

Did I tell you that he wasn't taking my calls.

"Hey I was meaning to call but I was a bit busy" he said.

I could tell he wasn't telling me the true and somehow it felt like he was going to leave me.

"Have I done something Busaphi" I asked.

He sighed and said nothing for a while.

"Look I didn't mean to ruin your day but honestly I hope you're okay. I love you bhuti" I said.

"I love you too sisi and I promise to come visit as soon as I get back" he said ending the call.

So calling him is out of question apparently he's away on business.

I woke up late today and had to do a very rushed up job.

I had to eat, dress up and bath at the same time It doesn't make sense but it's doable trust me.

It's a Sunday and I promised my mother I would join them for church today.

But the devil wants to use me people and I got a flat tire.

I called for road assistance about an hour ago and still no sight of them.

The high pitched voice lady told me to patiently wait as help is on the way.

I almost told her where to get off with her stupid apology and their poor service.

I am dressed to turn heads and have the men of God declare marriage and want to pay lobola as soon as tomorrow.

I want to cry as I reach for my sleepers, if I don't get out there and get this over and done with then church will miss me.

I need to confess all my sins and the good Lord needs to forgive.

I step out of the car open the boot taking out the carjack and spanner to change the wheel.

I should be glad Mphemba taught me how to change a tire and fix things around the house. And the fact that I stayed with my mother for a long time I learned how to do things myself around the house.

I fold my arms preparing to go down on my knees and find myself cursing.

"Excuse me" A voice says from behind me.

I look up and the sun blocks my view but I can tell it's a man judging from the hand offered and broad shoulders.

He pulls me up and I hit his chest so hard I almost bounce back down to the ground but he wraps his arms around my waist making my breath hitch.

"I am sorry" I say clearing my throat.

He doesn't let go and I have no choice but to look up.

He's handsome a bit on the dark side and tall my eyes almost roll when I look at him.

"Do you need any help" he asks.

I almost float in his bold deep raspy voice and nod my head.

He gently lets me go and rolls his sleeves unbuttoning his shirt.

I move aside and watch him go down on one knee.

I don't think men should be this handsome it's not allowed but here's one looking like a sin.

There last time I felt all tingly inside Mphemba was looking my way and I ended up in his bed the following week.

"I should be done any minute now" he says.

Such chivalry and I thought it no longer existed in men of today.

He stands up and his white shirt is ruined. I get my bag and take my wipes scrubbing away at the poor man's chest.

He holds both my arms stopping me.

"I am so sorry" I say locking eyes with the man.

"It's okay I was only doing my duty as a man" he says.

"No one stopped so thank you" I say.

"My name is Bayanda Zulu and I am on my way to church" I stupidly says and bite my lip once the words leave my mouth.

He chuckles and gives a slight nod.

"Lubanzi" he says with a smile.

"God you say" he says mockingly.

I detect belief issues.

"You don't believe in God" I ask.

"No" he says.

"Well I do and I believe there's a reason why we are standing here" I say.

A man comes out of the car and calls him to the side.

"We need to leave now" the guys says.

"I won't make it anymore" Lubanzi says taking off the stained shirt putting on a clean one from the car.

I find that to be odd the only person I know to keep clean shirts in his car is Ray Donovan.

I watch his smooth looking skin and his toned abs and swallow hard.

"I will call and explain" Lubanzi says to the young man.

"And if they asks who you are with what must I say" he asks.

"Tell them the truth" he says grabbing his jacket.

Ears have no lid so I couldn't help eavesdrop.

He comes back and looks at me.

"I haven't been to church in a very long time" he says.

"Would you like to go to church with me" I ask hoping he says yes.

I know he's a stranger not to be trusted but he's a goody looking one.

I call Bubu and tell her that I am about to hop into my car with a total stranger out of my own free will and I really don't know why.

The drive to church wasn't all bad but I did embarrass myself when my tongue decided on its own to get tired up.

Lubanzi wouldn't keep his eyes off me and I had thoughts of him pinning me to the wall and have me screaming out his name.

I had to open the window because the conditioner was doing anything to help ease my heightened sexual desire and craving.

I couldn't help look at his thighs and the way his shirt wanted to rip.

I thank God when I bring the car into a halt killing the engine.

"We're here" I say attempting to step out of the car but he holds my hand.

He shouldn't do that because something happens when he does. I retract my hand I am not about to have flash on this man doing on the floor right outside this holy house.

"What do I do" he asks.

I tilt my head looking at him confused.

"I mean what do people in church do" he asks.

"Just follow my lead" I say.

We both get out of the car and walking close together my heart racing.

Why do people do strange things in the first place and why am I with a stranger taking him to church.

His hand brushes mine automatically having our hands entwined, the same electric wave I had when I hitting his chest surges again.

When I said marriage I specifically said a man of God not this a total stranger.

#008

Zoleka worked on her garden as usual this helped to calm her down.

She wasn't all bad well that's what she thought little did she know her outbursts and her way of going about things is what made it difficult for Bayanda to be around her.

Her work is what kept her busy most of the time and away from home.

To her Bayanda was strong and capable of looking after herself and she didn't see the need to constantly be at home.

Bukhosi left her and she was bitter and always angry at everyone but herself.

She always took out her anger at Bayanda and Lord the men she brought home after her husband left always left her with a scar be it physically or emotionally.

And her frequent lover broke not only her but Bayanda too.

Scelo was his name loving and caring at first till he started seeing Bayanda as more than just a child but a woman.

He started touching her little girl and she turned a blind eye. Scelo loved and treated her like a queen he reminded her of Bukhosi and she didn't want to let that go.

Even when Bayanda begged her to take her to aunt's place she wouldn't.

Bayanda was Bukhosi which made letting her go hard and a part of her beard resentment towards her own daughter.

That's one of the things she would never be able to forgive herself for.

Bayanda started acting out over the years cutting herself and found comfort in the most unlikely of places and humans.

All she needed was her mother's attention and she got none of that and so coping was the only thing she could do to survive.

But if there's one thing Zoleka she knew is that she loved her baby girl despite their differences.

She deeply sighed as she dug a hole and put a plant inside given to her by Bayanda.

She smiled thinking of how grown her Ayana was and how strong she is no matter what life threw her way she always came out stronger.

She stood up and dusted herself off the dirt and turned bumping into her past.

She dropped her small red shovel and backed away stomping on her beautiful flowers.

Bukhosi was standing right in front of her and this wasn't a dream.

She closed her eyes and blinked but he was still there tall and handsome as she knew him.

The last time she saw him he had his bags and was leaving.

She couldn't believe her eyes and tears streamed down.

"Bukhosi" she said in a whisper.

Bukhosi shook his head this woman still had the looks and the body to make any man's blood run hot.

This was the love of his life the mother of kids and after so long he couldn't find fault in what she looked like.

He too wasn't bad in fact he matured and grew old like fine whiskey that Zoleka couldn't help but check him out.

"What are you doing here" Zoleka asked.

"Did you bring my son" she asked looking behind him only to be disappointed.

"You didn't care about Busani then so don't start now" Bukhosi said feeling himself get angry.

"I am sorry" Zoleka said when he saw the picture Bukhosi was holding.

A picture of their daughter and regret swooped in like a flood.

"Why" Is all Bukhosi could say after he took a good look at his wife.

"I don't know I guess I was angry" Zoleka said shaking her head.

"So angry you took her away from me snatched her away from my heart" Bukhosi asked because to him that's what she did.

"Bukho ngiyacela don't do this" She said making her way to him.

That's what she used to call him back in the day.

"Can we go inside please" Zoe said walking back inside the house with Bukhosi following behind.

"You had no right to lie to me" Bukhosi said when Zoleka turned to look at him.

"I am so sorry Zulu" She said clasping her hands together.

"I don't want to hear your excuses I came to get my daughter" He said.

"No you're not doing this to me" Zoe said.

"But you did it to me" He said shouting.

"And I am sorry" She shouted back.

"Where the hell is my daughter Zoleka" Bukhosi said taking a few steps closer to her.

"She's not here" Zoleka said hiding her face.

Bukhosi saw how frightened she was and backed away.

She had known how a man's fists and how an open palm felt like on her soft skin along the years.

"You're going to call her and ask her to come home" He demanded.

"You will tell her the truth or so a help me God" he said through gritted teeth.

Zoleka didn't recognise the man who stood before her and that scared her.

"Bukhosi if you ever loved me then you will not do this please" She begged.

"I forgave you Zoe but you went and did this to me" he said in disbelief.

"I am sorry" She said crying her eyes out.

Her sins had finally caught up with her.

She had lied and deceived the poor man but still he would forgive her each time she strayed.

Yes they loved each other but the lonely nights and missed dinner arrangements got to her.

Bukhosi was a great father and husband but work took him from home and that put strains on their marriage.

Patience was never one of Zoleka's strongest traits and so she found comfort in the arms of another man.

She found herself sharing a bed with her husband's best friend and with a child she wasn't sure who the father was.

"You slept with him over and over again in my bed in my house and I forgave you still. You told me Ayana wasn't my child because that's what you are a liar.

You ignored my kids and played girlfriend to a married man my best friend and then you aborted our child" Bukhosi said as tears fell.

"You were brave enough to open your legs for him but not enough to raise his child. You could have waited till we got the DNA test but you didn't, and when I wanted to take my children with me you claimed I hit you and your boyfriend put out a restraining order against me how nice" He said laughing out loud.

He couldn't help realise just how much of a fool he was and it only darned on him now that he was saying it all this outloud.

"I couldn't see my children while you neglected them and my son got sick while you were in his sheets.

And then you bloody lied and said our daughter is dead how could you Zoe" He asked feeling weak all this was too much even for him.

"I was blind Zulu I swear I was" She said.

At some point she was because she ended up supporting Scelo financially and broke not only her family but another woman's family.

"You left me for him and what did he do huh, he hurt you and my daughter and what did you do nothing Zoleka you stayed" Bukhosi said.

"I used to listen to men talk about conniving, selfish, dangerous and spiteful women and I always told myself those were just myths till I met you" he said.

Zoleka couldn't hold it and screamed at how the truth slapped her in the face.

"I should have payed more attention to you and less on my career and I am sorry for that, but I thought I was doing the right thing providing for my family as a man" he said looking at her.

He made his way to Zoe who was on the floor and embraced her inhaling her floral scent and foundy himself not letting go.

"I spent years hating myself pushing everyone away all because I didn't want to face the truth" She said sobbing in his arms.

"But I can't tell her the truth" She continued.

"Please don't make me because she will hate me Zulu my daughter will want nothing to do with me" she said raising her eyes to look at Bukhosi.

"I am begging you Zulu" she said swallowing hard.

"Baba" Busani said standing from afar looking at his parents.

He saw all the other features of himself he couldn't see on his father but on his mother.

Zoleka looked at Bukhosi who nodded his head and she sobbed even more her son was standing in her living room.

"Mama" Busani said.

She couldn't get a word out and just opened her arms and watched her son stumble to her hold.

She held him tight not letting go and Bukhosi wished Bayanda could walk through that door.

He prayed his daughter would be welcoming and more understanding like her brother.

"Call her" Bukhosi said standing up.

To him this was long overdue and he didn't want to waste any more time.

....

If I knew I would meet Lubanzi like that then I would have long gone to church and mysteriously have my car break down.

Sunday wasn't just a sunday but it was the best day of my life well since things haven't been good.

I even ditched sunday lunch for him and spent my whole afternoon just staring at him and listening to his laugh while I cracked up my own horrible one.

He borrowed me his jacket when it started getting cold and kissed my forehead when he accompanied me home.

He drove my car and had someone come pick him up while he watched me walk up to my apartment.

I couldn't help notice the dimples on his cheeks and how he is different from the serious looking Lubanzi to the smiling one.

And he somehow managed to get me to give him my numbers without hesitation.

And he has been calling since to check up on me and how my day is going .

I smile just thinking about him

the door to my office opens up and Pam walks in followed by Luke who is holding his laptop.

"This better be good" I say looking up.

He makes his way to me and shows me a video clip we have been waiting for.

My smile fades when I see Lubanzi walk out of the crime scene his shirt soaked in blood. He is seen changing into a clean one while disposing of the other one.

As I am about to ask who this is the door opens again with Bab' Mngadi senior and son's making their way in.

My worst fear comes to life when I smell a whiff of Lubanzi in the room.

I think my body just went cold and my heart raced over its limit.

"Mr Mngadi sir" Luke says exchanging handshakes.

I stand up as he reaches for my hand and put on my best smile.

"Pleasure to finally meet you sir" I say.

"The pleasure is all mine meeting one of the best young prominent lawyers" he says.

"These are my sons Lubanzi, Sizwe and Muzi" he says introducing them.

Just like most of the public I was in the dark when it came to the eldest Mngadi son that's how it's always been.

I mean you could walk past him and wouldn't know you did just like I didn't know.

I believe the youngest one is in school.

"I believe everything is in order and that you have gone through the case" Bab' Mngadi says.

I nod looking at Luke this whole room reaks of egos and dark auras and all sorts of energies.

"May I be excused" I say walking out to breathe and compose myself.

Lubanzi catches up with me and grabs my arm.

"You did that to that poor man" I say.

He clenches his jaws looking at me in the eye.

"He crossed me" he says.

"So what am I huh a pawn in this game of yours, you seduce the naive lawyer and have her fight tooth and nail for you is that it" I ask fighting myself out of his hold.

"That's not true Bayanda" he says.

I don't know why this hurts but I was hoping we were headed somewhere.

"I am the man who helped you fix your tire and payed your bill at forbidden not that man you saw on the clip" he says.

I tilt my head.

"That was you" I ask.

"Yes and the same man who spent his whole afternoon with you while I should have been attending an important family function" he says sounding frustrated.

I didn't ask him for that and right now I don't care.

"There are distinct clauses about about dating clients and I am not about to blur that line" I say.

"Bayanda" he says.

His father comes out of my office and clears his throat looking at us suspiciously.

I know what it looks like Lubanzi has his one leg up between my thighs and the other one locking me in.

Both his hands on my waist while he breathes my air and I breathe his slowly as we look into each other's eyes.

"Banzi" his father calls him.

"I believe we are done here mr Mngadi" I say getting out of his hold.

...

Work dragged longer and I didn't even want to go to my place and as always I find myself on my mother's doorstep tears dried up and me feeling like the worst fool under the sun.

I don't even bother knocking and just walk in calling out Mama.

"Mama" I say.

"Ncane where are you" I ask dropping my bag.

I walk to the living room and find Ncane, Mama, Busaphi and one gentleman.

"Busaphi" I say stunned.

The gentleman sharing th couch with him looks up and my whole entire existence ceases.

He stands up together with my mom and then Busaphi.

I look at Busaphi and see the resemblance flinching my eyes.

"Baba" I say looking at him.

"Ayana" He says.

I shake my head looking at Busaphi or should I say Busani.

"Busani" I whisper.

He nods attempting to make his way to me.

"Stay where you are" I say putting out my hand.

"Bayanda" my father says.

I feel so overwhelmed the last thing I expected to do when meeting my father happens.

"Bayanda no" My mother shouts

I run towards the door and get inside my car driving off.

I find myself sitting on the bar gulping down beer after beer.

I wanted to call Lubanzi but aborted mission before he picked up.

"I thought you quit drinking" I hear Liv's voice say behind me.

I did say I was turning a new leaf but I find myself drowning in the same poison I fought so hard to let go.

"Olivia Roux" I say raising up my beer.

She joins me and orders another round placing her hand on thighs.

"Should we go to my place" she says winking.

I nod paying my bill and standing up, we bump into Lubanzi outside with him standing next to his car.

"Ngizok'landa" he says without even saying hi.

"Bayanda get in the car" Liv says.

I am standing here looking at both these people I want to burst out laughing but I can't reach that feeling.

Lubanzi looks at Liv from head to toe and raises his eyebrow.

"Are you coming or not" Lubanzi asks.

"Bayanda get in the fucken car" Liv says.

I step aside and stand next to Lubanzi.

"Wow" Liv says.

I didn't come here for her so she shouldn't be catching bags of feelings.

"We ngane hambo lala" Lubanzi says to Liv.

He opens the car for me and drives off stopping in the middle of nowhere.

"Phuma ukhale" he says. I look at him and bite my lower lip.

"You haven't said anything and I figure you don't want to cry in front of me" he says.

I look outside and it's dark but still step outside and slump to the dusty ground screaming.

He joins me and pulls me into his chest while sobs build up.

"I didn't know what to say finding him there" I say.

"I have waited so long and now I don't know even my own brother lied to me" I say. He tightens his hold and lets me cry.

"Why is he back after so many years" I ask.

"Shss" He says rocking me back and forth.

We are in the middle of nowhere not caring if we get dirty or not.

"I am not strong enough for this Banzi" I say shaking my head.

"I am here and I am going to be till you say otherwise" he says.

"He left he made his choices why now" I ask.

He scoops me up and gets me inside the car cradling me like a child. "You're okay I got you" he says.

#009

Goodbye Norma Jean

No I never knew you at all but you had the grace to hold yourself.

While those around you crawled they crawled out of the woodwork.

And they whispered into your brain

They set you on the treadmill and made you change your name.

And it seems to me you lived your life like a candle in the wind.

Never knowing who to cling to when the rain set in.

And the I would have like to know you but I was just a kid.

Your candle burned out long before your legend ever did.

Loneliness was tough.

The toughest role you ever played

Hollywood created a superstar and pain was the price you paid.

Even when you died all the press still hounded you

All the papers had to say was that Marilyn was found in the nude.

Goodbye Norma Jean

Though I never knew you at all you had the grace to hold yourself

While those around you crawled.

Goodbye Norma Jean

From the young man in the 22nd row who sees you as more than sexual.

More than just our Marilyn Monroe.

And it seems to me you lived your life like the candle in the wind.

Never knowing to cling to when the rain set in.

And I would have liked to know but I was just a kid.

Your candle burned out long before your legend ever did'

I wake up to the melodious peaceful sound of Elton John's candle in the wind.

It's such a beautiful and sad song about a woman whose candle burned out long before her legend ever did.

I feel like John right now wishing I crossed paths with Marilyn.

I love the song but I won't give much away as I keep my eyes shut and inhale the fresh morning cold breeze coming in.

I spent the night here even though I didn't intend too but emotionally I wasn't in the right state of mind to drive home.

I don't know how Lubanzi found my location or maybe I pocket dialed him but either way I am glad he came.

His forehead and nose is touching mine although I should be finding this to be creepily weird if that's even a word. But I don't instead I take in every a bit of him and his masculine scent feeling giddy and butterfly occupied.

"I know you're awake" He says in his raspy voice that has me swallowing.

I won't risk saying anything knowing how much morning breath stinks and I don't want to jinx whatever this is.

I open my eyes and smile at this beautiful man saying nothing.

"Morning" he says.

I continue smiling afraid my morning breath might put him off.

"If you're worried about your breath trust me I have smelled and seen far more worse" He says not moving an inch.

"Morning" I finally say.

"Oh my she speaks" he says lightly laughing.

I smile back at him and witness his beautiful dimples.

I don't know but this man is not smiling with only his lips but eyes too and those are the best and most beautiful sincere of smiles.

I can't breathe freely he's close too close of I may add.

He gets off the bed giving me a full view of his tall body structure and settles on the couch overlooking the perfect view of his garden.

"I would like to know you" he says bobbing his head to the song.

"You're quite the fidget had to sleep on the floor but don't worry I will get used to it " He says so casually

He stares making me follow his eyes all the way to my breast.

He must have taken off my clothes because I am only left with my thong.

"About last night I am sorry I was such a mess" I say.

Thinking about last night make me want to beg the ground to open up and swallow me.

I made a fool of myself and cried in his arms even had snot and now I find myself in his comfy bed.

"I am glad I could help" he says.

"You will find everything you need in the bathroom" He says standing up walking towards the door.

I slow get out of bed and make my way to his bathroom but stop on my tracks when I see a recorder playing it's one of those old huge plastic disc player.

I smile running my hands around it careful not to stop, this man is old school and his bedroom is spacious.

I proceed to the bathroom and take a long shower that leaves my body fully relaxed.

I put on his robe and bury my head inside it taking in another bit of him.

I want to have an embeded memory of how this man smells.

"If I knew this would a put a smile on your face I would have long woken you up" he says behind me.

I feel embarrassed and this whole experience is new to me.

He leads me to the balcony and I am welcomed by a scrumptious breakfast making my stomach growl.

"Shouldn't you be at work or people like you don't" I ask.

I am never one to mince my words hence the question.

"I do work and yes I should be at work but I took the day off to look after you" he says.

I want to say yeah right but hold my tongue

He hands me my phone and our hands touch till he clears his throat.

"I switched it off when it wouldn't stop ringing" he says.

"Thank you" I say

I truly am thankful because if I heard it ring then I was going to smash it to the ground.

He pours coffee for the both of us and I for some odd reason feel like his homemade icecream but afraid to ask.

"So is it true that your family is a family of murders and thieves" he coughs almost spilling his coffee.

"No I am don't come from a family of murders and thieves as you put. I am the CEO of Mngandi gold and my father is into politics as you know.

I am a son, father and brother two three boys and one girl. I graduated top of my class in varsity and I have been doing well since.

What you saw was an unfortunate scene one I wish I hadn't seen.

I was beyond the word angry and I don't take lightly to betray but that doesn't justify what I did" he says.

"And if I wanted to finish him up then I would hunt him down kill him and make sure his body is never found, but that's not how I do things" he says.

"You're telling me that all these things are Just rumours" I ask.

"All these things written about my family are hearsay and I believe an educated person like you would know there are always two sides to a story.

Papers are there to be sold, stories are there to be fabricated and lies are there to be told Ndabezitha" he says.

Okay that was a mouthful and I now I feel bad.

"Get to know me" he says with a side smile.

"And what if I don't like what I know" I ask.

"There's no way you wouldn't" he says confidently.

He looks at my wrist and a sad smile shows.

"You cut yourself" he says so raw with emotion my hands withdraw from the table.

"You had no right" I say.

"Who hurt you

who tormented you" he asks.

I look away till I feel his hands on cheeks.

"Let me take care of you" he says.

"Banzi I should be going" I say standing up.

He gently grabs mu arms pulling me to his chest.

"I will drive you home" He says letting go.

I switch on my phone and a number of messages comes through a lot from my Mom and most Ncane.

One from Mphemba gets my attention.

Mazulu please don't do anything stupid I know how you get when everything is too much. Please call me so I can come get you It reads.

I don't know what game he's playing but I won't be apart of it.

Lubanzi drives me home to my mom's place and parks one house away.

He gets out of the car coming to my side opening the door for me.

I won't be getting used to his tallness anytime soon.

He brings me into a hug and I want to break down I don't think I am ready for what lies ahead.

I didn't even want to leave his place, I wrap my arms around him and wish I could stay.

"Tell me to stay and I will" he says not letting go.

He pulls away when he sees Mphemba making his way to us.

"Bayanda we were so worried about you" He says the moment he reaches us.

"Mphemba" I say my hand still clinging on to Lubanzi's.

Nsindiso looks at the knot our hands just made and looks at Banzi.

"I will take it from here" he says taking my other hand.

"Thank you" I say letting go.

He watches till I disappear and drives off.

My mother is the first one to attack me when I walk inside the house.

"Don't you do that ever again" she says letting go.

I look behind her and the whole crowd is here.

Ncane leads me to the couch while everyone settles down too.

"Can I walk Nsindiso out" I say standing up before anyone responds.

I walk him to the door and have him grab my arm.

"Are you sleeping with him" He asks.

"Excuse me" I say.

"What are you doing with a man like that" he asks.

"What are you going to give him huh because we both know your won't give him kids" He says.

"Just come back home to me where you belong" he says.

I slap him in the face biting my lip.

"I will give him what I gave you all these years and so much more" His face changes to a look I am not used too.

"I think you need time to think and come back to your senses" he says giving me a kiss on the cheek.

The nerve of this man so much for having a pregnant woman at home.

I look at my father and man I look so much like him my anger towards him intensifies.

"Ayana" he says making me chuckle.

"Just like that after so many years of not being around" I say.

"Bayanda please" Ncane says.

"No all I want to know is why" I say.

"Why did you leave and why didn't you take me with you" I ask.

He looks at my mother and sighs.

"Why did you take Busani and not me is it because I am not boy" I ask.

"That's not true" He says.

"Oh then you not loving me and not wanting me must be the truth" I say.

"Bayanda" Mama says softy.

"What mama it's the truth he walked out and left us all alone, I don't get what you're sitting there when you should be throwing him out" I say now standing up.

"Bayanda sit down and listen" Ncane says.

"No if he was here playing his fatherly role and duties then I wouldn't have turned out like this. Seeking comfort and attention in man looking for a father in most of them" I say.

"Yana" Busani says softly.

"Stay out of this wena your father took you and left me to be suffer the after effects of a broken home. I was left behind to fend for myself because mama was too broken and occupied to do so. I stayed with an abusive man a man who creeped up to my room everu chance he got. And what did you say mama huh what did you tell me" I ask tears streaming down.

"You don't,well I do you said I wanted attention because my deadbeat of a father didn't love me" she shakes her head her own tears falling.

"You made your choice and left and at some point I made peace with it and a part of me buried you now stay dead" I say.

He looks at my mother once again and stands up.

"That's enough Zoe tell the child the truth" he says.

"Bukhosi ndiyacela suyenza lento" she begs with her eyes.

"Fine I will tell her" he says.

"Mama just tell her it's better when she hears the truth from you"Busani says.

"Hayi" she says holding Ncane's hand.

I look at my father try his best not say it but he ends up shaking his head.

"It was never my intention to leave you but I had too" He says wiping his own tears.

"For the longest time I thought you were dead because that's what your mother told me. I stayed away because she made me not because I wanted to" He says.

"Mama would never do that" I shake my head.

"She did because she was having an affair with my best friend and I an inconvenience and so were my kids" he says.

"I took Busani because he was sick and your mother couldn't care less about him. Remember that day I took you out for icecream that was the day we were suppose to leave but your mother threatened me in the most way possible and I had to leave you" he says breaking down.

"Mama what did you say" I ask furiously.

"I am sorry Ayana" she says her cries turning into sobs.

"What did she say mama utheni that was so bad he left without me" I ask.

"Tell her Zoe" he screams and the whole house goes quiet you can a pin drop.

"Mama what did you do" I ask.

"I told him if he took you like he did Busani I would tell the police he was molesting you and your brother" she says getting up coming to me.

"No" I say feeling my get sick.

"Tell me he's lying that you didn't do all thess things" I beg.

"I was young Ayana and foolishly in love, he made me feel good and that's all I thought about" she says.

I nod my head walking up to my room.

She follows me and blocks my way.

"I love you and I am sorry" she says clasping her hands together.

"I hate you Zoleka Zulu" I say moving her out of my way.

"Bukhosi" she screams.

Same old scream different events and this one just tore another piece of me.

I feel weak so much so nothing comes out the air in my lungs feels sucked out.

I reach for my cookie monster stuffed bear and hug it for all the times I put it away in the box of all my memories.

I lay on the cold floor and keep swallowing hard till my eyes shut and the banding on my door quietens down.

I wake up to my phone vibrating and look at it only to see Lubanzi calling.

I look at the time and it's late to have him call at this time.

"Ndabezitha" he says.

He sighs and clears his throat.

"I am outside" he says.

I pick myself up and luckily the house is quiet still wearing his hoody and all.

I make my way outside not caring about witches doing their work and find him standing next to his car.

He opens his arms and I slowly step into his embrace.

I don't know why this man feels like my home after a long journey.

"What I am going to do with you" he says kissing my head.

"She lied" I say.

"Mngadi my mother lied" I say sniffing.

"There are always two sides to a story" I say.

He pulls away and kisses my forehead nicely fixing the hoody over my head.

"Ngiyaxolisa yezwa" he says smiling.

#010

I couldn't see myself under the same roof as my mother and so I packed the last of my clothes and called a taxi.

I wish I could stay and talk things out but I was tired of always being the one to talk things out.

My mother has always been like this mess things up between us and never own up.

The pain of knowing she lied all these years cut deep.

I realised that she's always been manipulative, selfish and probably spiteful but I couldn't see all that because she was the only parent I had.

The only person who stayed and loved me in her own messed up way.

I think it's safe to finally admit I come from a broken family and my mother was the cause of it all.

I swear I have seen and read about toxic mothers who use kids to fight their battle but I didn't think my own mother would stoop so low and be one of them.

I dragged my one bag and the only box that remained to the kitchen.

"Bayanda" she said the moment I appeared.

I looked at her after everything we have been through not once did she think of telling me the truth.

I would have long sought my father with every resource possible.

But I was always afraid of being rejected and my mother proven right.

"I am leaving and there's nothing you can do to change that" I said.

"I know I hurt you and I am so sorry but please don't shut me out" she begged.

"No matter what happens I am your mother and I will always be your mother. I didn't mean to hurt you or watch by while you suffered emotionally and physically" she said trying to hold my hand.

"You mean you didn't mean to hit me all those years" I said.

I would come home late and I would get a beating, I would say something she didn't like and I would be given nasty looks then a beating would follow.

"You hated me not baba, you are the one who didn't love me but you couldn't do much because you were stuck with me " I say.

"Ayana that's not true and you know that" she said.

"I don't know anything anymore because you programmed me and planted hate and doubt in my mind" I said.

"Do you even know the damage you have done to me because it's so huge not even your sorry can fix it" I said.

"I am your mother and I raised you please forgive me Ayana" I shook my head.

"I stayed when you pushed everyone away and now I wish I didn't" she put her hand over her mouth.

"I wish I didn't pray that hard and I wish I wasn't there when you collapsed because then I wouldn't be hating you this much. You don't speak ill about the dead remember" I said.

"Ayana you don't mean that" she said shaking her head.

"I do" I said looking at Ncane who just appeared.

I took my things once the taxi arrived and left.

I didn't mean most of the things I said about wishing she wasn't alive but I wanted to hurt as much I was.

That was a week ago and I have been cooped up at myself not wanting to leave.

I haven't been feeling sorry for myself but also I don't know how to move on.

Do I accept the olive branch my father extended or do I just go about as if nothing happened.

And then there's Lubanzi my very own kryptonite and shoulder to lean on.

This guy has been amazing and I am afraid one more look from him and I will crumble that's how he makes me feel.

I haven't heard from him in days and I seem to have lost my necklace which is a bummer.

That thing kept me sane and now that's it's gone I feel naked.

Is it possible to fall in love at first sight and deep down know things you shouldn't.

Although I haven't seen him his younger brother has been making stops to my apartment bringing me food and just keeping me company.

I think he's the most approachable one of all the brother's and he's cute in a brotherly way.

It wasn't always like this you see Banzi had sent all his brother's to come and bring me food.

Imagine my horror when I saw them standing outside my door and I pleaded with the man to at least send someone who smiles hence Njabulo.

A knock comes through making me put a pause on The Good Doctor. So much for staying on home and just stuffing my face.

I brush the crumbs off t-shirt and drag my slippers all the way to the door.

I find my father and Busani standing on the door.

I would ask how my father found the place but he's with my brother and that question is out.

"May we come in please" My father says.

I move out of the way letting them in, the place looks a mess but they should have warned me.

I close the door behind me and breathe heavily joining them.

"I hope we didn't disturb you" Busani says.

"Why are you here" I ask.

"I know you're angry but I would like to give your mother the benefit of the doubt that she taught you a little respect" My father says.

"Ngyaxolisa" I say.

"Now please sit down" he says.

I sit next to Busani and my father stands looking at us.

"You two are my children and I love you so much. I am sorry that your mother and I hurt you both" he says turning his focus to me.

"I loved you from the day your mother told me about you and you have always been in my heart ever since. I am sorry that I wasn't there and knowing what you went through breaks my heart.

I love you Bayanda and nothing has changed all I ask is that you forgive me and your mother.

I want you to know that no matter what happens you have a father that loves you so much more than anything.

I would love to be a part of your life and for you to be a part of mine" He says nervously smiling.

Busani holds my hand and nods.

"It's okay you have us now" he says.

"I was angry at you for so long and all I wanted was your love nothing more. I happy that you are here and ready to be a father but I am also sad that mama did all those things" I say.

"And I am sorry too Ayana" he says.

"You should have come sooner" I say.

"I know and I am sorry" he says slowly making his way to me.

"I love you" he says.

I have longed for hear these words and hearing them brings tears to my heart.

"Cry it's okay baba is here and I am not going anywhere" he says.

"Baba" I say he nods his head lightly laughing and opens his arms not sure if I will embrace him.

As expected I hesitate but end up crying painfully in his arms.

So many kids are fatherless out there because of woman like my mother and they walk around bearing anger because they seek that one thing

love, acceptance and approval from their absent fathers.

He holds me tight and doesn't let go while I hold him back and cry.

Birthdays passed, graduation came and pass and my first heartbreak came and pass and he wasn't there.

"I am sorry I lied" Busani says.

"I am not angry" I say.

I have alot to share with him and I miss how creative he gets with smores.

"I am happy" My father says wiping his own tears.

"No one will hurt you for as long as I live and when I am gone from this world your brother will take care of you" He says.

"I don't want to overwhelm you but when you're ready I would like you to meet my wife and your sister" He says.

"I have a sister" I ask looking at Busani who laughs.

"Yes and she's pretty just like you" he says.

"Shall I make you breakfast" I ask.

"No just show me where everything is and dad will whip something up for you two" he says.

I look at Busani who smiles.

"Baba is the best in the kitchen" He says.

I feel happy and I don't want anything ruining this day.

We have a long way to go but I am willing to try and build a relationship with them.

As for my mother time will tell but how do you fix a relationship that was already in tatters.

Mngani senior looked at his son busy cleaning the same gun over and over again.

He had been doing this ever since he walked through that door and he couldn't help but wonder what was troubling him.

He even went as polishing his bullets which wasn't a first for him but it was the way he was doing it that troubled Mngadi senior.

Although his son's mind seemed to be far away he was careful in what he was doing.

Mngandi senior cleared his throat and looked at his son who wasn't even paying attention.

"It's her right the one who has you all worked up" He said watching his son's face relax.

Of course it was her the woman who had stolen his heart and made him weak in the knees.

The woman who made him want to eliminate all those who looked her way in a way that was sexual.

The woman who made him want to confess all his and find warm comfort in her soft arms.

"I don't know what you're talking about" Lubanzi said in voice that preceeded even his father.

"I am not stupid Banzi" Mngadi said.

"You being that would be an insult baba" Lubanzi said with a smirk.

Although he respected his father he loved challenging him.

Their relationship was strong and Mngadi never feared showing affection to his son's.

"You have been cleaning that thing since I got here" he said.

Lubanzi reached in the draw next to him and took the necklace but put it back.

"What's on your mind" his father asked genuinely concerned.

"It's nothing baba I have been thinking about how much Omuhle has grown and that I will be chasing boys soon" Lubanzi said.

"I just hope you don't plan on breaking someone's knees" his father said laughing.

"I promise it's nothing like that" Lubanzi said.

"Tell me when are you going to give Omuhle siblings" his father asked.

Lubanzi laughed the only siblings he wanted to give Omuhle were to come from Bayanda.

The thought of seeing her naked made his blood hot and gave him a hard on.

"Soon baba" he said while his mind raced back to the night he spent with Bayanda.

He inhaled her and touched her smooth delicate skin and watched her cry in her sleep and finally come down.

Her body fit perfectly in his arms and all he wanted to do was protect her from the outside world.

He saw how scarred she is and his heart broke to him women were never meant to cry expect when giving birth.

"Now that is a smile of a man in love" his father said.

"You know me too well baba" Lubanzi said.

"Is she worth it Banzi" Mngadi asked seeing how deep in thought his son was.

He wasn't stupid he knew his son like the back of his hand.

"I know she is but I don't know if I am worthy" Lubanzi said standing up.

"If she loves you then she will most take you with your past" his father said.

"I don't want her handling my case anymore" Lubanzi said facing the window.

"But why with her on your side you will walk" his father told him.

"I don't care find someone else but not Bayanda or better yet I will ask mr Cowan to deal with my case,him and him alone" he said. "Very well" his father said walking out.

Lubanzi remained and looked at the necklace again if he didn't believe in the universe before then he did now.

This belonged to him once and he never thought in his wildest dreams that he would ever see it again.

He took it and fojnft himself driving to Bayanda's place.

He knocked a couple of times before the door opened and a sexy Bayanda appeared wearing her black silk short night gown dress with a slit on the thigh.

"Mngadi" she said bringing her robe closer hiding her indecency.

She wasn't expecting to see him so late and all she wanted was give him a hug. "Can I come in" he asked.

Bayanda nodded moving out of the way she was doing a lot of that today moving out of the way that is.

First it was her father and brother then Ncane came to reason with her and now it was the man who made her heart skip a beat.

She could tell by just looking at him that he wasn't okay and watched while he slumped down on the couch.

She went to the kitchen and dished up something for Banzi heated the food up and gave it to him with a beer on the side.

"Thank you" He said eating up what felt like heaven to him.

Their silence didn't have to mean much because somehow it was what they needed.

Banzi was used to having women throw themselves at him but this one sitting next to him was different.

She stood up with this content smile on her face Banzi had finished his plate.

Banzi watched as she swayed her hips and wondered how his hands would feel against her slim waist gliding down.

He stood up and followed her to the kitchen closing her in against the sink planting small wet kisses on her neck.

Bayanda closed her eyes feeling Banzi's hands glide down all the way to her thighs and up her breast.

"Banzi" she said feeling his hard dick press against her arse.

"I want a house full of Ayana's running around the house, and I want to find you naked in our kitchen every time I come from from work" he said turning her then lifting her up to her arse on kitchen counter.

"Open your eyes for me" He said having both his hands on her exposed thighs. "Take a chance on me" He said.

Abba is all Bayanda could think off and a faint smile grew on her face.

"I don't know if I should" She said closing her eyes again.

"Then let me love you" He said kissing her thighs till he reached her temple and spread her legs running his tongue across her wet moist folds.

"Banzi" Bayanda cried out feeling his warm breathe and gentle nibble on her clit.

He moved his to tongue in and out pleasuring her till couldn't hold it anymore.

"Ahha" Bayanda yelled when Banzi pushed in a finger and to realised she was tight.

He then gently entered another one and used his thumb to vigorously rub her clit.

Bayanda pulled him close and her lips devoured and her hands wrapped around his head.

"Come for me Ndabezitha" He said increasing the intensity and pace of his fingers.

She held on tight to Banzi as her juices flowed down and her screams echoed and filled her whole kitchen.

"I think I should leave" Banzi said pulling away.

She wasn't expecting Bayanda to please him too having her scream his name and beg him to make her come was enough.

"Take a shower and spend the night" Bayanda said kissing the palm of his hand closing her eyes.

"I don't think that's a good idea" Banzi said.

He knew he wouldn't be able to hold himself if he stayed a minute any longer.

He kissed her forehead took his keys and left soon regretting his decision the moment he heard the key behind him.

He wanted nothing more than to lay next to her but on her terms not his.

There was something that tunedw him on when a woman knew what she wanted.

#011

I thought I was okay till I found myself staring at babies through the glass and tears welling up.

I thought I could move past knowing I can never have children that I am a woman just not enough to bring life into this world.

When I saw Mphemba and his new women something shifted inside me and anger consumed me.

I know I am not supposed to feel like this but that should have been me, I was the one who was supposed to carry his child and give him a home not some random girl whose not even all that.

That's what I kept telling myself till Buhle brushed my shoulder and I came back from sounding bitter.

I couldn't believe I was turning into that type of a woman bitter and wishing I was the one carrying the child.

I hold my belly and close my eyes imagining tiny fluffy kicks.

I giggle at the thought of carrying a son, I don't why but I have always wished for a boy and then all the girls in the world would follow.

I open my eyes when I hear one of the babies cry and the mother holding him or her so close to her chest.

I stare and wonder how it feels to hold and feel your own so close you can hear their heartbeat.

I wonder what joy is it to see and have them open their eyes for the first time and cling to your one finger.

I ask myself how it feels to scold them and kiss their pain away.

Do they feel bad after scolding them because I know I would.

I laugh at created memories of me being a mother and running around after this tiny person.

I place my hand on the glass separating me from these angels and smile.

My hand moves to my neck finding my bare soft skin.

My fingers are so used to finding a pendant that I feel naked without it.

I have never taken it off and I don't understand how I lost it which is strange.

I take a sit in one of the benches going through my phone.

I want to call my dad but he might decide to take me to his house and I am not ready to meet his other family.

And knowing my mother she might see this as some form of betrayal and speaking of her.

I am angry at her and I am trying so hard not to hate her but she keeps giving me reasons to.

I wish she could own up to everything she's done to me and to our family.

I wish she could acknowledged her wrong doings and then just maybe I would be able to understand and move on.

Because of her I find myself here longing to hold one miracle and some days I want to walk inside there take one baby and just walk out of here.

I have had dreams where I am holding one and I don't ever wish to let go or wake up.

And then there's Banzi I can't stop thinking about him to the point where I even dream about him.

I even smell him every where I go and I don't remember ever feeling this way about another human being.

Even Luke took me off the Mngadi case I know that's what I wanted but it left me feeling conflicted.

"Ngivumele ngikuthande Ndabezitha" he said having my back against the wall.

"Why would you want to love someone tormented as me" I asked feeling his breath hit my face.

"Because I would love nothing more than to see and feel each and everyone of your demons" he said as his lips reached for mine.

"And what if you can't handle them" I asked biting his lip making me close my eyes and float.

"Bayanda allow me to be your hell and have your demons have their way with me" he said lifting me up having my legs wrap around his waist.

"Mngadi" I said feeling his hand glide up my breast.

"Don't fight me Bayanda" he whispered in my ear.

That's conversation almost had me screaming his name yet again but his phone rang and he had to go.

That's was days ago and I haven't heard from him since.

I think it's better that way that way no one gets hurts.

This hunger and desire we have for each other is killing me.

And the more I try fighting him the more I sink into this hole of falling for him.

But knowing the person that I am, I don't want to be toxic to yet another man.

I have beaten

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talked down and humiliated men and I don't want him or see me in that light.

You should see the way he looks at me and the way he holds me, his tallness and those dimples Lord his eyes are everything and when he smiles my whole world feels complete.

Everything I ever dreamed of and more so why would I want to taint such a beautiful memory of him and myself through his eyes.

I get home and find Ayanda waiting for me looking terrified and bruised.

I make my way to him and open the door when he begs me to take him inside.

"Ayanda what happened" I ask inspecting his face.

He looks at me and cries all over again.

"Maybe I should call Mngadi" I say.

He shakes his head.

"Please don't call him" he pleads clasping his hands together.

My thoughts immediately tell me he was involved in a fight that ended with him getting whooped.

"Okay but you need to tell me what's going on" I say going for my first aid kit.

I clean him up and make him some food.

Ayanda is the youngest one of the Mngadi boys.

He doesn't even eat but asks to sleep.

"Ayanda" I say.

He looks back and steadily walks back to me giving me a hug.

"Thank you sisi Bayanda" he says pulling away and walking to one of the bedrooms.

I look at the bottle of wine I bought on my way here when I thought I was going to be alone.

I hold the bottle and sniff its intoxicating content before taking one gulp.

I wipe my mouth and gulp another take breathing heavily.

I reach for the bottle cap and put the bottle away chewing some gum starting with my pots.

I end up taking the bottle out of the fridge and pouring myself a glass as I cook.

I call Banzi and tell him his brother is here and that I am worried since he won't talk.

He finally wakes up and joins me looking better than he arrived.

"Are you ready to talk" I ask.

"It's nothing I just got into a fight" he says brushing me off.

He avoids eye contact making think there's more to what he's saying.

He looks at my glass and squints his eyes.

"You drink" he asks.

I want to laugh but smile and nod my head instead.

"And bhuti is okay with it" he asks.

I nod even though we've never really discussed that well because there's nothing to discuss.

I plate up and soon a knock comes through.

I stand and compose myself before I stumble.

I open the door and Banzi walks past me and heads for Ayanda.

"Where the hell is he" he asks.

"Buya la wena" he says pointing at Ayanda.

"Banzi" I call out the moment he grabs Ayanda.

"Stay out of this Bayanda" he says sounding livid.

I hurry to Ayanda's aid and stand as his shield.

"Not in my house" I protest.

I feel courageous with this red poison running through my veins. "Did he tell you what he did" he asks letting him go.

"I don't care just not in my house" I say.

I turn and look at him. "You did this to the child" I ask.

He says nothing and just looks at me.

"Phuma Banzi" I say showing him the door.

"The least you could have done was talk to him or better yet take away his allowance, do something just don't beat him up" I say.

"He stole my car and nearly got himself killed" Banzi says.

I breath in and out swallowing. "Okay now please leave" I say.

He looks at Ayanda and tosses him his keys who quickly stands up.

"Ayanda sit down you're not going anywhere" I say putting my foot down. "Ayanda" Banzi says and the poor boys disappears.

"Are you drunk bayanda" he asks sniffing me which is rude.

"No" I lie.

I didn't think it would work so fast but here I am sounding sloshed even my speech is a bit broken.

"What you hate alcohol or the women who drink it" I ask titling my head.

"I am not doing this with you" he says.

"Oh okay then leave my house and don't you ever come back you bully" I say.

He rubs his forehead and lifts me over his shoulder.

"Put me down" I say.

He gets to my bedroom and lays me on the bed and takes off my shoes then his. "Ngithe hamba kini" I say.

"I am not going anywhere" he says taking off my clothes then his shirt. He wraps his arms around me cuddling me.

I feel at home and safe in these arms.

"I told you let me take care of you" he says.

"I don't need taking care of" I say.

"But you do need help" he says softly.

"There are many people with far deeper issues than drinking a bottle of wine and they are doing just fine" I say.

"You not many people but my wife" he says.

That shuts me up immediately.

"I am old Bayanda to be doing this hot and cold thing. I want to be with you so bad and you want to be with me too, but I don't understand why you are pushing me away" he says.

I untangle myself from his hold and look at him.

"Banzi I can't have kids" I say softly.

He looks at me for a good few seconds saying nothing.

"Banzi say something" I say.

He nods his head and brings me closer wrapping his arms around me.

"Even if I wanted to I won't be able to give you kids and I am sorry" I say.

"It's not your fault" he says in a voice I barely recognise.

I want to ask if he still wants me but the silence shuts down every last of my courage.

"You should get some sleep" he says tucking me in.

I have just shattered his dream of having little Ayana's running around.

12

#012

I thought he was going to leave during the night after the bomb I threw at him but he stayed.

I woke up next to him and I could tell he didn't sleep one bit.

I gently shook him and he turned to look at me.

"Morning" I said.

"You no longer care about morning breath I see" he said kissing my forehead.

He always finds humour in everything.

"I didn't mean to scare you last night" I said still looking at him.

"I should be the one apologising for my reaction. It's just that I already have this beautiful picture of you walking like a duck" he said laughing.

I know how it feels to have something taken away from you I thought.

"Have you tried other things" he asked nervously.

"Yes but nothing has worked so far" I said.

I have gone to specialist and even traditional healers but nothing.

"And what about surrogacy" he asked

"No the doctor's once advised me against it but I went ahead nonetheless and the embryo's didn't even work" I said.

That was one of the worst few months of my life and I couldn't exactly tell Mphemba so I was alone in that.

"And I am glad they didn't because being a mother is more than just holding your baby, but it's about feeling their every kick and uncomfortable position they take.

It's about me screaming my lungs out when I give birth.

Its having morning sicknesses and those regular doctor's appointment.

It's about carrying your own child like how nature designed it to be and having your hand always brush my belly" I said placing his hand on my belly.

He looked at me with teary eyes and closed his eyes.

"I won't have that but another woman will and you will be torn between the woman you love and the one carrying your son. And that will break me and I don't want that so please don't ask that of me" I said.

"Bayanda I love you and this changes nothing" he said smiling.

"And I hope me being a father to an already existing person doesn't change anything" he said showing me pictures of Omuhle.

He once mentioned being a father but we never dived deep into it till today.

"She's beautiful and she has your eyes" I said.

"Thank you" he said putting his phone away.

Silence fell upon us and only the sound of us breathing could be heard.

"Bayanda I will never hurt you and that is a promise. I will walk this journey with you to wherever it leads us" he said.

"Ngiyakuthanda Mngadi" I said.

There was no point in not saying it because it has been written on my face and heart ever since I met him.

"You do" he asked with a growing smile on his face.

"Yes I do" I said.

He leaned forward and kissed me not giving me a chance to catch my breathe.

He stood up and scooped me up twirling me around and finally putting me down.

"I love you and I am going to make you the happiest woman on earth" he said embracing.

"Let me take you out just the two of us" he suggested.

"I want to spend the day with you just the two of us" I said.

"Do you realise you are dating me as of today" he said making me crack up.

"And what about you" I asked resting easy in his arms.

"You might find this creepy but I have been dating you since the day I met you" he said laughing.

"Shame on you Mngadi for not even telling me" I said laughing.

"I was still enjoying using my love for the both of us" he said.

"You're amazing you know that" I said.

"No woman has ever said that cha kumandi ukuthandanana nezifundiswa" he said shaking his head.

"And when you're ready I would like you to meet Omuhle and my family" he said not breaking eye contact.

"I would love that very much" I said.

We spent the morning together and just talked about a lot of things including his case and family.

I made breakfast wearing his shirt while he sat there and just smiled.

I know I agreed to meeting his daughter but a part of me is afraid the child won't like me, and his family what if they hate me and decided I am not fit for the Mngadi heir.

And what if my father doesn't approve of him darn it who knew dating and meeting someone would be this difficult.

I look at the text I got from my man telling me not to cook because he's taking me out tonight.

.....

Banzi spent all morning just staring and admiring Bayanda's beauty. He couldn't get enough of her smooth skin and her soft laugh or the way she spoke and everyone listened.

The way she swayed her hips and took notice of everything and how she tamed him without even trying.

The way she looked at him and listened when he spoke and how beautiful Bayanda is.

He couldn't help himself and thinking about her just made him hard.

His father walked in and settled next to him pouring himself a drink.

"Baba" Banzi said.

"Lubanzi" his father said looking at him.

"You seem to be carrying the whole world on your shoulders" his father said.

"After last night that's how I feel" Banzi said thinking about what Bayanda told him.

He didn't want to lie to himself Bayanda's revelation shook him and took him by surprise.

"I know you believe now that you're old you can handle everything but that's not always the case, hence you have parents to guide you and to listen when nothing makes sense" his father said.

"It's Bayanda" Banzi said deeply sighing this weighed heavily in heart.

"What about her" His father asked when he saw the look on his son's face.

"Madlokovu she can't have kids" Banzi said feeling a sting in his heart.

His father put a hand over his shoulder he knew how Banzi felt about Bayanda. And his son's plans to marry and build a family with her.

He had already gotten used to the idea of having him always talk about Bayanda and the idea of having her as a daughter in law.

"Just lilke that baba she can't have kids and it hurts seeing the pain in her eyes" he said.

"We live in a modern world and I am sure doctors can do everything in their powers to help her" his father said.

"It's not about that and I won't force her to do something she doesn't want" Banzi said standing up.

"Baba how do support her without showing her how much this affects me

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how do I say everything is going to be okay when I know that's not the truth" he asked looking at his father.

He saw the look Bayanda wore when she spoke about not being able to have kids of her own.

He wondered how she would feel meeting Omuhle and if it would upset her.

"Love her and be there when she needs you" his father said.

"Don't push just take things slow" his father continued.

This would either build or break them as a new couple his father thought to himself.

Nothing broke a man's spirit like knowing the woman you love can't bare kids.

"Your mother must be wondering where we are" his father said stirring away from this topic.

"I guess we should head down before she calls out Banzi said.

All day he had been questioning God and how he does things.

Why he would take away such a precious gift from any woman.

He just couldn't understand and the thought of seeing Bayanda hurt didn't sit well with him.

His mother had already set the table and everyone was sitted ready to dine, but he wasn't staying because he had already made plans.

"Mama I am not staying" Banzi said the moment he saw Phindile carrying one of the dishes.

He looked at his mother and shook his head.

"Mngadi" Phindile said smiling.

"Maka Omuhle" Banzi said looking at his father.

He hated how his mother always found ways to bring Phindile into their home even when Omuhle wasn't around.

Which is why he ended up buying a house and didn't tell his mother.

He still wanted to have the house to himself and Bayanda without having distractions.

"What do you mean you can't stay" his mother asked.

"I have a business meeting" he lied.

"So late" his mother questioned.

"It's an important one I couldn't postpone" he said standing up.

"It's okay I will keep your food warm" Phindile said.

"Don't bother there's plenty where I am going" his father laughed.

"Ungibulisele" His father said with a smile.

"I thought he was going on a business deal" his mother said feeling all her efforts go to waste.

"Well he is going to a meeting just a special kind" his father said.

...

Celiwe listened as her husband came into their bedroom late once again

This was the second time in a row he has come home late without even telling her.

She listened to Bukhosi turn on the shower tap and assumed he was taking one.

She didn't want to come here but her husband insisted, deep down she knew that Zoleka was here in the midst of it all and that one day Bukhosi would bring her into their lives.

But she didn't think it would be this soon, she felt that like she was losing her her husband and there was nothing she could do.

Bayanda being alive changed everything and although she knew her husband wasn't a bad man and he loved her dearly.

His weakness was always Zoleka the love of his life and she wonder if Bukhosi would leave her.

She wondered if their daughter still had a place in his heart now that Bayanda was alive.

Her daughter never lived in Bayanda's shadow nor memory but Celiwe knew the love her husband had for his little Gogga, that's what he called Bayanda.

She opened her eyes and sat up straight when her husband came out of the shower.

Bukhosi was never one to shy away from the gym which mad woman throw themselves at him.

"Mkami" he said dropping his towel making Celiwe stare.

She missed her husband and all of her being wanted to be under him.

"You came home late" Celiwe said.

"I know and I am sorry" he said.

"Were you with her" She asked standing up.

She didn't want the truth but she needed to know.

"No I was at work" he said.

That was the truth although he would check up on Zoleka nothing was going on.

"And you couldn't let your wife know" Celiwe said.

"I am sorry that didn't call" Bukhosi said.

"I miss you Zulo so much" She said amaking her way to her husband.

"I miss you too" he confessed.

"Tell me everything will remain as it is now" she said.

She wasn't afraid of change but losing her husband is what scared her the most.

"Celiwe" Bukhosi said softly.

"Just me I won't lose you especially not to her" Celiwe said.

To her it wasn't fair she was the one who was there when he was falling apart.

She pieced together a heart she didn't break and she wasn't going to let anyone ruin her family.

"I will no let her break up my family Bukhosi" she said kissing him.

13

#013

Ndabezitha please pick up Omuhle for me. I have already called the school and told them about you please provide them with some identification. I love you so much Mrs me

I have been looking at this text for an hour hoping the words change and I am let of the hook.

I know he wouldn't have asked if he had a choice meaning I am his only option.

Or maybe this is his way of getting me to meet Omuhle without him having to play chaperone.

I don't know what to think anymore and this is messing with my head, if I didn't know better I would say he's setting me up for failure.

Or maybe he has so much faith in me he's just giving me a little push.

I wanted to call Buhle and her ask for tips but decided against it.

I don't want to fail at this girlfriend thing and truly speaking I want to get along with the child.

I should be focusing on the road but my thoughts are on what lies ahead.

I try playing some music but that also doesn't seem to work.

I come into a halt and my palms start sweating and my heart starts beating fast as I see some of the kids being fetched by their parents.

I breathe in heavily and step out of the car heading to the principal's office.

"Mrs Mngadi" the principle says standing up.

I am flattered and a smile spreads across my lips.

"Ms Zulu" I say extending my hand.

"Oh I am sorry its just that when Mr Mngadi said his wife would be picking up Omuhle I figured you guys are married" she says neviously laughing.

"It's okay" I say.

"May I see your id please so we can put you on the list of people who might be picking her up as her father requested" she says.

I give her my id then drivers license for verification.

She writes all my details down including that of my workplace.

"Thank you mam" she says giving me back my things.

The door opens and Omuhle walks in followed by whom I assume is her teacher.

The child looks at me and smiles putting more pressure on me.

"Hi, I am Omuhle's teacher" the lady says.

"Pleasure to meet you, I am.." I run out of words and look at Omuhle not knowing what I am to her.

"She's my other mom" Omuhle says bringing tears to my eyes.

"Nice to meet you and I believe we will be seeing more of you" her teacher says smiling.

The principal walks us to my car and for some reason I believe Mngadi sponsor's the school.

We get to my car and things start getting tense. I don't have any conversation starter to begin with and that makes me wonder if she will find me boring.

I put on the radio and look ahead, what do I say and how do I say it because right now I am sure I have lost points.

I drive to a near icecream shop and see a smile spread across her face.

"My name is Bayanda" I say trying to break the ice.

She looks at me and smiles oh Lord she's beautiful just like her dad.

"I know daddy told me" she says.

"And you don't mind me picking you up from school today" I ask.

"No" she says softly.

"I know mom is probably busy with granny doing some grown up stuff" she says nodding her head.

"Do you love my dad" she blurts out softly.

I almost choke on my saliva kids of today ask anything and everything.

"Well yes I love him" I say.

"And what about me" she asks looking up.

"Loving your dad means loving you and taking care of you" I say.

She smiles and I think with each smile I fall in love with the kid.

"Daddy says love that comes from the heart is pure is that true" she asks.

"Your dad is a smart man and yes that's true, Nana love sees no colour nor does it have boundaries and it sees all the good in

people, Love is kind and caring and I hope that one day you remember your father's words when you're all grown up" I say.

"What shall I call you" she asks softly.

I stumble on my words and end up shrugging my shoulders.

"What ever makes you feel comfortable" I say.

"Can I call you mama or ncane" she asks.

"I think Ncane will do" I say.

She frowns a bit making me think I said something to offend her.

"You don't want me to call you mom" she asks.

"I don't think your mother will like it if you call me mom" I say.

It's enough I fetched the poor the woman's child from school, having her call me mom would probably send her to the hospital.

"But you love my dad" she says.

"Tell you what we will ask your father if calling me mom is okay, how's that will that make you stop making that horrible face" I ask laughing.

She laughs back and nods.

"Now lets go get you some icecream" I say.

She holds my hand firmly as we walk inside the shop and orders plain vanilla icecream, while I binge and go all out.

We talk about school and how she's finding everything.

"Ncane there's this boy in class who likes looking at me and he picks up most of my stuff in class" she says frowning.

I want to laugh but the matter sounds serious.

"He even gives me sweets and now when I asked him to stop, he said he just wants to be my friend" she says with deep sigh.

I can't believe we are talking boys.

"And I was thinking of telling daddy" she says.

"And what if daddy breaks his legs" I ask tilting my head laughing.

If Banzi hears any of this he will flip and then have the poor boy taken to another class.

That's how crazy my man is when it comes to Omuhle

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I think that's because he was also young and he knows how smooth boys can be.

"Would he" she asks her eyes widening.

My phone rings just as I am about to put her mind at ease.

"Mngadi" I say blushing like a young girl.

"Not even a hello muntu wam, my sexy warrior or even the common sthandwa sam" he asks.

I look at Omuhle and smile what am I going to do with this man.

"Hello my handsome man" I say and watch Omuhle giggle.

He laughs filling my stomach with butterflies.

"Now that's more like it" he says.

"Thank you" I say.

"What for" he asks playing dumb with a hint of amusement in his voice.

"For the push she's really an amazing child" I say.

He breathes deeply in relief making me laugh.

"And here I was thinking you had confidence in me" I say.

"I did and I do sthandwa sam" he says.

"Are you guys home" he asks.

"No we're having icecream then I am going to get some food" I say.

"Thank you for trusting me and for being this amazing woman, I love you Bayanda Zulu" he says.

"And I love you Lubanzi Mngadi" I say.

I give Omuhle the phone and her dimpled smile never leaves her beautiful face.

She gives me the phone back and carries on filling her mouth with spoonfuls of icecream.

"Ngizokushada Ndabezitha and that's a promise" he says.

"I can't wait to get back home to you guys" he says.

I end the call and watch Omuhle finish head back to the car soon after thinking about Banzi coming home.

.....

Celiwe stood outside Zoleka's house calming herself down.

She didn't expect to find herself standing here about to face her husband's past.

She had put this idea of Bukhosi having an affair to the back of her mind.

Till she saw a text from Zoleka claiming to need Bukhosi and the phone call that had her husband rushing to Zoleka's rescue.

She fixed her dress and knocked a couple of times till Zoleka opened up looking just as she predicted.

Beautiful well kept and well dressed to the nines.

She saw exactly what Bukhosi saw in her the moment she smiled.

"May I come in please" Celiwe said.

"I am sorry please do" Zoleka said moving out of the way..

She had been staring amused and rather shocked to see Celiwe.

"I don't believe we have met, Celiwe Zulu" she said extending her hand.

"Zoleka Zulu" Zoe said with a smile.

"I don't want to waste your time so I will get straight to the point" Celiwe said settling down.

"I understand you share not one but two children with Zulu but that ends there" Celiwe said.

"I didn't come here to make idle threats so please stay away from him and I am begging you not break another home" She continued.

"You know I didn't take you as one of those woman who go around to other people's houses only to bark at the other woman" Zoleka said titling her head.

"Firstly you're far from being the other woman" Celiwe said.

"Oh you're right I am his wife and the mother of his kids so I don't understand how you can come into my house and ask me to stay away from my husband" Zoleka said leaving a sour taste in Celiwe's mouth.

"I figured you would say that but trust me you're also far from being his wife, you're the woman who cheated on him and broke him beyond words. You're the woman who used his kids against him and told him his daughter was dead.

And I believe you're the same woman that killed his child" Celiwe said with a smirk.

"I am not Scelo's wife and believe it when I say Bukhosi will never be yours ever again" Celiwe said standing up.

"I didn't want to see myself here but I just wanted to clear the air" Celiwe continued.

Zoleka stood up and smiled.

"Here's the thing I love Bukhosi and I will always love him that's a fact.

But you coming here proves that he still loves me too and that scares you like hell. If I were you I would have sat my housewife ass at home and cooked for our husband instead of coming

here" Zoleka said looking at Celiwe's face go from calm to furious.

"I made my mistakes but never have I gone to another woman's house for a man" She continued.

"You're right but then again how would I have or known how it feels when you have always been the other woman" Celiwe said looking at Zoe's smile fade.

"Its was nice meeting you Zoleka Zulu" Celiwe said walking out.

She couldn't believe she had stoop this low and became what had always warned her daughter not to be.

She got to her car the tears she was holding back came like a flood.

Her phone rang and when looked at screen Bukhosi was calling.

"Celiwe" He said.

She tried stopping the tears and herself from breaking down.

Bukhosi was and is her life and she didn't want to lose him, this man was her lifeline the same man who taught her how to love and be the woman she is today.

"Zulu" she said breathing heavily.

"Why would you go to her house yini kodwa Nanhlabathi" he asked.

"I wasn't thinking I am sorry" she said.

Bukhosi sighed on the other end knowing his wife was upset didn't sit well with him.

But never did he expect his wife to pay his other wife a visit and especially not in that manner.

"Why am I feeling like this Zulu this is not me" she said.

"Sthandwa sam hamba ekhaya I will find you there" he said trying to calm her down.

.....

I spent the rest of my day with Omuhle till her father came to pick her up to drop her off home.

Although she didn't want to leave her father persuaded her that tomorrow is school and that I would driving her.

I don't mind at all but then I believe Banzi needs to to discuss such things with her mother first.

She's a smart mouth, clever, attentive and she's such a delight to be with.

I walk out of the shower and find my man sitting on the edge of the bed taking off his shoes.

I love this man and he's been great with me loving and respecting him comes naturally.

I go down on my knees and help him take off his shoes watching him smile.

"I have my days" I say shrugging my shoulders.

His smile fades making me stand and sit on his lap wrapping my arms around his neck.

"What's wrong" I ask.

"Nothing I just have this feeling that won't go away" he says .

I kiss his forehead like he usually does mine and smile.

"Everything is going to be okay" I say.

My phone rings and I have to stand up and get it from my bedside.

I look at the caller and get the shock of my life when I see it's Mngadi senior.

I excuse myself and walk back to the bathroom.

"Baba" I say as respectful as can be.

"Bayanda" he says in a sad tone.

"I hope I didn't disturb you" he says and my whole mood drops when I hear a woman wailing in the background.

"Not at all baba" I say.

He sighs and stays quiet for a while then clears his throat and I can hear the sorrow in his voice.

I feel my own heart beating fast and take a sit on the toilet.

"Is he there" he asks.

"Yes he is" I say.

"Good" he says breathing easy.

"Baba what's wrong" I ask softly.

"There was an accident Sizwe and Sthembile didn't make it and Ayanda is critical" he says.

My mind freezes for a moment.

"I am so sorry baba" I say.

"It's life Ngane yam" he says.

"What can I do baba" I ask wiping my tears.

"Be there for him I couldn't find it in me to call and tell him" he says.

"It's okay baba" I say.

"Thank you" he says ending the call.

I stand up and shake my head today wasn't supposed to be a sad day.

We were supposed to celebrate me meeting and getting along with Omuhle and his company finding another vein of gold underground.

I walk out and find him still seated on the same spot waiting for me. "Usuyajola" he asks playful.

I sit on his lap and take his hand into mine.

"Who was on the phone" he asks.

"Your father" I say. "Madlokovu called you" he says.

I nod my head tears welling.

"Baby" he looks at me and frowns bringing his brows together.

"Your father called to tell me that there was an accident and in that accident Sizwe, Sthembile and Ayanda were involved" I say.

He looks at me blank making it hard for me to read him.

"Sizwe and Sthe didn't make it and Ayanda is in the hospital critical" I say.

"And I sold the company to the highest bidder" he says chuckling then standing up.

"Mngadi" he turns and it's only now I see his eyes.

"I am sorry" I say. "Not to Sthe" he says.

I never really got a chance to sit down with his siblings but I knew them all and they are great people.

I know how much he loved all his siblings but Sthe being the only girl out of four boys made him over protective over her.

He grabs his phone and calls his father only to nod his head and end the call.

He turns facing the mirror and cleans out everything ontop of my dressing table shattering it to the floor screaming.

He crumbles down breathing heavily.

I slowly make my way to him and kneel bringing him into an embrace.

"It's okay to cry Mngadi there's nothing wrong in that" I whisper throughout my own tears.

He rests his head on my chest and holds me tight almost squeezing the air out of me.

He doesn't cry as I rock him back and forth but I cry for the both of us.

He ends up having me lay on his chest while he calms me down.

"I am sorry" I say.

I know how it feels to lose a sibling but this is different unlike Busani, Sthe and Sizwe are never coming back.

"Why Ndabezitha, why them" he asks.

I don't have all the answers and I don't know why these things happen but I am here for him.

I kiss the palm of his hand not moving my eyes from his.

I gently lower my towel and kiss him slowly moving my hands up his thighs all the way to his belt.

He shakes his head and looks away.

"I will only hurt you if I allow this to happen" he says kissing my forehead.

"We need to go to the hospital" I say putting both my hands on his face.

"I am here and I love you" I say having my forehead touching his.

He closes his eyes and nods.

"Come your father needs you" I say.

#014

I wanted nothing more than to be there and hold his hand as he identified his siblings and went to the crime scene.

But he dismissed like a child and told me to stay home.

I did stay although my feet were aching to follow him and my heart was torn.

He came back and didn't say anything, he just got into his side of the bed held me and slept.

I couldn't keep my mouth shut never could and so I didn't.

I shook him a little and he couldn't hide his frustration.

"How did it go" I asked turning to face him.

"I thought you were asleep" he said opening his eyes.

That's a lie he knew perfectly well when he walked through the door that I wasn't asleep.

"I couldn't sleep I was waiting for you" I said.

"How's your dad" I asked.

"He's not okay no one is" He said.

"And how are you feeling" I asked placing my hand on his chest.

"Can we do this some other time, I am exhausted and talking isn't what I want to do" he said facing the other side.

"Banzi how am I going to there for you if you don't open up and keep pushing me away" I asked.

"Ndabezitha musa ulokhu ukhuluma kakhulu ozokonakala " he said shutting my mouth completely.

"I love you now can we sleep" he begged.

These past few days have been trying and I don't know if I am coming or going.

I have been calling and checking up on Banzi but lately he hasn't been taking my calls and only sends texts.

I have decided to let him be and just give him my support unquestionably.

I can't imagine his pain and he refuses for me to see and feel it.

He's more angry than hurt and that scares me the most.

I have never had to deal with a grown man and his emotions before, honestly for as long as I can remember I have always been the one dealt with.

His whole family is going through alot and I am grateful that Ayanda made it. I don't think I would have been this strong for him had anything happened to the child.

His father was not strong enough for all this and it took a toll on him.

"Gogga you're not watching" Baba says softly.

I think he forgets that I am old and there's no need for Gogga anymore.

"We could watch something different other than the Blacklist" he says.

I shake my head, I thought seeing Raymond Reddington would cheer me up but nothing.

I have a thing for this man its silly Banzi even took offence not long ago when he found me naked watching it.

It just happened that I was coming out of the shower and pressed play on my laptop and after seeing this man I couldn't find nor put on my clothes .

But today I see him as nothing more than just Liz's father.

"Gogga what's wrong" he asks.

"Baba why do bad things happen to good people" I ask.

He takes my hand into his and kisses it.

"I don't know but all I know is that lessons and pain are a part of this circle called life. I wish I could tell you a different answer that as you grow up life becomes easy but I would be lying.

trials and tribulations are a part of this thorny life and sometimes we go through things we don't even wish on our worst enemies.

I don't know what's going on but seeing you like this breaks my heart.

And I know I can't always protect you from the world as I would want but you're my daughter and I love you" he says.

"I love you too baba" I say.

"Now don't let anything get you down face it head on and always remember that I am here, and if what's troubling you now is boy problem then consider him dead" he says making me laugh.

"I am serious Bayanda you're too young to be dating" he says with a straight face.

"Baba how old am I again" I ask titling my head.

"Not old enough" he says.

I look at him and smile.

"Bayanda when are you moving in" he asks.

"Baba I don't think that's a good idea" I say.

He's been begging me to move in and the little Bayanda inside me wants too. But the one craving and loving Banzi refuses to be under surveillance because that's what's going to happen living under my father's roof.

"Bayanda life is too short and with everything that's been happening I don't want to have regrets in the afterlife. I want you and your siblings under one roof in your father's house is that too much to ask" I shake my head.

"Then grant me this wish come stay with your old man" he says.

"I promise soon and when I have chosen a date you will be the first one to know" I say.

He gives me a hug and smiles.

"You are the love of my life Gogga" He says kissing my forehead.

My father pulls away when someone clears their throat. I look up and see MamCeliwe carrying plastics, baba stands up and helps her only to have her turn her back on him.

She puts the heavy plastic bags on the kitchen counter and smiles looking my way.

"Bayanda" she says.

"Saw'bona ma" I say looking at my dad.

"I didn't know you were coming over. Had I known I would have prepared something delicious for you" she says.

"It's okay I was on my way out" I say.

"Don't be silly stay I will make you something" she says.

"She won't take no for an answer please stay" Baba says.

I can't exactly leave that would be plain rude but then I need to leave the tension between these two has risen I feel suffocated.

...

I am sitting across my Ncane greatful she called and reminded me of our luncheon date.

I wouldn't have survived another minute in that house, I am not sure if it was me being there or maybe they fought way before I came.

A smile spreads across my face when I think of how Nacne kissed me on the lips.

And when I tried complaining she said just because I have my own place and I work doesn't mean I am old.

Can you believe she told me to try getting married then maybe she might consider me old.

"Have you spoken to him" she asks.

I know she's asking about Banzi, I told her about him and how things are between us.

"Not exactly but yes" I say.

"How is he holding up though with losing two siblings in such a horrific way" she asks.

"That's the problem he won't talk to me

Ncane I have been there because I am stubborn but he won't let me in" I say.

"And is that why you decided to not attend the funeral" she asks.

"Ncane I don't want to go there and make a fool of myself, I know this isn't about me but it's hurts seeing him like him like that" I say.

"If being away from him is hurting you that much then go" she says.

"Go out there and be with him stand by him and support him through this difficult time. I am not saying go there and play wife duties on girlfriend petrol uzolima" She says laughing.

"Hau Ncane" I say shyly.

"I know you kids of today building a man instead of building with him, as I was saying go out there stand tall beside him and hold his hand. Show his enemies and lurking vultures that he's not alone that behind that tallness and brave face is a strong woman" she says.

"He's not pushing you away he's grieving the only way he knows how" she says.

"Thank you Ncane for listening and for being there when I need advice" I say.

"Now tell me when are you coming around the house to see your mother" she asks sipping on her juice.

"I don't know but until she admits and acknowledges her part in all this nothing is ever going to be okay between us" I say.

"But she's your mother" Ncane says softly.

"Who lies and hurts those around her" I say.

"Oh Bayanda this much anger will kill you if keep harbouring it inside of you" She says reaching for my hand.

"Can we talk about something else please like her mammogram check ups, is she still going" I ask.

"Yes and everything is still good she's healthy and there's nothing to worry about" She says.

"That's good" I say.

.....

I took Ncane's advise packed my bags and left for KZN to attend the funeral.

I kept her words at heart not to play duties I have nothing to do with.

Although I would love to help around as a sign of me caring but she had point in her speech.

Banzi hasn't even introduced me to his family as a girlfriend and that's all my fault.

I called Ayanda and asked him for directions but Muzi came and fetched me instead.

Rain started pouring the moment I stepped foot in the Mngadi homestead and Bab' Mngadi came to welcome me.

"Baba" I said extending my hand with a little bow.

"Ngane yam it's good to see you" he said.

The rain wasn't pouring hard it was just flowing peacefully.

"I had someone prepare a room for you thank you coming" he said.

"You don't have to thank me baba" I said.

"You have just blessed the land of my forefathers" he said looking up.

A soft knock comes through bringing me back from my thoughts.

The door opens before I can say anything and Banzi walks in.

I spring into his arms and hold him for dear life.

He breathes heavily and lets go looking at me.

"Thank you for coming" he says kissing me.

"I wouldn't be anywhere else" I say.

"I am not ready" he says deeply inhaling.

"I know but I am here and we will get through this" I say.

Busi walks in while I am still in Banzi's arms him gliding his hands down my waist to my arse.

"Ngixolisa bhuti I didn't mean to disturb you" she says.

"Its okay mancane, baby you will find me in the house okay" he says.

His father organised a place for me at a neighbour's house turns out both families are friends..

And they have been kind and accommodating.

Busi places the tray of food on the table and offers to make me tea.

"I am not a morning eater" I confess.

"But you are a morning kiss person" she says wiggling her brows.

We spent the whole night getting to know each other.

"If there's one thing I could never resist in this life is your brother" I say.

"I know most women can't help but drool and throw themselves at him, just look at Phindile playing makoti as if we paid Lobola for her" she says throwing her hands in the air.

"Phindile" I ask.

"Oh she's Omuhle's mother you should see her fawning over bhuti and suffocating him" she says making a disgusted face.

I didn't think she would be here but who am I kidding they have a child together.

I look at myself and breathe.

"Don't worry you look beautiful and trust me none of these ladies here have anything on you" she says making me laugh.

Banzi walks in and looks at me forcing a smile.

"We should leave" he says.

We use my car since he decided to walk here.

It's just the three of us in the car and as we approach his house the sun peaks through.

He steps out and comes to open the door for me holding my hand.

I try getting myself out of his hold he tightens it and clenches his jaws.

You would think with all these eyes on us he would let me go but not Mngadi.

Ayanda and Omuhle rush to me and almost tumble me over with their hugs.

"Hey guys" I whisper holding them back.

Omuhle lets go and her father picks her up while Ayanda sobs in my arms.

"Its okay" I say holding back my own tears.

"It's not fair" he says still holding me.

I let him be till Banzi clears his throat.

"Just hold your head up high and remember all the good times you guys had" I say wiping his tears.

Ayanda is a child he's hurting how I wish his brother would be like him.

I move eyes to look around and notice it's mostly family here and close friends.

I catch a glimpse of Phindile looking my way while my focus is on Banzi's mother the woman is broken and so is her husband.

I know the pain of not having a child of your own but I think having to bury them is more painful.

No parent should ever have to through such.

I look at Muzi and his eyes have been bloodshot red since I got here.

I look at Banzi who is difficult to read right now. I just want to hold him and take away his pain even if it's for a while.

I only notice the coffins get lowered to the ground when Banzi's mother wails and tries standing up.

"I want my kids back Xolani" she says holding on to her husband.

"Thula Nanhlabathi" Bab Mngadi says.

"Oh kodwa nkosiyami ngiyazisa ngezingane ngami" she wails even more.

She calls out all her children's name and shakes her head.

"What have I done to deserve this" she asks.

The men here seem to know their stuff because soon enough the two graves are filled and only Banzi, Muzi and their father remain.

I scatter joining the crowd heading back to my car.

Busi joins me having two plates of food with her, if it was any other day I would be in awe and admiring the beauty of this place.

"Bhuti Banzi said not to leave and that I should take you to his house" she says.

I nod my head asking her to take me now my feet are killing me.

I lay in his bed falling asleep till I hear the door quietly slam.

I jump up and find him standing next to the bed looking tired.

He settles on the bed and drops his shoulders.

"I will run you a bath" I say standing up.

He grabs my hand having me sit on his lap wrapping his arms my waist while I wrap mine around his neck.

Today was tough be he got through it.

"Madlokovu" I say softly getting his attention.

"Ndabezitha" he says looking up.

"Talk to me" I plead.

"And say what Bayanda huh" he asks.

"Anything, something just let me in" I say.

Tears well up in his eyes.

"I didn't want you to come because I feared this happening me falling apart in front of you" he says letting his tears fall.

"I didn't want you to accompany me at the viewing or crime scene because I didn't want you having nightmare" he says with a smile.

"I would have been able to handle it just like I am right now" I say.

"Sthembile's head was found a few feet from the accident and Sizwe's body was crushed. I could barely recognise my own siblings Bayanda that's how bad they looked.

If Ayanda wasn't spit out of the car then we would have buried three people.

I would be dead three times today and you want to feel all that pain" he says.

"Your pain is my pain Mngadi" I say.

"Its all my fault and it hurts. I was supposed to protect them but I didn't" he say.

"No this is not your fault" I protest.

"This wasn't an ordinary accident someone did this and they will pay" he says.

"Banzi no" I say.

"None of this makes sense and it only will when I start looking into it" he says.

I put both my hands on his face and kiss him.

"I love you and I am sorry but please don't do this" I plead.

"I have too and if this means war or revenge then so be it" he says.

"So you are going to go a wild goose chase hoping you find something" I ask.

He breathes heavily not looking at me.

"Ngiyakuncenga Mngadi let this go" I say.

I pray deep down that grief is what's making talk like this.

With his current case hanging over his head he definitely can't be on the wrong side of the law.

#015

These past few months have been hard on all of us, although the funeral might seem like a distant memory right now but the pain is still raw.

The Mngadi's had to pull themselves together present a united front and try to move on.

As for my man he's been having difficulty sleeping, sometimes he wakes up in the middle of the night screaming out their names.

He blames himself for not being there when they needed him the most.

But had he been there what would have happened, I would have lost him forever and I can't imagine life without him not in this life time.

I know I shouldn't be making this about me but I miss him so much. Lately he has been all work and nothing else and with this case hanging over his head. The mining company seeking strong leadership from him I fear one of these days he might burn out.

So yesterday I decided to lend a helping hand and paid an old dear friend of mine a visit.

I found myself knocking at Nhlaka's door and letting myself in.
I should have waited for him to say something instead of just walking in.

I found a young lady kneeling in between his legs ready to give him a blow.

"I am so sorry" I said turning saving myself from seeing Nhlaka naked.

"Will you ever learn how to knock" he asked grunting.

"I did" I said still having my back facing him.

"And did I say come in Bayanda" he asked.

"Will you turn around I am not naked and it's not something you haven't seen before" he said making himself decent then dismissing the young lady.

"I don't think I did a good enough job in teaching you manners" he said smiling.

"After all these years you're still stubborn and lack patience" he said giving me a hug.

"And after all these years I have known you sex is still your number one game" I said.

"What would a man be without sex" he asked pulling away.

"It's good to see you Mazulu" he said.

"It's good to see you too Nhlaka" I said settling down.

"What can I do for you" he asked looking at me these hazel nut eyes of his Nhlaka is handsome which makes him a ladies man.

Nhlaka is older than me but we have such a connection and mutual respect it's amazing.

I met him when I was still in varsity wet between the ears and he took me under his wings and taught me everything I know.

He taught me about life and how to bend rules enough not to get caught.

This man taught me how to hold a gun aim and shoot, he taught me how to kiss properly just imagine.

I would say he's been my guardian angel of some sorts.

"I need your help with the Mngadi case" I said.

"Anything but that case" he said with a straight face.

"Please" I said.

"The only thing I can do is make it possible for you to see the witness" he said.

"And what good will that be" I asked looking at him.

"Haven't I taught you anything Bayanda" he asked questionable.

"You have" I said.

"Good but if this doesn't work then there's nothing I can do" he said.

"You really care about Mngadi huh" he said raising his eyebrow.

"I really do" I said smiling.

"And what happened to Mphemba" he asked.

"Things didn't work out and he's about to become a father" I said shrugging my shoulders.

"I guess it's not true what people say about virgin breakers, first loves and not being able to let go of them" he said laughing.

Nhlaka never really liked Nsindiso and when I started dating him we kind of grew apart.

"Trust me it's all lies" I said.

"Then I am glad" he said.

"You better leave before people start talking" he said kissing my hand.

"How about some coffee" I suggested.

"Coffee and seeing you smile sounds great" he said grabbing his wallet.

"You're paying right" I said looking up at him.

"And people wonder why I love you this much" he said laughing.

"You're rich so don't complain" I said walking out.

I didn't think Nhlakanipho would come through for me so fast but he did. I had to be escorted to the safe house at dawn as to not attract attention.

It's a good thing that Banzi didn't sleep over here so it was easier for me.

"You must really mean something to Mntungwa for him to pull such strings" The officer in charge says to me.

"Do you have anything to get out of your chest officer" I ask.

"Not at all mam" he says leading me inside the house.

I find the man in question drinking his morning coffee.

"You have a visitor" the officer says to the man.

"You must be from the prosecutors office" the man says looking at me.

"Not exactly" I say.

The man looks at the officer who looks at me nods and walks away.

"Then who are you" he asks looking around.

"Sir please calm down I am here to speak to you that's all" I say.

"What's going on here because only authorised personnel is allowed here" he says.

"I realise that but I am here to plead a man's case" I say.

"So Dlokovu sent a woman to finish what he started" he says looking at me.

"He doesn't even know that I am here" I say.

"I don't want to hear anything about that man not after what he did to me" he says.

"I am sorry for what he did to you but please don't testify against him. You and your testimony alone could be the last nail to this coffin" I say.

He removes the scarf around his neck having me look to the side.

His scar has healed but it still looks bad and I bet he still gets pain from it.

"No don't look away see what the man you're here for did to me

I don't see why I should care what happens to him" he says.

"I am here stuck while he is out there" He says.

"All that could change if you walk away" I say.

"I could help you start your life somewhere new. Your wife will not never have to carry your family like she's always done all these years.

All three of your kids will be taken care of and your firstborn daughter's dream of being a doctor will come true.

I will take her to the best schools in the world and I know she will make it because she's a smart kid.

You will live the life you have always dreamed of and your wife will never want for anything" I say.

"Just like he does this to me and walks away" he says.

"I suffer and he doesn't get punished, I don't get justice" he says.

"You may see me as the bad guy for being here and doing this, but whether he gets justice or not is entirely up to you. You could go to court fight this matter and have him sentenced then have him in a few months appeals then he walks free.

Or you could change your statement take my deal and carry on with your life I say rather get something out of this whole matter.

And if you agree I swear on my life nothing will happen to you" I say standing up.

"You don't know this man" he says shaking his head.

I can tell Banzi puts the fear of God in him.

"I know him well enough to be standing here" I say.

"I wish you all the best going forward" I say walking towards the door.

I tried my best and all that is left is for him to take the bait.

"I am only doing this so that my family is taken care off" he says.

Today was a stressful day I had to fix a few things and make sure I keep to my promises.

I don't know what Nhlaka did but he came through and the evidence disappeared into thin air as well as the original statement.

I hear the door bell and that must be Busani he called earlier and a said he would pass by.

I stand to get the door and find him leaning holding a tub of tin roof icecream.

I push the door turn to look at him fold my arms and pretend to hold my breath.

"Oh my word she's going to explode" he says making his way to me.

"What am I going to do" he says gasping.

He gets to me and starts tickling me till I give in and drop to the floor.

"And she's been saved" he says.

"I am sorry for being a bad brother and not coming over to check up on you" he says.

"That's because you don't love me anymore" I say.

"What never you are my other half" he says.

"So what's been keeping away" I ask.

"Work" he says with a mischievous smile on his face.

"Really Busani" I say tilting my head.

"And other things a man like me can't stay away from" he says.

"I love you Gogga ka baba" he says.

I shake my head smiling.

"Say it back" he says.

"No, make me" I says daringly.

He stands up chases me around and finally catches me.

"Say it Bayanda" he says tickling me.

"Baba" I say out loud.

"Did you reall call out dad" he says laughing.

"I won't let go till you say it" he says still tickling.

I laugh till my throat feel burned out and dry.

"I love you Busani" I say trying to catch my breath.

"Was that so hard to say" he says catching his own breath.

Someone clears their throat making us turn to look.

"Muzi" I say standing up.

"I knocked but I guess you didn't hear me" he says.

"Oh" I say looking at Busani.

"I came to drop this off" he says looking at Busani from head to toe.

"Thank you" I say.

The Mngadi man are always in a grumpy mood.

"Would you like to stay" I ask.

"I wasn't staying" he says walking out.

"And then" Busani asks.

"That was Banzi's brother" I say.

"Banzi your boyfriend" he says.

"Yes" I say smiling like a retard.

"Okay but I already one thing I don't like that guy" he says looking inside the brown bag Muzi brought.

"You might be brothers soon so don't say that" I say.

"Usho ngoba bayakudiza huh" he says looking at me.

"Don't you touch my food" I say.

"Ngidla amandla asbari wam" he says confidently.

"I am going to tell on you" I say.

He laughs till I do too.

"Okay and when you do please don't forget to tell baba that the food I saved you from came from a man" he says.

"A man who might have put some love potion in here dammit woman I saving you" he says.

"And what about me" I ask in a sulking tone.

"Dlana u icrecream lapho" he says pointing at the tin roof.

"And pour me some juice uyavilapha wena Bayanda" he says laughing.

He's eating my food and he's finding all this to be funny.

My man bought me this food because unlike this brother of mine he prefers me fed.

"While at it tell me about that friend you posted on instagram" he says.

"Who Buhle" I ask.

"No maan not that one, I mean the dark chocolate you posted with last week" he says.

"Oh you mean Busi" I say.

"Yes" he says eagerly waiting for me to spill.

"We you're getting nothing zilch from and that for eating what's not yours" I says.

I know he will bump into Busi one of these days because Bab' Mngadi and his wife decided to bring her with. I understand why they did that seeing that Sthe is no longer here, she will not replace Sthe's place but bring joy again to the family.

And when she told me her other name is Betty I decided to call her Bettys from now on.

I like the name and it sounds English when I say it.

.....

My day started out heavy but when Busani showed it got better.

I told him about Baba's request and he said he would come get me and my clothes friday.

I wish I hadn't told him about the moving in thing because a part of me feels like Mam Celiwe doesn't like me much and that's because of my mother.

And I am yet to tell Banzi about this whole thing see these people are complicating my life.

I look at myself on the mirror one more time and smile putting on some perfume.

I bought this small tight fitting lingerie just for today and I hope it works.

You would think by now I would know how he feels inside me or how he moans when inside me.

But I have had enough and tonight I want to feel all of him.

I top my look with a pair of sleepers and a matching silk gown.

I would go for stilettos but I am already tall so these comfy babies do just fine.

I hear the door shut and make my way to the kitchen.

"Where is he" Banzi asks walking past me straight to the bedroom.

"Bayanda" he barks coming back.

I did say Mngadi man are always grumpy right look at this man of mine.

"Mngadi" I call out softly.

He stops and looks at me opens and closes his mouth. I think he juts ran out of words great.

"Good now talk me sthandwa sam" I say dropping my gown.

He swallows and clears his throat.

"Khuluma nami muntu wam" I say slowly making my way to him.

"Muzi says there was a man here where is he" he asks calmly.

"You mean Busani because that's the only man who was here" I say.

Muzi is such a snitch hayi.

"Busani your brother" I nod unbottoning his shirt.

"Pho ubungasho ngani" he says in a raspy voice.

"You didn't ask you were shouting" I says standing on my toes pecking his lips.

"I am sorry" he says.

"That's no way to say sorry" I say pulling away.

He gives me a smirk and closes the gap between us.

"You're tempting me Ndabezitha" he says slowly kissing me.

"I missed you" I say biting my lip.

"I missed you so much you don't even know" he says lifting me up and having my legs wrap around his waist.

I get excited feeling my heart race.

His hands glide down waist going all the way to my wet core sliding in his hand.

"That is all yours Mngadi" I say nibbling on his ear.

I move my lips to his and start grinding on his finger.

He walks with me all the way to the bedroom and gently lays on me the bed.

I watch in amusement and anticipation as he takes off his clothes and stares down on me with his eyes blazing with hunger and desire.

I close my eyes when I feel his lips on my thighs going to my belly button.

He stops looks at me and rips this thing off me.

His teeth grazing on my hard nipples while his one finger work on me down there.

I keep moaning and go berserk when his tongue slips into my wet fold and dips into my hole.

I move my hand to his hard cock and quickly move my hand but have him put it back there.

It's so hard, long and thick I doubt he will fit.

I feel myself let go and scream out his name he chuckles.

He gets inbetween my thighs and stares into my eyes.

"I love you Bayanda Zulu" he says kissing my neck.

"I love you Lubanzi Mngadi" he smiles having out hands entwined as he slowly pushes himself in.

I bite my lip wincing when he pushes in more.

"Should I stop" he asks breathing heavily.

See the thing with Banzi is that he listens and he might just get off and have us cuddle.

"No don't stop" I say moving my arse up.

He pushes in till he's fully inside and gasp for air holding me tight.

"Are you okay" I ask.

He looks at me nods kissing my forehead and starts moving slowly.

He gives me slow strokes making moan his name louder and louder.

"Banzi" I say hugging his waist with my legs.

He starts moving faster then using his thump to work on my clit bringing tears to my eyes as I feel myself nearing.

I hold on to my sheets bringing my chest foward.

He pulls in and out using his cock to work on my clit then sliding back in having my one leg up his shoulder.

"Ndabezitha" he says kissing me.

"I am coming Banzi" I say biting my lower lip holding him tight his groans and moans get louder as I come screaming.

"Are you good" he asks while his groan gets louder and then softer with each release. "I love you" he says kissing my forehead. "I love you too" I say closing my eyes.

"Marry me" he says getting hard once again.

"What" I ask still catching my breath. "Ngishade" he says slowly moving.

I don't know what to say it's too soon but Lord he's doing me good.

#016

I would like to think last night was a dream but it wasn't. Banzi made love to me all night long and I think the neighbours could hear me.

After last night I know he's the man for me the man I want to spend the rest of my life with.

And in the middle of being loved and told I was loved I couldn't help but say yes.

I said yes and my man did the most craziest thing ever, he called his father and told him I said yes imagine.

And he wanted to cry which is rare nowadays last night was bliss and I wouldn't change anything.

Waking up there was a ring box between us and he was looking at me smiling.

He stood up and properly went on his knee and asked me to marry him.

I didn't hesitate I had already said yes last night so this was just making it official.

The most beautiful stone ever well it is said that diamonds are a girls best friend.

The ring is engraved with words that say " I love you Bayanda Mngadi".

"You have been staring at that thing all morning" Banzi says.

I give him a disapproving look this is not a thing but a diamond ring worth a lot.

"This is more than just a thing it's a symbol of your love" I say looking at my ring finger.

"I don't understand when did you have it engraved when you only proposed a few hours ago" I ask.

"I fell in love with you the very first day I saw you and it only took a month of us being together to know that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with you" he says.

"Really" I ask.

"Yes and I am sorry that it took long for me to propose but I feared you rejecting me" he says smiling showing off his dimples.

"Which is why you proposed when you knew I had lost all my senses" I ask titling my head.

"Do you regret saying yes to me" he asks.

"No I don't Banzi I love you so much" I say pulling him for a kiss.

He looks at me and clears his throat holding both my hands.

"Sthandwa sam you never really told me what led to you not being able to have kids" he says.

I look at him and wonder if this is the right time to tell him everything I have always wanted to.

"If your don't want to talk about it then that's okay I promise I won't push" he says.

"I don't know where to start there's a lot I need to say" I say.

"Start from the beginning" he says.

"I was ran over by a car" I say.

He nods his head listening.

"A car driven by my mother's boyfriend at the time" I say tears welling up.

"Things got out of control when my father left and my mother started drowning herself in alcohol. I would be her punching bag when she wasn't coping and then she would bring different men into the house.

But only this one stayed he used to beat her up and then would also beat me up.

And then one day he started coming into my room and touching me.

I remember telling my mother this but she didn't believe me and would take his side. That's where I realised she valued lies more than the truth" I say looking at him.

"Is that why you lock your bedroom door at night" he asks.

I nod my head one night Banzi almost broke the door down thinking I was with a man.

"And you know what hurts the most is I was a child and needed her to believe me and choose me but she didn't.

What breaks me the most is that she knew I couldn't have kids and she said nothing. I will never get to hold my baby because she chose a man over me" I say letting the tears fall.

"I started drinking and cutting myself to help ease the pain I felt here" I say placing a hand over my chest.

"Of constantly being told my father never loved me" I say chuckling.

"Look at me" he says cupping my face.

I look at him and smile.

"I love you so much and I am sorry you had to go through such" he says.

"I don't want to hate my mother Banzi but I can't forgive her. I really can't and you know that sometimes I go to the hospital and look at other people's babies" I say.

He shuts his eyes and breathes out heavily.

"There was a time I wanted one so badly I even thought of stealing one" I say.

"Bayanda" he says softly.

"Banzi promise me that you will not make a fool of me, that you will not hurt me and that when if you ever wish to have kids then you will let me go" I say.

He shakes his head.

"I would never leave you not in this nor the next life. I won't lie when you told me you couldn't have kids I was torn. I prayed about it questioned God's existences and why he would put you through this.

I would be lying if I said I didn't want kids but I want them with you, and if I can't have that then that's okay you're enough for me" he says kissing me.

"I am sorry" I say.

"It's not your fault never was" he says.

"It hurts Banzi so much" I say.

He pulls me into his arms and brushes my back.

"Thula phela Ndabezitha" he says.

"You should be happy you're marrying a man amongst man" he says softly laughing.

I laugh breathing out heavily.

He pulls away and looks at me sloww kissing me.

. . . .

Banzi sat with his whole family having lunch while a huge smile on his face.

He still couldn't believe that Bayanda agreed and said yes to his marriage proposal.

He wanted to propose for so long but he just couldn't get the words out or right and believe it or not he was afraid of being rejected by his love.

His father looked at him and smiled he couldn't help feel proud of his son.

This was the first time he had seen his son this happy and In love.

"Baba" Omuhle said happily.

"Yes pumpkin" Banzi said looking at his daughter.

"Where's ncane Bayanda" she asked causing her grandmother to look at Banzi.

"She's at home" he said.

"Our home" Omuhle asked titling her head.

"Yes and if you finish all your food then I might take you to her" Banzi said.

"Baba I have something to tell you" Banzi said clearing his throat.

"I asked Bayanda to marry me and she said yes" he said looking at his mother.

"Bhuti you're getting married" Busi said screaming.

"Congratulations bafo usebenzile" Muzi said.

"And what about Phindile" his mother asked.

"What about her mama" Banzi asked.

"She's the mother of your child and she will make a good wife for you not some city girl who's only after your money and will take you away from me" she said.

"Omuhle go to your room" Banzi said to his daughter.

"I have never promised Phindile marriage and she knows that, I don't love Phindile and she knows that" Banzi said still looking at his mother.

"I have never stringed her along nor did I ever sell her dreams" he said looking at his mother.

"But the poor girl loves you and she's a really good person" his mother said.

"If she's such a good person and you love her that much why don't you marry her" Banzi asked.

"I told you about Bayanda so don't act like I didn't. I love her and she's going to be my wife" he said.

"She's barren and she won't be able .." Banzi raised his hands and closed his eyes letting the words his mother said simmer.

"Don't you even say it mama" Banzi said clenching his jaws.

He didn't see himself staying not after what his mother said.

Everyone loved Bayanda but his mother couldn't let go of the fact that she couldn't bare children.

"Banzi where are you going" his mother asked.

"I am going where my heart is" he said walking out.

"You just had to go there Nanhlabathi" Bab'Mngadi said.

"He's my son I have every right to look out for him" Banzi's mother said.

"If you carry on like this you will lose him" Bab' Mngadi said.

This was the truth Banzi wasn't one to forgive easily and when pushed hard enough he pushed back.

"Kodwa baba Phindile can give him as many kids as he wants, what has Bayanda have to offer huh other than looking good" she asked.

"Mama she's more than just a pretty face and Banzi loves her" Muzi said looking at his mother.

"It's true mama she's a kind

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loving and humble person and I know if you move past the kids issue you will love her" Busi said.

"No one will ever be good enough for my son, Phindile and him belong together and that's how it should be" she said.

"That's enough I have had it with you maka Ayanda, if you love Phindile that much marry her yourself and leave my son alone siyezwana" Bab' Mngadi said leaving the table.

....

Bayanda looked at her ring and her stomach filled with butterflies. The man had asked for her hand in marriage and she still had to tell her mother and her whole family.

But she called her father and brother first to tell them the news.

Although traditionally she had to tell her mother first then her mother would be the one to tell the news. But with things still rocky between her and her mother she didn't see the need to tell her first.

She had prepared her father's favourite meal just the way her mother taught her.

"If I didn't know better I would say you have something to tell us" her father said laughing.

"Your mother would cook this when she wanted to spend my money" he said shaking his head.

Having both his kids under the same roof was a dream come true.

"Baba I have made a decision" Bayanda said smiling.

"And what have you decided" Busani asked.

"I would love to move in but I don't think that's such a good idea" she said looking at them both.

"If this is about the other day then you don't have to worry I spoke to Celiwe and everything is okay" Bukhosi said.

He wished Bayanda would jump at the possibility of moving in with him.

Although Celiwe voiced out her concerns about Bayanda moving in and making way for her mother to also come into her home.

He didn't care he wanted to have his little Gogga by his side even if that meant stepping on his wife's toes.

"Baba I am old and I need my privacy" Bayanda said.

"Your brother lives with me and he's old and he still gets his privacy" Bukhosi said.

"Busani" Bayanda said looking at her brother.

"This is between you and dad,I would love to have you at the house but that decision has to come from you" Busani said.

"Fine I will move in but baba there's something that I need to tell you" Bayanda said.

"Anything Gogga" Bukhosi said smiling.

His daughter was his whole world and if he had it his way he would spend most of his days staring at her making up for lost time.

"Baba someone asked for my hand in marriage" she said nervously.

"Who did what" Her father asked.

"She's dating and the dude asked to marry her baba" Busani said.

"That's what you're telling us right" Busani said looking at his sister.

"Baba I love him" she said.

"Baba say something" Bayanda said.

"I just found you Gogga" Is all that Bukhosi could say thinking of his daughter getting married to another family. Taking another man's surname and leaving his he he couldn't stand the thought.

A knock on the door came through and Bayanda stood up rushing to get it.

Banzi stood there looking like a sin every woman's dream.

"Sthandwa sam" he said kissing her cheek walking in.

"Banzi I have guests" She said running after him.

Both Bukhosi and his Son stood up when this tall man appeared and stood frozen when he saw them.

For the first time in in such a long one Banzi's heart raced as he stood before his soon to be father In law.

He greeted both man and cleared his throat looking at Bayanda.

This is not how things were supposed to be, this is not how he pictured meeting his In laws.

"You are dating the CEO of Mngadi gold" Busani said looking at Bayanda who wished the ground would open up and swallow her.

"Baba this is Lubanzi Mngadi" she said introducing them.

"Tell me what are doing with my daughter, what do you want from her" Bukhosi asked.

"I don't want much baba but to love and protect her" Banzi said looking at Bayanda.

"And if you had to chose between her and your family who would it be" Bukhosi asked.

"I pray it doesn't reach that point baba but I would chose my heart my without a doubt" Banzi said holding Bayanda's hand.

"Bukhosi Zulu Bayanda's father pleasure to meet you ndodana"
Bukhosi said extending his hand.

"The pleasure is all mine baba" Banzi said giving a firm handshake.

"Bengicela indlela" Banzi said respectful excusing himself.

Bayanda walked him to the door and they stood outside holding hands.

"I am sorry you had to meet my father like that" she said looking up.

"I am glad I did now I know who you take after" he said leaning down kissing her.

"Are going to come back" Bayandw asked.

"Do you want me" Banzi asked teasingly he couldn't resist Bayanda and staying away wasn't an option.

"Yes all of me wants you back" She said.

"Silambe kethina ngoba wena usuyajola" Busani said looking at the pair.

"Really Busani" Bayanda asked through gritted teeth.

"Baba says he hasn't even paid a cent so he must leave and I must spend the night to watch over you" Busani said laughing.

He loved toying with his sister and watching her react.

"Sthandwa sam" Banzi said kissing her forehead walking away.

Bayanda turned and looked her brother.

"Please don't spend the night" Bayanda pleaded.

"And have baba skin me alive" Busani said.

"I will hook you up with Betty if you disappear tonight please"
She said clasping her hands together.

"All this pleading just to see that ugly tall man" Busani said
laughing.

"See why I don't want to move in" Bayanda said grunting.

"Oh come on it won't be that bad and beside you have me, now
let's go and eat before your father buys a gun to kill your man"
He said walking inside.

Bayanda smiled having brother had its ups and downs but most
ups and she loved the attention and love she got.

#017

Swallow the pride, forget all doubts and shove your anger in the deepest of wells inside you.

Lock every bad memory in the small black box trust me it happens. Sometimes we remember the things we want to remember but you can also forget them.

That's what I told myself when I decided to call my mother and asked if I could come around.

I will admit the first thing I did when I saw her was fling into her arms.

I missed her and I needed my mother so bad I couldn't stop crying.

I also wanted to share the good news with her and have her meet Banzi officially.

She pulled away when I was done crying and held my face in her palms and kissed me.

"Please don't ever stay mad at me for this long" she said giving me a hug.

"I missed you so much mama" That was the honest truth.

I missed talking to her and having her fuss over me.

"Look at you all thin you haven't been eating right Bayanda"
she said pulling me to the kitchen.

I sat and watched her plate up for me.

"Ayana" she said softly making me look up.

"I am sorry" she said still looking at me.

I thought I knew the drill till she continued and surprised me.

"I wasn't always a good mother and I know that I messed up
along the way.

I wasn't there when you needed me the most, I turned a blind
in most things.

I watched by while you self destruct and I am so sorry that I
chose to believe Scelo over you.

I will never forgive myself for what I put you through.

The abuse neglect and the cancer.

Yana I know things were not easy and I didn't make them easy.

But I want you to know that I love you and you know I would
kill for you.

I love you sanalwam and no matter what happens I will always
be here for you" she said blinking away her already falling tears.

"I love you too mama" I said.

"One last thing" she said breathing heavily.

"I am sorry he took away your chance at being a mother. I am sorry that I let it get to that point and when you ready please find it in your heart to forgive me" he said crying bitterly.

My mother owned her part in how my life turned out.

"Mama I have something to tell you" I said wiping my tears.

"I hope it's nothing bad" she said softly laughing.

"I don't know how you will take it" I said smiling.

"Out with it Bayanda" she said.

"Well mama I am seeing someone" I said.

"I know" she said smiling.

"You do" I asked.

"Ayana I am your mother and I know when you're happy and this time you're in love" she said.

"And your father told me" she said in a low tone.

"Did he tell you about the wedding" I asked.

"Yes and I was waiting for you to share the news with me" she said.

"He asked me to marry him mama" I said.

"My baby is getting married" she said screaming and pulling me into her arms.

"You are going to be the most beautiful bride ever" she said crying again.

"I am so proud of you Yana and God has been good" she said.

"Mama don't cry" I said.

"How can I stop when I am the most blessed mother out there and the happiest right now" she said.

"You are going to make a good wife and mother" she said.

"Mama" I said softly.

"Trust God Yana he performs miracles" she said starting to sing.

"And this thing of you moving in at your father's with his wife doesn't sit well with me" she said.

"Mama he wants me close and me getting married scares him" I said.

"I don't like that Celiwe and I don't trust her" she said looking at me for a while.

"What mama" I asked.

"Do you really love him" she asked settling next to me.

"I love him so much mama, I feel complete when I am with him" I said.

"I am happy but please don't rush things and don't rush this wedding let everything work itself out. I loved and still love your father but I made mistakes because I knew his heart belonged to me. I don't want you to make the same mistakes as me okay" she said kissing my cheek.

"Now let mom feed you" she said.

I stayed longer at my mother's place and she told me about Ncane meeting a man and spending time with him.

I couldn't stop laughing when she mentioned how Ncane is behaving like a teenager head over hills in love.

I don't know why I agreed to this in the first place maybe I should have told him that I am sick.

Banzi's family has a get together of some sort and I was invited.

Ever heard the term monster inlaw now that's Banzi's mother.

I tried my best even wore a new dress perfect for the sun and appropriate for meeting your man's people.

Bab Mngadi is a kind man and the whole family was welcoming.

Omuhle hasn't left my side since I got here and Banzi has been pampering me.

Her mother has been going up and down helping with the cooking and cleaning.

When I tried to offer my help Mam Mngadi blatantly refused for me to do anything.

And so I have been sitting here cheking Banzi out with my arm around Omuhle and Betty keeping us company.

"You shouldn't mind ma" Betty says.

I look at her and smile but we all know such mothers wreak havoc.

"Just look at how bhuti is looking at you anyone can tell he's in love" she says holding my hand.

"And I feel bad for just eating and doing nothing" I say.

"Uxakwe yini bekhona ugaxekile" she says laughing.

"Ncane can you plait my hair" Omuhle says looking up with eyes just like father's.

The last time I plait her hair Phindile called and told me where to get off.

"I think we should speak to your mother first" I say brushing her hair.

She pulls the most cutest supposed sulking face.

"And you look so cute I could eat you up" I say.

She giggles and puts her tiny hands on my face.

"When I grow up I want to be beautiful just like you Ncane" she says smiling.

"And what am I ugly" Betty asks looking at Omuhle.

"No Ncane you are baba's black diamond and you're the most beautiful person in our whole family" Omuhle says smiling.

Betty is beautiful and I swear one could eat off her silk skin.

Omuhle bats her eye lids and I am sold.

"I guess I should go look for your mother" I say looking at her.

"She is in the kitchen with Gogo" Omuhle says pulling my hand.

"Goodluck" Betty says.

I look at Banzi and mouth a desperate *Help me*

He mouths back one huge *I love you* and I have no choice but to walk.

I stop when I hear Phindile laughing from the top of her voice.

"You should see her looking at Banzi like a love sick teenager" Phindile says.

"I still can't believe Banzi wants to marry her" His mother says.

"Did you see her nails huh I bet she can't even cook. Not only will my son be starved but he will be denied a chance to be a father.

Ayizali leya ngane Phindile yinyumba and Banzi still wants to marry her why ngoba emuhle" she asks.

"I think he's blinded by her beauty and once that fades he will toss her aside" Phindile says.

"If she loves Banzi as much as she claims then she should leave him alone.

Phindile my child you know I love you and want you to be with Banzi

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with you I know he's going to be okay his wish of being a father will come true" she says

"She's not woman enough to marry into this family" Banzi's mother says.

I push everything I have just heard to the back of mind and clear my throat.

"Hau Bayanda" Banzi's mother says.

"I am sorry to disturb you but I was looking for Phindile" I say in a shaky voice.

"Omuhle asked if I could plait her hair and I was wondering if that's okay with you" I say.

"Oh that's okay and I liked how you did her hair the last time but I had to undo it because she kept complaining about her head hurting" she says.

"That's okay" I say walking away.

I hold on to the wall the moment the air hits my face.

"Akazale eyakhe ingane and stop trying to play mom to my child" Phindile says.

Banzi's mother laughs.

You would think she would atleast feel my pain because she knows the pain of losing a child.

Unlike her I lost my children way before I could even hold them or have them.

I feel Omuhle's hand on my mine.

"Ncane are you crying" Omuhle asks.

"No sweetheart I have something in my eye" I say .

She runs off and comes back with Betty.

"Hey what's wrong" Betty asks.

"Nothing but I need to leave I just received a call and I need to go home" I say.

"Bayanda talk to me atleast let me call Bhuti" she says.

I smile and look at her.

"Bettys nothing is wrong or going on with me okay" I say.

"Can I atleast drive you" she offers.

"Sure" I say.

I look at Omuhle and smile.

"I will ask daddy to bring you over to the house so I can make you the prettiest girl alive" I say.

She gives me a hug and whispers.

"I love you Ncane" she says pulling away.

It's a good thing Banzi left with Muzi to buy more coal because more people will be coming.

It would have been hard to leave him here my day was great just looking at him.

I can't believe he's going to be my husband and I will forever lose myself in his eyes and those dimples.

Betty plays some music while trying to get me to talk.

I tell her about Busani which seems to excite her even more, I throw in a few pictures of my brother and the biggest smile pops on her face.

I ask her to drop me off at church and find myself sitting at the front row looking ahead.

I asked her to stay in the car so I could gather my thoughts.

I go down on my knees and clasp my hands together closing my eyes.

"Heavenly father I come before you my heart pure and heavy.

I have never asked you for anything before but to heal my heart, but dear Lord I am begging you please bless me with this tiny soul and I will forever praise you for all the days of my life" I say.

I feel Banzi's cologne and strong arms embrace me.

"Please don't do this" He says.

"You gave me this man to love please don't put him through this" I say still clasping my hands.

"Ndabezitha please you're hurting me don't do this to yourself" he says.

I look at him and his mother's words ring in my head.

"I don't think I am strong enough for this" I say looking at him.

"I can be strong for the both of us allow me to be" he says.

He helps me up and kisses me pulling me close.

I know we're at a church but my clit says otherwise.

"You do know we're in church right" he says pulling away.

"I don't care Banzi" I say pulling him close.

"Sizoshiswa Bayanda" he says cupping up my breast.

I laugh grabbing his buttocks.

"I love you Dlokovu" I say.

"I love you Mazulu" he says kissing me.

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Lubanzi.

I dropped Bayanda home and went to get a few beers at the bar.

I couldn't stop thinking about what Betty told me.

I know what my mother is thinking but I didn't take an emotional decision.

I didn't sleep one night and wake the next morning to propose to Bayanda.

I took time and thought things through not that I needed too because I knew I wanted to spend my life with her the moment I held her hands outside that church.

I know she can't have children and that kills me but there's more to life and being in love.

I don't understand how God works how he hurts the very same people he's supposed to love.

I grab my keys and drive home playing some music.

I get home and head straight to the kitchen finding the whole family.

"Banzi" My father says.

"Baba" I say looking at my mother.

"What's wrong" My mother asks.

"You are what's wrong" I say.

She looks at everyone and blinks.

"What have I done" she asks

"Drop the act I know you're the reason Bayanda left early" I say.

"Hayibo she chose to leave I had nothing to do with it" she says.

"Fine just like I am leaving your house and never coming back" I say.

She gasps and looks at my father..

"You don't like Bayanda mama and you have made that clear. I love you so much but you can't hurt Bayanda and expect me to be okay" I say.

"Banzi she's not good for you look at what she's making you do" my mother says.

"Will you stop it mama" I say.

" She can't have kids and I know how you feel about that" she continues.

"She's not the first woman to face this and she's not the last and you know nothing about how and what I feel" I say.

"Baba khuluma naye" she says to my father.

"Ngathini kuwe huh angikukhuzanga" Baba says.

I look at Muzi, Betty and Ayanda smiling

"You know the way to your old man's house right" I say.

My mother starts crying and trying to talk to my father.

"Stay the night Banzi you will drive in the morning when you have sobered up" Muzi says.

"I can't stay in the same house with that woman" I say.

"Bafo that's our mother" he says.

"And she's hurting me through the one person I love" I say.

"I will call you when I get home" I say.

I make my way to my car and drive home finishing up my beer.

I play a video of Bayanda wearing nothing but my white shirt her small fists in her mouth and her hair all ruffled up.

I can still date back to this morning she woke up singing and planting kisses all over my face.

"Awungithandi wena" My voice comes up.

"That's a lie I love you Lubanzi" her voice says.

I hear a screeching sound and notice a car in front of me and another one at the back.

I cuss when I realise Muzi took my gun for safe keeping and the one I keep in my car I left home.

I try swerving off and the two cars close me in till I kill the engine.

Two guys wearing balaclavas come out of the cars and start shooting at me.

One bullet hits my shoulder while the other one hits my chest making me pass out on the passage seat.

I reach for my phone while gasping for air dialing Muzi.

"Muzi" I say coughing bloods.

"Dlokovu" he says.

"Tell Bayanda that I love her" I say closing my eyes.

#018

Banzi should have been home by now but he's not and his phone goes unanswered.

I tried calling but it put me straight to voice mail and that worried me.

He was supposed to be here with me after the day I had he promised he would, which makes me think something important came up.

I tried sleeping but I couldn't my body wouldn't let me.

I even thought I was having a panic and anxiety attack with how everything just took a turn for the worse.

From worrying to complete over thinking and not knowing who to call.

I tried calling Buhle though but couldn't reach her and it only dawned on me at that moment that we haven't seen each other in a long time.

I mean she's my best friend but lately we have been drifting apart barely talking.

Or maybe I am reading too much into this and she's busy with work just like I am.

Either way I need to reach out to her and maybe we can go out for lunch.

I ended up calling my mother and told her everything that transpired during the day.

She wanted to come but I told her it was late and she shouldn't worry.

But now she's been calling like crazy asking if I am okay.

All I need is my man and his strong arms around me making love to me.

I send him a tex rather and hope he at least sees it.

*I guess I will see you in the morning and you better have breakfast with you.

I stayed up thinking you would show but it's okay something must have come up I love you*

I press send and it goes through, I look at the time and it's past midnight I should be sleeping right now.

I switch off my phone to stop myself from dialing Banzi and just hope I wake up next to him in the morning.

I wake up to a banging sound on my door and look at the time. It's 4am and someone is about to break my door not that I got any sleep.

I was awake all night praying for Banzi and his family I don't know why but it just came to me.

I get out of bed and rush to open the door.

Muzi makes his way in and looks at me.

"Sawbona Muzi" I say yawning.

"I am sorry for almost breaking your door but your phone wasn't going through" he says.

"I switched it off before I slept would you like some coffee" I ask.

"No I came to get you" He says.

"Why what's going on" I ask.

"Banzi is in the hospital" he says.

I hear what he's saying but can't comprehend any of it.

"No Banzi is home he was supposed to come here but he didn't" I say.

"He couldn't come because he was shot on his way here" he says.

"My father asked me to come and get you" he says.

"Bayanda are you okay" he asks.

I stare back at him blank and he looks tired he must have been at the hospital all night.

"I will go and get changed" I say softly.

I run the water and find myself screaming as I take a shower. I don't feel like myself and my heart aches as tears well up.

"Bayanda" Muzi calls out as I am sitting on the bed putting on Banzi's black hoody with jeggings.

The drive to the hospital is long and the silence makes it all real but I won't let my tears fall.

"He's going to be okay I know my brother he's a fighter" he says.

"How bad is it" I ask.

"Pretty bad he was shot three times" he says breathing deeply.

My heart sinks three times who would do that.

"Do you honestly believe he's going to make it" I ask turning to look at him.

He sighs and tightens his hold on the steering wheel.

"Its okay you don't have to say anything" I say.

I have suddenly lost all will to my bodily movements only when Muzi helps me out of the car do I realise we have arrived.

We walk inside and find both his parents and Phindile.

His father makes his way to me and gives me a hug.

"I am so sorry baba" I say.

"Sekulunge konke" he says letting go.

"What the hell is she doing here" Mam Mngadi asks making her way to me.

"Maka Ayanda ngiyakukhuza not today not now" Banzi's father says.

"I will go look for the doctor please don't start with your nonsense" He says before walking away.

Banzi's mother turns and slaps me.

"It's your fault my son is laying in there if he didn't leave his home none if this would have happened" she says looking at me.

I hold my cheek biting my lip.

"Mama" Muzi says standing between us.

"Stay out of this Muzi she's the reason my son was angry and decided to leave" she says.

"You did this and ever since you came into my family nothing has been going right. You are taking my son away from me and I will not let you" she says.

"I am sorry" I say.

"I don't need your sorry all I want is for you to leave my son alone" she says.

"I don't know what kind of witch doctor you go to but he's really good I give you that. You managed to put a wedge between me and my son and you somehow convinced him that not having kids is normal" she says.

"Well let me tell you something a woman's job is to nature turn a house into a home and give birth.

Woman bring life into this earth and you are none of what I just said.

See Phindile was able to give Banzi something you can't and he will forever be grateful and love her.

They will always share a bond you can never imagine" she says.

"That's enough Tholakele Mngadi" Bab Mngadi barks behind us.

"How's my son" she asks looking at the doctor.

"He was in surgery for seven hours and we managed to take out of all three bullets" The doctor says putting my heart at ease.

"So does this mean he's okay that we can see him" Phindile asks.

The doctor looks at Bab Mngadi who nods his head.

"I am afraid he's still critical and there were bullet fragments we couldn't take out" He says.

"What do you mean you couldn't take out and where are these fragments" I ask.

"Doctor this is Banzi's fiance my daughter inlaw" Bab Mngadi says.

"Mam the third bullet hit his chest close to his heart and I am afraid these fragments are close to his heart" He says looking at me.

"And if you don't get them out" I ask.

"He will die" he says.

I hold on to Muzi and struggle to breathe.

"Breathe Bayanda" he says.

"Please calm down we have scheduled him for another surgery and with the specialist we are bringing in it will be a success.

And he managed to say something before the surgery which gives us hope" He says.

"What did he say" His mother asks.

"He said Bayanda I don't know if that means anything" The doctor says.

Banzi's mother looks at me and shakes her head.

"Can we see him" Muzi asks.

"Yes of course" The doctor says walking away.

Bab Mngadi asks me to come with but I decline and watch as they walk inside his room.

I can't be in the same room as that woman God knows I tried with her but I can't anymore.

Even if right this moment I was married to Banzi I would still be an outcast in his mother's eyes.

I look up when I hear my mother's voice and see both my parents.

I stand up and suddenly plummet in their arms.

"Gogga" Baba says holding me.

"Baba" I say my lips quivering.

"Its okay he's not dead don't cry like this Bayanda" My mother says.

"Mama he's critical and he might not make it" I say looking up.

"He's a fighter that boy and he will come back to you" Baba says.

"Mama" I say holding her and crying my eyes out.

"Oh sanalwam" she says brushing my back.

She pulls away and looks at me wiping my tears.

"What happened to your face" she asks.

"Nothing ma" I say.

"Bayanda your mother asked you a question and this is not nothing" Baba says.

I tell them half truths so as not to make things worse.

"You're not telling us the whole truth" my mother says

"She insulted you again right" she says.

"Mama let it go" I say.

"So it wasn't enough that she gossiped about you now she hits you" she says standing up.

The door opens and they come out Banzi's mother crying.

"That's her right" My mother asks.

I say nothing and look at my dad.

"Your silence says a lot" she says walking up to them.

"So it wasn't enough talking about my daughter you had to lay your filthy hand on her" Mama says to Mam Mngadi.

"Mamela apha ke nontombi yambona laBayanda umhle kangaka khange ndimfebele yeva ndimbelekile just like you did Banzi.

Kuyavela nakum' xa owam umtana ekhala

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undive ke sisi ayo punching bag uBayanda uyandiva.

If ever ndibona okanye ndimfumane ekhala sisimanga sakhi uzaw'ndazi.

Ubucinga ntoni that she doesn't have parents well you're wrong she has both a mother and a father.

Stay out of my daughter's business or you will have me to deal with" Mama says fuming.

I think my mother just went ghetto and Xhosa in one go.

People are now staring just like they did when Mam Mngadi was throwing insults at me.

"Zoleka please" Baba says.

"Hayi Bukhosi ngokabani umtana ofanele usafarisha huh, look at me a whole school principal shouting from the top of her lungs.

This is so unbecoming and so unlike me" she says.

My mother is extra and I think she's always wanted to go off at this woman.

"I apologise for my wife's behaviour and Bayanda no one is stopping you from seeing him" Bab Mngadi says.

Mama looks at Baba just as he is about apologise on her behalf.

"We will wait for you outside" Mama says.

I walk inside and the first thing I see is his lifeless body plugged to the machine and his bare chest bandaged.

I sit next to him and hold his hand kissing it.

I am not used to seeing him like this and it scares the life out of me.

I look at his chest and the fragments statement comes to mind.

I can't believe there's a possibility I might have to wake up to a world without him.

I silently sob and wipe my tears finding my voice.

"Banzi vuka" I say.

All I hear is the machine beeping and his chest gradually going up and down.

"I don't know if you can hear me but please come back" I say.

"I love you so much but I can't do this" I say.

"I took time and thought about everything and I realise that I am happy because of you.

You complete me and I breathe because of your love" I say smiling.

"But then I thought about our future and I realised I wouldn't want our kids to have chose between us and the people they love. I don't want that for you and that's what's happening right now you are choosing between the woman who gave birth to you and the one you love" I say looking at my ring.

"I am not running away or am I being coward but I love you enough to know" I say breathing heavily.

I stand up and kiss his lips turning to leave only to have Banzi pull me back.

A gentle pull that breaks my heart when I pull my hand from his hold.

"I love you" I say.

I walk out and find my parents waiting.

"Baba I want to go home" I say.

"Why" he asks.

"I just want to go home" I say.

"Okay" he says leading the way.

The drive home feels nothing like the drive to the hospital.

The air in this car is sombre and everything in me is aching.

We get to my house and my parents decide to stay behind.

"I will make you some soup" my mother says.

"I am not sick mama" I say.

"That's not what I meant nana but you haven't eaten all day"
she says.

"I will have some icrecream" I say.

They both look at each other and sigh.

"Fine I will bring it" Mama says.

I walk to my bedroom and leave them to their hush whispering.

I take off my shoes and sleep on his side of the bed. That's right
he has his side of the bed and it smells like him.

He's a well respected man a powerful man, tell me who do you think his legacy and surname will be passed on to these are some of the things his mother said.

It's only been a day but I miss him so much.

I breathe heavily closing my eyes probably sleep with come and these tears will stop.

#019

I was there when the doctors performed the second surgery. I was there when he didn't wake up and just slipped into a coma.

The doctors did everything but still he didn't wake up and they couldn't tell us why.

But I overheard one of the nurses saying while he was under he bled and maybe that's why he didn't come out of the anesthetic and that was two weeks ago.

I don't know what to think anymore just when I thought this was my year and this happens.

I had told myself that I wasn't going back to the hospital but when Muzi came and talked to me.

I realised leaving Banzi at a time like this would be cowardly of me and very foolish to begging with.

We still don't know who tried to kill him but his father won't let this matter rest.

I regret telling Banzi to let go of his investigation when his Siblings died none of this would have happened.

I toss when the door to my bedroom opens and my mother walks in with a smile of her face.

"Bayanda" she says settling next to me.

I don't know why she doesn't go back to her house because she only treats me like a child.

And my father is the worst always here and I don't like the fact that they are spending so much time in each other's spaces.

Don't get me wrong I love both my parents but mama hurt my dad and that still stings.

And what happens if Mam Celiwe goes crazy and starts questioning my father's loyalty and love.

I don't want any more drama and I feel that's what's on the way if things carry on this way.

"Ma" I say sitting up straight.

"You have someone to see you" she says looking at the door.

Nhlaka walks in looking good as always with a smile on his face.

I see this woman called reinforcement even when I told her that I am okay.

"I couldn't stay away" he says.

"I will leave you two to it" Mama says walking out.

"You just couldn't stay away" I say.

"What's there to cheer up when you're still the Bayanda I know" he says laughing.

I deeply sigh and look at him.

"What brings you here" I ask.

"Well I could say I missed you but that would be a lie, your mother called me" he says.

"So you don't miss me" I ask.

His face lights up and he looks at me.

"If I said that then I would be lying" he says.

"You sound like yourself but you don't look like yourself" he says.

"I am tired" I say.

"And what's this I hear about you letting people walk all over you. The Bayanda I know is not a push over and is definitely not someone's punching bag" he says.

"This is different Nhlaka it's his mother and I have never been in a situation like this before" I say.

"Every man wants to marry a woman whose half what their mothers are and that woman hates me" I say.

He laughs out and sighs.

"So what you're not getting married to her but Mngadi so why should you care what she thinks about you" he asks.

"You love him don't you" he asks softly.

I nod my head.

"Then there's your answer forget what that old hag says and love the man" he says.

"And if you get your groove back who knows you might want to put a bullet through her skull" he says raising his eyebrow.

"Nhlaka that's a bit extreme" I say.

"Don't let her get to you nomatter what she says" he says holding my hand.

"But this woman is not insulting my intelligence, morals

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manners or the way I look.

She is insulting my worth as a woman my inability to have kids something I have no control over" I say.

He sighs.

"I know which makes me angry too but that's life not everyone is going to like you" he says.

"You know what you're right" I say.

"Okay now that we have that out of the way tell me what's going on at work" he asks.

"Nothing apart from the fact that I got my first warning and Luke told me to shape up or ship out" I say.

"Don't worry about Luke I will talk to him" he says.

"No that's okay you have done enough already and this could be some kind of blessing in disguise" I say.

"What do you mean" he asks.

"I think it's time I realised my dream of opening a law firm and empowering young black women. There's so much that I want to do and maybe now is the time" I say.

"Come here" he says opening his arms.

"I am so proud of you" he says.

I wish Banzi was here because when I told him about my dream he promised to back me all the way.

"Thank you" I say letting go.

"Now please get out of these hedious clothes your brother is on his way" he says.

I think Nhlakanipho's visit did me more good than I will admit too.

Busani took me out to lunch and I called Betty and asked her to please bring Omuhle with.

I swear that child is mine in my previous life she's everything I would want in a child.

"Ncane are you leaving my daddy" Omuhle asked scrunching her nose.

That's the thing with kids they don't beat about the bush and get straight to the point.

"And who told you that" I asked looking at Betty and Busani who seemed to be in their own little world.

So much for taking me to lunch you know what I did good by asking this betrayer called Betty to bring my baby girl.

"Gogo" she said tilting her head.

"Gogo is dreaming I would never leave you or daddy" I said looking at her.

"Do you promise" She asked smiling and right there I saw her dad.

"I promise" I said raising my pinky.

We did a pinky promise and her smile stole my heart once again.

"Ncane gogo says you can't have kids and Mkhulu said she was being mean" she said making one of her faces.

"That is mean" I said matching her face.

"I told gogo that I would be you child and make you happy" she said.

I didn't know what to say and I wished her father was here to hold my hand and be proud of his daughter.

"You are the most prettiest and most thoughtful child and I would love for you to be my child" I said giving her a hug.

I had the best time with Omuhle and I think I saw my supposed best friend but she ducked clear avoiding me.

I don't know why and what made things worse is her horrible ugly coat.

I tried calling her but she didn't answer as usual.

Betty said I shouldn't read too much into it but at some point Nobuhle and I were close.

I thought she would be the one holding my hand during this difficult time but clearly I was wrong.

....

I told myself that I wouldn't let that vile woman get to me and decided to freshen up and put on my best clothes and head to the hospital.

I have been waiting for Banzi's parents to come out of his room so I can see him.

I stand up when the door opens and his parents come out holding hands.

His mother heads my way already fuming and ready to take me on.

"We mama ungangiqali" I say raising my hand.

"I told you to stay away" she says in a lower tone.

"And I was going to stay away but then I realised you are not the boss of me" I say looking at her.

"Insolent just like your mother" she says.

"You mean the woman who put you in your place yes" I say nodding my head.

"I don't know what Banzi sees in you" she says making me laugh.

"Funny enough I don't know what Bab Mngadi saw in you. I mean he's a gentle kind soul while you are the most vile person I have met" I say.

"And don't try me with that nonsense of yours about what a woman means because clearly you have no idea what it really means" I say.

I look at her and smile.

"I prayed about you and I asked God to deal with you.

And I told him that if you keep pushing then I would definitely push back.

I am tired of you and that flat ass Phindile you keep shoving down Banzi's throat.

Their ship came and sailed kuphelile akasafunwa and you should let that sink in. Mngadi loves me and wants to marry me I am not going anywhere and if you don't like it then tough phuza amanzi" I say with a smile.

Bab Mngadi makes his way to us after his brief talk with the doctor.

"Makoti" He says giving me a smile.

"Baba how are you" I ask.

"Everything is well as it can be and how are you holding up" he asks.

"I am okay baba in fact I feel so much better akunjalo mama" I ask looking at Banzi's mother.

She smiles looking at her husband.

"You should go inside" he says.

"I should and baba thank you for everything" I say.

Just like my father Bab Mngadi has been supportive.

I leave them and make my way to his room closing the door behind me.

I remove my shoes and lay next to him placing my hand on his chest.

"Dlokovu" I say following a deep sigh.

"I miss you so much" I say.

"I wish you were here with your eyes open. I need you and Omuhle needs you everyone needs you sthandwa sam.

I know you will wake up its doesn't matter how long it takes just take your time. I am not going anywhere and I will wait because you made a promise to that you would never leave me.

And you're a man of your word so please sthandwa sam just come back to us" I say.

Today my well of tears seems to be all dried up.

I move my hand to his and close my eyes.

"I can't wait to be Mrs Lubanzi Mngadi and to look into your eyes and tell you how much I love you.

That you're the best thing that's ever happened to me. I miss the sound of your voice so much I wake up at night and cry because you're not next to me" I say.

He's not moving or saying anything and that breaks my heart taking away the little faith I have of him waking up.

I take out my phone and play some music putting one earpiece on his ear while I put the other one on mine.

"You are the one Banzi and in my heart I know and your love has healed me" I say.

I know he can hear me and one of these days he has to wake up because I can't without him.

.....

Nhlakanipho Khumalo

I didn't plan this nor I did I ever dream of myself doing this.

But here I was doing it and seeing it through after seeing Bayanda I had to come.

I paid one of the nurses to let me in as family are the only people being let in.

I closed the door behind me and looked at Mngadi's lifeless body.

This man right here has everything I ever wished for I thought to myself.

He has Bayanda the most precious thing a man could have and I have all these worldly possession but not her.

I grabbed one of the chairs and sat next to him.

I remember meeting Bayanda for the first time and I thought she was impressionable but man was I wrong.

I was the one taken and intoxicated with her and everything she did.

All of me wanted to tap into her inner world and her vulnerability.

I saw how strong and how she didn't take crap from anyone including me.

I was pulled into her dark alluring world and never found my world to be the same ever again.

Once I learned all she had been through I wanted nothing but to protect her and be what this man is to her.

"I don't even know why I am here" I said looking at him.

"If only you knew how much I wished to be in your shoes right now" I said laughing.

"To have her look at me the same way she looks at you and smile at me the way she does at you" I said thinking about how Bayanda's eyes always light up when she talks about Mngadi.

"You are one lucky bastard and I doubt you know it because if you knew then you wouldn't be lying here like a damn vegetable" I said.

"She hides it so well but she needs you and she's falling apart. I know her and she can be her worst enemy trust me when I say she's fragile.

Wake up and make sure you stay alive for her sake she won't cope without you" I said realising how this relationship is different from the one she had with Mphemba.

I wasn't worried about Mphemba because I knew they wouldn't last, he was always a cheat and it was only a matter of time before Bayanda found out.

Bayanda always found comfort in the bottle, guns and boxing the only things that kept her sane.

I don't want her going down that path ever again.

His eyes moved and so did his fingers.

"That's it come on wake the bloody up" I said standing up.

His eyes slowly opened up and he kept blinking then he closed them again.

I stood up and called the same nurse that granted me access.

I don't know what this is foolishness on my side or loving her to a point where I would do anything for her.

Anything not to see her cry or look at me with those eyes.

I reached for my phone and called her.

"Mazulu" I said after composing myself.

"Nhlaka" She said softly.

"Everything is going to be okay" I said looking at the doctor making his way in.

#020

A few hours ago I received a call from Nhlaka to tell me that everything is going to be okay and I believed him.

You won't believe what happened after his call the hospital called and told me to come there immediately.

I rushed there and found the whole family standing with the doctor even Omuhle was there.

She rushed to me and I had to lift her up for a tight hug she's my baby.

I have been holding on to her for dear life not knowing what to expect from the doctor.

I have been praying that he wakes up that he comes back and that everything goes back to normal.

I have so many emotions going on right now I can't exactly explain how or what I am feeling.

His father calls me close as the doctor tells us why they called.

I breathe in slowly and make my way close to them and as always Mam Mngadi's handbag is with her.

"As I was telling mr Mngadi the good news Banzi woke up a few hours ago" The doctor says looking at us.

"And is he okay" I ask.

"Yes he's okay and he's talking which is a good thing" he continues.

"May we see him" His father asks.

"Yes but he specifically asked for two people and we don't want to overwhelm him" The doctor says.

"Asambe baba" His mother says.

"I am sorry mam but he asked for his daughter and fiance" the doctor says looking at me.

"Did you hear that mama daddy asked for us" Omuhle says.

"Hamba Bayanda" his father says.

I nod my head taking Omuhle's hand and walking inside his room.

You would swear he wasn't in a coma because he's sitting up straight.

"Daddy" Omuhle says and runs towards him.

She's a child and doesn't understand that she needs to be careful but seeing them this happy makes me happy.

I stand by the window looking up and thanking the heavens for bringing him back.

"Its so good to see you pumpkin" Banzi says in a deep tone that takes my mind all the way to our bedroom dealings.

"I missed you daddy" She says giving him a hug.

"Daddy missed you too and I promise to never leave you guys alone" Banzi says.

"Good because mama has been praying for you" Omuhle says.

"Remind me to thank mommy for her prayers" Banzi says.

"But mama is here so you can thank her" she says softly.

I still need to tell him that we moved from the Ncane stage to the mama stage and I love every moment of it.

I feel his eyes on me and wipe my tears turning to face him.

"Ndabezitha" he says with a smile.

I bite my lip and look at him he has lost a few muscles but I know with a bit of work at the gym he's going to be his old self.

"Dlokovu" I say.

"Buya la" he says reaching out his hand.

I move closer and hold his warm hand.

"Hey" he says.

"Hey" I say giggling

"I am sorry" he says.

"It's not your fault" I say.

"I missed you" I say.

"I missed you too" he says.

He gently pulls me close and gives me a slow kiss.

"Daddy" Omuhle giggles closing her eyes.

I pull away when the door opens and his family walks in.

"Banzi" his mother says giving him a hug.

"Its good to have you back Dlokovu" His father says.

"It's good to be back baba" he says.

"We were so worried about you" his mother says looking at him.

"Well as you can see I am okay" Banzi says.

The doctor walks in and checks up on him.

"I was hoping to go home today" Banzi says.

"I don't think that's a good idea" His father says.

"He's not strong yet but his wounds are healing well and his body healed itself while he was in the Coma" the doctor says.

"And what about infections" I ask.

"As I said he is healing well and his wounds are no longer septic" the doctor says.

"Does this mean he can come home" I ask.

"Yes mam and I will bring your discharge forms" the doctor say.

"Phindile and I made sure everything is okay and we prepared your bedroom" his mother says.

"Ma, Banzi is coming home with me to our home" I say.

"Stay out of this and don't tell me about that small apartment of yours" she says looking at me.

"Oh I am sorry ma when I said our home I meant the house Banzi bought without telling you" I say.

"Banzi" his mother calls out.

Banzi looks at his mother and shakes his head probably gathering strength to deal with her petty self.

"Mama I am going home and that's where Bayanda is" Banzi says.

"I told you that I would never step foot in your house again and I meant it" he says.

"It's all her fault I just know it" his mother says.

"Mama please don't make say something I will regret" Banzi says.

"Don't worry mama I will take care of him and you are welcome to come and see him anytime" I say with a huge smile.

She looks ready to burst but I don't care seeing her squirm makes me a happy woman.

"Kodwa baba wathula uBanzi engenza kabi" she says looking at her husband.

"Umthetho wakho uwuzwa" Bab Mngadi says.

Three days later and Banzi came home I had a talk with the doctor to keep him for observations and to make sure he was fit to go home.

That sparked a huge fight between us with Banzi claiming I was taking decision for him like he was a child and the most ridiculous of them all.

Was when he told me I didn't want him home because there was someone in my life other than him.

I had to laugh it off and blame it on the heavy medication that was still in his blood stream.

The first thing he did when we got home was take a shower and call Muzi to bring his gun.

I had to help him out of the shower and got myself wet in the process.

My nipples just poked out of my shirt and Banzi slowly took my shirt off leaving me half naked.

He went down on the twins taking each in his mouth while pulling down my pants.

"Banzi you're not strong enough" I said trying to pull away.

He took my hand placing it on his already hard manhood and I couldn't resist going down on him.

The towel had already found its way down the floor making taking him in my mouth easy.

He grabbed my hair as I deep throat him gagging in between.

I could tell he loved every moment of me sucking him till I stopped and pulled him to our bed and dropped my thong on the floor.

I slowly made my way to him and stroked his cock playing with it.

"Oh Bayanda" he said closing his eyes.

I got ontop and pushed myself down his cock and Banzi went crazy with his hands on my boobs.

I started ridding and moving feeling his cock deep within my walls.

He placed his thumb on my clit as I shook my waist

I could feel myself come and scream his name while he held me tight despite his wounds.

He changed positions and got ontop giving me long and slow strokes.

"I love you Bayanda" he said running out of breath.

I swear it happens all the time Banzi is inside he collapses ontop of me gasps and catches his breath. It's amazing to watch and quite sexy when he does it.

I could tell he was about to come when his one hand moved down my thigh and he gently lifted it up.

He pulled out still hard as a stallion and had me bending with my arse in the air while he pushed his cock inside.

I held on to mattress with each stroke and thrust leaving me breathless.

He held on to my arse and slowly pulled out making certain I could feel him and placed his cock on my entrance gently gliding it up and down my folds and clit.

"Banzi" I said pushing my arse to him.

"What is it Ndabezitha" he asked chuckling.

"Faka" I said in a voice I could bare recognise.

"Your wish is my command" he said sliding in as I closed my eye and used my two fingers on my clit.

"Ahhaaa" I heard him grunt as he release inside me.

"I am never letting you go" he said pulling out.

I was beyond tired and all I wanted was to lay next to him.

"I was scared Banzi" I admitted while laying on his chest.

I didn't want to but I guess all the adrenaline from the sex morphed him out.

"I know and I am sorry I put you through that" he said kissing my head.

"I want you to know that I love you so much and if ever I get this love thing wrong please don't give up on us" he said looking at me.

"I love you too Mngadi" I said kissing him.

.....

I think Banzi and I had our first real argument and it ended up with him going to work when he said he wouldn't.

I don't know why I left my gun in my dressing table but after what happened to Banzi I decided not to keep it my safe but close by.

I made breakfast and walked back to the bedroom only to find him holding it.

"What the hell is this" he asked looking at me.

With him holding it like that there was no way I could lie.

"I will ask you again Bayanda Zulu what the hell is this doing here" he asked.

"It's a gun" I said answering his first question.

"I know what it is but what is it doing with you" he asked.

But he asked what it was and I had to answer him.

I have had it for a long time it's like my baby she's part of the family.

"Is it even licensed" he asked.

He raised his hand as I was about to answer him.

"You know what I don't care but get rid of it" he said.

"Hayi Banzi this for my protection" I protested.

"And what about me huh ngiyini mina ngihlobisile" he asked raising his eyebrow.

"Don't test me Bayanda get rid of that thing no wife of mine will walk around carrying a gun" he said.

"You do realise a lot could go wrong in split seconds. The same criminal you want to protect yourself from might use this steal against you and what happens if you mistakenly shoot someone thinking it's a burglar" he said.

He's overeating but I won't say anything because if I do then he's going to pick another fight with me.

"Even if your bat those beautiful eyes of yours Bayanda I want that thing gone and if you can't do it yourself then I will" he said.

I still can't believe we fought but I know he's going to cool off after that whole research I sent him.

I get the door when a knock comes through and find Nsindiso and Nobuhle standing on my doorstep.

"Bayanda" Nsindiso says.

"Mphemba" I say clearing my throat.

"I am not staying I came to drop Buhle off" he says kissing her cheek then walking off.

I let Buhle in and start laughing.

"And then um'coshephi lo vobe" I ask shaking my head.

She nervously laughs making me look at her.

"Okay" I say settling down.

She looks nervous and sweaty I am starting to get worried.

"I haven't seen you in such along time" I say.

"I know and I didn't mean to stay away it just happened that I was busy" she says.

"Oh well then I have some news" I say.

"But first can I get a hug I missed you" I say.

She gives me a side hug and quickly pulls away.

"I also have news" she says.

"You go first" I say excited.

"No you go first" she says smiling.

I show her my ring.

"I am getting married" I say.

"Congratulations Bayanda" she says breathing heavily.

"Buhle what's wrong with you" I ask.

The Buhle I know would be all up in my face screaming and dancing herself crazy happy for me.

"Bayanda I need to tell you something" she says.

"Okay" I say feeling my heart beat fast.

She stands up and takes off her beautiful coat at least she got it right this time around.

"I am pregnant" she says.

I open my mouth shocked till it wears off and pull her into a hug.

"Oh my Buhle congratulations I am going to an aunt" I say still holding her tight.

A part of me wishes this was me but this is amazing news my bestfriend is having a baby and I am going to be a part of it.

"Why didn't you say anything and who is the father" I ask curious to know the lucky man.

Her hold over me tightens and she starts crying.

"What's wrong we should be happy there's a child coming and I am getting married" I say.

"Bayanda I am sorry" she says.

"You're scaring me" I say.

Subconsciously I know what she's sorry for but I don't want to believe it.

"Why are you sorry Buhle" I ask.

"The baby is Nsindiso's" she says.

I let go of her like I got burned by coal.

"What" I ask.

"I am sorry it was only one night a stupid mistake and I didn't mean for it to happen" she says.

"One night a stupid mistake" I ask.

"Bayanda please he came to my house broken and begging me to help him get back together with you" she says.

"And I guess you got it together with him instead" I say.

"Bayanda please" she pleads.

"I thought you were my friend" I say.

"Bayanda we are sisters please forgive me" she says.

I shake my head.

"And that is why this hurts so bad because we were more than friends but sisters" I say.

"Mazulu don't say that" she says.

"Phuma Buhle" shout.

"I didn't mean to hurt you" she says.

"From today onwards you are nothing to me uyangizwa phuma" I say opening the door.

She takes her bag and leaves her stomach clear big meaning this night happened soon after our break up.

I close the door and walk back to my fridge taking out a bottle of wine and pouring myself a drink.

I have a feeling they were sleeping with each other behind my back while I was still with Mphemba.

Never say you know a person just look at me now.

If you want loyalty buy a dog not that she owes me nothing but still this is a low blow I didn't expect this from her.

I told you to come home wanqaba, your friend is not good as you in bed but at least she's good for something and she's carrying it a text from Nsindiso comes through.

I throw my phone on the floor after seeing that crap.

So Nsindiso did all this to spite me and why does it hurt do much.

I gulp the glass down and drink from the bottle getting my keys.

#021

Nhlakanipho Khumalo.

A loud knock came through my door bringing me out of my sleep.

I looked at the time and it was late for anyone to be on my doorstep.

I reached for my gun and cocked it looking at Salizwa sleeping next to me.

"Where are you going" she asked waking up.

"Someone's at the door I need to check it out" I said getting out of bed.

"Go back to sleep" I said walking out.

Knowing Salizwa she didn't even listen to and followed me to the kitchen.

"Nhlakanipho" Bayanda's voice came through.

I quickly put my gun away and opened the door.

She stumbled her way inside almost falling with a bottle of wine in her one hand and her gun on the other.

I took the gun before Salizwa could see it and closed the door behind her.

"I am sorry I didn't know where else to go" she said walking past us.

"I need to sort this out" I said looking at Salizwa.

"You're doing it again letting her in " she said shaking her head.

"Salizwa" I said looking at her.

"It's okay Nhlakanipha go be with your friend" she said.

I followed Bayanda to the gym and found her struggling to put on my boxing gloves till I helped her and held the punching bag for her.

"I went past the shooting range well Banzi's" she said.

She once told me that Banzi has a shooting room.

I said nothing and waited for her to offload but she missed a shot and almost fell.

"You need some water" I said giving her a bottle of cold water.

"She's pregnant" she said looking at me.

"Who" I asked.

"Nobuhle and the child is Nsindiso's" she said chuckling.

"And that is why you decided to drink a whole bottle and knock on my door like a mad person" I asked.

"Yes" she said sniffing.

"Why I thought you were over that cheat and you love Banzi so what's the matter" I asked.

"It's not about Nsindiso it's about Buhle my best friend sleeping with my ex and getting pregnant for him. It's about yet another woman falling pregnant for him while I couldn't. It's about this lump I have in my throat and the feeling of betrayal from her" she said looking at me.

"Nhlaka she's pregnant and she kept the baby why" she asked.

"How many times has she killed her babies huh how many times has she washed her own pregnancies down the drain but still God blesses her with another one" She asked standing up.

"But me Nhlaka he's done nothing for me. My prayers keep falling on deaf ears why did that accident have to happen to me" I couldn't answer her.

Her anger wasn't because Nsindiso slept with Buhle per say but because Buhle was pregnant and she wasn't.

"How do I sue God" she asked trying to wipe her tears.

Her anger was at the man upstairs. I kneeled in front of her and wiped her tears.

"Banzi loves you don't let what happened today get to you" I said cupping her face.

"I know but he deserves so much more than my past and scars" she said..

"That's not true he deserves all of you" I said trying to make her see reason.

"You need to stop hurting yourself and live your best life Ayana" I said wiping another stream of tears.

"I am afraid that one day he's going to leave me" she said swallowing hard.

That's always been her biggest fear having people walk out on her like her dad did And that has always led her to do stupid things.

"That's never going to happen you know why because you're gold and he sees that" I said smiling.

"If only I didn't love him this much then I wouldn't be trying my best to fix myself" she said smiling.

I felt my heart ease up seeing her smile.

"And I thought I would never see the day where you tried" I said.

"It's having people like you in my life that I want to be okay" she said biting her lip trying to stop her tears.

"And it's people like you that make people like us want to carry on" I said.

"Will I ever be okay" she asked seeking the one true answer I couldn't give her.

"Yes you will be" I lied.

I stood and went to get my phone and called Busani instead of Banzi to come fetch her.

Salizwa came in while I still had her in my arms and gave her a cup of coffee.

I met this beautiful woman through the one I am holding right now and I know that one day Salizwa will be my wife and mother of my kids.

"I am happy for her but I got angry when she tried justifying herself and called that child a stupid mistake that happened one night" she said deeply sighing.

I looked at her playing with her fingers hurting and I wished I could take her pain away and make her happy wipe all her tears away.

"You are stronger than this" I said lifting her up.

"Busani is on his way to get you okay" I said putting her on the couch.

"Uyangixosha" she asked laughing.

"No" I said.

"I can't even trust you Nhlakanipho" she said burping.

"Salizwa is here but because you're drunk you couldn't see her" I said laughing.

"I am so sorry Mntungwa and I promise to make it up to you when I am okay" she said holding my hand.

"Nhlaka thank you" She said looking at me.

If only she knew how much I loved her and how seeing her like this broke me.

I wish I could toss this love away but loving her from a distance is better than not loving her.

.....

Lubanzi Mngadi

I got a call from Busani and then I headed straight to his mother's house.

I had been calling him all day trying to find out where Bayanda was and only now did he call.

I walked inside her bedroom and it reaked of alcohol.

I couldn't believe she went straight for the bottle and didn't call me.

I had someone tail her and apparently after her friend's unexpected visit she lost it and drove around then ended up at Mntungwa's house.

I locked the door and sat next to her running my hands down her cheeks.

She's beautiful and I am the luckiest man on earth to be blessed with her.

She opened her mouth and the stench of alcohol came out.

For some reason I called this Nhlaka of hers and he told me what happened.

"Bayanda" I said gently shaking her.

"Mhmm" she said with her eyes still closed.

"Vuka we need to talk" I said.

"Dlokovu" she said softly raising her head.

"Yes" I said.

"I need to throw up" she said.

I lifted her up and rushed her to the toilet and she threw up.

I opened the window and placed her inside the bath tub and turned on the shower head.

She screamed her lungs out and tried getting out but I didn't let her.

"Ngifuna kuphume bonke lotshwala" I said.

"Why

why not come to me and talk to me" I asked looking at her shivering.

Can't she see that man loves her and that scares me.

"I don't want to burden you" she said looking up.

"What am I to you Bayanda" I asked.

"You're my man" she said softly.

"That's it I am your man and that ring on your finger means nothing" I asked.

"I love you Banzi okay but I told myself that I wouldn't do what I did to Mphemba to another man. I told myself that I wouldn't put you through what I put him through. You are the reason I

want to keep going to be better so please don't push okay" she said standing up.

"I love you with all your flaws I don't care what or who you are" I said shaking her shoulders.

"Sometimes love alone is not enough Banzi and that's the truth" she said trying to fight me but I didn't let go.

"Bayanda how many times have I asked you to stop over thinking things" I asked.

"I can't help it even when I don't want to it happen" she said crumbling on my hold.

"Baby please you need to get help allow me to help" I pleaded. She nodded her head looking at me smiling.

"What's wrong with me" she asked softly gazing at me.

"I don't know but trust me everything is going to be okay and you are going to be fine" I said.

"I am sorry for going to Nhlakanipho instead of coming to you" she said throwing up again.

I cleaned her up and tucked her in kissing her forehead.

I have seen things with Bayanda but I just didn't want to face them.

Her anger can triple up when she's really into it.

And her happy can be contagious to a point where you want to stay with her forever and feed of her.

I turned off the light and lay next her holding her close.

I don't want to lose her but her obsession with having a child of her own is going to kill her.

Her need to carry a child of her own will slowly eat away at her and drive her crazy.

"God please make her whole again please" I said shutting my eyes.

I woke up early in the morning and left some breakfast for Bayanda and a note telling her I had an early meeting.

I drove to Nhlakanipho's house and found him drinking his morning coffee with a beautiful lady next to him.

"The security guys let me in" I said.

"Mngadi" he said looking at me.

"I wasn't expecting you till late" he said.

The lady he was with kept her eyes on me till Nhlakanipho cleared his throat.

"She barely looks at another man when I am around whatever you're using must be strong" he said chuckling.

"I should give you my gobela's contacts will definitely come in handy" I said laughing.

"Careful it might just be the end of you" he said giving me a cup of coffee.

We walked to his study and sat there.

"What brings you here Mngadi" he asked not moving his eyes off me.

"Bayanda" I said.

"What happened is she okay" he asked putting down his coffee.

See right there is a man inlove.

"I am not sure yet but I need to ask you something" I said clearing my throat.

"Anything" he said listening carefully.

"Has Bayanda ever had any mental or emotional break down over the years" I asked.

I saw him flinch and breathe confirming my worst nightmare.

"Dammit" I said.

"With her panic and anxiety attacks and constant over thinking the doctor's ruled it out as stress" he said.

"Was she ever admitted" I asked.

"No" he said shaking his head.

"Why" I asked.

"You know how Bayanda is she wouldn't let anyone in not even her own mother " he said.

"Why are you asking all these questions" he asked clearly concerned.

"I needed to make a few things clear" I said standing up.

"Thank you for being there for my wife but I will take it from here" I said.

"Before you take it from here start dealing with Mphemba first" he said.

"What do you know about him" I asked.

"Enough to know that he won't let go and you know why" he said.

"Don't worry yourself about that one he's going to pay dearly" I said walking out.

I reached for my phone and called Muzi.

"Bafo it's time we need to deal with Ntuli fast" I said.

"It's about time" he said before ending the call.

....

I had to fix a few things before going home and the smell of a home cooked meal hit my nostrils.

I found Bayanda in the kitchen finishing up her cooking and mixing cake batter on the side.

I watched while she hummed this beautiful song and her beautiful smile spread when she looked my way.

"And how long have you been standing there" she asked making her way to me.

"Not long" I lied.

"Well then welcome home sthandwa sam" she said helping me down then pouring me a drink.

She put the cake batter in the oven and started with her icing.

"How was your day" she asked.

"My day was okay and yours" I asked looking at her bareface.

"I was throwing up the whole day and I was this close to being smothered I had to leave that woman's house" she said laughing.

I drowned in her laugh and smiled back she was back to being her old self.

"Things haven't been okay the past few weeks but I promise everything is going to get better" she said.

"I want this Banzi with you and no one else" she said coming to my side standing in between my legs.

"You scared me last night" I said hoping she would talk.

"It was the alcohol" she said looking down.

"We need to stop drinking" I said cupping her face.

"And I will" she said sounding sincere.

"How about we start going for AA meetings and joining a support group" I asked treading carefully.

"I am not an alcoholic Banzi" she said softly.

"I never said you were sthandwa sam but something has to give" I said kissing her palm.

"Okay" she said closing her eyes then getting back to her pots.

"I want to send my uncles to your father" She looked up and smiled.

"Ngempela when" she asked excitedly.

"I was think soknt maybe this month if that's okay with you" I said.

If it were up to me I would send then early ad tomorrow.

"I need to tell my mom" she said getting her phone.

"I love you Bayanda" I said.

"And I love you so much" she said kissing me.

"You make me happy" I said as she sat on my lap.

"And you have just made me the happiest woman to walk this earth" she said wrapping her arms around my neck.

#022

I had my first AA meeting last week with Banzi holding my hand and not letting go.

I didn't do much but to introduce myself and the hard part is that I couldn't admit that I have a problem.

But the sponsor said it would take time and at least I took the first step.

Banzi is amazing and supportive he even promised that he would be there for my second meeting.

His mother is still a witch with a broom and what she does no longer affects me that much.

I am also attending therapy to deal with my demons as if that's a new word for dealing with issues.

Well that's how Banzi put it and my father took it upon himself to help me find a very discreet and expensive shrink.

I don't know but him and my mother are getting to close it scares me.

And I think he's having troubles with his wife and we all know the cause.

You won't believe it but I finally met my sister this ducking and diving was getting to me and I asked Busani to bring her over.

And he did I won't lie we had a good time and she's really nice we get along just fine.

While I am on the topic of who did what Buhle called and asked to see me.

She came over to house and asked for forgiveness but honestly she didn't even have too.

Buhle owes me nothing and so I apologised for kicking her out but told her that our relationship couldn't go on.

I love her but I can't trust her anymore what happens if she develops feelings for Mngadi then I would be forced to kill her.

And I can't really kill someone I love right

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you see if she kept her throbbing clit to herself then maybe but I am not taking any chances.

I asked Salizwa and Betty to meet me for lunch these two wowed are dating important men in my life.

"I hope you girls didn't have anything planned" I said.

"None at all I am glad to be out of the house Mntungwa was getting on my nerves" Salizwa says laughing.

"Well I am glad you calles your mother inlaw wouldn't stop complaining about how she has to come over to your place just to see her son" Betty says rolling her eyes..

"Ma needs to apologise to me so I can soft talk my man for her" I say.

"In fact seeing that I saved both of you from terrible situations you two are paying" I say.

"So much for taking us to lunch" Salizwa says.

"And I thought being family counted wow" Betty says.

"Family flies out the window when money is involved" I say.

"But you look good and you're glowing" Salizwa says.

"That's true I guess talking helps right" Betty says.

"I guess so but it's still early days" I say.

They simultaneously nod their heads.

"And having Banzi walk beside me helps a lot. I don't think I would be standing here if it wasn't for the support I get from him and the family" I say.

"And we are here" Betty says reaching for my hand.

"You know Nhlakanipho and I are here if ever you need anything" Salizwa says smiling.

"You guys are the best" I says.

"So tell us about that hoe hoe friend of yours the one who slept with that scum" Betty says not mincing her words.

"That's extreme" I say.

"Extreme my left foot I would have stabbed her mina" Salizwa says cracking me up.

"That's right what happened to girl code you are too nice I would have ran over with my car if she slept with my Busani" Betty says.

"So you guys are official" I ask .

"Yes and I am so happy" she says blushing..

"Aren't you two going to be family when Banzi and I get married" I ask.

"Family my arse Bayanda" she says laughing.

"At first I was angryt even wanted to shoot both her and Nsindiso but then I calmed and realised I was being extra" I say sipping on my juice.

"As in like shoot them boom boom" Salizwa asks with her eyes popping.

"At first yes but no I am okay" I say.

"So bhuti was right you have a gun" Betty says over her shoulder then back at me.

"Guns but yes" I say.

"And I think it's time you ladies carry one to for your own protection that is" I say.

"Nhlakanipho will protect me" Salizwa says raising up her hands.

"Hayi I have Busani for protection" Betty says.

"Okay if you say so" I say back at them.

"How did you learn to use a gun or even hold one" Salizwa asks.

I almost mention Nhlakanipho but quick say an old friend of mine when I was still taking safe defence classes..

"You don't look good" Betty says.

"Lately I have been tired getting these split headaches and sweating" I say.

"Maybe you should see a doctor" She says.

"I think she's right you need to see a doctor it could be something serious" Salizwa says.

"I don't do doctors the last time I saw one they diagnosed my mother with cancer" I say.

They look at each other then me.

"More reason why you should go" Betty says sounding concerned.

"Fine I will just don't tell your brother" I say closing my eyes trying to get my vision straight.

"What's wrong" They ask.

"Nothing" I say opening my eyes only to still have a blurry sight.

"We are taking you to the doctor ayikho lento" Salizwa says standing up.

I try standing up but stagger almost falling.

"That's it I am calling Banzi" Betty says helping me to my seat.

.....

Lubanzi Mngadi.

I called Muzi and Nhlakanipho to meet at the safe house where Nsindiso was kept.

I had my suspicions about this man for a every long time but I couldn't exactly put my finger on it.

Turns out he had a hand in my siblings suddenly death and my shooting too.

To say this man is dangerous would be understatement.

I had one of my guys teach him a lesson we watched as the blind fold covering his got taken off.

He laughed till I couldn't take it and decided to teach him a lesson myself.

"That's enough bafo we need him alibew so he can talk" Muzi said pulling me off.

He lookes up and spat blood on the floor.

"Three against one now that's not fair" he said laughing.

"I will show you what's not fair" I said opening his mouth and using a plier to pull out his tooth.

"Banzi" Muzi shouted.

He screamed trying to get himself free till the chair he was on fell.

"You're lucky this chair fell" I said.

Muzi helped him up and looked at me.

"Start talking what do you want from me" I asked.

"And more specifically what do you want from Bayanda" Nhlaka asked.

"If it isn't Nhlakanipho Khumalo the man who is secretly in love with Bayanda" he said swallowing hard..

Muzi looked at me then at Nhlakanipho.

"Bafo what's he talking about" Muzi asked.

"Don't listen him he's a dead man walking" I said.

"Oh he knows and he hasn't killed you that's interesting" He said looking at Nhlaka then nodding his head.

"That's what you're good at right killing people" he said looking at me.

"Ngivumeleni ngibulale lenja" I said looking at both Nhlaka and Muzi.

"Is that what you said when you killed and dumped my sister's body" Nsindiso asked.

"Nomalanga Ntuli" he continued looking at me.

It all came to me this was Nomalanga's brother.

I thought about Sizwe we warned him about this girl but he never listened.

"I never killed your sister it was a mistake" I shouted.

"You were there when she died and you helped him dump her body in that park like she was an animal" he shouted back at me.

"Yey wena Banzi did nothing get that through your thick skull" Muzi said back slapping him.

"So much drama for a junkie that overdosed" Muzi said clucking his tongue.

"Let me tell you a story" Muzi said grabbing a chair.

"Your sister was a junkie and Sizwe fell in love her because he somehow thought she could be saved. But she couldn't the more love Sizwe showed her the more she stole from him and made him a fool.

Till she got mixed with the wrong crowd bought some messed up uncut snow and died in Sizwe's arms.

She killed herself because she didn't want to be saved no could save her not even her own family you failed your sister and messed with the wrong family trying to play hero" Muzi said opening his mouth going for another tooth pulling it out.

"You are one stupid man acting on impulse nc nc nc nc" Nhlakanipho said.

"I have a girl child and I have laid my hand on a woman before and I didn't kill your sister" I said.

"You killed my sister and brother all for nothing" Muzi said.

"Calm down Muzi" Nhlaka said.

"And he tried to kill Banzi ayife lenja" Muzi said taking out his gun.

"As of taking my sister away from me wasn't enough you took Bayanda too" he said.

"Now I have heard it all he's definitely crazy" Nhlakanipho said shaking his head.

"Does she even know the type of person you are huh a murderer" he asked.

I swallowed hard looking at him.

"Poor Bayanda she doesn't know that she's sleeping with dealer and a murderer" Nhlaka shut him up by putting a bullet on his knee.

"That's enough" he said.

He laughed out loud coughing blood.

"Oh but don't you worry she's going to find out who you really are and soon" he said before Muzi pulled the gun and shot him three times on the chest.

"That's for spilling Mngadi blood" he said putting another two on his skull.

"That's enough Dlokovu" I said.

"His people will come after us" Nhlakanipho said unbuttoning his shirt.

"And we will be read and waiting" I said looking at my bloodied hands.

"I will ask one of the guys to clean this up" Muzi said cussing.

"Now my favourite shoes are ruined" he said clucking his tongue.

I have been here with Nhlakanipho, his woman and Betty waiting for the doctor to come to us.

Betty called and told me that Bayanda passed out and was rushed to the hospital.

"She's going to be okay" Betty says.

Well that's what she's been saying since I got here.

The doctor approaches us and we all stand.

"How is she" I ask holding my breathe.

"She's okay but she's asleep" the doctor says looking at me.

"What's going on what's wrong with her" I ask.

"We still haven't found out what's wrong but we are running a few tests" the doctor says.

"Can we see her" Nhlakanipho asks looking at me.

"Yes" the doctor says.

I let them be leaving me with the doctor.

"Have you run those tests" I ask clearing my throat.

"Yes sir but we still need to draw some blood again" the doctor says. "I want you to also run a pregnancy test" I say.

"Sir we can't just take do that without her consent" the doctor says. "Do the pregnancy test" I say walking away.

I walk inside her room and find her still sleeping.

I kiss her forehead and settle next to her holding her hands.

She looks so peaceful sleeping I want to watch her all day.

"Today I killed a man and that made me realise just how much I am used to doing it it doesn't bother me much anymore" I say.

"I love you sthandwa sam and I would never hurt you in any way. I live for you Ndabezitha" I say kissing her hand.

I hope this gamble comes through I pray the test comes back positive.

#023

I woke up in the hospital with Banzi sleeping next to me one of the nurses told me he wouldn't leave my side.

And I haven't even been here for a long which makes me wonder what this man of mine would do without me, not that he would have too because I am not going anywhere.

You know when you love someone and you don't see yourself with anyone else but them.

When you love them so much that seeing them hurting hurts you, when you see a future with them and always pray to God that he he takes you first so you don't have to deal with the pain of living without them.

Thats what Banzi does to me his love alone soothes me.

His love breaks even those walls I have built and it scares me that he loves me with all my flaws.

How lucky can one get huh to be loved in such way.

I swear I am still going to love this man in even in the after life.

He left a while ago and soon after his mother walked in and my whole mood changed.

She made her way close and settled next to me beautiful as always.

"Ma I don't want to fight" I said sitting up straight

"Its okay you don't have to say anything please listen" she said clearing her throat.

"If you are here to insult me or tell me to stay away from your son then you're wasting your time because I am not dying" I said.

She laughed and for the first time ever I saw what drove Bab Mngadi crazy her beautiful smile.

"Trust me you dying means my life being miserable all over again" she said.

"And what's that supposed to mean" I asked looking at her.

She sighed and reached for my hand.

"Don't be scared I won't hurt you" She said when I tried to pull my ahbdw away.

"Unlike Phindile you are not a walkover and definitely not a yes mam woman and I love that about you. I saw how he looked at you a look I have never seen before and that scared me because I thought you would take him away from me.

I am sorry that I treated you badly when I first met you. I am sorry that I said all those hurtful words about you not being woman enough because you can't give my son kids.

But yesterday I saw something when he came home and cried in my arms.

Banzi doesn't cry and he barely talks to me about such things but yesterday he came to me and cried because he was scared" She said nodding her head.

"My son loves you so much and I won't stand in his way not anymore.

I know it will take time for us to build a relationship considering the things I did but I hope you forgive me" she said.

"And what about Phindile" I asked.

"I have been unfair on that poor child holding her back from finding happiness and I will make things right with her" she said standing up.

"I even apologise to your parents and I hope going forward you will see me as not just Banzi's mother the witch but your mother too" she said.

"Please get well" she said walking out.

I had to blink a few times and try pinch myself to make sure I wasn't dreaming.

Then my man walked in and I got a fright.

"Hey what wrong" Banzi asked.

"Your mother was just here" I said looking at him.

He nodded his head and made his way to my bed didn't even remove his shoes and just laid next to me.

"Don't take whatever she said to heart my mother is crazy" he said making me laugh.

"She was actually nice" I said looking at his feet.

"Don't start" he said raising his hand.

I was about to scold him but sold myself out by giving him the look.

"Now back to my mother that woman is never nice" he said.

I gave him a look.

"Okay that's a lie but she's never been nice to you" he said.

"Granted but she was genuine and she apologised" I said.

He put his hand on my forehead feeling my temperature.

"Are you sure the doctor didn't up your dose" he asked smiling.

"Sthandwa sam this is serious" I said gently hitting him on his chest.

"And how do you feel about her apology" he asked.

"I don't know she's your mother and I would like to have a relationship with her" I said.

"I love you muntu wam" he said giving me a kiss.

I looked at him and smiled tears welling up.

"Hayi yini manje" he asked.

"I love you" I said staring at his beautiful eyes.

"You know if there's one thing I know is that you're the best thing that's evert happened to me" he said.

"And I miss you" he said running his hand up my thigh.

"Banzi" I said giggling.

"Let me take care of the door" he said.

"Banzi don't even try it this is hospital" I said blushing.

"Is that supposed to mean anything" he asked.

"Yes we can't do it here" I said.

"That's not what you said when you were moaning my name in church" he said.

"Oh my you had to go there" I said tilting my head.

"You made me go there" he said biting his lip.

"Banzi don't be a rabbit myeni wam please" I said laughing.

"The more you laugh the more he grows" he said pointing at his crotch.

"I don't know what I am going to do with you" I said also biting my lip.

"Ngithengise ngoba awungifuni" he said making his way to me.

.....

Celiwe paced up and down her living room waiting for Bukhosi to come back home.

She was livid after Thandiwe showed her a picture Bayanda posted of Bukhosi

Zoe and of course Bayanda with the caption "My two greatest loves"

The picture was innocent but not in Celiwe's eyes the green eyed monster had clawed it's way into her heart.

Busani took Thandiwe to see Bayanda at the hospital living their mother alone and her wild thoughts.

Bukhosi made his way in and Celiwe stopped her pacing and looked at her husband.

This man who once had eyes for her and only her.

"Mkami" Bukhosi said.

"Is that all you're going to say after lying to me about how your day was" she said fuming making her way to Bukhosi.

"Lying" Bukhosi asked puzzled.

"Yes Bukhosi you spent your day with Bayanda and her mother, but when I asked where you were you lied and said the office" Celiwe shouted.

"I was at the office but left early to go see my daughter who's in the hospital remember I told you that she collapsed and was rushed to an emergency room. But you wouldn't remember because you don't care" Bukhosi said shouting back.

Celiwe was becoming a nightmare to live with she tried her best to hide her feelings of dislike for Bayanda but she couldn't.

Bukhosi saw right through her and it hurt knowing how his wife felt about his Gogga.

He even told Bayanda it wasn't necessary she moved in if she didn't want too, but the truth is Bukhosi wanted all his children under the same roof.

But he wouldn't be able to watch the politics and toxic relationships that would go on in his house.

"And what were you doing with Zoleka huh holding hands singing kumbaya" she asked.

"Zoe is Bayanda's mother get that through your head Celiwe" he said shaking his head.

"That's what you say now till you sleep with her" Celiwe said looking at Bukhosi's facial expression change.

"Are you sleeping with her Bukhosi" She asked looking at her husband.

Bukhosi couldn't believe his wife thought so little of him.

He loved Zoe but he would never cheat on his wife or make a fool out of her.

"You know today you sound just like her and these are some of the things that made me leave" Bukhosi said softly.

"Don't you compare me to that whore" Celiwe said trying to slap Bukhosi but he held her hand and drop it.

"Don't you ever try that again or you will find yourself out in the cold" Bukhosi said breathing heavily.

"I come home each and every night to you and no one else. I wake up next to you and not her.

My daughter did nothing to you but you can't even accommodate her in my house and I let that slide.

Busani wants to move out to live with his mother because of all the bickering you do.

I won't lose my kids because of you Celiwe if it comes down to me choosing between you and them.

Then it will definitely be them so don't try me uyangizwa"
Bukhosi said clucking his tongue.

"So that's how things are going to be f*cck what I want or feel"
she asked.

"Take it whoever you want" he said.

"And what about daughter huh don't you care about how she feels suddenly taking a backseat now that inkosazane is supposedly back from the dead" sje asked being spiteful.

"If you cared so much about our daughter you would know she's happy to have a big sister.

I spend more time with her than I do Bayanda because I don't want the same thing that happened to Bayanda to happen to her.

I want her to know that her father loves her and that I will always be there when she needs me.

I love both my daughter's and I haven't been neglecting anyone of them" He said.

And that was the truth Bukhosi loved all three of his children and Thandiwe never took a backseat.

"I am tired of telling and showing you the same thing over and over again because you don't want to see it. Your jealousy has blinded you to what's in front of you my love for you.

Stop competing with Bayanda she's a child and not her mother" Bukhosi said.

" That child has been through so much and I wasn't there, she's still going through a lot and as her father I want to be there and protect her" Bukhosi said.

"Your fear of losing me will push me away" he said walking away.

"Bukhosi I am sorry" Celiwe said running after him.

"That's all you have been saying lately and I am getting tired of it" he said looking at his crying wife.

"I promise to do better and to treat Bayanda like my own" she said upon realising her husband would choose all three of his kids over anything in this world.

"Don't say that because you fear me leaving you no one is forcing you to love her. I miss my wife the mother of my daughter my partner" he said.

"And you know what hurts the most is that you never ask about her not once" he said turning.

He closed the door and sat on the bed thinking about the past few weeks.

Always coming home to be questioned and shouted at just.

Thandiwe saw the crack between her parents but she hoped things would be okay as time went by.

He looked at their wedding pictures and smiled coming home wasn't easy because he knew he would face his past.

But he wasn't regretting anything just heartbroken his wife was changing.

.....

Lubanzi Mngadi

The doctor called me and said he had something to discuss with us.

I had a talk with the doctor before coming to see her.

Bayanda has been tapping her hand driving me crazy.

"Sthandwa sam will you stop" I say.

She looks at me and carries on then sighs.

"Ndabezitha please" I say.

"Why is he taking so long" she asks.

I look at her and only realise all the signs I just didn't notice.

"Ngidle ke seeing that you won't stop looking at me" she says.

"Do you know how beautiful you are when you're angry" I ask.

She laughs and hugs me.

The doctor walks in and looks at me.

"Doc how's everything" I ask..

"Everything is okay I had to make sure that all the results are accurate" he says looking at me.

"So you mean to tell me that even the other one is accurate" I ask.

I had to ask him to do all the tests again.

"I will give you a moment" the doctor says walking out.

"What's going on Mngadi am I sick huh" she asks.

"No" I say laughing.

"Then why are you crying" she asks placing her hand on my face.

I close my eyes letting out my breath.

"You're scaring me Lubanzi" she says softly.

I reach for the file the doctor left and go through the tests showing her the one that confirms the good news.

She reads the fine print and looks at me with a bored expression.

"Yini lokhu" she asks.

For a clever person this morning she's pretty slow.

"You are going to be a mother" I say.

She looks at me her mouth open and laughs softly.

"You do know that's impossible right" she says.

"Well in this case it's possible" I say.

Her heart rate goes up and she struggles to breathe causing the machine to go wild.

The doctor walks in followed by a nurse and try to sedate her.

"Don't" I say stopping the doctor.

"Sir she's struggling to breathe" the doctor says.

I look at her tears falling.

"Bayanda" I say softy.

"I can't breathe" she says running out of breath.

I put both my hands on her face and smile.

"Breathe" I say.

"I can't Banzi" she says grasping at me hands.

"Look at me breathe calm down" I say.

She slowly gets her breathing together but her tears still falling and smiles.

"You heard me right you're pregnant sthandwa sam. You are going to be a mother to my child" I say.

"Hayi Banzi musa ukudlala kanje" she says shaking her head.

"Tell her doc" I say.

"It's true you are three months pregnant and I ran the tests thrice to be sure" the doctor says.

She looks at herself and shakes her head.

"That's impossible I am not even showing" she says.

"That's because the baby doesn't have enough room to grow but with the right vitamins and regular doctor's appointments you will be fine" the doctor says.

"My history contradicts everything you have just said" she says her voice breaking.

"I have seen miracles happen and when your husband gave us your medical record history I had to call your doctor and double check" the doctor says.

If only the doctor knew she's not my wife yet.

"I think I should leave you alone" the doctor says walking out.

"Banzi you heard the doctor" she says placing her hand on her stomach..

"There's a baby" she says smiling.

"I am carrying your baby" she says letting out a soft laugh.

"I know" I say.

She looks at me and cries sobbing.

"Banzi let's pray" she says holding both my hands

I do as she says but keep my eyes open.

"There's so much I want to say and thank him for" she says.

I can tell she's overwhelmed and her tears won't stop.

"Ngiyabonga somandla angiphezi ukubonga umusa wakho namandla akho" she says opening her eyes looking at me.

"Tell me this isn't a dream" she says tilting her head.

"This is not a dream" I say kissing her forehead.

She lays on my chest and takes my hand placing it on her stomach.

#024

I spent three weeks in the hospital being monitored and all that after I collapsed.

I still don't believe that I am pregnant and expecting a child a whole human being with toes and fingers.

I can't wait to be a mother and give birth to my very own child.

Banzi didn't leave my side all the while I was in the hospital, I would wake up with him next to me and sleep with him still there reading on his tablet.

My last days in the hospital were something else I got home and the following weekend Banzi sent his uncles to pay Lobola.

I didn't think he was serious when he said he would but apparently he sent the latter weeks prior.

Just when I thought my day couldn't get any better my mother followed by Ncane came into my room and dressed me up for the biggest celebration.

Banzi and his family were there waiting to take me home with.

I was surprised to see the outside of my home and the family and friends who gathered there.

I didn't think he would go far as to plan our traditional wedding.

It was small, intimate and yet the most amazing gift ever given to me.

My brother and father did an amazing job in appeasing the ancestors and asking them to bless my union and the journey I was taking.

I was still in awe and the tears wouldn't stop flowing. I would have preferred to wear the heavy isidwaba but considering my condition my mother chose the less heavy one allowing me to dance the day away.

Banzi looked daring and appetising I couldn't take my eyes of him.

To say I love the man would be an understatement he's my soulmate the flames to my blazing fire.

I was taken to his family and introduced to his ancestors and welcomed to his home.

I won't forget the look he gave him or how he danced when his mother and aunts started rejoicing.

The rain started pouring in clear blue skies and Bab Mngadi senior cheered us to dance in the rain.

After a while it stopped and the sun shone bright like it never rained.

I looked at my husband and thanked the heavens for blessing me with him.

We moved in with his parents because he didn't want to leave me alone.

I tried telling him I am not sick just pregnant and he almost lost it.

I think the doctor scared him a bit, the doctor said this is a high risk pregnancy and I am not allowed to work.

I am not allowed to drive myself or without anyone and I can't get angry.

I still get the headaches but not severe as the first time and the doctor said with time I am going to be my normal self again.

But before we moved he held most of his meetings via skype and didn't go to the office just to take care of me, He cooked and took care of the house literally that's how hands on he was.

He bathed me and that led to most of our sex escapades satisfaction and Lord knows lately that's all I need, him and his cock.

And there were moments I looked at him and wondered why he chose me and the answer was simple he loves me and only me.

I wake up to the feel of Banzi's hand gliding up down my thigh and lifting it up a bit.

His warm hand locating my folds finding me wet and ready for him.

He chuckles knowing full well I could never resist his kisses and sensual touch.

He pushes his hard cock in and deeply exhales when inside my warm moist temple.

"Damn you are hot" he says.

His one hand moves to my sensitive breast and gently kneads them kissing my bare shoulder.

"Banzi" I moan his name as he gently thrusts in and out.

"Banzi don't stop" I say biting my lip.

His thick long cock has me arching my back wanting all of him to have him.

I can't scream out loud and he knows it but he uses his two of his fingers to build me up.

"I love you Bayanda" he says kissing my back.

"I love you Banzi" I say.

The door to our bedroom opens making Banzi pull out without even thinking twice.

"Banzi" I cry out.

I swear I was getting there one thrust and my slick juices would be flowing.

"Ma" he says grunting.

"I swear I didn't see anything" she says with a hand over her eyes.

"How many times must I tell you not to come into my room ufuna ukubona ini kahle kahle" he asks.

"Banzi I didn't come here for you I came for Bayanda" she says softly.

"Ma phuma" he says angrily.

"Okay but I came to tell Bayanda that her breakfast is ready" she says looking at me.

Lately Banzi doesn't exist in this house and only me and the baby seem to be visible.

"Morning ma" I say.

"Morning makoti please don't forget you need to take your meds" she says with a mischievous smile.

"I know ma" I say.

"Okay then umama uyanithanda niyezwa" I smile although a moment was taken away from me.

"As soon as I get things in order I am moving out of this house I would rather have Bayanda's mother live with us than to have you walk into my bedroom without knocking" Banzi says.

"I am sorry Banzi" his mother says.

This woman has been begging us not to move back to our place till the baby is born.

I think she loves having all her children under one roof Banzi leaving again scares her.

"Phuma ma and stay out" he says.

His mother goes out and Banzi sighs.

"Who does that" he asks sounding irritated.

"You are the one who asked her to take care of me even though my mother offered" I tell him.

"I would have taken her offer but considering your history I don't want old things resurfacing and upsetting you" he says.

I know he means well and his mother has been nothing but supportive but living with his parents is getting to us.

He peaks under the blankets and clicks his tongue getting out of bed.

"I can't enjoy some time with my wife because your mother in law knows nothing about boundaries" he says.

I pull his hand just as he about to head for the bathroom.

"Don't look at me like that Ndabezitha" he says teasingly.

"And what if I do" I ask daringly.

He moves closer and pulls my nightdress down to my waist cupping my breast.

He pinches both my nipples and quickly soothes them using his warm tongue.

I close my eyes to the feel of his tongue running up my chin and devouring my lips till swollen.

I let out a soft moan stroking his cock.

"Those hands sthandwa sam" he says.

"I want to go down on you Mngandi so bad I can't help it" I say.

"Easy Ndabezitha let me take care of you" he says moving his lips down my belly and staying there for a while.

"I put you there" he chuckles rubbing my belly while his hands part my thighs.

I feel the burning desire to have him inside but he won't give me that he just won't.

I know Banzi and he likes to take his time getting me there.

His lips leave wet kisses making their way to my warm folds making me lift my hips up.

His tongue dances making sweet love to my entrance then my clit.

My hands push his head deep inside as his eats me up and fills me up with his tongue my legs hanging over his broad shoulders.

"Banzi" I scream holding on to the pillow looking down.

His gaze meets mine and I see the love and fire he has for me.

"I love you" he says.

I know he does his actions speak louder than words can.

He puts in one finger and then slides in another curving and fucking me.

"Oh Banzi" I say breathing out heavily feeling the warmth in my womb about to ripple through me.

"You like this don't you" he says running his tongue over my anus causing me jerk up at the burning sensation to have him inside me.

He knows his tongue does magic.

"I can feel you creaming so bad" he says quickly removing his fingers then pounding me with his cock.

One thrust and I come undone screaming his name this unexplainable feeling tearing through me and rushing through my veins while he holds on to my thighs and slowly thrusts and strokes.

He chuckles with that glint of satisfaction in his eyes.

"I love you woman" he says releasing inside me with each load growling and digging into my thighs..

He collapses next to me and pulls me to his chest.

"I am tired" I admit.

Lately even simple chores seem to drain the life out of me.

"I will bring your food here so I can feed you" he says.

I look up and get a kiss.

.....

My mother came and took me out to lunch to my surprise Busani was there.

Him and mom have been getting along so well their bond has formed like he never left I guess that's what a mother's love does sometimes.

I am put on a strict diet but sometimes I do cheat just like today.

My mother looked beautiful as always and her bubbly personality coming out to play.

"So has your mother in law been treating you right" she asked sipping at her cocktail..

"She's a great help but she can get too much at time" I said shrugging my shoulders.

"Why has she been stirring up trouble again because if that's the case then I will deal with her" she said.

"Ma" Busani said shaking his head.

"You heard what the doctor said she's can't be stressed" Busani said looking at our mother..

This one has been spending more time with Betty than his sister.

"I heard that why do you think Banzi did take me up on my offer" she asked looking at me.

"How are you though" she asked reaching for my hand.

"I am okay mama a bit excited and nervous" I said honestly.

I bet being a first time mother can be scary.

"You don't have to be scared because you have us and your new family behind you" Ma said smiling.

"And I can't wait to be an uncle" Busani said.

"Did ma tell you about me wanting to move in with her" he asked.

I shook my head this was news to me.

"I still need to talk to your father about that" Ma protested.

"Ma I am grown man if I don't move in with you I am going to get my own place" Busani said.

There was no disagreeing with him just like my father..

"Won't your father think I am taking you away from him" she asked.

"Baba understands" My brother said.

"Speaking of baba what's going on between you two" I asked looking my mother.

"Nothing" she blushed and Busani cleared his throat.

"Mama what's going on" I asked.

"I want to ask your father to take me back" she said looking at us both.

"But why" I asked the past coming to me like strong tides.

I suddenly thought about the reason we never grew up together, how we were robbed of both parents and I came from a broken family.

"Because I love him and I miss him so much" she said.

I always knew she loved him and never forget him hell this woman kept a suit case of everything my father ever bought her.

All the pictures and memories they ever shared

She would shut her bedroom door pull it under the bed go through it and cry.

I pushed all that to the back of mind and looked at Busani who wasn't surprised but calm.

"I don't see anything wrong in that" Busani said.

Under all that calm demeanour I always suspected he wanted our parents back together. That little boy inside him still needed a mother just like I needed a father.

He needed a family and to him that meant having both his parents.

"But he is married" I said.

"So am I" she said.

I looked at her dumbfounded married to whom I thought.

"Your father and I never divorced and he married Celiwe traditionally" she said breathing heavily.

"I know you are worried about the past Bayanda but people change and I love your father" She said.

"What about Mam Celiwe" I asked.

If some woman from Banzi's past came and told what my mother was saying right now I would go crazy.

"Your father will talk to her he's the one married to her.

I am not saying he must leave her I would be a fool to even think that, your father loves her and that's something I will live with if he takes me back" she said softly.

"I don't know" I said shaking my head.

"Would you have a problem if I asked him to give us another chance whatever we do affects the both of you" she asked.

I looked at Busani and shook my head breathing heavily.

"Follow your heart mama and I pray all works out just don't get hurt" I said smiling.

I love my mother but this might end badly and she might lose it knowing my father doesn't feel the same anymore, or maybe he does I just don't know it.

.....

Lubanzi Mngadi.

His mother stood up after having placed Bayanda's food on the small table.

"She's beautiful" his mother said.

Lubanzi placed his hand on Bayanda's belly and sighed.

"We need this mama she needs this" Banzi said.

Acknowledging how much this meant to his wife.

"I know this is a miracle and I will make sure her pregnancy is the most pleasant one she'll have" his mother said honestly.

"I will take care of her don't worry" she said.

"Thank you mama for everything" Banzi said.

His mother had been amazing and strong through out this process.

She stood up and left the room leaving Banzi to watch a sleeping Bayanda.

He moved his fingers down her cheeks and smiled this woman was beautiful

sensual, warm and probably the most loving female creature he knew.

He couldn't believe that Bayanda even looked his way and he somehow managed to steal her heart.

His hands glided on her hands settling on her ring finger and a grin spread across his lips.

She saw no longer a Zulu but Mngadi and that made him want to scream to the whole world.

He wanted everyone to know that she was his and no one else.

He looked at her swollen lips and the hunger and desire to have right now consumed him again.

But he knew she wouldn't be able to take another wave rippling through her.

The innocence she had to her made him hard just thinking about it.

Not only did he love Bayanda but he was possessive and he would kill anyone who looked her way.

He realised that when he learnt about Nhlakanipho's true feelings.

Him and the man were starting to be more than acquaintances but friends, but still he couldn't take the thought of Nhlakanipho loving his wife out of his mind.

He saw the way he would look at her when no one was watching, or how he held her for way much longer than he should when consoling her.

How his eyes glistened with moist when they found out she was pregnant.

How protective and loving he was towards Bayanda drove him crazy.

He never knew he could love a woman like this, feel for a woman like this in a way he couldn't describe.

He was him because she was and that scared him.

Bayanda wasn't just his wife but his soul and life and he breathed because she walked this earth.

His father had warned him about loving a woman in such a way and he listened but Ndabezitha came like the strongest tide he had ever seen and washed him up.

People always said it was easier to swim but he learned that it was even easier to drown.

And so he was, drowning in Bayanda's warm folds, body and soul he didn't want any saving.

He couldn't wait to be a father and looked forward to holding him or her.

Bayanda made him sane and she made him feel and her love healed him and he couldn't let that go not in a million years.

After loving and bathing her he slipped out of the house and went past her favourite bakery and got her favourite jam filled pastry.

But on his way back home he saw these cute little tiny baby socks with a pink bow on the side and was immediately sold.

"Bayanda" he said softly kissing her nose bridge.

She was as delicate as a flower her skin smooth that of a baby's and her lips tender he couldn't resist touching her. He couldn't resist loving her being buried deep inside her.

She opened her eyes and her beautiful eyes looked at him.

Damn he was a lucky man and he was never letting her go.

"What" she said batting her eyes.

"You're are so beautiful Ndabezitha" he said kissing her.

She sat up straight and yawned smiling.

"What is it" she asked his gaze meeting her's

Banzi could watch this woman all the days of his life without ever getting tired.

"I bought you something" he said giving her the box tied with a white bow.

"Another gift Banzi" she asked her eyes lighting up.

He watched as she opened the box and tears welled up that's all she had been doing lately bawling her eyes out.

But Banzi wasn't going anywhere and he found these random moments and fiery moments to be beautiful and his hunger for his wife deepened.

Bayanda was worth it he knew it and so did Nhlakanipho.

"Dlokovu" she said looking at him.

"Oh baby they are so cute, daddy bought you some baby boots can't wait to see you wearing them" She said wrapping her arms around Banzi thanking him.

"You know you are the best thing that's ever happened to me" he said honestly.

"You are my forever Banzi" she said softly pulling her arms and looking at husband.

Banzi held her close to him and sighed Bayanda had been having a tough time with the pregnancy and he feared the worst happening to her.

"Ungowami Bayanda" he said as his heart beat close to his chest.

"Banzi what's wrong" She asked feeling how his body had suddenly tensed up.

"Nothing sthandwa sam" he said caressing her shoulder.

Bayanda knew something was amiss something was troubling her husband but when his word was final nothing would change his mind.

She placed her hand on his chest and sighed.

"Whatever is troubling you I know you will fix it and everything is going to be okay" she said softly.

He kissed her head inhaling her scent.

He knew the moment he held her hand outside that church that she was his destiny that their love was written in their past, present and after life.

And Bayanda knew the moment Banzi looked into her eyes and peace filled her heart that he was her redemption.

#025

It had been weeks and Banzi still couldn't understand what was going on with Bayanda.

The first thing that popped into his mind was that she was cheating and the one thought that broke him the most was the thought of her drinking again.

Everything seemed aloof nothing was okay his bubbly wife was gone and he couldn't understand what was eating her up.

He tried talking to her countless time but she closed off and pushed back.

This reminded him of the early days he met Bayanda, she didn't know peace and that tore him apart and there she was going down that road again.

He stood up from his chair when his father walked in and gave him a hug.

"You don't look okay" his father said looking at him.

He wanted to tell him the truth that he barely slept these days.

That his side of the bed was no longer warm and that's because Bayanda kept to her side of the bed.

"It's work baba" Banzi said softly.

His father could see the pain in his son's eyes he could see hurt and anger.

"I know that look Banzi" his father warned.

"Its nothing I can't handle" he said looking aside.

His father looked at him and sighed he knew this sudden change had to do with Bayanda.

Bab Mngadi loved Bayanda like his own daughter and he wouldn't want seeing her hurt.

But lately she wasn't herself and that worried everyone.

"Banzi what's going on with makoti she's not herself lately are you two fighting" he asked looking at Banzi.

Banzi lifted up his gaze and his father saw that look again.

"I don't know but something isn't right suddenly everything is turning upside down and I don't know what to do" he admitted.

"Try talking to her maybe it's the hormones" Bab Mngadi tried reasoning.

"She doesn't even bother answering me Baba, she looks at me walks away and I hate that" Banzi said said clenching his jaws.

"But I doubt she's cheating because that's what you're thinking right" his father said.

"That's the only thing that makes sense right now she's seeing someone else" Banzi said chuckling.

"And I am going to find that bastard and kill him nobody touches my wife and gets away with it" Banzi said looking at his father.

"Banzi don't get ahead of yourself please" his father warned.

"Ngenzeni baba can't you see this is driving me crazy. I am losing my wife and I don't know why because she won't talk to me" he said feeling defeated.

Hia father stood up and gave him a long look before breathing heavily.

"Maybe you should try talking to her mother she might help and please don't do anything you will regret" he said walking out.

Banzi took out his phone and dialled Muzi's number if there's one person you could be discrete then it was him.

"Bafo" Muzi said on the other end of the line.

"I need you to follow Bayanda and report all her movements to me" he said.

"I was wondering when you would ask" Muzi said.

"I don't have time for your games" Banzi said warning.

"Will you do it" he asked waiting for his brother's response.

"Consider it done Dlokovu" Muzi said hesitant.

Muzi didn't want to ask but he knew that Banzi suspected Bayanda of cheating.

....

Nhlakanipho took Bayanda out for breakfast with the hope of finding out why she stopped taking his phone calls.

Weeks passed and he hadn't heard from her which worried him.

Weeks didn't pass without them talking or checking up on each other and he wouldn't dare ask Banzi what was going on.

Bayanda wore a flowing dress with a headwrap that sculptured her beautiful face and showed her cheek bones.

She drank her green smoothie and looked up to find Nhlakanipho watching her.

"Nhlaka it's rude to stare" she said smiling.

"I can't seem to help it the last time I saw you wearing a headwrap like this was when you shaved your hair"

Nhlakanipho said remembering how Bayanda shaved all her hair in support of her mother's cancer journey.

"You know I am married right and it's only right I show respect to my inlaws" She said softly.

"Well then it suits you" Nhlaka said.

Bayanda was beautiful and this headwrap suited her perfectly.

"Thank you" she said casting her eyes down.

"Nhlaka do you want to say something" she asked looking up.

She could feel his eyes on her and for some reason today that made her edgy and uncomfortable.

Nhlakanipho cleared his throat and put down his coffee.

"You haven't been taking my calls" Nhlakanipho said softly.

"I have been busy Mntungwa" she snapped unintentionally.

Bayanda barely called him Mntungwa and that meant something was bothering her.

She sighed and looked at him shaking her head.

"I am sorry Nhlaka" she said softly reaching for his hand.

Nhlakanipho wanted to close his eyes and take in the feel of Bayanda's warm smooth feel.

"Then what's wrong" Nhlakanipho asked putting his hand over hers.

"Nothing is wrong Nhlakanipho all is well but this baby is slowing me down" She said smiling.

"Are you sure everything is okay Mazulu" Nhlaka asked titling his head.

Bayanda softly laughed and looked him straight in the eye and put her hand over his jaw smiling.

"You don't have to worry about me Nhlaka, Banzi is there so he can do all the worrying but you need to focus on Salizwa and make her happy" She said.

Nhlaka couldn't fight it he didn't want to fight it and so he closed his eyes at the feel of her hand against his jaw.

He could feel something wasn't right but she wasn't talking.

"I love you Bayanda" he said feeling moist reach his eyes.

"I know you do" she said smiling.

Nhlakanipho hoped these words would sound differently that she would realise he didn't mean them not only as a friend but so much more.

"You know I want you to know that I appreciate you and everything you do for me. You're amazing Nhlaka and Salizwa is

lucky to have you in her life you will make the best husband ever" Bayanda said withdrawing her hand.

"Now that we are past the sappy stuff what is going on with you" she asked seeing how Nhlaka looked for the first time she sat down.

Nhlakanipho laughed seeing the look Bayanda gave him.

"Hayi Nhlaka shave hau this is so not you I wonder how Salizwa kisses your unshaved self" she said laughing.

The truth is that not talking to her and not seeing her left him feeling like he had lost a limb.

"I will as soon as I get home" he said.

"I am sorry that I kept ignoring your calls but I promise it won't happen again, I don't want you dying okay" she said giving him a faint smile.

She was tired drained but for Nhlakanipho she kept and maintained a front.

Her phone rang and she looked at the screen and her smile faded Banzi was calling.

Nhlakanipho looked at her and wondered what was going on.

"Answer it I don't mind" Nhlaka said clearing his throat.

"It's okay they will call back if it's important" she said waving her hand for the waiter to come to their table.

"I should get home you look tired" Nhlaka said narrowing his eyes.

"I don't want to go home but if you want to leave then that's okay" she said shrugging her shoulders.

"It's okay I will stay" he said

.....

Bayanda jumped up frightened at the feel of someone's hand on her breast and only calmed down she saw Banzi next to her. She held on to her towel and looked at her husband getting out of bed.

"It's only me" Banzi assured her.

"I am sorry I must have been dreaming" she said lying.

"It's okay" Banzi said.

"I will get dressed then head down to eat" She said disappearing in the bathroom and locking the door behind her getting dressed.

Banzi tried opening the door and realised it was locked cussing under his breathe.

It had been days without touching her, feeling her or being inside her warmth.

It had been days without seeing her genuinely laugh or them spending time together.

Damit it had been days without seeing her naked or have her dress in front of him.

She clothed in winter clothes when sleeping and didn't want her husband touching her.

Banzi sat on the edge of the bed rubbing his hands together and running them over his head.

Muzi called and told him about her lunch with Nhlakanipho he even took pictures.

Banzi couldn't understand that Bayanda touched another man and that same man touched her back yet he wasn't allowed to touch her.

He felt his anger build up and stood up with the intention to knock that door down but heard the knob turned and the door opening.

"I thought you were downstairs" Bayanda said upon finding her husband still in their room..

She attempted walking past him but Banzi held her arm.

"Uyangilimaza Banzi" she said calmly.

He didn't even realise that his hold was tight.

"Are you sleeping with him" Banzi asked trying to be calm.

He couldn't keep quiet anymore this was eating him up tearing at him.

"What" Bayanda asked turning to look at her husband.

Shock and anger in her eyes she couldn't even hide it.

"Angizwa" She asked one more time.

"Ulala no Nhlakanipho yini" he asked clenching his jaws.

Bayanda's palm closed in on Banzi's cheek.

Her chest heaving and her nose flaring anger, pain and finally regret washing over her.

She had laid her hand on her

husband when she vowed she would never do that.

Banzi watched the same hand that hit him tremble and tears welling up in Bayanda's eyes.

"Nhlakanipho is my friend you should know better" she said swallowing hard.

"You keep to side of your bed

Advertisement

I haven't touched you in days and we haven't made love in days. You hide yourself each time you dress, we no longer take showers together and you avoid me each chance you get.

So God dammit Bayanda if you're not cheating or sleeping with another man then what's wrong" Banzi asked.

"I told you nothing is wrong with me" Bayanda shouted..

Banzi shut his eyes stumbling upon one thought he kept ignoring and pushing to back of his brain.

He moved closer closing the gap between them and trying to place his hand on her belly but stopped and looked her in the eye.

"Is this baby mine Bayanda" he asked feeling his own tears near.

"Phuma Banzi" she said calmly.

"Bayanda give me something I am going crazy here not knowing what to do" Banzi begged.

"I don't care how you damn feel just get the hell out of here and stay out" She shouted.

"Not until you tell me what's wrong" Banzi said.

She chuckled throwing her head back.

"Maybe being with you is getting to me, just maybe your love is what's suffocating me and driving me insane" she said running out of breath.

"You have insulted me Lubanzi now get out" she said pointing towards the door and seeing both her father and mother in law standing there.

"If you won't leave then I will maybe that will make you happy" she said going for her wardrobe.

"Bayanda" Banzi called out softly and she could feel the love his his raspy voice and the warmth it carried.

She turned and looked at him guilt eating away at her.

Was she ever going to survive this if it happened if were true.

She saw the pain in his eyes, the confusion and finally the love he had for her it was still there burning in all its glory.

"I love you" Banzi said with a faint smile.

He saw the raw pain she carried in her hazel eyes, her need to scream, the tiredness he missed all these other days and what shocked him the most was seeing his wife drowning.

That's the thing with both of them Bayanda could see way deep inside his soul and so could he. He could see his wife even when she tried fighting not to be seen.

When she fought hard enough people couldn't see or reach her but only Banzi could and right now he was seeing her.

He missed all the signs his wife was in pain and he missed it, his wife needed him and he missed it now that cut deeper than anything he knew.

"When last did you see the doctor" he asked looking at lips quiver, his heart in his throat and dropping to the pit of his stomach.

His parents had long excused themselves and only the two of them remained.

He made his way closer to her his tears fall.

She smiled back at Banzi and shook her head.

"Ngithe phuma Banzi" she pleaded.

"Whatever it is we've got this this I know we do" he said before walking out.

Bayanda crumbled to the floor and bit her fist screaming.

How was she to face this knowing what it did to her mother what it took from her mother

The scars it left in their lives but she held on to the fact that it could be nothing but a cist.

But who was she fooling she knew all the signs and they were there staring her in the eye.

She locked the door and looked at her at self in the mirror taking of her headwrap and a small chunk of hair with it.

#026

Bayanda sat in her bedroom thinking about the last few days and how each event unfolded.

Her mind knew better but her heart was denying every thing fighting it all with its might.

A part of her thought Banzi wouldn't come home but he did and he slept next to her like always.

Banzi was still sleeping when Bayanda woke up and watched him breathe in his sleeping and suddenly she realised this man would die for her but he would rather die than lose her.

He shook him up and planted a small kiss on his lips.

Banzi opened his eyes and saw his wife Smiling brightly it brought some sense of relief to him..

"Morning" Bayanda said still holding her smile.

And just then Banzi remembered the first morning he woke up next to her and Elton John's song was playing.

"Morning" he said sitting up straight.

"I am sorry" she said holding his hand and placing it on her belly.

Banzi could feel the baby move and that alone made him was thank the Lord for blessing them.

"The past few weeks were horrible and hard on you I am truly sorry for shutting you out and putting you through that" She said acknowledging the errors of her ways..

"I am taking a shower would you like to join me" she asked getting out of bed before he could ask an question.

She walked towards the bathroom leaving her clothes behind, this was an invite and Banzi was accepting it with all its perks.

He took off his own clothes and joined her already hard at the thought of touching her and feeling her soft smooth skin against his.

The shower was already running steamy and hot just like Bayanda loved it.

He noticed the shower cap on her head but didn't say anything.

He turned off the shower and took his time marvelling at his wife's beautiful body and didn't waste time kissing her.

Her lips on his and the way her tongue moved to his felt like coming home after a long while.

"I love you" Bayanda said as her husband's hands moved all over her body.

Banzi cupped her breast taking in each one in his mouth she winced in pain when and gently pulled away turning on the water back on.

Banzi could see the discomfort in her eyes and swiftly moved along down her pussy his fingers having their way with her

Banzi could hear those soft moans escape her mouth and her hands on his shoulders.

He could just come only by just seeing her climax and going over the edge.

He could feel her creaming and screaming his name..

Banzi went down on her having her one leg over his shoulder pushing and holding on to his head.

"Banzi" she screamed feeling herself lose control and giving in.

No matter how hard she fought she always have in when it came to her husband.

"I think we should take this to our bedroom" he said lifting her.

He wasn't taking any chances the shower floor was slippery as hell.

He placed her in their bed and continued going down on her giving her pleasure and stopped to lool at her flushed face.

She was intoxicating and anyone who looked her way found themselves drunk, every man who found himself in her midst wanted a piece of her to tame her and to break each and every wall she had built.

Banzi had done that and he wouldn't stop till her soul fully belonged to his.

He brushed the head of his thick cock on her entrance gently pushing in just the head and taking it out.

"Banzi please" she cried out.

Banzi pushed in the head drawing in his breathe because of her tightness and warm to the feel of his cock.

Bayanda pushed herself to Banzi's cock while Banzi gently pushed himself in and was finally in.

It felt like sweet heaven while thrusting and stroking inside her.

"I love you Ndabezitha" he murmured not knowing what do with himself.

He could feel the first spurt of semen come out as he went faster and faster till Bayanda screamed pulling the sheets.

He came groaning and growling after each spurt inside his wife.

He looked at Bayanda tired and drained panting and he knew he loved her with all of him.

He pulled out and noticed the redness on Bayanda's left breast.

He tried pushing this image at the back of his mind but lump he felt when cupping her breast came to mind.

Bayanda stood up and kissed him heading back for shower, it took a while but he followed behind and stood behind her scrubbing her back.

Tears streaming down his face he was defeated.

"I am tired Banzi" she said feeling him wrap his arms around her and moving them up to her breast feeling the golf size lump.

He couldn't say anything his throat was burning.

He rested his head on her back and silently cried.

Bayanda could feel the tension she could feel her husband's pain and it hurt her deeply

She turned and looked up at him cupping his face kissing his lip then walking out of the shower.

She wanted him to see because words also failed her she didn't know where to start.

How do you tell the person you love that it might be too late.

She dressed up in her dress and waited for Banzi to come out, when he did he was all dressed up.

He came to Bayanda and went down on his knees resting his head on her lap he couldn't find the right words.

"I know it hurts but everything is going to be okay" she lied.

She was scared not even sure of what she saying.

"I don't want you to leave me" he confessed.

That was the truth he couldn't imagine life without her.

Right now he was like a child crying in his mother's lap.

Bayanda loved that about Banzi when he was with her he could show her all his emotions.

Bayanda didn't believe in the "man don't cry nonsense" that the world kept preaching.

Banzi was a father, a brother, son and husband at home but to the world he was ruthless and that was fine with Bayanda because he knew the real Banzi.

"When did you find out" he finally asked.

"A few weeks back" she said.

Her doctor's appointments were going well till she felt a lump on her left side breast and things spiralled out of her control.

In a matter of weeks her life was turned upside down and she didn't know what to do.

"I will get you the best oncologist" he said looking up.

"I know you will" she said smiling.

The mood darkened things were going to be hard and Bayanda wasn't even sure Banzi would handle it.

Bayanda and Banzi sat in the doctor's office holding hands it was the hardest thing they had to do together.

The doctor closed his file and looked at them breathing heavily.

"I am glad you came back Mrs Mngadi

I know this is hard but with the right treatment you're going to be okay" the doctor said.

"So she's been here before" Banzi asked feeling betrayed.

Bayanda did this this without him didn't she trust him enough to share such important and sensitive information.

"Yes sir" the doctor said looking at Bayanda who had her hands over belly protectively.

Her mind was far away drifting to a place where she could think and seek peace.

"So what is wrong with her exactly I want all the details" Banzi said.

He knew it was cancer but he needed to be sure.

"As I told Mrs Mngani this is not a cyst as we suspected it is a lump and it's cancerous and progressing fast" the doctor said.

"If she doesn't start the chemo now before and after the her surgery I am afraid she might lose both breasts" the doctor said looking at Bayanda.

"What do you mean she needs chemo now and after" Banzi asked.

"Sir your wife has delayed things by not coming in when she was supposed to, her cancer is progressing very fast and we need to be aggressive with it if we want her to survive" the doctor said.

"So what now" Banzi asked.

"We start her on chemo and then surgery" the doctor said.

"And the baby" Banzi asked looking at the doctor.

The doctor looked at Bayanda standing up grabbing her bag she didn't want to hear any of it.

"Thank you so much for your time doctor" Bayanda said looking at her husband.

Banzi stood up and followed Bayanda this was too much for her and he could see it.

Bayanda was falling apart slowly he saw the cracks everyone of them.

....

They sat in their house Banzi stood up and poured himself a strong drink looking at his wife.

In a few hours Bayanda had turned into a total stranger and he was angry that she kept this from him.

"Weeks Bayanda" Banzi said chuckling.

"I am sorry Banzi" she said standing up.

Some days were better than most but today she was drained and she didn't want to fight with Banzi.

"Sorry" He laughed

"Bayanda you're selfish" he said shaking his head.

"I didn't know how to tell you" she said honestly.

"I am your husband Bayandal deserved to know" he shouted.

"I know and I am sorry Dlokovu" she said.

"What I am supposed to do with your sorry" he asked looking at her.

"Try and forgive me for keeping this to myself" she said.

"You kept this to yourself for so long Bayanda" he said feeling.

"You're right I am selfish for keeping this from you, from not saying anything to you while it ate away at me.

You are right I am selfish for trying to protect you from what I know could break or make us" she said nodding her head.

"Qhubeka Banzi engani mina I am selfish for having this killer thing spreading inside me. From trying to protect you from going through what I went through with my mother" she shouted back.

"I am the one who has to take chemo and go through a gruelling surgery and live with the scar.

I am the one who is going to be pumped some poison so it can be aggressive enough and get rid of the cancer.

I am the one who is going to be sick so bad I can't get out of bed because my whole body will be aching.

I am the one whose going to vomit whose hair is going to fall" she said shouting.

Banzi smashed the glass he was holding against the wall.

"You're right I am selfish for not wanting to put you through all that" she said wiping her tears.

"We can fight this do the chemo" Banzi said.

"Don't you get it Banzi if I do this stupid chemo then I lose my baby" she said shaking her head.

"I can't and I won't do that uyangizwa" she said biting her lip.

"If you want to do chemo then hamba wena mina angizingeni" she said settling down..

"This is my child Banzi my miracle please do ask me to do this" she pleaded.

Banzi held her against his chest as she cried bitterly holding on to his chest.

Why was this happening to them why was God giving them such a precious gift only to snatch it away again.

"I love you so much and I know you're strong we will get passed this" Banzi said kissing her head.

"Ngiyasaba Dlokovu" she said looking up her eyes wet with tears.

"It's okay sthandwa sam" Banzi said rocking her back and forth.

He let fall asleep in his arms and all he think off was why them, why was this happening now at the time where they were supposed to be happy.

Bayanda woke and found Banzi staring at her.

She knew he had been thinking and barely slept, she moved and went to Banzi's walk in closet and came out with his shaving kit.

In his spare time he was a barber and he was really good.

She took out her head wrap and gave him the machine.

"No" Banzi said shaking his head.

"It's already falling Banzi" she said in a soft voice.

She sat in front of the mirror tears streaming down and she breathed, it was starting and she was already losing a part of her.

Banzi plugged it in carefully shaving her hair till she was bald.

She hadn't even started the intense treatment yet her hair was falling and that broke Banzi.

"I've got you all the way" he said kissing her head.

She looked up and smiled she had her husband and she wasn't alone anymore, they were going to tackle this head on.

She still needed to tell her parents and her siblings but it would be more harder on her mother.

And her father was just a big softie and this was going to shatter him but having Banzi hold her hand was all she needed to keep going.

#027

Things were a mess and this this whole cancer thing was putting a huge strain on Bayanda and Banzi's marriage.

She had gone for her first chemo sessions and it did her worse than good, Banzi had to pull himself together for the sake of his wife and be strong.

With each session a part of her wasted away and she was becoming a shadow of herself.

Banzi left her with her Betty and headed out to meet Nhlakanipho.

He no longer went to the office and worked at home, he would do that till Bayanda was okay and he believed that she would be.

He sat across Nhlakanipho drinking his coffee and sighed.

"Women problem" Nhlakanipho said raising his eye brow.

"Something like that" Banzi said.

"Well I know you didn't call me here to look at me and sigh" Nhlakanipho said.

He was a straight talker at times and Banzi liked that about him.

They were no longer just acquaintances but friends and something more because they loved the same woman.

"It's Bayanda right" Nhlakanipho said bring Banzi out of his thoughts.

"She's not okay" Banzi said.

"Why what's wrong did something happen" Nhlakanipho asked with that blazing concern in his eyes.

"My wife is sick she has cancer" Banzi said swallowing hard.

This was harder to say and more harder to admit.

"That's impossible I was with just the other day and she was perfectly fine" Nhlakanipho said.

"She was putting up a front" Banzi said as he watched Nhlakanipho's eyes get teary.

Even if Banzi tried but he would never understand the love the man sitting across him had for Bayanda.

This love wasn't possessive like his .

"Her mother went through this Mngadi and she was never the same" Nhlakanipho said clearing his throat.

"I know and that's what scares me the most I might lose my wife Mntungwa" Banzi said feeling his heart rip.

He was faced with the thought of possibly losing his wife and child.

"She's strong so don't think like that" said although he knew the truth behind this killer disease and what it did to Bayanda and her mother.

"I don't think her body is strong enough to stand chemo now and after the surgery" Banzi admitted more to himself than to Nhlakanipho.

What happens if she get's cured and then it came back more aggressive than before. These are the thoughts that came to his mind and couldn't stop them.

"How do you it" Banzi asked.

"How have you been doing it" Nhlakanipho asked back he knew Banzi was holding back.

He knew men like Banzi and how they wouldn't hesitate starting a war especially if they felt threatened.

"Love" Banzi finally said.

Banzi loved Bayanda with everything in him and seeing her happy meant the world to him.

"Exactly that" Nhlakanipho said looking to the side.

"I think I need something stronger than this" Banzi said raising up his hand.

"Makes the two of us" Nhlakanipho said nodding his head.

"Can I come and see her" Nhlakanipho asked.

"I don't think that's a great idea she's fragile at the moment" Banzi said.

"I understand" Nhlakanipho said nodding his head.

.....

Zoleka sat in her lounge with Bukhosi sitting next to her. Bayanda couldn't tell her the news and asked her father to be the one to break the news to her.

At first she thought it was a bad joke distasteful and done completely all wrong.

Untill she saw how Bukhosi wasn't laughing or smiling.

She didn't want to be at home all she wanted was to be with her daughter.

She knew this journey

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walked it and almost didn't find her way back if it wasn't for her daughter.

Two weeks passed but Zoe didn't want to accept that her baby girl might not make it.

Bukhosi held her hand and wiped her tears.

"She's my baby Bukhosi" Zoe said.

"I know which gives me hope that she's going to fight it" Bukhosi said.

"And what if she doesn't, what happens if we lose her" she asked.

The thought of losing Bayanda broke her it scared her.

Despite all she's ever done Bayanda never left her side and she always stood by her mother.

"We won't lose her okay she has the best doctors" Bukhosi said.

"I know how she's feeling but I didn't think she would have to go through this, Bukho she's young and she's pregnant what about her child" Zoe asked.

Even with her tears falling she was beautiful as ever Bukhosi thought to himself.

He ran his fingers down her cheek and close his eyes.

He shouldn't but he wasn't stopping himself.

"I know you're scared but Gogga isn't going anywhere okay" he said pulling away and clearing his throat.

Zoe looked at him and swallowed hard this was the first time Bukhosi held like this since he came back.

She had long forgotten how his touch felt against her smooth skin.

"I should leave" Bukhosi said.

He knew that if he stayed a minute longer he wouldn't leave.

"Please don't" Zoe said holding his hand.

"I can't, you know I can't" He said fighting the urge to rip her clothes apart and take her.

"Bukho please stay the night I am begging you" she said leaning over to kiss him.

He wanted to fight but with every touch he lost the will to say anything.

He ran his hands up her thighs and breathed heavily as he took in her scent.

"I never stopped" Zoe said wrapping his arms around his neck.

"Don't do this to me Zoleka" He said cupping her breast.

.....

Lubanzi drove home after checking a few things in the office.

he got home and found Bayanda sleeping relieving her aunt of any duties.

He stayed next to her and held her hand before he got up and went to his study.

He sat and drank his cold beer thinking about Bayanda's smile he hadn't seen that in such a long time.

He need to see her laugh but this was killing her slowly.

He prayed to God just like he did when he needed a miracle.

He quickly got up from his chair and rushed to his bedroom when he heard Bayanda screaming.

He opened the door and found her on the floor crawling trying to reach the bathroom.

She had already thrown up and and as crying.

Banzi knelt down and picked her up heading for the bathroom so she could threw up.

She held her belly trying to catch her breath.

She looked at her husband and tears streamed down her face.

She was in pain and her whole body was aching.

"Kub'hlungu Banzi" she said breathing heavily.

"I know sthandwa sam kodwa kuzolunga" he said holding her.

She started shaking and breathing heavily.

"Bayanda" Banzi said lightly tapping her cheeks.

She was losing consciousness and Banzi knew it was something other than the pains.

"Bayanda stay with me" he pleaded when Bayanda's eyes started closing.

"Ndabezitha don't do this to me stay with me" he pleaded.

Her body started shaking so bad Banzi lifted her frail body and rushed out the door.

#028

The drive to the hospital was unbearable the thought of Bayanda taking her last breathe was killing him.

He held her so tight and prayed to God that she pulled through that she didn't close her eyes. That her tears would stop flowing meaning the pain was getting less intense.

Nhlakanipho was the one driving and Banzi was grateful that he was near the area when he called him.

He kept looking back at them as Banzi whispered in her ear and a smile showed up in her face.

They were in love and he knew it no matter what Bayanda only had space for one man in her heart.

"I love you Bayanda so much please fight this" Banzi whispered.

Bayanda opened her eyes and looked at her husband.

In as much pain as she was in she could feel Banzi's heart breaking.

She could see herself in him when her mother started getting worse and she had to rush her to the hospital.

This was a bad circle and she didn't even know if she could fight it,if she would come back and be there for those who love her.

"Promise me you won't do it Banzi just promise me" she said in a strained voice her tears making their way down.

Banzi shook his head this was difficult and he couldn't well he wouldn't make this promise.

"Banzi" Bayanda's voice was pleading..

She looked to her side and saw a glimpse of Nhlakanipho and smiled.

She wanted nothing but to seem strong in front of these two people who meant the world to her.

"Nhlaka" she said her eyes closing.

Nhlakanipho shut his eyes a tear falling as he quickly wiped it off.

"Mazulu" he said clearing his throat.

"Make him promise" Bayanda said shivering.

"Don't worry I will" Nhlakanipho said.

Silence filled the car and Banzi panicked this wasn't happening, Bayanda had gone quiet and wasn't responding to anything.

"Nhlakanipho step on that car" Banzi shouted.

He did step on the car although it was difficult being in the driver's seat.

This was an important task but he so desperately needed to be at the back holding her close to chest.

.....

Bukhosi kissed Zoleka as they came down the staircase and stopped on their tracks when they found Babalwa.

She was making her usually late evening hot chocolate, she looked at her sister then back at Bukhosi and sighed.

"Babalwa" Bukhosi said clearing his throat.

They were so taken by the moment they forgot people lived in this house.

"Baba ka Busani" Babalwa said.

"I will call you later" Bukhosi said kissing Zoe's cheek before he headed for the door.

A hot slap landed on Zoleka's cheek the very same one Bukhosi kissed.

"He's married" Babalwa hissed.

"Sisi please" Zoe said holding her cheek.

"I hope that was the first and the last time you got into bed because that man has a wife and a family" Babalwa said clicking her tongue.

She couldn't understand how her sister could think of getting frisky while her daughter was battling the biggest war in her life.

"You should be next to Bayanda holding her hand assuring her that all this is going to be okay and that it shall pass. But you're busy luring her father into your warm sheets hayi Zoleka" she reprimanded.

"I love Bukhosi and I want us to be a family again" Zoe said.

"What part of he has a wife don't you get huh or you want to be known as an adulterer and homewrecker again" her sister asked.

"You chose to cheat on him with his best friend and did far more worse to his kids,he might have given you great sex but that man will never forget what you did to him" her sister's words cut deep.

"He's still my husband" Zoe said softly.

"And the biggest mistake he did was not divorcing you,I pray that was comfort or closure sex and nothing more.

Stop what you doing before it blows up in your face and you're all alone with no Bukhosi or your kids because if you carry on like this you'll lose.

Celiwe will never let him go she would rather play dirty"
Babalwa said.

"I love you Zoleka and what you shared with Bukhosi was beautiful but you ruined it please don't tear his new family part" Babalwa said hoping she had gotten through to her.

"Stop chasing Bukhosi and start being a good mother"

A call came through and Zoleka got it on the second ring it was Busani.

"Mama" Busani said on the other end.

"Busani" Zoe said clearing her throat her sister had said a mouthful and she was still letting it all sink.

"Ma where are you" Busani asked.

"At home why? Is everything okay" she asked upon picking up on how different and cut up her son sounded.

"Okay I am on my way" Busani said.

"Busani I am not a child I am your mother so tell me what's going on" Zoe said.

"It's Bayanda Ma she's in the hospital" Busani said.

In that moment Zoe looked at the door opening and Bukhosi making his way in.

"We need to get to the hospital now" Bukhosi said looking at Babalwa.

"Bayanda is in the hospital" He said looking at Zoe who dropped her phone to the floor.

"Hold her Bukhosi" Babalwa said when she saw Zoe collapsing.

"Bukhosi why is this happening" Zoe asked as Bukhosi helped her to the chair.

"Let's not think too much about this let's just get to the hospital and find out what's going on" Bukhosi said looking at Babalwa who was ready to leave.

"Put on something warm it's cold outside" Bukhosi said to Zoe.

.....

Bayanda was taken by the nurses and rushed into the emergency room.

Banzi had called everyone and told them about Bayanda being taken to the hospital.

The hardest thing was telling his father that he didn't know if she was going to be okay.

The whole family was gathered here to offer their support hoping everything was going to be okay and the precious baby she was carrying was going to fight hard.

The whole corridor was silent with no one saying anything, Banzi was the only one pacing up and down waiting for the doctor to tell them something anything.

He rushed towards the doctor when he saw him approach.

"How is she" Banzi asked swallowing hard.

"Not looking good she's in a critical state and showing symptoms of having a mild stroke" The doctor said.

"No" her mother said looking at Bukhosi.

"How's that even possible" Banzi asked.

"Sir I will be blunt with you this pregnancy was and is a high risk one, the doctors warned Mrs Mngadi that she might need to terminate should the pregnancy affect her health" The doctor said not mincing his words.

"I don't understand, what are you saying" Banzi asked.

All this made his head spin it was too much.

"Your wife suffers from high blood pressure which has sky rocketed and is causing a lot of problems for both mother and child

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sir we need to do an emergency C-section now before its too late" The doctor said looking at everyone.

"You can't it's to early and the baby won't make it" Banzi said shaking his head.

He made a promise just before they took Bayanda that he wouldn't let them hurt her baby.

"Sir if we perform the surgery now that gives us a 50/50 chance to save both mother and son,all we need is your permission to go through with it" the doctor said.

A nurse came running towards them panicked and breathing heavily.

"We need to prep her now she's hemorrhaging" the nurse said.

"Sir if you don't decide now you I am going to lose both my patients please" the doctor pleaded.

Banzi looked at Bayanda's parents then his without saying anything.

"It's okay she'll understand" Bayanda's father said putting a hand over Banzi's shoulder.

"Do it but please save them both" Banzi said.

The doctor rushed away leaving them standing there with all hope lost the moment the nurse mentioned haemorrhage.

Banzi sank to his chair and sighed this was more difficult than he had hoped it would be.

The mother of his child was facing death and there was nothing he could do.

The love of his life was fighting for her life and still there was nothing he could nor say. He stopped praying when he realised no amount of prayer would make this go away.

"Luu" his mother said settling next to him.

He looked up facing his mother, this woman could tell her son was in pain and even if she offered him words of comfort his pain wouldn't go away.

"She's going to be okay" his mother said giving him a hug.

"And what about my son mama" he asked his voice chocking.

"Don't lose hope Lubanzi that girl is strong and that baby will fight hard to stay alive" she said.

The thought of losing her second grandchild broke her heart.

For the first time ever Banzi was really happy and the most beautiful thing of all was that he was having a child with the love of his life.

"I love you Lubanzi no matter what happens your father and I will be here" she said standing up.

Eight hours later and the doctor made his way to the whole family.

He looked at Banzi and with the time he had spent in this profession he knew a broken man when he saw one

The first thing he would say to Banzi would shatter him forever.

"How's my baby girl" Bukhosi asked holding a weak Zoe in his arms.

"We did all we could and prevented her from suffering any permanent internal damage including stroke" the doctor said.

"And the child" Muzi asked the one now question no one dared to ask.

"We did all we could but his lungs hadn't fully developed and he caught an infection, we couldn't save him in time I am truly sorry for your loss" the doctor said looking at Banzi.

"How's my wife doing" Banzi asked in a shaky voice.

"She's heavily sedated and is still in ICU" the doctor said bowing his head.

This meant they couldn't see her.

Banzi turned and looked at everyone.

"I think you should leave" he said.

"We can't leave you like this" His parents said.

"We are not leaving our daughter" Zoe said sharply.

"And all of you being here will wake her up is that what you're telling me" He asked.

"Will your presence wake her up or bring my son back" he asked.

"Banzi" his mother said softly.

"Let him be mama" Muzi said.

"None of you know the pain that I am feeling right now so please leave" he said.

"Ma I think he needs to be alone and we all need some sleep" Busani said nodding to his brother in law.

"I will stay with him" Bab' Mngadi said to his wife.

Everyone left and Banzi and his father remained behind.

"I need to see him" Banzi said looking at his father.

The older version of him nodded and led the way.

His father opened up the door leading to where his son was wrapped in a small hospital blanket.

"I will wait outside" His father said.

"Don't leave baba" Banzi said as he made his way closer to his son.

He stood there and looked down on the table where they put him.

Tiny he could fit in Banzi's big hands alone, his eyes shut and tiny hands tightly clasped forming a fist.

Banzi unwrapped him and tears streamed down his face.

He was a perfect little human being and he was going to grow up to be an honourable young man, and he would have surpassed Banzi to greater heights.

His tiny body cold and all Banzi wanted to do was breathe life into this tiny body even if it meant sacrificing his own life.

He wrapped him up and picked him up placing him on his chest.

He had to make a decision and now his son was dead.

"I am so sorry" Banzi said choking on his own tears.

He placed him down and looked at how perfect his son was, tiny as the little man was he saw himself in him and a bit of his mother.

He sank to the floor and sobbed like a child.

"Baba I killed my own son" he said.

This was the first time Bab' Mngadi saw his son weeping like a small boy.

"She will never forgive me baba" Banzi said thinking about Bayanda.

"My son is gone baba" he said looking up to see his father also crying.

"Qina Banzi, Bayanda needs you now more than ever" his father said trying to clear his throat.

"How do I bury my son baba tell me how" he asked.

"By becoming a father, husband and a man" Bab Mngadi said.

He took his son and held him again crying not growling but crying for the soul that left them without getting to know them, without getting to know his mother or the soft warm touch of her hands.

Bab Mngadi held him letting him cry.

A nurse walked in and saw the sight Banzi was in fighting her own tears.

"I am sorry to disturb you but we need to take him" the nurse said.

He watched as the nurse took him away from him and looked at his father.

"Ngizombukelwa ubani baba" he asked still looking at his father

Bab Mngadi tightened his face and breathed heavily this was going to be hard.

#029

Lubanzi.

I sat in the kitchen looking at nothing but space till I remembered the feeling of coming home to Bayanda. I remembered the warmth she brought to our home and how peaceful it was when started singing and laughing.

How she would come up with crazy theories about our neighbours and I would listen attentively at look at come alive.

I know she won't admit but she really misses being in the office and getting her hands dirty.

I drank the last of her gin and closed my eyes hoping maybe I would feel close to me somehow.

Being in the hospital and having to look at her in that way, I can't take it anymore.

Two weeks after her surgery she was scheduled to have another major one to remove all the cancerous tissue on her left breast.

Her doctor's decided it would be best they start treating her while she's under which is why she hasn't woken up.

I don't know if I can do this without her it's hard enough that I buried Nkazimuloyenkosi alone and she wasn't there.

That was the hardest thing I had to do and I don't wish to do it anymore.

I had to be strong for Omuhle who didn't even understand what was going on.

She kept asking if she would ever see her brother again, if Bayanda was going to wake up and I didn't have all the answers to her questions.

I stood up to get the door hoping that Muzi and to my surprise Phindile was standing in front door.

I moved aside allowing her to walk in and closed the door behind me.

"Mngadi" she said looking around the house.

"Maka Amahle" I said clearing my throat.

"This place looks like a pigsty" she said putting her bag down.

I looked at her as she started clearing things around cleaning.

"Phindile just stop because we both know this is not what you came here for" I said.

"I am trying to help that's all, with everything that's going on in your life you need someone" she said.

"You know what I don't have time for this please leave" I said walking towards the door.

"Why" She asked putting the dishes inside the dishwasher.

"Why what Phindile" I asked irritated.

"Why did you do it" she asked wiping the kitchen counter.

I looked at her and sighed, I knew very well what she was asking me.

"Because I had to" I said breathing heavily.

"You took a decision that had dire consequences" she had.

"Do you love her that much" she asked.

"More than you will ever know" I said.

I saw how her eyes widen to my admission.

"If that was me would you have taken the same decision" she asked softly.

"Phindile don't do this to yourself" I said.

"I just want to know baba ka Amahle" she said

"Phindile you won't understand even if you tried but you wouldn't be able to phantom what Bayanda and I have.

I exist because of her and I cease to also because of her.

She a part of me just like I am a part of her we complete each other something you and I never had" I told her.

"What went wrong between us,wasn't I good enough for you to give us another chance" she asked.

"We fell out of love Phindile kwamukele lokho" I said.

"And if I said I never stopped loving that I still want to be in your life Banzi,that Amahle deserves both parents in her life and that I am willing to give her that" I looked at her and shook my head.

"Phindile my wife is in the hospital and I don't know if she will wake up any time soon,so please respect yourself and leave my house before I throw you out" I said.

"You never loved me Banzi even though I was there and willing you just couldn't love me the way I needed you to" sje said nodding her head.

"Phindile I never stringed you along that was my mother's doing and you allowed her.

You knew very well that I was over you that I didn't love you anymore but chose to stick around,I will always be there for Amahle but I can't say the same about you.

Thank you for giving me such a beautiful daughter but that's all we will ever share" I said opening the door.

She took her bag and looked at me.

"I pray she wakes up and realises just how selfish you are" she said walking out.

I closed the door behind her clenched my jaws. People like Phindle are the ones that drag me to dark places.

....

Bayanda

I don't know for how long I have been out but my head hurts and my whole body aches.

I open my eyes and finally breathe out heavily swallowing hard.

I look around me and see my surrounding it finally dawns on me that I am in the hospital.

"You're awake" A nurse says running out.

I blink a few times trying to register my mind when I feel somethings not adding up.

I don't know when or why I got here I remember throwing up and and all else is blurry.

I notice an huge difference on my whole body,my belly a flat and my breast bandaged.

I start panicking when I place my hand on my belly and I don't feel my baby bump.

The door opens and the doctor walks in followed by two nurses.

"Where's my baby" I ask looking at the doctor.

"It's good to see you awake and talking" the doctor says.

"I don't care about all that where is my baby" I ask.

The doctor makes his way to me and checks me out.

"Awungizwa yini I want my baby" I say through gritted teeth.

The two nurses look at me then back at the doctor.

"Mam please calm down and let me explain" the doctor says.

"I don't want any of your explanations where's my husband" I ask looking around.

"Mam you had complication and we had to do an emergency operation your husband gave us the go ahead" the doctor says in a softer tone.

I shake my head and close my eyes these people aren't making sense and they are making me angry .

"Don't lie on my husband like that or I will sue you" I say breathing heavily.

"Mrs Mngadi you're still fragile and you're hurting yourself please calm down let call your husband" the nurse says.

"I will burn this mother f@cken hospital down if you don't bring my bring baby now" I scream.

"I think we should sedate her for the time being" the other nurse says.

"Touch me and I swear I sue this whole institution and you will never work anywhere else

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now bring me baby" I say clicking my tongue.

I feel this pain my lower abdomen and shake my head.

I feel it in my heart but it can't be true.

"Please don't do this I am begging you" I say when the two nurse hold me down.

"I just want my baby" I say letting the tears fall.

The doctor pushes in the syringe on my wrist and looks at me.

"This will calm you down" he says.

I shake my head tears falling.

"What did you do to my baby" I ask feeling my whole body relax.

"Just close your eyes and everything will be okay" he says.

.....

Lubanzi

I got a call from the hospital telling me that Bayanda woke up, after a month of not showing any signs of life she finally woke up.

I felt myself getting weak and emotional driving to the hospital.

I didn't know what to do or say and I still don't know what to say now as I am looking at her coming about

I have been here for hours waiting for her to wake up.

She opens her eyes and smiles when she sees me.

"Banzi" she says hurriedly.

"They took our baby and they cut me up" she says not moving her eyes from me.

The door opens and Nhlakanipho walks in with his hands inside his pockets.

She looks at me then at Nhlakanipho the back at me.

I called him here because I know she's going to need one of us.

"Sthandwa sam" I say holding her hand.

She looks at me like I am her shining armour, like I will wave a magic wand and everything will be okay but that not the case.

"You have been out of it for a whole month and a few weeks" I say.

"And the baby where's the baby Dlokovu, who's taking care of the baby" she asks smiling.

"When we brought you here you started having complications and I had to make hard decision" I say.

She nods her head and I don't think she's getting any of this.

"If I didn't I would have lost both of you" I say wiping my tears.

"Ngiyakuzwa konke lokho kodwa iphi ingane" she asks getting impatient.

"The doctor's couldn't save him I am so sorry" I say.

"No ..not my baby" she says with her lips quivering.

"He wasn't strong enough" I say.

"You promised Banzi" she shouts.

"I had to Bayanda" I say.

"Usuyahlanya wena just like these doctors"she says getting in denial mode.

"It's true they tried everything but it was already too late"
Nhlakanipho says clearing her throat.

She looks at us laughing and finally yelps and cries holding her chest.

"Banzi why" she asks.

"I am sorry" I say trying to touch her.

"Banzi no...no ..not our son " she says.

I look at her and wish I could take away her pain.

"You killed my baby,you killed our baby Banzi" she says shutting her eyes.

"Bayanda that's not true" Nhlakanipho says holding her.

"Why didn't you kill me instead huh,he did nothing to you Banzi he was just an innocent child. My baby and you killed him" she says.

I have never seen her crying like her this and not being able to hold tears me apart.

Hurt,pain and anger fill her eyes when she looks at me.

"Where is he" she asks with hiccups.

"We had to bury him" I say shutting my eyes.

She almost jumps at me but Nhlakanipho holds her.

"Yini ngikwenzeni yin' ndaba ungizwisa ubuhlungu ngengane yam" she screams.

"Where's my child Lubanzi I want my child" she shouts..

"He's gone Bayanda Nkazimuloyenkosi is gone okay"
Nhlakanipho says holding her.

"Oh kodwa Jesu ngoneni lengaka hawu kodwa ingane yam" I
put a hand over my mouth when she says that.

I didn't mean for things to be like this,I didn't mean to hurt her
in this way.

She shakes her head and tilts her head looking at me.

"I am his mother,I was supposed to hold him,hear his cries and
hold his hands and you took that away from" she says.

"I will never forgive you God knows I will never forgive you
Lubanzi" she says breaking down.

"My son is gone and I didn't even hold him" she says.

"You promised Banzi" she says.

The doctor walks in followed by a nurse.

"Sir you need to leave you're upsetting my patient" the doctor says.

"She's my wife and I need to be here" I say.

"I am afraid she needs to be sedated" the doctor says.

"No I don't want to sleep" she says looking me.

"Banzi" she calls out softly not looking at me.

I wish she would so she could my pain and sorry I am.

"Ndabezitha" I say clenching my jaws.

She closes her eyes and opens them breathing out heavily.

"You named him Nkazimulo" she asks.

I nod my head biting my lip.

"Was he beautiful" she asks biting her lip tears streaming down.

I take out a picture I took and place it next to her.

She takes the picture and breaks down holding it close to her chest.

"Nkazimulo wam" she says laughing through her tears.

"Oh my baby" she says looking at the picture.

The doctor looks at me then Nhlakanipho signalling us to step out.

We hear her screams when they sedate her.

"She's going to be okay" Nhlakanipho says.

"I don't know" I say.

That's the honest truth I don't she's going to be okay, I don't think we're going to be okay.

#030

I stood up and took my bag,I cried my sleep to sleep the past few days and if I made a scene I would get sedated.

I won't lie I think I sometimes made a scene just so the doctor could knock me out and I would drift to sleep.

I don't feel anything when I am asleep,the agony the pain and hurt just goes away and I reunite with my son.

I don't know what to say when I receive visitor's because nothing we say or do will bring back my baby.

I pleaded with the hospital hoping Banzi was lying and needed me to get better then he would give me my baby.

I was told that he was taken a few days after his dead.

Banzi buried my boy and I wasn't there,they ripped him out of my stomach and want me to understand why they did it.

Both my family and his came to visit me and I just looked at them without saying anything.

My father held me close to his chest and I realised this would have been me in a few years.

I would have held my son and told him all was going to be okay.

I wiped my tears when the door opened and MamCeliwe walked in.

I called her and asked if she could pick me up.

"Hello sisi" she said hugging me.

"I didn't think you would make it" I said breathing heavily.

"How could I not when you're going through something so painful" she said tilting her head.

"Let's go home" she said taking the bag.

"I am not going home,I am going to my apartment" I said.

"You need to be with family in such a time" I said.

"Ma I didn't call you here for counselling,I called you because I needed someone to drive me home" I said.

"If that's what you want then okay" she said getting the door.

I reached for Nkazimulo's pictures and held it close as if it was going to fly out of my hand.

The drive was quiet and very fast gospel was playing and with all these songs nothing shifted inside me.

I looked out the window and when we passed the park and I saw kids playing so carefree.

"This would have been you" I whispered.

"Sorry" MamCeliwe asked

I shook my head and looked to the road,we got to my place and she fixed me some food and then sat with me.

I could tell this would end with me crying and wanting to leap off the roof.

"I called you because you are basically a stranger to me and you don't care about me which is fine by me" I said clearing my throat.

I could tell those words hurt but this woman doesn't know me and never took the time to do so.

"Bayanda I care about you" she said.

"You are married to my father and I am just a constant reminder of what he shares with my mother" I told.

She swallowed hard and ran out of words.

"It's okay I don't hold grudges and quite frankly I don't care anymore,but thank you so much for getting from the hospital it means a lot" I said .

"I can stay if you want or maybe call your father" she offered.

I quickly shook my head and sighed.

"I would rather be offered some gin or whisky" I said with a straight face.

She shook her head and held my hand.

"No one deserves to go through what you are going through and I am sorry that it's happening to you. But alcohol won't help you in anyway please talk to someone" she said.

"Okay" I said nodding my head.

She stood up took her things and walks out.

I stood up and went to my bedroom, it's a good thing Busani would come over and water my plants the place is clean.

I remove my top and stare at myself in the mirror reaching for the gun I strapped under my dressing table.

Tears well up as my fingers trail both my scars, I chuckle till it turns into a loud sob and punch the mirror hurting myself.

One shot and all this would be over, I won't feel anything anymore not even the emptiness I have inside me.

I hold my breath and let it out when I feel see blood dripping from the side of my hand.

I look at the hand and the pain I feel seems to go well with the pain I feel inside.

I slump to the floor and close my eyes there and there wishing I wouldn't wake up.

I wake up to the feel of someone's fingers trailing my down on my cheek,I deeply inhale and the scent gives me an idea of the person next to me is.

I open my eyes and find Nhlakanipho just looking at me.

"Why" he asks.

I don't know what to say even though his voice is calm and gentle his eyes are different.

"Hey" I say trying to sit up straight.

The pain from my bandaged hand stings I wince.

"That's what you get for being irresponsible" he says.

"When did you get here" I ask looking around.

The shattered glass is gone,I have on Banzi's huge jersey and my hand is cleaned up.

"Thank you" I say.

He shakes his head and takes my hands.

"Why Bayanda why would do this to yourself " he asks gutted.

I feel my tears near.

"I don't know what to do with myself Mtungwa" I say honestly.

"Talk,do anything just don't go back to self harming" he begs.

"I didn't mean to" I say.

He brings me into a tight hug not letting go.

"You should have called I would have picked up from the hospital" he says.

"I wanted to be alone" I say.

He pills away and away and smiles.

"I am sorry" he says.

"I know you are" I say.

"I cooked and I want you to eat okay" he says.

"Nhlaka how is he" I ask.

I haven't seen Banzi since that day he told me about the baby. I couldn't face him didn't even know what to say to him

so I asked his mother to tell him not to visit again.

Banzi being himself he came the following day and he was escorted.

"He's not coping" He says.

I nod my head and look at this man in front of me.

He had been nothing but a godsend and I am grateful for having him in my life.

"I think I want to be alone now" I say.

"I don't want to leave you alone Baya it's not okay" he says.

I look at him straight in the eye and fake a smile.

"I am going to be fine and if I need anything I am going to call you" I say.

He kisses my forehead then cheek.

"Please call him, just call him okay he needs you" he says standing up.

"I took the gun" he says when I walk him to the door.

I want to laugh this man taught me so much, it surprises me that he thinks I would keep one steal in the house.

"I love you" he says.

"I love you Nhlaka" I say giving him a hug.

I close the door behind him and walk to the couch and notice a baby blankie on the floor.

I reach for it and sniff it closing my eyes.

"Oh Lord this hurts more than I thought it would, awusiye unkulunkulu wothando because of that were the case Nkazimulo would be here" I say standing up and heading for the fridge.

I pour myself a glass of wine and gulp it in one go, then go for the whole bottle till I am brought back by the loud bang on the door.

I almost drop the bottle and grasp at the blanket tight.

I must have dozed off there for a while, I stumble to door and open it up only to find Banzi standing there.

My heart races and I blink, I don't know if it's the alcohol or what but he looks different not the man I know.

"Ufunani" I find the courage to ask.

"Ndabezitha" he says.

"May I please come in" he asks.

I move out of the way allowing him to get inside.

I miss him so much but I can't even bring myself to look at him.

"I am sorry maka Nkazimulo please forgive me" he says making his way to me.

"He's gone Banzi my son is gone" I tell him.

"I know but I had to make a decision" he says.

"A decision that killed our child" I say.

"Bayanda" he calls out.

"You promised you wouldn't do it but you did" I shout.

"You do realise he was my son too and I had to bury him alone" he says.

"Is that supposed to make me feel better huh that he was your son too. Is that supposed to make me forget and make us okay because it won't happen" I say.

"Don't say that Bayanda we can get pass this" he says.

"I can't and I don't think I can Banzi" I say.

"Tell what do and I will do it" he says.

"There's nothing you can do Dlokovu and I don't think I can forgive you" I say wiping my tears.

"God knows I want to forgive you and forget but when I think about his tiny body being taken out of me,I can't think properly and what hurts the most is not knowing if he cried or not.

If he opened his eyes and looked for my face and yearned to hear my voice" I say.

"What am I supposed to do with all this love I have huh,I want to love him like I have always wanted to be loved.

growing up I didn't have it easy but this was my chance Banzi,the one think I longed for and it was taken away from me" I say.

"What hurts again is that you chose you over us" I say.

He wipes his tears and sniffs .

"He did cry and all he wanted was his mother" he says breaking down.

"I held his cold tiny body and cried because we had lost a part of us,I cried because I knew losing him mean losing you" he says.

"Ngiyaxolisa Mazulu" he says walking away.

"Mngadi senzeni lengaka" I ask softly.

He turns and swiftly brings me into his arms.

"I don't know" he says.

"I don't want to lose you Ayana" he says quietly.

"I am sorry" I say.

He goes quiet and the silence is soon filled with his cries.

I pull away and kiss him deeply running my hands over his head.

He doesn't look okay and hearing him cry breaks my heart.

"It's not your fault" I say.

He looks at me and shakes his head.

"It's hard Ndabezitha"he admits.

"I know but I am here and I am not going anywhere" I say.

He places his hand on my belly and swallows hard.

I know he's hurting and I would rather carry his pain than watch him suffer.

"You are a good father and I know you would have been an amazing one to Nkazimulo" I say.

He looks at me with both longing and desire.

His eyes blazing with need and his hands running down my hips.

I don't know how I got from wanting to kill him to needing him inside me.

He places me on the kitchen counter and pulls down my pants stroking his cock.

I pull him for a kiss parting my thighs, he pushes in the tip of cock having me gasp and grabbing his shoulder.

He fully pushes himself in filling me and having me scream his name.

" I love you" he whispers in my ear.

"I love you Mngadi" I say pushing myself to him.

"Harder Banzi" I say.

He moves his hands to my thighs and grips on them hard I feel the heat from the slight pain.

"Don't stop Banzi" I say

He thrust in faster and harder I can't hold my screams when his teeth graze on my tits and gently bite them, then soothing them with his tongue.

He pulls out and has me bending blowing cold air on my pussy.

I close my eyes when I feel his cock brush against my entrance and he pushes only the head taking it out and blowing some hair cooling me down from the burn sensation.

I haven't had sex in a while and it shows.

He pushes his two of his fingers inside me and bites my bare bare leaving marks.

I love every moment of this as it take me away from reality and into the arms of the man I love.

He bites my shoulder and takes out his two fingers and pushes in his dripping cock sending me through the roof.

He pounds on me not having an mercy.

I arch my back wishing this would go on for long, I bite my lip when he drops on top of me and groans filling with his semen.

He wraps his arms around me breathing heavily.

"Are you okay" he asks.

"I love you" I say.

"I swear I will make this right no matter how long it takes" he says.

"It won't happen over night Banzi" I say.

"I know" he says carrying me to the bedroom and running a shower for me.

I place my hand on his cheek having him close his eyes and resting on my hands.

"I missed you and I am sorry for shutting you out" I say kissing his lips.

He opens his eyes.

"What did I do to deserve you" he asks.

"You loved me when I didn't know such love exists and you are my redemption Lubanzi" I say softly.

He nods his head and gets inside with me having me rest my head in his chest.

#031

Lubanzi

Everything seemed to be fine, Bayanda was getting better and I was actually telling myself that she's going to be fine that we going to pull through from this.

I think having her take me back and forgiving me was the most amazing and biggest thing.

For the past few days she took care of everything and everyone around her and that made me realise just how strong of a wife I have in her.

I wasn't myself but because of her and will I am back to my old self and trying to help her too.

Things started to take a turn for the worst when I went back to work and thought she was coping.

I think deep down that's what I wanted to believe that she was getting better.

She refused to go to Nkazimulo's grave and she refused therapy and somehow she's been great with chemo, the doctor's assured us that she would be in the clear soon.

I am proud of her for not giving up but I also wish I could take away her pain and have her talk to me.

I sat on the couch with her father and watched her cook with the baby blanket beside her not leaning her side.

She looked happy and that's the case with her episode's, she's happy now and a whole different mood later altogether.

"She does this all the time" I said looking at her father.

To tell the truth if this man could he would feel everything on Bayanda's behalf.

He would take it all and still smile because that's how much he loves his daughter.

"I thought she was getting better" her said looking at me.

"I thought so too but it turns out she's gone back to sleeping in the nursery" I said deeply sighing.

"What is the doctor saying" he asked.

"That she's using all these things as coping mechanisms and if we don't do anything we might lose her to her thoughts" I said.

"That's my daughter right there and there's nothing I can do to help her" he said looking at me.

I sighed because I know I would feel the same if something happened to Amahle and she shut everyone out.

"How's her mother holding up" I asked.

"She's not coping a part of her is afraid all this is her fault and I don't think she knows how to deal with this. You see Zoe was so used to being taken care of by Bayanda that she doesn't know what to do" he said.

"She loves our kids I have seen that countless time,she's proven me wrong she's different from the woman I knew back in the day,but I don't think she knows how to be what Bayanda needs right now" he said.

I knew exactly what he was saying I have seen Bayanda's mother and not a day passes without her coming to see if her daughter is okay,if she needs anything and she sometimes cleans around the house.

But Bayanda needs a firm hand and her being her mother I don't think she know how to be that.

"I think she's afraid she might come across as the old Zoleka hence she hasn't pushed Bayanda to do anything" I said.

Her father looked at her and she smiled.

"You know it's rude to stare baba" she said sweetly.

I swear the reasons for loving her tripled.

"I can't help but look at my precious daughter the love of my life" He said.

"Don't let your other kids hear you" Bayanda said softly laughing.

Right in that beautiful moment she stopped and took the blanket mumbling to herself.

"See" I said looking at her father, we both stood up and followed her to the nursery.

She was seated on the rocking chair holding the blanket and happily whispering.

"Bayanda" her father called out.

She turned and looked at her father smiling I couldn't help but feel this warmth inside of me.

"He's so beautiful baba you have to see him" she said closing her eyes.

I saw her father close his own eyes and sigh.

"Tell him Banzi" she said.

"I will sthandwa sam" I said closing the door.

"I am losing my wife because of that nursery and tonight I am breaking it down" I said.

"Ndodana don't do anything hastily talk to her first or have a doctor come check her out, whatever the costs I will pay" he said.

"It's okay baba Bayanda is my wife" I said leading him back to the kitchen.

We sat there and talked about ways to get through to her.

The door opened and Bayanda's mother walked in.

I gave her the key to come and go as it suited her so she can take care of Bayanda.

I remember this one time this woman called hysterical over the fact that Bayanda wouldn't open the door.

She thought something was wrong and I had to come back from work to open the door.

We found her laying on the floor in the nursery not aware of anything that was happening around her.

"I am sorry I didn't know you had company" she said clearing her throat and putting some of the plastics she had on the counter.

She looked at Bukhosi and smiled then looked at me.

"How are you nyana" she asked.

"I am okay mama but Bayanda is having a rough day" I said.

"I will check up on her and make you some food" she said walking to the nursery.

"You still love her" I said chuckling.

Bukhosi looked at me and laughed.

"One day you will know treacherous the heart is and that the more you fight it the more it pushes on" he said pointing to his chest.

We both sighed and sat watching tv.

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I think having both her parents visit yesterday was really good for her

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she didn't sleep in that damned nursery and saved me the trouble of having to break everything down.

I kissed her cheek hoping she was still asleep but she wasn't.

She held my hand and pulled me close.

"I thought you were sleeping" I said softly.

It's funny how she can still look beautiful even when she wakes up.

"I was waiting for my morning kiss" she said opening her beautiful eyes.

"I love you Bayanda" I said.

She raised her eyebrows and smiled.

"I love you Lubanzi so much" she said sitting up straight.

"We are going to be okay however long it takes" I said.

"I am the luckiest woman in the world to have you as my husband" she said her lips touching mine.

I moved my hand to her breast and had her close her eyes.

"You are beautiful Ndabezitha, the most prettiest and delicate of them all" I whispered.

If there's anything I want her to know is that with all her scars she's still the most beautiful being my eyes have laid on.

"You're going to be late" she tried telling me.

"And it will all be worth it" I said sliding my hand inside her pyjamas pants.

She pulled away and smiled then throwing herself at me.

I wrapped my hands around her waist and breathed heavily.

God I love this woman and I pray she heals and let's go.

"I will never leave you" I said.

"I know you won't Dlokovu" she said her breath hitting my neck.

"Daydreaming I see" Nhlaka said bringing me out of my thoughts.

I stood up and chuckled this old bastard has been nothing but supportive, I am starting to think we're related.

And I am glad that he and Muzi are getting along although my brother doesn't understand how I would be this calm around this man.

But the thing is I know that if something happens to me Bayanda will always be taken care of.

She will be loved, worshipped and never want for anything.

"I was thinking about my wife" I said.

This morning was bliss and it's what every man should get before heading for work.

"And how is she doing" Nhlaka asked.

"Apart from missing you she's okay" I said.

"I will come by once everything is settled and the last shipment is handled" he said.

I have been so occupied with work and home my other business interest took a back seat.

"I thought Muzi was handling the shipment" I asked.

"He's preoccupied that one" Nhlaka said shrugging his shoulders.

"With what" I asked.

Muzi better not drop the ball on this one.

"Woman stuff" he said looking at me.

"You must be kidding me does he know how much that shipment is huh,if this falls through I am holding him liable" I said.

"Relax Muzi is on the ball and this deal won't fall through and I will make sure of it" Nhlaka said.

"Now go back to day dreaming while I go take care of business" he said walking out.

I promised myself that this is the last weapon shipment and after that I am out of this game.

I can't be on the lookout for enemies when I have a family that's just suicide and I won't put Bayanda through that.

I received a call from the security at the house telling me I needed to get home.

No one goes inside the house beside family meaning something was wrong.

I drove home and the moment I pulled over a police van also made its way in

I stepped out of my car and so did the police officers with a young woman.

"Officers may I help you" I asked looking at the young lady who was with them.

Her eyes a bit swollen and red clearly indicating she was crying.

"Are you Lubanzi Mngandi sir" one of the officer's asked.

I nodded my head.

"Is your wife home" the other officer asked.

I slowly nodded and asked what's going.

"Sir we believe your wife kidnapped this lady's baby" the first officer said.

"What" I asked.

"My wife would never do that" I said looking at security and the house maid.

With their silence I knew something was wrong and walked inside the house.

I believe my heart broke in two when I found her sleeping in our bedroom with the baby safely tucked in her arms.

I carefully took the baby and walked outside.

"Xolani" the young lady said taking her baby.

"We need to take her in for questioning" the officer's said.

"I am not pressing any charges I know sis Bayanda and what she's going through,I would never do that to her" the lady said.

"Very well then" the police officers said taking their leave.

I was still shocked to say anything this was escalating further than I thought it would.

I asked one of the maids to prepare something and bring it to my bedroom.

I sat next to Bayanda and watched how her lips pouted and how she breathed heavily in her sleep like she had been crying.

She must have had a long day and beside she's always been a heavy sleeper.

I ran my fingers down her plump cheeks and sighed.

"What have I done" I whispered.

She opened her eyes and her smile faded.

"I took him back" I said.

she slowly nodded her head casting her eyes down.

"I am sorry" she said.

"No don't say that" I said.

"I stole someone's baby" she said realising the massive dire action she took.

"I wanted him Banzi I needed him so bad" she said shaking her head.

"We both did" I said nodding my head.

"And then he was gone" she said biting her lower lip.

"You need to heal Sthandwa sam and we need to visit Nkazimulo's grave" I said softly.

"I can't Mngadi if I do that then I am forgetting my son and I don't want that" she said swallowing.

"We are not forgetting him I just want you to get closure" I said.

She shook her head and breathed heavily.

"Everytime I close my eyes I see him and he's so beautiful Banzi. I hear his voice and that's all I want to be with my baby" She said.

"I don't want to let him go" she said smiling.

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A few weeks later.

Bayanda still refused to go to Nkazimulo's grave and I think that's partly why she's like this.

I walked to the nursery and found her cradling the baby blanket talking to it as if it were a baby.

This has been going on for days and I was advised that seeing that her medication wasn't helping, I needed to have her admitted at an institution.

I don't know how she got that gun next to her but here it is on her lap.

"Bayanda" I said.

She looked at me and smiled, Bayanda woke up one day and convinced herself that none of the past months happened.

"Stay away from me" she said sternly.

I stood by the door and watched her baby talk the blanket.

"Your daddy doesn't believe that you're here" she said laughing.

"You look like your grandfather and you should know he's an amazing man" she said.

"One day you're going to grow up and be great just like daddy" she said rocking herself with the chair.

"Bayanda he's gone" I said.

"He's not can't you see he's right here" she said standing up showing me the blanket.

I snatched it out of her hold and threw it on the floor and shook her back to the land of the living.

"Our son died okay he's dead and he's never coming back" She pushed me and started hitting my chest.

"You're a liar Banzi" she said not stopping.

I took the bat I had placed behind the door and started destroying the baby cot.

That infuriated her even more because she tried pushing me and hitting me.

I sank to the floor and so did she.

"I want you out of my house Banzi" she said grabbing the blanket and drifting to her own world again.

I don't remember the last time she took a proper bath or comb her hair or changed into clean clothes.

I stepped out and called both our parents.

They arrived an hour later after my call.

Both my mother and her mother walked inside the cursed nursery and saw the mess I created.

"I think it's time" I said looking at my father.

"You are doing the right thing" my father said.

"I will make the call" her father said.

I watched my mother comb her hair while her mother helped put on her shoes.

"You look so pretty" her mother said.

"Just like my baby boy" Bayanda said smiling.

"Just like your baby boy" Her mother said bringing her into a tight hug.

"I love you so much" she said.

"I love too mama" Bayanda said.

They left the room leaving us alone and mama managed to take her gun.

I guess that's what you get for marrying someone who's highly skilled and trained to handle a pistol.

I sat next to her and held her close to me.

"I love you" I whispered the thought of letting her go killing me.

Two nurses walked in and I nodded my head.

She jerked up and tried standing up but I held her down.

"Do you trust me" I asked.

"Mngadi what's going" she asked softly.

Her eyes glistening with tears and fear searching my soul.

She nodded her head tears streaming down.

"I am losing you aren't you" she said shaking her head.

"You're not losing me okay,I will be here with you every step of the way" I said kissing her forehead.

"Ngiyasaba Banzi,I feel like am going crazy and the only thing keeping me sane is sleep" she said holding me tight.

"I can't do this" I said shaking my head.

She held my hand and kissed its palm resting easy on it.

"Ngiyakuthanda Dlokovu uwena kuphela ubambolwam" she said looking up.

Her father nodded and one of the nurses injected her calming her down.

"It had to be done Banzi"Her father said.

#032

Bayanda.

Life doesn't always pan out the way we want it too and that's what I learnt in these past two months that I have been here.

I wasn't ready to let go of my son and even when the doctors told me the first step to healing was to accept and deal with it. A few weeks into this institution I was like the walking dead, I wasn't speaking nor eating and all I could see was my son fading and walking away from me each day.

I swear that killed me every time I would close my eyes I would see him alm happy and in my arms and I would wake up he would be gone.

Lubanzi asked to take me for the weekend and he drove us home well his home and then took me to Nkazi's grave.

I felt my knees weakening and my heart pumping I could barely breathe.

My son was all alone in that small grave cold and being maggots and termites food.

I fell right to ground and wailed as I realised I was a mother and in a few hours all that was taken away from me.

I stay next to his grave and sang to him and talked to him while Lubanzi held me close to his chest.

I was hurting because we were there because he broke his promise.

I don't blame him for what happened I blame myself for not being strong enough to carry our son.

I blame myself for allowing all the negativity to get to me and causing dire consequences to my health.

After all that crying a part of me was at peace and I could feel something calming down inside of me.

I wasn't okay but I was getting there and my husband was next to me holding my hand.

We spent the weekend together and we made love but I had to get back to those high white walls and get better.

I must say things haven't been that bad, Everyone is here because they are facing their own demons and some are drowning in them deeply I doubt they will ever come back.

Some people are here because they lost everything and some because lost love ones and they didn't see themselves going on with life.

I was given a journal to jot down everything I felt inside me and all that I wished to say.

That was part of my healing, I know I wouldn't have done this without Lubanzi and his love and support.

My family has been great and my dad has been my hero all over again.

I was sitting in the garden when a doctor walked towards me and sat next to me.

"Ayana" she said smiling.

This woman pushed and pushed till I broke and told her all my deepest and darkest secrets.

She's white and whenever she smiles her eyes wrinkle in the corner making her blue eyes more beautiful as ever.

She knows my fears including things I haven't told Lubanzi.

"Lisa" I said looking at her.

"You are going home in three days" she said in her happiest voice.

"I know" I said shrugging my shoulders.

"And you're not excited as I thought you would be" she said holding my hand.

Truth is I have been here for so long I don't think I can cope on the outside, I am afraid I might relapse and go back to that dark place.

When I got here the doctor diagnosed me with severe depression and hallucination and it was tough knowing that I was going crazy.

I literally felt myself going crazy and this woman was patient all the way.

"Can't I stay a bit longer I don't think I can do this" I said shaking my head.

"You are strong and trust me when I say you can do this" she said smiling.

"Out of all my patients you were the most difficult to understand because you still had unfinished business with your past, and when you worked through that it was easier for me to see that you're an amazing person and that life just wasn't kind" she said.

"Remember all the techniques I taught you and if you ever need anything I am a phone call away" she said.

"Thank you Lisa for everything" I said nodding my head.

She remained quiet and looked at me breathing heavily.

"Have you told him yet" she asked tilting her head.

I shook my head giving her a wary smile.

"Ayana you have to tell him" she said in a pleading voice.

"Lisa this is hard for me too keeping it away from him but I feel like I have too" I said.

"But he deserves to know the truth he's your husband and I can tell he loves you so much" she said looking at me.

"I will when the time is right" I said smiling

She stood up and smiled.

"In all my years living on this earth I learnt that woman go through the most hardships and that the greatest sacrifices we make,we make for our children.

I really hope you change your mind and really tell him how you feel" she said walking.

"Lisa" I called out.

She turned and looked at me.

"You're not that bad" I said laughing.

.....

Lubanzi.

I sat across my father excited that my wife is coming home in a few days.

I don't know how I did it but I managed to stay strong and wait for her.

Not a day went by without me visiting her and I would see a different person, one day she would want to see me and the next she would want nothing to do with me.

These past months have been nothing but hell going on with life without her and waking up to an empty bed.

I could have sworn there were days I went crazy and all I wanted to do was walk inside that place and get her.

All I wanted was for her to be home with me right next to me where she belonged.

"You must be happy that Bayanda is coming home" Baba said looking at me.

"I have been waiting for this day I can't believe it's finally here" I said.

"Banzi I am your father and I need to tell you the truth at all times" he said.

I cleared my throat and sat up straight paying all my attention to him.

"I know you love Bayanda but she's been through a lot and I don't think she's the same person she was before the cancer or the baby" he said.

I shook my head

" Hell baba I know that and it scares me but all she's my wife and she's better now" I said.

"Language Lubanzi" he said warning me.

"I know she blames me although she won't say it but I see that look in her eyes

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she tries to hide baba but I know my wife and she still blames me for losing Nkazi" I said.

"Then give her time allow her to be herself without you,let this be on her terms" he said.

"If I let her be baba then she'll think I am giving up on her,that I don't care which is not true" I said.

"Don't expect to much to soon she might just shut down and we don't want that" he said.

"She's good for you and somehow you are good for her" he said.

"I love her baba and she's one of the strongest people I know" I said.

"I know that you love her and I have seen her strength to hold it together, but when she realised you were the one who made that fatal decision and broke her promise she stopped being strong, her will and strength to fight left her because she would never fight against you" he said.

I shut my eyes tightening my face.

"Think about what I said and give her time to come back to you" he said.

I shook my head how can my own father say that knowing how I feel about that woman.

knowing how hard it was to cope without her.

.....

Bayanda

I called Nhlakanipho and asked him to come see me.

I asked one of the nurses to organise the private garden and for us not to be disturbed.

He joined me a few hours after I had made the call and I swear Banzi and him get more handsome with time.

He looks at me and tilts his head and smiles.

He knows me not better than Banzi but he knows me and I think that's why I called him.

"Something is bothering you" He says.

"Can't I call without anything being wrong" I ask.

He laughs and shakes his head.

"Times travel Bayanda but I would still like to believe I know you" he says standing up.

"Beautiful place you wouldn't say it's a nut case place" he says.

"Says the guy who can't keep away" I say.

"Your husband wouldn't let me stay away so I had no choice but to come" he says.

"We both know that's a lie" I say.

"Fine" he grunts then laughs.

"I could never stay away even if I wanted " he says.

I get on my feet and stand next to him looking at the sun going down.

No visitors are allowed after visiting time but I made a plan.

He looks at me and narrows his eyes.

"I can't read you Bayanda" he says like that's a crime.

I reach inside my pockets taking out an envelope handing it to him.

"What's this some kind of a goodbye letter" he asks laughing.

"I am leaving Nhlaka and I need you to give that to Lubanzi" I say.

He abruptly shakes his head and shoves the letter back in my hands.

"I am not going to do that because you're not leaving" he says.

"But I am" I say.

"Bayanda you can't do that" he says.

"I have to leave for your sake and sanity" I say.

"And what about Banzi huh are just going to leave him like that" he asks.

I fight the tears and nod.

"Well I am not going to play errand boy, you are going to tell him yourself that after waiting this long for you to come you're leaving him. You are going to break his heart not me" he shouts.

"I can't believe you Bayanda you're actually running away" he says.

"You can't leave me" he says.

"I would be a fool not to realise that you don't just love me as a friend but more than that" I say.

His eyes widen.

"I know" I say.

"And I know that you love Banzi too and that you're going to be there for him, he's going to be okay" I say.

"He's not going to be okay Bayanda and you know that" he says.

I close the gap between us and put both my hands on his face.

"I am pregnant Nhlaka" I tell him.

He laughs letting his tears fall.

"You're pregnant" he says.

I nod my head smiling.

"Then you need to tell him he's going to be so happy" he says.

I have thought about telling Banzi so many times but I can't.

"I can't" I say.

"Why" he asks.

"Because I fear that we might be put in the same situation and Banzi would still make the same decision. I fear hating him if anything happens and I don't want that. I love him so much that it would kill me to have him be in that position ever again. We both know that cancer in remission just means that cancer laying low" I say.

"You don't know that" he says.

"I have made up my mind Nhlakanipho and maybe one day he will forgive me" I say.

"You going to kill him" he says.

"That's why I need you to be there for him" I say.

I give him a hug and breathe heavily.

"How far along are you" he asks.

"A few months" I say.

Coming here I was already pregnant but I didn't know till Lisa had me do blood tests, because the medication wasn't treating me right and I would throw up after every meal.

#033

I packed my bags and looked around with my father inlaw standing not to far from me.

I couldn't ask my fathert nor my brother for I know that would have shattered them.

Knowing my father he would have talked me out of doing this or better yet demanded that we leave together.

I don't want to put anyone's life on hold including my mother's hence I didn't tell them about my plans.

This will be difficult for everyone and I know they will hate me but eventuall with time they will forgive me.

I don't about Banzi knowing him he won't rest till he finds me and he will destroy everything that is in his path.

I do love so much but I need time away from everything and I believe going away will be better for everyone.

This place has been my home for the couples of months that I was here,although I never took time to make close friends but I met beautiful souls.

Lisa being one of them today I take with me her teachings and techniques not forgetting her love and support.

I breathe heavily one more and settle down on the bed, there were times I didn't see myself leaving this place truthfully.

I was broken and clouded by so many things I didn't want to be better and now that I am, I don't know what to do with myself.

I know I should be happy going home to your love ones is huge, except I am not going home and I won't see my husband.

I know this is selfish and heartless on my part but I just can't stay.

Banzi's father clears his throat taking a sit next to me.

"We should leave" he says.

I look at him and smile Bab' Mngadi could have told me to go jump off a cliff and told his son the truth but he didn't and he hasn't.

"Baba why does it hurt so much" I ask fighting my tears.

I feel like backing off and aborting this whole mission but everything is set.

"Because you are leaving home and the people you love" he says holding my hand.

I give him the baby scan and watch as a huge smile spread across his face.

He's the one who's been present in all my doctor's appointment.

"She's growing" he says.

"She" I say.

"I have a feeling it's a girl this time" he says bringing me into a hug.

"Bayanda I know I said I wouldn't fight you but this is madness" he says looking at me.

"We both know Banzi did kill the baby he took a decision he thought would save you both, he didn't want to do it because he made a promise to you. But when you weren't responding the doctor's needed him to make the toughest decision he had ever taken in his life" he says.

I nod my head because I know all this Banzi sat me down and told me everything .

"I know baba I really do in my mind and soul I know but in my heart that's where the problem lies" I say honestly.

"The very same heart that loves him" he says.

"Yes and that is what makes all this difficult because I love him so much more than anything" I say wiping my tears.

"I want this child to grow up with two parents but I can't give him/she that at this moment" I say.

he nods his head and stands up.

"I think we should go now before someone sees us" he says.

I breathe out heavily and head for the door filling him.

....

Lubanzi

I looked at Nhlakanipho then the letter he gave me and told him me it's from Bayanda.

I didn't believe him at first but when I saw her handwriting I knew he was telling the truth.

After everything we have been through she wrote me a letter instead of facing.

My hands trembled as I ripped it open smelling her floral sweat intoxicating scent.

I closed my eyes as my mind drifted and searched for her beautiful face.

Dlovaku

If I could I would turn back the hands of time and stay home the day we met.

If I knew that going to church and getting stuck of the side of the road would lead me to you then I swear I would have stayed home and drunk myself to oblivion.

If I knew I would spend my days waking up to you and falling asleep in your arms then I wouldn't have taken your hand when we walked inside that church.

Then I would have saved myself from all this heartache,if I knew looking your way would save me from the person I was and make me a better woman only to have you slip away then I would have stayed home and drunk till I could no longer feel anything. But who am I fooling our love and destiny was long written in the stars and there was nothing we could.

Your love is one of the most beautiful things I have ever experienced in this life time,it scares me but most of all it heals and I am sorry for walking away.

I know this doesn't make sense but one day you will understand,I am not leaving because I have stopped loving you.

I love you like I did the first morning I woke up next to you.

When I woke up from the hospital and you told me our baby died a part of me died too.

Banzi you chose you over us and I am still battling with that.

You could have chosen a part of us both and I know you would have been great.

I know it's seems unfair but I am choosing us over me or you.

You have given me the greatest gift ever twice and I will always love for you for that, I will always love you for being the husband you are and for loving me without ever giving up on me.

You are an amazing man and you are my redemption Mngadi, you saved me when no one could sthandwa sam, I love you Dlokovu now and forever till we meet again bambolwami"

A baby scan fell out of the envelope and my eyes widened when I saw a baby.

I looked at Nhlakanipho and he nodded fuelling my anger and hurt even more,I charged towards him and put my hands around his neck blocking his windpipe.

"Where the hell is she" I asked pressing harder.

"I don't know" he managed to say.

I shook my head tightening my face

"I swear I am going to kill you Nhlakanipho if you don't tell me the fucken truth" He tried pushing me but I wasn't letting go.

"You saw her and you knew she was leaving yet you said nothing" I shouted pressing even harder.

The door opened and Muzi walked in pulling me away from Nhlakanipho.

"You're going to kill him" Muzi said.

I watched Nhlakanipho violently cough and I couldn't care less.

"If I find out that any of you know where she is and said nothing

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not even God will help you" I said walking out.

I drove to the clinic and went straight to Lisa's office.

"Where the hell is my wife" I asked.

She look shocked and blinked.

"Sir your wife is home she was discharged as discussed" she said. I pulled out my gun and pointed it at her.

"I will ask you again where are my wife" I asked breathing out.

I wanted to shoot someone anything just to get the answers I was looking for.

"I promise all know is that she's pregnant and didn't want to tell you that's all" she said.

"So you knew she was pregnant" I asked.

She closed her eyes and swallowed.

"I promised her that I would not tell a soul" she said

"Not even the person funding this whole stupid place" I asked lowering my gun.

"I trusted you Lisa, you are one of the few people I trusted with her and you said she was getting better" I said.

"I know this difficult but give her time, she loves you that I know and when the times comes I am sure she will come back" she said making her way to me.

I looked at her and tried fighting the tears hoping they wouldn't fall but they did.

Bayanda left me she took my baby and fled without even saying a word.

I knew she was hurting but to leave like this cuts more deeper than anything I know.

Bayanda

'These times are trouble and these times are good.

And they're always gonna be they rise and fall.

We take them all the way that we should together you and me
forsaking them all.

Deep in the night and by the light of day it always looks the
same,true love always does.

And here by your side,or a million miles away nothin' ever
gonna change the way that I feel.

The way it is,is the way that it was when I said I do,I mean that I
will till the end of all time.

Be faithful and true,devoted to you that's what I had in mind
when I said I do.

Well this old world keeps changing and the world stays the
same,for all who came before and it goes hand and hand.

Only you and I can undo all that we became that makes us so
much more,than a woman and a man.

And after everything that comes and goes around has only
passed us by here alone in our dreams.

I know there's lonely hearts in every lost and found but forever
you and I will be the ones who found out what forever means.

When I said I do,I meant that I will till the end of all times

Be faithful and true devoted to you that's what I had in mind when I said I do.

Truer than true, you know that I'll always be there for you

That's what I had in mind when I said I do'

I listened to the song over and over again Lubanzi had sent it to me a few days ago.

I looked at the baby scan and touched my belly tears falling

If I board this plane then I will be just like my mother no different from her.

My child might grow up resenting and hating me for keeping him from his father.

I looked at the ticket stood up and shook my head.

I thought I could do it but I couldn't, I found myself standing in my bedroom with my bags in hand and my baby bump sprouting out.

Next to him was a bottle of gin my favourite and the baby scan he was crying. "Banzi" I said softly.

He looked up and wiped his tears.

"I don't wanna be like my mother" I said my lips trembling.

He just looked at me and said nothing standing up.

"I am so sorry Dlokovu I was this close to getting into that plain but I couldn't" I said shaking my head.

"I know I messed up but please forgive me" I continue.

He made his way to me and collapsed on his knees and held my waist laying his head on belly.

"You are my life Bayanda" he said breaking down.

It broke my heart hearing him cry like that and I was the cause if it all. "I thought I lost you" he said looking up.

I carefully went on my knees and and held his face kissing him.

"I didn't mean to kill him" he said in a shaky voice.

"You didn't kill our son okay you didn't and I am sorry that I ever blamed you" I told him.

"I failed you both and I will never forgive myself" he said.

"Buka mina" he looked at me and swallowed hard.

"Ngiyakuthanda Lubanzi ngenhliziyo yam yonke, you didn't fail us okay you loved us and took a decision as my husband and the man of this house" I said.

"And to show that God still favours us and that our love is true and one of a kind we are pregnant" I told him.

He cried even more and held me tight.

"I am never letting you go Mngadi never" I said smiling.

He stood up and staggered to the closet coming back with a gift bag and went on his knee burping.

"I was going to do this when you came home but that didn't happen so here goes nothing. Ngakuthanda mhla ngikubona inhliziyo yam yashaya kancane ngabona ukuthi ungowami.

Abakithi bavuma mhla bezwa izigi zakho emagcekeni akathi dammit Bayanda I love you so much" he said opening the box.

"Bayanda Ayana Mngadi will you marry me" he said not moving his eyes from me. "Even after I tried to walk out on you" I asked.

"Even if you walked out now I would still love you and want no one but you" he said.

"I don't deserve you Mngadi" I said giving him my hand.

"You deserve me and so much more love you Maka Nkazimulo" he said giving me a hug.

For the first time since our son's death being called his mother didn't ache as much.

I was in my husband's arms home where I belong and I wasn't going anywhere anytime soon.

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

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