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I Became His Zulu Bride By Nomzi Dlamini

Prologue

09th May 2019. If one was to crawl back into their childhood life, watch how the future is going to unfold as they grow, this day would definitely mark as the day she would write about when a teacher asks her to compose an essay of the day she will never forget. The day that felt like the end but was the beginning of something new, something radiant and something worth living for.

A 28 year old Lwandle Ngcobo Molapo sits holding her new-born child outside the hospital benches a day after giving birth. She is waiting for her husband to come pick them up. He was right by her side the entire day yesterday, full of happiness, full of love and extremely happy to finally be a father. He had promised to come back again later that day but he didn't, he was a no show but she brushed it off, thought something important must have come up. He knew that today they were going to discharge them but an hour later there is still no sign of Peete Molapo. She is slowly growing out of patience but because she has no one to call she soldiers on for a while, staring at her beautiful daughter she melts like butter, growing with time but she doesn't realise as she falls directly into her daughter's innocent look. She is a screamer this one, she didn't sleep a wink but her screams were worth it, now she is innocently dosed off in sleep that she should have slept last night.

Another hour later there is still no sign of Peete Molapo, now she is totally pissed. She has no money or cell phone on her because her daughter decided to come on her own time. She was expected to give birth in three weeks' time but her daughter came early. She had just knocked off work a day before yesterday when she started feeling cramps, she brushed it off thinking it's Braxton hicks contractions but yesterday morning she woke up at three o'clock in the morning feeling sweaty, her water broke right when she climbed off the bed. She woke up her husband next to her and Peete excitedly rushed her to the hospital, forgetting her baby bag. She

didn't even waste time, three hours into labour pains she welcome her daughter. As tiny as she is, she is a traitor, she came looking nothing like her. She is her father's daughter, her father's sharp nose points out.

Peete waited until his daughter was born. He held his daughter for the first time with nothing but pure joy, because they were in hurry when coming here. They forgot the bag so he went back home and promised to come back later with the baby bag, but while his wife was still in labour pains he did run to the store and bought few things for his little girl.

The time now reports to be 16:30 in the afternoon, some of the staff is knocking off. Anger cannot describe how she feels right now. She usually bites on her bottom lip when she is angry, right now she can feel some blood through the grit of her teeth where she hardly chewed on her inner lip skin to suppress her anger. She is going to burn Peete when he arrives.

A beautiful Toyota Tazz halts before her, she sees the old beautiful midwife that was helping her behind the wheel. She rolls down the window and offer her one of her contagious smiles, it's not true that all nurses are cruel, this woman was an angel and patient with her.

"Mrs Molapo" Lwandle smiles, she is not used to people referring her that way "Where are you going? I can offer you a lift" thank god, she wastes no time. She sighs before securing her daughter in her arms and taking their belongings with. She jumps in at the back seat.

"Thank you so much, I don't know what happened to my husband. He knew he had to come fetch us today" the nurse smiles warmly staring at her through the rearview mirror

"I'm sure something must have come up, he was one of the happiest fathers I have ever seen" they both laugh thinking of his drama yesterday. He held her hand throughout all the pain yesterday from 3am to 7:15 am when she delivered he was right by her side. 7:30 he dashed to the shops to buy his daughter some clothes and came back immediately. He named her Lewatle, just like her mother he said she was his ocean. He didn't want to leave but he was kicked out of the hospital by nurses, he was told to go get the baby's bag.

The nurse asked for directions to their flat and she nicely left them at the gate, she refused to stay so she can go and get her bag to thank her. She told her to buy baby

girl sweets with the money and left. Lwandle was touched, there are still good hearted people out there.

Entering the house, everything is still as they left. The house is still a mess and knowing Peete this is so unlike him, he is a neat freak by nature. The vase that she broke when the pains were showing her flames is still shattered on the floor, she pulls her baby to her chest and make her way to the bedroom. The baby bag is still on the pedestal with her phone that she forgot. She tries to take her phone to inspect it but something stops her, there is sudden fear wearing her out of nowhere, she feels the need to put her daughter on the bed first. She stills, standing near the bed staring at her phone from a distance, trying to drown the fear down in her guts. She cannot understand this tidal wave of fear that hits her so hard when she has to reach for her phone and call her husband.

She baby walks to the phone and gently takes it, she swipes it to find thirteen missed call from a telephone number she cannot recognise, her heart is still pounding as she stare at her phone but luckily or unfortunately she is disturbed by a knock from the door. She heaves a sigh to calm down and make her way to the door, it doesn't look like Peete came back home yesterday.

She opens the door to find two officers behind the door. That fear struck again. She stands rooted not knowing what to say.

"Hello Mam, are you Mrs. Molapo" one officer enquires with a closed expression, she nods slowly with her heart pounding out of her chest "May we please come in?" she doesn't say anything, instead she steps out of the way and they both come in. She doesn't offer them sits, instead she feels the need to ask

"Where is my husband?" both officers look at each other

"Please have a sit mam" one suggest but she denies with her head, warm liquid fall down her cheeks, deep down she knows but NO, NO. He is fine, he has to be, they just had a baby.

"Where.....is....the...father of my child?" now her voice is trembling, the ache in her heart can already tell. One officer squash his hat in his hands.

"Mam I'm so sorry....." she doesn't wait

"NOOOOO!" a piercing cry leaves her, she balances by the table as she sink down to the floor breaking into a painful cry

“I’m so sorry mam, there was an accident yesterday, a truck hit your husband and he didn’t make it, he died on his way to the hospital” the officer explains further squatting down on the floor to her patting her shoulder “I’m so sorry mam, we have been trying to call you since yesterday” she is sobbing painfully on the floor, she doesn’t know what to say “Mam we need you to come and identify the body” the young mother felt her world shatter right before her, she didn’t know who to call or what to do. She had a young baby sleeping waiting for her father and she had to go identify her husband’s body in sore birth stiches.

CHAPTER 1

LWANDLE NGCOBO MOLAPO

They say life is a series of hierarchy, from the smallest phase to highest phase we grow. The phases we go through in life moulds us for the higher phases above – childhood moulds us to teenage hood, teenage hood to adult hood and finally adult to old age. Through all this stages we come across things as we grow, some scar us for life. The marks left by some of life's hurdles can never fade even with all the phases, they grow and stay with you for eternity.

From crying to feeling totally hollow its how I felt, their voices were so far yet so close. I could feel and see my chest expand and contract as I breathe, I could hear the sound of my heart beat. Why death? Why me? I already have no mother or father even a sibling to hang on, Peete was my varsity sweetheart, he was my home. He gave me life, before him I was just an orphaned girl going to school with no purpose at all, I was so lifeless I cannot account the number of times I attempted to take my own life.

But when Peete came into my life all that faded like a bad dream. He gave me something I was longing for and he gave it to me so perfect I didn't hesitate when he asked me to marry him. Straight on our graduation day we both got married and moved in together. We both went to home affairs and signed our affair as married with our friends as witnesses. That was the happiest day of my life, I graduated and married the love of my life.

Two years later here I am, with two police officers asking me to go identify his body. Our love was the in a moment kind of love, I don't remember any of us talking about funeral covers. I don't know what I'm going to bury him with if it really is him, I could use the money in our savings account but who am I kidding? That's all I have and on top of everything I have my new born on the bed that money should be for her. Not for burying her father.

As weak and shattered as I am, I hold on to the table to gain strength to rise from the cold tiled floor. The pain of the stitches has levelled up because of the cold floor I was sitting on. The first thing I do is check on my daughter. I may not have experience in motherhood but I feel that it wouldn't be the wisest decision to take a new born with when identifying dead bodies. I don't want to leave her with just

anyone but then again I want to see for myself to be sure that it really is the love of my life lying cold somewhere.

The only person I can trust for now is my white old neighbour. I hope she won't think I'm being forward. I inform the officers that I need to find a sitter for my baby first and they don't mind. I knock softly on my neighbour's door, she takes a while to respond. It's about six o'clock in the afternoon, maybe she was already sleeping.

"Hey you, I have been wondering where you were" she greets with her infectious smile

"Hey kayler" I don't have the energy but I do need her help

"Where were you?" she asks again

"At the hospital, I gave birth yesterday" her eyes pop, this means if she didn't see Peete, indeed he didn't make it home

"Oh! Congratulations my love, is it a boy or a girl" my smile is accompanied by glistening eyes "Hey, hey what's wrong" I sniff

"Could you please look after her for just few minutes, there are two officers in my house. They say I have to go..... Identify.....identify.....my husband's body" my speech is blurred at the end. For a moment she just looks at me shock struck, I think she doesn't know what to say "Please" the words leave my lips in a whisper

"Oh my God, Low I'm so sorry, let's go" she doesn't even lock her house and because my mind is no longer here, I forget to remind her. She calls me Low because she was trying to imitate my husband who called me Lwa, short for Lwandle. So her being white she turned it to Low.

From the site of the accident when we past it, I saw his car. It is damaged beyond repair. Death is something else, I saw the car but somehow something in me still told me maybe it wasn't him, maybe one of his friends was driving the car. Tears still downed my cheeks but I soldiered on and went ahead with viewing the body, the minute I entered that cold room fear struck hit me once again but I soldiered on once more. I took one last deep breath, the minute the white sheet was peeled off his face, I could tell by just his head before I saw the face that it was him. My

knees started feeling wobbly, his face was just so pale, so dull and so empty. There was no life in him and he was my husband, dead and cold.

I tried to breathe but a piercing cry left my throat, I tried to touch him but strong hands grabbed me from behind, I tried to kneel to God and ask for a miracle but my prayers weren't answered. From kneeling holding on to the stretcher asking for a miracle my heart felt numb, I could hear my every pained heart beat until I couldn't take the pain anymore. My heart and body failed me, I felt my weight hit the floor and it was lights out for me.

An hour later I woke up to find myself on top of the stretcher, the nurse told me I fainted. The minute I regained consciousness I flew home, the two officers were still waiting for me. They dropped me home and past their condolences promising to keep in touch with the investigation. I expected to walk in a house full of screams but like a baby she is, she was just sleeping with no clue what's so ever. I didn't need to tell kayler she could see right in my eyes that I'm a now a widow. I thanked her and asked to be alone, she allowed me that freedom but made me promise to wake her up even in the middle of the night if I happen to need her help.

I have to eat so I can produce milk for my baby but I don't have appetite, I'm still sitting beside her not sure where to start or what to do. Every now and then I keep running my finger on her nose to check if she is still breathing, the way she screamed last night I thought she was a little screamer. Or she was screaming because she could feel that her father was leaving us.

My phone- I remember I have to start telling our friends, maybe they will know what to do. That fear again, the minute I touch my phone that fear struck me but this time I soldier on through it. The screen top shows that I have a message from 'Hubby'. I feel myself biting hard once again on my bottom lip to keep myself from screaming. This will mark as his last voice note to me, I soldier on and listen to it.

The time of the voice note reads 08:48. He left the hospital just after 08:00, I expel a heavy sigh with tears watering my cheeks, my trembling fingers presses play on the voice note 'My Ocean, my infinity, the mother of my little ocean. Thank you for giving me that gift and thank you for loving me. I'm sorry I'm not going to be around to see our little ocean grow and to see you age so perfectly but I want you to know

that I will always be with you. I'm sorry my time came sooner than we thought but please My ocean, live, live for me, live for that little life we created'... there is a groaning sound, he sounds like he was in so much pain, someone is attending him "Sir you need to calm down" I think it's the paramedicthe voice note continues 'Lwa waka, I know I didn't tell you this and I hope one day you'll forgive me. I wasn't honest about my real identity. I'm a royal, I'm of the Bataung clan. In your phone there is a number saved as Agent, call it. It's my brother, he will take care of you and will make sure I rest with my ancestors. I'm sorry'... another commotion, he sounds like he is in so much pain 'My love, I'm sorry, I'm sorry I lied, I'm sorry I wasn't an honest husband, please forgive me my ocean. I will always love you. Call Agent in your phone' the message stops, I want it to me more, I want to listen to his voice longer. My chest is wet with tears, my throat is aching with every hiccup. I want my husband, I want to have been next to him when he took his last breath. With every hissing breath I take sense comes back, I remember his last sentence 'Call agent in your phone' with trembling hands I scroll, scroll far down, I expected it to be upper on the 'A' alphabetically not so far down but I scroll to the last alphabet until I come across 'Urgent' I'm not familiar with this contact, my heart tells me that he meant this 'Urgent' maybe I didn't hear him correctly because he was in pain. I wasn't even aware I have a contact saved as 'Urgent'. Now I have to make the difficult call, I release another sigh when the call goes through.....

The phone rings for a while until someone picks it. I expect the normal conversation where he says 'hello' and I reply but not today, this person picked the phone and decided to keep silent, I can hear him breathe through the phone and I'm sure he can hear me sniff.

'You must be Lwandle' the deep voice comes when I least expect, I almost drop my phone in terror. He knows my name? Weird!

'Hi' I cannot recognise my own voice because of the crying I have been doing

'How is little Lewatle?' He knows about her too?

'You know about her?' I think I hear a chuckle

'Peete tells me everything' he keeps silent. I also maintain my silence because I'm trying to grasp how does my husband have a brother I never knew? 'How can I help you Mrs. Molapo?' sigh!

'Are you Urgent' now he laughs, out loud. His laughter is just like my husband's laughter, loud.

'I'm Majara Molapo but Urgent is fine, although I think you meant 'Agent' I heave a sigh first and close my eyes, this is so confusing

'Are you my husband's brother?' I need to make sure

'Yes Mrs. Molapo, I'm Peete's eldest brother' I smile, smile of pain to refrain myself from wailing out loud

'I have some terrible news' he keeps silent once again, I'm gripping on my cell phone hard as I run what I have to tell him through my head and heart once again 'Pee.....Peete is no more, he passed away yesterday morning' he offers me time to deliver the heart breaking news without interrupting me, he keeps quiet and I keep my silence sobbing after the deliverance, we both can hear each other take every breath

'I was talking to him yesterday morning, he was going to fetch Lewatle's clothes' calm he tells me, he is not shocked, he sounds pained but like he somehow already knew. My tears are paving down once again 'What happened?' he asks once again calm, there was an accident, the more I think about it the more my heart tears apart

'Sir.....i....just....i just came home from the hospital.....and two officers asked me.....to go.....identify..... his body. He was in an accident....on his... ' he cuts me with a heavy sigh

'Can I call you back' I don't even agree he drops the call. I heavily sigh and look up the ceiling throwing my aching body next to my daughter. Life is a bitch!

CHAPTER 2

The beam of sunlight penetrate my heavily sleepy eyes, I groan instead of opening my eyes and change my sleeping position, I must have been facing the window. Something hits in my heart just as I settle on my other sleeping position side, my daughter! I sprang up like something venomous just sank it's teeth in me. I grasp the sheets kneeling on the bed with tears already falling.

'LEWATLE?!' her name escapes my lips, I know she is an infant but where could she be? She can't crawl, she can't walk. This bed is going to give me my baby. 'LEWATLE' I call out once again now hitting the poor mattress. A shadow catches my sight as I'm still wrestling the poor bed, I raise my head to inspect and find myself on the bed surrounded by strangers. My mouth opens agape in shock when I see the old version of my husband in the two old men amongst three women. I'm surrounded by five people I don't know. My daughter is in the arms of one old man although the grey headed one looks much older than the one holding my daughter.

"Makoti?" I almost turn and look if there is anyone behind me, Makoti? "Dumela ngwanaka?" (Good morning my child) he extends his hand but I just look at his face, my shock is still in its epic stage

"Can I have my daughter?" I open both my hands for the other old man to place my daughter, with no hustle he places her in my arms. She smells fresh, someone bathed her although she is sucking on her hands. My poor baby is hungry. I wipe my tears that just fell on her cheeks "Can I feed her?" I'm not asking permission, I want them to step out of my bedroom so I can give my baby her nipple. They all just sit surrounding me. The older woman with red eyes takes her scarf that was wrapped around her shoulders, she covers both Lewatle and my chest with it.

"Feed her" I nod already taking out my boob. She is clever, I didn't think of this "I'm Peete's mother" her words brings me back from watching my daughter suck on my boob. Peete's mother? Peete was an orphan just like me, it's the one pain we had in common "I'm MaMajara" she puts her hand on her chest "And there is my husband, Peete's father, Bereng Molapo" she points the old man that was holding my daughter "Next to him is his father, Peete's grandfather, Tlali Molapo" she points the grey headed one with a walking stick that looks.....questionable "Here

are Ntate Tlali's wives, MaBereng and MaPuso" She points the two women next to her. Never mind the names, I'm still stuck on my husband having a family

"Can you speak Sesotho?" one of the wives asks, she looks younger than the other one, I think it's the one called MaPuso

"A little" she claps her hands once in disappointment

"Yoh! ntho the setloholo sa hao dise entseng ntate" (the things your grandson has done my husband) she exits the room leaving me in questions

"I think she is full now, give her to me so I can burp her" I hand my daughter to Peete's mother, she takes her and walk around the room humming a song as she rubs on her back.

"I'm sorry we met like this, under such circumstances makoti but you have to take us to the hospital so we can start the proceedings of taking Peete's body home" the old man who was introduced as the grandfather informs but his wife interrupts him

"Ntate can you both wait in the lounge, we have to help her bath and make sure she eats first, she is just a new mother who had no one for god sakes" her words touches that fragile place in my heart, I find my eyes glistening in tears once again. She comes closer and brushes both my hands. "I'm so sorry my baby" I nod as the two men leave the room

"She is two days old" Peete's mom, Mamajara asks putting the sleeping Lewatle on the bed, I nod and she receives it with a smile brushing on my daughter's cheeks "Ncoo, my first grandchild bathong!" MaBereng laughs

"Second you mean"

"Mme don't stress me please, I only have one grandchild nna" she raises her face from Lewatle to me "Where is your bathroom?" I point her with my head "Is it a shower or bath?"

"Both" she smiles and disappears in the bathroom. I can hear water filling up the bath as the old woman just silently stares at me with nothing but pity.

"Hau! You haven't taken off your clothes?" she asks coming back in the bedroom, I look at her with questioning eyes but she slightly laughs "Ausi Lwandle we have to

bath you, did you bath when you came from the hospital?" I shake my head no
"You see" she tries to reason

"Do you have any birth stitches?" MaBereng asks

"Seven" she hisses gritting her teeth "Get salt" she instruct Mamajara who quickly leaves the room "Take off your clothes" I'm a bit hesitant with this one, I have always been shy about my body. When I rise from the mattress only now I notice pull of blood on the bed, the pad feels full, somehow I feel stinky and stuffy. I feel embarrassed. Her pat on my shoulder brings me back from staring at the mess on my bed "You have been through hell on your own but not anymore, there is no need to feel embarrassed. Take off your clothes and leave everything here, I'll wash everything while Mamajara helps you bath" I'm still embarrassed but I do as told. Even the dress I was wearing is soaked in blood.

"Come" Mamajara holds my hand and pull me to the bathroom. She pours so much salt in the water while I go to the toilet and take off my full pad wrapping it. My underwear is a mess. I take it off and find the bucket, trying to wash it but tender hands grabs both my wrist "What are you doing? Get in the water. Mme will take care of it" I'm overwhelmed but no, not my underwear

"Thank you but no, I would like to wash my own underwear" she nods and let me be.

Sitting in the water I feel the salt penetrating my stitches, it stings as hell. She grabs a towel from the hanger and lather it with soap washing me. It's Peete's towel, I feel tears blurring my sight once again

"It's his towel" I inform when she looks at me, she just smiles continuing with her task. Unintended laugh escapes my lips when she asks me to give her my leg, I don't remember anyone bathing me before. I wonder if this is what mothers do.

"I know my hands are gentle but I'm sure I'm definitely not funny"

"Thank you" I'm really grateful

She smiles "Was he happy?" I pick sadness from her question though she is trying to be strong for me, I nod "Thank you for keeping him happy" I nod once again

"Why didn't he tell me about you" she smiles sadly

“Life ngwanaka, even us parents sometimes make mistakes but nothing hurts more than burying your child, hang in there makoti waka, everything will be revealed when we get home” (My child,.....my daughter in law) I want to ask questions but for now I will take what I’m given “Do you have a passport?” I shake my head No “We’ll make a plan”

“Are we skipping the country?” she laughs

“Peete is from Lesotho ngwanaka, we going to Lesotho” HUH! I have never been that far, how am I going to cross the border? Oh by making plan she meant that. Sigh!

“How did you find me?”

“Majara, my eldest son called us last night and broke the news, we had to leave immediately. Already we knew that there was death in the family we just didn’t know who” strange

“How did you know?” she smiles

“When one of the Bataungs pass to the other world, the males in this house all suffer severe headache that cannot be healed even by painkillers, it only stops when we know who passed on” I’m looking at her like a ghost, she laughs “Don’t worry everything will be clear when we get home” I nod “Majara mentioned that you’re an orphan” I nod, how does this Majara know so much about me yet I only knew him from yesterday “I’m so sorry my baby”

“It’s okay Maa”

“Who do we need to report to that we are taking you with?”

“No one” she frowns “Peete was all I have”

“No uncle, grandfather-nyana” I shake my head no

“There is no such thing, I’m sure we’ll find someone. We have to pay mahadi, ditsenyehelo and a fine if im not mistaken”

“What are those?” she laughs

“Mahadi as in lobola and ditshenyehelo is the damages” oh! “Come let’s get you out of here, your body is still weak. You can’t spend too much time in water” she

takes a towel and helps me up. She wraps the towel around me when I step on the mat “Go wash your face, I’ll clean up here” I want to argue but that look on her face tells me it will just be a losing battle.

I find my room spanking clean, windows are opened and fresh air is roaming all around the room. Mabereng comes in just as I’m still getting dressed, she has my washing powder bucket in hand

“Oh you’re done, I was waiting for you to finish so I can wash this” she points a pile of my bloodied bedding wrapped on the corner. I’m still embarrassed that I bleed like that and didn’t feel it the entire night “Put something on your shoulders and head” she instruct checking on the sleeping Lewatle on the bed

“Thank you Maa” she just smiles looking down at my baby

“We are family ngwanaka”

Mamajara comes out and tells me to come to the lounge to eat when I’m done. I find the old man having tea and scones in my lounge, ntate bereng smiles at my sight. I wonder where the scones come from but hey I’m too overwhelmed to question everything.

“Now you look perfectly like a Molapo makoti” I find myself smiling to his compliment as I head to the kitchen but Mamajara kicks me back to the lounge and tells me to go sit down, I’m nervous sitting with the old men but they don’t seem to mind me, they are both discussing the funeral.

“Makoti I meant to ask, where do you come from? We have to go ask you properly from your elders before we take you” ntate Tlali asks, this one makes me cringe but I have to be honest

“I have no one, it’s just me” Mamajara walks in, she serves me a bowl of hot soft porridge

“Can we please just focus on putting Peete to rest, we’ll find a way forward afterwards” she begs sitting next to me, the old men hesitantly nod their head to agree. My stomach groans when the porridge fills my empty intestines. Only now I realize how hungry I was. “Come on drink up, I don’t want you starving my

granddaughter” she encourages when I attempt to put the bowl down. I drink it listening to them talking about the preparations of the funeral.

When I’m done with my meal, Ntate Tlali and Bereng both usher me to the car. A black range rover stands with a chauffeur outside it. I don’t need to ask to see that he is a chauffeur. His attire and representation says it all.

“My lady” the chauffeur says with a nod opening the door for me. He just holds it open for the gentlemen but nod. He jumps to the driver sit when his certain we are all settled in. I’m asked to provide the directions to the hospital and I do so with ease. I wish the women came with us, their gentle nature is just so overwhelming. I wonder why Peete lied about being an orphan while he had such an amazing caring family.

Today feels different. I have people with me, not just people but family with strong support system. But the walk to that room feels the same, knowing that he is there cold and lifeless feels like a repeated knife stab on the same wound.

“You can stay here ngwanaka” ntate bereng suggest pointing at the bench outside the room, I shake my head no with tears already bracing my face. He nods but they both keep close to me. Their presence makes me feel warm, at least I have them with me today. The process starts again. The drawer is pulled open. Today he is in a morgue. The sight of his feet with a paper trail is the first thing we see. Ntate bereng walks to his head, I see him close his eyes in pain as he sharply heaves a sigh “Joooo Motaung o etsang hao etsa tje” (My son what are you doing to me) he question with a single tear dropping down his eyes. He bends touching his knees, failing to stand, both his cheeks are now wet. He takes easy slow breathes to calm down. Ntate Tlali brushes my shoulder next to me.

“Hareye Bereng ngwanaka, re mobone motaung wa rona” (Let’s go Bereng my child, we saw our son) it takes a minute for ntate bereng to regain himself. This is his son so it’s understandable. After a while we all retire outside the morgue in silence, I think they are still digesting his death. “Makoti, let me walk you to the car. Bereng and I have to stay here so we can sort preparations to take him home” he is already on his feet. Ntate bereng is just looking down, I think he is still crying. I

want to argue for him to walk me to the car but he is already ahead of me. We leave my drained father in law still looking down on the bench.

Like a chauffeur he is, his standing outside again "My lady" he says again with a nod opening for me but nate Tlali stops him from closing the door

"Lwandle, when you get home tell you mothers to leave. All off you leave immediately, Tlali and I will follow with the hearse. All of you should get home before us so they can prepare for him at home" I nod. He turns to the driver "Make sure my family gets home safe" the driver nod again before going to his sit

CHAPTER 3

Lesotho. What a unique beauty! Everything about this country is just so unique and calm. There is this aura that just draws you in. Something about it is just so welcoming. It gives a sense of longing, something in me just want to belong here, like it's the final puzzle to complete my life. Sunset slowly dissipate on top of the mountains making the view even more spectacular! The orange and red glow of the sun claims the view perfectly. If Peete had taken me to his home, I would have asked him to take me hiking, just to touch base with those beautiful mountains.

My heart was in my throat when we passed the boarder. The first post was the South African boarder post. That was the easy one, I wasn't even interrogated. The chauffer took everyone's passports and went to the window, when he came back he just drove off. When we reached the gate exit he gave the boarder officer R300 and we passed. The problem came when we reached the Lesotho post, I could feel my heart sink deep. The car was searched, everyone held their passport to the window. But because money speaks the loudest language, the chauffer gave up more notes at the window for lewatle and I. And just like that, I was in.

"This is Maseru" Mme Mamajara whispers next to me, she is been quite the tour lady "It's our capital city" I haven't seen it all but it seems beautiful from where we are

"It's beautiful Maa, my feet are killing me. Are we still far?" she shakes her head no with that killer smile of hers

"No we reside here, we just about 10 minutes away" I nod with a smile and look out the window admiring the uniqueness and individualism of Lesotho. Who would have thought that I would one day cross the border to Lesotho? I still don't understand why Peete lied about his family. They are all so caring and so welcoming, well except that Mapuso who throws daggers at me every chance she gets..... wait what's this place now, did Lesotho just flip and change to Dubai? We driving through I don't know I think this is Dubai in Lesotho, every building is just architecturally build in its own uniqueness. It's not an estate of some sort but damn! Beautiful houses I see.

“Wow this is beautiful, is it the Maseru estate?” I ask Mamajara next to me, it sounds stupid but I ask it anyway

She laughs shaking her head, she is a woman of humour, always delight “Here is what we call Masoe 2, let’s just say to build here you need to be extremely sure of the depth of your pockets” In few minutes the vehicle comes to a halt at the huge gate, the chauffer presses the remote and the gate slide open. Wow! Inwardly I exclaim. Just wow! My jaws are sweeping the floor invisibly, some people live extravagant!

Double story mansion beautifully stands tall at the centre of other extravagant houses. Everything about all this houses screams power and wealth.

The chauffer does not drive further in. He remains at the gate. Mapuso is the first to jump off the car like she couldn’t wait to get the hell out of this car, I’m left with MaBereng and MaMajara in the car. Whom are both just sitting still and I join them in our little vehicle board meeting.

“Lwandle my dear. Because Peete died before formally introducing you to his ancestors, we have to let them know who you are first before you enter the Bataung premises” Mabereng explains and I just nod as confused as I am, I’m not very informed when it comes to the underground gang. In few minutes an old grey headed man comes out with a bucket reciting their clans. He stands exactly at the gate and wave us to come to him. I have my daughter tight in my arms. He puts the bucket down and I see it occupies water and greenish aloe like herbs. He indicates for me to give him my daughter and I only do so after seeking confirmation from mabereng and mamajara through our silent eye communication. He smiles looking at my daughter in his arms

“Lewatle la bataung, his queen” (the bataung’s ocean) (Bataung are Basotho clan names). He kisses her forehead before handing her to mamajara, he intently stares in my eyes for a moment making all my follicle hair shiver “How far is Majara?” his eyes never leave me, his asking the old women but glaring at me

“I’m not sure but he said he would be here soon” mamajara responds

“She cannot enter this premises without him, Peete wants him to bring her home” with that said he turns leaving us shocked by the gate. I’m more than confused,

what is this old man talking about? Mamajara pats my shoulder and only then I snap out of it.

“We have to go baby” she says already heading for the car with my daughter but Mabereng stops her

“Mamajara you can’t go, you’re the one who is going to sit on the mattress. She is a new mother, you know the tradition. Peete’s spirit has to find you home when Tlali and bereng arrives” Mamajara sighs, in exhaustion.

“And you also can’t leave Mme, you have to be present in the hut when they arrive” they both sigh in defeat, I wish I can help but I’m so clueless.

“I’ll drive her to Mjay’s house and make sure she is safe” the driver offers from behind. The two women look at each other in silent communication before giving in. Mabereng nods to him and he steps back for a minute.

“Ausi Lwandle” Mabereng, she takes my hands, gently brushing on my knuckles in assurance “That old man is what we call a royal seer, his name is Moletsane. We as the royal Bataung cannot go against his word, what he says goes no matter what my baby. He said Peete wants Majara to enter this premises with you, meaning you have to wait on Majara so he can bring you home” I’m just looking at her confused “So we were thinking maybe you go wait for Majara at his house, we’ll call him and explain everything to him”

“Mme!” I can only exclaim

“Please ngwanaka we have no other option. Tshepo will make sure you’re safe and sound until he arrives” Sigh! What else can I do? I’m in a foreign country, even if I wanted to say no, where would I go? I nod hesitantly and they walk me back to the car. Mamajara doesn’t want to let go of Lewatle but she eventually hands her to me.

“Please call if you don’t feel uncomfortable or.....” Mabereng cuts her

“She will be fine, stop stressing” the two humble bunch both stand by the gate and wave us goodbye until the car disappears by the corner. Such humble souls. I can’t believe my husband hit such a nice family.

The drive is not long, in another ten minutes the car comes to a halt. I learned that my driver's name is Tshepo. He is quick to open my door with his signature nod. Now we are in another extravagant house, this one is not as huge as the ones I saw earlier. It's safe to say it looks like a bachelor's house. Big enough but lonely, there is no homely feeling about it.

"Thank you Tshepo" he smiles and helps me with my bags. He parked right by the entrance, I can't admire the outings because it's getting dark. He punches in a code and the door swings open. Okay! Definitely not a home.

"Mam, your code for everything in the house is 8864 and if anything requires a password, the password is MPSO in capital letters" my jaw is sweeping the floor, I'm shocked by all this "You may get in Mam" Mam? Sigh! I have been standing by the door.

"Please call me Lwandle, aren't you going to come in" he shakes his head with one of his smiles, I don't know if it's a genuine smile or it's part of his job.

"No thank you, I would like to keep my job. I'll be in the cottage down there, if you need anything like maybe order some food. Please dial 1 on the telephone and tell me what you'd like, it's my job again to make sure that I order you whatever you prefer" Yoh! andizi shame. This time I just smile and shut the door, I have a feeling his job is too much and I'm not ready to hear it all.

Okay! The house. This is one beautiful but lonely house. Firstly I explore all the rooms, I'm supposed to be alone in here but I don't want to be sleeping with snakes so I search each and every room. You never know how some people become so rich. I wonder where the owner is, everything is so clean. I can tell the owner is a neat freak like my husband. I hope his wife is as warm as the other woman.

My daughter is sleeping. I have to put her down. I don't know which one is the master bedroom because everything is the same. I want to avoid pissing madam of the house by sleeping in her room so I open all the closets, the one with clothes I'll not use. None of the rooms have clothes, I'm starting to wonder if there even is anyone living in this house. I choose the one my heart draws me to, they'll forgive me if I choose someone's room.

I put my daughter down and go get my bags. I'm tired. I just need a soothing bath and sleep. After bathing and changing my daughter I retire next to her. For a while, I can't shut my eyes, pain is once again back, my pillow is once again wet, now that I'm alone it hits the same way, I feel his absence. My ringing phone disturbs my sorrowful mind. It's Mamajara. The woman can talk, she was just checking on me but we ended up chatting until I dozed off.

Waking up I feel heavy. I'm awake for a while but I'm too tired to open my eyes, or I just don't want to feel the sorrow my life has turned to be, so I indulge in shutting my eyes, though I'm awake. I feel like there is something heavy staring down at me, it's pressing but I'm enjoying this heaviness. I groan before finally succumbing to wakefulness. I find my daughter next to me first and she is just sleeping, my little angel, she didn't fuss at all last night, I think we only had two breaks during the night. She smells fresh and now that I'm full awake I realise that she is in different clothing from last night. Someone bathed her, but who and when? With a yawn and a frown I stretch my hands, chasing sleep off me. I sit up straight in search for my phone so I can call Mamajara, maybe they are here, who else would bath my daughter except.....my heart limps to the shore, it stops for a while, I feel my veins dry up in an instant. There is a man.....a strange man in the room, when my eyes meet the strange man sitting on the chair just staring at my daughter and I, I feel my skin shiver, my heart pounding out of my chest, I'm suddenly bathed in terror. I think my heart just stopped pumping blood through my system because I just froze. We both fall into a staring contest, no one lets off their stare off each other. He loses the battle, release a sharp sigh before he utters his words, still burning me with his stare.

"I hear you didn't eat last night, mind explaining why?" now I frown, who the hell are you? I scream inwardly, wanting to ask him this but something in the way he looks at me refrains me. He has me hypnotized, inwardly there is a battle within me but I can't seem to utter any word. He heaves another sigh, a huge one, like he just remembered something "Hi" I can see the movement of my chest, it's the only thing audible. His 'Hi' sounds a bit far because I'm still in my head. He is sitting right at the end of the bed. He looks at me for a moment before he comes stand at my side giving me his hand "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to startle you. I'm Majara" sigh!

Slowly I come back to the land of the living. I close my eyes first to gather all my scattered emotions and release a much needed breathe off my chest that I have been holding, I give him my hand for a shake and he takes it for a while before I yank it off his hold. He looks nothing like Peete, tall and not yellow bone as my husband, he is a bit on the coffee colour but now that he is close enough I see a bit of resemblance. The eyes, ears and that sharp English nose of theirs “Lovely finally meeting you Lwandle” lovely? Brother in law you’re in my bedroom, well not mine but I wish I can tell him that. There is something about him that grounds me. It’s like I’m restricted “I hear you didn’t eat last night, may I ask why?” hmk! If strange was a person, back to his prior question

“Hi” my voice finally comes back but what comes from it is not what’s in my head, I have lost control of processing what comes out of my mind

“Hi again, I asked why you didn’t eat” It’s hard to read someone like this, his face is warm but cold, very cold but there is something in his eyes, something assuring. I don’t think he knows how to smile.

“I....I.....” where is this voice kanti? I clear my throat and expel a sigh to call on my voice “I was full, we ate on our way here” he nods, still making me feel small and smaller with every stare he subjects me to. Lewatle immediately starts fidgeting, his captivating eyes leave me. I see something I didn’t think he is able to do. He can smile, he smiles looking at the waking Lewatle next to me. He bends to scoop her next to me, leaving the pleasant linger of his cologne over my nostrils. I just stare and watch him melt, melt like ice subjected to the flaming heat of the sun, breaking into a beautiful smile as he arms my baby. He dances around the room talking to her like an adult.

“Oh daddy’s ocean” a forehead kiss lands on my baby “Lewatle la papa, sekaba lla ngwanaka papa o teng, papa nkeke a pheta ao siya, papa otlo o hlokomela wena le mama” (Daddy’s ocean, don’t cry my baby daddy is here, daddy will never leave you again, daddy will take care of you and mommy) unfortunately I’m not very good with sotho, I only heard Daddy’s ocean because I was once my husband’s ocean. He keeps humming the song or is it a talk dancing the room with my daughter in his arms. I take this time to wrap myself with a gown when he isn’t looking “she is four days right”

“Yea.... I mean yes sir” he stops to frown at me for a moment and shakes his head going back to dancing with my daughter. I don’t know how to address him, I have never had a brother in law before.

“You’ll find us in the living room, I organised us a brunch” brunch? What time is it kanti? I search my phone for time, 11:15? This is embarrassing.

“Thank you but I have to..... to check her nappy first” and bath her but someone beat me to it, the latter I say inwardly. And only now I realise I have never bathed my own daughter, it stung a bit in my heart. What kind of a mother am I?

“You okay” I find him burning me with his stare again, a lace of worry over his face. He takes me with his eyes, intently waiting for an answer. I nod to ease him off and he nods back “Don’t worry about her, she is fresh” he heads for the door. I don’t know this man but I believe he is my brother in law. My Peete was a yellow bone while he on the other hand is a bit light brown, they are not look alike but you can tell from the resemblance that they are siblings if you look close enough “And please call me Majara not sir” he pops his head back while I’m still trying to spot their similarities. There is no way in hell I’m doing that. Something about him demands respect, he has an aura of someone you cannot look in the eyes for a while.

After making the bed and bathing I make my way to the living room with my scarf to hide my boob when I feed my baby. Poor thing must be starving. Sitting directly across from him I feel my nerves waking up once again, it’s a table for two, if there was another sit available I would have taken it instead of this one, this one opposite him makes me cringe with every look he gives me. He has a look that intimidates the hell out of me. I feel so small around him. He stands and place Lewatle in my hold. I cover the both of us as I had intended earlier while I feed her. My eyes follow the mysterious brother in law moving about.

He is left handed. A neat freak like his brother. Making a cup coffee for him is such a task, his mug is filled with hot water first. To warm the cup. He tabs his fingers on the table for couple of minutes, in silence while he warms his mug. Only after warming the mug he discard the water and makes his coffee.

“I didn’t know what you prefer so I made almost a bit of everything” he is preparing my cutlery while he sips his coffee

“Made?” with what I think is hesitation he nods, biting on his lower lip “Thank you” I appreciate through unintended smile, I know he is lying. There is no way a man like him can have a relationship with pots. He puts a plate of omelette and bacon in front of me, I mumble a low thank you looking down at my daughter as she sucks me for life. Poor thing having a mother like me, sometimes I forget to feed her.

He sits before me, just stares while he sips his coffee. He watches me intently, almost sending chills down my spine with his contagious look. I find it hard to enjoy my meal with him pressing me down with his glare, I can’t clean my plate with.....

“Finish up” he commands, making me question his personality more. Is he psychic too? I was just thinking exactly what he just ordered me to do. Slowly I eat in silence, with him monitoring me. Every bite feels like a cumbersome task but I eventually finish. The food was nice... Scratch that it was delicious, the best I have had in a while, if only I had a decent companion “Coffee, tea or juice?” his eyebrow follows his question, bushed eyebrows like Peete’s. I used to straighten Peete’s eyebrows every time we cuddled, sometimes when I woke up before him my fingers would..... shit I’m staring, further curve of his eyebrow brings me back from my reverie. He pours me my drink of choice and puts it in front of me. With that nervous smile I sip, he doesn’t return the smile, he just oddly stares at me. Sigh such weirdo! I have a feeling he doesn’t like me much.

CHAPTER 4

The ride to the palace is silent, his back to himself, looks deep in thoughts. I have Lewatle in my arms, today she is awake, staring at me as if she can see me. Can she? When do they start seeing? I find myself smiling and kissing her little sharp nose. When I raise my head from my daughter I find him staring, with a trace of what I think is a smile on his face. I expect him to drop his stare now that I saw him but he doesn't, he keeps his eyes on me, I find myself squirming on my seat.

"Mjay?!" the driver, tshepo. Thank god he distracts him. He doesn't reply, instead he stares at him in the review mirror "Angie just booked her regular room in Avani" he throws his head back on the headrest

"Same guy?" his question comes disappointed

"No, a different one" tshepo sounds professional, like he is working

"Fu....." he frustratingly rubs his face, takes a heavy sigh and bends his head to lewatle in my arms. He kisses both her cheeks and lips and say "Sorry angel, daddy shouldn't use vulgar in front of you and mommy" I roll my eyes looking the other way "Did you just roll your eyes on me?" Jeez! His back over my face, trying very hard to hide the amusement on his face, I find myself shaking my head no. Now he chuckles "Good" he goes back to his seat, his attention back to tshepo "Is she careful though?"

The driver shakes his head no "This time she is being reckless"

"I'll talk to her....." he trails off, looking out of the window.

Finally, we are here again, the huge gate is once again opened, this time it's just the weird brother in law, my daughter and I. The grey headed royal seer once again approach us with his bucket. I wonder if he does this every day, to everyone. It must be tiring being a seer, if this is his job, it's damn exhausting.

"It's not a job, his job is far more unique. His the shield of the throne" my brother in law is back at being weird. How can he always hear everything I say in my head?

I just look at him shocked, this time he doesn't look back at me. He keeps his eyes fixed at Moletsane, smiling. The old man returns his smile when he reach us.

"Mora" (son) the weirdo just nods "Mabataung" he is looking at me this time, my eyes scatter around trying to grasp what he just called me. His eyes blaze towards my companion once again "Dress her, you know the tradition" he orders, glaring at my brother in law whose eyes immediately leave his sockets

"She is not mine to dress, I already dressed Angeline" his deliverance comes shocked, in disbelief

"Did you?" the seer challenges him, cocking his eyebrows

"I'm married" he sounds appalled

"Are you?" Moletsane challenges him once again "We have no time for your nonsense Majara, it's either that or she cannot enter this premises. The ancestors knows no Angeline in this home stead, they want her and it was your brother's duty to bring her to you" he explains, exasperated, lacking enthusiasm.

"But....." he is cut off

"But nothing, I told you what you and angeline are doing is going to bite both of you one day" my brother in law huffs, in defeat. He goes back to the car with my daughter still in his arms. He looks annoyed because he is lowly mumbling in displeasure to himself. The seer gives me a warm smile as I'm left with him, I don't know what is going on. My brother in law comes back, he hands the seer my daughter, who immediately is taken by Lewatle's presence, he is kissing and playing with her fingers trying to unwrap them. I feel my brother in law's glare at me, when I turn opposite to him I realise he has a jacket in his hands.

"Lwandle" him calling me sounds like his scolding me, my voice hides once again

"Hmmm.....sir....." the look Jesus! I think he cremated my soul with that look "I mean, bhuti..bhuti Majara" his lips curve into what I think is a smile his trying to supress, the seer burst into fits of laughter, causing me to frown

"What do you know? Majara Jumanji Molapo can finally smile" he narrows his eyes at the seer, not pleased. Eventually he looks back at me

“Abuti” he corrects, glaring at me making me feel small as always. I quickly nod not able to maintain his eye contact “Bataung ba ha Moletsane bare keo apese, do you accept?” I’m lost, he sees from my expression “My ancestors wants me to dress you, do you accept?” I don’t know, I look at the seer holding my daughter and he nods, that compels me to also nod, I nod.

“Yea....yes sir..... I mean abuti, yes abuti” I immediately bite my tongue after the ‘sir’ he clearly doesn’t like it. He puts the jacket around my shoulders, putting his big skilled hands on my shoulders for a while from behind, like he presents me to an audience he pushes me further into the yard

“Ke enwa Mabataung wa lona hee baletsane, otlisitswe ke nna Majara Molapo” (Here is your daughter in law my ancestors, she was brought by me, your son Majara Molapo) just like that I’m in the yard. The seer waves for a girl who was just a step away, he gives her my daughter and stoops to his bucket. He sprinkles the liquid on both of us, reciting their clan names.

“Ke enwa Mabataung wa lona hee baletsane o fihlile hae

Lona boletsane, botho ba modisa –phohole

Kopu-kopu madi atswa phuwaneng ya motho.....” clan names

Finally the bucket is empty, my companion and I are both annoyed. We are both wet and not happy, I hear him huff when the seer is done. He waves the girl to bring back lewatle, he takes her and his other hand grasp mine, his grip is too strong but I don’t dare complain. He pulls me further into the yard with a pace I cannot match, his one step equal two of mine, I realise he is quite tall with long legs.

“Jeez can we slow down” I snap, unexpected. He immediately halts, his Adam’s apple moves, swallowing something down

“I’m sorry” it comes in a whisper but I heard it, now I feel guilty, I just nod to ease him. I’m already wet I don’t need him making me run. This time his pace is much bearable, the yard is empty, it’s the middle of the day but it doesn’t look like there is any living being around this home stead. He leads me straight to the palace, still in hurry. When he opens the door we are welcomed by beauty, beauty of the house

and beautiful woman in black and white, she looks like she is somewhere in her late thirties. She instantly flushes at the sight of my companion, consumed with desire.

“Mr. Molapo, great to see, welcome back sir” the enthusiasm in her voice cannot be missed, she acknowledges bowing her head down “Mam” she bows to me too “May I cater my services to you sir?” I’m trying hard to stifle my laughter, the woman definitely has a crush on the man but this weirdo is immune, he is just cold

“We are fine Palesa, excuse us” Jesus! Couldn’t he at least be gentle? He so cold. Palesa scurries off in hurry. Only now when he lets go of my hand I remember his been griping my hand. He brings lewatile’s little face to his, planting a sweet peck on her forehead “Welcome home daddy’s ocean” then he looks down at me, with an impassive expression “This is home, your home now” I find myself nodding under his words “Do you prefer to use.....” his adam’s apple moves, his so tall I have to stretch my neck up to meet his eyes “Do you want another room or.....” He trails off once again, like he doesn’t want to say the words out of his mouth “Peete.....my...my brother, do you want his room or another one?” now I feel what he was trying hard to escape. The time we have been together none of us has mentioned his name.

“His room will be fine” he nods coupled times questing me with his eyes, making me feel like a peanut once again

“You sure?” I nod, feeling small under his scrutiny. He grips my hand once again, my baby wrapped on his shoulder and he walks us further in. He doesn’t give me time to admire the beauty I see in this house. He comes to a halt when we have to take the stairs upwards, almost in debate inwardly “Let’s take the elevator” he changes direction, pulling me in another path. He presses an elevator and we slide in, I wish Mamajara or Mabereng were here to welcome me, this one is cold and not talkative.

“They are at the caves, they are expecting us there” his weird moments once again, he frustrate me, how can he be able to read my mind “I know you think I’m cold” my mouth drops, sweeping the floor. He leaves me astonished in the elevator when it pings open. “Let’s go lwandle, we are already late” he screams already walking down the passage. I’m trying to stifle my breath as I head to him waiting on me with that weird smile of his “Here you are” he opens the door besides him, now my heart sinks once again. This is my husband’s bedroom. He slept in here.

“Has anyone used it since he left?” he shakes his head no “Why did he leave home? Why did he lie about being an orphan to me” he sighs, looking down at me. With a head gesture he shows me that I should get in, only now I remember we are still standing by the door. I take my first step in, run my eyes around the room. It looks clean, like him but then again I’m sure it’s cleaned every day. This house looks squeaky clean.

“My ocean” he brings me back when he puts my baby on the bed, once again melting like butter under heat. I almost think he is talking to me when he said ‘my ocean’ that’s what my husband called me when we were in our bubble “Hmmm looks like we have a mess in here” his nose sniffs my daughter, infecting me with his giggle “Hmkk baby, what did you eat?” he is captivating to watch with my daughter, he unclamp her romper down, trying to free her so he can change her diaper but nop. Not on my watch.

“I’ll do that, thank you” I’m already taking over, I see he wants to contest “Can you please bring her bag and mine from the car”

“Tshepo is bringing them” he stands for a while watching me undo my baby’s romper “You should also change too, you’ll catch cold in that wet dress” I nod, continuing with my task, as if on cue there is a knock on the slightly opened door, tshepo is standing with my bags. The weirdo brother in law takes them and dismiss him. He sits silent on the bed fiddling with his phone while I change Lewatle, I don’t think it’s a good idea for him to be in my room and he has to change too, I don’t want to find myself in situations, but how do I kick him out.

“I’m waiting on Moletsane to bring our blankets so we can go” God I hope he didn’t hear what’s in my head once again. I want to question the blankets but who am I with? The non-talker “Don’t dress her, she has to be naked, only cover her with her blanket” say what?

“For what?” I can’t contain the frown on my face

“The ritual, your husband was a prince. There are things to be performed before he is laid to rest tonight” he informs calm, still staring down his phone

“TONIGHT?” I snap, drawing him to me, only now he sees the displeasure over my face, he looks amused instead of confusion or.....

“Are you shouting?” his question is followed with brief laughter, I frown further and that causes him to compose himself “Yes tonight” his tone is now stern, leaving no room for argue. Another knock comes live from the door “Kena” come in, he gives entrance permission for whoever it is. Mapuso walks in with nicely folded Basotho blankets. She is also in one too. She smiles looking at Majara.

“Mjay jay” the cold one just look up at her, with no smile what’s so ever? In fact he looks disgusted if I may say “Your back? When did you arrive?”

“Yesterday” she hands him one blanket and put one and another smaller one besides me “I’m going to change, I’ll be back” my brother in law informs me already walking out. I sense vibes between him and this woman, like he is not happy to see her.

“Listen, the ritual is already late because Mamajara wanted no one to wake her precious daughter in law. Didn’t they tell you it’s unlawful to wake up at the peak of day bohadi?” (...at your in laws) I wonder why she hates me so much “We don’t have all day, undress everything and just put on the blanket. Don’t wear anything beneath it” in and out I breathe, she may think I’m a walk over but she doesn’t know me, I’ll keep my peace for now. As my brother in law instructed, I cover my daughter with a blanket. Then I take mine, disappear to the bathroom to undress. I make sure to be quick, I don’t want to piss this woman who seems to not like me for some reason. When I come out she laughs, shaking her head in disapproval “And they say you’re the ‘bearer’ yet you can’t even wear a simple blanket”

“Maa I’m wearing the blanket” I almost snap

“Not proper, you don’t even know how to fasten it” she looks appalled by me and I just want to disappear. The door is pushed open, my brother in law walks in, his blanket is covering his shoulders. Now I see where I went wrong, mine is under my arms, I’m wearing it like a towel

“You okay?” his eyes are on me, searching assurance. I nod. He looks at Mapuso, cold frown wearing him at once “What did you say to her?” his question comes calm but threatening. Mapuso blinks at him, stepping back a bit.

“Nothing....nothing” she stutters, cowering back though Majara is standing rooted, but his eyes are ice cold, transforming to dark “I....she...doesn’t know how to wear the blanket....properly” she trails off shivering

“She is not fucken sotho and your job was to help dress her, not bark and roar at her” he points her his trembling index finger “Mapuso if you try the mess you pulled on Peete with her, woman I’m going to crush your bones so bad even shaka zulu will deny you” I can see Mapuso panting in fear “And I’m back, I’m going to avenge my brother” the tension in the room wears me too, it’s instantly cold.

Mapuso is shaking visibly “I’m.....you’ll...find me in the car” she flies out of the room. Leaving the room cold. Majara’s eyes are.....or am I seeing things?

“Your pupils” my voice comes in a whisper, staring at his eyes. He blinks twice with a huge sigh and they are back, back to normal. I think....his pupils turned black.

“You would tell me if anyone mistreat you right” I quickly nod, still trying to look in his strange eyes but his back at intimidating the shit out of me “Good, do you need anything else before we go?”

“I would just like to know where we are going and what is happening, no one said anything to me” he sighs

“I’m sorry, you were still asleep when sgriza came to bath my ocean, she would have explained to you” I nod “We are going to the caves, where all the family members are at now. All the proper rituals to bury the royal bataungs are done there” I nod

“And my questions? You still haven’t answered me” he knows which questions I’m talking about

He sighs, expel an exhausted breathe. Strides two steps to me and takes both my hands without asking, he pulls me to the bed and sits besides me still holding my hands “Listen, I know you have questions, lots of them. But I’m asking you to give me just today, help me bury my brother, your husband as you know him. When we have laid him to rest, in the eternal peace he deserves, I’ll tell you everything myself. Just give him today, please give him today to have your love once again because after knowing the truth, you’ll probably hate him from his death bed” he holds my eyes with his, staring in mine, I can hear every beat of my heart in my ears “Please give him today, bury him as a husband that you know and love, tomorrow I promise to give you all the answers” I find myself unable to articulate my feelings, I feel like he just opened another can of worms. I’m shock struck. Who was I married to? What did Peete do? “Can you afford me just today?” with a sigh, my eyes

trapped by his gaze. I nod. "Let's go" he stands, still holding my hands. I sigh and take my hands off his hold.

"Okay" I stand, trying to straighten my blanket. I find him trying to suppress his smile, looking down at me "What?" I ask

He shakes his head with a chuckle "Let me help you with this" his long arms reach for my blanket knot before I can process what he is doing, he immediately gasps and closes his eyes turning "Jesus! Why are you naked! Wandle?" he snaps, looking the other way

I find myself gripping hard at my blanket, holding it not to fall down because now it's undone "Ma....Mapuso...said I should be naked underneath" I see his shoulders move high as if taking a long breath still giving me his back

"That woman just confirmed she hates you, get dressed and put something on your head. Put your blanket on your shoulders like me. Only Lewatle has to be naked here, not you. I'll wait for you outside" he sprung out like he is chased by a dog, sigh! I have to be careful of this Mapuso. This is embarrassing.

CHAPTER 5

The drive to the caves is about an hour, the sun is slowly marrying into darkness, reflecting its beautiful glow as dusk beautifully swallow its brightness. In the car I'm with my daughter, Majara and Tshepo as the driver. Mapuso and Moletsane are ahead of us in another car with another driver whose name I don't know. Majara took the front sit today, leaving me at the back with lewatile. He couldn't look at me when we walked out of the house and for some reason he seems to not want himself close to me. Which I find weird, it's not like he saw anything, I was quick to hold the blanket and I just had a baby, there is nothing appealing about my body at the moment.

From a distance I think I see where we are headed, I wish Mamajara was here. She would have been so nice with the tour, telling me what is what. I see we are headed to the mountain shaped in some sort of a triangle like shape. I wonder what is called.

"That's mount Qiloane. The conical shape of the Basotho hat Mokorotlo, is derived from the shape of this mountain" oh! Now that he points out, it does look like the hat. At least his back at saying the things I'm thinking. He frustrates the shit out of me when he steals my thoughts.

"It's beautiful" he nods looking ahead, not even sparing me a look

"You still good?" his voice comes when I least expect it, still looking ahead

"Yeah!" I see his nod again. Then we fall into another silence. Lewatile starts fidgeting when we get close to the mountain, I offer her my nipple but she cries, her cute cry fills the car.

"Bring her" his turned from his seat, waiting for me to place her in his arms, I do as ordered and he brings his face to hers, kissing her all over "I know my baby, hush now my ocean, daddy is here" the traitor daughter of mine hushes. I watch him cradle her and play with her small bare foot brushing on it. How can he be so good with babies, yet so....so weird and cold at the same time "I have a son, turning six soon" the driver chokes, fidgets uncomfortable as if tensing. I wonder what's that about?

“I hope I’ll see him soon” he nods, I can sense that he is smiling. Looking ahead. The driver steals a glance at him, almost feeling sorry for him. I think they are close in a weird manner.

Finally we make it to the mountain. Surrounded by huge cars, lots of them. Moletsane is standing waiting for us. He has his bucket in hand. I hope I won’t be subjected to another sprinkling. Climbing off the car, Tshepo opens my door acknowledging me with his signature nod followed by ‘My lady’. Abuti Majara is standing with lewatile in his hold, he gives out his hand to hold mine and I do so. He tenses when I put my palm in his, almost like something unexpected just hit him “You okay?” he nods, looking down at me making me feel like something he can crush any minute.

“Please keep an open mind today, just let this day be and tomorrow, I’ll give you all the answers you need” I nod, looking up at him “You ready” I nod once again, he sighs and squeezes my hand in reassurance. He leads us to Moletsane, who smiles and walk ahead of us. We round the mountain to the other side where we find an entrance cave.

The entrance is sealed with a beautiful soft like lion skin, with tails and bones decorating around the entrance edges. Moletsane halts before the entrance, puts his tail inside the bucket and sprinkles the covering lion skin

“O mang?” (Who are you?) Moletsane asks, staring at the lion skin

“Tau ya hlathe, Moletsane” (Lion of the Jungle, Moletsane) Abuti Majara responds next to me, almost startling me. I keep my peace when I realise this is some custom of sort. Their demeanour about this moment have both changed, focusing in what they are doing with outmost respect and peace.

“O tswa kae?” (Where do you come from?) Moletsane asks

“Ha mantilatilane” (A place called Mantilatilane)

“Wa jang?” (What did you eat?) Moletsane

“Bohobe” (Bread)

“Wa futswela kang?” (With what?) Moletsane

“Metsi a pula” (Rain water)

“Ithoke hee morena” (Praise yourself) this time abuti majara expels a slow sigh first, gripping me harder

**“Naa ke motaung wa moletsane, motho wa modisa –phohole
Kopu-kopu madi atswa phuwaneng ya motho
Athe madi a tswa lehateng
Sa kena se ina-ina sethole, se ekile matswele
Ke lethiba kgorwane labo mpoetsi
Ha ke ipoke nna pholwana ke tsosa lesope” (Clan names)**

They both bow when he is done with the praises, I find myself bowing too. And ahead Moletsane lead us inside. The cave is not that dark. Multiple sticks are bundled together down the passage with red flames at the head providing light. The deeper we go the deeper the foreign smell of a herb like substance grows in my nostrils. In all this my hand is still in abuti majara’s hold with lewatile on his shoulder. Finally we come to the open large room full of people, immediately all eyes are thrown at us. Someone starts a low hymn, humming slowly and they all join in. Everyone is wearing the same blanket. Except Mamajara, she looks drained, eyes red, hollow, in petticoat and bra on the mattress next to the coffin. She and the coffin are at the front. Where she is seated with the coffin there is an icy formation above her. Water is dripping from the cave roof, wetting her and the coffin only.

Abuti Majara seats me on the first row, next to Mabereng, he smiles and kisses her cheek. Mabereng looks at him in tender care, she scans lewatile in his arms, plants a kiss on her forehead and nod to him. He goes to the front, gives Mamajara lewatile and come back to take a sit next to me on the floor. I watch Mamajara cradle my daughter from the front, wiping her tears as she gently looks at her. Only when I feel his eyes on me I realise I’m crying too. Before I can wipe my face, his free hand cups my face, cleans the falling tears off my cheeks with his thumb, the look I’m subjected to now is different, there is tenderness in it, something soft, something assuring. We are both brought from questing in each other’s eyes by Moletsane sprinkling water on everyone. They should have called him the water seer.

The low hymn never stops. When Moletsane is done sprinkling water on all family members on the other side, he goes to Mamajara, doesn't sprinkle her but strips my daughter off her blanket. The poor thing wails, out loud, reminding me of the day she was born, crying so badly. The one holding my hand squeezes it, in reassurance.

"Hushhhh" he whisper in my ear, gently wiping my tears away. Mamajara stands with the wailing lewatele, turn to the opened coffin. Moletsane takes my daughter from her hold, slowly sinks her in the coffin. I feel myself shiver on her behalf, running out of breath but quickly I recover. I almost jump but that assuring squeeze stops me "It's tradition" he whispers in my ear, calming me down. Lewatele immediately stops crying, her wails stops like a switch off the radio. The only sound is now the never ending hymn. My heart is beating out of my chest, I want to see if my daughter is still breathing.

"Majara?!" Moletsane calls out carrying my daughter out of the coffin, she silently kicks and moves a tiny feet in just her diaper. I release a low breath of relief "He wants you to give her a name, her mother as well, their royal names" Abuti Majara tenses, the song stops, people gasp

"Majara is married" Mapuso snaps, only when I hear her voice I realise she is in here

"Is he?" Moletsane challenges her but this woman is as vile as they come "Did you perhaps attend his wedding because none of us Bataung know about Majara's wedding?" Dear lord, what is happening in this family?

"Yes Moletsane, Angeline, Majara's wife. Did you forget her or your trying to pin that rapist's wife....." like lightning, Majara is pinning her to the wall. When did he?.....he was just here, right next to me. Mapuso is suspended in the air, eyes turning into white. No one is doing anything. What's wrong with this people?

"Moletsane?!" ntate tlali calls out "We don't want him turning today, please stop him" he begs

"Tame your wife tlali, Majara is going to kill her if she keeps coming for the people he loves" that comes out like a warning. He goes to Abuti Majara and hits him with a horn that is hanging around his neck. Immediately abuti Majara ceases, Mapuso falls on the floor gasping for air. A girl covered in a blanket as well, pulls Mapuso

beneath Abuti Majara's hold, who is now facing the wall taking deep breaths in order to calm down "You've come too far Moletsane, control it, don't let it control you" Moletsane the seer talks to Abuti Majara, squeezing his shoulder "What's the one thing you wouldn't go back for?"

"Not one but four. Lewatle, Ora, Say and....and Lwandle" his response comes immediate, very sure, although he is still facing the wall

"Good, good son. One last deep breath" the slow expansion and contraction of his shoulders shows that he is doing as told "Now come back for them" he expels another deep breath and turns, everyone look everywhere but him, like they weren't piercing him with their stares when he was facing the wall. He retires next to me once again, takes my hand once again, his palm is sweaty now, like he was washing his hands. My eyes immediately finds his, he blinks a lot but I can see the change in his pupils once again, they are black. Now I know I wasn't hallucinating earlier on "Well what's a funeral without drama" Moletsane takes attention once again "Where was I?.....oh Majara, Peete awaits your response before he passes over"

"Majara son please do it for your brother, it's his last request please" ntate bereng begs in a low pained voice. Abuti Majara expels another sigh, helping me up. He walks us to the coffin, I feel wobbly, my knees kissing on each other the closer we get.

"I won't let you fall" he whispers once again in my ear, I draw my strength from his moist hold and trust him to catch me if I fall. By the coffin we both stand, Moletsane hands him my daughter, who is now wrapped in her little blanket. We both stand in silence staring at my pale husband. He still looks like him, like the Peete I know. If only he could open his eyes. Abuti Majara stills as if having internal communication with his brother, he gazes at me with that soft expression of his, black pupils gone, his back to his normal self "It's time to say goodbye to him" I know, I smile with a trembling lip at what was once my husband, what was once my reason for breathing. In the coffin I look, at what was once the biggest part of me, my peace, my happiness, my life. Internally I say my own goodbyes.

**"Don't leave me my love
Don't tear my heart into pieces that will never be mended.
Don't shatter me my love**

**You're forever embedded in my tormented heart
Don't leave me in this pit
I can't crawl out of it alone
I need you to breathe, to survive and to raise our daughter with you by my
side**

**Don't leave me my love
I'm just an orphan with nobody
You're my home, my life, the reason I wake up
everyday I'm nobody without you
I'm just an empty vessel, my soul left with you**

**Don't leave me my love
Please stay with me
I have just our daughter to live for
The pit is way too dip
I don't know how I'm going to crawl out of it
I don't know who is going to hold my hand back to
live I don't know how I'm going to numb the pain**

**But if you have to leave my love
I'll hold on for the beautiful soul we created
I'll stay in the pit because life goes on
I'll do my best to be both parents for her
Please watch for us my love
I'll hold on to hope that someday we'll be reunited
Sleep tight my love, you have my heart even in
sleep I hope you keep it safe wherever you are
Don't free it for anyone, keep it for eternity"**

That assuring squeeze brings me back, for once we share the same pain, I feel his pain in mine. This right here was both our reason for breathing. He lets go of my hand, but his eyes never leave me. He looks at me like I am a quest, searching for something deep within. Again he opens his palm, this time asking for permission. "Let me help you out of the pit" he asks, opening his hand to me. I feel like something pushes my hand in his, the minute we touch connection sparks in both of us, like a gust of foreign feeling sweeps us. That gentle tender look he hardly

gives, creeps his face, taking me with. For some reason we both giggle, staring at each other.

“Hmmm” Moletsane clears his throat, cocking an eyebrow at us. He excuse us from the coffin with a head gesture pointing us back to the floor. The whole family line up, each and every one saying their goodbyes in their own way. I realise Mapuso and the girl who pulled her both didn’t go to say goodbye to Peete. The girl looks anguished, like in excruciating pain, crying from within but totally failing. Mapuso is now the one trying so hard to contain her. I wonder who she is?

When all was done, one by one we all walked out of the cave, Mapuso had the tormented girl under her arm who could barely walk. Abuti Majara and I, are the last to walk out of the cave leaving Mamajara, mabereng, ntate bereng, ntate tli and Moletsane in the cave with the coffin. The minute we walk out, there is a bubbly beautiful girl standing as if waiting on us. Tapping her foot while at it. She looks somewhere in her early adulthood, about 20 or 21. I see that ghost of smile on his face once again, that one he hardly dishes. He catches the girl right on time, spinning her around. When he puts her down the girl is crying, he brings her to his chest kissing the top of her head. His so tall he bends a bit to kiss the top of her head.

“Oh my Oros, you’ve grown” the girl laughs, still in tears. He holds her shoulders, gently pulling her off his waist, studying her “Have you two met?” he asks the girl, pointing between her and I

“No, but I know about her” her voice comes soft, caring, like mamajara’s voice

“Lwandle, this is my little sister, straight from my mother’s womb. The full stop of Mamajara and Bereng” they both explode, as if in some kind of a joke “This is Princess Oratuwe Molapo”

“Hi” she says shyly under her brother’s arms, giving me her hand

“I’m Lwandle but you can call me Lwa” she nods with a smile

“May I?” she request for Lewatle in my arms, I place my baby in her hold. She beams with affection “Ncooo, nana aunty” her brother laughs

“Where is Seeiso?” he asks

She rolls her eyes first, still kissing on lewatle “Somewhere chasing hot cousins”
Abuti Majara huffs shaking his head

“OLA OLA! MJAY JAY, JASON, JAYSTOS, JUJUMY, AHFFF JUMANJI OF THE FAMILY BANNA. THE DEVIL IS BACK. KE TELLAAAA FROM TODAY, NO ONE WILL TOUCH ME, MY BEAST IS BACK” (I’m so disrespectful from today.....) from the crowd a young hot, and I mean hot boy screams, taking all the attention heading straight to us. His got one of those walks, the million dollar walk with bracket legs. Abuti Majara narrows his eyes at him, trying to scare him but who is this boy “Hmm beauty, oh lala! Hello beautiful” he greets me, with what I think is him trying to be sexy. He takes my hand and kisses the top of it. I can’t help but laugh. He turns to Majara “Jumanji” he is being subjected to a cold look but it doesn’t look like it scares him “Hau! Kiss me ndoda, you haven’t seen me in what? Five years? I have a beard now” indeed he does, it looks well taken care off. From the five minutes I have met him I can tell his a young player, he looks like he is somewhere between 20 or 21, he actually looks like Ora.

Finally the so called ‘Jumanji’ fist bump him, laughing and ruffling his head “A.a Mjay, I’m too old for that shit, don’t be ruffling with my head like I’m your six year old son”

“I can’t believe I missed your stupid ass” Majara, he looks happy, at ease even. He looks at me “This is Ora’s twin, Seeiso, we call him Say. They are twins but Ora is the youngest twin, making her the full stop” him and Seeiso burst laughing, laughing so loud reminding me of Peete’s laughter.

“Hmk, I’m an uncle bathong! Let me see, I hope this one is not cute or else im dead” he remarks already taking lewatle from Ora “Oh I’m dead, my money is gone” he kisses her forehead “Baby girl why do you have to be so cute heee”

“Bring her back” Ora, already trying to take her from her twin. They fight, Seeiso doesn’t want to let her go “Bona, it’s time for the burial, look Mama just came out” (See) from the entrance Mamajara appears with Mabereng, now dressed in black. She looks drained. They are both heading to us.

“Will you be okay? We have to go bury him, only males are allowed to the burial site” Abuti Majara lowly asks, speaking to me. I nod. “We’ll be back before 8 pm” I nod okay once again “You still have my number if you need me right” I nod “Good”

he squeezes my shoulder and look at Ora "Please look after ausi lwa until I come back, keep Mapuso at bay okay"

"Sure thing Jumanji" Abuti Majara laughs but his laughter is cut short when his mother and grandmother reaches us.

He kisses Mabereng's cheeks again "Sgriza, o right?" (You okay) Mabereng nods drained too. He doesn't greet his mother, he looks at Mamajara with nothing but pure disgust.

"Maja....." He pauses her with his index finger

"Don't even say my name out of your mouth mother" he hisses, but his voice is kept at base not to attract an audience.

"Majara ngwanaka...." (My child) Mamajara tries to reason but she is cut off

"Your no mother to me, your cruel, you deserve everything coming to you, this is just the beginning" Mamajara is crying, tears falling down her cheeks like rivers

"MAJARA" Mabereng hisses, admonishing him

"It's the truth nkgono, where is my brother mother? Peete is six feet under all because you couldn't stand for you son, you threw him right in the pit. Choose to believe that zulu woman whose been nothing but pain from day one" (Grandma) zulu woman? Who is that?

"MAJARA?!" from behind, ntate tlali hisses "Go bury your brother, let bygones be bygones" he barks, but in a low voice

"No, be reconciled?" he chuckles in annoyance "You all kicked my brother out of his own home and exiled him while I was away, none of you believed him and stood by him. You choose that thing you call a wife over your own grandson. I'm making all of you a promise, I'm going to avenge my brother, one by one, your all going to pay dearly" with that he turns, going back to the cave where all the males are all going back. Ntate tlali follows him after releasing an exhausted sigh. My head is buzzing. What the hell is going on here? Is my perfect family not so perfect?

CHAPTER 6

The drive back to the palace is a bit sombre. I'm overwhelmed with waves of emotions, lost in my head with multiple questions bombarding my already heavy mind. I'm with the bubbly Ora who couldn't put Lewatle down. She doesn't talk much but she has a pleasant presence, every now and then she steals a glance at me and smiles but immediately look the other way when I reciprocate her smile. Her quite personality gives me ample time to wallow in my thoughts. What the hell was that at the caves? Why does abuti Majara blame his mother for my husband's death? And who was that girl who couldn't even walk, she cried like a side chick at sugar daddy's funeral. Is she perhaps my husband's ex? Or.....oh my God! It hits me, it hits me like a hammer screwing a nail into the surface. That could be my husband's wife, another wife? Could he perhaps have left a wife at home? Now it makes sense, mamajara once denied having two grandchildren, maybe she is the mother of the other grandchild she denied, or is the other grandchild she denied abuti Majara's son..... But why?

"Ausi Iwa" gentle voice draws me up from my troubled thoughts, she is climbed off the car, standing down holding lewatle and tshepo by their side "We are here ausi" sigh! I nod following her off the car. Tshepo nods and gives his signature greeting and goes back to the car. I follow Ora into the mansion, the yard is now bathed with couple of eyes, almost all staring at us, especially me. I cannot hear them but I can see some whisper at my sight, pointing at me like I'm a curse. A dirty little secret "Don't mind them, they are always like this whenever we have someone new in the family" poor thing trying to be gentle, I'm sure these people are thinking I'm a side chick

"Princess Ora, Mam" the familiar Palesa from earlier on welcome us at the door, with the outmost respect "how may I be of your service today my princess?" she asks bowing

"We are okay ausi palesa.....oh! You can organise ausi Iwa a room, please" ora, gentle as ever

"I already have a room ora" ora turns surprised

"You do?"

“Abuti Majara gave me Peete’s room” she nods and turns to palesa

“Thank you ausi palesa” palesa nods and disappears down the passage. Both ora and I head up to my room. The stairs are quite long, I wish we had taken Majara’s elevator.

She puts my baby who is now asleep on the bed “Would you like something to eat ausi?” she asks shy, not able to hold my stare

“Yes, I’m quite famished” she nods and heads for the door but I stop her before she exits the room, remembering something “Ora?!”

“Ausi” she is standing by the door

“Who was that girl with Mapuso?” she is a shy girl, her nerves shoot the roof at my question

“She....she is....Nolizwe.....Mapuso’s daughter” daughter of Mapuso? Meaning she cannot be my husband’s side chick or wife. They are cousins, more like siblings. If she is Mapuso’s daughter it means she is ntate tlali’s daughter, who happens to be my husband’s grandfather. So confusing.

“Why was she like that?” Ora fidgets

“Ausi I think you should ask Mama or Mme all these questions, I don’t want to get in trouble” she is right, I should let the poor girl go “May I go?” I nod and she flies out of the room. I release a much needed breathe to gather my thoughts. Something about that girl, just doesn’t give me a break. Something about her leaves a bitter taste in my thoughts, wait.....why is her name Nolizwe? Aren’t they all sothos?

The humble pair both walk in on me while I’m still in my full FBI mode, trying to crack a case in my head.

“Lwaaa!” Mabereng exclaims walking in, not pleased “What are you doing?”

“Ahhhm.....going to unpack my bags” I’m dragging my suit cases to the closet room but I stop immediately, confused, I hope I didn’t offend them in any way

“You should be in bed, you just gave birth child. Sit down, I’ll get someone to do that for you. And you should not lift any heavy objects. The only heavy item you should lift is that beauty snoring down there” sigh! I abandon my clothes, joining my silent drained mother in law on the bed.

“You look beautiful Maa” I compliment, thinking it will lift her spirit, but she indeed looks beautiful in her widow’s weeds

“Lwa” Mabereng shakes her head in disapproval “We don’t compliment someone wearing black for their loved ones by saying they are beautiful. We have to say they look ugly, because traditionally saying someone is beautiful in widow’s weeds it’s like calling death upon them all over again” Mamajara gives me a look that say she disagrees with her mother in law but she doesn’t dare say it

“I’m sorry Maa, I didn’t know. Are you okay?” her eyes are full of sparkling tears, she wipes her face and sigh before looking up at me

“I’m fine baby, I’m wearing this for you. You owe me” we all giggle “You should thank my beautiful grandchild here” she is brushing on her face “Or else you would be the one dressed in black for an entire year?”

“Year?” she nods with a smile and heavily sighs

“Don’t worry, the worst is over. Tomorrow we going to formally introduce you to our ancestors and every one. Then will give you rules on how you carry yourself during this mourning period” I nod “Now get in bed and be a new mother, your job is just to sleep and feed my grandbaby here, I’ll show you around and the entire house tomorrow” she orders, opening covers for me but I don’t get in, I need a cleansing first “Mme call palesa to come unpack her bags” Mabereng nods, taking the telephone on the bedside table I’ve been wondering what it’s doing in the bedroom. She only presses one button and puts it on her ear.

“Palesa, get someone to come unpack Ausi Lwandle’s bags” she shoots straight to the point “Wait....what?” now both mamajara and I stare at her at the change of her tone, she sounds bewildered, annoyed while at it “It’s fine Palesa, she is already coming” she drops the call with a defeated look “Angeline is coming” mamajara looks bored already

“Mme I just buried my son, can I not deal with Majara skank, not today of all days” she snaps, gripping her disgust to the poor pillow like it did her wrong

“Mamajara calm down, you’re in black, you have to mind your language” Mabereng warns, her warning is received with an exhausted sigh “I hope she is with your grandchild” Mabereng giggles, elevating my mother in law’s unpleasantness “Even if you narrow your eyes at me, that’s your grandchild”

“Your great grandchild too” that annoys her too, judging from her expression.

“Knock knock” soft voice asks for permission, mabereng replies with a bored voice for her to come in. In comes a beautiful woman, damn she is beautiful, petite, tall, perfect body, damn gorgeous! Her face is dressed with a beautiful warm smile “Dumelang” (Greetings) even her voice is beautiful. Hmk! That shoe, I wonder how many inches it is, I wouldn’t dare rock heels so high.

“Dumela Angie” Mabereng responds, my mother in law cannot even bring herself to look at this woman, she definitely hates even the air she breathes

“Mother in law, I brought your grandson” I sense a bit of sarcasm in her voice

“I bet you did Angeline, what do you want?”

“Oh mother in law, I’m here to see Peete’s wife” like she just remembered, she looks at me with a smile “Hellooo”

“Hi” she keeps her eyes on me

“I’m sorry about Peete sweetheart, my condolences” I nod, returning her beautiful smile “I’m Angeline, Mjay’s wife” I shake her warm hand

“Are you?” Mamajara questions with a mock “When was your wedding dear? I would have loved to see my son marry a whore of your calibre, you truly are the best of them all. Ambassador of whores in Lesotho” Haaa! My jaws are sweeping the floor, mamajara? The sweet mother in law just said that?

“A witch like you wasn’t needed to tie our union, yes I may be a whore but honey I have your son’s diamond ring on my finger, the sooner you all accept that, the better for all of us” Angie waves a huge diamond ring on her finger

“Really? And why didn’t he give you his last name? Does that stone compensate for not carrying his surname, by the way....what is Jackie Chan’s surname” Mabereng burst in laughter, hiding her teary face by her hand. That infuriates the beauty queen, up and down she slowly breathes, abandoning her beauty, now that she is angry I think she is not that beautiful. Who the hell is Jackie chan? Is it the one I’m thinking? The rush hour guy?

“I may not have his last name but you know I have him, right at the palm of my hand” she sounds and looks very devious

“That you do, did they tell you that he is here?” Angie cringes, pops her eyes like she just saw a ghost “I guess Mapuso wanted Majara to squeeze the life out of you like he almost did her, she told you Peete’s wife is home but forgot to tell you that your so called husband is home too”

“O leshano mamajara” (Your lying) her voice comes in a whisper

“Good thing you came with his son, he is going to be so pleased to see his son, for the first time. I can’t wait, what’s his name again?” Angie is now visibly trembling “Jackie Chan? Oh boy I can’t wait for him to see his son” poor thing is now glued to the wall, with no words to say

“Enough” Mabereng comes to the rescue “It’s been a long day and I think Lwa wants to sleep now” Mamajara nods with a sigh

“Your right Mme, let me go fix you a plate my beautiful Molapo daughter in law” I think that is to infuriate her other daughter in law, she stands, preparing to leave. My sister in law seems to have regained her composure, she unglued herself from the wall and is now sitting on my bed

“I actually came to talk to you nana” my sister in law informs, smiling at me. The two women behind her are now laced with frowns over their faces “I hear you’re zulu and not familiar with Lesotho, I was wondering if I can take you out and show you around” I’m looking at her but my eyes are fixed at the two behind her shaking their heads for me to say no

“Aaah thank you but, you see.....my daughter, she is still a new born and ” I’m cut off, by mabereng already pulling angie up

“Lewatle is still young, her mother can’t be walking around, she will attract bad spirits and bring them to the baby”

“But Mme....” She doesn’t give her a chance to speak

“But nothing, let’s go” Mabereng pulls her out of the room and they are out, I’m left with Mamajara, who is now dressed in embarrassment

“I’m sorry my baby” she says sweetly staring at me

“Maa I have questions” she nods, coupled times

“I know my baby, let’s sleep, then tomorrow, we’ll sit down” I nod “I’ll tell Palesa to bring your food and make your wardrobe, please rest my baby” sigh! I nod though I’m not happy “Thank you for loving my son” she squeezes my shoulder once again, gives me that adoring look of hers and exits the room. I take this time to go and wash the day away, Lewatle will sleep without bathing, I’m not waking her. Poor thing is dead in sleep. After my much needed bath I found my table for one nicely set besides my bed

“Mam” o voice comes from behind me, startling me “I’m sorry my lady, I was told to come and unpack your bags, I’ll be in the closet” I nod and Palesa disappears back to the closet. After eating I retired next to my baby, Palesa wheeled the table out when I was done. My body only complained when I sunk the bed. I wasn’t aware I was this exhausted, immediately I could feel my body submerge into deep sleep.

That sleep again, the one I feel like something is pressing me down. I don’t want to open my eyes again but something compels me to. I feel a shiver before I could finally shoot my eyes awake, wiping a gloop of spit trickling out at the side of my mouth. Now I know I was sleeping good. What could have woken me? It’s still dark and Lewatle is not even crying.

“I did” fuck! I jump, his voice comes in a dark room. Can he not be weird please, it’s the middle of the night for Christ sakes and what’s he doing in my room “It’s morning actually and I can be anywhere I like, whenever I feel like, I don’t sleep”

“Can you please switch on the light?” he obeys, flickers the light much to my drowsy eyes. It takes a moment for my eyes to adjust to the brightness. He is standing by

the wall, tall, legs crossed and his left hand playing around his chin. His in just tall silk pj pants with nothing on top “What are you doing here, shouldn’t you be sleeping?” I’m annoyed

“I don’t sleep” can we be in tune, can he please answer the things I ask him

“How is that my problem” now I cannot hide the lace of annoyance in my voice. He laughs out loud, infecting me with his laughter, I end up giggling and shaking my head

“Is that you shouting?” he still amused, he strides to the bed, sits below my feet “You know this is the second time you shout at me, if that’s what you call shouting”

“I hate being woken up” he nod, containing his simple normal self, switching to the serious himself

“I’m sorry” I nod “I thought we could talk” I know he promised to answer my questions tomorrow, not this late “It’s morning Iwandle, 3 am to be precise” sigh! He is back in my head. I sit up straight and balance by the headboard, this gives him space to lie under my feet with his stomach. When he sure of his resting position, he releases a sigh, looks intently in my eyes from the side view “Peete” his eyes stares in affection “That was my day one nigger, the bastard who took my baby spot. I hated him, the day olady came with him” (mother) we both laugh, he shakes his head “The following day it was a different story, I went back to sleep with my parents, just so I can guard my little brother” for a minute he stares up, consumed with guilt “I wasn’t there for him when he needed me the most....” he trails off, still staring in space

“I beg to differ, if he made me his last voice note on his death bed asking me to reach out to you, he knew you were his hero. He knew you would do right by him, even in death” a creep of smile wears him turning to me “How was he like growing up? And what let to him being exiled?” he heaves a sighs and look up again

“My brother was.....he was the perfect son, the normal one. The one groomed for the throne because he was of the right bloodline and second born to Mamajara and Bereng. And boy he loved the attention” he chuckles shaking his head

“You’re the first, right?” he nods “Why couldn’t you be the one for the throne?” another sigh he expels

“You said you want to know why your husband was exiled, not my business” arrogant bastard “And I’m your brother in law njalo lwandle, you can’t be calling me a bastard” I giggle, looking away from him and he just shakes his head, back to being serious “Peete was to take the throne, straight after my father steps down the chair but one fateful night destroyed everything. Peete was found in Nolizwe’s bedroom, naked and had taken her by force”

“Rape?” my voice comes in whisper, not able to put the word with my husband in the same sentence. He is not looking at me, he is looking up but I can see him nod

“The family was woken up by painful screams of Nolizwe, the girl screamed so loud waking the entire palace, she was trembling and shaking on top of the bed. With Peete right next to her. She said Peete raped her” my heart stops, I look at him expecting him to say he is joking

“Nooo” I’m in denial, my voice comes weak, broken

“My brother’s life shattered from that day. I’m told he was just looking up the ceiling, failing to utter even a single word”

“You weren’t there?” he shakes his head no “Peete would never.....” I’m defending my husband, because I know him

“The doctor was called and he confirmed that the girl was raped. Peete’s DNA was found all over the girl and his semen was.....” I stop him with a hand, I don’t want to hear how my husband’s semen was found in the poor girl’s private part “That’s why he was exiled” my voice fails me, a grip of disgust is growing up in my guts “And the girl in question is Nolizwe, Mapuso’s bastard child” I frown “Mapuso is zulu, the name Mapuso she was given here when my grandfather married her to hide the shame he brought on the family. Mapuso was his whore, one of the girls brought to royal men to entertain themselves when they visited the royal bataung in the Free State. That’s where he initially met her. But years later she promoted to being his mistress and more years later a zulu woman named Zanele Miya popped up here with a boy Peete’s age who looked just like us and a young girl who definitely was not ours. The boy was definitely my grandfather’s. He was named Puso, changed from his zulu name his mother had given him. But his sister Noliwe was not acknowledged by our ancestors because she is not of our blood, though she was raised here. To hide the embarrassment my grandfather brought on the

family he had to marry his mistress as second wife with both her children, and she was named Mapuso after marriage.

“So my husband, he.....” I can’t even say it, but he gets me “Mapuso’s daughter?”

He nods “The one who was shattered than the most at the funeral” this explains why Mapuso hates me so much “Let me ask you something, if someone raped you, would you cry like that for them? Like you lost a jewel or something” what’s he insinuating?

“I.... I don’t know, maybe I would cry that the bastard died after what he did to me, but I wouldn’t be broken like that” he nods

“One of the things that confirms my suspicions, I know Peete, I know my brother, he would never. I mean poor thing was even scared of dikwena. There is no way in hell Peete would force himself on a woman, let alone a girl so young” (.....Prostitutes.....) he sounds adamant

“What did he say to defend himself?”

“Apparently he said nothing, they say he was staring in space like a zombie and took all the blame. And just like that he was kicked home”

“Peete was a rapist” I murmur in disbelief “I married a man who molested a young girl”

“Don’t say that lwandle, my brother was anything but that. I’m going to prove it to you and everyone that Peete was an honourable man” he searches my eyes, desperate for me to believe him. But Peete? I mean I stayed with the man for two years while I knew him for another two years, in total I had known my husband for four years. Did he look like a rapist? No, he was a normal guy, a guy who loved me and had no red flags what so ever but then again rapist don’t have tags that define them. One can never know.

CHAPTER 7

Gosh! My neck hurts. I groan in pain twisting my neck to ease the ache in my muscles. Fight drowsiness trying to flicker my eyes open while I rub on my sore neck. The light is indeed welcoming my eyes to a new day. It's morning already. I twist my stiff neck running my eyes around the room, but I immediately stop at what's below my feet. He slept here. And I slept seated by the headboard, that's why my neck hurts this much. Jesus this man will get me in trouble, why would he sleep here? Where is Angie? I don't want to get in anyone's bad books, I already have a rapist of a husband, that's bad enough. I don't need more.

"Abuti Majara" my wakeup call is followed with a bit of a kick, I'm gently kicking him so he can quickly wake up and get the hell out of here "Abuti Majara" another kick but still nothing "Majara" this kick is pushed with much effort hoping to revive him to a new day. Is he doing this on purpose? "Majara" one last hard kick, I gave that one my all but still nothing. This man has to be shitting me. With exasperation I abandon my bed, wrap myself with a gown and turn to the edge of the bed, where his face is positioned on top of his arm as a pillow. The nigger is even snoring, how can one man sleep so well in such uncomfortable position.

"Abuti Majara" now I'm back at waking him, this time I stoop to his face, giving his cheek slight slaps "Abuti Majara wake up maan" I'm slowly retracting from annoyance to worry. For a while I just stare at him, listen to him snore and my palpitating heart. He is breathing right? Snoring means breathing.....my hand feel his skin, he is warm. Why is he not waking up? "Abuti Majara please" my now trembling voice confirms my fears, I'm now scared, close to tears.....Lord what did I do? Why isn't he waking up?. a soft knock comes live from the door, making my heart stop.

"Mam....Mam Lwa it's me palesa, I'm here to see if I may offer any of my services before I fix you breakfast" Palesa, I sigh, release slow breath to regain myself. Services? Can she wake a sleeping man? To the door I march, carefully opening up just enough for my face to peep through.

“Hi palesa” she nods with a bow, I try very hard to hide how nervous I am “Can you please call Maa for me, tell her it’s urgent” she frowns, looking up at me in confusion

“Maa?” she asks, I nod “Who is Maa?” if it was any other day I would have laughed “Mamajara” she pops her eyes

“The queen?” is she? Now I’m confused...oh yah, my father in law is the king. I nod again “I’ll do so my lady” she bows and leaves. I close the door and remain facing it for a while, hoping for miracle behind me but what do I have, the bastard is still sleeping. God this is embarrassing, his half-dressed, in my room, sleeping. God please don’t let Angie find out about this. As frustrated as I am, I continue with my useless technique of waking my brother in law, now I’m even begging him. I retire next to him in defeat. Burying my frustrated face with my hands. Peete if you’re out there, do something my husband, please don’t let this shame on me, wake him up. I don’t need a burden of being shamed for having my brother in law in my room for the night, people are not going to believe that he just slept.....a once knock and opening of the door stops my train of cries to my husband, Mamajara walks in with a smile but immediately frowns when her eyes fall on the man on my bed.

“Maa I swear he just slept, one minute we were talking and then somehow he slept, I slept...maa” she is not looking at me, she is staring at her son in astonishment

“He is sleeping?” her voice comes in a whisper, in disbelief

“Yes Maa, and he doesn’t wake up, I tried to wake him up” her eyes are fixed on her son

“He is sleeping” this time it’s not a question, she is telling herself, making herself believe it “Majara Molapo is sleeping” only now she looks up at me, with a smile “What are you doing to my son?”

“Huh?” if she wasn’t smiling I would have thought she is asking that otherwise

“Majara never sleeps”

“Maa” I think I’m confused

“My son doesn’t sleep, not after... ” she trails off, stops herself “It worked, they purified him” now she is talking alone, I have no idea what she is talking about, she

look up and claps her hands in gratitude “Kea leboha bomoletsane” (Thank you bomoletsane-moletsane are clan names). She goes to the telephone and press a single button “Bereng your son is asleep..... Not that hot head, Majara... I swear, in lwandle’s room..... Come see for yourself, tell mme and ntate” she laughs before dropping the call. Tell....did she just invite more people to this embarrassing moment “Why are you so spooked?” now she is talking to me, sitting besides me brushing on her son face

“Maa I don’t think it’s appropriate that he is in my room like this, his wife might not take this well” that devious smile creeps her face

“Ohh lwandle your giving me ideas” she stands, going back to the phone “I hope that wh*re is still here” she presses the phone, not minding my confused face, who is she calling? No no no “Makoti waka..... how did you sleep baby... nice next to your husband the entire night neah oh baby girl, and who is this I have in my other daughter in law’s room... See you now now my baby” she drops the call, smiling, I don’t return her devious smile. I hate being put in the middle of things I know nothing about “Relax will you” she is talking to me, sitting back to brush on my brother in law, it’s cute to watch him this asleep, I don’t think he would let his mother do this to him if he was awake

“It’s not right Maa, that woman will hate me and I really don’t want to cause more troubles”

“Trust me she already despises you”

“Why?” she chuckles

“Lewandle have you seen yourself? Have you seen how Majara looks at you?” now that’s nonsense “I don’t want to confuse you but even a fool can see and sense what’s about to happen and darling that woman she may have not seen it herself but trust me, her accomplices told her, hence why she was here trying to befriend you. Wear a thick skin here lwandle, fight for your spot” what spot “It feels good to baby him like this” now that makes both of us giggle “he would bite my head off if he woke up to me brushing him, such a hot head” she kisses his cheek, looking at him with nothing but pure love.

The door burst open, with no knock. Mabereng, ntate Tlali, ntate Bereng and Moletsane all walk in. Coming to the sleeping man’s face they all exclaim.

“The journey to the mountains worked?” Ntate bereng asks, touching on his son

“No, this has nothing to do with his clout, I think the young Mrs. Peete Molapo here wasn’t meant for peete after all, peete was meant to bring her to his brother but....the universe happened, showed it’s ulterior motives, but then again who wouldn’t fall for such innocent beauty” the gentle man in the room agree with Moletsane, I hope my mind is not taking this to my heart. Mamajara gives me a look that says I told you

“How do we wake him?” I ask, bringing the attention to me. All this people seems pleased with him sleeping, no one is asking how to wake him. Moletsane laughs, staring at me.

“You care about him, don’t you?”

“What? No....yes I mean I care about him, his my brother in law” he laughs, now joined by almost the entire room

“Do we need to call Zwelithini and Gumede to help us revive him?” Ntate bereng asks looking at Moletsane

“No Vulamasango’s case was different, the curse was lifted the day he bed his chosen. This one it’s the Alpha in him, for once sleeping at the presence of the one who can tame it” gasp! Almost everyone in the entire room seems shocked except me, I’m confused, they seem to be speaking things out of my reach, things I can’t even make out what they mean

“Does this mean what I’m thinking?” ntate tlali asks, bewildered

“Yes, she is the one to tame it, and it wants her” From his gown pockets he produces that horn and small container, he kneels next to him, recites his clans smearing his nostrils, ears, head, feet, and hands with the stinking Vaseline from the container.

“Tsoha hee moletsane” (Wake up Moletsane) he hits him hard with that horn, I almost feel for him, immediately he groans, looking the other way changing his sleeping position. Angie walks in, right in that moment and I feel like the world could swallow me. For some reason, she keeps quite, not happy but quite, I think she respects the gentlemen in the room “Tsoha Moletsane” another hard hit abuti Majara sprung up, almost falling down but his quick to balance with his hands,

everyone is laughing expect me and angie. He stands up, with a frown, stretching his arms and that sound, the sound of breaking bones when you stretch yourself fills the whole room. God he is still has nothing on top, only his pj pants that hang so damn se.....I stop, much to my displeased subconscious, she will finish it herself. I just buried my husband a day ago, my subconscious shouldn't be checking my brother in law's v structure that travels nicely shaped south of his strong muscled body..... 'He looks edible' my subconscious snide when I least expect it.

"F*ck, does it feel like this to sleep?" he utters his first words, still stretching

"Mind sharing your dream, your first dream, or should I call it a wet dream" he narrows his eyes at moletsane

"What's wrong with you? Get of my head" he barks, moletsane dies in laughter, I think only them knows what the joke is all about "Where is Lwa?" moletsane points me with his head "You good?" I nod, immediately looking the other way "Olady, tyma, sgriza, Oupa" he acknowledges, still stretching his arms

"OUPA is jou gat" (is your ass) Ntate tlali hisses, seeding the whole room with laughter

"You can all go now, I'm fine people"

"Ungrateful bastard, see me right away" Moletsane is the first to walk out of the room, followed by everyone except mamajara and angie, I think only now he sees angie.

"Angie?" he looks surprised

"Hey" angie looks nervous "I..... I heard your back" why is she like this around her husband, and why is he like this, they look like strangers

"Yeah, where is my son?" both mamajara and angie chokes, almost both cough to nothing

"She....she....he is on a school drip, right angie" mamajara jumps in

"Yes, yes mme is right, you'll see him when he comes back" what? Yesterday angie said she brought the child and why is mamajara suddenly on her side? What is going on here?

"His six? Isn't he too young to be going on school drips?"

“His six mjay, and very clever” angie

“He should be, he is got clever genes after all” angie narrows her eyes at mamajara, who rolls her eyes in return

“What is going on?” Majara asks the two woman but no one replies, there is something shady going on between the two. He eventually shakes his head when he realises no one is going to reply him. He stoops to me, cage me with his arms putting both of his hands on either side of my body on the bed, I cower back with my palpitating heart when his face almost collide with mine. What the f*ck is he doing? His wife is in the room “I have to go wash up, will you be okay?” I nod, swallowing my nerves down my throat “We’ll finish up our talk later on after the ceremony” what ceremony? “Your introduction ceremony, you’ll be formally introduced to our ancestors today and I have to think of a name I’m going to give you and lewatile” gosh can he back off

“You?” angie asks appalled “Majara, first they want you to dress her, now name her? Whose wife is she?” the tension in the room thickens, I feel her question and quite frankly I’m starting to have more questions, mamajara blows a whistle going to lewatile, whom I wasn’t aware is now awake. She plants a peck on her forehead and scoop her.

“Let’s go have a bath baby” she takes my daughter, and out she walks with my baby, leaving me in this situation.

“Mjay I asked a question, whose wife is she?” only now this one moves from caging me, I can finally breath

“You know its tradition” what tradition? Angie’s eyes pop

“Don’t tell me you’re stepping in for Peete?” step in? What are they talking about?

“It’s what my brother wants and it’s what I’ll give him”

“YOU HAVE GOT TO BE F*CKING KIDDING ME” Angie snaps, bringing majara to his cold physique

“What?” he asks calm, staring at her, she swallows, dropping her chest

“I’m sorry.....it’s just.....Majara no, you can’t do this”

“Why not?” he asks with a shrug

“We are married?”

“Are we?” angie fails to respond “Don’t be acting like my wife, we both know we are in a deal, not married. Pull yourself together, jealousy doesn’t do your beauty justice”

“F*ck you, you hear that majara, f*ck your cold self, no wonder you can’t.....” she clears her throat, regretting whatever she was about to say

“Get out”

“Mjay....”

“Out Angeline” he snaps “And next time you go around opening your legs for boys in hotels, be damn careful, I can’t be cleaning your mess all the damn time. Your father is on your tail” angie blinks, coupled times before she walks out. He releases another sighs before he turns to me. He burns me with his stare, trapping my thinking and voice with just his look. I lose the battle looking the other way “What?” he murmurs

“I have more questions” he smirks

“I bet you do, your one inquisitive little madam, aren’t you?” he shouldn’t test me, I have to know for my own good, I know nothing about his culture “I have one minute to spare, ask the main one before I go and I’ll answer you”

“What did that thing of dressing me with your jacket mean and what does naming me and my daughter mean?” he laughs, the mocking laugh

“I said one question MaNgcobo” did he just address me like that? I flush, my cheeks turning pink under his combusting look “One minute is gone” he gives me a brief crooked smile followed with a swift head shake before he leaves the room, he pops his head back in while I’m still trying to recover from my shame of blush “Oh to answer both your questions, only a husband can dress and name his wife” he bangs the door just when my head takes in the news. What in Moshoeshoe land is happening? Am I being married off to him?

CHAPTER 8

I must say, I had a rather weird morning. From sleeping beast to discovering the news about what his ancestors wants 'is it only his ancestors that wants him to marry you or he also wants it too' my subconscious asked herself this tricky question and failed to come up with an answer. He is a closed person, too impassive, it's hard to place his feelings. I would say he genuinely cares for me as his brother's wife but I don't know him that well.

The breakfast table-for the first time I'm told I can sit on the table because proper customs to welcome me as a Molapo will be taken today, I wish my brother in law was here to walk with me, I don't think I have the strength to face the stares alone. I steal a glance at myself one last time in the mirror, doek fastened, shawl over my shoulders and long dress. I hope this works. Here goes nothing. The minute I open my door, I see he was about to knock, raising his fist to the door. This kid! There is something about him, something warm and lovely. I find myself giggling and shaking my head.

"Good morning ausi lwa, you look beautiful but too motherly" dear lord help with this one "A crop top wouldn't hurt, you're too covered" he mocks

"Seeiso I'm a daughter in law here, I have to dress like this" he laughs, taking my hand in his and leading the way

"Come, let's go. Wait until you see your sister in law. You'll wish to had taken me up on the crop top offer"

"Angie?" he leads us to the elevator, opens it and allow me in first, there is a bit of a gentlemen in him

"That one I wouldn't mind stepping in if Jumanji dies" he looks up lost in lust "In fact can he please die, lord I wouldn't mind being a ben 10 over there"

"Seeiso that's inappropriate, you can't be lusting over your sister in law" he rolls his eyes

"I wouldn't vele if she was one. That one is a Porsche, no one ever makes a wife out of a Porsche" the elevator slings open

“What does that mean?”

“Oh ausi lwa, have you seen angie?” I nod, he stops looking up in thought “She is the dirty type, the type you don’t even save in your phone, the DCD” a giggle comes from behind us and I see Ora

“Morning ausi Lwa” Ora, now walking besides us

“Morning baby, what is DCD?” Ora laughs

“Ask your poison” Seeiso

“Who is my poison?”

“Jumanji” Jesus this kid

“He is not my poison, and why do you call him Jumanji?”

“It’s his name” they both say in unison, both die in laughter

“Parents can be so mean, who names their child Jumanji?” Seeiso asks but receives no answer as we come to a table full of eyes, my nerves shoot up once again but the little guy holding me squeezes my hand in assurance, pulls a chair for me and sits besides me “Famili, madume” (Family, morning) I can’t greet, I’m too nervous, I feel small under the stares I’m subjected to.

“Morning, Seeiso, Say...” multiple they all respond to his greeting. My eyes finds the girl’s eyes, feeling guilty of what my husband did to her, is it okay for me to sit on the same table as her? Am I not making her feel uncomfortable, she looks the other way when I look at her. Sigh!

“And she can’t even greet her elders” Mapuso snarls

“Will you shut up, for once woman, just damn shut the hell up” ntate tlali snaps, I know I should have greet them but I’m nervous okay, can’t I be nervous in peace.....and behind me I feel him, he has a way of taking the room, the quietness suddenly wearing the big breakfast table confirms that he is behind me. I don’t want to turn but his presence behind me attunes to my body, bringing it to relax and ignite at the same time-a foreign emotional duality reflecting my emotions to him. When he feels I have calmed down, only then he pulls one of the vacant chairs next to a chubby beautiful woman. He kisses the woman’s cheek.

“Rakgadi, I didn’t see you yesterday” (Aunt) his talking to the woman, happy to see her

“My nephew passed Juju, there is no way I was going to miss his final goodbye” Abuti Majara nods, looking adorably at the woman “What were they doing to you in those mountains? You look....” She fails to find the word, stares at him studying him “Different”

“Maybe that’s because I’m a father now, I can’t wait to see my son” silence wears the table, uncomfortable silence.....the heel, the sound of a sharp heel hitting the floor becomes audible before she could shower us with her presence. Angie. Damn! She is beautiful. Is she supposed to wear something so short though?

“Hm...hm..hm you sexy thing, yoh! Jumanji I envy you man, Damnnnnn!” another new face remarks coming just behind Angie, his checking her out. Majara gives one of his smiles shaking his head “DCD or jwang Say” (or what?) seeiso nods quickly gritting his teeth

“Manners you two” the cold majara scold the two

“Is there anyone left?” Ntate tlali asks and everyone shakes their head “Puso bless the table” he orders

“Haaa! tyma” he whines, bringing seeiso and ora to laughter. It’s the guy that came last to the table, who was checking Angie out. He is Puso, Mapuso’s son I guess.

“Puso, tyma my foot, I said bless the table” now we all almost laugh

“Yoh! Join hands batho ba modimo” (people of god) we all join hands and bow “Oh .lord .my .god .please .bless .our .food .amen” he sings it like in primary school, is he real right now? Almost everyone sighs in defeat, attending their plates, making conversations.

“I need a favour?” Seeiso whisper in my ear, low so the table cannot hear him. I spare him my attention “I want you to borrow me princess, for just couple of hours tomorrow” confusion wears me

“Who is princess?” my voice matches his as we continue to eat

“Lewatle” I frown looking at him “There is this shandis wa bona, I vitizised her and now ke right, jwale madimane ha batle ho ntswa. I want to show her I made

someone pregnant and I'm now a father.....I know she will leave my d*ck alone" (....girl you see, I chowed her and now I'm okay but she refuse to leave me alone.....) bathong!

"Are you serious?" he nods "No, big N.O"

"Hau ausi lwa, I'll buy princess heels. What's her shoe size?" I'm defeated

"Say and lwa mind sharing what you two are whispering about?" Angie loudly asks, when we least expect it

"Princess, I want her to borrow me princess" Seeiso responds quickly

"Seeiso lewatele is still a baby, you can't go around gallivanting god know where with her. Tell one of your hookers to make you your own child" Mabereng

"Or better yet, maybe you can borrow Jet Li" Mapuso suggest, bringing Say, Ora and Puso to fits of laughter. Angie huffs, narrowing her eyes at Mapuso

"Who is that?" Abuti Majara asks, suddenly laughter dies, throats are cleared

"Your son" Mapuso is happy with the information

"Mapuso please don't do this" Mamajara begs, pleading with everything in her

"Do what? it's his son. He married a wife and they had a child. In fact it's about time he meets his son" Mapuso, Angie's hand is shaking, the fork in her hand is kissing the plate trembling "PALESA!" Mapuso screams, calling out for Palesa who immediately avails herself as if she wasn't far "Please bring Jet Li, his father would like to see him" Palesa nods immediately disappearing, everyone looks uncomfortable, silent waiting for the child with a weird names, first he was Jackie chan now jet li.

"Why do you all keep calling him Chinese names?" Abuti Majara asks with creased furrows on his forehead. No one responds, people keep their peace. Palesa comes holding a hand of white Chinese boy, killing every emotion in the room. Abuti Majara is looking at them but sending his eyes behind them hoping to see another boy come out "Palesa you were asked to bring my son, not Hong Kong over there, who is he by the way?" he asks, confused as I am

"That's your son, Jet Li Molapo" Mapuso is quick to reply, now I understand why the child was called Jackie Chan and now Jet Li. This has to be a joke.

He grins, faking a laugh “Mapuso stop smoking paint” he dismisses her, look at Angie who now I realise is crying, that plaster a frown on Majara’s face “Where is my son Angeline?” she can’t say a word, she burst into tears, neglecting her beauty once again “Tell me this is a joke” Abuti Majara pleads, not shouting but staring at her. He releases a defeated sigh, pushes his chair standing “Excuse me” he flies out of the room, Puso and Say follow him out. The table is left in thick silence. I give it to Angie, a Chinese child? Obviously she cheated, but with a Chinese though? Hai some women are strong, super woman!

After the awkward breakfast I haven’t seen abuti Majara, the palace is filled with people going up and down for my naming ceremony. My nerves are starting to shoot the roof. What if he doesn’t show? Who is going to name me then? Will the ancestors approve of me? Sigh! I miss my daughter, I wish she was with me. Another tiny person I last seen in the morning, Mamajara hasn’t returned her and I wonder what she is feeding her.

“Knock knock” Angie’s soft voice asks for entry already opening, my skin shoots light sweat of nerves. I’m still shaky of what transpired in the morning “Hey” she greets with a warm smile, assuring me that she comes in peace

“Angie” I nervously smile back, she is carrying a beautiful Seshoeshoe dress

“This is for you, I hope it fits” I raise an eyebrow in question “Traditionally your people are supposed to bring you here wearing a seshoeshoe. Just an act of showing they brought us a daughter in law” I nod in understating “So I thought maybe I should borrow you mine because we both know you don’t own any seshoeshoe dress” that she is right about, we both laugh

“Thank you, it’s beautiful”

“Put it on, you’re supposed to wear it before he ceremony and then they will change you to their own dress after all the customs have been carried out” I nod in appreciation

“Thank you, what else do I need to know?” She laughs, sitting on the bed

“The sheep, we slaughter a sheep to welcome a new makoti this side. Don’t eat that meat, be sure of your taste bites. DO NOT EAT MUTTON. Even if they tell you it’s tradition don’t eat that meat today rather eat the chicken” I’m confused

“Why?” she laughs

“I’m not sure of the reasons why but it’s something we are told as Basotho girls when we are of age to get married” sigh!

“Thank you, is that all?” she bites on her lip looking up in thought

“Yeah that’s all I think, but there is something I want us to talk about” I cringe, I know what it is. Silence draws the both of us, uncomfortable events of the morning visits us once again. She looks at me expectantly, awaiting my apology I think. I gather my scattered nerves, releasing a much needed breath

“Angie” I clear my throat “About this morning, I’m really really sorry” I truly am “It wasn’t my intention to keep your husband in here, he was just here explaining to me why my husband was kicked out and somehow we both fell asleep while he was still explaining the whole ordeal to me, I swear that’s all that happened” she nods with a smile

“Relax Lwa, I know Majara wouldn’t touch you in any way” Hooo! I exhale in gratitude. Thank god she believes me “Plus Majara is a complicated man, you’re not of his calibre. You wouldn’t know how to handle a man like that” she smiles, I think she is bashing me but I don’t mind, I’m not after her husband “And we wouldn’t want you going through the pain I’m going through, you already have a lot on your plate”

“Pain?” I ask lowly in confusion

“Majara d*ck game is a wack” I gasp, how did we get to his pipe? “I mean look at me, I married the man but I had to go conceive outside. That should tell you a lot about the kind of a man he is” this is uncomfortable for me

“Angie I really don’t want to talk about my brother in law’s bedroom business please”

“You have to know, I’m just clarifying for you what you’ll be getting yourself into if you allow him to name you. The man can’t keep it up Lewandle, don’t fall for the body like I did, he is a dream to look at but a nightmare to sleep with” bathong!

“I’m not falling for anything, please if you’ll excuse me” she smiles that warm smile of hers, is it warm or conniving?

“Free advice. Don’t let him name you or else you’re going to be stuck with half a man for the rest of your life” she stands from the bed, fixing her tight body hugging dress that looks like it was tailored just for her perfect body “I’m looking out for you Lwa, remain married to Peete. He was a nice man and I’m sure he wouldn’t want his cold brother anywhere near his daughter” I nod, smiling back at her as she was about to exit the room. But she ends up holding the door open for Ora, Palesa and a girl I don’t know who is pulling a clothing line in my room hanged with different kinds of Seshoeshoe dresses.

“What’s this?”

“Courtesy of Mr. Molapo Mam, you’re supposed to choose any you like or keep them all. His orders” the girl I don’t know informs. Angie grabs her dress, bangs the door walking out. I sigh in defeat, Majara is going to be the death of me. His timing is always wrong.

I must admit I look different in this Sotho regalia, I’m wearing the damn dress. I choose one that doesn’t touch me because of my belly situation. I haven’t done much in loosing baby fat. The humble pair came to fetch me when Ora and the girls were done with me. Leading me to a hut that looks out of place in this beautiful estate. It’s at the back of the houses. Entering the hut we found Moletsane, Majara, ntate bereng and ntate tlali already inside. We abandoned our shoes outside the hut, same as the gentlemen in the room. Moletsane nods to us and only then we sit down the reed mat, joining the men. The room is congested with smoke, incense smoke. He starts by calling on their ancestors, then he asks for my hand

“Ausi Lwa can I please have you left hand” I hand him my hand “Majara, right hand” he does too. He turns both of our palms up, smearing both our hands with blue liquid. I cringe when he produces two razors from his bag. I stiffen, wondering where the razor is going ‘Relax, I’ll not let anyone hurt you’ Abuti Majara’s voice

comes in my head, I frown looking up at him and I find him staring down at me, in assurance. I need to ask him how he always invade my head. 'So eager to know everything MaNgcobo, that I will not tell you' again he just responded in my head, this time I find him biting on his lower lip trying to suppress a laugh "Majara, lewandle, your making noise" Moletsane scolds us, sending us to audible laughter

"Moletsane, what noise?" Mabereng asks

"You have no idea, this two are having a mental conversation" I throw a dagger at abuti Majara, for him to get out of my head. I pay my attention to what Moletsane is doing. Gosh when did he cut me? He is squeezing blood out of my palm and abuti majaras', letting both drops of our blood fall on the metal plate with a light fire that doesn't burn out beneath both our hands "Silence everyone" he orders, looking up and placing his hand on both our palms "Canis lupus, the alpha, gray wolf, the rarest but most feared by all packs of wolves. You asked for her, quench your thirst, acknowledge her, be one with her, let her tame you gray wolf of canis lupus" like blowing out a birthday cake candle the flame beneath us dies, the room that was once bright couple of minutes ago darkens. I hold abuti Majara's hand tighter. What the f*ck is going on? What was abuti Majara's hand in mine I feel something harry in it, I want to jump and scream but I feel glued to the floor, my voice also failing me. A grunting groan fills the room, that familiar sound of bone breaking 'Call me' abuti Majara's voice comes in my head, I'm scared, confused 'Call me MaNgcobo' his voice comes again 'How?' I ask 'Call me like your life depends on it' suddenly my heart is drumming out of my chest, I feel like I'm losing him 'MOLAPOOO' inwardly I scream, feeling like I'm pulling him back. Suddenly the room brightens once again, but still worn in haze of incense smoke. Abuti Majara's hand now feels sweaty in mine, or is it the blood?

"HUUUUU!" Everyone breathes, in relief, except abuti majara. I'm trying to find his eyes through the smoke but he isn't looking at me, he is looking down

"I think I peed on myself" ntate tlali informs, shaking. Everyone laughs, expect the one I'm trying to look at, his still looking down "I'm too old for this shit"

"Abuti Majara" I call out, surprising myself, I thought it would be a mental conversation. Not out loud. He looks up at me, eyes dark when he meets my stare but this time the darkness doesn't scare me. He stands up, not letting my hand go. He helps me up and leads me out of the hut "Are you okay?" I ask as soon as we

exit the dark room. He stares at me, making me feel small under his burning look, eventually he shakes his head with a smile, kneeling down on the floor

“Let’s get you shoed up” he puts my sandals back on “What size is this lwandle? Size 1” my hand is quick to spank his head, he looks up at me laughing, I wish he could smile every day, he looks cute laughing “Cute?” he cocks an eyebrow standing back taller than me

“How do you do that? Always in my head”

“It’s not me, it’s the alpha in me connecting to you” he takes my hand after putting on his shoes, leading us back to the palace

“Alpha in you? What does that mean?” he stops, look at me with a frown

“You don’t remember what just happened couple of minutes ago? In the hut?” I frown back, confused

“What happened?” he laughs

“I guess he doesn’t want to scare you, come let’s go”

“Who?”

“You look beautiful MaNgcobo” I stop, try to take my hand off his but his grip is too tight “Are you sulking?”

“I’m not sulking, we are having a serious conversation and you’re trying to change the topic”

“You really do look beautiful”

“Abuti Majara” I snap

“So beautiful and so eager to know everything. Let’s get the last part of you ceremony out of the way then I’ll tell you all you need to know” now we getting somewhere

“You better” he laughs leading me to the palace door

“This is where I leave you MaNgcobo” he points a reed mat behind the door with a grin creeping his face “Welcome home Makoti, don’t eat any mutton” he whisper

in my ear leaving me shocked "Sit down lewandle, it's tradition" tradition? Behind the door? Shaka zulu needs to come rescue me.

CHAPTER 9

Behind the door! This has to be some kind of a sick joke, I fail to contain the bitterness it leaves in my mouth. I want him to come back and tell me his having me for a laughter but what's the reed mat doing behind the door with Seana-marena (Sotho blanket) nicely folded. I stand rooted for while contemplating whether to obey his orders or.... 'SIT DOWN LWANDLE' Argh! He shouts command in my head, frustrated that he has a way of getting in my head, I scoff, looking up in irritation. The bastard is standing up the stairs, looking down at me with smugness 'SIT DOWN PLEASE' he has a playful side, one that doesn't usually come out, this time he waves at me up the stairs.

Before I do as told I release an annoyed sigh, then put my annoyed arse down the reed mat. What now? Inwardly I ask myself but receive no answer. Mabereng is the first to walk in, her eyes fall exactly behind the door like she expected me to be here. She joins me on the mat with that contagious smile of hers.

"The blanket has to go around your shoulders" she tells already wrapping me with the blanket "People are going to come in now, to see you. Mostly family and close friends, one by one I'll tell you who they are" I nod at her but fail to keep my mouth shut

"Do we really have to sit behind the door" that brings her to a brief laughter

"Yes baby, its tradition. Just for today only"

"Is there anything else I should know about today?" she curves her cheek in thought

"Oh yah! Don't eat any mutton, especially the ribs.....they are going to tempt you in every way possible to eat it. Don't, it's a bait" the third person warning me about mutton, this people have to be kidding me. Meat is meat.

"Why?"

"In our culture, the sheep slaughtered for welcoming our bride is a symbol of bringing two families together, asking your ancestors permission to allow us to have you as one of ours. That's what the spilled blood of the sheep is for but as for the body, the meat of the sheep, it means something else. It means that you are

now stepping into marriage, that we are lawfully giving you a right to bed our son. We call it 'Kwae' Ka Sesotho re re retlo ofa kwae. Meaning we are lawfully giving you...." she trails off, clearing her throat looking intently at me trying to bring me to understand whatever she is saying

"Lawfully giving me what?"

"Joo Lwa, you're sending me straight to hell. We are lawfully giving you kwae"

"What is kwae?"

She releases a nervous breath "This child" she looks up in thought, trying to find a better way to tell me what I asked "Your becoming a wife, so we are lawfully allowing you to do things that husband and wife do" Sex?

"Maa! My husband passed" she rolls her eyes

"I'm not saying you're going to do it, I'm just explaining this whole thing of not eating mutton. So if you eat meat slaughtered for your ceremony, it means many things. It comes as disrespectful. You ate 'kwae' in front of your in laws. Meaning you have no manners, no shame and your marriage will not last"

"Well I don't have to worry about my marriage not lasting, my husband is no more" she gives me an exhausted look

"Hmmm.....anyway, no mutton. You can eat anything but it" I nod "Be sure of your meat lwandle, they are going to confuse you just to make you eat mutton, especially the ribs" I roll my eyes and nod, she laughs "And one last thing, today your sleeping alone. Tomorrow morning you'll wake up before dawn breaks, sweep the yard, fetch water from the spring and warm that water to wash Majara's feet" what?

"Maaa!" she laughs

"I swear that's all"

"Why him?"

"It's what the ancestors wants baby, can I let the people in now?" I think she is trying to escape my questions

"Can I eat first, I'm starving" she laughs

“No, your breakfast was the last meal your supposed to have, you’ll only eat after the ceremony” sigh!

“Yoh! You can open Maa” she is quick to stand, hold the handle but looks back at me

“Bow your head a bit, don’t look at them straight in the eyes” I nod doing as told. As soon as she opens I can tell there is a long cue waiting to see the bride. The first one in is the aunt from the breakfast table. She kneels to us on the mat.

“Oh! ausi lwa, so beautiful. My nephew outdid himself” she compliments kissing both my cheeks

“This is rakgadi Bohlokwa, my full stop” (Aunty Bohlokwa) we all laugh, I know now that full stop means last born. She is a beautiful warm woman “She comes right after bereng, I was only blessed with two until Puso came and kicked this one out of her position” so far I have realised that Puso is loved, no one treats him otherwise.

“Welcome to the family baby” Aunty bohlokwa kiss my cheeks pushing herself to me, she sits right next to me, creating space for whoever to come next. The second to walk behind the door is two old woman, with a plate of meat that has me salivating, the smell has me swallowing my greediness.

“Jo jo jo! Makoti a montle soo” (Such a beautiful bride) one compliments, sitting right next to me and putting the plate before my face “Let’s eat Makoti, ke sure o tshwerwe ke tlala” (I’m sure you must be starving) I feel Mabereng’s eyes on me even though I’m not looking up as per her instructions ‘bow your head’ I’m not totally hopeless in sotho, I know she just offered me a plate of meat.

“I’m full Mme” still looking at the plate I deny it but lord knows I want to clean the damn plate

“Wena, wena manyeo.....ke mang?” (You, you.... What’s her name) the old woman asks Mabereng

“Lwandle Ngcobo”

“Eng?” (What?) I can’t help but lowly giggle at her astonishment “Nkobo?” she asks in bewilderment

“Ngcobo Madibuseng” Mabereng corrects

“Yoh! ke mohlobo ngwe ona oo?” (What tribe is it?)

“Zulu” both woman clasp hands

“Mabereng! Shaka zulu e mong? Lenale machina, lenale masulu joooo! Miss masala boreneng” (Mabereng! Another shaka zulu? You have Chinese, Zulus joooo! Miss masala in our palace)

“Mix masala” the other one corrects, bringing me to giggle

“Helang basadi! O batla ho impresha shaka zulu ka nna” (You want to impress shaka zulu with me?) Madibuseng asks her companion bored by her correction. It still baffles me how can she pronounce shaka zulu correctly but fail to pronounce zulu alone, it sulu to her. She turns back to me after burying her friend with looks “Bona wena MaNkobo, eja nama ke ena” (MaNkobo, eat this meat) she is persistent but I know better

“I’m really full Mme” she was about to push but another group walk through the door, she and her companion shifts to make more space for the others

“Ke shaka zulu enwa, le bue sekgowa” (This is shaka zulu, speak English) she tells the bunch walking in with plates of meat. This is going to be a long day.

After futile attempts to make me eat mutton, the entire floor is now bathed with women in plates. Eating meat I’m not supposed to eat today. The fact that my stomach is contradicting me by making those noises is not helping. The women around me are all eating in peace not minding the starving me. Even Aunty and Mabereng now both have plates. I’m subjected to useless conversations, telling me how to please my husband and keep a happy home. I think all this women forget that I’m a widower.

The minute the floor quietness I know he is here, taking the room with him. Low breathes of appreciation are expelled. I want to laugh but I hold it in, this old women have no manners.

“Jesus jary! Mehleeng yaka ngwanaka neketlo o ferekanya” (Jesus jary! Back in my days I was going to confuse you) Madibuseng remarks, bringing the whole room to

fits of laughter “O kgutla o le strength yong!” (You came back strength) this time I fail to hold myself, I laugh, joined by most women in the room

“Strong” English major friend is back at it. I don’t know who came with a chair, one puts a chair next to me and he weighs it down. Still keeping his silence but warm, I wish I can see his face but I can’t. I can only appreciate his cologne, he smells exquisite, fresh shower gel, foreign cologne and his natural scent. His smell alone can make a girl forget is a widower.

Someone gives him a plate, it smells Devine. It’s a plate of ribs, marinated just the way I love them. He abandons his chair, squats down at me. His one hand is carrying a plate of marinated ribs while the other one is pushing my chin up to look at him. Now that our eyes meet, I find myself smiling for no reason, he returns my smile with his that takes me with. Breaking our smile battle his thumb brushes on my chin.

“You really do look beautiful MaBataung” his voice comes out bold calling me what Moletsane usually calls me

“Hmmm” I murmur, failing to keep his look.

“Ntate, Mankobo. We tell you now now to...to....hlonipha the monna” (....respect the husband) Madibuseng is quick to correct me, turning herself into a laughing stock while at it. Abuti Majara is not my husband, I fail to call him ntate, instead I look nowhere but him, this urges him to laugh briefly.

He composes himself and tilts my chin up so I look at him again “I brought you this plate to eat” he brings the plate to me, with a serious look I can’t read. No one told me about food from him, but this is ribs, Mabereng said don’t eat mutton, especially ribs. I look around, trying to look for a clue in any of them but they are all just impassive, eagerly waiting for me to take action. Sigh! I hope this is the right thing to do. I turn the plate back to him

“I’m full” ululation erupt, women dance around the room in jubilation. Only then familiar faces of people I know come join the room. Mamajara is smiling with lewatle in her hold. She gives her to abuti Majara who’s now back to his chair, I’m still down the reed mat beside him. Madibuseng is murdering a plate of ribs I refused.

“What do we call our bride?” ntate bereng ask, bringing the whole room to a still. He, ntate tlali and moletsane are also seated on chairs while all the woman a down the floor.

“MaBataung” Mabereng is happy to tell, I wasn’t aware he was naming me when he called me that

“I knew it” Moletsane beams, shaking his hand, they both laugh “I always knew that if you ever had found yourself a woman to carry your heart you’d name her MaBataung or Mamoletsane” I have realised that they understand each other so well

“You spend too much time in my head Moletsane” they laugh, having their own communication. Am I missing something here? Did he say a woman who carries his heart? ‘I’ll explain, just let this end please’ his quick to be in my head when I question, I throw him a side glance and he mouths ‘please’

“And our princess, what do we call her?” ntate bereng asks once again

Abuti Majara looks at my daughter in his arms, his eyes twinkle with affection. He first plants a peck on her forehead “This one is my pride, my honour, my heart. I give you Princess Tlotla Molapo” everyone beams, now coming to shake his hand, congratulating him for choosing well. From the side corner of my eyes I catch Angie, staring at us with a look I can’t take. I squirm, feel myself freeze in an instant

‘What’s wrong?’ Jerrr! He is in my head once again, now he feels my moods shifts too? ‘Mabataung what is wrong?’ he is shaking people’s hands, not even looking at me but having a conversation with me. I’m not going to honour him with an answer.

Mamajara disturbs me, helping me up. When I glance at where angie was I find her now gone. I feel like a bi*ch, she asked me nicely not to let him name me, I know she thinks I’m after her man but I’m not, abuti majara said he is just doing what the ancestors wants “It’s all over now baby, you must be starving” I let my lips curve into my not so smiley smile because I’m nervous “You can go relax, they’ll bring your food. Unless if your still enjoying yourself”

“Thank God” she laughs, I turn to abuti majara and take my daughter from him. I miss her so much

“Pump more milk for tonight, remember I’m taking her” I nod already pushing my way out of the crowd. I need a bath and to get out of this heavy dress and blanket. I take the elevator to my room, I need my quietness now. The minute I enter my room I give my baby her nipple to feast, she sucks for dear life making cute sounds while at it. She is a sleeper this one, she is quick to sleep when she is feeding.

Abuti Majara walks in when I least expect it, I guess he was right on my tail. I’m still feeding lewatile and my boob is not even covered, I’m facing directly at the door.

“Do you mind” I snap “Knock please” I’m quick to grab the blanket I was wearing to cover us. I think he just rolled his eyes at me, did he? He puts a tray of food on the pedestal, comes directly for my blanket. He peels it and stoop to kiss lewatile’s forehead while she feeds.

“Your mother is a drama queen, I have seen breasts in my life, serious breasts not this naartjies she is trying to hide like they can actually fill my palm” I narrow my eyes at him, he laughs sitting besides me “Bring her” he is already taking her, pointing me to eat

“Am I supposed to eat that?” I think for the entire day I will be hesitant with whatever I’m given to eat

“I told them to give you chicken because I knew you were going to be a headache, EAT MANGCOBO!” he commands the last part, leaving no room for me argue otherwise. But I really am famished, I hope this is not one of their test. I enjoy my plate watching him with Lewatile, he walks around the room rubbing gently on her back to burp her. Then he falls back to the bed, play with her. First he tries to open her fist but he gives up when she starts to form a frown. He half lies on the bed, his feet still floating down. He puts her on his chest and bites on her bare foot stretching her arms. That brings a giggle to both him and his playmate. His very good with kids, I wonder why his wife cheated. I cringe when I remember he has a way of residing in my mind, I think he heard that because he gives me a look I can’t put. I think it’s hurt. Does he get hurt? Sigh! I let him wallow in his feelings alone and attend my phone, I don’t want to pry, I could ask about him and his wife but I think it’s not my business. Peete and I had friends, most still don’t believe the news of his passing. They want to come, see how am doing but I’d rather see them when I get back.

“Get back where?” he startles me, giving me that look I can’t keep. If I’ll ever get used to having someone read my mind “I hate repeating myself Iwandle, get back where?” his careful to put lewatele aside, then pay all his attention at me, combusting me under his cold stare that send shivers down my spine

“I.....i thought when all is done I can go back” I feel like a child under his look. Abruptly he pulls me, his hand wrap around my waist, pulling me closer. The other one holds my face, I’m trapped, trapped under his hold and look. He is breathing right at my face. Following my eyes everywhere in order to trap them too.

“I won’t let you go” he informs, staring deep in my eyes, igniting a foreign flame with my soul. I suddenly feel sweaty in his hold, my breath hitches. I nod coupled times and fly to the bathroom as soon as he frees me. What the f*ck just happened? Why does he have so much hold of me? How does he carry me like this? I ask myself this questions staring at my flushed face in the mirror. My heart is palpitating in.....it’s not fear, there is this feeling I can’t exactly place. What the hell is this man doing to me?

After collecting myself I make for the bedroom. Looking down because I’m nervous but the quietness stretching the room pulls me up, I find the unbelievable. His got to be kidding me. His sleeping again, lewatele is now safely tucked on his chest, both parting their mouths in sleep. How long did I take in the bathroom?

“Abuti majara, hey hey!” I’m hitting his arm that’s safe holding lewatele on his chest, he yawns opening his sleepy eyes

“Jooo! It feels so nice to sleep, what is it?” he asks with a yawn, it looks foreign on his face

“You can’t sleep here again, hamba” (go) I’m taking lewatele from him so he can leave

He sighs, not leaving my bed “Can I put a couch in here and sleep on it?” I realise he has his moments, stupid baby moments. Sleep where? “Please Iwa, I only sleep when I’m around you and it feels nice to actually sleep, I’ll be a silent sleep partner I swear” lightly I giggle, sleeping people are silent

“No abuti majara, I don’t want more trouble please” he stares at me, balance his head with his palm, his elbow burrowing the mattress. He intently watches me for a while, almost making me hold my breath

“You do realise we are traditionally married right?” I blanch at him, stare at him in horror, hoping to see him break into a smile and say he is joking

“You’re joking right”

“Am I?” Bile rise in my mouth, this family better not f*ck with me

“YOUR MARRIED DAMN IT” I shout, bringing him to a giggle which annoys me further

“You should shout more often, you look cute” his mood and tone doesn’t match mine, his as calm as if he hasn’t dropped a bomb on me “Calm down, you’ll wake my daughter. I’m not married Lwa, Angie and I are.....were in a deal until hong kong”

“I don’t care, we are not married”

“Oh Mabataung! The day I was asked to bring you home was the day we got married spiritually, that day I presented you to my ancestors and today we sealed it traditionally” oh my god! How can I be so stupid? How can they marry me off to him like that? This has to be a joke.

“OUT” I’m hurt, pointing him the door. I think only now he realise that I’m not pleased

“Mangcobo....”

“Out abuti majara and don’t come back” this time I hold the door open for him. He obliges, gives me a look that haunts me the minute he leaves, he is hurt. Why would he be hurt? I’m the one wronged here.

CHAPTER 10

I'm mad, nervous and confused. But most importantly I'm towering with rage. How could they? How dare they? I'm clueless about their culture, they should have told me. Not ship me off to the next available man in the family without my consent. Yes hints were dropped here and there but I brushed them off because I thought they understood that I'm still mourning my husband. Damn Molapos. I refuse to be married to my brother in law without my consent. How does one divorce spiritually and traditionally?

After our first fight yesterday with my brother in law I couldn't sleep, the look he gave me haunted me the entire night. I was sure to sleep alone, as Mabereng instructed me, Mamajara came to fetch lewatle and I couldn't even question her, I wanted to be mad alone before I took any drastic measures. I had the longest night alone wishing my daughter was next to me to keep me busy of my troubled mind. I didn't even need an alarm reminder to wake up, before dawn I was still up staring in space. By 3:30 in the morning I was sweeping the yard, don't ask why I felt the need to complete the damn ceremony because even I myself don't know why a continued with the last events of the ceremony. At least most ground is paved, I only swept the bare ground. By 04:00 I had Ora, palesa and one of the girls I have seen around the palace accompanying me to the spring, it was quite a walk but we made it, by 05:00 we were back. My neck was burning from carrying a twenty litre of water for that long, my companions told me that they are not supposed to help me carry it but they did allow multiple breaks along the way.

As instructed I boil the water when we get to the kitchen and ask palesa for a bathing basin. When the water is ready I still, only now I remember that he might be in bed with his wife. How is this supposed to work?

"Your water will get cold Mabataung" Ora brings me back from my troubled thoughts, I almost bite her for calling me that now that I know what it means. Now I wish I had listened to Angie. I realise palesa and the other girl have vanished. I'm left with Ora who is sipping coffee.

"Ora, how am I supposed to this? I was told that I have to wash abuti majara's feet and all will be done" she nods agreeing with me "How am I going to do it, what will

angie say? I can't just budge in their bedroom and ask to wash her husband's feet"
I don't know why she is laughing while I'm panicking here

"Mjay and ausi angie don't share a room" she tells, confusion creeps my face

"What?" she shrug

"I don't know what kind of marriage they have but those two don't even share a room, well at least not here" she thinks a bit taken in space "I don't know what happens when they are at their house but when they are here, they have never shared a room. Both they have separate rooms" what kind of marriage does this two have? Sigh! "I can show you his room" I allow her to lead the way, when we take the elevator and press second floor I realise his room is in the same floor as mine. Walking on the same corridor as my room but we head to far room at the corner.

Ora doesn't knock, she opens widely and we find abuti Majara sitting lost in space. He looks terrible. The cold him wearing him from head to toe. The room alone lacks life, it's like no one ever uses it. He sits on the chair, staring purposely outside the huge opened widow. This room is cold, I wonder how long have the windows been opened for. I stand frozen on the spot, carrying a bathing basin with hot water and a towel on my shoulder. Ora strides to him, carefully puts her hand on his shoulder. He puts his hand on top of hers, still not sparing us his look. His staring outside lost in train of thoughts.

"Mabataung is here to complete the ceremony" Ora's voice comes soft, gentle as if soothing him. He takes her hand from his shoulder and turn a bit planting a kiss on her knuckles.

"Thank you for helping her" Ora nods, half stooping a bit to kiss the top of his head. She nods to me with a smile before she leaves the room. Now I'm left with the cold brother in law, our eyes haven't met but I can tell his back to being cold.

"Good morning" I finally gather my strength, taking careful steps to him

"Mangcobo" he acknowledges still looking ahead, it stings a bit in my heart that he hasn't offered me his beautiful captivating eyes

"I'm here to wash your feet"

“Come wash my feet” sigh! Tentatively I make my way to his front, I try to look at him but his expression is bleak, giving nothing but cold from it. Somehow I think this has everything to do with me denying him to sleep in my room than kicking him out. Now I wish I can go back to that moment, unmake my decision, he would have taken the floor. He looks hollow, like there is no life in him. I hate seeing him like this.

Both my knees and basin meet the carpet at the same time. He is in his pyjamas but his bed is well made, like no one even sleeps on it. With a pained mood I crease his pj pants up to his knees. Free both his feet of the comfy push ins. I take both his legs and direct them in the water. He hisses when he comes in contact with water, compelling me to look up at him.

“Is it hot” he shakes his head no, gazing down at me anxious. This motivates me to play with his feet, maybe it might soften him up. Between all his toes I run my fingers, his eyes widen before he breaks into a smile I like on his face, melting the icy cold him away. Thank god it’s working “What size is this abuti majara? Size 10” I use his words against him, this one tickles him perfectly, he breaks into fits of laughter

“10/1 meaning I take your feet ten times” he is back, humour him back

“I’m sorry” I don’t dare look up at him, I busy myself with toying with his feet in water. I’m apologising for kicking him out because somehow I can tell I’m the reason why he looks this cold.

“Don’t worry, I’m used to being rejected. No one wants to carry my cold heart” that hurts me, I would carry his cold hea.... I stop, gaining myself a side glance from my subconscious

“Abuti Majara I just wish you had told me, sat me down like you did all the other things and told me. Not drop hints like you did”

“If I had sat you down and told you, would you have agreed to marry me?” silence, he forces a pained smile “I asked them not to tell you because I was scared of this, scared of knowing that I don’t have your heart while you on the other hand have full ownership of my heart. I understand your mourning and you should rightfully do so, but is it so wrong for me to see something with you, something I never thought I deserved Mangcobo”

“Abuti ma...” he stops me with his hand raised

“Don’t worry. We may be married but I know you don’t want this, and I won’t force this marriage on you”

“It’s not that abuti majara, I just want to mourn my husband. Maybe after that we can visit this topic again” he smiles but it doesn’t break to it’s fullest “And if I agree to this marriage thing now, how is that supposed to work” now he breaks to his full smile

“Just allow me to sleep please, you can kick me out all you want but don’t deny me sleep” such a complicated man

“Those two things contradict each other, how can I kick you out of my room but allow you to sleep in my room” he shrug, breaking to the normal him

“Don’t do them both hee” this time we both laugh but it’s brief, he switches back to serious but not cold “Lwa I can only sleep when I’m around you and that is the reason why I’m becoming more normal. Your presence tames the alpha in me”

“I just don’t want to be in trouble with your wife”

“We are not married, angie and I are in agreement. Believe me the woman doesn’t care whether I sleep or not”

“I don’t understand abuti majara, what is happening between you and your wife?” he sighs searching the correct word to explain to me. I take this time to free him out of the water, quickly wipe him and apply lewatile’s Vaseline on both his feet at the same time, massaging him so he relax but he stills, almost freeze with his mouth open wide “What’s wrong?” I question in confusion

“What are you doing?” his looking at what my hands are doing, sliding up and down his hairy feet.

“Massaging you”

“Stop” he commands, looking at me appalled “Stop before you wake.....” he trails off, clearing his throat as if to fight uncomfortableness

“It’s a massage, I’m trying to make you relax” I free my hands off his feet

“I’d rather you make me sleep” I look at him to elaborate “You can sit with me for just an hour so I take a small sleep”

“A nap?” he frowns “Power nap”

“Power nap?”

“Yeah! You want to sleep for just an hour to power up” he nods hesitantly

“I guess if you want to put it like that, all I know is that I hate feeling this cold, this distant, this different but I know I after my ‘power nap’ I’ll wake up normal. Able to smile and be human” so sad bathong!

“Is it a tokoloshi?” he frowns compelling me to clarify “The alpha in you, did they put like tokoloshi in you” he bursts, out loud almost like peete

“What?” he asks again still buried in laughter

“This thing haunting you, is it a tokoloshi?” he nods still laughing, I feel sorry for him. I’m glad in my life I have never come across such demons ever “You can sleep, but seven o’clock I’m waking you. I hope you do wake this time” he grins, waste no time climbing his bed. He slips through the covers while I sit comfortably on his previous comfy chair looking at him.

“All you have to do to wake me up is to leave this room, once you leave this room I’ll wake” better, at least I won’t need Moletsane and his gang to wake him up this time “Bed time story mommy” he teases, pulling the covers up to his shoulders. I like him when he melts like this, revealing his playful side that hardly comes out

“Lewatle is far too young for me to finish her stories to an old man like you” he laughs, closing his eyes

“Keep your eyes on me” it comes as a plea when he closes his eyes. I do as told. Look specifically at this weird man. The man that can turn cold and warm in a space of a minute. One complicated man I have ever come across in this life but somehow I find myself drawn to his inhuman like character. He speaks of the alpha in him, does he have like a tokoloshi haunting him? I hope I’m not diving with the devils in this family ‘I love you’ the voice comes in head, startling me. I jump inspecting my surroundings. Is it him? Is he talking to me? Nah- he is asleep, it can’t be him. He is

already snoring, one person who can fall asleep in a matter of two minutes. Maybe he is dreaming of his wife.

ANGELINE MOHATO

One of the worst things I did to myself was to hope. Hope that our agreement would manifest into real marriage. Mjay and I were friends, good friends but we ruined it by taking our friendship to something else. From friends, to friends with benefits, to lovers then to an agreement. A deal that benefitted the both of us until peete's wife, well deep down I know Micheal was our deal breaker, from when my son was born I knew our deal was off but I still had hope. But that girl just came out of nowhere and took him without even trying.

It hurts seeing him blossom like a summer flower under her spell. He smiles, smiles a lot. Which is weird, the Majara I know is as cold as an animal but lately he even speaks, doesn't give short cold answers he used to give, not the closed cold him anymore. He stares at her like his afraid of losing her, like he purposely lives for her. Sometimes I find it funny to watch him like that, I wish we were still that close, like back in the days when I used to tell him just about anything and we would f*ck the entire day. He hasn't said anything but I can tell Lwandle is a no go area, she is his soul keeper.

It's hard to admit it because I filled myself with hope when he left. He had been gone for five years. I wish I knew where he went but I wasn't around when he left, I was home and had just given birth to Micheal. When my boy came Chinese I didn't dare come back, I kept stalling him every time he wanted to come see him until he left. I only came back when I heard he left, not by choice though.

The deal that Mjay and I had was simple, we are both royals. A man his age and of his status was questioned why wasn't he getting married, why he didn't have children of his own. And the last nail to the coffin was when he was chosen a bride. Tebello was forced down his throat but he stood his ground. Denied marrying that girl with everything in him until she was returned back to her home. But his troubles weren't over, the council wanted at least a child from him. Not caring if it's a female or male, they just needed him to add his seed to the royal offspring.

But he and I both knew that was impossible, Majara cannot have children. He had taken me to thousand doctors just so I carry his child but they all said the same thing, the problem is with him. But what exactly all doctors couldn't pin point it, his sperm is healthy and strong and can definitely swim to the pond. The problem is fertilisation, he sperm just can't fertilize any egg. They tried all scientific forms but still. That is where our deal came about. I found myself pregnant, pregnant with a guy who denied me I thought. My father was going to have my head. A whole princess knocked up by a commoner out of wedlock.

I tried aborting the child but the damn thing didn't leave my womb, of course I didn't know I was carrying a Chinese child otherwise I wouldn't have bothered. Those beings are clever and even clever in our wombs. A Chinese child is nothing to be terminated by pills. I found myself visiting dodgy doctors just to terminate. The woman did her things, assured me that the child was no more. I went back to my flat to heal but I woke up in a pull of blood. Majara was the first person who found me and he rushed me to the hospital where it was confirmed that I was still pregnant and tried to have an abortion. Bloody Chinese, if I had known back then that I was carrying Jet Li, I wouldn't had even bothered to terminate.

Our deal was birthed from that experience. He needed a child and I needed a royal man to take the fall to my father. Gladly we were both in a deal, he got the council off his back and I got my father off my back. He paid the damages and did all he had to do to please my father and just like that was 'his promised'. We never got married but to everyone around us we pretended to be married. He took me to one of his designers who crafted me a ring of my style and taste from Mjay's diamonds collection. That alone filled me with more hope. He took good care of me when I was pregnant, chased his wh*res and claimed me in front of both our families. He even bought me a house, a car, and had people working for me just so I wouldn't lift even a finger. That sealed the deal in my heart, that just maybe we might be real.

The problem came when I gave birth. I fainted five times every time the maiden aunt showed me a Chinese boy. If I had given birth at the hospital I would have sued the poor hospital. How can I give birth to a Chinese boy? How can I fail Majara with the one thing he wants the most? I knew that I was screwed. All the hope I

had vanished into thin air. I was thankful I had one maiden aunt in the hut when I gave birth at home, she is an old woman who cares deeply for me. She and I both knew my father was going to kill the baby. I didn't want it when I first found out I was pregnant but as time went I bounded with my child. I loved every bit of him, whether he is Chinese I love Micheal with everything in me.

The maiden helped me escape, I went to my aunt who stays up at the mountains. Majara wanted to see the child but I told him my culture denies him 'I should stay for a year at home' before he sees the child. I think he understood and just like that he left without seeing his 'son'. Whenever he called for pictures I would take snaps of my cousin's boy and send them to him. All he needed was just a black child, he didn't need it to have his blood, just black and I FAILED in capitals.

My son is the result of an aftermath of being piped by Majara Molapo. Nigger knows his business. He serves an A class bedroom service. Once you go Majara Molapo you never go back. After we stopped 'benefiting' each other I couldn't find anyone who does me like he did, every guy I slept with bored me to the core. I found myself scratching nail polish off my nails with my teeth when poor things with pipes between their legs were pounding me. No one and I mean absolutely no one hits it like he does. So from boredom I experimented, I read somewhere that Chinese were beasts in bed. I needed another beast to scratch that thing. Yeah was one of the Chinese eyeing me, I gave him my cookie and bastard scored me and skipped the country. His game was such a wack I didn't even think a whole person could result from his one minute business. That's how my Michael was conceived.

Back to my aunt's place, I couldn't stay forever, my father fetched me and like an angry man he is, he dropped me right here at the Molapos. He wants no Chinese child in his house. And that day, that's when Mamajara hated me. Only she and I knew about Majara not being able to make babies, she was happy that I was willing to hide her son's infertility. Even vouched for him to make an honest woman out of me. But the day I was dropped with a Chinese child, the woman hated my guts. I had embarrassed her son in front of his family and the entire council.

Well as embarrassing as it was, Mamajara is a woman with pure heart. She fought for me and my child when the council tried to have us evicted. At least here at the

Molapo my boy is subjected to weird names, he is not exactly the grandchild but he is loved. Unlike my father who can't even spare him a look.

Standing from the corner yesterday watch him marry another woman hurt me, he never gave me hope but his care, the things he did for me and still does had me thinking we could be more. What annoys me about this whole thing is that Iwandle doesn't even want him, the naïve girl doesn't even know she has the founder and director of one of the biggest diamond mine in Lesotho at her palms. I wish I can spank her zulu ass back to South Africa. I want to hate her but.....there is just something about her, something that takes you in. she is one of those people are just simply lovable.

Mjay and I haven't talked, Mapuso is the one who told me he was back home. He didn't even call and I think from that he somehow knew that I failed him. Even his expression from when that Mapuso told on me, I thought he was going to strangle me alive but he didn't, he left it at that and hasn't made time to even talk to me about the child. I have to win him back, get him to where we were before he left.

I freshen up and wrap myself in this ridiculously expensive lingerie he bought me from France when we were still f*cking. The man knows his business and I know he loves his woman elegant. I cover myself with a gown just in case I bump into palesa and her grew down the corridor. I know they are the only ones who wake up this early.

I feel myself moisten up at the thought of him, how I miss him. I don't knock, I let myself in and freeze at what's before me. Majara is sleeping again? And this one.....this innocent bi*ch promised me that she doesn't want my man. I know they have connection but can she at least respect me. As far as she knows I'm Majara's wife and this is pure disrespect. What's so special about her? I take my time to study her. She is innocent, pure, not the ridiculous beautiful but she draws you in. Even in sleep there is just something about her, something radiant and welcoming. She is sleeping on the couch while Mjay is under covers.

How do I go about this one? Lord I hope she backs off after this and I hope I don't lose Mjay for this. I let my gown fall down the floor, step out of my panties and place them right at her eyes reach, where she will see them when she opens her

eyes. I join Mjay in bed. I saw yesterday that he doesn't wake up when he sleeps. Mother f*cker smells divine in sleep, that panty combustive cologne of his has my south clenching. Sigh! Reaching for a book on the bedside table I throw it at Lwandle, waking her so she can see the show dedicated for her. When I see she is waking I wrap myself on top of Mjay, making sure my naked ass is out there for her to see. I pretend to be the sleepy wife, like we f*cked while she was still asleep. I watch her through my pretending to sleep eyes, she gasps putting her hand on her mouth. Good girl, she walks out of the room, hurt. I hope she stays married to the ghost forever, it's one thing that they are married traditionally, I can't have her marry Mjay legally too.....

"Hmmm" what? He is waking, quickly I jump off the bed and put on my gown. I grab-fold my underwear and shove it in my gown pocket sitting where Lwa was seated.

CHAPTER 11

ANGELINE

“HmMMM” another groan, he stumbles rolling over the bed like a patient immersed in great pain. I expect him to wake but he doesn’t, it seems like his having a nightmare, a painful one for that matter “HgmMMM” he whimpers, sounding so painful, breaking of bone like sounds fills the room although he is still rolling on the bed not stretching. “Auuuuuuu” that sounds like a howl, like it origins from deep down his throat. I squirm on my couch looking around, that is definitely a growl made by a wild animal. Running my eyes around for the beast in the room I land on a haze of smoke evaporating from under the bed. Immediately I freeze, stare at the bed worn in haze of smoke. It doesn’t smell like fire smoke, more like ice formation and resulting in haze. Following the haze up as it ascends the room my eyes fall on an ice formation forming from the ceiling. Shivers wears my skin, my mouth voluntarily opens in shock. The formation above the ceiling makes cracking sounds, like ice cracking, the whole room is slowly getting infected in an icy formation. My eyes follow the cracks marrying one another until they lead me back to the bed. The bed is now covered with ice. And on it stands one hell of an angry white wolf

I never thought I would see a wolf in my life until today, standing four legged on top of the icy bed. White fur covers the black eyed wolf, canine teeth point sharply out of its enraged opened mouth like a beast ready to feast. Gloop of saliva drop like rain down the cold bed, ready to devour me for breakfast. I’m drawn like water snake calling its prey. Under the fierce glare of the wolf I sit, sit tight staring back at it, ready for my horrific departure of this world. My voice has abandoned me, froze to death down my throat. My means of locomotion suddenly died, compelling me to endure the look of an angry beast ready to charge at me anytime. It howl-bark twisting its neck looking up, when it glares back at me again I find its eyes now red, gritting its teeth together like sharpening tools.

I close my eyes to welcome death, death by a wolf. But to my luck, the door abruptly opens when I least expect it. Moletsane barges in like he expected to see what is

before me, followed by ntate tlali and ntate bereng right on his tail. The mighty moletsane kneels before the wolf, speaking tongues I didn't know existed

"Canis lupus, the alpha, grey wolf, the rarest but most feared by all packs" He raises his hands in surrender "Tower down grey wolf of the south, no one touched your bewedded" like a child scolded it charges back, ice formations divorces each other, melting away but not even single drop of water falls down the floor. With every breaking crack it grows smaller and smaller until it fall back on the bed, fur slowly disappears, growing back. What was once front legs turn into strong veined human hands, back legs turn to feet, the spinal cord of an animal visibly re arranges on the naked person on the bed, making painful sounds of bones breaking. He grabs the pillows hard groaning in them faced down, now I can tell the beast on bed is Majara. Ntate tlali hits his back bone that is curved in pain with his walking stick and he falls flat on the bed. Ntate bereng throws his jacket on his exposed arse, he stills for a while panting like he ran a marathon. When he starts breathing normally the tension in the room wears off, only now I feel wet on the couch, I peed myself.

"What happened Majara?" Moletsane asks, all of us glaring at him still faced down

"It wasn't me, it was the alpha. She hit it's mate" all eyes of the gentlemen in the room turn to me, each giving me a look to explain myself.

"I...ididn't" I stutter, curled on the couch still trembling. I'm not sure what I'm accused of.

"The book, you hit her with a book" Majara, now back to normal joining the glares on me

"Lwandle?" I'm confused, yes I hit her with a book but it wasn't even that hard

"Angeline, free advice my child. Choose your battles wisely. Don't annoy people who have wolves in their corner. STAY AWAY FROM MABATAUNG" ntate bereng cements the last part, making me understand but I'm so lost, who's got a wolf in their corner?

"Majara handle this shit before lupus heads her stupid head for breakfast. I told the both of you that this arrangement was going to bite the both of you someday and unfortunately someday came sooner than expected. Lupus doesn't do well with sharing, choose and make it clear or else mama kung fu will be his next meal"

Moletsane leaves the room after his words, followed by ntate tlali who first hands ntate bereng his weird walking stick.

“Are you okay son?” ntate bereng question him, concern displayed all over his face

“I’m fine tyma, don’t worry”

“Majara son I thought you could control it now”

“I do tyma but when it comes to Mabataung it defeats me, it totally takes control over my body” ntate bereng brushes his shoulder in concern

“I think it’s about time we reach out to the only royal seer left, king Morena Motaung has a grandson like you but his been able to keep him at base for a while”

“Vula’s son?” ntate bereng nods

“Hai! Do it tyma, maybe he might help me” his father nods with a sigh, holding the walking stick in his hand tighter aiming at me

“I’m going to wipe her memory now” Majara nods and before I know it, ntate bereng strikes me with the stick and I immediately fall in deep sleep.

Waking from my weird sleep I intently watch him stretch, flex his strong muscles breaking free from tension I think, I feel like something is amiss but I can’t pin point exactly what. I’m sitting on the chair but....i don’t know I feel like I’m missing something....like...oh I remember, he was asleep, he just woke up. I still can’t believe he sleeps. For years I have been with him, Majara has always been an all nighter, weird I know but I learned not to ask questions about his personality because he’s never even bothered to open up to me. He intently stares in my eyes like his searching for something, almost making me squirm under his look

“Angie” he keeps his eyes on me, creased lines on his forehead confirms a frown

“Mjay” my voice come nervous, butterflies chocking me. He has that effect on me.

“What are you doing here? Where is Mabataung” f*ck mabataung, f*ck lwandle, f*ck peete for bringing that zulu woman in our lives.

“I need to talk to you Mjay” He stops me with his hand

“Where is mabataung and what did you do to her?” can he keep his little wh*re out of our conversation, I came here to talk to him about Micheal “I need us to talk about Micheal baby” with a hand he stops me again, the baby I accompanied my plea with I think threw him off. He pulls an exhausted sigh before he intently glares at me once again.

“MaMohato, I just had my second sleep in almost two decades. Please I beg you woman, don’t ruin my mood with hong kong. He is very cute by the way” he added to my son’s names. From Jackie chan, jet li, kung fu and now hong kong. Seeiso is not going to let this one slide anytime soon.

“Mjay I’m sorry okay, I didn’t know I was carrying a Chinese child”

“That’s what happens when you f*ck the entire country, you end up with Chinese babies in your womb angeline” he sighs, stopping himself from chopping my head “It’s fine, it doesn’t matter anymore but please tell me, whose pictures have you been sending me”

With embarrassment I look down, that was my lowest “My cousin’s son” he chuckles

“You need help, psychiatric mental evaluation” I deserve that, I’ll let him be

“I’m really sorry baby but we can still have us, we are still married right?” that look, the look that says are you stupid or what?

“Angie we had a deal not married and you failed to deliver your end of the bargain. If you were me, what would you do?” deep down I know I would cancel our deal but I can’t have that “Hmmm”

“Baby we can still find a common ground” he slips off the bed, heading to the bathroom

“Angeline, eradicate yourself from my bedroom. The damn deal is off! Are you insane? How are you going to turn hong kong into a black child. Talk about common ground, common ground my left foot” he bangs the door, disappearing in his bathroom. F*ck my life. Patience is the mother of all success. I keep my sit waiting for my man. And 15 minutes later he comes out looking delicious in just a towel wrapped around his waist. He glances at me once and disappear in his closet. Still I

keep my patience, finer things never come easy in life and the damn brother is as fine as they come.

“Angeline, I really don’t have time for you to day dream in my room” gosh! I snap out of my reverie. Aiming for plan B.

“I found another doctor” that gets me the attention I have been hoping for, he intently stares at me “He said he’s worked with someone who had the same problem as you and he was able to help him bare children of his own” he chuckles, charging to me on the couch. He stoops to me putting both his arms on the armrest to cage me.

“Angeline Mohato, our deal is off” calmly he delivers on my face, staring at me to make me understand “Thank you for carrying my secret with you but I think I’m sorted now, I have Tlotla and I don’t need any other baby”

“Mjay what about me, what about Michael?”

“Sweetheart you were already pregnant when we stamped our deal, I didn’t ask you to go sleep with Chinese men, that was all you. I just helped you clean up the mess because I also needed your help back then and for that and keeping my secret, Thank you Angie but I want us to part ways now, on good terms but listen babygirl, and listen good. If you ever pull the little stunt you just pulled earlier, I won’t be held accountable for what will happen to you” his calm, not shouting but his hurting me, threatening me

“Mjay don’t, i....” I try to touch him but his quick to hold my wrist

“Just your touch alone might enrage the alpha, don’t please” he breathes back on my face

“Who?” my face is worn in tears voluntarily making their way down

“Leave Angeline, keep the house, the cars and the money, everything but leave me. I’m not for you and I was never for you”

“Is it because of her” the calm him switches to cold, sending shivers down my spine

“Keep her out of this, and let today be the last day you ever tried the shit you pulled on her” the warning is received and heard. I pull myself together and walk out of his room, now I can safely say I hate that zulu girl. Time for plan c, maybe it’s about

time the authorities find out about a certain zulu woman entering the country illegally. I know they don't play this side, first thing tomorrow they are going to collect her zulu ass and drop it back in South Africa where it belongs. If I can't have Mjay, she also must not have him.

LWANDLE

I'm a bomb, ready to explode the entire palace and my brother in law is going to be my ignition. I swear the sight of him is going to have me burning everything and everyone coming my way. Maybe having my daughter will calm me. After cleaning up I went to look for my princess, as always she was already fresh waiting on mommy. I refused to join the breakfast table and made an excuse of being tired, my breakfast was sent to me in my room. Truly speaking im just so mad I want to be alone, I'm not mad at the family for lying to me anymore, I'm mad at what I saw and for that I feel like biting everyone's head off.

Damn that sexy woman, she wears him like a glove. She looked so damn sexy on top of him. I can't believe they f*cked right in my presence, what was I doing in a married man's room anyway? What did I expect?

"Mabataung I have told you time and again that I'm not married" he remarks walking through the door, without knocking once again. I don't honour him with my response, instead I throw daggers at him and pay my attention back on the tv that's watching me. He glances at me once, like stealing a look. What the hell is he planning now? He disappears in my closet and quickly come back with lewatile's bag hanged on his broad shoulder. And then? He stoops down to lewatile next to me, kisses her forehead and her tiny fists and scoop her to his shoulder.

"Abuti Majara no, where are you going with my child" I'm quick to jump off the bed

"Father Daughter things, you're more than welcomed to join us if you want" he shut the door close before I could protest. Damn him! I quickly put on my shoes running after them, he can't just leave with my daughter. He holds the elevator open for me, with a smirk like he knew I would follow him.

“This is my daughter, you can’t just kidnap her like that. You have your own kung fu to do as you please” he laughs, holding Lewatle closer to his chest

“I see you joined the family in naming Micheal, his name is Micheal” I roll my eyes looking the other way, I really don’t give a damn about his son “You really do look cute when your mad”

“I’m not talking to you, I’m just coming for my daughter, I don’t trust you with her” he nods with a smile playing with my daughter in his arms. The elevator is filled with their giggles and my rage, it opens delivering us to the main floor. His hand finds mine and grabs tightly on it, I try to yank it but it’s so damn tight, bloody animal.

“And then? Where to?” Seeiso screams causing all eyes to turn on us, almost everyone is still on the table. I feel like a little whore. The one holding my hand tries to scold him with a look, but not today “Ausi Lwa use protection, don’t be making babies for that one, his got Chinese genes in him” I feel like disappearing the scene, people laugh out loud “We don’t need another Hong Kong in the house, please good people” Abuti Majara pulls me out without replying, I allow him to because I already feel small from the laughter bursting the breakfast table. Seeiso is a nightmare. I noticed that his wife was not on the table.

“She is not my wife” Urghh! “The only wife I have is the one I’m holding now” that fuels me

“I’m not your wife, your wife is that sexy thing you slept with in my presence. You have no shame” he smirks, opening the door for me. I climb the car without hesitation and he straps me on my seat, then hands me Lewatle and turns to the driver seat. His driving?

“Where is Tshepo?” he laughs

“Keng? You don’t trust my driving Mangcobo?” (What?...) his left handed, driving out of the yard with just his left hand. He looks boss, executes power behind the wheel.

“No I miss him” I got him, he frowns stealing a glance at me and then looks ahead “Where are we going?”

“Where Tlotla and I are going? Wena your just a heavy little angry parcel that intends on pissing me off” he gives me a side glance and looks ahead, piss him off?

“Piss you off, I’m the one pissed here, you slept with your wife in my presence” the car abruptly comes to a halt “Jeez! Abuti majara we are in the middle of the road”

“And you’re very slow, for the last time. Angeline is not my wife and I did not sleep with her. I told you that when I sleep I can only be woken by Moletsane or you leaving the room” I frown trying to remember, he did say something like that “Did you leave the room?” I shake my head no “Angeline did that to piss you off and it worked since your one angry bird ready to eat me alive” he glares at me, cocking an eyebrow “Can I go now?”

“I didn’t ask you to stop but you can go. Just for clarity, I hate your wife” that tickles him, his face breaks into a beautiful full smile

“And I wonder why?” I will not reply him because I can’t bring myself to admit the answer to that question

“Where are we going?” distracting my mind before it dwells on that question, I ask him where we are headed once again. He smiles looking ahead.

“Always so eager Mangcobo” he shakes his head with a sigh “Horse riding, we are going to my house first to change then we are going horse riding” what?

“I can’t ride a horse” the horror in my voice cannot be missed

“I got you, don’t worry sweetheart”

“Is it true that you guys eat horses” he burst, filling the car with his contagious laughter

“God it feels good to laugh, Mabataung you’re going to be the death of me I swear” the car comes to halt to, he climbs off still laughing. Only now I realise that we are at his lonely house, tshepo emerges from the corner and comes to my door, he opens my door with one of his smiles. I find myself smiling back at him.

“My lady” he nod looking down

“Hi tshepo, I told you to stop calling me that. Lwa please” I follow his eyes, he steals a glance at the not so happy abuti majara. Shifts immediately from me.

“Sir, I was about to call you, there are two officers waiting on you” abuti majara frowns looking at his entrance, two males stands wearing formal long black coats.

With my hand in his he leads us to them, his looks back to impassive, giving no emotions.

“Gentlemen” he acknowledges freeing my hand to shake them

“My prince” they both say in unison

“How may I help you?”

“We are from the immigration services, we were task to come raid your house. There are suspicions of illegal immigrants hiding in your house” I blanch, feel my body weaken instantly “Mam, can we please have your documents? Both you and the child” f*ck my life, I’m going to jail. In a foreign country.

CHAPTER 12

“Mam?” the other officer enquires, holding out his hand for me to place whatever documents I’m supposed to have

“This is my wife, she has every right to be here. We just got married yesterday” the other one cocks an eyebrow in surprise

“Oh! Congratulation my prince” he shakes his hand smiling, more welcoming of the news “If you don’t mind my prince may I please share the news with my sister, she is a reporter and the news of your marriage coming from her would... ”

“Thabang, you’re here as an official. Not a rat for royal drama” the rude one cuts his colleague, my almost hope sink back in my guts, this one really doesn’t take nonsense. He glares back at abuti majara “Can I have their passports please, and the child’s birth certificate while at it” from his expression he makes sure to display disgust, annoyance masking him.

“Can I have your name?” abuti majara asks, glaring at him

“I didn’t come here to share my name, I’m here to do my job”

“Give me your name, and that’s an order from your prince” the rude guy pinches his nose trying to mask annoyance

“James”

“Look james, I don’t mean to use my status on you. I’m sure we can all come to an amicable solution, things don’t have to escalate. Like I said, we got married yesterday, traditionally. We are still about to legalize our marriage”

“Good for you my prince, that’s not my concern. My concern is how she got here, where are her documents. I’m sure someone of your ‘status’ pulled strings for her to pass through the border neah” he smirks “Am going to need those documents or I’m taking her in” silence, I’m already drenched in sweat, reciting silent prayer to the higher power. I hold my daughter close to my chest, just to feel her one last time if I go to jail “I guess she doesn’t have any documentation, mam let’s go” with a smug he points me to their car with his head. My tears freely pour down my cheeks, with trembling hands I try to hand abuti majara lewatle but he stands

rooted, like a pole glaring at the rude officer who doesn't even squirm from the look he subjected to.

"I'll take her" tshepo comes for my aid, emerging behind the immobile abuti majara

"That won't be necessary, we are taking her too. Or does she have proper documents?" James asks glaring back at abuti majara who suddenly just went mute, he keeps his silence, continue glaring at James

"James no man, the child is innocent and that place is very cold for an infant" his colleague tries to reason with him but he is having none of it

"Our dear prince of the high power should have thought of that before smuggling damn foreigners here, take them to the car" he smirks challenging abuti majara back

"How does being a royal help you now my prince? You don't have powers over everything, remember that next time" he turns to leave, proud of himself. The immobile majara stills, standing staring in space where once was standing the rude officer before him

"Mam" the nice officer gently points me to the car, I think now he doesn't want to be doing this, his face is masked with pity. We walk to the car, tshepo following us with lewatele. Every step to that car feels surreal. My daughter and I are going to jail.

Before I climb the car I feel his hand grabbing my arm. I don't know when he moved or when he pushed through tshepo and the officer, the other one is impatiently waiting on the driver seat. Like wind he sweeps me to the back of the car, away from the stares. He pins my back to the car, cages me with his arms, his hands cup my face like he's holding his world, wiping tears from my cheeks with his thumbs.

"Shhhh" it comes as a command, staring in my eyes and realise his are back to dark, they don't scare me anymore instead I feel drawn, I love them dark.

"I can't go to prison" I deliver followed by hiccups from the silent crying I have been doing

"I'll not let that happen, trust me okay" I nod, sniffing the tears away "Go with them. I'm right behind you okay" again I nod with a sniff. He pulls me to his chest, enveloping me in a hug full of emotions, the beat of his heart and his cologne draws me in, it's intoxicating to be in his hold. Heaving a sigh I can't help but feel safe, I

feel every beat of his heart and his cologne sing a soothing lullaby to my emotions, assuring them that I'm safe and protected. He lets me off when he feels I have calmed down, look intently in my eyes searching for assurance "You okay now" I nod dropping my eyes because I can't take his look any more, just his eyes alone makes me feel things. He cups my face again, I flush under his hold when he makes me look in his dark eyes, affection twinkles from his eyes, infecting mine with. Slowly and gently he bends to my face, still keeping his eye contact with my suddenly weak eyes. My heart races out of my chest, I'm drawn to him. His lips touch mine still staring in my eyes, I allow it because the touch of his lips on mine feels magical, an odd exhilarating shiver runs through me, he keeps our lips touched for a moment, just staring in my eyes, only when he closes his eyes I close mine too, allow his sweet lips entrance to mine. For a moment I feel foreign, his tongue expertly explores my mouth, taking me in a slow erotic kiss that takes my breath away. I have never been kissed like this. He sure takes no prisoners when he kisses a girl. He suddenly stops, just when I was grabbing his jacket, pulling him closer. He keeps his eyes close but intertwines his forehead with mine "You're like a drug and I'm so addicted baby" I find myself giggling, standing on my toes to reach his lips, I plant a peck when he least expect it. He opens his eyes with his contagious smile.

"I have to go" my voice comes in a whisper, dressed with desire, now I remind him that I have to go, not so sombre anymore

"I'm coming for you, no one is taking my drug" we both smile, just stare at each other until the rude officer breaks our moment

"I believe you said your goodbyes, areye wena xenophobia" (let's go) f*ck him, he is so pleased one would swear he has satan in custody

"Xenophobia ke sebono sa mmao se metsi boy, o mofounele o mojwetse o tswetse masepa and ketlo a hlakola" (Xenophobia is your mother's fu*ked up jelly ass, make sure to call her and tell her she gave birth to a little piece of shit that I'm about to wipe out) whatever he said doesn't sit well with the officer, from his change of breathing I can tell his fuming. Abuti majara leads me back to the door and helps me in, pecks my lips and hands me lewatle from tshepo. He kisses her forehead and fists also before he looks back at me "I'm coming for the both of you okay" I nod "Don't even cry, none of my girls are going to see prison, I'm right behind you" I

smile to assure him, he kisses my cheek and only then he closes the door. The rude officer speeds out of the yard like his being chased.

I close my eyes taking small deep breathes, I have never thought I would see jail cells in my life. My poor baby is going to see prison at such tender age. I feel my eyelids get heavy with tears when I think of that but I blink rapidly to chase the damn tears, I can't cry with my daughter in my arms. Maa said she feels everything, when im sad she feels it too and she will be restless. Poor thing is been through so much so young, losing a father and now going to jail. I wonder if he is seeing all this things that I'm going through?. the car comes to an abrupt halt, screech of brakes linger in my ears. I hold my daughter close to my chest when the car swerves out of the road and completely ceases.

"Did you see that?" officer thabang ask james who's suddenly quite, like he is in disbelief, james' hands are trembling on the wheel

"Wolf" his response comes shaken, dressed with fear. They look at each other, fear stricken. I hold my baby close to my chest join them in search, all our eyes run around searching for a wolf. A howl comes behind the car, that 'Aauuuuuuu' sound fills the car, I jump from my seat to the front. Hold my daughter tight between the two officers "Shhhh.....no....no....one makes a sound" in a whisper and trembling voice the rude officer informs, none of us is able to make a sound, my heart is pounding out of my chest. Through his pants pockets he produces his phone but because his trembling it falls down.

"What's that?" the other officer asks, concentrating on the window, we follow his gaze which leads us to an ice formation growing on the window. The sun is out but the window is slowly wearing ice, just as we watch cracks of ice combining, white red eyed beast jumps on the car bonnet, the entire car exterior crushes to the engine. I don't know who screamed the loudest amongst us but complete mayhem wears the car. Chaos of screaming and opening of doors take place, the minute officer thabang opens his door and fly out of the car I follow him, screaming my lungs out with my daughter on my chest. "Ntata rona ya mahodimong, lebitso la hao " I'm following officer thabang, who decided to pray I think while running for his life. My focus is my daughter wrapped on my chest, one mistake of me falling I'm going to crush her, so I keep my eyes on the bushed ground, run for my life. I

don't know when or how but I run into a hard chest, without raising my head I scream louder, thinking it's the wolf.....

"Mam...Mam...Lwandle" with blurry eye and pounding heart I look up

"Tshepo?" I throw myself on his chest, he hugs me with my daughter. I have never been so happy to see him in my life.

"It's okay, we are here" he assures, brushing on my back to calm me down

"There is.....is a wolf....tshepo....." he cuts me, brushing on my back

"Just relax mam, it won't get to you" I feel a bit calm, my heart is slowly decelerating

With hiccups I ask "Where is he?"

"Ahhmmm, he he went to look for you in the other direction, we divided" I nod wiping my tears "Lets go back to the car" I quickly nod, not wanting myself anymore in this bushes. He takes lewatile from my trembling hands and hold mine, leading me to the car.

"Tshepo there is a beast in this bushes, big white wolf with red eyes. Call him, please, I can't lose him too" I'm in full panic mode, I want myself in the car safe and I want abuti majara next to me, I don't want that thing to eat him

He chuckles "Relax Mam, your man is perfectly fine" I hate him for being so calm, he didn't see what I saw, if he had, he wouldn't be so calm. The black range rover is parked right behind the officer's car, how did I not see it? I don't know. I wonder where they ran to, I hope that thing didn't catch them. Tshepo helps me in the car and hands me my daughter "Stay in the car and don't open for anyone but me or Mjay" I nod, taking his orders "Relax, nothing is going to harm you, I'm just going to look for your man that side" I nod again, I want him to come back with him safe and sound, I feel like his wasting time giving orders. I want abuti majara.

"Please come back with him unharmed" he stills for a minute, look at me in appreciation.

"Thank you for bringing a smile on his face" he shut the door when I frown, trying to make sense of what he just said. Quickly I make sure all the doors are locked, only then I breathe and look at my daughter

“Baby why are you so calm?” my baby is playing with her tiny feet, punching the air like we didn’t just run a marathon. There is also that silent smile of hers wearing her innocent face. Babies can be so weird, I expect her to scream her lung out loud but poor thing is just..... ‘Knock knock’ I almost die, abuti majara is knocking on my window. I put my daughter on the chair, open the door and attack him with a jump, he catches me with the same effort “Thank God you’re okay Molapo” the words escapes my lips, delivering as a whisper in his ear. I’m truly grateful he is okay but I didn’t mean to say it out loud. He lets me melt in his embrace for a while, feeling his skin on mine calms me down.

“Did they touch you” he asks putting me down, inspecting me from head to toe. I shake my head no to assure him “And you weren’t hurt at all right?” I nod once again, he pulls me to his chest again “Thank God you’re okay mabataung waka” he cups my face, look at me with tender care and plants a kiss on my forehead when he frees me

“And then?” only now I realise his wearing Tshepo’s coat, it’s so short on him it looks odd, funny on his tall physique “What happened to your clothes?” my eyes fall on his firm thighs, out on display, he looks like he owns a gym in his house

“I...i...fell....in a lake” he stutters, scratching his head and pulling the coat down

“And you took off your clothes?” he nods, looking troubled “Where are they and why are you not wet?”

“I forgot them, I must have dried while running looking for you?” why do I not believe him

“You were running naked looking for me?” even saying it is unbelievable, he also frowns to himself, questioning his sanity as I am at this moment “that must have been a sight to see, you naked, running all over the bushes” tshepo laughs but quickly contains himself when abuti maraja look at him

“Let’s get in the car lerato laka, I’ll explain” (my love) without hesitation I climb the car, he straps me on the seat and shuts my door close. He opens the front sit next to Tshepo

“Abuti majara” he looks at me from the front, trying to climb the front seat “Please come sit next to me” I take him by surprise, they share a look with Tshepo but he obliges, coming straight to my side. I take lewatle from the seat to free space for him next to me, he sits just close enough, the way I want him. I find his hand and grip it for dear life, now I can safely say no wolf formed in Lesotho shall prosper with him by my side, I feel safe in his touch “I saw a beast, a wolf to be precise” he stiffens, shifts uncomfortably “Did you see it too?” Tshepo is joining the road, keeping his silence

“You sure you saw that?”

“I know what a wolf looks like, it was huge, white, red eyes and scary as hell” tshepo coughs dramatically from the front, interrupting my description “I have never seen something so scary in my life”

“If you were to find yourself in a room with it, would you be scared?” what? is he crazy?

“Abuti majara I don’t want to see that thing anywhere close to me, where did it come from? Do you guys pet wolves in Lesotho” that gets him, he chuckles shaking his head

“I don’t think anyone in their sane mind would pet a wolf” he looks at me, amused for some weird reason “I like what you called me”

“What did I call you?”

“Molapo” I smile shyly looking the other way and he burst, into his loud infectious laughter “Can I have my daughter please?” he takes her before I attempt to hand her over, kisses her and brushes her feet. He likes playing with her feet “Idiots saying tlotla ya papa is going to spend a night in jail, some f*ckers really do like to test me, apply for hell even before satan advertise any post” his talking to lewatle, calming himself down. My mind drift to the officers, Jesus what happened to them? I hope that thing didn’t eat them “I hope it ate him good, I want not even his bones discovered” his back in my brains

“That’s very mean and cruel”

“Mean and cruel is what they were trying to do to you” I keep my silence because that’s true but still they didn’t deserve to die like that, especially the nice one

“Tshepo please find angeline for me, she just handed her application to hell also” the car comes to a halt, we are back at his house. Tshepo is always quick to open my door, nods with a smile when the one wearing a skimpy coat holds my hand with lewatile in his other arm, heading us to the door.

“What did she do?”

“I’m still mad at what she did this morning” he waves me off, somehow I think his lying again but I don’t probe. He punches a code to his door and it slides open “the code for everything is 8864 and the password is MPSO” he informs, walking me to his lonely house

“What does it mean?”

“Majara, Peete, Seeiso and Oratuwe” simple enough, anyone could guess it “Are you trying to say I’m simple” urgh! I don’t dare respond him, I make my way in and leave him chuckling. He follows me to the living room, puts lewatile on the couch and sits right next to her

“Abuti majara” he steals a glance at me and goes back to playing with lewatile’s feet “You need to get decent, you look like a male stripper” he ceases, turns to me with a dropped mouth. I can’t help but die in fits of laughter “What?” that coat is really short on him and it doesn’t help that he is moving about like he isn’t wearing something so short, he is distracting me

“Hmk! Bare ke stripper baby, daddy will be right back” (They say I’m a stripper....) he talks to lewatile, plants a peck on her before he leaves but stops just by the hallway “Have you seen those?”

“What?” I’m confused

“Male strippers” with a giggle I shake my head no “Thank god” he disappears mumbling to himself. I take this time to undo the blanket around my shoulder, damn it felt so heavy, I’m sweaty under this seshoeshoe dress. I was told this is my attire for the next two weeks, seshoeshoe with a matching doek and the blanket. Abuti majara comes back just when I’m stretching my neck, fighting the fatigue. He is wearing a simple blue t-shirt that drops around his neck and grey sweatpants. Sweatpants surely qualifies as male lingerie. What’s that smile creeping his face, gosh konje he can read my mind, he heard my nasty comment.

“Can you please take me home?” the smile on his face instantly disappears “I just need to bath and change, I run for my life in this heavy dress and blanket” he eases refrains from the frown that was wearing him

“I figured, I left you my pants and shirt in my room. You can use my shower gel.....and my tooth brush” the last one he added on purpose, look expectantly at my reaction, I narrow my eyes at him and he laughs out loud

“Thank you, where is your room? Last I was here all the rooms looked vacant”

“You were snooping around my house” I roll my eyes, he puts lewatile on his shoulder and hold my hand leading “My house is partitioned into two, the above floor which is this one we are in and the underground floor” down the passage that I thought leads to the balcony he takes a short turn and there are stairs heading down, it gets a bit darker but he snaps his finger and the room lights up. Wow this is another house moos! We are in another hallway, bringing us to the underground house “This is my room” he opens a door to the room that’s not so far from the entrance hall way, it’s dressed blue satin covers, the walls painted in dark blue. I find it beautiful but too dark for my liking “You can change it, paint and dress it anyhow you like” he frustrates me every time he dominates my head

“Thank you and bye abuti majara, I’m not changing anything and I think I can find my way from here”

He smirks “Can you now?” I push him out and shut the door on his handsome face, he has his stupid moments. I quickly strip my heavy dress and make my way to the shower, it soothes just right.....

30 minutes later I come out smelling just like him, I reek of his shower gel, lotion and everything. I’m even wearing the t-shirt he put on the bed for me, no sweatpants though, I looked like a hobo in those, they were just too big. The t-shirt is okay though, it looks like a dress on me. Up the stairs I emerge to the upper hall way and I spot him out on the balcony, he has my daughter on his shoulder and his other hand holding his phone, his on call

‘Moletsane I wasn’t going to let anyone take my girls from me’ ‘I don’t give a f*ck, the idiot was disrespectful as f*ck’ ‘Yes I transformed and had feast, his rude flesh was mouth-watering’ he laughs..... ‘Don’t worry, tshepo and I cleaned the mess’ ‘no the other one won’t talk, he

didn't see me, he just saw lupus' 'I'm marrying her legally, it wasn't all so bad now it will be easier to convince her' laughter 'Sharp moletsane, find a wife and stop worrying about me and please get out of my head' another laughter and he drops the call, turn around with a grin but immediately ceases at the sight of me "Baby" it comes nervous, as it should be

"What do you mean you had a feast?" the moment stops, he stands rooted, my heart has stopped, asking that question came a whisper from my mouth because I don't want it to be what I think it is, I feel weak from where I'm standing "You eat people?" I ask again in a whisper, longing for him to say no, that what I heard was....i don't know, a joke or I refuse to involve myself with cannibal man. Who is this man?

CHAPTER 13

“Lwandle” he steps closer but I cower back, he ceases, blink rapidly fear and guilt wearing him off. The nervous tension wearing the room tells me that I’m spot on, something is up

“You eat people?” he shakes his head but my heart don’t believe him, I hate this strong connection I have for him because I can always tell when he lies. He is like a piece I didn’t know was missing until we met

“I don’t baby I swear, what you heard was……. Please let’s sit down and…….i would like to hold you when I explain”

“I don’t want you to touch me abuti majara, you eat people” that hurts him, I can always read his emotions from his eyes, the sadness in them screams hurt, I’m sorry that I’m hurting him but I need my honest truth

“I don’t eat people lwandle” he snaps a bit, obviously taking me by surprise, his never lost his temper with me “Do I look like a dracula mangcobo, like I suck people’s blood for a living? Or better yet, do I look like a f*cking cannibal man? Like I eat human flesh?” lord his pissed, his trying to shift the interrogation, I know what I heard but did he mean it like that? I’m starting to doubt myself due to his reaction

“No but you….i heard you talk and you…….” He interjects me, annoyed as hell

“That’s what happens when you eavesdrop lwandle, don’t be listening to conversations that are not meant for you”

“You still haven’t replied me abuti majara, you eat people?” he huffs, look up in defeat, before I know it he strides to me and pick me up like a sack of potatoes, he has me on his shoulder and lewatile on the other side of his chest

“Lwandle I swear if you kick my daughter with this useless protest of yours, you’re going to be next on my meal” I stop to kick let him carry be back to the lounge. F*ck his bulk, how can he carry the both us at the same time. He puts me down but his shirt on me creases up exposing my thighs, I’m quick to catch it down. He rolls his eyes and sits down with my baby still on his shoulder, pulls me next to them and glares at me “We can talk now, like civil adults, ask your question”

“You know my question abuti majara, just answer me” he sighs, looks up to gather some strength before he gives me his eyes

“When I said I had a feast on the guy I meant I manhandled the idiot a bit, he was rude and I wasn’t going to let him take you to jail” his expression is impassive, it’s hard to read if he is lying or not and this thing of looking in my eyes it’s like he is trying to make me not listen to his mind and blind his emotions to me “I mean come on mangcobo, who eats people? The san? Do I look like a Khoisan to you?” now I feel stupid, yes he has this dark character I can’t exactly explain but eat people? That’s a bit extreme plus those things happen in movies only “I mean have you not seen me eat food? What’s this food doing on my table if I’m such khoi khoi?” he must have ordered while I was cleaning up, the table is carrying two huge foodie bags

“I’m sorry” he glares at me, makes me feel denser, I feel so bad for accusing him of eating people. This man has been nothing but my rock since Peete died, the least I could do is not accuse him of such inhuman things. I reach for his big veined hand, he really is one hell of a man, even a grab of his hand feels so solid, strong and firm. His other arm is wrapped around lewatele on his shoulder “I’m really sorry Molapo, I can be very impulsive sometimes, when I heard your conversation with ntate moletsane the image of that beast crossed my mind and somehow I thought it was you” he flinches, shift uncomfortably but still hold his impassive expression at the moment “I’m really sorry, I know it’s stupid, even now saying it sounds more stupid” I ease him by brushing on his hand and nervously smile at him to melt him

“Eat up, I’ll go put her down” he retract his hand from my hold, a sting of hurt grips my heart. The minute he stands puke soaks his entire shoulder, yak! Lewatele just puked on him, asleep “Yeerrr baby girl, o jokotsa o robotse” (, you puke in your sleep) he puts her back on the couch, smiling at her, my daughter is smiling back eating some of her puke in her sleep. Babies are also one hell of weird creatures, who pukes in sleep and smile while at it.

“Let me help you”

“No eat lwandle, I got this” he takes off his shirt, wipes the rest of his shoulder and lewatele with it. Hoooo! I didn’t know God still makes them this masculine and fine, this is one beautiful man “You can also touch for free instead of just feasting your

eyes only” f*ck im staring, he asks with a cocked eyebrow, amused of my wondering eye

“Aren’t you going to put something back on?” I ask when he sits back down by lewatile

“No, my ocean just made me realise it’s quite hot today” he smirks, gaze intently at me making me squirm “You look flushed and your breathing has suddenly changed, for no reason at all my baby, do you need some water” the cockiness in him, but I’m glad my wondering eye brought him back, his forgot that he was pissed at me

“Are we still going horse riding?” I’m changing the topic on purpose, his look at me now feels too exposed, like he can see right through my dirty mind. Amuse dances on his face, melting him to liquid

“I thought you didn’t want to go horse riding anymore” I would rather that than be subjected to his sudden smouldering look that draws me to need. A need of foreign things I would rather burry “I’ll revive that need, don’t worry” I gasp, he stands wearing a smug on his face, carry my baby to put her to sleep I think. He leaves me stuff my face with food, I don’t dare look at him even when I feel his eyes on him. This is so embarrassing, how do I keep forgetting that he reads my mind.

Within couple minutes he comes back, seat right before me on top of the table. His aim is to look right in my eyes when he embarrasses me I see.

“I actually need us to talk, not embarrass you” he takes my drumstick from my hand, eats the remains of it slowly studying me, I squirm under his look, immediately lose all my appetite. My need for food is suddenly replaced with butterflies rising in my navel, I can’t hold his soul searching look anymore, I look the other way. But he reaches for a serviette to wipes his hands and mine, he takes both my hands in his hold when he is done, look intently at me, dishing me that demanding look of his that always leaves me naked “Mabataung I know I’m not your ideal man, or something any mother would want for their daughter but I want you to know that you have my cold heart woman and I need you in my life, I need you so bad Lwandle. The one week you have been in my life has been nothing but extraordinary, something so damn unbelievable that I find myself doing things I

never thought I would....” He pauses, frustratingly brushes his face while he takes in some air “Lwandle ngcobo I damn love you woman, I love you so bad it’s not funny anymore, I love you so bad that I can’t sleep when you’re not by my side, I love you so bad that I see red and dark at the thought of you going back to South Africa. Mangcobo I’m in love with you and I need you to have my cold heart, I need you to be mine Mangcobo” he is gently squeezing my hands while he pours out his heart. I knew from the first day I saw him how he felt and how I feel about him but the timing, I feel like I’m betraying Peete “Pleaseee” it comes as a plea, his hold on my eyes is weakening, something I have never seen in his eyes wears him, his suddenly scared “Peete gave us his blessings, he needs me to be the man for you, please don’t say no” I’m lost for words, staring back at him in.....I don’t know, he took me by surprise, I didn’t expect this today, I thought....

“Abuti Majara im still mourning Peete”

“And I’ll not stand in your way of doing that, I just need us to be official, I need to know that you’ll have my heart when you’re ready, allow me to move my couch in your room because your my drug baby, you put me to sleep like no other pill” he softly stares in my eyes, begging me with his eyes to say yes

“Can I sleep on it?” he swallows, blink to push the hurt in his eyes back “Just today” I add when I realise his hurt, I don’t want him to be hurt

“Sure, tell me when you’re ready I’ll take you home” like his being chased he frees my hands from his hold and leave the room, I really didn’t mean to hurt him.

The drive back home is silent. He is the one driving, he keeps stealing glances at me and just when I think he is going to say something he exhales and looks ahead. I still only have his shirt on but I fastened my blanket around the waist just to hide my legs. He pulls on the driveway and remains seated. I have a feeling his not coming in with me.

“I’ll see you before you sleep” I feel like he is kicking me out of his car, his not even borrowing me a single glance of his look, his eyes are just fixed ahead

“Abuti Majara I’m just scared okay”

“Scared of what Iwandle? Peete gave us his blessings, my ancestors approve and Lupus adores you to death, he kil.....” He trails off, sighs brushing his mouth close “Was I the only one who felt that connection when we kissed earlier?” god!

“Abuti majara that was.....no one can know about that please, it shouldn’t have happened”

“Meaning it was a mistake?” reluctantly I nod, looking the other way. I hear him heave a huge sigh and grab my hand compelling me to look at him “Listen, don’t feel bad for not feeling the same way, I’m sorry I came so strong. Take your time, think and mourn all you want. And I will always be here for you no matter what, I hope I don’t lose your trust in me because of my one sided feelings” I wish I can correct that, he pulls me closer, kiss my forehead and free me “Off you go, I’ll see you tonight okay?” I nod, not able to look at the hurt I have brought in his eyes. He climbs off to open my door, pull both lewatile and I to a hug the minute I step down “You’ll still tell me if anyone mistreats you right?” I nod, still in his warm hold

“Thank you for today, it was quite an adventure” that brings the both of us to a giggle, not letting go of the hug

“It was, thank you too, I’ll see you tonight before you sleep” he frees me, inspect me with his eyes for a while and then he kisses lewatile in my arms “I hope you still trust me enough to fight for you after what I told you, I don’t want my stupid feelings coming between the trust you had for me” with my sombre heart I shake my head no. He plants a peck on my forehead and turns to his driver seat. I stand and watch him drive out until he disappears out of the gate. What have I done God?

ANGELINE

The minute I walked through my gates and welcomed by darkness I knew something was up, my house is never one to be dark. I have people working for me 24/7, some I’m not even sure what they are doing here after all I don’t pay any of them a dime. Mjay takes care of all the payments.

Flickering the lights to my living room I’m welcomed by his reflection, hazed with the smoke of cigar in his hand. I know that look very well, I’m in deep shit. F*ck I

hope James didn't rat on me, his job was just to take Iwandle in without raising any suspicions, I paid that nigger so well for him to rat on me.

"Mjay?!" I cannot recognise my voice, it's shaky and too low for my liking

"Come here" he commands with a firm voice, pointing me to the space between his legs. If it was any other day I would run to be in that position but not today, today I know he isn't here for peace "I hate repeating myself Mamohato" that he does, I feel myself drench in sweat with every step I take closer to him. I expel some air when I feel I'm as close as I can come, im not going anywhere closer than this "I'm not going to ask questions, if you have something to say, now is the time before I send you to your father's place in a box headed by a tree for your useless soul" he means it, his expression looks very deadly

"Mjay I can explain" I beg clasping my hands together for emphasis

"I don't need no explanations, I told you once that if you come for Mabataung you're coming for me" time for plan B, I can't die and leave my son alone. Mapuso will have to forgive me, she also snitched on me by showing Mjay my son. Gathering the little strength I have I stand out, stand tall giving him what he didn't expect

"Well dear husband, I have an insurance, I knew you would come for me and I made damn sure you wouldn't touch even a single fibre on me" he cocks an eyebrow in surprise "I know your weakness mjay and I'm not afraid to abuse them to get what I want"

He smirks, almost impressed with me "Your one hell of a viper aren't you?"

"No I'm a woman who knows what she wants and I'll stop at nothing to get what I want. Saying that, Mjay you're going to marry me, give me a ball wedding I have been dreaming of or else your dear little brother Seeiso might just be disowned like Mapuso did Peete" that gets him, he doesn't lose his composure though but I can tell I have him right where I want

"What are you talking about?"

"Baby Peete never raped Nolizwe, in fact it's the other way round. That quite innocent girl raped Peete, she had her way with him and cried raped when Peete gained consciousness"

“ANGELINE” he snaps, in disbelief

“Baby Mapuso wanted Peete out of the way, he was next on the throne when nate bereng steps down and she couldn’t have that. She wants Puso to rule and in order for that to happen Peete had to be eliminated, of course she could have killed him but we all know no one can touch royal blood and get away with it. So the only solution was to catch him in the most indecent act that will have him exiled” now it’s my time to be boss, I sit astride him and wrap my hands around his neck “Now dear husband, we are getting married and only until then I’ll give you my source and all the evidence I have. And oh you and I both know that Mapuso is your grandfather’s wife and that makes her a Molapo in every way so there will be no killing her baby, my way of exposing her is the only solution you have and for that you need my evidence and source which I’m not willing to give it up until I have a Molapo name following me” I peck his forehead, just to infuriate him and it works, I like him worked up “And oh! One more thing, since you love Iwa so much you can keep her only as a second wife though, I’m your one true Queen and of course my royal blood makes me even more suitable for the role. Do we have a deal baby” he looks up at me pulls me closer to his face

“A deal it is sweetheart” I always knew I was meant to be Mrs. Molapo.

CHAPTER 14

LWANDLE

Watching him drive out of the yard felt like he left with a piece of me, I hope I don't lose him while I mourn for my husband. It's extremely embarrassing for me to admit to myself that I have deeper feelings for this man, people are going to think I'm a wh*re, jumping from one brother to the other. But then again I'm not sure I can ignore the effects he has on me, he is my doing. The touch of his skin on mine is like two opposite charges attracting each other, the echo of his raw voice always leave me with butterflies wearing my entire skin. I'm a gone girl, gone so bad I don't think there is coming back from where I'm at.

"My lady" Palesa welcomes me with a bow, I have learnt that lately I'm no longer referred to as 'Mam', I have been promoted to 'My lady' and even my name everyone calls me Mabataung of lately, well expect abuti majara and that hot headed little brother of his, Seeiso calls me anything that comes to his mind.....oh lord, speak of the devil and he shall avail himself

"Hi Palesa" my tone comes bubbly, pressing my lips trying to suppress a laughter. What is happening behind her is a movie, if only she could turn

"Ausi Pally pally" Seeiso interjects her just when she was about to ask if she could be of service to me. He is trying to be cool standing by the table he pushed a young lady under. Palesa turns with a smile, no one can hate this one, his is one of a kind.

"Say" Palesa's tone is warm and friendly, Seeiso is the only person in this house I have to realise that he doesn't want to be addressed by his status, its seeiso or say

He scratches his beard, play with it thinking of a lie "Ausi pally, my wardrobe is a mess jooo! If you don't mind hle ausi waka kekopa o e shape hai two feela etlaba sharp" (.....my sister can you please do your magic and touch it just two times it will be okay) Palesa nods to him with a smile and ask if I need anything before she attends Seeiso's wardrobe, I free her and she immediately walks off. I burst into fits of laughter when Seeiso pulls a girl under the table, he pushed her there when he walked from the corner and realised Palesa was by the door. The girl looks down fixing her mini skirt that's hugging her slim body perfectly... but because she was

sneaked in here and she is under my look I'm sure she thinks I can see what they were up to. A camera snaps me while I'm still taken by the beautiful slender girl.

"Seeiso!" I exclaim, shocked of him taking images of me

"Insurance policy Mabataung, you scratch my back and I scratch yours" I frown in confusion "If you tell on me that I had my baby in here" he kisses her cheek and the girl turns pink, blush like Spongebob every time he sees Sandy in bikini "I'll tell on you that you left the house looking like a decent makoti but came back like a sidechick wearing bae's clothes, and I'll provide evidence for my allegations" I just narrow my eyes at him, he has a bit of Peete in him, too playful. Not the uptight Majara

"Bye seeiso, I won't tell on you" he kisses my cheek and my sleeping baby's forehead in my arms

"I hope you two didn't subject my baby to some growling and howling, poor thing will be traumatised for life, next thing she will want a wolf partner like daddy, where will we get another one?"

"What are you talking about Seeiso?" the smirk on his face, it's crept with curiosity as he studies me

"O strong ausi Lwa, jooo!" (Your very strong sister lwa) he turns to his girlfriend and tell her to wait outside he'll be with her shortly, as soon as the girl closes the door he gazes at me with that curious look of his "I always wondered how is it like?" he is low, close to my face whispering "Having a beast growling and howling on top of you, does he really change when doing the deeds?"

"The wolf?" I'm so lost

"Yeah! It was said that it will reveal itself when it pounds its mate" he has a naughty smile creeping him that I can't make "Was it like AUUUUU while he....." he shakes his waist portraying someone having sex "Are you okay? Don't you need like salts and staff, I'm sure it was very huge, was it harry?" this child!

"Seeiso ukhuluma ngani?" (What are you talking about?)

"Hmk, so secretive ausi lwa, but don't worry even I would tell no soul that I slept with a beast" he stares at me in disbelief "Hmk! Bo ausi lwa lebanyane yet you carry

such beast, but they do say dynamite comes in small packages” (.....Sister Iwa your do tiny yet....) he makes past me shaking his head with laughter just when I was about to tell him the only beast I saw was the wolf chasing me. I have a feeling he is a bit crazy, maybe they forgot to tell me that he loses his marbles sometimes, who sleeps with a beast? That’s utter nonsense, the things coming out of his mouth sometimes proves that his sanity needs to be questioned. He stops by the door, look at me one last time “But if you ever need someone to talk to, like offload the beast sex styles, I’m your man. I’m sure it’s very hard carrying such beast on your tiny body and now having to live with the image of him like that must be traumatising. Call me when you’re ready to share” he shut the door leaving me in shock, I can’t believe he really is that crazy. Poor thing, so handsome and so young and so crazy, life can be a bi*ch sometimes.

The minute I enter my room I’m welcomed by sleep I can’t explain. I feel like just hitting the pillow. I abandon the blanket around my waist after putting Lewatle down and remain with his t-shirt. Warm smile creeps me as I curl myself next to my daughter. It smells like him, his unique scent that draws me in. I can’t exactly make out the contents of his cologne, it has something wild, something a cave man would reek of but it’s very pleasant and so welcoming.....

~ “But then again a bit scary” my heart limps, im curled on my bed with Lewatle next to me

“Peete....” My tones comes ached, sudden lump choking it, he smiles, looks at me in white, I have never seen him in white suit until today, it looks so good on him

“My ocean” his hand reaches for my face, brushing my cheeks “It’s time to free me my ocean” I shake my head, tears making their way to the sides of my face as I touch on his hand, I want it to remain there, I don’t want to let go of the familiar touch

“Baby no....please don’t leave me” he just smiles, continue brushing on my cheeks

“I’ll never leave you Mabataung, you and Tlotla are my spirit, I’ll carry the both of you till the end of time but now you have to free me. The truth is out, your soul is going to avenge me and those who had a part in tainting my name are going to die

a slow painful death by the great Lupus himself. Now that he has a way of clearing my name, I need you to let me go, free me so I can join my people”

“Pee no, you can’t leave me again”

“I’m here my ocean, please take care of my little ocean and could you please do me one favour” I sniff, allow him to continue with a nod “Please give him a chance, his not a very patient man and you and I both know how you feel about him, what you feel for him doesn’t come even close to what you felt for me. Ours was love, normal love but yours and his is epic, unique rare kind of love. You’re his chosen mate and I was supposed to be a bridge to bring the both of you together but I’m Pee, I know pure gold when I see one and I took you for myself. I want you to be with him, do me that favour, don’t let anyone raise my child expect him, he is the only one that will know how to handle the future she is about to have”

“Pee I need you”

“No you don’t, you have Lupus himself by you side. Hush now my baby, go to sleep. I’ll be watching for you when you wake” he blinds my eyes with his hand and when I gain light.....~ f*ck I realise I was dreaming, it was such a beautiful dream I want him to come back, why did he leave me again? A soft knock interrupts my sorrowful moment, I allow whoever it is to come in with a sombre heart.

“My lady” Palesa’s soft voice comes from the door, my back is facing the door

“Yes.....Palesa” my voice is paused with sniffs in between

“Dinner will be served in ten minutes my lady”

“Thank you palesa” I expect her to walk out but I don’t hear the door shutting, I can tell she is still standing “Palesa?”

“My lady are you okay? Do you need me to call for my prince” I chuckle, sniff the tears away and turn to face her as I sit up on the bed

“I’m okay Pally, you don’t need to call anyone” she nods with a smile and walk out, now I see why she is high regarded in this house. She is such a warm soul with a huge crush on abuti Majara but she knows her place, doesn’t do anything to jeopardise the trust everyone has in her.

I took my own sweet time to avail myself for dinner because I was still cleaning up me messy face but had I known I would gain myself this shocked audience, I would have came earlier or not come at all. I wonder what I did to deserve such curious looks.

“Dumelang” my sotho is slowly getting there, the response I receive is not what I expected. The females around this table are just staring at me, only the men reply with a low ‘Eya ngwnaka’ (Yes my baby)

“Seeiso are you sure?” Mamajara questions him but keeping her eyes on me

“I swear olady, she was so traumatised”

“Lord I’m going to kill Majara, how could he do this? She just gave birth not so long ago. He was supposed to wait and.....” Ntate tlali clears his throat

“I’m sure we don’t want to discuss things that husbands and wives do in their intimate times, anyway makoti are you okay?” I nod, confused as hell

“Hmk! Your one strong woman, I give you that” Mapuso remarks, bringing the younger ones to laughter. Just then the devil himself walks in taking the stares from me. I can finally breath...well for a moment, now eyes keep running from him to me

“BoMoletsane” he pulls his chair and sits down already reaching for a plate to plate for himself but he immediately comes to a pause, slowly raising his head when he feels the tension and eyes on him, he frowns back at everyone “What did I do this time?”

“These ancestors are really selfish, they show me things I don’t want to see but fail to show me the one thing I begged them to show me” Moletsane his tone is as disappointed as expression

“And that is?” Abuti majara enquires cocking an eyebrow, lost as me

“You and Mabataung”

“What about us?”

“The events of today, the first time you two bed each other” abuti majara chokes from his drink, I’m still lost, what does bed mean?

“I just need you two to feel safe and share with us, this is a safe space. Us boMoletsane we share everything. Just share they styles, the moans.....”

Patting the table abuti majara is quick to stop seeiso “Seeiso, seeiso” he has a smile on his face but his trying so hard suppress it “Mind that dirty mind of yours” he laughs, it comes as a chuckle “So this table is filled with curiosity of my sex life”

“No, nna I just want the styles, like share if there are things that animals do that could help me improve my bedroom skills” Seeiso

“You’re all going to hell with your dirty minds but please family mind sharing how you’ll came up to that conclusion” he questions with raised eyebrows

“It’s not us, the prophecy said it ‘Lupus will show himself only in three scenarios, 1. Shielding his loved one 2. Bedding his mate and 3. When he finally departs to the other world, so we have seen the first one more than enough, it would have been nice to see how he gets down to business” the entire table erupt with laughter at ntate Bereng’s revelation, even I laugh but I’m still lost. I wonder who is Lupus?

“Shame on you majara, she just had a baby for god sakes. Lord I hope you didn’t rip her apart” Ora and Puso burst into pieces at Mamajara’s statement, slowly I’m starting to think I’m the subject of matter but what exactly did I do “My mother said she couldn’t walk for days the first time before she got used to it, I’m surprised mabatuang is this fresh”

“Eeehhh Maaa, what did I do?” she keeps her silence, suddenly uncomfortable

Seeiso intertwines his fingers together and clasps his palms “You two.....” he finishes his sentence by clasping his palms together, taking my eyes with hoping to make me understand, he is the most curious one eager for information

“This family is really f*cked up. Hold your horses’ hee boMoletsane, Iwa and I did no such thing and I wouldn’t traumatise her like that” relief, Mamajara is quick to thank god, others turn to Seeiso with displeased looks “But I still want to know how you all came to that conclusion”

Seeiso’s curiosity turns into confusion as he explains “You see, Mabataung came home wearing his t-shirt only.....” I cut him in shock

“Bathong! Seeiso!” I’m on my feet with horror all over my face, haibo! This kid

“I really thought you two got dirty ausi lwa, but le wena you should have told me what happened so I don’t end up coming to my own conclusions” I can’t believe this, I slowly sit back down in embarrassment as people laugh their lungs out

“Who is lupus?” that’s the only part I didn’t get, I ask when laughter dies down

“The wolf....” Seeiso comes to my response quickly but Abuti Majara is quick to tame him

“Ei ei! Cut it wena lwa doesn’t know as yet”

“You haven’t told her?” the entire table asks almost the same time

He scowls at them “You’ll live for my business, Lwa is not very welcoming of the news. She kind of saw him earlier and if you had all seen freaked out she was, you’d understand why I’m holding up on her” some nods in understanding, I need this dinner over so he can explain few thing to me, I’m starting to have my own conclusion

“That’s very dramatic if you ask me. She is the mate, the bearer but she is afraid of her own chosen. Ae this zulu girl loves drama” Mapuso, I don’t bother with her anymore, I understand why she hates me. My husband molested her daughter

“Your homie is very dramatic neah?” abuti majara asks shooting daggers at her, immediately the tension on the table changes “I’ll share what I think is drama, a certain little birdie whose in boots too big for herself revealed that Peete never raped Nolizwe, in fact it was the other way round. That little missus of yours rode him the entire night and cried rape in the morning” gasps “If I were you I would start packing and leave in peace before you leave in pieces” the table is quite, Peete is a sensitive matter for this table, only now I realise that nolizwe is not on the table. Lewatle shoots a sudden loud cry through the monitor I came with, Mamajara tries to stand but I stop her. I would rather be the one to leave this table, the atmosphere is not as welcoming.

“I’ll check on her Maa” with that I leave to attend my daughter, she hasn’t cried like this since the night her father died. I take the elevator to make it to her sooner, from the monitor I can tell her voice is even trembling. The minute the elevator opens I’m welcomed by horror, nolizwe is coming out of my room naked, bloody naked with nothing on. She stops to look at me with shock that matches mine

“What were you doing in my room?” my heart is already shattered, I pray she didn’t do anything to my daughter. She keeps her silence, stare at me without blinking like a statue “Nolizwe little bi*ch I hope you didn’t touch my daughter or else you’ll know the kind of bi*ch I can also be” I threaten but she doesn’t even flinch, she stands like a pole without even blinking. The more I study her waiting for a response it occurs to me that my daughter has stopped crying, that fear struck hits me when I have to push the door open. I suddenly feel weak, my sight gets blurry before I gather strength to push the door open. I recite my silent quick prayer “Lord please don’t do this to me again”

CHAPTER 15

Opening a door had never been such a mountain. She feels like she is about to dive in the lowest extending base of the ocean. Even though she doesn't know what awaits her, the abnormal speeding rhythm of her heart is confirmation enough that terror waits for her. She takes one last deepest breath before her world shatters once again. She is used to losing people but she never thought her time with her daughter would be this brief. She opens the door with a trembling heart, force her limbs to the room. What sits curled on her bed is not her baby. Her worst nightmare sits in peace sucking on her baby's pink pacifier. She feels shivers run all over her before her legs fail to carry her any further. She falls to the bare ground.

Lucky for her Majara is her second big baby. He was right on her tail, he follows her like a lost puppy. He took the stairs because he wanted to check the whereabouts of the odd Nolizwe whom he had just discovered some dark news about her. She had always been an odd child. They tried everything to fit her in but Nolizwe was always a loner, they eventually stopped trying and just let her be but that was their biggest mistake. The snake was slowly but surely spiting it's venom in their chieftaincy.

The moment he appears from the corner he is welcomed by horror. Nolizwe is standing like a statue outside Lwandle's room. All that Angeline said is true, this young girl is a witch. She stands without blinking like a witch held in act. Lwa must have seen her. Everyone knows you don't touch a witch when it's held captive like this, he spits right on her feet before he opens the door to check on Lwa then deal with this girl once and for all. He is welcomed by Lwa's fainted body on the floor. Immediately he squats down to her and scoop her to the bed but he ends up dropping her on top of the bed when he sees a little blue eyed wolf trying to stand on the bed. It's still young, needs a bit of training to stand firm. This is definitely Tlotla. The pink dummy and Lupus laminar emotions confirms that this is one of his own but how? How did this happen? This was supposed to end with him hence why he was sent to the mountains for five years to purify his blood so Lupus wouldn't implant on any one.

Before he calls everyone he takes his little wolf in his arms, he should be angry at this moment but this feeling right now he feels content. Funny how he missed five

years of his life just to prevent this from happening but now that it's happening he feels magic. He would take the five years back and undo what was done to him just to have this moment. He chuckles at how little beastly is sucking on the dummy in her sleep, this is all Tlotla. Baby girl sucks her dummy for dear life. It swells his heart that his daughter has caught on the first born child curse in his family. It was supposed to end with him, but now that she is of his bloodline he knows lupus hates nothing more than rejection. Lupus needs acceptance from the alpha himself which happens to be him. In the little beast's ears he whispers, gently cradling his daughter.

"Lupus, canis, free my daughter, I have seen you and I accept you" little canis transforms back to Tlotla in his arms. Now it's clear that Nolizwe was in here to practice her dark magic on the baby hence why she transformed. Only new born wolves can detect dark magic because they are still pure, they haven't killed as yet and have not seen full moon transformation. You don't practice anything foreign to the wolf line new born it can't kill as yet but not even a single witch can touch it.

"Don't be changing Tlotla your scaring mommy okay" he whispers in her ear gently putting her on the bed. Just then Moletsane walks in with his fathers, the women are still standing outside glaring at the caught witch. Moletsane had a vision soon after he left the table and alerted the entire family.

"What happened?" Moletsane asks, he only saw two versions of Lupus in Lwa's room when he had his vision. He sees everything but sometimes ancestors works in mysterious ways. This they didn't show him until couple of minutes ago.

"Lupus has implanted on my daughter, she transformed" Majara sits next to the passed out lwa in defeat. The three gentlemen gasp in shock.

"Is she another gray or iberian?" Ntate bereng asks, stricken in horror

"Gray wolf tymba, another lupus to be precise, a female one" he is happy but sombre at the same time, he doesn't want his daughter heading for the same experience as him "What was the use of me leaving if this thing is still in my blood, I was caged and tortured for damn five years just so this doesn't pass on" silence, no one can say how this happened "You all said..." He trails off, words fail him. He takes a huge sigh to calm down before he continues "I gave up my life, allowed that monster you call the greatest wolverine to drain my blood off my system, torture

me for years but it's still here, my daughter is a damn wolf and I don't understand, last I checked I was the only one carrying grandma's gift, Tlotla doesn't even have my blood but she transformed, to Lupus, a wolf of my kind"

"Majara Tlotla has your blood. You and Peete are birds of the same feather, him implanting in you chosen was him doing it for you. Lupus recognised his blood as yours and claimed the seed. Remember Lupus held your seed because he wanted you to implant on your mate only. Peete planting his seed in your chosen is one and the same thing to Lupus, you blood implanted your chosen, it may have not been through your scrotum but the main issue is it's your blood in your mate. Peete conceived her while you were still in your purity journey and because she was already here it makes the whole five years in the mountains useless" Moletsane, making sense of how this came about "Lupus had already claimed her and implanted in her, the only thing he needed was for you to mate with your chosen and your brother did it for you"

"Meaning all my children are still going to turn out this way?"

"What children? Last we checked you couldn't father a child Majara for this reason, we can't risk you barring us little wolves. Now we already have the two of you and it's bloody too much before it even starts" ntate tlali

"Tyma don't call my daughter a wolf asambrief" the gentlemen laugh at his annoyance

"BoMoletsane I think Majara can now have children" the two gentlemen both throw displeased looks at Moletsane "His mate is here" he points at the still passed out Lwa on the bed "He couldn't father children because Lupus doesn't implant in just anybody, he needed his chosen and how that she is here, I'm afraid we are about to have more than two wolves in our house"

"But this is first born curse, Majara caught this because he was my first born, Tlotla caught this because she is Majara's first born. That's what the prophecy said, only first borns will carry wolf line blood except the....." Ntate bereng trails off, making sense of what the prophecy says

The two finishes it for him "Except the true Lupus himself, his seed will resurrect the house of wolves" silence, majara's seed maybe the end of the Molapos, do they want that? They don't know as yet but one thing is for sure. They don't want more

of this blood in their house, meaning Majara and Lwandle cannot have babies at all.

“Tell me again why that old woman choose to pass this on to me?” Majara frustratingly questions his father who just look at him with nothing but guilt “You see why I sometimes hate your wife, her mother ruined my life” words fail nate bereng, he pities his son because he lost on the throne because of this curse. None of the Baletsane wanted him to take on the throne because of what’s in his blood therefore the throne was promised to the next in line except him.

Lwandle starts fidgeting behind Majara, slowly she blinks scanning the room when she opens her eyes. Her eyes fall on her daughter next to her and she sighs, clasp her hands looking up.

“Thank you lord” relief carries her tone, she bends to her sleeping baby and plants multiple kisses all over her tiny face. Just as she is busy blessing her baby girl with kisses, the women walk in, still shock stricken at what is standing outside. Mapuso is the last to walk in and the minute she enters the room, Tlotla transforms back to little Lupus. Lwandle pass out again on top of little lupus, everyone turn to look at Mapuso.

“You and your little witch” Majara hisses, still faced down, he hasn’t raised his head but he can tell Mapuso just walked in. His shirt rips into pieces, fur growing all over his skin, rearrangement of his spinal cord alters just when he is about to fall the ground and transform Moletsane is quick to hit him with the Lupus horn, the only horn that can temporarily tame his wildness.

“Not today son, you cannot kill a Molapo you know that” Majara hisses as if cold, fighting his teeth that ache Mapuso’s blood. Slowly he is coming back to human, gritting his teeth and fisting his hands to fight the ache to rip her apart

“But Nolizwe is no Molapo” Ntate bereng reminds with a shrug gaining himself daggers from Ntate Tlali and Moletsane “What? It’s true. That little witch performed her dark magic on my son and I ended up chasing my son out of his home. I want that thing died and that’s a command from your king” that stops the two gentlemen from reasoning with him “Lupus?!” he calls, Majara transforms back to Lupus, slowly he grows into a huge red eyed wolf “Let’s go feast son” he says

that looking at Mapuso who shatters to the ground, crying for her baby. Ntate bereng walks out with his wolf brushing on its back. It's so huge its right under his arms. They both stand before the naked Nolizwe, mabereng is trying to hold Mapuso who wants to throw herself to save her daughter. Everyone knows you don't come between Lupus and his prey or else he will feed on you too. So because she is married to the Molapos, she can't die of Majara's hand, she is still a Molapo and they can't risk the ancestors retaliating towards Majara for taking his own blood.

"Psssssss for Peete and Tlotla boy, to the dark room off you feast" ntate bereng unleashes his wolf, in its ear he whispers brushing on its backbone. Like a starved beast he is it jumps on Nolizwe and dislocate her arm through gritted teeth. The taste of the witch's blood has it howling twisting its neck in satisfaction. She is mouth-watering, her dark blood quenches lupus' thirst like no other. Within a minute her arm is a thing of the past. She once had an arm. Her piercing cry touches the fragile women's hearts but not Lupus. She is cowering back with her one arm on the floor, leaving trail of blood on the white tiled floor. It sharpens its pointy teeth slowly heading to her, aiming for another arm "To the dark room Lupus" ntate bereng orders, it catches her other arm once again and drag her to the dark room. Her painful scream follow to the dark room down the passage.

Tears have stopped flowing on Mapuso's face, only the sound of hiccups and shallow pained breaths is audible from her "Your....mean" she spits, with pauses from her ached heart.

Ntate bereng smirks squatting on her face "Consider yourself lucky that you carried one of our own, other than that I would have Lupus behead your witching ass for breakfast. Now tell me what that thing you call a daughter was doing to my grandchild and what she did to my son" Mapuso spits on his face

"You're all going to pay, all of you" she is enraged trembling from her emotions

"Moletsane, make her talk" Ntate bereng commands.

Moletsane stoop to Mapuso's ear and throws a command of his own "Speak witch" like a possessed witch Mapuso sits up straight, staring at ntate bereng.

"What did you do to my son?" he questions again, glaring back at her with nothing but pure hate, now she is under Moletsane's spell. She will surely speak.

“He...Gogo wanted Puso to rule after you, she wanted someone she can control and because Puso has my blood in him it would have been easier to control him through dark magic. So the order was to remove Peete because he was next so Puso can take the throne right after you. We hypnotized Peete with dark magic and had my daughter take him by force so he can be exiled. We could have killed him to remove him but gogo advised that taking a royal blood will be calling hell on us” her eyes are fixed on the king

“Who is gogo?”

“Our master”

“Who the f*ck is she?” Bereng is losing patience, he wants this gogo today

“I have never seen her, only the echo of her voice gives instructions in the caves of greatest witches”

“Where is this cave?”

“I don’t know, only she can transport us to the caves. We just wake there whenever she wants us” this is getting no where

“What about my granddaughter? What did Nolizwe want from her?”

“Her blood, gogo sent her get Princess Tlotla’s blood. She wants Lupus blood mixed with hers to intense her powers” ntate bereng stands, glare at Moletsane and his father

“You see the things you did? You brought witches in this house and now my son died alone in the world with none of his family. And now this witch you call a wife was here for my granddaughter’s blood. What do you suggest we do father?” ntate tlali sits on the bed, defeated. Mabereng brushes on her husband’s shoulder

“Bereng mind that big mouth of yours, this man is still your father”

“Yeah right, father that married a wh*re and now his wh*re is all over my offspring”

Moletsane intervenes “Exile, we can’t have her killed so the only solution is to exile her”

“Over my wolf body” Majara remarks walking through the door fixing his shirt he just put on, all eyes fall on him “She can’t die of our hands but she can surely die of

someone's hand. I have something special planned for her and her partner in crime. For tonight she will spend the night in the dark room, tomorrow she will know not to mess with a molapo even in after life" he roughs her pulling her with an arm followed by the gentlemen

"Majara did you clean your mess?" Mamajara asks about her tiles

"Mother don't worry I licked everything, your tiles are squeaky clean" she stands by the door watching them drag the numb Mapuso down to the dark room "Mme what are we going to say to Puso?" she asks in defeat sitting by the spooked Mabereng

"I don't believe I have been sleeping with that man who was sleeping with a witch Mamajara" Mamajara brushes her shoulder consoling her, she herself can't believe they have been living with someone who practice dark magic witchcraft all this years. But this explains why they all just gave up on Peete and exiled him, it was all Mapuso's doings.

Lwa moves behind them, she abandons mabereng to hold lwa because Tlotla is still in a wolf form, Majara didn't speak to Lupus as yet to free Tlotla.

She wakes in Mamajara's arms, she doesn't know how long she has been out for but she do remember seeing little white wolf curled on her bed sucking her baby's dummy instead of Tlotla. Her heart sinks once again.

"Maaaa!" her heart is pounding once again, holding on mamajara for dear life "My baby maa.....it....it ate her" Mamajara brushes on her arms, she past out two times when she saw the little wolf on her bed.

"It didn't eat her Mabataung she is perfectly fine" Mamajara try to convince her

"Maa I want my baby"

"She is here" Mabereng responds with the little wolf in her arms, trying to hand it to Lwandle who is quick to jump and curl herself by the wall

"Get that thing away from me" her voice is trembling, mixture of snots and tears have messed her face "I want my baby" she is trembling by the wall, shaking like a leaf. Majara walks in at the perfect moment, his eyes remain on the trembling

Lwandle “Abuti majara I want my baby” she is not moving, she is pushing herself to the wall as if it will hide her

“Sgriza how is little Lupus’s temperature?” he asks mabereng who is holding the little wolf, now that she pays attention it has changed

“She is getting hot” Majara nods with a sigh staring at Lwandle

“Lupus hates rejection more than anything. She is going to have to come to terms with this soon” He informs, his eyes still fixed on Lwa

“Sit her down and tell her the truth Majara, you can’t expect her to accept things she doesn’t know and understand. You two need to sit down and talk, tell her your naked truth” Mamajara suggest, standing by his son “I’ll be more than happy to babysit tomorrow the entire day while you bare your soul to her, show her your roots. But please make sure you leave Tlotla in a human form I can’t be a queen walking around with a wolf grandchild”

Mabereng burst, handing little wolf to Majara as they walk out, Lwandle wants to follow the two woman but majara stands by the door. Kisses the wolf in his arms before he whispers to her ear.

“Lupus, free my daughter” with an order little wolf transforms to baby Tlotla, her mother hits the floor with another faint. He chuckles holding her head with his leg so it doesn’t hurt from falling “Tlotla ya papa, I wonder how she is going to be like when she meets me” he talks with his daughter who decides to smile as if she could understand “Nna le wena we are going to kill mommy keya o jwetsa babygirl” (You and i...i’m telling you baby girl)

CHAPTER 16

MAJARA MOLAPO

Not once in my life I ever thought I would ache for a woman this much, her presence makes me feel like a magnet fighting to choke steel. I want to glue on her for life, stay by her side through all the seasons of life. It's safe to admit that I belong by her. Some people find love in slow motions, the minute everything ceases and the only thing mobile is the love of your life walking past you, that's how most fall in love, but not me. I Majara Molapo fell in love with the voice of a woman I didn't know, the woman who belonged to my brother then. The day I first spoke to lwandle on the phone I knew I was screwed. My heart finally danced for a woman for the first time, her voice sounded like a soothing melody in my ears. It was through our worst when we first spoke but her sniffs and the pain in her heart drew me to her from miles apart. Lupus and I finally had one thing in common, we were finally a single soul, both attuned and pushing in the same direction.

I still remember the first time I arrived in my house and found her asleep, asleep in the one room I feel drawn to in the upper level. Funny thing about the room she choose is that it's the only room in the upper level house I use, the only room I sometimes retire in. Watching her sleep that night was like watching my God before me. She slept like a god, something so unique but special in its own way, something wrapped with innocence I could not describe, something so pure and so damn thirst quenching for my troubled soul. She caught me at a single telephone conversation and trapped my soul for her to keep. She claimed it before I could even lay my eyes on her.

The minute laid my eyes on the tiny beautifully sleeping woman on my bed lupus ached for her, he growled, fought to break free just to lick her and I let him be. He licked and brushed on her until he was satisfied. I knew in that moment that she is my tamer, the one who can cease lupus from breaking free no matter what.

I love her under my arm, Seeiso accused me of squashing her bones, but little did he know I haven't touched even a single strand of her hair. I have been told im too huge for her, my family is scared for her even though I haven't tried anything indecent with her. She is like a tiny ball of emotions, I find her funny when she

shouts. She looks like a 16 year old scolding me whenever she shouts and I find it quite amusing, unfortunately it infuriates her more when I laugh so I end up holding my laughter in.

The time I have spent with Mabataung I have come to realise that I can't hold myself around her, she has me at my lowest. I swear no woman has ever grabbed my balls so hard without even touching on them. The connection I have for this woman is indescribable, her soul is so naked to mine that we are like one united heart but separated in bodies. I love how I'm able to listen to her mind. After Moletsane she is the only person in this world I can read, sometimes we don't need to open our mouths to have a conversation, just listening to each other's souls it's enough.

She had quite an exciting night yesterday. Olady sedated her to bring her to calm a bit down but she ended up drifting the night away which was perfect for me because I couldn't bring myself to clarify this whole thing to her. Not while she was still in that state, my worry was that she is going to faint to coma when she learns the truth. She was a complete mess and I hope she will wake calmer and more open minded, I can't have her that freaked out once again.

Thanks to the sedative I stole a moment with her, multiple kisses all over her face and another one night of sleep next to her that she will not know of because she was drugged to sleep. I wrapped her the entire night and I feel so rejuvenated, but not so exciting for my di*k though because his excitement ended up being torture for him. The minute I step out of my closet I'm welcomed by my worst nightmare. That look, I know he wants something and he is going to blackmail till Jesus comes back.

"I hear we have little beastly in the house" the smug on his face, he is infuriating me on purpose

"Seeiso if you know what's good for you, let today be the last time you refer to my daughter as beastly"

"Relax will you, more beasts in the house means I can be as disrespectful as f*ck. No one can touch me, I'm one untouchable sly fox"

“What do you want? It’s too early for me to entertain your fantasies” he cocks an eyebrow at me with a smirk

“Glad you know me so well, listen” he challenges me, and I already know what’s coming. Blackmail “I saw you sneaking out of Mabataung’s room by dawn”

“Are you a freaking vampire” he smirks

“I guess so, anyway I was sneaking one of my shandis out” (Girlfriends) Dear Lord!

“Seeiso how many girlfriends do you have?” he rolls his eyes before he falls the rest of his wh*ring body on my bed, such a royal man wh*re

“Counting is so damn high school Jumanji, I didn’t come here to discuss my ladies. I’m here for your lady” he looks up at me, with that smirk of his “As I said, I saw you walking out of her room like a sneaky little boy you are and I checked and realised she was still out of it from the sedative she was given. So here comes my request. I need you to borrow me your house, there is a little chillas I want to hold with just four of my guys and Majara Jumanji Molapo before you deny me access to your house remember the information I have of you cuddling sedated Mabataung the entire night, a little birdie will whisper that in her ears” Hell can also be family

“She is my wife damn it” I snap

“That she is but you and I both know she will burn you and refrain you from seeing her the entire day if she finds out. We both know a day without seeing her for you would be the death of you. And on top of that you wouldn’t want to add on things to make her sour, I’m sure she is going to wake burning like a flame and you just want to put that fire out, not add more fuel” he winks and serve his victory look “Deal homie?”

“Why don’t you use Puso’s house because I’m sure he is attending your little event?” his eyes falls in disappointment

“He abandoned me”

I’m confused, the two of them are tight as hell even though Puso is way older than him “What happened?”

“He betrayed mankind, his in love and now I’m suddenly cramping his style. He is under a woman spell, have you not seen how he misses most of family time. He has

a woman cooking for him in his house and it's not cute, his even thinking of introducing her" this is exciting, Puso is finally growing up, he is two years younger than Peete but he had me worried for a minute, there were no signs of growth in him

"That's my boy, stepping up. You should try it, it doesn't hurt to grow up" the devil himself walks in my room just when we are discussing him, he doesn't even knock, my room is quite famous today "I have just heard amazing news about you" he beams

"That's how we roll" we fist bump on it much to Seeiso's pleasure

"Well I don't roll like that, I'll be a DCD till the Jesus comes back, there is no way I'm going to settle for a single dish while I can eat anywhere I like anytime" they both crack up, I think I'm far behind with their lingo

"I'm a DCS and I'm loving it, that dish is the best I have had and I don't think there is any that would grip my cock like she do" Puso, with a smirk winking at Say

"Mind taking me with, I'm lost, what's DCD and DCS?" they both crack once again

"To think I asked mama kaBeasty to ask kganthe you're so far behind" he sits up, smirk at me "You see I'm a DCD, that's my motto. I tread dating like porn. I Download Cum Delete, I delete porn in my phone, I don't keep it no matter how good it is. I always want something different. Same goes for my love life. I 'Download' – that's the courting stage, search for my woman same as searching for my pleasure on the net. Then comes the comes the 'Cum' stage, I sex my woman same as watching porn and cuming from it, and lastly it's the 'Delete' stage, I don't eat the same dish twice so I delete meaning my porn when I'm done to make space for something new and different, same goes to my lady. Baby I downloaded you, cum from you and I'm deleting you when I'm done, simple and straight, no drama, no hassle" What a wh*re my mother birthed "So the difference between me and Puso is that he decided to be a DCS. Download, Cum and Save and believe me you don't want to find yourself saving. That means same pussy for the rest of your life and it's terrible" he has a way of rendering me speechless sometimes, I hope to still be here to see the day Seeiso meets a woman that will tame him.

"And all this women you sleep with agree to that nonsense?"

“That’s the thing, I’m an honest guy. I explain my motto to them, that I’m a DCD so to avoid unnecessary heartbreaks”

“I pray you one day meet a woman that will break your heart for all the women you slept with” I give up on this boy, turning to the tickled Puso “You look dressed, aren’t you supposed to be on your way to work?”

“I am, I have a morning meeting. I just wanted to find out when you’re coming back to the office, I could use a bit of a bae-cation with my girl now that you’re here”

“Yeeew!” Seeiso exclaim in disgust “Uglycation? What the hell is that?” we both burst

“This is my last week doing nothing, next week I’m coming back full force. You can plan your things” he beams does the slow motion dance walking out “Make sure you find a spot for this one before you leave, make sure it’s underground, I’m dragging him to work myself” Puso nods in delight before he closes the door, Seeiso is looking at me horror stricken

“I’m too handsome to be a mine worker, please don’t do that to my handsome face and style”

“You can’t take selfies for a living Seeiso, you need a serious job”

“It’s photography, I did that in school and I’m good at it. Juju please don’t make me sweat for a living. I love my job, the gigs I get are enough to maintain my living”

“Gig my foot, you busy chowing every model you snap.....”

“It’s not snap, it’s photo shooting” he argues, standing up “I’m out of here, remember I’m having chillas at your house”

“I don’t remember agreeing”

“I know the combination to the house Majara, now I’m telling you so you don’t make things awkward for me with my niggers by showing your face there Jumanji, you know what will happen” a 22 year old threatening me, he opens the door back and peep in when I think he’s left “Talk to your father if you don’t want me in your house, he bought Puso a house when he turned 21, I deserve one too not a damn car he bought me” he shuts the door without waiting for my response. Puso was very responsible at his age and he deserved a house, not this wild him.

I can't believe that little devil just took my crib like that, I guess I'll take Lwa to my cabin when I explain everything to her and show Lupus. Now I have to prepare for her cute little interrogation. She better be awake now but I need to make a quick stop the dark room before that, check how my pot is boiling. That evil Mapuso will not.....and then? I can hear Moletsane's terror in my head, something is missing from the dark room. I follow his troubled mind and it leads me to the dark room, he is standing by the door. Wide opened and hit by shock

"She escaped" he informs not even looking at me, keeping his look to the empty room

"How? You tied her by your spell" I ask, he shrug his shoulders turning to me

"Whatever witchcraft that woman uses is powerful, she broke my spell" his in disbelief

"Bona hee Moletsane, you better throw your things and throw them fast. I want that woman found today. My wife and daughter are at risk here and we both know I'll not hesitate to rip her apart, so for your precious ancestors make sure you find her because I'll take their precious blood myself if she comes for my family, capish"

"Fotsek" he hisses back

"You know my honest truth, good thing you reside in my head so you know I ain't kidding" I can feel him burn me with his look until I disappear from the passage, I don't know what's so special about ancestors if they can't protect us from such evil. And now she has escaped right under their watch. Bloody useless underground gang.

Before entering her room I take another calming breath and throw myself in. For a minute I just freeze and smile like a fool in love I am looking at my beautiful wife. She captivates me but she's been sleeping for far too long, it's after 8 am already and if she doesn't wake soon she is going to infect me too, she knows she is my drug. I can't keep my eyes opened longer with her by my side. My phone, who could it be so early in the morning, the only people who call me are Tshepo, puso and seeiso always trying to woo me in their wild lives.

Good morning handsome this bi*ch is really losing touch with reality, I don't dare respond her wanna be cute messages. She and I passed that line a long time ago and from her yesterday revelations, I can safely say her application to hell is in process

Baby I just secured a venue at Maliba-mats'o lodge, we can have our ball wedding by this time next week another text, I can't help but laugh, this bitch is dripping. Thinking I would give her my name for information, the only thing I need is her source. I have a feeling this source might lead me to this witch gogo that craves for my daughter's blood.

Sweetheart do what you have to do but remember your taking me to your source before the wedding

Of course baby, we'll go on Saturday Just perfect, I can finally approve her application to hell after she leads me to her source *I love you baby, let's spend the day together. I miss you so bad* nothing turns me off like a desperate woman

Save yourself for our wedding night, can't wait sweetheart

I love you ntate Molapo and I can't wait to make you happy some wh*res are really thirsty out there, yoh!

Mabataung moves, turns to wake and I'm quick to shove my phone in my pants, wh*res can wait, I have my spooked wife to attend right now. I rest on the chair besides her bed.

She takes my breath away even when she is a mess. She blinks rapidly fighting sleep and light piercing her sight from the window. It takes a while for her to wake fully before her weak eyes finally fall on me. Oh lord she looks like a perfect dream, I still don't know how one woman can be just so infectious.

"Hey" she weakly smiles to my greeting

"Intruder, what are you doing in my room?" she frees her arms from the covers, stretching them with a yawn

"Sleeping, you know you're my drug" she smiles, shuffles out of the covers and sits up straight but she almost freezes after glancing at her side, the side Tlotla usually sleeps at

“Where is Lewa....” She trails off, look at me in horror “Where is my baby?” her heart is pounding, I can see her chest expand and contract in horror

“Relax Mabataung, Tlotla is fine”

“I don’t need you to tell me she is fine, I want my daughter” she snaps, keeping her raging look directly at me. I retrieve my mobile from my pants’ pots and dial olady with her burning me with every look. She is breathing fire this morning.

‘Olady please bring back tlotla yaka before her mother have my handsome face for breakfast’ my mother laughs before she tells me Palesa is already on her way with her. The woman before me is glaring at me like she is seeing evil “Mama Tlotla I really don’t know why you’re burying my innocent soul with that look” she bites on her lower lip, narrows her stare at me

“What are you people? What’s that thing that changed to my daughter” she fixes her demanding glare at me “Majara Molapo I swear if I find even a single hair missing on my daughter, you and your family are going to feel my range. I’m going to poison and stab all of you to death and skip the country when I’m done” I find her so cute when she shouts, I wouldn’t mind dying of her hand “Don’t dare laugh.....” she is interrupted by a knock from the door, quickly she abandons the bed to open the door “Thank you palesa” her range eases as she arms the wake tlotla. She forgot to wrap herself in a gown when she flew to the door, now I’m subjected to the smooth silky thighs all up in my face, how am I supposed to think with her bending up on me like this “Please keep your dirty mind a bit lower, this is my room and I can be anyway I like” Jesus! I forget she also has a way of invading my mind. I clear my throat to fight the urge to rip that tiny piece of silk off her, my palms are itching to grab her and rip that thing off her “You’ll rip it in your dreams abuti Majara, what’s this paper on my baby’s forehead” Sigh!

“What paper?” I stand to distract my horny thoughts to check the paper “Hau! Mama tlotla this is for hiccups, it helps ease hiccups in babies” she throws a dagger at me and continue to unclothe my daughter “Why are you stripping her?”

“To check if you didn’t do some voodoo shit on my daughter, I don’t trust none of you after yesterday. Where is that little wolf that kept swallowing my daughter? I hope you killed that thing or else I’ll kill it myself if it ever comes for my baby girl again” She is turning naked Tlotla up and down inspecting her like an investigator

sniffing for information “And where is that little witch nolizwe anyway? She has the nerve to parade her naked body in my room. What kind of witchcraft was that?” she is dressing Tlotla back, I guess she is pleased with her findings “Damn right I’m satisfied my daughter is in one peace. Now I’m going to wash up and when I’m done I want you to take me to that little witch” she tucks tlotla under her arm and make her way to the bathroom

“Mabataung you’re going to suffocate my daughter with steam in there, how are you going to bath with Tlotla in your arms? Leave her I’ll look after her” she cocks an eyebrow at me

“And you think after yesterday I can trust any of you with my daughter?” she questions, challenging me with a look “You know what, your excused. Eradicate yourself from my room I’m going to use a basin so I can watch after my daughter while I bath”

“This drama is really unnecessary, you know nothing will happen to Tlotla under my care”

“I’m not so sure anymore, that witch got in here and did god knows what to my daughter and you were right in this house. I let my guard down because you’ll gave me the impression that we are one big happy safe family and nothing will happen to my daughter but guess what? One of your own was busy with some voodoo shit turning my daughter into a wild animal. You know what? I think it’s about time we go back home. I know no evil will fall on my daughter in my care” she opens the door for me. Only now it registers to me how pissed she is, she points me out leaving no room to soften her

“Mabatau ” she pauses me with a hand raise

“Out abuti majara. Please make sure my daughter and I pass the border without any hassle, that’s all I need from you” My heart sinks, her mind is made up, she means it. I can’t have them leave me “Don’t force me to stay, I can’t trust any of you”

“Can you please afford me the chance to explain, give me just this morning to explain and if you still want to leave by tonight I’ll gladly drive you. You owe yourself that truth, to know what nolizwe was doing in here and why she accused peete of rape”

“He didn’t rape her?” her voice comes weak, slowly breaking. I shake my head no
“He didn’t?” she asks again, biting on her lips from forming a frown of pain

“He didn’t” I affirm, she looks up fighting tears threatening to fall her eyes “I’ll be waiting right outside this door” she nods with glistening eyes and shut the door right on my face. How do I make her stay? Is showing her Lupus the right thing to do at this stage?

CHAPTER 17

LWANDLE

He is here, driving us to his cabin. He said Seeiso borrowed his house for some chillas with four of his friends. His mood is a bit dull, his focus is kept straight to the road. I have never heard him play any music until today, the dead atmosphere in the car is dressed with Jazz music. He lowly hums dancing his head lightly to the song on repeat, it's classic jazz and I wish I knew what it meant. For him I think it carries a certain message because it has engulfed him and thrown deep in his emotions, he's shut down so bad it's hard to tell what roams his mind "I'm scared" he informs when I least expect it, but still keeping his eyes on the road "Scared that after today you'll run for the hills and leave me like an empty shell I was" his words touches my soul, instead of reciprocating them I look the other way because I myself I'm also scared, I'm scared I will not be able to stomach his truth but one thing I'm adamant of is that I'm ready to risk it all for my daughter's safety. One day he'll understand when he has a child of his own that for our babies we risk it all. My love can wait as long as my daughter is safe.

"It stings more than Lupus' bite every time you label her as not mine, I know I didn't seed her but she is mine Lwandle. You can be mad at me all you want but don't claim my daughter as yours only, she is ours" I know his sombre mood is the after effects of my announcement of leaving so I'll not entertain his tantrums, he knows what I meant. And as for my fury, I have every right to be mad. I thought I had seen some deep shit in my life but what I saw turn to my baby yesterday was the top notch list of some f*cked up witchcraft I have seen. In fact I have never been subjected to any witchcraft until yesterday's escapades.

As much as I want myself out of this country now, I still don't feel ecstatic about it, I know I'm doing this for my daughter but I feel like we'll be incomplete without him. His captured my soul in a short space of time with been together and now thinking of leaving him behind is like cleaning an opened wound with spirit. I don't want to think what my daughter is going to be without him, she is still an infant but she surely knows her father, his is the one person who brings her to a giggle by just

showing his face “I would skip the country to be with you if it’s what you want, all you have to do is just accept me with my horrors” he tells from reading my mind, I don’t know if I’ll ever get used to it. I want to ask what horrors but from the events of yesterday I think four and four is starting to come together in my head. Deep down I think I know but 10% of me is still hoping that I’m insane, those kind of things don’t happen in real life.

From what happened yesterday I should be scared of going anywhere with him but I’m not. Reflecting on my emotions I think I’m just mad at him, I’m mad that he wasn’t there to protect my baby. I want him to be my hero in everything, I feel like he failed me yesterday “I’m no hero but I’m sure as hell know that I will give up my life saving the both of you” our eyes lock for moment when I look at him, his eyes wear pain, pain I didn’t mean to inflect on him but I know for Lewatle I would let love go just to keep her safe.

“I’m hungry” my words brings him to look back at me again, a bit of smile creeps his face

“I’m sorry I made you miss breakfast, I’ll make sure you’re well fed when we get to the cabin” a bit of humour chases the sombreness in the car. He didn’t even give me a chance to eat, when I opened my door after bathing he was right outside. He grabbed my hand and pulled me straight to this trip.

“How? Did you order something?” he shakes his head glancing at me with a smile

“No, I’ll cook for you” I roll my eyes at his lie and that brings a chuckle to him “Why is it so hard for you to believe that I can cook?” he once claimed to have cooked me breakfast the first time we met and the way that breakfast was scrumptious, there is no way it was him who cooked, he must have ordered the breakfast somewhere

“You and pots are just parallel lines and I’m adamant those big hands are good at other things other than that” one of his silly smiles creep him

“That they are, wanna find out how good they are at ‘other things’ my eyeballs abandon their sockets in horror, he can be too dirty for my liking. I wasn’t talking about that “What other things were you talking about?” Urgh!

“Leave me alone, you know what I meant” he steals a glance at me and shake his head continuing with the journey, now the mood in the car is light, we drive in

silence listening to his jazz which I now find soothing and very welcoming of it, I think I want to listen to more of his jazz.

He takes an off ramp to the woods, it starts with couple of trees clustered together but as he drives ahead the road leads to a thick forest ahead, light almost darkening with every drive. I find myself sharpening my sight and holding in some breath as he continues to drive through the forest, my heart starts pounding out of my chest at the dark forest we drown in. I bring my daughter closer to my chest and tightly hold on her in case the devil is taking another shift on me. His warm hand reaches mine for assurance, he squeezes my free hand and I expel air from my chest that I was holding in. His thumb brushing on my knuckles and I find my ease, take minimal sharp of breathes to release the tightening in my chest “You okay now?” I nod, embarrassed of how he is in tune with my emotions “Nothing bad will befall you under my watch” my hand squeezes back on his as I find a sacred safe place for his words in my heart. We both steal a glance at each other the same time, both smile at each other.

Immediately after the forest we come to a beautiful wood house standing alone. She is quite a humble beauty, sitting alone within the forest claiming all the light. She is fenced with huge palm trees, bare land surrounding her is planted in neat well-kept grass. Only single pavement leading to her door opening is decorated with beautiful granite stones, the rest of her yard is dressed in green.

“You referring to our cabin as he?” he asks opening my door, I’m so taken my eyes are everywhere but him. He takes my sleeping baby from my arms and give me his hand helping me out of the car

“Such beauty deserves to be a woman” I admire, feeding my sight with everything surrounding the beautiful cabin

“This is where I used to conceal when my family got too much” he leads the way, walking the pavement to the door. It’s not the longest walk, in few minutes we are standing outside the door. This one has a key like normal houses. He produces a set of keys grouped by a key holder from his pants and opens the door

“Wow” simplicity and uniqueness of everything inside takes my breath away “One thing you both share with Pee is your neat freakish nature, how do you keep all your houses so clean while you stay at the palace most of the time”

“My assistant makes sure of it or else she will find herself without a job” he puts Lewatle on the couch, both kitchen and lounge are open space, the place looks more cosy for winter or rainy days. There is a huge fireplace in the lounge that makes me want to just sit by it with a nice book and brewing hot cup of coffee, I wish it was cold “I’m just going to wash my hands and fix you something to eat, you can look around in the main time” well I’m already outside the balcony, taking in the beautiful nature. This is definitely where I would run when the world gets too much “I’m back, you can come back now” he screams from the kitchen interrupting my alone time, his shirt sleeves now rolled to his elbows exposing those thick muscular arms “I don’t know which one takes you more, the house, nature or me” he winks at the end, I must find a way to keep my thoughts away from him.

“This place is amazing” he waves me off, busy himself around the kitchen as I retire on the kitchen stool

“You can find something to wear in my closet if you feel hot in that, I know how heavy that blanket is” I’m still wearing my makoti attire, that means seshoeshoe dress with a blanket around my shoulder, why again I don’t know because I was prepared to leave all this behind

“Maa said from Monday I can go back to my normal clothing, I think I’m getting used to this attire in fact I’m worried about my hair, this doek is hiding serious bush in here” he chuckles “What are you making?”

“Chicken biryani” well I’m starting to swallow my doubts about him and pots his, he seems to know his way around the kitchen “Nka, munch on this while I make you some food” (Here,...) he pushes a packet of biltong before me and I’m quick to burst it open and devour it “And wena mabataung can you even cook?” (...You....)

“Well I’m not the best of them all but I’m sure can make a meal to save myself from hunger” he breaks into a beautiful short laughter

“I’ll take that as medium, meaning you try” I nod. He places his chopping board before me and starts his chopping looking down at me “So tell me, who is Lwandle Ngcobo?”

“Today is not about me, you’re supposed to tell me your honest truth remember”
I remind

“Yes we are but believe me, I’m just killing time so I can feed you before I have you fainting on me once again” I throw him my meanest look and he burst “Tell me” he probes after containing himself

“Well you know me, there is not much to tell. I have no mother, no father and.....”
he cuts me

“That, how did they die? And when?”

“My father I don’t know if he is alive or dead, I was raised by a single mother who never even bothered to at least drop me at my father before she took her own life”
he stops his task to look at me

“Your mother committed suicide?” his voice carry concern

“Yeah that bi*ch took her own life. I remember that day like it was just a day behind. It was back in the days when matric results were published on newspapers. She made me wake up so early in the morning just so I can be the first to buy the newspaper to check my results but little did I know she needed time to hang herself. I rushed to the shops that morning as she had asked and I was over the moon to discover I obtained five distinctions on my matric results, I didn’t want to share that moment with anyone but her so quickly I ran home to show my mother but when I got in the house I found her hanging from the roof” I didn’t think he can be shocked until now, he stands stunned glaring at me

“What?” his question is worked with concern, dishing me pitiful eyes

“Yeah that’s when I started referring to her as a bi*ch, a selfish one for that matter. She knew she was all I had and decided to take her life on that day, the day I needed her to embrace me and be proud of me but ke it is life, I survived and made sure to never look back there ever again”

“What do you mean you never went back there?”

“Well her neighbours and couple of her friends helped me bury her and after the proceedings of the funeral I packed and moved to Joburg. I got accepted in Wits

and got a great scholarship so, I just buried her selfish ass and never went back” he is looking at me like I’m speaking in riddles

“So you don’t know why she killed herself if she did?”

“Not if she did, she did. There was some stupid letter on the table addressed to me but I was so mad at that time I tore the damn paper into pieces before even attempting read it”

“So you don’t really know her reasons”

“And I don’t want to know them, I hate her from her grave hence I why she will never see me visit her grave” he sighs, try to take a sit but I’m quick to bring him to stand “I’m hungry njalo abuti majara, don’t be sitting and trying to sympathise with me over a selfish woman, get to work” he sighs and obeys me

“How was she like with you?” he asks back on his feet

“That’s the thing, I don’t remember her from my childhood. My memories of her starts from when was in primary school, other than that it’s just a blank, I don’t remember anything beyond that and as for my relationship with her. I don’t know, she wasn’t a bad mother but she was not the most loving one, hence why I want to shower my daughter with all the motherly love I never got and be the best mother in the whole world. I don’t really know what mother do” the last part comes as a mumble because it’s something that haunts me

“You’re an amazing mother, don’t ever doubt that” I nod “Your background is very troubling Mangcobo, where are you from? Maybe I can do some digging and co.....” I pause him with a hand before he even thinks of it

“Don’t you dare, leave that selfish woman in the past where she belongs” he closes, even his mind closes so I can’t tell what he is thinking, for a minute he just keeps his eyes on me without saying anything

“Your brunch will be ready in ten, you can go take off that blanket mabataung, no one is going to come after you for taking it off” thank God he left the subject, I roll my eyes at him before I obey his instructions “And take off that heavy dress too, find my shirt, I love you in my shirts” he screams as I disappear down the passage

“I don’t even know where you room is”

“Find it baby, the one you feel drawn to is my room” baby? I smile to myself heading for his room, at least this one is a normal house and I can tell his room is the one at the far end.

He is a bloody mean cook, chef rank staff. I’m now in one of his shirts and I’ve just cleaned my second plate forgetting my lady manners. I can see his very proud of himself.

“That was extremely good, I take my words back” he breaks into that infectious smile of his “Now that I’m well fed, its truth time”

“Let me put……” He tries to collect the plates but I stop his attempt

“Abuti Majara, sit down and talk to me” reluctantly he seats back on the couch, we moved to the lounge after cooking and moved lewatile to his room

“Eish Mangcobo” he takes a moment to himself, runs his hands all over his face, he releases some air before he changes to sit on the table before me. He captures both my hands in his, brush on my palms but keeping his eyes on me “Let me do this for courage” just when I take his words he brings his face to mine and steal a quick peck on my lips “Now that I have the strength I need you to promise me one thing” I raise an eyebrow in question “Don’t faint on me lerato laka” (My love) I laugh, he can be very stupid

“I promise not to faint” he takes my words, look internally in my eyes

“Baby there is no better way of saying this so I’m just gonna blurt it out. Mabataung I’m a gray wolf” I frown in confusion “The wolf you saw the other day chasing the two officers was me” I wince, taking in the news with terror

“This is a joke right?” I’m already smiling waiting on him to join me but he doesn’t, his hands firms the grip on mine, holding a bit tighter to cement the information in me “Abuti majara no” my voice comes as a whisper, I suspected but I didn’t think it was him, I thought is family practiced some wolf witchcraft

“I am mangcobo and so is tlotla”

“WHAT?” that bring me to my feed “WHAT DID YOU SAY?” he pulls me back to the couch

“Please calm down” he begs, taking my eyes in his, something he does with his eyes catches me, I offer him a moment of silence to elaborate “My mother comes from a line of wolves, her mother, my grandmother was the last gray wolf, the last carrying bloodline of wolves. Apparently I was born the same day she died and that’s how she passed the gift to me, moletsane claims that I would have been born a still born had my grandmother not passed the gift to me. The wolf in her needed an innocent soul to implant and my mother being of the right line and pregnant with a difficult pregnancy, I was the perfect target so my grandmother gave up her life for me but little did she know that sacrificing herself as a wolf carrier would bring something worse to me. I didn’t just get normal wolf like her, I got the baddest, a canis lupus of a kind” my jaws are surely sweeping the floor

“What the f*ck is a canis lupus?” any other day he would be shocked with my choice of words but not today, today his focus is on making me understand

“It’s the kind of wolf both tlotla and I possess”

“Wait how did this pass on to my daughter?” he releases another breath

“You see this gift or curse, however you want to call it. It’s first born curse, only first borns in the family are able to carry wolf blood. My mother is from a wolf line but doesn’t carry wolf blood because she wasn’t a first born, same as all my siblings, they carry wolf line from my mother but don’t have any wolf blood except me. Same applies to tlotla, she is my first born so she was bound to carry the bloodline”

“But she is Peete’s” he shakes his head

“That’s another thing I’ll explain after we get this one out of the way”

“So you change? To wolves?” he nods “What do you eat when you’re like that?” he burst into fits of laughter

“I think my answer should just remain to raw meat” hmk!

“So you can change now?” he nod once again, supressing his laughter

“Do you want to see me in lupus form?”

“Hmk! You won’t eat me right?”

“Never”

“Okay, go ahead” he stands with a smile, I watch him take off his shirt and I let that be, swallow my drool over his well-kept body, I love how that V structure paths his southwards “Wait, uyenzani?” (What are you doing?) his unbuckling his belt, right before me

“This are my favourite pants, I’m not about to have them ripped in pieces” the smirk on his face

“How? What do you mean?” by the time I’m saying this he is kicked his pants off, I can see his boxers fall to the floor too as I bury my face between my legs, I’m too young for this

“Young my left foot. Your still going to see me naked whether you like it or not. That’s the one thing I hate about this. Bona hee, look up I’ll hide my d*ck” Jesus! The brothers in law we keep!

“I don’t want to bona abuti majara, can’t you go back and do your things in the other room and come as a dog” (.....look.....) I can feel him smile on me

“Mabataung your still going to see me naked believe me, please look up and call on him, you’re the only person who can bring him out without a reason”

“Him who?”

“Lupus” that frees my head from the floor, the frown I had is immediately replaced by shock, my mouth drops when my eyes land on his.....yoh! Is it real? “You can touch” it looks like it’s made of steel, too painful for my liking “Mangcobo please call Lupus, stop insulting my d*ck” he asks in between his laughter

“Why me? Why can’t you call him yourself, his your wolf”

“He only shows up for me when I protect my loved ones, when I die and when I sleep with my chosen” hmk! I feel sorry for the unlucky chosen.....wait

“When you said I’m your mate you meant I’m you chosen” he doesn’t need to say, his expression says it all “Oh hell no, I’m not... ”

“Let’s pass this one first, CALL LUPUS MANGCOBO” the last part comes as a command

“What do I say?”

“Touch me you’ll know what to say” my hands find his eight packed structure, I have been itching to put my hands here. Something compels me to look up in his eyes, I find his staring down at mine in need, need to free the wild in him. Something in me bring me to stand, I don’t think I have looked at him like this before, he is suddenly like my baby, I find my hands exploring all his broad structure

“My lupus” his temperature changes to sudden cold “My mate, my feared leader, my shield. Show yourself to me canis lupus” the words escapes my mouth, I can’t tell where they originate from but they feel like something I should say. His body lightly trembles at my plea, fur pokes off his skin as I continue to brush on him, on a normal day I would be on the floor by now but not today, I’m glued to him, something in him is keeping my emotions with his. His face is slowly transforming, sounds of bones breaking fill the entire room. I should be running for the hills but I find myself standing, feeling mesmerized of this whole thing. He hugs my legs when he falls to the floor with his knees, my hands find his altering backbone and brush on it, I have never seen something so beautiful in my entire life. I drop to my lupus before me, white fur wolf staring at me with red eyes, it howls twisting its head and I brush on its neck, running my hands all over him “My lupus” It dangles its tongue out and lick all over me almost tickling me. I think I’m in love with a beast, I have lots of questions but they can wait, this moment here is like finally having drink after a long walk through the desert, I have never felt anything like this before.

CHAPTER 18

PRICELESS

No price tag fixed to this moment could be enough. This moment right here is priceless for the two lovers. Lwandle sits wrapped by the wolf, all its legs holding on her so tight. Any normal being would be dead by now but not Mangcobo. This right here fills the ache in her heart, something her mother left wounded when she took her own life, finally feels healed. She feels content in ways she never thought she would. She runs her hands through her red eyed wolf's fur. Their eyes keeping at each other. Lupus closes his eyes for a moment and when he opens them, they have turned blue. She can feel what he is trying to say through his eyes, it's time for his carrier to resurface back, time for him to go back.

"My Lupus, my mate, my shield. It's time to free my husband" like a good pet he is, it howls first. Look up when its body starts to tremble. It looks painful when all the fur grows back under his skin, bones altering back to normal once again. Lwandle holds him tight with eyes closed wrapping his transitioning body. She only opens her eyes when she feels a human in her hold, he sits panting with sweat shooting all over his skin.

Lwandle smiles sitting astride the naked Majara. His just transformed back to human form. He is in disbelief himself, partly he was prepared for the worst, he thought by now he would be driving them back to South Africa. But the universe had other plans. Here he sits, with the woman who complete every form he possess wiping sweat all over his forehead with her soft hand while the other one hugs his neck. Her touch alone holds extreme powers over his body and for the mere fact that he is still naked, this is definitely bad for him.

"What's this smile on your face?" he asks, trying to read her but she is just closed but the muse dancing on her face confirms that she is delighted

"Where have you been all my life?" she asks back, studying the man who's such a mystery yet she wants more, more of his wild life, she craves to lie the night away with Lupus by her side. She was ready to run for the hills but after seeing Lupus, this is where she wants to stay for eternity "You're my home, and I should have been home sooner" a sloppy peck lands on his lips, taking him by surprise. This is

definitely lwandle surprise majara day he thinks “I love you abuti Majara” he beams, this feels content

“I love you too Mabataung waka” (.....my mabataung) he plants a kiss on her free neck “I’m sorry time wasn’t on our side, I should have found you sooner”

“Why did it take so long?”

“Time sweetheart, time is for no man and if it wasn’t our time yet then we had to wait on it but now we found our way to each other. I’m here and I’m not going anywhere” he plants an appreciation kiss on her shoulder, holding her tighter through his hands wrapped to her waist

“You wouldn’t vele” he raises an eyebrow in question “I would unleash Lupus on you to sort you out if you ever leave me” his loud infectious laughter fills the room, he throws his head up dying in laughter. Lwandle kisses his dancing adam’s apple as he laughs looking up

“Wena naa! My love” (.....You) he is still consumed by laughter

“Be careful of me abuti majara, I’m a very dangerous woman, the first to pet a wolf and I’ll unleash it for anyone who dares me” she playfully threatens

“That you do lerato laka, so this means I’m no longer driving you back to SA?” (.....my love...) she shakes her head no

“Not today, not ever. The only time you’re going to drive me there is to wrap up my life that side and come back home with you, my home is with you” everything coming out of her mouth surprises him today

“If I had known that you would be this welcoming of lupus, I would have showed him to you on the first day. You had me worried for a minute, I thought we’d be having yellow samp by now for your funeral because you’d be dead from seeing Lupus” the back of his head receives a playful spank “But thank you for not fainting on me and for being so open minded about the whole thing”

She sighs, wrapping both her hands around his neck “I don’t know, i....Lupus is like something that has been in me my entire life but I just never knew about it, seeing him was like finally embracing that part but as for Tlotla, that was shock as hell, my whole tiny baby turning into a wolf, even now thinking of it my heart is pounding”

Majara beams, kisses her forehead with a smile she can't understand "What is it?" she asks in confusion

"You just called her Tlotla for the first time" she thinks of it and it might be true, she is always been Lewatle to her "Not that I don't like the name Lewatle but you just never acknowledged this one"

"I'm sorry"

"It's okay, I love both names, I just needed you to accept both of them" she nods "And as for you fainting on Tlotla, that's because you're not her tamer, you had a normal reaction of any person seeing a wild wolf for the first time but as for Lupus I guess you were bound to be calm, he is yours after all" she nods in agreement

"So where do we go from here?" she asks

"We get married, legally and I can finally taste my meaty curtains" she frowns in confusion "This" he propels his pelvic bone so his steely member touches on her twat. She gasps trying to free from him and stand but he tightly hold her still, bring her closer to him, her slow sharp breaths fanning his face "Is it me or do you suddenly have difficulty in breathing my love" he questions with a smirk, knowing exactly what he is doing to her

"I....You.... should get dressed" she stutters, her speech suddenly blurred from the intended poking she is receiving beneath her "And I have to check on Tlotla" she delivers with a flush, her colour suddenly changing. He frees her with a smile, he likes making her nervous. She flies out of the room but stops mid-way.

"Abuti Majara?!" she calls out, staring back at him. Majara raises his head to her "I still don't know what is going on between you and maka kung fu" (....kung fu's mother) it's true as he thinks of it. He rises the floor, stands tall naked heading in her direction. Lwandle nervously look up inspecting a beautiful ceiling she wasn't aware of "This is quite a beautiful ceiling" her eyes are fixed up on the ceiling, Majara is standing before her with amusement on his face

"It is, isn't it" Majara mocks, inwardly laughing at how nervous she looks "Let me get dressed and follow you, I wouldn't want my daughter seeing daddy's something something that makes mommy admire normal white ceiling" he kisses her forehead "Go and check on tlotla, I'm right behind you, I just need to get proper for my

daughter and I'll answer all you ask about Angeline and I" she nods and immediately removes herself from his drawing look. He is quite a good looking man, in and out. God definitely took his own sweet time while creating this one. She thinks as she walks to where her daughter sleeps. She finds Tlotla awake kicking her tiny feet up in the air, this is quite a surprise because Tlotla loves arms more than anything. She is that child that always want to be carried because it's her who got her comfortable in her arms, she always wants to hold her in her arms.

She is giggling alone playing with her tiny fists and feet. She carefully walks to her, sits besides her playing with her foot like Majara always do

"Someone is growing, why are you not crying my baby?" she baby talks her pulling her with a leg so she lays right by her side "Hmmm! Are we not hungrrr....." her words freeze, comes like a scratched CD in the player when her eyes land on her daughter's face "Abuti Majaraaaaa?!" she screams in fear, already replaced herself away from the giggling Tlotla. Majara burst through the door pulling down on his shirt.

"What's wrong?" he questions the spooked Lwandle

"Her.....her eyes.....her eyes are red" she points Tlotla peacefully playing on the bed. Majara is quick to stride to his daughter, pick her in his arms, confusion wears him too because this is not supposed to happen until she is seen the full moon

"Lupus, what's the meaning of this?" he whispers in his daughter's ear, gently brushing on her head. Tlotla's romper breaks to pieces, she transforms to little lupus in his arms. A sound of something heavy hitting the floor catches his ears, only when he turns he finds Lwandle down on the floor "Jesus!" he puts Tlotla on the bed to pick her mother and place her just beside her "At least you won't die from me, Tlotla is to blame for your death" he speaks alone gently tucking her on the bed. He arms his little wolf again when he is done and walk back to the lounge to search for his phone which he finds already ringing. Moletsane is calling, he probably already saw what is happening.

'My seer' he receives the call

'How is his queen?' only Moletsane calls Tlotla that and he's never bothered to ask why

'Her eyes turned red and I transformed her, should I be worried?'

'No but I think we are about to receive visitors from the Zulu kingdom, their heir connects with his queen and she is probably having a reaction to what the heir is going through'

'Don't tell me my one month baby is already chosen a mate' fear creeps him

'Hence why she is his queen, I guess they got to us first, your father was preparing a visit to them regarding your irregular transformation. Transform her back, her eyes will turn back to normal when her mate ceases his transformation' f*ck! Majara curses before dropping the call but immediately regrets it when he remembers his holding his daughter

"I'm sorry angel" he kisses the wolf's head "Free my baby Lupus" Tlotla transforms back but her eyes still remain red. He retires on the couch with his daughter "I guess it's just you and me, I'll wake mommy when you gain back your normal eyes" Another difficult road awaits his daughter.

In a secluded forest hidden by three mountains surrounding it, a huge spark of flame burns resulting in a thick haze of dark smoke. The sound of unusual human skulls drumbeat fills the atmosphere. About ten naked women and five men dance surrounding the flame, inside the flame seats one they call the sorceress, head bowed and only a glimpse of something dark as sight is regarded as the sorceress. Mid night has impregnated the day, time they have been dancing for to please their leader is here. This is the day they have been waiting for.

"Hooooold" the kind of voice that leaves one in terror comes within the flame. Immediately the skull drum stops, dancing ceases, everyone stands surrounding their flame with head bowed down "WE ARE...." she starts their motto and stops for them to join in reciting their principle motto

".....WITCHES OF THE SOUTH, THE DARKEST OF THEM ALL, THE ONES WHO THRIVE EVEN IN DAYLIGHT. WE ARE THE LAST REMNANTS OF DARKS MAGIC" the churros comes to an end, head still bowed down.

"We were once 15 but now we remain at 14, one of ours joins our devil god on the other side" Mapuso's voice breaks in a piercing cry, the one closest to her brushes

on the shoulder still bowed down “Don’t cry child, she joins our father in the dark world, we’ll all meet her again when we get home” silence, only small sobs from Mapuso is audible

“Mother thank you for saving me” Mapuso, her voice still immersed in pain

“I didn’t save you, I have no powers in that place. Someone freed you” confusion wears Mapuso but this is no time to linger on that

“Nolie’s blood gained us what we have been seeking for without knowing, her dying as lupus’ feast worked in our favour. Nolizwe’s dark blood with dark magic diluted with that beast’s blood and that gave us power over the throne. That beast is half wolf, half royal and now we control the two through our dark magic” the drummer starts beating on skulls in celebration, dancing continues surrounding the flame. This is great news... .. “Hooooold” Mother’s voice ceases the moment once again “My children I have a task for all of you”

“Yes mother” they all say in unison

“To rule the world we are now short of one thing, the blood of a white witch. We have dark magic, a beast, the throne and the only thing left is light from the white witch. Magic provides darkness, beast-Terror, throne-Power and lastly white witch-Light. We need all for elements to complete our circle. **DARKNESS-TERROR-POWER AND LIGHT**. Children I need you to find me our fourth element which is light”

“Mother all white witches are extinct” one reminds, because it’s what they all thought

“No my child, through the beast’s blood I could sense that it has come in contact with a white witch, though the white witch doesn’t know is a white witch as yet. I need you all to find me that white witch’s blood”

“Mother how do we know when we find her? How do we know it’s her?” One witch asks but receives silence, mother thinks because it’s hard to spot a white witch. White witches come as normal people, the type of person who thrives and shines no matter how hard life kicks them. Normal people refer to them as the highly favoured, people with strong ancestral roots. But in the dark world they are called white witches. Spotting them would be difficult because this are normal people.

“Only your darkness can clash with her light when you meet her” the conversations continues, one witch informs

“Meaning I’m the only one who can spot her” Mother

“Yes mother” they all sing in unison

“Then I’m going to need a body, a body to harbour in”

“The body should be of someone who can sustain royal power” Mapuso

“A royal woman close to the wolf to be precise so I keep at its tail when it meets the white witch” Mother

“Any royal woman mother?” Mapuso asks

“Yes child” Mother agrees “But you know I can only harbour broken souls, souls that are broken beyond repair. I need a body of a broken royal woman who believes there is no other higher power, a woman on the verge of killing”

“I have a perfect candidate mother” Mapuso

“I hope it’s that girl that once came to me to for a herb to fool royal family” Mapuso nods “Then I suggest you all get to work when dawn breaks, I need that body soon because we are on window limited time. The one royal seer who threatens our existence is on the way, once she is born before we obtain all four elements, her birth day will wipe all evil from the face of the continent. Tonight let’s celebrate obtaining two elements in one. **TERROR AND POWER we now have. TO THE RISE OF THE WITCHES OF THE SOUTH**”

“**TO THE RISE OF THE WITCHES OF THE SOUTH**” they all sing in, skull drum continues and naked men and women dance surrounding the flame.

CHAPTER 19

LWANDLE

Spending the night at the cabin with abuti majara was a break I didn't know I needed. Now I can safely say I know the monster I choose and I would choose him every day given the chance. We spoke the night away, I had him cuddle me like a new born the entire night while he put lot of things into perspective for me. Now I can safely say I know what I'm getting myself into but the one thing that still slaps hard is my baby girl. I still can't accept my daughter can turn into a wolf, that one I don't know when or how I'm going to accept it. Apparently I fainted the entire afternoon yesterday, I only woke up around six in the afternoon and found him and Tlotla lying next to me with Tlotla bedding his chest. I couldn't help but steal few pictures, my two wolves, the bigger one I see and I love so much as for the younger one-that thing creeps the hell out of me.

Now I know I'm not stabbing another woman with the worst knife of taking their man, I know that he and Angie were just in an agreement to please the council on his side and hide his infertility. I guess that's the only thing Angie was right about, well except his bedroom skills. That I still don't know if she was telling the truth about but the steel I saw yesterday left me horrified, that thing is extremely manly and I don't intend on getting to know that steel anytime soon.

I stretch my arms and turn to their side hoping to find them and steal more of their beautiful sleep pictures but I find my side empty, it's early in the morning and I thought the two of them would still be here but it looks like I'm alone in here. I wonder where they disappeared to.

With a yawn I sit up straight, stretching myself to chase sleep fatigue off me, a note and stack of cash from my bedside table catches all my attention, I almost freeze gazing at pile of bucks besides me "What the hell?" I exclaim reaching for cash first. Holding it feels like a hold of steers last number burger. What's with so much cash? I put it back on the pedestal and reach for the note which read ***Go do your hair. Tshepo is waiting to drive you and Palesa is waiting to accompany you. You'll find both of them outside. Tlotla and I went to put out a flame in my house, apparently it was on fire from chillas of four friends, call me when your done I'll pick you up***

This creature in him messes with his head shame! How much is this anyway? And telling him my hair is a mess I wasn't asking him to give me money to do my hair, I was just telling him so I remind myself to do my own hair before Monday when they remove this Makoti attire on me. What am I going to do with so much money? One thing I'm sure not going to do is return the money, I love my money shame.

After making the bed I cleaned up and ate the fruit salad I found fresh waiting on me on top of the table, I think my expectations are getting higher, now I must have a man who can cook in the next life and a bit of something dangerous in him.

I thought Tshepo and Palesa were waiting on me outside. Where could they be now? I'm standing by the door looking at the beautiful Greenland before me, I can see from where I'm standing that the car is empty where it waits. Trying to fish my phone to call him I stop midway when I feel a presence behind me. Tshepo? Why does he look so shy suddenly?

"My lady" he bows running his eyes everywhere but me

"Lwandle Tshepo, how are you?" I admonish first before I greet, trying to search his eyes but he is sure to keep his look away from mine

"I'm fine my lady, I'll be in the car when you're ready to go" with that said he flies out of the house leaving me in confusion, what's wrong with him toda....aaaaah! Now I see, Palesa comes from the passage buttoning her shirt, she freezes when she sees me

"My...my lady....i...gosh I'm sorry mam, we were supposed to wait for you outside but....." I stop her with a hand

"No need to explain Palesa and please stop calling me my lady" she nods burrowing the poor floor with her look. A subtle chuckle leaves me looking at how nervous she is "I'm ready when you are" she jumps to get off my stare

"I am my la....I am mam" I follow her hurried steps out of the house, I'm trying very hard to suppress my laughter behind her. She is a nice girl, I wonder if they are dating or Tshepo is just taking advantage of her. Tshepo allows us in the car before he goes to lock the door. Driving out tension and silence fills the atmosphere, they both give awkward and nervous vibes. Sigh!

“Your secret is safe with me, I won’t tell a soul” I put it out there, gaining myself an almost audible sigh from Palesa next to me. The one on the driver sit just looks ahead minding the road.

The aim of the day changed, what was supposed to be Salon day has turned into shopping. Palesa and I we are buying almost everything. She was shy to buy but I told her to relax, immediately after I showed her my mobile bank inside my bag she was all in. Forgetting that she just banged Tshepo just few minutes ago. The minute we arrived at the mall he left us, said he is needed at the palace.

“Thank you ma...” My mean look stops her “Okay at least mabataung if you don’t want me referring to you as mam or my lady” she retires next to me on the couch while we wait for a free hair stylist because we have no appointment. We finally made it to the salon after parading the entire mall, I shopped for Tlotla and I while she on the other hand shopped for.....she mentioned her sister, her niece, her mother...let’s just say she is the one with quite loaded shopping bags.

“Yes please, that one is better” she nods, sipping on her champagne inside a milkshake container, she bought a bottle and stashed it in her bag “Maybe we should go somewhere, it doesn’t look like we are going to get service anytime soon” I suggest darting my eyes around, almost every work station is occupied

“And miss a chance to do my hair at Glamour stylist? No thank you, we’ll wait” I can’t help but laugh, I suspected even from the stores she dragged me in that she was really chowing abuti majara’s money “How much are you left with?” Booze, is also starting to take her shyness away, I shrug because I really don’t know “How much was it anyway?”

“I don’t know, you still want to do more shopping?”

“Yeah, I’m supposed to buy my mother some blankets for her stockvel so.....” she winks at my bag. Alcohol, to think how shy she is when sober

“No problem we’ll buy the blankets”

“Ncoo! mabataung I could eat you right now” now it’s my time to roll eyes “Hand me your bag, I want to see how much is left” I pass her my bag and she is quick rummage through my bag counting notes still inside, she has energy, well

champagne energy, I on the other hand didn't even bother to count how much I was given for my hair "hold out your first finger, it's for the first ten thousand I can't go beyond that. That's where my money computation ends" I'm doubting her counting, ten thousand so fast? "Another finger, how much is it?"

With an eye roll "Twenty thousand" she nods and continue. A male stylist comes our way, he smiles and asks what we are going to do, I tell him I just want to remove the braids and relax my hair. He advises against relaxing immediately after removing braids but I insist, my companion is still inside my bag

"Two more fingers" she says when she finally rise from the bag "Hana 1 finger is equals to how much?"

"Ten thousand" she nods with a smile

"We have four fingers in this bag with useless cents, meaning we still have forty thousand to spend" the stylist gaps "What's your most expensive weave?" she asks the guy who somehow looks like he believe her

"I have crown topper virgin hair at about M8000.00, not the original though but a fool would not underestimate you" he is quick to inform her

"That's me, your putting that on this head"

"Yes chommie" they high five on it "Let me find someone to undo her braids while I start with you chommie" the guy advices already on his feet, I guess he is chommie now.

Two hours later Palesa looks like a different person, that weave sits on her shame. I'm almost jealous but I remember I have Tlotla, I can't put on weaves now. Tlotla is a hyper baby, next thing she will be pulling on my hair so maybe when she starts crawling I will. Our chommie is now drying my hair, I was the last one because I'm stingy as he says.

"Mabataung Agent is calling" Palesa screams through the hair blower noise so I can hear her, she is my bag guard today so everything including my phone is with her. Agent is abuti majara, I'll call him when I'm done he probably wants to know if I'm done "I'm going to buy another milkshake I'll be back" milkshake is champagne, she

shared with our chommie hence why she is out of stock. She is out of the door before I can even think of saying anything

“OH...MY....GOD” the girl next to our station exclaim, with her jaws sweeping the floor. The salon has suddenly turned mute, even blowers have stopped. Everything seems to be on sudden silence. I follow everyone’s eyes and they lead me to the door, where abuti majara stands inspecting the place in search of something, I suppose that something is me “I didn’t know they come to the malls, f*ck he looks more panty dropping in person” the girl whisper with a hissing sound undressing the man from afar “He can f*ck me anyhow he like, I wouldn’t mind” all coming out of her mind doesn’t seem to be running through her head for process. Everyone is hypnotized to the door.

“F*ck I wouldn’t even report him even if he raped me, I just got hard” my stylist, now it’s my time to be in shock, I didn’t think he is gay. My face is staring up at my stylist in shock, he is a white man but slowly turning purple. He looks like he is blushing and nervous at the same time.

His unique cologne hits my nostrils, only now when I turn I find him bending to me, his face is right on mine, now I’m the blushing one. He intently steals a long peck on my lips that linger for a while, only when we hear the sound of something heavy dropping on the floor we pull apart, my stylist is on the floor, he fainted and it looks like no one is going to attend him, all eyes are on us.

“You look beautiful” I flush, break into tiny fragments of love at his whisper “It’s time to go home now baby, the world has seen enough of you” I’m a blushing mess. My jealous man.

“I haven’t paid” my voice comes as another whisper

“Let’s go I’ll take care of it” another peck lands on my lips before I ask the girl next to us if my stylist was done, she confirms with a nod but keeping her eyes at the tall man beside me. He grabs my hand in his and leads us to the receptionist by the door.

“Hi. How much is this?” he asks the receptionist who is staring at his face like a sweet dream

“For you.....anything is free, I can do you just the way you want, exceed your wildest freakiest expectations” I think the lady is not aware of what comes out of her mouth, now I can’t help but laugh. He also chuckles fiddling with his wallet, he puts coupled notes on the desk

“I hope this will be enough” the lady doesn’t even count the money, she keeps her stare at abuti majara’s face “Let’s go baby” under his arm he tucks me, gaining ourselves more eyes as we walk outside

“Our bags abuti majara, and palesa” I remind just as we are about to walk out of the mall, I almost forgot our shopping bags and palesa

“Let’s get you in the car, Seeiso will get them” he leads us to the parking lot, more eyes glaring at us with every walk we take

“Why is everyone staring at us like this” he still has me tight under his arms

“It’s not everyday everyone see their royal walking about at the mall, the only person they see all the time is Seeiso” that explains. Getting to the car we find Seeiso with Tlotla, my daughter is got a chain, cap and some huge brand sneakers on her feet. I look at abuti Majara for explanation and he points Seeiso.

“I didn’t sleep with you Mabataung, I’m your daughter’s uncle, just spent about M2000 on her, just to bribe her bully father. Please show me some respect” he finally rises from his phone to find us standing outside. I roll my eyes instead of greeting him.

“I hear you burned a house down” I say climbing at the back, besides him

“White people are dramatic, they saw a flame and thought the house was burning. We were only having fun, jumping the flame of life”

“Bona flame of life, go find Palesa and get mabataung’s bags” abuti majara orders him already pulling him out at the other side, he sulkily goes but complain all the way out of the parking. Now I’m left with a man who makes me feel small in every way, he sits beside Tlotla who is right in our middle with a huge cap, huge chain and huge sneakers “You really do look beautiful” I can feel his eyes on me even though I have kept myself busy playing with Tlotla between us

“Thanks for the money” my focus is still on my daughter

“My pleasure, even though I ended up paying the salon myself”

“Don’t worry I will refund you your cents, I have more than enough” he breaks into that infectious laughter of his, his laughter draws me to look at him, I love seeing him laugh. Our eyes lock while he laughs, he scoops me from my sit and put me on his lap, I don’t know how he did that. I turn to look if Tlotla is still okay and I find her playing with her feet on the seat. Now my heart is pounding again at the man holding me. His tall even when seated, I’m on his lap but he looks down on me

“I have been dying to do this” his words comes seductive, his one hand dances around my waist while the other one cups my face. He bends his face for our lips to touch, I find the hems of his jacket collar and pull him closer, I have been dying to do this too, kiss the shit out of him...the kiss starts slow and gentle, he has a way of taking control in everything, the desire stimulated by the kiss awakens our freak side, next thing I know his hand is dancing on my thighs under my heavy shoeshoe dress, the whore in me is opening further for his hand to reach the pot

“Hmmmgh hmgh” fuck. Seeiso clears his throat with a smirk outside the opened window “And they say I’m the whore of the family, at least I didn’t subject my angel to any indecent behaviour” he winks, look at abuti Majara “Yah! JUJU you look Chinese, those eyes prove that you do father kung fu” I can feel abuti majara hiss buried on my neck “I can take my angel and give you guys some time, car sex is the bomb, especially the back sit. There is more space at the back and enhances more action”

“Seeiso get in the car and drive” abuti majara hisses, finally looking at his stupid brother “Where is palesa?” Seeiso points at the back of the car where palesa stands laughing talking on the phone “Get her in the car, and let’s go” I try to move back to my sit but he holds me tight, on top of his lap “Don’t” it comes as a command, leaving no room to say otherwise. Both Seeiso and Palesa finally make it inside the car, Seeiso takes the driver seat but turns and take Tlotla next to us

“I don’t want her traumatised any further” abuti majara rolls his eyes and I laugh lightly hiding with this shoulder. Seeiso drives us out and that continues our previous moment, we are quick to smash our lips on one another again but Palesa stops us

“Mabataung how is the kiss?” I hate champagne, she is turned from her seat to look intently at us at the back “Does he frenches it?” she curiously asks “How is his tongue game?” I now I regret buying her that champagne

“You do realise the man in question is right here right?”

“Yeah” she waves me off “I always wondered how he plays his tongue, does he touch the small tongue at back when he kisses you”

“Yeeew!” the car comes to a halt, the horrified Seeiso look at her in shock “Who’s been kissing you?” seeiso asks worn in disgust

“Tshepo” both seeiso and the man holding me gasp

“Which Tshepo?” abuti majara asks with a frown

“You’re Tshepo, my tshepo, my sister’s tshepo. He rides me so well” She is kak drunk, even admitting to this her eyes are closed. Looks are shared between the brothers, why does it feel like something is suddenly wrong

“What’s wrong?” I ask the one holding me in a whisper

“Tshepo is married to her sister” now it’s my time to frown. The hell!

CHAPTER 20

LWANDLE

At this point in my life I'm adamant that all is going well. As long as Tlotla doesn't change on me I bet I can take just about anything. I intently look at her in her innocent sleep and fall into deep wonder, as much as I'm ready to run back to SA with her when shit hits the fan, I now know that I could not handle her on my own. I need abuti majara's help to raise her. Now my dream about Peete is finally falling into perspective. I see what he meant when he said I needed abuti majara to raise Tlotla, she is a special kid and she needs her father to grow. A glimpse of a clear cloud of where we are headed is slowly but surely starting to show.

I'm a bit startled by my door when it opens without a proper knock. But when the image of my sulky big baby show from the door all fear flies out of the room. I just want to melt in his hold. He looks ravenous but too delicious for my liking. His angry face doesn't scare me anymore, in fact I find him mysteriously more drawing in, when he is mad. His eyes are my doing, lately the colour of his eyes are my best communication. I find him extremely attractive at the emotions his eyes portrays.

"Good morning" I greet because he didn't, he decided to pocket himself and just stare at me. What a sulky man he is! He is mad that I didn't allow him to sleep with us last night, as much as I allowed him next to me at the cabin, that was the cabin and no elder were there. But here? It embarrasses the shit out of me that I'm with my husband's brother like that. Though everyone seem not to mind us, I actually think they are rooting for us to hit it off

"Not good to me, I didn't sleep, you know you're my drug" I almost roll my eyes but stop myself "Mabataung can I at least move in the couch? I swear sweetheart I'll not bother you" he sits by my side, the rest of his cologne engulfs me as he reaches for my hand, warming my sacred places "I'll be a quite sleep mate I swear" he plants a kiss on top of my hand while he caresses my palms "Please" now he is kissing my palms

"Where are you going?" my question comes from his attire. He has a black polo neck shirt that hugs him perfectly and a knee length plain military coat that

complements his black slim fit chino pants folded at the ankles. I don't know what shoe is that but it looks quite expensive.

"To the office, I told you today I'm going back to work" his disappointed that I ignored his plea to sleep in my room. He did mention that he is going back to work on Monday but now I can't help but let my emotions fall, I'm disappointed too. I wanted him here today.

"Can't you go back tomorrow?" I sulk and that bring him to smile. I'm going to be undressed today, undressed of the makoti attire. I don't know what is going to happen but I wanted him here

"I really can't lerato laka, I have taken too much time away as it is" (.....my love.....) I nod in disappointment. He pulls me to his lab when I least expect it, my nightdress creasing up but I'm quick to pull it down. He kisses my forehead and bring me to his chest "Nothing much is going to happen today my love, it's just a matter of olady and sgriza dressing you into new clothes they bought themselves and that's it, no slaughtering no nothing" that calms me, I always expect more when it comes to his family

"That's better, I thought it was going to be something big" he shakes his head no. our eyes lock for no reason at all and I can read where his mind is headed "No abuti majara, I haven't brushed my....." I'm cut off by a stimulating kiss, as much as I want to stop him I can't. I find him irresistible. My hands voluntarily wrap around his neck and he grab my waist, position me to straddle him. Desire takes me as I allow him to take control of the kiss, head it where he wants it. I feel like my body is in knots and he knows how to unfasten them as he explores my mouth with his demanding kiss. I kiss him back with the same effort, matching his fervour I push my body closer to his warm feel, wrap both my leg around his waist. He groans, a low sexy sound comes from his throat. His hands abandons my waist, through my silk wear he slowly and seductively moves both his hands down my body to my thigh, I feel them brushing upwards to my inner thighs and I want more, I want him to reach for my pot but he goes behind. Grab both my butt cheeks in his palms. Another reverberate groan leaves him, abruptly he stops. My eyes remain closed for a moment taking in the aftermath of our heated moment. I can feel his panting fresh breath fan my face.

“How long does it take for you to heal?” his question brings me to open my weak eyes, my most fickle organ squirm further at his question

“Three months”

“Yoh!” I laugh, I know how he feels like, I don’t know if we’ll make it there “I think its best we stop kissing all in all” never, his kisses are my world. He laughs holding my waist “But baby look at me, this is going to break my little man” his steely member is fighting his own battle, he pokes like a grown man fist from his pants “Hmmm? We can’t keep torturing him like this” like he is the only one tortured

“No to no more kissing, in fact I want more of these kisses” I peck his lips “And I think you’re going to be late”

“And I answer to bloody no one so mabataung you can keep me all you want” I beam, raising my eyebrow in question

“I can?” he nods “Then the office can wait, my man needs more of my kisses today” we touch lips again, his hold is much tighter, he grinds my body on his, bringing me closer with his other hand while the other one aims for my boob. He cups them and presses my nipple between his thumb and index finger, the sensation has me moaning in his mouth.....we both cease at the sound of the door opening, I really don’t know why people don’t knock yazi. Whoever it is I think is frozen, I haven’t opened my eyes because I’m still in my moment while as the man holding me is panting on my neck, he buried his face on shoulder and died right there.

“I’m here for my granddaughter, never mind me” fuck! Mamajara. Now I know I’m not opening my eyes. A trace of her footsteps makes it to the other side of the bed, I can feel her scoop Tlotla off the bed “Good thing you’re still asleep my baby, I think it’s about time you start to sleep with Nkgono le ntate moholo” (.....grandma and grandpa) her footsteps make it to the door, she chuckles standing by the door “Continue” she says before closing the door, as soon as she shuts the door we burst. Abuti majara puts me back on the bed still laughing.

“I better get going love” I nod pouting my lips for him to peck before he leaves and he does “See you later mamaTlotla”

“See you later papa kung fu” he laughs and kiss my cheek before closes the door. God I’m in love.

I ignored mamajara's eyes at breakfast as much as I can, she had that smirk on her face, the smirk that says I know what you did. I just finished taking my bath and knowing that she and Mabereng waits for me in my bedroom to dress me in their choice of clothing has me treading going back to my room. I know she told mabereng, they are like sponge bob and Patrick.

"You do know that we are not going anywhere akere mabataung?" urgh! She screams for me in the bathroom, knowing exactly why I'm taking forever to come out. Wrapped in my towel I finally come out, looking anywhere but them. Mabereng is the first to burst in pieces of laughter.

"There really is nothing to feel embarrassed about, his your husband" this conversation makes me nervous. I retire between them, ignoring the conversation at hand on purpose.

"I hope you didn't buy me more shoeshoe dresses, those things are heavy" I search the shopping bags, ignoring their eyes "Maaa!" shock hovers me, picking a petticoat from the shopping bag

"A.a don't look at me, that's from nkgono here not me" (.....grandma....) mamajara points at mabereng who seems confused of my shock

"Every woman needs a petticoat" she defends

"Yoh!" that's all that leaves my mouth, I'm not wearing that, not today, not ever. Checking further through the bags I come through a black set of matching underwear, I don't need to ask, it has mamajara written all over it. I pick it and run to my closet to put them on, I was told that just today I'll wear what they bought me from head to toe.

"Because you didn't choose my underwear, you'll wear my dress" Mabereng pulls a simple short summer dress. I'm taken, the dress is beautiful. I thought she would buy me something long

"Thank you Maa, this is beautiful" now I confidently drop the towel, put on her tiny dress that seats well on me

“And you need this, though you have amazing genes, your belly is growing back on its own” Mamajara throws a slimming belt at me. I haven’t tried anything but I’m also amazed at how my body quickly transformed back in a space of one month. Beneath the dress she helps me tie the slimming belt “And last but not least this” she pulls comfortable wedges from the bags. This oldies really do know their style. The shoes fit me well “And the final piece is every girl’s rock, a woman can never be complete without a piece of diamond”

“Ahhh maa” I melt at the beautiful bracelet “Thank you so much”

“One of your husband’s latest collection” she ties the bracelet on my wrist “Now you look perfect, from today you can wear anything you like” I nod

“Except when we have ceremonies, you must make sure you wear long dresses and cover your head and shoulders” Mabereng adds and I nod once again “Hai! all is done, keep my grandson happy mabataung” Mabereng, I cringe “And feed him, don’t starve him please” I feel like we are going back to the naming ceremony “A three course meal if you know what I mean” mamajara and I burst, surprised by mabereng’s take. A soft knock disturbs our moment, Puso walks in surprised to find his mother’s in here

“Eeeeh, oladies” they frown at him

“Why aren’t you at work?” mabereng asks

“I’m heading there, I just need to talk to mabataung” now I join in the frowns “alone please” sigh! The two woman leave my room, allowing him the space he needs. His suddenly nervous now that we are alone, I have realised he is more like Ora, closed.

“Puso?” I call out, he looks all over the room suddenly scratching his head

“Ausi lwa” he is two years older than me but because I’m his brother’s wife, he has to respect me at all cost “Eish.... Don’t you want to get out of here, like drink coffee or something?” and then?

“Let’s go” his surprised, look at me like he expected a bit of a struggle. He carries my hand bag as we head out, I pass by mabereng first and ask if she still has enough milk for Tlotla and she informs that she is still okay. Getting to the car I find the suddenly nervous Puso outside his car, he opens the door for me on the front and jumps to his side “Where are we going?” I ask to break the silence in the car

“My house ausi lwa” I frown in question “I need you help ausi lwa”

“With what Puso?” he shifts uncomfortably

“I did something stupid I know my family is going to kill me, everyone seem to melt around you so I thought maybe you can help me too” sigh

“Help you with what?” he steals a glance at me and keeps his silence. I wasn’t very welcoming of him because I thought he would show that he is Mapuso’s son but shame he proved me wrong, he’s been nothing but good to me. I wonder if he knows what happened to his mother and sister, abuti majara told me everything.

In no time we drive through his house, it’s beautiful, modern and screams power and money like the rest. We both climb out and head for the door in silence, when he opens the door we are welcomed by a beautiful thick girl who immediately freezes, popping her eyes at me.

“Hello” I greet the nervous girl, she runs her eyes between Puso and I

“Du..Dumelang” (...greeting) she greets, burrowing the poor floor

“Ausi lwa you can have a seat” I pull a chair and do as told, he holds the girl’s hand and they sit before me “Ausi lwa this is Violet, my girlfriend” I nod in confusion, not sure why he would introduce his girlfriend to me so nervous “Baby this is my sister, mabataung” the girl can’t even look at me “The reason I called you here ausi lwa is because I...” he trails off but heaves a sigh to gather his strength “Violet and I have a baby” just then a huge cry fills the house, the girl jumps from her chair and runs to the bedrooms. She comes back with a fat baby boy covered in blue.

“Pusoooo!” I’m shock stricken, he is the stand-up kid, this is so unlike him

“I can’t hide my family any longer ausi lwa, I need you to help me break the news” he pleads, with his hands clasped together

“How did this happen?”

“It just happened ausi lwa please” I hate the position his putting me in but he trusted me to help him so I will “And there is one tiny winy detail that makes me reluctant to tell my family” I raise an eyebrow in question “She is not royal”

“Well I’m also not royal, I don’t see the big deal of that one”

“Your case is different, you’re a chosen ausi lwa as for her.....” he trails off, not proud of what he is about to say “She will be regarded as just as commoner” sigh!

“Can I see him” I ask the girl already prepared my arms, she puts the boy in my arms. He is a Molapo, the sharp English nose points just like my daughter’s “What’s his name?” they both share looks

“Boy” they chorus

“Boy? Puso are you for real?”

“Ausi lwa I didn’t know what to name him” sigh!

“And how old is he”

“Three months” Violet.

“He is beautiful” I stand to hand ‘boy’ back to his mother “It was nice meeting you Vio” she smiles “Let’s go, we’ll figure something out”

“Thank you, thank you” he jumps to kiss my forehead “I’ll be back baby neah” he blows a kiss at his girl as he walks out with me. They look cute together.

CHAPTER 21

To break Puso's news I know I have to soften my beast first, buttering and gentling him I know will work in my favour. He will help me I know when he's less sulky. Which means I have to allow him to sleep in my room. I asked Puso to take me to his office, I want to surprise him on his first day. This is my first time in this building, the building alone intimidates the shit out of me. I can tell that we are stepping in different class but because Puso here is rocking cargo shorts and simple white short sleeved shirt I don't feel too out of place. The building welcomes us with bold italic letters written **MDM-Molapo Diamond Manufactures**. I feel underdressed stepping inside the building, everyone is formally dressed but I find comfort in Puso who doesn't even introduce me, he walks me straight to the elevator and press floor 25.

"This is where I leave you, it will deliver you straight to his office"

"Yet I'm helping you but you don't even walk me to your brother's office" he rolls his eyes, more back to the normal himself now that he is getting the help he needs

"You won't get lost ausi lwa, just tell his receptionist that you're the wife, she will let you in" with that said he lets go of the doors to close, wave off to some of his colleagues as he walks out. The higher the elevator goes the higher my heart thumps, science say the higher you go, the cooler in becomes but not in my case. I'm starting to regret this, the higher I go, the hotter I become. Thank God my ride to the 25th floor is mine alone, no one joined in. The elevator deliver's me to the quite floor. A beautiful woman sit alone behind the desk, paying attention at her computer. She glances at me with a frown as I approach.

"Good day" I greet

"Good day mam, how may I help you?" her eyes remain on her screen, not sparing me a look

"I would like to see Mr. Molapo please"

"Do you have an appointment" the sarcasm in her tone goes unnoticed

"No but I won't take long, I just need to tell him something urgent"

“I bet you do, bona I’m afraid you can’t see Mr. Molapo without an appointment”
the attitude

“I just need five minutes, maybe if you tell me when he takes his lunch I will take that time, it’s almost lunch” I don’t even need five minutes, I just miss the man

“I’m afraid that’s impossible ausi, it’s his first day in the office and he is quite busy”
I roll my eyes in annoyance, she is right but she could at least be nice. Now I have to pull the card I didn’t want to pull

“How about I’m here to see my husband?” she stops, now look at me with a frown.
From head to toe she studies me, chuckle with a mock

“I know my royal when I see one, sit down and fill in your details. I’ll see where I can squeeze you” she shoves a board and pen at me. To think Puso said she will just let me in, sigh! I take the board and retire on the couch trying to fill in my info, the elevator opens just as I try to fill in my details. He steps out walking with two men beside him, they are all focused on the file in one’s hand. He doesn’t see me but one man notice me and stop, he changes direction coming to me while the two continue to his office I think. I can tell from his stupid grin that he is about to make a pass at me.

“Hey sexy” he sits before me, straightens his tie staring at me “What are you doing here beautiful?” how unprofessional, what if I was a client

“I’m here to see my husband” he smirks

“Then your lost baby girl”

“Am I?” I question putting the bloody board on the table and standing, I’m tired of playing nice now. I straighten myself and follow the direction abuti majara took with the other guy

“Hey what are you doing?” the PA screams behind me followed by the guy “You can’t just go in.....” she is late, I already opened the door to find the two gentlemen seated. Surprise wears him, his quick to stand on his feet and march to me. With a swift touch he grab my waist sweeping me off my feet, kiss me like his been so hungry for my lips. I’m reluctant to kiss him back with the same effort because we have an audience. Pulling off the kiss his eyes remain glued to my face, content creeping him.

“You’re all excused” he commands, fixing his eyes at me. Clearing of throats and fading of steps confirms that people are excusing themselves out of his office, as soon as the door shut I jump him, planting sloppy kisses on his lips “Someone missed me” he says in between the kiss, I’m wrapped around his waist as he moves us to his couch

“Yeah I missed you” I admit, taking my favourite position, his lap

“You look beautiful, I almost didn’t notice you” I laugh

“You actually passed me outside, I was sitting on the couches waiting for you” he frowns

“Why didn’t Lerato let you in, to wait on me in here?”

“Aaaa! I didn’t explain who I was” lies

“Hmmm.....anyway to what do I owe this surprise visit”

“I missed you and I wanted to tell you to come home early so you can move your couch” he beams, break into a beautiful smile

“Or I can always take my position on the bed, right next to my wife”

“Don’t push it” we both laugh but he stops abruptly, like something just shifted in him “What’s wrong?” I ask with a slight panic. He pulls on his polo neck to make pass for some air, like his suffocating “Abuti majara?” now im fully panicking, the colour in his eyes is something new. I know red and dark but I have never seen them dusty grey like now, this one colour I don’t find welcoming, something in this look scares the hell out of me “Baby” his hold around my waist is tightening, I can feel lupus nail almost digging at me but he hasn’t transformed. He sits like a dead person staring in space “Molapo” I spank his cheeks “Baby you’re hurting me” I can feel the sink of nail almost passing my dress, close to digging my skin.

His phone rings just as I’m trying to fight myself off his tight hold, like something just flashed through his eyes he closes his eyes with a deep sigh and rest his head on the couch rest freeing me. I attend the phone and realise its Moletsane. I can tell from how fucked up he looks that he doesn’t want to talk, I receive the call because I have was instructed never to dismiss Moletsane in this family.

‘Ntate Moletsane’ my eyes remain on the man lost in space on the couch

'Mabataung what is happening to him?'

'I don't know ntabe Moletsane but his eyes.....they changed to dusty grey and he held me too tight'

'Did he hurt you?'

'No but I think he was about to, it was almost like it wasn't him, like something else was inside him' through the phone I can hear him release an exhausted sigh

'Bring him home' that's an order. He drops the call and I keep my eyes at my mysterious man, he is like an ever ending book but I keep going.

"I hurt you didn't I?" the guilt in his tone, I don't want him feeling like this

"No you didn't, let's go home" I take my sit back on his lap, pull his jacket so he looks at me

"I'm sorry" it comes as a whisper, a bit of glister dancing in his eyes. I don't know what is happening but I know he wouldn't hurt me in anyway, that wasn't him and I don't want him beating himself for something we don't know and don't understand as yet. Keeping eye contact I reach my lips to his, pull on his lower soft lips on purpose, a bit of a bite on them has him smiling "O etsang?" (What are you doing?)

"Let's go home" he kisses my nose and look at me for a moment, I know he heard my conversation with Moletsane through my head so there is no need to explain.

"Let's go get answers my love" he pulls me to stand, goes to his desk and collect somethings before he comes to me and wrap his hand around my waist walking us out "Thank you for being here" he whisper in my ear as we walk down the passage, taking me by surprise. He has weird random moments that just take my breath away every time he dives into them. I know he is a monster but he is my monster, he is my home and I would choose to be here all the damn time "Lerato, please postpone both my afternoon meeting to tomorrow" the girl nods, now suddenly so professional "Oh, and Lerato this is my wife, next time you make her wait on visitors chairs remember she pays your salary" I don't even ask how he knows, he must have read my mind when I lied about my reason for sitting outside for him.

“Yes sir, my apologies mam” I just smile at her before my poison heads us to the elevator.

The elevator. That moment once again. Something about confined spaces charges our electricity. That exhilarating feeling wears me once again. Something about enclosed spaces fuels our feelings. I feel like I want to be caged with him. The minutes I raise my eyes I find his intently on me, we lock, pounding heart to heart as the form of communication.

“Fuck” like a rebellious dog unchained he jumps me, his smash me with a hungry kiss. My deliverance carry the same hunger, he picked me and sat me on elevator handles as he feasts on me, his hands travelling all over me. His touch is my drug, I want to keep it on me till death do us apart. The elevator pings off, immediately all actions cease, I’m quickly pulled back to the floor and only now my knees complain, they are too weak to carry me after the hunger kiss I just received. I actually feel like touching on them and just take a deep breath.

“Ahhh!” unexpectedly I exclaim as he sweeps me with a scoop, holding me out of the building like a new born “You’re getting us unnecessary attention” I warn giggling his arms as he walks us to the car

“My baby couldn’t walk after the kiss sooo....” He trails off, placing me on the chair and strapping me, another nose kiss before he goes to his side and drives us home.

Getting home I went straight to my room to dress proper for the elders. Long dress accompanied by two shawls on my shoulder and head. I’ll attend Tlotla after this, I need to know what is happening because whatever that was, is something I want not to happen again. The lounge is embraced by ntate tlali and bereng while we wait on abuti majara who went straight to moletsane’s hut when we arrived. I take this time to prepare them tea, I have learned that they love tea and scones. Palesa is looking anywhere but my direction as I make tea in the kitchen, she and I still haven’t talked about her milkshake moments. She is back to being shy.

Just as I put my tray on the table the two walk in, followed by mamajara and mabereng. I serve everyone their choice of tea including myself and retire next to abuti majara who decided on whisky on the rocks. I can tell that he’s switched off, something in him doesn’t connect in me, something is amiss. I hold his hand just

for assurance, make him know that I'm not going anywhere. Our eyes lock when I touch on him, I keep my eyes at him for him to drink and he does, deeply inhales keeping his eyes at me.

"Thank you" he lowly mouths squeezing my hand back. The dust that was creeping him immediately rest back, he comes back to me, the normal him that I love so much.

"You can kiss each other" Moletsane, his words break our moment and we find people staring at us, this is embarrassing

"You need to get a wife" abuti majara hisses bringing the house to laughter

"Maybe share mabataung with me" moletsane teases

"I have an extra one, maka kungfu is free of charge" we all can't help but laugh

"Nxa! I would rather be single till I die" laughter die off "BoMoletsane something is happening" he delivers with a sigh "I don't know what it is as yet but it's something that's about to test us, all I see is that Majara is about to go rogue" everyone keep quiet, taking in the not so welcoming news

"Rogue how? What do you see?" Ntate bereng asks with panic

"I don't know but I see something dark controlling him, I see him behaving in ways I know his normal self would not and the worst is....." he trails off, look up at me "I see him hurting his chosen" I feel myself damp up

"How?" I ask still holding the man accused of hurting me

"I don't know, I saw him surrender himself to the wolverine, the vision was not clear, you were lying in a pool of blood and he surrendered himself" I don't know much about visions but something in me know and believe that he wouldn't hurt me, he is my protector, my earth guardian angel

"He wouldn't hurt me, him and Lupus would die protecting me" I tell, Moletsane smiles

"That he wouldn't we all know but because we don't know what we are dealing with as yet, I think its best we separate the two of you for now"

"NO" both abuti majara and I chorus, holding tight on each other

“I lost my life because of this, I lost out on being a normal kid because of what was passed on to me. Please don’t take my chance to live once again from me. Don’t punish me for something I didn’t choose myself. Find something else but that” he pulls me up with him, look at his parents “This is the happiest I have been, don’t take my happiness from me, you owe me at least that” he walks us out of the lounge, clinging me tighter under his arm “I’m not losing you Iwandle, not when I just found you”

“I’m not going anywhere” I assure just as we step in the elevator to my room. He pulls me to his chest, wrap both his arms around me and hug me in silence until we get to the bedrooms. He takes my hand and leads us to my room. Getting in there he takes off his clothes under my watch, remain in his boxers.

“Can I take a nap?” I nod, abandoning my clothing too. I remain in my underwear and allow him to coil on me as he drift the afternoon away “Please get my daughter for me when I wake up” I nod brushing on his firm arm wrapped on me as he cuddle me “I love you mangcobo”

“I love you molapo” and like that we both sleep holding on tight to each other

CHAPTER 22

Sleeping has never felt so comforting and so safe ever before. I feel like I received a therapeutic and soothing massage for my soul. Something in me feels appreciative of the sleep I had just taken. I feel relaxed and laminae without any turbulence, like everything in me is just smoothly flat. I place my arm on top of his arm wrapping me closer to him, a steely poke from my behind renders a smile on my face. I can feel his erection fighting to burst his boxers but because he exercise control in everything. I know he is not one to let his dick take control of him. When his firm grip harden around me, only now I can tell his awake. He sniffs the nape of my neck like a morning breeze, taking all of me in and then he hums, hum a soothing melody of 'all for one - these arms' carrying my emotions just perfect. In my ear I hear him hum line by line as he wraps me in his safe arms. I have never experienced love so simply pure and attuned to my emotions like this. I love this man.

**I hear the sound of your heart beating
Don't say a word I know what you're feeling
Just hold me close, don't be afraid
These arms won't let your heart
break Just ask me girl-oh I surrender
I'll make love to you-so soft and
tender I promise you with every
breath I take These arms won't let
your heart break**

**These eyes will worship and adore
you These hands will love you every
day Darlin' the only guarantee I can
make These arms won't let your heart
break**

**Your wish is my command I'm right here for you
Just take my hand I'll love you like you want me
to One thing's for sure make no mistakes
My arm won't let your heart break**

In the arms of the man I love I lie, hold his words and find them a sacred place in my heart to keep for a life time. The love I have for this man is effortlessly perfect. I believe him word for word and I know he is my safe place, no one is separating me from him.

“I love you” I confess still looking the other way as he spoon me

“And I love you more than life itself” his soft lips touch on the nape of my neck
“Your my home baby” I beam in his hold, melt for his love. Happily I turn to face him, find him content. I use his kisses on him, plant a peck on his nose bringing him to a giggle.

“You’re my heart and there is no way I’m separating from my heart” I assure keeping our eyes locked and I can tell he finds the assurance he needs in my eyes and words. Humour dances in his eyes “What is it?” I ask

“Good morning”

“What?” I exclaim inspecting the room and indeed the sound of first a roaster goes off, morning breeze wearing the room “We slept the entire afternoon and night?” he nods with a smile “Jesus Tlotla, I hope she still has milk”

“Olady would have woke us up if she needed more” my panic eases, I look at him back in a smile myself, he keeps saying I’m his drug but I think he is my drug too
“Your turning me into a normal human being, I have never slept and had enough sleep so much that I wake willingly. My wake up calls are you and Moletsane but today I woke on my own accord”

“I love that your being normal but I still want my lupus, please don’t chase him out of you” he breaks into a beautiful laughter, ease as I want him to be when I break Puso’s news. I brush all over his face admiring his looks, God really knew what he was doing when he created him “I have something to tell you” frown immediately wears him

“Keng love?” (What is it my love?)

“Puso is in a bit of trouble?” the lines on his forehead creases into deeper frown

“Puso?” he questions in confusion “Are you not trying to say Seeiso?” I shake my head no

I release a sigh first “He has a child and a woman he wants to marry” he blankly just stares at me in disbelief, compelling me to recite the events of yesterday.

“HE DID WHAT?” he shouts, trying to break out of our cuddle but he receives my not so pleasant look that pulls him back “I’m sorry my love, it’s just that.....” he trail off, failing to find his words “I actually expected something like this from Seeiso not him” I know, me too. He is too stand up for this reckless behaviour.

“You’ll help me break the news akere” my sotho is getting there and he likes it when I try on his language but today it doesn’t work. He mockingly chuckle at me.

“I Majara Molapo, have a very busy day ahead. This is your case my skat, handle it on your own” (.....my love,.....) argh! So much for helping. He immediately leaves the bed, sprung tall barefooted on my floors, I can’t help but get lost in his dreamy body “Watching is free but touching.....” he winks at me “.....Is extremely expensive” he puts his pants back on but doesn’t zip them, stoop to plant a peck on my forehead “Thanks for sleep but now I have to go get ready for work” I nod “And make sure you have my daughter with you when I’m done, I need my kisses from her” I can’t help but fall deeper in this love, a man who loves your child is a dream come true.

His absence on my sheets is felt, since it’s still too early I decide to wake up too and start my own day. Preparing breakfast for my family is not so bad, I have actually never did but I was told that I can suspend the staff from the kitchen and take over whenever I want. Today I’m doing so, making them breakfast and spending the entire day with my daughter, I miss my baby, it’s her and I today.

I must admit I have grown quite brave and confident in this household. Abuti majara meant it when he said I’m on my own, he left and I had to announce my meeting with the elders at breakfast prepared by me. Mamajara is growing drunk in love with me every day, I know I’m not the best of the best when it comes to cooking but the way she was praising my food, one would swear the meal was prepared by a qualified chef or something.

Puso and I shared looks when I asked for a meeting at breakfast. He knew he was the agenda and I also asked him aside after breakfast and told him not to leave as yet, he, the culprit has to be present in his meeting.

“You told Juju?” Juju is abuti Majara, he sits nervously wiping his clean face as if it’s already shooting sweat. I nod “What did he say?” he and I are a bit early for our meeting, we are already in the lounge waiting on the elders

“Nothing much, just that he didn’t expect that kind of behaviour from you” I can’t help but notice a shadow of disappointment wearing him “What’s wrong?”

“I long for his brotherly love” he keeps his eyes fixed on the huge wall television before us, confusing me with his words

“What do you mean?”

He remains glued to the tv, pretending to be watching it though it’s watching him “If it was Seeiso who did this, I know he’d be here, hold him through it all but because it’s me, Puso. Mapuso’s bastard son who he will always doubt he is not here. That’s why I came to you instead of him, I knew from the first day I saw you that you don’t judge people by their mistakes and in this case my mistake is just being Mapuso’s son. My own brother doesn’t love me like he loves his other siblings just because I didn’t come from the same womb as him, I think he tolerates me more than he loves me”

“That’s not true Puso” my tone comes as a whisper, I know how abuti majara feels about him, he adores this guy.

“Have you been to this house?” random change of topic but I nod, letting him put out all his feelings on the table

“Yeah” lowly I admit

“Do you know what’s his password” I know and I can help but curse inwardly “Yeah, his password his MPSO for Majara, Peete, Seeiso and Oratuwe. No Puso anywhere there. It stings to know that I have a brother who doubts my love for him yet I keep rolling with the punches for this family. Now my mother and sister just disappeared like they were never here and no one saw fit to say anything to me but you know what I did, I rolled with the punches for my family, I choose them over anything but my own brother still doubt my love for this family. Maybe I’m better off with my own little family” he attempts to stand but I’m quick to jump in his way

“Puso sit down” the pain in his eyes is unbearable, he obliges with a sigh and sit back down. I take the table before him and take his hands in mine “I’m sorry you

have been going through so much on your own, don't leave please, allow me and trust me to fix this" he just nods "Your brother loves you Puso maybe you might find his way of loving you a bit offish but he does. Don't doubt his love for you. He would take a bullet for you just as he would for Say and Ora. He just doesn't overwhelm you with his love because you're the perfect brother in his eyes, you hardly need saving that's why he may appear a bit distant. While Say on the other hand is very troubled, he constantly has to keep him in check" a bit of smile creeps him

"You think?"

"I don't think, I know. He tells me how good you are every chance he gets" he fully smile, I think he needed to hear that

"And that is why BoMoletsane saw you fit to join in this homestead. You're the 'bearer'. You bear peace and unity, heal us in ways we didn't know needed healing" Moletsane remarks, standing by the lounge entrance with all the elders. Mamajara is already crying, she is cry baby sometimes

"Oh son!" she squats in front of Puso "I'm so sorry we neglected you and failed to consider you feeling all this years, please forgive me" Puso hugs her, wipe her teary face

"I know she was my mother but she didn't raise me, you raised me and brought me into this man that I am and all I need is acceptance Mama. I know I didn't come from you but I consider you my mother because you were there on my first day at school, my parents' meetings, my fights, my teenage, my graduation. Almost my entire life I remember you being the mother I needed unlike my own mother and for that I love you and I'm grateful but I'm tired of having to prove myself over and over again that I'm a Molapo before Mapuso's son. I'm a Moletsane and I deserve to be treated like one" the direction of this meeting is shifting but it's still okay that he tells his parents how he feels.

Ntate bereng squeezes his shoulder from behind "Son you are a Molapo and we apologise for making you feel less like one of us" I think the news hit ntate Tlali hard, his too old but this is his son with his witch mistress that he married, slowly he breathes on the couch I think still gathering his words to assure his son. After some silence he finally say

“Puso, you know why I named you Puso?” Puso shakes his head no “You’re the ruler, you rule my heart, my home, my soul but most importantly you rule BoMoletsane. Your name alone should assure you that you are one of us son. Please forgive me for making you feel like you’re labelled as Mapuso’s son before a Molapo. My blood runs through your veins, you’re my pure joy. Having you after bereng and bohlokwa brought the sunshine in me, your presence in my life brought light to my then dimmed life. I was on the verge of taking my own life in that time but when I found out about you I held on and lived for you because I needed you to feel the same love I gave your brother bereng and sister bohlokwa. Please don’t doubt my love for you son. I love you” sadness wears the room, emotions suddenly high

“My pupu we love you” Mabereng exclaim breaking the ice in the room, we all chuckle “Please forgive us boy boy. No one in here regards you any less of a Molapo. You are one of us and we apologise my boy boy”

“Hai hai, not boy boy please nkgono” (.....grandma) we all laugh, chasing the heaviness in the room away

Ntate Tlali turns to me with a smile “We are really grateful of your presence here mabataung, thank you for hearing him and calling us to listen to him” that’s not the purpose of the meeting but..... I look at Puso who is receiving all the love from mamajara. His look is suddenly dressed in doubts. He is taking in the love and I think he doesn’t want to break the bubble. I seek confirmation once again with our silent communication if I should still tell the real reason of the meeting

“Thank you ntate but that’s not the real reason for this meeting” silence, all eyes turn back to me, even the culprit himself who is suddenly ready to run “Puso...” clearing my throat “Puso has a family” I confess

“We are his family, of course he has a family” ntate bereng, I look at him to elaborate but he looks up, stands up

“I need a drink” he announce, ready to escape his doings

“Sit damn down Puso” my voice come stern. He sits but changes his couch, he chooses the one close to the entrance. Readying himself for when things turn sour to escape.

Sigh! “Yes we are his family ntate but what I mean is that Puso got someone pregnant and he is been living with that person and their three months old son in his house” Silence, all jaws drop to the floor staring at him

“And the last nail to the coffin” Puso reminds me

“And oh! she is not of royalty” disappointment wears the room, people all suddenly went mute

“PALESA” mabereng scream and palesa is quick to show herself “I need brandy”

“Three ships” ntate tlali

“Scotch” ntate bereng

“Mojito” mamajara, rendering me speechless

“Water” moletsane

One by one they all order their drink of choice to down Puso’s news. Silence wearing the room once again as we wait on drinks. This is going to be a very long morning.

CHAPTER 23

ANGELINE

I know he is a difficult man to love but we are practically getting married in two days. Had he not called today to ask about the preparations and meet up I would have thought he is fooling me. But my father hasn't called to confirm that he received his people for mahadi (dowry), and somehow I was starting to doubt his intentions but the sound of his voice through the phone call drove all the doubts in me away. I went and continued with my plans for my big day. He said he wants us to start on a clean slate, settle the Mapuso issue for having his brother exiled and marry me.

I'm dolling up so he finds me sexy and neat for him. He should be here any minute from now. And just like that I can hear the sound of his wheels driving in. One last touch up on my make-up and I run to the kitchen to open up for him, I gave all my helpers a day off so we can have our alone time. I stand by the door and watch him make his way to me, how lucky am I? To have such a dreamy man all to myself.....well and that lwandle zulu woman but I'll make sure she knows he is mine, I know he is marrying her off guilt because she was peete's wife and that nonsense connection they have. If it wasn't for that, Majara wouldn't look at her even for a second. She is not his type.

"Hey you" he wraps my waist and pull me to his chest, gosh I feel like just lying there. His cologne warms all my muscles

"Hey babe" I reach to plant a peck on his lips but he gives me his cheek, gosh! I forget that he can be so closed, probably doesn't want to kiss on me standing by the door "I missed you, come in" I make space for him to pass and I just die staring at his back, I know how much he hates formal, rather resort to t-shirt and formal blazers instead of a clean neat suit attire. He only wears those when he has important meetings, other than that, this right here is his formal for work and it suits him just perfectly "How is work, can I make you anything to drink?" he shakes his head no, retiring on my couch like it was meant just for him

“I’m okay sweetheart and work is great, come sit next to me” he pats the space besides him and I fly there, allow him to hold my hand in his “I missed you too, how is the preparations going?”

“Great, my dress is here and just waiting for our big day. How did the family take our news?”

“You know you’re not so popular to them but they have no choice, they will show for our wedding” I nod “And because of that and our time frame they said they will see your father after our wedding, they just need you to prove yourself that now you’ll be the daughter in law they need before they involve our ancestors” I believe him, I know how sacred they are about their ancestors and I’m ready to prove myself

“And here I was worrying myself over nothing, I was starting to doubt your intentions” he smiles

“Never”

“And what happened on Saturday? We were supposed to see this Mapuso’s accomplice then, now I would be spending time with you” I sulk, resting my head on his broad shoulder

“Tlotla hasn’t been well, and I couldn’t focus on anything but her” I know how much he loves that girl

“Is she okay now?” he nods “Good, so we still have sometime nyana to kill, soo I was wondering if we jump to the bedroom and give you a bit of a sneak peek into our wedding night” his eyebrow raise, I think I took him by surprise

“You see why I have been avoiding to come here, I want our day to be special love. Don’t tempt me tuuuu” ncooo! Such a wonderful man, I swear I’m never fucking around again after we get married “Let’s just go baby” he pulls me with as he stands

“Okay, let me get my bag” he lets me be, scream already walking out

“You’ll find me in the car”

“How do you know this place?” he asks stealing a glance at me as he drives through the bushes. I’m directing him to Mapuso’s co-witch. I once followed her and

Nolizwe to this place, the night before Peete was exiled they came here and I heard everything they talked about. And me being being me, I came back, asked the witch to help on few occasions.

“I followed mapuso and nolizwe here, and that’s how I found out about what they did to Peete”

“And why didn’t you warn my parents?” his tone changes, comes a bit harder but he contains himself

“I knew she was using dark magic on everyone so I didn’t want to get on her bad side”

“And what do you know about dark magic?” nervously I look the other way, gather myself before I incriminate myself

“Nothing, it’s something my grandmother used to tell me stories about growing up”

“Hmmm” he parks from a distance, inspect the surrounding area running his eyes around “So this is where the witch that helped Mapuso in framing my brother lives?” I nod “Okay, let’s go?” my heart stops, I frown looking at him in confusion

“Go where, you wanted my source and gave her to you, I didn’t say we are going to interrogate her together” I don’t want to risk my involvement, showing my face in there the witch will spill on me

“You know what? Your right, I’ll take this information to Moletsane, he’ll know what to do” sigh! Thank God “What would I do to a witch anyway, she will be witch me too right?” I nod, smiling as he drives back “Thank you for this love” now I know with Mapuso gone and the witch dealt with by Moletsane, I can warm my way back to the palace

MAJARA

As soon as I dropped maka kung’fu back, I made a u-turn back to the odd creepy house, sitting alone in the middle of nowhere. As much as Angeline is trying to pin everything to Mapuso, something in me and the way she reacted when I asked we

go see the witch together confirms that she is been too busy for my liking. Too much time in her hands so much she end ups using it inappropriate.

The closer I get to the door, the closer Lupus wants to free. As much as he is a beast, at some occasions I have to protect him. We are going to see a witch, something that easily connects with him because they have one thing in common, blood on their hands. The witch can use that against him and end up trapping him, so I have to be careful around such occasions. Come off as human like the witch. I'm going to play client.

"Knock knock" I accompany my voice with fists banging the door. The place looks too deserted for someone to live in, the surroundings alone smell odd, lonely and bizarre. Like something of a creature like lives here. I continue to pound the door before I give up and resort to kicking it open, now I don't give a fuck, I want this witch dead today. The smell death grip my nostrils as soon as the door falls to the ground. The house is empty. Still standing by the door I look up the roofing and find it dark. A dark hole roofs the house, it looks like it leads somewhere.

"WHO DARE ENTERS MY PREMISES WITHOUT PERMISSION?" an angry woman voice emerges through the dark hole above, this is witchcraft at another level, something I haven't come across since my existence

"The one daring you to show face" calmly I respond the voice

"I don't show face to intruders, what do you seek here?"

"You" silence, nobody has shown but I can feel a presence, behind me I feel something sniff on me and I know the witch is right behind me. In a blink of an eye I have her neck strangled between my arms. She still hasn't taken form but because I have another being in me so powerful, I'm able to strangle her invisible soul "take form" I order. Wanting to see the devil I'm dealing with.

"HA HA HA! You can strangle my soul all you want but I don't die, I'm already lifeless" fuck! I free the freak "We meet finally my bearer of terror and power" she is close, surrounding me in powers I can't make off but something is familiar, the feeling I had when I almost hurt my wife grips me again. This is where the urge to hurt my wife originated from, but why?

"Who are you?" calmly I ask

“Your new master boy, the one in charge of Lupus now” this bitch really knows her story “LUPUS, SHOW YOUR SELF” she commands, I almost laugh at her but stop when I feel Lupus fighting to free. No one controls Lupus except Mabataung. Who is this witch? “NOW?” her angry voice shoots the roof, shaking the darkness dancing up the house

I smirk looking up at the darkness “That’s where your wrong baby girl. Lupus reside in my blood and I know how to control my blood” I know Lupus would do anything for Lwa, promising him to spend the night in mangcobo’s arms made him cower back, sleep tight in my blood where he belongs

“Once I get my body I’ll have him, you and your Lupus are going to be my beast of terror”

“Dream on bitch, get that body and come so I finish you off” with that said I turn back to my car, spit on the ground before I climb my car so the witch doesn’t follow me. I can hear Moletsane summon me home in my head, I know he saw that through me. This witch has something on me, she is good and very good if she is able to shake Lupus.

CHAPTER 24

MAJARA

I'm cuddling the love of my life, tired after an eventful day I had. Moletsane and I had a useless afternoon trying to crack who the witch is and what's her motive. Because the ancestors haven't shown him anything, it was all a futile exercise. But I have to admit, now I have someone who shakes me. That witch's got powers I can't understand.....my daughter's whining baby voice put a stop to my crooked thinking, she probably picked up that I'm laying her on my chest but thinking of darkness

"I'm sorry my love" I brush on her back kissing her head as we wait on her mother who is taking forever in that bathroom. My daughter is even starting to eat on her hands, we all had dinner except her and her mother is taking forever to shower up and come feed her "Mangcobo?!" I call out

"Molapo" I love it when she calls me like that

"Get the hell out of there, my daughter is hungry" she opens the door rolling her eyes at me

"I think I'm going to kick you back to your room, you're too much to bear in my room"

"I'm sorry" I'm quick to apologise and she dies in laughter, I don't want to risk being sent to that cold room. Not when I feel the progress I'm making with her. She takes the love of my life from my chest and settle by the headboard next to me while she feeds her.

"And I thought I was the love of your life" I laugh

"Don't worry your cute self about anything, my ocean is not a greedy woman. She can share with mommy I'm sure" she rolls eyes looking the other way, suddenly I feel her emotions shift, something is troubling her "What's wrong?" I ask

She heaves a sigh "How is your relationship with Puso?" that compels a frown to creep me

"My relationship with my brother? It's okay I think, we are good" I confess

“And Seeiso?” that one I roll my eyes like her, bringing her to smile a bit

“Troubling, Seeiso is a special kid. I always have to be constantly at his tail, so I would say my relationship with him is..... I don't know, parent like. I have to be a parent to him before a brother to keep him in check” she nods, biting on her beautiful lips that I also want to bite so hard.

“And why is your house passwords MPSO?”

“That's my siblings names you know that”

“And Puso?” fuck, I curse inwardly. She sighs again “Something surfaced from the meeting” that, I almost forgot to ask how it went “Puso feels like you don't love him” I'm quick to sit up straight and look at her with a frown

“That's nonsense, I love Puso like all my siblings”

“He doesn't feel your love, he wanted you to be here for him today but you weren't. He made an example of how you're always so quick to save Seeiso but never him and that thing of his name not being listed on your password cemented the doubts in him. He thinks you just tolerate him instead of loving him” WHAT? I have never been this shocked, Puso my pupu “I think you need to talk to him, assure him that you don't see him as Mapuso's son but your brother”

“Sweetheart Puso is my brother, my straight up level headed brother. The one I don't need to check on mostly because I know he has his shit together” I defend, horrified that my brother thinks that of me

“You need to tell him that, not me. I'm just telling you how he feels” Fuck! I jump the bed, look for my shoes “Hoo! Where are you going?”

“To talk to my brother, I can't have him thinking.....” she cuts me off

“Molapo he is not here, he is at his house with his family. He was asked to bring them tomorrow”

“Then I'm going there” I'm getting dressed, not changing my mind

“Okay, burp Tlotla and take her to Maa while I dress up, I'm coming with you” my panic eases when she informs that she will be by my side. I want her everywhere, especially now when I face my brother who thinks I love him any less.

“Thank you” I kiss her as I take tlotla from her boob and walk out with her, she’ll burp on the way.

Now that we are here it occurs to me that, I don’t really know Puso’s house all the way inside but I knew Peete’s house all the way to his secret stashes. One day I have to take her to his house.....

“He had a house?” fuck lupus “And you never mentioned it?” the pain in her tone is not hard to miss

“I’m sorry my love, it slipped my mind. A lot happened in a short space of one month. I’ll take you there soon” she nods, not satisfied of my answer “He hardly lived there, it was just something he used to.....” I can’t say fuck around

“You forget that I hear your dirty mind, let’s go” moerrrr! I hate this thing of her constantly invading my mind. I follow her to the door, she asks for permission with a knock and a cute chubby girl opens the door, freezes if I’m not mistaken.

“BABY YOU FORGOT THE CARD” Puso screams, coming to the door too but stops on his track at the sight of us “I guess it’s not pizza” it’s definitely not pizza “Baby” he pats the girl moving her out of the way for us to walk in

“Pupu” I greet, heading for his fridge to look for a beer

“I’m too old for that shit” that’s his baby name, like any black child he hates it. Like how I hate Juju. I wonder why my mother had terrible taste in baby naming us. The only bastard who has a cute baby name is Seeiso, he was called Say and he loves it. Even Peete was Pepe and he hated it like us.

“Are you going to introduce me Pupu?” I’m pissing him on purpose, like how they always piss me off too. I’m looking at the nervous girl as I ask, she looks like she is about to faint “Why don’t you have Heineken?” that’s the beer I tolerate, not this....I don’t even know what this is

“I think we should all sit down?” my wife suggest, I love her every day and I can’t wait to make her mine legally and spiritually “Spiritually?” she asks with a frown

“Body to body, soul to soul baby” I wink, bringing her to a blush

“Are we missing something?” Puso asks, confused as hell

“Nothing for you to worry about” my wife and I laugh as we make our way to the dining. My brother did well for him, this is a home unlike my house “I’m waiting” I urge when silence breaks after sitting down

“Juju this is Violet, the woman I want to spend the rest of my life with” that’s a Molapo over there, always sure of what he wants “Baby this is my brother, abuti Majara” the girls nods, not even looking at me once. And just then, the bell rings. The girl try to stand but Puso pulls her still and look at mabataung who is quick take Puso’s card from his hand and go attend the Pizza guy I guess

“Nice meeting you violet, I hear you’re the reason why we never see this nigger at home” she looks down, squirm like I just touched her. I have that effect on people, scare them without even trying so I’m not offended “Where is the young man?”

“Sleeping” Mabataung joins us back, empty handed “Where is pizza?” we both chorus, taking her by shock

“You ate” she say to me “Vio come help me plate up” I know what she is doing, giving Puso and I some space. As soon as they leave the room we fall in to silence, I stare at my brother wounded that he thinks I don’t love him and I can tell he knows the reason why am here

“You do know I love you right?” he shrug, looking down instead of me “Remember my cars?” I ask

“Mercedes Benzes?” I nod

“Which one do I like the most?” he thinks a bit

“I would say the C-Class because you always use it” I shake my head no

“Nop, I love my amg more”

“But it’s always parked”

“That’s because it’s my special car, the bitch I pull when I make my mark” we crack “And that’s you, the special guarded brother. And then there is Seeiso, the C-Class, the one I’m always on because I don’t trust it, I constantly have to keep an eye on it. But my amg, even in 5 years gone I know I would still find it intact. I don’t love you any less Puso, maybe I was misguided in how I showed my love to you but I need you to know you’re my blood. I love you like all my siblings and I need you to

forgive me for that password shit. I was wrong and I honestly didn't think much when I installed it" he nods, a bit of smile creeping him

"Do you see me as Mapuso's son?" shaking my head, the women joins us

"No, you're a Molapo before mapuso's son. Are you mapuso's son?" I question and he laughs

"Olady would kill me, I'm Mamajara's son"

"Exactly, I was waiting for you to say otherwise and I was going to tell her" he laughs as I stand "Come here" he does, with a smile and we fist bump "Your my it car wena, don't ever doubt your presence in my life and please forgive me for the password" he nods freeing from my embrace

"Well I can forgive you under one condition" gosh! I wonder what that could be "I need you to stand for me, I want to marry Vio and I know it's going to be a battle" we both sit back. I look at this girl who has my brother within her palms reach, inspecting her for a while. I receive a sharp poke from the side and I hear Mabataung snide inwardly that I'm scaring the girl "Do you love her?" he nods without a doubt "Does she make you happy" he nods again "Will she handle being a Molapo wife?" that he stops, think like he didn't think of it. He knows what I mean.

"I can't say but I'm willing to risk everything to be with her, I'm hoping she will take me as I come"

"I will" the girl whisper in a low tone, taking me by surprise. Well at least she can speak, for a moment I thought she was mute.

"Well I'll back you up ntwana yaka" that smile of his, the appreciative one

"Thaaaa, my blood. Let's go see your son" he takes his pizza plate and I follow him down the passage. As soon as he shut the door he turns to me with an expression I can't tell "There he sleeps, I wanted to ask you privately what happened to maa and nolie" I knew there was more too 'come see my son'

"Nolizwe is dead, I feast on her and your mother is.....on the run, she ran away" he sighs, falling on the bed "Thank God" now I frown

"What's wrong?"

“Maa wanted me to sleep with Nolizwe, that’s one of the reason I was now scarce at home” that witch! “I had to make sure my door is locked all the damn time before I could find myself in bed with Nolizwe like Peete”

“That witch is going to pay dearly when I find her” he nods “Let’s stop talking about her before I curse in front of my son, who do we have here?” I ask, holding the big fat boy in sleep

“Boy” I frown to look at him

“What is boy Puso?” he shrug

“He came unexpected and I didn’t know what to call him and when I finally found the perfect name for him, I didn’t know if the family will approve”

“What’s the name you thought?”

“Peete” I beam, look at the young Peete in my arms

“Peete Molapo, I love it. Can I give him his middle name?” he nods “Peete Peacemaker Molapo”

“I love you juju”

“I love you pupu” we both crack up and I couldn’t be happier.

CHAPTER 25

ANGELINE

My day is finally here. The day I have been dreaming about. I must admit I look like a perfect dream. Mjay's perfection. He is going to be blown away when he sees me walk my white snowflake aisle. It's a bit unsettling that I haven't seen him since that day when I took him to Mapuso's witch. But hearing his voice through our phone conversations, assuring me to go ahead with everything soothed me. I guess he is saving me as the best for last.

I got the lounge I wanted for my wedding. Small and intimate, just perfect for our union. Looking through the window I see couple of our friends seated, eagerly waiting to see us tie the knot. I know some are just here to see if this is really happening. Bitches be craving on my man since day one.

The sad news though is that none of our family made it. My dad wouldn't agree to give me away because he didn't pay Mahadi (Dowry) but I understood my man's reason for not doing so. His family is still mad at me so there is no one to hold the negotiations for him. And from what I see outside, I guess his family didn't show for him too because they wanted me to prove myself first. They will all calm down, we'll prove to them that we are meant to be and they will come around.

"It's time Angie" my planner burst through the door, informing that it's time to start but I frown, looking out the window

"I don't see my husband, he hasn't shown yet" there is no sight of him at the altar

"His brothers are here, they said he asked to make a special entrance. You walk first" I break into fine piece of blush. How did I get so lucky? Looking down the window I see Tshepo, Puso and Seeiso take front row sit. All rocking tuxedos for my wedding. This is really happening. At last I'm going to be legally Mrs. Molapo.

Walking down the aisle in my fitted body hugging dress I feel like the princess that I am. Pity my father refused to be part of my wedding. He would have been so proud. Every slow pace I take to the altar it feels surreal. This is finally happening.

Our beginning may have not been perfect but I promise to be perfect for him. I love this man and I'm ready to embrace him like no other.

I see the envy in all my friend's eyes as I walk to marry the love of my life. I wanted this lounge because I knew its beauty will fit my theme for my wedding. Winter in summer theme. The trees and the white roses with snowflakes gently falling down the aisle as I walk makes me feel my dream wedding come true. Somewhere in the atmosphere Beyoncé and Jamie Fox's melody easily soothes the scene with 'When I first saw you'. That's how I feel about him, I knew he was my dream from the first time I saw him and I did all that I could to be with him. If only he knew the shit I did to have him, I had to eliminate every girl he spared an eye just to have him all to myself. And this moment here is my dream come true.

The envy in this girls eyes. Some I just invited just so they could finally witness that I too made it, that I'm marrying my prince. Bitches were talking about me, saying I had a child with a Chinese man. Well that's true but who is marrying the most eligible bachelor in Lesotho now.

Finally making it to the altar I find father Luke, he bows with a smile. And I smile back, look at my fake friends as I stand still. Wait on my man with my friends and few of his family to witness. I'm sure that Zulu girl is bathing in chillies hence why she isn't here. I don't know who the hell she thought she was to just come out of nowhere and take my.....

"THE FUCK" I shout, with a trembling voice drawn to the beast at back. Looking at the red eyed huge wolf standing at end of the aisle. Everyone follow my shaky sight and I can feel fear wear the room in an instant "GET THAT THING OUT OF HERE" I scream, but low to my wedding planner who is already shaking. I want that thing out but I also don't want to anger it more. The wrathful expression on it leaves shivers on my skin, that low grunt escaping it is prove enough that it's about to wreak this place into havoc. People are squirming on their sits, already warming up to run for their lives.

With one howl chaos break, my wedding ruins. Damn beast is still just standing while people run for their lives. I feel shattered, weak to even run, my knees fail me and I shatter to the ground. I'm not coming back from this one.

“IF YOU VALUE YOURSELF I SUGGEST YOU ALL GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE” Puso announces, to those hiding beneath the chairs. He has the mic I don’t know when he got hold of, more chaos erupt, chairs fly up in the air with people running to save their lives. Anger is inadequate to describe how I feel right now. I should be scared but I feel like tearing that thing apart more than being scared. With rage I stand, feeling as venomous as the beast.

“Aaaaaaarhg” I roar in anger, hitting my bouquet to the floor

“Congratulations Angie, there comes hubby” Seeiso snaps his fingers like he’s calling his dog. Urging the beast to walk down the now messed aisle

“Seeiso don’t, call mjay to kill this thing” I suggest, cowering back with every step the wolf takes towards me

“Oh Angie, so beautiful yet so empty. Come boy” he brushes on the wolf now beside him “I’m sure you must be starving boy” the wolf growls, twisting its neck looking up, ready to feast. Now that it’s closer there is something familiar about it, like I have seen it before “FEAST LUPUS” he shouts a command. Like he just unleashed it, it roars through its gritted sharp teeth, scratch digging the ground with its evil nails. Like lightning it jumps towards me but something dark engulfs me before it touches me.

With a pounding heart I look around, lost and disorientated. What the fuck just happened? Inspecting my surroundings, my fear escalates. I’m in a dark room with one light coming from above. This room feels scary, I feel like I’m under watch but I can’t see anyone. The light from above shines directly on me though I can’t tell where the light comes from. I’m still in my wedding dress, tormented and torn apart on my dream day.

“Hello....please help” I cry, to the light from above “HEELPPP PLEASE” giving my cry the deepest push. The light is too sharp to look at for a while, I keep glancing at it and blinking the sharpness away “HEEEELP” I scream once again, shivering from fear and sudden cold

“ANGELINE MOHATO” a scary voice comes from above, shaking me into further pieces when I least expect it

“Who.....who... are you? Please help me” I stutter, like a leaf blown by wind

“I’M YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE” the sound alone feels like a worst nightmare

“Please don’t hurt me, I just want to get out of her, I’m getting married” I plead

“HAHAHAHA” that laughter matches that of the devil’s laughter “UNFORTUNATELY THERE WON’T BE A WEDDING. I NEED THAT BODY OF YOURS”

“What do you mean, please help me, I’ll pay you, money is not a problem” trying to find my way out of the dark hole

“IT’S TOO LATE FOR YOU BUT IT’S NOT TOO LATE FOR YOUR BODY”

“Who are you? Pleaseeeee...aaaaaaahhhh” something just stabbed me from behind, I don’t see the weapon or blood but the sharpness of it stings through my heart. A drop of blood falls from above, landing right on my forehead.

“TASTE THAT BLOOD IN YOUR MOUTH” an order comes from above, shaking me like a leaf

“I don’t want to.....aaaaaaahhhh” that stab again, coming from nowhere

“NOWWW” the voice roars and with trembling hands I wipe the drop of blood from my forehead and put it in my mouth for taste. Something immediately happens, I suddenly feel drowsy, trembling all over. With blurred sight I see something dark comes from the light above, like a dark soul it slowly sinks into me. Infecting my veins with power out of my abilities, I feel every inch of my bones power up. Movement of something shivering dark running through my veins. What the hell is happening to me?

“NOW THE SACRIFICE MUST BEGIN” I say, feeling like a leader, powerful beyond measure

“OUR SORCERESS, OUR SORCERESS” multiple voices chorus, coming to light I see my children. Gloriously naked ready to help me take over the world

“BRING THE SHEEP OF SACRIFICE” One of my warlock comes forth holding Michael. Red in piercing screams “Oh baby. You’ll understand in another life that you were meant to be the sheep of sacrifice for mother. Shhhhhh! Hush my baby. Give mommy the power she needs to rule the world” with my dark nail I rip right at my Chinese boy’s heart, coming out with his beating small heart in hand. The coven

erupt in ululations as I feast on the pure heart, celebrate our begging. For now I have a body and a pure heart therefore I can do as please.

CHAPTER 26

LWANDLE

Weeks has passed by like a gust of wind. I'm heading to two months in this place and I'm loving it. Every day I feel more at home though there is this sudden rift between my person and I. Something is sour between abuti majara and I. I have tried multiple times to engage him to open up on what is happening with him but it's like speaking to a rock. If he isn't leaving early for work and coming back in the middle of the night, he spends his time at his cold house. Lately I feel like he is starting to withdraw from me, going back to the shell he was.

I was starting to warm up to Lupus, in fact I love that wolf but lately I feel shivers run down my spine every time he brings him up. I have never felt like Lupus could harm me until of lately. The last nail to the coffin was when I found him staring down at me with dark eyes in the middle of the night. That molten grey dark look creeps the shit out of me, something about that look just isn't settling.

The worst part is Tlotla's sickness. Baby girl is growing fast but something is just amiss. She is a lazy child but the past three days she is been sleeping way too much. Even her grandmothers noticed that hence why Mamajara is forcing us to go see the doctor today.

"Where is violet?" she asks holding Peete in her arms, while I have Tlotla in mine. Tshepo is driving us to the doctor.

"Maaa" I mutter in admonishment. I love Puso's person but for some reason she just doesn't click with these oldies. I don't know if it's because she is not of royalty or what but because I'm none too, I love the girl and I see nothing wrong with her

"Mabataung we compromised, allowed her in but she isn't meeting us half way. Where is she now? I told her that we have to go dress fitting so we know her size to buy her shoeshoe dresses for her ceremony but she hasn't shown till today. All she does is lock herself in that room or run to Puso's house" the talk weren't as a severe as we had thought. Abuti Majara came through for Puso. He was with him through that journey and they came out victorious. Managed to corrupt the council

and royal to allow Puso to take her as wife. Though he was promised to still take another royal wife when the time comes.

I'd say the family really did compromised and allowed her in. she was welcomed and now we are in preparations for their traditional wedding. The problem is her. I don't know if she is shy or what but she is dragging her feet, doesn't involve herself in any of the planning like it isn't her wedding.

"But Maa you never asked me for my size, you all seemed to know everything"

"Your husband knows everything about you. All we had to do was ask him and he would tell us all. This two is different, Puso knows nothing about Vio"

"I'll talk to her when we get back" she smiles

"You see, I don't have to ask with you. You're involved and help in all that you can but I can't say the same about my other daughter in law" complains

"Is it that or you just don't like the fact that she is a commoner and how they went about their affair?" she shakes her head no

"No. You too are not of royal but I love you. I just want that girl to be involved. Show that she really wants to marry Puso, not be like we forcing him down her throat. Show some enthusiasm. You know with you, it was hard because you didn't know and we also were scared that you might reject Majara but the fire and spark in both of you had us marrying you off without knowing" we laugh "Speaking of marriage, have you too decided on the white wedding. That one I'm planning myself. A huge ball wedding" my heart sinks, lately I don't think that will happen. He has stopped pushing for the white wedding.

"I don't know Maa, firstly the deal was that we wait for you to undress the widows weed which is next week but lately I don't think he still wants to cement our union" Tshepo scoffs from the front

"Mjay is crazy about you" Mamajara and I both laugh. The car comes to a still and we both head out to the facility.

“How long has she been feeling like this?” the doctor asks again, now joined by the other doctor whom I think she called to confirm whatever she suspects. I don’t like the silent communication they have.

“We only noticed this about three days ago” Mamajara responds

“What exactly did you see?” the doctor

“Paleness, extreme tiredness and her rapid heartbeat” the latter I wasn’t aware of either, I guess it helps to have a mother as new mother myself. The doctor nods and she arms Tlotla.

“I’ll bring her back, we just going to run few test” we allow her with nods and they both walk out

“Don’t worry, I’m sure we are stressing over nothing” she squeezes my hand “Pass me his bag” I had her my husband’s bag. He is a big kid and he eat like no other. I love how she mothers everyone, she took control of little peete like she did of tlotla. She feeds him his bottle humming a soothing melody as the little man sucks his life away.

“Have you seen Angeline?” she frowns to my question continuing feeding Peete

“You know now that you mention her, where is she vele?” I shrug “Have you asked you husband?” I shake my head no “Hmk, maybe she went on a vacation or something. The last time I saw her was when she came to fetch Kung fu”

“It’s weird, she didn’t give me vibes of someone who gives up without a fight. I thought she would be on my neck for my union with abuti majara” she laughs

“Yah that’s the thing about her, the one thing I liked. That woman was tenacious, had she channelled all that energy in a righteous path, she would have turned to be one of the iconic women in this world” I nod in agreement “which is what I can’t say about Peete’s mother, she lacks a fighting spirit that one” oh lord!

“Give her a chance, she’ll come around” she nods “And Mapuso, have you heard about her whereabouts?”

“Another one that just vanished like she was never human. I still don’t know how one can just disappear without a trace” it really is weird. The doctor walks back in, the look in her eyes alone is alarming.

“Where is my daughter doc?” I ask, already on my feet

“Please sit down Mrs. Molapo” I do as told and watch her take five hours to turn the table and take her own sit. She sighs “My queen we have a problem” she addresses looking at Mamajara “Your granddaughter suffers what we call a sickle cell disease”

“What is that and where is she?” I ask, worn in panic

“Sickle cell anemia is an inherited red blood cell disorder in which there aren't enough healthy red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout the body”

“Okay, so what do we do, how do we treat it?” Mamajara asks, panicking like me

“Because it's an inherited disease caused by a defect in a gene. We are going to need a blood transfusion between the mother and father, one might alter the gene in her” thank god!

“I'm here, take my blood. I'm her mother” she chuckles but stands to me

“We'll test your blood, you might not be match to the gene. We might need the father” she informs me following me down the passage as if I know where we are headed. I hope we don't need the father because I will dig peete alive.

Coming back I find the whole office full. Mamajara seems to have called everyone. Even the man who hates me lately is here, popping those eyes I want to squash so bad.

“What happened, you match?” Ora asks immediately when I enter the room

“Dumelang and No I don't match” I retire in defeat, I waited down on those corridor watching my daughter sleep while I wait on my results. And when I was told I don't match I felt like screaming.

“Where is the doctor, tell her to come take my blood” abuti majara, on his feet. As if on cue, the doctor walks back in, startled with more eyes in her office.

“My king” she bows, sings respect at the royal

“Tuner, I'm the father let's go” I guess he knows the doctor. The doctor frowns a bit but doesn't dispute, she shows him out and they leave

“If he doesn’t match come for me. I know I’m a solvent, mix with almost everything”
Seeiso pops his head screaming for doctor tuner

“Are you drunk?” Mabereng asks Seeiso who decide to look up the roof “Where is violet?” Puso shrug “Did you at least fetch her?”

“She said she was tired” that silence speaks volume and the oldies communication say a lot. I can’t stress about her now, I just want my daughter safe with no sickle diseases.

Another two hours there is still no sign of abuti majara’s return. Now I’m panicking more. Even the heaviness in the room is thick. The doctor also hasn’t come to say anything. Not knowing anything is killing me.

“Puso call violet to order us some food, it looks like we are going to sleep here” Ntate tlali suggest. It’s heading to 19:00 and we are still in this hospital. Puso nods and excuses himself heading out to make a phone call I guess. Palesa is away on week leave. Her mother’s blanket stockvel ceremony was this week so she asked a weekend off. These people only eat her food, other than her they cook themselves so with her not around I have been slaving a bit in the cooking department.

Puso walks back in with abuti majara and we all stand, burn him with our eyes for answers. He is wearing those hospital clothes. The scrubs. He looks way too odd in them and what happened to his clothes?

“I matched, gave her my blood and witnessed the entire transfusion hence why I’m only joining you guys three hours later” thank you God. I love him more. Everyone expel relieve sighs.

“THANK YOU JESUS” Mamajara loudly say. I feel him touch on my shoulder and squat down to me.

“You okay?” I nod, thankful that he saved my daughter. He plants a peck on my lips when I least expect it, causing me to pop my eyes. We have a damn house full of eyes.

“You need to learn how to use a tongue Juju, those baby kisses are for tlotla not her mother” Seeiso, infecting the room with laughter “See me soon, I’ll teach you a thing or two” mxm

“You all should go home, I’ll wait for her. They said to release her tomorrow morning” abuti majara announces. Playing with my hands. He confuses me a lot lately, one minute he is cold, one he is warm. It’s really hard to keep up with him of late.

“You’re the vampire of the family vele” Puso say standing stretching his hands. Everyone join him in preparations to leave.

“Mabataung?” Ntate bereng calls for me to leave with them but I shake my head no

“I’m waiting” no one fights me, they seem to understand

“Let’s walk them out and get ourselves something to eat while at it” Abuti majara suggest holding me up. I don’t even argue because I’m starving, now I can eat because I know my baby is going to be okay.

“Thank you” I say, looking at Tlotla peacefully sleeping on the hospital bed. We just got back from having dinner at a restaurant nearby.

“No need to thank me Lwandle, that’s my daughter and I would do anything for her and you” well maybe her, me I doubt so much lately “Why do you say that?” eish konje I have an invader in my head

“Lately we feel like two different people” I confess.

He drops his eyes “I’m sorry about that”

“No need to be, I just wish you talk to me, tell me if you changed your mind about us”

He expels a sigh “Mangcobo I would never change my mind about you. It’s just that I’m going through something even I myself don’t understand” I frown urging him to continue “Lately I fight myself from strangling you. Sometimes at night I wake

with the urge to choke the life out of you, and it scares the shit out of me Lwandle. I can kill and do any sinful thing there is to do but I can't put my hands on you. Touching you is killing myself. I would end my existence if I ever put my hands on you" hmk

"When did this feeling start?"

"Immediately after my fake wedding with angie"

"What?" horror in my tone cannot be missed. He closes his eyes like he just said something he wasn't supposed to say "You said your what with angie?"

"Come here" he pats his lap signalling for me to sit on him but I sit still. Fold my arms for him to explain "Mabataung?" I don't, I keep my eyes at him "You do know I can scoop you with that little protest of yours"

"Molapo I'm waiting for you to explain" he smiles, stands and scoop me to his lap. Fighting is so useless with him.

"What was so hard?" I roll my eyes and he laughs. Then he tells me all about his almost wedding with Angie

"And she disappeared just like that?" he nods "Baby this is scary, your life scares me more everyday" I confess

"And it scares the shit out of me every day that I now have the urge to hurt you out of nowhere"

Wrapping my arms around his neck and planting a peck on his forehead to ease him, I whisper "I trust you Molapo, and I know you'll never hurt me" he smiles

"I wouldn't?" I shake my head no because I'm in tune with him. I feel him and he feels like my safe heaven "Well let me taste if you also taste like heaven" he keeps his smouldering needy eyes fixed at mine until he smashes me with a kiss. His kisses are always the best.

CHAPTER 27

LWANDLE

Nothing is more soul fulfilling than waking up in the arms of the man who loves me. I really am his drug. Watching him sleep holding me on the couch really is food to my soul. I hope his fears never come true. I don't know what I would do if he ever hurt me in anyway. Maybe I should consult with Moletsane when we get home. I'm sure he might have a glimpse of how to come for my aid. If there is one person who always have a solution for anything it has to be him.

Untangling myself from the arms of my sleeping Lupus I check on my daughter. My little Angel scared me a bit. But I can see the paleness is slowly wearing off her skin. I kiss on her forehead before I feel her father wrap his arms behind me. He really is one unique species.

"I tell you every day that you're my drug. You put me to sleep and put me off sleep" I smile, content that he is here and we are back to normal. Turning to him I stand on my toes and wrap my hands around him, pulling him to my face

"Thank you for being here" I mumble when my lips touch on his. My aim was just to peck his lips but he cups my face, deepens the kiss taking all the control like he always do. Abruptly he stops, pulls out of the kiss but still holding my face in his warm hold. He regards me, confident sexy eyes blazing down at me. His look is pooling my belly in thick desire.

"Do you have any idea how much I want you mabataung?" my breath hitches. I Feel shivers of pleasure instantly wear my skin. I can't take my eyes of his needy eyes. His infected me with the same need as his "Every time we kiss I just want to rip you apart" he reaches down and gently caresses my lips "Hmmm?" I swallow, feeling my entire body betray me "Let me in, please lerato laka" (.....my love) he adds, now cupping my face with his one hand. The other one seductively travel down my butt, caressing all the way down there. The trail of his touch clenches my southwards darkest places. My vaginal muscles pull in such a sweet sharp pain. Aching for something to rub down there.

With a smirk he finally leans down. He knows what he does to me. He kisses me, his lips commanding, firm and slow. Moulding me like clay in his arms. His hands squeezing my butt and pulling me closer to his erections. Like picking something so light he puts me on his waist, my leg voluntarily take place around his neck. His hand moves to my breast, he fits on me like he is the only one meant to touch on me. Unintended moan escapes my lips in his mouth. I have never had a man touch on me so good

“Hmmm Mooerrrr” fuck! We have a full house once again, an audience I don’t want to witness us like this. I feel like such a whore “You two should fuck already, I mean all this kissing and touching is not good for both your health, if you don’t fuck your both going to end bitter and acid” Seeiso, he doesn’t know when to shut up

“Please continue, don’t stop on our account” Puso, I thought he was the decent one. I didn’t think he has stupid moment

“Put me down” I whisper to the man holding me to his waist, I can’t fight his hold. And I really do need him to put me down. We have all the oldies in the room and this is very embarrassing.

“I can’t” his tone doesn’t match mine, I frown at him “I’m too horny unless you want them to see my erection” gasp

“Yoh! We’ll be outside” Mabereng exclaim already heading out with the others except the two brothers who are dead in laughter

“Do you two want to help me with my erection?” he questions his brothers, who both shake their heads no “THEN FUCK OUT OF HERE” only then they excuse themselves

“I hate you” I say when he puts me down

“It was that or they were going to see the effect you have on me when I put you down” he really is huge, there is even wet evidence of his precum plastered on his scrub pants. He forgot to change back to his clothes yesterday “You see what you do to me?” he grins looking down his arousal. I have never met a man so stupidly in love.

“Get dressed please” he laughs, stripping scrub top first. Fuck those arms, I’m drooling. Watch him tentatively put his shirt on but he doesn’t buckle up. He grabs my hand when I least expect it, puts them on his hard steely eight pack

“You can touch, it’s all yours” the amusement dancing his face is unbelievable. He looks at me daring me “Undress me” he points me his scrub pants

“The....family....is outside” my voice comes shallow, infected by all his doing to me

“No one will come in here, take me as you please” he has that voice that can make me do just about anything. He takes both my hands and place them at the hem of his scrub waist. Keeping his eyes directly fixed in mine. With a pounding heart I take my own pace, run my hands up his well-built torso. He smirks, taken by surprise. He feels like a steel, too firm. Slowly tracing one finger I trail back down his pelvic bone. His breath hitches when I hook his scrub with my index finger and peek inside. Seductively I grab both sides of his waist, gently play my way down his ribs “Fuck Iwandle just undress me already” he snaps, bringing me to laughter

“You said I should do as I please njena?”

“The offer is off” I laugh harder, watch him pull his pants down but my laughter is replaced with a huge gasp at the sight of the steel covered in his boxers “Where is that laughter now baby?” he winks, knowing exactly what he is doing to me

“GET DRESSED” It’s my time to snap. This is torture.

“Don’t eat me, I am getting dressed” with that smirk of his, he puts on his pants, button his shirt looking at me in muse “The day I fuck you hmmmmmm nc nc nc nc!” he narrows his eyes, inflicting his indecent imagination on me. I need a bathroom “I bet you do” the cockiness. It’s best I leave this room before he has me on this hospital bed.

Getting back home he took a day off to spend with the love of his life as he say. My daughter is one spoiled girl. He took her and little peete and locked himself with them in his room. I take this time to go consult with Moletsane about my problem. Passing by the lounge I find Mamajara and Mabereng sipping on some tea. The hidden smile behind the tea mugs are not that hidden. I can see they are laughing

at me. They are still amused about this morning events. I have been avoiding eye contact since then.

“Sgriza, is ntate Moletsane back?” I ask, looking down the tiled floor like there is something interesting on them. I have adopted everyone style of calling mabereng ‘sgriza’

“Yeah he is, but he can wait. Sit down” at the back of my head I can already tell what this is about “Make yourself some tea” she points me their tea pot but I shake my head no, I don’t want this to drag longer “Mabataung you do know that’s my grandson your starving” Mamajara laughs “What’s your problem?”

“Maaa” I gasp

She shakes her head “Don’t Maa me, mabataung it’s been what? Tlotla is turning three months soon but my grandson is steal playing dice game” this is embarrassing “Bua mabataung” (Speak....)

“Maa I just...he...I just need some time”

“Time to do what? You do know that you’ll not run from it forever right” with embarrassment I nod “He is a man with big appetite and big in all ways, the sooner you let him taste his meal, the sooner you’ll get used to him” can this end already

“The first time you do it make sure to call us, you’ll need us” okay that’s my cue

“Excuse me, I really need to go see ntate moletsane” they die in laughter

“Mabataung remember our talk when the time comes” I hear mamajara add. Such vile grannies!

One thing about Moletsane is that his surroundings alone demands respect. Upon my arrival I remember that my head is bare. I hold a little debate in my head contemplating for while whether to go back just for a doek or.....

“Come in mabataung” sigh! He almost startled me but thank God I don’t have to go back to the house. And how did he know I’m outside because his voice comes from inside the hut is still a mystery

“Dumela ntate moletsane” (Good morning.....) I greet, offering myself the vacant space before him. He doesn't respond, he has one of his sweet gentle smiles wearing him.

“I hear his queen gave you quite a busy night” he remarks, talking about Tlotla. He is never really told me why he calls her his queen. I guess now is the perfect time to also ask that.

“Why do you call her his queen ntate moletsane?” he minds his herbs, grind them mixing them together for god knows what

“All will be revealed soon mabataung, now tell me. To what do I owe the pleasure of being visited by you?”

“I missed you” I tease and he rewards me with this beautiful laughter

“Please say that in front of Majara” the name of the reason I'm here sinks my happy mood, he sees right through me “What has he done?” sigh!

“I can't really say he's done something but there is something happening to him. Something that unsettles me” he urges me to continue with a look “He and I haven't been okay for some time, I thought he was starting to have doubts about us but last night he confessed something to me. He said he's been keeping to himself because lately he sometimes has this urge to hurt me” he frowns

“How long has this been going on?” I shrug

“I'm not really sure of the duration but do you think he would really hurt me?” as much as I believe he wouldn't, 10% is still not at ease with discovering that he sometimes feels like unleashing Lupus on me

“You're his chosen, he would never put his hand on you. Even if he found you on bed with another man. He'd forgive you over and over again but the day he is had enough if being hurt by you, what he'd do is take his own life. You're his sole purpose for existence mabataung. Rest assured he'd never harm you in anyway. Unless oppressed by dark forces” thank God, I needed to hear that “But tell me about this sudden urge to harm you, where does he say the anger originate from?”

“I don't know ntate moletsane, that you'll have to ask himself” he nods but still creased with lines on his forehead

“Why hasn’t he said anything to me?” again I shrug, I used to think they are close and if they are as tight as thought, it’s surprising that he hasn’t said anything to him “You know now that you’re here, I haven’t heard majara’s mind in a while” more frown dress him, now turning to worry

“Do you always hear his mind?”

“No but to connect with Lupus I must. At least feel him when I listen carefully but now give me your hand mabataung” I do. Hand him my hand and he grabs it, closes his eyes looking up for a while mumbling to himself. He turns back to me with a frown “Something is definitely happening, all I see is darkness and that’s odd, I should see light through you but because you’re his light”

“What does it mean ntate moletsane?” the panic in my voice speaks volume

With a sigh he looks at me in pity “I don’t know ngwanaka but all I can say is brace yourself. It looks like storms are coming, but I’m sure you’ll both weather them” sigh! I hope so too but I’m afraid now I have enough reason to worry.

CHAPTER 28

The palace had gone to sleep like any other day. After dinner they retired in the lounge for some television time. And one by one people or two by two for the coupled they started disappearing to their restrooms when drowsiness took over their muscles. Moletsane is never one to sleep in the palace but tonight, after Lwandle's visit he decided on using his room inside the palace. He prefers his hut but today. Something is a bit amiss and unfortunately he hasn't had any vision to put his mind at ease.

Mabereng and Tlali were the first to leave the lounge. They don't usually even make it to 8 pm but everyone understands. They are old people and they need their sleep. Soon after them was the queen and king with baby tlotla and peete. Mamajara loves her grandchildren and she parent them more than being a grandmother. Most of the nights she sleeps with them unless she feels really tired. Soon after the king and queen, Seeiso followed with a dirty smile answering his phone call. Ora stands stretching her hands after a while

"Good people, good night. See you all tomorrow" some nods some mumble their good nights back. Now left in the lounge is Moletsane, Lwandle, puso and violet.

"Why aren't you going to sleep mabataung?" Moletsane asks, she should be in bed with her man but today she feels like treading going there. She just doesn't want to sleep next to him for no reason at all. And on top of everything she is been having quite weird scary dreams of lately.

"I wanted to watch this show, I love it" she lies, she doesn't want to come clean in front of Puso and Violet

"You know you're his drug, I'm sure he is impatiently waiting on you" Puso. Lwandle fakes a laughter but eventually decides to go to bed. Maybe she is just being paranoid because of her earlier talk with moletsane.

"Vio remember to wake early tomorrow, maa said we are going dress fitting" Lwandle reminds but receives a nod accompanied by an eye roll. Slowly she is starting to see what mabereng and mamajara were talking about. The girl is rude or hostile, she just isn't sure as yet but now is not the time to dwell on that "Good

night, let me go put my big baby to sleep” they all laugh as she walks out of the room. She makes her way to her bedroom with a pounding heart though she doesn’t know the real reason why.

Before opening the door she heaves a sigh and finally makes her way in. Majara is not in the room. For some reason she sighs. This means he doesn’t want to sleep tonight or he is still busy with his work in the study. But she doesn’t dare go look for him. She undress and make for bed after saying her prayers. Immediately after slipping through the covers, the door opens. He comes in dripping hot at always. Nothing on his bare chest, just his silk pj pants that looks like they were made just for him hanging deliciously around his waist.

“And finally you remember I need to sleep” he remarks, slipping behind her and spooning her. His lips kisses the nape of her neck before brings her tighter his chest “You’re tense today, what is going on?” he asks

“I don’t know, I just have this unsettling feeling I can’t exactly place” she honestly confess

“Maybe you’re still shaken about Tlotla” that might be it but.....

“Maybe you.....” she turns, about to talk at him but when she finds his eyes molten grey. The smoky grey that scares the shit out of her. Majara feels her stiffen in his hold.

“What’s wrong?”

“Your eyes”

“What about the....” He is interrupted, hearing something call on Lupus “Did you hear that?” she heard nothing, she looks at him confused “Someone is calling.....” he doesn’t finish, touch his head in pain like he just received a blow “RUNNN” he roars, feeling Lupus taking control. Lwandle is never been shaken by Lupus but today. She jumps to the door as Majara transforms on top of the bed but for some weird reason the door is locked. She is seen Lupus but what lies on her bed is not her lupus. Lupus is red eyed but the beast on the bed is grey black eyed.

Slowly the dark eyed wolf jumps down the bed, heading her way with spit of gloop dropping down it's mouth.

"HELPPPPPPPP" loudly she screams, alarming the entire palace "Abuti maraja....pleaseee" she begs, crying for her life "Lupus noooo" it's too late, the wolf is here, sharpening its teeth ready to feast on her. It growls twisting its neck and she knows this is the end. They say you'll die for what you love the most and this is her, taking her last breath for what she loves.

"AUUUUUUU" it howls, ready to feast but from outside she hears Moletsane's dominant voice plead to Lupus

"CANIS LUPUS, THE ALPHA, GRAY WOLF, THE RAREST BUT MOST FEARED BY ALL PACKS OF WOLVES. YOU ASKED FOR HER, QUENCH YOUR THIRST, ACKNOWLEDGE HER, BE ONE WITH HER. LET HER TAME YOU GRAY WOLF OF CANIS LUPUS. FIGHT EXTERNAL FORCES LUPUS. LOOK IN HER EYES, LOOK BEYOND THE RANGE CANIS, LOOK PAST THE DARKNESS, LOOK THROUGH HER LIGHT" like an animal scolded it retreat, cower back howling "MABATAUNG CALL HIM, CALL MAJARA TO FIGHT" moletsane's voice comes once again

"MOLAPO DON'T DO THIS TO ME PLEASE" Iwandle begs, with a faint voice "PLEASE COME BACK TO ME, COME BACK TO TLOTLA" the wolf hasn't changed but its eyes are changing colour

"OPEN THE DOOR MABATAUNG THE SPELL IS BREAKING OFF" Moletsane. As weak and shaky as she is, she stands pulls the door hard that feels like someone is also pulling to close "HARDER MBATAUNG" moletsane encourages, who also sounds like he is also pushing. Like a crack the door finally opens, pushing Iwandle back to the wall. The push from outside was stronger than hers. Puso, Seeiso and Moletsane were pushing against her. Mamajara is quick to squat to her touching on her ached head. Only now she gasps, break into a piercing cry in mamajara's arms. She is shaking like a leaf, even peed on herself.

All the male attends Lupus. Moletsane hits him with a lupus horn and he stills, stand four legged still but doesn't transform back to human.

"Majara fight son" Moletsane begs, repeatedly hitting him with is horn, it has never failed before "Ma...majara" his tone alarms everyone, the pain in it cannot be

missed "MAJARAA" he squats before lupus, crying before the wolf "Don't do this son please"

"What is happening?" ntate bereng ask

"He is giving up, he is turning himself in. Ending his existence" Mamajara abandons lwandle, everyone squats in front of the wolf

"Nooo, majara, juju, mjay....." multiple his family pleads but he can't come and look past what he did. This is where he puts an end to Lupus. Through Lupus' eyes he looks at the shaken crying lwandle on the floor one last time before he breaks the window and break free running wild like an animal he is. Mamajara's painful cry follow him but he doesn't dare stop. He is going to the one place that will end him.

CHAPTER 29

LWANDLE

I groan in frustration. Feeling light penetrate my drowsy eyes. There is nothing I hate like waking up before my body is satisfied of sleep. Jeerrr I feel ached, wonder what could have woken me up. My body feels sore, like I didn't sleep at all.

Finally giving into wakefulness I yawn, opening my eyes but I find myself in a room I'm not so familiar with, scanning the surroundings I make it to be Ora's room. How did I end up in Ora's room? As on cue she appears from her bathroom. Eye bags wearing her eyes like she didn't sleep like me.

"Mabataung" she greets. Her tone carrying pain I don't understand

"What happened?" I feel the need to ask, something is wrong "Why am I in your....." I trail off, coming to a halt as all comes back "WHERE IS HE?" I ask, kicking off the covers. Her eyes wears tears instead of replying me "ORATUWE?" I shout

"I'm sorry ausi lwa" she breaks. I don't want her sorries, I want my man.

I leave her room. Make my way to find anyone who will tell me where abuti majara is, I'm sure he came back. He is probably feeling guilty of what he almost did to me. Lucky for me it's breakfast time but he is not here, there is no face of Majara Molapo on this table. He probably left for work to avoid me.

"Where is he?" I ask, anyone. I'll greet after, now I need to see him first, something in me is just aching to hold his eyes, just see him I'll be perfectly fine. Silence wears the room, the atmosphere was already dead but now it's more than dead. People's eyes wear tears I don't understand "Maa where is he?" my attention turn to Mamajara. She doesn't reply, instead she shakes her head too with her mouth trembling in frown. She is fighting tears "Maaa?" I turn to Mabereng, hoping for a better reply but her eyes wear red, remnants colour of sadness after crying "Seeiso?" he shakes his head with tears making their way down "Pusssso" he doesn't even look at me. This feels like deja vu. That familiar pain once again, I have been through this pain and I can't say it hurts any less unfortunately. I have been through this pain and now it feels like it's multiplied. Like it stabs right at every pore of my skin, I feel my breathe tie in a knot before I allow numbness to take over.

Questioning my existence as a person. Why do I always have to have Molapo men and loose them all over again?

“Baby please sit down” I feel strong hands grab me from behind, pushing me to a vacant chair, before I fall to the floor “SOMEONE WATER PLEASE” ntate bereng snaps, my sight is too blurry to make pictures but I do hear commotion. A cold glass touch on my lips with liquid inside “Baby drink please” he begs, urging me to take a sip of water. As weak as I am I do, feel it water my dry veins as I swallow the water. With a blink tears fall my eyes, my eyes clear and I can make sight. Sitting on a table full of teary eyes “Hushhhh this too shall pass mabataung” he brushes on my back. I’m afraid I don’t want it to pass. I want to feel this pain for as long as I live. Feel this hollowness he left in me because it’s what I deserve. How can I lose him when we haven’t even had even a moment together? How can I lose him when I was just starting to warm up to him?

It hurts but why are they eating, why are they going with their normality as if we didn’t lose the one we loved

“Why...are..we eating?” at least I’m not eating, my pain doesn’t allow my oesophagus to get to work. I need him and I need him alive.

“Baby we must go on. We’ll never see him again” ntate bereng

“But ntate we haven’t even buried him, where is his body?” my voice comes in a pained whisper

“Baby he ended himself in Lupus form, we’ll never have a body. There is nothing to bury. All we have to do is accept that he is gone and move on”

“HE IS NOT DEAD” I shout pushing the chair off. I need a moment alone. I refuse to believe that he left me, he turned me into a widower once again. His mother is about to undress Peete’s weed next week and now she has to wear it again for him? I refuse to believe that he would be that selfish. At least if I didn’t matter that much to him, did he stop for second to think of his mother and his daughter? Will my daughter ever have a father in her life?

Unfortunately with every day that passes by without his appearance it feel more real that he is gone. It’s been a week since the eventful night and there is still

nothing from him. At first I thought he would come back, apologise for putting me through that pain but that day hasn't come. I'm still as sorrowful as I was that particular night. I don't know how to deal with the pain of losing him. At least with Peete I had Tlotla. But now I feel like I'm all alone in this pain, people are going on like nothing didn't happen.

A soft knock attracts my attention before the door opens. I don't even bother to reply lately, if you want to come in my room you come and do as you please. I'm just a statue staring into space. I don't know when last I had something to eat. I have seen doctors come and go in this room checking me for god knows what but it still hurts the same way.

I see it's Ora. Somehow I think she and I are the only ones hit by this pain the same way. This is her daily routine. Come sit next to me and cry before she goes starts her day and come back later to fill me in.

The wall clock above the television reports to be 04:30 am in the morning. She is early today and she is not in her pyjamas like she always is. She is wearing her shoeshoe dress, blanket wrapped around her shoulders. Reminding me of my fateful traditional wedding to the man who disappeared on me. The man who turned me to this rock that can't even sleep. Feeling the pain of his departure is what keeps me going, funny thing is that back then I use to wallow in suicidal attempts but now, I don't. I want to feel this pain through and through.

"It's Day nine today" she informs, starting her usual routine of keeping me with the outside world "Day nine since he left us" I love that her pain matches mine. Since I shut down she is never used the word death in the same sentence as him. To her he left like I do believe, he left us, he didn't die on us "We are undressing Maa today" the weeds, she is finally freeing from Peete's dark clothing but she might wear it again, for her other son "I wish you'd come back to us ausi Iwa. You're fading in front of our eyes and there is nothing we can do about it but I'll die trying. I may have not been there to experience your love with abuti Peete but I think he wouldn't want to see you shut down on his daughter too. And as for abuti majara, he would end his life all over again if he ever came back to find you like this" she touches my hand, brush on my pale skin "I have to go now, I'm on double duty today. Guarding the children and making sure all the important guest are served because Mama and nkgono will be at the river the entire day washing mama off

the dark cloud. Ausi Vio is still not helping with anything and now I miss you more than ever, I know if you were okay I would get away with just about anything. Disappear with no trace and no one would see because you were there. Making sure all goes to plan. The time we had with you was precious, it's the little things you did that made us fall in love with you. I'll see you tonight ausi waka. To tell you how today went" (.....my sister.....) with a blink her tears fall as she stands but she wipes them, sniff cleaning herself up before she leaves the room.

This is what Majara's love has left me like. An empty vessel sitting in the room staring into space. I hate that I have to pee or bath, if it was for me I would just sit on that bed until I die. My routine is just to pee and bath, I don't know when last I pooped because I can't stomach anything. Everything comes back except liquid hence why I pee this much.

Coming back from the bathroom I stumble on my shoe resulting in Tlotla's photo with abuti majara falling down. The frame crushes but the photo remains intact. Picking it up with a smile full of tears. I remember taking this. They were both asleep. I loved taking their pictures together. Looking at my little angel it stings in my heart that she lost three of her parents. First Peete, then abuti majara and now me? I know the pain of not having a parent, do I want that for my little girl? I catch a reflection of my sight in the mirror and I'm afraid I look just as dead. Why am I putting my daughter through this pain?

"FIGHT BABY" I hear the voice in my head, that familiar voice of a woman I don't know. I don't know her face but her voice always felt familiar in my life. Whenever I felt like giving up this voice always pulled me through "FIGHT BABY" fight? I'm fighting for my daughter, she can't grow orphaned like me.

"Ora" she jumps, startled in the kitchen. She is making tea with Tlotla strapped on her back, for a while she looks at me like she sees a ghost before she throws her arms around me. Hugging me too tight

"Ausi Iwa, oh thank god" she says in relief, Palesa stops at the door coming in, staring at me too

"Where is Peete, why are you carrying this one?" she smiles

“Peete is a nice boy, he is playing in a cot but not Tlotla. You know the princess here loves hands” that she does, that’s my daughter for you. She is used to hands so much.

“Give her to me” I’m already unstrapping her, my cute baby falls in my arms where she belong, smile at me like she sees that I had deserted her “What has she been eating?” I ask, looking at my now fat baby girl

“This is nkgono’s baby, she eats just about anything” (.....granny’s baby.....) I smile, strapping my baby on my back

“Where can I help?” I ask, looking around the messy table

“Thank you for coming back mabataung” Palesa say, finally walking in. In her I have realised that I have also made a friend.

Ora, Palesa and I retire in the lounge in exhaustion after cleaning the house. It was a busy day but we made it. I don’t know how things work but Ora told me that everyone left with Mabereng and Mamajara to the river this morning. Apparently in their tradition they will only come back late in the afternoon when all the guest have left. If I didn’t pull through I wonder if this two would have made it. Two babies and serving guest is not child’s play.

“I need wine” Ora, worn by fatigue

“Me too but we have to bath the babies first” I add, exhausted as hell. They both look at me in question and I know what they are asking “Tlotla is no longer breast feeding. Whatever she is been eating, I’m keeping her on that, she is too fat anyway, she will finish me off” they laugh

“I’ll get that wine, we’ll bribe Say and pupu to bath them” Palesa announces already on her feet. This one loves booze way too much. Within a minute she comes back with a bottle of Pinot Noir. Already popped open drinking straight from the bottle. She knows her wine.

“Where are the glasses?” Ora asks when she is handed the bottle

“You’ll wash them?” she questions Ora who takes a long sip and pass to me. We enjoy two to three rounds of our wine before the door opens and Seeiso walks to

the lounge, he stops on his tracks same as Puso behind him. Both keep their eyes at me. The oldies all walk in too and die on the track too, in disbelief.

“Wine anyone?” Ora asks?

“Food first please” Mamajara announces retiring next to me pushing Ora “Thank you” she whisper, appreciatively brushing on my back. I smile back, thankful to be back to the land of the living

“Can you all not get drunk please” Moletsane admonishes

“We deserve to get drunk please Moletsane. I’ll have my scotch and we’ll make sure you have your water” we all laugh, I have been told that he is the only sober being in this house, he doesn’t drink.

“Palesa?” Mabereng calls on palesa who is enjoying her wine like she is not supposed to dish for this people

“Nkgono I’m tired tuuuu. Please get that other ausi to dish for you, we have been on our feet since morning” (Granny.....) the other ausi is Vio, that girl is just too closed shame. She is here but one would swear she isn’t.

“Where is she?” Puso asks, not pleased at all. I think even he himself is starting to see that his wife is isolating herself

“In her room” Palesa, wine drunk. She gets drunk quickly this one.

Puso tries to stand but I stop him “Puso sit down, let the girl be. We’ll dish for you guys” Ora and Palesa complains but do come help me “I’ll ask her to bath the children at least” I tell, my complaining companions, they complain of her not doing anything. I think bathing babies should be enough for her since we are all tired.

“And you’ll serve the princess yourself. There is no way in hell I’m going to serve a woman who keeps herself locked in her room like this isn’t her in law’s house” Palesa, mouthful because of wine. I hope violet comes to her senses soon or else she will be hated for no reason at all.

CHAPTER 30

LWANDLE

~ “My Lupus” silence, I feel his presence but I can’t see him anywhere. All I see is this mountain that feels like it’s shading me from reaching to him. I feel him close but I can’t seem to locate him. I’m in my short silk night dress, barefooted. I don’t know how I got here but I know I’m looking for the one who keeps my heart “Molapo?!!!” I call out again, turning around hoping to spot him emerge from somewhere here

“He is going to end his life if you don’t find him” Peete’s voice comes from above, I try to look but piercing sunshine blocks my eyes “He hates himself for putting his hands on you”

“It wasn’t him, it wasn’t him” my knees fail me, I fall to the dusty red soil crying for my man “Please help me, it wasn’t him” I beg, watching my tears fall to dust begging for my soul to be safe

“He doesn’t know that, he wants to end his existence because he feels like he failed you”

“Pee please help me find him, I’m nothing without him” I admit, how deep I feel for that man “he is my knight, monstrous but he is my knight in monstrous amour” I’m begging to my knees crying, crying for pee to help me and just when I feel like he is not going to, I see white shoes on dusty ground. Raising my blurred vision to the man in shoes I find Peete smiling. He gives me his hand helping me up.

“You belong with him and your connected to him, go find him before is too late”

“How? Where do I find him?” he smiles

“They know where he is” I freeze, furious at ‘they’ I know who is ‘they’ “Go get him, only you can pull him through in that state, he has given up”

“Thank you” my tone is accompanied by tears

“I told you I’ll look out for you. Go find your soul. And Mabataung, when you get here listen to your heart, you’ll know how to get to him”

“Here where?” he smiles, disappearing before my eyes

“Here Mabataung” his disappeared

“Peeteee?!” I call out, loud on top of my lungs wanting him to come back

“Peee.....~

“Mabataung, mabataung” repeatedly I wake to Ora waking me up, I’m dressed in sweat as all thoughts comes back. I was dreaming “You kept calling abuti Peete ausi Lwa, are you okay” fuck this family, I kick of the duvet, furiously march out of the door for answers, they are going to give me my answers “AUSI LWA?!” Ora calls out with panic as I get to the elevator, it closes before she reach me. The two minutes elevator trip suddenly feels like a life time today. I want him and they are going to give him to me.

“WHERE IS HE?” I roar, finally reaching the full breakfast table

“Mabataung you’re not dressed, your...” I don’t give a fuck about my clothing right now

“I SAID WHERE IS HE?” I bang the table, surprised at how furious I am. They borrow each other stares but don’t reply me “You all listen to me and listen carefully. I know you know where is he and you’re going to take me to him or else I’m walking out of that door with my daughter and I’m never coming back” I sigh, hoping my threat cements how serious I am to them

“He is at the mountains, ending his existence” Ntate bereng informs, not able to even spare me a look

“And you all knew and let me go through that pain thinking he is already dead?”

“Mabataung we were trying to protect you. He went rogue, into the wild animal he is and there was no way of taming him. So we protected our own, which is you. We gave Lupus up, just to have you safe” Moletsane tries to reason

“I don’t want to be safe. I want Lupus. I want my Lupus because through him, lives the man I love. YOU, YOU let’s go, your taking me to him” I point Seeiso and Puso

“NO NO NO ausi lwa I understand your mad but there is no way in hell I’m putting my foot in that place” Seeiso

“Then I guess you’re ready to bury another brother, Puso?” he stands with a sigh, glare at Seeiso who finally gives up and stands. I can’t believe this people have known that he isn’t dead as yet but made me believe he is.

The ride is long but with every shallow beat of his heart I feel I soldier on. I still have hope that he lives and he is okay. I’ll find him. I convince myself.

“How far are we?” I don’t know how long I have been asking that, they are pissed I’m sure but I don’t care, I want my Lupus, I want my man.

“We are actually here” Puso is the one driving, the car comes to a halt just by the road. Thick forest grow parallel beside the road. Seeiso comes to open my door and takes off his shoes and jacket.

“At least put this on” I don’t fight, I’m in just my sleeping garment and I have no shoes. His sneakers don’t fit, they are too big “You look like a cartoon character” we all smile but it doesn’t reach the far end, I’m still mad at them “You really do love that beast don’t you?” I nod, with a pained smile

“Ausi Lwa this is as far as we go, we can’t come with you. You do understand that right?” I nod to Puso “We carry royal blood and passing this forest would be like inviting evil to us” I do understand. Moletsane explained before we left. He gives me a thin piece of stick “Chew this and spit along the way, don’t swallow” I nod “Repeatedly keeping talking what you want to happen, ask him to hold on, connect with him while you chew on this stick until you can finally reach him” I nod, smile at them before I take the path to the forest. They both stand consumed by sorrow.

“Please look after my.....” Seeiso is quick to cut me

“You’re coming back, both of you are coming back to raise her together” I smile, wave one last time before the forest darkness consume me. Any other day I would be shaken as hell but not today. Today there is a little spark of flame burning in my heart, I follow the direction of where I feel my fuel is, to ignite more fire in me. As instructed I don’t focus on the shivers of the forest, I chew and spit the stick asking him to hold on, I’m coming for him.

Just when I thought darkness will not end I see bright flashes of light through the dark forest. With a deep sigh I quicken my steps, following the direction of light and

it leads me to the end of the forest. Behind me is a forest and ahead is a mountain a bit distant. The rest of the land is dusty red. Shows no presence of life. This place looks familiar, like I have been here before.....then it hits me, my dream. Pee and I were here in that dream. His words come back again.

“When you get here listen to your heart, you’ll know how to get to him” this is what he meant. The last bite of my stick finished when I took my last step outside the dark forest, meaning now I have to listen to my heart. I stand frozen for a moment, inspecting my surroundings for anything.

“My Lupus, show yourself to me my shield” I mumble, looking around for any sign “Fight for him Lupus, don’t let him give in. we need him” I continue my plea mumble, looking around until I hear his loud growl break from the mountain

“AUUUUUUU” it sounds a bit far but I hear it, from the mountain. I look up and thank Peete if he is watching, abandon Puso’s coat and shoes right there, they suddenly feel so heavy because I’m preparing to run, run for my life to save my soul.

I didn’t know I could Caster Semenya like that, finally reaching the mountain I’m panting. Holding on my knees to catch some breath before I climb the mountain. I’m going back home with him.

“WHO ARE YOU?” I’m startled. Rising from panting I find a beautiful woman, tall and long in every way just wearing short animal skin dress covering just her boobies and private part standing before me. She has a walking stick taller than her in hand. Where did she appear from? I can’t seem to find the answer, I stand frozen, mesmerised by her presence. She is feels powerful “Lupus’ mate, his chosen” she breaks into a smile “Let’s go before it’s too late” I trust her, I don’t need to question her, her presence is pure and unique. From the mountain she shift a large rock and it opens a hall cave, dark but not frightening. Stepping inside the cave as I follow her it feels like a change, like it’s suddenly the wee hour of the morning

“This is the mountain of time, time in here is different from the outside world” she explains as I follow behind her leading me “I’m the wolverine, I’m sure you have heard about me” I have but it wasn’t all pleasant, she chuckles, still walking ahead of me “He hates me because he doesn’t understand how much our existence

depends on him. He is the last to resurrect the house of wolves and he doesn't want to take on the task. So I'm a bit hard with him because I need him to understand his task"

"So you're just strict, you don't hate him"

"Yes, and I'm strict for a reason. He is the last male of our kind, planting his seed in you could mean a whole new beginning us. The family of canis lupus could resurrect through the both of you" she turns to me and stand before what looks like another rock door "You understand that right?" I nod

"Then help him do right" she pushes the large rock again and gesture for me to get in "His in there, go save him and resurrect the house of wolves" nervously I walk in the cave, what I see before me shatters me. Lupus winces, growls in so much pain at my sight.

"Auuuuuu" that howl sounds like a cat cry, how could he do this? I crouch to the cage, getting my hand inside the cage just to brush on his pained body "Auuuu" it howls weakly again as I touch on it. His chained in a small cage. Sharp multiple metal sticks stabbed all over him, he is covered in blood everywhere. It pains my heart to see him in this form, my Lupus is no weakling, he is my beast and I need him to be one. Calling on abuti majara to fight for him will give Lupus strength. I know they hold each other's strength.

"Molapo, I know you're in there somewhere. I need you to fight baby. Fight to come back to me. If you don't come back to me this instant, I'm going to take my life and Tlotla's" I feel his range, Lupus red eyes look at me with that fear that doesn't scare me anymore "I'm taking her life and mine if I lose you" I cement, making sure he understands his importance to me. Weakly it stands, too huge for the small cage but he growls from deep within, scaring me in the process. The cage breaks like it was made of wood, sharp metals stabbing him freely fall out of his body. With another deep growl he twist his neck, looking up as his wounds close up from where the sharp metal had stabbed him. I love my beast. I jump on his neck touching all over him as he transforms back to my mighty Lupus I love. When his tongue lick long and hard at the side of my neck I know that he is back "Come back to me Molapo" tightly I hug him from behind, hold him in place as he trembles transforming back to human, to my man.

I hold him tight feeling his damp skin on me, breath to breath we take in silence. The more I listen the more I feel his pain. It pains him that he almost touched me like that. Nothing has been clarified to me but I know in that dream I kept repeating that it wasn't him. I believe it wasn't him, things are yet to be revealed but I know my heart doesn't believe he would even put a finger on me.

"I'm sorry rato laka" (...my love) his voice alone makes me happy, I plant a sweet long peck at his bare back as we sit "I don't know if I'll ever forgive myself. Death is punishment for what I did"

"Molapo I love you" he stiffens in my hold

"I'm a monster lwandle"

"My monster and I wouldn't have you any other way"

"What are you saying?"

"I'm saying let's go home and raise our baby and make more while at it" the feel of his body shaking in my hold confirms that he is laughing. Finally he turns to me. I feel like I love him more, I cup his face and caress his lips like he always do me "It wasn't you baby, that Mapuso's daughter you feasted on tainted your blood. Your blood is mixed with dark magic and it was them controlling you with dark magic. It wasn't you rato laka. I know you'd never touch me like that, your life goal is to protect me, not harm me" we both frown together, I, surprised of how I know that and him, I guess surprised of the revelation

"How do you know that?" I shrug because I really don't know "They are going to pay"

"Dearly and I want you to make them scream" he drinks me in, serves me that look of his that always makes me want to spread my legs

"Maybe it's about time you spread this beautiful legs" he captures me in a sweat kiss, running his big hands all over me. His touch on me wakes foreign things in me, I get lost in the kiss, touch him back all over. My hand slips between us, when I touch on his steely member he abruptly stops. Quickly stand stepping away from me. I can see his heart pound breath by breath, mine long joined in the rhythm. I

hear his mind, I feel what he wants and I want it too. With distance between us we both stand, panting and undressing each other with just looks.

CHAPTER 31

That feeling again, that exhilarating feeling that makes every fibre in me itch to rip his clothing apart. It happens mostly when we are in confined spaces. For some unexplainable reason, there is a certain flame that just want to ignite when we are in enclosed spaces, the charge just becomes too much to bare. The first episode was at the back seat of the car, with Seeiso driving for us. We couldn't keep our hands to ourselves, all we did was touch and kiss like never before. If it wasn't for palesa being milkshake drunk I still wonder what could have happened because Seeiso was enjoying the show and I'm adamant he wouldn't have stopped us. The second episode was his office elevator, the effect he has on me had me pulling the hems of his coat collar at me, I wanted to feel all of him and he gave me just that. His hands touched anywhere he felt like touching but then again the elevator opened and ceased all our horny acts.

"The elevator was my undoing, I wanted to rip you apart" I swallow, biting on my lower lip looking down. The look he has in his eyes is dressed with need. Thirsty and hungry for me just as much as I'm also craving for him "Damn right I want to feel you babe, lord knows I have held myself long enough" I still forget that he reads my mind and I still haven't found a way to keep my thoughts a bit lower

"Abuti majara stay where you are" I beg, cowering back. Electricity charging between us in this cave at this moment is enough to accelerate my pounding heart, I can't bring my eyes to look in his because he is going to take me with and I'll lose control like I always do with him. I have never thought I would meet a man who turns me on by just staring at me, he has different looks for me and this one right here I can't see it as yet but I can feel the need in his look, the panty combusting look has me drenching my underwear with every breath I take. I feel so familiar to his look so much that I feel like we have made love before but he's never penetrated me.

"We have love but today I need to taste it myself" all my south muscle clench at his words, I steal a glance at his steely member and squirm, wondering how something so firm and huge is going to fill up in me "It's cold mabataung, come, let me keep you warm" I hit the cold wall, restricted, with nowhere to go "This cave is going to get much colder when dawn breaks, come allow me to warm you please love" I'm

already freezing, lightly shivering from cold and nervousness. I'm both horny and scared.

"You're naked" I state the obvious, trying my best to look the other way other than his steely member, it looks hard solid like a rock

"And your cold, etla love" (.....come) with one stride his at me, keeping his eyes down at me. Just his proximity alone has me panting with need. The atmosphere between us is dressed with sexual desire "Have you healed?" I swallow hard, looking down at his question, I have but.... "Good, I wouldn't want to send you back to stitching again" I gasp looking up at him now. I find his dark eyes intently fixed at me, desire dancing all over him. I'm quick to drop mine biting on my lip but he brings my face up, caress my lips as he cups my face "You're. So. Beautiful. My. Love" he murmur, each word already undoing me and combusting me with the same need as his. He pulls me closer, positioning me on top of his feet. He looks at me like I'm his muse, something he holds so dear in his heart. His other hand drops to my waist, the feel of its slow south wards trail movement has me shivering. He brings me closer to him, grinding my tiny body to his bulky warm body. His other hand cups my face, maintaining that panty combusting look of his while the other hand choose to caress my ass covered in my short silky night dress. He pecks my lips like a thief stealing a kiss, momentarily close his eyes like he just had his first drink after a marathon "Your my drug baby and today I seek permission to make love to you" he whisper in my ear, gently caressing my behind and cupping my face like pure gold "Please" the need in his plea cannot be missed.

I nod, looking down but he brings my face up again with his index finger beneath my chin, content smile wearing him "I need your audible approval" I can feel his leaking steel pushing on my stomach, already oozing precum. I want to feel it more, feel how he buries it inside me. I'm already drenched as it is.

"I'm ready" his smile is triumphant, a content kiss lands on my forehead, it lingers for a moment. Both his great size hands drop to my waist, cupping both side of my waist like he holds his world. I feel like I fit in his hold like a glove, perfect size for him.

"Do you have any idea what you do to me woman?" I'm shallow, quaking at the change in his eyes, the darkness is transforming to red. Lupus red though he still stands humanly tall "I'll not hurt you" I believe him. With one hand he picks me to

his waist, position me to coil my legs around his waist while he blaze me with Lupus eyes “But I’m afraid I’m going to fuck you sweetheart” the promise in his words clenches my deepest darkest muscles, I’m hypnotized by his red eyes fervently fixed at mine and ready for whatever lies ahead

Leaning to my face he kisses me again, the kiss starts off slow and demanding, firmly taking control like a control freak he is. I get lost in the way he takes my lips, find myself kissing him back with the same effort, running my hands all over his warm firm muscles. He trails wet kisses to my ear-my neck-my shoulder-my neck again-my jaw-my chin and back to my lips. His one hand holds me tight against the cold cave wall, the other one cups and squeezes my boob through my silky material.

I moan in his mouth, lost in the kiss “hmmm.....please” I beg

“What do you want love” Victorious he asks through the kiss, knowing exactly what I’m crying for

“I want you....all of you” my words are laboured in need. Panting to feel his steel rip me apart. The sound of a tearing material releases me from the kiss, I pant looking at his transformed nails rip my silk nightdress into a jacket. Seductively he slowly cut into my nightdress like a scissor cut all the way down staring in my eyes, the promise in his eyes informs me that he is going to rip me apart just like my dress. I feel my inner walls contract and expand, releasing its own breath ready to feel him deep inside me. My nightie has turned into a jacket, lupus long fingers hooks the rest of my night dress cloth to the floor “Fuck your beautiful” he appreciate glaring at my now freed boobies, he takes full advantage of my exposed boobies, cup the other one while he sucks on the other one like a hungry dog. He blows lightly on my wet nipple, rolling my enlarged nipple with his thumb while he continues to gently squeeze the other one. I groan, feeling the sweetest sensation travel all the way down to my sex.

“Oh....Molapo” I beg, wanting him to find my release

“I need you wet mama” he whisper, continuing his assault on my boobies. Finally his mouth worships my nipple once again. The feel of his wet tongue tentatively sucking and playing with my nipple has me stiffening, his teeth teases around my nipple while his thumb and finger pulls hard on my other nipple. I feel myself convulsing and shattering into fine pieces “Let go baby” his words are my undoing,

with just nipple play I cum hard, feel myself release my juices all over his waist. I have never felt anything like this. I tremble for a while in his hold as I finally wear off my first nipple cum I find him worn in satisfaction, staring at me like a mystery “Your deliciously wet, just the way I want you” his huge hand cups my wet sex, I feel him pull my undies to the side, touch on my pulsating clitoris while he keeps his red eyes at me. He hisses at the beat of my vibrating clit “Mangcobo fuck” my underwear tears from beneath, remain on my waist like a belt. I feel his long finger gently push inside me.

“Aaaaah.....baby” his fingers feel so nice, he gently circles them inside my cunt

“Kekopa ho kena love” (Can I please come in my love?) his speech is drowned in need, need to feel on me

“Come in my love” He’s suddenly worn in uncontrollable need, reaching for his steely member already oozing with pre-cum, I feel him nicely position him on my entrance but I remember “Molapo....condom” my voice comes as a cry, a cry for need. We are inside a freaking cave for crying out loud but here I am thinking condoms. He plays with his steely member for a while, sliding him up and down my wet sex, that action alone makes my walls want to grip on him. He is not fucking me yet but his eyes are already in the deeds, fucking me with just his stare on me.

“I gave Tlotla blood not so long ago, you know I’m clean” he circles his head on my cunt, driving me sexually insane “Hmmm?” he murmur in my ear

“Pregnancy....” I can’t seem to finish my sentences, he circles me so delicious

“I’m a wolf sweetheart, I only breed between January and April” I nod, pushing the information back for another day, now I want him in, I’m panting for him and he waste no time, slams into me hard when I least expect it

“Aaargh!” I cry, feeling a deep pinching sensation inside me that compels me to close my eyes

“I need to see your eyes mabataung” he cups my face, wipes both my cheeks with his thumbs “It will get better my love” a peck land on my nose “Now I need you relax so I can put him all in”

“Baby no” I beg, I want it but this is too much, it feels like someone is ripping my virginity two times the pain.

“You’ll expand my baby” he hold both side of my butt cheeks, open me up and slowly he buries his steel deeper in me. I feel full, overwhelmed of him inside me “You’re too tight my love, you okay?” weakly I nod “One last time” just as I take his words he pulls out and quickly slams all of it back in.

“Aaaaaargh” I cry out loud. He stills, lightly trembles buried deep inside me. Lupus growl breaks from deep down his throat. I feel him hold me tighter trembling.

“Auuuuuuu!” he howls, throwing his head up as he echoes the cave with his cry. The feel of his strong arms in my hold suddenly feels hairy. His shoulders broadens, fur shoots all over his skin, his grip holding my butt feels tighter, sharp ends of his nails digging in my skin. He just transformed, to Lupus. But he stands human, pinning me tight against the wall. I feel something rip deep inside me as he eases further in my sex with exquisite gentleness, his tail coil between our groins, clinging me closer to him, the fur of his tail teases my spine bringing me to shiver in his hold.

“My Lup....” I’m unable to finish my moan, his long tongue licks the side of my neck as he thrust into me. He thrust slowly at first, easing his dick further in me that feels like it changed shape, it suddenly feels like it’s C shaped, hooking my cunt for dear life. Gently and tenderly in and out of me he moves. Allowing my walls to slowly become acquainted of the alien feeling, the feeling of his huge C shaped dick buried deep in my sex. As my walls relaxes, I push my sex further to his to do as he please. He picks his speed, pounds in me like an animal he is. I moan, hit by his merciless pounds. Another deep growl escapes his throat, trembles as he continues to pound in me. He transforms back to human in my hold, his eyes still remain red. And Lupus tail wrapping us together remain coiled around us. The rhythm of his thrust speeds up, he finds my face, kisses the shit out of me as he pounds deep inside me. With one deep thrust he hits my g spot, hooking something inside me with his C shaped dick. Immediately I stiffen, feel myself build up as he repeatedly thrust on it. My body quivers, I coil like a snake as the foreign feeling travels all the way to my toe. It feels ecstatic, I didn’t know it would feel this amazing.

“Let go” his words come as a sweet command in my ear, unfastening me and I breathlessly explode around him as I climax into small fragment pieces of his love “FUCK” he curses, thrusting deeper inside me as he find his own release “AUUUUUUU” this one almost frighten me, he growls deep as he empties all in me, stills trembling all over. My legs keep trembling around his waist too as we ride our

wave. That was astounding. His face finds mine, he takes mine with and pecks my lips "Thank you" I'm too weak to respond, I'm still panting, trying to slow my thumping heart. He keeps his forehead with mine, delicately hold me for a while "I want more" his tone is covered in need, his dark eyes carrying more hunger "That was a warm up" he pant still buried inside me, I feel him remain thick hard inside me.

"Let's try again tomorrow" I weakly suggest because I don't think I can take more. He doesn't fight me, he pecks my shiny nose before he pulls out of me "Aaaaah" I wince, at the sting left by his steel

"Did I hurt you" he asks staring at me, I'm not sure but I think so, he looks at our intersections and curses "FUCK" I know, I don't even want to look myself, I felt the rip but the pleasure over took the pain in that moment. He sinks us to the floor, with me still wrapped around him, guilt wearing him "I'm sorry, I got lost" I find his lips, wrap my arms around his neck as I take my own kiss to ease him off the guilt

"It will expand" using his own words against him brings a bit of smile at him "That was amazing Molapo, I want more of it" he raises an eyebrow in question, surprised of my take

"And I want more but I'm afraid im going to tear you fur....." he stops meet way, twist his neck looking up "They are here?" his eyes turn back to red, teeth sharpen, fur starts growing back on him as he pushes me behind him and kneel readying for Lupus form

"Who?"

"The witches" he transforms before me, turning back to Lupus "No one is going to touch you" those are his last words before he takes lupus form, pushing me behind him as he growls sharpening his teeth staring at the dark entrance of the cave. The lady from earlier emerges from the dark entrance. Hit her stick hard on the ground and visible blanket shades the entrance. She crouches to Lupus, brush on it.

"Get her the hell out of here, they are here for her" she advices, continually brushing on Lupus

"Why me?" I ask in panic. She comes to me, touch on my hand with a smile

“It’s not just a coincidence that you are Lupus’ chosen, your of the high power. Of the pure blood. If you had read that letter you’d know” what letter? I’m confused. She picks me and puts me on Lupus back “I have dealt with witches more powerful than this, go home and heal. He dealt with you didn’t he” I hate her last comment but we do smile at each other “We’ll meet again”

“I bet we will” I hiss

“Ride your wolf and get the hell out of my mountain” she winks and turn back to the entrance, only now I see Angeline leading a coven of naked witches, Mapuso also among them

“Let’s go my Lupus” I whisper in his big ears, wrap tight around his neck and he climbs out of the cave from the back. His nails climbing from rock to rock until we make it outside. Like a wild animal he is he runs, run more like flying with me naked on top of him. The feeling is priceless. I feel like I’m in another life, the touch of wind hitting my nostrils and caressing my skin as I ride Lupus for life, leaves me worn in goose bumps. This is the real life, wild and adventurous but I want more.

In a minute he makes it to the forest, pick Seeiso jacket I deserted with his teeth and pass it to me on top of him. It’s getting dark and I guess he want to cover me up. I wear the coat back, wrap around him again as he flies us back home. I have my man and my Lupus back.

CHAPTER 32

LWANDLE

Time outside the mountain is really different from the outside world. Reaching home the sun is setting to the sky, beautifully marrying into darkness. I have never rode a horse before but I have a feeling it's not as magical as riding my Lupus. I see he has his own gates, not taking the front gate to attract audience he takes the small gate at the back yard I have never seen until today. I feel his tail brush on my bare thighs as he slows his paces, now walking to the palace instead of running.

"I love you too and thank you for coming back with me" I confess, kissing his hairy neck I'm gluing like chew gum on hair. From the veranda I see people standing in horror. It's the oldies only. Mamajara's wine shatter to the ground when we stand before them, I see they were enjoying the afternoon sun.

"Mabataung?!" Moletsane calls in disbelief, taking slow baby steps to us. One by one they join to surround us in shock. Ntate bereng is in tears, tears of joy I think.

"Mabataung what are you doing to us?" he asks, brushing on Lupus

"Let's get you in the house" Mamajara touches me trying to help me off Lupus but I shake my head no, she frowns "Keng?" (What is it?) I really can't say, not in front of this old men

"It happened" I tell in codes, looking in her eyes for her to get me, she frowns further

"What happened?" sigh

Turning to mabereng "That thing you said to call you when it happens, it happened" I confess again, she is lost too

"Mabataung what are you saying?" Jesus! Why do I always have to be in this kind of embarrassment?

"Molapo come back to me, I know you're doing this on purpose" I talk to my Lupus because, I don't know why he isn't transforming back to human so he carry me to the house. I can't walk.

“Mabataung what’s wrong?” mamajara now asks in worry

“I can’t get off him”

“Why?” Jesus! How do I say we just fucked and I can’t walk in front of old people, if the men weren’t here I wouldn’t mind

“That situation you once asked me to call you when it happens it happened and now I have a situations down town” finally I thinks she gets me, she laughs out loud

“keng?” (What is it?) mabereng asks

“Majara o jele torofeile” (Majara ate the spikey fruit) mabereng gasp, quickly touches on the man chasing them

“Excuse us please, we’ll call you.....”

“But.....”

“But nothing Tlali, please leave us alone” she is in pure joy chasing the old men. Finally I can breathe but this is embarrassing “Oh poor thing” she hiss on my behalf, gently taking my hand while mamajara brings the other foot stretched to Lupus’ other side to joins the other one. Gently I fall off Lupus and only now the stinging escalates. On top of Lupus white fur where I had sat straddling him blood decorates. Fuck!

“Yerrrrrr!” mamajara winces for me, staring at Lupus’ back “Go clean-up” she whispers to him and he disappears around the house running “Let’s get you cleaned up too” gently they walk me to the house, giggling every step of the way “Mara le wena mabataung? What happened to romance? Flowers, chocolates and berries? Giving it up for the first time in the veld? Hmmm” mabereng is having me for a laughter “You really are Lupus’s wife” they join in on laughter, I also do but it stings like hell “Let’s take the elevator, I’m sure the stairs will tear you further” I allow them to have for a laughter. Next time I starve this son of theirs they will be complaining on me.

“Milk?” I ask, walking into a bathroom with a tub filled with milk. They asked me to sit down and called the herd boys to bring two twenty litres of milk. I didn’t think

they were preparing a milk tub “Is it cold milk” I ask feeling the milk first but it’s warm

“No, the first 20 litres was boiled milk. Get in. This will help with the stinging and make you heal faster down there. By tomorrow you’ll be craving for him again” to be honest I’m already craving for him, it stings but there is that sweet painful pleasure I can’t really explain.

“Am I going to bath with milk every time we make laugh?” the have me for laughter once again

“No, just for the first time. It will make you expand and swallow all of him” the freaky mother in law I have

“How do you know all this?” she laughs before she replies me

“Majara inherited this from my family. My mother passed the wisdom to me to pass on to my son’s wife” hmk,

“Am allowed to take a shower after this right?” she nods. Milk bath is nice but a.a I need water to clean up.

“Mabataung you should start shopping for lubricants, that thing is an animal, there is no catching breath with him. The engine is always ready to function” shit I choke, looking anywhere but her “Don’t be embarrassed baby, I’m telling you what you should know”

“Am I always going to bleed like that” she shakes her head

“We put a herb called Monontsha in this milk, it will help you expand and take him all in” I hope that monono what what herb works. I have never felt something so painful but yet so pleasurable at the same time, it felt like pain and pleasure go hand in hand with him.

“Hmmmmmmm” deep clearing of his throat makes us turn to the door. He stands deliciously tall holding Tlotla to his chest. Both oldies fly to him and squash him, touching where they feel like touching. He winks down at me in a bath full of milk “Can I breathe, please” Mamajara is crying. He wipes her tears and kiss her forehead “Husssh now olady, I’m back and I’m never leaving” (.....mother.....)

“Don’t ever do that to us again Majara, we had to give up because... ”

“Hussssshhh, it’s all over now. Can you both excuse me now? I need a moment with my girl alone” I break into goose bumps, his way of loving me has me wrapped at every word he spits.

“Majara don’t tear her apart again, give her at least a night to heal”

“MAAA!” he exclaim, in shock. We all die in laughter at his expression

“That’s my daughter in law, who rode lupus to bring you home. Don’t maa me”
more laughter

“Nka, get out of here” (Take.....) he tries to hand her Tlotla but baby girl refuses, she cries clinging on her father’s chest “Aaaa my ocean I’m not going anywhere” he tries to reason with Tlotla who totally refuse to let him go. He gives up and kisses her all over. The two woman leave the room. Now only the three of us remain in the bathroom. He stands for a while looking at me in gratitude.

“What?” I ask, enjoying my milk bath

“I never really understood the say that says ‘Dynamites comes in small packages’ but now I do, through you is see my tiny tiny wife but my tiny wife who’d burn the world to have me”

“I love you Molapo. I told you I’m not going anywhere”

“I have one last plea to you” he squats to my tub, pecking my lips in the most gentle way

“I’m listening”

“Let’s go wrap your life in SA and set a date for our white wedding” I flush, grab his white t shirt and smash my lips on his ‘Nyweeeeeeeee’ Tlotla breaks into a cry, shocking both of us when she stops when we break the kiss “Mangcobo find yourself your own man, someone is not sharing today” hmk! My own daughter is showing me flames. He steals a quick peck on my forehead and say “Let me go bribe her, don’t move from that tub” I just smile, watch him walk out with my daughter, no scratch that, our daughter. I love how much I have grown since he came into my life.

Few minutes later I open my eyes still in my milk bath, this thing is really soothing. His standing by the door staring at me once again. Oh I love this creature.

“What happened to the love of your life?” I ask of Tlotla

“Drama queen, she loves men that one and we confuse her. Between Puso, Seeiso and I she doesn’t know whose arms she loves best” we laugh “Mind if I join you?” I don’t like that expression on his face but I don’t mind either

“Feel free ntate molapo” he smirks, strips out of his sweatpants and shirt then climb behind me. Addition of his heavy body causes water to rise as he sits. He pulls me to his chest, making his steely member feel on my back. His legs rest between mine, opening me up to the milk. His taking control of my bath like he always do. I feel his nose on my neck, inhaling me.

“You reek of milk Mangcobo” I roll my eyes, aware that he doesn’t see me because he is behind “Let’s see if you’ll still roll those eyes when I’m done with you” he whisper in my ear, cupping my boobies and I gasp. His hands has a field day with my body, traveling around my neck, my shoulders and boobies, massaging so firmly with his long, strong fingers. I groan, feeling pull of desire at my southward region “You feel that?” I feel his grin against my shoulder

“Yes baby”

“Let me soothe you where I hurt the most” his hand glide way down, heading for my pot that’s widely spread by his legs between mine. He reaches between my legs and wash on my pot first, he slide his long finger between my aching clit. Encircles my clit taking no prisoners, this man knows my body more than I do. I feel his growing erection pressed against my behind. My hand voluntarily touch on top of his, push his skilful fingers deep in my pot “On baby, you feel that” I can’t reply, I’m holding my breath feeling myself tie up under his touch. My hips move to the rhythm of his play, pushing his hand further in. His mouth bury on my neck, sucking for dear life, I tilt my head to give him more space, feel my self-built up with his finger in my pot, hand on my boob and lips on my neck “Give it to me, baby” he whisper in my ear, lightly biting on my ear lobe

“Oh... aaah baby” I moan, feeling my body going rigid. Breaking to a shattering breath taking orgasm of this man’s hand. He is a beast in bed too.

“I think we are clean now” he whisper, pulling out his hand in the middle of my orgasm

“Baby don’t” I cry, infecting him to laugh at me

“You haven’t healed akere baby, wash me stop whining” I feel like screaming that I have healed, I just want more of his hand down there “Nhlapisa le nna baby” (Wash me too baby) he is insistent, I turn to wash him too even though he deprived me of my orgasm. The minute my eyes fall on his horny look I smirk back, he wants me as much as I want him

“Oh I do baby” he murmurs, grab his erection firmly in his grasp, pulling it out of the milk. My mouth drops open. It looks scary “This is my meaty member and his job is to feast on your meaty curtains” I hate what he calls my pot. What the hell is a meaty curtain? It’s so big and it looks like it’s breathing on its own.

I glance up at him and find him plastered with a wicked grin. He’s enjoying my terrified look. I can’t believe that was inside me! And it fit and tore me nicely apart while at it.

“Please touch it baby” I smile, my wicked smile too. He better brace himself. I do as he asks, touch it staring in his eyes. First I pull him closer with it and he gasp, his eyes widen when I do what he didn’t expect

“Let me taste you baby” he wants to argue but he is too wrapped in pleasure. I lean forward, watch him close his eyes when I place my lips around him and tentatively suck, running my tongue over the tip.

“Whoa... baby” He opens his now Chinese eyes, and I suck harder. Hmm... he’s soft and hard, like a steel I always imagined but surprisingly tasty – salty and smooth “FUCK!” he groans, throwing his head back. I twirl my tongue around the tip again, and he flexes his hips. His eyes are open now, burning with heat. His teeth are clenched as I push him deeper into my mouth, supporting myself on his thighs. I feel his legs tense beneath my hands. He reaches up and grabs my head and moves “Oh... mangcobo....baby...what are you doing to a grown man” he murmurs. I suck, harder, clamp my mouth around his steely member. His breath hisses between his teeth, and he groans “OKAY FUCK THAT’S IT” he stands tall, pull out of my mouth in frustration “Damn it mabataung” I watch him wipe himself. He started all this and now he is the one crying “I’m going to fuck you mangcobo and I’m going to fuck

you hard for this, you better pray tomorrow doesn't come" He threatens and leave me buried in laughter, oh I love this creature "Finish up, I need to feed you, you're too slender for my liking" he peeps back in just when I was going back to relax in my milk bath. If only he had seen me a month ago when I shut down, I was so slender back then I even scared myself. Now I'm getting back to normal.

The dining table is filled with a feast, happy faces and happy food. Everyone is happily here, welcoming the man we thought had died on us.

"Attention everyone" ntate bereng calls for attention, picking his beverage glass "I think it's safe to say we owe our gratitude to mabataung. If it wasn't for her this day would be just like our normal sorrowful days" everyone nods "TO OUR ZULU BRIDE" we all laugh, clicking glasses to toast and join the chorus 'TO OUR ZULU BRIDE'

"I'm one lucky bastard aren't I?" he whisper in my ear next to me

"You should remember that when Tlotla takes you from me" he laughs

"That's the love of my life, you'll have to understand" I grin at him

"Thank you for loving her"

"Thank you for loving me Mangcobo"

"Thank you for loving me Molapo" applauses. Jerrr! This people were listening in our conversation

"You two make me want to fall in love" Ora remarks, making cute faces but she receives horror

"Oratuwe what is love? You know nothing about love. Shut up" Puso

"And there is no man that could love you more than me. I'm your love, we shared the same sperm and womb...."

"SEEISO!!" Mamajara scolds, infecting the room with laughter

"And you do know I'll not be afraid to unleash Lupus for any fool that even breathes close to you" Molapo. Ora rolls her eyes.

After our pleasant dinner Moletsane asked to have a talk with the oldies, and us. Well except Seeiso and Ora who are still regarded as kids. We moved our conversation to the lounge straight after dinner while Seeiso and Ora help Palesa with the dishes.

“Where is your wife?” Moletsane asks Puso, sitting alone on the couch. I’m past making excuses for Violet, if this is shyness then it’s definitely making her in-laws look at her otherwise

“Eish!” that’s all that escape Puso’s mouth

“Does she want to be a part of this family?” Puso doesn’t have an answer “Tell her to make up her mind and make it fast because things are about to get rough. We don’t need no weaklings in this house. If she is not ready to be a Molapo wife, she better leave before we invest in her. RAUTLWANA?” (.....are we clear?) He roars, startling us all. Okay Moletsane is pissed.

“Okay tyma. I’ll talk to her. No need to eat me up” Puso surrenders, surprised by Moletsane just like all of us. He is the one person who is always calm, we hardly see him cremating people. He turns his focus now to ntate bereng still not pleased, I guess he is next to feel Moletsane’s wrath

“What did I say about allowing Lupus to feast on Nolizwe” Ntate bereng frowns in confusion, trying to remember what was said “Akere you’re the bloody king and you don’t listen to know one, didn’t I warn you about unleashing Lupus to Nolizwe? That child was a witch, not just a witch, a dark witch to be precise and Lupus feeding on her tainted his blood. That’s why I can no longer connect with Lupus. The witches are doing as they please with Majara because he has their blood in him, hence why he’s been doing things we don’t understand. They are controlling him through dark magic” the man beside me stiffen, I feel him shift uncomfortably but I hold his hand tighter for assurance. Then he turns to ntate tlali, I guess all of them are feeling his range today “And wena, you freed that witch you call a wife. Broke my spell to free Mapuso. What is wrong with you?” Ntate tali looks down in embarrassment

"I....she....I just thought it's best if she left and never came back. She is Puso's mother, as much as I hate that woman she gave me a son and I couldn't break my son like that. Let Lupus feast on her like she was a no body"

"Don't call that thing my mother please tymba" Puso. So this is how Mapuso escaped, I guess at the end of the day ntate tlali had a soft spot for his baby mommy. And....wait why is Moletsane looking at me like that, am I on the firing line too

"And wena mabatung"

"Me?" I touch on my chest, horrified

"Why didn't you tell me about your dreams? And uneasiness? We could have saved majara long before he even tried to harm you. Sometimes ancestors don't come to me with visions, they send warnings straight to the victims and had you came to me and consulted, all this shit could have been avoided" eish!

"I'm sorry ntate moletsane, I really didn't think much of them" I mutter, horrified that I could have saved us the headache

"Good people, I'm the seer around here. Anything that unsettles you, whether a dream, a feeling or just a thought. Anything that just makes you question anything spiritually is my work. You come to me with those and what I say about those goes. So for the last time. I'M THE SEER AROUND HERE, RESPECT MY WORK AND ACKNOWLEDGE IT" we all nod, terrified that Moletsane could be this firm "And Majara, I'm sure your aware that I can no longer connect with you son" abuti majara nods "That's because of the dark blood in you, ancestors don't mix with those hence why I can no longer read you. So until we find a way to cleanse you, I'm going to need you to work with me, tell me every little detail you hear in your head, anything foreign happening to you I'm going to need to know about it"

"You're heard, loud and clear my seer" Majara

"Good. You can all go as you please, and Puso? Remember to be firm with that woman, she needs to step up and do so soon"

CHAPTER 33

LWANDLE

Life and love. Both four letter words. The two forces complements each other so well. Life without love is just life, purposeless, a blur of life but once you find love and grab it with both hands. That's when you feel that there is no life without love. Love doesn't always have to be romantic love but once you find the love of life, everything just falls in place. In my case I found love in soulmate, he came and gave me my reason for breathing.

I'm a true Mrs. Molapo. Happily married to the royal prince of the kingdom. We have been legally married for three months now. Tlotla is six months old now and she is her father's brat. I have never been this happier in my life. Every day with my soulmate feels like a dream, I feel like I will still love him only in the next life. Love him for a thousand more years if possible. Three months ago he put his foot down and drove me back to my place, helped me wrap my life at the other side and married me off immediately when we got back, and since then everything's been a bliss of happiness.

"Ready?" he asks, wrapping his hands around my waist and caressing my neck with his chin. I'm having coffee watching Tlotla crawl her way outside. She is a free child, loves wild life like her father. She is constantly outside, I have to keep look at her every time I open the door.

"No, I already feel exhausted" I do, we are moving back to the palace this entire weekend because we are to have visitors. Visitors from the Zululand whose prince is somehow Tlotla's chosen. Apparently the boy is wild, he needs serious taming and he needs it fast. And Tlotla is that for him. His tamer, his chosen. Moletsane said every time Tlotla's eyes turned red were her feeling the range in her chosen, being the young troubled heir.

"When is violet picking her up? I need to eat before we leave" this man's got stamina for days. By eat he means he wants to sex me. He doesn't let me rest shame but I don't mind, I love every single stroke he gives me. Violet and Puso made it, for a minute I thought they wouldn't but they did. She slowly but surely adapted to being a Molapo wife, now she is more welcoming and cooperative. She is supposed

to pick Tlotla up with Peete and drive them to the palace then come back with palesa. We have to run to the shops and buy some of the things that will be needed for this weekend before we go to the palace.

“She should be here any minute, shouldn’t you be getting ready though?” he shakes his head no

“They can wait, I miss my wife” he is supposed to go join ntate tlali, bereng and moletsane for slaughtering the cow “Plus I don’t want to anger Lupus, spilling of blood in his presence might make him break free and feast, he’s been hungry for far too long” it’s true, Lupus has been starved since the discovery of him feasting on dark witch’s blood. Ntate moletsane suggested they starve him for a year so the blood can wear off him and allow his cells to make new blood. And only then he can feed again. And I must admit, it’s working. We don’t know what happened to the witches and they haven’t controlled Molapo in a while. Though sometimes he does confess of still feeling them, meaning they are alive but captured where ever they are.

Vio’s car pulls up just as we talk and watch my baby play outside. She was thick before but now she is just huge, she is the one person I know I think would look terrible if slender. She looks beautiful.

“Abuti majara” she greets, she already picked Tlotla when she climbed off her car

“Makoti, where is my son?” he asks, I want to know too because I thought she was taking both kids to the palace

“He is teething. His father took him past the hospital first” we nod “So I’m here for this dirty being only” she says regarding Tlotla who really is dirty.

“Hai! Nkgono will bath her, I’m too tired for Tlotla. You bath her now and in two minutes she will be dirty again” (....granny....) she laughs

“Let us get going hee” she rummages through her bag and give me a brown medical paper bag. This bitch! Inwardly I curse “Don’t take them.....” I clear my throat, indicate with my eyes that the bull behind me doesn’t know about this “Don’t take those pills without eating first” Good girl. She smiles and shakes her head leaving with Tlotla

“What pills are you taking baby?” he asks as we wave them off. He takes my now cold coffee and sip but quickly spit it to the ground. I laugh, I know he can’t stand cold coffee “Jeezzz! Why are you drinking bitter coffee, there is no sugar in here moos” drama king! Two spoons is enough in my coffee

“This are headache pills, remember I have been complaining about constant headaches” he nods “And my coffee is perfectly fine”

“Okay, let’s go sex baby I’m starving” he pokes his steely member on my butt pulling me back inside the house and shutting the door. Men and sex. They never get tired of it.

Okay now I’m alone. I can finally breathe and confirm my suspicions in peace. Thank God he was called in or else he’d still be pounding me now. I think he is also addicted to me hot pot. Okay! Breathe in Lwandle. I gape at the pregnancy test in front of me. I know I bought them because of my suspicions and forgot them at Vio’s place, hence why she brought them.

Lately I have been feeling just the same way I have been feeling when I discovered I was pregnant with Tlotla. Constant spitting, mood changes, gagging at the smell of chicken. As much as I would want to make Molapo a father I think the timing is just wrong now. Tlotla is not even walking as yet and I have a feeling the family will not be happy about my pregnancy. They haven’t said anything certain about me falling pregnant but at once it was once an issue that, if I was ever to fall pregnant, it would anger the council because my seed with Molapo would resurrect the House of wolves, which the royal is totally against.

So here I am, peeing on my own because I need to find a way out if this is what I think it is. If I had known that abuti majara would score me, I would have put myself on contraceptives but he assured me that he only breed in seasons and it wasn’t his season now. Hence why I have been spreading my legs without being careful.

The minutes of pregnancy test are always the hardest, whether you knew or not, heart just race in those moments. I pick my pregnancy tests, two of them and look up reciting a prayer.

“Lord please let them be negative” sigh! Opening my eyes I find two visible parallel lines on both sticks “FUCK”

CHAPTER 34

SEEISO

I have never been this annoyed. I had tripping hot plans waiting on me but guess what, I had to cancel on my current girl because of some royal family coming today. And worse part is that this damn family didn't show so all my good boy acts went to vain. Well a bit of smoke has never killed anyone, and it will show calm me down. I took a moment in the balcony to weed up. My mother would bury me alive if she ever saw me weed up. This roll should put me to sleep. Weed goes so fucking well jamming to the master of weed himself. I feel it pop me well listening to Wiz Khalifa and Snoop through my headset walking down the corridor now ready to finally sleep high

**Is this thing on? (word)
So what we get drunk
So what we smoke
weedWe're just having
fun**

**We don't care who sees
(shit)So what we go out
That's how its supposed to be
Living young and wild and free.....**

"THE FUCK!" I exclaim, frozen on the spot. Am I too high?

"Hi" the hell! Did I die and made it to heaven? I thought I was going to hell moos

"Are you an angel?" she smiles, I just bumped into an angel down my home's corridors "Should you be smiling at me? I'm too sinful" she flushes, fuck angels are beautiful "I don't know if it's the weed or what but dammmnnnn. Are you real?"

"Hi I'm Khwezi, I got lost back to my room. Can you please show me to the third floor" why is my heart beating so abnormal, am I going into cardiac arrest

"So you're not an angel" she shakes her head no with a smile I just I want to look at for the rest of my life

"I'm just a lost princess"

“Princess? We are not related right?” she looks lost “I’m Seeiso, prince seeiso to be precise. Your surname don’t happen to end with Molapo right” that smile again. Can this girl stop smiling? Jeezzzz!

“No. Princess Khwezi Dlomo” oh! They arrived. Nervously I clean my sweaty hand, give it to her for a shake

“Nice meeting you MaDlomo” we touch hands, something attracts us like different charges. I want to hold her till I die “How old are you?” I ask, staring at the most beautiful girl I have ever seen

“Seventeen” now the whisper in her tone matches mine, she stares with a pounding heart just as I stare at her

“Are you married” she shakes her head no “Asked for hand” asking if any royal has asked for her hand in marriage. She shakes her head no “Can I spend the night with you?”

“Huh?” her beautiful eyes pop in fear

“I just want to get to know you MaDlomo. Just talk, I have never felt so mesmerized by anyone”

“What if you’re a pervert?”

“I’m not pervert” I quickly defend, wanting to come out perfect for her

“You reek of weed and dance to fuck fuck songs bumping into people”

“I’ll stop smoking weed and listening to fuck fuck songs my entire life if you just spend the night with me. Just to talk” I emphasize

“I’m underage and my parents would kill me”

“That’s why I said to talk. Please mphatlalatsane yaka” (My morning star) she frowns

“Huh?”

“My morning star” I explain “I’ll never do anything to harm an angel like you” she blushes

“I’m no angel”

“You are my star and stars resides in heaven to me so that makes you my angel. Let me help you with this” I don’t wait for her to argue further. I grab her big luggage

and show her the way like a gentlemen. Lord help me not mess this up. I'll clean up my act if I ever come close to spending just this night with this girl

"If you ever try anything funny know that my fathers will not hesitate to kill you" she warns, when I open the door to my room and I nod, suppressing my smile "Don't laugh" the last tone is stern, putting a halt to my laughter

"I'm sorry my star, it's just that you said my fathers" she frowns, scanning my room

"You have a beautiful room Siso" I'm in love with a zulu girl, her murdering my name is a bonus "What's wrong with saying fathers and why are you grinning"

"I love how you call my name and I'm smiling because I believe no one's ever had more than one father. Unless if mommy was a busy girl" she rolls her eyes and sits on bed. God she belongs there "Do you want anything, water, juice, coke" she frowns "What?"

"I said I'm seventeen not a recovering alcoholic" okay

"Wine?" I ask and she is quick to nod, proving that she is stealing this moment "In your dreams MaDlomo, I'll not feed you any alcohol until your 21. You said your father kills right? I would like to save my life to marry you soon princess" my girl blushes. Ahh! I feel content.

"What are we celebrating" she asks when I ask for a toast

"To new beginnings, new relationship and new love" she doesn't argue, she beams when I click my non-alcoholic champagne glass with hers, she sips munching on cheese platter and samosas, I didn't know what to make for her so I stole mabataung's platter. I know Juju made this for her "Tell me about Khwezi Dlomo"

"There really is nothing to tell"

"I'm sure that's not true. Where are you from, what grade are you doing, how many ex boyfriends do you have....." she laughs, that laughter that just warms me

"Why do say ex not boyfriend?"

"I'm your man from today MaDlomo, any nigger that's been sniffing your way better back off before I make them" that eye roll

"Not when you still listen to fuck fuck music" shit, my hip hop is lowly playing in the background.....with panic I reach for my phone, change music and put it on flight

mode. I don't want no disturbance. I don't have any different genre music except the one song I stole from Juju's iPod to charm the model I wanted to chow last week. From today I'm straightening my act, this girl right here has to be Mrs. Molapo. Dark or Blue. She beams when the song starts. It's perfect for this moment. All 4 one-I can love you like that.

"Can I have this dance" I'm already swaying to her, I can't dance even to save my life but for this innocence here I'd like to be perfect. Know everything just to see that smile on her face. She surprises me taking my hand and off I dance her heart to mine

**They read you Cinderella
You hoped it would come
true
That one day your Prince Charming
Would come rescue you
You like romantic
moviesYou will never
forget
The way you felt when Romeo kissed Juliet
All this time that you've been waiting
You don't have to wait no more
I can love you like that
I would make you my world
Move Heaven and Earth if you were my girl
I will give you my heart
Be all that you need
Show you you're everything that's precious to
melf you give me a chance
I can love you like that
I never make a promise I don't intend to
keepSo when I say forever, forever's what I
mean
I'm no Casanova but I swear this much is true
I'll be holdin' nothing back when it comes to you
You dream of love that's everlasting
Well baby open up your eyes**

"Can I please have your heart Khwezi Dlomo?" I whisper in her ear somewhere along our dance, she feels perfect in my arms. Like this is exactly where she belongs.

“Siso my fathers will kill you”

“I’m ready to die trying to have you. Please baby girl”

“We are from worlds apart, I’m from South Africa and you’re from Lesotho I don’t see us working even if we tried”

“Wena just say yes and you’ll see me ‘Move Heaven and Earth if you become my girl’

“You don’t fight fair siso”

“For you I intend to walk through hell just to have you make an honest man out of me”

“I think it’s time I go back to my room now”

“MaDlomo?”

“Hmmm”

“Please look at me” she does, fear in her eyes matches mine. This is not me alone, she feels what I’m feeling “Please say yes MaDlomo”

“I can’t, my fathers will kill you”

“I’m begging you sweetheart I’m ready to die for you” she shakes her head no with a smile “Can I at least taste your lips?” she looks down and I bring her up holding on her chin “Please” I beg

“I can’t” her tone comes soft in a whisper

“Why not?”

“I have only kissed my family in my life”

“You can kiss me like family I don’t mind” she swallows, biting on her lower lip and I know an invitation to kiss when I see one. Leaning down I cup her face, bringing her beautiful face closer to mine. An honest peck on her nose first to melt her.

“I love you Khwezi Dlomo” I say before going for the kill, kissing her to make my mark. This here is Mrs. Seeiso Molapo to be.

CHAPTER 36

LWANDLE

I'm snuggled on top of my husband's chest, panting after serving him his soul food. He wraps me around him while we watch the television in our room at the palace. It had been a busy day, exhausted after all the preparations for tomorrow. Our guests are to arrive in the middle of the night so we'll see them in the morning.

"Molapo?" I call out, hesitant of how I'm going to approach this

"Mama Tlotla"

"How do you feel about babies?" he gapes down at me, worn in confusion

"What do you mean? I love my daughter mangcobo" that he does but I'm asking about his blood "Don't start with me, how many times do I have to make you understand that Tlotla is my blood" he snaps

"Molapo I didn't mean it like that, please don't be pissed at me" I brush on his chest, calming him down "There is just something I want us to talk about" he sighs, taking enough breath to calm down

"What is it?" there goes nothing. I expel a heavy sigh

"Molapo I'm pregnant" he stiffens, instantly shoots shivers "I have two positive pregnancy tests in my bag" I feel him swallow, sigh deeply and look down at me. His eyes glisten in tears when his look meets mine, they carry pain I don't understand. I panic, sit up straight with a frown

"Can I.....can.....please see them" huh! Lost in his foreign expression. This I didn't expect "The test" his voice comes afraid, laced in fear I don't understand. Without a doubt I stand and reach for my bag. Hand him the two positive pregnancy tests. His hands tremble holding the two tests like his life "In my age.....this is the first time I experience this" my heart sinks, this is his first time, yet so old "there was a time when I thought I was infertile"

"You're not, you know your soldiers were just waiting on me" he smiles, within a blink one tear drops down his eyes. I'm quick to wipe it and straddle him sitting on top of him.

“Did you confirm with Moletsane?” I shake my head no “I’m happy lerato laka, I’m more than happy but to be on a safe side before I get my hopes up. Could you please consult Moletsane and confirm it. And if it’s true, I’m going to scream the news to the entire world” (.....my love.....) I laugh, lean down to kiss him

“I would be happy to make you a father too but I think the timing is wrong” his grip on me tightens

“You don’t want to carry more of my babies?” the hurt in his tone cannot be missed

“What? No. Of course not” sigh “I just.....if I remember correctly it was once revealed that our pregnancy would anger he council”

“I don’t give a damn about those big fat bellied man. If God finally decided to bless me like every man, I’m going to embrace it and they can all go jump in Mohokare for all I care. I don’t care that my seed threatens their throne. They have never wanted me for the chair and I didn’t either, why should I care for the chair they adamantly denied me? If this is the begging of the rise of wolves, so be it. Geina was right, it’s about time I live for my purpose, do exactly what I was meant to do” okay he is angry, I didn’t think we would take this turn

“Geina?” I question

“The wolverine” oh! His master from the mountain. Now I remember the talk I once had with her.

“What ever happened to her? You never told me”

“I don’t know baby, because I’m too weak and too exposed for the witches to do as they please, I can’t go there. I have to wait for her to come to me”

“What if they killed her?”

He shakes his head “I would feel the rift. She is very much alive believe me” sigh

“Anyway, back to my seed germinating inside you, I was thinking we water it neah. Just to make sure it still has enough nutrients and staff” the creature I fell in love with. His head is already under my night wear.

Moletsane is always happy to see me. Getting in his hut in the morning I find him all smiles, like he already knew I was coming.

“Ntate Moletsane” I greet, taking my usual spot on the reed mat

“Mabataung” he acknowledges, all smiles

“I’m here to confirm something ntate moletsane. Molapo asked me to confirm to you before I get is hopes up” I tell, searching for the right words to say it

“You are pregnant mabataung, you’re carrying his seed” he confirms before I even confess, I gape at him “You’re pale mabataung, would you like a glass of water?”

“Please.” My voice comes in a whisper

“You already knew, what’s the matter?” he hands me a bottle of water from the cooler box besides him

“I’m worried” he gives me the go ahead look “Am I carrying another Lupus?” he adamantly nods “So my breed with Molapo will birth a whole new house of wolves as predicted?”

“Not birth, resurrect. There once was a human family of Canis Lupus in about 100 BC ago. They become extinct with time and was presumed to never surface again but all that changed when Majara was the first human male able to carry Lupus in him from child birth. The gift was passed to him by his grandmother, who before also took it from her mother but it was just in a normal wolf form. But to majara it changed from normal to Lupus form, making him the first male to carry Lupus in him after so long. Meaning he is the right person to wake that family if he breeds with you” this is getting more complicated

“When you say resurrect, does this mean the dead wolves’ family will rise from the dead through my children with Molapo” he nods, regarding me with his eyes

“Yes mabataung, but you have nothing to worry about. As the mother, the bearer. You have a firm hand in how they turn out. You as the bearer can mould them to be what you wish them to be”

“Jesus ntate moletsane, what if there was a killer in that family? What if they couldn’t be tamed and were rebellious?”

“Faith Mabataung, sometimes faith is all we have to hold on to when we have nothing to assure us” Sigh “We don’t know my child but I wouldn’t worry about that today. Let’s get today out of the way then we’ll consult some more and see if we can see something that will ease you that you’re little creatures will turn okay” we laugh, lightly. He looks out at the door “Mabereng is bringing Tlotla’s mother in law, behave” Jeezzz! How does he always know everything? In a minute mabereng walks in with.....God! Are there people so beautiful? I didn’t know we have mermaids in human form. She blinks a lot!

“Dumelang” she greets, even her voice is beautiful.....Damn I have never seen someone so beautiful.....

Molapo has been all over me like bad rush. From morning when he came from his run. He just looked in my eyes to confirm the news and picked me in his arms, took me up to our room and celebrated our pregnancy the best way we know how. He is happy that he is finally going to be a father. It worries me that I might be bringing evil on earth.....what if they turn to be little monsters I can’t control? What if.....

“And then?” I’m startled by Seeiso, regarding me with worry in his eyes “Why are you so lost, Tlotla is getting married for God sakes?” we laugh, he can be so stupid

“My problems are too heavy to bare” I’m standing by the balcony, watching people go around decorate a huge ass long table for lunch with our guest. I’m honestly just here for fresh air, there is too much chaos in the house. My companion here also seems to be lost, he is lost in space, troubled if I may say so “And wena, why are you so nervous?” he looks a bit shaken, his eyes all over the place

“I’m scared” he confess

“Scared of what?” I question

“I think I just meant the love of my life and I’m scared I’m going to fuck it up” I can’t help but laugh, he really does look shaken

“Seeiso Molapo? Wena? In love? Don’t even bother, you’re just going to break the girl’s heart” I spit but the guilt in his eyes makes me instantly regret my words. I thought he was just joking “Okay let’s go talk” I pull him to the next vacant room we come across, away from prying eyes “I didn’t mean that, I just said it because I

thought you were joking around like you always do. Who is the girl and what is happening?" I ask immediately when we find an empty room. Shut the door and watch him nervously sit on the bed with a sigh, he frustratingly brush on his face

"Her name is Khwezi Dlomo, I call her my star and I just spent the night with her" I question with an eyebrow, horrified that he already chowed the poor girl "Not like that mabataung, we just talked and got to know each other"

"When you say Dlomo you mean MaDlomo's daughter?" he nods, nervously "Oh Seeiso! Why does it have to be her you love?"

"I don't know, I just....." He trails off at first but heaves a sigh closing his eyes to come back "I saw her and saw my whole life in her" he chuckles "You know she jokingly asked me to stop smoking and I haven't had even one puff today, I haven't even entertained any of my girls today and now I just met her mother and it scares me that I might have angered her and caused problems between her and her mother"

"What did you do?"

"Her mother is quite a beauty" that I know, woman like that should be illegal, be charged with too beautiful abuse law "So I kind of commented on her mother's beauty and I think she wasn't happy about that. She hasn't replied to any of my texts or called me back" I can't help but die in laughter. He is so nervous you'd think he really did mess up.

"You really love her, don't you?" he is quick to nod "I'm going to love this girl, if she gets you to quit weed in just day one"

"Can I use your phone? I just need to know that she is not mad at how I handled things around her mother and that she is not in trouble for spending the night with me" sigh! New love.

CHAPTER 37

Bringing two elements that contradict each other is almost an impossible thing to do. But not for the two royal families. They are faced with bringing purity and wrath together. Baby Tlotla is the purest of them all, although tainted by her father's Lupus, she is a calm storm that can tame the wrath in Mkhonto. A lot is at stake, high risks regarded. Everyone is holding breathes that Mkhonto's wrath doesn't over power her purity. Mkhonto is a beast of wrath, full of anger and hatred while Tlotla on the other hand is purity, she bring peace and calm.

Lot of things are at odds for the two families, it's not a coincidence that the two mothers of the children in question are both three months pregnant. Though the other one just found out and hasn't sat down to count how far along she might be. Little does she know that Majara scored her the first time they made love in the caves.

A little alter is created for the two mates. A bit afar from the tent. The alter is created with a large lion skin covering the roofing with four poles to hold the skin. Then below it's just bare, so the family can witness everything.

"Please put her down baby" Majara begs his wife, who is cradling Tlotla hesitant of leaving her daughter next to a creepy boy who leaves shivers down her spine with just his look alone

"Nothing should happen to my daughter Molapo" She is stern, cementing to her husband who is quick to nod. Finally she place Tlotla down on the reed mat before the creepy boy

"I'll look after her" the boy remarks, surprising Majara and mabataung

"That you'll do my boy, don't let her cry okay" Majara say squatting to the boy. He became fond of Mkhonto at first sight. He reminded him of the younger version of himself, how he was always cast aside and regarded as weird. Majara pats the boy and takes his wife heading to the tent where the family is eagerly seated to witness if the union is really blessed by the high power.

Mkhonto is 12 years older than the infant put before him. He is just a boy himself, he doesn't understand what is going on, therefore he just sit like his father told him. Stare at the little baby playing with her feet and making cute baby sound

"BABAA?" Mkhonto screams, for his father looking at the baby

"Twebankie" Vula replies

"The baby puked, she is eating her puke now" he informs, intently looking at Tlotla. The two families die in laughter.

"Wipe her Dinangwe, stop being a chicken" Mkhonto sighs, he hates being called a chicken but he doesn't have anything to wipe her with. Therefore he resorts to wiping her with his hand, he'll have to just be careful not to touch himself with that hand until he's washed his hand. The minute he touches the little girl wiping puke off her mouth. Clouds roar up in the sky, startling everyone when a clap of thunder strikes day light. Sun up in the sky.

Inside the tent, Ntate Morena, Gumede and Moletsane all stand, head bowed acknowledging their ancestors.

"It has to rain" Ntate morena's voice comes high, grabbing all the attention to himself. As the last blood royal seer, this is his task, he has to see this through. He takes his walking stick, walk to stand just outside the tent. Raising both his hands he praises "Lona Bataung boMoletsane. AboDinangwe boMkhabela. We come before you today seeking assurance, assurance that this union is pure and befitting. That we combined two elements that you also needed combined. IF YOU BLESS THIS UNOIN AND APPROVE, WE ASK FOR RAIN. PULA YA MEDUPE, SENWESA MABALA. HA ENEEEEE!" (.....thunderous rain that waters our lands. Let it rain!) He praises, voice high above in the sky, singing to the lord of rain

"HA ENEEEEE!" (Let it rain!) The sothos reply in chorus, all standing lifting their right hands in fists up in the sky

"YA MEDUPEEE!" (Thunderous rain!) Ntate Morena continues in praises, now lifting his walking stick up in the sky

“HA ENEEEEE!” (Let it rain!) They chorus back. Rejoice and break ululations when rain falls midday. The unions is blessed.

When rain stops. Silence wear the yard. Now they wait. Sit still staring at the two at the alter. Mknonto is supposed to change and transform back when he looks at baby Tlotla but nothing is happening, Mkhonto is just sitting staring at baby Tlotla.

“Maybe we missed something” Gumede jumps in, worried that maybe something is amiss

“No, I think he needs a little motivation” Majara laughs, only he understands where ntate morena is going with this “And you better make it real Majara”

“We are all here, don’t leave us outside. That’s my son there, what are you two talking about” Mtho remarks, impatiently wanting to know everything

“I think Majara should release Lupus, unleash him and take Tlotla so we see how Mkhonto will retaliate and if looking in Tlotla will tame that thing in him” Ntate Morena explains

“Who is Lupus?” Mtho “A family dog or something” Majara laughs, he loves this guy’s humour, he reminds him of Peete “Mkhonto has seen the likes of aboDeclerk, I doubt a dog named Lupus would shake him”

“Well, there is one way to find out. Majara!” Ntate Morena orders. He stands, take off his shirt giving it to his wife

“I need a drink” Dinny remarks, infecting the tent with laughter as she ogles Majara who is now bare chested standing in front of the crowd. He served them his back but even from behind nigger is just dripping hot

He breathes, twist flexing his neck to wake Lupus. When he feels him taking his veins he growls, howls looking up and he jumps up in the sky. Pieces of his pants decorate the ground. When he lands the ground, his taken Lupus form. Gasps wear the tent.....

“Yiiiiiiii?” (What?) Mtho exclaim, standing in horror looking at Majara in Lupus form “I want to go home” he says before he shatter to the ground fainting. Vula

attends him, laughing but just as he squats to Mtho, another hit falls the floor, its boitumelo, his wife.

“Jooooooweee! Le mone, o fetohile ntja” (Did you guys see him? he turned into a dog) aunty dee exclaim, not shaken but shocked “I need my klipdrift” Chaos of fainting session take over. Buhle, Nkanyezi and Khwezi also falls but Seeiso is quick to play hero. Hold her tight. Lupus wags his tail leaving the tent in ER of fainting people.

The minute Lupus stands at the little alter, Mkhonto stands to shield baby Tlotla. In and out he breathes as to calm down. Lupus aims his one foot on the alter. Mkhonto transforms, challenging Lupus with a stare as his body takes form. A reptile skin like layer covers him, his face takes that of a wolf but no fur, he is layered with a snake skin with sharp teeth pointing down. Sharp spiky bones shoot out of his back bone like needles, his nails all shoot out like those of a vampire. He growls in anger waiting on Lupus to take another step.

The tent has come to a standstill, even madam klipdrift ended up joining the fainting ones along with Ndlovukazi when Mkhonto took form. Mabataung and Ora also joined the faints, terrified of what Mkhonto turned to be. The only people now still standing in horror is Mabereng, Mamajara, Moletsane, Tali, Bereng, Puso, Seeiso, Morena, Gumede, Zwelithini and Vulamasango. The rest of the tent is down on the ground. No one has seen a creature of this sort, they knew he was tainted but they all thought it was another wolf. Only Vula has seen his son in this state and for years he has threatened him with this mother to tame him. Mentioning how that thing in him will harm Boitumelo had always tamed Mkhonto until of recent when he was starting to get out of hand.

Vula makes way to the alter, Lupus can no longer go any further because by the look of things, hell will break loose if he climbs any further. This creature knows him very well, his blood runs through it so it doesn't retaliate when he climbs the alter. He picks Tlotla from behind the creature shows her tiny little face to the creature. It growls, howls growing back. The needled bones at the back all grow back like they are turned by switch, Mkhonto crouches to the floor, pained as all his features grow back under his normal skin.

Majara has transformed back behind Vula, he took Tlotla's blanket to cover his private parts. He looks at Vula for a while, not pleased.

“Dlomo what’s that you created?” he points naked Mkhonto on the ground. Vula has no answers, he hands him his daughter and pick his son in his arms with a heavy heart “That’s no wolf. That’s a fucken predator” Vula halts, stop to look at Majara with a frown

“How do you know? Can you help him?” Majara sighs, kisses his now red eyed daughter to calm down. Mkhonto’s situations is more fucked up than they thought

“You going to have to come clean to your wife” Vula blinks, spooked of what he just said

“I can’t have that, I’m lucky as it is that this boy transformed while she was still out of it” Majara pauses him with a hand

“Wait, she doesn’t know her son is a predator?” Vulas shakes his head no

“Kanti what did you mean when you said I have to come clean?” Vula asks

“I meant come clean of who you killed and why. The person you killed is responsible for all this and your family also played a part with what they did before you were born” Vula frowns “I’m no seer but in me resides Lupus who can see beyond the eye. That thing your son turned to, is a haunted creature. Something man made. There is no animal of that sort”

“CAN YOU HELP ME” Vula is losing patience, his voice comes exasperated

“Only if you come clean to your wife because the woman I’ll take him to, heals with honesty. And she is going to capture him for at least five years to be normal again and learn how to connect with that thing in him”

“Fiv...” He trails off, shocked “What do I say to my wife when she asks where her child is for five damn years?”

“That’s why is said tell her the truth now” Vula sighs, feeling defeated already. Boitumelo is going to leave him “Believe me, I also learned the hard way that I just can’t kill anyone. I killed a witch a while ago and now she tainted my blood, I can’t connect with my seer anymore and I’m a risk at everyone I love. And worst of it all, my wife is pregnant, possibly conceived while my blood still had high content of dark magic from the witch. So there is a possibility that what she is carrying, we’ll be something half wolf, half witch” Vula’s mouth is dropped in shock

“Yoh! And here I was thinking I’m the only one with super natural problems” they both laugh

The two royal men all gather in Moletsane’s hut after an eventful afternoon. Recapping and polishing the events the union.

“BoMoletsane we thank you for welcoming us and helping us with our heir” Zwelithini

“We didn’t really help Zwelithini but at least now we are certain that our princess is the predator’s chosen” Bereng. They all nod in agreement

“Which brings us to another reason for our visit. We would like to pay lobola for the princess. We don’t want another family coming to take her for bride as she grows” Zwelithini

“A.a Dlomo let’s hold our horses. My granddaughter is just six months old, and for now we don’t know if Mkhonto will be able to connect with that thing in him. So as much as the ancestors blessed the union, I would like to put a pause to this union until we are sure Mkhonto can control himself. I don’t want to tie my grandchild with a rogue predator” Ntate bereng.

“The boy will be fine Moletsane, his father just have to come clean to his mother and them too” he points Zwe and Kay “Have to come clean of what they did to Vula” the room tenses, Vula frowns at Moletsane and looks at his fathers

“What’s he talking about?”

“Eish!” Zwe rubs his face with a sigh “Some things are meant to stay a secret”

“TALK” Vula roars

With a sigh “Well before you were born, we kind of did something as family. You know you were the first male seed after decades of female seed only. So when we heard you were a boy. We panicked, did everything in our power to make sure you made it alive because we needed you. So my brothers and I, we visited a witch doctor which we thought was a healer back then. He ordered us to sacrifice one of your sisters for you to make it and because we were desperate, we did just that” he frowns further, lost “Luthando had a twin too. We sacrificed her twin for you,

which we later found out it was bunch of lies. The witch doctor just wanted royal blood to strengthen himself and we fell right in his trap. It was later revealed that you were always going to live because you were the one meant to lift the curse” Vula is shattered, lost for words. All this time he couldn’t understand exactly where Luthando’s hate comes from kanti his family’s been keeping such news from him

“And my son? How did I taint him?” he asks looking at ntate Morena

“That man you killed had a witch grandmother, his grandmother is the one possessing your son” fuck! He curses, looking up in defeat.

CHAPTER 38

The royal guests left about two weeks ago leaving the palace in some what a sombre mood. In a weekend they spent together, they became so well acquainted with each other. They felt like they made family more than alliance. They brought clarity to each other in ways they didn't know needed to be clarified. But it's clear that their journeys with the Dlomos was just the beginning of it.

Monday morning Majara took his family to his house. He loves his wife in his house, she is turned that cold house into a warm home.

It's a normal day when Mabataung wakes up. She runs her hand on the space besides her that is always occupied by her husband when they sleep, with her eyes closed she brushes the sheet hoping to stumble on her handsome husband's body but she is disappointed to find her side of the bed empty. She opens her eyes with a sigh, she was hoping to score some morning glory like he always serves her every morning.

"Molapo?" she calls out, thinking he is in the bathroom. That man loves his sleep. He hardly wakes before her "Babe?" she calls again but still receive silence as an answer. Maybe he is preparing her breakfast. She thinks as she wraps her naked body with gown. Strict rule of her husband. He likes sliding his steely member in her whenever he feels like. So she is forbidden from sleeping with clothes or else he tears anything coming between him and his cookie.

Mabataung checks on Tlotla in the cot first before she go look for her husband. She smiles at the cot squatting to check on Tlotla but she comes to an abrupt freeze at the sight of her daughter. Tlotla is lying in her cot, red eyes with bloody tears flowing at the side of her cheeks. Her voice traps in her throat. For a moment she stands not knowing what to do or what to say. Her knees wobbly kiss on each other as she stare at horror before her.....

Majara walks in with a tray of simple breakfast in his hands. He wanted to spoil his pregnant wife. There is a sweet hum leaving his mouth, he is in a great mood. And he can't really tell why. He frowns at his wife standing by Tlotla's cot.

“I woke before you today” he happily tells his frozen wife “And decided to make you one of my meanest breakfast” he puts his tray on the pedestal, round the bed to wrap his arms around his wife “Someone is sulking, is it because I didn’t open my meaty curtains today?” silence, he bends with a frown to read the expression on his wife’s face. He finds her spooked, staring down in the cot like she seeing a ghost “Mabataung?” with creased lines on his forehead he shakes her but she doesn’t move, he follows her eyes and they land on the Tlotla “OH! FUCK!” he gasps a curse, quickly drop to the cot to pick his daughter up “MamaTlotla dress up, we have to go” he panics, walk around the room stripping his clothes off with Tlotla in his arms, he stops meet way when he realises that Mabataung is still standing spooked “You better not faint on me” he mutters, heading straight to her “LWANDLE?” he shouts in her ear, resulting mabataung to jump

“Jeezzz WHAT?” she snaps

“We have to go” he emphasise with a head gesture pointing at Tlotla in his arms. Sanity comes back to mabataung. With panic she runs to the closet while Majara strips Tlotla too. Mabataung is too disoriented to ask why are they stripping off their clothes?

“Molapo what is happening to my daughter?” she shouts screaming in the closet

“The witches are coming for her because it’s her first full moon tonight”

“What does it mean?” she asks coming out in track pants and hoodies. Majara throws her sneakers and she quickly puts them on but asks “Why are you two naked?”

“It means she is her strongest tonight and if she is not well protected, the witches will take her powers from her and do as they please with it. Please don’t faint my love” his last statement brings her face to frown at him “Lupus, take form” he whispers in Tlotla’s ear, her mother cringes but holds it together when her child transforms. That thing still creeps her on her daughter, now it’s clear why they are both naked “Nka, I have to transform too” (Take.....)mabataung takes the little wolf with her shaky hands “After I have changed, ride on me with her. We won’t be needing a car today” mabataung nod to his command, terrified of the little wolf in her arms.

“Aahhhh” she groans, touching the side of her stomach in pain. Majara stops, he was just about to take form

“What’s wrong?” he kneels to touch on her tummy. It’s not visible as yet but it is felt when touched

“I think he.....ahhhhhh” she cries harder, another pain hitting her with more force. It’s unfortunate that Majara no longer connects with Moletsane, he would have felt and heard everything and would be here by now “Baby aaaaaaaaahhh” the pain is too much, he can see it just by sweat instantly shooting off her forehead

“Baby talk to me, what is happening?” he is in panic mode too, taking little Lupus of her mother and placing her on the bed

“Baby I feel like.....like I’m in labour” that’s utter nonsense, she is just three months pregnant. Mabataung stops, still in pain but now she appear to be scared

“Whats wrong?” Majara asks, reading the terrified expression in her eyes

“Your.....your....your eyes” her voice comes trembling in a whisper. His eyes has taken the dusty molten grey that scares the shit out of her.

“Baby..” he tries to touch her but fail, mabataung took he daughter to her chest, slowly cowering back from the edge of the bed where she had seated. She is slowly reversing, unaware that she is about to hit the headboard “Baby I’ll never hurt you please don’t” it hurts him that his wife is scared of him but she is seen him almost strangle the life out of her in this state “Baby please.....baby I can try to control him.....auuuuuuu” a deep growl leaves his mouth, he feels Lupus breaking free. Like someone is calling him to do so. Mabataung takes this as her escape plan, while he still battles for Lupus not to break free under whoever’s command. She runs out of the bedroom, down the passage to the lounge that stops all her efforts.

A coven of naked witches stands in circle in her lounge. She holds little Lupus tighter in her arms, slowly cowering back with every step. Inside the circle sit another slender naked woman bowed down, slowly the woman stands, the two witches standing by mabataung’s side move to make space for their sorceress to see her clearly.

Mabataung is shocked to discover the woman to be Angeline

“Angeline?” she gasps, in shock

“WHITE WITCH” the sorceress exclaim, resulting in all witches to turn to the direction of the woman they didn’t come here for. But now the motive just changed. That voice is too frightening to be Angeline’s voice, it leaves shivers all over her skin “CAPTURE HER” the sorceress orders. In a second she feels something drawing her in, pulling her body inside the circle, where they now all stand surrounding her. She is trembling, can’t even raise her head to look at the coven surrounding her.

The sorceress comes to squat to her, content if she must say “And we came here for the children, kganthe we’ll find a white witch too” he grabs her by her neck, choking her while at it “My last element, who the hell are you woman?” Sorceress questions, mesmerized by her purity. She is never met a white witch so strong yet so naïve, she doesn’t know how much power she posses

“WE ARE.....” she stands, spread her arms wide while lwandle gasp for air on the floor

“.....WITCHES OF THE SOUTH, THE DARKEST OF THEM ALL, THE ONES WHO THRIVE EVEN IN DAYLIGHT. WE ARE THE LAST REMNANTS OF DARKS MAGIC” the coven finishes her song

“AND TODAY WE RISE, ALL FOUR ELEMENTS SHALL COMBINE AND WE’LL RULE THE WORLD” they all nod, thrilled of the news “But first, the sacrifice must continue. We came here for the soul in her, the soul she is carrying that threatens our existence. That thing in her cannot live. It is too strong and we’ll wipe our entire coven. That thing in her is half human, half royal, half wolf and half witch. That thing must be sacrificed, we need to capture that soul and save it to strengthen us whenever we run out of strength. LET THE SACRIFICE BEGIN” she commands the last part. Blow air through her mouth as if soothing a wound, from her mouth steam wears the room, witches clapping hands in jubilation “MY CHILD COME TO AID” she calls, one of the witch squats to mabataung. She is shocked discover that it’s Mapuso but she is too terrified to exclaim. Mapuso yanks little Lupus in her hands and throws her to the wall. Lwandle tries to fight but it’s futile. Witch Mapuso pins her down on the floor, rip her hoodie apart and touch on her tummy. Only now she sees that her tummy is green.....

“MOTHER” abuti majara stands behind the circle, taking all the attention in the room. He is transformed but hasn’t taken full form. He stands in human form but covered in Lupus white fur and a tail between his legs “I BELONG TO YOU MOTHER, USE ME AS YOU PLEASE” the sorceress beams. Laughs that earth shattering laughter of hers.

“HAHAHAHA MY ELEMENT OF TERROR AND POWER. KILL THAT THING IN HER” she orders. Majara obeys, roars twisting his neck to take full Lupus form. In a minute he is standing four legged. Looking hungry for Lwandle’s blood. With each step he takes, Lwandle feels dead already. She is going to die by the hand of the one she loves the most. He roars hard when he reaches her, elevating the jubilation in the room. His two canine teeth points out, like sharp knives. He opens his mouth wide, bend to feast on her. Lwandle has given up, she is ready for death. She feels his two teeth sink on her neck, the stinging is unbearable but something is happening, it’s like he is drinking instead of eating her up. Lwandle turn to look at Lupus face with a frown but it immediately scatters, his eyes are taking red, the calming red she loves and connects with

“DRINK UP MY LUPUS AND KILL THEM ALL” She gives her own order, her eyes fixed at Mapuso and Angeline as Lupus drinks her blood

“HE IS ONE OF US, WE CONTROL HIM”

“HE IS DRINKING MY BLOOD, WHITE WITCH BLOOD CLEANSING ALL THE DARKNESS IN HIM” Silence, only now it registers to the witch. The sorceress try to take action but Lupus strangle her with his tail, still sipping his mate’s blood. In her head she hear a voice, Moletsane’s voice connecting through abuti majara. The darkness has been lifted. He connects. She listens carefully and hear moletsane’s voice in abuti majara’s head telling him to give mabataung a command. She holds powers more than witches as the white one. She should command them to freeze and they will “FREEZE” mabataung commands, gluing the witches to the floor.

Lupus stops drinking. He gives her one long lick, she smiles but it doesn’t reach its end. She crawls to where Tlotla was thrown while Lupus has a field day with the witches. The screams are deafening, with his nails he rips all of them apart but makes sure not to play with his teeth. Once bitten twice shy. He can’t risk having the witches’ blood in his mouth. What was once a white room is covered in red. Blood red with witches’ heads lying all over the lounge. After chopping the last head

he roars, howls deep filling the entire house. Lwandle is curled on the floor covered in red, tears now streaming like rivers all over her eyes. She waits for Majara to take the human form and he does. Breathing heavily after killing so many witches. He smiles at his mate but she doesn't smile back.

With red eyes she looks at him "My child is dead" she informs, holding little Lupus in her arms. The look in her eyes is full of hatred, immersed in so much pain "MY. CHILD. IS. DEAD" she roars, rendering majara to freeze, he feels something really disconnects in him, which child? He inwardly asks himself, terrified of what's about to come out of her mouth.....

.....**THE END**.....

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