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PROLOGUE

I push past everyone that is walking Infront of me wanting to make my way to the taxi rank on time so I could get home. I am shivering as the rain is messing my outfit ! God this is just great ! Now I have to pass the pharmacy tomorrow because of the rain. My immune system isn't so strong, it's weak ! Sigh , Let me move my legs to the taxi rank. I don't like taking an Uber,I just felt uncomfortable after the stories I have heard of Uber drivers and how they take advantage of women! What a vile world we live in now we can't be as free.My work, my paper work that is soaked in rain. I hope this bag is water proof or else I am going to sue those Chinese owners for selling a cheap knock off. My braids are dripping while I hold onto my body trying to rush as much as I can. Should've made Sisanda pay for my umbrella when she broke it because now I am the one who has a problem while she is driving in the comfort of her car miles away. I am sure she is cruising in her car where ever she is right now while I am suffering in this rain.

“Peep peep!”

It's the car hooting and it drives on the poodle of water

and I am irked but this guy stands Infront of me sheilding me from the dirty water. He is dirty as well and is for the streets. He lets out a smile after that and I turn walking as I commence , I am late and wet , it's 17:02 and I should've been home by now under my covers , stuffing my face with whatever I have in the apartment. This is the worst day of my life. I might miss an episode of my favourite series if I don't carry my legs very quickly at this moment. Part of me is now missing the benefits I had before when Melusi was in my life. I didn't have to worry about the rain. Just one phone call away and I would've been warm in my apartment right now.

“Hi”

This parasite keeps on following me, I can't smell him but for sure he is dirty. Looks like he hasn't bathed in the past 10 years! I am a bit exaggerative but it's true. I keep on moving ignoring him still rushing and the rain has covered my reading glasses. The clouds are grey and it is making it seem like it is dark at this hour. They fall and I can't see properly anymore. I crouch and search for them on the ground and I find them. Someone is holding them as well, I wipe and put them on. It's clear now and the rain doesn't have any Mercy on my lenses nor my body for that matter. I am soaked and I chose a bad day to wear my sandals really. Now they are slippery and I can't walk properly in them. I feel like taking them off and just walking on foot. The rain has suddenly stopped and I look up to meet a black umbrella, I look beside me , it's the dirty guy and he shares a small smile. Cute, I am sure he got it from the dust bin or stole it from someone but now it has helped me. It's big enough and sheilds me from the rain. I am not complaining even though it came at a late stage where I am soaked in water but let me be appreciative and keep quiet.

“Are you going to the taxi rank?”, he asks and I nod.

“I can accompany you”, he says

Don't trust strangers! Is what my mother would've said. I am under his barely there umbrella, I should be moving. I turn from him and start moving without saying anything to him. He should keep his umbrella for that matter I don't need it anyway.

"I won't harm you, I promise", he is still following me. I hold my bag close to me and he is looking at me. I look away from him and keep on walking, I can see the taxi rank and my heart is happy. He hasn't tried anything nor had said anything since he has been following me. He wouldn't try stealing because I would scream like I am dying if he did. I can't protect myself yet I can give off stares. Well I try but it never works not that I have been mugged before but my brother once said "With that look they will just ask for your bag politely and you will hand it over. That's how soft you are". He is wrong, I am sweet yes but I don't take nonsense. There is a difference in that.

I dash off without saying goodbye into the taxi rank and I went to catch my taxi. Soon I am inside and happy that I am going to my little sanctuary . I look at the rain from the window. It's beautiful when you watch it from a safe place where it won't touch you. I need to get these braids off. It has been 2 months of them being on this big head and probably with the dandruff collecting in my head they are not smelling as good with the rain water.

Showers are the greatest invention from mankind after sterios of cause. No I am wrong, Geysers are the best invention. I throw my wet clothes in the washing basket, I will take care of that later on for now I am tired. I look at myself through the mirror as I wipe my wet braids and I am done. I get dressed in pyjamas, I am alone and have a date with myself before reviewing Mr Selepe's books once more to check if I didn't miss any numbers. Work ! I love my job , it's boring as my sister would say but I love it.

I am in the kitchen making some sandwiches, I am lazy to do any cooking today, I settle on the couch with my cup of coffee as well and I take my remote to open the tv when there is a knock on the door. Who could it be? I didn't receive any call from anyone about certain visits. No one has confirmed if I am home or not. I always say I am not when I am because I don't like visitors that need to be entertained, I don't have time for that! Not today, I am not in the mood for one.

I drag my feet and I go to the door, I am drained and hoping it's not my mother or brother, even Sisanda the only friend I have of which is my sister as well. She loves to give her surprise visits once in a while and I love them but sometimes I just want to be alone. Friends are fake these days you don't know who to trust anymore.

“Bang bang! ”

The knock is persistent and the person is impatient. I hope it's not any police as I haven't committed a crime either than overusing water when we should be saving. I needed that shower otherwise I would be dead by now.

“I am coming! ” I shout and open the door.

“Lwande!”, he says and I am annoyed.

“What do you want Melusi?”, he is rather shocked about my question. I thought I made it clear last time that we should cut ties.

“Lwande, I am here for you”, I lightly chuckle

“You can leave , we are not dating anymore”, he moves closer and his cologne hits my nostrils perfectly. It's like a new fresh flavoured air.

“We are engaged , you can't just call off the engagement ”, he speaks through his teeth.

“I don't want you anymore, ok !? ” , he is frustrating me and I am missing an episode on How to get away with murder at the moment. If he doesn't go away I will...breathe Malwande breathe.

“I will leave you to calm down but we will talk”, he looks at

me.

"Go back to Dineo please" I close the door and my back is against it. I want to cry but I hold myself. I have cried enough. A week is enough for me to waste my tears on him.

I rush to my phone when I feel like my chest is closing in and I dial his number. He answers in a quick one and I just cry. He is silent, letting me cry everything out till I am ok.

"I still love him Bhuti", it's stupid but I do love Melusi.

"You will be ok", he says.

I sniff and wipe my nose and tears.

"I will come by tomorrow", he adds.

"I would like that", I reply and he chuckles

"You are a baby", I am the last born anyway.

He keeps on talking rubbish until I feel tired. I hang up after him reminding me that he is coming. Meaning I should cook some traditional Zulu dish. I wonder if Bhuti will ever get married. I switch off the lights and I go to bed. I will watch my episode tomorrow for now I am tired and in need of this rest.

Melusi, the man I loved with my whole heart. We met in Durban when I first started working as a CA. He was an investor in the company when we met last year and he was taken by me. We went out and he has a 7 year old son of which baby mama drama follows. I tried my best and kept on being by his side even though his baby mama was giving us a hard time. Finding out that he took her on a trip overseas when he said it was a business trip last month tore me. He was lying to me and cheating at the same time. I was made a fool so I removed myself from that situation. Here I am feeling the pain still there. I thought I grieved but it still hurts a bit. My brother is understanding and is not dramatic. At times I need a guy's point of view than a woman and that's where he steps in, in situations I face. Sigh, Melusi.

I have had my 3rd cup of coffee for today and I am more energized. I am happy that the numbers balanced for last month and everything seems to be in proper order. I have submitted the books to my superior and now I am waiting to knock off any time now.

"Malwande " , I turn from the window view I am watching. It looks wonderful and refreshing.

He peaks his head in holding onto the door.

"Yes?", I move from the window. I need to buy a car, today it's hot than the rainy day of yesterday.

I was budgeting a house first at La Lucia maybe. I am from KwaMashu and I want something ,Nami ngishaye impilo eskebheni (I want to live the yacht life). Crazy but I want that for myself.

"Craig , how may I help you?", I place the mug on my desk as I move towards it.

"Mr Zuma is here for you" I shake my head and grab my bag really quick.

Knowing the staff here, they will let Melusi in since he is a regular and known. Also our relationship is known by everyone since we were engaged. He is really bothering me and now I am sick of it.

"I am knocking off early , I am not here " I move past him as he nods.

I tell my P.A that I am gone and she nods. I use the stairs instead of the elevator and I get out from the other side and I rush out. I hope he hasn't seen me. Why do I have to live my life like this ? At times like this I really need a car !

I am far from the office but I am walking fast like he is following me or he is behind me at the moment just ready to ambush me. I take out my phone and see a message from Bhuti. He mentions he has to finish from the garage before coming but he will be 20 Minutes late. I sigh , gives me enough time to prepare for his visit then. I hope he arrives with a girlfriend this time. A whole 36 year old

without a wife and kids ! I think he is gay at this point.
My phone disappears from my fingers and I look up.
Already a parasite is running away.

"Help help ! " , I shout but no one intervenes.

"Lama phara (these Parasites)", one says walking by ,
shouldn't they help me ?

I am running towards the direction that thing went, if I get
my hands on him then hell will break loose. I see him and
I shout.

"Hey my phone wena sdididi !(you fool !)"

I run after him, I am glad I wore sneakers and decided not
to be formal with heels. One fellow para stops him and
they are fighting over it. The one who stole it losses and
ends up running away. I stop my tracks as I see a knife
from the other's hand. I search quickly In my bag for my
paper spray and he is walking towards me.

"Here is your phone"

I locate it and spray the eyes. He groans and drops my
phone as he places his dirty hands on his burning eyes. I
shove the paper spray in my bag and I take my phone the
screen protector is cracked but only just that.

"Fuck ! " He curses.I take the knife from the floor and
point it at him. His eyes are red.

"Stay back or I will stab you " I say to him.

I am scared to be honest. Shivering but I keep calm and
try to be brave.

"I was...ahh" he says and he removes his hands.

He looks quiet familiar. It's the umbrella guy from
yesterday.The soft me comes out and I feel bad. I drop the
knife and I went on my knees to his level. I take out
bottled water from my bag and remove his hands from his
eyes. It's my fault

"I am sorry" I say

I pour the water on his eyes cleaning them. My hands get
dirty but I don't stop cleaning his eyes. After some time I
am done and he seems a bit better, he chuckles a bit and I

couldn't help smile. He has a very beautiful smile that is for sure.

"Thank you for the phone" I say raising it a bit.

"You are welcome" I fiddle with my bag and take out a R100 note

"It's fine " he says pushing my hand away.

"No take it. I inisit " I place it in his hands

I stand up and he is on his feet again. He looks at the note for a while.

"Bye " I say

"Let me walk you to the rank and make sure you are safe " he says

I nod because I don't want that guy catching me alone. We walk side by side. I take time to look at him and he is in worn out jeans and a top that looks like it used to be Navy. His hair is in nots and grown as well as he has a beard.

"Mkhuleko" he says

"Huh ?"

"It's my name " he says smiling once again. I am charmed and taken by his smile.

"Malwande"

"Its nice to know you Malwande "

"You too Mkhuleko" Prayer , that's his name. I guess his parents had their prayers answered through him.

"How many years have you lived here?" I ask , I shouldn't have. He takes some time to give off his response.

"5 years" He says placing his hands in his pocket.

I want to ask more but I keep quiet. I like his company. He is a quiet one. We get to the taxi rank.

"You are beautiful , bye " he walks off and I look at him before turning to go to the taxi.

"Bhuti " I jump into his arms after he had taken a shower. He came here in his overalls that has oil. I don't like that and needed him clean.

"Little sis "

He kisses my cheek and perks my lip holding my waist and hugs me and I hug him back.

"That jerk doesn't deserve you " he says from a place of hate.

He has never like Melusi before only because he felt like I deserve better.

"Really?"

I love him still though.

"Yes" he removes me from his strong hold.

There is a knock on the door and already I know drama is here today.

"Lets leave it Thalente " He walks to the door and opens it

A punch follows on Melusi's face and I am rushing towards them.

"Stop ! " I shout.

"Stay away from my sister or you will be six feet under "

Thalente says

"Stop it , leave Melusi" I say before he can spill what he has to say.

I move from him leaving him on the floor and got inside.

My brother clicks his tongue and walks off. I didn't do anything

I woke up in my brothers arms and he left after making breakfast for me that day . I was happy and his endless silliness cheered me up alot. Sisanda is married and she lives in Pretoria with her husband. They don't have a child as yet and they are not rushing in her terms. She usually baby sits for the cousin though who goes on endless vacations and she doesn't mind. There are only 3 of us in total and I am uthumbu lwasekhaya(the last born). I love my siblings so much, we are different, so very much. I believe we are equally wild in our own way and also we have our moments of being reserved. Our father is strict and doesn't take nonsense but very soft when it comes to his daughters sometimes. My parents are genuinely nice people and very loving.

I took my bag as I am about to leave for work. Mr Mlaba is waiting on my report on the company books today. He can be something else if he wants to. Strict is the word but I am used to it because of my parents and also it's a form of getting your things in order quickly and on time. Our company is company that handles money for other business as well as investments in companies. We are a well established company here in Durban. Quiet well, we also work partly with the harbour as well. It's widely a bit company that I enjoy working for. I love comfortable

things but also I want thee life as well, I mean who doesn't?

I catch the taxi and I pay before I look out of the window. I am thinking of Mkhuleko. It would be nice if I bought some food for him. I mean he is looking out for me when I go to the taxi rank just for today. Maybe a muffin while I am on my way with coffee, that Malwande! My mother would be proud of the woman I am becoming, caring. I get dropped off in town and make my way to Mug & Bean and I order some coffee and muffins on the go. I get what I need and pay then I am out.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 1

As I am walking down the streets of Durban in search of a man who lives on the streets, who would've thought. My father wouldn't be happy to hear about this and he would talk about the dangers that might occur about this but Mkhuleko has been nice to me. He doesn't talk much at times but he has been well nice. I walk to his usual spot where I find him and there are other Parasites in site but not him. They are smoking and one looks up to me and comes my way leaving what is being smoked to his fellow friends. I hold onto my bag tightly and move back.

"You are looking for Nyathi?", The parasite says.

I shake my head quickly. If my father was here he would've been sour at the mention of that surname.

"No, I am looking for Mkhuleko"

"Oh, yeah. He left he will be back during the day", I sigh. He looks at what I am holding in my hands.

"He left to where?", I ask. He looks at me and I swallow.

"You are his girlfriend? I am sure you swim in money", I quickly shake my head.

"No I don't have money", oh my God get out of here Malwande but what if he grabs me while I try to run?

"Don't worry I won't do anything just give me the food kuphela.", I nod and give the food up to him.

He takes it.

"I have to leave"

I turn quickly and run off. I breathe out when I am a distance away, I wonder where Mkhuleko is if he is not there. Maybe he sleeps in another place or area or ally if that's it. I head myself to the taxi rank and I get in and breathe out when I am in a safe spot. My phone pings and I try to fish it out of my bag and get hold of it. It's Thallente, he is telling me that he has arrived safely at his garage. He is a Mechanic and owns a panel beater, he is doing very great for himself more reason why he should have atleast one child even from a headache baby mama. I

place my phone back into my bag, I will talk to him later on.

I get to work and I rush inside the building. Melinda the receptionist calls out for me.

"Miss Miya, Mr Mlaba wants you in his office!", I nod and signal thumbs up and get inside the elevator.

I breathe out, the moment the elevator closes. It pings open as it reaches my floor and I go to my office. My P.A hasn't arrived. I am a very early person and I like to do some things on my own and have my own time during the morning. I place my things and open the windows in my office then turn my P.C on before anything else. I then leave my office and make my way to Mr Mlaba's office. I get there and I greet his P.A before I knock and I get inside. He lifts his head and fixes his suit jacket and looks at the shady man in front of him who is wearing a black leather jacket, some jeans and a Carvela.

"Zala sobonana Kumele ngiphuthuma erank(I will see you later cousin. I have to get to the taxi rank)", The man says and stands up.

"Good morning", I say

"Good morning Malwande please sit down.", Mr Mlaba points to a seat in front of him and I move there and settle.

"Ntokazi", I acknowledge the man with a nod before he walks out.

"I heard you left early yesterday", I swallow.

"I am sorry about that"

"This is a warning, at least inform my P.A or H.R of any early departure because of an emergency", I nod.

"I will, I apologize", I say.

"Okay you may go back to your work", I nod and stand up.

I walk out of his office and go to mine, damn you Melusi for getting me in trouble. If he could just leave me alone I would be happy. I get into my office and find my P.A in there touching a vase full of flowers.

"And Good morning to you", I say

"Good morning. You have flowers delivered", Craig says in quite excitement.

"I bet they are from Melusi. God why can't that man give up", I scoff.

"Well I am sorry to burst your bubble but they are not from him. Some Lady delivered them and she looked too good to be associated with Melusi", I frown and move closer to him.

"Lady? From where?"

I get to the flowers and get the card then read it.

"N.M"

I frown more and flip the card around and look at Craig. He shrugs.

"Uhm Thank you, I have some work", he nods.

"Mr Mlaba needs Mr Selepe's books in 2 days time for his meeting", he says

"Sure, can you make some coffee for me please"

"Sure"" ,he walks out of the office after that.

I sit down and look at the flowers before throwing the card away. Who sends flowers and only initials. Well it can't be Thalente. Maybe my father but no he doesn't have the bone to buy flowers for his wife so who are we. Not that he doesn't love my mother he does very much but he is a typical Zulu man who is not materialistic. Sisanda loves finer things in life she is just that person who likes to go big or go home. That is my sister and I am just, me.

My coffee arrives on time and I get onto my work. I have to send a brief about the meeting in 2 days with Mr selepe to Mr Mlaba. By the time I hit 30 I want to be head of the Finance team. That is my goal more than anything.

It's after work and I am very tired. Just two more days until the weekend then I can binge watch something new. My phone rings as I am making my way to the taxi rank. Again one thing I miss about Melusi is his car nothing else. Maybe I should've blessed myself when I was leaving but I

had pride. Now the pride is walking and not driving. I answer my phone.

"Hello"

No one speaks through the phone.

"Hello anyone...", still nothing. I remove the phone from my ear and it's still on call.

"Hello", still nothing but breathing sounds.

I hang up and click my tongue while shoving the phone in my bag.

"People have time for games", I am tired and someone just wants to annoy the hell out of me. I am even tempted to get an Uber that can just take me home right now.

I keep on walking and pass the usual parasite spot. I have no choice than to do so either way they are all over the town but I hold my bag close to my body.

"Malwande", I jump and let out a little scream and people look at me but keep on moving.

I feel a hand on my shoulder that moment and I turn to find him looking at me and he removes it quickly.

"Mkhuleko", He looks a bit cleaned up but still the same though, I don't know. Same clothes I guess.

"I am sorry to scare you", he says in concern.

"No...it's...it's fine", I flash a faint smile.

"You are going to the taxi rank?", I nod my head.

"Okay let me accompany you then", he flashes a little smile.

We start walking together. He is more ever quiet, I feel small and I don't know why and the fact that he doesn't smell like pee like every other parasite I know is something. Why doesn't he?

"Where were you this morning?", I ask.

He looks down on me as we are walking and bumping into people.

"Somewhere", I nod.

"I wanted to bring some breakfast for you but...", I shrug my shoulders.

"Don't worry I had breakfast", he lets out his faint smile again.

I love it! His smile. Despite his face it's cute , he is not ugly don't get me wrong but the facial hair is the problem.

"So you will accompany me until when?", I look at him.

"Until you get old"

"I am not planning on taking taxi's for the rest of my life", I say

"I know", he replies.

"Okay, so why are you here? What happened?"

He sucks his breathe in and looks at me.

"You really want to know?", I nod.

We are about to approach the taxi rank. He stops his tracks and I stop mine as well. He turns and looks down on me.

"I was supposed to be here for a job but here I am", he says.

"I am sorry", I can imagine. Those fake job adverts.

"Where are you from?", I ask. He pauses for some time.

"Tugela Ferry"

"How many siblings do you have?", I ask.

"The taxi rank is close from here", he avoids my question.

I nod, it must be too much to tell a stranger like me.

"Thank you, bye"

"You are beautiful Malwande, bye", he runs off after that before I can say anything. I watch him disappear in the crowd of people going home. I release a breath before I go and catch a taxi going home.

MKHULEKO

I stood by the corner as I watched her disappear into the taxi rank. Someone touches my shoulder and I quickly held the arm and twisted it around while turning around and it was Duze. I quickly let go of him and he started stretching his arm and took out the cigarette from his mouth and threw it on the floor.

"Do you have to always do that?!", he asks.

"I am sorry", He signals with his head that I should follow him.

I follow after him.

"You are lurking around my turf these days", he says and takes out another cigarette and lights it up.

"I am?", he turns to me and I lightly chuckle.

He stops his tracks places the cigarette in his mouth.

"Yes and i don't like it."

"I can take care of myself Duze", he clicks his tongue and spits on the floor.

"You are my responsibility Mkhuleko. Around these streets you are. I know you don't want that but you know that..."

"I am okay thank you", he takes out his wallet and shoves R50 note.

"Awuthenge ipapa nenhloko Lapho udle (Buy some pap there)", I chuckle.

"Sho", he whistles and walks away.

Duze owns taxi's and he always felt the role of playing my father sometimes. He thinks I am a child when I am not. I look at the note and shove it in my pocket and walk off. I go to the same corner spot I was in. I see the taxi exiting the taxi rank and she is in it by the window seat. She looked tired. How I wish I could fetch her and take her home, prepare a warm bath for her and cook for her as she relaxes. She is really beautiful, simple but beautiful. I walk away from the corner.

MALWANDE

It's again another night without any cooking just noodles. I have a deadline by tomorrow I want these paper works done and ready for the meeting on Friday. I can't wait for Friday actually. I have been in front of my laptop since I came back from work, as much as I am tired but a shower is something that couldn't fix that. I reach for my cup of coffee on the coffee table but it's empty. I need a refill

quickly. My phone rings and I look at it and it's My mother. I grab it and answer while going to the kitchen with my dirty cup.

"MamuMiya(Mrs Miya)"

"How are you my child? You haven't killed yourself?", I sigh and throw the dirty cup in the sink and take another one and open the kettle.

"No mah"

"Good fanele uze lah ekhaya sikuthandazele uthole omunye umkhwenyana(You should come home and we will pray for another man for you)", she says.

"No I am fine for now", I don't want to.

"Hayi okay then. I was checking up on you. I love you"

"I love you too", I hang up and carry on making my cup of coffee.

I am tired. I wish I can just take a leave already but I want to save it up. Working in a private company has its pros and cons as well and this is one of the cons where I only have one leave in a year. I wish I went for teaching instead of accounting and I would have holidays even. The weather today is calling people up to the beach. I haven't been there in some time and boy do I need to go to West Street and buy that umbrella. I am on my way to catch a taxi to work. I might have to get over my Uber fear this summer because wow I can't deal with this anymore.

"Wande!"

I keep on walking.

"Malwande", a hand on my shoulder and in a swift turn I am gazing up on him.

"Mkhuleko, hi"

He removes the hand quickly from my shoulder.

"I am sorry for making your dress dirty", he quickly says. I look at my shoulder and not at all it's still okay.

"Its fine. How are you?"I ask.

"I am okay, you are?"

"Tired, I wish I could just have a day off or get to relax you know work is too much plus I have a deadline to meet today. ", I start blabbering.

"I am sure someone gets to give you a massage after a long day", he says.

"I wish, I am just me", I smile.

He nods.

"The beach is looking beautiful today". He says

"It is. It has been some time since I went there", he nods.

"I have to go, bye Wande", he walks off.

"Mkhuleko", he doesn't respond. I sigh and make my way to the taxi and get in.

He is a weird person that I won't lie about.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 2

It's a Friday and Finally someone can take some time off and relax for the weekend. Maybe I should go and visit my parents. I miss my mother's cooking, mainly because I haven't been cooking for some time now since Thalente left. I am in my office, also Mkhuleko. I haven't seen him since that day he left me at the taxi rank but what can I say he must've changed his spot or something it could be anything. I am busy with my work when a knock on the door surfaces and I lift my head up.

"What are you doing here?", I frown upon seeing Melusi. He has a gift bag in his hands as he walks in.

"I am here to see you baby", I fold my arms.

"Melusi what can I say to make you understand that I don't want you anymore?", he places the gift bag on the table.

"Baby I miss you and I know I was wrong but...", I lift my hand up.

"Before I call security please leave".

"I won't until we sort this out. I love you", he comes my way .

"Melusi don't tell me that crap!",

"It was just one time Malwande you know it...", he is getting a little frustrated with his tone.

"One to many times so get out right now!", he places his hands on my shoulders and leans towards me.

"I will be back and you are mine Malwande. I own you", I swallow.

He kisses my cheek.

"I will see you later", he smiles and leaves.

Tears stream down my cheeks and I feel a bit Shakey.

Craig walks in the office.

"I was just...Malwande", I try to breathe.

"Call..Call dad please", I say.

He nods and walks out quickly.

Melusi will make my life miserable I know. He has

connections in high places. Craig walks in after some time.

"Your father will be here in a few", he hands some water to me and I drink it.

"Thank you.", he nods looking at me concerned.

"What happened?"

"Melusi", I just keep quiet after.

He sits down in front of me and watches me in pity. How could I love such a man like him? Saw my future with him and all he has brought me now is pain. Why can't he leave me alone?

"Please give these to Mr Mlaba", I say.

"I will. I have some feedback. The meeting with Mr Selepe went well that we got a new client with his referral. He owns a few super markets in KZN and also has some shares in the Aluminium mining company in Rustenburg.", oh wow.

"That's wonderful"

"Yes, so Mr Mlaba is having a meeting before knock off time to inform the staff", he says.

"I don't think I will make it. You will call me and inform me about everything"

"Okay, should I keep you company?"

"No I will be fine. Let my father through when he gets here", he nods and stands up before walking out.

He closes the door and I lay my head on the table and cry my lungs out. I am young for this kind of stress that I am receiving from Melusi. I take his gift bag and throw it across my office and I hear breaking sounds. I don't care but continued crying at that.

"Where is my daughter!?", I lift my head from the table. My neck feels a bit stiff but the noise is what woke me up.

"Where is my daughter?!", My office door opens and dad walks in and stands by the door.

"Baba", I softly say

"Thumbu kababa", he comes my way. The soft him

surfaces and he pulls me up to his chest and I cry.

"He said I am his and he owns me", I can feel his heavy breathing.

"Shh he won't do anything to you while I am still alive", he says.

"Kodwa baba(but dad)"

"Calm down Malwande baba is here", I know I am making his favourite shirt dirty with my tears.

He lets go of me and there are my tear marks on his shirt.

"Pack your things we are leaving", I don't protest at all but pack up.

"I need to inform my boss about me leaving", I say

He nods at that. I quickly make my way out of my office and go to my boss's office. I get in the elevator and it goes up after closing. It pings when it gets to his floor and I quickly make my way there.

"Is the boss available?", I ask his P.A and she agrees and lets me through.

I knock on his door. I haven't stayed until lunch but already I want to leave.

"Come in", I get inside.

"Mr Mlaba sorry to disturb", he unties his blazer and rests on his seat then signals for me to come in.

"What is it that I can help with?", I wipe my face.

"I...I am needed home", he frowns.

"Something wrong there ?", I nod.

"Yes but hopefully all will be well"

"It looks like you have been crying sit down and I will bring water", he says while trying to stand up.

"My father is here to fetch me so thank you", he nods slowly.

"Okay you may go", he looks at me before I leave.

I rush back to my office and my father is still there. I love this man, I haven't talked to him in 2 weeks kodwa one phone call away that his daughter is crying he is here. I am sure when I have felt better he will complain that we

are making him our husband when he has only one wife to jump and die for.

"Should I carry you?", I shake my head.

"No baba thank you", he takes my bag and hand and we walk out.

I don't want people looking at me weird when I am being carried out by my father to his car. We get out of the building and go to his old Kompressor and get inside. I settle and he starts the car and drives off.

"I will kill that boy with my own hands if he gets near you", I smile and laugh lightly.

"You are not violent baba"

"You don't know me Thumbu", he says and focuses on the road.

NARRATED

It's a slightly cold day on the other side of the city in another area. Hilton just near Pietermaritzburg, the place of high residential quality area stays a man who already has grey hairs showing around his body but never the less never replaces his energy and drive to go and get what he wants. He worked to be where he is and very proud of it. Though he had to betray alot of people and be greedy to give his children the life they deserved he felt proud of being the kind of father to them.

By the glass window this old man stood there with hands deep in a Karki Brentwood pants as he looked out to his garden by the poolside watching the garden boy working up a sweat at the garden while it looks cloudy and the rain might just fall but he doesn't care. At the end of the day the job must be done as he pays him good money for his garden to be done plus it is summer. A little wash wouldn't hurt the garden boy, he thought. He was disturbed from his thoughts by foot steps behind him that suddenly stopped.

"Malume", he slightly turns his head by the side but his focus is now on the floor.

"Khuluma Mfana (talk boy)".

"You wanted to see me?"

"What is great about Durban?", he lifts his head and focuses on the garden boy again.

"Hawu kuningi Malume.(A lot)", he nods. The nephew wasn't pleased that he left his taxi's in Durban just for this but he loved his uncle.

"Vukani hasn't called or visited in a week", he says with much bitterness.

"You know his company is holding him down"

"You don't need money I have it"

"We want to work for it", he sucks his breath in before he releases it. Its a talk he always has with the boys but they never listen to him.

Yes he gave them some start up money but the rest they work for it.

"Get me something to drink", he turns and walks off.

He doesn't understand his children included his sister's son as well. Yes it is his child too. When she died because of his carelessness and also greed he vowed to take care of her son like his own and has done that so much. He goes to his office and walks to his book shelf and takes the framed photo. It is of him and his old friend.

"We could've been something powerful my friend",he chuckles at that moment.

He then places the photo back where it was and looked around his office before going behind the desk.

MALWANDE

Home sweet Home. The noise is there but nothing beats being home. My father has went out to wash his car and my mother is baking while cooking in the kitchen. I took a little nap before I was woken up to come and eat. Some music is playing and it's from my father's car, its by Shwi

Nomtekhala. I get to the kitchen and look at my mother moving her Body a bit to the song.

"Doesn't he ever get tired of that song?", I ask and she turns to me.

"Never.", she says with much pride.

"Come and sit down or take your food but my child how are you?", she asks.

"I am okay now that I am home"

"kodwa Nawe. You are a cry baby", I smiled.

"I am your baby", I put my body on hers as she hugs me.

"Go and eat then baby", she laughs.

I take my food and thank her before I sit down. My father comes back in the house.

"Oh you are awake"

I nod slowly, I hope he doesn't say anything.

"I am glad you are home mina. Has Thalente told you about anyone special in his life?", my mother asks.

"No, he hasn't", she sighs.

"Let them be Mkami (my wife)", my father says to my mother.

"I have to watch something", I move from the kitchen.

I settle myself on the couch and I hear someone calling me from outside.

"Malwande Haibo!", I place my food down and my father appears. I walk outside and meet Fezeka.

She is my neighbour that I get along with. We are not friends because well because of my father. He thinks she is a bad influence because she was a rebel in high school but she doesn't care what he says or any of his sour faces that he makes when he sees her.

"Fezeka", she leans against the gate and holds on the bars while I wear my flip flops.

"Sawubona babu Miya(Hello Mr Miya)", she does that to annoy my father.

I hear him scoff.

"Fezeka", it's their way of greeting each other.

I walk towards her and I open the gate.

"Haibo you are still that skinny thing. Ubuzoshada kanjani unje? Umfazi ugcwala iphinifa (How would you have gotten married if you are still like this. A wife is thick)", she says slapping my arms.

"Please that is an old myth", I roll my eyes.

"Eh don't roll your eyes at me. Anyway how are you?", she says while chewing her gum away.

"I am okay Wena?(you?)"

"I am not okay, I was hoping to see Thalente walk out after you", I look back.

She has been crushing my brother since we were kids, I still don't understand what she sees in Thalente. There is nothing that special about him.

"Haibo dream high Thalente is not it", she gives me a look and folds her arms.

"You always want to burst my bubble. Your brother is all that for me", I frown.

"I have to go, work and deadlines", Lies. I just don't want to talk about Thalente.

"Okay and start eating more", she slaps my arm again before she walks off. I watch her leave.

My god this child is something else. I get inside the house and seat myself down.

"She hasn't changed on bit.", my father says and walks out of the house.

I watch him as he leaves and change the channel to something else.

MKHULEKO

I have been watching her from a distance since the day I left her at the taxi rank but today I didn't see her walk by. I was determined to accompany her to the taxi rank that's all. Maybe she took an Uber but I know for sure she went to work this morning. I saw her cross the road to get into the taxi rank. It's dark outside now and I am seated on the

pavement while waiting for Size to finish up with talking to his driver's before he leaves for home. He comes my way and stands in front of me while smoking a cigarette and hands it over to me. I take it and take a puff while he places one leg on the pavement next to me.

"Mkhuleko", I look up to him.

"Mmh?"

"Where are you sleeping tonight?", he asks.

"I don't know", I say. That's the last thing on my mind right now.

"I am about to leave then", I nod and I stand up and he takes the cigarette from me.

He leans in and sniffs me and moves back.

"Hai Ndoda, angazi nifuna ukuba amaphara ngobani(I don't know why you want to be a parasite for what reason?)"

"I will wash your taxi's tomorrow", he smiles.

"Be my guest. By 7 am", I nod.

He walks away and goes in hoping inside his taxi and he leaves. I stay rooted where I am before I start walking away.

MALWANDE

I had to do some labour while I am home and that is cleaning early in the morning. My mother is an early bird and since it's summer she wants to get up before the sun is fully out. I had thrown myself on the couch the minute she said we are done. My father walks in from their bedroom with a box in his hands.

"You haven't thrown that away?", my mother asks as soon as he walks in.

"No and i am glad I found it.", he says and sits next to me while I sit properly.

"What is this Vele?", I ask.

"Get ready for a story time Lwande", my mother says and walks away.

"You remember the story I always told you about Brian Nyathi?", I nod.

Brian Nyathi, The most ruthless man known back in the 90's. He was a politician back then and an activist . He killed spies without hesitation , helped wanted people escape over borders but in all of his political front he was working with the British force as he was bought and that's how he became a rich man. He turned against his word in secret but my dad knew because they used to be friends back then until he took a step back. Last heard that he relocated somewhere in south Africa though but unknown. My dad always started talking about him when Sisanda wanted to study political law. It's a story he told us from a young age and have really seen pictures of the man. My father hates him it's in the way he talks about him. Anything that has Nyathi in it he despise even if you are not really related to the man. There is more to this though that I know.

"Yes", I reply.

"This is the man", he opens the box and takes out the picture.

They looked like good friends. The smiles and all but this man looks a bit familiar like a face I see everyday.

"He looks...", I look at my father.

"This is the man", I keep quiet.

I can't put a finger on it as yet who he looks like. My phone rings and I take it from the coffee table while placing the picture down.

"Its work", it's a Saturday. Why is Craig calling?

I take it and walk outside.

"Hello", I answer.

"Miss Miya, I know it's a Saturday but I forgot to inform you. Mr Mlaba is having a company party tonight in celebration of the staff and some new clients.", he says.

"Oh really. Uhm you sound down ", I say

"I was drinking and damn my head", I laugh lightly.

"Okay, I will be there"

"I will send the details via email", I nod.

"Thank you", I say.

He hangs up after that then my mind clicks who does this person look like....

"Vukani Mlaba!"

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To be continued

CHAPTER 3

Is there a possibility that my boss is related to thee Brian Nyathi that my father hates with passion that is more than the story that he has told us. Well I am not that interested in their feud or whatever hate they have against each other. I mean we weren't born when that happened so it doesn't even have to bother me.

I have taken a bath and told my mother that I have a function at work tonight, I am stealing one of Sisanda's dresses from the wardrobe. We used to share a room growing up and I loved it I won't lie. She has a great style and some of her old clothes are here and also the wigs. Well I won't put that one it's hot for that plus my mother helped me take off my braids. It was long overdue then sent me to go and buy a relaxer from the tuckshop and I came back and she relaxed my hair. I don't like Afro hair, too much maintainace that needs to be done there but it's beautiful on other people not me though. I am about to slip myself into the dress when my phone rings from the bed and I take it. It's my boss Mr Mlaba. He hardly calls me but sends an email to me or my P.A when he needs something or his P.A calls md so I am a bit surprised. I take the phone and throw my naked bum on the bed.

"Mr Mlaba", he chuckles lightly.

"Miss Miya, how are you?", I breathe out.

"Good...good I am good and yourself?"

"I am great! Craig has informed me that you know about tonight's events"

"Yes I do."

"Okay, I will fetch you then"

He hangs up before I could say anything. A knock surfaces from my door.

"Qeda phela Malwande !(Finish up Malwande)", I still have 20 minutes before I leave.

"Okay I will", I stand up and I feel a gush run through my legs.

I look at them and it's blood. Gosh can this day be worse. How can I start my periods at this time? I should've known those tears from yesterday were a warning that they are coming.

"Mah!", I quickly take a towel and put it around me.

"What is it Mawlande?", she walks in.

"I just started my periods.", she folds her arms.

"Usungaze umemeze ubange umsindo ngento oyaziyo.

(Why are you shouting then and making noise about something you know about?)" she pushes me.

"Go and bath I will take care of the cover", I nod and rush to the bathroom to bath again.

MKHULEKO

I discarded the dirty water along the pavement and wiped my forehead with the back of my hand, Duze approaches me as I am done with the last taxi for the day.

"You should do this everyday I will pay you", he chuckles and hands a cigarette to me.

"How are you today?", he asks.

"Okay?", I say.

"Are you not tired?", he asks.

"I am", he hands the lighter to me and I light it up.

"But in this life we do not give up", He smiles.

"I love your humble soul", I chuckle and push him off.

"Voetsek!"

"Your mother groomed a very good man"

"That prostitute!", silence falls between us.

"You are better than that Mkhuleko. I will see you", he pats my shoulder and walks away.

-----FLASHBACK-----

"I am sorry Mama", she pulled me by the collar as blood dripped from my forehead. The headache wasn't having any mercy.

She roughly pushes me on the bed and her boyfriend enters the room following her.

"He is holding you back darling", she looks at him then me.

Tears fall from my face as I tightly close my eyes and feel the headache.

"I am sorry Mama", she screams and I feel her pressing on my pain.

"Why can't you die?! Why don't you die?!", she screams.

"I am sorry Mama!!", I cry out those words.

"I hate you Mkhuleko. You are ruining my life!"

_____END OF FLASH BACK_____

I sucked my breath in and touched where my scar is. I was 6 when she broke a bottle on my head. She lived off selling her body and I was a mistake that shouldn't have happened. I got my name from my grandmother. She never wanted me and she made sure I knew that as far as I know I am her only child. I felt like I was dying that day. I was always sorry for being born and for breathing and being in her life. I was always sorry for that.

I take another pull from the cigarette before I walk away.

_____MALWANDE

I am done with everything and my mother sent my father to go and get me pads after a lot of scoffing he did but he did go and get me what I needed, I thanked him and now I am dressed. My phone pings and I grab it. It's my boss and he is saying he is outside.

"Malwande finish ubaba wakho ukulindile(your father is waiting)", it's my mother again.

I put everything in my bag and I walk out of the bedroom. It's a company party nothing as extreme so I am just wearing a black dress with some heels to look semi formal at the event. I get to the lounge.

"It's okay, I am going with someone from work and they are here", I say

"You are coming back right?", my mother asks.

"I will see if it ends early then yes", she nods.

"Be careful", my father says.

"I will baba don't worry"

"Okay bye", I walk out of the house and I go out through the gate. I see my boss's car across the street and I go to it. He gets out of the car and faintly smiles.

"Hey, how are you?", he asks.

"I am well thank you and yourself?"

"I am good", he goes around the car and goes to open the door for me.

I thank him and get inside. He goes around and does the same before driving off.

"How is everything home? You didn't seem okay yesterday"

"Everything is well"

"Melusi will be at the party", I look at him.

"Craig told me about the engagement off and so I wanted to warn you", great just great.

"Its fine", I smile faintly. No it is not!

I just wish I stayed at home if that is the case. The rest of the journey was okay and he didn't talk as much and so did I. My boss is not my friend but I kept on looking at him and there is that resemblance to Brian Nyathi but he is a Mlaba which is non of my business anyway. Just hope my dad doesn't make me quit if he sees my boss just because he looks more or less like Brian Nyathi. We get to the venue of which is a Hotel in uMhlanga , I wonder how they got to get the spot at such short notice. This was probably planned yesterday but as we step inside it looks magnificent. Money can buy anything really.

"Wow, is it someone's wedding?", Mr Mlaba laughs.

"No but it is a special day to gain connections", he says. I nod.

I see that shady man from last time. Different black jacket. It's denim this time but without the Jeans though.

"I will see you", Mr Mlaba says and walks off to his Cousin. I stand there and a waiter comes and offers a drink to me

and I take it. Craig comes my way.

"Miss Miya looking good", he says.

"Thank you. You don't look as good"

"Hungover got me bad but I can't miss such a good event", he smiles.

"That is true. Who is our new client?", I ask.

"It's Mr Vezi. Some old man ", I nod.

"You look beautiful tonight baby", the sound of that voice pissed me off.

"Melusi", I turn around to him.

"Craig", he greets but Craig keeps quiet.

"I will take it from here", Melusi says while looking at Craig.

He stands a bit before leaving.

"Here ,To business", Melusi takes my glass away and gives me another one from his hands.

"I don't think so"

"I don't want to fight Lwande, I won't bother you for the rest of the night"

I look at him and he looks sincere. I take his glass and he smiles then lift his up.

"To business", they click and I take a sip of my beverage and he does the same.

"How are you?", I give him the glass.

"I am okay thank you", I take a few steps away from him and I feel a bit dizzy. He catches me before I fall.

"Are you okay?", he asks concerned.

"Yes, I think I have had enough glasses", I say.

I try to stand up but I feel dizzy.

"Malwande", I can hear his voice.

"Melusi"

"Let me take you home"

"No call Craig for me", I say as he picks me up.

"No baby don't worry I am here", he picks me up.

He walks out of the venue and we are at the hotel lobby.

"Melusi call Craig and let me go. I am not going home with

you!", I scream and he shuts my mouth up.

"Be warned Malwande"

He holds me tightly in his arms as I try to wiggle our of his hold. I am scared! I have never been scared of Melusi before but now I am really scared of him. He goes to his car and he places me on the floor as he is about to open the passenger door. I see headlights and it's a car approaching. I stomp on Melusi's foot with my heel and kick him before he lets me go. I try to run off.

"Help!", I feel tired and I am not even far from his car before I drop to the floor.

"You bitch!", I hear him curse.

"Help!", I try to shout. I feel drained.

The car has come to a halt and I see brown Italian shoes making their way to me.

"He will kill me help", I feel Melusi pulling my leg as I try to fight off. My eyes feel heavy.

All I heard was a gun shot before I closed my eyes.

I was woken up by a little bell ringing and bright light stinging my eyes as I am trying to open them. I try once more and look around. I am not in a hospital, I try to sit up and I feel a bit tired but I manage to. I touch myself and I am in pyjamas. I am confused of where I am. The room looks spacious too and also grey in colour. I slip off the covers and walk on bare foot towards the door. I have a slight headache. I open the door and I have concluded maybe I am not kidnapped. I look around the passage and a woman in a black and white French uniform is approaching me from another bedroom I presume.

"Good morning", she greets and bows her head.

"Hi, how can I get out of here?", I ask hoping she gives me the way out.

"Just down that passage and take left then there will be stairs there.", thank the Lord.

"Thank you so much", she smiles and walks off into the

room I was in.

I quickly make my way down the passage without wasting time. I see the stairs and I go down them. I hear some male voices going around and one doesn't sound as pleased.

"Imina obe nephutha bafo ngangambheka (I am the one who was in the wrong of not watching her)", I know that voice.

"We don't have time to blame whoever or point hands kodwa leyanja Kumele ifile bafo (but that dog must die)" I get down the stairs and I stand by the staircase as I watch 3 men who look almost the same in one room in shock too as well as confusion.

"Mr Mlaba, Mkhuleko", those are the first things that come into my head.

He stands up from the couch and they all turn towards my direction including that shady man.

"I can explain Wande", Mkhuleko says in a pleading voice.

"Wh..what am I doing here?"

"Leyanja ibifuna ukudlela ubafo bengeke amyeke phela!(That dog wanted to take you away from my brother but he wouldn't have watched him do that!)", the shady man says in much anger.

"Duze!", Mr Mlaba reprimids.

He keeps quiet but you could still see he wants to say more. Mkhuleko comes my way, he looks different. He has trimmed his beared.

"Are you homeless?", I ask.

"No, what made you assume that?", I frown.

"You were..."

"Always unkept? I was helping my brother out with his taxi's and that's where I got dirty", he says.

Oh my God what?

"So you lied to me?", I feel like crying. Argh these hormones!

"I am sorry Wande", his voice rings in my ear.

"She is bleeding bafo!", Mr Mlaba says as they all start to panic.

"I am on my periods", I say while sniffing.

They start calming down.

"Come let's go change you", Mkhuleko says softly.

I nod like a child. I love being babied when I am at the time of the month. I have alot to say but I am still emotional for no reason at all!. Usually I call Thalente at this time and he takes care of me and spoils me.I guess that's why he hasn't gotten married because I am well me. I always bother him.

"What is your full name?", I ask him.

He steps closer about to carry me up the stairs.

"Mkhuleko...Mkhuleko Nyathi", my heart stops for a second. He lifts me off the floor and walks up the stairs with me in his arms.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 4

I couldn't try to register my mind around this. I have been stuck in this bathtub since I undressed. The water has turned cold even but I am afraid of getting out. I have questions in my head that need answers. This is not making any sense to me at all at this point! Why was he following me? Did they plan all of this and get some sort of revenge for their father? He betrayed my father some how. How am I involved in this? Yes I am my father's daughter but I shouldn't be involved right? It's only fair. A knock surfaces at the door and I listen attentively.

"Wande are you okay?", it's Mkhuleko.

I keep my silence.

"Please say something even if it's one word", he says softly.

"I don't have clothes", I say softly.

"I do. You will take mine, they are comfortable only if you are comfortable with it", he says.

"I don't have... Toiletries for my...my situation", I say.

"I got them last night."

He clears his throat.

"I got them when Natasha undressed you and told me about your situation. What do you use?", he asks.

"Always", they help with heavy flow.

"I have that", I just nod.

I breathe out and take the water out before getting out of the bathtub. I grab a towel and wrap it around my body and open the door. I hold onto the towel tightly, he is seated on the bed. He stands up quickly after that.

"I will give you space"

"I have questions" , I say.

He looks at me and nods while pressing his lips.

"I will answer them after you are done", I nod.

He walks out of the room.

I have changed and wore his clothes. I haven't seen my

bag and I am sure my father has called if not then Thalente. I will have to ask for it before I leave. I walk down the same passage I went through and get down the stairs and he is seated alone. No Mr Mlaba in sight and also his shady man that I saw. He stands up when he sees me approaching.

"You look beautiful", he smiles while saying that.

This man is gifted in that. He has a very beautiful smile.

"Thank you", I say.

He lets out a breath.

"What do you eat? My helper will prepare anything", he says.

"Anything would be fine", he nods and walks off.

I settle on the couch and look around. This house is beautiful, not too big but just right. I lay back on the couches. I smell like a man and it's not from my brother Thalente at all. He comes back and settled in front of me.

"Are you okay?", he asks

"I don't know", I am confused and scared as well, that is the truth.

"I won't hurt you Wande", he holds my hands in his.

"I promise", He sucks his breath in.

"I will be honest with you. I have never lived on the streets before. Maybe how I looked portrayed it but I have never. I was just suffering a mental breakdown when I met you and it has been weeks of it hence I didn't shave. I tend to not take care of myself when I am in that state. I always help my brother out at the taxi rank because I feel well human. Like I am involved in everyone's day to day lives and I enjoy it really but when I saw you in the rain and how scared you were of seeing me I knew how bad I was in that state but it didn't matter because the next time I saw you after you pepper sprayed my eyes I thought I should keep the facade a little longer.", he says.

"You said you lived there for 5 years"

"Yes I have lived here for 5 years", I sigh.

"What do you want from me?", I ask.

"To give you massages and cook for you after a long day. Fetch you from work so you don't have to run away from people who really live on the street", He chuckles lightly and looks at me.

"Its not roses Mkhuleko I just...I just can't believe it! How are you related to Mr Mlaba and who is your father?", I hope he says some other Nyathi man.

He looks at me and looks down.

"Mlaba is our clan name. He is my older brother, Duze is my cousin and my father is Brian Nyathi", I felt my ears drumming. I felt my heart beating fast again at the mention of that name.

I was hyperventilating as of that and he comes closer to me and holds me from the back.

"Breathe Malwande"

"Take me home. I want my dad", I say through my shortness of breath.

"Breathe Wande",he says softly.

I try to until I have calmed down.

"What do you want from me?", I say looking at him.

"Your time"

MKHULEKO

I am always fighting demons within me. Having parents who are like mine can prove to be difficult but I don't acknowledge my mother as my parent but my father does qualify. Even though sometimes he is a bit too much but that man can lay his life down for me. Vukani and I have different mothers. His mother was better than mine, loving and caring unfortunately she found a man of her dreams and well you know the rest. The child forgotten. He was 13 when she left and I was 10. Grateful that my father found me all thanks to his friend. I still wonder where that man is. I always grew to have nightmares every night when I was young. It got too much to a point where I would also

wet my bed and I was always punished for it. Shouted but never understood. All that was known was that my mother was a prostitute that's all. I have been through so much through that woman and till today she is the only person I will despise till the grave. I never lasted in a relationship because when it started I became that little Mkhuleko i was. The reason why Vukani used Mlaba was when my father was on the run he couldn't use Nyathi in his schooling career so he had to change it until things died down and I remained Nyathi.

Now the mention of my surname is stressing the woman in front of me. One person I am scared of yet I love her company.

"Breathe Wande", I say softly close to her ear as I run my fingers through her relaxed hair.

"You are Brian Nyathi's son", I nod in waiting for her to continue.

"My father despises your father", my heart pounds and she sits up.

She looks at me.

"I can't talk to you anymore", she says and stands up.

"Wande Please", I pull her back to me and sit her down.

"I didn't do anything"

"But your father did. Izono zabazali ziwela enganeni(Parents sins fall unto their children)", I swallow. I hold her face side by side.

"Did I wrong you?", I ask and she keeps her silence.

"Mkhuleko I am sorry", her lips quiver. I pull her into my arms and she cries.

I brush her back. I never knew she was a cry baby this much.

"My periods are making me emotional", she says through her sobs.

"Its okay, I have snacks", I have heard of that being a thing for periods and help some how.

I kiss her forehead.

"Please don't go", I hold her tightly.

She cries some more and holds onto me.

"He cheated on me now he drugged me ! What did I ever do to him?" ,My body tenses.

That man pissed me off last night, he should be thankful I don't kill him but shot the air.

"Shh it's okay", I don't know what to say.

I pull her off my chest and wipe her tears.

"You don't cry for him okay?", she nods.

"Good girl",I smile.

She does the same and then leans in and gives me a perk.

I close my eyes as I still feel her lips there when they are not. My heart is racing very fast at the moment.

"Thank you", she softly says.

I open my eyes and look at her.

MALWANDE

He stares at me and comes closer to me shifting his body and lowers his head to my level. Malwande! Malwande!

What are you doing? This is not what you are supposed to be doing. He leans further in and he is an inch close to my lips.

"I want to kiss you, can I?", I swallow and nod slowly.

Malwande Miya!

"Please speak",he begs.

"Yes", he looks into my eyes and I close mine before his lips touch mine.

He slowly parts them and starts kissing me.Oh my god I am kissing Brian Nyathi's son.The son of the man my father hates! He holds my cheek and breaks the kiss and gives me a forehead kiss before hugging me. It feels warm being in his arms but what does this mean? My father would kill me.

"Your food is ready Mr Nyathi", we break the hug. It's the helper.

"Okay thank you Natasha you can go home when you are

done", she nods and walks away.

"Come let's go and feed you", he takes my hand and I go with him.

We enter the kitchen.

"Mkhuleko what is this?", I ask.

He pulls the high chair for me and I settle on it. Periods are uncomfortable I won't lie.

"Breakfast", I look at him.

"You know what I mean", I say

"Let's eat", he brings a plate my way. I look at it then him.

"What?"

"I was drugged last night I can't trust you", I fold my arms.

"Okay, just know I am allergic to eggs", he says and takes a fork.

He is lying. He just wants me to stop him of which I won't. He starts cutting the eggs on my plate and looks at me while I do the same before I starts eating them then tastes the rest.

"There", he says.

"Thank you", he nods and gulps water down.

"I need to call my doctor for a shot", he gets off the high chair and walks away.

I carry on eating the food before long I hear breaking sounds. I get alarmed before I get off the high chair and follow where the breaking sound might have come from. I walk there and find the room. I knock on the door.

"Mkhuleko"

I hear a groan before I turn the door handle and walk in. The vase is on the floor and he is laying there on his back with a bit of sweat on his forehead and a phone on his hand.

"Bafo can you hear me? Why did you eat eggs nawe you know you shouldn't be!", the person on the phone shouts. I place my hands over my mouth.

"Mkhuleko", I say

He doesn't respond but his eyes are open.

"Oh my God he is dead.", he blinks his eyes.

I feel relief washing over me.

"I am 5 minutes away Bafo hold on", the person speaks.

I go to his side and kneel in front of him.

"I am sorry, I should've stopped you", if he dies it's all my fault.

He keeps on blinking. A bad rash has slowly started on his chest even. I don't know what to do but I am panicking that is for sure. The call ends.

"I am so sorry Mkhuleko", I cry. I feel like a mess.

Oh my God please can he live I know I should've maybe had a glimpse of faith in him that he is allergic but after last night God I am sorry please let him live.

"Mkhuleko!", I get off my knees and rush out the room and I meet a man in semi formal wear with a stethoscope around his neck.

"He is in there", he doesn't say anything but rushes inside. I go and stand by the door and watch as he tells him to breathe before he opens his bag before he wears gloves and takes out an injection then he injects him. Then he throws everything away including the gloves.

"Is it okay for him to sleep on the floor?", the man turns to me.

"Who are you?", he frowns. I swallow.

"Ma..Malwande", I don't want to Mention my surname.

"Malwande leave this to the professionals", he says with a bit of attitude.

Mxm doesn't suite his handsome face for having such an attitude. I watch him as he looks at Mkhuleko and I turn and go back to my food. Rude much just because he is whatever he is he thinks he can speak to me like that what a bum. I sit myself down at the kitchen and I start eating. I just hope Mkhuleko will be okay.

"Ngaze ngafela ubala..", I walk down the stairs from my room in shorts only.

It's a bit chilly outside but I have warmed the house up. I can't believe Malwande almost got abducted under my nose. I shouldn't have left her but staying too long in her presence does things to me. I remember when she first came into my company. Looked tiny, fresh from varsity and was looking to internship anywhere. Her grades spoke for themselves but also her way of thinking did. She is mostly quiet and during her internship years she worked along side me that is why majority of the time she has a hard time report to H.R. I don't mind. I always liked her but I felt like I was too old for her. I mean I am 34 and she is what? 25 but when Mkhuleko started talking about her and showed me a stolen picture of her going to the taxi rank I knew I should back off. He deserves her more than I do. I am just fearful. Not alot of woman can handle my brother. I mean non of them. He goes through alot on his own that he never tells us about since we were young. I have given up at some point but when he needs to tell me he will.

"Dali wami, ngicel'ukhulum iqiniso kuwe Dali..", I find Duze singing while he is polishing his guns.

"Ubanga umsindo(you are making noise)", I plump myself on the couch.

He stops what he is doing and pats my thigh.

"Hade bafo(I am sorry bafo)", I turn to him.

"For?"

"You have liked that girl for years. Kodwa nawe walibele ukuthithiza(but you were busy being slow)",I shake my head.

"I am glad I didn't", he looks at me and chuckles.

"I know you are lying and Baba has been asking about you", he stands up and goes to the kitchen.

I close my eyes and take a deep breath before I release a sigh. Tomorrow I have to go to Pietermaritzburg to see my father.

MKHULEKO

I open my eyes and I am on the bed. I am glad that Lindo was able to pull through for me and leave work in a hurry. That one will forever be my brother despite us being related or not. He has always been there for me since we were teenagers. Speaking of the devil he walks in and I try to sit up and he stands in front of me and places hands in his pocket.

"You made me loose money today because of your silliness", he says.

"I will pay you. R20 K per day?", I ask.

"Just don't ever eat eggs again even if It's for that girl. If she dies it's fine", I shot him a look.

"Don't say that", I say

"On a serious one..", I interrupt him.

"I won't don't worry.", I slip out of the bed and I take a deep breath.

"What time is it?", I ask. He checks his wrist watch.

"It's 6pm"

I go to the bathroom and do my business before I wash my hands and face. I get out and Lindo is no where in the room. I go to the lounge and I find Malwande sleeping while covered in a fleece. I look at her for a moment and then look at what she was watching. I go towards her and shake her a bit before she opens her eyes and looks at me.

"Mkhuleko", I nod.

"Did we die?", she asks.

I sit next to her.

"No we didn't", she nods.

"We will with my father", she says.

"I...I", I stop myself and take a breath in and out.

"I love you Malwande, so much", she sits up and looks at me.

"Mkhuleko you can't love me."

"Why not?", I ask.

"I won't lie my father wouldn't accept you. He hates your father", I bite my lip.

"Do you accept me though?", she keeps quiet while looking at me.

"I have to go", Lindo walks in with his things.

"Okay, thank you"

"Anytime, I will see you"

He walks out of the house. I look at Malwande

"I have to go too", she stands up. I do the same.

"I will take you home.", she nods.

MALWANDE

We are silent in the car with Mkhuleko driving today was a too much day. I got my bag and I haven't opened it I will check my phone when I am home. I look outside the window as the car is driving through the city to where my flat is in Morning side.

"Wande", I look at him.

No one has ever thought or shortening my name like he does. I like it that I won't lie about but there is constant reminder in my mind that says "He is a Nyathi Malwande. Your father hates them". Now I get why that parasite thought I was his girlfriend.

"Mmh?", he takes a deep breath.

"Tell me if you want me to leave you alone and I will never cross paths with you again. I won't bother you and you won't see me", I take a deep breath in and close my eyes. He used to walk me to the taxi rank. Had chances of harming me with respect to his father but he didn't. He even tried to kill himself just so I could feel safe and trust him. I open my eyes and look at him.

"I want to see you again", he looks over to me and smiles.

"Can I hold your hand?",I nod.

He takes my hand in his and holds it. We approach my flat and he parks the car once we are inside.

"I love you",he says a bit fearful while I look away.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 5

It's a Monday morning and Thamente slept here last night. After Mkhuleko dropped me off I saw missed calls from him and Sisanda. I called them back and that was it within a matter of minutes he was in my front door but I didn't just get off the hook. He told me off and shouted before he calmed down at some point I felt emotional because he was shouting too much. I am glad today is my last day on my periods, I really hate them because I am very emotional in that state. Sometimes it's 3-5 days but to my luck the flow is low now so I might be finishing today.

"Malwande qeda phela!(finish up!)", it's Thamente.

"You can leave I will take a taxi", I hear him groan.

I am still indecisive of what I should wear.

"Okay bye ke!", he shouts.

"Bye", I scheme through the wardrobe before I hear the front door closing.

I pull some clothes and I am good with them. I will wear some sneakers today I am not in the mood for heels. I get dressed quickly and after that I am done. I take my work bag and I make my way out of my room. I take the gate keys from the coffee table and move to the door before I open it and there he is.

"Mkhuleko, what are you.."

"I saw your brother leave", he interrupts me.

"How do you know he is my brother?", I ask with a frown. He scratches his head.

"Ngiyaxolisa(I am sorry)", I sigh.

"Don't stalk me please", he nods. It makes me feel uncomfortable.

"What are you doing here?", I ask

"I am taking you to work", I nod well saves me some money.

"Okay hold here", I give him my bag and lock up the place. After that we walk off.

"So do you work?", I ask

"No but I own a Hotel", I look at him.

"How old are you?", I ask

He bites his lip before he answers.

"I am 30 ", he holds my hand after that with a bit of contemplation.

"Well I am 25", I say.

"I love you Malwande", I look away from his gaze.

We get to his car and he puts my bag in the back and he closes the door.

"Can I kiss you?", I nod slowly.

He steps closer to me and leans towards me before our lips touch and intertwine. I wrap my arms around his neck as I try to stand on my toes while he places his hands on the side of my waist. He breaks the kiss and smiles.

"You look beautiful", I smile.

"Thank you", he looks at me.

"Don't worry about anything just trust me and give me a chance", I sigh.

"Mmh", he opens the door for me and I get inside.

He closes it and goes to his side and gets in before we are off to my work place.

"Do you mind if I ask questions?", I look at him and he nods.

"What do you want from me or my family? Is there something you want from us through me?", he keeps quiet for a moment before answering.

"I don't want anything from your family except for your time. I won't harm you Malwande. That I promise and also don't ask that question out loud rather investigate about it because some people wouldn't tell you their true intentions if they know you know their motive is bad so rather investigate", he smiles

"Oh", I keep my silence then.

The drive is silent until we get to work. He gets out and gets my bag from the back before coming to open my door. I thank him at that moment.

"I will fetch you", he says, then kisses my forehead. I look at him one last time before I leave him there and go inside the building. I make my way up to my office.

VUKANI

I wouldn't be going in today at work, my P.A will update me as I will be working from home. Yesterday I went to see my father and he was much happy also reminding me that I don't need to work but I love being in power and having my own money that I work hard for so I wouldn't give that all up. Melusi is one of my clients and as much as his connection to the company brings in money but it is nothing compared to Malwande's well being.

So I made it my mission to go and cut him off personally from the company today. I got into my car and drove all the way to his place. I got there and the gate was opened for me after some time. I park the car and get out and find a woman standing by the door in a apron.

"Hello"

"Is Melusi Zuma inside?", I shoot straight to it.

"Uhm yes he is come in. You are?"

"Non of your business", she swallows as I pass through her.

"Baby!", the woman shouts.

I wait upon him to come out and he does.

"What is it? Oh Mlaba", I look at his woman as she looks at me.

"Your office"

"This way", he says as he walks off and I follow.

We get to his office and I close the door and lock it. He goes around the desk and seats himself down.

"Scotch?", he asks.

I nod while looking around. He stands up and goes to get some beverage.

"What do I owe this pleasant visit from you?"

"Its not pleasant", I throw the envelope on the desk. He

takes it.

"What is it?"

"We are cutting ties with you"

He takes out the papers inside the envelope.

"You are going to loose alot of money you know"

"Rather that and my pockets are deep enough", I say.

"A man's pockets are never too deep enough Mlaba"

"Sign the papers Zuma", he chuckles and grabs a pen.

"You will regret this", he signs then puts the papers inside the envelope an hands it to me.

"Great doing business with you", He clenches his jaw.

I turn around and go to the door.

"And Also...", I turn around and take out my gun and shoot his knee

He screams in pain as he falls to the floor. .

"Touch Malwande again I will kill you", I click my tongue and place my gun away before walking out.

MALWANDE

My day progresses so well that I wouldn't complain. Craig and I updated each other and what happend in Saturday wasn't raised. I have to go and get a restraining order against Melusi quickly even though it would be as useless but I need to get one against him. It's worth a try. I never mentioned anything to my family about being drugged or it will be the end of me living alone until I get married that I know for sure. It's knock off time and I am ready to get home and just sleep. I am over these periods now. Mr Mlaba is not in today and I needed to get some new work from him and also needed him to sign some things.

"Bye Miss Miya!", it's Craig and he is leaving.

"The boss didn't pop in?", I ask

"No unfortunately. Maybe tomorrow", he says while leaning against the door frame.

"Sure then"

"Bye" , he waves

"Bye", he walks off.

I start packing my things as well and I switch off my P.C before I walk out and lock my office. I get into the elevator and it goes down to the ground floor before I walk out. I get out of the building and Mkhuleko is waiting for me next to another car. An Austin Martin to be specific. I guess his father is swimming in money. Who would've thought me? Malwande Miya would get inside such a car? Yes a Mercedes-Benz but it stops there that's what I thought.

"Hey", I greet before anything.

"Hi, ready to go home?", I nod.

He opens the door for me and takes my bag from me. I get inside and Thank him. He gets inside after placing my bag and he reaches the back for something and comes back with Flowers and hands them over to me.

"Uhm thank you, what is the special occasion?", I frown.

"There Is no special occasion", I nod.

"Thank you", he nods.

He starts the car and drives off. The car occupies some music and I keep on looking at the flowers. Don't be fooled by movies and T.V and all of that. Flowers have no scent they just smell bad especially fresh flowers. He drives off to a restaurant and we get there. I look at him before he tells me he has to quickly get something. I nod as he gets out and goes inside the return. This car smells nice , it smells like him and I find myself smelling the roses and smiling. Well I need to take a picture of these and share with Sisanda. I do just that and send to her. I do a little video for my story on Instagram for my little followers and I post it. It has been a while since I posted. Last time I posted was my engagement. I have to remove this. I remove anything that has Melusi in it and I feel satisfied. Mkhuleko comes back and he has paper bag in his hands. He gets inside and closes the door and gives the paper bag to me.

"So you don't cook", how nice.

"Thank you", he smiles and starts the car before driving off.

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We get to my apartment just on time and I am dropped off. I am smiling and it's all just for a bunch of flowers and food. Now I just have to shower and eat while watching "How to get away with Murder". My phone rings as I close the door to my apartment.

"Hello", I place everything on the counter.

"Are you back with Melusi?", it is the first thing Sisanda asks.

"No, I am not", she screams.

"Oh my God who is he?", I swallow.

"You will see him", I say

"Okay then mystery man shouldn't hurt you though", I sigh

"We are not dating"

"Is there something wrong with him?", Yes he is Brian Nyathi's son.

"No there isn't, I just got out of an engagement"

"That shouldn't stop you. Matter of fact nothing should stop you from getting love. It conquers all"

"You think?"

"I know", I sigh.

"Okay. Call me later"

"Why don't you call me later why do I have to do it?", she asks.

"You are older", she clicks her tongue and I laugh.

"Bye ", we hung up.

I look at everything that is on my counter and I shake my head before I go to the bathroom to take a bath.

MKHULEKO

"I haven't seen you in a while Mfana", I sigh and turn away from the balcony.

"I am sorry baba I will make time" ,I am on a phone call

with my father.

"Make sure you do. Vukani has visited me"

"I will do the same soon", I say

"Okay then", he hangs up.

I sigh and look at Malwande's phone number. I want to call her but it is already late and it might look creepy. I smile at the thought of my lips touching her and I feel things going through my body. Fear creeps in. If she would be able to live with how I am?

I throw my phone on the bed and I go to the bathroom and wash my face. My phone rings and I get out of the bathroom and I go to it. I answer my phone.

"Hello"

"Are you upstairs?", it's Vukani.

"Its late at night"

"Come down", he hangs up.

This man! I wear a top and some shoes and I walk out of my bedroom. I go down the stairs and find him drinking my brandy.

"What is wrong?", he has never been like this. More or less it's me who is like this.

"I love Malwande too.", I am taken aback but what he is saying.

"For years I have been but I backed off for you", I am still speechless. I don't know what to say.

"Why are you telling me?"

"I want one night with her just so I could get over what I am feeling thats all I ask.", he says

"What?!"

"Bafo"

I close my eyes.

"I promise I won't bother you after this and I will make sure they vanish just one..", he is pleading.

"I love you bafo kodwa I... I can't imagine you doing this to her"

"I will only hug her that's all"

I am defeated at this point, I just don't know if how I should react... pissed being one of them.

MALWANDE

I wish I worked at alternate dates then I would binge watch Law & order. I love Series they are just too interesting and make you wait in anticipation for the next one that's what I love. I have eaten all thanks to Mkhuleko who was very sweet and thoughtful by getting me some food so I wouldn't cook. There is a knock on the door and I get off my couch and go towards it and open the door.

"Mr Mlaba", I am surprised.

He places hands in his pockets. I can't believe he looks like Mkhuleko.

"Call me Vukani, please", I nod because it is after hours.

"Come in", he walks into my flat. I close the door.

I wonder if I missed anything that is work related maybe a meeting Craig forgot to inform me of. I go to the couch and remove the fleece.

"I am sorry about the little mess", I say.

"Malwande please sit down", I sit down and he remains standing while looking at me.

"Do you love my brother?", I am taken by the question.

"He is interesting", I say.

"I can't work with that. I need to know if you be with Mkhuleko you are with him and will fight through anything that comes your way", why does this have to involve fighting?

"Yes, I will.", he nods.

"Stand up", he takes off his jacket. I do as I am told.

"What is happening?", I am still confused. He comes closer to me.

"I am the first obstacle", he says as he smashes his lips onto mine.

"Mkhuleko", I say between the kiss.

These men are something else, good kissers that is!

Malwande what are you doing?

I push him off and catch my breath.

"Mkhuleko. You can't do that to your brother"

"He knows", I frown.

"Is this some sick game you two want to play with me involved!?", I can't believe this.

"Ma..."

"Don't even start with me Vukani don't!", he smiles widely.

I place hands on my hips.

"What is amusing?"

"You said my name and it sounds amazing", I frown.

He comes closer.

"We are not treating you otherwise. I just want one night with you in my arms and tomorrow it's all forgotten, please", he pleads.

This is...I have never been in such a situation.

"What is this for?", are you considering Malwande?

"Closure", what closure am I going to give?

He leans down on me and he kisses my lips slowly while holding my face. As he pulls me close to his chest I can feel his heart thudding against his ribcage. He picks me up and walks towards my bedrooms.

"Tell me if you want me to stop. If I am hurting you", he says through the kiss.

My body has officially betrayed me at the moment.

To be continued

CHAPTER 6

He places me on the bed without breaking the kiss and gets ontop of me. His hands run under my top and I place my hands on his chest and push him off a little. He stops and looks at me.

"I can't do this, it's wrong", I sit up and he sits next to me.

"I am sorry", I get off the bed.

"Uhm sure", he swallows.

"Please can you take me to...", he nods before I could finish.

We keep our silence after that. He walks out of the bedroom and I sit myself on the bed and breath out. I need to freshen up before I leave. I go to the bathroom and I wash my face and brush my teeth. After i am done I feel sastified. I walk out of the bathroom and go to the lounge. I couldn't even look at his direction.

"Ready to go?", I nod.

"Malwande", I look at him.

He comes closer and he pulls me into a hug and I breathe out so does he.

"I am sorry", I nod.

We break the hug after that.

"Let's go"

We walk out of my flat and go to his car. We get inside and he drives off. The drive is very silent and the tension you could cut it with a knife. Maybe I should've taken my chances and gotten an uber to take me to his house but problem is I don't know his exact address. It's late and I am sure he is asleep as well. The streets of Durban are very quiet as the drive commences. In no time we reach Mkhuleko's place and Vukani parks in the driveway.

"You can go in", i nod and take off ths seat belt before I open the door and get out.

I go inside the house. Who sleeps without locking the house? I walk inside and It's a bit dark.

"Mkhuleko", I softly shout out for his name.

I walk towards the stairs and make my way up.

"Mkhuleko", Nothing.

I check the first room and he is not there. I got to the second one and I see a figure on the bed. I open the lights and it's him. I go towards the bed and he has the covers intertwined between his legs while holding to a pillow tightly. I bite my lip and look at him for a moment. His bed seems wet and so I get closer to him and shake him a little.

"Mkhuleko", he opens his eyes and looks at me.

"Come", I take his hand and he gets out of the bed.

The bed is wet but I don't say anything.

"Go and change while I clean up here", I say

"Did he do what he wanted?", he seems vulnerable.

"No", he nods his head and goes to the bathroom.

I take out everything from the bed and there is a plastic sheet over the mattress. I look towards the bathroom wondering if this is a regular thing. I take it out and after some time he comes out with a towel wrapped around his waist. He looks at the bed avoiding my eyes and goes to the wardrobe and takes out some clothes and gets dressed in another short and vest.

"Where are the clean sheets?", he is silent.

I go towards him and place my hands around his waist.

"I choose you okay? I am not going anywhere"

"Wande.."

"So please let's get clean sheets and we can sleep", he nods.

He removed himself from my hold and goes out to get clean sheets. I wait for him as he comes back and he hands the clean linen to me. I put it on the bed with the waterproof sheet as well and after that I was done.

"Let's sleep"

"Can I kiss you?", I suck my breath in.

"Yes", he comes closer to me and kisses my lips and I respond. After some time he breaks off the kiss.

"What does this mean for us?", he asks.

"It means I am your girl", I smile and he does the same.

"I love you so much Wandé", He kisses my forehead.

I give him a little hug and he holds me back into his arms.

After some time we break off the hug.

"Let's sleep we will talk in the morning", he nods.

We get in bed and I make a distance between us but he pulls me close to him and holds me just like how he held the pillow but I let him be. After some time I closed my eyes and slept.

VUKANI

I don't know where the road leads me from here. It was very stupid of me to expect that. I should've just kept quiet and buried those feeling deep inside of me and now I have made a bit of some damage. All I need is to be home at the moment. I won't bother Mkhuleko, atleast she kissed me and I got a hug. That's all that matters at the moment. I just hope Malwande would treat my brother well. Yes I know sometimes I can be something else but I care for him it was just a selfish moment for me of which I don't regret one bit.

I am driving past Camper Down making my way to Pietermaritzburg. I am going to my father's house I just need to sleep in my room that is all. Feeling at home that's all I want. I play some music in the car as I am driving and increase my speed on the free way. I am sure Duze is busy or asleep at this time so I don't want to bother him right now.

MALWANDE

Its morning and the sun is out. I run my eyes from the sharp burning rays that are surfacing into the room. I feel

like someone is touching my hair and I look up to find Mkhuleko looking at me.

"What time is it?", I ask

"Its 7 am", he says.

"Oh my , I will be late for work. I have to go", I try to get off the bed.

"My brother will understand", he says.

"I don't want to be fired",I say.

"You won't be, I called him", I look at him.

"Oh, okay",he kisses my forehead and runs his fingers through my hair.

"Malwande", I look at him as he stops what he is doing.

"I love you and please be patient with me", He says.

"What is wrong?"

"I might not be your ideal guy, I have alot of baggage but I want to be with you if you do too".

"We all have baggage. My father being one", I say

"Let's not get involved in our fathers drama", I giggle and he smiles.

"Okay Mr Nyathi".

"Come let's go and freshen up our faces so we can go and eat breakfast",he says.

I didn't want to bring up what happened last night so I kept quiet. I just nodded as we got off the bed and he made it before we went to brush our teeth and wash our faces then walked out and went downstairs.

"Who do you live with?"

"No one"

"Why?",I look at him.

"I like being alone sometimes",I just nod.

We get to the kitchen and he tells me to sit down.

"What do you like doing the most?", I ask.

"Cooking",I smile. What a bonus! I don't like doing that.

"I don't like cooking", he chuckles.

"Don't worry I will cook for you", he leans closer to me.

"Can I...", I just hold his face and kiss him.

He responds and places his hands on my waist as I wrap my leg around him. I run my fingers under his vest and his breathing hitched as I did that. I help him take it off and he stops me.

"We have to eat".

"Is there something wrong?", I ask.

"I don't want to fuck you before you eat", I just nod. He didn't have to be raw in saying it.

He gives me a perk and goes about his cooking business.

"I want to burn you out for the whole day when I do that with food in your stomach", my uterus just danced if that is possible.

I can't believe what he just said moved me so much.

"I don't get burned out easily", I lean over and look at him as he grabs an apron.

"Well I will", I shake my head while looking at him as he cooks.

NANDIPHA

I fix my uniform properly and I breathe out while playing with my fingers. I have been stuck in this kitchen since morning and I am just waiting to to hear from Aunty Futhi that I should come with the food cart when Mr Nyathi has settled down on the dinning table.

My name is Nandipha Khoza. I am 21 years old from a place in Sweetwater. My mother has worked for Mr Nyathi for more than 10 years with Aunty Futhi. There are more people who work here but they have watched Mr Nyathi's sons grow old to be who they are today. I have heard that the man is ruthless and has a little heart but very big for his children. He cares about them so much. My mother is sick, she can't work anymore and so as the person who was a bread winner I had to take over. I have a cousin, her name is Phumzile. The golden child in my mother's eyes and the person who would uplift my family. We are the same age , she passed her matric very well and

received funding to go to university. I passed as well but my points weren't enough. My mother is loving I won't lie but sometimes she does damage that she is not aware of. For example she would compare me to Phumzile at times. She studies Medicine in Durban and you can imagine what I go through that. She is my drunk uncle's daughter. We all live together. My father? Well he went to Johannesburg in the 90's to work at the mines and never returned till this day and yes they are married with my mother. She is waiting for her husband till this day and praying for his safety and return. I would've given up along time ago if I was her for a man I don't know if he is alive or not. The last letter he sent was in 2000 so you can imagine the Decade that has passed with still nothing not even a phone call from him. Ai amadoda shame(Men!).

"Nandipha", aunty Futhi calls out for me.

She comes towards me and places the jug of freshly squeezed juice onto the trolley.

"Mr Nyathi is by the dining table, come", We push the trolley and we get to the dining room.

He is reading The Witness News paper. We place the food on the table and he lowers the news paper.

"Go and call Vukani", I look at Aunty Futhi. No hello? No good morning?

"Sawubona Babu Nyathi(Hello Mr Nyathi)", he looks at me.

"Nandipha ", Aunty Futhi lightly slaps me by the side.

He still doesn't greet but goes back to his newspaper.

"Nandipha go and wake up Vukani please", Aunty Futhi says in a pleading voice. Her eyes masked fear.

I nod and went off, I walked up the stairs, this house is really beautiful and the interior designer did very well. I love decorating and it's my thing. I am also good in fashion and co-ordinating clothes well. I love cleanness.

Ngiyiqhathanzipho(very clean person). If I had such a house the show top billing would be here every week I tell you.

I go to the room I heard was Mr Vukani's when I first came here. I heard he is the first born child. There are 3 of them. I knock and knock them wait. After some time the door roughly opens and he seems to be on the phone.

"Yini?(What?)", he says with a bit of attitude.

"Breakfast is ready my Prince", I bow a little. These people think they are royalty even so this is just rubbish treatment.

"So ? What should I do?", I stand up and fold my arms.

"I don't know it's not my business that your father is calling you", he frowns, then places his phone on his ear.

"Bafo I will call later I have something to sort out", he hangs up and frowns while looking at me.

"Do you know who I am?"

"You are Vukani Nyathi", I say

"So you know this job of yours you can loose it now"

"Heeh ngiyalungwa Nkosi.(I am being tested lord) Are you really threatening me?"

"I don't make threats, I make things happen"

"Game on Boy", I step closer to him and look at him up and down before I click my tongue and walk off.

I wish I punched him, maybe I should've done that but as always, a dog has its day. He will have his.

MALWANDE

Mkhuleko got done with breakfast and we started eating. He really can cook well or should I say he can fry well. He keeps on looking at me as I am eating and I stop at some point and look at him.

"Is there something wrong?", I ask

"No, you just look... Beautiful", I smile.

"Thank you", he pulls my chair closer to his.

"Let's eat", I nod as we carry on eating.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 7

It has been two days since I agreed to be in a relationship with Mkhuleko and I haven't seen him since yesterday when he dropped me off. He did say he has somewhere to be and I wonder where that place is. He has been taking me to work and we would go to his place and eat before he takes me home. I don't know my exact feelings for him, I don't want to say Love as yet but I really am into the man. He is purely amazing with his quiet reserved self at times makes me doubt the stories my father would tell us about his father and how he is. Is he even his child at this point? that is the question.

I am past what happened between Vukani and I. I haven't seen him since that day and Craig told me that he told his P.A that he will be working from home. Maybe he is avoiding me but avoiding each other wouldn't help because we are bound to see each other by two things. Mkhuleko and our work relationship as well. Its knock off time at work and I have been very tired. I got someone to take me to work this morning all courtesy of my Boyfriend. Mmmh that's another thing, Melusi. I heard the company has terminated their contract with him and I haven't seen him since the day he tried to drug me and take me with. God I will forever be grateful for being saved by the man you have presented to me. What would've been of me? "Miss Miya, Someone is here for you", Craig says while knocking on my door.

I am packing up my papers and laptop into my bag at that moment.

"Who is it at this time?", it's after work now.

"You will see for yourself", He says and removes himself from the door.

Mkhuleko walks in the office with a gift bag and roses. I leave whatever I was busy with and go to him throwing my arms around his neck.

"You didn't tell me you are back"

"I wanted to surprise you", I give him a kiss and he responds by deepening it.

We break the kiss right after some time. He hands the gifts to me.

"You spoil me too much Mr Nyathi, thank you", I say

"I love you, you don't have to say it back but know I love you", I look at him and smile while nodding.

I still don't have the guts to say it back.

"Let me take my things", I go around and take my things before we leave the building.

I am happy now. I never thought I would be in a relationship so soon after Melusi, even the thought of feeling happy once again being there not at all. Mkhuleko takes my bags as we are walking out of my office. I lock it and we go to the elevator. We get inside and it closes before it goes down to the ground floor and it opens and pings after. We walk out of the building and he directs me to his car. He is driving a Mercedes-Benz GLC Coupe this time. He opens the door at the back and places my things there. It has become his habit.

"How many cars do you have?", I ask while he opens the door for me.

"Only 3"

"They sure are an inspiration", I say as I get inside and he closes the door.

He goes around and gets inside the car as well.

"Which car do you love?", he asks as he starts the car and drives off.

"Anything Merc, Let's go to my place I will cook", I say

"Are you not tired?", I smile and look at him.

"As much as I enjoy your food I want to cook for you today", he smiles.

"I wouldn't mind eating food cooked by you", he looks at me and smiles before he places his hand on my thigh.

"I will sleep over too", He says

Great! A girl can maybe get something tonight.

"Then it's settled!"

The drive commences as we update each other on things and he tells me he went to his hotel by South beach for some meeting. I wasn't listening as attentively but I gave him my attention that counts. I didn't ask about his bother. That is non of my business anyway. We get to my apartment and he parks the car before we both get out and he takes my things. Melusi wasn't this gentle man enough like my man here! We walk up to my apartment and I try to unlock the door but it is unlocked already.

"I left my door locked.", I look at Mkhuleko.

"Wait here and let me go in and check", he says while putting his hand on his waist.

He walks inside as I wait outside. I hear my mother's scream before I rush inside the apartment, I find my mom and Sisanda inside the apartment with my mom throwing her hands over her head screaming.

"Sizani nakhu sikhonjwa ngesbhamu sizani!(Help, we are being pointed with a gun help!)"

"Mah what are you doing here? I thought it was a criminal", I quickly say.

Mkhuleko hides his gun and I give him a look, he looks at me and looks over to my mother.

"I am sorry Mah for...", he clears his throat.

He can't even mention it!.

"Ehheni Bantu nakho ngizofela ezindlwini zabelungu(I am going to die in white people's houses!)", she still has hands over her head.

"Mah calm down and sit down.Thumbu get some water"

I rush to the kitchen and get some water in a glass. I come back and hand them over to my Mom.

"I have to leave. I am sorry again ", Mkhuleko says.

"Wait...", I say softly.

"I will call you", he mouths and I nod. He says his good byes and walks out.

We try and get my mother to drink water and she calms down making little crying noises with no tears coming out.

"Call my husband. Call my husband, I almost died!", My mother is dramatic when she wants to.

"Mah calm down !", Sisanda says much irritated.

I am so happy to see her but I can't enjoy the happy moment because of my mother.

"You are shouting at me when I birthed you? What wi your father say Sisanda?", Sisanda throws her hands in the air.

"I give up. I am going to call my husband", she stands up and walks out.

My mom pretends to hiccup and I just watch her.

"Who is that boy?", I swallow.

"Mkhuleko Mah?"

"Call my husband", she makes crying noises. I stand up and I go and call her husband before she starts her tantrums.

MKHULEKO

I really was looking forward to spending time with Malwande. Even now I still can't believe that she is my woman. I find it better when I sleep next to her it doesn't subside the nightmares, I still have them but she does this thing when I am asleep with slowly rubbing me when I am sleeping and it calms me down a bit. I am scared that one day I will wet the bed like a little boy and she would leave me with my demons. Many of the women loved me for money but when it came to that they packed up and left. I started keeping to myself alot. I still despise my mother. She put me in the position that I am in. I become this little boy that seems to be lost and in need of some care and love as well.

I drove from Malwande's apartment. I didn't mean to point her mother with a gun. I have to apologize when I see her again. She seemed traumatized at that. I take my phone and call Duze. He answers on time.

"Bafo"

"I am sleeping at your house tonight", I say.

"Okay, it's open."

"Sure then, have you heard from Vukani?", I ask softly.

"No, I haven't. I thought you knew something", unlike him.

"Okay I will call him later"

"Okay", we hang up.

NANDIPHA

I have been standing the whole day and this grey foosball called Mr Nyathi was here all day. I heard that the money he has he invested it somewhere that is why he never runs out of it but enjoys the interest rate of it rather than the money he invested. Smart I have to say about that. His son is another headache that I can handle nothing is too much for Nandipha. Never !I am glad that I am done with work for today now I can go home and check on my mother. She is my main worry right now since Phumzile is not around here. Dinner will be served by the other helpers today not us so we are knocking off right on time. I am just left with placing the clean ironing where it should be then we are leaving with aunty Futhi. I go to the guest room and I go an place the clean linen in the wardrobe and when I am done I walk out of the guest room. I hear some shouting on the next room.

"Fuck that deal I want things in order as in tomorrow you hear me or you will be fired !", I go there and I open the door and see the angry bird shouting through the phone. He swiftly turns my way and the frown is not missed with the vein popping out of his forehead.

"What!?! Are you obliged to do that in my room?", I walk inside.

"I can do whatever I want ngeke ngizwe ngawe(I won't hear from you)", I shove the basket in his hands and I go and sit on his desk.

"Mmh what work is this?", he places his thumb and index finger on his nose showing frustration.

"Don't touch my things or else..."

"Or else what? Sit down and let me tell you something", he looks at me. I turn around the chair and look at his papers.

"Well I am waiting"

"Leave my room", I turn to him.

"That's the thing. You don't ask nicely boy and also speak to me like you are speaking to a human being not a piece of object", I smile and raise my brows.

"What do you want?"

"Ask Nicely"

He shakes his head and chuckles.

"I am being tested"

I get up from the chair and go towards him and take my basket.

"I will teach you Ubuntu Wena uzongazi(I will teach you humanity you will know me)", I walk out of his room.

MALWANDE

We or should I say I managed to calm my mother down after some dramatical sobs that she had performed. My father was not called of which I appreciate that my mother didn't push. I had forgotten that everyone in my family has keys to my apartment. This will be a problem if my father comes randomly. What if I want to get down with Mkhuleko? Will I get down with him ? Ofcause i want to have Sex with him I really do. My mother has went to go and lie down while Sisanda and I ordered food. I am so happy to see my older sister. It has been so long since I last saw her and she lives in Pretoria with her husband. We are cuddled up on the couch while eating some take away watching something else than my regular show. She takes a bite off her food and looks at me.

"So who was that man?"

"Who?", I stuff my face.

"You know what I am asking", she says eager to hear what I have to say.

"Mkhuleko", I shut it there.

"Mkhuleko who? Doesn't he have a surname?"

"I don't want to talk about it for now", she nods.

I focus on the TV. She nudges me, I look at her.

"Hey. I love you okay?", I nod and lay my head on her shoulder.

She removes my hair from my face.

"So tell me about your boyfriend", I sigh

"He is amazing so far, we will see"

She nods at that.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 8

I couldn't sleep while thinking of what my mother just did. Sisanda is next to me and my mother is in the other room. She ruined the possibility of me being scratched down there. I am itching and also I miss Mkhuleko. Funny enough I had just saw him a few hours ago but yes I do miss him. I turn my head to Sisanda through the darkness in the room and I reach for my phone next to me on the pedestal and I check the time. Its almost midnight. I send a message to Mkhuleko hoping he sees it and my phone rings after some time and I answer.

"Why are you not asleep?", He asks first.

"I miss you", I say

He is silent for a moment. Sisanda stirs and turns the other way.

"Mkhuleko", I say softly.

"You miss me?", I nod.

"Yes I do"

He is silent again.

"Should I Uber there?", I ask. Its a risk I have to take for me to get what I want.

"No, it's dangerous. I will come", I smile.

"Okay do you have condoms?"

"What?"

"Its okay you can come", I say.

He hangs up after that. I get off the bed.

"You are a bad sister. You are going to leave me to go and get laid?", I turned to Sisanda sitting up and opening the side lamp.

"You are married you get laid everyday", I say

"I will...", I turn to her.

"I will be back by morning I promise if not earlier", I say

"Its morning darling"

"Whatever"

"Buy me lunch"

I sigh.

"Deal", she smiles and I go and get something from the wardrobe.

"I need to shave", I take my cosmetic bag and rush out to the bathroom.

MKHULEKO

I couldn't sleep, when I closed my eyes it became one of those days so I decided to keep myself busy with some work when I received a text from Malwande. I wondered why she wasn't asleep but hearing her she misses me felt good. I felt a bit speechless but it felt amazing to hear that and so I here I am on my way to go to her. I do miss her too and maybe having her in my arms will make me feel better. Feeling her touch as it is also would be more to me. I passed by the 24 hour garage and went to fill in the tank. I went inside just to get some water and remembered Malwande Mentioned something about condoms. What? What was she meaning if she asked if I have condoms or not? Maybe her sister has her husband over and she is in need of an emergency but something. I buy a slab of Cadbury chocolate and I go and pay. After that I go to my car and pay for the fuel before I leave the garage and drive over to Malwande's apartment. When I get there I park my car and call her and she tells me she will be down in a minute so I wait for her. She comes down and rushes to my car and gets inside while wearing a silk gown.

"Hey...", she shuts me up with a kiss and I respond as passionately to the kiss.

"Why are you wearing a hoodie?", she speaks in between the intertwining of our lips and tongues.

"Its chilly outside babe", she smiles and breaks the kiss.

"You look handsome", I smile and shy away.

"Thank you"

She undoes her silk gown and I swallow as she reveals a black laced Lingerie underneath. She moves from her seat and climbs ontop of me settling her self right ontop of my

cock.

"Wande", she perks my lips and kisses my neck before she whispers in my ear.

"I want you to fuck me Nyathi", My body reacts to her words as she carries on kissing my neck. I swallow.

"How...How do you want me to fuck you?". She flicks a finger on my ear and her warm breath hits on my ear as she whispers.

"Hard and begging for more Baby" , she grinds on my cock and I curse under my breathe while closing my eyes.

"Fuck!"

I move my hands around her body and she holds my head and gives me a kiss. A knock on my window stopped us from going any further. We stop and she gets off me going to her seat and quickly wears her gown. I curse under my breath before rolling the window down.

"Sir you need to get into parking you will block other cars from coming out", the security man says.

"Sure", I faintly smile. I am a bit pissed. I was ready to pop my woman's cherry .

I roll the window up and look at Malwande.

"He ruined the moment", she says a bit pissed.

"We can try again", she shakes her head.

Well there it goes. I hit my fist on the steering wheel.

"Lets go to your house I want to sleep next to you", she says.

"Okay", I start the car and drive off from her apartment. Atleast she is leaving with me.

NANDIPHA

It's morning and the sun is about to rise. I sleep with my mother ever since she wasn't well just so that I could monitor her always. By 5 am I have to leave this house and go to work. I am preparing myself for my departure while I had just finished bathing and I am about to discard the bathing water outside the house and then I can brush

my cornrow and then wear my shoes before I leave. I take my bathing basin and my mother looks over to me while sleeping on her side.

"Nandi", I look at my mother.

"Mah"

"Kade ngikhuluma no Futhi uthi uyahlupha emsebenzini(I was talking to Futhi and she tells me that you are problematic at work)", she says and I keep my silence.

"Nandipha ngikhuluma nawe(Nandipha I am talking to you.)", I sigh and turn to my mother.

"I am not being problematic mah."

"I know you Nandipha. We need all the money we can get with Phumzile being in varsity she needs it too", I breathe out.

"I know"

"To whoever you insulted or talked bad to please go and apologize and shut your mouth", I nod.
I can't argue with her.

"I will"

"Go, you are stressing me out. Phumzile is graduating in years time wena you are stuck in one place. Ontop of that I get you a job you want to ruin it. Usiphuca isinkwa emlonyeni Nandipha(You are taking our bread away Nandipha!)", I walk out of the room.

She is starting again. I don't understand what I did wrong? I just don't like people who think highly of themselves and see others as nothing but for the sake of peace I will just keep quiet. I discard the water and I go back inside. I go and make instant soft porridge for my mother and after I help her eat. She sits up and she eats. After eating I get her medication and give it to her. After that I start doing my hair.

"You are going to be late", My mother says.

I nod and finish up getting ready on time and I take my things.

"Behave yourself Nandi I don't want trouble"

"Yebo mah", I walk out of the house after that to catch a taxi going to work.

MALWANDE

I was woken up by the lights shining into the room. One thing I hate about Mkhuleko's room is are the lights that come in and the fact that the window is glass. Yes people outside can't see what is happening inside but still it creeps me out at times. I look around and he is not in bed. I check the time and it's 6 am.

"Shit!", my mom is awake by this hour.

I check the bedside and my phone is not there then I remember that I left it at the apartment. I didn't intend on coming to sleep over it was not part of the plan. I get off the bed and leave it like that. Mkhuleko will have to see. I rush to the bathroom and I wash my face and brush my teeth with a clean tooth brush before I leave. I get down stairs and I find him in yesterday's clothes while on a phone call. I watch him as he leans against the glass wall while looking frustrated.

"Okay I hear you, I will see", he bites his bottom lip.

He sighs and then turns to me.

"I will call later on", he hangs up after that.

I walk towards him and look at his face. He has eye bags.

"Did you sleep?", he looks at me then looks down sighing.

"No"

"Why?", I ask.

He was next to me when I slept. Told me he had a few things to sort out before he comes and joins me.

"I couldn't sleep"

"Talk to me", I say

"You will be late for work.", he says walking off and I stop him.

"I will Uber. I can't let you drive in this state", he sighs

"Malwande"

"No"

"I don't like ubers. Take my car", he says.

"Promise you will rest", he nods.

"I promise baby"

"Okay then...", I give him a kiss and he responds.

"The keys are on the coffee table", I nod and thank him.

I go and take the keys then he walks me out. I get to the Mercedes and get inside. After that I wave and drive off. I just hope when I get to the apartment I would have some sort of story I will be spitting out of my mouth. Honestly I am worried about Mkhuleko very much. I am concerned about him more than anything. I drive all the way to my apartment and I arrive just on time. I quickly rush out of the car and lock it then go up to my apartment. I open the door and my mother is by the stove cooking porridge.

"Hello mah"

"Uphumaphi?(where do you come from?)", I am 25 with my own job and place Njalo.

"I..I was.."

Sisanda walks in.

"Did you get the tablets I asked for?", I just nod.

"Where are they?", My mom asks while frowning.

"In my gown pocket. I have to bath I will be late for work"

I run to my room and Sisanda walks in after some time while I take out what I will wear. She takes the car keys from the bed.

"You gave him that good that you got a Merc Mntase. Hayi!", she exclaims.

"We didn't do anything. The security man disturbed us downstairs", she gasps.

"I never thought, you of all people being that freaky"

"People change", I say

"Well you owe me", I sigh.

"I know, I know"

"Good then", being bribed by Sisanda is the worst.

Ever since I left home I haven't said anything at all. I don't want to upset my mother more and she is capable of saying harsh things that I don't need to hear at all.

Breakfast has been served and now I am waiting for the Nyathi men to finish just so I can go and collect the dishes for them to be washed. Aunt Futhi walks into the kitchen whole carrying a feather dust and places it on the counter.

"Wathula boh namhlanje akufani nawe (you are quiet today it's unlike you)"

"Nothing", I say.

"but Nandipha why can't you be like your cousin Phumzile. She is respectful and doesn't put stress on your mother. Look where you are and where she is, is this the life you want?"

"I didn't choose..."

"You create your own path Sisi. Don't fight people because we are not the ones who said you should disappoint us", I feel like a dagger has been inserted in my heart. My throat is burning and I am fighting tears.

She turns and meets Mr Nyathi. She bows her head.

"Mr Nyathi", she says softly.

"Call me Vukani mah", she nods.

"I brought these since no one was coming", he says bringing his plate forward.

"My apologies sir. Nandipha will go and collect everything", she says.

"Okay mah", she walks out. He takes his dish to the sink and I turn around to walk out.

"You are not greeting. How rude of you miss", his voice echoes the kitchen.

"You...you found me...me first here so..you should greet first", I struggled getting that sentence out. I then remember what my mother said.

"I am sorry Good morning"

As I am about to walk out he speaks.

"I heard what she said.", I turn to him.

"Don't. Don't say anything", I raise my hand while trying to take a deep breathe as a lump I fighting its way out.

"I am.."

"Don't please...you don't know anything so please", he sucks his breath in and comes my way.

"Cry", he says and pulls me into an embrace.

I release the lump and start sobbing softly on his chest making his white t-shirt wet.

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To be continued.

CHAPTER 9

I walk into my office, I will call Mkhuleko when I have settled down just to make sure that he really rests. I settle myself on my chair and breathe out while closing my eyes. A knock on the door disturbs my resting moment and I open my eyes to find Mr Mlaba's P.A in front of my door. I sit up properly.

"Come in", I say and she walks in.

"Good morning", she smiles.

"Good morning, these are the books Mr Mlaba would like you to look into this month"

"Is he in?", I ask.

"No he is not"

"When will he back?", I ask.

"He hasn't mentioned but it will be sooner.", I nod my head.

"Okay thank you", she smiles and walks out.

I take my phone and call Mkhuleko. It rings but doesn't go through. Maybe he is rested. He needs that. I was about to put my phone down but I needed to make one last phone call. I search for Vukani's numbers and I got them. I made the call and put my phone on my ear and stood up from my chair and went to stand by the window. It rings a few times and after some time it gets answered.

"Malw...Miss Miya", he clears his throat.

"Vukani"

"Is everything okay at work?", he asks. I breathe out and pace up and down the office.

"Yes everything is well. We need to talk about that night.", I say and I hear him sigh.

"What do you want to talk about it?"

"We can't avoid each other"

"I am not avoiding you...", I interrupt him.

"You are. You hardly miss a day at the office. I love Mkhuleko and I really love you little brother. I know there is something wrong with him but us being like this I don't

want to add stress to him already. You have to face me one way or another”

“Malwande!”, he speaks.

“Vukani listen to me, get your act together this is not on”, he breathes out.

“Fuck!”, he curses before he hangs up. I look at my phone and throw my hands in the air.

This man better get his act together for the sake of his brother. I am willing to move past it and not make things any awkward for him if he doesn't do the same. I go to my desk and a knock comes from my door. I look up and it's Craig with a bouquet of roses.

“Flowers for a beautiful lady”, he places them on my desk.

“Thank you. Please bring reports that I need to look into”, he nods slowly.

I go around my desk and sit down.

“Are you okay?”

“Yes I am okay”

“Okay then. I will bring the reports.”, I nod.

VUKANI

Nandi, yes that's her name. She left right after she cried without saying anything. Honestly I have been frustrated. With the whole Malwande situation has been getting to me, every since that day we kissed I can't stop imagining her in my arms kissing me again. Feeling her hold me while I pull her body close to mine. While I was holding Nandi I imagined Malwande crying and me comforting her. That's why I have been avoiding her. My father is more than happy to see me home than anything else. He doesn't even question when I am going back to Durban he is okay with me being here. When I received a call from Malwande I contemplated with myself if I should answer or not but I did. When she mentioned Mkhuleko I felt bad. My brother, my little brother. I haven't checked on him because I don't want to disturb him after what I requested and did to him

I felt ashamed to even face him. I know he goes through things but I know Duze is close by and Malwande, hopefully Malwande will look after him in my absence. I heard breaking sounds and I had to cut the call short. I was feeling hard after the conversation but I had to fix myself. I did that and rushed down the stairs with a frown on my face.

"What is going on?", I find Nandi with some other cleaning lady picking up a broken whiskey bottle. The most expensive one yet and my father's favourite.

"What is that breaking?", it's my father.

I can see fear masked in the eyes of the other lady yet not the cry baby who is on her knees attempting to pick up the broken glass. My father walks in and he frowns upon what he sees.

"We are...", the fearful one starts stuttering.

"I will pay for it baba"

"Who broke it?", Nandi looks up to my father.

My father looks at her.

"You get up!", she does and he marched towards her but I stand in front of her.

"I broke it baba", his breathing heavily.

I know him. I know he would've laid his hands on her. Its not about the whiskey but how expensive it is.

"Better pay for it", I nod as he clicks his tongue looking at the girls and walks off.

"You didn't have to lie, it's a sin", I hear the cracking voice behind me.

I turn and look at her.

"Clean it up, you go upstairs.", she looks at me before marching up the stairs.

"Don't you ever mention anything that happened here", The helped nods quickly.

I rush up the stairs and find her standing by the end of the stair case staring into the painting on the wall.

"You should go home"

"Don't pity me. I don't want that plus I am here to work"

"I don't care"

"Do you ever care?", she turns to me.

"Do you care about how people feel around you? Being rude to them? You know kindness goes a long way and silence is the best weapon"

"Seems like you don't know how to shut up sometimes", she looks at me.

I have to admit she is beautiful. She smiles and laughs lightly leaving me in confusion.

"Are you okay?", she shakes her head.

"I feel free...", she laughs and closes her eyes before taking a step towards the stairs and she almost falls but I catch her.

"You will injure yourself"

She opens her eyes and looks at me.

"If I didn't love my mother so much I would've loved to tumble these long stairs", she giggles.

"Are you high?", she doesn't seem like it?

She shakes her head.

"No, I am normal", I frown.

"Should I take you home?"

"Why are you mean?"

"Why are you mean?", I ask

"I am not mean, I just pushy that's all..."

"Nandi"

"I didn't ask to be who I am. For my father to leave, for me to struggle in school. I love art and it was never there at school. I didn't go to a school where it provides what I am really passionate about and good at. I used to go to the art gallery in town and get inspired. I wanted to be a Interior designer. Your home looks wonderful with its interior features but when you are black those type of dreams are crushed simply because they are said to be not real jobs. I try my best. Phumzile does Medicine and she is praised. She was good in science and I wasn't. I work for

her and my family. Its all about her and now I am causing trouble. I am the problem always. I love my mother. I never looked at a man in that sense to have feelings for them. I shut every man that came my way because i wanted to make my mother proud even if I am not like Phimzile. She came back and demanded to be cleansed because she miscarried and they did that for her. Why can't I do right?", I didn't know what to say.

"I am not a motivational speaker so all answers you can seek in you just push yourself.", she smiles and nods.

"Thank you.", We both lean in and our lips touch but no one is moving, she looks at me.

The environment is now filled with much tension. She closes her eyes and breathes out before I pull her close to me and softly kiss her lips before she tries to respond to the kiss.

NANDIPHA

He hovers over me as I am pinned on the wall. His one hand on the wall and the other is placed on my waist. My heart starts beating fast when I feel his boner on my stomach and I gently place my hands on his shoulders and push him back a bit.

"I am sorry", he quickly says and closes his eyes.

"It's okay we are both at fault."

We keep quiet for a moment.

"I need to leave. I don't want to be part of the maid Statistics", he opens his eyes.

"That is?", he raises his brow.

"Loosing my virginity to my boss and getting pregnant then have to raise a child on my own while struggling", he lightly chuckles.

"I am all things but heartless", I look at him.

"I cross my heart", he makes a cross over his heart.

"But it was mistake and also", I push him off me a bit harder now.

"Don't ever take advantage of a vulnerable woman. It shows an ugly side of you", I walk away after that.

I hope Aunty Futhi didn't see us or I am in big trouble. I just hope he stays out of my way. I can't stop touching my lips. He kissed me and he is such a great kisser. Not that I have kissed many men but I knew I would fall into a messy temptation that moment.

MKHULEKO

I took time to rest after Malwande left and it was only for 3 hours. I took a shower there after and embarked my way to the taxi rank so I can see Duze. No one knows what I really go through with the nightmares but my brothers try to be as supportive as they can. I haven't heard from Vukani in a while. I saw missed calls from Malwande. I will call her in a short while I just want to feel fully awake and not as tired. I parked my car by the side of the road and placed my head on the steering wheel. I can't take this, I don't like this feeling anymore. The feeling of feeling this useless and bad and like a little boy. The process of getting my bed wet every chance I get. Malwande might seem to take it now but for how long will she take it? I started the car and drove off. Sometimes I wish that my mother killed me when she got the chance and finished every task she tried to achieve maybe I wouldn't be suffering for so many years in silence. No one will understand what I am going through.

"Peep peep!", I lay my head on the steering wheel as tears stream down my cheeks.

MALWANDE

It has been a long day that I requested for food go be delivered to my apartment for Sisanda and Mom as I can't take her out right now. I am swamped in work and Vukani is no where to be seen at the moment. It has been hours since I talked to Mkhuleko so I will just drive to his place

and check on him. Firstly I miss him and secondly I am still worried about him. Maybe I should talk to him about talking to a shrink if he doesn't want to talk to me. I think the nightmares have an impact. Maybe he has a calling who knows?

My phone rings as I am typing away and I think it's Sisanda but it is Mkhuleko. My face lights up.

"Mkhuleko, How are you?"

"I am hurt Wande. I wanted to die I am sorry", my heart skips a beat.

"Where are you?", I hear him sob as I stand on my feet grabbing my bag and car keys.

"I love you so much, I love you Wande but I have too many problems"

"Mkhuleko where are you?", I rush out of my office with Craig calling out for me.

"By North Beach"

"Okay I will call the ambulance just wait for me"

"I love you"

"I love you and we will get through this I am here. Okay?", I run down the stairs. I have no time to use the elevator. I am worried and it shot up sky rocket. The call ends and I feel like crying. I get outside and get inside the car. I cry there and there before I grab my phone and call the only person I can think off.

"Thumbu"

"Bhuti I need you..I can't..", I cry.

"Where are you, I will be there. Should I call baba?"

"No, please don't", I sniff.

"Okay"

"Please meet me by North beach"

"Okay I will don't cry I love you", Thalente says.

"I love you too ", we hang up.

I call the ambulance and start the car before driving off.

CHAPTER 10

Thalente called me telling that he is on his way to North beach. As i am driving I can't help but feel worried and actually hoping that Mkhuleko is okay when I reach there. The robots are the only things that are irritating me at the moment as they keep on closing and opening as I am driving. I get by North beach and there seems to be traffic. I get out of the car as soon as I am parked and rush up to the front where I see Mkhuleko's car crushed. My heart skips a beat and the police are already here. I rush up to the officer that I see first.

"Where is my boyfriend?", my voice is shaking.

"He was just taken right now to the hospital"

"Whi...", I felt chest pains that moment.

"Malwande!", I hear someone calling me.

I search around and I see Thalente rushing towards him but the cops stop him.

"Let me through that's my sister!", he says aggressively.

They do and he comes my way and crushes me into a hug as I cry.

"Bhuti he is not here. What if he...",he Hushes me.

"Everything will be okay"

"I won't be okay until I see him"

"What do you want to do next?", he asks

"I just want to see Mkhuleko. He needs me"

"Okay, whatever you need I am here", I nod.

I just hope we find Mkhuleko and he is okay.

VUKANI

It has been a day for me and quiet long. It felt like it when it isn't that long. I am in my bedroom as my phone rings and it's Duze. I take it and answer the call.

"Bafo"

"Yabona Wena usuzoshawa yini ngikusakaze ngenhlamvu(I will hit you and out a bullet through you)", he says angrily.

"What did I do?"

"Ubalekisa okomfazi. Ungangidini, ngikufuna eThekwini njengamanje !(you are running away like a woman. Don't piss me off, I want you in Durban as in Now!)", he spits.

"I will come tomorrow", I say. I don't want to argue with Duze.

"Mkhuleko is admitted. He got Into an accident so I suggest you come now! Inform baba", I suddenly feel worried.

"Is he okay?"

"Come and find out for yourself"

He hangs up after that. I quickly get up and go to the closet and grab a change of clothes and I change them. I then walk out and grab my car keys and walk out of my room. I shouldn't have left,I shouldn't have talked about my feelings for Malwande. I should let them go just for the sake of my brother. I don't want him hurting.

I go to my father's office and I open the door. He looks up at me with a frown on his face.

"What is it? "

"Mkhuleko just got in a car accident", he stands up.

"If he is hurt I swear people are dying", he opens the drawer on his desk and takes his gun.

"Lets go", he grabs his fadora and we leave the room.

"Nganitsela ngaleli leli Theku Vukani(I told you about this Durban Vukani!) call one of the maids she is leaving with us", I didn't ask as he walked out seemingly pissed off.

I go to the kitchen and bump into Aunty Futhi.

"Mah ubaba needs one of the maids to leave with us to Durban right now it's an emergency we will be back by tomorrow", I say

"Okay, I will get one she will come right now."

I nod and I rush out of the house and meet my father already inside his car. He doesn't like anyone driving his car beside himself. He takes out a cigarette and he lights it up before he takes a puff and passes it to me.

"No thank you", he shakes his head while clicking his tongue.

I am in no state to smoke. I see Nandipha coming out of the house and I jump out of the oassanger seat. She doesn't look as pleased as she comes towards me.

"If anything happens to my mother I am blaming you", she says and I open the back door for her.

"Is she okay?", I ask concerned.

"She is not well but I can't trust aunty Futhi to take care of her so well", I just nod.

"Don't worry she will be okay"

She huff and gets inside. I get in too and close the door while she looks at me.

My father throws away his cigarette. When we come back that stud won't be there I know.

MALWANDE

We got to the hospital and I asked for Mkhuleko and they told us that we should wait a bit a doctor will be sent for us. We did settle down and I didn't want to cry but be strong for Mkhuleko. He is going through things that he is not telling me about. I just want to hold him and hug him at that moment. Hear him speak.

"You have a new boyfriend?", I look at Thalente as he speaks before I look down.

"It just happened"

"Malwande I know you are kind at heart but you let these men play you"

"Mkhuleko is different"

"How? Not so long ago you were single.", I suck my breath in and breathed out.

"Please trust me", he presses his lips together before he nods slowly.

"Fine", I nod.

"Thank you".

We sit in comfortable silence with him comforting me and the doctor comes towards us.

"Mr Mkhuleko Nyathi", I stand up removing myself from Thalente.

"Yes how is he doc?"

"Just a broken arm and a light scratch on the face. We out a cast on him so he is discharged now", I breathe out.

"Oh my God thank you", he smiles.

"My pleasure. He will be here shortly", I nod.

"Thank you", he nods and walks off.

I press my hands together thanking the God above for these lovely news.

"Nyathi?", I turn to Thalente who is waiting for me to explain.

"Yes", I say softly.

"You know Dad despise that surname. You won't succeed in this relationship"

"It just happened Thalente could you please be supportive and just stop being up in who I date. You are always single I am starting to question it!"

"Maybe if the woman I loved with my whole heart didn't get shot and die in front of me in highschool maybe I would be backing off!", I keep quiet for moment.

"Gugu?", he sinks into the waiting room chairs.

I swallow and look at him. Gugu Thwala. She used to be Sisanda's friend. A crime gone wrong KwaMashu resulted her in being on the firey end of the bad luck. Thalente used to treat our friends like his siblings. Caring and over protective of us. I never thought he loved her. When Gugu died it was at night. She needed to go to the store to buy something before she left for home and it was after her visit with Sisanda. Thalente offered to accompany her as it was not safe to walk all alone outside at night and that is when it happened. Thalente was injured but luckily it was the shoulder but for Gugu it wasn't luck. It was the heart that got penetrated.

He puts his hands on his face.

"Let's not talk about it"

"I am sorry", I say softly.

I don't know what to say. We keep our silence for a while and I see Mkhuleko coming our way with a nurse behind him. I faintly smile and go to him and hug him as he hugs me back with his one arm gently.

"You gave me a fright", he kisses my forehead.

"I am sorry", the nurse hands the envelope to him.

"Your appointment has been booked for next week", she says

"Thank you", she walks off.

"Baby talk to me", I say.

"I will I just need to rest."

"Malwande", I turn to Thalete who has an explain look.

"Bhuti this is..."

"Go to the car and you stay away from my sister if you know what's good for you", He interrupts me and says that.

"Bhuti!"

"Go to the car now Lwande or I am calling baba", I suck my breath in.

"It's okay, you can go", I turn to Mkhuleko.

"You are not well"

"Don't fight with family Wande.", I bite my bottom lip. Thalete pulls me away.

"If I see you near my sister I will deal with you", he says as he pulls me away.

"Bhuti please", I say and he stops his tracks and roughly makes me stand in front of him before he points his finger to me.

"This is shit Malwande! Did you see that boy looks like?", I nod slowly.

"Yes, I have"

"So you expect baba to accept that?!"

"I want him okay? His father and my father are the people that have problems not us, please understand"

"I will understand in heaven let's go", he pulls me.

I hate this. I thought maybe he would be a bit okay but he is not.

NANDIPHA

Being in the car with these two men I something else. What if they are going to kill me and bury me wherever we are heading to? I am worried about my mither and i wish time flies for me to be back home and take care of my mother. I feel a bit tired as the drive commences. The car is really soothing me yet this old man ia driving in speed. I don't know how many parking tickets he will get just for exceed the speed limit.

"We are entering Durban", Vukani announces like he is the one driving.

I look at him from the side and turn to look outside the window.

"This place brings back memories", Mr Nyathi says softly thinking we can't hear him.

Vukani leans by my ear and whispers softly.

"Are you tired?", I nod slowly.

I see the hospital and Mr Nyathi finds parking. He gets out without talking and goes inside. Vukani takes off his jacket and puts it over my shoulders.

"Rest a bit, I will be back"

"I am not charmed by a jacket", he laughs.

"I know.", I yawn and he gets out of the car leaving me inside.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 11

MKHULEKO

I sat down as I waited for Duze to come and fetch me. I have called him to come. I don't have a next of Kin because i fekt like I don't need one. My brothers love me and so as my father but this battle in life is for me and me only. I bury my head between my hands as I wait.

"Bafo!", i look up and see my father with Duze and Vukani coming my way

I sat up and adjusted my arm collar. They reach me in a matter of time.

"What happened?", Vukani is the first one to ask.

"Who crashed into your car?", My father asks.

He is ready to fight I know that but no one was in the wrong beside myself.

"I crashed into the robot", I say.

"What happened?", Vukani asks again.

I suck my breath in and release it.

"It's nothing bad.", Duze sits next to me.

"Bafo we care about you so what is going on?", He looks at me.

"Malwande", I say breathing out.

They look at each other.

"What did she do?"

"Baba", I look up to my dad.

"What really happen between you and Zweli Miya?", his face changes.

"What do you want from him?"

"His daughter", I say.

"That man has too much pride he won't let you have his daughter"

"Not if you fix the shit you made with him",Vukani sasy. He turns to Vukani and points a finger at him.

"Watch your mouth boy!"

"Let me go",he walks off.

"Stay away from that Man's daughter", he says.

"I won't and you will fix whatever is going on", I stand up as he clenches his jaw before I walk off as well.

I won't stop loving Malwande. I want her, I really want her.

NANDIPHA

I was woken up by the door opening slamming and I sat up straight from my short nap. I stretch myself. It is Vukani.

"Are we going home now?", I ask.

He keeps his silence and I do the same. I sigh and try to talk again without acting like the Nandipha I usually am.

"Vukani"

He turns to me.

"What Nandipha, don't you see I don't want to talk?!", I keep my silence holding my tongue back.

"Okay", I turn and lay my head on the window and close my eyes.

I hear him heave a heavy sigh before I feel his arms around me.

"I am sorry"

"I am not your girlfriend nor toy", I say while my eyes are closed.

"I know, I am really sorry", he sighs.

"I will tell you some time what is going on", I keep quiet.

"Let's get something to eat"

"I am not hungry", I say

"Nandi"

"Please get off me"

"I won't until you agree to eat", I keep my silence.

"Why am I here?"

"My father doesn't travel without a Helper. We don't have helpers in our houses"

"Basically he is lazy"

His deep voice vibrates by my ear as he chuckles.

"Yes",he says.

"Can I ask a question?"

"Sure",he clears his throat.

"Are you married?", He chuckles.

"I wish,no I am not"

"Why?", I ask

"I was busy building an empire that I never saw a necessity to have a wife and kids but then when I wanted to settle down with a certain lady she was taken in front of me", he sighs.

"I am sorry, So you are a celibate?", he laughs.

"What? No? Why would you think that?"

"Phela ushimile ngizothini?(You are single so what can I say?)"

"That doesn't mean I can't get any."

"No self love there"

"What should I do then?",His warm breath hits my neck.

"Get a girlfriend is a starter"

"I need the best candidate then Mngani", I frowned.

"I am not your friend"

"Well you are now. Plus we hardly have friends it's just the three of us"

"Why?"

"Story for another day", I just say Mmh.

"I am hungry", I say

"Let's go to my house. We will take my brother's car",I look at him.

"Don't worry I won't do anything"

"Okay",he lets me go and gets out of the car.

He goes around and comes to open the door for me while I sit up. Honestly I get why he is single. Udelela Kabi Loh ubani ongamelana nodoti onjalo(He is very rude, who would stand up for that rubbish) so I understand quiet well.

I haven't talked to Thalete since we left the hospital. I didn't even get the chance to kiss and ask how Mkhuleko is and how he really feels. He worries me and that is what is stressing me more than the threats from Thalete about telling my father that I am dating Nyathi's son. Why do we have to get involved ngempela ngempela?

"So you are going to ignore me?", Thalete asks as he is driving while stealing glances from me.

"What should I say? You said a mouth full already"

"Don't give me that attitude Malwande ngimdala kunawe(I am older than you)", he says.

"You are treating me like a child"

"Like you always want to be treated."

"What is that supposed to mean?", he keeps his silence.

"But Bhuti you have to understand..."

"What will I say mese ufela khona(If you die there?)"

"I wouldn't trust me."

"Malwande you don't understand. You would not understand", he says.

"What would I not understand? Do you know something that I don't know?", I ask

"No", he says quickly.

"Thalete"

"Let's leave this topic Malwande!", I huff and fold my arms while looking out of the window.

I have to find out why my father has so much hate towards the Nyathi's. Its not about Mr Nyathi doing what he did it is really beyond that. I am being crucified for it with Mkhuleko. I won't let this go until I find out what is really going on....

NANDIPHA

We left using Vukani's brother's car to his house. He said something about residing near Umhlanga but not quiet there I don't know that's what I heard. Umhlanga was what I really heard. I kept on looking outside the window

as the drive commences and watch the beautiful ocean as we are driving by. My phone rings and I take it out. It's my mother, I sigh and take a hold of it.

"Mah", I cover my phone.

"Nandi, I heard you went to Durban with the Nyathis", she says.

"Yes"

"Awu Kuhle yazi(that's great), Phumzile just called and she needs money she is short and uthi akanayo into yokudla(She doesn't have anything to eat)", I huff.

"I don't have my bag here"

"Lend some from there, please mntanami and they will deduct from your salary"

"I will see", I won't do that.

"Okay, I love you"

"I love you too", I hang up after that.

"Everything okay?", I look at him.

"Yes", he nods.

We keep our silence until we get to his house and he parks the car upfront before we hop out of the car. I look at his place and it looks amazing.

"Wow", I say softly.

"Come", we walk inside and I can't stop looking around. Its simple, its elegant, it shouts bachelor as well.

"You live alone", I say

"I do, the kitchen is this way", he says.

We walk to the kitchen and I fall in love with it. I love the simplicity in here. I keep on walking around and touching.

"Can you cook?", I turn around to him.

"Ofcourse I can", he bites his bottom lip.

"That's a lie right there", he chuckles.

"Well I eat at Duze's house sometime or Mkhuleko stays with me. He can cook"

"Who is Duze?", I ask

"Mduduzi"

"Why is it Duze instead of Duzi then?"

"Pronunciation gone wrong", I giggle.

"Sure"

"Everything you need is in here "

"Might as well start cooking", I smile.

He comes closer and kisses my forehead.

"Okay", he walks off. I stand right there for a second.

"Get it together Nandipha", I say to myself before I start moving around the kitchen.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 12

It's morning and I haven't talked to Thalete since yesterday when he dropped me off at my apartment. He made sure that I stay here because he kept on telling me that if I move my mother will notify him if I am leaving. I am being treated like a child here and I think today my mother is leaving and Sisanda is staying for a day or two before she leaves for Pretoria. They should go at once, not that I don't love my sister but they have overstayed shame I won't lie. I can't even have Mkhuleko over or go to him without being questioned. It's like I am a child in my own place. I finish getting dressed and I will go and take a taxi today. It has been some time. A week or so since I took one but it feels like It has been so long. I get done and get my things before I walk out of my bedroom. I find my mother in the kitchen making breakfast.

"Sit down the food is almost ready"

"I can't, I have a meeting today", lies

She folds her arms.

"So?"

"I don't want to be late. Sorry mah", I say and kiss her cheek.

"Bye, I will see you later", I rush out before she says anything further.

I breathe out once I am outside and get down stairs. I get out of the gate and go to the taxi stop and wait for a taxi to come. It comes after some time and I get in before it goes off to town.

MKHULEKO

We were all stuck at Vukani's house. Honestly I don't hate him, I really don't. Yes I was mad and hurt at first with what he wanted but now I am not. He is my brother at the end of the day and a great one at that. I can't let one thing get in between us plus they are the only people I

have in my life since I was young. Malwande called last night to check up on me and I told her that I am okay even though she didn't believe me but I stuck to eat I said. I miss her, I really do.

I woke up to the bed wet and I sighed and went to shower. I hardly slept last night and it seemed a bit worse. Seems like I am going to that place I once was in when I met Malwande. I can't seem to function well when I am in that state and I don't like it. I don't want Malwande to experience it with me. It's only unfair. After the shower I got out and dried myself before I pulled the sheet off and the water proof one under. When I was done I sat on the bed and placed my hand on my face before I sighed. My phone rings and I reach for it and answer it.

"Bafo"

"Bafo, your woman is getting taxi's that is not right", I forgot that I fetch Malwande and take her to work every morning.

"I am coming there"

"No, I will take her to work.", Duze says.

"Okay then. Thank you"

"Are you okay though?"

"Yes I am, I will see Makwande after work", I say.

"Here she is", I hear some shuffle.

"Baby, how are you? I miss you", I want to laugh but instead I smile.

God knows how much I love this woman and I fear one day she won't be able to handle this anymore and find a man who does not have any problems like mine.

"I miss you too"

"Talk to your brother I want to skip work and spend the day with you just this once", she is begging.

"I will speak to him"

"Okay, thank you"

"Malwande, I love you", I say.

"I love you too Mkhuleko", I bite my bottom lip preventing

myself from smiling.

"Okay, I will see you just now"

I hang up after that. I get off the bed and I take my linen and I go to the laundry room with it. I shove it in the washing machine and then turn it on. After that I go to the dining room and I find my dad there reading a news paper. Every morning he always does this.

"Baba", I sit down and he lowers his news paper to acknowledge me.

"Mkhuleko we need to talk"

I nod as he folds the news paper and places it on the table.

"I think you should move back to Hilton with me"

"Kodwa baba I am 30. I have a hotel to oversee I have things here to do"

"I know kodwa udinga ukubona umuntu manje. Khona okungahambi Kahle.(You need to see a Sangoma, something is not right)"

"I will do so but I am staying here"

"Is it about that Miya girl?"

"Yes, ngiyamuthanda baba lokho ngeke kushintse(I love her dad, that won't change) I don't care what you say. All I want is for you to fix things with her father that's all. Whatever it is and she is coming this morning.", he kept quiet right after that.

He stood up and took his newspaper and walked off.

NANDIPHA

I had to wake up as early as possible without any cosmetics here for me. Yes I was lended some manly products but now I smell like a man. Can't they cater for women as well or is it because I have never seen a woman in these men's lives. Who am I kidding? I have only been here for what? 5 minutes? I am waiting for the dishes to come. Usually I eat at home before I go for work just so I have energy. Yesterday I ate late and Vukani stayed up

just so he could show me the room I had to use as I was staying there. I am busying myself while waiting to be called to collect the dishes. I am wiping the kitchen counters as it is when Vukani walks into the kitchen.

"Good morning", he says and places his laptop bag on the kitchen counter.

"Morning"

"I won't be here for breakfast. I have to be at work", he says.

"Oh, okay", why is he nice? Weird.

"I will send someone by 13:00 to come and fetch you so you can bring me lunch", he takes his laptop bag.

"What?"

"Bye Nandi..", he turns and walks out.

"Wait!..", he is out of sight.

This man! By that hour I want to be home. I am just worried about my mother being away from me for far too long. This is not on really. I sigh and carry on with what I was doing.

MALWANDE

I was happy that I was going to see Mkhuleko. No one can stop me from seeing him. I am 25 years for goodness sake not a child! Duze is the one driving me to Vukani's house. Apparently Mkhuleko is there.

"My father is in town. Just a heads up", I look at Duze and swallow.

"Do you think he would be angry?", he shrugs his shoulders.

Well that is not good enough at all.

"Oh", I don't know what to say.

Scared is an understatement at this moment. I am terrified. We get to Vukani's house and we hop out of the car. I see Mkhuleko standing by the door waiting for me. I rushed to him and gave him a hug. He flinched a bit.

"I am sorry"

"The rib area is a bit painful for now", he says.

"I had missed you so much, you don't know"

"I did too", I give him a kiss.

"Is your father here?", he nods and I breathe in and out.

"I am terrified"

"I spoke to him"

"And ?"

"Everything will be fine. I promise", I nod and he kisses my forehead.

"Come", we walk inside the house.

I am holding onto Mkhuleko as we are walking in. We see a young woman serving an old Man something to drink and I assume it's Mkhuleko's father. The Mr Miya. He has aged but aged finely. Money is treating him well.

"Baba", Mkhuleko says to get his attention.

He turns to us. I am so very nervous.

"This is Malwande Miya. My woman", he continues.

"Sawubona", I say softly.

He stares at me for a while and I look away to Mkhuleko's direction.

"You look like your mother", he takes his drink and gets up from the couch and walks away.

I look at Mkhuleko.

"He likes you", I hit his shoulder.

"Don't play like that"

"I am being serious."

"Come let me nurse you back to life", I say and he has a conniving smirk on his face.

"Don't think with your bottom brain Nyathi"

"Okay", he pulls me as he leads the way up to stairs.

We walk up the stairs and enter his room. I feel like a teenager at the moment sneaking in his home. His father is very intimidating and that just scares me a little.

"Baby are you okay?", is the first thing I ask when I sit down on the bed.

He looks at me for a while and nods.

"Mkhuleko you know I am here for you"

"Are you?"

"Yes and i am concerned about you. Alot. "

"Its alot Wande. I don't know if you will handle it"

"Try it", I say

"One day", I bite my bottom lip and nod. I don't want to pry him too much.

"Okay"

I am really worried about Mkhuleko. He is myakn concern now than anything.

THALENTE

It has been what ? Over 10 years, almost 20 years since Gugu died. To this day I blame myself. I could've protected her. I should've known, I am the one to blame but everyone kept on trying me that I shouldn't blame myself. I am at the grave yard. Today was supposed to be her birthday. How I wish she was here. I would've made her my wife a long time ago. Had kids and given her the world she needed but she is not here. I see her tombstone and I look at the flowers in my hand before I crouch infront of it.

"Happy birthday Precious",I lay the flowers on the tombstone.

I can't let her go. I try but I can't seem to be able to succeed. People are finding love yet my love died with her that day.

NANDIPHA

Mr Nyathi is very demanding. I thought by now we would've left but it seems like we are staying. I want to call home but my only problem is my mother wantingoney for Phumzile. Where would I find her if I am searching for her here ? I doubt she will even answer my phone call. She hardly does when she is away.

I am no slaving away around the kitchen to cook lunch.

Also I am skeptical of going to Vukani's work place. What is this man playing at? I don't want to go there. Simple! I won't go there. My plan seems to be coming in motion as I think of that. I won't go and there is nothing anyone can do about it but what I love about being here is that I don't have to do much work. Clean here and there then cook. I hear some laughter from the living room and in walks in the owner of this place. It is not even 13:00.

"Honey I am home!", he says and i throw a swab at him and he catches it.

"Don't say that"

He chuckles and comes my way and takes some chopped carrots and pops them in his mouth.

"I will hit you Vukani"

"I will get you arrested", He chuckles.

"I am being serious", I take the swab from him and carry on with cooking.

"It smells nice in here", he says.

I keep my silence. He stands behind me and I feel his warm breath on my neck.

"You smell nice"

"I smell like you", I say a bit softly.

My throat feels dry at that moment.

"It smells better on you", Nandipha!

"Please can you move back so I can carry on with cooking"

"Mmmh"

A lady walks in the kitchen wearing big slides.

"Oh I am sorry", she says as I push Vukani away and carry on with what I am doing.

My heart is beating fast. God please can I not get fired.

"Malwande", He says.

"Vukani, how are you?", she walks to the sink.

I look at them.

"I am good and yourself?"

"Worried about your brother but I am good", she looks at me.

Did I do something like steal her man or something?

"Mmh", she says and gets water. As she is about to walk out I speak.

"If you have something to say please say it now and don't give me looks"

"I have nothing to say", she says and gives one last look at me and Vukani before she walks out.

"What was that all about?", Vukani spits.

"She is giving me looks I can't comprehend. If you fucking her then it's your business not mine"

"Let me leave before we both say something we will regret", he walks out. I click my tongue.

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To be continued

CHAPTER 13

VUKANI

After I left Nandipha in the kitchen. I felt a bit pissed I would not lie but I knew if I stayed I would've said a lot of things that would've led to a big fight. I am fighting the urge to take a smoke at the moment. It has been what? Months now since I last had a pull and I am trying to stay that way. One thing I know Duze won't stop. He is knee deep into his addiction. I went to stand by the pool side. Mkhuleko hates pools, very much that I have noticed and also bath tubs. He doesn't like them. He would rather not bath. I don't know why? I have to believe me to figure it out since he doesn't want to state the reason but I don't get anything. I know my brother has something bothering him but he doesn't want to voice it out. I am a genuinely concerned person believe me.

"I am sorry", I turn around and look at her.

"I shouldn't have spoken to you like that", she says.

I keep quiet and look at her.

"Uhm lunch is ready", she says.

"This behaviour doesn't suit you", she takes a deep breath in and bites her lips before nodding.

"Okay", she turns around.

"And Nandi..", she turns to me.

"How about you move to Durban and start schooling whilst having an internship?"

"That's wonderful but my mother. I can't leave her with my uncle"

"We will make a plan, move her to the hospice", I walk closer to her.

"Why? Why are you doing this?", She looks at me.

"I want to."

"Getting things from men leads to a lot of abuse later on in life because they feel entitled of you", she says.

"Where did you get that?"

"I read articles and Facebook"

I chuckle and shake my head.

"Well take it from a good Samaritan", she laughs.

"What?"

"The stories I heard about your family doesn't give off that someone could be a good Samaritan""Take it from me then. I am one",she just nods while giggling.

"Lunch is ready", she turns to walk away

"Can't I have you for lunch?", I say under my breath.

"What?", she turns to me.

"What?"

"What did you say?"

"Nothing", she looks at me and walks inside. I breathe out after that

MALWANDE

Honestly who is that lady to speak to me like that? What did I do because I just looked at them. Amazed as well as surprised. Not that I don't want Vukani to be happy but it just all seem fast. You know what I should just leave people's businesses and focus on my business because it's about to get tough than this. I walk in the bedroom and Mkhuleko is sleeping on his back. I get to him and shake him a bit before he opens his eyes.

"Come and drink your medication before you eat",he sits up as I sit next to him and hand him his medication and water.

He downs everything he needs to drink and hands the glass to me.

"Did you sleep?", he shakes his head.

"Should I get in bed with you?",he nods.

I place the glass next to the side lamp and I take off his shoes and get in bed with him. I place my arms around him and he heaved a sigh.

"Talk to me"

He looks up to the ceiling.

"I want to be normal Wande. I want to feel normal", he says.

"You are normal baby"

"I have never been. I am a grown man who...", he keeps his silence.

"Its okay, I love you regardless of that", I know what he means.

"We will get through it", he sighs.

"I want to close my eyes without experiencing any disturbance"

"Try and close them", he does and I keep my silence there after.

This man of mine needs some therapy I suspect. Maybe he will be more open to a stranger than to me. Anything to help him feel okay.

NANDIPHA

I couldn't hold myself any longer. I had to call back home because it seemed like we are not going back anytime soon. I am worried about my mother and I can't stress about it. The offer Vukani gave to me is very tempting but at the same time I can't leave my mother with Phumzile's father. That would be the death of her. I call my mother as the phone rings a couple of times before it got answered.

"Nandi kodwa Nkosi Yami(oh my God) Phumzile is waiting for you nemali kunini uyayi dings(With money she needs it)"

"I don't have money on me Mah, how are you?"

"How can I be okay when I know my brother's child is hungry out there?", I breathe in and out.

"Why doesn't she get a job like some student who work?", I am starting to get pissed off.

"She can't do that she has to focus at school"

"Mah I don't have time for this", I hang up after that.

This is stressing me and I can't take it anymore. Phumzile is always on a high pedestal and i can't take it any longer

now.

MALWANDE

It was getting late now and it was time for me to leave, my mother has called some time ago asking me when am I coming back home and I said I am held up at work and I will be back home a little later than normal. Mkhuleko slept for a while and I was happy that he got time to sleep without any disturbance. I prepared myself to leave and got out of his hold and he opened his eyes.

"Where are you going?", he asks

"Home, they are waiting for me", I say while getting out of the bed

"Don't leave"

"I am sorry baby I have to"

"Okay" ,he says after having a sigh

"I love you okay?", he nods

"Take my car"

"I can't ,How will I explain it to my brother and mother?"

"Please", he begs.

I am defeated at the moment. I sigh

"Okay I will"

"Let's stay for an hour", he says.

"But you have to eat"

"I will don't worry"

"I love you okay?", he nods.

"I love you Wande"

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CHAPTER 14

It's good that my mother and Sisanda have left my place. I love them yes but I cannot see my man properly. My concern for him grew each and every day, I mean why would it not but he keeps on assuring me that he is okay. That is my fear, him saying that he is okay when he knows that he is most certainly not okay. Anyway right now at work things are okay. Me and Vukani are not acting any weird around each other and I am happy about that because I really love my job and the company I am working for. I am not prepared to foa transfer or seek another company.

I am preparing myself to go to work and yes I am still using Mkhuleko's other car to travel. The one he crashed had to be fixed and he didn't want to so he is getting another one. Perks of having money. I wouldn't waste money like that but he has some point in doing this. Sometimes after a car accident a car doesn't function as well as it did before so I get why he is doing this but still... Anyway another thing is I haven't done the deed with Mkhuleko. Nothing I tell you and I really want to get down to it. Don't get me wrong I am not whoring myself to him. Okay maybe but he is my partner so shouldn't I be one for him?

I have just finished getting ready and I go and open the news channel while I go and make some cereals. My phone rings from the bedroom and I go and take it. Its Mkhuleko. I answer.

"Baby"

"How are you?"

"I am good Wena?(you?)" ,I ask

"I am okay" ,I sigh.

"Well I was thinking"

"Mmmh hhmm" ,he keeps his silence

"I think we should go for couples therapy" ,he keeps quiet.

"Why?"

"To strengthen our relationship", I say.

"We are okay though", he doesn't seem to like the idea.

"I know but baby think about it"

"Okay I will then", I know he would not but I will keep on pushing the idea.

"Thank you, I have to go. I will see you at lunch"

"Okay, I love you too", I smile as we hang up.

Maybe this will be a way for Mkhuleko to open up about whatever it is that he is going through. I really will try every way possible. I won't ask his brother as it is not his place to tell me anything.

I go to the kitchen and carry on with my cereals.

PHUMZILE

I have been stuck on eating noodles for the past week and only NSFAS will pull through for me on Monday next week. I don't really like noodles at all but what choice so I have. Being a Medical student is tough. Sometimes I want to drop out but then I think about the situation at home. My loving aunt and my dead beat father. I don't know my mother well. All I know is that she passed away when I was really young and that was it. I can't ask my father because he is not always home. I am working here for my future. I don't want my life to be on a stand still like Nandi's.

I have a boyfriend or should I say he is my beneficial friend Dr Lindokuhle. I met him at the hospital while we were doing one of our practicals and I won't lie I was taken by him from the first moment. He is not one to be messed with but when he smiles, laughs and his soft side comes out it looks magnificent. He is a man who keeps to himself and can make a girl shake with or without him being inside her. The type of man my aunt would be happy to have as a son in law. A Dr dating a future Doctor. I just wish he can ask for me to be his girlfriend. I know he doesn't have one so I am waiting for that moment.

The holidays will be approaching soon and I have to go

home. I can't wait but being in Durban is the best despite anything else. I love it here, the freedom and everything. Let me try my aunt again and hear what she says about the money I need. I haven't had some Steers in awhile so I need some.

VUKANI

My p.a bought my morning coffee when I needed it. Things have been okay between Malwande and I. I have decided to act professional and all that happened in the past be in the past. I sat on my chair leaning back as I called my P.A inside my office and she walks in.

"Mr Mlaba"

"Please get me in touch with Sasha's Interior designers", she nods

"Do you need a meeting ?"

"Yes please schedule one and call one of the Finance managers", she nods and walks out.

I carry on with my work. Nandi is a good girl who just needs a bit of a push in the right direction. The first night she was in my house she couldn't stop talking about the interior of it and I could see the passion in her eyes. I just want her to succeed. That's all. There is a knock on my door and I shout a come in and Malwande walks in the room and she stands in front of my desk.

"Mr Mlaba"

"You may sit down"

She does so.

"I want you to look into the company's budget and money we have. I am sure it would be enough to provide a scholarship"

"Is it a new project we have established?"

"No, it's for one person only", she frowns.

"Okay, we have funds. Should I draw up a contract?"

"I would love that"

"If this person fails qw are pulling out", she stands up.

"I will say when we should pull out even if she fails",she smiles.

"So it's a she...",she leans by the table

"You really have hots for her to do this. Nice of you just don't take advantage of her",she becomes serious.

"She Isa friend so I won't do anything",she nods.

"Email me her details and I will get the contract"

"Thank you",she walks off.

"And also don't impregnate her she has a future to secure!"

"Malwande Miya!"

"Sorry sir",she laughs and walks out. I shake my head. I hope Nandi takes this offer,she needs it.

NANDIPHA

Today is my day off. Finally we got back home and aunty Futhi took care of my mother well for me. My mother hasn't spoken to me since I came back home. About Phumzile not having some money. What does she really do with her NSFAS allowance cause I kmpq anoyt those R1500. It should be more than enough for her to eat ansgwt to school at times. Its draining to be working for her because I feel that way.

I am going to the salon in town just to get my hair done well and actually enjoy the salon experience. It has been long since I had some that and also maybe get myself something too. Some Honchos will do. I want to buy some snacks first so I go to Spar in town and I go straight for the snack aisle. I grab some Doritos and someone does the same the expensive perfume gave it away. My eyes moved along the Apple watch going onto the veined arm to meet a white t-shirt hugging the arm well to the face of the owner of this arm and I faced a handsome man with thick eye brows that are shaped well while mine are not. His pinkish lipa with a moustache on his face that is well connected. You know what I mean. He looks clean with no pimple in sight or maybe there is one while my cheek has

some. He is wearing a black cap at that and it's Nike. He seems to be on the phone.

"Bafo, I am coming back. You know Mah wants to see me every weekend", he speaks.

He frowns as he looks down on me and my hand on the Doritos. They Cost R20 so I don't know why I am picking them up. Ukuphapha nje.

"Sorry bafo wait a bit...ungibukani?(Why are you looking at me?)", he says with a frown and a rude(ish) tone.

I also frown "Kuzozonke izinto ezilah emvakwakho engizibukayo ucabanga ukuthi ngivuka Wena(Out of all the things behind you, you think I am looking at you)", he pulls the Doritos and looks behind me.

"You can't look at them because I am taller than you ", he is right.

I click my tongue and take the Doritos from his hands.

"Get yours next time sididi", I take some chocolate and I go to get some juice and I go to the till to pay. I pay for my things and leave the place

I walk towards where the salons are located and a Smokey grey BMW slows down next to me as I reach the robot. The window rolls down as I am waiting for the other cars to stop so I can pass.

"Sisi we Skhibha esibomvu(The lady in a red top)", I turn to it and it's the guy from Spar.

"My Name is Lindokuhle Nkosi. Not isididi. Get it right next time Ms Peng", The robots open and he winks at me before driving off.

Beautiful waste nxx!

MALWANDE

I am always happy when it is Knock off time I get to go and see Mkhuleko. Gosh what has that man fed me to feel like this. Ngathi ngiyahlanya(it's like I am crazy) and he is the only pill I need. I will drive through somewhere and get us something to eat before getting to his house. I pack

up my things I will deal with the contract tomorrow after I have sufficient information to use. A knock comes from my door And I look up to find Craig.

"Good bye Ms Miya"

"Bye Craig"

He walks off. I switch off my computer before I take my things and leave the office. I lock my office before I take out my phone to call Mkhuleko.

"MaMiya",he answers.

"I am on my way to your place I will sleep over. What should I bring?"

"You"

"Okay then that is guaranteed"

"But you remember Lindo from when I ate eggs",That rude beautiful man! How I can I forget such attitude he had on me without knowing me.

"Yes"

"He is coming to check on me then leave. Right now he is on his way from Pmb"

"Mmh okay",he better make his visit quick and I already don't like him.

"I will see you then", we hang up after argh God why me though.

I wish I could turn but Mkhuleko needs me especially since he can't use his other arm. I don't want him having Natasha there 24/7 that's too much for me so it's best if she comes during the day and I take over the rest sometimes. When he can handle himself I am at my apartment. I am not moving in with him no. I am just being caring girlfriend you know...

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To be continued

CHAPTER 15

I get to Mkhuleko's house and I didn't buy any take away. We have a guest coming so I have to cook. It has been literary so long since I cooked something. I am lazy I know but I can do some things when I needed require to go do. I park the car and hop out of the car and I take my things. There is a car parked just in front of this one and I assume it's the friend. I huff and sigh before I walk inside the house and hear people talking. I get to the lounge and find the guy standing by the table to pour whiskey while Mkhuleko is seated on the couch.

"Good day", I say and he turns with his glass towards me

"Good day", Atleast he greets.

"Baby this is Lindo you have met I assume", I nod

"I will start on cooking", I walk away before anything is about to be said.

I get in to the main bedroom and i place my things on the bed before I wear comfortable shoes and then I go to the bathroom and release myself before I am done and go down the stairs to get on my cooking. They are now both seated on the couch.

"What would you like to eat baby?" I ask looking at Mkhuleko.

"Anything"

"Except anything with eggs in it", The friend speaks.

"I know"

"Last time you weren't as smart on that", he says

"Excuse me?"

"Bafo cha, not with this one soxabana this is my woman you don't speak to her anyhow", the guy raises his hands in surrender and I click my tongue before leaving for the kitchen

Mkhuleko follows behind me as I go and open the top cupboard. He holds me from behind and kisses my neck.

That man pisses me off honestly.

"I am sorry"

"Tell him the only thing he is going to digest is that whiskey, I won't make food for him nx!"

"I will"

"Good"

"Are you angry at me?", I sigh

"No but your friend. Angangiphapheli ngizomphoxa (he must not be forward I will tell him off), I am not his friend", he laughs and turns around and hits his shoulder.

"I am serious"

"I know baby I know", he gives me a peck on the lips.

"I love you yezwa?", I nod

"I know"

He walks out of the kitchen after a while and I start with cooking.

NANDIPHA

I got home after my day out. I bought a little grocery on my way home of the things that we need at home and went to deposit some money for Phumzile before my mother starts talking too much and ends up saying things that I don't like. Didn't realise that while I was away I felt a relief and peace than I am at home. I get out of the taxi and the conductor helps me with my plastics and places them on the floor and I thank him before I take my things and make my way home. I get inside and I open the door and find my mother shouting. My uncle is probably back from wherever he went to.

"You are the reason I am like this. You and Nandi stress me out too much!", she says from the kitchen

I sigh and bite my lip before going to the kitchen and placing the plastics. I greet her.

"Hello mah"

"Wamuhle boh", I smile

"Thank you", I say

"Phumzile called saying she received the money",she says.

"Oh"

"Ei leya ngane ithemba lethu(That child is our only hope)From this poverty"

I suck my breath in as I start unpacking thing into the cupboard.

"Mah I have something to tell you",I turn to her.

"I am thinking of studying soon second semester"

"But you were rejected at varsities with your marks", I breath in and out.

"God will make a way"

"You want to study that design thing of yours? Ukuhlobisa imizi akunamisebenzi Nandipha (decorating houses does not have jobs)You need to study something that will get you to be hired by government"

"But Mah some people do make it and alot of money"

"That's rare. Don't waste your time studying someting invalid and the fact that people study that is Ridiculous!",she walks out.

I feel my heart being heavy. I finish up unpacking and my phone rings from my bag and i go and take it. I answer the unknown number.

"Hello"

"Nandipha it's Vukani",he says on the other side.

"Oh hello. How may I help you?"

"My mind is not even here anymore"

"I am calling about the offer I presented last time"

"Oh"

"The company will have everything sorted out for you. All you have to do is..."

"I will take it", I breathe out.

"Are you sure ?"

"Yes I am hundred percent if my mother will be safe"

"She will be and we'll taken care off with treatment"

"Vukani",I hold on the phone tightly.

"Yes?"

"Thank you so much."

"My pleasure Nandi. Don't disappoint me "

"I won't, I promise"

"Good,I will call you for further information"

"Okay thank you"

We hang up and I hold onto the phone and look up to the roof and breath out. I hope everything works out fine

PHUMZILE

I was in my res room. This is my last year sharing a room with someone. Don't get me wrong but I love my roommate. She is a great person so I have no complaints about her at all. I do have friends here and there as well. I am not a loner at all. I am studying for my upcoming test when my phone rings. My roommate is napping at the moment. I take my phone and it's Lindo. I clear my throat before I answer my phone.

"Hey",I say

"Be ready in 20 minutes I will fetch you",he says

"Okay I will be",he hangs up.

Oh my Gosh I can't wait to see him. It has been a few weeks since I last did and I do need to release.

"What has got you excited?",My roommate wakes up.

I put my books away.

"The Doctor is going to get me any moment",she shakes her head.

"He is just fucking you that's all"

"So?"

"That doesn't mean he will want you through your pussy. You are just easy"

"You don't know anything so keep your comments please",She shakes her head.

"Fine then suite yourself"

I ignore her and I go and take my cosmetic bag and towel before I leave the room. I go to the bathroom to take a shower and I get to wash a bit properly then get out. I

only have 10 minutes until he arrives and I am not ready. I do my hair and apply so make up before I get done and then my phone rings. He is here.

"I am here"

"I am coming", he hangs up.

I take my bag and walk out of the room. I go out of the residential and I see his car from a distance. I get to it and get inside.

"Hi", I say

"Hi", he starts the car and drives off. What annoys me is when he doesn't talk. I know something is wrong.

"Want to talk about it?", I burst that out.

"Me and you are here for a good time not therapy sessions", I keep my silence.

He is rude but I get his moods and feel that I can handle the too.

MALWANDE

It's the next day and I am half way through the contract before I give it to Vukani. The things in here are beyond. The benefits of this "Scholarship", I mean are very favourable. I get up from my chair and I take my phone and leave my office. I have booked a session for Mkhuleko and I and we are starting very soon. I am quiet excited and scared at the same time about it. This will be our tunnel. If we can sort this out then we can conquer our family when the time comes. I go to Vukani's office and greet his P.A. I get to knock on the door before I open and go inside. He lifts his head up and looks at me.

"Miss Miya"

"I can't believe you. The contract has so many benefits. Wow you love this woman"

"I am just being kind"

"She has a boyfriend doesn't she?"

"No"

"Okay mmmh"

"It's just a friend"

"I am not buying it but okay. I need her here by tomorrow to sign the contract. It will be ready"

"Thank you",I nod and stand up to leave

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To be continued

CHAPTER 16

NANDIPHA

I have arrived in Durban. I am here to sign the contract that I need to sign. Vukani told me that I need to come and I was given a day off by Mr Nyathi to do so. I was surprised but non the less I am happy. I didn't tell my mother I am leaving. Vukani offered to come and fetch me but I declined the offer as I had set off early for the journey. I got off at the taxi rank and made my way through. I am not scared no but I need to call Vukani to tell him that I have arrived. I need a safe place to make that call though. I walk for some time until I find a garage and I stand there and take out my phone to call Vukani. It rings for some time but it is not being answered. I try again and it still does the same. He is probably not up. I mean it's somethinh past 6 am. I sigh and breathe in and out. I am hungry too. I didn't eat because I wanted to make it on time. I go inside the garage. I can't really wait to study and have my own things and be as equally valued as Phumzile. I get inside and I go and grab some cold drink. It's quiet pricey buying In a garage. I will find a lady who is selling on the sidewalk for chips and some fruit maybe because I won't spend that much here. I turn around and bump into someone.

"I am sorry", I say

I look up and it's the guy from spar.

"Ms Peng",he says with a little smirk on his face.

God created a good looking creature with a rotten personality I believe. You can't have it all right?

I move away from him and I feel a hand on my arm.

"What's the rush?"

"This would be the very last time you touch a woman without her consent",I look at his hand and he removes it.

"I am sorry"

"Good atleast you have some manners."

I walk away from him and go to the till. I wait to pay and when it's my turn I move forward.

"Put it all under my card so as her things", I turn around and it's him behind me.

I turn around and fold my arms facing him.

"I don't need you to pay for anything"

"I am just trying to apologize for touching you", Mmmh.

I take my drink and walk off. I try Vukani again and still nothing. Now I am stressing.

"Hey, I can take you wherever you are going", this man is annoying.

"No I am fine, I will wait"

He looks at me.

"I am Lindokuhle Nkosi"

"Yeah I know you shouted your name for the whole of Pietermaritzburg to know", he laughs.

"I did. I didn't take it lightly when you referred to me being stupid"

"Aren't you?"

"I wouldn't be a self established man if I was"

"It doesn't require education only for you to be stupid. Courtesy, Chilverly, Manners? Have you heard of that", I say.

"I have"

"Then practice them trust me you will go a long way"

"You should too. Being rude isn't cute", He says.

"I am not being cute for anyone", he chuckles.

"Tough, mmmh", I shake my head.

"And by the way this is Durban. The minute I leave amaphara will be all over you. Even the clean ones and to you do look lost", he says holding the bottled water tightly.

"How do I know if you are not one of them?", he chuckles.

"I am not, where are you going? I might know"

"Well I am meeting someone. His name is Vukani Mlaba and now his phone is only ringing"

He takes out his phone.

"This guy?",he shows me a picture.

"Yes!",I say.

"I can take you to his house, boyfriend"

"No it's not your business"

"Oh okay,come"

I breathe out and did a little prayer that I don't get lost. I hold onto my bag tightly as I follow him to his car and he opens the door for me. A lady lifts her head up but I can only see her expensive hair. He closes the door and goes to the front while I settle and he turns to me.

"Are you okay?",I nod.

"You took long",the lady speaks. I know that voice.

"Don't start",he says.

The lady grabs the water and he waits for her to drink it. Seems like she is swallowing something.

"I am going to drop you off first",she huffs.

No man I know this person. I decided to be nosey and peak my head.

"Phumzile",she turns to me.

"Nandipha,what are you doing here?"

"Don't ask me that Wena. Are you even studying ?"

"Ofcourse who do you take me for. You the useless person in the family"

"Yet you chow my useless money"

"Oh please those R200 of yours don't get me anywhere. I am a medical student I need more and you wouldn't understand because you have never set foot in Varsity",I clenxh my jaw.

I grab her wig and leave her in conrows while she gasps out of shock. I shove it inside my bag.

"This will pay back all my money",She bursts into tears.

Served her right looking ugly infront of her boyfriend
He will see all those hairless and most of all her struggling hairline.

"Drive please and buy Black castor oil for your girl she needs it".

He is silent not saying anything but he drives off. Phumzile keeps on crying. We get to a certain building and she hops put and runs inside. I look around. Serves her right. I will sell this wig she will know me.

MALWANDE

I woke up quiet early today. I am going to a session with Mkhuleko soon and I am happy. I just can't wait and he hasn't changed his mind about going to the therapy sessions so that is a bonus. I look at Mkhuleko who is next to me sleeping peacefully. It has been some time since he wet the bed but sometimes he would with me there. I really want to help him. I kiss his nose and then forehead before he opens his eyes and looks at me.

"Good morning Nyathi"

"Baby", I perk his lips.

"Are you okay?", he nods.

"When are you going to see the doctor about your arm?"

"Month end", he says and I nod while he pulls me to him.

I feel his dick pressing on my abdomen as he brings me closer.

"You want me to take care of it?", I look at it.

"No, I will take a shower, for now be happy"

"Why should I be?"

"Because the day I am inside you I will make us parents", I took a deep breath in.

"I want that"

"You want to be a mom?", I nod.

"Yes to your child Nyathi and I want you inside me", he kisses my neck.

"Don't worry you will", Gosh why is this man teasing me?

"Come get ready for work", He pulls me out of the bed.

Argh I wish I was boss really.

NANDIPHA

We get to Vukani's house and I am happy that this man

took me to the right place. He parks in front of the house after being let in by security. They know him so it was easy to get in. I attempt to open the door but I am stopped.

"Close it, I will open", I close it and wait for him to get out and open for me.

I get out and he helps me off and I strap my bag on me.

"I would like to see you again Nandipha", he says with a smile.

"I won't be your girlfriend's weave back. She owes me money nx"

"We work together. We are nothing", Heeh Kanti.

"Mmmh it's not my business anyway", I move past him.

"Don't be surprised by my call one day"

"I will arrest you", He chuckles and goes to his car.

I get to knock on the door and there is nothing. I try Vukani again and nothing again. I turn the door handle and push it and it's open I walk inside and I go straight to his bedroom. I get there and he is asleep in his work outfit. He must've worked till late. I sigh and walk inside the room and I place my bag down before I shake him. He will run late to work.

"Vukani", I shake him a bit and he opens his eyes and wakes up.

"Nandi"

"Shit! I was supposed to fetch you. I am sorry"

"It's okay, I found my way here"

He nods and sits up on the bed.

"Go and freshen up"

"Okay", He kisses my forehead and I freeze.

He stands up and walks to the bathroom. I breathe out and I go and make my way downstairs to the kitchen. I open the cupboards and I take our things to make breakfast with. I make some coffee and fry everything I need to. After I am done I wait for him and he comes down after some time wearing a vest with shorts and

slides. He has something in his hand.

"You will be late for work"

"I will work from home. I have the contract", he hands it to me and I wipe my hands and take it.

I open the envelope and read through it. My eyes pop out as I am reading. I am speechless.

"This is too much Vukani"

"It's okay. You need it", he says.

"There is even allowance. I don't mind working, I don't need it", he holds my face.

"Calm down will you", This is overwhelming. My mom would be taken care of and so as I while I study.

"Where am I signing?", he laughs.

"After breakfast", I hug him in excitement.

"Thank you so much ! Thank you!"

"No need to thank me Nandi"

We break the hug. I feel like rejoicing and singing. I can't wait to study really.

"Nandi", I look at him as he looks at me.

"Yes?"

"You are...", he keeps quiet and then takes the contract from my hands.

He places it on the counter and he comes closer to me and lowers his head and he closes his eyes before his lips touch mine.

"Can I?", I nod as I swallow

He parts my lips with his and starts kissing me. We share a kiss as his hands move to my waist and mine balanced on his chest. Our tongues intertwine as he presses my body onto the counter. He picks me up and he kisses my neck while walking away from the kitchen with me in his arms before going back to my lips. He goes to one of the bedrooms downstairs and I am laid on the bed.

"I want to make your legs Shake in pleasure", He whispered softly into my ear and my body reacts.

I close my eyes as my dress is pulled up and I am exposed

infront of a man for the first time. He kisses my stomach softly and I feel butterflies fluttering in my stomach. My breathing hitched as off that. He slowly removes my underwear and my heart is beating fast. He does it slowly with some ease and then it's gone. He goes down and opens my legs slowly and kisses between my thighs. My heart is beating fast as be gets closer and closer to my coochie. He kisses it.

"Vukani",My voice is failing me.

His tongue comes in contact with my clitoris as it starts circulating there. I start breathing quiet heavily and arch my back a bit as he goes in for it.

"Vukani",I have never felt such pleasure in my whole 21 years of life.

He keeps on going while I hold onto the sheets biting my bottom lip and my one hand goes to his head and rests there asi open my legs a bit wider. He holds my legs and brings my body closer to him. After some time I feely legs failing me.

"Vukani ,please",I don't know what I am begging for here. I start shaking and he holds my legs as I am trying to catch my breath. He does a few licks before he lifts his head.

"How do you feel?",He asks.

"I have never felt thus pleasure before",I shy away.

"There is more where that came from."

"I want more"

"Are you sure?",I nod.

"Words baby I want words"

"Yes I am sure",He nods and he stands up to take his top off.

I watch him as he does so. I sit up and watch him. He comes towards me and gives me a kiss before he takes.my dress off and unclips my bra. He throws all of this to the floor and he takes lays me on the bed again. I am fully naked infront of man. This is all I am processing. He gets

on top of me after some time.

"I am a virgin, please be as soft",I blurt that out.

"I will be gentle but it will be painful a bit",I nod and he holds my legs.

"Look at me the whole time baby, your assurance is in my eyes",he says and I breathe in and out and nod.

I feel his cock rubbing on my clitoris for some time before he starts to enter. I want to close my eyes as I feel the pain but I look at him and he does the same. He pins my hands in his down.

"It will be over now",I nod as I feel my eyes a bit glossy.

He stops moving and looks at me

"Relax",I breathe out and try to.

He thrusts 3 times and stops when I start to feel the pleasure and pain. He releases my hands and starts moving while I place Mine on his back and close my eyes. He buries his head between my neck and face and he kisses my neck.

"Fuck!",he curses and plays with my nipples.

I start moaning as I hold onto him.

"Oh yes"

"Fuck Nandi",He holds onto me and goes deeper and slowly in strokes. My toes curl at that moment.

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