



Book. Nandatho the village girl

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1

Present day..

I can't!! I can't!!" I hail in agony.

"Ndanda push! You can do this my child. Push sisi" She says squeezing hard on my marshy hand.

"I give up Tholakele we've been trying for the past two hours without any luck. It's pretty obvious this baby doesn't want to come out! Instead it's planning to kill her. What was Ndandatho thinking by falling pregnant? Now we have to put our lives on hold because of her? Hhayi maarn!"

My aunty Nomzamo cursed. Poor me I let out a silent sob.

"Nomzamo this is not the right time and place to start with your nonsense. My child is in dire straits she doesn't need your nonsense but rather your support. If you don't want to help get out maarn!!" Mom-

"Your child is a disappointment Tholakele! Wena Ndandatho stop whimpering and push for that outcast that you're carrying hurry up young lady!"

"Nomzamo don't test me! Don't poke a peaceful snake from its hole. Get out or shut up!" Mom-

"Sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.comaah!

Sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.comh!!!

I scream in anguish as I feel a sharp pain piercing on my lower back leading to my anal bone.

" Open those shameful legs of yours just like you opened them when you allowed a man to play in your father's kraal!! We don't have the whole day!"

My aunt says roughly holding my legs. My mother blows her nose in frustration. She and my aunt don't get long they always never saw eye to eye. Their hate goes a long way. Aunty Nomzamo is father's sister she and my father get along very well. Father would break his back and twist his ankles for this lady he would even go to the ends of this world for Aunty Nomzamo but not my mother who gave him five beautiful children. Even though we lost one the previous year to a snake bite.

My name is Ndandatho Mchunu I'm 24 years old of age. I'm a young beautiful maiden who is heavily pregnant out of wedlock. I've disappointed my entire family and villagers by falling pregnant my mother is very much disappointed in me but she's been my tower of strength throughout my pregnancy. Like any father my father decided to be an arse hole about everything. He still wants his yard cleaned his lawn trimmed a pile of wood fetched the water tanks filled he still wants me to go on with my daily chores regardless of my suffering situation.

He cares less about my state or the danger of doing heavy-duty work while I'm on my gestational process. He doesn't see the need of nurturing and pampering me. While no penny was paid for me as a token to show respect and accountability for the

damage done. Father is very stereotypic and old fashioned. He still follows and obeys those teachings that were instilled and left by his forefathers. Both my mother and father are loyal servants at the Ngwane royal house. Mom is a cook and a cleaner while father is a horseman and sometimes a gate man. Father is hardly home but when he is around everything turns upside down. We all fear him unlike mother her presence excites everyone.

Before I fell pregnant.

I was a lead dancer and singer in a cultural group that normally entertains the royals when ceremonies are held. I was also doing farm work and sometimes I was helping my mother out with her royal duties depending on the scale of work she had. I was a very busy and hands-on individual. I was loved by and praised by many Zimele Jali included but everything flashed before my eyes a couple of months ago but everything flashed before my eyes a couple of months ago when my stomach started growing bigger and bigger. I was told not to set foot ever again at the Kings palace or any of their community services because I'm a bad example to the maidens of this village that I'm setting a bad example by being pregnant and unmarried. Since then I have been a useless village bimbo a mumish that excites everyone in this village.

What hurts the most I'm in the dark regarding Zimele's fate. I don't know if he still lives or if he passed on. All I know is he went AWOL and no sign of him since eight months ago. I don't even know what I will tell his child in future.

It's painful!! It's painful mama I can't push this baby I really can't! I might as well just die!!" I screamed out groaning.

"No Ndanda push this baby. I don't want to lose any of you please " Mom-

"Who is the father of this child Ndandatho? Maybe this child needs its father. Give us a surname" My aunt says glaring at me with nauseated eyes sadly i wont tell who the father is.

Gogo walks in with a bowl of water and a cloth. She kneels before me and wipes my sweaty forehead.

"Tholakele we need a Maine for this baby to be delivered. This is a very complicated and difficult pregnancy ever. Nomzamo go get us help instead of bickering. Ndanda inhale and exhale" Gogo-

I bite hard on my lower lip and tighten my grip on my mother's pinifers. I do the longest breath in ever as I try to give my best push for the hundredth time. I'm already drained and exhausted. It's been two hours already of trying to push this baby but he or she hasn't been working with me. Zimele's baby is too relaxed and not putting in some work to meet me halfway. God knows my strength is running out if I don't push this baby in the next coming minutes I will die. I will be reunited with my ancestors.

I whimpered in pain with my toes curled up.

"Push Ndandatho!! Push!!!" Gogo-

"I'm.. I'm trying gogo! I can't! I can't " "Hhayi angisazi impela! Ingane yami iboshiwe uNomzamo uthakathe ingane yami. Umbhedo lona" Mom- (No someone casted a spell on my daughter Nomzamo bewitched my child this is madness)
"This is strange Makoti. This is very confusing." Gogo- "Namanje ayiphumi lengane?" Aunty-
(Even now the baby isn't coming out?)
"Imihlola ka James ke lana. Waze wazifaka otakwini Ndandatho Mhlampe umithi Imfene" Aunty- (Wonders shall never end. You are in deep waters Ndandatho surely you pregnant with a monkey.)
"A monkey put by you Nomzamo? It's your fault my child won't deliver this baby! You bewitched my child" Mom-
"In your dreams! What's special about a child who has no morals and respect for herself? Surely this baby was conceived in the bushes explaining the difficulty of pushing" Nomzamo-
"Nomzamo!! Nomzamo don't push me woman. Don't try me! I was herding cows mina i will whoop you" Mom-
"Bring it on Maka Buhle! Bring it on!!" Aunty-
"Shut up!!! Shut up!!! Tholakele and Nomzamo get out!! This is not a circus. A child might die here but you both don't care but rather bickering and causing more tension in this room! How do you think this baby will come out with you doing this rubbish? Get out!!" Gogo-

I let more tears hit the pillow this has been my life for the past month's. What hurts the most is my baby refusing to come out while on the other hand people are fighting because of me and my stupid decisions. Where are you Zimele??

(Ngwane royal house)

"It's finally happening my daughter"

"It's finally happening mama I've waited for this moment for as long as I can remember. I'm glad he finally came to his senses and agreed to this union mama." Nomaswazi-

"Look at you princess who would deny this? Who wouldn't resist this beauty my daughter? You look beautiful sisi. The prince would've been stupid to refuse all this. "

"Thank you mama. Are my beads ready?"

"All is set Noma. Madongwe will bring your dress in for fitting. A maiden will come shortly to style your hair. Another thing I want to send one of our postman to go fetch the cook for me. I want her to prepare a feast enough for kings and queens of different kingdoms and villages. Ngifuna ashaye idili likamkhipheni. Phela my daughter is getting married. Not just to anyone but the prince of Thuthukani village. I'm talking of a kingdom that consists of riches gold and silver the most feared kingdom amongst all kingdoms. I want her to put her full panties on. My daughter deserves everything. I mean beautiful things. " Queen-

" I really deserve beautiful things mama! " I say with joy.

" Nawe you need to cut down on starch for the next coming hours so you won't look fat and shapeless on your wedding day. "

The door swung opened Madongwe walked in with my patterns. I snatched them from her hands to put them on the bed i cant afford to have them stained.

"You can leave quick! Quick!! " I said clapping my hands on the servants ears i want her gone already. "Mama can we try this

dress on"

"No problem princess." She says helping me out with my dress.

My blind sister walks in.

"What is this? What is this? Is this a dress? Who is getting married? Who is getting married?" She asks trembling while pulling my dress.

"Inathi calm down!" Mama-

"I cannot calm down Mama!! Who is getting married!! " inathi-

"Inathi get out!!! You gonna tore my dress Mama!! Mama! Do something get her out please!" Me-

"She can't marry the prince! She cannot marry the prince of Thuthukani village! Nomaswazi is not the chosen one she can't marry the prince."

"Inathi get out of here!! Who let her in? Madongwe!!!!

Madongwe!! Where is this servant? Madongwe!!" Mom yells from her highest pitch I also help her. Madongwe walks in panting.

" My queen." She says laying on the floor with her head bowed.

" Take this blind girl out of this room! Get her out make sure she doesn't set foot in here hurry up granny!!!" Mom says clapping her hands.

"She can't marry in that village!! " My blind sister says grabbing my dress.

"Inathi!!! Inathi stop it!! stop with this jealousy of yours Inathi it's not my fault that you're ugly and unmarried. Leave me alone! I will marry the prince of Thuthukani village! Whether you like it or not get off from my sight!!" I roughly pushed her off me.

Madongwe helped Inathi up and they left my chambers.

" Mama I want her locked up in a dungeon! I don't want to see

her loose. I'm getting married in a day. I can't afford her pulling a stunt on my big day If you won't do it I will do it myself." I roared and stepped out of my chambers..

—

"This is strange." Maine-

"What do you see great one? What are the gods of Ngwane village saying?" Gogo-

I blurt out a sob. It's now eight hours of trying to push for my baby with no luck. I'm still in pain and I'm losing my mind. I'm slowly regretting my decision. I shouldn't have asked Zimele to impregnate me I shouldn't have donated my body to him. I was so naive and so stupid to even allow that thought to get the better of me. Look at me? Look at me now. I'm in pain and I'm might die any minute from now because of his baby. I wish I could pull this baby out myself and toss it in a burning fire or drown it in water. I'm tired for Christ's sake. This grass mat is also making my state unpleasant.

"The gods are not saying anything. They not showing me anything. Young lady who is the father of this child?"

"I don't know"

"Ndandatho talk! Who is the father of this child?" " His dead!!"

"Young lady if the gods of Ngwane village cannot communicate with me that means some gods can communicate through this child. If you don't talk you might die"

"At this point I want to die! I want to die!!" I sob.

"Hhayi wena Mvana! Die for what? Before you die give us a name of the man who sprout his seedlings in you then you can die" Nomzamo-

"I know his name but not his surname" The Maine looks at me

then massages my belly. "You lying tell the truth" I say it within my heart they cant know who the father is.

"Bhengu Ngcolosi Dlabazane!! I call upon you bo Jali to intervine and see your child through. We need your assistance and support for this child to be born. Sondelani bo Mepho! to intervine and see your child through. We need your assistance and support for this child to be born. Sondelani bo Mepho! help Ndandatho Mchunu to deliver the gift you've entrusted her with. Make this delivery a success" Maine-

He says moving his sage around me. He looks at me.

"Where is the beaded bracelet he gave you months ago?" I point to the table. He takes it and put its on my wrist.

"Maine what's going on? Is my daughter okay?" mom- "Okwani lokhu?" (What is this for?) Aunty-

"Don't ever take this off Ndandatho the person who gave you this gave you a family charm. Don't lose it. Now open your legs and push. "

Before I knew it I felt the strongest push enfolds. I cried in agony as I gave out my best push. A strange sound echoed in the hut. I was panting and trying to catch my breathe my eyes slowly closed. Darkness was all I could see.

**

I was woken up by loud baby sobs my body was Numb and all cold. I forced myself up but I struggled. Gogo walked in carrying a tray. Besides me was my baby that was wrapped in a white cloth. The baby was crying so badly to my annoyance.

"Eat Ndandatho then feed your son" I looked at gogo dumbfounded.

"It's a boy the Maine said we should call him Bangizwe Gatsha"

"Why those names? What do they even mean Gogo?" I say softly.

"Bangizwe means fighting for the land and Gatsa means a branch. A tree branch to be specific" "If I don't call him that what then?"

"Try it and see what happens Thomas. Come and eat" She kneels to hold Gatsha. I try to sit up straight and eat. But I struggle.

"Can I hold him"

"His yours Ndanda. But sit up straight and hold the baby." "It hurts gogo"

"Don't be weak Ndandatho sit up straight my child" I force myself up and hold my baby.

"His black gogo"

"I guess the father is a darker shade of you. His chocolate skin and probably handsome judging by the kid you holding." She flash me a smile I return a faint one.

"Feed him sisi. I will go outside shortly to fetch your water so you can wash up. Your mother went to work and your father is coming home tomorrow."

I immediately squirm in fear after hearing that announcement father coming home means trouble for me. I feed Gatsha. At first its tinglish and all uncomfortable but it gets better with every minute. I don't know if my baby looks like me or the father. But his skin complexion matches Zimele's he has Carly black hair and mastouches just like the father. He has a cute little pointy nose beautifully distributed and drawn brows his Lashes are gonna be long that is evident. His lips are colored I'm not sure if it's red or pink lips. His eyes are glassy and all big. I think my son is cute yes his dark in complexion but his cute very cute. Just like myself.

I'm dark in complexion I have a long afro hair.

I have beautiful curves and thighs I have round full pointy boobs my waistline was lean and flat but now that I have a baby I might lost it if I'm not fortunate but other than that I'm a very appealing African plum woman. I look at my baby and feed him with my heart beating on my throat. I look at my wrist band then go down memory lane.

Get her locked up! Don't give her food and don't give her water. You hear me?" Noma-

"Princess we can't do that the king will not approve of this.

Iminathi is a princess in this palace we can't lock her up please."

Servant-

"Who are you again?" "A servant my princess" "And what am I?"

"A princess"

"Who is of value between you and I?" "You my princess"

"At least you know how useless and meaningless you are. Now stay in your lane nobody asked for your stupid thoughts. Zip it!"

I say scaring him off with my hand.

"Like I said keep her in here and nobody has to know about this. Especially the king and the queen. Keep it locked you can even throw away the key if needed be. I'm done here." I say heading to the exit.

"Nomaswazi you can't lock me up in here this is not right!!"

Inathi-

"Shut up blind face" I say then slam the door. I walk outside. I bump chests with my brother. "Swazi. Wait up! I need a little Favour from you"

"What do you want Zuko?"

"I'm in search for Iminathi I haven't seen her for the past two hours. Do you have any idea of her whereabouts? She needs to

take her medication"

"Do I look like her keeper maybe? Go search in the krsehranmagzine.com I surely you will find something. Now get off from my sight." I say walking past him.

"I wish you sleep and forget to wake up Nomaswazi you are ruthless." He says storming to whatever place his going.

My name is Nomaswazi Ngwane. I'm the third born born to King Ngidi and Queen Thabile Ngwane. My parents are blessed with four children. My brother Zuko being the first born Iminathi the blind princess being a second born me and lastly my brother Mkhuleko Ngwane. We are the prince and princesses of Ngwane village. Our kingdom is doing just fine but it's not rich like many others. We do have a few operating businesses but they not plenty when compared to those of other kingdoms. That's why my father arranged for me to marry in a monied kingdom so that our own Kingdom could tie forces with other great kingdoms. I will be a wife soon hence I won't allow anyone and anything to get on my way to marrying the prince of Thuthukani village.

3

"Gatsha please don't cry. Thula Khehla lami. Shhhhh!"

I yawn and continue rocking him instead of keeping it low he cries even more louder his tongue is even shaking profusely.

"Gatsha Shhhh..(Baby cries)Bangizwe don't cry please my baby. Mommy is tired and drained. I haven't slept since I gave birth to you hours ago. Please sleep."

I drop a tear and look at my candlelight.

My aunt walks in demented She puts her hands on her waistline and looks at me.

"Ndandatho No!! No!! It's late at night young lady and your little rascal is screaming and groaning to his highest pitch I bet witches are finding it hard to work tonight because of your mischievous rat hailing non stop. Did you see where the moon is positioned? It's devils hours Ndandatho. Don't inconvenience us because of your love for adults things. We want our peaceful slumber shut him up"

She roars and slams my fractured door. I jump in fright Gatsha cries even more. I look at him with tears rolling out of my eyes.

" Shhhh... Shhh.. Sorry my baby. Here Ncence Gatsha. Ncence. " I say rocking him and putting my nipple inside his mouth. He refuses it and cries even more to my distraught.

"Gatsha stop it!! Just stop it okay? What do you really want from me huh? You refusing my breast you refusing to sleep. What do you want Bangizwe? If you want your father go find him!! Go search for him wherever he is ! I'm tired okay? I'm tired!! Just sleep!"

"Ndandatho!! Why are you shouting at the baby? What is wrong with you? Can't you see his crying? Hhayi Ndandatho. " Gogo-

"Let him cry gogo Isn't it he doesn't want the breast and he doesn't want to sleep. He wants nothing gogo but to cry! Let him cry!!" I burst in tears.

"Bring him here." She takes the baby and pace around the hut with him. The look she's shooting is accompanied by a lecture.

"Ndandatho this is your child. You made him. Nobody sent you to be deflowered out of wedlock. Yelling at this child will not undo your mess. Don't take your frustrations on this child. Like any woman Ndandatho strap your child on your back as hard as it is. A woman is a strong vessel a problem solver no matter what prevails in front of her. Ndandatho be strong my child These tears will take you nowhere." I swallowed a lump.

" Your fate is unknown on these grounds. Your life might change after tomorrow Ndandatho. Carry this cross as heavy as it is. When Gatsha cries don't cry with him. When his sick don't be sick with him but rather find herbs and remedies that will aid him you were not given this burden for vanity. Be strong you raising a warrior here not a maiden. Toughen up!! Here feed your child and hush him. You can do this. " She gives me Gatsha and walks through the door.

—

When the rooster crows outside. I immediately get on my toes limping outside my chambers. I'm met by dust rising my siblings

are sweeping the yard. Some are getting rid of weeds It's evident father is coming home.

"Morning Macingwane"

"Morning Bhuti" I say limping to the kitchen. I find mother mixing steam bread ingredients.. There's a huge pot on the fire normally we use it to boil water.

" Morning Ndanda how did you sleep?"

"I hardly slept ma but I'm fine and how are you?"

"I'm very much good my daughter. I'm ecstatic that my husband is coming home after two full months of not seeing him. I have to cook him a storm. I need you to catch a fat hen like yourself outside. I don't want my husband to starve. But before you do that make us tea Ndandatho " Mom says humming a song. I force myself to attending the pots but my body rejects it. I'm still wounded.

" The baby is crying Ndanda"Buhle-

"Ehm.. I'm coming.. Mama can I go attend to the baby?"

"When you done come back here we don't want to upset your father." Mom-

"Mameshane!! Ufunani lona ekudleni? Anazi ukuthi umdlezane akalithinti ibhodwe Tholakele? Kanti nichamukaphi Tholakele?" (Abomination! What is she doing in here? Don't you know it's an abomination for a new mother to touch pots? Where are you from Tholakele? Not to know about such?) She says clapping her hands and fixing her cloth.

" Good morning aunty Nomzamo"

"What is good about the morning? When I hardly slept last night? Get out of my sight" She says pushing me aside. I limp heading to my private chamber I feel a warm fluid roll down my legs. My aunty laughs from the top of her lungs. My siblings look at me in awe. I ignore everyone and walk away. I find Gatsha crying I kneel before him to check on his nappy which was passed down to me by my mother these were Buhlebuzile's back then When she was young. I'm glad they haven't lost their colour. I change and wash his tiny body. Then dress him in baggy worn out clothes that mama gave me. We feed each other then wash my own body. I later wash my baby's nappies. I'm given a bowl of sour Mabele porridge. I eat it and go nap.

—

(Ngwane royal house)

"Where Is Iminathi?" King-

"I've been asking myself the exact question Ngwane. I haven't seen her since yesterday." Zuko-

"I've asked around nobody has seen her. Surely she's hallucinating somewhere in the kraal if not the field. She loves

the kraal after all" Mkhuleko-

"Isn't that dangerous though? For the princess to be untraceable and unreachable? The people of Ngwane Village might use her for witchcraft evil hounders in this village. We need to find her"

Princess Mgcinaphi -

"My wife is correct father we need to find her as soon as possible." Zuko- "Noma where is your sister?" King-

"I know nothing your highness but surely she ran away after she destroyed my beautiful wedding dress. Poor Iminathi surely thinks I'm mad at her for fragmenting my dress but little does she know I'm understanding of her situation" Noma says with her beautiful and dimpled smile that always wins heart.

"I will ask the servants to search for her before they go about with their daily chores" Queen- "Please find my daughter." King-

"We will father" There's silence for a little while princess Mgcinaphi breaks it.

"So Noma how do you feel about marrying the prince of Thuthukani village? I heard his a drop head. I won't mention the riches of his family. Damn you must be ecstatic aren't you?"

Mgcinaphi-

" Well I'm jolly my beautiful princess Mgcinaphi. The prince did not make a mistake by choosing me. Already I'm imagining the kids we will have together. I just can't wait. "

She says chirping in joy. The king and queen flash her a smile but not Zuko. "I love the part of having grandchildren." King-

"I also love that one baba. I can imagine myself playing with a little one. God I'm dying to have little Jali minions running in this open space of mine. Zuko please son hurry up its long overdue "

Queen-

Zuko looks at princess Mgcinaphi who suddenly chows roughly

on her meat." So which cultural band are you gonna call for the ceremony?" Mkhuleko-

"I don't know cos I loved the one led by that Mchunu girl who chose to men over talent" Queen-

"I knew that girl wasn't gonna stay pure till marriage. She was too full of herself I bet her fat body is now sagging being a parent ruins bodies." Noma-

" She wasn't full of herself but you were intimidated by her Nomaswazi phela uNdandatho indoni yamanzi. Her curves are beautiful her eyes are bright like a morning star her breast are pointy and round. I won't mention her voice and her beautiful legs. Wow! Ngwane village only had her as a beautiful girl not oNoma with pink cheeks" Zuko-

"Excuse me" Mgcinaphi she says standing up and walking away from the dining table. "Was that necessary Zuko?" Queen-

"But I was stating the obvious my queen. Ndandatho is truly a diamond ring. I wish she was royalty" Zuko-

"Don't bore us about that ugly and fat commoner! I'm beautiful not her!" Noma- "Your cheeks are burning though sisi Iminathi is more prettier" Mkhuleko- "Mama you see them?"

"Can you all keep quiet and eat thank you."

**

4

Ndandatho

"Ma can I go lie down please I'm tired"

"Ndanda you can't do that lokho kuzowenza umacingwane angane unwabu. Sebenza sisi"

(No. That will upset your father. Work my child)

"Kodwa ma angisenawo Amandla umzimba untekenteke ngiyakucela ma."

(Ma I'm weak though my body is falling me. Please mother)

"What is that commotion about? What's going on over there mama kaBuhle?" Baba gabbled glaring at my mother and I from afar. "It's nothing of use my husband.."

"Get back to work! I want these seeds planted all of them. This bickering wont do us any justice workNdandatho and stop gabbing!!" My body hasn't recuperated I'm still numb and sore but here i am sweating my butt off in these fields planting seeds. The sun too is failing to be lenient with my skin.

"Ndanda work my daughter we can't afford having Macingwane breathing down our necks.Work sisi" This woman is very scared of her husband not in a single day has she challenged him but rather agreeing to everything he says or does i hate it honestly. As my mother she must be on my side not against me but i brought this upon myself i should toughen up and dance to my tune.

"Yazi Ndandatho I use to work in the fields heavily pregnant Planting sugarcane. I would pitch in for work everyday no matter how exhausted i was. If I was able to do that so are you. Don't be weak be strong."

"Gatsha is probably starving and crying in the hut can I at least go check up on him for a minute or so please mother?"

"I said work!!!!" Father says throwing sand on my face.

"Baba!!" Mom shouts. I rub my eyes with tears rolling down my eyes these sand particles are blinding me.

"A simple instruction" Work"!!! But you dont listen!! Get back to work before I use my sjambok on youNdandatho! "

" Baba please be understanding of her situation. Ndanda is weak she just had a baby. Can't we please be lenient with her till she recuperates fully please Macingwane " My brother vouched for me which was something i wish my own mother would do. "Did I send her to open her legs? this is my compound young man! My rules! If you want to be a father or an adviser get your own stand Muzi your opinions will only matter there not here."

"Ndanda are you okay?"

"It's fine thanks. Muzi"

"Ndandatho how are your eyes my child?" Mom asks i really don't wish to converse with that one.

"After this chore go fetch water and prepare supper my wife needs rest she works hard for you and your siblings. " Dad-
"Don't forget collecting wood mama ka Gatsha." My auty adds.
"Hhayi Nomzamo no Bafana. My grandchild is not a donkey. She won't do that! Ungumdlezane animeni" Gogo-

"Ma we don't care. I want those things done" Dad-

"It's fine gogo I will do it"

"No! This is wrong baba I will fetch the wood. " Muzi

"Muzi I will do it.. It's fine I will manage"
My brother looks at me then aggressively does his work.

"We mama ka Gatsha ubani ubaba ka Gatsha?" Dad-

"Umoya oyingcwele Bhuti okwenzeka ku Maria sekwenzeke

lakhaya. "

(Holy spirit brother. What happened to virgin Mary has happened to us too.) They laugh.

I'm strapping Gatsha on my back and wood on my head. My son has been crying so badly surely his hungry or his in distress. He will have to forgive me i cant breastfeed him here we in the middle of nowhere and darkness has covered the sky by the look of things its gonna pour cats and dogs. I just happen to know when its gonna rain or not sometimes i hear waters flowing right inside my ears and sometimes thunder while there isn't. This is what i meant by saying i just know when it's gonna rain. What did i say? The rain is pouring on us my poor son is crying hysterically now he even has hiccups. At this point running wont save us its vanity because my legs are failing me

I'm still awful. By the time we reach the house both my baby and I are soaking wet. I take a grass mat and what I call his blanket to the kitchen. I lay it on the floor and then put him down i want the fire to warm us up.

"Did you wash his body?"

"Not yet gogo. I will attend to it after cooking"

"Ndandatho you need to rest my child" "I can only do that in my grave Gogo." "Nda this will pass my child." "Hopefully"

"Nda you know you can trust me sisi with you life please tell me e who is the father of this child?"

"Zimele a warrior gogo"

My mother walks in crying.

"Tholakele what's going on?"

"uBafana mama"

"What did he do?"

She looks at me then my grandmother..

"Let's talk outside mama"

"I'm coming Ndandatho"

I nod my head and continue with dishing out....

Tholakele

"What's going on Makoti?"

"He wants to sell Ndandatho mama."

"I don't follow Tholakele"

"He wants to marry off uNdanda to Makhehla mama. They coming for her tomorrow morning. "

"Makhehla is old and his a witch Tholakele.. What's going on ngo Bafana? He can't do that to her daughter!"

"His mind is made up mother."

"No we can't allow that! They can't succeed in this. Ndanda is still a kid Tholakele. She's a mother atthat. We can't separate her from her child. She can't marry uMakhehla."

"There's nothing we can do mother but to obey my husband. We can't go against his wishes. "

"Maybe there's nothing you can do about this Tholakele but as for me her grandmother. Ngishaya phansi ngonyawo! Nobody will marry off my daughter without her consent especially to uMakhehla."

"Mama"

"Hhayi Makoti Nganele!!!! Nganele!! My child will not marry uMakhehla!!! Uyasangana uBafana actually let me go have a word with him."

"Mama please dont he will punish me"

"His been punishing you for years Makoti and you used to it unlike Ndandatho this is gonna break her. She wont survive this." I follow her pleading with her not to address this sadly its too late They arguing.

"Bafana what rubbish is this that I'm hearing? Why would you do such a horrible thing to your daughter huh?"

" Ma it's a right thing to do. No normal man will marry a tainted woman and besides Makhehla is paying a lot of money for her hand in marriage. I'm trying to hide her shame mother!" husband-

"What shame? Leave this child alone Bafana. Are you doing this because she's not yours Bafana? Nawe Tholakele you condoning this because she didn't come from your belly Huh?"

I swallow a huge lump.

"Leave Ndandatho alone! Her father might be dead but I'm not dead. I will protect my grand child with my all! If you both charmed by this Makhehla marry him yourselves without involving my daughter in your madness. uMajawonke angavuka ame ngezinyawo ngengane yakhe!!! "

" It's not about her not being ours mother we doing the right thing. Makhehla might die any day from now. Ndanda will be left with his livestock his farm and his house mama. Look at the bright side. That Gatsha kid will not starve. Makhehla is burren he is already excited to claim Gatsha as his own. Think about it mother. "

" You telling me I must be excited about my daughter being married off to an old hag? Do you really hate your brother that much Bafana to marry off his only living child? How could you? Uyasangana wena!

Gatsha has a father and that's Zimele the warrior! Nda will not marry anyone!! Ngifunga okhokho!! " She curse and walks out.

" Uyasangana umama uNdandatho uyoshada nomaKhehla ethanda engathandi!! " husband-

—
Zimele Jali

"Zimele fix your spear that's not how we hold it." Hawu- "I want to hold mine like this"

In a split second i feel a sting on my body.

"Ouch Hawu!" I say groaning in pain this moron punched me. I'm very much aware we practicing but he didn't have to do that.

"You are slightly becoming wreck at this Zimele and that's worrisome. Where is your at? Let me guess princess Noma?" He says smiling.

" Over my dead body. "

"Zimele come on. She's not that bad looking. You will grow to love her with time. Don't be hard on yourself my prince"

"You don't understand Hawu. I can't even look at her. Her laughter annoys me her voice makes me wanna vomit. There's this disturbing tooth that she has it's very sharp and distracting you would swear she's a shark. I don't like that girl" Hawu laughs hard and looks at me.

"My prince a woman's beauty is her heart don't mind external looks. She can be your missing rib just give her a chance please and besides you need to move on from that Fictional lady she's no more Jali. You can't live in your past tomorrow you getting married. Focus on that. "

" I still think we never did a thoroughly search Hawulesizwe. She's surely alive and maybe with.. (I swallow hard) "

" With what Zimele? " He glares at me with his brows furrowed. " I'm listening my prince" " Well she might be having a child my child to be precise"

"What?" His doing that annoying facial expression that he does when I'm gabbing rubbish. "Excuse me Zimele you saying?"

"That night I impregnated her Hawu"

"And you only telling me this now? Like really? "

"There was never a perfect time to share this Hawu. But really if she's alive that means she has a child wherever she is my child Hawu"

"Zimele!! You entrusted your seed to a commoner? You are a prince Zimele Jali. You shouldn't have done that. What's gonna happen if the royal family finds out about the child?"

"The baby will be my business not theirs. If really Ndandatho is still alive then we will pick up from where we left off we gonna be a happy family."

"Zimele just shut up! You gabbing garbage! Happy family my foot!!" He snaps. "This time around father won't succeed with his plans with me. I can even run away from home if needed be i need to conduct this search once more at least i will give up knowing i gave it my all. " He narrows his brows.

"Now you sound like a sissy Zimele. You can't lose your chieftains over a commoner. Listen let's not talk about this because you really losing your mind. Tomorrow you saying I do to your shark stop thinking of ghosts."

"She's not dead Hawu something tells me she's still alive help me find her please.." "Zimele no!"

"As much as we friends Hawu but I'm still your prince and your warrior leader. Now obey my rules Hawu"

"You crazy Zimele. I'm doing no such thing."

"Fine.. I will do it my self!" I say throwing my spear on the ground. Hawu follows me shouting.

"Fine!! Okokugcina weeh Zimele!!" I curve my lip and smile...

{Ngwane kingdom}

"It's a sunny day my king" Queen- "Indeed it was my queen"

" I can't believe our third born is tying a knot I'm proud Baba Noma"

"I'm proud too.. But where is Iminathi Ndlovukazi? I hardly slept last night wondering about her whereabouts with her condition i cant help but to worry too much. " The queen heaves a soft low sigh then puts her hand on the king's shoulder.

"Noma promised to conduct a search with the help of Mkhuleko dont worry too much my husband. Where are you going looking this good?"

"I'm meeting the king of Thuthukani we have a few things to seal. Regarding our children's union." "God I can't wait anticipation is killing me." The king glares at his wife and faintly smile. "Same here""Dont be long in Thuthukani Ngidi."

She pecks my lips then walks out i myself make my way out bumping chests on my eldest son Zuko having a little chat with the guards. I recall the queen's requests.

"Son"

"Dad"

"Can I have a minute with you" "Sure.."

" Please go to the Mchunu family household and summon mam Tholakele here Your mother needs her hand this side."

"No problem my father"

"Don't make moves on Ndandatho I'm watching you Zuko. " He scoffs. "I won't father"

"Let's catch up later" I gently pat his shoulder then embark on a journey to Thuthukani village to discuss a couple of things with king Ngcolosi Jali.

"Ngidi welcome to my homebrother. "

Thank you for the warm welcome Jali" We shake our hands. We make our way inside his ravishing spacious and delicate home. With appealing oak wood furniture and beautiful animal skins on the floor as a carpet. I see big portraits of his family members. There are gold designs on some of his furniture. I'm grateful my daughter is marrying into a rich family this Kingdom is a living heaven.

-

Ndandatho

I'm seated outside my hut lazing on the bursts of the sun while breastfeeding my son. Besides me I have beads. I'm trying to make my son a bracelet and one for my grandmother. A royal cart park's right in front of my compound I'm lazy to attend to them luckily my noisy aunt runs to their rescue. Prince Zuko appears with a broad smile painted on his face his talking to my aunt but his focus is fixed on me. When aunty disappears to wherever he makes his way towards me.

"Ndandatho the most beautiful maiden in Ngwane village how are you?" I shyly smile. "Prince Zuko the warrior of Ngwane

village. I'm good thanks and how are you my Prince"

"Now that your beauty has stroke me yet again I'm the happiest man alive. So that's the little one?" He says taking a peep on Gatsha.

"His adorable his name?" "Bangizwe Gatsha"

" Surely the father is jolly and all ecstatic to have such a beautiful baby and a breath taking woman by his side."

"He sure is" I lie. "Are you still with him?"

How do i answer this one? Lucky me my mother shows up to save me from my damsel.

Zuko has always liked me since our childhood days i was so close to dating him until Zimele happened. He swept me off my feet's It didn't take him days for us to date it's just happened so fast. A couple of days later he took my innocence a week later we made Gatsha of which was all my fault I'm the one who pleaded with him to impregnate me. I don't even know what I was thinking.

"Prince Zuko.. To what do I owe this visit?"

"My mother sent for me to call you so you can start with the preparations for Nomaswazi and Prince Zimele's wedding."

I accidentally drop my bowl of beads immediately after hearing his name.

"Ndandatho are you okay?" Zuko-

"All is well my Prince." I say with a trembling voice.

"Oh! I wasn't busy we can go now my Prince. Ndandatho please prepare lunch your father will come back hungry from wherever he went to. "

"Let me pick up these beads before we leave mama" Zuko says eyeing me. He kneels before me and picks all the tiny pieces of my beads. I forcefully push back my tears.

"Are you Okay?" Zuko-

"Which Zimele is getting married to Princess Noma?"

"Zimele the warrior Zimele Jali of Thuthukani village. Do you know him?" "No I don't"

"He was a regular on most Reed dance and singing ceremonies. Surely you know him Ndandatho and he once made a move on you remember?"

I pretend not to know what his talking about.

"My Prince you've been of great help thank you. I will pick up the remaining pieces you can go. " "Are you sure?"

"Very sure"

"Fine... See you tomorrow at the ceremony."

"Yeah.. Bye.." He flash me his beautiful smile and walks away.

Immediately they get out of sight I let my tears meander on my face. I do it looking at Gatsha. I can't believe Zimele is alive and that he is marrying Nomaswazi after he took my innocence and left me with me a child.

He knows my village but he didn't bother to come look for me

and his son. His very much aware he left a woman pregnant but stupid him careless about that to think all this time long I've been mourning him our relationship thinking he died in a fire but little did I know he was making plans to marry the Princess of Ngwane village. Nomaswazi to be specific I'm so demented right now. Actually let me remove his stupid beads from my son's wrists isn't it he is marrying someone else meaning we are not important to him we also gonna show him how insignificant he is to us. His marrying my childhood enemy can you imagine?. The cherry on top is him hiding his royalty status from me. While I'm crying gogo quickly runs to my direction panting.

"Ndandatho please run away now!" I glare at her dumbfounded. "Did you hear what i just said? Make it snappy please!!" Oh! So she's serious?

"Ndandatho You need to leave these grounds immediately you not safe here please leave now before Bafana comes back your life is in great danger. If you dont leave now I'm afraid of what awaits you. Save your soul and run it's for a good cause."

"Kodwa gogo I have no one I have nowhere to go. What will become of me and Gatsha? Sizonethwa zimvula gogo. I can't run away ngizoyaphi? Futhi ngibalekela ini Gogo?"

" I once told you to be strong stop being weak and fight for yourself and your child. If you continue like this come morning you will be a wife to Makhehla your father wants to marry you off to Makhehla. "

"The village witch? No he can't do this to me." "That's why you need run and never look back."

"Zimele said those exact words when I last saw him gogo and i never saw him again now you saying the exact thing. I'm scared might never see you again gogo."

"Whatever happens my child always remember you are loved and special Ndandatho please leave. "I hear someone clearing their throat behind me.

"Go pack your bags Ndandatho we have a very long journey to embark on I'm giving you five minutes to pack up. Don't make me drag you to your husband's house hurry up!!" Dad-

He walks away.

"Here! Take this Ndandatho it will push you through for a couple of days. Go my child run and never look back!! Run Ndandatho!!"

For a moment I'm reminded of the last day I saw Zimele. He said these exact words. I guess my life is all about running. What hurts the most is that this time around I'm not running alone but I'm running with my son. We don't even know where we will go from here on.

"I need clothes Gogo"

"Ndandatho there's no time to pack up here take my jersey and my cloth. Carry your child and run. May the gods of Ngwane village see you through

I speak blessings upon your life. Run my child run!!" "Gogo!!"
"Run!!!" She shouts....

—

Princess Noma

"So are you ready to be Mrs Jali?" Mgcinaphi -

"I'm ready sweetheart. The part I anticipate the most is sharing my body with him. I can't wait Mgcinaphi "

"You lucky Noma. Finally he noticed you."

"Finally. I never saw this day coming the gods are with me. "

"Yeah they are. So tell me Princess."

"Yeah"

"Are you ready to donate your body to him? Phela after tomorrow we have to go see the bed sheets. You gonna have sex tomorrow night"

"I'm so ready Princess Mgcinaphi. We talking about sharing a bed with Zimele the most feared warrior amongst all Kingdoms so I'm ready to donate my body and soul to him. I want to give him an heir as soon as possible. "

"It's gonna be painful though Princess. Like very painful Noma you will be in bed for the whole day after his done deflowering you."

"Is it that bad Mgcinaphi?"

"It's very painful Princess. Remember when I struggled to walk a day after my wedding? And I lied saying I fell?"

I nod.

"Well. The previous night your brother Zuko took my innocence It was hard to walk and my privates were throbbing but second time around. I started enjoying mating with him now I'm addicted to it. I can't go a day without mating it's a pity we not fortunate with babies. "

" Sorry Princess soon God will remember you. Don't worry. I just can't wait to experience that. Ooh Zimele!!! " I say picturing him.

" Princess the queen is asking for your presence in her private chambers "" Can't you knock maDongwe? "

" I'm sorry my Princess the door was opened"

"Whatever ugly!!" I spew and she walks away. Princess Mgcinaphi looks at me badly.

"What?"

"You do know that tone is inappropriate Princess especially when addressing an elder. How could you address an elder like that? "
Mgcinaphi-

"She was ill mannered njena and futhi she's a nobody. Her blood is red and mine is blue. "

"Don't get used to that tone Princess don't ever ill treat servants. They are human too and they deserving of our respect regardless of our titles. That was uncalled for Princess Noma"

"I care less about those people and I'm not about to waste my most valuable time discussing lots of nothings Princess Mgcinaphi. They just not worth my efforts."

"You are soon to be crowned a wife in Thuthukani village Nomaswazi The Prince will not appreciate that tone just like my husband doesn't. Teach yourself a new pair of morals Princess before you embarrass your people in a different Kingdom what you did was very scary. I'm out of here"

"Princess Mgcinaphi please stay.. I want you to help me choose a dress and maybe perfect beads too."

"I have to go Noma. I have errands. " She walks out and I roll my eyes. I go to my mother's chambers I don't find her. That's my cue

to go to the dangeon. I find Iminathi singing.

"You making noise can't you hear that?"

"You don't tell me what to do in my father's palace. What brings you here evil Princess."

"I'm here to check if you still alive or dead. By the looks of things you love this newly home of yours you don't seem bothered by my presence. It must be nice sleeping on these creasy grass just like the cow that you are. "

I chuckle.

Iminathi ignores me and sings louder than before.

" Iminathi! "

" What? "

" I'm talking to you"

"I don't want to talk Noma"

"Stop singing your singing us horrible."

"It's nothing compared to the wrench our gods will put you in. You will be slayed by dragons eagles will feast on your bleeding and opened wounds. You will cry blood tears Noma. Everything that you will touch will wilts grounds you step on will go dry and river banks will lose their aqua. You are a curse Thuthukani village will replenish because of you. If I were you I would marry Prince Khetha not Prince Zimele because the warrior is not yours to marry Noma. "

" You dumb! What you saying is nonsense!! You just jealous because nobody wants to marry you Iminathi. You are bitter and gloomy because I Princess Nomaswazi the daughter of king Ngidi and queen Thabile I'm the fairest of them all. I'm the chosen one and you are the forbidden one. Your jealousy annoys me! Why don't you just die huh Iminathi? "

" Killing me won't change the prophecy. But go on and be the Thomas of the Bible. Locking me here won't change your fate. "

" Geez!!! You annoy me Iminathi why don't you just die? "

She laughs and continues singing.

" Iminathi you are a witch"

"Noma I'm still gonna say the Prince is not yours to marry. He doesn't love you and never will he do. "

" I wish I can silence you to death" I roar and walk out livid. I bump into mother scolding at a servant. I just push the servant aside and walk to my bedroom..

—

"Zimele I'm tired now. We've been at this for the past five hours. This girl doesn't live she's just a ghost Zimele. The sun is setting and we haven't ate. I'm resting on these rocks I'm no longer going any further." Hawu-

"Hawu come on don't be a weakling. We almost there don't disappoint me not now Hawu"

"Jali this girl is Fictional. She doesn't exist she's just an imagination. Everyone doesn't know her I bet you don't know her too"

"If you won't do this with me I will do it by myself Hawu. I will find my wife without your help!"

"Your wife? Are you hearing yourself my Prince? Your wife? A whole commoner? What if this wife of yours moved on and married Zimele? What if she doesn't want to be found Zimele? We've been searching for her for months with no trace maybe she is happily married. My Prince give up this fight its vanity! "

" You talking rubbish warrior! Stay here with your utter nonsense i will find her"

"Zimele! Ngwane village is haunted by evil spirits don't forget that."

"Evil spirits like yourself" I say and run up the rocks leaving Hawu resting on a rock. I'm tired too but I can't stop at least not now..
_ Ndandatho

(Crying baby)

"Gatsha!! Shhhh!!! Shhhh!!!" I say panting while leaning on a tree. It's been an hour now running barefooted with my son crying nonstop on my back. I'm thirsty and exhausted. Most importantly I don't even know where I'm going. Ngwane village is very dangerous at night. These bushes consists of evil spirits. People die in here and their bodies are never retrieved. What's even frightening these spirits want innocent blood. I fear for my son right now.

I offload him and sit down on the shrubs and pop my breast out. I nest him while singing him a lullaby.

" We gonna be fine my baby we gonna survive Bangi. There's always light at the end of the tunnel. This battle we will conquer son we gonna survive my baby and we don't need your father he failed us.

Zimele is dead to us. I will be your mother your father your sister and your only existing family. I will protect you Gatsha and most importantly the love I had and still have for your father I will give it to you. All of it. Don't cry yezwa? "

I say brushing his angelic face.

" Now come buckle up. We have a long way to go my baby" . I say putting him on my back. We run till we spot a river. I kneel to drink water and rinse my face. Gatsha starts crying again. I hear a few scary voices and go hide behind a huge rock. I cover my son's mouth with my hand.

"Where did she go Bafana? How could you be so careless? After I paid you so much money? I want her alive before morning find her!!"

"Makhehla I will find her I promise."

"Find that girl before sunset Bafana. Bring my offering or your wife will know the reason behind your sons death. I will tell her the truth about Bayanda's death. Bring that Ndandatho girl first thing tomorrow."

"I will bring her Makhehla but don't tell my wife about Bayanda please."

"Let's go before I call my little man to feast on you. Come!!" Their voices get lesser and lesser. I suppose they are gone. I get up and cry my lungs out. I run as fast as I can at least Zimele's son is no longer crying but sleeping.

"Hey! Young maiden what are you doing in these bushes late at night?" A voice says behind me. I turn to look. A tall muscular and sun-kissed à la mode gentleman appears. He is carrying a shield and a spear. He is wearing his animal skin attire. He looks at me.

"I asked you a question you maiden where are you going this late? "

" Em.. Well I'm going home warrior."

"Where is home?"

"That side of the mountain" I lie.

"What delayed you to travel back home at this hour? Is that your baby?"

"Yes warrior.. I was sent to a nearby village but I lost my way back hence I got delayed my warrior."

"I see.. Unbuckle the baby. I will carry him while I walk you home. These bushes are very dangerous young lady don't ever travel at this hour ever again. Bring the baby" I hesitate.

"I don't feast on human flesh unless your son is a bush meat then I can feast on him." I look at him scared.

"Okay that was a lame sarcasm what I meant was I won't hurt your child. Let's go before witches start to dance." He says helping me unbuckle Gatsha. He looks at my son then me. My tummy mumbles he laughs.

"I will hunt along the way. That tummy is declaring a war." He laughs I look at him. He resorts to whistling while carrying Gatsha like a sling bag stuffed with bush fruits. We walk around I don't even know where am I going.

"Awuzwake mgilikitshane!! Inyama madoda!!!" He says staring at a springbok.

"Thula ke mama wengane ngizamela umshana ukudla" " He aims for the springbok.

" What is his name? "

" Bangizwe Gatsha"

"You want him to be a warrior?"

"No . I just want him to be a responsible man. I want him to be a man of his words a future leader at it."

"I see.. let's go and cook"

"What Is your name sir?"

"Sizwe. And yours Nkosazana?"

"Ndanda"

He looks at me and smile.

06

"Who are you?"

I say fixing my spear with my eyes wandering around the bush.

"I dare you to show your face! Show your face now!!"

I roar.

"Easy my brother we mean no harm. We are just on our way home don't mind us"

"What brings you here at this hour? Are you two up to no good?"

"We just lost track of time. We are not evildoers pardon us Prince of Thuthukani village" The old grey haired man says. The other one is looking at me and saying nothing.

"Fine! Get lost and next time dont wander around in the bushes at such devil hours you will be in dire straits. Go!!" I say looking at them.

"My Prince" He says bowing his head. I look at them as they walk away.

"Hey! Wait a minute." They stop to hear him out. "Yes my Prince" "I'm looking for a young beautiful black pearl maiden. She has wide hips and long black curly afro hair and a perfected pointy nose. She has a baby a new born baby to be specific. She's from this village Ngwane village. Do you by any chance know her house?"

They both look at me and whisper to each other.

" What is her name My Prince? "

" Ndandatho. She's a lead dancer and singer. "They look at each other and whisper again.

" What is the search in connection too my Prince? "

" That's not your baby to feed do you know her yes or no?" "We don't know her my Prince."

" Come on. You can not know your people." "I'm sorry great one. We don't know her"

Fine.. Get lost" I say in defeat. I've spent the whole day searching and now it's late at night. Home is very far from here. I can't walk back to home. I have no choice but to go rest at King Ngidi's palace. I just hope warrior Hawu is safe wherever he is. This

village consist of witches I can sense their aura and its draining me..

—

"Ndanda are you sure this is where you stay? I mean you reluctant to go inside your compound. Could it be you lied to me young lady?"

"My sincere apologies warrior but my son and I are homeless. We have nowhere to go. We ran away from home because my evil parents wanted to sell our soul to a witch. We have no one but us I'm very much sorry i lured you here for vanity." He huffs.

"You should've been honest young lady I would've suggested the royal headquarters surely the queen of Thuthukani village wasn't gonna have a problem with accomodating you. It's our motto to give refuge to those who seek it." He says with defeat. "I will pay your parents a visit young this is uncalled for its inhumane bloody ancestors Let's go. "

" Go where Bhuti Sizwe? "

" The royal house it's the closest. Bring him here"

"We can't go to the royal house. I can't dine with the Queen and king." I laugh at this maiden. She looks beautiful when she's terrified.

"Who said anything about dining with the royals? Come let's go."

"Can I sit down and feed my baby please?"

"Again? Do you want this boy to be fat? What kind of a warrior is he gonna make if his weighed down byfats?"

"His hungry"

"But I can't hear him cry" "His feasting on his hands" "So that means his hungry?" "Yes"

"Mmmm... Mothers know best I guess. "

She looks at me and gets lost in thoughts. This maiden is beautiful she's a very rare kind of beauty. Lucky is the man who was bestowed to her. I'm glazing on her as she's nesting her son. It's pretty obvious her joy and tranquility resides within this young soldier's eyes and existence she loves her child and I love that about her. I position my meat properly and look at her once again.

"We need to get going"

"Oh yes.. We need to get going."

She says standing up. Immediately after standing I spot blood on her behind. I widen my eyes without gathering properly words to describe her state.

"Let's go"

"Em you.. You wet" I manage to say with a lump on my throat.

"Excuse me?"

"I don't mean that kind of wet as in you want to play adult wrestling. (I giggle but she doesn't. Lame joke again) you wet as in your skirt is messed up."

"I stained my cloth?" "Yes"

"Oh bless! I don't even have clothes." She whimpers.

"Let's go to my house It's just a few houses away from the palace. I'm certain Khethiwe will borrow you some of her clothes."

I say picking the baby up. We walk in silence.

_ Ndandatho

We make a stop in front of a beautiful compound with many orange and brown painted hutches. The compound is huge and neatly swept. It looks nothing like my home this is not a palace but for me it looks like one. The warrior "Sizwe" walks in front of us with my son resting on his shoulder. An old woman whose probably in her a late forties if not fifties steps outside their hut to look at us. A few others step outside and give us stares too. The old lady runs towards Sizwe and quickly reach for the baby.

She looks at Sizwe and then me.

"It's not what you think it is mama I will explain later can you please prepare a private chamber for Bangizwe's mom. A couple of clean cloths and warm water to bath and lastly a plate of food. She's tired her day has been nothing but a rough one . Please maKhuboni. " Hawu says.

"Sanibonani ma" I say bowing a little to show respect. "Welcome my child. Khethiwe!!! Khethiwe sondela!"

A young beautiful looking pregnant lady walks to us. She greets with her eyes fixed on Sizwe.

"Take this lady to one of our unused chambers give her water to

bath and some of your old Thuthukani attires. Ask Lungelo to prepare a meal too"

"Welcome sisi" The Khethiwe lady says looking at Sizwe again.

"Come" The mother says.. I follow her and greet a couple of people whom I believe they reside here too. "I should get going mother I will come by tomorrow to check up on them. Here's a bush meat."

"Sizwe go tomorrow morning my son. It's late and dangerous. Spend a night son surely Khethiwe would appreciate your presence son." The mother says and Sizwe faces the other direction. I suppose Khethiwe is the wife.

"I will see her shortly mother." Sizwe-

"The Maine said it's a baby boy son" The mother smiles so does Sizwe.

"Such a beautiful baby you have my daughter. (She says looking at me) Explain Sizwe"

"Well I met her in the bushes running away from her family who wanted to sell her soul to the evildoers. We bumped into each other and I brought her home. That's all mama"

"I see... What village do you come from young lady?" "Ngwane village of King Ngidi"

"Oh! I see... Your name?" "Excuse me." Sizwe- "Ndandatho"

The lady looks at me.

"Surname?" "Mchunu"

"Macingwane I see. And your parents?" "Bafana Mchunu and Tholakele Mchunu"

"Welcome This will be your new home. Your cloth is dirty you menstruated on it." "I'm sorry mama I will wash this grass mat I will bring it back spotless"

"No problem.. You recently gave birth isn't it?" "Two days ago. "

"Your child looks like someone I know. "

"I guess people look alike mother" She chuckles and reaches for the bowl of water Khethiwe just brought in.

"Thank you Khethiwe. You don't mind if I wash your baby's body with herbs? They gonna help him heal faster on the cord and any internal pain. I will give you some too for your wounds to heal faster. "

"Thank you mother I really appreciate it."

"Our surname is Maseko Sizwe is my son and Khethiwe is the wife. This beautiful Grey haired woman is my mother In law she might be strange at times but you will get used to it. Shall you need something while I'm away Khethiwe and Lungelo will be of help. Don't hesitate to call in for help we will answer."

" No one has ever done such a thing for me mama Ngiyabonga Khuboni kaNdlovu. "

" That's because it's easy to do it for you

my girl. Your aura is very clean I love that." She blush and wash Gatsha's body. Khethiwe calls me to go bath.

—
{Ngwane kingdom}

" My king the Prince of Thuthukani village is outside our premises do I permit him entrance?" " See him in "

" Wait for me I'm right behind you. He couldn't wait till tomorrow oh Zimele" Noma says excited about the news. She follows the guard to the gate. Indeed it's him her handsome African man. She's dying to touch those abs and kiss his beautiful full pink lips.

"You may come in my Prince."

"Thank you" He says stepping inside the yard. He looks at Noma then the gate man. "Excuse us servants!" Noma instructs.

"HI" Zimele -

"Good evening my husband. I see you couldn't wait any longer to set your eyes on me. That's so heart warming. Please follow me. Actually can I?" She says stretching out her hand for him to intertwine with Zimele's.

" No.. I hate affectionate things."

"Oh! So how are we gonna make babies my Prince if you hate romance?" "I don't want babies. We won't have any"

"But we will kiss right? And do adults things right?" "Where is your father Princess Nomaswazi?"

"Father is running errands. Come let me show you my grounds. Especially the garden you gonna love it come."

"No.. I'm tired. I'm surprised you haven't offered me something to drink a normal person would've thought of that before I even uttered my greetings but I guess we not taught the same way Princess"

" I beg your pardon my husband. I was still going to offer you a glass of water thing is my eyes didn't spot a servant anywhere closer but other than that I would've long offerd you something to quench your thirst my husband"

" I suppose your servants scratches your itch and combs your hair. From where I'm standing you nothing without your servants isn't it Princess?"

"Of course not. I do my own hair I'm very much depended on myself my Prince." "Where is Princess Iminathi?"

"Why are you asking me about her?"

"She's your sister your beautiful sister to be precise."

"She's... She's.. She's in a pigsty actually I don't know she's not my bellybutton I don't go around carrying herwith me excuse me" She says livid.

"Prince Zimele Jali how are you?" Zuko-

"Prince Zuko. I'm very well thanks and how are you?"

"I'm very good My Prince. To what do we owe the visit?" Zuko-

"I was just stretching my legs and the sun vanished into thin air my Prince." They both Laugh.

" Come with me so we can discuss so much. Noma make yourself useful and bring Prince Zimele something to quench his thirst." Zuko-

I run to the kitchen and find Madongwe and Mamchunu busy with chopping.

" The Prince needs food. "

"Hello to you too princess Nomaswazi and how can we help you?" Mamchunu-

"Did you grasp what I said servants?"

Mamchunu looks at me and says nothing. They fix the food. I remember something I ask for another plate. I give Prince Zimele his food and run to the garden. I pluck out a few herbs and go blend them. I take their juice and pour it on the food. It's over now Iminathi..

-

Thuthukani palace

The King and Queen were settled in their huge living room. Reminiscing on their good old days they still crazily in love with each other. Each day they grow stronger and fonder. It pains them that their eldest son Zimele isn't serious about marriage and settling down it has come to a point where they had to swallow their pride and negotiate with King Ngidi of Ngwane village to bestow his unmarried daughter to their son which King

Ngidi has done already. Nhlonipho their second and last born son walks towards them he comes after Zimele. The King and Queen stop kissing and acting cosy to mind Nhlonipho who is their sweetest son.

"Your majesty there's a Maine outside the gate. She's requesting for your attention father." Nhlonipho-

"What maine Nhlonipho?" King Ngcolosi - Jali says concerned they don't normally get uninvited guests especially maines.

"I don't know father but she's scary and all grey haired"

Nhlonipho- "Mmmmm Tell Hawulesizwe to permit him entrance" King-

"I'm afraid my King both Hawu and Zimele are not around father"

"UZimele nkosiyami! His getting married tomorrow he can't elope at least not now!" Queen Nozibele- Jali says deep down she would be jolly had Zimele eloped and refused to marry the princess of Ngwane.

"Let me go to this Maine. I'm coming my queen"

He bends to peck the Queen's lips. He rolls up his royalties garments and walks to the gate. This is not their Maine he doesn't know this one.

"Greetings great one. To what do we owe the visit?" King-

"The God's have spoken my King. I have come to deliver the message as soon as possible."

"You can come in.." He says opening the gates. The Maine is summoned to the counsel chambers. The queen joins him so

does the Kings mother. The Maine sits on the grass mat and starts with his incantations.

"What's going on Ngcolosi?" King's mother inquires. "I don't know Queen mother" King-

"Uphi Uzimele?"

"I don't know mother."

"Your son kodwa Ngcolosi kwakhala nyonini kuloya mfana?"
(Where did we go wrong with that boy?)

"Mother can we hear the Maine out please." "Akakhulume phela naye"

"What are the gods saying?" King-

"The God's have spoken. Where is your eldest son?" "Zimele? His not around"

"The gods instructed me to pass his message that the heir has been born" They glare at each other confused the maine continues. "Bangizwe Gatsha is the heir and future King of Thuthukani village. The gods are saying he must find his son before the enemies find him and turn him against him. That was the message"

"Whoa!! Whoa Maine! What are you talking about? What heir are you talking about?" King-

"Heir? What heir? Zimele is not even married Princess Nomaswazi is still pure. This is nonsense!!" Queen mother-

"The gods have spoken" The Maine says walking out.

"Bangizwe? Where is this boy? Where is this boy!!! I will kill Zimele myself!!" King-

"My husband what is this noise I'm hearing?" The queen says making her way towards her husband.

"Your son will be the death of me Nozibele!! Zimele is a disgrace!!" King- "What has he done now? Don't curse our son please Ngcolosi" Queen- "Did you know about his son? Did you know Zimele is a father?"

"What? No! Ini? Zimele a father? That's not possible that's a lucid lie. Our son hate women he can't be a father"

"Its unfortunate there's a Bangizwe somewhere out there uGatsha.." "Kodwa Nkosiyami uZimele!!" The queen says in disappointment.

—

Ndandatho

First thing in the morning I wake up to assist Khethiwe with the cleaning. She tells me we need to fetch firewood Lungelo will fetch water. I'm learning Lungelo is a sister to Sizwe.

" Yooh!! "Khethiwe says leaning against a tree breathing heavily.

" You tired? "

" Very tired. I wish I can hatch already.. This baby is taking much of my energy " I smile how beautiful she is.

" I was once in your shoes always tired and sleepy but here I am. Soon you will hatch my sister."

"Can't that soon be today? I'm tired Ndandatho. How old is

yours?"

"His four days old"

"Really? Then he grows fast"

"I guess he inherited his father's genes his a warrior"

"Mmmm.. Mine is a warrior too Sizwe" She blush and brush her tummy.

"Don't you miss his father?" I look at her and faintly smile.

"I would ha he not abandoned me with his baby and went ahead to ask for another maidens hand in marriage. I hate Gatsha's father"

"What an animal he is. You such a beautiful lady Ndandatho have you seen your reflection in a mirror? he was a fool to let go of you. Actually if my grandfather was still alive we could've negotiated for him to turn him into a chicken so we can slaughter him and cook him."

I laughed my lungs out.

" I hate silly men. We could've turned him into a chicken stew.

Ugly piece of shit" Khethi-

"It's okay Khethiwe men know whom they want to marry some of us just get to be their training field
But it's okay Khethi I'm fine. So is my baby. I'm grateful for the baby he gave me that's where my love and his love will go to my son Bangizwe"

"I wish I can meet that guy and chase him with a broom"

"Do you chase Sizwe with one?"

"He would kick me that one."

I laugh. This Khethiwe lady is crazy

"Don't cut down any wood I will." I say looking at her.

"Thank you. How old are you?"

"24 soon to be 25 and yourself?"

"That makes the two of us"

"Great.. And Lungelo how old is she?"

"That frog.. She's 20"

"Why frog?"

"She's disrespectful. Actually she hates me because I told on her for sneaking out at night to go to men."

"Kodwa nawe Khethi"

"No she's young Ndandatho.. I cant allow men to use her. You know how things goes in this village. Having a baby out of wedlock means you are damaged goods so no sisi."

"You don't want her to be like me.. I understand"

" I didn't mean it like that Ndandatho."

"I get it no offense taken. Let's go my son is probably crying"

"Let's go and besides I want to go bath and get ready to go Ngwane village. Our Prince is getting married to the most beautiful woman In Ngwane village that's what I heard too."

"Yeah.. You should go"

"Come with me I will ask gogo to mind Bangizwe"

"No I just hate crowded places and besides my parents will see me and try to sell me to the witch.. You can go. I will listen to the story later"

"Mmmm... I will miss you though."

"You will enjoy" I say pushing back a tear and carrying the wood on my head while she carries few. We walk home with her talking as for me my mind wasn't here but the man I love getting married to someone of his caliber really broke my heart.

People are dazzling outside The Ngwane village palace. Servants are moving up and down trying to make sure all is sorted and in order. The Queen gave them a straightforward and brief statement on how she wants everything to be positioned and aligned. She doesn't want her child's marriage to look like a gimmick show. Everything has to be exceptionally good and exquisite looking. She has waited for this day for quite some time. She wants no one to ruin it.

She monitors if the platters are beautifully decorated with stuffing. She looks at everything and a breath of relief comes when she learns all is well..

"Madongwe I want this side of the garden to be allocated to the royalties. The commoners can only occupy the outskirts don't make a mistake of mistaking the two and please one plate per person" Queen Thabile-

"I got it her majesty. Do we dish up for the servants too?"

"Everyone will eat today but I want every dish used by a commoner thoroughly cleaned Madongwe. I don't want their diseases and dirt to infect my people. Soak them for five good days so every bacteria can die. You got that?"

"Yes my queen I got it."

"Another thing.. I want you to ensure Iminathi is locked up in her room. She mustn't come anywhere near closer to this wedding. We can't afford a stunt not today at least. Change that outfit and those shoes too they look dirty and ugly. Find something that spells Devine brightness and boldness. That outfit will make us look cheap the Thuthukani royals will think our servants are under paid. Now please woman look pretty for once. " Queen

" I got it my Queen " She says with her head bowed.

" Mmmmmmm... I'm done here. Wrap up now!" She warns and Madongwe attends to everything with the help of Mamchunu.

(Servants gossiping)

Mmmm do you think she will last? " Mamchunu

" Who Noma? That girl is evil I wish her nothing but heartache and sadness. May she not know peace in her marriage. "
Madongwe-

"I can't wait to see the proceedings."

"I still feel the Prince is marrying the wrong Princess. We all know Noma is the youngest and Imi is the oldest. Meaning the Prince was meant to marry Iminathi not Noma. " Madongwe-

"But Iminathi is not a full functioning human being kaMadongwe. She's blind and unstable I think they made a wise decision though with Noma"

" I don't like this Noma girl. Anyway hows your daughter doing?"

"Which one?" Mamchunu-

"The eldest Ndandatho.. How's the baby doing too? God knows I'm dying to meet her little one. Maybe I should sew clothes for him bakithi."

"Ndandatho is.. Is.. Well she's doing fine and the baby too."

"Is she coming for the ceremony?"

"She's a mother now Madongwe. She's no longer that innocent young maiden who knew nothing about men. She can't attend such the Queen would turn her into a laughing stock."

"Loyo yena but she is talented though surely the royal house miss her beautiful singing and dancing. Phela in events like this she was the apple of many eyes. What a beautiful daughter you have in Ndandatho. If my sisters son wasn't married back in Thuthukani village I would've told that young man to wash his eyes with Ndandatho's beauty. Phela uzele usisi. " Madongwe-

She laughs as she wipes the table.

" It's a pity uNdandatho has a baby now"

"Hhayi suka!!! Having a baby doesn't hinder her beauty. That girl is a real dynamite. She's beautiful there's no such beauty as hers in this village. She was meant to be a Princess with her kind of beauty"

"It's a pity she's not.. Anyway I will go mind the pots"

Mamchunu-

Zimele

I'm sitting on the bench waiting for a hearing. Nhlonipho and Hawu told me I'm in deep shit with my parents. I don't know what wrong have done. I just pray it's nothing major because my parents always refer to me as the "Black sheep" of the family. I know I'm a bit troublesome but this hearing sounds a bit serious. I just hope it's not about them giving me stupid marriage lessons because really I don't need that. I don't love this lady and never will I.

Father walks in with a greased forehead so does mother and Grandmother. They all sit down and look at me as I fiddle with my hands.

"You summoned me father. Is everything okay?"

He looks at me the next minute my cheek is numb and aching.

"How could you Zimele? How could you embarrass me and this Kingdom in this manner? Are you really my son Zimele?" Dad-

"Your majesty what wrong have I done this time around?"

"What wrong I have done this time around" Shut up!!!! Shut up Zimele! Yazi wena you will be the death of this Kingdom. I don't see you taking over my throne you are stupid! Very stupid Zimele!!! " I clench my jaw and blow my nose as father calls me stupid.

" Calm down my king. Just calm down! "Mother-

" I can't calm down Nozibele. Your son is a disgrace!! I don't birth this fool!! His no son of mine!!! " Dad-

" Now you insulting me Ngcolosi! Are you insulting my intestines Ngcolosi? "Mom-

" I'm not insulting you but him"

"You declaring him as not yours meaning you insulting me! I gave birth to this boy Ngcolosi and you are his father. Address the matter at hand and stop beating around the bush and calling my son names!" Mom-

I clear my throat.

"Why was I summoned in here?"

"Shut up Zimele!!!" Gogo-

I keep quiet and look at both my parents as they both try to calm each other down.

"Zimele.."

"Gogo"

"What have you done my son? What are these hearsays that we are hearing my grandchild?"

"What hearsays gogo?"

"Mama don't be polite with him! Zimele who is Bangizwe Gatsha?"

"And how am I supposed to know that Father?"

" You see Nozibele? You see this son of yours?" Dad-

"Zimele tell the truth nawe! Ubani uGatsha?" Mom-

"Ma angazani naBangizwe mina angazani naGatsha."

(I don't know mom. I don't know any Bangizwe or Gatsha)

Granny chuckles.

"I told you that Maine was sick in the head. Zimele would never embarrass us in this manner" Gogo

"What Maine? Actually what's going on Mama?"

"Zimele I want you to be honest son I can't protect you nor side with you if you lying son. Ubani uGatsha?" Mom-

"Ma angimazi uGatsha mina"

"Don't make us fools Zimele. You know Gatsha stop making fools out of us. The Maine told us your deep dark secrets. We know about you being a father to a Bangizwe! We know about your bloody son Bangizwe! Now cut the crap and tell us which Princess have you damaged and left pregnant with your son!! "

My eyes fall on the ground with shock.

" Talk dammit!!!! " Father-

"Is it true that you impregnated someone out of wedlock Zimele?
What Kingdom is that Princess from?"

"Ehm... I have a son?"

"Sasingekho ugila imikhuba sazelaphi thina?" Gogo-

(We were not there when you were up to no good don't ask us)

Father looks at me angry I look at mom she's confused. I look at
Gogo and she is pissed too.

"She's not a Princess"

"WHAT?" them-

"What is not a Princess Zimele?" Dad-

"Ehm... Well she's not a Princess father but I.. I love her"

Gogo immediately gets on her feet and starts bashing me with her cane.

"You love what? You love what? What is wrong with you Zimele? What rubbish is this?" Gogo-

"Zimele you have a child with a commoner? What rubbish is this?" Dad-

"Can we all calm down please." Mom-

"Get this filth out of here! Get him out before I... Before I..."
Gogo started coughing badly. So much that I was told to fetch water for her.

Iminathi

"Help somebody help!!!!" She said shouting from her highest pitch.

"Somebody help!!!! Help please!!!! Help!!!!" She said coughing up badly. Something was slowly suffocating her she was feeling sick.

—

Ndandatho

I'm sitting on the verenda breastfeeding her son. While looking at everyone moving up and down the compound getting ready to go watch Zimele betray her and her trust by marrying someone who isn't her. Her heart is bleeding badly. If it was possible to rip off one's chest and ribcage just to monitor how bruised and blemished their heart is you would see how minced and diced hers was. I'm trying by all means not to hurt over Zimele's act but

its hard and it hurts gradually. Last night I wept in silence all night long while breastfeeding his child. I cried to an extent that I had to beg my gods to make this pain subside.

Today morning I also wept but nobody noticed. I don't know what hurts the most "losing Zimele to marriage" or "Loving Zimele in silence" but I'm certain both hurts. What hurts the most is that he doesn't care about his child. I understand he doesn't need me but Gatsha needs him. His son needs a relationship with him.. Can't he at least find his son and love him fully? Can't he at least make time to see him even if it's once I would appreciate it gratefully.

I'm starting to regret ever crossing paths with him. I wish I ended our conversation at "Hello" i should've walked away and never let him continue expressing his feels towards me or should I say his lies towards me? Whatever it was.. I wish I never gave him a chance or a platform to deceive me or manipulate me into giving him my body. I shouldn't have let him touch me or better yet look at me. After all a man's sin is the eye so says grandma.

Zimele played me and I was really a fool to let him play me without my consent. He took my pride as a woman he took my

adulthood. He just ruined my life. Had he not introduced me into mating I would still be a virgin singing and dancing as a leader. I would still be a happy and stress free beautiful Ndandatho but no he went and ruined everything. What he ruined the most is my fragile organ and my mind. I can't skip a moment without loving him or thinking about him. His all over my head his haunting me everyday. But it's all vanity now.....

"How do I look?" Khethi-

"Beautiful"

"Do you think my hair looks beautiful like this? Or a headwrap will do? My belly annoys me it's too revealing. How do I hide it Ndandatho?"

"I don't know Khethi I really don't know."

"Are you Okay?"

"Of course I'm fine..." I say trying to be strong and bold but my stupid salt water betrayed me just like the man I'm holding right now in my arms.

"Ndanda are you crying?"

"Me? Crying? No silly! I'm not crying."

"Ndandatho Yini sisi? Talk to me."

"I'm fine. Surely my hair stuck inside my eye. But I'm not crying. You look pretty" I say pushing back the other tears.

"I know we not best of best friends but Ndandatho you not okay and I wish you can talk to me please"

"Khethiwe I'm fine. Just go have fun and stop worrying about me."

"Mmmm... Anyway there's food in the house eat when you hungry. It's meat by the way."

She smiles and I return it. She walks to her hut. I let my tears roll. I look at the bracelet he once gave me the last time I saw him. I roughly rip it off the beads scatter on the floor. I don't bother picking them up instead I run inside my hut and put Bangi on the grass mat and curl myself in a corner and cry my lungs out..

Zimele

"You nearly killed my mother with your stupidity!!" Dad-

"Uxolo Ngcolosi" I say defeated.

"Dress up we leaving immediately!"

"I don't want to marry the Princess father"

"That's not up for discussion.. You marrying the Princess of Ngwane village this is not up for discussion." dad-

"But I have a child out of wedlock baba isn't that an insult to our Gods?"

"Zimele. You marrying Princess Nomaswazi wether you like it or not and another thing she won't know anything about your bastard son. Gatsha will be a secret that we all gonna take to the grave. We bringing Noma today and tomorrow morning I want her deflowered." Dad-

"Baba come on.. I don't want to marry her and how am I gonna make love to someone I do not love? I love the mother of my child not that ugly Princess"

"I can't you hear you Zimele." Dad-

"Mama please talk to your husband he can't do this to me angimthandi uNoma"

"Zimele this is above me son

angimthandi uNoma"

"Zimele this is above me son do as your father says."

"No mama!! I can't marry that Princess she's not a perfect match for me"

"Zimele don't be stubborn!! I did say allowing you to be a warrior while you are a Prince would invite such problems but you never listened as always!! If you continue being hot-headed Zimele you will find yourself gavalanting and soughting shelter in the cursed grounds." Dad-

"Ngcolosi you can't do that that can only upset our gods." Mom-

"If this son of yours Zimele continues acting like a sissy. I won't hesitate Nozibele." Dad-

I look at my parents and storm out of my chamber. I bump into Hawulesizwe whistling while fixing the cart.

"My Prince how are you?"

"Not today!"

"Zimele!"

"Sizwe not today please!!"

"What a foul mood for someone who is getting married"

"Hawulesizwe Maseko I said not today!!!" I roar.

"Easy tiger jeez!" He says stepping back.. I walk to the garden to take my shield and spear. I start fighting air till Hawu reaches for his shield and spear joining me with training.

"Zimele what's going on? " Hawu

"They forcing me into marrying Noma"

"It was bound to happen Zimele you are royalty. Actually you are a future King to rule Thuthukani village remember that Zimele"

"I don't love her and never will I Hawu. Doesn't that count for something? " I say fighting.

"Zimele you have blue blood not red blood like my own."

"I don't care about these riches Hawu! If finding my girl and my son means loosing this then so be it!" I roar.

"You cant lose this Zimele where will you go? You do know your father can be cruel Zimele. He have you banished maybe he will join heads with other Kingdom's for them not to give you shelter in times of need. Don't mess with Ngcolosi you don't want to be on bad terms with him Zimele "

"I will hide in your house Hawu we friends isn't it? "

"The King and Queen will banish me Zimele what will happen and become of my family? I have a pregnant wife. No Zimele focus on your marriage not this fictional girl of yours"

"I can't!! I can't forget her!! She holds my heart.. Hhayi uNomaswazi that girl only sees herself in this world. She cares less about others and I for one I hate such people Hawu."

"Zimele are you hearing yourself? You ready to lose everything for a commoner that could be dead!! Are you sure she didn't perform black magic on you before she died minutes after you mate with her for the final time? What does this girl have on you Zimele?"

"I love her Hawu!! She is my life. I love her.. Most importantly she is the mother of my son!!!!" I roar and drop my fighting shields.

"Marry the Princess and find your son afterwards. Just do it to honor your parents Zimele. Marry her but don't love her ke decorate these lands with her crown. You have nothing to lose. "

I look at him and lean against the wall.

"If I find her I'm leaving this Nomaswazi Princess."

"Fair enough"

"But they want me to deflower her"

"Slaughter a chicken at night or a mouse Zimele and paint your sheets white. That's simple." I chuckle.

"Your smart warrior"

"At least I'm not an empty brain like yourself Jali." we fist bump and go to my private chambers.

Gogo ka Ndandatho

Ndandatho's disappearance has put me in dire straits with my health. Not a day goes by without me thinking about her and wondering about her state and safety most importantly I worry about Gatsha the child is still fragile to be out in the cold. I just pray the gods of Ngwane village are watching over them.

"Ma get ready the ceremony is yet to resume. Get up mother put that cloth away. Why do you still have it by the way? " Nomzamo

"This is the cloth she wrapped up with when Majawonke came with her"

"Get rid of that thing ma She's dead to us. My brother is in dire straits with Makhehla because of that fool. Get rid of this cloth or I will" She says snatching the cloth from me.

"Nomzamo you will do no such thing! Ndandatho is still alive to me and I still love her as my own. Give it back"

"Mama uNdandatho is a curse don't forget her own mother abandoned her. Two days later my brother died leaving us with this ugly child"

"I'm not going to the ceremony Nomzamo you go."

"Fine suit yourself mother" She steps outside. I bury my wringled face on my hands. I heave the longest sigh recalling the last conversation I had with Majawonke regarding Ndandatho this poor child has been through the most and I just wish she finds peace from here on..

—

Nomaswazi

I'm standing in front of a huge mirror. I'm wearing my elegant gold dress with sparkles. My beads are gold too so are my bangles. My hair is beautifully styled I look like a true Princess. My divine fragrance and lean body serves as proof that I am a goddess. My few relatives are around to assist in preparing me for the day ahead. There's laughter and singing chirping through my sashed windows. I smile again and fix my eyes on the mirror yet again. How I love my flat tummy I look appealing everything is situated where it belongs. Oh Princess Noma.

"We need the veil Khosi." Aunt-

"The white one or gold one?"

"Gold." I say with a broad smile.

"You look beautiful Princess look at you" Mom-

"I am my mother's daughter your majesty. " I do a little bow to show respect.

"In deed you are your mothers daughter. Do that turn around again sweetheart" Mom-

"Like this mother?"

"Oh yes my petunia flower" Mom-

I slowly do my little twist and turn. Mom jumps in excitement.
"She's so beautiful Thabile" Granny

"A true Princess mother" Mom-

"My son gave you beautiful children you should be grateful"
Granny-

"Indeed he blessed me with good genes mother." They blush and
continue doing touch ups here and there.

My cousin Khosi walks in running there's joy painted on her face.

"I see their carts and their people outside our premises. Your

husband is here" Khosi-

"Really?"

I say in joy.

"let me take a peep" I jump in joy and peek on my curtain indeed I see their Kingdom attire.

"It's really happening mother."

"Indeed. But before we give your hand in marriage we need to have a little chat my daughter" Mom-

"You do know what today means right? You becoming a wife Noma and being a wife comes with a lot of duties duties that do not need your title interfering with them. You need to be submissive my daughter. Your husband will have a strange and disturbing moment first in the morning. It's gonna be hard and

probably long like a python. Somewhere between his legs. When that happens you need to help him out my child "

Princess Khosi and Princess Mgcinaphi cover their mouths and laugh.

" Mom are you by any chance talking about a penis erection? "

She widens her eyes and swallow hard.

" How do you know about this Noma? And it's not a penis but manhood. Don't go around telling people your husband has a penis" Mom-

"Kodwa anty it's a penis" Khosi

Dad clears his throat and walks in.

"Seems like you ladies are having a serious conversation here am I by any chance disturbing?" Dad -

"Not at all my son we were just telling the little flower about marriage"

"I see" Dad-
We all look at him as his looking at me..

"You look exquisite my daughter. The Prince of thuthukani village will salivate till noon" Dad-

"Baba" I shyly say.

I walk towards father and embrace her.

"You look beautiful my child. You look like a goddess" Dad

"Thank you father... "

"Its a pity your sister can't monitor this big day. Oh poor Iminathi" Dad-

"She will be found father. Just give it time can we be jolly today please father?"

"Of course anyway I came to inform you our guests have arrived. We need to be punctual and not delay the ceremony. They have a welcoming ceremony waiting for you back in Thuthukani we can't waste any more time"

"I'm almost done father"

"Fine"

"Father whom did you book for the singing and dancing gig since that Mchunu girl decided on being a mother?"

"Well.. We have a new band daughter they good too."

"I want perfection.. I just want the dancing and singing to be well polished I don't want to deal with amateurs on my big day. I can't be a laughing stock of this village"

"Don't panic Princess wrap up and come to the garden. " Dad-

**

8

Zimele

"My Prince we have a problem" Servant-

"What problem?"

"The donkeys won't move we are stuck my Prince"

"Cant you kick it till it moves?" Hawu-

"I'm afraid we will need a new pair of donkeys.." Servant-

"It's a pity we are in the middle of nowhere. What do we do now?" Uncle-

"Simple... I go back home to train for the biggest war that we

have against Umthombo village in few days time." I say looking at Hawu.

"Zimele shut up!! Just shut up!!" Granny-

"This could be a sign the gods are giving us a sign.. These donkeys are the only fastest and best donkeys that we have in our Kingdom. This is act is a first. They've never done this before"
Me-

My grandmother and uncle look at me with creased faces.

"Zimele you not helping at all just shush please" Hawu-

"But his telling the truth these are our best donkeys. Malume you should know that information." Nhlonipho-

"Hawulesizwe think of something fast we need to be in Ngwane village in the next coming hours. We can't keep the Princess waiting. " Gogo-

"With all due respect Queen mother there's nothing we can do unless we walk back home or you stay here while I walk back to the Kingdom to get two donkeys but that too will consume more time time that we do not have. " Hawu-

"Can't we postpone this wedding? I mean we have enough and valid reasons to object it for today." Me-

"Can somebody zip Zimele's mouth before I punch him!" Gogo-

I look at her then play with my beards.

"Go fetch those donkeys Hawu. We will stay here we have no choice one of you chauffeurs need to rush to Ngwane village to deliver a message about our delay and wena Zimele do you Remember the pendant I once gave you a couple of months ago? Saying it was a family pendant that was passed on to me by my parents when I married your grandfather? (I nod) You need to give it to the Princess immediately after the initiation. "

" What? How? I mean why? "

I say swallowing my saliva. I gave it to Ndandatho a couple of months ago for protection.

" What kind of a question is that? I just said it's a family gift Zimele"

"Well gogo I... I kinder lost it in one of the battles I once went to" I lie.

"You did what? Zimele what is wrong with you huh? What is wrong with this child? Do you know what that pendant carries? It shouldn't be lost Zimele better yet it's not to be worn by outsiders. If it's ruined it invites trouble.. What have you done huh? You've just killed me Zimele!! Are you really my grandson? Hhayi u Zimele hhayi nkosiyami"

Hawu looks at me and laughs silently while I'm scratching my head.

Suddenly the clouds form a strong wind prevails.

"See what I told you? Whatever storm that's coming you will face it Zimele you will be the one on the receiving end of the ancestors wrench." Gogo-

"What wrench gogo?"

"Phuma kimi Sathane"

Hawu laughs even more. So does Nhlonipho am I really the disobedient child that my family paints me as? Could it be my son Gatsha could take after me? Talking of him what if Ndandatho did something to the pendant? I mean gogo just said once worn its not to be removed.. I just pray she hasn't done something stupid to that pendant..

—

Meanwhile in Ngwane village

Nomaswazi

"What's going on mother? Why is Zimele not here? Why hasn't he arrived?" I say with a high pitch so much that I attract eyes.

"Calm down Noma surely there's a valid reason my daughter. Just give him an hour or so" Mom-

"No! No! This is degrading mother! This is nonsensical. His being disrespectful mother. How could he be late on this important day? How could he? His embarrassing me!!" I roar and stamp my feet.

"Noma calm down." Aunty-

"I will go check with the King and Queen of Thuthukani surely there was hiccup somewhere but trust me he will show up"
Mother-

"What are looking at morons? Sing!! Just fucken sing!!! SING!! and stop looking at me!!" I roar and the band gets frightened. The few other Princesses from foreign villages whisper I know they gossiping. I roll my dress up and prepare to walk away I walk faster till I accidentally trip.

" She's so dramatic "

" Noma will never change "

I hear these words behind me. I get up and run to the devils bedroom. I don't knock but budge in her room. I find her coughing out blood I suppose my little poison is doing its trick.

"Please help! Please help! I.. I. (Coughing) I'm burning my insides are burning. Please!" Iminathi-

I pace around her bedroom with a creased face.

"Iminathi I thought you were my sister and that you had me in your best interests. I thought we are Bonnie and Clyde sister riding together on a motorbike. I thought we were gonna be the best of buddies but you ruined everything and changed my perception on you. How could you be so cruel and malice? How

could you be the Ester in our sisterhood? Why do you hate me huh? "

" Please help! I'm gonna die please Nomaswazi "

She says crawling with her bloody hands staining the floor.

" Mmmmm... It's funny how I always had your back throughout our childhood. I hid your dark secrets from mother and father. I always protected you but here you are Iminathi the blind girl. Choosing to hate on me and my happily ever after instead of rejoicing and celebrating with me. You were supposed to be supportive and cheering me for finally marrying the man I've always grown up crushing on. Iminathi you are evil and do you know what happens to evil beings? They die a cruel death they die like witches or perpetrators of crime. And you my sister you will die a gruesome death. Because you do not deserve to live instead you deserve what's currently happening to you. You ruined my chance at love and I'm ruining your chance at living. Just die idiot"

I say composing my posture and doing a little breathe in and chin up before I step out of her room.

"My blood is on you Nomaswazi!! My death will not go unpunished you will reap what you sow. The gods of Ngwane village will retaliate they have eyes and ears.. They can see the unseen and they hear the unheard and you will die too. Your evilness will be the price of your death! " She roars and coughs

up more blood.

" Candy dreams my beloved sister I love you okay? "

She looks at me and her eyes turn black.

" You are no sister of mine.. "

She says and her head hits the ground. The door handles turns I quickly run to my sisters body and start crying mercilessly.

Queen Nozibele

My husband is giving me a deadly stare. His demented and in his head it's my fault that our son isn't here for his wedding. After all I the Queen mother is to "Blame" whenever our son does bad things all because his a fruit of my womb. But when his doing as his father wishes he is "His son" I know I will be on the receiving end of his wrench shall we arrive home.

Queen Thabile walks towards me. My face immediately forms a frown.

"What's going on Nozibele? Where is Zimele?" Thabile-

"Please Thabile not you again."

"Woman your son needs to get here shall we arrive home."

Queen Thabile walks towards me. My face immediately forms a frown.

"What's going on Nozibele? Where is Zimele?" Thabile-

"Please Thabile not you again."

"Woman your son needs to get here before dawn. Other than that there's a price to pay! You can't embarrass my child in this manner!" Thabile-

"Are you done barking like a dog Queen Thabile? If you done fold your tail and piss off. It's not like my son loves this trash and immoral daughter of yours. Now back off before the singing comes from us." I say between my teeth.

"You think your son is better than my daughter? Listen woman I will keep quiet and walk away because I have a huge respect for your husband not you."

I chuckle and walk past her. I spot My husband and Ngidi talking. I walk past them and go join the other ladies.

"Greetings ladies"

"Oh greetings Queen Nozibele" They say in unison.

"I need a drink" I say and call one of the servants.

"My Queen"

"Greetings my friend can I have a strong beverage"

Queen Siboniswe is the first to chuckle.

"That makes the two of us my darling." Bonisiwe-

The servant excuse us.

"Drinking your sorrows away I guess?" Bonisiwe-

"Don't ask.."

"It must be hard being in your shoes right now but I don't blame your son for not pitching. Who would marry a daughter of a hyenna?" Bonisiwe-

The ladies laugh. She's still a humble and sweet woman I don't want to begin describing her beauty. This woman is very pretty her skin is so smooth and flawless. Her curves are beautiful and perfectly drawn. Her beauty is rare she is a dime.

"Tell me about it. If it were to me my son wouldn't marry this girl."

"She's very self centered and spoilt surely she can't even wash her own underwear"

Queen Lolo says sipping on her mug of whatever beverage she's having.

"I don't like this woman. Her sight annoys me I'm just tolerating her for my husband's sake. Thank you my darling" I say to the

woman serving us. She looks at Queen Siboniswe and smile. Surely she's admiring her beauty she's very appealing.

"You look familiar my Queen." Servant -

"No darling I hate these grounds. I wouldn't say we met before." Boniswe-

" You beautiful " Servant

" Stop being a poet and get back to work! " Thabile roars at the servant. We all exchange looks.

" Like mother like daughter " Me-

"Mother!! Mother!!! Mom you need to come see this!!!! " The girl says distraught and shaking. Her hands are bloody so is her white garment.

—

Ndandatho

There's a strange rain and wind outside. My son is crying so badly he is even shaking. I'm trying to calm him down but his restless. I'm starting to worry now.

"Gatsha stop crying! Kanti Yini ngawe?" I say losing my temper.

Sizwe's mother walks in and kneels in front of my child. She's about to leave for the wedding too Khethiwe is long gone with Lungelo.

"Ndandatho why is the baby crying?" She looks at me.

"I don't know."

"You can't not know Ndandatho you are a mother. It's either he needs food or a nappy change if not a bath or maybe some sleep. Have you tried any of the above?"

"I did mama but he won't keep quiet I'm even tired."

"Ndandatho where is this child's father?"

I look at her.

"He left us mama when I was pregnant. So I don't know about his whereabouts"

"Ndandatho I'm gonna ask you again. Who is the father of this child?"

"I can't tell you mother you won't believe me."

"Maybe I already know. Just say it."

"Some idiot called Zimele Jali"

"You mean a warrior?" She smiles.

"Yes him."

"Apparently his getting married today to Princess Nomaswazi of Ngwane village surely you know her since you from the same village"

"I know her" I faintly say. She looks at me and smile.

"You are blessed do you know that?"

"Had I been blessed I wouldn't be here now ma with a child whose father knows nothing about"

"You are blessed because the gods of Thuthukani village entrusted you with their seed to make things much better is him being an heir. The first heir of this Kingdom. I don't know much about you and your boyfriend Prince Zimele but I'm certain you are highly favoured Ndandatho. Bangizwe is your blessing actually a blessing to these grounds. Don't let your hate or sadness against The warrior hinder the good that's in you. You were destined for grater heights and I my child will propel you to being that woman and another thing your our secret is safe with me. Shhhh... Bangizwe"

She says trying to hush the baby bit instead it gets worse.

"Ndandatho something is wrong with your child his eyes are changing his temperature is high. We need Zimele. Only him can save his child"

"bring him here" I hold my baby indeed his body temperature is high. His eyes start turning white.

"No! No!! Bangi open your eyes! Open your eyes my baby please. Ma please get me water please!! Gatsha Jali wake up please my baby. No! No! No!! Gatsha!! Gatsha!!" I say shaking him. Mom walks in with water but it's of no use. I walk outside carrying my child with tears rolling down my cheeks.

" I will go seek help. "

"Please mama hurry I can't lose my baby too please mother. Don't leave me Gatsha!!! Wake up! Wake up please" I say wailing while shaking my son. Suddenly I hear the most loudest thunderclap outside rain stars pouring heavily. There's wind too a terrible wind to be specific.

—

King Ngidi

"Nomaswazi what's going on here? Hhhayi!!!!" My wife screams as we find Iminathi laying in a pool of blood immobile. Noma crying so sorrowfully her eyes are even swollen. The servants run to our chambers they scream when they monitor Iminathi's state.

"This is a bad sign son! The gods are warning us Ngidi" Mother-

"Iminathi!! Iminathi hawu ingane yami" Thabile-

"My sister!!! No!! Iminathi wake up!!" Noma-

I look at everyone not knowing what to do. More and more people starting coming in numbers some hail historically and some are distraught. I gather my sense and walk outside. I find a few people gathered outside solely gossiping. I pass them and go sit down.

"My King a message has come for you from the king of Thuthukani village." Servant-

"What are they saying?" I say in defeat.

"I will handle it father" Zuko-

"Is everything okay King Ngidi?" Ngcolosi -

"My daughter has met her fate Ngcolosi"

"What do you mean?"

"She's dead her body is soaked in blood. The gods are warning us maybe this marriage is a curse to these grounds. Or maybe today wasn't a good day. Let's postpone"

"Curse is big word Ngidi maybe this wasn't a chosen day"

"Father King Zimele and the others have their cart stuck in the middle of nowhere hence they couldn't make it for the wedding. They suggest we postpone." Zuko-

"Tell everyone to eat shall they get full they should carry some of the goodies to their families there's no wedding. Call our afar relatives and tell them about Iminathi's death we have to bury her tonight."

"My King" Zuko says bowing his head. I spot a big tornado from a distance suddenly a heavy rain starts pouring threatening to sweep souls away. Maybe mother is right about this being a warning.

9

09

Ndandatho

"What did I tell you about this bracelet?"

The Maine says looking at me. It still baffles me how she got here if not mistaken this woman is based somewhere in Ngwane village. How she got here and knew about my son's sudden predicament is still a mystery I can't seem to fathom.

" Young maiden What did I say about this bracelet?"

"My apologies great one I didn't know it carries so much powers and capabilities. I was just angry great one and I..."

"Shhhh... Spare me your life crisis Ndandatho I'm not here for that but this little boy. Your foolishness nearly made your son meet his fate untimely. A simple instruction was given but you failed to obey. This makes me question if the gods gave a right maiden for the mission but my guess tells me you not strong Ndandatho you are weak and you might lose this battle before it has even began. You are not a rock Ndandatho you are just a wreck young maiden. For both our sakes I hope this is the last time I travel such miles to attend to your carelessness and negligence. I hope this was our last encounter. "

" I'm sorry"

"Change that soon! Stop being sorry and grow some thick skin Ndandatho this is a jungle and only the fittest survive. Change your sorriness and be a rock!!"

Tears roll down my eyes. This Maine is mocking me. She's judging me I'm a good mother this was a mistake. I don't normally do such I was just angry.

"Another thing make that waterfall of salty aquas a foreign thing to you. Leaders never shed tears they reign. You raising a male child Ndandatho A future leader of these grounds a warrior of Thuthukani village You are raising uJali uBhengu Udlabazane umepho!! Tears won't solve your problem stop being weak and easily breakable. Have a heart of stone eat a scorpion alive and nothing will ever make your skin cringe. "

She looks at me then my son. She puts the now fixed bracelet on Gatsha's wrists. She stands up and fix her cane. She removes one of her white beads bracelet.

" Here. Don't ever take it off I mean it Ndandatho. "

" Fine" I say between my teeth.

"Stop being weak.. You still have a long way to go. Young warrior stay well the gods are with you. Now can the storm stop Gatsha.." She bows and head to the door. She looks at me and then disappears into thin air. I look at my son.

"I will be strong Gatsha. I will be strong I will stop being weak and grow some thick skin. For you I will be anything and I will do anything. Ngiyakuthanda Ndodana umama uyakuthanda." I say kissing his forehead.

—

Days have gone by my son is doing just fine and I'm healing pretty well. Khethiwe and Lungelo spilt the beans about the " Prince" disastrous wedding day that turned into tragedy. Apparently the Princess was stood up by the King. It broke Nomaswazi to the core having being embarrassed by the Prince

by. The poor dracula was spitting fire she folded her little tail and go bury herself in her bedroom. Yeah it's a juicy story but it's not benefiting me anyhow because Zimele and Noma will marry soon cos I overhead mother and Hawu discussing it. I even heard Princess Iminathi died on the very same day that was scheduled for the wedding. Such a sad day it must've been.***

Khethiwe Lungelo and myself are seated under a shade. We busy surfing sugar beans we have to prepare them for supper. Khethiwe is spilling the beans about last night apparently Hawulesizwe her

husband was home so they did the deed and by the look of it It was mind blowing because Khethi won't keep her mouth shut about it.

"So didn't this specimen disturb you?" I say smiling.

"No he made me sit on top of him" She smiles showing off her beautiful dimples and white perfect teeth.

"It must've been a good night Khethiwe. Some of us were cold woman" She laughs.

"You ladies should keep your eyes open there are many handsome and athletic men in Thuthukani village you might be lucky and

find yourselves your prince charming just like I found mine."
Khethi

"I don't like men" Lungelo-

"Reason being?" Me-

"Duh!! They make bellies huge and boom big headed babies"
Lungelo- We laugh.

"Wait till you get a taste of that snake that's situated between
their legs you will regret ever uttering those words" Khethi-

"Or their tongue causing friction on your bean" I say and curve
my lips.

"You say what Ndandatho?" Them-

"Yeah their tongue surpasses the snake Khethiwe"

"Wait are you telling me Gatsha's father was shoving his tongue in there Ndandatho? The tongue we use to communicate with our ancestors?" Khethi-

"Yes Khethiwe! A whole tongue on my privates doesn't Hawu do that?"

I tease.

"No.. He just kiss my neck my stomach and my boobs then the bashing" I laugh my lungs out.

"Well trying something new wouldn't hurt Khethiwe. You must tell him to give you a suck down there"

They both look at me like I'm saying an abomination.

"Yes.. You should tell him Khethiwe"

"Wonders shall never end! Tongues are now for mating? I can't believe this Ndandatho a whole tongue inside a vagina?" Lungelo-

"Guys a tongue is tool too when mating. My ex boyfriend was doing it to me he would even kiss my toes and suck on them"

"Hhayi!! Ndandatho are you sure your ex boyfriend was complete upstairs? Maybe he was a vampire!"
Khethiwe

"Maybe he was a witch. Who sucks toes now? That person needed a Maine to check their brains. He wasn't complete upstairs" Lungelo-

"The are positions too" I condensed.

"What positions now?" Khethi-

"Sex positions."

"What are the positions now?" Lun

"They are plenty guys come on."

"Ndandatho talk no one is here" Lun

"Can we surf the beans before Mama comes here"

"You changing the topic again Ndandatho" Lunge-

"Wena you shouldn't be so intrigued and fascinated by this topic you hate men isn't it? I will disclose the information to Khethiwe not you"

I tease.

"Nda don't do that we are siblings come on!" Lun

We laugh at her. To clear the confusion Lungelo is five years younger than us her love for things would have you believing she is our age mate but dololo.

"Okay fine. My boyfriend and I we used to do it..."

"How are the beans coming about?" Mom says standing in front of us cutting our conversation short.

—

Zimele

"Hawu where is your mind at?"

He feasts on his lower lip and flash me a smile showing off his long rabbit teeth.

"My wife"

"What about her?"

"Last night was epic Zimele we went on and on without getting tired. She kept on wanting more of this I love her Zimele" I smile and lean on my fighting stick.

"I can imagine her singing tenor if not alto. Hawu!!! Oh Hawu!!! The gods are watching Hawu!!" I tease him.

"Piss off Zimele she was singing sopranos."

I laugh this guy never discuss sex this is a first.

"I'm a happy man when you're happy. So how's your sister the one that has a child? Is she pretty?"

"Don't get ideas my Prince. You have a thing for commoners hands off from my sister"

"Sizwe I'm just asking come on dude. I won't mate with your sister"

"She's pretty dark in complexion. Sexy body and beautiful hair

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dark in complexion. Sexy body and beautiful hair she's a pearl and a good mother too. Now back off"

"Really?"

"Yeah.. Thobani!!! That's not how you hold a spear! What is this boy doing!! Nkosana don't fight with your eyes closed what is wrong with these boys?" Hawu -

"Boys thats not how we do it. Thobani picture that spear as your dick would you manage to mate had the tip of your manhood faced your belly instead of forward?"

Hawu looks at me and laugh.

"No my Prince"

"Then why are you expecting the spear to do it works while facing that way? And wena Nkosana how would you know you acing for the actual hole if you not watching where you shoving it? Boys fighting is like arousing a woman take your time when doing it. Focus don't lose your zeal. Keep your eyes opened and glued on what you doing. Go harder and stop then harder and harder depending on her stamina or mood. Just like fighting. Let your pace match with that of your opponent. If his slow be slow too if his fast be fast too. Fight Sex!! Keep that in mind" I say and they look at me.

"You sick in the head Zimele these are kids. They know nothing about women"

"But their penises get hard Hawu. We dealing with men here we can't baby and smother them.. Back to your sister"

"There's nothing to tell Zimele. She loves her son She won't give you a chance"

"What is her name?"

"None of your business"

"Come on Hawu who is she? What if she's my girl?"

"Not a chance"

"Guess what tonight I'm going to your house and you won't stop me"

Hawu laughs. We train the young aspiring warriors. Hours later

Hawulesizwe and myself walk to his house.

—

"This river is far no way!" Me-

"Come on Khethiwe we gonna arrive in no time" Lungelo-

"Guys I'm tired I really can't. Can't you guys leave me? You will find me here." Me-

"Are you sure you gonna be safe?" Ndandatho says looking at me with worry in her eyes.

"Duh! Of course I will"

"Okay we coming now now don't move please Khethi. We don't want Hawu to kill us" Nda-

"I will manage" I assure them. Ndandatho walks away with Lungelo. I slowly and carefully sit on the grass and brush my tummy. A loud and long heave follows. I sit there waiting till two men stop in front of me. They both old but one has more Grey hair than the other.

"Greetings my daughter" Man-

"Greetings old man" I say looking at them.

"We looking for a young maiden she has a new born son. The lady is dark in complexion. She has a twisted long afro hair do you by any chance hold knowledge of her whereabouts?"

"The are plenty of women with those characteristics. A name would help baba"

"Ndandatho Mchunu" Man 2 says.

"And who are you?"

"Bafana Mchunu her father and this man over here is her husband." I widen my eyes.

"Ehm! Well I met that maiden a few hours ago but she was running to that direction father saying she's going to a village called uMthombo if you run faster you might be lucky to find her Baba."

"That direction to the left?"

"Yes baba. Hurry.."

"Thank you daughter may blessings fall upon you"

"Pleasure" I fake a smile and watch them run to the direction I directed them on. When I learn they gone I stand up and force myself to run to the river bank which takes me a hundredth

pauses and long sighs but eventually I meet them walking to my direction.

"Ndandatho your father and your husband came questioning me about your whereabouts I mislead them though. Why didn't you tell me you have a husband Ndandatho?"

"His not my husband Khethiwe and that man who calls himself my father his the reason I left home. They want to kill me Khethiwe and one of them is a witch back in my village.. My son is not safe and so am I. I should get going before their witch assistance tell them about my whereabouts. I need to run thank you for saving me Khethi I appreciate it"

"Don't thank me we are family Ndandatho we have your back. Listen use this road it's the quickest backhome. Your path will not meet with that of these people.. Run home and be safe." Me-

"May the gods of Thuthukani village see you through Ndandatho"
Lunge-

"May the gods be your eyes and ears may they see you home sister. Till we meet again" Me-

"Thank you thank you my sisters. I have to go now."

"Here.. Put these under your tongue no evil will prevail" Lungelo says giving her stones and flower to chew.

"Thank you. Be safe guy's please."

"We will.." Ndandatho runs as fast as she can. Lungelo and I start crying and calling our gods to be with her till she gets home.

"Here my Prince" Mrs Maseko

"Thank you mama" She flash me a smile and rock the baby she's carrying on her back.

"And who is that mama?"

"This is my grandson Bangi Hold him my Prince."

"Babies hate me mama"

"But this one will love you trust me"

"Mama he will scare the baby with his smoky voice" Hawu says
drinking from our jag of fermented mealie porridge "Mahhewu"

"Ma when she or he starts crying don't blame me I warned you"

"Zimele hold the baby please."

"Fine!" I say and put my spear down. Sizwes mother unbuckles

the kid. Hawu looks at me and laughs so badly he know how babies hate me. It's more like my husky voice scares them.

"Bangi say hello to the Prince of these grounds. Say hello to the warrior." Mrs Maseko looks at me for a little while longer. She hands me the baby I heave the longest sigh before looking at her.

"Hello beautiful how are you baby girl?"

Hawu and his mother laugh at me.

"Come on guys I'm trying here"

"It's not a she but a he." Hawu-

"Really? He looks like a girl warrior"

"That's because you love girls Zimele" Hawu-

"Hawu don't start with me Sizwe"

"Can you two stop! You gonna make the baby cry" Mrs Maseko-

" Sawubona butho" I say gazing at this little man whose eyeing me non stop. You would swear he knows me.

"Iyabukana lendoda kazi ingazelaphi"

"Maybe you are the father anything us possible with you Zimele"
Hawu-

His mother looks at me.

"See his not crying?"

"That's strange"

I say.

"His just doing you a favour don't be too excited Zimele." Hawu-

I look at him and smirk. I play with the baby till I give it back to the grandmother. Mrs Maseko does something to the blanket and my eyes land on his wrists. I furrow my brows trying to collect my thoughts. They disappear.

" Here" He says handing me a jag of our Mahhewu.

"That bracelet looks familiar Hawu"

"What bracelet?"

"The one the baby is wearing it looks familiar"

"Beads are the same Zimele.. It's definitely not the one you lost in case you getting ideas"

"You don't get it don't you? I never lost the bracelet"

"I don't follow Zimele what did you do then?"

"Remember that night of the ceremony when I asked you to accompany me to my grate maternal grandmother's old house? In the bushes?"

"You mean that night when you were helping your sick grandmother out in that dark room and I told you our opponents were coming for us?"

"Yes.. That night Hawulesizwe. I lied about my grandmother being sick that woman disappeared years ago leaving her house abandoned. So I was with my girlfriend in there making love or should I say making a baby? That was the night I gave her the pendant and she gave me this bracelet in return. When I knew war was coming our way I gave her the pendant to make her feel stronger and fearless as I knew she was gonna risk with her life by running in those dangers bushes while I was fighting. I lied Hawu I never lost the pendant she has it and it looks exactly as that one. "

" Hhayi Zimele so are you trying to tell me that this boy could be your son? "

" I don't know but what I know is that the Maine told me his names. "

" What names? "

" She said my son is Bangizwe Gatsha. " Hawu immediately stands up and starts pacing around while looking at me.

" What was her name Zimele? "

" Ndandatho"

"You say what!!"

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10

10

Ndandatho

I lean against a tree and try to catch my breath. A cough follows afterwards. I've been running for quite some time now. Khethiwe told me this is the fastest route to the house but I'm nowhere close all I see are trees and abandoned houses. I'm now stuck on a rock and hail I don't know if I'm chasing pavements that lead nowhere or swimming in an ocean that will lead me to greener pastures or not.

"Khethiwe wouldn't sell me out right? This road will take me to my son isn't it? I'm on the right track right?" I thought to my self and pick up my pace. I hear scary sounds and try by all means to keep my head focused on getting home to my son.

"This road is leading us to nowhere! That young maiden lied to us let's go back Bafana"

"Khehla let's keep going surely we will find our tunnel at the end of this road let's keep going"

"Listen you fool!! We chasing blanks! This road is taking us nowhere let's walk back Bafana. We lost!!"

"No let's keep going Makhehla I really want to find this girl.. I want to clear name out of bad books I have debts."

"You knew she would run away isn't it?"

"I knew nothing Makhehla"

"You trying to hide her for yourself isn't it? I've always known you wanted to have her for yourself Bafana after all what could've prevented you from having her to yourself? Because she is not yours to begin with? Huh Macingwane"

"Now you talking rubbish Makhehla! Get up and start walking"

"I'm tired you fool"

"So you wanted to marry her for this? This is how you were gonna pant while mating with her? Get up and start walking"

I eavesdrop on their conversation. I accidentally step on something That made the loudest noise to pinpoint someone is hovering in their midsts. I run as fast as I can.

"She's here! I can feel it! She's here!!"

"Run!! Bafana find her!"

"We stuck on this bush there's no way forward we need to go back. I think there's a road somewhere nearby because her footsteps are heard from that direction. She's close"

"If you can't find her then Mkhino will find her!"

"A Monkey during the day?"

"Do you have a better solution Bafana? My guess tells me you have nothing! Mkhino is my last hope!" With that said I run as fast as possible I look back to see if someone is following me but there's nothing. I run with Gatsha wandering heavy on my head. I can't die and leave my baby alone I really can't. I run till I see trees falling and leaves scattering all over right there I knew this so called "Mkhino" Monkey has located me..

"Zimele for once be realistic"

"Hawulesizwe I'm not bluffing! My lady girl is Ndandatho Mchunu. Who is the lady who mothers this boy? "

"Ndandatho Mchunu"

"It's her Hawu! It's her!! She's the mother of my son she's the maiden I impregnated months ago. And this young warrior is my son Hawu."

I look at Zimele in disbelief.

"Let's go for a walk Zimele. We need to talk things through"

"Fine warrior" He says standing up. We walk to a far distance and sit on the rocks and throw stones in the river. None of us is saying anything to the other.

"How do you know her Hawu?"

"I found her in the bushes a day before your doomed wedding"

"You mean the day we went soughting for her?"

"Yes. I found her in the river drinking water. She was carrying the baby on her back running for her life Zimele. Apparently her father wanted to sell her to an old witch together with Gatsha.. She ran away from home and her legs brought her to Thuthukani grounds. "

" And you didn't tell me about her Hawu why? "

" I told you Zimele she said her name was Ndanda all along I knew her as Ndanda until Khethiwe briefed me a little about her life story"

"Where is she now? I need to see her Hawu I want to talk to her"

"Zimele she holds hate against you."

"And how do you know about that?"

"She told Khethiwe about your little short lived love story. She knows about you and Princess Nomaswazi"

"Dammit!! Knowing that maiden she's stubborn. But I will see what I can do to talk to her. Thank you for taking her in warrior."

"I didn't do it for you Zimele."

"You mad at me isn't it?"

"Zimele why didn't you try harder to find her and the baby? You had time Zimele. That girl is going through the most"

"I tried Hawu"

"But not enough"

"Like you were helping me with the situation each time I asked you too Khuboni!"

"But I was coming with you"

"But you always rested in the middle of nowhere forcing me to walk alone Hawu. You know I tried"

We look at each other and keep quiet again.

"Let's go back I want to see my child"

"Zimele you are marrying the Princess soon what about her?"

"What about who?"

"I'm talking about the mother of your child what's going to happen to her Zimele?"

"If you asking me if I love her warrior well the answer is yes."

"You not answering my question Bhengu. Are you gonna marry the Princess or not?"

He looks at me and heaves a sigh.

I feel something huge reach for my arm. I turn back my eyes land on a huge fury and scary creature with big black eyes. It groans trying to pick me up.

" No!! No!! Don't touch me!! Don't touch me ugly creature!!" I say trying to fight it off.

It carries me and starts walking as that happens. I suddenly hear a scrotching and scary sound. My body hits the ground I look on the direction of the sounds shock fills my eyes as I spot a huge white lion fighting the monkey. The lion looks at me and roars shouting "Run!" I do as instructed and run home with my arm bleeding a little.. Hours later I spot the yard from a distance. I run as fast as I can. I enter the premises i sit on the verenda and panting heavily.

"Ndandatho! Are you okay my daughter?" Mom says with worry. I start coughing struggling to put her into tabs with what happened.

"I.. I nearly died mama. They.. (Coughing) Gatsha and I have to go mama"

"Go where Ndandatho?"

"They here Mama and they mean business. Bangi and I need to leave before we put your lives in danger please allow us mother"

"No Ndandatho you going nowhere! If they want blood blood they should get. I won't watch them toy with you my daughter. Actually we need to train from today. You need to learn how to fight Ndandatho. You need to be a fighter a warrior lady. Come.."
She says holding my hand and leading me to one of the huts that I've never entered.

She shows me a spear and a shield.

" In these grounds we teach our women how to fight we teach them how to protect themselves against vultures. We don't tame women and tell them their place is in the kitchen or nurturing children. Women of Thuthukani village are fighters they are conquerors. Since you here you will act like a Thuthukani villager. You will speak and walk like a Thuthukani. From today I want you to face your demons don't run away from them. You facing your demons will start with Zimele! "

I swallow hard. No I don't want to see that goat I hate that specimen!

" No mama"

"No to what?"

"I won't see Zimele and I never want to see him next to my son
mama he is dead to us. We better off without him. He ditched us
mama nathi asimfuni uZimele!"

"Gatsha needs his father.. Maybe you don't need your lover but your son needs his father.. And I'm certain Queen Nozibele would love to see her grandson."

"He won't see uGatsha mama. I don't want Zimele anywhere near us."

"Ndandatho like I said. Your first demon to face its him" She says pointing to the door I turn to face the door my eyes land on a tall and dark specimen with a muscular and athletic body holding my son in his arms. I drop on the floor with shock... What brings him here? Why is he holding my child? What if he drops my baby? No I don't want him here!. I storm to his direction and snatch my baby from him. I roughly walk past him and walk to my chambers. I sit down in my bed and breastfeed Gatsha. Can this stupid Zimele guy go back to whatever hole he came back from.. We doing fine without him we don't need him. A tear drops on my son another follows and then many more.

—

Mchunu household.

Thobekile's Pov

I'm seated outside on the veranda chopping my green vegetables pumpkin leaves. I want to cook them with peanuts and sour pap. There's meat from yesterday for those who will need meat instead of these. I'm humming a song while at it.

"Koti"

"MA"

"Such a happy mood what's going on?"

"The King and Queen of Ngwane village made me the head of cookers. My salary will be increased too mama"

"Mmmm... That should be nice if only Ndandatho was here she

was gonna sing and dance in celebration" We both smile.

"She left a mark ma ka Simphiwe"

"She shouldn't have ran away ma we could've tried to convince her otherwise"

"How Tholakele? While your husband was selling her soul to the wolves. How where we gonna convince her?"

"Ma uMakhehla was gonna die eventually she was gonna inherit a lot from his death."

"Thobekile I thought you loved your daughter"

"I still do mama I love her"

"So much for loving your child."

I stop chopping and look at my mother in law. Since Ndanda left there's been tension on these grounds. My kids are moody and distant especially Simphiwe. My mother in law doesn't want to eat my food she only eats when Buhle cooked. My husband is not on good speaking terms with his mother. At least Nomzamo left a day after the funeral of Princess Iminathi what a sad funeral it was. What killed her is still a mystery. But we pray the gods will avenge her death. I'm glad though that there's progress with the parents they are healing pretty well. As for Prince Zimele and Princess Nomaswazi they are gonna

marry soon. The Prince promised to show up this time around. As for Princess Mgcinaphi she's been acting strange lately. A little bird said she's been spotted vomiting on numerous occasions we suspecting her of being with child in her womb.

My husband walks in the yard covered in blood. He is holding his stomach wait he by any chance holding his intestines? No way it can't be.. I stand up and meet him halfway he coughs so badly and mops in pain.

"Bafana! What happened?"

"Witches!! Witches!! I was attacked in the bushes by a lion"

"A lion?" I say in shock.

"What lion?" Ma-

"A huge white lion. It attacked myself and Makhehla in the bushes. Makhehla is trapped in the bushes his badly wounded. He might die"

"Hhaibo!!! A lion in Ngwane Village? Thats an abomination!!! We should make traditional beer and slaughter a goat surely our ancestors are not pleased with us or maybe we havent slaughtered in years" I say tearing his t-shirt and running to fetch a hot wood. I try to push back his insides with the wood and lucky me I succeed. I clean his wounds when mother is coughing badly.

" I hope my child is safe wherever she is if lions go around hunting for preys"

"She's better off dead that one" Bafana-

"That lion should've swallowed your skull and spew your scrotums out!" Ma-

"Mama don't say that his badly injured please"

"Hhayi suka akafe losathane!!" She says standing up and limping to her chamber.

"Phephisa Macingwane"

"Am I gonna die?"

"Of course not"

"Please help me my wife don't make me die!"

"You won't die" I say cleaning him up.

—

Zimele

Mrs Maseko looks at me so does Hawu.

"Can I follow her to her chambers please?"

"Go on" Mrs Maseko-

"Give her time Zimele" Hawu-

"I can't Hawu I need to speak to her. I'm coming."

I say walking outside. I permit myself entrance into her private chambers. I find her curled up in bed nesting our son. I lean by the door.

"Khethiwe I'm not hungry" She says without looking at me. I walk closer to her and sit besides her. I put my hand on her hip.

"Phakade la..."

She turns immediately and slap me.

"Don't call me that Zimele!! Don't phakade lami me!!" She roars

"Ndandatho I can explain"

"Explain what?"

She wipes her tears. Gatsha looks at me.

"Ndanda please calm down"

"I don't want to talk nor see you Zimele."

"Ndandatho please.."

"Zimele!..." She gives a warning look.

"Can I hold my son at least please"

"Don't pinch him warrior!"

"Hhaibo Ndandatho!" She fix her boob and look at us. I look at Gatsha then her. She's also looking at me.

"When was he born?"

"Two weeks ago."

"Was it in the morning or at night?"

"I don't know"

"Ndandatho come on"

"Ongiyeka Zimele or should I say Prince of Thuthukani village?"

I look at her and heave a sigh. I put Gatsha on the bed and walk out.

"Ngcamani I'm leaving let's meet tomorrow for the training."

"Let me walk you out My Prince."

"Thank you.. Ma nisale kahle"

"See you soon my Prince."

"See you mother" I say to her. I spot Ndandatho holding a basin
On her back she's carrying Gatsha. She's walking to the bottles of
water my guess tells me she wants to bath the baby. She looks at
me and I do the same.

"Ndandatho the Prince is leaving" Ma-

"Okay" She says continuing with her business.

"It's okay mama. Take care" I say walking out. I know she's looking at me I can feel it. I talk myself out from turning to look at her. She's angry at me and I somehow I understand. But I wish she can let me talk and explain myself. Just like Hawulesizwe said I will give her space. Honestly speaking I wasn't expecting this kind of welcome I was expecting a heart-felt embrace and a warm kiss but it turns out I met lemons.

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Ndandatho dating back

"This party is no longer exciting don't you feel like taking a walk beautiful maiden?" Zimele -

"I'm tipsy warrior my legs are failing me." Me-

"I will carry you come."

"Wait let's check if the coast is clear."

"Come!" He said joining his hand with mine.

Khethiwe and Lungelo are looking at me as they waiting for me to narrate my little love story but I won't give them a name.

"What happened thereafter?" Lungelo- I looked on the fire flames and went down memory lane.

"We left the ceremonial without people noticing. We walked to this deserted house that was situated in a bush. I was drunk on that day blame it on my friend. She lured me into drinking saying

we should try out new things. A little spontaneous wasn't gonna kill so she said. "

I chuckled.

" What happened next? " Khethi-

" Well me being naive I put her words into use. "

" Back to the house that's situated in the bushes. What went down in that house Ndandatho? Let me guess that was the night you lost your virginity isn't it?" Lungelo-

"No Lungelo. I was already deflowered. Anyway we arrived in that house. Gatsha's father started touching me in sensitive places it wasn't his first time touching me on those foreign places but on that day it was different you know? I myself I was thinking differently it's like someone if not something clouded our thoughts and made us do the unthinkable. We were both lusting on each other. He undressed me and left traces of kisses on my bare skin. He nibbled my neck ears and nipples. His kissing was warm and inviting. I dont even know when our clothes ended up on the floor but we were both naked and gazing in each other's eyes. "

I smile while at it.

" So Ndandatho you conceived on that night? " Khethi-

" Yes and blame it on me. I asked him to do it. "

They both look at me.

" What happened after you made love? "

" Khethiwe come to bed it's night time woman " Sizwe-

" I'm coming my husband." Khethiwe-

" Ndandatho the baby is crying come feed him" Mom-

"ladies see you tomorrow sweet dreams." I say standing up.

"We shall continue tomorrow mama Ka Bangizwe!" Lungelo-

I smile and walk to my private chambers. I find my son crying. I pick him and up and perk his lips.

"It's okay mommy is here boy don't cry Jali"

I climb the bed and pop my breast out. I caress his head and breastfeed him with thoughts wandering heavy in my head.

Zimele

I'm standing in front of my warriors looking at them. I want to say a few things but my mind is clogged I can't think straight. I

have so much going on right now.

"Prince Zimele you were still talking"

"Em! Well.. You need to fight and you need to fight and then fight to fight." They all look at each other confused.

"Listen let's meet tomorrow morning at the usual spot"

I say walking away from them.

"Zimele!"

"Not now Nhlonipho.."

'Zimele its important "

" Whatever it is deal with it like a man Nhlonipho "

" Zimele Princess Nomaswazi is coming over tomorrow father and grandmother invited her over. I thought I should tell you. "

" Thanks Nhlo. " I say walking to my chamber. I throw my body on the bed. I close my eyes and everything unfolds. I heave the loudest sigh and sit on my butt. I look at my bracelet and recall the night she gave it to me. I try to retire to sleep but I struggle. I find myself tossing and turning all night long. I'm battling with sleep. The rooster crowing outside and sunlight approaching my chamber is proof enough that morning has arrived. I hear voices outside. I rub my eyes and take a pillow to cover to my head. I need some sleep I didn't sleep last night. Just as I'm closing my eyes a loud knock comes.

"Prince Zimele can I come in?"

"I'm naked give me a minute."

"Your bathing water is ready my Prince and the warriors are waiting for you outside."

"Tell them I'm dead"

"Excuse me my Prince?"

"I'm coming." I say in defeat.

I hear footsteps and right there I'm certain she left. I feel a slumber approach I yawn and get up from the bed. I can't betray my warriors I have to show up. I go bath and get ready for the road.

"Zimele where are you going looking clean so early In the day?"
Dad-

"Umthombo kingdom"

"To do what? We have a guest Zimele."

"I will be back sooner father"

"Fine.. Don't keep us waiting."

"Fine" I say and walk past father.. Hawu approaches we exchange our greetings and say nothing thereafter.

—

I battled with sleep last night. I was tossing and turning till sunlight appeared. I had so much in my head I still do. I don't know how to feel with Zimele being back in our lives. I wish I can be ecstatic and all chirpy about his debut come back but I can't all I feel is hurt and rage towards him. He was supposed to have

resurfaced sooner not now when his son was born. What reeks me off the most is that he wants things to be the same as before not knowing so much changed the past few months.

I get up from the bed and tidy my room. I put Gatsha back on the bed after it's fixed. I wash my face and brush my teeth. I step outside and get a hold of the grass broom. I start sweeping the yard thereafter I boil water and mix my dough. I want to make bread and tea for breakfast. My grandmother taught me to get busy whenever I have a lot of wrongs going in my life. She said keeping busy gives you less room to overthink things. Hence I'm practicing that. I rinse my hands as I'm done with making use of the flour. Gogo comes outside I hardly talk to that woman but today I guess i will.

"Morning young maiden"

"Morning gogo"

"Can you please accompany me to the bushes I need a few herbs my daughter."

"Can I wrap up here gogo and then take Gatsha with me?"

"Don't worry I will wait."

"Thank you gogo"

"You so beautiful who borns you?"

I smile.

"Tholakele Mchunu"

"What a beautiful daughter she has. Look at your eyes and your sun kissed skin you beautiful young maiden"

"Thank you gogo."

Mom walks to our direction.

"The yard is clean who was the early bird?"

"I couldn't sleep last night mama hence I thought I should do a few chores."

"Thank you my child. You can go with mama Bangi is safe with me. Even though I might take him with me to see a neighbor"

"I just hope he won't trouble you mother"

"Not a chance my daughter. I will carry a bottle of porridge so I feed him."

"Is he gonna eat that?"

"If it's cooked by me? Yes he will. Go already" I smile and walk with gogo in the bushes. She plucks out her herbs and I start collecting wood. We talk over light conversations and laugh here and there. Gogo looks at me and I do the same.

"You remind me of a young beautiful maiden who once came here with her family seeking refuge back in the years of wars between Kingdoms. She was very beautiful just like yourself. Her voice was beautiful and soothing as much as she sang melodies of melancholy but her voice was healing. One day she went to fetch wood and that was the last day we ever saw her alive. "

I look at her.

" How are your scars now? "

" "They not throbbing."

"I see.."

"Who is that lady you talking about Gogo?"

"I don't remember her name my child but I used to call her Kuhle because everything she touched turned into gold. She was beautiful at heart and outside."

"What Kingdom did she come from?"

"I'm not sure my daughter."

"I see.. Anyway we should get going gogo these bushes are not safe"

"If only you knew the strength that you hold my daughter

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you wouldn't be so fearful. I know about the lion that rescued you when vile men wanted to kill you. That lion is a peaceful lion Ndandatho it never harms no one. But for you it can kill you are a chosen one Ndandatho. The gods are protecting you and they walking besides you always. No harm will ever come to you and your son. They love you Ndandatho. "

" Who loves me Gogo? "

" The people who made your path and that of Prince Zimele to cross. They are the ones who made you fall pregnant even if you never mate with Zimele. You were still gonna fall pregnant in your slumber justlike marry the virgin. You and Zimele are meant to be. Don't doubt that. "

" Zimele broke my heart gogo"

"He didn't my daughter. That boy has been searching for you Ndandatho. He never stopped loving you he still does. Give him a chance to explain himself"

"But his gonna marry the Princess gogo"

"You have every power to fight that Ndandatho. I told you only you was meant for Zimele not that Princess"

"But I'm not royalty why me?"

"Why not you? Anyway let's go before your mother starts saying I'm hallucinating and making up stories."

I look at her and start thinking again.

Zimele

"Zimele where is your mind at? Can't you see you bleeding?"

Hawu-

"Excuse me!"

"Fight Zimele!! Don't be a weakling come on!!" He says fighting I look at my other warriors everyone is fighting but not me. I pull myself up and start fighting. More warriors approach us we all fight till more soldiers are down. Hawulesizwe looks at me annoyed. His covered in sweat and his panting loudly. His spear is bloody. Our warriors appear some are wounded and some are clean. Hawu roughly pulls me to side.

"What rubbish was that Zimele Jali?"

"I have a lot in my head Hawu!"

"This is a battlefield Zimele not a woman's legs! When we here we fight and kill. We don't get lost in blues. You nearly died you fool!!" He spew venom his demented.

"Hawu you don't understand. Ndandatho wants nothing to do with me! You have any idea of what that does to me?"

"Don't tell me about women in a battlefield Zimele!! Geez!!! Warriors let's go!" Hawu says leading the warriors.

"You won't understand because Khethiwe never left your sight Hawulesizwe but you will understand how it feels like to be out of touch and out of sight with the maiden that you love Hawu the day Khethiwe finds out about your other woman who has your daughter!!" Hawu walks to my direction with his jaw clenched.

" Don't use that against me Jali! You know it was a mistake!! I was drunk"

"All I'm saying Hawu is that you don't know how it feels like when the only woman you want is pushing you away!!"

"Zimele you could've come to my house in the middle of the night to talk to her unlike losing your focus like she's dead. It's your life I was worried about not your heart matters."

"So you want me to sneak into your parents house Hawu? How will that portray me?"

"Zimele I'm exhausted and bloody! Let's go man!"

He says walking in front of me. I follow him. We reach a river bank and rinse our bodies off the blood. We walk back to our village.

Nomaswazi

The table is beautifully set. I can spot a variety of meals meals I do not know. I sit on my chair and sip on my glass of juice while conversing with the King and King's mother. The Queen is not saying much to me if not mistaken she's not excited about my visit. Maybe she hates me mom did say she's cruel and pride driven.

"Yes Princess Nomaswazi. We want grandchildren a lot of them."
King-

I laugh.

"Consider it done my King I will give you tons of children in due time"

"We want boys mostly not girls" Senior Queen-

"That's if the gods will bless me"

"Zimele Is a warrior after all surely he wants boys." Nhlonipho -
He says showing off his beautiful teeth such a fine guy he is.

"No problem Prince Nhlonipho.. I will"

"Seems like your focus is on mating with my son than elevating him and building an emperor with him. I haven't heard you say anything about bringing our people change and opportunities. You haven't said anything about productivity and skills that you might share with our people but rather mating. Are you sexual active Princess Noma? " Queen Nozibelele-

I choke on my drink and look at her.

The King and Queen mother look at me Nhlonipho is holding back his laugh.

" Excuse me mother? "

" You heard me"

"I haven't said anything about that mother because you haven't asked me anything regarding that."

"Okay Princess of Ngwane village. What difference are you bringing on these grounds? What is it that you can guarantee us that our people will learn and graps from you?" Nozi-

"Em... I.. I will make sure their basic needs are met Queen mother. I will maybe try to instill a few fashion senses here and there especially in this house. There's so much I would change Queen mother"

She laughs and claps her hands.

"You say what?"

"She said she will breed a new fashion sense in our house mother" Nhlonipho-

"This is a liability she's a dunder. She's absurd and delusional. She's not a perfect match for my son. Zimele is smart and intelligent he should marry out of his calibre not this."

I blow my nose and bite hard on my enamel. I tighten my grip on the fork and look at her.

" Nozibele stop it! "King

" I'm done my King"

"That was inappropriate apologize to her"

"I would rather go blow clouds away King. Actually excuse me I'm scheduled for a meeting with the ladies from the farm. Later Princess Noma whatever" She stands up and with her tummy tucked in and walk away. I reach for the bottle of wine and gulp it. This woman is testing me.

"Don't mind her Princess she's going through the most lately."

"Surely menopause is knocking on it's own door. I understand"
Nhlonipho looks at me.

"Anyway what do you do in this palace for fun?"

"What do you do on extra time Princess Noma?" Nhlo

"I polish my nails and have the servants doing my hair and some massaging me."

"Do you know how to Cook? Zimele loves food" Nhlonipho-

"Well Its not hard." Damn I can't cook.

"I see Princess let me disappear. I have a class to teach."
Nhlonipho-

"What class? I can help"

"Sure come.." I get up and follow Nhlonipho. I find dirty mucous filled and ugly commoners kids gathered under the tree. They all jump to embrace the Prince. I scream in fear.

"Hello my future leaders. Did you write your homework?" Nhlo-

"We didn't have a homework checher" Nhlonipho laughs.

"It's teacher Mina" Nhlo-

"Sorry teacher"

"Okay today we studying about animals Kingdoms anyone with a clue of what that is?"

"Sheep's" I say rolling my eyes. The kids laugh their lungs out. Nhlonipho joins them.

"There's no sheep Kingdom Princess we have Mammals reptiles Amphibians insects and birds to name the few." Mimi-

"Sweetheart how about you wipe your mucus and comb your ugly dry hair and look a bit prettier because you ugly nana"

The kid cries. Nhlonipho picks her up.

"And now? What was that Noma?"

"She was rude"

"You were dumb at your age you know nothing about animals Kingdom's? You are a disgrace. Get lost" Nhlonipho says angry. I guess he respects anything and everything that comes his way just like his name says.

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Nhlonipho Jali

My name is Nhlonipho Jali I'm the second son born to King Ngcolosi and Queen Nozibele. Well I can say I'm their last born since there's only Zimele and I as their children. We don't have any sisters or any other sibling but we do have cousins. I'm a simple Prince I'm all about respect love care teaching and giving. I'm actually the intelligent and smart sibling and Zimele being the opposite of me "I'm kidding"

His smart in his own way. I'm a humble guy and love people regardless of their status or pockets. To me human is the same wether there's blue blood involved I careless.

I was so offended and shattered by Princess Nomaswazi of Ngwane village when she ill treated a kid who is probably fifteen years younger than her. Her tone was unacceptable to think I've always spoke highly of her and wished for her hand in marriage but after today. I'm certain I wouldn't appreciate referring a woman like herself as my bride. She's so malicious and vile a woman like herself is capable of decaying everything that's fruitful. I thought Zimele was being melodramatic when he told me a thing or two about this lady but today I saw the serpent myself. I'm 20 years old by the way.

"Are you calling me dumb Prince Nhlonipho?"

"I would do it time and time again till it gets into your thick skull. Sorry Mina" I say comforting the kid she walks away livid and for the first time in forever I don't give a pie hole care about an

individual.

"What happened Prince Nipho?"

"The Princess insulted her."

"That's bad come here Mina"

"She's a horrible person I don't like her!!" Mina says and runs off.

"She is angry that's a first."

"And that hurts she's actually one of the smartest students ever Ngelozi."

"I'm sorry my Prince. Let me get going before my mother yells at me. Bye my Prince."

"It's always a pleasure seeing you maiden" She smiles and walks away.

"I'm sorry about that cruelty that adjourned minutes ago. She's a bad person isn't it?"

"She's bad Prince Nipho." Kids-

I smile at them.

"Well how about we postpone today's class for tomorrow. We don't want Mina to miss out of the lessons isn't it?"

"Yes Prince Nipho. Can we sing and dance?"

I scratch my head.

"Well dancing and singing is not a problem kids. But the problem

is with me young hero's. Can I tell you a secret? Promise not to tell?"

"We promise we won't tell Prince Nipho"

I melt again seeing their smiles.

"Okay fine! Prince Nipho here can't dance and his a horrible singer!!"

They laugh their lungs out. I narrow my brows and look at them.

"But sisi Ngelozi can dance and sing why don't you ask her?" Sino

"Mmmm... Brilliant idea Sino. But her mother might give us trouble. Unless I go there myself how's that?"

"Go well our Prince" They giggle. I turn to walk to the direction of where I suppose she is based on. I find a few ladies I greet and they show me where Ngelozi is. She walks out carrying a basin.

"My Prince"

"Is your mother around? I have a plea"

"Mama!! Ma!! Prince Nipho is in quest for you." Ngelozi-

Her mother shows up wiping her hands.

"My Prince"

"Call me Nipho mother.. Mama can I steal your daughter for an hour or so? I need her help"

"Sure my Prince but she needs to be back to fill those buckets and wash the dishes too. We don't want trouble with your parents"

"No problem mother I got this. Thank you." I say bowing she turns and goes away. Ngelozi follows me.

"And now?" Ngelozi -

"I need help with the students. They want to dance and sing for today and that's where you come in."

"Me? I can't dance Prince Nipho"

"I trust those little minions they wouldn't lie I'm a desperate Prince"

"Fine"

"Thank you" I say with a smile.

—

Ndandatho

I'm holding my son trying to feed him porridge. Mom instructed I do so as little as he. To my surprise his eating. I shove more and more spoons till he won't eat anymore. I put him on the grass mat that I've placed under this shade.

"Ngiyabuya Khehla lamama yezwa?" I kiss his forehead and walk to the kitchen I was his plate then mine. That had sugar beans with pap. The yard is lousy that's because Lungelo went for her youth whatnot and Khethiwe is sleeping. Mama went to see a friend and gogo is sleeping. Only Gatsha and I are around.

"Mmmm... I'm pressed Geez!!" I say and run to the mini bush and pee.

Zimele

We finally reach his compound. He walks to his house and I walk to the bench that I'm spotting under a tree shade. It's been a long journey. I walk there I find a yellow and white snake rolling around my son whose laying on a grass mat. Fear engulfs me because snakes are dangerous and poisonous. How could Ndandatho be so careless.

"Hey! Suka!!" I say to the snake but Gatsha laughs at it so loud. The snake looks at me and then my son.

"Gatsha don't laugh! This thing is dangerous it's poisonous frown young man! Scare it off" I say.

I hear someone behind me I turn to look it's Ndandatho. Her face changes when she looks at me or maybe Gatsha.

"No!! No!! Ingane yami Zimele! Susa inyoka enganeni yami!! Susa inyoka!!!!" She screams.

"Gatsha loves it"

"Don't tell me about Gatsha we talking about a snake Zimele!!!"
She roars and starts jumping.

"Gatsha tell your friend to leave please!"

"Bulala lento Zimele!!"

"Ndandatho if I attack this snake is gonna attack my son!!"

"Do something right Zimele for once!!!! Don't be useless!!! " She shouts.

"I should do something right Ndandatho? That's what you said right?" I shout back

"Yebo ucabangani?"

"Fine" I pull her hand and smash my lips on her lips. She pushes me away and slap me.

"My son could die from a snake bite and you initiating stupid kisses!! Hhayi suka Zimele"

"You said I should do something Ndandatho .!!That was something right!!"

Gatsha laughs even more as we bicker. We go on and on bickering over a stupid baby kiss. Till we can't anymore. She looks at me and heaves a sigh I look at her and heave a sigh too.

"You annoy me Zimele"

"You annoy me too Ndandatho"

"I regret the day I met you!"

"And I regret the day I proposed a relationship to you!!"

"Nxaah!!"

"Nxaah nawe" We both look at each other. Gatsha has stopped laughing. We break the stare and look on the grass mat. Our eyes land on our son feasting on his hands the snake is gone. We both run to kneel in front of our baby with worry written in us.

"Oh my baby! You scared me. Your so called father couldn't fight off a snake a mere snake Bangizwe you can you imagine the disgrace Gatsha? " Nda

"And your so called mother couldn't scare a mere snake can you imagine the disappointment she is? Some mother you have my son one day she's gonna choke you and suffocate you to death with her breasts all in the name of breasting!! "

"Zimele don't insult me!"

"Nawe don't insult me Ndandatho. You wanted me to risk ngengane yami? What rubbish was that? "

"Point of correction ngengane yami!! As in me uNdandatho Mchunu. Wena you have no child Prince Zimele Jali of Thuthukani village!! "

"Listen here you didn't give yourself this baby Ndandatho don't make me remind you of biology maiden of Ngwane village!! His mine you just happened to be the carrier which I regret at point "

"Like I don't regret opening my legs for you fool!! "

"Whatever Ndandatho I didn't come here for you but him"

"Kanti Yini ngawe wena?"

"Wena Yini ngawe?"

"Zimele you repulse me kahle kahle ngiyakuzonda uyangidina!!"

"The feeling is mutual!! Ndandatho I also hate you and you annoy me too!! It's even worse you left my child unattended putting him in danger to being bitten by a snake some good mother you are!!"

"Shut up!! Just shut up before I slap you again! This time around you will piss your pants I swear Zimele!!"

" I will chokeslam you Ndandatho I dare you to do it again uzobona izinza zenyoka"

(I will show you a serpents pubic hair)

She looks at me and blows her nose I narrow my brows and look at her..

" Just kiss and make up already I narrow my brows and look at her..

" Just kiss and make up already and stop making noise." We both turn and find Hawu staring at us.

"Come Gatsha let's go" Nda

"Go alone. Leave my child behind just like you did leaving him for snakes to twerk for him!"

"Don't judge me Zimele!! You know nothing about what I'm going through and I've been through to raising this child of yours!!! Don't you dare judge me wena sies!!

She walks away with Gatsha on her hands. Hawulesizwe laughs.

"Leave her alone Zimele"

"A snake nearly bit my son Hawu I can't leave her alone. Well I can leave her alone but not my child" He furrows his brows and looks me.

"Let's go eat surely it's hunger my Prince"

"Uyadelela lona!! Futhi I'm not going home today I'm sleeping here. "

"Reason being?"

"I want to deal with this maiden"

"In what manner Zimele?"

"I want to give her my side of the story since she thinks only hers matters."

"Are you really gonna deal with her or you GONNA DEAL WITH HER?" He laughs as I give him a questioning look.

"Let's go eat I'm hungry." I say to Hawu..

—

Ndandatho

Who the hell does Zimele think he is? Who the he'll is he to Judge my parenting skills? What does he know about labor pains? What does he know about pushing a baby? What does he know about staying awake all night long breast feeding a baby? What does he know about running from home with a baby on your back bare footed? What does he know about waking up at devils hours to feed a child and change nappies? What does he know about being a mother? He knows nothing! But here he is Insulting me and judging me. I just pray his outside I want to give him a lecture or better yet another slap across the face. His belittling me his taking me for granted! I will show him who I am..

I say standing up from the bed wiping my tear heading outside.

"No Gatsha!!!" I say as his sobs stop me.. I go back to my private chambers. I pick the baby up and feed him. While at it I sniff his nappy. He popped. I need to change him then his stupid father

calls me a bad mother like he is good father himself. His family did well by choosing Nomaswazi as his wife they make a perfect couple of idiots.

"Wait we need to change your nappy Bangi"

He cries as I stop him from feeding from my breast. His sobs cut me within soul I hate seeing him crying but right now. I have to change his nappy before he gets an irritation. I put my boob back in my Thuthukani tradition attire clot. I change his nappy. He needs a bath too. I heave a sigh and breast feed him.

"Ndanda!!! Can I come in" That's Khethiwe she's awake.

"Ngena"

She slowly enters. She humps as she sits ony bed. A yawn follows.

"Girl I'm tired yoh. I wish I can push this baby today!"

"Sorry darling"

"Yini? You good?"

"Yah"

"Ndandatho Yini?"

"I don't want to talk about it. Please pass me that cloth I want to buckle this one and go wash his nappies they all dirty"

"Ndandatho talk to me Yini?"

"Khethi please.. At least not today." I say carrying Gatsha on my back. I carry the bucket with his nappies and go outside. Khethiwe follows me around. I spot Zimele eating the food that I prepared with my strength and skill what an audacity. I look at him as I walk.

" Ouch!!! Shit!! " I groan in pain as my toe hits a rock causing a numbing sting.

It's Zimele's fault!! Everything is his fault!!

"Does it hurt?" Khethi

"I'm fine" You lying Ndandatho that's not fine. I tilt my head to check if his staring dammit his looking at me.

"Ndandatho this is getting confusing now what's going on?"

"Nothing I'm just not in a good mood. I want to be alone. Do you mind?"

"Sure no problem. More sleep for me" I smile as she embrace me. I go the basins and pour water inside my bathing basin I start washing Gatsha's feces. With him making noise on my back. I wash while this ugly Prince is staring at me..

Queen Nozibele

"I should get going Queen Sbonisile before I throw myself on a crocodile's mouth"

"Let me walk you out my friend. I don't want your husband sleeping on a separate bed"

" Mind you his capable. Do greet your husband for me."

" I will my friend." She says embracing me as we walk towards the exit. We gossip one last time we say our goodbyes and I go home. By the time I reach home it's already dark outside and already I'm certain Ngcolosi will give me a lecture. I heave the longest sigh before I enter my beguiling house. I find Nhlonipho seated on the leather couches reading a William Shakespeare book.

"Nhlo.. Evening my son. Where is everyone? "

"Dad is with the delegates Gogo is having a little get to together with Princess Noma somewhere in the house. Zimele left early this morning with Hawulesizwe and Nhlonipho is here reading a William Shakespeare book" I smile at my boy and kiss his cheeks.

"I love you too mama."

"I know.. So that girl hasn't left? Why not?"

"I don't know mama. Surely they waiting for Zimele I don't know. But anything is possible with Gogo"

"Mmmm... If this girl spends a night here she will molest my son."

Nhlonipho laughs so do I. I sit besides him and rest his head on my boobs. He reads me the book while I brush his hair.

"And thee liveth happily ever after with thy love the end!!!"

"That was a beautiful story Nipho please lend me the book"

"No problem thy love. Mom you won't believe what your future bride did earlier in the day. Yooh this woman is something else mama"

"Future bride ka bani? What did she do"

"She is dumb mama! She knows nothing about animals Kingdoms. Can you imagine she said a sheep is an animal Kingdom a whole Princess mama."

I laugh.

"The pudding got more sweeter when Mimi corrected her ma. She snapped and insulted the poor kid calling her ugly and whatnots"

"Hhaibo Nhlo? A whole Princess? Hhayi we don't need a Princess like that one. I for one I don't want this girl. I would rather choose a wife for Zimele in Uthombo kingdom. Bonisile has a beautiful daughter I would rather wait for her to grow."

"That would be in decades time nje mama"

"I don't care son. I hate that Noma girl Iminathi was way better than this one."

"Nozi can I have a word with you" Husband -

"I'm coming boy." I say getting up following my husband to our private chambers. He sits on the bed while I stand behind the door. He looks at me and heaves a sigh.

"Where did you go?"

"I went to see my friend Queen Sbonisile"

"And who did you inform about that visit Nozibele?"

"My King I apologize."

"You haven't answered my question Nozibele. Who did you inform about your sudden visit?"

"Ngcolosi I'm apologizing njena"

"Do you have testicle?"

"Ngcolosi..."

"Answer my damn questions" He roars. I fiddle with my hands and walk towards him. I kneel before him and now my head down to show my remorse and respect for him.

"Ngiyaxolisa Ngcolosi. It won't happen again" I say massaging his thigh. He looks at me and calms down.

"Don't ever do that Nozibele. I worry about you especially with witches all over our bushes. I don't want to lose you to witchcraft. The next time you decide on visiting someone tell me"

"My apologies my King I promise I won't do it again"

"Fine.. How is the Queen of Umthobo doing?"

"They are well and healthy my husband they send their greetings."

"Come to bed before you strain your knees." I flash him my beautiful smile. I sit besides him he joins our hands together.

Where is Zimele?"

"He went to a training"

"He didn't come back home?"

"No baba"

"Zimele is getting out line the Princess is here for him. What kind of rubbish is this? What's wrong with your son Nozie why is he acting like an obedient child?"

"Ngcolosi calm down."

"First he impregnated a commoner secondly he didn't show up on his wedding now this??"

"Can you stop being hard on Zimele Ngcolosi. Allow him to make his own decisions give him a chance to do things his way and the way he sees fits. You allow Nhlonipho to teach children you allow

him to ride horses and do any other work knowingly he is a Prince. Why can't you allow Zimele to do his will baba for once? Our son is a good child Ngcolosi. He is smart just like Nhlonipho I wish you can let him be my husband. Allow him to make his mistakes his not gonna break"

"I did allow him to be a warrior what did he do Nozibele?"

"Don't yell my King"

"Sorry. But what did he do my wife? Didn't he fail abstain from intimacy till marriage? Didn't he impregnate a commoner? Zimele is irresponsible Nozi and that boy will never grow and learn because you condemn his nonsense"

"What did I do now my husband? What did I condemn?"

"Let's talk about this naked"

"Let's talk now."

"No.. I had a long day right now I need my wife's touch."

"I want to freshen up my husband"

"No my love come. I want you now"

—

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13

Nomaswazi

"Is he back ma?"

"No my daughter.. I don't see him sleeping home."

His grandmother says in defeat. My heart boils to its maximum.

"So this how marrying Zimele would be like Gogo? I will spend nights alone freezing cold? Without my husband besides me?"

"Of course not my daughter he just had a training surely he lost track of time and decided to sleep in the bushes"

"Unless his cheating on me Gogo. Zimele would never sleep in the bushes his a Prince for christsake not some scavenger or witch. Zimele is with a woman my Queen and if so he will pay greatly."

"Excuse me?" The grandmother says with a creased forehead.

"Oh! Beg your pardon my Queen I meant I will discuss this and put an end to this sleeping out tendency of his. I would never do the unthinkable to my husband to be"

I smile. She heaves a sigh and shows some teeth too.

"You nearly scared me Princess Noma. I thought you meant something vile and dangerous. Zimele could use a wife like yourself my grandson can be a handful at times. But with your courage and boldness he will be a better man."

"Yeah.." I say with a smile trying to hide my anger.

"Let me leave my Princess sleep tight."

"Thank you Gogo" She kiss my cheek I smile. Immediately she

slams the door I wipe my cheek! I start pacing around the guest room. Trying to figure where Zimele could be. A knock comes disturbing me from my little thinking. A beautiful young looking lady. Erase that part "Lady" a young slave walks in with what looks like curtains and toiletries. Maybe she's sleeping with Zimele. I look at her from head to toe.

"And then?"

"Greetings my Princess the Queen mother said I must bring you these."

"And what are those? Curtains?"

"No my Princess these are clothes for you. And here are you bathing accessories."

"Those rags are for me?"

"Excuse me?"

"Where is my husband?"

"Which one?"

"So you have plenty? Abomination young slave!! You don't only sleep with Zimele but you flaunt those boobs of yours to every man in this palace!!"

"My Princess I don't know what you talking about I'm not.. I'm not doing sinister things with the Prince.. I'm just a commoner my Princess"

"Yey! Don't call me my Princess you shameless little harlot! I know a slut when I see one and you are one!"

"Princess I.."

"Shut up!!" I roar and look at her right in the eyes. She starts weeping.

"Listen... I want you to tell me everything there is to know about Prince Zimele. I want to know about his royal mistresses. I want to know everything. If you don't share you will pay greatly!!" I roar and move my hand to her neck. She starts coughing. I hear footsteps.. I let loose of her and embrace her. The swings open. It's Zimele's mother.

" Oh! Pardon me I didn't know we have guests in here. Ngelozi how are you my daughter? " She flashes the biggest smile I've ever seen.

"I'm... I'm.. I'm fine my Queen"

"Are you crying Ngelozi?"

"She said she has a terrible pain on her abdomen." I say to save my soul.

"Is that true Ngelozi?" Queen-

"Yes Queen mother"

"Come here my angel I think I have something for you" She says pulling her for a hug. They walk out. I sit on the bed thinking out loud.

Ndandatho

I just finished bathing Bangizwe and folding his nappies. Now I want to wash my own body. I had a very long day. I pour myself water in a basin and start bathing. I lotion my body minutes later with a coconut butter cream that Mama Maseko gave me a couple of days ago as a sample she makes body creams and supplies them at the Kingdom. They very soft and gentle on the skin. I love how fragranced it is. It makes me smell like a million dollar bucks you would swear I'm wealthy when I've applied this body butter.

I wear my under garment I wrap my body in a cloth and cover my hair with a scarf. I take my flip flops and step outside the house to discard my bathing dirty water. While at it I feel someone hold my hand. I jump in fear and accidentally drop my basin. Thinking it's my father and that witch Makhehla.

"It's me don't make noise!"

"What do you want Zimele? Why are you even sneaking on me?"

"Shhh.." He says picking up the basin I snatch it to rinse it off. He keeps quiet and looks at me. It's peacefully quiet outside I love night time. I just love the beauty of the sky. I finish rinsing off my basin and walk to my private chamber. Zimele follows me he steps inside and shuts the door behind him. He sits next to Gatsha while I stand by the door.

"I don't bite Ndandatho"

"Says a dog with sharp canines"

"Ndandatho come sit down. We need to talk"

"Zimele I'm tired can't you come tomorrow so we can talk? I'm really exhausted right now" I say yawning.

He looks at me and I do the same. Gatsha coughs we both look at him.

"Is he sick?"

"No"

"Why is he coughing then?"

"I don't know Zimele a baby coughs without having any illness. Can I sleep please?" He stands up. I walk to my bed. I stare on my lamp I need to save it for when Gatsha wakes up in the middle of the night to suck me dry. Some parasites of a son I have.

"I want to undress Zimele. I need some privacy"

"There's nothing I do not know In there Ndandatho undress. I'm not going anywhere. I'm spending a night with my child" I look at him with a furrowed forehead in disbelief of his statement.

"Are you out of your mind Zimele? This is not your house you can't do as you please. You can't sleep in here"

"What would stop me?"

"You should respect people's privacy and rules Zimele. Respect ma Maseko's house Zimele and leave"

"Bark all you want I'm going nowhere. Make space for me too!!"
With that said he removes his clothing. I swallow hard on my saliva as my eyes are covered by his athletic and beguiling body. I clear my throat as I learn his looking at me.

"What?" I coldly say.

"You do know staring is rude?"

"I wasn't staring Zimele there's nothing tantalizing to gaze on in you"

"Ndandatho you are bitter do you know that?"

I look at him and choose not to say anything. I'm tired to partake a debate with Zimele morning would even come while arguing with him. I shift Gatsha and make space for Zimele.

"Come morning I want you gone Zimele."

"No problem."

"Switch off my lamp I'm saving it for when Gatsha wakes up in the middle of the night. Another thing cover your eyes."

"I'm not even staring at you Ndandatho!" I remove my cloth leaving my underwear on.. I'm not the type to sleep with clothes on. I jump on the bed. So does Zimele Gatsha starts searching for my boobies whereabouts I shove my hard nipple inside his mouth. I look at Zimele to my surprise his looking at me.

" You have nice boobs"

I look at him and say nothing.

"Why do you hate me Ndandatho?"

"You left me pregnant and not in a single day did you search nor inquired about me Zimele"

"That's your opinion right?"

"My fact"

"You wrong Ndandatho. I did sought for your whereabouts but everything lead me to dead ends. For the past months I've been walking barefooted on thorny grounds screaming your name Ndandatho. Looking for you Ndandatho. ask Hawu if you don't believe me. "

"You didn't try harder had you did you would've found me. "

"Ndandatho some people told me you were dead! Some didn't even match your description they didn't know who you were. I did try the day your path crossed with Hawu's I was out in search for you and him I never rested." I look at him he looks so sincere. I clear my throat.

"Why didn't you come to my house?"

"I did Ndanda but I was told they don't know who you are"

"You lying Zimele!!"

"I'm not Ndandatho! I found someone who disguised herself as your aunt!"

I look at him and swallow hard that has to be my aunt Nomzamo.

"I was always home how come I never heard your voice nor saw

you?"

"I don't know"

"Zimele tell the truth. Did you or did you not come to my compound?"

"Okay fine I sent a young maiden to your compound. She came back with a response of saying. Someone who disguised herself as your aunt said you died of a snake poison. "

I laugh.

"Wow!"

"I'm telling the truth."

"I hear you Zimele" We both keep quiet. I can't believe my aunt said that about me the only person who died was my of a snake bite was my sibling. Why would aunty Nomzamo lie about such though? And why was she busy inquiring about who my baby daddy was knowingly she pushed him away by lying about my non existence death? Some relatives I have.

I lift my head my eyes land on Zimele's Eyes. I look aside and quickly wipe my peeping tear the truth hurts. As much as I wanted it but this kind of truth just broke my fragile heart.

"Don't ever show up here at night. This bed is little Zimele it's only enough for me and my son"

"I have a bigger bed in my house. "

"You mean the bed you yet to share with that lizard Nomaswazi you yet to share with that lizard Nomaswazi your wife?"

"She's not my wife Ndandatho"

"But you were ready to marry her Zimele and you still gonna marry her"

"Mama ka Gatsha can we not go that route please"

" I can draw her with my left hand with my eyes closed at it!"

"Okay.."

"She's not pretty. She looks like ugly and pale! Oh yeah!! Her teeth are not perfectly lined She's cruel too!! " I say in jealousy.

"Oh God!! Didn't you say you tired and sleepy?"

"Didn't you say you want to talk? We talking now. "

"You gonna wake the baby"

"His my baby. I can put him to sleep again!"

" Okay mama ka Bangizwe Yeka ukubanga umsindo ke"

(Fine Bangi's mom. Don't make noise please)

He says looking at me.

"Nawe nje umubi just like your wife!"

(You also ugly)

He laughs and whistles. I look at him and move closer to him. Gatsha sleeps on the far end of the bed. I just want to feel his touch at least one last time. I feel his hand cup my boobs I whimp a little without him hearing me do it. He still gives me butterflies

and shivers down my spine. He still makes me weak. He moves closer to me and whispers in my ear.

"Sleep" he says with his smoky moky voice.

"I'm not sleepy"

"Well I am. "

"Good night then"

"Night"

"Zimele good night"

"Good night Ndandatho" I want you to kiss me dummy. I say within my heart.

I roll my eyes at it and let my slumber hypnotize me..

Zimele

I lift my head to take a good look on her stunning beauty. She's peacefully sleeping so is Gatsha. I stroke her beautiful black and long hair. Her scarf came out. She toss and turns her face comes in contact with mine. I move my thumb around her soft lips. I tilt my head with plans to steal a kiss. Gatsha coughs and I pull back. I can't sleep I'm really struggling. I tilt my head again with intentions of stealing that kiss again. I finally smash my lips against hers. I get lost in a world of my own I separate her lips by smooching on her lower succulent lip. I feel my warrior rising up.

"Nda..." I say waking her up.

"Mmmm..."

" Can we talk?"

"It's devil's hours Zimele"

"Em... Yeah devil's hours." She says and rubs her eyes.

"Can we make love?"

I shouldn't have said that.

"Are you out of your mind?"

"I'm erected"

"Sleep Zimele and stop lusting on me"

"Nda.."

"Zimele I'm trying to sleep"

"Can I have a kiss then. I'm leaving in few minutes and you won't see me for the next coming five days."

"Why not? We gonna miss you. I mean Gatsha will miss you."

" Ndandatho."

"HmMMM"

" Look at me please"

"No"

"Ndandatho please"

She refuses. I remove her hands that are covering her face.

""Zimele don't... Don't touch me"

"You're crying?"

"I'm not"

"Your hands are wet Ndandatho you are crying?"

"I need to pee I'm pressed"

She says getting off from the bed. She relieves herself on the buck she takes a towel and wipes herself. She walks back to the bed She keeps quiet and faces Gatsha.

"Ndandatho"

"You shouldn't have come back Zimele"

"Excuse me"

"You should've just moved on with your life and forgotten about me and my son. We were moving on too and adjusting to living without you. But now you just ruined everything with your presence. You just gave us a glimpse of a future that we know we will never have with you. This.. This bed sharing shouldn't have happened Zimele. You shouldn't have touched me nor touched him you shouldn't have started a conversation with me. I wish you left things as they were and didn't even utter a mere hello Ndandatho. "

She says sniffing without looking at me.

" Ndandatho look at me please"

"No Zimele"

"What is happening right now is my truth this is my future Ndandatho. This is what I need and find joy in. I was lost and alone without you Ndandatho for the past months. I was mess a very terrific one. You saying such is hurting me Ndandatho because I love you I love you more than I should be. Ndandatho now that I found you again I'm not letting you go again. I will fight for you if needed be. "

" You don't get it don't you Zimele? Our love is rooted on pain our love is an abomination stones might be casted on me when everyone knows I've nurted and given life to your seed while I'm not royalty.

Zimele I love you only you but we can't be together nawe uyazi.. Gatsha is your son but he can never ever live like a true Prince that he is because of my red blood. You are a Prince and my son and I are nobodies Zimele. By being here you causing us pain Zimele especially me because I still love you. I still long for you and your touches I still yearn for your laughter. I wish you told me you were royalty I wouldn't have allowed this feelings to mature to what they are right now! Our worlds are segregated Zimele and you being here is causing more damage than we already suffering"

"My parents know about you and my son. I can take you with me

to the Kingdom and try to talk to them. We might be lucky."

"They know about us but they would prefer to sweep us under a rug Zimele. We are a sensitive topic that should never be spoken all in the name of protecting their throne. Gatsha is a bastard isn't it?"

She says looking at me with tears falling from her eyelids. My heart shrinks immediately.

"I love you and I love my son. Had I not loved you. I wouldn't have deposited my seeds in you Ndandatho and had my gods not approved of us Gatsha wouldn't have happened. Better yet I wouldn't have risked spending a night here Ndandatho. Ndandatho things might be complicated for now but there's gonna be light at end of tunnel our light. I don't want to lose you again now it's even worse because my blood runs in this little human that we made out of love. Ndandatho.. "

" Zimele "

" Can I hold you?"

She looks at me and moves closer to me.

I tilt my head and smash my lips against her lips. She puts her

guard down and kisses me back. We repeatedly take turns with making our lips dance to the rhythm of our hearts moving in synchronization. She places her leg on my waist. We continue kissing till our breathing changes. My hands wander to her round and pointy breasts. She looks at me with glassy eyes..

He cups my breasts his breathing is fast paced so is mine. He slightly gets up and lays on top of me. He spreads my legs open and rolls my underwear down.

"Zimele.." That comes as whisper.

"Mmmm..."

"The baby.. Let's do it on the floor"

"Fine!" He says standing up and lying a grass mat on the floor. He takes one of my cloths and use it as a sheet. He scoops me up and gently rest my head on the pillow that he placed on the grass mat. He layson top of me and starts kissing me he ventures to kissing my entire body. I squirm with every touch. Hesucks on my nipples and I let out a moan.

"Don't make noise"

"I will try not too"

"I love you my Queen"

"I love you too my King"

He says inserting his fingers inside my privates. I bite hard on my lip to prevent a loud moan from coming out. He does foreign things to me like inserting his tongue between my legs. By the time he starts penetrating me a pinch of pleasure has long took its course on my body. I close my eyes with every stroke.

"Open your eyes Ndandatho look at me." He says with a smoky moky voice.

"Zimele. Oooh!! Sehranmagzine.comah"

"Look at me don't close your eyes"

"I can't.. Sehranmagzine.comah!! Oooh Zimele!!!"

I whimp.

"I missed you"

"I missed you too"

"Sehranmagzine.comh! Aah!! Aah!!!"

"I think I'm gonna cover your mouth with my hand you making noise"

"I can't help it"

"It's only me right? Who does such things to you?"

"Yes... No one... No one has been a sehranmagzine.comah!!
Zimele!! Zimele!!! I want to pee!!! Zimele!!!
Sehranmagzine.comah"

"Sehranmagzine.comh!!!" He groans too. We both release ourselves. He kiss my now sweaty forehead and I unhook my legs from his waist.

"Thank you"

He says getting up.. He use my bathing cloth to clean off our mess he cleans himself too. He carries me to the bed. We share a last kiss and sleep. The rooster is crowing outside I quickly wake Zimele up. He is reluctantly waking up.

"Zimele wake up.. It's morning."

"I'm tired I want to sleep"

"Zimele please wake up Mama Maseko you will find you here
please dress up and leave"

"Not now.."

"God Zimele!!"

"Ndandatho!!! Ndandatho!!!" Dammit that's Hawu's voice. God I
will die today.

"Ndandatho!!" He shouts again

"Bhuti!!" I say shouting back.

"Please open"

"A second please!" I shout back dressing up.

"Don't take long"

"Sure thing."

I remove Zimele's clothes and hide them. I cover him with my bed sheet. I walk to the door and check if my bed looks suspicious so far so good. I reach for my bucket and open the door. My eyes land on BhutiHawu's by the look of things his going to the palace.

"Good morning" Hawu-

"Good morning Bhuti Hawu"

He looks at me like suspecting something of some sort.

"Where is he?"

"Where is who?"

"Don't act like you don't know Ndandatho I'm talking about Bangizwe."

"Oh!! Yeah uBangi is sleeping."

He looks at me and chews on whatever that his chewing.

"Bangi is sleeping so she says."

"Excuse me?"

"How did you sleep last night?" Hawu-

"Em!! Well... I slept" I said being skeptical. Hawu is acting strange today.

"With who?"

I pop my eyes out this is getting more and more awkward.

"With my son of course."

"Ndandatho you're a terrible liar. I know Zimele slept here and I know he didn't just sleep here but he slept with you. Not in that kind of way but he slept with you for the whole night. I'm not saying you made love but you guys slept together and it's actually exciting you know that both Gatsha's parents slept together. Like you slept together as a family. God's of Thuthukani!! "

He says and laughs. I look at him shyly.

" Tell him to get up we have a long way to go and lucky you everyone is gone to run their errands. Wrap up " He says and walk away.. I go discard my overnight urine I rinse the bucket and go inside my chamber. I'm met by laughter I find Bangi and Zimele playing with each other. Bangi is even laughing his lungs out. He stands up and walks to my direction with Bangi in his hands.

"Morning"

"Cover up Zimele and you need to go. Hawu wants you outside and by the look of things he heard us. "

"Morning my Queen. Gatsha mommy is grumpy can you see

that? Maybe daddy didn't excite her last night."

"Zimele!! Geez!!" He smirks and pulls me for a hug.

"Don't mind Hawu his a lunatic. Morning Phakade lami"

"Morning Zimele"

"You look beautiful."

"Zimele dress up please."

"Mmmmm... Fine.." He says walking away I steal a moment to analyze his butt. I find myself laughing alone. I sit on the bed and breast my son. While drooling at Zimele dressing up.

"Five days? Are you still gonna disappear for five days?"

"I was joking I made that up. "

"I see..."

"I'm coming back here tonight. See you later"

"Later"

"You are loved Ndandatho."

"I love you still" He leans to kiss me then Gatsha. He plays with him before he leaves. I stand there smiling. He walks out and I'm left replaying last night..

Hawulesizwe

Zimele has been in a good mood since we left my house. His singing and greeting anything that comes his way. The topping of the cake is when he hugged a cow and told it "I have a son Mooey Gatsha" He was even laughing while at it. Talking of crazy that's Zimele.

"Hawu what do we have today on our to do list?"

"Working on the farm and attending the men class then training the warriors later"

"Mmm... Not bad.." I look at him.

"Don't give me that look Hawu I'm not telling you anything"

"Zimele come on. Spill the beans it's Ndandatho right?"

"No my son"

"She was loud I heard everything"

Bingo!! He looks at me with his eyes wandering around. He does that when his busted.

"Very loud?"

"Very loud. Surely everyone heard you in the compound" I furrow my brows I know nothing. I heard nothing. I'm just trying to make him talk.

"Fine... I'm busted"

"What happened?"

"We started off by talking you know? Discussing our future and then things lead to another."

"Did you make love or fought? " I say laughing. He smirks.

"It was a peaceful fight more like she was humbling herself while master was lushing out on her. She was apoligising for being disobient and disrespectful I loved every minute of it."

"Poor Ndandatho and where was Gatsha?"

"My boy was a sweetheart. He was like " Dad I'm giving you some privacy to deal with my stubborn mother. I won't disturb I will sleep till morning.. I won't even cough I will play dead till morning"" I laugh my lungs out.

" That's hilarious Zimele. So you did it on the bed or"

"Floor"

"Damn!! Did she love it?"

"She couldn't keep my name out of her mouth"

"Wow!!! I'm glad she deflowered you again!"

I tease.

"That's not funny Hawulesizwe"

"I hope it wasn't Gatsha's sister you were making last night." He looks at me with his eyes out.

"What?"

"You didn't do the trick didn't you Zimele?"

"I... I.. Oh flip Hawu!! Oh no!! She's gonna kill me"

"I would be happiest man alive had she killed you Jali that would mean Khethiwe won't know about my little dark secret. "

"Hawu what if she conceives again?"

"Then you will be a father of two simple Zimele!"

"And whose gonna be a father of two?"

Prince Nomaswazi says with a broad smile on her face. We both look at each other as she walks to us and sits besides Zimele intertwining her hand with Zimele's.

Ma Maseko

"Someone is in happy mood today what happened?"

She smiles and continues to chop the greeny leafs that I believe she plucked out in the field.

"Let's say it's a good day mama. Actually it's a new beginning. I'm happy and I'm at peace!!"

"Mmmm... Did you strike a big deal Ndandatho?"

I smile.

"No mama I'm just happy you know? I have you I have Khethi I have Lungelo Hawu Gogo and lastly my handsome little man Gatsha"

She says smiling such a beautiful girl she is.

"Mmm... This chirpiness narrates a story you can't tell Mama Gatsha. I might be old but I know a woman who slept next to a man and this has a man written on it"

"Obviously that's Gatsha mama"

She giggles.

"Ndandatho I'm not old Aibo! I can see right through you that something happened. If you won't tell me Bangi will. Isn't it Mfana kaGogo?" I say playfully teasing Gatsha.

"Mama uthanda izibanda"

(You love gossiping)

"This mood has everything to do with the warrior. Listen my child stop with your chopping. Go freshen up I will attend to Bangi. We have somewhere to go."

"Where is that mama?"

"Go freshen up. I want to show you the beguile beauty of Bangizwe's Grounds. Hurry up Lungelo will attend to that when she comes back."

"Mmmm... Let's hope mama you not taking me far I'm a lazy bone."

"Hhayi suka ntombi Ka Zimele"

She laughs and I walk away with Gatsha.

Ndandatho

As we walk to whatever destination we going to with mama. We bump into a group of young maidens whom I believe they are

dancers them wearing Amafangwane and a drum serves as proof that they are artistic rhythm and melody is their middle name. I look at them in Awe wishing if I were them. I was really fond of participating in such activities. I was always the one doing the choreography and voice training. I was the important master mind in music and dance before I chose to become a mother. Not only was I a lead dancer and lead singer but I was a composer most songs we sang in the ceremonies were jotted down by me. Seeing these beautiful maidens reminded me of the woman I once was.

"Greetings beautiful maiden. Are you dancers?"

"Greetings our sister yes we are dancers."

"OH! Thats beautiful. So do you also sing maybe?"

"Yes but our singing is not that good so is our dance routine"

"Beat the drum I want to show you something. It's nothing big but you will love it" I say smiling. Mom looks at me with a smile on her face.

"How's this one?"

"Em!! Give me something funky and fast paced."

"Ndandatho you will hurt yourself don't forget you are a mother. Your bones are now weak." She says with care. I chuckle.

"Relax mama I'm still fresh an egg. Please play me your best fast songs"

One of the maiden starts beating the drum the others join her in singing. I'm not happy with their off pitch voices but that's not my business. The drum engulfs me and I start dancing and singing properly..

Nhlonipho

I'm not the kind to laze around doing nothing. Right now I'm accompanying Ngelozi to the stream to fetch water for her family. She is grumpy today and that is worrisome. She's not the type of person to keep quiet.

"So today I was thinking Ngelozi how about you take the English class while I do the science and maths class? I mean you good"

"Who will assist my mother in the kitchen? If I neglect my duties to teach the children?"

"I will talk to your mother and father maybe. Or maybe my mother will go ask for them to grant you permission to assist me"

"My Prince I respect you big time. But I can't help you actually I don't want to be anywhere near the Prince's of Thuthukani I don't want trouble"

"What trouble Ngelozi?"

"The sun is blazing hot today can you feel it?"

"You changing the topic young maiden. Whose giving you trouble when you closer to the Prince of Thuthukani?"

"My Prince let's get moving."

She says walking faster leaving gaps between us. I jog to catch up with her pace when I succeed. I gently pull her hand she turns to face me and right there I saw where the problem is.

"What happened to your face Ngelozi?"

"Nothing to worry yourself about Prince Nhlonipho."

"Who bruised you?" I say tilting her face to the side. Ngelozi is one of my best friends in the palace even though she's a "She" while I'm a "He" but we very good close friends. I didn't know her parents abuse her.

"Your father did this isn't it? Was he drunk?"

"My father is a drunkard but he would never do this to me
Nhlonipho don't insult my dad"

"I wasn't Insulting him but I was asking Ngelozi. Did you see your
face? You are bruised. And I as your Prince I command you to tell
me who did this to you?"

"See why I didn't want you to accompany me to the stream? I was avoiding this Prince Nhlonipho. You question everything and anything. I'm fine it's just a bruise not an amputation!!" She roars and walks faster. I look at her and say nothing. She fills the buckets and I kick blanks waiting for her to finish.

" Can you hear that? " Ngelozi -

" Hear what Ngelozi? "

" The drum the singing?"

" I can't hear anything all I hear are birds chirping and the aquas flowing" I coldly say cos I'm angry with her not telling me about her abuser.

"No!! This voice is so.. So soothing and calming this melody is recuperating. Can we go see whose singing?"

"On one condition. You tell me who beat you up. Whether it's your boyfriend or whatever I want to know"

"I'm young to be having a boyfriend Nipho"

"Then who bruised you"

"Let's go. I will tell you later"

"The buckets?" I inquire.

"They safe no one will steal them" she says smiling running to the direction of the melody. Our eyes land on a very breath taking lady

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with a sun kissed skin and long black braided natural hair. She is pulmpy and curvy. She has nice legs too her eyes are magic. She's so enchanting.

—

Back in Ngwane village

Ndandatho's grandmother has been sick for some days now. Nomzamo was forced to come back to aid her sick and dying mother. Because Tholakele is caught up with work at the royal house her missing a day at work would amount to her salary being reduced. Gogo is laying on a grass mat she has a terrible cough. She always whimper saying her body is cold and that she needs more and more blankets what even worse is that she cries calling out Ndandatho's name. It obvious the old lady isn't coping knowingly Ndandatho is out in the cold with no shelter and refugee she's roaming around in the unknown with a little infant depended on her. She worries so much about her daughter and brings her anguish waking up to no trace of her. ***

She coughs again...

"Mama at least sip a teaspoon of this porridge. You haven't ate in days please eat"

"Ndandatho!! Ndandatho!! Bring my daughter back home!!
Hawu ngiyazisa ngomntana wami" Gogo

"Ma what is your obsession with that girl? She's right where she belongs. Stop stressing yourself over her mama! She will cost you your life!" Nomzamo-

Tholakele walks in looking tired. She has a bowl stuffed with fruits she kneels in front of her mother in law.

" Mama how are you feeling today? "Thola-

" She's becoming worse!! All thanks to that immoral and ill mannered Ndandatho girl. My mother is sick and laying on her death bed all because of that lot of nothing of your child Tholake look at my mother?
Sies Ndandatho! " Nomzamo

" Don't insult my daughter Nomzamo! Don't you dare bark up at the wrong tree Ndandatho has been through a lot already. Leave the poor child alone. "

" Why didnt you teach her morals Tholake? Now we have to dance to her tune even in her absence. Hhayi ngidelile mina uNdanda. "

(I've had enough of Ndandatho)

"You do realize this is not the right place and time to be to bickering! Mama is sick Nomzamo can't you at least respect that?"

"if my mother dies her death is on Ndandatho"

"You wish!!!"

They went on bickering. While on the side Gogo was having her last breathe..

"Im out of here!!!" Nomzamo -

"Good riddance!!!"

"Piss off Tholake"

"Go to hell!! Nxsehranmagzine.comh!!" Nomzamo walked out breathing fire.

"Mama my sincere apologies about the noise. You know how your daughter is." She says rinsing off the fruits for her mother in law to eat.

"Mama what do you prefer? The banana mango or oranges?"

She says walking to the already dead old lady. She kneels to monitor her temperature.

"Mama!!" She says shaking her to no response.

"Mama!! Mama wake up! Please don't!! Mama!!! Nomzamo!!!
Nomzamo!!!" She shouts with a trembling voice.

"Nomzamo!!! Nomzamo!!!!"

"What? Why are you shouting like a mad man? The witches already know my name now all because of you!"

"She's gone!! She's gone!! Mama is gone"

"Hhayi suka wena!! Mama!! Kamacingwane!! Mama!! Mama!!!
Bafana!!! Bafana!!!"

They wailed in sorrow.

Nomaswazi

"And who will be the father of two?" I say with a broad smile on my face. I sit besides the Prince and intertwine my hand with his.

"Let loose of me!" He roughly yanks it off and stands up breathing fire.

"Zimele?"

"Let me excuse you two." The other guy says.

"Hawu sit down!! Let this witch go!" Zimele-

"Excuse you Zimele? Whom. Are you calling a witch?"

"The person behind you turn around and see who they are!! Why are you eavesdropping on our conversation? Didn't your parents

teach you about privacy?" Zimele-

"I won't appreciate that tone you using Zimele!! I'm your wife!!!"
I roar.

"Whose wife? Did you hear me tell you I want to marry you? Did I ever touched you in a way that a lover would do to their loved one? Did I ever utter the words I love you Nomaswazi? Never!!! Dare call yourself my wife will twist your neck and take you to your early grave! Get lost!! " He shudders so much that feel his voice vibrating in the depths of my ears. I'm not the kind to cry but I think I'm gonna cry.

" I wasn't eavesdropping Zimele!! "

" I said piss off!!!! "

" Zimele" The guy says looking at Zimele whose eyes have turned grey.

"Zimele!!! Zimele what is this noise?" King-

I blink once and tears hit the ground.

"Ask this bloody guest of yours." Zimele-

"Princess what is going on?" King-

"Zimele.. Zimele insulted me my King. He called me names and he threatened to separate me from living" I sniff.

"You said did what Zimele? What did you say?" King-

"Father she was snooping around and she was disrespectful"
Zimele-

"Who gave you permission to insult her?" King-

The King says walking towards Zimele. Zimele stands still and looks at his father.

"Let me excuse you" Hawu -

"See you later Warrior" Zimele--Hawu leaves and Zimele's mother appears.

"Ngcolosi!!! Zimele!! What's going on here?" The Queen says panting.

"Ask your son Nozibele" King-

"Zimele are you okay my son? Ngcolosi I bet you didn't do anything inappropriate to my son" Queen-

"He was rude to the Princess! Look Noma is crying all because of this lot of nothing!" King-

""Father don't call me names!" Zimele-

"Zimele calm down. Wena why don't you go home kanti? Go back to your parents house Nomaswazi and stop stalking my son!" Nozi-

"Mama I belong here with my husband!" I say-

"Belong where? When I gave birth to this boy I don't remember giving birth to anyone's husband but my son! Leave Zimele alone!! There are plenty of fishes out there leave this one alone. He doesn't want you!!" Queen -

"Mama why do you hate me this much?"

"Nozibele stop doing that you hurting the poor child!" King-

"She must leave Ngcolosi. Come Zimele" The Queen says walking away with Zimele. The King tries to comfort me.

"It's okay my daughter don't worry he will come around"

"It better be soon daddy."

"It's okay my child. Come here" He says embracing me. I wrap my hands around his waist taking in his fragrance. He kiss my cheek.

"Only you loves me in this Palace not everyone"

"That's because I know beauty when I see it. And you Noma you are beautiful. If I wasn't old I would've married you for myself" I smile as he wipes my tears away.

Ndandatho

My feet's are colliding with the sand making dust to rise. My heart is beating fast this used to be my first love before Zimele. Being reunited with it again gives me joy it brings me the happiest that I once had. Right now I don't feel like Bangizwe's mother but rather Ndandatho the beautiful maiden. I can hear loud cheering and applauding just like the old days. I stop dancing when I feel a sting on my chest.

"Wow!!! Wow!! You really good at it. Please be our dance teacher please" young maiden-

"Well I would love too but I can't my sister I'm a mother now and my life is quite busy"

"Prince Nhlonipho please talk to her." I look at these beautiful ladies and smile at them.

"You very good at dancing and singing Ndandatho. You should join them" Mama-

I faintly smile as I succumb to the sting that's on my chest.

"Where would Bangi be mama by that time?"

"Nda what am I? Am I not your mother? Isn't Bangi my grandson? Don't insult me young lady. I can look after my grandson with no hassle" I blush.

"Thank you mama I will think about it and I will seek permission from.. (I clear my throat)"

"From the warrior isn't it?" She laughs. I tilt my head and look away.

"Good day beautiful maiden your name is? Greetings mama Maseko pardon me for my disrespect. " He flashes mama a genuine smile then me.

"Greetings I'm Ndandatho"

"Such a beautiful name for a beautiful woman. I love what I saw and heard. Can I take you up for an offer please?" Nhlo-

"What offer?"

"You teach dancing and singing at the palace you will work hand in hand with this beautiful maiden here Ngelozi" He says I look at the beautiful young maiden who flashes me a smile.

"I'm afraid I won't be able to take it. Your name is?"

"Nhlonipho. And nobody says no to the Prince of Thuthukani please."

"See this little boy? I'm his mother"

"We can arrange for you to stay in the palace with the little boy. Can I hold him?"

Mama looks at me and smile.

"Prince Nhlo after holding the baby please carry these for me my son. I was walking to your house to deliver these Ngelozi how are you? Where is your mother?" the pretty girl greets and answers mama. Bangi suddenly cries for this Nhlonipho guy. Nhlonipho holds my baby and the crying stops.

" Such a beautiful girl. What is her name? "

" His a boy. Bangi"

"I've never met a beautiful boy apart from myself of course"
Nhlo- Ngelozi laughs.

"Prince Nhlonipho my daughter will take your offer she will teach these beautiful maidens. Isn't it Ndandatho?" Mama-

"Mama!!!"

She laughs. Nhlonipho hands mommy the baby he carries the bag mama was handing him. We walk together while having a little chitchat moment. My heart and mind isn't here instead it's at Ngwane village with my grandmother...

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Ndandatho

We finally reach a huge rashing compound. That I strongly believe it's a palace. The gates are tall and made out of gold. The houses are beautifully designed and painted the grass is green and fully distributed. This place looks like a heaven everything around here is breath taking. I'm scared to even step inside I'm walking on eggshells. Something tells me this is Zimele's house. I mean mama did mention Nhlonipho being a prince of Thuthukani village meaning his brothers with Zimele. I don't know how I feel about being here or this place but it gives me shivers down my spine.

Nhlonipho disappears to whatever place his going to leaving me and mama walking our selves inside the main house. I don't want to go inside my body is against it. But mama doesn't give me a chance to say my mind. She drags me inside. We are met by loud noises more like there's a squarel. Mama looks at me and assures me not to fear anything.

Nozibele

"Ngcolosi stop dictating my son's life! Zimele will not marry that girl. Over my dead body Ngcolosi. That girl has no decency She will be the end of this kingdom."

"I'm the king of this kingdom and you are my wife nothing more than that! If I say Zimele will marry he will do as instructed. Nozibele you not my husband remember that." Ngcolosi -

I look at Zimele his infuriated. A knock comes to the door our servant informs us we have guests outside. Ngcolosi looks at me then Zimele who is settled on the leather couch.

" Let them in.." Ngcolosi-

"My king" He says bowing his head while heading to the door. We all try by all means to clear out the tension so our guest won't notice it when they step inside our dean.

"This conversation is not over Nozibele and wena Zimele tonight you not going anywhere we have serious things to discuss."
Husband-

The door swings open. Mrs Maseko walks in with a young looking

lady whose strapping a baby on her back. I have forgotten about my body butter being delivered today. That's how caught up I am with this Zimele and Ngcolosi dilemma. I flash her a smile and meet her halfway. Zimele stands up in shock. My husband fakes a smile and greets the guests.

"Mama Maseko how are you my sister? I even forgot about the orders. I must be aging" We share a sisterly hug and giggle.

"Don't be silly my queen you look very fresh and healthy for an aging lady. How are you Queen Nozibele? King Ngcolosi and prince Zimele how are you?" Mrs Maseko-

Ndandatho

"Don't be silly my queen you look very fresh and healthy for an aging lady. How are you Queen Nozibele? King Ngcolosi and prince Zimele how are you?" Mrs Maseko-

I'm standing over here looking at the father of my child. With lots of questions wandering in my head.

"You mean her? She's my daughter my queen." Mama says

snapping me out of from my thoughts.

"Greetings my queen king and prince of Thuthukani." I say as I learn I didn't greet them.

They greet me back and offer us chairs to sit down. A servant lady gives us refreshments. Gatsha starts crying. Zimele swallows hard and looks at me I'm certain he wants to ask what's wrong with his son but under the circumstances we are in his voice is tamed. My guess tells me his parents know nothing about our little deep dark secret.

"Young lady feed the baby. Surely she's hungry." Queen-

"Excuse me." The king says disappearing somewhere in the house. Zimele looks at me as I unbuckle Gatsha putting him on my lap I pop my breast out and feed the little man. The queen looks at me and smiles.

"Can I hold the baby?" Queen-

I give her Gatsha.

"Where is the father? She's so beautiful." Queen-

I look at Zimele.

"He died mama" Zimele swallows hard so much that he chokes on his saliva. Mama looks at me then Zimele who is coughing up

badly.

"I'm sorry my daughter about that so how are you making mends to raise her?" Queen-

"I breast feed him my queen"

"Breast milk is not enough babies need clothes and cosmetics. Your name is?"

"Ndandatho"

"Such a beautiful name. And the baby?" Zimele looks at me and coughs again.

"Bubu bring us water please! My son will die of saliva!" The queen shouts. An old lady limps to the sitting room. She greets us and walks away. I believe that's Zimeles grandmother.

"I'm fine mama no need to give me water. Sisi Ndandatho can I hold your child? I love kids." Zimele-

"That's if he won't cry my prince."

"Kids love me.." Zimele-

"Zimele don't lie. Kids fear you." Queen

"Not this one mama.." Zimele-

"Meaning?" Queen-

"He recently came to my house my queen in search of Hawu. You

know how close these boys are? He met my daughter and her son
I must say Bangi is found of Zimele" Mama-

I look at Mama then Zimele. I don't like this mystery game we
playing. Gatsha is Zimele's son.

"I see.. Here Zimele.." She says handing Zimele the child. She
stands up.

"Excuse me Mama Maseko let me collect your parcel." She disappears. Zimele plays with Gatsha mama looks at us.

"Hey warrior how are you? Did you miss me? " Zimele-

"That's Zimele's mother Ndanda Gatsha's grandmother." Mama whispers in my ears. The queen comes back Nhlonipho walks in.

"Greetings mother and greetings warrior" Nhlo-

They greet him back. He walks to Zimele and snatches the baby from him. Zimele looks at me and I return the stare.

"Ndandatho..." Mama says shaking me. I snap out of it to look at her.

"The queen is talking to you." Ma-

"Pardon me my queen. You were saying?"

"These used to belong to my son Nhlonipho when he was still a baby. I never gave them away because I thought I was gonna fall pregnant again or better yet my son Zimele would impregnate and make me a grandmother but nothing happened my child. I suppose this little beautiful girl over here would enjoy

making use of these. I'm sorry it's boyish but it's the least I can give. I will try to get her more shall I go to the market Hawu will deliver them. What's her name again? "Queen-

"Bangi It's a boy mama" Zimele-

"Really? I thought his a girl" Queen-

"It's a boy." Nhlonipho-

" Thank you my queen for the clothes and blankets Bangi will love these. Thank you so very much God bless you. " I say with a smile.

" No problem.. I just love kids it's such a pity the gods blessed me with two naughty sweet and handsome boys. Mama Maseko thank you for the deliveries I will be seeing you in a months time.

" She says embracing mama.

" Mama there's something important I would like to discuss with you after this meeting. "

Nhlonipho-

" Thank you my queen we should get going. Surely Bangizwe needs rest" Mama-

"Bangi what?" Queen-

"Ehm mama I think dad is calling you." Zimele-

"Safe journey.." The queen says and walks away. Nhlonipho and Zimele walks us out. We all quiet. We pass a group of kids gathered under the tree with papers and pens. They jump in joy when they see Nhlonipho.

"Em... Ndandatho we shall meet soon. I have a class to teach"
Nhlonipho says giving me Gatsha. We say our goodbyes.

Zimele

We all gathered as a family on the dinning table. The servants

have cooked up a storm there are several other dishes that I've never tasted. Mother and father are not on good speaking terms but I'm grateful Nomaswazi left the palace. Gogo has been giving me uncomfortable glances. Nhlonipho is himself always minding his business.

"So Zimele tell me. Where is the maiden you impregnated? Surely you've been searching for the young prince of Thuthukani. When are we seeing them?" Gogo-

"Ehm.. Well.. I'm still searching gogo I haven't found them as yet."
"

"Really?"

"Yes gogo"

"Zimele tomorrow I want you to go to the farm our farmers request a meeting. Nhlonipho you will attend to the other farm. After that we will go house to house doing a little surveys on what our villagers are in need of in terms of basic needs. I want you to sleep early tonight

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in terms of basic needs. I want you to sleep early tonight tomorrow you have a long day ahead. " Dad-

" Talking of villagers needs Ngcolosi. Nhlonipho had a word with me regarding our villagers being in dire straits with a music teacher and a dance teacher. You do know we need entertainment for most ceremonies so I was thinking we employ someone to aid our people with those skills. "Mom-

" Who do you have in mind Nhlonipho? Actually we will discuss that before we retire to bed. "Dad-

" Thank you my king" Nhlo-

"Can I be excused?" I say standing up I miss my son and I'm leaving now.

"Zimele don't forget what I said" Dad-

"I heard every word loud and clear father and I will attend to the farmers. Good night bo Jali" I say standing up going outside to my private chamber to lock it. When no one is watching me I run towards the gate and start walking. I need to see Ndandatho I wasn't comfortable with the glances she was giving me earlier on. My guess tells me she wasn't at ease with my family not knowing who and what Gatsha is to them. I know keeping her and my child a secret is very wrong and agonizing but I need time to process everything and tackle it. I can't just act now. I don't even know how my family will see her or treat her. I love her so much to bring her on grounds she might never be appreciated on..

I finally reach her house. I scan the compound before I knock on her door..

—

Ndandatho

I'm sitting on my bed nesting my son while packing up the clothes the queen gave to us. I have so much in my head but most importantly I'm thinking about Zimele and the kind of lifestyle he's exposed to on a daily basis. I can't help it but to doubt our love I don't think there's a room for our feelings in that huge breathtaking compound. That house is a heaven a heaven I don't see myself parading freely and boldly like a significant other to the prince. I don't see Zimele and myself not forgetting our baby boy living our happily ever after in that house. So far the father the king might be the first person to dispute us and shout Abomination when he hears about Zimele and I resume spreading around like a contagious virus. I really don't see us propelling in the midst of these tribulations that awaits us.

"Gatsha don't bite me." I say while brushing his brows. I hear a knock and I permit whomever it is entrance. He walks to the bed and sits besides me he plays with Gatsha while I'm feeding him.

"Hello.." He says looking at me.

"Hi.."

"Did you bath him already?"

"Yes.. I'm only left with discarding his bath water which I will do now. Please hold him"

"No problem." I stand then walk outside to spill water. I walk back to the house and neatly place The clothes in a storage. I fix the bed so Gatsha can sleep. Zimele is holding the baby as fast asleep as he is.

"Can you please put him on the bed."

"I'm still admiring him" Zimele-

"When you done admiring him please put him in bed."

"No problem." He says. I sit on the edge of the bed and start feasting on my nails Zimele steals glances. I suppose my silence is to blame.

"Ndandatho are you okay?"

"I'm fine.. Are you Okay?"

"I don't know.." He says heaving a sigh. He puts the baby in bed. He moves towards me.

"Are you sure you Okay?"

"I'm fine Zimele."

"Ehm.. I will tell them about Gatsha."

"You said they know njena"

"The maine told them but they don't know Gatsha is the son they were told about."

"Zimele maybe it's best you don't tell them."

"Meaning?"

"We come from two different worlds I don't see your father approving of this your mother and brother yes they might like Gatsha but not your father. I don't want my child growing up knowing his a product of forbidden intimacy."

He heaves a sigh and draws me in for a hug.

" How about we run away you and I and the baby? "

" No Zimele where are we gonna go? "

" Ndanda what solution do we have? If not running away? "

" Can we not talk about that its not gonna work out Zimele you wont survive a single day of experiencing and suffering hunger and poverty. Lets drop it"

He glares at her. Ndandatho heaves a sigh "I missed you"

"I missed you more I couldn't sleep without seeing you and my son."

"It's funny how you always declare him as yours but not ours"

"I once told you the baby is mine Ndandatho you just happened to be a carrier. His mine" I look at him and smile.

"You love him don't you?"

"I've never loved a living being like I love my son"

"I see.." the silence takes over again.

"I think i like your mother and brother"

"I like them too."

"They are kind hearted and beautiful."

"Mom is the sweetest of hearts you gonna love her"

"I love the clothes she gave us."

"Knowing my mother she will keep her word. She likes him I guess she can tell his our blood."

I glance at Zimele. He shifts closer he puts his hand on the side of my face he tilts his head then captures my lips for a brief smooching. He gently pushes me on my back and stands between my legs he starts undressing me and leaving traces of his lips on my body. He seductively squashes my son's food and rolls his tongue on my nipples we make love. We both groan as we feel a fever pinch invades our bodies. He releases and links our sweaty foreheads together.

"I love you my queen"

"I love you too my king. Zimele"

"Yes.."

"Let's make love till the sun comes out"

"Ndanda"

"Please Zimele"

"The last time you said that we made Gatsha."

"Zimele please"

"Fine" He says and starts touching me. We do it on the floor repeatedly.

Nozibele

I'm pacing around my private chamber. Something has been bothering me about that young lady and her son. Something unusual happened earlier on when I was holding that baby. Something about that child reminds me of young Zimele. That baby looks everything like my son when he was still a baby. Could it be she's the woman the Maine told us about? Or maybe I'm just overthinking and seeing unexisting things? As I'm deep in thoughts Nhlonipho walks in with my cup of tea.

"Thank you son"

"You welcome mother and good night."

"Nhlonipho."

"Mama.."

"Eem..Nhlonipho what is the name of that baby boy we were

holding earlier on the day?"

"Gatsha?"

"Gatsha??" I say in shock.. The mother said his Bangi.

"That should be all my son good night."

"Good night mother"

Nhlonipho walks out. I'm left cracking my head.

—

—

Weeks later

Ndandatho

The queen of Thuthukani didn't allow me to leave my son behind with mama when I was offered a job in the palace. Gatsha is staying with me in one of the rondavels houses that only servants occupy in this palace. As much as it looks nothing like the royal house but I must say these rondavels are stylish and trendy. I love mine honestly it's nothing I can attain for myself. Having this one is a blessing. Zimele is not happy about me and

Gatsha staying on this palace he feels uneasy. We still see each other from time to time. But now it's harder than before because around here his a prince and every where he goes someone is always watching. He does come to play with his child and kiss him good night but that happens once in a while because his busy lately. The royals they still don't know about Bangizwe being one of their own.

I'm sitting outside with Ngelozi and a lady who works inside the royal house having a little chit-chat. Today it's Saturday we not doing much. Gatsha is sitting on Ngelozi's lap stroking his long hair.

"Let's go fetch water I have run out" I say chewing the nuts Bubu gave us.

"I also don't have some." Bubu-

"You guys can go I will look after Gatsha." Ngelozi-

"Please make sure he doesn't eat those poisonous leaves."

"His safe Sisi Ndandatho."

"Thank you" I say smiling at Ngelozi. Bubu and myself carry our buckets and walk out of the premises. We bump into Buthelezi a royal guard who loves singing praises to me.

"Ndandatho my wife how are you today?" Buthelezi -

"Buthelezi stop referring to her as your wife shall her boyfriend

hear you say that he will kill you" Bubu-

I laugh at these two. They don't know who Gatsha's father is and lately My son is starting to look more like Zimele that might start sparking concerns.

"Good day Buthelezi how are you?"

"Now that I see you my wife I'm doing great"

"That's beautiful"

"Ndandatho I made your son this toy please give it to him" He says handing me a clay car toy.

"Oh! That's sweet of you Buthelezi thank you so very much. My boy will love it"

"Pleasure" He flashes me a smile. Zimele and Hawu looks at us as they walk in the compound.

"Buthelezi can you please hold it for me till I come back from the river bank."

"No problem my dearest wife" Buthelezi-

Zimele immediately turned his head to look at Buthelezi.

"What did you call her Buthelezi?" Zimele-

"I love this maiden my prince one day I will make her my wife"
Buthelezi-

He looks at me and greases his forehead.

"Warrior let's go" Zimele- I glance at him and swallow hard.
Zimele is easily agitated lately. I know we will fight over this later
shall he come to see the baby. Bubu and myself walk away.

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Ndandatho

The walk back home is a drag since the buckets are weighing down on me. I gasps for air when I offload my buckets. I wipe my hands and go to Ngelozi's house. I call for Ngelozi her mother grants me entrance into her house. I find Ngelozi applying petroleum jel on my baby's body. How she loves him I curve my lips to form a smile.

"I'm sorry sisi Ndandatho I had to wash his body. My siblings bath

twice hence I saw it fit to bath Bangizwe too. I hope you don't mind." Ngelozi-

"Thank you so much Ngelozi you really helped me my sister. I wasn't planning on bathing him today. Thank you."

"You welcome. Mom fed him porridge"

"Thank you very much.. Hello my boy did you miss mommy? Come here!" I say stretching my hands out he smiles. I pick him up and sway him on the air before I kiss his forehead.

"Ndandatho the baby will puke stop doing that" Mama-Ngelozi

"My apologies mother" I say and stop doing what I'm doing..

"Mama and Ngelozi let us get going. I want to fold his laundry and tidy the room a little."

"Bye Ndandatho." They say in unison. They kiss Gatsha goodnight. How they love my child surprises me each day. Majority of individuals love my son they all want to hold him. Sometimes I forget I have a baby I guess that's what they meant when they said "It takes a village to raise a child" Gatsha is mine biologically but physically his everyone's child.

We walk to our chamber and see ourselves in the house. I put a grass mat for Gatsha and let him play on the mat while fold our clothes. A knock comes to my door I'm surprised to see the Queen. She flashes me a smile and walks to Gatsha.

"Ndanda how are you doing? Hello Bangi"

"Greetings my Queen we doing fine and how are you doing?"

" I would be happy had you not lied about my grandson Ndandatho." My heart stops beating for a minute.

"Queen mother I can..."

"You thought you could hide him till when? This little guy is a replica of his father. Ndandatho I've been meaning to ask where are you from? "

She's now holding Gatsha and rocking him. This woman is pretty.

"I'm from Ngwane village."

"Then why are you in Thuthukani village if you are a Ngwane breed?"

"My parents wanted to marry me off to a witch doctor they wanted to sacrifice my son at it. So I ran away from home."

"I see... Who are your parents?" "Tholakele Mchunu and Bafana Mchunu" "Why do you look familiar?"

"I get that a lot mama I take it people with my skin tone kinder look alike"

She giggles and sits on my bed.

"Are you and Zimele still seeing each other? You're secret is safe with me." She giggles. "I can't tell you my Queen"

"Fine I get the answer.. Anyway I came to check up on this little man don't say anything about our conversation to Zimele. It's our little secret."

"Thank you mama"

"You such a pretty girl Ndandatho. Bye Gatsha la Gogo. Give gogo a kiss" She says kissing Gatsha she walks out and I'm left mesmerized by her reaction towards my little secret with the Prince. To make things worse she doesn't see me and my son as commoners she's a very good woman...

—
King Ngcolosi

Zimele and myself are attending to a very important meeting. This boy won't stop yawning and its evidence he doesn't want to be here he is bored. I'm giving him my most cautious look.

"Zimele what is your take on this matter?" ME-

"First and foremost my King. I strongly believe in creating opportunities for the underprivileged other than giving them fruits of hard labor that was done by others but not them. What I mean is we need to teach our people skills father instead of giving them food. They need to know of ways generating their own daily lives supplies. Spoon feeding is wrong father. We are making our people lazy and too relaxed by always giving them already made goods that they know nothing about where and how they were attained. "Zimele-

Is this really Zimele's thinking?

" I love your idea Prince Zimele. Go on we listening " Elder -

"Thank you Jali.. As I was saying. We need to teach our people to practice family farming they must farm for their bellies and that of their families. They must sew and make their own clothes and other accessories. They must dig up holes and make their own boreholes. The list is endless it's not everything we should supply as a Kingdom but rather the things we certain they can't afford on themselves. "Zimele

-

" I love this Zimele. I really do. This young man is smart. " Elder-

"Indeed his smart but we can't listen to a young man who doesn't have a wife. Zimele has to marry Ngcolosi.. His not getting young"
Elder-

"With all due respect my elder. What you saying right now is obnoxious and irrelevant to the conversation at hand. Here we discussing the future of these grounds and it's people not family planning. I won't sit here and listen to you insult my intelligence married or not my voice matters. " Zimele-

I clear my throat.

" My son is correct. We not here to discuss him but the future of our people. Can we stick to the agenda. "

" Excuse me! " Zimele says breathing fire. He steps outside I follow him till we reach the living room. I find my mother sewing a blanket. She looks at me then Zimele.

" What happened in there? "Ma-

" It's nothing major mother.. Zimele you did great in there "

" Thank you father " Zimele-

My wife walks towards us humming a song.

" Dinner is ready where is Magcina? " Nozi-

" I'm here mother! " Nhlonipho says with a broad smile.

" Awesome! Let's go dine together as a family. Mama put that blanket away. The delegates will see themselves out. Come everyone!" My wife says in a chirpy mood. She's ecstatic and thats questionable.

" Zimele my handsome son sit here. Nhlonipho here mother dearest here and husband dearest. Today I prepared the meal myself. Isn't that beautiful? " Nozi-

"Mama what is going on? Why are you this excited and jolly?"
Nhlonipho-

"Life is good my son! The gods have been good my kids are good so is my husband and my mother in law." Nozi-

"Baba do you have anything to do with this?" Zimele-

"I'm confused son."

"Ma I hope you not expecting a baby." Nhlo

"Hhaibo Nhlonipho. Its your turn and Zimele's to be making babies not me" Nozi-

We eat with laughter amongst ourselves. The kids disappear to their private chambers. So does my wife. My mother and I are having little talk..

**

Queen Thabile

"They made our daughter to spend two nights on their Palace Ngidi. Anything could've happened in that time phrase. My husband I think we should take Noma back to their Palace with her clothes they sinned Ngidi."

"Thabile she's still in tact that Jali boy didn't deflower. Stop making a mountain out of this"

"Ngidi We don't know what happened in that Palace for that two days. I won't fold my hands and watch my daughter being stripped off her innocence by a man who won't marry her."

"Summon her to my private chambers then."

I get on my feet and sway my hips to Nomaswazi' s private chamber.

"Mama" "Noma.."

"Listen young lady I want you to tell your father that Zimele deflowered you. I want you to lie and throw yourself on the ground if need be to convince your father that you are not pure. Noma you need to marry this guy if not our Kingdom will perish of hunger and droughts. You do know our river banks are going dry

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our cultivation lands are turning colours and wilting. Nomaswazi if you don't lie my child we gonna loose so much. Our Kingdom is struggling to make mends. Soon our livestock will die of thirst and hunger due to lack of greener grasses and trees. The future of Ngwane village relies in you. Now my precious daughter go in there and pull a stunt saying he touched your boobs and kissed your privates and invaded your father's kraal. You love him don't you? "

" Yes I love him mother "

" Now do as instructed go to your father and tell him the Prince of Thuthukani made you a woman in that two days you've spend in their palace. Go on"

She flashes me a smile and walks to my private chambers. I follow her behind. She sits on the bed with her head bowed. Ngidi looks at her and clears his throat.

"Noma"

"Baba"

"I want you to be honest with me young lady. How was your stay in Thuthukani? Did anything absurd happen?" Ngidi-

"Nothing strange happened father.."

"Noma tell the truth did the Prince handle you in the most uncomfortable and unusual manner?" "Mama did you tell father about my little secret?" Noma-

"Em! Nono his my husband sisi and I had no option but to tell him I just couldn't keep my mouth shut"

"Ma it was supposed to be a secret!! Our little secret!! Now ubaba knows about the Prince and I making love! Mama you betrayed Zimele and I!!" Noma-

" You did what? Noma you did what?" Ngidi- "Baba.." Noma-

"You gave Zimele your innocence?" Ngidi says livid. "Baba it was a mistake."

"Rubbish!!! Rubbish!!!! Zimele is gonna make you a wife wether he likes it or not!! Ngcolosi will pay for this!!" He says cursing. I curve my lips to form a smile Noma clicks her eye. We both smile when Ngidi isn't watching.

Ndandatho

I'm seated on my bed reading a book that Ngelosi borrowed me. Gatsha is feasting on my meat besides me. The door swings open the warrior walks in I don't understand why he doesn't familiarize himself with knocking. He shuts the door behind him he glance on the baby and play with his cheeks.

"We spending a night in my private chamber" Zimele-

I look at him and close my book. He carries the baby and walks out. I follow them. I check my surrounds and enter his private

chamber. We've been doing this for quite some time now. He puts Gatsha on the bed and removes his clothes to bath. I continue reading my book. After a while his done washing his body he climbs the bed and faces the roof.

"What's going on between you and Buthelezi?" "Nothing"
I say not looking at him but my book. "Look at me when I talk to you."

I pause reading and glance at him. "My apologies."

"What is your business with Buthelezi Ndandatho?" "I just told you Zimele there's nothing going on" "And you think I believe that lie?"

"That's on you Baba ka Gatsha." I say putting my book on the mini table and switching off the lamp bulb. I turn my back on Zimele.

"We not done talking"

"You accusing me njena! There's nothing we gonna discuss Zimele and have you believing me" "I didn't accuse you of anything Ndandatho. I asked you a question that's it. "

"A sarcastic question you meant?"

"I don't like how that servant views you and address you. I don't want you to talk to him ever again Ndandatho."

"Fine"

"I mean it Ndandatho."

"You've proved your point Zimele I get it!"

Gatsha sobs I give him breast milk.

"Another thing. Stop leaving my son with strangers Ndandatho you putting his life at risk." I heave the longest sigh.

"Where am I supposed to leave him Zimele?" I say agitated.

"Carry him on your back."

"So now I'm a donkey Zimele? I have to practice with a baby on my back? Go to the rest room with him on my back? Are you hearing yourself Zimele? Do you ever go about your duties with your son buckled on your back? Don't tell me I'm putting my son

in danger when you yourself isn't doing anything to ensure his safe Zimele! I mean his your biggest secret to begin with! "

" Ndandatho! "" Ngiyeke! "

I retire to sleep the next morning. I leave his chamber and go to mine. I start sweeping in front of my hut. I resort to cleaning my private chamber. I need wood I forgot to collect some yesterday. I put sleeping Bangizwe on my back and step out of the house. I go to the bushes and collect wood. I walk back home with Gatsha crying on my back. I start making fire and mixing my bread ingredients I will eat that with tea. Bubu walks to me with a tray. She flashes me a smile and puts the tray besides me.

"Good morning Ring" "Morning Bubu"

"If I were you I would throw this dough away because you won't be needing it for the entire day." "Excuse me?"

"The Queen told me to give you this as a token of what? I don't know Ndanda. So here enjoy your breakfast see you later at practice."

I look at Bubu then the tray. I shift the cloth a little and take a peep on what's in there. Wow!! These are goodies I don't even know most things that are garnishing my plate. I pick what looks like buns and take a bite on it it tastes good actually. I take the sticks like things that are on the plate mmm this tastes like potatoes but what kind of potatoes are these? They taste very good. I eat the meaty like thing that's in my plate. Zimele eats good stuff no wonder he looks this handsome. I eat everything that's on my plate but I still continue making my bread. Minutes later I finish with my bread and wash the royal plates. I bath my son and bath myself. I think I'm gonna visit mama today I miss Lungelo and Khethiwe not forgetting gogo. I slowly walk to the gate my eyes land on Princess Nomaswazi carrying luggage bags walking inside the royal house along side Queen Thabile and King

Ngidi. I walk outside the gate fuming..

Zuko

I think I just saw Ndandatho or my eyes are deceiving me? No let me run after the young maiden who just left these premises.. I run after her to my surprise I find her seated on shade breasting the kid.

"Ndandatho.." "Prince Zuko"

"What brings you here? Shouldn't you be in Ngwane village with your family? Mourning together?" "Mourning what? Ngwane village is no longer a home to me Prince Zuko"

"You haven't heard?" "Heard what?"

"About your grandmother?" "What about my grandmother?"
"She's late Ndandatho she died a day go and think they burying her today." "You joking right?"
"I'm afraid not." She gets on her feet and buckles her son. "You lying Zuko and that's wrong!!"
"I'm not lying she's dead Ndandatho and your brother said she died mentioning your name." A tear escapes her eyelid.
"Thank you for telling me" She says walking away with tears clouding her vision. "Ndandatho!"
"Leave me alone!" I let her be...

Nomaswazi

My parents dragged me to Thuthukani village with my bags packed. I've never seen father this livid. I carry my luggages inside their luxury home. King Ngcolosi is the first one to stand up and meet us halfway Queen Nozibele is mesmerized by our sudden visit. Nhlonipho stands up and looks at me The King mother walks to me with her arms opened.

"And now? What is this ambushing all about?" Nozibele - "Ngidi what brings you here? And these luggages?" Ngcolosi- "Where is your eldest son? Where is this warrior!!" father- "Zimele!!!! Zimele!!!!" Mom shouts.
"Yeyi!!! Don't turn my house into a circus!! Don't make noise in here Thabile!! Respect my house!!" Nozi-
"Don't bicker about respect! Not when your immoral son failed to apply that to my daughter." Mom-
"Immoral son? Don't test my patience Thabile!! The only immoral child here is this ugly daughter of yours who is stupid and

dunderhead!!!" Nozi-

"And this noise what's going on here? Whose moving in? Zimele says walking in looking all sorts of handsome. God gave himself time when creating this one.

" The man I've been waiting for!! Jali the only person whose moving in is your wife Nomaswazi isn't it you made her a woman? Man marry her!!" Ngidi-

"What? What woman?" Zimele-

"You deflowered her in simple terms" Mama-

"What? That's a lie! I didn't even touch her! I don't even know the texture of her lips!! This is nonsense!!" Zimele-

"Yeyi we won't argue with you baba let's go. Noma don't ever set foot in Ngwane village this is your new home!" Dad-

I start crying.

"I'm sorry!!! It was a mistake please forgive me! We were so excited so much we let things go overboard."

"Ye!!! Don't lie Nomaswazi I wasn't even home on those two days don't start with me!! I didn't deflower you!!" Zimele-

The noise goes on. My parents walk out leaving me in Thuthukani village Zimele is angry.

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Nozibele

"We not taking her with us!" Ngidi-

"Nimshiyela ubani? Take her with you!" Me-

"Nozibele calm down" Ngcolosi -

"I can't calm down Ngcolosi not when they are accusing my son of something he didn't do!"

"Were you there with them when they did the deed?" Thabile-

"Don't ask me stupid questions Thabile! And you stop lying on my sons name. Zimele did nothing with you! Go find the lousy commoner who deflowered you and leave my son alone!"

" Zimele tell the truth" Noma

"What truth? Are you sick Nomaswazi? What is wrong with you? I'm gonna warn you one last time stop lying on my name!!"
Zimele-

—

Bubu

I know it's wrong and rude to eavesdrop on people's private conversations but true honesty ears don't have lids and mine are widely opened hence I will let them do their work.

"If my son really did what you accusing him of doing then the counsel elders should be called in to prove your statement I want the seer to be called in too."

"There's no need for that Mama I didn't touch her. Noma is lying"

"I'm not lying Zimele. I'm telling the truth. You took my pride don't play pretense please!"

"I didn't touch you woman!! I don't even know the colour of your inner thighs stop lying! I didn't mate with you!"

What did my ears just hear? Prince Zimele made love to Princess Nomaswazi? Could this mean the Princess is pregnant with the royal heir? Wonders shall never end! I cover my mouth and clap my hands in disbelief. Prince Zimele is really a disobedient child he couldn't even hold himself till marriage? That's an embarrassment. I clap my hands again.. I hear footsteps In the corridors I run back to my gazetted work station. Queen Nozibele walks in infuriated she paces around the room and glance at me after a little while.

"Bubu"

"Queen mother"

"Don't change the bed sheets make sure you put on the dirty and stuffy ones. Just abort this cleaning mission. After all a pig will make use of this chamber go home young maiden"

"Thank you Queen mother"

I say wiping my hands on my work uniform. I walk out of the private chamber and head to the sitting room where I find Princess Noma with her rags. I greet and walk out. I find my mother making fire outside our hut. I greet her and walk inside the house to check up on my forever ill child whose father is a deadbeat yet we bump chests every single day on this compound. I've gotten so exhausted of begging him to love and

want his child. I place my hand on her forehead to monitor her temperature. God she's extremely hot today she's worse. I glance at her my heart shrinks.

^^^

Ndandatho

I've been curled up in bed weeping.
I couldn't carry on embarking on my journey to visit mother and my sisters blame it on Prince Zuko for hurting me to the core with the beans he spilt on my ears. As we speak I'm living mess I'm in pure agony my heart has been crashed into a million pieces. I can't begin to explain how I feel right now about my grandmother passing on. I find it hard to believe Gogo is no more that woman loved me and I loved her too. She didn't deserve to die so soon especially when my world is left upside-down. It pains me a lot that I won't be able to attend her funeral. I wish Prince Zuko didn't tell me these heartbreaking news.

Gatsha wakes up and starts crying I give him his favorite meal to shut him up. When he falls into slumber again I force myself up to go start with preparing supper.

"Ndandatho!"

"Yes"

"Are you sleeping? It's me mama Ngelozi I came to give you these. Open up" I open the door and let her step inside she walks to sleeping Gatsha and brush his head. Her last born son walks In too naked.

"Ndanda you are sleeping during the day? No this is not good for your health."

"I wasn't sleeping mama" I say softly.

"I was starting to think you are expecting Gatsha's sibling."

"No mama.. Hello boy" I say greeting the little boy.

"I came here to give you this meat my child. Ngelozi's father got lucky today in the bushes. Here's a little something Cook this

portion for your breasts to secrete more milk so young Gatsha won't die of hunger"

"Thank you mama God bless you"

"Pleasure. What time are you training today? Bring Gatsha over I will baby sit him."

"For today mama I will go with him his troublesome lately"

"Why are your eyes puffy? Have you been crying Ndandatho?"

"No mama"

"Ndandatho come here" She says looking concerned.

"No sisi you not okay. I will dish up for you don't cook. My mother would turn In her grave had I allowed you to cook In this state." "

I flash her a smile.

"Thank you mama"

" let me get going I left a pot on the fire. Come over Ndandatho and I will be telling a story tonight. Come over my child."

"Thank you mama I will." She stands up and carries her naked son. They leave. Ngelozi knocks and with a bowl of fruits. I smile these people and stuffing me with food.. They really want me to be fat? Already I'm chubby how big do they want me to be?

"I brought you fruits Sisi Ndandatho. Aah! His sleeping?"

She says disappointed.

"Yes his sleeping"

"Make a second baby Sisi Ndandatho so I can play with the other while the other is sleeping"

"God forbid Ngelozi I don't want a baby. I'm fine with one. Can I take those?"

"Yeah sure.. Sisi Ndandatho mama will be telling a story at night.. Please come join us please?"

"I will come. I made bread would you like some?"

"Yes please" I give it to her she loves my bread.

"God! This is mouth watering" She says with her eyes closed.

"I saw the mean Princess and King Zimele heading to council meeting house."

Oh that! I've been trying not to think of them.

" Nice"

"That's not nice sisi Ndandatho that Princess is evil and demonic. I don't like her she once slapped me"

"She what? "

"She's cruel"

"That's awful why did she slap you?"

"She accused me of doing sinister things with the Prince Zimele"

"That's bad. I'm sorry"

"I'm over it now." I look at her. Nomaswazi is evil I know how capable she is of causing people pain and discomfort It's a pity she's Zimele's soon to be wife and a step mother to my son.

^^^

Zimele

We have been summoned to the council Court. The elders have landed and came in numbers. Mama Thwala is amongst them. She's one of our trusted virginity tester she's very observant on such things she's very observant on such things as old as she is. The devil is seated on the grass mat facing the ground. You would swear she's being truthful and relevant. Nomaswazi is a witch in making I don't understand why was she's so determined in ruining my life. I didn't touch her not in a single day have I ever lusted on her body. This is a pure insult I'm every infuriated over her accusations.

"Queen Nozi why were we summoned to the council house at such short notice?" MaThwala-

"My sincere apologies elders for the short notice proposal but your attention and assistance is highly needed elders this matter cannot be put to bed. We need clarity is soon as possible. "
Mom-

"Why are we here? And why is the Queen and Princess of Ngwane village here? Such meetings should not be invaded by strangers. " Elder-

"I'm very much aware of that elders but the meeting is about this girl we are in question of her virginity. We need a testing to be conducted immediately elders."

" Mom-

I glance at the venomous snake.

"Hhaibo are you suspecting something faulty Queen mother?"
Elders-

"Yes elder this young maiden claims my son deflowered her and that's not true Elders. " Mom-

"Were you there guarding them all night long Queen Nozibele for you to be this determined that the prince knows nothing about these accusations?" Mota-

"Everyone knows the Princess is a loose panty. She holds no morals and respect for herself. I wouldn't be surprised if she gave her innocence to a commoner and then later lied about my son."
Mom-

"Nozibele mind your tongue! It's my daughter you calling names."
" Thabile-

"And it's my son you accusing of such mediocre Thabile!" Mom-

""Princess are you innocent or dirty?" MaThwala-

" I'm not pure elders." Noma-

"Who impurified you? And don't say it's Zimele." mom-

"Don't insult my daughter Nozibele! Don't disrespect my daughter not in front of me." Thabile-

"I have all the authority to ask that question Thabile. What if she spread her legs elsewhere Thabile? I mean The apple doesn't fall far from the tree! Doesn't it?" Mom-

"Nozibele Jali don't provoke me! Don't insult my daughter in that manner! You son had a helluva of a bliss with my child for two consecutive days. Don't deny your wrongs instead take responsibilities of your actions. My daughter could be pregnant with a Jali offspring as we speak. " Thabile-

" Unless you referring to another Jali not this Jali that is a product of my intestines. " Mom-

" Queen Nozibele and Queen Thabile this is not necessary. Let's get this done and dealt with. Princess come here" MaThwala_

She stood on her feet and walked to the grass mat that was laid on the ground.

"Please vacate the room" MaThwala -

We all vacated the room apart from the person in question..

**

I decided upon my self to go stretch my legs on the empty field where our royal warriors train. I bumped chests in to Ndandatho training the young maiden. I sat on a nearby rock with admiration in my eyes.

Glancing on her beauty and curves and her elegant legs as they collide with the ground causing dust to rise. What a beautiful maiden she is.

"Prince Zimele"

I look behind me.

"What brings you here Buthelezi?"

"I was given an instruction my Prince to guard these maidens. You know these bushes are not safe my Prince. I should be their eyes and ears."

"Whom are you holding there?" I say stepping closer to him and taking a peep on the baby he is holding. I feel my insides boiling when his holding my son. Ndandatho doesn't listen.

"Bring him here her mother will find her at the royal house"

"My Prince I can't permit you that. Ndandatho will be mad at me

she told me not give anyone the baby"

"I said give me the child Buthelezi!" I command.

"Here Prince." I carry Gatsha to my private chamber. I put my son on my bed I sleep besides him.

"Zimele!! Zimele open this door!"

"Ehm father give me a minute" I say pacing around not knowing how to hide Gatsha from father.

"Zimele open this door!"

He says letting himself in.

"What is this Zimele? Who is this child?"

"Ehm father this is.. Ehm!"

"Stop stuttering and come to the living room we need to talk young man."

"Yes father"

"Take that baby to its mother."

"Yes.." I say glancing at my sleeping son.

I leave him on the bed and walk out following father.

-

Meanwhile in the private room

Princess Nomaswazi is laying on a grass mat with her legs facing

upwards and slight spread apart. Ma Thwala is inserting her two fingers inside her vagina to monitor if her hyem is still intact. She looks at the other women who are assisting her.

"Something is not right."

"What is going on MaThwala?"

"Come here Sotobe please prove me right"

The old lady comes fourth. She puts her fingers as well and to her surprise the outcomes are the same as those of MaThwala.

"Hhayi Zimele!!! That boy is trouble. Queen Thabile was telling the truth. This is an open field. This girl is not pure and she could be pregnant. Zimele is very ill mannered" Mota

"You do know it's a sin to speak ill of the Prince Mota?"
MaThwala -

"No ma Thwala my brother shouldn't have married Nozibele that boy is like this because of Nozibele. Look at Zimele his a total opposite of my brother. I'm starting to think his an illegitimate child. Ngcolosi wouldn't make such a child" Mota-

"Mota shut up! Just shut up! We didn't come here to point fingers but to fix this situation at hand. You and gossiping no maar!"

Nomaswazi is attentively listening to the conversation. According to get judgments Mota is gonna be her new best friend because it's obvious they both don't favour Zimele's mother. She's their biggest obstacle in attaining what they want. If her mother's plan succeeds she's gonna befriend Aunty Mota already gogo is eating from her palms meaning she will have more power and alliance

over the Queen.

"Dress up young lady" MaThwala-

"That boy has no choice but to marry this girl. He can't deflower the Princess and expect someone else to commit to his leftovers. Zimele is gonna marry this Princess wether he likes it or not. Get up Princess Nomaswazi." Mota-

Mota is Ngcolosi's big sister. She is a wife and Queen in a faraway Kingdom. She has never been fond of Queen Nozibele their dispute comes a long way. She would do anything to see Nozibele bowed head and all defeated. According to her Ngcolosi was supposed to marry Queen Thabile or any other Queen apart from Nozi. She has beautiful children Mgcinaphi included who happens to be Prince Zuko's wife. Their friendship with Queen Thabile is non existence they just in laws nothing major.

Nomaswazi gets up and fixes her clothes. She is instructed to call the elders in for their answers to be given. Queen Nozibele the most humble and gentle and selfless Beautiful and curveous Queen walks in first and sits on her chair. King Ngcolosi follows and sits besides his wife with their hands joined. Zimele and the King Ngidi are next Thabile and Gogo follows. Prince Zuko preferred being outside instead of inside the palace. MaThwala clears her throat and looks at the everyone.

"We have the answers you all have been waiting for. The Princess is tainted she's not pure"

Queen Thabile looks at Nomaswazi she has a number of questions wandering in her head.

"Even if that's the case this child wasn't deflowered by my son"
Nozi -

"Nozibele just surrender your son is gullible and ill mannered. Here is what we gonna do he will marry her first thing tomorrow morning." Mota-

"Mota this is my house my rules and my regulations! Your words matter in your Kingdom not in Thuthukani Zimele will not marry this vicious girl!! Zimele was not even home when this act was done! My son will not marry anyone apart from Nda..." She clears her throat and everyone looks at her.

" Apart from what Nozibele? " Mota-

" Mota just keep quiet. The council delegates and myself will join our heads on this matter but I must say marriage might be possible Zimele. " Ngcolosi -

" Father I didn't do it! I didn't touch her"

"Zimele shut up!! Shut up! Stop being a coward and dance to the drum. Marry this girl and that's final!!" Mota-

"Don't scream at my son Mota!" Nozi-

"This is madness!!" Zimele storms out the council chamber livid. He didn't do anything having people point their fingers at him is painting him to the core because these lies can cost him the woman he truly loves and needs.. He could lose his only child because of these lies. He drops a tear as he thinks things through..

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Zimele

He coughs disturbing me from my thinking. I quickly wipe my salty water and hold my son. Footsteps echo outside my chamber a soft knock follows. I permit Ndandatho entrance I'm familiar with her knock. She looks at me then the baby.

"Greetings" She said with her head facing the ground.

"Please come here"

"I haven't bathe my body is sweaty and dirty. I can't sit on your sparkling clean bedding. I'm here for Bangizwe"

"Ndandatho please.."

"Zimele can we not bicker again over this. I'm here for the baby please bring him"

"Look at me when you talk to me Ndandatho."

"Zimele give me the baby please!" her tone changes. I get up on my feet and walk towards her.

"Are you Okay?"

"I'm fine"

"Ndandatho..."

"Zimele the baby please." I give her the baby she walks out and closes the door. I'm left dumbfounded and confused. I freshen up and walk to warrior Hawu's private Chamber. I find him drinking African beer while sharpening a blade. I don't ask anything nor greet him I just empty the calabash.

"Easy warrior.." Hawu- he says reprimanding me. "What's troubling you Zimele? Ndandatho is expecting again isn't it? "

"Nomaswazi is not pure" he pops his eyes out and spit the beer that was inside his mouth on the ground. "You say what Zimele? You deflowered Nomaswazi? Zimele you thinking of marrying her don't you?"

"No Hawu none of the above is correct. I didn't touch that maiden I don't even know the colour of her in between thighs."

"Then what happened Zimele?"

"Warrior I don't know. I'm in the dark but tomorrow I might marry her" He turns to face me with shock in his eyes.

"Ndandatho? How is she gonna take that Zimele? You can't stay with both your women in this palace Gatsha and Ndandatho will suffer greatly Zimele. Did you sleep with her? Tell the truth Zimele"

"I did not Hawu. I wasn't even home I was sleeping at your house on those days she claims I deflowered her."

"Warrior this is bad there's no escape from this"

"I know Hawu and my biggest fear is Ndandatho and my son. I can't lose them Hawulesizwe."

"You've already lost them Zimele." I look at him with pain in my eyes. I drink from his calabash again. "Let me fetch the meat inside." Hawu says disappearing to his chamber. He comes back with a tray of meat. We start digging in.

"Zimele you are in trouble my guy. So tell me what are you going to do about this?"

"I don't know warrior."

"Marry her Zimele and explain yourself to Ndandatho."

"She's stubborn warrior she won't allow that."

"Run away then"

"I can't doing that will hinder Gatsha's chances on having a seat on that throne. I will face my demon Hawu"

"So you prepared to share a bed with a snake?"

"I will take the floor Hawu"

He laughs in disbelief

"You know that's not true Zimele."

"But I can't runaway Hawu aunty Mota won't take us in that I'm certain about. She's the only family I have."

"Zimele you're a man do the right thing." I look at him and eat more eat.

"Ngelози's mother will be telling a story tonight come over Ndoda to unwind a little. Ndandatho is coming too."

"I will come she's a great storyteller I can't miss that."

"Ndandatho loves you Zimele"

"I love her too Hawu I mean it"

"Tell her about Nomaswazi and her drama before one of the news reach her"

"I will do it tonight"

"So be it"

-

King Ngcolosi

"You can't allow our son to marry that vicious witch Ngcolosi. You and I know the truth that Zimele wasn't home on those days. There's no way he could've sneaked into the Princess underwear. If my son ends up marrying that witch I'm leaving Ngcolosi and these grounds will perish right in front of you"

"Nozibele what am u supposed to do? How are we going to prove that Zimele didn't sneak into her panty?"

"Ngcolosi I'm giving you a prove Nhlonipho is prove and your mother is another prove you are another prove and so am I. Thabile is pushing a vendetta Ngcolosi if you let her deceitful daughter to be a part of us Thuthukani will not prosper. You heard what the Maine said Ngcolosi. We can't upset the gods Zimele is supposed to be marrying Gatsha's mother not that witch"

"Nozibele that maiden cannot be found and besides a commoner. The gods were being delusional"

"That maiden is living in this compound Ngcolosi I've met our grandson not once but three times. If you won't respect the orders of the gods then I won't be a part of the circus that you will turn this Kingdom into. The throne belongs to Gatsha and nobody else but him. That Ngwane girl is not a nurturer of our seeds Ngcolosi but the maiden Zimele impregnated and gave his seed. Make sure my son doesn't marry that girl Ngcolosi"

I look at Nozi.

"Where is the maiden you talking about?"

"Her name is Ndandatho she's the maiden who teaches our youth music and dance"

"Wait!! You mean that maiden is the mother of the Gatsha's we've been in search for? Meaning the child I've found in Zimele's chamber was Bangizwe? And you didn't tell me Nozibele? You kept that a secret?"

" How was I supposed to tell you about something you never enquire about Ngcolosi? had you been determined in finding your grandchild you've would've long read between the lines that Zimele and that lady knew each other from the very first day she set foot in this compound. That's how I found out my self. I'm not telling you this information to terrorize that little girl Ngcolosi. "

I heave a sigh and sit on the bed. We both keep quiet and look at each other.

" Can we discuss this further while we both naked? "

" Not today Ngcolosi. Theres so much going south and making love is the last thing to do. "

" Nozibele.. "

" No Ngcolosi.. My son is not gonna marry that girls and that's final."

"Nozibele that's therapeutic don't be stingy. How am I gonna think straight if you won't open the gates of heaven for me?"

"If really you want to do it for our son then fine Ngcolosi you can have it anyway you like." She says locking the door. If really Gatsha's mother is amongst us then I have no other choice but to protect and side with my son. But who is this Ndandatho maiden? Why did the Gods even choose her to nurture a Jali? Only royalty is gifted with our offsprings not commoners I think I should visit this maiden before I address Zimele's predicament.
_ Nomaswazi

I'm seated on the bed fiddling with my hands. Mom is standing in front of me livid.

"Nomaswazi who deflowered you?"

"Mama..."

"Don't Mama me!! What innocence were you gonna give the Prince had he married you Nomaswazi? Who deflowered you!!"
She shouts and slaps me. I massage my cheek and look at her.

"I'm not talking to a wall or a tree talk young lady!!!"

"it was a mistake mother"

"What mistake Nomaswazi? Who did you permit entrance in your father's kraal?"

"Mb.. Mbongeni mama"

She widens her eyes and slaps me again.

"A herd boy Nomaswazi? A whole poverty stricken herd boy?
One that I pay with my own penny? How could you Nomaswazi?"

"I like him mother and he likes me too"

"Stuff that!! Here's what you gonna do give Zimele a child"

"What if they send me packing tomorrow mama?"

"That won't happen I will ensure it doesn't happen. "

"I'm sorry mama"

"Hhayi suka!!"

She says heading to the door. She slams it and walks away leaving me holding my painful abdomen. It's been painful since a

couple of days ago. I curl up In bed and fantasy about Mbongeni.

Ndandatho

I'm preparing to go Ngelozi's house for the story session but I'm not feeling okay. Gogo's death is taking much of my energy. Right now I'm forcing myself into going there I just don't want to disappoint mama after she personally asked me herself. I wear a cloth on my lower body another to cover my upper body. I can smell the scent of my lavender handmade body lotion that mama brought me a couple of days ago. I carry Gatsha on my back. I walk to mama's house. I find a few children already seated they eating nuts. Ngelozi is sweeping the farend of the yard. Mama flashes me a smile and gives me a wooden bench to seat on. She brings me nuts too with water.

"Your food is inside."

"Thank you mama" I say and unbuckle Gatsha. I put him on my lap. Prince Nhlonipho walks in the kids jump and rejoice upon his arrival. I glance at them in awe. Ngelozi's stops sweeping and runs inside her mothers hut to give Nhlonipho a chair to sit on. I find myself smiling from ear to ear.

"Sisi Ndanda how are you? Can u hold this little warrior."

Nhlonipho-

"I'm doing great my Prince and how are you?" "We hanging in there my beautiful lady."

I give him Gatsha.

"What are you feeding him? He gets more chubbier day by day such a cute little baby. Shall a maiden give me a cute one like this one? I'm gonna kiss her toes and suck on them like candy"

Nhlonipho-

I giggle.

"Or maybe clean her ears with your tongue my Prince"

"Definitely sister Ndandatho. God knows I will love that maiden with every bone in me"

"Do you have a suitor maybe? You wouldn't be saying such had

you not spotted a flower elsewhere."

He looks at me.

"How about you as a suitor?"

"Start afresh my Prince with your search."

We both laugh.

"Well sister I don't have anyone in mind but maybe there is someone I might have on the back of my mind"

"And who is that?"

"No sister Ndandatho." I giggle and eat my nuts. More kids start pouring in number I look up on the stars and moon. Gogo is surely one them and she's watching over me. I push back my tear and fix my eyes on the kids.

"Sisi Ndandatho please sing for us" a voice says behind me. I turn to look at who's making that remark. I stare at him without blinking.

"Please Sisi Ndandatho!" Kids-

"Please Sisi Ndandatho sing. I will bath Gatsha for the whole week." Ngelozi-

"Mama wants to tell a story."

"I'm finishing washing these dishes

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sing. I will bath Gatsha for the whole week." Ngeloz-

"Mama wants to tell a story."

"I'm finishing washing these dishes sing my beautiful daughter."

Mama-

"Please sing for us as a Prince of Thuthukani village I'm begging on my knees" Zimele - I stare at him once again. I feel knots tying in my stomach.

"Fine!"

They all cheer on me.

"Uyinkwenkwezi

Khany' ebumnyameni Ubumnyama bungaka Ngathi uwedwa

Uyinkwenkwezi

Khany' ebumnyameni Ubumnyama bungaka Ngathi uwedwa

Oh Khanya Khanya ebumnyameni Ubumnyama bungaka

Ngathi uwedwa

Uyinkwenkwezi Khanya ebumnyameni"

By the time I finish singing my eyes are glassy my heart is bleeding and throbbing. I can't believe I will never see her again. I wipe my tear and listen to everyone cheering and applauding on me. I smile with tears rolling on my cheeks. Zimele massages my shoulders. He whispers in my ear.

"Are you Okay?" "I'm fine"

"I'm spending a night in your chamber I miss you beautiful maiden"

"I miss you too" He kiss my cheek Nhlonipho looks at us and then the baby. Mama comes with her chair.

"Can we go sit there" Zimele- "It's scary Zimele"

"Come on nothing will happen to you when I'm around." "Fine"
"Ndandatho are you leaving?" Mama-

"No mama I just want to change a spot" Nhlonipho looks at us and curves his lips Ngelozi occupies my spot. Nhlonipho steals a glance and then focus on the baby. We finally sit down where less eyes are facing.

"Sit on top of me" Zimele- "No Zimele that's risky"

"Do as I say my Queen please" "No silly doings Zimele"

"Fine" I sit on top of him. He exhales down on my neck I close my eyes as I feel a foreign bliss overtake me. He cups my breasts and squeeze on them. I turn to face him.

"You want a kiss?" Zimele-

"You arousing me Zimele. I want to sit on the floor" "I love you"

"Zimele"

"Sit still mama Gatsha."

I swallowy saliva and look at him. He kisses my cheek then my neck I feel my privates itching. "Focus on mama Ndandatho"

"I can't focus I have a itch" "What itch? Where is the itch?" "On my privates."

"Let me see"

He says invading my thighs he moves his hand to my privates I press my lips together and breath heavily. "Let's disappear"

Zimele-

"I love the story"

"What did she SAY Ndandatho?"

What is the story about? I didn't hear half of the things mama said. That's how Zimele is disturbing me. "Let's go make love my queen"

"Zimele let's listen attentively.. Mmm" I dwell on what his doing to me. He slightly opens my legs and positions his manhood on my privates.

"I'm doing it here and now"

"Zimele don't.. People are watching" "It's all in your head"

"fine! Let's go to the house"

"Let's go" I stand up and use a different way to leave this compound Zimele uses a different one too. I enter my hut and quickly undress. Zimele walks in and locks the door. I climb the bed getting ready for the process. Zimele slightly opens my legs and dips his head between my legs. I feel the warmth of his tongue on my plate.

"Zimele.." "Yes"

"I love you my Prince"

"I love you more mother of my child"

I feel his finger doing something on privates a gush of water pours out. My toes curl up and my body shakes profusely. He slowly and gently invades my honeypot he does his will with me. I cry and moan simultaneously before I knew it warmth engulfs my honeypot. We remain intertwined on the bed.

"Let's go back" Zimele- "Let me fix myself"

"Ndanda we need talk later on it's urgent" "is it something way too serious?"

"Yes"

"Fine. Let's go before someone reads on our disappearance."

"Come"

We both fix ourselves and walk back to the mama's compound
now I feel hungry.

Zimele

We find the children laughing their lungs out. She goes to sit besides Ngelozi while I go to Hawu whose now seated besides Nhlonipho who is still holding my son. Hawu and Nhlonipho look at me I sit down and scan Ndanda. Our eyes lock yet again.

"I know your girlfriend Zimele" Nhlonipho - "What girlfriend?"

"This is your son isn't it?" I look at my little brother and swallow hard. Nhlonipho is too noisy his a blubber too. He wouldn't mind asking favors from father by using this little secret. I can't agree to this that could be risky.

"Is she telling a second story?"

"Yes. The first one ended when you and Ndandatho were kissing or maybe making a sibling for this little warrior here"

"Nhlonipho stick your nose out of my business"

"Don't worry brother Zimele I did have my suspicious about Bangizwe. His a replica of you only a blind person wouldnt see the resembles."

"Father doesn't have to hear about this Nhlonipho"

"My lips are sealed Warrior. My biggest fear is the witch that has stepped on these grounds in dire straits of seeking your heart and love brother. Bangizwe and Ndandatho could be in danger Zimele it's even worse you spend weeks away. "

"I will find away forward Nhlonipho."

"You love her don't you?"

"Listen to the story." I smirk and roughly brush his head. I spot the maiden Hawu has a child with staring on our direction. I look at Hawu and giggle.

"What happened to village girl?" Ngeloz-

"The Prince couldn't marry her because Queen and King didn't approve of their love Lola was a servant and Bambo was a royalty. A Princess was brought on the Kingdom for Bambo to marry." Mama-

I suddenly get interest on this tale.

"So did Bambo marry the evil Princess since his relationship with Lola never worked out?" Nhlonipho -

"Bambo woke up on the day of the wedding he cleaned well and wore handsomely. He was empty and anguished at heart because his lover had departed and left him to the unknown. Bambo didn't want to marry the Princess but at the end he married the Princess because his parents promised to take everything he has ever known away from him. Bambo never knew poverty he wasn't familiar with eating crumbs over the loaf he never slept in a dug house and he was never gonna start now hence he married the Princess and let Lola go because their love wasn't gonna win either way" Mama

I clear my throat and glance at Ndandatho.

"So there's story never had a happily ending?" Bubu-

"Not every love story ends with a happily ever after some end with the love birds dying because of love and some end with the love birds separating. Through it all everyone is given an opportunity to decide on how their love story should end. It's either to fight and win your love or you get corwadice and stop fighting and surrender and get to lose your love. It's either you choose to loose your riches and go elsewhere to start afresh where love a foundation and shelter. The choice is yours" Mama-

I cough again and mama looks at me.

"What a sad story. I wish the Prince had fought harder for the servant maybe he wouldn't have married a wicked woman over a woman who was a blessing and a giver. Poor Lola" Ngelozi-

"So mama if you were the Prince what were you gonna in this case?" Me-

"I would choose love my Prince because riches are nothing without warmth and love and joy. We only become ecstatic and cry hysterically where love is a shelter.. Love is it my Prince"
Mama-

I look at my girlfriend and then my son.

"Thank you for the beautiful story Mama"

"Pleasure!!"

"Greetings mama Ngelozu. I'm In search of a young maiden. A little bird told me she's amongst your student" I look at father.

"My King whose the maiden you've came to enquire about?"

"Ndandatho the music and dance tutor" Dad-

I pop my eyes out so does Nhlonipho.

"Ndandatho the King is here for you."

Ndandatho stands up and bows her head to show respect on my father.

"Greetings my king"

"Greetings young maiden. Where is your child young lady?" Dad-

"Ehm.. His.. His over there. Prince Nhlonipho is holding him." I stand up. Father looks at my brother. He starts walking towards Nhlonipho. Father takes Gatsha from Nhlonipho their eyes meet.

"What is his Name?"

"Bangizwe Gatsha my King"

"Where did you get this pendant?" Dad-

"Ehm.. My King.. I"

"Father can't you question her in private instead of here?" Me-

"Zimele is right. Follow me young lady." He says walking away with Gatsha I get on my feet and follow them.

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Ndandatho

I was instructed to sit down on a grass mat. My head was bowed and my eyes were facing the ground as a symbol to show respect to the elders. The King is glancing at me giving himself a thoroughly analysis of who I am. The Queen is nowhere in sight only the old woman whom I believe is the King's mother. There's silence in the room.

"What is taking Nozibele forever?" Old lady-

"I will go call her mother please hold him" King Ngcolosi-

"No need for that my King I'm here." The Queen walks in with a broad smile she semi bows her head to greet me. The old lady is eyeing me.

"Mama Ndandatho and little Bangi greetings" Queen-

"Call Zimele" Old lady-

"My Queen..." The Queen says stepping outside the chamber we in. Zimele walks in with fear written on his face.

"Sit down Jali" King-

"My King" Zimele-

"Greetings young maiden I'm the Kings mother and Zimele is my first grandson what is your name?" Old lady-

"Ndandatho my Queen"

"Where are you from and what is your surname?"

"I'm from Ngwane village and my surname is Mchunu"

"Are you a breed of a royal family?"

"No my Queen I'm an nobody a commoner"

"I see young maiden don't ever call yourself a nobody young maiden because we all human. Royalty or not blood is blood"

I nod and swallow hard.

"Is this your child?"

"Yes my Queen"

"Where did you get this pedant thats on his wrists?"

"His father gave it to me."

"Do you know the meaning that this pedant holds?"

"No my Queen"

"Where is the father of this little boy?"

I swallow hard and look aside.

"Where is the father of your child young lady? I hate repeating

myself Ndandatho"

"Eehm! My Queen.. The father of my child?"

"Yes the father of your child. Where is he and what are his names?"

Zimele's grandmother asks with a stern voice. I fiddle with my hands and listen to the horses that are galloping on my chest.

"I'm still waiting"

"Ndandatho tell the truth" Zimele's mother utters.

"Queen mother the father of my child is" I look at Zimele.

"Zimele."

"Which Zimele? There are plenty of Zimele's in this village young maiden. Which Zimele are you referring to?"

"Zimele Jali the Prince."

"Were you pure when he gave you his seed?"

"Yes my Queen"

"Ndandatho why did you allow the Prince of Thuthukani village to play in your father's kraal and leave an imprint inside it? Do you know it's an abomination for a Prince to mate with a woman who is not of royalty? Do you know the punishment of your shenanigans with the Prince? "

I feel tears build up.

" I'm aware my Queen that death is the price to pay. But Queen mother I didn't know he was a Prince when I met him he told me he was a warrior and that was it my Queen. I never meant to taint your clan and your throne I didn't intend on bring you and this Kingdom an abomination. I was in love my Queen with a warrior who never disclosed his true identity. Queen mother I beg of you not hurt me and my child. I beg of you not to punish us with death or imprisonment. I love my son so much to watch him suffer the consequences of my wrongs with his father. If there's one person to punish my Queen it's me banish me from your grounds and send me to the evil bushes but don't kill Bangizwe don't kill us please my Queen"

I say hailing.

"Ndandatho.." Old lady-

"Please Queen mother don't kill my baby please"

"Ndandatho calm down. Nobody is gonna kill you nor banish you just calm down." King-

"Don't cry young maiden we won't hurt you" Old lady-

I wipe my tears and sniff The Queen and King glance at me with sadness filled eyes.

"Zimele."

"Gogo"

"So you lied about my pedant?"

"Gogo I.. I can explain" Zimele -

"is she telling the truth?" Gogo-

"Yes Gogo."

"Ndandatho allow us to strip him naked it's procedure. Ngcolosi undress the little boy."

They undress my son Gatsha cries so sorrowfully so much that my heart breaks. They turn him around analysing him. The old lady opens his hands and reads them she moves to his privates and underfoot. She looks at me and dress Gatsha up.

" Here.. Feed him"

She hands me Gatsha and I pop my breast out he sucks hard on it.

"Thank you young lady you are excused" Gogo-

"Thank you Queen mother"

"Before you go.. Have you ever seen a yellowish snake next to your child?" Gogo-

"We once saw that gogo" Zimele-

"I wasn't talking to you but her"

"Sorry Gogo"

"Yes Queen mother we once saw it"

"Okay.. You are excused." She says facing Zimele. I stand up and walk to my private chamber Im now starving so badly.

"Gatsha stay here mommy is coming okay?"

"Going somewhere?"

"Yes." I softly say not staring at him.

"Go I will mind him"

"I'm fetching my food from Mama Ngelozzi"

"You hungry?"

"Yes"

"Let me fetch something for you in the house"

"No it's okay Zimele" I say walking outside. I knock at the door and Ngelozzi's father opens for me.

"Greetings baba" "Greeting my daughter"

"Baba I came to fetch my food"

"OH! Give me a minute." He disappears and shows up later with a plate I thank him and walk to my private chamber. I find Zimele washing Gatsha's body.

"I left some hot water for you to bath"

"Thank you." I smash my lips on his left cheek. I sit on my bed

and open my plate.

"Wanna dig Prince Zimele?"

"No I'm full thank you"

"pleasure." I dig in and watch the two people I love the most loving each other.

—

Meanwhile in the royal house

"The child is ours Ngcolosi his a Jali. " Gogo

"His a replica of Zimele." Ngcolosi -

"Ngcolosi what happens from here? I mean the Ngwane Princess is here already what are we gonna do about Bangizwe and his mother? They can't leave because of Nomaswazi we can't fail them Ngcolosi."

"Mama I've been thinking about the whole Nomaswazi saga and deep down we all know what the council delegates will say regarding this matter. No matter how hard I will try to convince them to ridicule this marriage but nothing will work on my favor"

"Ngcolosi give it your best devotion. My biggest concern is on Bangizwe. The child belongs in this kingdom Ngcolosi."

"I know mama I will see what I can do."

"That maiden looks familiar though I think I've met her before"

"She looks familiar mama I also noticed too. Something about her rings a bell."

"Could it be we've met her before?"

"I heard she was a lead singer and dancer back in Ngwane village surely we met her in one of the ceremonies my rebellious son loves that maiden mama"

"I saw that too but we must'nt forget Ngcolosi she's not royalty and you know how the story goes."

"I know mother but we can't force them against it"

"Ngcolosi attend to the Princess situation

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my rebellious son loves that maiden mama"

"I saw that too but we must'nt forget Ngcolosi she's not royalty and you know how the story goes."

"I know mother but we can't force them against it"

"Ngcolosi attend to the Princess situation I need my slumber right now. Sleep well son"

"Sleep well mother"

The Queen mother disappears and King Ngcolosi disappears to his luxurious sanctuary. He finds the Queen getting ready for her slumber. He undress and gets under their white and gold bed sheets. He nibbles the Queen's neck and cups her round and full breasts that have feed their two handsome sons. King Ngcolosi may be everything worth defining or characterizing but one thing for sure about him he genuinely loves Nozibele. He would jump paddles and cross oceans for this woman. This woman is his sanity and refugee she's his tranquility and missing rib. Anything she says goes. The only that makes them fight and drift is their rebellious and hot headed son Zimele. Who does anything he pleases with no care how the parents feel about it or view it. Zimele is nothing like Nhlonipho the King wishes for Zimele to obey rules instead of bending them. He wishes for Zimele to act like a true royalty instead of doing things that are not suitable for the likes of him but thought it all the King loves his sons that sorely because he loves the woman who gave him those boys deeply if it want for this woman he wouldnt have

been a father and a respectable man. Ngcolosi is strict but he has a soft spot for his little family sometimes he takes risks for them just like now.***

Queen Nozibele brushes his hand and moves closer to him. Ngcolosi moves his one hand to the Queen's buttocks. He squeeze them and kiss her neck. Queen Nozibele lifts her one leg up and place it on top of King Ngcolosi with her back turned on him. The King sneaks his hand underneath the Queens sleeping garment. If it was for the king he would prefer the Queen to sleep naked. He knows himself that he can't get enough of the Queen. When they were still young he used to mate with her any given time of the day. He would sometimes take risks and do it in the bushes or somewhere public. He never got tired of the scent of the Queen he still enjoys her now its even worse than before.. His hand massages the creamy thighs of his wife he squeezes the Queen's breasts aggressively. The Queen tilts her head to kiss the lover of heart. She too is crazily in love with the King even after so many years of challenges and hardships in their life and love. It wasnt easy for them at first but their love for each other kept them sailing the ship.

Their lips collide against each other the horses in their chests gallops. The kiss leaves them longing for intimacy. The King rolls her night garment up and he let's pleasure take over. The Queen is giving him motivation not to stop breaking her walls she cries in ways the King love they go on and on till a fever pinch of water gushes out leaving them breathing heavy. The Queen turns to face her handsome husband who gave her two handsome boys. She smashes her soft lips on the King's thick lips. The moves his

thumb on the Queens face admiring the beauty his staring at.

"I love you my Queen"

"I would love more if our son finds his happily ever after my husband"

"I will try Nozi I will try to fight for that. Just promise not to leave my love. No matter the decision of the council"

"I promise Ngcolosi."

"I will be away for a week or so attending to meetings with our other tradesman"

"I will miss you my beloved husband"

"You have Bangizwe and Ndandatho you will not get bored when your grandson is around."

"I can't believe he made us grannies Zimele though"

"I told you your son is rebellious and naughty. We too young to be grandparents "

"I'm only forty three my King but look I'm a grandmother"

"What about me? I'm only forty six and here I am"

They both giggle and cuddle in bed.

"I like that maiden she is clean at heart"

"Wow Ngcolosi thats awesome coming from a strict father"

"Don't push it Nozibele"

"I love you grandpa"

"I love more grandma"

"Don't call me that Ngcolosi"

"But you called me that too"

"Be a gentleman My King"

"Fine sexy sister of Gatsha"

"That's way better" They giggle again.

—

Zimele

She's been quiet since I told her about what could possibly happen in the next coming days. I know it's painful but it's above me. Her silence is cutting deep I prefer yelling or shouting unlike being quiet.

"Excuse me"

"My heart where are you going?"

"To pee I'm pressed Zimele"

"Fine" She goes about her business and climbs the bed.

"Ndanda please say something"

"What am I supposed to say Zimele Jali? That I'm ecstatic that you gonna marry Nomaswazi while I'm staying in the same compound with you and your soon to be dearest wife? Fine.. I'm happy for you Zimele and guess what? I will entertain you on your wedding day with my singing and dancing! "

"Ndandatho come on. We should be thinking of solutions for our underlying problem I don't love that girl I told you. It's you I want only you"

"Zimele I'm exhausted I need my sleep. Let's discuss this some other day" She says yawning.

"Fine"

We both keep quiet and retire to sleep. She wakes up at dawn and steps outside the house. Within seconds I hear the sound of a broom I haven't heard the roosters crowing but she's at it. I force myself up and step outside her chambers. It dark outside there's no sign of sunrise. I glance on her and pull her hand gently.

"Ndandatho it's still night time what are you doing? Come to bed please"

"Please let me be Zimele"

"Ndandatho people will accuse you of witchcraft come to bed my love please"

"No! No!! I can't sleep next you knowing tomorrow you will be sleeping next to your wife! I can't Zimele!!"

"Nda don't do this please"

"Yazini it's better I pack my stuff and leave than to watch you love another woman Zimele!" "I won't and I might not marry her can you please stop what you doing"

"Eventually you gonna love her Zimele! You gonna touch her and make love to her! I'm tired of this pain and torture! I'm leaving these grounds."

"You going nowhere!"

"I'm leaving and I'm not leaving Bangi behind. Go marry your beloved wife Zimele! I'm tired of losing at love! I lost gogo to death now you? I would rather go blind Zimele than to watch you and that girl together! I refuse to be your candle stand!"

"Ndandatho come on I love you doesn't that count something?"

"Zimele please let me be leave me for the likes of Buthelezi or Hawulesizwe that's my calibra that's where I fit. Not here as a royal mistress no!"

"Don't mention Buthelezi Ndandatho I will use my spear on him and kill him to death. Continue mentioning his name I will make him meet his fate now."

Bubu

"Don't mention Buthelezi Ndandatho I will use my spear on him and kill him to death. Continue mentioning his name I will make him meet his fate now." Zimele

"You being in denial of our lucid truth Zimele. One way or the other we will up like Lola and Bambo from the tale mother shared with us. You will choose the throne not me not even your son Zimele!!" Ndandatho -

"Are you hearing yourself Ndandatho? Are you hearing yourself? I'm nothing like Bambo that stupid prince was fictional mina I'm real. I will choose you over everything. That throne is nothing compared to my love for you and my son!! Stop making a mountain out of this and come to bed. " Zimele-

" Make me Zimele! "Ndandatho -

" Come here don't be stubborn" Zimele-

He says picking Ndandatho up.

"You will drop me Zimele!! Put me down!" Ndandatho-

"We not having this conversation ever again." Zimele-

They disappear to Ndandatho's chamber. I cover my mouth in shock. Zimele and Ndandatho? Gatsha a son to the Prince? Wonders shall never end! This is an abomination now I understand what the token

was about when the Queen instructed me to dish up for Ndandatho saying it was a "Token" the token was Ndandatho's illegitimate child. These findings are sure gonna make everyone sing like a mockingbird. Let me go to peek on what they doing in there..

"Sehranmagzine.comh!! Sehranmagzine.comh Zimele..
Sehranmagzine.comh" Ndandatho-

"Don't make noise my love Bangi will wake up" Zimele-

"I can't help it my love I can't. Ooh!! Sehranmagzine.comh!!
Zimele"

"I love you Ndandatho I love you more than I love love"

"I love you too.. I love you Zimele. Ooh.. Mmmmm I love this my
Prince. "

She says holding tight on him. They making love against the wall. Ndandatho's legs are wrapped up around the Prince's waist the Prince is standing in between Ndandatho's legs. This is an abomination a whole commoner and a Prince? This is oil and water two dimensions that do not combine. And why are they making love on the wall standing? Instead of making love on the floor or better yet the bed? This is a voodoo..

Ndandatho

He carries me to the bed after our little love making session is over. He snuggles me and perks my back. I feel butterflies spread out all over my body.

"Thank you my love I enjoyed that."Zimele-

" I wish we could spend eternity like this loving each other fondly raising our little boy and grow old together. "

" I can picture you all grey haired my love and all wrinkled walking with a cane and having few strands of hair. You will still be young at heart though my love"

"I can picture you my love walking wobbly and all shrunked to this little short and muscle less old hag with green eyes. By then Gatsha will be this old man with beards and your husky voice just like yours. Who would be carrying you on his back by then so you can go release yourself. " I giggle as I tease him.

" Wow lady woman I'm hurt. "

" Where does it hurt? "

" Here on my chest's"

"Let me kiss it better"

I turn to face him. He lifts my chin up and smashes his succulent and sweet lips of his on my forever cold lips. He passionately kiss me we pull out from kissing and glance at each other.

"You beguiling."

"You charming yourself"

He smiles flashing his long and filled up perfect white teeth.

"My love don't you wish to go to Ngwane village to bid your grandmother goodbye?"

"I would love too but it's risky my heart"

"It cannot be that risky if myself and Hawu accompany you I can even plead with my noisy brother to come with us"

"That's dangerous my love the witch might smell my blood from a distance. You can't be in jeopardy because of me my Prince"

"I don't fear witches Ndanda we will accompany you. Immediately the funeral ends we come back"

"It's far my love it might take us half a day to go there and half to return."

"Do you really think I would risk you traveling such miles to bury your loved one while you have a heart of a Prince on the palms of your hands? No mother of my child I won't allow you to travel barefooted on such a mileage. Father has carts we will make use of one"

"We don't know when the funeral is"

"What does your beautiful heart tell you?"

"That we should leave immediately?"

"Let me go to warrior Hawu's chamber and maybe go wake Nhlonipho so we embark on the journey. Prepare yourself"

"I will my love and thank you"

He smashes his lips on my cheek and gets up from the bed. He dress up and flashes me a smile and walk out. I heave a breathe of relief and bite my lower lip as thoughts cloud my mind. Bangi coughs I brush his back.

"Apologies my little bright star" I perk his lips and face the roof replaying my little moment with the prince I know tomorrow might change our lives for good but for today I want to be resilient in the stillness that I am in. I want to make the most of today..

—

Nomaswazi

I'm seated on the edge of my bed panting and gasping for air. I just woke up from a terrible dream of Iminathi chasing me with a knife and snakes. She was very infuriated and annoyed by my sight she was chasing me to a pit full of blood and dead bodies. Amongst those dead bodies were two infants. I was very much scared as I ran away. It's prove this blind girl is gunning for my peace and mental state. I now fear to sleep I'm afraid of the next nightmare I might suffer. Its best I get on my feet's and walk to window and gaze on the galaxy unlike suffering another nightmare. I stand on the window sill and look outside I spot Zimele and the guy I once saw him with in a garden having a little chat. It seems like they agree on one thing because the guy goes on another direction and so does Zimele. They both disappear and I get a chance to go outside in the garden. Theres a plant I need it's obvious the one I've been chewing to rid of Iminathi's ghosts from haunting me is losing its strength and significance. I walk to the garden and search around. Damn! This garden is useless only flowers and fruit trees occupy this place. I need someone to help me out with this...

** Nhlonipho

I'm standing firmly behind my door in fear. I don't know if a witch located my chamber and decided on making a sacrifice with my innocent and fresh blood. I mean only witches knock on peoples doors at this hour it devil hours right. The knock comes again I close my eyes and call upon my ancestors not to let the witch win against me. The knock comes this time around the door handle turns I reach for my book so I can bash the witch on the

head and run to save my life. The door swings open I use my very last strength to bash the witch with my book.

"Ouch Nhlonipho!! What did you do that for?" Zimele-

I quickly lit my light bulb.

"Zimele!"

"Don't Zimele me! What did you do that for? I might suffer a concussion Nhlonipho"

"What brings you to my room at this hour Zimele? I thought you were a witch or better yet your beautiful and ugly wife Princess Noma"

"You're such a dummy Nhlonipho and don't refer to that shark as my wife."

"What do you want baba ka Gatsha?"

He heaves a sigh and rubs his head while sitting on my bed.

"Does it really hurt?"

"What do you think Nhlonipho?"

"My apologies warrior. What brings you here? Shouldn't you be outside in someone's private chamber making a sibling for Bangizwe?" I tease.

"Geez!! I need your help Nhlonipho"

"Finally my brother knows I'm useful."

He gives me a stare that I fear and not fear simultaneously.

"I need you to accompany me and Hawulesizwe to Ngwane Village. Ndandatho lost her grandmother and I want us to

accompany her to that village and ensure she's safe because people in that village want her dead especially her father. Are you willing to come with us? Because you coming with us will mean I won't be punished alone or maybe I will but it will be lenient if you were with me so Nhlonipho please come with me?"

" Does mom and dad know Zimele? You do know we need their permission and blessings to embark on this journey. Ngwane village consists of witches and ghosts I don't want to die. Mom and fathers blessings will protect us"

He heaves a sigh and covers his face with his hands.

"Permission? Like really Nhlonipho? We don't need that let's go please."

"Zimele dad will not be pleased shall he hear about this Zimele. I'm a good child and right now you want to make me a bad bad and bad child Zimele"

"Cover up we leaving before the sun comes please Nhlonipho."

"I will only do that on one condition Zimele"

"And what is that? Don't tell me you want to join the warriors Nhlonipho you know it's dangerous and risky."

"Then we don't have a deal."

"Nhlonipho come on. Do this for Gatsha please"

"Not till you agree to that"

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I need the time away from the Kingdom too Zimele. Being here can be stressful and boring especially when Ngelozi visits her other relatives during winter season. So if you don't allow me the chance I'm going nowhere"

"What's taking you forever Zimele and Zimele?" Hawu-

"Don't call me that warrior Hawu" Nhlo -

"Fine Nhlonipho we have a deal but you won't fight but rather use being a warrior as your escape to going to wherever you please."

"Now we have a deal brother" I stretch my hand for a handshake but my rebellious brother looks away.

"Or not" I say with a smile.

"They already waiting outside hurry up"

"Fine" We say in unison. We walk outside and go to the cart standing by the gate. May father not kill us for this. I'm too young to die..

—

Nozibele

I'm woken up by a rooster crowing outside. Its event morning has come sleep is to be kicked out of the house till night comes. I get up from the bed leaving my husband sleeping. My clothes are on the floor I pick up a cloth and cover my naked body. Last privates are aching don't ask me why. I yawn and wear my flip flops and

drag my body to the kitchen. I start making fire to boil myself and my husband water to bath so is my mother in law. I might be a Queen but I'm not a lazy bone I don't depend on my servants for everything. I can do half of what they do I'm capable and right now I'm doing a part of their job. I walk back to my house today I have plenty to do just like going to the market to see things through. I want to buy a few sewing materials to make Gatsha clothes winter season will be approaching soon and besides the servants will soon need warm clothes and winter boots. Hence it's safe I go out for the day. Maybe I can ask Ndandatho to accompany me that's if she has less to do today. I open the curtains and windows. I climb the bed and sit besides my husband I perk his lips and wake him. He has so much to do as well throughout the day just like attending the councils meeting.

"Wake up Bhengu"

"I hardly slept last night Nozi grant me the opportunity."

" And whose fault is it that you didn't sleep My king?"

He opens his one eye and looks at me.

"Are you really gonna ask me that my wife?"

I giggle.

"Fine sleep Ngcolosi before I'm crucified. I'm off to sweep the yard and water my flowers."

"Nozi.. Come to bed. The servants will attend to that"

"Ngcolosi please"

"No. Come to bed."

"I miss doing chores my King please grant me the opportunity please?"

"You are a Queen we are paying people for that Come to bed."

I sulk and climb the bed.

"You spoiling me rotten Ngcolosi"

"That's how it should be"

He says scooping me up.

"Don't get ideas Ngcolosi I'm sore"

" I won't I had way too much last night." He kiss my cheek. I brush his hairy hand.

Hours later we both freshen up and dazzling clean. His wearing a sky blue outfits with whole beads and his crown. I'm wearing a tight red dress with white beads and other accessories. My head wrap is white too.

"You look stunning my Queen"

"You look handsome as always Ngcolosi." We share a passionate kiss and step outside our bedroom with our hands joined together. I'm surprised by the beautifully set table. What's surprising me mostly is mother in law cooking up a storm. She hasn't done this in years but today she decided otherwise.

"Sit down my daughter and son. I've cooked up a feast for the royals. Make yourselves comfortable I will go call the boys to come dig in Such a wonderful day it is"

Ngcolosi and myself share a glance. We both surprised by this

sudden mood change.

"Mama what is going on? Who is carrying a Jali's offspring because I for one I'm certain I haven't mama" I say. She smiles and pats my shoulder.

"Worry not my daughter I would've known had you been expecting. I'm just celebrating the good day that God and our ancestors have blessed us with."

"You've found love mother?" Ngcolosi -

"No silly your father was my only love and I'm never finding another Ngcolosi." She says singing.

"What's wrong with her Ngcolosi?"

"Your guess is good is mine I don't know my love"

" Could it be she's excited by Gatsha?"

"I suppose so or maybe we expecting again. She was this chirpy when Nhlonipho was in your womb."

"No my husband it's not like that."

"Lets wait for the boys to come join us"

"Let me dish up for Ndandatho"

"Please do my wife"

I look at him and smile. Mama walks in saying there's no sign of the boys. But we don't let that miff us we dine in harmony.

"Where is this girl kanti? The sun is now blazing and she's not awake what kind of a woman is this? Gogo-

" Then you wanted my son to marry that lot of nothing. "

" Makoti this girl is a lazy bone shall they force us into making her our bride she will scrub these floors wash dishes and cook for us five times a day. We can't harbor a lazy bone" I laugh at mama's remark I though she was a fan of this Princess how things change. Nomaswazi walks in yawning wearing a sleeping garment. Mama looks at her and then me.

"I nearly died of hunger" Noma-

She says reaching for the bread.

"Good morning Noma and how are you? Didn't your parents teach you morals? Or lost them when you lost your virginity?" I say-

"My apologies good morning"

"Theres nothing good about this morning young lady. You already made it sour by showing up on this beautifully garnished table with pyjamas on. I'm certain you didn't rinse your face nor washed your teeth. Ingane so Thabile" I say drinking my freshly made orange juice.

"Eat before flies eat on your behalf" Mom-

"Excuse me everyone I'm out of here" Ngcolosi

"Excuse me too I have errands to run too. See you later on the day mama"

"A blessed day ahead my children I have sewing to make. Clear the table afterwards Noma" mama says walking us out..

—

King Ngcolosi

I kiss my wife goodbye and walk to the council court. I find a few elders gathered around so is King Ngidi of Ngwane village. Everyone was talking before I entered the champel they all keep quiet as I step in. My sister is not here today and that's a relief. They all stand and wait for me to sit down. The greetings and praises follow. I sit down and semi bow my head as a permission for them to sit down.

"Greetings elders and welcome" I say.

"Can we resume with the meeting" I say and sit properly on the throne.

"My King we've heard the allegations brought upon the Prince of Thuthukani and we are not pleased at all my King. It is very wrong of him to dirty the Prince and not marry her" Elder -

I clear my throat and look at him.

"Indeed my Jali what Zimele did is wrong and unacceptable. We need to teach him a lesson. He should marry the Princess" Elder 2

"Elders I beg to differ what if the Princess is lying about these allegations? What if the Princess is making this up to tarnish our future King? Zimele is a handsome little boy all girls will not hesitate to get him under their skin. King Ngcolosi was once in the same position back in the years and it turned out the lady was wrongfully accusing the King. This Nomaswazi Princess is lying elders she knows who deflowered not our Prince. " Elder 3-

"Dlamini the Princess was spotted on these grounds for two good days meaning she's not lying but the prince is"

I clear my throat.

"Ehm elders I hear your voices and concerns but I as the father of the Prince. I really believe in my son's statement when he says he didn't touch the Princess because Zimele wasn't home on those two days.

You all know his a warrior and that his hardly home and that was the case with those two days. The Princess was here sleeping alone in my son's absence. I strongly believe the Princess visited this Kingdom knowingly she was tainted and damaged from wherever she was coming from.. She embarked all the way from Ngwane village to ease her guilt and pin another mans fault on my son. She wanted to give Zimele a burden that wasn't his. Let's not forget every guy has a penis and they all can make love to a woman. The Princess being deflowered doesn't mean it's my son who did it she might even lost it backin Ngwane Village. I'm not siding with my son nor condemning this act but one this one Zimele is not to be barked up"

I hear mumbles. Ngidi looks at me and says nothing.

"That's not true Ngcolosi just admit your sins and right them."
Ngidi-

"Zimele did nothing to your daughter he wasn't home Ngidi don't be gullible and so desperate to securing a spot in my Kingdom buy giving me your ill mannered daughter as a bride. She's no fit for my son."

"Ngcolosi don't provoke me! Don't insult my daughter on my account"

"King Ngidi and King Ngcolosi calm down we need a seer to tell us the truth regarding this matter. That's our only solution to this matter" elder 3-

"The seer will be of no use because this is obvious and straight forward. Zimele deflowered the Princess of Ngwane now he should dance to the tune and marry the Princess. Actually she must move into the royal house for good" Elder 1-

"Call a seer in we have nothing to lose" I say-

"Fine!" The elders say.

"Let's meet in an hour or so" I say getting up from my chair

heading outside.

Back in Ngwane(Queen Thabile)

I hate taking things to this route but right now I'm stranded and desperate for an escape. I can't believe Nomaswazi a whole herd boy? This girl will be the death of me. I swallow hard and check with my surrounding before I enter his dark hut. I enter in his hut and make myself comfortable on the grass mat. He clears his throat and sniffs around me.

"Greetings Great one"

"Greeting Queen Thabile how can I be off help?" Makhehla-

"Great one I have a problem. My daughter slept with a commoner and she might be pregnant. I want her to marry the Prince of Thuthukani village but now her chances are slimmer because she's not pure. And knowing the elders they will seek help for clarity from a seer putting my daughter in jeopardy to losing what we aim to obtain. Great one can't you do something for my daughter to get away with what she's doing? "

" There's nothing Makhela can't do my Queen but I must warn you. We can't perform black magic on the royals only your child can be. I can only blind the seer from seeing the truth so your daughter can remain in the royal house"

"The aim was not to harm the Prince or the royals but rather to secure a seat for my daughter in Thuthukani please do it now Makhela. I will reward you greatly"

"You will reward me greatly?"

"Yes. I will bring you a sacrifice. A big fat cow great one and maybe a goat"

"That should be all my Queen. I'm on it."

"Get on it." he starts doing this and saying strange things. I look at him with my fingers crossed my daughter deserves that throne

not anyone else but her.

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Nomaswazi

I'm inside the royal trying to dust their expensive leather couches which is a hassle for me. I've never done any servant's chore growing up. My mother stated that out that touching filth wasn't for blue blooded species but rather the servants. I can't believe the Jali's are making me touch dirt all in the name of cleaning. They even made me make my bed and God knows how exhausted I am right now I could use a little magic. A young maiden walks in humming a song I throw the dusting tool on the floor to demand her to notice me and feel my presence. She looks at me.

"Aren't you gonna bow and greet your future Queen servant?"

"My apologies Princess. Greetings my Princess and how are you?"

She says with her knees pressed against the floor and her head bowed. I sway my body to her direction.

"Don't they teach you manners around here? "

"My apologies my Princess. I didn't see you when I walked in but I'm sincerely sorry my Princess." Maiden-

"Mmm.. I see.." I say with my arms folded and my nose niffing her. "Get up and start dusting this place thereafter I want you to

come clear out the dinning table I want it sparkling clean without a mark.

Another thing I want my bathing water delivered to my chamber immediately don't keep me waiting servant"

"I'm sorry my Princess but today I was granted a day off by the Queen I'm not on duty." Maiden-

"And do I look like your Queen?"

"No my Princess"

"Now get up and make yourself useful! There's no day off for a slave get up and start working flabby stomach!" I say pushing her she stumbles and stands up. She walks to the dusting tool and starts getting busy. I won't touch this filth not with my beautiful hands..

Nozibele

"Queen Nozibele" A voice mutters from behind. I tilt my head to gather facts.

"Queen Sbonisiwe and Princess Gabisile how are you?" I say opening my arms to embrace the queen of Umthombo and her beautiful daughter Gabisile.

"What a pleasure it is to see you my friend." Bonisiwe-

"Indeed it's a pleasure. Someone is growing so fast huh Gabi? Nhlonipho will marry soon" I tease.

"I don't understand what the rush is. How are you doing my sister? " Bonisiwe says smiling showing her beautiful teeth such a beautiful woman she is.

"I'm doing great my friend and how are you?"

"Ah! I'm hanging in there my friend you do know these Kingdoms and their repercussions if not predicaments but all will fall into shape. You glowing Nozibele what is Ngcolosi giving you?"

"Too much love Boni and besides I'm now a grandmother" I smile-

"You lie Nozibele! Who you made you a grandmother my friend?" Boni-

"These beans should be spilled on a cup of coffee Bonisiwe unlike here where it's buzzing with people."

"You know what I need all the details. I'm coming to your house finish your shopping my friend I will wait for you." Boni-

"This was my last item to buy I'm done here"

"Mama can we please go home I want to go train with Mangaliso" Gabi-

"Hhayi Gabi can't you see I'm still addressing an elder?"

"Sorry mama and my apologies my Queen" Gabi-

"It's okay my angel. Or we can go to your house I still have time."

"Come Nozibele anticipation is killing me" We seal it with laughter..

In a split second we are seated on her beautiful leather couches sipping her expensive favorite herbstea. She puts her mug down and look at me.

"Now spill the beans Nozi"

"Zimele has a beautiful son his name is Gatsha Bangizwe"

"Wow! Congratulations Nozibele these are good news. So whose the mother?"

"That's where the twist is"

"Meaning?"

"The mother of the child is not royalty"

"Njani?"

"She's a beautiful commoner lady and she's very respectful at it."

"Zimele impregnated a commoner Nozibele? Your son is really problematic." She giggles.

"Tell me about it."

"How can the gods of thuthukani present a commoner with your seed? That's very rare thank likely my friend."

"I've been beating my head on that friend"

I sip from my cup. Her husband walks in.

"Queen Nozibele greetings Greetings my flower"

"Greeting King Zikhali" I say

"The meeting is over my love?" Boni-

"It was mundane and all vanity I shouldn't have gone there"
Zikhali-

"That's bad but don't give up yet my husband we will find help.
Can we discuss this in bed later?" Boni-

"Later it is it's a pleasure seeing you Queen Nozi"

"Like wise Zikhali"

"Pass my greetings to your husband"

"I will" He disappears. Bonisiwe's face changes immediately.

"I want to meet your grandson my friend and maybe buy him gifts."

"Pleeee do come but Boni it's a secret for now. We don't want people knowing about Bangizwe"

"Your secret is safe with me. Don't sweat my friend" She says playing with her teaspoon.

"Boni is everything okay?"

"You don't want to know Nozi"

"I'm sorry I overheard your conversation you know ears do not have lids my friend. What help are you guys needing? Maybe my husband might be of help if it's related to trades and stuffs like that"

She looks at me and heaves a sigh.

Nhlonipho

Ngwane village is very far from our my village the sun is now blazingly hot and kissing our skins thus we haven't rethead our

destination. Watching Ndandatho and Zimele acting cosy keeps me a little entertained and less focused on the road.

"Are you Okay?" Zimele -

"I'm fine Jali"

"You don't look like it Macingwane"

"I'm scared Zimele I'm uncertain about what awaits me there. When I left the village I wasn't myself baba ka Bangi I was in a very bad state of mind. Showing up now might cause more damage my Prince"

"I'm here my love don't fear anything. Just calm down and stop over thinking things. We will take whatever thunder comes our way with our heads held high my love. " Zimele-

He says brushing her thigh.

"Thank you Zimele"

"No harm will prevail my brother's love you have us now and we will ensure your safety is priority. Fear not." I add.

"Thank you Nhlonipho." Nda-

"How is Bangi doing there?" Zimele-

"His fine warrior but he needs a nappy change. His wet" Nda-

"Did we bring nappies?"

"Yes two"

"Let me help you with changing him it better not be poop though. " Zimele-

"Fear not he peed Thank you"

I look at them in awe. Zimele changes the nappy while Ndandatho brushes her arm.

"Are we feeling cold brother's love?" Me-

"No Prince Nhlonipho I'm trying to calm myself down." Nda-

"Try closing your eyes inhale and exhale.. It helps" Me-

"Thank you" Ndanda says breathing heavily.

"Here we done I think his hungry now. " Zimele-

"My boobs are aching Zimele. " Nda

"But the baby is hungry Ndanda it's only fair you feed him"
Zimele -

"I was feeding him just a minute ago Zimele I need a breather please." Nda-

"This young man will finish her fleshiness my Prince Gatsha is a heavy eater my Prince just like someone I know." Hawu-

"And who is that? Surely that someone you know can come in handy to negotiate for this little champ's food to be bestowed to him."

Zimele says eyeing Ndandatho.

"Zimele we get it you love your son but she needs a breather."
Me-

** Ndandatho

I must've zoned out because I'm woken up by Zimele kissing my lips and besides the cart has stopped making it obvious we've arrived.

"We here my love"

I jump in fear as my eyes locate my compound from where we standing. Zimele brushes my back to comfort me.

"let me give you some privacy" Nhlonipho-

"Please take Bangizwe" Zimele-

He takes Gatsha and disappears with him. Zimele kneels between my legs and cups my face as salty water is pouring from my eyelids.

"Let's go back please I can't be here."

"No. We going nowhere Ndandatho you deserve to be here for your grandma please my love"

"They gonna kill me Zimele they gonna hurt my baby and you guys please. We can't be here let's go"

"No we going nowhere look at me in the ears and tell me if you see fear in my eyes. My love I won't allow anyone to do anything to you I'm not a warrior by mistake if I need to slay dragons I will proudly do so. We here to pay respect to your grandmother not

to evoke people if anyone has a problem with that then they have a problem with me. "

I sniff Zimele wipes my eyes and smashes his lips on mine. I wrap my hands around his neck and drop my head on his shoulder.

" Gogo instructed I should run and never look back Zimele she said shall anything befall her I must always look over the sky the brightest star will be her watching over me and my son. She said she will always be in my heart I think she didn't want me to attend her funeral my love"

"Shhhhhh... Shhhh okay? Nothing will happen to you my love I'm here Ndandatho If you want me to carry you on my back I will do just so you know. I mean it when say nothing will happen I love you Ndandatho. Wipe your tears and hold my hands and don't let go. "

" I'm scared. " I hail again..

Tholakele

The compound is fuzzy and congested. Nomzamo is busy scolding and screaming at people none stop to do things the right way. I'm starting to think she's drunk because she is the one who made the African beer maybe she thought she was tasting her hand not realizing she is intoxicating herself. Bafana and my eldest son Phiwe are busy with the cow and whatever that needs men. My daughter and myself are busy cooking with the help of the other village women who came to support us its evident people cherished gogo so much. It's a pity Ndandatho is not here to bid her grandmother goodbye.

"These people are stubborn and useless they need to be reminded every now and then on what to do and what not to do I'm tired of shouting yoooh!!" Nomzamo-

"Then stop if you are tired"

"No I can't do that everything will go south if I do that.

Buhlebuzile fetch my calabash in your grandmothers hut hurry up young lady" Nomzamo-

Buhle leaves.

"My poor mother bakithi she's really gone? Wow Ndanda did a number on us. ." Nomzamo-

"It wasn't her fault Nomzamo mama has been sick for a while. Stop barking at the wrong tree Nomzamo" Me-

"There's a royal cart outside" My husband says walking in.

"Surely it's King Ngidi and Queen Thabile"

"Let me go to them

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Nomzamo please attend to these pots" "I say wiping my hands on my pinifers. I step outside the isolated kitchen and walk to the gate. This is not a Ngwane cart these faces are not familiar in Ngwane. I look at the two warriors who are having a little chat. I clear my throat and look at them.

"Greetings young warriors what brings you here?"

"They with me mama" a familiar voice mutters behind them a young maiden with a baby on her back appears besides her is a handsome muscular and hairy tall young man. I think I know this young man isn't he the Prince that's supposed to marry Nomaswazi from Thuthukani village? Isnt this Zimele the son of King Jali the third? Why is he with Ndandatho? I close my eyes and open them it's Ndandatho. I jump on her and embrace her.

Tears threaten to fall.

"My daughter Ndandatho" I say squeezing her harder.

"I'm sorry mama"

"Why didn't you send your goodbye? You shouldn't have left my child"

"Has I not left you know what would've happened to me mama and my son"

"Ndandatho your grandmother died with a bleeding heart she was going crazy without you."

"I'm sorry mama."

"And what is this little family reunion about? Tholakele who are these people!"

Nomzamo shouts heading to our direction. I break the hug and look back. She's coming with Bafana.

—

Zimele

This woman is faking her care for my love. She's lying that she was worried about her and my son her sight annoys me but I won't explode at least not yet. The drunkard aunt who once told me Ndandatho died shows up shouting. I hold Ndandatho's hand to assure her she's safe.

"Hheeee!!!! Hheeee!!!! Look what we have here!!" She laughs sarcastically

"Nomzamo not today" Mother-

"Hheeee!!! The progical daughter has come back!! Not alone but with warriors if not her boyfriends!! Ndandatho what brings you here you little curse? Isn't it enough that you killed my mother by

opening your legs and falling pregnant with a little bastard?" lady

-

I clench my jaw and huff.

" With all due respect elder it's rude to call an innocent child names babies are a blessing please correct that statement " me-

" Izwani! Bafana fetch your hunting gun and shoot this useless girl!! " Lady-

"Ndandatho get lost! Disappear you are not needed here leave!!"
Father -

"Bafana Nomzamo no! No!! This is not the right time she came to bid gogo goodbye. Can you stop already" mother-

"Ndandatho leave!!!! Leave us alone maarn!!! Go back to whatever hell you've been hiding at we don't need you and never have we ever needed you! None of us here us your family!!! We don't know you now fuck off!!!!" Lady

"Now this is enough!! Enough!!!! She came here to bid her grandmother goodbye not to play happy family with slithering venomous serpents. If you don't stop insulting her I will slit your throats and your dead will go unpunished!!" I roar-

"Let's go Zimele Nhlonipho and Hawu let's leave please" Nda -

"You going nowhere Maka Gatsha! We didn't travel such miles for nothing you gonna bury your grandmother!"

"Zimele let's go please they don't need me here let's go please"
Nda-

"I won't argue with you too my love you going nowhere!!" I roar so much that my son jumps and starts crying Ndandatho too cries.

" Can everyone calm down calm please. As my brother said we only here to ensure that Ndandatho buries her beloved grandmother please grant her the wish that's all she asks"
Nhlonipho-

"She needs no one's permission to do that not even them Nhlonipho. Ndandatho will bury her grandmother come morning we leaving!" me-

"And who are you to shout at us young man? " Lady-

"I'm your worst nightmare and worst enemy at it. You having a problem with my son makes you my enemy and I never spare my enemies"

"We are from Thuthukani village elders" Nhlonipho-

"Zimele let's leave I no longer want to be here please!" Nda-

"Ndandatho this is your home bury your grandmother please."
Ma-

"No it's fine mama." Ndandatho -

"Let her go! We don't need her she's not our family after all! She's just a litter my brother found in the bushes! We were just fortunate to have sheltered this filth! Take your wrinkled and ugly face and go!! We don't harbor bastards here Go find your real blood parents and fuck off. Take that illegitimate son of yours and go die in the bushes!!! CURSE!!!! " Lady..

" I'm not a curse aunty Nomzamo!!! "

" Then what are you if not a witch??!! You are a demon!! Go Ndandatho and don't ever come back I wish you sleep and forget to wake up!!! " Lady-

I stormed at the lady I punched her and she flew in the air and collided with a tree.

"Becareful of what you wish for let's go!! " I say holding my love's hand. She hops in the cart so did Nhlonipho and Hawu. She breaks down sorrowfully in the cart slicing my soul into pieces. Nhlonipho looks at me and then the baby his holding. I'm coming back for this family the gods will forgive me. I never live my enemies breathing.

"Shhh don't cry my love"

"I told you coming here was a bad idea Zimele!!!!"

"I'm sorry I was only trying to help"

"They hate me" She cries so sorrowfully. I tightly embrace her..

—

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"My back!!! My back Tholakele!!" She groans in pain now everyone is gathered around looking at her as she's stuck on a tree branch

"Do you know who those people are Nomzamo?" I shout in anger

"I don't care!!! Get me out of this tree!!!! Get me down!!!"

The tree branch breaks she falls on the ground. Bafana helps her out. She stands up and changes looks with me.

"Do you know what you did Nomzamo!! How could you be so insensitive? What is wrong with you?"

"She was bound to know Tholakele that you are not related to her!!! She's not our blood we can't harbor her not anymore!!!!"

"She's mourning gogo and wena you decide on adding more load on her shoulders? How could you? Your mother surely dropped

you at birth No maarn!!!"

"Who are those people since you asked if we are aware of who they are?" Bafana -

"Didn't you hear that he declared himself as that Gatsha ugly kid's father?" Nomzamo -

"His Prince Zimele Jali. His father is King Ngcolosi and his mother is Nozibele" Me-

"Wait!! Wait!! That's King Ngcolosi's eldest son? The one who was supposed to marry The Princess of Ngwane village?"

Nomzamo -

"Yes.."

"Wait!!! Ndandatho gave her garlic to the Prince of Thuthukani? Gatsha is royal? No!! No!!! Why are you telling me this now??"

Nomzamo -

"We need to bring her home!" Bafana-

"See yourselves!!!" I roar and walk away. We continue with the proceedings and lay gogo to rest..

—

Zimele

The drive back to Thuthukani is filled with silence and sadness. Ndandatho cried throughout the ride at least now she's resting her head on my lap sleeping. I've never seen such cruelty in my whole existing life. How could they tell her in this manner that she's not family? Knowing Ndandatho she will not take this lightly she will be hard on herself and that will put me in unease because tomorrow morning I have a journey to embark on warrior Hawu and myself are leaving for a couple of days. Seeing

Ndanda like this is giving me second guesses and sadly I can not abort this trip it's very important. Nhlonipho looks at me and then Ndandatho. By the time we reach the royal house it's night time I carry Ndandatho to her hut and then Gatsha. Nhlonipho comes with food behind him its mama and baba. They walk in and close the door. Ndandatho is sleeping but not Gatsha. Father walks in and makes himself comfortable on Ndandatho's bed by sitting on the edge of the bed. He holds Gatsha and looks at me. I'm going to get a serious scolding today Its worse that I left with Nhlonipho I thought everything was gonna be better but I was wrong. Father looks at me and heaves a sigh. He looks right into Gatsha's eyes...

"Baba I can explain I didn't mean to put Nhlonipho into trouble. I was only trying to help" he uses his hand to shut me up.

"Nhlonipho explained everything to me Zimele I'm not happy with what I heard son We should go visit her family. Actually let's go to the house I want to discuss important things with you. "
dad-

"I thought I should spend a night here to make sure she's okay because she's not fine baba"

"We moving her to a better hut son this one is far from the royal house. I won't be long Zimele" Dad-

Why is he not shouting at me like he always does? This is strange. He puts Gatsha on the bed and we walk to the royal house. Leaving mama with Ndandatho. Father pours me a glass of wine he sits on the chair opposite me he covers his mouth with his hands and look at me.

"I want us to discuss how the meeting went"

"Fine what happened father?"

"It's not looking good Zimele"

"What did they say father please talk"

"She's gonna stay with us"

"How baba? I didn't touch her njena how come?" I say agitated.

"The Maine said we should harbor her till the baby is born."

"Whosehranmagzine.com! What baby baba?"

"Nomaswazi is pregnant but she doesn't know I tried son but.."

I heave a sigh.

"I knew this was gonna happen baba. I don't like that girl"

"I know you don't. For your safety Zimele she won't share the same space with us. Yes we will share the same compound but not the same house."

"Thank you Jali"

"Don't thank me yet. What really happened in Ngwane Village?"

I narrate everything.

"Shes been through a lot son it's only fair we do everything in our powers to protect her. She may not be royalty but she should be treated with respect and love. I'm sorry again"

"It's okay baba I'm just glad you now on my side than against me It really feels good father having you by my side."

"I have your back it's your naughtiness I'm against. Look now I am a grandfather isn't that an insult?"

We giggle.

"More?"

"Yes please" he pours me another glass. He looks at me and smile.

"Have you been sneaking out son?"

"No father"

"Don't lie to me Zimele are you still playing with her"

"Dad come on I'm not having this talk with you"

"Zimele I know you you're my son. I just want to know if my teachings didn't fall into deaf ears"

"Your teachings didn't fall into deaf ears baba Bangizwe happened so yeah. Your teachings came in handy"

He giggles. Back in the years when father and myself were best of friends he taught me everything there is to know about women that included. He taught me that part very well and I practiced every trick on Gatsha's mother.

"You wanted to do things today?"

"Baba come on God!! I will go call mama on your behalf"

"Zimele!!" I giggle and look at him.

"My King I'll be leaving tomorrow for a couple of days please treat her like your daughter while I'm away she's not okay"

"Your mom is around go have one for the road son. She might heal faster."

"Baba that's gross King Ngcolosi!!" I say standing up. I walk outside as I'm walking I find Nomaswazi vomiting. I look at her and shake my head sideways.

"Zimele!!"

"What?"

"I ate too much food my husband"

"Indeed you ate way too much food Princess" I say and walk away.....

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Queen Boni

"Zikhali how did it go?"

"It was vanity Boni they turned me down. Saying they can't help us nor our Kingdom. Our people are slowly dying of thirst our perennials are going dry. Livestocks are growing bones. Our farms are turning colours Bonisiwe" He roars.

"Zikhali I'm aware of that and I know how it's troubling your soul

can't we seek help from Thuthukani village? We can use a portion of their fields and plough our crops and dig up holes and create dams there for our people not to die of thirst. Our livestock can temporarily stay under their care Zikhali. Not all is lost my husband "

" Boni that would not happen! I'm not seeking help from Ngcolosi and his Kingdom. That will degrade us and tarnish my dignity. He will see me as a failure. I won't allow that I would rather go seek help from Ukhahlamba Kingdom of King Phakathwayo not that of Thuthukani "

" Zikhali you being pride driven even when your shoulders are weighed down and defeated. We need help not your feuds with Ngcolosi. If you won't go seek help from our nearby Kingdom I will Zikhali. We can't punish innocent souls because of your pride. Kings also need other King's to hold their hands and lead them to the promised land Zikhali. "

" I'm the head of this house Boni what I say goes"

"And I'm the neck of this house Zikhali what you say is edited here! And I give life to your words and right now you not saying anything fruitful. I will go kneel in front of Ngcolosi if you won't put yourself into doing it!!" I yell.

"Boni you don't understand dont you?"

"And I prefer it this way not understanding a thing you saying. We all were affected by what happened Zikhali but life goes on!!!
" I roar and step out of the bed.

"Where are you going?"

"Far away from you. I can't share a bed with a barbarian and self feed King. I will share a bed with Gabisile"

" You're my wife come back here"

"Not until you stop acting impulsive like the world revolves around you Zikhali."

"What do you want me to do? Ngenzeni!!"

"Accept what lies before your eyes and stop turning a blind eye!"
I roar.

He heaves a long sigh and cover his face with his hands.

"I will see what I can do."

"Don't see but do what you see Zikhali"

We remain silent again.

Ndandatho

"Thula thula mntwana thula sana!! Thula ubaba uzobuya ekuseni"

I hear this cradlesong from a distant. I attempt to open my eyelids which is a hassle. My eyes are heavy and this cradlesong is inviting more sleep but I can't fall into another slumber my son is starving. The weight I'm feeling on my breasts tells me I didn't feed him all night long. I lift my head up and groan in pain as it feels heavier from the excessive crying that I've cried yesterday. My eyes captures Zimele's mother singing a senerade for Bangizwe. Besides her there's a little ceramic bowl. She looks at me and smile I faintly smile back. I look at Gatsha and moments of yesterday unfolds I sniff with hopes the Queen will not see my tears but it's too late. I pour my salty water into a jag. The Queen moves closer to me and rubs my shoulders as a sign of comfort.

"It's okay my child it's okay sisi let them all out." She says comforting me.

"It hurts my Queen. I feel a melancholy that only my grandmother would fill. This pain is painful"

"No pain is sweeter my child cry till they dry out. Don't deny yourself the opportunity to grow through your pain. We've all been hurt before and burnt by coals but we pressed on Ndandatho and grew through our pain. You too can also do that my daughter. If you were able to push and give birth to this child then you are strong than you can imagine. "

" I wish I can die My Queen "

" Nonsense Ndandatho! If you die whose gonna feed this child and look after him? Don't make me angryNdandatho already I am infuriated by those lot of nothings who mistreated you. Don't think of death I can slap you for saying that. "

She draws me closer for a hug.

"Everything is gonna be alright Ndandatho we might not be your blood family but we are your current family. Share your load with us. Please.."

I wipe my tears.

"Can I feed him My Queen?"

"He just ate porridge but you can feed him breakfast is ready."

She gives me Gatsha to feed.

"I'm not hungry"

"Zimele would kill me if you don't eat young maiden."

She says standing up fetching a bowl of mabele porridge with milk.

"Open your mouth."

"I'm not hungry."

"Ndandatho don't forget that I am a Queen what I say goes.
Open your mouth."

I open my mouth she shoves a spoon inside my mouth two more spoons follow till the bowl is empty. She uses a napkin to clean the corners of my lips.

"Zimele left this read it when you get time"

"Where is he?"

"He went to a warriors game"

"Will he be back?"

"After a couple of days. Everything is jotted down there."

"OH!" I say with a sting on my chest.

"I will get herbs for you to lessen this tension and pain you feeling."

I look at her then Gatsha who chokes on breast milk. She jumps to snatch him from me.

"Umzukulu wami bandla!"

(My poor grandson) she says rocking him.

"I'm sorry" I say in defeat.

"It's understandable You need to bath and step outside the sun.. A maiden will come to collect your stuff you moving to the chambers next to the royal house."

I nod and start burping. She looks at me for a little while.

"You beautiful Ndandatho whomever birthed you passed their good genes on you. You are everything I wanted for my son. I love you young maiden"

With that said I feel knots in my stomach there's a snake slithering to my throat I can taste it's venom threatening to come through my mouth as vomit. I quickly stand up and go outside and spit the snake

out. More venom comes out leaving my throat sore and bitter. The Queen looks at me and hands me a glass of water to rinse my mouth out..

"Are you Okay?"

"I'm fine My Queen"

"It's probably the porridge I shouldn't have stuffed you with it. I'm sorry"

"It's okay my Queen" I say rubbing my throat.

"Who are your parents again?"

"I don't know my Queen"

"They didn't give you a clue at least on where to conduct your search?"

"I was dumped in the bush I guess and they gave me shelter"

"I see... How is your throat? Please read that Note Ndandatho"

"I will" We remain in total silence till Gatsha sneeze.

A young maiden walks in with my bathing water and a few herbs..

"The Queen said you must soak these herbs in your water and apply this herbs butter lotion on your body. Here are your clothes too" Maiden-

"Thank you my sister your name is?"

"Siziwe"

"Thank you Siziwe"

She smiles and walks out. I undress and soak my body in this basin filled with herbs I apply the body lotion on my body and wear the garments I'm given by the Queen. I walk outside to discard my bathing water I spot Princess Nomaswazi from a distance. I step back inside my chamber and read the little love letter left by warrior. His sorry to leave me broken like this he wishes he could've stayed but he had to go because this camp is important too. I should not worry about Princess Nomaswazi she's not a treat because he has never touched her regardless of what people say of him and her. I shouldn't let her get under my skin and bully me into doing something I do not want because she is not a future Queen of this Kingdom but I am "Zimele though" She is a deceitful woman who is desperate of his attention. He loves me and Gatsha we mustn't miss him too much his gonna come back and love us harder his sorry again. I heave a sigh and brush my sore throat. Sizwe walks in again.

"I'm here to collect your clothes."

"Thank you."

"Is that your son?"

"Yes"

"His beautiful"

"Thank you my sister. Have you seen Ngelozi?"

"She left with Prince Nhlonipho to the river bank but shall she return I will lead her to your room sisi?"

"Ndandatho"

"Yes Sisi Ndandatho. You have a beautiful name and you beautiful too"

"You're the prettiest Sizwe. How old are you?"

"20 and yourself?"

"I'm old enough." I giggle for the first time.

"Come on sisi Ndandatho tell me"

"I'm twenty five my sister"

"You don't show" I giggle. Bubu clears her throat and looks at us.

"Ndandatho the charm how are you friend?"

"I'm very well thanks."

"You scarce lately where are you hiding?"

"Out and about my sister. How are you?"

"I'm good Ndanda." She says looking at me

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how are you friend?"

"I'm very well thanks."

"You scarce lately where are you hiding?"

"Out and about my sister. How are you?"

"I'm good Ndanda." She says looking at me then the letter on the bed. I fold it and take out my few items for Siziwe to carry.

"Going somewhere?"

"I'm swapping rooms"

"Reason being?"

"They got me a better one"

"And who is they?"

"Bubu I'm not feeling good my friend I would really love to chat but right now I need some sleep"

"Commoners don't sleep at this hour Ndandatho we work. Don't you have maidens to train?"

"I do but I will attend to them later"

"Mmm you sound like a blue blood doing things when you want too and not when you told too. It must be nice having the privileges" Bubu-

Sizwe looks at Bubu then me.

"Excuse me Bubu?"

"Nothing.. I came to greet you my friend nothing much."

"Thank you"

"What time are you collecting wood? I would love to join you"
Bubu-

"Not today maybe tomorrow."

"Ndandatho you acting strange lately" Bubu-

She says eyeing me. I look her and choose not to argue. Sizwe and myself get busy Bubu sees herself out...

Ngelози

"Do you ever wonder where this river ends Nhlonipho?"

"I do but I think it flows as far into ocean's."

"It must be nice being a river it gets to see all beautiful places in this world and all kinds of animals and people. Unlike some of us who are stuck in one places. I wish I was a river you know?"

"You reckon?"

"Yes. Don't you ever wonder how life is in other ends of this world? I wonder Nhlonipho all the time."

"Do you ever wonder what the future holds Ngelozi? I always wonder about my tomorrow the woman I will marry and plant my seeds on I worry a lot about that"

I giggle.

"Mmm.. Have you met a lady my Prince that has captured your heart? Now that you worry about marriage and having kids?" I giggle.

"No silly I haven't I just wonder that's all"

"I do wonder about that but it's not yet too important for me but rather seeing the world and wearing the most expensive pearls there is in this world. Just like the gold ones that the Queen wears. I love her beautiful clothes and beads please steal one for me"

"Don't you love mine?"

"Maybe the white one's not the brown ones"

"I will gift them to you then."

"You can't do that dummy that's forbidden"

"How is it forbidden Ngelozi?"

"That will mean you giving me uCU Nhlonipho." I giggle.

"Come on Ngelozi that's over rated I will be giving my friend my beads that she happens to like. Is there something wrong about that?"

"Yes my Prince because that will be a symbol of love. You do know when a man gives a woman beads or bracelets or a cloth it means his courting that girl the maiden accepting the gift simply agrees that she has her eyes on that certain man alone Nhlonipho. You are a Prince you should know such! "

I say pouring water in my bucket. He kicks stones and look at me.

" It's a gift for our friendship nothing much Ngelozi "

" Fine I will take the gift Prince Nhlonipho. Please pass me the other bucket and thank you " He passes me the buck our hands touch he looks at me and then looks aside. I flash him a smile.

"Do we have a class today?"

"Yes"

"Fine. Nhlonipho?"

"Yes.."

"My mother will be making roasted nuts do you fancy them?"

"Of course I would love them."

"Fine.. I will give you some before I undo my hair"

"I can help you with undoing your hair"

"Thank you"

"Pleasure. Do you ever wonder how it feels like to be kissed?I've never been kissed before"

"Maybe it tastes sweet and energizing. My mother closes her eyes when my father kisses her sometimes she makes noises like Sehranmagzine.comah and ooh! I think it's sweet my Prince"

Nhlonipho burst in laughter leaving me confused.

"Your mom says Sehranmagzine.comah and ooh when she kisses your father?"

"Yes.. The kiss makes her sing"

"A kiss doesn't make people make sounds like that it wasn't a kiss she was having but a sibling for you being planted in her womb"

"You know that's not true Prince Nhlonipho you've never been kissed before so you know nothing about what was happening"

"Yes I've never been kissed before but my mother and father and Zimele never made those sounds when kissing. They were making

love" I cover my mouth and look at Nhlonipho.

"People make sounds when they make love?"

"Yes it's nice"

"How do you know that?"

"I just know Ngelozi. Finish up please"

"I see"

We look at each other and carry the buckets home. We walk with silence between us...

-

King Zikhali

Boni is butting her bread she's avoiding eye contact with me and cracking up a conversation had Busani been around he would have sensed this tension between us and told us to suck it up or sleep it off. That's how blunt of a person he is. Sometimes he forgets we are his parents not his kids. Boni and myself were blessed with two beautiful kids Busani being the eldest his twenty three years old and Gabisile is our last born she's sixteen years old. Boni made it clear she doesn't want any more kids she was satisfied with the number we have. I wish me had more children but sadly I'm not a bearer of the load. I'm King Zikhali Buthelezi and my wife is Sbonisile. We are a family situated in the dry lands of Uthombo Kingdom which was known as the Kingdom of Iron core and water makers. My late mother was a rain Queen and fighter a female warrior. During her days these grounds were blessed with water fertile soils and rains our vegetation and fruits were one of the greatest. Most foreigners wanted to buy from us because our harvests were one of the kind. Our live stock was heavy and fat this Kingdom was a place of peace for many it's waters and air brought many peace and happiness but after my mother died things went South because when she died she had said to me my first female child would have to take after her and bless these grounds but till this date nothing has ever went to its normal state.

As we speak the grounds of Umthombo village are stroked by a devastating and frustrating famine. The perennials are going dry and empty. There is little to less of aqua flowing and running in the river banks of the village rain has also become a rare and foreign thing. The forests and other significant plants are turning leaves and dying slowly so are the livestock. The people who are poor are becoming more and more poor the richer becoming more and more richer. So many homes are slowly left with ghost occupying them. This is worrying me so much as the King of these grounds it's my duty to ensure such things never happen. A day ago I went to consult and I was told the obvious which leaves me much more stressed out than at ease. Because I don't know where to begin with finding solutions. My wife always complain about my worries telling me to forget our past and move on which is hard because the future of this Kingdom relies on our past which she hates visiting. Anyway there's so much to know about is but I won't dish out now.

"Gabisile pass me the jag"

"It's for my reach mother only Abba can pass it over to you"
Daughter-

"Gabisile" She gives her a scolding look that has always forced me to do things I do not intend on doing. I pass her the juice our hands rub against each other. She gives me a glance and I return it.

"Don't look at me Zikhali"

"You did it first Boni"

"That's because you were staring at me first Zikhali"

"How would you have known or seen that if you were not staring at me?"

"That's because I felt your eyes on me"

"Boni you being melodramatic and it's too early for that"

"See why I was avoiding to talk to you Zikhali?"

"You know what I'm tired of this Boni I'm exhausted!!"

"So am I Zikhali"

"Are you really my wife?"

"Are you really my husband?"

"Mama no baba please stop" Gabi

"Your mother is stubborn one day I'm gonna plug out your bull balls Boni"

"And I'm gonna sew your vagina Zikhali"

"Can you two just shut up!! What is this mother and father? I could hear your bickering from a distance! Take this to the bed and stop scaring Gabisile. You two are turning into toodlers geez!!" Busani says looking at us with annoyed eyes..

"It's your father's fault"

"It's her fault Son"

"Whatever it is you fighting over its stupid and obnoxious. If you won't deal with it I will as the future King of these grounds. Gabi go play outside" Busani -

"It's still morning Bhuti Busani"

"Then go back to bed and pee on your blankets like you always do" Busani -

Boni and myself look at each other and swallow hard. What did I say about this one? You got that one right

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Nhlonipho Jali

There's silence creeping around between my best friend and I. Only our stares does the talking. We smile here and there for the each other. Ngelozi is sweet and fun individual to be around. She always brings up lame and funny topics she never wants to keep her full lips shut. She always wants to argue with me or fight me for not agreeing to what she tells me there's never a dull moment with this maiden and I love that about her.

We reach our destination. I put the buckets where I know they belong and help her out to putting hers. She heaves the longest sigh to signal she's exhausted. I walk outside the kitchen and wait for the nuts she promised me under the tree. Her mother and father leave their private chambers following each other. The mother is fixing her clothes while the father's eyes wander around. I let out a chuckle recalling what Ngelozi said.

"Prince Nhlonipho greetings" Dad-

"Greetings Mr Dlamini. Greetings mama"

"Greetings. How long have you been waiting there my Prince? Did Ngelozi offer you something to drink?"

"No my lady she gave me nothing"

"Aibo! What is wrong with this child? I'm coming my Prince." She

walks to the kitchen. I said that on purpose I just want her to be mad at me because I know her mother will give her a lush out on some "Never ever starve a guest Ngelozi" Oh there it goes.

"Mama I was still preparing for him" Ngelozi-

"You lying Ngelozi go give him the refreshments"

I laugh and wait for her to show her grumpy face. She kneels before me and present a tray in front of me.. She's angry.

"Here!"

"Can I have water to wash my hands"

"You know your way to the basin Nhlonipho."

"I'm your guest Ngelozi"

"Asshhh Nhlonipho!!" She says walking away leaving me with a broad smile reaching out to my ears.

"Here you go"

"Thank you my beautiful maiden"

"Was there a need for you to say that Nhlonipho?"

"But I was telling the truth"

"Damn you!" I giggle and reach for the jag of fermented maize meallie porridge. It's my favorite. There's a banana mango and roasted nuts on the side neatly set on the tray. I smile while she's giving a warning look.

"I wish you choke on that"

"That won't happen dearest witch"

"Next time I'm gonna punch you in the face Nhlonipho"

"That's sweet. Your mom is the best. What are you having for supper? I'm eating here today"

"Don't you have food in your house? You gonna finish our grocery" I laugh.

"Your stingy"

"I don't care.. Can have your Mango?"

"What do I get in exchange?"

"I will make you a sling"

"No.. You made me that the previous week."

"What do you want then?"

"Your favorite beads."

"Hha Nhlonipho for a lame fat mango?"

"The ball is in your court"

"Fine.. In exchange of the mango and your beads?"

"Yes.. Here is the Mango"

"Thank you"

She smiles.

Boni

Busani is giving us the most discomfoting look ever. I know his about to lash out on us.

"I need rest I'm saving my energy for later" Busani-

I look at Zikhali and storm to our private chambers. He walks in and sits on the bed besides me. He squeezes my thigh I know what he wants and sadly I'm not gonna give it to him without a fight.

"Your son is disrespectful he takes after you"

"Move your hand from my thigh Zikhali"

"I'm not hurting you njena. Actually why do you hate me this much Boni"

"I don't hate you I just hate how egotistical and prideful you are Zikhali even when it's time to bow your head and put your shields down and seek help elsewhere. There's nothing wrong with seeking help elsewhere Zikhali leaders too sometimes break and need someone to fuel them. It's not every load you can carry on your shoulders alone. "

"Boni you and I know the solution to our problem. I can go to Ngcolosi but still it won't change the truth that remains"

"What is the point of holding on to something that isn't there Zikhali? You were there you saw what happened. Blood was everywhere don't you recall that?"

"But it doesn't mean we should stop hoping and propelling Boni"

"Zikhali I'm not about to discuss that I'm still hurt and wounded about that incident. So please stop bringing it up!"

"But it happened Bonisile!"

"And you think I don't know that Zikhali?" I lash out and push back my tears.

"I'm sorry" I look at him and use my pointing fingers to wipe my peeking tears.

"Can we please not discuss this ever again Zikhali please."

"I'm sorry Bonisile I really am but mina I still believe in my mother's dreams and my instincts I believe our solution is out there in the world. I don't think our solution relies on King Ngcolosi. I understand your pain I go through it every single day. But at some point Boni we need to discuss this because it happened regardless of how hurting it is but we need to discuss it and instead of forgetting it like it never happened "

" Zikhali I'm not ready I really am not ready to go through that again." I say now crying. He moves closer to me and press my head on his chest.

" I'm sorry I didn't mean to hurt you. "

" Mama!! " Busani shouts from outside.

" I'm coming" I shout back.

"Come in Busani" Zikhali says not letting loose of me.

"Excuse me. Mama there's an old lady outside who is eager to talk to you. She said she's not leaving till she sees you. Do I permit her entrance or chase her out." Busani-

"Give me a minute I'm coming."

"A minute it is." He says walking out...

—

Ndandatho

"This is elegant and ravishing I love it"

"Indeed it's beautiful sisi Ndandatho you are lucky to be moved on this side of the royal house. You must be special to the King and Queen." Siziwe says flashing me a broad and genuine smile.

"I'm highly favored my sister. Thank you so much for helping me out"

"It's my duty. I should get going Ndandatho take care" She walks out leaving me praising my new chamber. It looks nothing like the one I was occupying previously this one looks expensive and well built. There's an animal skin carpet on the floor a decent neatly and spacious bed with beautiful bed sheets. There are beautiful decorations on the wall. The paint is beautiful too everything is capturing and enhancing so is the little furniture that's in here. The King walks in followed by the Queen.

"Maka Bangizwe" King-

"My King"

"How are you feeling today?"

" Not bad my King

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I'm hanging in there"

"That's beautiful. Did you get your little love letter left by the warrior?"

"Yes my King"

"That's beautiful.. How are you finding your new place ?"

"It's beautiful my King and it's more spacious than the previous one. I love the carpet and the paints not forgetting the bed I can't thank you enough my King. I speak blessings upon your life and that of the Queen thank you so much my king."

"No need to thank us my daughter. We are the ones who should be thanking you Ndandatho. You have given us the greatest gift of life giving birth to a Jali offspring is not easy. Some die while giving birth but you my daughter you've proven us worthy of being the Queen of these grounds. I know you are not a blue blood but I see a perfect match for Zimele in you. "

" My King... "

" At first I was against this but now my daughter I see and understand why my son made the decisions he made about you.

There's something extra ordinary about you. It comes with peace and happiness your eyes sparkle like a ray of hope. You are beautiful my daughter at heart and external. I know my son can be a handful but don't ever let go of his hand. As long as I live I will fight for your love and his I will make sure nobody harms you or segregate you. "

He chuckles and look at Gatsha.

"Excuse me for saying much but you make it easy to talk too. But I give you my word."

"Ngcolosi don't lie to the kid." Queen mother -

"Nozi.. Do you really have to follow me around all the time?"

"I'm here to check up on my children Ngcolosi not you." Queen mother-

" You saw me walk to her chamber don't act like you coming here was an coincidence I know I'm a good looking old man who is irresistible. You missed me Maka Zimele just admit" King-

I look at them blush. They look so in love and so happy. I don't think they ever argue just like their son and I. They so capturing to watch. They somehow remind me of the days before I fell pregnant. Zimele and myself were once happy all the time we use to play and tease each other. We used to do fun things and plan a future we were never certain about. The King and Queen make me miss their son.

"Ngcolosi I came to check up on Mama ka Gatsha besides I'm honoring my sons wishes."

"Lies! You following me me I will give you whatever you want Maka Zimele "

"Ngcolosi there's a baby here"

I giggle.

"She's not a kid Nozibele she's a mother" I giggle.

"How are you finding your new sanctuary My daughter?" Queen-

"It's warm and beautiful my Queen I love it. Thank you so much"

"No need to thanks us I'm just grateful I've found myself a daughter that I was never blessed with." Queen -

"I can give on when you complaining my Queen" King-

"Ngcolosi stop it you scaring Ndandatho"

"My ears are covered my Queen I'm not hearing a thing you saying" I assure her.

"You lying Ndandatho" We laugh a knock comes to my door Bubu looks at me and then the King and Queen.

"Apologies my King and Queen I will come some other time"
Bubu-

"Next time familiarize yourself with knocking young maiden"
King-

" I will come to your house Bubu" I say with a smile.

"I'm sorry to disturb my elders" Bubu says looking at me with eyes I cannot read.

"That's your friend?" King-

"Yes my king"

" She is ill mannered" King-

"Ngcolosi" Queen-

"Who doesn't knock when entering people's houses? That's rude Nozi and unacceptable. I don't condone that act."

"My apologies my King she thought I was alone."

"Don't condone that Ndandatho people die because of such people. Be careful" King-

"I will my King but she meant no harm."

"Don't mind the King his getting old my daughter. Did you take the herbs I've sent for you?" Queen -

"I did my Queen"

"Tomorrow we going for a walk Ndandatho there are few things I need to teach you as woman who is now a mother. Things that will prevent you from things you trying so hard to abstain from them."

"Like conceiving again" King-

My saliva immediately dries out recalling the nights and moments I made love with Zimele without knowing such information.

"I would love that my Queen" I say with a lump on my throat.

"Anyway we should get going Ndanda we will see you later my daughter"

"Thank you your majesty"

"Pleasure" they walk out of my chamber leaving me with a dialogue I can't seem to understand. Zimele has been making love to me for days now not in single day did he ever release himself on the ground or better yet on my chest or thighs each time we made love he deposited in me. My guess tells me I could be expecting again and that isn't part of my goals right now. Gatsa is barely a year old I can't be expecting again especially out of wedlock. What have I done? The gods can't punish me in this manner.

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Ndandatho

This can't be happening to me again the gods cannot push me in this manner. A soft knock on my door gets me out of my misery.

"Come in.." I permit.

"Good day sisi Ndandatho!! A little bird told me you were missing me so here I am!"

Ngelozi says in a quavering mood. I stare at her and feast on my nails.

"Sisi Ndandatho are you okay?"

"No sweetie. Is your mother home?"

"Yes she's around"

"Great! Please look after Gatsha for a minute. I desperately need to your mother please Lozi."

"You don't need to ask mommy"

"Thank you my love" I perk her cheek and walk outside running along the way I accidentally bump chest's with Nomaswazi. Her mug of whatever she's drinking lands on her clothes the look written on her face is enough to tell me my grave has been dug up.

"My sincerely apologies Princess Noma I'm sorry"

I say using my hands to clean her up.

"Leave me alone Ndandatho!! Don't you have eyes?"

"I said I'm sorry Nomaswazi"

"Your sobby apologize won't dry these clothes."

"It was an accident a mistake it was Noma"

"Just shut up!! Shut up!!"

I glance on her.

"What brings you here?" I keep my mouth shut.

"I'm talking to you dammit! What brings you here Ndandatho?"

"Didn't you say I'm must remain quiet?"

"That's inappropriate you don't talk back to the future Queen of Thuthukani slave!!"

"Noma I would love to remain here and catch up with you but right now? It's not a perfect time for me save the formalities for later"

I say turning my back on her to walk away.

"You won't get him Ndandatho his mine"

"And who are talking about?"

"Don't act dumb! You know whom I'm talking about"

"It's a pity my Princess I don't understand what you talking about. I'm one individual who fails to read between the lines"

I say walking away. Nomaswazi? Our story goes a way back. She woke up one day and decided to hate on me for no valid reason. She started treating me like dirt made me feel less prettier because of the size of my hips tone of my skin and length of my hair. She would lie on my name bringing me fights I had no strength to fight. Had it happened we meet on a pass she would rather go back instead of going forward. Nomaswazi's hate for me was really annoying because I never gave her a reason to hate me but poor Princess of Ngwane village she hated me and it's evident that she still does.

"Mama!! Mama Ngelozi can I come in?"

"Come in my daughter!" She shouts from the kitchen. I enter. I find her chopping cabbage leaves She has carrots and onions laid on the table. Meaning she's still gonna chop and peel those. I scan for a knife and start peeling the carrots.

"Mama"

"Yes Ndandatho"

"I need help mama"

"Regarding?"

I swallow hard. In my culture it's a turboo to discuss love making with an elder especially if you are unmarried. Right now I'm bringing a voodoo upon mama. I swallow hard again. She is now not chopping the cabbage but glancing at me.

"Ndandatho"

"Mama I.. I.. Well I.."

"Ndandatho talk what's going on?"

"Do you know of any plants that hinders eehm.. Well mama never mind"

She giggles.

"You made love isn't it?"

"Is it obvious?"

"Your flawless skin screams that loud Ndandatho."

"I need help mama I need herbs"

"What herbs?"

I swallow hard.

"Herbs to prevent the likes of Gatsha's from happening"

"You don't want to conceive again?"

"Yes mama"

"When did you make love? And who did you make love with?"

"Ehm.. Bangizwe's father. It's been happening for the past few weeks mama and month"

She looks at me with worry.

"What mama?"

"My daughter you can't take those herbs. You should've taken them before making love not after making love. Taking them days after making love it's dangerous and sinful especially when you showing signs of pregnancy."

"I'm not showing signs mama."

"Ndandatho you just said you've been making love for the past few weeks meaning my daughter you might be blessed again."

"Mama I don't want a second baby not when I'm not married."

"Ndandatho I feel for you but my daughter taking those herbs now will harm an unborn infant. The herbs will terminate an existing pregnancy and that is wrong Ndandatho"

I swallow hard and feel the knife heavy for me to carry.

"Mama I can't be pregnant not again"

"I'm sorry Ndandatho."

"So there's no way out?"

"When last did you get your monthly menstruations?"

My scalp immediately itch so are my armpits.

"Eehm.. I don't remember"

"Ndandatho I can't give you those herbs my child and don't take them Ndandatho not when you are unsure yourself. Babies are a blessing Ndandatho"

Can the world swallow me already.

"Mama now you sounding like I really am pregnant while I'm not."

"I won't mind babysitting" She giggles and chops her cabbage.

"Who is the lucky man?"

"The lucky man?"

"Yes.. The man whose making you this terrified?"

"You don't know him mama"

"What if I know him?"

"No you don't"

She giggles again.

"Ndandatho I saw you with the Prince holding hands and smooching each other in the dark on the night I told you a story. You even disappeared Ndandatho and came back later exchanging cosy stares and besides Gatsha is selling you out. That little boy is a replica of his father and guess what? Most people are starting to gossip my child "

I swallow hard.

" You can't take those herbs Ndandatho the Jali ancestors will punish you gruesomely shall you temper with their gift"

"Mama.. I should get going"

"Don't be a stranger"

"Thank you mama"

"Take some roasted nuts." She says heading to an transparent bottle with nuts.

"Here"

"Thank you mama"

She flashes me a smile. I walk to my private chambers with thoughts in my head. God knows I don't wish for another baby.

—

Nomaswazi

"Bubu come here!" I command her as she's chilling with her friends having a little chit chat. She follows me to my private chambers. I undress in front of her.

"I want these washed and ironed" I throw the clothes on her. She takes the clothes.

"Bubu are you a good person or a bad person?"

"I'm a good person my Princess"

"Thats great. Are you a liar or a truthful being?"

"A truthful being"

"Now tell me Bubu. What do you know about Ndandatho the new girl with a baby?"

"Nothing my Princess"

"Bubu you I want us be friends and I want you to be honest and loyal to me because I see you as my friend. Please be honest with me what do you know about Ndandatho and Zimele? Are they seeing each other or something?"

She looks away and fiddles with her hands. I need answers here knowing Ndandatho is here surely means I have competition. I can't loose Zimele for her. She thinks I don't know about Zimele

courting her. I once saw them together talking one night at my house when it was my birthday ceremony.

Ndandatho and a few other girls in the village knew about my crush towards Zimele they knew about how I desperately wanted to marry Zimele. But Ndandatho saw it fit to lure my man with her ugly curves and ugly off tune pitched voice. She seduced Zimele to get his entire attention. From that day I hated Ndandatho because she was a vicious and parasitic snake. Her being here is proof she still wants Zimele and I wish she could stay the hell away from the Prince I might not love Zimele like I do with Mbongeni but marrying him will be the biggest achievement to my parents. We need a portion of their riches we need their name in order to be seen mighty and glorious to many Kingdoms. People don't take Ngwane kingdom seriously

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in their eyes we are a poverty stricken Kingdom and I for one hate that. Ndandatho being here might distract Zimele and make him not to learn to love me like mother thought he would if I had faked that I lost my virginity to him. I wish Ndandatho can disappear and go to the man who impregnated her and leave this one for me.

"Bubu I'm still waiting"

"Princess I know nothing about Zimele and Ndandatho but I've seen the King and Queen give Ndandatho special treatment compared to many of the servants just hours ago they moved her from the second class houses to the first class ones. That's all I know"

"Why would they give her special treatment Bubu? I mean she's a servant not a council persons daughter. I don't understand why they doing that for her."

"My Princess I think the King and Queen are trying to hide something. I mean Ndandatho eats royal food and bath with royal soaps and butters. I think you should make your statement

that you are the Princess not Ndandatho. Demand the King and Queen to give you a first class house my Princess "

" Indeed Bubu. Listen I want you to start tailing Ndandatho for me tell me everything she says or does. Even if it's means counting how many times she sneezes in a day please do it. I want every little detail friends right? "

" Yes my Princess friends we are"

"Buby keep those clothes I'm giving them to you now. As a token of our friendship"

"Really? Oh my God Princess thank you so very much"

"That's nothing compared to what I'm yet gonna do or gift you with"

She jumps in joy I look at her and think of an alternative to getting rid of Ndandatho.. Yes I'm thinking if that alternative the one I've used on my sister Iminathi.

Boni

Zikhali and myself are staring at our guests as she's sipping tea from her mug. We don't understand what brings Ngcolosi 's mother here. She's been quiet since and now it's getting worrisome.

"Mama can you talk already it's been a full hour of not silence"
Zikhali-

"Mama are you okay?" I ask now concerned.

"Your biscuits tastes good who baked them?" She says looking at me.

"I did my Queen"

"Can I have some to take with me back home. The girls who are cooking at my place they make bitter and yucky biscuits these

ones are yummy"

Zikhali rolls his eyes and huffs.

"Mama please say whatever you've come here for. I'm certain you didn't travel such a distance to discuss biscuits and maidens who can't cook. The sun is setting start talking" Zikhali-

"Mpontshane mind your tone don't lash out on elders please"
Me-

"We've been seated here for quite a while without her saying a word but rather the hlwi hlwi hlwi's she's making when sipping her tea I'm leaving!" Zikhali-

"That brings me to why I requested to see the Queen but not you Zikhali." Gogo-

"Zikhali apologize please"

"Fine.. I'm sorry ma"

The old woman takes out something from her breasts and puts it on the table.

"What is that?" Zikhali-

"You gonna find out on your own" She says standing up.

"Ma this is..this looks like muthi. Whats in this plastic?"

I enquire with fear. This creepy old lady just place a scary plastic pocket with what looks like hair.

"Sbonisile and Zikhali I only came to give you this and that's all. It's up to you to make use of this or just remain in the dark not knowing what lies outside this sanctuary." Gogo-

"You talking in riddles ma"

"Exactly" Zikhali-

The old lady stands up. I volunteer to walk her to the gate luckily she came with her own cart. She climbs and disappears. I walk to the house I find Ngcolosi and Busani having a little chit chat.

"This old woman is a witch baba who brings hair in people's houses?" Busani-

"Exactly son! See why I didn't want to seek help from Ngcolosi? That family is weird and questionable. They were gonna give us bloody seeds that were gonna mature into talking food!" Zikhali-

My daughter Gabi walks in.

"She's a witch I'm telling you!" Busani-

"Can you two stop with the labeling please."

"Mama who brings hair in people's Kingdoms if not a witch?"

"Busani calm down"

"This is beautiful hair I love how Carly it is." Gabi-

We all turn to look at her.

"You crazy Gabisile! What is beautiful about this muthi that you playing with? Your hands are gonna cram" Busani-

"Liar!!" Gabi-

I'm trying to give this a thought but my thoughts leave me more confused.

"Zikhali a minute please"

I walk to our private chambers. Zikhali walks in and looks at me.

"Please sit down"

I sit besides him and rest my head on his shoulder.

"I think she's trying to tell us something Zikhali I can't smell nor sense witchcraft in her gestures"

"What could it be my flower?"

"I don't know but something about that hair brings me questions."

"What questions my love?"

"I.. I.. I don't know exactly but hair is a human product hair carries a DNA Zikhali"

"Meaning?"

I shift my hair and look at him while holding his hands.

"Can we climb the bed and cuddle so I can tell you about my thoughts."

"Sure"

We rest our heads on the pillows and embrace. My one leg is intertwined with his.

"I'm listening my wife" He says moving his hand to my breasts squeezing them.

"Shenge I think she knows something that could be of help to us."

"Like what Boni"

"Our past." It's up to you to make use of this or just remain in the dark not knowing what lies outside this sanctuary" these were her words Zikhali. She knows something my love"

He raises his head and captures my eyes.

"You look beautiful Boni"

"Thank you my husband"

"Can I make love to you?"

"That should calm me down from this embankment point my husband"

"How do you want it my love?"

"Soft and passionate Zikhali"

"Let me close the door"

I nod as he goes to lock the door. He lays on top of me and gives me a soul kiss that leaves me wanting more. He moves his lips to my ear and whispers.

"I love you Boni and seeing you stressed out hurts me."

"I hate it too.. Please make love to me till I fall asleep"

"Your wish is my command"

He strips me naked strips himself naked too. He cups my breast and sexily bites my nipples. He sucks and moves to kissing my belly he buries his head between my spread apart legs. His warm tongue against my most sensitive skin sends shivers to my spine making me to open my legs even more. He shoves his tongue in and I whimper just like that one beautiful day when we found out we were

pregnant with our first child. He gave me the most mind blowing love making session gashes if water were sprouting out of my privates. A fever pinch of ecstasy took me to a world I never knew existed. From that night I was spoilt rotten by everyone mostly Zikhali. Him giving me this pleasure brings back bitter sweet memories. My body is trembling and my toes are curled up. A foreign feeling takes over here it is a fever pinch. He climbs on top of me and thrusts softly while looking at me. His eyes God knows his eyes brings me pain. I can't look into them for a while and not feel a sting in my heart. That's all I remember vividly the eyes.

"You crying are you okay?" He says with a smoky voice

"I'm fine"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes"

"Don't cry my flower"

"I can't help it my love your eyes are torturing me."

"I'm sorry.."

"Please up the pace"

"Definitely"

He says upping his pace. He grinds me harder I moan cry and groan. It's a mixture of emotions.

"Ooooh!! Ohhh Zikhali!! Sehranmagzine.comah my husband!!"

"You love it my wife?"

"Yes.. Yes... Sehranmagzine.comah sehranmagzine.comah
Zikhali!!! Zi... Sehranmagzine.coma Sehranmagzine.comah!!!
Oooh!! Sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.com!!!
Ndandatho!!!!" I cry as we both release....

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Today I'm having a very busy and stressful day. I just swept the yard and tidied my chamber. I wanted to make porridge for myself and my son but sadly we don't have wood and matchsticks. I resorted into doing laundry. I'm now hanging our clothes. Siziwe is coming here I can spot her from a distance. Bangizwe is on my back I have grown so fond of being his donkey even when it's not needed for me to do that but I gladly do it. In pure honesty I don't want to find my son playing with snakes. I quickly discarded of the water I was using to do my laundry. I think soon I will make a garden for myself this water will come in handy. I will ask mama Ngelozi to get me seeds when she goes to

the market or maybe I should go there myself. I've never been to the market not even once I guess now it's the time I started exploring things and living independently so.

Siziwe is smiling at me while handling the tray with tender care.

"Morning sisi Maka Bangizwe"

"Morning my beautiful sister."

"How was the night?"

"Long and stressful and how did you sleep?"

"I slept well my sister I've found love"

She shyly smiles while scribbling things with her toes on the ground.

"And whose the lucky man?"

"I can't tell you yet. His good a good man my sister. Where do I put this?"

"Today we eating together I want to know who this man is Siziwe"

"Not before you tell me about your knight in shining armor sisi Ndandatho"

I wipe my hands and collect all the basins inside the house. I put them neatly behind the door and walk to the mini veranda to join Siziwe.

"You were saying?"

"Who is your boyfriend? Judging from your looks. Your boyfriend is tall and handsome surely he has beautiful beards and mustaches not forgetting a perfect torso and a sun kissed skin and a husky voice. Your boyfriend is an athletic with muscles maybe. Am I lying? "

I glance on her and giggle.

" Ndandatho spill the beans already please. "

" You're right. My missing rib matches the description you've given. The only missing part is him being a warrior. "

" His a warrior? "

" Yes.. Now Siziwe can we eat please We still have so much to do."

"Can you keep a secret sisi Ndandatho?"

"Sure.."

"I have a serious crush on warrior Hawulesizwe I love his giant body and muscles his smile melts me."

I press my lips together preventing a laugh from coming out.

"So his not the man you love?"

"Yes.. But him too his a good guy but I would've loved it had he had some of the features that warriorHawu has. I'm jealous of his wife"

"Then who is the guy you are in love with if you have a serious crush on my brother?"

"Buthelezi the gateman. Hawu is your brother? Please put in a

good word for me please Ndandatho"

"You just said it yourself that he has a wife njena Siziwe"

"Our culture isn't against marrying multiple of women. I can be his second wife if you really want to earn me as a sister in law Ndandatho"

I crack up and pull a roll and butter it.

"Eat Siziwe so we can go to the river bank the farm and then collecting wood not forgetting making corn bread"

"Ndandatho..."

"I'm not condoning this Siziwe. My brother has a wife back home this isnt right"

"Ndandatho I love Hawu I sometimes dream about him and I wish to loose my innocence to him"

"Eh! This is serious mosi.. When Khethiwe goes on a killing spree I don't know anything Siziwe. I will see what I can do."

"Thank you my sister"

"Shall he like you back what's going to happen to Buthelezi?"

"I will end things with him I've barely kissed him nor touched him"

"But you said you've found love"

"Maybe I was exaggerating."

"I see"

We eat the food. She baths Bangizwe while I quickly wipe my body I will bath properly when we come back. She volunteers to carry Bangizwe while I push the wheel- barrow. Ngelozi spots us and tag along. We find Buthelezi at the gate his eyes move to Siziwe and so does Siziwe. Our little walk is filled with laughter and excitement and for a minute I'm not thinking about the chances of me being blessed again. We walk to the farm Siziwe's mother's farm. She was gifted a little portion of the farm to plough vegetables that were gonna sustain her and her family of seven by Queen Nozibele. Zimele's mother is really a reflection of her name she is very humble selfless and kind towards people. She is polite and treats everyone with respect she never considers herself as a Queen but rather as an individual who isn't above or superior than others. Indeed uNobubele. We greet her mother who is grey haired.

"Mama these are my friends Ndandatho and Ngelozi. This little man here is Bangizwe Ndandatho's son. Like I said yesterday mama I promised to give her a few vegetables. Do you still grant me the permission?" Siziwe-

"Help yourselves but don't leave the gate unlocked I don't want Mzimele's goats eating my harvest. Welcome young maidens"
Mother-

"I will make sure that doesn't happen mama" Siziwe -

"Let me see the little boy." She hands her the baby.

"Such a handsome boy he looks girlish though. I blame it on the mothers gene's"

I smile. If only she knew how this child looks nothing like myself but his father she would swallow hard when Zimele steps on these grounds with Gatsha on his hands. He took nothing from me.

"He looks so much different from me mama he takes after his father"

"I see you in this baby.. Are you married Ndandatho? Married

women don't dress like that they cover up."

I swallow hard.

"I'm not married mama"

"Oh! The Bible principle wasn't practiced? You couldn't hold yourself huh Ndandatho? Whose gonna marry you with an extra? Don't you know this is wrong? " She furrows her brows and looks at me I swallow hard.

"Ehm mama it" I don't know what to say but I know I don't like her questions.

"Mama Ndandatho didn't come here for this please respect her"

"Go pluck out the things you need leave the baby with me. There are mosquitoes there and some leaves will leave him scratching his skin."

We nod and walk away.

Siziwe and Ngelozi indulge on a conversation but I don't I caught offence from Siziwe's mother. I hate being reminded about my lack of holding horses when my underwear was dropped. I really dislike being guilt trapped by conceiving my son out of wedlock. I don't regret having him nor granting his father access to my womb I wish people could just stop interrogating me. I loved and enjoyed mating with his father hence I hold no shame that my son happened. Wether I marry or not my son is my charm my pride and my illusion of happiness. Actually I should go fetch him and leave this place.

"Ndandatho don't mind my mother. She is like this with everyone. She's a virginity inspector you know how judgemental those women can be." Siziwe-

"I will take the corn only"

I say with defeat.

"Ndandatho I'm sorry"

"I'm just tired of people thinking I was raped or I regret ever conceiving my son. I made my choice and I think it's only fair I do me without being made inferior by those who think they are superior. Gatsha is my son not a disgrace or shame. I made him with love and I don't regret that. You will find me by the river bank. " I say heading to where mama Siziwe is seated with Gatsha singing him a senerade song.

" Can I have my baby we leaving " I say with a trembling voice.

" Are you done plucking out what you needed from the garden? "

" I finished plucking out what I needed the moment I was judged for being a mother out of wedlock."

I say picking up my son and putting him on my back.

" My daughter I didn't mean any harm I was just asking out of care not out of judgment "

" Mama with all due respect I'm sick and tired of this being brought up on my face each time I declare myself as a mother. Not every woman sees the importance of marrying and having kids in marriage I'm sick and tired of this being brought up on my face each time I declare myself as a mother. Not every woman sees the importance of marrying and having kids in marriage or better yet losing their innocence to men who will marry them. Mama I conceived this baby out wedlock because I wanted to and that doesn't mean I'm less deserving of being respected or treated just like any other woman. Virginity doesn't make a woman any superior than the other because whether you lose it out of wedlock or in marriage the state of your cervix is similar to other you are still a woman of no difference from the others. I won't allow anyone to bully me and degrade me because of the state of my cervix I made a choice and I don't think you should be interfering on my life it's mine after all not ours. " I say buckling Gatsha and walking away. Leaving Siziwe and Ngelozi startled. I push my wheelbrow with tears beaming in my eyes.

"Ndandatho!! Ndandatho!!" I don't bother to look behind me I'm

angry right now very angry. I fill my buckets with water.

"I'm sorry about what my mother did Ndandatho I'm very much sorry" Siziwe-

I look at her and drop a tear. They help me fill my buckets with silence amongst ourselves. They collect wood for me and we walk home not saying a word to each other.. When I reach my house I gently put Gatsha on the bed and pour myself cold water to bath. I wear my new garment I was gifted by the Queen I also put on my hand made beads and go discard my water. I walk back in the house and find Gatsha awake. I change his nappy and clothes. I reach for my little money and take a few papers and coins. I carry Gatsha on my back and walk out of the compound. I need some time to myself...

—

Busani

"My Prince is the King home? There's something serious we need to discuss with him. It's in connection with the east farm. "

"I'm here you can talk to me."

"My Prince there's no easy way to say this but our crops are all dead the farm is dry and deforestrating. All our hard work has gone into vanity. This is not looking good my Prince"

"What exactly happened Babo?"

"The crops are all scattered around with no sign of fruitfulness. Some leaves are decayed and some have marks and things I cannot explain nor describe my Prince. Theres nothing fruitful in our farm. At first we thought it was pests related we made use of the pesticides but then nothing worked my Prince. "

" The east farm is one of our best Babo we can't lose that side of the farm. Come show me what you talking about because right now I'm not hearing anything you saying. "

I say huffing and panting this can't be happening. We can't be losing everything all at once. This Kingdom is gonna go dry and perished it will be forgotten. If we continue having such devastating problems soon we will be seeking refugee in other Kingdoms and I hate the thought of that we can't lose this

Kingdom something needs to be done. I know my father has bad blood with King Ngcolosi but right now is not the right time to be pushing pride forward and solutions backwards. If he won't put his pride aside then I'm afraid I will go there and lay out our dirty laundry myself. I can't watch my people die of hunger and thirst. As the first child it's my duty to protect my Kingdom and save it from dying.

"See my Prince?"

"This is not good! This is not good at all. What about water? Our dams are still accumulating of water right?"

"Yes my Prince but it's the littlest of it that can only sustain us for a week or so. It's bad Shenge we need some serious saving from this."

"Tell me something I do not know Babo"

"Something needs to be done my Prince before all of this is destroyed and written down on history or better yet its extinct"

"You know what summone the farmers to rid of these dead plants. I will find ways of fixing this but I'm not promising anything."

"I will tell them my Prince." I look at him and walk home. I find Gabisile and her friend playing with water. I storm on their direction and yank their hands from the basins they holding.

"Ouch!! Busani you hurting me!!"

"Why are you playing with water Gabisile? Can't you see you wasting it?"

"Mom allowed me to do it"

"You lying Gabisile!!! Why can't you be thoughtful for once Gabisile? Use your brains or don't use anything at all!"

"I will tell you on mama and baba"

"If you continue doing this you will bath and drink from your urine that's if you will have any of that when water is a foreign thing to these grounds! Go and tell on me I don't care " I bark at her so much that she cries her friend stands there still looking at me. Mom and dad comes out running Gabisile's weeping is the reason. They spoiling this one and it annoys me.

" Busani!!! What did you do to her? " Mom-

" Something that you and your husband are failing to do mama. Why are you allowing Gabisile to play with water while we are in dire straits of it? Children her age are learning about comprising and conserving things mama not wasting the little that they have!" I roar

" She's still a child Busani you can't force her to grow up and miss out on her childhood because of our Kingdoms persecution and repercussions. Don't ever yell at my child Busani Gabi is your sister not your wife. "

"A stupid one at it!!"

"Busani you getting out of hand! You don't talk your mother like that or your sister. Know your place young man!"

"How about you do the same father? Our Kingdom is dying baba but your dear precious pride is worth restoring other than your throne. How am I gonna know my place while I'm trying to fix yours as the King and leader of these grounds? I will know my place the day you start acting like a true King not the weakling that you are father! "

I thunder lands on my cheek I tilt my head and glance at father with rage

" Do you want my other cheek father? Or this one should be enough? "

I look at him.

" Busani!! Busani stop this madness!! This is your father not your mate! " Mom-

"Boni reprimand this boy!! Reprimand him before I use that brick on him" Dad-

"Your head might use the awakening that will come with that brick father not me!"

Father gives me more and more of thunders and I just happen to careless. When his done he walks inside the house mom is infuriated but I careless..

-

My heart is aching over some beads I do not afford. I really fell in love with them and letting them go is causing me pain. I settle for cheap one's and pay for them. I'm gonna save up for these I really love them. I buy a few other important things that I need for myself and Gatsha. When I'm done I fix the cloth I'm carrying Gatsha with properly. I feel a pat on my shoulder I look behind me my eyes land on Queen Thabile of Ngwane village. She doesn't look happy to see me it's like she's trying to read me or something.

"Queen Thabile greetings"

"What brings you here?"

"I now reside this side my Queen"

"Mmmmm " She says not looking pleased.

"Ndandatho go back to Ngwane village our village is a perfect home for you and your son. Please go"

"I'm sorry my Queen but I can't do that this is where I belong"

"Is that your child? Can I look at him?"

"No problem"

"Who is responsible Ndandatho?"

"A commoner whose a gateman back in Ngwane Village."

"I wasn't born yesterday Ndandatho who is the father of this child?"

"It's not your place to know my Queen my private life is my business"

"Ndandatho I'm a your Queen and you are my servant!! Tell the truth or danger will come your way. I cannot work so hard only for you to ruin things and make my hard devotion a waste of time!! Who is the father of this child?"

"Like I said my Queen it's not your place to know who the father of my child is. You might be a Queen but this is Thuthukani village not Ngwane village I don't bow to two queens but one"

A numbing sensation lands on my cheek.

"Ndandatho I can make you disappear in a blink if an eye. If you think you gonna steal what rightfully belongs to my daughter you got another thing coming young lady! See this little illegitimate of yours? I will kill him and you included. Leave Thuthukani village and don't ever look back! "

" I'm tired of running Thabile! I've been doing much of that as far as I can remember but now it's not gonna happen not even you will and can make me run. Unless you're the one doing the running not me! I'm tired of you people playing on my head thinking I'm gonna keep quiet and obey to your stinky rules just because you are mighty and all that. I'm tired my Queen kill me if you like but my son and I are done running and we going nowhere. "

There's a commotion.

" Nomaswazi is the rightful bride to the Prince not you! "

" And I didn't dispute that. She can have Zimele that's if Zimele would love to have her. But as for me and my little man we going nowhere come thunder come storms and come hurricanes we going nowhere! Dare touch me ever again you will rue the day you've ever bumped chests on me!!! "

With that said the clouds forms and thunder shudders from a distance. Strong winds starts blowing Thabile looks at me with worry.

" You don't scare me so does your daughter I'm feed up of being a good girl now I'm switching lanes. If you strong enough ride along!! " I click my tongue and carry my little grocery with me and head home. The ran starts pouring cats and dogs there's a strong wind that's threatening to sweep houses and soils

away for some weird reasons it the rain doesn't pour on me wet nor makes me cold but rather warm. Mind you we don't have an umbrella..

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Zimele

This rain will cause me fever I just hope my son is safe and warm wherever he is. It's been a while waiting for this rain to come to an end instead of subsiding it's getting worse. Hawulesizwe and the warriors are now shivering and growing a colds skin. I'm looking at all of them as they are in dire straits all I'm worried about my son whom I might see in the next coming days. I miss him so much it's strange how my world makes sense because of that little man whose a portion of my ribs. Most importantly I miss the softness of his mother's skin I miss her touch and her fragrance. I was really looking forward to sleeping home tonight

but sadly that won't happen not when there's thunder and heavy rain.

"Hang in there warriors the storm will be over soon and all of us will be reunited with our families. Jazi hang in there warrior."

He nods and folds his arms.

"Can we use a different route Zimele instead of this one?" Hawu-

"Left is always a distraction warrior. We right on track"

"But these warriors are dying already because of this cold Zimele. Let's switch up routes surely this one will be quicker than the other."

"Warrior I'm telling you left is a distraction. That route might lead us to the devils den or better yet our rivals. We are safe here than there. Be strong and take these lashes as they are. It's just rain Hawu not a burning flame"

"This rain won't be ending anytime soon" Hawu-

"I think warrior Hawu is right Prince Zimele we can't spend a night here we gonna die of colds. And these bushes are haunted by witches and ghosts my Prince. We can't be here. My grandfather once told me many people died on these bushes back in the years when a life threatening war erupted between Umthombo village and Ngwane village. He said the ghosts of this bushes are haunting. I don't want to die Prince Zimele "Jazi-

" Jazi I know of that but we can't use left no matter how stranded we are.. Left always leads to danger and I'm not about to die and leave my son fatherless"

They all look at me mesmerized.

"A son? What son Zimele?" Jazi-

"Yeah.. What son Zimele?" Mafutha-

"The fact remains we not using that route"

They look at me.

"I can't spend a night in this bush mina I'm using an alternative"
Jazi-

"Rest in peace Warrior" I say playing with my beads. The warrior stands up and walks away within seconds we hear him groaning and pleading with us to aid him. We run there and look at him. I pull my spear out and look around.

"My leg!! My leg!!!" Jazi-

"What happened Jazi ?"

"I don't know"

"I warned you!!" I say kneeling down holding his leg.

"It's a snake bite I'm coming."

I say walking away. I pluck out leaves and blend them using a stone. I take the remedy and kneel in front of Jazi and rub it on the snake bite.

"It will heal." i take my slingshot and rearrange it to tie it around his leg to prevent the poison from traveling too far in his bloodstream.

"Do you still want to switch routes?" none of them says anything

"My guess exactly. Don't be the next Thomas"

They warriors exchanged looks.

"Hawu lets go hunt I'm hungry"

"I thought you wouldn't suggest Jali I'm starving too" Hawu-

"On what fire are you gonna prepare whatever you going to hunt down in the bushes?" Jazi-

"We shall see to that Jazi. But a plan will birth itself."

"Hurry up I'm starving too" Mafutha-

"Why don't you drain some of your fats by joining us fat one?" I tease.

"Warrior I'm exhausted we traveled the longest distance I've ever imagined of."

"I miss my wife right now" Hawu-

"Which one?" Mafutha teases.

"My wife dummy not mistress" Hawu-

"What do you miss exactly?" Jazi-

"I see where you taking this Jazi and I don't want to go there but I need her warmth." Hawu-

"I don't blame you Hawu its cold out here. Such weather's favors a blanket with eyes. " Mafutha-

I chuckle.

"Stop hurting yourselves warriors. You won't be getting any of those blankets not anytime soon" I tease.

"Warrior let's go before Mafutha dies of hunger" Hawu-

"Stay focused and alert Mafutha. We coming"

"Bring us meat not leaves" Jazi-

We turn our backs and go to the depths of these bushes while cracking up some jokes. Hawu looks at me.

"What?"

"There's a maiden working inside your parents house. What is her name?"

"How am I supposed to know Hawu?"

"I was just asking don't bite my head off"

"I was just asking nothing major. What about this maiden? "

"I see a chicken Zimele"

I look at him and chuckle.

"No Hawulesizwe that thing will cry inside our tummies. So no Khuboni"

"Zimele come on that too is food our food"

"We not having that. I don't want be walk around with a chicken crowing in my belly"

"Fine... So tell me how is Ndandatho taking the whole Nomaswazi saga?"

"Honestly speaking I don't know warrior"

"Do you think she will stay?"

"She has too cos I'm not losing her over that shark"

"The other thing? Is she showing signs already?"

"Warrior I haven't been with my love for days now thus I don't have much answers to your questions."

"Thats fair. Zimele"

"Yes.."

"Never mind"

"Talk. Hawu"

"I kinder noticed something the past few days when I was home."

"And what was that?"

"Khethiwe"

"What about her?"

"Argh! Let's change the topic.."

"Hawu what's going on?"

"It's nothing to worry yourself about"

"If you say so"

I say making a stop in a river trying my luck to catch a fish.

"Can you accompany me to Ngwane village I want to enquire about Ndandatho's parents"

"They said they picked her up Zimele meaning her true parents are unknown."

"Whom would those people be? That's my biggest question"

"It could be anyone Zimele. Your mother included"

"Stuff you Hawu"

We giggle.

"I need to find her real parents warrior"

"I got one!" He shouts pulling out his stick. There's a huge fish

stuck on his rod.

"Good thing Warrior"

"When do you want to go to Ngwane village?"

"A day after seeing them. "

"I see. I want to go see my child back home"

"We can postpone then"

"No problem warrior I got you."

"I got one too"

"Great thing warrior let's go back to the others this will be enough"

"Let's go"

Queen Thabile

I'm seated on the verenda staring on the raindrops as they collide with sand. I have so much in my head more like I'm replaying my little altercation with that commoner girl Ndandatho. Something about her words and courage scared me off. She wasn't the same girl I've always watched running around playing in the sun and dancing with my daughter Nomaswazi. She was so thirsty of blood and violence.

Ndandatho was never the kind to backchat elders she was so humble and so respectful what I saw back there wasn't the little girl who grew up wearing Nomaswazi's rags and some of her old clothes. That was a woman who is ready to fight me and bite my head off. I feel very disrespected and degraded. That child challenged me into a fight and that alone brings shivers down my

spine. How did the gods of Thuthukani village favour a commoner with their offspring? Ndandatho is not of blue blood how come she gave the Prince a son? Noma is the one who deserves to be mothering that child not some slave a poverty stricken and scruffy piece of rag. My daughter is deserving of that title. How come Queen Nozibele and Ngcolosi never disclosed this information? Something needs to be done. I have to get rid of that girl.

"Penny for your thoughts Queen mother?" My daughter in law says snapping me out of my little bubble.

"It's nothing of use my daughter"

"Mother the King is calling you inside"

"I'm coming shortly"

"No problem" She says stepping outside. I spot Madongwe walking inside to the kitchen.

"Madongwe!!!"

"My Queen"

"A minute please"

"How can I be of help my Queen?"

"Where is MamChunu?"

"She's off duty my Queen"

"I see...You used to be close my daughter Iminathi"

"Yes"

"Remember the day she walked on Noma fitting a wedding dress?"

"I remember my Queen"

"Why didn't she want Noma to marry the Prince?"

"My Queen she told me Princess Nomaswazi wasn't the chosen one for the Prince but a Princess of Umthombo"

"What Princess? Gabisile Buthelezi?"

"She never specified my Queen. She just said Noma was gonna struggle in Thukathukani because she wasn't the chosen one for Prince Zimele"

"What else did she say?"

"She said the Princess Zimele was gonna marry comes with rain and heavy storms."

"But there's only Princess Gabisile from Umthombo then the Prince Busani. How come we know nothing about the other Princess? Could it be Queen Boni had a child out of wedlock? "

"I can't answer that my Queen because I hold no knowledge of that"

"Thank you Madongwe that should be all."

"My Queen"

She bows before walking away. Mmmm could Bonise be a mother to this Ndandatho girl? If so why did Ndandatho end up being raised in Ngwane Village instead of uMthombo? If she's a

Princess I'm afraid Makhehla has to intervene. No one will cease my daughters throne not on my watch.

Ndandatho

I'm seated on my rock waiting for my students to arrive. I don't understand why they always show up late for practice. At first I let this slide but now I need to address it before things escalate to another. Ngelozi is the first to arrive followed by Phumzile and Thoko the others start coming too. The few other girls walk in slowly while laughing and discussing something that captures my attention. I look at them and without saying anything. I stand up and start pacing around waiting for them to finish whatever they discussing. The other kids see right through me that I'm infuriated they caution the other girls to stop making noise. After minutes there's pure silence. I look at them one by one I heave the longest sigh.

"Greetings young maidens"

"Greetings teacher Ndandatho" They say in unison.

"What time is it?"

They all exchange looks.

"The last time I checked I'm not talking to mute and deaf individuals. What time is it?"

"We are sorry sister Ndandatho" Ngelozizi-

"I said what time is it young maidens?"

They keep quiet.

"We are late sister Ndandatho and we are sorry" Phumzile -

"And why is it like that? Why are you late? "

They all keep quiet.

"Young ladies you do know that I am a mother right? A good one at it? I should be doing the most with the time I've wasted here while waiting for you to show up for practice leaving my son back home unattended too just to babysit and clean after your stinking attitudes! I'm talking to you and you all quiet! Who is a fool between you and myself? "

They keep quiet.

" You all lost your voices huh? Even the celebrities of this group? Who were discussing handsome warriors?" I roar. They all jump in fear that's exactly what I want.

" Since you all voiceless leave!! Go back to your houses and continue doing what you were doing before you decided to show up late go back to whatever places you were at while I was sitted here being roasted by the sun waiting for you to show up for practice. Isn't it this class is not important to you? You do as you please isn't it? Now ladies turn your backs and go back home!! Our class is over and maybe you can search for a new teacher because I Ndandatho won't settle for this? You can't even sing properly but you have the dency to show up late in class!! We done here!" I roar

" Sister Ndandatho No!! No!! Don't do this to us

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please. We are sorry!! " They all say in unison

" Now you have voices? "

" We are sorry sister Ndandatho.. My mother asked me to do laundry and that made me late but I'm sorry my sister please forgive us. " Lady-

" My Grandmother is sick sister Ndandatho I had to wait for her to sleep first before I could come here I'm sorry sister Ndandatho " Maiden-

" As for me I had to fetch wood and wash dishes at home I'm sorry I came late" maiden -

"Mina I was doing my hair and I'm sorry I came late sisi Ndandatho" Ngelozi-

"I was caught up in the royal house I'm sorry sisi Ndandatho"
Siziwe-

"What about you celebrities? Why did you come here late?" I say
staring at these two girls with my arms fold.

" The sun was too hot for us to walk sooner" She says with
attitude.

"And I didn't feel that isn't it?"

"Sister Ndandatho do you want us to faint?"

"I want more than that."

The other maidens laugh but this rudely kid rolls her eyes.

"Are you rolling your eyes at me young maiden?"

"No"

"I don't know who lied to you and told you you are pretty more
than every lady that's in here from where I'm standing I see lizard

or better yet a tortoise. I don't see a rose nor am I captivated by your looks. So young maiden never in a single day roll your owl eyes at me you hear me?" The other giggles but the lady blows her nose.

" Do you hear me? "

She nods.

" Now smile and get rid of that mask you wearing. "

The ladies laugh.

" So starting from today if you are late you don't bother showing your face maybe you can do that for good. I won't tolerate late coming and I won't tolerate divas. If you feel you are prettier than everyone else try showcasing your beauty elsewhere not here. Here we sing we dance we don't ruin a gimmicks concert or a parading show better yet we not running a day care . You all adults here you have boobs bigger than pots pubic hairs and some of you are having menses. So no one is gonna babysit you nor beg you to be here. I wont push anyone into doing anything you are not my wheelbarrows to push. If you belong here you will act like it but if you are here to flaunt your beauty or hips you are in the wrong place we don't own rods here. You can try going to where the warriors train not here. If any of you comes late tomorrow or any other day consider yourselves eliminated from this group. If you know you will be caught up just like the young maiden who said her grandmother is sick you come to me and tell me sooner not this sudden stunt. I hope we all on the same page. "

" Yes sisi Ndandatho!! "

" Better. Ngelози lead us in a song. "

I say looking at the rude maiden waiting for her to leave the group because I'm certain she won't stay long here..

Zikhali

Getting to Thuthukani village has been a struggle especially with the soil wet and slippery. It took me some serious salt rubbing for me to swallow my ego and embark on this journey. Busani's bluntness got the better of me. I'm surprised that it rained in Thuthukani but not in my village their gods are really watching over them and granting them blessings. The horses stop right in front of Ngcolosi's gate. The gate man's comes to greet and enquire about my visit. After a short while Ngcolosi permits me entrance. My cart parks outside his gate I walk inside their lavish compound.

"King Zikhali of Umthombo village greetings." Ngcolosi's youngest son bows.

"Greetings my Prince. Is your father around?"

"Yes my King I will show you in please follow me"

"Thank you young man"

I follow the son inside his father's castle. Immediately I step inside both Ngcolosi and his wife turn their heads to face me.

"Baba King Zikhali is here to see you" kid-

"Thank you Nhlonipho.. Greeting King Zikhali to what do we owe the visit?" He says putting his mug on their delicate table.

"Greetings King Zikhali" Nozi-

"Greetings beautiful Queen" I say. Ngcolosi perks his wife and leads me to a secluded chapel. He sits on his throne and looks me as I'm seated on simple chair.

"Zikhali what brings you here?"

"I need your help Ngcolosi"

"What help?"

"My Kingdom is suffering from hunger and thirst. My soil is losing its fertility coverage. My dams are going dry and livestock are dying Ngcolosi that's where you come in Jali"

"How can I be of help Zikhali?"

"I need water and food"

"Zikhali I don't have much myself if I give you and your people a portion of my people's needs that will put many other villagers in risks of suffering hunger and thirst. I can't do that"

"You owe me that much Ngcolosi actually it's your fault my Kingdom is suffering from hungers."

"Here we go again Zikhali! Stop pointing fingers on me!"

"Where am I supposed to point them Ngcolosi?"

"Zikhali don't bring up bygones. What happened back then wasn't my fault you know that as well."

"Ngcolosi I'm giving you two good days to bring water and food supplies on my Kingdom if you don't there's gonna be a price to pay. Bonisile will know about what really happened to her daughter and whose to blame for her getting killed in a war!."

"You won't step on my compound and threaten me Zikhali! This is my territory my turf and my rules. I won't sit here and listen to you bicker about a child I've never killed Zikhali. Nor do I know her name if you done talking get out"

I chuckle.

"You chose not to remember her name Ngcolosi not that you don't remember her name. Like I said you owe me that much Ngcolosi tick tock.. The clock is beeping"

"I won't do that! I won't bow to you Zikhali I don't owe you anything. Just accept your Kingdom is collapsing and going dry. Don't pin your gods ignorance on me. I never killed your daughter. "

"That's what you kept on saying but deep down you know it's your fault I lost my rain Princess daughter."

"This is hilarious Zikhali!!"

He says stepping up.

"I will only offer a helping hand when your stinking attitude is dispersed!" He stands up and walks away. I walk out of his chapel. I mistakenly push aside a young maiden whose holding a baby. I say sorry without looking at her and walk to my cart. Ngcolosi is evoking me I wish he can take accountability for once that my daughter died because of him. Had he come in time to the location I had told him to go at my daughter wouldn't have died. But he won't take responsibility that he stood me up and betrayed me.

Ndandatho

This man...As fat as I am he decides not see me? I nearly fell for christ sake after he pushed me like aside like I was a leaflet. These royal people can be arrogant at times to my annoyance. But I won't argue I'm exhausted. I start making fire outside I want to bath and then bath Gatsha. Siziwe walks in holding a live hen and vegetables on her other hand.

"Sisi Ndandatho"

"Greetings sisi"

"Am I disturbing?"

"No my sister I'm just trying to make fire. I want to bath and go to bed. You can sit down"

"Thank you.. Mama sent me to you"

"Oh!" Only those words escape my mouth. I don't even bother to ask what she wanted.

"She said I must give this hen and vegetables as a token of apologizing for what she did or said to you. She said she's sorry and that she didn't mean to hurt you"

I look at her.

"The hen is pregnant sisi Ndandatho soon it will hatch. She said this is Gatsha's investment"

I giggle.

"Gatsha knows nothing about chickens and eggs. Thank you"

"She said you must make bread with these."

"Tell your mama I said thank you and that I've forgiven her. Thank you my sister. Do you want a cup of tea?"

"No I'm fine my sister"

"No way.. I'm giving you tea Siziwe"

She giggles.

"I think I saw warrior Hawu and the other warriors"

"Oh! Where?"

"By the river they heading back"

"Oh that's beautiful"

I say in joy thinking of Zimele's face.

"You must be excited about your crush coming back home unharmed."

"Sisi Ndandatho stop it."

"I think I'm gonna cook this hen"

"No Ndandatho it's pregnant didn't you hear that?"

"I need a chicken Siziwe i think I need to cook up a simple meal"

"Why do you have to do that sisi Ndandatho?"

"That's because I want to dish up for my brother"

"I will go buy one by Bubuza's house."

"Buy a fat one. I will start with cooking pap and these spinach leaves. Here that should be enough"

I say giving her my last coins. She runs to Bubuza's house. I want to feed my man today I'm certain his been dying for a home cooked meal. I want to bath and smell fresh too so he can hold me and if I'm lucky I might make love to him tonight. I quickly chop my spinach leaves with care and negligence. I start cooking the leaves and the pap while boiling some water on the side for the chicken. Siziwe walks in holding the kitchen. She helps me to

slaughter it and pluck out the feathers. Minutes later we chopping it and putting it inside the pot I put pinch of salt and water. I quickly tidy up my room I bath Bangiziwe and myself while Siziwe is minding the pots. I now smell fresh and aromatic my lavender butter oil smells divine.

"Mmmm.. You smell good Ndandatho"

"Thank you Siziwe"

"I should get going sisi Ndandatho I don't want your brother finding me here"

"You going nowhere young maiden we eating this food together and we gonna gaze on the stars together."

"Hha Ndandatho I can't"

"Speak of the devil.."

"God! Do I look good maybe?"

"Very good babe"

"Greetings maidens" Hawu says with his husky voice behind him there's Zimele. They have grown some hair on their beards and heads. He looks at me and says nothing only his eyes does the talking.

"Greeting warrior" Siziwe-

"Greeting Bhuti" I say with a smile. Zimele walks towards me and opens his arms for me. I walk to him with a smile on my face.

"Prince Zimele greetings" Siziwe-

"Greetings my sister. I'm hungry Ndandatho" Zimele-

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Zimele

"I'm hungry Ndandatho"

"I will dish up shortly"

"I'm not talking about that kind of hunger mama kaGatsha"

"Zimele we have guests"

"I know but I need to be fed woman."

"I will feed you but for now can I feed you food?"

"Please save me before I collapse"

"With pleasure." She flashes me a smile.

She later appears with a bowl of water and a cloth. She kneels in front of me with her head bowed. She moves to Hawu and does the same thing. We rinse our hands and wipe them. She gives

Siziwe the bowl to rinse her hands as well. She comes back with a tray carrying two plates she again kneels and serves us. A tingling feeling engulfs my chest I glue my eyes on her.

"Thank you Ndanda" I say.

"Pleasure"

"Thank you Lil sisi" Hawu-

"Pleasure Bhuti Sisi Siziwe here's your food"

"Thank you sisi Ndandatho. Do you mind if I carry this plate with me? I will bring it tomorrow" Siziwe-

"Don't leave because of us maiden eat your food don't mind us"
Hawu-

She keeps quiet and eats her food. Ndandatho shows up with her plate and sits next to Siziwe. Hawu and myself wipe our plates clean.

"There's more if you not full" Ndandatho -

"Please dish up for me" Hawu-

"I'm making room for later" Hawu giggles Ndandatho gazes on me without blinking. Siziwe finishes her food and asks to be excused saying it's late and she needs to go home.

"Please prepare bathing water for me Maka Gatsha shall you finish eating"

"No problem. Bhuti Hawu would you like some?"

"Yes please"

"Please hold him for a little while" She says handing me Gatsha.
She pours water in a pot and comes back to eating her food.

"Who cooked?"

"Me"

"Wow!! You out did it. I didn't you know you can cook"

"I try"

"Hawu finish eating Ndoda." I say. The bloody mood killer giggles.

"I'm not leaving Zimele not today"

"Maka Gatsha please kick him out"

"No his my brother I can only kick you out"

"That hurts" I say gazing on her eyes she swallow hard and clears her throat.

"How was your training?"

"Tiring and draining." Hawu-

"We were starved in all aspect" She looks at me.

"You were not eating?"

"We were eating don't mind Zimele" Hawu-

"Hawu aren't you done eating?"

"Yooh Zimele! I get the memo.. Nda you will fetch the plate tomorrow Good night"

"And your hot water?"

"I didn't fall on my way back thank you dearest sister" I giggle so does Ndandatho.

"Let's go inside"

"Let's wait for your water to heat up"

"You will find us inside."

"I will join you shortly I want to collect these and put them inside the house."

"Don't take forever."

"I won't"

I say stepping inside the house. I play with Gatsha for a little while I feel a sweet slumber approach. I close my eyes and nap.

"Zimele you're water is getting cold wake up" I feel tiny hands gently shaking me.

"Zimele!!"

"I'm tired I will bath in the morning" I say with my eyes closed.

"Honey wake up you need to bath. The are soothing and relaxing herbs and oils inside your water wake up please"

"Fine" I say rubbing my eyes. I sit on my butt and put my right leg on the floor then my left leg.

"Use my bathing cloth"

"Thank you" I say undressing. I reach for her lavender soap and grease my face I wash my body while she's looking at me. Minutes later she takes my water and disappears outside. She walks back inside and locks her door.

"Hello beautiful" I say greeting her while buttering my body with her aromatic fragranced body lotion.

"Greetings my love" She says making the bed.

"I missed you"

"Same here I was dying of loneliness" She says walking towards me.

Ndandatho

I sneak on him and wrap my hands around his waist. I plant a sloppy kiss on his back. I move my hands on his manly nipples and gently pull them.

"Are you Okay?"

"Yes I'm fine" I assure him and move my one hand on to his wand I gently brush it while planting sloppy kisses on his sun kissed body. I swallow hard as I feel his wand expanding in my hand.

"You've been starved isn't it my lady?"

"Yes its been a while my love"

"I'm sorry.. I'm almost done"

"Zimele..."

"Yes"

"Is it possible for it to be licked? The same way as you lick mine?"
God! What are you saying Ndandatho? That's an abomination this thing is for peeing and making babies not be licked like a lollipop. Gogo is surely turning in her grave after hearing you say this. Who sucks and licks manly sticks? I'm slowly becoming a Delilah in Zimele's life.

He chuckles.

" You want to lick it? "

" Ye.. Yes"

"Well we can give it a try My love surely it won't be that of a problem. I would love that by the way"

"Isn't it gross though?"

He chuckles.

"I always lick yours njena my love"

He says buttering his face.

"If you not comfortable you don't have to do it Ndandatho you're not obligated my charm. Did anyone give you a trouble while I was away?"

"I dealt with my troublemakers. Are you done?"

"How did you deal with them?"

"I dealt with them accordingly. Zimele finish up"

"I'm almost done you can't wait any further?"

"Yes..."

I say moving my hand to his belly.

"Zimele"

"Yes"

"How would you feel if I.. I"

I stutter..

"If you what my love?"

"Never mind my love.. Come to bed"

I say pulling his hand to bed. His wand is already standing blame it on me for rubbing it. Now the biggest question is where am I gonna start with licking this? What if It sticks on my throat and never comes out? How am I gonna talk to my son or the King or Queen? What if he spills his seeds inside my throat and his kids start haunting me? That would be yucky I can't do this. As much as I wanted to give him pleasure but sucking his wand is uncalled for.

"You don't have to do it if you not ready"

"Ehm.. I can do it my love" I faintly smile. He chuckles.

"In everything you do don't bite me Maka Gatsha"

"I won't my love" I say playing with it again while looking at him. I go down on knees and glance at Zimele.

"Honey come here forget about doing that. Come to bed I'm hungry woman. " He says drawing my face nearer to his. He tilts his head on the side and sucks on my lower lip I suck on his upper lip. He makes me sit on his lap as we share a butterfly kiss. He moves his hand to the knot I've tied on my cloth he unties it and rolls it down. He cups my boobs and pinch my nipples making my body to convulsed. He stops kissing me and leaves sloopy kisses on my neck. I whimper softly and I rest my one hand on his other lap.

"Zimele..."

"Yes..."

"I missed you my love I kept on thinking and worrying about you"

"I missed you more my baby. I'm home now you don't have to worry about me. Sit on top of me with your legs spread apart"

I sit on top of him and spread my legs apart. My privates are very close to his.

He shoves one of my breasts in his mouth and suck it seductively. I put my hand behind his head. I kiss his neck. I feel his finger invade my privates he rubs my sensitive genetials.

"Zimele..."

"Yes baby"

"I love that don't stop"

"I wasn't gonna stop honey"

He stimulates my clitoris I feel it expand and making tinglish movement. He slides a finger in and out I suck on his neck to prevent a moan from coming out. He repeats that. He tortures me till my body trembles He slips his finger out and licks it while looking at me.

"You taste sweet. You wanna have a taste?"

"No my love"

He chuckles.

"Were you practicing your chords today?"

"Yes we had practice"

"What notes were you singing?"

"I sang a high no Sehranmagzine.comah!!!" I whimper as a hard snake enters my folds.

"You were still talking."

"I sang.. I sang a high note Zimele..." I bite hard on my lower lip.

"It's hot in here Ndandatho what did you drink or put?"

"Nothing."

"It's hot my love and I think I'm gonna release any minute from now" He says moving me up and down on top of his shaft. This position is a little bit uncomfortable I feel like his slicing my womb with his wand. This position is making it hard for me to enjoy this snake is reaching for my belly.

"Zimele please stop! Can I lay flat on the bed."

"Why my love? I can't stop now"

"It's a bit uncomfortable this snake is reaching for my belly.

"Zimele please stop! Can I lay flat on the bed."

"Why my love? I can't stop now"

"It's a bit uncomfortable your wand is poking my belly"

"I'm sorry but I can't stop"

He says with a smoky voice with his eyes closed.

"Zimele!!"

"Honey please"

"It's big Zimele"

He quickly puts me on the bed and does his thing. My legs are dangling in the air taking his strokes as they are. He cums and continues. His one hand is covering my mouth I must've been loud.

"You hot Ndandatho!! It's hot in there I can't stop! Oh God!! Nda.. Nda.. " his been saying this for quite some time now. I'm tired already I wish he can stop..

Boni

"How did it go with Ngcolosi?"

"His a son of a bitch."

"Meaning? How did it go Zikhali?"

"I knew going to his place was a waste of time but you couldn't stop nagging me and whining alongside with your son Bonisile!! That man doesn't care about anyone else but himself! "

"What did he do Zikhali? Just say the damn thing!"

"He is ruthless and boastful! He said he won't help us"

"You must've said something that evoked him Zikhali!"

"So you taking his side Maka Busani?"

"It's not like you giving me solid reasons to side with you Zikhali"

"Who is your husband Sbonisile? Me or that murder?"

"Zikhali sleep before I loose my temper because right now you being melodramatic baba ka Gabisile and guess what? It's annoying me!!"

"Fine Bonisile!! Since I'm annoying and he isn't why don't you ask him about our daughter!!!"

"Zikhali hold it right there!! This hate of yours towards Ngcolosi is driving you crazy!! Don't bring up my daughter on your nonsense! I will talk to Ngcolosi myself since you catching feelings over idiotic things Zikhalyzezizwe"

"Don't use that tone with me Bonisile!! I won't tolerate that tone!! Ngcolosi is the reason our daughter died!! But if you want to side with him over me fine Bonisile! I'm going to my mother's house that's where I will sleep tonight"

"Go Zikhali!! But Don't be surprised when you find another man occupying your side of the bed! What kind of a man leaves his wife alone in bed at night time? Hamba Zikhali and don't set foot in this bedroom!!" I roar and pull a blanket over on my head. The door slams i bite hard on my lip and push back my tears. If there's one thing common between Zikhali and Ngcolosi it's their stubbornness and boastfulness. None of them is willing to put their guards down Zikhali is even worse. He doesn't beg that's the kind of arse hole he is. The door swings open he sneaks on me and sleeps behind me.

"Switch off the bulb"

He stands up and switch it off..

"Im sorry." I choose to ignore him and turn my back on him.

"Boni I'm talking you"

"I want to sleep Zikhali not to argue with you"

"I'm sorry"

"Say that without touching me"

"I can not do that you're mine Boni"

"Zikhali don't start with me Zikhali! I will scream"

"I'm sorry I will go back and humble myself"

"Can I handle it this time around if not Busani"

"I will handle it Boni I will go back myself."

"Zikhali anithelelani amanzi I will go myself"

"We will go together"

"Fine"

"I said don't touch me Zikhali."

"Don't act like you don't want it"

"I don't want anything mina. I want to go the market and buy Nozibele's grandson a clothing or container to eat. I promised to buy the baby something"

"We will go together."

"I didn't know Zimele married"

"His not married he just has a son"

"And Ngcolosi allows that? Some King he is"

I turn to face him.

"Leave Ngcolosi alone Zikhali. You impregnated me before we married don't judge people.."

"But the fact remains I married you"

"I was five months pregnant already. You married me to hide your shame."

"You liked things Boni don't blame me"

I roll my eyes and move closer to him. He puts his hand on my tummy. We both keep quiet.

"I still wonder how my baby would've turned out. Surely she was gonna after your stubbornness and maybe your beauty"

He smiles.

"She was beautiful Zikhali. She had your pointy nose and eyes then my complexion and obviously my hair. I don't know about the body and the singing part." I add.

"She would've been sweeter than this brother of hers. Busani is something else"

"He takes after you Zikhali. Ndanda would've been stubborn too. First borns inherits the bad habits."

"No way I'm not stubborn you are Boni."

"Your daughter would've married Zimele had she been alive"

I tease and giggle.

"Over my dead body!! I would've fought with everything in me for her not to marry in that family"

"Zikhali your father hated my father but look what we did! We ended up sneaking into each other's house to steal moments of pleasure. Your daughter Ndandatho would've married Zimele to make things worse she could've followed in my footsteps falling pregnant out of wedlock at 23 years old"

"Ndandatho would've married in Germany my wife. Not here in the villages"

I laugh. We never discuss her and that's my fault.

"What if she's alive Zikhali?"

"If so we can find her and bring her home"

"A woman from Ngwane once told me I looked familiar."

"Really?"

"Yes my love. She's a domestic worker a cook in Thabile's house"

"That means she knows our baby. What if the hair mama Ngcolosi brought here was Ndandatho's hair?"

We both look at each other.

"We should summon Mehlemamba"

"I think she lives Boni this is exactly what I've been trying to say"

"But how could she have survived if that was the case?"

We both don't know. We snuggle and talk a little more about this.

Zimele

Shes facing the other direction nesting our boy. Her butt is poking my wand. We had way too much already I don't think I will play again.

"Ouch!!" She cringes.

"What's going on?"

"His biting me"

"He doesn't have teeth though how possible is that?"

"His gums are biting me."

"Sorry my flower."

"Thank you Bhengu"

"Did mom give you those women lessons as she promised?"

"She was occupied we didn't get time. But Mama Ngelozi did"

"What did she say?"

"Ehm.. It's something hilarious my love"

"She taught you about licking wands didn't she?" I tease.

"No.. She said something else"

"And what did she say?"

"I can't say it Zimele"

"You can trust me what did she say?"

"She thinks I'm pregnant my love."

"Oh! Is she being accurate maybe?"

"I don't know Zimele but one thing I'm certain about is that I don't want a second baby not now."

"My love you are not in position to be saying that especially after the countless love making session's we were having in here. I think she's telling the truth"

"Jali Gatsha is still a baby we can't have another baby while we struggling with this one. I can't mother two babies. If really I'm pregnant I can't raise this one Zimele. I will get herbs to.. To"

"To what Ndandatho?"

"To clean my womb"

"Excuse me? Can you repeat what you just said surely I didn't gasp that one correctly"

"I want to clean my womb Zimele."

"You mean you want to kill my child? The future Prince or Princess of Thuthukani Kingdom? Huh Ndandatho?"

"Don't make noise Zimele walls have ears."

"Don't tell me about walls that have ears!! You will do no such thing Ndandatho. If you are nurturing a Jali offspring you won't be cleaning any womb. Unless you signing your death I clean your womb by piercing my spear on your chest that's not a joke!!"

" Zimele try to understand. I really can't be a mother of two out of wedlock I can't go around giving you babies knowing our future might never happen. Already I have people laughing behind my back having a second baby will do more damage. I can't Zimele "

I chuckle and sit on my butt.

"Are you hearing yourself Ndandatho?"

"It's a good thing to do"

"Shut up!!! Just shut up!!! Zip that mouth of yours before I get more infuriated! You want me to understand a murder? Don't insults my ancestors! If there's a baby in there we gonna wait for him or her to be born no short cut will be taken into consideration. You won't wipe out my baby Ndandatho? If you want to kill that baby start by killing Gatsha. So I will know I don't have any kids with you. I can't kiss a murder!! You are no different from a witch Ndandatho to even think of that "

"Zimele"

"No! Don't Zimele me!"

She sniffs while breastfeeding Gatsha.. I look at her and blow my nose.

"When last did you get your monthly menses?"

She keeps quiet.

"We will talk in the morning since you grumpy"

She sniffs all night long. The next morning I leave her chambers and go to the main house with thoughts in my head. If Ndandatho is pregnant again then I'm doomed with my parents. Father will slaughter me and skin me alive if really she's pregnant. I find my grandmother sipping tea.

"Greetings gogo"

"Greetings naughty boy"

"Gogo can I ask you something"

"How is the Princess doing?"

"She's not my business gogo I care less about her. Can I ask you a question"

She chuckles.

"Go on Zimele"

"Never mind Gogo I'm sorry to waste your time"

"I wonder what mess have you made this time around"

"Gogo I did nothing wrong"

"How is the little one doing? I sew a blanket for him. Tell his mother to come and collect it."

"I will gogo"

I leave her busy and go to the kitchen. I find Bubu and Nomaswazi having a little chat that's accompanied by laughter. Noma screams when she sees me she spreads her arms out getting ready for an embrace. I dodge her hug and reach for an apple. I walk outside to think things through. No matter what happens Ndandatho cannot take those herbs. Actually I'm going to her house. I find her sweeping her compound while Gatsha is on her back.

"Morning"

"Hi"

"Can we discuss what you told me yesterday"

"I'm sweeping Zimele"

"Pause please."

"The sun will be blazing hot by the time you done talking"

She says sweeping. Siziwe shows up with a tray of food.

"Who cooked Sizi?"

"Princess Noma and Bubu"

"Please throw that away"

"Why my Prince"

"You can leave"

"My Prince" She bows and walks away. I reach for the food and discard it right where Ndandatho just swept. She Glaze on me with a frown jotted on her beautiful face. She comes to pick up the dirt and toss it aside. She washes her hands. She gathers two water containers and put them inside a wheelbarrow. She pushes it out of the compound. I follow her till we outside the royal house. I gently pull her hand.

"What!?"

"I love you and I hate it when you're troubled and angry"

"Leave me alone Zimele I'm trying to process what you trying to put me through!! I hardly slept last night because of you and your selfish plea!!"

"Are you really serious about wanting to kill our baby Ndandatho?"

"Zimele I'm a commoner!! A whole nobody!! Giving you another baby won't change anything! I will remain a royal mistress that happens to have two illegitimate kids! But you won't understand because you are royalty Zimele nobody will blame you but me!! For throwing myself on you! Why didn't you pull out? "

" Fighting won't take us nowhere.. If you pregnant we raising both our kids let's go! " I say pushing the wheelbrow on her behalf...

Our walk to the riverside isn't a pleasant one. It's filled with silence confusion frustrations and sadness. I can barely look at the man who holds all tinny parts of my heart and soul. Each time I look at him I feel mixed emotions I really can't begin to describe how I feel about Zimele right now. I don't understand his eagerness for us to parent a second baby as hard as it is with our first child. I was negligent honestly I have been so focused and fixated on pleasure instead of considering pregnancy. I was so careless and so naive but a part of me shifts the blame on my mother it was her duty to teach me about adulting and how to prevent such from happening but now it's vanity to be crying over split milk.

" Give me that jag I will fill the container"

"I have hands Zimele and I'm capable"

"Can you suck it up already? Cut the pride Ndandatho I'm trying

to help"

"You've done way too much helping lately Zimele! You've been very very helpful to me Zimele"

"Ndandatho stop being dramatic please!"

"I'm not being dramatic Zimele! I'm not being dramatic you jinxed things Warrior!"

"My love can you stop doing this to yourself it has happened Ndandatho and you need to make peace with it. This is really unnecessary we both at fault for what happened. Bring that jag and go sit down on that rock please honey."

"No.."

"Babe come on please"

"Keeping busy is preventing me from over thinking what awaits me and Gatsha so let me be Zimele"

"What awaits you and my son Ndandatho?"

"We leaving.."

"Excuse me?"

"That's final Zimele. That's the only way I will raise your offsprings by being far away from you and your people"

"I won't be pulled by my nose by a woman Ndandatho. That's not happening! No child of mine will be raised in the wilderness not when I'm alive! Abort that thought immediately my lady "

"I've made up my mind Jali and there's no backing out "

"If you want to leave do it alone Ndandatho Don't drag my

children into this."

I spot Nhlonipho and Ngelozi pushing a wheelbarrow coming to us.

"I love you Ndandatho"

I look at him and say nothing.

"Greetings sister Ndandatho and Prince Zimele" Ngelozi-

"Greetings brother and greetings sister Ndandatho and greetings warrior Bangizwe" Nhlonipho -

We greet them back. Ngelozi and Nhlonipho engage on a topic that I care less about. Zimele fills up my water container while I am lost in a world of my own. I feel a strange movement on my abdomen accompanied by pain. I cringe and try to soothe the pain by massaging my abdomen. Zimele is looking at me I'm tempted to show him my middle finger but the crazily in love maiden whose within me melts at his glance but not to obviously for him to see. Bangi starts crying. I unbuckle my son and breastfeed him. Zimele comes to sit besides me and brush his child's curly hair. With his eyes fixed on me.

"Are you Okay?"

I nod.

"You lying. What's going on my love?"

He says moving his hand from Gatsha to my thigh. I look at Nhlonipho and Ngelozi. Unfortunately they not watching nor are they listening instead they are laughing and filling up their containers young love. How sweet of them.

" I'm fine "

" Can I see you later?"

"No"

"Why not Ndandatho?"

"This is not the right place Zimele"

"Why don't you want to see me later Ndandatho?"

"I want my space"

"And I'm gonna take that up? I want to talk not to undress you Ndandatho!"

"Don't yell at me Zimele"

I say between my teeth looking at him. He stands up and starts pushing the wheelbarrow heading to the royal house. I walk behind everyone plucking out grass stems to playfully craft something out of them. We reach the royal house we bump chests with the Queen and gogo. I greet them so does everyone. Gogo looks at me and then my stomach she shakes her head.

"Excuse me" Zimele-

"It's a pleasure seeing you Ndandatho see you later" The Queen disappears. I'm now left with gogo.

"I have to go ma it's a pleasure seeing you"

"Are you Okay?" Gogo-

"I'm very well thanks my Queen and how are you?"

"You not okay Ndandatho but I won't force you into it. I have something for you in the house. Come to me when you get time"
Gogo-

"I will mother"

"You are glowing."

"Thank you gogo"

I say walking to my private chamber. I tidy the house and wash dishes. I neatly place my water containers outside. I wash nappies and then my clothes. I boil water for my son he needs a bath. I wash his body and then mine. I later start with making corn steamed bread. The pain I left earlier on resurfaces again. Bubu walks in my compound. She greets me with worry written on her face as she finds me creasing my forehead succumbing to the anguish I'm feeling right now.

"Nda are you okay?"

"I think so.." I say biting my lower lip.

"Ndandatho you sweating are you okay?"

"Yes I'm fine." I say walking to the verenda. She follows me and sits down besides me. She puts her hand on my forehead.

"You extremely hot Ndandatho."

I faintly look at her.

"What's going on?"

"It's nothing serious"

"Nda are you okay like very very okay?"

"I would rather not discuss it Bubu. I have somewhere to go"

"And where is that?"

"Home"

"Which home? Ngwane village?"

"No.."

"Ndandatho we are friends right?"

"Yes"

"Now talk to me what's going on?"

"Somethings are better off unspoken"

"You talking in riddles"

I can't tell anyone about being pregnant with a second baby. I only want to talk to my mother and God knows I'm going to mama. I need her and Khethiwe right now and maybe a little bit of Lungelo's sarcasm and hilarious questions.

"I have to go"

"You want me to leave Ndandatho?"

"Please Bubuza I have to prepare for the road"

"I see" She says standing up leaving my chambers. I take a container and put my corn bread inside. I can't visit mama with empty hands. I haven't seen her in while now I guess being home will distract me a little from what's currently happening..

Zimele

I'm laying on my bed with my knees up and my eyes staring into blank airspace. I don't know how am I gonna spill such beans to my parents. A soft knock comes to my door.

"Ngena.." I say faintly. The door swings open.

"Aibo Zimele sleeping during the day? Who did you knock up?"

Dad says laughing sarcastically as he makes himself at home by sitting on my bed.

"No one baba" I say clearing my throat.

"Only a man who made someone's daughter a mother sleeps during the day son. How are you?"

"I'm fine baba and how are you?"

"I'm fine son. A little bird told me you are around"

"I came back last night baba"

"I see... How is your son and his mother doing?"

"They all good baba and how is your wife doing Jali?"

"My wife is a chirpy son just like a morning bird. I'm a good husband I'm feeding your mom in all aspects son. Are you feeding Ndandatho?"

He gives me his dirty look. I look aside.

"She's fine baba"

"And why the grumpy face Zimele? Son are you making love or you being deprived of it? Your long face says a lot. I told you to mate with that maiden since you won't mate with Noma" he sarcastically laughs.

"Baba please"

"Son Bury your head between a woman's thighs and stop pulling a long face."

"Baba I do that a lot I'm just exhausted and sleepy"

"Zimele"

"Baba"

"You impregnated?"

"No baba"

I swallow hard.

"That's a relief and keep things like that. Zikhali was here a couple of days ago"

"Regarding?"

"There's a crisis in his Kingdom. Their Kingdom is becoming non-existent"

"And how is that our business?"

"That's my biggest question too son. I hate the fact that he disrespected me. He was forcing me into helping him and his people"

"What motivated him into thinking we can help him and his people? Zikhali has fix this on his own our hands are tied."

"We can assist his people son we have enough to sustain three Kingdoms but with Zikhali I want him for once to take his bitterness and resentments out of the shuffling panel. His so arrogant and disrespectful he can't come to my castle and demand me that was uncalled for"

"So is his eldest son. I guess the apple doesn't fall far from its tree."

Dad looks at me as I yawn.

"You acting strange Zimele. What's going on son?"

"It's nothing baba"

"Mmmm... It's nothing? So you say.." He says looking at me. He

leaves my chamber and I resort to sleeping.

"Oohhhh!! Ohhhh!! Zimele!!"

"Ndandatho is that you?"

"Yes my love!! It's me baby!! Hold me please"

"Like this?"

"Yes honey

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that was uncalled for"

"So is his eldest son. I guess the apple doesn't fall far from its tree."

Dad looks at me as I yawn.

"You acting strange Zimele. What's going on son?"

"It's nothing baba"

"Mmmm... It's nothing? So you say.." He says looking at me. He leaves my chamber and I resort to sleeping.

"Oohhhh!! Ohhhh!! Zimele!!"

"Ndandatho is that you?"

"Yes my love!! It's me baby!! Hold me please"

"Like this?"

"Yes honey like that! Oooh!!! My prince!!! My Prince!!!!"

She says splashing saliva on my face all in the name of kissing.
This is so unlike Ndandatho..

Ndandatho

The sun is blazing hot Gatsha isn't making this journey any easier. My baby is fat and carrying him on my back is starting to drain me. I go lean against a tree to catch some breathe. After a little while I keep on walking up the cliff. Sweat is seeping from hair to my cheeks my breathing is heavy. My throat is dry I need to seep some liquid if not I will collapse I just pray I find a river nearby. I bump into young girls carrying water containers on their head. One of them fixes her eyes on me she looks at the other. Their eye contact says what their mouths wont say.

"Greetings young maidens"

"Greetings"

"I'm sorry to bother you but can you please offer me water? I'm thirsty please"

"We don't have a proper container to pour you water"

"Don't be silly young ladies I can use that container it's fine by me. Please"

"No problem" They give me water to drink.

"Thank you ladies"

"Are you Gabisile and Busani's sister?"

"No.. I'm Ndandatho and my siblings reside in Ngwane. Thank you beautiful maidens"

"But you look like Boni"

"Who is Boni?" I ask them while buckling Gatsha properly.

"You don't know Queen Boni?"

"No.. Does she know me maybe?" I say less interested on the conversation held.

"She's a Queen in uMthombo village Busani and Gabisile are his children and her husband is King Zikhali. You resemble them especially the Queen. "

I chuckle.

"I don't know her my sisters. Thanks for water God bless you"

"Thank you Ndandatho"

I smile at them and walk home.

Mama Maseko

"Lungelo Hhayi!!!! Hhayi!!! How many times am I supposed to cation you about washing the dish you've used? Take that plate and go wash it!"

I say annoyed by her carelessness.

"Get up Lungelo!!"

She does as instructed. I carry the bucket of warm water to Khethiwe's cabinet. She needs to bath so is her son Mlingo. She gave birth a couple of days after Ndandatho left. Talking of her I miss my daughter. I need to visit her.

"Khethi"

"Mama"

"How are you my daughter?"

"We doing fine mama just that I havent slept in days. Mlingo stays awake at night"

"I'm sorry my daughter with time it's gonna change"

"I don't see myself giving you a second grandchild mama"

"I wouldn't blame you my daughter"

"Yes... Is Hawu coming tody?"

"I don't know my child. Did he say he was coming?"

"Not really mama I just miss my husband"

"It's okay my daughter he will come home"

I hear Lungelo screaming outside I reach for a spear behind Hawu's door.

"I'm coming my daughter"

I walk outside ready for war to my surprise she's screaming out of joy we have a guest my one and only daughter Ndandatho. I also join Lungelo in Joy. We embrace each other. She hands me a container saying it's bread. How I love her cooking. She goes inside to greet gogo then Khethi. Ndandatho is looking good she looks well nourished. I suppose being nearer to her lover is bringing her joy and peace.

"Ndandatho is this you?"

"It's me mama in a flesh" She giggles.

"You look beautiful and healthy my daughter. What is Ngcolosi and Nozibele feeding you?" Me-

"She looks different mama like she's glowing!" Lungelo-

She shyly smile. I know that smile.

"Nothing mama. Maybe I'm at peace"

She says with her smile disappearing.

"Lungelo dish up for your sister."

"Hello Ndandatho how are you?" Khethiwe says with a broad smile.

"I'm fine my sister how's the baby doing?"

"I hardly sleep my sister Mlingo is sucking me dry. I can't begin to explain my sleeping routine" Kheth

"Chronicles of a mother" Nda

"I wish I was given lessons on how to not make a baby."

We giggle.

"Let me leave you two to catch up because right now I can see you want to bond."

I giggle and leave them to it.

Khethiwe

Mama did well by leaving. I'm not a venting kind of person but right I need my sisters shoulder to cry on. Marriage isn't flashy and all gold shit is going on my side. Ndandatho did well by visiting home. Lungelo walks in with her food and tells us she has practice and that she will see us later. Ndandatho and myself are seated on the bed with silence amongst ourselves. Gatsha is with mama.

"How have you been?" I ask.

She looks at me and heaves a sigh.

"Honestly speaking things were going fine till last night"

"What happened last night Ndandatho?"

"There's no easy way to say this my sister but my life has made yet another u-turn Khethi"

"I don't follow. What happened Ndandatho?"

She looks at me with glassy eyes. I stand up and walk to her. I rub her shoulder because I know a minute from now gashes of water will escape from her eyelids.

"I messed up Khethiwe. For a girl whose an orphan I was careless and naive to have let things to get this far. I have no one but myself Khethiwe and having another baby is just going bring me more misery than it did with Bangizwe"

She says weeping.

"Nda!!"

I look at her..

"I'm pregnant Khethiwe"

"Ndandatho kodwa!! Why didn't you ask me about herbs to prevent that? And who is responsible?"

"I haven't been honest with you my sister about Bangizwe's father"

"Who is the father?"

"The baby I'm carrying and Gatsha they are both Zimele Jali's children"

"Now this is a bombshell Ndandatho! You just dropped a grenade right into my ears. You say you did what? Zimele Jali? A Prince Ndandatho? Tell me this is all a joke"

"It's not a joke Khethi. The man I've been always telling you about was Zimele Jali. I didn't know he was a Prince"

"Wow!!! Just when I thought my love life was mess more than everybody else's then my sister drops such a bombshell. Two kids Ndandatho for the Prince? Out of wedlock? Do you really think he will marry you?"

"He won't marry me and I'm fine with that. I need herbs Khethiwe"

"What herbs Ndandatho?"

"Herbs to.. To.. To terminate the preg.."

I don't wait for her to finish her statement.

"ABOMINATION!!! ABOMINATION!!! May the gods punish you for even saying that Ndandatho!!! Uyasangana Ndandatho?"

"Khethi put yourself In my shoes please"

"What shoes? You mean the size you bought knowing it wasn't yours to wear? Ndandatho had you told me the truth from the beginning that you were sleeping with Zimele I would've shown you herbs to prevent the pregnancy but you acted all hollier than

thou each time I enquired about the man behind Gatsha. You won't terminate that baby Ndandatho you made him or her and now live with your choice. When Zimele was on top you were crying isn't it? Namanje dance to his tune Ndandatho "

" You being insensitive Khethiwe "

" Oh. You want me to be sensitive? (She nods) No Ndandatho this the truth bitter as it is swallow it sisiwam. You pregnant with a Jali offspring Ndandatho terminating that child might leave you womb less and paralyzed. I don't want you punished mina. Already your brother is punishing me"

I say in defeat sitting on the bed brushing my forehead. Mlingo cries Ndandatho passes him to me.

"Are you okay Khethiwe?"

"Not at all Ndandatho"

"What's going on?"

"You won't believe what I'm about to say"

"Just say it"

"He wants to take another wife. I eavesdropped on him and mothers conversation. He told his mother he saw a maiden that he finds enchanting and stuffs like that. He hinted he wants two wives Ndandatho"

"Tell me you joking?"

"After he gave me Mlingo Ndanda It's only now he realizes I'm not enough for him Ndanda?"

"Maybe you didn't gasp his conversation clearly"

"Nda I heard quite a lot of things. I heard him telling his mother

about having a daughter with a maiden from that place too. Like Ndandatho Hawulesizwe is taking me for a ride and I hate that big time"

"Talk to him"

"I drag it his gonna lie or better yet he will me the truth what if I struggle to swallow it?"

"How is he gonna know that you hate this?if you don't talk?"

"I don't know. Hawu is not a man of many words"

"Where is your bucket?"

"Behind the door why?"

"I think I'm gonna throw up"

"Ndandatho"

"Just run outside"

"Too late" She says kneeling in front of my bucket throwing up her lungs. Tears escape her eyes as we lock eyes.

"Does he know?"

"Who?"

"Zimele. That you pregnant again?"

"He knows"

"And?"

"We fighting over the pregnancy. He wants the baby and I don't"

"Ndandatho you are chosen one for him."

"I'm a commoner my sister"

"A strange one at it. Whose busy being blessed by the gods of a Prince. Keep the baby Ndandatho"

"I will be a laughing stock"

"Tell them the penis was that good that's why you failed to abstain"

We both giggle. That's a first since we both started talking.

Nhlonipho

"Where are you taking me Nhlonipho?"

"Somewhere quiet and beautiful. I'm showing you places since you once hinted you wanted to see the beauty of this world. So young maiden come with me."

"Fine.. Let me take fruits and water to quench our thirst."

"I have that covered my lady"

"Mmmm... Fine"

She says smiling. I show her a horse.

"Climb"

"No. I'm gonna fall and lose my teeth"

"Ngelozu hop on the horse please."

"I'm scared of horses! What if I die?"

"Ngelozzi I will hold you throughout our ride you won't fall come here"

"Nhlonipho shall I fall I swear I will haunt you down till you join me to the other life"

"Fine. Now climb please"

She looks at me and climbs the horse. I hop on it as well.

"Wrap your tiny hands around my waist and hold on tight Ngelozzi please"

"Fine"

She sneaks her hands and holds me. She rests her head on my back. I swallow hard and clear my throat.

"You ready?"

"I'm ready"

"Let's run away Juliet!!"

"Ride carefully Romeo!!Take me as far as you can Romeo"

"I have your back my Juliet. You are safe in my embrace"

"Now run Romeo!!! Run mother is coming!!! Run Romeo!!!" She says with a different accent giggling. I tilt my head to look at her. Her eyes are closed and smile is still on her face I smile too and focus on the road.

"Would you die for love?"

"I don't know Ngelozi"

"Why don't you know Nhlonipho?"

"That's because I've never been in love before."

"And how do you know Nhlonipho?"

"Know what?"

"That you've never been in love before?"

"Hhaibo Ngelozi I just know.. Have you ever been in love before?"

"Yes and I'm still in love"

"With who?"

"My family"

"I wasn't referring to that kind of love Ngelozzi but the kind that makes one world's to go around. And spend hours and minutes thinking and fantasizing about that certain person you know? The kind of love that makes you long for that certain person whilst you've seen them a minute ago. I mean the kind of love that feels wrong yet it's so right. Love that makes you feel giddy vibes in your tummy. Have you ever experienced that? "

" But you said you've never been in love Nhlonipho. Only a person who has ever been in love would say that Nhlonipho not you. That's how Romeo felt about Juliet in that William Shakespeare's book. His world only existed when Juliet was standing in front of him and gazing in his eyes singing praises to him and showing him her beautiful smile and teeth True love she would call it.."

With that said I feel this annoying slight panic I get whenever I think of her or want to talk to her.

" Its a pity they died"

"I would die for love it's worth fighting for. The day I find my own knight in shining armor I will hold on to him and never let go. And what about you?"

"What about me?"

"Your significant other how are you gonna love her"

"I will give her foot massages bath her body. Kiss each and every part of her body I will comb her hair and plait it. "

"Just like you do with mine?"

"Yes. I will love her everyday make love to her every time I will give her tons of babies and I will call her my Queen. My beautiful Queen"

"What if she won't be beautiful but rather headless?"

She giggles.

"You know that's hilarious?"

"I'm the only pretty lady in Thuthukani"

"Who said that?"

"A lot of boys who are training as warriors"

"They proposing you Ngelozi?"

"Am I not proposable?"

"Of course you are but they shouldn't do that the next time they talk to you tell them I will kill them Ngelozi"

She giggles.

"It's not funny"

"It's is"

"Ngelozi"

"You sound like a broken record."

She laughs while I'm fuming. I stop the horse and gently help her down as we stand in front of this beguiling place.

"Wow!!!! WOW!!! This place is beautiful"

"You are beautiful"

"I know right?"

She walks around praising this place. I walk behind her and wrap my hands around her waistline.

"It's a beautiful place Nhlonipho I love it"

"Please turn over I want to show you something"

"Show me what?"

I tilt my head and pull her lower lip I give her a soft and warm butterfly kiss. I pull back and she looks at me not blinking not even moving.

"Ngelozzi?"

"Excuse me" She says running away....

"Ngelozzi!!! Ngelozzi!!!!. I'm sorry!! Ngelozzi!!!!"

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Mota(Zimele's aunt)

My daughter Mgcinaphi summoned me to pay her a visit in Ngwane Village. She hinted having good news for me anticipation is killing me because it has been hard to put my buttocks down and wait for that moment. Luckily I'm on my way there I won't die out of eagerness. My name is Mota Jali but I'm now referred to as a Mrs Ndlela. Ngcolosi Jali is my little brother Zimele and Nhlonipho are my nephews. Growing up my brother and myself were very fond of each other mother raised us with love and unity. One spiteful day my relationship with my brother was tempered and things went South for us. We started being rivals of each other we fought day and night all because he fell in love with a woman I've never liked from the beginning. It became worse when the lady's parents came forth to deliver the news of her being pregnant with a Jali offspring. I wanted to die on that very same day because Nozibele wasn't a perfect match for my brother she wasn't deserving of holding Ngcolosi nor opening her legs for him. Days later Ngcolosi told father he wanted to marry the Princess I fought him against it but mother and father supported his decision. On that day I decided upon myself that Ngcolosi was dead to me I disowned him as my brother and went to marry so I won't get to see Nozibele with her big belly everyday. I had wished for Ngcolosi to marry Thabile because she was fun and we got along very well but anyway those are bygones.

Her beautiful angelic face and broad smile makes me curve my lips to smile. I haven't seen my daughter in ages she looks so beautiful and radiant. She even added a couple of pounds Prince

Zuko is handling my daughter with care and I love him for that.

"Mama" She says enveloping me into her embrace behind her there's Thabile Ngidi and Zuko.

"My daughter." I giggle and tighten the hug.

"You look beautiful Mgcinaphi you are nourished my child. What is Zuko feeding you? You added weight too.."

"That should be love mama and lots of it" She shyly smiles that's so like her. My shy and humble baby.

"Greetings everyone. Pardon me for my disrespect. I couldn't keep my mouth shut about this butterfly of mine. Thank you"

"She's family you don't have to thank us Queen Mota" Thabile-

"Let's go inside ma" Mgci-

"Your house is beautiful Queen Thabile I love your decor and your taste for finner things. "

"You know me sister Put me under your wing. I will teach you a thing or two. Mgci tell Madongwe or Mamchunu to make us tea."
Thabile-

"Greetings my son in law how are you?"

"I'm good thanks my mother and how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks son. I've been meaning to ask where are the kids? This house is quiet" He smiles and plays with his hands.

"They coming mama" Zuko

"Don't take long. We going grey Zuko. We need little ones to play with it's gets lonely as we age"

"We won't rob you of the opportunity mama. Please excuse me"
Zuko- I smile and look at Ngidi who doesn't look at me but aside.

"Thabile when last did you saw your daughter?"

"She was here yesterday earlier to collect a few items from the farm"

"That's beautiful. How are things with that rebellious boy of my brothers?"

"They taking baby steps but soon all will work out"

"They have to make things work phela your daughter is carrying uJali."

"Yeyi futhi! They really have to work things out before the baby is born"

"I can't wait to meet the little one. I just pray it doesn't take after it's fathers rebelliousness. Akezwa uZimele" I giggle while glancing at Ngidi. He looks at me and breaks off the stare when Mgcinaphi walks in with a tray.

"Thank you my daughter" I say with a smile to my beautiful daughter.

"Ehm.. Ladies please excuse me. It's a pleasure seeing you Queen Mota" Ngidi-

"It's a pleasure seeing you Ngwane. I must say you age very well Ngidi you still have your charms" He chuckles so does Thabile.

"I was telling him those exact words just yesterday. I chose well" Thabile-

Ngidi walks away leaving Thabile and myself then Mgcinaphi.

"To what do we owe the visit Mota?"

"This beautiful lady here summoned me to come here"

"That's beautiful be my guest." Thabile-

She giggles and sips from her mug.

"Ma can we go to my private chambers please" Mgci-

"No silly!! I will excuse you my child" Thabile-

"There's something I want to show my mother Queen mother"
Mgci-

"It's no problem my daughter. I'm going out myself. You spending a night isn't it Mota?"

"Yes my sister I will spend a night"

"That's awesome. Enjoy your moment" She says standing up and walking out leaving my daughter and I.

"Mgcinaphi how are you my dear?"

"I'm very well thanks mother and how is everything back home?"

"Everything is going well my child but the house gets lonely with your father late."

"Im sorry mother about that I guess I should visit more often especially with most of us married."

"No my daughter it's okay. You are married now you need to be around your husband and all"

"Ma are you sure you okay?"

"I miss your father and your uncle."

"I'm sorry mama. Don't you think it would be wise to visit uncle Ngcolosi? You won't get bored since Noma is that side"

"No Mgcinaphi I can't visit Thuthukani unless there's a crisis that needs us as leaders to tackle other than I'm not setting foot there what are the good news Mgcinaphi?"

I change the topic immediately. She shyly smiles and brushes her tummy.

" I'm pregnant mother"

"Really?"

"Yes mother"

"Congratulations my daughter!!! I'm so proud of you!! This is what a real woman does my baby!! "

"Thank you mother. I sow this for you. I wanted to send the blanket as a message telling you about mybaby"

"These are good news my daughter God is great" "All the time mama"

She smiles showing off the beauty of the Jali's that was passed on by our descends and my mother.

"Ma"

"Yes"

"Can we talk about something else"

"Which is?"

"Gogo"

"What about her? Actually which one are you talking about?"

"Gogo Jali mama"

"What about her Mgcinaphi?"

"I need to meet her and talk to her about something serious
mama"

"No!! No Mgcinaphi!! You not setting foot in Thuthukani. I've
raised you openly what is it that you want to discuss with her that
I won't help you with?"

"Ma I really need to talk to gogo Jali only she can help with my
situation."

"You not going there Mgcinaphi. We don't need Ngcolosi in our
lives"

"I need them mama if I don't see gogo I will lose this baby"

I look at her and swallow hard.

"Why Mgcinaphi?"

"My husband went to see a seer and he was told the fate of this

baby and myself. That's when he was told that I should go to Thuthukani"

"Hhayi ke Mgcinaphi that's not gonna happen"

" I'm afraid I will go there without your blessings mama" She says whimpering while brushing her belly.

Zikhali-

This is bad. This is very bad I can't believe this. Instead of things becoming better they getting worse. I heave a sadness filled sigh I look at Busani and tap his shoulder.

"I have somewhere to go Busani go home son. I will see you shortly"

"Don't take forever baba. You know how worried your wife gets when you're out of sight"

"I will be back son I won't take long."

"Fine"

He says walking away. I collect my thoughts and take out the hair plastic that I have in my pockets. I know I said I was done with this route but I have no choice. I need answers and only Mehlemamba will help me.

"Siyakhululeka ekhaya!!" I greet from outside his compound. He steps out to welcome me inside. His wearing those animals skins and ropes. He sniffs me and gives me a discomfoting stare.

"Mpontshane come inside my King"

"Thank you Mamba"

"It's extremely hot Buthelezi we haven't smelt the scent of rain in

ages." He says putting a grass mat for me on the floor. He's trying to have a conversation with me and I hate doing this.

"Yah.. It's hot Mehlo."

"Can I offer you something to drink my King?"

"I'm not thirsty"

"My King you need to smile at times not only for your wife's nakedness but other people. You've worn this masquerade since twenty five years ago you changing and becoming a monster Mpontshane. Your mother used to sing and laugh even when her home was falling apart. She would make people laugh no

matter how weeping she was inside. I wish you can be like your mother Zikhali because this man whose standing in front of me. Is not the King we gifted with. Please sit down "

I swallow hard.

"Give me the plastic My King" I give it to him. He sniffs it and looks at me.

"Where did you get this hair?"

"From Ngcolosi 's mother"

"I smell rain and soil from this hair."

"I'm confused Mehlo"

"The rain Queen is alive My King!! Our helper is alive and she's coming home!! The rivers of umthombo will flow permanently!!! Our days of struggling are over!!!! Hail!!! Rain Queen!!! Hail Rain Queen!!!" He says laughing and dancing.

"Mehlo!! Mamba please stop talking in riddles what does this hair mean?"

"Unwele olude Zikhali!!"

I look at him unsure of his saying what I think he is saying.

"Wait you said the rain Queen is alive do you mean my daughter is.. Is alive Mehlemamba?"

"Your daughter is a live Zikhali she's alive. Come closer and smell her hair."

I do as instructed.

"Don't you smell prosperity Abundance progression and production? She's coming Zikhali. The Princess never died. Ndandatho is alive!"

"My baby lives? I knew it!!! I knew it!!! I need to tell my wife!!!" I say in joy but Mehlo's face turns into a frown.

"Buthelezi... There's more.."

"What more?"

"You will not like this one"

"Like what? What's going on?"

"Your daughter has a son and another on the way."

"What? That's okay Mehlo I'm just ecstatic about my daughter being alive. I need to find her and bring her home"

I say getting up on my feet and jogging home. I care less about my daughter being a mother as long as it's nothing connected to

Ngcolosi I'm a happy man..

Nhlonipho

"Ngelozii!"

"Leave me alone Nhlonipho"

"I'm sorry.. I meant no harm I was just.. I was just."

"Friends don't kiss Nhlonipho!"

"I'm not your friend Ngelozi can't you see that?"

"If I'm not your friend then what am I?"

"I love you! I love you Ngelozi"

"Abomination!!!" She says running away again this time around she's sprinting. This girl is crazy but stupid me loves her as she is.

"Ngelozi please stop running!!! Ngelozi!!!! I'm sorry"

" I'm gonna tell my father Nhlonipho!! And his gonna chokeslam you!! You want to steal his eggs just Skewu" I crack in laughter.

"You say what Ngelozi?"

"What's funny Nhlonipho?"

"I'm a dog mina? You just compared me to your dog Skewu. I

don't want to steal any eggs"

"You said you wanted to have babies Nhlonipho dont make me a fool. Oh no! I think I'm pregnant!! I'm pregnant!!!" I crack in laughter again.

"Nhlonipho this is not funny!!! It's not funny. Why did you kiss me?"

"Didn't you say you long to have your first kiss?"

"I didn't want yours well maybe... You know what? You are no longer my friend!"

I look at her with my brows narrowed and lips pressed together to prevent another laughter.

" I'm sorry.."

"Shut up!!"

"You have a spider on your head"

"What? No remove it!!! Remove it Nhlonipho!!!"

She screams. I walk to her and put my hands on her waist I look down into her eyes. She looks at me without blinking.

"You beautiful Ngelози"

"I have a mirror at home even if it's broken and showing my one eye it's still enough to give me a reflection of myself. So I know"

"Do you really have to answer and explain everything?" "I was

just saying."

"Keep quiet"

"You won't make me Nhlonipho futhi let me go"

I tilt my head and look right into her eyes.

"I was talking before you disturbed me"

"Talk fast I'm gonna pee on myself"

"Pee on yourself I'm gonna lick you dry."

"Sies! Are you Skewu"

I chuckle and move my hand on her smooth face.

"Do you love me?"

"Nhlonipho leave me alone"

"Do you love me Ngelozi?"

"I love your royal food not you"

I softly chuckle and leave a sloppy kiss on her lips. I deepen the kiss till she engages and follows my lead.

We take turns on each other's lips. I move my hands to her buttocks and squeeze them. She jumps in fear and bites my lower lip.

"Ngeloziiii" I groan.

"What?"

"Oh gosh!!!! You bit me!!"

"I didn't ask you to teach me how to kiss and I didn't ask you to press my buttocks you gonna make them jellish and shapeless. You men ruin everything that you touch!!! Stand there I want to pee"

"Whatever!" I say in pain wiping my bloody lip. This girl is a crocodile one day she's gonna eat me alive..

"I wish a snake helps you to urinate" I tease-

"That's evil of you Nhlonipho!"

"Or maybe a spider please we in a bush"

"Nhlonipho stop it!!!"

I giggle and wait for her to finish up with whatever she's doing. She shows up looking shy and walking differently...

Zimele

I've been pacing around my private chamber as far as I can remember. I thought I was having a nightmare but little did I know the nightmare was real and laying on top of me. Taking

advantage of my body. The thought of it is making my skin cringe. The audacity of this girl! She really stroke my last nerve. I really have to address this matter I have to deal with her immediately failure to doing that will result into something huge that I won't be able to escape nor take in. Knocking is not my hobby especially when I'm infuriated and demented.

"Get out!"

"She's my guest Zimele"

"I won't repeat myself! Get out!!! And wena sit your buttocks down!!!" Bubu walks out running. I slam the door and aggressively manhandle Nomaswazi. I don't give her a chance to breath nor utter a word.

"You came here to ruin my life Nomaswazi? First you lied about my name to hide your shame of doing unholy things before marriage. Now you sneaked up on me and had your way with me while I was sleeping! what kind of rubbish and ridicule was that Nomaswazi? What do you want from me!!!! " I roar the devil coughs kicking blanks against the wall. She's even stinging her claws on my skin.

" Zi... Zi... Zimele!! " She stutters I let her loose. She falls on the ground. " What do you want from me Nomaswazi? What did you do that for? " " I love you Zimele! Can't you see that?"

"I don't love you Nomaswazi!! Never will I do!! Take your shameless body and leave! Failure to do that I will kill you Nomaswazi and bury your body in the bushes where vicious witches like yourself are burnt!"

"That's not happening Zimele! I'm going nowhere!!"

"Then you seriously crazy!!! You crazy!!! Leave Nomaswazi!!"

"I'm going nowhere Zimele! This is where I belong! If I can't have you nobody will not even Ndandatho the commoner. If I leave Zimele everyone will know about what happened in your chamber I am a Princess and I am a woman guess which side will have more support than the other Zimele. I've won their trust once and guess what? I will do it again Zimele. I'm your wife and it's about time you treated me like one."

"Whose wife? Don't annoy me Nomaswazi! Get lost before I strangle you to death. You can't even kiss I nearly drowned in your saliva! You not my wife not when you carrying a child that isn't mine. You are a slut Noma!! "

"You and I are even Zimele. You sleeping with Ndandatho and you happen to be the father of that little rascal of hers and I happen to have done the same thing as yours. So suck it up and join me into hiding each other's shenanigans Zimele because if the villagers find out about Ndandatho and yourself. You know what's going to happen. You should be grateful that I'm still

hiding your abomination."

" The audacity you have Nomaswazi!!! I won't marry you and never will I do that!! "

" It's only a matter of time Prince Zimele in a day or two you will be telling a different story. You slept with me and by now you should know that intimacy is a bondage Zimele "

She sarcastically laughs to my announce.

" Another thing this madness of yours and that Ndandatho girl of yours It has only two days before it ends Zimele. Tonight give it to her for the last time and maybe tomorrow. Thereafter you are mine!! "

"I hate you Nomaswazi and that will only happen in hell! The hell I'm gonna take you to!! " I storm out cursing and spitting saliva. I need to talk to someone about what happened this Noma maiden will make my life a living hell. It's even worse she now knows about my girlfriend and my son I can't risk with their lives especially with Ndandatho expecting our second child. I can not do anything about this because shall people learn about my relationship with Ndandatho so much will go South. I might be disowned and stripped off from my royal chair Ndandatho and Bangizwe might be casted with stones till they die or maybe be taken to the dangeon. I can't put them in that tight spot and unpleasant situation. If nobody assists me then I'm doomed marrying Noma is the last thing I would do. Even if it comes with Ndandatho's safety along side the kids I wont do it.

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Zimele

Her house is locked there's no sign of her and our son. I've searched for her in all the possible places but there's no trace of her. I don't know how I feel right now. But I'm certain I feel fear and discomfort taking a toll on me. In my deep thoughts I'm certain she upped and left me for obvious reasons or maybe Nomaswazi managed to get to her before me. She surely told her about her little sticky situation. If so I'm never gonna see my son even the one that's inside her womb. May the gods of Thuthukani not forsake me and punish me like this. I would die a silent death if my heart and my kids left me for good. The thought of losing Ndandatho has me breathing through the wound. I'm panting and huffing jogging to warrior Hawulesizwe's hut.

"Hawu!!! Hawu!!!" I shout.

"Warrior!! I'm this side!" He says shouting from a tree shade. I walk to him panting.

"And now? What's going on Zimele? Why are you running and shouting like a maniac? Is someone chasing you? "

He chuckles and carves his rod.

"Have you seen Siziwe?"

"Who is that?"

"The maiden we found in Ndandatho's compound the other day"

"Her name is Siziwe?" He says stopping with the carving act.

"Have you seen her today Hawu? I desperately need her help. I think Ndandatho is gone warrior I think she left me for good."

"Gone? To where? What exactly are you talking about warrior? Why would Ndandatho leave for good? What did you do?"

"We had a little altercation and now she's gone."

"What altercation Zimele?"

"I can't give you the details now but I need your help to find Siziwe"

"Zimele I'm not helping you if I'm in the dark. Why would my sister leave you for good Zimele? What did you do?"

"We had a little altercation warrior I just told you"

"What was the altercation about Zimele?" he says with a stern voice.

"I didn't harm her"

"Stop beating around the bush and get straight to the point Jali!!" he commands.

"She's... She's nurturing a Jali in her womb. "

He whistles and shakes his head.

"Again?"

I shyly nod.

"Ncah Ncah Ncah Zimele!!"

"It happened so fast warrior don't judge me please. "

"You're a father of two Zimele?"

I look at him and reach for his calabash I help myself with his African beer. His giving me a verydiscomforting and disturbing stare.

"There's more isn't it?"

"More what warrior?"

"There's more going on other than Ndandatho leaving. What happened Zimele?"

"Nothing.. Nothing happened"

"You lying Jali."

"I'm not lying"

"How do you explain a certain somebody spotted leaving your chambers? Huh Zimele"

"It's not what you think warrior"

"Zimele I'm still gonna ask you this question once again. What are your intentions with Ndandatho?"

Warrior you can't keep on giving this maiden babies knowing you might not marry her in future You are really stagnating her life Zimele. Gatsha is barely a year old but already you have a second child on the way. On the other hand you seeking pleasure from the Princess Zimele. That makes me wonder what kind of a game are you playing Zimele. Are you trying to string Ndandatho along? While you waiting for your heart to accept the Princess? What exactly are you playing at Jali? Ndandatho is my sister and I really don't want to see her hurt by you and your actions warrior. If my sister finds herself broken because of you I won't lie to you

my friend. I will kill you warrior that's a promise. "

" Hawu I'm not toying with your sister. I would never do that. I love her so much to play games with her"

"Then what was Nomaswazi doing in your private chambers Zimele?"

"You won't believe what I will tell you warrior"

"Come on Zimele just tell the truth"

"Firstly I want you to know that I love your sister and I'm willing to elope with her and my son and leave these riches and all because Noma is gunning for me Warrior. She wants to destroy me and my little family."

"What do you mean?"

"She forced herself on me. I was sleeping warrior and when I woke up she was taking advantage of my body."

"She did what?"

"She was helping herself with my wand warrior"

"That's hilarious and you felt nothing throughout the process?"

"Warrior It felt like a nightmare it was hard to wake up from it. My body was weighing on me"

"So you saying the Princess raped you in your sleep?"

"Yes.. I think she hypnotized me warrior"

"She raped you in your slumber and hypnotized you?"

"Yes.."

He looks at me and bursts in laughter.

"Hawu it's not funny"

"Are you hearing yourself Zimele?"

"of course I am"

"Warrior how can a woman force herself on you? You are a warrior man you can't be over powered by a woman. I don't buy that illusion. You slept with the Princess and that's it"

"I didn't sleep with her but she slept with me Warrior she forced herself on me"

"Even if it was true warrior that is hilarious nobody will believe this nonsense don't even tell Ndandatho about it.. That will only incriminate you as a cheat."

I look at him defeated.

"I didn't cheat on Ndandatho"

"You did Zimele you just being in denial."

"She raped me Hawu and she wants to use the intimacy into forcing me to marry her in exchange of keeping my relationship with Ndandatho a secret. She knows about Gatsha and she wants to tell the other leaders about it"

"You have nothing to lose your parents approve of your child and

your little situationship. She's crazy."

"It does matter Hawu. Our kingdom does businesses with other King's and that could lead to this Kingdom losing its trade and alliance. There's so much to lose warrior"

"I hear you warrior so where to from here?"

"I must find Ndandatho and Gatsha so we can leave at dawn"

"Are you crazy Zimele? Where are you gonna go?"

"I don't know but the gods who blessed us with Bangi will see us through. I can't put my family in jeopardy."

"You do know that's cowardice Zimele? Running away? Face your nightmare Ndandatho is pregnant warrior you can't put her through that thorny road again. Deal with Noma accordingly and stop giving her the upper hand. "

"I can't risk Ndandatho knowing about my little hiccup with the Princess it might ruin things for me."

"Zimele your a man deal with this Princess accordly"

"Says a man whose running away from his wife" I tease

"This matter is different warrior"

"Keep fooling yourself Hawu.."

We continue drinking from his calabash this is what I need right now. Wherever Ndandatho is she better not be harming my unborn baby that could cost her our relationship and Gatsha. I would never settle with a murder honestly.

Ngelози

I'm so embarrassed with myself. Since when do I pee on myself? Since when does my urine disappear into thin air? This is witchcraft. I can barely walk properly because my underwear is soaking wet this is very embarrassing. On the other hand I'm finding it hard to believe Nhlonipho kissed me he touched me in a way his never done before. Only God knows how weird his lips and touches makes me feel. I felt strange movements on my body my guess tells me that's what Juliet meant by "butterfly movements " It felt like horses were in a rally inside my stomach. Nhlonipho is something else..

"Are you Okay?"

"I'm fine"

"You walking differently Ngelozi what happened in the bushes? Did a snake bite your..." I give him a deadly stare before he can continue.

"Or not" He says hiding his laughter.

"My underwear is wet I mistakenly urinated on myself"

"Oh! I'm sorry"

"It's okay.. Can we go home already?"

"Are you mad at me?"

"No"

"But it looks like it Ngelozi"

"I'm not mad Nhlonipho can we go please"

"Fine.. Can I hold your hand?"

I heave a sigh and hold his hand.

"Are you my girlfriend Ngelozi?"

"Should I be?"

"Of course I just kissed you"

"I don't know Nhlonipho"

"Do you love me?"

I glance at him and swallow hard.

"Eehm... Aren't you hungry? I'm starving"

"Ngelози you ducking my question"

"I can't respond to that"

"Why not?"

"We not birds of the same flocks"

"Meaning?"

"Nhlonipho I want to go home and freshen up."

"I get that but please answer my question Ngelozi"

"Nhlonipho I don't know what to say"

"Tell the truth only the truth will set you free"

"There's no truth to tell Nhlonipho I don't even know what I'm feeling right now. I just want to go home it's getting dark and that will put me into trouble."

"You don't love me Ngelozi I can feel it."

"I didn't say that Nhlonipho"

"Then what are you saying Ngelozi huh?"

"Don't shout at me Nhlonipho "

"I wasn't shouting just that my pitch went high"

"You were shouting at me!"

"Yazini forget it Ngelozi. Just forget everything that has happened today I already know your response you don't love me and that's okay. But let me warn you Ngelozi don't be angry when I start giving another maiden my attention and love. "

He unhooks his hand and walks in front of me. We get the horse and ride back home with silence between us. He drops me off at the gate and takes the horse where it stays. I wait for him to

show up hoping he will walk me home but he doesn't he doesn't even wave me goodbye nor looks at me. Right there I'm certain Nhlonipho is angry at me. A sting on my chest leaves me with regret. I run home with thoughts in my head.

Ndandatho

I knew mama wasn't gonna be excited about this. I knew she was gonna say what I was trying to level out with Zimele. The look on mama's face says a lot. She's disappointed in me just like I've once disappointed gogo mama and father back in Ngwane Village. This look is reminding me of the pain and miff my family once felt when they found out about my pregnancy. It took everyone days and weeks to accept my fate. Now seeing Mama undergoing the same phase I've once put others brings me shame and pain. I wasn't looking forward to having a second child this soon. I know intimacy leads to baby

making but this time around I thought the gods will have mercy on me and not bless my womb with a baby I had hopes of having fun not making a baby. I know I sound stupid and crazy right now but I needed a wincy taste of fun not a glimpse of pregnancy. I really messed up big time and mama is really reminding me of my carelessness and ignorance. It's enough hard to swallow my saliva and look at her. I'm wearing a bulky blanket of shame as hot as it is outside.

"Mama please say something"

"like what Ndandatho?"

"Shout at me or scream in my ears just do something mama instead of keeping quiet and shying away from me" I say softly.

She puts the basket of sugar beans on the ground and looks at me.

"What exactly do you want me to say Ndandatho? That I'm proud my daughter is pregnant again? While her first child is not crawling nor talking or better yet walking? Ufuna ngithini Ndandatho? Hhayi maarn!"

I swallow a huge throat and let a tear gash out of my eye.

"Mama I'm sorry it happened so fast"

"What happened so fast Ndandatho? Didn't you open your legs voluntarily?"

I look aside and wipe my tears with the back of my hands.

"Ndandatho I'm very much disappointed in you my daughter I won't lie. Zimele and yourself were too careless and negligent. Bangi is barely a year old but here you are giving him a sibling that he didn't even ask for. What are you going to do with a second baby Ndandatho while you still struggling with your first? Do you know the load you've put upon your shoulders?" Mrs Maseko-

"Ngiyaxolisa mama"

"I didn't say apologies Ndandatho I want answers right now."

"Mama I didn't know he was giving me a baby

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I want answers right now."

"Mama I didn't know he was giving me a baby I thought we were having fun mama. I will terminate then"

I say quivering and wiping my heterogeneous mixture of tears and mucous using my hand.

"Excuse me? What did you just say Ndandatho?"

"I don't want to disappoint you any further mama I will take herbs and clean my womb mama"

She laughs sarcastically and claps her hands. Lungelo appears with a wheelbarrow.

"Lungi!"

"Mama"

"Take these beans before I shove them in your sisters mouth uncooked." She looks at me and stands up with Gatsha on her back. She waits for Lungelo to disappear.

"Leave my grandson behind when you leave I will raise him myself while you raise the one you carrying right now. Isn't it you careless about this baby?"

"Mama that's not true. I love my son"

"I didn't say you love him less I said you care less Ndandatho. Gatsha needs attention himself he still needs to be breastfed and nurtured he needs his mother's love fully without competing for it or your attention. Having a second baby will deprive him of that love and attention since your much-needed attention will go to the little one. Hence I'm saying to you leave this baby so I can love him fully Ndandatho and give him the best. Soon you will be grumpy and tired his sobs will annoy you and drive you mad. You will be short tempared and easily agitated I don't want you to treat this child badly because of your hormones. You would rather strangle Zimele not this grandson of mine. Leave him behind I have cows. Milk will be provided for him"

"Mama I can't leave my son behind please. His father is gonna kill me I can't leave Bangi the King and Queen will not like this"

"You need time to figure out what happens from here on

Ndandatho."

"I can't leave my baby behind mama"

"Ngiyabuya"

She goes away. I remain on the veranda crying.. Lungelo and Khethiwe come to me.

" Why are you crying sisi Ndandatho? "Lungelo-

" It's adults stuff Lungi please excuse us. " Khethi-

"Come on guys talk to me. Am I not your sister too?" Lungelo-

"Lungi not today please" Khethi

"I have to go before it gets dark outside." I say sniffing.

"Ndandatho it's already getting dark outside. You can't leave now" Khethi-

"No I have to go I can't miss classes Khethi." Nda-

"What about uGatsha? Mom just left with him." Lungi-

"Can you please bring him over tomorrow? I need some time to myself please sister Lungi"

"Fine.. I will bring him tomorrow"

"Thank you."

"I will breast him for today and tomorrow morning." Khethi-

"Thank you my sister"

I say standing up. I embrace my sisters and walk out of the compound. If I wasn't working at the royal house I wouldn't be bothered by going back. The walk to the royal house isn't a pleasant one it's filled with pain and unending questions. I really can't stand Zimele right now. I reach my chamber and light up my light bulb. I step outside to make fire so I can boil water to bath as for cooking I won't do that I will eat the corn bread I've made earlier on the day. As I'm seated and buried in thoughts My brother Hawu shows up. I roll my eyes and look at him.

"Don't roll your eyes at me"

"I'm sorry"

He sits besides me I stand to go fetch bread and two mugs to make us tea. I make him a cup of tea and one for myself.

"Thank you" I nod.

"Tell me where have you been?"

"Home"

"And you didn't see the need to tell Zimele about your trip?"

"I wasn't aware Zimele is also my father"

"Excuse me?"

"I don't submit to him brother"

"What's going on between the two of you Ndanda?"

"Nothing"

"Ndandatho"

"Khethiwe is not happy back home you should visit her and talk things through brother"

"What did she tell you?"

"Everything" He swallows hard and stares on his bread.

"Fix things with Zimele and stop being a baby Ndandatho. I can't always have my peace disturbed because of you and your little drama. I have problems myself Nda."

"Nawe do the same with sisi Khethiwe"

"She's feeding you lies"

"What lies Hawu? That you no longer love her like you used too?"

"That's not true Ndandatho"

"What is the truth brother since your life is not drama filled?"

"I'm out of here!!"

"Fine"

"This pregnancy is making you disrespectful" I tilt my head to look at him. How does he know? News travel fast in Thuthukani.

"Who told you that?"

"I don't need to be told. Familiarize yourself with sleeping Ndandatho not doing adults stuff. Maybe if you practiced that your life wouldn't be drama filled"

He says and walks out. I blink endlessly with hopes of pushing my tears back but it doesn't happen. My bathing water is now warm I do my routine and climb the bed. When I'm close to sleeping I remember the Queen mother summoned me to come see her later I jump out of bed and walk to the royal house.

Nozibele

Supper is served. Zimele is bowed head and Nhlonipho isn't his usual self my husband is giving me stares that I do not understand. My mother in law is looking at Zimele without blinking. Noma is playing the handyman and useful makoti stunt on us. Zimele is giving her a deadly stare There's tension on this table and that is unsettling well with me..

"Salt anyone?" Noma-

"I'm off to bed" Zimele-

"You haven't touched your food my Prince" Noma-

"Eating in front of faeces is hard. " Zimele-

Nhlonipho chuckles.

"Zimele" Ngcolosi -

"Nozi who cooked?" Mother in law-

"I don't know mama"

"I cooked" Noma-

"That explains the river our cow is swimming in. You cook rubbish! Not even mad person will eat this nonsense." Zimele-

"Zimele don't insult me" Noma-

"I can see all the ingredients you've used to cook this beef. Your gravy disappears on the rice it's playing hide seek with us only the vegetables are seen on top of the rice. You cook nonsense"
Zimele-

"I can't handle this!!!" Noma-

"That's why you need to go home to the people would appreciate this crunchy rice of yours." Zimele-

"Zimele no!" Ngcolosi -

Nhlonipho laughs again.

"Nhlonipho what's funny?" Gogo-

"Sorry"

"Hhayi ngeke!! I can't eat this.. It's like I'm eating rice with water.
Ngeke!! Not even Bangi would cook this nonsense! Whose

hungry? I will cook immediately" I add.

"The Princess cooked" Ngcolosi -

"When you get a stomach bug who are you going nag Ngcolosi wanting remedies? I won't have you eating this rubbish! It's obvious when girls were taught about chores and making decent meals miss here was sleeping with her legs spread out. I won't eat nonsensical food like I can't cook myself wena dont ever touch my pots. Go cook sand or leaves in tins just like your age mates. Food is costly and I won't have you wasting it with your zero cooking skills. "

Noma glances at me with glassy eyes. Ngcolosi looks at me.

"Ma bring that plate this is rubbish" I say standing up to collect the plates. Nomaswazi storms out crying. I'm not shaken by her crocodile tears. I cannot eat rubbish not when I have hands myself. I will prepare food and dish up for everyone apart from miss floods cooker she can swim in her watery stew alone. I walk back to the dinning area. Ngcolosi gives me a look that he usually gives me when his about to scold at me.

"Was that necessary Maka Nhlonipho?"

"She can't cook baba ka Zimele"

"You could've said it politely"

"Jali there's no better way to say a person can not cook other than saying you are terrible cook I won't sugarcoat the truth.. She needs to down it as bitter as it is."

"Kodwa nawe Makoti" Ma-

"Cha ma.. I won't tolerate nonsense on my grounds. That girl is useless and spoilt rotten I'm certain she can't even wash her own underwear not forgetting her genitals"

"Hhayi Bo!!" Mom and Ngcolosi say in unison.

"Zimele where is the mother of your child? She promised to come see me later on the day but she did not show up. Where is she?" Gogo-

"I don't know gogo" Zimele

"What do you mean by that Jali?" Ngcolosi -

"I mean just that father I don't know where she went"

"Zimele how can you not know where the mother of your child is? Did you even check up on her and the baby?" I ask while glancing on him.

"Zimele what did you do?" Ngcolosi -

"I did nothing wrong baba."

"If you did nothing wrong Zimele where is she?" Ngcolosi says with a stern voice.

"She's gone baba"

"Gone? Gone where Zimele? What did you do Zimele?"

"Ngcolosi calm down." I say brushing his shoulder.

"Not when Ndandatho is not home Nozibele Zimele did something and his hiding the truth from us. Why would Ndandatho just go? Talk Zimele before I punch you on the face. "

"Yazini I don't have time for this! I had a very rough day." Zimele says standing up. Ngcolosi stands up too.

"Ngcolosi let him be" Ma-

"Where is Maka Gatsha Zimele? What forced her into leaving? "

"I will go check up on her Jali don't harm my son please. Zimele what happened son?"

"We had an altercation ma"

"What altercation?" Ngcolosi -

"It's our personal business baba"

"Don't play that card on me she became our business the very same day you deposited your sperm in her womb. Don't make me remind you of that!!"

Zimele swallows hard. His about to talk when Bubu walks in.

"Whatever you fought about it better not involve a second child planted in her womb Zimele!! I won't tolerate that!!! " Ngcolosi says. Zimele swallows a lump I pay close attention to him.

"Evening elders Queen mother Ndandatho is here to see you. Can I permit her entrance?" Bubu says looking at mother in law.

"See her in my child." Ma-

Ndandatho walks in with her head semi bowed.

"Greetings elders my sincere apologies to come at this hour. I was summoned by Queen mother to see her please pardon me"
Nda-

"No silly its okay. Come in sit down. I think food ready" I walk away leaving Ngcolosi with narrowed brows. He better not fight my son I had the longest labor day ever with that boy. He better not touch him. I set the table we eat with silence amongst ourselves. Zimele is looking at Ndandatho and Ndandatho is shyly looking at him but her eyes are not filled with passion or pure love there's a glimpse of pain. Something tells me whatever they had an Altercation about is very serious..

"Where were you?" Zimele -

Ndandatho looks at him and says nothing.

"I'm talking to you" Zimele-

"I'm not talking to you nor did I come here to talk to you"
Ndandatho - We all exchange stares..

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Gogo

"Ndandatho!" Zimele -

"Queen mother can we please go discuss what you called me for please."

"No problem my daughter let's go." I say leading her to my bedroom. She stands behind the door.

"I don't bite Maka Mzukulu"

"My apologies Queen mother." She says walking towards my bed. She sits down with her head semi bowed.

"How are you Nda?"

"I'm good thanks mother and yourself?"

"I'm very well thanks my child. How's the baby?"

"Bangi is doing fine mama"

"I see.."

I glance on her. She's a replica of her mother. At first I was in denial but as days went by I concluded by myself she's Zikhali's daughter. What a respectful soul they have.

"I made a few clothes for the little one"

"Thank you Queen mother we really appreciate it"

"Pleasure.. Tell me about your parents Ndandatho what do you know about them?"

"You mean the ones who raised me or my biological parents?"

"I mean your biological parents"

"I don't know them Queen mother. I was told I was found in the bushes and I was given shelter"

"Have you ever been told you look familiar?"

"Yes"

"And that doesn't bother you Ndandatho?"

"I never pay attention honestly Queen mother. People look alike out there"

"For a person who doesn't know her biological parents don't you think it's about time you listened and investigated when people tell you you are a look alike of someone?"

She looks at me blank.

"Look Ndandatho I know someone who looks everything just like you. Each time I look at you I see the Queen of uthombo and a bit of Zikhali."

"I don't know them"

I chuckle.

"It wouldn't hurt inquiring about them. Bring Bangizwe tomorrow I need to do a little ceremony for him before I'm united with my maker's"

I say handing her the garments I've made for her and Bangi.

"What do you mean by your statement gogo? Being united with your makers?"

"We are visitors in this world Ndandatho. Our time here is

borrowed."

"Queen mother I don't appreciate your tone and choice of words.
Can you not say such please?"

I chuckle.

"You beautiful Ndandatho. You are a charm"

"Thank you Queen mother"

"Ndandatho"

"My Queen"

"Everything will make sense soon my daughter all is for you not to give up on Zimele and your love. Storms will come to sweep you off from your ground but don't weaver my child. I want you to stay strong for Bangizwe and his father. Rome wasn't built in a day good things take time to make. Zimele loves you I know his a handful but don't give up on him. Whatever burden comes with him handle it with caution and care. I believe in your love. Let me not keep you here Bangizwe needs his breast"

She looks at me and faintly smile with her glassy eyes.

"Thank you Queen mother"

"You are excused" I smile and see her out.

Ndandatho

I reach my compound and open the door to my chambers. I really need some sleep I turn on the paraffin bulb. I nearly die of a heart attack when my eyes locate on a manly pupil laying on my bed with his hands rested on the back of his head and his knees facing the roof. I glance at him that's all I can do I'm speechless. I

jump on my bed and reach for a pillow and turn my back on him.

"Where is my son?"

Keep quiet Ndandatho and sleep.

"Where is my child Ndandatho? I won't repeat myself. Where is uBangi?"

Silence is golden beautiful woman don't lash out or say anything.
Kill them with silence.

"Ndandatho!!!!" His pitch accelerates. I tilt my head to face him
his eyes are not filled with love but rather anger if not hatred.
Talk Ndandatho...

"His with mama"

"Doing what?"

"His visiting Zimele"

"And you didn't see it fit to tell me Ndandatho? Whose son is Gatsha's? Am I not the father to that boy Ndandatho?"

"Of course you are his father Zimele"

"Then why wasn't I told about my son going to sleep in people's houses Ndandatho?"

"People's houses Zimele like really? Mama is now people Zimele?"

"I want my son you hear me?"

"Fetch him you know where he is Zimele close the door on your way out"

I say switching off my bulb and turning my back on him.

"What is wrong with you Ndandatho?"

"Zimele I want to sleep I need my peace of mind. Can I get that?"

Theres a moment of silence only the bed makes movements. His turning.

"Ndandatho"

"What?"

"Can we talk as mother and father not rivals or opponents please."

"Talk" I coldly say..

"Look at me"

I turn to face him even though it's dark.

"Please come closer to me"

With that said I'm gently pulled towards his hairy chest to rest my big head on it. I put my hand around his waistline to avoid discomfort or better yet straining my muscles. There's a moment of silence only a cicadas insect is singing outside as the sun is down and night has approached. I gently tilt my head to get a glimpse of his state our eyes locate each other. A stare battle resumes I stretch my one hand to bend down his head. He follows the lead and smash his sloppy lips against mine. He sucks on my lips passionately I suck on his gently. Our tongues are dancing to a rhythm of their own I'm slowly transiting from terminal of breathing to another. He gently pulls out from the

kiss and resorts to playing with my hair.

"Why did you stop?"

"I want us to talk things through Maka Gatsha."

"Oh!!" I say defeated.

"My love"

"Yes"

"I don't like this tension"

"I don't like it either"

"Ndandatho we can stop fighting amongst ourselves and find ways of breaking the news to my parents about the second baby you are nurturing. Fighting won't really change anything Ndandatho. I myself I'm freaked out about the pregnancy just like you are but my love you can't terminate our baby. "

" Zimele your parents are already helping us to raise Gatsha imagine the burden we yet to add over their shoulders by having a second baby? It's too much for them and us Zimele"

"I know but we can't run away from our responsibilities Honey. If the gods of Thuthukani want us to have more babies then we can't dispute that. Who are we to question the God's?"

I swallow hard.

"I'm scared Zimele"

"Scared of what?"

"Of going through what I went through with Bangizwe. I'm scared of what could go wrong Baba ka Gatsha. Mama gave me a lecture on how I'm going to struggle with raising two kids. She suggested ientrust Gatsha to her so I can focus on my pregnancy and it's complications"

"That's not a bad thought but it's a pity it won't happen. All my children will grow up in front of me we will manage Ndandatho don't be scared. But father won't like these news. He just hinted on dinner about not wanting another baby born to us."

"That's bad. We can't tell them then let's keep it as our little secret"

"You will show eventually Ndandatho"

"When that time comes I will leave work and go stay home with mama."

"Didn't you hear me when I said all my children will grow up in Thuthukani royal house? You going nowhere Ndandatho.. I will deal with my parents don't sweat"

"Fine but don't say anything now I'm still trying to process everything myself."

"I get it and I'm sorry about the little altercation we had. I was feeling terrible Nda"

"I'm sorry too for barking at you and pointing all fingers in your direction. I'm sorry"

"It's okay my love. Has it moved already?"

"What?"

"The baby?" He says brushing my tummy. I blush.

"No.. It's too soon for that"

"When is the baby gonna start galloping?"

"A couple of months from now"

"Mmmm I think we should have a daughter this time around I've always wanted to have a sister"

"What if it's another boy?"

"That would mean trouble and unrest. Do you know what my mother always said to me when growing up?"

"No"

"She said I will give birth to own version someday."

"Meaning?"

"I've always been the naughty one Sthandwa sami. I was always in trouble from a tender age and Nhlonipho being the sweetest one. Imagine having two boys who are troublesome just like me? I would die Ndandatho"

I giggle.

"Gogo always said. I will have stubborn babies

"Gogo always teased saying I will have stubborn children.

Apparently I'm stubborn and hot-headed"

"You are stubborn and that makes me frightened my love one day you might use my spear on me"

"I won't silly. I love you so much to do that to you."

"I will hold your word to it. So what do you hope for?"

"A baby boy one that looks everything like myself. "

"No way Ndandatho!! A daughter it is we can't have a son whose a replica of his mother but rather a girl. "

"No Zimele I prefer my babies boy's"

"That's because you love boys Ndandatho"

"And they love me too just like this one"

I say searching for his lips. When I locate them I smash my lips on his I indulge on sucking his lower lip. He sucks my upper lip. Our tongues collide I reach for his hand and move it to my boobs. I like it when he squeezes my boobs. He squeezes them and deepens the kiss I'm now breathing like a wet puppy. I move my hand to his wand to massage it the reaction I get is not what I've expected.

Zimele

She's massaging my rod I know she wants it but I can't give it to her. I gently withhold her hand to stop her from making it more erected.

"Thembalami" I say between the kiss. She moves her hand back to my wand and massage it. I feel giddy and excited but I can't give it to her not after what Nomaswazi did I need to cleanse before I pleasure the mother of my kids.

"Zimele.."

"Mama don't poke Jali"

"Why not? I want him my love please give it to me. "

"Ehm.. I would love that my love but not today"

"Why not Zimele?"

"I.. I kinder took herbs and for them to work I was told not to engage on intimacy"

"What were you trying to rid off Zimele by taking those herbs?"

"I'm a warrior you know that my love"

"But you can suck my boobs and lick me maybe? I feel excited my Prince."

"That's risky"

"Please Bhengu I beg you Ngcolosi. At least play with my boobs and shove your fingers inside please. I'm excited Zimele and besides your son is not around tonight we have the time to ourselves don't disappoint me pretty please. "

"Ndandatho we can't babe I'm sorry"

She stops initiating. She sits on her buttocks and looks at me.

"Did you sleep with someone Zimele?"

"No why would you think if that? I didn't. "

"Then what's going on? "

"I told you I took herbs"

"Zimele you lying to me is it Nomaswazi?"

I swallow hard and look aside.

"I thought as much!" She says jumping off from the bed.

"I knew this day would come Zimele! I knew it!! But I was so young and naive thinking you were mine alone!!!"

She's dressing up and she's angry.

"I can explain my love. It's not how it looks it. She forced herself on me. I am yours Ndandatho and yours alone please believe me"

"Believe you Zimele? Like really?"

Trails of tears are rolling down her cheeks.

"Sthandwa sami allow me to explain please"

"Explain your lies Zimele? You were two seconds away from lying to me!! Had I not seen the guilt in your eyes I wouldn't have known the truth!!"

I get up from the bed and walk towards her.

"Don't touch me!!! Actually leave my chamber Zimele!! Go finish off what you two started! Get out!!"

"She took advantage of my body Maka Gatsha I didn't sleep with her voluntary. She sneaked into my bedroom I was sleeping. Please believe me"

"I would've believed you had you told me the truth without me connecting the dots myself Zimele!!! You should've speaked up!! You are a liar!!"

She walks out and slams the door.. Damn you Noma!!..

BONI

"I went to see Mehlo"

"And?"

I inquire as I'm busy buttering my body I just finished bathing.

"I gave him the hair that was presented to us by the Queen mother of Thuthukani."

I lotion my face and crawl to the bed naked. He prefers me naked after all. I peel the blanket and get underneath. I glance on Zikhali giving him the "Go ahead look"

"What did he say about the hair Zikhali? That old woman was casting a spell on us isn't it?"

"My love.. It's about time we told the kids about our past"

"Why would we do that? She's dead Zikhali and she's never coming back. Talking about her will bring worry and doubt on Busani you know how your son is. "

"After what Mehlo whispered into my ears Boni the kids deserve to know about their sister. Sooner or later they will unite."

I look at him confused.

"Unite? What exactly are you on about Zikhali? What did Mehlo say?"

"Tomorrow morning at breakfast I'm gonna tell you everything along with the kids. "

"Zikhali come on. Tell me what Mehlo said about the hair morning is too far and besides tomorrow I have a trip to Thuthukani."

He looks at me and heaves a sigh.

"Come here" He says.

I move closer to him.

"She's alive Boni"

"Who is alive?"

"The rain Queen"

"I don't follow Zikhali"

He chuckles and kiss my nose.

"Ndandatho is not dead She's alive my love."

I roughly push him away.

"Are you losing your mind Zikhali?"

"I'm not. Our daughter is alive Bonisile and she's a mother of two. The hair belongs to her"

"You know what? This is madness our daughter is dead!! Don't joke like this Zikhali you know how long it took for me to make peace with her death don't put me through that pain again Zikhali. Don't joke about my daughter please!!" I say sniffing and getting off from the bed.. My husband walks towards me

he embraces me and wipes my tears away. A kiss on my big head follows another goes to my damp Little's.

" Sthandwa sami. I would never lie about such. Ndandatho is alive and Ngcolosi 's mother will be the bridge into finding our daughter. She's alive sthandwa sami. I myself I couldn't believe my ears when Mehlo declared her alive. He sniffed the hair and predicted what mother once said about the rain Queen before she died. My daughter is alive and tomorrow morning we telling her siblings. We are grandparents too my love"

"No!!! No!!! No!!! I can't believe this Zikhali it's a lie right?"

"No my love she's alive"

I burst into tears again this time around I have mucus running down my chin. My husband wipes my messy face he lifts my chin up and smashes his sloopy lips on my lips. He sucks my lower lip and I suck on his upper lip we share a passionate butterfly kiss. When I least expects it he scoops me up and lays me flat on the bed. A pillow is put underneath my petite curveous body he spreads my legs apart and moves his tongue from my vaginal opening to its upper body. The friction caused by his tongue leaves me crying for two things my daughter and pleasure. He licks me in a upwards motion. My clit is rubbed seductively so with his thumb I can feel my spasms building up. I think I'm gonna jett any minute from now. He gently grits my labia and I let out a moan. He sucks harder all I can do is call out his name

and deep his head in my honeypot.

"Zi... Zikhali!!! Sehranmagzine.comah!!!" I cry and grab hard on the bedding. He ups his pace I feel foreign muscles contracts. I sprout out a waterfall he gets up on his feet and pull me to the edge of the bed. Spread my legs apart and slides his wand inside me. He does his magic leaving me crying like a little baby.

"Are you feeling better my love?"

"Yes.. Yes.. Sehranmagzine.comah.. Aah.."

"I love you Boni"

"I love you too.. I want to pee"

"Wait for me honey I'm close"

"I can't Zikhali I can't sehranmagzine.comaah"

"Do it for me Maka Ndandatho"

"Fine..." I say defeated we both release and cuddle in bed. I look at this man who gave my daughter his cute pointy nose and eyes.

"You said she has kids meaning we are grandparents?"

"Yes.. Mehlo said she has kids"

"I can't wait to see my baby"

"So do I."

"Thank you"

"For what?"

"For loving me Zikhali"

"As stubborn as you are"

"I'm not stubborn"

"You are only Mpotshane is able to tame the beast that's within you"

"Sies Zikhali. We are grandparents now don't say such things"

"I will be a good one my wife I will explore even more. Come to daddy. I want to sing you a lullaby" I laugh and kiss his full lips.

Boni

I'm the first one to wake up and prepare breakfast for my family. Zikhali energized me last night and this morning. The only thing that's gonna drain me is the news his yet to deliver to the kids. I don't know how Busani will take this his a tough nut to crack. He might insult us for having sex at an early age. He might feel threatened by Ndandatho my son is definitely his father's son it's a pity Zikhali doesn't see that. As for Gabi she will be excited if not a little bit disheartened she's her father's doll and she might feel replaced. Anyway I will cross that bridge when I get there.

"Good morning my beautiful flower" I giggle as a kiss lands on my neck.

"Morning handsome how did you sleep?"

"Splendid my love I slept like an infant. You really gave me the best show time last night"

"Cant you take this conversation to your bedroom?" Busani-

"Good morning to you too Son" I say searching for his mood.

"Morning ntombi ka baba"

"She's not my girlfriend Busani but my wife. Talking of wives when are you getting married Busani? " Zikhali

"A wife equals to disaster I will marry when Zimele Jali gives up on his warrior duty" We all burst into laughter.

"That's not happening I guess" I say Busani laughs. Gabi walks in.

"Morning mommy and morning daddy and morning to you"

"Good morning penguin" Busani teases.

"Your a grasshopper!" Gabi-

"You meant a sexy one right?" Busani-

"Mommy why didn't you buy me a better brother than this one? I wish you bought me a beautiful sister not this crocodile" Gabi-

"That sister of yours would've suffocated a long time ago because of your urine and horrible singing"

"I will tell your secret Busani!!"

"I don't have any!"

"You reckon?"

"Duh!!"

"Mommy no daddy Busani has a girlfriend" Busani jumps to shut Gabisile mouth.

"What girlfriend? You are a terrible liar Gabi"

"Okay fine!! Thank you Busani no Gabi for the standing ovation sit down breakfast is ready" Zikhali-

"Is she pretty Gabi?" I tease.

"She looks like scribbles mama" Zikhali and myself laugh our lungs out.

"Since we spilling secrets I'm telling mama about your secret Gabi"

"It's a pity I don't have any and whatever you gonna say would be lies!! Big foot"

"Gabi was involved in a fight yesterday she twisted a boy's arm."

"Gabisile!!!" I say in shock Zikhali laughs.

"That's my boy - girl. You did a great job Gabi"

"Zikhali.."

"What honey?"

"Anime ke nina. What's the occasion ma? Such a feast? Whose getting married?"

"Your father has something to tell you"

"What is that??" Busani-

"You have a sister"

"Duh I know that and that so called sister looks like a penguin"

"We not talking about Gabisile Busani" I add.

"Okay!! Where is this going mama?"

"Twenty five years ago we had a baby girl and we lost her"
Zikhali-

"But now his found." I add

"You not the first born Busani but rather second born." I add.

"The hair that was presented to us belongs to your sister She's
the answer to the prayers of these Kingdom. She's a rain
Princess" Zikhali-

"We gonna bring her home to you" I add

"Whoa!!! Whoa!!! And why are you telling us this now?"

"Because it's the right thing to do Busani"

"Now that she is found baba? Why didn't you say anything about her from the beginning? So the rumors were true about you two sacrificing your child for riches?"

"What did you just say? Repeat the nonsense you've said Busani?" Zikhali-

"Zikhali calm down.. Busani we never sacrificed your sister circumstances separated us. Who ever said that lied my son. We were too hurt to and saddened by her departure we thought she was dead and that we were never gonna see her again. So we preferred to move on and not bring her up because she was a story we never had courage to share nor narrate. "

Busani looks at me.

" What circumstances separated you mama? "

" War amongst Kingdoms"

"And her name?"

"Ndandatho"

"I see" Busani says politely.

"Penguin pass me the fruit juice" Busan-

"Ask nicely"

"Please"

"Please what?"

"Pass me the juice and thank you"

"Now that's the brother I prefer" Gabi smiles.

"Don't paint me black I always comb your ugly hair"

"And I help you too"

"Liar!!! How do you feel about having a big sister?" Busani-

"I don't know.. And how do you feel about being small like me?"

"I don't know Gabi.. Let's go for a walk?"

"No.. Let's eat first"

"Come let's go penguin"

"Can I carry my food with?"

"Yeah" They take food and walk out. I walk to Zikhali and rest my head on his shoulder.

"His not okay Zikhali"

"I can see right through him let's give them time.. But I'm glad he didn't throw fists on us"

"But you were prepared to throwing some at him"

"He was pushing me"

"Don't be impulsive Zikhali we are at fault not him."

"I'm sorry my wife" He says kissing my lips.

"Eat Buthelezi so we embark on our journey."

"You cooked well by the way."

"Thank you. Is the present ready?"

"Yes"

"Soon we buying one for our own grandchildren"

"don't remind me" we giggle and feed each other..

Tholakele

Bafana left for work only I didn't go to work. I'm seated under a shade busy with my pumpkin leaves. This compound is quiet without Gatsha's sobs. I remember how warm it used to be when Gatsha was around. His sobs uses to make this yard a home but now it's a hopeless place filled with boredom and melancholy. I must admit I miss my daughter. A cart parks right in front of my gate. I put my pumpkin leaves aside and walk towards the gate. A beautiful lady steps out wearing beautiful beads and royal clothing a handsome man follows right behind her. Oh these are the royals of Thuthukani village the man looks a bit like Gatsha. I wipe my hands and kneel on the ground as a sign of respect.

"Don't bow for us." The lady says with a broad smile on her face. I stand up and dust myself up.

"Greetings. Is this the Mchunu household?"

"Yes.."

"Right can we have chairs please" King-

"My apologies please go stand under a shade"

"Thank you" They say and walk to the shade they smell devine. I collect two chairs and wipe them. Theysit on the chair and look at me. The lady is friendly but not the husband.

"Macingwane we are sorry to show up here unannounced." Lady-

"It's okay my Queen. Are you Queen Nozibele?"

"Yes and this my husband Ngcolosi. I'm certain you've met my sons and grandson" Lady-

I nod.

"Where is your husband?" King-

"His at work and he only come back home in two days time"

"I see.. We came here in question about Ndandatho. We will highly appreciate it if you told us the truth about her biological parents" King-

"Oh"

"What do you know about her parents?" King-

"Honestly speaking my King I know nothing about her parents"

"How did you meet her then?"

"My late brother in law came with her. He told us the baby was his and that her name was Ndandatho. We knew Ndandatho as Majawonke's daughter but when he was nearing death he told us a different story saying he found her in the bushes separating Umthombo kingdom from Thuthukani kingdom"

"Meaning Ndandatho's biological parents could either be residence of Thuthukani Kingdom or Umthombo?" Lady

"I don't know honestly my Queen because we found the child in those years a war amongst Kingdoms."

"Tell me more about this Majawonke"

"Majawonke was working in a Kingdom as a postman I'm not sure if he was working for Thuthukani or Umthombo Kingdom but he wasn't working for Ngwane Kingdom."

"So this Majawonke knew who Ndandatho's parents were?"

"I suppose so because Ndandatho came to us covered in this cloth I will show you shortly" I stand to go collect it. I give it to the lady.

"Okay it was a cute cloth I must say" Lady-

"She came here covered in this cloth?" King-

"Yes"

"Where was she found again?"

"In the bushes my husband separating Umthombo from Thuthukani" Lady-

"She came covered in this cloth? Are you sure?" King-

"Yes. She was covered withthat cloth."

"Didn't she have beads or a beads crafted hairband?" King-

"She did my King"

The King is looking uneasy if I didn't know better I would think he suspects something or better yet knows something about this cloth and baby. He is slowly sweating his hands are shaking.

"Ngcolosi are you okay?"

"Thank you my sister that should be all" King_

"Pleasure"

"Do you have the beads?" King

"I think I do"

"Can I have them." King-

"Ngcolosi are you okay?"

"Yes I'm fine my wife"

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Nomaswazi

"Someone is taking her frustrations on the poor broom I wonder what kind of sleep you had"

"Stay the hell away from me Nomaswazi."

"Thats no tone to use on a Princess Ndandatho"

"Your a Princess in your Kingdom Noma but here you are molester a scoundrel. Back off!"

"Who did I molested again?"

She keeps quiets and continues sweeping her yard.

"I thought we were talking"

"I thought you had ears I told you to butt off Nomaswazi"

I chuckle.

"I see warrior dearest ran to mommy to squawk over saggy
boobs with pig milk"

"Are you calling my son's food pigs food?"

"Oops!!"

"Noma what the hell do you want from me Huh?"

"I want you to leave my husband alone and for you to stop spreading your shameless thighs for him. His mine Ndandatho stick to muddy boys they match your calibra"

"I don't have time for this madness!" She says sweeping more dust to my direction.

"Ndandatho leave Zimele alone. With the little pride remaining in you fold your tail and take your piglet and leave these grounds before stones and sticks are casted on you. Leave!!"

"Don't you get tired huh? Of squawking and whimpering about the man who doesn't love you? Don't you get tired of making yourself a free cheap dish? That doesn't have any seasoning and aroma? Your sight is sickening and exasperating Nomaswazi. You are polluting fresh air! Why don't you just sleep and forget to wake up? You annoying me!! And I'm fed up Nomaswazi! If it's not you it's your ugly mother leave Ndandatho alone please!! "

" How about you leave us alone? "

" Noma get out of my sight please!! "

" Did he tell you how good was our session? Did he tell you about how loud he was groaning and sucking my breasts? "

" You meant to tell me about you forcing yourself on him? What a mundane piece of shit you are!! What kind of a Princess stoops this low to getting a penis? Damn Princess you are an embarrassment. "

I immediately thwack her cheek. She massages her cheek and looks at me.

" Say that rubbish again!! Say it Ndandatho!! " I roar attracting eyes from nearby villagers.

" Do that again I will kill you Noma! Try me!! "

I thwack her again but this time around. She thwacks me back harder than I did with her. We engage in a catfight villagers stand to watch making noise.

"Ndandatho let go of me!!" I say trying to fight her off. This commoner girl has me laying on the ground breathing heavily she's thwacking me all I can do is scream and duck here and there. Villagers are having a time of their lives they cheering if not mesmerized.

" Ndandatho!!!! Ndandatho!!!" A familiar voice says from a distance. Ndandatho puts her hands on my neck strangling me.

"I did warn you!!! I warned you to butt off!!!"

"Dare kill me I will haunt you down and I will kill your bastard child!! Everyone will know about your royal mistressing tactics!! Everyone will know who your sons father is!!!" I shout.

"Go on and tell them!!! You think I'm ashamed of that? You think I'm embarrassed about who the father of my child is? I'm not afraid!!! I might be a royal mistress but you are a man molester!! you are desperate to be mated with Nomaswazi !!!" with that said she beats me up this time around it feels like she's using claws to slap me because I can smell blood...

Zimele

" Pesticides will be delivered elders new pipes will be bought and delivered elders. And more chemicals will be.. " Nhlonipho walks in panting the elders and myself look at him.

"Nhlo I'm in the middle of a meeting and I"

" Ndandatho is fighting Nomaswazi outside"

"You say what?"

"It's bad Zimele!! She's gonna kill her come!!"

"What happened?"

I ask standing up.

"Which Nomaswazi are you talking about Prince Nhlonipho?"

"The Princess of Ngwane village" Nhlo-

"Prince Zimele we still discussing something serious you can't adjourn an important meeting over a fight!! "

"Excuse me elders I have to attend to this this is important "

"Hurry up Zimele!!!" Nhlo-

I run after my little brother heading to whatever place he leading me to. I'm met by a commotion outside Villagers are watching and clapping hands some are whispering into each other.

"Go on and tell them!!! You think I'm ashamed of that? You think I'm embarrassed about who the father of my child is? I'm not afraid!!! I might be a royal mistress but you are a man molester!! you are desperate to be mated with Nomaswazi !!!" Nda-

Sweet Jesus!! What is this woman doing? What's the meaning of this?

" Ndandatho!!! Ndandatho!!! " I say running to her direction.

" You mean Prince Zimele isn't it Ndandatho?"

Ndandatho punches Nomaswazi I've never seen this maiden fight and today I fear for my life. I pick her up.

"Leave me alone Zimele!!! Let go of me!!!" She says kicking air trying to fight me.

"Ndandatho stop it!!! Just stop it!!!"

"She started all this!!! She started it"

"I don't care about who started what!!!"

"You taking her side isn't it Zimele? Is it because she's royalty and I'm not?"

"Thats utter nonsense!! You shouldn't be fighting in your state!! Do you want to hurt the baby Ndandatho? "

"You only care about the baby Zimele and not me? She started this but all you care about is your baby?"

She says crying. I pull her in for a hug.

"Hhsehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.comaa!!!!!" The villagers say in shock.

"What baby Zimele?" Noma says getting up from the ground bleeding.

"I'm sorry I didn't mean it like that I don't want you to hurt yourself and the baby. Come let's go"

"ABOMINATION!!!! ABOMINATION!!!!" aunty Mota says walking towards us when did she get here? This is getting much more worse..

"Who is this Zimele?"

"Aunty please" I say in defeat walking away with Ndandatho. Right now I care less about gossips. I take her to my private chambers and gently lay her on the bed.

"I want to leave!!"

"You going nowhere! I will get you water and clean clothes."

She cries. I look at her and walk out. I heave a sigh when I close the door. Damn what just happened!!

Ngcolosi

The ride back home is filled with silence and guilt if not worry. I'm filled with uncertainty. Nozi has been staring at me and that's making me uncomfortable. The cart finally makes a stop outside our royal house. I spot a commotion not far from Ndandatho's compound curiosity gets the better of me. I jog there leaving my wife behind. I spot a young maiden that I do not know holding my grandson I greet her and take the baby.

"What happened? Why is there a commotion?" Nozi-

"Eehm... There was a fight" A maiden says.

"What fight? Who was fighting?" I ask-

"The Princess" A maiden says.

"Which one?" I blurt out without thinking twice. Nozi must've heard me because she's giving me an uncomfortable scare.

"Princess Noma and Maiden Ndandatho"

"What were they fighting about?" Nozi-

"I can't tell Queen mother" Maiden-

"Ngcolosi!!!! Ngcolosi!!!!" I hear this familiar voice calling my name that could only be my sister what brings her here? I give Nozibele our grandson she disappears with her. Mota stands in front of me with her hands rested on her waist.

"We need to talk!!!"

"What brings you here?"

"Now I need permission to step on my father's grounds?"

"Thats not what I meant Mota"

"What rubbish is this? Why has my home turned into a circus? Who is that lady who fought the Princess?"

"Can we discuss this in the royal house"

"I want that commoner punished!!! She's not a human being but a lion! She hurt Thabile's daughter!!!" I look at her and heave a sigh.

The commotion has dispersed. Noma is being attended too indeed Ndandatho left marks on her. Her light complexion cannot hide her scars shall Thabile get here then I'm in trouble. The things Zimele puts me through. Siziwe gives us food we having lunch mom included Mota is spitting fire. Nozibele is not on the table but rather bathing Gatsha since his mother has disappeared into thin air alongside the father. My head is all over.

"Please excuse me"

"You not going anywhere till you explain what happened outside"

"Mota for once have table manners" Mom-

"Mama don't interfere! Don't start please" Mota

"Mota this is my house you don't talk to me like you just dropped from a tree branch." Mom-

"Mama what happened outside was unacceptable it was degrading for the Princess of Ngwane" Mota-

"Had she gone back to her family non of that would've happened." Nozi-

"I wasn't talking to you! Who asked for your opinion?" Mota-

"The sooner you accept that I stay here and married here the better Mota! I don't need your permission to talk or sit or better yet eat. I don't answer to you nor do i worship you but rather the man who sees my nakedness. Your validation doesn't bring me any change in my life stop disrespecting me. " Nozi-

"Just shut up I wasn't talking to you had I wanted to talk to you. I would've called your name out Nozibele but I didn't zip it!" Mota

"Don't bring your widowed tactics in this Kingdom Mota. You are a wife elsewhere and I am wife here. You don't use that tone with me especially in front of my son I'm not a kid anymore!" Nozi-

"Can you two keep quiet" Me-

"Keep quiet when this fat and hippopotamus is insulting me on your watch Ngcolosi? I won't keep quiet not anymore!" Nozi-

"This hippo is not barren unlike some people I know of who bore rebellious and ill mannered children who go around dropping their pants for commoners and sprouting their seeds in them!! Don't declare a war with me Nozibele I will dish out your dirt!! " mota-

" What does barren mean dearest Mota? See how far your stupidity has escalated? Get a penis and a helluva of an orgasm only then you can level with me. Don't let your salt drive you to me I don't have a dick and I won't be able to give you an orgasm!!" Nozibele-

"Mota Nozibele enough!!! Enough!!! There's a child here stop with your bickering! Kahleni bo!! Wena Mota Now I see why your husband died early you are toxic maarn!!" Mom-

"Wow mama!! Instead of reprimanding Ngcolosi's wife you are here insulting me? Zimele is sleeping with commoners and giving them babies her royal mistresses are given authority mama to fight the Princess and you won't say anything about that?"

"The problem is that you using an inappropriate tone to addressing it. Nozibele is not your daughter and you're not my mother too. You don't get to make rules and regulations in my marital home! Your thoughts and feelings matter in that nameless Kingdom you married yourself at! I won't allow you to bully my grandkids and their parents. If what I said is causing you chest pains go elsewhere to numb the pain! I'm enough!!!

"Mom-

Mota looks at mom and blows her nose. I look at my last born son.

" Nhlonipho please excuse us"

"Go check up on your brother's son her royal mistresses are given authority mama to fight the Princess and you won't say anything about that?"

"The problem is that you using an inappropriate tone to addressing it. Nozibele is not your daughter and you're not my mother too. You don't get to make rules and regulations in my marital home! Your thoughts and feelings matter in that nameless Kingdom you married yourself at! I won't allow you to bully my grandkids and their parents. If what I said is causing you chest pains go elsewhere to numb the pain! I'm enough!!!

"Mom-

Mota looks at mom and blows her nose. I look at my last born son.

"Nhlonipho please excuse us"

"Go check up on your brother's son I left him sleeping in my bedroom" Nozi

Mota claps her hands and laughs sarcastically.

"Brothers son? Heeee!!! Wonders shall never end!! The bastard child is treated like royal? His having royalty benefits? His the egg? Yazi nixakile!!!" Mota-

I bang the table and look at Mota. A couple of things collide with the floor.

"Dare call my grandchild names I will put you in a dangeon Mota!! Dare insult Bangizwe you will have me to deal with!!"

"You fighting for a commoner Jali? A whole dug?" Mota-

"MOTA!!!!!" I roar and she keeps quiet..

Ndandatho

"I have to go attend to my sister Zimele"

He ignores me and continues using the cloth on my now naked body.

"Zimele I'm talking to you"

"I will go attend to her."

"I'm not crippled"

"Did you hear me say you were? Don't push it Ndandatho"

"What are you going to do?"

"So now you challenging me? I'm not Noma I will slap you and your neck will be stiff for a life time! You're not the head here I am!!! When I talk listen and shit later!!!"

I swallow hard and keep my mouth shut. His furious and I don't know why.

"Whose bringing Bangi?"

"Lungile" I say carefully.. I don't want to have my neck stiff for a lifetime.

"Why did you fight her?"

"She called me names"

"What namesa?"

"A slut and my son a piglet"

"Thats all?"

"Your penis of course!"

I say snapping. He shots me a warning look I swallow my spits and compose myself.

"Was there a need to yell?"

"I'm sorry.."

"It's about time I taught you morals and respect Ndandatho failure to doing that I will raise disrespectful kids who thinks raising a voice proves a valid point not knowing it proves stupidity and weakness"

"You calling me a stupid?"

"What did I just say about listening when I talk?"

"I'm sorry.."

"Don't ever raise your voice at me or try to debate me out of things especially things that are straightforward you hear me?"

I nod.

"You don't have a voice?"

"I was fighting for you Zimele. She raped you"

I say sniffing.

"I appreciate that Maka Gatsha but that was risky. You put the baby at risk something bad could've happened out there"

"I'm sorry"

"I need a proper apology and I will also apologize in a good way for lying yesterday. How is your body?"

"I told you I'm not wounded she can't fight"

"And you can?"

" I meant she didn't hurt me. I'm sorry for everything"

"It's okay don't be hard on yourself.. Are you hungry?"

"Yes.."

"What would you like to eat?"

"Anything my Prince."

"I'm coming"

"Please search for Lungelo"

"I will. Don't move Ndandatho"

"I won't"

"I still I love you"

"And I love you too"

He walks out leaving me staring into blank air space.. A soft knock comes to the door I keep quiet and choose not to answer. It's gets more louder. I cover my body with a cloth and permit them entrance. I jump in fear when the King appears.

"My sincere apologies my King I shouldn't be here.. I will leave immediately"

"Ndandatho just shut up please. I'm not here for that where is Zimele?"

"He just left my King"

"Did he offer you something to drink or eat?"

"His working on it"

"I see. Don't mate during the day you will fall pregnant Ndandatho"

I choke on my saliva this is weird coming from a King.

"No need to be ashamed I know you two have been naughty but don't fall pregnant Ndandatho.. Not again that will bring us more

problems with your parents when they fine us.. Tell your boyfriend to come see me I want to talk to him." He says standing up heading to the door.

" Another thing Ndandatho "

" Yes my King? "

" Your son is sleeping in his grandmother's bedroom"

"I will collect him my King"

No problem.. He says glancing at me like his trying to read my soul. The door swings open Zimele walks in with food.

"Baba"

"I was just telling Ndandatho not to mate during the day she will fall pregnant"

"Ehm... About that baba we need to talk"

"See me after wrapping up here. See you Ndandatho"

"My King" I say in respect.. He walks out.

"Here.."

"Thank you. Gatsha has arrived but please go attend to my sister"

"I spoke to Ngelozi to keep her entertained.. She will sleep there"

"No. She will sleep with me"

"On this bed? And where am I gonna sleep? Outside?"

"Zimele I can't spend a night here not after what transpired today"

"Your classes have been postponed for tomorrow"

"Zimele.."

"Ndandatho you sleeping here today and tomorrow and maybe all these other coming days."

"Zimele no"

"I can't hide us anymore we are parents now. I'm going to tell father the truth about your pregnancy and that I want you to be my wife"

"Zimele I'm a nobody don't do that"

"I wish you could stop calling yourself a nobody because you are everything that I am. The only difference between you and I is what lies between our legs"

I blush.

"Now come on eat my flower. I can feed you I don't mind"

"Feed me? No way I'm an adult"

"Then I'm feeding my baby"

"That will mean you feeding me"

"Let me feed you Ma Jali junior but before I do that. Can I have my kiss"

"No.."

"Ndandatho"

"Fine" He moves closer to me and smashes his succulent lips over mine. We steal a passion filled one. His hand moves to my right boob he squeezes it.

"Zimele"

"Yes.."

"I'm hungry can I eat?"

"I'm also hungry too can I eat?"

"Not now later"

"I don't mind eating twice my flower"

"I won't function with an empty stomach"

"Don't say empty but rather pregnant stomach thats hungry"

I giggle.

"I'm hungry please stop"

"You still owe me Ndandatho"

"Owe you what?"

"Sucking my penis you promised"

"That was before it went to Noma's pit" He stops kissing me and sits on the edge of the bed.

"I didn't mean it like that"

He looks at me and says nothing.

"I will do it"

"No it's fine don't do it"

"Zimele I'm sorry I was joking"

"I will go fetch Gatsha eat" He stands up leaving me with boredom in this huge chamber of his.

Boni

We finally reach Thuthukani. This Palace is far. I'm certain riding back home will be a challenge its already late but knowing my husband he will refuse spending a night here. Not like I would agree myself Gabi needs me. A Gates man whom I've learnt his surname matches ours opens the gate for us. A young beautiful maiden shows us in.. Ngcolosi is the first one to stand then his mother. Mota looks at us and says nothing. This Saint that will never go heaven annoys me alongside that friend of hers Thabile. I swallow my pride and broadly smile Zikhali too changes his facial expression to a forged smile..

"Ngcolosi!! Bhengu!!! Dlabazane Jali!!" I say praises as they flash us smiles too. Nozibele shows up looking dazzling as always. I'm given a hug accompanied by a cheek kiss.

"Beautiful Queen Boni how are you?" Nozi-

"I'm very well thanks and how are you?"

"Now that a radiant amicable and sweet Boni has landed I'm jolly and splendidly at ease"

I laugh

"Enough with the flattery Nozi.. King Ngcolosi Mota and aQueen Gezekile greetings" I say

"Greetings no Jali" Zikhali-

There's an awkward moment for both Ngcolosi and Zikhali
Ngcolosi is even worse. Their hate goes a long way.

"Come in my children. Mota go prepare a feast for these royals"
Gezekile -

"Don't you have slaves for that? I'm not here for that" Mota-

"Rude as always." I say with a sarcastic smile.

"That explains all the wrinkles on her face" Gezekile -

"Maybe Zimele's royal mistress would be jolly to be granted that
opportunity of cooking for her look alike ngiyekeni mina!!" Mota-

Zikhali and myself look at each other so does Ngcolosi and
Zikhali.

"Don't mind her please come this side" Gezekile -

We walk to their leather couches. We make ourselves comfortable. A young maiden gives us tea and biscuits while preparing yet another feats.

"Nozi my friend.. I've come to meet the little one my husband and I bought him this." I say handing her a paper bag.

"Thank you my friend I highly appreciate these" She says with a broad smile. Zikhali is glancing at Ngcolosi and Ngcolosi is doing the same.

"Excuse me I need my clean air" Mota says.

"Imagine fume saying the air is polluted" I say in a sarcasm. Nozibele laughs.

"Thats an irony my friend." Nozi-

"Greetings Buthelezi?" Ngcolosi

"Greetings Jali"

"Whiskey?"

"I would love that"

"Care to join me to drinking it without the women looking at us?"

"You meant fighting without the women looking at you?" Nozi-

They both frown.. Zimele walks in whistling such a fine and good looking young man.

"Greetings elders"

"Greetings Jali" us-

"Ma.. I'm here for the little man is he awake?"

"I don't know son but the Queen of Umthombo is here to meet the little man. Please bring him over his mother will forgive us"
Nozi-

Zimele slowly walks away staring at me. He looks troubled by my sight that is strange I've known this boy since he was a kid. That look of his is making me uneasy.

"Zimele!! Watotoba Yini?" His grandmother says sipping from her mug scanning us.

"Excuse us ladies" Ngcolosi-

"How old is Zimle again?"

"30"

"His a big boy Nozi. How old were you again when you had him?"

"14 years old"

We look at each other and die in laughter. We are the first royals to practice early sex. It's just a pity I feel pregnant five years later.

"Don't judge me Boni"

"Like I'm an angel myself"

We laugh again...

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Thabile

My daughter walked in here crying herself a river. She was barefooted and bleeding. She was a living mess that I've never seen before she refused to talk to me when I asked what was troubling her. The only thing she did was to lock herself In her bedroom. I'm worried about my daughter honestly.

"Madongwe please make her a vegetable soup"

"I'm on it my Queen"

"Thank you"

"What is wrong Thabile? You look troubled"

"Nomaswazi is home Baba"

"Why is she here? Shouldn't she be at her husband's house?"

"Baba she's not okay. She came here wounded and weeping she was barefooted and dirty Ngidi. Something happened to my daughter and I'm gonna get to the bottom of it"

"I'm off to a meeting don't wait up."

"What do you mean by that Ngidi?"

"I might not coming home my wife"

"I want you home by 7 pm Ngidi. Our daughter needs us"

"I hear you" I leave him standing and walk to Nomaswazi's private chamber. I knock but she doesn't open.

"Nono are you okay my baby?"

"I'm fine" She says sniffing.

"Please open the door sisi"

"I want to be alone mama"

"Nono come on please open for me my child."

"Please leave mama"

"Nono we friends remember? You can talk to me please my child"

I hear footsteps heading to the door. She opens for me. I look at

her and embrace her. She bursts in tears.

"Shhhh my baby it's gonna be okay yezwa?"

"She took my him mama"

"Who took what?"

"Ndandatho is pregnant mama with Zimele's second child"

"What?"

"I don't want to go there any more mama.. She embarrassed me in front of the villagers"

"Ndandatho did this to you Nomaswazi?"

She nods.

"The nerve of that poverty stricken chicken.. Leave her to me I will deal with her my baby."

I say brushing her back.

"I want to come back home I can't stand that place anymore mama I want to come back home"

"Sorry my daughter.. I'm very sorry.. I will fix this. But you have to go back my child. If you leave permanently Ndandatho will think she has won don't give her the satisfaction Noma"

"He doesn't love me Zimele doesn't love me mama. He told me time and time again. He barely notices me and touches me. I had to force myself on him mama"

"Noma it takes men time to love a woman. All you have to do my daughter is respect him bow for him and lower yourself each time when you with him. Please Noma"

"Mama I can't!"

"No you can.. You gonna go back to Thuthukani and be his peace Noma. I didn't raise a weakling mina I didn't raise a fool"

"Mama I'm tired. I'm very much tired of fighting. He doesn't want me but her mama"

"Don't be weak Noma fight for your man and your throne don't let that idiot get under your skin. ChamaNgwane"

"Iminathi did say Zimele wasn't mine to marry mama I think she was right.. That man's heart is elsewhere mama not here with me"

"Sleep for today but tomorrow you going back to Thuthukani"

I say standing up. She looks at me with tears rolling down her eyes. No daughter of mine will settle for less I've worked hard for her to be declared as a Princess. I've once been in her shoes pregnant for the wrong person and I fought so hard not to end up in a poverty stricken family. No daughter of mine will follow on my footprints. Iminathi and her mother's corpse would surely celebrate n their graves laughing at me and my daughter who followed my footsteps. If Noma won't fight for her marriage then she leaves me no choice but to visit Makhehla...

Zikhali

Ngcolosi and myself haven't said a word to each other since we left the women. Only our eyes are doing the talking..

"To what do we owe the visit Buthelezi" Him-

"We didn't come to beg nor ask for anything Ngcolosi but rather to present your grandson with a gift"

"I meant no offense Zikhali"

I look at him and sip from my glass of whiskey.

"Eehm Zikhali can we discuss your daughter"

"What about my daughter Ngcolosi?"

"I never killed her"

"But you left her in the bushes unattended leaving her exposed to death Ngcolosi!!"

"Zikhali I did went there to look for her but I never found her I went there Zikhali"

"I don't buy that bullshit Ngcolosi! You failed my daughter just admit it!"

"Your problem is that you refuse to listen Zikhali! You act out of emotions and your empty pride!"

"Don't stand there and insult me Ngcolosi! Don't start with me!!"
I look at him with a greased forehead.

"We used to be friends"

"That was before you betrayed me and left a knife dangling on my back. You should've protected Ndandatho!!!"

He looks at me and swallows hard.

"Her name was Ndandatho?"

"Of course!!!"

"Buthelezi I'm still gonna say this I didn't fail you and your family. I probably got there late but I did show up to search for your daughter where you told me you were gonna leave her so the rivals wouldn't get to her. I went there but I found nothing!"

I look at him and blow my nose.

" She's alive Buthelezi "

" I know and I'm gonna find my daughter and bring her home with her children"

"What do you mean by children?"

Ngcolosi says surprised.

"Thats none of your business backstabber!!"

"Your daughter has two children?"

"Thats all you managed to gasps Ngcolosi?"

"You telling me Ndandatho is pregnant again?"

I tilt my head to look at him what does he mean by "Again" I thought he knows nothing about my daughter.

"What do you mean by again Ngcolosi?"

"Eh!?"

"You heard me moroon!! What do you know about my daughter Ngcolosi!!"

"Calm down Zikhali!"

"Talk!!!!"

"Your daughter is.. Your daughter is the mother of Zimele's son. I didn't know she was yours and I"

I don't wait for him to finish his sentence fists are been thrown at him. Words are being exchanged on him.

Boni

"Your house is beautiful Nozi we should trade"

"I would kill to have your house Boni especially you're huge and fascinating garden. I love it"

"Where is the mother of your grandson?"

"She's probably sleeping in her chamber I will ask Nhlonipho to call her for us"

"Eehm Boni did you manage to seek out help?" Gezekile says sipping from her mug.

"Ehm yes mama thank you"

"You welcome my daughter let me leave you to it."

Ngcolosi's mother says walking away. Zimele shows up with a freshly baby on his hands. I stand to meet them halfway. A broad smile is painted on my face.

"Ohw! Nozibele!" I cry in awe

"This is your son Zimele?" I asked

"Yes my Queen"

"His so adorable and friendly look at him his smiling at me. Isn't that cute?"

"Gatsha is a lover his a darling just like his mother" Nozie-

"This mother sounds like a great person. Zimele you borne yourself here this little man looks everything like yourself. We're you denying him son?" I tease

"Not in a million years my Queen."

"I'm leaving with this one Nozibele his so adorable.. For a minute I thought it was a she"

Nozi and myself laugh but not Zimele who looks uneasy to my curiosity.

"Let me leave you to it elders" Zimele-

"His probably hungry Zimele take him to his mother then bring him back after feeding" Nozi-

"Go eat little man go to daddy. Can i kiss you? Do you love kisses? Yes Gatsha Gogo Boni wants to kiss your cute little lips. Is that fine little Zimele?" I add a bit of gibberish to my surprise he laughs and let's me kiss him.

"Thank you for the sugar future Prince. Now go to daddy off you go"

"Mmmmmmm " Gatsha says preparing to burst in tears.

"You don't want daddy now? Hhaibo Gatsha come to daddy"
Zimele-

The baby refuses to leave my sight I look at Zimele who looks defeated.

"It's okay Zimele let him be. His probably not hungry. We can't break his little heart. Isn't it Gatsha?" He smiles as I playfully pull his cheeks.

"He loves you Boni surely you remind him of his mother" Nozi-

"Shame poor thing. Nozi you're grandson is adorable look at his hair and eyes. I must say Zimele it was worth it. "

Zimele shyly smile.

"Thank you my Queen. It just hurts that he doesn't want me today his a womanizer" Zimele-

"I guess he takes after his father" Nozi-

"Aibo mama! That's not true" Zimele-

"He' s a ladies man just like Ngcolosi?" I say laughing Nozi rolls her eyes and then a laughter follows.

"Don't go there Sbonisile"

"What is that noise?" Zimele -

"Noise?" I ask surprised

"I think they fighting Boni!!" Nozi-

"What?" I say in disbelief.

"I will go attend to it mother you stay here."

"What did Zikhali do? How stubborn that man is!!!" I say now standing on my feet

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pacing around with Gatsha on my hands.

Zimele

I'm hearing sounds of things falling and crashing voices are on their maximum they cursing at each other.

"Your son impregnated my daughter Ngcolosi? And you said nothing about it?" These words echo in my ears on full blasts what daughter are they talking about? Wait!! Could it be Ndandatho is? No! Oh no!!!

"Calm down Zikhali!!! Hear me out"

"You are evil Ngcolosi!!! Very evil!!! I'm gonna kill you today!!"

"Baba!!! Stop it!!! Just stop it please!!!" I say standing in front of them. Zikhali gives me a deadly stare a few steps are taken in a split second I'm manhandled and punched..

Ndandatho

Damn! What's taking Zimele this long? My breast milk is dripping and my boobs ache. If he won't bring my son back to me then I will fetch him. I will take risks I really want and miss my son. I haven't seen him since yesterday. I'm going in that royal house. I cover my body properly and step outside. With each step I take my feet's fail me and voices of flowing aquas echo in my ears vividly so. I rub my eyes and ears and propel to going to the royal house. As im about to step inside the royal house I hear the strongest thunder I've ever had. A cold engulfs me my hair rises and my breathing changes...

"Ndandatho are you okay?" Siziwe says holding me.

"I feel cold. Can you feel the cold and wind? Gatsha needs to dress up warmer"

She looks at me strangely.

"A cold Ndandatho?"

"Yes it's cold and there's thunder I can smell rain from a distance"

"Rain? Thunder? And wind? No Ndandatho none of those things are taking place in this Kingdom. Look at the sky it's very clear and the sun is blazing hot. I think you suffering from those things

called hormones the Prince did give us signs of you expecting his child " She smiles. I quiver in a cold and look at her.

" Please open the door for me"

"Fine" She does that. I slowly walk inside the royal house the wind is blowing harder than before. The thunder is shuddering boldly than previously. The water is flowing heavy in the seas and rivers..

Something is wrong with me. I close my eyes and try breathing slowly.

"Ndandatho are you okay?" Siziwe keeps on saying.

"I don't know something wrong is happening to me"

Ngcolosi

"Zikhali let go of my son!!!!"

I say fighting Zikhali off my son.

"This dog of yours stole my eggs!! Of all people him?"

"What's going on here!! Ngcolosi! Zikhali!! What's going on in my house?"

My mother says looking at us.

"We had a little misunderstanding mother"

"Little misunderstanding? The sooner you bury the hatchbacks the better!! This fighting won't change anything Ngcolosi no Zikhali!" Mom

Zikhali steps out storming Zimele and myself exchange eyes. We say nothing and step outside following Zikhali..

Nozibele

Zikhali shows up livid his fists are bloody behind him there's Ngcolosi bleeding Zimele who is bowed head.

" Zikhali" Boni says looking at her husband with worry and care. I walk towards my husband and look at his face his bleeding. I look at Zikhali with rage.

"What happened? What happened to your face Ngcolosi? Zimele what happened to you son?"

"Sbonisile let's go!!!" Zikhali-

"Not yet Zikhali."

"I said let's go!!! I won't repeat myself woman!!" Zikhali-

"Don't shout at me Zikhali! What did you do? !" Boni-

"I won't repeat myself woman!! Get your things we leaving!!!"
Zikhali -

"Zikhali I'm going nowhere! Not until you explain the blood that's on your fists! We came here in peace Zikhali not to declare war. What the hell happened in there? What did you do to Ngcolosi?"
"Boni-

"I said we leaving!!!" Zikhali roars and roughly pulls Bonisile's hand.

"Zikhali you hurting me!! Let loose of me!! I'm gonna drop the baby" Boni-

"Put that kid down!!!" Zikhali -

"Zikhali don't talk to your wife like that! And don't handle her in that manner!!" Ngcolosi -

"Shut up!!! Shut up you fool! Don't mangle in my business! Shut up Ngcolosi !!" Zikhali

"Mind your tone Zikhali!!" Boni-

"What the hell is going on King Zikhali no Ngcolosi?" I ask-

"Zikhali you hurting me!!!! Let go of me" Boni

"I told you these people were rotten and evil!!! We shouldn't have come here they are bunch of hypocrites. Let's go!! " Zikhali-

"King Zikhali I'm sincerely sorry I didn't know she was.. She was your daughter I really didn't know" Zimele-

"What are you talking about Zimele?" I ask

"What daughter are you talking about Zimele?" Boni-

"Zikhali leave my house Immediately you and I will talk when you sober minded not now when your emotions are high" Ngcolosi -

"The only conversation you and I will have is war Ngcolosi!! I'm gonna make you and your people perish!!" Zikhali

"Perish ini? Now this is getting more and more confusing! Boni give me my grandson before this lunatic husband of yours drops my grandson" I say

"Nozi don't call my husband a lunatic please!" Boni-

"Would a normal person do what his doing right now? Attacking people and threatening them in their Kingdom? Look at my

husband face and tell me if his normal Uyasangana uZikhali!!" I add

"Can you all calm down please!! Baba please tell the truth about what happened please. " Zimele-

"Greetings elders I'm sorry to disturb but can I please have my son I want to breast feed him" Ndandatho says.

Zikhali immediately let's go of Bonisile's arm and walks towards Ndandatho. Bonisile looks at me.

"Nda.. Nda.. Ndandatho!!" Zikhali-

"Who is this young lady Nozibele?" Boni-

"Nda.. Ndandatho?" Zikhali-

"What's going on here?how do you know Ndandatho Zikhali?"

Ndandatho

"Nda.. Ndandatho?" The man who once pushed me says walking towards me. I look at him and then the lady whose holding my son.

"Can I have the baby please"

"Who are you?" Lady-

"The mother of the child you holding"

"Who are you and who are your parents? What brings you in this Kingdom? " She says with a trembling voice.

" I'm sorry but I can't answer all your questions I just came here for my son and that's all"

"I know you!! I know your eyes and I've once held you in my arms sang you a lullaby. You're my daughter!! Ndandatho!!
INdandatho yami!"

The man says stepping much closer to me. I look at him with confusion written on my face. Zimele and King Ngcolosi both look at me with questionable eyes. What the hell is going on here?
Who are these people!?

" No!!! No!!! This is not happening!! This is not happening!!! No!! What's going on here Ngcolosi? Why does this little maiden look everything like myself Ngcolosi? Huh Nozibele?" the lady says struggling to breathe. There's pain in her eyes.

"Excuse me can I have my son please"

"What is your name?" Lady-

"Boni this is our daughter our Ndandatho!! This fool here abducted our daughter so his immoral son can have his way with her and leave her with tons of babies!! The child we've spent years yearning for and crying for thinking she was dead all these years.. This mooroon knew about her whereabouts not in a single day did he see the decency of telling us about her living in his Kingdom!!! That child you holding is her son with this lot of nothing Zimele. "

" Ngcolosi what is Zikhali talking about? What child is he talking about? Nozi

"Ndandatho is... Is a Princess she's.. She's" Ngcolosi stutters

"She's King Zikhali and Queen Bonisile's first born daughter

whom they separated with twenty five years ago" Gogo

I chuckle and shake my head in disbelief. These people can't be my parents. They can't be my parents my parents are commoners not royalties. These just fabricating this whole thing. I'm not their daughter they confusing me for someone else.

"My baby? My baby? Ndandatho" The lady says crying.

"Am I getting my son or not?"

"Ndandatho" Zimele -

"Give me my child please!!!!" I roar

"Maka gatsha calm down." Gogo -

"I can't calm down!! These people are not my parents! I don't know them and I don't need them! Now can I have my son!!!" I bark.

"Ndandatho please my baby we are you're parents look at me don't we look like? I'm your mother and you are my daughter my first born child don't say those words you hurting me please"
Lady-

"My parents? Are you really declaring yourselves as my parents? No parent leaves their child in a bush!! No parents chooses their throne over their child!! I'm not your child and never will I be!! Give my son back!!" I say with a trembling voice.

"They poisoned our daughter!! They've fed her nonsense!!" Zikhali

"That's where you are wrong Zikhali these people have been nothing but family to me! They took me and my son in and gave us shelter and warmth something you and your wife failed to do when you left me in the bushes!! The only tree you should be barking on is yourselves!! For being deadbeats in my life!! " With that said I snatch my son from her hands and wipe my tears.

" Ndandatho that's no proper tone to use on your parents "
Ngcolosi -

" With all due respect my King these people are nothing to me!! I am my only parents. Had they been parents they would've done what I did for Gatsha choosing their child no matter what happens. I could be a better parent than the both of them joined together. Excuse me"

I walk outside leaving sobs behind me. Zimele follows me I'm now crying and these bloody tears are blinding my sight.

"My love"

"Leave me alone Zimele please"

"I can't do that honey please let me instead of pushing me away"

"I can't believe them Zimele why come now?" I say putting my guard down.

"Its only fair you let them explain themselves. I'm sorry you and to find out this way"

"I'm heart broken."

"I know honey so am I."

I cry and Gatsha cries too.

"My love feed the baby please. I'm gonna take him to mama Ngelozzi's house."

"Why me Zimele? Why do bad things always happen to me? What is my Rachel sin huh?"

"You not a fault honey it's just nature giving you lemons to make

a lemonade.. I'm here baby and I'm never leaving your sight not even our parents feud can stop this love from blooming"

"I can't feed him I'm empty within soul I'm bleeding Zimele"

"It's fine I will help you to feed him. Can I pop your boob out?" I look at him and faintly nod. He pops my boob out and shove it inside Gatsha's mouth. My son feeds with my tears dropping on his delicate skin. Zimele helps him to burp he wash his body and lotions him. He changes him into clean clothes and rocks him to sleep. He walks out with the baby on his hands. I scream my lungs out recalling how I grew up and how I was raised and where I was raised and how I ended up in Thuthukani while my parents wear expensive beads and royal garments. What makes the malva pudding more tastier is me growing up knowing I was a nobody while I was a somebody elsewhere. I hate my parents honestly whatever forced them or pushed them to me ending up in bushes with no care was not reason enough for them to ditch me the bushes if it was death they could've fought with me buckled on their backs just like I've ran away

from Ngwane with my son on my back. I was still a new born mother bleeding and in stitches but I succumbed the pain and ran away with my child. I didn't ditch him in a bush nor did I leave him with someone else but wherever I went my son was there something Zikhali and Bonisile failed to do. They no parents of mine!!

"My love"

I blink once and cry heavily. He sits on the bed and tightly embraces me. I cry in his arms...

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Gezekile Jali

"She just walked out of me!! She just walked out of me again!!"
Boni sinks on the ground and cries her lungs out. Zikhali walks to her and embraces her.

"Let's go home my wife" Zikhali-

"No one is going anywhere Zikhali" Ngcolosi -

"I will have a room prepared for you its already dark outside Buthelezi. I won't allow you to leave looking like this at least you owe me that much Zikhali"

I add on Ngcolosi's statement. " Can I have water" Boni-

"I will get you a glass" I say walking away.. I give them water and walk to Bubu I instruct her to fix a chamber for the King and Queen of Umthombo. She does as instructed. We dine together with melancholy and awkwardness on the table. Zikhali and his wife excuse themselves to go to the guests chamber. Nozibele follows them then Ngcolosi. Mota walks in with her arms folded.

"Noma is gone mother"

"It was about time Mota good riddance"

"Mama are you hearing yourself?"

"I don't mind repeating my self Mota."

"You are unbelievable mother when did you become this ignorant and bias?"

"The day I've realised some people prefer stones and sticks thrown at them instead of leaving gracefully. That girl is shown nothing but liabilities that this Kingdom won't afford to have. We need assets Mota not liabilities."

"So you prefer that slave marrying in this family?"

"That would bring me a peaceful sleep Mota. And bring Mgcinaphi home before I meet my fate because of you"

"Excuse me mother?" "Good night"

"Am I your daughter mother?"

"You tell me Mota are we really related?" I walk away leaving her standing.

Nozibele

I'm seated on my bed trying to replaying everything that has adjourned. I'm struggling to understand what happened a couple of hours ago. I can't even explain it nor describe it but what I know is so much doesn't make sense everything just turned into a tornado In a split second.

"What happened Ngcolosi? What was the meaning of that?"

"I don't want to talk about it Nozibele"

"You cannot want to talk about it Ngcolosi you just turned my house into a circus in a split second and you don't want to talk Ngcolosi?"

"Eish Nozibele awume!"

"I can't do that dammit! What the hell was that Ngcolosi?"

"You saw what happened and you heard what was said why do I have to say what you already know Maka Zimele?"

"I want you to explain Ngcolosi! Tell me how Ndandatho is a daughter to Zikhali and Boni and how you knew that and didn't see a need to telling me we are harboring a long lost Princess of umthombo I deserve the truth Ngcolosi"

"I need some air"

"There's no air you will get Ngcolosi not before you tell me what happened back there"

"Ndandatho is Zikhali's daughter are you happy now?"

"I already know that"

"Then why are you asking me what you already know? Give me a breather Nozibele"

"If she's a Princess we need to do the right thing Ngcolosi"

"And you think I don't know about that?"

"Why do I feel like you fighting me Jali?"

"I'm not fighting you I'm tired and I don't want to talk but to sleep! Am I gonna get that Nozibele?"

"Sleep Ngcolosi it's your house!!"

I say standing up and walking to the door heading to Zimele's chamber.

Zikhali

"Bonisile..."

"Back off Zikhali!!"

She barks with tears rolling down her eyes.

"I'm sorry I wasn't thinking straight. I let emotions to get the better of me I'm sorry I didn't mean to fight him. "

"You sorry? You sorry Zikhali? You saying you sorry? Shove your lousy sorry in your anus Zikhali!!"

She whimpers and rolls her dress up and storms inside the house we were shown to sleep in. I run after her.

" Bonisile!!! Bonisile hear me out please! "

" I said back off Zikhali! You ruined everything just like you always do!" "You don't understand don't you?"

"Understand what? That you are controlled by emotions? And that your brain works on your fists? Ngcolosi didn't deserve those punches and insults! Did you hear what Ndandatho said?"

"I'm sorry we will fix this tomorrow"

"You better!! When I leave tomorrow I want to leave with my

daughter Zikhali the bone of my bones and dare sue Ngcolosi and Nozibele you will wake up to an empty bed."

"So you indirectly telling me to allow My daughter to marry Zimele? Ngcolosi 's son"

"Didn't that son leave bones in your daughter's womb? Did you see the boy I was holding? That's your grandson and he happens to be a product of a Jali sperm Zikhali I want my daughter home that's all I'm gonna tell you"

I look at her and huff.

Nhlonipho

I greet mama Ngelozi and the lady whose visiting here whom I believe is Ngelozi's cousin. The lady looks at me and smiles broadly I can't help but to return the same smile. Ngelozi shows up rocking Gatsha on her back. Our eyes lock.

"Ngelozi!" "Ma!"

"Give the Prince something to drink"

"I will give him ma" The lady I do not know volunteers.

"I will serve him Lungelo" Ngelozi says looking at this maiden whom I just learnt is Lungelo. "It's okay Ngelozi let her serve me"

"Excuse me Nhlonipho?"

"I'm saying let Lungelo give me the drink"

"Oh!! Fine... I see" Ngelozi says angry. She goes back to the house and carries on with washing dishes. Lungelo gives me a juice I thank her and wait for Ngelozi to finish washing dishes. I need a little distraction from the house chaos. So much has gone down back there.

"I'm Lungelo Maseko Hawulesizwe is my brother" "Pleasure knowing you Lungelo I'm Nhlonipho"

"I know who you are you handsome" I giggle.

"Thank you"

I say with a smile on my face. Ngelozi walks out from the kitchen and roughly spills water. "Ngelozi"

"What?"

"Can I hold him"

"Take him!!" She says coldly. I stand up and walk towards her. I tilt my head to gaze on her beauty I purposefully put my hand on her waist I whisper in her ears.

"I miss you"

She looks at me and quickly moves her eyes away from me.

"I'm here to see you can we gaze on the stars when your parents goes to bed please" "Why don't you ask Lungelo?"

"Ngelozi.."

She gives me the baby and walks away. "You love kids?" Lungelo-

"Yeah.. Sure"

"I love them too" "Thats beautiful"

"Do you want to have kids in future?" Lungelo- "Yes"

"Me too"

"Okay" I say with a faint smile. Ngelozi shows up.

"Lungelo your bed has been made you can go to bed now"

Ngelozi- "I'm not sleepy" Lungelo -

"Ngelozi let's go the queen is waiting" I say to lure her to me.

"Fine" Ngelozi says walking away.

"Can I be your friend Nhlonipho?" "Sure"

"Nhlonipho!!!!!!!" Ngelozi shouts agitated. I leave Gatsha with Lungelo and run after Ngelozi who is grumpy. I keep up with her pace and gently pull her hand leading her to the garden. She stumbles and falls into my arms.

"Don't touch me" "Why not?"

"Because I don't want you to touch me Nhlonipho" She says folding her arms and looking at me with a cold look.

"What have I done now?" "Nothing"

"It can't be nothing when you this grumpy Ngelozi talk to me"

"You want her don't you?"

"Want who?"

"Don't act dumb Nhlonipho I saw you smiling with her! Am I not enough?" "Ngelozi I don't follow"

"Arg!! I'm going home!" She says taking two steps away from me. I pull her hand she stops and looks at me. Arms folded.

"Why are you stopping?" "I love you Ngelozi"

"I would love you too Nhlonipho if you didn't flirt with another lady in front of me" "This is about Lungelo?"

"What do you think?"

I chuckle.

"I don't want her but you" "You lying"

"I'm serious as a heart attack Angel" She looks at me.

"I miss you" "And I don't" "Can I kiss you?" "No"

"Can we glance on the stars" "Sure"

She sits on the floor and with her legs crossed and looks up in the sky. I glance on her when she's not watching. She's so beautiful outside and within soul. Mom would love her as a bride I know they will approve of her. They were willing to accept Ndandatho without her having blue blood but tables turned she is one. But with my case they will accept her regardless of anything.

"Why are you looking at me?"

"I'm just admiring your beauty"

"I thought we gazing at the stars and the moon"

"You are my galaxy Ngelozi in you I see the mother of my kids."

"Nhlonipho stop please"

"Why not?"

"You selling me dreams okay! I don't want to be like your brother and sisi Ndandatho. Stop this thing of yours please"

"Ngelozi I can't!" "Why not Nhlonipho?"

"Because I love you in you I see the mother of my kids."

"Nhlonipho stop please"

"Why not?"

"You selling me dreams okay! I don't want to be like your brother and sisi Ndandatho. Stop this thing of yours please"

"Ngelozi I can't!" "Why not Nhlonipho?"

"Because I love you doesn't that matter?" "I just saw a shooting star"

"Did you make a wish?" I say trying to calm down. "I haven't"

"Make a wish Ngelozi" She looks at me and says nothing. I move closer to her and put my hand on her exposed thigh. She looks at me. I move my hand all the way to her left breast.

"Can I squeeze it?" "Why?"

"Just allow me Ngelozi please"

"Fine" She says and looks at the stars.

I squeeze her boob she blinks repeatedly and opens her mouth. I do that again.

"Nhlonipho..."

"Mmmm?"

"Why does it feel good and strange?" "What feels good Ngelozi?"

"What you doing to my boobs"

"I didn't know about that must I stop?" "No"

"Okay"

Squeeze her pointy round and medium boob. I tilt my head and pull her lower lip into mine. She reaches for my upper lip. We take turns with the lips she's getting good at this kissing thing. She's a fast learner I must say. I kiss her while squeezing her breasts.

"Nhlo... Nhlonipho this feels good I like it" "I love you Ngelozi"

I say kissing her lips a bit aggressively. My wand starts expanding. I need to stop this before things lead to danger.

"I love you too Nhlonipho" "Huh? You say what?"

"I love you too."

"Please look at me and say those words Ngelozi" "I love you Nhlonipho Jali"

"Really?"

"Yes" That comes as a whisper. "Can I see your breast?"

"Sure" She says with her voice trembling and her eyes semi closed. She unties the knot of her upper cloth. Her two ladies stare at me. I swallow hard.

"Can I suck them?" "Like a baby?"

"Yes"

"But you big Nhlonipho" "You love me right?" "Yes"

"Lovers sucks each others boobs" "Don't bite me"

"I won't" I say reaching for her breast sucking it.

"Sehranmagzine.comah!!" She says holding my head. "Are you Okay?"

"This too feels good Nhlonipho don't stop" "Can I put my hand between your thighs?"

She nods and spreads her legs apart I put my hand and she closes her thighs.. That's all I want. I suck her boobs and move to her neck she tells me she wants to pee. I don't let her go to pee instead I suck on her boobs till she starts vibrating.

"I love you Nhlonipho and I love this"

"I love you too" I remove my hand from her thighs which are wet. She looks at me and then the stars. "We had sex Nhlonipho?"

"No we kissed"

"I love this kissing."

"Thank you for joining me" I say covering her breasts. "What Is that?"

"What is what?"

"That between your legs" "Oh that?"

"It's my my cane" "Why is it big today?"

"It has a mind of its own"

"How so? You telling me it has a brain?"

Geez! Ngelozi how am I gonna explain being horny??

-
-
Ndandatho

I don't know how I got here shoving things that are meant for urinating inside my mouth. This things is too big for me to swallow nor accommodate it in my throat. I've been gagging for as far as I can remember. I don't know what I was thinking going down on my knees and doing this to Zimele. ***He is aggressively pushing my head on his manhood forcing me to give him more of what I'm doing. His groaning at first I thought I was hurting him or biting his wand but he told me all was good. I really regret doing this I can barely breathe properly because of his cane.

"Sehranmagzine.comh Ndandatho don't stop" "I'm tired Zimele"

"Please don't stop I like it" "I can't swallow it Zimele"

"You don't have to swallow it my love just lick it and suck it" "Isnt this a voodoo Zimele?"

"If it is then it's a good one because I'm still gonna get more of this"

I pop my eyes out. Today was first time and last time doing this. I won't die because of Zimele. I do what he tells me to do in a split second juices ooze out and they splash inside my mouth. I quickly run to the bucket and spew this salty fluid in a bucket I nearly vomit at it. Zimele looks at me and laughs.

"Are you Okay?"

He says walking towards me with his erected wand dangling sideways. "I'm fine this things has salt"

"Thats the same thing I taste each time I go down on you"

"Isn't there a way to dilute the salt?" He laughs at me and scoops me up. He makes me lay on the bed with my back turned on him and my chest resting on the bedhe arouse me and starts mating with me. In a split second I hear disturbing sounds coming from my privates.. I look at Zimele with worry but he doesn't seem shaken or bothered by these noises instead his continuing with his business. We make love till our bodies complain. A knock comes to the door Zimele attends to it. I lay on the bed trying to

catch a breathe I cover my body with a clothe his mother walks in. This chamber doesn't have a good aroma for now it reeks of gametes. I quickly wrap a cloth properly on my body. The Queen looks at me.

"I heard the noise Ndandatho covering up will not change anything. We need to talk the three of us" Queen-

"About?" Zimele- "About what happened"

I look aside and starts feasting on my nails. "Ndandatho"

"Ma?"

"What I will say will sound somewhat harsh but my daughter you have to go home to your parents and mend things with them Ndandatho. Keeping you here is wrong especially without their consent or blessings. Zimele is in deep debts with your parents my daughter for Bangizwe I feel it's fair you go home to your parents and give us time to fix this repercussion. You saw what your father did to your father in law and your boyfriend. I don't want Zikhali to do more harm especially on my family. I'm not kicking you out Ndandatho but I want Zimele to fight for you and your love by proving himself as worth it or deserving of you to your parents without you being here. "Queen -

" I'm not ready to face them my Queen"

" I understand my daughter but think of what could go wrong if we continue to keep you here without your parents consent I know they just resurfaced and declared you as theirs but this matter is hard because you are royalty they might sue our Kingdom and declare war with us. Because of this I don't want that Ndandatho. Go home my dear"

"Can she spend a day or two before she leaves mama please"
Zimele -

"I don't have a problem with that but the day after tomorrow she

has to leave Zimele before you give her a second baby"

Zimele looks at me.

"I understand mama I will transport them there" "Please son.

Where is Gatsha?"

"Mama Ngelozi"

"I will fetch him so I can bond with him. Good night" She walks out leaving Zimele and myself in total silence.

Nhlonipho

"Can we not talk about my cane Ngelozi" "Why not?"

"Because you won't understand anything I say" "I will I know its angry right now"

"It's excited Ngelozi not angry. It needs warmth and moist"

"Warmth and Moists? Where will that come from Nhlonipho? " "I don't know Come let me walk you home"

"I want you to hold my breast again"

"I can't doing that makes me.. Gosh! How do I tell you this? Let's go please" "Can I have a kiss then?"

"Ngelozi you're torturing me can we not kiss please" "I want a last kiss Nhlonipho please"

"Fine" I give her a sloppy kiss and gaze in her eyes afterwards. "I love you Ngelozi"

"I love you too Prince Nhlonipho"

"Let's go before your parents notice your absence"

"I will sleep well today" She says intertwining our hands. "Why today?"

"I breastfed a baby that has 32 teeth" I laugh.

"You are a good mother" "Did milk come out?"
"Plenty of it I left some for our babies" "Our baby?"
"Yes" She looks at me then silence creeps around.
"My mother would kill me if I brought a baby back home
Nhlonipho" "I know. Thank you for accepting my proposal"
"What proposal?"
"You being my girlfriend"
She shyly smiles and jots on the ground with her foot. "Good
night Nhlonipho"
"Good night beautiful Ngelozi"

I embrace her and kiss her forehead. I watch her disappear inside
her compound. I walk back to the royal house whistling. I pour
myself cold water and wash my body. A knock comes to my door
I cover up. Mom walks in holding Gatsha.

"Nhlo"
"Ma"
"Where are you coming from? I was here a couple of minutes
ago to give you your food and there was no trace of you"
"I went to the garden for a walk my Queen"
"Oh! I should've thought of that." She faintly smiles. "Nhlonipho"
"Ma"
"I'm sorry my boy that lately your father and I seem to be so
occupied so much that we haven't given you our attention. My
boy your brother has been the center of our worlds and that is
wrong especially when you getting less attention from us for that
Nhlonipho I want to apologize my baby"
"Mama it's okay Zimele needs you more than all else I'm fine
mama. I actually don't mind you giving my brother much of your

attention. He needs it mama"

"Are you sure you not angry or upset about it?"

"I'm not mama actually I'm ecstatic that everything is falling into space"

"You've grown Nhlonipho and you look happy my son. You have this radiant smile if you were naughty like your brother I would think you have your eyes on a certain maiden"

"Not a bit mother."

She looks at me and smile. "I love you thumbu" "Same here mother"

"Did you eat?"

"Yes mama Ngelozzi gave me food" "Okay. Fine then that should be all" "Let me go tuck the baby in bed" "Good night mom"

"Night son. Bangi say good night to daddy Nhlo"

I smile and pick him up I tickle him and give him back to his grandmother. They leave and I throw myself on my bed and think things through.

Zimele

She's the first person to wake up in the morning the sound of a broom inside my chamber serves as proof that she is awake. I blink once and twice then open my eyes..

"My love come to bed"

"The sun is out wake up Zimele. "

"Princess Ndandatho please come to bed your Prince is calling you please Princess of umthombo"

"This chamber needs some cleaning and I need to calm my nerves down. I boiled you water to bath my love. "

"Maka Bangizwe woza!!! What did I say about respect and

defying your husband? " "My love I'm sorry about that but we need to wake up. You have a son remember?" I lift my head to look at her.

"Come to bed Princess please and when you do remove those clothes"

"Zimele please. "

"Honey you might leave today please climb the bed and bond with your husband please "

"Don't you want to bond with your son instead? We did way too much bonding last night my love. Gatsha would love that bonding session"

I heave a sigh and cover my face with my hand. "Wake up warrior"

She says putting the broom down and undressing. I sit on my butt and gaze on her. She reaches for my bathing utensils. She greases her face with a soap. She washes her body and brush her teeth. She walks towards my bed to reach for a body butter. I stand and walk behind her. I wrap my arms around her exposed body and cup her breasts.

"Do you really have to go though?"

"You heard your mother Zimele I have no choice but to face Zikhali and his wife." "Seeing you will be a challenge from now onwards"

"I know but we need to accept our fate it's best for the kids Zimele and us. We have to do things the right way my love. Please freshen up before your water gets cold. "

"Knowing your father this will drag Ndandatho he might not bless our union. He doesn't see eye to eye with my father and now that I have you as my hearts ruler he might use this to breaking my father. I can't afford to miss out on my children's milestones Ndandatho especially the one you carrying. I missed the opportunity with Gatsha and I can't allow that to happen again"

"My love whatever storm comes we will swim as a collectives. I will ensure you won't miss out on your kids. For now my love can you please bath and go eat and then face my parents and hear their thoughts about everything. Thereafter bond with your son please Jali"

"I love you Zimele"

"I know my Princess." I say resting my head over her shoulder. She uses her one hand to brush my face. I heave a sigh and kiss her shoulder.

"Let me bath my love"

"Fine" I let go of her and start with my hygiene routine. She wears a cloth I've never seen before She looks beautiful.

"Don't tell your parents just yet about the pregnancy Zimele already I know Zikhali will burst out" "I understand. How's the baby in there?"

"The baby is fine"

"Better" I say wiping my body. We wrap up and step outside. A few individuals looks at us with gossiping eyes. We walk inside the royal house. We find everyone gathered on the dinning area apart from Nhlonipho. We greet and sit down. Zikhali is looking at me and Boni is looking at Ndandatho. Mom and

dad are looking at us too Gogo is busy with a cutlery. Aunty Mota is looking at my mother. Dad is holding Gatsha. I look at everyone and swallow hard.

Ndandatho

The eyes we getting are making me uncomfortable. But I won't freight.

"Father can I please hold him" Zimele-

He hands him the baby. He plays with him I look at him and smile. "How was your night?" Zikhali-

"It was okay and yours?" "Fine."

"I see." I say looking at him.

"Nhlonipho breakfast is ready!!!" Gogo-

"I will go call go him gogo My love. I mean Ndandatho please hold the baby" Zimele says looking at Zikhali who is giving him discomfoting stares. I hold my baby he whimpers searching for my breast. I pop it out and give it to him. He sucks on my boobs like his life depends on my nipple. Zimele shows up with Nhlonipho following him. Gogo Mota dishes up for everyone.

"His gonna choke on the milk hold him properly" Boni- I position him properly.

"Do you want tea or juice?" Zimele- "Please pour me the juice"

"Are you gonna feed him the porridge?" Zimele-

"I will give it a try Jali" I say faintly smiling. The elders glance at us and says nothing. "Must I dish up for him though?" Zimele-

"Please but not too much"

"No problem" He says disappearing to the kitchen. "What is the name of the kid?" Zikhali -

"Bangizwe Gatsha" I say.

"How old is he?" Zikhali- "Four months"

"Where is your second child?" Zikhali- "My second child?"

"Yes"

"I'm confused my King" I try not to show what his talking about.

"I see" He eats his food so does everyone. Zimele comes back with the bowl he feeds his son while I eat.

We now done eating and seated on the couches. Zimele's father is looking at everyone and ready to talk.

"Ndandatho" "My King"

"You saw what happened yesterday and you heard every word that was said apart from explanations and a little peep on your past. So I won't drag it my daughter. Your father Zikhali and myself were once close friends back then. Certain circumstances swept our friendship away and replaced it with this absurdity. " King Ngcolosi says drinking water.

" What circumstances where those Ngcolosi? Get straight to the point please"Zikhali-

"If I recall very well Zimele was five years old when a war between Umthombo Kingdom and Ngwanevillage erupted. And you were probably a couple of months old" Ngcolosi -

"You were a couple of weeks old Ndandatho. I wrote a letter to my then friend Ngcolosi pleading with him to hide you in his castle till the uprising calms down. In that letter there was a location where I had stated out where I was gonna put you so he can come for you and hide you in his castle. That was in the

bushes nearer to this Kingdom. I was gonna come back for you when the storm stopped. A day later Ngcolosi told us he didn't find you on that spot my wife and I went to the bushes In search for you. But where we left you

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my wife and I went to the bushes In search for you. But where we left you we found blood stains but no sign of you. I blamed Ngcolosi for not picking you up I blamed him for the blood stains in my head I thought you died in the bushes because of Ngcolosi's careless and ignorance for not showing up in time to save you. "Zikhali-

" Ndandatho I went to the bushes on the very same day I was summoned to fetch you. I searched the bushes but I couldn't find you. I tried to explain myself to your father but instead I was labeled a murder and backstabber or whatever vile word you could imagine I was that according to Zikhali. But to be honest with you. I only found out a couple of days ago that you might be royalty. When my wife and I went to inquire about you from the family that raised you back in Ngwane village. The woman who told us she was your mother said you were found in a bush exactly where your father had left you for me to collect you. But a Majawonke Mchunu who was a post man found you and took you to Ngwane village. And that's how you ended up being raised in Ngwane. But war separated you from your parents I guess I too added to that by not coming in time to fetch you. But I did come for your rescue I was just beat up to it Ndandatho " Ngcolosi -
" Did you say a Majawonke took her to Ngwane? Boni- " Yes"
"We once had a postman by those names" Boni-
"His the man I gave the letter to give it to you to save my

daughter."Zikhali-

" My guess tells me this Majawonke guy never gave the King of uThuthukani the letter in time instead he took me to his Kingdom and gave the letter later. I don't think King Ngcolosi was to blame for my disappearance but Majawonke " I say looking at everyone.

" Thats what happened Ndandatho these people are your parents you are royalty "Ngcolosi -" I get it my King"

"We are sincerely sorry for everything Ndandatho We loved you and we still do" Boni-"We thought you died" Zikhali-

"I'm not dead this is me. I understand your frustrations but I think it would be wise for King Zikhali to apologize to King Ngcolosi because he didn't do any of the things you've accused him off."

"I see" Zikhali-

"Can I marry your daughter king Zikhali" Zimele- "Can we discuss that some other time" Zikhali-

"But they need to marry Zikhali they love each other and besides my son deflowered your daughter and entrusted her with his seed that alone is reason enough for them to marry" Ngcolosi -

"It won't be that easy Ngcolosi. I want to focus on getting to know my daughter firstly before I sell her off to you" Zikhali-

"A human being is not a piece of cake that you can buy Zikhali you won't be selling her off but rather joining a force and a relationship with this Kingdom through her. Ndandatho is the mother of my grandson and for that I won't allow you to use the term sell her because we as the Thuthukani royals we don't see her as an item but a daughter that we never blessed with

"Nozibele-

" Like I said this is not the right time to be discussing marriage and trades. I want to get to know my daughter well before she becomes a wife to your son" Zikhali-

"But she's already a wife Zikhali we can't change that but rather share her amongst ourselves" Boni-

"King Zikhali is right we should give him the opportunity to bond with his daughter. It's only fair we grant him that I mean he has lost twenty five years of his daughters upbringing years. I will patiently wait Buthelezi" Zimele-

He says looking at me.

"So you all saying this homewrecker is not a royal mistress but a daughter in law of another homewrecker?" Mota-

"Excuse me Mota?" Nozi-

" You heard me. This girl ruined Nomaswazi's home by opening her legs for Zimele. Giving him an illegitimate son and counting. She is pregnant as we speak with another illegitimate child for the Prince. She ruined Nomaswazi's marriage with her shameless thighs Noma is pregnant for the Prince for christ sake! "Mota-

" You say what? Zimele impregnated my daughter and another girl simultaneously? "Zikhali-

" Thats not true Aunty Mota I didn't impregnate Nomaswazi I've never even touched her not in a single day" Zimele-

"Are you calling me a liar Zimele? Isn't this girl pregnant with your second child? I heard you the day she fought Princess Nomaswazi for you!" Mota

Everyone looks at me and then Zimele. My father is now angry so is King Ngcolosi.

"Ndandatho go pack your clothes we leaving!" Father-

"Baba that's not true I didn't destroy anyone's home. He was mine before her it's me he loves baba nother" I add.

"Ndandatho Buthelezi take your belongings we leaving!! No daughter of mine will fight over a man and settle for less. You pregnant again!! Yet your first child is barely a year that should tell you this warrior of yours is useless and irresponsible! Why did he give you a second baby while you still have an infant? We leaving!! "Zikhali-

" Zikhali calm down these are kids" Boni-

"No daughter of mine will share a penis Bonisile I never made you to share my penis why does Ndandatho has to share? She's leaving" Zikhali

" Zimele how could you be so careless? Didn't I teach you about sex and pregnancy? "Ngcolosi -" It happened so fast baba we.. We sorry. " Zimele -

" And you didn't see the need of telling us? "Ngcolosi" I wanted to tell you father " Zimele-

"Ndandatho go pack your clothes my daughter go home with your father" Ngcolosi -

"Good riddance Noma will finally have her husband back and raise her child in a stable and healthy environment without this bush baby interfering" Mota-

"Bush baby? Are you calling my child a bush baby? Mota I will

squash you! I will go wild on you dare insult my daughter I will rough you up woman!!" Boni-

"Zimele has a baby coming with Princess Noma take this girl and go!" Mota

My mother chuckles and shakes her head sideways.

"Mota my son didn't impregnate that witch dare say that utter bull ever again you will deal with me. I'm sick and tired of your negativity and toxins! My son loves Ndandatho only and the only woman he impregnated is her. Don't talk nonsense wena!!" Nozi-

" I will help you pack" Zimele says softly with defeat in his voice.
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Ndandatho

"Zimele we will survive this too don't worry"

"Not after what your family thinks of me Ndandatho"

"Zimele don't be hard on yourself this too will pass"

"You don't get it don't you?"

"Make me get it Zimele"

"In your father's head I'm a loose pants Ndandatho I go around impregnating girls and giving them babies. He sees me as a womanizer and a cheat Ndandatho. In his eyes I'm not a perfect match for you and changing that will be a hassle"

"That's where you will prove him wrong and everyone else my love and besides his thoughts meaning nothing he was never a parent to me but a seed donator to hell with his theory and beliefs."

"His your father Ndandatho and his a King at it he will use Nomaswazi to ending our relationship. I don't wish for that to happen"

"It won't happen I promise"

"I don't want to lose you Princess I really don't want to lose my kids"

He says running his face. I sit besides him and put Gatsha on my lap. I cup his face using my one hand our eyes come in contact.

"My Prince you will not lose me nor the kids. Our union was blessed by our ancestors and nobody will change what the God's have agreed upon. You and I and our kids we will be united I know the gods will not allow us to fail they won't write our names and our love story in history. Zimele they blessed us before and they still gonna do it. All I ask from you my love is not to turn your back on me and the kids because of struggles and tribulations that will come our way. Temptation will always prevail and challenges too my love but all I need from you Zimele is for you to be loyal and consistent. Don't let your love die because of us being out of sight with each other don't let go because of challenges. If I was able to go through the agony and thorns for Bangizwe to be here what would stop you warrior? Sthandwa sami do it for the kids not for anyone else but your blood Zimele. Fight for us and I will do the same okay? This is not goodbye this is only the beginning Jali. You hear me? "

" I hear you my love but.. "

" No buts Zimele! I fell in love with a warrior not a weakling that gives up without fighting. The man I gave my innocence to is strong and undaunted. He reigns in whatever predicament he is facing. If you give up now warrior you will be giving up on Gatsha and his sibling."

"Do you promise not to forget me Ndandatho?"

"I promise"

"I love you"

"And I love you too"

He gives me a sloppy kiss and holds his child. Bangi cries and his sobs hurt Zimele even more. A knock comes to the door I permit entrance. Siziwe appears.

"My Prince Ndandatho" She greets.

"Good day my sister"

"Good day sisi Ndandatho. I was summoned by the King to aid you with your packing." Siziwe -

"I'm almost done my sister."

"You really leaving sisi Ndandatho?"

I nod.

"I'm gonna miss you my friend"

"And I will miss you too Siziwe you've been a good friend to me. I won't be a stranger okay?"

"Please don't. I still don't understand why you leaving.. Is it because of the fight you had with Princess Nomaswazi or the Prince being the father to Bangizwe? I'm just confused and saddened by your departure"

"Worry not my friend some day I will tell you everything for now Siziwe please carry these to the royal house. I will join you shortly"

She sniffs and carry the cloth I've used to gather my clothes and that of Gatsha. My things are not plenty I had less after all. Zimele looks at me with sadness in his eyes. Gatsha is still crying on his arms.

"My son doesn't want to go Ndandatho"

"Zimele please"

"Go alone leave my son behind"

"Zimele you can't do that I can't leave him behind."

"Your father hates us do you think he will want a Jali on his premises? Leave my son please!"

"Zimele I can't leave my baby a child belongs with its mother"

"And I'm his father Ndandatho. Leave my son behind" He roars and Gatsha cries.

"I will do no such thing Zimele!!! His my baby my son!!!!"

"My blood runs through him Ndandatho!! A Jali blood"

"And my blood runs through him!! I just told you this is not goodbye Zimele!!!" I shout and let my tears fall.

"You know what? Maybe I made a mistake Ndandatho!! I shouldn't have fallen for you!!" He sniffs.

"Excuse me Zimele?"

"You heard me!"

"Fine Zimele!!! You made a mistake then correct it! Give me my

baby!!! I say snatching Gatsha from his hands and storming outside. My face is covered in tears and right now I care less about whose watching or gossiping. Zimele is sick in the head he thinks what's happening is only affecting him but little does he know but him saying he made a mistake by falling for me was a loud and stinging slap he could've said it much nicer than that.

"Ndandatho!"

"Piss off!!!" I shout with a trembling voice.

"Ndandatho I'm sorry"

"Go to hell Zimele!!!"

"I'm sorry please wait up"

"I said correct your mistake! Go to that lunatic who helped herself with your body when you were sleeping! Leave me alone!! Alone Zimele!! I say roaring and tasting my salty tears and mucus. I pass by mama Ngelozi to inform her about my departure she's heart broken

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please wait up"

"I said correct your mistake! Go to that lunatic who helped herself with your body when you were sleeping! Leave me alone!! Alone Zimele!! I say roaring and tasting my salty tears

and mucus. I pass by mama Ngelozu to inform her about my departure she's heart broken but it is what it is. I find my parents waiting for me. I tell them we should leave immediately. Zimele really pissed me off.

"Ndandatho I'm sorry please! Can I hold my son and say goodbye please!" Zimele-

"A child of a mistake Zimele huh?"

Zimele

"A child of a mistake huh?" She says gashing tears.

"I'm sorry please hear me out"

"Zimele what's going on? What is she talking about?" Dad-

"King Ngcolosi and Queen Nozibele not forgetting you Queen mother and Nhlonipho. Thank you so very much for the wonderful treatment and respect you've been giving me and showing me. Not in a single day did I feel like an intruder or a nobody. You've always treated me like a Princess or a part of family for that I want to say thank you and that you hold a special place in my heart you are loved and cherished. May the gods bless you abundantly this is not goodbye. Little Bangi will not be a stranger so am I. Take care" She says wiping her tears. My mother embraces her Nhlonipho too and then Gogo. Father side hugs her. She looks at me and says nothing. Now everyone is

confused and concerned about what happened. Her father's eyes are already peeling my epidermis.

"Nozi we sorry for bringing you chaos in your peaceful home we sorry for the bickering and confusion we really sorry from the bottom of our hearts. I will pay you a visit soon so we can clear the air. I appreciate your efforts to providing shelter for my daughter and treating her like one of your own. We very much grateful this is not goodbye. "Boni-

" Thank you Queen mother and Nozibele. See you soon" Zikhali-

"Ndandatho don't be a stranger please" Mom-

"I won't mama"

"Bring our grandson over we still love him" Dad-

"Ndandatho can I talk to you please"

She looks at me and gives me Gatsha instead. She takes him after a minute and walks to one of the carts outside. She climbs it and looks at me with tears in her eyes. Goodbyes are shared and I'm left hollow and broken. I leave my house and walk to warrior Hawu's house. I knock but nobody answers..I sit on the veranda and let a drop of my tear roll down..

Ngcolosi

My wife is disheartened and saddened by Ndandatho's departure her red cheeks says it all. I had to force her to go to our private chambers so can sleep it off. We both snuggling in bed she's

sniffing. I don't blame her we were all getting comfortable with having Ndandatho and our grandchild over here. They brought warmth and healing into this family. I for one never got along with my eldest son fully before Ndandatho came here but after she stepped on Thuthukani grounds my relationship with my son went back to the one I once shared with him when he was younger than Nhlonipho. For the first time in forever I felt the bond and harmony between my son and I. It hurts that Ndandatho is gone meaning I have no daughter to tease anymore..

"They should've at least let her stay for a day or two Ngcolosi"

"I'm sorry my love but they also needed their daughter"

"They wouldn't have known about her if it wasn't for us they were cruel and unfair Ngcolosi. My son is heart broken"

"Zimele will be okay my love in time he will be okay. My biggest concern is the baby Ndandatho is carrying. Knowing Zikhali Ndandatho and Zimele might not meet again."

"That would be cruelty Ngcolosi they can't do that to us and our son. They can't act like good parents now Ndandatho had a life before them and that shouldn't change because of that stupid title she now holds. That girl was gonna marry my son royalty or not. They mustn't come with bullshit not with my grandchildren Ngcolosi"

I hear a sigh and gently stroke her hair to calm her down.

"Zimele has to toughen up"

"He will I know my boy"

"But he messed up by giving her a second child. Gatsha is a still a baby Nozibele. Didn't you teach her about family planning Nozi?"

"I guess hot cold feet or maybe the damage was already done Ngcolosi"

"God! We need to fix this"

"You heard that robot Zikhali he said the marriage is not priority but rather his relationship with his daughter."

"That son of a bitch is ungrateful his so delusional. He will use her daughter to proving a point some lunatic he is. And sadly these kids love each other. " I say in thoughts.

"I still blame Mota for everything Ngcolosi your sister ruined everything! Why is she even here?"

"Can we not go there"

"No I want to go there! That widow ruined everything Ngcolosi everything was going just fine before she showed her rhino face. Zikhali was calmer but after mentioning Noma being pregnant things changed.

Mota is a devils agent and I feel like sweeping the yard with her fat face"

"My love no violence please. Mota can be a pain on the neck at times but fighting her would be a waste of time. Let her be"

"No Ngcolosi! I can't let her be. She needs to leave none of us here are her husbands. She must go!"

"I will talk to her"

"Don't talk to her but rather drag her out!!"

"I'm sorry Nozi"

"I miss Gatsha already"

"Me too we will be okay"

"We better Ngcolosi"

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Ndandatho

"Shhhh my baby don't cry yezwa?"

I say trying to hush-hush my son whose crying so badly.

"Give him the breast Ndandatho" Zikhali-

"He doesn't want it" I say defeated.

"Bring him here" Queen Bonisile says stretching out her hands. I give her the baby and watch the trees and grass as the horses gallop taking me to a new place I would call home. A place where my heart won't be besides me nor in sight. A place that might never welcome me warmly a place I've never been too ever since I was born. So much thoughts are wandering in my head mostly what the father of my son

said. I really can't unhear those words he really broke my heart. He wasn't supposed to say that he made me feel like a Goliath in his life. That was the worst insult I've ever had to take in.

"We have arrived Princess and this little man is sleeping" The Queen says flashing me a smile. I look at her and not bother to smile back these people kinder ruined my life. I was happy and content before they showed up and declared themselves as my parents. Zimele and myself were doing great our only stress was Nomaswazi that I happened to deal with. This whole Ndandatho being a Princess demeanor messed up everything. It left my world upside down just when it was moving from downwards to upwards. I heave a sigh and put my boob back inside my cloth I've forgotten about it.

"Leave those I will take them myself"

Zikhali adds referring to my clothes covered in a sheet. I'm the first one to get off from the cart. I look around me the Kingdom is huge and beautiful but I care less about being here. I miss Thuthukani already apart from Zimele I had Mama Ngelozi Siziwe Ngelozi and Bhuti Hawu. I had way so much better there and here I'm not sure if I will love this place.

"Here you can hold him" Boni says handing me my son. I look at her and then Gatsha. We slowly walk inside the house a few eyes are piercing on my skin. The servants keep their eyes glued on me they greet their masters. I look at them and swallow on my spits. We finally reach what looks like sitting room it's pretty but it looks nothing like the one in Thuthukani. I would say this Kingdom was once the it thing but then life happened. A tall boy who resembles Zikhali shows resurfaces behind him there's a little girl. I don't want to describe them because I care less about what's happening here.

"Busani Gabisile" The Queen says with a smile looking at these kids.

"Who is this mother?" Girl-

"And why does she look like you?" The girl adds.

"Gabisile how about you greet first and question later?" Zikhali-

"Is she the lost daughter?" Guy-

"Busani!" Boni-

"My apologies anyway I'm on my way to the farm. See you later Queen and King" The tall boy says looking at me and then my son he walks away leaving behind his manly fragrance.

"Ndandatho that was your brother Busani he comes after you and this little one is Gabisile our last born" Zikhali-

"Gabisile this is your sister Ndandatho" Boni-

"Are you married?" Gabi-

"Why are you asking?" I say coldly. I don't want to entertain her or anyone else.

"You have a baby only married people have babies" Gabi-

"I'm not married"

"Then how did you get a baby if you not married?"

"I had sex that's how I got the baby!" I say annoyed by her questions. Zikhali clears his throat and looks at me.

"Can I be shown a room I will be occupying"

"Of course" Boni-

"She can share with me" Gabi-

"I need privacy Gabi"

"Why are you arrogant? You mean Ndandatho" Gabi-

I look at the kid and heave a sigh.

"I'm sorry Gabi I'm just not feeling well"

"Come with me I will make you a remedy" Gabi-

"I meant emotionally"

"Oh! Sorry. Anyway my name is Gabisile and I am a Princess and you are my big sister Ndandatho." She says introducing herself I already know that by the way.

"Pleasure meeting you"

"And what is the name of your child?" Gabi-

"Gabisile give Ndandatho a breather please don't you have training maybe?" Boni-

"No today I'm not going mother." Gabi-

"So she is the prodigal daughter?" A voice says from the door I look there and it's Busani.

"She's your sister not prodigal Busani" Bon-

"Okay!!" Busani says looking at me.

"The chamber please"

"Your brother will show you your room" Zikhali-

"Busani carry these bags to her room"

"Since when am I a chauffeur or better yet a servant? I'm only here for my beads that I happened to have forgotten nothing else but that" Busani says walking past me heading wherever. I look at Gabsile to show me the room. She shows me I put my son in the bed and walk back to the sitting room to collect my bags. Leaving Zikhali and Boni having a talk with their son.

I look around the chamber it's nothing like the one I was occupying in Thuthukani. This one looks plain and ugly it feels cold and dark. I heave a sigh and sit on the bed and cover my eyes. Tears meanders from my eyelids all the way to my chin I feel lost and empty without my significant other. I know he broke my little fragile heart when he said half of what he said. But that doesn't mean I love him less or miss him less I need him. I

whimper while brushing my stomach...

Zimele

I don't know how I feel right now but I'm certain I feel horrible and empty. I feel guilty and cruel for slicing her with those words. I shouldn't have said what I said I shouldn't have let her leave in that condition. I messed up big time and I need to right my wrongs.

"Zimele!! Can I come in?"

Nhlonipho shouts from outside my chamber.

"Come in" He walks in and stands by the door. I semi lift my head from the pillow and glance on him.

"Is it a bad time?"

"What do you want?"

"Well I I just came to check up on you especially after what happened earlier on"

"I'm fine Nhlonipho"

"Are you sure Zimele?"

I look at him.

"I'm certain"

"Let's go for a walk or better yet the garden"

"I'm not in the mood Nhlonipho"

"Okay"

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let's go horse riding?"

"Nhlonipho I said I'm not in the mood please excuse me"

"Zimele we are brothers"

"I'm very much aware of that Nhlonipho but right now I need my vaccum."

"Zimele I miss you. I miss the bond we used to have before you were united with your son and his mother. I miss having late night conversations with you. I just miss our brotherhood. I know this is not the perfect time to be discussing this but I miss my brother too Zimele" I look at him.

"Remember the swimming tutorials? Do you remember how scared you were to lose me to death after I drowned? I miss that Zimele doing stuff with my brother. Don't you miss me?"

"Nhlonipho you're my little guy and you know very well that I cherish you but brother im facing a mountain right now. So much is going on in my life and my love life. Brother I need time and space to reconnect with my thoughts I just want to focus on bringing my wife home and my kids"

"I know they important Zimele but in whatever you do please remember you have a brother that loves you and looks up to you. Don't push me away Zimele"

"I'm sorry Nhlonipho I really am but brother please understand.. I'm a father and a partner you see how weighed are my shoulders?"

"But that doesn't mean you should stop watering other gardens Zimele. I will leave you to it"

He says turning his back to face the door.

"Nhlo"

"Yes"

"I love you still brother"

"Okay"

"I will take up your offer of going horse riding that's if you still keen"

"You will find me outside when you ready" He flashes me a smile I give him a faint one back. He walks out leaving me in my thoughts. I miss my rib and my son..

-

Hawulesizwe

It's been a while since I've gone home. Today I've decided upon myself to go see my son Mlingo and his mother. I find my wife hanging baby towels on the fence. She wipes her hands on her cloth and walks towards me. She has a smile on her face.

"My husband" She says embracing me and giving me a baby kiss. I look at her and faintly smile.

"My wife"

"You look skinny my husband you weren't eating proper food. Come let's go inside I must feed you proper food." She says holding my hand. We walk to our hut I put my little food offerings on the ground. She attends to that and disappears outside. I heave a sigh and look at my sleeping son. Khethiwe walks in with a bowl of water and soaked leaves. She kneels in front of me and gently reach for my legs and dips them inside the basin she came with.

"These leaves will aid you with relaxing your feet. You traveled far my love"

She says massaging my feet's gently.

"How are you?"

"I'm doing great and yourself?"

"I'm doing fine. Why is the compound quiet? Where is everyone?"

"Mama went to the market and gogo went to visit a friend and Lungelo went to the farm"

"I see.."

"It's only you and me and Mlingo" She smiles.

"Yeah.."

"Ndandatho was here a couple of days ago"

I look at her.

"She's pregnant for Zimele"

"I know about that. What else did you tell her?"

"Nothing much my love. How are your feet's?"

"Fine"

"I see.. Are you hungry? There's pap and bitter leaves mixed with peanuts. Would you love that?"

"Khethiwe we need to talk"

"About what Hawu?"

"I think I'm in love with someone else"

She chuckles.

"Must I dish up for you?"

"Did you hear what I said?"

"Hear what? What did you say again?"

"Khethiwe don't play pretense"

" Since you not saying anything about filling your tank then I will dish up for myself" She says standing up with the basin. I walk towards her and gently hold her hand.

"I love you too"

She chuckles and walks out. Mlingo wakes up I pick him up and play with him. I step outside the hut and go sit outside the verenda where I find Khethiwe seated and eating.

"His awake"

"Okay"

"Are you good?"

"What do you think?"

"Khethiwe"

"Look after your son I have wood and water to collect
Hawulesizwe"

"I can do that on your behalf"

"By asking your newly favorite person to collect them on my behalf? Because I'm lazy and amputated?"

"Thats not true Khethiwe"

"Hawu do what you please"

She says standing up and walking to the kitchen. She resurfaces with a wheelbarrow and water containers. I heave a sigh.

Ndandatho

I wake up to Bangizwe laughing. I find the Queen playing with him. I rub my eyes and get up from the bed.

"Food is ready"

"I'm not hungry"

"Princess please."

I look at her so does she.

"Ndandatho don't starve the little Jali offspring please."

I look at her and say nothing.

"You have a handsome little young man here"

She smiles at Bangi.

"Thank you"

"He looks so much like his father"

"Just like your son"

"Busani?"

"He looks like Zikhali so is the little girl"

"Only you took after me" She smiles. Indeed I'm a spitting image of this woman I only took Zikhali's eyes and pointy nose other than that I look so much like this woman.

"Come let's go join the others in the dining room"

"Can I freshen up first?"

"No that will take a while. Come Ndandatho" She says swaying her curves to the door. I follow her and Bangi. Busani stares at me across his chair I return the stare too.

"Who is the father of your child?" Busan-

"Are you talking to me maybe?"

"Of course who else is pooping boobs here apart from you?" Busan-

" Knowing about the father of my child will not put an end to your suffering problems nor is it gonna elevate you any how" I say dishing up for my self.

"So much pride and disrespect for a lost and found" Busani-

"Like you respect yourself royalty and mighty. "

"Can you two stop already? Busani I will not tolerate that in my house. This is your big sister not one of your opponents" Zikhali-

"She's bringing in her stinking attitude into my Kingdom baba"
Busani-

"Your Kingdom? Dont annoy me Busani apologize to your sister now!!" Boni-

"I will do no such thing"

"I think I've lost my appetite"

"You didn't lose your appetite you just don't know half of these meals" Busani-

"Busani!!!!" Boni-

I give him a deadly stare.

"Busani what did I say to you?"

"Baba I was trying to converse with her properly but she gave me a shitty response" Busani

"Vulgar Busan" Gabi-

"Thula wena!" Busan

"Didn't you give me a shitty attitude too?" I say looking at him.

"I was telling the truth I'm not your errands boy"

"You know what? Stuff you Busani and stuff this Kingdom! If you think I want to be here and I enjoy being here then you got it all wrong. I care less about your Kingdom and your people and your family! I never knew you any of you and guess what? I would still be ecstatic to continue living my life without knowing any of you. Don't stand there and disrespect me Busani you might have been promised the world and everything that lives inside it but to me you are nothing but a bum wipe!! Treat me like dirt and I will treat you like faeces!! Mr prestigious!!!! "

I say standing up. Everyone looks at me.

" Can I have my son"

"Ndandatho" Mom-

"Please give me my son please!!"

"Here" She hands my son and we walk to our private chamber I think I won't last here. I'm leaving this place..

Ngelози

I'm done filling in my water containers. I put my containers on the wheelbarrow and slowly push it. I hear laughter a bit far accompanied by galloping sounds of horses. I push my wheelbarrow as heavy as it is.

"Nhlo come on I was doing you a Favour!" Zimele-

"No way admit Jali that I beat you to it"

"Hhayi suka" They laugh again.

"Ngelozii!!" Zimele-

"My Prince greetings" I say with my head semi bowed. Nhlonipho is glancing on me.

"Why are you collecting water alone? It's dangerous to be here alone young maiden" Zimele-

"I got caught up during the day my Prince"

"Don't collect water at this hour young maiden it's not safe. Witches are lurking around." Zimele says getting off from his horse.

"Stand here I'm coming"

"Where are you going?"

"I'm pressed Nhlonipho" Zimele says.

"Fine" Nhlonipho says looking at me. Zimele disappears to the bushes. Nhlonipho jumps off from his horse and walks towards me.

"Greetings my flower"

"Greetings Prince Nhlonipho"

"How are you doing?" Nhlo-

"I'm doing fine and yourself?"

"Not good and you're to blame" He says reaching for my hand.

"What have i done?"

"You didn't invite me to come with you to collect water"

"I'm sorry."

Zimele appears he gently let's go of my arm.

"Nhlonipho"

"Brother"

"I want you to push the wheelbarrow back to the Palace Ngelozu will ride in your horse"

"No my Prince I can push it myself no need to do that" I say.

"I will push it for her Bhuti Zimele you can take the horses home both of them"

"Fine" Zimele says climbing on one of the horses and striding the other one. He disappears leaving Nhlonipho and myself then the wheelbarrow.

Nhlonipho glances on me and so do I.

"Let's go" Nhlo-

"Let's go"

"Ngelozu"

"Yes"

"Are you angry at me?"

"No."

"Then why have you been dodging me since we kissed? Today you didn't invite me to accompany you to the river bank and normally you invite me. What did I do?"

"You did nothing my Prince"

"Really?"

"Yes.."

He looks at me and stops pushing the wheelbarrow. He pulls me closer to him and puts his hands on my waistline. He gaze into my eyes.

"I missed you"

"Me too"

"You seem shy today what's going on? Come here my flower" He says smashing his lips on mine he separates my lips forcing me to kiss him back. We kiss till he squeezes my boobs.

"Let's go home it's dangerous here"

"Nhlonipho"

"Yes"

"You said I'm your girlfriend"

"I know"

"Does that mean you will deflower me?"

"Eehm!! Why that question Ngelozi?"

"Yes or no Nhlonipho?"

"I don't know Ngelozi"

"Do you wish to deflower me?"

"Ngelozi can we talk about this please"

"Nhlonipho girlfriends and boyfriends make love and they make babies just like your brother and sister Ndandatho"

"Where is this coming and going?"

"I don't want to be deflowered"

"Fine I won't deflower you Ngelozi"

"But you will continue drinking my breast milk?"

"Do you like it when I do that?"

"Yes I love it"

"I will do it Ngelozi even though that will be risky"

"How risky?"

"My wand will be hard again and that will put ideas into my head."

"What ideas?"

"Ideas of deflowering you"

"You won't do that Nhlonipho I'm still a baby."

"I know. I won't deflower you my flower"

He says looking at me. I put my hands on his shoulders and kiss him. He kisses me back we stop when our breathing changes.

"I love you Nhlonipho"

"I love you too"

"Can you please hold my boobs and kiss my neck like that day"

"Let's move to a bush so nobody will see us doing that"

"Fine" He pushes the wheelbarrow to the nearest Bush he picks me up and lays me on a rock with my legs spread apart. We kiss each other my upper cloth is removed and my boobs stare at him. He does what he did previously but today it's more nicer

than before he is laying on top of me with his clothes on. His rubbing his privates against mine while kissing me.

"Ngelози"

"Yes"

"Do you love me?"

"Yes I love you"

"Enough to let me see your nakedness?" I widen my eyes.

"Nhlonipho I don't want you to deflower me".

"I won't deflower you I want to do something in your castle please"

"What something?"

"I want to use my tongue on your privates. I want to kiss your inner thighs and your castle"

"No Nhlonipho"

"Please Ngelozi it's not gonna hurt"

"I'm scared Nhlonipho"

"Don't be please" He says rolling my cloth down.

"Nhlonipho no"

"My flower I won't hurt you nor am I gonna deflower you please. Open your legs please?" I bite on my lower lips and look at him with worry and fear but his eyes assure me not to fear anything.

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Nhlonipho Jali

I hope I won't fumble on what I'm trying to initiate with Ngelozi.. Father gave me that kind of talka couple of days ago. He said stuffs about tongues and privates of a woman and right now I want to put his teachings to use. Her legs are wide spread apart there's fear in her eyes but I won't hurt her nor deflower her at least not now.

"I won't hurt you nor will I deflower you my flower I promise" I assure her. She puts her guard down. I roll down her cloth and gaze into her nakedness. I kiss her again when she's fully aroused I move my head to her privates. I swallow hard and say a little prayer. I don't know which is which here I don't even know how this fluid i'm staring at tastes like if wether I should swallow it or wipe it off. God's of Thuthukani what am I doing? I kiss her creamy thighs gently.

"Nhlonipho"

"Mmm?"

"Nothing" She says.. I kiss her tighs again. I put my guard down and rub my finger on what father described as a "Kidney bean size or shape" Ngelozi makes a strange sound her voice is changing. I continue rubbing that place in circular.

"Nhlo!! Sehranmagzine.comh"

"Does it hurts?"

"No... No.. It feels good don't stop please" I heave a breath of relief and continue doing that. I use my tongue to lick on that beany thingy. To my surprise Ngelozi moans louder and holds my head tightly. I do everything father said I must do when I "Marry"

"Sehranmagzine.comaah!!! Nhlo... Nhlonipho!!! I love this!!! Sehranmagzine.comah!!! I want to pee! I want to pee!!!" She shouts. Could it be this is what father classified as an orgasm? I continue.

"Sehranmagzine.comaah!!! Nhlo!!!!!! I want to... I want to... I want to pee!!!!!"

"It's your orgasm don't push it back Ngelozi let it out"

"You want me to pee on your face? I'm not nasty Nhlonipho"

"Ngelozi do as I say please" I say rubbing her bean.

"I want to pee!! Stop!!!"

"No!! Pee here!!!"

"That's yucky!! You not a bucket nor am I a bed wetter!!! Move I want to be!!!" she says trying to lift her head up.

"Don't be stubborn pee here!!!!"

"No I want to pee on the ground!" We argue about the peeing till I let her be.. She squats on the ground and forces her bladder empty nothing comes out.

"I can't pee my urine has disappeared"

"Serves you right"

"The witches stole my urine Nhlonipho"

"I wish they stole your mouth too" I say handing her her clothes.

" That wasn't urine but your orgasm Ngelozzi."

"What's that?"

"Pleasure"

"So it went to my intestines instead?"

"Yes and it's gonna come out from your mouth and ears" I say.

"Nhlonipho no! You need to help me get it back please"

"It's a pity I can't.. Let's go"

"We not done"

"Ngelози let's go"

"Fine" She dresses up and follows me as we walk back to the royal compound.

Mama Ngelози

It's been a while since Ngelози went to the river bank to collect water. I need water to make my steam bread but this child is nowhere in sight.

"She's not back?" Husband -

" No baba and this is starting to get strange baba! Ngelozi is becoming something else it's about time we reunited her with a belt" I say annoyed and livid as my dough is rising and spilling on the basin.

"Maybe there's a valid reason my wife. The river bank is far"

"There's no such thing as that baba! Ngelozi is getting out of hand. She's surely swaying her hips out there to attract boys. I will deal with her today she will know ke very well! Come morning she will be numb and itching from her body." I say standing up reaching for my 5lt bucket to go ask for water next door. I greet Bubuzile who is breasting her child on the verenda.

" Bubu"

"Ma"

"Where is your mother?"

"She went to mama Thwala"

"Okay.. Look can you please give me water Ngelozi will reimburse you when she comes back from the river. I want to make steam bread and it's a hassle without water"

"It's okay mama. Please hold her for me" She says handing me her baby who doesn't look very well. This child is very sick.

"Bubu"

"MA"

"The baby is still not healing?"

"It's getting worse mama"

"What does the Maine say the problem is?"

"He needs a ritual from her father's clan"

"Then what's stopping you from achieving that?"

"The father wants nothing to do with the baby mama he is a royal cassanova"

"Meaning?"

"Her father is busy is chasing women instead of doing right by her"

"Who is the father?"

"Warrior Hawu"

"You lie!!"

"Not a chance mama"

"Why would Hawu do that to his blood? That's wrong" I say brushing her hair.

"I don't know mama he is just a jerk. Here ma"

"Thank you my darling I will pray for her recovery"

"Thank you mama" I give her the baby and walk out. I spot Ngelozi walking in the yard with a wheelbarrow she's even singing.. I slowly go to the peach tree and pluck out its wet branch to use it as a whipping stick. I peel off the leaves and go sit down next to my pots.

"Mama I'm home"

"I see you home. Go put the containers in the kitchen and come here to aid me with this bread."

"No problem mama" She walks away singing again. I walk to the kitchen as her back is turned on me I take out my wand and bash her with it. She dances to the rhythm.

"Mama!!!! Mama yoooh!!!! Mama Ngiyaxolisa!!!!" She cries and jumps.

"where were you? Huh Ngelozi?"

"The river bank mama!!!!"

"Nyiva bank!! Nyiva bank? You think i was born yesterday huh? Who is this boy you seeing Ngelozi? Today you will show me your boyfriend I hope he would love you after these marks I will leave on your body. Uyadzelela wena!"

Ndandatho

I'm laying in bed with Gatsha crying to my annoyance. I shove my boob inside his mouth he pukes it out and cries. I stand up to check on his nappy he didn't pop nor did he pee. His just being a little dramatic and a cry baby. I put him on the bed and look at him as he cries. I heave a sigh and pick him up and pace around the bedroom with him. I sing him a cradle song. A knock snaps me out my little fantasy. I permit whomever it is entrance. Gabi walks in I roll my eyes.

"Hi"

"Hi Gabi"

"Why is your baby crying?"

"I don't know"

"Did you give him milk?"

"He doesn't want it"

"Did you wash his body?"

"Not yet but I will."

"Maybe he miss his father" I look at her.

"And how do you know that?"

"Because he doesn't look like you but the man who made him" I giggle.

"How old are you again?"

"14 and yourself? "

"Twenty five years"

"Wow!! When are you taking him to his father?"

"I don't know Gabisile. "

"Can I hold him and show my friends please?"

"It's late sweetheart maybe tomorrow"

"Fine. Do you like roasted nuts?"

"Yes"

"I like them too. Can I sleep in your room today please? "

"Why?"

"I like you and your son" I smile at least not everyone bores me here I think I'm gonna like this one.

"On one condition"

"What condition?"

"You bath and don't snore and lastly not a terrible sleeper"

"I can do all that I'm a good sleeper and I don't snore. Busani snores like a pig" She giggles and covers her mouth. Her long

black twisted hair is tied neatly in a bun.

"Thats more like him. You can sleep in here just for today"

"Thank you sister Ndandatho. Let me fetch nuts for you and me and a banana for the baby

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that should be fine right?"

"Definitely and please prepare bath water for me or tell me where the kitchen is I will do it myself"

"We have slaves for that I will tell one of them to bring you water I'm coming"

I nod and let her go. Minutes later she shows up with a tray stuffed with food and drinks. A tall pregnant follows her with a basin with water.. I look at her and then her tummy.

"Greetings Princess"

"Greetings my sister and how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks my Princess.. I've brought you and the young Prince water to bath. Clean cloths will be brought in for you"

"Thank you and what is your name?"

"Her name is Liziwe and she has an elephant tummy." Gabi says and laughs. I look at her and then the lady.

"Gabi how old are you again?"

"14"

"Sisi Liziwe how old are you?"

"27 Princess"

"And wena why are you disrespecting her? Is she your age mate Gabi?"

"No"

"I want you to apologies to her now"

"I can't do that sisi Ndandatho"

"That wasn't a plea Gabisile apologies or else you won't sleep in my room"

I say with a stern voice.

"I'm sorry sister Liziwe you look beautiful and your tummy isn't an elephant tummy."

"It's okay Princess I forgive you"

"Don't ever disrespect elders Gabi not even young kids that's mean and wrong!"

"I'm sorry"

"Thank you sisi Liziwe for the water God bless you"

"My Princess" She bows and walks out. This lady is too heavy to be working why is Boni condemning such? This is wrong especially done or ignored by a woman who has given birth to three children. I need to have a word with her.

Ngelozi

My mother is whooping my arse and body with the peach stick. I'm crying my lungs out with every bash my body is numb and stinging but mother doesn't stop. I run around the kitchen trying to duck the lash she's giving me. As I run I accidentally trip and twist my ankle. I cry in agony but mother continues beating me up.

"Hhayi bo!!!! Mama Ngelozi do you want to kill the child?" The Queen says in shock.

"My Queen this girl is getting out of hand she takes hours to collect water from the river bank can you imagine? The next thing she will be bringing me babies in this house to feed. I will kill Ngelozi with my both my hands!!" Mom says whooping me again this time around I'm crying for my leg.

" Mama Ngiyaxolisa! The wheelbarrow was giving me a tough time I'm sorry!! "

" Shut up!!! Shut up!! You lying Ngelozi!! After I'm done with you I'm fetching your boyfriend to bash him too!! No daughter of mine will be a free milk cow in the bushes!!!!" She says cursing.

" Mama Ngelozi don't do that don't beat her up. Ngelozi is a good child and never will she do what you accusing her off. The river bank is very far come on!"

" Queen Nozibele I need to reprimand this girl"

"By beating her up? No mama Ngelozi this is wrong. A wheelbarrow was giving her a tough time"

The Queen says helping me up I cry in agony as I'm forced to stand.

" Ukhalelani? I will slap you!!! "Mom-

" Ngelozu go outside my child okay? "I nod as the Queen says I take a step forward and fall on the ground. The Queen rushes to me.

" I'm sorry yezwa? Sorry. "

" My ankle is twisted "

" She's lying!!! She's a liar this one!!! "Mom-

" Mama Ngelozu the child is in pain come aid her"

""My Queen what brings you here?"

"I wanted a little help from Ngelozu"

"What help?"

"Her to lead the dancers and singers since Ndandatho is not around.. How is your leg?"

"Painful" She tries to twist it I flinch in pain. She looks at my mother.

"She broke her leg she's not lying"

"You broke your leg?" Mom- I nod and cry. I even have hiccups. The Queen helps me up and leads me to my private chamber.

"I will send someone to aid you okay? I'm sorry" She says brushing my hair. She leaves the door and I cry my lungs out. My body is in pain so is my soul.

Khethiwe

"Khethiwe can we talk"

"About what?"

"What I said few hours ago"

"Hawulesizwe what do you want me to say or do about that?"

"Tell me how you feel about it"

"Will that change your feelings for another woman Hawu? Will

my opinion make you change your mind about her?"

"Khethiwe"

"Hhayi ongiyeka wena" I say attending ro my son.

"I love you Khethiwe"

"That's your favorite song isn't it? You sing it to every woman who comes into your life isn't it Hawu?"

He looks at me.

"Listen if you love that maiden be with her but as for me and my son. We leaving Hawu and you will never ever see your son."

"Khethiwe I want a polygamous marriage"

"And I'm not against that Hawu do it but as for me Khethiwe I won't be a part of your circus. Count me out"

"Khethiwe you cannot leave me"

"Why not? Am I chained to you or sharing the same heart as you?"

"You need to meet her"

I laugh and turn off the side lamp..

"Good night Warrior"

"Khethiwe come on"

"I see you and Zimele carry the same appetite when it comes to women. You think you can eat all cookies and get away with it. What you doing is exactly what Zimele is doing with Ndandatho. There's Noma on the other hand and Ndandatho. Now you want to put me through that madness as well? Forget it Warrior I'm not stupid. I'm very pretty and I'm certain I will find love elsewhere. " I say turning my back on him.

"Khethiwe can we not argue over this"

"Are you hearing yourself Hawu? I mustn't what? Don't work on my nerves Hawu."

"Your family will not take you back Khethiwe have you forgotten what they said the day I married you? Don't do that to yourself my wife please. I still love you Khethi. It's just my heart has made room for two. I'm not telling you this to chase you away or to disrespect you but I'm telling you because I love you and that you deserve to know the truth. I need you Khethi"

"Hawu please let me sleep I'm tired"

"Khethiwe I mean it"

"Whatever Hawu" I look at my son and crack my head. I knew one day such would happen what was u thinking marrying a warrior? I swallow hard and breastfeed my son with tears threatening to roll out of my eyes as thoughts about my family resurfaces. Hawu moves closer to me and holds me from behind. A kiss on my neck follows I ignore him and focus on my baby.

"Khethi we can make this work please my love"

"Why Hawu? Am I not enough? Don't I satisfy you Hawu?"

"Khethi this has nothing to do with you but me"

"You hurting me Hawu"

"I'm sorry I really am"

"Are you doing this because you know I am an orphan? and that my uncles kicked me out of home? Hawu why are you doing this to me?"

"Khethiwe I love you and I love her too."

"Who is she?"

"Thats my business Khethiwe"

" I'm leaving with you back to Palace. I won't allow this Hawu never not when I'm still alive"

"Khethi come on don't be stubborn. We gonna make this work please" I let my tears roll.

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Ngcolosi

Before I make my way to my private chamber to retire for a peaceful slumber. I walk to the kitchen to drink a glass of water. I find my sister Mota sipping from a mug. She looks at me and so do I. I pour myself water and gulp the glass I turn my back to walk away.

"Ngcolosi"

I look back.

"Care to join me for a little while?"

"I'm afraid not Mota"

"Why not?"

"My wife is waiting for me"

"It must be great being a husband isn't it?"

"Mota I'm tired and drained to be tolerating your bickering. Not

today sister"

"Have you ever wondered why I left home Ngcolosi?"

"You couldn't live with your cruel heart. You turned everyone against you if not against each other. Mota you made your own bed now lay on it"

"Thats not true Ngcolosi that's not the reason behind my departure"

"Whatever reason it is or was Mota I care less about it because instead of changing your ways and mending things with me your hate has escalated to my children. You can barely hide your evil heart Mota and that could cost my son his lover"

She sips from her mug and looks at me.

"Ngcolosi you don't know what I was going through in this Palace you have no idea of what I was going through behind the curtains you were the egg child and I was the blacksheep of the family Ngcolosi. Do you know how many times your father left me sleeping in the dungeon? Do you know how everything I used to do looked wrong on mother and father's eyes? But with you everything was okay they would even give you a round of applause for doing nonsense but not me Ngcolosi."

"And if that is true I don't care Mota. It was never my fault that all of that happened to you what I know very well Mota. I loved you and cared for you like my little sister. I would even carry you on my back each time you had your knee bruised. I cared for you Mota brought you bush fruits each time I went to the veld with others. Till this day I don't know what is it that I've ever done to you for you to wake up one day hating me. We were close Mota I was the best brother ever to you"

She looks at me and then her mug.

"You fell in love Ngcolosi that's what happened."

"How was me falling in love reason enough for you to hate me Mota?"

"You started neglecting me and spending more time with Nozibele! That's how you ended our relationship Ngcolosi. You made her your universe and forgot about me your little sister."

"Like I said Mota I have little energy for this conversation. I'm trying to fix to the mess you've done have some decency to fold your tail and leave my Kingdom please. Come tomorrow morning I need you gone Mota my wife and kids are not safe in your presence nor are they happy so please leave "

She looks at me.

" Honey! Ngcolosi!! "

" I'm in the kitchen sweetheart " I shout looking at Mota. Her footsteps fills the kitchen.

" What's taking you long? I've been waiting " She says embracing me from behind. Her head rests on my back.

" I'm sorry honey we can go now"

"It's cold without you come let's go" She says sulking. I hold her hand and leave the kitchen with her..

Ndandatho

The rooster is crowing outside poor me hardly slept last night. Gatsha was throwing tantrums by whimpering all night long. I would only take naps here and there but his mops would snap me out of it. Gabisile is a heavy sleeper not even once did she wake up as we speak she's still snoring softly besides Gatsha. I jump off from the bed and cover these two properly with a blanket. I step outside my private

chamber and walk to the kitchen. I find Liziwe leaning against the wall. She's not looking well judging by her facial expression. I slowly walk towards her and put my hand on her shoulder.

"Greetings Princess"

"Are you Okay?"

"Yes my Princess"

"Liziwe don't lie you look nothing fine. Are you in pain?"

"It doesn't matter my Princess I have to prepare breakfast for everyone" She says forcing herself to walk.

"Lizi look me in the eyes and tell me you okay"

"Morning Liziwe" Thats Busani the bus headed Buthelezi offspring.

"Morning my Prince"

"How's the little one in there?"

"Naughty and kicking hard" Liziwe faintly smiles.

"Soon I will be teaching him or her a few skills" He genuinely smiles and looks at me.

"Morning" Busani-

"Morning"

"How was your night?" Busan-

"Sehranmagzine.comaah!!! Sehranmagzine.comh!!!" Liziwe-

Busani looks at me and then Liziwe.

"Lizi are you in pain?"

"Yes my Princess"

"Why did you pitch in for work knowingly you are heavily pregnant Lizi?"

"Princess I need money if I don't work my family will starve judging our grounds have gone dry sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.comah!!!!!" She whimpers. I look at Busani as I'm holding Liziwe's hand.

"Can you please lend me a hand Busani let's take her to her private chamber. I think the baby is coming"

"Me? Help you deliver a baby? No way Ndandatho"

"Busani can you for once put your mighty pride aside and bow to offer a helping hand you won't lose anything please!"

"Ndandatho it's a taboo to watch a woman deliver."

"You won't deliver the baby we just taking her to her private chamber please. The baby will be in danger" He swallows hard and helps me walk Liziwe to her house. This is not right the house she's staying in. It might collapse any given day..

"Lay the grass mat on the floor Busani and please put a cloth on it. I want you to collect hot water and a clean cloth then bring those here. If possible call your royal doctor or midwife. She desperately needs help"

"Thats all?"

"Yes"

"Fine I'm coming"

"Don't run away Busani please"

"I won't Ndandatho" He says jogging outside.

"Calm down yezwa? Calm down all will be okay." I brush her tummy for a moment I'm taken back to the day I gave birth to Bangi. What a horrible and terrifying labor I had. I still wish Zimele was there to hold my hand as I pushed for his baby.

"Lizi do you stay alone here?"

"No I stay with my boyfriend "

"Where is he right now?"

"In the farm"

"I see.. Do you need him besides you as you deliver your baby?"

She nods. I have to beg Busani for this one too.. He walks in panting carrying a basin and cloths.

"The midwife is not around Princess" He says trying to catch his breath.

"It's fine I will manage. Do you know her partner?"

"I doubt I do"

"Fine.." Liziwe cries in pain Busani steps outside leaving me alone with Liziwe...

Zimele

I hardly slept last night all I could hear were my son's sobs.

Hearing him cry in my dreams was bringing me agony just on my abdomen. I have no choice today later to go check up on my son and his mother. For now I have to go attend to the surgacane farmers the cotton farmers and lastly the livestock farmers I will deal with the fruits and vegetables farmers tomorrow when I address the warriors. As for the dancers and singers I will talk to Ngelozi to handle that. Nhlonipho will have to be alone on this teaching duty maybe I will help him here and there since his been complaining about me not giving him much of my attention. My bath water has arrived. I freshen up and reach for a blade to trim down my beards. I brush my teeth afterwards and wear my royal garments. I put on my beads too I need to look presentable when handling the farmers. As I'm about to leave I bump into Ndandatho's beads

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I need to look presentable when handling the farmers. As I'm about to leave I bump into Ndandatho's beads I grab them and embrace them. I miss her so much I wish she was home to kiss me goodbye or wish me a good day ahead. I snap out of it I put the beads on my wrists and walk out. I find my brother waiting outside he looks cleans too.

"Morning Jali"

"Morning brother Zimele"

"What is the occasion? Why did you clean out well?"

"Your father forced me into coming with you"

I chuckle.

"I see his now making you fill in his shoes. The next thing is intimacy tutorials" I say walking towards a horse stall.

"I've already got those Bhengu" He says walking towards a brown horse while mine is White.

"Really?"

"Yes"

"What's left is for you to practice that"

He giggles.

"Only that remaining brother"

"You do realize you need a girlfriend for that?"

"Duh Zimele I'm very much aware"

"Don't jump into that Nhlonipho Relationships are very complicated and challenging. Enjoy yourself hey without rushing to licking beans" We laugh. Father though I only realised now that the bean he has always taught me about was a clitoris.

"I won't rush Warrior"

"No breakfast today?" Mom-

"Maybe your little man would love that mama"

"I'm full mama I will grab a fruit in the farm"

"Have a good day my boys I love you" Mom-

"No kisses for me please Nozibele" I say. Mom giggles and walks towards me she smashes her lips on my cheeks she moves to Nhlonipho whom she pulls by cheeks playfully. He kisses him father walks out with a smile on his face.

"Boys"

"Jali"

"Dont disappoint me give the farmers solutions not shock or worry you hear me?"

"We got it Ngcolosi" I say with a smirk. Mom embraces Dad a butterfly kiss follows. Nhlonipho and myself ride to the farms. We are told about their problems my brother and myself join our heads together to bring them solutions. To move to another one and hear them out the sun is bursting mind you it's morning. We listen to all their concerns..

"I'm feeling sleepy now"

"It's still morning Zimele"

"But I'm tired Nhlonipho this sun is blazing hot"

"You're weak. Where is Hawu? I haven't seen him in days"

"He went home"

"Surely the wife is excited to have him over"

"I doubt surely he spilt the beans"

"What beans?"

"Warrior has fallen out of love with his wife he now likes a woman he has never touched nor proposed too"

"Thats hilarious Zimele. So you telling me he is leaving his wife for a woman who might not end up with him? I mean he hasn't proposed love to her how sure is he the girl will love him back?"

"I don't know Nhlonipho I told him it's crazy but you know Khuboni. His hot headed"

" That warrior is chaotic firstly it was Bubuzile now this?"

"The cherry on top is that Bubuzile has a child which is a secret back home."

"So you saying Bubuzile 's child is Hawu' s child?"

"Yes"

"Damn!! Hawu though"

"His a cassanova"

"And yourself?"

"Nope! I have my eyes on one woman and that's Mama Gatsha"

"And the shark?"

"It must dive into the ocean because me and her we are never happening not a chance."

"I love someone"

I look at him.

"You love someone? Who?"

"Can I not tell at least not yet"

"Your friend Ngelozi?"

"Is it obvious?"

"I saw the awkwardness between you too yesterday"

"Don't tell on me please Zimele"

I chuckle.

"Nhlonipho has gone bad."

"I haven't done anything inappropriate with her"

"I didn't say you did"

"But you making it sound like that"

I chuckle.

"Don't deflower the maiden Nhlonipho focus on kissing only not putting things in each other's privates please. Your parents will

blame me shall you impregnate her."

"I wasn't gonna do that duh!"

"Nhlonipho don't I'm warning you seriously"

"I'm nothing like yourself and Ndandatho I don't even think of intimacy" I look at him and furrow my brows.

"You lie"

"I'm dead serious Zimele"

"Anyway there is your father in law" I stand up and walk to my horse. So does he..

Bonisile

"Boni the baby is crying can't you go attend to him?"

"What is stopping you from doing that Zikhali? His your grandson"

"I don't have boobs"

"But you have fatherly instincts"

"Fine Boni!" He says jumping off from bed heading to the door. I smile and get up from bed too. I fix the bed and dress up. I follow him outside. We find Gabisile pacing around the room trying to hush-hush the baby.

"He won't stop crying mama"

"Where is her mother?" Zikhali-

"I woke up to her not in bed baba"

"That's strange." Zikhali says holding the baby. Gatsha keeps quiet. Zikhali looks at me and smiles.

"She surely went for a walk" Zikhali

"Or she went to Zimele"

"Even if that was true she wouldn't have left the baby" Zikhali-

"Let's go grab something to eat."

"I'm hungry mother let's go please" We all walk out I walk to the kitchen and I find no pots on the stove. I walk to the sitting room.

"There's no breakfast Zikhali. Liziwe hasn't made food yet"

"Njani? The sun is blazing hot outside how come she hasn't prepared food?"

"I don't know my King. That leaves me no choice but to prepare it myself"

"God! That's gonna take years Boni give us cereals we have no choice"

"I want bread and eggs sausages and tomatoes. I want cereal"
Gabi-

"Gabi your mother won't have enough time to prepare all that"

"Hha baba! The baby wants sausages too isn't it Bangizwe? He said yes daddy" We laugh at Gabi.

"Fine we will make you eggs and sausages"

"Bangizwe and myself are going out for a walk call us when food is ready"

"Don't drop Ndandatho's baby Zikhali"

"I won't Boni I have three kids remember and counting"

"Zikhali don't you dare! Yooh" I say walking away leaving him laughing. I prepare food and go call him outside disturbing him from his little conversation with one of the royal delegates.

"We will talk later"

"Later Buthelezi and bye little man. Such a handsome boy"

"Thats my grandson Bangizwe"

"Busani has a baby?"

"No but my daughter does"

"Your daughter? What daughter?" He chuckles and pats his shoulder.. He walks towards me I playfully tell Bangi to come to me but the little rascal chooses his grandfather instead. Trust Zikhali with being loved by kids. We sit down and start eating.

"Zikhali don't give the baby sausages".

"He told Gabi he wanted them isn't it young Zimele?"

Gatsha smiles.

Ndandatho and Busani walk in.

"I will go freshen up Ndandatho"

"Thank you once again"

"It's a pleasure but is she gonna be okay?"

"Yes the woman promised to look after them. I need a bath myself after that little job"

"You better" They talk. Zikhali and myself look at each other and then them.

"Good morning you too"

"Morning and bye" Busani-

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Noma

I was peacefully minding my own business before mother walked into my bedroom. She's huffing and breathing fire that's because I haven't started getting dressed nor prepared a luggage bag to go to the Kingdom. I really don't want to go back to Thuthukani village that place carries embarrassment and shame I've lost so much in those grounds. I can't understand why mother would keep on forcing me to go back to Thuthukani its obvious I don't belong there.

"You still in bed Nomaswazi?"

"Mama I'm not feeling well nor do I want to go back to Thuthukani"

"Young lady get up and stop making excuses Noma!what kind of a wife are you gonna make? One that runs away from problems and shows up when everything has fallen into shape? Swazi get up"

"Mama I don't want to go back there!!"

"Or you want me to tell your father whose responsible for your pregnancy?"

I widen my eyes she can't do that.

"Mama you can't do that"

"Why not Swazi? Get up and stop whining failure to do that I will sing to your father and we both know what's gonna happen.. Your filth of a boyfriend will be killed!"

"Mama please"

"Get up! I'm giving you a minute to fix yourself."

She leaves my room. I heave a sigh and get on my feet. I was going to the kitchen to collect bathing water when I bump into the man who left his seed in my tummy. We share a long stare without saying anything to each other it's been like this since I came back from Thuthukani.

" You can pass" He says looking at me without blinking such a good looking man.

"No you can pass"

"Are you Okay Princess?"

"I'm fine"

"Are you sure?"

"I'm just sick morning sickness"

"What are those again?"

"Can we go to the garden please"

"I don't want trouble with your parents"

"I need to tell you something please let's go to a private place"

"Fine" We walk in silence. I sit on the bench and fiddle with my hands He stands in front of me waiting for me to talk.

"Nomaswazi talk I have livestock to herd please"

"I'm... I'm pregnant Phiwe"

"Okay.. By?"

"It's yours"

"What? Tell me you joking Nomaswazi"

"I'm afraid not I'm carrying your child"

"You lying that child is not mine but the Prince of Thuthukani.

You left here and went to him now you claiming I'm responsible?
Noma don't pin your mess on me please! I'm just a herd boy"

Tears roll out of my eyes.

"Phiwe I never showed the Prince my nakedness. He is in love
with someone else. The baby is yours please believe me"

"Noma let's be serious here you left the Kingdom and went to another. To a man is who is supposedly declared as your future husband.. You spent countless of nights in that place then weeks later you come back and tell me you pregnant with my child after disappearing for such a long time? Noma please tell the truth"

"Phiwe the baby is yours. You took my pride and left me pregnant. Don't you remember doing cult with me?"

"I have to go"

"Not yet please Phiwo"

"What do you want?"

" I need your help."

"What help?"

"I need shelter for a couple of days"

"Why?"

"My parents are kicking me out of home because I'm pregnant with a commoners child instead of the Prince"

"So you serious about this baby not being Zimele?"

"Yes"

"Are you sure it's mine Noma?"

"What more do you want me to say Phiwe? The baby is yours"

"I see..."

"So are you helping me or not?"

"I can't Nomaswazi you're a Princess. I would be accused of kidnapping you"

"Nomaswazi the Queen is calling you"

"I'm coming" I say to the lady whose staring at me.

"Phiwe please"

"I can't"

"Fine!" I say standing up with defeat. I guess it leaves me no choice but to go back to Thuthukani...

Ndandatho

"Where are you coming from?" Boni asks.

"To deliver a baby" Busani-

"What baby?" Zikhali -

"Liziwe's baby" Busani-

"Hhaibo! Liziwe gave birth? When?"

"Today morning" Busani-

"Aibo!! Who delivered the baby?" Zikhali -

"Ndandatho"

They all look at me as I'm breastfeeding my son.

"Ndandatho you helped Liziwe deliver a baby?" Zikhali-

"it was either that or death. That brings me to my biggest concerns why do you allow pregnant women to work till this trimester? "

"They need the money" Busan-

"And?"

"Thats all" Busani-

"And in your perspectives that is acceptable Busani?"

"Ndandatho there's nothing for free if you need a glass of water you need to sweat for it It's survival of the fittest" Busani-

"Busani that is wrong in many ways."

"How so Ndandatho?" Busani-

"For starters she is putting her life in danger and that of the child by walking such a long distance barefooted and working such abnormal hours in her state carrying heavy things and suffocating herself in smoke trying to make you food. She might fall on her tummy or better yet collapse due to the heat. Do you know what could make things worse? Her going into labor without any one nearby just like it nearly happened. She might die in the kitchen alone or better yet have a palpitation that could kill her and you saying people should sweat for a glass of water Busani? Like really? "

" But we didn't force her Ndandatho to work here"

"That's where you're getting it wrong Busani. There's something called a sense of humor. Sometimes you need to reflect and put yourself in people's shoes. Imagine if that baby she was carrying was you and she was your mother. Would you applaud her masters for putting you at risk and herself? Would you be jolly had you hit the floor with your head and died due to your mother's masters being so self-centered and so focused on

getting their services rendered without knowing the state of that person? Busani what happened back there was totally wrong. King Zikhali and Queen Boni that was unacceptable that showed how selfish and self consumed you are. How do you allow a woman in her state to feed you everyday? Do you even know the place she calls home? The distance she travels to come here and serve you? Do you know Liziwe or you just know her name? "

They both look at me.

" I'm sorry if I sound disrespectful but you need to change your leadership skills and style. Try being human without involving your blue blood. Treat your workers the same way you would wish and want

for your parents and children to be treated. Stop treating servants like your front door carpet. They are human there's so much they put on hold just make you delicious meals with smiles on their faces they going through so much but you won't notice because blue blood has blinded you from humanity. Humanity!!! Humanity will be the rise of this Kingdom. Not forgetting respect and love."

Zikhali looks at me. Busani looks a bit calmer and interested in what I've got to say. Boni is bowed head and I'm eating my food while Gatsha is eating my flesh.

"Wow!! Did that come from your mouth?" Dad-

"It was just my two cent thoughts nothing much. "

"I love that my daughter I love the fact that you can stand on your truth you do not care about who you addressing and guess what we will definitely take your words into consideration thank you" Dad-

"Pleasure"

"I feel bad right now I'm sorry Ndandatho" Mom-

"You should apologize to Liziwe not her mother" Busani-

"Exactly. Anyway Ndandatho today we meeting the council members we need to notify our people about your return" Boni-

"OH!"

"They need to know about you surely those who saw you are gossiping about it." Zikhali-

"So am I needed at the meeting?"

"Not yet but a ceremony will be held in few days time. A proper welcoming ceremony where Prince and Princesses and King's and Queens from other Kingdom's will be invited. There will be a feast prepared and entertainment. It's gonna be a huge ceremony if other Princes are interested in washing their eyes or plucking out a flower they welcome" Zikhali -

"Even if that Prince is Zimele Jali baba?" Busani-

I look at him.

"What about Zimele?" I ask.

"The Jali's and the Buthelezi's don't drink from the same cup"
Busani-

"Reason being?"

"Boni

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let's go my wife. We have back to back meetings" I look at father. I excuse myself to go fix my bed and bath my son and wash his nappies. Gabisile is on my tail everywhere I go she is around. We spend the rest of the day eating nuts and unplaiting each others hair.

Nhlonipho

"Brother I will see you guys later I have a journey to embark on"

"Where are you going?"

"Umthombo"

"Okay see you brother"

He gently pats my shoulder and get on his horse. He goes on a different direction and I head back to the Kingdo. I pass the dancers standing under a shade with Ndandatho gone they will be in dire straits with an instructor I guess i should run this by Ngelozi. She's not a terrible singer or dancer. With more practice she might match Ndandatho's capabilities. Talking of her I haven't seen her since yesterday. I ditch my horse on its stall and walk to Ngelozi's house. I find her sibilings playing with sand and a plastic ball. I greet them and as always they ask me for sweets I give them the little I have. I smile and walk inside the compound..

Ngelози

"What are you standing for Ngelози? Are these dishes gonna wash themselves?"

"Mama I'm still finishing up the sweeping I will attend to that" I say softly.

"You lazy!!!! Lazy Ngelozi! Get busy"

I limp and quickly finish up the sweeping. I start with the dishes.

"After those dishes I want you to collect wood and come back to cook"

"Mama my leg is painful and swollen"

"Does it look like I care?"

I blink and push back my tears. I wash the dishes.

"Knock knock!"

"Ngena!!! She shouts annoyed.

"Greetings mama and greetings sisi Ngelozi "

I face the door my eyes land on Nhlonipho. I shy away and continue washing the dishes.

" Greetings Prince Nhlonipho how are you? "

" I'm good thanks mama and how are you? "

" We very well thanks Ngelozi didn't you hear the Prince greeting? Wena I will slap you with your sudden attitude you hear me?" She scolds. I look at Nhlonipho and faintly greet him back.

" Prince Nhlonipho go sit down Ngelozi will bring you something to drink "

" Thank you mama" He says looking at me. I wipe my now falling tear without anyone noticing. Nhlonipho walks outside conversing with mama. I wrap up with the dishes assisted by gashes of tears. My leg is painful honestly the Queen did send herbs for me but they didn't help that much. My ankle was twisted back to its condition but the pain hasn't subsided. Mom made me to do all chores I made breakfast and washed dishes then I made lunch and washed dishes now she wants me to cook yet again. On top of that I have to go find the wood and bath her two naughty kids who play and get dirty like pigs. Sometimes I hate my mother she's very strict unlike father who is understanding and caring and calmer.. Mom is the lion Juda I don't know how it looks like but I'm certain it looks like my mother.

"Sisi Ngelozi I'm hungry"

"Go eat lizards!"

"Sehranmagzine.comh!!! I'm gonna tell on you"

"And when you do that make sure you sleep and forget to wake up get lost!!" I say holding a basin to go spill the used water. I find mom and Nhlonipho laughing their lungs out Nhlonipho looks at me without blinking. I glance on him as well.

"Ngelozu where are the drinks?"

"I have two hands and one leg"

"Excuse me?"

"I will bring it shortly." I say and limp to the kitchen I butter the steam bread that made me to get a beating with jam and peanut butter. I make juice and put a banana on the tray. I limp towards mother and Nhlonipho the Prince has his eyes glued on my leg and his facial expression has changed from the one I saw couple of minutes ago.

"Your food" I say putting it in front of him.

"Thank you" He says staring into my eyes.

"Go chop up the pumpkin leaves we having that for supper"

"Mama you said I must fetch food"

"And you think I forgot Ngelozi?"

"What am I supposed to do first between the two?"

I say annoyed.

"Fetch wood and come back home not elsewhere" I glance on mom then Nhlonipho who still has his eyes on me. I get up and limp towards the gate.

"Sisi Ngelozi I said I'm hungry!"

"Dare say a word I will hold your little neck like a chicken that's yet to be slaughtered. Ngiyeke!!!" I burst and slowly limp..

Khethiwe

"I'm leaving Khethi"

"Okay"

"Can we have a minute in our private chamber?"

"Go Makoti I will finish up"

"Thank you mama" I say with defeat. I walk to our private chamber he locks the door and holds my pelvis.

"Can I get a good bye luncheon" he says kissing my neck. I look at him and stand like a statue.

"I miss you my love" He says unwrapping my cloth he takes a handful of my boobs and squeeze them.

"My love you quiet say something"

"Leave me alone"

"Pardon?"

"Let me loose Hawu"

"Khethi it's rude to starve a man can I have my luncheon please"

"Go to the Palace you will get a fresher one"

"Khethiwe come on"

"You have options Hawu if you won't get it from me she will give it to you"

He stops kissing me and looks at me.

"Khethi why are you doing this huh?"

"And why are you doing this huh Hawu? Do you even know how I feel about what you trying to put me through? Do you even care about my heart condition Hawu?"

"Khethiwe this is above me I love you and I love her as well."

"As you saying you love her and myself then I as option one I'm saying I don't want to show you my nakedness nor opening my legs for you. Go to option B Hawu bang her all night and maybe morning. Your appetite can you that far. Leave me alone please!!!"

"You are my wife Khethiwe and she isn't"

"You said she will be your second wife didn't you give her a title? Listen I won't sit here and husband you while you doing nonsense out there!! Go without getting your luncheon she will give you more than a luncheon" I say heading for the door. He huffs and looks at me with red eyes.

"Khethiwe I'm not done talking to you get back here!"

"I don't want!!!" I unlock the door and walk outside. Minutes later he steps out of our private chamber with his luggage and spear.

"Mama stay well I will see you soon"

"Travel safe my son Khethi walk him"

"He will cope mama" I say looking at him he blows his nose and looks at me.

"Bye son" He says brushing Mlingo's head. He walks away mom looks at me with concern. I continue with what I was doing before he disturbed me.

Zimele

Umthombo is very far but luckily I have arrived. I'm now standing in front of their gate chanting a little prayer for Zikhali not to give me a tough time. I'm surprised that this guard knows nothing about Ndandatho. I've been saying I'm here for Princess Ndandatho and the guard said there's no Ndandatho but the King will attend to me. As I'm talking I'm waiting for permission from Zikhali. He finally shows up.

"Jali"

"Greetings my King and how are you?"

"To what do we owe the visit? Come inside" He says looking at the guard. I walk in with my horse.

"With all due respect King Zikhali I'm here for Ndandatho and Gatsha can I kindly see them please"

"I see come" He says leading me to his garden. He walks away saying Ndandatho will join me shortly.....

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Nhlonipho

"Mama may I be excused?"

"No problem my Prince thank you for coming by"

"It's always a pleasure mama" I say standing up and dusting

myself.

"Thank you for the food I loved it"

"Pleasure my Prince let me not keep you waiting"

"Please" I say faintly smiling. I'm not happy with Ngelozi's state She's limping and I don't know the reason behind it. She wasn't like this yesterday what could've happened to her?. I leave Ngelozi's house and jog to the possible places she usually collects her wood from. I find her in the bushes conversing with a boy who is a warrior trainee. The boy is even chopping wood for her they giggling how nice. I look

at them till they finish their little conversation. The boy recognizes my presence and greets me Ngelozi looks at me and her smile disappears. She gathers her few firewood instead of looking at me.

"Warrior please excuse us"

"My Prince bye Ngelozi and see you around"

"Thank you Fano" The guy leaves.

"Ngelozi"

"Please leave Nhlonipho"

"Excuse me?"

"What brings you here?"

"What kind of a question is that Ngelozi?"

"A question that needs to be answered. Why are you here Nhlonipho? To cause me trouble?"

"Ngelozzi what is going on? What am I missing exactly? Actually Where else was I supposed to be if not here with you?"

"I don't want trouble Nhlonipho please leave me alone. I'm too young to die for you"

"What do you mean by that? And why do you have to die for me Ngelozzi?"

"I'm leaving" She says limping with her wood. I gently pull her hand to stop her.

"You hurting me!! Let loose!" She weeps. I swallow my spits and bury her in a hug. She cries on my chest I brush her back.

"My flower I didn't mean to hurt you I'm sorry" I say kissing her hair.

"Ngelozi what's going on? Talk to me"

"Nhlonipho just leave me alone please!"

"I can't do that Ngelozi not without a valid reason"

"I don't want trouble please leave please" Sniffing.

"Not a chance my flower" I say holding her tight.

"Ouch!!! You hurting me let loose of me!!" She roar and I let her loose.

"Don't touch me ever again"

"Why me Ngelozi? Why are you doing this and saying such words to me Ngelozi? You didn't ask that boyfriend or whatever person he is to leave why pushing me away huh?"

She keeps quiet.

"You haven't answered my question Ngelozi I'm not talking to a wall but you. "

"I haven't responded to your question because I don't answer to you Nhlonipho"

"Ngelozi what have I done kanti huh? Why are you acting up?"

"I can't be your girlfriend not anymore Nhlonipho"

"Really Ngelozi? Are you for real now?"

"Nhlonipho leave I don't want trouble please"

"Ngelozi I won't leave you alone till you tell me why you can't be my girlfriend anymore you owe me that at least."

"If you won't leave then I will!" She says looking at me with glassy eyes.

"I don't want trouble leave please. "

"What trouble are you talking about? What is really going on with you? And what happened to your leg and your arm? "

"Bye bye Nhlonipho and stop following me around" She says limping I look at her.

"You don't love me anymore? Huh Ngelozi"

"Thats not true"

"Then what is the truth?"

"Nhlonipho please"

"Please what Ngelozi? You pushing me away and hurting me Ngelozi! Don't tell me about that please. You breaking my heart Ngelozi! If you want to end things with me it's fine yezwa? Zimele warned me I should've listened!!!" I say collecting her wood and storming to her house leaving her behind. I finally reach her house and put the wood down then walk to my students..

Ndandatho

I carry Gatsha on my back and walk to the garden where I find Zimele kicking blanks. I clear my throat to make him aware that I'm around. He tilts his head to look at me. He slowly walks towards my direction. He swallow his spits and open his lips.

"Greetings"

"Hello"

"How are you?"

"I'm fine and how are you?"

"I'm good"

"Fine" we let silence creep in. I unhook the baby from my back and slowly walk to the wood chairs that are garnishing the garden. Zimele follows me and opens a chair for me to sit on.

"Thank you" I say sitting down and putting Gatsha on my lap to breastfeed him before I hand him over to his father. He pulls a chair and sits besides me. He gently holds Gatsha's hand we steal a glance at each other. A stare battle resumes.

"How has he been?"

"His a cry baby"

"Surely he longs for me"

"Maybe"

"And yourself how are you finding this place?"

"I will get used to it. How's everyone back home?"

"They doing fine but they long for this little man here" He says gently pulling his toes Gatsha stops feeding and laughs at the sight of his father.

" Go to daddy Gatsha" He jumps on Zimele and gently pulls his beard. Zimele leans over to kiss his cheek I glance on him. He looks a bit changed. Something about him has changed I don't know if he trimmed his beards or did something with his hair but he looks good different.

"Bangi that hurts stop pulling my beards son"

The little rascal laughs. I put my hand on my tummy and rub it. Zimele looks at me.

"Are you Okay?"

"I'm fine"

"Is the baby okay?"

"I suppose so"

"I see.."

"What brings you here Zimele?"

"I came to check up on you and the babies"

"I see... Please excuse me I will join you shortly"

"No problem" I slowly walk to the kitchen I make him something to eat and to quench his thirst. I walk with the tray to garden. I place everything on the wooden table.

"Bring him so you can eat"

"It's fine I will multi-task and thank you my love"

I look at him and fiddle with my hands.

"I actually wanted to discuss what happened before you left Ndanda"

"You mean insulting me?"

He nods.

"Ndandatho I'm sincerely sorry for saying those words it was so stupid of me to say them. I really regret letting them spew out of my mouth I was hurt and saddened by the thought of you leaving me. I'm veryvery sorry. "

I look at him and yawn.

"Ndandatho please forgive me please"

"Each time we have sticks and stones thrown at us you will say things out of proportion Zimele?"

"No what happened was total stupidity at worst. I let my emotions get the better of me and that was uncalled for."

"Zimele if you let emotions control you instead of you controlling them what's gonna happen the next time we have yet another dispute? Are you gonna call me a home wrecker or a harlot just like your aunt did?"

"My love that won't happen

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I promise you Maka Gatsha. This time around I will choose silence over talking I mean silence is priceless especially in times of heated conversations. I will act differently my love I promise. I miss you Ndandatho"
"Eat your food Zimele"

He looks at me and eats. Gabisile shows up with her friends I guess. She looks at me.

"Greetings Prince Zimele"

"Greetings Princess and how are you?"

"I'm doing great and yourself?"

"I'm very well thanks."

"Sister Ndandatho I came to fetch the baby as promised"

"As promised? What are you on about Gabi?"

"You promised to borrow me the baby so I can show my friends"

"Gabi that's risky what if you drop my baby or better yet forget him on whatever grounds you will playing at?"

"That won't happen Sister Ndandatho because I will carry him

ony back please?"

"No Gabi"

"But you promised sisi Ndandatho"

"Promises are not meant to be broken"

"Thats unfair though" Gabi sulks Zimele looks at me and then Gabi.

"Life is never fair sweetheart"

"Ndanda keep your promise"

"No Zimele"

"Gabi here is the baby let me help you carry him on your back. Be careful with him okay?"

I look at Zimele.

"I promise Prince Zimele and thank you"

"Pleasure" He says smiling at Gabi who walks away with my baby on her back. I Glaze at him so does he.

"Why did you do that Zimele?"

"You promised the kid Maka Gatsha it was only fair you kept your promise"

"But what if she leaves him unattended and puts him on the verge of a snake bite?"

"That won't happen Princess Gabisile loves kids"

"If anything happens to my baby you are to blame"

"His my baby too Ndandatho do you really think I would put him at risk knowingly he wasn't safe? Come on be lenient with the kid. She won't do any harm"

I look at him and heave a sigh.

"I get it maybe I'm being paranoid"

"Or maybe your hormones are kicking in Princess Ndandatho"

I look at him and say nothing.

"You look pretty"

"You look handsome yourself"

He smiles and drinks from his glass. I stand up and wrap my hands around his neck.

"Are you Okay?"

"I miss you"

"I missed you too and I still do"

"Can I sit on your lap?"

"Am I forgiven?"

"Not yet but I do need to feel your touch"

"Come here" he says gently pulling my hand leading me to his lap. I sit on top of him and rest my big head on his shoulder.

"You smell good" I say sniffing him yet again.

"I love you" He says tilting his head to kiss my lips. I kiss him back.

"I can't wait to marry you Jali"

"I can't wait either" He says brushing my thigh.

"Do you think Zikhali will bless us?"

"I suppose so"

"I will jot down a letter soon"

"Please do it after the welcoming ceremony"

"When is the welcoming ceremony?"

"In a few days time a letter with details will be forwarded to you shall I know the date"

"No problem my love" He says kissing my lips again. How I missed him.

Zikhali

The elders are seated on benches waiting for the memo of the meeting. My wife is seated besides me with our hands intertwined. She steals a moment to kiss my cheek. I smile and look at the elders.

"Greetings elders"

"Your majesty" They say in unison.

"Elders you surely asking yourself why I called this meeting urgently but fear not it's not a matter of death and life don't be anxious because today I have good news for all of you"

They mumble.

"Is it in connection with aqua my King?"

"Maybe ma Zitha"

"That maybe is not promising enough King Zikhali our people are dying of thirst and hunger the only good news we need is that of our rivers accumulating water our soils being fertile and healthy our farms producing crops and our livestock living longer. If the good news is not related to that I'm afraid this meeting will be adjourned before it even begins"

"Mthethwa familiarize yourself with patience and understanding and listening. The King hasn't started talking about the situation

at hand but already you jumping into conclusions. Listen old man and voice out your thoughts later because right now nobody gives a damn about your concerns but rather what the King is yet to say. We all know the fatalities we already facing and suffering in our Kingdom so please listen to the King and stop being poetic"Busani-

The elders giggle. Busani and his bluntness I guess all my kids share this same traits because this is exactly what Ndandatho did today morning. I guess my wife was correct about me depositing my bad traits to our kids only Gabi is the softest but she's naughty that one.

"Why did this one join the meeting again?" Mthethwa -

"Nyambosi I'm the future King of this Kingdom and it's important I participate on such platforms so I won't fumble when the time to lead you comes" Busani-

"Can we get to the matter at hand" Joko-

"Exactly!!" The elders say.

"Elders you do remember twenty years ago my wife and I were blessed with a daughter?"

"Yes"

"The daughter who died in the bushes?" Joko-

"Definitely"

"What about her King Zikhali"

"The Princess is alive"

They mumble.

"we don't follow my King"

"My first child is alive and you know what that means? Our days of suffering poverty and thirst are coming to the end because the rain spirit lives within her. She is the next female to carry the gift my mother had so villagers change is coming. "

They all celebrate Busani looks at us with shock. He doesn't know about the gift part.

" My King but the Princess was declared dead how come she is alive? "

" Do you remember our postman Majawonke? He saved the Princess way before Ngcolosi came. All this time long the rain Princess was in Ngwane village being raised in Majawonke's family. Soon we having a welcoming ceremony for my long lost daughter and if we lucky we gonna have a wedding soon"

They cheer and jump in joy.

"These are wonderful news King Zikhali! Umthombo will go back to its state these are wonderful news" they celebrate. Boni holds my hand tightly...

Ngelози

I put the wood in a corner. I reach for an onion and start chopping it gashes of tears rolls down my cheeks. I'm not crying because of the onion I'm crying for the sting that I have in my immaculate heart. I keep on hearing Nhlonipho's words and they bring me sadness. I cry to the instant of having hiccups. My mother walks in to check up on the job I'm doing. She puts her

hands on her waistline and looks at me and the onion I'm chopping.

"So much mucus and salty tears for a mere onion Ngelozzi?"

"It's itchy on the eye"

"You're weak! Go bath I will finish up"

"Thank you"

"There's a concoction for that leg of yours"

"Thank you" I say limping to my private chamber. I undress and wash my body with tears rolling down my cheeks hours later I retire to slumber..

Zimele

It's now dark outside and a bit windy. Ndandatho and myself are still chilling in her garden. She doesn't want to let me go but sadly I have a journey to embark on.

"My love I should get going"

"Do you really have to go Zimele? Spend a night please. "

"Nda this is not Thuthukani I can't spend a night here. I'm not a groom in this family. I don't want trouble with your father already

we not on good terms sleeping here would be a problem. "

She heaves a sigh.

"I miss you though"

"And I miss you too but I have to go please"

"Fine let me fetch Gatsha to bid you farewell"

"He will cry it's better I leave without saying it"

She looks at me and rest her head on my chest. I tilt my head to kiss her lips she returns the kiss and kisses me back. I grab her boob and squeeze it in my hands. She spread her one leg up and moves my hand to her privates. I brush her smooth thigh and deepen the kiss.

"Ndandatho we can't do that here"

"Zimele please"

"No my love I will wait till we marry"

"Zimele thats far"

"I know but I can't taint your father's grounds by having you here. My love you are a Princess and this title comes with endless and mundane rules. Already I'm on his bad books I can't add more fuel please understand"

"I understand" She says standing up with a grumpy face fixing herself. I stand up too to embrace her and kiss her well. She looks at me with glassy eyes.

"Don't cry Ndandatho please"

"This is unfair"

"I know sweetheart but I will make it up to you okay?"

"Okay come let me walk you to the gate"

"I would appreciate that" We walk hand in hand. We find her father and mother at the gate conversing with an elder. There's laughter here and there. Nda looks at me so do I. We let go of each other's hands.

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Ndandatho

I walk back to my chamber after making sure Prince Zimele has left. I find Gabisile bathing Gatsha there's way too much foam in their bathing water. My heart nearly stops beating by the look of that but luckily she's not washing his face. A breath of relief. I walk closer to them.

"Hey"

"Hello and welcome back I bathed your baby please don't shout at me"

"Thank you sweetheart I really appreciate it. Did you wash his face already?"

"Yes. Now I want to lotion his body and comb his hair"

"I will leave you to it. Let me go to the kitchen to prepare supper"

"You know how to cook?"

"Yes and yourself?"

"I can only boil water"

I giggle.

"I will teach you soon"

"Please teach today"

"Wrap up what you doing and come to the kitchen"

"Thank you Mrs Jali" She says with a naughty smile and does something with her brows.

"And where does that come from?"

"Cindy told me"

"Who is Cindy?"

"My best friend"

"She's a very bad friend"

"That's not true"

"How was your play time with Gatsha?"

"He was fun to have around everyone kept on wanting to touch him but I didn't permit them. I had him buckled on my back"

"That's beautiful he didn't trouble you?"

"No his my second best friend after Cindy and Buhle"

"I suppose you meant third best friend"

"And you're my zero best friend"

"Ouch! That's hurts"

"No you don't understand sisi Ndandatho. Zero comes before one meaning you're my best best best best best friend"

"I'm flattered little sister I love you! " She jumps to hug me.

"Gabisile!!"

"She said she loves me!!! She said she loves me!! Oh Good heavens" I giggle and kiss her cheek.

Boni

"No you don't understand sisi Ndandatho. Zero comes before one meaning you're my best best best best best friend"

"I'm flattered little sister I love you! " Gabi jumps to embrace her sister.

"Gabisile!!"

"She said she loves me!!! She said she loves me!! Oh Good heavens" My last born says in joy my eldest laughs and kisses her cheek. I look at them with a smile on my face. I smell his fragrance before he touches me. He whispers into my ears.

"You stalking them?"

"No. I only came to check up on the baby but I was met by this view they get along Zikhali"

"Thats because Gabisile has found a doll in Gatsha you know how much she loves babies if she's not fighting like a man"

I giggle.

"You refused to give my daughter a sibling after so many years of begging for one." I look at my husband and smile.

"I hate pregnancy Zikhali I wasn't about to have a child I did not look forward to having. Just because Gabi was longing for a sibling. Ndandatho has gave her the doll on my behalf" We giggle and look at Ndandatho and Gabi.

" I'm gonna give him a new hairstyle"Gabi

" Don't plait my son Gabi his a boy"

"I won't plait him" Gabi says rolling her eyes.

"Thank you ma'am. I'm off to the kitchen see you beautiful Gabi"

"I'm coming Mrs Jali in a minute"

"Stop calling me that"

"You are Mrs Jali"

Ndandatho giggles so do we.

"If you weren't my cute little sister I was gonna slaughter you like a chicken Gabi"

"I'm a warrior you wouldn't try that believe me Ndandatho"

"Now I'm scared" Ndandatho says walking towards the door. Her eyes bump into ours she flashes us a faint smile.

"Greetings Princess" Husband-

"Greetings elders"

"Sorry to eavesdrop on your conversation with miss forward we wanted to check up on you and the little one"

"It's okay my Queen please excuse me"

"Before you go how are you finding your new home?"

"It's okay ma I will get used to it"

"You better get used to it before you leave us for marriage"
Husband-

"Honestly I'm starting to love it all thanks to Gabisile"

"She's very warm at heart I don't know about Busani" We giggle.

"His also warm at heart I saw him when we aided Liziwe giving birth" Ndandatho says. We gaze in her beauty and smile this girl is pretty.

"Please excuse me" She says walking away swaying her beautiful

curves. Zikhali looks at me and kisses my neck.

"She's a dime Boni"

"Tell me about it I can't believe she's mine"

"Ours not yours"

"Duh! That wasn't a attack"

"I can make you pay for that"

"Zikhali come on" We laugh.

"When are you going to Nozibele? We owe them a proper apology Boni and a big thank you. How about we invite them over for dinner or lunch but on Saturday"

"I love that Zikhali."

"What happened to my love my husband or my heart? God woman where did the romance go?" I turn to smash my lips on his he puts his hands on my butt.

"I love you my handsome sweet and sexy husband"

"Now that sounds like paradise. I love you too"

"I know let's go to our room. I want to snuggle and discuss Saturday"

"How about we discuss you and your girls going to the market?"

Buy gifts and lads for Saturday. Spoil my daughters and I will do the same with your son"

"Okay where are we? And what happened to my husband?"

"I'm a grandfather Boni a vibrant one."

"I will do Buthelezi for that you deserve to be rewarded" I cock my brows. He bites on his lower lip and follows me to our house...

Busani

There's something about roasted nuts that brings me peace and joy. Nuts can calm down a devastating storm with me. Ndandatho walks in the kitchen humming a song. I look at her as she opens the cardboards not knowing what she's looking for. I clear my throat.

"Oh! Sorry I didn't see you greetings"

"Do you maybe need something?"

"I want to cook and I know nothing about where you groceries and stuff"

"Well check within those cardboards if you don't find anything then it means we've run out"

"Oh thank you brother" I look at her as she moves around the kitchen. I sit on the chair and continue with my nuts I still can't believe she's a rain Queen. I'm certain she doesn't know as well I won't be surprised if she jumps on the cliff after learning she's a rain maker.

"I only managed to find these" She says showing me rice and a couple of spices.

"Bummer"

"Don't you have chickens? And vegetables?"

"Well your father has chickens and then Gabisile as for me I finished mine by making them ancestors." She giggles and so do I.

" How about we get naughty? I mean they won't know we just gonna spill the beans after they are full"

"You do realize that's stealing Ndandatho?"

"But we need food Busani aren't you hungry?"

"I am hence I'm eating nuts"

"Come let's go hunt" I laugh and shake my head. Not only is she a rain Princess but she's a livestock thief. I think I'm gonna like her.

"Let's count the black fur ones if they are more than ten we having one for supper"

"Ndandatho you turning me into a thief"

"This is the only time where stealing is for a good cause. We gonna repent when our tummies are filled my baby needs food Busani"

"Gatsha eats food now?"

"No. I mean this one" She points her belly I narrow my brows.

"You having another one?"

"Don't judge me"

"I've already buried you with judgement. Why don't you sleep Ndandatho or sit with your legs crossed?like a lady"

"Here we go again!! The chicken please" I chuckle. We get one of Gabisile's chickens. We walk to our mini garden. She plucks out what she will need We go to the kitchen and she does her magic I look at her with glitters on my face. This girl is pretty why did she have to be my sister though??.

Hawu

I spot Zimele riding a horse. I wait up at the gate for him. He stops in front of me.

"Warrior" He says getting off from the horse. We share a brotherly hug.

"Warrior how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks and yourself?"

"I'm fine" I say with defeat.

"What's up with the long face? That face is not appropriate for a man who went home to his wife" He smirks and shows off his long white teeth.

"Ndoda kubi. Things turned sour"

"Let me go put my this horse on its stall I'm coming to your house"

"Let's go buy African beer from Bubu's house"

"The nerve to show up there Hawu"

"Dude I need beer right now come with food from your house. I'm starving"

"No problem" He pats my shoulder and walks off. As I'm minding my business I bump into maiden Siziwe walking along with Bubuza. We share a contest of stares Bubu looks at me and clicks her tongue. Siziwe remains with her eyes dropping on the ground.

"Greetings maiden"

"Greetings warrior Hawu"

"How are you?"

"I'm very well thanks and yourself?"

"I'm very good. Can I pass?"

"Where are you going this late?"

"Home"

"I see.. Can I walk you home please. It's not safe for a lady to walk alone at this hour"

"I will manage warrior Bubu looks at me and clicks her tongue. Siziwe remains with her eyes dropping on the ground.

"Greetings maiden"

"Greetings warrior Hawu"

"How are you?"

"I'm very well thanks and yourself?"

"I'm very good. Can I pass?"

"Where are you going this late?"

"Home"

"I see.. Can I walk you home please. It's not safe for a lady to walk alone at this hour"

"I will manage warrior you seem to be coming from somewhere I mean You still have your luggage. Rest is what you need warrior. Don't worry about me"

"I cannot worry Siziwe my heart won't let me. I will go drop off these and walk you home wait here okay?"

"No problem warrior" she says looking down. I jog to my chamber and leave my luggage. I jog back to where I left Siziwe I find her seated on the ground.

"I'm here we can leave now"

"That was quick"

"Bring your hand" She does as told I help her up. We walk In silence. It's dark out here.

"How was home?" She says.

"Home was. Home wasn't good honestly I kinder hurt someone with the truth and I must say she's not taking it the good way"

"Who is that someone? What did you do?"

"That someone is my wife Khethiwe and what I did was that I told her my eyes have been wandering and they've spotted a flower that I would to pluck out"

"That was harsh warrior. Why did you say that? You should've say it a bit careful without hurting her feelings. What you did was heart breaking"

"But it was the truth Siziwe. What is worse between being told in time and finding out on the day of the magic? I think telling the truth is better than lies"

"Honestly speaking I don't know which is better but I think finding out later would hurt more gracefully than finding out sooner but the pain would still be the same and that's the heart.

So tell me warrior do you love your wife?"

"Honestly speaking I love my wife but I love the other maiden even more"

She looks at me.

"That's bad. So you willing to lose your wife for her?"

"I don't want to lose both of them"

"Now that's getting more confusing"

"Would you agree to be in a polygamy relationship?"

"With me it would depend on my love for the guy. If I love him more than I do with myself then I would marry him but on a condition"

"What condition?"

"He treats both the wife and myself equally when he buys her beads I get them too. He gives her beef I get it too. I would prefer being treated the same no one must be above the other. I came from a polygamous home and It worked for my parents till death did them part"

"I see. What would you do or say had I told you you're the maiden I'm taking about?" She looks at me and smile.

"Why would it be me?"

"Why not you Siziwe?"

"I don't know but I think I'm not a match for the likes of you"

"What is my match?"

"Girls like Ndandatho or Bubu"

"Geez!! You are Beautiful Siziwe have you realized that? Take a mirror and look at yourself no man would regret having you as their wife."

"So I am the maiden you talking about?"

I chuckle.

"Yes"

She shyly laughs.

"Well I've reached my home thank you for walking me"

"It's a pleasure. Can I see you tomorrow? I mean can walk you home tomorrow and the next coming days please"

"Fine.. Good night"

"Good night" She smiles and walks away I turn and smile too. I find Zimele and Nhlonipho seated on my veranda there's a calabash in front of them and food too. I greet Zimele small and dive on the meat.

"Actually beer is not bad I think I love it" Nhlonipho says downing the calabash.

"Since when do you drink Nhlonipho?"

"Since today"

"Nhlo go easy on the calabash please" Zimele

"Okay fine" He assures his brother and puts the calabash down he eats meat and pap and gaze into the sky why do I see tears in his eyes?

"Nhlo ukahle?"

"I'm fine"

"You lying! What's eating you?" I ask.

" Nothing! I'm fine "

" You lying Zimele omncane"

"Hawu I'm fine!!!!" He roars and stands up.

"Warrior let my brother be Nhlo come here don't mind him. Come and get your arse drunk" He stands a bit far from us for a while and shows up later I giggle. Nhlo drinks the African beer after sometime he asks to be excused.

Nhlonipho

If Ngelozi thinks she's gonna toy with my feelings and get away with it she's got another thing coming. I'm going to her house. I know her chamber is never locked. If she won't tell me what's

going on maybe she will be able to narrate what's going on with her parents. The lamp from her parents house is not lit I slowly and carefully walk to her chamber. I push the door gently. I find her sleeping on her bed she didn't switch off her lamp. Ngelozi though. I sit on her bed and gaze on her beauty I brush her face and gently smash my lips on hers.

"I love you Ngelozi" I whisper.

"I love you too" She says in her sleep. I walk to her door and put water buckets behind it to force it locked. I remove my sandals and lay behind her. I move my hand to her waistline I nibble her neck. I feel her moving closer to me.

"Ngeloz!" I say gently shaking her to wake up.

"Ouch!!!" I cover her mouth as she's making noise. Her eyes widen when she realizes I'm in her room.

"Don't shout please! I just want to talk please"

She nods I let loose of her mouth and lay besides her. There's silence for a while.

"You smell of yeast" Thats the first thing she says.

"You broke my heart do you blame me?"

"I'm sorry"

"Why can't you be my girlfriend anymore?"

"How did you get in here?"

"Thats not important why are you breaking my heart Ngeloz?"

"I'm not doing it intentionally"

"Then why are you doing it?"

"Because my mother punished me for coming home late that day
we we got naughty in the bushes"

"Punished you how?"

"She gave me a hiding to never delay whenever I'm sent out to run chores. She thinks I will bring babies in the house and that I'm sleeping with men"

"And your leg what happened?"

"I twisted it while she was beating me up" I huff.

"I don't like this Ngelozi why didn't she talk you nicely instead of beating you?"

"I was at fault Nhlonipho I shouldn't have remained in the bushes with you."

"So you ending things with me because of your mom?"

"I'm scared Nhlonipho one day she's gonna busts us"

"And when that day comes I will be over the moon because I won't have to sneak around like a kid."

She looks at me.

"I don't want trouble Nhlonipho you need to go"

"I will leave after massaging your leg but you and I are not separating. I think we need to meet at night when they go to bed"

"What if they find you here?"

"We both gonna tell the truth if that happens"

"We can't do that"

"Do you love me Ngelozi?"

"Of course I love you"

"Now listen my love we will survive all this. As for your mother I will talk to her you hear me?"

"No don't Nhlonipho"

"Why not?"

"She will break my other leg I will look like a duck by the time she's done with me."

I giggle.

"You too pretty to look like a duck.. I'm sorry okay?"

She nods.

"The next time she beats you tell her to beat me instead not you"

"She will slaughter me like a Christmas lamb" I laugh and kiss her neck.

"Don't ever say you done with me Ngelozi please I nearly cried in front of Zimele"

"I was crying too and I lied about an onion saying it was stinging my eyes"

"Oh! That's sweet of you"

"Hhai suka my leg please"

"Fine" I say peeling off her blanket go down on her leg.. I gently and carefully massage it my head is spinning and heavy. It must be the African beer I kiss her cute toes while massaging her. Minutes later she tells me it's fine. I let go of her leg and go lay behind her. She turns to face me. I glaze into her eyes so does she.

"Please kiss me"

"Are you sure? You don't mind the yeast smell?" I ask.

"I don't mind it please kiss me Nhlo"

"No need to ask my flower" I say moving too close to her I hold her chin and endeavor on her succulent lips. She starts breathing fast and ask me to do to her what I did in the bushes. For a moment I look at her with worry but I give her the pleasure she asked for.

"I love this this is good"

"I'm glad you love it let's sleep"

"What do you want?"

"To hold you and kiss your lips and maybe watch you sleep I will leave when you fast asleep"

"I can do that." I hold her and kiss her lips. Minutes later she is snoring on my chest I gently lay her on her pillow and kiss her goodnight I sneak out and go to my house...

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Nozibele

"My love"

"Mmmm"

"When is your sister leaving again?"

He chuckles.

"I don't know why asking? "

"She's crowding our space. She's taking much of our oxygen and living us with the carbon dioxide I'm suffocating my love. Please send her packing please"

"I wish it was easy my rose I would've long done it. Are you still reading your book?"

"Yes you needed something?"

" Yes a little body massage. My body is tense"

"What is stressing you Jali? Only stress does that to one"

"It's nothing major my love I just need rest you know. These back to back meetings are draining and taking much of my energy"

"I see my husband I will attend to you immediately then"

"Thank you maJali"

I put my book aside and walk to our dressing table I get a hold of my lavender essential oil.

"Please lay on your tummy"

"Do that pounding thingy that you always do it does wonders"

"No problem"

I carefully sit on top of him and grease his back and shoulders with the lavender oil and start massaging him.

"Nhlonipho wasn't himself earlier on any idea of what's troubling him?"

"I asked him but he didn't want to share Jali"

"That's so unlike him to be grumpy and quiet"

"Surely the load is way too much for his shoulders baba especially with Ndandatho being away and Ngelozi limping it must be hard on him. "

"I can imagine. We need to find someone to fill in Ndandatho's shoes but I must say it's gonna be the hardest thing to do"

"Indeed."

"When are you visiting Boni?"

"I don't know but it won't be anytime soon"

"Why?"

"Baba they owe us a proper apology for the way they treated you and my son. I will only go there shall they apologize properly and show us their remorsefulness"

"But they apologized Nozi"

"They didn't mean that Ngcolosi Maybe I will go there to see my grandson other than that I don't see myself setting my foot in that Kingdom"

"You women and drama. I'm certain that's not the only reason you do not want to go there"

"Meaning?"

"I think you jealous that she's spending more time with Bangi than you do" I roll my eyes.

"Am I lying?"

"That baby will forget me and I hate that"

"That won't happen unless you allow it to happen. Boni and yourself must not inherit our hatred only Zikhali and myself are fighting not you two. She's your friend and I think it's only fair you maintain your friendship without inheriting feuds that have nothing to do with you. Gossip about us over a hot cup of tea or coffee"

I smile.

"Since you've spoken I will go there my love and thank you for being smart!"

"I guess that's the reason you ended up marrying me not only am I handsome on the face but rather everywhere" I kiss his big head and continue massaging him..

Busani

The table is set everything looks good. It's funny how she managed to turn less ingredients to such a meal this looks expensive and delicious. I can't wait to taste it already I'm salivating. Boni and her husband occupy their seats Gabisile shows up carrying Gatsha. She sits on her chair. Ndandatho is busy with whatever pacing around she's doing.

"Gabi what did you do to the baby's hair?"

"I plaited it he looks good doesn't he?" She smiles. Mom and dad hide their laughter. Ndandatho will die with a heart attack. I shake my head side ways.

"Food is ready" Ndandatho - she says sitting next to me.

"This looks good you didn't have to though" Mom-

"I wanted to ma its okay"

"Thank you daughter" Dad-

"Chicken? My favorite!!" Gabi-

"Yeah your favorite" I say and Ndandatho looks at me.

"I hope you enjoy it Gabby girl" I add.

"And my baby's hair Gabisile?"

"He looks good doesn't he?"

"I thought I told you not to braid him Gabby"

"But he looks cute Sisi Ndandatho"

"With those thorns?" I say

"These are not thorns Busani"

"That hairstyle looks like he has pencils pinned on his scalp it's pointy and ugly."

"You lying he looks good you just jealous because your hair looks like rice crispy"

Ndandatho laugh.

"In your apple sleep snow-white I won't lie to you. But Gatsha looks like a hanged cloth on a washingline with this hairstyle" She frowns.

"I love the hair style Gabi it looks good" Ndandatho says trying to cheer her up but honestly he looks funny and untidy. These are scribbles not a hairstyle.

Ndandatho dishes up for everyone.

"This is yummy where did you get the chicken?"Gabi

" We bought it"

"With what money?" Gabi-

"Money Gabi eat and stop asking questions" I say.

"This is delicious I love this" dad

"It's taste really good You're a good cook Nda" mom-

"Thank you everyone there's more if you not full"

"Can I have more of everything sisi Ndandatho" Gabi-

"Especially the chicken right?" I tease.

"Yes it tastes good"

"I can imagine I give a 100 Nda. It's scrumptious"

"Thank you brother" She smiles. Mom and dad look at us.

"Sisi Ndandatho do you know how many chickens I have?"

"No Gabi I don't how many are they?"

"I have twenty five I will give Gatsha five and remain with twenty."

"Oh that's sweet of you Gatsha would love that"

"Are you sure they twenty five?" I tease

"I know how to count"

"What if the other ones belong to dad? And maybe yours are twenty three in total"

"No way I have twenty five chickens unless you killed my chicken Busani"

"I'm not a chicken killer I would rather kill you instead of your chickens"

"Busani!!" Mom says with a warning look.

"And I will kill you too with my spear. Talking of chickens tomorrow I'm counting my chickens I don't want one of my own ending up in a stew or my plate"

I laugh.

"Good luck Gabi good luck little sister"

"How about I help you count those chickens Gabi?"

"No problem sisi Ndandatho"

"Enough about chickens please! Tomorrow you going to the Market Ndandatho along side your sister Gabi and your mother"

"And what about me baba?"

"You and I are going to the farm"

"More like I like it" I say with a broad smile.

"I'm so gonna crush these bones Gatsha" Gabi-

We all laugh mostly my partner in stealing. Thank God everyone will be busy tomorrow Mrs chickens won't get a chance to count them. I can't wait to see the pain in her eyes when she learns the crushed bones belongs to one of her favorite chicken..

Zimele

"Why are you doing this though Warrior? Khethiwe loves you she doesn't deserve this"

"Zimele you don't understand there's something about Siziwe that brings me calmness and peace. This maiden is beautiful at heart and externally" I furrow my brows and look at him as we gulp down the calabash.

"I'm serious Zimele"

"As your friend warrior I honestly think you lusting on Siziwe. What you feel for her is nothing but lust. Wait till she spreads her legs for you you will see it was her nakedness you wanted not her heart.

Khethiwe is a real deal warrior she is the mother of your kids come on warrior"

"Zimele I've made up my mind I want Siziwe and I'm gonna make

her my second wife"

"This is garbage warrior. Have you forgotten about Bubuza and her daughter? What did you do to her after taking in her sugar? Didn't you spew her out like a tasteless gum? Come on Hawu erase these thoughts you gonna lose the galaxy while chasing pavements. "

" Warrior I never loved Bubuza you know that it just happened I drank way too much and she threw herself at me and I couldn't resist and brush off a naked woman. Her falling pregnant wasn't apart of my intentions "

" What I'm hearing from you is justification and excuses. You not owning up to your mistakes and taking responsibility for them. It's a pity you justifying another shenanigan that could result into a deadbeat.

Hawu you're a cassanova that lacks morals. I won't sit here and watch you toy with women feelings

instead of disclosing Bubuza and her child you galloping on dropping another skirt that's sickening Hawu" I say standing up.

"Zimele the problem with you you think everyone is like you and Ndandatho. Some of us are not perfect just like the two of you. We make mistakes and this is me trying to fix my own mistakes!"

"Don't raise your damn voice at me Hawulesizwe over rubbish!! You not owning up to anything but you just being cowardice to compacting this demeanor. If you don't love Khethiwe tell her and stop lying about your heart being in two different places. If really you want to fix your mistakes and be perfect just like myself and Ndandatho as you said. You would start by accepting your daughter and telling your family about her other than that you are a disgrace to the man society!! Nxaah! "I curse and walk away. Hawu is sick in the head imagine if Khethiwe was Lungelo his sister. How was he gonna feel about such? I reach my private chamber and close my eyes and fall into slumber. The following morning

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and fall into slumber. The following morning I wake up and wash my body. I have to attend to the fruits and vegetables farm I bet Nhlonipho us awake. I jog to his chamber I find him snoring. I shake him to wake.

"Wake up we need to go"

"Go where?"

"Farm Nhlonipho have you forgotten?"

"I think I'm sick Zimele"

"Nhlonipho come on we need to get going."

"My head is buzzing and my sight is blurry.. When I stand I feel dizzy. Go alone brother"

"Ngelozi is heading to the farm"

"Really?"

"Yes.. She's going to pluck out vegetables"

"Listen give me a minute or two to freshen up then we set. Move out of the way" He says sprinting I sit on his bed and pass time. He walks in and lotions he dresses up. We walk to our horses we get to the farm.

"Do I look fine?"

"Yes"

"Fine..." I look at him and softly giggle.

"Where is she? I can't see her?"

I look at him and then focus on the road.

"Zimele which side did she say she was going?"

"I think the workers side"

"What is she going to do there? Because grown vegetables are that side only seeds are this side"

"Brother thank you for pitching in for work there was no way I was gonna go about today's duties alone."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning there's no Ngelozi Nhlonipho I made that up to get you here."

"Like really Zimele? Wow!!"

"Thats for lying Nhlonipho you will head North and I will go South deal?"

"We both go to the same place and attend them together that's for being a liar too big brother"

"Whatever! Let's go" we go about our business today we have so much work to do. It's a pity we not used to this kind of work but royalty aside we have to work and lead by example here and there. How I hate being burnt by the sun...

Mota

"Welcome Princess can I offer you a drink?"

"No thank you"

"Come on Nomaswazi have a drink"

"I don't need it"

"This Jali little offspring is making you grumpy"

"Don't mind her Mota I would love the drink. Where is everyone?" Thabile-

"They left the house a couple of minutes ago"

"I see" I walk to the kitchen to make refreshments for Thabile and myself. Nozibele baked yesterday I'm serving my guests. I care less if they were meant for someone else.

"Here my friend"

"Thank you Mota these cookies look appetizing who baked?"

"The python"

We giggle.

"That's so unlike her"

"Tell me about it."

"Excuse me I will go to my" Chamber"" Noma says standing up leaving us with privacy.

" She's grumpy Thabile is it the pregnancy maybe? "

" No she didn't want to come back here because of that commoner who beat her up. Actually I want to pinch her ears till blood comes out that girl is disrespectful!"

"Don't mind that baby making machine She's history. They sent her packing for seducing the Prince. Noma has her husband all to her self without that homewrecker"

"You lying right? They did what?"

"They kicked her out and it was painful my friend"

I say sipping from my glass while searching for her soul. She laughs and claps her hands.

"Wow!! Finally! Finally my daughter will enjoy her time with Prince. The gods are good"

"Indeed" I say faking a smile.

"Tell me what happened to Iminathi? I'm still not at ease with her death"

"Honestly speaking her death was a mistery"

"That's bad. It's so sad that she joined her mother at such a tender age"

"Tell me about it at least not all is lost my friend I still have her brother Zuko"

"Sometimes I forget they not your biological kids you have been good with them"

"I'm trying Mota being a step mother to two wasn't easy"

"I see" I sip and look at her.

"So Mota are you not seeing anyone after your husband passed on?"

"I am and I prefer not sharing the details"

"Heee! I wonder who it is"

"His a male" We laugh.. Nozibele and Ngcolosi walk in holding hands. Nozibele looks beautiful in her dress but I won't tell her.

"Jali I will join you shortly I'm coming" She says smashing her lips on my brother Thabile looks at them.

"Don't take long my love"

"I won't honey" She says looking at Thabile without saying anything.

"Greetings Nozibele" Thabi-

"The audacity " Nozi says walking away. Noma walks in yawning.

Ngcolosi looks at me with a greased forehead.

"Greetings my King" Noma-

"Mota what is going on here?" Bro-

"Meaning?"

"What are these people doing in my house?"

"You mean our house Ngcolosi?"

"Mota don't poke a lazing snake take your guests and leave my grounds immediately"

"Hhaibo Jali these people? You mean your daughter In law and her mother? That's mean Ngcolosi we are family now" Thabile-

"I wasn't talking to you Thabile learn to mind your business and stop interfering. Get out all of you"

"They going nowhere!"

"We shall see about that" My brother says walking away.

"This brother of yours is a lunatic"

"Blame it on that maniac Nozibele. We going nowhere these are fathers grounds"

"Excatly my friend"

"Mama let's go please"

"Shut up wena!!"

"Mama I've had enough of this! I'm fed up!"

"You don't get to make that decision Nomaswazi you don't decide when it's enough and when to be fed up. I will do it myself. We in this mess because of your legs sliding side ways don't annoy me"

"Mama mina I'm exhausted of playing pretense!! I'm fed up if you not leaving then I am" Noma-

"Yeyi wena Noma sit down and listen to your mother!!"

"I'm afraid I won't do that I'm tired of you living my life on my behalf. I'm leaving"

"Don't make me embarrass you yet again your experience with me will surpass that scavy girl sit down"

"Don't you get tired Mota and Thabile running the devils errands? Leave the poor child alone she's tired. Let her give up this fight. It's a losing one already. Because honestly had my son loved her she would've known. Put an end to this gimmick stunt Zimele is happily in love and expecting. Just make peace with that "Nozi

"And who asked for your opinion you? "

"How about the animal with teeth situated between your legs?"

I immediately get on my feet and walk towards Nozibele God

knows I've been wishing for this day.

Now that it has come I will make the most of this moment.

"You saying?"

"You heard me Mota get out of my house before you leave these grounds with your skin on your hands. I've been tolerating this nonsense for a while now and I'm F E D U P about it!!!!" She says looking at me.

"What do you think you are Nozibele?"

"It's not what I think I am but what I know I am Mota. I am Ngcolosi's wife a mother to the handsome boy who has drove you all into a psychotic mania disorder. I am the woman whom your brother chose over you not only am I that I am the most precious person that has ever happened to Ngcolosi. See Its not what I think I am but what you also know I am? " Nozi-

I let the itch that's on my hand to land on her cheek. She looks at me and turns her other cheek.

" Go on and slap my other cheek go on Mota"

I slap her other cheek while I'm yet to slap her again I feel strong arms elope me aggressively I turn. My eyes land on agitated Zimele and Nhlonipho.

"Zimele let her slap me repeatedly surely it's gonna be of help son to her suffering situation of growing tall grass in her pubic area. Let her loose"

"You still here?" Ngcolosi says holding a hunting gun Thabile is the first one to run followed by Nomaswazi.

"I'm going nowhere!!!"

My brother starts shooting as evidence he means business
Zimele let's me loose and I run outside panting.

"Dare show up on my grounds ever again Mota I will kill you!!"

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Ngelozi

I've got joy in my heart there's so much beauty within my soul. I can't believe the risks Nhlonipho is willing to take just to be with me I must be the most significant part of his life. I'm slowly starting to think his worth every sacrifice and risk that I'm yet to succumb on just to get more of his kisses and hugs. His actually my favorite thought of the day. My father shows up angry coming from his private chamber. Behind him there's mom who looks sorry if that's the correct term.

"Baba please"

"How could you huh? How could you?"

"I'm sorry baba I meant no harm"

"You meant no harm? You meant no harm huh? You know what I do not want to see you before God knows I will kill you Maka Ngelozzi" He says roughly reaching for his farming tools.

"Greetings Ngelozi"

"Greetings baba"

"Get ready you have a journey to embark later"

"Journey? What journey?" I ask confused.

"You visiting your aunt"

"Baba there's no need for her to leave it's not even holiday season"

"Don't interfere! Ngelozi be careful with your leg"

"Baba can I not visit my aunt please"

"Ngelozi! Do you want to die?"

I shake my head sideways.

"I thought as much" Father says walking away. Mom looks at him with pain in her eyes. I stop sweeping and limp to my mother.

"Mama you haven't forgiven me?"

"Ngelozu please"

"Why is baba sending me to my aunt? Is it because I delayed coming home the other day? Mama I can't go there aunty makes me herd cows and goats. I go far distance to collect water I don't like that place. I can't go there mama"

"Ngelози once your father has made up his mind there's no turning back. I'm sorry. Don't cook I will cook give me your dirty clothes so I can wash them and pack them up so you can leave with decent clothes."

"Mama I'm not going to aunty' s place"

"I'm sorry" She says walking away. I walk to the garden and cry my lungs out. Father can not take me there I don't like that place...

Nomaswazi

Mom is busy feasting on her nails as she's pacing around the sitting room. She has so much going on inside her head. Surely she's plotting another stunt for me to pull. God knows I'm

already tired of being my mother's puppet. I wish she can surrender already this is a losing battle. I should be focusing on the baby I'm carrying instead of forcing my way into a man. She looks at me for a while a long breather comes out then her lips index parting sideways.

"Noma where did I go wrong with you? Why is my hard work vanity? Am I wrong for wanting a better life for you my child? "

"Mama asking those questions will not help right now I'm tired. What happened today is enough evidence for me not to go back there"

"I understand but I don't understand why things are going this way"

"I need rest mama"

Thabile

"I need rest mama" She says yawning.

"Go" I permit her while thoughts are running wild in my head. She walks to her private chamber I reach for my purse and walk out of the palace. I walk to Makhehla's house. I find him pounding whatever herbs he is pounding. I don't greet but rather walk inside his hut. I make myself comfortable on his grass mat. He walks in smelling funny as always. He fix his eyes on me.

"Trouble?"

"Everything is failing Makhehla. Instead of things getting better they increasingly becoming more and more complicated. So much is going South and that reeks me off. Can you believe that commoner is pregnant with the Prince's second child? "

"Don't you think it was destined Thabile?"

"What was destined?"

"Maybe you should give up this fight Thabile maybe Iminathi was right"

"Right about what?"

"Noma not being compatible with the Prince"

I look at him.

"Look at how things have been going everything is failing my Queen even my most dangerous and life threatening herbs didn't work to advantage for the Princess. I don't know any more my Queen"

"Makhehla I've worked hard for my daughter to get here I've sacrificed way too much for that title. My hard work cannot go unnoticed or to waste something needs to be clarified. Cant you consult? Surely that girl is using muthi on the Prince."

"I would've known if that was the case"

"Then what's going on? Why is everything failing?"

He looks at me.

"What?"

"You know what you did wrong Thabile not once but twice. Don't you think this is the punishment the gods saw fit for you?"

I look at him and swallow hard.

"There's no such thing Makhehla"

"Thabile the past has its way of catching up with us. Surely what was swept under carpet is yet to resurface"

"Coming here was yet another waste of time. I thought I came to see a witch doctor not a gospel preacher"

"Thabile at some point we can't and won't be able to hide the truth. I suggest you let Noma live her life"

"And Ngidi? Do you know what's at stake here?"

"As for the King maybe just maybe you should kill him"

"Over my dead body Makhehla!"

"What happens when the truth comes out?"

"I would rather suffer the repercussions of my past than killing my husband no way. Already I have Zuko and Iminathi's mother's blood in my hands. I can't kill the King too. Hands will be pointed at me! I can't Makhehla"

"Thabile you do know the price you will pay for deception? You will die in a dangeon"

"Rather that"

He chuckles and stands up. I look at him before standing up he does the same. I stand and take two steps towards the door..

"What is that noise?"

"What noise?"

"No Makhehla can't you hear the noise?"

He chuckles and walks out. I swallow hard and rub my ears so the sound I'm hearing can subside luckily it does. I walk home with thoughts racing wild in my head. I find Zuko fanning Mgcinaphi who is whimpering on the couches. Something connected to her belly.

Ndandatho

"Wow I love them mama"

"I love them more they look good on you my darling" Mom says fixing the gold beads on my neck.

"They expensive though"

"Nda these are yours nothing can be more expensive than seeing you smile"

I smile and admire my beads.

"They look good my dear" The seller says.

"We taking them" Mom says reaching for a few coins and papers.
She pays for my beads we move to another store we buy cloths
for me Bangi and Gabi. Mom pays.

"I think we done ladies and gent"

"We haven't bought groceries" She looks at me blank.

"We dont have any we ran out" I add.

"Fine" We buy groceries and everything else that we gonna need in the house. We ride back to the royal house. We unpack the groceries.

"Ladies I have somewhere to go see you later okay?"

"Where are you going mama?"

"Thuthukani"

"To see warrior Zimele?" Gabi ask yet again.

"Yes"

"Can I come with you?"

"And whose gonna keep your sister company Gabi?"

"She has a baby mama" I laugh so does the Queen.

"You guys can go Gatsha and myself will be okay ma"

"Don't miss us then"

"I will try not too and besides I want to go check up on Liziwe and the baby. And maybe walk on these grounds"

"Don't go to the river Ndandatho please"

"Why? Is it dangerous?"

"Theres a little narrative and relationship between our Kingdom and waters."

"I don't follow"

"We will explain everything when the time is right. Don't go to the river my darling especially with the baby. It's dangerous"

"Oh! Is there a mermaid maybe?"

"You mean a water spirit?"

"A mermaid is a water spirit?"

"Yes and only selected individuals can meet and dine with the Queen of water not forgetting the serpent God"

"Mmmm that should be dangerous and frightening"

"See why I don't want you to go to the river alone? Our selected biomes are sacred not everyone should step on them especially those who are chosen to rule them without holding knowledge of that"

"Do basically if you are chosen to rule the rivers you can't go there any given day? Like how is it dangerous for you to go there when you are the chosen one?"

"You can only go there when the spirits have called for your attention or presence or better yet assistance. You go there to a significant purpose. Maybe pleading for rain or blessings or calmness for those who are residing in that area. Ndandatho it's complicated my daughter but one day we will explain everything to you"

"Sounds like a tiring thing thank goodness I hold no such spirit. I can imagine the trauma that individuals with this kind of gift suffer. Imagine having a conversation with a serpent in a river better yet sipping wine with a mermaid. That's hilarious mama I would die immediately! "

I laugh so does Gabi.

" You never know what your capabilities are Ndandatho. See you later Princess" She says kissing my cheek. They depart I put everything in the cardboard boxes and walk to Liziwe's house. I find her breastfeeding her child.

"Princess"

"How are you feeling?"

"Better but it's sleep I miss a lot"

"I can imagine. His growing though and his cute"

"Indeed. You should make him a girlfriend Ndandatho"

I laugh.

"I pray so"

"Can I offer you something to drink?"

"No it's okay sisi Liziwe I bought you fruits and a few vegetables."

"Oh Princess you didn't have to"

"You need milk sisi Liziwe and these will come in handy. Did you eat?"

"Not yet"

"Why not?"

"The baby cries nonstop my Princess I can't even shift"

"This is wrong Liziwe you need food and the energy. I will prepare something for you"

"Princess that's an abomination you can't be cooking for servants but vice versa"

"Not in my world. Where do you keep your pots?"

"That side"

"Do you have food though?"

"I only have maize meal our grounds have been struggling with production"

"Mmmm.. I see.. I will cook the vegetables leaves then"

"Thank you Princess"

"Pleasure" I immediately get on top of it. I cook for her and dish up it takes her a minute to wipe her plate clean.

"I boiled water for you and the baby to wash your bodies"

"Thank you Ndandatho you have a heart of gold. Just like the late rain Queen"

"Thank you" I wait for her to finish bathing. I bath her son and rock him to sleep. Minutes later I bid them goodbye and walk back home. I find Zimele conversing with the guard. My heart immediately jumps so does Bangizwe.

"Thank you warrior"

"Thank you my Prince"

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I will put your words to use"

"See you shortly" Zimele says walking towards me and the kid.
He looks at me for a little while long.

"Greetings Princess"

"Greetings my Prince"

"Am I not getting a kiss maybe? Greetings my little boy" He says playfully stroking his hair Gatsha laughs and stretch out his hands. His father takes him. I tilt my head and give him a sloppy kiss.

"Can we take a walk?" Zimele

"Walk? To where?"

"Just come!" He says playfully pulling my hand. I smile and walk out of the compound with The Prince of Thuthukani.

"How are you doing?"

"We doing great my Prince and yourself?"

"I miss you people"

"We miss you too"

"I saw your mom and Gabi"

"They off to your Kingdom"

"I see." She intertwines our hands.

"You look pretty my Princess your skin is flawless and glowing.
I'm jealous my love"

"Don't be I'm all yours my Prince only you"

I say resting my head on his shoulder.

"I love the sound of that"

"I love you instead"

"I love you for the two of them"

I smile.

"I actually have a surprise for you"

"And what is that?"

"It won't be a surprise if you already know about it"

"Come on tell me"

"Give it a guess?"

"Another baby maybe?" He laughs..

"If you want that I can give it to you on top of the one you carrying"

"Really?"

"Really" He says looking into my eyes

"You haven't guessed my love"

"Okay.. Beads?"

"No"

"Baby I can't guess I suck at these guessing games."

"Let's go we nearing our destination"

"Fine"

We walk to a very beautiful bush depth. That's surrounded by shady trees In one of those trees there's a cloth laid on the ground. There's a grass made basket and two pillows. I see cutlery too a wrapped up gift and two Thuthukani guards. I look at Zimele and smile..

Zimele

I just needed a little a distraction from what adjourned in the house. Aunty Mota really pissed me off she wasn't supposed to treat my mother in that manner.. If she wasn't a woman she would be dead by now. Anyway I won't dwell much on her but rather my little family. She looks at me and smiles. I guess she likes this picnic setup. She greets the warriors.

"Warriors it's okay you can stretch your legs."

"My Prince" They semi bow and walk away. I help Ndandatho to sit down. I put Gatsha on the throw blanket. I sit behind Ndandatho and gently put my hands around her waist mostly her tummy.

"I love this set up it looks good and royalty"

"I'm glad you love it" I say kissing her neck.

"It's called a picnic setup my love"

"Ive never heard of it before"

"You will get more of it when we marry"

"I can't wait" She says glancing into my eyes.

"I can't wait either. How's the baby?"

"Your baby is doing fine"

"Thats good news to me. And this warrior is he okay?"

"His doing fine he now sits on his own and attempts to say a word or two"

"Thats good news my love. His a warrior just like his father"

" I bet you gonna teach him how to fight soon"

"Indeed. Are you hungry?"

"Not really but I have room for more food"

"Okay" I open the basket.

"Wow!! I'm hungry please put everything on my plate"

I giggle and nod. I dish up for her and myself I give Gatsha a banana. I feed Ndandatho till she finishes her food. I wipe off the food dirt from her lips. She feeds me too. We read a book afterwards while patting Bangi to sleep. When he softly starts to snore Ndandatho and myself share passionate kisses.

"How's everyone in Thuthukani?"

"They doing great but your brother Hawu is prepared to having Siziwe as his second wife"

"Thats crazy tell me you're joking"

"I'm afraid not."

"Yooh! I'm speechless"

"I won't allow that to happen"

"What are you going to do?"

"It's not what I will do but how she will react to the truth that Hawu is not telling."

"What truth my love?"

"You remember bubuza?"

"Yes Noma's puppet?"

"Her child is Hawu's"

"You lie baby"

"I'm not."

"I have no comment honestly but I think Khethiwe deserves better honestly."

"Exactly"

"She must go home to collect her thoughts on what to do next"

"She has to leave him"

"Love will debate her out of it" I look at her.

"Where is Ngelozi? I miss her"

"She's dating that one"

"Dating Nhlo?"

"How do you know?"

"It was written in bold italics that they love each other"

"I'm scared of what could go wrong with those two my love."

"Pregnancy? I doubt Nhlo will move to that his responsible."

"Responsibility exists the room when there's nakedness"

"ZimeleNhlonipho is nothing like you you are naughty and he isn't"

"I know my brother Nda he might look innocent and all but that guy is naughty. His the slow position kind."

"They won't do that my love. They just baby kiss and thats all"

"Not when father had started giving him adulthood talks. His already licking and sucking things"

"Zimele don't think like that about kids thats gross"

I giggle.

"Soon she will have huge belly don't say I didn't warn you. Come here" I say putting her on my lap. I start kissing her hungrily I squeeze her breast. The kiss gets more and more heated up I invade her oven and pleasure her. We don't make noise waking Gatsha is the last thing we need. We wrap up and continue reading our book and eating the few goodies we have here. Ndandatho falls into slumber I let her be and brush her tummy..

Mota

Ngcolosi is a nutcase I can't believe he chased me with a gun. That brother of mine is a lunatic Nozibele bewitched my brother. The Ngcolosi I know wouldn't have done that unless his under a spell. As I'm walking to my Kingdom I bump into King Ngidi he looks at me and so do I.

"Jump in"

"Thank you" I say jumping inside the cart.

"Where are you going?"

"My home"

"Did you say your goodbyes to your friend?"

I look at him.

"No"

"I see"

He looks at me. We ride to my house he walks inside for a cup of tea and scones. I request for supper to be prepared.

"Are you staying for supper?"

"I don't see that happening I have to travel home"

"I see"

"Don't be angry"

"Angry for what?"

"You know what I'm talking about"

"Ngidi go and stop playing the caring card"

"Mota"

"What?"

"Don't do that. I will make it up to you soon"

"Then the favorite chorus"

"Mota I have a wife don't be dramatic"

"I'm dramatic Ngidi? When last did we spend quality time?"

"We don't have to spend time I have a wife and you very much aware of that"

"You love her don't you?"

"She's my wife"

"See yourself out." I say standing up heading to my private chamber I feel footsteps behind me. I throw myself on my bed he walks in and locks the door. He undresses.

"I will be quick Mota"

"If you say so"

"Don't lure me into spending a night I know you Mota. "

"You will do that yourself" I say undressing slowly his shaft expands. He smashes his lips on mine he gently lays on top of me and kisses me the way he knows I want it to be.

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Ngidi is laying on Mota's bed trying to catch his breath. His upper body is exposed so is his hairy chests. Mota left the bedroom to go fix Ngidi something to eat. She knows very well that Ngidi loves a

submissive woman which is something her friend Thabisile never allows Ngwane to practice. She knows a way to man's heart is his stomach. Mota and Ngidi have been seeing each other for years and nobody has ever suspected them of adultery. Ngidi finds peace in Mota but he loves his wife Thabile and himself have through the most especially after his first wife passed on leaving behind Zuko and Iminathi. Thabile became a good mother to his kids not only did she love his kids but she treated them with understanding and care. She ensured they ate everyday and four times a day. She ensured their skin was moisturized and their laundry was done. She treated her step kids like they were hers that alone had won her Ngidi's heart. Mota on the other hand she's been a good listener advisor and an asset to building his Kingdom or ending crisis in the kingdom. Mota is calm and understanding and when she isn't calm she voice out her pain properly without degrading Ngidi Ngidi can take her unlike Thabile the lover of his soul. Honestly speaking Ngidi has grown fond of Mota so much that he lies to his wife whenever he has to see Mota. He has used so many deceitful excuses about attending to trading businesses whilst the business is situated between Mota's thigh. ****

"Food is ready here" She says putting the tray of food on the bed pedestal.

"Thank you" Ngidi says sitting on his butt. Mota looks at him and smile.

"It's your favorite"

"Let me not waste time"

"I will bring in bathing water you can't go home smelling like me.
She knows my fragrance"

"No need"

"Meaning?"

"I'm spending a night"

"Oh!" Mota says surprised by the sudden change of hearts. Ngidi never spends a night with her.

"No Ngwane you need to go home"

"Don't act like you don't like the idea of me spending a night"

"Of course I like it but she will suspect"

"She would've suspected a decade ago"

They look at each other and smile. Mota removes her dress and stays in her birth suit. She rests her head on Ngidi's shoulder. Ngidi kisses her forehead. Mota closes her eyes. She has so much to tell Ngidi so much that might destroy his marriage with Thabile she has kept this skeleton in the dark for years now. All in the name of peace or being inconsiderate of Thabile feelings or Ngidi's. What she knows can end this marriage of years not that she doesn't wish for Ngidi to end things with Thabile she wishes for that but she doesn't wish for things to end this way. She and Thabile have been friends for years and she knows a couple of things about Thabile that nobody knows it's not like she heard the news from the horse's mouth but she saw everything and heard everything with both her eyes and ears. At least she can clap for herself she's been a good secret keeper.. Ngidi kisses her lips to snap her out of thoughts she smiles and looks into Ngidi's eyes. She loves this man growing up it was him he wanted to marry and spend the rest of her life with. She wanted her brother to marry Thabile so she can give Ngidi to herself. She

even hated Queen Nozibele for ruining her plans by marrying and falling pregnant for Ngcolosi making her chances of marrying Ngidi slim. Because she knew Thabile's next stop was Zikhali if not Ngcolosi but when Boni dated Zikhali she kissed her glimpse of hope goodbye because it was obvious Thabile was gonna marry Ngidi and that alone drove her to the edge of leaving home to settle for a man she never loved. She got tired and jealous of watching every one marry out love but not her she knew nobody would love Ngidi more than she did but Thabile took her man and not in a single day did Thabile ever asked her about who her childhood crush was.

"This is good your servants are good cooks"

"They learnt from the best"

"I see"

"How is my daughter doing back in Ngwane?"

"She's doing fine but her pregnancy will take her to an early grave. Bless her to go to Thuthukani Mota"

"Over my dead body not when my own brother chased me out like a dog at gunpoint Mgcinaphi is not going there"

"Your daughter will die Mota"

"We will go see a Maine soon"

"This is above the Maine"

"I will think about it"

"Ngidi"

"Yes"

"I love you"

"Mota please don't complicate things. You know I have a wife can we not fight over this please"

"I see I am sorry" She says moving her head from Ngidi's shoulder.

"Mota please understand I dont mean to hurt you but you know my situation."

"You like me too but you just can't be with me right?"

"My son and your daughter are married Mota. See where the mould comes from?"

"Excuse me"

—

Ngelози

"I don't follow Ngelози you saying?"

"I'm leaving Nhlonipho today. My father is taking me to my aunt and I don't know why. "

"Where does your aunt reside again?"

"The village you once came to"

"Oh the one around my Kingdom?"

"Yes"

"That shouldn't be a problem where you go I will go."

"I don't like that place Nhlonipho I want to stay here with you"

"It's okay my flower a plan will make itself"

"If I leave today please don't forget about me Nhlonipho"

He giggles.

"Not a chance. I love you Ngelozi a lot"

I smile by hearing those words. My father shows up looking exhausted he throws his facing tools aside and walks to my chamber. I look at Nhlonipho we are hiding in the trees situated in my compound.

"Go inside I will visit you I promise"

"You promise?"

"I promise"

"Blood promise?"

"We don't have a needle"

"I will take a thorn"

"Fine go on" I search for a thorn.

"Which finger do we prick first yours or mine?"

"Ladies first bring the thorn I will prick you my flower"

"Don't be hard and.." He kisses my lips.

"I will be gentle just like I will be when I deflower you"

I smile.

"Come give me your finger" I hand it over. He pricks it stings. I squeeze my finger so blood will come out.

"Let me prick yours"

"First I need to swallow your blood before you prick my finger"

"No we will swallow simultaneously. Come" I gently pull his finger and prick it we cross our hands and glance into each other's eyes. He moves his bloody finger towards my mouth and I do the same with mine.

"Do you promise not to forget me and our love Prince Nhlonipho?"

"I promise love do you promise not to give up on me and love someone else?"

"I promise" We both lick and swallow each other's blood to make our promise spell. He pulls me for a long passion filled kiss. He touches my butt I put my hands on his shoulders. We kiss for a little while.

"I love you Angel"

"I love you too Respect" He caresses my face.

"Baba please! Don't take the baby away I didn't mean to hurt her please!!"

My mother says crying we can hear them from where we are standing.

"My child has a swollen leg!! We're you trying to kill her huh?"

"No! I was just disciplining her please believe me don't take her away please. She hates that place please."

Nhlonipho looks at me and squeezes in for a hug. I rest my head on his shoulder.

"It's normal for parents to argue don't feel bad okay?"

"I just don't want to leave and hearing them fight over me hurts. Mom meant no harm she was trying to discipline me nothing much"

"Sorry my flower let's go gaze on the stars instead"

"I can't they gonna suspect I'm not around father prefers we travel at night so I don't want trouble."

"Fair enough"

"Baba please! I didn't mean to hurt her it wasn't out of hate but love. She is my daughter too and I have a say babakhe!"

"Next time I will find my daughter headless because of your violence. I don't have a punching bag woman! For Ngelozi I can burn all these bushes you hear me? That's my first child my treasure. I won't allow anyone to bully my child she's been through so much already. I don't expect that from you too!!!"

" Samson please I'm sorry. But don't take the baby there I will do better this time around "

"I'm going to get alcohol and don't you dare touch her ever again"

My father walks away. My mother walks inside her chamber.

"Since you not leaving today I will put you to sleep tonight don't lock"

"I won't lock I will passionately wait for you"

"Now can I drink my orange juice and go home?"

"Sure" I lean over to kiss him.

"Go home and stay away from trouble" He says slapping my butt. He walks away leaving me smitten like a kitty seeing milk. I walk to my private chamber and throw myself on the bed. My mother walks in and stands by the door with her arms folded.

"Can we talk?"

"Ma? Talk? About what?"

She sniffs.

"Ngeloz i know you heard my conversation with your father"

"Mama I'm sorry that you and father are fighting because of me. I'm sorry for everything"

"It's not your fault my darling. Ngeloz i when I punished you it wasn't put of hatred my daughter. Ngeloz i just like every parent my aspirations and hopes for you are very high my child. I don't want you to be a playground for these Thuthukani boys who lack a skill or two. Ngeloz i I want you to have a better life than mine and your father's. I wish for you to marry in a well established home have children in marriage. I don't want you to have kids out of wedlock I don't want you to be seen like damaged goods. What I was trying to instill in you was discipline I'm sorry if I went overboard by caring too much and trying so hard to right your wrongs. Or she'd some light in you I'm sorry if I went overboard by caring too much and trying so hard to right your wrongs. Or she'd some light in you I'm sorry you broke your leg. I'm sorry for everything but I didn't do all that out of hate I love you Ngeloz i. "

" Ma it's okay I really understand and I have nothing against you. I know you meant no harm I really do"

"But your father doesn't see it that way. He thinks I'm abusing

you"

"I will explain everything to him mama"

"No it's okay. Don't talk to him he will think I forced you into saying that but if it happens you don't leave. I promise to give you the freedom that you need. I will stop smothering you and watching your every move. I will let you be Ngelozi if it will bring peace in this compound I will let you be. It's pains me hearing that your father think that way of me to think I've raised you since birth till this day only to hear that I'm abusing you it really hurts"

She cries. I stand and embrace her.

"Mama don't cry please"

"I'm hurt Ngelozi. I can't believe he said his protecting you from me your mother? Can you imagine the weight of these words?"

"Mama I will cry too if you don't stop crying"

"I'm sorry my daughter there's hot water to bath okay?"

"Thank you ma"

"Good night"

"Night mama" She turns her back and walks out.

Nozibele

"Jali"

"Yes"

"Boni was here with Gabi"

"Oh and?"

"They invited us for dinner on Saturday then a welcoming ceremony for Ndandatho that will be held in a week's time. They invited everyone even your sister whose a lunatic" I tease.

"Does Zikhali know about this?"

"They surely discussed it over a pillow talk"

"If so then we gonna go. Surely I will get time to discuss their marriage proposal"

"No drama when you get there please"

"You know I'm drama less only Zikhali is"

"Fine. I trust you"

"Wait isn't Saturday tomorrow?"

"It is my love but it's in the evening"

"Oh that was short notice though"

"I know but it serves as proof that we reaching our light at the end of the tunnel."

"I will rejoice when my son marries then we focus on finding Nhlonipho a wife"

"Ngcolosi his still young we can't force him into marriage"

"I don't want another Zimele Nozibele. Nhlonipho has to marry before he thinks of undressing someone's else's daughter. I can't afford to have yet another baby born out of wedlock. I want him to marry"

"But you didn't marry first before having a baby you are the breeder of that Ngcolosi" He looks at me and narrows his brows.

"I'm being for real"

"But we can't condone sex before marriage Nozibele we are royals remember?"

"What I'm trying to level my husband if that we mustn't force perfection on our sons. They not perfect and they should be granted opportunities to make mistakes they won't break Ngcolosi"

"My love please. I really want my son to marry and have a peaceful home unlike what Zimele and myself went through"

"I hear you Jali but don't force my child into marrying someone he won't want to marry whether he chooses a donkey to marry we should grant him the opportunity to make his own decisions without interfering"

"I hear you Nozi wphat am I gonna wear tomorrow?"

"We will go shopping"

"Come here."

He says pulling me closer.

Thabile

It's now morning and my husband is not home it's so unlike Ngidi to sleep out unless he went to one of his trading businesses but this time around he said nothing about going to a trip but rather a nearby meeting but surely something befell him. I step out of bed and stare outside my window a knock snaps me out of my thoughts.

"Ma morning"

"Morning Zuko"

"Ma I've made up my mind"

"About?"

"Mgci I'm taking her to Thuthukani"

"No problem son"

"Are you Okay?"

"Yes I'm fine son I just had a nightmare yesterday"

"About?"

"It's nothing to worry yourself about"

"Good morning my beautiful wife" Ngidi walks in with a broad smile he smashes his lips on my cheek.

"Morning my husband"

"Ma excuse me dad morning"

"Morning son"

He leaves our bedroom. Ngidi looks at me nobody knows me like he does.

"Are you Okay?"

"I hardly slept last night. Where did you go to?"

"Oh! Our horses suffered injury I had to sleep in the roadside my love. I'm sorry for not sleeping home"

"It's okay. Zuko did hint that our donkeys are aging and failing to take up the load. It's a pity the Jali family wants nothing to do with us and our daughter. Trading with them would come in handy"

"What happened?"

"Ngcolosi chased us with a gun Mota included"

"Thats hilarious what is wrong with Ngcolosi?"

"Juju is to blame it obvious Nozi bewitched him"

"I'm hungry"

"I'm not in the mood Ngidi"

"No I meant for food my love."

"Surely Madongwe prepared something I will join you shortly"

"Okay" He says walking out leaving me alone to replay my dream. I heave the longest sigh in worry. I fix myself to go join everyone else in the dinning area. I find Noma laughing together with Mgcinaphi who doesn't look well. Ngidi is conversing with Zuko about cows and goats Im seated here cracking my skull.

"I think I'm gonna visit Mota"

"I will tell a guard to drive you there"

"Thank you Ngwane"

"We also heading to Thuthukani Mgcinaphi is in dire straits."

"Becareful for Ngcolosi not to shoot you that man is a lunatic"

I say.

"indeed my friend. Good morning everyone My apologies to

show up here unannounced. I was just passing by and I thought I should pop in for a cup of tea" Mota says with a broad smile on her face. She sits besides Noma

"Welcome my friend Nomaswazi give her a mug"

"On it"

"Thank you" Mota says looking at everyone.

"I was thinking of going to your house my friend"

"We can go there together I don't mind."

"Better" We eat breakfast over a light conversation. Mota does the regular telling jokes and having everyone laughing loud myself included.

Zikhali

Ndandatho and Bonisile are busy setting the table we having guests in few hours. I drag seeing Ngcolosi but I have no choice but to tolerate his existence. Ndandatho looks ravishing In her new garments and beads Gabi too so is my wife not forgetting my son and grandson. I pour myself another glass of fermented grapes. My wife looks at me with worry I know what she's thinking.

"Zikhali you need to limit yourself on the wine please. I'm not looking forward to having yet another fight today please"

"Don't sweat I won't argue with anyone"

"Zikhali I mean it"

"I meant it too my candy. Are you done with the table?"

"Everything is set please stop drinking"

"I won't go overboard if that's your concern I know what's at stake here"

"Thank you I love you yezwa?"

"I love you too"

"Your guests have arrived" Busani -

"See them in Busani" Nda -

He walks away. Ndandatho finishes up with the decorating of the table. Nozibele is the first to walk in with a gold sealed container and a wrapped up gift. King Ngcolosi is the second to walk in with two bottles of wine He looks at me and so do i. Zimele walks in looking decent his eyes run to my daughter. Nhlonipho walks in for some weird reasons I like this boy. His nothing like his father and brother his so calm and respectful he is so good looking too.

"Greetings royals of umthombo" Nozi

"Greetings Queen Nozi"

"You look beautiful" The ladies exchange compliments.

"Greetings King Zikhali" Zimele-

"Greetings son"

"You look great King Zikhali" Nhlonipho -

"You look dazzling yourself son Please have a sit"

I say I showing them chairs. Ndandatho embraces Zimele who then picks up Gatsha.

"You look stunning " Zimele-

"You look handsome" Nda -

"Okay enough with the flattery how do you know my sister Zimele?"

"His the father to Gatsha" I say. Ngcolosi looks at me.

"You joking right?" Busani-

"His not Brother his my partner"

"And you didn't tell me Ndandatho?"

"Sorry" Busani looks at Zimele and then Ndandatho he pours himself a glass of juice to calm himself down.

"Greetings Jali"

"Greetings Buthelezi"

"Wine?"

"Please" I pour Ngcolosi wine as we seat on the chairs.

"I love your house it's elegant and very capturing." Nhlo-

"Thank you Nhlonipho" We say in unison.

"Please make yourselves comfortable on the table" Boni-

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Ngidi is laying on Mota's bed trying to catch his breath. His upper

body is exposed so is his hairy chests. Mota left the bedroom to go fix Ngidi something to eat. She knows very well that Ngidi loves a submissive woman which is something her friend Thabisile never allows Ngwane to practice. She knows a way to man's heart is his stomach. Mota and Ngidi have been seeing each other for years and nobody has ever suspected them of adultery. Ngidi finds peace in Mota but he loves his wife Thabile and himself have through the most especially after his first wife passed on leaving behind Zuko and Iminathi. Thabile became a good mother to his kids not only did she love his kids but she treated them with understanding and care. She ensured they ate everyday and four times a day. She ensured their skin was moisturized and their laundry was done. She treated her step kids like they were hers that alone had won her Ngidi's heart. Mota on the other hand she's been a good listener advisor and an asset to building his Kingdom or ending crisis in the kingdom. Mota is calm and understanding and when she isn't calm she voice out her pain properly without degrading Ngidi Ngidi can take her unlike Thabile the lover of his soul. Honestly speaking Ngidi has grown fond of Mota so much that he lies to his wife whenever he has to see Mota. He has used so many deceitful excuses about attending to trading businesses whilst the business is situated between Mota's thigh. ****

"Food is ready here" She says putting the tray of food on the bed pedestal.

"Thank you" Ngidi says sitting on his butt. Mota looks at him and smile.

"It's your favorite"

"Let me not waste time"

"I will bring in bathing water you can't go home smelling like me. She knows my fragrance"

"No need"

"Meaning?"

"I'm spending a night"

"Oh!" Mota says surprised by the sudden change of hearts. Ngidi never spends a night with her.

"No Ngwane you need to go home"

"Don't act like you don't like the idea of me spending a night"

"Of course I like it but she will suspect"

"She would've suspected a decade ago"

They look at each other and smile. Mota removes her dress and stays in her birth suit. She rests her head on Ngidi's shoulder. Ngidi kisses her forehead. Mota closes her eyes. She has so much to tell Ngidi so much that might destroy his marriage with Thabile she has kept this skeleton in the dark for years now. All in the name of peace or being inconsiderate of Thabile feelings or Ngidi's. What she knows can end this marriage of years not that she doesn't wish for Ngidi to end things with Thabile she wishes for that but she doesn't wish for things to end this way. She and Thabile have been friends for years and she knows a couple of things about Thabile that nobody knows it's not like she heard the news from the horses mouth but she saw everything and heard everything with both her eyes and ears. At least she can clap for herself she's been a good secret keeper.. Ngidi kisses her lips to snap her out of thoughts she smiles and looks into Ngidi's eyes. She loves this man growing up it was him he wanted to marry and spend the rest of her life with. She wanted her brother to marry Thabile so she can give Ngidi to herself. She even hated Queen Nozibele for ruining her plans by marrying and falling pregnant for Ngcolosi making her chances of marrying Ngidi slim. Because she knew Thabile's next stop was Zikhali if not Ngcolosi but when Boni dated Zikhali she kissed her glimpse of hope goodbye because it was obvious Thabile was gonna marry Ngidi and that alone drove her to the edge of leaving home to settle for a man she never loved. She got tired and jealous of watching every one marry out love but not her she knew nobody would love Ngidi more than she did but Thabile took her man and not in a single day did Thabile ever asked her about who her childhood crush was.

"This is good your servants are good cooks"

"They learnt from the best"

"I see"

"How is my daughter doing back in Ngwane?"

"She's doing fine but her pregnancy will take her to an early grave. Bless her to go to Thuthukani Mota"

"Over my dead body not when my own brother chased me out like a dog at gunpoint Mgcinaphi is not going there"

"Your daughter will die Mota"

"We will go see a Maine soon"

"This is above the Maine"

"I will think about it"

"Ngidi"

"Yes"

"I love you"

"Mota please don't complicate things. You know I have a wife can we not fight over this please"

"I see I am sorry" She says moving her head from Ngidi's shoulder.

"Mota please understand I dont mean to hurt you but you know my situation."

"You like me too but you just can't be with me right?"

"My son and your daughter are married Mota. See where the mould comes from?"

"Excuse me"

Ngelози

"I don't follow Ngelози you saying?"

"I'm leaving Nhlonipho today. My father is taking me to my aunt and I don't know why. "

"Where does your aunt reside again?"

"The village you once came to"

"Oh the one around my Kingdom?"

"Yes"

"That shouldn't be a problem where you go I will go."

"I don't like that place Nhlonipho I want to stay here with you"

"It's okay my flower a plan will make itself"

"If I leave today please don't forget about me Nhlonipho"

He giggles.

"Not a chance. I love you Ngelozi a lot"

I smile by hearing those words. My father shows up looking exhausted he throws his facing tools aside and walks to my chamber. I look at Nhlonipho we are hiding in the trees situated in my compound.

"Go inside I will visit you I promise"

"You promise?"

"I promise"

"Blood promise?"

"We don't have a needle"

"I will take a thorn"

"Fine go on" I search for a thorn.

"Which finger do we prick first yours or mine?"

"Ladies first bring the thorn I will prick you my flower"

"Don't be hard and.." He kisses my lips.

"I will be gentle just like I will be when I deflower you"

I smile.

"Come give me your finger" I hand it over. He pricks it stings. I squeeze my finger so blood will come out.

"Let me prick yours"

"First I need to swallow your blood before you prick my finger"

"No we will swallow simultaneously. Come" I gently pull his finger and prick it we cross our hands and glance into each other's eyes. He moves his bloody finger towards my mouth and I do the same with mine.

"Do you promise not to forget me and our love Prince Nhlonipho?"

"I promisey love do you promise not to give up on me and love someone else?"

"I promise" We both lick and swallow each other's blood to make our promise spell. He pulls me for a long passion filled kiss. He touches my butt I put my hands on his shoulders. We kiss for a little while.

"I love you Angel"

"I love you too Respect" He caresses my face.

"Baba please! Don't take the baby away I didn't mean to hurt her please!!"

My mother says crying we can hear them from where we are standing.

"My child has a swollen leg!! We're you trying to kill her huh?"

"No! I was just disciplining her please believe me don't take her away please. She hates that place please."

Nhlonipho looks at me and squeezes in for a hug. I rest my head on his shoulder.

"It's normal for parents to argue don't feel bad okay?"

"I just don't want to leave and hearing them fight over me hurts. Mom meant no harm she was trying to discipline me nothing much"

"Sorry my flower let's go gaze on the stars instead"

"I can't they gonna suspect I'm not around father prefers we travel at night so I don't want trouble."

"Fair enough"

"Baba please! I didn't mean to hurt her it wasn't out of hate but

love. She is my daughter too and I have a say babakhe!"

"Next time I will find my daughter headless because of your violence. I don't have a punching bag woman! For Ngelozi I can burn all these bushes you hear me? That's my first child my treasure. I won't allow anyone to bully my child she's been through so much already. I don't expect that from you too!!!"

" Samson please I'm sorry. But don't take the baby there I will do better this time around "

"I'm going to get alcohol and don't you dare touch her ever again"

My father walks away. My mother walks inside her chamber.

"Since you not leaving today I will put you to sleep tonight don't lock"

"I won't lock I will passionately wait for you"

"Now can I drink my orange juice and go home?"

"Sure" I lean over to kiss him.

"Go home and stay away from trouble" He says slapping my butt. He walks away leaving me smitten like a kitty seeing milk. I walk to my private chamber and throw myself on the bed. My mother walks in and stands by the door with her arms folded.

"Can we talk?"

"Ma? Talk? About what?"

She sniffs.

"Ngeloz i know you heard my conversation with your father"

"Mama I'm sorry that you and father are fighting because of me. I'm sorry for everything"

"It's not your fault my darling. Ngeloz i when I punished you it wasn't put of hatred my daughter. Ngeloz i just like every parent my aspirations and hopes for you are very high my child. I don't want you to be a playground for these Thuthukani boys who lack a skill or two. Ngeloz i I want you to have a better life

than mine and your father's. I wish for you to marry in a well established home have children in marriage. I don't want you to have kids out of wedlock I don't want you to be seen like damaged goods. What I was trying to instill in you was discipline I'm sorry if I went overboard by caring too much and trying so hard to right your wrongs. Or she'd some light in you I'm sorry if I went overboard by caring too much and trying so hard to right your wrongs. Or she'd some light in you I'm sorry you broke your leg.

I'm sorry for everything but I didn't do all that out of hate I love you Ngelozi. "

" Ma it's okay I really understand and I have nothing against you. I know you meant no harm I really do"

"But your father doesn't see it that way. He thinks I'm abusing you"

"I will explain everything to him mama"

"No it's okay. Don't talk to him he will think I forced you into saying that but if it happens you don't leave. I promise to give you the freedom that you need. I will stop smothering you and watching your every move. I will let you be Ngelozi if it will bring peace in this compound I will let you be. It's pains me hearing that your father think that way of me to think I've raised you since birth till this day only to hear that I'm abusing you it really hurts"

She cries. I stand and embrace her.

"Mama don't cry please"

"I'm hurt Ngelozi. I can't believe he said his protecting you from me your mother? Can you imagine the weight of these words?"

"Mama I will cry too if you don't stop crying"

"I'm sorry my daughter there's hot water to bath okay?"

"Thank you ma"

"Good night"

"Night mama" She turns her back and walks out.

Nozibele

"Jali"

"Yes"

"Boni was here with Gabi"

"Oh and?"

"They invited us for dinner on Saturday then a welcoming ceremony for Ndandatho that will be held in a week's time. They invited everyone even your sister whose a lunatic" I tease.

"Does Zikhali know about this?"

"They surely discussed it over a pillow talk"

"If so then we gonna go. Surely I will get time to discuss their marriage proposal"

"No drama when you get there please"

"You know I'm drama less only Zikhali is"

"Fine. I trust you"

"Wait isn't Saturday tomorrow?"

"It is my love but it's in the evening"

"Oh that was short notice though"

"I know but it serves as proof that we reaching our light at the end of the tunnel."

"I will rejoice when my son marries then we focus on finding Nhlonipho a wife"

"Ngcolosi his still young we can't force him into marriage"

"I don't want another Zimele Nozibele. Nhlonipho has to marry before he thinks of undressing someone's else's daughter. I can't afford to have yet another baby born out of wedlock. I want him to marry"

"But you didn't marry first before having a baby you are the breeder of that Ngcolosi" He looks at me and narrows his brows.

"I'm being for real"

"But we can't condone sex before marriage Nozibele we are royals remember?"

"What I'm trying to level my husband if that we mustn't force perfection on our sons. They not perfect and they should be granted opportunities to make mistakes they won't break Ngcolosi"

"My love please. I really want my son to marry and have a peaceful home unlike what Zimele and myself went through"

"I hear you Jali but don't force my child into marrying someone he won't want to marry whether he chooses a donkey to marry we should grant him the opportunity to make his own decisions without interfering"

"I hear you Nozi wphat am I gonna wear tomorrow?"

"We will go shopping"

"Come here."

He says pulling me closer.

Thabile

It's now morning and my husband is not home its so unlike Ngidi to sleep out unless he went to one of his trading businesses but this time around he said nothing about going to a trip but rather a nearby meeting but surely something befell him. I step out of bed and stare outside my window a knock snaps me out of my thoughts.

"Ma morning"

"Morning Zuko"

"Ma I've made up my mind"

"About?"

"Mgci I'm taking her to Thuthukani"

"No problem son"

"Are you Okay?"

"Yes I'm fine son I just had a nightmare yesterday"

"About?"

"It's nothing to worry yourself about"

"Good morning my beautiful wife" Ngidi walks in with a broad smile he smashes his lips on my cheek.

"Morning my husband"

"Ma excuse me dad morning"

"Morning son"

He leaves our bedroom. Ngidi looks at me nobody knows me like he does.

"Are you Okay?"

"I hardly slept last night. Where did you go to?"

"Oh! Our horses suffered injury I had to sleep in the roadside my love. I'm sorry for not sleeping home"

"It's okay. Zuko did hint that our donkeys are aging and failing to take up the load. It's a pity the Jali family wants nothing to do with us and our daughter. Trading with them would come in handy"

"What happened?"

"Ngcolosi chased us with a gun Mota included"

"That's hilarious what is wrong with Ngcolosi?"

"Juju is to blame it obvious Nozi bewitched him"

"I'm hungry"

"I'm not in the mood Ngidi"

"No I meant for food my love."

"Surely Madongwe prepared something I will join you shortly"

"Okay" He says walking out leaving me alone to replay my dream. I heave the longest sigh in worry. I fix myself to go join everyone else in the dinning area. I find Noma laughing together with Mgcinaphi who doesn't look well. Ngidi is conversing with Zuko about cows and goats Im seated here cracking my skull.

"I think I'm gonna visit Mota"

"I will tell a guard to drive you there"

"Thank you Ngwane"

"We also heading to Thuthukani Mgcinaphi is in dire straits."

"Becareful for Ngcolosi not to shoot you that man is a lunatic"

I say.

"indeed my friend. Good morning everyone My apologies to show up here unannounced. I was just passing by and I thought I should pop in for a cup of tea" Mota says with a broad smile on her face. She sits besides Noma

"Welcome my friend Nomaswazi give her a mug"

"On it"

"Thank you" Mota says looking at everyone.

"I was thinking of going to your house my friend"

"We can go there together I don't mind."

"Better" We eat breakfast over a light conversation. Mota does the regular telling jokes and having everyone laughing loud myself included.

Zikhali

Ndandatho and Bonisile are busy setting the table we having guests in few hours. I drag seeing Ngcolosi but I have no choice but to tolerate his existence. Ndandatho looks ravishing In her new garments and beadsGabi too so is my wife not forgetting my son and grandson. I pour myself another glass of fermented grapes. My wife looks at me with worry I know what she's thinking.

"Zikhali you need to limit yourself on the wine please. I'm not looking forward to having yet another fight today please"

"Don't sweat I won't argue with anyone"

"Zikhali I mean it"

"I meant it too my candy. Are you done with the table?"

"Everything is set please stop drinking"

"I won't go overboard if that's your concern I know what's at stake here"

"Thank you I love you yezwa?"

"I love you too"

"Your guests have arrived" Busani -

"See them in Busani" Nda -

He walks away. Ndandatho finishes up with the decorating of the table. Nozibele is the first to walk in with a gold sealed container and a wrapped up gift. King Ngcolosi is the second to walk in with two bottles of wine He looks at me and so do i. Zimele walks in looking decent his eyes run to my daughter. Nhlonipho walks in for some weird reasons I like this boy. His nothing like his father and brother his so calm and respectful he is so good looking too.

"Greetings royals of umthombo" Nozi

"Greetings Queen Nozi"

"You look beautiful" The ladies exchange compliments.

"Greetings King Zikhali" Zimele-

"Greetings son"

"You look great King Zikhali" Nhlonipho -

"You look dazzling yourself son Please have a sit"

I say I showing them chairs. Ndandatho embraces Zimele who then picks up Gatsha.

"You look stunning " Zimele-

"You look handsome" Nda -

"Okay enough with the flattery how do you know my sister Zimele?"

"His the father to Gatsha" I say. Ngcolosi looks at me.

"You joking right?" Busani-

"His not Brother his my partner"

"And you didn't tell me Ndandatho?"

"Sorry" Busani looks at Zimele and then Ndandatho he pours himself a glass of juice to calm himself down.

"Greetings Jali"

"Greetings Buthelezi"

"Wine?"

"Please" I pour Ngcolosi wine as we seat on the chairs.

"I love your house it's elegant and very capturing." Nhlo-

"Thank you Nhlonipho" We say in unison.

"Please make yourselves comfortable on the table" Boni-

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Ndandatho

"Mama"

"Yes"

"Can I please visit Thuthukani Kingdom"

"Hhaibo Ndandatho! Why is that?"

"Ma I miss the father of my child and the couple of friends I've made there"

"Nda your father will not like this honestly can't you wait till your marriage?"

"I can't mama"

She looks at me. Really I can't wait that long I miss my partners touch. I'm certain she wouldn't survive days without Zikhali.

"Ndandatho you need to wait my daughter"

"Kodwa mama"

"Ndandatho there's no but already your father is making progress on his relationship with the Prince of Thuthukani village. You can't make all this go to waste Ndandatho please my baby"

"Mama you don't understand"

"I do understand you're pregnant and you having high spikes of hormones. But no Ndandatho"

"Can I ask father myself?"

"Ask father yourself? Ask what Princess?" My father says walking towards mother whose emptying the used plates getting them ready to be washed.

"Are you gonna talk? Or I should go back to Ngcolosi and drink myself a pulp?" Dad-

"Baba can I.. Can I." I stutter.

"Your daughter wants to visit Zimele back in Thuthukani village" Mom-

"Thats if the King won't have a problem with it"

"Why do you want to visit the Prince?" Dad-

"She's pregnant Buthelezi she longs for the father of her child"
Mom says looking at me.

"Saying no will not in pregnant you the damage has already been done."Dad-

"Meaning?"

"You will spend a night Ndandatho then come back home. We have a few things to do before yourwelcoming ceremony" Dad-

"Thank you baba" I jump to embrace him. He giggles.

"Don't do things I wouldn't do my Princess" Dad -

"Thats a tale my love" mom-

"I won't do anything baba I promise"

"Don't tell me you buy that my handsome" Mom says kissing dad.

"I don't buy it my love I know they up to no good." Dad-

"Don't get too drunk I need you sober Zikhali"

" I won't get wasted my love." Dad-

I look at them as they french kiss. I leave the kitchen and walk to the rest. I find King Ngcolosi and his wife at the table then Zimele. Nhlonipho and Busani and Gabi are not in sight. I sit besides Zimele who is gulping down his grapes drink.

" Where is my son?" Zimele-

"Your mom is holding him"

"Oh! Oh yeah." I look at him.

"Are you Okay?"

"I'm okay my love"

"Where is Nhlonipho and the others?"

"They mentioned something about taking a walk in the garden"

"I see" I say gazing on Zimele whom I believe is tipsey.

"Ndandatho" Nozi-

"My Queen"

"This pregnancy suits you my daughter you look radiant" Nozi-

"Thank you mother"

"You better give me a granddaughter this time around"

"Hha mama what if it's a boy?"

"Then we try again" Zimele-

"Exactly my Son" Nozi-

I giggle.

"Don't panic mother I will give you a daughter so I won't have to try again" I say glancing at Zimele.

"What did we miss?" Dad-

"Your daughter giving us a daughter since we failed to have one ourselves" Ngcolosi -

"Good luck on that one." Dad -

They laugh.

"Zikhali we should get going" Ngcolosi -

"Thanks for the hospitality and warm welcome" Nozi-

"It's all our pleasure. I wish you were spending a night though it's late to travel at this hour" Mom-

"Thing is we have a guest back home Princess Mgcinaphi being here would denote a negative message you know?" Ngcolosi -

"I fully understand Jali but before you leave let's drink a final drink" Dad-

"Zikhali you already wasted my husband save that drink for another time" Mom-

"Sbonisile don't worry about my performance this drink will not ruin your session. I will perform much better than I always do"
Dad-

Zimele laughs.

"Zikhali..." Mom warns.

"Indeed Zikhali this drink will give her a blissful night" Ngcolosi -

Zimele whispers into my ears.

"Can't you sneak out tonight?"

"There's no need I'm coming with you"

"Really? I love the sound of that" He says brushing my thigh underneath the table.

"Zimele. "

"Shhhh don't make noise" He says sneaking his hand under my garments.

"Excuse us ladies Jali and myself have something to discuss.

Woza Zimele" Dad-

"Oh!" He says standing up. My mother's and myself remain.

"Had Mota returned Nozi?"

"No.. My husband scared her off. But her daughter is in the palace for what? We do not know"

"Your sister in law though. How I hate that woman." Mom-

"That makes the two of us my friend I don't know how many times I've prayed to God to end her life but the witch is still breathing venom and bringing fourth torture to innocent beings. Ngcolosi should've killed her"

"Whatever we did to that lady it cannot be undone."

"We did nothing to her she's just bitter she did not end up with her ideal guy."

I look at these women as they freely gossip.

"Excuse me elders I have some packing to do"

"Packing? Where is the road leading you Ndandatho?" Nozi-

"She is so addicted to your son my friend. I don't know what Zimele is using for my daughter" Mom-

"Mama please"

"She wants to sleep besides him?" Nozi-

"And do adults stuff" My mom says sipping wine.

"Let the child be Bonisile time is on their side and besides you started sooner yourself. I remember how you used to lie to your parents about coming for a sleeping overs at my place while the sleep over was Zikhali" They laugh.

"Don't go there Nozibele"

"Let Ndandatho be you've done worse than her"

I look at mom and giggle.

"Its funny that I bore your son a wife"

"Tell me about it. The mistakes we made are marrying each other" They laugh. I leave them catching up I walk to my private chamber and pack a few stuff for my son and I..

Nhlonipho

"You hinted having your eyes on a woman Nhlonipho who is she?" Busani-

I gible.

"She's a pearl Busani she's beautiful both externally and internally"

" Name and surname? Surely we have eyes on the same maiden"
Busani-

"This is one is a mystery Buthelezi."

"Where is she from?"

"Thuthukani kingdom"

"Is she a Princess?"

"I care less about titles my Prince if the heart is golden then she's worth everything that I have and fighting for. "

Gabi looks at me.

"So you denoting she might not be of royalty?"

"If my heart finds comforts and peace in her then the answer is yes Buthelezi"

Busani giggles. Gabisile looks at me then aside.

" I hear you Jali I really do. So are you prepared to settle down with her?"

"Do we really have to discuss Nhlonipho's girlfriend?" Gabi-

"Nobody asked you to listen Gabi" Busani-

"We can change the topic Princess Gabi" I say glancing on her.

"Don't mind her Nhlonipho She's being melodramatic. Excuse me I'm pressed" He says walking away leaving both myself and Gabi behind.

"I love your garden it's beautiful" I say to clear the air.

"Yeah it is"

"Gabi are you okay?"

"I'm fine"

"I see" I say looking around.

"Don't you think we should get going? I mean its getting windy and a bit cold".

"I like it when it is like this it's so chilled." Gabi-

"I see my Princess"

"You getting married soon?" Gabi-

"I suppose so but I still need my parents permission you know."

"So who are you marrying Nhlonipho?"

"My lips are sealed Princess I prefer my affairs to be kept as a mystery."

I say looking around their garden. She looks at me for quite sometime.

"If you love her why is hard to say her name Nhlonipho? Why are you keeping her as a mystery?"

I look at her.

"Gabisile I don't want people meddling in my business I love her. By the way I thought this topic was irking you"

"Nhlonipho do you remember what our parents said?"

I look at her.

"They said quite a lot of things Gabisile"

"But there's one important thing they highlighted Nhlonipho"

"Gabisile can we change the topic please"

"Not before you answer me"

"Gabisile this is getting a bit discomfoting."

"Our parents once said you and I will marry in future. " I tilt my head to look at her.

"They said you and I would make a cute couple. Your mother went as far as saying you will wait for me to grow fully then later on I will be your wife."

"And you believed that?"

"I didn't have reasons not to believe it Nipho"

She looks at me.

"Prince Nhlonipho let's go back it's getting cold out here" Busani-

"Indeed Buthelezi let's get going. Gabisile" She looks at me and so do I.

"Let's go"

"Fine"

She says coming next to me She intertwines her hand with mine. I look at her then Busani who is not looking at what is happening. We walk in total silence. Why do I feel like Gabisile has a crush on me? And that somewhere at the back of her mind she thinks we might get married. She's cute and all fun but my heart has accepted someone else not her I know what my parents said and hers but I didn't see that being our reality. Parents joke about such almost every day it's a pity Gabi out their words into existence. We reach the royal house Busani disappears into thin air. Giving Gabi the zeal to kiss my cheek. Ngelozi would be crazy right now had she seen this. We say our goodbyes and leave Umthombo village. Ndandatho and Gatsha are traveling with us. Mom is resting her head on Ngcolosi Busani disappears into thin air. Giving Gabi the zeal to kiss my cheek. Ngelozi would be crazy right now had she seen this. We say our goodbyes and leave Umthombo village. Ndandatho and Gatsha are traveling with us. Mom is resting her head on Ngcolosi whose gently enveloping her. Gatsha is sucking on Ndandatho's boob. Zimele is glancing at poor Ndandatho as for me I'm glancing at everyone while replaying what happened back there.

"Gabi has grown" Mom-

"To a beautiful girl" Dad-

"She is a beauty" Zimele-

"As beautiful as she is she's naughty too" Nda-

"Nhlonipho.." Mom-

"Ma?"

"What do you think about Gabi?"

"Nothing" Dad looks at me.

"Meaning?"

"Meaning I don't think about her at all." I say without facing them. We arrive in the Kingdom. Zimele and Ndandatho disappear mom and dad does the same thing. I decide upon myself to go check up on Ngelozi.

Mama Ngelozi

"Baba can you please stop what you doing and saying. I do not hate our daughter I was trying to discipline her"

"I wish you could stop using that line it's outdated and outlined"
Baba-

He says undressing while stumbling at it. He finally succeeds and climbs the bed naked. I can still smell the yeast aroma coming from his mouth.

"Fuze.. "

"Sleep woman and stop pestering me"

"Kodwa Fuze can we kiss and make up. I hate this tension please"

I say undressing too climbing the bed.

"Turn off the bulb" Baba-

"I'm on it Fuze" I say turning it off. I lay behind him and move my hands all over him.

"Wenzani?" (What are you doing?)

"Fuze please it's been a while now"

"With everything that is happening in our lives you have a minute to plead for this?"

"Fuze you being unfair to me. I've apologized to my daughter and made peace with her. I even told her I won't be on her case anymore I gave her the freedom she wanted Fuze and I won't make noise anymore."

He turns to face me.

"You did what?"

"I gave her freedom."

"Freedom to do what?"

I look at him and cup his face to kiss him.

"Awume we still talking"

"Fuze can we mate please we will talk when you sober minded"

"What is going on with you mama Ngelozi huh? How could you give a girl child freedom? Do you know what that word means?"

"Kanti Fuze what do you want me to do or say? What am I supposed to do kanti? I reprimand her it's wrong I give her freedom I'm wrong too. What am I supposed to do Fuze? What exactly do you want from me huh?"

I say sniffing.

"Fuze you being unfair. You really being unfair. For years and years you made me feel miserable and empty all in the name of Ngelozi. I've tried Fuze I gave her a home a mother's love. I taught her how to be a woman and a lady. I gave her my whole Fuze but not in a single day had you ever appreciated my love and efforts with her. Instead you saw the cracks on her knees and labeled me heard her cried and pointed fingers at me. You saw her pricked by a thorn and blamed me. For years Fuze you've been insulting me and treating me like dirt. I've decided to grant her the freedom and never pester her nor interfere in her life but here you are lashing out about it. Isn't this what you wanted Fuze? "

" Mama Ngelozi you don't understand "

" Make me understand Fuze!!! I'm tired of being the black sheep. I raised this girl since birth till this day and you think I hate her like really Fuze? " I say with water rolling down my cheeks..

"Freedom means you telling her to go galavant with men freedom means you saying she can be a mother..." I look at him and cry even more..

"I don't want to talk Fuze I'm tired. Do what you see fit I'm tired of begging apologizing and explaining myself all the time when it comes to your first child. I'm tired."

I move away from him and wet my pillow..

Ngelози

Mom and dad are still fighting this is getting worrisome honestly. Growing up they used to fight a lot. What made everything worse was father always dragging my name in their fights. My poor mother would apologize all the time just like she did a couple of days ago. My mom is strict that I won't lie about but I'm certain it comes from a clean heart and care. She never hurts me for no valid reason I wish father understood that. I walk to my chamber with my basin filled with bathing water. I undress and collect my bathing utensils. My door slightly opens I'm met by his fragrance before his face appears. I reach for a cloth and cover myself.

"Is it a bad time?"

"Come in"

"Thank you" he says walking in and locking the door.

"How are you my flower?"

"Missing you"

"I missed you too" I smile and meet him half way with a sloop
y kiss.

"You smell good"

I say with my eyes closed.

"I love you Ngelozi"

I lift my head up and look at him.

"I wanted to bath before you walked in."

"Carry on I want to rest my head for a little while"

"Don't look Nhlonipho"

"I won't my love" He says unhooking himself from my embrace walking towards my bed. I remove my cloth and walk to my basin I grease my face with a soap. I wash my body and all parts of it I can feel Nhlonipho's eyes on me. I'm certain his staring.

"You look beautiful without clothes"

"Nhlonipho" I say smiling.

"Your skin is delicate and flawless"

"Bhengu please stop"

I say wiping myself.

"You need a hand?"

"With?"

"Wiping your body and applying a body butter on your body"

"Isn't that risky?"

I say looking at him.

"Everything is risky my love" He says standing up walking towards me.

"Can I my flower?"

"Sure" I say giving him my bathing cloth. He stands behind me and gently wipes me off. He reach out to my butter and gently apply it on my body. I feel strange things on my tummy with every touch. He rest his chin on my shoulder and sniff my neck his hands move to my boobs and gently massage them.

"Ngelози.." He says with a smoky voice.

"Yes" I say with a trembling voice.

"Let's get married"

"Huh?"

"Yes.. Let's get married my love. I can't wait anymore"

"Nhlonipho I... I" He gently tilts my head forcing my face to be in contact with his. He brushes my face with his thumb.

"I can't wait anymore"

"Nhlonipho can we not talk about marriage tonight please"

"Fine.. But think about it"

"I will" I smash my lips on his lips he reciprocates the kiss. He turns me over and moves his hands on my naked butt. He shoves his tongue inside my mouth forcing it to collide with mine. I cup his face and deepen the kiss. My body is getting warmer bit by bit. My breathing is changing my thighs are running against each other blame it on the fluid that's gushing out.

"Nhlo..."

"My love..." He says with a smoky voice.

"I like this"

"I love it too I wish we can do more"

"Please don't leave early tonight please"

"I won't my love" He scoops me up and lays me on the bed my legs are spread apart. His face is buried between my legs he gives me his magic. When my body jets I scream the magic words. He looks at me with glassy eyes.

"Ngelozzi"

"Yes"

"Can I.. Can I put it between your legs"

"Put what?"

He points to his pointy and throbbing anaconda. I swallow hard.

"It won't hurt"

"Nhlo.. I'm scared"

"My flower I won't hurt you" He says looking sincere.

"Please my love"

"It won't hurt? You promise?"

"I will be gentle"

He says removing his clothes my eyes nearly drops to the floor when I see the length of his manhood. This is scary and long.

"Are you gonna put that in my.. My kraal?"

"Yes.. You gonna love it"

"Nhlonipho it's long what if it doesn't come out?"

"It will come out. Now shhhhh don't fear anything" he says

kissing me differently from the begin. He sucks and nibbles my nipples. He moves his thumb on my belly I feel those giddy feels on my tummy he sucks my neck and I squimer like puppy. He runs his manhood on my sensitive genitals. Pleasure takes over I gash out another river. He looks at me with glassy eyes and spreads my legs even more opened.

"Do you know how beautiful you are?"

"No"

"You are the most beautiful and precious thing that I've ever seen Ngelozi I love you more than I can ever imagine"

"I love you too"

"Your smile is beautiful"

"I love your eyes and your..."

Sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.comah!!!" I jump as i feel a numbing sensation on my privates.

"Baby relax"

"I can't! It's painful Nhlonipho"

"If you don't continue it's gonna hurt even more it's best you succumb to it"

"No! Can we stop sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.com!!!!
Nhlonipho.. No!! Stop"

Zimele

"Your lady birds are growing bigger"

"They feel tender and heavy too"

"What is the cause of that?"

"Zimele I'm pregnant"

"I know Mommy but I didn't know it does that to your boobs.
What else hurts?"

"My abdomen"

"Surely my baby is dancing" She laughs and embraces me.

"What did my father say?"

"Nothing serious he just approves of us being together"

"I see"

"His coming around and I love that"

"I love that too" She says looking at me.

"You drunk Zimele"

"A bit"

"Don't you want to freshen up?"

"I didn't fall on mud Ndandatho" She laughs.

"My love come on two minutes will be"

"No Maka Bangi I'm tired"

"I'm also tired to spread out my legs for a tired man"

I look at her and smirk. She laughs.

"Thats not happening"

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[Ngelozi loses her virginity]

Nhlonipho

"You are the most beautiful and precious thing that I've ever seen Ngelozi I love you more than I can ever imagine" I say rubbing my manhood on her clitoris. I didn't want to penetrate her but rather perform an external intimacy known as "Ukusoma" I was gonna put it between her thighs and thrust them but my guard didn't allow me but rather to go actual spot.

"I love you too"

"Your smile is beautiful"

I say slowly making my way into her kraal.

"I love your eyes and your.."

I push in.

"Sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.comah!!!" She jumps in pain.

"Baby relax"

"I can't! It's painful Nhlonipho"

"If i don't continue it's gonna hurt even more it's best you succumb to it"

"No! Can we stop sehranmagzine.comsehranmagzine.com!!!!
Nhlonipho.. No!! Stop"

"Honey please relax it's gonna hurt for a minute but not forever"

"No Nhlonipho. Can we stop Sehranmagzine.comh!! Nhlo.. Nhlo.. Please stop" She says trying to push me off.

"My flower please"

"No! It hurts Nhlonipho please stop" She says with a trembling voice and teary eyes grabbing hard on her bed covers.

"Ngelozzi"

"Nhlonipho please Its painful"

"We've already resumed Ngelozzi we can't stop now. Pretty please my love." I say pushing myself in slowly she let's out a sob I push in again. She jumps in anguish I lean over to kiss her so I can calm her down. I taste the saltiness of her tears. I passionately kiss her till the beast within her is tamed.

"Nhlo "

"Yes my flower?"

"I love you"

"I love you too. Does it hurt?"

"Yes."

" I'm sorry okay? I will try to be gentle."

"Nhlonipho my mother is gonna kill me"

"She won't kill you I will take responsibility and accountability for everything. I'm very much aware of my actions "

"I'm losing my innocence Nhlonipho and that is gonna come with trouble."

"My flower whatever storm will come. You have me besides you I won't leave you nor forsake you. I love you Ngelozi a lot." With that said I push myself much steeper and harder.

"Nhlonipho!!!! Nhlonipho! That hurts!! Please stop!!"

"My flower please"

"It hurts! No!!! No!! Stop"

She cries so hysterically I just broke her gates of Jericho. The sound of a breaking portion of her body is evidence enough that her innocence is a thing of the past. I've stripped her naked and tainted her body. I hold her tight and thrust gently as she cries.

"Nhlonipho..."

"I'm sorry my love I'm very much sorry Ngelozi"

"Nhlonipho I'm in pain you've hurt me"

"I'm sorry my love I really am Ngelozi"

"Please leave"

"I can't do that"

"Nhlonipho go please" She cries again.

"I can't leave you like this"

"I want to be alone go!!"

"Ngelozzi can we not fight please"

"Do you know what you've done Nhlonipho? Do you know the shame you've brought me? Leave me alone please!!"

I look at her and stop thrusting. She's angry at me I honestly don't blame her. Deep down inside I know we shouldn't have done this especially in her father's house. I know it's total disrespect but I got carried away and I let the fear of the unknown to take over me. I love Ngelozzi that I won't lie about nor do I regret making our bodies one. What I do regret is bringing her pain unintentionally. Hurting her was the last thing I intended I was only reacting to my feelings. I'm a man too

sometimes I think like a man and act like a man. Getting erected comes with great agony today I decided otherwise however that brought my flower great agony and that hurts because I might lose her to another. That alone is frightening.

Making love to her was my way of giving her a clarity to the depths of my love. Like I once said I'm willing to lose my rights and title of being a Prince just to be with her. I want to marry her and build a life with her. I don't come with games or anything like that. She looks at me with teary eyes. I wipe her tears as I'm still buried between her thighs.

"My love"

"Get off Nhlonipho"

"Ngelozu Ngcobo I didn't mean to hurt you. I'm sorry for what I did. Ngelozu I will take responsibility for my actions. "

"What did you do Nhlonipho?" Sniffing

"Can we not fight please. I just wanted us to have fun Ngelozu nothing much."

"You took my innocence!! Do you call that fun Nhlonipho? "

"Ngelozu please.."

"Nhlonipho please leave"

She says sniffing. I slowly get up and lay besides her. She tries to turn and sleep on her side but a groan escapes her lips. I move closet to her.

"Are you Okay?"

"I said leave"

"Ngelozu come on. Are you being serious right now?"

"I'm serious leave!"

"Ngelozu you being dramatic right now."

"Dramatic Nhlonipho? I'm being dramatic like really?"

"Yes you being dramatic Ngelozi you shouldn't have allowed me entrance from the beginning. You shouldn't have let me between your legs from the get gocos right now you making me feel bad Ngelozi like I forced myself on you."

"Thats what you did Nhlonipho!!" She says jumping off from bed she groans in pain.

"You saying I forced myself on you Ngelozi?"

" Get out!!"

"Shall I walk out of that door I'm never coming back Ngelozi. Not after you called me a rapist. Think twice before you open your mouth"

"I don't care Nhlonipho get out!!!"

"Fine... Before I leave just know our relationship ended because of you"

"That would be selfish Nhlonipho"

"You calling me a rapist isn't selfish?"

She looks at me and walks to her basin to pee. I look at her with a greased forehead.

"I thought as much!" I wear my clothes and head for the door.

"I'm leaving"

"Cool.."

"Ngelози"

"You still here Nhlonipho?"

"Damn you Ngelози!!" I walk out of her chamber and walk home. I sleep it off..

Ngelози

I cry myself a river realizing how things unfolded tonight. Everything happened so fast I don't know what happened but I'm certain I'm no longer pure. Nhlonipho broke into my father's kraal and that is a disaster. In two weeks time there's a ceremony for us maidens. MaThwala will check our virginity and knowing my parents I have to go there by force. MaThwala and my mother are close friends there's no way I will escape this. I think I will go to my aunts place I have no choice after all Nhlonipho made himself clear there's no us shall he walk through that door. Which he did. I have to go I can't be ridiculed by the community. My father will kill me not forgetting my mother. I wipe my tears and mucous. I remove the spotty bed sheet and cry once again. It's morning and I have to go about my daily routine sadly my

legs are failing me I'm in pain. Walking is hassle all thanks to Nhlonipho Jali.

"Ngelozii!! Ngelo knock knock!!!" My mother says from outside.

"Ma I'm coming" I say limping to the door.

"Ngelozii did you not hear your father calling you?"

"I'm coming mama"

I open the door then face ground. I can't risk glancing on her.

"Ngelozu you still sleeping? This time?"

"I battled with sleep last night"

"Hhee! Ngelozu are you sick?" She says putting the back of her hand on my forehead checking my temperature. I feel tears threatening to come out I push them back by blinking endlessly.

"Ngelozu are you okay my baby?"

"Yes ma I'm fine."

I say with a trembling voice.

"Ngelozu... No.. Something is not right my daughter what is going on? Must we go see a witch doctor?"

"No mama! I'm not sick but I'm not okay ma. I think my monthly cycle is approaching I have cramps on my abdomen."

"I will get you herbs my angel but can you please attend to your father. His been calling you. "

"I'm coming ma"

"I will dish up porridge for you"

"Thank you mama"

"Don't cook later on the day I will cook when I come back from the Queens house." She says with worry.

"Thank you mama"

"Be well okay?" I nod and let my tears roll down my eyelids. My father stands right In front of me his surely going to the farm.. Judging from the tools his holding.

"My pearl how are you?"

"I'm fine baba and yourself?"

"I'm fine too"

"Ngelози"

"Baba"

"Have you been crying?"

"No"

"Ngelozu don't lie to me. Wasn't that sniffing I just heard?"

"I haven't been crying baba"

"She's not okay Fuze"

Mom shouts making her way towards us with a bowl of steamy porridge.

"What is wrong with her? Where does it hurts Ngelozi yami?"

"Here..." I gash out tears.

"She has women problems baba. I will get her herbs and anything that could be of help to her"

"Thank you Nkosikazi I will leave work early then. I'm sorry my daughter okay?"

I nod.

"My wife please go to the market shall you get time. I wanted to send Ngelozi to the market sadly she's not okay"

"I will go there baba" Mom says to my father.

"Come let's take you inside so you can rest okay?"

"Yes" I walk to my chamber with a hallow heart.

Ndandatho

"Jali"

"My heart"

"Eehm.. Can I go greet mama Ngelozi and Ngelozi?"

"Didn't you say you fancied a walk?"

"Thats me taking a walk my husband"

"No problem

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I will walk you there" "Thank you so very much"

"Can we go greet my cousin Mgcinaphi"

"Oh! You mean Zuko's Mgcinaphi?"

"Yes."

"Okay I don't mind doing that. I want to greet Gogo too"

"No problem.. Hey little man wake up!" He says shaking Gatsha.

"Zimele his sleeping leave him alone"

"No he needs to wake up and go hustle like a true man. No child of mine is a lazy bone. Gatsha wakey wakey warrior!!"

"Zimele maarn! Stop it"

"It's way past morning why is he snoring at this hours?"

"Zimele!!" He succeeds on waking on my baby. Gatsha cries to my pain. I stretch my hands out to pick him up.

"Come to mommy my boy your father is a bully. Woza mfana ka ma"

"You spoiling this boy"

"Aibo! Zimele this is my boy.. My pride and joy he deserves this."

"Mmmmm " He says looking at me as I pop my breast out to feed him.

"Here boy. Ncence" I put my breast inside his mouth to my surprise he pukes it out and cries. I give him the other one this young man cries and avoids to feed on my yummy food.

"Gatsha eat my boy please Jali"

He shakes his head disapproving I look at his father worried. Bangizwe has never rejected my boob.

"Gatsha" I force my boob inside his mouth my baby cries and spits it out.

"What's wrong with him?"

"He doesn't want my breast milk Zimele and this is so unlike him."

"Maybe his not hungry"

"Or maybe you made him demented by snapping him out of his sleep"

"His a baby he doesn't hold grudges Ndandatho nor does he know what anger is. His full"

"He can't be full Zimele he hasnt ate anything since morning. Maybe his catching a cold"

I say introspecting his temperature.

"You worry too much his okay bring him here."

I give him back to his father. Zimele tries to play with him instead my son cries. I look at Zimele worried.

"Well this is getting confusing."

"It is surely gogo will know what is wrong with him" I say standing up from the bed. Zimele stands too trying to hush the baby.

"Let's go Ndandatho"

"Yes let's go" I say heading for the door. Zimele whistles I look at him.

"Boobs! Put them back inside" I look at my breast damn! I fix my boobs and walk outside.

"Hhaibo! Why is this little man crying? Come to granny my boy"
Queen Nozi holds Gatsha who decides on keeping quiet.

"He doesn't want to eat"

"To eat what?"

"My breast food"

"Ndandatho introduce solids please. This baby cannot survive on water try starchy foods pretty please" She says rocking him while singing a cradle song.

"Maybe that milk of yours is not good anymore to be given to him"

"I don't follow"

"You pregnant Ndandatho"

"What does that has to do with my milk mama?"

"It's polluted and unhealthy for Bangizwe. You need to introduce

solids now. Fruits included"

Zimele looks at me.

"Oh!"

"Don't just say oh Ndandatho go make the baby food"

"Oh!" I say walking to the depths of this beautiful house. I find Mgcinaphi in the kitchen drinking water..

"Princess Mgcinaphi"

"Greetings.. Do I know you maybe?"

"Of course from Ngwane village"

"Please remind me a bit?"

"Ndandatho"

"Ndandatho? Ndandatho! Oh yeah! The dancer right?" She says with a broad smile.

"Yes."

"Thats awesome. You now work here?"

"No I don't work here but I'm a soon to be bride in this Kingdom"

"You lie! Whom are marrying?"

I smile.

"The eldest Prince of this Kingdom"

She looks at me then her glass.

"I'm marrying Zimele Jali"

"You?"

"Yes me"

"A whole you with a Prince?"

"Yes the whole me with a Prince"

"Thats a joke right?"

"Definitely not I'm marrying Zimele Jali and I'm a Princess of Umthombo Kingdom" She cracks a loud laughter. I look at her confused.

"You a Princess?"

"Yes me a Princess"

"Ndandatho are you not a commoner? Are you not mamChunu's daughter?"

"I was but now I'm not"

She laughs again.

"Listen when you done cracking up jokes please bring me water I want to bath.. Thank you. I must say that was a good one darling." She says laughing walking away. I click my tongue and look at her annoyed.

Nomaswazi

Mother and myself are seated outside in a shade doing each others hair. Sphiwe walks towards us my mother looks at him with hate. She clicks her tongue as he steps closer.

"Look how dirty he is to think he touched my daughter with his filthy hands nxaah!!" I swallow hard.

"Greetings my Queen greetings Princess" Phiwe-

"Talk you penguin!" Mom-

" A letter was dropped off for you my Queen"

"Where is it coming from?" I ask

"I don't know my Princess"

"Bring that letter and leave my sight!! You smell like a dead mouse piss off!!!" Mom-

"My Queen"Phiwe says walking away.

" Nomaswazi how could you? How did you even kiss that dirt huuh? That boy hasn't bathe in years!! Sies maarn! Not even a skunk smells like that boy phewww!!!" Mom spits my heart shrinks. Phiwe is not dirty.

"Read that letter Noma"

I open the envelope.

"Greetings Queen Thabile Ngwane. My husband and I are kindly honoring you with this invite to our warm home in Umthombo village. We have a welcoming ceremony this weekend Saturday to be exact. Please dress elegant and beautiful as you always do and join us. I won't give out more of the details but please come by yours sincerely Queen B Buthelezi "

" Give that nonsense here! What ceremony? We going nowhere!
"

" Come on mama let's go there. We will get a chance to gossip about their poverty stricken Kingdom please"

"Boni annoys me surely that lizard Nozibele will be there too alongside that filth Ndandatho"

"Mama can we go please"

She looks at me..

"Fine" I smile and fold the letter..

Mama Ngelozu

"Greetings mama" The voice says behind me. I look back and
jump in joy

"Ndandatho my daughter!" I say wiping my wet hands on my cloth. I open my hands and envelope her in a hug.

"How are you mama?"

"Now that I'm seeing your face I'm very well my daughter. Look at you Ndandatho you look beautiful and all gained. What are you eating wherever you staying my child?"

"Nothing much mama just your normal food. You look beautiful yourself"

"Don't lie to me Ndandatho.." We giggle and hug again.

"Where is the little one?"

"Bangi is with his grandmother he refused to come with me"

"Thats sad my daughter. Can I offer you a drink?"

"Yes mama. What are you cooking there? I'm hungry."

"I'm preparing samp my daughter I will bring you something to

drink shortly. What a wonderful day it is to be visited by you my child" I say with a broad smile. I disappear inside my kitchen I walk out with a tray. I give Ndandatho food.

"Thank you mama.. The compound is quiet where is my Ngelozi? How I miss her"

"My poor daughter is sleeping she's not very well"

"What is wrong with her mama?"

"She has abdominal cramps"

"That's sad my child"

"Indeed mama I will check up on her before I leave"

"Please do.. Your complexion Ndandatho"

She shyly smile.

"What about it mama"

"It's beautiful you radiant my child. How's the new baby treating you? Not forgetting the Prince of Thuthukani"

"All is well mama the Gods are finally coming for me this around. Soon I will be a wife on those grounds mama"

"You lie Ndandatho Zimele asked for your hand in marriage? These are good news. Come here silly!" I embrace her and kiss her cheeks.

"Yes mama and guess what? I would appreciate it if you came to

my welcoming ceremony in Umthombo Kingdom this Saturday"

"Excuse me? What welcoming ceremony? Why in Umthombo?"

"Ma I'm... I'm not what I've been thinking I was ma I'm a Princess. Boni and Zikhali are my biological parents" I cover my mouth in shock.

"You lying isn't it Ndandatho?"

"I'm not lying mama" She softly laughs.

"Ndandatho I will bash you with this pot for lying in broad day light. Don't you liars grow a pair of horns?" She giggles.

"Ma I'm not lying if you don't believe me come to Umthombo this Saturday please mama."

"So you telling me you are the rain Princess?"

"What rain Princess?"

"That means you lying Ndandatho if you know nothing about the rain Princess"

"I'm not lying mama believe me please. I was separated from them years ago after a war amongst Kingdoms erupted"

"Wow My child. If you are truly their child that means you're the chosen one" She looks at me confused. I embrace her again and congratulate her. Ngelozi slowly limps to our direction. Just yesterday her leg was fine what changed today?

"Sister Ndandatho greetings"

"Hello my darling!" Ndandatho says all chirpy she embraces Ngelozi who smiles genuinely. Ndandatho kisses her face and my daughter laughs. I leave them to it.

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Ceremony day

The Umthombo compound is swamped with individual pacing up and down they all dressed up for the ceremony. There are new faces that only the rich recognizes most of these individuals are royals. Her beads and cloths serves as proof they are not eaters of bread crumbs but rather the whole loaf.

Amongst those royals some are related to Ndandatho's mother and father. Ngcolosi and Zikhali are greeting the people who

have took the initiative to showing up on this beautiful day. Bonisile is somewhere preoccupied with whatever. Nhlonipho Zimele and Busani are grouped with other Prince. Gabi is with her friends. Ndandatho is in the room getting dressed for the ceremony. Mama Ngelozi came here alongside with Ngelozi. Mama Maseko couldn't come she had to go deliver important stuff in other Kingdoms. Nozibele is chit chatting with her other friends. Mota and Thabile Nomaswazi and Ngidi walk in Zuko walks in with his wife. They also greet those they know. The compound is crowded and everyone is concerned about the person of the moment.

Thabile

"The deco is not bad"

"They out did themselves I must say this deco looks extravagant. Surely it cost them an arm and a leg" Mota-

"It's too much though they shouldn't have opted for gold but rather silver it's was unnecessary for these to be used" I say looking around.

"Mama this place is exquisite I love everything about the deco" Noma-

"I just wonder whose being welcomed." I say.

"I wish I didn't come here" I say between my teeth.

"Ngidi Ngwane and family greetings" Zikhali says showing off his beautiful teeth and smile.

"Zikhali Buthelezi! You don't age Mpotshane. What is Boni feeding you?" Ngidi-

"Love and respect" They laugh and share a brotherly hug. I look around the place for familiar faces.

"Thank you for honoring the invitation please feel free to have starters and drinks. Let loose and have fun" Zikhali says.

"Thank you my brother in business" Ngidi-

"You look beautiful in your dress Queen Thabile"Zikhali-

" Oh! It was shipped my King"

"Nice.." He says and fix his eyes elsewhere.

"Oh mama!! I can see my friends let's catch up later"Noma-

" Okay" She walks away leaving me feeling me feels I shouldn't be feeling especially In front of these people.

"Aren't you gonna go greet other royals Thabi?" Ngidi-

"Wow!!! Is that Gloria? Oh God!!!" Mota says walking away. I feel a light headache and a bit of dizziness I shouldn't have came here...

"Are you Okay?"

"Yes I'm fine I just need water" I say walking away I spot a lady with water. I gulp my glass and lookaround.

Ndandatho

"Is it done?" My mother says walking inside my chamber as I'm getting a hairstyle and a little bit of make up. I'm wearing a dress that's hanging beautifully on my body. I have white beads too I look like a million dollar bucks. As much as I look beguiling I don't feel okay honestly. Something is bringing me shivers down my spine I feel a bit uncomfortable and edgy about tonight. Mother says it's because I'm nervous but I feel like it's more than that.

"Come on ladies hurry up I want my daughter to meet her other family members especially my mother" Mom-

"Mama where is my son?"

"His with Zimele Jali"

"Did you feed him?"

"Yes Ndandatho"

"Mama please don't allow anyone to touch my baby especially strangers please"

"Ndandatho calm down my baby."

"Ma I'm serious"

"If it makes you happy I will hold my grandchild myself is that fine?"

"Please ma" I say massaging my neck.

"You look beautiful sisi Ndandatho" Ngelozi-

"Thank you my sister you look pretty yourself" She faintly smiles.

"Greetings ladies" An old woman says She resembles my mother a bit.

"Where is she Sbonisiwe?"

"Mama you can't see my replica?"

"This lady is your daughter Boni? Hello my baby"

"Greetings gogo and how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks please stand up a little.. I want to see my grandchild" The lady says. My mother smiles. I stand.

"Do a twirl a little I want to see if the Buthelezi family didn't give you their flat buttocks." I giggle and make a twirl.

" She's indeed my granddaughter Boni. Look at my curves and my beautiful waistline she inherited our genes. She looks like you"

"Indeed mama" My mother smiles.

"Ndandatho I'm your grandmother I gave birth to this beautiful lady who happens to be your mother" My grandmother says. I hear a strange sound roaring in my ears. I close my eyes a bit.

"Nda are you okay?"

"I... I don't know mama I feel a bit dizzy"

"Are you pregnant?" Gogo-

"Mama can we not discuss such please" Mom says.

"Hey my beautiful child please collect water for her" She says to Ngelozi.

"Girls please excuse us" My grandmother says kicking everyone out.

"Ndandatho"

"Gogo"

"What sound were you hearing?"

"A roar of some sort"

"I see.. Give me your hands" I do that she holds my hands for a little while.

"Drink water sisi. People are waiting outside." She says standing up.

"Baby are you sure you okay?"

"I'm fine mama" Ngelozi walks in with my glass of water my grandmother holds it for a little while and gives it to me.

"It's not contaminated you can drink"

"Mama" Mom-

"Bonisiwe I can't help it it's who I am. By now you should've made peace with it"

"Mama do you really think she would poison water? No mama I'm sorry Ngelozi okay my baby?" My mother says embracing Ngelozi.

"It's okay my Queen I understand"

"Where is your mother Ngelozi?" Gogo-

"She's somewhere outside"

"I see" Gogo-

"My love they waiting outside" Dad says.

"We coming babe" Mom says.

"Let's pray"

"Mama we don't have time"

"Bonisiwe can you stop this okay!! What is wrong with you?"
Gogo-

"Fine pray but don't take years mama"

"Fine" My stubborn grandmother calls upon the gods..

(Meanwhile in the compound)

Nhlonipho is here physically but mentally and emotionally he is not here. His mind is somewhere else but not here. Things between him and Ngelozi have gone too bad. There's a void and that is hurting poor Nhlonipho.

"Excuse me! Can I have more" He says asking the waitress to give him another drink. Zimele looks at his brother with worry he did notice something being off about Nhlonipho the past few days.

"Nhlo go easy on the alcohol please"

"Zimele give me a breather please"

Nhlonipho says gulping the alcohol walking away from Zimele.

"You have a beautiful son Jali there I applaud you." Zuko

"His a handsome little boy at first I thought he was a girl" Scelo-

"All thanks to the mother" Zimele-

Zikhali taps a wine glass with a spoon to call for everyone's attention. He does that repeatedly till the noise cools.

"Attention!!!! Attention!!!! Attention everyone" Zikhali says standing in front of everyone on a podium. His wife walks slowly to stand besides him.. The Queen is wearing a very stylish grass green dress that hugs her body beautiful. She has a head wrap too on her head.

"Greetings everyone and how are you?"

"Greetings King Zikhali we doing good" We all say.

"Well firstly I would like thank everyone of you for showing up here. It really means the world to me and my wife. I didn't expect so many people to support us for that I want to thank you all of you." Hands are clapped. He clears his throat.

"Ehm... I'm very aware most of you are having intra personal conversations. They surely wondering what this ceremony is about and who is being welcomed. I myself I'm dying of anticipation. Because I want to know what is really happening here today" People giggle.

"Without a waste of time. I would like to narrate a little story. Twenty five years ago this beautiful woman besides me and myself we were blessed with the most beautiful baby girl ever. She had the cutest eyes nose cheeks and the most beautiful long black afro hair. She had a delicate face that brought one harmony and tranquility. Her sobs were soothing and rejuvenating like flowing waters I know many would say baby whimpers are annoying and irritating but with me it was different. Her sobs were melodic and poetic. I remember how my wife and I would bicker and argue over whose gonna hold her till she sleeps. In my Queen's eyes our daughter loved me more than she loved her she would get jealous each time my baby girl fell asleep on my chest other than her dripping boobs "

People crack up in laughter.

"Shenge you embarrassing me" Boni-

People laugh

"I'm sorry my love." He kisses Boni's cheek.

"Our home was filled with joy and peace. One awkward morning we woke up to chaotic village. People were dying left and right. A war that confused and threatened lives erupted between this Kingdom and Ngwane village. So that morning a life changing decision was made my wife and I had two choices. To face death with our daughter or to save our daughter and face death by ourselves. We chose to protect our calf and by entrusting her to a friend which went South too in short my wife and I lost our daughter in the bushes. My friend Ngcolosi was supposed to collect her from the bushes sadly that never happened because someone beat him to it. Someone from Ngwane Village collected my daughter and sheltered her for whole twenty years. For years my wife and I not forgetting my best friend Ngcolosi. We all mourned my daughter thinking she died in the bushes but little did we know. We spent so many nights in freezing colds we were homeless and empty. A part of us died. I on the other hand I've

destroyed a friendship of years thinking my child was gone. By the grace of the gods and my mother who was a gifted in many aspects my daughter was never dead but alive and protected recently I was reunited with my daughter and I must say ladies and gentlemen I have the most beautiful daughter ever. And young men I'm not saying come and play on door step. No way!!"

People laugh.

" Ladies and gentlemen I present to you my first born child Ndandatho Liyana Buthelezi the rain Queen after my late mother. I present to you my pride and joy. Can we please welcome her with a round of a applause" People clap their hands as Ndandatho slowly walks in the room with her face covered. Suddenly the sky goes gray the clouds form and wind starts blowing. Thunder claps and bangs so louder. Water starts pouring heavily. The villagers that have been in dire straits with water and rain shouts in joy they jump up and down like kids rejoicing over a candy. The rain pours so heavy but something strange happens. The people are not getting damp but they can wet soil and rain they hear the pouring sounds and they see the rain but their clothes are not getting damp.

"The rain Princess!!!! Liyana!!!!!! Ndandatho!!!!" The people shouts.

"My daughter please show your face"

Boni removes the beads that are covering Ndandatho. Her face is revealed people mumble. Thabile is jaw dropping so is Nomaswazi and Mgcinaphi. Shock is written all over their faces. Ndandatho waves her hands as people cheer on her.

"Ndandatho!!!! Ndandatho!!!Welcome our rain Queen!!!!
Liyana!!!!!! Liyana!!!!!!!"

Ndandatho looks at the people she flashes her a beautiful smile. Her father starts singing praises to her

"Buthelezi Shenge Ndaba Ngwane Mvulane Ngqengelele oyivalo zibili uthi uvala lesi avule lesi;

Wena owadliwa yiNdlovu

Zimudla Zimlabalabela

Zimudla Zimlabalabela

Mbangambi;

Inyathematheza eyatheza lapho kungathezi khona muntu

Gibisizungu Mthandeni Sokwalisa Mnyamane ka Ngqengelele

Sondiya Somkhabase;

Nina bezinyawo ezimahhele

Enaganisa izintombi nanganye nangambili!

Mpotshane!! " Zikhali says in joy. People whistle and cheer. The entertainment group beats the drum they resume singing and dancing. Mehlo kneels in front of Ndandatho and does something to her legs he makes a twirl around her. He blows whatever powder on Ndandatho's face.

"Ndandatho do you have something to say my Princess?" Zikhali-

"Nothing baba"

"No problem sisi" Boni says embracing her daughter.

Nomaswazi

"What? How? Ndandatho? This is a lie. " I say In shock.
Ndandatho is faking this there's no way she's a Princess. I've known this girl for as far as I can remember she has lived on my rags. She was my door carpet there's no way she is royalty. She just happens to look like the Queen but she's not royalty!

"Noma you are you okay?"

"Water.. Please give me water"

I say having palpitations. My breathing changes my armpits

immediately sweats.

"Nomaswazi!!"

My vision immediately goes blank.

Thabile

Abomination!! This is an abomination.. This can't be happening. Ndandatho a Princess? That's rubbish that's a total nonsense!! This can not be happening! This mucous girl was living on my hands outs and my rags. She can't be superior than everyone else.

"This is a lie!! This homewrecker is not a Princess! Ndandatho you are an imposter!!" I say out loud a few villagers look at me.

"Yes this girl is nothing else but a home wrecker! She goes away snatching people's husband's and giving them babies to trap them!! Ndandatho won't stop at nothing to bring people pain!!" I add

"Thabile can you stop what you doing this is unacceptable" Nozi-

"Shut up wena!!! Everyone can I have your attention! Let me tell you who this girl is and what she is capable of!!" I say attracting more eyes. Boni looks at me with red eyes I careless.

"Thabile what are you doing? Stop this nonsense!! " Ngidi -

I look at him annoyed.

"Butt off Ngidi!!! Attention!!! Attention everyone!!!"

"Thabile stop what you trying to do we've had enough of your bullshit. This nonsense ends here!!" Boni-

"Shut up wena! I'm not surprised your daughter is homewrecker she takes after you! Why don't you tell these villagers about the capabilities your daughter has?"

"Your obsession with my daughter is starting to irk me Thabile! Leave my child alone and focus on your daughter who doesn't know who her baby's father is" Boni-

" Thabile stop this rubbish!!! Just stop it. You embarrassing yourself in front of these people! If you don't stop this madness you gonna regret ever starting this!" Ngidi-

I look at him and the couple of people who are looking at me like a mad woman. I blink once or twice and swallow my spits.

"Noma!!! Nomaswazi let's go home!!!"

"Buthelezi my sincere apologies about my wife's actions I'm sincerely sorry. Villagers my apologies too. My wife is sorry too. Let's go!!" Ngidi says pulling my arm rough.

"Let me loose!!! Nomaswazi! Nomaswazi!!!! Let's go home" I say shouting for my daughter. A girl I do not know accidentally steps on my shoe I roughly slap her across the face and push her aside so hard that she collides with a table.

"Hhaibo Thabile!!!" The villagers say.

"Yini you want one too? I will slap all of you" I say clicking my tongue.

"Ngelozu are you okay? " A voice says behind me.

"Nomaswazi!!! Nomaswazi!!! Swazi!!!"

"Cha she's sick in the head this one. Who does that?" Someone says in the crowd.

"Thabile has always been a nutcase she's a monalisa" They laugh and clap hands. I feel my heart beating fast with anger.

"Yey wena Thabile!! Why did you slap the child?" Nozi

"Not today Satan!!!"

"You are evil wena! What did this child do to you to push her like that?" Nozi-

"Back off wena!!!!" I roar.

"You are a witch!!! After all everyone knows whose child you are it's no surprise you act like you're acting the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. " I look at Nozi.

"Thabile go apologize to that kid for pushing her" Nozi

"Ongiyeka wena!!!! If I don't apologize so what? "

"Then you will be crowned a witch. You busy offloading your stress on innocent kids. You are decayed Thabile!!!"

"Shut up before I slap you Nozibele"

"Thabile Ngwane just leave!!!! Guards!!!! Guards!!!! Come drag this dirt out!!!" Boni says calling guards for me. Ndandatho is staring at me something about her eyes is making me sick.

"Don't touch me I will leave myself" I say.

"Ma'am please leave" Guard-

Ndandatho walks towards me she looks at me for a little while.

"May this be the first and last time you ever disrespect me Thabile. Nobody wrecks a home unless that home is already wrecked. Call me names ever again you and I will have a serious problem. I know who you are and I know what you do and whom you doing it with if you continue poking a snake from its hole it's gonna bite and spew its venomous poison on your face. Continue bullying me and tarnishing my integrity. You will rue the day you've ever earned me as your enemy. My grandmother once said I'm powerful and undefeated and right now Queen Thabile I'm not scared of you and your determination to bringing me agony and sadness. I'm not scared of you if you continue fighting me I will retaliate. My days of clapping and cheering for the likes of you are over. You've once done it and guess what? This time around I will give you the fight that you really aspire for. I will fight back Thabile. I never stole Zimele from anyone but given the chance to steal him from anyone I would greatly and do it and not be apologetic about it. You know why? Because you do not scare me not anymore. Go on insulting me we will meet in a battle field! And I Ndandatho will not be on the losing team that's a promise Thabile. "

Ndandatho says glancing right into my eyes. She flashes me a smile and pats my shoulder. She walks away. Leaving eyes fixate

on me. I sought for my daughter whom looks a bit messy and wet then head to our cart. My husband chooses to remain behind not that I care as for Ndandatho. She has grown a pair of wings and guess what I will soon strip her naked and get her off from her high horses. She won't survive what I'm yet to do to her.

Nhlonipho

"Are you Okay?Did she hurt you? "

"Leave me alone"

"Ngelози please"

"Nhlonipho don't make shout please"

"We in public my flower dont do that please. You hurting me Ngelози. "

"I said let go of me Nhlonipho!"

"I can't Ngelози I can't let go of you. I love you and I care. I miss you my love. I'm sorry my love please forgive me.. I beg of you"

"let me loose!"

"Ngelози ngiyakutsanda futhi ngiyaxolisa"

"Lower your voice!!"

"Ngelози I'm going crazy I need you my love. I'm sorry for what I did big time"

She roughly let's loose from me and walks away. I look at her and scratch my head. I reach for yet another glass of wine. I gulp it

and walk towards Ndandatho.

"Greetings my brother's wife"

"Today I'm accepting hugs Prince Nhlo"

She says embracing me so tightly. It feels like she knows I need one.

"You smell good Nhlo"

"Thank you and you look good"

"Thank you. I'm actually hungry do you fancy food?"

"Anything to distract me from this melancholy and distress. "

"Are you okay Nhlo?"

"I'm very well"

"You don't strike me like a fine person. What's going on Nhlonipho?"

"I don't function well in crowded platforms." I say tilting my head to the side I spot Ngelozi chit chatting with a guy I do not know. I glance at her and swallow hard I feel my insides boiling. A sting on my chest takes over me. I feel a tear peeping on my eye corners. I'm a man I won't shed a tear in public.

Ndandatho intertwines her arm with mine.

"Something is wrong and you gonna tell me brother in law"

"Aren't you supposed to be crying or something after what Queen Thabile said?"

"Sometimes Nhlo you need to let toothless dogs bark. Some dogs bark for a no valid reason and some bark for a reason. Don't waste much of your time barking back on a canineless dog that barks at anything and everything. Some people are so fond of dragging other people into their misery when they down and low they long to bring others with them on their pit so I as Ndandatho I would've never ever in a single day permit someone to make me feel inferior without my consent. Nor will allow someone to ruin my day. My day is mine and mine alone. What a waste it would be to allow someone to ruin your day. You feel me? " I smile and embrace her what a smart thing to say.

" You're smart. It's your day right? "

" It's mine Nhlo and no one will ruin it without my permission "

" I love that"

"I love you little brother now chin up and smile.Remember when you ready to talk I'm here. Shout I will answer"

"Can you please do me a favour?"

"Sure"

"Prince Nhlonipho how are you" Gabi says with a broad smile she hugs me and I hug her back. I feel eyes piercing on my back. Its Ngelozi. I glance at her for a little while she walks away I let myself loose from Gabi's embrace and run after Ngelozi.

Ndandatho

The sound I heard earlier on pester again. Zimele walks towards me.

"Finally I've located Liyana the Queen of hearts. The woman behind my little handsome man." I smile.

"Greetings my love. " I say kissing his cheek. A couple of girls are whispering about me while glancing at Zimele.

"I miss you sexy. You've been playing far from me today."

"I'm sorry my love I had a few loose ends to tie. Besides looking this sexy took hours and hours to be dealt with. I miss you handsome" I say smashing my lips against his.

"You have this aromatic fragrance it's sweet and inviting" I say kissing his neck.

"You look stunning my darling how I love you woman. Please make a twirl for your Prince"

"Like this honey?" I say turning around.

"Definitely you so beguiling Liyana. Will Zikhali kill me if I stole you for a minute?"

"You already dead by thinking of that"

"Come on Liyana I love your name hey. Why didn't you tell me you are Liyana? "

"I only found out today as well. I love it too and I love you too crazy right?"

"Crazy."

I pull him for a kiss.

"You look good warrior"

"I look nothing handsome when you step in the room" He kisses me.

"Get a room you two this is yucky." Busani-

We giggle.

"My soon to be brother in law"

"Hhayi suka!!! Where is Gogo Ndandatho?"

"I don't know did you check her guesthouse?"

"Not yet. You look beautiful by the way and guess what? Most Princesses are gossiping about you and Zimele. You blazing hot sister."

"Today I'm taking hugs Busani"

"Now you want to hug me and kiss me too? No way Ndandatho"

"Busani!!!"

"I love you too and bye" We laugh at Busani-

"Ndandatho please come here" My father says surrounded by a

family I do not know.

"Honey I'm coming shortly"

"No problem I need to find Nhlonipho and talk to him I love you"

"I love you too" He kisses my cheek and walks away.

"Greetings elders"

"Greetings my daughter such a beautiful girl you have Zikhali.
Nkonzo has to pay a visit"

I look at this man with a smirk. Who said I need a man? I have my
own

"My son will beat you up to it Mzimela"

"My daughter is taken to be married abort that mission.
Ndandatho this is King Mzimela and Mngomezulu they are my
biggest business partners"

"Pleasure meeting you elders"

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Nomaswazi

"Can you imagine what happened back there? That girl embarrassed me she threatened me Nomaswazi. She challenged me into a fight can you imagine? I will show her a snake's saliva. She doesn't know me!!"

I rub my forehead and glance at my mother. She's been pacing around and cursing. Ndandatho has been our holy oxygen since we left that horrible Kingdom.

" I will teach that girl a lesson" "Mama please let Ndandatho be"

"Over my dead body Nomaswazi unlike you I finish what I start!!"

"Fighting her is vanity mama she is a Princess and a mother to Zimele's child. I don't see the relevancy of fighting her its over she won!"

"Not until I say so. I worked hard for you to marry Zimele. I made so many sacrifices Nomaswazi blood was shed I bathe in blood so you can be a somebody. That girl has took everything

Nomaswazi! Not only did she take your man but she will take all the riches and powers. Do you know what her gift comes with? "

" Ma I don't care I'm tired of eating from Ndandatho's palms. I wish you stopped too"

"With that gift of hers so much will go wrong!! Noma I need your help my daughter to bringing that witch down"

"Ma I'm tired just give up already"

"If I give up we both gonna lose this we will go back to that pigsty that I conceived you in Nomaswazi. You will join your father in working in the bushes chopping down wood for the likes of Ndandatho for peanuts. You will work in sugarcane farms twenty four seven Nomaswazi with no proper shelter to call your home. The sun will rise and set on your skin.. You will wear rags and nobody will respect you. You will be the next poverty stricken version of Ndandatho.Nomaswazi if you don't help me I'm afraid all this will be history. You' ll turn into a laughing stock. Let me remind you daughter you pregnant for a nobody and your father is a nobody and your child will be nobody. Ndandatho on the other hand will be a somebody she will marry a somebody and give birth to somebody's. Choose wisely. At least Ngidi gave you a title he gave you a home. A home your biological father wouldn't have given you! " I look at my mother confused. I can hear talking but I cannot grasp a little she's saying. I don't know whose father is a nobody and whose gonna lose so much shall Ndandatho continues to prosper and be of relevance. She's

blubbing and I care less about her barking. It doesn't make sense. Her hate for Ndandatho has escalated to her making up ridiculous theories in her head. King Ngidi is my father not the garbage mother is trying to fill in my head. Killing Iminathi was enough I don't want to have more blood on my hands she can partake on that journey alone. I'm now a mother my child needs a healthy mother and safe environment. I'm not about to mess with the Jali 's not anymore.

Actually leaving home wouldn't hurt anymore I'm tired of being the scapegoat to mother's nonsense. I'm tired of her benefiting from my sanity expenditures.

"Noma did you hear what I said?" "I did and I don't care ma"

"I'm certain you heard nothing I said Nomaswazi. Your biological father is a nobody. I slept with a nobody and conceived you! You should thank me for bringing you this life!"

"You are a harlot mother!!!"

"Says a murder who killed a blind Princess. You and I are not different we are birds of the same feathers!!"

"I hate you!!! I hate you Thabile!!!! Geez! Of all mothers God blessed me with you? You out of all people? No wonder you are infertile you are a whore!!" She slaps me hard across the face. "Make up your mind young lady. The clock is ticking tick tok!!!" I look at her and brush my cheek. She walks out leaving me crying. Is she really my mother?

Madongwe walks in. She puts a tray in front of me.

"Mama... Ma. Mama Madongwe can you spare me your time please"

"If you want to insult me or mock me once again Princess I'm afraid I don't have that much time." "I need to leave please help me leave this royal house please"

"Nomaswazi why would I do that?"

"Ma please. I'm in dire straits if I don't leave this place now I will leave in a coffin please"

"What happened to you commanding and treating people like dirt? You want my help Nomaswazi? My help? After so many years of disrespecting me? I'm afraid Princess I can't help you nor would I consider even on gun point. Ungihlukubezile wena!" She says walking away.

"Mama please!! I need to leave this place or else my mother will kill me please" "Why would she do that?"

"She's evil and cruel. She's heartless and immortal. She killed Iminathi and now she wants to kill me please" I lie and cry louder.

"Fine! I will talk to my son Sphiwe" "Sphiwe the postman?"

"Yes his my son"

"Then mama you really have to help me because I'm carrying your grandchild please" She looks at me jaw dropping.

"You.. You slept with Phiwe?" "Can I go start with packing?"

"We will leave at night I don't want trouble with your mother" I nod and wipe my tears away. I'm leaving my mother and guess what? She will never ever see me again if she wants to fight

Ndandatho she can do that alone without my alliance..

Ngelozu

"My flower please wait up"

"I want to be alone Nhlonipho " I say with a trembling voice.

"Ngelozhi can we stop fighting already please. We've been strangers for days now and I hate this fall out amongst ourselves. Please spare me a minute of your time please"

I stop walking and turn around. Nhlonipho takes a couple of steps towards me. "Ngelozhi..."

"Nhlonipho.."

"Are you crying Ngelozhi? Is it my fault?" He says holding my hand gently pulling me in for a hug. I'm grateful we far away from the crowd.

"Ngelozhi I'm sorry I really am sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you. I didn't mean to break your heart and bring you tears. I'm sorry Ngelozhi. I shouldn't have said those things I've said the last time we were together as a couple. Ngelozhi I thought you wanted it like I did. I mean you said you liked it and you permitted me to do it. "

" I said stop Nhlonipho but you didn't listen. "

" Ngelozhi you've said stop it Nhlonipho a couple of times but when I stopped you would complain asking why I stopped doing whatever I was doing. I thought that was a similar scenario. Had I known fully that you didn't want it I would've stopped. Ngelozhi I love you so much to force you into doing what you don't want to do. "

" But you did it Nhlonipho" I say breaking loose from his embrace.

"My flower I'm sincerely sorry. Ngelozhi I've been feeling bad for days now after what happened. You calling me a rapist caused me sleepless nights Ngelozhi. I'm sincerely sorry I didn't intend on hurting you not in that way to be precise. In you I see a glimpse of my future I see the missing rib that Romeo has been yearning for when he met Juliette. In your eyes I see my truth the only beauty that tamed the beast that's within me. Ngelozhi when I said I loved you I meant it I still mean it. My flower I know you mad at

me or better yet you mad at losing your virginity but Ngelozi you still have me the man who loves you. I lost my own virginity to you not that it matters but Ngelozi we share the same pain you and I. I wish you can let me in and show me your scars so I can take the pain away. "

I glover on him and not say anything.

" Ngelozi please forgive me even if you don't take me back as your lover but please forgive me. I'm willing to cleanse your father's kraal by tainting you. Like I once said I'm willing to take risks for you. Just forgive me please so I can die freely without having my first love holding a grudge on me"

"You can't do that Nhlonipho" "Do what?"

"Both dying and cleansing my father's kraal."

"Ngelozi I took your innocence and that comes with a charge"

"My parents cannot know about that"

"Eventually they gonna find out Ngelozi. You go to Reed dance ceremonies remember? " "I won't go this year"

"Reason being?"

"I'm visiting my aunt"

He looks at me and I do the same. "Ngelozi the truth will set us free"

"Nhlonipho I have so much to loose. I will be mocked by many I'm a commoner have you forgotten that?"

He heaves a sigh.

"Can I ask you something Nhlonipho" "Fine"

"What happened to that fluid that makes babies? Where did it go?" "That?"

"Yes.. What happened to it?"

"I didn't have it because you pushed me off." "You lying Nhlonipho"

"I'm not lying Ngelozi"

"Nhlonipho you can't take my innocence and leave me pregnant only to go marry Gabi!" "I'm not gonna marry Gabi Ngelozi"

"It didn't look like it when you shared a hug." "I'm not dating Gabi she's a kid for christ sake." "You lying!"

"Ngelozi come here" "No"

"Ngelozi!" I look at him and walk closer to him.

"Can we discuss this again before we go back home"

"I'm not going back home Princess Ndandatho asked me to spend the weekend" "Then we gonna talk again before we retire to bed"

"I don't want to talk to you" He chuckles..

"I'm sorry okay?" I look at him..

"Nhlonipho! Let's go challenge those boys I've been looking for you!" Prince Busani says. "I'm coming Buthelezi" Nhlo says glancing on me.

"Who is that? The lady of your dreams?" Busani says walking closer.

"Yes.. I'm still talking to my Queen" Nhlonipho says glancing on me I look at him as well. "Whoa!!!" Busani says.

"Ngelozzi you are the mystery girl?" Busani -

I face the ground. Busani laughs I look at Nhlonipho.

"Wow!!! I nearly made a move on your girlNhlonipho?" Busani says laughing again. "Please excuse me"

"Not before you give me the answer I want". "What answer?"

"Us talking tonight" "We will talk"

"I love you Ngelozzi" I look at him then Busani who is laughing

"Okay"

"Okay?"

"Nhlonipho please" He looks at me and his smile disappears. I walk away with a bit of joy in my heart. He called me his Queen in front of Prince Busani. That's heavenly. I smile yet again

recalling his face. I even forgot about my numb cheek that Queen Thabile slapped. That woman and her daughter really have a thing with slapping me on first encounters and I don't know why. I locate my mother and go sit besides her I rest my head on her shoulder.

"Ngelози.." "Mama"

"Are you okay?" "Yes mama"

"Better.. Do you see a possible son in law?" "Mama!!" I giggle

"Yini? Don't act innocent I saw you and that boy talking" "Mama it wasn't that talk but rather a simple and normal talk" "What is a normal talk Ngelози?" Mom says looking at me. "Mama.." I say shyly.

"I love you my dear"

"I love you too mama" I say resting my head on her shoulder. Queen Nozi walks towards us alongside Queen Boni.

Ndandatho

"It's a pleasure meeting you elders" I say rubbing my ears.

"Please excuse me?"

"Liyana" "Baba"

"Are you Okay?"

"I... I feel a bit dizzy and a bit sick" "Where is your mother?"

"Baba can I lean on your shoulder?"

"Mzimela and Mngomezulu. Please excuse me my daughter is not okay" My father says holding me.. I spot Zimele's father from a distance. My sight is getting blurry the waterfall burbling sounds gets more and more persistent and louder than before.

"Is she okay Buthelezi?"

"I don't know Jali she's not okay though. Where is your wife? Surely something is wrong with the baby" "Let me carry her inside the house"

"Please Jali I will search for her mother" These voices are heard from afar..

I hear a woman thrum a song. I can barely see her face but only the cloths she's wearing. Its something white glittery and sparkling. I don't know how to describe it the more I take a closer look on her smoke comes from her surroundings..Her back is turned on me she's busy tapping things against each other while humming. I strongly believe she's a nixie spirit.

"Pass me those white stones"

"Who? Me? " I say looking behind me. "Definitely you" She says not looking at me. " You mean me? "

"Or I should say your name so you can be certain it's you I'm talking about?" "Sorry"

I pick up the stones and walk behind her to give her the stones. More smoke appears.

"Put those there" She says showing me what looks like a grass basket. She continues humming her song. "Excuse me who are you?"

"You took forever to get here Liyana What delayed you?" "I.. I..

Why am I here and what is this place?"

"You haven't answered my question" "I was separated from my parents"

"I see.."

"What is this place and why am I here? Who are you?"

"Welcome to Uthombo Kingdom Liyana.I wanted to welcome you properly in your sleep but anticipation got the better of me."

"Welcome me? Why didn't you come to the welcoming party instead of luring me here? This place looks like a fountain or a source of water. I can't swim by the way and being here is danger to me"

The nixie chuckles and hums.

" Hello please respond to my question"

"Firstly I'm not your friend Liyana. You don't talk to me like you talking to Zimele or Gatsha. With me you humble yourself you address me with respect. Back to your question. This beautiful place here is a sacred place that I call my home and state of mind. Only the chosen ones visit and sometimes resides herethose who play on these waters they disappear and never return. Cruel hearts and evildoers don't make it alive out of these waters. The Mami wata is dangerous when provoked Liyana."

"How do you know my name?"

"I see you still haven't changed Ndandatho. I'm surprised you do not remember my voice. How can I not know what I've made and guarded for the past two decades and five years?"

"I don't follow"

"I live within you young lady and I've fought for you a lot of times. You growing up in Ngwane village was planned by me you having Gatsha was planned by me. Your entire life was controlled by me. Do you remember the night you suffered a gruesome labor and someone came to your aid? That was me when a lion attacked your standby parents I was the one who protected you. The beads you once broke putting your son in danger I gave them a meaning and purpose. Ndandatho the list is endless. I am your third eye your protector your shield your guardian angel your heart your advisor the list is endless.. I am the one who sees you through the one who blessed you with the water spirit. I am a mamiwata Your grandmother."

I look at her confused.

"I have a living grandmother what do you mean by you're my grandmother?" "Your father is my son"

I look at her.

"Liyana today is not a day for us to get into work and all that. I just wanted to welcome you on these grounds I wanted to meet you once again but this time around our meeting was not that of pain and loneliness but rather joy and tranquility"

"I see... Are you the one who made it rain today?"

"Your a mamiwata Ndandatho your gift comes with that after you she will take over" "Who is she?"

"The baby girl that's in your stomach" I brush my tummy.

"Listen go back to your party before Zikhali insults me once again go home. Till we meet again"

"One question how did I find this place?" She clicks where white stones together before I know it I'm coughing and sweating. I hear familiar voices and fragrances.

Boni

"Ndandatho is not okay" My husband says panting. Nozi and myself stand up immediately. Mama Ngelozi does the same. I suffer a panic attack.

"What do you mean by Ndandatho is not okay?"

"I don't know Boni surely there's something wrong with the baby" Zikhali says "But she was fine not long ago" Mama Ngelozi- "Surely she inherited bad spirits! We definitely had a witch parading in our dean!" I say shouting yet pulling up my dress so I don't trip and fall because of it. I storming to my house. Nozibele follows me panicking too. I find my daughter sleeping on the bed lifeless. I sit besides her and put my hand on her forehead. I feel tears threaten to come out I can't stand this fear that I feel lurking in. I once lost her and losing her again is the last thing I have on my mind. Two tear drops collide with the ground. Zimele walks in with Bangizwe.

"What happened?" He says scanning the room and walking towards the bed. I let out a silent sob.

"Hhayi Boni wakhala kushone Bani?" My mother says (Crying? Who died?) I ignore my mother and hold my daughters hand.

"Boni stop crying this child is not dead. Why are you weak? Did you really push these three kids?" Mom- "Mama please. This is

not the right time please!"

"Ndandatho is perfectly fine I don't know why you ruining your make up." Mom "Mama!!!" I roar everyone looks at me..

"Don't worry Boni she will be alright I trust your mother thoughts" Zikhali- "It's not a thought but a fact Zikhali" Mom- Ngcolosi giggles.

"Ngelosi my beautiful daughter please bring my handbag" Mom- "Ma Ngelosi is not your errands girl she's not your servant"

"Boni stop it! Why are you treating your mother like this? We gonna have trouble woman" I look at my husband and brush my daughters face.

Ngelozzi brings my mother's handbag. She takes out white rope and put it around her wrists. She thrums a song.

"Can I touch your daughter Sbonisiwe? Or I shouldn't do it?" "Ma touch her she's your child after all" Zikhali-

"Thank you mkhwenyana" She holds Ndandatho's hand and intertwines it with that of Zimele. She looks at Nhlonipho and then Ngelozzi. Gogo "Gezekile" walks in. She let's go of Ndandatho and Zimele's hand.

"She's not dead The rain Queen was greeting her and welcoming her officially home. Any minute from now she will pull through and it's gonna rain inside this house" Mom-

"You mean we should get umbrellas?" Nozi "I'm joking" Mom-Zimele laughs. "Mama!!"

"Why are you too serious Boni is this how you are in the bedroom with Zikhali? No my daughter you have gone boring maarn!!" My mother stands up.

"She will wake up I was joking about the raining part. Gezekile let's go gossip over a cup of tea."

They laugh and walk out. I roll my eyes. Ndandatho coughs her forehead sweats at it.

" Ndandatho" I say embracing her and kissing her forehead. " My head is.. Is heavy..Where is my child?"Nda-

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Hawu

I'm laying on bed with Bubu. We both naked and panting. How we got here I don't know.

"That was good and rejuvenating" I say sticking my tongue out. Bubu shyly smile and covers her face. "Warrior come on"

"I mean it. Open your eyes and stop being a little girl" I tease and tickle her. I hear footsteps outside the compound.

"Shhh... Don't talk please" "Why?"

"Just do as instructed" "But why warrior?"

"Theres someone outside the yard" "Could it be your wife?"

"No its not shhhhh..."

She nods and keeps quiet.

Khethiwe

I didn't want to come here but Mlingo running out of his baby toilies and other things forced me to travel this distance. I'm still not in a good state to be seeing his face or better yet having a valid conversation with him. Hawu annoys me big time. Sadly I haven't told his mother what he told me but I'm planning on telling her. I put my sag like handbag made out of grass on the veranda. I exhale deeply I'm tiredthirsty and hungry. I really need to relax and breathe a fresher and clean air. The sun burnt me to make things worse Mlingo is heavy. You can picture the torture and hardship I've succumbed.. I take off my flip flops and close my eyes before knocking.

"Khuboni!!!" I shout.

"Hawulesizwe!! Hawu!!!" I say knocking on the door. Mlingo starts crying I put him on my lap and breast him.

"Shhh my boy eat yezwa?" I say brushing his brows..

"Ngcamane!!! Please open its me your wife" I say shouting but there's no response. When Mlingo finishes drinking my milk.. I knock on the door.

"Maseko!!! Hawu!!! Ngcamane open please!"

Theres silence. I twist the door handle God! It's locked.

"Mlingo let's go peep through the window surely daddy is sleeping" I say putting the baby on my back.

Hawulesizwe

"Maseko!! Ngcamane please open the door it's me" She shouts from outside. "Mlingo let's go peep through the window surely daddy is sleeping"

"She's going to peep on the window" Bubu-

She jumps off from the bed and shuts down the curtains. I sit on the bed and cover my face with my hands.

"Hawu!!! Open the door please!!" Khethiwe-

My son cries from outside. I look at Bubu who is also looking at me with her arms folded and her nose sweating.

"Hawu we hungry and thirsty please!!" She says with defeat. I start eating my nails to calm my nerves down.

"Mlingo please stop crying my baby please.. Mommy is tired and hungry okay? Please behave" I feel bad right now. She knocks till she gets tired hours later there's silence outside.. Bubuza reaches for her clothes and dresses up.

"You angry?"

"What game are you really playing Hawu?"

"Can you stop making noise please. Already I feel bad I didn't open the door for my wife and son don't pester me too"

"Do you even love me Hawu?"

"Shut up Bubuza!! I can't even hear myself think shut up or fuck off!!" I bark. She looks at me and sits on the bed. We remain quiet for a little while.

"Is that thunder?" Bubu keeps quiet. "I'm talking to you!!"
"You said I'm shut up I'm shut ke!" "Bubu"

She looks at me and opens her lips ensuring no sound comes from her lips.

"I'm talking to you" She continues doing that at it she rolls her eyes. I stand up and click my tongue. I wear my clothes and peep on the window it's raining outside. It's pouring. Dammit!

Khethiwe and Mlingo...

I walk outside.

Khethiwe

We took our bags and left there was no point of staying there it was evidence nobody was around. Knowing Hawu he surely went to war. As tired as I am I force myself to it. We now at the gate.

"Did you find him?"

"No.. Only a bug was in his house. Thank you brother" "But he was here a couple of minutes ago"

"Well there's nobody bhuti I have to get going. Thank you so very much." "Aren't you tired though?"

I chuckle

"I have to go shall you see him please let him know his wife was here" Thunder shudders rain is approaching I can tell the sight of the clouds. "My sister you can't travel back with a child on such a bad weather." "It's fine Bhuti I really have to go"

I say with a trembling voice. Honestly speaking my heart is on my sleeve. I traveled so far only to be met by emptiness. Now the rain is gonna pour over me and my child. Like it's not enough I'm gonna walk back home on an empty stomach complaining stomach. I look at the guard and push back my tears.

"Mrs Maseko please allow me to help you. This weather is very bad it's not looking good. This rain is gonna destroy many things don't be a part of those. I'm certain its coming from Umthombo Village. Knowing Umthombo that Kingdom has been cursed for years this rain will sure cause dire harm to many things and peple." I blurts out poor me cares less about what his talking about. Mlingo starts crying I lethim be. I'm drained and exhausted. I don't even have the stamina to hush him. Crying has never killed anyone and it's not about to start with Mlingo. The guard looks at me and then my crying baby.

" Look I will borrow one of the Kings horses and transport you home. My deepest worries are on the baby you carrying if it wasn't for him I wouldn't have bothered you my sister please go wait for me overthere" I nod and let my tears pour out immediately he gets out of sight. Mlingo ups his sobs that pushes

me to walk out this compound without waiting for the gate man. If this rain kills me and my son then it will be a blessing in disguise cos honestly there's no purpose for my son and I to live. His father wants to take a second wife meaning I'm no longer useful and significant to him. On top of that I'm not working but a compound decoration. I don't have a family nor do i have a place to call home. I'm just doomed and alone. If this rain really comes with motives to destroy and kill I pray it's starts with me and my son. At least there won't be pain and misery wherever we going unlike here in this Kingdom.

"Mrs Maseko!!! Please wait up!" The guard says following me with a horse..

Zimele

"Hey"

"Hey" She says faintly smiling and embracing Gatsha. Her family and my family gave us privacy minutes after she was resurrected. Ndandatho really loves our son and that brings me joy.

"How are you feeling?" "Drained and a bit dizzy"

"You will live sweetheart. I'm sorry okay?"

She nods. I continue brushing her tummy and gazing into her eyes. "What?"

"Nothing"

"Come on Bhengu talk I know you have something to say. Please say it"

"No it's okay my love just rest and worry less about my demeaning thoughts" "My King please talk"

"Fine.. I'm worried about you Ndandatho" "In terms?"

"You carrying this rain making gift. I can't help but to think it's

gonna put your life at risk and that of our unborn child.

Ndandatho you pregnant have you forgotten that? "

She looks at me faintly and then looks at Gatsha.

"Ndandatho such gifts come with a baggage they demanding.

They can put one's life at risk especially when it's time to work and face evildoers that's if it allows you to do that too."

"Zimele can we not discuss this now please"

"We need to discuss it Ndandatho if not today when?"

She looks at me and says nothing. I exhale deeply and glance at her yet again.

" I don't want to lose you and the baby. Better yet I don't want to raise Gatsha alone. I've once been separated from you Ndandatho and life wasn't lively as to when I had you besides me. Maka Gatsha I don't want to lose you again. I don't want to face future that doesn't involve you and our children."

"Zimele.." She says putting her hand on my cheek and sincerely gazing into my eyes. I feel a sting on my chest.

"Bhengu Ngcolosi Dlabazane Mepho wami. Look at me please" I look at her.

"Zimele can we not think of the worst-case scenario I beg of you Jali. I don't know how my gift works or operates but one thing I'm certain about it comes with tranquility and harmony. I'm certain that it's not chaotic and perpetuating any sorts of violence or anything like that. Zimele rain denotes blessings joy peace and hope. I don't see my rain making gift resulting to us being separated from each other or our kids. I don't see this gift hindering our love or our planned future. Mepho I'm not going anywhere not anytime soon. "

"Seeing you laying there unconscious brought me fear and great grief Ndandatho. What if one day you fall into yet another slumber and never gain your consciousness again? Ndandatho I'm scared as much as I know there's calmness in rain but there are also tsunamis and cyclones that comes with water Ndandatho. People drown in water houses and plants get damaged in the presence of water. I won't mention the sweeping away of lives. "

"Zimele"

"Ndandatho I'm terrified"

"Zimele please calm down and listen to me."She says softly. I put my guard down and glance at her. She forces herself to sit on my lap and wrap her hands around my neck. She looks right into my eyes.

" My love" "Yes"

"I understand your concerns I really do my love. But Jali nothing will happen to me and our unborn baby. The bad you talking about can only happen when my nixie is provoked or threatened. But other than I that my gift comes with peace Zimele please believe me when I say that. I know it's all new to me and that I've never used it before but I know it comes with peace. Nothing unholy will prevail trust me Jali. "

I look at her and then Bangi who is busy rolling on the bed.

"Can we not allow my gift to come between us most importantly can we not think of the worst case scenario please my love. I will make sure our babies and future is unharmed. Please Zimele?"

"What if they want you to do duties that will hinder our time as a couple like wanting you to practice celibacy for months and months? Or better yet they want you to marry someone else like the list is endless Liya"

"That's not gonna happen" "You promise Ndandatho?" "I promise"

"You better keep your promise because honestly there's no way I'm leaving without you" "You won't live without me unless you decide on living without me"

"Shall you not keep your promise Ndandatho you won't see the kids I promise" "Zimele.." She says faintly laughing.

"I mean it Ndandatho"

"I wouldn't survive without Gatsha and this baby" "You know what to do"

"Knock knock!! Is it safe to come in?" Someone says from outside my chamber. "Come in" Nda permits. Her mother walks in with a tray of food.

"I thought I should bring you food since you collapsed while food was being prepared for the ceremony" Boni-

"Thank you ma" Nda says slowly getting up from my lap. Her mother looks at us and smile. "Zimele please make sure she eats. I will go back to the guest's shortly."

"I will mama Thank you"

"Another thing please ensure she gets rest she looks weak and tired. I will keep little Bangizwe entertained"

"Thank you mama I appreciate it" Nda-

"Don't ever scare us ever again Ndandatho" She smiles and puts the tray on the mini table next to Ndandatho's bed.

"Shall you recover Nda come join us outside"

we still have guests."

"I will pass ma I want to sleep" "No problem get well okay?"

Nda nods her mother kisses her lips.

Mota

"Are you certain Mota that your Ngwane friend is complete upstairs?" Gloria-

"I don't understand her either can you imagine the embarrassment she brought upon herself?" I say sipping from my wine glass yet scanning Ngidi's whereabouts.

"That woman is a lunatic was there a need for her to say those things?" Queen 2-

"Very unnecessary had my brother's son wanted that Noma daughter of hers we would've been invited to a wedding isn't it?" I say.

"Indeed the one we were invited in the Prince didn't show up" They laugh so do I.

"So which home did Boni's daughter wreck? Thabisile is a cray cray I tell you. Look at Boni's daughter and then light skinned shark of hers. Ndandatho is beautiful she surpasses many" I say and they join me.

"Some friends you have Mota and wena who is the new guy after your late husband?" Gloria-

"Someone handsome" I say. I finally spot Ngidi heading to a quiet place I gulp my drink and put the glass down. I fix myself at it.

"Ladies please excuse me I will be right back. Gloria don't leave without announcing" I say tucking in my tummy and walking

away. I find Ngidi releasing himself in yet facing the three. I put my hands on his waistline he jumps in fear.

" Pardon me Ngwane it's me"

"Dont ever sneak up on me ever again woman. I nearly had a heart arrest."

"I'm sorry Ngwane.. You look handsome by the way this color looks like it was perfectly made for you. It enhances your skin color and makes you look like a little boy" He chuckles.

"You reckon?"

"I mean it Ngwane you so handsome. I'm certain Thabile couldn't stop complimenting you when leaving the house" I test waters knowing Thabile she's ignorant to such little things.

"You actually the first person to give me a compliment. Yes other people did compliment me but not my wife or any familiar person. So technically you are the first familiar face to compliment me. You actually look good yourself I couldn't have noticed you Mota" I blush

"Oh! I feel honored right now Ngwane"

"Honestly you look good." He says glancing on me. "Thank you.."

"Mota" "Ngidi"

"I'm not planning on going home not after the stunt that was pulled here. So is there a chance I could hide my head in your house?"

"You want to snuggle with me? Of course there's room for you i once told you my door is always opened."

"Thank you Momo" "No thank you."

I say flirting with him.

"I know how fond you are with fermented grapes don't go overboard Mota" "I won't go overboard"

"Please we need to take this party elsewhere."

I giggle God I'm so smitten right now. You would swear his yet to give me Ucu(A bangle that symbolizes love) and I'm yet gonna ululatate. That's how exited am I right now about Ngidi giving me the attention I've been yearning for throughtout my life.

" Look let me go join the others I can't risk Zuko seeing us together. It might draw eyes on us. Later"

"Later it is and please don't change your mind Ngidi please"

"I won't I promise. I really can't stand my wife at least for today"

"But eventually you will be able to stand her?"

He clears his throat.

"I'm sorry I shouldn't have asked that question I'm switching lanes"

"Mota like I once said our story is different and complicated judging our kids are wife and husband soon to be mother and father. We have no choice but to continue playing this hide and seek game we playing"

I swallow a lump and nod my head.

"I see Ngidi. I'm sorry for being forward I'm a woman after all" "I know it's hard but it is what it is Mota"

"And I understand big time excuse me" I say walking away with chest pains. Why can't this old hag leave Thabile and opt for me? All im hearing from him are excuses. If only he knew the devil his sharing a bed with he would jump off the cliff and make use of this opportunity instead of misusing it. Thabile is a witch and little does he know. I find people singing and dancing my heart and focus is no longer here.. It wouldn't hurt had I left this stupid ceremony.

"Let's go"

"Mama we still enjoying the party"

"I said let's go home!!" I scold at my kids they collected their belongings and followed me to the cart. Even if Ngidi doesn't show up its okay my mood is ruined already. When I reach my house I remove the exquisite dress I was wearing I opt for my indoors rags and walk to my kitchen to start with preparing supper. I have so many thoughts running wild in my head. What if I told Ngidi about Noma? Or better yet Zuko's mother? Or better yet what if I told him about Thabile's earnest love for him? Or this Makhosonke man of hers? What if I.. I wrote letters to Thabile pretending to be this Makhosonke guy? Mmmmm Thabile I also love Ngidi and I will do all in my powers to have him to myself...

Gezekile Jali

"These kids have grown Majali who would've thought our grandchildren would fall in love with each other? To make things worse the daughter whom I believed was dead was never dead"

Boni's mother says sipping her herbs tea.

"Who would've thought indeed. To think my son and your son in law become sworn enemies along the midst of that" I say smiling.

"The gods of Thuthukani and Umthombo are really not sleeping nor yawning. They are at work they are restoring and repairing what we thought would've never be mended ever again. It's so sad MaButhelezi never lived long to see this. May her soul rest in eternal peace"

"Eish! Don't remind me my sister. What a beautiful and angelic woman she was. She was a source that quenched so many thirsts a vineyard of sweet grapes. May she rest in rest in deed"

"I remember how shuttered Zikhali was that boy suffered greatly after losing his mother. He was a living corpse. It become worse when Ndandatho was declared supposedly dead. It's by grace Boni never gave up on him" He says sipping her tea.

"That brings me to my biggest question Maka Boni why does your daughter carry that kind of attitude towards you?"

"It's a long story Gezekile but to cut the story short she hated me when her daughter died."

"Why was that?"

"Gezekile I won't lie to you or anything but people have this tendency of thinking us spiritual beings are supposed to know everything and anything even those things that were not meant for us to know or prevent. It's like the moment a person knows about your spiritual gift automatically you become a saviour and a magician or better yet you have all powers to do anything and everything. Like you have eyes that see all over the world and ears that can listen and hear a simplest sneeze or heartbeat from across the oceans. Like it's bad and hard for spiritual gifted beings Gezekile. " She says with sadness and looks outside the window.

" Boni had a little sister She drowned. In Boni's eyes I had powers to prevent death and resurrect people. She never understood how my gift worked and what it was able to do or not do. Boni expected me to be the master of all. She wanted me to save her sister but I couldn't prevent her sister from dying my hands were tied and the fight was out of my control. It was another beings capabilities not mine. She hated me and blamed me for my daughters death saying I disguised myself as spiritual being yet I know nothing and can not do a single trick which was saving my daughter "She chuckles.

" I strongly believe that was the time her relationship with Zikhali resumed. She started being disobedient at home started disrespecting me and giving me a pollute attitude. Her father would punish her time to time. She got pregnant years later as a mother I fought against her being kicked her out of home. For a moment she saw a mother in me but our relationship was still decayed and odor filled.

Ndandatho was born. She was jolly Gezekile so was I. Then the death thing happened. Now I was insulted for not preventing her too from dying. I was called all sorts of names she went as far as

telling me to never set foot in her home and that I was curse"

"Ma have you by any chance seen Gabisile?" Boni says looking at me. I look at her mother who is sipping tea and then her. What I just heard is nothing like this beautiful lady who is standing in front of me with my grade ngrandchild.

"No Boni we haven't seen her"

"Oh! Thanks Majali" She says walking outside.

"See? Even when her child lives I'm a still seen as that bird that makes a Hsehranmagzine.comr hoooo dee! Sound. " I giggle.

"You mean inkankane?"(Hadedda bird)"The big black bird right?"

"Yes"

"Yes.. That one Geze my child is boring I won't lie to you." I laugh as sad as it.

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Thabile

"Dont look at me like that Makhehla give me solutions" "Thabile this will backfire"

"Are you still the biggest and most feared witch doctor or a weakling? Huh Uncle?" "Thabile do you want to die the same way your mother died?"

"I don't care! What I care about it bringing the Buthelezi family down! And the only way to doing that is by killing Ndandatho or Gatsha or Zimele"

"Thabile this is dangerous and it's gonna backfire!"

"Malume you are a coward!!!! A coward!!! You are losing your touch! You no longer strike me like a witch doctor a good one to be exact! A puppy is making you this weak? Come on!!!!" I roar and pace around his hut.

He looks at me and shakes his head sideways.

" Thabile you gonna die the same way as your mother died if you continue living like this" "If I die Noma will carry on from where I left off"

"You don't get it don't you?"

"I want Ndandatho dead this time around don't do any careless work like you did years ago. When I gave you a simple instruction to kill all female children back in Umthombo Kingdom. Had you done the job well none of this would be happening Makhehla!! Ndandatho would've died two decades ago! You owe me Malume you know who my mother was you don't want to earn me as an enemy Malume. "

"Thabile have you forgotten that Ndandatho has both gifts? She is a mamiwata and you know very well how dangerous water spirits are on top of that she has her maternal gift. Which I do not even know nor understand how it works but that girl is protected. Bafana was attacked by a lion not so long ago trying to bring her for the sacrifice. If you don't value your life then I do value mine Thabile"

I look at him and blow my nose.

"I care less about lions Makhehla. Ndandatho will expose me for who I am especially if let her take over this gifts. Have you forgotten my mother was a witch Queen? Do you remember how she died and who killed her and got me banished from my father's village? Have you forgotten how hard I had worked to make everyone believe I wasn't a daughter of an evil queen woman? Have you forgotten how hard we've worked to blind and block everyone from knowing the truth about my existence? Bewitch other royals to disguise themselves as my parents while they weren't? Yes my mother was a Queen and my father was a King but darkness and light don't mix Malume and that's the reason why you have to help me kill Ndandatho before her mamiwata kills me like it did with my mother. If you don't help me I will go to the evil bushes and claim my gift from dark forces. I'm a leader there and guess what? I will have all witches eating from my palms and working for me after reviving my mother's spirits to live within me. She was a powerful witch she was powerful more than you. So the ball is in your court Makhehla!!! You help me or I help myself"

He looks at me and swallows hard.

"How am I supposed to kill Ndandatho? You've said it yourself her guardians are undefeated I failed once. How am I gonna succeed this time around? "

"A human's weakness is what they love the most and what they would die for. I guess you know what that is"

"I don't follow"

"You will force it then"

I say collecting my stuff and leaving his hut. I will narrate my true

story someday but for now it's war I want..

[Narrative]

Most people have departed from Umthombo Kingdom and went back to their homes as the party ceremony is over and dealt with. As promised Ngidi went to Mota's house. Mama Ngelozzi was transported home so is Mgcinaphi and Zuko. The Jali's have decided to remain behind for tonight. They still enjoying themselves in Umthombo Kingdom leaving today would bring them so much melancholy and boredom or better yet sadness. They seated on the dinning table talking and laughing. There's joy and harmony but not for Boni's Mother who has her attention on Ngelozzi Ngcobo. Something about Ngelozzi brings her uncertainty and worry She is a bit uncomfortable with sharing a table with her but at the same time she is comfortable with her being around. She's trying by all means to figure Ngelozzi out but her spiritual eye is struggling. Ndandatho looks way better now. Nhlonipho can't stop stealing glances at Ngelozzi Zikhali has noticed that but what happens in Jali's kraarl is none of his business unless it's in connection with his daughter Ndandatho. Gogo Jali is telling a story that is making everyone laugh.

Nomaswazi

It's dark and quiet outside night time has approached. Thabile is not around and this is so unlike her because knowing her she would've long gone to bed. I don't want to risk leaving the house without knowing where she is I might bump chests with her as I'm planning on running away from home. I prefer leaving when I'm certain she's in bed. I pace around the sitting room time is not on my side. Madongwe has been asking how far I am with my plan. All I kept on saying is "Not yet" Or "Not now" I really need to leave I've heard way too much. I do not want to hear the rest of it. The door swings open My mother walks in.

"Still up?" She says softly "I'm suffering insomnia"

"A cup of hot warm milk would be of help" "I'm on it"

"Noma my baby. I'm sorry for the way I acted a couple of hours ago. I'm sorry for slapping you but what I said then was nothing but the truth. The King is not your father but a man whom I once loved dearly by the name of Makhosonke is your father. When I said you are a nobody. I meant your blood was diluted Noma. I am from a royal family but your father isn't meaning you are considered what we call an outcast an illegitimate child a bad omen when using the language of royals.. Noma your biological father knew nothing about your existence in my womb. I had to decide on what was gonna benefit you and I in the long run and that was lying to Ngidi saying you were his. I knew your biological father was never gonna be able to give you a good life that I knew you deserved hence I lied and paid people for years to hide

your true identity till this date" I look at her and say nothing.

"Noma I loved and I still do your father so dearly just like you love that commoner who impregnated you. But with me I had to give you and I what I never had growing up. You deserved to be wanted and needed you deserved to live not to strive like I did Noma. My lies were necessary for you and I to survive. Since you saw what happened in Umthombo Ndandatho already knows about this information and she's gonna go around telling people the truth. Do you know the consequences of that? "

" Mama I understand your story I really do but honestly let's leave Ndandatho alone please. We've been torturing the poor girl it's enough now.. Please"

"I understand.. Look let me go to bed I'm tired Noma we will talk tomorrow. Candy dreams I love you Okay?"

"I love you too"

"Don't forget the milk for your sleep"

"I won't" She flashes me a smile and walks away.. Touching story but to hell with it. I mize in the sittingroom. When I'm certain mother is sleeping I take my bags outside. I find Phiwe at the gate he looks at me and I do the same.

"HI"

"Let's go"

"Please carry my bags" "" Sure"

"Your is your mother ?"

"Let's go Ndoda!!" He says annoyed.. I roll my eyes and follow him around. Goodbye Ngwane village..

Ndandatho

Ngcolosi yawns.. My grandmother and Zimele's grandmother are long gone to bed. "Nozi let's retire to bed" Ngcolosi-

"We also joining you Jali it's been a long and hectic day. We need to rest honestly. Kids good night and don't be up for trouble. Gabi night sweetheart" Dad-

Father says standing up. Mom follows. "Night kids see you tomorrow" Mom-

"Night my beautiful children" Nozi- They get up and leave the rest of us seated on the dining table. "Then they leave us with a table to clear out" I say standing up.

"I will help my beautiful sister" Gabi- "Thank you sweetheart"

"Do you need a hand sisi Ndandatho?" Ngelosi -

"Yes please beautiful" Gabi looks at me and then Ngelosi.

"How about we make fire boys and chit chat outside? The ladies will surely join us shall they finish with their own business?"

Zimele-

I look at him and smile he clicks his eye.

"That sounds like a great idea I love it" Nhlo-

"Can I join too brother Zimele?" Gabi-

"Join who? Do you have testes Gabi?" Busani- "They are inside you wanna see them?" Gabi-

"Don't cramp our style go count your chickens I'm certain they less than twenty five" Busani- I look at him so does he.

"You are evil Busani!"

"I don't care Gabby girl go to bed" Busani- "I don't want I will sleep when I want too!!"

"I can tell you a story that can immediately put you in bed by force Gabisile. A story about how two individuals stole your two chickens and made it a stew. You being the meat lover you turned the bones into powder by grinding and grinding the bones non-stop. Must I continue with the story Gabi? "Busani-

Gabi looks at Busani with glassy eyes God I feel bad.

" Busani no.. "I say

" She's forward this one I want to teach her a lesson. "Busani "What did you do to my chickens Busani?"

"We slaughtered their neck boiled water plucked it's feathers removed the inside and tossed everything into a pot and then added spices and water. What am I forgetting again Sisi Ndandatho? What did we add again" I roll my eyes and slowly walk away.

"What did you do to my chickens!!!!!!" Gabi burst into tears "We ate them you included!" Zimele is hiding a laugh.

"You stole my chickens Busani? You stole my chickens? You are evil I hate you!!!!!!" Gabby cries sorrowfully I pull her in a hug..

"Leave me alone!!! You are also evil sisi Ndandatho you turned my chickens into a stew!!!!" She says roughly pushing my hand

off.

"Baby I'm sorry

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I didn't mean to hurt you"

"But you did!!! You stole my chicken" She cries.

"We not sorry hawu!!! We were hungry you included. We took a stewing chicken and made it a stew. You ate it too it's not like we ate it in a lavatory but we dined together. Me Mama Ndandatho Daddy and yourself not forgetting Gatsha who drank the soup!!"
Busani-

Ngelozi laughs so does Zimele." Busani!! "I say

"I wish my chicken cries in your tummies!!!!" Gabi-

"Same applies to you. With you it's even gonna make those cracking bones sounds that it made when you turned the bones into powder!!" I lose my cool and giggle but I stop myself immediately.

"Gabi I'm sorry sweetheart!"

"Gabi sorry about your chickens we were hungry sweetheart"

"As for me Busani Mkhawuli Buthelezi I'm not sorry cos my sister you made a delicious meal out of that chicken!!!" People burst in laughter Gabi walks away angry. I look at Busani in disbelief.

" Did you really have to do that Busani?"

"I knew this story would take her to bed we can go guys" Busani says standing up. "Busani you are heartless poor Gabi is heart broken" Nhlo -

"Don't worry she will be peeing on her blankets" Busani says whistling and heading outside. Zimele kisses my cheek and

whispers in my ears.

"You will pay for stealing her chicken." I look at him as he walk away I smile and press the cloth I'm holding in my hands. Ngelozi looks at me and smile.

"You love the Prince" Ngelozi-

"Big time Ngelozi I would die for Zimele" "Just like Juliette and Romeo?"

"Definitely my sister just like Romeo and Juliette" "Thats sweet"

"So how are you Ngelozi?" "Me? I'm fine sister Ndandatho"

"I can see you fine but tell me something I do not know Ngelozi"

"You mean something you do not know? This question is sarcastic sisi Ndandatho you know everything." I giggle.

"I meant something I do not know about Ngelozi"

"Oh!! You should've specified but since you asked. I will tell you. I eat grasshoppers I eat bush mice my father brings me one occasionally not forgetting birds. God!! I love birds especially their crunchy legs and wings!! They are divine sisi Ndandatho. I also love dancing in the rain naked. I love.. "I don't let her finished I break in laughter this girl is crazy.

" You eat all that? "

" Yes even mopani worms! "

" You eat all that and then kiss Nhlonipho afterwards? " She pops her eyes out and shyly look at me. " I've never kissed the Princ sisi Ndandatho"

"And I believe that Ngelozi" I say looking at her without breaking the stare. "You don't trust me isnt it?"

"Are you trust worthy?" "Yes I am"

"If you were you would've told me about you dating Nhlonipho.." She keeps quiet.

"Did you see that when we're sleeping earlier on?" "Yes"

"Yoooh!!! Then I'm in trouble. My parents are gonna kill me" I break again in laughter.

"I'm joking Ngelozi I didn't see any of that. I just know that you two are in love." "Did he say so?"

"Your eyes did.. I saw how you two were looking at each other. No matter what happens Ngelozi don't rush mating please. You don't wanna end up like me how old are you again?"

"19"

"You don't wanna end up like me pregnant out of wedlock. Being a mother is hard Ngelozi. There I won't lie to you. Don't let Nhlonipho inside your father's kraal okay? His gonna leave you will big belly. See how flat it is? You gonna miss it when its time come to lotion your feets or better yet pick up a bean. The ground will be far from your reach. Please pass me those platters" I say.

"Thats scary"

"It's nothing compared to having a big head coming out of your wincy sensitive organ. It's hell but I trust you you won't make babies isn't it?"

"Isn't there a way to prevent babies from happening?" "I only know of one and your mother knows of others." "What is yours?"

"Avoiding mating"

"Yoo!!" She says I look at her.

"But your mother knows of herbs to be used. Are you by any chance active Ngelozi?" "How?"

"Wanting to mate?"

"I'm still a child sister Ndandatho. Here are the platters" She says cleaning out the table. We wrap up and go join the boys outside.

Ngelozi

My heart is on my sleeve. My soul is troubled once again. My conversation with Ndandatho kinder reminded me of what I was trying so hard to ignore the past couple of hours. I was starting to accept and make peace with what happened between Nhlonipho and i but after hearing Ndandatho talk me out of intimacy. The pain and worry took over my entire body. I was looking forward to having a great time with Nhlonipho tonight by

gazing at the stars but now I'm not sure. I mean doing that could lead to pregnancy I'm correct right? Losing my innocence to Nhlonipho is trauma enough imagine having a big belly too? The gods of Thuthukani would poke my butt each time they saw me. I love Nhlonipho big time but I'm not sure if his worth all these changes and risks. We come from two segregated worlds what if our thing doesn't work out? What happens to me? Who will see value in me when I'm not even pure?
Gosh! Ngelozi what did you do?

"I'm telling you boys fighting is fun" Zimele- "I don't picture myself being a warrior" Nhlo-
"Remember vouching for a spot? Didn't I grant you one?" Zimele

-

"I asked for that so I can leave the Palace freely without explaining myself to Ngcolosi and Nozibele"Nhlo

Ndandatho and myself join the everyone else. Nhlonipho's eyes are fixed on mine I flash him a faint smile and go sit between him and Busani. Ndandatho goes to sit on Zimele's lap.

"Who made the fire?" Nda- "The warrior himself" Nhlo-

"Mmmm... My man of many talents" Nda says kissing Zimele. I

look at them in awe. Wishing if it was me and Nhlonipho.

Royalties are blessed honestly unlike us servants.

"Need meat?" Nhlonipho says drawing a tray in front of me. It's biltong. I grab a snippet and throw it inside my mouth.

Ndandatho and Zimele are busy whispering things in each other's ears and laughing. They even kiss with biltong balancing on their lips wait they sharing the meat through kissing. Okay how do I describe this? They eating and kissing simultaneously.

"Aw! Baba ka Gatsha!" "What my love?"

"Your forehead just got into a forehead accident with my forehead" "Let me kiss it better sweetheart"

"You better"

"I'm sorry mommy" They say kissing again. I look at them and smile. I feel a hand on waist as glancing at Prince Zimele and Nda. I tilt my head my eyes meets those of Nhlonipho. I gaze at him and swallow hard.

"Are you Okay?" "Yes"

"You don't look like it wanna talk about it?" He says brushing my back. "Eehm.. Its.. It's nothing. The meat is yummy"

"Relax Ngelosi it's safe" "Ndandatho knows"

"Knows what?" I look if not looking at us. "It's okay go on and talk me I'm listening" "About us"

"Is that all?"

"She said I mustn't engage on intimacy"

"Reason being?" I look at the flames of the fire and swallow hard.

"Why did you steal Gabby's chickens though?" Zimele-

I recall that moment and giggle.

"We didn't have food my love so we made food" Nda-

"We were not about to sleep on hunger while meat was modeling in front of us" Busani-Nhlonipho moves closer to me

I'm certain he can hear my beating heart.

"That was wrong though you owe that little girl an apology"

Zimele -

"She owes the chickens one too cos she grinded the bones unlike us. We gave the chickens hope that they can still be rivived by not grinding the bones." Busani-

"You guys though. Whose idea was it to steal?" Nhlo - "Isn't it obvious?" I say-

"Busani?" Nhlonipho - "Busani?" Zimele -.

"Yes.. All fingers points to him" I add. Busani laughs.

"It's a pity it wasn't me but rather the Rain Queen Princess Liyana" Busani We all look at Ndandatho in shock.

"Don't judge me please phela I'm eating for two" Nda "Not eating for two but stealing for two" Zimele- "Honey you not on my side?" Nda-

"I'm always on your side even inside" Zimele - "Zimele there are kids here"

"They don't follow. They missed that one" "No way! You gross"

"Let's go to bed so I can be inside and by your side" "They want to make love" Nhlo whispers in my ears. "I got that too" I say.

"They think we kids little do they know" We both smile.

"I'm sorry Ngelozi"

"We will talk in private"

"Kids we off to bed goodnight" Zimele says. We wave them good night.

"I'm coming Nhlonipho I need something in the house juice to be specific" Busani - "No problem brother" Busani walks away..

"We can talk. You say Ndandatho said what? " Nhlonipho

"She says I mustn't engage on intimacy because I won't see my toes" "Did you tell her about your virginity?"

"No.."

"Why not?"

"Nhlonipho do you want me to die? My parents are gonna kill me." "They won't kill you not unless we tell the truth. Did you bleed?" "Yes but the stains were not too much"

"I need the cloth we slept on I'm sorry once again" "What are you gonna do about it?"

"Just give me the cloth unwashed Ngelozi" "Fine"

"Am I Forgiven?" "I don't know"

"Come on maFuze" "No! I'm still angry"

"Now you want me to tickle you?" "No don't do anything."

"Can i have a hug as a sign of forgiveness?" "Fine" I turn to face him and embrace him.

" Thank you for forgiving me and trust me I will never ever do anything you do not want me to " "I forgive you and I love you"

"You mean that?" "Yes"

"I love you more Ngelozi"

"I missed you"

"I missed you more"

"Missed what? You dating people are crazy.. How can you miss someone you always see? Thats crazy" Busani says sitting on a chair looking at us..

"So tell when is the big day?"

"Busani please make yourself invisible"

"There's an empty chamber just next to my chamber You can make you two invisible. Gogo is peeping through the window. Make yourselves scarce." Busani says. We turn to look and indeed she's peeking at us.

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Noma

"Are we there yet?"

"Noma just shut up and keep going"

"Phiwe I'm tired my feet's are killing me"

"It's a pity you left your father's horses behind" "Phiwe can we stop please."

"Have you forgotten what hour it is noma? Keep going and keep quiet" "Phiwe I'm with child for Christ's sake your child to be exact!!"

"The choice is yours Noma."

He says upping his pace. I run after after him with my tongue out. Phiwe doesn't walk he runs keeping up with his pace is a mission impossible especially when walking is your main thing.

"Phiwe wait for me please"

"Don't mention my name in these bushes!" "Don't shout at me phela!"

"I will do what I please with you Nomaswazi. Now shut up and walk. Dare open your mouth I will leave you in these bushes."

I swallow hard. This guy was once head over heels with me I don't know what's changed. "Phiwe"

"What did I just say Nomaswazi about mentioning my name in the bushes? Do you want the witches to feast on me? Damn you!!!!" He says annoyed. I swallow hard and keep quiet. We walk till we reach this muddy house that can collapse any time. As we walk in the compound I spot more and more mud houses. Phiwe stands in front of one. He looks at me

"That's your new house " " Meaning?"

"You will sleep there"

"Where are you gonna sleep?"

"That is none of your business. You said you needed a place to stay so here it is"

"Phiwe I can't stay here alone please. I mean look at the door the veranda is ruined and eroded. The grass roof is not filled in. Shall it rain this house will collapse on me.. Please stay with me and our baby please Phiwe"

"Noma you ran away from home thinking you and I will play happy family huh? Listen girlie or better yet Princess nothing! You don't get to make orders here you appreciate what's given to you and forget what wasn't given to you. You hear me? If you want a better house build your own or better yet go back home " He says staring at me agitated by my sight.

"You really gonna leave me alone here?" "Do you have a choice Noma? "

"Phiwe please"

"I'm too exhausted to entertain this."

"Phiwe!!" He looks at me as he walks away. I feel tears on the corners of my eyes. I brush my tummy and pick up one of my bags and see myself inside the house I collect the others. I switch on the light bulb and look around this hut. God!! Even a cow would reject this. I heave a sigh and sit on the bench. Where is the bed? There's no way I will sleep standing...

Zikhali

"Kanti what is taking you so long to come to bed?" "I'm still lotioning my body Zikhali"

"Boni come to bed please"

She looks at me and continues doing what she's doing. I heave a sigh and roll my eyes. She finally comes to bed and turns her back on me.

"And now?" "Now what?"

"Why are you turning your back on me Boni? Are you trying to ignore me or better yet brush me off?" "I don't know what you talking about I'm sleepy Zikhali. Night" She turns off her side lamp.

"You joking right?" "About what?"

"What is wrong with you Boni?" "Nothing"

"It can't be nothing when you all moody and gloomy." "Zikhali I had a long day please"

"Long enough not to kiss your husband goodnight?" "I kiss you everyday njena."

I chuckle.

"Its about your mother isnt it?"

She keeps quiet. I move closer to her I cup her breasts and kiss her neck. "I'm tired Zikhali not today"

"Come on Boni.." "I'm tired!!"

She moves a bit far from me. "Is it about your mother Boni?"

"What about her?"

"Stop acting up Sbonisiwe. You know actually what I'm talking about" "Well I don't know what you talking about"

"You know I hate what you doing right now don't you?" She keeps quiet. "Wether you like it or not Boni she's your mother."

"Zikhali I don't want to talk about her please"

"Liyana managed to forgive us for being absent from her entire life. She didn't even insult us nor blamed us for not being a part of her life. She accepted you as her mother regardless of everything that you've done or never did to for her as her mother."

" Where is this going Zikhali? "

" Exactly where you don't want it go Boni. What is hard about you forgiving your mother or mending things with her? Would you have been jolly had Ndandatho treated you the same way as you doing with your mother huh Boni?"

" I lost my sister and it was her fault Zikhali. My mother was able to see things from afar she has mixed herbs and done incantations for other dying people and they lived. Why didn't she see my sister's future or fate from afar? Why didn't she mix herbs and restored my sisters life huh Zikhali? What was hard for her to do with us what she was able to do for others? Ndandatho included she would've told us what our fate was Zikhali! "

" Have you ever heard the phrase " A skunk cannot smell its own odor" Same applies with spiritual gifted people Boni. Them being able to aid others doesn't mean they can help themselves. Even doctors need doctors to aid them when they sick. Why did you expect your mother to be a God Boni? Even God couldn't help himself hence he used Jesus to pass his message to the Israelites. Don't you think your mother and Jesus were wearing the same shoes? Because both of them were led by a spirit? Your mother wasn't a magician or an encyclopedia Boni. Somethings she knew and some she didnt"

"I don't have time for this switch off that lamp before it runs out"

"I'm still talking woman"

"And I am done"

"Dare talk to your mother in that tone ever again I will slap you for the first time in forever. Mark my words"

"That would be the last time you see my nakedness Zikhali" "Are you challenging me?"

She keeps quiet. This woman and her stubbornness gosh!!!

Gogo ka Ndandatho (Boni's mother)

This is above me.. There's nothing I can do about this. Not when I'm still unsure of the person who gave birth to Ngelozi. As for what's yet to strike the Jali 's they will have to see themselves out of it. I close my

eyes and try to sleep. I can feel her presence in my room she's standing by the door. Looking at me she keeps quiet for a while before she starts to converse with me.

"You are troubled my daughter" "Indeed master I'm troubled."

"What's troubling you?"

"Ngelози.. I can't seem to read her master and that's strange because I can read everyone. With her there's this force that I cannot seem to understand nor describe. Each time I try to invade her mind something drains me and leaves me tired. But one thing I know there's something connected to a mother that I only manage to grasp from her. "

"You can't read her because she's not yours to uncover my daughter. The more you try to figure her out the more depleted you will be. Your powers do not allow you to go that deeper in seeking the truth like I said she's not yours to uncover"

"Meaning?"

"Stop cracking your head about that girl she's not yours to read nor aid. But your granddaughters mission. Sleep my child"

"before you leave Master please tell me what the future holds between my daughter and I" "Rest please.. "

She disappears..

I open my eyes and look around my chamber. My master is not here. I must've been dreaming again I go stand by the window and look at the moon. The brightness of the moon is the only thing that has kept me going till this far. With all the darkness I've been living under this light is my sanity. Surely those kids thought I was peeking on them I go stand by the window and look at the moon. The brightness of the moon is the only thing

that has kept me going till this far. With all the darkness I've been living under this light is my sanity. Surely those kids thought I was peeking on them little did they know..

Ngelози

"We here..." He says leaning against the wall of my temporarily chamber Gazing into my eyes. "Yeah we here now"
"I guess I will see you tomorrow" "I suppose so too"

"Okay.. Good night" "Yeah.. Good night Nipho" "Okay.. Sleep tight" "Same applies to you"

He smiles and moves away from the wall. "Bye"

"Bye Nhlonipho" I say looking at him with love filled eyes. I never in a single day ever pictured Nhlonipho and myself doing things that only lovers do. We were friends best of friends. I don't know what happened for us to be here doing such things and feeling this way about each other. I don't know how we got here honestly. I'm not complaining but this feels strange. It's like I haven't been living before this happened. My life is actually fun and lively now that I've started smashing my lips against Nhlonipho's.

My life feels brand new ever since I permitted and allowed the Prince of Thuthukani village to touch me in all sacred places and say all these things that he usually tells me. In his eyes I find comfort and shelter in his touch I feel the glimpse of what happiness is. When he talks or laugh he makes me have a runny tummy immediately. I suppose that's what Romeo was talking about "Goosebumps" I really feel strange things when I'm with the Prince. Sometimes I wish I could live inside him somewhere in his tummy or head if not on his chest. I love it the most when I'm with him. Being away from him hurts deeply so does going days without talking to him. I love Nhlonipho I really do.

"Hello!! Can we come back to earth!" He says waving his hand on my face. "Sorry.. You were saying?"

"That you should go inside and that I was gonna leave as soon as you shut your door." "Oh! I didn't grasp that"

"Reason being?"

"I.. I just got lost in my thoughts"

"What thoughts? Don't tell me you still thinking about what

Ndandatho said. Don't worry Ngelozi everything is gonna be okay. We gonna be okay okay?"

I nod.

"Now go inside please"

"Eehm.. Well can't you.. Can't you join me a little? I mean I want you to sing me a lullaby. I'm afraid of being alone especially in places I hardly know"

What a great lie Ngelozi. You love being alone stop lying.

"Oh! Really?" "Yes please." "Its fine by me" "Thank you"

"Pleasure" I open the door to my chamber Nhlonipho walks in after me. "Must I close the door or lock it?"

"What is your preference?" I say. He scratches his head.

"How about locking the door?" "Then lock the door"

"Fine.." He says locking the door. I look at him so does he. "You not bad looking though" I say as I sit on the bed.

He chuckles..

"Did someone debate you about my looks?" "No.. No one has debated me"

"Then where does that come from?" "My mind and I"

"Why is your mind gossiping about me?" "Because it's has a mind of its own." He chuckles.

"So can I take that as a compliment maybe?" He says walking towards me. "Yes.."

"But it's not a full compliment but a forced one" "What do you want me to say Nhlonipho?"

"I don't know Ngelozi" He says staring at me.

"I said you not bad looking a normal person would say thank you"

"A normal person would say you look good Nhlonipho Jali instead of saying you not bad looking" "You not good looking nor are you bad looking you just.. You just a person" He laughs

"Thank you maFuze. Let me fix the bed for you so can hop in and snore like a little baby" He smiles showing off his teeth.

"Please" He stands up to remove the things I won't need. I undress while his doing that.

"Well you can jump" He widens his eyes and swallow hard as his eyes bump into my nakedness.

"You were talking?"

"I said.. You can.. Eehm.. You can jump in bed."

"Oh! Okay" I say walking to my bed I get under the blanket. Nhlo brushes my back.

"I'm a terrible singer I won't sing you any cradle song but rather pat your back till you sleep"

"Thats fine" I say gazing on his eyes. For some weird reasons something is happening between my legs. I feel some vibration sensation my nipples are hard too.

"Are you Okay?" "I'm fine Nhlonipho"

"No problem.. I think I should leave" "I'm not sleeping though"

"Phew! Fine. I'll stay"

"Nhlonipho" "Yes"

"My My pot is a bit wet and my nipples are hard"

"Heh? You aroused?" "I don't know" "Ngelozzi. "

"Can you hold me or kiss me please"

"Ngelozzi I wish I can do that but after what happened. I don't want to hurt you again" "Can we try it again?"

"Try what?"

"You said the second time around it won't hurt" "Ngelozzi you want to make love?"

I shy away from his question. "Ngelozzi?"

"Yes"

"Yes to what?"

"Making love again. After all I'm going to die soon my parents will kill me for losing my virginity. It's better I die knowing how making love feels like" Nhlonipho looks at me flabbergasted. What am I saying actually?

Mota

Ngidi is snoring besides me. I sneak out of bed. I sit in the dining area with a piece of paper and ink. I jot down a letter pouring my heart out to Thabile. After what she told me getting rid of her would be much easier if I disguise this Makhosonke guy that she boldly said was her true love. This letter will make her distracted and all crazy in love with an nonexistent being. Footsteps come my way. I quickly hide the letter.

"Mama you nearly gave me a fright"

"Why are you up at this hour? Only witches are awake" "I'm hungry ma. I need something to eat"

"Fine go help yourself. Don't forget to pray" I say standing up heading to hide the letter. Thabile won't know what has struck him. I jump into bed and rest my head on Ngidi's chest. He embraces me.

"Where are you coming from?" "I went to pee"

"Better I thought you ran away" "Not a chance"

"Come let's play again"

"I'm game Ngwane" I say laying flat facing upwards with my legs spread apart like a roasted chicken. Ngidi gets on top of me and

helps himself with my pot. I cry in ecstasy with every thrust.

Nhlonipho

"Ooh!! Nhlo... Nhlo!!!"

"Am I hurting you? I can stop" I say with a smoky voice.

"No... No don't stop I love this.. It feels great Nhlonipho" "Tell me when it hurts or a bit uncomfortable"

"Fine.." She says holding me I continue to thrust softly and carefully. Suddenly I feel a tickly butterfly feeling slowly building around my head and down on my shaft.

I can feel my heart pounding to its maximum. This feeling spreads to my lower stomach and groin area. It's building with intensity. My balls are a little throbbing from within they tighten up as well. The tension increases with every stroke. Whatever is causing this if stopped the feeling will fade. Ngelozi wraps her legs around my waist making this feeling more exciting giving me more platform to keep pushing inside. ****

"Sehranmagzine.comah!!! Sehranmagzine.comh!! Nhlo... Nhlonipho!!" She says drawing me nearer. "I love you Ngelozi" I say with a smoky voice

"I love you too and I love this Oooh!! Sehranmagzine.comh!!.."

"You beautiful Ngelozi"

"Nhlonipho I love you!! "

She says looking into my eyes I look into right into her eyes. "I love you and I won't stop any time soon my love. "

The sensitivity is incredibly increasing and coming to the point of no return. My mind is going completely blank and I'm not aware of what's going on around me.

"Nhlo!!! Don't let go!!!!" She says ensuring her legs don't let go of my me or my waist. "Nge... Ngelozi... Remove your legs around my waist please"

"No!!! No!! I'm loving this Nhlonipho I can't!!"

"If you don't I will explode Ngelozi please... I don't want to... Ooooh!!!!!" My eyes roll back my lids shut. An urge of electricity takes over me. This feeling is too tense and uncontrollable. I feel a bliss of burst approaching.

"Ngelozi please Remo... Ohhhh" I explode into a world of ecstasy relaxing and pleasure. A really nice sleepy feeling comes in and I lay there useless listening to my shaft flicking between Ngelozi's legs...

Ndandatho

"Zimele wake up" "Mmmm..."

"Darling please wake up it's morning"

"I'm tired Nda I hardly slept last night can I please"

"You don't want my father or mother finding you in here.

Sleeping in here wasn't supposed to have happened my love. So please wake up and walk out"

"Hhayi Nda I'm sleepy and in gonna sleep" "Zimele..." I say shaking him. He doesn't wake up. "Gatsha wake your father up please my boy" Gatsha looks at me without blinking.

"Are we thinking my son?"

He smiles and I do the same too.

"You have the world's greatest smile my boy. Look at you aren't you the most the handsome little baby in the world? I love you mommy loves you" I say tickling him he laughs his lungs out showing his four teeth. I can't help it but to laugh too. Baby laughter is priceless.

"Nda that's too much don't tickle him again and thank you for

waking me up" He says sitting on his butt yawning. I glance on him then Bangi.

"Gatsha how did you sleep my baby? Today you we not grumpy and crying. What did you dream sweetheart?"

He smiles yet a gain and shyly rest his head on his father's abs tummy. "Gatsha. " I call him my little human being smiles.

"I love you even though you keeping secrets from mommy.

Morning Jali" I say staring at Zimele. "Morning maJali"

"How are you and how did you sleep?" "I'm tired and sleepy." He yawns.

"I have nothing to do with tiredness right?" "mxm" He says yawning.

"Jali thats rude clicking tongue?"

"I'm tired and you have everything to do with it Maka Gatsha"

"My apologies" I smile.

"Majali I'm starving."

"I will go prepare breakfast shortly. Would you please do me an honor of minding this little guys for me." I say tickling Bangi his laughter feels the room.

"I will hurry up before you lose me to hunger"

"Fine.." I kiss his cheek and walk outside. I find my maternal grandmother busy in the kitchen. "Morning gogo"

"Morning Princess how was your night?"

"It was peaceful and beautiful and how was yours?" "Mine was just the usual nothing fancy about it"

"I see.. Are you by any chance making breakfast?"

"Hell to no my daughter. Fighting with your mother is the last thing I want to do on this peaceful morning. I came to make myself a cup of tea so I can go meditate outside"

"I see gogo. I will get to it then. What do you eat and not eat? So I won't starve you by making you something you hardly ever want to eat."

"You so beautiful Ndandatho even within your soul my child. Boni was blessed with you. To take you out of your misery my daughter I'm a pig my child. I eat everything"

"Oh that's great then."

"Don't you have servants in this house? I mean yesterday you made yourselves food then today it's the same thing"

"We actually had one but she recently went to maternity but soon we will find someone" "I see..." She says stirring her tea yet looking at me. Such a beautiful old woman she is.

"Ndandatho" "Gogo"

"Can I ask you something personal?" "Sure.. Try me"

"Who is Ngelozi?"

"Ngelozi is my personal adopted sister and friend. Actually I can say she is Gatsha's big sister and my first born child. That's how much I adore her and appreciate her gogo" I smile collecting my breakfast apparatus.

"I meant who is she as in background status"

"Oh. Her mother is one of the greatest people who work in the royal house back in Thuthukani her father is a farmer and a fisherman."

"I see... What is their surname?" "Ngcobo"

"Oh! Mafuze..." She says sipping her tea.

"How do you feel about her? I mean spiritually related? How is her aura?" I look at her curious now why the sudden interest in Ngelozi? Just yesterday she was enjoying asking favors from her now this?

"Gogo if you don't mind me asking. Why are you suddenly interested in knowing more about Ngelozi?"

"It's normal to enquire about people who are yet to be a part of your circumference for a little while longer. I just happen to care Ndandatho"

"You involving your spirituality denotes something zealous and deep gogo" She giggles.

"Oh no silly!! I was just asking these are simple questions that anybody would ask about anyone Liyana. Look let me not distract you and delay you from making breakfast. See you around" She smiles and pats my shoulder as she walks out. I search deep into her invisibility gogo is up to something and I hope it's nothing related to her relationship with Nhlonipho. I won't allow people to abuse Ngelozi calling her names or mistreating her because of her blood. If her heart beats for Nhlonipho then no one will come

between them. I come from that coldness I won't stand to watch my little girl suffer from such. Gabi walks in the kitchen she immediately exits when she realizes my presence. God! I have to make it up to her I really owe her an apology..

Thabile

"Look what the cat dragged in!" I say as I sway my slim waist heading to my husband who has his crown on his hand. He didn't sleep home last night this is the second time he goes Awol.

"Morning maNgwane"

"Where are you coming from Ngwane? Where did you sleep last night because I don't recall you sleeping besides me"

"I'm not one of your opponents Thabile if you want to irk someone go to Thuthukani. I'm not up for your shenanigans"

He says walking past me.

"Since when do you use that tone with me Ngidi?"

"Since you've shown the world the true colors by ruining Zikhali's daughter ceremony. What were you thinking Thabile?"

"There comes the lecture.." I say walking away.

"Thabile one day just one day I will never come back to his house knowing you still around." "Excuse you? What actually are trying to tell me Ngidi?"

"That I'm getting tired and impatient of your stinking attitude.

What you did in Umthombo embarrassed and dropped my virtue as a King."

"Blah blah blah! I'm out for the day Ngidizivaliwe I have errands to run. When your daughter wakes up tell her to go to the market and buy groceries."

I sway my hips and reach for the door. A aromatic fragrance penetrates my nostrils. I turn to look at Ngidi.

" Ngidizivaliwe wait up! "

He looks at me I walk closer to him. I sniff him. " And now what are you doing? "

" What a woman who knows her husband does." "This is creepy"

"Where did you sleep last night?" "I slept at Zikhali's house"

"That explains the cheap perfume that I smell from you. It smells bad bath twice to rid it" I walk away and turn the door handle.

"You! Come ride with me." "My Queen"

"Hurry up and stop bowing! You guards are useless! Useless just like everything else that exists!! Hurry up!!" I lash out and walk to the cart. The guard holds my hand to aid me climb the cart. I sit down and fix my dress. The horses start to gallop. My eyes wander around as thoughts cloud my mind. I look at the girls who are walking around with calabashes over their heads

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some with basins. As they stop to laugh. I'm looking at them and wishing I was them. There were so many things I would have done and not done. I would've chosen my battles wisely. Maybe I wouldn't have been the kind of woman that I am. I've done so many bad things that only my victims and I know about. Some of them were walking on them and some of them are wandering around in the fields. Some are still pending.

Often times I wonder and question why my parents named me Thabisile because honestly there was never a moment I was joyful and all chirpy throughout my existence. My life has always been a sequence of pain misery anguish and discomfort. I've

spent much of my time in winter crying myself a river and hiding behind curtains. My biological mother was a witch a high ranked witch. She was always busy never had time to give me the mother and daughter kind of moment. All she did was to force me to run some of her errands I was young and blank about what I was doing each time I was told to go throw things in the bushes. My father on the other hand he had two wives my mother being a second wife.

Father loved the first wife alongside her children. Thabisile was just a child there was nothing adorable and praise fulfilled about her. She was just a Princess that was hated by many her family included. At least her mother tried to fill in the void she would buy her beads and clothes whenever she had money. And little Thabile appreciated that because love was something she was never gifted nor lavished with. When her mother was labeled as a witch things worsen for her because she was banished and out casted from her royalty rights. She became a homeless Princess. Poverty took over at some point she believed she was a commoner and started living like one. She met a commoner who was only two years older than her Makhosonke. They got along very well. Their friendship resumed one day they both confessed their feelings for each other. The candle picked up its flame. They got head over heels with each other but something happened as they were enjoying themselves. Thabile found her mother burning and crying in agony saying a nixie attacked her. When Thabile was trying to aid her mother. The Queen instructed her to leave the bushes to go seek her uncle "Makhehla" Who was gonna be in charge of her. The mother told little Thabile to runaway from the village they hid their heads on because the

nixie was coming for her since she was very aware of a toxic and blood thirsty species that was residing in her territory. Hence I ran away from Umthombo Kingdom immediately my mother was silenced for good. That night I ran away from Umthombo leaving behind Makhosonke the love of my heart*****

"My Queen where actually are we going?"

I try to open my lips to my surprise I'm met by my watery mucus and tears. I sniff and answer. "Just keep going" I say not knowing where I'm going...

Gezekile(Ngcolosi's mother)

As I'm taking a walk outside their beautiful compound. I'm met by "Mama" By mama I mean Bonisile's mother. That's her name. She smiles and looks at me.

"Morning"

"Morning my sister and how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks and what are you doing here?" I ask. "I was meditating"

"You should've called me"

"Next time I will." We giggle and remain silent. "Her aura runs deeps in these grounds."

"I was about to say that" "Death shall not be proud"

"It's a pity we all going there mama" She looks at me.

"My guess is how am I gonna depart from this world to be united with my ancestors not forgetting my husband" I say smiling.

"You ready aren't you?"

"Honestly I've been ready since the day Nhlonipho was born but it took long." "Gezekile you do know Ngcolosi still needs you?"

"He has a wife kids and grandchildren. It's not like I will be leaving him alone Mama"

"A mother's love surpasses all loves Gezekile. He might have a family but his family will never be you"

"Zikhali is an orphan look how happy he is. Ngcolosi will live too"

"That's what you think.. Zikhali still cries for his mother but nobody knows not even the wife but he does. Even now he is crying in his private room" I look at Mama.

"I'm tired Mama.. This illness is draining me bits by bits. Just yesterday it wasn't phlegm but blood Mama"

"Allow me to give you herbs Gezekile"

"No.. I just want to die Mama like I've said. I've been ready since 20 years ago. I even forgot how old is Nhlonipho"

She looks at me.

"But you being selfish Geze. Come on live longer"

"For what? I'm tired of living my sister. The kids are weighing on me with their drama. Soon it will be Nhlonipho I see how that boy looks at Fuze's child. I'm certain history will repeat itself. He will impregnate that girl bringing in more chaos and discomfort in my house. I've had enough honestly. If it's not Ngcolosi and Nozibele it's Ndandatho and Zimele. Or better yet that lot of nothing Thabile and her daughter I'm tired" I say and cough up badly. The coughing gets worse I spit out my blood on the little cloth I use to clean myself. Mama looks at me.

"This is not good Gezekile. Zimele is marrying my granddaughter soon you can't just die come on."

"I will only live till they marry. Three days later I will unite with Jali I can feel him closer. His calling me home" I smile. Mama pulls me for a hug.

"Promise to live till then Gezekile. These kids will not survive with everything that is coming your way. At least say your farewells a bit nicer and warmer. Please"

"Don't worry. My death will come with a lesson. You will see. Let's go inside to have something to eat I'm starving"

"I'm starting to wish you didn't come here because MaButhelezi is kinder motivated you to craving for death."

We giggle "No way."

"I'm gonna be bored though" "Join me then"

She looks at me.

"Please don't tell anyone about my illness please. Let my death be a surprise and if I die tell them to bury me in satin they must lay me down on a bed of roses"

"Just shut up Gezekile please"

"Thats my wish!"

"Hhayi suka!" We share a sisterly hug and walk away.

Nhlonipho

I'm the last person to walk in the house as breakfast is served. Everyone looks at me making me to feel a little bit uncomfortable. Surely they heard the noises and I'm yet to be shouted or banished. You will never know with these blue bloods. I yawn and look at everyone. Ngelozi is not looking at me I can't keep up as well. For some weird reasons I left my temporary chamber late on purpose. I'm shy honestly I'm actually afraid of looking at my hearts ruler.

"Greetings" I say softly

"Greetings Prince Nhlo.." Everyone -

"Waking up late is so unlike you Nhlonipho what made you delay?" Mom-

"I had a nightmare last night" I lie obviously. Ngelozi looks at me and quickly shifts her eyes. "Thats strange my boy. I will make you warm milk" Mom-

"Ma I'm fine"

"No Nhlo look at your eyes. My baby is not okay" Mom- "Ma please!.." I say between my teeth.

"I'm just glad the cat decided on dragging you in." Zimele - "Can we eat please" Busani-

"Indeed let's eat" Nda-

"Chicken thieves!! Surely this wheat was stolen too" Gabi-

Everyone looks at her I quickly glance at Ngelozi. To my surprise

she's looking at me. I faintly smile so does she.

"What are you on about Gabi?" Bon- "Ask your ugly children
mama"

"Gabi! That tone is unacceptable" Zikhali

"Daddy they stole from me can't you see I'm angry?" She sulks. I
look at her and faintly smile. Imagine marrying a person who
would chose to starve instead of slaughtering her so many
chickens. I wouldnt survive.

"They stole what?" Gogo-

"Busani and Ndandatho are not my siblings. I don't like them anymore" "Okay... Gabi what happened?" Boni-

"They stole from me" "Stole what?"

"My chickens mama" "What chickens?" Dad-

"The chickens we had for supper the other night. That my sister thief stole and cooked into a stew"

Zikhali laughs

"Those were two delicious chickens Gabi you also enjoyed them too" Zikhali- "Thank you baba!!" Busan -

"Sweetheart you also ate the chicken. If I remember correctly you blended the bones saying the chicken was yummy" Bonu- Everyone laughs. Ngelozi looks at me I do the same. I get goosebumps and smile. I tilt my head Zimele is looking at me.. I clear my throat and fix my eyes on my plate..

"Can I please have the juice" Ngelozi and myself say in unison.. Busani giggles Ndandatho and Zimele looks at us.

"So thirsty so early in the morning" Busani- Everyone laughs.

"Here you can pour your first and then I will do it behind you" I say looking at Ngelozi.. Zimele laughs "What Zimele?"

"You say you will do what behind her?" Zimele-

Ndandatho laughs.. I choose to ignore them. Why is granny creepy looking at me? Geez!!

Nomaswazi

My back aches.

My entire body is numb and stiff. I can't believe I Nomaswazi Ngwane slept on a grass mat for the whole night. Especially in some ugly and falling cave that has a broken door. I know beggars cannot be choosers but this house is very bad calling it a house is over rated. This is a kraal. Shall I continue residing here this mud house will collapse on me.

"Breakfast is served" "Morning Phiwe"

He looks at me and says nothing. I get up from my grass mat and try to stretch my body.

"Cover up and come outside. After eating we have fire wood to collect and water containers to fill up" "Excuse me? You say what?"

"You heard every word I've said Nomaswazi" "What am I Phiwe? A royal servant?"

"Noma around here if you need things you work for them.

There's no mana here if you need water to drink. You need to go to the stream to fill up buckets. No one is here to lick your butt"

"Phiwe I'm not going to collect water and wood. I'm not a royal servant nor am I a housewife. I'm tired I hardly slept last night because of this grass mat of yours. Im not going to strain my back by collecting water and wood yooh imagine the whole Princess doing commoners work! Over my dead body"

"Noma look around you and tell me what you see. Do you see gold and silver furniture around here? Do you see a big built portrait of your father and mother against the wall? Do you see ceramic tiles on this floor or rather cow dung? This is not your ravishing house Nomaswazi. This here is reality and If I was you I would make peace with it and accept my new fate. "

" Phiwe I'm a Princess think of my integrity. What will people say and think of a Princess whose licking dry wounds of commoners? Phiwe don't do me like that please. My night was horrible and unbearable. Sleeping on the floor isn't a child's play my body is stiff as we talk on top of that you want me to go collect wood like really Phiwe? "

"Noma how long are planning to stay here?"

"Long enough till I find the courage to find my own place"

"Since you will be staying here long enough then you will do everything that is done in these premises. You will cook sweep the yard collect water and wood. You will also water the vegetables that are in the garden. You will apply cow dung on these floors. You will do everything just like everyone. You being here simply means you need us not vice versa as the head of this compound I've spoken. "

" Phiwe come on! Are you hearing yourself? I'm pregnant have you forgotten that? Do you even love your child and care about his or her well-being? This is not the way to treat a woman who is carrying your first child"

"Get up and stop barking"

He walks outside leaving me covering up and replaying his words. There's no way I will be a donkey for commoners.

Ndandatho

Our guest are leaving today apart from gogo "Mama" She will be here for a couple of days. I kiss Zimele once again. Bangi cries for him. Zimele holds the baby and plays with him with a little while. "You breaking his little heart"

"It's not intentionally. See why I want to marry you Ndandatho? I can't be a visitor in my own son's life." "I get it Jali and I'm sorry"

"It's okay my love. Bangi go to mommy" "Come baby"

He shakes his head.

"Bangi come daddy is leaving boy"

He shakes his head once again.. Zimele looks at me. "He doesn't want Zimele"

"What do we do?" "I don't know.."

"Gatsha go to mommy little warrior daddy will come for you.

Yezwa?" My baby looks at his father with glassy eyes.

"Nda please take him forcefully we have no choice" "His gonna cry Zimele"

"My love we have no choice they waiting for me"

"I so hate what you want me to do Zimele. When he cries the pain is felt on abdomen."

He looks at me as I attempt to take my son who bursts into tears. My hearts shrinks by the sound of his sobs.

"It's okay Bangi shhhh my baby.. Don't cry yezwa?" "Don't tell me you also angry Nda"

"There's no joy in goodbyes Jali travel safe" "I love you"

"I love you too"

We share a hug and kiss he leans over to kiss his son. I wave everyone goodbye. I slowly walk inside the house with tears whelming in my lids. I find my parents clearing out the table. I walk away heading to my private chamber. I put my son on the bed and let my tear fall.

"Ndandatho!"

"Ma" I say wiping my tear. "Can I come in?"

"Yes"

The door swings open. My beautiful mother walks in. "Nda"

"Ma"

"Can we talk?" "Sure"

"Ndandatho can I come in?" My grandmother says outside mom rolls her eyes.

"Yes come in" She opens the door and walks in.. Her eyes land on mother. Her smile fades. Mom puts her hand on my thigh.

"Look my flower let's talk some other time." Mom-

"No Boni it's okay. You two can continue I will come back later"

Gogo- "Later baby" Mom stands up.

"Boni you don't have to leave because of me" Mom walks out ignoring gogo. "I'm sorry about that Ndandatho"

"It's okay gogo"

She sits on my bed and play with Gatsha. "Why is mom treating you like that?" "She hates me Ndandatho"

"For what exactly? Isn't it wrong for kids to hate their parents?"

"With your mother it's the right thing to do Ndandatho"

"Gogo I have time you can talk to me"

"Ndandatho I honestly don't want trouble with your mother she will think I'm putting words into your head and I don't want that Liyana. Already I have a lot going on I can't add more"

"Gogo this attitude is unacceptable you are her mother and she needs to respect you and treat you with respect."

"Ndandatho it's complicated my daughter" "Gogo talk to me"

"Fine"

She narrates to me everything. I'm left disappointed in my mother

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you are her mother and she needs to respect you and treat you with respect." "Ndandatho it's complicated my daughter"

"Gogo talk to me" "Fine"

She narrates to me everything. I'm left disappointed in my mother it wasn't her mother's fault that everything turned out this way. Gogo had no power to alter things and prevent them

from happening. Mama is being melodramatic and I won't let this slide. Not when she's causing a gray haired woman stress and worry. This is wrong. Gogo walks out saying she's going to stretch her legs. I decide on taking a power nap last night I went overboard. I need this sleep.

Ngelozi

Looking at Nhlonipho is a mission impossible. I cannot look at him and not see what we did last night. Each time I look at him I feel naked and exposed. It's like everyone can see my nakedness or what we did. I do want to look at him but it's hard.

"We've reached our destination" Nhlonipho's mother says with a smile. The King and Queen are the first ones to climb off Zimele and gogo Jali are next. Then me and Nhlonipho.

"Ngelozi can I walk you home?" "I will manage Nhlo"

"I'm walking you home" I say my goodbyes to the Jali's.

Nhlonipho and myself walk away. We are not saying anything to each other this is so unlike us.

"Thank you" "For what?"

"Last night" I shyly say.

"No need to thank me Ngelozi" "It was nice"

I say looking at him.. He looks at me then the pregnant lady who walks past us. He looks deep in thoughts.

"Nhlonipho"

"Sorry you were saying?" "That it was nice"

"Yes it was night.. I didn't hurt you?" "It was painful but in a nice way"

"I see.." He says looking aside. "Are you okay Nhlonipho?"

"Yes I'm okay I'm just feeling tired" "Are you sure it's only that?"

"Yes it's only that." He says looking at me. I smile and steal a moment to kiss him. "Today I love you more Nhlonipho"

He smiles.

"I love you more"

"I mean it Nhlonipho."

"I know you mean it I mean it too"

I see my father heading on our direction. "Ehm I should get going Ngelozi take care" "Thank you my Prince"

"Pleasure" He gives me my little bag and greets my father then walks away.. "Ngelozi"

"Baba"

"Let me help you with that bag" I give it to my father. We walk home. "How was your weekend?"

"It was beautiful baba I ate fancy food. I saw fascinating things that side. Ndandatho has magic daddy" He chuckles.

"I see my angel.. Did you miss me though?" "Not a chance dad"

"That hurts Ngelozi. As for me I was worried about you I couldn't get sleep knowing you were far from my reach"

"Baba I was safe"

"I know Ngelozi you just won't understand what I feel when we are apart or when you are in pain." I smile. Mom walks towards us with a tray. She flashes me a smile.

"Hello Ngelozi... Fuze how are you" She says greeting my father.

"I'm also good mama"

"Your smile says it all my baby. Here is something to quench the thirst" "Thank you my love" Dad-

"Why don't you call her my flower honey or sweetheart? She would love that dad" There's silence. "Ngelozi"

"Ba?"

"Where do these names come from?"

"I read them from a book baba" "What book?"

"William Shakespeare"

"Don't ever read those books they polluting your mind." Mom giggles.

"Ngelozzi your mom and I have been talking last night.. We were thinking of doing a ceremony for you ukuthombisa. It's a ceremony we were supposed to have done for you the first time or second time after you had your monthly cycles." Dad- My heart stops beating for a moment.

" Your father and I we were at fault for not doing it sooner. Traditionally we were supposed to celebrate you and welcome you to adulthood with a goat and traditional beer for finally being a woman." Mom-

"I don't understand ma. Do I need to wear umhlwehlwe for that ceremony? Just like it happens with umemulo?"

"No you don't have to wear umhlwehlwe but we have to celebrate my daughter" Dad- "Will my virginity be tested?"

"I will brief you up Ngelozzi. After talking to Siziwe's mother. By the way I'm going to buy you white beads for this years Reed dance ceremony" Mom smiles.

"About that mama can I not go this year" They both look at me.

"Why not Ngelozzi? You never miss these. What has changed?"

Ngelozzi should I be worried? " Dad- "No baba... All is well I just miss Aunty Fuze. I was thinking if visiting her instead."

"Ngelozzi..." Mom-

"You can't miss umhlanga Ngelozzi. It comes once in a year your aunt can wait but not umhlanga" Dad-

"I miss aunty though. Skipping a single ceremony won't hurt mama nobaba. Besides I don't understand why we have to go through such an experience just to prove our virginity"

"My mother used to say when a girl starts questioning umhlanga it simply means water has started leaking on the rooftop." Dad-

"No baba. I would never do that not in a single day."

"Is my kraal still intact Ngelozi?" I swallow hard and nod. "Then we going for that umhlanga ceremony"

"Baba I don't want to go there. Those warriors sneak on us last time they molested a girl.. Mina I'm scared baba"

"She's telling the truth baba.. Some guards do things to these kids" Mom says looking at me.

"Ngelozi is attending umhlanga and this is not up for debate" dad says standing up. I feel my intestines tying knots this can't be happening. I can't go there not when Nhlonipho and I made love for the second time. I can't go there.

"Ngelozi" "Ma"

"Is everything okay?" "Yes mama"

"You didn't do anything that your father and myself warned you against isn't it?" "I'm still pure mama"

"It better be that way Ngelozi please since you don't want to go the Reed dance I will see what I can do for you not to go there"

"Thank you mama."

"Pleasure i love how happy you are my child" She stands up. I crack my head replaying this conversation..

Nhlonipho

I'm laying on my bed replaying my moment with Ngelozi. I need to seek help and advices regarding what I did. I can't afford to impregnate Ngelozi. I feel guilty as it is that I failed to pull out. I can't begin to imagine what could happen shall Ngelozi be pregnant. Seeing that pregnant woman reminded me of this reality of mine. I need to seek knowledge about herbs that Ngelozi can drink to cleanse her womb. we both young to be parents. I was gonna pull out but she locked me in with her legs. Zimele walks in.

"Penny for your thoughts?"

maybe I should ask him but no had he known such information Ndandatho wouldn't be a mother of one and counting. Only

Siziwe can help me she's a woman after all..

"Just feeling sleepy" "Why?"

"Aaibo Zimele so now a person must give a reason to why they feeling sleepy?" "That was a simple question Nhlonipho no need to bite off my head."

I look at him. "You good?"

"Yeah I'm fine"

"I see..." He says looking at me. "Zimele stop it please"

"You had sex didn't you?"

"Says who? Don't come in here and make wrongful accusations please Zimele"

"I'm joking Nhlonipho geez! Why are you so up tight and defensive? I'm joking. I know you are a good guy unlike me." I look at him.

"Let's go for a walk"

"Fine" I get up from bed and follow him outside. God how do I fix this? Knowing Ngelozi she will freak out if I explain what happened that night.

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Boni

I'm busy humming a song as I'm parading my kitchen preparing supper. My husband is not around he mentioned something

about attending a meeting. My mother walks in laughing alongside Gabisile and Gatsha. I look at her then the kids and continue doing my chore.

"Gabi it's bath time you know you won't have supper looking like that" "I will get to it shortly mama"

"Now Gabisile.. Where are your siblings?"

"I don't know and I don't care about those thieves. Bye gogo I will see you shortly. I'm off to bath"

"Bye Gabi" My daughter walks away. I can feel my mother's eyes on me but I choose to go about my business.

"Sbonisile" "Sbonisiwe"

"Pardon me your names still confuse me till this date. Sometimes I forget I was blessed with twins" "We were never twins but ten months apart"

"You know what I mean Bonii raised the two if you as twins" "I don't want to burn my pots please"

"Sbonisiwe can you please lend me your ear at least allow me to explain myself and apologize to you. For everything please"

"What if I care less about your apology or better yet your sobby explanation? Mama I think it's best you go back to whatever cave you reside in."

"Boni ngiyakucela please."

"Are we by any chance trying to force a conversation? Ma I'm ignoring you and avoiding you for a reason. I'm protecting my sanity and peace of mind."

"Boni what happened to your sister was never my fault it was destined to be. It was her fate Boni. Just like it was your fate to be separated with Ndandatho for years Boni" I push the knife aside and slowly walk towards my mother.

"Don't ever bring up my daughter in your lousy explanations. Accept that you are an imposter and a killer. Accept that you are a liar and a conniving old creepy woman. Listen I want you gone before you lure my daughters to a early grave just like you did with yours"

"Boni why are you saying painful word's? Do you really think I would hurt your children? Do you really think I would kill your children? Actually are you calling me a witch? Me Sbonisiwe your mother?"

"I'm done talking to you Ma" I turn my back on her and cook my pots. I hear sniffs. "Boni I'm still talking and you gonna listen to

me"

She sternly says.

"Why would I do that? I can only do that if you will bring back my sister if not I have no time to waste on you! Get out of my sight!!"

Ndandatho

"Boni I'm still talking and you gonna listen to me"

Gogo sternly says.

"Why would I do that? I can only do that if you will bring back my sister if not I have no time to waste on you! Get out of my sight!!"

"Bonisiwe!!"

"Save those crocodile tears for someone who cares mama!" My mother roars. "Mama!!" I say walking in the kitchen.

"Ndandatho how long have you been standing there?" "Long enough to hear you tarnishing your mother mother" "It's not what it looks like actually stay out of this."

"I'm afraid I can't and I won't mom. What you doing to gogo is unfair and inhumane mama." "Ndandatho I said stay out of it!"

"Gogo are you okay?" I inquire she nods.

"Gogo I will make you a cup of tea please go sit on the couch pretty please" "I want to go pack my stuffs my grandchild."

"Better!!!" Mom-

I look at my mother. I walk Gogo to the couch and storm to the kitchen. "What was that Bonisiwe?"

"Excuse you Liyana who are you calling by name?"

"How could you do that to your mother Mama? Can't you see you hurting gogo?" "My child I said stay out of it"

"There's no way I'm gonna do that mama. What you doing is cruel and evil! It's inappropriate ma" "And you yelling at your mother is appropriate Ndandatho?"

"I guess an apple doesn't fall far from the tree mama. If wena you can do that to your mother then what is stopping me from doing it?"

"Ndandatho I will slap you you hear me?"

" Bonisiwe leave the child alone. Ndandatho don't interfere please" Gogo-

"No gogo. Mama is wrong and I won't sit back and cheer on her. Her sister dying wasn't not your fault so was me being separated from her and Zikhali. That was my fate." Mom slaps me. I hold

my cheek in disbelief.

"Mama you slapped me?"

"I will do it again!! To remind you I'm your Mother not vice versa!! You are only a mother to Gatsha not me!! I see you've injected things into my daughter's head. See what I mean when I say you are creepy ma?" Mom-

"I guess I also made a huge mistake by forgiving you and father for ditching me in the bush!!" I roar "What's going on here?" Dad- I blink once a tear rolls out.

"Excuse me" I say attempting to leave the kitchen. My father blocks my way instead.

"Boni what is going on in here? what was that noise? And why was my daughter slapped huh?" Dad- "Mkhwenyana I can explain" Gogo-

"SBONISIWE I'M TALKING TO YOU!!!" Dad roars so much that mother drops a lid. "I won't repeat myself!!!"

"My husband it was a little hiccup."

"A hiccup that brought tears to my daughters face? You call insulting your mother and my daughter a hiccup?" Dad-

"Ndandatho was being disrespectful Buthelezi"

"And you were being obedient and respectful towards your mother? What do you call insulting your own mother?" I say. Dad looks at mom with red eyes.

"Ndandatho I'm sorry my daughter go to your room. Wena come here!!" "Zikhali"

"Don't Zikhali me get your arse in the bedroom!!" Mom throws the cloth on the table and walks away. I look at Gogo then make my way to my chamber. I pack up a couple of clothes i take Gatsha and carry him on my back.

"And now what's going on with your parents? Zikhali is yelling." Busani- "And Ndandatho is leaving"

I say walking through the door.

"Ndandatho!! What's going on? And why are you leaving?"

"I think I made a huge mistake by forgiving your parents for ditching me in the bushes. I mean our own mother cannot forgive her mother for not being able restore her sisters life. If my own mother cannot forgive why should I be the bigger person and forgive? "I sternly say.

"Ndandatho I don't know what happened but I cannot lose you please stay"

"No Busani I have to go. Maybe me leaving will teach your mother something if she doesn't learn from my departure then she's a barbarian and a heartless being.. I love you Buthelezi" I say embracing my brother who has tears in his eyes.

"Ndandatho where are you going?" "I will see Busani"

"Ndandatho don't go please you putting your life in danger"

"Busani obviously you will find me kwa Jali"

"I'm coming with you for safety purposes" "Fine"

My brother and I walk outside. Immediately I sat my foot in the cart my vision goes blurry. I hear water sounds and a strong lighting clap. Before I knew it my head hits hard on something..

Thabile

I'm surprised to find my second biological child in the house. Mkhuleko is hardly home and when his around his busy doing commoners works. Herding cows and milking the cows. His the only child Ngidi and I conceived together. I greet.

"Then my beautiful mother walks in. Mom how are you?" He says walking closer to embrace me. "Mkhuleko you growing tall my boy. What are your uncles feeding you?"

"Food mom and bush meat. Where is the sun?" "What sun?"

"Nomaswazi. Where is she?"

"She's surely sleeping. When did you get back my boy?"

"It's been a couple of hours now. Noma is not around ma I went to her room. There's silence there" "Really?"

"Yes mama."

"unless she went to Thuthukani village. She did hint she was

gonna go there" "To do what in Thuthukani?" Ngidi-
"Isn't it obvious Ngwane?"

"That's crazy!! Why would Nomaswazi go there? Zimele made it sure he doesn't want her. That girl is crazy!!" Ngidi

"That girl happens to be your daughter Ngidi"

"No daughter of mine is that desperate for a man!!! See your teachings Thabisile?" Ngidi- " Well thanks for the warm welcome mama no baba" Mkhuleko says standing up.

"Boy.. Mkhuleko!!" he disappears. "See what you made me do Ngidi?"

"Hhayi suka!! Fetch Nomaswazi from that Kingdom.." He says standing up.

"Did he eat?"

"Eat what? When did you cook?"

I blow my nose and walk to Mkhuleko's bedroom. I knock he permits me entrance. "My son.. I'm sorry about what happened"

"I'm used to it ma. It's just that I wasn't expecting it today" "I'm sorry Mkhuleko"

"Ma"

"Yes"

"Do you love dad?"

"Of course. What kind of a question is that?"

"You always fighting mama. It's been worse since Iminathi passed on" I embrace my son and kiss his hair.

"One day you will understand how adulthood is like. Fighting in a relationship doesn't mean it's over my son or love is no longer there"

"I see"

"Is that all?"

"Well there is something I've heard ma from one of uncles wives. Mam Thandie said something bad about you"

"What did she say?"

"Well I can't say this mama" "Mkhuleko talk please"

"Promise you won't freak out?" "I won't I promise"

"Ma don't make a mountain out of this please"

"If she said rubbish you never setting foot in that place
Mkhuleko" "See why I don't want to tell you? You dramatic
mama"

"Okay fine. You will still visit them. Now talk"

"She said you were cheating on father with a commoner from
Umthombo if not mistaken" I choke on my saliva.

"She said what?"

"She said you were seeing a Makhosonke guy and that you have
a baby with him. She said I could not be a Kings child."

I immediately stand up and start pacing around the room. "She
said what Mkhuleko?"

"I overheard her talking to one of the wives from that Palace"

"Thats rubbish son she is lying. Wena you are a Ngwane

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she is lying. Wena you are a Ngwane you all are. She is crazy..

Me? Cheating?" Mkhuleko looks at me.

"They said you were cheating on father Twenty years ago if not
nineteen years ago." "These are lies"

I stop him from going any further.

"She lied son you know how your aunt hated me till this date she would do anything and everything to tarnish my name. Wena you are a true Ngwane. Don't let them get to you boy"

"I don't believe their story ma. I missed you"

"I missed you too" I kiss his cheek. I promise to go prepare a meal for him. I asked Mamchunu the fool who raised Ndandatho as hers not knowing she was a Princess.. By the way let me spill the beans to her.

"Ma mchunu" "My queyen"

"Please prepare a feast for my son.." "My Queen"

"Oh! Did you hear the latest news?" "What news?"

"Your daughter Ndandatho" "What about her?"

"She goes around declaring herself as a Princess of Umthombo. Remember the ceremony I went to on Saturday back in Umthombo Kingdom? I was going to her welcoming ceremony"

"Ndandatho is a Princess?" "She's pretending to be one" "I see"

"Anyway cook for my son." I say walking away. "My Queen a minute please"

"What?"

"A letter came in during the day from a Makhosonke" I immediately run towards her. "What letter?"

"I didn't read it my Queen. It's in your private chamber just next to your bed on the table" "Why did you put it there?"

"My apologies my Queen".

"Did you tell the King about that letter?" "No"

"Better" I say walking to my private chamber. Makhosonke? What does he want now???

Zikhali

"What was that Boni?"

"Zikhali she was out of line. I had to reprimand her. ""By slapping her Bonisiwe? Did I ever slap you?" "Zikhali I'm sorry"

"Mama!!! Baba!!! Come!! Ndandatho is not breathing please hurry up!!" "What?"

We both look at each other with our eyes popped out.

"You better not be the cause of this Bonisiwe. Shall any thing happen to my daughter I swear you will rue the day you ever crossed paths with me." I jog outside following Busani. I find a guard and gogo trying to shake Ndandatho. I kneel in front of my daughter and hold her hand.

" Ndandatho please come back my child"

"How is she? Ndandatho!!!" Boni says kneeling in front of Ndandatho whose not moving. "What happened Busani?"

"She was angry baba saying she was leaving this kingdom" I look at Boni. "What then?"

"She was trying to climb on the cart when she suddenly fell""This is bad.. Help me carry her" I say to Busani

"Ndandatho my baby please" Boni-

"Shut up Bonisiwe actually don't touch her. It's all your fault she's in this state. Let her loose! " I roar."Zikhali please"

"Bonisiwe don't push me into doing something I will regret doing. Get lost!!!" I bark so much that she steps away.

"Mama is she okay?"

"She's gonna be okay Zikhali" "What caused this?"

"Her anger. It's by grace or favor that the lightening didn't strike the person behind her pain." "I don't follow"

"She's not supposed to be angry Buthelezi her anger shakes her guides. She's a free being her rage calls for danger.. It can lead to death too. "

"I see.. What do we do from here?"

"We let her be till she comes back to the living. Boni take Gatsha inside the house" I look at her she walks closer to her mother and gets the baby.

"Ngelozzi. Ngelozzi!!!" Ndandatho says with her eyes closed..

"What about Ngelozzi?"

"I don't know only her knows"

She opens her eyes and looks around us. "What happened?" Nda-

Baba kaNgelozzi

I'm laying in bed cracking my skull. Raising a girl child is not easy especially when you are a man. My wife walks in she looks at me and smile.

"Fuze" "My love"

"You look troubled is everything okay?" "I'm okay my love don't worry about me"

"Fuze I can not worry especially when you looking like this" "It's work related don't worry"

She looks at me.

"Fuze talk to me please"

"Mafuze do you think we should be worried?" "Worried about what?"

"Ngelozzi"

"Why would you worry about her?"

"Do you remember that Ndandatho lady?" "Yes"

"My biggest fear is for my daughter to turn out like her. You do know how Ngelozi is fond of her. I can't help it but to think our girl might be influenced by that girl. She might mimic every thing Ndandatho does. Maybe I'm overthinking my love"

"Baba uNgelozi is a very smart child. We raised her well. She would never ever do anything we've warned her against. Ngelozi is a responsible being Fuze. She would never ever mimic bad things.. She knows very well that sex before marriage is very wrong.. She knows her private parts are privates for a reason.. We need to trust our daughter my love."

"Mafuze have you seen how close they are with Nhlonipho? Their friendship is worrisome"

"Fuze.. Nhlonipho is very respectful and responsible being. His a sweet boy.. He knows very well that girls are not to be touched especially commoners. Nhlonipho is the only true friend our daughter has ever had. Baba stop thinking of such things. Our daughter is responsible having such thoughts is an insult to Ngelozi.. She would never baba. Our child is nothing like these Thuthukani maidens. She loves everything but not men. Nhlonipho on the other side he loves kids and teaching. Not kissing girls. To show that Nhlonipho is a mannered being doesn't he ask for our permission to spend time with Ngelozi? Doesn't he play with Ngelozi in front of us? Baba if you continue thinking like this you gonna hurt Ngelozi.. She's gonna leave us believe you me"

"Mafuze I can't help it my wife. Why doesn't she want to go emhlangeni? My Ngelozi loves showing off especially with her pride and innocent breasts."

"Baba she's growing and the more she grows she will have things she would wish to weed out and plant others in. It's normal."

"I hear you my wife for everyone's sake I don't want that girl to bring us babies soon. It's very risky for Ngelozi to go around

dating especially since she knows nothing about her biological mother"

"Baba please.. Let her be. Shes not that kind of a child"

"But my wife I need you to observe her though. Or better yet remind her of this talk" "I will Fuze can I join you in bed?"

"I don't want what you want Maka Ngelozzi" "You lying Fuze you have plenty of it"

She says climbing the bed.. She kiss my lips..

Nhlonipho

I just finished bathing. My walk with Zimele was very helpful even though I didn't tell him about my little demeanor. A soft knock comes on my door. I quickly cover my lower body with a towel before I open..

"Give me a minute" I say fastening the towel. I open the door. What the heck? She walks in and sits on my bed with her legs crossed. I lock the door.

"Ngelozzi what brings you here?" "Is it a sin to miss you?"

"No its not but it's risky for you to come here Ngelozzi"

"I'm sorry Nhlonipho but I missed you. And I wanted to give you a good night kiss" "I appreciate that my love but don't ever take such a risk."

I say sitting next to her. She doesn't waste time she jumps on kissing me. "Can we make love again?"

"Can we slow down Ngelozzi. This pace we moving on is dangerous" "You joking right?"

"I'm not Ngelozzi. We need to slow down" "Oh! You don't want?"

"No it's not like that" "Then what Nhlonipho?"

I look at her and heave a sigh.

"We did something wrong last night Ngelozzi" "What did we do?"

"You locked me with your legs making it hard for me to pull out"

"Pull out where and what?"

"Remember the fluid that makes baby?" "Yes.. What about it?"

"Well I... I.. It's in your body Ngelozzi" "Okay... And?"

"Ngelozzi you might be.. Be pregnant" She immediately jumps from the bed and stand on her two legs. "Nhlonipho you saying?"

"I couldn't pull out Ngelozzi"

"So your baby fluid is inside my womb Nhlonipho?" I nod.

"Yhooooo!!!! Yoooh!!!! I'm going to have a baby Nhlonipho?" "I don't know"

"Yhoooooooo!!! Hhhayi Nhlonipho" Her eyes turn glassy immediately.

"Don't freak out we will find ways to.. To clean your womb so my fluid will disappear without doing its job"

"Please take me to the river" That comes as a whimper. "To do what?"

"To die... UBaba is gonna kill me Nhlo just today he was talking about Umhlanga and a certain ceremony. Nhlonipho they gonna kill me"

"What ceremony?" "Ukuthomba" "What?"

"I'm gonna die Nhlonipho" She starts crying. I pull her closer to my chest.

"It's okay my love we will find a solution to this problem. You might not be pregnant I mean it's too soon to tell Ngelozi. I will ask around on how to prevent pregnancy. Surely there is something we can do. Dont cry please"

"My boobs are tiny to be someone's food. Imagine me with a belly Nhlonipho I would look funny. I will look like I just swallowed a peanut!!" I giggle.

"It's not funny!!! Yoooh!!!"

"Ngelozi you might not be pregnant relax."

"You can't say that Nhlonipho not when your baby making fluid is in my pot. It's best I go" "Ngelozi I'm sorry"

"I will try to drink African beer so your baby making fluid can get drunk and leave my body" "What if the yeast makes it rise just like it does with bread?"

"Yoooh!!!!!!!" She sinks on the bed... SEHRANMAGZINE.COM

(Invasion in Ndandatho's sleep/Vision)

"Iminathi what brings you here?"

"Greetings Princess Ndandatho"

"Greetings to you too. What brings you here? Aren't you supposed to be dead?"

She giggles.

"A body dies but not the soul Ndandatho."

"I see.To what do I owe this visit?"

"I want to help you regarding your little vision in exchange for your help in saving our fore fathers Kingdom"

"I don't follow Iminathi. The last time I checked you from Ngwane village and I'm from Umthombo. "

" Our Kingdom is surrounded by evil and evildoers"

She says walking around facing the stars yet playing with her hands.

"What do you mean Iminathi? How is Ngwane our Kingdom? Listen Iminathi I was never intended to reside in Ngwane to begin with. I owe that Kingdom nothing my help included. "

She ignores me and keeps pacing around. Stupid me stands up to follow her around.

" Iminathi I'm talking to you"

"Ndandatho your father and my father are related. You need to help my father and his Kingdom."

"You not making any sense right now. How is my father and King Ngidi related? You lying Iminathi and that's exasperating"

"Look Ndandatho if you don't save our Kingdom the witch will destroy it just like she and her daughter have already started. Everything will be left in ashes or dusts or better yet crumbs.

Help me to destroy them Ndandatho"

"It's risky for me to go back to Ngwane village Iminathi. I ran away from that place for a reason. I can't just up and go just like that. I have a son to live for Iminathi."

"Don't you think I know that Ndandatho? Don't you think I wish to fight this by myself without bothering you? "

"Why are you asking me to put my life in danger? You just said it yourself there's a witch there. I still don't understand why I have to risk so much for that Kingdom. I don't even belong there but you do Iminathi""

She stops pacing around and looks at me.

" Ndandatho we are family how many times am I supposed to tell you that we are family? So you not willing to fight and aid your family? We are one blood Ndandatho. I'm desperate here can't you see that? I'm here because of those people. I need to save Zuko and my father not forgetting the throne. Please "

I look at her and blow my nose.

" I'm afraid I won't do that Iminathi.. I feel your pain but my hands are tied"

" Ndandatho you will help me"

"I won't Iminathi!!"

"Well you will do by force! if not someone close to you is yet to suffer greatly I will bring them a life threatening turmoil till you agree to help me!"

"Iminathi if you can punish other people why don't you punish Thabisile and Nomaswazi yourself and let me be?"

"I can't fight them because they blocked my powers to avenge myself! But with this girl what's her name again? Ngelozi... She's gonna suffer I will make it possible Ndandatho. Her blood will be on you"

"Iminathi leave Ngelozi out if this! She has nothing to do with this!!"

"She has everything to do with this and you know it Ndandatho."

"If you hurt Ngelozi I will kill you again Iminathi. Leave Ngelozi out of this"

I roar and she laughs.

"Look my beautiful cousin this is how I'm gonna hurt her. Tick tock Liyana"

"No! No! You can't DO THAT!!"

"Tick tock..." She says walking away.

"Ngelozhi.... Ngelozhi. "

I scream her name out in fear. I open my eyes.

Immediately I open my eyes I'm met by familiar faces surrounding me.

"Shes gonna hurt her!!! " I say badly coughing.

"Shhhhhh!!! Calm down Ndandatho" Gogo-

"She wants to hurt Ngelozi!!!"

"Calm down!! Calm down my daughter. " Gogo says brushing my cheeks.

"I cannot calm down! I cannot calm down!! She is going to kill her and the..."

I feel a peaceful sleep creeps in. Before I know it it's morning. The rooster is crowing outside the sun is rising too. I rub my eyes and get up from the bed. I go about my morning routine with thought clouding my concentration. I bath Gatsha and feed him porridge. I grease his face with petroleum jel again.. His skin quickly dries out. I need gogo to mind Gatsha for a little while. I promised my little brother I was gonna join him in the farm soon and that soon is today. Going to the farm will come in handy. I will be distracted from my little vision. Thinking about it constantly is draining me and scaring me simultaneously because in honest truth this gift thing is all new to me and between my heart and soul I wish I never had it. I don't like it at all. My life was way better when I was struggling and all alone. Loneliness was warmer than this gift. I walk to gogo's chamber's along the way I bump into my mother.

"Morning Liyana"

"Morning" I say walking past her.

"Ndandatho can I.." I open the door to Gogo's chamber.

"My apologies to burge in without knocking gogo I was trying to avoid a conversation with my mother"

"Ndandatho that's not who you are my darling. Don't stoop that low please"

"Morning gogo"

"Changing the topic?" I look at her and unbuckle Gatsha.

"Can you please look after him Gogo I have a few things to attend to today"

"What time are you gonna come back Ndandatho?"

"By noon I will be home gogo. Why asking?"

"I'm leaving Liyana."

"Leaving? Why gogo?"

"Ndandatho the tension is too much. It's weighing on my spirit"

"But gogo I need you. I still enjoy your company. You can't just leave Gogo. Not when things are this. "

"Liyana I seriously need to leave my child. I have people to aid back in the village. Besides I need to breathe fresh air not this intoxicated air. "

"That hurts though Gogo. I thought you were gonna stay for a little while and guide me through my life and marriage. "

"I know my child but we will meet soon for your wedding that's when I teach you a thing or two. For now Ndandatho I have to leave it's for the better"

"Talking of a wedding I need to go to Thuthukani. There are few things I want to discuss with Zimele"

"You better not stop your wedding Ndandatho please."

"I won't go. I need him to help me in planning my wedding since you're leaving."

"Ndandatho we will meet again and besides I'm not that far. It's a walkable distance"

"I can't wait to leave this place. "

"Is it about your mother?"

I look at gogo and nod.

"Ndandatho this is your home your family.. You can't just leave them when they just found you.. Forgive your mother that's who you are after all. A forgiving being not a hater"

"She slapped me gogo and besides she hasn't forgiven you. She thinks her pain or loss surpasses yours. Little does she know your pain is more steep than hers. You lost your daughter gogo a child you've carried in your womb for months. Boni annoys me honestly gogo."

Mom walks in.

"You want to leave because of me?"

Both Gogo and myself look at each other because we both leaving.

"Who are you referring to?" Gogo-

"Both of you"

"Mina I overstayed my visit Bonisiwe I'm not leaving because of you but rather for my sanity and peace of mind. "

"I see... Can we talk Ndandatho?"

"I have somewhere to be Bonisiwe"

"Ndandatho please"

"Don't you have something to say to your mother Bonisiwe? Like apologising to her or making peace with her or better yet admitting how cruel and difficult you are? "

"Ndandatho.." Gogo-

She swallow hard.

"I thought as much.... Bye Bangi see you shortly my boy." I kiss his forehead and walk out. I find Busani in the sitting room eating nuts.

"Ready?"

"I'm ready. You took long though"

"I am a woman Busani"

"Whatever Ndandatho" I smile.

"Can I come with you?" Gabi-

"Sure

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a woman Busani"

"Whatever Ndandatho" I smile.

"Can I come with you?" Gabi-

"Sure tag along" She jumps in joy

"Can I join too?" Dad-

"Sure" I say..

Zimele

I bump into Siziwe and Hawu helping each other with pushing a wheelbarrow. I look at them then walk away without saying anything..

"Zimele"

I look at him.

"What?"

"I haven't seen you in days warrior how are you?"

"What do you want Hawu?"

"Warrior I miss our friendship"

"What friendship?"

"Zimele come on. You can't stay mad at me for that long. We come way back Zimele come on"

"Did you tell Khethiwe about your daughter? Does Siziwe know about Bubu? If not there's no friendship left for us Khuboni"

"Zimele you being melodramatic right now. All this is not necessary come on"

"Whatever hawu"

"Zimele you can't do this to me. I've been supporting you throughout how come you can't do the same with me?"

"Hawulesiziwe I would've supported you had you ended things with Khethiwe properly. Not doing this rubbish that you doing. You toying with three women Hawu! Is any of that funny to you?"

"Zimele these girls are my business not yours.. All I need from you is to be my friend not my supporter"

"Didn't you say you needed my support? Wena Uyasangana wena"

I say attempting to walk away.

"Now I see why Nhlonipho couldn't talk to you about his little predicament of impregnating a maiden"

"What did you just say?"

. "You are so self centered Zimele. You think the only person living on earth is yourself!! Go to hell arse head!!" I feel my palms sweating.

"Hawulesiziwe I want you to repeat what you just said about my brother"

"If his truly your brother go ahead and ask him. Fool!!" He roars on my face to an extent his saliva sprouts on my face. I push him off and walk away.

"One day you will need me Zimele!!"

"Fuck off Hawulesiziwe"

"Come here to say that nonsense on face"

"Are you challenging me Hawulesiziwe?"

"I'm challenging you Zimele you think I'm scared of you? Come

here!!!!"

"Fine.. I'm coming" I say turning my back. He punches me on the face before I know it. We fighting like two bulls in a kraal.

Nhlonipho

"Are you Okay?"

"Yes I'm fine Nhlonipho"

"Ngelozi come on. Tell the truth"

"Fine.. I'm scared Nhlonipho. I've been thinking about what you told me last night and it's scary Nhlo"

"Didn't my little performance help you?"

"Nhlonipho!" She says gently punching my chest as we walking to her house to drop off the wood we've collected.

"I'm asking Mafuze come on"

"It wasnt bad"

"Oh! That hurts Ngelozi"

"Nhlo.."

She says shyly.

"I won't stop till you rate me"

"Fine it was nice"

"Out of ten?"

"2"

"Ouch! I'm having a heart attack"

She giggles.

"I'm kidding it was better than the other day"

"Mmmmm " I say brushingy chests.. She starts feasting on her nails she does that when she's stressed out.

"Ngelozzi come on.. Don't do that to yourself please"

"Nhlonipho I can't help it. I really can't unthink this"

"Ngelozzi relax"

"Nhlo last night we did it again. What if you added another

baby?"

"I didn't deposit inside remember I deposited on your thigh"

She looks at me with glassy eyes. I stop wheeling the wheelbarrow.. I move closer to her.

"My flower stop thinking about it I told you not to worry about it Ngelozi. Besides I was given a remedy to cleanse your womb"

"What's that?"

"They said you must boil guava leaves and drink the water"

"Surely that thing tastes bad"

"We have no choice but to drink that Mafuze"

"Are you sure it's gonna work?"

"Yes it's gonna work I trust Hawu"

"It better not kill me Nhlonipho"

"It won't. Now stop being a cry baby "

"Fine." She smiles and I let her loose.

"When am I getting that bed sheet?"

"Later today"

"Don't sneak out today Ngelozi please"

"Fine I won't. You will fetch it yourself right?"

"Yes"

"Okay... I love you"

"I love you too"

"Zimele!!!! Zimele stop it!! You gonna kill him!!"

These words echoes as we joining the road that leads to Ngelozi's house. Both Ngelozi and myself look at each other.

"Somebody help!!!! Help!!! Prince Zimele stop it!!!" Lady-

"You said you gonna kill me whose dying now! Huh Warrior Casanova!!"

"Nhlo isn't that your brother?"

"I think that's Zimele. Look let me go there and check out what's happening. Please wheel the barrow home"

"Nhlonipho it sounds like there's a fight"

"I know my love just go home I will see you later. I love you" I say kissing her cheek and jogging to where the commotion is. As I'm running I'm met by a disturbing view of Zimele and Hawu.

Actually I find Zimele strangling warrior Hawu who is struggling to breathe with his eyes turned white. Zimele is bleeding from his mouth and nose. He is even determined on killing Hawulesiziwe. For a moment I stand there distraught not knowing what to do. These people are friends not any kind of friends but best of best friends. They have been friends since childhood. What the heck is going on here? This is absurd.

" Nhlonipho stop your brother he's gonna kill Hawu" Lady 1

"Please my Prince do something please.. If you don't stop the Prince he's gonna kill warrior Hawu" Siziwe-

"Nhlo what's going on there?" Ngelozi-

"Go home Ngelozi"

"Nhlonipho put an end to this please!!!" Lady 2-

I swallow hard.

"Zimele!! Zimele!! Stop it" I say.

"Butt off wena!" Zimele-

"Zimele please stop it! Whatever it is it's not worth fighting for Just stop it Bhengu please."

"Nhlonipho Jali I said butt off!!" Zimele-

"Zimele look at his eyes! They all white just stop it you gonna kill him!" I say now trying to pull Zimele away from Hawu.

"What did you do wena?" He says looking at me.

"Mina?" I say confused.

"Nhlonipho I'm so gonna kill you today!! Let me finish with this one I'm coming for you Nhlonipho" Zimele-

He kicks Hawu repeatedly.

"What did you do Nhlo" Ngelozi-

"I don't know just go home Ngelozi" Zimele roughly pulls my hand dragging me to my private chamber.

He aggressively pushes me inside the room so much that I slip and fall hitting the corner of my bed with my forehead. He locks the door and puts his hand on my neck.

"Hhaibo Zimele!! Angilwi" I say frightened

(I'm not fighting)

"What did you do Nhlonipho?" He roars.

"Zimele you hurting me let me loose"

"Not till you tell me what you told that womanizer!!" He roars.

"Zimele I will die and mama will..."

"Shut!!!! Shut up!!!!" He roars.

"Zimele you hurting me."

"Nhlonipho why didn't you talk to me instead of that fool?"

"Talk about Jali?"

"You think I'm a fool don't you? "

"Zimele let go of me you not making any sense!!"

"What were you thinking depositing your sperms inside her womb huh Nhlonipho?" My saliva immediately goes dry.

"I'm talking to you!!!" He roars.

I look aside. He let's loose of me and starts pacing around the room.

"Nhlonipho I asked you nicely if you were having sex and you acted all holier-than-thou. Masimba Manilawa Nhlonipho? "

"Zimele I.. I can explain"

"Explain what? That you can't pull out Nhlonipho? While father taught you everything there is about sex?"

"Zimele I can explain okay? It was actually a mistake. A mistake that you also made Zimele"

"I don't remember ever making a sexual mistake Nhlonipho.. I knew what I was doing with Ndandatho unlike you and Ngeloz! Don't compare yourself and I!"

He roars.

I swallow hard and bite hard on my lower lip.

"Do you have any idea of what you have done Nhlonipho? Do you even know what a pregnancy is? "

I look at him and squirm in fear....

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Ndandatho

We reach the first farm it's looking bad. All the once green leaves are decayed and marshy and filled with flies. This soil cover doesn't look fertile.

"How long has it been like this?"

"It's been a month now if not mistaken" Busani-

"That's bad. So what have people been eating since the fields are this dry and all decayed?"

"Our people are starving Ndandatho we need a mana for everything to go back to its state" Dad-

"I see.. So is this the only farm or there's still plenty?"

"We have other farms this one was a maize only farm" Busani-

"I see" I say looking around.

"Is there a chance of greener pastures Liyanda?" Dad-

"I suppose so baba"

"I need these grounds functioning to their fullest or else this Kingdom will collapse" I look at dad and recall my conversation with Iminathi about my father and his father being related.

"Don't worry baba all is gonna work out. Where are the seeds? I think I need to bless them before you plant them. I don't even know if that's gonna work but we should give it a try baba"

"Ndandatho believe in yourself my child. Mehlo said you come with change and prosperity. Don't doubt yourself please Liyana"

"Fine baba. Busani where are the seedlings?" I shout so he can hear me from where he is standing.

"They are in the store room Nda" Busani -

"Please go fetch them for me pretty please"

"Fine" Busani walks away.

"Baba can use this to put worms for my chickens pretty please daddy?"Gabi-

"Your chickens eat white worms Gabi?"

"They love them Sisi Ndandatho"

My face immediately turns sour.

"Go on my angel" Dad permits him. Gabi walks away leaving dad and myself alone.

"It's extremely hot today" Dad-

"Indeed it is baba"

"Did your mother talk to you Ndandatho?"

"Baba can I talk to you about something else"

"Such as?"

"Your family history"

"What about my family history Ndandatho? What do you want to know about my family?"

"Eehm baba. Do you by any chance recall ever having other family members apart from your mother and father?"

"They all died Ndandatho. Only my father survived.. Why are you asking?"

"I'm just interested in knowing baba"

"Okay.. As I was saying my father said his entire family died only him survived.. Hence I only knew him and my mother"

"I see... Baba"

"Yes"

"Do our clan names include Ngwane?"

"Yes.. I can say Ngwane and Buthelezi are covered by one umbrella. But Ngwane can also be found in other clans names"

"Meaning Buthelezi and Ngwane are somehow related?"

"Yes. Especially if you recite in this manner.. Buthelezi Shenge Ndaba Ngwane Mvulane Ngqengelele oyivalo zibili uthi uvala lesi avule lesi;

Wena owadliwa yiNdlovu... The list is endless. But keep it in mind Ngwane can be found in Hlongwane clan names and many more others"

"I see...So am I allowed maybe to date a Ngwane? For instance Zuko from Ngwane Kingdom?"

"No Ndandatho you cannot do that because I've told you already that we are related to Ngwane culturally.. And by the way Zimele would kill that Zuko boy." He giggles.

"Isn't it a coincidence that you and King Ngidi share the same surname?"

He chuckles.

"Surnames are the same Liyana. He could be a Hlongwane Ngwane"

"Or a Buthelezi Ngwane"

He looks at me.

"Liyana"

"Baba"

"Where is this conversation going actually?"

"No where baba"

"Ndandatho..."

"Ba?"

"Why are you suddenly interested about my surname and that of Ngwane?"

"Well I had a vision baba"

"After the one you had?"

"No the one I had baba"

"What was in your vision?"

"Well I was visited by Iminathi Ngwane"

"Ngidi's dead daughter? What did she want?"

"Well baba she told me something a bit confusing."

"What did she say?"

"Didn't your father say anything about you having another family in another Kingdom?"

"Ndandatho stop talking in riddles my child it's hot.. Get straight to point"

"Well Iminathi said you are related to his father"

Dad laughs.

"That zombie was messing with your head there's no such thing.."

Surely she has no friends on the other side hence she came to you to rid her boredom"

"Baba this is serious"

"Liyana this one is an offside my daughter.. There's no relation between Ngidi and I.. I look nothing like that fool. The next time that Zombie visits you chase her out with coarse salt and chillies.. She's mad"

Father walks away laughing. What if Iminathi is serious??

Zimele

I'm seated on his bed glancing at him. I'm waiting for him to open his mouth just like he did with her legs.

"I don't have the whole day Nhlonipho. Open your mouth the same way as you did with her legs"

"Kodwa Zimele"

"Kodwa yani?Talk Nhlonipho or you will talk in front of Ngelozi's father"

"No please... I beg of you Zimele"

"Jali just talk please so I can help you if needed be. "

"Well I've deflowered Ngelozzi"

"And?"

"Okay the aim was to pull out Zimele I swear on mkhulu's grave."
He licks and cross his fingers to make a swear.

"And? What distracted your aim?"

"She locked me with her legs. I didn't want to be deposited inside her but she squeezed me with her thighs Zimele"

"Delilah's thighs I see"

"Don't call her that please"

"It's not an insult dummy."

He keeps quiet.

"You messed up big time Nhlonipho. What I hate is that your parents will pin this on me. You should've told me Nhlonipho unlike running to Hawu. That guy is gonna tell the whole village about this. Do you know what this will do to you and Ngelozi?"

"I'm sorry Bhuti"

"Did you tell Hawu about the specific maiden you were talking about?"

"I didn't give him a name brother"

"Better... So what's the way forward from here? I mean the poor girl could be nurturing a Jali seed. "

"I will take responsibility for my actions. I will tell mother and father about this. I will cleanse her father's kraal by giving them my five cows Zimele. I will do whatever it takes to right my wrongs. If really she's pregnant I will step up and be a father just like you did with Ndandatho. I will take responsibility Zimele. "

"It's not gonna be easy Nhlonipho. It's easier said than done. I once was there in your shoes. And I won't lie to you its gonna be a draining fight. You know how father feels about blue blood mating with commoners. Its gonna be hard Nhlonipho."

"Like I said brother I will take full responsibility Zimele or better yet I will leave home if me loving Ngelozi will cost me my throne or rights in this Kingdom."

I look at him and remember how once I wished to elope with Ndandatho when father was giving me a tough time about impregnating her. Hearing my little brother say such is a painful reminder because nobody deserves to go through such all in the name of love. Love doesn't have to cause one pain it doesn't have to be this hard and complicated. If father puts Nhlonipho under such a demeanor I'm afraid he will never be the same shall Nhlonipho leave these grounds. And knowing my brother he is sure gonna leave when that time comes.

"Nhlo.. If you really love and serious about this girl I will advice you to fight with everything in you no matter how exhausting and hurting it will get please don't give up but rather press on. The sad reality is that we never choose who we want to love but our hearts does. If this girl makes you happy and at peace then I won't stand in your way Nhlonipho but Jali for now here is what you will not do till we certain on what to do next you won't run

to your parents and tell them about this whole predicament. We gonna wait and see if she's pregnant or not. If she isn't the next time you mate with her be responsible Nhlonipho. "

" Thank you Zimele thank you so very much brother "

" It's okay"

" What about her virginity Zimele? "

" Can we deal with everything else after this turmoil of her being pregnant or not has cool down."

"Fine.. But I want to marry her Zimele

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I really love her" I look at him.

"Talking of marriage little brother I have to plan mine. We will talk about the other things later on and Nhlo don't ever seek comfort from that cassanova please. I'm here as your troublesome brother and I love you Jali. I would never ever lead you into dark place you hear me? "

He nods.

" Thank you Zimele"

"I have to go bath I have a trip to embark on."

"So if she's pregnant you going to be a what? An ancestor?"

"Wrong the boyfriend!"

"Zimele!!" I laugh and help him up.

"Later Nhlo"

"Later"

I walk out.

This is gonna be a challenge knowing Ngcolosi he will blame me for everything. You know parents with their lame and exhausted line "You are the eldest you need to lead by example" Poor me would take in the punches. I can already picture fragile Nhlonipho being scolded at for mating with a girl. But I think Ngcolosi will be defeated he will lose his voice to fight his dearest son. Nhlonipho is an egg after all surely they won't be hard on him as they were with me but you will never know with Ngcolosi cos at first he wanted nothing to do with my son but when my boy stepped on these grounds they became best of best friends surely with Ngelozzi it won't be that bad. But whatever the outcomes I anticipate the day they find out about Ngelozzi and Nhlonipho doing adults stuff. Come to think of it I did suspect those kids but I talked myself out of that illusion.

I wash my body and wear decent.. I leave my chamber. As I'm walking I bump chests into dad.

"The man I was looking for son come here. I need to have a word with you"

"Baba I'm actually on my way to Umthombo"

"I won't take long"

"Fine" He shows me a chair.

"Can we gossip a little about Nhlonipho"

"What about him?"

"Who is the lady he once said he was seeing?"

"How am I supposed to know Jali?"

"Come on Zimele"

"Baba I don't know the maiden. But I know that Nhlonipho is in love and that's all I have the remaining details you will get them from him.. I'm out"

"Zimele"

"Ba?"

"Make sure my son doesn't follow in your footsteps please Zimele. I can't afford to have all my sons impregnating girls out of wedlock. Make sure you prevent history from repeating itself."

"Hhaibo Baba! How am I supposed to do that? I'm not a magician"

or a future predictor. "

"That boy likes you Zimele from childhood he always mimicked you. Make sure he doesn't mimic the bad too"

"Shall Nhlo enter someone's kraal you will blame me Bhengu?"

"Of course. You are the eldest you need to lead by example. Not when you impregnated Zikhali's daughter out of wedlock..Not once but twice"

"By leading by example you mean he must follow in my footsteps baba? "

I furrow my brows dad looks at me sharply.

"Are you crazy?"

"Dad you've been teaching him about pleasuring women soon you will be seeing old women wearing blankets with a girl facing the ground with a big belly.. You can't coach a player and expect them not to practice what you teaching just saying father.. I have a wedding to plan"

I leave my father in thoughts.

Thabsile

I've been reading my letter repeatedly I even have butterflies in

my stomach.

"My Queen we have arrived"

"Okay!" I say in a happy mood.. I fold my letter and put it between my breasts. I chin up and inhale the fresh air. I roll up my dress and step out of the cart. I sway my hips side ways. They better not ruin my mood.

"Greetings Queen of Ngwane"

"Greetings royal servants!!" I say humming and all chirpy. Oh Makhosonke. I smile and let myself inside Nozibele's house.

"Nomaswazi!!! Nomaswazi!!!"

I call out in joy.

"Noma!!!! Swazi!!! Come my baby. Pack up all your clothes we leaving!! Mommy is here to save the day!!.. Ohhhh lala!!!!" I hum as I throw myself on the leather couch.

"What is this noise?" Gezekile-

"Fossil I'm here for my daughter nothing major. Noma hurry up!!!"

"Noma is not here Thasile burging into my house shouting is disrespectful."

"Like I said I'm here for my daughter and that's it"

Majali the firsts looks at me and coughs. I immediately cover my

mouth.

"Eew!!! Old hags saliva is contagious.."

"You full of yourself aren't you?"

"Granny get out of my sight! By the way you look pale today what's going on? Husband dearest is calling you to the other side?" I laugh.. Ngcolosi shows up I immediately stand up recalling the last time I was here.

"Thabile"

"Ngcolosi"

"To what do we owe the visit?"

"I'm here for daughter Nomaswazi"

"We don't have such a livestock in here" I blow my nose.

"Are you calling my daughter an animal Ngcolosi?"

"Pardon me all my livestock has names if I recall well I named one Nomaswazi" Ngcolosi-

"Ma are you okay?" Nozi says walking in. This woman dresses well but I won't give her credit.

"Ngcolosi are you certain about Noma not being here?"

"Why would she come here Mangwane? Go check with the father of her child.. Surely she remembers where she lost her

virginity " Nozi-

"You know what? Today I'm so over the moon my day is too bright.. I won't allow you two to ruin it for me. I only came here in peace to collect my daughter and take her home that's all"

"And we told you she's not here" Gogo-

"Mmmmm No problem then surely she went to her aunts. Farewell everyone see you soon for the funeral"

I hum and walk out.

"Guard let's go"

"My Queen" I put my foot inside.. He drives off along the way I spot a familiar face.

"Stop this cart!!!"

"My Queen I can't"

"I said stop this cart!!!"

"My Queen that could lead into an accident"

"just stop it!!!" I roar the guard stops the cart.

I look at this person and rub my eyes on disbelief. I glance on him as his walking on a blazing hot sun. Wearing blue overalls and carrying field tools..His laughing with whomever his walking with. I look at him not knowing what to say. Do I call him or just let him walk away again? But he wrote me a letter maybe I should call him.. I swallow hard and close my eyes trying to calm my nerves down. I look again to my surprise he looks at me then walks away without waving or saying a word to me..

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Khethiwe

"Hawu hasn't been coming home lately do you by any chance hold knowledge as to why is it like that Makoti?" Ma-

"He has important things to do ma"

"What important things?"

I glance on mama.

"Makoti what's going on? Are you by any chance fighting?"

"Ma we not fighting"

"Then what's going on Khethiwe?"

"Hawu has found love in the Thuthukani Kingdom ma he wants to marry again"

"What? You joking right?"

"I'm afraid not ma. He said it on my face loud and clear"

"His crazy! He cannot do that Khethiwe not when his father made me a slave because of that polygamy nonsense. I won't allow that rubbish on these grounds of mine."

"Ma his mind is made up."

"Khethiwe that will not happen not when I'm alive. That will only happen in his dreams. I've lived a painful and ridiculous life in polygamy. I won't allow it to happen to you Khethiwe. "

" Mama"

"Yes"

"I want to go home"

"What home Khethiwe?"

"My marriage is over mama it's point less to be here knowingly my replacement has been found ma. I really can't stay here

anymore."

"Hhayi Khethiwe. You going nowhere if you leave these grounds where will you go?"

"My uncles place"

"No Khethiwe.. My heart won't be at peace. You suffered in that place Khethiwe they even fed you poison at some point putting your life in danger. I won't allow that my daughter. The only person who has to leave its Hawu not you."

"Mama it's better I go suffer in the hands of my blood family unlike here with a man who barely loves me nor cares about me and my son. Just days ago we traveled barefooted on a very terrible weather as we speak Mlingo is coughing. If it wasn't for that samatarian who brought us here my son and I would be dead. The cherry on top Hawu would know nothing about it because till this day he hasn't come for us after a message was left for him. "

"This is bad. Are you sure this girl is not using muthi on him?"

"I don't know and I don't care ma"

She looks at me and massages my shoulder..

Ndandatho

The sun did a number on me I can feel the itchiness of my skin. Even after bathing and changing my clothes..

"How was your day?" Zimele

"Zimele..."

"Yes"

"What happened to your mouth? What is this cut? Wait you swollen. What happened?"

I say analysing his face.

"I was in a fight"

"What fight Jali?"

"It's nothing serious my love."

"You swollen Zimele.. I will get soothing herbs for you" I say standing up from the grass mat.. He pulls my arm and embraces me from behind.

"That won't be necessary my love it's not even painful"

"What happened Zimele?"

"Hawu happened"

I turn to face him.

"Hawu? Which Hawu?"

"Your brother"

"He did this to you?"

He explains what happened.

"His a fool don't mind him. The next time you fight him chop off his head. Khethiwe deserves better than this"

"I know right?"

"Such an idiot! We should tell Siziwe about Bubu That girl is very good to be messed by Hawu"

"My love there's more"

"What's more?"

"The reason I fought with Hawu"

I look at him and put my hands around his neck.

"Nhlonipho tainted Ngelozi"

"Oh no! They did what?"

"Nhlo suspects Ngelozi might be pregnant"

"Oh no!!! This is bad Zimele" I say letting loose of his neck and walking towards Bangi whose seated on the grass mat eating Mango.

"I know my love"

"Her parents are gonna kill her"

"Ngcolosi is gonna castrate Nhlonipho"

"I don't see their love winning"

"Same here.."

"They made drastic decisions they don't know what they have put themselves into. This is bad Zimele I can't even begin to imagine the distress and struggles that Ngelozi might face. Knowing her father that man is cultural oriented he might kick her out. "

" Your fears matches mine my love. These kids played with fire. Their story is very much different from ours. Theirs might end with one of them living with a broken heart and pain from where I'm standing that could be Ngelozi. "

" Tell me about it. Nhlo might realize when the baby is born that what he felt for Ngelozi wasnt real love but rather lust or something... Anyway enough about Thuthukani drama. Honey I want to come home can we make it snappy with the wedding preparations?"

"Hence I came here."

"Let's do the wedding in two days time it's pointless to drag it"

"I miss waking up next you my honeycomb. Let's do it Ndandatho. But we have to agree on the theme"

"The theme is simple my love. I was thinking of gold on my side I don't know about you"

"I wanted to suggest gold too. What about the invites? How many are we gonna send out?"

"How about twenty maximum you know much people hence you can give me names then we get to them as in yesterday. Honey I miss you so badly I can't wait any more"

"I love the sound of that my petunia flower"

"Those naughty kids need some saving my love and maybe a little punishment. This has gone overboard Let me go fetch the ink and paper so we can start with the invites"

"You look beautiful by the way"

"As pregnant as I am?"

"Yes my daisy you are the prettiest Lilly I've ever seen a cross the valley. If it were up to me you would look this way everyday till death do us apart"

"No way Zimele. You prefer me looking fat and heavy?"

"You haven't added any pounds you still the same I can still pick you up and sway you around and pin you against the wall and have you singing chords the way I see it fit" He says peeling my top a little to glance on my boobs.

"You being naughty right now Zimele it's best I walk away sthandwa sami. You such a charmer though as swollen as you

are"

"Really?"

"Yes"

"Come here Ndandatho"

"No.."

"Ndandatho come here your husband is calling you"

"No my husband I do not want to come any where near you" I step back a little.

"Nda don't make me chase you"

"Don't chase me my la mode and sexy husband"

I lick my lower lip and furrow my brows.

"Gatsha warn your mom"

My son smiles and eats his Mango.

"Come here"

"No way Zimele"

"I'm five.. four.. Three.. Two.. One I'm chasing you"

I giggle and attempt to run poor me Zimele catches me in a split

second.

"I love you"

"I love you too"

"Am I allowed to sip on your orange juice?"

"Only if it won't hurt your cheek"

"I'm a warrior" He says scooping me up I giggle like retard.

"Don't drop me Baba ka Gatsha"

"I've never dropped you before" He says sucking my lipsi place my hands on his neck and kiss him back.

"Your lips are soft"

"Wow wife! You only realizing today that your husband has gentle lips? You so gonna pay for being a naughty girl" I giggle and peck his lips he puts me down.

"I'm coming the baby please"

"Talking of babies I haven't kissed this one"

He says kneeling down to kiss my belly.. I smile and brush his head.

"Enough with the flattering" I turn my back naughty him playfully hits my bums. I walk away.

Ngidi

Today I found myself missing my late wife and my late daughter. Hence I decided to take a walk and go pay them a visit. I talk to my wife and then Iminathi. I recall my father I go to his grave and converse with him too. Boredom makes me walk to the other graves of my descends. I don't talk to them but rather clean their graves. Sometimes I miss them "My father late wife and late daughter" Come to think of it things have been going south since. Maybe I need to make a little ceremony for them.

"Stretching your legs?"

"Mota what brings you here?"

"I came to check up on my friend and you of course"

"It's risky Mota especially now. What if Thabsile sees you?"

"Relax Ngidi I made sure no one sees me. How are you doing?"

"It's one of those days you know"

"Let me guess you miss your late beautiful wife and your daughter"

"They left a void"

"I can imagine. But you have Thabile to fill in all the empty spaces"

"Do you see her now?"

"Nop"

"Exactly"

"Look Ngwane let's go inside.. I will make you a cup of tea just the way you like it."

"I would love that"

"Let's go" She says holding my hand..

We reach my house. She disappears to the kitchen a while later a woman holding a tray kneels in front of me to serve me. She carefully puts the cup of tea on the table

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a while later a woman holding a tray kneels in front of me to serve me. She carefully puts the cup of tea on the table then the

saucer with cookies. I won't lie my heart feels at peace and warmer with this little gesture.

"Lots of milk and less sugar just the way you like it Ngwane"

"Thank you Majali"

"Maybe I should start with supper"

"Maybe you shouldn't Mota"

My wife says walking in. She looks at me then Mota.

"Oh! My friend how are you?" Mota-

"What is happening here Ngidi?" Wife-

"Nothing can't you see I'm sipping tea?"

"Mota are you by any chance trying to warm your way into my husbands underwear?"

Mota giggles

"At what costs? Sit down silly I will make you a cup of tea. By now you should know how active I am my friend. I mean no harm" She disappears to the kitchen.

Thabile looks at me.

"You better not betray me Ngidi I'm watching you like a hawk"

"For me not to betray you how about you roll your tail and go to the kitchen to cook up a feast for our guest and son?"

"Do I look like a maid to you?"

"No you don't"

"Better. "

"I miss the wife I once had Thabile"

"Noma is not in Thuthukani"

"Did you hear what I said?"

"What did you say?"

"I miss the wife I once had. The happy home and it's joy don't you miss those times when we were all happy and united as a family? You me Zuko Iminathi Noma and lastly Mkhuleko? Don't you ever reminisce on those days?"

She looks at me and swallows hard.

" I'm tired I need to freshen up"

She walks away I look at her then Mota whose looking at me.

"She went to freshen up you can put the tea over there"

"Leave her and come to me Ngidi She doesn't appreciate you"

"I love you Mota"

"What?"

"I mean it"

"My place tonight"

"My place tonight you not leaving today" She smiles..

Thabsile

I have a terrible headache. It must've been caused by my little crying after the love of my heart gave me a nauseated look. I don't blame him though I've done him wrong I'm deserving of the hate his giving me. But on the contrary I wish he greeted me at least or better yet said the things he wrote on that letter. I'm certain he still loves me it's just that my presence caught him off guard.

"Thabsile Mzilikazi" I jump in fear so much that I drop my night time perfume.

"What do you want?"

"Greetings"

"We are not friends step back!!"

"How does it feel disguising me? Sleeping on my bed eating my food and raising my kids and killing my child? how does it feels like to be me huh sweetheart?" I close my eyes and ears.. I open my lids I jump in fear as she's standing in front of me with a broad smile..

" Why are you scared? "

" You dead "

" Physically yes but not spiritually"

"What do you want from me?"

"I want you out of my house Thabile"

She says pacing around my luxurious private chamber.

"This used to be my favorite room in this house see right here? On this wall? There used to be a huge portrait of myself and my husband it was a picture of our wedding. And right here it was a picture of Zuko and Iminathi. This chamber was bright and warm it was filled by my laughter and that of my husband. I won't say the other part because you know very well what else we did in here apart from cuddling"

"Get out!!!! Get out Maka Iminathi"

"Not before I narrate a little story for you."

"Why don't you narrate that story for ghosts like yourself?"

She laughs.

"Long long ago there was a King based on these ground his surname was Buthelezi. The King gave birth to a son who was a skirt chaser Dinabantu Buthelezi. Dina bantu had a weakness and his weakness was a woman. One day he found himself impregnating two women simultaneously he decided on marrying one woman leaving the other one unmarried "

" I don't have time for this rubbish! "I say standing up

" YOU GONNA SIT DOWN DAUGHTER OF A WITCH!!!! DON'T MAKE ME ANGRY THABSILE!! " I swallow hard and sit down.

" Where was I? Oh yeah.. Dinabantu Buthelezi decided on marrying one of the pregnant women leaving the other one unmarried. The married woman had a son whom they named "Mkhawuli" the unmarried woman had a son whom was named "Mayihlome". Years went by Dinabantu was going Grey and aging he had to appoint a son who was gonna ease the throne his biggest mistake was to appoint Mkhawuli. A Maine came to warn him against that saying the throne belonged to Mayihlome. Mkhawuli fought his brother for the throne to an extent that Mayihlome decides he was done fighting. After all his father allowed him to be labelled as a bastard son by not marrying his mother hence Mayihlome left home The Buthelezi grounds and went to another land to start his own Kingdom that he named Umthombo Kingdom. Along the years since the brothers had their little altercation. Mkhawuli married and had a son. Do you know what he named his son? "

" How am I supposed to know? I'm not even interested on this story!! It's boring and agitating"

"Mkhawuli named his son NGIDI" I look at her..

"Since Mkhawuli knew what he did to his brother Mayihlome he decides I will change my surname to NGWANE and call this Kingdom NGWANE VILLAGE so that one day when MAYIHLOME decides to come back home and ease the throne he finds nothing. On the other hand MAYIHLOME married a Mamiwata they had a son do you know what they named him? "

I look aside.

" ZIKHALI.. Mayihlome decides he wasn't gonna change his surname he kept his surname but because he loved his wife so dearly he decided to call his Kingdom "Umthombo" To show appreciation to his wife's

gifts. The water gifts hence he kept his Kingdom known as the source of water. If you smart enough you will understand why I'm narrating this story to you Thabsile"

"You trying to tell me this Kingdom belongs to The Buthelezi? As in my husband is a brother to Zikhali?"

"Not your husband but my husband meaning Ndandatho is a granddaughter of the Ngwane clan"

"You crazy!!!! Ngidi is not related to Zikhali.."

"And who are you talking too?" Ngidi-

She smiles and walks away. Leaving me in a tight corner...

Zikhali

I've been trying to crack my head over what Ndandatho said I

wish I can believe it but that's hilarious. It's can not happen.
Mayihlome was never a liar he wouldn't have lied about such or
he would've?

"Sthandwa sami"

I look at her and then my book.

"Zikhali..."

"What?"

"I miss you"

"Don't you miss your mother?"

She plays with her hands.

"I thought as much." I say paging over... She undresses and climbs the bed. She brushes my thigh.

"Khali please my love"

"Please what Boni?"

"Can we make love please"

"Why would you want to make something that you do not have?"

"Zikhali..."

"Do you have love in you Boni?"

"Honey please"

"I won't make love to cruel beings."

"Zikhali you denying me my right?"

"If it's your right why is it situated between my legs?"

"Zikhali what you doing is unfair I married for this"

"And you doing to your mother is fair? Don't annoy me Boni. Get dress or better yet go out I'm reading a book"

"Zikhali you hurting me"

"You will only get this when you mend things with your mother and your daughter. Other than that hunger will drive you to your early death."

"Zikhali you denying me? You denying me Shenge?"

"Proudly so"

She looks at me with glassy water.

"I won't buy your crocodile tears. Crying for a penis? While you can't cry to your mother. I'm serious you won't be getting any of this"

"Zikhali you starved me yesterday even today?"

"Even tomorrow"

I say putting my book aside. I get under the blanketsi perk her lips..

"Good night"

With that said I turn my back. What if we somehow related? No Zikhali stop thinking about this it's a crazy thing.

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Thabile

"I can explain"

"Thats exactly what I'm anticipating You better start talking"

"Ngidi I was.. I was meditating. You know I find it therapeutic and rejuvenating. You know how hard and challenging things have been going in our marriage and our children it's just too much my love."

I say walking towards him.

"I think you were right Ngidi there's been a huge gap between us. We haven't been a couple for a while now that has led me into talking to walls and imagining things. I miss you Ngwane" I say blinking to force tears out of my eyes. There's no way I'm gonna admit to killing his first wife and seeing her ghosts.

"That didn't look like meditation. You mentioned something about Zikhali. I don't understand how Zikhali is a part of your meditation"

"Ngidi listen.. I was praying about seeking forgiveness from Zikhali and his wife for the way I've acted on Ndandatho's welcoming ceremony. Please believe me."

"Thabile what is going on with you?"

"I just said it it's my marriage I'm stressed about then our daughter Nomaswazi. I'm sorry I scared you my love" I say embracing him and putting my head on his chest.

"I see..." He utters without holding me. He clears his throat.

"Your friend made you tea"

"Oh! Let me get to it. Is that all? "

"Yeah that should be all I actually came to shift this portrait" He says staring on my wedding portrait.

"Why? Why do you want to remove our wedding photography?"

"That used to be my wife's spot. I want to put her photo back"

"Ngidi!!! You cannot do that!"

"Why not? She was my first wife the mother of my kids Thabsile. It's only fair I put her photo here as a sign of her existence and acknowledgement that she existed"

"What am I Ngidi? A tree? Am I not the mother of your kids?"

"Thabsile if I remember well they said a head is a He not a she. This is my castle my rules remain. I don't need your approval"

"Hhee!!!" I say clapping my hands laughing sarcastically.

"Are you hearing yourself Ngidi? A ghosts portrait inside my bedroom? My private space?"

"Dare call her a ghost again I will make you swallow your words. I mean it Thabsile by the way I was thinking you go visit your parents for a little while I need this castle to myself for a little while. The are things I need to do and alter alone without any disturbance "

I look at him confused and shattered.

" You kicking me out Ngidi? Is that your way of kicking me out? Let me tell you what you do not know I'm going nowhere! This is my home my house! I've worked hard to be here and to make this cave a home. If you think I'm going you got another thing coming!! " I roar and push him aside. I walk to the sitting room I find Mota laughing her lungs out with my son's and her daughter. I look at them and step outside...

Nomaswazi

Never have I ever been this tired and worked. Can you believe I was made to fetch water? To collect firewood? To pluck out a chickens fur and to cook it? Can you believe the insult? The whole me uNomaswazi Ngwane. A daughter of a Queen and King a royal Princess? Can you imagine? You should've seen how my master was ordering me around while stopping to court on girls. I've never been this degraded and tarnished in my whole life. As I'm talking I'm seated on the verenda trying to calm myself down..

"I'm off the bushes to hunt"

"Whatever"

"Nomaswazi!" Phiwe warns. I look at him and stand up heading inside my hut. I brush my tummy and let my tears roll. Where did I go wrong? Why are bad things happening to me? I know I killed Iminathi but that's not reason enough. I don't deserve this pain. I really don't....

Ndandatho

"Baba you awake?"

"I'm struggling to sleep why are you up this late?"

"I need to discuss something with you baba"

"About?"

"My wedding"

"What about it?"

"I want to get married in two days time"

"Ndandatho..." He says shocked.

"I don't see why we should drag it baba."

"Ndandatho that's not how things are done.. You not gonna get married in two days time. That's not happening"

"Baba please.. I thought you wanted Zimele and myself to marry"

"Exactly.. But I want it done the right way. There's a procedure Ndandatho. The are things that Ngidi and I need to discuss before you marry"

"Ngidi?"

"I meant Ngcolosi" He shys away from me to glance at his mug.

"Baba are you okay?"

"I would be okay if my daughter listens to me and marrys on weekend. I will go see Ngcolosi tomorrow. Wena no Zimele are stepping back on making these arrangements."

I roll my eyes.

"Baba I miss him though"

"Hence you want to marry in two days time? Thats ridiculous Liyana."

"Baba you don't look okay" I say changing the topic.

"Go to bed"

"I'm a good listener"

He looks at me.

"I'm sorry if I snapped or shouted at you but Liyana a wedding is not a snake and laddee game. Such things you take time when preparing for them. We need to inform the gods on

time so they can bless you. The list is too much"

"I get it baba I really do. But are you okay as in personally dad?"

"I'm fine"

"Is it safe to say you lying baba without sounding disrespectful?"

He giggles.

"You just said Ndandatho"

I smile and go sit next to him. I rest my head on his shoulder.

"You can talk to me baba"

"Whose the child here and whose the parents?"

"Thats us" He giggles.

"I've been rethinking and replaying our conversation Ndandatho."

"About?"

"The Ngidi and my dilemma"

"Oh! What about it?"

"What if it's true my daughter"

"If so baba we gonna do the right thing which is reuniting."

"It's strange Ndandatho and it's crazy honestly. I'm trying by all means not to see my father as liar you know"

"He had his reasons there's actually a reason to why he kept quiet about it."

"I just wonder what it could be"

"Shall Iminathi revisit she will surely explain everything to me and I will gladly pass it on to you."

"Do you know what it will mean if Ngidi and myself are related?"

"It will mean I will have an uncle and cousins"

"It will mean Ngwane is my home Ndandatho"

"Baba can we not get our hopes high for now please"

"I know Ndandatho but there's a chance my father left his home and seeked refugee in this Kingdom"

"How would you feel given Ngidi is truly your brother?"

"I would be ecstatic Ndandatho because I have no family but you kids and your mother"

"I see. Whatever it is I love you dad and you have my support."

"Thank you Liyana"

"No thank you for being a cool dad"

He smiles and embraces me. Mom walks towards us wearing her night garment. Dad looks at her then me.

"Baba"

"Liyana"

"Don't you think we should go see Mehlo'emamba surely he will shed some light"

"Or your grandmother she has a gift"

"That too is awesome besides I need Gogo's input on this wedding planning process. I trust her taste on fashion"

"Your mom is good too. You should try her" Dad says looking at mom.

"We shall see about that.." I say standing up.

"Good night"

"Night Liya" Mom-

"Good night baby" Dad-

I walk away leaving them behind.

Hawu

"What was that about Hawu?"

Siziwe says applying a cream on my body.

"It wasn't serious"

"You fighting the Prince wasn't serious Hawulesizwe? Inkosi ayishaywa that's a big insult"

She says with a upper voice.

"He instigated all this

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that's a big insult"
She says with a upper voice.

"He instigated all this I didn't want to fight him"

"Zimele Is a good guy he didn't deserve to be in that embarrassing position because of you"

"Excuse me Siziwe? Are you taking sides?"

"I'm not.. But you.."

"Now shut up! Shut up before I shut you up"

She looks at me then stands up.

"I'm done here"

"Siziwe.."

She looks at me and wipes her hands.

"I won't stand this Hawu" She says heading for the door. As she goes out Bubuza walks in carrying Buhle. They look at each other not this..

"And Siziwe what brings you here?" Bubu-

"What brings you here?"

"You can not ask a question with a question Siziwe.. What brings you in my man's house?"

"Excuse me? What man?"

"I see you choosing to play it hard. Listen get lost Hawu is my man"

"Bubuza stop it!!" I say.

"What do you mean by that Bubu?" Siziwe ask with confusion.

"I mean just that. Stay away from Hawu."

"I can not do that because Hawu is my boyfriend and his gonna make me his second wife" Siziwe -

"He said that? Oh! Poor little thing. I guess that will make me his third wife" Bubu

Siziwe blows her nose and looks at me.

"What is she talking about?"

Khethiwe

I know this was a foolish decision but I had no choice. Sometimes saying your mind in front of your pain inventor is a good thing. Just like going to spit on Hawu's face about leaving him for his second wife. I wasn't willing to coming here again but seeing my son's skin crack because of dryness pushed me to the edge. I'm finally here mind you it's dark. Luckily today his door is opened..

"What is she talking about" I hear the voice as I enter his compound.

"Siziwe let me explain Bubu please excuse us" Hawu-

"I'm going no where Hawulesizwe I'm not leaving you with this lady. Not when you also my man!"

"Bubuza don't be stubborn don't make drag you out!" Hawu Lashes out.

"Before you drag her out tell me what's the story between the two of you? I'm talking to you Hawulesizwe" Lady 2-

"My love listen it's not what it looks like. I can explain" Hawu-

"How does it look like then?" I add as I step inside his hut. His eyes nearly hit the ground when he sees me.. The ladies look at me..

Siziwe

"Go on and explain Hawulesizwe these girls and I are waiting for your response" Lady-

I look at Hawu annoyed.

"I can explain.. Ehm!! Well.. I" He stutters.

"Well ladies let me tell you what's happening here. This jerk is my husband and this little boy that you see happens to be his son Mlingo. From where I'm standing this fool is not only playing with my heart but yours too. Imagine three women in one what a shame Hawu!! " The wife says looking at Hawulesizwe.

I blink once then twice. A burning sensation engulfs my chest and my entire body. I feel my knees going woobly I look at Hawu with glimmering eyes. I truly and a sincerely love this guy God is my witness. For him I would do anything and everything. Already I was making him lunchboxes washing his clothes cleaning his house and fetching water for him. I was doing so much for him to prove my love to him just yesterday I.. I gave him my innocence..

"Khethiwe stop what you doing! Siziwe... Siziwe my love this is not true I'm not playing with you. I meant it when I said I love you" Hawu-

"And what about me Hawulesizwe? Didn't you say you loved me and our daughter? Didn't you say you wanted to do things the right way? Hawu!! Hawu!!!" Bubuza-

"What daughter Hawu?" That comes as a whisper accompanied by tears

"Siziwe I can explain my love please hear me out"

"You have a child with Bubuza? And you never told me? You dating Bubuza too?" More tears gush out.

"Thats the jerk you were soon to marry my darling.. A whole fool whose declaring his love for his mistress in front of his wife can you imagine? Is this the madness you want to invest your heart in? A cassanova?" Wife-

"Khethiwe shut up!!!"

"Make me Hawu!!! Make me shut up I regret the day I let you see my nakedness. You are a fool!!!!" The wife roars and Hawu does the unthinkable.. I leave them with my heart faintly beating on my sleeve. My poor heart my poor heart. He promised to handle it with care he promised to love me. He said he loved me he said he was being truthful and sincere with everything he said and aspired to do with me. Hawu

guaranteed me a life together saying he was gonna marry me. He broke my heart he broke my virginity he broke my trust.. He just broke so much!!!.

Mota

"Ngidi a letter came through" I say -

"Good night elders" The kids say walking away. I clear the table. As soon as the kids disappear. Ngidi pulls my hand leading me to the room I'm going to use for a night. He throws me on the bed and rushes to locking the door. He pulls me on the edge of the bed and strips me naked. We share a hunger filled kiss my boobs are squeezed in an arousing way my honeypot is later massaged and teased in a nice way.

"Let me in Mota"

"It's open all for you"

"I've been waiting for this moment tonight I'm all yours"

"What about Thabile she's around"

"I'm leaving her it's you I want"

"What if she hears us"

"We owe her nothing" He says sounding different and strange.
He let's himself inside he slams within me.. My moans fill the
room. I deep my claws on him and open my legs much wider.

"The letter my love... You need to see the letter"

"I will look into it when I finish here!" He says going all hard on me.

"Okay baby... Sehranmagzine.comah Ngidi!!!"

"Vula kakhulu!!!"

"Okay" I open my legs much wider he smashes harder and harder.

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Thabile

I'm met by sexual sounds as I'm taking a walk inside my compound. It's coming from one of these guestroom. Surely it's Zuko and one of the royal slaves. I'm very much aware that royals have this indescribable feel for commoners I myself was once there. So letting the small boy have fun won't kill. It's not like his my biological son even if he were to lose his wife I wouldn't care. I walk pass by minding my thoughts. Would I be wrong If I killed Ngidi? Something about him is changed and that alone annoys me and scares me..

"Ahhhhh!!!! I love you!! I love you Mota!!"

These words fill my ears. Which Mota is this person talking about? And why does this voice sound familiar? No maarn something doesn't feel right. Let me go check in the house if Ngidi is in our bedroom because really I left him in our main house not outside.

"Sehranmagzine.comah!!! Sehranmagzine.comh!!!" I storm inside the house. I shot straight to my bedroom Mmmmm... His not

here and guess what I will do? Nobody messes with me and gets away.

Makhehla

"Sisi it's me your brother. I got you an animal to feast on. I know you rule in these bushes" I say raising my dripping blood chicken to lure my sisters soul towards this sacrifice.

"My sister please show your face"

"What do you want Makhehla"

"I need a little favor from you"

"You want my powers don't you?"

"Well you got me.."

"I thought my daughter wanted them. Why do you want to beat her to it?"

"I've been practicing witchcraft as far as I can remember. I think I'm deserving of the powers"

"Really?"

"Yes.. Please transfer them to me"

"That can only come with a huge sacrifice brother"

"I can get you more cows to feed your blood thirst"

"This is more than blood brother"

"What do you want?"

"I need you to sacrifice with an infant"

"Sorry?"

"Yes... I can only give you my powers if you sacrifice with an infants blood"

"Where am I gonna get blood?"

"You are a witch make a plan..."

"But I..."

"Go out there and hunt Makhehla thanks for the chicken."

Her shade snatches my chicken. I walk back to my house thinking of whose pregnant so I can make a blood sacrifice with an infant. I really can't afford to give Thabsile these powers because I'm certain I will go down while she goes up.. I can't risk being stoned to death or better yet burnt alive. Thabile has done way too much evil she would rather take my place. I will make her the sacrife. Already I've unblocked the Kings first wife to send her into her early grave while I focus on getting the powers. If the wife doesnt do much I will have no choice but to unblock Iminathi to fight her. Already I have the wife hovering around the castle now she's invaded the Kings body. My poor niece won't know because she doesn't know her real husband. Wether Ngidi changes or not she would never notice because she's ignorant.

instead she still had her heart fixated on her past lover who has moved on too. I need her mother's powers to myself.

Khethiwe

"How could you huh?"

He says beating me up my son is howling on my back.

"I'm sorry!! Hawu Ngiyaxolisa!!!" I scream from the bottom of my lungs.

"Today I'm gonna teach you a lesson!!! I love that girl but you went on and ruined everything dammit!!!"

"Hawu I'm your wife!"

"Used to be Khethiwe!!! You used to be! You and I are history!!!"

He says reaching for a sjambok I attempt to run outside but he closes the door and pushes me to the floor.

"Hawu please! I will let you be please don't hurt me. Please Hawu think of my son please" I plead.

"I'm gonna kill you today I'm not a warrior by mistake!!! You've striked my last nerve!"

"Hawu I'm sorry!!! I'm sorry!!!!" I say weary and all bloody from the previous beatings. I'm on my knees begging for my life My son is crying hysterically on my back.

"Undress"

"No! I'm not gonna do that!!"

"I said undress!!" He says pulling me by my hair.

" Fine!!! Fine!! At least don't kill the baby! Please!!!
sehranmagzine.comah!!! Hawu!!!" I cry in agony as the sjambok
lands on my arm. He roughly takes the baby and puts him on the
bed I try to pull the sjambok but it's a losing fight to wrestle him.
We talking about warrior here a whole giant. He gives me lashes
my sobs fill the entire compound if not the entire Kingdom. His
gonna kill me his eyes says it all.

Ngelozi

I'm seated on my bed brushing my tummy. I have a runny tummy
I've been boom booming in the toilet since morning. I'm even
becoming dehydrated. But on the other hand I'm excited about it
because a tummy signifies a cleansing process. Meaning all
unholy things are leaving my body through my buttocks Even the
baby making fluid is swimming out. You should see how happy I
am right now. All thanks to the guava leaves my tummy will
remain small and tucked in as it always is. There it goes again I
run to the toilet. I do my business and go pluck out a handful of
tree leaves to wipe myself clean. I've already finished my toilet
paper roll. I'm not about to wake up my parents for a roll. Mom
complains a lot about it after all it's a mana for us hence we need
to use it wisely. I walk away heading to my chamber.

"Hawu!! Hawu!!!! You hurting me! I'm gonna die please stop!! "

These words echo in my ears It's a womans voice. If I didn't know better I would think she's making love but that's not the case. Making love doesn't kill a person or it does? But whatever the circumstances This person sounds in pain not that kind pain that's enjoyable but the kind of pain that I felt when my mother beat me up. I mean the kind of pain I'm yet to succumb when the beans spill about my virginity. The screaming gets more and more louder. So much that it brings me fear and shivers down my spine. I walk to my father's house I knock.

"Who is it?"

"Baba it's me Ngelozi"

"Yini Ngelozi?"

"Hawu is hurting a woman the lady is crying baba"

"Ngelozi stay out of adults business they surely having fun"

"Baba please go help!"

"Ngelozi it's late at night silele" My mom says-

"Mama please"

"Give me a minute I'm coming" Dad-

I keep quiet and listen attentively on the noise..

"Baba come to bed we not done" Ma-

"We will wrap up when I come back I need to see what this boy is up to" Dad-

"Baba what if they making love?" Ma-

"How big is the penis for her to howl this loud for the entire village to hear? Unless it's a snake mafuze" Dad-

I giggle.

"Baba I was already close to my glory "

"Same here but I need to attend to this it might happen his beating up a lady. You know these warriors are animals too. I'm coming my wife."

"Kodwa baba..."

"Mafuze I'm coming back don't sleep"

I giggle and cover my mouth. Sies these parents are naughty. Dad walks out fixing his cloth.

"What's going on Ngelozi?"

"Baba the lady was crying like crying baba. I think uncle Hawu was hurting her"

Dad looks at me in miff.

"Let's go.." He says heading to Hawu's house. My tummy makes those "Ncreeiiiiii" Sounds to alert me the bomb is about to explode. But since I love people's news I walk with father heading to the Hawu's house. Father knocks..

Ngcolosi

I was in the middle of something serious when that Bubu girl came knocking and shouting for us to aid a woman whose being beating up by Hawulesiziwe. I had no choice but to go there with Nhlonipho.

Zimele said he will join us shortly. This Maseko boy what has gotten to his head? Since when does he beat women? I'm gonna twists his testicle.

"Baba do you think his gonna kill her?"

"I don't know son but warriors are heartless they not different from soldiers. These people have hearts of scorpions"

"Let's hurry up"

I force myself to run there. I find a couple of people gathered outside. Fuze is knocking...

"Maseko!!!!!" Fuze -

Baby sobs are heard.

"Maseko!! Open this door!!" Fuze-

Bubu is crying and trembling. Zimele shows up.

"Baba kanti what's going on here?" Zimele-

"I don't know son but that maiden mentioned something about Hawu beating his wife"

"He did what? Is this son a polygamist okay upstairs? You should've told me Baba" Zimele -

"Don't do the unthinkable Zimele" Nhlo-

Zimele looks at his brother and breaks through crowd.

"Hawu!!!! Come outside now!!!!" Zimele roars.

"My Prince his not around he should've long opened or cane out when i called his name" Fuze-

"There's a baby in here baba his crying." Ngelozi-

Zimele Jali

I look at my brothers lady.

"I can hear that too" I add..

"Maseko open this door or I'm coming in there to fuck you up!!!"

"Zimele..." Nhlo warns.

"Five four three two and one!!" I say storming on his door. I try to push it open but it doesn't open. The bastard must've locked it.

"Fuze please stand this side while I go check that side."

"My Prince" Fuze says semi bowing his head.

I walk around the house please stand this side while I go check that side."

"My Prince" Fuze says semi bowing his head.

I walk around the house fucken moroon. He used a window to exit the house.

"We need to kick down the door.. There's a woman laying unconscious on the floor." I say frightened I'm so gonna kill this son of a polygamists.. I can't say a son of a whore because his mother is nothing but a good mother to everyone. I cannot insult her.

" Zimele where are you going? "Dad-

" To find Hawu.. Kick this door down or Nhlonipho use the window to enter then unlock the door. I'm coming. "

I say running heading to my chamber. I need my spear I'm gonna slaughter this woman beater. Khethiwe doesn't deserve this actually she's no longer going anywhere.. She's gonna get a chamber here but that Hawu shit is leaving this compound be it amputated or dead....

Mota

"I loved it Ngwane" I say smiling ear to ear.

He smiles and looks at me.

"Aren't you sleepy?"

"I'm not why are you asking?"

"Just wanna tell you a story"

"What story Ngwane?"

"My childhood stories"

"I would love that but before we go there can I tell you my little secret?"

"Try me MaBhengu"

"Growing up I had a serious crush you Ngidi I loved everything about you. The way you walked the way you smiled the way you combed your hair and the way you breathe I loved everything about you especially your calmness. I remember one time writing your name and mine on the sand I covered those with a heart. That's how much I loved you. But you married Thabisile"

He lifts his head to look at me. I continue brushing his chest playing with his hair that covers his chest.

"You lying right?"

"I'm not Ngidi" I say looking at him.. He chuckles.

"And you never said anything Mota?"

"I was young and naive"

"And shy always you hid your face behind your brother."

He side smile I can't help it but to smile.

"I wasn't doing that"

"You were Mota courting you was hard because Ngcolosi was always there protecting you"

My smile disappears when I recall how protective my brother was of me. He was always right behind me ensuring I was okay and safe. Honestly speaking it's my fault our bond ended blaming it on Nozibele is wrong and cowardice. I think I let jealous get the better of me after all Ngcolosi was my brother at some point he was supposed to have a significant other someone he was gonna have a family with and that someone wasn't me. For years I put myself in trouble to seek attention I lied about the beatings and abuses I told Ngcolosi about.. That was for to lure him into feeling bad for neglecting me which he never did.

"He was a good brother indeed"

"Had he not been a guard to you I would've married you instead. Zuko would probably be our first born." He says with his brows furrowed. Ngidi is acting strange honestly something about him is off if not changed. He doesn't normally permits the motive to engage on such topics. He just makes room for sex talk and that's it but today it's different I think i like the new Ngidi.

"We would've had a happy home"

"Tell me about it.."

He says playing with my hair..

"You mentioned a letter"

"I feel bad for giving you that letter but I couldn't stand watching my friend I mean your wife do this to you" I blink my big eyes for him to see my care for him.

"It's okay.. What was she doing?"

"It's best you read the letter but please don't tell on me"

"She will leave soon don't mind her it's only a matter of days. I can not share a bed with a witch."

"Ngidi.."

"What?"

"You've changed"

"You reckon?"

"Yes.."

"Give me the letter" I get up to go search my dress.. I pull out the letter I've asked my daughter to draft down but smart me did not give her the yours truly and dear names I added them myself pretending to be Thabile responding to the supposedly "Letter Makhosonke" sent me. I want her out. I want Ngidi to be mine I just pray he strangles her to death.. Ngidi reads the letter. He looks at me.

"Who is Makhosonke? And what child is he talking about?"

"Thabile has the answers Ngwane" I say with the sweetest voice ever.. He blows his nose I side smile.....

Ngelozi

Nhlonipho uses to the window to enter the door is swings open. My father and the King go inside. Nhlonipho walks towards me holding a baby boy. He looks at me.

"You good?" Nhlo-

"Yes.. How are you?"

"I don't know Ngelozi I really don't know. Please hold him"

"Sure" I hold the baby.

"I will be right back.." He says in a very saddening manner.

"My lov I mean Nhlonipho" He looks at me.

"Yes"

"How is the mother?"

"Its not looking good let me go lend a hand"

"Be careful..."

"I will..." He says covering the baby with a blanket. How he loves kids. My tummy does those weird sounds again. I look at the baby.

"Hey don't sweat it's my tummy. I have a runny tummy" I smile but the kid doesn't.

"I see you're the rude type smile kid"

The kid cries that's a first. Kids love me they laugh at my presence but not this one but I understand his mother was beaten surely the poor thing is pained by this whole experience.

"Why is he crying?"

"When did you get here?"

"When he resumed crying"

"I didn't pinch him.."

Nhlo looks at me my stupid tummy makes the loudest rumble
Nhlonipho looks at me.

"I'm not hungry I ate.. It's just I've been shitting none stop the
guava leaves are at work"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

"A runny tummy is a good sign isn't it? "

"I think you hungry Ngelozi"

"I'm not hungry" He looks at me. I look at the baby his quiet.

"Why is he quiet?"

"Thats because his chose silence over chaos"

"Nhlo that baby was crying when I held him"

"Surely you're not his kind of tea or maybe he doesn't like women"

"Or his angry his mother was beaten rude baby"

He giggles.

"Thats wrong to say Ngelozi"

"He hurt me Nhlonipho kids love me"

"But I love you more" He says looking at me. I blush.

"You look beautiful by the way"

"Don't start"

He smiles and slowly plays with the kid.

"Nhlonipho!!" King-

"Baba"

"Go call the royal doctor" King-

"On it baba"

"Can I go with Nhlonipho baba?" I say

"It's not safe stay here or go home" Dad-

"Baba please I want to help"

"Ngelozu I said stay here or go home" Dad-

"Home it is then" I say disappointed Nhlonipho looks at me.

"And the baby baba?" I ask-

"Take him with you" Dad-

"Handle him with care let me run." He says bringing the baby to me my tummy starts again. I walk out of this compound with the grumpy baby. As I'm walking home a hear someone call me.

"Ngelози.." Gosh that's Nhlonipho!!

"Nhlo.."

"Can I have a kiss?"

"Be quick or else I will have porridge inside my underwear"

We share a kiss. My tummy makes more noise.

"You must've drank too much of those guava water"

"At least we won't be mom and dad"

"At least" He says kissing me again.

"Bye"

"Bye and please get well soon I love you"

"I will I love you too"

"Night little one I will see you tomorrow"

I smile as he walk away. I run to the toilet.

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62

The sun is rising across the mountain.

It took me the whole night to sought for warrior Hawulesiziwe's whereabouts no trace of him was found. I even went to all the possible places I know he would go into hiding in. I really wanted to kill him I hate men who instill discipline on women by beating them to a pulp ears are never on the face and a hand is never a mouth. How do you expect someone to digests and phantom whatever you trying to instill or state out while you bashing them and having them screaming from their highest pitch? That's

rubbish and stupidity. Hawu shouldn't have done that I don't know what Khethiwe did or said but whatever it was she didn't deserve to be beaten up in that manner..

I exhale deeply Zikhali will forgive me.. I will seek still waters in his house that's how far I've traveled searching for that fool.

"Jali good morning.."

That's Zikhali i clear my throat.

"Greetings Shenge and how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks son. To what do we owe to be visited by the Prince of Thuthukani? Don't tell me you woke up this early missing your family."

I giggle faintly.

"That too is the reason my King but honestly I was looking for a guy from my Kingdom he left his wife in a terrible state."

"That sounds bad.. Listen Bhengu let's discuss this over a steamy cup of tea."

He says tapping my shoulder. I follow him inside their spacious house.

"Have a sit Jali" He says showing me a couch. He disappears to the kitchen. Mrs Buthelezi shows up yawning.

"Oh! Jali.. Good morning"

"Morning my Queen and how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks my son and yourself?"

"I'm good mama I can't complain"

"What brings you here so early in the morning? Is everything okay back home?"

"We can say that my Queen" I say yawning.

"That yawn tells me you hardly slept"

"Thats the truth"

"You should go lay down Zimele."

"Boni make breakfast We can not starve Jali." Zikhali -

"I'm on it"

She disappears. Buthelezi hands me a cup of tea.

"Here Jali quench your thirsts"

"Thank you Buthelezi."

I say reaching for my mug he places a saucers with cookies.

"A little cookie to break your fast Jali while we wait for the real breakfast"

"Thank you my King"

He looks at me.

"You were saying something about a man leaving his wife in a terrible state what happened?"

I narrate what I saw. He shakes his head side ways he puts his tea mug on the table. Then joins his hands together then he looks at me again.

"Who does that? That is so barbaric!! That's hilarious and inhumane! Stone that jerk to death."

"He sure does deserve a punishment"

"How could he beat his wife to a pulp? Especially in front of a child? What he did was no different from stripping his wife naked in front of the villagers. His a fool!"

"This is so gruesome really"

"If you were to do that to my daughter my own flesh and blood. The gods of Thuthukani and Umthombo would hold their jaw in shock Zimele. I would turn you into a roasted turkey. No daughter of mine would suffer like that in the hands of a man who claimed to love her. I would skin you alive! "

I look at him eyes pop out.

" When you find that fool skin him alive then pour chilli paper and spirit on his skin. Bloody arsehole"

"Isn't it too early to swear dad?" Busanu-

"This is my house Busani"

"Greetings baba ka Gatsha and counting.." Busani-

"Greetings malume ka Gatsha and counting"

He sits opposite his father and myself

"Baba I'm off to the farm is your daughter awake?"

"Which one?"

"I'm wide awake! Ready to go?" Ndandatho -

I look at her so does she.

"Good morning my love" Nda-

"Morning my love"

Zikhali looks at me then Ndandatho.

"I'm ready too am I late?" Gabi-

"Very late Gabisile" Busani-

"Come on Busani I tried to be early"

"We leaving you behind late coming is not appreciated this side"
Busani-

"Busani you are vile you can't do that to me" Gabi-

"Busani stop abusing my daughter please this little girl was made with love. Stop hurting her come here sweetheart come to daddy" Zikhali says enveloping Gabi in his arms.

"I was also made with love baba your loved daughter is late"
Busani-

"Who said I made you with love?" Zikhali -

"No need to say it me being your replica is proof of that. Of all people you chose to give me your looks not these two daughters of yours" Busani-

Zikhali laughs.

"Busani I never made you but your mother did"

I laugh.

"Excuse me?" Boni-

"He says you made me." Busani -

"You were sneaky Busani.." Boni -

"Thats my cue to leave" Busani-

They laugh at him.

I glance on the view I can't wait to see my own minions do this to each other. I can't wait to have such conversations with my kids. I lift my head someone's daughter that was made with love is glancing at me.

"Where are you guys going?" I ask-

"They going to the farm" Dad-

"Thats great can I join?"

"Not before you rest Jali you need rest" Dad-

"I can rest when I come back"

"No go rest Jali Ngcolosi would shoot me with his hunting gun shall anything bad happen to you. Rest son you can only help some other time" Dad-

"No problem enjoy your time" Nda looks at me she's smitten.

Zikhali stands up with Gabi clinging on him.

I think I want a daughter I would enjoy my life if I had a Gabi amongst my kids. Already I know what kind of a child Gatsha will be it's either he will be like Nhlonipho or Busani. This boy is gonna be too serious and unapproachable. Even now his somehow honestly. You would swear his gonna yell at you or punch you when he looks at you.

"Don't strain your back" I say to Ndandatho

"I will be careful"

"Please do.."

Thabile

Mota walks into the house singing I look at her and butter my bread. Ngidi follows minutes later I glance at him. These two backstabbers.

"Morning maThabi" Mota-

"Such a happy mood you have" I say-

"Do you blame me? Your blankets are comfy so is your bed I

would kill to use these for quite a while"

"You might as well just move in there's so much you would enjoy in this house. Not only the comfy blankets and bed." I say. Ngidi looks at me.

"I will keep your word for it" Mota-

"Morning Ngwane.." I say -

"Mota do you mind making me that cup of tea that you made me yesterday?" Ngidi-

"Oh! That? That I could do my King"

"Thank you Majali"

I glance at them while squeezing hard on the table knife. They can't even hide it. They flirting in front of me. I should've knocked and showed them I was aware of what they doing behind my back. As for Mota she will rue the day she messed with me. But easy tiger she will rue the day she messed with me. But easy tiger Fighting silent is better than exaggerating. They won't know what stole them when I'm done with them.

"Are you trying to kill that knife too?" Ngidi -

I look at him surprised.

"Excuse me?"

"Are you trying to kill that knife too? Wasn't I loud enough?"

"Kill that knife? What have I killed before?" I said with a upper tone.

"Good morning mama nobaba" Mkhuleko-

"Good morning everyone" Zuko-

"Morning elders" Mgcinaphi -

Zuko helps her to a chair he kisses his cheek.

"Thank you my love" Mgcinaphi -

Ngidi looks at me I swallow hard.

"Morning my children and how are you?" Ngidi says happily..
Makhehla must come to the rescue Ngidi is getting too big for his shoes.

"Your cup of tea the way you like it my King" The slut smiles broadly Ngidi smiles too. As he takes the cup their hands touch I swallow hard as a sting on my chest presses so hard.

"Thank you MaJali"

"It's a pleasure Shenge"

I look at her eyes popping. Ngidi sips

"This is good it tastes good"

"Everything touched by me tastes good and turns into gold. Tell

me if you need more!"

"I won't hesitate" He looks at her.

Zuko looks at me then Mota and Ngidi. Is it obvious maybe?
Mota I'm so gonna deal with you..

Zuko

I look at my father then my mother in law and my step mother. Something strange and questionable is happening here. I don't know what it is but something doesn't feel right with the way my father and mama Mota are talking if I didn't know better I would think they flirting.

"Mgcinaphi" Dad-

"Ngwane"

"How's the baby?"

"The baby is fine baba going to Thuthukani really helped. Gogo did the ceremony for me I haven't had pains in a while now" My wife-

"Thats great my daughter... Zuko how is it going with the farms?"

"All is going just fine baba thanks for asking"

"Pleasure"

"Baba no mama I've been meaning to ask where is Nomaswazi?
It's been two days now without seeing her"

"She went to visit family"

"What family ma?" I ask because we hardly visit mama's family..

"Please excuse me I need to lie down" Ma-

"Are you okay mama?" Mkhuleko-

"Yes my boy I just have a headache"

"Excuse me kids I will tuck your mother in" Dad-

"No.. I will manage Ngidi" Ma

"Please my wife" Dad -

Mom blows her nose and agrees on dad's offer. I look at them as they disappear. Mama Mota looks at us then drinks from her mug. Something bizarre is going on here.

Nozibele

"Mama good morning.." I say in a happy mood heading to her windows to open them. I've brought her something for her cough.

"Mama wake up please. I have a remedy for your fever"

"Makoti I need to lie down my child my back is painful"

"You will lie down mama after drinking this remedy and taking a bath."

"Nozibele can I rest please"

"Not when you coughing up so badly mama. I will rest when the cough has subsided"

"Makoti stop worrying about me. Where is Zimele?"

"I haven't seen him this morning"

"Please tell him to come see me it's urgent"

She coughs. I slowly walk to her bed and put my hand on her forehead.

"Ma you extremely hot you sweating too. What's going on?"

"Makoti don't worry about it"

"Mama what is going on? I'm calling a doctor mama this is not right. "

She coughs up.

"There's no need for that my daughter"

"Mama you have a terrible cough I cannot fold my hands and wait for mana to locate you. You need help as in yesterday"

"Nozibele it's just a cough my child don't freight. Where is my son?"

"They surely still attending to Hawu's case"

"I see... And Nhlonipho?"

"Same with him. Mama please drink up the remedy while I go seek help for you please"

She looks at me and nod.

"Thank you mama" I say heading for the door.

"Nozibele"

"Mama"

"You are kind and merciful just like your name says you are gentle at heart and for that my daughter I will always love you and cherish you"

"Thank you mama I love you too"

"Don't change that heart of yours it's the reason good things are happening to you and your family"

I smile she coughs up.

"Mama are you okay?"

"Yes.."

"Mama I don't like this cough honestly"

"I will be fine"

"Okay I'm coming now now"

"Okay..." I walk out of her private chamber.

I find Ngcolosi and Nhlonipho talking while eating banana's and nuts.

"Bhengu and son how are you?"

"We doing great mama and yourself?"

"I'm doing great my love.."

"How's the lady?"

"She's being treated she will live." Husband -

" Better. Jali mama is not okay she's extremely hot and sweating her coughing is getting worse by day. We need to call in help as in yesterday "

" You reckon? "

" Yes she's in bed as we speak struggling to wake up."

" That's bad I will go seek help" Ngcolosi -

"Please"

"I will go check up on her" Nhlo -

"Please my boy. Please Nhlo let me prepare water to calm her temperature. "

"No problem." Nhlo says disappearing. I go about my business I join Nhlonipho and mama. I put a white cloth on her forehead. I recall my minty concoction syrup for colds and fever surely it's gonna help especially with her dry cough.

Nhlonipho

"Have you met a woman who brings you joy?"

I smile

"Yes gogo"

"Do I know them maybe?"

"Maybe"

"Who is she?"

"Well.. Gogo I cannot tell you gonna tell dad and dad is gonna kill me"

"It's Fuze's daughter isn't it?"

"How do you know?"

"I might be old Nhlonipho but I'm not blind"

I look at her.

"You love her don't you?"

"Gogo.."

"Talk to me Nhlo"

"Yes I love her gogo a lot"

"Fuze will kill you Nhlonipho you know how he values his daughter"

"He doesn't know"

"Soon he will"

"I will cross that bridge when u get there"

"You haven't messed with his kraal didn't you?"

"Me? No gogo I haven't.." I look aside Gogo looks at me and smile.

"You not a good liar Nhlonipho. Your eyes are selling you out"

"Gogo I haven't touched her"

"How do you explain my dream if you and her swimming in a river stuffed with live and fresh fish?"

I look at her lost.

"I don't know gogo dreams are crazy Gogo andd who would swim with fishes?"

"Nhlonipho you invaded Fuze's kraal"

"Yooh gogo!" I say standing up.

"Nhlonipho you won't ask what my dream means?"

"No gogo it's bizarre and all hilarious."

"My dream denotes fertilization"

"By swimming with fishes Gogo?"

"Let me do this. How do sardines fertilize each other?"

"Their gametes travel on water gogo and why am I having this topic with you?"

"Correct their gametes travel on water. What was my dream again?"

"We were swimming with fishes in water."

"Ngelozu is pregnant and you are responsible"

I choke on my saliva. She looks at me without blinking.

"Gogo please"

"Or I'm lying Nhlonipho?"

"Gogo I.. I don't know what you talking about"

"Nhlonipho come clean before Fuze comes knocking on my doorstep."

I swallow hard

"How come she's pregnant gogo? We drank guava water."

She laughs at me and coughs.

"Guava water? Why was she drinking guava water? To increase her chances of falling pregnant?"

She laughs again.

"Gogo what do you mean by your statement?"

"Guava leaves do not hinder a pregnancy from happening Nhlonipho instead it promotes and enhances chances of pregnancy. Growing up women who were struggling to conceive were given guava leaves as an concoction to enhance pregnancy. Days later they had diarrhea and stomach cramps meaning fertilization has taken place. And that's what my dream told me that you and Fuze 's daughter made a baby. That's why you were swimming with fishes "

"Gogo... You.. Oh no!!" I say defeated and frightened..

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Gezekile Jali

"Gogo you joking right?" Nhlo-

"I'm afraid not my grandson"

"But gogo we too young to be parents"

"You were too young to be doing adults stuff Nhlonipho"

He looks at me bowed head.

"Ngelozzi will hate me"

"Would you blame her grandson?"

He looks at me.

"Gogo you not helping you know that?"

"You will make a great father Nhlonipho"

"You mean a great Child father? Cos I'm still a child"

"A child who barely slept at night while he was supposed to be sleeping you meant?"

He looks at me.

"Please don't tell my father"

"I will be dead by the time they know"

"It won't take long till I join you."

He says between his teeth.

"Why is that?"

"Your son is gonna kill me gogo I've brought yet another shame upon the family. You know how father feels about children born out of wedlock. He wanted me to do things differently from how my brother did but here I am gogo following right into my brother's footsteps. "

" Nhlonipho calm down."

"Gogo I can't calm down."

"Nhlonipho my son. Everyone is allowed to make mistakes within those mistakes comes lessons my son."

"Gogo do we have other relatives maybe? Somewhere far maybe? Where father wouldn't find me? I really need to run away before father kills me"

"Why would I kill you Nhlonipho?"

My son says walking in with Nozibele and our royal doctor. Nhlonipho looks at me.

"Please excuse me" Nhlo-

"Nhlonipho Jali you haven't answered my question" Son-

"Baba I have a class shortly bye"

"Nhlonipho what did you do?" Son-

"Ngcolosi this is not the right time to confront the baby
Nhlonipho you can to your class my son." Nozi-

"Nhlonipho misplaced his pendent Ngcolosi his afraid that you will punish him because you made it clear to him not to remove it even when he baths. That's whats going on" I say staring at my kindhearted and respectful grandson. I cannot afford to watch Ngcolosi kill him with harsh words. He would rather do that when I'm gone..

"I'm sorry baba" Nhlo-

"Thats fixable I will see a Maine to that replace that pendent"
Nozi-

"I'm watching you Nhlonipho" Ngcolosi -

Poor Nhlonipho walks on eggs shell....

See why I want to die? These kids are troublesome. Apart from them being troublesome I need my rest honestly.

Ngidi

I slam the door behind her. I roughly push her on the bed she nearly slams on the floor after making a huge jump.

"Ngidi!!"

She says looking at me with pain filled eyes.

"Who is Makhosonke?don't you dare think of denying it Thabile"

"I don't know who or what you talking about Ngidi"

"Thabile who the hell is Makhosonke?" I roar so much that she covers her face thinking I will slap her.

"Ngwane I don't know any Makhosonke I promise"

"So I'm making this name up? Huh Thabile?"

"No.. I didn't say you are but what I'm saying is that I do not know any Makhosonke"

"Isn't Makhosonke your first love?" She widens her eyes.

"Did Mota tell you that Ngidi when you were making her moan in my house! Right under my nose?"

"Don't you dare drag her name in this conversation! She has nothing to do with this but your letter to Makhosonke has everything to do with this. You think I'm stupid don't you?"

"Ngidi you not denying having another woman moan in my house? You dont deny your cheating huh Ngidi?"

"Cheating is nothing new in this house. Listen I want you to pack your bloody clothes and leave myhouse immediately!!"

"No.. No... You can't do that to me! Not for my friend Ngidi. I'm the mother of your children and I'mgoing nowhere! The only person who should be leaving is that whore you sleeping with"

"Have you forgotten how you got here Thabile? Have you forgotten you were once the Mota in my wife's marriage? Have you forgotten how you lured someone else's husband by faking you were pregnant for him?"

She swallow hard and looks at me.

"Ngidi please! You cannot do this to me. You can't send me packing because of Mota!!"

"I said stop dragging her into this rubbish!!!! You have Makhosonke and I have Mota so I'm sending you away to your lover. Get lost I'm done with you"

"You cannot do this to me! I'm going nowhere!!! Mota made a clown of you because there's no Makhosonke that I happen to love or had as a first love! That witch is feeding you the nonsense that's buried within her thighs! I'm going nowhere Ngidi!!"

"Leave murder!!! Leave murder!!! If you don't leave I will kill you just like you killed my wife and my daughter!!!"

With that said I strangle her.

Ngelozzi

At least today the stomach ache and bug have subsided. I feel much better. I was able to do much of my chores and help my mother out with some of the things she needed help with. On the other hand I've helped with bathing Hawu's son. The wife is sleeping baba suggested they bring her over here so help would be given to her. I must say Hawu really saddened this woman he hurt her so badly. Her body marks. Her face is swollen too. It's sad cos she can't even sit down her entire body is throbbing. It's so sad to observe honestly.

"Ngelo"

"Ma?"

"Did you feed the baby?"

"I'm on it mama I'm almost done"

"Better... Do you have class today?"

"Yes mama"

"Eish!! That's a problem because I have a shift in the royal house. I wanted you to look after Khethiwe and baby Mlingo."

"Mama I can't miss the class just yesterday I missed it. Not today please ma"

"Ngelozzi I have work"

"Kodwa mama.." I sulk.

"Ngelozhi she really needs help"

"Fine mama it's not like I have a choice"

Mom looks at me.

"You dont want don't you?"

I look aside.

"If you don't want Ngelozhi just say it the last thing I want is being labeled as abusive by your father. Say it if you really don't want it."

Mom says taking the baby she's not happy with me.

Honestly speaking it's Nhlonipho I don't want to miss I miss spending time with him.

" I'm sorry mama I will look after her"

"Let's hope you mean it I'm tired of fighting with your dad Ngelozi. It's draining and tiring."

I look at her.

"I will look after her.You can go to work"

"Thank you"

"Pleasure" I say with a sad tone. I carry the baby on my back and go seat under a tree.

"Parents are annoying isn't it baby Hawu?"

The baby yawns so do I.

"Don't be a boring parent in future your kids are gonna lock you inside the house for days. Or better yet they gonna hide all your left shoes poor you will struggle to run after them because you will be all grey haired and walking with a cane."

The baby sneeze.

" Mmmmm Ngelozi your life is boring " I say resting my head on my hand.

" Ngelozzi I'm off neh? See you later"

"See you later mama"

"There's meat in the pot please eat and save some for your father. I love you yezwa?"

"I love you too"

"Did you hear the" eating" part? "

" I will eat mama"

"Better."

She says walking away.

Zikhali

"Going somewhere?"

"Yeah please eat and save some for your father. I love you yezwa?"

"I love you too"

"Did you hear the" eating" part? "

" I will eat mama"

"Better."

She says walking away.

Zikhali

"Going somewhere?"

"Yeah I'm seeing Ngcolosi. There are a few things I want to discuss with him regarding the kids marriage"

"I see..."

"And you.. Any plans for the day? Like visiting your mother to mend things? Or better yet apologising properly to our first born child for your actions?"

I look at her as she's holding Gatsha feeding him porridge.

"I will apologize Ngwane"

"Better hurry up."

"Do you still love me though Zikhali?"

"Why wouldn't I? It's your cruelty I hate not you."

I say fixing my beads

"I'm sorry my husband I will fix this"

"I believe in you"

"Thank you."

"Today I'm preparing your favorite meal please come back in time"

"I will try my wife"

"Don't try but do it Zikhali"

"Fine my love.. Let me get going."

"Fine" I kiss Gatsha's cheek and walk outside..

My journey to Umthombo is filled with thoughts. In a split second my cart parks outside Ngcolosi's compound. I'm welcomed in. A minutes later Ngcolosi his wife and a woman I do not know come myway.

"Thank you doctor" Ngcolosi says as his wife walks the person outside.

"Buthelezi"

"Bhengu"

We say shaking hands.

"I'm sorry to keep you waiting my mother is not feeling well. We had to summon a doctor to introspect her"

"I see Jali.. What is wrong with her?"

"She's coughing badly and she sweats heavily too"

"Thats bad but she will live Jali don't worry about it"

"Greetings Buthelezi.."

Nozi says bowing her head a little to pay me some respect.

"Greetings maJali"

"Can I get you something to quench your thirst?" Nozi-

"Please my wife you will find us in the ward council chamber"

"No problem" Nozi-

We stand up and head to the private room. I'm shown a chair.

"Buthelezi what do I owe to be visited by you?"

"I want us to discuss the kids."

"Okay.."

"They wanted to marry in two days time but I've stopped them. There's so much that needs to be done Jali"

"I'm very much aware Buthelezi but we don't have to drag this."

"When are you planning on doing a ceremony for Gatsha?"

"Let's do it this weekend Buthelezi then sometime during the week we do the wedding."

"You need to draft a lobola letter too"

"Definitely Shenge"

We discuss many things and conclude on the same judgements. Gatsha needs to be welcomed properly in the Jali household..

Thabisile

"Ngidi!!! Stop it.." I cry in agony trying to kick him off from me but his grip around my neck is too strong..

"Ngi.... Ngi...yoi hurting me!!"

"I'm gonna kill you!!"

"I do know Makhosonke!!! He was my first love I've admired now let me go please!!!" He let's me loose I cough up badly while he stares in my eyes with no remorse.

"Nomaswazi is not mine isn't it?"

I look at him.

"That is crazy Ngidi where is that coming from?"

The first wife appears embracing Ngidi from behind. She looks at me and sticks her tongue out.

"You just admitted to being in love with another man"

"She's your daughter. And I didn't say I still love the guy. "

"Liar!!" First wife-

"She's yours Ngidi"

"And you expect me to believe me you?"

"Ngidi please"

"You gonna leave these grounds soon!" Wife-

"I'm going nowhere"

"Excuse me?" Ngidi-

"I feel dizzy you nearly killed me"

"Pack up and leave I want you gone!"

"Ngidi please!"

"I'm off to a meeting when I come back I want you gone" Ngidi says annoyed. The wife laughs and looks at me.

"You going back to being deserted Thabsile You are going to live a life filled with persecution and famine"

"Go to hell ghost!!"

"I have control over my husband now I'm using him to hurt you. I'm also using Mota to destroy this shame. Go just like your witch daughter has done."

"Leave my daughter out of this bitter corpse!!"

"Shame Thabsile"

She laughs and walks away. I changed my clothes and walk out of the house. I push the door open in my uncles hut. He looks at me and continues doing what his doing.

"I need your help I want to kill Mota and Ngidi"

"Thabile just give them what they need and back off"

"Excuse me? I should what?"

"If you continue doing this more of your secrets will be dished out"

"Silence that corpse and stop talking nonsense!! Actually take me to the bushes I want her powers now. I want to be a witch just like the woman who gave birth to me"

"Thats not gonna happen"

"Excuse you Makhehla?"

"Thabile you can't obtain those powers they not yours"

"What do you mean?"

"I was in the middle of something before you came in here please leave"

"What's going on here?"

"Thabile this wife is dangerous she's over powering me. I can't help you"

"So you telling me I must fold my hands and watch Ngidi disrespect me?"

"Thabile give up!"

"You are useless!!!!" I say walking outside. I decide on walking slowly heading home.

"Thabile..." A voice says from the bushes.

"" Who is it? "

" Come closer it's me we need to talk"

"Makhosonke is that you?"

"Just come here and stop making noise!"

" Fine " I step closer.. I'm met by his eyes and handsome face. He looks at me so do I. His still handsome as grown as he is.

"How are you?"

"What were you doing there?"

"How are you?"

"Thabisie I'm not here to play games what were you doing that side?"

"I was just passing by"

"Listen to me carefully don't ever set foot that side."

"Why not Makhosonke?"

"Are you really gonna ask me that rubbish?"

"Makhosonke.."

"I want you to back off Thabile I never ever want to see you on those grounds not after what you did years ago. I don't want you to complicate my life not again back off."

I swallow hard.

"Makhosonke please"

"I've traveled this far to pass this message. Stay away"

"You hate me don't you?"

"Do you blame? Who would love a woman like yourself? A whole

cruel woman who would waste their love on you? I was a fool to love you once! I would be a fool to love you again I hate you Thabsile!!"

I swallow hard.

"So you lied about everything that you wrote on that letter huh Makhosonke?"

"What letter? I didn't write you any letter. Stay away please"

I swallow a lump and push back my tears.

"Makhosonke!"

"Goodbye Thabile."

He says walking away..

"Makhosonke please don't do this to me"

"You did this to yourself!!"

"Makhosonke!!"

"Stop calling my name and walk home."

"We have a daughter!!"

"And you think I do not know that?"

"Her name is Nomaswazi she's our first born"

He looks at me angry.

"You say what? Do you really think I'm that stupid Thabile? What the heck is wrong with you? Busytoying with people's emotions? I'm no longer playing games with you this is rubbish!!! Go to he'll"

"Makhosonke hear me out please"

"Go to hell!!!!" He roars and walks away leaving me crying.

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Boni

I had no choice but to go to my mother's house. I find her watering flowers how she loved them.

"I see somethings never change" I say faintly smiling.

"Never would I let go of this addiction my child"

"I see Ma. You doing a great job with this place Its looks nothing like the home I've left when I went to marry"

"I try Boni. It's all I have then your brother."

"Where is he?"

"Went on business trip. Look at me lacking my manners let's go inside for a cup of tea"

"Wrap up ma I will go inside and prepare us something to eat"

"Thank you my child." She flashes me her beautiful smile. I make her a simple meal minutes later she walks in.

"To what do I owe the visit?"

"Is it a sin for a daughter to visit her mother?"

"With you it is a sin"

Trust my mother with bursting bubbles.

"Ma I come in peace. I know I haven't been an ideal daughter I've been nothing but a disgrace ma and a disobedient child. For that I come bowed head and humble mama seeking for your apology.
Ngiyaxolisa

mama for everything. I was bitter and holding resentment over something you had no control over. Ma I'm sincerely sorry"

She holds my hands and smiles.

"I've been praying for this day Boni I'm glad the God has remembered my prayer and my wish. My daughter you know I don't hold grudges. I've always wanted you to utter these words my child but in honesty I've long forgiven you for you had no knowledge of what you were doing. I love you Sbonisiwe"

"I love you too mama and I'm sincerely sorry"

I feel tears overwhelm me..

"Don't start with those don't be WEAK Bongi! Save those for Zikhali" I giggle.

"How would saving these for Zikhali help ma?"

"His gonna comfort you in a way that only you know of. I'm hungry please dish up my daughter."

"With pleasure ma"

I stand up. Thank heavens she didn't kick me out or pull a stunt on me. A couple of family members come to greet me I haven't seen them in years...

Ndandatho

My siblings and I are exhausted working in the farm is not a child's play. I need a bath food and a long nap.

"I will pass by the kitchen" Busani -

"Same here I could even eat a harlots the way I'm so hungry"
Gabi-

Busani and I look at each other.

"What do you know about harlots Gabi?" Busani -

"Don't start with me I'm starving" Gabi-

"Let's eat guys" I say going to check on the pots luckily Boni cooked. I dish up for everyone we eat. They go to their chambers I do the same but I go there with a bucket of boiling water. I want to freshen up. I find Zimele and Gatsha sleeping. I don't wake them instead I wash my body. I hear rain sounds. This is a beautiful sign the seeds are gonna turn into harvest. Dad was right about believing in my self. I did say within my heart that I want rain to kiss the soils of Umthombo and bless its farms with mature and fresh vegetation. I begged for the rivers to flow. I

didn't do much but to wish from the bottom of my heart. I smile as I'm buttering my body I go to my toes to butter them..

"Mmmmm What am I seeing with my eyes?"

"Nothing you've never seen before"

I say standing up walking towards Zimele.

"I love you in your birth suit"

I smile and rest my head on his shoulder.

"You not dressing up?"

"You gonna dress me up"

"Oh! Mommy baby.."

"Yes daddy lover"

"How was your day?"

"My day was long and tiring.. How was yours?"

"I've been sleeping since you left this place"

"Jali you were dead not sleeping"

"Maybe I was.." He says rubbing his thumb on my pointy nipples.

"Did you freshen up?"

"Yes I did"

"When cos you said you've been sleeping since I left the house?"

"I was exaggerating.. Your beautiful mother gave me water to bath and food too."

"That's sweet of her. It must be nice being an in-law"

He laughs.

"Are you jealous?"

"Not a chance"

"You lying maJali junior"

I look at him then my little boy.

"I gave you a cute baby look at him"

"I gave you a cute baby not the other way round. He looks like me not you"

"You're a dream crusher."

"Maybe this one will take after you" He says brushing my tummy.

"What are you hoping for my love?"

"A baby girl. I like how cute Gabi is with her father"

"I must've forgotten to tell you."

"Tell me what?"

"I'm a nurturing a baby girl" I bite on my lip.

He smiles.

"You joking right?"

"I'm not joking honey I'm carrying a Princess"

"These are good news honey."

"I know right? But don't love her more than me Zimele I'm a jealous lover"

"Okay mommy I got that"

"No babies after this one"

"Two more to go"

"Hhsehranmagzine.com Zimele?"

"I'm not done with you Ndandatho I want two sons"

" So you want four children in total one being a girl?"

"I actually want six children. Four boys and two girls"

"Whose gonna give you that number Jali?"

"You"

"Jali I'm still a kid in case you've forgotten."

"Kids are still active so I haven't forgotten."

He smiles.

"I love you silly"

"I love my baby girl even more"

"Zimele.."

"Sorry baby" He laughs. He bends his head to play with my nipples using his lips.

"Don't think about it Zimele"

"Think about what?"

"Making love to me"

"I wasn't thinking about it"

"You lying!"

"Okay fine... I will be quick"

"Look behind you" I giggle. He turns his head.

"Gatsha!!!" I giggle..

"This guy has a bad timing"

"Thank you baby for saving mommy." I stand up and go get dressed. I pick Gatsha up and play with him. Minutes later Im laying on the bed with Zimele behind me and Gatsha in front of me. Zimele wraps his hand on my waist.. In a split second we all snoring..

" Ndandatho have you made your mind up?"

"Iminathi"

"She wants to poison my father"

"Your mother is protecting him"

"I want to expose her for the witch she is"

"Iminathi I'm pregnant."

"Ndandatho don't be stubborn"

"Before I do that tell me how our fathers related?"

She narrates everything to me. Which makes sense. I open my eyes later only to be met by night time. Zimele is nowhere in sight. I need to tell dad I promised him the brief up.....

Nhlonipho

I've been cracking my skull open since my conversation with Gogo. I can barely think of anything else but Ngelozi having a big belly most importantly I'm thinking of Fuze. That man will chase me till I surrender. How am I gonna break this ice to Ngelozi? That girl can be crazy at times. God's of Ngwane so give me strength. I sleep it off. The following day I go to the farm to run errands. By the time I knock off I'm tired but I've promised my students a class and today I'm not skipping it. I get home and prepare for today's class. I wish Ngelozi doesn't show up I really can't be the bearer of bad news. Would I be wrong if I tell her after my brother's wedding that she's going to be a mother? How I pity my baby though. Imagine having a mother like Ngelozi? A whole mother who calls sperms "Baby making fluids" I find myself laughing by thinking of the stupid and hilarious things she says or does. My poor baby would have a good mother though even though I'm afraid she might laugh when it's time to breast

feed the baby.....

"Greetings students"

"Greetings teacher Nhlonipho"

"How are you doing handsome boys and beautiful girls?"

"We doing very well teacher"

"Thats beautiful" I say faintly smiling.

"Kids today we gonna study about a food pyramid okay?"

"Yes teacher"

"Greetings my little monkies "

I look behind me damn! The kids smile she calls them that. She's carrying baby Mlingo on her back.

"Hello my love"

"Hey.. How are you?"

"I'm good and yourself?"

"I'm good too"

"Great... What are we teaching them today?"

She says looking into my eyes I shift mine quickly.

"Well.. I'm teaching them about food groups"

"I see... I will sit over there and let you get to it. ."

"No problem"

She walks to one of the benches. I teach the kids the way they are fast learners they understand the whole chapter and they not even afraid to give examples.. They start leaving hours later. Ngelozi looks at me I look at her tummy.

Soon its gonna look like she swallowed a whale.

"That was a great class you did well"

"I tried"

"No you didn't but you did well"

"Thanks"

"You sound bored am I boring you?"

"No you not."

"Let's go for a walk? I miss doing that with you."

"Can we postpone for tomorrow?"

"Why not today?"

"I'm tired"

"Oh!"

"Yes"

She keeps quiet.

"Hows your tummy now?"

"It's fine"

"No runny tummy or stomach cramps"

"They all over"

"I see..."

"Nhlonipho you serious about not wanting to take a walk with me?"

"Ngelozzi I'm tired"

"You didn't come see me last night."

"I was sleeping"

"I see Nhlonipho"

She says looking at me. God how do I break the ice.

"I got you this"

She hand me a plastic bag.

"What is this?"

"My sheet"

"Oh yeah the sheet"

"You acting strange am I boring you Nhlonipho?"

"Of course not"

"Then why are you like this? It's like you don't want to be here or to talk to me."

"Ngelozzi can we not fight please"

"I'm going home"

"Ngelozzi come on! You not boring me"

"You are boring today. You hardly laugh nor call me my love"

"I'm sorry my love"

She looks at me.

"You mad at me because I've killed your baby making fluids?"

"Can we call them sperms or seeds"

"You mad because I drank guava water?"

"Im not angry that you drank guava water.."

"If not please smile"

I faintly smile.

"Can I hold the baby?"

"Sure.."

She unbuckles him.

"Does he still cry when you hold him?"

"No.. But he wants to rest his big head on my tummy."

"Oh!"

"You would swear theres music in my stomach. Let's go to my house to eat nuts"

"Tomorrow I will come."

"Another tomorrow..."

She says looking at me.

"Fine let's take a walk. Ngelozi before you bite off my head. "

"Fine" We walk out of the royal house.. We are silent for a little while.

"I miss you Nhlo"

"I miss you too"

"Do you love me still?"

"Of course I do"

"Okay..."

"Ngelози"

"Yes"

"What would you do if the guava leaves did not work?"

"I will make myself a fire and roast myself. I will be a Christmas lamb"

"Would you hate me if your tummy grew bigger?"

"I won't hate you cos that's not gonna happen"

"Do you think I would make a great father?"

"You will make a great father Nhlo "

"Do you think your father would allow you to marry at this age?"

"Yoo!! Fuze would not allow that he would kill me and the so called husband I'm supposed to marry."

"Ngelozzi what if the sperm didn't die?What if you pregnant?"

"Then I will runaway from Thuthukani"

"I love you Ngelozzi"

"Me too"

"Whatever happens please don't forget that I love you"

"I won't forget."

"Can I have a hug?"

"Sure" We share a hug. I move my hand to her breast.

"Ouch!!!"

"What?"

"They painful surely a monkey was sucking on them last night"

"Sorry.. What else is painful?"

"Nothing apart from my boobs"

"I see.. Sorry" We kiss again. This time around I move my hand to her flat tummy. I feel fear kick in immediately.

Thabile

I take a stroll to the garden to pluck out poisonous leaves. Isn't it Makhehla has gone weak and all cold feet to make poisonous herbs. I will use the same plant that Noma used to kill Iminathi. Ngidi is gonna die today so is Mota. I hide the leaves inside my pockets. I walk back to the house. I cook up a storm.. Mota walks in.

"What are you cooking my friend?"

"Mota what game are you playing?"

"Excuse me?"

"How did Ngidi know about Makhosonke?"

"I don't know. Do you need a hand?"

"I will manage"

"You grumpy what's going on Thabile?"

"You tell me Mota"

"I don't follow"

"You will understand soon"

She looks at me and walks out of the kitchen.. I crush the herbs and mix them inside the stew im gonna dish up for Mota and Ngidi.. Supper time arrives. We all seated on the table. Ngidi still wants me gone and this is my only resort to ending this disrespect and discomfort . I cannot be treated like this in my own house. I cannot watch Ngidi and his mistress take me for a ride. Today I'm putting an end to this nonsense. If there's a person leaving tonight it's them. They will leave as corpse. Already Makhosonke disrespected me now them? Never. I'm gonna dish up this poison and wait for them to die In their sleep.

I dish for everyone. We bless the food Mota looks at me I return it. Ngidi looks at his food. My fingers are crossed. Ngidi fills up a spoon right when his about to shove it inside his mouth Ndandatho walks in.

"None of you must eat that food!!"

She says panting.

"Ndandatho!!! Get lost! What brings you to my house!!"

Zikhali walks in too.

"I don't need your permission to be here!" Ndandatho -

"I'm hungry" Mota-

"You eat that food you die the ball is in your court!" Nda-

I feel my armpits itching my privates sweating.

" What brings you to my house?"

"I seek nobodies permission when visiting my great great grandparents house" Ngidi looks at Ndandatho.

"What great great grandparents? You are sick in the head!!!" I say-

"What are you talking about Ndandatho? What great parents" Zuko-

"Ask your mother she will tell you.. King Ngidi please don't eat your food Mota don't eat your food. This food was poisoned Thabile wanted to kill you through food poisoning. "

"Ndandatho get lost this is my house!! You've came from whatever hole you came from to mock me and tarnish my integrity? What is wrong with you child? Leave me alone Ndandatho!!!" I say in fear.

"She's going nowhere the only person that should be leaving is you Thabile" Ngidi-

"Why does mom have to go baba?" Zuko-

"Exactly baba why does she have to go?" Mkhuleko-

"Didn't you hear what Ndandatho said?" Ngidi-

"And you expect us to believe a stranger over our mother baba?" Mkhuleko -

"Tell him son! This girl is sick in the head. First she was a Mchunu then a Buthelezi now she is a Ngwane!!! What rubbish is this?" I add..

"Ngwane my daughter is not lying I was there when she had a revelation about this dinner. Iminathi sent her to come here to save you from your prematurely death. Please believe her brother please!!" Zikhali

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Ndandatho

I had no choice but to heed Iminathi's plea. This ghost couldn't stop pestering me I hate that she keeps on threatening Ngelozi which irks me. Ngelozi knows nothing about her death or better yet her chaotic family hurting her is an abruptly decision. I left home in a hurry you would swear ghosts were chasing me. My father being the loving father that he is he volunteered to come with me for safety related reasons. I haven't told him as yet about his relation to Ngidi blame it on Iminathi making me have a seizure. Showing me the leaves Thabsile wanted to use to poison her father...

"This girl is confused. First she was a Mchunu A Buthelezi then a

Ngwane! What is wrong with you Ndandatho?" Thabile-

"Listen to me carefully Thabile I know who you are and what you are. Don't push it!!"

"You think I'm scared of you Ndandatho?"

"I care less about your bull shit talks right now. Ngwane please give me your food"

"What exactly is going on here?" Zuko-

"Your mother is a witch that's what's going on here" I say walking closer to Ngidi.

"Mama what is Ndandatho talking about?" Mkhuleko-

"I don't know son she wants to label me as something that I'm not."

"Thabile I want you taste the Kings food"

"Why should I do that?"

"Because you not guilty of witchcraft isnt it I'm making everything up? Ndandatho is delusional isn't it? Now go on and proof everyone right. "

"This is crazy I don't have time for this!!!" She says attempting to move. I spot Iminathi's mother blocking her way.

"Get out of my way!!!" Thabile-

Everyone looks at her.

"Go eat that damn Poison Thabsile" Iminathi's mom-

"In dead sleep I would do that!"

"Who are you talking to mama?" Zuko-

"Hhayi bo Thabile usuyasangana?" Mota-

"Shut up you slut!!! Bloody home wrecker!!" She yells at Mota.

"Wena Ndandatho I dare you to leave immediately"

"She's going nowhere till you eat your poison Thabile!" Ngidi-

"You buying her facade story Ngidizivaliwe?" Thabile-

"Do the damn thing and stop blabbering!!"

"I will do no such thing! I'm not a witch!"

"Thabile eat your food stop wasting everyone's time. Eat this bloody nonsense that you've cooked! If you don't I will shove this food inside your mouth my self!!" Ngidi-

"You know what Ngidizivaliwe? Go to hell maarn!!! After raising your kids this is the thank you I get? You believing a sexual active girl who wouldn't keep her legs to herself while her age mates abstained from sex. Surely she's doing all this to get into your pants!!"

" Shut up!!! Shut up Thabile eat!! "Ngidi-

Thabile

" I'm not eating anything I've been cooking for you for years Ngidi!! Why would I kill you today but not these other years? "

" Thats because you know your lies are catching up with you Thabsile. You know your the sun and moon have finally shedded light on your dark corridors. If you don't eat Thabile you leave me no choice but to dish out each and every little dirt about you!!"
Nda-

" May the gods of Ngwane forgive you for you do not know what you doing! "

I say trying to save myself.

"Mama eat the food you have nothing to lose please" Zuko-

"No Zuko I won't eat anything.. Why I would I kill your father? My husband? The man that I love so dearly? I'm so so disappointed right now I'm so hurt!!"

I let crocodile tears slide down my cheeks this is my only resort. Playing the victim in all of this.

" Baba come on mama has done nothing!! "Mkhuleko-

" Thabile eat your food now!! "

" No!! Ngamane ungibulale Ngidi! "

(Rather kill me)

Mota laughs

" Eat your food and stop crying Thabile. Crying won't take you anywhere"Mota-

"Shut up wet mouth!!"

"You leave me no choice but to talk Thabile..."Ndandatho -

" Babu Ngidi.. Thabile is not the woman you thought she was. Thabile is a daughter of a.. "

" Ndandatho!!! Ndandatho!!! Don't you dare! "

" Just come clean and stop playing the victim in all of this "

" Eat your food Thabile"Mota-

"Mota shut up!!!"

"Let me do a simple trick my King. I will add a substance on this food if any of the food on the plate has a poison you will see a change of color or better yet smoke will come from that meal."
Ndandatho -

I chew on my nails. Ngidi looks at me.

"I will start here" She says taking Zuko's plate and then Ngidi's.
She pours something.

"Let's all pay careful attention. Shall nothing happen then you
can cast stones on me and banish me or punish me anyway you
see fit my King." Nda-

"Ndandatho..."

"Yes my Queen?"

"Why are you doing this?"

"Because it's the right thing to do. Don't you get tired of causing innocent people pain and torture? My Queen this ends today."

"Nothing is gonna happen"

"We shall see about that... While we waiting for the results. Let me tell you a little story." She looks at me and paces around my dinning area my eyes are fixed on the food.....

Hawulesizwe

Its been days squashing in the dephts of Mzilikazi's bushes. I knew nobody would find me here. I'm very much aware of what I

did and honestly speaking. I feel guilty I shouldn't have done that to Khethiwe. But what's done is done. Crying over split milk will take me nowhere instead I should live with my decision. Tonight I want to risk seeing Siziwe I really love that lady. As I'm talking I'm on a tree scouting her private chamber. You would swear I am a chameleon because nobody would spot me from where I'm standing. Finally the lights go down in her compound giving me a chance to sneak into her chamber. I push the door open and lock it when I'm in.. She jumps and looks at me her eyes are puffy.

"My love can we talk?"

"Get lost!!"

"Siziwe please please my love. I've traveled such a far way to be here with you"

"Hawu please go. I don't want to see you nor do I want to hear from you! Leave!!"

"Siziwe I love you"

"Thats how my heart got played You uttered those words and stupid me believed you Hawu!"

"Siziwe I meant it when I said I loved you. I love you Siziwe please believe me"

"You love me enough to cheat on me with Bubu? You love me enough to hide your relationship and daughter with Bubu? You know what leave Hawu I will live without you"

"Siziwe come on.. You can't do that to me I need you. I love you please my baby"

"Don't you have a bedridden wife to worry about? Oh! You gave her a beating and ran away like the coward that you are!" She wipes her tears.

"I'm hungry"

"So what am I supposed to do?"

"Siziwe you still love me I know that you do. I can be better for you. I will be better for you it is you that my heart wants and longs for."

"Just leave me alone please"

"I can't do that"

"Why not?"

"I love you... And you might be carrying my child"

She looks at me then the wall.

"Can you please give me food so we can talk?"

She stands up and walks outside a little while later she walks in with a tray. She goes back outside and comes back with a basin. I wash my hands while looking at her.

"Thank you my love"

She says nothing. I open the food it's pap and chicken. Then a cabbage and carrot atchar. I flash her a smile she doesn't return it.

"Thank you Sthandwa sami"

"After that meal leave and never come back"

"Siziwe come on"

"Hawu you left your wife hurt what if I'm next to be given lashes?"

"I would never hurt you"

"You already have"

"It wasn't intentional"

"It was because you chose to lie instead of telling the truth. That was intentional"

"I'm sincerely sorry"

"To think I still love you Hawu!" I look at her and rinse off my hands. I will eat after making sure she is better. I go sit besides her I put my arm around her shoulder. She yanks it.

"Come on babe forgive me I miss you Siziwe"

"Leave me alone"

I put my hand on her exposed thigh. She keeps quiet.

"I'm sorry my love I mean it. Life is hard for me out there please be my rainbow on a darkest cloud?"

"Hawu please you broke my heart. It's no longer beating the same"

"Can I kiss it better?"

"No"

"Siziwe..."

"Hawu just eat and leave"

"Definitely"

I say tilting my head to kiss her she is reluctant at first. She eventually puts her guard down. I scoop her up and lay her on the bed. I strip her off her from her clothes. Her pointy round full boobs invites me her hairly pubic area stares at me. I spread her legs apart and kiss her In a way I know she would be aroused. A couple of hours later she let's me in her body. I carefully thrust her I make sure she is enjoying herself. We make love till she falls into slumber. I kiss her and go back to eating my food. I get the chance to leave her house I can't risk being found or seen by the villagers. I travel back to Mzilikazi's bushes. Soon I will seek employment here

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I can't risk being found or seen by the villagers. I travel back to Mzilikazi's bushes. Soon I will seek employment here when that happens I'm bringing Siziwe here. So we can start a new life

together on a clean slate...

Ngelozu

I know he told me not to sneak out at home but I miss him. I run out the house and shoot straight to his chambers. Luckily no in saw me. I knock I stop when footsteps come to my rescue. He opens rubbing his eyes. I gently walk past him and go sit on his bed. He locks and walk to the other side of the bed. I look at him.

"Sleep Ngelozzi"

"I didn't come here to sleep Nhlonipho I would've done that home"

"Get under the sheet please"

"Don't tell me you sleepy?"

He looks at me and yawns.

"Switch off the lamp when you decide to sleep good night."

He hops under the sheets. I blow my nose and get under the sheets. He turns to embrace me from behind.

"Thanks for visiting" He says with a Smoky voice.

"Pleasure"

He kisses my neck.

"Good night"

"You sleeping?"

"Yes"

"Nhlonipho you boring you know that?"

"How so?"

"You not fun like before"

"Honey I'm tired can I rest please?"

"You will rest when we done"

"My love can I nap I will kiss you when I wake up"

"Nhlonipho..."

"Babe come on please"

"Mxm!!" I say resting my head on the pillow.

"Nhlonipho you stingy" He doesn't respond.

"My father and mother do naughty stuff everyday at night but you denying me. You are evil Nhlonipho"

He doesn't respond.

"You taught me these things I was pure Nhlonipho but you came and introduced me to these things. Now I want these things but you denying me saying you are sleepy. You are stingy Nhlonipho. One day just one day I'm gonna have my own wand I won't beg you. I swear you hear me? " he doesn't respond..

" Now you ignoring me you playing mute. "

"Nhlonipho!!! " He doesn't answer I turn to look at him bloody Prince!! His sleeping Nhlonipho though. I roll my eyes..

"Wake up I'm talking you. Nhlonipho!!!!" I say shaking him.

"Ngelozu no. I'm sleeping"

"But I'm not sleeping"

"Sleep please honey I'm tired"

"Nhlonipho " I say crossing my legs.

"I love you" He says kissing my cheek closing his eyes again....

Ngidi

I look at Thabile then Ndandatho.

" She has a hand in your wife's death and that of Iminathi. "

" I can't stand this!!! This is rubbish!! This girl is lying!!"

"Thabile you know I'm not lying I gave you a chance to tell the truth.. Now it's my turn to talk isn't it you failed to talk?"

Ndandatho -

"Ndandatho mind your tone my darling" Zikhali -

"Baba this woman is full nonsense!! This is the correct tone to use with her!!"

"You say her mother was a witch Ndandatho?"

"Yes.. She's a Mzilikazi her mother was banished from Mzilikazi's Kingdom because of witchcraft. She lied to you about her identity. She even lied about Nomaswazi 's paternity. Must I continue Thabile?"

I look at Thabile in disbelief.

"Oh here!! The food has changed colors!!" Mota-

"This is poisoned" Ndandatho

" You killed my mother?" Zuko-

"She's lying!!!" Thabile-

"Then explain how the Kings food ended up being poisoned!!
Who are you and what are you?" Zuko-

"Zuko I'm innocent this girl is lying!!! Ngidi please!! Please she's
lying. Noma is your daughter"

I storm to her direction and slap her across the face. Zikhali pulls me back.

"Buthelezi allow me to kill this witch!! Let me kill her just like she killed my wife and daughter!!! Let me finish her!!!" I roar

"Let's not act drastic" Zikhali-

"Kill her dad!!! Kill this witch!!!" Zuko-

"Dare call my mother a witch Zuko we gonna have a serious problem!" Mkhuleko-

"Shut up puppy penis!!!" Zuko -

"Zuko calm down please" Mgcinaphi -

"I can't calm down not when my mother is six feet under. Baba kill this witch" Zuko-

"Zikhali please let me loose!!!"

"No... The Gods will deal with her. Don't get your hands dirty because of this witch. She's not worth it"

I try to break loose but Zikhali doesn't let me loose..

"Wow Mthabirizer!! My friend you are a bad bitch struu naas!!!! I've always known there was something cloudy and shady about you. But witchcraft friend? Hhay no!! You are a boss!! This actually calls for celebration.. I need a glass of wine actually the whole bottle. You deserve a big fat celebration Mthabirizer!!! "

Mota claps her hands.

" Ngidi I didn't kill your wife please believe me"

"Is Noma my daughter?"

"Ngidi please"

"Is Noma my daughter?"

"I was young Ngidi I made a mistake.."

"Trying to feed me nonsense was a mistake too?"

"Ngidi let's talk in private please"

"Get your damn clothes and leave my house and my grounds I never want to see you in Ngwane village I will tell all other King's not to permit you entrance into their Kingdoms. You are a curse Thabile a bloody curse on fertile and promising grounds!! I hate you and I hate everything you've touched!!! Get out of my house peew!!! " I spit on her face.

" Ngidi... "

" Get out!!!! "Zuko

" I will start packing on her behalf!! Oh Mthabirizer!!! "Mota-

" Ma stop interfering this is a Ngwane matter not Jali or Mlotshwa one. Back off" Mgcinaphi -

"Ngidi please you can't send me away please"

"Leave!!!"

She cries.

"If she doesn't want to leave she might as well eat her poison and leave this place heading to a pit" Mota-

"Shut up wena!!!" Thabile-

"Zikhali please let me loose I want to send this witch packing and don't allow her in her your Kingdom Ngcolosi too"

"Don't beat her up"

"I won't Buthelezi" He let's me loose I storm on Thabile. I slap her repeatedly. I push her against the wall and walk to our private chambers. I want my sjambok I'm not about to massage a witch. I want to torture her till she dies. A witch deserves to feel pain before they die. I locate my sjambok I run to the dinning area..

"Zikhali please block him!!!!" Thabile screams running around she slips and fall. I give her lashes she jumps like a frog and head for the door I chase her out. Her screams fill the compound. She must go back to Mzilikazi. I head to my bedroom I take out and each and every cloth that belongs to her I step outside and put those on the floor. I reach for paraffin I set her belongings alight even our wedding photo included. I won't harbor a witch. Everyone looks at me like I'm crazy....

"Ndandatho"

"My King"

"You said this is was your home what did you mean?"

"Well my King I was shown the history of these grounds. Apparently your grandfather Dinabantu Buthelezi. He was a skirt chaser he made two women pregnant simultaneously his biggest mistake was to marry one of the women. Months went by the married wife gave birth to a son which was named Mkhawuli Buthelezi "

" Wait baba mkhulu's name was Mkhawuli" Zuko-

"Carry on Ndandatho"

"The unmarried wife gave birth as well to a son named Mayihlome. The King was told an heir was to be appointed for the throne which Dinabantu appointed Mkhawuli as his successor but a Maine disputed that he said Mayihlome was the rightful owner of the throne that's what the gods said. This throne issue led to Mkhawuli and Mayihlome fighting more like Mkhawuli was fighting Mayihlome for the throne. The bickering went on for years till Mayihlome decided he was enough he left the Buthelezi Kingdom and went to foreign grounds to start up his own thing. He built a Kingdom with the help of his wife who was a Mamiwata because Mayihlome loved his wife so dearly he named the Kingdom Umthombo a couple of

years later Mayihlome and his wife were blessed with a son who happens to be my father Zikhali Buthelezi.."

I swallow hard by looking at Zikhali

" On the other hand Mkhawuli decided to change his father's Kingdoms name to Ngwane village instead of calling it Buthelezi Kingdom. He did that to confuse Mayihlome shall he come back to cease the throne which Mayihlome never did. Mkhawuli married too and a son thats you My King Ngidizivaliwe. In short your father and my fathers father were..."

I cut her short and look at Zikhali who is surprised as me.

" They were brothers? His my brother? Zikhali is my brother? "

She nods.

" Ngwane... "I say to Zikhali

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Nhlonipho

I wake up to Ngelozi snoring besides me. My eyes wander around my chamber damn it's morning. The sun has come out. I swallow hard and look at her fear engulfs me. What if her father and mother learns about her not sleeping home?

"Ngelozi..Ngelozi wake up"

"Mmmmm..." She says pulling the bed sheet to cover her face.

"Mafuze wake up! Wake up it's morning!!"

"Mmmmm... I want to sleep" She says turning to the other side going back to her sleep.

"Ngelozi!!!.. Wake up!! The roosters are done crowing Wake up please!!"

"Mmmm "

"Nkosiya!!"

"Jali!!! Nhlo!!! Nhlonipho!!" Zimele shouts outside my chamber. My armpits immediately sweat and itch the itch goes to my arms and back. The fear escalates on my intestines if not stomach I hear mumbles and thunder. My ears made strange sounds too.

"Nhlonipho wake up ndoda!! Nhlonipho open!!!"

I whisper.

"Ngelozzi wake up.. Zimele is outside"

She jumps and looks at me with her eyes popped out.

"You say what?"

"Zimele is outside and the sun is blazing hot outside you overslept"

"It was your duty to wake me up you said you were gonna wake me up!"

"I said I was gonna wake up to kiss you not to wake you up!" I whisper.

"What difference would that have made Nhlonipho I was gonna wake up!!" She says between her teeth.

"Nhlonipho!!!! Hhaibo! What's taking you so long? Open this door before I kick it down" Zimele-

Ngelozzi feasts on her nails.

"He better not do that tell him not too"

"He won't listen"

"Nhlonipho I hear your breathing njalo just open"

"I'm naked Zimele"

"Since when don't I know your nakedness? Even Mafuze knows your nakedness you have nothing to hide open"

Ngelozzi looks at me with fear written on her face.

"I think I'm gonna pee on myself"

"Ngelozzi no"

"Nhlonipho!!!"

"Zimele would you stop already? I'm coming!!"

"You better cum outside here we have work ndoda"

"I know I just over slept I'm coming"

"I'm giving you five minutes Nhlonipho"

"Fine"

"And I'm waiting right here on your verenda"

"Zimele leave please!!!"

"Who are you hiding in there?"

"No one!!" Ngelozi shouts. I immediately hold my head and shook it in disbelief.

"Nhlonipho since when do you have a voice like that? Heeee!! Ngcolosi will kill someone" He laughs

"I... I kinder have a skill of changing voices Zimele please leave!!!"

"Wrap up we need to go Ndoda."

I hear his footsteps walk away.

"You didn't have to shout back Ngelozi!"

"I was trying to help!"

"See where your help got us?"

"Don't shout at me"

"Hey dress and go home please" I say jumping off the bed bloody wand is erected.

"Don't mind it it does this every morning."

She sits on the bed and looks at me.

"Ngelosi please get up"

"I don't want to go home my father is gonna kill me"

"And Ngcolosi is not gonna kill you shall he find you here?"

"Nhlonipho..."

She says with glassy eyes. I walk towards her and embrace her.

"I'm not shouting at you my love I'm just scared too. I'm sorry if I'm sounding care free or somewhat selfish. Both fathers will do the killing today"

Her tummy makes noisei swallow hard.

"Hungry?"

"Yes"

"Let me get something for you quickly do not open for anyone."

"Fine"

"As for your parents tell them you had a runny tummy or better yet you went to wood searching but you saw a scary creature and aborted the mission okay?"

She nods with tears sliding down on her cheeks. I cover up and go collect bathing water for myself I go get food. I whisper for her to open for me..

" Here.. "

" Thank you "

" Pleasure my love"

"Must I leave some for you?"

"No you and the ba. You need it more than I do I will get a fruit in the farm. Let me freshen up while you eating"

She nods. I undress and wash my body.

"Royal food is delicious"

"I enjoy yours."

"Ours is boring."

"Not at all."

She smiles. I wipe off and grease my body with my minty body butter. I search for something to wear.

"Wear the red cloth"

"Not the blue one?"

"No red looks good on you"

"Thank you Mafuze.. Shall your father beat you up negotiate with him not to ace for your face and stomach."

"I will put two small stones under my tongue nothing will happen."

I laugh.

"What if you swallow them by accident?"

"Nhlonipho that's evil"

"It's a question my flower nothing big"

I say with a smirk.. She shyly smiles. I go lock the door and sit besides her.

"Can I?"

"Do what?"

"Feed you obviously"

"I have hands and I'm not baby Mlingo or your nephew Gatsha. I can feed myself and I can" I smash my lips against her lips I gently suck on her lower lip. She slightly spreads her lips apart and ace for my upper lip. We take turns with each other's lips I break the kiss to feed her.

"Here.. Eat."

"You look handsome"

"And you look beautiful and Angelic it's the big head I'm worried about though"

"You say what? You teasing me you see?"

"My flower you have a big head" I tease.

"I'm full"

"You angry aren't you?"

"You calling me big head"

"Stop sulking and eat Ngelozzi. Do you want Fuze to beat you up on an empty and complaining stomach?"

"You should've woke me though"

"I'm sorry honey." I say kissing her once again. I put the plate on bed.

Zikhali

Ngidi and myself are still shocked by our findings. So much that he decided we sleep over and have Ndandatho explain this again till it clicks into our heads and ears. There's awkwardness on the table as we seared for breakfast. Mota left hours ago. The Mkhuleko boy isn't himself after last night he looks sad if not distraught. As for Zuko the young Prince is handling everything like a true man. Ndandatho is only worried about Gatsha i don't blame her.. A cook walks in to garnish and dirty the table with breakfast. My daughter jumps to aid her. Ngidi and myself look at each other to think we have a single trade together.

"Morning royals" Servant-

"Morning Mama Madongwe" They all say.

She puts the food on the table with the help of Ndandatho.

"Thank you Macingwane"

She says to my daughter. I guess they know each other.

"Pleasure mama"

"You look beautiful Ndandatho"

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if I didn't know better I would suspect you for being blessed again" Ndandatho smiles.

"Yes mama I am"

"Hhaibo Ndandatho! Again? If I remember well your first one is barely a year old. Who's is this man whose busy giving you babies?"

Ngidi clears his throat.

"My apologies my King We need to catch up Ndandatho"

"Ofcourse Madongwe" The lady walks away leaving Ndandatho

smiling.

"Food is served help yourself" Ngidi-

"Thank you Ngwane"

He semi bows his head as a pleasure.. We eat but Mkhuleko isn't eating.

"So baba this is how things are going to be from now onwards?"
Mkhu-

"Just shut up and eat Mkhuleko!" Zuko-

"I wasn't talking to you Zuko mind your plate not my business"

"Or you want to follow your witch of a mother? Say it and stop being a baby." Zuko-

Another Busani of the family.. I say in my heart.

"That witch raised you Zuko she wasn't evil alone but she was good at some point!"

"She was acting out of guilt of killing my mother that wasn't from her heart it was an act Mkhuleko"

"Yazini I'm not hungry!"

Mkhuleko stands up.

"Sit down!" Ngidi says with a stern voice.

"I'm not hungry"

"I said sit down Mkhuleko Buthelezi!!" Ngidi-

The boy looks at everyone and sits down.

"Madongwe cooked this food to be eaten and finished if you don't eat your share whose gonna stuff their bellies with your share? It's still morning young man"

I look at Ngidi Ndandatho looks at me.

"Thank you baba for speaking some sense to this spoilt brat of yours" Zuko-

"Shut up Zuko. Don't make me embarrass you in front of your wife. Behave"

"Grumpy because wifey witchy is gone" Zuko says between his teeth. Mkhuleko wraps his hands around Zuko's neck.

Mmmmm.. Another Mkhawuli and Mayihlome. I thought and shove a tiny piece of egg inside my mouth.

Ngidi bangs the table and roar.

"Mkhuleko!!!! Stop that rubbish! I won't harbor a Mkhawuli on any grounds you hear me?"

"Baba he is insulting my mother" Mkhuleko says with glassy eyes. I feel the boy's pain.

"You saw what your mother did you were there. No one is making up theories Mkhuleko. If what happened yesterday wasn't witchcraft in your eyes then I do not know son!" Ngidi-

"Kodwa baba she was a mother to me. I know she was at fault but please remember she was my mother baba the woman who gave birth to me!!" Mkhuleko -

"But she was a W. I. T. C. H!!! The cherry on top is that she K. I. L. L. E. D my M. O. T. H. E. R!!! Mkhuleko" Zuko-

"Don't you think he heard that Zuko? Don't you think the truth is suffocating him?" Nda-

"I wasn't talking to you Ndandatho"

"Well I am talking to you because had I not told you these you wouldn't be doing what you doing. As much as she wasn't a good person but she was a mother to him. Allow him to say the good about his mother. Nawe you can say your mind but politely Zuko without acting all childish and somehow ridiculous! "Ndandatho says attracting everyones attention."

"Zimele gave you the upper hand that it's good and wise to address men in that tone huh Ndandatho?"

"You men with men like yourself? Future leaders who act from emotions and lacking of comprehension? If the answer is yes then he sure did!" Ndandatho -

"His mother killed my mother"

" And his mother raised you you grew up referring to her as mom. At some point she gave you a shade and walked you through shadows of death and take you still waters to quench your thirsts. She was good to you at some point Zuko. That's what Mkhuleko is trying to say. His not saying erase her evilness or evil doings but rather allow him to say the good that his mother did or meant to him. That's decency after all isn't it? "

I decide on quenching my thirsts this is not my business but on this one I side with my daughters explanation. Witches are ruining others lives and building on the other side. If you were on the good side of the witch it's safe and normal to state the good they've done to you but if you were on the bad

it's also good to share your experiences about it. On Zuko's case Thabile was mother to him throughout. He never in a single day experienced the bad of her but rather his mother....

"Next time stay out conversations that have nothing to do with you" Zuko-

"And who are you to tell me what I should do and not do? Zuko I don't worship you and lick you in places that a dog wouldn't even lick. So please don't make yourself my idol I don't even see you at all. You hear me?" Nda-

"And you think I'm scared of you because you busy making babies with a warrior whose dropping more of your pants than he is with your stinking attitude? You don't scare me too Ndandatho" Zuko-

"I will be pissed Zuko and you won't like whats gonna happen next! Try me!"

"You will go all gamma ray on me and all lighting? Try me Ndandatho Oh now you Princess Liyana? I somehow think you

lost your kindness and value the day you lost your virginity in the bushes" Zuko-

Ndandatho blows her nose and stands up heading to Zuko.
Mkhuleko holds Ndandatho from fighting her cousin.

"Don't mind him Ndandatho his just bitter you never ended up with him. His bitter that you chose Warrior Zimele but not his little crush over you." Mkhuleko -

Zuko stands up from his chair he looks at Ndandatho with a certain eye. In my conclusion Mkhuleko is telling the truth about Zuko's feelings for Ndandatho. Ngidi drinks his tea and I do the same. I guess stubbornness and bluntness runs in the family..

"Brother let's go outside for a walk" Ngidi -

"Indeed" I say putting my mug on the table.

"When you done killing each other make sure you go burry yourselves somewhere faraway.. I won't have another Mkhawuli and Mayihlome in my Kingdom" Ngidi-

Ngelози

"I'm sorry honey" He says kissing me. He shifts the plate aside

and pulls the bed sheet away from me. I slowly rest my head on the pillow..

"You good?"

"I'm fine"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes I'm sure"

"What do you want Nhlo to do or give you?"

"Nothing"

"Okay.. Continue eating then"

"Mmmmm..."

"Eat your food." He says looking at me while biting his lower lip.

"Last night you were complaining"

"Me? No way"

"I heard you Ngelozi"

"You were sleeping how come you heard me?"

"I sleep but my heart and ears never does. I thought you still wanted it"

"I want it"

"Even when you in trouble already?"

"It's better being punished for something I've done other than being punished for something I didn't do"

He giggles and starts kissing me again. He spends a little while kissing my belly while shoving his finger in my privates. A little while later he makes me cry in ecstasy. He lays on top of me and kisses my forehead.

"Be careful when you walk out I have to go now. I love you"

"I love you too.."

"Finish your food and leave when you ready.. Don't forget what I said"

"I won't"

He kiss me again. Zimele knocks Nhlonipho stands up and walks out. Leaving me thinking of what awaits me..

A little while later I leave his chamber I grease myself with sand and put stones under my tongue. I have passed by warrior Hawu's chamber to get an axe so It can look like i indeed went wood collecting. I find my mother yawning on her verenda father walks out fixing himself his on his way to work.

"Yoo mama you won't believe what happened in the bushes as I was going wood hunting!!"

"You went to collect wood so early in the morning Ngelozi?" dad-

"Yes baba.. I was struggling with sleep"

"Not long ago it was a runny tummy now you struggling with sleep? Anyway I'm late for work see you later" Dad says patting my shoulder.. Mom yawns so much that tears come out from the corners of her eyes.

"What happened in the bushes?"

"I saw a scary creature mama so much that I ran away and fell. You see how dusty I am? I nearly died"

"Sorry baby surely that creature was Hawulesizwe. Next time don't go to the bushes at that hour it's dangerous Ngelo. God I'm so tired" I gige on the creature part being Hawu.

"Why is everyone tired Kanti? Even Nhlonipho is tired mama"

"Excuse me?"

"I bumped into him this morning with his brother heading to the farms"

"I see... Talking of him his been scarce lately what did we do to him?"

"Nothing mama surely his too busy"

"I see.."

"Mama my boobs are painful what can i use to heal them?"

"Why are your boobs painful Ngelozi?"

"I think Ghosts are sucking on them"

"Hhayi Ngelozi."

She says looking at me from head to toe.

"Wena you starting to scare me lately with these sickness of yours. Soon you will be vomiting and sleeping during the day. "

"Hhayi Mama let me wash the dishes and sweep the yard"

"Please and maybe cook. I will attend to baby Mlingo but honestly I'm tired my baby"

"As for me I'm active and flexy I will do all the chores mama rest"

"Seeing a creature energized you"

She laughs.

"It did mama. I feel so happy"

She smiles and I walk away. I go about my chores while thinking about Nhlonipho. Sleeping next to him and waking up next to him was fun. I loved it. I smile again I remember what we did this morning. I spit out the stones and sing as I do every chore.

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Days later.....

Zimele Jali

I'm standing in front of a mirror looking at the man who looks nothing like the man I once was. This man is filled with love tranquility happiness and springing up hopes within his soul. He has zero regrets and zero worries. Instead everything is going well on his side his at peace..

"Zimele can I come in?"

"Come in Nhlo"

The door swings open. My little brother walks in wearing our traditional animal skin clothing. He even has beads on his neck and wrists. The beads look very good on his flat tummy and a little muscles. He smells good too.

"You ready?"

"I suppose so."

"Come on Zimele what kind of an answer is that?"

"Dowry negotiations are a bit challenging Nhlo anything can happen today. My fingers are crossed"

"Everything will go just fine stop cracking your skull."

He says sitting on my bed.

"Thank you young man. You cleaned out very well"

He smirks.

"Thanks brother"

"Is Ngelozi joining us?"

"I suppose so"

"Meaning?"

"She's not talking to me it's like my sight annoys her"

"Thats bad"

"I know. It's been a couple of days now"

I look at him.

"Nhlonipho"

"Brother"

"You do know soon her tummy will start to show?"

"I know Zimele I really do know brother"

"What is your plan?"

"Can I deal with that when her grumpiness fades? Cos honestly I cannot make plans without talking to her"

"That grumpiness might last for nine months Nhlo"

He looks at me.

"She's boring with her grumpiness I prefer her crazy self not the uptight Ngelozi"

"Thats what happens when you get carried away Nhlo."

He looks at me.

"Tell me about it.. Have you seen how Fuze looks at me lately?"

I giggle.

"How is he looking at you Nhlo?"

"I don't know Zimele but it feels like he knows something or better yet his suspecting me of something"

"Thats your guilt Nhlonipho he knows nothing about your shenanigans with his daughter"

"Mmmm... Please fight for me shall he challenge me into fighting"

We laugh.

"I can't wait to meet my child though" He says smiling. I look at him.

"I drag that sight Nhlo."

"Come on Zimele I will manage trust me"

"I trust you but it's not easy Nhlo parenting is hard brother. Do I look fine?"

"Yeah you look good. Add a couple of beads. How hard Zimele?"

"Thank you. Sleepless nights changing nappies the crying and a grumpy woman too"

"I can work with that I love her Zimele."

"And I'm happy for you brother. Congratulations Zimele's look alike."

He smiles and helps me out with my outfit.

Zikhali

Ngidi and myself have been talking things through we've been trying by all means to make use of our sudden reality to make future mends and plans that are less chaotic or filled with disputes. He assured me he wants to be a part of my life and that of my kids I on the other hand I also asipre the same thing as him. As we speak he just left Umthombo heading back to Ngwane village to run a few errands. Just like having some of the elders from our family to help in negotiating for Ndandatho's hand in marriage. I was gonna ask a couple of friends to assist me on this mission luckily Ngidi came into my life with motives to aid me and lessen my burden. It feels great honestly having a big brother like him because he is so helpful and shaping me into greatness. On the contrary him and I have decided on ruling our Kingdoms as we have been. He can continue being a King of Ngwane village and myself being one of the Umthombo Kingdom. Well today we have a little ceremony for my daughter Ndandatho today we expecting the Jali's to come over pay for her dowry. We received their letter and a message was sent back to them to come seal everything today. As we speak we have people cramping the yard they preparing for the ceremony.

"Mkhuleko"

"Baba?"

"Pass me that basin"

"My King.."

We have Mkhuleko visiting us. Mkhuleko pleaded with his father to be granted rights to visit my Kingdom for a little while. Ngidi permitted him I must say his doing much better than before. Having Ndandatho on his side surely gave him hope and a peace of mind. Busani was accepting of him so was my wife who was so excited to knowing about my newly relation with Ngidi and the kids. He puts the basin in front of me..

"Here it is"

"Thank you son."

"So dad whose gonna clean these out?" Busani-

"You and Mkhuleko"

"Hha baba these insides are dirty and the smell us unpleasant"

"Busani you gonna wash the meat only the Buthenzezi's have to touch this meat. Nobody else but us" I say to the boys as we continue slaughtering the cow.

"Baba that's too much work though" Busa-

"Your problem is that you lazy Busani" Mkh-

"I'm not lazy I just hate slaughtering and cleaning up the tripe it's a drag. I actually don't understand why women don't do the washing" Busani-

"They don't know how to clean up the meat Busani.. They never leave some of the dirt of the tripe they clean it throughly destroying the actually taste of the meat. See that like cow dug?"

They nod.

"Bits of it is needed for the tripe to taste succulent and delicious. Women clean all out saying it's dirt not knowing that's where the yummiest is."

Mkhuleko laughs.

"So you saying those faces are necessary?" Mkhuleko-

"Yes Shenge. Even the ones found inside the derno"

"Hhayi baba" Busani-

"I'm telling you the truth boys"

They laugh.

"My King the Queen is asking for you inside the house"

"I'm coming"

"My King" He bows and walks away. I leave the boys to go attend to my wife. I find her and Ndandatho doing the peeling and cooking.

"My lady and daughter"

"Sweetheart" my wife says coming to kiss me. Ndandatho smiles and continues peeling.

"You called me"

"Yes.. Honey you need to freshen up we do not need to delay the Jali's"

"I'm still busy with the meat"

"The royal servants can attend to that Zikhali please go freshen up.. I've placed your clothes on the bed"

"I was still enjoying the slaughtering my love"

"No honey you need to bath. Our guests will be here in a few minutes time. Your brother has arrived alongside your other uncles and cousins"

"Oh! Where are they?"

"Sitting room"

"I see.. Let me go greet them then go bath."

"Fine"

"Ndandatho you good my dear?"

"I'm very much good babai can't complain"

"Good. Where is Zimele?"

"Thuthukani baba"

"I meant Gatsha"

"His with Gogo in the garden"

"Better.. Let me go greet the elders"

"Fine dad" I walk away leaving them to it.

Mama Ngelozi

"Aibo Ngelozi! You haven't finished washing the dishes?"

"I was still busy with something mama"

She says yawning. I look at her from head to toes.

"We have somewhere to go young lady in case you've forgotten"

"Ma you can go I don't feel like going."

"Ngelozu are you okay?"

"Yes mama I'm fine"

"Ngelozzi. " She looks at me with glassy eyes. My daughter never suffers from eye problems why are her eyes glassy and all white.

"Ngelozzi we going to Umthombo Ndandatho invited you. It's gonna be rude to miss her lobola ceremony"

"Mama I hardly slept last night I want to sleep"

She yawns again.. I look at her her father walks towards us looking fresher.

"Excuse me I want to finish up with the dishes."

She says fanning herself with her top. I fix my eyes on her body again something has been bothering lately. Something about my daughter has changed I know right now I will sound a bit delusional but something off is going on with her. Lately she's grumpy and irritable. Her frequent visits to the loo also worries me. Ngelozzi is a happy and energetic girl she loves laughing and talking. But lately she talks less and laughs less. Her father has noticed that too but in his head he thinks I had a little altercation

with Ngelo but nothing. I just pray her father's kraal is still in tact because failure to that Fuze will kill her or send her packing.

"Is she okay?"

"She has fever baba"

"I see. We should get herbs for her fever can be dangerous at times"

"Yes it can be"

"Look my love let me get going. We will meet in Umthombo"

"No problem my love."

"Bye bye"

He kiss my cheek and walks away. Khethiwe appears carrying Mlingo on her back she looks dazzling in her red outfits. Such a beautiful young lady.

"Ma"

"My daughter how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks ma are you ready?"

"Let's wait for Ngelozi"

"I don't think Ngelo will come with us"

"Why not?"

"Ma Ngelozu is not doing fine."

"Meaning?"

"She is sick"

"How sick?"

"She has a headache and a runny tummy"

"Again?"

"Yes"

"Hhaibo! Since when does a person suffer from headache everyday?"

"I don't know mama but it's hot. This heat might be the cause of it"

"I see"

I look at Khethiwe and then Ngelozi who is washing dishes.. Gods of Thuthukani so help me just help me from my thoughts..

Ndandatho

I'm done helping out in the kitchen. I run to outside vomit well lately that's how my life is going. I vomit if not being picky with food. Mama Maseko was right when she told me this baby I'm carrying might later make me grumpy and too tired. Honestly lately I'm quickly irritable and impatient. When Bangizwe cries I feel like spanking him or lashing out on him. A few days ago Zimele and I had a little argument over Gatsha. He called me out saying I must never ever in a million years scold at his child. He was angry with me. Poor me had to apologize and promise to never do it again. My belly is now showing a little..

Well a couple of days ago Zimele paid dowry for Gatsha my son has animal skin bangle as a sign that a ceremony was done for him. His officially a Jali now. Today. I'm being a Mrs Jali Zimele is sending his uncles today to ask for my hand in marriage. Honestly speaking I'm happy with the proceedings. I'm now done dressing up I'm waiting for the ceremony to start. My mother walks inside my bedroom with beads on her hands.

"Liyana"

"Mama"

"How's the nausea baby?"

"Horrific mama it's bad"

"Sorry my baby you need to eat ginger"

"It's bitter mama"

"But it's good for the nausea baby"

"Yoo mama I can't down it it's tastes bad"

"Pregnancy is high maintenance you see?"

"It's too tiring ma."

"Are you gonna have another?" I roll my eyes as my mother smirks.

"You teasing me aren't you ma?"

"Baby I'm just asking"

"No mama you laughing at me"

"Sorry sweetheart. It's gonna subside sooner"

"I pray that sooner is tomorrow ma"

She laughs.

"Was Gatsha's pregnancy experience this horrific too?"

"No it wasn't mama the only challenge with that one was the pushing part of it"

"Sorry baby. Zimele needs to stop punishing you in this manner"
She says rubbing my back. I rest my head on her shoulder. She smashes her lips on my forehead.

"I love you"

"I love you too mama"

"Wrap up baby the Jali elders are outside the gate"

"Is Zimele amongst them?"

"No his surely gonna arrive after everything is concluded and dealt with"

"I see ma. Where is Bangi?"

"His with Gabi"

"That boy no longer misses me ma"

"Thats because you yell at him Ndandatho"

"Mama..."

"Thats the truth sisi"

We keep quiet..

"You need to stop shouting at him Ndandatho Zimele will kill you"

"I know mama I will keep on trying"

"Better... Anyway I brought these beads my daughter let me help you with wrapping the head wrap"

"Thank you mama" She aids me. I brush my tummy I hope
Ngelози shows up.

Thabile

It's been hard the past few days to find myself shelter since I was banished from most Kingdoms can you imagine what Ngidi did? He told lies about me saying I've killed so many people before he even went as far as denying me access to my son. Most King's turned me down as we speak I'm cuped up in the depths of Mzilikazi's bushes living like a wild animal. Not in a single day have I ever thought I would prey on bush meat and eat food that no animal would eat. I've been collecting tin containers to use as pot.

Can you imagine I've become a thief too? Yes I steal in people's farms in the wee hours. It's by luck most houses do not have dogs had they had dogs I would have died already.. As I'm seated minding my business I hear movements behind me. The shrubs make alerting noises I immediately stand in defense and look behind me. A tall well built man stands in front of me. He looks handsome he looks like a warrior. He looks at me and clears his throat.

"My Queen"

I look at him and eat my bush meat.

"Greetings my Queen"

"I'm not your Queen pass already so I can have my piece of mind"

"What brings you here Queen of Ngwane village?"

"Young man I said I'm not your Queen"

He chuckles and walks towards me.

"A beautiful Queen like yourself in the bushes means you've done something bad"

I look at him then the meat his holding.

"What are you doing in the bushes young man?"

"Let's say this is my home"

"A whole handsome man like yourself in these bushes?"

"If a beautiful woman like yourself is seeking refuge in the bushes what is hard about me a whole commoner seeking refuge in the bushes?"

"I'm not beautiful stop with the flattery"

I smile so does he.

"Hawu"

"Sorry?"

"Hawulesizwe that's my name"

"Oh Thabile Mzilikazi"

"What happened to Ngwane?"

"Had that surname carried weight I wouldn't be here. Living like a tortoise"

I bite hard on my meat.

"Mind sharing why you are here?"

"It's a long story"

"We are both homeless and alone time is something we have"

"Well I'm a bad person and I've done bad things to innocent people my child included"

"Nomaswazi?"

"No"

"What did you do?"

"Enough about me. What brings a whole handsome man like yourself in the bushes?"

"Just like you I'm a bad person. I've hurt someone so badly I don't know what got to me. But I beat my wife to a pulp leaving her for death"

"Thats bad.. What did she do?"

"Nothing honestly I was the dog on this one."

"Do you love her or better yet do you wish to mend things with her?"

"Honestly speaking I don't know."

"What is it that you do not know Hawu?"

"If I love her or not or if I want to mend things or not"

"I'm having bush meat want some?"

"I thought you wouldn't ask"

"I may be everything you can imagine but food stinginess is the last of it." I hand him the other piece of roasted mice.

"Thank you"

"Pleasure." We remain silent.

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Nozibele

"Nozi hurry up we do not have a long day we gonna run late for the ceremony"

"Ngcolosi I'm tired"

I say yawning.

"Hhayi Nozi you starting to scare me now. The last time you were this tired we had a son a couple of months later."

He says fixing himself.

"You think I'm pregnant Ngcolosi?"

He looks at me for a little while.

"Nozi should I be worried? Are you expecting?"

"As old as I am?"

"It's possible"

"No I'm not my love I just feel exhausted Thats it."

"But we slept early last night and we didn't do adults stuff. What Is the cause of your exhaustion?"

"Ngcolosi I'm not pregnant!"

"Let me see?" He says walking towards me to squeeze my boobs.

"Do they hurt?"

"Ngcolosi please"

He kneels in front of me to kiss my lips.

"You look grumpy though"

"Thats because I'm exhausted"

"I will rid of this grumpiness when we come back home. Would you like that?"

I look at him.

"Jali I'm not pregnant. Nhlonipho would stone me to death"

"I love you Nozi even if you pregnant again."

I giggle and wrap my hands around his neck. I kiss his full lips..

"I love you old man" I say playfully pulling his nose.

"Let me go check up on mama and the boys"

"Please do."

I leave the bedroom and walk to mama. I find her dressed up looking gorgeous as always. Her cough has gotten better than the last time. She smiles.

"My daughter"

"Mama you look good."

"Thank you my daughter"

I yawn.

"Are you okay Makoti?"

"I'm tired and sleepy ma"

She laughs.

"I'm not pregnant mama if that's what you think"

"I would've known had you been. Maybe someone close is pregnant"

"Only Zimele is expecting ma could it be I'm reacting on that?"

"Pregnancy hormones and habits can easily be shared my daughter. Pregnancy is like fever one sneeze from one person it gets transmitted to those around you"

"This is a first ma"

She looks at me.

"Let me go check up on the boys" I walk to Nhlonipho's chamber I knock once and open the door. This boy and leaving a mess on his chamber.. I smile and go fix his clothes. As I'm busy my eyes land on a bedsheet this is not one of my bedsheets. I know what I buy in the market and this is not my kind. I fold it with care till I spot blood stains that are now turning brown. I look at it the door swings open Nhlonipho walks in and dives on the sheet.

"Mama what are you doing in my room?"

"I was just helping out Nhlo. You left a mess in here."

"It is my mess mama not yours!! Dont ever enter my private chamber without my permission" He says snatching the bed sheet he looks agitated for some weird reasons.

"Aibo Nhlo! Since when do you use that tone with me?"

"Since you invading my privacy ma"

"Nhlonipho don't give me that nonsensical attitude have you forgotten who I am and what I am to you? Don't push it young man!" I say with a stern voice.

"What is that by the way? Whose bed sheet is that Nhlonipho?"

"It's a bed sheet and it's mine."

I look at him.

"Nhlonipho what are you hiding?"

"Ma leave my private room please!! I never walk into yours and snoop around."

"Why are you shouting Nhlonipho? Who are screaming at? Are we age mates?"

"I'm not shouting ma I'm just pleading with you to leave my room and to never use it without my permission. My mess is mine to clean after"

"Are you hearing yourself Nhlonipho? Are you really using that tone with me? Since when do you scold at me? "

I say surprised. Ngcolosi walks in.

"What is this noise I'm hearing?"

"Ask your son who back chats me Ngcolosi"

"He did what?"

"Baba I didn't back chat umama. I was begging her not to enter my room without my permission"

"So you saying I'm laying Nhlonipho Jali?"

"I did not say that ma. You twisting my words" He raises his voice. Ngcolosi looks at him.

"Are you yelling at your mother Nhlonipho? My wife to be precise?"

"Baba I'm not."

"Let's go Ngcolosi I won't allow Nhlonipho to ruin my day. Let's go"

"Dare use that tone on my wife I will slap you Nhlonipho you hear me?" He nods.

"Get your arse in the cart" Ngcolosi -

"I'm coming" He says with a soft voice.

"Let's go my love." I hold his hand and walk out of Nhlonipho's bedroom before he slaps me because it's obvious I've woke his low key devil.

"What were you arguing about?"

"Can we not discuss it at least not now my love"

"I don't want you stressed out. Not when you might be pregnant with my baby"

"Ngcolosi can you stop talking about babies and pregnancies God!"

He laughs and kisses my cheeks..

Khethiwe

My body is not fully healed but it's getting better by the day. I've been staying with the Ngcobo family after my little sticky situation with my husband. This family has been nothing but good towards me. In these few days of my stay I've been observing this cute baby girl. Ngelozi she is somehow showing signs of pregnancy but I cannot rush into telling her mother because I've heard both parents say the good about her. Imagine the pain and miff she would face if I let my suspicions get better of me..

"Hey.. Do you need a hand?"

"I'm fine sisi"

"Ngelozu are you okay?"

"Yes I'm fine"

"Ngelozu look I know we not friends but you can talk to me. I view you as my little sister I won't mislead you nor judge you"

"I'm fine sisi Khethiwe"

I look at her.

"Ngelози.."

"Sisi I said I'm fine please excuse me" She stands up she brushes her forehead.

"Ngelози are you sure you okay?"

"I'm fine sisi I just have a mild headache"

"Look. Go freshen up I will attend to this."

"Thank you but there's no need"

"Fine..." I step back and look at her.

Minutes later Mrs Ngcobo walks out smelling good and all dresses up for the occasion. She goes to check up on Ngelози who then tells us to leave her behind. We walk away along the road I bump into Hawulesizwes girlfriend. She greets us I keep quiet and look at her. What was Hawu seeing in this lady? I click my tongue she looks at me shyly and walks away.

[Zimele uncles]

We have arrived in Umthombo. We standing outside permitting the sun bursts to kiss our skins. It's extremely hot. The eldest amongst ourselves sings praises from outside. As we wait for the Shenge's to grant us entrance or better yet their attention.

"Buthelezi Shenge Ndaba Ngwane Mvulane. We greet you all. We are the Jali's the Ngcolosi family. We come to your grounds with respect and honor. Please hear us out and all our pleas and cries." elder 1-

"Ngqengelele oyivalo zibili uthi uvala lesi avule lesi;

Wena owadliwa yiNdlovu

Zimudla Zimlabalabela Mbangambi!! As my brother has said Shenge we come in peace! With us we come with good news and cows. Buthelezi Shenge. We have come to pluck out a beautiful flower from your beautiful and inviting garden! Our son has heeded us to these grounds and we beg of you to come fourth and hear us out!! Ngwane!! " elder 2-

Ngidi

" Inyathematheza eyatheza lapho kungathezi khona muntu

Gibisizungu Mthandeni Sokwalisa Mnyamane ka Ngqengelele

Sondiya Somkhabase;

Nina bezinyawo ezimahhele

Enaganisa izintombi nanganye nangambili! Buthelezi!!! "

And elder sings praises from outside my brother's gate. Bonisiwe the wife to Zikhali looks at us with worry.

" Ngidi go to attend to them

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it's a while now. This sun is blazing hot. These old men will collapse right in front of our gate" Boni- "They need to be patient malokazi" I say eating a piece of meat with the wooden platter.

"Zikhali please grant them entrance this is too much" Boni-

" Ma let them be. Let this sun roast them these people tainted

the Princess of these grounds. They allowed their son to invade our kraal this is nothing. Mama Ndandatho "I add again-

" Nkosiyami.. " She says walking away.

" Buthelezi!! Shenge we plead with you to come to the gate. Come lend us your ears this sun is blazing Ngwane. The love we have for our beautiful rose doesn't allow us to watch it suffer the consequences of the sun it's gonna wilt please Ngwane" The elder shouts from outside the gate. Forcing me and the few elders to laugh.

"Let me go attend to them"

"Please Ngwane" I walk outside. I spot men with pot bellies standing outside the gate.

"Buthelezi!! Ngwane!!" They praise me as I walk towards them. I look at them and say nothing. They look at each other.

"Inhlawulo Jali!" Elder one-

They place a bottle of fermented grapes on the ground.

"Greetings and how can we help you?"

"We have been asked by our son to visit these grounds to pluck out a daisy that he has spotted in your vineyard." Elder -

"We come in peace Shenge. Our intentions are pure and sincerely. " Elder-

"Are you certain this is the right compound to seek for that daisy?"

"We very much certain Ngwane"

"If so you can come in" I get a hold of my little gift from the Jali's..

"Thank you Jali." We walk inside the compound. Sits are given to the elders. My elders stares at the Jali's.

"To what do we owe the visit?" Uncle-

"We have come to join forces with you by seeking and pleading for your daughters hand in marriage"

"Which daughter are you talking about? I have a lot of daughters in the premises. Which one are you inquiring about?" Uncle-

"Elders the young lady we have come to inquire about is the eldest daughter of King Buthelezi. Her name is Ndandatho Liyana" Uncle-

I clear my throat.

"Would you be able to point her out she we invite her in our midst?"

"Yes Ngwane we know the rose we have come in search for."

"No problem.." I say heading to the ladies who are seated in the living room.

"Can one of you please summon Ndandatho and the other ladies to the chapel"

"My King.." One of them says walking away. I head back to the other men we have a little discussion before Ndandatho and others walk in.

Ngelozzi

My mother and sister Khethiwe left the house. If it wasn't for my love and respect for sisi Ndandatho I wouldn't be forcing myself to attending this ceremony. To be honest I'm not feeling well at all.

Something strange is happening to me lately I'm always tired and sleepy. Most days I wake up with a heavy headache. I'm easily irritated and lazy. Just yesterday I was feeling dizzy by the river bank if it want for my quick balance against the rock surely I would've cracked up my skull and died at the river bank. My poor brain was gonna be minced if not turned into brain soup. My boobs feel heavy too and painful. Some days I want to cry for no reason at all. The cherry on top is how Nhlonipho and myself argue about everything. Most days I'm trying by all means to avoid him. Something about him bores me lately each time I bump into him I feel like sprinting away from him or better yet bite his eyes so he won't see me. When his not around me I miss him and love him so deeply. I just don't know how to explain what is going on with me. But I can guarantee you something bad is happening to me and the more I give it a thought the more complicated it gets. As I'm dressing up I feel a strange pain on my abdomen. I brush my tummy and sit on my bed. When it has subsided I get up and finish up dressing. I dress up nicely so I tie my hair into a simple bun. I take my homemade perfume and sprinkle it on my body. I later walk outside the house then the compound. I bump into Siziwe's mother. The leader of virginity testing.

"Mafuze how are you?"

"MaThwala how are you?"

"I'm good my child.. Hee Ngelozi I wanted to come by your house later tomorrow to discuss the Reed dance ceremony. As my favorite maiden I wanted you to lead the other maidens and to teach them how virgins should act and hold themselves.."

"I would love that ma but I won't be around for the ceremony this year. I'm visiting my aunts place."

"Hhaibo!! Ngelo you can't leave I really need to be present."

"Siziwe is older than me she can lead the maidens mam"

"I will try her"

"I should leave ma bye"

"You look beautiful by the way"

"Thank you ma"

She goes her way and I join mine. Along the way I bump across the King Queen the Prince and the senior Queen.

"Greetings" I say faintly while waving at them.

"Greetings maFuze" Gogo-

I slowly walk away from them they better not lift me. Nhlonipho is here.

"Ngelozii!! Ngelozii" Thats Zimele Jali shouting. I look back.

"Come ride with us I'm certain you heaving to the ceremony..
Come tag along. "

"No thank you Prince Zimele I want to stretch my legs. Thank
you"

"Ngelozu come ride with us Umthombo is very far to go there
barefooted. Come young lady. " That's the Queen talking. I heave
a huge sigh and walk towards their cart. Who was I fooling?
Umthombo village is far. I want gonna reach my destination not
when I'm always tired.

" Thank you for the invite. "I say looking at Nhlonipho who doesn't look okay.

"How are you maFuze?" Gogo-

"I'm fine Queen mother and how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks my daughter. I hope you ready for this year's Reed dance" Queen Nozi-

I cough up. Nhlonipho looks at me so does the grandmother.

"Yes mama I'm ready" I lie. Of course I'm not I'm definitely running away on that day. I rub my forehead as my headache kicks in.

"Are you Okay Ngelozi?"Gogo-

"I.. I have a slight headache Queen mother"

"Thats bad." Gogo - Prince Zimele looks at me I shy away and look elsewhere.

"Drink water." Nhlo-

"There's no tank in this cart" He looks at me and blows his nose..

"Gogo please borrow me your bottle of water?" Nhlo-

"No it's okay my Queen. "

"It's just water maFuze here drink up" Queen-Senior.

I reluctantly make use of the bottle of water. I drink up and give it back.

"Thank you my Queen"

"Pleasure"

Zimele is still looking at me and that is making me uncomfortable. My tummy makes those hunger sounds. They all look at me. They better not think I starve because I'm a servants child.. My mother and myself cook we make sure we always cook more food.

Zimele hands me a banana and apple.

"Here you could use this"Zimele -

"Thank you my Prince I actually ate from the house"

"But your stomach didn't say that those noises are hunger noise"
Nhlo-

"What exactly are you implying Nhlonipho? That I don't eat at home?"

"That's not what he meant Ngelozi he meant your tummy needs a snack so the noise can stop he didn't mean you don't eat. "

Zimele-

"Thank you brother" Nhlo says with a greased face.

"Mafuze eat and stop complaining. No one is insulting you all that came from a caring heart" Grand ma-

"Thank you Prince Zimele"

"Pleasure" I eat while looking at Nhlonipho. My tummy slows down on the noise. A little while later we arrive in Umthombo people are busy there's a music band and dancers too. The royals walk inside Zimele remains a little while in the cart. Nhlonipho pulls my hand leading me to a mini bush not far from the royal house.

Ndandatho

Gabisile Mgcinaphi and two other girls walk me to the where the negotiations are being held. We are shown a grass mat to sit on with our heads bowed. I'm covered in a cloth to hide my face. Honestly I'm scared of what might happen today these negotiations may take forever to get over done with. Some families they make them a challenge and a drag. A lady from Ngwane village ended up being unmarried because her uncles were being delusional and over charging for her. The partner ended up leaving their premises without leaving anything for the lover. You could've seen how devastated and heart broken she was.. I just pray these uncles do not ruin my day especially with me being pregnant. They might use that to their advantage to cause a stir or havoc out of these negotiations. If I don't leave this house with a dowry being paid for me the gods will forgive me because I will leave forcefully. I miss my lover and father of my kids..

"Bhengu elders these are our daughters since you said you saw a flower in our garden please point out your flower" Uncle Ngidi-

"Eehm thank you Ngwane. I think our rose is the one on your left hand side the lady covered in a red cloth. That's our rose"

I swallow hard.

"Are you sure about that? Because you just said you think instead of saying you are certain that's her?" Uncle Ngidi -

"Our apologies Ngwane we are very much certain

That's our bride the mother of our grandson Bangizwe" Elder-

"Lady in red please remain behind and the rest of you my daughters please excuse us" Ngidi-

"Eehm... My daughter please remove your cloth"

I do as instructed.

"Is this the flower you have come to pluck out?"

"Yes my in laws."

"Liyana"

"Baba"

"These men have come for you they say their surname is Jali and that their son has sent them to ask for your hand in marriage. Do you by any means know of a Jali man?" Ngidi-

"Yes father I do know a Jali man"

"What is he to you?"

"His my significant other elders and a father to my children"

"What is his name Liyana?"

"Zimele Jali"

"Elders who is this son that has sent you here?"

"Zimele Jali the eldest son born to Ngcolosi Jali and Queen Nozibele of Thuthukani Kingdom." Elder-

"I see.. Liyana you just mentioned this Jali man is supposedly the father of your children. Did i hear you correctly?"

"Yes father."

"That should be all my daughter."

"Thank you elders"

Noma

I've been having a discomfoting and excruciating pain since last night. As we speak I'm struggling to do anything because this pain shoots so deep on my abdomen. Madongwe walks towards me with a jag she places it in front of me as I'm seated on the

veranda.

"Try to drink this fermented mealie porridge. Your eyes are sunken you look weak Noma. This should give you strength"

"Thank you" I reach for the jag and drink up.

Phiwe walks in carrying a Springbrook over his shoulders. His been away from home for quite some time now.

"Ma how are you"

"I'm good my son and how are you?"

"I'm good too. Ma have you heard about what happened back in Ngwane Kingdom?" Phiwe says putting the unskinned Springbrook on top of a sag on the ground. He sits besides me and looks at me.

"Hi"

"Hi" I say softly.

"Heard what Phiwe?"

"About the Queen mama."

I look at him..

"Which Queen are you talking about?"

"Your mother." Phiwe-

"What about my mother Phiwe?"

I panic.

"Your mother was banned from the Kingdom Nomaswazi. The King sent her packing heading to wilderness." Madongwe-

"Why would father do that?"

"Apparently your mother wanted to kill the King with food poisoning. Ndandatho saved the King" Madongwe -

My insides boil immediately her name pops up.

"Kill the King? For what exactly? My mother would never do that. These are lies this is all fabricated"

"Apparently hearsays are spreading around about you not being Ngidi's daughter." Phiwe-

"Those are lies" I lie of course to shield myself from the truth.

"Phiwe did you hear about the latest? Ngidi being brothers with the King of Umthombo?" Madongwe -

I pop out my eyes.

"Thats not true! Those are lies thus has Ndandatho' s name written on it. Surely she misled my father into believing his related to them.. Sehranmagzine.comaa!!!" I cringe as the pain intensifies...

"Noma what's going on?" Phiwe-

"Something doesn't feel right my baby is in danger"

"Come my child surely you need a back massage." Madongwe says helping me up.

"You bleeding Noma!! Blood is coming out from your.. Your num num" Phiwe-

"What? Blood?"

He nods.

"This is not good! This is not okay.." Madongwe.

—

Makhehla had to make a tough decision last night for him to get access of his late sister's witchcraft powers. He didn't want to sacrifice with family but Noma was the only pregnant woman whom he knew was pregnant. His sister wanted an infant as a sacrifice hence he had to oblige and grant her her wishes. His now crossing fingers for his work to be granted as a mission possible. He cannot afford to have his hard work unpaid for he loves Noma as his grandchild but he needs the powers too. After all to attain something you need to lose something isn't it?

"Makhehla!!!!" A voice calls him out in this dark sanctuary of his. He immediately follows the voice using his eyes to locate the person who has invaded his castle. Breath of relief that's the sister.

"My sister"

"What did you do? What did you do Makhehla??!"

"I gave you a baby sacrifice isn't that what you asked for?"

"Makhehla!!!! You are a fool!! You are very dumb and stupid!!"
Makhehla is confused by her sisters rage she's supposed to be happy she got her sacrifice isn't it she wanted an infant's blood? Why the anger now?

"You shouldn't have killed my grandchild!!! You shouldn't have sacrificed with one of our own! When I said I wanted an infant's blood I meant any other child but not Nomaswazi's daughter! You are a fool!!"

He swallows hard and scratches his head.

"I'm sorry I thought blood didn't matter"

"That's where you went wrong!! You thought!!"

"I can still find your blood please"

"I don't trust you anymore!!!"

"Please sister. I need your powers don't drop me like a hot potato please. I can even find you a royal blood if needed be!!"
She looks at me.

"Really?"

"I will bring you an infant sister I promise!!"

"A royal infant?"

"That would be hard but I can try"

"If you certain about that bring me the mamiwata's grandchildren just one of them. After all she killed me killing one of her own wouldn't hurt. After all she's an enemy." She says walking up and down in Makhehla's hut. Makhehla is unsure about this one he knows how dangerous and risky this could get if they went for the mamiwata's grandchildren especially the fresh and pure ones. He might die but because he needs the powers for himself he has no other choice but to put his life in jeopardy.

"I've made up my mind brother bring me a royal blood. The mamiwata's blood-type nobody else but Zikhali's grandchildren or children. Don't forget the pure ones. Mess up this mission nobody will get my powers till I decide on whom is deserving of it."

"I'm deserving my sister"

"Don't mess up you have a day to seal this one. Tick tock!!" She disappears..

Nhlonipho

"What was that Ngelozi?" I ask livid.

"What was what? You hurting me Nhlonipho"

"Since when do you address me in that manner Ngelozi?"

"Nhlonipho you hurting me let go of my arm!!"

She wince in pain I let go of her arm. I pace around this bush she sits on a rock and looks at me with glassy eyes.

"Why are you doing this to me Ngelozi? Why are you fighting me and pushing me away? Why did you even talk to me like that in front of my family? Why are you doing this huh? "

"Thats because you boring Nhlonipho"

I strain my eye socket by popping out my eyes.

"Pardon?"

"You heard me"

"I'm boring you Ngelozi? As in I'm no longer fun to be around? Or I'm boring because you've met someone new? "

She looks aside.

"I'm talking to you dammit!!!" I roar so much that she gets frightened.

"Am I talking to a brick? Answer me Ngelozi!!"

"Don't yell at me!!"

"I will yell at you till it clicks I'm talking to you.!"

"You not my father Nhlonipho! Don't raise your voice at me!"

"But I am the father of your child and I don't deserve this treatment Ngelozi!!" I roar.

"If you don't deserve this treatment then leave Nhlonipho!!
Nobody forced you into tolerating me! Leave!!! "

"I would be gone had it not been for the baby that you are carrying. If you were not pregnant Ngelozi I swear I wouldn't be nagging you and licking you to need me once again like you used to. I'm only begging you because I care about my child that's in your womb!! I'm sick of this rubbish!" I click my tongue and lean against a tree and rest my forehead against it. There's silence for a little while Im snapped out of my thoughts by sniffs.

" You said I what Nhlonipho? "

I ignore her.

"What child are you talking about Nhlonipho? Whose pregnant?"

I ignore her and look onto the trees.

"I'm talking to you!!" She says punching me while crying hysterically.

"You did what Nhlonipho? How could you Nhlonipho?" She says still punching me. I try to stop her but she doesn't stop her sobs are now intensified.

"We gonna have a baby Ngelozi you pregnant with my child." She sinks on the ground and cries even more.

I kneel in front of her and heave the longest sigh ever.

"No!! No!! I got rid of the sperms I shitted them for two consecutive days. I even drank guava water for them to leave my body! No!!"

"Ngelozi.."

"Don't touch me.."

"My love. I'm sorry.. I'm very sorry Ngelozi"

"I hate you"

"You don't mean that I'm sorry. I wasn't planning on doing this to you Ngelozi. I'm sorry my love I'm sincerely sorry."

I say trying to embrace her she yanks off my hands.

"I said don't touch me"

She looks at me with tears filled eyes.

"I love you Ngelozi nothing has changed"

"Sharpen a wood and Stab me to death Nhlonipho just kill me!!
You've ruined my life!"

She breaks down again.. I pull a tough face and embrace her. She embraces me and buries her face on my chest she cries so sorrowfully breaking my heart.

I think I'm gonna take her home..

Ndandatho

The women yelp outside cheering on the good news that have been dropped by the Jali's. I'm seated in my bedroom listening to their chirping and joyous selves. A smile is decorated on my face. I look at my sleeping baby and smile.

"Sisi" Gabi-

"Baby"

"Gatsha's father is calling you"

"His outside?"

"Yes.. In the garden."

"And mama said you need to serve the Jali's"

"Oh! I see I'm coming baby"

"You look beautiful"

"For the hundredth times thank you little sister"

She laughs.

"Your tummy is round and not so flat"

"Thats what happens when you pregnant Gabi"

"I don't want to be pregnant I will look like an elephant" She shyly smiles covering her mouth.

"So you saying I look like an elephant?"

"Not a mommy elephant but baby elephant soon you will look like a mommy elephant"

"Sehranmagzine.comh!!!" She laughs and walks outside. I smile and brush my tummy I kiss Gatsha and walk outside leaving him sleeping. I firstly dish for the in laws everything went well. Now it's the time for

the real ceremony to began.. I walk pass Khethiwe and mama Ngelozi. I'm sad Mama Maseko is not here I wish she came. I sneak on Zimele. I wrap my arms around his neck and kiss the back of his ear.

"My sunflower"

"My knight in shining armor how are you my beloved husband?"

"I'm doing great my love and how are you?"

He says kissing my arm.

"I'm doing fine I just missed you"

I sulk.

"Come sit on daddy's lap and tell him what you want"

I walk to his lap and sit on top of it.

"You look beautiful Mashenge"

"Thank you my husband. You look sexy yourself"

"Thank you baby"

He says kissing my shoulder.

"How do you feel about being Mrs Jali junior?"

"Honey I'm so excited I'm just looking forward to waking up next to you every single day watching you bath and cooking your favorite meals. Honey I just can't wait to have you all to myself. I'm so happy Bhengu"

"I'm looking forward to coming home to you every single day. I love you Liyana I don't regret ever courting you Ndandatho. Given the chance I would do it time and time again without complaining and getting exhausted by it. If an arrow was fast paced like a rocket I would aim for your favorite star and shoot it off from the galaxy and have its glitters and sparkles shinning over you. I love you Maka Gatsha"

"Are we by any chance trying to make each other cry my love?"

"The only crying I want us to cry is that of our genitals fighting each other."

"Eew!!" I gently beat his shoulder. He laughs and kisses my neck.

"We haven't made them fight in a while now. Baby Gatsha has two more teeth"

"My son is growing Mommy and thanks to you for nurturing him" He sneaks his hand inside my cloth he pulls my boob out and suck

on my nipple.

"Loving you so dearly is the reason I haven't given up on our little human being."

"I love you Liyana big time"

"I love you more Ngcolosi.."

"How's the baby doing? Still having mood swings and irritability?"

"Yes but I'm trying to be a mother a good one at it. After you called me out I realized it was wrong of me to do that to him."

"Can we never fight again in future over your hormones. I get it pregnancy is complicated and filled with many turmoils but try not to be hard on my little man. Talking of him where is he?"

"His sleeping honey"

"Thats beautiful the ceremony went well I'm happy"

"Same here soon its gonna rain"

"I think it's safe for us to leave now. You are my wife after all. I'm tired of stealing my castle I want to have access to it without feeling guilty of anything"

"Are you starving?"

"Isn't it obvious?"

"Let me go pack then"

"Your husband will get you clothes no need to pack. Just fetch my son."

"Zimele stop it" I say as his teasing my nipple.

"Stop what?"

He says with a Smoky voice.

"Doing that my num num is getting excited Bhengu"

"I can give her more joy right here. At least it's not cramped with people. No one would notice"

"You naughty."

"And you like the naughty me isn't it?"

"Zimele stop it God!!"

He makes circles around my nipple sending shivers down my spine. I arch my back a bit as feels invade my body.

"Liyana go pack up we leaving. People can continue having drinks and music and whatever they eating. I want to eat you and enjoy you too."

"I love you" That comes as a whimper as I feel his finger invade my privates.

Ngelози

He wanted me to go home but I debated him out of it. Hurting Ndandatho is the least on the plate. I know I'm not okay myself but I have to pull a tough face and smile around people I will cry myself a river when I'm alone. Now it explains why I've been this sick lately. It's because there's a stranger in my womb. Actually there's a big headed Nhlonipho growing inside my belly what an audacity. This child is doing as he or she pleases in my body. Making me tired and sick and moody. This stranger hasn't checked with me or sought permission from me to enter my body permittedly she/he decided to fight against and defeat my trusted guava leaves to ridding his father's fluids. What a liver of this human being. Honestly speaking I'm so hurt and disappointed with the bad news Nhlonipho told me. I wasn't expecting this I'm too young to be a mother. I'm very young to be joining women in the river bank to wash nappies over a conversation on how to keep them sparkling clean and less stained. I'm very young to be complaining about how my own child doesn't eat while others are round and fat like a golden frog because of eating too much.. I'm too young to be having boobs that are pouring like a water fall not forgetting those zebra stripes.. I'm very young to be called "Mama ka Gandaganda" I'm very certain this baby is gonna be the only baby with the biggest

head ever in Thuthukani. Imagine the stress of having everyone calling you mama ka "Makhanda" God I'm young very young. If the baby cries I'm certain I'm gonna clap for him or her to cry louder till her voice runs out better yet I will cry louder than the baby. I can imagine Nhlonipho bringing me spinach everyday to make his child food. No!!! I'm too young for this what was I doing? Why did I even invite him to that room that night? It's all my fault I should've let the poor guy leave with Busani that night. Now I will look like pumba the bush pig. ****

"Did you hear what I said?"

"I don't have ears"

"Ngelozzi"

"Nhlonipho give me a breather please! I'm trying to digest this crocodile liver!!"

"Can we not fight Ngelozi"

"I want to throw a rock on your face actually I want to crash your head and turn it to powder Nhlonipho."

He furrows his brows.

"You will find me in the garden when you done talking to Ndandatho"

I look at him as he walks away I feel tears creeping in once again. I wipe them but who am I fooling more tears roll down.. I search for Ndandatho but I don't find her I go to her chamber. I find Gatsha sleeping I jump on the bed and sleep with him. More like cry with him besides me..

Nozi

"Nozi are you okay my friend in law?"

"I think I'm fine sisi"

"You've been turning that piece of meat with your spoon what's going on?"

"Eish Boni. Something is troubling me honestly"

"What's going on?"

"I need a glass of wine for this one"

"Coming right up" She disappears and shows up later with a glass of wine.

"Don't get drunk I don't want Ngcolosi chasing me with a hunting gun" I smile.

"Thank you Boni"

"Nozi talk what's going on? Don't tell me Ngcolosi is cheating on you"

"His not. But something strange happened before we got here with my family"

"What happened?"

"What I know is that these kids will be the death of us someday I swear."

"Hhayi bo! Yini Nozi?"

"Maybe I'm an overthinker my friend but I think Nhlonipho did something awful"

She widens her eyes.

"Something bad like what?"

"I think he slept with a girl Boni. As in he deflowered a maiden. I found a white sheet in his chamber as I was fixing his bed. It was bloody Boni"

"Hhayi Nozi!!"

"I'm telling you friend. The blood stain has now turned brown to prove its something he did ages ago"

"Hhayi Nozi!! Nhlonipho is a good child nje a respectful and responsible one"

"My friend Nhlonipho has been acting strange lately. Just like today he shouted at me like he was so defensive over the sheet his was lived and all annoyed by my sight. I can't help to think my son has tasted the forbidden fruit and I tell you it changes a person. I'm talking from experience "

"I'm flabbergasted. He shouted at you?"

"Yes.. I've also noticed something on our way here"

"What did you see?"

"I think his seeing Fuze's daughter."

"Who is Fuze now?"

"Ngelozzi"

"You mean that innocent and sweet like girl? Hhayi Nozi you accusing these kids. Surely he had a bleeding nose the last time I checked Nhlonipho suffered from that since childhood"

I look at her.

"I sensed a bit of tension between them. Like a couple kind of tension. Boni if that blood was a virginity blood I'm afraid of what's gonna happen especially with Ngcolosi. I cannot always protect my kids

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the last time I checked Nhlonipho suffered from that since childhood" I look at her.

"I sensed a bit of tension between them. Like a couple kind of tension. Boni if that blood was a virginity blood I'm afraid of what's gonna happen especially with Ngcolosi. I cannot always protect my kids I did it with Zimele when he impregnated your daughter now Nhlonipho? No Boni. "

" Mmmm Mmm Do you think his really not pure? "

" My son has never raised his voice at me. It was all new to me. "

" Mmmm This is bad Nozi"

"My biggest fear in all this is them making babies Boni. Because trust me that blood was a virginity kind of blood stain."

Ngcolosi walks in.

"Ladies"

"Jali" Boni-

"My love"

I say sipping wine.

"Nozi are you supposed to be drinking?"

"Ngcolosi don't start again"

"I'm just concerned that's all anyway can we have more meat."

I stand up and walk to the kitchen. I give them more meat. He kiss my cheek and walks out.

"So what if all of this is true what if Nhlonipho deflowered her?"

"Then Ngcolosi is gonna blame me for being soft on the boys because you know our husband's if a child does wrong it's a mother's fault but if he does good it's their child. So I don't know

but I know war is coming."

"Dont tell on Nhlonipho Nozi"

"That would be giving Ngcolosi permission to kill my child."

"Talk to him so you can put your mind at ease. Actually tell him you know what happened don't ask him."

"He will snap again"

"Nozi you are a mother not vice versa. Deal with him"

"Fuze will kill my son if really really he deflowered Ngelozi"

"But that girl is a darling"

"I know but what they did is wrong"

"I know because they young very young"

"I know"

"Don't you think your kids take after you and their father?" I look away and sip my wine. Something clicks on my mind..

Zimele

Ndandatho and myself couldn't hold ourselves We let pleasure get the better of us. We ended up making love in the garden. Nobody noticed because she was sitting on top of me. Our moment was short lived but we enjoyed. How i missed her sacred place. She fixes herself while I do the same thing. I look at her and smile.

"Now I want to eat"

"I hope there's still food in the house"

"Make a plan Maka Gatsha"

"Now I must act like a true wife Jali?"

"Yes.. That's why I paid dowry for you to serve me like your husband"

"I'm gonna ask dad to give you back your 40 cows"

"I want them with ten more cows"

"Hha Zimele"

"Honey come I'm hungry"

"Fine no need to sulk. You too old for that"

"Too old? Wow!! Says someone whose been sulking since day one of our relationship ?"

"I'm a woman Jali"

"A man is also allowed to sulk."

"It's not cute coming from you"

"Really?"

"Really" I stand behind her and tickle her. She laughs.

"Zimele stop it!"

"Not till you apologize"

"Apologize for what? I'm not apologising"

I continue tickling her. The clouds start forming it's gonna rain.

"Then your child compresses my abdomen"

"She's saying hello daddy"

"Why do I have a feeling this little girl is gonna take my shine?"

"Of course she will. You are damaged goods and she isn't"

"I will punch you Zimele"

"My daughter will not make love outside in gardens like someone I know"

"Zimele stop it"

"My daughter will practice celibacy til her fate."

"Mxm!!! While her father failed to do it? It's a pity girls follow on their fathers footsteps"

"Not my daughter maybe your daughter will be naughty"

She laughs and kiss my cheek.

"You crazy warrior. When are we going to war again?"

"I don't know"

"Please don't go there you married now Zimele not fully but you are a family man"

"You selfish? You want me all to yourself?"

"Not really people die in war babe.. I'm too young to be a widow"

"I will think about it."

"We have a baby coming soon"

"I knowy love"

"And I want them to have a father not a stranger"

I look at her.

"Wife demands?"

"Whatever you call it but I need you home Zimele seven days in a week"

"God!!! Why did I get married again?"

She looks at me.

Hawu

"Are you Okay?" She asks looking at me.

"Yes I'm fine"

"Come on Hawu in the little time we spent together I've come to realize your eyes wander around when you lying what's going on Khuboni? Talk to me."

I swallow hard and look aside.

"You miss home?"

I nod.

"You were not banned or restricted to going home Hawu. You can always go back home and mend things. Your sin is lesser than mine it's fixable"

"It's no different from yours I left my wife wounded in front of my son Thabile. I'm very much evil and imbecile"

"Hawu don't be hard on yourself go home and mend things. Humble yourself and apologize to the King and maybe Khethiwe"

I look at her and swallow hard. Not only do I miss home but I miss my only best friend I miss the friendship and our love for each other. I miss warrior Zimele and hearing rumors about his lobola ceremony hurts because had I not become a scumbag I wouldn't be here in the bushes living like a snake. I wouldn't be here living like an owl absent during the day but present at night..

"What?"

"There's more isn't it?"

"How do you know?"

"Before being an evildoer I am a mother Hawulesizwe I've raised children previously. I know when someone is hiding something or not feeling well. Right now I see my son in you talk to me"

"I miss my friend"

"Your friend? What friend?"

"Zimele.. His the only friend I once had."

"What happened to your friendship?"

"My love for num num caused me our friendship"

"You fought because of a woman? Let me guess Siziwe?"

"Yeah and Bubuza. I fucked up"

"Fix your mess Hawu before it's too late running away won't fix anything"

"What about you? Why don't you fix your mess regarding Makhosonke?"

She swallow hard.

"It's complicated Hawu"

"I complicate it you have nothing to lose. Already you've lost so much Thabile at least do this one thing right"

"Hawu I ruined Makhosonke's life. Actually I've used the man throughout my marriage days."

"I don't follow"

"I cheated on Ngidi with him at some point and I.. I conceived again"

"Mkhuleko is Makhosonke's child?"

"Not him but a she that Ngidi knew nothing about"

"I don't follow."

"My tummy never shows Hawu when I'm pregnant. I knew I was close to giving birth so I went to Makhosonke to give birth and I disappeared the following morning leaving him nothing but a piece of paper justifying my evilness and lack of morals."

"You left Makhosonke with a child?"

"And I never looked back. That was the last straw for Makhosonke."

"So you saying you have two kids with this Makhosonke guy?"

"Yes.. Two daughters. Noma being the first born and the other one that I've never raised nor named. I don't even know how she looks like but what I know is that she soon to turn twenty"

"Thats bad.." "

" I know. See why Makhosonke and I are better off unmended? "

" Don't you wish to meet your daughter? "

" I wouldn't know her even if I was given the chance to meet her. Surely she's someone I've once ill treated because I'm like that "

"Thats bad"

" I know"

We remain silent for a little while..

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(Gogo ka Ndandatho)

What is Ngelozi doing in Ndandatho's private chamber? Why would Ndandatho allow her to sleep here with Gatsha? My grandson to be specific? I told her something wasn't settling well with me regarding this beautiful and fun little girl. I can't read her mind or see her past that alone brings me doubt and uncertainty. In the spirit world people are placed into two different criterias "Holy" or "unholy" With Ngelozi there's no specific criteria that she belongs into that makes me believe she's both holy and unholy. That is a bad sign Ndandatho and myself need to discuss this over trusting will of hers. I know I like Ngelozi but I can't fully trust what I do not understand fully..

I scoop Gatsha up and rest his head on my shoulder I pace around the chamber while glaring on Ngelozi. Who is this girls mother? Why do I see rejection and neglect each time I try to invade her mind? Why is this woman surrounded by darkness?. I decide on sitting besides her I reach for her hand trying to read through it. The results are the same. She's a mistrising woman. I heave a sigh and step outside the room...

Nhlonipho

It's been a couple of hours without seeing a trace of her I know she's not okay wherever she is. I mean she just found out she's pregnant while she strongly believed it was dealt with and a thing of the past. I'm certain she's somewhere in a quiet place straining her eye socket by crying hysterically. Sitting here not knowing or seeing a glimpse of her state is worrying me most importantly it's draining me. This meat and African beer that Busani myself and Mkhuleko are sipping on and feasting on its not tasty enough for me because my mind and heart is not here..

"Excuse me warriors I need to have a word with my father"
Mkhuleko says running towards his father leaving Busani and myself seated in silence. I can feel his eyes piercing on my skin his definitely reading through my mood.

Busani: "What's bugging you up Nhlo?"

Me: "Nothing"

Busani: "I know you Nhlonipho just spill the beans already"

I lift my head to glare on him.

Me: "Spill what beans?"

Busani: "Nhlonipho you acting strange so is your girlfriend. I bumped into her minutes ago. Her eyes were puffy so was her face. What happening Jali?"

Me: "Where did she go?"

He looks at me.

Me: "Come on Busani where is she?"

Busani: "Nhlonipho what did you do? Did you dump her or something?"

Me: "No. It's nothing like that."

Busani: "Then what is going on? The honeymoon phase has left the room?"

Me: "Busani where is Ngelozi?"

Busani: "I won't tell you till you tell me what's going on."

I look at him and huff. He narrows his brows to show his listening.

Me: "There's no easy way to say this Busani"

Busani: "Just say the damn thing already or you want to say it in front of myself and Mkhuleko?"

Me: "I'm in trouble I messed up Busani"

Busani: "We all mess up and get into trouble but we are never this absent minded Nhlonipho"

Me: "Can you shut up and hear me out without blabbering."

Busani: "Fine.. Go on."

Me: "Well I.. I've done something wrong to Ngelozi"

Busani: "What something wrong? You deflowered her?"

Me: "It's way too complex than deflowering her."

He looks at me confused.

Me: "I'm going to be a father Busani Ngelozi is nurturing my seed"

Busani: "You say what?" He says with his eyes popped out.

Busani: "Excuse me Nhlonipho You did what?"

Me: "She's pregnant Busani and unhappy."

Busani: "Why did you do that Nhlonipho?"

Me: "It wasn't intentionally She forced me into depositing within her."

Busani: "Nhlonipho you are a man you should've pushed her away or something"

Me: "Have you ever seen a woman's nakedness Busani and had your wand buried inside her thighs?"

Busani: "Of course not"

Me: "Then shut up cos you know nothing about intimacy. You go there knowing you won't do certain things but rather certain things but when you both exchanging sweat and moans the brain wipes out!"

Everything slips from your mind. Till you mate with a woman you won't understand what I mean Busani. "

He looks at me.

Busani: " Nhlo you still young to be a father. I'm sorry to say this but your girlfriend is way to crazy and dumb to be a mother. She will surely boil your child instead of boiling peanuts. What were you thinking kodwa? "

I look at him.

Busani: " Oh sorry. You just said it you were not thinking. "

Me: " This is not a joke Busani "

Busani: "What is wrong with you Jali boys with making babies sooner than you do with sneezing?" I look at him annoyed.

Busani: "Does Ngcolosi know?"

Me: "Of course not."

Busani: "Your mom?"

Me: "She saw the bed sheet"

Busani: "Then Ngcolosi knows Nhlonipho."

Me: "No he doesn't nor does mom know"

Busani: "When a wife knows something that the husband doesn't know then whatever the wife knew the husband already knows it. She is gonna discuss the sheet believe me"

Me: "Mom would not to do that."

Busani: "She already did Nhlonipho"

Busani: "If I were you I would be collecting sticks and mud to make myself a stick and mud house somewhere in the bushes. While stealing seeds to plant so I can feed my pregnant girlfriend. I wouldn't wait for my parents to kick me out I would do it myself"

With that said he reaches for a calabash.

Ndandatho

I walk to my private chamber I find Ngelozi still sleeping. I turn to walk out.

Ngelozi: "Ndandatho"

I look behind me.

Me: "Finally she's awake. Hello Mafuze and how are you?"

Ngelozizi "I think I'm fine"

Me: "You think?"

She nods and sits up straight. She looks at me.

Me: "And then? Why the puffy eyes Ngelozizi?"

She looks aside.

Me: "Ngelozizi have you been crying?" tears slide down from her eyelids.

Me: "Ngelo... What's going on sweetie?" I say heading towards the bed to embrace her.

Me: "Sweetheart talk to me what's going on?"

Maybe I do know what's going on.

Ngelози: "Help me remove the baby from my womb please" That comes as a whisper I quickly go to lock the door and go back to embracing her.

Ngelози: "Sisi Ndandatho I don't want the baby please help me remove it. I beg of you. My parents are gonna kill me"

Now she sounds like me

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please help me remove it. I beg of you. My parents are gonna kill me"

Now she sounds like me when I discovered I have the second one in my womb. I remember how shattered and terrified I was knowing Zimele made me a mother again. While I was still breast feeding Bangi. I wanted to die and rid off the baby. I even went to her mother to seek herbs to clean up my womb. Hearing her say these words kinder took me down memory lane.

Me: "Shhhhh Ngelo... Shhhh sweetheart."

I say rubbing her back while she wails.

Ngelozzi "I don't want the baby please help me?"

Me: "Sweetheart you do not want to do that."

Ngelozzi "I want to do it"

Me: "Ngelozzi a baby is a blessing sisi"

Ngelozzi: "A blessing I do not want. I don't need this blessing sisi Ndandatho. Having plenty of food is a blessing but not having a huge belly."

Me: "Nhlonipho would love to have this blessing Sisi please consider his feelings too. "

Ngelozzi: "He can have this blessing growing inside his own tummy not mine. If he wants this blessing he must attach it to himself only then his feelings will matter."

Me: "Kodwa Ngelozzi"

Ngelozzi: "Sisi Ndandatho my father will kill me"

Me: "He won't kill you but he will be disappointed and all hurt but killing you won't be his resort."

Ngelozzi: "You don't know my father his gonna make fire with my legs"

Me: "Ngelozzi... We not gonna harm the baby the gods will punish us because this baby is their gift to you. You can't throw a plate

full of faeces on the gods that calls for persecution and struggles. The gods will help you throughout your milestones Ngelozzi even when your father makes fire out of your legs. The gods will be screaming with you and succumbing the pain with you. You won't be alone sweetheart I'm talking from experience. "

Ngelozzi: " The gods should've gifted themselves with this baby since they powerband will to going this far to ruining people's lives. They shouldn't have tempared with my guava water. "

Guava water? Why would she drink that? Everyone knows Guava water is to enhance fertility.

Ngelози: " Why do they go around blessing people with children they never asked for? The gods annoy me given the chance to have a one on one meeting. I would throw stones at them. "

I press my lips against each other to prevent a laugh from coming out. Nhlonipho has a character of a partner. Who would chase God's with stones? Such a lunatic. I wipe her tears.

Me: " Ngelози I will help you throughout the process. Don't harm the baby please shall you do that. Something bad will happen to you"

Ngelози: "Can I have food I'm hungry"

Me: "I'm on it sweetheart."

Ngelози: "Thank you" I press my lips on her forehead and head outside. I bump into my grandmother holding Gatsha.

Gogo: "Liyana"

Me: "Gogo"

Gogo: "Can we talk"

Me: "About what?"

Gogo: "The girl whose sleeping in your bedroom"

Me: "What about Ngelozi Ndandatho?"

She looks at me and heaves a sigh.

Gogo: "Do you really trust her around you and your family Ndandatho?"

Me: "I don't follow Gogo why shouldn't I trust her around me and my family?"

Gogo: "Ndandatho do you ever give yourself time to exercise your gift and figure it out on how it works or not?"

Me: "Gogo can we not discuss my gift or Ngelozi its a happy day for everyone please."

Gogo: "How does her past look like?"

Me: "I don't know gogo. And it doesn't matter"

Gogo: "See what I mean Ndandatho? You completely in the dark about those who are around you. You will have your enemies preparing you and your family food someday and guess what's gonna happen? You will die Ndandatho without fulfilling your

purpose"

Me: "Gogo I don't know where this is going or where it is coming from. Ngelozi is a good person I've told you before and I'm still gonna say it again." I say annoyed.

Gogo: "Are you sure she is a good person?"

Me: "Of course I am. I know her more than I do with everything"

Gogo: "If so tell me Liyana who is her biological mother?"

Me: "Mangcobo."

She laughs.

Gogo: "Really?"

Me: "Of course gogo"

Gogo: "See what I mean by saying you know nothing about how your gift works?"

Me: "I know how my gift works!! I've already blessed these grounds. People have water seedings are maturing to food. Their livestock is expanding. On top of that I exposed Thabile for who she is. I wouldn't have done all of that had it not been for my gift Gogo. "

Gogo: " Ndandatho Mangcobo is not Ngelozzi 's biological mother. Her real mother abandoned her at birth Fuze is her father but mangcobo isn't her biological mother. If you were paying much attention to your gift by now you would be certain about who is she." Gogo walks away leaving me cracking my mind.

Ngelozzi is eating her food. All I'm doing is to glare on her replaying what gogo said. I look at her trying to figure who her look alike is. But I find no one but rather her father. Gogo is surely led on by worry there's nothing wrong about Ngelozzi.

Voice: "Remember when I said I would kill her instead? When you were refusing to help me with saving my Kingdom?" The voice says out of nowhere. I look around the room but I see no one.

Iminathi: "Liyana there's more to her than it meets the eye. I wouldn't have chosen her randomly I chose her for a reason to have you agreeing to saving Ngwane village from danger" That's Iminathi's voice but her face isn't visible as always that's strange. I look at Ngelozi trying to gather my thoughts.

Iminathi: "Ndandatho I can't show my face in her presence. A blood that is unholy ruins on her veins."

I choke on my saliva and look at Ngelozi who is genuinely smiling at me.

Ngelozi: "The food is yummy sisi Ndandatho"

I faintly smile.

Iminathi: "Look at her give yourself time Ndandatho what do you see?"

I stand up to go lean by the wall so I can get a glimpse. In a split second a dark Smoky like gas covers her. In it I see a woman whose face is not visible whomever this woman is somehow shielding Ngelozi. I shut my eyelids and open them again. Suddenly I see Fuze's father trying to push away this dark smoke

the poor old man is even sweating and cursing this lady like dark cloud that surrounds Ngelozi. In a split second dizziness takes over me I collapse...

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Nhlonipho

Something is happening inside the house there's a loud noise coming from the house. Busani and myself walk there.

"What did you do to her Ngelozi!!? "

Ndandatho's grandmother says yelling at Ngelozi As she's trying to aid Ndandatho who has collapsed. "I did nothing Gogo I swear!" Ngelozi-

"You lying!! You did something to my granddaughter! What did you do talk!!" Gogo-

"I didn't do anything I swear on my late grandfather. I was eating my food and she was standing there by the wall. I did nothing. " With that said watery water slides down on her face Zimele looks at me. I look at everyone while my heart is shrinking in hurt and anger. I don't understand what's going on here but I'm certain my flower is being accused of something she knows nothing about..

Ngelozzi

"You lying!! You lying Ngelozzi" The old lady scolds at me there's anger and hate in her voice and eyes. I don't know why she strongly believes I would hurt Ndandatho. I thought she loved me.

"I swear I didn't hurt her I would never hurt sisi Ndandatho" I even cross my fingers to show how sincere I am.

"I don't believe you Ngelozzi I'm certain you did something to my granddaughter. I knew it something was off about you!!" Gogo-Nhlonipho walks to my direction there's pain in his eyes but right now I need a hole to hide my face in.

"Please excuse me" I say with a trembling voice. "Vele go! Just leave" She clicks her tongue. "Mama stop it!! Can you stop it already?" Boni-

"Stop what? Stop what Boni? Liyana was with her when she supposedly collapsed!. " Gogo- "That doesn't mean she was behind it." Zimele-

"Ndandatho collapses all the time after having a vision ma. Don't insult this innocent child not on my account mama" Boni-

"I know she did something! It's her fault Ndandatho is in this state Young girl get out didn't you say you were leaving?" Gogo-

"She goes nowhere!!" Boni-

"You waiting for her to kill her before you open your eyes Boni? This girl pushed Ndandatho or better yet she sprinkled something in her food. "

"Rubbish!! That's rubbish!! Ngelozi was not even here when food was cooked. This is madness!" Nhlonipho says annoyed. I storm out of this place and run outside. I can't believe I'm being accused of witchcraft. I really can't believe that woman thinks this way about me. Why would I do such a vile thing to Liyana? What would I achieve in doing that? I run for dear life making sure nobody catches up with my pace...

Nhlonipho

"Ngelozi!!!! Ngelozi!!!!" I shout as I see no trace of her. Sometimes I forget that Ngelozi was a Springbrook before being a human being.. That lady sprints you can never catch up with

her pace when she runs. I hear strange noises in the bush as I call her out. I move closer to where the noise is surely that's Ngelozzi. I find a strange old lady seated facing one direction. She doesn't move nor sneeze. I rub my eyes and open them.

"Greetings elder" She says nothing.

"Elder I'm looking for my girlfriend have you seen her maybe?"

She says nothing.

"Excuse me!! I'm talking to you"

She says nothing.

I walk closet to her so I can get a picture of her as I'm move closer my skin cringes. My hair stands an electricity of fear creeps in. This can only mean two things this person is a witch or a monkey..

"Nhlonipho help!!!!!" A voice engulfs my ears. I look at the direction of the voice I suddenly feel an itch on my cheek. I tilt my head quickily to look at the old lady whom was here I see nothing. Sounds of galloping engulfs the bush.

"Help me!!!!! Help me Nhlonipho!!" The voice says from a distance my vision suddenly gets blurry I feel a very peaceful and long slumber. I lay on the shrubs..

Bonisiwe

I'm so livid right now I can't believe my mother insulted Ngelozi to this extent. Everyone knows Ndandatho collapses after having a vision. Calling that child names was uncalled for Ngelozi wouldn't even hurt a fly. This gift of hers is driving me crazy right now. It's making a clown out of her. Zikhali pulls my hands and pins me on the bed.

"Zikhali leave me alone!!" "Boni that's your mother"

"A foolish mother you meant? Zikhali she insulted that poor girl. That was uncalled for let me loose!" I say trying to push him off.

"Calm down Boni"

"I can't calm down Zikhali! I'm a mother and I wouldn't appreciate my child being labeled as a witch!" "I know honey I will talk to your mother sweetheart.. Wena calm down please"

"I can't calm down"

"I can calm you down" He says smashing his lips against mine.

"Zikhali stop it."

"Tell me you don't like"

"Zikhali can we focus on the kids" "What kids?"

"Ndandatho and Ngelozi. There's plenty of time for this please stop" He looks at me and stops initiating whatever he was trying to initiate.

"Fine"

I look at him and stand up. I walk to Ndandatho 's chamber. I find Nozi and my mother busy helping Ndandatho to drink from the cup of water that's on their hands. Zimele is nowhere in sight.

"Liyana how is it going?" "I'm fine mama"

"Did Ngelozi hurt you?" "No I had a vision"

"Your grandmother accused Ngelozi of witchcraft." Ndandatho looks at my mother. "Boni this is not the right time she just woke up"

"What were you thinking ma insulting that poor child? You hated it when I called you names do you think Ngelozi is fond of that?"

"She's surrounded by darkness!"

"In your little peanut head ma you think everyone is against other people? You think everyone is controlled by evil and jealousy. Like really ma? Why do you always see bad in people but not the good? That child has been nothing but a good and respectful child. What you did out there is vile and tarnishing!! "

"I don't have time for this Bonisiwe

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I have a granddaughter to worry about. " ma-

"Ndandatho is my child I will worry about her mama. As for you

worry about that child you've just disheartened and bruised!"

"Can I please be left alone" Nda- We look at her.

"You heard what she said" Nozi- "Fine. But this is far from over
mama"

I stand up..

Hawulesizwe

"Leave me alone!!! Leave me alone! Mama!!!"

These words capture my ears from a distance as I'm busy walking around in the bush. A kid is crying so hysterically I just wonder what's happening.

"Shut up!!! Shut up!!!" A man says.

Now this is getting serious and more awkward.

"You hurting me!! Let me loose!!" The child cries. I slowly follow the voices. "My sister is gonna kill you!!!"

"I said shut up!!!" The man roars..

Ngelози

I run till I reach my aunts place. I find her busy on the fire then throw myself on her knees and cry hysterically. She puts the bucket down to attend to me and my crying.

"Ngelози?"

I don't say anything.

"Mafuze what's going on sisi? What did my brother do now?"

She says with worry. I suddenly feel the salads I ate at the Buthelezi's threatening to come out from my oesophagus. I unhook myself from my aunts legs to go throw up. It's a good riddance honestly that I'm vomiting their food isn't it they labeled me as a witch? I want none of their food inside my body even their water. I throw up till my throat and tummy aches.. My aunt rubs my back.

"Ngelozzi.. What's going on? You starting to scare me what happened sisi?" I throw up even more so much that I fart.
"I'll get you water sweetheart." She disappears and shows up with a jag of water.

"Here drink up sisi. You look troubled Mafuze what's going on sisi?" "They accused me of hurting the Princess of Umthombo"

"What?"

"They said I poisoned her Aunty Liziwe"

"What? Who would say that to a kid? Who said that Ngelozzi? "

"Queen Bonisiwe 's mother. "

"Thats rubbish. Why would she say that? That woman is crazy. Just because she sacrificed with her daughter that doesn't make everyone a witch. Such a evil old woman. Sies!! Don't cry sisi. " She says brushing my back.

"Princess Ndandatho collapsed and I was with her when she collapsed"

"Everyone knows Ndandatho collapses after having a vision that woman was taking out her frustrations on you. She's crazy! I'm sorry Mafuze. I'm sorry sweetheart"

"She insulted me in front of everyone even the mices and ants were listening to her insults" "Don't mind her she's evil."

A baby cries inside the house.

"Let's go inside the house. My baby is crying" I nod and go inside the house. It's dark inside.

"Don't mind the darkness sisi I've ran out of candles and the matchsticks." I nod. "Please make yourself a cup of tea."

"I'm not hungry"

"It's gonna help with the burping left by the vomiting"

I walk outside to make myself tea. This is where I usually visit more often but I hate this place. I hate that my Aunty struggles a lot at some point I was forced to go to bed on an empty stomach. She would only have sugar and water. Luckily her husband would bring us corn and sweet potatoes from the farm since he was working there. Sometimes he would bring vegetables and bush meat. At some point I was forced to eat rabbit meat because that was the only meat they had. I remember how angry I would be

each time father suggested I come here for Christmas holidays. I hated this place honestly but since I'm pregnant I have no choice but to come stay here for a little while...

"Are you Okay?"

"Yes I'm fine Aunty" She looks at me as I'm seated in the veranda and glaring on the stars. "There's chicken and pap inside the house you can dish up and eat. It's a pity Its dark"

She says breastfeeding her child. I look at that and get lost to it.

"You've grown Ngelozi"

I faintly smile.

"You such a pretty girl." "I take after you Aunty"

"I've lost my beauty my love" "Not at all."

"How's your father and your mother doing back in Thuthukani?"

"They all doing great thanks for asking."

"How many siblings do you have now?" "They two three with me"

"Boys or girls?" "Boys"

"That's great" She looks at me.

"You look different from the last time I saw you" "Really?"

"You all gained now." "I eat a lot."

She giggles.

"You will add in a few pounds you need to limit Ngelozi" "I will"

There's silence for a little while.

"Please hold him so I can dish up for you" "Fine"

I hold the baby and replay what happened..

Thabile

I slowly walk inside her house. I know Ngidi is probably here making her scream her lungs out. I want to teach Mota a lesson or two. I cannot fold my hands and not retaliate what she did to me. She messed with a wrong woman. I open the chambers that I strongly believe are occupied by her children. I slightly open to make sure there's someone inside to my luck both her girls are peacefully sleeping on the same bed. I reach for a cloth and set it alight. I move the cloth to the bed covers immediately the bed covers catches the fire I move to the curtains. I do the same thing. I move to the next chamber occupied by her son who comes after Mgcinaphi his not around lucky him. I move to her private chamber as expected Ngidi is here making her moan. It's a pity after this moaning they will mourn. After eavesdropping I walk away. I head to the kitchen I know she cooked. I take the pot with stew and balance it under my arm. I reach for few other things that I can cook and eat in the bushes. When all is set I leave their house..

From a distance I see the fire picking up I giggle and walk away....

Busani

Zimele walks in with Nhlonipho who looks a bit drowsy. They give him something to drink. I decide on going to my kid sisters chamber. We may fight but I love her so much. I enjoy teasing her and fighting with her. I knock once and twice then see myself in.

"Gabi!!" i say waiting for her response.

"Gabi since when are you a fan of darkness?" I say switching on the lights. To my surprise she's not in bed. This is strange. I walk outside and head to my parents.

"Ma where is Gabi?"

"She said she was going to sleep"

"I just came from her private chamber she's not there"

"Surely she's with Sisi Khethiwe you know Gabi loves kids" Mom-

"Khethiwe left after talking to Ndandatho" Zimele-

"Then where is Gabisile?" Mom-

" That's exactly what I'm trying to ask" My father stands up.

"Let's go look for her surely she's playing or having a chat with other kids"

"Baba it's already late. Gabi is afraid of the dark. She would never risk being outside at this hour." "Then where is she Busani?"

"Mama I don't know I wouldn't be asking had I known the answers" "Hhaibo!!" Mom says.

"We need to find her then go to check with her friends"
"Fine" I say walking outside Mkhuleko follows me. We go Gabi searching but nobody saw her that's what we get from most people even her friends. Everyone is panicking right now especially my mother.

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Ndandatho

"Gabi is missing"

"I don't follow Busani what do you mean by missing?"

"My love we've been searching since last night it's now morning and nobody knows of her whereabouts." Zimele-

"How though? Why would someone kidnap Gabi? She has no enemies and she would never hurt a fly too"

"Cousy no one has seen her even close friends." Mkhuleko-

I look at them with hope they will say they joking.

" You are guys are serious aren't you? "

" We are serious Ndandatho she's missing."Busani- " Who has motives of doing that to Gabi? "

" Our guess is similar to yours" Mkhuleko-

My father walks in shattered. He occupies the seat besides Busani.

"Where could she go?" Dad-

"We do not know baba but Gabi would never go somewhere faraway without telling me. Someone has Gabi."

I look at my baby brother and try to crack my skull open with thoughts trying to figure who could be behind this. Father is looking at me surely he expects some little magic to happen right now but sadly that cannot happen.

Nozibele

I'm seated on a bench opposite the bed his occupying holding his hand and trying to calm him down. Something terrible happened to my son in those bushes he was found in. He is not himself if I didn't know better I would think he was hypnotized or something of some sort. He is sweating and quivering profusely. He is shaking in his sleep and panicking at it. This is worrisome.

"Ma Jali come to bed please."

I wipe my tears and tilt my head to face the door.

"Not now Ngcolosi. Not when my son is looking like this Jali." I say with a trembling voice. He heaves a sigh and comes to stand beside me.

"Nozi you've been at it since last night you hardly slept. Please go lie down please."

"Ngcolosi there's no room for sleep not when Nhlonipho is in this state. Something terrible happened to my son Ngcolosi! I cannot go to sleep while his looking like this!." Tears slide out of my eyelids.

"I will look after him please go lay down. It's morning now and you hardly slept. Please my heart"

A knock comes on board.

"Come in" My husband permits. "Morning mama and morning dad" "Morning Zimele" I faintly utter.

"Morning son.. How was the search?" Husband

"The search was vanity baba nothing conclusive came out of it. I strongly believe Princess Gabi was abducted."

"Ingane ka Bonisiwe" I say in sympathy I cannot begin to wonder how Boni is holding up with her daughters disappearance. Surely this blade is cutting so deep. Not knowing where your child is is torture and pure anguish. What I'm crying for right now is nothing compared to what Boni is going through.

"And how is Nhlo? Is he sobering up?" Zimele -

"His Squivering. He's been tossing and turning since. He's not okay Jali your brother saw something he wasn't supposed to see in the bushes. That's what Mama said when giving him a herb cleanse."

"What could that be ma?"

"I don't know son she didn't elaborate further."

"But he's gonna live Jali. Nhlonipho is a Jali and we Jali's are not faint hearted we are warriors Conquerors. Singodlabazane oMepho oShongololo. My son will come out of this a stronger man."

Ngcolosi -

Zimele heaves a long sigh and sits on the edge of the bed brushing his brother's legs.

" What really happened in the bushes Zimele? "

" I don't know much mama but I found him laying on the ground.

" " Did he collapse maybe? "Husband

" No I don't think so. Nhlo doesn't suffer from that. "Zimele - "

Now this is terrible. "Husband-

He does another quiver while trying to catch his breath. His lips

are trembling and more sweats takes over his face.. My heart shrinks yet again.

" Sorry my boy phephisa Jali. "

Mama Maseko

My son hasn't been home for quite some time now. This is getting worrisome I can't help but to think something shattering befell him. My son is a warrior after all and anything can happen you know. Those people gamble with their lives each and every day. I really do miss him now I know his a naughty boy just like his father but my blood is my blood and I love him to bits. I'm this worried about him because yesterday I had a terrible dream regarding Maseko his father. He was threatening to kill my son. That scared me to hell because even before he passed on he told me he was gonna kill Hawu punish me for my sins. Everyone knows I was in a polygamous marriage and I was the blacksheep throughout. I have the answers to the why's but I cannot go around laying my dirt

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sometimes shifting blame helps. So when he threatened to kill Hawu in that dream i knew he meant business because he died with a bleeding heart after learning about my deep dark secret.

"Mama I'm off to Thuthukani to go visit brother Hawu" Lungi -

"Please my daughter when you find him tell him to come home.
We have serious things to discuss" "I will mama"

"Travel safe okay?" "Thanks mama" "Lungile"

"Ma?"

"Tell him it's a matter of life and death he needs to see me." "I
will mama"

"Take this and put it under your tongue" She does as instructed
and walks away.

Liziwe(Ngelози's aunt)

The roosters have stopped crowing outside meaning morning is long gone and noon is approaching. I'm surprised to find my brother's daughter snoring at this hour. Ngelozi is not a lazy bone she's nothing like myself who grew up having her ear twisted and pinched all in the name of ridding laziness. Ngelozi is a very active being her normal self would be coming from the river bank to fill up buckets or collecting fire wood better yet she would be cooking porridge or doing a chore outside. This is all new to me. I step outside to do my everyday chores. I sweep the yard and wash dishes. I move to making a fire I will make steam bread for breakfast. I will serve it with peanut butter. As I'm busy with my business the cat drags Ngelozi out running to save a life. She bends in front of the mini vegetation to throw up her intestines. Right there I put my hands on my waist because honestly this is getting all suspicious. Firstly she oversleeps now vomiting? Mmmmm... Something is cooking here..

"Morning Aunty" "After noon Ngelozi" "It's noon Aunty?"
Of course" I say scanning her. My eyes make a stop on her eyes they pure clean.. "Im sorry I overslept Aunty it's just that last night I ran too much I had fatigue" "Ngelozi"
"Aunty"
"Are you partaking the reed dance of the year?" "No Aunty I don't like it anymore."
"Why not?"
"Because it's boring and tiring"
"I see" I say scanning her. The actual answer is "Because I'm doing adults stuff and I'm pregnant"

"Do you need help?" "No it's all sorted sisi"

"I can bath the baby maybe" "Thanks Ngelozi"

She smiles.. I look at her.

"Eehm Ngelozi. Later on the day I want to go visit a friend" "I guess I should go home then"

"Of course not silly. I will pass by your father's house to notify him you are visiting me. Don't worry Ngelo"

"Thank you Aunty." I smile and mix my bread ingredients. Minutes later the bread makes its way down to my throat. I freshen up and get ready for the road. I haven't seen my brother in years and I guess this is the right time to visit him back in Thuthukani Kingdom...

Ngidi

Mota is weeping a sorrowful filled sob. I still don't understand how the fire started. But what I know here daughters are both ashes and some of her houses are burnt beyond recognition. I'm really shattered myself because as a man it was my duty to prevent this from happening. I was supposed to be the ears and eyes of this compound. This is so sad to watch because she's a living corpse.

"My babies!! My babies Ngidi!" "I'm sorry Majali"

She roars in a sob while holding bones of her flesh..

"Thabile is behind this!! That witch is behind this!!" a She curses. I swallow hard.

"Or maybe it's the wrath of the ancestors Mota. Your husband to be specific we doing these shenanigans in his compound. This is an insult to him"

"Are you hearing yourself Ngidi? Are you hearing yourself? I'm saying your witch of a wife killed my children and you here defending her? By shifting the blame to my dead husband?" She says looking at me with glimmering eyes. "Thats not what I

meant"

"Get lost Ngidi!! This is all your fault!!!" She roars. Being the gentle man that I am I collect my things to walk away.

"Mota" "Go!!!!!"

"I'm so sorry I'm here and I care.. Please reach out"

"Reach out my foot!! Get lost Ngidi!!!" She barks.. I walk away heading to my brother's castle as it's nearby from where Mota is.

Makhehla

I'm so excited right now. I have the sacrifice with me what's left of me is to wait on my sister to give instructions on how to conduct the sacrifice. I'm already thinking of what could go right shall this job become a success I will be the most feared witch. Everyone would bow to me. I will be the new physical God to many. The more I think of this the happier I get. As I'm busy pounding herbs I'm whistling in joy. I stop here and there to look at my sacrifice I crack up in joy as it weeps and looks at me. Makhehla will finally be a someone. I will be a man amongst men. For the first time in history people will see me in a different ray not as Makhehla the wife less and childless disgrace of a man. I will soon earn respect..

"You smell like chicken faces" The young Princess utters. I crack up in laughter. "And you will smell like a burnt goats skin in the next coming hours"

"I hate you! You are evil and ugly."

"Now that sounds like me. Ugly means strong and hate means powerful and mighty. With you little girlie I will be respected by many. Do you know the reward I will get by killing you? You have no idea young girl. You are my victory. "

She starts crying.

"My come back Gabisile Buthelezi. Let's see if granny mamawita will save you." She cries even more.

"Do you remember that boy whom you called out to aid you?"

She looks at me as I've chained her.

"That boy will not remember a single thing that happened in the bushes if fortunate enough he will not remember who he was before I slapped him. I'm the most feared witch I have strong

powers young lady."

"You will also die and no one will come to your funeral you will bury yourself Satan!!" The young utters attracting my attention...

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Fuze

"Baba I left Ngelozi here I promise"

"Then why is she not home huh?" I roar.

"Fuze..."

"Don't Fuze me! Don't Fuze me maNgcobo! Ngelozi didn't sleep home woman and you are to blame!"

"I am to blame Fuze?"

She says putting her hand on her chest.

"What do you expect huh mama Ngelozi? It's your fault."

"How is it my fault that she didn't sleep home? How is it my fault huh Ngcobo?"

"Ngelozi is your daughter our daughter how do you close your eyes and snore at night not knowing where she is huh Mafuze? " a tear rolls from her eye.

"What kind of a mother are you ma Fuze?"

"Have you ever asked her biological mother these kinds of questionnaires Fuze? How does her own mother snore at night not knowing where and how her daughter is or doing huh Fuze? What kind of a mother is she that never worries about her own child? I've been doing so much worrying about Ngelozi Fuze the decades and couple of years. I've been cracking my skull open about Ngelozi since she was two months old! Don't you think I need a moment not to worry about Ngelozi Fuze? Don't you think I need a second to worry about my own two sons Fuze? Our own children to be specific? Don't you think I'm tired of being crucified and pointed fingers at each time our dearest egg breaks huh Fuze? I've been worrying about Ngelozi so much that it drained me out of living and being happy Fuze. I've tried okay? I've been trying and I'm still trying to be a good mother to your daughter. Why can't you see that for once Fuze? "

More tears roll out of her eyes. I look at her and start beating myself on it.

" Shall Ngelozi fall pregnant Fuze you will still blame me? Because I have magic to control her and prevent her from doing sinister things? "

I swallow hard.

" You know what I'm tired Fuze. I'm very very tired" She says wiping her tears heading outside.. I sit on the bed and heave a long sigh. I bury my face in my hands . I'm lost in my thoughts when my second born calls me saying there's someone outside looking for me. I stand up and walk outside. Just under my mango tree I spot a familiar face. I walk there to attend to her.

Ndandatho

I was supposed to be enjoying myself today as a newly wife at the Jali's but here I am seated on top of a rock staring into blank air space. Thinking of possible ways to finding my kid sister I'm trying to figure this enemy who could've abducted my sister but the only name I have is Thabile.. She has every reason to doing that. I mean I'm the reason she was banned from most Kingdoms the reason Nomaswazi ended up not marrying the Prince of Thuthukani. Another thing I'm the reason her marriage ended I exposed her for witchcraft. The list goes on and on. It's hurts knowing my sister is paying a price of my own actions. I can't say this to my parents but deep down I know I am to blame for Gabi's disappearance.. I sniff and wipe my tears.

"My love"

"Zimele please."

"Gatsha is crying in the house"

"Attend to him I want to be alone please. "

"I'm worried about you Liyana"

"Don't be."

"Ndandatho let me in allow me to share your pain and worries."

"Didint you say the baby was crying Zimele?"

"I did"

"Then why are you here crowding me instead of being there with your son? I want to be alone!!" I blurt out. He looks at me and narrows his brows.

"Leave"

"I'm going nowhere not without you"

"Then I'm leaving after all my son needs me. " I stand up with hopes to walk away.

"Ndandatho!" He says with a stern voice but that doesn't stop me from walking away.

"I'm talking to you!"

He says pulling my hand I dart to his body. He looks at me and squeezes me in a bear embrace.

"Majali.. Talk to me. I'm a good listener my love let me in." I find myself crying all over again. He rubs my back with care.

"It's okay I'm here maBhengu your husband is here and he cares. Let him in share with him."

"This isn't supposed to be happening Zimele. This is so wrong we

were supposed to be enjoying ourselves as newlyweds. Not going through this!"

"I guess it was jotted down as part of our fate Liyana. As far as I know life consists of turmoils every single time of the day. We can never run away from things that are meant to happen to us or our lives."

"This is all my fault Zimele. It's my fault that my sister is missing!"

I burst into tears

"They should've taken me instead of my sister!!"

"Majali don't say that. It's not your fault don't be hard on yourself"

"Had it not been for me and my forward gift none of this would've happened. I'm being punished for laying out people's dirt Zimele. Thabile is retaliating and she's using my sister to hurting me. She should've came for me not my baby sister she knows nothing "

" You were only doing what you were instructed to do Liyana. You did nothing wrong if really Thabile is behind this we will find her and trust me my love she will pay greatly. "

"What if my sister would be burping poison by then Zimele? What irks me the most is that my spirit guards are silent and distant from this matter. They not saying anything or doing anything. It's like nothing happened Zimele. They also make noise when they need my help but when I need theirs silence is all I get "

" Sweetheart calm down "

" I can't calm down. If I do so Gabi will die we talking of a witch's daughter. Ngelozi's moth... "I shut my mouth before I spill the beans.

" You say what about Ngelozi? "

" Nothing.. I should get going my son needs me"

"Ndandatho what about Ngelozi?"

"She's pregnant with a son"

"Okay how is that related to this conversation?"

"I said never mind Zimele" I say unhooking myself from his embrace..

Zikhali

"Brother I don't know.. I really don't know who took my daughter. I'm trying to give it a thought but no name pops up"

"This is very bad Zikhali."

"Very bad. Maybe this is a sign Ngidi"

"What sign Ngwane?"

"That the ceremony we did wasn't approved nor was it successful"

"What makes you say that?"

"How do you explain my daughter going missing your Mota losing her children to fire? The bad luck has even went as far as

transmitting to the Bhengu's. Nhlonipho might never be himself again. The list is long. What if the ancestors are angry at us for something that we do not know? "

" There's no way they would be angry at us. The ceremony was a success brother."

" Then why are bad happening Ngidi? My daughter might die! Do you know what that would do to Bonisiwe? We were once here before with Liyana and trust me the experience was life threatening we were gruesome. Imagine how it will be with Gabisile! Ngidi I cannot lose my wife yet again. "

" I get it brother I will try to do a little ceremony we were gruesome. Imagine how it will be with Gabisile! Ngidi I cannot lose my wife yet again. "

" I get it brother I will try to do a little ceremony but Ndandatho should guide us a little. "

Ndandatho walks in with Zimele following her. She looks at us and swallows hard.

" Excuse me" Ndandatho -

"Liyana come here" I demand.

Zimele walks away my daughter occupies an empty chair besides her father Ngidi.

"Baba.."

"Ndandatho you had a vision before you collapsed what was it about?"

"Baba it's nothing related to Gabi I didn't see the person who abducted her"

"Then what was your vision about?"

"It's Ngelozzi's business father not our Kingdom related"

"Ndandatho have the ancestors said anything to you maybe about my future and that of Zikhali?" My brother inquires.

"Not at all baba."

"Something doesn't add up Ndandatho Nora's house was engulfed by a fire and both her daughters passed on.. Now this Gabi saga and that of Nhlonipho. I think something evil is polluting this air." Ngidi says.

"I agree with Ngidi" My mother in law says walking towards us. We fix our eyes on her.

"Gabisile was abducted by a witch a witch that portrayed its self as she while it's a he. The motives are unknown but I know one thing. Witches come to do three things: Killing destroying and stealing..

Witches get satisfaction from pain and sorrows. They enjoy it when people are confused and wounded. " Mother in law-

" So you saying this witch wants to kill my daughter? For what exactly ? "

" Power Zikhali. " She says.

"What power?" Ngidi-

"To rule and to be worshipped and recognized. In short my son this witch wants to sacrifice with pure blood for self gains.."

"And how do I prevent that from happening?"

"Only one person will prevent this happening"

"And who is that?"

"A carrier of both hell and heaven. The mamiwata" Ndandatho looks at my mother in law.

Hawulesizwe

Who would stay in such a dodgy place as this? This place is scary it's making my insides to boil. My skin is cringing each time I look at these animal skins. I'm certain a witch stays here. But what is this person trying to do with that little girl whose face I didn't get a chance to see? Could it be his trying to sacrifice the little girl? This is very parasitic and inhumane if so. Who would do such? As I'm seated in on this tree minding my business I spot Thabile knocking on the door what brings her here? Wait is she part of this molestation? Wonders never ceased.

"Open the door Makhehla I know you are in there!! Open up!!"
She says looking side ways. After a little while this ugly beasts appears.

"What do you want?"

"I no longer can't afford to stay in the bushes hide me here please. Already a boy I do not know holds a secret of me staying in the bushes. He could sell me out and have me killed"

"I'm afraid you can't stay here Thabile"

"Why not uncle?"

"Because you are no longer needed. I can't go down with you. You on your own please leave I was busy before you came here to interrupt me"

"You can't do me like this! Not before you give me my mother's powers!"

"Those powers are coming to me she is going to give me her powers"

What powers are they talking about?

"Listen Thabile leave before I cast a spell on you just like I did with that Jali boy Nhlonipho"

What the heck? What spell is that? What exactly is going on here? Why would this man cast a spell on Nhlonipho? For what exactly?

"I'm not scared of you Makhehla"

"You should Thabile not when I have leverage on you."

"What leverage?"

"Your daughter"

"Stay away from Nomaswazi"

"Not her but your daughter who is pregnant with a Jali offspring."

What daughter? What exactly is going on here? Whose daughter is carrying a Jali offspring? It can't be Ndandatho Ndandatho is a Buthelezi.

"What are you talking about?"

"Your daughter is pregnant and guess what.. I've just made her life unbearable. The father of her child will forget her and not remember a single moment he once shared with her the cherry on top the entire Jali family will hate her calling her a witch because I've managed to paint her as one using your mother's gift." The man laughs to my annoyance.

" Don't you dare hurt my daughter Makhehla especially not with my mother's gift!! A gift you've stole!! "

" Now you care? After you spat her like her like a spatum? Don't start being a mom now you've failed your daughter. Since she was unlovable why do you care now Thabile? Any way you don't have to answer that question I was just trying to level with you Thabile back off. Your daughters life is depended on your

decision-makings. I will make her life a seldom journey of sadness and anguish if you continue poking me and annoying me. Already Ndandatho saw the disguised lie that I wanted her to see hence she can be the one spreading the negative and untrue allegations about your daughters plans with the Prince of Thuthukani. Leave me alone Thabile in exchange of your rejected daughters life. She's nothing but a clean soul"

Who is this daughter? The Jali brothers are two. Zimele and Nhlonipho. Zimele impregnated Ndandatho and Nhlonipho suspects he impregnated Ngelozi.. And I once told him to use guava leaves to prevent a baby from happening using Siziwe's given information. Wait.. Does this means Ngelozi is the child they talking about? This can't be happening. This is getting more and more interesting..

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Ndandatho

Zimele is not happy with my decision of remaining behind in Umthombo village until Gabisile is found. According to him he wants me and his son to embark on the journey back to Thuthukani together. I know his my husband and that he longs

for my attention too but so much is going on right now on both sides of the family. Just like he wants to be there for his baby brother I also want to be there for my mother who is a living corpse. She needs me more than Zimele does. I know I sound selfish right now but I need to find ways to bring Gabisile homethen worry about Zimele later on. On the other hand I need to find ways to help Nhlonipho regain his sanity or normality. There's just so much on my plate.

"Ndandatho I also need you."

"Zimele I've already explained myself and my reasons. Please don't be selfish."

"I'm being selfish by wanting my wife besides me Ndandatho?"

"Zimele can we not fight"

"Your grandmother is here Busani is around and so your father. Your mother will be going through this with her husband by her side. Unlike me who will go through the pain of having my brother losing his sanity alone."

"My family is going through the most Zimele. Just like yours is going through the most. We both need to be around our family's on this rough phase."

"So we still gonna carry on living like singles or better yet strangers? Even when a dowry has been paid Ndandatho?"

I look aside.

"Why did we rush this marrying thing if we won't make use of it nor put it to action Liyana? "

"Zimele I understand how you feel I really do but this is not the

right time to be cupid up as a lovely dovey kind of a couple especially with all the wrongs going on. We can't be on a honeymoon phase Zimele please understand."

"That's the part that annoys me the most. Zimele being understanding all the time when it suits Liyana but not vice versa Ndandatho I'm getting tired of this hide and seek game we playing. We have a son and counting in case you've forgotten who we are and what we are to each other. "

" Zimele you being melodramatic right now. So much is going on but all you think about is our marriage like really? My sister is missing and my mother needs me"

"And I don't?"

I look aside.

"Fine..I get the answer Ndandatho we will continue living our lives as boy friend and girlfriend. It's fine I get it take all the time you need to smothering your mother. Stay here Ndandatho and do you."

With that said he gives me Bangizwe and walks away. Gatsha starts crying. I myself I feel like crying but I can't do that not now This is not the right time and place to be shedding tears. Zimele will calm down sooner.

Mama Ngelozi

I'm wrestling the poor cabbage with the knife. My lips have been shaking since my little altercation with my husband. I can't believe Makhosonke Ngcobo all the time when her dearest daughter does something unruly I have to be crucified and

deemed as the irresponsible mother. For how long exactly am I gonna tolerate this endless blame? Her biological mother is nowhere in sight but I have to do the parenting only to be insulted and called useless. I'm now fed up I really am fed up. For some weird reasons I'm starting not to like Ngelozi after all she's the reason I'm always seen as a nobody.

"Mama Ngelozi. Aren't you gonna offer Liziwe something to quench her thirst?"

"I'm busy Fuze" I continue with my chopping. He makes his sister the food and drinks. I stop chopping and start pacing around the kitchen. I've made up my mind I'm no longer siding and being supportive of Ngelozi's decision of not going to the Reed dance. Now I will pester Fuze to drag her there. I want to see the sadness on his face when reality sinks in. Isn't it Ngelozi is a saint in her father's eyes? Isn't it she's an egg that should be handled with care? We shall see the results of an egg.

Liziwe

We seated under a tree shade. My brother and myself havent seen each other in years the last time we saw each other was when we buried our parents. Thereafter the kids have been visiting but not him.

"To what do I owe the visit Lizi?"

"Is it a sin to long for your sibling?"

"Not exactly. But you not a visiting type unless there's an emergency or bad news to share. "

"You got me there."

"What's going on Lizi?"

"Khosonke we need to talk about Ngelozi"

"What about her?"

Do I spill the beans or better yet divert to discussing her mother?

"She's getting old now Makhosonke. Don't you think it's about time you let the ghosts rest eternally?"

"What ghosts Liziwe?"

"You need to tell her about her mother she deserves that Makhosonke."

"Liziwe like I once said my daughter is better off knowing nothing especially about that woman. Some things are better off unspoken and I will not expose my daughter to that wicked woman. "

"That wicked woman is her mother Fuze"

"Mafuze is her mother nobody else but her. She raised Ngelozi since birth that alone deems her as a mother."

"My brother a child is a gift belonging to two ancestors her maternal and paternal ancestors. The blood that runs over her body is blended. It's your blood and that of Thabile. Tell the child the truth Makhosonke please. "

"Over my dead body."

"Makhosonke she's not getting any younger. Soon you will have grandchildren and a son in law. What if that son in law becomes her brother? Incest is an abomination Fuze. Anyway I came to inform you Ngelozi is at my place. She came yesterday saying the

Queen Bonisiwe's mother called her names. She wasn't herself
Fuze. "

" What did the Queen say? "

" She will narrate everything when she's back"

"What did they do to my child?"

He says infuriated.

"Another thing Makhosonke take Ngelozi to the Reed dance. She
can't miss it."

It's best they find out the latest by themselves I can't afford to have Ngelozi hating me.

"She's going there forceful."

"I brought her these she must wear those beads on her dance."

"Thank you let me walk you out"

"Tell your wife I said my farewells."

We stand up to walk out the compound. Poor Ngelozi...

Hawulesizwe

I hope this chillies will help. Growing up my mother used to say burning chillies drives witches crazy hence this is my resort.

Wait.

I need sea salt and water solution too I heard it works wonder on witches. Maybe I can save this little girl. I jog to the nearby stream. I find a very beautiful looking lady collecting water she has curves and a flawless skin. She looks at me and smile.

"Greetings warrior"

"Ehm.. Greetings beautiful maiden"

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do you need a hand?"

She giggles strangely.

"The sea salt is on that side" She points in a direction that I believe its gonna take me to Umthombo sacred waters where only the mamiwatas chosen one can collect their waters.

"Ehm.. Excuse me how do you know I need sea salt?"

"I know. Go that side there's plenty of sea salt. If fortunate you gonna find help"

"What is your name?"

"Nomanzi"

"Where do you stay?"

"I stay wherever I want to stay."

She looks at me yet eyes are different from eyes I've seen before.
She blinks twice and looks at me.

"Don't be scared nothing bad will happen to you go
Hawulesizwe."

"How do you know my name?"

"I know. Just go."

"Fine and thank you Nomanzi I'm looking forward to seeing you
again."

"Likewise.." I walk away I turn to glare on her beauty again to my
surprise I spot white ducks swimming no trace of Nomanzi is left
behind. I run to whatever place I'm going.

Zimele

The drive back to Thuthukani is filled with silence only Gogo's

coughing echoes. My mind is not here my mind is with Ndandatho and her bias thoughts. I know she's going through the most as an individual but it's unfair of her to treat our marriage like a joke. Once a woman has been negotiated for and paid for she automatically packs her belongings and embarks on a journey to her marital house even when she's leaving a collapsing house behind with her parents. That house no longer becomes her problems but rather for those she's leaving behind. The elders will even attest to this. I reach my private chambers and throw myself on the bed in times like this I miss my friend Hawu. He would be advising me and cheering me up sadly he's nowhere to be found. I wish we were still friends. Life sucks.

Ndandatho

I wipe my tears as I recall how sorrowful my mother was crying minutes ago when I went to give her food. Her sobs are ringing loudly inside my ears. I was forced to leave home to come on this peaceful river. That I believe is a sacred place. Hearing the waterfall waters shuddering is way better than hearing my mother's sobs. I find comfort in this place.

"Li.. Ya... Na.." That comes in a form of a whistles or a melodic enchanter. I look behind me and sideways.

"Li.. Ya.. Na.. Over here!" My eyes follow the voice so does my ears. I see nothing I stand on my both my legs.

"Li.. Ya.. Na.. Look behind you"

I quickly look behind me my eyes land on a man busy digging up whatever in the river.

"What is he doing?" I say running towards this person this is a very dangerous place to be. His even worse his taking some stuff of this river. "Hey!! Hello!! Excuse me!!!" I say running. "He can't hear you nor can he see you" The voice says again. "Why not? That person is gonna die this is a dangerous river. I need to scare him off before something terrible happens. Hello!!! Excuse me!!!"

"Liyana he can't hear you nor can he see you besides I've brought him here for a reason"

"Can you show your face and stop ducking." I say looking around.

"Come here.. I want to show you something" In a split second I'm seated on a rock.

"Who is that man?" The voice asks me. "I can't see his face clearly"

"Liyana look at his scar. Don't you recall that scar from somewhere?"

"Of course not"

The voice heaves then boom a mermaid is standing in front of me.

"That man knows where your sister is."

"Where is my sister?"

"A witch held her captive they want to sacrifice with her for powers"

"What?"

"You got that right."

"That can not happen mermaid"

"Nomanzi."

"Please help me find my sister."

"Help him find his true identity Liyana"

"My sister needs help not that man. He can find his identity by himself. What is he collecting? "

"It's a pity you won't find Gabisile till you figure out who he is. Gabisile's life is sorely depended on that man and I your grandmother will make sure you don't find Gabisile till you solve this little predicament."

"Nomanzi Gabisile is in danger she needs me"

"Gabisile will not die Ndandatho she's very much safe. That young man is there and the ancestors that are with him are very strong in battles. They never go to war to be defeated. I strongly believe in him. Where is Ngelozi?"

I look at Nomanzi.

"She's at her aunts place."

"She's your charge Ndandatho. Whatever troubles her will trouble you too."

"She's covered by darkness Nomanzi"

"That's not true. You know her heart Ndandatho. Her heart is your truth."

"Her mother is Thabile Mzilikazi"

"But she's not her mother. She's a rare offspring of witches."

"But she is a witch?"

"She's a daughter of a witch after all tiny blood drops of a witch ruins in her body but those are zero to none effective Ndandatho. Ngelozu will need you more than everything else. Look I won't stay long I have people to initiate underwaters. I must go. Don't forget that scar it's gonna lead you to his truth. Like I said find his true identity Gabisile will come back home. "

She disappears in a split second I'm in my private chamber. Today I have no headache. I walk to my mother's chamber.

" Gabi is safe wherever she is mama. "

She looks at me.

" Bring her home"

"I will."

"Go to your husband Ndandatho You are a wife now."

"Thank you mama"

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Mama ka Hawu

Queen Nozi and her mother in law make their way towards me. I've come to drop off their orders. MaJali the first glance at me She doesn't look well. She's looking pale if not sunken. Nozi smiles at me as always.

"Makhuboni"

"Queen Nozi how are you?"

"I'm very hanging in there long time."

She says stretching her hand for a hand shake. Gezekile coughs I look at her. "Long time indeed myQueen."

"Nozi I will go lie down I'm not feeling well my daughter"

"Ma Maseko please have a seat I will join you shortly." Nozi says with worry glaring at Gezekile who looks unfit and all drained. To think she was once fit and active now she's all wrinkled and sick.

Surely she's gonna meet her fate soon. "Of course my Queen"

I flash her a smile. She walks away with Gezekile.

Zimele appears along side his brother Nhlonipho who is leaning against Zimele's shoulder. He too looks sick. What is going on with the Jali's? Zimele smile.

"Mama"

"My son how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks ma and yourself?"

"All is well my son even though your friend hasn't been home for quiet some time now. Lungelo was here to search for him but a bug wails so loud but not him. Do you by any chance know where he is Jali?"

He swallow hard and scratch his head.

"Zimele.."

"Ma Hawu did something terrible on this Kingdom his been on the run out since that incident occurred."

"What incident Zimele?"

"Mama he.. He beat up Khethiwe to a pulp leaving her on the edge of death."

"What? He did what? Why didn't you tell me Zimele?"

I say now standing on both my legs with my hands resting on my waists. "Mama it wasn't my place"

"I thought you two were friends Zimele! You were supposed to tell me about this."

I say infuriated. "My apologies mama"

"Find him Zimele"

"I can't mama he left this place out of his free will and out of his will shall he return"

I look at him angry I want to leave this place immediately. They were supposed to inform me about such. Ngcolosi appears We glare at each other for a little moment. He shifts his eyes to look at Nhlonipho. Nozi walks up to me.

Ndandatho

My bags are all packed up ready to embark on the journey to the unknown. I can't believe I'm now a wife but hey its what I've always wanted. Busani looks at me.

"So this is it Liyana?"

"It's not like I'm gonna die there show some teeth"

I say playing pulling his cheeks. He faintly smiles.

"Ndandatho there's nothing beautiful about this. Gabi is missing and now you leaving too. Melancholy will do its best with me. I won't have people to tease or talk too this house is gonna be a bore without both my sisters. I'm not a cry baby but this is heart breaking Ndandatho "

I pull my baby brother into an embrace.

" I know how you feel brother I really do relate but look at the bigger picture Busani. Our Kingdom is gonna benefit out of this. You know how wealthy the Jali Kingdom is soon its gonna be ours. Already our crops are green and our livestock is getting fats our perennials are running periodically. Things are working out Busi. I know riches are not family but I'm not only leaving you with worry nut but with hope and something you gonna dedicate your all into. Busani I know you and I were sworn enemies at first but now I love you brother big time. Me leaving home to my marital place doesn't mean the friendship and sisterhood or brotherhood is doomed and finished We are still one and we are still Zikhali's children. Do come to visit me any given day. My home has room for you and still a home for you in my heart. Don't be sad please. "

" It was gonna be better had Gabisile been home Sister. As much as she's annoying I long for her and I love her Ndandatho. "

" It's okay. Mom and dad are around not forgetting gogo. For now appreciate what you have please Busani. Gabi will be home soon"

"I hope so."

"I love you stop crying I love the blunt and strong Busani not this crying version of Busani"

"I'm not crying futhi let me go. Gatsha's milk is making me dizzy" I laugh and let him loose from my embrace. "I'm so gonna miss you"

"I know. I always leave a mark on people's hearts."

He faintly smiles. "Please bring Zimele over here I want to bid him farewell" I hand Gatsha over. Mom and dad are looking at us with sadness. They too sad about my departure but on the real. It's not like I'm going there to die. There's still a marriage ceremony to be held they must treat this initial step as a

final one. Zimele just paid dowry not that he married me they still gonna see me. Gogo appears. Mom rolls her eyes.

"Travel safe Liyana and don't be a stranger please" Mom-

"Do us proud at the Jali's.. Like I said before Ndandatho Zimele is the head and you are the neck. Don't turn him into your wife and you being the husband. Listen to him and respect him. Be submissive too not dismissive." Gogo -

"But don't be too submissive Ndandatho when he does something uncalled for talk to him don't die inside. A neck is important too. A head is useless without the neck be you sisi be his peace Ndandatho be the reason he leaves work early not late. Daddy loves you"Dad-

"You want to make me cry isn't it?"

"Don't cry have a scorpion heart" Busani says.

"Hhayi suka." My parents come to embrace me.

"Don't be too relaxed Ndandatho not after what Ngelozi did. You need to be alert all the time" Gogo-

"Ngelozi did nothing wrong to her ma" Mom-

"That's what you think Boni"

"Had you not started that delusional accusation Gabi wouldn't have gone missing ma" Mom

"The blame game again huh Bonisiwe?" Gogo-

"Of course! You also playing it nje with Ngelozi." Mom shouts I heave a sigh in disappointment. They still fighting over this.

" Boni stop it. "Dad

" Mama is unfair Zikhali. It's okay for her to point fingers on others but it's not okay when fingers are being pointed to her. Nhlonipho is in a bad state because of her! Had she not insulted the mother of his child none of this would've happened! " Mom-

Dad looks at Mom surprised. I know why is the " Mother of his child" statement. I didn't know mom knew about the pregnancy how she knows it's none of my business. My business is to figure where the scar man resides and who he is. I want Gabi home.

Ngelozi

My aunt walks in through the door. She glares at me then the compound it's sparkling clean. I'm doing all that to soften her heart and earn her support to allow me come here instead of going to the Reed dance we all know what awaits me shall my plans fail. It's even worse with me nurturing Nhlonipho's seed. Talking of Nhlonipho I woke up missing him a lot I even shed a tear drop or two when I learnt his not besides me. Blame it on my last night thoughts about him and our baby. Yes I've accepted that our baby is there wether we ready or not it changes nothing. Makhanda is here and my baby is gonna walk tall with her big head if it's a girl. Talking of Makhanda today I didn't vomit instead I was thinking of the person who put these fluids inside me. Poor Ngelozi with her double tummy.

"Mafuze"

"Aunty"

"How are you my daughter?"

"I'm very well thanks Aunty"

"I see.. The compound is sparkling clean I'm happy."

She smiles. I'm going nowhere I tell you I've just earned myself a ticket to stay here till Khanda comes out of my tummy.

"I tried Aunty. I even collected water and firewood. As I'm seated here I was thinking of a better way to cook these sweet potatoes leaves"

She smiles. "Thats sweet of you my daughter thank you Ngelo but I'm afraid sisi you need to leave"

I choke on my saliva. How and why?

"Aunty?"

"Yes Ngelozi. Fuze wants you home. You need to leave"

"But Aunty I can't go home not now"

"Why can't you go home now Ngelozi? Have you forgotten in two days time you going to your Reed dance. Your father and myself cannot afford to make your marriage chances slim you have to go there Ngelozi. I even bought you white beads to go there. White beads for a pure girl" My insides boil immediately. I think I'm gonna collapse.

"Ngelози..."

"Aunty I can't go home I'm not ready to go home. Can I stay here till my heart has healed from the insults I succumbed please" I say kneeling in front of her.

My tummy does noises of hunger sadly I won't feed anyone I'm still negotiating a place for us to stay. She might cry all she wants but right now we need a place to stay.

"Ngelози go freshen up and go. A horse will collect you shortly I paid one of the royal guards to take you home" She says stepping away. She stops halfway she's gonna change her mind. "Your tummy is crying go pluck out a guava on the tree" I cry even worse recalling that guava concoction I drank with hopes to prevent this noise making baby. My aunt walks away I have no choice but to go home..

Thabile

I've been so distracted by my conversation with Makhehla I can't believe he did that to me. He using my mother's powers to defeat me and ruin my life can you imagine? Some mother I have. If he thinks I won't do anything to fight him his got another thing coming. I will plot to kill him that Hawu boy will make me curve a spear even if it's not a spear but he must make a weapon for me. His a warrior after all. I need his help. I find him whistling his in a jolly mood. His busy with strange things that I cannot make what they are.

"Hawu."

He ignores me.

"Hawu such a happy mood you're in what's going on?"

He looks at me I flash him a smile.

"Hawu what are you doing?"

"Good and bad cannot coexist these witches will go hell the very place they belong too." He says giggling.

"Hawu did you hear what I said?" He stands up and storms my way I cover my face to my surprise his coming to me but rather a plant that's situated behind me. "Hawu" I say shaking him to my surprise nothing happens. It's like his a spirit but not a physical form. I shake him again he still doesn't hear me nor see me.

"Hawu"

"He can't hear you nor can he see you Thabile" I look around the bush to find the person whose talking.

"Who are you?"

"Something took over his body. There's a confusing spirit that has invaded his body. I don't know what their plan is but I'm certain it's not looking good" The voice says behind me. I look around me I find nothing. Fear is lurking in. "Who are you and why are you telling me this information?"

"You know who I am Thabile"

"I don't know who you are! Is this Ngidi's wife?"

"You've forgotten my voice like really? Listen attentively."

I try to listen. "She's pregnant Thabile with a Jali offspring."

"Who are you? Makhehla stop what you are doing"

The voice shudders deafening me.

"I've trapped Makhehla he was so stupid to think he was gonna get my powers over you. He thought I was gonna allow him to take over and betray my only child. Poor stupid brother of mine. He started a war with Nomanzi without realizing. I lured him to believing I wanted a blood sacrifice of a royal blood when all I really want is a body to live within."

"Mama is that you?"

"Yes.. It's me Thabile and I need your help. I want you to give me permission to invade your daughters body. I want to find us a home. With her pregnant already with a royal baby will grant our ancestors a chance and home in a royal Kingdom. The Jali's and ourselves we will be one big family. We won't find a home in these bushes. We need a home and that's the Jali's. We gonna use your daughter after all our blood runs in her veins and a child being present will strengthen our bond with the Jali's. "

" I don't understand. "

" You will understand sooner. Find Ngelozi"

"Who is Ngelozi?"

"Your daughter"

"Ma you can't do that leave the child alone please. Don't you think Ndandatho will prevent this from happening?"

"Shall she interfere one of her children will die if not Zimele. We need a home and Ngelozi has found us that home. I need your permission please"

"I will think about it after all it's not like I know her to that extent to care about her."

"I want to take her to a foreign land so I can give her my evil powers to stand out in that royal place. The Jali grounds will be ours nobody else's but ours through that child and my powers over Ngelozi"

"I see... I can't stand these bushes anymore"

"Thats why you need to go find your daughter"

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Mama Ngelozi

Look what the cat dragged in. The egg Princess has remembered where home is.

"Greetings mama"

"Hi"

"How are you?"

"Where are you coming from Ngelozi?"

"I was at my Aunty Liziwe's home"

"And you didn't see the need to inform us? Do you really think the world revolves around you Ngelozi? Do you know how stressed we were about you while you were galavanting wherever you went?"

"Mama I wasn't galavanting I was at aunt's place"

"Rubbish!! Rubbish Ngelozi those are lies lucid lies!"

"I'm sorry mama"

"You should be. Get lost already"

"Mama are you angry at me?"

I lift my eyes to look at her She doesn't deserve this tantrum I'm throwing.

Ngelози

"Of course I am. You didn't sleep home and your father was pointing fingers at me like i was responsible for that i'll mannered act of yours. Yazini I'm tired of you and your father Ngelози I'm tired of always being on the firing line every time you mess up Ngelози! What's next? I will be blamed shall you fall pregnant or loose your virginity Ngoba Ngelози is too precious and fragile to be lashed at or disciplined or better yet to be reprimanded over her mess. Njalo maFuze this maFuze that when will I rest huh? "

" Mama I'm sorry " I say with a trembling voice.

" Save your sobby apologies Ngelози I'm tired of that chorus. You might as well marry your father Ngelозиcos it's pretty obvious I'm not needed in this home. I'm the child and you are the wife in this yard everything revolves around you like you are the only child born to Makhosonke hhayi suka!! "

" Mama ngiyaxolisa"

"Stop calling me that Ngelozii!! Your sight annoys me"

"Mama" –Now I'm wailing as I call her.

"Don't call me that I'm not deserving of that tittle!!"

"Mama you hurting me"

"Hhayi suka egg Princess!!!"

"Mama!"

My father shows up panting. By the look of things his coming from work.

"Ngelozu what is that noise? What was that bickering all about?"

"Mama is... Mama.." I struggle to talk instead run out of the compound crying.

Nomaswazi

"Noma please say something"

I glare at them with a tear rolling out of my eyelid.

"Noma you haven't ate in days please eat sisi. We do not want your blood on your hands." Madongwe-

"Noma please eat even if it's two spoons I beg of you".

"I want my baby not your food"

"Noma the baby is gone"

"Shut up Phiwe!! Shut up! It's all your fault my child died. You hated my baby you killed her or him!!"

I roar and blurt out a sob.

"Noma...Sorry sisi" Madongwe embraces me.

"I want my child I want my baby!!" I wail in agony.

"Noma please sisi. The baby is gone"

"Mama I wanted that baby I was gonna love my child and be better for him!"

"Shhhh... I'm sorry sisi only the gods know why this happened. We need to trust their judgements they know more than us and they can see what our eyes cannot see. Please try to accept this as hard as it is sisi but there's a valid reason behind it."

"It's your son's fault mama not the gods"

"Noma come on sisi What did Phiwe do? You had so much stress Noma not that Phiwe had a hand in the death of the baby. Deep down you know he did nothing."

"Can I be left alone"

"That's risky Noma"

"I won't kill myself if you think I will"

"Fine Nomaswazi." They both make their way out. I cry myself a river before chewing hard on the poison oak plant. After all my life is meaningless. I'm not a Princess my father is a nobody my mother is a witch that was banned from most Kingdoms. My child is dead Phiwe has a pregnant girlfriend that he stays with the list is endless I could go months going on about it. This is it this is how my character in the book of life will be destroyed and remembered..

Nhlonipho

" Nhlo I'm leaving I need to bath. Are you gonna cope all by yourself? "

I nod.

" You will live brother fear no evil. You are a Jali a son of the undefeated. A black lion a warrior. You hear me? "

"Thank you" I say faintly.

"Maybe you need to see Ngelozi surely you will live"

I look at him.

"Yeah you should see her. Seeing her might remind you of who are you and what you were capable of."

"Does that person know me?" I say glaring on him.

"She's your girlfriend the mother of your unborn child."

"How old am I again?"

"Twenty"

"Am I not young to have a girlfriend and an unborn baby? I mean you just declared me unfit and young. How come I have a girlfriend and a child?" I manage to say as weak as I am.

"Nhlonipho you had a life before this happened to you. You had a girlfriend and you were stressed out about our parents finding out about your little secret of making a girl pregnant out of wedlock."

"What?"

"Nhlonipho try to remember dude you know this person and she's pregnant with your child as we speak. You need to remember her because her world is yet to crumble and you Jali are her last resorts. If you continue not knowing her I'm afraid you might lose her and the baby. Try to remember"

"Zimele stop. Please stop"

I say rubbing my head.

"Nhlo you are a good person try to defeat whatever spell that was casted on you. Ngelozi needs you so does the baby."

"Can you please leave me alone."

"Nhlonipho"

"Zimele please go. I don't want you to cloud my mind any further. Go."

"You need to hear the truth Nhlonipho and this is nothing but the truth."

"Zimele go and stop lying in my name."

"Im not lying Nhlonipho!!"

"You are!! Everyone knows you are the rebellious one not me. You have a child with a commoner not me!"

"Nhlonipho I will punch this memory loss out of your head if you continue denying the truth!! Mom and dad are yet to kill you for impregnating a girl. You have a blood stained sheet that has Ngelozi's blood!!" He shouts at me. I look at him.

"Sorry I screamed at you. I'm just going through the most myself Nhlonipho nawe ngapha you adding with this blacked our brain of yours. But really Nhlonipho you need to remember Ngelozi."

I look at him as he stands to walk out. I rest my head on the

pillow and replay our conversation.

Ndandatho

I walk into Zimele bathing. I salivate on his nakedness I haven't seen him in this suit in a while now. I must admit he is looking ravishing. He looks at me and wipes his face.

"Pardon me for entering without knocking"

He continues bathing ignoring me. That's strange what have I done? But I won't ask about that I need that bath myself. I take all my rags inside his chamber.

"What brings you here?"

"Excuse me?"

"Shouldn't you be home with your mother? She needs you remember?"

"Zimele I'm here not there doesn't that count for something?"

"You came here out of pity. It wasn't from the bottom of your heart I hate pity Liyana"

"Are we really doing this Zimele now?"

"Doing what?"

Calm down daughter of Zikhali and Bonisiwe. Breath in and out. I look at my belongings and start offloading them

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luckily Gatsha is in the main house with his Grandparents. "I asked you a question"

"I don't respond to rubbish and ridiculous questions."

"Excuse me? Do you know who I am?"

"My child dish and selfish husband! A whole warrior who moody and all grumpy over me staying home to ensure my mother was well with my sister missing. That's what I know about you Zimele."

"Ndandatho I dare you to use that tone on me again you will sleep in the kraal with cows you hear me?"

I ditch the cloth I was holding and head for the door I slam it behind me. I walk away with tears clouding my vision. What a warm welcome from my dearest husband. I bump into Ngelozi crying while running.

I guess I'm not the only one doing the crying today..

Zimele

"Ma"

"Yes."

"Did Ndandatho come here?"

"No she didn't why are you asking?"

"Never mind."

"Yini?"

"It's nothing mama"

"How's Nhlo?"

"His struggling to remember much things but he will be fine in time. Excuse me"

"Aren't you gonna greet your son Zimele?" Dad-

Suddenly I remember I didn't greet my son. My little hiccup with Ndandatho got to me. I scoop him up and rest his head over my shoulder I kiss his curly hair.

"Is it a taboo to cut his hair?"

"You should cut it during the day not at sunset" Dad -

"I see."

Gogo appears coughing up badly My mom stands up to meet her halfway. Her condition is getting worse her skin complexion is not a good one. She's turning colour I'm trying not to think of the worst..

"Where is Nhlonipho?"Gogo-

"In his chamber. Mama you to need to rest" Mom-

"I can't rest Nozibele not when water is pouring over my house."
Gogo-

"Mama Nhlonipho will be okay stop stressing about him. He will pull through" Mom-

"Do you know what could go wrong Nozi if that boy never recalls incidents of the past couple of months?"

"Please excuse us." I say carrying my son outside. I walk back to my chamber she's not here again.

"Lets take a walk son."

He smiles. I walk past Hawu's house my eyes focuses on the tree that we sat under on hot days discussing manly stuff and women obviously over a calabash of African beer and roasted meat with powdered peri peri. A slight pinch of pain lurks on my chest as I realised how much I miss him and our friendship the pain only disappears when I recall our last encounter. Finally there is Ndandatho with Ngelozi not far away from Ngelozi's house.

—

Ndandatho

It hurts seeing her in tears. Just like her name She's an angel. I hate seeing her in this state. In her I see myself the only difference is that she was surrounded by love since her childhood. Not in a single day had she ever felt like an intruder or a nobody that doesn't fit in. She has always worn her beautiful smile as her make up She has laughed more than she did with crying. Unlike me. The only time I got to wear my smile boldly was when I was with that selfish dog Zimele. Other than that I wasn't a free and care free child just like Ngelozi was before she fell pregnant obviously.

"It's okay sweetheart. It's all gonna work out"

"She hates me"

"No Ngelo please don't say that please"

"I want to die sisi Ndandatho."

"Thats never happening.. Don't cry sweetheart do it for your baby." I wipe her tears.

"Ngelozii.."

"Yes"

"Your life is in danger"

"Of course it is sisi Ndandatho my father is gonna kill me soon."

When the truth comes out."

"Can I hold your tummy?"

"Why?"

"Just allow me please. I won't hurt you"

" Why though? It's not like this baby will come out now"

"Ngelozzi please"

"Fine"

She rolls her cloth up. I touch the belly.

"Ngelozzi your life is in great danger. The danger I'm talking about is not your father but your..." Damn she doesn't know Thabile is her mother if I say the danger is with her mother she will think that danger is Mafuze.

"Who is the danger sisi Ndandatho? It's the baby right? I knew that this baby was trouble from the very first day it defeated guava water and shitting. Bloody head master."

I glare at her God's of Thuthukani I don't want to crack up not today.

"Please stand up and come with me."

"Where to?"

"Just come Ngelози. If your life is in danger that means mine too is in danger. Let's go"

"Ndandatho can we talk"

"Not now Baba ka Gatsha I'm in the middle of something serious."

"Can't it wait?"

"You can wait but not it"

"Excuse me?"

"Zimele not this again please. We've had way too much already. I will talk to you when I'm done" He looks at me with anger written in his eyes I will deal with him later. Ngelozi looks at us. She better not judge me all couples fight. She's still gonna fight with Nhlonipho who doesn't remember her. But for now I need to protect the baby from the evil that looms around them. Thabile won't stop at nothing I can see.

By the time I'm done with making Ngelozi a safety wristband and waistband. Gatsha is peacefully sleeping besides his father. Yes it's dark outside. I carefully wash my body ensuring I don't make noise. When I'm done I cover up and walk outside to discard my use up water. I lotion and climb the bed. I shift Gatsha to the corner of the bed I move closer to my husband. I press my cold lips against his lips. He turns to face the other side.

"Zimele..."

"I'm trying to sleep Ndandatho"

"I'm sincerely sorry Jali please"

"Sorry for what Liyana?"

"My love can we fight tomorrow morning not now please. I'm tired and drained."

"Ndandatho what's going on with you huh?"

"She needed help"

"So this is how our marriage will be throughout? Putting other people first over me? First it was your mother then Ngelozzi whose next Ndandatho?" He shouts. I keep quiet.

"Ndandatho I'm your husband in case you've forgotten. I also need your attention your time and your presence. I also want to be number one at some time not the last person to mind. Since this gift thing of yours came into our lives our relationship has never been the same. I miss the lady I fell In love with not this stranger who crawls in bed at night "

" Bhengu I'm sorry. I don't hurt you intentionally but Ngcolosi before being your wife I am a daughter to my parents. I am a spiritual gifted being aiding people comes with that gift. Jali I cannot ignore these voices that whispers into my ears. When they tell me to aid someone I need to attend to that immediately not tomorrow or later but immediately Zimele. "

" And I must understand that too? "

" Zimele I love you if you feel like I don't. I still love you my love. Just that now I'm not only yours and Bangizwe 's but rather my guides and the gods. Please respect that and understand it. This is above me. Nobody is better than you or more important than you. You are my soul mate the my knight Jali. I can never see you any lesser because you mean way too many things to me. I love you more than I love my breath. I'm sorry and I miss you "

He keeps quiet. I wrap my hand around his waistline.

" Please look at me? "

He turns over. I reach for his hand and place it on my tummy. He moves his hand on my tummy sending me chills. I know touching his baby calms him.

" I'm sorry my love from here on I will..." He smashes his lips against mine He sucks on my lower lip while I suck on his upper lip. He presses me closer to his body while squeezing my butt cheek. The kiss is filled with tension. My leg is moved to his waisthis erected manhood pokes me...

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Days later....

Gezekile jali

I'm peeking from my window looking at the young girls who are dressed in short beaded skirts and necklaces over their bare breasts. It's that time of the season to celebrate our pure maidens. It's a reed dance day. Their beautiful singing and laughter serves as proof they proud of themselves and their heritage. Ngelozi is amongst these girls my worry goes to her because I'm certain her reed will embarrass her.

My family is all cleaned out and ready for this day. The servants have been up since dawn making preparations for these young girls as such ceremonies are funded and sehranmagzine.com by royalties. Nhlonipho is all cleaned out too it's safe to say his getting better but myself I'm worried about this whole situation it's more embarrassing for the lady who is tainted than it is with the man who tainted her.

Everyone will point fingers at poor Fuze's daughter but not my naughty grandson. Such an unfair world. I cough up and make my way towards the glass of water that's on a table..

Zimele

I glare on Nhlonipho as his standing on the windowsill staring outside the window. Today it's a big day a big day for his little secret with Ngelozi to come out.

"What's the solution Nhlonipho?"

"What solution Zimele?"

"I told you already"

"Mina angazi"

"You can not know anything Nhlonipho not today of all days. You need to think fast You can't embarrass that girl in this manner"

"What am I supposed to do Zimele since you know everything?"

I glare at him..

"Excuse me" I get on my feet and walk outside. I locate my wife from the crowd. She's surrounded by a lot of women She's helping out with the preparations.

"Ladies greetings"

"Greetings our Prince"

"My love can I have a word with you"

"Please give me a minute Jali to wipe my hands"

"I will wait." It's not long before she makes her way towards me.

She's wearing beautiful gold beads dress and a headwrap. She looks so wifey.

"My husband you called for me"

"Honey have you seen MaThwala?"

"Eehm.. I'm not sure I have but I've seen the other women who are always with MaThwala.. Why are you asking my love?"

"Come closer" I say pulling her to whisper into her ears by the time I finish she's jaw dropping.

"Think about it my love"

"Jali that's dangerous and very wrong. Can we just let the truth come out as it is"

"I'm not trying to prevent it from coming it's her integrity I'm protecting Ndanda. She's so fragile she won't take in the sticks and stones thrown at her just like you. Please sweetheart"

"Kodwa Zimele."

"Please my wife. Nhlonipho has a collapsing memory he can't do anything about this. His hands are tied. We have to do something please"

"It's already late as much proceedings have taken place Jali"

"Sweetheart please try I beg of you"

"I'm doing this because I love you"

"Thats my Queen. Come get your orange juice water." She smiles showing off her teeth. I press my lips on hers.

"I love you"

"More than rain drops." She says fixing my beads.

Ngelози

Everything that happens in the dark has its way of coming out of the closet. Today my little lie will be exposed and lay out for everyone to see. Everyone will know Ngelozi failed to tame her horses down when a naked man crippled through her skirt. The borehole that mama Thwala will find today will turn me into a laughing stock. After all the people in this village has this painted picture of Ngelozi that is perfect and all sparkles they don't see me in that ray or being naughty and ill mannered its a pity. My sin will be scribbled on my forehead for everyone to see.

"Such a beautiful day it is I've been waiting for this day to come. So i can flaunt my pointy breasts and curves. Not forgetting my purity."

Lungelo Maseko says to one of her friends as they walking in front of me.

"I'm gonna save myself till marriage Lungi. Only then I flaunt my assets to my suitable suitors." They laugh.

"I pity the tainted ones. Remember what happened to that Ntombi two years back? I don't wish that anyone. The poor girl was so embarrassed. Nobody pictured Ntombi doing adult things She was so innocent I tell you" Lungelo-

"I missed that one remember had a swollen leg. What happened Lungi?"

"Ntombi was tainted my friend. Her Reed broke and guess what the warriors did to her" Lungi-

"What did they do Lungi? Because I once heard if a woman who is not a virgin takes part in the ceremony her reed will break and her punishment is a whopping."

I swallow hard by hearing that. My heart starts beating fast.

"Yes they gave her a whopping and her family was charged with a cow to cleanse the Kings grounds. She was so embarrassed."
Lungi-

This can't happen to me. My father doesn't have cows his just a farmer for God's sake. We don't have livestock but rather chickens and ducks and one pregnant pig. This is bad. I squirm in fear a tear threatens to come out but I push it back. I glare on the warrior escorts adorned with cow tails and clutching knob-stick and shields as they are sternly intent on their duties and seem

contemptuous at doing it. I can't help but to see them whipping me poor Jali child. I place my hand on my bump. A lady looks at me I quickly shift my hand these girls are snitches.

I continue walking with my anklet rattling and my dazzling costume blurring into a living chanting kaleidoscope. We heading to the testing huts.

Makhehla

I've ran out of water chanting kaleidoscope. We heading to the testing huts.

Makhehla

I've ran out of water I need to collect some. I throw a banana at my sacrifice.

"Don't move!"

"I'm chained in case you haven't noticed"

The little girl yells. I mockingly mimic her "Nyway chained Nyway Nyway you noticed" I shake my head at it because I'm enjoying her little company.

"I'm off to collect water be a good child or I will pull out your left

eye and eat it uncooked"

"That eye of mine will block your oesophogus see if you will manage to breath witch!!"

"Blah blah blah!!" I walk out with my bucket. I whistle as I walk I hear strange sounds in the bushes. Like someone is following me. I ignore that and keep walking. I reach the river bank. I spot a beautiful lady collecting water. She has beautiful curves and beautiful eyes. I immediately run out of saliva by staring on her beguiling face. My gods know I've never seen a beautiful woman like she is let alone I've never had a girlfriend in my whole existing life. This one is melting my heart..

"Staring is rude"

She says filling her bucket.

"My apologies. Wow! You beautiful"

"I know."

She blinks endlessly.

"What is your name? Are you from around here?"

"I can only tell you my name if you remove those red and whatnots black ropes that you wearing. They look dangerous and scary. If I didn't know better I would think you are a witch."

I scratch my head that has long messy hair that hasn't been touched by a comb since I was teenager. This lady is so beguiling not to pay attention too I wouldn't mind being Samson right now. This Delilah is enchanting and warming up my heart.

" If I remove these things you gonna kiss me?"

She giggles in a strange way.

"I'm sorry I meant you gonna tell me your name?"

"Of course I'm gonna tell you my name" She says standing up making her way to my direction.

"Remove them and place them over there such ropes pollutes our mouths. The fishes die too."

I glare on her how does she know about my ropes? They are hidden from physical eye reach.

"How do you know I have these ropes?"

"Your eyes did. You handsome I love your hair and eyes"

Now that warms my heart I'm smitten.

"Nobody has ever told me I was handsome not even my own mother this is all new to me."

"Just say thank you"

I remove my ropes.

Hawulesizwe

What is that witch doing? Why is he undressing? I think I'm gonna enjoy watching this. His laughing. As I'm minding the witch I feel something an strange force behind me. I feel like someone is watching me or following. But each time I look back I see nothing. This has been going on for a couple of days now.

I look behind me. I see nothing in a split second i accidentally hit against a tree a portion of my hair is removed and stuck on the tree branch. If I was a girl I was gonna cry but not today. I leave my hair and walk away heading to the witches house.

"Hello.. Young lady are you in there?"

"No I'm not"

I giggle.

"I see.. Then whose talking?"

"Are you a brother to the witch?"

"No I'm here to help you"

"The witch is gonna kill us"

"Not at all. Are you unharmed?"

"I'm chained."

"I'm here guarding you don't fear anything. He won't do any harm to you not on my watch. I'm always by your side you hear me?"

"Why has your voice changed?"

"It hasn't changed silly"

"First you had a manly voice secondly you sounded like a woman."

I giggle.

"Not a chance. My name is Hawu and what is your name?"

"Hawu as in a shield?"

"Yes and I am warrior."

"I'm also a female warrior my name is Gabisile Buthelezi."

"Buthelezi as in the daughter of King Zikhali and Queen Sbonisiwe?"

"Yes.. My brother is Busani and my sister is.." I cut her short.

"Ndandatho Zimele's wife."

"Yes.."

"No problem Gabisile I will help you leave this place okay? Just don't eat anything the witch gives you. How far are you tied from the door?"

"I'm actually behind the door."

"I'm gonna sneak in my lucky wristband. I want you to have it you will be safe from danger okay?"

"Okay..." I take it off and glare on it for a little while before I shove it under the door.

"Do you see it?"

"Yes"

"Wear it then"

"Fine..."

"The witch is coming back. I'm outside you hear me?"

"Yes"

"I'm not going anywhere."

"Thank you warrior Hawu"

"Pleasure"

I disappear and go to the my tree spot. The witch is running naked I can't help it but to laugh. His no longer carrying a bucket with him..

Mathwala

I can't believe what Queen Nozibele asked of me. What shocks me the most is that Ndandatho and Zimele came asking for the same thing. Why me of all people? This is gonna back fire I don't want the wrath of the gods to be on me. When the truth comes out I want nothing to link me on this. I heave a sigh. I look at the naked dazzling young maidens. There's no trace of Mafuze. I heave a sigh and walk to my sisters in testing.

"Sisters greetings"

"Greetings MaThwala"

"Listen I have a request please"

"What request?"

"You all know maMagcobo 's daughter isn't it?"

"That talkative girl Ngelozi?"

"Yes..."

"What about her Mathwala?"

"I will be the one testing her"

"Why the speciality MaThwala? Why specifically her?"

Bubuza' s mother inquires.

"Her mother asked me to test her She's on her menstruation"

"Sies!!! So you gonna touch her blood? Hhayi if so she's all yours sisi"

What am I doing?

"Imagine touching someone's dirty blood" They condensate. I walk outside. I spot Ngelozi and lead her to my testing hut. She

looks at me with fear.

"Lay on the grass mat Ngelozzi"

"Mama can I tell you something."

"Keep quiet and lay on the grass mat the walls have ears and eyes. Whatever you want to say you gonna share it with your parents. Lay there Ngelozi"

I scold out of fear and wonder. Something is beating around water Queen Nozibele is never this invested in Reed dances she even paid me money to test Ngelozi and declare her pure. I think they know something regarding her.... Wait...

"Why are your boobs swollen and black on that nipple area? "

She blinks endlessly and opens her legs I slide my finger in there. I glare on her and check what I know isn't there. I shake my head in disbelief and clap my hands three times.

"Go join the pure ladies so you can go down the river to bathe with the other girls then cut the reed stick. But let me warn you Ngelozi that tummy will show soon. Sadly I won't be able to hide that ke sisi. " I say standing up leaving her startled..

Nhlonipho

I'm still trying to accept everything that Zimele told me about my life sadly it's hard to remember. It was more hard when my supposedly girlfriend came here in the wee hours crying saying her parents are forcing her to go to the Reed dance. I couldn't remember her but I could sympathize with her after all Zimele briefed me a little about her but her being my girlfriend and the mother of my unborn child freaks

the hell out of me. My mother walks in and glares at me. She heaves a sigh and goes to sit on my bed. She says nothing but rather cries by looking at me.

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Nozibele

Being a mother is hard.

Sometimes you tend to make decisions that might come back to bite you in the future. I had to put my marriage at jeopardy just to save Nhlonipho and Ngelozi from embarrassment. I know these kids were sleeping with each other behind our backs. It's best their little shenanigans bites us unlike doing so in public. Ngcolosi is gonna kill me for this one but I'm prepared for anything that's coming. I just pray Ngelozi is not pregnant because I won't be able to hide that. I glare at Nhlonipho with tears rolling out of my eyes I wanted to yell at him for putting me in this state. But here I am tongue tied..

"Mama"

"Nhlonipho please.." I say using my hand to shut him. I stand up and walk away. I find Ngcolosi drinking whiskey I reach for glass too and pour myself some.

"And now? What's troubling you?"

"Nothing" I gulp the glass and put it on the table.

He glares on me.

"My love what's going on?"

"Let's go the maidens are making their way this side"

"Nozi talk to me whats going on?"

"See you outside." I say walking away. Leaving him pouring another glass of whiskey. I find Zimele and his family seated on the chairs. Mama is not here let me fetch her..

Ndandatho

I think I recall that scar. If not mistaken Hawulesizwe Maseko has that scar I remember it from the riverbank. I remember it vividly so. But why would Hawu need clarity on his identity? His a Maseko and his mother was married to Maseko. This doesn't make sense. I look at my husband as playing with Gatsha while seated on his chair.

"Sweetheart.."

"Yes"

"I will be right back I need a minute to my self"

"Is it related to your gift?"

"Yes Bhengu"

"It's okay my love I will come check up on you."

"Thank you Jali."

I'm glad Zimele and myself mended things. I explained myself and my gift to him. Now there's harmony and tranquility at our home. I walk to my private chamber. I sit on the bed and crack my skull open. I start pacing around as thoughts fill my mind. I leave the house when I'm calmer I walk past the King and mama Maseko talking. I don't pay much attention to them but rather where I'm going. I reach Hawulesizwe's compound. There's a stuffy smell in here on the floor there's blood that has turned color. I open the windows and start cleaning after this mess. When I'm done I make the bed and sit on top of it. In a split second I'm taken back to the Maseko grounds. A young woman whom I believe is Mama Maseko has given birth to a baby. The husband is glaring at her with repulse on his face. It looks like they fighting or arguing over something but I can't grasp what it is. All I hear is Hawulesizwe crying loud on his mother's hands. Mama Maseko cries..

"Whose child is this?"

"It's yours Khuboni"

"Don't lie to me!!" The husband slaps Mam Maseko across the face.

"I said whose child is this?"

"It's your child Khuboni!"

"This is not my child his not a Ngcamane."

"I'm telling the truth the child is yours!!" Mam Maseko cries. Years later I see Hawu a big boy now probably ten years old. He is playing with Zimele because that face is actually like his they playing with wire cars they look happy. Mama Maseko resurfaces she roughly pushes Zimele away from Hawu. He pinch Hawu's ears and screams.

"I told you to stay away Hawulesizwe!!! We leaving this place now!!" She packs up and goes back to the Maseko grounds. Only to find her husband brushing another woman's thighs by the look of things this woman is expecting a child. My eyes open. I stand up and walk outside. This is the same compound Hawulesizwe was playing with Zimele on. I guess mama Maseko used to stay here. But why did she roughly push Zimele like that? Maybe they were naughty kids.. I snap out of it and go back to the ceremony.

Fuze

I'm from the farm heading home when I feel eyes piercing on my back. I tilt my head only to find my ex girlfriend staring at me. Wasn't she banned from these grounds what brings her here? I roughly drag her to the nearest bush.

"Makhosonke you hurting me! Let go of my hand!!"

"What brings you here Thabile? What do you want on these grounds? You were banned"

I say livid.

"But I wasn't banned from my daughter Makhosonke. I want my daughter"

"What daughter? Do you have that?"

"Makhosonke don't act stupid give me my daughter"

"Over my dead body. She's better off without you"

"Did she tell you that?"

"Thabile I won't allow you to use my daughter for your personal vendettas. Stay away from her!!"

" I can't stay away from her. She needs me Makhosonke"

"I said stay away woman!!"

"She's mine"

"You abandoned her at birth"

"It was for a good cause now I'm back I want my daughter. After all she's gonna need my full attention soon she will be showing and struggling to touch her toes. And I her mother I will have to guide her and aid her throughout the process."

I look at her with confusion.

" Showing what? Why would she struggle to touch her toes? You think my daughter has a disability? Get lost Thabile nobody needs you you are good as dead!"

"Mmmmm... You don't know? I see. Let me tell you something Makhosonke free of charge. She's gonna need me wether you like it or not. She will bring herself to me she will smell my blood from a far distance because my blood runs in her veins!. "

With that said she walks away

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I follow her pulling her hand. I pin her against the tree and put my hands around her neck.

"Stay the hell away from my daughter Thabile I'm warning you. The next time around I won't be this lenient with you. Get lost!!!"

"If I don't? What then Makhosonke?"

"I'm gonna kill you and snitch to the King telling him you loomed around the bushes we both know what's gonna happen to you shall all these bushes be burnt down your evil ugly face will be left exposed.. Stones will be casted on you. You know what's gonna happen next? We will stone you to death and you gonna die like a witch that you are. " She blinks endlessly pushing back tears.

"You think that will stop me from seeing my daughter? That won't happen Fuze. I won't stay away from her!!"

"Are you sure about that?"

"i am sure.."

"Fine.. We shall see about it Thabile. There's only one ruler of the

jungle not two. Play your cards safe. " I let her loose and walk away.

"You are cruel Makhosonke! What kind of a father are you that's keeping a child away from its mother? Unonya!!!"

"Fuck off harlots!"

"Showing and struggling to touch her toes" My foot. She thinks my daughter is disabled not to reach her toes. Stupid woman. I rush home to change so I can go to the ceremony as it is taking place in this very compound that I happen to reside in. Had it been it was taking place elsewhere I wasn't gonna go there.

I just wanna get out my wife's sight it's been days now of her being grumpy. We fought about her scolding at my daughter I know Ngelo was at fault but she no right to use that tone with her. This fight was between me and her not her and Ngelozi. She had to yell at me not my daughter hence I'm leaving the house to go to the ceremony. Surely by now the maidens are making their way to the King's castle. I want to see my daughter and show her support. After all I want to make sure Thabile doesn't abduct her just like they did with the Princess Gabisible. Thabile can be ruthless at times and one thing I've learned about her throughout our dating years when she says she's gonna do something never take that lightly she definitely will do it. I can't gamble with my smile not when her mother is looming around bushes like death lurking in without a warning..

"Where are you going Fuze?"

"To support my daughter"

"What about the tree I begged you to cut down? Not forgetting the grass that's slowly growing inside our compound? Are you gonna remove those when a big snake bites the kids huh Fuze?"

"Tomorrow is still another day mangcobo"

"Tomorrow is very far Fuze stop procrastinating Fuze. Do it today."

"I said I will do it tomorrow my daughter needs support"

"And I don't need your help huh Makhosonke? Have you forgotten you stay with four other individuals in this compound not one! "

I huff and glare on her.

"Mangcobo can you stop adding more pile of anxiety on my shoulders. I said I will do it tomorrow but if that's a problem with you then do it yourself."

"Why don't you move in her chamber Fuze? Why don't you marry her and make her your wife huh?"

"Pardon?"

"Exactly!!"

"You crazy Mangcobo I don't know what you smoking these days but whatever it is it's driving you crazy. I won't listen to this rubbish"

I turn my to walk away.

" Your dearest daughter has been sleeping during the day."

"So what? Don't you have potatoes to dig out from the garden or chickens to throw grains? Leave Ngelozi alone and direct your nonsense to me it's me you want a fight with isn't it? Keep my daughter out of your mouth. Another Ngelozi this will lead to a fist scattering your teeth all over this compound. Damn woman!!

" I storm out of the compound leaving her with folded hands..."

Nozibele

My fingers are crossed for everything to go well. The maidens are now making their way here they all holding their reeds. My eyes are only focused on Ngelozu. Ngcolosi is looking at me surely he sees the distress I'm in. After all nobody knows me like he does..

Nhlonipho

I'm seated here looking at the ladies. The girl whose my girlfriend appears holding a reed a strange soothing and calming feeling lands on my chest. I feel giddy movements in my body as our eyes meet. She has beautiful pointy breasts even though hers are a bit dark than those of many girls. I move my eyes to her tummy. It's not big I thought Zimele said she was pregnant. I swallow hard as my eyes meet with those of hers i look aside only to be met by mothers eyes and my grandmother's. I ignore them and still yet another glare at the girl. The Princesses of the other Kingdoms present their reeds and shift aside and start stamping their feet on the ground as a symbol of celebration that the ceremony went as planned. Now it's my supposedly pregnant girlfriend who is yet to present her reed.

"I Ngelozu yethu enhle!!!" One woman yelps from the crowd the others join to cheer on her. She glares at me and then her reed that suddenly breaks making people to clap their hands and cover their mouths. Her hands immediately trembles so are her lips. She looks at me with eyes glimmering with tears. The elders shouts abomination and start hovering around her. By the look of things she is guilty of something the insults says it.

"I'm sorry.." The words manage to escape her lips before she cries loudly. The feeling I was feeling seconds ago is replaced by another. My mother stands up together with Ndandatho. I myself I stand up too.

"Abomination!!! Why did she come to this ceremony knowing she is not pure!!! What a disgrace phew!!!" A woman says-

"She has just insulted and mocked our King! She must be punished!!!" One of the elders adds.

"Who are her parents? They should cleanse the King! Shameless little girl! She's dirty and ugly!!"

An elder says.

"Shes not ugly!" I manage to say father glares at me.

"Excuse me?" Elder-

"I said she's not ugly you are!! " I roar.

"Nhlonipho!!" Dad says reprimanding me. A man who looks like this Ngelozi glares at my supposedly girlfriend with pain in his eyes.

"I'm so.. so.. " She tries to say before collapsing on my brother's wife's hands. People make more and more noise.

Fuze

I don't know what to say.

I don't know what to do. Do I shout roar or stomp on her body beat her till she confesses? Do i put a rope around her neck and hang her on a tree branch? Do I let her be or do I just surrender this one? I've never been this tattered in my whole existence. Ngelozi? My Angel? Not intact? No something went wrong someone sabotaged my daughter. Ngelozi would never allow a single man to play in my kraal She would never.

"Baba.."

She blurts out with tears rolling down her eyes while fiddling with her hands. Now that we home and she gained conscious.

"Baba Ngiyaxolisa"

I'm flabbergasted battered demented and hallowed. I can't explain how I am really I'm speechless and powerless. All I manage to do is to glare at her and shake my head in disbelief.

"Baba Ngiyaxolisa Ngiyaxolisa bekuyiphutha!"

(Father I'm sorry I'm sincerely sorry. It was a mistake)

"What mistake? What mistake Ngelozi?"

My wife screams.

"Mama I didn't mean to let a man in father's kraal"

"But you did! You did Ngelozi and you decided on embarrassing us in public! Now the whole of Thuthukani knows about you spreading your legs wide open for a man! I knew it I knew it that

you were up to no good!"

I glare at Ngelo with miff I leave their presence as I feel my tear threaten to roll out..

Nozibele

" What was that? What the hell happened out there women? "

My husband curses the women who are lined on the grass mat with their legs stretched out and their faces facing the ground.

"What was that madness? How did that happen? Why was Fuze's daughter not tested?"

"My King she was tested."

"If she was indeed tested none of that would've happened!! Do you know what you've done? You've just insulted me!"

" Ngcolosi calm down please "

" I should calm down? I should calm down Nozibele? Don't tell me to calm down!"

He roars on my face to my frighten. I've never seen Ngcolosi this infuriated if I didn't know better I would think his taking out his frustrations on these women. Surely something somewhere is troubling him.

" Who was conducting a testing procedure for Fuze's daughter?"

The ladies mumble poor MaThwala is sweating I myself I'm sweating. If you were to lift up the dress I'm wearing you would see how frightened and soaky I am.

"I said who was responsible for the test that was conducted on Ngelozii!?"

"Ngcolosi can you stop already. This is uncalled for. These women are old enough to be your mother you cannot address them like that."

"When did you get a pair of testicles Nozibele? Are you a King now?" I glare at my husband demented.

"My King I can explain" Mathwala-

" Explain what MaThwala? There's nothing to be explained.
Please leave elders "

I say trying to stop her from spilling the truth.

"Nobody goes till I find the person whose responsible for this embarrassment if none of you talks I'm gonna punish all of you by giving me one cow each"

"My King please!! You can't punish us We know nothing about this nor do we have cows. Please be lenient on us" Mama bubu says. That one is blubber I'm certain she's gonna sell MaThwala out.

"My King I can't be punished for something I didn't do. MaThwala was responsible for Ngelozu."

What did I just say about mama Bubu? Bloody elephant.

"My King I can explain what happened"

"There's nothing to explain MaThwala such mistakes happen."

"Nozibele can you shut up and let me fix this"

"I don't like this tone Ngcolosi I don't find it attractive at all!"

"My King she said Ngelosi was on her menstrual days saying she will conduct the test herself us we know nothing about this. "

"Can you shut up Maka Bubu!! Don't you make mistakes? Didn't your daughter conceive out of wedlock and didn't your husband leave you for another wife? Just shut up already or I will shut you up myself"

Ngcolosi pulls my hand leading me outside.

"You hurting me Jali"

"What is wrong with you Nozibele?"

"And what is wrong with you Ngcolosi? Why are you lashing out on those old women?"

"I'm doing my job and I would appreciate it if you stepped aside and let me do it the way I see it fit."

"You mean taking out your frustrations on these poor women is your job?"

"I'm not taking out any frustration I'm just doing my job.. The only person who has a problem here it's you Nozibele I saw you drinking whiskey and you never do that!!"

"Me? A problem? All in your head!"

Zimele

"Me? A problem? All in your head"

I hear my mother shout as I'm making my way towards them.

"Baba can you let this slide already"

"Not a chance. If I let this slide I will be setting a bad example for the other maidens. Ngelozu will be punished I want two cows!!"

"Rubbish!! Thats rubbish and how many cows are you gonna give her father huh Ngcolosi?"

My mother blurts forcing my father to glare on her.

"What did you just say?"

"Nothing"

Mom says walking away.

"What was that? What did she mean Zimele?"

"I don't know"

"Zimele Jali what did your mother imply by her statement"

"Let's go have whiskey We will deal with this tomorrow. We've had way too much drama for a day."

Mama Ngelosi

To say I'm excited is an understatement We will deal with this tomorrow. We've had way too much drama for a day."

Mama Ngelosi

To say I'm excited is an understatement I'm ecstatic about this. I'm swinging on tree branches with these findings. Seeing my husband this shattered brings me joy because Princess egg will

be beaten to mixed on a flour. There's no longer gonna be special treatment for her.

"Who deflowered you?"

She cries.

"Shedding salty water will not save you Ngelozi not on this one. Try again sisi! Speak up just like you opened your legs Ngelozi"

"Mama I'm sorry"

"Sorry? You sorry? This is not the time to be feeling sorry Ngelozi. This is the time to be soughting for a higher tree branch to tie a rope to wrap around your neck because sisi my husband is gonna kill you and the special treatments is gonna go to your siblings but not you"

"Mama I'm sorry! It was a mistake I'm sorry!!" She cries as she's kneeling in front of me apologising.

My eyes locates her breasts. The area around her nipples is black wait her boobs have gained some tenderness. Wait is the egg Princess pregnant too? I clap my hands.

" You pregnant Ngelozzi? Not only are you tainted but you pregnant too?"

I say out loud making sure my husband hears.

"Ngelozii!! You pregnant? Abomination!! This is an abomination
Fuze come hear this! This girl has made us grandparents.
Wonders never cease to end. Makhosonke come hear this"

My husband walks towards her I'm so enjoying this. Fuze is very hurt and angry. I just wish he sent her packing. It's high time her mother played her part too. I just want to enjoy my husband without any difficulties is that too much to ask? Definitely not I also want to be a baby to my husband just like other women say their husbands baby them. I want that for myself and Ngelozii being out sight will earn me that. Fuze will be mine and mine alone. Preggy will be out in the wilderness preying on grasshoppers to feed her little cult. I tighten my face as Fuze steps closer. I don't want to show that I'm enjoying this. Tonight I'm so gonna comfort Fuze I know he won't push me away but closer. He loves it the most when his stressed out. All thanks to Ngelozii I will have my husband back.

Ngelozii

My father stands in front of me.

"What did you say Mama Ngelozi?"

"She's pregnant Fuze. Ngelozi us pregnant."

"What? Is this the truth Ngelozi?"

"Baba I'm sorry" I say with a trembling voice the gods are witnesses of how sorry I am.

"Who did this to you? Whose responsible Ngelozi?"

"I don't know"

"Pardon?"

"I don't know baba"

"She's the new virgin marry baba. Ngelozi is insulting our intelligence. A whip will remind her of the man she let inside in her kraal"

"Ngelozi I'm gonna ask you once again. Who is the thief who stole my eggs? Who invaded my kraal?"

"Baba I'm sorry"

"You haven't answered my question whose responsible"

A numbing sensation lands on my cheek.

"Mshaye Fuze!! Nalu uswazi"

(Beat her up Fuze here is whip)

I swallow hard and slowly get on my feet. My father used to beat the nonsense out of me and once he starts whipping you he doesn't stop. If I want to live I need to stand up now.

"Ngelozzi whose the father of your child?"

"Baba I'm sorry.. I can't tell you"

"You can't tell him? Listen to Ngelozzi" Mom says glaring at me with hate.

"Do you know the mess you've done Ngelozzi? How are we going to clear our name out to King Ngcolosi? Where are we gonna get cows to fix this madness? Then you say you can't tell us?" Mom-

"Can you stop shouting Mangcobo"

"Baba deal with her or I will. It's our name she's dragged on mud. Here is a whip make use of it or I will do"

"Will that bring back her virginity?"

"Oh!! Here we go again taking her side yet again after she's

disgraced us in public? Fuze have you forgotten you don't have cows? You are a poverty stricken man without nothing but a blue rolls to workin the farm!!"

"Ngelozzi we gonna talk about this tomorrow and I want all details. I want the name and surname if this shameless boy who did this to you. Come sunset I want his head on my platter. Failure to do so this home will no longer be your home. I'm gonna send you packing Ngelozzi. You will leave these grounds to go marry yourself just like you have already done. If this boy won't marry you and this child you carrying then I will also not harbor you on these grounds. Not without a dowry being paid for this nonsense.

Having people mock me and laughing behind my back is enough you giving birth here will not be acceptable. Go to bed but tomorrow morning you and I visiting the boy's family. "

My heart beats on my sleeve.

Ndandatho

My mood has been tampered with since the whole Ngelozi saga. I wasn't happy with the way labeled her and mocked her. Seeing grown arse women with grey pubic hair chirping over a child's distress brought me more pain and disappointment. Mother's are pillars they are preventers of such vile talks and outcasts but seeing them participate in bringing Ngelozi tears really broke my heart. Yes I wanted her secret to be out but this route of coming out ruined things even more. Bloody reed shouldn't have broke gods of Thuthukani why didn't you avoid this? She's nurturing your offspring. But I get it it's her fate and sadly she can't shift it or go around it instead she has to go through it and get her first lesson I guess. Zimele walks in drunk he glares at me and smiles.

"Princess Liyana my beautiful wife and mother of my children
how are you?"

"I'm fine" I say massaging my shoulders.

"Did I tell you beautiful MaJali?"

"A countless of times"

"I'm still gonna say it you are the most precious and enchanting
Lilly across the valley"

I glare at him as I'm seated on the bed. He makes his way towards me. He smells of yeast.

"Where is my son?"

"With mom"

"I will go fetch him"

"No..."

"What do you mean by no Zimele?"

"No to fetching Gatsha from my parents and yes to us enjoying the time to ourselves without any distraction."

He leaves a sloppily kiss on my collar bone.

"Zimele not today"

"I can't hear you"

He says removing the towel that's covering my body.

He plants kisses around my neck.

"Zimele.."

"Liyana we haven't had such privacy in a while can we please make the most out of it."

"I'm worried about Ngelozi"

"She will live honey don't sweat"

"What if her father is beating her up as we speak? I need to help her Zimele"

He brushes my thighs and gently scoops me up.

"Zimele put me down you drunk"

"I won't drop you"

With that said my legs are parted he hurries his head between my thighs. In a split second I feel the friction of his tongue on my most sensitive skin. He pulls my labia flower with his lips while his finger is

rubbing my nana. I find myself arching my body and opening my legs much wider. He goes back to sucking me and seductively grazing my sensitive skin. I hold on tight on his head while he holds on tight on my thighs. The warmth of his tongue snaps me out of the worry I had a couple of hours ago...

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Mama Ngelozu

My husband has been staring into blank space for a while now. Maybe I need to take him out of his misery with my body of course and maybe a body massage.

I climb on top of him with hopes of kissing him sadly he brushes me off saying his not in the mood. I try negotiating but Fuze doesn't burge instead he turns his back on me.

"Makhosonke"

"Mangcobo"

"Do you still love me or did you ever love me?"

"I have so much in my head Mangcobo can you stop it with your hilarious questions."

"Fuze it's not hilarious to me it is important. I want to know where I stand"

"Aren't you worried or troubled by your daughters predicament?"

"Fuze for once can we discuss our marriage and our home. Not everything revolves around Ngelozi"

"I know where we heading right now Good night maFuze"

"So I won't get what I married for all because the egg of the family decided on losing her virginity and mating for conceiving Huh Makhosonke?"

"Mangcobo sleep."

"No I'm not sleeping. Fuze I need answers. "

"Then I will sleep on your behalf"

"Who is Ngelozi's mother? At least respond to that"

"You are her mother"

"You know what I meant"

"Thats not important"

With that said he blows the candle off. I lay in bed lost in my thoughts. I need to see MaThwala tomorrow.

Ngcolosi

"What did you mean by what you said Nozibele?"

"I said a whole lot of things Ngcolosi"

"Nozibele what's going on? What are you hiding from me?"

"What are you hiding from me Ngcolosi?"

"I'm hiding nothing Nozibele. "

"And you think I buy that two cent bull?"

"You getting out of line Nozibele. This sudden attitude of yours will bring us trouble."

"I see.." She says removing the clothes that are on top of our bed.

"Nozibele did you have a hand on what happened earlier on the day?"

"Why would I do that? What's so precious about Ngelozi for me to do that for her?"

I glare on her.

"She's the daughter you never had. You love her that I know"

"I guess that's my biggest sin judging it been used to accuse me of things I do not know"

"Wether you did it or not Fuze has to pay two cows."

"Be prepared to take them back after collecting them."

"Excuse me?"

"You heard me Ngcolosi"

"Why are you talking in riddles? Actually why are you acting up Nozibele? You rude lately"

"I think you were right about me being pregnant again."

She glares at me I can't read her face but I know her when she's being sarcastic and right now she is.

"Pregnant?"

"Good night Jali"

"We drifting and I hate it Nozibele"

"The lies are to be blamed"

I glare at her with worry.

"What lies?"

"You lying to me about what's troubling to you the same way as I'm doing with the Reed dance thing. I can't dish out my own lie while you also keeping yours in captive. I will tell the truth when you also decide on telling the truth Ngcolosi"

I swallow hard.

"So you are involved Nozibele?"

"Your guess not mine."

I glare on her and fiddle with my hands.

"Are you gonna sleep there?"

"I'm coming"

I heave a sigh and jump inside the blankets.

Ngelози

Sleep is playing far away from me. I'm tossing and turning endlessly and munching on my nails. As father's words vividly rings inside my eardrums. I know he meant every word he said his definitely gonna send me to the unknown. Honestly I embarrassed my parents mostly my father. I lost my virginity and conceived right under his nose in his very own compound and bed. It's funny how everything that doesn't sound so right when you're sober minded feels so right when you are in loved. Deep down I knew it was wrong of me to allow Nhlonipho to invade my father's kraal. I knew it was wrong of me to let a man touch me in sacred places my father had warned me against playing with. I knew everything that I was doing with Nhlonipho was wrong and unholy I let my feelings to control me. That was stupid of me I shouldn't have allowed our conversation to get this far. I messed up big time. What hurts the most is my mother not being on my side but rather perplexed to an extent of luring father to beating me and sending me out of home. It hurts having your mother against you. My world is upside down

I shouldn't have allowed our conversation to get this far. I messed up big time. What hurts the most is my mother not being on my side but rather perplexed to an extent of luring father to beating me and sending me out of home. It hurts having your mother against you. My world is upside down sadly I can't bring it back to its natural state. Maybe I need to force myself to his house. I want to talk to him and update him on how things are this side. I'm willing to take this one last risk of going to his house tonight even if it might lead me to being slayed or casted with stones. So be it maybe it will be the last time he sees me and the baby because I'm certain this story will end with one of us dying and the other moving on. Ours won't end like that of Romeo and Juliette. It's either Romeo will live with a mark of losing Juliet

or vice versa. There's no future for Nhlonipho and myself. At least let me go visit him so we can discuss the latest or maybe kiss one last time.

My little walk to his house is accompanied by anguish and tears. I feel so detached from my being I feel so empty. Maybe burying my face in his embrace will bring me comfort. The door opens after a few knocks. I don't hesitate I throw myself in his arms and cry myself a river.

Nhlonipho

How does one comfort a crying woman? Do I hold her or let her hold me instead? She's in pain and I can't help it but to feel it too. It's like we are one her pain is painting me too. I don't know how to say this.

"Please hold me Nhlo" that comes as a whisper. I let her loose to go lock the door. I do as she begs with me.

"How am I supposed to hold you?"

"Tight please"

"I'm sorry. Where does it hurts?" I don't know what I'm saying but it would be better knowing I'm not hurting her by tightly holding her.

"In my heart Nhlonipho. My heart aches I feel empty" She burst in tears so much she makes those hiccups sobs.

"How can I numb the pain?"

"I don't know Nhlonipho. But my father knows and his gonna kick me out of home. "

"I'm sorry Ngelozi I really am sorry. "

"Nhlonipho I love you but I'm gonna die soon. I can feel it Nhlonipho."

Something about these words cut me so deep.

"You can't die Ngelozi what about your baby?"

They said she's pregnant isn't it?

"My baby and I will both die your family will make sure of that my father included."

There's silence for a little while. She unhook herself from my embrace. She glares at me.

"Make love to me one last time Nhlonipho please"

"I can't"

"Nhlonipho we are already busted tomorrow morning our little secret will be out. We have nothing to loose. Today might be the last time you see me please make love to me just like you did when you gave me this baby please"

I glare at her.

"I want you to remember me this way please grant me my wish"

"Ngelozzi I don't remember most things that we used to share or do together. I don't even remember how I made this baby that you carrying I don't even remember most events of my life"

She ignores me and presses her lips against mine. As she makes her lips to dance with mine for a moment I remember her and what we once was.

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Ngeloz

It's been ages without sharing my body and soul with Nhlonipho. Today I'm putting all my guard down I'm giving myself all the time in the world to open all openable parts of my body for him. I mean it could be our last night as a couple. After his father and my father finds out we both dead. I'll rather be killed for a valid reason tomorrow which is "Sleeping out" after the mess I've made.. ***

I continue sucking gently on his soft lower lip careful not to rush the moment. I want the taste of his lips to stay longer on my lips. He is sucking on my upper lip as well the kiss is filled with joy harmony. Its sweeter than berries or maybe it's because I love this Prince with everything in me so much that I describe his kiss as devine as berries? Anyway never mind the kiss but the moment we sharing.

"Ngelози.."

"Mmmm..."

"Please don't stop kissing me"

"I won't stop I need it more than you do"

"It tastes sweets and..." I smash my lips against his this time around his manhood has expanded. I undress and climb the bed with my legs wide open.

"Please lick it"

"Fine" with that said he does his magic like the old times I find myself calling his name louder than I do when i reprimand my bug eyed siblings with stones hair. Their hair breaks combs that's how hard they are. I pull his head much closer. For a moment I wrap my legs around his neck. When I feel my sensitive organ throbbing I know any minute from now I will reach a planet that only Nhlonipho can drive me to.

He stops doing that and lays on top of me. He runs his manhood on my privates with his eyes glued to mine.

"I missed you" He says.

"I missed you so much."

"I love you Ngelozi and I will always do"

I glare on him recalling he stood by me when I was insulted and mocked the time my reed broke.

"That kiss reminded me of you so are your tears. I had forgotten you but today I was revived and brought back to life all thanks to you my flower."

"Forgotten? How?"

"The day you ran away from Ndandatho's home I was slapped by a strange creature it wiped my memory away and it made me forget you and my life."

"I love you Bhengu"

"And I love you too maFuze and I love this baby even more because you are the mother of my child."

I shed a tear. He wipes it.

"My flower you not alone on this you have me. The father of your child you hear me?"

I nod like a retard.

"Ngelo I'm sorry you went through so much all by yourself while I wasn't there for you but now I'm here."

"My father wants to kick me out of home"

"You will stay with me. If my parents have a problem with that I will go elsewhere with you."

"He said if I don't say the name of the person who made me pregnant his gonna send me to the bushes. I don't want him to hurt you I can't give him your name. " I start afresh with the crying.

"It's okay my flower. Tell him the truth and I will try this side. Please don't save me doing that will put your life and that of our child in danger. Tell your father."

"He will hurt you Nhlo"

"I'm a man I can take in the punches Ngelo. I really missed you"
He says kissing me while thrusting gently.

"I love you Ngelozi"

"I love you too Nhlo"

"Even when we stay in the bushes like Apes you will still love me?"

"I will love you in hunger and thirst Nhlo"

"Nothing will separate us again right?"

"Nobody will do us part apart from death."

" I love you mafyuze and thank you for saving me."

I blink and sob yet again.. The love making takes place.
Afterwards we lay in bed chest to chest his handing moving to my belly. At least now I'm happy and I care less about tomorrow.

Gabisile

Look at this pig snoring like a pig he is. I've seen ugly animals but no animal is ugly as this one. This place is horrible and untidy just like the owner. This creep has all kinds of animals skins and feathers here.

There's a Awol mind you. I'm seated here playing with my wristband that I was given by warrior Hawulesizwe for some weird reasons it brings me less worries and less fear I'm filled with joy and peace that I cannot describe. Yes I do miss my parents and I do think of them everyday but I'm not in a terrible state of mind I'm hanging in there.. I know and believe Hawu will rescue me. I mean his name is "Hawulesizwe" meaning his a shield of the nation the cherry on top his a warrior a whole fighter. I know his gonna take me home to my parents. I believe in my knight.. I miss Busani though.

"Gabi!" A voice says from outside.

"Hawu is that you?"

I whisper. I hear a soft chuckle that's soothing and great to listen to.

"Yes.. It's me my Princess. You still awake?"

"Can't you hear this pig snore?"

He giggles again.

"I'm sorry Princess. I suppose the feets snore too"

We laugh. The creep wakes up and glares on me.

"Who are you talking to?" Creep-

"Tell him you talking to the person you once killed."

Hawu says I giggle while covering my mouth. The creep glares at me with annoyance written all over his face.

"I'm talking to you ugly kid!!"

"Do you really want to know?"

"Talk before I turn you into a lizard!!"

Hawu laughs from my outside.

"Okay Mr lizard. I'm talking to my first murder case."

"Your what?"

"I'm possessed I kill people. Especially when they snore like yourself."

He holds his chest in fear.

"You are a murder?"

"Yes. Sometimes I leave this place without you noticing. I go blood hunting in the bushes. I must say I've stopped myself a several times from killing you that alone shows you have a special place in my heart. I love you Mr witch" I smile.
Hawulesizwe laughs the more he laughs something within me feels warmer and at peace.

"Gabi you such a good liar" Hawu-

I giggle the creep is flabbergasted.

"Do you want food?" Creep-

"Human head yes"

"Kid this is not funny"

"indeed it's not because this is my truth my life mr witchy. I don't find it funny either"

"You are creepy kid"

Such an irony for a creepy being to label me as creepy.

"Look Gabi I will be outside if you need help or anything. Just shout I will hear you"

"Can't he hear you as you speak?"

"Only you can hear me and see me."

"What are you?"

"Shut up ugly kid. Stop hallucinating and talking to ghosts continue doing that you will end up running naked"

Hawu giggles softly. I wish to see his face already and embrace him.

"Entertain the creep Gabi."

"Be safe out there"

The creep bangs one of his drums scaring me. I keep quiet and brush my wristband how I love it.

Nozibele

The gods know I'm uncomfortable with whatever Ngcolosi is hiding from me. I really can't begin to imagine how frightening and mesmerizing it is. I know my husband never keep things from me but this one is making me uneasy. To an extent I'm reading through everything his doing. Maybe opening my legs is the only solution to have him talking. After all as a woman it's all up to you to press buttons for all doors to be closed or opened and right now I'm trying to win that one.

"Jali wami"

I say with a soprano voice

"Mmm.."

"You sleeping?"

"No.."

"Can we please cradle each other?"

"Nozi what do you want?"

"You and I are fighting but not our privates."

"There's a child in here Nozibele you can't corrupt Zimele's son.
Sleep"

"Ngcolosi I'm not sleeping not without getting what I want.
We've always had fun with Zimele or Nhlonipho laying besides us
when they were kids. What has changed?"

"I'm tired"

"Tired from what because I dont recall making you tired. Ngcolosi are you making your pants loose for someone else?"

"Of course not you being hilarious Nozibele"

"Prove me wrong then"

"I have so much in my head Nozi"

"Such as what?"

"My mother's sickness"

"Wanna talk about it buried between my thighs? I won't make noise"

He glares at me and faintly smile.. I want to milk the truth out of him I'm tired myself from all the planning of the Reed dance ceremony that turned South.

"Let me shift Bangi to the corner"

He says moving our grandchild. In a split second I'm crying "Ngcolosi" I'm screaming his name but my handsome husband is not spilling the beans as I expected instead his going all wild and all out in pleasing me. His giving me that kind of intimacy that a man gives to a woman his trying to cover up a lie or conceal yesterday's mistake. Ngcolosi is acting strange I'm afraid his gonna be worse when he finds out about Nhlonipho and Ngelozi. His done him collapsing besides me is proof.

"Sthandwa sami you know that I love you isn't it?"

He says as his trying to catch a breath.

"Yes I'm very much aware of that"

"Keep that in mind MaJali"

He gives me a cheek kiss.

"Jali should I start packing maybe?"

"Why would you do that?"

"Just asking my love because we not our usual selves."

"MaJali the man is all yours you not sharing him with anyone. I have my eyes on you Maka Zimele"

"Don't hurt me Ngcolosi"

"Even if I do it wouldn't be intentional"

"Excuse me?"

"I can't promise you that sthandwa sami I'm a man sometimes I would be out of line."

"Ngcolosi..."

" I'm kidding I won't hurt you." He says pulling me to his chest we lay in silence..

Ngelози

I overslept again at his house. Today it's worse because I have nothing to lie on my mother and sisi Khethiwe are busy with leaves.. It's pretty obvious they just had breakfast and now they planning on cooking lunch. I'm so doomed honestly.

"Morning mama and sisi Khethiwe"

"Morning sisi" Khethiwe says with a smile. My mother looks at me from head to toe.

"Khethiwe are the buckets filled?"

"Cha mama not all of them."

"Do we have wood?"

"It's nearing to finish mama"

"Make yourself useful Mrs leg spreader by going to the river bank to collect water and wood. When you come back I want your siblings clothes washed and ironed Ngelozi not forgetting sweeping the yard.

Afterwards you gonna cook."

"Mama I can cook and sweep the yard while she collects water and the firewood. " Khethi-

"No Khethiwe here she is a child not a woman. She's gonna do all her chores without sharing them with anyone"

"Kodwa ma it's too much.. After what happened yesterday Ngelozi needs a break."

"Khethiwe don't start! Don't you dare interfere with the way I'm raising my ill mannered daughter. You are only Mlingo's mother and Hawulesizwes punching bag not Ngelozi's mother. Actually you should be going home cos you are fully healed now!!"

Mom yells Sisi khethiwe looks at me and so do I.

" It's okay sisi Khethiwe I will do it"

"And when you get back Ngelozi I want you to tell your father where you slept last night. Because you and I know you didn't sleep here"

"Mama I slept here"

"You think I'm stupid?"

"Mama I swear on gogo's grave I slept here."

"So you saying I saw my buttocks yesterday when I went to your chamber only to find your bed empty?"

"Mama I slept home"

"Ngelozu get lost before I slap you all the way to your mother's village so you can leave me the hell alone. Yeses!!!"

She stands up and walks away.

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Gezekile Jali

Mota is not doing well the passing of her children took a toll on her. Her eyes are sunken one would swear she hasn't slept in

days her weight has slimmed down. My daughter is not doing well it's a pity there's nothing I can do to take away the heavy load that's on her shoulders. We watch as the villagers pour sand over her children's graves the sob she blurts out cuts so deep. Nozibele is comforting her but Mota isn't taking this any easier. I locate Ngcolosi and make my way towards him. Zikhali steps aside as I move closer I pat his shoulder and smile at it. I hope they find their Princess.

"Ngcolosi can I have a word with you son"

"No problem ma"

We move away from the sobs and crowd.

"Son I want us to discuss the Fuze saga"

"What about it mama?"

"Don't demand them cows"

"MaJali they were at fault that needs to be punished. Failure to do so all the other maidens will pull the Ngelozu stunt"

"Do you have eyes Ngcolosi?"

"Of course I do ma"

"What do your eyes see? Darkness or smoke?"

"Mama.."

"Ngcolosi you can't demand cows from Fuze not when you haven't heard the whole story.. Doing that will come back to bite

you son"

I cough and walk away. I find Bonisiwe's mother and walk towards her.

"Mama how are you?"

"Drained and weakened such events drain me."

"I can imagine."

"And how are you MaJali?"

"The chaos that's happening in my house is draining me and pressing me down it's suffocating"

"I'm sorry about that. How's the illness now?"

"I haven't died as yet and I don't know why."

She giggles.

"You not going to die sisi not when there's so much hidden under carpets"

"I want to die Mama I'm all grey I can't be playing the mesmerized game each time the past catches up with us. Ngapha it's Nhlonipho's mess what's next mama?"

"Nhlonipho's mess"

"What mess?"

"Like I said it's too soon for you to meet your maker. You still have so much to uncover."

"Is this the price we pay for being royals?"

"So many things are happening around these thrones."

"I wonder what storm is coming"

"Give it time you will know soon"

She says staring the graves of my grandchildren..

Ndandatho

I wasn't allowed to go to the graves. It's culture that a woman whose with child doesn't set foot in the graveyard reason being the unborn baby will inherit bad spirits. After all so many things happen in the graveyard. Some people bewitch graves and turn our peaceful ancestors against us. They negotiate for their lives to be longer and ours being shorter. Some goes as far as seeking for our lucks and us inheriting their bad lucks. The list is long and endless but a pregnant woman mustn't set foot in that place

unless she longs to have an abnormal and complicated gestational process not forgetting having a child that is very challenging and difficult to reprimand and caution..

I'm doing laundry my laundry and that of Zimele. I've already swept our house and yard that's all there is to do. Most chores are done by servants and I get to do the little ones. But today I want to cook for everyone I miss doing that and getting my hands busy. I have Gatsha on my back this boy is clingy lately and on the other hand my belly is giving me discomfort . I'm starting to feel pregnant unlike before.

"Ndandatho"

"Khethiwe how are you my sister?"

"I'm doing great thanks and yourself?"

"I'm hanging in there. Do you need a chair maybe?"

"No I will sit on the veranda"

"Okay I will join you shortly let me wrap up here"

"Bring Gatsha here."

"Thank you my sister"

I unbuckle Gatsha and give him to Khethiwe

"His growing Ndanda what are you feeding him?"

"Porridge and how is Mlingo doing?"

"His growing thank you for asking"

"Pleasure. You glowing Khethi"

She blushes.

"Wrap up there we have so much to discuss"

"Definitely"

I make my way to my laundry I spot Ngelozi wheeling a barrow. A couple of girls point fingers at her they gossiping and laughing behind her backs. They actually mocking her and turning her into some gimmicks stunt. This is uncalled for.

"I'm coming Khethiwe"

"No problem" I walk towards the girls.

"Young girls how are you doing?"

"We doing great my Princess"

"Thats good to hear and why are you pointing fingers at Ngelozi?"

"We did not point fingers at her"

"So you saying I'm lying young girl?"

"No my Princess."

"Then what are you implying?"

They look at each other.

"Dare gossip or make a joke out her I will deal with you personally you hear me?"

They nod.

"Here's what you gonna do starting from today all three of you will befriend her and you will help her with her chores you hear me?"

"My Princess we can't befriend her she's gonna teach us an abomination"

"What abomination?"

"We gonna learn adults stuff and we gonna be pregnant like her. Ngelozi is a bad example to some of us."

"Young lady you will only learn and practice those things if you intend too or decide upon it. Ngelozi made her choice and you discussing her over her choice and decision is uncalled for. A donkey can only drink water if it's thirsty if it's not thirsty nothing can make it drink water instead it will go away slowly distancing itself from the river bank but not from the other donkeys. So here's what's gonna happen you all gonna apologize to her and

better yet say the things you were saying behind her back right on her face. Isn't it if it was a pleasant conversation you won't shy away from saying it in front of her? "

They all look aside.

" Ngeloziiii " I call out.

" Sisi Ndanda "

" Sweetheart these ladies have something to say to you please lend them your ear. Come closer" They all swallow hard.

"I'm coming"

"So here's what's gonna happen ladies you gonna say everything you were saying behind her back or you will tell her you want to be her friends and help her with her chores the choice is up to you"

"Sisi Ndanda you called me"

"Yes sweetheart ladies get on it"

"Hello Ngelozzi?"

"Hi"

"We would like to be your friends and we want to be of help on any department of your life."

"Why do you want to be my friends? So you can gossip about

me?"

"No we sorry about gossiping about you we were very much out of line"

"You just have bubble fish mouths you talk plenty like polygamous wives" Ngelo-

I giggle.

"We sorry Ngelozi. Can we wheel the barrow for you"

"We can be friends if you willing to do that"

"Fine ladies work on your friendship" I say walking away.
Khethiwe laughs.

"You're a bully Mrs Jali junior."

"I had to my sister. This act of women labeling and tarnishing other women over such things is a disgrace and it's shattering. Women are supposed to be pillars and a unity

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they need to be supportive and caring towards each other. Not judging one another yes Ngelo lost her virginity but she hasn't lost her value and beauty or better yet the qualities we all know she has. This hate against woman to woman is very sickening my sister it's parasitic.. How will men see value in us as women when do not see value amongst ourselves? If we need men to respect us as women we need to practice that amongst ourselves. Whether a woman has plenty of children or she's barren all women matter and they all important and worth respecting or loving. I hate this discrimination amongst women" "Indeed the hate is deep sisi. For starters some date our husband's knowingly we are there Ndandatho. They even go as far as agreeing to being second wives not knowing a second wife is nothing but a stress relieving pit. A whole option. "

"Are we talking about Bubu and Siziwe maybe?"

"Hawu included his the instigator after all."

"I'm sorry Khethiwe"

"I will heal sister and besides I like someone now"

"Better not be Fuze Khethiwe"

She glares at me.

"Khethiwe!!"

"What?"

"You like Fuze? No way girlie his old"

"And handsome too"

"MaFuze will kill you snap out of that thought. I thought you liked Buthelezi the gates man"

"His not my kind of tea. His too slow for my liking. "

"Khethi.."

"Nda."

"Thunder fire will strike you woman."

"I can't help it"

I cover my mouth in shock Fuze?

"Khethiwe I'm getting you out of that compound immediately!"

"That won't destroy the feels I have for him"

"Khethiwe!"

She giggles. I look at her with worry I'm moving her to my Kingdom. She can't be home wrecker not on my watch.

Nhlonipho

We are having buns when Zimele pulls me aside from our

parents.

"Nhlo"

"Yes"

"I saw Ngelozi leaving your chamber this morning"

"She slept there"

"With you?"

"Yes"

He looks at me like his waiting for me to confess something.

"She slept in your bed the whole night yet you do not remember her?"

"I remember her Zimele. Something about her tears touched me when she kissed me I remembered that sweetness."

"Just like the Princess and the frog?"

"Something like that"

"That means you back fully?"

I nod.

"Now these are good news Nhlonipho I'm glad you remember"

"I'm glad too."

"So what's the way forward?"

"We gonna wait for Fuze to punch me he wants to know whose behind her daughters invaded kraal"

"Rest in peace brother you were a loving and respectful yet sneaky brother. I will always love you Jali. Just like they also say King's do not die they multiply. Rest easy Nhlonipho"

I playfully punch his shoulder.

"Thats not funny Zimele."

"Welcome to alduthood."

"It sucks already."

"Next time you see a woman naked run away brother"

"You should've told me sooner."

"Congratulations Jali"

"Thank you brother."

"Boys.." Mom-

"Mom" We say in unison.

"Can I have a word with you Nhlo"

"Me?"

"Yes you"

"Oh!" Zimele walks away. My mother glares at me

"I tried to cover up your mess Nhlonipho"

I keep quiet.

"When were you planning on coming clean?"

"Mama I'm sorry I didn't mean for her to pregnant"

"She's what?"

She asks surprised.

"She's pregnant mama with my child I thought you knew already isn't that what you talking about?"

"I was talking about you deflowering her Nhlonipho not you being a father!!"

"I'm sorry"

"Your father is gonna kill you how could you be so irresponsible
Nhlonipho Jali?"

"Mama I wanted to prevent that happening but she locked me
in"

She gives me a deadly stare.

"Tell your father the truth today. I can't be blamed for this too. I was barked at quite a lot with Zimele and Ndandatho not this again Nhlonipho! What is wrong with you Jali offspring with impregnating out of wedlock? Can't you control your erecs?"

I glare at her.

" I want to marry her "

" Maybe in hell that's the venue of your so called marriage! " She walks away fuming...

Fuze

" What do you mean she didn't sleep home? "

" Her bed was empty all night long "

" So you saying she sneaked in the wee hours to go to that boy

who made her a mother? "

" I saw the boy when he came to drop her over after an epic night"

"So he had the bull balls to set foot on my yard?"

"Fuze Ngelozi is out of hand she even insulted me when I called her out about the boy dropping her off right in front our gate. My husband where did we go wrong with her?"

I glare at her I should've listened when she told me she was seeing someone.

"We raised this girl with love and respect. We warned her against men but look at what she did. What did King Ngcolosi say about our penalty?"

"He wants two fat cows"

"We can go to my father's house and loan those two cows"

"No Mangcobo I will make a plan"

"Baba you need to punish her honestly this is too much. Already people are insulting us as her parents saying we are the one who taught her these shenanigans"

"Today she will show us the way to the house she lost her virginity. Those people will be the ones paying for those cows"

isn't it was them that made the cows to flee from the kraal?
Ngelози will show us her boyfriend's home. Today I'm going with
her"

"We're you serious about kicking her out of home?"

"She's my daughter Mangcobo"

"Meaning?"

"I said that to scare her but I want her to show me the boy's
home"

"Baba why don't you kick out her out for good?"

"Thats not happening"

"Fuze!"

"Mangcobo that's not happening I will punish her but kicking her out of home is uncalled for. You are her mother if you throw in towels whose gonna shelter her and support her throughout?"

A knock comes to the door. Ngelozi appears.

"Greetings mama no baba mama I came to ask what to cook"

"Before you touch my pots tell me where did you sleep last night Ngelozi?"

"Baba I slept home"

"Ngelozi stop lying! Tell the truth for once"

I say standing up

"Baba I..." She fiddles with her hands.

"You bring your boyfriends in my compound huh Ngelozi?"

"I did not baba"

"Your mother is lying huh?"

"Baba I did not bring a man home."

"Ngelozi Ngcobo you and I are going to your boyfriends house now!!"

"Baba..." She says crying.

"Just give us a name of that dog Ngelozi and stop crying!"
Mafuze-

"Where did you sleep last night?"

"I slept here" She's lying I guess a little whooping will have her talking. I quickly reach for my whip.

"Baba I will talk!!"

"Who is he?"

"His from Thuthukani"

"Thuthukani is a big village we want a name and surname
Ngelozzi!" Ma Fuze -

"Who is he Ngelozzi?"

"Baba don't beat me I will pee on my self"

"Just like you peed when that boy was putting things inside your
kraal!" Mafuze-

"Ngelozzi talk!!"

"I would rather tell my mother baba. "

"She's here tell her"

"I meant my biological mother"

"Excuse me? You say what Ngelozi? "

"I want to know who my mother is!" She says as she cries I loose my cool and whip her out. Her screams fill the room.

"You talking rubbish!!"

"Baba Ngiyaxolisa!!!"

"Who made you pregnant!!"

"Baba you hurting me!! Mama!!!"

"Who made you pregnant!!!"

"It's Nhlo...its Nhlonipho!!! Nhlonipho Jali!!!"

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Hawulesizwe

Makhehla has left his hut meaning I can take Gabi out of this place. Depending on how far his gone.

"Gabi"

"Warrior"

"Look I want you to step back if possible. I want to open this door"

"Please hurry up"

"By the count of three you should be ready okay?"

"Yes"

I do the counting and kick down the door. This place is too dark how does one see in this hut. Yucky look at these animals skins they smell so bad. Is makhehla really a human being?

"Gabi where are you I can't see you? It's dark in here."

"Over here"

I follow the voice God knows it's dark in here. I unchain her She jumps on me and wraps her hands around my neck.

"Thank you for keeping your word"

"It's all my pleasure"

"Thank you so much!!" She says perking my cheek. I scoop her up and make our way outside. I hear sounds of footsteps that's him.

"Don't make noise even if you see something creepy and scary. Don't scream Gabi"

"I promise"

"Better" She's adorable just like the sister. Makhehla walks inside his shack immediately he slams the door I make my way towards his hut and set it alight. I wait for the fire to pick up. As I make my way towards Princess Gabi. I find her glaring at me in a strange and awkward way. I kneel in front of her.

"I'm sorry you had to see that"

"You saved me that's all that matters"

I faintly smile.

"You look handsome you not ugly just like many warriors"

"Is that a compliment?"

"Yes it is"

"Thank you Gabi"

"Your body and height matches that of King Ngcolosi"

I giggle.

"Stand up and let's get moving"

"My legs are killing me I've been chained for a while now"

"No problem I will carry you on my back come hop up"

"I'm hungry"

"We will find bush meat"

"I don't eat bush meat I want to eat one of my chickens I have twenty four of them. I will give you two of them"

"No need let's go"

I carry her on my back.

"Do I smell bad?"

"Blame it on those ugly animals in that hut"

She giggles.

"I like you warrior Hawu"

"And I like you too Princess Gabi" She rest her head on my back and tightly holds on unto me. "

Ndandatho

Khethiwe and myself are having a little chit-chat when mama Maseko walks towards us.

" She's surely here for me"

"You are still her bride after all"

We softly giggle and smile at her.

"Girls"

"Ma how are you?"

"I'm tired and hungry. I've been walking since morning."

She says sitting on the stoop she holds Gatsha and playfully pull his cheeks.

"Ndandatho Is your husband around?"

"Cha"

"Where is he?"

"They went to a funeral but I can pass the message"

"Has he made the initiative to finding my son?"

"Mama nobody banished Hawu from grounds he left willingly and willingly he shall return. His a grown man and im certain he knows his way home"

She glares at me.

"Zimele needs to find Hawulesizwe. My son cannot stay in the bushes like an owl"

"Mama Zimele has so much on his plate he can't abort everything to sought for Hawu not after the stunt he pulled here. My husband has important things"

"And his friend is not important?"

"Mama have you forgotten what Hawu did to Khethiwe?"

"But to me his still a son Ndandatho regardless of what he did. Yes it was inhumane but everyone deserves a second chance"

"Him returning home and owning up to his mistakes will be the sign that indeed his deserving of our benefit of doubt"

"Ndandatho Hawu is your brother"

"And his a woman beater ma we mustn't forget that too"

She heaves a sigh.

"Tell Zimele I was here"

She says standing up and giving Gatsha back. She walks away
Khethiwe looks at me.

"You were mean and rude towards her Nda"

"Where does she get the entitlement that my husband is responsible for babysitting Hawu? Not when he has seven children who were born on the same year. Zimele is not an errands boy his a Prince a whole future King of Thuthukani. Mama is making it seem like Zimele is an errands boy and Hawu is a Prince that was mean too"

"Why are you angry Ndandatho? You are worked out"

"I guess what mama said repulsed me. You here and she cared less about how you feel but thatcassanova son of his"

Khethiwe giggles.

"It's not funny Khethiwe"

"Let her be please"

"Fine but she must never ever think like that about my husband"

"Sorry MaJali"

She giggles. I roll my eyes.

Ngelози

"Baba please stop!! You hurting me!!"

I wail as the whip lands on my legs.

"Mama please help me!!! Baba!!!" I cry out covering my face with my hands.

"You and I are going to Jali's house immediately!!!"

"Baba I'm sorry"

"Sorry won't fix this Ngelozi!! Wena you are out of hand the audacity to bring that puppy into my yard while knowing you are undressing each other behind bushes. Let's go!!!"

My father says dragging me outside.

"Baba please stop it! Don't drag me in public people are watching"

"You embarrassed me in public this is nothing compared to what you did"

"Baba Ngiyaxolisa!!!"

I cry hysterically as my hand is roughly being grabbed.

I cough till I vomit.

"Ngelozu you wasting time!! Actually take your clothes and move in with Jali. Isn't it he wanted this? To make you his commoners wife? Take your rags and leave my house!!" He says storming to my private chamber he packs up my clothes and puts them under his armpits for balance.

"Baba you can't send me away please not when I do not know my biological mother! "

"What mother rubbish are you talking about? Who said anything about you not having a biological mother Ngelozi?"

"Mama said so this morning. At least tell me who my mother is so I can go to her since you kicking me out of your house and out of your life. "

"When did you start back mouthing Ngelozi? A penis is making you a rebel over a night huh Ngelozi ?"

"You hate me baba so does mama

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this morning. At least tell me who my mother is so I can go to her since you kicking me out of your house and out of your life. "

"When did you start back mouthing Ngelozi? A penis is making you a rebel over a night huh Ngelozi ?"

"You hate me baba so does mama at least tell me who my mother is!!"

"Let's go and stop talking rubbish!!"

He says dragging me out of the compound attracting eyes on us.

Ngcolosi

We finally home supper is served. The table looks beautiful that I give it to my daughter in law. My mother is glaring at me making me uncomfortable. Nozibele too is looking at me. I hate how they both looking at me it's making me uncomfortable. Maybe I should tell them the truth about Hawulesizwe after all I've kept this a secret for a while now. But I'm concerned about my mother these findings might take her to an early grave.

Now Ndandatho is looking at me having that one look at you can mean many things and right now she's making me way too uncomfortable.

"I've regained my memory" Nhlo-

"Those are good news son welcome back" I say sipping from my glass.

"Meaning I remember everything about my past baba" Nhlo-

"Hence I'm saying it's a good thing"

"Nhlonipho please pass me the salt" Nozi-

"Here ma"

"Thank you."

"So baba I wanted to..." Nhlo-

"Zimele we still waiting on wedding date Boni and Zikhali were asking about it. Remember son you haven't paid fully as yet for Liyana" Nozi says Nhlo heaves a sigh. Could it be she's trying to prevent Nhlonipho from saying something?

"Ma we were waiting on Nhlo to fully recover now that it is done we can agree on any date" Zimele-

"Better and please stick to the gold theme it's exceptionally good and elegant" Wife-

"I love it too mama" Ndandatho adds.

As we seated a strange sound and movement fills up the entire passage leading to the dinning area.

"Baba I'm sorry!!!! You hurting me!"

"Ngelozu shut up!!"

"Baba I beg of you please"

"Today you will reap what you sow!"

Before their faces appear my mother and wife are both standing on their feet. Nhlonipho too is standing.

"Fuze please don't hurt her" Mom-

"My Queen right how I'm her parent don't dictate what I should do and not do.. Wena come here!" He says staring at Nhlonipho while roughly holding Ngelozi.

I clear my throat and walk towards them.

"Hey you boy I said come here! Or you think I won't do anything to you because we standing inside your house?" Fuze -

"Fuze this is not a circus this is my house!" I say

"Ngcolosi don't interfere I'm handling my family affairs I would really appreciate it if you stepped back" Fuze says making me more confused.

Nhlonipho

"I said come here!!!"

"Fuze I'm sorry from the bottom of my heart I humble myself before you apologetic"

Fuze let's go of Ngelozi and walks towards me. In a blink of an eye he slaps me across the face not once but a several times. My father grabs him but Fuze is too strong his a beast.

"I will kill you Nhlonipho!! I'm gonna reunite you with your ancestors. Who gave you permission to turn my daughter into your pit?"

My father glares at me.

"Fuze calm down let's talk about it in a much calmer tone not over fists" Mom-

"My Queen I'm very livid and infuriated by your sons behavior over my daughter!"

"What did he do?" Dad-

"Baba please stop embarrassing me please" Ngelo-

"Shut up!! Wena Nhlonipho I'm giving you her free of charge you can do to her whatever you please just like you have started"
Fuze-

"You did what Nhlonipho?" Dad-

"Baba I'm sorry"

"Sorry yani? What did you do huh?" Dad-

"Can you two stop this bickering it's not taking us anywhere..
Fuze sit down and adress this like an adult!" Gogo-

"Adress what mama? Nhlonipho wenzeni?" Dad-

I look at Ngelozi then Zimele whose pressing his lips against each other preventing a laugh from coming out.

"I... I.. I" I stutter and swallow hard.

"I what? Talk at the pace you went when deflowering my daughter and leaving her pregnant!!" Fuze says. Ngcolosi glares at me with red eyes.

"Is this true Nhlonipho?"

"Baba I'm sorry"

"You not answering my question dammit!! Did you or did you not sleep with Ngelozi?"

"It was a mistake my King it happened once" Ngelozi says

"I wasn't talking to you shut up! And wena start talking!" My father says walking towards me. My mother blocks him.

"Nozi move!!"

"We don't solve problems by implementing a problem Ngcolosi"

"You knew about this rubbish didn't you?"

"Don't pin this on me!!"

"Nozibele move before I slap you along your son and his pregnant girlfriend!"

"Ma it's okay I got this"

Zimele laughs.

"You got what? Don't annoy me Nhlonipho I'm already annoyed as it is back off and stop getting things you do not got!!" Zimele laughs even more.

"Come here I want to twist your testicles and feed them your pregnant girlfriend isn't it you feeding each other adult stuff" Fuze says.

"I'm sorry"

"Sorry won't fix this Nhlonipho!!"

"Can you all shut up this noise is uncalled for. Ngelozi go sit down and you to go your chamber Fuze and Ngcolosi discuss this like men and wena Nhlonipho dance to your tune just like you did when you made this baby"

Gogo says.. Ndandatho and Zimele carry food and walk away. Leaving me with my angry father and Fuze whose yet to swallow me Ngelozi is crying. Wait did they beat her up? What are those marks?

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Gabisile

His roasting a rabbit that's our supper. I'm staring at him taking lessons. On the other hand he is boiling water he said he will make me a soup so I can be warm throughout the night. We still in the bushes hence I need the warmth.

"How old are you?"

He glares at me.

"I'm 18"

I'm lying of course.

"I see.. Don't you want to know how old I am?"

"Please tell me"

"I'm 31 years old"

"Wow!"

"I'm old right?"

"Very old you are twelve years older than me"

"Yeah."

He smiles and continues with the meat.

"I like your eyes"

"Another compliment Gabi?"

"They beautiful"

He glares at me and smiles showing off his white teeth.

"You beautiful yourself"

"Thank you." I smile.

"So can you fight? You once told me you are a warrior in training"

"Sure I can fight."

"Show me a trick or two"

"Now?"

"Yes"

"Fine" I stand up so does he.

"I want you to punch me I want to see how you fold your fists"

"Thats easy and doable. Like this" I roll my fists he smiles.

"Now thow in your best punch"

"Don't wail"

"Not a chance"

"Fine" I throw in a punch or two.

He cringes in pain.

"Did I hurt you?"

He nods while holding his stomach I move closer to introspect him.

"I'm sorry I didn't mean too" He scoops me up and puts his hand around my neck not to tight though.

"Rule number one Gabi you don't check up on your opponents. Whether they are in pain or negotiating for their lives you don't show them care or worry. You don't sympathize with them. They might use your worry or pain in advantage that is inappropriate my lady"

He says staring at me I nod.

"So you faked that?"

"Definitely I was testing your skills"

"I'm sorry."

"That too is not proper for a warrior a warrior must have a heart of a stone. A warrior is emotionless we do not feel Gabi."

"Okay I got it."

"Never repeat this mistake"

"I promise"

"Fine.." He glares at me then slowly puts me down.

"Supper will be ready any minute from now."

"Do you need help?"

"Not at all."

"Fine" I sit on down and glare at him.

"Your punches are good I wish you used them on the witch"

We giggle..

Ngcolosi

"Fuze I kindly apologize for the inconvenience caused by my son and your daughter. I wasn't aware of their little shenanigans. This is new to me just like it is to you"

I swallow my saliva and glare at Nhlonipho.

"Had I known my son was responsible for tainting your daughter I would've handled everything accordingly and different. I had no knowledge of this.

"Your immoral son must pay for what he did to my daughter Jali what he did was a pure insult to us as the Mapholoba clan. That brings me to wonder what kind of a father are you that cannot reprimand and instill morals into your kids? What kind of future leaders are these boys of yours who go around impregnating maidens out of wedlock Zimele did the same thing with that girl Ndandatho now this thief!" Fuze -

"Mapholoba I'm still your King and Nhlonipho here happens to be the Prince of Thuthukani most importantly he is my son. I would really appreciate it if you changed your tone and minimized with the insults that you are throwing in. What these kids did has got nothing to do with my parenting skills or how I've raised them. I'm your King and I deserve to be treated with respect regardless of what is going on currently. You insulting me won't change the fact of your daughter opening her legs for my son. Right now you are out of order and disrespectful towards your King. "

"I am careless about your blue blood Ngcolosi. Not when my daughter was stripped off from her pride and purity by this dog that you call your son."

I clench my jaw.

"Nyuswa I don't recall giving birth to a dog. Don't insult my son and my seeds and my wife's womb I didn't call your daughter names for allowing a man into her sacred places because only a loose canon does that. A whole shameless woman allows a man to play with her privates instead of playing with sand. Don't label my son because your daughter is not a saint she might be an angel to you but in my eyes she's a sneaker. Another thing pinning this whole predicament only on Nhlonipho is uncalled for my son didn't lure your daughter to his chambers but she came here willingly. If we want to solve this we need to tame down on being biased and provocative. They both at fault not only him. "

" His older than Ngelozi I won't be surprised if he used his blood type to having my daughter under his spell. " Fuze

" Fuze can you stop barking at the wrong tree. These kids are both at fault Ngelozi attends Reed dance classes that alone sheds light on her knowing what is wrong and what isn't it. If she didn't want this none of this would've happened and we wouldn't be here today having this conversation. Ngelozi is old enough to make her own decisions. Right now you painting my son as a pervert or a retard. I won't tolerate these insults not under my chapel Ngcobo. "

" So you saying it's a good thing for your sons to prey around people's daughters and leaving them with babies? "

" Fuze we will discuss this when you less emotional or infuriated. Right now you seeking a punching bag not solutions. "

I say standing up.

" Nhlonipho take your pregnant girlfriend to your chamber

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isn't it you have balls to make babies? Come morning I want you building your own house elsewhere not on my grounds you hear me? "

" Kodwa baba I.. "

" Shut up! " He glares at me so does the girlfriend.

" You both young you still feasting on your mucus what were you doing and thinking huh Nhlonipho no Ngelozi? Why didn't you blow clouds or roast grasshoppers instead of climbing on top of each other? Do you even have pubic hair huh?"

They both swallow hard.

" You exasperating and nauseating Nhlonipho. You are a disgrace!! "

Nozi will know me well tonight I know she knew about this rubbish and stupid her decided on keeping it a secret. Today I'm gonna slap her for the first time in forever. I've been way too soft on her so much she has forgotten whose the head here and who she submits to.

Ndandatho

"My love"

"Yes"

"Can I ask you something?"

"I'm all ears"

"Did mama Maseko stay here previously or worked here?"

"Yes she used to stay here and work here."

"On which department was she rendering her services in the palace?"

"If I recall well she was a cleaner in the royal house"

"I see.. And whose the eldest between you and him?"

"Hawu is a year older than me"

"Where was he born?"

"I don't know honey I wasn't born by then even if I was I wouldn't have known"

"I see"

"Why are you asking about him?"

"Just that his mother came here earlier on the day in search for you"

"For?"

"Apparently you are Hawulesizwe's babysitter"

"I don't follow my Princess"

"She wanted you to go search for Hawu."

"And why would I do that?"

"You friends"

"Hawu will come back when his sober minded.. How's the pain now?"

"Better my love thank you."

"Pleasure.." He says kissing my cranial area of my head as my head is resting on his chest and his hands on my belly. We snuggling.

"Baby"

"Yes Liyana"

" How was Mama Maseko as a worker?"

"Baby I recall much but she was always against my friendship with Hawu growing up. One time we were playing with wire cars that a servant had made for us She showed up out of nowhere and roughly pushed me then scolded at Hawu for playing with me. Till this day I can't erase that memory. "

" Do you think she hated you? "

" For what my flower? I never gave her reasons to hate me I was peaceful just like Nhlonipho. I only changed when pubic hair grew longer and more coarse other than that I was always respectful "

" Something is strange don't you think? "

" How so? "

" I think mama has a deep dark secret. It's somehow related to Hawulesizwe's paternity "

" I don't follow"

"Hawulesizwe is not a Maseko"

He gently pushes me away from his chests.

"Ma ka Gatsha what do you mean?"

"Hawulesizwe is not a Maseko."

"And how do you know that?"

"I had a vision of what you just told me you and Hawu playing with wire cars and mama pushing you away. There's more I heard Maseko confronting mama about the man behind Hawulesizwe's paternity."

"Liyana I don't like where this is going. I really don't like it all"

"I mean honey what if Hawu is your sibling?"

He hops off from the bed and stares at me.

"Ndandatho can you stop with these sinister thoughts of yours you hallucinating"

"Honey I said what if I didn't say he is your sibling"

"My father would never betray my mother like that. There's no way Hawu could be my sibling"

"Why didn't you kill him the day you both fought? Why didn't he beat you up? You've said it yourself Hawulesizwe is one of your best fighter's but why did he not fight you full force on that day he lied to Nhlonipho about those leaves?"

"Ndandatho you mumbling"

"It's possible Zimele"

"What's possible its you being sleepy and hallucinating. Please sleep before you create more scenarios in your head"

"Jali in not fighting or something I'm just sharing my thoughts and visions with you. I mean no harm"

"How do you think I will view my father after this information?"

"Bhengu..."

"Liyana sleep please" I glare at him so does he..

Mama Ngelozi

"Fuze!!!" I blurt out a scream as my husband throws me thunder fire on my face. I'm trying with everything in my powers to block him but his a man. In split second I fall on the bed he puts his hard hands around my neck.

"Makhosonke!!! Khethiwe help!!!"

"Why did you tell her about her mother huh? Do you hate her that much?"

"It was a mistake I'm sorry! Please stop Fuze you hurting me and you gonna kill me!"

He doesn't stop instead gives me more beating till I taste a thick fluid coming from the corners of lips.

"Makhosonke I'm sorry!!"

"Do you know who her mother is huh?"

"No... No I don't know Fuze and I'm sorry"

"Her mother is a heartless witch she feasts on people's blood. How could you disclose this information ? Ngelozi is better off without her mother but you had to bring her to existence why mama Ngelozi?"

"I was angry Fuze"

"Angry at who and what?"

"You and her. I'm jealous of the love you give her Makhosonke. She's way too precious and dear to you than I am"

"Thats because I'm her father and mother MaFuze. I do that to protect my daughter from her mother and to fill all the empty spaces that were meant to be filled by her mother. Unlike her other siblings they have you and me but she has me alone. You didn't have to bring Thabile Mzilikazi in the picture."

"Thabile Mzilikazi?"

"The former Queen of Ngwane is Ngelozzi's mother. "

"What and you didn't tell me?"

"You were very stupid to tell her she's not yours. How am I gonna tell her about that witch? See where your delusional goes? "

"I didn't know she was her mother you never told me"

"You just pushed Ngelozi away and stupid me had to to join heads with you in destroying my daughter"

"I'm sorry"

"I'm tired of this nonsense Mangelози. I think it's about time I let you go to your parents house"

"Fuze I'm sorry there's no need for that. I can't be a returned soldier please"

"You hate me you hate our marriage and you hate my daughter. What's there to fight for MaFuze? You've been saying you are unhappy in our marriage I guess you should leave and go find a better husband than I am."

"Fuze please I didn't mean for this to happen we can't end things"

"You ended our marriage when you allowed jealousy over a child to get under your skin. You made it look like Ngelozi was my mistress other than my kid. See how far your jealousy made you nasty? Now I have to tell my child about the most dangerous

creature there ever lived all because of you. You were supposed to fight me not my daughter. "

" Fuze I'm sorry"

"I need a breather"

He says walking out and slamming the door leaving me aching and weeping. I didn't know Ngelozi is diluted and that her mother was a witches daughter.

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Ngelози

Once upon a story I once was a little chirpy girl who loved laughing and saying senseless things that I myself never understood. I once was in the stillness of my calmness mind and it's earnest heart. I didn't know falling love came with a baggage like this one. I lost my virginity I lost my freedom of being a child and now I've lost my parents and the life I grew up appreciating the most. So much has been lost and I'm certain more is still to be lost. Maybe his next or maybe this baby is next. I mean already I've lost so much my integrity included. To think I once was this happy little girl who only longed to dance in the rain and run freely and wild in the open fields of Thuthukani village and have the sun kissing my skin. I remember how life was peaceful and harmonious but all that changed the day I let a tongue drive me crazy. I know I shouldn't have allowed him to touch me in that manner but I too I shouldn't have asked him to do it time and time again my addiction to his tongue got us here in this cold and empty hult. I can't even look at him the way I'm so broken and hollowed.

"Oh!! Mafuze.." I let my tear hit the pillow. Today this act is not bringing me comfort I just feel numb my body is numb too. I don't even know how to describe how I feel right now. He collapses besides me panting. I close my legs and turn my back on him.

" Mafuze.. "

I keep quiet and sniff.

I can't believe my whole world has turned into shambles and ashes so suddenly so fast. I mean I've lost so much within a couple of months I mean things I've had for a lifetime only lost by the blink of an eye. I really fumbled I messed up so much. Where am I even gonna raise this baby? I mean King Ngcolosi said he wanted us gone by tomorrow. Meaning my baby will grow up in bushes like tortoises and chameleons. I can picture him fighting other people for his spot or turf in the bushes. Something like "Hey you that tree with brown leaves is mine Its been mine from when I was only zero days. I challenge you to get off immediately that's my house." Poor thing will survive in the jungle just like the animal - human super hero I grew up hearing stories about from

my mother how I miss her the mother who once loved me. I wish I didn't disappoint her this much. She's been nothing but a good mother to me I've never left like she wasn't my biological mother well apart from when she would discipline me. I deserved that but hey no child loves their beaters but with Mafuze she loved me and she was doing that out of love. I miss her..

He moves closer to me and presses his naked body against my exposed body that he stripped of himself. He better not want more. Doing me more won't change the situation at hand actually how does that thing of his want to play on such a very discomforting moment? Stupid penis.

"Ngelози are you okay my love?"

If course I'm okay my child will be George of the jungle his family will be chimpanzees jackels and bush pigs. How the hell can I be okay? Stupid father...

"Mafuze please talk to me"

I don't want to talk to you Nhlonipho Jalinot today.. Let me cry in peace please till my eyes gets all swollen and heavy like I was punched.

He rests his chin on my bare shoulder he peels off one of my leg and moves closer to me. His hand plays with my now tender breasts.

"Sweetheart come on I hate this silence"

Just do whatever you want to do and let me cry in peace. I'm mourning my parents my virginity and the good food my mother always cooked by my house another thing I'm mourning my innocence of being a child without mothering a child. I have a serious conversation with my brain and heart. I feel him groan on my ear his doing me again.

"I can't get enough you I will do this till you talk to me. Even if it's a simple" it hurts Nhlo" I won't stop I miss you my flower. I know we having so much on our plate but I need to know you happy with me besides you"

You are the reason tomorrow we will turn into bush meat how can I be happy with that Nhlonipho? Do your thing and sleep afterwards. Stop talking with food in your mouth. The pain I've been ignoring since last night is slowly intensifying but it's nothing major

Ngcolosi

"Ngcolosi you hurting me!!"

She manages to say with her voice quivering. My grip around her arm is too tight. I know what's next I'm probably gonna slap her or strangle her. I'm very much infuriated and by now I'm certain my eyes are cutting her sharper than a blade has ever slit her finger. She's seen me demented before but she's never seen me this livid before. The man whose holding her arm today is not the husband she married but a monster who has taken over her marriage.

"How could you Nozibele?" I bark so much she jumps in fear. This act is all new to her and myself.

"How could I what? You hurting me Jali please let me loose!" She whimpers.

"How could you keep this abominable act from me huh Nozibele? How could you cover up and conceal this imbecile act of Nhlonipho and that Fuze girl? Do you have an idea of what you've done? "

"Ngcolosi uyangilimaza!"

"Shut up! And stop whining about being pained! You embarrassed me in front of the vilagers with your lies! You share a bed with me what was hard about you telling me this?"

"I knew you would do this and act like this. You once did it with Zimele you acted impulsive I couldn't allow you to do the same with Nhlonipho. But all if this is your fault!"

"How is it my fault Nozibele?"

"You teaching our children about intimacy Ngcolosi and now they putting your words into action!! You brought the embarrassment upon yourself!"

"Excuse me?"

"Beat me knowing the truth Ngcolosi!! It's your fault these kids are making children out of wedlock!"

"And it was my fault when you had Zimele out of wedlock?"

She glares at me.

"For your information I'm not sick in the head Nozibele! I taught them responsibilities too and how to avoid certain things from happening within their marriage not on their courting days. I taught them those things to practice them in marriage not this nonsense. You are at fault for keeping Ngelozzi's tainted kraal away from me. I would've handled this differently had I known my son was the culprit but you decided on being sneaky and untrustworthy! You embarrassed me in front of Fuze and the villagers. Now people will know my son was responsible for that!"

" I told you not to charge Fuze anything"

"Reason being? I hate that you taking me for a fool Nozibele since when do we keep secrets from each other?"

"Since you've decided on being secretive Ngcolosi! If you dare beat me up I'm gonna stab you to death fool!!"

I immediately lift my hand after the four letter word "Fool" I glare at her with my lips pressed against each other she does the same too.

"Ngcolosi you want to beat me?"

She softly says contemplating what nearly happened.

"You know I won't do that to you I'm just angry that you lied to me and top of that you calling me names that's uncalled for

Nozibele. "

"Angry enough to scare me off with your hand Bhengu?"

I keep quiet.

"Me Ngcolosi? Your wife of many years?"

"I'm sorry maJali"

"You wanted to beat me up after you hated it when your father did it to your mother?"

"I'm sorry I don't know what came over me"

"As much as you complaining about me keeping secrets what are you doing Ngcolosi? Are you letting me in or pushing me away? I didn't tell you about the sheet I've found in Nhlonipho's chamber because you were also acting strange and you still are. Now you raising your hand at me like really Jali? "

" You called me names while I didn't with you"

"Ngcolosi what are you hiding from me?"

"The next time you call me names I will slap you"

I let her loose and go lean by the window sill. I need to disclose this to my mother before I do to my wife.

Nhlonipho

" My love please say something. You've been quiet Ngelozi and now I'm getting worried. "

She glares at me and says nothing.

" Ngelozi we will be okay stop worrying and crying. Talk to me say something even if its hilarious please."

"How can I stop worrying and crying Nhlonipho while we have nothing to our names?"

"I will make a plan I'm a man"

"Your father said we must leave his premises come morning! We are doomed and so is this baby"

"My flower stop worrying I know Mvelincangi and my Jali descendants will be with us every step of the way just trust the process please my love. "

"Where are they now huh Nhlonipho? Are they gonna build us a house by morning? Are they gonna bring back my once happy family? "

"Ngelozu can we not fight that won't fix anything"

"And your Mvelincangi and Jali descendents will fix everything? Nhlonipho I've lost so much for this shame of ours do you know what could go wrong shall I leave these grounds? "

"Eat before we fight this conversation is gonna brings us more problems than we already facing. "

"There won't be a need for us to fight because we are doomed and we are alone this baby and myself are gonna die and suffer in the bushes and you on the other hand you won't lose so much just like I have because you have blue blood and everything worships you"

"Ngelozu can you stop it okay? Stop this madness"

"I can't and I won't Nhlonipho are lives are over and we won't survive all by ourselves out there not when you can't even fight to save a life"

I stand up and cover my naked body. She was better off quiet than uttering this garbage.

"Where are you going? You said you wanted us to talk! Now this is it Nhlonipho!"

"Can you shut up! Or better yet go back to your crying and endless worrying because right now you are annoying me Ngelozu"

"I can't annoy you Nhlonipho not when I have this belly because of your bloody sperms!"

"Did I beg you to lock me with your legs? No! Did I force you to make love with me? No! So don't you dare sit over there and say bullshit Ngelozi you brought this upon yourself. You had an option to keep your legs closed and yours was to open them don't pin this on me alone. You annoying me right now!! "

" I don't have a penis it's all your fault!! "

" Ngelozi I said shut up!! Shut up woman! I'm also stressed out and patronized by this. Buy blaming me you not making this whole situation better than it already is!! "

" I hate you Nhlonipho "

" Fuck yourself! " I say heading for the door.

She sniffs while holding her tummy. I close the door before I could move any far I hear groans behind me that can only be Ngelozi. I jog back to my chamber. I find Ngelozi sweating and panting. She's screaming while holding her belly.

"Ngelozi are you okay?" I say panicking.

"My tummy... My tummy is ouch!!!!"

"What about your tummy Ngelo? What is going on Mafuze?"

"I think my baby is not okay Nhlonipho something is wrong with my baby it's painful Nhlo"

"What is wrong with the baby? Are you sure it's the baby that's in pain but not your tummy? "

"I don't know but i'm having excruciating pains it feels like my insides are burning or better yet someone is slicing my intestines with a sword! Please help me!" She cries. I shouldn't have shouted her maybe it's all my fault she's in state.

"Try to stand up Ngelozi"

"Please call Ndandatho!!"

"I can't leave you here alone my flower not when you looking like this."

"I feel wet I think i urinated on myself"

"You scaring me Ngelozi if it's my fault I'm sorry my love.. I'm very sorry"

Zimele

I'm peacefully sleeping when Ndandatho profusely shakes me up panting hard. The first thought to come in mind is my baby being in danger. That's the only reason she would wake me at this hour if not for my wand.

"I'm sleeping Liyana"

"Dress up something bad is happening in Nhlonipho's chamber"

"Huh? Meaning?"

"Hurry up and dress up Zimele!"

Gatsha starts crying hysterically so.

"And soldier why are you crying?"

"Something evil is parading these grounds Zimele there's a force that wasn't meant to come here. His sensing that."

"Do I need a spear maybe?"

She glares at me okay shut up Zimele.

I quickly dress up so does she.

"Ngelozhi needs me"

With that said she walks out leaving Gatsha and myself behind.
As we approach Nhlonipho's chamber I'm met by sobs.

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Ngelozu

"Sisi Ndandatho what is going on?"

I manage to say after a little while of succumbing these excruciating pains are threatening to grate up my womb.

"I don't want to lose my child to death."

"I don't want to lose my child the baby is okay right?" Nhlonipho says glaring at Ndandatho searching for assurance and relief that everything is going well and that our child's life will be spared. After all babies are too young to die only the likes of gogo Jali die often not innocent kids.

She glares at me then Nhlonipho without saying anything.

"Can somebody tell me what is happening?" Nhlo-

"Ehm.. Everything is everything is the baby is.."

She stutters and presses her lips together. She moves her eyes to me then to Nhlonipho. I'm worried by her hands profusely trembling sweat is covering her face. I think she's struggling to swallow. I shift my eyes from Ndandatho to Nhlonipho's parents who've been standing by the door since they walked in.

The mother is covered in tears and holding tight on the fathers hand. As for the father I can't read his facial expression or body language. As for the grandmother she's been staring on the floor since she saw the blood stains on the bed sheets. I guess I should ask again Ndandatho about what is happening and if my child will be okay or not. I mean she's been here way before these people. She's been holding my hand and brushing my stomach surely by now she's certain and has clarity as to why I had these cramps and why blood stains are spotted on the bed. I need answers.

"Ndandatho please say something. " Nhlo-

"The baby is unharmed isn't it sisi Ndandatho?" I manage to say.

She blinks repeatedly before gashes of water escape her eyelids.

"Sisi Ndandatho.. "

"I'm sorry Ngelozi.." that comes as a whimper.

"Sorry for what? Why are you sorry?" Nhlo-

"I.. I tried to..." She stutters.

"Just say what you need to say Ndandatho and stop stuttering!"
Nhlonipho hauls.

Ndandatho blinks endlessly more tears leaves her eyes. When I think she will talk she slams "Please excuse me" line across my face sprinting outside.

Ndandatho

I couldn't say it. I could bring myself to being the bearer of bad news. She's so young for this experience. This cross will be hard for her to bear. This is too much given I've tried everything in my powers to prevent such a thing from happening. I've tried the Jali gods are my witnesses. I made her a waist beaded band to lessen the chances of such predicaments then this happens? Right under my nose? How could I fail her like her in this manner? Do I even possess the powers that I think I have if I couldn't save a baby? Nhlonipho's baby to be quiet frank.

"Liyana.."

"Please leave me alone Zimele"

That is accompanied by tears and a trembling voice.

"Ndandatho I just wanna hold you tight that's all"

I stop walking he pulls me in his arms. I scream sorrowfully.

"It's okay my love it's okay"

"It's not okay! A baby is dead and I couldn't save him!" I blurt out as I tremble and wet his shoulder.

"At least you tried"

"Not enough! Not enough Zimele! Her child is gone and never coming back!"

He holds me tightly and brush my back while I die a silent slow death. "I'm sorry my love I really am. But we need to break down the news to them. This confusion and worry needs to put at ease. I know it's hard and weighing down on you but please tell them what happened"

"I can't bring myself to doing that. This is gonna break Ngelozi"

"Tell her the wait is doing more damage please my love"

"I should've saved the baby Zimele"

"It's not your fault you tried Ndandatho. Don't be hard on yourself"

"How am I gonna face them knowingly I failed to save their baby?"

"Shhhhh..." He squeezes me in.

**

Nhlonipho is holding and carefully brushing Ngelozi's hand when I walk in

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you tried Ndandatho. Don't be hard on yourself"

"How am I gonna face them knowingly I failed to save their baby?"

"Shhhhh..." He squeezes me in.

**

Nhlonipho is holding and carefully brushing Ngelozi's hand when I walk in after crying myself a river on my husband's shoulders. Everyone glares at me making this more hard. I sat beside Ngelozi and held her loose hand. Her eyes those angelic eyes are yet to glimmer with tears. Her precious soul is yet to be detached from her. She will never be the same.

"Ngelozi"

I glare at her then Nhlonipho whose waiting for me to carry on.

"Nhlonipho.."

"Ndandatho it's okay I will tell them what is happening." Gogo says walking towards Nhlonipho. She heaves the longest sigh before clearing her throat.

"As you both saw the blood that means our little soul detached from its mother's womb" gogo-

"I don't follow Gogo what do you mean?" Nhlo-

"The baby is late Nhlonipho" I say whimpering yet again.
Nhlonipho glares at me so does Ngelozi.

"The baby is dead I tried to save him or her but it was too late.
I'm sorry" Ngelozi yanks off her hand from me. Nhlonipho stands
up shots me a strange look then walks out..

Fuze

My wife has been crying since I broke the news about her leaving to her family. I know I said things I wasn't supposed to have said here and there but she betrayed me and our promise to Ngelo. We both promised none of us was gonna disclose Ngelozi's biological mother but cruel her slammed the truth on my daughters face. She shouldn't have told her that not now especially.

"Fuze I can't go home please"

"What hurts me the most is you betraying our promise. Ngelozi has been nothing to you but your daughter. Why did you bring that up kodwa Mafuze?"

"I was angry"

"All thanks to you I've lost a chance to mending things with my daughter. Her falling pregnant would've been forgiven and forgotten but me keeping her mother a secret will make

everything unfixable."

"Fuze Ngiyaxolisa"

A knock comes to the door after all its morning.

"Coming" I make my way to the door. It's Khethiwe.

"Mapholoba good morning" Khethi-

"Morning"

"How are you and mama?"

"We doing fine and yourself?"

"We doing very well thanks"

"Better"

"Eehm.. I brought you breakfast. I saw mama not leaving her chambers hence I made it upon my stride to get to it"

I glare at her then the tray she's holding.

"Thank you my darling"

"I made you water to bath too."

"Thats kind of you thank you my child"

"Pleasure.. Greet mama for me"

"No problem"

She shyly bows and hands me the tray. My long fingers accidentally touches hers.

"My apologies"

She smiles and walks away. MaFuze is trying to get dressed but she's struggling. I reckon I left her covered in scars yesterday.

"Breakfast is ready"

"I will pass"

"Why?"

"My body and face is numb and stinging Fuze"

She looks at me so do I. I heave a sigh. "I'm sorry I did that to you"

"I deserved it"

At least she's aware of that.

"Khethiwe will bring in bathing water"

I say before biting my peanut buttered bread. A knock comes to the door that's Khethiwe I guess. I attend to the door.

"Buthelezi"

"Nyuswa good morning?"

"Morning Shenge. To what do I owe the visit?"

"Mapholoba I was sent by the King and Queen to summon you to their Palace they said its important"

"What could be important?"

"They just told me to summon you in their chambers"

"No problem Shenge I will make my way there after wiping my body and face"

"Mapholoba.." He says bowing his head as a symbol of respect

towards me.

Mama Maseko

I just wish Nozibele and Gezekile could find themselves a new supplier. I really can't stand them not anymore. For years I've been licking their toes and forcing a laugh over their lame and unfunny jokes all in the name of what? I really can't do this anymore. I wish my son could come back from whatever hole he's hiding in. I think it's about time I told him who his father is. I think doing that will remind those two

women who think the world is there about who I am and what I am. By the time the truth out they will view me and see me differently. I will be more than a royal servants.

"Mama you need to see this"

"Lungelo I told you to stop shouting in the morning. I hate noise"

"My apologies but mama you need to see whose outside"

"Whose outside?"

Maybe it's Ngcolosi. I don't want to argue with him it's too early for that.

"Give it a guess ma"

"Lungelo talk!" I snap. Her once visible smile disappears.

"Brother Hawulesizwe is outside"

"My son is outside? Did you say Hawu is here?"

She nods and walks out. I leave my body butter containers on the floor I run outside. I find Hawulesizwe seated on the veranda. He flashes me his beautiful smile I bury myself in his embrace.

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Nhlonipho

How do I feel about my first child's passing? I feel every single feel that's related with pain. I'm confused and questioning myself as to how it happened and why it had to happen to me and my Ngelozi. I'm so dishearted and hollow. I was looking forward to having this baby and being there every step of the way. I know I wasn't sure about fathering a baby while I'm a kid myself but I was sure I was gonna make a good father to my baby and a good partner to the mother but right now that dream is far fetched. It looks nothing but an obnoxious nightmare and a total ridicule of an hallucination. I've survived many things memory loss included but this I don't think I will survive nor do I think I will ever look at Ngelozi the same way. This is the hardest pill to swallow.

"My Prince I brought you breakfast"

"Excuse me" I say walking past her leaving Ngelozi sniffing on the same bed where our child's blood was shed being in this chamber is suffocating and draining me.

Hawulesizwe

It's pretty obvious I was missed. My mother was never an affectionate being I'm surprised by the hugs and kisses I'm getting. On the other hand Lungelo is scouting for a fat live chicken to be slaughtered in celebration of my return. It's such a pity Khethiwe and Mlingo are not here to welcome me home not that they will be excited and all jolly upon my come back after what I put them through.

"In the mean time let me give you a mealie porridge fermented

drink to quench your thirst"

She says standing up. "Mama"

"Khuboni..".

"Can you please make those two"

"I don't follow Hawu"

"I didn't come back alone ma but a beautiful young lady."

She widens her eyes. "What lady Hawu?" I glare at her I know what she's thinking but it's nothing like that. Not after the Khethiwe stunt. "She's a kid mama"

"Whose kid? You didn't describe her as a kid long ago but a beautiful lady"

"It must've been a slippery of the tongue"

"Who is this girl and why did you bring her here?"

"Mama can we be kind enough to welcome her warmly and give her the heart of a home. She will leave as soon as she's healed. I can't take her to her family looking like this." She's glares at me then my hut where Gabisile is standing yawning and stretching her arms. She just woke up.

" Isn't that Gabisile Buthelezi? "

"That's her" She blows her nose. "I want her gone by the crack of dawn"

She walks away leaving me staring at Gabisile's direction. Her eyes are on mine. My mother brings the fermented porridge jag with two mugs. Gabisile walks towards us.. She sits besides me then greets my mother who gives her a sly "HI" and walks away.

"Your mother doesn't like me" She says softly.

"As a warrior lady you should care less about how a person views you or think of you. You not gold and silver to be loved by many if a few people love you to hell with the majority that's hating on you"

I sip from my mug. She rests her head on my shoulder.

"Thank you Ngcamane"

I chuckle.. "What?"

"You just called me with my clan name that's so unlike you"

"You've been good to me" Gabi-

"Gabisile Buthelezi what are you doing? All flattery over my son remove your head from there" My mother says annoyed. Gabi shifts immediately. I glare at my mother and press my lips together.

"What do you call that?" Ma

Gabi says nothing but rather fiddle her hands.

"Keep the distance" Ma-

"Mama come on she meant no harm"

"Shush!! I let out a soft sigh.

Ngidi

I had no choice but to visit Mota. I've been missing her quite a lot lately. I know she's going through the most right now but I could use her attention and company. A King without a Queen is a miserable leader. I don't want to undress her but rather to gaze into her beautiful eyes.

I find her staring into blank air space besides her there's a glass of water and nuts. She has lost weight and she has eye bags. She's a living corpse from a man whose suffered like she is right now showing her a little support won't hurt. This is the saddest moment ever.

"Majali"

She glares at me and shifts her eyes back into staring into a blank space.

"Majali I miss you"

She keeps quiet.

"I know the pain you feeling right now. It never goes away especially at night time. I know suffocating it gets on devils hours. I've been there Majali with my daughter Iminathi I still think of her and call her name in the middle of night with tears rolling down my cheeks. I love her so much just like you loved your kids and still do. But Majali we can't go on like this we should share our pain and burdens. Sometimes pain is better when shared. I know I sound crazy right now but I want you back. "

A tear escapes her eye.

" You don't have to go through this alone. Share your pain with someone else it can be your brother's wife Nozibele. She's a good listener I must say she's a blossoming garden that I believe you can find peace in. You can also share with your mother or brother after all you had a good bond with Ngcolosi "

" I want to kill Thabile only then I can know peace and find healing"

"She's already dead. Living in the bushes is enough torture than death"

"I want to her killed Ngidi I wanna see her suffocating till her last breath. I want her to die just like she killed my children. My kids had nothing to do with me sleeping with you she was supposed to kill me instead not them"

"She's not worth it Mota"

"You defending her don't you?"

"No I'm on your side"

"If so

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I want you to do everything in your powers in sending warriors to the bushes to kill her" I glare on her.

"I want to fight fire by fire"

"Mota this is not who you are"

"Then I guess who I was all these years was nothing but pretense."

She stands up. I heave a sigh. Thabile is still Mkhuleko's mother. Having her killed would break my son.

Ngcolosi

Fuze walks in. He greets and occupies the empty chair facing mine. He glares at me at least today he looks a little calmer than yesterday.

"You called for me"

"Indeed Mapholoba"

I heave a sigh Nozi squeezes my thigh. As a symbol of support.

"Mapholoba you were summoned here because of what happened last night regarding your daughter Ngelozzi"

"What happened last night King Jali?"

"Nyuswa something awful befell both our clans. Mostly our children."

I swallow my saliva.

"What happened my King? What do you mean by something bad befell our children?"

"Eehm Mapholoba last night a black cloud casted a spell on us. A very dishearting and agonizing omen was dropped on our doorstep. My son and your daughter lost their child."

He glares at me without giving me an expression that I can read into.

"They lost their child?"

"Yes Fuze we lost our grandchild last night. This is the cloth the little one's blood shed on" Nozi hands me the bed sheet covered in blood. Fuze stands up and rolls a fists his now showing me pain and worry.

"Mapholoba I've put it upon my stride to clean up the mess left by my son by appeasing your ancestors. I want to apologize for the inconvenience caused by these two. Meaning I need you to meet me half way in fixing things"

"Ngelози miscarried the baby? All that blood is came out from my daughter's body?" He manages to say with his eyes semi closed his pushing his tears away.

"Fuze we are very much sorry for everything. This knife is cutting deep inside we also feel ripped apart. The pain is suffocating and loud it cannot be ignored. Hence we want to pay you for your daughter's kraal two cows for that and two more cows for the damages and one cow for this bad omen of having a Jali offspring die in her womb. We know it's not gonna fix anything or bring back what you've lost but we need to tackle this the traditional way. We also gonna need you in the process of burying the child which here will be this sheet. Please Fuze" Nozi says with a sincere voice. Fuze goes back to his sit he hides his face in his hands while facing the ground "

" Nyuswa we apologize for everything we are sincerely sorry no words can explain how deeply sorry we are"

I hear a sniff.

"Can I see her?"

He says with his hands trembling.

Ndandatho

"I still don't understand why the baby died"

"I believe there's a valid and strong reason behind it"

"What could that be Zimele?"

"Ndandatho the gods see and understand things differently from us. What makes sense to us doesn't make sense to them so blaming yourself won't undo what has already happened. Go check up on Ngelozi she would really appreciate it"

"I'm not ready Zimele"

"Ndandatho go there you staying in here locked up will send off a very bad message. She needs you more than ever"

"I will try"

"Don't try just do it" He says applying petroleum gel on Gatsha's body he just washed him.

"I will ask gogo to sew few baby clothes for the baby"

"Which baby?"

"Ngelozi's we gonna need those for the cleansing ceremony"

"I see."

"Zimele are you okay? I mean you've been asking me if I was okay but I didn't do the same with you"

"I'm fine Ndandatho" He says quickly like his blocking me from asking any further questions.

"I meant regarding Hawu's case"

"I don't want to talk about it please"

"But we need to"

"I don't want to discuss it Ndandatho having this scenario playing vividly on my mind makes me wanna punch Ngcolosi on the face. It's a constant reminder his been sneaking around my mother's back to bend slaves down the thought of it irks me"

"The throne is my biggest concern Zimele"

"The throne is mine then Nhlonipho's or Gatsha's not that illegitimate son who goes around beating women and dropping their underwears"

"Like you said Jali what's makes sense to us doesn't make sense to the gods. What if the gods bless him but not you just like they did with my fathers situation? Let's remember Zimele every child is born with a gift enveloped in their hands what if his the chosen one wether his a blue blood or purple blood. What if Thuthukani is his to rule? "

" Over my dead body. That can only happen in their eternal sleep not in reality that throne is mine! "

" We can't be sure of that "

" Go to Ngelosi or something Ndandatho!" He snaps." I'm sorry"

"I told you to drop it!"

"Sorry Jali. I guess my mind was running wild"

I say and look outside the window I should go check up on Ngelozi for real.

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Fuze

Have you ever found yourself wandering in a cage of "What if's" or "I should've" or "I shouldn't have" kind of a situation? Right now I'm playing that endless song of blame and regrets on the back of my mind. I feel very much responsible for every little contributing factor that led to my daughter's predicament. I

shouldn't have added more pressure on pushing an already collapsing building. I should've done so much better than being an adding factor to her baby dying. I know feeling guilty and sorry won't change anything but I can't help it. I don't even know what to say or where to begin. I can't even face my daughter without guilt trapping me. Right now I'm no different from the woman I've been trying so hard to prevent her from knowing or having around her life I'm no different to the woman I've been trying forcefully to protect her from. She doesn't deserve this not at all.

I knock yet again nobody permits me entrance. Do I see myself inside? Maybe..

—

Gezekile

I've never been broken before nor have I ever experienced such a predicament. Honestly I don't know how comfort Nhlonipho and Ngelozi for I do not know how deep and far the knife cuts. I don't even know where it hurts the most I might think the pain is cutting deep in their hearts only to find its worsen in the brain. I can't even say "It's gonna be okay" because that is a big fat lie. These kids are going through the most sadly there's nothing I can say nor do to numb the pain nor can I make it subside or bring back their innocent and angelic smiles. I guess I will have to watch them vanish into the unknown.

"How is Ngelozi doing Ndandatho?"

"She's.. She's a mess Gogo"

I heave a sigh filled with sadness.

"Did she eat?"

"She's still in the very same position she was in yesterday the only difference today is the wetness of her pillows. You could mop floors with the tears she's cried"

"Poor thing.."

"I wish I can tell her the reason behind her fate but it will sound like mumble she won't understand anyof it."

I lift my eyes to look at her.

"Why wouldn't she understand Majali?"

"Gogo it's complicated"

"Do you by any chance know the reason behind her dilemma Liyana?"

"Yes gogo it's one thing I would rather not say for safety reasons"

"You beating around the bush young lady what is going on Liyana? Was the fantom related to the ancestors or her anxiety?"

"Gogo all I can tell you is that the ancestors did whatever they did to protect Ngelozi to the forces that surround her or haunts her. There's so much you all don't know about Ngelozi and it would be very wrong of me to tell you information related to Ngelozi without telling her first. "

" But we somehow related to her we need to know Maka Gatsha"

"Just a snippet of it then. Mafuze is not Ngelozi's mother. Her biological mother has a very bad and polluted aura that is seeking a home in Ngelozi. You know how these spiritual warfare works gogo. What happened to the baby was to protect this Kingdom from evil as it was warming its way in through the pregnancy "

" Is this Spanish you just spoke MaJali? Cos I don't understand any of the things you saying"

"See why I said Ngelozi won't understand any of the things I would say? This is very confusing yet clear it's just that I need to explain all this to her father at least"

"Who is this mother you talking about? Because from your sentence I was only able to grasp bad and evil."

A knock disturbs us Ngcolosi comes in.

"Ma I should leave take care"

"We not done talking Ndandatho"

"I need to attend to a couple of things." Liyana says glaring at Ngcolosi there's a little stare contest till Liyana walks out..

Ngcolosi

What a long stare she just gave me. I don't even recall what it

was that I needed to tell my mother.

"Ngcolosi you didn't come here to stare at the door speak up"

"Eehm.. Yes mama. I came to discuss the Ngelози dilemma"

"What about it?"

"How do we go about everything?"

"We need a traditionalist to lead the ceremony cos I myself I don't know where the baby will be buried since you know. Blue blood mixed with red blood"

"The baby is a Jali though"

"But the mother wasn't royalty Ngcolosi"

"Doesn't a child deserve both rights from both sides?"

She looks at me.

"Ngcolosi an illegitimate child can never ever be recognized as a royal child no matter what happens. That child might not be buried with our forefathers no matter how much we would like for that to happen."

"So you saying an illegitimate son can never ever have a say in the Kingdom?"

"Definitely"

I glare at her and heave a sigh.

"Ma.."

"Yes"

"Can I ask you something personal"

"Shoot"

"Has father ever cheated on you previously and if so how did you feel about it?"

"Your father was a very honest man Ngcolosi anything he did or said behind my back he would come home and share with me. He wasn't that kind of a man."

"So you saying he never cheated?"

"You know him he was your father did you ever see a manipulator in him?"

I swallow hard.

"Had he cheated where you gonna leave him or stay or better yet treat him like a none existing being?"

"I wouldnt have left but he would've left."

I swallow hard this is getting much more worse. At least I'm certain on the other aspect of him ruling these grounds.

"Why are you asking me these questions Ngcolosi? Did you by any chance" I cut her short immediately. "No mama I would never. I was just asking"

"Nozibele is a good wife Ngcolosi keep that In mind"

"Thank you ma. Let me go fetch a Maine to help us with this ceremony"

"Better"

I walk out bumping into Ndandatho holding spring onions and spinach leaves. She looks at me.

"Princess Ndandatho how are you?"

"I'm very much well my King and yourself?"

"All is well."

"I see."

"Ndandatho you've been giving me stares that I'm not comfortable with is there anything you would like to share with me? Maybe my ancestors passed a message to you for me."

"Nothing at all my King the only vision I had was that of Ngelozi but all other things

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the only vision I had was that of Ngelozi but all other things I'm certain the frog's nakedness will be seen by everyone after a rainy season"

I swallow hard.

"I see.. Anyway I need your help on informing Ngelozi to clean up and all that we have a guest"

"A guest?"

"A Maine"

"No problem my King please excuse me" She turns to walk away.

Nhlonipho

She's still in the same position as she was when I left the house. Two plates are still stuffed with food flies are dancing on it. I glare at her and take the plates outside to discard the food I walk to the kitchen. Where I bump into my brother's wife.

"Prince Nhlo"

"Hi sisi Ndandatho"

"How are you doing today?"

"Is there any hot water in the urn?"

"Eehm yes"

"Can I have some"

"Pleasure." She says pouring some in a bucket she hands it over.

"Is Ngelozi awake?"

"Yeah"

"Nhlonipho how are you feeling with everything?"

"I don't want to talk about it thanks for water"

I walk away bumping into Zimele who greets and I greet back then walkway before I get yet another interrogation. I find Ngelozi wiping her eyes. She glares at me and I return it.

"Sorry I let the food go to waste"

"I brought you water to bath"

She keeps quiet and tries to stand. My bed sheets are bloody again. I stand up to change them I can feel her eyes piercing on my skin.

"I'm sorry"

"Sorry for what?"

"Everything"

"And what is everything?"

"The baby and the blood stains. I'm sorry"

"How are you feeling?"

"I don't know" She says sniffing.

"Regardless of everything you need to eat and bath"

"Am I smelling Nhlonipho?"

"Did I say that?"

"What are you implying then?"

"I don't want to talk because it might get ugly before it's gets beautiful Ngelozi"

"You saying I'm smelling Nhlonipho?" I ignore her and throw the sheets on the floor.

"I'm talking to You!!"

"Don't scream at me! You hear me?"

"And don't raise your voice at me! You insulting me and you want me to be cool about it?"

"Didn't I say you need to eat and bath huh? Ngelozi I just lost a child! A child I didn't get a chance to hold nor name don't nag me about odors that I'm not smelling dammit!"

"And I didn't lose a child?"

"Fighting me is pointless Ngelozi you need to bath and stop justifying bullshit"

"Don't use that tone with me! I'm in pain okay! I lost my baby and I feel empty Nhlonipho for I've lost another treasure blessing on top of losing my family!"

She starts crying again. I sit on the bed and scratch my hand.

"I wanted my child alive not dead! I know I'm dumb and childish but I would've loved my baby for this baby would've been my family since my own parents abandoned me and disowned me!"

I glare on her as she cries.

"I'm sorry Nhlonipho that I couldn't save your child but this was above me I'm sorry you won't get a chance to hold your child I'm sorry okay!!!"

"Ngelози"

She cries hysterically forcing a tear out of my eyelids.

"Why didn't Ndandatho save my baby though?"

"It was above her just like it was with you" I say with a trembling voice.

"This hurts!! This hurts!!!" She blurts out a sob stand up Nhlo and embrace her. You love this woman it's nobody's fault that you lost the baby surely the gods had a valid reason.. You saw the marks on her body you were there when her Reed broke you were there when everyone pointed fingers at her and curses her. Nhlonipho you were there when she was struggling to accept her pregnancy you've seen her cry quite a lot. Even when she wasn't okay she let you in her warm folds Jali hold this woman. At least

tell her you love her and that everything will be okay in time or maybe you will be by her side no matter the storm and quakes. At least tell her no natural disaster will make your love for her waver just do something don't watch her trembling all by herself. Cry on each other's shoulders if needed be. She's in pain and so are you embrace her even if she suffocates and dies in your embrace just do it...

"It hurts Nhlonipho"

"I'm sorry my flower I know how you feel and I love you still"

I manage to say as we both cry on each other's shoulders.

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Hawu

"Gabi can we talk"

"Sure thing warrior" She walks towards me with a bright smile painted on her face. She sits besides me. "I'm here now. What do you want to talk about?" She looks at me with her beautiful eyes. "I want to know if your wounds are healing i think we need to embark on a journey to Umthombo. Your family needs to be informed about your suddenness condition"

"Are you trying to send away warrior?"

"No but you really need to go home Gabi keeping you here might put me in trouble. People will think I'm behind your kidnapping. I'm not sending you away."

"I hear you warrior Hawu"

"Are you angry maybe?"

She flaps her long beautiful eyelashes.

"Gabi"

"After all this is not my home"

She stands up. "You also dont like me just like your mother. I will leave"

"Gabi its not like that i like you so much but you cant stay here not without your parents permission"

"Whatever Hawu" She walks away. I swallow hard my grandmother limps to sit besides me.

"Sizwe"

"Gogo"

He looks at me then heaves a sigh.

"Who is this little girl?"

"Gabisile Buthelezi"

"King Zikhali's daughter?"

"Yes"

"She's beautiful"

"Very beguiling"

I say still glaring at her legs as she walks to one of the chamber's.
I feel my grandmother's eyes cutting me deep. "What gogo?"

"Nothing"

"Better"

Nozibele

I put the teapot and mugs on the table one of the royal helpers comes with cookies. "Thank you my darling" She semi bows and walks away. I glare at mama Maseko "Please help yourself maKhuboni" My friend and in law- Bonisiwe Buthelezi is here. She caught me off guard by popping in when I'm undergoing such tribulations and stressing dilemmas. I was so delighted to see her its been a while without seeing her and i somehow feel guiltily for not coming in numbers to show her support regarding her last born's missing predicament. I feel like a horrible friend honestly.

"You made this for me MaJali?"

"Yes maKhuboni help yourself my sister"

"I'm sorry my Queen but i will pass i have no room for this treat in my belly."

"Oh!" i say disappointed She has never refused our food maybe she's full. So thoughtful of me.

"More for me" Boni says pouring herself a cup of tea. "I should've told you my Queen" Mamaseko adds. "Its okay next time i will ask even though my mother warned me against that" I smile. "So when will you manage to make deliveries for me?" Boni asks. She was charmed by my lavender body butter. "I will come to your Kingdom my Queen" My mother in law glares Makhuboni. "Please do i could use this bodybutter to enhance my mood" Boni says biting her cookie. "No problem my Queen i should get going"

"I will walk you out"

"No need i know my way around this house and compound" She says smiling Boni glares at me. I look at Makhuboni "I once was a cleaner remember?" She smiles. "I will walk you out its always a pleasure to do so" I walk her out. "Ew! Boni how are you my friend?" i say sitting besides her "Excuse me kids i want to knit in my private room" My mother in law says standing up it feels like she knew i needed privacy with my friend. We have so much to discuss starting from the pregnancy of Nhlonipho all the way to its ending. Not forgetting my husband acting strange lately. She looks at me. "What?"

"I dont want to talk Nozi"

"You already talking just say it already"

"Who is that woman?"

"She's a very important person in Kingdom. She is our supplier"

"Mmmm.." A vey important person She us our supplier" So you say my friend"

She looks at me someway.

"Yes she is our supplier nothing much"

"A supplier that knows all corners of your house?" Why am i getting uneasy with this conversation? "Aargh! She was a cleaner before she became a supplier"

"Those are the only services she rendered in this Kingdom or there's more?"

"Boni.."

"Your cookies are good that i give you." i look at her "is your supplier a baker too?"

I roll my eyes. "Are there any improvements on finding Gabi?"

"Mehlo told us she is safe and that she will return home soon"

"And you satisfied with that information"

"Just like you satisfied with your supplier supplying for your entire family" Okay what is going on here? What's with her obsession with ma Maseko? "Greetings elders" Ndandatho says walking in with little Bangi she shares a long hug with her mother. "She knows her way around this house and compound?" Mmmm something feels wrong about her statement.

Nhlonipho

"How are you feeling?"

"Numb"

"Mom made you a vegetable soup please eat up even if It's two spoons."

"Ive lost my appetite."

"Ngelo you losing weight and your eyes are sunken you need to have something please"

"Nhlo im not hungry please don't force me"

"Ngelozi if you love me you will eat this soup"

She heaves a sigh "Fine just one spoon"

"Make them five"

"Four"

"Six"

"No six is too much i will vomit"

"Okay four it is"

"Okay"

"Now say sehranmagzine.comh!" She slightly opens her mouth i
shove a spoon inside her mouth

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it comes out food less. I shove another till the bowl is empty. I
wipe the corners of her mouth and then smile.

"I still love you a lot and I'm proud of you"

She smiles. "Can we please bath now"

"I will wash myself" She says faintly. "I can help till you strong
enough"

"No Nhlonipho i will wash myself"

"You afraid of me touching your blood?"

"Its dirty blood i cant watch you touch it"

"I will fix you water then"

"Thank you" I gently brush her hairy cheek with my thumb. I walk to the kitchen to mix water i walk out bumping chests into Ndandatho.

"Hey Nhlo how is she?"

"She ate today"

"That's awesome here please put these in her bathing water they gonna help with soothing the pain"

"Thank you sisi Ndandatho"

"Pleasure and how are you feeling?"

"Its too soon to tell but with time the pain will subside and we will move on"

"I'm sorry though about everything"

"Its okay and thank you"

"I will pop in soon and please wear decent clothes a Maine will

see to us later"

"No problem" I faintly smile and walk away. I find blood rolling down her legs theres some on the floor. She glares at me. "My apologies i will clean up especially the bed." I shift my eyes to the bed sweet Jesus this is too much honestly. "I will take care of it" i say with a sting on my chests. I remove the bedding and toss it on the floor. I mix bathing water for her adding the herbs i received from Ndandatho. I take her messy clothes along the bed sheets. I wipe off the blood thats on the floor i step outside to burn those. Theres no way I'm touching blood i will get new sheets in the house. I think i need to walk to the river bank this is too much for me. "Excuse me"

I call one of the helpers "Please get me new bed sheets and sanitary towels in the royal house get them delivered to my chambers" My Prince " She says walking away" checha Nhlo we miss school we even forgot how to count to 100"

I smile and pick her up i gaze into her beautiful eyes. "I'm sorry my angel"

"Are we gonna have a class today?"

"Not today Mimi"

"Why not we miss school and singing with checha Ngelozi"

"Both Checha Ngelozi and myself are not feeling well we cant teach you for now"

"Are you sick?"

"We broken"

She covers her mouth. "How bad?"

"Very bad mimi"

"Like a cup?" i nod and faintly smile. "Are you gonna collect the pieces and try to glue them back together? When i break my mothers cups i try to glue back the pieces or sweeping them then discard them somewhere far!" I feel tears build up in my eyes. "So you think i should sweep away these pieces ifgluing them back isn't working?" She nods and adds "Yes so nobody will know and see that you broke the mug." I squeeze tiny Mimi into a hugtears overwhelm me "Thank you mimi"

"Are you crying?" i smile she uses her tiny hands to wipe my tears away "Im sorry checha Nhlonipho you will be okay."

"Now that you guaranteed me i will be okay"

"Minenhle!!!!" Her mother shouts "I have to go" i put her down and kiss her chubby cheeks "Thank you"

"Tell checha Ngelosi i said hello" She says waving i kiss her tiny hands and nod. "Minenhle come clean after mess!! Greetings my Prince" Her mother says holding a whip. "Greetings mama and please dont hurt her" She smiles and Mimi walks away i guess she just advised me to pick myself up such a smart little girl.

Ngcolosi

I'm pacing around in the middle of nowhere waiting for Mrs Maseko to appear i know she uses this road when going home. Finally she appears eating nuts i pull her hand. She drops her nuts. "Ouch Ngcolosi!!"

"What did i say to you about coming to my house on a regular?"

"Ngcolosi you need to stop threatening me i didn't go there to stir up trouble. I'm working"

"Phoxile you better not say anything"

"My son is a Jali too Ngcolosi! its unfair for him to live in this manner!"

"Jali my foot! Have you forgotten how you conceived him? Dont make me remind you"

She glares at me. "Soon our little lie will be out Ngcolosi people will know the truth about Hawu you couldnt even send a hunt out for him when he left the palace. You were supposed to have done something Ngcolosi!"

"Hawu is not my burden and i careless about him. Shall my family know about Hawu i swear i will banish you from these grounds i let you stay because you are mutual friends"

"You meant family?"

"End whatever business you running with my family"

"And you think that will prevent the truth from coming out? It wont Ngcolosi! Hawu is a Jali wether you like it or not!"

"You mean a diluted jali?"

"It makes no difference but his flood and your blood and that of your sons runs deep in his veins"

"The throne will never be his in case you want to secure that"

"But he will be recognized as Jali because thats who he is!"

"Get lost before i lose my cool"

I walk away leaving her standing.

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Nhlonipho

The maine came to attend to us of which we didn't get answers to the questions we had. He didnt say much on that but rather "We mustn't question the doings of the gods" Thats all he gave us and obviously herbs for Ngelozi and i to bath with. The other one we were told to bite chew and spit it out without swallowing. The baby's ceremony will be nothing major or exaggerated less people will be part of it solely Ngelozi and myself and the person who will be doing the ceremony.

We gathered in my hut reading a book. I'm reading the book and she is listening attentively. Its her favorite William Shakespeare's book. A knock on my door snaps me out of it "Come in" I shout putting the book down. Ngelozi raises her head from my chest but i pull her back.The door swings open. "Fuze"

I say to myself in shock Ngelo immediately removes her head from my chest. She resorts to sitting on the edge of the bed i swallow hard and glare at her father who is exchanging eyes with us. "Hi"

"Greetings" We say at the same. He clears his throat. "I brought you fruits and nuts your favorite" I look at Ngelozi another face appears as Fuze shifts a little from the door. "Greetings my Prince" Her mother says with a broad smile.

"And daughter" She adds. We greet her back. They sit on the two chairs opposite my bed "Let me excuse you" I say standing up "You are needed as well for what we about to say. "Fuze says he better not say I'm needed so he can slap me again. "Oh.. Okay" i say sitting on the bed. "Thank you for the fruits and nuts" Ngelozi

-

"Its always a pleasure" Mafuze says smiling. Fuze looks at us without saying anything.

"Let me get drinks for everyone"

"There wont be a need for that Prince" The father says the gods know I'm not comfortable with sharing a tiny space with the likes of Fuze.

"Eehm we came to pass our condolences. We heard about the aftermath of your little one leaving us before turning into a full human being. We dont know how you feel but our hearts pour out to you and your family Jali. We are sorry for everything." Fuze says Ngelozi and myself glare at each other. "My children we very much sorry about this omen that has befell you. Our hearts pour out" The mother says looking at Ngelozi.

Ndandatho

My beautiful mother hasn't left the Palace as we speak I'm laying on her bed with my head resting on her lap. While brushing my back and hair. We are discussing Gabi and how horrible we all feel about her absence but on the contrary we both at ease knowing she will be home soon alive and unharmed. "Hows the pregnancy Liyana?"

"Tiring mama. Its starting to kick in that I'm pregnant. The fatigue and laziness has spiked high ma"

"Sorry my baby in few days time we will be holding and kissing delicate little lips and cheeks." i smile and brush my bump "Lets hope you not fighting the poor guy Ndandatho" I look at her "I'm not fighting him" She looks at me and giggles "That look is selling you out young lady"

I roll my eyes. He bores me lately but when his not giving me his attention it hurts big time. Poor Zimele now dedicates his time on his son to avoid having a catfight with me. He doesnt even bother with asking the forbidden fruit he just sleeps without getting erected thats exactly what we've become and sadly we dont see a problem with that. "Ndandatho dont push your husband away"

"What if he is the one doing the pushing away ma?"

"I dont follow"

"There's something going on mama in the royal house"

"You mean that body butter selling woman with your father in law?" I lift my head to glare at her "You know that mama?"

"That woman sold herself out poor Nozi doesnt see what's happening right under her head"

"Mama there's more"

"What more?"

"I think there's a child involved"

She pops her eyes out in shock. "Tell me you joking Ndandatho"

"I'm not mama"

"Nozi will not survive this yooh uNgcolosi naye!"

"Can we not say anything till we certain ma"

"Of course my baby" She says still surprised.

"How's dad and Busani?"

"Your father is handsome as always" She melts at the mention of father "And your brother is still single and he doesn't care. "We giggle." "I should visit you soon"

"Please do your father will be jolly so is your brother" I smile
"Ndandatho it's rude for a woman not to be with their husband at this hour. Zimele needs water to bath and a little body massage and cuddling"

"I'm still enjoying your company mama besides he has Gatsha"

"Liyana Gatsha is not a wife but you are. Go to your husband Ndandatho"

I glare at her. "No leave"

"Mama you sending me away?"

"Leave! That boy needs you more than i do"

"Kodwa mama" I say standing up. "Come see me tomorrow during the day besides you need a new hairdo. I will plait your hair" I smile then kiss her cheeks" I love you"

"I love you too" She genuinely smiles and walks me outside.

Zimele

Nhlonipho and myself are gathered on the veranda apparently Fuze is having a private conversation with Ngelozi. "Where is Ndandatho?" i glare at him. "I dont know"

"Thats strange for you not to know where your soon to be wife is." He says eating nuts.

"Liyana is forever angry lately if not snapping"

"Don't you have a tool to fix that?" i glare at Nhlo with narrowed brows" What tool? "

" Duh warrior" i chuckle. "Her moods swings are making it hard to get erected brother"

"Is it that bad?"

"Very bad"

"Damn! Give her a body massage or do something intimate you can bring Gatsha to my chamber for a night sleep"

I look at my brother "Are you sure?"

"Definitely

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you can bring Gatsha to my chamber for a night sleep" I look at my brother "Are you sure?"

"Definitely i need all the distraction in the world brother. Ngelozi is no different from a zombie. All she does is sniff sniff and sniff. I know shes hurt just like me but i miss her crazy selfsadly i cant bring that back."

"Thats bad brother she will come through be patient with her. Women bore me at times" I say eating Nhlonipho's nuts. "They really boring at times" We both gaze on the stars. I miss my wife

not the stranger I'm sharing a room with. "These nuts are delicious where did you get them?"

"Ngelozzi's parents. They are the reason i was fond of going to Ngelozzi's house."

"That explains the sex drive" He looks at me. "Nuts make you fertile brother"

"Really? I didn't know"

"And now you know.." Ndandatho appears singing that belly my Lord. Did i really make it look this big? "Greeting Jali Prince's"

"Greetings MaJali" Nhlo says. "What are you two eating? Can i have some?" She's on her happy side today come morning she will be grumpy and all ugly. I glare at her "We having nuts ma'am"Nlo-

" Eew! They taste like sand" i narrow my brows. "You haven't tasted them though"

"But they taste awful that i know"

"Your opinion right?"

"Fact"

"These nuts taste good they actually the best thing I've ever tasted" She blows her nose i smirk "Excuse me? Are you comparing me to nuts?" Nhlonipho laughs "I said the nuts taste good" i smirk again. "Better sleep with those nuts for the next coming ten years" Nhlonipho cracks up even more. "Lets go inside."She looks at me i look at Nhlo."Massage" He whispers. Ndandatho is long gone thats a snippet of what i deal with lately

but i still love her.

Hawu

We staring at the moon while making corn on the fire. The compound is silent only crawling inserts are making the loudest noise and obviously the fire flames. "So do you want yours with salt or pepper or just plain?" i say trying to break the ice tomorrow she's leaving. "How about dont talk to me?"

"Gabi come on you can't stay mad at me for the whole day"

"Well i can Hawu"

"What wrong did i do?"

She looks at me then her corn. "Gabi you mad at me for taking you home?"

She looks at me and says nothing. "I hate what you doing friends talk Gabi"

"I'm not your friend warrior"

"Okay siblings talk is that convincing?"

She folds her hands and glares at me. I swallow hard and look away. She keeps quiet and so do i. She's giving me a long stare i return it back.

"I think you should go sleep it off"

"I dont want"

"Okay" i pull my corn from the fire. "Must i pull yours?" She nods.I pull it out and hand it over to her."Here you go"

"Thank you"

"Pleasure. Salt or no salt?"

"Salt please excuse me"

She stands up heading elsewhere. Its dark wherever she is going.
"Gabi"

"Mmmmm.."

"Where are you going?"

"Im coming"

"Its dark you gonna trip and fall or better yet get a snake poison"

"I got this"

"Fine" i eat my corn in a split second she screams. I immediately jump and run to her direction with my heart beating faster than a rocket scientist's. I kneel in front of her "What happened"

"I don't know i just stepped on something cold and slippery it made my skin cringe and i.." I put my finger on her full lips
"Shhh!!! Dont panic it was a wrong" She looks at me i return it.
"Come let me carry you inside"

I pick her up She wraps her hands on my neck and looks at me. She decides on resting her head on my collar i feel her lips press gently on my neck. I close my eyes She does that again "Gabi please don't do that"

"Why not?"

"I.. Well i.." i stutter. She looks at me i tilt my head and look at her "Your eyes are watery"

"Wind just.. Just blew on my eyes"

"I see" She smiles and does what i warned her against. Why is my heart beating this fast? This beating is accompanied by gashes of fear and shivers that strikes hard on my spine. Something is wrong with me. "Good night"

"Good night" She embraces me then kisses my cheek. I watch her disappear inside the house. I go sit by the fire i eat my corn with so much wondering in head. I miss Zimele in times like this.

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Ngcolosi

The scent of her body butter always makes me weak. I sneak up on her then cup her boobs. I kiss her neck while inhaling her aromatic fragrance. "Sthandwa sami"

"Ngcolosi Jali"

she says soft. "How are you my love?"

She heaves a sigh

" I'm fine."

In my history of knowing my wife her "I'm fine" Means the opposite and if i dont get to the bottom of it now she will sink ships the day she explodes. I nibble the back of her ear.

"Mommy do you want to talk about it?" She exhales deeply.

"kaMaseko was a bit rude towards me today."

"What did she do?" She heaves a sigh

"Its how she said it Jali."

"Said what?"She chuckles. " She mentioned something that got me mesmerized and uncomfortable."

"Such as? " I say still holding her.

"She said "I know my way around this house" its like she was trying to tell me something that i wasn't aware of like she's been or still a royal mistress." I hold her tightly and plant sloopy kisses on her neck.

" She even refused my food after so many years of licking plates clean without leaving a trace of crumbs she was rude"

"She thinks its our fault that Hawu left the Kingdom"i say." That's rubbishthat Maseko boy left willinglywe didn't tell him to beat up his wife."

I caress her belly."Majali dont mind kaMasekoshes not a threat."

"And how do you know that?" She says staring at me. "Thats because she's nobody of significance her thoughts only carry value in her mind not that of everyone. Dont let her get to you she's bitter not having another home to wreck is driving her crazy"

she looks at me somehow." Another home to wreck? Meaning?"

" Honey i will narrate everything some other timefor now can we make the most of this moment and time?"

" I'm afraid i cant let this slide not when she said out loud that she knows all corners of my home."

"You think i would have motives of undressing her?"

"She's a beautiful woman Ngcolosi."

"Yes she's a beautiful woman but not for me. The only beauty my eyes see is this beauty not that of another woman."

"Jali stop flirting I'm concerned about you and the chances of you committing adultery with ka Maseko" i chuckle.

" Would you love me still if i did commit adultery at some point in my life?"

" Over my dead body i will leave Ngcolosi."

She says setting herself loose. "Why would you even consider doing that?"

She says wearing her night garment. "Majali I'm a man."

"Rubbish!! Ngcolosi if that woman meant what i think or suspect i swear I'm leaving. I'm too pretty to be played by you. Ngidi would jump puddles and cross oceans to have me as Thabile's replacement if not Mota. Look at me carefully before you think im desperate."

" You have your eyes on Ngidi? "

" I'm a woman figure that on your own what it means."

" Nozibele i dont have my eyes on anyone but you."

" Then how does mama Hawu know all corners of this house if not stripping her nakedness for you? It cant be Nhlonipho or Zimele whose showing her all corners of this house but you."

I giggle

"Majali you really think i would do that to you?" I chuckle. Its not funny Bhengu."

"Come here my love and stop creating non existing scenarios in your head."

I say pulling her toward me. "Ngcolosi if you cheated tell me" i heave a sigh."I didnt cheat on you and never had i thought of it. The only thing I've ever cheated on you with was the brandy i would sneak out at night to sip while you were fast asleep.I love you MaJali."

I embrace her and close my eyes....

Ngelozi

Nhlonipho walks in carrying Gatsha he is grown and all cute. I haven't seen him in ages his delicate and delightful little face still captivate me. My lips slightly move to form a smile. Bangi say hello mommy Ngelozi.

"Yeyo mama" I pop my eyes out in shock Bangi talks? Isn't he little to be speaking? I stand to kiss his forehead. Nhlonipho glares at me our eyes lock for a little while. He puts his hand on my waists. "Hello little Zimele" he smile and stretches out his tiny hands for me to pick him up "hey stranger." I move to the bed with him on my arms.

"His grown" i manage to say Nhlo looks at me as his leaning against the wall staring at us. "Very grown and handsome too. I just don't like this afro hair its too much."

"His fine like this you want to turn him into a potato." He giggles.
"He will look good in bald not this bushy hair."

"Leave Bangi alone if you want to cut your hair do it alone without involving him." He smiles "little Gatsha they want to turn you into a silver sparkling dog bowl imagine?"

He smiles i smile back. Nhlo moves to sit besides me.

" He is spending a night with us."

"Oh! Where are his parents?"

"In their chamber."

I look at him "no problem" .We keep quiet and both glare at Gatsha Nhlo brushes his brows and i move his hand on my cheeks. He looks at me and i look at him. " Are you okay?" I ask.

"Are you okay?"

"Seeing my father kinder of revived me."

"What did he say?"

"His sorry for beating me up he misses me and loves me and that i should come back home so we can talk." He narrows his brows.

"Come home?"

"Yes."

"Oh!" He says glaring at me differently from previously. "What? Are you okay?"

"Yeah.. Sure."

"Is it about me considering going home?"

"The anguish will suffocate me should you leave atleast in your presence the pain and grief was shared but i understand Ngelozi."

"I can stay two more days if its fine by you."

"I would really appreciate that. Did you eat?"

"I forced myself to eat two fruits if its fine by you."

"I would really appreciate that. Did you eat?"

"I forced myself to eat two fruits"

"mango and banana" i smile so does he. "How do you know?"

"I know your favorite fruits Ngelo you always bullied me to bring you mango each time i came to your house."

"I wasn't bullying you but asking you politely."

"She said bullying is being polite" I glare at him he narrows his brows. "I wont agree with you Ngelo you were bullying me and that's it."

"I guess i knew you were gonna put me in serious trouble someday hence the bullying. I drank guava leaves at some point and.."

"You shitted the baby fluids for two days?"He laughs and i

narrow my brows ."Its not funny. "

"Do you ever think before you talk Ngelo?"

"Of course i do. "

"Mmmm... I see" he smiles showing off his beautiful teeth.

"Seems like Zimele Jnr is sleeping."

"I will tuck him."

"Let me bath have you bathed already?"

"Yes."

"Fine" I remove the few things that are on the bed and put Gatsha then cover him with a blanket. I glare at him and date back to my days of being pregnant it was short-lived but the idea of carrying a little human being inside me was very exciting and cultivating. It was worth all the struggles and misery. At some point i had already figured what i was gonna name my child. Its a pity my baby didnt cease to be born but rather to give in on death. In a spilt second i feel his arms around me and his thumb wiping my tears.

"Its okay my daisy we will survive this. The pain will subside with time all this misery will be gone with the wind."

"Its hard to believe though Nhlonipho."

"We will be okay. We might have lost our baby but not the love we hold for each other. We've been through a lot before we lost this baby and we came out of those without a doubt that we did everything in our powers and we conquered whatever triumph. This too shall pass"

"I wish it passes tomorrow"

"Or we can try again when we both ready and married."

I look at him. I no longer want babies what if they will all die? I'm not trying anything.

"Fine"

"Don't cry my petuniawe will be okay that i promise you." He plants a soft kiss on my forehead. We remain in each others arms.

Ndandatho

The massage is very soothing and recuperating this little treat sounds nothing like the man I fell in love with. Zimele is sweet and all but being a man with soft hands I've never seen nor known about that one. But here i am with oil greased on my naked body and his hands kissing the pain and fatigue away.

"Who taught you this technique ?"

"I suppose you wanted to say thank you my beloved husband not that"

"I just want to thank the person warrior nothing much."

"I'm self taught before you i had a toothless gray haired old hag as a girlfriend so she taught me these things."

"Thinking i will freight and get all jealous sorry lover."

He chuckles. "I was telling you whose behind this skill."

"I appreciate her late self." We giggle.

"This human being is turning us into strangers MaJali."

"You planted her in here."

"So i have to succumb the sticks and stones?"

"Like a warrior that you are."

"It would've been better if i was with Hawu the pain would've been shared."

"This is the second time you mention him do you miss him?"

"His been a part of my life since we were kids Ndandatho. I shared everything with himso did he. The only thing we didn't share was the obsession of women."

"I understand Jali the bond you had was inseparable."

"Even though my ill mannered father could've been responsible for his existence."

"How do you feel about the probability of that being true?"

"At the end of the day Hawu took after his father to be a

cassanova sadly my mother married a pimped penis."

"Zimele dont talk ill of your father."

"I can't stand him he annoys me for lying for so many years. He has been sleeping besides my mother for years but never had the decency of coming clean his a cock."

I keep quiet. "How's the pain now?"

"Better" i tilt my head to face him he leans over to smash his lips on my mine. He gently and carefully flips me over to face the roof. He slightly lays on top of me with is manhood erected.He kisses the back of my ear my neck my jaw line my collarbones he moves to my tits and moves the tip if his tongue in circular on my hard nipples i bite my lower lip and grab on the bed covers. He moves his tongue to my bellybutton then that sacred place. He teases my clit till the pleasure and pressure is unbearable. He taps his hard mamba on it.I moan softly when i least expect it he slides in gently till his all in. He glides on me with his eyes closed.

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Ndandatho

I sleep on my side catching some breath.

"Liyana"

"Honey"

"I'm not done" He says with his smoky voice while massaging his huge mamba. I glare at him shocked by all this he just cum. He should be done already. I think he wants me to deliver this baby right here and right now. "Zimele I'm tired"

"Dont do any of the work i will do it myself"

"I'm satisfied already"

"That was just a warm up MaJali the actual match resumes right now" I think tears will bail me out of this one. "Please get on your knees"

"Zimele I'm pregnant"

"Liyana I've been starved for days can i quench the thirst please " I force myself up to do as he instructed "Chest down and buttocks up"

"Zimele consider the baby's safety.."

"I would never put my baby in danger MaJali"

"Are you punishing me maybe?"

"I thought you loved this joy candy"

"I do just that I'm tired"

"We only had one Ndandatho"

"This one is my final one Zimele"

"Fine my beautiful sexy Princess."

"Dont call me that" I say resting my chest on the pillow. In a blink of an eye his going in and out slapping hard against my butt cheeks. Poor pregnant Liyana all she does is screaming Zimele's name and grabbing hard on the bed sheets. When his destination reaches out to him he lays on my back panting hard and his rod throbbing within my kraal. "That was epic my love. I loved it" He what? Loved that? This man hates me honestly if he wasn't my husband and the man who makes me weak i would've long shouted abomination or rape. That's how discomfoting this position was. But in the midst of that i reached my planets. "I love you"

"Please love me enough to get off from me"

"Fine" He says laying besides me he flashes me a smile and kisses my forehead. "I love you"

"I love you too. Can we sleep now?"

"Definitely"

Ngelози

Gatsha looks innocent in his sleep. I love his brows and complexionNdandatho has a beautiful baby. I wonder how mine would've looked like or whom they would've took after between Nhlo and myself.I

just wonder if i was gonna have a girl or boy if they were gonna be big headed as i had always pictured them as. I really wonder i wonder so much. "Nhlo"

"Mmmm.."

"Are you sleeping?"

"No I'm thinking"

"About what?"

"You dont wanna hear about it."

"Try me"

"I'm thinking of a name for the baby"

"I think Khanya would be a beautiful name"

"Here i was thinking of Skhanyiselwe"

I smile. "They kinder sound similar and cute"

"Yeah they do so do we use both?"

"Lets save Skhanyiselwe for the next one"

No Ngelozi i thought you said you didn't want to try again. What is wrong with you? Again what?

"So there's gonna be "Again" Mafuze? "

I blush. "Yes. After getting married though. " I quickly say.

"Let me run the idea to my parents tomorrow"

"What idea?"

"You and i making Skhanyiselwe within marriage. I will talk to my mother and she will talk to my father"

"No Nhlonipho isn't it too soon to do that?"

"There's no such thing as too soon my flower any time is always the right time."

"No Nhlo"

"You scared of being Mrs Jali junior?"

"I'm unafraid Nhlonipho"

"You lying" He says moving closer to me. "Can you feel that?"

"Feel what?"

"Bhengu's rage." i tilt my head to stare at his eyes. He smirks then licks his lower lip i swallow hard. He rests his chin on my shoulder his way too close and his angry Bhengu is poking me. Do men really have to be erected even when its not necessary? I mean i didnt torture him or do anything to make it rise and grow harder.

"His so peaceful and cute to watch" He says brushing my arm.
"He is"

"Mafuze.." He says with a husky voice.

"Mmmm.."

"Can i kiss you?"

God. He wants what's between my legs and i cant give him that I'm still bloody and all that. What baffles me he knows my predicament but here he is making Bhengu to rise.

"MaJali.."

"Nhlo I'm.. I'm still not okay i cant give you what you want"

"Mafuze its only your kiss i want nothing much i know you still sick and all that. But your kiss would put me ease"

"Nhlonipho dont change your mind please"

"I wont i promise"

"I would believe you had this snake not woke up"

"Dont mind the snake just mind my lips"

"A snake bites in case you've forgotten"

"Mapholaba.."

"Fine" i turn to face him. He presses his sweet lips against mine. He pulls my lower lip gently i pull his upper lip. Our lips dance to a rhythm of their own. He invites his tongue forcing me to mine reciprocate his own. He squeezes my bums. "Nhlo.."

"Ngelози yami" He says with a husky voice while kissing my neck.
"Can we stop kissing this is escalating to something else"

"Please give me a hand"

"I thought we agreed for not getting that far"

"A hand wont hurt please"

"Fine.." i get a reach of his wand and give it that hand he requested. He closes his eyes and bites on his lower lip. In a split second my hands are sticky and wet. "Sorry about that" He says.

"Its fine" Hell to no it's not fine. These hands touch food not sperms. "Let me get a cloth to wipe that" He hops out if the bed he looks at me "Thank you i loved it"

"Loved a hand?"

"It was good it made the job done"

"That was gross though it made the job done"

"That was gross though these hands touch food"

"What do you say about my immaculate tongue licking places that are.."

"Just stop!" I say he giggles.

Khethiwe

I spot Fuze smoking outside his veranda i didnt know he smokes. This came as a shock. I walk towards him with my basin stuffed with used up bathing water. "Mapholaba you still awake?" He faces my way. "And you still awake?"

"I just finished bathing and besides Milingo took ages to sleep" He puffs while facing the galaxy. "I see"

"Anyway i came to say goodnight."

"Thank you sleep well yourself" He says still facing the stars. I look at him for a while before i go spill water I'm disappointed honestly. By the time i make my way back to the hut i find him long gone but for some weird and strangest reasons i feel piercing at the back of my body. You know that instinct that tells you someone is behind you? That's exactly what i feel right now. I look behind me but i find no one. I enter the chamber to my surprise i hear the door closes behind me i jump in fear. I face door and what i see makes me cringe and my insides to tie knots. "What do you want?"

I say quivering with my voice breaking in between. "Khethi"

"Hawu leave! Get out!!"

"Dont make noise please i come in peace"

"Peace my foot get lost before i shout abomination!!" i say taking careful steps backwards. "Hawu please leave"

"I'm sorry for what i did Khethiwe."

"What exactly are you sorry for? Nearly killing me or leaving me laying on the floor bloody and aching and unconscious? What are you sorry for Hawu? Cheating on me with two women?"

He heaves a sigh and walks towards Mlingo. "Leave my son! Stay the hell away from him i will shout and Fuze will kill you not forgetting Zimele"

He leans over to hold Mlingo's hand. He brushes it then kisses his forehead. "I'm sorry Khethiwe for everything that I've done. I know it cant undo what i did but at least i want you to know that hurting you wasnt in my best interest it just happened and I'm sorry it left you bruised and bleeding. All i need from you is your forgiveness nothing much. "

I laugh and clap my hands.

"Had i died on that night whom were you gonna apologize to?"

Whom were you gonna be telling this nonsense Hawu?"

"Khethiwe I'm sorry and i mean it."

"In case you thinking i still care about you forget it.I'm done with you Mlingo and myself are done with you Hawu"

"Its not a relationship mending i require from you Khethiwe but your apology."

I look at him why is he gentle out of nowhere? My Hawu was never like this he was a true definition of a warrior. "Hawu leave and dont ever show your ugly face here ever again. Guess what you have my blessings to marry that girl as your first wife. I as Khethiwe im done with you"

"No problem take care Khethiwe. At least can i be allowed to be a part of Mlingo's life"

"Not a chance Mlingo is my son"

"And my son too"

"You are a disgrace not when you were beating me in front of him"

"I'm sorry"

"Shove it in your anus Hawu now leave!" He stands up and glares at me. I take two steps backwards. He looks at me again then heads for the door. He shuts it and finally i can breath.

Zimele

She's snoring peacefully besides me. I've been glaring on her beauty since she fell asleep. The more i look at her its the more i realize how blessed and favored i was to having her as my girlfriend then fiance and wife. I really love this woman as complicated and stubborn she is. I can boldy stand on rooftops and declare my love for her for the whole world to see. It wasn't easy but here we are.

I sneak out of bed cover up and go outside. I need to stretch my legs and besides I'm battling with sleep I slept during the day so you know the struggle. I'm walking around the compound when I spot someone who has features that I strongly believe are those of warrior Hawulesizwe. It's dark outside and the land is quiet but I know my friend of many years. I even know the sound of his footsteps. That tall and athletic body is his. I find myself following this person till he reaches the gate.

"Warrior" I call out. He jumps in fear. There's a stare contest for a little while the little distance between us serves as proof something has changed between us. Previously we would bump into each other's shoulders that's how close we were. "Traveling at night what's going on?" I ask. The aim is to be heard on him but sadly I find myself being gentle I mean he could be my brother one whom might stir up in my life shall he find out about his true identity. "I don't want trouble Jali I only came to apologize to the women I've hurt after that I'm never setting foot back here." He says gently. "Why come at night though?"

"It's for the better I can't risk you and your people stoning me to death after what I did."

I glare at him trying to gather if he took really his a Jali. The only resemblance is his athletic body height and skin colour but other than that he looks nothing like me or Nhlonipho or my father."

Shouldn't you be in bed with the wife? "

I chuckle "She's sound asleep"

"Sang her a lullaby or rocked her up till she got tired?" We glare at each other and chuckle. "You know me Khuboni"

"I missed you Zimele"

"Not seeing your face on my negotiations cut so deep warrior. I hate to admit but i was longing for you"

"You still my friend one that i cherish the most my Prince."

We are brothers warrior not friends. I wish i can tell him "Its such a pity things turned out this way"

"I'm sincerely sorry warriorfor everything.I should've listened when you advised me against such. Lookwarrior i need to get going i have a journey tomorrow morning"

"You still my friend Warrior and i adore you"

"You still my friend and the brother i never had Jali i still admire you"

We look at each other and share a brotherly embrace. "I've been searching for you!" A voice says behind us. We both turn my beautiful wife is standing there glaring at us. "Princess.. Greetings" Hawu says. "Greetings Jali" i look at her with warning eyes. She looks at me "I guess I've been a distant memory for you to forget my surname Liyana" Hawu says smiling. "I know your surname and surname is Jali" My wife says.

Ndandatho

I had no choice but to spill the beans. Isn't it when i give people the opportunity to coming clean they ridicule me and belittle me and adress me like a delusional and abstract little thing that holds no emotions or feelings. If the storm comes so be it. I know it wasn't my place to say it but Gabi's return is highly depended on this revelation. Zimele and Hawulesizwe are giving me ugly stares if not miffed facial expressions honestly i did the right thing.

"I think its best i leave" Hawu-

"Spend a night warrior"

"No Zimele its best i leave." He says glaring at me. "Travel safe and see you in the next coming days". I turn to walk away i feel my hand hanging upon something. "Liyana what was that?"

"The truth Zimele"

"The truth Ndandatho? "

I glare at him.

"Do you really enjoy this Ndandatho? Being selfish and inconsiderate of other people's feelings all in the name of your gift huh?"

"Zimele i wasn't selfish but i did what needed to be done!"

"Rubbish! It wasn't your cross carry Ndandatho!

I dont know how things work in your world but what i know spiritual gifted beings do not do what you just did Ndandatho. That was wrong and unprofessional! "

"Zimele i did the right thing! Hawu deserves to know the truth. I dont see any wrong in what i did. "

"Right thing for who?"

"Zimele you being dramatic right now and its really unnecessary. "

"It wasnt your place to tell Hawu this information especially in this manner Ndandatho. What you did was unkind and unjust you can't just disclose such news in this manner. You were supposed to have sat down with him and asked him questions before you spew that venom! That was absolutely hilarious and demeaning maka Gatsha! "

"Its not like your father is a saint Zimele the truth was meant to come out either way. "

"Stop justifying rubbish and admit you were out of line!" he barks.

"My sisters return depended on that truth Zimele! My parents want Gabi back and the only way to achieving that was by doing this."

"See what i mean? You selfish and inconsiderate of others feelings. Your focus and motives were only one-sided your focus was your sister only but not Hawulesizwe. You were biased and unfair Ndandatho. You hated it when your identity was revealed in that manner you wanted and wished it was revealed in a good and respectful manner but here you are doing to others what you hated when being done to you. You are a hypocrite!"

I swallow a huge lump.

"Why are you angry at me kanti Zimele? "

"Dont tell me your hormones are blinding you from differentiating between wrong and right. You using your gift for selfish reasons!!" I blink profusely pushing back my tears.

"Zimele i was trying to help!"

"Who asked you to help?"

I keep quiet and blink endlessly.

"This wasnt your business Ndandatho you had no right to diclose that information. You should've waited for the right time. What you did is no different from telling a pregnant woman that their child is gonna die tomorrow morning while they are surrounded by many people. You should've kept quiet and let the Jali's elder to disclose this information not you. Ndandatho let me remind

you. You are a bride here not a goddesses or an ancestor or anyone fit to voice your opinions or worries concerning my family. Such things are to be discussed by family not the likes of you in case you've forgotten these premises belongs to the Jali not Buthelezi or Mamiwata damns you do not include yourself on such family matters Ndandatho. You couldn't even read through my eyes when i was warning you against that. "

" Zimele i.. "

" Whatever Ndandatho!! "

My tears slide down. Zimele walks past me disappointed." Please wait for me Zimele "

" You managed to get here now see yourself home"

"Zimele you being unfair right now!!"

"And you being fair?" I opt for silence.

Fuze

I find my wife seated on the bed.

"Mapholoba can we talk"

"Talk about what?"

"Everything baba"

"Mama Ngelozu I'm tired"

"I'm sorry Fuze"

"Sorry for what?"

"Fuze please sit down we can't talk while you standing please baba. "

I heave a sigh then make my way towards her.

She looks at me then fiddles with her hands.

"Makhosonke our home has turned into a battlefield there's chaos and discomfort around us. Peace and joy have been playing far from our doorstep Fuze. "

"And whose fault is it again?"

"Fuze all three of us are at fault. You me and Ngelozi" I look at her. "Fuze I dont like what we've all become. Most importantly seeing Ngelozi in that state broke me because i failed her as my child and failed you as my husband. Fuze I raised Ngelozi with tenderness and warmth when she had wounded knees as a toddler she always ran to me and seeked comfort in my arms mostly because she knew i was her mother and i had her in my best interests. I shouldn't have stood with the crowd that was ridiculing her and labeling her i was supposed to work on her side against all odds. "

" But you didn't do that Mafuze actually we both didn't do that. We both were the root of her pain"

"My husband we need to fix our home our marriage and our relationship with our eldest daughter. We both need to admit our wrongs and apologize to Ngelozi till she forgives us we failed her when she needed us the most"

"You right mafuze but i did plead with her come back home"

"We need to do more than that"

"I think its best i disclose who her mother is"

"Makhosonke that's risky and dangerous"

"We have no choice already she knows you not her biological mother dragging this will be the reason we still in discomfort. I'm tired of this hollowness myself"

"I'm sincerely sorry for everything Fuze"

"I understand maka Ngelozi i guess i myself i should apologize for making you feel inferior and less significant which wasn't true. Mafuze we men love differently from you and the fact that there were things i wasnt saying or doing it didn't mean i love you lesser. In my heart i loved you i guess my biggest mistake was not assuring you. "

" Fuze its okay we both were delusional and selfish here. I let jealousy to drive me crazy to such an extent i treated my daughter as threat that's yet to destroy my home. On your side i just wanted to hear these words "I love you and i appreciate your efforts" Thats all i needed to hear Makhosonke "

" Maka Ngelozi i love you if i didn't love you i wasn't gonna find your nakedness captivating and alluring. If you paid attention i

couldn't resist you each time i saw you i just wanted to hold you and make love to you mama Ngelozi. On the other department i felt like Ngelozi was too exposed to danger

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given i knew the kind of woman whom borne her. I knew she was evil and that she would corrupt Ngelozi's head shall she get an encounterment with her. I did all that to protect Ngelozi but MaFuze you knew my heart when we were locked behind doors and sweating on top of each other"
"I wanted to hear the words Fuze. "

"I'm sorry MaNgcobo i will do better starting from today"

"You promise Fuze?"

"I promise my love"

"I love you still Makhosonke in you i still see the man who captured my heart by risking to go to work with a baby on your back. I still love you Fuze"

"I love you too MaFuze and I'm sorry for everything" She looks at me. I move closer and kiss her..

Hawulesizwe

I've been trying to articulate and digest what Ndandatho said last night but the dots are not connecting there's no way that i Hawu would be a Jali not in a million years. She's trying to cloud my

mind and confuse me but why would she make up such a lie? No man! This is confusing and worrisome. I mean I look nothing like Ngcolosi Zimele or Nhlonipho. I just look like my father uKhuboni. Ndandatho is misleading me she's pushing a mission of her own..

I wish Lungelo could stop banging the door I've been ignoring her by now it should've clicked i dont want their mundane breakfast.

"Hawu please open"

That stupid and strange feeling crawls in yet again. I dont understand what it is or what it means but it is accompanied by a pinch of fear strange noises and movements in my stomach and a slight thunder on my back. My body changes in a split second feeling foreign things and weakened. "Warrior!"

"I'm coming" I slowly make my way to the doori turn the handle. There she is radiant as always.

"Can i come in?"

I make a way for her. She sits on my bed and i stand behind the closed door glaring on her.

"I'm ready"

"Ready?"

"To leave"

I look at her. "You made yourself clear yesterday about wanting me gone now let's go"

"Gabi i didn't mean it in a bad way" I say making my way to the bed i lay there facing the roof. "Hawu you want me gone and I'm leaving"

"Can we go there later"

"Why not now?"

"Because I'm tired"

She flaps her eyelashes while squinting her eyes. "What is wrong with you? First you skipped breakfast and locked yourself up. What's going? Are you sick maybe?" I flap my eyes while glaring on her. "Hawu I'm talking to you"

"How old are you again?"

"17"

"Didn't you say you were 18?"

"Of course i lied. I will be 17 soon"

"I see."

"Now back to my question what's wrong with you?"

"I think I'm sick"

"Really?"

"Yes"

"Let me see.." She says climbing my bed she puts her hand on my forehead. Stupid me is looking right inside her eyes she's so beautiful just like Ndandatho. Her soul is so sweet and lovable. "Your forehead is not hot" She says laying besides me. "I will stay here with you till you loosen up"

I swallow hard as she puts her hand around my waistline those hilarious feels crawl back. "Gabi can you please remove your hand"

"Why?"

"Its making me uneasy"

"How so?"

"Gabi just remove it"

"Okay" She removes it i turn my back against her. "Why are you facing that side?"

"Because its comfortable when laying on this side" I'm lying I'm erected.

"Okay"

"Yeah... Did you eat?"

"Yes"

"Is my mother around?"

"No she mentioned something about going to the market"

"I see"

She moves closer to me. "Warrior"

"Mmmm"

"Please face this side"

"No"

"Please"

"Gabi you still a kid" That slips out of my mouth. "I know I'm kid just look at me please"

"Okay.." I turn to face her. Her eyes make me weak my heart beats faster than ever. "Can you kiss?"

"Huh?"

"Can you kiss?"

"Yeah i do know how to kiss why asking?"

She narrows her brows and flaps her eyelashes. "Teach me how to kiss" i choke on my saliva. "What?"

"Teach me how to kiss"

"Gabi i cant do that. I think we should get out of here what do you think?"

She cups my face and puts her leg on my waistline. Sweet jesus deliver me from temptations. "Gabi stop it"

"Please teach me how to kiss i wont tell please"

"You and i are going outside for a walk."

"Hawu please"

"No Gabisile Buthelezi!"

"Hawu open this door!!" My mother shouts from outside Gabi jumps in fear. "Is that girl in here? Open this door before i kick it down!!"

We both look at each other.

Ma-maseko

I hope Hawu is not up to no good or his mischievous doings of stripping girls naked. He really cant do that on a kid i dont want trouble not when things are this bad. He opens the door the Gabi girl is seated on the edge of his bed. "What are you doing in here Gabisile?"

"Mama i.. I wanted to"

"Shut up!! Just shut up and get out of here. Didn't your parents teach you about men making babies? Do you want to walk in your sister's steps?" I bark. My son glares at me with his brows narrowed and his eyes looking at me in the most discomforting way." GET OUT NOW!!! " Gabi runs outside. " What is your problem Hawulesizwe? Do you want to leave all these girls pregnant? What is wrong with you huh?"

"You tell me"

"Tell you what? Dont annoy me Hawu if you dare touch that girl i will kill you you hear me? You can't go on whoring and moaning even on toddlers"

"Who said i wanted to sleep with her"

"Why was your door locked?"

"I didn't touch her ma!"

"You think i believe that? You've always had cases of sleeping with people's children since childhood!!"

"Maybe none of that would've happened had you not been a harlots yourself!" I slap him so hard. "What did you call me Hawu?"

"A slut!"

"Excuse me?"

"You busy labeling me while everything is your fault."

"How is your whoring and obsession on women my fault huh? Did i make you sexual active Hawu?"

"Maybe i take after you after all an apple doesn't fall far from it's tree!" I choke on my saliva.

"You are a conniving har!" He doesn't finish his sentence because of the thunderstorm that has landed on his faces. My hands are trembling so are my lips. I'm trying to gather my thoughts as to how does Hawu hold such information like where is it coming from? Knowing King Ngcolosi he wouldn't bring himself to telling the truth about Hawu. He struggled for years to come clean about what Hawu is to him or his family instead he promised he wasnt gonna allow Hawu to lack anything he promised he was going to cater for his needs only if i agreed upon keeping him a secret. Now that information is leaked i might be in trouble with both Queen's.

"Hawu i will pretend we didn't have this conversation"

"Who is my father Phoxile?"

"Pardon?"

"Dont give me that bullshit pretense whose my father? Actually why am i Jali? How did i become one instead of a Maseko"

"I dont have time for this rubbish!!"

"Well this rubbish is the reason I'm acting like this mama! Your rubbish is the reason I've been hurting all these girls i didn't know my true identity explaining why I've been acting like a dog all thanks to your whoring!!" I raise my hand with hopes to slap him yet again but he blocks it and tightens his grip around it.

" I dont know what you talking about this is madness Sizwe"

" Well maybe Ngcolosi will know what I'm talking about!"

"Hawu stop with this madness we gonna be casted with stones. You are not a Jali such accusations and allegations will put us on dire straits"

"All this time you've been quiet mama while i turned into something you knew i wasn't all because of your lies and lacking morals! You are a disgrace!!"

He yanks my hand and walks past me. "Gabisile!!! Gabisile come We going to the royal house" He shouts from outside.

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Kamaseko

"Hawu!!"

I call out panting and coughing.

"What?"

"My son please! Please Hawu i beg of you not to do anything drastic. Can we sit down and discuss this like adults without allowing emotions to get the better of us my son please"

I cough up badly and kneel before him.

"Please my son please Hawu. I'm very much aware you infuriated and burning fire but my son what we do now or say will be a biggest regret in the future. Please sit down and allow me to explain everything please"

He glares at me with his eyes reflecting flames.

"I beg of you my son please." He looks at me.

"I will only do that mama on one condition"

"I will do anything to prevent you from the shame and embarrassment"

"I want to know everything mama"

"No problem i will do that Sizwe"

"Fine! Get up" He says stretching out his hand. I stand up with

sweat and tears covering my entire face. We walk to a tree shade
he lays a grassmat for me and a bench for himself.

"I'm all ears"

Where do i begin?

Nozibele

We having lunch as a family Ndandatho and Zimele are very quiet today and its so unlike them. They even seated further apart from each other. Its pretty obvious there's tension between them.

"Nhlonipho please pass me the jag of juice" Zimele-

"Brother its far from my reach sisi Ndandatho please pass it over" Nhlo-

Ndandatho hands it over to Nhlonipho. "Thank you" Nhlo says passing it over to his brother.

I glare on both sides of these of individuals.

"Zimele dont give him mango." Nda-

"Why not?" Zimele asks with an annoyed tone.

"His gonna have a runny tummy"

"But he wants it"

"Dont be stubborn Zimele!"

"Are you talking to me with that tone Ndandatho?"

"I'm asking you nicely and politely not give my son mango but you doing it regardless!"

"Dont yell at me Liyana!" He says with a stern voice. "You playing deaf to what I'm saying what am i supposed to do for you to hear me!!" Ndandatho -

"I said don't raise your voice at me!!" Zimele roars so much that Bangi weeps. "Can you two stop it already! Cant you see you scaring off the baby?" Ngcolosi says glaring at Zimele who is huffing and Ndandatho who is weeping.

"What is wrong with you?" I add. They both look at each other. "Ndandatho what's going on?" My husband asks. "Please excuse me my King." She says standing up making her way towards Zimele to take Gatsha. "Bring my baby"

"Do i look like a lion?"

"Zimele can you snap out of it already you attracting eyes over something stupid and hilarious!!"

"Something stupid huh?"

"ZIMELE NDANDATHO STOP IT!!!! this is not the right place to

discuss and solve your bedroom problems!! Yini ngani?" Ngcolosi shudders. "Actually the both of you must leave this table. We trying to have a decent meal after a long morning of putting Khanya to rest. This nonsense is exasperating!" Ngcolosi says with his stern voice. "My apologies Bhengu" Zimele says softly. "Ndandatho apologize" Boni says glaring at her daughter "My apologies." She says sniffing she later walks out of the door. We all move our eyes to Zimele "What was that all about Zimele?"

"Excuse me" He says following Ndandatho. "Nhlo please take fruits to your chamber so Ngelozzi can snack"

"I will mama thank you."

We all eat in silence.

Ndandatho

I accidentally bump into Khethiwe spilling her bucket of water.
"Ndandatho!"

"My apologies Khethiwe" I say storming to my private chamber with my lips quivering. I can't believe Zimele addressed me in that manner in front of his family. He had no right to ridicule me actually I'm packing up my luggages going home. After all he made it clear I'm not needed here throughout the night. His been giving me a cold shoulder since morning guess what I'm leaving with my mother. I get a hold of a cloth i stuff my clothes and that of Bangizwe. I even get a reach of my toiletries tears are dropping mercilessly so is mucous. The door swings open i dont even bother to take look at what is happening or whose here. I continue packing.

"What are you doing?"

I keep quiet."I'm talking to you Ndandatho what the hell are you doing?"

"Doing what i should've done ages ago!"

"Excuse me?" i ignore him and pace around the room searching for anything that belongs to me.

"So you gonna pack up each time we have a fall-out Liyana?" I ignore him.

"So you think running away will undo the mess you've caused?"

"Zimele I'm sick and tired of having this conversation. I've apologized for having a gift that makes me to do things that i never intend of doing. I'm sorry okay!!!"

"Thats were your problem is playing victim each time you mess up Ndandatho instead of apologising and seeing things from a different view which isn't parasitic."

"I've been apologising what more do you want me to do Zimele? Strip myself naked so you can see I'm sorry huh?"

"Shouting at me wont make your points valid talk in a calmer tone instead of screaming. Another thing you apologising to a wrong individual you owe Hawu an apology not me"

"Apology of telling him the truth?"

"Liyana stop being stubborn and take accountability of your actions!"

"I dont have time for this I'm leaving!!!"

"Fine

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go ahead. You think I'm going stop you? Go on but my son is going nowhere!!"

Now that hurts so very much. He cant even debate me out of it?
Wow Zimele is evil no wonder he is warrior.

"Where i go my son goes!!"

"Do you have a sperm? Can you impregnate yourself? If the answer is no dont repulse me if you want to leave Liyana do it alone without my son!!"

"Did you push a head out of your vagina Zimele? If not you have no damn son!!!"

I roar on his face. He glares at me with his jaw clenched. "Liyana dont push me you hear me? Dont challenge me you wont like the monster you will see. Leave alone and when you give birth to that child I'm fetching her as well. As for you i care less about you!"

"I hate you Zimele!!"

"And i hate you more!!"

"What did you say Zimele? You hate me?" I cry hysterically then start punching him. He stands still glaring at me. "You are evil!!"

"You are a beautiful devil"

"Zimele you insulting me!" I stop punching him and embrace him. "Hold me moron!"

"That will delay your trip to your father's house"

"Damn you!!!!" I unhook myself and roughly pull the stuffed luggage attempting to pull it i accidentally trip and hit the corner of the bad so hard.I blurt out a loud scream. "Ndandatho!!" He runs towards me. "My baby Zimele! It's your damn fault!" I curse wincing in pain.

Hawulesizwe

"I was young beautiful and full of life and your father was so handsome and all charming. Falling for him was the easiest thing to do. I knew our little taboo wasn't going to last and that he would choose his family over me but it felt like a right thing to do Sizwe. Maseko was very abusing towards me and your father was able to kiss away the pain by touching me and whispering sweet nothings. Hawu hurting you wasn't my intentioni was young and at the stage of making mistakes its unfortunate you became a visible reminder of that careless mistake "

I swallow hard.

" So Ndandatho was right? "

" Ndandatho told you this? "

" Yes.. Last night"

"That girl!!"

"Why didn't you tell me all along ma?"

"Because it was the best thing to do Hawu"

I look at her and heave the longest sigh.

"Does he know about me?"

"Yes"

"Wow! So all these years he said nothing to me knowing this information ma?"

"It wasn't his place Hawu"

"But still mama!"

"Hawu appreciate the little he gave you and did for us had it been someone else they were never ever going to look back and offer a helping hand. Remember son you not royal you are deep dark secret!"

"But it doesn't change the fact that he knew about me and that

he watched me play with Zimele thinking we were friends while we were more than that mama!"

"Hawu like i said it wasnt his place"

"You taking sides mama and that hurts deeply"

She swallows hard. "Sizwe I'm sorry my son"

"Lets go to Thuthukani i want this truth out of the closet so i can move on with my life as Hawulesizwe Jali not Maseko"

"Hawu that will invite trouble"

"I'm tired of living a lie I've been doing that for years. Now i understand why Zimele couldn't bring himself to killing me that day. It's because we are family"

"Hawu can we not do this please. "

"Mama we doing this today!"

"Kodwa Hawulesizwe"

"Mama lets go please"

"Fine" I look at her with my palms sweating i cant believe mom and Ngcolosi hid this for years. As for Gabi I'm gonna take her to her parents tomorrow right now I'm focusing on me. "Lets go"

She says standing up..

Ngcolosi

I'm seated on the sofa sipping whiskey with thoughts wandering in my head. I think tonight i should tell my entire family about Hawu i really kept this lie for years now. I can't take it anymore its weighing on me. "Son you can always talk to me" i look behind me.

"I've been observing you for the past few days Ngcolosi you not your usual self. Share the load with me if you cant share it with your wife"

"Eehm ma theres no easy way to say this"

"You committed adultery isnt it?" She faintly smile. "I wont judge you Ngcolosi" She says coming to sit besides me. "I'm a good listener i once lended you my ears when you wanted to confess impregnating Nozibele. I'm still that mother or friend Ngcolosi. "

I look at her with worry. "Mama can i narrate everything after finishing this whiskey?"

"You slept with mama Maseko didn't you?"

"Excuse me?" A familiar voice says behind us.

My eyes land on my beautiful wife. My mother and i glare at each other. "You did what Ngcolosi?"

"MaJali please calm down"

"Dont tell me to calm down Ngcolosi!! You did what?"

"Mama please excuse us"

"Fine" She says standing up "You did what? start talking Ngcolosi!! Before i bash you with that whiskey bottle!!"

"Nozi calm down"

"Dont tell me to calm down not when you cheated on me with my beauty product provider!! Dont tell me to calm down!!Yazini if you wont say anything that harlot will!!!" She says storming outside. "Nozi can you hear me out please!!!"

"Did you or did not sleep with her Ngcolosi?"

"I didn't"

"Stop lying!!"

"Nozibele i didn't sleep with her!!"

"Do you see a board written stupid on my forehead huh?"

"My love i did not sleep with her just hear me out!!"

"If you didn't sleep with her who did?"

"Nozi come on you blowing things out of proportion!!"

"I will show you proportions Ngcolosi watch and see!!!" She walks towards Buthelezi. "Buthelezi take me to Hawulesizwe's house"

"Buthelezi dont do that"

"Ngcolosi dont annoy me!!! YOU TAKE ME THERE NOW!!!"

"Buthelezi if you still love your job here you will do no such thing"

"You protecting your mistress?"

"NOZIBELE JALI STOP THIS MADNESS OKAY!!!"

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Ndandatho

Zimele is massaging my belly Worry is written all over his face. We both haven't said much after my little hiccup which was something not huge but because i want him to feel a pinch of care and love for me I'm pulling some gimmick stunt explaining why his massaging my belly.

"Is it better now?"

"Not yet"

"Ndandatho you need to be careful please"

"You were yelling at me Zimele so i missed a step and fell"

"I'm sorry okay?"

I nod. "But next time be careful with my daughter Ndandatho"

"I will Bhengu and I'm sorry for everything"

He heaves a sigh. "I mean it Zimele."

"MaJali junior the problem will be Hawu disclosing who told him these news to my father. My biggest fear is my father insulting you for meddling in his business you know how brutal he can be. I'm not against your gift and all that I'm sorry if i made it sound like i hate it. "

"I know I was wrong with my style of approach maybe i should've done what i did with Fuze"

"Maybe you need to be initiated properly you need an instructor or mentor Ndandatho"

"Come to think of it i never had one"

"See? You need a proper training with cons and pros"

"I guess my grandmother will guide me"

"I thought of such things a person meant to shape you will appear in your dreams"

"Thing is i dont understand how my gift works"

"Be patient with it but the next time you are assigned to assist someone use a different approach to helping them. Ask questions my love instill that sense of confusing or introspection leave people asking themselves questions shall they need clarity from you only then you can dish out what you know out of their will Ndandatho."

"That was my rachel sin Jali and I'm sorry about it because honestly the truth was gonna come out with or without my control. After all the gods have ways of revealing the unknown"

"I understand you did it for Gabi of which you knew she wasn't going to suffer in the hands of Hawu. Her safety was guaranteed Ndandatho all you needed was a proper approach after all we must have empathy as humans"

"I'm sorry Jali i guess i will dance to the tune soon. Can we never argue again please"

"Fine no argument and no stubbornness Ndandatho"

"I promise to do better. I will allow you to be a head"

"I would love that. I'm sorry for being hard on you"

"I love you"

"I love her more"

"She's in my belly"

"And she is my sperm"

"This baby is so gonna take my spotlight"

"Definitely" We chat a little till a peaceful slumber knocks on our doorstep.

Nhlonipho

I'm leaning against the wall watching her pack up her clothes. I really wish she could stay here with me. I've gotten used to sight of seeing her face first thing in the morning and last thing at night. Her leaving is really saddening. "Mafuze"

"Jali"

"Is there something i can do for you stay a little longer two more days please"

"Nhlo"

"Please my flower a night with you is all i ask. I want us to sneak on the moon and stars like we always did. I want us to take a walk like the old times before you go please"

"Nhlonipho we both know i shouldn't be staying here out of wedlock"

"I understand and i will fix that but can we make tonight about us and our love please"

"Fine Nhlo" I smirk then make my way towards her. I wrapped my hands around her waistline then slowly and carefully nibbled her neck and the back of her ears. With my hands squeezing her boobs. "Baby girl"

"My Prince"

"Is it safe to make love to you?"

"I dont follow"

"Is it dry in there?"

"We can try"

"Try?"

"Making love"

"You not bleeding?"

"Today it's safe and clean"

"Fine." I turned her slowly to face me our eyes locked taking me to memory lane. This how she looked at me the night i took her virginity her eyes gave me comfort and permission to do as i pleased with her body soul and mind. This is how she looked at me when i gave her a first kiss this is how she looked at me when she asked me to touch her and give her that strange yet

pleasuring feeling i had given her in the bushes. This is how our love story began. It was these eyes that captured my heart just like her name. I saw an angel in her and in her wings i am safe and sound.

My mother has shown me love a countless times but the love i found and drank from the lips of this woman is a gretest love of all. She's been my strength when I was weak my voice when I couldn't speak My eyes when i couldn't see. She saw the best there was in me. Like the angel that she is she gave me wings and made me fly. Its been hard but living without her was more harder.

"Why are you looking at me like that Nhlonipho?"

"I just remembered our childhood memories." She giggles shyly.
"Just yesterday we were skinning our knees and learning ABC's and climbing trees and hills" I say with a smirk. "Running freely in the fields and arguing over stupid things." I add.

"Stupid things like what came first between an egg and a chicken. I remember arguing with you till you cried that day you swear our friendship was done Ngelozu not knowing it was only the beginning" She blushes while i brush her lips with my thumb.
"I remember when your boobs were maturing i laughed at you."

"You were stupid and annoying Nhlonipho"

"But you loved the annoying me"

"No way i loved eating your lunchboxes. I still dont understand why your mother made you lunchboxes just to get your skin roasted by the sun. You had food just to go play"

"I guess you would've done the same thing for Khanya"

"I suppose so."

"We had joy we had fun we had seasons in the sun. But the hills that we climbed were just seasons out of time." I say pressing my forehead on hers. "As much as we were taught ABC's but i was taught how to love you care for you and tolerate you as annoying as you were. I loved you the very first time we started arguing over silly stuff how you would insist to walk me home even when we had fought and got each other angry. If given the chance to choose a lover again i would still choose you as my biggest mistake. I love you Nhlonipho Jali"

A tear escapes her eye lids i wipe them with my thumb. "I love you more Ngelozi i would succumb more and more slaps just for you. I love you maka Khanya"

"And i cant live without you baba kaKhanya"

She cries. I pick her up and carry her to my bed. "Dont cry my flower. Through the lies you were the truth My world is a better place because of you Mafuze" i press my lips on her damp lips i gently pull her lower lip and carefully suck on it she goes for my upper lip. I slowly lay on top of her so i can enjoy the kiss even more.

Ngcolosi

"You cheated on me Ngcolosi and it hurts!"

I said sobbing Ngcolosi decided on embracing me. "I'm sorry my love hurting you wasn't intentional but trust me when i say i did not sleep with her. Can we go to our private space please?" I nod and continue crying. We sit on our bed with both of us quiet.

"Ngcolosi tell me the truth please"

I said glaring at him with tears rolling down my eyes "Majali i love you the truth is I've never ever slept with ka Maseko. "

"Ngcolosi you lying and that is frustrating me just be honest no

matter how brutal the truth is just slither it like a serpent"

"Honey stop wrecking your mind there's no threat okay?" I stood up from the bed headed for the door. "Majali!"

"I won't attack your mistress if that's what you're thinking" I slammed the door behind me, walked to the kitchen, I need whiskey.

"My Queen, there are people outside who would like to see you and the king"

"What people?"

"Warrior Hawu and his mother"

"The Maseko's?"

"Yes my Queen"

"See them in"

"My Queen" She walks away leaving me tightening my grip around the wine glass that I'm holding. Gods so help me can i be calm in the presence of these people because my gut tells me there's more to this than i know. Hawu better not be Ngcolosi's son!!

Mrs Maseko

The lady servant's sees us in. My heart is beating on my throat my legs are wobbly and my entire body is sweating. I'm getting

all cold feets a part of me wishes i didn't come clean. The poor lady will die after hearing such news. Nozibele walks in to welcome us she's wearing her beautiful smile as always.

"Bo Ngcamane please come inside make yourself comfortable. Hawu how are you?"

"I'm very well thanks my Queen and yourself?"

"I'm doing great my boy. Must i bring you something to drink ka Maseko?"

"Yes please"

"Coming" She says swaying her curves and hourglass figure. Ngcolosi appears with his mother following him behind. He squints his eyes when he sees Hawulesizwe and myself seated on their leathercouches. His mother glares on us then Ngcolosi. Nozi walks in with a tray of cookies glasses and juice.

"Ka maseko and Hawu.." Ngcolosi says looking uneasy.

"Greetings King Jali" Hawu says with his husky voice. "To what do we owe the visit?" Ngcolosi asks glaring at me. "Ngcolosi its time"

"Time for what?"

"The truth"

"What truth?" He says staring at his mother. "Hawu knows" He blinks endlessly. Nozibele looks at me then Ngcolosi with her arms folded and her lips pressed her eyes reflect pain and disappointment if not discomfort. "Phoxile this is not the right time"

"When is the right time Ngcolosi huh? So you want this little shenanigan of yours to go on even longer?" Nozi-

"Nozibele can you stop okay?" Ngcolosi -

"No i cant do that Ngcolosi not when i do not know what is happening!" She says with tears dropping. I suppose she's been suspecting something and poor her pushed back her tears for a little while longer and right now she's bursting. "Nozi please"

"Phoxile have you been sleeping with my husband?" Nozi-

"My Queen can we all calm down please"

"Calm down? Gosh she's saying i should calm down just like her boyfriend said" She says calmly. Ngcolosi looks at me then her mother.

"Ngcolosi i think it's about time we both tell the truth this pretense and deceit cannot go on" I say.

"What is going on here?" Gezekile.

" Ngcolosi start talking already! "Nozi

We both look at each other for a little while.

"Mama i dont have time for this I'm leaving" Nozi says attempting to walk away. Ngcolosi grabs her arm "Nozibele sit down"

"Let go of my arm Ngcolosi what is hard about confessing your cult? Huh?"

"I told you several times that did no such thing as that sit down and stop acting up"

"I would be acting up if you were honest and never deceiving

Ngcolosi I've been asking you about all the worst case scenario but you still denied it even now!!" She roars.

"My Queen please sit down" I say softly glaring at Queen Gezekile who is staring at me to my discomfort Hawu looks at me. "Is he a Jali?" Gezekile says suddenly Nozi standstill. "Yes"

Nozibele blinks endlessly till she breaks down so sorrowful. "And you kept it a secret?" Gezekile says with a stern voice and tight face.

"I'm done Ngcolosi! I'm leaving! How could you? Both of you how could you do such a thing to me huh? Do i deserve this? Wena Phoxile I've been nothing to you but a good friend i treated you with love and respect i cared for son like he was mine not knowing you were showing my husband your nakedness "

" Nozibele can you please lis... " She cuts Ngcolosi short" Dont you dare Ngcolosi dont you dare tell me to listen! You cheated on me and Hawu is a product of it"

"Nozibele i never slept with her why dont you listen kanti?" Ngco

"If you didn't sleep with her how come Hawu is a Jali Ngcolosi? You still denying as lucid as it is!!" Zimele walks in. "Ngcolosi dont make us fools just admit your wrongs!" Gezekile -

"Mama i did not sleep with her"

"If not you then who?" Gezekile -

"Mama just say it already please" Hawu-

"Queen Nozibele your husband is telling the truth. He has never touched me" They all look at me mostly the mother. "Talk Phoxile!"

"Mama ubaba wasn't the Saint you thought he was." Ngcolosi -

"Queen Gezekile I'm sincerely sorry for.. For" I swallow hard.
"Hawu is not my son but my brother" Ngcolosi -

"What??" They all say.

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Nhlonipho

She looks at me panting while covering her naked body.

"Well its time Nhlo"

"Do you really have to leave today instead of tomorrow?"

"My love i want hear what father has to say. I'm very much certain it has everything to do with my mother"

"Your mother? What about her? Shes the one who gave you the beating that left marks on your body?"

"I meant my biological mother"

I lift my eyes to glare at her.

"What biological mother Ngelo?"

She blinks endlessly then moves to my direction. I rest her egg head on my chest "Isn't it i have a big head hers is an egg head"

"My flower talk to me"

"I found out MaFuze is not my mother but my step mother"

"What?"

"Yes.. So i think by going back home my father will tell me the truth"

"Why am i hearing about this now?"

"Its not like you would've known who my mother is" I look at her.

Does she really have to be this blunt and brutal? Some partner i have.

"Ngelozu I'm not fighting okay?"

"I wasn't fighting too"

"Can we drop it before we fight are you gonna bath or something?"

"I cant go home smelling like a goat"

I narrow my brows "So i smell like a goat?"

"Thats not what i said"

"Ngelozzi?" She giggles. "We've been bathing with awful things so we smell like goats"

I chuckle. "How did i fall for you exactly?"

"Do me again and stop talking alot"

"Do you what?"

"You know Nhlonipho"

"Know what?"

"This" She says demonstrating with her hands. "A normal kid would be anxious about knowing who her mother is instead of asking scary things"

"You complaining?"

"Not at all but you weren't comfortable Ngelo. I dont want to see you in pain"

"A good pain Nhlo"

"There's no such thing let me bring you water"

"Come on Nhlo"

"Ngelo not when you were in pain i love you so much my love to watch you in pain"

"You sound like a father now"

"I could've been one" I say jumping out of bed i reach for my clothes. "You look good"

I chuckle "I'm no longer ugly?"

"I never said you were ugly Nhlo i said you had a big head"

"Yours is tiny like a bean"

"Which bean?"

"Yooh! I'm out Ngelo" She giggles..

Hawulesizwe

Queen Gezikile is glaring at my mother i can't describe how she looks like but confused is a better word if not denial.

"Ngcolosi repeat what you just said you said Hawu is what?"

"Ma kiyng Jali the second was not a saint"

"Stop telling me rubbish and get straight to the point!" She lashes out. "Ka Maseko and dad had an affair and Hawu is my half sibling. " Queen Gezikile glares at me then my mother.

"I once eavesdropped on fathers conversation with grandpa. Father told Mkhulu about his adulterous act and that a child was involved. Khulu advised father to keep Hawu a secret and the little shenanigan of his with Mrs Maseko. It didn't stop they kept on seeing each other from time to time at night father would sneak to her room while you slept peacefully. They dated till father's last days "

"Is this true Phoxile?"

My poor mother blinks profusely while fiddling with her. "I'm talking to you!!"

"I'm sorry my Queen"

"You sorry? For what exactly? Seducing my husband and conceiving this disgrace or sorry for being a royal harlots and

destroying people's home's? What are you apologising for exactly?"

She called me a what?

I glare at Zimele then his mother.

"Talk dammit!!"

"Queen mother I'm sorry i never meant to harm you"

"So you not denying it?" My mother keeps quiet. "So that was my thank you Phoxile for treating you like family and a daughter of mine? Was it really necessary for you to strip naked in front of my husband?"

Knowingly i was feeding you clothing you and putting butter on your table? Was it necessary for you to bite the hand that was feeding you? "

" My Queen I'm sorry i was young and crazily in love"

"Crazily in love with my husband huh?" She shouts so much that starts coughing.

"This witch has the nerve to say she was crazily in love with my husband! The same man i had to beg with my knees on the ground for her to be a bitch on these premises!!!" She yells again.

My mother though couldn't she keep quiet instead of rubbing it in? Some liver she had to parade naked for an old man.

Ngcolosi

"Ma calm down"

"Dont tell me to calm down not when you helped this witch in keeping her little secret!You get out!! "

"I did it for you ma."

"Did it for me by siding with witch?"

"Ma i knew how much you loved dad and how you saw an angel in him. I couldn't bring myself to watching you die a slow poison death"

"Did i ask you to do that for me? Did i ever portray myself as weak for you think and feel on my behalf? " She roars with a trembling voice. "You didn't have too ma but my love for you pushed me into doing it ma "

"Phoxile you still here? I said GET OUT!!!!" She barks yet again making her to cough evenmore. Ma Maseko stands up so does Hawulesizwe.

"I'm sorry my Queen

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i sincerely am. "

"Sleep with your eyes wide open because failure to do so. I'm gonna kill you!!"

"Ma can you please calm down please"

"LEAVE MY HOUSE!! ACTUALLY PACK YOUR LUGGAGES AND PISS OFF FROM MY GROUNDS YOU ARE BANNED!!! "

"My Queen I'm sorry I'm very much sorry. Please dont send us packing please my Queen. We have nowhere to go please"

"You should've thought of that before moaning for my husband!"

"My Queen please! At least send me packing but not my children. I beg of you"

"Leave them for what? So they can fight my blood for this throne? Everyone knows about what illegitimate kids do on fertile soils. Take your rubbish and leave. These grounds belongs to the Jali's and as a Jali I've spoken! Take your garbage and leave!!"

"Ma lets go" Hawu says with his jaw clenched he is livid.

"Listen to your little immoral sin and piss off. This ill mannered son of yours is no Jali get lost!!"

Hawu steps outside fuming in anger.

Zimele glares at me so does Nozibele. Zimele rushes outside

surely his running after Hawu.

Ndandatho

I'm humming a song while walking to the royal house with a basket of spinach balancing under my armpits when Hawu roughly pushes me over so much that i stumbled upon a wall. I'm left trying to catch a breath while glaring at him.. I've never seen Warrior this angry. In a split second i spot Zimele running after Hawu. I'm standing here wondering what could be going on.

"Warrior wait up"

"Zimele i dont want to talk not now or tomorrow!!" Hawu roars.
"I'm on your side not against you come on"

"I dont need your pity just met me please" He says storming away. Zimele heaves a long sigh while glaring on Hawu. He has his hands on his head i slowly move away from the wall. Zimele turns to look behind. "And now what are you doing there?"

I look at him and say nothing. "Who plastered you on that wall?" I blink endlessly. "And what happened here? Why are these spinach leaves on the ground?" I heave a sigh "Warrior Hawu accidentally walked passed me so I dropped those"

He chuckles. "Poor thing" He says bending to pick up my leaves. Mama Maseko walks out crying hysterically. She looks at me then Zimele.

"You should be proud of yourself Ndandatho all thanks to your mighty gift my children are outcasts and we will have no home. Go on and clapped your hands Your mission is accomplished" I swallow hard. "Mai dont follow"

"I should've known i was harboring a snake that was gonna bite me. I regret the day I met you and gave you shelter. Now i see why your step dad wanted to sacrifice with you you would make a great and poisonous medicine because you are evil and selfish!!"

I blink endlessly" I will pray to my forefathers to for your gruesome pregnancy delivery see my tears Liyana? They will plant a very bad omen on you and that baby you carrying "

" Whooa!!! Whooa!! Just hold it right there mama Maseko. Dont curse my baby not when you brought this upon yourself " My husband says walking towards me as tears are rolling out of my eyes." The hills

have eyes Ndandatho " She walks away." She cursed me! She just cursed me Zimele! "I cry." Dont mind her shes bitter because her little secret came put"

"Zimele there's power in words she just cursed me and i might die delivering this baby"

I say paranoid and frightened..

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Few months later

Ngelozzi

Its been a couple of months since i found out the truth about my mother it was heart breaking at first but now its all healed. I would've wished and wanted to have a relationship with my mother had she been gentle at heart and all generous to other human beings sadly the version I've seen or experienced of her isnt a pleasant one hence i was motivated to living life without her just like she managed to live hers without me. I'm content and happy with my life and family as it is. Mom apologized for everythingsame thing with dad. Life has been harmonious and recuperating especially with Nhlonipho loving me more than ever and treating me like an egg. I've been happy and at peace throughout the previous months. I've even forgot i lost a baby along the way that's how peaceful my life has been.

But lately something has been happening to me again but this time around its different from previously. I'm always active and less hungry i hardly sleep and hardly weep. I'm forever happy and longing of him. The only similarity is that i haven't had my periods in three months now Nhlonipho is happy and I'm scared of history repeating itself while the father is doing everything in his powers to make sure we end up wife and husband. My parents don't know as yet i was advised to keep quiet but obviously mothers knows best. She's being inquisitive lately saying how I'm gaining weight and how my skin tone is changing. My father says a simple "Should i be worried MaFuze" and when i say "No" He faintly smiles like he doesn't buy it.

Surely you know what it is happening there's bun in the oven and right now I'm forced to eating bread and butter because he doesnt want his baby to be "Skinny"

"Ngelo finish this sandwich"

"I'm not hungry nje"

"My flower please my baby will be tiny"

"Nhlo I'm full"

"Ngelози..." I glare at him and have his sandwich either way.
While brushing my belly and myself seated between his legs.
"Fine but shall i be fat you will carry me wherever i want to go"

"Why are you bullying me though?"

"Because i love you"

"Some dangerous love you have"

I giggle. "Cant wait to be Mrs Jali"

"Those people are fighting me left right and center. You know how hard it is my love"

"I'm just glad you fighting for our love."

"I love you MaFuze"

"Me too"

"Are your parents suspecting you?"

"Yes mom mostly"

"I'm sorry i brought you here yet again"

"Its my fault too."

"I just want these people to grant me permission to marry you. I cant take it any more"

He says brushing my arm as we glaring on nature. Like i said we now love each other more than ever.

Ndandatho

Milani whose name means "Growing/growth" is very a handful baby. She cries for no apparent reason even after having her nappy changed or being fed. This baby girl doesn't mind crying for hours without stopping. Its even worse when Zimele isn't around she happens to love the father more than me which I've made peace with. To think i nearly died when bringing her in this world only for her to prefer a person who can't even push a peanut anyway its okay I'm happy mother. Who am i kidding? My little owl birdie is using me for my milk and not happy about it. On the other hand she betrayed me by taking her father's looks just like her brother. All my kids want to look like their father but not me and that is another betrayal. Why are the gods doing this to me? So much hate for such a beautiful lady but I'm Fine! Yes i am fine. ***Rolling eyes***

Bangizwe is now a year old this father of his that happens to be a warrior is already giving him tutorials on how to fight my poor kid fumbles everyday. But i am lenient with him after all his only a year old not twenty something. He can't be good at it as yet but with time he will be better. By the way i have a little bit of a hiccup here with this human being that i happen to call my son. Gatsha is my son but saying i know him or understand him is a difficult thing to attest. I mean this boy talks less smiles less socializes less he hardly plays nor touches his sibling or better yet kiss her cheeks. Gatsha is so detached and so uptight even i as the mother i dont get hugs not even kisses. My baby doesn't have friends he just loves his space my biggest concern is with his eyes. That kid doesn't have calming eyes his eyes carry this energy that i cannot describe. If i were to describe them in one word i would say "Lion" His eyes are freaking me out. They beautiful eyes but they also not beautiful. What worries me the most is how quiet he is Gatsha doesn't talk not that he can't talk but he doesn't talk. I wouldn't say having Milani contributed to it i feel like his a rude kid. A very attitudinal filled young man. Zimele thinks I'm paranoid but i know my son is not the friendliest species of the world.

"Ndanda my baby is crying"

I glare at him and feed his little spoilt brats. "Where is my son?"

"Where is he? He was here not long ago"

"Zimele please find my son i hate it when my baby is out of sight"

"Gatsha!!!!"

"Zimele go outside and stop shouting"

"Fine maka Mila"

He stands to go outside. "His here on the veranda"

"Doing?"

"Nothing his alone. "

I heave a sigh then stand up.

"His probably hungry" Zimele glares at me. "Warrior"

"Baba"

"Are you hungry?"

"No"

"Come play with Milani"

"No"

"Gatsha she's your sister"

He looks at me then his father. He walks inside the house glares at Milani whose laying on the bed. He holds her hand for a second then goes outside. "Zimele i dont like this i really dont like how my son is"

"There's nothing wrong with him Ndandatho you worry too much you worry too much by now you should've noticed your son is not a socialite"

"I'm forcing him to have friends i cant allow a loner cow of a child"

"Ndandatho leave my son alone he is okay and besides his a man. You can't expect him to be a sissy imagine what kind of a King he would make?" I glare at Zimele. "Dont worry my love his perfectly normal"

"I can't help but to feel guilty for giving him a sibling sooner.
Maybe his not happy with me"

"Honey relax" I swallow hard then embrace my husband.. "Bangi
a very unique baby Nda it has nothing to do with us having a
second baby. If you remember correctly we once found him
playing with a snake. Meaning he is a different kind of a child"

"That alone scares me Zee"

"Honey our boy is a warrior. Warriors dont smile apart from me"

I smile. "His perfectly normal."

"Fine"

Hawulesizwe

I still haven't gotten used to this truth or reality thing of me being a Jali. I can't even act like one nor walk like one. This title feels so huge for me to fill in hence I've been against people knowing about it.

Ngcolosi has begged me time and time again not to be a stranger at the palace but i can't stand those grounds. They always leave me feeling like a pandemic virus that is sweeping lives away and leaving children as orphans. I really cant stand the hate in Gezekile's eyes. Queen mother doesn't like me She can't even hide it. In her eyes I'm the culprit but not the victim. She's making me carry the cross of my parents sins which is unfair and disheartening because both her and i are victims on this matter. If it wasn't for Ngcolosi my family and i would've long left these grounds because the Queen was vouching for us to leave to no return. But luckily we had support from Zimele and his father and our home was saved and extended. I now have two cows Ngcolosi gave them to me. He is trying to play the big brother role which i find suffocating and absurd. I mean I've always been the big guy here not a sibling having someone play that role to me is bizarrely tiring.

"Hawu"

"Ma"

"Didn't you say you were going to the market?"

"It must've slipped my mind"

I quickly get up to freshen up. I wear a better looking outfits. I leave my house heading to the depths of Umthombo. By the time i get there its getting dark but fortunately i find her seated on our little rock

glaring at the trees and the rivers. She has a flower on her hands plucking out the petals uttering that "He loves me he loves me not" Kind of a game. I cover her eyes with my hands. "Dont do that!"

"Hello beauty"

She blushes and glares at me. "Hey stranger"

"How are you?"

"I'm mad and yourself?"

"I'm happy to see your angelic face i have a gift for you"

She turns to face me with a smile on her face. "And what is that?"

"This" I plug in a flower on her beautiful long plaited hair. "Ow! Thank you warrior"

"Do you like it?"

"A lot"

"There's another one"

"What is it?"

I smile. "Come on just say it"

"This"

"Beads?" She says with her eyes popped out and her jaw dropping on the ground "Not just any beads but beautiful beads for a beautiful Princess" She glares at me with a smile. "Thank you"

"Can i?"

"Yes" I gently pull her hand then put the wristband on her hairy hand. "I see you still have my lucky band"

"Its my favourite"

"I see" I kiss her hand then sit besides her. "You look good and you smell good"

"I tried hey." She rests her head on my shoulder we both glare at the waters. "I missed you"

"I hate to admit but i missed you too"

"Really?"

"I promise"

"That's kind of you"

"I know" I rest my chin on her head. "I love my gifts hey i should get you something soon"

"I dont like gifts Gabi"

"No way silly i will get you one"

"No problem then" Our hands interwine those strange feelings have gotten worse with time. "You are a good friend Hawu"

"And you are a good friend too Gabi. Its strange how the past few weeks you have been my coping mechanism"

"You were there for me when i was kidnapped its only fair i do the same."

"You've done way too much"

We keep quiet she lifts her head and her eyes to glare at me. I glare at her. "Can i ask you something?"

"Yes"

"Why do you refuse to kiss me"

"Friends don't kiss"

"Okay" She shifts her eyes. "Do you want me to kiss you?" Damn Hawu! "I would appreciate it"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes"

"Fine" I gently draw her face to my face our eyes lock for a little while. "I'm gonna teach you how to kiss. First thing first slightly tilt your head to the side. Making sure our foreheads dont bring forth friction so with our noses they mustn't rub against each other that will result to the kiss suffocating and.." She presses her lips on my lips i gently pull her lower lip and suck on it she does the same thing with my upper lip. We let our lips dance to a tune of their own she cups my face and deepens the kiss. My hands make their way to her boobs. I gently brush them "Gabi can we stop?"

"I like this"

"Gabi we friends"

"I dont want to be your friend Hawu i want to be your wife"

"I'm old Gabi I'm eleven years older"

"I dont care culture allows a man to be ten years older than a woman. Besides love has no age limit"

"Gabisile you are a beautiful looking girl cant you marry your age mate's?"

"Kiss me please"

"Gabi" She sucks on my lips yet again. My stupid organ beats faster than it ever had i kiss her back.

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Nhlonipho

"Try to eat tonight Ngelo"

"I will"

"Ngelozzi I'm dead serious"

"Fine bye and i love you"

"I love you too"

"I love you"

"And i love you"

"Bye"

"Candy dreams okay?"

"Okay" She smiles i peck her lips then watch her leave. I turn to go home myself. I find my entire family gathered on the table they all look at me as i occupy a seat besides my mother.
"Greetings elders"

"Greetings Nhlo" They all say then continue laughing over whatever. My father is glaring at me which is making me uncomfortable. Since my plea of marrying Ngelozi things between us have been awkward.

"Where did you go? I've been looking for you."

"I went for a walk"

"With miss Fuze?"

"Zimele please"

"Come on brother i care. You're my baby brother"

"The pollen on his hair serves as proof that he went somewhere with someone" Mom adds they all laugh at me. "Can you all let my son be" Dad says glaring at me. "How are you Jali?"

"I'm doing great baba and yourself?"

"I'm very much happy son"

"Good" I dish up for myself. "So you want to marry Ngelo because you made her twice again?"

"Zimele dont..." I say between my teeth. "Zimele would you please let my son be!" Mom says Dad pecks her cheek. "We know Nhlo and guess what Son" Dad says. "What?"

"You have twenty two cows remaining in your kraal meaning your lobola is ready"

"Excuse me?"

"CONGRATULATIONS SON!" I immediately drop my fork.
"Meaning baba?"

"You slow Jali like a tortoise!"

"Zimele can you stop teasing my last born please" Dad says smiling "You have my blessings Nhlo marry your woman. You've fought hard in that meeting now be proud of yourself." I heave a long sigh and cover my face i cant believe this. "You joking right baba?"

"Not a chance my boy. You love the girl and there's nothing we can do to stand on your way. Besides I've changed a few customs. You are the first royalty to marry a diluted being. Meaning on my grounds blood wont stand between true love"

"BHENGU!!! THANK YOU SO MUCH BABA I'M VERY MUCH GRATEFUL AND!"

"Thank your brother mostly" I glare at Zimele "What did he do?"

"He vouch for you to the elders they blessed you."

"Thank you so much Jali thank you brother so much"

"Pleasure. But dont be excited brother marriage sucks trust me"

He says glaring at Ndandatho "Dont start with me Zimele" They all giggle i cant believe Ngelo and i are gonna be married. "Am i allowed to marry her this weekend?"

"Next weekend"

"Thank you so much."

"Congratulations son" Mom says embracing me.

"I cant wait to see Ngelozi as a wife" My grandmother giggles the others join. "My poor brother will have a tough time trust Ngelozi with complicating life. Shes a lunatic that one" Zimele says giggling. There i wont side with her she's something else. "She will make a great wife honestly" Dad says. "True that my love" Mom says. "Mama Ngelo is telling a story tonight lets go there please" Ndandatho says excited.

"The kids?"

"We will go with them"

"While you do that my husband and i will go to bed" Mom says
We all shift our eyes to them. "Let me finish my meat sweetheart
then we go to bed" They give each other flirty looks.

"Dont take long You will find me there"

"I'm coming beautiful " They wink at each other Zimele and i roll
our eyes.

"Goodnight my beautiful people" Mom says standing up jolly.
"Good night kids enjoy your story. Honeywait for me"

"You two are gross"

"Leave us alone Zimele" Mom says pecking dad's lips. "I love you"

"I love you more sthandwa sami" Mom says glaring at dad. Gogo
is looking at me with a smile on herface she's the one who told
my little secret. "I will go freshen up so we can go to Ngcobo's
house"

"No problem"

"Night Gogo"

"Night my kids" I jog to my private space with joy in my heart i never saw this day coming anytime soon. The elders were really not hearing anything about it. I'm so happy right now.

Zikhali

"Where is Gabisile?"

"She's probably in her chamber"

"Busani"

"Baba"

"Please go call her her food is getting cold"

"Fine baba" My son stands up. I glare on Boni. "What?"

"Your daughter is getting out of hand"

"Zikhali not this again"

"This whole stage thing is starting to annoy me. Since her return that girl is acting strange"

"Its adolescence my love I've noticed that"

"She better not be doing stuffs Boni i will kill her just like i made her" She glares at me. Busani walks in "Uphi?"

"She's not in her chamber"

"What?"

"Its dark baba there's no one"

"Its already dark outside where could this girl be?"

"I dont know baba"

"This i wont tolerate!" I stand to make my way to her chamber i knock then open her door. "Khali"

"Honey she's not in here!"

"Surely she's with a friend my love"

"What friend Bonisiwe? That kid will rue the day she started acting like an adult in my chambers. She has curfew Boni"

"Honey surely there's a valid reason for this can we please wait for her to get back please Shenge"

I glare at her then calm down. "She better not be on that stage of messing with boys"

"I will talk to her"

"Please do"

"I promise honey"

MaFuze

My children husband and myself are gathered around a blaze eating corn while listening to the little ones chatting. I promised to tell them a story tonight and any minute from now i will start narrating the story. "Mafuze"

"Ma?"

"Please go collect more corn from the kitchen"

"No problem mama" She stands up

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heading to the kitchen Makhosonke looks at me. "Is she okay?"
"She's very much okay baba"

"She's changing my wife"

"Alot"

"Is she?" I giggle. His been saying this "Are you gonna kick her out again?"

"I will kick her out after delivering"

"Hhaa Khosonke?"

"I'm joking I'm just scared Mamakhe."

"Thats my biggest fear as well"

"She is right?"

"She is baba let's wait for her to come clean"

"Definitely i dont want history to repeat itself"

"We really cant afford to have that" Ngelozi appears with the corn. I hear voices from the gate i smile when i see the Jali's.

"They here for a story"

"Thats my quest to go hide in my bedroom"

"Fuze come on"

"I will stay then."

"Greetings elders" Zimele says. I spot Ngelozi and Nhlonipho glaring at each other Young love. We greet each other and do all the formalities.

"Ngelo"

"Ma"

"Please fetch chairs my daughter"

"I will help ma"

"Its okay Prince Nhlo i got this"

"A pair of hands is better than one"

"But i got it"

"Ngelози its just chairs my daughter dont be fussy please " I add.

"Fine" They disappear to fetch the chairs. "Gatsha come to gogo"
He comes to me i put him on my lap. Ndandatho has a rude one
with this one. Unlike Milani the sweetheart who cries endlessly
and smiles often. "Nda"

"Ma"

"Are we gonna have more of them?" I tease.

"Hell no mama these two are enough"

"Zimele isn't attesting to that"

They glare at each other "We not done mama she's fooling you.
We gonna have more"

"No way Zimele"

"This is a warm up ma"

"As long as his joystick still works more babies are gonna be made" My husband adds we giggle. "Thank you Mapholoba"

"If so he has my blessings to have a second wife"

"Hhaibo Ndandatho!"

"Serious Mama"

"Are you willing to share?"

"Already I'm sharing with this jealous little girl"

"Hhayi Liyana dont wish for that."

Hawulesizwe

"Gabi you should get going"

"I like it here with you"

"Your parents are surely worried"

"No dont mind my family"

"Its windy and dark i need to go home myself"

"Shall you leave today i know you gonna come back after days
Warrior"

"You staying far remember i cant walk such miles everyday."

"But still when granted the opportunity to be together i should
make the most of it"

I heave a sigh. "But its cold now"

"Your arms are warming me"

She says squeezing herself in my embrace yet again. I hold her
tight and kiss her hair. "Tell me a story"

"What story?"

"Any story"

"Mmmmm... I'm not a good story teller "

"At least try"

"I really cant tell story but rather singing. "

"You can sing?"

"Something like that"

"Please sing for me"

I chuckle "Dont you think that will invite witches to our dean?"

"I dont fear witches please sing"

"Dont laugh"

"I promise"

"Sure?"

"Pinky swear"

"Fine"

I clear my throat then close my eyes. "I'm joking i cant sing"

"Come on warrior"

"I dont have a talent Gabi"

"There's no such thing as that"

"I promise i cant sing"

"Dance then?" I laugh. "That's even worse"

"Come on"

"I'm being honest i only fight. Do you have a talent?"

"I can fake one"

"Fake one how?"

"Like singing"

"No way Gabi you are horrible at it"

"I'm not bad"

"You are horrible birds will have an accident shall you sing" She laughs. "Then we gonna sit here and do nothing?"

"More like it"

"Boring"

"Let's count the stars"

"I will pee"

"Dont tell me you believe in that"

"Each time i counted the stars i woke up to a wet bed. " I giggle
"Sies Gabi"

"Let's walk you home"

"Fine"

"Stand up"

"A want a good night kiss"

"No problem." I kiss her lips for the longest time. "My underwear
is damp"

"Its normal" I kiss her neck. "Warrior" She says with a smocky
voice. "Yes"

"Why is my body feeling like this?"

"I dont know" I smirk and kiss her neck yet again she arches her
back and puts her hands on my shoulders as she's seated on my
lap with her legs on either sides. I move my hands on her back
massaging her shoulders while nibbling her neck. "Ooh!!"

"Are you okay?"

"Yes I'm fine"

"No problem" I kiss her lips yet again the kiss is getting more and more warmer. My gent rises. "Gabi let's stop"

"Why?"

"I dont want to make you a woman"

"Why?"

"Gabi you are a Princess in case you've forgotten"

"But you kissed me"

"We leaving now"

"You dont like me don't you?"

"I like you"

"Then why are you refusing me this pleasure?"

"This pleasure complicates lives Gabi especially Princesses hence they call it adults stuffs"

"I wont make a baby like my sister "

"Gabisile the answer is no"

"Why did you kiss me then?"

"Because you asked me too"

"Had i not asked you you were not gonna kiss me?"

"I'm not gonna argue with you Gabi get up now"

"I dont want"

"You want me to kiss you again?"

"No"

I chuckle and kiss her again she gives in. "I will come back tomorrow dont be angry okay? For now this adult act is off limits Gabi. You will do no such thing okay? "

"But you gonna kiss me?"

"Yes"

"Fine"

"Now lets go home."

"Fine" I walk her to her palace then jog home.

Ngcolosi

"You will be the death of me someday Nozibele"

"Dont act like you dont like it"

I smirk. "How do you feel about your last born getting married?"

"Honestly i love how responsible and accountable he is. Most boys wouldn't have bothered they would've done what Hawu did to those girls Bubu and Siziwe. "

"Are you ever gonna forgive the guy?"

"He played those ladies Ngcolosi"

"They were also stupid for allowing him to do that to them.They both knew he was married why did they have feelings for a married man?"

"You gonna side with him because his your brother"

"Honey sex never benefits one person but two people. Those girl gave him permission to use them they had all the power to refuse being used but they allowed it. The only victim here is Khethiwe not those girls"

"Ngcolosi..."

"A person can only use you if you allow it"

She looks at me. "Maybe he took after your father" I giggle.

"Maybe"

"So what's the way forward?"

"In terms?"

"Your relationship with his?"

"I won't suffocate him. My focus now is on my son getting married. So proud of him for standing up for what he believes in I'm a proud father"

"That means two weddings?"

"Yes"

"We are old Ngcolosi"

"Don't include me I'm very much fresh"

She giggles. "You are Jali. I mean you have two grandchildren doesn't that spell old "

"Don't remind me these boys are naughty"

"Your teachings"

"At least their wives will be happy wives"

"Bad father"

"Good father"

"Ngcolosi!"

"What?"

"Dont teach Gatsha those things please"

"I wont."

"I love you still"

"Even though you were acussing me of cheating"

"You acted like a guilty person"

"But i told you repeatedly i wasn't guilty"

"You too handsome okay"

"So being handsome automatically makes you guilty?"

She shyly nods i roll my eyes. She giggles. Tomorrow I'm writing a letter to Ngelozi's home.

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Hawu

I've touched so many girls in my life kissed so many spoken to so many and showed so many my nakedness but I've never felt this way with any of them just like i feel about Gabisile Buthelezi. That kid has this hold on me i cant go a minute without thinking about her. Each time i call her name my blood boils a pinch of fear creeps in bringing shivers down to my spine. Sometimes i feel butterflies dances on my body. She is my ticket to hell if really what i feel for her is a sin. I've tried for a while now to keep a distance from her and to ignore this foreign feels but they overpower me.

Because everywhere i turn i hear her soft voice her laughter i sometimes smell her fragrance in my room. Everything reminds me of her even a bowl she once touched. This little girl is driving me crazy and it's beyond my reach. I once liked Siziwe and felt like she was my world but since my paths crossed with that of

Gabi I've realized those feelings were not true but the truth is Gabsile.

"Such a big smile Your cow delivered?" My smile fades immediately. "Delivered what? Stay out of my business Lungelo"

"What a grumpy and boring brother you are"

"Dont you have friends or something?"

"I had one and that was sister Khethiwe. But all thanks to you she left"

I look at her. "I wasn't cut for her"

"Who were you cut for?"

"Lungelo just get lost please!" I say standing up heading to my house. "You weird brother"

I ignore her. I switch on the candles to brighten my room. I lay on my bed replaying the kiss. I bite my lower lip. "Gabisile"

Mrs Maseko

"Lungelo who is that?"

I say pointing at the gate. "Where ma?"

"There's a shadow look closer"

"I dont see anything"

"Hhayi suka!" I say standing up making my way to the gate. "Ma its dark where are you going?"

"I'm coming" Before i could go far i hear baby sobs. "Khethiwe is that you?"

"Yes mama"

"Hhaibo! So late at night? What is going on? Bring the baby here" I say taking the baby from her. "Hhaibo Khethiwe why travel at night with the baby?"

"My apologies ma"

"Wozani" I lead the way to the elders house. She makes herself comfortable on the grass mat with her head bowed. I wipe Mingo's mucus with my cloth. "Yini Khethi?"

"Nothing ma"

"Why would you travel this late with a baby? It cant be nothing my daughter. Lungelo bring your sister food"

We look at each other. My daughter brings the food and a basin of water. Khethiwe eats without stopping its evident she is hungry. "Khethiwe yini?"

"I came to visit ma besides Mlingo misses his Father"

"Oh! I see. I thought it was something bad sisi"

"Cha ma i just want to bring Mlingo over"

"Oh okay"

"I will go fix a chamber for you"

"No need ma i will use Mlingo's father's."

I look at her "No problem" We converse a little till she leaves to her chambers. I missed my grandson his all grown now.

Boni

"Gabisile i wont repeat myself again!"

"Gabi talk where were you?" I say with fear of what Zikhali might do to her cos his breathing fire. "I went to friends house"

"What friend?"

"I went to Buhle's house" She says facing the ground. "You lying!"

"Baba I'm telling the truth"

"Gabisile Buthelezi!! Gabisile Buthelezi stop lying!!" I glare at Zikhali. "Sthandwa sami where were you? Tell the truth please" I negotiate.

"I was at Buhle's house mama i lost track of time"

"I see she's still lying! Busani!!"

"Ba"

"Woza lana"

"Oh!! Gabi tell the truth my baby please. You know how your father gets when lies are being told just come clean"

"Mama i was with Buhle i swear"

"Zikhali she's telling the truth"

"And you think i dont know my daughter when she's lying Boni?"

"Zikhali children lose track of time when playing"

"Bonisiwe let me deal with my daughter i wont tolerate this rubbish."

"Dont beat her Zikhali"

"Boni step aside!"

"I will talk to her"

"Shes lying cant you see that?"

I keep quiet. "Shenge you called for me"

"Fetch Mduuzi"

I pop my eyes out immediately Gabi brushes her arm. She's much aware of what's going on.

"uMdu baba?"

"Yes"

"As in the whip you used on us growing up?"

"Hurry up"

Busani walks away. I look at Zikhali "Honey let me talk to her theres no need for this please"

"Only Mduduzi will force the truth out of her mouth"

I look at my baby with fear and pain. My husband is not a fan of beating up kids but when he does it just know his angry over whatever that happened. With Gabi its even worse she's her father's little Princess. He wants nothing with his last born. "Gabi abdicate already just talk"

"I'm telling the truth"

"Here baba"

"Thank you son. Before i start with comforting her with this rod go fetch Buhle"

Gabi lifts her eyes. "No problem baba"

"Nana where were you?"

She keeps quiet. "Gabi you dont have a mouth?"

"I do"

"Now talk"

"I went to Xoli's house Baba"

"Now its no longer Buhle?" I ask. "See what i meant when i said she's lying"

Busani walks in with Buhle. "Buhle"

"My King"

"When last did you see your friend?"

"I dont follow my King"

"When last did Gabi visit you?"

"Two days ago"

"You didn't see her during the day?"

"I did not my King"

"And Xoli?"

"Xoli was with me throughout the day"

"That should be all young maiden" Zikhali glares at Gabi "Where did you go?"

"I went to train"

"I went there Gabi stop lying"

"You are the one whose lying Busani"

"Dont scream at me i will slap you Gabi"

"Slap who? Do you a child her age Busani?"

"But ma she's disrespecting me and top of that she's lying"

"Leave Busani alone Wena talk"

I look at my husband. "Baba i went to train" Zikhali pulls her hand
"Zikhali hhayi"

"Mama i didn't do anything please"

"Zikhali you gonna hurt my child"

"Gabisile talk or i will tell the truth!" Busani says. "What truth hippo!"

"What truth Busani?" I say glaring at him.

"Ask Gabi"

"Will you talk Busani!!"

"She was with a guy baba"

"You lying Busani!"

"I'm not lying"

"I hate you big foot!!"

"And i hate you more!"

"I wish you were never my sibling! I hate you for lying in my name"

"Weren't you kissing anyone in the bushes? A tall guy huh?"

"She did what?" Zikhali says ready to whip her butt "Mama his lying!! His always been a liar just like he did when he stole my chicken!"

"Uyajola kabi?" Zikhali-

"Cha bo"

"Uyajola?"

"Cha baba"

"Shes lying baba they were kissing in the bushes i saw them. I even saw him when he left her by the gate!"

"You lying asshole!!

" What did you just call your brother? "

"Baba I'm sorry"

"Zikhali no" Did he listen? No. My baby's sobs fill the house my heart is bleeding.

Ngelози

My mother is a good narrator i love her stories with everything in me. "And that's how Ndunduma and Phawu ended up" She says.

"So this Phawu married her sister's husband regardless of how Ndunduma felt?" Zimele-

"Yes Prince Jali she chose to stay"

"I would kill Gabi yoooh! Imagine the nerve?" We all giggle. "Like really though

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this Phawu girl was sick in the head. Who becomes sister wife with their sister's? Imagine sharing Gatsha's father with Gabi? I would chop her not my husband"

"Such a jealous lover you are sisi Ndandatho" Nhlo-

"Would you share Ngelozi with Zimele?" My parents look at us i shyly look down. "I bet you wouldn't agree to that" Dad says.

"But culture allows that" Dad says.

"Only when the wife is infertile or in a case of death baba Fuze"

"But still Nhlonipho Jali it changes nothing. The sisters can share a husband. Mafuze lets go to bed"

"Good night kids and thank you for coming over next time i will make goodies for everyone "

"Thank you for having us"

They stand up with my siblings sleeping in their arms. We eat corn while glaring on the fireplace. "MaJali let's get going its already late and my kids are sleeping uncomfortably"

"Why did i become a mother again?"

"You love men" Zimele adds. We giggle. "Nhlo we going home get up"

"I'm coming Zimele"

"I will walk you out"

I say standing up. Ndandatho and Zimele are the first to leave the yard. Nhlonipho and myself follow them. He joins our hands together "Hey again"

"Hi again"

"You look beautiful at night" I flap my brows. "Its not about the hours I'm always beautiful just that you haven't been able to get time to admire me"

"Really?"

"Really"

"Thats not true. "

He stops walking so do i. He pulls me to his body "I wonder what kind of a wife are you gonna make"

"A good one. I will serve chicken as breakfast and porridge as supper" He giggles. "You capable. I wish we were going to bed together"

"Same here. I wish they bless our union"

"It's a pity they against it"

"Lets elope then thats the only way to make it happen" He furrows his brows "Serious Nhlo"

"Not a chance Hows the baby in there?"

"Gentle and sweet"

"Thats great. Lets talk tomorrow my love I'm tired and sleepy"

"Alright good night my love "

"Night" He pecks my lips. I wish they grant us their blessings. I love Nhlonipho and marrying him is my wish.

Khethiwe

"Khethiwe..." He says shocked by my presence.

"Hi"

"What brings you here?"

"I thought you wanted to see your son"

"Of course i do but why this late?"

I keep quiet and glare at him.

"Thank you i missed my son" He says playing with him. "When are you leaving?"

"I dont know"

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean just that Hawu. I might stay for a week or so. " His face changes from smitten to worrisome. "What?"

"You can't stay here Khethiwe. "

"Reason being?"

"We separated"

"But you not separated from your son to be specific. "

"Khethiwe i dont have any problem with my son being here dont get me wrong. Its you I'm concerned about"

"Hawu I'm only here to bring your child you said you missed him so we are here. There's nothing to be concerned about. "

"I wasn't fighting Khethiwe. "

"I wasnt fighting too but you sounded like I'm here to bring you trouble if not discomfort. "

"I'm sorry if i offended you."

I glare at him. This man has changed he was never like this before. I guess my departure kinda knocked some sense in him to be honest I'm charmed by the new him.

"I will take the floor and you two can use the bed"

"Excuse me?"

"I said i will make a place for my self on the floor while you and Mlingo take the bed"

"I heard that but i dont understand as to why you would sleep on the floor while your bed is big enough for all three of us. What is wrong with you actually?"

"Wrong with me how?"

"You acting strange Hawu."

"I will go fetch more blankets from mama's house"

"We gonna share the bed Hawu in case you think we will be intimate forget it it wont happen."

"I wasn't thinking of that Khethiwe but rather your comfort especially after what happened the last time you and i were in the same room."

"You mean hurting me?"

He says nothing. "I'm over that"

"Why dont you go sleep with Lungelo?"

"Since when do you suggest such? Hawu yini?"

"Nothing"

I glare at him once again.

"Since you comfortable its fine we will share a bed but tomorrow please move to another room" I chuckle. "Your bed is a sacred isnt it? Actually only your new fling is allowed to sleep in here but not the mother of your son huh?"

"I dont have time for this. Good night" He jumps on the bed with Mlingo. I undress then join them. "Cant you cover up or something?"

"I hate sleeping with clothes as my ex husband you should know such"

I move closer to him making sure my skin sends vibes on his. "You too close"

"Too close for what? I know you want me you've always had an appetite for me now here i am do what you please"

He keeps quiet for a while. To such an extent i have to question if his awake or sleeping.

"Hawu"

"Mmm"

"Are you sleeping?"

"Not yet"

"Can i get a warm welcome please. "

"No Khethiwe. "

" Hawu i miss your touch. I'm a woman and i still have feelings and needs needs that only you can help me with."

Or maybe Fuze i really love that man and i cant hide it anymore. My feelings for him have grown rapidly along the month's its such a pity i now don't get to see him often like i used too because i now have my own space in the premises.

"Khethiwe i cant. "

"Why not?"

"I dont want to take advantage of your body"

"But I'm asking you right now it wont be you taking advantage of me but both of us having fun."

"Khethiwe you are a beautiful woman with a good heart. You don't deserve me or anything involving me. Someone out there loves you and sees you as gold don't waste your time on me."

"I don't want your heart but your penis Hawulesizwe. "

"And my answer is no."

"Hawu yini ngawe? Since when do you think with your brain and not your penis?"

"Khethiwe you shouldn't be asking such from a man who once hurt you this is ridiculous. "

"Hawu just spread my legs open and stop bickering i came here for that"

"Khethiwe i love someone else now"

"Let me guess Siziwe?"

"No"

"Bubu?"

"No"

"Hhayi ke whose the new victim?"

"I will sleep on the floor"

"Hawu please"

"I said no"

"Hawu please" I say planting wet kisses on his back while intertwining our hands. "Its tempting but i cant"

"Hawu please"

In a blink of an eye the roosters are crowling outside morning has come but Hawulesizwe hasn't touched me not even once but rather he said a girl's name in his sleep. I know i said i was done with him but these couple of minutes kinder awakened certain things i got jealous over this "Gabisile" Lady he called in his sleep. His moving on and poor me the victim of his cheating and abuse I'm not moving on but rather stuck on stupid feelings. Buthelezi once said "You will miss this love that you throwing away Khethi" I guess that love is catching up with me...

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Mafuze

Have you ever woke up with a broad smile on your face? Feeling like the world is cupped in your hands like a little limping moth that is depended on your zeal to either aiding it or just letting it die in your hands. Lately i wake up with excessive joy i cant help it but to flaunt. My husband is now a changed man. I'm treated like an egg the whole me my feelings and worries are now taken into consideration i even get appreciation words and randomly kisses that i fail to understand the meaning behind them. The old Makhosonke i met a two decades ago is finally back to the living and its safe he say his giving me good

sweet love and I'm satisfied. This tranquility and excessive joy is the reason I wake up with a broad smile..

"Hhaibo Ngelo lately you beating me to it my baby. The compound is already looking like this?" She swept it and it's dazzling. "I woke up early ma and decided upon it"

"Siyabonga ngane yami but your father will want his cows back saying he married a lazy woman because lately I wake up to such" She shyly giggles. "It's no big deal ma. You taught me well I guess"

"Unless this little one is not a lazy baby" She drops her head and fiddles with her hands. She does that when she's frightened or uneasy.

"Ngelo" I lift her chin up with my hands careful not to bruise her. "It's okay sisi I know. You can never hide a human being my child. It's alright"

"I'm Unmarried ma and already I've disappointed you"

"Ngelozu look around you dont you see cows in that kraal?"

"I do ma"

"You know what that means? His family respected us enough to present those cows to us regardless of who we are and what we are. They treated us with respect showed us humanity. No royals would do such for the likes of us Ngelo but the Jali's. Married or unmarried I'm happy for you and I'm proud my baby okay? "

With that said i gently rub my hand around her cheek. " Thank you mama"

"How far are you?"

"Close to four months i guess"

"Hhaibo Ngelo mosi uyobeletha kungekudala?"

(No way soon you will be giving birth) She faintly smile. "Ekhaya ka Ngcobo!" Buthelezi says entering my yard with a smile on his face such a handsome man. "Shenge morning"

"Morning mama how are you doing today? Ngelo hi"

"We doing great my son we can't complain that smile tells me you doing great too"

"We hanging in there ma. I was sent to bring this letter to senior Fuze is he around?"

"Yes but his bathing you can leave it with me my son i will give it to him"

"Thank you ma and stay well"

"Be blessed my son" He turns to walk away. "Sabelani"

"Ma"

"Please have tea my son" He smiles. "Thank you ma"

"Ngelo please make Sabelani tea i wanna go give your father this letter"

"No problem ma"

Fuze

"Baba are you done?"

"Come in MaFuze"

"Is it safe though?" I softly chuckle. "Come in MaFuze you know everything that's on my body" The door slightly opens her radiant smile is the first thing i see. I purse lips then glare at her.

"Khosonke you not properly dressed" She covers her eyes.

"Hhaibo MaFuze ihhaba. Come in woman" She giggles. I put on my underwear then make my way to the bed. "Baba i brought you this letter"

"What letter?"

"Sabelani just brought it here"

"I hope my sister and her family are doing fine. Letters can be worrisome. Thank you" I peck her cheeks. "Do you mind reading it? I wanna dress up quickly and prepare for work"

"No problem" She opens the letter i fix my eyes on her facial expression. "What does it say?"

"Greetings Mapholoba i hope all is well in your home and family. We as the Jali's are writing this letter concerning your beautiful daisy it has come to our attention you have a beguiling eden with enchanting blossoms. We would really appreciate it if you could give us a date as to when we can come to discuss this further more in person. Please don't keep us waiting the sun might burn our flower with it's bursts. BABA!!!! "

She covers her mouth i reread the letter then look at her " Baba!! Baba they asking for Ngelozi's hand in marriage!! Nhlonipho wants to marry Ngelozi!!! Baba!!!! " She jumps on me with excitement. " That boy want to marry my daughter? " I utter in a shock filled tone. "My daughter is getting married baba!! Kuhle okwethu!!!!!! Halala!!" She ululate in joy..

Khethiwe

Mama walks towards me with a broad smile on her face. "Makoti how are you"

"I'm very well thanks ma"

"Good. Come here lets gossip" She gently pulls my hand leading me to the veranda. She genuinely smiles. "Spill the beans how was your night?"

"My night was.. Was fine ma"

"You dont have to be shy Khethiwe i know you adults and that your blood is warm. My biggest concern is did you mend things?"

I faintly smile. "Well mama it was a just a peaceful night." She

smiles. Hawu makes his way towards us he has our son on his hands. Such a handsome man. "Morning Khethi and Mama"

"Morning son how was your night?" She says chirpy. "It was just a night" Hawu says glaring at me. "Musti prepare for another baby?"

"No mama we.." We both say in unison. "You still waiting on Mlingo? I understand my children I'm just happy you put this tension to rest and working on your marriage. I should slaughter for this one" She says standing up leaving Hawu and myself glaring at each other. "What is going on? Did you tell her we mending things?"

"No.. That's her version of events"

"I see."

I glare at him so does he. "I'm leaving today"

"Going to Thuthukani Kingdom?"

"No.. My uncles place"

He looks at me. "He hated you Khethi"

"Not anymore we spoke about it."

"Oh! That's beautiful"

"I'm leaving Mlingo"

He glares at me. "Leaving him how?"

"His a Maseko and as a Maseko he will be raised and shaped" He glares at me. "I want your mother to raise him Hawu."

"You abandoning our child?"

"If his with his father and family its not abandoning"

"Why would you do that Khethiwe? His still depended on breast milk"

"Hawu i have my own life to fetch. People to mend things with the last thing i want is another marriage with Mlingo"

"Securing a marriage? What marriage is that?"

"Its not your business"

"It is my business when you ditching our son for a man"

"Like you didn't ditch us for another woman well women."

He looks at me. "If you found love its fine i will raise my son Khethiwe"

"Gabisile will surely make a great mother to my son. I mean if she loves a man like yourself she has to love you with your two kids that's if that Siziwe lady is not pregnant wherever she is because if she is it means three babies." He looks at me

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she has to love you with your two kids that's if that Siziwe lady is not pregnant wherever she is because if she is it means three babies." He looks at me his slowly getting agitated. I want to mend things with Sabelani surely he wont hesitate to take me back with Mlingo staying with his father. " Congratulations on your marriage Khethiwe i wish you well"

"Tell your mother we didn't mend anything"

"You can do that as well the last time i checked you were friends"

He walks away. I heave a sigh.

Gabisile

I sure hate my father actually i hate my entire family especially after yesterday. Busani takes a cup. "I want to visit sisi Ndandatho"

"Are you telling us or asking us?"

"Can i"

"You going nowhere"

"Zikhali you being hard on her let her visit please"

"No She's going nowhere. Doing that will give her more time to smooch men in bushes" I heave a soft sigh this backstabber is glaring at me. How i hate Busani right now i wish i can use my

spear on him. "Dont give me that look" My father says with a stern voice. I look at my food then play with it. "Gabisile finish your food"

"I'm not hungry"

"Gabisile dont make me force you to it"

I open my mouth then start eating with father giving me ugly eyes. "I should get going my love i will see you soon" Dad says to my mother. "I will quickly collect your luggage my love"

"Thank you my wife"

"Gabi please clear out the table"

"Dont we have servants for that?"

"Gabisile do as your mother says" I get up to get my way around it. Where is dad going with a luggage bag? Busani is looking at me to my frustration. Mom and dad walk away "What is wrong with you?"

"Are you talking to me?"

"Maybe the monkey behind you"

"Busani you repulse me just be transparent. Your face disgust me"

"Why are you getting yourself into trouble Gabi? Since when do you kiss men in bushes?"

"Its not my fault you not getting any kisses you bitter Busani"

"Have you ever heard of the phrase"Boys bring babies?" Ignore him "You still pee on your blankets Gabiyou want to embarrass yourself by peeing on a man's blankets?"

"Dont insult me Busani"

"You are crazy wena actually there's a missing screw in your head. How do you kiss a guy whose taller than a giraffe?"

"Drop it Busani"

"Imagine yourself pregnant with a giraffes baby what a disgrace. Actually where did you buy those feelings that led you to a grown arse man? Gabi you are sick!! You have a screw missing up there! SiesGabi"

"Shut up asshole"

"Your boyfriend is ugly too"

"And your father is handsome?"

He giggles. "That guy is father's age. You are a disgrace young lady. I'm starting to think you faked this whole abduction just to be with that ladder boyfriend of yours that i can i draw with my left foot even Gatsha can draw that man. That's how grammatical he is" I get a hold of a mug and throw it on his face. "GABI OUCH!!!"

He groans loudly so much that mom and dad walks in.

Ndandatho

If there's anything I spite the most about being a mother are the sleeplessness nights of having to breastfeed and rock up a crying who has no reason at all to howl. While their maker is snoring with no damn care about their little business. Its morning poor me already i feel exhausted and drained Milani is taking much of my energy. Gatsha was peaceful baby honestly unlike this sister of his. Talking of Gatsha i woke up to him staring at Milani if not mistaken he was holding her hand but he immediately let it go when Zimele and myself were glaring at him. I know my son is creepy but like any mother i would kill a person who would label my baby as creepy. Only i have the right to call him that. Oh last night i soaked Milani's nappies meaning i have yet another chore as tired as i am.

"Sthandwa sami dont you wish to pamper me today?"

"I'm always ready to pamper you my love what do you want?"

"Please wash your daughter's nappies"

"Hha Ndandatho! I love you and i would do anything to help you but not nappies baby"

I narrow my brows. "I'm serious Ndandatho"

"Wow I'm hurt."

"You will heal honey"

"Where was i again when women were blessed with good men?"

"You were moaning somewhere in the bushes at some old abandoned house asking me to make you a mother"

I playfully punch him. "That hurts woman"

"That's for being handsome and crazy. Did my baby eat?"

"Which one?"

"We both know i have one baby"

"He is refusing to eat had to take him to his grandmother"

"I think i should run this to my mentor Gatsha is troubling me"

"At least he loves his sister"

"Yet his shy about it"

"His a true man. I think you need to visit your parents surely he will be okay. Besides you haven't shown your parents the second baby"

"You right Jali"

"I'm always honey"

"Keep fooling yourself"

He giggles then kiss his daughter. "I love this girl I've never loved a woman like i do with this one" I narrow my brows "Excuse me?"

"What?"

"Please repeat what you just said?"

"Wamuhle uMaJali kababa lana ngoshaya abafana"

"Let me go wash her nappies babe"

"And go to Umthombo"

"What about you?"

"Go without me babe"

"Yooh"

"Thank you" He stands up heading outside with the baby. I've noticed something the randomly kisses that were once mine have decreased to none all thanks to Milani.. The only person he snuggles with is Milani not me. I didn't know a baby girl takes one's shine. Of course I'm jealous this is my man. I've sweat for him alone sharing him hurts. "Mama"

"Yes" i didn't see him come in. "Manzi"

"Okay baby mommy will give you water" I scoop my son up. "Did you eat?" He nods.

"Are you full?" He nods. "Do you love me?" He narrows his brows. "Gatsha kiss mommy"

"Angifuni" With that said he faces the other direction to prove he doesn't want. Mama smiles. "Greetings ma"

"Greetings koti you look exhausted"

"I am ma. Mili hates my peace of mind"

"She's a woman you wont know peace as long as the father is still in the picture"

"Little home wrecker" She giggles. "He ate sisi"

"Thank you ma"

"Gatsha bye bye"

"Bye gogo"

"Kiss granny boy" Little rascal kisses his grandmother today I'm certain i dont have any kids. Both these kids aren't mine such betrayal.

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Zikhali

I'm seriously concerned about Gabisile this girl is getting out of hand and its bad honestly. I know adolescence is knocking on the door but with her its heading South. My daughter just turned 16 i dont understand where the obsession is coming from.

It's even worse things have escalated to her calling her brother names and getting all aggressive on him. I'm very much concerned i dont wanna play pretense. I dont think i will cope in that trading business meeting I'm going to. Surely she's gonna beat up my wife next time i mean she's already turned into a hooligan over a stupid kiss. Busani is bleeding profusely from his nose all thanks to yours truly Gabi. The more i glare at her the more i wanna kill her.

"Luckily his nasal bone is not fractured"

Boni says heaving a breathe of relief.

"Gabi just vacate the room i seriously dont know what to do or say to you." My wife says in defeat. I sit besides her intertwining our hands together. "Zikhali we losing our Princess I'm afraid Gabi is falling deep in this trap. She's changing into this girl that i

do not know."

"I will kill that girl honestly for the first time i look at my child and regret ever making them. "

She glares at me.

"Ndandatho has to talk to her other than that we lose her to this boy. "

"My guess too but she can't go to Thuthukani she might use the opportunity to doing her shenanigans"

"Right now I'm tempted to locking her inside the house like rapunzel"

"That will make her more worse but we have no choice to do that"

"This guy is bad for my daughter actually who is he and what he want from my daughter?"

"My guess is good as yours. If only that Maseko Samaritan knew he wouldn't have saved her from the witch because her coming back is a curse in a blessing. I'm starting to think she's being used by that witch."

"Zikhali don't awful you cant say such about our child"

"I'm sorry but she's freaking me out."

"My love let me not delay you travel safe okay? I love you okay?"

"I love you more my Queen summon Ndandatho here so she can knock some sense in her sister and make sure she doesn't leave these grounds not even to train. Accompany her to the rest room"

if needed be"

"I will honey. Do me proud wherever you going"

She smashes her lips on mine we share a passionate kiss. "Tell Busani to tighten the security around here i dont trust this girl not anymore"

"Consider it done"

Nhlonipho

"When are the lobola negotiations again?" She says fanning herself.

"In two days time gogo"

"Beautiful. Are you happy with the proceedings?"

"I'm satisfied i just cant wait"

"I've always known you are a responsible person I'm proud of you honestly. I love how you've been supportive of your girlfriend throughout Nhlonipho unlike your brother who kept things in the closet until a maine came here to spill the beans. Yazi Nhlo not that I'm taking preference or anything But Jali you are my favorite grandson ever one that I'm proud of till this date"
" I glare at her.

" I've been observing you throughout your upbringing In you i see a reflection of my late husband its such a pity he left me in the dark about his shenanigans but other than. You are a replica of him. He was exactly like you in his living days he fought for what

he believed in he always stood his ground no matter what prevailed. Just like you did with Ngelozi "

" I guess love makes everything doable and worth fighting for "
She smiles.

" Thats fair anyway there's a blue box in my cabinet please bring it here"

I make my way to her cabinet.

"Here you go"

"Please open it"

I open it there's plenty of coins. "Take all of it"

"What? No way gogo this is a lot."

"Consider it as your wedding gift and your child's lifetime insurance you can save up too adding on what's already in there."

"No gogo i cant take it"

"But your future children need a life time legacy Nhlonipho." I embrace her. "The brown one please give it to Gatsha" I look at it it has lots of coins. "Thank you gogo"

"Oh! I forgot something please bring that container" I pass it on her. "Give this to your mother tell her to share with her daughter's"

"Thank you gogo you are a darling" I kiss her cheek. "I love you Nhlonipho"

"I love you too"

"Please excuse me i want to wrap up with my sewing."

"What are we making this time around"

"A blanket for your unborn baby"

"Awesome i cant wait to cover my little one with it" I kiss her cheek.

Ndandatho

Zimele is staring at me as i wash up its a bit uncomfortable to wash that sacred place with him drooling over my nakedness but i succeed eventually. I wipe my body then lotion with him glaring at me. "Your numnum is bushy it needs some trimming"

"Zimele mind your business"

"I can trim it down if you dont mind after all its not like i have something to do. Let me be useful what do you think? "

"Do you want to trim or plant something new? Since we showing much interest on gardening."

"What kind of a question is that again?"

"One that should be answered warrior. "

"Your hair is disturbing ma'am can we please get rid of it"

"Zimele i need to be home before sunset. I can't travel late with the kids"

"I would be done by now" He steadily walks towards me pulling my dress underwear from my hands. "Cant we postpone? Its not like i will walk around naked"

"We can postpone but not this" He unhurried moves my hand to his privates. "Zimele you need to do something with your spare time go to war or something" I move away. "I will but for now i would rather be here with you and doing you"

"Milan is only two months old i dont want another Gatsha saga"

"I will be extra careful this time around i swear"

"Tempting but no they said six months Zimele"

"You fine now all healed please my love. I promise i will be careful"

"Can we save that for when i come back please" I peck his lips "I love you" I take my underwear from his hands "I love you too" He says that in pauses poor thing has an erection. I quickly dress up

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Nhlo drops off a brown box saying its Gatsha's gift from gogo. "Please pass my gratitude to gogo" i instruct before climbing on the cart. "I will. And Milani be a good girl don't trouble mom" He pecks her lips "Warrior Bangi look after mom dad loves you okay?" He nods. "Can i kiss you?" I narrow my brows little rascal kisses his father. I guess I'm the enemy here maybe having two

more kids wont hurt. "Bye baby i love you"

"I love you too sthandwa sami" We share a kiss i wonder what awaits me in Umthombo.

It doesn't take us long before we arrive at the Buthelezi premises. I'm surprised by the green pastures so much has changed around here. I've spotted quite a lot of existing things that were never there previously i must say Umthombo is blooming. I spot my mother from afar watering her plants i feel joy in my heart. I didn't realize i missed my family till now. "Need a hand my Princess with the luggages?"

"Yes please and thank you brother Sabelani"

"Pleasure." He starts by helping Bangi then Milani and myself. He offloads the bags too. Her broad smile and her stretched out hands serves as proof we've been missed too. "Sawubona bhuti" She greets Sabela Buthelezi the royal trusted service provider i hate the name "Servant" hence i refer to him as a service provider. "My baby hello"

"Greetings mama i missed you"

"I missed you too fatty look at you. You so enchanting my baby Zimele is doing a good job. You dazzling. Where are my manners Gatsha hello boy boy. Come give gogo a bear squeeze" She picks him up they hug and kiss. "I will greet Mila properly for now its hot out here. This heat is not good for her"

"Not you rocking the Gogo role ma I'm blessed"

I tease. "Stop silly" she gently bashed my arm. We walk inside the house "Wow! ma this place has changed oh look at Bangi on the wall."

"Isnt it you ditched us my baby"

"Mila wasn't lenient on me ma its been a bumpy journey"

"Sorry my angel. Please make yourselves feel at home i wanna carry these to your chamber"

"No problem" She disappears i feed Zimele's daughter. I dont know how I've survived not going lean with this child sucking me dry like i promised to pay up her loan. Gabi appears "Hello baby sisi look at you all beautiful and so like me" I say excited. "Hello" Okay.. What a warm welcome i wasn't expecting that. "Hi Bangi" She says in a tone that I'm not happy about nor satisfied by. Mom appears Gabi excuses herself.. "There's a new baby on my lap in case you haven't noticed Gabi" She flaps her eyebrows then faintly smiles. "Hi new baby" I look at her annoyed by her sudden change of hearts she's always been chirpy and lively and all welcoming not this beset newly personality.

She doesn't even bother to pick my baby up and I'm excited about it.

"Bring the little one here" Mom says with a broad smile i hand the baby over then stand up to go make myself something to drink because its obvious mrs "grumpy face wont consider"

"Excuse me ma I'm coming"

"Where are you going my baby?"

"I could use a drink ma"

"I spoke to Liziwe she will bring it soon"

"Thank you ma"

"She's so adorable Ndandatho ow! She reminds me of your little self"

"Ma i look nothing like Mila"

"I know Zimele is dominant but there's a bit of you here and there especially the hair"

"Ma you trying to make me feel better and my dearest loving mother its okay.. I've made peace with it" She giggles. "Excuse me" Gabi says walking away Lizi brings something to quench the thirst obviously i ask about her child and all that. "Mama"

"Sweetheart"

"What is going on with your daughter? Why is she beset and all gloomy?"

"Yooh Nda i dont wanna talk about it my baby i was about to write you a letter to come cast out a demon if not spell from her"

"What's going on ma?"

"So much is going on with your little sister. Since she came back from wherever she was she's being like that. She back mouths and say distasteful things to his brother it's alot sisi"

"Hhaibo ma what's going kanti?"

"Apparently she's seeing someone Busani spotted them kissing in the bushes. He suspects its someone old my baby about Zimele's age. Not long ago she bashed her brother with a mug can you imagine?"

"Hhaibo mama what is wrong with Gabi? Adolescent is getting the better of her"

"And its using a very dangerous and sticky situation"

"This is hilarious i need to talk to her or maybe slap her till she comes back to her senses. Shes only 16 for christ sake"

"That's what we dealing with here your father was even forced to give her a beating. I'm scared she will fall pregnant"

"Maybe she's idolizing me ma you wont know what's happening in that porridge head of hers"

"Talk to her other than that Zikhali will kill her or better yet she will kill everyone in this house isn't it she's trained as a warrioress"

"That's obnoxious ma i will deal with her"

"Thank you baby. Hows marriage?"

"My kids hate me mama"

"Why? Do you yell at them or beat them"

"Not all ma i treat them like eggs"

"It will blow off baby its normal"

"Yeah.. Where's dad and Busani?"

"Busani i dont know his scarce lately i think there's a girl involved. Dad left for a business trip"

"Busani and dating?" I giggle. "Trust me"

"That's weird" We giggle.

Siziwe Thwala

She's glaring at me with a nauseated face. Her hand resting on her waist is evidence of her in fury.

"Siziwe get up!"

"Ma I'm exhausted" I belch.

"Dont give me that get up and stop belching!"

"Mama i cant my legs are killing me. Cant we go back home?" I pants "Are you crazy? Don't make me force you up stand up now!" She hurriedly comes my way i force myself up. I swallow nothing that's how exhausted i am. "Hurry up i want this done and dealt with"

I look at her annoyed and infuriated. I dont understand why she's forcing me to doing this. My grandmother agreed to sheltering me in since she wants me out of her house I dont understand why she would drag me like this I hate it. I force myself up the hill with my hands balancing my back. "Better not give birth here!"

"Lets go"

"Kodwa mama"

"Siziwe!!! Dont test me hurry up!!!"

I roll my eyes and tail her as hot as it is.

Khethiwe

Sabela is sitting on a bench opposite me with that "Talk I'm all ears" Kind of look on his face. Honestly i dont know where to begin but rather "You were right about me making a terrible decision by turning your proposal down. Honestly you came into my life when i wasn't myself i was a living mess Sabela"

"And now what are you Khethiwe?"

"A beautiful mess that is willing to give us a try only if there's still room for us" He heaves a sigh. "Sabela i never intended on hurting you i was just trying to recuperate from my suffering situation that my then husband had put me through. Trust me i haven't been with any man for the past months i was healing and working on myself. I did not turn your proposal down because of a man i wasn't okay nor ready for a new relationship but now i am. "

"Khethiwe"

"Shenge please forgive me please take me back. I can even go down on my knees begging you to please take me back"

"That won't be necessary Khethiwe"

I swallow a huge lump down my throat he has moved on and he doesn't want me at least not anymore. "Alright We can try and see how it goes. I wont rush you into anything after all a baby crawls before walking so I'm cool with anything."

"What did you just say?"

"I won't repeat myself Khethiwe you know how challenging it is for me to compile words. So please beautiful lady don't make me repeat myself"

He smiles genuinely "You mean that Sabela?"

"I've always had hope Khethiwe that one day you would be mine" I smile. "Thank you"

"Where is your son?"

"At his father's place"

"Why didn't you bring him with you?"

"I prefer he stays with his father given he paid dowry for him"

"That's fair."

"Can I hug you?"

"You don't need to ask" He envelops me in his buff arms.

Ndandatho

I have rested fully Milani is sleeping so is Gatsha. Its safe to leave the room to go have a word with that adolescent driven young lady whom I've heard has developed feelings for grown men. The thought of Gabi kissing a man is enough to make my insides cringe. If this was Milani I'm dead sure Zimele would've killed her. I sneak out of the room heading to her chamber. I knock once without her responding.

"Gabisile!! Gabi can i come in?" She keeps quiet i know she's in here. I guess invading her privacy is mylast resort oh! scratch that no kid has privacy not when they still under their parents roof. "Gabi didn'tyou hear me knocking?" She looks at me then ties her hair while humming "Hello I'm talking to you"

"I'm busy"

"Busy preparing to go in the bushes to kiss men who are older than your sister?" She looks at me in a very disturbing way. I'm talking to you"

"So they sent you to come here to act all smart on me?" I chuckle. "Ndandatho leave me alone"

"Gabisile what is wrong with you?"

"You interfering on my business!! Why cant you people let me be

huh?" She roars on my face. "Wena you possessed! And I'm gonna snap you out of it by slapping you you hear me Gabisile?"

"What are you again? My mother or the sister who was ditched in the bushes then returned acting all mighty and holier-than-thou while she had a child out of wedlock? What are you again?"

"Are you talking to me Gabisile with that tone?"

"What are you going to do rain Queen? Are you gonna use your powers on me and try to destroy me like you did with Queen Thabile and her mother? I'm not scared of you Liyana."

"What is wrong with you?"

"Get out before i do the unthinkable!" She turns to face the mirror she continues humming and brushing her hair. Something is not right with this girl. "Gabisile you gonna regret this"

"Why dont you just go back to your husband?"

I glare at her for a little while for the first time in forever i cannot read my sister's mind or invade her memories its like I'm blocked from reaching her inner self. Something is wrong here...

Ngelози

I spot him waiting for me by his chamber i cant help but smile. He shows me inside his chamber. Immediately after slamming the door i smash my lips on his making sure he tastes the sweetness of mylips. "And now?"

"Thank you"

"For what?" He smirks. "For the letter i really can't believe it. It

feels like I'm dreaming Nhlo"

"How about we go sit on the bed so we can try to sleep then maybe wake up to confirm if we dreaming or its a reality. What do you think Mrs Jali junior?"

"I'm willing to take you up on your offer Jali junior"

"Come here" He says biting on his lower lip luring me to his bed the very same bed that made his baby making fluids make another baby its a pity this time around we didn't make use of guava leaves. It's safe to say its something we both wanted. He puts me on the bed unhooks my upper garment while staring at me. "Does it have to rise every time i walk in?"

"I dont know my flower"

"Are we gonna make love?"

"What else do you want us to make?"

"Its hot Nhlonipho"

"That place only knows one temperature dont mind the external temperature" He says parting my legs standing between them.

"Did i tell you i love you MaFuze?"

"You tell me always"

"Today i mean it" I narrow my brows. "So you didn't mean it previously?"

"I was stupid and naive then i thought i knew what love was unlike now."

I keep quiet "Going through the hazardous seasons made me realise what love and being in love was. Its crazy how your tears brought back my sanity when i was suffering a memory breakdown. I think that was the first day i realized that i loved

you and you loved me too"

He says removing my lower garment then my soaky underwear "I love you Mafuze i mean it"

"I love you too big head" He scoffs. "I'm about to bury this big head of mine between your legs" i feel a itch immediately.

"Thank you for choosing to fall for me its really a blessing Ngelo"
I blush then pull him closer to me. I want to kiss him already maybe today i should be the one giving him the privates lick he has always gave me those. He really deserves my freeshly brushed tongue down there. "Nhlo"

"Yes"

"Can i lick you as well?"

He narrows his brows "Can i trust you not to bite me?"

"I love meat but that meat i wouldn't eat it not in a single day."
He giggles. "Come give me the lick"

"Fine" I go on my knees and look at it i furrow my brows then glare at him. Why is he looking at me like that? "What?"

"I'm waiting"

"Do i have to swallow all of it? As in deep down my throat?"

"Yes"

"It wont stuck inside or fall out?"

"No"

"Mmmmmmm Fine but if i die tell my father i swallowed your snake"

"I will now go on"

"This is my first and last time Nhlonipho I'm only doing this for the cows that you gonna bring at my home"

"No problem my love"

"Let's make a truce?" He rolls his eyes. "Ngelo its gonna bow down eat then talk later"

"What if i want add sauces on what I'm eating? For example the salt what if its little and i need more?"

"There's plenty of it there just eat please"

"Fine! But this is an abomination a whole rachel sin!"

"Ngelo please" I heave a long sigh in a split second he is holding my head so tight forcing me to go up and down on his snake that's choking me. Surprisingly he is enjoying it while I'm dying. Surely my throat will be left a borehole i wont be able to chew food ever again i will just swallow because of this act..Okay what did i just swallow? I felt something going down inside my throat its salty and... No!! He deposited his seeds inside my mouth? That's gross..

Siziwe

"Mama there's really no need for this please"

"I won't harbor a mother in my compound Siziwe nor will my mother harbor an ill-mannered girl who donated herself freely to a man and conceived! You really embarrassed me Siziwe not when I'm one of the virginity testing chiefs! I always motivate girls about keeping themselves till marriage then my own daughter saw it fit to stray and open her legs for that woman-beater a whole Cassanova! Come!! " She roughly pulls my hand and I stumble trying so hard to keep up with her pace. We find a group of girls carrying buckets on their heads." Greetings young ladies. Do you by any chance know where warrior Hawulesizwe resides? "

They look at each other. "Lungi they going to your house" I look at the Lungi girl "Can I have water please" The girls look at each other. "Here" One of them says I drink up then eat my remaining mango. I didn't know carrying a child makes one tired and ever hungry if not spitting out saliva profusely. Lately I can barely touch my toes washing up is a challenge too. I really hate Hawulesizwe for putting me in this situation. My life was going just fine before he forced me into womanhood bloody Cassanova.. "This is it" The girl says offloading her bucket "Mama!!! Mama!!!!!"

"What? I told you not to shout my name Lungelo!"

"Mama you have guests!!" She says going to what i believe is a kitchen i must say this yard looks beautiful. Its spacious and clean. The houses are beautifully designed i love it no i hate it. Its Hawulesizwe's dean so i hate it because of him. "What guest's?" The mother says appearing from one of the rondavel such a beautiful family. She looks at me then mymother "Greetings"

"Are you Hawulesizwe's mother?"

"Yes Why are you asking?"

"See this" She says roughly poking my huge belly. "Ma uyangilimaza" I wince in pain. "This is your son's mess ka Maseko and guess what? I wont harbor it."

"Excuse me?" The mother says. "Your son tainted my daughter and this huge belly is a result of your son's sperm! I'm leaving her and her big belly here. She's no longer my burden but yours!!" Ma Maseko looks at me then my mother. "You look tired sisi come have a seat"

"I'm out of here! Sala maphana!!" She storms away. "We mama

dont you need water to quench your thirst?"

"Stay with your water i want nothing of yours!!!" My mother says walking away the woman chuckles. "You must be Siziwe right?" I swallow hard. "Yes ma"

"Come." I follow her. As i follow the mother his face appears from one of the huts. He still looks more like i remember him handsome tall and sun-kissed. His still makes my knees wobbly and my body warm. He still makes me experience butterflies regardless of that i hate him still. Okay his looking at me of course I'm pregnant and all swollen. He better not give me that look he made me look like this its his fault my nose is huge and my neck black he better not judge me. Its a stare battle for a little while...

Ndandatho

I'm seated on my bed trying to crack my skull about my sister. Me not being able to reach into her means something awful is happening something that could put my entire family in great danger. Her aura was clean but now she's.. She's "Milani baby stop crying i know you miss daddy but please dont cry" Bangi wakes up too panting and all sweating. His eyes wander faster scanning the room. Okay what is happening with his eyes? Why are they like that? Why are his in this color? "Mama"

"Bangi are you okay?" I say in grasping his eyes are still different from their normal color. I swallow hard "Gatsha close your eyes and open them" He ignores me and looks around the room. "Bangi!! Bangizwe what are you looking for?" The door swings open his eyes suddenly change to their normal color. Those are lion's eyes i think I've seen that pair of eyes before. "Nda"

"Ma"

"How did it go?"

"Awful ma she's not her normal self ma. I couldn't even get far with her something is going on with her and i think its more than

adolescence"

"I dont follow"

"I can't read her ma i dont know what she thinks how she feels or what her intentions are. Its like she's neutral mama"

"Ndandatho you scaring me"

"Hey mama and hi sisi Ndandatho" She says smiling genuinely fixing her eyes on my little girl. "Can i hold her?"

"No" Gatsha says standing in front of Milani. That's strange.
"Gatsha" Gabi says smiling. "Mila woza"

"No" Gatsha protests. "Bangi" I say softly. Gabi leans over to scoop Milani surprisingly my son does the unthinkable.....

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Ndandatho

He aggressively gnaws Gabisile's hand using his very last strength. Gabisile is belching on full blasts cursing and screaming Gatsha's name with hopes to tame him down but my son is not having any of it. "Ndandatho get your little rascal off me snap him out of it!!!" She howls.

"I'm trying okay! Bangizwe stop it!! Gatsha!!"

I'm trying everything in my powers to negotiate with this child but his not backing down his very much stubborn and persistent on hurting Gabi. Of which i find very perplexing and questionable my son has never shown aggression behavior before he is not violent. I cannot even pin this on the fighting tutorials that his father has been giving him because honestly Gatsha is never like this even when his demented. I know every parent likes protecting their children by acting surprised by an act they familiar with but on my case its different because i sincerely dont know where this violence derives from. Gatsha is not a violent person but a peaceful one this is all new to me.

"Ndandatho tell him to stop sisi"

"Mama i cant i just dont know how to. He wont snap out of it" I say feeling embarrassed and all terrible or better yet all responsible for not instilling morals on him. "Bhengu please stop my boy stop fana kagogo please Mepho" My mother tries to negotiate with him that tends to calm Gatsha down. Gabi glares at me with fury in her eyes and hate. "I'm sorry Gabi i really am. I dont know what came over him he doesn't normally do such.

"You dont teach him manners! He doesn't have any morals! His a spoilt little mischief!" She roars. "Gabi your sister is apologising

there's no need for you to say such" She looks at me yet again with bloody eyes if there's such a thing.

"Sorry Gabi.." I say glaring at Bangi whose holding his sisters tiny hand while brushing her hair backwards which is strange too given Bangi is never this affectionate with his sister.

"Sorry wont undo this!" She points to where Gatsha was biting him but i see no mark "There's nothing nje Gabi"

"Excuse me Ndandatho? Dont you see I'm bleeding? There's blood coming out! Your creepy child bruised me! You would swear he has canines bloody vampire!"

"Gabisile dont use that tone on my child I've apologized on his behalf. There's no need for you to spew insults Bangi is just a kid and besides you making a mountain out of this there's no blood there you exaggerating Gabi"

"If he wasn't a kid i was gonna decapitate his head and leave him headless. "

I shift my hands to my eyes to Gabi that's a very very disturbing remark especially directed to a kid.

"Excuse me Gabi what did you just say?"

"I said if he wasn't a kid i was gonna yank his head off and bash it against a huge rock till it turns into mince and "

Lord forgive me for what I'm about to do.

—

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I feel a numbing sensation on my cheek for a moment i see stars and my sight goes blurry she just slapped me and my mother is not doing nor saying anything about it.

"Repeat what you just said? I dare you to say it again Gabisile? You threatening my child huh? What is wrong with you? So now you are a murder Gabisile? You want to kill my child huh?"

I glare at her with no damn care massaging my cheek is my worry for now.

"Dare use that tone on my kid ever again i swear Gabisile i will be the one ripping off your head you hear me?"

She barks i fix my eyes right into hers. I move them to Milani then the brat whom i find is glaring at me with eyes that have changed colour. I swallow hard then look at my hand I'm bleeding heavily. " Ndandatho leave her please"

"Gabisile dont wish to earn me as your enemy its gonna end badly you hear me?"

"So you wont reprimand your child but rather insult me and beat me up?"

"After the nonsensical stunt you pulled? No my son did a great job." I scoff. "I hear you mrs rain maker. Here's what i will do i will back off big sister" Mom looks at me then Ndandatho "Get lost immediately" I look at Ndandatho from head to toe i scoff again then slowly walk outside..

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Ngcolosi

"Nhlonipho"

"Mama"

"Please call grandma supper is served."

"Alright" My son stands i clear my throat. "Sit down Jali i will go call her myself" He sits i make my way to her chamber. I knock once the see myself inside. Its too dark in here i thought mama hated darkness. I lit the candles. "Mama" She didn't close her windows too i see this old lady wants to share her bed with mosquitoes. I close the windows then go sit by her legs. "Mama food is ready" She doesn't say anything i heave a sigh. "Mama i know the truth has been nothing but a bitter pill to swallow. I know this Hawu dilemma is taking a toll on you given you only saw a saint in dad not the wolf he was hiding under that sheepskin. Ma i really understand how you feel i really do. Kodwa mawami you need to eat and step outside to inhale fresh air and sniff the smell of the sun bursts and your flowers scent. " I say brushing her legs. " Mama you cant continue like this

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i really do. Kodwa mawami you need to eat and step outside to inhale fresh air and sniff the smell of the sun bursts and your flowers scent. " I say brushing her legs. " Mama you cant continue like this locking yourself behind doors and dark rooms.

This is not a life you cant allow this pain to cage you. Maybe i dont know how you feel but i know you are wounded and hollowed this is the reason i kept him from you because i knew you would be this way" I heave a sigh and look at her. "Mama wake up you need to eat" I say gently shaking her she doesn't respond instead the wool and knitting sticks she was holding falls on the floor this knitting thing of hers she even doze off doing it some love she has. "Majali wake up or you want me to carry you just like you've always done with me after giving me a long bubble bath when i was still a kid?" I chuckle recalling those day's i was six years old then and my sister was three years old. "Mama vuka Nozi will come for us shortly you know how your daughter in law operates."

"Of course i will come for the both of you if and here i am" She walks towards me with a smile. "She's sleeping"

"Let me cover her then" She sways her curves reaching for a fleeces blanket "She's a mess MaJali especially with this Hawu saga. She now loves darkness can you imagine" I say to Nozi whose is standing like a statue. "Ngcolosi"

"My love"

"Did you see this?"

"See what?"

"The blood on her pillow?"

"What blood?" I say standing up walking to the other side of the bed where I'm met by excessive blood stains on my mother's pillow and her mouth. I look at Nozi "Mama!!" I say shaking her gently. "Mama!!" Nozi puts her hand on my shoulders. "Mama vuka!! Please wake her surely she will respond to your message" She looks at me with glassy eyes. "Ngcolosi she wont respond"

"Why not Nozibele?" A tear escapes her eyelids it better not be that. I really cant lose yet another parent not this pain again..
"Jali I'm sorry mama is gone" i ignore her "Mama!!! Mama!!!"
Now I'm shaking her a bit roughly i want to prove my wife wrong..

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Siziwe

Lungelo fixes a bed for me she brings me water to bath too. I look around my room yet again i heave a long sigh as reality kicks in that i have nowhere to go and no one to call my family but rather the child growing inside my stomach. To make things worse I'm realizing how stupid and naive i was to have participated in the mediocre that brought me here. None of this wouldn't have happened had i not interfered on another woman's marriage i should've stayed away from Hawu for the betterment of his family. I shouldn't have allowed these stupid feelings to drive me to such depths i mean now I'm pregnant. I lost my family and i lost the man too adding on that I'm now staying in the same compound with the man who broke me and introduced me to this pain that going and dying through. I really messed up sadly i can't blame this on anyone but my self. Ndandatho warned me but i never listened.

I heave yet another sigh i need to bath and rest. I've traveled a far distance to get here my feets are killing me. I'm half way to undressing when a soft knock lands on my door i cover up and shout "Come in" The first thing i see it's his scar and athletic well structured body before i could see his face. I swallow hard i mean there's this stupid organ called a heart its good a betraying one on last minutes. Actually putting your trust and hope on it is a waste because after seeing those eyes and those full lips and his tall body its gonna forget that you said you hated him and his ugly self but rather remind you of his touch the feel of his skin against yours and how his eyes shine when gazing into yours and.. And how you've been missing him and wishing for him to return one day and for you two be a one big happy family and
"Hi"

"Hi" And live happily ever after. "Can i come in?"

"You already in Hawu" He looks at me then my tummy. "Its big"

"Just like the penis that made it big" He chokes on his saliva. A stare contest begins. "Anyway i wanted to ask if you okay"

"I'm fine Hawu"

"Great.. I should get going"

"Where is your wife? I mean i saw your son"

"Get some rest Siziwe good night"

"Good night" He looks at me like he forgot something. "I knew you were pregnant"

"Of course you are a baby making machine"

"Dont insult me Siziwe"

"What we going to do? Beat me up and leave me laying on the floor unconscious?" He looks at me with a facial expression i cannot read. "That will actually be a good thing to do i mean i would die and rest"

"I'm no longer that man Siziwe I'm sorry for everything I've put you through"

"Will your sorry and new man reimburse my virginity and bring back my smile? And my less big belly?" My pitch changes he stands by the door and look at me. "I hate you Hawulesizwe! Everything that you touch turns into dusts if not crumbs you are a curse in people's lives!! Why didn't you die at birth huh?"

"I know how much of a curse i am Siziwe even my father felt cursed with my existence and its okay. I'm sorry you feel that way and I'm sorry i didn't die at birth surely Thuthukani village would've been blessed and more richer than it is had i not been born. I know how cursed i am and i hate myself too but for your own sanity I'm sorry that i was born a curse I'm sorry my cursed blood runs in your childs blood you dont deserve any of this sorry Siziwe " I shouldn't have said that i just brought him pain."Goodnight"

"Hawu" He looks at me with glassy eyes words fail me. He walks out...

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Finale

Ndandatho

After my little altercation with Gabi I've been tossing and turning all night long sleep was playing was far from my reach. I've been trying to crack my head on the "I'm bleeding and bruised" Phrase i saw nothing honestly so did mom. I'm now certain my son saw or sensed what I've been suspecting of. She's possessed there's something controlling her and sadly i cant do anything about it its above me. If Mehlemamba wont tackle this then it will mean we will be stuck with this version of Gabisile for good and its ending is not a pleasant one.

I breastfeed Milani i doze off and wake up the following morning to Busani playing with Milani. I didn't see him yesterday meaning he didn't sleep home. We greet each other and catch up on the latest. "Mom told me about what happened Ndandatho" I heave a soft sigh.

"Its awful Busani"

"She's getting worse by day you wont believe who the boy she was kissing was" I look at him. "Who was it?"

"Promise not to scream?"

"I promise"

"Hawulesizwe the guy who saved her from the witch" Now that explains the sudden attitude she tasted the penis that drives three women that i know crazy meaning now it's four.

"Hawulesizwe?"

"Yes"

"That guy has babies everywhere what was Gabi thinking and besides his old"

"Does Gabi ever think?" We both keep quiet "I think she's possessed" Busani speaks my mind. "My guess exactly"

"Cant you help her Ndandatho? Because failure to do so will make this Kingdom extinct. Not long ago she was aggressive on me next time it will be mom if not dad. She might kill everyone Ndandatho" He says with worry i heave a sigh. "Lets go to Mehlemamba surely he will help"

"Please.. I'm glad you came because this Gaba saga has been the reason i avoid this house."

"It's okay brother we will fix this"

"Better.. She looks like the father"

"Aren't they? Bloody back stabbers" He giggles "Try a third one maybe she will look like you"

"Definitely as soon as she turns two years old I'm having another one."

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After a couple of minutes we locate his house. We find him busy with herbs "Greetings great one" He smiles at us. "Your father was here with the same concerns as yours" He says faintly smiling "Please tell us how to put an end to this"

"I'm afraid only the hair used can fix this"

Busani and myself glare on each other "What hair great one?"

"Your sister was abducted isnt it?" We nod "The person who saved her once had his hair stuck on a tree branch in the bushes. His biggest mistake was leaving it behind making it easier for the witch to use it against you"

Okay this is confusing "I dont follow Mehlo"

"In short Gabi will be herself once the hair used to cast the spell is retrieved other than that I'm afraid you will be stuck with this version of her"

"How can we find the hair?" Busani-

"Cant we ask Hawu to cut off his hair and give it to us to reverse the curse?"

"He can do that but it wont work Liyana."

"I dont follow"

"The witch gained power by using that hair its more like Gabisile has more power than you or any other healer. Given your grandmother was the one who failed the warrior"

"I dont understand how does gogo come in this?" Busani asks with worry.

"When the warrior was attending to Gabi he wasn't himself but Nomanzi was controlling him and living inside him. Meaning your grandmother was tricked into giving a sacrifice which was the hair. Physically the hair belongs to Hawu but spiritually it belongs to Nomanzi. Meaning the witch managed to dribble the mamiwata explaining why you cant help your sister nor read her mind because the Mamiwata

kinder gave up your rights or powers to doing that" I immediately sweat and stand up. "So are you telling me Ngelozzi's grandmother is living within my sister?"

"And she wants her kind to multiply and Hawulesizwe is gonna help her in achieving that" Busani stands too and starts pacing around.

"That cant happen!! My sister cannot do any of this. This is rubbish!!" Busani says.

"Its a pity there's nothing we can do. "

"I need to do something about this! Like going to have a word with my grandmother" He looks at me. "Like i said your grandmother gave up your powers and rights to partaking on such."

"Meaning i wont have my powers anymore?"

"When last did you dream or have a vision?" I try to calculate.
"No! I've lost my powers?"

"You only have one last remaining vision Ndandatho sadly you gonna have it after a little while thereafter your powers and rights will be extinct"

"That cannot happen! So i wont be a rain Queen because of Nomanzi's carelessness?" He heaves a sigh. "You wont be one but one of your kids will inherent the mamiwata gift She is not yet born but you will know her as soon as she's born. I'm sorry maButhelezi"

"I didn't know hair was this strong in witchcraft!" Busani-

"Not only hair my Prince. Any portion or sample of your body makes muthi starting from breast milk all the way to your nails. Even simple tears my Prince can you cast a spell on a human being you do not need an alligators liver to kill someone but a simple and tiny thing as hair you should be careful on how you discard samplings of your body my Prince to prevent such. " I swallow hard after hearing that

because my gogo from Ngwane village used to warn me against leaving my fallen hair after combing. She would advice i pick it up or burn it even with old clothes she would scream" Burn it or deep it inside the toilet pit" i guess she meant such. But what about my gift?

"And my last vision when will i have it?"

"In the next coming years"

"What?"

"Be patient its gonna come even if it takes twenty years eventually its gonna come. My time is up i have a client from SOMLOMOTI KINGDOM"

Busani and myself glare at each other.

oooooooooooooooo

Its been fifteen years since i last had a vision. I haven't been being hearing voices in my head nor seeing things in my sleep like the late Mehlemamba once said it was gonna take a while for me to have my last vision of which i haven't had for the past few years till now I'm still anticipating after so many years of so many things happening in my life and my family. I've lost gogo Gezekile a couple of years ago it didn't take long for gogo- Mama to follow her.

Mind you all these things happened prior to my big wedding and that of Ngelozi and Nhlonipho. It was really a devastating and draining phase in my life. But on the contrary i married so did Ngelozi and Nhlonipho who didn't have it easy to having people supporting and blessing their marriage given Ngelo

was a diluted blood and her mother was a daughter of a witch one that's living within my sister till this date. Regardless of the harsh words and ill treatment they married and grew stronger and more magically in love with each other so much that the Jali ancestors blessed them with three beautiful big headed Nhlonipho's who resemble their father to Ngelozi's frustration. They named them "Skhanyiselwe Sphamandla and Sphesihle" They all boys hopefully the unborn one is a baby girl. Ngelozi threatened and promised to "Fry her womb and patch her vagina" Shall her fourth baby be a boy instead of a girl she's still that crazy and i still love her even though my parents dont like her anymore especially after the Gabi saga.

On the other hand my brother Busani fell in love and found love in "Nobantu" a very humble shy and kindhearted woman from a not popular Kingdom. They were blessed with twins a boy and a girl who fight over anything and everything most people claim they look like me but i disagree with that. Gabi? I would rather not dwell much on her brief of moments it will take me decades to seal.

I'm now 39 years old Zimele is 45 years old. We still crazily in love and complimenting of each other. I must say we doing well as the leaders of this Kingdom its safe to say to we bringing so much

change in Thuthukani village our people cant stop praising us and worshipping us for the right things of course.

My son Bangizwe is now a grown-up tall and tantalizing 16 year old looking guy with mustaches and a husky voice not forgetting his beautiful yet strange eyes.. He is now a qualified and trained warrior who handles a spear like Shaka Zulu i dont know how many reports have come forth about him and Mlingo terrorizing people. When confronted about it they say nothing his still that strange kid who isnt understood by many. He hasn't changed actually it got worse over the years. He talks less smiles less he just does everything else less but not on throwing fists. Gatsha uses three languages to communicate "His eyes Body and hands" nothing else but that.

Milani has complained a several times about Bangizwe not treating them like their siblings but strangers. When Zimele confronts him about this he gives us a sly and cold off shoulder response "I love them a lot and i protect them a lot they just childish." with this said and done the young man walks away with his jaw clenched no smile no nothing Bangi is very rude and very unapproachable. With him you dont just say anything you just need to choose your words carefully. I'm certain he will make the most feared and respected King husband and father. He has that serious face and aura that demands you to respect him and submit to him effortlessly other than that his a good brother to his siblings but his overly protective of them. **

Well Queen Ndandatho Jali now has five beautiful naughty chaotic challenging rude and sweet children. Already you know Bangi and Milani. Well there's an addition of three on that number "Nethani Ncedani and Lungisani"

I have three boys and two girls. Ncedani is the sweetest child in all five he talks alot laughs a lot laughs a lot he is respectful and smart giving and humble his very soft at heart. I can say he took Nhlonipho's personality and characteristics.

Milani is my replica stubborn and blutant when she says she's not gonna do something trust her she's definitely not gonna do it. She's bossy and all demanding. Then there's Nethani daddy's precious girl wherever Zimele goes you will find Netha tailing him she's a sweet yet picky baby. My baby girl is forever sick her grandmother used to say she's carrying a certain ancestor spirit but i haven't been taking that into consideration until she started talking to rocks trees and stars. Nethani is my weirdo she sometimes laughs at nothing or see things that are not visible. One time she mentioned something about Gatsha being a lion and her being a water animal that doesn't have a face. She says and sees the most abstract things. Lastly there's Lungisani. He loves books and animals not forgetting his space. He is more like Gatsha as little as he is i like his less demanding attitude. I can do anything and galavant anyhow without him nagging me unlike Ngelozzi's son Sphehlehle. This boy loves his independence sometimes i forget his my last born.

Ngelozzi and myself are seated underneath a tree shade having mango and paw paws. We watching the kids as they playing soccer and screaming above our hearing frequency. More like Milani screaming above all pitches bossing around other kids. My focus is on Netha i dont trust that girl she might baby a serpent that one. "Milani can you shut up already!" Ngelozzi's eldest utters. "I wont shut up not when you cheating us! We have 5 points not four!" Milani-

"We have 5 points not you Milani" Ngelozzi laughs. "Why dont you start afresh we will count on your behalf isnt it Nda?" She smiles glaring at me. "Hha mama you gonna miscalculate" Ngelozzi's eldest says "I taught you that word njalo" I chuckle.

"I can't believe we made it this far who would have thought? " I say looking at the kids. "It wasnt easy honestly especially on my side" She says faintly smiling.

"I know and I'm sorry Ngelozzi about your siblings may they rest easy"

"It never gets old hey its been six years since they passed on but my mother isn't doing well Nda" I brush her thighs. "But its okay i

have you the kids and my beloved big headed Nhlonipho" We giggle. "Are you ever gonna call him with a pet name?"

"Maybe big foot if not mbazo" I chuckle. "Hhayi Ngelozi why are you like this?" She shrug and eats her mango. "Hows the baby in there?"

"Dont ask Ndandatho I'm never ever showing him my nakedness ever again. "

"That's what i said after delivering Gatsha but look where i am. "

"I'm not like you mama ka Lungisani i will keep my word. No Nhlonipho formed against me shall prosper" I laugh. "I pray this one has a small head or else she will wont enjoy playing hide and seek like the others these bus heads sell them out when playing hide and seek by being all visible. "

"Leave those angels alone they beautiful with their buses. "

"These mosquitoes?"

"I love those mosquitoes"

"You wasting your love with those mischievous boys. They very very naughty one said i swallowed the entire earth planet explaining why tummy is this big. Then Nhlonipho doesn't want me to beat them" I laugh "Who said that?"

"Sphamandla" i laugh he took it from her.

"I guess that's a Jali thing" I say eating my mango. "What thing MaJali?" He makes his way towards me with Sihle on his hands. Nhlonipho appears empty handed. "Its our secret Zimele" "Maka Gatsha..." He glares at me with his lips pursed. "Loving their women wholeheartedly isnt it Ngelozi?" She looks at me and smiles "They really love us even though they refuse us the privilege of spanking their little rascals tinny buttocks like real mothers do." Nhlo narrows his brows "By little rascals you mean my kids?" Ngelo furrows her brows "Majali" Nhlo says. "Sorry sthandwa sami" Zimele and i glare at them "The kids are playing let's go inside we will be quick" He whispers in my ears.

"I need to prepare supper Zimele"

"The hungriest of them all will the do the cooking" I giggle. "Are you hearing yourself?"

"Let's go" I fix my eyes on Ngelozi and Nhlo who are arguing over what i dont know.

"Ngelozi my peace hurts you isn't it?"

"Why must you know peace while im not at peace?" They argue yet again "Lets disappear before it gets far"

"You right they wont stop now"

"You go first i will follow you i dont want Netha tailing me"

"What if Lungisani follows you instead?"

"Milani is a big sister she will strap him on her back"

"Fine" I stand up then look around me "Ngelo i have a laundry to remove from the washing line do you mind?"

"Please take Sihle with"

"No way Ngelo" Her pregnancy makes her not to want a kid next to her even her last born Sihle. "Nhlo take your son" She says.. "Khanyiselwe!!!" Nhlo calls for his first born "Baba" The young man runs towards us "Look after your brother Sihle. Your mother and i are going somewhere" Ngelo glares at Nhlonipho with those "Dude i dont want to be naked" Eyes. Zimele chuckles. "But I'm playing soccer baba i wont manage"

"Khanyiselwe..." He says with a stern voice poor kid carries his brother. They both stand to go wherever i spot Bangizwe and Mlingo whispering in each others ears from afar for a moment i see my son's teeths that's a rare view with Gatsha.

My husband and myself go to our private chamber we do what we haven't done in ages blame it on load over shoulders. Juggling between all five of them and their needs is not a childsplay the royal back to back meetings and projects too take up much of our time too. Its just too much making love is something we dont get much time to do we just kiss and cuddle. But when an opportunity like this one prevails we make the most of it just like now.

His strokes are deep and sweet. His hitting all the spots I've forgotten they existed. His giving me a heaven on earth his quenching my thirst and combating my hunger. I feel good right now i need more and more of this. "Dont forget to pull out Jali" I say biting hard on my lower lip holding him much more closer "Dont lock me in"

"Fine" We make love till a fever pinch takes over us he pulls out. He glares at me the same way as he did when we made Gatsha "I love you Majali"

"I love you more Jali" In a split second im snoring...

[Ndandatho's last vision]

"Mama you need to go in hiding all of you."

"Why Bangizwe?"

"I would love to tell you more but i can't! You need to follow

Mlingo and Khanyiselwe they will take you to a safe place. Leave ma"

I start crying hysterically "What is that noise I'm hearing Gatsha?" He look at me then his siblings "I love you all of you and i will do anything and everything for our grounds to be restored from the thieves. Look after each other Nethani do your part and i will do mine! Make sure they all safe you hear me?" I look at him confused of what is happening more and more anger beaming voices shudders from a distance." Bangizwe! They are here! "

" I'm coming warrior"

"Hurry up they already killing people our warriors are decreasing in number hurry Bangizwe!!"

"Fine!!!... Mama baba babomncane and mamncane please go. You will be safe." He says glaring at us with pain in his eyes and maybe fear. We all confused on what's going on.

The commotion I'm hearing from afar tells me a humongous life threatening war has emerged. By the look of things it is here to destroy kill and steal from the grounds of Thuthukani Kingdom. In a split second we running and stomping on lifeless bodies. I tilt my head to look at what was once my home sadly i see nothing beautiful but a holocaust. The once green grass is covered in red the once blue waters are turned into red waters stones are replaced by dead bodies of many innocent souls. On the other hand fire is engulfing the entire village women and children are crying and begging for their lives to be restored i walk away with a bleeding heart and haunted mind. Their sobs and fear accompanies me to wherever Mlingo is taking us. Suddenly i feel someone shaking me profusely immediately after opening my eyes. I shout "IGAZI" then collapse. This confusing synopsis was my last vision and i strongly believe its a future prediction of what's yet to strike Thuthukani village or maybe all other surrounding Kingdoms.

THE END.....

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