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PROLOGUE

I heard her terrible cough from the other side of our shack, it was divided into two, a bedroom and a living room together with a kitchen at once. My grandmother has been sick for over two years, we don't exactly know what is wrong with her since she always deprives me from taking her to a hospital, as she always says "amakhaza nje, ungakhathazeki kuzondlula (it's just cold, don't worry it shall pass)" even though it's blazing hot outside. I've been trying to talk her out of that mentality but she refuses to listen. I took out the container that carries the clothes pins and walked out to hang our laundry. I've been living in this shack for as long as I can remember, my mother died after giving birth to me through vaginal delivery after refusing to go through C-section, they told her how much it

wasn't safer for her because of a certain condition she had but she bluntly refused, so I'm practically the reason my mother died but nevertheless my grandmother still loves me. I don't know my father, mom never mentioned him to grandma. When mom died granny took full custody and raised me, at the time she wasn't sick, in fact she was very healthy until a few years back... Being raised by my grandmother was amazing because she taught me to be a woman, to be strong. She took me to school, paid for everything that I needed, I've never not even one day, went to bed with an empty stomach. Ever since I knew my grandmother, I've never seen her waking up going to work. She's always earned pension fund and she also used to sell snacks and sweets but not anymore. By the grace of God I managed to study and did my matric, I couldn't further my studies since I had to take care of her. Gran and I are just a family of two, no cousins, aunts, uncles or even friends. She has always been a loner and always felt comfortable around her own presence, I took that from her, even at school I had no time to make friends but went to fetch education, besides no one wished to have a 'nerd friend' as they used to describe me. Either way till this day I'm very proud that not only did I pass my matric but I got four distinctions... "No... Nomsa!" She called out, I stopped what I was doing and quickly ran inside. Shame my poor gran I don't understand why she's being so stubborn, I mean she looks very bad, her lips are dry and have cracked it's

like she's never drank water though I give her more than eight glasses a day. I don't want to mention her thinness, her bones are literally visible, she looks lifeless and it's very sad to witness her sight each day. "So...ndela...ngane...ya...yami (come closer my child)" I went on my knees next to the mattress and took her hand into mine. "Sekuyi...skha...thi (now is the time)" I shook my head with a tear slowly streaming down my face. She coughed like someone running out of breath. "Sewukhulile Nono, uzokwazi ukuzina...kekela(you've grown Nono, you'll know how to take care of yourself) " "Shhh ungasho kanjalo Mama (Don't say that)" "Inkosi ingilindile Nono. Ngishiye imali eyanele ukuthi uyisebenzise icard liseskhwameni sami, ipin uyayazi.(The Lord is waiting for me. I left enough money for you to use it, the card is in my bag, you already know the pin.)" "Asikho isdingo sokungitshela konke lokhu... (there's no need for you to tell me all this)" "Nono... mana ngiqede.(let me finish)" I sighed and let her speak "ngiyakuthanda ngane ye ngane yami. Akukho lula ukuphila kulomhlaba, kodwa ngiyazi ukuthi wena uzophila. Ngiyakuthemba Nono ungavumeli abafana bedlale nga...we *coughing* uyezwa? (I love you my grandchild. Living in this world is not easy, but I know that you'll live. I trust you don't allow these boys to play you, you hear me?) I nodded, with the other hand I wiped away my tears. "Hamba uyongithengela ubanana (go buy me a banana)" without a word I stood up and left home. My grandmother has

never spoken to me like that, like ever. The conversation was very emotional, it felt like she was literally saying 'goodbye' even thinking about it just breaks my heart. What would I be without my granny, she's the only person I have and ever had. I've never been alone, will I be able to adapt into being on my own. Won't this world be too big for me? Oh Lord please don't let this happen, don't take the only person I have in this life. Please spare that woman from death, save her for me, there's still a lot I need to do for her to show my gratitude towards everything she did for me. "Hey Makhi (neighbour)" I turned to look at her, she was roughly chewing a chewing gum while blowing it. Till this day I don't understand this girl's character, she's everyone's friend this one, wherever the wind blows she's there. I waved at her. She held her waist dramatically "Haibo kanti umlomo owani?(what does the mouth do)" "Hey Zandy" I had to or she'd go on and on about how rude I'm being "That's more like it" she blew the gum "uright yini? (Are you good)" "Yes I am" "Hmm okay, cheers mnax" whatever that means. She walked away while shaking her pear shaped body and greeting everyone she came across. After a few minutes I made my way home, our home, the only home I ever knew. I walked inside and it was dead quiet "Mama! Sengibuyile! (I'm back)" she kept quiet "Ngikufakele lona esitsheni!?(Should I put it on a plate)" silence... She's probably tired of talking, it's not really easy for her. I took the plate and rinsed it then cut the fruit into

pieces, that's how she prefers it. I made my way to the bedroom, there I found her sleeping. I went to kneel and slightly shook her "Mama I'm back" nothing... "Mama?" Still no response. I don't know what came into me but I suddenly decided to feel her pulse and it was not there, I shook her roughly this time around and there was no sign of a living person. "Mama!" I screamed, tears welled up, my heart beat had accelerated, she can't leave me! No she can't! "Wake up, this is not funny Mama! Please! It's me, your Nono! You can't leave!! NO!!!!" I kept shaking her, everything was playing in a slow motion before my eyes, I shook her, there's no way I'm stopping until she wakes up and laugh while saying 'IT'S JUST A JOKE NONO!'

SHEROE 1 ____ Today my grandmother is being laid to rest. Till this day it hadn't sunk in that she really left me alone in this cruel world, I'd wake up at night to get water as I always did, getting back to bed it all comes back, she's gone and gone forever. There tears would well up and wet the pillow. I feel like a dead woman walking, I don't see any reason to live anymore I absolutely have no one, no family, no friends nothing! I had told the neighbours about grandma's passing and all thanks to the grace of God they offered to help where they could with food and vehicle. She didn't have any funeral fund or whatsoever but with the money she left I managed to get her a cheap coffin and left the rest since everything else had been sorted. It wasn't really packed just a few neighbours, Zandy included. I don't really mind what people wear but I didn't concord with the choice of her attire, it was pure disrespect to my grandmother if I can put it like that. She walked my way all half naked and sat next to me. We were in the bus ready to live to the cemetery. "Mnax" she said in her squeaky voice, I wonder what's this 'mnax' thing, maybe it's a new way of greeting... "Hi" I looked at her exposed thighs "How do you feel?" Is she for real? How does she think I feel, I just lost the only guardian I had. She chuckled "what am I even asking. How are you holding up?" "Slowly getting there" She nodded while tugging loose strands of her wig behind her ear "How are you going to survive from here on, I mean you don't work and you

need money" I sighed "honestly I don't know, I guess I'll have to look for a job." She chuckled "Girl who still looks for a job in this century, we no longer the ones who look for jobs, but jobs look for us" huh? "What does that even mean?" "Child, there's still a lot you need to learn. How old are you now eighteen, nineteen?" "Twenty" "Oh so you're just a year younger than me, old enough to easily adapt on the bright side of the world" She kept speaking in riddles till we arrived at the cemetery, I didn't even catch a thing she was saying instead she was confusing me even further. "Finally, we here" she exhaled like it has been the longest trip ever. Am I even ready to so this? Why did she have to leave me though, this is killing me it's too much to take in. "Let them out baby, let them out" she comforted me, tears were gushing out. She embraced me in a hug allowing me to rest my head on her shoulder. "This too shall pass" "I don't think so..." honestly I don't think I'll pull up from this, my grandmother died not only with a piece of me but with all of me... . . A WEEK LATER _ZANDY_ . "Mnax!" She walked in the restaurant, clicking her heels, all eyes were on her. She's loud. "Hey how's you girl?" "I'm well njengoba ubona nje (as you can see)" she flashed her nails, and sat. Busi is my best friend from the ladies house, I knew her there a few years back I was probably eighteen years of age when I became a rebellious girl. "So how's baby Blue?" That's her two months baby girl, see Busi is one of Beyonce's loyal fans that's why she named her

daughter Blue, she's very fond of that woman, everyone who knows her calls her Queen B some because of the initial of her name but some because of her adoration for her role model. "She's awesome, sweet as honey" we laughed "or maybe as sugar" she shrugged as we busted into laughter, she's dumb like that. "And baby daddy?" "Ahh" she rolled her eyes, I understand, that guy is a nuisance, I don't know what she was thinking letting him plant a seed on her. "Khohlwa uyena!(forget him) , so where's Innocentia?" We laughed, she came up with that name for Nomsa "She's around innocent as ever" "No man she should join our house" I nodded "Don't worry , all in good time. We should give her time." "Ahh uzophaphama esebulawa yindlala (she'll snap out of it when she's dying of hunger)" we laughed "amasheleni kagogo azophela (granny's cents will finish)" we laughed even more "And she'll be begging for my help" "And you know where to take her" I nodded and took a sip of my drink... . . _NOMSA_ . It has been a week of sorrow and tears. The only thing I've been doing is feel sorry for myself, I hadn't been eating, bathing or even getting out of bed. I don't know which route to take, I don't know if I should continue living like this, or try to make something out of my life or just end it. "Oh Lord why don't you give me a direction, show me which route to take, which path to walk on. I'm a lost soul

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I don't know what to do with my life. Everything is just meaningless, I see no purpose to continue, is this perhaps my destiny? Is this my story? Is this why you brought me on the land of the living, to suffer like this?" I sighed. Why me? For the first time since I laid my grandmother to rest, I got out of bed, it was a bit of a challenge to stand since I hadn't eaten for a while, I was weak. I slowly walked to pour myself a glass of water, I looked for the bread only to find it rotten, sigh, what did I expect. I walked to open the door and was met by a fresh breeze, it's really stuffy in here, not to mention my own body, I feel disgusted by it, I should bath. I didn't know what came up to my mind but I started searching my grandmother's belongings since I hadn't gotten rid of them and never will. I bumped into a sealed box in her old suitcase, I've never seen it before, I took it and sat on the bed. It was a box full of pictures and some letters, granny has never showed me these pictures, I took a look at them and it was her and my mother on most of the pictures, one caught my attention, it was a young good looking man with a beautiful smile, I wonder who he is... I took one of the letters and read "Musa" my mother's name. "I did receive your letter on the past week. I couldn't respond, you know I'm a married man. I thought about your request but I don't approve of it, I can't have you come here, to tell my wife that you're expecting a child that's mine" What! So my mom was in a relationship with a married man? Wait... this means

this box belonged to my mother, does this mean granny didn't know about it, since she knew nothing about my dad? I sighed and continued "that will be the end of my marriage and you know how much I love my wife. What we had going on was just fun. Yes I will be there for the child but my wife can't find out" Wow and that's it, no signature nothing. Wow! I already dislike the man who's supposedly my father. I opened the next letter and it was a different handwriting reading "You man eater! I knew you were up to no good when you worked here." Oh no! So my mother literally slept with her own boss and betrayed this poor woman... "You thought I was never gonna find out about the bastard child you carrying!? Well you're wrong missy , make sure you stay there with that child don't ever set your foot in Pretoria or else I'm gonna kill it!" To say I was shocked was nothing beyond what I felt. I held my chest. How can my mother do this to another woman though?... . . _RICH_ . "All rise!" We all stood up as the judge walked in "You may be seated" he said "still on the case of the accused Richard Mbewu for murder of Ziyanda Sasa..." I sighed "Allow me to call on our third witness Miss Maria Sithole she's a helper at the hotel" the Sasa family lawyer said. She walked in with a face full of makeup, urgh judging from what I'm seeing, she'll literally mess with my case. She took a stand and swore before the Lord. "Miss Sithole, can you explain to us what your profession is at the hotel?" "I work there as a cleaner" "Please tell us your

routine." "During the week , I work a day shift from six am to six pm. Then on weekends I work a night shift from six pm to six am. Mondays are my day offs unless I'm needed" "Understood" he nodded while looking at a paper he was holding "You told us that you saw Mr Mbewu at the hotel on Sunday with the deceased, can you tell us more about that." "It was around eight pm I had already started doing my job, when I saw them hand in hand making their way in one of the rooms. I was cleaning on the corridor " "What was she wearing?" "A pink short dress and heels" "The same dress she had when she was found dead!" "Objection!" Bruno, my advocate said. "I'll rephrase. Do you have any proof of what you are saying?" "When I saw her I liked the dress, I told her and she said I should take a picture , in case I bump into it at the mall it'll help me recognise it." "Please show us the picture" "I object! It could be photoshop!" "I want to see it" the judge said. Damn! I had forgotten about that "Do you know about this?" My lawyer asked and I nodded "damnit Rich man, why didn't you tell me?" "How was I gonna remember that man that's girly stuff " "Well 'girly stuff' might just send you straight to prison!" This can't be happening... "Let's take a break and we'll return in thirty minutes...." Just what I needed. My wife rushed up to me, I'll never get used to her beauty..."Mbewu" I smiled and we kissed "I don't understand why we always have to face the same problems." She's right , one weakness I have is to keep my zip

up but she still sticks by my side even though I cheat over and over again. All the woman I've gone out with either disappear or end up in hospital, well this one just died and I'm being accused of her death. If I had a jealous wife I'd say she's responsible, but my wife is incapable of hurting a fly, she's basically the sweetest... "I'm sorry mama" "No man Mbewu please grow up, the last thing I want is dying of heart attack" I laughed "You're too fresh to die like that baby" she blushed. I love this woman, even though I cheat, but I'll never let her go!

SHEROE 2 ____ Everything I read on those letters left me with a whole bunch of questions and I'm very disappointed to the woman whose supposedly my mother, I mean from what I read seems like the woman used to take a good care of my mother , she treated her more like a sister than a maid and for her to just backstab her like that. I can't say the husband is at fault, I mean men are usually weak around women, they are easily tempted. My mother should have stood her ground and told him to back off. Women are the ones who allow men to be like this. Or my mother could be the one who made it hard for him to reject her, I honestly don't know, but what I know is my mother had the power to prevent all this from happening. I tried looking for names but to no luck I couldn't find them, they were discreet enough on their letters not to leave a name, not even my dad's. All I know is they're from Pretoria, I wonder how it is there, ever since I was born, all my life has been based here in eThekweni. "Knock knock!" NO I hope it's not who I think it is, honestly I don't like this girl , she's too much for my liking, what does she even want I mean I'm not in her league, I don't wear heels, makeup, wigs, short dresses, and I don't have long nails matter of fact my skin tone is not even light like hers or the girls she hang around with, I'm a total opposite. "Mnax ukhona yini lapho!?(are you there)" "You may come in!" She walked in with a bitter face, she used her one hand to squeeze her nose. "How's you girl?" She sounded different since she had

covered her nose "I'm good unghlala (you may sit)" I pointed at the only chair that we have. She went and dusted it with her handkerchief. "I haven't seen you in a week, where have you been?" "In here" "Why? Are you still mourning isgogwana sakho? (your old lady)listen no matter how long you mourn but she's not coming back, forget her already and move on. You think locking yourself in here is wise? Of course not, get up and do something about your life" I hate the fact that she's right "lalela (listen) life is real out here, you either do something or continue lying there like a dead woman" she still had her nose covered, I don't know if the smell in here isn't pleasing or she's just dramatic like that. "I'll do something" she smiled "that's more like it, do you have a phone?" "Yea I do" "Let me give you my number" I pointed at it since it was on the table, she took it and busted into laughter, I don't know what was funny. "Hhai mnax (No) Nokia 1100 I mean not even my grandmother has this phone, not even my great grandmother. No man mnax do something please. How do you even turn this on?" I stood up from the bed and went to help her out "No man life is showing you flames!" She said as she pressed hard on the numbers... . . . _RICH_ . "No further questions my Lord" he said and took a sit. It's been minutes since we returned from the break, I knew this maid of a woman was going to mess with the case, I just hope Bruno does something about it. "Miss Sithole

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you said your Mondays are your day offs?" Bruno said "Yes" "Yet you said you heard her screaming on Monday during the day?" "Yes" "Why didn't you run to call the security?" "Well I.. I thought they were... you know being intimate." "I believe a loud scream of a woman about to be murdered is far way different from the scream of pleasure" "I..." "My Lord the CCTV footage showed us Mr Mbewu leaving the building in the early hours of Monday" he went to give the judge what I believe are pictures. He nodded "You may proceed." "Miss Sithole why were you at work on a Monday?" "I was still finishing my job, I couldn't do everything I had to on Sunday , I wasn't feeling well." He nodded "was there anyone else with you when you heard her scream?" "No I was alone" "So you could be the suspect?" "Objection!" "Sustained!" "Miss Sithole when did you leave the hotel?" "Monday around eight pm" "This gave you enough time to kill and and wipe out all the evidence! Did you kill her because of the dress? Did you envy her? Or maybe you always had your eyes on Mr Mbewu here and you knew how he treated his mistresses, maybe you also wanted to be one of the mistresses" "What!" She cried "I object!" "Mr Canal!" Bruno's surname "I apologize my Lord. My client was not in the building when Miss Ziyanda Sasa was brutally murdered. And he was there not once or twice with her but more than that, if he had any intentions of killing her he wouldn't have done it in that hotel, someone framed him..." My man... . . _ZOLA_ . "Sho

Majita(Guys)" I raised my thumbs up "Sho ndoda (man)"
"Z'khiphani (what's up)?" I asked while pulling my troll "Ah nix kuyabheda vandie one (nothing it's bad today)" I work at park station at Joburg, I transport people's luggage. "Eix yah abantu bayiqedile imali ngoDecember (people finished their money in December)" "Yaz ndoda babuya sebehlophekile (they come back poor)" "As long as we get a few cents to feed ourselves" "Yah" You may think I'm one of those gangsters or dagga boys but I'm not I don't smoke I only drink probably once a month. I studied till matric but then couldn't further my academics because of my financial life, I didn't qualify for bachelor I only passed with H , I've always been slow, when I was in school I couldn't keep up like my mates but I'm glad I did my matric. I hadn't got a job, so instead of sitting at home I chose to do what I currently do. Like my mom used to say "since you're slow mentally, you're probably good at hand jobs" she was right everything I do with my hands prospers, and I must say I have a good mind for businesses, I believe one day I'll be a business man, just a matter of time... "Sewuringile nomadala?(have you spoken with the old man)" "Ya uthi ngijike daar weekend(yes he said I should go there on weekend)" my grandfather lives at Pretoria with my cousin, she's three years younger than me she'll be turning twenty one. I usually go see them every month end and give them something. They don't know what I do to get money, not because I'm ashamed or

anything but simply because my granddad said that it doesn't matter what I do just as long as I won't be stealing or doing anything that has to do with crime. So I believe he trusts me enough to not even ask what I do. I started living here in Joburg two years back, I'm renting a single room and I don't have a girl friend or anything close to that, all the girls I've met are into money and honestly I'm still young to be spending on a woman, I still need to have something stable and be sure of my future. "Sawubona Ma ngingakunceda ngemithwalo?(hi Ma can I help you with your luggage)" I said running to the woman who appeared from the rank "Yebo(Yes)" she said. I carried her suitcases to the troll "Siyaphi Ma? (where to)" "Asiqale lapha ngiyothenga inyama(let's start there I want to buy meat)" she pointed at the shops "No shuthi umama uyakwazi ubudget (a) hhai njengalaba okufika uJanuary bebroke (this means you know how to budget not like those who are broke when it's January)" she laughed "I'm smart my boy. Angihambi nomoya (I don't go where the wind blows)" we laughed "Ai uyang'shaya olady (I like you)" she smiled as we continued walking. She bought all kinds of her favourite meat, she sure knows how to budget. I then took her to the other rank where she took a taxi to Tembisa. I was so glad she gave me a hundred rand, I mean I usually get this kind of money on festives, she said I'm very smart that she wished her son was like me, she liked me. At least I can buy food for the whole week... . . _NOMSA_ . I

should do something about my life. Zandy was right , I can't keep locking myself up in this house, yes it might hurt but my granny is not coming back,she's gone and gone forever. But where do I even start , I've never had friends, I don't even know anyone who's connected, who can help me find a job, or maybe I could just ask Zandy after all that's why she gave me her contact. "Do I even have airtime?" I guess I'll have to send a call me back. She called after a few seconds, it's as if like she was already expecting my please call. "Mnax" "Uhm hey" "You good?" "Yes I am" it went silent for a few moment no one said anything "Have you thought about everything I told you?" "I did. I need a job but I don't know where to start" "Worry no more babe , I'm the correct person to help you." Wow she's truly an angel sent by God in my life...

SHEROE 3 ____ Zandy has been so good to me. She's been treating me like her younger sister, I swear I've never felt such love it's just out of this world. Yesterday she took me out and I met her best friend I think Busi is her name or something like that. She's also a nice girl, bubbly and likes to joke, I truly enjoyed their company and I believe working with them will be amazing. I haven't started working though, I still need to be taught how to walk in heels and be a lady, they said that we will be working with whites and other elegant people. I'm actually getting there since I'm a fast learner, the last thing I need is to embarrass myself in the midst of classic people, probably by the end of this week I'll start working and I couldn't be more happier. I don't know how to thank Zandy, she's truly a Godsend. "Hello" I answered the call that just came through, it was Zandy. "Baby sis!" She's loud "Hey big sis how're you?" I smiled, she's not a bad person you know. "Now that I'm hearing your voice , I feel good." I chuckled "Wow really?" "Yebo mnax (yes)listen seems like you'll have to start working tomorrow" "Oh God really!?" I couldn't believe it. "Yep, are you ready?" "Yes! Ofcourse I am!" Even though I haven't mastered walking in heels , I guess I'll have to learn while working. "That's the spirit girl." "Wow! At what time should I be ready?" "Don't worry about that, we'll be working at night" "At night!?" This I didn't expect. "Yes silly" "Oh okay, but why? What kind of work will we be doing at night kanti?" "Relax it's just as normal nje,

just that we'll be working nightshift" "Oh I hope it won't be dangerous for us then" "Trust me you'll enjoy every minute of it." I sighed. "I trust you " "Good girl!" . . _ZOLA_ . "Ey mfana inyanga kasamsokolo kodwa eyakho ifridge ayikho empty (boy it's a month of poverty yet your fridge is not empty)" we both laughed while he took out a two litre of coke "Uyaz moss angibekelwanga inhlupheko (you know I'm not destined to be poor)" "Ngiyakuzwa somabhizinisi (I hear you business man)" Cush is my closest friend, he's the first person I got close to when I moved here. He knows everything about me and I him, for that's the reason he's referring me to a business man. We are planning on opening a car wash just by the corner of our street, this one landlady agreed for us to open it outside her yard. We already have a space, and a few materials to use but we still have some machines to buy a conveyor, a wheel blaster and few more things, but soon we'll open it we just need enough money. "Eish" he said brushing his fade hair after throwing himself on the couch and drank from the bottle. My room is very simple, it has a bed, a single couch, a plasma, small speakers, a fridge and a two plate stove that's on the floor. The room doesn't have enough space for many things. "Z'khiphani? (What's wrong)" "Eish kuzovalwa lapha espanini unomphelo lomlungu uthi ubuyela kubo (the company will be closing for good the boss says he's going back to his country)" "Uthin ndoda(what are you saying man)" He sighed. He's stressed.

Cush works for a company that makes furniture, cupboards, tables, couches you name it all. "Ndoda angazi ngizoyenzani (man I don't know what'll do) in a month I'll be unemployed." "A month!?" He nodded "that's not enough time man for you to find another job." He held his head with both his hands. "What will I tell my wife man, the kid?" "Yah neh!" Cush is twenty six, he's been married to the sweetest girl for a year now and they have a two year old daughter. He's just my inspiration I mean man who still see marriage in a woman are very rare. I'd love to get married one day but where will I ever find a real woman... "Don't stress I'm sure something will come up" "If only we had all the equipment for the carwash I'd have something to do. It's even worse now since I won't be able to raise funds to pay my share" "Man have hope something will come up" he sighed once more and threw his back on the couch... . . . _SAM_ . "Your eyes change colour when you lie I can see it, I'm not blind, yeah Your eyes, Your eyes

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Your eyes, yeah Your eyes, they sparkle in the light But in the dark I see the true colours of your heart Your eyes, Your eyes, Your eyes, yeah" A pool of tears fell from the sides of my face as I laid with my back on the bed. I pulled the remote and pressed on volume plus... "They say you love me, there's no one above me They say I'm pretty, I don't need no makeup Your

eyes, your lies, they shot a million knives Your eyes, yeah They say you love me, there's no one above me They say I'm pretty, I don't need no makeup Your eyes, your eyes, they're telling me your lies Your lies, yeah" I've never felt so heart broken, yes I'm not so lucky when it comes to my sentimental life but this time around, I can literally feel a sharp knife tearing my heart. I'm twenty one and already going through real life problems. My dad is being accused of murder, my brother doesn't even care what happens in this family and my mother well she...

"Samantha! Sam baby!?" I ran to open the door and it was her, I hugged her so tight and cried. "I heard baby I'm sorry"

Nomasonto the maid probably told her, she's nosy. "He left me mommy" "Shh it's okay now baby I'm here" she pulled me to sit in the bed. "What happened?" "He said I'm not good enough for him, that I'm no longer his type, that I'm a selfish spoilt brat and..." "He's the one that's not your type Sam don't let him get to you" "Why do they all leave?" She hugged me for dear life, I love this woman... "Listen baby. You are a Mbewu by blood, you deserve better, if that boy chose to leave you then his loss. Now get up little Mbewu and pull yourself together, we're going to do some shopping." She broke the hug. This woman is a whole mood, I don't know what I'd be without her. "Get ready we don't have the whole day" Without a word, I got up and went to refresh... . . _NOMSA_ . "There is a race that I must run There are victories to be won Give me power every hour to be

through Give me power Lord Give me power every hour to be through " I kept singing and singing, my heart never felt so light ever since my granny died. I'm glad I finally see a direction to take, a path to walk on. God has been so good to me that he sent me an angel, Zandy. Tomorrow will be my first day at work and I need to do an impressive job... I swunged in my heels and clicked them back to the opposite direction till I got disturbed by a knock. "Yimina mmax vula!(It's me friend open up)" oh speaking of the devil. "Kuvuliwe(it's open)" she slowly sneaked in "wanyonyoba nje yini? (why are you sneaking)"she laughed "It's nothing" after closing the door she went to sit on the mattress, she had her one hand inside her shirt. "What's that?" She slowly pulled out her hand and it was a plastic of white sugar. "Hau why are you hiding sugar. You want a cup of tea?" I asked already pouring water in the kettle. She busted into laughter. "Yini? (what)" I asked completely dumbfounded "It's not sugar, come sit here" she tapped on the mattress next to her, I went... "What is it?" "Shhh not so loud." She whispered, she's different. "I need to prepare you for tomorrow. This" she took out her phone and poured the powder on the screen. "With it you do this" she snorted "ahhh!" She moaned. Ok what's going on here. "This will give you all the energy you need to deal with the clie... with the people " she cleared her throat. "Oh it's something like energy drinks but yona it's not a drink?" "Yes my dear." Oh she should have said so. "But do we

really have to take it in by the nose?" "Yes it works faster" Oh then this will help me a lot tomorrow. Ey growing up in eThekwini makes one kinda slow , I would have long started using this energy powder.

SHEROE 4 ____ Finally the day is here, I'll be all exposed to the new world. I can't wait to start working, I don't even want to mention tasting the energy powder. When Zandy snorted that last night she became so active, so hyper, I couldn't even keep up with her. She was craving all sort of weird things to a point where she ended up leaving because I had no idea what she wanted so badly, she didn't tell me much about it, she just said "tomorrow's your day you'll see for yourself" and well I let her be. She even left it with me, I was almost tempted to try it but then I didn't fall on the temptation, I'm just gonna save the moment for later... . . . _RICH_ . "Tell me man, do you think I'll ever leave this place?" This place is not so welcoming. I was with Bruno discussing the case. "You know I never let down my clients, and you should know me by now, I've been your advocate for as long as I can remember." I sighed "You're right. But how's it going?" "Very well. Most facts show to be in your favour" I nodded "I'm glad. I miss my family, how are they?" "You know your son is out there doing what he does the most." I sighed, that boy will definitely send me to an early grave. "And your girl is suffering yet another heartbreak" "My daughter never learns, I can't be going after all the boys because of her dumb choice of boys. Can't she choose wisely." He chuckled "Then the Mrs is perfect as always." I smiled "You know I still can't get used to your fresh love for her. It's like she fed you love portion." I laughed "she's just pure man, that woman is

rare, she's one in a million. I doubt women like her still exist out there." He eyed me blankly. "Hmm if that's what you think" he shrugged "No I don't think, I'm certain." I looked at him with a smirk and he maintained his blank face... . . . _ZOLA_ . Last night I had a dream or was it in my mind? Well I don't know, what I know is that a solution was revealed to me and now I know what Cush and I should do. I'm not only glad that we'll finally find an easier way to start our business but again it will help my bro financially. I couldn't even sleep farther I quickly refreshed and walked to his home. He lives at the other street in his late mother's house... We should act on this vision I had. I knocked and the madam opened "ahh mamas wakhe(his lady)" she blushed. "Hello Zola, come in" she moved to the side allowing me to walk in. "Uyatholakala ubafo?(is bro around)" "Yea he just came out of the shower" "Okay" we walked in to the living room where I bumped to cute Minnie, their daughter. I carried her and started tickling her. She couldn't stop laughing "I told you I'd find you" "Stop! Stop!" She screamed joyfully "I'm not stopping till you give me back my one rand" she laughed while screaming along the way.. "Hhai bafo ung'bulalela umntwana(bro you killing my baby)" he said appearing from the bedroom "Daddy!" "I forgive you for now" "Come baby let's go buy fatcakes" Precious took her and they walked out after taking the money. "No man you should help me find a woman like her" He chuckled "how will you find one when you don't

even want to date one?" "Come on man you know my relationships never end well" "But that's the only way to find the right one" "No phuma lapho(let it go) I'm here to talk about business" "I'm always ears for business" "Good" we both sat on the same couch, I have to whisper, this is a business idea, walls have ears we can't have our ideas heard and busted or stolen "since we don't have enough money to buy the machines why don't we start by doing a chisa nyama" he maintained silent "on the same spot, we'll just start by selling meat as in a chisa nyama then we'll raise funds for the machines then at a later stage, it'll be a car wash together with a chisa nyama." "Stop it I like it!" We laughed "yizo ntwana! I like the idea. Eish but what if the landlady doesn't concord with the idea?" "Hope boy!" "You're right. Eish I wish there was enough space in this yard" "It doesn't matter. We already have a space " "When will we talk to her?" "Even now there's no time to waste!" "You're right!" This plan will succeed I can feel it... . . _SAM_ . Shopping spree with Mom is always the best. That woman loves to spend money more especially on her children. Even though my brother is out there doing what he does most, clubbing day in and out my mother still sends him money. I've been in my room chatting with my girls(Bloom, Pam and Swazi) on a group chat they've been consoling me on this new heart break. "Forget him friend he's not worth it" "I've never liked him anyway, he's too black for you" "Not to mention skinny *rolling eyes" "And

broke! He can't afford you baby!" "You deserve a president's son!" "A whole yellow mellow!" "With all the money!!!" "*Haha and buffy!" "Guys will you stop with that" I finally replied. They'd go all day without even taking a break. "Sam darling listen to our advice, infact we should go out and help you find someone new" "It's too soon girls" "Nonsense!! Get ready we'll be there in an hour!" I threw my phone on the side of the bed, these girls are something else you know. I'm certain they'll be here before that 'hour'... . TWO hours later we were at the Basement a well known place to hang out. "I love this place!" Pam said while dancing to the music. She's very good with moves that one. "Pam don't forget why we're here, to find our sister here a rebound!" I shook my head and drank my cocktail. "Wooo!" Swazi screamed, we looked at her and she had her eyes fixed on some guy, I couldn't see him clearly. "Come on Swazi." I rolled my eyes, she's always like that. "Nah let her be I see what she sees" Bloom exclaimed with her squeak voice, she was also facing on the same direction. Pam was still too occupied with dancing to even mind us. "He's what we refer to as nature!" "Oh no he's coming" Bloom whispered. My eyes were now fixed on my cellphone. "Hey ladies" Okay I know that voice. I turned to look at the direction of the voice and it's... Oh no!, come... on! "Sam!?" He said surprised to see me here "It's been a week!" I shouted "You... You know each other?" Swazi asked, she couldn't hide the shock. Pam had stopped dancing,

she also wants to meet the handsome dude. I don't blame Swazi , this is one side of mylife they hardly know. "Lungelo meet my girls Pam, Bloom and Swazi. Girls meet my brother Lungelo better known as Choco " "WHAT!" They sang in unison... . . _NOMSA_ . "For someone who's still an apprentice to walk in heels you're doing absolutely amazing" "Yea true" they smiled. We're at a motel I think that's what they said it was. We getting ready for work and everything seems to be workin' out well on my side. They've been watching me walk in these stilettos and I must say I'm doing very well. "So what will I be doing?" I asked while taking a sit next to one of the girls, I was with Zandy, Busi and three other girls. "Iyoh akazi kanti?(Doesn't she know)" One girl asked in irritation, ever since I got here I noticed that I'm not much of her favourite, infact I seem to annoy her. "Awuthule(shut up) Sbahle uyeke ukuphapha (stop being forward). So this is what will happen baby girl, you'll be serving people, men specifically." Busi said "What! Why?" "Because women don't come here. So you'll be serving them drinks" "Like a waitress" Sbahle chuckled while shaking her head. "In a few minutes it'll be packed, you have to wear this" Busi threw a red dress, I took a look at it and it's the opposite of what I'd wear. It's a short , tight, off-shoulder dress. Bare in mind I was wearing a long, creamy, long sleeved dress. "I can't..." "Yes you can and you will" Zandy said "but first let's get you energized" she took out the energy powder from my

bag and all the girls hungrily got closer. She poured it on the coffee table between us then took it in. They all did it until it was my turn... "Relax will you" Busi said. I sat on the floor and smiled. The girls were now all over, this thing is really quick. I looked at it for a minute then went for it and immediately I felt a sting on my head. I looked up and all I could see were stars shining so bright, I laughed so hard. This is it, there's no doubt that I am in heaven!

SHEROE 5 _____ "This... This is heaven" I heard a loud laughter. "Yes honey we are in heaven! Let's get this party started!" I don't know but I suddenly got this weird energy, I stood up and started undressing, my clothes were bringing me so much heat all I wanted was to undress. "Yes babe I told you that you can! You aren't an old hag those clothes are definitely not for you. Come on show us that beautiful body!" As she said that I felt more need to take these disgusting clothes off! She's right I'm not an old hag, I'm very young, I'm free. "Yes! I am free!" "That's my girl!" I started dancing as I took off my clothes feeling the fresh breeze hitting my body. This is the best feeling ever. "Oh Zandy what took you so long to bring me here!" I swung around while the girls laughed... . . . _SAM_ . "Tell us you're joking!" Pam said in complete shock. I rolled my eyes "How I wish I was" "What are you doing here Peaches?" He asked. He always called me that since my skin tone is very light like mom and he's the complete opposite like dad. "Don't call me that!" Funny how we always fight when we're together but miss each other whenever we stay apart. "Ey spoilt brat watch how you talk to me, I'm still your older brother" "Maybe if you knew how to play that 'older brother' role, I would give you some respect" "Listen here!" He got closer while pointing at me and Pam quickly stopped him with her hands on his chest. "Wooo big brother, calm down" she said and he looked at her while smirking, jerk... "Pamela if you don't want to end up like

me, please stay away from him" I warned. I know my brother like the back of my hand. "Want a drink?" He asked her "I already have one, but I'd appreciate another one" she smiled "Pam..." "Sam awukahle ukuphapha (stop being forward)" he said while taking her hand and they walked away... I wasn't waiting... "Wow!" I had forgotten about their existence. "What was that? Why don't we know about any brother?" Swazi asked I sighed "He's always been the prodigal son" "A hot one I must say" Bloom exclaimed "Guys we should stop Pam before she commits the most stupid thing" "I wouldn't mind being a fool for him" "Me too" they both sipped on their glasses while watching the newly found couple dancing. I give up... . . . _ZOLA_ . "Kunjani Ma?(how're you)" we took a sit. It was now in the evening, the landlady was not available all day. "Ngiyaphila nina ninjani bantwana bam?(I'm good and how are you my children)" "Siphile kakhulu Ma(we're very well)" "Hmm kuhle lokho (that's good)" "Ma silethwe ukuzoxoxisana ngebusiness(we're here to talk about business)" She laughed "Yess kuhle ukunizwa nikhuluma kanjalo bosomabhizinisi (It's good to hear you talk like that business men)" We laughed "injalo nje (that's how it is)" "Yini le enifuna ukukhuluma ngayo (What is it that you want to talk about)" "Ma we have come up with a new idea, we want to open a chisa nyama..." "Haibo iCarwash?(What about the carwash)" "We want to make enough money to buy the machines and well sibone kungcono

siqale ngechisa nyama mengabe uMa uyasivumela ngoba siyazi amachisa nyama anomsindo (We thought it was better to start with a chisa nyama only if you allow us 'cause we know chisa nyamas can be noisy)" She nodded and thought for a moment "ayikho inkinga futhi ngibona kuwumbono omuhle loyo (There's no problem in fact I think that's a good idea)" "Yes!" We smiled, I could see the joy in Cush's eyes. "Thank you so much Ma" "Nina nisazophumelela(you will prosper)" "Sthemba njalo (We hope so)" "Niqala nini?(when will you start)" "Soon probably next week" "Okay masenidinga uncedo nizosho noma kuwukupheka(you'll let me know when you need help even if it's cooking)" we nodded. "We'll put that in mind, thanks for your time Ma" we bid farewell and left. As soon as we stepped outside Cush screamed "Yesss!" I smiled "Yoh! Man you have no idea how happy this makes me feel. You know last night I kept tossing and turning thinking what will my family be without a financially stable life. You know my wife is unemployed and Minnie is still very young to be exposed to all this."I nodded "I'm glad we thought out of the box" "No man. You are the one who thought out of the box" I shook my head "We ndoda(man) WE" he chuckled "Mxm let's go man tomorrow we should start planning further" "Sho!" . . _ZANDY_ . "Yeses mnax this is too strong for her" Busi whispered "It's her first time, remember you were worse than her" "Mxm. Look at her that dress looks good on her

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she has a body to die for" "She'll drive those men crazy"
"Crazy? Mad!" We laughed, she's been hiding a beautiful body with those rags she wears. "Nono dear!" I called out. "Sweet cakes , it's time" she looked at me "Zandy I've never felt so alive" she did a catwalk to me "I know darling I also felt like that on my first day " "So you understand what I feel?" "I do" I smirked "I just want to give in to all these body desires" "I know what you mean, come" I pulled her hand and we went out. The other girls were already out working. We stood by the entrance "A bunch of hot guys" she said with a smile. The drug is truly working. "I know right, wanna go say hi?" "I'd love to" "Feel free" she fixed her weave and clicked her heels away to one table with a whole lot of hot guys. As she was passing ,the guys glanced at her while others whistled. She's the perfect candidate for this job, I'm glad I thought of her when the boss lady or rather the mini boss asked for someone new... I kept my eyes fixed on her, she was now on one guy's lap. His hands were all over her and she looked so comfortable she even looked like she wanted more, she whispered on his ear and he nodded. After a few more minutes they rose up hand in hand and went on a direction that leads to private rooms... "Check mate" I smirked and walked away... . . . _CHOCO_ . I looked at her as she danced, she's not that beautiful but has a nice slim body and sure got all the moves. I don't know why she

didn't listen to Peaches when she warned her about me. I don't do relationships not even for a week! I usually get what I want from girls in a day then I'm done. I don't know what it is that girls see in me but they go crazy as soon as their eyes make contact with me. You may refer me to a jerk or anything but this is the life I've been exposed to, this is who I am, if it wasn't for my mother I would have been a weak coward. I'm glad she introduced this life to me, my dad and sis may think I'm one rebellious son but I'm not, they don't know who Mrs Mbewu really is. I'm the only one who knows the real woman behind her charming face. "Wanna join me?" She asked still dancing "Why don't we take this party else where?" "Uhm do you think that's a good idea?" "If you don't want to then it's fine I'll ..."

She stopped dancing "No! I mean, I want to. Where to?" I smirked, this gender "I currently live at the hotel" "Okay uhm let's go then" she drowned her drink then held my hand. I led the way to the door "Aren't we gonna let them know that we're leaving?" "No" "Ohh ok" we left to the hotel... . . _NOMSA_ .

"Ahh!" I love this powder! We've been doing round after round he can't even keep up. Something in me wants him to go even deeper. Ohh so much pleasure... "Damn where's all this energy coming from sweetness!" He groaned. I ignored him and fed the desires of my body."

SHEROE 6 ____ I woke up to a pounding headache. What happened? How did I even get home. I looked at myself and I was in my usual clothes, I remember that they gave me a dress , I probably refused to wear it for that's the reason I'm in my clothes. Why can't I remember anything that happened though? All I remember is arriving at that motel, and I was given that dress that I refused to wear, then we did that energy thing after that... after that I don't remember a thing. What happened? Did I consume alcohol? I laid on bed trying to force my mind to remember everything that happened. I hate this feeling. What if something happened to me, lately women get violated out there, what if I just became one of the victims and I don't even remember. I quickly sat still as the thought crossed my mind and I suddenly felt a sting of pain on my private part. I slowly placed my hand on it and it was sore "ahhh!!" I screamed in agony, what's going on... I stood up and attempted to walk but that became an unbearable mission, this has never I mean ever happened to me, I need to go to the hospital as in now, what if I'm dying? . . _CHOCO_ . I woke up to heaviness on my chest, urgh another day and yet another head, who could it be this time around? I roughly shook her, they love getting comfortable forgetting that I'm a complete stranger to them. I shook her once again and she mumbled something in a horsey voice. "Yey! Wake up" I said, she slowly raised her head and I immediately recognized her. "Get up you should leave" "But it's

still early" "I don't care, you should go!" "What's wrong with you?" She said sitting up while pulling the cover to her tiny body. "We are not in any kind of a relationship girly, my woman will be here in a few minutes and she shouldn't find you here" I lied. "Wow!" She sounded hurt, are we catching feelings?... "Why didn't you tell me you had a girlfriend?" "You didn't ask" I got up and walked to the ensuite "No he didn't! Did he just play me!" I heard her say to herself, what did she think? That I'd marry her after a steamy one night stand pshhhh real women are not found at the club... "Do you want to take a shower first or you'll just leave?!" I shouted from the bathroom after releasing myself. She didn't respond. "Did you hear what I said!?" I would be calling her name but I forgot it, all I remember is she's friends with Peaches. Again she didn't answer, I went to stand by the door and she was dressing up. Well good for her... "I take it you won't be taking a shower." "Why should I when your 'woman' is coming" it came out like a statement as she emphasized the 'woman' part. I chuckled, why are girls this quick to catch feelings. "Why are you being so dramatic and making a big deal of this when there's absolutely nothing going on between us." "Just shut your mouth!" She bent down and tied her heels, within seconds she was done. She got hold of her clutch bag and as she was about to leave "A simple goodbye would do" She clicked her tongue and left, she probably knows how she'll get home. I chuckled and went to

grab my phone. I called my mother "Son" She said "Mother, how're you doing?" "I'm very well baby and you" "You know I'm always good" "Right, what do you want?" "To meet up with you, that's if you aren't going to court" "When and where?" This is what I like about her "In two hours at the same restaurant" "Okay" she hung up, if I were to find a woman like my mother to marry... the door flung open she looked frustrated "Can you just get me an uber, I don't have money with me" I laughed "A simple please would do" she rolled her eyes. I shook my head and called an uber "Just a few minutes and it'll be here" "Thanks" she walked out and banged the door along the way... sigh . . _ ZOLA _ . "Ey mjitha(man) I hope out of this comes success" "Ungakhathazeki ndoda konke kuzo vaya grand, uzobona(don't worry man everything will go well, you'll see)" he nodded. We had just arrived at the mall to buy a few things that we'll need for our shisa nyama. We asked for a loan on some old man who owns taxis, he has always been fond of us even wanted us to work for him but since we've heard stories about taxi drivers always shooting each other for certain stupid reasons, we've never agreed and besides being a taxi driver is the last job I'd ever settle for... "As'qale eGame (let's start at Game)" we headed there, we didn't even know where to start "We should get pots, a braaistand a tent nyana, a table or two , chairs then after we'll buy groceries." "How will it be with the drinks?" "Why don't we just sell cool drinks since

KaSbali(tavern) they already sell alcohol." "Yah asifuni izitha (we don't want enemies)" I nodded then we went along with our shopping... . . _CHOCO_ . I was at the restaurant waiting for queen mother, she called and said she would be a few minutes late due to traffic. While I waited I ordered I'm not talking about your typical oysters, I'm talking about real food, meat. I also ordered a champagne, I don't need a reason to drink it, just long as I feel like it I go for it... "Come on you can't be that hungry" "Trust me I am" "When last did you eat?" Come to think of it, I don't remember "I don't know" "What! Lungelo don't give me a reason to make you come back home!" She was mad, o-kay it's just food. "Don't stress my queen, I do eat" "Don't tell me not to stress, when you're literally giving me a reason to stress" "Sorry. Would you like some?" I raised a glass of wine. She nodded. "So why am I here?" I gave her the glass "Business" "Obviously." She sipped "I want to start my own business" she looked at me blankly "A car wash in the township" she did what I least expected of her, she laughed so hard even people faced our way, my mother never laughs when it's business related, I must have said a joke to her. "Oh God this child wants to kill me" she said through laughter "Ma! What's funny?" She looked at me then again, laughed. Between you and I, this laughter is not real, she's pretending... "You know what's funny?" She said suddenly with a serious expression like she never laughed, I knew it! "The fact that

you've stooped so low to think of such. How do you even call that a 'business' idea?" "Look Ma. I've been at the township, and honestly speaking I think I'll make lot of money there"

"Couldn't you think of something better like a mini restaurant?" I shook my head, she sighed "you know what you saw. Now what is it that you want, money?" I smirked and nodded. "I'll send you enough money to start. Where exactly is the location?" "Joburg at Tembisa" "Are you okay in your head? We're in Pretoria, why not somewhere here" "Because there's a specific space that I want to occupy" she dramatically held her head and closed her eyes. I know what I want... . . . _NOMSA_ . I stood at the waiting area. The doctor had said that I could wait for the results and well that's what I've been doing for hours, I don't know what it is that is taking him so long, for some reason I've been shaking. "Nomsa Nkosi!" Finally, I sighed, stood up and went in. He had taken off his spectacles, I don't know if I should expect good or bad news. "Please sit" I slowly sat and squeezed my arms together, somehow I was feeling cold. "Miss Nkosi you said you don't remember anything that happened?" "Yes Dr" He sighed "We've found drugs in your system. In your case it's not only one type of drug but it's a mixture, if you overdosed you would've died" my heart immediately started racing. "The drugs were meant for you to get all wild and not only that but it increased your sexual desire. It would seem like you were willing to be intimate with whomever you were

intimate with, but again in this case, it seems like you were raped" No he didn't say what I think he did, tears slowly streamed down. This is it, my virginity gone just like that, and it's all Zandy's fault she drugged me. She better pray I don't find her...

SHEROE 7 ____ It hadn't been easy to get home, I've been crying since I left the hospital. I dragged my feet making my way inside the yard. How did I not see this coming, how could I be so stupid and foolish. I should have stayed away from her, from them. I should have noticed from the very beginning that she was no good to me. "Oh bakithi Gogo kodwa wangishiyelani (Oh grandmother why did you leave me)" I said while lying on the mattress "ngiyimpoxo, sengehlulwe yinto elula nje ukuzikhethele umngani olungile (I'm a disappointment, I've failed to do a simple thing, to choose a good friend)" tears welled up wetting the pillow. I've never felt so useless, so cheap and weak. So alone and helpless. Is this my destiny, what will I even do with my life from here on... . . . _RICH_ . "Mr Mbewu, you're free to go" I smiled and fixed the suit Bruno brought me then stepped out. Yesterday the judge declared me 'not guilty' after all the proof, the witnesses, I still came out innocent, the state didn't have enough proof to lock me inside, in fact I've always been innocent, I don't know who the real murder is or why it was all pinned on me, all I know is I'm finally free, free to be with my family. I sighed and closed the car door, Bruno was driving. "You did it my guy" I laughed while tapping his shoulder. He smiled but his smile wasn't convincing it was like something was eating him up "it was clear you didn't do it" "Either way you were my voice" "I was just doing my job" "Thank you man" "Don't sweat it, it was just nothing" "Are you

okay man?" I finally asked. He looked at me then back on the road. "I'm good. Why are you asking?" "You just don't look like your usual self, or rather happy for me" He chuckled "You know I am, it's just women you know..." He looked at me and winked "Ohhh! I get you, who is she?" Last time I checked he was single must be a new girlfriend. He slightly coughed and cleared his throat "You don't know her yet" "Oh okay, can't wait to meet her." We laughed as I took my phone to text my children and the wife, I can't wait to see her. . . _SAM_ . I screamed on top of my lungs after reading a text from dad. I don't understand why he had forbidden me from going to court, it would have been good to follow his case. "Mommy!!" I ran down the stairs "MaMbewu!!" She so doesn't like it when I call her that. "Yini!(what)" I laughed and hugged her so tight "Why didn't you tell me daddy's coming home" "Hau You already know" "Come on Ma you know what I mean" "I also didn't know, remember I didn't go to court yesterday" right , we sat on the couch in the living room "Can I bring you anything?" That was Nomasonto, the maid. "Cha Sonto siyabonga(No thank you)" mom said "Bring me a hot chocolate" I said as she attempted to leave "Please."she said, I rolled my eyes, sometimes she forgets she's just a maid. "Nomasonto yenza umsebenzi wakho tuu(do your work)" she shook her head and walked away "You should respect her" "Don't start Ma. So when is he getting home?" She shook her head "In a few minutes or so" "I can't wait!" I

clapped my hands like a little girl seeing a candy. The bond my father and I have is unbreakable... . . . _CHOCO_ . My mother had transferred a few thousands in my account for the business. There was this other week, I was with my boys at a hood known as Tembisa, we were drinking at this tavern called KaSbali the vibe there is out of this world. That's when I spotted the space at the opposite side of the tavern, it's a very big yard and I think it'll be a good spot for a car wash. I concluded with the idea even before speaking with the owner of the yard, but I know they'll agree, I'll just show them a few bucks then the spot is mine. Why a car wash and not a restaurant like mom prefers it? Simply because I'm that typical black dude. Even though my parents are rich, even though I studied at one of the best schools, nothing will take me out of the ghetto, I don't dream of opening a restaurant in the hood... My phone rang

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it was dad. "Mbewu" "Son, how're you?" "I'm good" "As always. Where are you?" "Driving to Tembisa" "Ini?(what) what for?" "Business. Why?" "We have a dinner, I thought you'd join us" oh "Aren't you supposed to be in jail?" "Ouch." That came out wrong "I've been declared innocent" "Oh good for you. Look dad I'm driving, I'll call you later" "Ok son drive safe" the call ended, I'm not my dad's biggest fan simply because he always cheats on my mother and gets away with it... . . . _RICH_ . I

sighed. "I'm tired of trying with this boy. I don't understand why he's always cold with me" I had arrived home, we were in the bedroom with my wife "that's not the truth" "You know it is, his behaviour towards me is completely different from the one towards you." "Are we being jealous Mr Mbewu?" I looked at her, she had a slight smile on her face "It's not that wife, you know I'd appreciate to have him treat me like his father, you know giving me all that attention" "What?" She laughed "no! he's too old to be giving you attention love, he has things to do, a career to build" "You know what, let's forget this and join the others, our visitors are probably waiting for us." We went ahead to join our friends and family. . . _SAM_ . My phone rang as we were eating, mom hates it when we answer during dinner but it's Pam, it's probably important. "Excuse me" I got up and slowly walked away with Mom giving me warning looks. "Pam! Wrong timing!" I said closing my bedroom door. She sniffed, is she crying "Are you crying? Pamela what's going on?" "It's, it's your brother" just what I needed "What did he do now?" I asked calmly "Promise me you won't say one of those 'I told you' lines" I sighed, he did it again "He left you after having his way with you?" "I hate him Sam! He played me and what's worse is I have fallen for him" "What!?" That was quick "I know ok. I know it's too soon but I couldn't help it, he was...he was..." "Urgg please spare me the details and tell me why didn't you listen when I warned you about him" "That's not why I called

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pay but if she's not then..." I couldn't put up what they were talking about, all I felt was too much heat, I started removing my clothes... "Have fun!"

SHEROE 8 ____ "My friend was right, you are a whole package" he said while pumping more into a now numb Nomsa, she couldn't take it anymore, the guy was using her like some sex toy. He kept turning her from one position to another, on the other hand her mind was totally out she was trying to block everything that was happening... . . _ZOLA_ . Everything was now ready. We didn't waste anytime as soon as we arrived we put a sign that a new Chisa nyama is up running, the landlady prepared some chakalaka and pap whilst Cush marinated the meat, I on the other hand was serving those who were buying. The smell was pulling in the people, especially those drunkards who were at the tavern and I must say they were enjoying the food, even Sbali was here to check what was happening I'm sure he thought we were selling alcohol "yeh ng'cishe ngani saphaza ubuchopho(I almost blew your minds)" I laughed "Khululeka njayam lokhu kuziyela ethunjini (relax my man this is just food)" "Kuhle keh lokho awung'tlatse ngeplate (That's good give me one plate)" I prepared him his plate "awu ntwanas (boy)" he said greeting some guy who had just appeared out of nowhere, he looked like those rich guys. "Sbali! K'hambani lah?(What's going on here)" I didn't expect him to know taal language "Sise restaurant yase kasi ndoda (we're at a kasi restaurant)" "Ngiyabona(I see)" he looked rather pissed "Uzokwenzani la phakathi neviki (What are you doing here on a midweek)" "Business man, ngiyazwakala (I'm coming)" he

walked in the yard "Uban lo ?(who's he)" I asked, after giving him the plate, he immediately devoured in "Yerrr imnandi lenyama!(This meat is delicious)" he even had his eyes closed "Sbali!" "Ey nawe Mzoja(nickname) awusangiyeki ngidle(can't you let me eat) intwana yami leya uChoco(that's my boy Choco)" "Hmm" I nodded and let him enjoy his food in peace. . . _CHOCO_ . I'm pissed I don't wanna lie, did it really have to be the same yard DAMN! Either way I'm going to talk to the owner maybe we can do something, there's no way I'm backing down or letting these guys have their way with this place. I knocked at the already opened door "Yebo! (yes)" a lady shouted, I walked in, I guess she's the landlady "Sanibonani(good day)" she was also eating the same food "Yebo mfana ngena (Come in boy)" she said while licking her fingers "ungahlala (You may sit)" she pointed at the couch "ngingakusiza? (how can I help you)" "Yes it's business related" she chuckled "You boys of today with business, how can I be of help?" she closed her takeaway "I want to rent your yard" "Hau!" She seemed a bit shocked "that space is already being occupied" "I know but I can offer more" "What business do you want to start?" "A carwash" "Amen!" She clapped once "did you know that those boys outside also want to start the same business, they are just raising funds to start" this was news to me "I can't rent that space to you when there are already people renting" "You said they don't have enough money to start?" "Yes" I smiled "I have an idea, can you

please ask them to join us?" She sighed and went to get them, I'm sure my plan will workout after all I have all the money, she came back with the guy who was serving Sballi. "Sho!" He said and I nodded "Fede? (how're you)" I asked "Mnandi wena? (good and you)" "Ng'grend (I'm okay)" "Ma said you have something to discuss" o-kay I didn't expect him to speak English, I guess I undermined him "Yea I heard you want to open a carwash but don't have enough money?" He nodded "I believe I'm just the answer to your prayers" he frowned "look I also want this space to open a carwash" he chuckled "and since your financial life can't make it easy for you , I can. How about I buy all the equipments and everything else then you work for me. You may continue with your chisa nyama but I think it'll be too much for you. What do you say?" He kept quiet "Umbono omuhle lowo (that's a good idea)" the woman said "I need time to discuss this with my partner" "Ok. But I'll need the answer tomorrow" "Sho (ok)" he stood up and excused himself, they'll agree I know they will. I smirked... . . . _RICH_ . "Tell me man why would someone kill Ziyanda, I mean that girl hardly had enemies?" Wyatt (my business partner also friend) and I were having lunch at a restaurant, we've been good friends for as long as I remember, it's true when they say 'show me your friends and I'll tell you who you are' everything I do this guy also does it and everything he does I also do it, that's how close we are. "Beats me, I don't understand why" "This is connected,

whoever did this also made the other ones disappear " makes sense "But why?" "That's what we need to find out, atleast we know the person or people doing this are close or related to you" "What do you mean?" I looked at him "That it could be your enemy or someone who loves you and is doing this out of jealous" "Who do you have in mind?" He's onto something "Mrs Mbewu, your wife" "My, my wife" I looked deeply into his eyes then busted into laughter, I laughed so hard even tears ran down. "My what!?" I couldn't help it I continued laughing, Wyatt should be given a spot next to Trevor Noah... . . _SAM_ . I was with the girls Pam and Bloom organising a surprise party for Swazi since she'll be turning twenty one on Saturday. Truly speaking we weren't planning on throwing any party for her, but then Bloom changed our minds, she made us see this differently. Swazi doesn't come from one of those rich families like some of us and I'm sure her grandfather wouldn't afford to throw her any party, she has a brother but I think he also doesn't have much money judging from what she's told us, but either way we don't treat her in any different way. "I think we can do it at her home that way her grandfather won't have to leave his house" Pam suggested, she's good at distracting herself rather than feeling sorry for herself because of men. "I second that" I said "Then how are we going to make her leave her house without noticing anything?" "That's easy, I'll take her out on some 'I'm taking you out since it's your birthday' kind of

thing" Bloom said "But she'll wonder where the rest of us are" "We'll say we have important things to take care of" Pam said "She won't be pleased" "For a few minutes yes, later she'll see the love we have for her" we smiled, Swazi has a very beautiful heart she's going to love the surprise. "Okay guys but the grandfather needs to know, we can't just pop in his house and start organizing a whole party" we laughed "I can already see him chasing us out with a sjambok!" We laughed that's how dangerous he is... . . . _NOMSA_ . I couldn't feel my body, I was numb. This time it was different I remember, yes I remember everything that happened to me, though I was fuzzy and couldn't see his face. But I remember that I was raped in my own home my grandmother's house on her own bed, yet I couldn't do anything because I was weak. Whatever it is they gave me, took all the strength that I had. If a girl can be raped at her own home then what more out there? I can't even lay any charges since I don't remember him and as for Busi and Zandy I don't have proof against them, besides I don't have money to pay even a lawyer that comes cheaper. There's only one solution run, I have to run. I can't let them violate me like this, if they could do this to me in here then they won't hesitate to come back. I have to run for my life, but where to, where , maybe Joburg...

SHEROE 7

It hadn't been easy to get home, I've been crying since I left the hospital. I dragged my feet making my way inside the yard. How did I not see this coming, how could I be so stupid and foolish. I should have stayed away from her, from them. I should have noticed from the very beginning that she was no good to me. "Oh bakithi Gogo kodwa wangishiyelani (Oh grandmother why did you leave me)" I said while lying on the mattress "ngiyimpoxo, sengehlulwe yinto elula nje ukuzikhethela umngani olungile (I'm a disappointment, I've failed to do a simple thing, to choose a good friend)" tears welled up wetting the pillow. I've never felt so useless, so cheap and weak. So alone and helpless. Is this my destiny, what will I even do with my life from here on... . . . _RICH_ . "Mr Mbewu, you're free to go" I smiled and fixed the suit Bruno brought me then stepped out. Yesterday the judge declared me 'not guilty' after all the proof, the witnesses, I still came out innocent, the state didn't have enough proof to lock me inside, in fact I've always been innocent, I don't know who the real murder is or why it was all pinned on me, all I know is I'm finally free, free to be with my family. I sighed and closed the car door, Bruno was driving. "You did it my guy" I laughed while tapping his shoulder. He smiled but his smile wasn't convincing it was like something was eating him up "it was clear you didn't do it" "Either way you were my voice" "I was just doing my job" "Thank you man"

"Don't sweat it, it was just nothing" "Are you okay man?" I finally asked. He looked at me then back on the road. "I'm good. Why are you asking?" "You just don't look like your usual self, or rather happy for me" He chuckled "You know I am, it's just women you know..." He looked at me and winked "Ohhh! I get you, who is she?" Last time I checked he was single must be a new girlfriend. He slightly coughed and cleared his throat "You don't know her yet" "Oh okay, can't wait to meet her." We laughed as I took my phone to text my children and the wife, I can't wait to see her. . . _SAM_ . I screamed on top of my lungs after reading a text from dad. I don't understand why he had forbidden me from going to court, it would have been good to follow his case. "Mommy!!" I ran down the stairs "MaMbewu!!" She so doesn't like it when I call her that. "Yini!(what)" I laughed and hugged her so tight "Why didn't you tell me daddy's coming home" "Hau You already know" "Come on Ma you know what I mean" "I also didn't know, remember I didn't go to court yesterday" right , we sat on the couch in the living room "Can I bring you anything?" That was Nomasonto, the maid. "Cha Sonto siyabonga(No thank you)" mom said "Bring me a hot chocolate" I said as she attempted to leave "Please."she said, I rolled my eyes, sometimes she forgets she's just a maid. "Nomasonto yenza umsebenzi wakho tuu(do your work)" she shook her head and walked away "You should respect her" "Don't start Ma. So when is he getting home?" She

shook her head "In a few minutes or so" "I can't wait!" I clapped my hands like a little girl seeing a candy. The bond my father and I have is unbreakable... . . . _CHOCO_ . My mother had transferred a few thousands in my account for the business. There was this other week, I was with my boys at a hood known as Tembisa, we were drinking at this tavern called KaSbali the vibe there is out of this world. That's when I spotted the space at the opposite side of the tavern, it's a very big yard and I think it'll be a good spot for a car wash. I concluded with the idea even before speaking with the owner of the yard, but I know they'll agree, I'll just show them a few bucks then the spot is mine. Why a car wash and not a restaurant like mom prefers it? Simply because I'm that typical black dude. Even though my parents are rich, even though I studied at one of the best schools, nothing will take me out of the ghetto, I don't dream of opening a restaurant in the hood... My phone rang it was dad. "Mbewu" "Son, how're you?" "I'm good" "As always. Where are you?" "Driving to Tembisa" "Ini?(what) what for?" "Business. Why?" "We have a dinner, I thought you'd join us" oh "Aren't you supposed to be in jail?" "Ouch." That came out wrong "I've been declared innocent" "Oh good for you. Look dad I'm driving, I'll call you later" "Ok son drive safe" the call ended, I'm not my dad's biggest fan simply because he always cheats on my mother and gets away with it... . . . _RICH_ . I sighed. "I'm tired of trying with this boy. I don't understand why

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"Yes he does" I lied the last thing I need is her thinking it could workout between them "Wow ok bye" "Wai..." She had dropped before I even said another word... . . . _NOMSA_ . I slowly opened my eyes, I probably dozed off, I quickly jumped when I saw someone sitted on the chair. She had her back on me "who are you? what do you want? how did you get in?" She got up and slowly turned, I sighed in relief when I noticed who it was, but how did she get in. "Hey, sorry to scare you. The door wasn't locked so I let myself in" It was Busi "Uhm I forgot to lock it" "You don't look very well, what's wrong?" I sighed, for a few hours I had escaped from all those thoughts "I don't want to talk about it" "I'm a good listener" "Not today please..." "Fine. But if you want to talk feel free to give me a call" I nodded "I made you tea" "Seems like you had made yourself at home" she chuckled while handing me a cup of warm tea, she was glancing at me "Why are you here?" "I came to see you" I chuckled "were you sent by Zandy?" "No ofcoarce not, I came to see a friend" I drank the tea, it tasted different, in a good way though "we are friends right?" "Uhm yea" I suddenly felt funny, I slowly laid on bed facing up. It was like I was flying, I felt like I was literally in the clouds. "What's happening with me, what did you do?" I heard the door open from afar "You may come in, she's ready for you. Pay up!." "I'll pay after having her, if she's as good as my friend said she is then I'll double the pay but if she's not then..." I couldn't put up what they were

talking about, all I felt was too much heat, I started removing my clothes... "Have fun!"

SHEROE 9 ____ I had made up my mind about leaving. I'm not gonna stay yet another day in this place, I confess I'm very scared, what if they come back and hurt me even more than they already have, what if this time around she'll bring more than one guy want if she brings a whole gang! NO I can't permit that to happen when I have an option of running for my life. I was almost done packing, atleast with a few bucks my grandmother left me I can pay for transport and maybe rent a place to stay for a few weeks but I'll have to find a job though, I can't live on these few thousands for the rest of my life. I hope I don't get lost wherever I'm going, I've never been out of KZN all my life has been based here. I continued packing everything that I'll need. Who would have thought that such wickedness would ever happen to me, that one day I'll be forced to abandon my home, this hurts it's like I've been literally put a knife in the center of my heart... . . . _ZANDY_ . "Hlala la(sit here)" I tapped on the couch next to me "how did it go?" I couldn't wait to hear all the details but the most interesting part is money, Busi and I are allies in each and everything. "I did it" we were in one of the private rooms at the motel. "You mean?" I smiled as she nodded, I couldn't be more happier, this means more money for me. If it was that easy to do the job at her home then this means we can still do it again, the girl makes us a lot of money. I know she was meant to be the new girl for the business but I'll have to find someone else, Nomsa

will be my very own private bank. "How much did she make me?" "Us you mean" she gave me 'the look' "Yes that, us." She smiled "here" she took out a stash of cash, oh Yess this is what I'm talking about! "They love her" "If she can make me..." I cleared my throat "Us I mean, so much money in a day then there's no time to waste. Get in contact with a few filthy rich guys and go there, again." "Sure thing. This is gold on a silver platter" "Oh Yea!" I inhaled the stash, my dreams will come true sooner than I've ever anticipated... . . . _NOMSA_ . I was walking down to the rank. My heart was beating so fast , no doubt I was very scared I was even at the verge of changing my mind, but as soon as I remembered the reason behind this decision, I stood firm on my decision. I kept stopping and looking back, looking at what had always been my home. Today I'm turning my back on the only home I ever knew. What will be of me in a new foreign environment, in a place where I don't know even a single soul, it could be dangerous for all I know and yet I have no one to protect me. I sighed and said a small prayer as the taxi to Johannesburg took off, "Lord please lead my way and protect me from the evil plans against me in Jesus mighty name,Amen"... . . . _CHOCO_ . What I like about being here is that when it's Friday, it doesn't matter if it's mornings or evenings, the multitude here just turn it up hence I always come here on weekends. I was at KaSbali waiting for the guy I believe will be my employee very soon... I was with Sbali at the

counter, listening to him doing all the talking. The way this guy talks, I swear sometimes when he starts a conversation I only hear fifty percent of it, he speaks fast and usually doesn't make any sense. I saw my future employee making his way in, he was not alone but with a very pretty girl. I kept my eyes on her till I heard Sballi saying something, I didn't think he was watching me "Eyes off ntwana(boy) she's married and very faithful to her husband" I couldn't hide the shock on my eyes , they widened, she looks young to be married. "I know she looks young but utha-thi-we (she's taken)" he emphasised that. "Married to him?" "Nah to Cush. Intwana eserious ngelife(A boy that's serious with life)" "Uban leyo palony manje ?(who's that idiot)" "Partner ka Mzoja lapha echisa nyama(Zola's business partner)" what! That stupid looking boy is married to one of the prettiest girl I've ever seen... "Sho sho" he greeting

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she leaned on the counter "Hi Sballi, ng'cela i 2litre sprite (can I have 2L sprite)" all this moment I was checking her out until she left, she has a very nice body, her voice sounds very sweet and tiny. "Choco!" I snapped out of it and looked at him before responding "Oh, yes! Our meeting. Let's go over there" we went to sit at the far corner so we don't get to be disturbed... . .
RICH. I was with my wife eating when I remember what Wyatt said when we met. My wife may not be the perfect

woman out there but to me she is, I can't believe that thought crossed his mind I mean even if my wife was to be compared to a whole nun, they would find a lot of similarities. My wife is one of the just women out there... "What are you thinking?" She broke the silence. "It's nothing, just something absurd" I chuckled "I wanna hear it" I might as well tell her, after all it's not like it's true "I was with Wyatt yesterday and you won't believe what he said" she took a bite of biltong, she loves it "he said that the person who killed Ziyanda is very close to me, might have done it out of jealousy because of the love the person has for me, then he said that person could be you" I was startled by her cough, she loves biltong why would it suddenly get it the wrong pipe, I quickly helped her drink water. "Are you okay?" She nodded "yes" "What was that?" "It's the meat, excuse me" she got up and walked away. O-kay, we'll continue when she gets back... . . . _ZOLA_. Our chisa nyama is doing very well it's just amazing and it's growing, even people from far come to buy food here. It's like we working together with Sbali, the customers get their drinks in his tavern while coming to get food at the chisa nyama. Business is very good. This Choco guy means business, he's not backing down from renting the yard. I tried convincing him to look for another location but he made it very clear that he wants that space, but thinking further on this situation I think it could work out. Cush said he seconds whatever decision I make because he trusts me. "So what do

you say?" "We can agree on something" He narrowed his eyes "what?" "We can both be owners of the carwash" when I say both, Cush is also included "What do you mean?" "Fifty fifty kind of business " he chuckled "But you don't have any money" "You don't know my pocket" he kept quiet, after sometime then spoke "Fine! We have a deal" I smiled "It was nice doing business with you, you know where to find me to discuss the whole thing" I stood up and left before he said a word, I was to meet Shasha my friend from park station so I had to leave. . .

NOMSA . I was literally shaking even the guy next to me kept stealing glances at me. I had hugged my bag so tight during the whole trip, I didn't agree on this thing of leaving my bag at the back of the taxi, I don't trust anyone, they could steal the bag and all the money is in it. The taxi had just arrived at the parking lot of Johannesburg, I'm finally here. We got of the taxi and was astonished to how it looked, it was full actually beyond the name full. It was noisy, people were all over I didn't know where to go. I stood a bit far by the wall trying to process this event. Where will I go now that I'm finally here. I looked around and I saw a guy making his way to me with a trolley, I immediately got scared and attempted to run but he stopped me "Wait! I just want to help" I stood still and waited for him with my heart beating out of my chest "relax will you" he said after getting closer "I just want to help you, I help around carrying people's baggage , you may put you bag inside where

you going?" He sounded sincere, he was struggling with his english. I shrugged my shoulders. "What does that mean?" "I have no where to go" I don't know why I'd say that to a complete stranger but I did. "Uphuma emaplazini?(you from the rurals)" he asked. I nodded "Yhoo!" He exclaimed and his phone rang he answered "Zozo!...sho...ngiyazwakala (I'm coming)" he looked at me "I don't know if you can trust me, but come with me, I have to talk to a friend then ngizobona ngiphuma kanjani ngawe (I'll see what to do with you)" shoot me if I'm a fool for trusting him, but I went along and followed him without a word...

SHEROE 10 ____ I waited a distance away from them. They seemed to be enjoying their conversation. Shasha, that's who he said he is. He seems like a very good guy I don't think he'd harm me in any way. I saw them looking at me, I'm very sure they were talking about me because they made their way to me. His friend had his eyes fixed on me, which was making me nervous "Hi" the friend said "Hello" "UZola igama (my name is Zola)" "Nomsa" he nodded "Uze kubani ngapha? (Who did you come to)" Shasha must have told him everything I told him I shrugged my shoulders "angazi muntu (I don't know anyone)" "Manje uzofunani ?(now what do you want)" his voice was very intimidating "Umsebenzi (a job)" he kept quiet for a while not moving his eyes from me "Mhlampe khona lokhu ongasiza ngakho (maybe there's something you can help with)" I smiled "Ngingakujabulela lokho (that'd make me happy)" "Since ungenandawo yokuhlala uzohlala naye (Since you don't have a place to stay you'll stay with him)" Shasha said, I didn't expect this, why not him "Yebo ngoba uShasha uhlala nomndeni wakhe ngeke ukwazi ukuhlala naye(Yes since he lives with his family you can't stay with him)" Zola added. I sighed, I'm gonna have to trust him, I just hope he won't try anything funny with me "Kulungile (it's fine)" he helped me with the bag after bidding goodbye to his friends and off we went... . . . _SAM_ .

Preparing parties can be very exhausted but fun at the same time. We had spoken with Swazi's granddad and he allowed us

to organize the party, it wasn't something huge but it was very beautiful, we are good at this designing thing. We thought it was best we start organizing on a Friday so that tomorrow we may have less to do. Swazi is out with Pam , they'll come back tomorrow, Pam cooked up a very good story and Swazi went along. "I'm so tired" that was Bloom "Makes the two of us" we had asked a few girls from around to help out with the decorations "But for a short notice, we've already done a lot" "You're right. Swazi's going to be so happy" I smiled "I can already see the tears in her eyes" we saw the granddad walking out to our direction "Girls" "Khulu (granddad)" "I just spoke to Swazi's brother" "End?" "He said he can't make it, he has business to take care off" oh that's a bummer I was eager to meet the brother "but he'll send the money to buy a present for her on his name" "It's okay, though we were looking forward to meeting him" I confessed, Swazi is very fond of him, she always tells us about him. "I guess next time" we nodded and he left "I wonder who's this brother we've never met" Bloom said "Me too" _ZOLA_ . Everything is coming together for me, my dreams are slowly but surely reaching the green light. I looked at this girl, she looked a bit scared at first but now she was relaxed. I don't understand why a timid girl like her would come to Joburg alone without knowing anyone, this is a big city and very dangerous for young girls it's nothing close to safe. If it wasn't for Shasha who resorted to helping

her, who knows where she would be right now, she definitely needs to thank her God for protecting her and leading her to the right people. "Ulishiyeleni ikhaya lakho? (Why did you leave home)" I asked, I had to. She was sitting on the couch while I was on the bed. "I... a lot of things were happening, I had to leave" I didn't think she knew how to speak English, I thought she was one of those farm Julia, well she is or at least her appearance is. "What things?" she eyed me, I guess I shouldn't have asked. I cleared my throat "maybe I can just cook, are you hungry?" "Yes I am, I'll help." "No it's fi..." "I insist" she said already on her feet. I guess I'll just let her be... As we cooked I got to know more about her, she's a very interesting girl and very intelligent. It's a pity she has no one in this world, except for the father she never met that's if he's still alive. She mentioned that the reason she's here is because everything there keeps reminding her of her grandmother, it must have been hard for her... "So you said you were gonna help me with a job" we were now eating, she did a lot of cooking

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I just helped here and there, I must say she's good the food is delicious, she'd fit perfectly at the chisa nyama "Yes, uhm I have a chisa nyama, what do you think of being our chef?" "Like in the kitchen?" Her eyes instantly glowed. I nodded "Wow! I'd love that, I mean that'll be amazing" she got up and came to

hug me, forgetting that I had a plate of food with me "oh I'm sorry" she said returning to the couch, I chuckled. "You can start tomorrow at twelve pm" "Thank you so much Zola awazi ungiseze kangakanani (You have no idea how much you've helped me)" "Are those tears I'm seeing?" She can't be crying on me. They slowly streamed down, I put away my plate and went to embrace her, all my life I've never met such a genuine girl. "Shhh it's okay"... . . . _NARRATED_ . Busi had just arrived at Nomsa's place, she signaled for the guys to wait outside while she attends to Nomsa. She went and knocked but there was no response, she tried to push the door and that's when she saw a big chain that was used to lock the door. She held it and it was indeed locked "damn it! Where could she be" she took out her phone and called Zandy "Mnax!?" "Akekho lo (she's not here)" she said "What do you mean?" "She is not here, the door is locked from the outside!" She said in frustration. On the other side Zandy got angry "Yerrr this girl wants to send me to an early grave, where could she be, she doesn't have any friends" "I don't know, what I know is the clients are waiting" "Eish! This is not good. Just make up a story then go around and ask maybe someone might have seen her" "Eish okay" she went to them while cooking up a story "Manje?(and then)" one of the three asked "I... uhm well thing is she's not around at the moment, but she'll be back before you know it" their facial expression immediately changed "What are you telling us, that

we came here for nothing!?" He roared scaring her "I'm truly sorry, she had forgotten to let me know that she'll get back a bit late" she lied "Do we look like fools to you? Huh?" They didn't wait for her "let's leave!" They clicked their tongues and left her there all shaken... . . . _RICH_ . So my wife never came back after that minor accident, she said she had a few errands to run at the boutique and I was left to eat all alone. I had just finished preparing myself to meet Wyatt , we have an auction to attend, Sam got in looking half dead she threw herself on the couch and groaned. "What's that all about, where have you been?" "Please don't even ask, I need a full body massage, infact." She sat up and gave me those puppy eyes, I shook my head "Please daddy..." "Fine quickly go freshen up , I'll drive you to the beauty whatever you call it, before I get late" she ran to hug me then ran upstairs. I work as hard as I can just so my children get everything they want... . . . _BUSI_ . I walked around asking about Nomsa and most people don't know her, those who do said they hadn't seen her, this searching was becoming very frustrating. I sat on the rock just outside her home, when Mageza passed by eating a bunnychow "awu ntombenhle (beautiful girl)" he's one of those typical Zulu taxi drivers who thinks stands a chance to date a lady like me. I just looked at him without a word "uhleleleni lapho ntombenhle umkhozi wakho engekho ?(Why are you sitting there when your friend is not around)" "Usho ukuthini?(What do you mean)" "Uye eGoli,

sikhuluma nje uphefumula umoya wakhona (she went to Joburg, as we speak she's breathing Joburg air)" what the... This is news to me...

SHEROE 11 ____ Zola introduced me to his partner Cush and also the landlady, Mam'Mavi. She was so happy to meet me to a point where we even sat together with her telling almost everything about her childhood. I was amazed to find out that she used to be a lesbian on her teen years and that's the reason she doesn't have any child but as she grew older she slowly changed. She said that she doesn't think she was born like that it was just a stage for that's the reason at a later stage she became straight. She started dating guys at her late thirties, when she got married to her late husband she could no longer fall pregnant due to age. She's a very good person, after my grandmother she's the most kind woman I've ever met. "Manje faka icarrot(now add the carrot)" we had been cooking , she was teaching me how to do salads after mentioning that most people love food with salads. She said she was going to teach me all the dishes then she'll step back from the kitchen so I do my job after all I'll be getting paid for it. "How's everything, uyafunda?(are you learning)" Zola got in. "She's a very fast learner" "I'm glad" "UCush uthe bewucabanga ukuyobona umndeni wakho ,kwenzekeni?(Cush said that you were thinking of going to see your family, what happened)" she asked "I can't anymore, chisa nyama iyangidinga no Nomsa ngokunjalo(the chisa nyama needs me and so does Nomsa)" "Umm..." that was unexpected "I can't leave you all alone, you still need to adapt to this environment" he added. He's right.

"Kodwa angasala nami (she can stay with me) matter of fact I think she should move in with me, an unmarried boy and a girl can't be trusted under the same roof. He coughed "don't worry Ma , I don't have any of those intentions" is that a polite way of telling her that he doesn't want me to move out... "Hmm ok" she said like she was suspecting something, as for me, I don't mind moving in with her... . . . _ZANDY_ . Busi came in dragging her feet, she looked extremely exhausted, I looked at her. "Did you find her?" She threw herself on the bed and covered her face with her hands "I swear the day I find Nomsa I'll make her pay for making me walk" I sighed "you didn't find her?" "What pisses me off is the fact that I took along those old punks for absolutely nothing!" "Don't worry about those ones worry more about our ticket to richness." She chuckled "I shouldn't worry? Do you have any idea who tagged along?" She sat up "Don't tell me it's..." She nodded, I shot my eyes wide open "the lunatic will come after us for fooling him!" "See why I'm worried" oh no we can't have that man as an enemy... . . . _CHOCO_ . I had the lawyer draw up a contract for us to sign after all we'll be working together as shareholders, even though it's not a big business deal I still had to keep things very much professional. I had left Tembisa and just arrived at KZN I'm a co-owner of a few businesses here. If my father knew how busy my life is he wouldn't be seeing me as useless, but it's good that he knows what he knows or else the truth would lead him to

one thing that would take him straight to the grave and we don't want that. I walked in through the main door, I usually use the back door but today I wanted to experience being the client, it's good that only a few people know that I'm a co-owner of this place. I saw a girl making her way to me, I think she's new. "Hey handsome" she was in a mini skirt revealing her long legs. "What would you like to have?" She touched my shoulders with her long nails, she's well trained I must say. "What do you have?" "We have everything you want, cocktail, shots, gin, girls we just don't have juice" she said in a very seductive way with her hands slowly massaging my shoulders down to my arms. "Can you get me Zan" She whispered in my ear "I can entertain you" "No thank you, but I prefer to be entertained by Zan" she stopped, then walked away. Honestly I might enjoy changing girls like my underwear but my employees are a no go area, I don't want them seeing me as their friend or worse boyfriend. The only employee I spend my special time with when I'm here is Zan, that girl knows her business that's why she's in charge of all the girls here. She made her way to me looking all beautiful as always "Look who's here, Mr Choco himself" she gave me that smile that melts my heart "In the flesh your highness" I bowed, she chuckled "You'll never change" she took a sit "What's with you and sitting here? Are you a client or a co-owner?" She narrowed her eyes I smiled "for tonight I'm a client and I want you" I licked my lips,

she smirked and stood up "You know where to find me" I quickly got up and went after her... . . _NOMSA_ . "Can I ask you something?" I asked. I was with Zola, Mam'Mavi was helping Cush outside and I still had a few pots to take care off... "Sure thing" he said while adding salt to the beef stew. "Why don't you want me to move in here" he cleared his throat "I never said that" "Not in so many words but you did." He closed the pot and looked at me "Do you want to move in with her? I mean you only knew her today" "And I only knew you yesterday" He sighed "Look Nono..." My heart melted at that, he just called me by the name my grandmother used to call me "I know that we don't know each other that well, but when I met you I took full responsibility of taking care of you since you have no one" "I..." "I'm not forcing you Nono, you can live wherever you want to. It's your choice after all." He said the last part with a low voice. I instantly felt ungrateful "Forgive me for sounding ungrateful. I... I don't want to leave" he looked deeply in my eyes "You don't have to do me any favours, I'll respect whatever decision you take" " I want to stay with you Zola, I don't want to leave" he smiled and came to hug me "You'll always be safe with me, and I'll take care of you" he whispered. My head was resting in his chest

listening to his heartbeat, before we got disturbed by someone clearing their throat. "Hade, kodwa sidinga amasalad (sorry but we need the salads)" Cush said with a creepy smile. "Oh yea

askies (sorry)" I quickly prepared the dishes and took them out... . . . _RICH_ . "Sir someone is here to see you" my PA said, I didn't even bother looking at her, I had a lot of work to do, running a construction company is not a child's play "I'm busy" my eyes were locked on the computer screen "She said she won't go until she sees you" "Is it my wife?" "No sir, I've never seen the lady" I don't have time for this honestly "Doesn't she have a name?" "She didn't give me one but one thing I'm certain of, is she's very beautiful." I finally moved my eyes "Who could it be?" She shrugged her shoulders "send her in" she nodded and walked out. Who could it be, who's this woman who doesn't know what an appointment is. I heard heels clicking from afar until she made her way in. This I didn't expect, she looked so different in a very beautiful way, she looked grown than the last time I saw her. Her outfit hugged her chubby body perfectly. Her smile, when was the last time I saw it... "Stop drooling" her voice as husky***as it ever sounded, I couldn't help it, I took off my spectacles maybe they are showing me things that don't exist. But where was she all this time?... . . . _CHOCO_ . Being around Zan always makes me feel different, whatever hold she has on me is really overworking. I'm well known for not wishing to be in a stable relationship but what no one knows is there's actually someone who unknowingly owns my heart and that person is Zan. I'm sure if she was to know how my heart feels about her she

would be using that as her advantage. One of the reasons I like her this much is that she's not into me like the rest of the girls, she just treats me like any other random guy. She doesn't work hard to impress me and she's never tried to name tag whatever there is between us. We were both in the office after our session. She didn't look like her usual self "What's up with you?" She looked at me "Nothing why?" "I know you Zan, what's eating you up?" She sighed and balanced her face with her hand "I messed up" "In what way?" "I got myself the worst enemy out there" I frowned "care to explain?" "It wasn't my intention but..." She sighed "I mistakenly fooled someone" "Who?" "Chains" I looked at her "Why would you mess with him?" "I didn't mean to" "But it's done, and you know him he won't let whatever it is you did to him go" "Don't remind me okay." She covered her face with her hands "Leave it to me, I'll deal with it" She shook her head "Don't get involved, I can handle him" "By sleeping with him?" "How I deal with him is not your business Choco" I clenched, I hate the sound of this "listen..." "No! You listen, I will deal with this on my own, I don't want you doing anything because it has nothing to do with you" "Dammit Zandy!" I hit the table so hard that she slightly jumped "let me handle it" my voice was now calmer. She didn't say anything but instead she rose up and walked out. She's very stubborn, the route she wants to take won't do her any well. I know Chains and I know how crazy and dangerous he can be,

but he's nothing I can't handle. The last thing I need is Zan thinking she can solve this by submitting to him... . . . _RICH_ . She made her way to the chair across me putting her bag on the table. "You haven't said a word since I got here, I knew that my presence here would shock you, but not this much." I cleared my throat "I... you look beautiful" she blushed "Thank you" "Uhm..." I wiped my face with my hand "where have you been all this time?" She chuckled "aren't you gonna ask me how I've been doing?" "By the look of it you are perfectly well" "You're right. I've never been better. To answer your question, I've been around." I chuckled "I don't believe that, you would've told me" "But I chose not to" "Why?" She sighed "look, I didn't come here to answer those questions, but best believe I'll organise a day for you to ask anything. Today I'm here just for business, as the only construction company I know I thought it would be better to work with you" I chuckled while shaking my head, something is going on, there's something she's not telling me... . . . _SAM_ . Everything was now ready we were just waiting for miss party to arrive. She had been with Pam all along as we were preparing, we called Pam earlier to find out how they had been and she said that our miss party was very sad that we were not spending this day with her, what she doesn't know is we've prepared something bigger. I called Pam "Girl" she whispered "Where are you?" "Don't worry we'll be there in a few minutes, she went to buy some snacks"

"Come on , we have all the snacks here" "She doesn't know that" "Right. Get here already!" I ended the call and Bloom walked up to me "Where are they?" They're coming She rolled her eyes "I might just cut a peace of cake. I laughed. Pam sent a text saying they at the corner. I quickly signalled to everyone to keep quiet. We don't wanna ruin the surprise. We heard the gate open and everyone positioned themselves. "It's awfully quiet" she said. The front door opened "SURPRISE!!" Before it rang to her mind she screamed with all her eyes out. She had her hand on her chest. Tears immediately gushed out, she hid her face with her hands. Most of us couldn't help it, we cried along with her. She ran to hug her grandfather, every moment was just too emotional...

12 _____ FEW DAYS LATER... I've never thought God would bless me so much after everything that happened to me. I thought my life was over when Zandy took advantage of me, but today here I am, I'm very happy and comfortable with Zola. He treats me so good, no scratch that, he treats me like an egg. He protects me from everything and everyone. There's this old guy called Sballi, he owns a tavern just opposite our chisa nyama. The guy always flirts with me whenever he comes to buy food, sometimes he even pays for mine too. Zola doesn't like it when he flirts with me, he is always over protective, he usually says "you're still young to date, more especially this old man." He says that he doesn't want any guy around me, makes me wonder if he has feeli... nah let me not think of it. Mam'Mavi has been insisting a lot lately that I go stay with her but even in this case, Zola doesn't want to give in. He keeps saying that he has gotten used to staying with me, that ever since I moved in it feels like home and he has been so happy with me, he can't let me move out... He hasn't gone to see his family, but he does talk about them, more especially his younger sister, he says her personality is more or less like his and that she and his grandfather they're very supportive. I would really like to meet them some day... . . . _ZANDY_ . I haven't had a good sleep since a few days back, all I keep doing is watch over my back. I don't know why but Chains hasn't attacked, that man has a very lose scruff, he's capable of killing us just because of a minor thing

we did. This silence from him makes me wonder why he hasn't attacked yet. I haven't seen nor spoken to Choco since our disagreement, he insists on calling me but I just ignore his calls. He is very stubborn more especially if you don't make things clear to him, I hope ignoring him will send the message very clear to him that I don't want him getting involved. Here's a thing with Choco, he's not dangerous but he's friends with some gangsters and he has money , and we all know that with money one can do anything. If he gets involved he might put not only his life in danger but his friends, I don't know how dangerous they are since I've never met them but what I know is Chains is capable of anything. "Yho no man this is just not healthy" Busi said after taking a sit. She's been here since morning with baby Blue. "Tell me about it. Awubuke nje umuntu useyawonda (look I'm even losing weight) just because of sleepless nights." "Mnax, what if Chains is busy worried about other 'important' things than us. What if we are just being naive, what if he didn't even take what we did serious and here we are thinking the worst" I thought about what she said, she could be right maybe we are looking too much into things... I chuckled "Yazi uqinisile(you know you are right), maybe he even forgot we exist since he hasn't showed up at the motel" "Uyabona ke (you see)" she laughed "now I can relax. Besengisaba nokuya emall ukuyokwenza ishopping (I was scared of going to the mall to do some shopping)" I sighed

"makes the two of us, infact let's go" I went to fetch my sling bag and off we went to the mall. How I had missed this normal life... We bought all kinds of dresses, heels and as for Blue , Busi bought cute baby kicks and a few clothes. It was just a long shopping spree, we didn't have enough time to eat out so we took takeaways... "This is heavy" she said while fixing Blue on her back, she hates having to carry her on her back but she has no choice because she was fast asleep, shopping must have overwhelmed her, we had called a taxi to fetch us. "You'll have to be strong, who said you should go and make a baby " she looked at me the clicked her tongue. A taxi made it's way to us I believe it's the one we called... "Waze wathatha iskhathi sakho (you sure took your time)" he didn't say anything, we got in and closed the door and the doors suddenly locked, mxm too much drama if you ask me, I looked at him through the review mirror and our eyes met

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he looked very cold and intimidating. He took a road we don't usually use but I didn't pay much attention to it, it's probably another route to our destiny, you know blacks with short cuts.. . . _RICH_ . "So what do you think?" She looked at it for a while then looked at the architect "I like it" she said. Finally we can proceed. Ever since Smangele showed up she hasn't been making my job easy, I don't know how many designs the

architect brought to her but she kept declining his ideas. As for me I find it very hard to work with her, besides from her beauty and maturity, I'm still curious about where she's been all this time. She hasn't given me any explanation about how things ended between us and whenever I ask she reminds me of professionalism and how it's unethical of me to ask that.

"Good. Now let me go do the final touch-ups" he said and left "Finally" I said, she chuckled "I had to make sure that everything is perfect" "All the designs were perfect Sma" "I disagree" I sighed, she's changed, she's completely different from how she used to be. "I still can't believe you want to build a school, I mean..." I shrugged my shoulders "You wonder where I got all the money?" I nodded, she chuckled. "It's still too soon for you to know" "Wow ok. But a whole school, it's a very big project" "And you think I'm incapable?" "I didn't say that" "Not in so many words" "When are we going to talk?" She looked at me like I've said something absurd "aren't we talking?" "Sma you know what I mean" "Listen Rich, I don't know what you'd like us to talk about. But if this will get you out of your curiosity then here it goes, I was threatened and paid a lot of money to leave you." "What! So you... no, is this the money you..." she nodded "I'm using it to build the school" I brushed my face with my hand, who would do this? "Is it that much?" She nodded "Who paid you?" She sat across me "I can't tell, yet... but sooner or later you'll find out." With that being

said she got up and walked out leaving me with a lot of unanswered questions. Who could it be? . . . _SAM_ . Varsity life can be very exhausting I mean I sometimes don't understand why I have to go to school when my father has all the money, I mean he gives me absolutely everything that I want and surely when he dies I'll inherit everything that is his , together with my brother obviously but there's no doubt that I'll inherit a major part than my brother since he's a prodigal son. I ran downstairs. I'll be meeting the girls, I'd rather be with them than to do my school work. "Nomasonto!" Silence... this woman...

"Nomasonto!" Where does this maid think she is, this is not her grandmother's house. "Nomasonto!" I screamed, she showed up dragging her feet... "do you still want this job?" I asked while folding my arms "Ngingakunceda ngani Samantha ?(how may I help you)" "Where were you?" "Kitchen" she said with an attitude "From the kitchen didn't you hear me calling your name?" She kept quiet "change your attitude or you might have to change your job" I clicked my tongue and walked away. I'm so not fond of this woman , she always sticks her nose on other people's business and doesn't do her job well , she thinks she's family here whereas she's just a maid... . A few minutes later I arrived at the restaurant and the girls had already arrived.

"You're late!" Bloom shouted, trust her to do that "I had a maid to deal with" she rolled her eyes "That one" "Y'all guys should let Sonto be" Swazi exclaimed "Oh come on. That woman acts

like the next Mrs Mbewu" Bloom added "Imagine" we laughed. I looked at Pam, it's unlike her to be this quiet. "Pam are you okay?" She sighed "I really don't know" "What do you mean?" Swazi asked "I've been feeling some type away, I don't know..." it's only now that I noticed that she looks like a mess "I keep getting nauseous, I vomit every now and then, and my appetite..." she sighed. She had tears in her eyes, Pam's worst fear is to be sick. "Did you consult the Doc?" She shook her head "then you should" "No! You know I don't like pills, worse injections" Swazi went to hug her "it's going to be okay baby, you know we'll always be here" with that being said, tears welled up breaking our hearts... . . _ZANDY_ . I don't know what happened but the route we were taking was definitely not taking us home. "Sorry bhuti ingathi uyalahleka (brother seems like you're getting lost)" he didn't say anything " excuse me" I tapped his shoulder, with his free hand he grabbed my tiny wrist, I screamed. I turned to Busi and she was long gone with her head resting on Blue, how can she fall asleep at a moment like this... "ngiyeke! (let me go!)" He quickly stopped the car on the empty side of the road, I almost bumped my head on the window screen. I don't know where he got the gun from but it was pointed on my face "wha...what do you want? Uwubani? (who are you)" he signalled for me to keep quiet. "Phuma!(out)" I quickly got out while trembling, who is he? He led me to the back of the car where he took out a long robe and

a tape. He used it to cover my mouth and a robe to tie my hands and feet then he carried me inside the trunk while kicking and screaming. I thought we were safe , could it be that this is Chains' doing? He looked at me then smirked, a loud bang followed and darkness filled the space , he left me in here trembling with fear...

13 ____ "Scela ipapa nesbindi, usheshe silambile. (Can we have pap and livers and hurry we're hungry)" she didn't wait for the response, instead she swung around and went to sit with a group of guys. Women like her are the ones that make this job very hard for me. They always see me as inferior than them, I don't really have a problem with that because the reality is that they look a lot much better than me so I take in anything they say to me. Today it had been very busy to a point that we haven't had lunch, I'm glad I'm no longer working alone Cush brought some girl, Lara to help us since it gets full and busy on weekends. She's a very nice girl always happy and bubbly. "Yoh nikhathele (I'm tired)" she's from Zimbabwe, hence her Zulu is very off. She threw away the used containers. "Girl tell me about it. Angisiboni iskhathi sokufika endlini (I can't wait to get home)" She looked at me and smiled "Kumunandi? (Is it nice)" I frowned "Ini?(what)" She shrugged her shoulders "nisho kuhlala noZola (to live with Zola)" I smiled "Yeah kumnandi kakhulu (it's very nice)" "Hmm I saw that" I blushed "what?" "That smile. You like him" "Shhh..." I looked around to make sure no one hears us "not so loud" "So I'm right. You do like him" she slightly hit me with a cloth, I hate the fact that she's right. "Do you think the feeling is mutual?" I sighed "I don't know, sometimes he treats me with so much care like a sister, but sometimes he... he... I don't know" she had her eyes on me "You're inlove my friend" I looked at her "no" I hid my face with

my hands. I was brought back by someone shouting "Yey!!! Sisters sithe silambile, ngeke ngizolinda ubab'wezingane zami owaduka bese ngilinda nawe (we said we're hungry, I can't be waiting for the long lost father of my children and still wait for you)" o-kay that was so unnecessary "Kuyeza ukudla! (the food is coming)" "Hurry keh sisi or else azohamba ama customer (the customers will leave)" "Asisebenze (let's work)" Lara went her way and I took care of that woman's order... . . _RICH_ . "Sorry man for keeping you waiting" he took a sit. After that meeting with Sma I immediately called Wyatt to join me at our usual restaurant, it is said that two heads are better than one and right now I really need someone to help me break and see through what she said. "It's cool man, I also just got here" "Here's your drink sir, uhm can I get you anything?" The waitress asked "Whatever he's having" "Coming right up" she walked away. I held my head in frustration "What's going on man, you sounded a bit disturbed" "I..." I sighed "it's Smangele" his eyes shot out "As in Sma?" I nodded "wow , where has she been, I mean when..." "That was me when I saw her" I sipped on my drink "You saw her?" "Worse, we work together" "Here's your drink sir" the waitress said "anything else?" "That'd be all for now , thank you." She nodded and walked away. "What do you mean ?" "She wants to build a school and well since I run a construction company..." I shrugged "Wow a whole school! Wait where did she get the money?" "That's exactly the reason

we're having this talk " "I'm not following?" "She said that someone paid her a lot of money to leave and stay away from me" "What!?" He roared in shock "that means it's a lot of money" "Exactly, must be someone wealthy. Question is WHO?" He gulped down his drink "This means two things. It's either someone doesn't want to see you with her. Or someone doesn't want to see her with a man. But, considering your history with your mistresses, I think it's someone from your side." Just what I needed, someone to help me think.

"Remember the last time when we spoke about this " I glanced at him "man you can't be serious" "I'm dead serious man I still think it's your wife" I chuckled "Nah. where would she get so much money besides my wife is a saint bruh." "If she had someone very close to her I'd say it's that someone trying to protect her from finding out but she has no one except for you and your children

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but again you may be right where would she get that kind of money" I chuckled "nah" I shook my head, he's wrong it's definitely not her... . . _NARRATED_ . "Look we can still get on without anyone noticing or finding out anything" she shook her head "Look Bruno we meet a lot lately, we should take a break you know, from seeing each other" He brushed his head in frustration then quickly pulled himself together, he held her

cheeks "I've fallen hard for you and honestly speaking, I can no longer stand seeing you together or even hearing him talk about you" She sighed "I told you from the start Bruno this is nothing but fun. You weren't supposed to catch any feelings" "Well too bad I'm crazy about you" he grabbed her by the waist then devoured her in a wet kiss, she couldn't even pull back... . . .

CHOCO . Today I decided to visit home for a change, I was with Sonto in the kitchen, she has been telling me about Sam's behaviour, seems like it's getting worse each day. Sam has always been a spoilt brat I don't know why she can't get used to her. Sonto started working here when we were still very young , she literally has always been there for us... "Yoh I tell you Ngelo" she calls me Ngelo which is short for Lungelo, she's the only woman who calls me that and I must say I really like it especially hearing it from her it sounds somehow different.

"Your sister will lead me to an early grave." I laughed "Now you being dramatic, come on" "No! You know sometimes I try being patient with her but she always makes it hard for me. Really it's not easy to deal with her" I looked at her, see Sonto's skin tone is very light and when she gets angry or sad she just looks cute even at her age. "Look try to ignore her, you know how spoilt my sister is. Just let her be and do your part" She sighed "here" she gave me a sandwich. "Thanks" "You know your sister can't be ignored" I chuckled "true" "So I will..." "Hey" She said as she got in. "Hey Peaches what's up?" "I'm good just tired.

Nomasonto give me a glass of juice." Sonto looked at me then shook her head before walking to the refrigerator. "What did we do to deserve your special visit?" I chuckled "Can't I come see my fam anymore?" "You abandoned us" "Such exaggeration" She looked at Sonto "Hurry I'm thirsty" "She's on it Sam" "Please dont even try to interfere" I kept quiet before we start an argument "My friend is not feeling well and worse she doesn't want to see the doctor" she changed the topic "What's wrong with her?" She shrugged "she gets nauseous, vomits , faints , and we all have no idea what could be the matter" Sonto put the juice on the table then spoke "That means one thing your friend is..." before she could finish Sam hit the table "See! This is exactly what I hate about you, who asked you for an opinion? Huh? You're always sticking your nose into people's affairs man! Yeses!" She stood up and walked away then stopped along the way "When you done talking to her you know where to find me" she went up the stairway. I looked at Sonto and her eyes were glossy, ever since I knew Sonto this is the first time I see her this broken. "Sonto please don't cry on me, you know I'm not good with this kind of a scene" "I can't, I'm tired why is she doing this to me!" She said between her tears , I got up and embraced her in a hug, her cries got even louder. What do I do, this is the worst moment for me...

14 _____ "That was definitely uncalled for!" I groaned after banging her bedroom door, she jumped in shock. "What the! No man since when you don't knock when you get here Choco?" "Don't ask me that. Ibizwani lento oyenzile ezansi? (What do you call what you did downstairs)" She rolled her eyes "I told you to stay away" "I'm not gonna stay away, awunanhlonipho wena(you're disrespectful) Samantha and it's about time someone tells you. Ngeke sizwe ngawe thina (we won't be controlled by you) you act like some spoilt brat! When are you going to grow up huh? And start treating people like human, you are no different from them. Is it so hard for you to love them?" She chuckled while shaking her head "love! That's too rich coming from you" She said sarcastically "You want us to talk about love hmm? Let's start with you, whom have you ever loved?" She folded her arms. "This is not about me." "See you can't even answer that simple question, don't come here talking about love" I sighed "look Sam" I went to sit at the edge of the bed "I just want you to change your attitude towards Sonto" She chuckled "Why! Why is it important to you?" "It's not that. She's trying can't you see, she understands that she's just a helper here but you don't have to remind her every chance you get. Please change your way of treating her, be patient with her, do it for me" She sighed "fine!" I smiled "but..." "I knew there'd be a but" "But she should stay on her lane and do her job" "Done" "I'm also mad at you for calling me

a spoilt brat" "Ohh come on little brat" I teased her "I'm serious Choco , I don't like being called that" "Fine my Peaches " she blushed as I pulled her for a hug... . . _ZANDY_ . "Well, well, well..." he said walking in. I knew it was him. My leg was chained to the mattress, I would jump on him and throw punches. I tried to free myself but I failed "Uzama ukwenzani ntombenhle ?(What are you trying to do beautiful lady)". I tried to speak but I couldn't since my lips were sealed. "Yazi ngangicabanga ukuthi kuyobanzima ukunithola (You know I thought it was going to be hard to find you)" he walked up to me with both his hands on the pockets. Chains is a complete turn off just by looking at him you don't think twice of having him as a partner. He has a huge belly and the shirts he wears are not long enough to hide the belly. "Awusho ntombenhle nanithi niyophelelaphi? (Tell me beautiful lady, where did y'all think will end up)" he chuckled. Then came to tear the tape off my mouth, I groaned in pain. "Usungakhuluma ke manje (now you may talk)" "Ukephi uBusi nengane? (Where's Busi and the baby)" "Loyo makhalane ungazikhathazi ngaye. (That cry baby don't worry about her)" he pulled the chair and sat in front of me. "Ingane yona iphi? (Where's the baby)" He smirked "khohlwa ingane (forget the baby)" his facial expression instantly became firm "Yini ndaba ningenze islima? (Why did you make me a fool)" "Asi... (we didn...)" I felt a sting on the right side of my face. He had given me one hot slap. "Phinda

futhi (Try again)" by now I was shaking, this guy is a complete lunatic and if I dare lie to him I might just end up dead... . .

ZOLA . Business has been prospering. I can't even help the joy that I feel, just yesterday I was a trolley guy and look at me now a business man and a partner of a successful guy. I had been asking and investigating about Choco and well the feedback I got from Sballi is very impressive, seems like this Choco guy has been in this business world for some time now, I'm glad he and I crossed paths. I was on the call with him. "I'm glad you have everything under control, now tell me when can the business start running?" He asked "All the equipments are ready and I have two more guys who are willing to work with us" "That's good, very good" "Yea so , I think it's better if we start on Monday after preparing everything " "Okay man do that, call me if you need anything " "I got it" "Fede mjita (Good man) it's nice working with you " "Sure ndoda(man)" I ended the call with the smile on my face. "Who's making you smile like that?" I raised my eyes to be met by Nomsa. She and I still live together , I don't want her to move out, I enjoy her company more than anything. "Business" "Oww" she said bluntly "Are you okay?" She seemed down "Yea why are you asking?" I shrugged my shoulders "you look off, is it that time of the month?" She nodded, I know how girls get when it's that time, my sis used to be on her worst... "ohh I'm sorry, do you want me to get you anything? Chocolate, sweets anything?" Like I

said I know all this because of my lil sis... She smiled "no it's okay all my life I dealt with this in a natural way, I never had anyone buy me chocolates" "In that case , accept a massage." She blushed and sat on the bed "Fine" "I hope your legs are clean" I teased her and she laughed. She's the best, now I literally have two younger sisters I'd die for... . . _RICH_ . After meeting with Wyatt I came straight home with a whole bunch of unanswered questions. His accusations are serious, I mean how can he accuse someone like my wife

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is it jealousy? What if he's jealous, she's everything a man would wish to have in a woman and his wife is practically different from her. What if he wants her? Nah he wouldn't I mean he and I come a long way and he knows how much I sweated to have her as my wife. But why, why would he accuse her like that? I looked at the time , it was already getting late and MaMbewu has not yet arrived. As I was about to call her, the door opened and she froze before walking in. She looked rather exhausted, must have been work. "Mbewu" she said in a low voice "Mama wezingane zami (mother of my children)" she sat on the bed. I got up from the couch and went to join her. "You got home late today" "I'm sorry, I had a lot of loose ends to take care of at work" I nodded "how was your day?" I cleared my throat at the thought of this Sma situation. My wife doesn't

know about Sma, yes she knew about my cheating tendencies but I believe she didn't know the women I used to cheat with... "I was with Wyatt..." She rolled her eyes, ever since that day I told her what Wyatt thinks of her , her opinion, her attitude towards him has changed. "What did he want this time around?" "We are friends My Love and you know we'll always meet every now and then" She sighed "I know, but I don't like him. I mean how can he accuse me of such evilness? Does he hate me so much? What did I do to him for him to hate me like this?" Tears fell from her eyes, I got closer to comfort her, see when I say my wife is an angel , she's just too sensitive... "Shh it's okay, we spoke about this. Forget it now" She sniffed "I need to shower" she broke the hug and stood up "Let me join you" "No!" She cleared her throat "I mean I'd like to soak in first" "Oh okay, I'll go get a glass of water" I watched her walk away, she somehow had a funny walk or maybe it's just me. Argh let me go get the water... . . _CHOCO_ . I was back in my apartment. Sometimes life is really boring when you live alone , this is one of the reasons I went to check up on my fam, too bad I didn't see all of them. It's times like this when I wish I was in a stable relationship, not that I want to be in one but it would be nice to have someone over to cook for me, watch movies, play games , chat and more, but that only happens in movies right... I took out my phone and dialed Zan's number, even though the last time we spoke our conversation didn't end well

that doesn't mean I'll stop feeling what I feel for her. The call wasn't going through, I tried again and again but still it was sending me straight to voicemail. Could it be that she's still mad at me for trying to help her? "Hey Zan. I know you still don't want to talk to me, look I'm sorry ok, I miss talking to you, I miss hearing your laughter. I miss being with you. Please forgive me, I promise to stay in my lane and let you do you. Please call me when you get this. I lo... uhm bye" I dropped the call. Am I becoming soft, am I falling in love, what is this I feel for her I mean all Choco does is smash and pass now what's going on... .

. _WYATT_ . "Bruno you should stay away from her. I can't keep this secret anymore" I said. He had come to drop off some of my documents. "Why not?" "You know Rich is my friend and not just a friend but my closest friend" "Oh and where does that put me" "Come on man stop sounding like a jealous girlfriend" He chuckled and shook his head "I love her" my eyes shot wide open "You can't love her, damn! She's married for heaven sake and to my friend, our friend!" "I can't help it okay? I didn't bring this on my self" "Of course you did. From the very first day when you flirted with her. Listen man you either stay away from her or Rich will have to know about this" He shook his head and chuckled "wow! So much for being a friend and a brother" he walked away to his car... sigh

15 ____ Pam was lying flat on her bed feeling weak, she still hadn't consulted a doctor or anything. The nausea ,fatigue it was just getting worse and she had no one to cry to , except her older sister who only goes home once a week due to work. Her parents are currently out of the country so she's practically alone. Tears streamed down as she ran to the bathroom to throw up, just then she heard someone calling her name and it was her only sister Enzo. She quickly rinsed her mouth and ran out to hug her for dear life... "Oh God what's wrong Pam , what's going on with you? You look like a mess!" She said completely surprised to see her sister like that "I feel like a mess" she added with tears falling. "What happened? Come" she led her to the couch "I don't know, I fell in love" She looked at her surprised "how did that happen?" "Please don't judge me" "So the guy broke your heart and that's the reason you're this messed up?" "No I'm just, I've been feeling sick" Enzo frowned "sick?" "Yes, it all began with nausea , then I started vomiting, fatigue and now I'm supposed to be on my period but..." "NO! PAM NO!!" Pam looked at her shocked by her sudden reaction "Pam you're pregnant!" She shot her eyes wide open "No no it can't be!" She held her head "Did you do the test or have you seen a doctor?" She shook her head "I'm certain that you're pregnant, those are the symptoms. Is he the father?" She looked at her "the guy you fell for?" "I... I believe so. NO!!!" She screamed before running to her room. Enzo

could feel how broken her sister felt, this changes everything, she thought... "Everything..." She said . . . _NOMSA_ . Zola has been so good to me , now I can safely say I've developed some feelings for him or maybe it's not feelings. Well I don't know since I never had a boyfriend or even loved someone. Maybe I'm just confused or maybe I am indeed inlove. I lied when I said it was that time of the month. After seeing him smile like that on his cellphone I felt a bit of jealous, I know I shouldn't have but I couldn't help it either. "Nono" I blushed while looking at him, we were doing some spring cleaning. "Zola" "Please pass me the broom" I looked deeply at him "Thank you" he frowned "What for?" "For being there for me, ever since I got here in Joburg you've always helped me and protected me so thank you so much" He smiled "that's nothing Nono I'd do it again if I had to" I blushed "Ngiyabonga (Thank you) "It's cool" I went closer to hug him, no scratch that, I squeezed him. "Hai sekuright phela (It's enough now)" he chuckled. I broke the hug and went to fetch the broom. "I hope you know how to sweep!" He laughed "Oh come before you were even born I was sweeping" we laughed and continued doing the chores.... .

. _CHOCO_ . I've been trying Zan for a hundredth time but still nothing. It was just clear to me that Chains has finally got to her. Zan is not the type of girl who gets mad for a whole year a day or just a few hours are enough. She doesn't have time to be holding grudges for this is the reason I'm certain that Chains is

with her. "Dammit!" I hit the bed in frustration. I know Chains and what makes him very dangerous is the fact that he's a bit unhinged, he doesn't think when he does things, he doesn't care. He doesn't even care about himself. Chains is crazy I still repeat, I mean who'd get mad for what Zan and the friend did, it's not like they stole something precious or cheated him, but there he is making them pay for the minor thing they did. I need to think, I know Zan ordered for me to stay away but unfortunately I can't abide by that, she means a lot to me that I'd just let her suffer in the hands of that man... I dialed Sballi. Sballi and I became very close ever since we met, he knows everything I do in life the businesses I lead, and I also know that behind that funny face he's also a dangerous guy from Kasi. Right now he's the one I trust. "Awu ntwanas (boy)" he's always happy "Sho boy" "And now, what's up awubheli ekseni wena unless zikushubele (You don't call in the morning unless you're in trouble)" I chuckled "Nah. Angikho ejaivini kodwa imady yami (I'm not in trouble but my girlfriend is)" He busted into laughter "awume ngamahlaya ndoda uqale nini ukuba nemady khona uyaz yini imady?(stop joking man when did you start to have a girlfriend, do you even know what a girlfriend is)" I laughed, mxm "It's not official man but she's my woman" "I see you got it bad for this woman, ukuloyile lomntwana (she has bewitched you)" I laughed "quit playing man this is serious" "Ringa(talk)" "She's been kidnapped by some lunatic

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her life is in danger man azithathi kuleyandoda (that man is crazy)" He went silent for a moment, then spoke in a firm voice "give me his address and I'll pay him a visit" "No no that's not how we going to do this, we're dealing with someone who cares less about living." "Dammit!!! You know how much I hate women abuse in everyway, I swear when I lay my hands on him I'm going to kill him ngizomkhipha ub'chopho (I'll remove his brain)" oh no! I should have remembered how much he hates men who abuse women, his mother was a victim of abuse till death took her. "Look man I need you to stay calm , we need to be smart about this" He sighed "ithi ngidle amathambo engqondo ngizobuya kuwe (let me think then I'll get back to you)" he said calmly but I could still feel the rave from here. The line went dead and immediately another call came through it was an unknown. "Hello?" a female voice "Who's this?" "Uhm... it's Pam" Pam? I've never met any "I don't know any Pam but either way how can I help you?" "Wow!" O-kay does that mean I should know her... "Your sis, Sam gave me your number" and why would she do that "Carry on" "Why are you so cold with me?" "Listen Cam..." "It's Pam!" "Whatever your name is, I have a lot to deal with, you either get straight to the point or hung up" "You know what Choco, Go to hell!" "Right after you" the line died, I wonder who she is and what business she has with me... . . _ZANDY_ . Chains has been torturing me by beating me,

he's been asking question after question and whenever I give him the wrong response he sends me flying with a slap, by now I'm sure my cheeks are red and swollen. I haven't seen Busi and the baby, I don't even know if they're okay but I hope they are. "Yazi iyodwa into engichazayo (you know it's only one thing that makes me happy)" I looked at him with the continue look, "ukwazi ukuthi akekho noyedwa umuntu ozonifuna (to know that no one will look for you)" he chuckled, "niyizeqa mgwaqo ezidumile (you are well known prostitutes)" he laughed, "kushokhona ukuthi nisazoba la iskhathi eside (meaning you'll be here for a long time)" he brushed his beard, "ugogo yena mhlampe sewakukhohlwa nokuthi unjani (your grandmother probably forgot how you look)" he laughed once again, I hate him. He walked to the door and returned with some guy "mqhaqhe(untie her)" oh no I hope he's not planning on hurting me. "Woza(come)" he attempted to grab me by the hair but unfortunately the weave came off, he looked at it then back at the guy, they immediately busted into laughter, the guy laughed so hard that he even had tears. Honestly I don't find any of this funny, since when bald head has ever been a joke,mxm... "Yoh yeses" the guy exclaimed wiping his tears. "Yaz wavele waba yindoda(you know you just became a man)" Chains added and they laughed again "Boss sekuright manje yoh (It's enough now)" "Woza" he put the weave on his head then roughly grabbed me by the arm, I swear I heard my bone

move. He took me to the other room where I saw my friend laying down helplessly, her face was too bloody and it was swollen too, identifying her would be a mission. She was still breathing though but she seemed to be in a lot of pain. I sat next to her "Busi what have they done to you?" I broke down "They... they... t... Blue..." she was struggling to speak "Blue! Where is she?!" "They... they..." she wasn't making sense, she blacked out before even saying whatever she wanted to say. I panicked, I checked her pulse, I was shaking, it... it wasn't there "Busi no you can't do this to me!..." I continued checking, I refuse to believe that... that, no it can't be...

SHEROE 16 _____ "So what did he say" Enzo asked, as she walked in her bedroom. "He... he" Pam couldn't believe Choco said all those things. "Pam!" She slightly jumped snapping out of it "what did he say?" "That, that" she cleared her throat "I didn't tell him" "What!, why!?" She screamed at her. "I couldn't, he said some things, he... I just couldn't okay" "Pam he made you pregnant, he needs to know , he should take responsibility" "How Enzo, he doesn't even care about me, he doesn't want me, he just denied to knowing me, he even called me 'Cam' imagine " "All that don't matter right now, a child comes first. You can't deny the child a right to know its father because of whatever you guys have between you two. " "It all matters, a child needs to grow in a stable and loving home." Enzo sighed "don't worry about that sis , if you really want to be with the guy he'll either be with you in a good or bad way, the choice will be his" "What do you mean by that?" She asked calmly. She smirked "All in good time. For now let's focus on letting this guy know about his seed. Come you're going to show me where he lives" She slowly followed her, arguing with her sis would be useless she knows that Enzo never lets anything go until she gets to the bottom of it and reach a solution. "I don't remember his apartment" she said already in the car. "Pam how did you fall for someone you don't even remember where he lives? Was he the one always coming to see you, in our parent's house?" "No" she was embarrassed to

say it "it was a one... one" she cleared her throat "night thing" Enzo stopped the car and looked at her surprised, she couldn't believe her younger sister would be capable of such "WOW!" Tears fell from Pam "I'm sorry okay, I'm truly sorry for disappointing you." "You're wrong sis you disappointed yourself" right then she felt those words piercing through her heart "now how are we going to find him?" "His sis is my best friend, we can call her and ask for the address." "We will do no such, we're going at his home" . They drove along till they reached their destiny, Pam was shaking and praying that they don't find his parents but luck was not on her side, the mother opened the door. "Hi you may come through, it's good that you're here , your friend doesn't want to wake up" "Uhm Mrs Mbewu we're not here for Sam." She said all trembling "Oh you're not?" She was surprised and curious to know "come this side" they followed her to the lounge. "Mam before we let you know the reason we're here , I think it's best for the whole family to be here." Mrs Mbewu frowned "this sounds serious" "It is mam" "Wait is my son okay?is this about him?" She asked in total panic "Mrs Mbewu please relax it's not about him, well it has something to do with him" "What has this boy done now!?" Rich walked in, he was reading a newspaper "Uhhh..." Pam looked at her sister pleading with her eyes that she doesn't say a thing "Sonto!" Mrs Mbewu called , within seconds she walked in "Yes mam" "Please wake Sam up and tell her to

get here now" Sonto walked away. She turned to the sisters "unfortunately my son doesn't stay with us , so it's only us" They nodded waiting for Sam... . . _ZOLA_ . We've been preparing the car wash, everything is set and ready to go. I passed by the tavern to see Sbali, he's been very scarce lately , unlike him but maybe he's sick "Sho sho madoda (guys)" some guys literally can't stay away from alcohol, it's morning they're here, it's evening they're also here. "Ah Sbali kanti uzifihle la ngithi uyafa mina (You're hiding here, here I am thinking you're dying)" He chuckled "ngumafavuka mina (I'm diehard)" I laughed, he looked a bit disturbed "ugrend ndoda?(are you ok man)" "Ngimnandi fanas impilo nje(I'm good boy it's just life)" I nodded though I could feel that there's more to it but I won't pry. "Kuhle lokho keh awuthi ngijike daar e chisa nyama (that's good, let me hit the chisa nyama)" he nodded and I walked away. Whatever it is that's bothering him must be big. A call came through, I picked it up, it was my lil sis "sthandwa!(love)" she sniffed, is she crying? "Swazi yini khuluma nami?(what's wrong talk to me)" "Khulu usesbhedlela Zozo(grandpa is at the hospital) you need to get here now, I need you" I panicked "Wait what happened?" "Woza Zozo ngiyak'cela (please come)" "Ok ungasakhali (cry no more)" I ended the call and ran home, Nono will have to forgive me

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I really have to leave. I found her dressing, why didn't she lock the door "ngiyaxolisa (sorry)" I quickly closed the door. She wasted no time she told me to come in, she was wearing a long dress. "Why didn't you lock the door? Do you have any idea how dangerous this neighborhood is?" "I'm sorry I thought I had locked it" I sighed " it's okay just don't do it again." She nodded "Nono I have to talk to you" "Okay" we sat on the bed "I received a call from my sister, my grandfather is in the hospital" "Oh my word" She said shocked "What happened?" "I don't have any details, but I need to leave now" "Yes! Uhhh... let me help you pack" I expected another reaction from her. "Aren't you afraid to stay alone, I mean you could call that girl from work, who's she?" "Lara" "Yes her." "It's okay, I'll be okay" "You promise?" "Yes I promise" I sighed "Okay cool. Let's go pack" . . _ZANDY_ . I was laying next to her, whatever they did to her destroyed her, it took her life. I always knew Chains was unstable but this was too much, how can a mere human reach this point. I know I've done things but I'm incapable of taking a life. All this because of a little misunderstanding, what more if I had cut his toe. Will I ever be able to take this in, I mean I'm all things but to have someone die on me like this, if this doesn't kill me it'll definitely make me way stronger than I was.

"Bengazi ukuthi uthambile lo (I knew she was weak)" he said "hambo uyofuna abafana, ang'funi ukubona lesdumbu (go look for the guys, I don't want to see this body)" he said to the guy.

"Sho boss" he walked out "What did you do to her?" I asked weakly "Lutho, abafana bami bathe ukudlala naye(nothing, my boys just played with her)" "You're a sick bastard, how do you sleep at night with someone's death on your conscience, how can you be so heartless, you are evil no infact you're are the devil himself!" He laughed so hard like a devil he is then suddenly did the expected, he kicked me so hard on my stomach repeatedly, I couldn't even groan anymore, I just let tears flow... . . . _SAM_ . I truly don't understand what it is that they want to talk to us about. As for Pam I don't think she's getting any better today she looks even worse, my poor friend I wonder what it is that is wrong with her. "Now that the family is here you may start talking. Sonto please bring us coffee." mom asked impatiently. "Mam like I said earlier on, your son is the reason we're here" Enzo spoke "We heard that now talk" Mom said again, she was running out of patience. She cleared her throat "my younger sister, Pam got involved with your son." "What!?" Dad groaned "that's impossible" "He's right, my son would have told me" mom added. I remained quiet "Your daughter can confirm mam" "Is it true?" He asked looking at me, my dad is very intimidating when he's mad. I slowly nodded, I won't say that it was a one night thing or I'll prejudice my friend. "The actual reason we're here is that" she cleared her throat "he made Pam pregnant" What!! "Yho" "Amen" the parents both said at once and we jumped to the sound of

glasses breaking, we turned, only to be met by Nomasonto, she had dropped a tray with all the cups, coffee was spilled everywhere. What does this woman exactly have with my family... "I'm truly sorry, I'll clean this up." She quickly went back to the kitchen. "Wow, so I'll be an aunt?" I asked with a smile, I already can't wait "Not so fast young lady, does my son know about this?" My mom can be sour I tell you. "I tried to talk to him but he didn't give me the chance" shame my friend was literally shivering Dad chuckled "that's Lungelo for you, what were you thinking getting involved with him?" "I..." "Mbewu please. We can't reach any conclusion without him. Sam call him." "My phone is upstairs" I didn't wait for their response I quickly rushed to my bedroom. Knowing my brother he won't take this well. "Hey bro" "Peaches what do you want I'm a bit occupied" "I'll get to the point. Pam is here with her sister and guess what?" "I'm not in the mood to play guessing game and who are they?" "Pam my friend the one you chose to snack that other night , she's pregnant" "Okay. Congratulations." "You don't get it, you're the father!" "Huh!! WHAT!!?" "Yep" I heard a breaking sound and suddenly the line went dead, I knew it , sigh...

17 ____ Honestly I don't know if I heard correctly or my ears were playing tricks with me. Did she say pregnant? No no this can't be happening especially not now, I mean how can I be expecting a baby with someone I don't even know, well at least I don't even remember her face. Nah I don't trust her, she might be trapping me with a baby, too bad it won't be that easy. I dialled Peaches "Bro you good? You just got me worried" "I'll be fine, send me her number" "Uhm actually, the reason I called was to tell you that they're currently here, downstairs, with the rents(parents), and you're also being summoned to join the meeting." "What the!?! Tell me this is a joke" "Unfortunately" "Dammit!" I swear I've never been this angry my whole life, I have no idea what her loose self is trying to achieve out of all this but I'm going to put an end right now. "Are you still there?" I just ended the call before she frustrates me even more. This girl will know me very well today, I took my car keys and walked out... . . _ZANDY_. This day will forever be my nightmare. Those kicks Chains gave me led to some intense bleeding, a lot of blood came from my vaginal area. I felt weaker, I slowly felt my life leaving me, Chains had called in a doctor to check me up because of the pool of blood that I was lying on. He was busy doing some tests, he lied to the doc and said I was his niece, I couldn't even say a word that's how weak I felt. Knowing Chains he would've killed the both of us if I were to try anything funny. "Why don't you take her to the hospital?" He asked with his

focus still on the tests. I could literally feel Chains anger rising. "Usuqedile yini ?(Are you done)" "Cha(no) but in a few minutes I'll be done. Please put her on the bed" Chains made this room look girlish. He called one of his guy to come pick me up , I'm sure he didn't want to come in contact with my blood. "And who's the guy?" He smirked. Even a blind man would pick up that the doc is gay. "Umfowabo (her brother)" "Oh" he smiled and did his job. He couldn't keep his eyes off Chains' lapdog. "And they're out" he said after sometime. "Silalele (we're listening)" "Ok, unfortunately your niece was pregnant and she just lost a baby" WHAT THE!?! So this explains all the blood. "She tested negative to everything else. If you don't mind me asking, why is her face all bruised like that?" Oh no "Ubaba wengane wuyena omenze waba nje (the baby's father did that to her)" "Oh my God, men are trash I tell you" he had his hand covering his mouth, drama... "did you report him to the police?" "Yebo (yes)" he said with an attitude. This doc better leave already "I hope he rots in there" "Dokotela siyabonga ngomsebenzi wakho (doc thank you for your service)" He nodded " you should take her to the hospital" "Yebo dokotela siyabonga(yes doc thanks)" The doc took his things but before leaving he looked at the guy "Please walk me out" the guy looked at Chains who nodded at him then they left together leaving me with this monster. "Hau kanti nawe besewulinde ingane (you were also expecting a baby)" I kept quiet, I don't

want to even think about it. How did I even get pregnant, I was preventing! A baby, I lost a whole baby... . . . _NARRATED_ .

Choco rushed in his parents house with sweat all over his face, he was literally being led by rage. He walked in the lounge only to be met by sour looking faces. He chuckled and put his left hand on the pocket of his sweatpants. "So you are the so called Pam" he said pointing at her with his car keys. Pam had her eyes on her fingers , she was ashamed and scared that he'll mention how they ended up together in bed. He continued "you know I should have known from that moment that you'd come up with such a story just to trap me, really girl, pregnancy is a very low blow. Couldn't you think of something else?" She still kept quiet and so did everyone. Sonto was behind the door listening to every word. "Son, sit" Rich finally said, but Choco was not having any of it. "Don't sit there and keep quiet! When you were on my bed you were screaming your lungs out now you can't even answer a simple question!" "Lungelo!" His father roared, for the first time Sam was not even thinking of getting involved. "Have some respect boy would you! We're still your parents" Choco sighed and went to stand in front of Pam "that thing you're carrying is not my baby, I told you I have a girlfriend and using that thing in your stomach will not make me leave my girlfriend. Go find the real father, maybe he's somewhere in a bar but you won't know since you jump into bed with guys after meeting them for the first time." Pam

couldn't hold it together, she wailed in her sister's arms. Sonto's tears fell in disappointment. Mrs Mbewu couldn't care less she was proud to see her boy putting the girl into place, she was very proud of how he turned out to be. 'I indeed raised him very well' she thought. Enzo's heart shuttered into pieces

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heart of vengeance was growing inside her 'he shall pay for this' she thought. After giving them a piece of his mind he left the room in complete silence as if someone has died. "Shuu." Mrs Mbewu sighed "we're truly sorry girls but we can't help you, if our son doesn't assume this pregnancy there's nothing more we can do , he knows his seed better than we do. Excuse me" she got up and left and the husband followed without a word. "I'm sor..." "It's okay. Come" Enzo didn't let Sam finish, she held her sister and they also left but her mind could still scream 'this is not over!'... . . _ZOLA_ . My heart has been beating so hard I don't know what to expect I just pray whatever reason my grandfather is at the hospital is not something serious. I still don't know what the matter is and I don't know what to expect. I made my way inside the hospital, I texted Swazi and she sent me the directions, I was literally shaking. He was in an ICU ward, must be a critical condition. I slowly opened the door and walked, Swazi came running to my arms "thank God you're here" she said wetting my shirt with tears. "Shh don't cry I'm

here now" "He he..." "It's okay you'll tell me when you're ready" she nodded, I let her cry in my arms. Minutes later she broke the hug and pulled me to a chair. "Yesterday uhmm" she wiped away her tears, "it all started yesterday" "What happened" "I don't know, I found him on the floor I tried waking him up but he didn't I even thought he was, he was... oh Lord" a tear fell. "What, what really happened?" "I don't know Zola" she got up and walked around the room like an animal locked in a cage. "He seemed like he was sleeping, I also can't explain it" "What did the doctors say?" "Not much , only that his blood pressure is too high and that he currently can't breathe on his own , he needs to be monitored." I shook my head "It doesn't make sense, I don't get it. Would you sit down you're making me dizzy!" I shouted "Sir this is not the place to shout." The nurse said after walking in "infact I'd like you two to leave now , the visiting hours are over now." We left after kissing our grandfather goodbye. As we walked out of the hospital some girls came running, they group hugged with Swazi, must be her friends. "Oh friend we're truly sorry for coming late" "It's okay, you're here now" "How is he?" She shrugged "still the same" "Ohh don't worry he'll get better, he's a very strong man" "That he is" Swazi looked at me, I see they had totally forgotten that I exist. "Oh guys uhm this is Zola my brother" "You guys have hot brothers I must say" a coloured looking girl exclaimed. "Zozo this is Bloom" "Nice meeting you

mister" she said with a smile "And this is Sam" I looked directly at her and our eyes locked, I can't explain the feeling but I literally felt something in me move. She's beautiful, very beautiful. Someone cleared her throat. "Ehhm nice meeting you Sam" "You too" she had her eyes on me. She has beautiful eyes, a nice slim body, her skin is flawless, she's pretty. "Uhhh let's go" Swazi looked at me with that 'We have an unfinished business' look... . . . _NOMSA_ . Business is not the same during the week, it's always not packed. Lara and I were chilling at the carwash with the boys, it was also not that packed since it's still new and most people still don't know about it. All the guys here are friends with Zola, good for him to be working with his friends. Shasha is one of the guys that work here, Zola mentioned something like they used to work together in the streets, I'm glad he didn't forget his friends. "Yabona moss ma farm farm(you see Ms farm farm)" Lara laughed. he calls me that since he was the first one to meet me , he said that day I looked like those women from the farm. "I'll never get used to that farm farm name" "Hhai Lala(no Lara) you see this name has memories." I shook my head. "I like you" Lara exclaimed while laughing. Honestly I don't find anything funny "Is there something you're not telling me?" I whispered to Lara "What do you mean?" "You laughing at everything he says, are we liking him?" She pretended to be surprised "What!" "Hmm" she stood up and walked away "Hau Lala uyaphi manje?(Where are you

going)" he asked seeing that she was leaving, more like running away from me "Myeke uyozi cabanga (let her be. she went to think)" "Aii aboLala benza ngathi siyakwazi ukulalela imicabango (She acts as if we can hear thoughts)" I chuckled. Poor Lara. Oh how I miss Zola...

18 ____ "I saw that" Swazi said as soon as we walked in at home. After meeting her friends they insisted that we go to a restaurant I didn't want to leave with them but hey you know how girls can be especially if they gang up together against one. I ended up joining them, they were so talkative I almost forgot we have a grandfather lying on a death bed but I must say I enjoyed their presence or rather Sam's presence. Swazi noticed how our eyes would fall on each other occasionally hence she's saying 'I saw that'. I threw my exhausted self on the couch ignoring her comment on the way. "Ignoring me won't do you well" I chuckled. Knowing her she'll annoy me the whole day and night. I looked at her. "Don't look at me like that Zozo, ngiyibonile indlela bewumbuke ngayo uSamantha (I saw how you were looking at Samantha)" she joined me on the couch "The same way I look at you" she rolled her eyes "you do know that I'm no longer a child , now I see things that can't be seen" "thatha mporofita (you go seer)" we laughed "I'm serious Zozo, you like her don't you?" I raised my eyebrow pretending to be confused "who?" "Stop it" she playfully hit my shoulder "Fine" I sat up straight while looking at her. "What do you want to know?" "Do you like her?" "If I say I do, how will it be any of your business?" "Ouch!" She held her chest dramatically "You don't have to peel my skin off" "No it's just a sincere question" "Come on Zozo" "What I can tell you now is that , she's beautiful and very attractive" "She's beautiful and very

attractive" she said imitating my voice "I know you like her! Say it!" She screamed while hitting me with a pillow "say it, I know you like her, you like her!" She hit me continuously, I got up and ran away but she ran after me, screaming "confess! You like her Zozo!" I swear this will be the longest day of my life... . . _SAM_ . I had been lying flat on my bed while facing the roof, I couldn't stop replaying everything that happened from the hospital even thinking about it makes me feel something strange on my stomach. I've dated a whole lot of guys and not even one ever made me feel this way just by looking at him. When I saw him at the hospital I could literally feel my heart jump in joy, I came up with the idea of going to the restaurant because I wanted to be closer to him, get to know him better, hear his husky voice and lucky for me, the girls backed me up unknowingly. His smile! Oh Lord take me already, I just fell for him, wait, is this what they refer to as love at first sight? Because wow I can't! The brother is driving me loco (crazy). I snapped out of it when my phone rang it was Swazi well now future sister-in-law! "Swaz hey girl! What's up?" "Don't 'what's up me', what was that between you and my brother?" Okay I didn't expect this "Uhm what are you on about?" "Girl I know you more than you know yourself" "Fine! Why didn't you tell me your brother was so breathtaking!?" She laughed "I knew it! I saw how you couldn't keep your eyes elsewhere" I blushed "well I couldn't help it" "You also didn't tell us about your brother's

handsomeness" I chuckled "Oh come on, we can't compare those two" "True. My brother is very honest and sincere unlike someone" "Unlike Choco, you can say it. Anyway you should hook me up with your brother" "That'll be very easy dear" I frowned "why is that?" "Uhm, nothing I just have a strategy planned out perfectly" "Tell me more" "Nope! You'll know as time goes on, I'm just glad both parties concord on the same conclusion." "What do you mean?" "That also you'll know as time goes on. Chat later chiao (bye)" she dropped. What is she on about

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what did she even mean?... . . . _CHOCO_ . As soon as I left home I drove directly to Tembisa, I needed something very strong to calm me down and mostly I needed an environment that will help me think clearly and I couldn't think of any other better place like KaSbali. "Ey ndoda yini, ungangitshayeli ukuthi babulale esakho ngoba ngiyafunga nasi kuzoshuba (Man what's wrong, don't tell that they've killed your girlfriend because I swear it'll get crazy)" I shook my head "Sbali ndoda besengiyikhohliwe naleyo ndaba (Man I had even forgotten about that situation)" "Usho ukuthi ubhekene nokuworse? (Are you telling me that you're facing something worse)" I nodded. "Awukhulume tuu (just talk)" I put down my Heineken then sighed. "Esinye nje besilapha endlini sitshela I olady ne tyma

ukuthi mina ngiskorile (some girl came at home to tell my parents that I made her pregnant)" He shot his eyes wide open "manje wena utheni? (What did you say)" "Mfana unamanga lomntwana, k'dala ezishayile ngami ebedenka ukuthi ngizomfela ngenxa yencosi (Boy this girl is lying, she always had a thing for me, she thought I'd fall for her just because of this baby)" "I hope umbonise lomnyango angene ngawo(I hope you showed her the door)" "Obvious" He laughed "nja yami (my man)" immediately his facial expression changed "on a serious note. I thought about a good plan to rescue your girlfriend" "Out with it" "Firstly, how well do you know him?" "Thando used to tell me about him." "Thando your twin friend?" I nodded "usho ukuthi yena akakwazi?(meaning he doesn't know you)" I nodded once more "then that could work in our favor" "Njani? (how)" "Make friends with him" I sat straight and listened attentively "then find his weakest point, we don't have time we'll have to act fast" "Tell me more" He nodded then shouted "eh fanas awulethe izingudu lapho! (Boy bring us the Heinekens)" he looked at me with a smirk "sizokwenza kanje.... (This is what we'll do)" I took in each word he said and I must say his plan will definitely work without a doubt he has everything planned out... . . _NOMSA_ . Spending time at the carwash is better than being at home all alone and bored. It was getting late and I was still at the carwash, I'm not in a hurry for anything so I'll just stay here until it's late, food is not a

problem, Lara and I usually eat the remaining food and share some with the boys. I was sitting alone on a chair looking at Lara and Shasha mingling like they've known each other for a whole century, I took out my phone and dialed Zola, I wonder how he's doing. "Hello?" I heard a giggle on the background. "Hi uhm... Swazi awuthule tuu (keep quiet)" I heard her respond just I couldn't make out what she said. I guess their grandfather is doing well. "Nono unjani? (How are you)" it was now silent, she probably left. "I'm good and you?" I heard him sigh "I'll be good" "And granddad?" "He's still in the ICU they say he can't breathe on his own, so he needs those machines" "What did they say is the matter" "Honestly I also don't get it, they said something like high blood pressure" "Oww I'm truly sorry" "It's cool. How's everything there?" I chuckled looking at those two "business is doing well, the carwash too though it's not that busy." "Kuhle lokho (that's good) and the guys?" "They're very well especially Shasha" "Why him specifically?" "He has a close friend now" "The only close friend he has is me" "Sorry to disappoint you Mr but Lara has already replaced you" he laughed "I'm hurt, what are you telling me?" "Exactly what you heard" He laughed once again. The voice shouted at the back again "ngiyeza Swazi (I'm coming)" he responded "Zola ngikukhumbulile(I miss you)" "Nami (me too) look I'll call you later" immediately the line went dead. I moved the phone from my ear and looked at it, a wallpaper of our picture starred at

me. I put it back on the pocket and watched those two. . .
ZANDY. I couldn't think , Chains took me back to the smelly
and dark room. My mind has shut out everything I mean the
world on its own. I no longer wish to go out. I'm ready to settle
in this room, I'm ready to live the rest of my life here. Chains
has taken so much from me my best friend and only sister I
ever knew, then he took a life that was growing inside me. As
for baby Blue I still don't know anything about her. Only one
person is at fault for all that is happening to me and she will
pay! If she didn't run from the very first time we wouldn't be
here, she is responsible for all the lives lost in this place! Nomsa
will pay! She better pray we don't cross paths because hell will
break loose that I swear!!!

19 ____ A WEEK LATER... Last week after finalising our wise plan with Sballi I didn't waste anymore time, the following day I drove to KZN. I spend all the nights in the club as a 'client' though I don't take any females with me, besides the fact that all these girls don't interest me , I also don't want to end up having another pregnancy pinned on me. This gender is something else , they are literally vultures! Our plan includes hiding my identity, meaning I'll continue being an anonymous co-owner of this place. I've been paying very close attention to Chains. If it was up to me I'd follow him until he leads me to Zan since he practically leaves this place drunk. But today I won't let him escape from me, I have to make my move , I need to act. God knows how Zan is if she's even safe, I won't forgive myself if something bad happened to her! I looked at him as he walked in pushing that huge belly of his. As soon as he sat down the girls ran to attend him one of the girls even left another client, one thing I've picked up is that my staff is very afraid of him and that's absolutely not good for the business, I can't be having clients acting superior than the staff, I'll have to put that to an end, he'll have to leave his bossy tendencies on the streets. He was not alone but with two other guys, I walked up to him with a drink on my hand , the girls were entertaining them. "Awu amadoda angempela! (real men)" I shouted , one thing I learned about Chains he's a very cultural man, nothing will take him off his tradition or even home language. He smiled "ushaye

khona nsizwa (that's right)" he said brushing his belly, the guys attention were on the girls. "Uma ngibona wena bhuti omdala ngibona indoda emadodeni! (When I see you bro I see a man amongst men)" it was like I was tickling him, every word I was saying was music to his ears, he was smiling like a kid. "Yey nina bafana hambani la aniboni siyaxoxa singamadoda (you boys leave, can't you see we're having a conversation as men)" the boys immediately left with the girls except for one girl that was with him, he continued "mana nawe ngikutholele iseqamgwaqo (wait let me also get you a prostitute)" the disrespect! "Awu nsizwa (my man)" I put the master of all the fake smiles, I got to play along. He raised his hand and another girl came running, he signalled for her to come to me. I don't like his attitude towards my employees! "Tshela mina ndoda uvelaphi ,phela angikaze ngikubone kulesgodi sami (tell me man where do you come from, I've never seen you here in my hood)" "Ngibuya esgodi sakwanongoma (I come from the hood of nongoma)" lucky for me my dad grew there. He smiled and said some praises! Checkmate I got him where I wanted, Step One successfully concluded, now we move to Step Two! . .

NARRATED . "So tell me Bruno, did y'all end it?" Wyatt enquired while satisfying his black tea addiction, as fresh as he is one can't separate him from black tea, it doesn't matter what time of the day it is, he still drinks his tea. Talk about old men tendencies! In irritation Bruno scratched his goatee beard "I

told you I won't be doing that" he said dispensing his question "I also told you that I'll tell him if you don't" "Wyatt why don't you stay out of my business huh?" He asked clearly annoyed "I can't! This involves people who are very close to me." "Come on!" He groaned He sighed "look Bruno I don't get why you can't see this the way I do, I mean that woman is not just a wife but she's a mother , a family woman! Would it please you to break a family apart? Because if you think she's gonna abandon her family, her children for you then you must think again!" He chuckled bitterly "A mother, a family woman" he said sarcastically. "We both know that she's none of that!" "Bruno!" He warned "No Wyatt it seems like you've forgotten, completely forgotten that she's not a 'family woman' and definitely not a mo..." "Bruno!" He groaned looking angry and annoyed by his childishness He sighed trying to calm himself down "forgive me, I just... you know how much I love her I can't let her go" "No you can you just don't want to" they both kept quiet with Bruno trying to process this whole situation, all he thought about was a plan to have 'her woman' only to himself... . . _MEANWHILE_ . "Pam I'll be back before you know it" she screamed hurrying to the door, but Pam wasn't going to let her go that easily "Woo wait hold up sis where are you off to?" She asked "Uhm out, look we'll talk when I get back I'm running late" "Not until you tell me?" She went to stand at the door "Come on Pam, it's a surprise okay and if I tell you I'll be ruining

the surprise" Hearing that she moved away from the door frame "Hmm in that case

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don't take too long" she added while forcing a smile on her face, she was having it hard with the pregnancy. "And don't forget to bring along some peanuts and cheese!" She screamed right after her sister hurried out. WITHIN half an hour Enzo arrived at her destiny in a secluded area, only certain people knew about the place. She slowly slipped out of her shoes already knowing the rules, and bend her way inside the hut, the smell of different herbs filled her nostrils! The old woman groaned as usual while singing ancestral songs, she was mixing some traditional medicines, still with her gaze on the herbs she spoke "usuzewafika ntombiyami k'dala ngikulindile (you've finally arrived my girl I've been waiting for you)" Enzo was now used to the powers the woman had, she wasn't gonna ask how she knew because she knew how strongly the ancestors always connected with her. "Thokoza gogo" way of greeting the ancestors "Hlala (sit)" she sat on the mat putting her bag next to her along with her cellphone "ngingakusiza ngani?(how may I help you)" she asked obviously wanting her to say it with her own mouth. "Ngiyakholwa ukuthi uMakhosi useyazi (I believe the master already knows)" she sighed feeling so relaxed like this was her second home. "Kodwa ke (anyway)" she shrugged

and continued "ngilethwe omunye umfana odlale ngengane yasekhaya (I'm here due to some boy who played my sister)" "Yey!!" The old hag groaned "Udlale ngenhliziyo yakhe, wamumithisa bese wamlaxaza (He played with her heart, made her pregnant then left her)" she was burning with rage as Choco's words replayed on her mind "ngifuna into ezomenza angabi yindoda ephelele noma efuna ukuya ocansini (I want something that'll make him half a man even when he wants to have sex)" The woman continued groaning in a very deep voice while listening to Enzo "ngifuna ezizwe engena mandla adinge abantu ukuthi bamhlanze (I want him to feel weak depending on people to give him a bath)" "Hmm inzondo, inhliziyo yakho igcwele inzondo (hate, your heart is full of hate)" she stated but Enzo held her head up not allowing the woman's comment to affect her. The woman crawled to small bottles with liquid, she grabbed two different in colour and gave her "uzothela kokubili esiphuzweni sakhe (you'll pour both liquids in his drink)" she took some herbs from those she prepared earlier then handed it to her "lokhu uzokuchela embhedeni wakhe (this you'll sprinkle on his bed)" she took the medicine "Thokozo (thanks)" she took out cash from her bag "kuyothatha izinsuku ezingakanani?(how many days will it take)" "Kuyophela iviki isifiso sakho sifezekile (before the week end your wish would have come true)" without a word Enzo rose on her feet leaving the money on the floor and left with a smile on her beautiful

face... . . _ZOLA_ . It's been a whole week and nothing has changed with my grandfather's health. He's still attached to those machines, he still breathes through them absolutely nothing has changed it's still like the first day. In just a week we've become regulars at the hospital even the security and some nurses have already gotten used to having us here. This is affecting my sister negatively, sometimes she doesn't eat, she keeps wondering what would happen if grandpa leaves us, I try to be strong for her each and every moment but deep inside I'm also breaking apart seeing my sister and the only father I ever had in him is not easy. Again I'm glad her friends are there for her they're very supportive, yesterday I even got to meet yet another friend, Pamela if I'm not mistaken and I must compliment my sister has very beautiful friends no wonder Pamela's boyfriend decided to get her pregnant, the guy wanted a way to make her stay forever. I wouldn't have known she is pregnant if it wasn't for the symptoms, she couldn't stop vomiting and the nausea , the hospital smell wasn't doing her good so she said, women really go through a lot! "Zola!" I looked up only to be met by the most beautiful lady "I've been calling you" she complained "I'm sorry I just have so much on my mind" "How about we go buy some food, you need fresh air after all " she was right, I nodded and out we went, one thing I like about Samantha is that no matter how much she's used to the rich life, when she's with me she doesn't make high

demands but she simply opts for the little that I afford. "How about some scones?" "You know I'm cool with anything you want" she exclaimed "Bloom?" "Argh that one she eats everything" honestly I wonder how they ended up having a friend like Bloom I mean the girl's father is white. "Wow ok" we bought some scones just outside the hospital and a fruit tree "Tell me Zo, when are you returning to Tembisa?" I raised my eyebrow "getting rid of me already?" She frowned "what? No of course not, you know I don't want you to uhm" she cleared her throat, she likes me I've seen her eyes, she likes me "I'm just asking I mean I'd hate to see my friend left alone in that state" she added "Don't worry I'm not going anywhere atleast not anytime soon" she genuinely smiled, she's happy "you don't want me to leave?" She looked down, Sam is very shy around me but when she's with the girls she becomes a total opposite "Uhm well my friend needs you" I chuckled and enquired "you?" "Me!?" She asked acting all surprised "Yes, you?" she fiddled her fingers "well I, I don't know, what I know is I'm on my friend's side" I shook my head "stop beating around the bush and say it, you don't want me to leave" I said slightly patting her. She laughed "oh come on" "Just say it" "Fine! I don't want you to leave" happiness filled my heart, that's music to my ears! . . . _NARRATED_ A guy was chilling with his friends having some drinks when suddenly a call came through his burner phone, he knew who was calling, only one person calls

him on that line. He rose up and walked away from his friends to a much quiet space "Boss" he responded to the caller "I have a job for you" the voice said "I'm listening" "Bruno Canal, does the name ring a bell?" The guy kept quiet for a second then answered "the lawyer?" "Yes him I hope you remember how he looks and where to find him" "Don't worry that's nothing" "Good" the caller sighed "I want you to end him. Before twenty four hours I want him dead!" With a firm voice, the caller spoke. "A clean job or?" The guy asked while taking a sip of his drink "Make it look like an accident" "Sho boss" call ended with the caller feeling satisfied like Bruno Canal had already been wiped off the surface of the earth!

20 ____ I was about to sleep when the door opened, it was Zola finally he was back. I went running to him and jumped on him with my arms around his neck and legs rapped on his waist, I can't believe I missed him so much. "Still don't lock the door I see" he whispered on my ear while slightly biting my earlobe, it was ticklish, I giggled. He walked to the bed after locking the door and slowly laid me down on my back with him on my upper body. When did our relationship get here? I wouldn't bother asking rather we just enjoy the moment. Today I had decided to sleep in my underwear, he removed all his clothes after removing, more like tearing my underwear. His lips were devouring mine, he wasn't letting me breathe, how did we get here?. Without wasting any time I felt him inside me, the pleasure, the moans and groans filled the whole room, I had been longing and waiting for this moment "I love you Nono" he said coming in and out of me as I enjoyed every single moment... I immediately woke up gasping for air, I looked around trying to take in what just happened, only did it sink in that I was dreaming after a few minutes, I pulled my gown and went to rinse the sweat off my face. . . _CHOCO_. The girl was seriously getting into my nerves, I don't know if the problem was with me or the girls are getting out of hand now that Zan is not here. I looked at her, she was just all over me and it was annoying whilst on the other hand Chains seemed to be enjoying every touch he got from the girl he was even

ridiculously giggling, fool! "Awung'hambele (leave)" she stopped and looked at me like I just spoke a foreign language "ngithe hamba! (I said leave)" she slightly jumped then chickened away "Kwenzenjani nkabi yami?(what's wrong my friend)" he had a confused look I took a sip of my drink then said "akakwazi ukwenza umsebenzi wakhe(she doesn't know how to do her work)" His gaze changed, he attempted to go deal with her but I managed to stop him in time, dude thinks he owns this place. "Kube ungiyekile ngayomqondisa (you should've let me deal with her)" I chuckled "Yazi mina ngifanelwa yini?(you know what suits me)" he glared at me like 'go on' , "intombi ezoba eyami ngedwa, ezolalela uma ngikhuluma ngoba yimina indoda, intombi ezothobela mina ithanda ingathandi , ezoba isboshwa sami(a girl who'll only be mine, who'll listen when I talk because I am the man, a girl who'll be obedient whether liking or not, who'll be my prisoner)" He looked at me before nodding obviously impressed by what I said "uyindoda emadodeni, manje leyo ntombi unayo?(you are a man amongst men, do you have that girl)" I shook my head "angazi ngizoyitholaphi akukho lula (I don't know where to find her it's not easy)" He smirked like the devil himself and said "yingakho abaphansi bekuthumele kimina(that's the reason the ancestors sent you to me)" I put on a 'confused' mask "usho ukuthini?(What do you mean)" I enquired. He drank his black label "phuza ndoda sisekhona

iskhathi(drink man there's still time)" I nodded while glaring at him, he raised his bottle and smiled, I raised mine and smirked... . . . _NARRATED_ . Enzo slowly opened the door and made her way in, only now did she remember that her sister asked her to buy peanuts and cheese hence she was sneaking in. To her bad luck she found her relaxed on the couch

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on the coffee table was a plate with slices of bread, it was as clear as crystal that she was waiting for her. "Oh finally!" She sighed and went to fetch a glass of juice. Right then Enzo felt bad for forgetting. "Uh hem" she cleared her throat "Hurry Enzo I've been waiting and your niece here is hungry" she said patting on her womb "Ehm princess I didn't get them" She glared at her with glossy eyes "What do you mean?" "They , they don't have peanuts and cheese" A tear escaped Pam's eye she felt like someone just broke her heart "Why? Why does everyone keep hurting me like this, why does everyone hate me so much, what did I ever do!" She sobbed as if she just lost someone close Right then Enzo helped her up "ok ok , you don't have to cry let's go look for it" she held her hand and led her to the door bare in mind that she was bare footed and looked like she hasn't taken a bath in days but she couldn't care less all she wanted was cheese and peanuts. . . _RICH_ . "Oh yea!? You are the worst remember how you used to tell me that you love me

when you didn't even care" Sma said. We were at the office concluding some work, I've been telling her about Lungelo and what he just did to that poor girl, and guess what? She thinks I'm worse than my son is. Well maybe I am but one thing I know is Sma held a part of my heart or maybe she still does... "Don't ever say that, you know I've never stoped lovi..." the door opened and I jumped in shock at the presence of her highness, she looked amazing as usual. I hope she didn't hear a word, Sma had her back on her. She clicked her heals and stood behind her "Am I disturbing?" Sma swunged the chair around to face her, my wife's expression suddenly changed, I couldn't put together her emotions but she looked rather shocked like she just saw a ghost "Are you okay Mrs Mbewu?" Sma asked since she knows her "I..." she immediately pulled herself together and smiled "I'm good thank you , uhm have we met?" "I don't know maybe we have or not" Sma stood up and slowly clicked her heals away , am I missing something? She stood at the door and turned before adding "nice seeing you again Mrs Mbewu" she left. My wife didn't even bother looking at her "Do you guys know each other?" I asked while silently praying that my wife doesn't know about her or rather our past relationship. "Yea, I... We met at the mall sometime ago" "Oh? And why did her presence shock you?" "Well" she forced a chuckle "it's something that happened in the ladies room" I sighed in relief "ohh okay" "I'm surprised to see her here after so many years."

She walked up to me and sat on the table while facing me "It's business she constructed our company" "And why didn't you tell me infact what business is that?" For some reason she looked annoyed "Because I never talk to you about my clients" She sighed "You're right" she kissed me and turned to walk away "I need to get to the boutique I also have a 'client' to meet" she left, what was that? Well atleast she didn't hear our conversation or so I believe. . . _NARRATED_ . Hours passed and both sisters were now lying on bed facing each other after eating all the junk and weird mixture of food. "Thank you" Pam said Her sister frowned "what for?" "For taking care of me, for supporting me" "Come on you're my lil sis and it's my duty to take care of you" she slightly pinched her cheek, causing Pam to giggle "I'm not little anymore" "To me you are and you'll forever remain little " "I spoke to the rents (parents)" she said changing the topic "Ow, when are they coming?" "They called to let me know that they'll stay for two more months" "What!?" Shock was written on her face Pam nodded "that was my reaction when they told me, I just can't believe they'd do this to me." "Told them about the pregnancy?" She shook her head "no I couldn't, I actually think it's best I don't tell them now, I mean I don't want to ruin whatever they're up to there" she nodded "I'll wait for them to come back" Enzo chuckled "I can already imagine Mom when you tell her you're pregnant" she mimicked her voice "What! OMG why on earth would you

settle for making me a whole grandmother! I'm too young to be called grandma!" They laughed "Then she cries" Pam added "Then dad will be there consoling his wife" they laughed even more "your mother is such a drama queen" "She's your mom too" she playfully hit her shoulder "Yea. Ummm Pam?" She responded while wiping away her tears "Yes" "Can I ask you something and please don't ask me why I'm asking" "Uhm sure" "I need Sam's number " She raised her eyebrow "What for" "I said no question" "Okay fine here" she grabbed her cell and dialed the number with Enzo smiling to her cheeks. . .

MEANWHILE . Bruno was at the restaurant, he needed sometime off to himself after all the stress, being alone would do him well. His mind was telling him to leave, let the woman he loves go, she's not worth it. Yet the heart spoke a different language 'fight for her, fight for what you love' the heart yearned... A waitress came to attend him "would you like to order anything sir?" She asked right after formally greeting him "Uhm yea, please bring me two spicy chile-lime shrimp tacos with coleslaw" She noted "coming right up sir" she walked away. "Ahh woman, you're slowly driving me insane" he said to himself. A few seconds later the waitress returned with a tray on her hands "Oh that was fast" he exclaimed "This is a soup sir it's on the house while you wait for your order" "Oh thank you" he genuinely smiled. The girl bowed and walked away , he didn't waste any time he took the spoon and devoured in. For a

moment the soup was scrumptious until he felt a bit of struggle in his breathing routine. His eyes shot wide open as he felt itchiness on his skin, he was sweating. A woman whom noticed him quickly ran to him "sir are you okay?" She held him "A... all... alle" he was struggling to breathe "Oh God looks like anaphylaxis! Someone call an ambulance he's having an allergic reaction!" She shouted and quickly ran to fetch her first aid kit, she looked like a doctor. By now everyone had surrounded Bruno Canal whom was lying flat on the floor!

21 ____ Everyone watched as the ambulance drove away with Bruno in it... He had passed out and the doctors were doing their best to keep him alive. One of the doctors dialed Wyatt since he's Bruno's next of kin. It didn't take him more than a second to answer "Hello?" He said while in his study doing some paperwork "Mr Wyatt Stifler?" "Speaking" he answered "I'm calling from Pretoria Provincial Hospital, it's about Mr Bruno Canal" that caught his attention, he stopped everything he was doing and listened "I'm afraid I have bad news," speak already! He wished he could scream but all he managed to say was "I'm listening" it came out as a whisper "He just got admitted and he's in a very critical condition, he suffered from anaphylaxis" that shook him, he didn't know what to say "What's that?" "Anaphylaxis is a potential life threatening allergic reaction, usually occurs immediately after a few seconds or minutes of eating food one is allergic to, more especially peanuts or honey" He wiped off his face, he knew about Bruno's allergy to peanuts. "Is he gonna live?" His life is all that mattered to him at the moment "We're still running some tests and doing our best to keep him alive. I can't tell if he'll survive" He sighed "Thank you so much for letting me know" the call ended, he covered his face with both his hands "see what happens when you get involved with her" he said to himself. . . _NOMSA_ . "You don't look well what's wrong?" Lara asked, she came to check up on me since I didn't go to work.

Ever since I woke up from that disturbing dream my vagina had been very sore I can hardly walk. I tried bathing with salt but it just made the pain worse! What irritates me even more is the itchiness, I just can't deal! I feel like crying. "Talk to me" she wiped away the tears I didn't know I had. "It's it's," how do I explain all this to her, that it all started off as a dream? She'll think I'm losing it. "Please talk to me friend, don't shut me out" she pleaded while pulling my head to her almost flat chest I sniffed "Please don't think I'm crazy after telling you, I also don't get how all this started" "I won't, you know me better than that" Sighing I told her about the dream, I was surprised how it didn't shock her. "And now it's very painful more especially when I urinate" I sobbed She squeezed me in a hug "Don't cry it's okay now, I think I have an idea of what's happening to you" I broke the hug and looked at her waiting to hear, she continued "how spiritual are you?" What does that have to do with anything "you know I'm not spiritual, I know God exists but I don't believe in spirits" I said, though I stopped believing in God the day he separated me from my grandmother "Well then it won't be easy to make you understand. Do you have any problem with someone praying for you?" I shook my head "what harm can that cause me" "Then tomorrow get ready before noon I'll fetch you, we'll go see my apostle at church and he'll pray for you" I really don't know if I'll go I mean this has nothing to do with a simple prayer

, I just need medical help. I won't tell her but tomorrow first thing I'll do is go to the clinic not some church! . . . _SAM_ . I was lying on my bed reading a book titled IT'S JUST FUN by E.M Rafael, I'm not really into studying but when it comes to novels, one can't separate us. I love how the author played around the relationships of nowadays. I mean this couple had an agreement that they were just passing time, none of them had any interest in a serious relationship, but at the end of the day no one can deny destiny, all along he was fooling around with the bone of his bones. It's funny how they both weren't into each other to that point but ended up married! I got disturbed by a call, it was an unknown number, I answered and maintained silent, I don't usually jump into speaking, whomever called should just tell me who he or she is and what they want "Hello, Samantha?" It was a woman's voice "Yes" I answered plainly "Uhm sorry to disturb you, it's Enzo" oh she should have said so from the get go "Oh hi Enzo how can I help you? Is Pam ok?" I panicked at the thought of my friend "Pam is good, she's good just hormones" she chuckled "sorry to bother you, but I need to ask something" ohh "Yes?" "Uhm I need your brother's address and please don't tell Pam this is the reason I called, just come up with something" "Oh ok but why do you want his address?" "He made my sister pregnant remember?" Right "Oh okay, I'll send it to you" "Thanks" the call ended, actually I don't even want to know why she wants it, I don't want to get

involved, knowing my brother, he'll kick her out! I sent her the address and a text came through, I thought it was her but it was Swazi. The text read 'please come quickly to my house! I need your help and Zozo is not here! Don't call just come ASAP!!' I immediately jumped out of bed and ran down the stairway... . . .

CHOCO . "Man just one more step then it's done" I was on the call with Sballi "Ah and here I thought Plan A was gonna fail and we'll have to settle for B, I even cleaned my knife" I chuckled "nah you can put your baby back, we won't have to get that far" "Sho ntwana (boy) now tell me how it went?" "Well first step it was exactly how you had anticipated, he fell straight at my feet" He laughed "ubuxoxa nenkabi yakho (you were chatting with your friend)" he said it in some deep Zulu causing me to laugh "Ehhene mfowethu(yes brother)" we both laughed "So what did he say about the girl?" His voice was now firm "First said she's his niece imagine, then called her useless. He said she's perfect for the kind of girl that I want, that she's loose and I should keep her on the leash" Just thinking about what he said rose my anger I heard him swallow "if I were you, I would have lost it" "That would have turned bad for me" "You're right" he sighed "So when is he giving her to you?" "Tomorrow he said he'll take me to her, I'm just worried, what if she blows my cover?" "Nah he also won't risk that she tips you off, chances are he'll drug her so that she loses it or drug her to sleep then come up with a very good excuse" "I hate

this!" Honestly I do "Bekezela ndoda(patience man) you almost there" he's right "Cool man, let me get back to work" "What work?" He said jokingly I chuckled "You know very well I'm a co-owner here" "Yea whatever bye" he dropped the call, I chuckled and got back to work, I decided to come here during the day since it's the only time when no one comes. . .

NARRATED . The assassin had been waiting impatiently for a feedback on the target, everytime the assassin tried getting in touch with the guy , it would lead straight to voicemail. 'Let me just try again' thought the assassin, this time around the guy picked up "why was the phone off?" The assassin enquired clearly pissed "Sorry boss I was still working" "Don't tell me that! Tell me he's dead!?" "Not yet boss, he's currently in hospital" Pissed "dammit! I don't want him alive, in fact which hospital?" "Pretoria Provincial Hospital in ICU" right after that, the line died... Before an hour, the assassin silently walked in Bruno's ward unseen in that black outfit, while closing the door. He had all the machines connected on him, he was out of it. The assassin didn't hesitate but walked up to him, put on leather gloves and took the pillow then spoke "I'm sorry but it's for the best" before slowly smothering him with a pillow, making sure he dies slowly and painfully, in a few minutes the machines started beeping, Bruno shook uncontrollably, the assassin didn't pull back instead pressed even harder!

22 ____ I quickly ran in, honestly I didn't know what was going on and I confess Swazi's message scared me, I thought she was in danger or something bad happened to his grandfather until... until I almost stumbled as I walked in. There were roses everywhere various kinds, Damask roses, Grandiflora rose, Bonica rosa, Cherry parfait, Mr Lincoln oh how I love Mr Lincoln , Floribunda 'easy does it'. They were just various others I even forgot the names. There were traces of Mr Lincoln roses, I blushed and slowly followed the roses. Did I forget my birthday or what? What is she up to? Walking further in, before my eyes was a coffee table simply decorated, on top of it were snacks nicely placed on the plates, the biscuits, chocolate, juice and all the nice stuff then was a card. I settled on one of the two cushions that were on the floor, the card read "you may serve yourself whilst I prepare myself" I laughed this is crazy "I, uhm" I jumped in shock then quickly composed myself when I saw whom it was "forgive me, what are you doing here?" He looked simple as usual yet very handsome "I " what am I doing here again? I cleared my throat "Swazi called me" "Oh" "And you?" I chuckled, that was stupid Sam... He chuckled "I live here" "Of course you live here" I said feeling stupid, I shouldn't have asked that "But to answer that, Swazi spoke something about me and her watching movies and stuff" oh that explains the laptop between the cushions , or rather next to me. "Oh then why am I here?" He smiled and shrugged his shoulders, this

clearly means I'm intruding I mean there are only two plates, two cushions, two glasses, she couldn't have possibly made a mistake of forgetting the third one and why did she even lie to me. I got up and attempted to walk away but he lightly held my arm "Where do you think you're going?" "I don't want to intrude" He shook his head "there must be a reason why she called you here, wait let's call her" he got hold of his cell and dialed her "Zozo!" She was on a loudspeaker , he let go of my arm "Swazi what's going on?" "Eish! I take it you already home and with Sam" "Yes, now what's going on, aren't you supposed to be here? And what's with the roses marn?" He looked pissed "I, I'm sorry but it, em..." "Awukhulume!(talk)" he shouted , I've never heard him shout, he must be really pissed "Ok ok, I, well I kind of prepared that for the two of you" my eyes shot wide, why would she do that! He didn't answer her but just cut the call, he huffed while scratching his little beard. I broke the silence "Look I can just leav..." "No no" he exclaimed "uhm, let's just sit and watch those movies, what can we lose" he was now calm "Ok" I shrugged, after all I think this is the best thing that ever crossed my friend's mind... . . _RICH_ . Morning came, my wife and I were having breakfast, I don't know if it was me but the eggs were too salty. Ever since that day Sonto dropped a tray with cups , she's been acting very strange, I don't even want to mention the food part, we eat salty food, sometimes with no salt and some days it's food with a lot of water! I

thought my wife would've spoken to her, fire her if she has to but it's clear that she has a lot on her plate to do that, I don't know if it was my impression but she seemed a bit off. "Ukahle? (Are you ok)" she was playing with her food

didn't even hear what I said "sthandwa sami(my love)" I don't usual address her with her first name but hey "Nthati!" She jumped in shock "Huh? What?" I shook my head unbelievably "what's bothering you?" She sighed "I, the boutique, I messed up a dress that was gonna make me a lot of money" Really? "How much?" "Huh?" She asked clearly dumbfolded "How much was the dress" "Oh I..." Before she could finish Sam appeared with a container of cereal and milk, she no longer eats Sonto's food "Morning rents" she was happy "Morning baby" her mother kissed her cheek before leaving, I watched her as she walked away. "Good morning princess how's your morning?" "It's amazing dad, so amazing!" I hope it's not what I think it is "The last time you were this happy, you had just started dating that good for nothing ex of yours, I hope you're not caught up in the same trap Hlanzekile Samantha Mbewu" "Dad!" She warned, she hates her first name , even got it removed from her ID "Well?" "Don't ever call me that." She then blushed "I met a very good guy" "You said the same thing with all your ex's" "He's different dad" I shook my head "You never learn. Tomorrow I want him here!" "What! Dad no!" She screamed as I walked away, I can't have another punk breaking

my daughter's heart. . . _NOMSA_. I woke up and went to the hospital just like I said I would. I barely slept last night I had yet another dream similar to that one, but this time it was another guy I've never seen my whole life, I really don't understand why this is happening, could it be that it's because of what happened to me eThekwini? The pain was double yesterday's pain, it was unbearable and the line here at the clinic was very slow, the doctors were modeling around, taking break after break, why are they doing this when people are dying here, these nurses sure contribute in people's death, they are very unprofessional they need to be put on their lane! "Next!" The lady at the reception shouted, I slowly made my way to her "akusheshwe asizelanga wena wedwa la (hurry we didn't come here only for you)" wow "Good morning" She gave me a bored look "yazi kube bewufuna ukuya esbhedlela sabelungu kube uvele waya khona (you know if you wanted to go to the white's hospital you should've just went ahead)" I just looked at her "yeka ukungihlahlela amehlo ntombazane khuluma!(stop staring at me girly ,talk)" the nurses that were around laughed "Ngilethwe izinhlungu ngale ngezansi(I'm here because of the soreness down there)" She glared at me before saying "manje ngibhale esandleni?(must I write on the hand)" they busted into laughter, I swear older people can't take in this treatment. "Letha ifile (give me the file)" "Anginayo(I don't have it)" She lightly hit the desk "Amen! Hhai namhlanje lizoduma izulu

straight (no today the lightning will roar)" I swear I was at the verge of crying, she was too loud and almost everyone was now looking and laughing at me, I regret coming here! . . . _CHOCO_ . I couldn't wait to finally have Zan with me. I just hope she won't bust my cover the last thing I need is to have Chains and his crew ganging up on me. I pinned a small tracker on my t-shirt, only Sballi and I know about it in case something goes wrong. We were to meet at a certain bar then from there we'd drive to the location... I must say I'm a bit scared for my life, minutes passed and we met, he was in his dickies trousers, I hate his taste but I currently don't have much of a choice, I was also in my brown dickies trouser, black carvela, uzzi golf t-shirt and a maybach cap! The combination was horrible! We arrived at the location, here I thought it would be a very secluded area but I was wrong, it was a public space no one would imagine that someone has been kidnapped here. "Sfikile nsizwa (we've arrived man)" We got off the car and walked in "umshana udinga indoda yangempela (my niece needs a real man)" he said while chuckling, I chuckled too. He opened the door of one of the bedrooms. I gasped at the sight of her weak body, the state she was in wasn't pleasing at all, just like Sballi said, he drugged her. She was out of it. I went to hold her , I brushed her bald head which I always found cute, she had lost weight. "Umthandile?(Do you like her)" now I'm more convinced that he's crazy! "Yini indiba enje? (why is she like this)" she had a

blue eye, I'm sure she was his punching bag "Isoka ebenalo limshayile , uphuze amapilisi wokulala(her ex boyfriend beat her up, she drank sleeping pills)" this is too much I need to take her out , I need to get her help as in now! . . _RICH_ . Since I spoke to my wife in the morning I haven't spoken to her again, I just drove to work, there's a lot of things that need to be done and the last thing I need is having my suddenly 'moody' wife ruin my day. I need all the energy I can get to get everything on point and done. My cell beeped from wherever it was, I had forgotten to put it on silent, I don't need any disturbance plus I have a meeting with a very prominent client in fifteen minutes. I went to get hold of it, I didn't want to read it but what I saw made my heart stop beating for a moment. Bruno Canal is dead! But How! I mean HOW! It can't be... This can't be... My lawye, scratch that my Friend can't be dead!!!

23 ____ "We received a call from the restaurant, seems like it all started there. They either messed up his order or something like that" the detective noted down everything the doctor said. As per usual the doctors were following the procedure since it's a case of sudden death, someone needs to be held responsible. "How sure are you that it all started there?" Detective Mthembu asked "Science proved that one can suffer from anaphylaxis reaction right after a few seconds or minutes." The detective nodded "Can you give me the address of the restaurant?" The doctor noted down the address on a piece of paper then gave it to her. "Thank you doctor, I'll be in touch" she stood on her feet and shook his hand then left the hospital with her partner. It didn't take them more than an hour to get to the restaurant. "What do you think?" She asked her partner "I don't think we have a case, it's probably yet another act of carelessness, cold case." they walked through to the counter. "Good day, I'm detective Mthembu and this is my partner, officer Kay" she spoke The lady at the counter suddenly trembled she thought this had everything to do with her tendencies of stealing earrings at Jet. "Uhh ehmm how can I help you?" Voice was even shaky "We're here on an investigation of the late Advocate Bruno Canal, we believe he was here yesterday before the accident happened" the counter lady finally breathed in relief. D.Mthembu took out a photo, an ID photo that is, and showed it to her. "Ohh" the lady exclaimed

obviously recalling his face "the dude who went dramatic after eating that soup?" She chuckled replaying the event on her mind The police looked at each other . "A soup? Please tell me more about that" D.Mthembu asked in curiosity "Well he ordered something before that, then asked for a soup whilst he wait for his order" she confessed "Mam, do you remember the person who was responsible for his order?" "Yea, but she's not in today, called in sick" she shrugged. The police looked at each other again suspiciously. "Can we have her contacts and address?" "Sure" the lady went jotting down. "I take it back, everything that I said earlier, there's definitely a case here" Officer Kay whispered. . . _RICH_ . After seeing that message I cancelled all my meetings and immediately drove to Wyatt's place, see he and Bruno were more of siblings than friends and Bruno had no one else except for him, no child or even a wife! I still can't believe we've lost him, he was still strong, what could've gone wrong? I quickly ran inside and found him on the couch with his wife hugging, after the maid had let me in. "Man" he got up, he was shuttered, we bro hugged. "Nice seeing you Rich"she said, I nodded "I'll be upstairs" she left us "I still can't believe it" he said , his eyes were red , I don't want to mention his face! We sat back on the couch "It's hard, I mean, how?" He sniffed "they said something about allergic reaction." "I didn't know he was allergic" I confessed He nodded "he was, to peanuts" "Wow" this was unbelievable, I thought allergies

were minor thing, I never thought they can actually take a life. "But how did he get hold of peanuts?" "Man I also don't have any idea, the police are still working on it" "Wow" I held my head unbelievably while balancing my arms on my legs , this is not easy to take in. . . _ZOLA_ . I was watching a series while waiting for my sister to get dressed so that we leave to the hospital. I still can't believe she pulled that stunt yesterday, I haven't given her a piece of my mind but oh I sure will as soon as she comes out. Not that I didn't enjoy spending time with Sam

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fortunately it's quite the opposite, I enjoyed every single moment with her. We laughed, talked, got to know her even better, we even shared our first kiss! But Swazi must not know about this or she'll get used to it, the last thing I need is her helping me on my sentimental life. "Done!" She screamed I slowly got up making sure my face looks as firm as it never was "lalela la Swazi (listen here)" I pointed at her "ungalinge uyiphinde lento oyitshune izolo(Don't you ever repeat what you did yesterday)" judging by her look , I was doing a good job intimidating her "Askies (I'm sorry)" "Entlek ucelwe uban?(actually who asked you)" "Look I thought ukuthi(that) I should do this because you two like each other" "So you think angikwazi ukuzenzela? (I can't do it on my own" she didn't say

anything "next time you think of doing that, uzosisola (you'll regret it)" she looked down in regret, shame my poor sis "I'm sorry, I thought you'd like the surprise" I didn't say a thing, I might pour out my 'emotions' "Asambe (let's go)" I led the way with her following me... Just as we arrived at the hospital my phone rang it was Sam "go on inside, I have to take this" she left, "Sammy?" "Hey" from her voice I could tell she was smiling "How're you doing?" "I'm very good and you?" "I'm better now" "Oww and before?" "I was a bit mad" I said "Why?" "Nah it's nothing important" I don't want her thinking I regret everything that happened yesterday. Did I mention that our relationship is official now? Yep, but we won't be telling Swazi, I don't want her thinking it's all her doing. "Oh I hope so. Look I called to let you know that my dad knows, I told him" "Wow, don't you think it was a bit soon to get your parents involved?" I mean we're still getting to know each other. "I couldn't help it, I'm sorry if I shouldn't have spoken a thing" You should be "It's okay they would've known anyway." "Uhm that's not all" there's more! "Okay?" "He wants to meet you tomorrow" I swear I immediately went deaf "What!?" "It's okay if you're not ready, we'll just postpone" I cleared my throat "I'll come" the last thing I want is to disappoint her She screamed "thank you so much baby! I promise you'll love him" I chuckled "I hope so" oh so I hope... . . _CHOCO_ . I need to get her to the hospital, "ngifuna ukumthatha, manje (I want to take her, now)" I said in

the most calm way possible, but all he did was to smile at me "Ungamthatha kodwa ngaphambi kokuthi wenze njalo, asixoxe (you can take her but before doing that, let's chat)" he walked out of the bedroom , I quickly kissed her forehead and whispered "I'll be back" then left. He was on a chair with a black label on his hand. "Ave unomshana omuhle (you have a beautiful niece)" I added "Asbonge, ebeshoda nje ngendoda (thank you, she was just left with having a man)" I forced a laugh "hhai useyitholile (she's found one)" "Lalela ke nsizwa uyazi awuthathi indodakazi yomuntu ungakhiphanga lutho (listen man you know you don't take someone's daughter without paying a thing)" Sbali had already told me to expect this "Sikhuluma ngamalini?(how much are we talking about)" "Fifty thousand" "Kulungile(okay)" 50K is absolutely nothing! He drank on his bottle with a smile that went up to his cheeks, I smiled too... . . . _NARRATED_ . The police have been knocking on the waitress's door but no one answered until the landlord appeared, she frowned "why do I have police officers in my yard?" "Good day mam we're looking for the lady that works as a waitress at the restaurant, Mbali" Kay spoke "Is she in trouble?" "We're investigating a case and we'd like her to answer a few questions." "Ohh ok, but she's not here hence the door is locked" she said "Where did she go?" He asked "I don't know," she shrugged "she just packed everything and left without an explanation, only told me she's finally found a

better life" That alarmed Detective Mthembu "Do you have any idea where she could be?" She enquired The lady shook her head "all I know is that she's finally gone" "What do you mean 'finally'?" "Aii now you're asking a lot, Mbali doesn't live here anymore" "Okay thank you for your time" they quickly went to the car "are you thinking the same thing as I?" Kay nodded "Murder" they both said at once.

24 ____ I managed to pay dowry, if that's what it was, though it's clear that I was just buying her. He just sold my girlfriend to me, I swear this is not over he doesn't get to walk away that easy after everything he put her through. One of his guys drove me to the hospital then left. Chains made it clear that he wants nothing to do with his 'niece' that he doesn't want her finding out that his uncle found him a husband. I just chuckled, in fact I'm the one who doesn't want him near her ever again. I looked at her as she lay there, it's been hours since she got admitted, doctors found pills in her system, sleeping pills that is and I'm just glad he didn't drug her with cocaine or any other drug. They also said she's very dehydrated, that good for nothing was even denying her a simple yet important thing as water!

"Hmm" she moaned softly. I took her hand into mine, she's so weak. She slowly opened her eyes and scanned around the room. Just as her eyes came in contact with mine she smiled weakly. "You've fou...nd me" "Shhh" I hissed "you don't have to say anything" with my other hand I held her cheek A tear fell from her eye "you... are here" I smiled "yes I'm here, for you" I kissed her forehead then the tears, I believe she thinks she's dreaming. "Thank you" that's all she managed to say before blacking out yet again. I slowly ran my hand on her head, she's beautiful, very beautiful and I've fallen inlove with her. My heart has finally been tamed! . . _RICH_ . Seeing my friend break like that didn't sit well with me, so I decided it's better to

go freshen out. I was alone on our usual restaurant. Before leaving, the police called and informed him that it wasn't an accident but it's murder and that the suspect is on the run. This changes absolutely everything! Now we'll have to find the killer, but who would kill Bruno and why? I mean the guy always made friends wherever he went and played right by the justice, now why would anyone want him dead? "Hi" she said startling me. "Hey" "May I?" she pointed at the chair "Yes please" I cleared my throat "why are you here?" She chuckled "I haven't eaten anything so" she shrugged "I thought, why not hit a restaurant" "Oh yeah that's good" honestly I didn't know what to say, I didn't expect Sma to find me here, the last thing I want is her bumping into my wife again "You don't look okay, what's wrong?" "I..." I sighed "I lost a friend" She frowned probably wondering which friend "who?" "Bruno" her eyes shot wide, her hand ran to cover her mouth unbelievably "But, how?" "Someone killed him, no one knows why" "Oh God I can't believe this" she was written 'shock' all over her face, yea his death surprised all of us "No one does " "How are you holding up?" She put her hand on top of mine "Wyatt is already taking this too hard. One of us needs to be strong, and that has to be me" She nodded "but with me you can pour out your emotions, you're human before being a man, so if you want to talk about it..." I sighed "I'll put that in mind, thank you" She slightly squeezed my hand before letting go "have you eaten?" I shook

my head "you shouldn't starve yourself" she signalled for the waiter "I'm not hungry" She shook her head in disagreement "I won't let you leave this place without having anything" I chuckled "still stubborn I see" She gave me a side smile "Sma wouldn't be Sma without stubbornness" I shook my head, she's crazy. . . _NOMSA_ . I still regret why I went to the clinic, those nurses and doctors kept making fun of me just because that was my first time going into a clinic by myself. Though I'm grateful because I was given pills, I really don't like having to swallow pills but hey, I actually don't have much of a choice you know. I made my way in the chisa nyama, it wasn't packed as usual, still waiting for weekend to get really busy. Lara came rushing to me "Friend I was worried, where have you been?" I couldn't miss the worry in her voice. "Uhm hey" "Hi" I led her further in, "my church leader had been waiting for us after telling him about you" "I was at the hospital" She frowned "why?" "Lara

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I needed pills it's not a prayer that will help me" She sighed "this is exactly the reason I asked you how much you believed in spiritual life, whatever's happening with you needs God himself" "How so? It was just a dream then I happened to wake up with the soreness, in fact you know what I think? It's a coincidence" she shook her head "Look, you're my best friend

and I wouldn't lead you astray but again I can't force you to see someone who lives by the spirit." "Exactly Lara, now be a good friend and give me something to eat, I have to take my pills" She sighed "keep this in mind, if what's happening with you is what I think it is, then there's no doctor or medicine that will help you" For the first time in my whole life I found a reason to roll my eyes "food please" I glared at her, she glared back at me before walking away. . . _NARRATED_ . Both the police working on Bruno Canal's case were in the office discussing and working on the case. It was already clear that they were dealing with a murder case, now what they needed to break down is the WHO and WHY. Who killed him and why was he killed, the only lead they have at the moment is Mbali, the waitress. They had her picture nicely placed on a big white chart on top of it written '1st suspect' and on the center was the victim's picture Bruno Canal. After all the investigation at the restaurant, they concluded with the fact that there was no connection between Bruno and Mbali, in fact they've never met before, Wyatt knowing his sibling better than anyone else, affirmed this fact. Detective Mthembu stood before the chart with a red marker, "did you let everyone know about the suspect?" She asked "By this time her pictures are all over, she won't leave the country" officer Kay answered "Are you sure she hasn't left?" "I did a thorough investigation and yes she's still around" "We have to find her" Mthembu added while slowly hitting her picture with

the marker, she continued "she's the only key we have to the mastermind" "Correct. Between Bruno and Mbali there's no connection, atleast we're sure that Bruno never met Mbali. Now this Mbali, what's her story. I still believe there's something the landlord is hiding" D.Mthembu nodded "I got the same impression, she's knows something and that thing is very useful to us." "What if I get hold of the restaurant's footage?" He enquired "You can do that, but I don't think it'll help us. You know what I think?" She went over and sat on her swing chair "I think whoever's behind this had it all planed out perfectly. She or he had the time to investigate everything there is to know about Bruno hence he or she knew about his allergy to peanuts. The murderer thought this would be a clean crime, having nothing leading back to him or her. It was supposed to be one of the usual deaths, like mistakenly eating something you allergic to, then conclude with the fact that it was just an accident. However the plan didn't succeed." Before Officer Kay could say a word there was a knock on the door, it was Detective Mthembu's assistant "sorry to disturb you, mam there's someone on the call" "Who's it?" "She said she'd like to remain anonymous" "Then hear what she has to say" she said dismissing her "She wants to speak specifically with you, said it's about Bruno Canal's case" the police looked at each other, Mthembu quickly got up to answer "Detective Mthembu on the line" "It's about Bruno Canal's sudden death" Mthembu starred

at the space "He was seeing a married woman, did Wyatt mention that? I guess not, you know why? Because that's where all the answers are." A new lead, Mthembu thought. "They were lovers but only a few knew" "Who's the woman?, Who are you?" The caller didn't respond but instead the line went dead leaving Mthembu with yet another puzzle to solve... . . _MEANWHILE_ . Smangele was in her apartment working on the laptop when someone knocked on her door, she got up from the mat and walked to the door. "Hi" she said to the guy who stood there in his black attire and a cap hiding half of his eyes. He took out something that looked like an envelop and gave it to her without a word then left. "Hey! Get back here! Who are you!?" The guy didn't bother turning back. She looked at the white paper on her hands and walked back in while locking the door. She unfolded the paper that was nicely printed in big letters. There was no sender's name just the message, a clear message. She read "I SEE YOU GETTING COMFORTABLE ON THE RAILWAY. BE CAREFUL THE TRAIN MIGHT JUST CRUSH YOU!! GET BACK TO YOUR LANE" she read it repeatedly until the words automatically echoed in her mind, that was a warning, the message is clear. She froze "My life is in danger" she thought...

"Good morning, please come in" the maid stood aside giving Detective Mthembu and Officer Kay enough space for them to walk in. "This way, Mr Wyatt is waiting for you" she led them in to his study. After that anonymous call, the police made sure that first thing on the following day they'd go see Wyatt. He answered after the maid knocked on his door "Good morning Mr Stifler" they spoke showing him their utmost respect, after all Wyatt is a magistrate. "Morning, please do come in" they made their way in and settled on the only available couch. "Can I get you anything water, juice, coffee?" Asked the maid "Water will be fine thanks" Kay said and Mthembu nodded in agreement "Mr Wyatt?" She asked "My usual cup" the maid dismissed herself. He took off his spectacles and sat still on his chair. "So you said you had new developments on the case?" "Yes sir, the reason we're here" Officer Kay answered "Okay?" He laid his arms on the desk, ready to hear whatever they had to say "Actually we have a few questions to ask you" Mthembu exclaimed "based on those developments" "You can ask anything" Mthembu continued "Uhm, okay. Previously you said that no one knew your cousin better than you did" "True" "Then you knew about Mr Bruno's affair with a married woman?" She kept her eyes glued on Wyatt incase he shows a certain reaction Wyatt gasped in shock, he didn't expect the police to find out about this , because he's certain no one knew

about this except for him, Bruno and the woman. However He maintained a clear expression. He cleared his throat "I...uhm" "Sorry to disturb again but I brought these" the maid said, walking in without a knock. "Thank you mam, please excuse us" officer Kay spoke clearly in annoyance, he always hated being disturbed in the middle of his questioning. The maid walked away, after giving Kay an attitude, he continued "Sir you were saying?" "Oh yes." He drank his black tea "I don't know anything about any married woman, but I knew he was in a relationship, more like he was seeing someone" Mthembu couldn't move her gaze from him, she could sense that he was hiding something "are you sure you don't know her?" She asked "Yes" he answered uncomfortably. Mthembu chuckled she couldn't believe that a whole magistrate would lie to the police just to cover up murder, this got her thinking 'what if he has something to do with his death. Why is he lying, who is he protecting?' Each development was literally yet another puzzle to solve! . . . _CHOCO_ . "Welcome to your new home honey" I said with a smile on my face. She was discharged last night, doctor said there was no reason to keep her there any longer it was just a few bruises after all and her system was cleaned from the drugs. I'm glad she's here with me, I was never gonna let her stay there even for a second, the first thing I did was to drive back home, it was a long drive but here we are. I carried her to my bedroom since she was limping. I don't want her

doing anything atleast till she regains her strength of which I believe she will soon, Zan is the strongest woman I've ever known after my mother. "Ahh" she flinched as I put her on bed, Chains really did a number on my woman. "I'm sorry" I sat next to her and kissed her forehead. She didn't want to leave with me but after what happened, I told her that there's no way I'm gonna let her do her, the last time she wanted to wear the pants she ended up being locked up and almost lost her life. "Are you hungry? I can make you something soft like porridge" She shook her head "no I'm not, I just want to lie down" "Of course you must be exhausted from the trip" I helped her lie down, after taking off her slippers. "Please stay until I drift off" I smiled there's no better place I'd choose to be "Okay" I lied next to her, with her cute head on my chest. I covered her trembling body. "Sleep" I kissed her head with my arms carefully embracing her as she slowly drifted to the dream world... I was woken up by a door bell, seemed like I also had an opportunity to rest. I looked at her and she was still peacefully sleeping. I slowly moved out of bed, silent enough not to wake her up, I dragged my feet to the door, who could it be? As I opened the door, I couldn't believe what stood there looking back at me, she smirked "finally you're back. Aren't you gonna invite me in?" Just what I needed... "What are you doing here?" I kept my voice down "Please invite me in, we have to talk" "We have nothing to talk about" I kept the firmness on my

voice "Trust me we do" she pushed me to the side and clicked her heels inside. Ngiyalingwa!(I'm being tested) . . _ZOLA_ . Today is the day where I'll be meeting my girlfriend's father. I'd be lying if I said I'm ready to meet him because I'm not, I never thought I'd have to meet him so soon but hey, here we are. Sam told me to come a bit more earlier because her dad will be very busy almost the whole day. So here I am, preparing to meet the father-in-law! I got startled by my phone, it's Nono. "Hey Nono" I spoke "Zola, hi how're you?" "I'm very well and you?" "I'm good" she didn't sound good though "how's your grandfather" "Still the same" honestly my grandfather is not doing well, without those machines my grandfather is - I don't even want to think of it. "Oh that's bad." She sighed "I thought I should check up on you since you never call me" she's right and I feel really bad "I'm sorry I just, with all that I'm facing here..." I lied "I understand. When are you coming back?" Oh that. "I don't know Nono, I can't leave my sis alone" She kept quiet for a moment then said, "Okay it's cool, bye" she dropped the call before I could even utter a word. Minutes passed and I left home to Sam's place. I must say I looked the part, the last thing I need is her father thinking I'm broke and can't even take care of myself, no father would allow that kind of man in his only daughter's life."hey babe" she said and jumped on me in a hug, she's happy to see me. "Come" she held my hand as we walked inside. "You look handsome" she whispered, well right now I

don't feel so handsome. I swear fathers will make you feel like your world has reach an end. He was sittted on the couch while reading a newspaper, it was right before his face hiding him. I could just pee on my pants at this instant. "Relax" she whispered before clearing her throat, calling her father's attention. He moved the newspaper and looked at his daughter before glancing at me from head to toe, I quickly let go of Sam's hand, I don't wanna seem disrespectful. I cleared my throat, guys help me, I've never been in such an uncomfortable situation, she broke the silence "dad meet Zozo, my boyfriend" oh no did she really call me that in front of her father "babe this is my father" this girl is literally digging a grave for me "Zozo?" His father enquired with a firm voice I cleared my "Zola, my name is Zola" "Sit" he said after a moment. We went and shared a couch "So you are the boy who wants to break my daughter's heart?" The authority in his voice, I couldn't miss it even if I wanted to "Dad!" She warned "Young lady, Upstairs" she gave him those pleading eyes but he was not having it, she left while sulking like a baby, I'd be smiling right now but I can't, not here. "So where are you from?" He threw his newspaper on the coffee table "I was born and raised here but a few years back I moved to Johannesburg" He nodded "what do you do?" Okay... "I own a chisa nyama and I co-own a carwash with my friends" His lips curved down "not bad but not good enough either. What are your intentions with my daughter?" I was

expecting this question "Well we're still getting to know each other I'm sure she did mention that to you. We'll see where it takes us" He chuckled "until when? When you finally find your way between her legs?" Oh God "no, I..." "If you say no then you'll wait for her till you get married" I gasped, I never thought of marriage "judging from your facial expression I believe you don't want to marry her" "It's not that sir, like I said we'll see where our relationship takes us" this man was literally putting me between a rock and a wall... . . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . I placed Mr Wyatt Stifler's picture on the far left of Bruno's picture. I would be having my doubts about the information I received from that anonymous caller. But after questioning Mr Wyatt I believe there's more to this case. Why would a whole magistrate lie to us, doesn't he want justice for his late cousin? Why? I wrote a question mark on his picture after drawing a circle around it, what's your story Wyatt? If Bruno was having an affair with a married woman, wait - could the married woman be Wyatt's wife? Or one of his client's. Either way, whomever Bruno was seeing, either is connected to Wyatt, or the husband is, that is if he's not the one. I think Mr Wyatt should be interrogated, he needs to be brought in for more questioning. Even if he holds the highest position in the authorities, he has to be brought in, all the answers we need lie with him!

26 ____ "What are you doing here? I told you I want nothing to do with your sister or the baby she's carrying. That's not my baby" she looked at me, I really don't know what these people really want from me. "Would you relax, before you grow gray hair. Please kindly serve me water" I chuckled she must be kidding me "So you came all the way here to drink water?" "Please" you know what? I'm not gonna fight her right now, not because I can't but simply because I don't want to wake Zan up. I made my way to the kitchen right after clicking my tongue, I curse the day I met Cam(Pam). "Thank you" she said and drank from the bottle "Now why are you here?" "Sit" I chuckled she was really pissing me off "I'm gonna ask you for the last time before dragging you out. What do you want?" She sighed "I want you to take responsibility for your actions. Assume that unborn baby and fix things with my sister, or -" "Or what!?" She was testing my patience "huh? Or what? You going to force me?" My voice was now high and surely Zan will be awake. "Lungelo I'm giving you a chance to choose wisely" she was so calm, which was annoying me "I don't need any chance from you, lalela la wemuntu wesifazane(listen here woman) I'm not gonna be told by you what and what not to do siyezwana!?(understood)" I went and grabbed her arm roughly, I won't let a woman disrespect me like this, my father would disown me and my mother would regret ever giving birth to me. She was fighting me off as I dragged her out until, "Stop!" I

turned and looked at her, she stood there "what's going on, what's all this?" Cam's sister chuckled in disbelief "Oh so this is the reason you don't want my sister, because you have another victim warming your bed!" "I said get out!" "Choco! What is all this?" Zan asked completely confused "I'll explain later okay. Mean time let me get this trash out of here" I grabbed her arm and pulled her She screamed "be careful young lady he's gonna desert you after having his way with you!" I banged the door after throwing her out "You will regret this!" She continued screaming. How did I involve myself with crazy people... I turned to be met by Zan who was ready to know everything, just what I needed. "So?" She spoke. I went to sit next to her on the couch "Her sister has a crush on me and now she's trying to force me into a relationship with her" she eyed me like she was seeing through my soul "Why would she do that?" I shrugged "I don't know, they're crazy" "Choco you not good at lying" "You got me." I sighed "I kind of had a one night with her sister, she caught feelings and now she's trying to force me into a relationship with her" I confessed though not saying everything "Are you sure it was a one night thing?" "Yea it was, I mean I don't even remember her or her name" she nodded "I'm sorry you had to witness that" I pulled her into a warm hug "It's okay" she whispered "You shouldn't be walking around, you're limping" I added "Come on it's nothing" "No no no, let's get you back to bed" I carried her, she tried to protest but failed

dismally, I mean no one wins against Choco. . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . Kay made his way in holding a white container of food and two cans of redbull. "I brought your favourite, dagwood" I smiled at him, I'm one of the women who have enough money to buy anything, but one thing for sure is I'll never stop eating kasi food, no matter how wealthy I can get. "Thank you Kay but I'm not hungry" He shook his head in disagreement "You've been overworking yourself on this Bruno Canal case that you hardly eat" I chuckled "You know how I get with my work" "I know you become too obsessed with finding the culprit" I shook my head "obsessed is not the correct term. Let's just say I'm devoted to what I do" He gently pulled my arm, I was still standing before the white chart. He made me sit on my chair whilst he sat on the desk facing me "fine I'll eat" "That's more like it." He opened the container, we usually share our food it has actually become more of a habit since we almost always together. "You know what I've been thinking?" "I'm sure you're about to talk about work. Unbelievable woman!" He screamed. I laughed I can't help it, work is like a drug to me. "I think we should bring Mr Wyatt in for questioning" He narrowed his eyes "You think he knows something?" I nodded with food on my mouth "but why would he lie, the man is on the justice side" I swallowed "could be a frontal, we don't know what's behind his closed doors" He nodded "You have a point. But what could he be hiding?" "The wife who happened to be

Bruno's lover. He's protecting her, he knows the lover" I exclaimed "I noticed when we questioned him." He added "See" "But we also have another way" he spoke "I'm all ears" "The victim's phone." I stopped eating and paid attention "it's still with us, we can go through his calls

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messages, everything, who knows maybe there we'll find something" he has a point I smiled "this is the reason I love working with you" he bend over and kissed me "I know" genius . . . _RICH_ . I haven't spoken to my wife about Bruno's death, she's been very occupied with work, leaves before I even wake up and returns when I'm already in bed, we hardly see each other. Today I decided to go see her at the boutique, funny how we live together but haven't seen her since that day when she ambushed me at the office. "Mr Mbewu" the receptionist greeted, my wife's boutique is not like others. This one is big like a certain different company, it's doing great. "Hi, is my wife in?" "Yes sir, you may go in I'll let her know that you're on the way to her office" "Thank you" I left. Minutes later I knocked before walking in her office, she was busy on her laptop. "Mbewu!" She quickly closed her laptop and walked up to me "Why are you here?" "Am I not allowed to see my wife" I raised an eyebrow "That's not what I meant silly" she playfully hit my shoulder. We sat on the couch. "I know I just came to check up

on you , since you've been scarcely home" "Oh I'm sorry I just have a lot to do" "I understand." I cleared my throat "I have something to tell you" She frowned "Okay?" "Bruno is dead, he's no more" She looked at me with a plain look, I couldn't pick up any emotions, they weren't related what was I expecting? "Oh God but how? He was so, I mean he looked so strong" that he was "Someone killed him and they're looking for his murderer" That caught her , her hands quickly moved to cover her mouth. She couldn't believe it "do they have any leads?" "Seems like the girl who served him is on the run" her eyes got wider, she couldn't believe it. Cruel world I tell you... . . .
NOMSA . I wish I could be there for Zola, I wish I could just leave and go be with him but I can't, except for the business I also can't because I've never been anywhere else except for our hood, the last thing I need is getting lost. When he told me that nothing has changed from his grandfather's health, right then I remembered my grandmother. I would hate for him to go through the same thing I went through when I lost my grandma. I was at the carwash with the guys and Lara, playing love birds with Shasha as usual. I took out my phone and scrolled on my whatsapp, it's boring I have approximately five chats. I viewed profile pictures, only one caught my attention. I couldn't believe what my eyes were seeing, so he's out there saying his grandfather is not getting better while he - he takes pictures kissing with girls! I don't believe he's cheating on me , I

don't believe this! . . _ENZO_ . I looked at the keys on my hand and smirked. This Choco boy thinks he'll play with my sister then disrespect me and get away with it, never! He clearly doesn't know me. When I got there I had something else planned out, I had another way of giving him the muthi(traditional medicine) but when my eyes laid on the coffee table and saw his keys, right then I saw a much easier way. When I asked him for water he fell right on my plan, he gave me an opportunity to grab the keys though I'll have to sneak in before he notices, but first I have to get him out of that apartment, but how?...

27 ____ I'm very angry at what Zola did, or shall I say how he's handling himself. The least he could've done was to come clean at me, than to cheat on me. I can tolerate anything but not what he did to me. Things were never supposed to be like this, they were not supposed to reach this point , but hey what can I do, he ruined everything. Today is one of the busy days at the Chisa nyama but before I leave to work, I need to take care of somethings. I logged on to facebook and created a fake account then went straight to Zola's timeline hoping to see if he changed his relationship status, to my unfortunate it's still single. I went along to his photos, probably there is what I'm looking for, bingo! A picture, judging from what I was seeing they were indoors, it's like they were having a date or something, everything was well organized with flowers all over. I went to the comments and I found exactly what I was looking for. She had commented 'thanks to you I had the most amazing day' I went on to her profile and it was her. I didn't waste any more time I hit the 'add friend' button then logged out, I'll deal with the rest later. . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . Another day and we still have a puzzle to solve. Today we'll be bringing in Mr Wyatt for interrogations. This case is very intriguing, how I love to deal with such cases, I always leave a mark of victory. I still want my name at the top and dealing with such cases gives an opportunity and an honor to prove it to myself that I'm victorious. I heard a knock before he let himself in "Detective"

he said with a smile. I frowned "Kay, and that smile?" "You won't believe the latest" he sat on the desk with his one leg dangling "What's up?" He smiled "we've found the waitress" I quickly stood on my feet "what!?" Great! He nodded. I walked around and turned to look at him "where is she?" "Interrogation room" I smiled "Good job" I went and pat his shoulder but instead he pulled me up for a kiss "I love seeing this side of you, the devoted woman!" "Heard a new Captain has been elected" I changed the topic He nodded "yep and it's a she" I opened my eyes wide this has never happened ever since I started working for the justice system."Wow" "I had the exact expression when I heard" "Let's just go get the answers" I pulled away and walked out... . . _AZENATHI_ . "Mam" "Yes?" I responded without looking at her "I found another one" I looked up and took it. It was yet another photo but this one was different it carried a lot of memories, a whole throw back. The only picture that kept me going everytime when I felt like quitting, like giving up all my dreams. I glared at the picture, it was me, my now fifteen year old daughter Yuna and eleven year old son Andile. At the time they were still very young, Yuna was eight while Andile was just four. On the picture I had my son on my back and Yuna was old enough to walk on her feet, I was just twenty three years old when I was kicked out, that evil woman whom I called 'mother-in-law' did the most despicable thing any woman could ever do. I will never forget how she

kicked me out, burnt all my elegant clothes then she said "goduka ngalahlobo wafika ngalo (leave the same way you got here)" bare in mind when my late husband took me there I had absolutely nothing! When that woman chased me out she didn't even have mercy on my children, her own grandchildren! She couldn't even let them take their clothes or even shoes, I had to sew some clothes using a needle. Lucky for me I always kept garments of which they came in very handy at that time. I'm sure you're wondering why she chased me out... Here's a thing, I was very poor before meeting my late husband, when he took me to his house, there my in-laws thought I was after his money. They tried everything to separate me from their son but failed dismally because of the love he had for me, until - until he got assassinated and lost his life. There his death caused a final separation, that's when his mother didn't waste any time in freeing herself from me and my children. Though I had no where to go, God continued sheltering me with his love and now here I am, I have everything I need my children with me, my money and now I just got promoted to the position I've always yearned for... . . _ENZO_ . I hadn't thought of a way to deal with Choco, but I've currently given myself something to do. I had been inside my car a few feet away from his apartment. Whilst I plan something I had decided to be on watch, who knows maybe he'll leave together with the girl and there I'll get an opportunity to finish what he started. . .

DETECTIVE MTHEMBU . "Well well well" I said walking in. She looked at me with red eyes, I don't know if she's been crying or it's just anger. I grabbed a chair and sat on it

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"Let's see" I looked at her with a smirk "Where have you been?" "Around" she said blankly I chuckled "did you enjoy the money?" "What money?" She raised an eyebrow "Fierce one I see" Kay got in and stood by the door "What's your story?" my eyes narrowed. She shrugged her shoulders "why did you do it?" "Do what?" "Kill Bruno, you were the waitress that served him that night, if you didn't dare disappear the following day maybe, just maybe we'd say it was a mistake. But in this case you did exactly the opposite, heard you were finally going to live the 'life' " I looked at her, she was too calm. She gave me the impression that she's either used to being interrogated or she's been through worse. I definitely need to look into her, there's something off about her. "I'd like to call my lawyer" she said "Oh so you'll need a lawyer? But why? To defend you from that cruel stunt you pulled? Why did you do it!?" I shouted unintentionally "I didn't kill him! You know what? I know my rights, and I won't say anything before speaking to my lawyer" I stared at her for a long time, this girl has been through this, she's going to be a tough one! I made my way out with Kay. "She won't be easy to crack" he exclaimed "You also saw that?"

He nodded "there's a lot about this girl, maybe we should check her records" "True. Please do that" "And..." I looked at him waiting for him to continue "we went through his phone" "Did you find anything?" "Actually we did. Most are unnecessary but then we came across one, of which I'm sure they belong to the girlfriend" I smiled "those are good news Kay, finding the woman is a step closer to the end of this case! Who's the woman?" He slightly scratched his head "there's a problem. He saved the number as 'my life' no name even on their texts" I frowned "you could've tracked the number!" "We tried but it led to a dead end, the number has been terminated" I hit the wall in frustration "dammit but wait..." I thought "did you check the registration?" "I also did and unfortunately the number was registered by Bruno" "No this can't be happening!" I shook my head unbelievably, I need to think! . . . _ZANDY_ . I stared at him as he moved around the kitchen, he was in his sweatpants and a vest, he looked good. I'm truly grateful for what he did, he saved my life, he gave me another chance to live. I'm glad he came back for me, though I still don't know what happened to baby Blue, my heart aches at the thought of her, I hope wherever she is she's safe but where could she be, what did Chains do to that innocent baby. As for my friend's body I wonder where he buried it, she didn't deserve such cruelty. Chains will burn in hell! "Which juice should I pour you?" I would definitely enjoy seeing him going to hell, infact you know

what he deserves? A very slow painful death. I so wish I could witness his downfall "Zan!" I squeezed the bear on my arms. "Zandy!" I immediately snapped out of it and looked at this handsome figure before me "Huh?" He shook his head "What's going on in that tiny head of yours?" He came and sat next to me before putting my feet on his thighs "It's nothing" I said blankly "Try again" "Fine. I - I was thinking about everything that happened" "Wanna talk about it?" He massaged my feet, making me feel more comfortable and relaxed "He killed Busi" his eyes shot wide "and I don't know what he did to her baby" "What! And only are you telling me this now!?" "I - Well..." "No Zan! He needs to be dealt with and I'm going to do that now!" "No Lungelo!" He got up and left me "Choco!" he banged the door on his way out, what now? . . . _ENZO_ . I watched closely as he hurried to his car, lucky for him he had separated his car keys from the house keys, or should I say lucky for me? Within a few minutes his car sped away, I wonder what happened. Anyway, I quickly got hold of the herbs and stepped out of the car to the apartment, how will I do it though with that girl there? Wait... I quickly ran back to get a pepper spray from my car, this is the most brilliant idea I ever thought off, but I'll have to be as quick as I can. I'm glad I won't have to use those keys anymore. I knocked at the door and hid myself by the wall, with my pepper spray on stand-by I'll have to make sure she doesn't see me. I waited till she slowly opened the door, I got myself

ready. She dragged her feet to the door frame but before her eyes could land on me I spray her eyes. She screamed in agony and bend down "Help!!" I pulled her back and closed the door, there's no time to waste! It's good that this is just an apartment I won't have to look for one bedroom. Within seconds I was in his bedroom, I'm glad the sangoma said even if someone else sleeps on the bed it won't affect them only the culprit. I sprinkled the herbs then made my way out, the girl was now lying on the floor while rocking back and forth with her hands on her eyes. I went to the kitchen and poured the liquid on the bottle of water and juice. As soon as I was done I ran to the door and stood there before opening it. I looked at her as she was still screaming it's a pity no one cares around here about what happens with their neighbors. I smiled, now my heart feels a whole better.

28 ____ I don't believe Zan kept this away from me, I would have dealt with Chains right away but no, once again she decided to do things her way. I'm very angry right now I could just drive to KZN and put a bullet through his head, how sick is he, how can he just kill a woman for such a petty and childish reason, how ruthless is he! "Yini ndoda(what's wrong man)" he stood next to the table. I couldn't take in what Zan told me I just drove straight to Tembisa, we need to take care of Chains as in yesterday! "Bloma(sit)" he sat with a worried look "Ringa nam(talk to me)" "UChains ubhodise umacala kaZandy (he killed Zan's friend)" "Huh!?" He took off his cap "wena uchuneni?(what did you do)" "Nix uceda ukung'sikela(nothing she just told me)" "Hhai no!! siyoqeda now ngaye, asgcwale istradi! (We going to end him now, let's go!)" He didn't wait for me to finish, he immediately stood on his feet and took out a gun on his lower back on the waist and made sure that there were enough bullets. People were just watching, no one panicked that's how ghetto this hood is... "asiye! (Let's go)" he snapped, I just took my gin and off we went. . . _AZENATHI_ . For the first time ever since I started living here, this will mark as my first time moving to a new place. I've always dreamt of this day, I never thought it would be here so soon, I never thought I'd be living my dream so soon. I looked at my bedroom and smiled, I'll miss this room, here I shed a lot of tears, in this room I poured my heart out, each and every night after hiding

my pain behind my smile the whole day, this is the only room that knows the true me and every single thing my heart felt. I would act strong the whole day but as soon as I walked in here, I'd break down. I heard a knock "Aze! We have to hit the road sweetheart" Luyolo, the only friend I have, the only friend that helped me when my in-laws deserted me, when I had no one, when I was at my worst! He helped me, gave me a shelter and food. I'm glad I have him in my life. "Coming!" I stared at my room one last time before walking out, this is it, this is the beginning of a new chapter of my life. . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . "He's here" said one of the police officers, I walked out of my office and headed to the interrogation room, where I found Mr Wyatt sitting with his head bowed on the desk and both his hands on the back of his head. I went ahead and sat down. "Mr Wyatt Stifler" "Detective, why was I brought in here?" "I believe you know the answer to that." "Then I wouldn't be asking" he raised his eyebrow "Well sir, we believe that there's a lot you hiding from us. I'm going to ask you again, who's the woman your cousin was seeing?" He chuckled "I thought I had answered that question" I shook my head, he shrugged "I don't know" "Why are you hiding her identity, what is she to you? Could it be your wife Mr Wyatt?" "What!?" He chuckled nervously "that's absurd!" He shouted "Then who is she!?" "I don't know!" I stared intensely at his eyes, he's lying can't even maintain eye contact. The door busted open, it was

Officer Kay, he was sweating "Something came up" he said breathing out loud I looked at him, what could be more important than this.. "what?" He looked at Mr Wyatt then back at me "we've found Bruno's fling or girlfriend, whatever she was" "Are you for real!?" His expression affirmed me that he was telling the truth, I turned to Wyatt he had just become pale, he sure didn't see this one coming. I chuckled then walked out with Kay "how?" I asked after closing the door "Someone sent us their picture" I frowned "Who?" "I believe the same person who told us about their affair" "Wow! Finally! It doesn't matter who the source is, did she also mention how to get her?" He nodded "who's she?" "Nthati - Nthati Mbewu" what!?

.. _ZANDY_ . I tried his cell for the hundredth time but he still didn't pick up, where could he be when I need him the most. I would've loved to have seen the woman that was here

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thanks to the long weave I managed to pick up that she's a woman but she didn't let me see her face, I struggled for an hour or more to open my eyes and the coughing was uncontrollable, however, the eye irritation and the redness is still there. I went through half of the things and nothing is missing unless of course there's something I don't know off. I wrote him a text, I hope he'll read it since it seems like he's avoiding me. . . _SAM_ . I've been in relationships but none of

the guys I dated made me feel so much inlove like Zola makes me, I swear he's everything a woman could ever wish for. I know we come from different families in terms of status, but he's everything. I'm glad he's not the type of guy that depends on family but has his own thing up and running. I saw a facebook notification , it was a friend request from a certain ANGEL SIMKA, she didn't have a lot on her timeline, by the look of things she seems to be new on Facebook. As soon as I confirmed her request, a message followed 'hi girl' ncoah she must be really bored not even knowing where to start, I just hope she won't be like others who comment with a 'hey' on my pictures. 'Hey darling' I texted back and immediately she sent another text 'how's you?' , I'm sure she has absolutely nothing to do 'you look beautiful' she double texted 'Thanks' I wrote, this will be a long day. A call came through, saving me from this new zombie, it was hubby "hey love" He sniffed "hi" he sounded different "What's wrong?" "I- it's my grandfather, we were forced to...to...to" "Okay breathe" I sat up straight I heard him taking in a few breaths "we were forced to switch off the machines and now here we are, we've lost him for good" he broke down oh my poor baby, I don't even want to imagine how my friend feels right now "Oh God, where are you?" "On my way home" he said "Okay I'm also leaving right now, we'll meet at your place." I quickly changed to decent clothes, before leaving I texted the girl who was already triple texting me 'chat

later doll, got an emergency' then logged out. . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . I couldn't stop smiling, the recent development makes me happy. I believe a lot of answers are with this woman. Though I still can't believe the woman is Nthati, my designer. I remember when I used to work undercover, she used to help me so much with beautiful dresses, I thought she was the sweetest. It's true you never know when the serpent approaches! "We need to let him go then, please get ready we're fetching the woman today!" I said and left. Wyatt was still there looking all pale, "sir, you're free to go" He chuckled "so you brought me in here for nothing! Do you know how many things I could have done, I could sue you for this!" I rolled my eyes "come on Mr Wyatt between you and I, we both know you're not a saint! Matter of fact you know a lot!" "Are you accusing me of anything miss?" I shook my head "not yet, but best believe I have my eyes on you, one mistake and you'll be in here" "Should I feel threatened!?" He was getting annoyed "I don't care how you feel" he clicked his tongue then made his way out without thinking twice "I'm watching you Stifler" I whispered "Someone wants to meet you" I got startled, Kay! I frowned "Who?" "Captain" "What! She's already here?" "Yes and the first person she asked about is you" "O-kay in a good or bad way?" He chuckled "you'll just find out let's go" he led the way "Wait," he looked at me "is she intimidating?" He laughed "What's wrong with you, since when do you chicken out?" I

laughed, we went along to her new office and knocked, she shouted that we should enter and there we made our way in, I was even scared to look at her, I had my eyes fixed on the floor "Detective!" Kay slightly hit my shoulder, I snapped out of it and looked at her and Wow she's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen. "Captain this is Detective Mthembu" she clicked her heels to me "You don't have to, officer Kay" she stretched her hand to me I stretched mine and said "Detective Mthembu " She smiled and shook my hand "nice to meet you Detective, I'm Captain Aze - Azenathi Kani. I believe we'll be working very well together" I smiled, I hope too...

29 ____ "Chat later doll, got an emergency!" I rolled my eyes as I read her text. Who does she think she is mxm. "And now?" Shasha asked, we were at the chisa nyama. Since it was busy he offered a hand. I ignored him "uke waringa nobade?(have you spoken to our friend)" I shook my head, more like I was trying to avoid him. "Hhai njani manje?(how come)" I stopped what I was doing and stood still before looking at him straight in the eye "awuhlukane nami! (Would you stay away from me)" I snapped He glared at me shocked "Nono uright? (Are you okay)" "Uyeke nokung'biza kanjalo! (And stop calling me that)" I left him there and rushed to the kitchen, the landlord was around "Nomsa yini wangathi uthukuthele nje (What's wrong you look angry)" "Yaz Ma abanye abantu banescefe! (Some people are annoying)" I shouted inevitably "Nomsa yehlisa umoya sisi, woza. (Calm down, come)" I sighed and followed her to the dining room. We sat across each other "khuluma nami (talk to me)" I took in a few breaths "uZola(it's Zola)" She frowned "wenzeni?(What did he do)" "Khona lo azwana naye (he's seeing someone)" "Lokho akuk'jabulisi?(that doesn't make you happy)" she asked. I nodded "yini 'ndaba? Bengicabanga ukuthi ningabangani (why? I thought you were friends)" I shook my head "besingaphezu kwalokho(we were more than that)" She glanced at me like she's searching for my soul "usho ukuthi uyanidlala? (You mean he's playing you)" I nodded. She shook her head unbelievably "ngangingacabangi ukuthi uyilohlobo

lomfana (I never thought he was that kind of a boy)" I shrugged my shoulders, Lara immediately rushed in "sisters uyawaz kubusy namuhla wela ula uyacoca (you know today it's busy and here you are chatting)" she spoke her poor Zulu. I didn't wait for her to tell me twice, I quickly went back to work. . .

CHOCO . We had just arrived at the club to plan everything thoroughly, we can't just ambush Chains and his lapdogs or it might turn bad for us. I noticed that I had tons of missed calls from Zan and a message, my phone had been on silence ever since I left. The text read 'Hey, I know you ignoring me on purpose, I'm sorry okay. Lungelo I need you here, a woman was here, she sprayed me with a pepper spray before I could see her face. I tried to go through everything but seems like she didn't take anything. I'm so confused and scared what if she sends someone to hurt me? Please come back!' I immediately called her... "Choco! Finally" "Zan are you okay? Did she hurt you?" "No she didn't, though the after effects of the spray are not doing me any good" "Did you see a doctor?" "How?" I scratched my head, she's never been around Pretoria, it won't be easy to find a hospital or even a pharmacy. "I was thinking you could take me" "I- uhm, I'm not in Pretoria" "What... wait please don't tell me you went after Chains" the worry in her voice. I kept quiet. "No! Please don't do anything, he's capable of killing you, that guy is crazy Lungelo please, I'm begging you, come back!" She was crying, this is new. Zan is one of the

women who never cry, like never! Unless she does it in discrete. "I'll be fine Zan, you shouldn't worry yourself. I'm a man and I know how to take care of myself" "Lungelo please, if you can't do it for me then do it for your mother. I know how much you're fond of her, do you want to hurt her? Is that what you want?" I sighed "Zan I'll call you later" "Lu..." I ended the call before she could say one more word, this has to be done. Chains needs to be dealt with accordingly! "Abafana bami basendleleni, ngiyathemba uMaketanga uyilindele impi! (my boys are on their way, I hope Chains is ready for war)" Sbali is not backing down, I also shouldn't. I must forget Zan's pleadings and cries. Chains has caused people a lot of pain, it's about time he pays. . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . We made our way in this beautiful building, now I believe it when it's said don't trust quiet people. Nthati is the most quiet woman, she's an introvert and very smart but seems like behind all that is a ratchet woman. "Hi, I'm detective Mthembu and this is my partner officer Kay, we're here to speak to Mrs Mbewu" I said to the receptionist "Do you have any appointment?" She asked while roughly chewing the gum, it was irritating "I don't think you heard what I said. I'm detective Mthembu not some client!" She rolled her eyes then made a call "Mrs Mbewu

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there's a police woman and man looking for you" Kay chuckled "Yes mam... okay... will do" she blew the gum and looked at us, "you may go up, she's waiting for you" I gave her the mother of all the fake smiles "now that wasn't hard, thank you" if eyes could kill, I'd be a thousand feet under! She glared at me until the elevator closed. "You know how to deal with them" he said I chuckled "I've long been in this field" , we got off and went to her office, she looked as beautiful as always. "Mrs Mbewu" we greeted "Hi you may come in" we walked in and settled on the couch, "so how may I help you?" She asked after making herself comfortable on the chair "We're here on Mr Bruno Canal's case, does his name ring a bell to you?" Shock was written on her face "I - uhm..." She cleared her throat "well... I ehh" we both gazed at her as she startled! Cat must have got her tongue... . . . _AZENATHI_ . I've been reading Mthembu's report and I must say I'm very impressed. When I was told about her I thought they were just being nice but seems like what they said was true. I'm glad I won't have to work with lazy people like back then. I have a very flexible and devoted team, there's no doubt we'll be working perfectly together. "How do you like your office?" he made his way in. Luyolo currently lives in Joburg, he's a single father to a ten year old boy, his wife is late died of cancer. "Not bad at all, not bad." He frowned "that's not enough, I want you to have the best office with the best view" Luyolo is a COP (chief of police) when I met him he was just a

police lieutenant, he's also one of the best in the police department. "Come on, what is this, some hotel room?" He chuckled "you'll never change, just live a little" he sat across me "You know me better than that, I can't be 'living a little' when people are taking law into their own hands" He sighed, I know exactly what he's about to say "I know I'm not God, I can't fix the world. But I can play my part for this is the reason God established the authorities" "You know what let's just change the topic. Have you met the staff?" I nodded "and?" I shrugged my shoulders "they seem to be the best team, they're very united. I've been going through their files and seems like they get the job done on time." "That's good" "Very" "The kids?" "Did you some how forget that we drove straight here as soon as we arrived? I haven't got the chance to be with them or talk to them" He chuckled, just then my phone rang, speak of the devil "Yuna" I answered, Luyolo smiled, the love he has for my kids is out of this world. "Mom!" She screamed "What's going on baby?" "It's your son" I shook my head, those two fight like they're twins "stop it!" She shouted. "Anyway. There's nothing to eat here" "Oh no, I completely forgot baby. I'll send Rose the money and she's gonna get you something" Rose is our helper always been, she practically has no one that's the reason she traveled with us. "Please make it fast before we die of famine" I chuckled "okay baby, and stop fighting with your brother" "Don't worry just one slap will take him to sleep" I shook my

head then ended the call. "They're fighting, again?" He asked. I nodded "those two are like Tom and Jerry" we laughed. Those two are my pride and joy... . . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . "Of course!" She moved uncomfortably "What was your relationship with him?" Kay asked She slightly scratched her nose "well he was my husband's lawyer" she nodded, trying to convince herself "How well did you know him?" I asked. This is one of the strategy we use, asking the same question in different ways they usually fall on the trap. "Not that much, just like friends know each other" I took down the notes "your friend I see" "Uhm- more like our friend" "Wasn't he just your husband's lawyer?" He asked "He was a friend too." "Did you have anything specific with him?" "Wha... no I, no" "No?" I asked She shook her head "No" Kay put her picture kissing with Bruno in front of her "what do you have to say about this?" Her mouth opened in shock , her facial expression was out of this world "I ehm... who's that?" I chuckled, what is she playing at. She chuckled "did you really think that was m - me?" She held her chest dramatically "that's photoshop or someone who looks like me. That's not me" she stood on her feet then went to pour herself water that's before she gulped down the whole glass. Kay and I looked at each other, this case isn't a walk in the park!

30 ____ I hate to see my friend like this. She was in deep melancholy, I didn't even know what to say. I was never good at comforting anyone but this is my best friend and I have to try my best, though I can't even put up wise words. Zola was out to get 'fresh air' I can imagine how he feels... "He will be dearly missed" Bloom broke the silence, she and Pam rushed here after I let them know. Swazi tried to convince Pam to go back home but she bluntly shut her down and said 'I'm pregnant not sick, I'll always be there for the people I love even if I was sick' how sweet! Her bump was now visible, my little niece or nephew is growing, can't wait to see him or her, but I hope it's a she we can't afford to have a boy who'll turn out a loser like the father. My brother doesn't want to assume his responsibilities and keeps hiding behind the 'it's not my baby' excuse, he's very wrong I trust my friend and I believe her, that's a Mbewu growing in there! "Yea remember when he used to chase us with his sjambok" Pam joked. We laughed, Swazi smiled "Yelling for everyone to hear that we slept out" I added "He'd be like 'ninuka notshwala'(y'all even smell alcohol)" Pam imitated his voice. We laughed, I excused myself. Zola was on the floor with his head resting on his knees. I sat next to him. "He was the best grandfather anyone could ever ask for" I chuckled "the most strict and sweet at the same time" I sighed "a few days before he got admitted he was very happy, I'm sure wherever he is it would make him sad to know that

you guys are suffering like this, he wouldn't want you to mourn him in pain and agony but yes to remember all the good times and the good deeds he did while still alive." He looked at me with red eyes then did the unexpectedly, he hugged me for dear life. I let him be, my poor man... . . . _NARRATED_ . She got inside rushing after making sure that no one was behind her. She quickly went to the kitchen and yelled "traitor!" grabbed Nomasonto's arm before leading her to the study. She shut the door behind them "and now?" Sonto asked with a frown. Nthati paced around the room without breathing a word.

"Kwenzenjani?(what's going on)" she was worried about her. Nthati never gets like that, ever! She sat down and looked at the helper "Did you have anything to do with it?" She frowned in confusion "What are you talking about?" "The damn picture of Bruno and I!" She yelled Sonto shook her head "What picture is that?" Nthati's eyes narrowed "if it's not you then who?" "Care to explain to me what's going on?" She sighed "the police know, they have the picture" Sonto's eyes shot wide, she hit her with a dishcloth that she was holding "how, can, you, be, so careless!?" She hit her after every pause, "I thought you were discreet with this relationship" "I was, okay." Nthati brushed her shoulder where she hit her "I don't know what happened, but whoever it is, it's someone very close" Sonto nodded while also grabbing a chair "now the question is who, could it be Rich?" Nthati did not expect that question "Don't play like that"

"This is not a game, everything is possible" Nthathi didn't let her speak twice, she rose up and rushed out. Sonto shook her head... . . _AZENATHI_ . I've been reading a report on the case of murder, I believe the one Mthembu and Kay are working on. Very interesting case I must say, similar to the very first case I nailed when I started working in Joburg. I knocked before making my way in, she was working on a culprit chart "Captain" she did the salute sign "Detective" "How may I be of help, is there anything you need?" "No" I walked on to the chart, this definitely reminds me of my first case, very similar. "Heard the magistrate was brought in for questioning" I said "Yep" "Courageous of you" "He's also human and suspect if not accomplice" I turned to look at her "I like you" she smiled, I turned back to the chart "the lover, what does she know?" "A lot but she didn't confess, not even to being a girlfriend" "She has something to do with his death" I exclaimed "My thoughts exactly" "I see she's married, what does the husband have to say about this" "I'll be talking to him tonight" I nodded "that's good" . . _CHOCO_ . Tonight is the night where we'll finally put an end to the 'mighty' Chains. Sbali's boys were already here

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we were at the back of the club, earlier on I called an urgent meeting to finally introduce myself to the staff, the girls are very happy to have a boss like me, some were even flirting, the

very same reason I didn't want to introduce my self all along. However I've made it clear that I'm nothing but their boss all I want is professionalism! "Siyezwana!?" (Are we together)" Sbali spoke. They nodded in agreement. "Akunyakazwe! (Let's get moving)" they quickly rushed out. "Ndoda yini uyasha? (Man are you getting cold feet)" he asked me "Ngeke kwenzeke lokho, namhlanje siyomsaphaza ub'copho! (That'll never happen, today we'll split his brain)" He nodded "asiye (let's go)" we made our way inside the club. Our the plan won't backfire! . I spotted him on the table at a far corner, playing boss as usual. I made my way there with my drink on my hand, this will help me loosen up. As soon as I got to him he recognised me and started saying some praises, I stood there with my smile of convenience. "Anisidedele (leave us)" he said to his guys "waduka nsizwa, ukwenzani umshana wami?(then you disappeared man, what is my niece doing to you)" I chuckled and sat across him "uyazi kahle indawo yakhe lowo (she knows her place very well)" He laughed "kuhle lokho(that's good) kuhle kakhulu (very good)" "Awuthi sishawe umoya ngaphandle (let's go have some air outside)" he nodded and out we went but before that his boys tried to tag along luckily he told them to just enjoy the night and forget about him. As we reached outside I could spot all the guys as we were walking down the street, I had convinced him that I'm going to meet one of my friends' , and he played along perfectly well. He even offered to

accompany me in case they tried to mug me along the way. As we continued walking the guys ran to us with masks on, they were armed. I dropped the bottle as an act of tremor, he tried to reach to his packet but one of the guy spoke before he could move a finger "uke nje. ngizokugqashula! (I dare you. I'll shoot you)" Another guy appeared from the back, without thinking twice he hit him on the head with the back of a gun and he fell. Everything was happening so fast that I even forgot I was part of the plan, a BMW sped our way, must be Sbali. I'm glad it's dark, or we would be speaking a different language. Carrying him was a mission but they managed to carry him to the car trunk. "Izobonana! (See you)" said Sbali before hitting the wheel! Now all I got to do is rush back inside and pretend like everything is normal, tomorrow we'll do the honours of ending his life! . . . _RICH_ . "How's the funeral going?" I asked Wyatt "About that, I'm having second thoughts" I frowned "what do you mean?" He sighed "I think it's best we cremate him" "Buy why?" He shrugged his shoulders "think about it man, I'm the only family he had. He didn't have any children or even a wife. I'm getting old and I'll be following him. Who will be left to take care of his grave, visit him and put on some flowers?" I nodded, it makes sense "then go for it" "I'll do so, the sooner the better. We need to move on, he's not coming back." "That's true" We heard the door bell, a maid came rushing "I'll get that" she said and went along. "If you need any kind of help , please don't

hesitate to ask" "Don't worry bro , I got that in mind" the maid appeared followed by the police, "this is harassment! Mt..thembu I'll get you locked up!" He yelled while struggling with the surname. The maid excused herself. The police woman chuckled "chill magistrate we're not here for you, though I would have loved to" he gave her a death stare, there must be bad blood between them. "I think you should show more hospitality to us, after all we are trying to find your cousins murderer" her partner nodded in agreement "What do you want?" "We've been looking for your friend here" she looked at me "I believe you are Rich Mbewu?" I frowned why would they look for me, I looked at Wyatt and his face didn't show any emotion. I nodded at them. "Good Mr Mbewu, we'd like to ask you a few questions concerning Mr Bruno Canal's case of murder" "Okay" I looked at Wyatt, he sighed "you can use my study" "Thank you" I don't know if I should be scared or what but hey I hope I'm not in trouble, what am I saying, of course I'm not in trouble, or am I?

31 ____ "Right" Officer Kay said after he settled on the chair across me. He continued "How well did you know the deceased?" I cleared my throat "very well, not only was he my lawyer but he was also a good friend, more like a brother" they wrote Detective nodded "you say you knew him very well?" I nodded "did he perhaps have any enemies?" "I can't think of any" I shook my head "he wasn't the the type to make enemies, on contrary he always made friends wherever he went" "I see" the detective said "How about his status relationship?" I chuckled, she looked at me as if searching for some answers "Well..." I thought for a while and I remembered something... ____Throwback____ "You did it my guy" I laughed while tapping his shoulder. He smiled but his smile wasn't convincing it was like something was eating him up "it was clear you didn't do it" "Either way you were my voice" "I was just doing my job" "Thank you man" "Don't sweat it, it was just nothing" "Are you okay man?" I finally asked. He looked at me then back on the road. "I'm good. Why are you asking?" "You just don't look like your usual self, or rather happy for me" He chuckled "You know I am, it's just women you know..." He looked at me and winked "Ohhh! I get you, who is she. Do I know her?" Last time I checked he was single must be a new girlfriend. He slightly coughed and cleared his throat "You don't know her, yet" "Oh okay, can't wait to meet her." We laughed as I took my phone to text my children and the wife, I can't wait to see her.

___End___ "Mr Mbewu!?" I immediately snapped out of it and looked at them, they stared back at me waiting for an answer "Well, I can't really confirm if he was in a relationship or not. But I remember he told me something about having a girlfriend" They eyed each other for a moment then back at me "please tell us more about that?" Enquired the Officer "I can't tell you more, because I don't know much." I shrugged "he didn't tell me anything else except for that one time when he mentioned having a girlfriend." Kay leaned back "sir, please tell us in detail about that 'one time' when he spoke about her" I frowned "why the sudden interest in this side of the story" they looked at me like I'm crazy, I immediately regretted asking. "Sir we trying to find your lawyer slash friend's murderer, and the only way to do that is by looking at every side of the story" They're right. I nodded, I cleared my throat "I had just been released when he came to fetch me, he wasn't looking like his usual self, he seemed a bit distracted." I sighed, they looked at me with that 'continue' look, "I asked him what the problem was and he said that it's a woman, curiosity got better of me. So I asked who she was, I believe that court him off guard because he acted in a funny way and assured me that I was going to meet her one day." "Did you finally get to meet her?" She asked I shook my head "no, I had even forgotten about that" She nodded suspiciously "so you don't know the woman he was seeing?" "Like I said, I never got to meet her" they

nodded, come to think of it, it was probably a one night stand, Bruno was too much of a workaholic to be entertaining relationships! . . . _AZENATHI_ . Apart from the station, the only other place I'd rather be is next to my children at home. I left early from work and came straight home to unpack and settle in to our new home. I wanted to rent an apartment but Luyolo convinced me that it's better to just buy a house since I'll be living here for years and besides it's not healthy for children to be moving from one place to another. We made our way in... "Mommy finally you back!" He screamed "Hey baby" I hugged him and kissed his forehead "Uncle Lu" they fist bumped "Hey boy! What are you up to?" "I just unlocked the coolest video game, come I need an opponent!" They went ahead to one of the rooms, I believe they had already chosen bedrooms. The helper appeared... "Mam, you're back" she spoke "Yes Rose, how's everything going?" "Almost there mam, the kids bedrooms are almost settled, just a few things left. The dining room is done as you can see, as well as the kitchen and bathroom. The lounge is perfect and everything else." I nodded "my bedroom?" "Not done, was waiting for you to tell me how you'd prefer it to be." "Okay, we'll get it done soon. I haven't seen Yuna?" "Oh she's in her bedroom" "Which one is it?" She went along and showed me. You can't separate Yuna from locking herself up, if she's not out there fighting with her brother, she's in her bedroom reading or studying. "Hey baby" I

said after walking in. She sniffed, she was lying on her stomach with her face buried on the pillow. I rushed up to her "Yuna baby are you okay? Why are you crying?" She shook her head "talk to me

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what's going on? Don't you like it here?" "It's... it's not that" "then what's wrong?" "It's" she sniffed then sat up "It's Precious Moloi" I frowned "who's that?" I swear I'll kill whoever that is for making my baby cry. Tears welled up again "She hurt me mommy, she convinced us that Ibanathi was..., that he was some rich and hot guy" I gasped "I can't believe she made me fall inlove with someone who was just on a... on a... dream" I couldn't understand "Yuna! You're just fifteen. What do you know about falling in love, and who's this Ibanathi, what does he want with you. You better give me his address right now! He sure won't live till the end of this day!" I yelled, this boy better not try me. She shook her head "he doesn't exist Ma, it's Qondisiwe one of Presh's story" she got up and walked out of the room. I looked at her laptop, right then I understood what she was talking about, I read 'FINALE' I also read the comments, many readers felt betrayed, she must be good to have so many people by their hearts... I chuckled and shook my head, Yuna should stop reading novels they're not doing her any good! . .
SAM . "We should start doing the preparations" Zola spoke "I

agree" said Bloom "You can count on me for anything" Pam added I sighed "Me too" Swazi was just staring into space without a word Zola grabbed a chair and sat "even though we don't have any family members, he had friends and neighbors will be here" I nodded. He balanced his arms on his knees and held his head "I don't even know where to start" I went to kneel next to him "we're here for you. I am here" I whispered "I love you Zozo, never forget that" he kissed my lips before staring deep inside my eyes . . . _NOMSA_ . Ever since from that day, this Samantha girl hasn't gotten back to me, I'm at the verge of calling her and telling her to stay away from my man. I don't care if people would name tag me as crazy just because I consider Zola as my boyfriend. He is my boyfriend, my partner and that's that! I would even kill anyone who'd take him away from me. I feel happy and complete with him I won't allow anyone to take that away from me. I heard my cellphone ring, I smiled as his name popped on the screen "Hey Zola, what a surprise" I blushed "Hey Nono" his voice was down "What's wrong you don't sound good?" "I, it's my grandfather" he spoke I frowned "Yes?" "He's - He's gone Nono, my grandfather is dead" it came out in a very low voice "I..." I didn't know what to say, though I've been in the same situation, life is cruel. He's dead and will never return, he'll just cry and cry but won't see him ever again, just like my grandmother! "Zola you have to send me your location, I need to be there for you!" "No" he

cleared his throat "I mean you don't have to" I thought for a while, this is the best opportunity to meet my rival, or shall I say 'the man stealer' finally I'll put her in her place "Zola I'm not taking any no for an answer, you either send the location. Or I'll catch a taxi and try to find you, until I find you!" He sighed "fine, I'll send it tomorrow" I smirked... . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . As late as it was, I was still locked in my office working. I looked at Wyatt's picture and recalled our conversation... ___Earlier at the Stifler Mansion___ After talking to Mr Mbewu, Mr Wyatt offered to show us our way out. As soon as we stepped outside he pulled me aside, Kay left us. "Mthembu I hope this is the last time you come to my house to question me or my friends" I couldn't miss the firmness in his voice "You, Mr Wyatt better than anyone else, should know that the police won't stop coming here until we've found the real murderer" "And you think you'll find him or her in my house?" I shook my head and chuckled "every time when I cross path with you, you give me yet another reason to keep my eyes on you" "Don't threaten me Mthembu" he warned "Listen here Mr magistrate" I stood closer to him "as long as I smell the rat, I won't stop looking until I find it! I'm convinced that you knew about your cousin and your friend's wife, now question is why did you hide the info from the authorities. What could be the reason for your actions, could it be that you didn't want your friend to find out, so you killed your cousin, or

maybe, just maybe you also have a thing for your friend's wife, so you resorted to removing your cousin out of the way just so you can get what you want!" His mouth opened without a word
___End___ "Who killed Bruno?" I continued "Who killed him?" ...

32 ___ Morning came and the first thing that woke me up was a beeping sound of my phone, Zola had sent the location. Honestly speaking, I'm scared, scared to get lost, I've never been anywhere else ever since I moved this side. Now having to do this alone, or maybe I could just ask Lara to come with. I'm glad Zola sent some money for transport, I believe it'll be enough for the both of us. I dialled her, she moaned "hmm hello" she sounded sleepy "Lara, hi did I wake you up?" "Nah" she lied, I heard her sniff "why are you calling me so early?" "I'm sorry it's just that Zola called me last night to give me the sad news" "What happened, is he okay?" "No he's not, he lost his grandfather" "Oh my God, I'm sorry to hear that." Her voice got back to normal "Yea eii it's life after all" "What a sudden death, I'm sure he's not taking it well" "Obviously, no one ever does" She cleared her throat "is there anything he needs?" "Yes our support" "Okay you just give me his number then I'll call him to send my condolences." "That's not the kind of support he needs, we have to go down there he needs us" "But Nomsa we can't, what about the Chisa nyama?" "Cush will take care of everything, he can ask his wife to help and Shasha is there too" "I don't know..." She sighed "Please start packing we'll leave in an hour or so" "What!?" She yelled "you can't be serious, can't we leave on the day before the funeral?" "Like I said Lara, he needs our support, emotional support" "Fine!" I could sense the annoyance in her voice, but that was the least of my

worries! . . . _CHOCO_ . Last night I couldn't sleep, I kept tossing and turning, I didn't want to confess but truth is I'm getting cold feet. I don't get why though, because I've been into a lot of shady business with my mother, however I've never killed anyone before. Now having to kill Chains gave me sleepless night. I quickly prepared myself to go get it over and done. We were to use one of my mother's abandoned building, where she also takes care of her business. Within an hour I drove to the location, it was very far from the houses, I'm pretty sure people hardly use this road. It's very quiet and kind of scary with a lot of trees surrounding the area. As I walked through I spotted him on one of the trees, as naked as he was they had tied him to a tree, I walked closer. They had roughed up his face, he was shivering and trembling at once, he was out of it. For a moment I felt sorry for him. "You're finally here" Sbali said, walking out of the building. I nodded "eii lomjitha ukhale ubsuku bonke (this guy cried the whole night)" unlike him "Ugidle yiso?(he slept here)" I asked He nodded "izinja zasendle zilala khona la(wild dogs sleep here)" I should be rejoicing that he's finally getting what he deserves but on contrary I just... He opened up a bottle of alcohol and poured it on his face. I swear I literally felt the pain through my heart... He immediately woke up and screamed in agony, the alcohol was doing the most on his injuries. His eyes laid on me "Hau nsizwa kodwa ngikoneleni?(man what wrong did I do you)" he broke down

"ngiyacela bandla ngixolele (Please forgive me)" he cried
"ngicela ningidedele(Please let me go)" without thinking twice,
Sbali kicked his face with his knee, I swear I heard a bone break.
"Sekuyiskhathi(It's time)" he said to Me then handed me a gun.
I took it and starred at it for a while, am I about to do this? Will
I be able to sleep with my self after this... . . _RICH_ . "Rich
wake up!" She shook me, I groaned. Wyatt and I had a very long
night yesterday, after being interrogated by those two police,
he got very annoyed by their presence so he invited me out for
a drink. What was meant to be a one drink turned out to being
a whole bottle and more. Now here I am with a heavy head. I
called to let my wife know that the police stopped by but I was
gonna tell all about it today. "Wake up!" This woman! I turned
to sleep on my back, she was already dressed, I pulled her
down for a kiss "ewww!" She made the nasty face "you smell a
whole brewery" I chuckled "But you still here crazily inlove with
me" she smiled. "You said something about the police last
night?" I brushed my head "can't we talk about that later?" She
shook her head "I'm curious to know so please" "Baby I have a
headache, you know I haven't been drinking in a while and now
that I drank, it's like I'm paying for all those months" "Mbewu
I'm not leaving until you tell me" "What happened to being a
loving and supportive wife?" I sulked "Mbewu" she pleaded
"Fine! They stopped by at Wyatt's place and they were looking
for me" "Why you?" I shrugged "to ask those questions I

believe." "And?" "They wanted to know about my relationship with him and about his sentimental life" she had a blank look "What did you say?" "That he had a girlfriend" her eyes shot wide "though I never got to meet her" they came back to normal "What else?" "That's all baby" I got up and headed to the bathroom "can you come scrub my back before you leave!?" I shouted "I'm late!" she said right then the door shut, she left... . . _CHOCO_ . I held the gun for a while, he was sweating all over his face, tears were gushing out, Sbali was waiting anxiously for me with a cigarette on his mouth. I can't do it, something deep inside me was warning me not to do it, I felt like I'll regret it someday, I can't let down my gut!

"Ngiyanicela!(please)" he cried, if it was a few days ago and someone told me that Chains will be crying and trembling, I'm sure I would have laughed at that. I stepped back and looked away, I can't. "And now?" Sbali asked "I can't" I said in a low voice He chuckled and got closer to me "usho ukuthini mewuthi 'I can't'? (what do you mean when you say 'I can't)'" he enquired "Nami ang'cavi (I also don't know)" with my free hand , I held my head. "Sewukhohliwe ukuthi uyitshuneni imaid yakho? (Have you forgotten what he did to your woman)" he whispered, I thought for a while... because of him Zandy's friend is dead , and the baby is missing! Of course he should pay! I looked at Sbali "you know

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you're right" I set the gun ready and went back to Chains whom was now smelling urine. I placed my hand on his neck and squeezed it "where's the baby!?" I yelled in anger "Ingane yi...yiphi? (Which baby)" I tightened the grip on his neck "don't piss me off Chains! Iphi ingane!?" (Where's the baby)" He coughed "ngi... ngiyithengisile (I... I sold her)" I couldn't believe my ears "What kind of a dog are you!?" I screamed "to whom?" "Ingamla angazi utholakalaphi (a white man I don't know where he is)" in rage , I got up and pointed the gun on his face right between his eyes. The world is better off without him, I pressed on the trigger, there I shot him with all five bullets that were loaded, without having mercy on him just like he didn't have any mercy on the girls! . . _SAM_ . It's sad that this family doesn't have any elders, we wouldn't be here preparing everything. Though we have the help of the neighbours, some of the friends he used to have, and also our families. Enzo offered to help, and Nomasonto, her presence however doesn't mean that we're getting along, she just offered since she heard me commenting with mom, but I'm glad she's helping. I can't imagine a whole funeral prepared by youngsters, a whole disaster it would have been. Zola had been out for a while, he didn't say where he was going. The girls and I were peeling the vegetables while chatting when we saw Zola and two girls walking in the yard, they had luggage with them. "And now, who are they?" Bloom asked but seems like not even Swazi

knows them, Swazi settled for peeling with us just so she keeps her mind busy, and since there's no elder in this family, no one said anything. They made their way to us, Zola cleared his throat "uhm girls meet my sister Swazi" he said pointing at her "And her friends Bloom, Pamela and Samantha." Did he just introduce me as a friend? "Girls, this is Nomsa and Lara, they're good friends of mine" I looked at the Lara girl, she seemed to be bored, like she didn't want to be here, my face turned to the other girl, Nomsa whom had her eyes locked up on me. "I'll take these inside" he took their luggage "So you guys are what, friends with Zola?" Pam asked with an attitude, I swear this pregnancy got her all rude. "yeah" Lara answered "Uhm Samantha right?" The other girl, Nomsa finally spoke. I nodded "you're beautiful" she added blankly "Thank you" "Do you have a boyfriend?" I frowned Pam chuckled and so did Bloom "and what does that have anything to do with you?" Bloom raised an eyebrow "Curiosity" she said "Why don't you go help inside instead of getting curious of things that have nothing to do with you" Pam said, the girls looked at her then walked away. "You guys what was that?" Swazi asked as soon as they left "I don't like them, especially that Nomsa girl" Pam said "Me too" Bloom added I shook my head, I'm still on the fact that Zola introduced me as a friend, is he hiding something, is one of the girls his girlfriend, I mean no guy has female friends like that unless he's gay, he must be into one of the two! . . . _AZENATHI_ . I looked

at her from the outside window, she's very devoted to what she does. I knocked twice before letting myself in. "Captain" she stood still "Detective I heard that you've been overworking yourself, worse you slept here last night" I gave her a disapproving look, this girl is still young she needs to live "I had to try and complete a few puzzles" she said satisfied "You can't do this to yourself Mthembu, you should have time to yourself, do you even have a boyfriend?" "Captain!?" She warned, but I'm not backing down "I'm not talking to you as a captain but yes, as a friend. You need to start your own family, what would happen if you died today, who will you leave behind?" She sighed "I still got my family you know" I shook my head "those aren't your family, your fam is your kids and husband" She raised her hands in surrender "no thank you but I'm not looking for one" She's stubborn "either way back to the case of Bruno Canal" I sighed this girl is something else "What did you find out through your productive night?" She smiled "okay so I've finally concluded that we have two suspects" "Okay?" "The woman and Mr Wyatt" I nodded, she continued "with the woman, I found that she's very inlove with her husband even though he cheated on her" I frowned "he was arrested sometime ago, accused of killing his lover, but later got released, proven innocent." "Who was the actual killer?" Her eyes narrowed "the state dropped the case so we don't know yet, but last night I looked deep into this. I know the woman, always did, she's two

faced. Her husband knows her differently from how Wyatt does." "What do you mean?" "The fact that he didn't tell us about their affair means he knows her better than the husband. Also he wasn't surprised when I told him how I knew about the woman and his cousin. Think of it Captain, if she was as sweet to Wyatt as she is to her husband, don't you think it would shock Wyatt to know that miss two goody shoes is cheating?" "Makes a lot of sense" "Exactly! Those two are my prime suspects" We stared at each other, this is interesting, I'm impressed!

33 ____ "Get rid of the body!" He said to the boys. I don't remember ever smoking but here I am, smoking away whatever just happened, all I need is to be high and forget everything. We watched as the boys put his body in a body bag then covered it with a blanket. "You did well" he pat my shoulder "What's gonna happen to the body?" I asked "Still deciding between setting it on fire and dumping it somewhere, maybe on the river" "Better throw it in the river, we don't want to attract unnecessary attention" "Uqinisile(you're right) now all we'll do is move on like nothing happened" "Asthembe kuyoba lula (let's hope it'll be easy)" the boys carried the body to the trunk. "Are you coming?" He asked. I nodded and we both walked to the car. I have to witness every single event, I don't want anything backfiring... My phone vibrated as we drove off, "Ma" "Baby! Finally, where are you?" "Around" "Around where? Wait, you don't sound well, what's going on, are you sick?" I shook my head, she's a perfect example of a 'cautious mom' "I'm good, I'm just exhausted" "Oh I hope you're not lying to me!" She yelled "now tell me, where exactly are you?" "Uhm - home" I lied She chuckled "since when is an abandoned building your home Lungelo?" "How did y..." I sighed "can you stop keeping tracks on me" "You know I'll never do that, it's for your own good. Now tell me what it is that you're up too there" "It's just a long story, we'll talk when I get back" "Then you better hurry, there's a new druglord in the city and seems to be

causing us problems" I scratched my face, the last thing I need is to be dealing with bandits, "I can't here you baby?" I groaned "I'll be there as soon as I can" "Good, I hope you're not doing anything that'll incriminate you" I swear this woman it's like she's watching my every move, what am I even saying, of course she's watching... sigh . . . _RICH_ . We walked around, we've already started building the school. Today we decided to meet up this side just so we see how everything was going. "They're doing an impressive job" Sma said I nodded "indeed, the school will be very beautiful" "I hope so" she seemed a bit distracted "Are you okay?" She looked at me then sighed. We stopped walking "what's bothering you?" "I don't want to talk about it" she said while avoiding eye contact "Why? Don't you trust me?" "It's not that Rich, I just - I don't want you caught up in my mess" "Please talk to me" I held her hands "It's... someone" she cleared her throat "someone sent me a letter" I frowned "what letter?" "With a warning" huh? "Warning? Please be specific" "A warning to stay away from you" I chuckled "what?" that's absurd "Who?" "I can't tell you, but what I can tell you is that my life is in the danger and I know who's behind it all" "Who's that!?" "Let me deal with this on my own" She got to be kidding "Smangele you better tell me!" I shouted "Whoa hold your temper! I know what I'm doing, for now let's keep things as they are." I turned around and walked a few steps away from her, how can someone threaten her and

who could it be? "This space will be perfect for a play ground" she spoke without a worry, like she didn't just throw a bomb on me. . . _NOMSA_ . "What was that?" Lara asked, we were in the kitchen. I smiled "that was me getting to know them" She frowned "Nomsa

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is there something you're not telling me?" "All in good time Lara" she sighed "They look rich" I rolled my eyes "they sure are" Zola appeared , I quickly walked up to him "ehhm... which bedroom will we use?" "You'll use mine" I smirked "but where will you sleep?" "I'll take the couch" "No" I sighed "I mean back in Joburg we used to share the room, we can still do that then your sister will share with Lara" He shook his head "we can't do that. Look I'm good with using the couch" he tried to walk away but I blocked him. I fixed his collar, right then someone cleared her throat "uhm I was just leaving." He walked away. The girl with a bump came closer, she starred at me and said "I don't know who you are, or what you want, but one thing I'll tell you is to keep your hands to yourself" "And who are you to tell me that?" I asked clearly annoyed "Trust me you don't want to know. Zola is taken and very much inlove, so go look for another guy" "If he was so inlove don't you think he would've told me?" The irritation on her face "maybe you're so not important in his life for him to keep you updated" I kept quiet

"now move" she pushed me away, I swear I was at the verge of squeezing that tiny bump "Nomsa what's going on with you, I really don't recognize you, you act like a possessed woman" "Lara please" sigh, this will not be as easy as I thought it would be. . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . "So we looked into Mbali's profile and also I went digging some information about her" reported Officer Kay "What did you find?" "She was arrested for killing his stepfather, for setting his ex boyfriend's apartment on fire, the lover died." I was shocked "as I went on digging I found out that she once pretended to be the daughter of a well known model, she even stole a lot of money" "All that!" My eyes widened "did you find any connection between her and the deceased?" He shook his head "I believe she did it for the money. Seems like her love for money is out of this world." "Do you know who contracted her?" "Not yet" I nodded "It's possible that she doesn't even know the person who contracted her, she just did it because of the benefits of it" "Makes sense, but it's also possible that it's someone she knows, since she's been in the industry for a long time" He nodded "do you have any new developments?" Before I could answer a man walked in "I'm so sorry to disturb" he said "No you're not disturbing doctor, please come in." Kay said, "Do you have anything?" He nodded "seems like I had missed some information" he gave me the file "Forensics?" I read He nodded "The death of Mr Bruno Canal, that mam" he pointed at the file

"proves that he was smothered to death" Kay stood next to me "what do you mean?" "In the case of suffocation by smothering and gagging, signs that are searched for include bruising around the mouth, chin and nose. Pressure of the lips on the teeth or dentures may cause the inner surface of the mouth to be bruised." "Oh God" I pushed back the chair and stood up "someone finished him off" I whispered "Yes mam" I glared at this doctor "How can you miss such an important information!?" I yelled "I'm sorry I - " "You know what shut up!" I shouted "and get out!" he quickly ran out "Kay get the CCTV footage of the hospital" he nodded and left. I can't believe this guy missed such an important piece of the puzzle. "Dammit!" I hit the desk in anger . . . _NARRATED_ . Nthathi was in her office going through something in her laptop when her husband called, "Mbewu" she answered "Sthandwa sami lalela, kukhona okumele ngikwenze, (my love listen, there's something I need to do)I'll be late for dinner" he said Knowing her husband she frowned, but kept her cool "It's okay Mbewu" "I love you" "I love you too" she responded, before ending the call a message came through, she ended the call and opened an email that was sent to her. Her eyes widened as soon as she saw a picture of her husband holding hands with Smangele. Rage took over her, she took out a burner phone and dialed a number "Do it!" she said firmly without thinking twice...

34 ____ I'm glad I'm finally back at home to be with the only woman that makes me happy, though she's been acting very strange, like she was hiding something from me. I called for her to come join me on the couch, "Zan" she looked at me and still held her peace "look I'm sorry I just left, I'm sorry" I held her hands after drinking my mineral water, I wasn't so thirsty until now. "It's okay, I understand" I know she said that just to pass time "did he tell you where he took baby Blue?" I sighed "that, uhm it's a very complicated story" "What do you mean?" "He sold her" her eyes immediately got teary "To whom? How can he do such a wicked thing?" "He didn't say" "Then he'll have to tell me" she attempted to get up but I held her in place "He, he's dead Zandy" She didn't react to that, I couldn't pick her expression "I killed him" she got up and started walking around "Do you know what that means?" She asked "I know, I'm a murderer" "And you don't regret it?" "I don't, he deserved it, I'd do it again if someone tried to hurt you" She gasped "why? why do you care so much for me?" I stood up and went to stand behind her, my hands snaked their way around her waist "perhaps you own my heart, have you thought of that?" I whispered in her ear "Tell me the truth" she turned to face me I sighed "I love you" She glared at me for a moment "you don't know what love is, you've never loved anyone" "Until I met you" we stared at each other till a call decided to ruin our moment "mother?" "Since when do you call me that?" Sigh

"anyway, we have to meet first thing tomorrow" "Just text me the place and the time" "Will do, are you with someone?" "Yes" I answered "Hmm I hope you won't make her pregnant" "I..." before I could speak she ended the call "Lungelo there's something you need to know" Zan spoke "I'm listening" she freed herself from my arms "I..." She fiddled with her fingers "I lost - I was - I" I frowned "Zan talk to me" "I don't know how to say this. Well we..." "Zan!" "I lost our baby!" What! "What baby?" I walked closer "I didn't know that I was pregnant, until when Chains, killed my - our baby" even in death Chains still torments us, now more than ever I don't regret killing him! "Our baby" I whispered, this is all my fault I should have protected her and the baby, my mini family! It's all my fault... . . .

DETECTIVE MTHEMBU . Now that everything is coming together, I'm certain that within the end of this week I would have Bruno Canal's murderer locked in! I just hope the footage will reveal whoever finished him off. "Guess what?" Kay walked in "I managed to scare off the security. I got the footage" "That's good, but doesn't it take a week or so?" "Like I said, I scared him off" I chuckled. He inserted the disc on my laptop. We watched closely not to miss anything, though we didn't see anything off "are you sure this is the correct footage?" I asked "I'm sure, maybe that side of the info has been wiped off" he shrugged "Let that not be true" "Wait look!" I did, it was a bit dark on the corridor, a shadow passed. We looked closely

"wearing a balaclava" he continued "whoever it was, she or he's very smart" I bend over and watched, wait... "Look" my eyes widened "not smart enough" I smirked "What?" He asked totally confused "It's a she, we're dealing with a she Kay!" "The heels!" I nodded "Yep, not smart enough" now with this information we'll know where to focus... . . . _NARRATED_ .

"Hey" Smangele was on the call, while walking out of her apartment "Hi love, how're you?" A female voice enquired "Not so good" "What happened?" She asked "don't tell me it's her" "Unfortunately it is, she sent me a letter with a warning" "Dammit Smangele! I told you it was dangerous for you to be there on your own, you know what, I'm coming down there!" She yelled "You don't have to, I got everything under control and I'll make sure that she becomes aware of the fact that if she tries anything funny, she'll be locked in for the rest of her life" "Smangele this is very dangerous, just stop with this plan" the female warned "You know I won't do that, that snake needs to be locked in." The female sighed "all I want is for you to continue taking care of my daughter" Smangele added "did you tell him about her?" "Not yet, first I need to deal with Nthati" "Okay do that" "Bye I'll call you later to speak with my daughter" she ended the call and drove off... Within a few minutes she parked her car across the street

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but before walking out, she sent Nthati a text that read "I know everything about you Nthati Mbewu! if you dare try anything that will cost me mylife, someone will make sure that you spend the rest of your life in jail!!!" She walked out of the car, locking it along the way, as she was about to cross the street to the other side, a car sped on to her direction, not giving her enough time to react, she dropped her cellphone with the bag and froze with her heart beating out of the chest! The merciless driver knocked her, she screamed in agony and flew down! Without a waste of time the driver sped off like absolutely nothing happened! . . . _MEANWHILE_ . Nthati read the text, she knew exactly that it was from Smangele. What worried her the most was that she stated that she knows a lot, and that someone won't hesitate to turn her in. "What is it that she knows? Could she be the one who sold me out to the police with that picture" she said. That alarmed her, she quickly took out her burner phone and dialed a number that immediately led her to voicemail, she tried a few more times but unfortunately for her, no one picked up. She decided to leave a voice message "listen here you imbecile! I don't know why the phone is off when I gave you strict instructions to stay on! Now listen, don't do it, you here me!" She yelled "DON'T DO IT!" "Do what?" A firm voice asked, she turned to look who it was and to her shock she dropped the burner phone! . . . _SAM_ . Ever since those girls got here, Zola has been acting very offish with me, I

really don't know what's wrong with him, he's bluntly shutting me out then when I ask him, he says that I have nothing to worry about those are just 'friends', I choose to believe him, just like Pam advised me, she thinks one of the girls is throwing herself on my Zola. I'm trying all my best to control my temper the last thing I need it to cause a fight on my boyfriend's grandfather's funeral. "Baby" Zola said, we were sitting at the back of the rooms, didn't want people looking at us like we disrespectful. I looked at him, "I swear I'm not hiding anything. I respect you so much Sam to bring a girlfriend right where you are" "Is that you confessing that you have another girlfriend?" He sighed "of coarce not" he held my cheek then kissed me "I love you" I blushed "I love you too Zola, please don't hurt me" he embraced me in a hug. "I'll never hurt you. You changed my opinion about girls, I never thought I'd be serious about any other female until I met you" we broke the hug "Ohh?" I smiled "Yes, I always thought girls were after money and everything else, but you proved me wrong" "I'm glad I did" he perked my lips "please do me a favour" "Anything" he spoke "Becareful around that other girl" "Who" "The slim one" He chuckled "Nono? Don't worry about her, she knows she's like a sister to me" I raised my eyebrow "yet you even have a pat name for her?" "Come on my love it's just a name" "She doesn't see you as a brother" He smiled "I don't care, I only love you" he said seductively and gave me a slow passionate kiss . . _NOMSA_ .

She just keeps on rubbing it to my face that they are together, mxm. I moved away from the wall, yes I was snooping on them, trying to see what they're up to. I furiously walked into Zola's bedroom the one we're using, Lara was on a video call speaking to God knows who. I immediately rushed to the wardrobe and kicked it a few times until I felt pain on my toes, "damn you Zola!" I screamed "What's going on, what's wrong with you?" She was standing behind me, I turned and pushed her, she fell on the floor. I didn't pay any attention to her I just walked out of the bedroom, I have to think fast, those two can't be together. When I walked out I saw the pregnant girl looking at me, she smirked, I swear if I let that baby on her stomach live I would be very stupid!

35 ____ "I... Mbewu you scared me" she held her chest dramatically "What are you doing here?" "We finished sooner than I thought, so here I am to fetch my wife" "Oh" she moved from her desk to pour herself water "you almost gave me a heart attack" He chuckled "I'm sorry sthandwa sami(my love), who were you talking to?" She chocked from the water "I ehmm" she cleared her throat "I was watching a movie" He furrowed his eyebrows "a movie?" "Uhm yes" she walked over to her desk and closed the laptop "Lungelo sent it so I got hooked that I even gave it all my attention" she chuckled nervously "Oh we should watch it when we get home" She nodded "definitely!" She sighed "so where were you?" "At the cremation, Wyatt thought it would be best if we did it sooner so that we move on" She nodded "you should've told me though" "I wanted to, but Wyatt preferred it to be a private event, not even his family was present. It was just the two of us" "Oh that's a pity" she glared at him "uhm did the..." she scratched her nose "The what?" "The police, did they contact you again?" He shook his head "fortunately no, I don't like being contacted by them. Ready to go?" She quickly went to pack "almost, you can just walk out with these whilst I finish off" she gave him her handbag and some documents "Don't take long" he walked out. Right then her burner phone rang, it was one of her guys "I'm the one who calls you not the other way round" she whispered "I'm sorry boss but we have a

problem" "What now?" "The girl who helped, she's threatening to sing if we don't get her out, within twenty four hours" Nthathi pushed the papers to the floor furiously "this is all your fault!" She said firmly "within that twenty four hours have her killed, she's a lose end" she cut the call, everything was getting out of her control and she hated it! . . . _NARRATED_ . Lara got up from the floor right after Nomsa left. She went to answer the incoming call, "hello" she said in a low voice "Hello? Lara it's the prophet" she recognised her church leader's voice "Oh father, how did you..." "I got the number from your aunt, look Lara I called about that situation" She frowned "which situation father?" "Your friend's" "Ohh" she slightly hit her head "Yes?" "You have to pray, don't stop praying for her. Whatever is happening with her is spiritual if we don't pray, by the end of this day she'll kill an unborn baby" Lara couldn't believe what the prophet just said, though she knew how the words of the prophet always come true "Your prayers will stop her, her plan will be a complete downfall. She's at her weakest, she's being used by that spirit, you remember what we spoke about that day when you said she had a dream?" "Yes" "That's the same spirit that is using her. You don't have to talk to her about all this, she won't understand she's still an infant spiritually. But you understand so please right after this call get on your knees and start praying for her using the name of Jesus Christ" She nodded "I shall do that father" "Good, may the peace of our

Lord Jesus Christ be with you" he said then ended the call. Lara wasted no time, she immediately got on her knees and started praying "father God in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, I come before you to ask..." . . . _CHOCO_ . "A baby" I sank on the floor with Zan next to me, more like two parents who lost their unborn baby. She told me in detail how Chains killed him, yes I believe it would have been a him. He killed our son, we couldn't even give him a proper burial as parents. She hugged me "I'm sorry I should've tried harder to protect it" I looked at her "it's not an it, a him" she nodded rapidly "I should've have tried harder to protect him, if only I knew that I was carrying a baby" she sobbed "I'm sorry Lungelo" "It's my fault Zan, I'm the one who's sorry, I shouldn't have allowed you to continue with your plan" we stayed there in silent mourning our son. "I love you" she broke the silent, those words softened my heart. "I love you more" I kissed her. She stood on her feet "Do you want me to prepare anything, you're probably tired from the trip" I also got up "nah it's cool, I'll just go lie down, wanna join me?" She shook her head "I have to cook" "We can order" "Rather not," she kissed me "go rest" I nodded and went to my bedroom, I would be taking a shower but I'm very exhausted all I need is to sleep then I'll do everything else later. I got in the covers since the weather was not friendly. . . _NARRATED_ . The ambulance arrived at the hospital with Smangele. She was in a very bad state, loosing blood. The doctors attended to her as soon as she

was brought in the emergency room. Even though breathing proved to be a mission for her, her mind still worked, all she was thinking of was her daughter, as young as she is she shouldn't lose her as her mother, she can't give up now. She thought of how she promised her that she'll return with her father and now she's here

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lying on a death bed. She could slowly feel her soul leaving her. "Internal bleeding! She's losing a lot of blood" one of the doctors screamed. Her eyes were shut all she could hear were faint sounds of machines and voices, 'forgive me baby, mommy can't hold on' her heart screamed! A few minutes later, the machines started beeping "we're losing her" the doctor said "stay with me woman, stay with me" they tried keeping her alive but it was too late, nothing could be done "Time of death?" One of the doctors asked. Nothing else could be done! The doctor left, he called the latest number on her phone registered as 'sis', "Sma?" A female voice responded "Good evening Mam, I'm calling from Pretoria Provincial Hospital" "Who are you?" "I'm a doctor, I'd like to know if you know the owner of the number?" "Yes Smangele, she's my sister" He nodded confirming the name on the Identity Document that was on his hand "mam, your sister had an accident earlier today. She lost a lot of blood and unfortunately, we lost her"

"What!" She screamed "no no! It can't be, I spoke to her earlier!" Phone fell from her hand, she looked at her twin sister's daughter who was playing innocently on the floor. "I will avenge your mother's death" she whispered firmly, with tears streaming out of her eyes. . . _NOMSA_ . "Hi" I said "So much ratax, you have many rats" the Indian guy said. I was on the counter paying for five packets of ratax, someone will know me very well today "Yes unfortunately" I answered "Don't worry, all will die tonight" he spoke his illiterate english I nodded "without a doubt my friend" I whispered "without a doubt" this will be much easier because since she's pregnant, she has her own stuff on the fridge. I took my things and hid them on my breasts, I pray they don't fall since I don't have big breasts. When I walked in I found them chilling outside, the pregnant girl was not around I don't know if she's already left, I walked inside and saw her sister pouring her juice, I frowned "isn't that your sister's juice" she's a nice woman "It is, I'm pouring it for her" oh "She's still around?" "Yea until after the funeral" that's good for me, "please keep an eye I want to fetch the tray on the living room, she also wants sandwiches" I chuckled, she quickly left. I didn't even hesitate, I immediately took out all the packets and began emptying them inside the glass, I don't care if it'll be too much for her as long as that thing in her stomach dies, even if she follows it, I would have killed two birds with one stone! "Thanks darling" she took the tray and went to the

lounge, with me after her. I stood on the door frame watching her sister devouring in. I watched closely as she raised the glass to her lips! Now this is it, drink! I smirked while watching her. . . _CHOCO_ . I quickly opened my eyes, I had sweat all over my face. I wouldn't say I was dreaming because I wasn't, it felt like something was being done to my body. I breathed out loud, what just happened, could this be because of the death that I carry on my conscience, is it Chains coming after me in a ghost form. What's going on! I tried sitting up but for some reason I couldn't, I felt my body very heavy. I balanced my arms on the bed but still, something weird was going on "Zan!" I called out "Zandy!" She immediately rushed in "What's wrong, why are you screaming?" "I - I" I didn't even know how to say it, she got closer and looked at me "I can't move my legs" it came out in a low voice, she looked at me like I was crazy "What?" "I can't move my legs" her mouth hung open, she looked at me then back at my legs

36 ____ "Call my mother dammit!" I yelled at her, ever since I told her I can't move my legs she's been frozen, haven't even said a word. "Zandy!!" She snapped out of it and stared at me "What... Where, uhm" "Zandy!" I shouted, she slightly jumped "Zandy look at me" she did "I need you to call my mother" She nodded and took out her phone "I don't have... have" I shook my head "of course you don't have her number! Use my cellphone!" "Okay" she quickly went looking for it and came back with it "My queen" I said, she nodded as she spotted her number. "I - hello" she spoke nervously "Put it on a loudspeaker" she did "ma!" She got closer "Baby this is not a good time, Mbewu and I are very busy. I hope this is important" "Ma you need to get here!" I shouted "Here, where? What's going on?" "Son, what's going on?" A deep voice asked on the background, dad. "Dad! You have to get here, I don't know what's going on with, I - I" I was panicking, breathing heavily. "Slow down Lungelo, where are you?" "In the apartment" Zan spoke seeing that I was sweating all over again, my breathing routen had changed "And who are you!? Listen here young lady, if you're responsible for whatever my son is going through, you better..." I pressed the end call button before mom swear at my woman. "Lungelo you're scaring me" she said I pulled her for a hug, she makes me feel better "stay with me Zan, I need you now more than ever" she held me even tighter . . _SAM_ . The funeral will be tomorrow, I can't wait I already

miss my bed. I don't get why Zola had to give the bedroom to those weird girls, we'd be sleeping in his bedroom, I would be embraced in his strong arms, sometimes I sneak out at night and join him on the couch. I can't let my boyfriend sleep alone while I'm under the same roof with him. I walked in to see how Pam was doing, when I found my rival on the door frame, I tapped on her shoulder and she jumped while screaming "What the!?" I heard a glass drop, we both turned to look, Pam had dropped the glass of juice. "Oh no" The girl whispered, she gave me a death stare before rushing to my boyfriend's bedroom. I shook my head and went to help Pam "how did you drop the glass? Are you perhaps getting old?" She chuckled "Don't mess with me Sam, it's that man stealer, she frightened me when she screamed" "Ohh, I'm sorry" I picked up the tiny pieces of glass, there were tiny odd things on the floor "which flavour is your juice?" I asked "Granadilla" oh it makes sense "why are you asking?" "It's nothing" I said and walked out to fetch a mop "What was she doing there?" Pam asked as soon as I got back "I don't know, I think she was watching the TV" She looked at me "from the door?" I shrugged "y'all guys don't get along remember?" She rolled her eyes "Yea whatever" I shook my head and went to pour her another glass of juice . .

NARRATED . After the call with the doctor. Smangele's identical twin sister went to the bedroom, with the little girl on her arms. Tears were still streaming down her face, she couldn't

believe that she just lost her twin sister right after warning her. She looked at her niece who was speaking baby language, she felt a sting on her heart, how is she going to tell her in the future when she asks about her mother, how will she explain the fact that someone had her killed, how... She put her on the bed and took her suitcase, "we'll be moving out baby" she sniffed while packing "the circumstances are forcing us to leave, we have to do this" she looked at her "we have to avenge mommy's death so that she can rest easy" she sat on the bed and carried her "mommy is watching you wherever she is", the girl responded in baby language "yes baby, mommy will always love you, even if she's not here physically but she'll always be here with you spiritually" "Mamamama" the baby played with her weave. She couldn't help it she just let them flow down on her face... . . . _RICH_ . We quickly rushed in my son's apartment, whatever it is that is going on with my son must be very serious. I was surprised to witness that Nthathi has the keys of his apartment, she didn't even bother knocking she just busted in his bedroom. As soon as our eyes came in contact with his, he sobbed, the last time I heard him cry like this he was less than ten years old. His mother went running to him

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the girl that was there moved away, I swear my son's cheating tendencies are just like mine, he definitely took after me!

"Baby! What happened?" She cupped his face "I don't know, I'm also confused as it is!" He said between the tears I walked up to them, "Son, yehlisha umoya (calm down). How did it all start?" He wiped off the sweat on his face "I slept then woke up like this" that's very weird "There's only one explanation to all this" she said then stood on her feet, she turned to face the girl who was shaking like a leaf on the wind, she walked up to her and did the unexpected, she slapped her, I swear I've never seen my wife like this, another slap landed on the girl's face "what did you do to my son!?" She shouted, the girl cried with her face hidden between her arms. "I'm talking to you!" Another slap went straight to the girl's bald head, I literally felt the pain. "Ma! Stop it it's not her fault" he begged "It's not her fault baby!? Is that what you telling me? Do you even know what voodoo she used on you!?" "Well this is not the time sthandwa sami(my love), we have to take him to the hospital" I said, she turned to look at me then sighed. "Fine! Kodwa wena (but you)" she pointed at the girl in warning. I carried our son, this calls for medical attention . . . _NOMSA_ . "Friend are you okay?" I looked at her, this girl is such a nuisance i should've left her back at home. "Nomsa, remember I didn't want to come here but you convinced me, and now here I am" "Guess what 'friend' I regret ever bringing you here" She sighed "I'll pretend like I didn't hear that" she sat next to me on the bed "You know sometimes it's very good to talk if you don't want to, why don't

you buy a diary and start writing. Pour out your heart, if you think someone might get hold of your diary then why don't you pray? I know you don't believe much in God because of certain events that occurred in your life, but best believe that it works. Prayer is a conversation that you make with God, you speak and he listens then answers" she chuckled, and I shook my head. "Sounds crazy but he does answer, try it. Pray and ask him to give you peace, happiness and love. Ask him to grow your faith." I sighed "I'm tired Lara" "I know, you can also ask him strength." I looked at her, "one thing you should know is that you should pray using the name of Jesus Christ" I frowned "if you don't, your prayer will literally hit the ceiling then fall down" I laughed "I'm serious the bible says on the book of John14:14 - 'Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!' Which means not even saying 'in the name of the father, son and holy spirit' will work, it won't" I didn't know that "though I'm glad I made you smile for a change" I nodded "thank you" "You welcome, uhm would you like me to leave now just so you have that conversation with the living God?" Honestly I don't know "I guess" "Ok" she got up and left I don't know where to start, I went down on my knees and closed my eyes "uhmm dear God, as I kneel before you. I don't know if you'll answer me after everything I did but please forgive me, I don't know what came over me." Tears streamed down "please guide me on your righteous paths, fill me up with your love,

teach me your way, fill me up with your truth!" I don't know what came over me but I was flowing, I don't even know where the words came from but I literally had all the right words, I was practically pouring my heart out. I felt like I've always known this God, like I've always had a relationship with him. Is this how believers feel when they pray? I could feel his fire in me "let your fire consume in me oh living Lord in Jesus name, transform my heart each day and fill me up with you peace, in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, Amen" I sniffed and wiped my face, I got on bed and laid on my back, I can't believe what Lara said was true, he lives and he answers I can literally feel his peace in my heart...

37 _____ "This way..." The woman said. Smangele's twin sister had just arrived in Pretoria, the woman was taking her to the apartment that Smangele occupied. She didn't want to look for another place since she has her late sister's apartment. The woman left after showing her the apartment, she walked in while carrying the sleeping baby girl. Before walking further in, she stood by the door and scanned around the room, her sister's perfume filled her nostrils, she sighed and walked in after closing the door. She laid the baby on the couch and walked around. "Forever stubborn! If only you had listened to me, we wouldn't be here. You chose to lose your life than to be here with your daughter. Did you really have to be this selfish!" Tears gushed out "why didn't you choose Princess (her daughter) over everything and everyone. Now she'll have to grow up without you. You won't be here to hear her say her first words, to see her first steps. Her first day at school, you won't be here to help her with her homeworks, to attend her school meetings" she chuckled "to see her find her first love, her teenage years. Why Smangele? Why?" She sat on the floor and hugged her legs . . . _ZOLA_ . Today's the funeral, finally we're going to lay my grandfather to rest. I never thought this day would come sooner, I've never prepared myself for it. I hugged my sister as she sobbed, it was even harder for her than anyone else, we lost the only guardian we had left. What will happen from today onwards, how will we face the world, will we be

strong enough to overcome anything, to conquer any afflictions? We watched as the coffin slowly went down, I clenched my jaws, hearing my sister break down like this was just heart tearing. The church elders led a song "Jehovah thel' umoya, Jehovah thel' umoya! Jehovah thel' umoya, Jehovah, thel' umoyaaaa! Oyingcwele!! Umoya oyingcwele! Umoya oyingcweleeeee, Umoya oyingcwele! Umoya oyingcweleeeee, Oyingcwele" I held Swazi even tighter, her friends couldn't hold it together, they were all a crying mess, some of my grandfather's friends were also shedding a few tears, we've truly lost an honored man. . _RICH_ . When we got at the hospital, the doctors didn't find anything wrong with our son, they assured us that everything was normal. I tried to talk my wife into taking our son to a traditional healer but she bluntly shut me down! She's a very modern woman, she doesn't believe at all on ancestors, she always sticks to the thought that blacks were brainwashed to believe in ancestors. We had no other choice but to bring him home with us, he insisted on going back to his apartment but we didn't allow that, there's no way he was going to continue staying there whilst he can't do anything on his own, as for his mother, she said that there's no way she'll let him stay with that girl! As I made my way to the office, my PA called to let me know that someone was here to see me and it was urgent. I sat on my chair waiting for whoever that is to walk in, a few minutes later Smangele walked in "Sma,

do we have a meeting that I don't know off?" I asked. She looked very drained with red puffy eyes "have you been crying?" I got up and walked my way to her , I held her cheek but she quickly removed my hand "what's going on?" "Uhm can we sit down, we need to talk" she was different, a bit distracted. "Okay" we went and sat on the chairs "does this have anything to do with what you said the previous day?" I asked "Mr Mbewu" she cleared her throat "my name is Sbahle, Smangele's identical twin sister" for a moment I busted into laughter, she's very funny. I looked at her and she had the most serious look, I glanced at her and only now did I notice that she's not as chubby as Sma. But how is this possible, all this time I've known her and she never had the courage to tell me that she had a twin

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what is she playing at. "I'm truly sorry for ambushing you like this but since you and my sister were working together, I thought it was best I came in person to give you the sad news" I frowned "what news?" "Smangele is no more, she died in an accident" I swear I felt my heart stop, this can't be true, it can't be! . . . _NARRATED_ . Nthati was in the bedroom with her son Lungelo, ever since he moved back home all his mother does is take care of him. She was forcing him to eat porridge... "Ma!" "Lungelo, you heard the doctor" "Of course I did, he said there's

absolutely nothing wrong with me" "He said you should take care of your health, that includes eating healthy food" she said "now eat" he slightly opened the mouth allowing her to feed him "I don't like this" he added "What?" "You having to take care of me, I'm a grown man for heavens sake!" "Then act like one, I need you for business" He chuckled "that's the only thing you're worried about, business" "Baby sitting here all day won't make us money" he looked at her, not believing that his mother just said that "I told you, there's a new drug lord in the underworld and he's messing around with our business, you have to get better so that you take care of everything!" She put the plate next to him, then stood up "I'll call your sister, it's about time she comes back" she said before walking out, leaving Choco with a mouth hung open. "Baby you need to come back home" she was on the call with Sam. "Mom, why? I told you I'd be back two days after the funeral" "You can't, your brother is not well" "What do you mean?" "He's paralysed" "What!?" She screamed unbelievably "Yes, so get back before the end of the day" Another call came through after she spoke with Sam, "What the!?! Since when do you call on my cellphone you imbecile!?" She walked in the study making sure no one overhears "Boss I've been trying to call on the burner phone" "What do you want?" "I got your message but" he sighed "it was too late, she's dead" "No!" She screamed "it can't be!" She screamed again but was soon disturbed by a knock and a voice

speaking "Mam are you okay?" She ignored her. She couldn't take in the news , what's going to happen now? Her mind thought . . . _NOMSA_ . After the funeral people stayed to eat then they started leaving, you'll sure never separate black people from food, some didn't even go to the funeral they just appeared when it was time to eat! Swazi was finally sleeping after all the crying she's been doing, I could feel her heart, she's going through everything I went through, it was really sad to see her break down like that, it was very sad. Zola was sitting on a big rock just outside the yard when I decided to go join him. "Is this how you felt?" He asked I nodded "if not worse, remember I had absolutely no one to cry to, no friends nor a sibling." "I can't even imagine how lonely you felt" "At the end of the day, it'll pass. Nothing is here to stay forever, pain is temporary" He sighed "thank you" "What for?" "For being here, for the support" "It's nothing. Now what's going to happen?" He shrugged "I don't know, one thing I know is I'll have to move back here" I immediately felt a sharp pain in my heart, I never thought it would get here . . . _AZENATHI_ . I love my work but sometimes it can be very draining, especially with the responsibilities that come with being a captain. It's not easy to hold such a high position and yet at the same time you're just a single parent. I always have to make time for work and my children and it's very exhausting... "captain, there's a lady that wants to see you, says she's an old friend" I frowned, I don't

have any female friends , who could it be, "Let her in" I waited until my old time bestie made her way in, I ran to give her the warmest hug ever, circumstances separated us but destiny brought us together once again "ohh my God look at you!" I screamed "No look at you! You look beautiful" I smiled "come" I led her to the chair "oh God Sbahle! What brings you here!?" Her smile vanished "They killed Smangele, now I need your help" I couldn't believe it, who would kill such a beautiful soul, I know she was very stubborn but to kill her! "I'll help you" she smiled...

38 ____ "Tell me everything" I sat comfortably on the chair, I still can't believe that Smangele is no more! But I'll do anything in my power to help my friend. Funny how Sbahle and I met, Luyolo and I were out to have a night out for a change, when I inevitably got drunk, I remember how I went looking for a bathroom when Sbahle and I bumped into each other, she split a whole glass of wine on us. If it was any two other females, it would've gotten pretty nasty, I don't even want to think of the bad blood that would have developed between the two. With us it was completely different, instead of getting mad, we laughed at what had happened, she even offered to accompany me to the bathroom. From there on we became best friends till she moved to Swaziland, and now she's here... She sighed "Smangele fell inlove with a married man, it was all nice until" "Until the wife found out" I added same old story, wives always do... She nodded "but it was too late she had already fallen pregnant" "What!?" "Yep she's one year two months" I covered my mouth with my hand unbelievably "She - she left a baby?" "Unfortunately yes. When she found out, she paid her a huge amount of money to leave the city. Until a month ago when she drew a plan to use the money to construct a school" "Wow, that's big" She nodded "I know right. She resorted to coming back here, and worse she was working with him" "And she found out again" "Yeah, a few days ago she threatened her, I guess she took it lightly until the supposedly 'accident

happened' " I thought for a while, do you have anything against this woman, I mean concrete proof?" She nodded then took out a memory stick , she gave it to me, I looked at it. "In there, there's everything we need to keep her locked in for years if not her whole life. All the files, all the crimes, and the shady businesses" "How did you find out?" She shrugged "Sma did" I nodded while looking at the stick, what could be in here... . . .

SAM . To say I was shocked by what my mother told me is just an understatement. How did it all happen, I mean my brother is young and very healthy how can he be paralysed out of nothing, unless he got in an accident. Oh no what could've happened. After speaking with mother I quickly went to pack my things, even though I still wanted to be there for my friend and boyfriend, I just couldn't my brother needs me more. I had just told the girls about what happened and I must say I didn't expect the news to affect Pam this way, she was crying or could it be the hormones, you never know with pregnant women... "I - I" she was even having hiccups "Pam you have to calm down before something happens to the baby" Bloom said "How can I calm down when the father of my unborn baby is paralysed" I raised an eyebrow, I've never seen my friend like this "guys I have to go, please take care of her" I said to Bloom and Swazi "Sam please tell him that I'll always love him" she spoke between her cries, I wonder if that's the real her speaking... After half an hour I got home, no one was around except for

the maids. I hurried to my brother's bedroom, he was on his cellphone "take care babe" he spoke "will do, and behave" he chuckled then ended the call. "Please do come in and stop staring" he said I slowly walked in "even on bed you still the same player" He chuckled "respect me" I sat next to him "What happened?" He shrugged "what did the doctors say?" He sighed "they didn't find anything" "That's very weird" I frowned "Tell me about it" he shook his head "but I'll be out of this bed before you know it" I chuckled "now you're forced to stay at home with your family" he made a funny face "I got a message for you" "From?" "Baby mama" his face instantly changed, he clenched his jaws "I left her a crying mess after finding out about your situation" he shook his head "She said she'll forever love you" "If you don't have anything better to say please leave" "You'll forever be an arrogant jerk!" "Yazi Samantha I can still rough you up even though I'm here!" He yelled "Well I'd like to see you try!" I stood with my hands folded, he gave me a death stare, right now I couldn't care less even if he came after me... . . _RICH_ . "Wow man!" Wyatt brushed his head unbelievably, I just told him about Smangele's death "Why is it that all those we care about are dying?" "I don't know man, I don't know" "A few days ago she mentioned that someone wanted her dead" He glared at me "What do you mean?" "Someone sent her a warning

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to stay away from me" He chuckled and shook his head "She has no limits" he mumbled "What!?" "No nothing, it's just that not so long ago you were arrested, accused of killing your mistress, and now your ex died in an 'accident', it just doesn't add up" "You're right, but who could be responsible for all of this" I wonder. He shrugged... . . _NOMSA_ . "It was very emotional" "Yea a lot" I responded, Lara and I were packing, the chisa nyama needs us so we have to leave... "I've never lost someone so close, but that was touching, he must have been a very good and honored man" "They sure gave him a dignified funeral" I nodded, Lara doesn't stop talking and right now all my mind thinks about is leaving this place and not seeing Zola ever again. What will my life be like without him, he can't stay here forever, he's the only one I have. What will happen to the business.... A knock came through, "sorry to disturb, can I have a word with you Nono" he stood by the door "Uhm I have a few dishes to wash" Lara excused herself and I was left with Zola "Lets sit" we sat on the bed facing each other "look Nono I know that you not happy with my decision" I kept my eyes on him "I can't let my sister stay here alone, she needs me" "I understand" "No you don't, look I'll come visit you, besides I have businesses there, I'll sure come as often as I can" "Then let me stay here with you guys, how will I survive alone, without you?" He sighed "Let me stay here, I promise I won't cause any problems" "Nono..." He whispered "Please Zola please" I

begged "I'm sorry but you can't, or at least not now, let's wait then I'll talk to Swazi" "Fine Zola it's okay" I got up and continued packing, he came and hugged me from behind, I don't know why he's doing this. "Zola" tears fell down "I'm sorry, forgive me Nono" he whispered, I turned around and hugged him back. "You will be okay, remember I'll always care about you" he said, I remained quiet letting him do all the talking... . . . _AZENATHI_. The information that I read on that stick left me without words, how can a mere human or rather a woman be so heartless and cruel, how can she promote such wickedness! We're here trying to fight evil, trying to lock in all the criminals, whilst she's out there spreading all the crimes in this world. With all the information that I have, there's no amount of money that will save her, no lawyer will defend her from this one, there's definitely no come back! I made my way in Detective's office, she was on her laptop "Mthembu" "Captain" she stood up "You may sit" I put the stick next to the laptop "What is this?" She looked at me I smirked "this my dear, is what you've been looking for to conclude that Canal case and other cases I believe" She frowned "what do you mean?" "In there, is Bruno Canal's murderer and all her crimes" "Her?" I nodded, she couldn't believe it, she grabbed the stick and stared at it "As from tomorrow, she'll have a room in here specifically prepared for her" she smirked, we got the big fish...

39 ____ "Why don't you come?" "What! Are you crazy?" "No I'm inlove" I heard her sigh. I really miss Zandy, all we do is talk on the phone or video call, she's scared of my mother. "That's crazy, isn't it enough that we video calling?" "No it's not Zan, I want to touch you and kiss you" "I also want that but I don't want your mother breathing fire down on my neck" "She's one of the coolest you know?" Her eyes narrowed "oh really?" "Yes" I smiled "I think I have a better idea" "Let's hear it" "Sam, my sis is back. I can talk to her so she fetches you, she'll be a good excuse for your presence in here" "Lungelo your parents know me, what happens if they see me?" "They won't, they'll be at work" She sighed "I don't know" "Come on say yes" I begged "Fine! Thank that cute face of yours" "Stop acting like you don't want to be here" "Ngelo!" Sonto came in rushing, I hadn't seen her ever since I got here. I ended the call, "What happened? I heard that - that..." She embraced me in a hug "It's okay Sonto, I'll be fine" "No" a tear fell "how can you say that when you're here" the love she has for us can be hardly ignored "Sonto" I whispered "Is there anything you need, anything I can do for you?" I shook my head "I'm fine really, stop worrying" "How? you're like a son to me and you know that, I can't help but worry" I hugged her "There's only one thing I need from you" She quickly broke the hug and looked at me "anything and I'll do it" "Just cook me my favourite chicken soup" She chuckled "you'll never change" I nodded "Then let me quickly do that"

she kissed my forehead before leaving . . . _AZENATHI_ . "Thank you" Sbahle said. We were eating out, little Princess was with us she's a very beautiful and a quiet girl, reminds me of Yuna when she was her age. My little girl was the sweetest, she hardly cried on the contrary with her brother, that one was pain on it's own, but I'll forever love them equally. "It's nothing, justice had to be done, I'm glad you took action before she did something, that woman is very dangerous!" "I know..." She sighed "although I want to pay her a visit" "What!" She can't... "You can't do that! You know she's capable of throwing a bullet in your head" "She wouldn't dare, the last thing she'll need is my blood on her hands more especially after killing my sister" "Sbahle we're talking about a murderer, the underworld queen, a druglord, a human trafficker! You still want me to add?" "She won't do anything, trust me!" I sighed I don't like this... "Why do you want to do this?" "I want to see my sister's killer" "But you will, when she's finally arrested" She shook her head "I want to do it now so that I can slap her if I have to" "You know you're as stubborn as Sma" I shrugged "after all she was your other half" "Exactly" she downed her drink "and you know what?" I shook my head "you're taking me there, now" this is crazy "you'll drop me at her workplace then leave with Princess, I'll fetch her later then find my way back home, maybe an uber." "And how am I supposed to know where she works?" "Don't forget I have every info on her, the address included" I

shook my head "Let's go" we left... . . _NTHATI_ . Sigh... working at the boutique is not something I like, thanks to my late foster parents they used to force me to attend all those different classes, even though I hate what I do, I'm glad it all comes to use, this boutique is just a frontal. I'm what they refer to as the venomous snake, a viper! The phone rang, "yes?" "Nthati

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there's a woman who'd like to see you" my pa spoke I sighed "does she have an appointment?" "No" These people "then tell her to make one" I attempted to drop but she spoke before I did "She won't leave until you see her" "Listen here, if there's no appointment then she can't see me" I ended the call, what do people think this is, some pasture? Imbeciles... I continued working on my laptop until I heard a strange noise, I immediately got up and when I was about to open, the door opened and I was met by a - a - ghost, it smiled at me, this can't be, I must be dreaming - this must be a dream! . . _NOMSA_ . So from today onwards this will be my home, mine alone. I might as well start now to get used to the silence around here, his call came through "Zola" "Hey Nono have you arrived?" I sighed "yeah I just did" "Safe and sound?" "Yeah" I said "I'm glad. You and I are good right?" "We are" "Nono" he whispered "Zola just stop! Stop it! You chose to stay there now please stay away from me, leave me alone" "Fine" he sighed "ngizoshaya

around weekend ngzolanda izinto zam (I'll come on weekend to fetch my things)" "Okay" I ended the call then went on Facebook to delete my fake account. I feel like I'm restarting my life, maybe this is for the best, I'll work my way up then maybe after reaching my goals then I'll consider falling inlove with a real man! Someone knocked on the door, I went to open and was met by this tall creature, I've never seen him before maybe he's friends with Zola "hi" I said. He had his eyes on me, his mouth slightly open, maybe he's lost, "hi!" I said louder, he snapped out of it then cleared his throat "Hey" he had a deep voice "Hi?" I repeated waiting for him to continue "Sorry - I. My name is King" I continued staring at him "I, I'm your new neighbour" he chuckled nervously "Oh, yes" I pat my forehead, I had forgotten that the landlord was looking for someone to rent one of the rooms "I'm Nomsa" we shook hands "Nice to meet you Makhi(neighbour)" I looked at him, he had this side smile on his face. He looks like those jerks, you know those who wear that combination of ankle boots, jeans, polo necks and a hat. "Nice meeting you too" I smiled genuinely "Yes ehm" he cleared his throat "since I just moved in, I hadn't bought any groceries" o-kay "if you don't mind, can you lend me half a spoon of salt" I chuckled "It's just that I want to prepare something to eat" "It's fine" he took out a teaspoon, I chuckled "You came here ready" "What can I say, my faith always works" I shook my head and took the spoon "I hope it'll be enough" I

gave it back to him "Thank you Makhi (neighbour) see you around" he went to his room but before walking in he turned "see you around!" He said, I smiled seems like I won't get bored after all... . . . _NTHATI_ . I slowly stepped back "Mam I tried getting rid of her but she insisted, I called the security" my pa spoke "Tell her it's not necessary" the ghost spoke, maybe she's not a ghost that's the reason my pa can see her, right... "tell her" "I it's okay, I know her" I pulled myself together "Mam are you sure?" She asked "Yes I am" she nodded and walked away leaving me with the woman I thought was dead, is she a cat? Does she have nine lives? She closed the door "how..." "How? That's the same question I ask myself" I didn't think I'd say that out loud. She walked to my desk and sat on it "How is it possible that after killing me, I still managed to get here in flesh!" She smiled, I made sure not to react to any word she spoke "say something Nthati or would you prefer I call you Nombuso" I immediately felt a huge lump on my throat, how is it possible that she found out!

40 ____ I looked at her "how did you know?" "Won't you serve me a glass of wine?" "You sure weren't brought by the wine" "Okay" she smirked "why don't you sit, after telling you everything I know, you might lose your balance and fall" I slowly walked up to the couch and sat, for the first time I couldn't feel any comfort from it "Nombuso" she emphasised "where would you like me to start?" "How about you start by telling me how you know my real name?" I enquired "How I found out doesn't really matter, what matters is what I know" I sighed "what is it exactly that you want? Rich?" She laughed "Oh come on, he's not all that you think he is." She shrugged "He may be a treasure to you but to some of us he's just" her lips curved "just a male" "What do you want Smangele?" "I want nothing, just to look at you before you get arrested for all the crimes, my sister's death included" I frowned "what do you mean?" "My name is Sbahle, Smangele's twin sister and everything she told you before you killed her was true, as we speak the police are probably on their way here" No, I slowly shook my head, I'm not going to jail! I ran to take my bag "I wouldn't do that if I were you!" she shouted, I ignored her and hurried to the door I need to do something, escape if I have to. As I opened the door, the police stood there "Going somewhere?" . . _AZENATHI_ . The twins sure never know when to stop, I don't understand why Sbahle has to be so hard headed, from everything I read there's no doubt that woman is

very dangerous, she's not anyone to mess with. If she steps on her toes things might turn very ugly for Sbahle and I'm afraid something bad might happen to her. The last thing I need is having Princess losing both her mother and aunt from the hands of the same woman. "Babies I'm home!" I walked in with Princess on my arms, my children came running "Mom! Who's that?" Andile asked, Yuna took her from my arms "She's so beautiful, hello baby I'm auntie Yuna" that's how old she thinks she is "That my boy, is your cousin" I kissed his forehead "But how? You don't have any siblings" he frowned I chuckled, he's smart "but I do have a best friend" "Ohh, so you just chose to give it the 'cousin' tagname?" I frowned "what english...where did you hear that term?" "A movie" I shook my head "It's not an it, it's a baby, her name is Princess" "Beautiful name for a beautiful girl" Yuna played with her "Rose please watch over her I need to make a call and freshen up" I said to the helper "Will do" I headed up the stairway . . _CHOCO_ . I managed to convince Sam into fetching Zandy and I must say, I regret it, I regret bringing her here! What was I even thinking, as if it wasn't enough that I can't use my legs now I can't even use my manhood too! I feel less of a man, I feel useless, we've been trying but my manhood just keeps acting up on me. Could it be that this is happening because of the paralysis. Something has to be done, I can't live like this it's just a shame... "Choco" she whispered, her head was on my chest. I've been telling her to

leave but she's not having any of it. "Please look at me" I continued staring into space, this is embarrassing "Lungelo" she slightly forced me to look at her "My parents will be here and the last thing I need is drama, so please leave" "I won't leave you like this, Lungelo it's not your fault. Stop beating yourself" "And what do you know Zandy huh? What? Are you a man? Have you been in the same situation before?" She gave me a blank stare "tell me!" I yelled "No, but I'm the woman you love and I care a lot about you. This shall pass and you'll get to your old self" "Leave" I said "I told you I..." "I said leave!" I shouted causing her to jump in shock "I won't repeat myself" I said firmly. She immediately got up and went to get dressed. She sure will never see me the same way after this . . . _NOMSA_ . I was about to leave to the Chisa nyama

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when King called me to his room, at first I hesitated but then remembered that the landlord and the other tenants included are around, so he wouldn't even try to do anything to me. I learnt that he's real name is Nkoskhona so he took the first part 'Nkosi' and translated it into english, that's the reason everyone knows him as King. Also that he's actually always been from around this hood just on the other street, he lived with his family and now he just wants his space and some privacy. "And you, where's home?" He asked "KZN" "Oh that's nice, you came

alone?" "Yea" "But why?" He chuckled "if you don't mind me asking" "Actually I do mind" "Ouch" he dramatically laid his hand on his chest "One day you'll know why" He nodded "I usually spend my weekends at Sbali's but I've never seen you" "That's because I've never been there" His eyebrows furrowed "That's a first, rare breed" he smirked "I like that. Does that mean you don't consume alcohol?" "Yes, I prefer staying sober minded" He smiled "You sure are a wife material" "And what is a wife material?" "Someone like you, who don't go out clubbing, doesn't drink, your boyfriend is very lucky to have you" I wish "unfortunately I don't have one" His eyes widened "are you serious?" I nodded "yesss" he mumbled "What was that?" Clearing his throat "nothing" he smirked . . . _AZENATHI_ .

I had freshen up and did everything there was to do, I even ended up doing some work and Sbahle wasn't back. I'm just glad Princess is not one of those cry babies, she's been quiet ever since we got here, Rose and the kids were playing with her. Where could Sbahle be? I just hope wherever she is, she's safe though I can't help but feel a bit scared for her, I've been trying to call her but it doesn't go through and it's getting dark! "I'm going to sleep, wake me up when it's time to eat" Andile said while yawning. He's very weird I even feel sorry for his future wife "Okay" Yuna answered "Did you prepare anything for her?" I asked Rose "Yes mam, besides from the sweets she got from Andile, I fed her the soft porridge" "Do you think it

was enough?" "I believe so, she was even getting drowsy until Andile and his sweets happened" I shook my head, it explains the energy "When will her mother arrive?" Yuna asked "Tired of her?" I joked "Of course not, I'm just asking in case I have to prepare my room for the both of us" I chuckled, my baby girl loves kids maybe I should consider having a third child, but with who? . . . _RICH_ . I was packing my things when suddenly the door opened, it was Smangele's replica. I can't get over how identical they look "hi and please you may come in" I said sarcastically "I'm sorry I didn't knock, I'm just a bit distracted" "Understandable. How may I be of help?" "We have to talk about my sister" I nodded "Okay. Is it about the funeral?" "No" she shook her head "it's about a child you had together" I frowned "what child?" She sat down "When my sister left she was pregnant, and now you guys have a baby girl" "What!!?" . . . _NTHATI (Nombuso)_ . I looked at them, as for detective Mthembu she looks like she's just won a lottery. "It's over for you" they had just put me in a smelling prison cell, at least I'm alone, the last time when I got arrested as Nombuso I had to share the cell with a whole bunch of women. Now I'll have some time to think and come up with a new plan. "If I were you darling, I'd start getting comfortable, you'll be here for a very long time" she smiled "Don't be so sure" I spoke She laughed "give up already, you won't get out of this one. No one will save you, not even the president himself" she hit the bars with her

stick while whistling then walked away. I held the bars with my hands "like I said, don't be so sure" I whispered, there's a reason why the underworld call me the ViperQueen...

41 ____ After finding out that I had a daughter with Sma, I insisted that Sbahle takes me to her. I couldn't believe it at first until I saw her, she looks exactly like me except for the skin tone. I really wish Sma had told me about her, I would have found a way to make things right even though I don't want to lose my wife. I carried her to my arms as Sbahle and her friend watched, I could feel the connection between this baby and I. "What's her name?" I asked "Princess" I nodded, beautiful name. She sure is a princess, my princess, it's sad though that she'll grow up without a mother... A call came through "hello" "Hi Rich it's Zweli, uhm you have to come down to the police station" I was surprised, Zweli used to be our lawyer before Bruno. "Why? What's going on?" "It's Nthati, she's arrested" "What!" I shouted "What for?" "Just come man" he ended the call, of all the people why would my wife be arrested, it doesn't make sense. "Are you okay?" Sbahle asked I shook my head "no, my wife just got arrested, I need to go" I handed her the baby "I'll call you later" she nodded, I left. Minutes later I arrived at the police station and immediately spotted Zweli... "What did you say happened man?" I was panicking, this is too much, my wife is very fragile, she won't even be able to make it for one night. "Come" we walked in to a room and there I found her, she was even trembling, poor thing... "Sthandwa sami (my love)" I ran to her and embraced her in a hug "Yey hands off!" The guard warned. "Are you okay!?" We sat on the chairs. Tears

welled up on her eyes "shhh it's okay, I'll make sure you get out of here" I held her hands "I don't care what they think you did, I know you're innocent" tears fell, I could feel her heart break... .

. _ENZO_ . I was with my sister massaging her feet, we were back at home and her feet weren't having any mercy on her, they were swollen. However something was wrong with her, she wasn't the energetic Pam, "Pam" she continued staring into space "Pam!" She looked at me "Did you just say something?" I shook my head "what's on your mind?" She sighed "I don't want to talk about it" "Well you better cause I won't let it go" I looked at her "fine, it's Choco" I frowned "baby daddy?" she nodded "what has he done?" "Nothing, he's just not feeling" "Be specific" "He's paralysed" she looked down, I smirked but quickly wiped it off my face "How?" She shrugged "something like he woke up like that" "What did the doctors say?" That's the most confusing part "they didn't find anything" "Ohh

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that's..." "Weird" she added "this seems like some witchcraft to me" I cleared my throat "I hope they take him to a sangoma" "Why does it look like these news don't sit well with you?" I glanced at her "You know I love him" she spoke then ate her nails... hormones are just playing with her, this is absolutely good news, I wish I had done even more than just a paralysis... .

. _CHOCO_ . I hate this! I hate my life! How did a well known

play boy like me end up paralysed in bed!? What sucks even more is the fact that I can't wash my own body, taking a shower proved to be more of a mission than anything else. Sonto is the one who takes care of me mostly since my parents spend most of their time at work. At first I protested but Sonto being herself, she insisted up until I gave in. Dad walked in, more like rushed in like someone was after him "dad!" He paced around "dad!" I shouted He stopped and looked at me "your mother is arrested" he blurted "What! Why!?" I couldn't believe it "It's - it's" he sighed "I don't even know why I came here, I need to do something" he rushed out. What was that, this is not good at all. Immediately a call came through, an unknown "Yes?" I answered "Baby listen..." "Mom!? What's going on?" "I said listen!" She spoke firmly "you have to move all the documents from the safety before the police get there" "How? Have you forgotten that I can't walk?" I asked in annoyance "I know that!" She yelled "get a wheelchair and make use of your hands and stop being a cry baby!" she cut the call before I could say anything. I need to move the documents, everything about our businesses is there, the last thing I need is to get arrested too! . . _NOMSA_ . "So last night Shasha was at home" Hmm I smiled, we were at the chisa nyama, it wasn't packed "What happened?" "He went to meet my aunt through dinner" she blushed "Aren't you guys moving a bit too fast?" "There's no fast in love dear" "And how did it go?" "Very well, however my

aunt thinks it would've been better if I went for a Christian" I nodded "y'all guys are from two different worlds" "We'll make it work" "That's the spirit" we did a high five, I saw King walking in. "Woow who's that?" She asked "My neighbour" "You know him?" I nodded "He's so, so wow" "He does look good" "What, good!? Nigga looks hot" I chuckled, so much for someone who's inlove I walked up to him "hey" "Makhi" he smiled "Since you told me that you work here, I thought why not go greet her" he shrugged. I led him to an empty table "it's a nice spot" he scanned around "Yeah, do you want me to prepare you anything?" "The best dish, for yourself also, I can't be eating alone" I chuckled "I'm working you know" "It's not too busy" "You do know that when you get me fired I won't have money to pay for rent , then I'll be forced to move out and I won't be your Makhi anymore" He smiled "then you'll move in with me" he winked, he's crazy I just walked away to prepare something. . . _NTHATI_ . After speaking with Zweli they brought me back to my cell, a few minutes later Sonto came to see me. I'm glad she did, she and I come a long way but that's a story for another day. She was worried about me, also disappointed about how I couldn't cover my tracks very well, she shouldn't worry though I already got a plan finalised! "Madame!" I turned around to be met by Wyatt "Well well well" I slowly walked to the bars "look who's here" "Move away!" He orderd the guard who nodded ridiculously before leaving us "You sure took your

time" I spoke "I'm a family man you know" "And I, a family woman" we looked at each other "So what's your plan?" He asked I smiled "you'll know all in good time, for now make sure Rich doesn't find out anything" "I'll try" "Though I know you've always wanted him to find out, I forgive you" He chuckled and shook his head "already know what they have on you?" I nodded "but the info they got, have a lot of missing puzzles. I can play around it all and come out as the conqueror" He smiled and shook his head "getting away with my cousin's murder" he said "Oh come on it's not like you cared about him" I looked at him "or did you?" He chuckled and walked away "call me when you're done finalising the plan" coward!

42 ____ Days turned into weeks, weeks into months and Nthati's case got real each day. A few weeks ago she had tried to escape from jail but to her badluck her plan flunked, causing yet another crime to be added on her case. Presently they were in court, the day of her prosecution, "...Mrs Nthati Mbewu you are found guilty of various crimes to name a few, human trafficking, fraud, drug dealing, attempted murder and murder." Everyone in the courtroom groaned, some whispering and mumbling things, Sam couldn't hold back the tears... "Therefore, you're being sentenced to life in prison with no chances of getting a parole!" Lungelo couldn't believe that her mother's down fall had caught up with her so soon. Sonto shook her head in disappointment. "Court is adjourned" "All rise!" Rich embraced her daughter, Samantha. Nthati turned to look at her family, she stared at them for some time without manifesting any emotions before leaving the courtroom... . . .

AZENATHI . We walked out of the courtroom, Sbahle was very happy at how everything had turned out, "I'm glad my sister's death has been avenged" she said "I'm glad too that justice played it's part" "Now we can continue living our lives" I nodded "I just feel sorry for her children, she should have thought about them before doing all those wicked things" "Yea at the end of the day children are always the ones to pay for their parents sins, look at my Princess" "You're right" Rich made his way to us, they hugged with Sbahle, the past few months

they've become very close. "How are you Aze?" "I'm good Rich and how do you feel?" He still hardly believes that his wife was capable of all those crimes He sighed "What can I say" he shrugged. He looked very drained and was even losing weight, this situation was taking a lot of strain on him... . . _NOMSA_ . My life has changed for the better, the chisa nyama prospered a lot or shall I say it continues prospering, and because of that we got a raise on our salary. The car wash as well, they even had to higher more guys. Zola pops by once or twice a week to check on the businesses, he and I kept it the way it was, as friends. Mam'Mavi (the landlord of the chisa nyama) she has become more of a mother to me, sometimes I spend the nights at her place, she's just the mother I've always yearned to have. As for my love life, everything is so perfect. King and I are seeing each other, we're very inlove more like we are our hood's power couple, though that won me a lot of female enemies, I couldn't careless just as long as I have him by my side. He makes it very clear to everyone that we're dating, I've started going to Sballi's place with King, however, he doesn't allow me to consume any alcohol, he just wants me by his side. We were at the mall eating out after watching a movie, "did you enjoy it?" He asked I nodded "you know there's nothing I like more than to be with you" "I love you" those words have become my most favourite words from him. He leaned over and kissed me "I'll forever love you" I blushed "I love you too

Nkosi yami(my King)" he smiled "I think it's time" I frowned "time? For what?" "For our first born" he smiled "I..." I ran out of words, we've spoken about this before, I just didn't think he was being serious. "I..." He chuckled "talk to me babe, what do you think?" "I - I don't know" I shrugged "Nothing would make me happy my love, my mates are already fathering their third child" I laughed "if you also wanted that you would've had those kids by now" He chuckled "no baby, I was waiting for a real woman and now" he kissed me "now I've found her" "Stop it people are watching" I said shyly, while pushing him away "They should know that you're mine, and I'm yours" he said seductively. I shook my head he's very inlove... . . _ZOLA_ . Ever since we lost our grandfather a lot has changed, now I'm the man of the house, I do everything for my sis and I

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I'm not complaining though. The last thing I need is her going after a man just so he provides for her. Sam has been going through a very rough time, with her mother's case she hasn't been taking it very well. "How did it go?" She had just arrived from court, I would've been there to support her but the last thing I needed was to intrude. "They've found her guilty Zola, I don't know what I'll do without her. It's a lie they don't know her like I do, my mother would never do all those evil things Zola, she'd never" she cried, I made lay her head on my chest.

Between you and I, I think her mother is guilty, how can they accuse one person of all those crimes. "She's not guilty" she whispered... I really wish I could take away her pain, this is not good for her. A call came through my phone, it was her father, "hello?" "Zola, can we meet at my office within an hour?" "Uhm" I cleared my throat while looking at Sam "She's there? Don't worry just make up an excuse then come here immediately" "Will do." I ended the call "Babe" she rose her head up and looked at me "I need to leave for a few minutes" She sniffed, her face was pink and the fact that she's light skinned made it worse "where to? Zola I need you more than ever, you can't leave" "I know love but I need to run a few errands then I'll be back before you know it" "You know what, just go, go and never come back!" She yelled, "oh I forgot this is your house, I'll go!" She got up furiously and grabbed her bag, I quickly pulled her to me and kissed her "Awume ngezitayela (stop acting)" "Oh you think I'm..." I continued kissing her, she can be dramatic at times. . . _RICH_ . He made his way in, I see a great potential on this boy he deserves an opportunity, or better I wouldn't want my daughter living a miserable life next to him. "You may take a sit Zola" he sat down "how's my daughter doing?" She's always with him He nodded "She's good, just a bit sad" "Understandable. And you? How's business?" "good, everything is going well" "I'm glad to hear that" I gave him a contract "What's this?" He frowned "That my

boy is a contract already prepared for you, I want you to start working here in my company, it's a very big opportunity for you" "A - a contract?" "Yes" I nodded "But what if I don't want to sign" "Trust me you will" he looked at me then back at the contract, this will do him good, he will benefit a lot from this... .

. _PAMELA_ . My belly keeps growing each day, I'm currently twenty eight weeks pregnant, yet I feel like I'm about to give birth. This baby won't let me rest, it keeps kicking every now and then, we still don't know the child's sex, we preferred it to be a surprise. We've started doing shopping for the baby with my family, my parents came back a few months ago. Dad was very astonished to see me pregnant, my mom was so angry, angry at the fact that I'm making her a grandmother, she's a drama queen that one. Everything is ready for my little one it's just amazing, there's even a bedroom prepared with everything in it. "Have you thought of any names?" Mom asked I shook my head "no, not yet" She raised an eyebrow "are you sure you're about to be a mother?" "You're the grandmother you'll choose the name" She gave me a death stare "don't you even dare call me a grandmother Pamela! Don't you dare!" "Sorry" I raised my hands in surrender "It's just... Ahhh!" I felt a sharp pain on my lower abdomen "What's wrong?" "I don't know I - ahhh!!" I screamed even louder causing mom to panick "Oh no, Pam is the baby coming!?" Ohh "how will I know!" "Ok ok, breath baby. Pat!!" She called dad, who appeared within a few

seconds "Pat the baby is coming, we need to go to the hospital" she spoke. It was painful, the pain was unbearable, all I did was to push, I cared less if the baby was coming or not...

43 ____ For the past months nothing has been going well for me, my life was so perfect until the paralysis happened, as if it wasn't enough my hood is also paralysed, the fool in me tried to have yet another sexual intercourse with Zan but it all caused yet another act of shame to me, she's even stopped coming to see me, always comes up with an excuse saying that she's busy she can't make it. We just talk on the phone then that's that. Then mom's situation , I still can't believe she doesn't have any chance to make it out, though I'm thankful that she didn't bust me out... We're close to the end of the year and here I am stuck in a wheelchair. Till now the doctors can't find anything, they don't know what is going on with me, they can't explain anything because according to them or rather, the results I'm perfectly fine. Sonto has decided to take me to a traditional healer, she believes that everything that's happening to me has to do with witchcraft. I don't know what to think about all this because honestly I don't believe in spirits, in witchcraft to be specific. She wheeled me in to this small hut, we were welcomed by the horrible smell, I don't even want to mention the smoke it was suffocating "makhosi" Sonto spoke after sitting on a mat He hummed a song "ndinganinceda ngantoni? (How may I help you)" "Sidinga uncedo lwakho, umfana wami akahambi (we need your help, my boy can't walk)" he continued humming "Mfana ufela izono zakho (boy you paying for your sins)" he said I looked at him "ngeke ukwazi

ukucacisa? (Can't you be specific)" He shook his head "yenza okufanele (do the right thing)" without another word he walked to his cabinet and came back with the herbs "ugeze ngalokhu kathathu ngosuku (bath with this three times a week)" Sonto took the herbs "lokhu uzokuphuza (and this you will drink)" it was some liquid. Just by looking at it, it was bad enough to make me puke. I wonder though what he meant by saying that I should do the right thing... . . . _RICH_ . After making Zola sign the contract of which wasn't so hard to convince him to sign, I had offered him a position of being my pa, it'll be good for him though he's not experienced he will learn, and will earn a good salary. I then drove to Sbahle's place to see my daughter, we've gotten very close sometimes I feel like I'm with Sma, not only are they facially identical but their stubbornness, intelligence , they're one. Nthati still doesn't know about Princess. Funny how after everything I found out about Nthati, I still love her like nothing happened. I walked in after knocking, we hugged before settling on the couch "you good?" She nodded "I'm glad you came" she said. Not only did we get close because of little Princess but also because I like her, or should I say we like each other. "I'm also glad to be here" she went to fetch Princess , my beautiful baby "Say hi to daddy" I carried her "hello my beautiful Princess" I kissed her all over the face, she giggled she likes it when I do that "Dadadada" she spoke her baby language, soon she'll be turning two, maybe I should plan

something big for her after all she deserves it. I love her, funny how when I'm with her I feel something I've never felt before with my other two children, I wouldn't trade this moment for anything in this world! . . . _PAMELA_ . After hours of pain and more pain, the groans, the loud screams. I've finally given birth to a beautiful baby boy. I wasn't due yet but hey whatever that happened, happened. The doctors said something like if they didn't take me to labour not only was my boy going to die, but I would have died along with him. My boy and I sure escaped death, we cheated it. As for the labour pains, I swear I don't want to go through that ever again, if someone had told me that it was this painful, I sure would still be a virgin. There's no way in this world I'm falling pregnant again, this is the only treasure I have and forever will. The girls made their way in with presents, balloons, a sash written 'congratulations mommy', Bloom had a cake written 'happy born day!', I chuckled where has she seen that, is my son supposed to eat that cake... They hugged me "welcome to motherhood bestie" they gave a wrapped present, I unwrapped it only to be met by a paracetamol and sleeping pills, are these girls crazy. "Those my friends will help you with headache and sleepless nights. "You guys are crazy, and that cake?" "It's for the baby

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infact where's he?" Right then Enzo and my parents walked in with him, the girls rushed to him, "oh my word!" Sam screamed "He looks exactly like him, more like his replica" "Let me hold him" Swazi spoke "Nope I'm the first one darling" Bloom exclaimed "Y'all should sit back, I'm bonding with my nephew" Sam said, I shook my head, I'm glad I won't be mothering alone "You guys should prepare extra rooms for my baby, soon we'll be taking turns in spending the nights with him" they all groaned, no one wishes to spend a night with a baby! "Have you named him" Enzo asked. I shook my heard "Name him, Patrick" mom said while brushing dad's belly, never! "Or Rodney" Bloom said, his boyfriend's name, no thank you. "I think Prince will suit him" Sam said, they're horrible at baby naming "How about Sibusiso, he's a blessing after all" said Swazi I shook my head "Lungelo!" I said. They all froze and looked at me "Lungelo, like his father" "Pam!" Enzo warned "It's final, his name is Lungelo" Sam smiled, she likes it, the girls also. As for my family , they were covered with a disapproving look, it's unfortunate that it's not up to them. . . _ZOLA_ . I don't know what to say really, everything is coming together for me it literally feels like God is showering me with his blessings. I accepted Mr Mbewu's offer, from next week I'll be starting to work in his company as his PA. I couldn't be more happier, earning more money is what I need not only to give myself the life I deserve but my sister too. We're not orphans after all we

got each other and God got us. I dialled a number "hello" she said while giggling "Hi ehm Nono it's me, Zola" "I know silly" she continued giggling "Stop it, I'm on the phone" she whispered "Am I disturbing?" "No it's Kin... nevermind, do you need anything?" I clenched my jaws "I just called to let you know that I've found a new job" "Oh that's wonderful" "Yes I'll be working as a personal assistance in a construction company" "I'm happy for you" she did sound happy "Thank you, I'll be starting on Monday" "That's great." "Yeah uhm that was all" "Ok bye" she ended the call, I looked at my phone and threw it on the bed. . .

CHOCO. We had already arrived home, I also took that bath even drank that tasteless thing. I really hope these things work, I'm sacrificing myself here busy taking a bath with herbs, and drinking who knows what! My phone rang it was mom, the woman has excess to the outside world like she's not even in prison. "Hello" "Lungelo is that how you answer your phone now?" "Sorry, what's up?" She clicked her tongue "how're you holding up?" "I feel good, we went to a witch doctor today" "What!?" Just like me, she's not a fan of this "Exactly what you heard" "I'm sure uNomasonto loyo (It's Nomasonto)" "Yeah" She signed "anyway I need ten thousand by tomorrow midday, don't be late" "What for?" "That's my business to know, besides it's my money" All her accounts were frozen but what they don't know is she was smart enough to have an account on the side registered by my name. "I'll bring it" "Good" I shook my

head, what is she up to now... . . _NTHATI_ . "E sergeant ngixolele (ufile!) E sergeant ngixolele (ufile!) E sergeant ngixolele (ufile kabuhlungu ngesibhamu) Bengithi ngiyamuthusa nje (ufile) Bengithi ngiyamudlalisa (ufile) Bengithi ngiyamudlalisa (ufile kabuhlungu ngesibhamu!)" They continued singing. I've been here before, for years after killing my good for nothing foster parents, until I managed to escape and change my identity with the help of my sister Nomasonto. From the last time I was here a lot have changed, for sure there's a new boss but that's no problem for me, this is my second home. I sat on my corner while watching them sing, two coloured women made their way to me, they were all tattooed, lucky for me the last time I was here I didn't get all those tattoos or Rich would've suspected of me. The only tattoo I have is very small just below my neck, but I had a plastic surgery hiding it, though a few weeks ago I had it removed. It's a small viper! "Wie is jy?(who are you)" I looked at them, the last thing I need is to be seen as a weakling, I got up and turned around to show them the small tattoo on the back of my neck, I turned back at them they had their eyes locked on me, I expected this reaction from anyone in here... "Viper" she whispered

44 ____ "Viper!" The other girl spoke, I kept my eyes on them. One of the girl's whispered something into the friend's ear. They walked away without a word, when they got at their spot they spoke with one of the other girls, who stared at me with her eyes wide open. I narrowed my eyes, whatever it is they were saying was really getting down their skin. The girl made her way to me with the two following behind her, I stood firmly, ready for anything. They finally arrived "draai om(turn around)" I stared at her for a moment, making sure to send the message that I don't appreciate her tone, though to keep the peace, I showed her my tattoo. She also had the same look, I don't expect anything less from what I'm seeing, the Vipers used to run this place that's if they no longer run it. I still remember the good old days when Mademoiselle and I used to run this place like crazy, making sure to live our mark! "Viper?" The woman asked, to me she seemed like their leader or someone close to that. I nodded "you got our respect" she slightly bowed, the other two did the same thing. I don't really care about how they feel about me "And who are you?" I enquired "We are - she looked at the two, we're no one" she shrugged "just another group of girls without a name" I nodded "Who currently runs the place?" I asked. They stared at me for a moment without saying anything, then one of them spoke "Rednecks" I kept silent, it was disappointing to know that the Vipers were no longer at the top, what happened to

Mademoiselle. I've had about the Rednecks, they're even painting the streets red out there. "Mademoiselle?" "It's been years since she's been moved" that's not good for me "Where to?" "Joburg" at least it's not that far, I might just come up with a plan or rather I already have one, Mademoiselle should come back home... . . . _NOMSA_ . King is everything I had always wished for, what was I even thinking falling for Zola. I have everything I need, a job, a place to stay, a mother and a man that loves me. We spent the night together or shall I say every night together, we live in the same yard so it's impossible for each one to sleep alone when we're a few feet apart from each other. Unless of course I spend the night at MamMavi' s place. My phone rang, we were in his room cooking when Zola called. I sighed, the first time when he called to tell me about his job, King and I had just had a steamy session. Now he's calling again, what does he want, "won't you answer?" He asked, I looked at it then picked up "Zola hi?" King looked at me, I could tell that he didn't like Zola at all, they've met a few times months ago and they don't like each other "Uhm Nono" he said "Yes" "I eh emm" he cleared his throat "seems like I forgot my black favourite belt there, could you kindly do me a favour of bringing it this side?" What!?! "I don't think I've seen it" the last thing I need is to go there, King won't be pleased, speaking of him, he had his eyes on me. "It's there Nono, just look for it. I'd appreciate if you bring it tomorrow" "I - okay I'll check" "Okay,

thanks." "Cool" before I could end the call he spoke "Nono?" "Yes" "Don't forget you hold a special place in my heart" I don't know why he would say that especially now. I shook my head then went back to the pots, King's glare was sending shivers through my spine "What did he want?" He finally spoke "A belt" he frowned, "he forgot a belt, asked me to check if it's here" "That's all?" I nodded, he sighed and kissed me. I won't dare tell him that he asked me to go there, the last thing I need is to fight with him. . . _SAM_ . I rushed to Choco's bedroom, he had to know about the baby. He's such an adorable baby

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it's a pity he was born very tiny though it's explainable since he's a premature. But he'll forever be adorable. I walked in he was on the bed staring into space, he looked more distracted "Choco" he gave me a blank look "You won't believe what just happened, Pamela has given birth to a beautiful baby boy" he kept his gaze on me "Lungelo I know you don't want to believe that he's your son, but you should see him, he looks exactly like you" he still looked at me, I frowned "are you okay?" He didn't answer, something is not right here. I waved my hand on his face, and all he did was to follow it with his eyes. I immediately left the room to call Nomasonto, something is wrong with my brother... . . _NTHATI_ . Wyatt came to see me, in fact he always does. My relationship with him is another story for

another day, all there is to know is that he's always on my side helping me and being obedient to my orders, "how're you?" "Not bad, remember I'm home" He chuckled "come on, we both know you prefer being out there, being free" "maybe" I shrugged "I need a favor?" "You always do, what is it this time around?" I sighed "Mademoiselle" he laughed "I'm glad she's no longer here, y'all would have turned this place upside down" "Well I think it's time we turn it upside down" He frowned "what do you mean?" "I want you to make sure she comes back here" He shook his head "even if I wanted to, i wouldn't. You two are a terrible combination" "You're not listening Wyatt, I want you to make it happen!" I said firmly "Look, I can try but it won't be easy. Remember now there's Mthembu and the new Captain, both of them are faithful to the law!" "Make it happen" I got up "You sure are something else ViperQueen" he shook his head I smirked then walked away, back to my cell. . .

NARRATED . Nomasonto and Sam rushed in Lungelo's room, he was still the way Sam had left him. "Uthi kwenzakalani Samantha? (What did you say happened?)" "I don't know, when I came in I found him like that. I started telling him about baby Lungelo but he didn't answer, he maintained still just like now" "Baby who?" She frowned "Lungelo, Pam gave birth" "Wow, that's good. But is it already nine months?" "No, he's a premature" "Oh. Manje inkinga ikuphi?(now what's the problem)" she put her hand on his forehead "his temperature

seems to be normal, Lungelo?" She called, but all he did was to stare at them. "I'm coming" she went out running to the kitchen and quickly dialled a number "makhosi. It's Nomasonto" "Ewe (yes) Sonto" he said in a husky voice "Kunenkinga ngomfana wami (there's a problem with my boy) kubukeka ngathi... (seems like...)" "umkelwa zingqondo?(he's losing his mind?)" He enquired "Y - yebo (yes)" He groaned "uzaba njalo okweshashana (he'll be like that for some time)" "Why?" She asked with teary eyes "Zi'after effects zamayeza (It's the after effects of the herbs)" "Ubungasho ngani!?" (Why didn't you tell me)" she yelled the furiously ended the call. . . _NTHATI_ . I was in my cell when the guard came to call me "you have a visitor" "Now?" I frowned "Now?" She imitated my voice "woza sboshwa! (Come prisoner)" she led me through the corridor, this is not good. She opened the door and pushed me in. I stood there on the center of the room, all the corners had each female there, the guard was by the door, I looked across me, the coloured woman with bald head had her back on me. They all had one thing in common, weird tattoos on their necks, numbers written in red ink. It all came back to me, the current prison leader, the Rednecks. This meeting was bound to take place sooner or later "sit!" The voice ordered, there was only one chair next to me. "Ek haat dit om myself te herhaal (I hate repeating myself)" I looked at the women behind me, they were slowly moving closer. I sat down, I'm out numbered.

"Goed(good)" she still had her back on me "gehoor jy is die adder (heard you're the viper)" I don't know if that was a statement "Respond" I don't know when she got here, but she spoke in my ear "dit is reg(that is correct)" I answered, the leader chuckled then turned around, I was shocked to see her, my eyes instantly got wide, is - is it possible!?

45 ____ The doctors took baby Lungelo to an incubator, they said something like since he's a premature he'll have to stay in there to complete the weeks that he didn't whilst he was still in my womb. It makes me sad that I won't be taking him home anytime soon, but the doctors mentioned that he might go home sooner because for a premature, he's a very strong boy. I wonder if Sam told Choco about his birth, but I'm sure she did. I wonder if he'll come to meet his son, what if he meant it when he said he didn't want anything to do with my baby, that'll break my heart into pieces, I won't be able to take in seeing my son growing up without his father whilst he's still alive. I hope he comes around, I'm also sure that after seeing him, he won't even think twice of accepting him as his one and only son, that's how identical they are. My son is very handsome no lie, he has his father's facial features, if it wasn't for the light skin tone, he would be his father's son. I've been looking at him from the incubator, he keeps sucking on his thumb it's so cute. How I miss holding him in my arms, can they just discharge him. . . _NOMSA_ . I ended up looking for his belt and I did find it, I don't know how this belt is his favourite because I've never seen him wearing it, or maybe he was saving it for a special occasion. I had to come up with a lie just so King won't ask a lot of questions. Since I had already mentioned to him that Zola wants his belt, I told him that I was going to meet up with his younger sister at Joburg to give her the belt. I also told him that

she and I are besties incase I take time to return back. I don't know if I managed to convince him, but I truly hope I did. Zola and I were in a restaurant, I had arrived a few hours ago and he offered to take me out for lunch before I return back home. It was good to see him this happy, I'm glad life is treating him like this, he deserves every blessing coming his way. "And how's everything that side?" "From the last time you came, nothing has changed" I spoke He nodded "are you happy?" I looked at him, he continued "with him?" I didn't expect him to ask that "Yes, I am, I've never been so happy my whole life" "Obviously, you've never had a boyfriend before, except for him" he mumbled, though loud enough for me to hear. "Excuse me?" He sipped his drink "nothing, I was just saying that if he dares try to hurt you, he'll have me to deal with" I nodded "how's your girl?" "She's good" the conversation was getting very lame, I could hardly feel the connection we used to share, I felt like we didn't know each other. "Tell me about the new job?" "Oh I'll be starting on Monday, as a personal assistance of the CEO himself." "That's great, it's something. I'm very proud of you, when did you submit your CV, I mean" I chuckled "you didn't even want to print it" "I, well Sam advised me to make one" "Ohh" I ate my food "Goodday" a deep voice spoke, it was a tall black man, he looked very elegant and classic. I looked at his face and for a moment I could swear that I've seen him somewhere, I don't know where but he definitely looks familiar.

"Mr Mbewu" Zola smiled nervously "I saw you when I came in and I thought why not go and greet them" I couldn't miss the firmness in his voice "I" he cleared his throat "this is Nomsa, she's like a sister" "A sister, I see" he stretched out his hand to me, I shook it, right then I felt something, I can't explain it but it was like some electric shock, we looked at each other for sometime until Zola broke the silence "She came to visit" "That's good" he let go of my hand but with his gaze still on me "see you on Monday and don't be late" he walked away He let out a huge sigh "heewww" "Who's he?" "That Nono, is Sam's father and my new boss" I shot out my eyes, that explains his reaction when he saw us "I hope you won't be in trouble, I can imagine how fathers are with their daughters" "I hope so too" . . _NTHATI_ . As soon as I walked in the visitor's room

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Wyatt busted into laughter. I don't find any of what happened to me funny, all I see is pure disrespect. "Who would have thought that someday I'd see you with all those bruises!" The other day, the Rednecks roughed me up pretty bad just because I refused to join their team. The leader told me how much she has heard about me and that it would do me good to join them, that's when I refused, and knowing one of the rules 'if you're not with us then you're against us'. They did a number on me, I didn't fight them back because I was outnumbered and

they would have killed me, so I just let them do as they please. Best believe that what they did was to start a war against the Vipers! I won't take this lying down, sooner or later they'll have to pay for all the punches and kicks I won from them, this is a shame! I won't have any mercy on them, never! "I don't find any of this funny" "Well it is" he smiled. I clicked my tongue "don't worry, your problems are over" I looked at him "What do you mean?" "As from tomorrow, Mademoiselle will be here" I smiled this changes everything. . . _SAM_ . Things haven't been easy for me here at home, it just goes from normal to worse. Choco is getting worse, I don't know what's wrong with him, I don't even know how to help him. Dad is always busy, ever since this whole drama about my mother, it hit him very hard to a point of spending most of his time out doors, we hardly see him, never mind to spend time with him. I don't know how but Lungelo is no longer paralysed, however the worst is that he's run out of his mind. It breaks my heart to say this but he's unhinged. Out of nothing my brother speaks and laughs alone, at times he sees things, or rather ghosts. I looked at him as he laughed at a fly, while running after it, this is really heart breaking. "Why don't you go out with your friends? Or visit your nephew?" Nomasonto asked I sighed "I don't want to leave him alone" my relationship with her has changed, I treat her better than I used to "Are you forgetting that I'm here?" "You also need to rest, all you do is take care of my brother,

you deserve a break" she sat next to me "I'd do this over and over again if I had to" "You have a very big heart Sonto, no one would do such for us. Why are you doing this, why are you so kind?" She smiled "one day you'll know" "Okay" I stood up "I'll be in my room" "You won't go out?" I shook my head then went to my room, the first thing I did was to dial Pam, she's the only friend who'll understand what I'm going through because of how she feels about my brother "Hey auntie" "Hey" "What's up, you don't sound good?" I sniffed "it's Lungelo" "What's going on with him, is he okay?" The care she has for him is so transparent "He's, he's run out of his mind" "What do you mean?" "He's crazy Pam" She chuckled "he lost his mind, he speaks to flies even runs after them, he laughs alone, at times he speaks to ghosts" "What!?! But how? I mean I. You know what I'm coming" . . . _NOMSA_ . It was already getting late, we spent almost the whole day together. After the restaurant we went to chill at the park "I have to go it's getting dark" we were sitting on the towel facing each other "I don't think it'll be safe for you to travel alone at this time" "Nothing will happen to me" "Sleep over" he whispered "What! I can't do that, King will be worried" His face changed "forget King" he got closer and kissed me , I didn't fight him off, I just let him be. . . _NTHATI_ . "Woza sboshwa, unesvakashi (come prisoner, you have a visitor)" the guard said to me, who could it be... We walked in, it was Sonto she looked pale, whatever it is, it's not good. "Hey" I sat

down "kwenzenjani? (What's wrong)" She sighed "uLungelo" I shook my head that one is a problem child "useyenzeni?(what did he do now?) You know I told him to bring me a stash of money till now I'm still waiting" I spoke "He couldn't make it" I frowned "why?" "Lungelo is, he" she sighed "he lost his mind" I laughed, like a very good laughter "You serious?" She wasn't laughing, she nodded. "Those aren't the only bad news I have" my eyebrows furrowed "There's a new member in the family" "I'm listening" "Except for Ngelo's new born baby, Rich has a daughter" "What!!" I screamed

46 ____ All my life I've made sure that no bastard child gets to be born in the Mbewu landline, I always made sure to eliminate all the possibilities that were out there, I thought I had made sure that my children would be the only ones to inherit everything Mbewu owns. I was surprised to find out that Rich has a baby and worse with Smangele. As if it wasn't enough that I had her killed, even in death she still bothers me. I sure have to do something, I can't have a commoner being part of my family or inheriting my children's inheritance! . .

AZENATHI . "So?" I asked detective Mthembu. On the previous day I received an order from the above that one of the criminals should be moved from Joburg to this side, so I had detective finding out about every detail. "Lucy Krueger best known as Mademoiselle, she's forty five years of age. Got arrested at her teenage years for the murder of her parents, she's also responsible for a lot of lost lives inside. Before being moved to Joburg she was here" she spoke "In other words, she's a notorious criminal?" She nodded, "why was she moved from the first place?" "Seems like she was a part of a very dangerous group, but the group lost it's power, and an order came from the above for her to be moved. To me, it had everything to do with bribery." I shook my head "then we have a big problem, we can't have corrupt leaders" She nodded "I agree, but right now there's no much to do except for being obedient" "There should be something" I sat down "I don't

know what as yet but for now just get that so called Mademoiselle" she nodded then left. Something is not right here, why would we be ordered to get her back? Who's got the upper voice? Where there's smoke.... . . _SAM_ . A new day, same life problems if not more. I was surprised to find my father in the dining room reading a newspaper, he's been so scarce lately I had forgotten about his existence. I went to get a glass of juice then came to sit next to him. "Dad" "Yes" he said not looking at me "I have been meaning to talk to you" "And why haven't you done that?" "Because it's been very hard to find you" "We live under the same roof Samantha how hard can it be to find me?" I sighed "Pam has given birth to a beautiful baby boy, he looks exactly like his father Lungelo" "Ohh" he still had his eyes on the paper "that's wonderful, we'll go see them on weekend. Does Lungelo know?" "No he. He's sick" "He's not sick just paralysed sweetheart so talk to him" "Dad. Lungelo is not on a good state of mind, he's mentally disturbed" He finally raised his eyes "ukhuluma ngani?(what are you talking about?)" "Azisathathi kahle (He's crazy)" he had a frown of confusion "he speaks alone most of the time, he sees things, ghosts" he put his newspaper on the table a put his hands at the back of her head "Kwenzekalani kulommdeki (What's going on with this family)" . . _NOMSA_ . What I did was cruel, I truly don't deserve anyone's forgiveness especially King's. I fell on the temptation, I permitted Zola to use me. Yesterday he ended up

convincing me to sleep over at his place and I agreed. Luckily his sister was not around when I arrived so she didn't see me until I finally left... I walked in the yard, it was quiet. This is the part where I don't wish living in the same yard as my boyfriend, how will I explain everything, where will I even start. As I was about to pass his room the door opened and he stood there looking at me, for a moment I felt like I could just die.

"Welcome back!" He said. I couldn't pick up any emotions from his facial expression. "Aren't you going to say anything?" I kept quiet. He leaned on the door frame with his arms folded "ngilalele phela sisi (I'm listening sis)" I sighed "I'm sorry" I had no other words He chuckled and shook his head "What for? You just did you, uyijwayele lempilo (You're used to this life)" I don't know why but his words felt a bit harsh "Can we please talk inside?" I begged "What difference would it make? Tshela mina (tell me) did you sleep at Joburg? On the street? Or do you know someone there?" I shook my head "noma mhlampe bakutshontshele ucingo? (Or they stole your phone)" I shook my head "you're not mute" "No" "Then why was your phone leading me straight to voicemail? Which style did he introduce to you to a point where you even had to turn your cellphone off? No man maybe he should consider giving me some lessons" I swear I felt a lump in my throat. "King" I whispered. He shook his head then walked back in his room before slamming the door shut. How on earth will I fix this, my phone

rang. I looked at it as Zola's picture filled the screen . . . _SAM_ .
Later I went to visit my boyfriend at his work place. I don't get why my father offered him a job in his company, worse as his personal assistance but hey I couldn't care less, who knows what's going on in that old man's head. I wanted to see how he was doing especially since he didn't call me last night. Ever since we started dating there's no single day that passed without him calling me until last night happened, whatever happened must be big and very important. I passed the receptionist without a greeting, she annoys me to death all she does is seduce my father, I'm glad dad isn't into her. I stood a bit far at the corridor and watched him in his perfect suit, he looked good no lie. He looked at me "Didn't your momma teach you that staring is rude" he said in an American accent, I chuckled and went to him "I can't help it, you look breathtaking" I kissed him "Thank you Mrs me" he looked very happy "You look happy" "Why wouldn't I be, I've started working baby" I think there's more into his happiness "Oh?" "Yep. What did you bring me?" "Biscuits" since I can't cook I decided to grab these. He took them. "What happened last night?" He shrugged "Nothing" oh "So why didn't you call me?" "I - I'm sorry I had an early night" he sounds suspicious, this has never happened before. At times he'd let me know if he was going to have an early night "I was worried" I said "I'm sorry it won't happen again" he kissed me again "now please let me do

my job, we don't want Mr Mbewu firing me on my first day"
"You're right" we hugged. I walked away but turned to look at him before leaving, he was now humming a song while moving to the rhythm. I texted Swazi "hey bestie, what did I miss out on last night?" . . _RICH_ . Everything is a mess, I've lost the head touch, I don't know what to do to fix this family it's like a curse has fallen on us. I couldn't believe what my daughter said until I went to verify, the state I saw my son in was heartbreaking. If only I had manned up, if only I had done what was right , if only I had been there for my family we wouldn't be here, this is all my fault. "Here" I was at Sbahle's apartment, I took the glass of whiskey. "I'm glad you came here" "This is the only place I thought off" She sat next to me "I know it's not easy and you might be blaming yourself but it's not your fault, you're not God you can't save every one and solve everything, you're just a mere mortal and you're allowed to reach your weak point" "I'm a man, I'm not supposed to be weak" "Before being a man you're a human, don't beat yourself, Princess needs you" I looked at her "Thank you" she smiled, I pulled her closer for a kiss , a slow passionate kiss, I poured out all my emotions "Wow" she said "I'm sorry, I shouldn't have..." "Don't be silly" she pulled me back for yet another one . . _NTHATI_ . I've been patiently waiting for my lifetime partner, I don't understand why they taking this long to bring her, or could it be that Wyatt lied to me because if he did, I don't even want to think of what

I'd do, I swear I won't be held responsible for my actions. "wat gaan aan met jou? (What's going on with you)" I looked at her, it was one of the coloured girls whom I met on the first day. "geen oortreding nie, maar jy lyk soos 'n dooie hoender (no offence but you look like a dead chicken)" I stared at her attempting to say a word but a loud voice spoke "Ngena sboshwa esdumile! (Get in notorious prisoner)" we turned to look at them, I thought my eyes were deceiving me but no! It was her, my lifetime partner, Mademoiselle!

47 ____ "He's acting very strange" Swazi and I were walking in the hospital to visit Pam and the baby. "Strange, how?" She asked I shrugged "I don't know, he looked way too overjoyed. I've never seen him like that" "Did you speak to him?" "I did, he said it's because of the new job" "Then what's strange about that?" She doesn't get it "He's way too happy" I sighed "when he went to sign the contract he wasn't that happy until yesterday happened" "Sam I think you're just overwhelmed by everything you currently going through" I sighed "maybe you're right. Hey mommy!" She was outside the ward. We hugged "I'm glad you guys are finally here" "How're you and our baby?" "We're good. How's Lungelo?" I sighed "still the same" "Still paralysed?" Enzo appeared "Worse, he lost his mind" Pam said "What!?" Her eyes widened "but how?" "No one has the answers. We're just as confused" "I'm sorry to say this but to me, he's paying for denying little Lungelo" "Enzo!" Pam warned "What? Did you really think our ancestors would take this lying down?" I didn't know she believed in that. "Maybe you're right" I spoke "I'm definitely right sweets. Look I need to be somewhere, mom and dad will stop by later." "You just got here!" "I know and I'll be back" she took her handbag and left. Pam sighed while shaking her head. . . _ZANDY_ . "Turn back the light!! Oh oh oh oh!!" We sang in unison, this party will make history. Ever since I stopped communicating with Choco, a lot has changed in my life. I found a job at one of the pubs as

a dancer, we just entertain the customers. I made a lot of friends there and I must say I've turned to be very popular for that's the reason I usually throw parties every month end. I still live in his apartment, I'm truly grateful that he didn't chase me out though I don't think I ever want to see him again. What happened on our last encounter was very embarrassing and besides I can't be with someone who's not man enough, no offence... "Azishe!(let's smoke)" I passed the weed to my pending boyfriend, I should've known that this place is the coolest, this is the best life I've ever lived. . . _NOMSA_. My conscious hasn't been having any mercy on me, I need his forgiveness, why did I even allow Zola to play me like that , I'm such an imbecile! I knocked at his door, ever since I arrived I hadn't spoken to him, like real talk. "Ngena!(come in)" I slowly opened the door and walked in "ahh kanti wuwe (it's you)" he rolled his eyes. I believe he was getting ready to leave, he grabbed his cologne "ufunani? (what do you want?)" He looked hot in his turtleneck, a leather jacket, a jean and Dr Martens boots. "I - " I cleared my throat "I came to apologise" "Ay uzong'casula usase lapho?(you'll annoy me still on that?)" "King" "Listen Nomsa, you're not a child and so am I. Whatever happened, happened let's just move on, assomblief(please) man" I gulped "Are you breaking up with me?" "You're putting words in my mouth" I sighed "where are you going?" He chuckled "how's that any of your concern?" He raised an

eyebrow "Uhm wow. Just so you know you're just being dramatic over nothing, I know it was wrong of me to go there but it's done ok. I did nothing that would jeopardize our relationship, you're jumping into conclusion without hearing me out." "You're done?" I stared at him "when you're ready to act like a grown up , you know where to find me" he chuckled, I opened the door and walked out . . . _NTHATI_ . "and that's how I got the scars" I had been telling her about the Rednecks. "They're not as dangerous, though they care less about splitting blood" "hoe het u in Joburg beland?(How did you end up in Joburg)" She chuckled "Rednecks, they made sure to wipe out all the Vipers sodat hulle kan regeer(so that they can rule)" "How did they manage that who helped them?" "As much as you had Wyatt doing all the job, they also have someone" "But who?" She smiled "don't worry you'll know him" "A him?" I frowned. She nodded. I swear there's no saint in this country everyone is corrupt "Now" she took out a cigarette and lit it "let's talk about how we're going to get back our power" I smiled "Mademoiselle! Only now am I recognising how much I missed you" "Mbemi(friend)" she spoke. I laughed, see Mademoiselle is white but she was raised by black parents , that's why her Zulu is perfect. When she was in her teen years she found out that her biological parents didn't want her for some reason so they went to throw her away but luckily their maid had followed them, so she took her and she grew that's

when she went after their lives and started being a cold blooded murderer! . . . _NOMSA_ . I was on the bed crying when a knock came through, it was Lara. "Hey mngani(friend)" I sniffed "Nom are you crying?" She sat on the bed "what happened?" I shook my head "please talk to me" I sat up "it hurts" I said "What? Are you sick?" I shook my head "love, why you never mentioned to me that love hurts like this" She embraced me in a hug "it's not love" she sighed "love is not painful, it doesn't bring tears nor sorrow, it isn't jealous or bitter, it doesn't hurt. On contrary love is patient, it is sweet, caring, trusting, it only brings tears of joy" "Then what is this?" "Anything but love" "Our relationship is over" I cried even more "He dumped you?" I shook my head "not in so many words" "one more thing, love doesn't end. If he truly loved you we wouldn't be here, and he wouldn't have ended your relationship because there wouldn't be any reason to do that" "He thinks I was up to no good with Zola" "Were you?" I broke off the hug and we stared at each other . . . _ENZO_ . "Makhosi" I clapped my hands twice after sitting on the mat "Ulethwa yini? (What brings you here)" "Loyamfana owang'letha lana kwaseqaleni (that boy that brought me here from the first place)" She groaned "kwenzenjani?(What's wrong)" "Kuthiwa useyahlanya (it's said that he's crazy)" "Iqiniso, kunokwenza nezono zakhe, nabaphansi (it's true, it has everything to do with his sins and the ancestors)" I sighed "kusho ukuthini

lokho?(what does that mean)" "Lomfana unefu elimnyama, abakubo bafuna ayocela uxolo (this boy has a dark cloud, his ancestors want him to go ask for forgiveness)" I frowned. She groaned louder "udinga ukuhlazwa(He needs to be cleansed)" could it be that his family haven't seen a traditional doctor? "Yena uzobuyela esimemi? (Will he go back to his usual self)" "Emveni kokwaziswa emndenini wakhe wangempela(after being introduced to his biological family)" what! "Kodwa usuyamazi nje (but they already know him)" I said "Sekwanele, usuwazi okuningi (it's enough, you know a lot)" I looked at her, seems like the Mbewus have a lot of dirt! . . _AZENATHI_ . I had been in my office all day trying to find out who is behind all these ridiculous orders, who's this corrupt being. Detective Mthembu made her way in after knocking "Captain, Mademoiselle is here" "That was fast" "Yep" "Sit" she sat across me "I'm trying to find out who's the upper voice" "And?" "I don't have any clue as yet, but I need you to do me something" "Anything Captain" "Talk to her, I mean Mademoiselle, find any useful information" "I'll do that tomorrow but what makes you think she knows something?" "I've been in this field for a very long time now, prisoners have all the information we need" She nodded. I played with my pen, they made a big mistake promoting me as the Captain now they'll feel my wrath!

48 ____ "I've never seen you, you're new aren't you?" The famous Mademoiselle enquired as I walked in the interrogation room. She seemed very relaxed, I'm not surprised though this is like a home to her, and those scars on her face were proof enough that she's been in this way of living for a very good time now, although she looks younger than her age. She was sitting on a chair with her one leg on the desk. I sat across her "I'm Detective Mthembu" "Hmm a speurder(detective) you cute" she licked her lips, this is the most annoying part with female prisoners "anyway how can I help you?" I chuckled "what makes you think I need your help?" She slowly shook her head "I've been locked up all my life, I know how everything works" "Fine" I sighed "How about you start by putting down your leg" I glared at her She took her time before moving it. "Good. Now I want to know who called the order of your transference to Joburg, I mean who's behind it all?" She chuckled "what do you take me for, a snitch?" I shrugged my shoulders "bad move cutie, that's not how you should do your job" "Oh" I raised my eyebrow "Yep, you still need to learn more, anyways, isn't it the authorities?" She smirked "Someone is behind it all , and you know who it is" "You're right, but I'm not gonna make your job easy by telling you." She opened her legs and balanced her arms on her thighs "I'm not a snitch" she whispered before getting up, she walked to the door and knocked "guard we're done!" "Mademoiselle sit down!" "I love how you call my name

cutie" I turned to look at her , she winked before the door opened "Dammit!" . . _RICH_ . I was with Wyatt in his house, talking about my current situation with my family, it hasn't been easy for me, I don't even know what to do, I need all the advices possible. "Have you taken him to the hospital?" I shook my head "I don't think this has anything to do with western attention" He frowned "I never thought you believed in that" he said "I don't ey but we need to look into all the possibilities out here" "Then maybe you should take him to those san - san, gomas (traditional healer)" I chuckled "sangoma. I will, I just don't know where to find one" "Ask your maids" "Good idea" I said, "I'll talk to Sonto, she should know someone" He nodded "how's the Princess?" "My daughter is good man I'm glad she's still young to understand anything" "And Sbahle?" I smiled, "that good?" I nodded "I'm going to ask her hand in marriage" he shot his eyes wide "What!?" . . _NTHATI_ . Being in jail without any cash can be a bit of a challenge, just like the outside world, y'all need money to buy food, clothes, pay for water, electricity and more the same thing happens inside. However we don't need it for those petty things, but yes for valuable things like protection. I was on the call with Wyatt asking him to grab a stash from Sonto, she has to stop coming here before raising a green flag on specific people, I don't want people finding out of all the things I still have hidden. "Okay I'll bring it tomorrow" "I'll be waiting" "Ask me what your husband

has been up to lately" I rolled my eyes "You're gonna tell me anyways" "Mood killer. He's playing around with the deceased twin sister" "What!?" I don't believe this "You haven't heard the best part" "There's more?" "He wants to propose" "Over my dead body! That's not going to happen! Not now nor ever!" I was breathing hysterically "Woo what's up? You want the guard to know that you have a cellphone?" Mademoiselle asked. I just looked at her . . . _SAM_ . "Choco stop!" He was making me very nervous with his screaming and crying

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I don't know what it is that he was seeing , I can't help him. "Lungelo!!" It's even worse that he's not in his sane mind, to him I'm not making any sense. He's been curled up on the floor next to his bed "Get away from me!! You're dead!! Get away!!" Those are the only words he keeps saying not more than that, and I'm here all confused. I quickly went out of his room to look for anyone whom can help us, I can't deal with this all alone. "Sonto! Nomasonto!" I went in and out of every room, but no one seemed to be home. I took my phone and dialed my dad, he answered on the first ring "Daddy! Thank God you picked up" "What's going on, you sound a bit off?" "It's Lungelo, dad you need to get here right now!" "Kwenzenjani(What's wrong Samantha?" "He's at it again, seeing ghosts but this time around it's worse, he's crying and screaming it's like he's seeing

a dead person" "Do this, don't leave his sight he might hurt himself. I'm on my way" "Please hurry I'm scared" tears were streaming down "I'm coming baby" I ended the call and went back to his room, where could the maids be when we need them the most. I made my way in and he was still on the floor just with his head in between his knees and his hands covering his ears. I went through to him, right when I was about to embrace him in a hug, he did the unexpected. He screamed and pushed me back so hard that I lost the balance. My head hit the corner of the nightstand, I immediately felt the room spinning before hitting the floor. The pain at the back of my head was unbearable. His voice was slowly getting faint, I couldn't see clearly anymore, I slowly closed my eyes and let darkness take over.... . . _NTHATI_ . "Tell me what happened?" She asked "He got someone pregnant, I didn't know till a few days ago. I got rid of the baby mama as you already know. Now Wyatt just told me that he wants to propose to the babymama's twin sister" "What, that's crazy!" "Its insane and I'm not going to allow that to happen" "Obviously, he's still married to you. What're you going to do?" I looked at her, "I hope you won't bite Viper!" I smirked "I have a better plan" "Let's hear it" I shook my head "not yet finalised". The guard appeared and called me, seems like I always have a visitor. "And now? I told you not to ever set your foot in this place, tryna raise suspicions?" Sonto can be very hard headed at times. "Its important" "How important?"

What's going on?" I sat down "Lungelo. His only cure is being introduced to his true family and ancestors" "What do you mean?" "I'm talking about his father's side of the family" "No no no!" I held my head in disbelief "we don't need this" "Tell me about it" "I need to think" I stood up and walked away, back to my cell... . . _ZANDY_ . "So how's it going?" My manager asked. A few days ago he asked us to be in charge of the preparations of the party that will take place on Friday. Just because this is a pub it doesn't mean we don't throw parties, this is one of the opportunities where we benefit a lot financially. "It's all good, we've sent out the word through media, flyers and posters." He nodded "I'm impressed" he looked at me "come with me" I left my colleague and followed him to the office. "Sit" he said, "I've been observing your work here and it's very impressive, like you have an experience" well I do "I spoke to the boss and seems like you deserve a raise" I smiled "Thank you so much" "Its nothing, you deserve it. You free to go back to work, I'll call you to sign a new contract" I swear I've never been so happy . . _RICH_ . After arriving at home to that disturbing scene, I quickly took Sam to the hospital. I've been panting around the waiting area without any feedback. Everything is getting out of hand, I need to do something "Mr Rich Mbewu" "Yes!" I rushed to the doctor "how's my daughter?" "I'm truly sorry sir but I only have the bad news for you" now these are the last words I expected...

49 _____ "Doctor please tell me she's still alive" desperately, I begged. His blank glare didn't reveal much , after all what did I expect he's a doctor and this is his field, he's mastered the strategy of dealing with emotional families. "fortunately she is" he sighed, "although she suffered from epidural hematoma" "What's that?" "Epidural hematomas occurs when an artery is injured and arterial blood accumulates between the dura and the calvarium. In simple, she suffered a severe internal bleeding" "Now what's going to happen?" "Since bleeding is under arterial pressure, the hematoma may expand rapidly resulting to subdural hematoma, so we're currently performing prompt drainage, then we'll have to take her to surgery, it's urgent that we remove the hematoma" "Long you save my daughter, you got all the permission you need" He nodded "your daughter will live" he said, probably one of his rehearsed lines... . . _AZENATHI_ . "Tell me you got the good news?" I pulled a chair and sat across Detective, the look she gave me was enough to know that she sent her straight to hell. Working in the police force is not easy, more especially if it's not in you, one needs to be very astute or you'll end up being a useless extra piece. "You failed?" "As soon as I walked in that interrogation room she saw right through me" I sighed "then we'll have to find another way of unmasking the venom before it contaminates us all" Nodding "I think we should look into whomever that gave the order" "Not a bad start, will you do

that?" "Sure thing I'll find out everything there is to know"

"Don't mess this up" the door opened after a light knock, with a smile on his face, his hands buried deep inside his chino pockets, he made his way in "You can go" nodding, she left.

"Luyolo! You should've told me you were coming" "Then I would have spoiled the surprise" he smiled, we hugged with him locking me up in his buffed up arms "I had a few errands to run up here so I decided, why not go see Aze" "Errands?" frowning, I asked. I'm the captain of this station, I should know about whatever errands. "Yea it was a descreat thing, you have nothing to worry about" he cupped my cheeks warming them up with the palms of his hands "Okay" . . _ZOLA_ . Working as a personal assistance is not as bad as it sounds or maybe it's because of the relationship I have with the owner. But he's very professional he doesn't treat me any less like he does with the rest of them. However ever since I started working here I've been seeing less of him, today he hasn't shown his face in this place, didn't even bother calling to let us know about his absence, what did I expect though, he's the owner and can do as he pleases. My thoughts were disturbed by a call "hello?" "Zola, it's Rich" Oh I cleared my throat "Mr Mbewu, how're you?" I bit my tongue after asking, he called me he should be the one asking "Not so good, look I need you to cancel all my meetings and -" He sighed "I'm at the hospital, Samantha has been admitted" "What!?" It can't be "what happened?" "Long

story" "I'm coming" "You don't have to, I'll be here with her"
"Sorry sir but she's my girlfriend and I have to be there for her"
"First do your job then you can play perfect boyfriend card" he
ended the call, I can't believe this, what could be wrong with
Sam, she's the healthiest person I know "Bad news?" Precious,
the receptionist asked

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who's answering the phone when she's up here doing God
knows what "Uhm yeah" I said clearly dismissing her, I've learnt
that she's not a big fan of my girlfriend "Sorry handsome, I can
bring you a cup of coffee" "So long you're not my assistant
please do get back to your field" I really need to leave . .
NOMSA . "What did you do?" Mam'Mavi asked in curiosity,
she could read right through me that I was slowly breaking
apart I shrugged "what's done is done Mam'Mavi there's
nothing more I can do, one mistake, only one and King doesn't
want to forgive me." I shook my head incredulously, it's hard to
believe that he broke up with me without even hearing me out,
couldn't he do a simple thing like to listen to me, just to listen.
"This shows that he didn't really love you, he just wanted what
any other guy wants from a woman. Woo shame I'm
disappointed in him, it's just unlike him" she clapped once, then
folded her arms on her chest "It's okay, he's not the first one to
leave me" "Shame my poor girl, let me prepare you something

to eat" with her one hand holding on to the arm of the couch, she rose but I immediately stopped her, I can't be sulking over a guy who doesn't deserve me. "It's okay Mam'Mavi, I'll get something for the both of us." She nodded and went to her bedroom "I'm coming" . . _NARRATED_ . Mam'Mavi closed the door behind her, making sure that it's locked, it wouldn't please her to have Nomsa overhearing her conversation with Skhakhane, the notorious witch. "Mavi" Skhakhane answered after the first ring "Unjani? (how're you)Skhakhane?" "Kuyaphileka ng'bonge kuwe ong'tholele umfazi (I'm good all thanks to you for finding me a wife)" She smirked in satisfaction "bengithi angikwazise ukuthi umfo umhlalele(I thought I should let you know that the guy dumped her)" He chuckled in his deep voice before burping "kuyohlezi kunjalo, ungowami emoyeni (it'll always be like that, she's spiritually mine)" "Kuhle lokho. Manje okungokwami ngikuthola nini?(that's good. Now when am I getting what's mine)" "Ngizoyithumela (I'll send it)" "Asbonge, thokoza(thank you)" she ended the call and put away her phone. Humming her favourite song she walked through the door back to the dining room . . _ZOLA_ . After doing my job I immediately went to the hospital, the same hospital where I had to switch off the machines just so I send my grandfather to the world of the dead. Hospitals are never welcoming, the smell of medicines, seeing sick people, the quietness causing the beeping of machines to be loud. I spotted

Mr Mbewu at the cafeteria "Zola you're here" he drank his coffee "Yes. how's she?" Sighing, he spoke, "last time I spoke to the doctor he said that they were taking her to surgery" "It's that deep?" He nodded. "Zola!" A voice called, followed by footsteps, her friends. Earlier on I told Swazi about her friend. "Oh God how's she?" She asked with tears streaming down, I hugged her, why do all these things have to happen to our loved ones "She's in surgery" "Excuse me" a tall man in a white uniform stood before us, I take it he's the doctor. "Mr Mbewu, can we talk in private?" . . _RICH_ . "Sure" Doc and I walked away "what's going on, is she okay?" "That's not the reason I called you" he said blankly "Oh? Then why?" "What happened to your daughter was severe, results show that she hit her head very hard, she wouldn't have possibly fell on her own or something similar" "What are you saying doctor?" "What I mean is there's high possibility that she was attacked" he sighed "I've already briefed in the police, and whoever's responsible for your daughter's attempted murder will have to pay. I'm gonna need you to collaborate with the law and hand in the culprit" I looked away...

50 ____ Now I can safely say that planning an event is one of my favourites. It looked pretty good, my partner and I did an outstanding job with the deco, surely tonight will be epic, there's no doubt we'll make a lot of money. Everyone on social media is talking about tonight's event and trust me they won't be disappointed, we'll make history. As for the line-up it's impressive, we have black coffee, shimza, kabza and many others for the hip hop fans, we sure did waste a lot of money to hire them but it won't go into vain, we'll get it back in double if not triple. "I'm impressed" our manager walked in, he smiled at what he was seeing "You guys make a very good team" "Yes sir!" Andile spoke, he's my partner and a very good friend and yes he's gay, we call him Andy or rather that's what he prefers us to call him "So a masquerade party huh?" He smirked. Andy's idea. "Uhha it'll be amazing, with everyone's face hidden behind their red and black mystery masks, just getting to see those eyes and lips!" he screamed "I can't wait, maybe I'll finally find myself my Mr right" "Dream on Andy, no one wishes to marry your crazy self" those two have that 'tom and jerry' kinda relationship, we've even learned to live with it. "Oh please" he rolled his eyes "if I wanted to, I'd have you crawling and begging me to marry you" "In your drea..." "Ok! Cut it out guys, Andy let's get this over and done with, the party will initiate in a few hours time" "Yea Andy do what I pay you to do" he said whilst walking away "You're not the one who pays me! Twit" He

spoke back, I shook my head, they could go on and on for the whole day! "You guys are crazy" "He is" "If I didn't know any better I'd say y'all like each other" "Ewww!" He made a disgusted face "I wouldn't dare" I looked at him , they do like each other... . . . _RICH_ . When I gave my statement to the authority, I didn't lie on contrary I told them exactly what happened, that is everything I saw when I got home. It was truly sad and heartbreaking that with my statement I had managed to prejudice my only son, as I speak he would've been in jail but because of his mental state, he was taken to a mental institution. They said that besides being a danger to everyone around him, he's also a danger to himself so he needs to be monitored all day long. I bend my way to this hut, instead of asking Sonto where I could find a traditional healer, I asked my other maid and she brought me here. I truly have to do something, I can't just sit back and watch everything fall in my family. "Ndodana kade ngikulindile (son I've long been waiting for you)" I didn't know what to say "ungakhathazeki konke kuzolunga (don't worry everything shall be well)" "Uhm" "Ngiyazi (I know)" this woman is sure acting crazy, why can't she just let me talk. Sigh... "umfana wenze isono esikhulu, kumele ayiswe kubo (The boy has committed a great sin, he should be taken home)" "Ukubo nje, khona okwamanje usesibhedlela (he's home, although he's still in the hospital)" "Akulona ikhaya lakhe lelo (That's not his home)" she groaned

while burping "Usho ukuthini (what do you mean?)" "Awuyena ubab'wakhe (You're not his father)" "Ini!?(what!?)" I chuckled, she doesn't know what she's talking about "Amadlozi alomfana athukuthele naye (his ancestors are angry with him)" she burped "mbuyisele ekhaya (take him back home)" "If what this woman is saying is true, I'll never forgive Nthati, EVER!!! . . _CHOCO_ . "Lungelo!... Lungelo-ooo!" The voices echoed, they were getting louder each moment. I don't know what's happening with me, at times I feel like I've lost complete control over my body and mind, what's worse is that whenever that happens I hardly remember everything I did. I keep hearing voices, not normal voices but a ghost like voice, they occasionally call my name, at times they call me a murderer. I can't control my emotions or my actions, they keep overpowering me. Now I'm here, locked in these four white walls, I wouldn't blame them though, I've noticed that they can't see everything that I see, this is pure torture

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why would God allow this to happen to me, that's if he even exists... I saw Chains from the other side of the wall, he looked exactly the same way when he died. He looked at me, I regret the day I threw a bullet through his head, is this what everyone who's killed before goes through or it's just me.

"Mbulali!(murderer)" he said, I shook my head rapidly.

"Mbulali!!(murderer)" his voice filled the whole room, I hugged my legs not attempting to let them go. "Mbulali!!!!" "No!!!!" Tears welled up, I looked at him through them, blood gushed out from his mouth whenever he called me a murderer "You're dead! Leave me alone!!" I screamed in agony, he's dead, he's dead, "leave me alone, you're dead" I whispered . . _NTHATI_ . When the guard told me that my husband was here to see me, I couldn't believe it, the last time I saw him was in court then ever since from that day I had never seen him, more like he never came to see me. I don't blame him though, I'd hate me too after finding out about everything I did. Ey kodwa naye he's too weak, why couldn't he take it like a man, if it was another man he'd be very proud to have someone like me as a wife, I mean I can take on the whole world alone if I have to, that should mean something to him... "Rich" I sat across him, he glanced at me like he was searching through my soul, something must've happened and whatever it is, it has something to do with me. "I'll ask you a question and I want an honest answer, you hear me? An honest answer because I won't ask you again" he wasn't screaming, yet his voice carried so much authority, it was so stern I've never seen him like this before. "Won't you ask me how I'm doing?" He kept his gaze on me, "fine" I raised my hands in surrender "you can ask" I folded my arms while leaning back "Who's the real father of your son?" No... how, how did he find out. I thought I had told Sonto

to pay that traditional healer to lie. Dammit!!! "You better think twice before lying to me Nombuso" I sighed "I don't know" he shook his head unbelievably "Not only are you a serial killer, but you're also a hoe! Well guess what? Your boy is suffering because of your actions, he's in a mental institution as we speak. He should've been in jail, for almost killing his sister, who happens to be your daughter. Speaking of which, is she also another man's daughter?" This is worse than I had ever imagined, I might as well tell him the whole truth or maybe half of it "Yes, she's not your daughter" a tear immediately fell from his eye . . . _ZANDY_ . I smiled looking at everyone, they all seemed to be very happy and they were enjoying the moment. The dance floor was packed with everyone showing off their dance moves. The celebrities seemed to be enjoying or shall I say they are doing their job, after all this is what they paid to do. "Zan" "Yes?" I looked at him, one of the waiters "We've run out of face masks, Andy said I should speak to you" we're the ones who offer them masks at the entrance, more like it's their ticket inside "Oh, still have people coming?" "Yep, a lot of them. You guys sure did a good job organising this party" "Thanks. Please fetch them in the storage room on top of the fridge" "Sure" he walked away. I put on my mask and went through the VIP section, that's where I'll be working tonight, the VIP is always different, the noise is reduced, everyone is chilled. I went over one of the tables it was only guys and just a few girls,

I couldn't tell if they were hot or not since their faces are half hidden. "Good evening, can I get you guys anything?" "How about you join us?" One of them said "I'm sorry but I'm working" "This is the best party I've ever attended, y'all should throw one like this every month" the light one spoke I smiled genuinely and turned that's when I bumped into someone's son's chest. "I - I'm sorry" "Don't be" he said, for a moment there we looked at each other. He pulled my hand and kissed the back of it "You're beautiful" I laughed "How..." "Your eyes say it all" I shook my head "King - my name is King" "Zandy" we both smiled

51 ____ "Tell me everything" I've known Rich half of my life but I've never, I mean ever seen him so broken. He wasn't angry but disappointed, I wouldn't say in me but yes in himself, probably because he couldn't see right through me, or because I played him although in actual fact, I didn't play him. All I wanted was to secure my marriage with him, and I didn't want those children to grow up without a surname, I had to give them a bright future... "What do you want to know?" "You still..." He sighed "who's their real father?" I shrugged my shoulders "I don't know, and not because I cheated or whatever comes to your mind, but simply because I'm not their mother" "Wow!" He got up "Sit!" He looked at me "are you hearing yourself? The only thing left for you to tell me is that you stole them, I wouldn't be surprised." "Well you should be happy that I didn't" I took a deep breath "they're Nomasonto's children" I swear if stroke doesn't hit him at this moment... . . . _ZOLA_ . It hasn't been easy lately, Sam's still in the coma fighting for her life. What I still don't get is why would her own brother attack her like that to a point of almost killing her. He must have pushed her pretty hard since she's unconscious. I was surprised to learn that her brother and my business partner are the same person, I got even more surprised when I was told that he's mentally ill. I don't know what's going to happen with the carwash but it's definitely in good hands, or maybe this is what I just need, to be the only one owning that carwash, I might just

enjoy the benefits of this current event... "Hello" I've been chilling indoors alone when I decided to call Nomsa. It's crazy how I miss her, or could it be that it's the distance between us? Either way I miss seeing her pretty face the whole day, I miss playing around with her, I miss our conversations, I miss everything that has to do with her. "Hi Nomsa how're you doing?" "I'm okay" she said in a low voice, if I didn't know better I'd say she sounds sick. "Are you sure? You sound quite the opposite" she sighed "talk to me, you know I'm always here for you" "I know, it's nothing you should worry about" "Anything that worries you, worries me too" I confessed "It's - it's one of those days where I miss my grandmother, I wish she was here, I miss her so much Zola" she sniffed, at this moment I would be embracing her in a very tight hug. "Shh it's okay to miss her, I also miss my grandfather. You know what I think? I think you and I should go out and have some fun, or we can just chill indoors and be each other's shoulder to cry on, you know recall all those best moments we shared with our old rents." "I don't think that's a good idea" "Nothing will happen, you can trust me" She sighed "I'm only accepting because I'm alone with no friends, your friend robbed me off my bestie so it's just me" I smiled "why don't you come now?" "Now!?" She asked incredulously "Yes" "I have work remember" "I as the boss, I'm giving you some days off" "Zola this is not some restaurant, you're well aware that we short of stuff" "Then start looking for

interested people, it's about time that chisa nyama grows completely" "Okay boss" I chuckled then ended the call, honestly speaking, I'm not sure if I ever loved Samantha... . . . _ZANDY_ . Last night - last night was, it was out of this world. The club did something that can never be undone, we are the current talk of the town. Work was amazing, more especially the VIP section, I should be put there more frequently because wow, the tip! I sure would buy weaves with the tips I got just last night. Andy's wish did come through, he got himself a promising partner

I don't know how since we were all in masks but yeah he did and he's very happy, the guy is very handsome and looks like he's got nice life problems... Then King... where do I start with that hot, tall and handsome dude, nigga is breathtaking. After that mini introduction we had I did get back to work, but not for long. I managed to sneak out with him to his friend's car, we didn't do the deed as much as I yearned to, there I got to see his face and to know more about him although not everything. He told me that he came all the way from Tembisa, I couldn't believe how much our posters had expanded to that side, I've never been to Tembisa but I know it's far from here. We exchanged numbers, I wouldn't have hesitated to, after all nigga was single until last night, yep we're fast like that, King and I started dating last night, we even did cocaine together, that's how far we got. "Sweetlips" he said after answering my

call "Handsome how're you?" "Now that I'm hearing that sweet voice of yours, my heart is melting" I blushed, the last time I blushed like this I was with Choco. "Missing me?" "Yes" I said "Why don't you come this side, since you've never been to Tembisa, it'd do you good to see new places" "It's actually a good idea, when?" "I'd say now if you aren't busy" "Let me do something, then I'll let you know" "You do that sweetlips" I dropped the call and texted Andy... . . _RICH_ . "How do I say goodbye to what we had? The good times that made us laugh Outweigh the bad I thought we'd get to see forever But forever's gone away It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday I don't know where this road is going to lead All I know is where we've been And what we've been through And if we get to see tomorrow I hope it's worth all the wait It's hard to say goodbye to yesterday" I've lost count of the glasses of whisky that I've been drinking, just as long as I forget about everything, though how will I forget. I mean how do I forget the woman whom I shared half of my life with, how do I forget the love I shared with her. How do I let go of the kids that I played a role of a loving father all their lives - How? Now it all makes sense, I've never seen her pregnant, she used to visit 'home' and return with a baby. How did I turn such a blind eye, I was too busy cheating instead of being with her, I would've have followed her or ordered her to come back just so I support her through 'pregnancy' that way I'd have masked her off. They sure played

me very well, but what did they gain if not my misery... What was a perfect family yesterday disappeared within the air like a smoke rising up. "Sir" I raised my eyes only to be met by the last person I ever wanted to see on this world. "Sir, is everything okay?" I chuckled "how did you do it?" She frowned "do what?" "How did you plan everything, fall pregnant then give her your babies to raise them like her own. How did you feel watching your children living a lie all their lives, how do you feel right now seeing your son suffer like that because of your stupidity, how do you feel seeing your daughter lying on that death bed?" I looked at her as her mouth hung open, tears streamed down. Whatever it is that she feels will never be compared to the pain that I feel. . . _NOMSA_ . I finally agreed to go to Pretoria although it was now a bit late it didn't matter, I'll sleep over at his place though I'm not looking forward to any sexual intercourse, what I want is to just clear my mind, I deserve this break, I want to do everything I've never done, clubbing is at the top of my list. I had finished packing when I locked my door on my way out, I looked at King's window, I heard soft music playing, I couldn't hear him maybe he's out. I sighed and carried my bag as I was about to leave I bumped into someone, it was King but he was not alone. I looked at her as she smiled , my heart literally stopped!

52 ____ "Excuse me" he pushed me and passed. This is why I need a breather, King acts like I did the worst thing any woman can ever do to a man. I shook my head and glanced at Lara, she looked way too different with those eyebrows on fleek and make up on. I couldn't believe this was her, see Lara is the most natural girl, she doesn't even use an eyeliner but at this moment, it was even hard to recognise her. "What do you think?" She finally spoke "You - You look... wow!" She indeed looked breathtaking "I don't have any words to describe your beauty right now" "I'll take that as a compliment" she did the famous turn around "and the dress?" "Out of a hundred, I give you a hundred and ten" she smiled "wait, where are you going?" She blushed "I thought you'd never ask, I'm going on a date" "With Shasha?" She nodded "wow you guys are really serious" "I also couldn't believe it at first but here we are" "Hashtag relationship goals" they sure are a dream couple, heard Shasha even tags along to church now, that's how much these two love each other. "Why didn't you tell me though?" "It was a sudden thing, he sent his friend to bring me a dress and shoes" "A gentleman I see, and the make up?" She chuckled "I thought I wouldn't pull it through, I took my aunt's stuff then followed the make up tutorials on YouTube, thanks to those women who help online I managed to do it" "Wow and you sure did it like a pro (professional)" "And you, where are you off to with that luggage?" "The less you know the better" she

looked at me suspiciously . . . _NARRATED_ . "Yeses no man!" Somewhere in KZN, Aunt Phumi shouted as she made her way out of her bedroom. Thalitha, her niece frowned looking at her. Phumi walked to the fridge and took out a bottle of black label, she gulped it down while leaning back on the fridge.

"Sekwenzenjani anti? (What's wrong aunt)" "Ubab'wakho uqalile (your father has started)" "Usho ukuthini? (What do you mean)" "Uphinde weza emaphupheni wami, yey angisakwazi nokucambala uloku uzenza idlozi (he appeared on my dreams, I can't even take a nap he's acting like an ancestor)" Thalitha remained silent processing what her aunt was saying. For some reason Thalitha's father has been showing up in her dreams for a month now. "Anti(aunt)" "Yini? (What)" she dragged her feet and sat on the couch next to her niece. "Ubaba akaze aduke iskhathi eside kanjena, mhlampe khona okushaya amanzi (dad has never disappeared for this long, perhaps there's something going on)" Phumi burped letting out all the brewery smell "Litha, ubhuti lo esikhuluma ngaye ngimazi kahle, la ekhona udala ezingadalwa, ungazikhathazi ngaye (this is my brother we're talking about, I know him very well, wherever he is he's doing what he shouldn't, don't worry about him)" she held her forehead "Anti..." she said in a worried voice "Litha ngiphethwe ibhabhalazi, awehlise umsindo (I have a hangover, reduce noise)" Litha shook her head "uKetanga uyakwazi ukuzinakekela themba mina (Chains knows how to take care of himself trust

me)" a song started playing on radio, she jumped up and increased the volume while singing along "Jerusalema!! Ikhaya lami!! Ilondoloze, zungangishiyi lovie!!!" She danced with her black label on her hand. Litha chuckled and shook her head, 'just a few seconds ago she was complaining of hangover' she thought... . . . _RICH_ . We were in my study with Sonto telling me how everything happened, all I wanted to know was their motive to play me like this. First thing she mentioned was that she and my wife, Nombuso or Nthati whatever her name is, they're blood sisters. It makes sense now why they look so much alike, skin tone and some facial features, no wonder why it wouldn't have been hard to think Samantha is Nthati's daughter, but now that I know the truth I'm finding Samantha to look a lot more like Sonto than Nthati, she's her exact copy. "My boyfriend used to abuse me, so when I got pregnant he would beat me through out my pregnancy, that's when I called Nombuso and told her about everything" she sighed "she just wanted to save my children from all the abuse, the torture and the humiliation, she wanted to give them a normal life." "What did you tell your boyfriend about the children?" "That they died" I swallowed really hard "we faked their death and well since he didn't want them to live, he never bothered to see the bodies or even coming to the 'funerals' " this was beyond evil "Why didn't you leave him?" She chuckled with tears streaming down on her face "do you think if it was that easy to leave an

abusive man the rate of women who get killed by their boyfriends would be as high as it is on this present day? It is definitely not easy, not mentioning the fact that we're scared

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we also get used to it, we get used to the abuse, we end up loving them and the way they treat us, we somehow believe that it's their way of showing love, or we sometimes believe that no, they will change. But again at times we believe that it's our fault, that we are the ones leading them to being abusive." She sniffed "I couldn't let him go, I loved him with his flaws" she's beyond the word 'broken' "Now that you're here, how did you escape? Did you kill him?" She shook her head "one day he brought another woman in my house without my permission" she chuckled "as if he would've asked for one. He used to send the message very clear to me that he didn't love me, he disrespected me in my own house, they would make love anywhere and everywhere without caring about my presence." She shook her head "Nombuso found out then she helped me out, I didn't hesitate to leave. Till this day he hasn't found me, Nombuso offered me this job just so I stay closer to my children." This was a lot to take in, I grabbed my whiskey and left... . . _ZOLA_ . Nono arrived a few hours after she had agreed to come, I'm glad she really did come the way she agreed it was like she was pulling me along. "I'm glad you're

here" I hugged her as soon as we walked in to my bedroom "I missed you" She smiled "me too, where's your sister?" "Visiting a friend" "Ohh" "Don't worry she won't be back until a few weeks" "Okay" she sat on the bed, I leaned closer to her and tried to kiss her, "Zola please" she slightly pushed me "this is not why I'm here" I frowned "Is this because of your boyfriend?" "We broke up" "If that's the case then I'll also end things with Sam" she looked at me like I've just lost my mind . . .
SAM . I heard the beeping of a machine from afar, it was faint but loud enough for me to hear it, my eyes slowly opened although I couldn't see clearly but I see the blur light before my eyes, where am I... I felt a sharp pain at the back of my head, the last thing I remember is falling and hitting my head, am I only waking up now... My throat felt dry like I haven't been drinking water for a whole year. My head slightly fell on the side, although my vision was still blur I could see that I was in a white room, a machine was on my side, a hospital, I'm in a hospital. I looked a bit far from me and saw a figure sitting there with its head resting on it's hand that was balancing on the arm of the chair, perhaps it can give me water... "huh..." I tried to speak but my throat was too dry to let me utter any words, "hh - hi" I whispered, it raised it's head and came running to me "Oh God Sam, you're awake" she spoke "Waa - wat - ter" "Water?" I slowly nodded. She grabbed something, I believe a glass of water and gave me a straw, finally! "Want

more?" I shook my head, now that she was closer I could see who it was, Swazi. "Let me call my brother, he's gonna be so happy to hear that you're awake" she walked away, I sighed, why is my vision blur to things that are a bit of a distant away... The doctor walked in "ohh Miss Mbewu, welcome back" "How long have I been here?" My voice still came in a whisper "That's not important, what is, is the fact that you're up, we should let your father know, he'll be glad to hear the news, whenever he came here he looked very devastated." She smiled "How do you feel?" "A bit of pain at the back of my head and I can't see clearly" "Let's see" she took something like a torch and lit it in my eyes "uhmm... we'll have to run some tests, if it's what I think it is, then you should prepare yourself because you'll be wearing spectacles for almost all your life" sigh , just what I needed....

53 ____ Samantha was sleeping peacefully when her father rushed in, he had received a call from the doctor about a few minutes ago, he wasted no time in coming to see his 'daughter'. She was now out of coma. He stood next to her bed and slowly brushed her hair with a tear dropping out of his eye. The wound of knowing about their paternal was still fresh, it broke his heart that sooner or later he'll have to tell them the real truth, what worried him the most was how much it would break them, he wouldn't do it if it was up to him, but again they deserve to know the truth, especially Lungelo who's currently suffering because of all this situation. He sighed "you know I still remember the very first day I held you in my arms" he chuckled "you were so little and pale, I was even scared to drop you, that's how small you were. You were the sweetest of them all, I don't want to mention beautiful." He rubbed his eyes "you and your brother don't deserve everything that's happening, you don't. If I were able to change this situation, trust me I would, but unfortunately it's way beyond me. However, I hope someday you'll find it in your heart to forgive me. If I had noticed from the first moment, your future would be different, you wouldn't be here and so would your brother." He kissed her forehead "one thing I can assure you is that I will never stop being your father, a father is he who raises a child with care, love, support and protection not just a sperm donor. I love you guys so much I can't stand here and watch you suffer, I need to

fix this but in anyway I won't stop being your father, never feel like I've abandoned you two, no matter what happens" again, he kissed her forehead "I love you" . . _NTHATI_ . I haven't been feeling very well lately and I don't even know why, I guess this situation with my family has been the one draining me. Maybe I should just confess everything and cut all ties with them for good, after all my life is now in here. I've started adapting to this place, my life is now completely based in here , I must confess I'm even enjoying every moment. I wonder how Rich is taking everything, it must be very hard for him but I'm certain that Sonto filled him up with all the necessary details, although not the whole truth. "Sthakathi (friend)" Mademoiselle approached "what are you up to?" I sighed "none much, just thinking of this situation with my family" "Luister(listen) you have to forget these people, as soon as you walked in here you died to them, you have a new life, I need you fully focused" "Focused?" I frowned "what is it that you're not telling me?" "Come" she pulled me to a more quiet space "heard the Rednecks have given out the word, whomever brings both your head and mine in a silver platter will get a very high and rare price" "But why" "We're a threat always have been, we are the Vipers, once owned this place and they believe we're out here cooking some plan to take them out" "So they somehow trying to beat us to it?" She nodded "it's not good to have you thinking of your past family, you have a new family now, me" I

smiled, she's right "what do you think we should do, any plan?" She shook her head "not at the moment, but we have eyes and ears everywhere, one wrong move we will know" "And where did you get the money" She smirked "I'm Mademoiselle, the prison ancestor, I can get anything done" I shook my head . . .
NOMSA. I'm glad I had made up my mind into visiting this side. Zola was making sure that I enjoy each and every second of my stay around here. He controlled himself like I had told him what my intentions were with him, he did stop trying to be intimate with me although he would steal a few kisses here and there, but I didn't mind , it's just a meaningless kiss... We were about to go out when he received a call

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he told me that it was his sister telling him that he should go to the hospital because Samantha is awake, at first I didn't know she was admitted until he told me about an accident that occurred. I told him that it was okay, he could go see his girlfriend but he didn't, he said that there's no way he was going to leave me behind. I don't know what his intentions are with this but I don't concord with his decision, for some reason I don't feel good about this. How will he explain my presence to them, 'trust me' that's all he managed to say, sigh... A few hours later we left to go see his girlfriend, although I could feel my heart pumping so hard, the nerves were doing a number on

me, this is not good in all levels, what is he up to. We made our way in her ward after being accompanied by the nurse, his sister was not around, just Samantha and her father. They were chatting but stopped when we entered, he gave Zola a look of disapproval, whilst miss yellow frowned "uhm sorry to disturb, but we're here to see Sam" he spoke "We?" The father asked, I swallowed, this man is very intimidating but at the same time there's something about him. "Yes, Nono and I" Zola spoke in confidence, he sure is growing some balls The father chuckled "yazini(you know what) let me leave" he kissed his daughter "I'll be outside, if you need me just shout" she nodded and he left. I looked at Zola "Samantha I'm glad you're up" he said "It's good to see you, I missed you" she confessed, I can't believe he's about to break up with the woman who loves him "why is she here?" She looked at me "To see you , don't you think it's noble of her?" This guy "I see" I cleared my throat and finally spoke "I'll be waiting outside" I didn't wait for his response but rather hurried out where I found the father standing, I forgot his name... "What brought you here?" He asked "I - Zola asked me to accompany him" "What relationship do you have with that boy?" I swallowed this is like some interrogation "We're friends, more like brother and sister" he nodded "I hope so for your own good" what's that suppose to mean?.. "what's your name?" He enquired "Nomsa, Nomsa Nkosi" he nodded and buried his hands in his pockets then walked away... that was

tense . . _ZANDY_ . I don't know if it's me or what, but ever since I got here, King has been acting very weird, more like different. He hasn't been giving me any attention, it's like his mind was not even here, whatever is wrong with him, he must deal with it I sure didn't come here to babysit him. "King" he was lying on the bed while facing up with his one knee up. He was out, "King!" "You're talking to me?" I rolled my eyes, such disrespect I can't tolerate "Are you sure you want me here? I really would be doing a lot back home right now than to watch you day dream" He sighed "I'm sorry" he sat up "join me" he tapped on the bed next to him "What's going on?" "It's" he exhaled "it's nothing" "Fine! Whatever it is please let it occupy your mind when I'm not here, I'm not your psychology, psycholost , psycho doctor whatever it is called" he chuckled "Psychiatrist?" "Forget it" I pulled him for a kiss to shut him up, truth is I've never been good with these bombostic (bombastic) words argh... . . _NARRATED_ . "Noma bekuthuka Bathi awugezile Unuka umlomo, Ngikuthanda unjalo Noma kanjani, Noma kanjani!!! Noma kanjani riye riye riye!!! Noma kanjaniii" They danced while singing along one of Brenda's old time song. As usual, Phumi was drinking her one litre black label with her friends both old men and women. That's where she always spends her cents, even when she doesn't have any money, she still finds a possible way to get drunk. "Hau kodwa wasishiya uMabrrr(then Brenda left us)" "Mpintshi kodwa umculo wakhe

usaphila (my friend but her music lives on)" "Ushaye khona (You're right)" they stumbled to the table and sat across each other" Another drunk lady came rushing to them "nizwile ?(did you here?)" She whispered "Usefikile undabazabantu (miss people's business has arrived)" "Kuthiwa kutholakele isdumbu emfuleni kwa14, akwaziwa ukuthi esikabani, ngathi isdumbu sinezinhlamvu ebusweni (they found a body in the river of kwa14, no one knows to whom it belongs, seems like the body has bullets on the face)" Phumi clapped once "ezibuhlungu azipheli kulesgodi (the painful don't end in this hood)" she stood and held her friend's hand "vul' indlela hhe mamgobhozi!! Vul' indlela yekel umona!!!" They sang along while walking away...

54 ____ Rich looked at me as I walked in, I had called him to come see me, at first he didn't want to until I told him it was about his children. Truth is I want to tell him everything, just so I cut all ties with them, it's about time I focus more on my new life, that is, life in prison. The last thing I need is distractions from my past life, at this moment I don't care if I add to the hate he already feels for me, so long I tell him everything. "Hi" I said "Why am I here?" "Straight to the point I see" I sighed "well I wanted to tell you everything, that is, the truth. I need to move on, there are things that require my full attention this side, so I don't want anything holding me back" "Just talk, I don't have the whole day!" He snapped "Really unnecessary" I rolled my eyes "anyways, where do I even start" sighing I leaned on the desk with my arms balancing on it "you have another bastard child" he frowned, "remember your first maid, Musa Nkosi?" His eyes shot wide "you were behind..." I nodded "yes I paid her to disappear, you thought I wouldn't find out that you had impregnated her, little did you know that I know everything. I paid her to write that letter saying she had a miscarriage" "You bi***" "Ey" I rose my hand "hold up with the curses, you know I hate it" "I don't care! You're a wicked woman!" "Please do let me know when you're done throwing tantrums" he sighed and held his peace "Good. Continuing, I was also behind all your mistress' s disappearance" He shook his head "You're sick" "Your last mistress, the one you uses to

take to that hotel, I'm the one who killed" "And put the stupid blame on me!" He snapped "do you have any idea what you did with my life there!! I hate you!" He stood up and paced around "damn it I can't believe I used to share the same bed with you, I can't believe I loved you!! You're the worst of them all" I glanced at him as he continued acting, "where is it?" "What?" "My son!" I chuckled "who said it was a son? Anyways it's a she. I don't know where she is, I kept tracks on her only when that man eater of her mother was alive, when she died I forgot about her" "She's dead" he whispered "Yep and I'm also responsible for her death" he looked at me, I smirked. He frowned and shook his head "Are there other fruits of your wickedness that you'd like to share?" "Well there's a lot, why don't you sit" . . _THALITHA_ . I miss my dad, he may not be the best father out there but to me he's everything. I started living with my father when I was ten, that is, when my mother died of brain tumor. Now I'm a twenty five year grown up still living with my father and aunt. My father took me in since my mother's relatives didn't want to stay with me, lucky for me, aunt Phumi welcomed me with warm hands. My aunt might be best friends with alcohol, but trust me, she's the kindest woman that ever existed, in fact she's a hundred times a real woman my sober aunts from my mother's side could ever be. She's loving, protective, caring and well funny. At first when my aunt told me about her latest dreams of my father appearing to

her asking for help, I thought she was just hallucinating, until I also got an almost similar dream. In that dream my father had his hands and legs tied, he couldn't move any muscle, blood gushing out of his mouth with tears on his eyes. When I ask him what the matter is, he does open his mouth but words fail him as more blood comes out, it's a very disturbing scene. My aunt is being ignorant through this matter, I believe there's more to these dreams

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my father could be in deep danger, wherever he is he's screaming out for our help, he needs us, but where will I even start to look for him. See no one is really a fan of my father around here because of his hilarious behaviour, he's literally a bully, we're lucky people from here don't judge you because of your family's way of doing things, or everyone would hate me for being his daughter. . . _NOMSA_. After our visit to the hospital, we went back to his place. I didn't dare go back inside after leaving that room, the last thing I needed was to make things awkward. He has been very silent since we left, I hope he didn't do any stupidity. "Zola?" I put a glass of water on the table. "You haven't said a word since we left, what's going on?" He sighed and gulped down the glass of water "I ended things" My eyes widened "what!?" "Don't act surprised, I did tell you I was going to end things" "Zola, she's in the hospital recovering

from the accident, you go there to finish her! Who does that!?" I was mad "Yey don't shout please" "You weren't supposed to do that, it's gonna break her" "She'll recover very well. I love you Nono" he put my hand into his and brushed it, the door flung open and his sister rushed in, she chuckled and her a waist "So she's the reason you did it!" I retreated my hand "how dare you girly!? How dare you come into my home and ruin my brother's relationship?" "Swazi" he warned "Thula (shut it) Zola, this girl is a demon in a human form, what kind of a woman are you to cause so much pain on another woman. Tell me what do you want from my brother? His money?" "Swazi leave" he spoke She chuckled "wow! Look he's even chasing me out of my home, whatever muthi you're using must be very strong, uwumthakathi ntombazane (you're a witch girl)" by now I couldn't hold them back I just let them flow "those crocodile tears won't take you anywhere mthakathi (witch)" "That's enough! Out!!" He got up and held his sister's arm forcefully dragging her out "You don't build happiness over another woman's tears and pain, never! This relationship won't go anywhere!!" She screamed as her brother continued dragging her out "ngiyeke(let me go) Zola!" . . _RICH_ . With everything that Nthati told me, I should be paralysed by now or suffering from a heart attack. I have no words to describe the woman I once fell inlove with, it's just crazy, it's sick. Look at me now, I lost two children in a way and God replaced them,

although to me I didn't lose Sam and Ngelo, let's just say I now have four kids. I smiled and drank my whiskey, this is the only friend I have. Speaking of friends, it's been long since I last heard from Wyatt. I got hold of my phone and dialed his number... "My man!" He said "Man where are you hiding yourself?" He chuckled "behind my work man, you know my job comes with a lot of work" he's right "Yeah, call me when you're free, we need to hit a club one of these days" He laughed "that bad?" "You have no idea" Sonto made her way in, "do that man" "Sure thing" I put it down "What do you want?" "I spoke to a traditional healer, we can go tomorrow to perform the ritual" "have you spoken to his real father's family?" "Leave it all on me, all you need to do is get Lungelo out of that place as soon as possible" I nodded finally my boy will be okay. . .

THALITHA . I was walking to the shop to buy aunt Phumi some painkillers when a friend of mine appeared "Choza (friend)" "Mngani (friend)" I replied "Kuyiwaphi? (where to)" "Shop, uyamazi uPhumza(you know Phumi)" She laughed "bhabhalazi? (Hangover)" I nodded "uyabufela utshwala u anti bo (aunt loves alcohol)" she was holding a newspaper "Zithini izindaba? (What're the news)" I asked "Ah uyazi yilesifo left and right (you know it's this disease all over)" I took it and read, one thing caught my attention a picture of a body in a body bag, I stopped and read, "umeleni? (What are you waiting for)" I didn't respond but continued reading, it's said that a man was

found dead , his body was in the river at Kwa14 , seems like he hasn't been identified because his face was shot not with one or two but five bullets! No one has been able to recognise him although they said he seemed to be on his late forties, they still trying to identify him... I don't know why but my heart started beating very fast, it was unusual, this has never happened before...

55 ____ "Litha spununu sam yini ndaba uphuze okufika?(my darling why did you take so long to get back)" I've been a bit distracted ever since I read that article. "Bekugcwele esphaza (it was full at the shop)" "Yey besengithi ulahlekile (I thought you got lost)" she was lying on the couch with a plastic of ice cubes on her forehead "letha amanzi (bring water)" I went to pour a glass of water and brought it to her whilst giving her the pills, she swallowed them at once and gulped down the water. "Anti?(aunt)" "Yes" she said whilst looking at the television "Bengisacela ufunde lokhu (please read this)" I gave her the newspaper, the one I took from my friend. She chuckled looking at it "uyazi angizwani nokufunda amaphepha, izinto zosomabhizinisi (You know I don't like reading newspapers, that's a businessmen's thing)" "Kubalulekile lokhu (this is important)" "We Litha, yazi ngagcina thirty years ago ukuya eskoleni, yini ekwenza ucabange ukuthi ngisakwazi ukufuna?(Litha, last time I went to school was thirty years ago, what makes you think I still know how to read)" I shook my head, one thing about her is that she's very stubborn. "Kungcono ungitshela ukuthi kukhulunywa ngani (it's better you tell me what they're talking about)" I sighed then sat on the couch next to her "kutholakele isdumbu sendoda ngale kwa14(they found a men's body at Kwa14)" "Oh yilokho, besengizwile (it's that, I heard)" "Kuthiwa indoda ebiseminyakeni yofourty (it's said that he was on his forties)"

"Angikutholi ukuthi uyaphi ngaloludaba(I don't get where you're going with this)" I cleared my throat "ubaba... (dad)" she didn't let me finish, she just busted into laughter "Litha ufuna ukuthi ubhuti loyo? (You want to say that's my brother)" "Anti (aunt)" She shook her head "ubhuti uyakwazi ukuzinakekela ngasho, akuyena loyo (my brother knows how to take care of himself I told you, that's not him)" "Angikuphikisi, kodwa kungaba ngcono sibe nesiqiniseko sokuthi akuyena (I'm not disagreeing with you, but it's better for us to be sure that it's not him)" She sighed "sivumelekile ukuyobona isdumbu (we're allowed to identify the body)" "Nakhoke Phumzet ngeke ulale namhlanje emva kokubona isdumbu (here we go Phumzet you won't sleep after seeing a corpse)" she said to herself . . _RICH_ . I'm truly glad that finally we'll be able to do this ritual and help my son. I don't know what will happen when we get there but I truly hope they will accept him so that he may be okay, I can't stand seeing him like that... I had managed to pay that doctor to let Lungelo out, I'm glad he's black and understands a lot about tradition, if it was a white doctor it wouldn't have been easy to make him understand and Ngelo wouldn't have been released. "How have you been?" Sbahle enquired, I had decided to show up at her place, after I asked her hand in marriage sometime ago she didn't respond me, but now I'm here and I need that answer. "I've been good. Sbahle?" "Yes" "About my marriage proposal...." She sighed "Rich you're

married" "My next step is to divorce her , then we can marry"
"Why are you doing this?" Honestly, even though she looks like her late sister, that doesn't mean I love her I just want to build a warm home for my daughter. I don't want her growing up differently, she needs a stable home, a mother figure and who else would do that if not Sbahle. "I want to build a home with you" she nodded. "It's good that you being honest" she remained quiet for a while then spoke, "I'll marry you" I smiled them kissed her. She won't regret this decision ever! Now I have to finalise my divorce and then start looking for my other daughter. Wherever she is she must need me, it's not easy to live without both parents, I wonder if they even told her about me... . . _SAM_ . Ever since that visit from Zola and that girl, I haven't been doing good. I'm having short breath and it sucks. I don't understand what I ever did to deserve such heartbreak from all the guys I've dated. Am I not good enough ? Or maybe I'm not woman enough? What is it exactly that I'm lacking

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beauty? It's just sad but this time around I don't have enough strength to break down. I'm tired of crying myself to sleep, I'm just tired. I give up on love that's if it even exists, from heroine I'll put all focus on myself, I need that. "You're up" the girls walked in "Hey" my voice sounding as horsey as it never did "How're you doing?" Bloom asked I sighed "very well, I have

you by my side remember" they stood on my side bed "You know you can be honest with us" I chuckled "this sounds like a therapy" "Well" they laughed "I feel bad" Swazi spoke emotionally "he did it because of that girl" I had my suspicions "I'm sorry " "It's not your fault relax" I assured "it's that man eater's fault!" "We should pay her a visit" Pam said "show her that no one messes with one of us and get away with it. I always knew she was up to no good!" "I can't believe she took your man" Bloom added "You know what , let's order some wine" "Good idea" Bloom, always resorting to alcohol, never been good with advices. . . _THALITHA_ . After she agreed for us to go and identify the body, we came right away. We arrived about an hour ago still going through all the process of answering all those questions. We maintained sitted on the bench waiting for them to call us in. "Litha awulaleli yazi (You don't listen)" I kept quiet "akuyena ubhuti lona(this is not my brother)" To say I was nervous would be an understatement, I was way beyond the word nervous, I was even trembling. "Asthandaze(let's pray)" She chuckled "ave une drama ngane KaNdabezitha (you're dramatic Ndabezitha's daughter)" I ignored her and said a silent prayer, that's when they called us in. We looked at each other then slowly got up and went in with her leading the way. "Ningavula(You can open)" the lady pointed at the corpse which was covered. "Yenza phela (do it)" aunt said, even though she looked strong , I could sense her

fear. "Hhai(no)" I shook my head, she went along and opened then literally went quiet for quite a long time. "Anti?(aunt)" I called whilst still standing behind her. "Yhooooooooo!" She screamed, I shook my head , I still didn't want to look at him. "Hhhaii hhhaii hhaii bhutiiii (no no no brother)" she cried and leaned on him, she hugged him. I slowly slide down and let them all out... . . . _NARRATED_ . You're either with us or against us!!! One of the prisoners top rules Finally the day was here, for the Rednecks to prove yet another point to the other inmates, yet another flag to be raised in their favour. Will the Vipers be conquered, or will their plan flunk dismally!! Mademoiselle and Nthati were chilling on their usual spot when a group of women appeared from nowhere. Anyone could pick up that they were up to no good but rather they meant business! "Get ready" Mademoiselle whispered as she eyed them, she quickly laughed out not to raise any suspicion, this meant war! "In five" she said as they approached, "four" they got closer, "three" Nthati smiled, she nodded "two" they both took out toothbrushes that were nicely sharpened at the bottom. This is the moment that will tell if it's a new beginning for the Vipers, or their end... . . . _MEANWHILE_ . Phumi and Thalitha were both on the coach embracing each other after finding out about the brutal death of Chains. Phumi still couldn't believe that her brother, the only one she had whom protected her, has fallen. It broke her heart way more than anyone could ever imagine. A knock came

through the door, at first no one said a thing, they were both lost on different worlds but again a knock came through and this time around Phumi answered "ngena!(come in)" a man and a woman walked in "sanibonani (good day)" a man said "Hi" Thalitha spoke in a husky voice Immediately, Phumi stood up and walked closer to the woman who stood there without a word, "Noma - Nomasonto!" She spoke incredulously "Phumi" she whispered...

56 ____ Prisoners had gathered around watching the fight between the women. Guards were nowhere to be seen or could it be that they were paid? Slaps? No! Those were for ladies, these are men in women bodies, punches and kicks were flying around. Mademoiselle was fighting two women at once, one was down after she managed to slaughter her neck with the toothbrush. There was no time to waste, you either kill or be killed. Nthati on the other hand was fighting one woman, after successfully bringing down another woman. They were throwing punches at each other, Nthati's weapon fell a bit far from where she was. She looked at it, and so did her opponent. As she was attempting to go after it, her opponent jumped on her causing them to fall, but fortunately for Nthati she got on top of her and strangled her she watched as she was taking life out of her, although not for long, she felt a sharp pain below her left breast. She looked down to be met by a pocket knife, she looked back at the woman beneath her who smiled in victory. Right then the guards appeared, chasing the prisoners away they hurried to Nthati, whom was now lying on the floor with blood gushing out of her. . . _RICH_ . They stood there looking at each other, it was tense they probably had a lot to say to each other. I looked at the girl on the couch, she was curled up, I think this is a bad time. I cleared my throat, the woman looked at me "oh ningixolele bandla, ngenani (forgive me , come in)" we walked in the sitting room "ningahlala (You

may sit)" we sat on a double couch opposite them,
"Nomasonto, mehlo madala (long time)" Sonto nodded "kuhle ukukubona Phumi (it's good to see you)" the woman sniffed, her eyes were puffy and red, seems like she was crying.
"Nilethwa yini? (what brings you here)" she asked I looked at Sonto whom seemed very nervous so I decided to speak, "I don't know if you know but Sonto had a..." "Wooo (wait)" she raised her hand "ngicela uyibeke ngesintu, isingisi akulona olwimi lami (please speak in our language, english is not my language)" ohh what was I thinking, I mean we're in KZN. "Ohh. Bengisasho ukuthi uSonto unengane, noma ngithi unezingane noweslisa wakuleli khaya... (As I was saying that Sonto has a child, or rather children with the man of this house)" "Haaa!" She screamed then covered her mouth with her hand, the girl sat up straight with her red eyes wide open. Sonto looked down. "Awuphinde! (Say that again)" she looked at Sonto "Nomasonto?" "Iqiniso Phumi. Uyakhumbula njalo ngangihlezi ngithi siphumile isisu (it's the truth. Remember I always used to say I miscarried)" Phumi nodded "iqiniso ukuthi ngangingafuni izingane zikhulele kulesa simo, yingakho ngazinikela kudadewethu. (Truth is I didn't want the children to be raised in that situation, that's why I gave them to my sister)" "Yhoo!!" She screamed I cleared my throat "ngicabanga ukuthi kungangcono abekhona naye umfo (I think it's better to have him here)" I said "Ehh ubhuti usishiyile (my brother is gone)"

"Ini!? (What)" shouted Sonto in shock . . . _NOMSA_ .

Throughout everything that has been happening to me, everything that has been breaking me apart, I finally decided to go back home and this time around with my mind finally made up. There's no way I'm going to allow Zola to be the cause of my unhappiness. The reason I went there was to clear my mind from everything, not to have him adding to my stress. There's absolutely no way I'm ever going back there. Now I'm gonna live my life in a very different way, infact I want to start attending church with my friend, who knows maybe that's where I'll find all the peace that I need, because wow! I currently lack all the love and peace. Tonight is one of those nights that we have to work extra hours, I haven't managed to get more people to add on our staff so we literally have to multitask. Mam'Mavi is also helping tonight, I'm truly glad she always offers to help without wanting anything in return. She's such an angel, "akusheshwe! (Hurry)" she said to me as I was still chopping meat on the plates, "bayakudinga ngaphandle (they need you outside)" I quickly finished up then went out. "Yoh kugcwele kenamuhla (it's really packed tonight)" Lara said "Tell me about it." I went to give out the orders, some people were already growling and complaining since they seemed to be drunk. I walked back to Lara "we need extra hands, it's urgent" "Maybe we should start tomorrow looking for..." she kept quiet "look" I turned only to be met by King, he was not

alone though but with a girl, I couldn't see her clearly, they were even holding hands. "Unfortunately you have to attend them" she said "Can't we swap?" She shook her head "You know that's your job" I nodded and walked to them, I felt dizzy as soon as my eyes landed on her

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how did she find me... "Well well well." She smiled but quickly wiped it off her face "and we meet again, mnax" she spoke emphasising the last part. I literally froze looking at her, all the fear kicked in. . . _THALITHA_. I couldn't believe what this man and woman were saying. My father was every bad thing but what this woman did was not fair, I mean how could she hide the children from my dad, he deserved to know them and to make part of their lives, now we wouldn't be here. Wow, I can't believe I actually have a brother and a sister... "So manje abaphansi bafuna kwenziwe umsebenzi sizobazisa ngabazukulu bakuleli khaya (the ancestors want us to make a ritual to introduce to them the grandchildren of this house)" the man spoke "Manje uphi lomfana enithi uyahlanya ? (So where's the boy you say is crazy)" aunt asked, I was also curious but mostly shocked. I mean why would the ancestors get to that harsh point of driving the innocent soul crazy, why didn't they drive this Sonto of a woman crazy. "Usemotweni (he's in the car)" "Hhai akalandwe (fetch him)" the man wasted no time, he went

to get this guy who's supposedly my brother! As soon as they walked back in, my eyes landed on him. He seemed very normal like there's nothing wrong with him, "ohh Nkosi ave efana nobaba, umkhulu wabo (oh Lord he looks like dad, their grandfather)" indeed he looked much like my grandfather "Lungelo (this is Lungelo)" he said I got up and walked up to them, I held his hands "sawubona (hi) Lungelo" I looked deep in his eyes, he looked very much drained. It's so sad that he didn't find dad whilst in life, it really breaks my heart, he would be so happy to see his son! "Soloku waqala ukuhlanya (ever since he lost his mind) he doesn't say much" I nodded "for him to get back to his usual self, he just needs to be introduced to our ancestors?" He nodded "then I guess we should get right to it after burying dad" "Uqinisile uLitha akumelanga siyeke umfana kulesi simo (Litha's right we shouldn't leave the boy in that situation)" "Siyabonga (thank you) Phumi" "Mina nawe kusazomele sikhulume (You and I still have to talk)" aunt said to the woman whom I nodded rapidly . . . _NTHATI_ . I was in the middle of nowhere when I suddenly heard voices. It looked like a desert, I couldn't hear clearly what the voices were saying but others were definitely calling my name. I looked around and saw my foster parents, the ones I killed years ago. For some reason they looked very happy, "finally! We've been avenged" my father said "Even in death you will still pay!" Mother spoke. I shook my head, I can't be dead. I heard a laughter, when I

turned I saw our late maid Musa, "look who's here, our new citizen!" She laughed while clapping her hands "Nananana nananana ohh ohh ohh welcome!" I quickly turned, Ziyanda and my other late rivals stood there singing and dancing "I'm not dead!!!" I screamed, they laughed so hard that it echoed "I missed you" I quickly turned, Bruno stood there with a smile on his face "I'm not dead!!!" I shouted, this can't be the end of me. I refuse to make these ghosts happy "Yes you are sis. Welcome, would you like me to show you around?" Smangele, wearing the smile of victory "I'm not dead!!!!!" I screamed once more, they laughed and sang while dancing as they circled around me. This cannot be it, it can't be, I can't be dead!!! . . . _NOMSA_ . My nightmare has finally arrived, the woman I've been trying so hard to forget and stay as far away from her. How did she find me, why is she after me, what does she want from me. She smirked, my heart was pumping out of my chest. "You know her?" King asked her "You have no idea how much I do my love" their eyes were red infact they looked high, so they're even dating, what am I even saying. Of course they are, they were holding hands. She looked around and spotted an empty table where she quickly went and got on top of it, my heart started beating even harder. "Can I have your attention!" She spoke. Some drunk guys started growling, "So sometime ago I got pregnant but unfortunately lost my baby you know why?" I looked at her with teary eyes "because of her" she pointed at

me, everyone looked at me "this prostitute killed my baby."
Why is she lying "Haa! Haibo!" "Yes she's a prostitute,
ebedayisa ngomzimba (she was selling her body). Sleeping with
married men. She even slept with some of them in her late
grandmother's shack!" "Sies!!" Some woman spat on me
"ukhohlakele(you're evil)" "Mbulali (murderer)" each person
had a thing to say "Wooo never ngidle ukudla okwenziwe
iseqamgwaqo (I won't eat food made by a prostitute)" a
woman got up "asambe baby (let's go babe)" she left with her
boyfriend "Nami (me too)" a guy said, he threw away the plate
with food. Everyone else got up, they were giving me nasty
looks, some even had a word or two to say. I felt like I could
disappear, this is some injustice they're committing with me!

57 ____ After talking with the Ndabezitha family, I offered to help them with the funeral, that is, I offered my support financially although they didn't want to let me but hey I wanted to help so I insisted. We were still in KZN, we checked in a hotel although not the same room. Sonto is in her own room whilst I was with Lungelo. It's safer this way, the last thing I need is to have my son committing yet another crime, so he's safer with me. I just took a shower when I heard my phone ring, Lungelo was still in bed. "Hello" it was Sbahle "Hi, how have you been?" "Good and you guys?" I walked to the bedroom just so I don't wake him up "We're good, say hi daddy" I heard Princess saying those gibberish words "Hello daddy's Princess I thought you were sleeping" "She just woke up" she said "She's an early bird" "Like daddy" I smiled "how did it go?" I had told her about the ritual "We'll be doing it after the burial, unfortunately their real father is late" "Oh my God I'm sorry, did you tell Samantha?" Oh damn, I had completely forgotten about her. "Not yet" "You should, after all she's the daughter" "You're right maybe I should fly there to talk to her" "Good idea" another call came through, it was a landline "Let me call you in a few" "Okay" I cut the call and answered the other caller "hello" "Good morning, am I speaking to Mr Mbewu?" "Yes" "This is Officer Kay, it's about your wife Nthati Mbewu" I sighed "what has she done now?" "Nothing sir. Yesterday there was an inevitable fight between the prisoners a few of them got badly injured some

lost their lives" I swallowed "Unfortunately your wife was one of those who were badly injured, we took her to the hospital but it was too late. I'm sorry sir but she didn't make it" . .

THALITHA . "Yazi angikakholwa (You know I still don't believe it)" aunt spoke, she sat on my bed "Ini?(what)" I yawned "Ukuthi uNomasonto unezingane nobhuti (that Sonto has children with my brother)" "Awungitshele anti kahle kahle kwenzekeni? (tell me aunt what really happened)" She sighed "yindaba ende (it's along story)" "Sisaneskhathi (we still have time)" I said. We're supposed to go deal with this situation of my father's body then start planning the funeral. "Eminyakeni eyadlula ubhuti wazana noNomasonto, babethandana.... (years ago my brother met Nomasonto, they loved each other)" she went on to tell me that my father loved her very much to a point of obsession until one day when he found out that she was cheating on him. My father went crazy, fear of loosing her overpowered him. So instead of dealing with this matter in a matured manner, he started abusing her sexually, emotionally, and physically. She continued telling me how that affected Nomasonto to a point of giving away her children, that she was scared for them, she didn't want them in an abusing and broken family... Everything my aunt said was truly heartbreaking more especially because of what we go through as women, at the end of the day I'm proud of her for being able to leave that abusive relationship, although I still think my

father had the right to know about those children. . . _NOMSA_
. My life keeps getting worse, whenever I try to take a step forward, I end up taking ten steps back instead. Whom ever cursed my life did a very good job because wow, this life is truly showing me flames. After the lies Zandy invented, people sure stood by their word, they left and never returned. I don't know who called Zola and filled him in with all the information but he got in contact with me and told me to take sometime off, he also mentioned that my presence is no longer good for the chisa nyama so I should distance myself for time being until people start letting go of the thought they have about me. I've finally decided to go to church with Lara, she was very happy that at last I accepted her invite. After everything I'm going through a church is the only place I need to be

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forget about everything else. It was the prophetic time, heard this is part of their service usually after ministering the word of God. The prophet walked up to me with two ushers next to him, he looked at me for a while then said, "praise the Lord, you finally overcame" he smiled. I just stared at him, "just by setting your feet in the house of the Lord, a lot has changed. You don't have any idea of how strong the fight was in the spiritual arena just so you don't get here, but fortunately you conquered" "Glory!" Someone screamed. The prophet was

using a microphone so everyone in the church could hear him. "You've been having sexual dreams for sometime now, in that dream you appear to be having a sexual intercourse with someone you've never had sex with, and when you wake up you feel a lot of pain in that area of your womb is it true?" I was shocked at how he knew that, I nodded "That's true" "Like I said, you have conquered. I declare in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that demon is out of you, you have been delivered. You will no longer have those dreams." I didn't know what to say "your sentimental life has been restored, you will finally meet your partner, the one who'll truly love you for who you are. Another thing, there's a test coming. God wants to see if you're going to endure it or you'll give up on faith. The bible says in the book of James 1:3 "For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow." Don't give up on the faith, hold on to God, especially now that you're about to face a hard time. The word also tells us that the glory that is to come cannot be compared to the pain you feel now" a tear dropped . _SAM_ . The doctor finally decided to discharge me , there was no reason at all to keep me at the hospital, I've been recovering very well from the incident I got. Swazi was the one taking me home, after a few hours of our journey, we finally arrived. We found dad on the couch staring into space, this sight of him was very unusual and disturbing, "I'll find you in my bedroom" I said, dismissing her then walked to my dad

"dad" he snapped out of it and looked at me "are you okay?" "Ehh ehm" he cleared his throat "sit baby" I frowned and sat next to him "we have to talk" "Yes?" He wiped his face "Baby" he sighed "I'm - I am, ehh hoo" "Dad" He held my hands "I love you so much never forget that" "You're scaring me" "Sam your mo... Nthathi and I are not your real parents, Sonto is your mother and your father just lost his life" I couldn't believe my ears, no that's not true. "I'm sorry I also found out a few days ago" "I" I stood up and began walking around "Also Nthathi is no more, she was attacked" "What!!!" . . _ZANDY_ . After finally finding that loose cannon of a woman, I had to get here to fetch something. Something no one knows exists, something that will be my revenge to Nomsa. Even though after doing this I won't feel satisfied enough, who knows I might just come up with yet another plan. I walked in at the back of the club, yea I was in KZN. I moved this huge portrait from the wall I moved one brick that was nicely put, no one would even imagine that it can be moved. I looked at the flash drive that was still nicely placed in there. I took it out and replaced the brick along with the portrait. I turned around and held it to my face, I smirked "You have no idea of what I have on the plate for you Nomsa" I smiled...

58 ____ TWO WEEKS LATER To say I was broken would be an understatement, my heart was literary bleeding. In a few days I'll have to pay the rent and I don't have more than two hundred, rent is nine hundred. I'm still not working ever since Zola said I should distance myself, I tried asking him if I should return but he bluntly shut me down, so I'm officially unemployed, more especially after what happened yesterday. I don't know when or how, but there are pictures of me naked and disturbing videos that are currently trending online! They got to Zola and guess what, he fired me, he even came to fetch all his furniture, said he didn't want anything to do with me, he even called me names. You know what hurts? Is the fact that I'm actually trending on all social media, what's even worse is that I appear to be enjoying every moment on those pictures and videos. When I first saw them I cried myself to sleep , whom did I ever wrong in this world, what did I do to deserve all this, is it because I have no one in this world to defend me? I wish the angel of death would just come and take me! I walked in at Sballi's place and immediately all eyes fell on me, people were gossiping, some were laughing while pointing fingers at me, the guys looked at me with so much sexual desire, I'm here to get drunk. Even though I was never a fan of alcohol, right now I needed way more than that. I walked through while ignoring all those petty comments , the sooner I get drunk then I'll start forgetting everything that is happening to me. I sat at

the bar whilst waiting for my shots, "give me tequila shots man!" I looked at him then back at the barman who placed my drinks in front of me, I wasted no time in gulping them down, "I just found out that my parents are actually not my biological parents and my mother, who's actually not my real mother is dead" he said I gulped down another shot, "I'm currently a well known prostitute, pictures of myself are well exposed, videos of my sexual scenes that I don't even remember are out there trending" "What I don't get is why my parents never told me the truth, my real father would be alive" he said "I wish I'd know what I did to whomever that posted the videos, I'd have apologised or spent the rest of my life asking for forgiveness" I confessed "I wish I had spend more time with my father" "I miss my grandmother" I turned to look at him "Nomsa" "Lungelo" we both turned back and continued drinking . .

RICH . A lot has happened in the past few weeks, we laid to rest my kids' biological father, we did a ritual for Lungelo, he's currently doing very well his health is back to normal. A few days ago we cremated Nthati's body, it was part of her wish, she probably knew that no one was going to be visiting her grave after everything she did. However, her death caused some sort of depression on Sam. She's no longer her usual self, she spends most of her time looking at her pictures and playing some videos she has of her mother, she doesn't leave her room even when her friends visit they only spend ten minutes max

with her then she dismisses them. I've tried talking her to a therapy but she didn't agree, she keeps convincing me that her behaviour is very normal for someone who just lost her mother. "Here" she gave me a glass of whiskey. I spend most of my time at Sbahle's place with her and Princess, they're the only mood I need, being at home is very depressing. "How's Sam?" She asked "Nothing has changed" "Why don't you get her a shrink" "She doesn't want one" I said "Obviously she wouldn't agree, get her one anyway" "There's no point of getting her a shrink if she's not going to attend the meetings" "You'll make her attend" I chuckled unbelievably "are you insinuating that I force my daughter?" She sighed "no. I'm just trying to help find a solution to her problem" "We should get married" I said changing the topic "Don't you think we should wait?" I shook my head " I want my family under the same roof. We're getting married tomorrow" She frowned "what!? How are we going to plan a wedding in less than a day?" "I've been married before so we definitely not marrying in church, as for the party I think that's too exaggerated

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especially for us" "Wow!" "We'll just go and sign whatever it is we have to sign" "I" she stood up and walked away, I took a sip of my whiskey . . . _THALITHA_ . My father's death changed a lot of things in this household. I wouldn't say that I'm glad he died,

that would be evil of me, but rather his death shook us up. I literally feel like when he was alive we were dead and now we've resurrected. His death opened our eyes, only now did we notice that my father was the only breadwinner, after his burial we dusted ourselves and started living. My aunt hardly consumes alcohol lately, she still does drink but not as much as she used to. She found a job at a supermarket as a cleaner, the income is not much but I believe it'll be enough, I also submitted my curriculum and tomorrow I have two interviews, one at a hotel and the other one at a restaurant. Although neither working in one of those is my dream but hey, this is a very good opportunity especially for someone like me who has no experience. "Litha spununu sam (my dear) sengiyahamba unghohlwa sidla umrhodu namhlanje uwuwashise (I'm leaving don't forget we'll be eating tribe tonight rinse it very well)" "Yebo anti (yes aunt)" she walked away clicking her small heels. I smiled, I'm truly proud of her, she didn't need anyone to tell her to look for a job, she didn't even resort more into alcohol after everything, but she stood up like a Heroine that she is and moved on. I grabbed my phone and texted my brother and sister since we have our own group chat, "I'll be having my first interviews tomorrow, any ideas on what I should expect?" I checked their last seen, seems like they've been offline for a good time I sighed and threw my phone away . . . _ZOLA_ . I can't believe I was such a fool, I should've known

that she was using me to settle down after selling herself to old men. The nerve of that girl she even lied about her grandmother, I'm very sure she did. They usually say men are fresh but guess what? Women are a whole trash bin! I can't believe I almost fell for her trap , I lost my diamond because of what, a prostitute? a pornstar? You're such a fool Zola. "Please come in" the maid let me in. Yes I was to fix things with my diamond, that trash bin is not worth it. "That's her room" heard she doesn't leave her room and that she's not doing good, I might just take advantage of how she currently feels, besides I need her on my side so that Mr Mbewu can bless me with a promotion. "Sam it's me please open" she didn't say anything, I tried to open and fortunately it did, she was lying on the bed facing the ceiling "hi" she remained quiet "Sam I heard about your mother I'm sorry" she still kept her peace "I came to check on you, you know how much I care about you" I sat next to her legs and slightly brushed them "I can feel your pain remember I don't have parents, whatever you're going through I also went through" she sat up and did the unexpected, she pulled me for a very tight hug. I smirked this will be way too easier than I had imagined. "Let them all out, I'm here for you" I brushed her back, she let them all out... . . _NOMSA_ . I was having a lot of fun with Lungelo, him drinking his problems away and I was doing the same. It was now starting to get dark, I had to leave. A few people did try to spoil my day but I didn't allow them

besides Lungelo would tell them to get lost, Sbali showed up later and he was also on my side, he even chased out all those who were there to mock me, I'm so grateful at him for everything. "I think I should get going" I said, my vision was now getting blur, you know that drunk blurness. "Uhhh come on, we still having fun" Lungelo sulked "Buddy I truly have to leave, this blurry vision is giving me a headache" Sbali laughed "bewucabangani uphuze utshwala ungakaze waphuza (what were you doing drinking alcohol when you've never drank)" "Heh?(what)" Lungelo's eyes widened He nodded "first time, next thing she'll vomit" honestly I've been feeling like it "woza ngikubeke(Let me take you)" I shook my head and stood up "I'll be fine" walking proved to be a whole mission but I didn't have any choice I had to leave. As I was walking down the street a group of guys appeared from no where, they blocked the street. Fear and soberness started kicking in, though my vision was still giving me difficulties. "Kunini sikulindile(we've been waiting for you)" "Leyo body iexactly the way siyibone ngakhona (that body looks exactly the way we saw it)" I swear I inevitably felt wetness leaving my private part...

59 ____ "Sam I'm sorry about everything, I'm sorry I dumped you when you needed me the most, I'm truly sorry. There's no explanation to what I did, I was out of it, I have no doubt that she used tradition to lead me on" I said trying to convince her to get back with me, I can't afford to be Mr Mbewu's enemy. "You hurt me" she confessed "And I'm sorry, from the bottom of my heart, forgive me, I love you Samantha Mbewu and I've never stoped loving you. You are the reason behind my heartbeat" "Why, why did you do it?" I sighed, it's going to be a long day. "Like I said she used witchcraft on me, now I'm back at my usual self and I want to be with you, forever" "I don't know what to say Zola you really broke my heart, I think it's best we stay apart" I held her hands and shook my head "I can't allow that, I made a mistake by leaving you, let's fix things please, give me this last chance" she looked at me "please" I begged She sighed "fine. But this time around we going to take things every slow, I don't want to get hurt along the way" "It's all I ask for, a chance" I kissed her . . _NOMSA_ . I tried running away to Sballi's place but the guys were way too fast, one of them grabbed my arm before I could even make it half way. He turned me around and slapped me so hard that I immediately got sober. "Udenka ukuthi uwubani yeh?(who do you think you are)" Tears started streaming down, I was afraid, afraid of anything, everything. Who knows what they're currently thinking of doing, they might have planned to capture me, or

they could want to have their way with me. But whatever it is, I pray to God that their plan fails. "Wenza ngathi awufuni, sbonile ukuthi uyayincanywa dideng(You act like you don't want to, we saw that you like it)" he held my waste more like squeezed it, with his other hand on grabbing my butt, he sucked on my neck, I tried to break free but I couldn't, he had me where he wanted, his friends were laughing and motivating him. I had no way out, until... "Ekse majita nifunani esbayeni sami?(hey boys what do you want in my kraal)" a deep voice enquired , the guy quickly let go of me "Eh ehm sho ta Sbali (hi bro Sbali)" "Ngibuze umbuzo (I asked a question)" he was with Lungelo who had his Heineken with him "Khululeka taSbali asikho esbayeni sakho, lo yilo tikilan omusha odumile (relax BroSbali we're not in your kraal, this is the new famous prostitute)" "Careful! Lawo mazwi azokubhodisa (those words will get you killed)" Lungelo added "Bafana bami nyamalalani ngingakacasuki (my boys disappear before I get angry)" I looked at them, they stared back at me then whispered something "niyagoloza? (Are you saying something)" they shook their heads and left, I sighed in relief. "Ugrend nana?(Are you okay)" I nodded "kube usiyekile sak'beka(You should've let us take you home)" I never thought Sbali would be so caring "Kulungile singahamba (ok we can go)" he chuckled "Uzifundise ukusthemba (learn to trust us)" Lungelo spoke then we left, he's right , I should've trusted them. . . _THALITHA_ . The

following day I woke up very early to prepare myself for the day ahead. I couldn't sleep the whole night I kept tossing and turning, this is my first time going for the interviews and I don't know what to expect. I tried getting more information on the internet since my beloved siblings didn't get back to me. The internet didn't help much, you know they kept giving me steps on how I should behave, it was just annoying because my data finished before I could get what I wanted. My aunt advised me to pray and let God take full control of everything, that one keeps surprising me. I prepared myself trying to look as professional as I could, I didn't have any professional clothes so I had to ask my friend to borrow me a black skirt then I wore a white shirt that I used to wear when I was still in school. It's good that inbetween both interviews there's a difference of about an hour or so

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I'll definitely be able to make it for them all. My phone beeped it was a text from Lungelo it read "hey lil sis" I chuckled, he keeps acting older than I am "I'm sorry we didn't get to you yesterday, anyways there's nothing specific to know just be yourself and honest, don't lie about anything. You know what, the job is already yours. Love you" I smiled . . _CHOCO_ . "Baby, sit" dad said to Peaches who just dragged herself out of her bedroom. I hope whatever it is that he called us for is

important, I have errands to run. "The reason I called you here is to let you know that I've found someone" I frowned "what do you mean?" "I think you understand what I'm trying to say Lungelo, I've found someone I want to spend the rest of my life with" She chuckled while shaking her head "I'm very old now kids, I need a woman next to me, a family" "Ok" I said, honestly I couldn't care less with what he does "Today we getting married, in fact I'm going there now" "Wow, and only are you telling us that now?" Sam enquired "You guys were going through a lot I didn't want to add on that" She got up "do you Rich after all we're nothing to you" she left "Hlanzekile!!" He yelled, I chuckled my sis hates being called with that name. I stood up and walked away "Lungelo I'm not done talking!" "Go get married man, you should be the one waiting for the bride not the other way round" I heard him curse... After a few hours I opened the door of my apartment, I still had the keys, I was surprised at what was before my eyes. They were sniffing a white powder like it's a normal thing, "what the hell is going on here!" to say I was furious I'd be lying, I was feeling way more than that. Zan quickly stood up and looked at me, more like she was surprised to see me "Ngelo" "Yey I asked a question!" I yelled. She slowly walked my way "ungalinge! (Don't you dare)" I pointed at her She looked at the boyfriend "leave" the guy didn't respond "King!" "If he leaves then you'll be left alone, homeless. I suggest you ask him to wait for you whilst you go

pack your things" She chuckled "this is my house you can't chase me out" I shook my head "you meant to say apartment? Anyways this is not your apartment you don't even own a thing here." She took another step towards me "Ngelo baby don't do this" "Don't make me drag you out" "Make your bags sweetlips he's starting to annoy me" the guy spoke. She nodded and walked away "Don't get too comfortable, she'll play you then dump you when you start to fall deeper" "Mina nawe asifani mjita (You and I are not the same man)" "You're right I have everything she needs and you, well I doubt you can even afford a lipstick she uses" he took a step closer . . . _THALITHA_ . I bow my head to ladies who wear heels for hours, this is a mission on it's own, I only made it to the interview at the restaurant then I had to change my shoes, luckily I had my pumps with me. My feet could no longer take it, it felt like they were on fire and like there were some stings on them, it's just not for me. Maybe as time goes on I'll get used to them but it definitely won't be easy. I never thought I'd find so many candidates here it was even embarrassing since I was in my pumps. These women literally looked like professional models, they were all tall with beautiful bodies , I don't want to mention their outfits, they must've went all out. "Girl are you serious about the job?" The girl next to me enquired I frowned "yes, uhm why?" She chuckled "pumps? high school shirt? Girl please" she rolled her eyes "a receptionist should be presentable and beautiful, I'm

sorry but you're just wasting your time" I looked at myself then back at her, maybe she's right I got up "excuse me" I walked away to a corridor then dialed Lungelo, "hey" "Lil sis, how did it go?" "I can't do it, these girls are way too beautiful and elegant then there's me in pumps. Some girl even mentioned that there's no chance for me" He chuckled "listen, don't let people tell you otherwise. For the fact that she said that it's because she sees something in you, something unique, something she doesn't have, something that'll work in your advantage. She's the devil's agent busy spreading the spirit of negativity. Don't allow her, raise up your chin and go nail the interview." He's right "You're right. Let me do this" "That's my girl" I ended the call with a smile on my face, raised my chin then walked back, the girl looked at me "I thought you left" "There's no way I'd do that before taking what's mine" I said "And that is?" "My job" I answered proudly . . . _RICH_ . We signed everything that was there to sign and so did our witnesses, Wyatt and Azenathi. "I declare you husband and wife, you're now officially married in the community of property. You may kiss the bride" I pulled her closer and kissed her. Now I'll have all my loved ones under the same roof, that's the only thing that makes me happy...

60 ____ "And welcome to your new home" Rich said. I looked around, the house was beautiful no lie, you could tell that it had that woman touch, not any woman but a woman who knows how to keep her home beautiful and breathtaking. "It's beautiful" "Well I don't know about that I'm a man and I pay less attention into that" he looked at Princess on my arms "baby you like it?" "I'm sure she does" Samantha made her way downstairs, this is my first time meeting her, I've only seen her on pictures. "Sam baby, come here" she dragged her feet to us "Meet my wife Sbahle and this is my daughter, Princess" She chuckled "so not only did you hide her from us, but your daughter too!" I couldn't miss the rudeness from her voice "Samantha!" He warned "What!? This baby is old enough for anyone to notice that you cheated on my mother!" "Hlanzekile ngiyakukhuza(I'm warning you)" his voice was deep enough to send a warning but she wasn't having any of it "I'm not going to stay under the same roof with - with" she gave me a nasty look "this woman" I really don't get why Rich didn't tell them the whole truth "Samantha go to your room I'll talk to you later" "I said I won't stay under the same roof with your new 'family', I'm out of here" she walked away "Hlanzekile!" She ignored him "Wow! That was a warm welcome" I spoke "I'm sorry, it's just that she's not taking any of what's happening lightly as you already know. Please do bare with her" I nodded "I will" just as long as she won't act all spoilt with me then we'll be good. A

maid appeared "meet my wife Sbahle, Sbahle this is Sonto our helper" oh she must be Sam's real mother, from the way she was looking at me I could tell that she didn't like me. I can already foresee my stay in this house. "Nice to finally meet you Sonto" She gave me a side smile "likewise" "Please take these to our bedroom, then prepare a room for Princess, get anything that she'll need" "Yes sir" she took our bags . . . _THALITHA_ . "Yho! Yazi imali siyayithanda kodwa kubuhlungu ukusebenza (you know we love money but it hurts to work)" she said walking in, she threw away her heels. "Ayahlaba nalama qhops(these heels sting)" I chuckled, those heels are shorter than my little finger, I'd rock them all day everyday. She threw herself on the couch "kuhambe njani?(how did it go)" I sighed "belulude lona usuku kodwa konke kuhambe kahle (it was a long day but it all went well)" "Batheni?(what did they say)" "Bathe bazongishayela ucingo (they said that they'll call)" "Aii bayacasula basafuna ukwenzani? (They're annoying what're they still doing)" I shrugged my shoulders , I then started telling her everything that happened in detail, she couldn't believe that I almost gave up on my interview at the hotel, "uyahlanya? (Are you crazy)" "Anti indaba awubabonanga (aunt the thing is you didn't see them)" "Noma kunjalo spununu bekumele ubabonise ukuthi uyintombi kaNdabazitha (even though darling you should've shown them that you're a Ndabezitha)" I chuckled "utheni kuyena lo ebekusukela?(what did you say to the one

who was messing with you)" "Lutho (Nothing)" "Uyitamtam marn, bekumele umbonise ukuthi awubhenywa (you're weak man, you should've shown her that you're not to be messed with)" I chuckled, she's a bad influencer. I stood up "asthembe uyongibekela amanzi wokugeza(I hope you're going to run me a bath)" I shook my head "yebo anti (yes aunt)" . . _AZENATHI_ .

It's been long since we haven't had a real case, I mean a case that'll make me sleep with one eye open. Lately we've been dealing with petty crimes and it's very boring especially for someone like me who's work driven. A knock came through my door, it was Detective Mthembu, "Captain !" "Yes" I looked at her, she threw a file on my desk "what is this?" "Remember I was onto those corrupts who are on the prisoners' payroll?" "Yes" "I finally got the names" glancing at her, I listened "Mr Wyatt, he was working for the Vipers, specifically for the late Nthathi Mbewu, I also found out that Wyatt is gay but he's hiding it, only a few people know." My mouth hung open, I couldn't believe a whole magistrate is gay. "Then Mr Luyolo, who's working for the Rednecks" "What!?" I inevitably screamed "that's impossible Detective, how sure are you about this?" "A hundred and ten" "No" I paced back and forth "Luyolo is the most honest man I've ever known, he wouldn't do that! He's a just man

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he hated crime and injustice" "In there is all the proof that you'll need" I looked at the document on my desk "excuse me" she left , I stared at it, I can't believe this... . . _SBAHLE_ . I've been touring around my new home, there's no doubt that the late wife had a good sense of style. The house is very big and beautiful it just needed a few changes, like portraits, flowers, the curtains, couches, I'm sure those were her ideas as well. Now that I'm the new lady of the house, I should add a few touch ups, I'm definitely sure Rich won't mind, he's a man he knows nothing about keeping a house beautiful. Who would've known that one day I'd get married and to a rich man. With a smile, I shook my head it's unbelievable. Speaking of marriage, I should talk my husband into a honeymoon, just as I managed to talk him into a community of property... "You're enjoying aren't you?" A voice startled me, I turned to look at this woman who happens to be the sister of the deceased I sipped my juice and nodded "yes, it feels good to be married but you wouldn't know" "Oh come on" she chuckled "we both know you're after what he has, his money" "I don't have time for this" I attempted to walk away "Your plan won't succeed!" I stood for a while then turned to look at her "I don't know what you're talking about" "Cut it out already!" I frowned "Nomasonto is it me or you like Rich in a very inappropriate way, are you falling for your own boss? I mean your late sister's ex husband?" She remained quiet "Well darling, you're just a maid in this house,

Rich is my husband if you try something funny I won't be responsible for my actions!" I left . . . _CHOCO_ . That girl left my apartment all messed up and smelling. I can't believe I was once inlove with her, that I was up to a point of doing anything for her that I even took my own father's life for her! And how did she do me? She abandoned me at my worst, she never bothered checking up on me. All she did was to bring her punks to my place and do cocaine probably all day and night. In anger I kicked the couch, I should get a new furniture, who knows where they've been doing it. A knock came through as I was about to leave, that is, after cleaning my apartment. I was surprised to see who was standing at my door "hi" she smiled, how did she even know that I was here. Sighing, I made a way for her "please come in" she walked in and settled comfortably on the couch "how did you know I was here?" "You haven't even greeted me" I sighed "I'm sorry" I brushed my beard "how're you?" "I'm good, I see that you're good too" she smiled. My eyes fell on the baby on her arms, I was even afraid to ask, how can I be such a coward "Why don't you come closer to meet him" At first I battled with myself but figured why not, it's probably about time I fix things "Lungelo meet Junior Lungelo, your son" she uncovered him, I was shocked at how much of my replica he is. I smiled and kissed his forehead . . . _NOMSA_ . I was doing laundry as tired as I was. I had to sleep the whole day because of the terrible hangover I had. I was

hanging my clothes when I saw King and Zandy walking in carrying bags, I hope this is not what I think it is. "Hau Mnax buka impilo iphinde yasihlanganisa futhi(look at life, it brought us together again)" King smiled and kissed her for sometime that I felt a bit jealous "you'll find me inside" he winked at me then left "I see you doing good even after getting all the fame" I frowned "pornstar!" She also winked then walked away. I couldn't believe it! she's responsible for my misery and embarrassment...

61 ____ Ever since my aunt started working this house has been very quiet and boring, she used to be my live radio talking about everyone and everything. The latest gossip, she'd be the one filling me up with it but now everything's changed. If only I had friends I'd be out there doing God knows what, but my only friend is also not around. Might as well start getting used to this boredom. I got startled by a ringing cellphone, landline...

"hello" "Good day may I speak to Miss Thalitha Ndabezitha?"

"Speaking" "Good. You're speaking to Kalen Khuzwayo a soon to be former receptionist of Majesty Hotel, I believe you brought your curriculum a few days ago?" "Yes" "Well

congratulations you've just got the job, we'd like you to come tomorrow if possible, so we may go through the contract, it's your choice if you want to bring along your lawyer" Oh my God!

"I -, I don't have one" "Like I said it's your choice doll, just be here tomorrow before midday" "I will definitely be there"

"Good, Ciao" I frowned then quickly brushed it off, I've never been so happy! I quickly ran to my bedroom and looked at

myself on the mirror "Good day, my name is Thalitha

Ndabezitha and I'm the new receptionist of Majesty Hotel"

wow - just wow! . . _NOMSA_ . I have to move out, except for the fact that I don't have money to pay for my rent this month, I also can't stand Zandy's sight. She's the worst female I've ever met, to think I had wiped out everything from my past, only for it to haunt me now! But where will I go? I definitely can't stay

with Lara and her aunt, she doesn't get much from where she works, she can't support both Lara and I besides their two room is small to accommodate the three of us. I should make a plan this is like a nightmare that I can't even wake up from. Or maybe I should just- , the door flung open and she walked in making noise with her sleepers, "awungiphe ushukela(give me sugar)" she didn't even wait for me, she headed to a bucket on the floor. Since Zola decided to take his furniture, I bought a bucket to put in my small grocery. She took out my canned food, rice, cooking oil and some other stuff but didn't find any sugar. I don't usually buy it since I'm not a fan of tea. "Uphi ushukela?(where's the sugar)" I looked at her and shrugged "uyadina yho (you're very annoying)" she took a can of baked beans and mix veg then left after clicking her tongue, she didn't even bother putting back all the stuff in the bucket. Fighting her would be very useless, that's exactly what she wants but I won't give her that satisfaction! A few minutes later I made it to Sbali's place, obviously after all the glancing and the comments, well let's just say I'm slowly getting used to being treated like a trash. "Nana (child)" he said as soon as he saw me I smiled "hey, unjani? (How're you)" "Uyazi abantu abafana nami bahlezi bagrend (you know people like me are always good)" "Singakhuluma?(can we talk)" He frowned "kubalulekile?(is it important)" I nodded "zwakala (come)" I followed him to the back yard, first time making it here, I must say he has a very

beautiful home. "Hlala (sit)" he gave me a chair
"k'hambani?(what's wrong)" "I need a job" With a raised
eyebrow he asked "why?" "Huh?" "Ngisho ukuthi why lana?(I
mean why here)" "Ngidinga umsebenzi (I need a job) soon I'll
have to pay rent anginamali(I don't have money) and that girl is
making my life miserable" I didn't mean to cry but tears had
already fallen "Eish uyabonake ungakhali (you see, don't cry)"
"I'm sorry" I said wiping my tears "it's just -" I sighed
"akukholula(it's not easy)" "Khuluma nami, ufuna umsebenzi
bese uqhubeke uhlale lapha noma ufuna ukuthutha?(talk to
me, you want a job then continue staying there or you want to
move out)" I shrugged "I no longer want to continue staying
there" "Then move in with me" My eyes widened "what!?" "I
think it's best she moves in with me!" We both turned to look
at Lungelo "sorry but your aunt is a nightmare Sbali" they
laughed

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I looked at them . . . _AZENATHI_ . I hadn't stopped thinking
about everything that's happening. I managed to get a warrant
of arrest for Luyolo, I know he's been my friend for a very long
time and he's the reason I'm where I am today, however I'm
not going to support his crime decisions he has to be locked up.
I'm sure by the end of this day I'll receive a notice that he's in
prison , I hope one day he forgives me. Then the Wyatt saga, by

now he's also probably locked up, we don't need corrupt people out there promoting crime! As for Wyatt he'll make it on the front page first thing tomorrow, I still can't believe he's gay, that's very disgusting, I detest gays with all my heart, if I was a president I'd probably rule a gay free country, "mam!" I slightly jumped and looked at Rose, she pointed at the spilling coffee damn it! "What's on your mind if you don't mind me asking?" I sighed "just found out one of the magistrate is gay" "So?" "So?" I shook my head "I hate gays! I don't understand why they can't be straight guys, they're demons!" Her mouth hung open "Mam! Don't say that. Gays are the most kind, loving souls that ever existed. They're actually a whole leadership because they don't rape or cause anyone any harm, they strictly do them" "I don't care even if they're Beyonce's first born, you know what? Clean this up" I got up and left . . . _SAM_ . I was now done packing my bags. I meant it when I told my father that there's no way I'm going to continue living under the same roof with the woman he cheated with whilst my mother was alive. I know she was not the best but she tried, in fact she was faithful to my father. I refuse to live with this woman. I carried my bag and pulled the other one, my dad was in the dining room with her, laughing like he's got everything well set in his life. "Sam baby come join us" she said, I swear I could just throw her out screaming. I headed to the door "where do you think you're going young lady?" Dad asked I sighed "I told you I'd be moving

out" "And where to?" "I'll move in with Choco" He chuckled "you got to be kidding me, are you that hungry for freedom?" I shook my head unbelievably, he won't understand I need time away from this house, I opened the door and walked out with him shouting my name, maybe he should learn to deal with the fact that he's not my father . . . _CHOCO_ . I know I've made a lot of mistakes including the fact that I denied my own son before he was born. But now I feel-, I feel some joy I've never felt before, when Pam brought him I felt the connection between us, besides the fact that we look alike, blood is thicker. I felt it inside me that he was mine, my son! I'm a father to a son! I'm a proud father! I'm glad she still continued giving me this opportunity to be a father. I'm glad she didn't hold my past mistakes against me, that she didn't punish my son for what I did. I had actually come here to brag to Sballi face to face about my son when I accidentally heard their conversation. "Akuzwe nje uAnti (if aunt dare hears you)" we laughed, the way Sballi is so gangster and everything you wouldn't say he has the most strict aunt "Iqiniso liyababa (truth hurts)" I sat on the stoop "so you want a place to stay?" She nodded "but why?" "Rent plus khona ugirl omhluphayo(there's a girl that's harassing her)" I sometimes don't get girls who let other girls mess with them, if it was my late mother she'd put a bullet through their skull "ngibona kungcono athuthe(I think it's better she moves out)" I nodded "you can stay in my apartment" "I don't know, I mean I

hardly know you" "Come on, within a week you'll know my favourite underwear" she gasped, Sballi gave me a warning look "gees, I'm kidding y'all. But seriously you can move in as soon as you're comfortable" She nodded "tomorrow?" "Fine by me" "Thank you so much" she gave Sballi a tight hug "Yey you hugging the wrong guy" she shook her head and hugged me "that's more like it" "You're crazy" she added "For you" "Uzong'casula (you'll make me angry)" he said pointing at me, I laughed.

62 ____ "Good day" They looked at me "uhm-, my name is Thalitha, Thalitha Ndabezitha I received a call yesterday from a Kalen Kh..." "I know who you are doll, I'm glad you came earlier. I'm Kalen" he stretched out his hand, he had his long nails painted in yellow. "now come" I was surprised to see that he was in heels "girl we don't have the whole day" I snapped out and hurried after him . . _SAM_ . When I left home I immediately called Zola and asked him to fetch me just so he may help me carry the bags, within half an hour he arrived. Without any hesitations I ran straight to his arms and hugged him for dear life. To think I almost lost him to another woman, I'm really glad he came to his senses before it was too late, that girl is a demon in a human form. "Babe what's going on, what happened?" I broke the hug and looked at him, my man is handsome no lie. "My dad" with a sigh I continued "he just married his mistress then brought her in my mother's house, you know what's even worse?" He shook his head "He has a daughter with her" his eyes shot wide "unbelievable right, I just don't get my father" "Wait - you're telling me that your father cheated and then married the mistress, who happens to have a daughter with him?" I nodded "what annoys me is that he has the courage to bring her in our home" "I don't know what to say, that was very low of him" "Tell me about it." "Now where are we going?" He enquired "Choco's place, it's the only place I can think of" He laid his hands on my shoulders and whispered

"I have a better idea" "I'm listening" "You can move in with me" I glanced at him . . . _CHOCO_ . "And we're here!" We had just arrived in my apartment, for some reason Sbali decided to tag along. "Wow you got a beautiful place" "Thank you" we occupied the couches while Sbali went to take out a drink "this will be your apartment until you learn to trust me" She gasped "yes, I know you don't trust me and I don't blame you we've only met how many times once, twice?" "But where will you stay?" "Khululeka sthakathi angagidla noma yikuphi, uyiphethe yonke (relax babe he can live anywhere, he has all the money)" trust Sbali to exaggerate "Uhm usebenza kuphi? (Where do you work)" "You'll know as soon as I learn to trust you too" I smiled "Wow okay" "But don't worry I'll be sleeping at home, my dad's house" "That's good" she got up and walked around "I've never lived in such a beautiful place, alone, in the city" I stood up and went to her "remember I'll check up on you everyday, you'll hardly notice I don't live here" She genuinely smiled "Thank you Lungelo" she held my hand "from the bottom of my heart" our eyes locked for sometime until he cleared his throat, I had totally forgotten about his existence "Nana, why don't you find an extra room and unpack" he sipped his drink while looking at me "You're right, but which direction?" She chuckled "That one" she nodded and walked away, Sbali stood up before gulping down his drink , I don't know if it's my impression or he does seem a bit distracted "ugrend ndoda?(You're good man)"

He cleared his throat "mina nawe sbuya kude ngiyakholwa ngeke saxabaniswa yilutho(you and I come a long way I believe nothing will come between us)" "Obvious" I chuckled "kubuyaphi lokho? (where's that coming from)" "Nomsa" I frowned "Nomsa?" "Ngiyamfela, uyazi angincanywa mekudlalwa esbayeni sami (I like her, you know I don't like it when one's playing in my kraal)" I couldn't miss the firmness of his tone "You like her?" "Ung'zwile, ngibhidliza noma yini esendleleni yami (you heard me, I destroy anything that's on my way)" "Uyang'songela? (are you threatening me)" He got even closer leaving a few inches between us "dlalela fer (stay away)" . . . _THALITHA_ . "Now this here is the main reason you should never leave the reception unattended" with his long nails he pointed at the telephone. After a long process of going through the contract

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I finally signed it, that is after the agreement that I'd be receiving an income of five thousand rands, if I happen to be working extra hours then another thousand will be added. For someone like me who's not employed , I didn't have any problem with the wages and the time, atleast now I'll have something to do, being unemployed is really terrifying. "Now we should deal with your look" I looked down at my attire "what's wrong with my look?" "It's just - let's just say you need

a whole make over" "You still haven't answered me" "Doll you need a new wardrobe, new shoes" he laughed "no offence but you look like my grandmother back in the 80s, I've seen her pictures and well you know pictures don't lie" "I'm offended" "I know" he dramatically held his chest "as for that hairstyle, braids are really not on. I don't wanna mention that make-up sembi! (It's ugly)" my jaw dropped . . . _RICH_ . I had decided to come visit Wyatt in prison, after receiving his call letting me know about his sudden arrest. I couldn't believe that my best friend , a man of law would be arrested for God knows what, life is really something else, but I hope it was just a misunderstanding for his own good, after sending so many criminals in jail, if he's really guilty then boy oh boy I'm scared for his life. "My man" As drained as he looked, he sat across me "Rich man, you're good?" "I should be asking you, how're you holding up?" He shook his head "this is hell, I need to get out of here" he leaned forward "Man you need to get me a lawyer" "You haven't told me what happened, why are you here in the first place, what did you do?" "It's - it was a mistake, man you know I can't be arrested. I'll be as good as dead if they send me in with other prisoners, we got to do something" "Relax man- I'll, I'll try to find a good lawyer" my eyes fell on his trembling hands, "man you know I got you" I pat his arm "Don't let me down Rich, please" "I won't" I sighed and repeated "I won't" . . . _NOMSA_ . When I was done settling in my new bedroom I

went back only to find Lungelo alone, drowning himself in alcohol. "Lungelo" "Yes" "Should I prepare you anything to eat?" "Nah I'm good" he kept his gaze on the bottle I went to sit next to him " what happened to Sbali?" "He left, said there are things he needed to take care off" "Oh. He should've atleast let me know that he was leaving" He turned to look at me "can I ask?" I nodded "are you two dating?" I laughed "What? Where did you get that" "Just asking" he shrugged "Even if I wanted to, I wouldn't. He looks way too old for me" "But he's not. Do you like him?" "Lungelo!?" "Just answer" "No! I don't" "Hmmm" he continued drinking, where's all this coming from... . . . _SBAHLE_ . I was in my bedroom reading a magazine when my cellphone started ringing, I answered without checking the caller ID "yes" "Heee sewuringa isngamla (Now you speak English)" I quickly sat up "Sparks!?" "The one and only" I immediately ran to lock the door , I wouldn't want anyone walking in on me "ufunani?(what do you want)" I whispered "Ungazongijwayela ngifuna imali yami (don't mess with me I want my money)" "Spa..." "Yey! No excuses, I'm giving you twenty four hours uyangizwa?(you hear me)" "I don't -" "Twenty four hours!" He dropped. My jaw fell, where the hell am I supposed to get a hundred thousands within a day...

63 ____ "Now go put this one on, I think it will look good on you" With a frown I took the dress and went along to fit it. I really don't get what Kalen's intentions are. He's been up and down trying to find me a new wardrobe, that is, buying me new clothes. At first I declined his offer I mean, who buys a total stranger new clothes without wanting anything in return. I guess Kalen, he told me that I shouldn't worry about money he's got lots of it, it just needs someone to spend on. When I asked how come he has so much money, he bluntly said and I quote "my boyfriend knows how to boyfriend", ask what that means and I won't tell you because I have absolutely no idea, as much as it would be hard to believe but I've never had a boyfriend. After struggling with wearing this tight offshoulder dress, I walked out uncomfortably while trying to pull it down, "and she finally comes out!" I looked at him as he sat on the single chair with his legs crossed, he laughed "sis there's a reason why that dress is short, what are you still doing pulling it down?" "Haibo imfisha lengubo (this dress is short)" "Please do remind me how old you are?" I stared at him "usaba nokusho(you're even afraid to say it) live a little" "Kalen I'm not used to this" "You'll get used to it just stick with me" he looked at the lady who was helping us "we're taking this one too" he turned to me and smiled in satisfaction . . . _SBAHLE_ . Ever since I received that call from Sparks , I hadn't managed to think of something, anything, a way out. Back in my days I used to be

what they refer to as a party animal, not only did I attend parties but at times my friends and I would go to casinos. At first it was just fun, until it got to me, and then I'd go there every Friday and gamble, this other day I lost all the money I had, I remember I was determined to get my money back. Sparks as the only loanshark who's always available at the casino, he knows very well where to get his targets, after losing to one game I went to ask for a loan, he gave me ten thousand if not more, I was so sure that with that 10k I'd get back to the game but I was wrong, instead I lost it also. I went along to ask for more until I ended up owing him this hundred thousands. Now the question still stands, how am I going to get this money? at least now I know that I'll get it from Rich but how? One thing I know I can't ask him that amount, it's a lot and we just got married that might just raise suspicions. And of course I can't steal it, however a divorce would do, I'd be staying with half of everything, again it's too soon. But- if something happens to him, something tragic, if he dies then I'll be left with everything. My problems will be solved . . . _RICH_. After seeing Wyatt I drove to the office, I had contracted a PI and asked him to find my daughter. I really hope he found her, the last thing I need is to continue living while I don't even know where my daughter is, where she sleeps or if she even has something to eat. I pray that he found her... When I got to the office I found him outside already waiting, "sorry man" I said

rushing in "please" he walked in "Don't sweat it man I also just got here" he sat on the chair "Would you like anything tea, water or something strong?" He chuckled "I'm working man, I'll go with water" I picked up the phone and called Zola "Mr Mbewu?" "Get us two bottles of water" "Coming right up" "Tell me you found her" I sat across him He sighed "well I went to her home as you already know, unfortunately when I got there there was no one or rather there was nothing" "What do you mean?" "Excuse me" Zola brought the water and left "The house no longer exists that is, the shack" "Huh?" I frowned He sighed "when I got there I found the house down, it has been destroyed. Most of the useful things have been stolen" "But-why? Her family, are they okay? Is she okay?" "Like I said I didn't find anyone. Her grandmother passed away about a year ago, and your daughter left

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no one knows where she went, but they suspect that she went to the City, Joburg that is" I leaned back on the chair "she can't be in Joburg, that city is big and dangerous especially for girls" "I found her name also" "Ohh?" "Yeah, Nomsa - Nomsa Nkosi" my jaw dropped . . _SAM_ . I did agree to live with my boyfriend and his sister. Honestly I wouldn't have settled for a better place I mean who in their right state of mind would choose to stay with her brother than her boyfriend? I mean this

is like a pre honey moon phase, as much as I had told him that we should take things slowly truth is when you madly inlove you go at a hundred and twenty speed. Things literally fly on their own. "I knew it! Where there's two people inlove the third one shall never prosper, so he said she used bheka mina ngedwa(love potion) on him?" I nodded. Swazi and I come a long way, we're besties, when I got here she didn't even think twice of letting me stay, I couldn't wish for a better sister-in-law she's all in one. "Ngasho umthakathi leya ntombazane(I said it that girl is a witch)" "I'm just glad she's out of our lives" "We can finally breathe" we laughed "Tell me, does daddy know you're here?" "He'd come fetch me screaming and crying, he thinks I'm at Choco's place" "You're playing with fire ke lapho, what if you get pregnant whilst here, who will you say got you pregnant, Choco?" I frowned "eww take that back! That's abomination at it's best level. I won't get pregnant" "Cause you won't be having sex?" "Don't be crazy" "Then you'll get pregnant, you can't have sex and expect not to fall pregnant, you know when it's your time not even an injection will save you" "Please change the topic" she laughed while shaking her head, my cell rang, "Mommy" it was Pam "You won't believe what I just witnessed!" She was fuming "What?" "That evil demon, she just moved in with the love of my life, the father of my son, your brother Samantha!" "Who are you talking about?" "That Nomsa chick" "No!" I screamed in shock, Swazi kept

whispering and asking what was wrong, "Nomsa moved in with Choco" . . . _ZANDY_ . I had thought that living here would be amazing since it's a new environment for me and because I like King. But honestly speaking this life is not for me, I can already foresee how my life will be like in a few months to come, I'll be one of those women who wake up to a whole laundry while wearing sleepers, and a towel around my waist, not forgetting calamine on my face. King treats me like some house wife, he expects me to make him food every now and then, he demands clean and ironed clothes. The worst thing is that a day he probably changes his clothes three times, I can't keep up with this kind of life, he always leaves me alone in this small room , Nomsa moved out to God knows where. I don't like the fact that she disappeared again, I want to control her, keep track of her life and everything she does, I want to see everything she does! Damn! How did she disappear just like that. "My friends and I are going out, don't wait up" "You're leaving me, again?" "Not this again, and wash these boots, I want to wear them tomorrow" with that being said he threw his now cream white boots on me then left. I swear if I don't leave this guy I might just grow grey hair "nywa want to wear them nyumorrow(tomorrow)" with a click of tongue I rolled my eyes. . . _SBAHLE_ . As much as I want to do it but this decision makes me very nervous. With my trembling hands I walked back and forth in my room trying to calm myself down. I'm a lot of things

but I've never killed anyone, although I have no other choice but to do it. My cellphone rang , an unknown, I frowned hoping it's not Sparks "hi" only now did I notice that I haven't drank water, my throat felt dry like never before "Sbahle" a female voice spoke "I don't know what your plan is but know that I'm watching you like a hawk, one mistake then boom! You're dead, not to mention that you're still gonna pay for what you did" "Who's this?" She laughed "Who are you!?" "The only queen of the Mbewu household" "Who are you? " the call ended "hello! Hello! Coward!" I threw the phone on the bed

64 ____ Rich couldn't keep still ever since the PI mentioned his daughters name, he has heard that name before, more like he's met her before but question is does he even remember? "You know her?" The PI enquired He sat back down and leaned forward "you know, I swear I've heard that name before, but I don't remember when and where. But I've heard it before I'm sure" with certainty and firmness on his voice he spoke. "Then try to remember. Did someone mention that name to you?" He shook his head "No, I mean I don't know. Nomsa Nkosi" again, he stood up and walked back and forth trying to recall where he's heard of that name , but unfortunately his mind has literally cleaned all the memories that have anything to do with this part of the event. He sighed in disappointment and said, "I don't remember" he brushed his face and continued, "please don't stop looking for her" the PI nodded . . _NOMSA_ . I was alone watching a comedy show, I couldn't stop laughing, which made me remember that I haven't had such a good laugh in a very long time. It's true when they say you can't find happiness in anyone else but you. All that time I was dating I've never laughed like this, instead my exes would bring me stress upon stress, this right here is actually what I've always yearned for, what I've always wanted. To be alone and happy. I got disturbed by a knock, when I went to open I was surprised to see Samantha and Zola's sister. What do they want here, are they after me, are they having me followed. Can't a girl have a

breather in her life and peace, I thought I was out of Zola's life but clearly not! "What are you doing here?" Samantha asked "I should be asking you that, aren't you the ones whom dragged yourselves to this place?" Swazi chuckled while shaking her head, you know speaking of her, I had thought that she's the most kind but I was wrong. "This is my brother's apartment, what do you want here and what do you want from him!?" I was shocked, well I didn't know they were siblings "nothing, your brother and I are friends, he's helping me out" Swazi clapped once "you sure are something else, since your plan failed with my brother you decided 'No let me look for another victim' why can't you stay away from other women's men?" "I really don't know what you're talking about" I bluntly said "Ofcourse you don't" Sam said sarcastically, what is it with girls being so obsessed with other females life, it's really exhausting "I want you out of this apartment right now!" "I'm sorry to disappoint you but that's not going to happen" "Heee islingo (temptation)" "First of all this is not your apartment you don't even own a thing here, so why should I leave?" "Because I want you to leave my brother alone before you use love potion on him like you did with my boyfriend!" So he lied, I'm even surprised they didn't see my trending videos and photos. "Your brother is not a child, he's old enough to know how to look after himself. You can't be here playing his mother's role" I was not waiting for what happened next, I felt a hot sting on my

cheek I almost saw the stars "What in the world is going on here!" He's here . . . _SBAHLE_ . To say that call didn't make me nervous then I'd be lying, who could it be, who could be throwing such a threat on me. Could it be Nomasonto? But why would she call anonymously, that would be a very low blow from her and it would be weak of her to pull such a stunt. Or could it be Nthati, she's the only queen of this family that I know, what am I even saying, Nthati is dead or so I believe... I immediately walked to the sitting room and called Sonto who came in dragging her feet, "you might just want to change that attitude towards me, or you'll find yourself hunting for a new job" She gave me the mother of all fake smiles "how can I be of help Mam?" "It's no secret that you don't like me and for one reason

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Rich. I can't stay in the same house with my rival, I'd be throwing you out right now. But I won't do that, you know why?" She shook her head almost rolling her eyes "because it's good to keep your enemies closer. I want you here so I can keep my eye on you" "The feeling is mutual 'mam' " she emphasised I clicked my tongue "get out of my face!" "With pleasure" yho this ouma(grandmother) is going to be that one annoying pimple! . . . _CHOCO_ . "Out" I said to both Peaches and her friend, what are they even doing here in the first place

harassing my- my friend. "Haibo Lungelo" "I said out!" She clicked her tongue and held her friend's hand "Inyanga oyihambayo iyasebenza (the witch you're seeing is strong)" they left. Nomsa dragged her feet to the couch "I shouldn't be here" she whispered "What was that?" I went along to her, she looked deep in my eyes "I can't be here, I don't want to cause any conflicts" "You're not! Whatever it is my sister is up to it's childish, I don't even want to know what it is" "Lungelo" she whispered, I put my hand right on the cheek where she got slapped and looked deeply in her eyes "You're beautiful, very beautiful" I whispered "you're where you should be, you're not going anywhere" "Lungelo..." "Don't say anything" I leaned closer and kissed her passionately, her lips felt softer than I had imagined, her tongue danced in my tune, no female has ever made me feel what I currently feel. I laid her on the couch and got on top of her , her moans were getting softer making me hard... . . _ZANDY_ . King did stick to his word, he didn't come back home and when he finally returned he did the most unexpected and most disrespectful thing I've ever witnessed, he brought along a girl. I was at the toilet when I went to the room after rinsing my hands, this living in the township is so not on, whenever I want to release I have to go outside, so much energy needed. Sigh... "What's going on here!?" I said walking in, the girl was on top of him. She was not your usual girl in heels, nails and everything but a total opposite, in a black all

star, leggings and a hoodie. "Uyasiphazamisa uwubani wena? (You're disturbing us, who are you?)" She had a tongue ring and a nose ring. "Eish" King brushed his head, it was clear that he has forgotten about my presence in his room "King?" I looked at him. His eyes were blood red, hangover is probably doing a number on him. "Ehhh..." words were clearly failing him "Thula. Girl ufunani? (shut up. Girl what do you want)" with her one hand she held her waist "UKing indoda yam angazi.... (King is my man I don't know)" She laughed "indoda yethu akuna yami endodeni(our man, there's no my in a man)" she went and sat on top of him "sdedele (leave us)" with that being said she devoured him in a kiss. "King!?" I went to push King which led to the girl fall of the girl, she got furious and did the unexpected, she rushed to me and choked me, I tried to pull away but she had her hands tightly locked on me, she was suffocating me "Thando uzomkhawatha man (Thando you'll hurt her)" "Wazi kahle ngibenzani abafana naye(you know very well what I do to girls like her)" "Thando man!" She hesitated at first then pulled away, I immediately gasped for air . .

NOMSA . "Ahhh!" I cried out He stopped and looked at me "did I hurt you" I shook my head, surely that sent him a clear message that it's all pleasure of what he was doing to my body, my soul, of how carefully he's giving it to me, this guy must have a PhD in making love, yes he was making love to me, it's like he studied all the sensitive parts of a woman's body. I tried

to move but he held me in place, making me to be still as I took in all of him. As my moans left my mouth it was like I was turning him on more than he already was, I've never had any sexual encounter like this one, Lungelo was literally devouring me...

65 ____ After a long steamy session of passion, Nomsa was awakened by a very bright light shining from outside the window. Her eyes slowly opened, she blinked a few times before fully opening them. With her one hand she stretched it on the side of the bed but it was empty. She sighed and tried to get up but her body was against her wish, the soreness on her body was as fresh as a fresh wound. Finally, she managed to leave the comfort of her bed, "Lungelo?" She called but only silence responded, although walking proved to be a difficulty she still managed to walk out looking and calling out for Lungelo, but no one responded. She went along to check at the kitchen but he was no where to be seen, although he had pinned a message on the fridge "morning sunshine I'm sorry you couldn't wake up next to me, had to leave early. Call me after seeing this, kisses*" she smiled inevitably but the smile was immediately replaced by regret, was this supposed to happen, what happened to remaining alone and happy... . . .

CHOCO . Earlier when I woke up to release I was also thirsty so I left the bedroom to get myself a bottle of water that's when I saw an envelop on the floor by the door, at first I thought it was probably something Nomsa dropped until I opened it, what I found there left my heart shattered into pieces I don't want to mention fear that immediately kicked in. They were pictures of that day, the day when I committed the worst mistake of mylife, the day where I resorted to ending my

father's lifespan. Unfortunately for me the pictures only showed me and Chains no one else. When I read the message that came along with the pictures , I was shocked beyond major to know who it came from, it read "dlalela fer nesbaya sami (stay away from my kraal)" I didn't even need a name to know whom it came from. What left me shuttered is the fact that he's threatening to pin all this on me alone if I don't stay away from Nomsa, hell the girl is not even his. How can our friendship end over such childishness , or maybe it was never friendship from the get go. I mean if there was ever friendship then these pictures would never exist... A call from Nomsa came through, I had to leave after everything, I had to think , I needed some space. "Finally she's awake" I smiled "Hey" "How're you, how did you sleep?" She chuckled "I guess I slept well" "Just well?" "More than that" for some reason her voice was doing wonders in calming me down, I don't regret what happened, if Sballi wants to take me down because of her then so be it, but he's going to be down with me. "What're you up to?" "About to take a shower" "I wish I was there to scrub your back" She giggled "stop it. Where are you?" "I'm - I'm running a few errands then I'll pass by the market, you should send me a list of everything you need" "Okay I'll do that, let me shower" "See you later" "Bye" she cut the call before I could even say the magic words. . _THALITHA_ . A few months ago if someone had told me that one day I'd work at the hotel as a receptionist, I swear I would

have laughed at the person like there's no tomorrow, I mean I don't even have any qualifications to be accepted there, this surely is what we call grace. I believe I got this job from the only God, I'd never doubt a prayer, this is full proof that God heard my prayer when I went for the interviews, and he gave me the best job, I'm very thankful. As I walked in the building clicking my heels, Kalen whistled from afar, he mentioned that as the receptionist I should always look my best, and well with a new wardrobe that he got me there was no way I wasn't going to look the part. When my aunt saw the clothes she couldn't believe that the guy who bought me all those things is actually not interested in girls, she thought it was a straight guy she was so concerned but happy at the same time that I'll finally date someone until she learned the truth. "Girl uyanyisa(you're slaying)" I smiled, today I decided to wear a black tight dress that goes a few inches below the knees and red block heels

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"yess girl!" He screamed "Hey hush, don't make noise" I whispered, this building is very quiet when one makes noise it just echoes "Hhai sebangijwayele (they're used to me)" I shook my head "honestly you're hot! I'm sure a lot of guys are gonna breathe through the wound today" I laughed "come on I'm not that hot" "Yea yea keep on telling yourself that until you hear women accusing you of stealing their husbands" My jaw

dropped "they wouldn't" "Have you seen that body?" I looked down on myself, the telephone rang "duty calls" he kissed my cheek and walked away I immediately ran to pickup "Majesty Hotel hello..." . . . _CHOCO_ . I went on to knock at the door, his wife opened "Lungelo!" She said clearly incredulous to see me "Mrs Mkhize" "Hhai suka" she playfully hit me with a dish cloth "come in" I walked in and followed her to the dining room "you arrived at the right time, I'm actually preparing breakfast" "And I'm very hungry" "I know" she chuckled "Thando will be down in a few" I nodded "tell me, what did I ever do to you for you to forget me like that?" She held her waist, before I could answer her the kids came running to me "Uncle Lu" "My boys" Thando is a proud man I tell you he only shoots males, he has three kids Junior as his first born, and the little twins. "Look at you all grown" "Uncle you brought my present?" One of the twins enquired, I still can't differentiate between the two. "Uhm..." "You said you'll bring it then you didn't come back" he sulked "I'm sorry I forgot it" "Uncle did you also forget my book?" Junior, he's a very special young boy, his toys are his books, he's not like other kids who play with toy guns and trucks, on contrary his books are his toys. "Mbewu!" Thando finally appeared in his suits, probably going to work. We bro hugged "what brings you here so early?" "We need to talk, I need your help" he looked at me . . . _RICH_ . Today I decided to meet up with my lawyer to talk about the will and also do some changes,

you never know when the angel of death comes, I really don't want to waste anytime, I already got her name and that's all it takes to add her on the will. I spent almost twenty two years absent in her life, I know money is not everything but this is the least I can do for her, she deserves it. "So you say she's your daughter?" He asked "Yea I didn't know until a few weeks back" "What makes you so sure that she's your daughter, it could be a lie from your late wife" "There was absolutely no reason for her to lie besides I knew the mother, I knew about the pregnancy back in the days, I thought she aborted" "What if she did and this girl is not yours" "She's mine" "Look as your lawyer I'm looking out for you, you might be committing the biggest mistake of your life, I mean you're giving a total stranger sixty percent of everything you own" I remained quiet, he might be making sense. "Wait until you find her, take a DNA test" "Man what if I don't?" He sighed in defeat "fine let's do this, we're going to put a condition" "I'm listening" "You can give her sixty percent but she'll only claim it after taking blood test that will prove that she's indeed your daughter, if she's not then everything will be divided amongst your other children. However if you find her whilst you're still in life then it won't be necessary for us to go through all that after your death" I nodded "then do that man" "You said sixty for her...?" "Yes, twenty for Princess, Samantha and Lungelo are getting ten each" "Do you think it's fair" "Absolutely" I nodded "I'm very

sure Nomsa has been struggling all her life she deserves it. Sam and Lungelo have had it all and continue having it all, I would've excluded them, but it's not only blood that makes family, they'll forever be my children." He nodded and noted . . . NOMSA .

Earlier when I was cleaning up, an unexpected visitor came, I was beyond the word shocked when I saw Zandy in this place. It seems like I can't escape from the past. What actually left me with a hanging dry mouth, with no words, is finding out that she and Lungelo are dating, they're are an item, I thought she was lying but she told me about his birth mark that's on his upper thigh, I still didn't believe it since I didn't see it but she then showed me their pictures together everywhere even in the bedroom. To say my heart was literary bleeding would be an understatement as it still is. I zipped my bag and pulled it. With the money I have and few notes that I got on his drawer I'm sure I can go very far away from this place. I looked at the apartment one more time before closing the door...

66 ____ "All that because of a girl who's neither dating you nor him?" "Practically" he laughed and shook his head "that's very childish more like two girls fighting for a man who neither likes them both" "Don't compare me with a girl man" He chuckled "that's how y'all are behaving" Thando is one guy who jokes a lot but when it comes to his gangster side he barely even show his teeth. When I saw the pictures the threats, I thought of him, not as a lawyer but as a gangster who's gonna help me out, however above it all he and I are friends. "This is serious man" "I know and if he goes to the police you're likely to be locked up for twenty plus years in prison" I shook my head "I can't go to jail, I can't" "Then go for the only option you have.." I shook my head in disagreement "I like her man" "So you rather serve half of your life in prison?" "I can't stay away you don't understand" "Tell me" he leaned on the desk "have you slept with her?" "I have, once, last night" He leaned back with his hands raised in surrender "then get ready to be arrested for murder, this is why he warned you. Man if he finds out that you've had her then it's over for you. I'm telling you it's over" I stared at him . .

THALITHA . Working as a receptionist may seem a bit easy but honestly it's not, the work here is very draining and tiring. Now I understand why a receptionist has to be someone young, the sitting for hours needs a whole lot of energy on it's own and if for some reason you are called to an office, you should make it quick, I had to run and immediately get back before a call

comes through or before someone appears. Answering calls isn't easy as well, you know having to note down each message people leave, one has to be a very good listener since callers hardly repeat what they say, more especially if I happen to find those rude callers... "Hi" I looked up to be met by a very fine light skinned woman "Good day mam" "Where's KK?" I frowned "KK?" "Yes" "Uhm, sorry Mam but who's KK?" I sure don't know anyone by that name "Kalen" she rolled her eyes "Oh, he's on his post" "Oh he has a new post, who are you?" I couldn't miss the attitude "I'm Thalitha Ndabezitha, the new receptionist" "Hmm. Is my husband in?" I looked at her "Uhhh, Mam I don't know who your husband is" She chuckled and shook her head "You're supposed to know, infact everyone here knows me!" She was really attracting unnecessary attention, shouting and pointing at me with her long nails "I'm sorry..." "You're useless!" "What's going on here!?" A deep voice enquired, it was Mr Sangweni the current acting CEO, Kalen mentioned that the CEO which is his brother, won't be in the country until the next coming weeks. "Oh honey!" She pulled him for a kiss which he broke it off "you'll find me in the office" she turned to me "this is my husband, heard that? MY husband" she clicked her heels away He sighed "I'm sorry" "It's okay Mr Sangweni no need to apologise" I said "Please do except my apology I know how dramatic she can be" "It's okay" I smiled assuring him that everything is cool, I understand why she's acting like that, I

myself would be ten times more than that if I had a husband as hot as Mr Sangweni "Let me go" he tapped the desk and walked away . . . _CHOCO_ . I had my hopes up that Thando would help me out with a plan or something but he stood firm on the idea that I should stay away from Nomsa and that I shouldn't mention to anyone that I slept with her not even to myself, or else that will raise war between Sballi and I. It really looks like he has the upper hand but one thing I won't do is stay away from Nomsa. I have to do something, I really can't go to jail for something that I didn't do alone , I definitely can't take the fall alone. I'll have to do something, I have to think hard about this situation and act very smart or else I'll trample alone. I walked in my apartment only to be greeted by the smell of handy andy, she must have been cleaning, it really smells nice, I don't even remember the last time my apartment smelt like this. I went straight to the kitchen to get my self a bottle of Heineken, I sure had a long day. Where is she, could it be that she's still sleeping, the house is awfully quiet. Walking in the bedroom I found the bed nicely made and everything where it's supposed to be, I called out but she didn't respond, I went on to look for her but she wasn't anywhere to be found. Where could she be, I took out my cell and tried to call her but it took me directly to voice mail. I was starting to get worried when I walked out to look for her

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it could be that she went out for some fresh air. When I got out I still didn't find her, heading back to the apartment panick had taken over me, could it be that Sballi took her away from me, what happened. As I sat on the bed I noticed that her shoes were not where they were supposed to be, I immediately went to the wardrobe, what stood before me left my jaw hanging, the side that was supposed to be filled with her clothes was empty. She left! But why? . . . _RICH_. After a long day that I had I finally arrived home. Home to my wife and my princess, "daddy missed you so much" I carried her and planted kisses on her face which made her giggle, babies are very cute "how're are you?" I asked Sbahle after passionately kissing her "I'm good, we missed you too if not more" she smiled. I sat next to her with Princess on my lap "how was your day?" I sighed "long, very long" "Oh?" "Yea, I had to see my lawyer, the PI and I also had a few more errands to run" "Oh okay, would you like me to bring you anything?" She enquired getting on her feet "Just water" "Coming right up" she went to get a glass of water "here" I got hold of the glass and drank from it as she kept her glance at me "Are you analysing me?" I raised an eyebrow "I'm sorry" she looked away but still kept stealing glances A call from Lungelo broke the awkwardness "son" "Dad look I need a favour, please contact a PI I want to find someone, I can't contact one, my head is not at the right state" "Son slow down, a PI for what?" "I want them to find someone for me!" He

shouted "Who, son are you okay?" "Her name is Nomsa Nkosi, find her dad, find her!!" He cut the call "What!!!" How does... Nomsa Nkosi, could it be the same... I held my chest as I struggled to keep up with the breathing routen, I looked at Princess on my lap and all I could see was a double, I looked at the glass on my hand and it was swinging, it dropped, the sound must've frightened her because she immediately started crying. I felt a sharp pain on my head, then her weight was lifted off, she probably took her. I looked around and everything kept swinging before my eyes, that was before I tried to get up but only managed to fall down... . . . _THALITHA_ .

Now I understand when people usually can't wait for the time to knock off, I sighed while packing my bag. I can't wait to get home and take a long bath then relax. "Already knocking off, want a ride?" I turned to be met by Mr Sangweni "Uhm no sir, but thanks" "Would you stop calling me sir, just call me..." "Honey here you are" the wife "let's go" she held his hand and pulled him away "Yhu logogo (this granny)" Kalen looked at them as they walked away "she's a venom that one" "I don't blame her, he's a hunk" "And what do you know about hunks miss virgin?" "Ohh come on!" We laughed and left the building. He was to give me a ride home. On our way as we were about to arrive at my place I saw a girl in a very bad state. She was curled up on the floor and since this hood is usually empty no one was around, "wait" I said to Kalen "Yini (What)" I got off the

car and walked to the girl, she had a bag next to her, not so far from where she was lying was a shack, more like it was completely destroyed, like a truck ran over it. "Uyamazi?(do you know her)" he asked I shook my head and crawled next to her "sisi (sis)" I shook her, she must've been sleeping. She slightly opened her eyes "ukahle?(You're good)" she shook her head and started crying "kulungile sisi, konke kuzolunga (It's okay sis, everything's going to be okay)" I hugged her then helped her up "woza (come)" I held her hands "ngiwuThalitha igama (my name is Thalitha)" "Nomsa" I smiled then helped her to the car

67 ____ Nomasonto was at the mall when she received a text from a very strange number with the code +268, she frowned at the number not having any idea to whom it may belong and worse she has no idea which country code number it is from. She went on to read the text, "stop whatever it is that you're doing and go home now!!! Rich is in danger, you have to save him!" She dialed the number and tried to call but it took her directly to voicemail, she immediately left the mall... . .

THALITHA. When we got home, I led Nomsa to the bathroom, she needed a shower. My aunt was not yet back home, unfortunately for Kalen who was so eager to meet her, we both sat on the couch chatting, he mentioned that he doesn't want to leave until he's heard the whole story behind Nomsa's sorrow. "You'll let her stay here?" He whispered, I nodded "What if she's a criminal and that's how she gets her victims?" I hit his shoulder "ouch" "Stop it, I trust her" "Oh yes you've know her your whole life right?" He said sarcastically, I rolled my eyes. "Whatever it is she's going through is real, she needs us" "Uzothi(you'll say) 'she needs us' after she's made you her victim" right then Nomsa walked in I stood up and went to her "ukahle (are you okay)?" She nodded with a weak smile "I'm okay thanks" "Hau bengithi awulazi elika george(I thought you didn't know English)" "Kalen!" I warned "hlala (sit)" I sat with her on the other couch "So tell us girl what's your story?" I have him the look but clearly he wasn't backing down, he

crossed his legs waiting for her to say something "I just returned from Gauteng, I thought I'd arrive at home and live alone in peace until I was met by that, tragedy" a tear fell from her eye "that's the only home I ever had, my grandmother's house, it's the only thing I had left with." "You have nowhere else to go?" she nodded. He looked at her as if trying to read her soul, "why don't you go back to Gauteng?" She slowly shook her head "I don't have a job or money to look for a new place" "Oh shame, you should've said so from the word go" I shook my head, he just shrugged. "You can stay here Nomsa for as long as you want" "I don't want to be a burden" "You won't, trust me, infact I can do with a sister, a friend" I smiled "And where does that put me sisi?" He asked with a raised eyebrow, I chuckled he's full of drama . . . _CHOCO_ . I've been looking for Nomsa almost everywhere to no luck, I've left tons of messages on her mobile. I don't have any idea where she could be, what makes everything even worse is the fact that I don't even know what the reason may be behind all this, I mean we were good , I hadn't done anything wrong to her for her to just up and leave me... I threw myself on the couch and sighed, where could you be Nomsa. I picked up my cell and dialed Sballi I hope he's not behind her disappearance or hell shall break loose I don't care if I go to jail. "Yah" he answered "Sballi, I'm looking for Nomsa is she with you?" "Last time ngicheck bengimshiye nawe, kwakho!(Last time I checked I had left her with you, in your

apartment)" I sighed "Ok sure" "Ungangitsheli ukuthi akekho lapho (don't tell me she's not there)" I remained quiet "umenzi?(What did you do)" "Shap Sbali" I ended the call, the last thing I need is him interrogating me. "Dammit Nomsa!" I sighed in frustration, a call came through it was Nomasonto, my mother "hello" "Ngelo you need to come to the hospital right now your father is not feeling well, I don't know what happened but I'm sure it's this thing he calls a wife she's been after his money and..." "Wooo wait Sonto, what did you just say!?" I sat up "Your father is in the hospital" "Just send me the details I'll be there" I quickly grabbed my car keys and left . . .

SAM . Staying with your partner is the best thing ever, it's like a pre honeymoon phase I tell you. Above it all what I love the most is the fact that there aren't any elders in this house we do what pleases us. At times Swazi sleeps over at Pam's place helping her with Junior since it seems like her sister Enzo has gone back to where she stays. Then Zola and I are usually left to own every corner of this house

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being intimate in all the ways possible, it's just amazing. However I don't find Zola to be the same anymore, it's like he doesn't like me the way he used to, we spend most of the time having sex than communicating or making love, if I didn't know better I'd say he's - no let me not think about that possibility.

My phone rang, it was my brother... "Peaches" "Hi Choco"
"Look you need to come to the hospital, now" "Why, are you
okay?" I frowned "It's not me, it's uhm - Dad" "What's wrong
with Dad, Lungelo is he okay what happened?" "Just relax and
come here, we can't talk over the phone" "Lung - Lungelo" he
cut the call, oh my God what could have happened to him . .

NARRATED. On the waiting area both Nomasonto and
Sbahle were sitted still waiting for the update on Rich's health,
each one had drowned on their thoughts until Sbahle's phone
started ringing breaking off the silence. At first she let it ring
then the caller dropped, but whomever it was that was calling
wasn't backing down, he kept insisting "that should be your
accomplice, why don't you pick up" Sonto spoke "I don't feel
like it" "Cause you're here with me, and I might just hear
everything" "Nomasonto I'm not in the mood okay, my husband
is in there fighting for his life" "Oh cut it out!" She stood up and
looked at her "you think I don't know that it was all your doing?
You tried to kill him! But I got there in time, you want him dead
for whatever reason. I'm pretty sure it's all because of money
but let me tell you this, your plan won't succeed! Do you hear
me!" "Stop harassing me!" She screamed "What's going on!?
Keep it down or I'll be forced to have you thrown out" one of
the doctors spoke "this is a hospital, do leave if you want to
fight" he then walked away "You'll pay for this girl" Sonto
threatened "Do you perhaps have any proof of your

accusations? I could sue you for defamation" Sonto laughed out loud then suddenly her face went back to being firm "I have eyes everywhere, how do you think I found out about your plan today?" She smirked "I'm watching you" "Do what you see fits" she clicked her heels away . . . _NOMSA_ . The state I found my home in, the only home I had, I thought that was the last straw to my falling, I thought it was over for me, that there wouldn't be a come back from this one but clearly God always has my back. He always hears my heart. When Thalitha helped me up I literally felt that she was an angel sent by God in my life. I felt the sincerity from her words, I felt the pureness of her heart. Her friend was now gone, we were on top of her bed chatting well more like I was telling her about how I went to Gauteng and ended up being back here, she couldn't believe that as young as I am I've already went through so much, "Wow!" She exclaimed "I'd die if I were to go through all that" I chuckled "I'm surprised how I'm still alive ey" "I admire you, you're a very strong woman" I smiled "now tell me more about the hunk you left , what's his name?" "I'd rather not remember his name, he played me" She shook her head "that's why I'd rather die single" I laughed "wait until you meet someone who's going to turn you on just by looking at you" "I don't even know how it feels like to be turned on" "What!? How old are you again, ten?" She lightly hit me "really Thalitha you're what twenty five or six and you're still a virgin, wow the guy who's gonna be into

you should consider himself lucky, women like you are very rare" "That's if I'm going to find one" the door flung open, it was a woman, I believe this is the aunt she told me about "anti sewufikile (aunt you're back)" "Bekubusy namhlanje sawubona sisi (it was busy today, hi sis)" "Sawubona anti(hello aunt)" She sighed "awazi Litha ngizweni (Litha you don't know what I heard)" "Yini?(What is it)" "Phela uRich usishiyile(Rich left us)" She covered her mouth "no!" "Yebo, angimazi lomngani wakho (yes, I don't know your friend)" "UNomsa uzohlala nathi(Nomsa will stay with us)" "Ini!?" (What)" she shouted

68 ____ "Anti sizobuye sikhulume ngaloludaba kwenzekeni ngoRich? (we'll talk about this later what happened to Rich)" "Bathe usesbhedlela (they said he's in the hospital)" "Ohh akashonanga? (so he's not dead)" "Cha kodwa ngathi uyela khona (no but it seems like he's going to)" Litha sighed, I was lost didn't even know who this Rich is. What I'm more concerned about is a place to stay what if she doesn't allow me to stay here I really hope she won't kick me out, I really can't afford to go back to being alone and broken, it will kill me. "Ithi ngiyogeza bese sizokhuluma(let me go take a shower then we'll talk)" she walked out "Who's Rich?" I enquired "He's my siblings' adaptive father" "Oh okay" "I hope he makes it or this will break Hlanzekile, she's very fragile." "Hlanzekile?" She nodded "yeah, my half sister" "Tell me why doesn't she stay here?" She sighed "it's a very long story, to cut it short let's just say we just found each other, so it's not easy to adapt to these drastic changes" I nodded "I see" "Anyway" she got up "let me go talk to antiza(aunt)" I looked at her "you can relax she will let you stay" she could see the worry on my face "I hope so" . . . _SBAHLE_ . After the tantrums, the accusations, the attacks Nomasonto threw at me I decided to leave the hospital, her presence was just suffocating and pretending is not one of my best scenes. I couldn't stand there and continue pretending like some carrying and loving wife. It's no secret that I'm not in love with him, never have been and never will... I made my way in

the pub to the bar, I need the strongest drink to forget everything. My only fear right now is Sparks, what am I going to do if he finds me. If he managed to get my number then what more will my address be. "Long time!" The bartender exclaimed, I frowned at him, I've never seen this guy before. "Excuse me?" "Yho I thought the world swallowed you up, where have you been!?" I sighed, he's probably mistaking me with my late twin "hai no girls are very good at hiding themselves" he leaned on the bar "your usual?" I just nodded, he went on to mix a cocktail "so vele awusakhulumi?(You can't speak)" "I'm - I" "Hee it's good that you're here, why was your friend arrested? Phela that one was one of our best customers" I cleared my throat, he gave me the glass "I bet it's that kat she used to smoke" "Excuse me!" I finally spoke "I'm not who you think I am" He laughed "that sounds like a line from the movie characters" I shook my head "I'm not Smangele, she was my twin sister" Again, he laughed "you should stop consuming alcohol babe" "Dude I'm serious, my name is Sbahle" He couldn't stop laughing he even had tears "hhai suka la!(get out of here)" I let him be and drank my cocktail, it tasted pretty good, my sis sure had a good taste . . . _CHOCO_ . Seeing my father like this was really heartbreaking, he's always been the strongest of the family. No matter what he had to go through he always stood firm, he faced everything with a lot of courage and strength. It was really sad to see him like this, lying on this

bed helplessly. Did this really have to happen now, with this whole Nomsa situation, sigh... I must deserve everything that's going on in my life, this must be karma coming back to me after what I did to my biological father, Chains... The door opened and Peaches rushed in, my poor sis, she probably feels ten times more than how I feel. Her eyes were red and puffy, her face was pink or rather reddish, her light skin tone made it evidently visible. She ran to give me a very tight hug, I let her pour out her heart through tears, how do I even mend her heart. "She did it Lungelo" she spoke through hiccups "Who did what?" "That woman! She claimed to love him Ngelo, she pretended and fooled us all. She killed my father!" I pulled back and placed my hands on her shoulders, "Sam don't ever say that again you hear me! Ever! Dad is not dead and he's not going to die anytime soon. He's going to pull through" I looked deeply in her eyes and convinced her "he is going to be fine, he'll overcome this, he'll wake up and come back home with us, do you hear me!?" She nodded rapidly, I embraced her. "He can't leave us..." She kept repeating those words

I swallowed and faced up beating up my own tears from falling... . . . _THALITHA_ . I waited my for my aunt in her bedroom until she was done taking a shower. I have a lot of convincing to do, my aunt always had trust issues , convincing her to let Nomsa stay will be a bit of a challenge but I know she'll give in, see my aunt may be all things but one thing she's

not is evil, she would never chase her out or even let her be, without helping her out. She sure will help her, I'm certain!

"Yho ngaze ngazizwa kamnandi! (I feel so good)" she walked in, "bekunjani emsebenzini?(how was work)" "It was good" She laughed "hhai ungishiyile Litha usemelika ke manje(you just left me Litha, you're now at America)" I chuckled "no aunty, luhle ushintsho (change is good)" she nodded "kade kukhona umngani wami wasemsebenzini ezokubona(my colleague was here to see you)" "Oh shame kube kade ngazi(if only I knew)" "Mhlampe kusasa (maybe tomorrow)" I sighed "aunt" "Hmm" she said while dressing up "Leya mtombazane (that girl)" She paused and stood still "tshela mina Litha, ubani loya?(tell me Litha, who's that)" "UNomsa ngihlangane naye emgwaqweni, akana khaya, akana muntu, uyasidinga anti (I met her on the road, she doesn't have a home, she has no one, she needs us aunty)" She sighed "wazi kanjani Litha?(how do you know)" "Ungixoxele udaba lwakhe, ngithembe anti lentombazane ithunyelwe kithini ukuze siyincede (she told me her story, trust me that girl was sent to us so we may help her)" "Kulungile kodwa ngimbeke ngehlo lokhozi (It's okay but I'm watching her like a hawk)" I smiled and went on to hug her "Ngiyabonga sthandwa senhliziyo yami (thank you love of my life)" Our moment was disturbed by my phone, the number was unsaved "hello" "Uhm - Thalitha" a deep voice spoke "Who's this?" "Ukhuluma no Njabulo umfo ka Sangweni (you're speaking with

Njabulo Sangweni)" "M - Mr Sa - Sangweni!" I stared at my aunt incredulously . . . _SBAHLE_ . With all the alcohol that I consumed in this pub, I could lightly feel my head spin, I was slowly getting sloshed, as for my vision it was worse. You know that dizziness that comes with being drunk, that dizziness when you look at things and they seem to be blur, like they're running a marathon before your eyes. That was me after drinking glasses and glasses of cocktail. "Don't you want me to uber for you?" The bartender asked, he still didn't believe that I'm Sma's identical twin sister "Nah I'll be cool, I'll drive" I waved my keys at him, well more like Rich's keys, since he's in coma I might as well start getting comfortable in owning his things, or rather our things we're married after all. I made my way out of the pub to the car, I immediately locked it after getting in. Putting both my hands on my face I leaned back, as I was getting comfortable I felt a hand squeezing my neck, I tried to free myself but felt a sharp object on the side of my neck, "don't try anything funny, now drive" the voice whispered, I swear I immediately got sober and started the car... . . . _NARRATED_ . Sbali couldn't keep still ever since he found out about Nomsa's disappearance. It was clear that he has grown to be very inlove with her, from the very first day he saw her when she started working at the chisa nyama, he fell for her, he always had his eyes on her but couldn't make a move. Now he has gone to be very inlove with her, or shall we say obsessed. His phone

started ringing before he could make a call to his contacts, "ringa!(talk)" he snapped "Listen and listen very carefully. You're not going to turn Lungelo in or you shall fall with him or maybe, make you take all the blame" he couldn't miss the authority and firmness from the voice "Uwubani!?(Who are you)" he asked "That's not important, what is, is that I have eyes and ears everywhere! Stay away from Lungelo, or else!" The call ended "Or else ini!! (what)" he clicked his tongue "gwala awungithusi!(coward you don't scare me)"

69 ____ The waiting was killing me. I couldn't stop thinking and wondering what aunt Phumi's final decision would be. Can Thalitha get here already and free me from this anticipation. Right then she made her way in, I quickly rushed to her, "so!?" She sighed and passed me, "I knew it, she doesn't want me here right? Oh God what am I going to do now, where will I even go!" "Hey" she placed her hands on mine "relax okay, you can stay" "Is - Is that what she said?" She nodded, I sighed "then why are you like this, I mean you seem a bit disturbed" She went along to sit on the bed "I received the most weird phonecall" "Oh, who was it?" She looked at me "my boss" "What! Why would your boss call you, did you do something wrong?" I kept quiet for a while, "oh no! Did you get fired, is that why you look down" "What!" She chuckled "no! It's not that, and please never say such things. I just got the job for heaven's sake" "I'm sorry, so what did the boss want?" "To ask me out for lunch tomorrow" "It's a he?" She nodded "wow! Finally she's going out on a date" she glanced at me "what! Girl are you hoping to die a virgin, single and lonely?" "You don't get it Nomsa" she layed back on the bed "the boss is married" "Oh no!" "Yep, I turned down his request" "That's good yho, no woman has the right to break another woman's marriage" "Exactly" . . _CHOCO_ . We were in the ward, Peaches was now sleeping with her head on my thighs, my poor sister cried herself to sleep. Can dad wake up already, our lives can't keep

up like this, it's just not fair to any of us. The doctor walked in, "I'm sorry to disturbed but you guys should leave" "Ohh" I said in disappointment, I was hoping to be here a bit longer. I slightly shook Peaches , who slowly woke up with swollen eyes from all the crying she did "we have to go" I whispered "Already?" She enquired "Yeah , come" we both stood up "doc?" "Yes" she answered without looking at me "Did you find anything?" She turned to me "unfortunately" she shook her head "no, except for the high bp" I sighed this is very weird, dad never had blood pressure atleast not that I know of, he's always been one of the healthiest men I've ever known. "That's absurd!" Sam spoke "never, not even once did dad suffer from bp" "Well that's what we found in his blood" "It's that woman" I looked at her "what! You know it's her Choco, she poisoned him" "Let's go" I pulled her by the hand "We have to find a way to prove this" she continued "she has to be turned in" . .

SBAHLE . The drive took long with the guy directing me which road to take. I'm surprised I haven't urinated on my pants, the guy had this knife pinned on my neck the whole time I couldn't even move a muscle, driving proved to be a challenge. To say I'm scared for mylife would be an understatement, right now even my intestines have frozen of fear. I still don't know who's behind all this... "Stop" I immediately did as told, it looked like an abandoned building, before I could turn back he forced in a paper bag through my head. He went on to open my side of the

door and pulled my arm "come" I obeyed. He pulled me to God knows where, I had no idea where he was taking me. I heard him open a door then he pushed me in that I fell on my knees. "Well well well" a different voice spoke, "you're finally here my lady. Tie her up!" He commanded. I was dragged to a chair and they tied both my legs and hands, there's no way I can free myself from this one. "Who are you! What do you want from me!" I screamed He chuckled "remove that thing" finally they removed the paper bag off my face, my jaw dropped when my eyes landed on him "Surprised to see me? Why, because this was expected of me more especially because you and I have unfinished business" "I -" "Is that all you have to say? I gave you twenty four hours my lady, now time has been up and you still hadn't given me what's mine" "I'm sorry I was still-" I sighed "come on Sparks I was still on it" "On it? I want my money!" He got close and strangled me "you're going to give me back my money" "S- Sparks..." I tried gasping for air but he squeezed me even tighter "You know what!" He let go "I need you in life to pay me back. I had other plans with you but I rather put them on hold" "Sparks give me some time, a week or two" He remained quiet "I'm going to give you some time

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however whilst we still at it, I'll have your niece with me" "No no please you can't do that" I begged "I can and I will, best

believe that by tomorrow she'll be here with me, don't worry someone will look after her, she's a minor after all" "Sparks please..." "Get the girl" he ordered his boys, I cried while begging him not to go through with his plan, but it all fell on deaf ears . . . _CHOCO_ . When we got home we found Nomasonto cleaning, or rather scrubbing the floor, Sam excused herself. "Sonto" she continued scrubbing with a lot of strength, I crawled to her "hey Sonto" she stopped and looked at me with glossy eyes, "what's going on?" "I should've protected him Ngelo, if he dies..." "Hey! Don't ever repeat that, dad will make it" "You're not sure" "I am, have faith Sonto, he will pull through, this is just another chapter another phase." I embraced her in my arms "now don't cry" "He has to pull through or I won't forgive myself" I never thought Sonto cared so much about my father "Have faith" she nodded "I- I'm thinking of going down to KZN tomorrow" She immediately broke the hug "what!why?" "I just want to see Litha, it's been long. I think this break will do me well, you can tag along if you want" She shook her head "I'd rather stay, your father needs me" Ohh "you're going with Samantha?" "No, she doesn't want to leave dad's sight" "Oh okay, go son Rich is in good hands. For how long will you stay there?" "I won't stay, just a day then I'll be back" She nodded "okay" . . . _ZOLA_ . I smiled as I watched her moving around that pole. This is how my life has turned to be, or rather I enjoy this sudden change in my life. At first my

colleague had come up with the idea of us going out, and when we got here, man I felt like my world revolves around this night club. Ever since that day I come here almost everyday, I've even found myself a stripper, Kate, she's white. Watching her swinging around that thing keeps doing things to me. I continued watching her whilst drinking a glass of gin... . .

NTHATI . I was at the balcony with my glass of wine, glancing at the mountains through my shades, remembering everything that happened... __FLASHBACK.... "We need to take her to the hospital, she's been badly bruised!" A few minutes later, they carried me to what i believe is an ambulance, "I'll go" the voice spoke "We'll be behind you" the door closed and the bus started moving "Quickly!" The guard on my payroll said. They opened what looked like a cage and moved the body that was in there, whoever she is, her face was very bruised she was unrecognisable. They put her where I was laying whilst i took the cage. When we got to the hospital, the guard nodded at me then they took the other woman, that was before he whispered to me, "they'll take you to a safe place". After sometime I arrived at this safe place where they treated me and all the bruises I had, throughout the process I couldn't stop hallucinating it wasn't easy I even thought I'd die... ___End... I sipped my wine and smiled, ever since I got locked in, I spent most of my time planning this and now, now I'm here, free and happier...

70 ____ Days later Thalitha decided to take me with her to see her work environment and know it, then I would return back home leaving her to her work. I think going out will do me well, it's said that it's not healthy to be always locked in, besides I'm starting a new life now and it will do me good to meet new people then who knows maybe get my self a new job and my own place, I can't depend on Litha and her aunt all my life. "You're ready?" I looked at her "Wow!" She looked good or rather splendid I almost didn't recognise her in that body hugging black dress and yellow heels, she really looked different "You like it?" "Yea, wow you look amazing, I love the make up, the dress, shoes! Man I love everything, I love you!" She laughed "Thank you, as for the make-up, I had to learn to do it. Kalen made sure that I get the best clothes and also helped with a few make-up lessons" "Really!?" "Unbelievable right?" She went to grab her bag "come, we have to get to the taxi rank before it gets packed" I grabbed my things "we can go" she led the way while my eyes landed on her body, she sure has a beautiful body, this is probably the reason a married man is after her... . . _NTHATI_ . "Good morning Miss October your breakfast is ready" I smiled "Thank you nana, and please do bring me that bottle of wine" "Sorry Mam but isn't it a bit too early for wine?" I raised an eyebrow "is that what you get paid for?" "I - I'm sorry mam I'll bring it right away" "Good" she left the breakfast then walked out, I sighed. Since I woke up from

the dead, I had to resurrect with a new identity, Nthati Mbewu died and now Pearl October lives. Thank God I had a lot of money on the safe now I'm not struggling financially. Everyone on the underground world knows that I'm alive although they have no idea where I am unless they looked deeper into my whereabouts. The underground had to know or else they would have thought that I died and replace me, what they didn't know is I'm irreplaceable and I'll forever be the Queen there, leading all the drug rings and human trafficking. My phone started ringing as I was scrolling down my IG feed. "Yes" I answered "He's trying to find out who was behind that call, he's even contact someone to track down the number" I chuckled "let him be, it's not like he'll find me. Make sure you send him those pictures and tell him if he dares report my son his family will suffer the consequences, tell him about the secret he thinks is his alone." "Got it" I ended the call and shook my head. I opened my laptop and watched my family, it's good that I had cameras installed in my house . . . _NOMSA_. We got at the taxi rank very early, it wasn't yet full we were lucky to catch the very first taxi that appeared. The distance to the hotel was a bit long but we finally arrived earlier than her usual time so she said. This will give us more time to explore the hotel. "This place is beautiful" I complimented "It is, I still can't get used to how it looks" "Wow, you know I've never been to any hotel, this is my first time" She smiled "and it won't be the last time,

you can come see me whenever you feel like it" I went on to sit on the couch by the reception as she went on to put her bag, "so that's your cell?" "Yep! This is where I sit for hours and hours until my ass becomes flat" I chuckled "Yeah right" "You have no idea how painful it is to sit for hours" "Come on, I wouldn't mind occupying a position where I sit all day and just pick up the calls" "Let me tell you something, I also thought that until I finally tasted how it feels" "Nah I..." I stopped as my eyes landed on a very fine looking man, I've seen a few guys before but this man, he sure fell from heaven" "Good morning Miss Ndabezitha, you're early" he side smiled "Morning Mr Sangweni" she couldn't keep her eyes on him, never thought she was shy "I had to wrap up a few things" "Oh that's very good" I got up and went to them, I cleared my throat, Litha shook her head and spoke "This is Mr Sangweni the CEO" I frowned "ahh" rolling my eyes, I went back, on my arrival I turned only to be met by his huge self standing before me "I-" "What was that?" He enquired "Sorry sir, she's a bit mentally ill" she said He glanced at me for some time then nodded, "I'll be in my office" he then walked away "What was that?" She whispered . . . _CHOCO_ Sleeping has become a mission lately with this whole situation that's draining me, I kept tossing and turning

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I ended up trying to get in contact with Nomsa but her contacts are still out of service, she must've changed her number. If only I knew her motive behind all this, maybe I would understand and stay away from her if that's what she wants. Her act was very childish, to just up and leave without any explanation! This is one of the reasons I'm going to visit my half sister, maybe she'll help me understand women better. I've been with all types of females in this world but I sure have never been as confused about a woman as I am right now. I ended up postponing my visit because the very same day when I was supposed to leave, I received a call from the hospital but it was a false alarm. Today I decided to go, I need a breather, being around depressed people isn't healthy, KZN is the perfect place, breeze hits different, the environment is just stressfree on it's own. I'm glad I decided to hit the road at the early hours of the morning. Traffic and roadblock suck, they're the worst living nightmare. "Call Thalitha" I waited for her to pick up, "Lungelo, hi" "Baby sis, how're you?" She chuckled "I'm good and you? How's Sam, I'm sorry I hadn't contacted you guys. How's uncle Rich?" "She's good, I'm good too. Dad will be fine. Where you at?" "I'm at work" "Oh, and I'm on my way there?" "Huh, what do you mean?" "I mean I'm on the road, driving there" "Care to tell me why you're only telling me now?" "It doesn't matter, what matters is I'll be there in a few hours" I heard her sigh "fine, you'll find my current best friend at home, she's still with

me but I'll tell her to come back home. You'll be with her until I get back, and please treat her good." I frowned "And who's that friend?" "You'll see her, she's a very nice girl" "Fine" "Behave!" "You know I always do" "Right" she ended the call, I chuckled. Ever since I met Nomsa I no longer see girls the same way I used to she can just relax. . . _NARRATED_ . "Usho ukuthini mewuthi awutholi nex? (what do you mean when you say you can't find anything?)" Sbali enquired. Ever since he received that unknown call with the person warning him to stay away from Choco, he has not let the matter lie, he's been back and forth trying as hard as he can to find whoever was behind the call "Exactly that" "Ungazongiringela isngamla ndoda, ngikubhadalela ukthola lomuntu (don't speak English on me man, I'm paying you to find this person)" "Ngizozama (I'll try)" "Ungazami, wenze! (Don't try, do it)" the guy nodded, he just shook his head then clicked his tongue . . . _NOMSA_ . When Thalitha told me about her half brother's arrival, I had to cut my tour at the hotel short to get back home. If we had left the keys somewhere, under the mat or anywhere I wouldn't have to hurry back home, but now it would be rude of me to let him wait outside. Upon our arrival at the hood, as I got of the taxi I started feeling very weird, things were spinning before my eyes, I stepped back and held on to the taxi. It's good that we're at the rank and the taxi won't move, I leaned back on it, and placed my hand on my forehead, "sis ukahle? (Are you okay)" a

manly voice enquired I nodded rapidly "ngicabanga kanjalo(I think so)" I let out a sigh and took a step forward but my weak self couldn't carry me, before I could reach the floor the guy held me, I looked at him but my vision was getting worse "sizani bo!(help)" his voice was faint , I looked at him one last time then it was blackout

71 ____ I woke to the sound of a beeping machine. I slowly opened my eyes, it was all blur before my vision went back to its normal self. I looked around and everything proved that I was at the hospital, what am I even doing here. I groaned trying to sit myself up, but the very same guy that I saw earlier appeared from no where. "Hey easy" he helped me sit up "How did I get here?" as horsey as my voice sounded, I paid less attention to it. "Ngibone kungcono ulethwe lana, kuhle ukukubona usaphila, ave ungithusile (I thought it was better to bring you here, it's good to see that you're alive, you scared me)" I smiled "bekuyisiyezi nje (It was just dizziness)" He shook his head "bekungaphez' kwalokho (It was more than that)" "Ngingcono manje, kufanele ngiye ekhaya khona ongilindile (I'm better now, I have to go home someone's waiting for me)" I attempted to get up but he stopped me "kwenzenjani?(what's wrong)" "kumele silinde udokotela(we have to wait for the doctor)" I shook my head "ngijahile (I'm in a hurry)" "Mana (wait)" I sighed and leaned back "ubani iskhathi?(what time is it)" "Sekuhlwile (it's already late)" "Ini!(what) I've been here for that long" he nodded "hhai kumele ngishayeke uLitha (no I have to call Litha)" he handed me the phone I had a lot of missed calls, I immediately dialed her "Nomsa ukephi?(where are you)" she sounded worried "Litha, ngisesbhedlela (at the hospital)" "Ini! kwenzekeni?(what! What happened)" "Ngizofika maduze, ngizokuxoxela konke(I'll soon be there, I'll tell you everything)"

the doctor walked in "kumele ngihambe (I have to go)" I cut the call and looked at this doctor whom was smiling "Dokotela kwenzekeni?(doctor what happened)" The doctor smiled at both of us "ngiyanihalalisela nizoba ngabazali (congratulations you're going to be parents)" "What!!!" . . _AZENATHI_ . "Tell me how's the process of the cases of those two?" "You mean Mr Wyatt and Mr Luyolo?" I nodded "yesterday they were in court and with all the evidence that the state presented against them, they'll be serving ten years in prison with the possibility of parole only after two years" "That's not fair! They should be in for life" she shrugged her shoulders, I shook my head in disappointment "As for Mr Wyatt, things are not doing any good for him" "Why is that?" "He made it to the front page this morning with the heading, 'Magistrate, Gay, Liar and Criminal, all in one!', I so feel sorry for him" I smiled "serves him right, maybe inside they'll show him how gays are to be treated" She frowned "You sound homophobic" "Girl please, as a country we're going through a lot to also have to deal with gays and their pathetic feelings and choices" "Wow! This is so unlike you!" "Mthembu yiza ndikuxelele bhabha (let me tell you) there's nothing like this, a man falling for another man or a woman falling for another woman, it's evil spirits!" I spit down in disgust "You won't make it to heaven!" With that being said she left, do I even care... "Don't forget to bring me today's newspaper!!" I smiled . . _CHOCO_ . When I got here I was

surprised to find aunt Phumza(Phumi), she mentioned that she didn't have a lot to do so she came back home since the boss wasn't around. I expected to find the so called friend but till now she hasn't come back home and it was already late. This means that if it wasn't for Phumza I would have stayed out in my car till a few hours ago when Litha came back. "So?" She had just received the girl's call, apparently her name is Nomsa, like my Nomsa. If she wasn't best friend's with Litha I'd think she's my Nomsa. But unfortunately there's no way it's her, Nomsa has no one, not even a cat, wherever she is she must be alone and lonely. "She said she had an accident, she's at the hospital" "Oh sorry, will she be okay?" "Yes I think it was a minor thing, she's on her way back" "Oh okay" "Anyway" she pat my thigh "You were still declaring your love for your girl" I chuckled "come on, I've repeated that more than enough now" "It's just good to hear love stories" "You're single aren't you?" "And a virgin" I laughed "yea right try again" she glanced at me "woo hold up, you're serious?" "Dead serious" "Get outta here!" I looked at her "and you shall remain single until further notice lil sis" She raised an eyebrow "excuse you bro, incase you forgot I'm your older sister" "I'm serious, they'll have to meet me first" "You're crazy" . . _SAM_ . Lately our routen doesn't include much, all we do is wake up, prepare ourselves then come to the hospital. Nothing has changed, my father's condition is still the same except for the fact that he can

breathe on his own although he hasn't woken up. Sonto is always here taking care of him, I must say she really does a good job taking care of him, if I didn't know better I'd say she likes him, in an appropriate manner, I mean he was her late sister's husband, she definitely can't fall for him. Then there's Sbahle, that evil woman has disappeared to God knows where

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I'm sure she knew that I was onto her, after trying to kill my father she didn't even think twice about staying here, she even took the baby with her. I may be portrayed as evil but I'm glad they both left us in peace, the same way they found us. I pray they never come back in our lives, she's evil! I feel sorry for the girl, she'll take after her. "You may go in" the nurse spoke, I've been waiting to be let in his ward, I sent Sonto home since she mostly spends the nights here, I thought it's best she goes home freshen up and rest. I looked at him then took his hand on mine, "Daddy! I'm sorry" I spoke, heard the doctor said it'll do him good if we speak to him, perhaps he'll recognise our voices. "I know I said some painful things the last time we were together, Dad I didn't mean it please forgive me, I'm sorry that I moved out, I should've protected you from that woman. She tried to kill you and I wasn't there to protect you" I wiped away my tears "I'm sorry Dad, she won't try anything again, she ran away with her child but I'll make sure we find her and send her

to jail. Please wake up daddy, you can't leave us, we need you" I leaned on him and rested my head on his chest as I let them all out. This hurts, it cuts deep through my heart. I was too occupied pouring my heart out, I didn't realise my hand was being slightly squeezed. I stopped and stood still looking at my hand, it could be my imagination. I looked at our hands, that's when I saw and felt his fingers moving... "wait dad?" Once again he moved his fingers, immediately, I ran to the door and called for the doctor, I ran back to him and chuckled "Dad! You're alive!" I shook my head "of course you're alive" I couldn't help but reach for my phone and call my brother... . . . _NOMSA_ . To say I was shocked would be an understatement, I can't believe this happened, I mean why now, couldn't God spare me from this tragedy, this, I can't, it's a lot there should be a solution. We were walking back home in silence, the guy, Thulani offered to walk me back home. I tried to refuse but he insisted, I'm glad the hospital isn't far from home. We were walking in silence with him carrying my bag, he did say that he's from around this hood so it'll be easy for him to then walk back home, "How did this happen?" "Wenze ezoncansi(you had sex)" I rolled my eyes "seems like I thought out loud" "Yep" silence, "so I'll be a father?" "You sure find this funny don't you?" "I'm sorry you think I'm trying to make a joke, didn't you hear the doctor?" "Give me my bag" I said "Remember I'm taking you home" I sighed, this will be a long walk "I'm sure your family is

worried" "Ngihlala ngedwa (I stay alone)" "Thanks for accompanying me" "I'm still going to do it, don't thank me yet, we're still gonna go through a whole lot of check ups together" I frowned "are you forever this annoying?" "I'm just happy I'm going to be the father" "Dude stop being weird! It's freaking me out!" He held his hands in surrender "ngiyaxolisa ma kaSihle (I'm sorry Sihle's mother)" I chuckled, as we were about to arrive. I saw a car outside the yard, I assume the driver was already inside because it was driving away. It was a very beautiful black Ford. "please" he gave me his phone "I have to know everything about my son" "Please stop it" he motioned that I take the phone, I did and saved my number, "my bag?" "Sifikele?(have we arrived)" I nodded "Oh I thought it was still a bit far" I shook my head "okay, ngizokushayela ngaphambi kokuthi uyolala (I'll call you before you go to bed)" he kissed my forehead and watched me as I walked home, I waved goodbye and walked in. "Girl! Are you okay!?" Litha screamed when she saw me "I'm okay. I need to apologise to your brother, where's he?" "You just missed him dear" "That Ford?" "Yep, his stepfather's car" I nodded "come you got a lot to tell me" she pulled me to her room...

72 ____ "What!?! You're pregnant!" We were both still in her bedroom "Shhh, not so loud" "Nomsa, you're pregnant?" She whispered, I nodded "wow, I mean how do you feel?" I shrugged "I don't know, I - I'm just" with a sigh I continued "I didn't expect this, I thought he used a protection, I'm not ready to be a mother, I don't want to be a single parent, Litha I can't do this, how will I support the child I'm unemployed for heaven's sake, I have no one, I have nothing" She hugged me, I let my tears fall "you're not alone, you have me and aunt Phumi is also here" I shook my head "that's not true, I'm nothing to you guys, y'all can chase me out anytime, especially now that I'll be adding a number in here, I don't want to bother..." "Hey!" She broke the hug and looked at me "don't ever say that again you hear me! My aunt and I would never be so ruthless, we would never be so despicable Nomsa I hope this is the last time you say such" "I'm sorry" I sniffed "what am I going to do now?" "I know you won't agree but I think the first thing you should do is let the guy know about the pregnancy" I shook my head "no, I won't do that!" "Nomsa you have to..." "I said no Litha! He doesn't deserve it, he doesn't deserve to know about this" "Will you stop being selfish!" She sighed "look he deserves to know, I don't know what he did to you but what I'm certain about is that you can't make decisions for your child based on what happened between you two." "I'd rather abort than to let him be part of my baby's life" her eyes shot wide . . . _SBAHLE_ .

Asking for a loan won't be a wise thing for me to do, I can't be paying a debt with yet another one. Rich was meant to die just so I benefit from his death, after calling that other maid, she confirmed that he's very well alive and awake. I'm glad they will never find the poison in his system or even trace it back to me. Although that twit of his daughter and that old hag Sonto do suspect that I was behind everything, they won't be able to trace anything back to me. The door opened and Azenathi walked in, I decided to move in with her after the abduction of Princess, I obviously wouldn't have gone back home or it would have backfired. I had to lie to Azenathi just so she lets me stay till I make a plan... "Hey girl" "Hey" I sniffed "Oh my friend you're still crying, this must be very hard" She walked up to sit next to me "still no news?" I shook my head "no and it hurts, we were meant to be on our honeymoon but look at us" "I'm sorry" she embraced me "How about I take you there tomorrow?" I cleared my throat "I - uhm" I shook my head "rather not, seeing him in that state will hurt me more" She nodded "I understand" I laid my head on her thighs "You did a good thing by taking Princess to your aunt, children can sense a tense environment" I sighed . . _ZANDY_ . Since I moved in with King my life has degraded from a level seven to a negative seven. King is the worst boyfriend or shall I say he's the worst boyfriend to me. After hearing some rumors I learnt that he was dating Nomsa and apparently he was boyfriending

perfectly. I hate the fact that everywhere I go this Nomsa keeps ruining my life, she's just too obsessed with me argh!!! "Girl awusheshe! (Hurry up)" I looked at them. Since King stopped giving me money, buying food, I don't want to mention my toiletries, I had to find a job and the only vacancy that was available was at the Chisa Nyama, the way I so hate pots I didn't want to work here, but I had no choice. "Ngiyeza!(I'm coming)" I didn't realise I had shouted until the girl and her crew walk up to me. I recognised the girl, she was the one King brought the other day. "Phinda futhi!(say that again)" "Ngithe kuyeza ukudla(I said the food is coming)" "Yini ngathi uyalwa? (why does it seem like you're fighting)" the girl was trying so hard to start a fight "Angilwi(I'm not fighting) I said "Hhai marn kunuka iattitude(no man I smell an attitude)" a friend said with a nasty look. I rolled my eyes and continued preparing their plates "Yeses Jesu wase Georgegorch (Jesus of Georgegorch)" she tried to grab my hair but instead she pulled off my weave and that led to an embarrassing laughter not only from them but ninety percent of the customers . . . _NOMSA_ . Litha left a few hours ago with the hope that I will 'think thoroughly'. I don't think there's anything to think about

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I've made up my mind, I'm not keeping this pregnancy. There's a lot I still need to fix on my personal life, I can't bring yet

another soul on earth when my life is so full of stress and complications. Even if I were to keep the pregnancy, I wouldn't have told Lungelo about it, the last thing I need is to give my baby an evil stepmother, without a doubt Zandy would've been a nightmare in my child's life. My phone started ringing, the number wasn't saved, I sighed before picking up, "hello" "Ma kaSihle(Sihle's mommy)" "Thulani" "That sounds disrespectful, but I'll let it slide, how are you? How's Sihle?" "Thulani I'll ask you for the very last time, stop saying that" "I'm a soon to be father how can I stop? I'm overwhelmed" I sighed, if only he was the real father, perhaps I would be keeping it. Maybe my life would've been different, maybe the events of my life would've been different "usekhona mama?(are you still there mommy)" "Yea ehh ehm" I cleared my throat "look I'm a bit busy I'll have to drop" "Mana (wait)" "Yes" "Ngiyanithanda(I love you two)" "I- " without a word I ended the call and shook my head, he's weird... . . . _SBAHLE_ . After supper Aze decided to have an early night, said she was exhausted from a long day that she had at work. The kids were also in bed and so was the maid. It was only I who was still wide awake, I decided to take a tour around the house until I walked in this other room, it looked like a study room. I slowly made my way in while closing the door behind me, the last thing I need is to be found in here. I sat on the chair with my hands resting on the desk. A lot of papers were hanging around, I opened the first drawer, there

were documents and some police stuff. I moved on to the second one, I sighed when I saw useless papers and a small key, the rest were documents as well. I leaned back on the chair and raised my leg under the desk, but as I did, my leg hit something that sounded like a steal. With a frown I crawled under the desk to see what was there, it was a small shelf made with steal, I put my hand on the shelf and felt something, I tried pulling it out but it was a bit heavy I had to use both my hands. It was a wooden box, I put it on the desk and sat back on the chair. Taking a look at the box it was well sealed, there was also a little key hole, what could be inside? I need a key... oh yes a key, I opened the second drawer and took out the small key that I saw. As I tried to unlock, it did just that! I slowly opened the box and my jaw literally dropped to what my eyes were seeing, I must be dreaming... . . . _NARRATED_ . Sbali has been pacing up and down like an animal locked in a cage, ever since he received a note with a threat, he knew that whoever is threatening him means business. What alarmed him was what they threatened him with, the only secret he thought was his, not even his friend Choco nor his aunt know about it. Then suddenly a stranger threatens him with it. He took out his phone and called... "Sbali" "Ubatholile? (have you found them)" "Eish akukho lula ndoda (it's not easy man)" "Ini? (What)" "These people know their story that's why I can't trace them back or even find them" "Try harder!" He yelled in anger "Sorry

kodwa aii kwanele (Sorry but it's enough)" "Usho ukuthini
?(What do you mean)" "I'm no longer doing the job for you" he
cut the call "Ini!!?(what)" in frustration he threw his phone and
grabbed a file with pictures of Lungelo shooting at Chains. "Inja
engana mazinyo iyangisongela, wothi sbone bazoyenzani
mengikufaka edanyane mfana (a dog with no teeth is
threatening me, let's see what they'll do if I send you to jail
boy)" his lips curved in a smile

73 ____ "What do you mean he reported him ?" "Exactly that boss, he took his chances, he must've thought you're playing games with him" "Did you threaten him?" "Yes" "And he still went along with his plan?" "Yes" I sighed "okay. Go ahead with our plan A" "Consider it done" Sbali is really taking his chances with me, my family is off limits! . . _CHOCO_ . "Son" "Mbewu, it's good to see you like this" "You mean in this death bed" I chuckled "I see you still got your sense of humor" I shook my head "It's good to see you feeling so much better and stronger than a few hours ago" "Trust me , I don't feel as strong as I look" "Either way you look a lot better" He nodded "uphi (where's) uHlanzekile?" "She better not hear you call her that or chances are you'll go back to sleeping mode" he laughed "she went to rest, this has been weighing up on her" With a sigh he spoke "I can imagine, she's very fragile for all this." He cleared his throat "son I need to ask you something" At that instant my phone started ringing "hold that thought" I picked up "sis, what's up?" "Hey you got home safe?" "Yea sorry I forgot to call" "It's cool, listen Lungelo I need a favour" "Anything" "I want you to help me find someone" "And who could that be?" "My friend's baby daddy" "Is he missing?" "Yes, no" "Which one is it?" "He's not missing, look I don't know all the details but I need to find him" "So long you have his name, surname, even his picture" "That's the thing I don't know anything about him" I sighed "that'll be a bit hard" "Please Bro"

I scratched my head "I'll see what I can do, just send whatever you know about him" "I will, thank you" I looked at my dad and he was fast asleep... . . _AZENATHI_ . "You have to look at this" Mthembu threw a file on my desk I looked at it "what's that?" "have a look at it" I grabbed the file and went through it "this is not our case" I said "You haven't gone through everything" "Ofcoarce I haven't. This case is not ours, this file is supposed to be in KZN" "I made a few calls and we're now in charge of it" "Why? The crime took place there, are we perhaps supposed to travel down to KZN to investigate the murder of this old man?" She shook her head "we won't have to" "What are you saying exactly?" "We have our culprit" she spoke bluntly I chuckled "who put you on the case Mthembu? No, where did you get that authority?" I stood up in frustration "Relax will you, I didn't do anything, we received the information anonymously all I did was to make sure that we get full responsibility of the case. We have our guy that's all that matters" she pointed at the file "in there are the pictures of our guy" I went through the documents until I bumped on the pictures "who's this?" "That's Lungelo Mbewu" "Mbewu as in?" She nodded "the late Nthathi Mbewu's son" "Then why are you still here!? Go and bring him in!" She immediately left, sigh... . . _THALITHA_ . "So? You're going to tell him?" She shook her head "No" I really don't get what in the world is wrong with Nomsa

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did he hurt her so bad. "I'm aborting" "What!! You can't do that" "I can and I will" she got up and went to the bathroom, she must have gone nuts. Aunt needs to help me on this one, I won't allow her to commit this error "Anti! (aunt)" I called "Hmm" "Ukephi?(where are you?)" "Emuva(at the back)" I hurried there "yini wajuluka nje? (why are you sweating?)" "UNomsa (it's Nomsa)" She sighed "bengazi ukuthi uzoba yinkinga (I knew she was going to be a problem)" I held her hands "anti uNomsa uzethwele(Nomsa's pregnant)" Her eyes widened "ini!(what)" "Shhh, akafuni ukusigcina (she doesn't want to keep it)" she remained silent "kumele sikhulume naye, angeke akwazi ukusikhipha akulungile lokho (we have to talk to her, she can't abort that's not good)" "Yilokho akufunayo?(is that what she wants)" I nodded "mekunjalo akukho esingakwenza (then we can't do anything)" "Kumele ukhulume naye(You have to talk to her)" She frowned "mina!(me)" "Yebo uzokulalela (yes she'll listen to you)" she sighed . . _SAM_ . Now that my father is doing better , I also feel a lot better, I decided to come back home with my family. I'm glad that woman is out of our lives for good, she must just pray I don't find her or else I'll have her arrested before a blink of an eye... "Hmm smells good" Choco walked in. I'm not a best cook but a woman got to know her way around the kitchen ey, "I hope it'll taste as good as it smells" "Are you doubting my cooking skills bro?" "Not at all I'm just saying" "Well you don't have to say anything, this is

not for you" He raised an eyebrow "don't tell me you cooking for your lover" "Nope. For daddy" "Oh God!!" He chuckled "Are you tryna finish him off?" I threw a dish cloth at him, the door bell went off. I wiped my hands and went to attend to it since the maids aren't around "Hello" it was the police "Hi I'm detective Mthembu, this is my colleague, we're looking for Lungelo Mbewu" I frowned "what for?" "Is he in?" "He is" he spoke behind me "I believe you are Lungelo" she asked "In the flesh" "Lungelo we would like you to come with us to the police station" "Why what have I done?" She nodded at her colleague who immediately took out handcuffs and grabbed my brother's hands "Lungelo Mbewu you are under arrest for the murder of Mr Ndabezitha better known as Chains, you have a right to remain silent or everything you say will be used against you in court..." I stood there frozen without a word, "I'm sorry" he said while looking at me , I can't believe he, he's a murder , no there should be a mistake my brother is anything but a murder! . .

SBAHLE . I looked at him as he made his way in, after finding that gold and diamond I wasted no time in selling some of the jewels to raise the money that I owe Sparks. "My girl!" He sat across me "Sparks , where's my daughter?" "You mean your niece? In the car. And my money?" "In there" he looked at the bag that was on the floor "I'll count it" "I know you will" "Tell me" he leaned on the table "where did you get the money?"

"That's none of your business" "You're right" he motioned for the waitress "bring me a beer, it's on you" he winked at me

74 _____ "Nana I came as quickly as I could, what did you say happened?" after they took Lungelo I didn't know what to do, I thought of going to the hospital and tell my father about everything but decided against it, such news would devastate my father, I don't want anything hindering his healing process. Nomasonto is the only person after my father I thought of calling, since she's our biological mother I know she'd do anything to help her children, it's no secret that she always treated us like her children, with care and love. "Lungelo, they took him" "Who took him? Come" she pulled me to the couch, she gave me a bottle of sparkle water "The police" I said after gulping down the water "they took him mom, they accused him of murder!" "You called me, mom" she smiled "I did?" She nodded "I - it must've..." "You don't have to say anything, I'm just glad that you're slowly seeing me the way you should" I cleared my throat "uhm - can we do this some other time, my brother needs us, he can't spend the night in a jail cell" "He won't, I'm sure they made a mistake" she held her bag "let's go" without a word, I followed her . . . _CHOCO_. When the police told me I was being arrested for his murder, as much as I was supposed to be shocked, I didn't bring myself to that. This was bound to happen, I killed him, I killed my father and now I have to pay for it, it's about time I did. "Leave everything" I was emptying my pockets and also every accessories that I had with me, from here they're taking me to a holding cell. "Can I make a

call?" "You're only allowed to make one call" I nodded. Thando, he's the only one that can help me, although he already warned me that I might serve almost half of my life in prison, but I'm willing to go through everything just so I pay for the crime I did, I just hope my family will forgive me, Sam and more especially Thalitha, I learnt that she really loved him... "I told you to stop calling me! Or I might just have to process you and oh you know I will!!" He snapped "Wooo! I feel sorry for whoever that got under your skin" "Choco? I thought it was - nevermind, what's up?" "I need you man, I've been arrested" I heard him sigh "So he stood by his word and reported you?" "Yep" "Okay. Just don't say anything to those bullies, not even a word" "Just get here" "Relax I'll be there, nawe awuzwa(you don't listen) you should have stayed away from the girl, look now" "Time's up!" "I -" "Yea I heard that clown. Behave! And don't let anyword slip" "Sho" . . _SBAHLE_ . After meeting up with Sparks he gave me back my Princess, I'm truly glad this didn't get out of hand and I managed to pay him in time. I still can't believe my life changed within a blink of an eye, just a few days ago I had nothing on my name and now I have all the fortune I need, now I can buy anything and go everywhere. Sigh, I hope Azenathi won't suspect anything. Now all I got to do is get myself and Princess passports then we're out of here, yes I'll be leaving my husband

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I don't need him anymore and as for Princess she's my niece she'll go with me wherever I go... . . _CHOCO_ . The police or rather the detective was busy asking questions, more like obvious questions, however I didn't dare answer a single one of them just like Thando ordered me not to. The door opened and Thando walked in, finally... "Mthembu would you stop harassing my client" he said She chuckled "look who just walked in, Mkhize, you always get here at the wrong time" "You'd appreciate more time to drill my client wouldn't you?" She smirked , "now if you don't mind, I'd like to have some privacy with my client" "As you wish" she looked at me then walked out I sighed "she's a piece of work" "You haven't seen anything, she can be worse" "Tell me how bad is everything?" He stared at me "very bad especially with that proof of pictures, I don't see a possibility of getting you out of here unless another evidence in your favour appears , if not so then only a miracle can save you." I sighed . . _THALITHA_ . "Nomsa hlala phansi (sit down)" aunt spoke "uLitha ungitshela ukuthi ukhulelwe (Litha told me that you're pregnant)" She looked at me, I could tell that she's not happy with what I did, "yebo uqinisile (yes she's right)" "Uphinde washo ukuthi awufuni ukusigcina (she also mentioned that you don't want to keep it)" "Yebo (yes)" "Nomsa, angivumelani nhlobo nesinqumo sakho. Ingane iyisibusiso esibuya kuMdali, wena uma usikhipha lokho kusho ukuthi uyasilaxaza lesipho esihle. (I don't agree at all with

your decision. A child is a blessing from God, if you abort then that'll mean you're throwing away this beautiful gift)" "Anti angiyifuni lengane (aunt I don't want this child)" "Yin' ndaba? Sikhona thina, sizokusiza (why? We're here, we'll help you)" she remained quiet "Nomsa uqinisile uAnti, sikhona thina (aunt is right, we're here)" I finally spoke "Why are you doing this?" She enquired I went to kneel in front of her then held her hands "abortion is very dangerous, you might lose your life. You can't risk your life like this" She sighed "I don't know" my phone beeped, it was a text from Samantha saying that Lungelo has been arrested "Oh no!" "Kwenzenjani?(what's wrong)" "ULungi uboshiwe (Lungelo has been arrested)" "Ini?(what)" "Kumele ngiye ejozi (I have to go to Joburg)" "Ehh Ngizohamba nawe (I'll go with you)" Nomsa exclaimed . . _SAM_ . When we arrived the police didn't want to let us see Choco until some guy appeared, I believe he's the lawyer, he managed to convince them to let us in. "Ngelo!" Sonto held his hands "Oh my boy what did they do to you" "No touching!" The officer spoke, they immediately let go "I'm sorry, please forgive me" he looked very devastated "No need to apologise, they committed an error they'll let you go" "I hope you didn't tell dad" I shook my head "I didn't, I know how fragile he still is, this news wouldn't do him good" "Ngelo did you tell them the truth? Did you tell them that you didn't do it? That they made a mistake?" She asked "I - " She continued, "What did the lawyer say? Why

didn't they let you go with him? Is there something that still needs to be done?" "Sonto!" She looked at me "let him speak" She smiled "I'm sorry, you may speak" "I , I'm guilty" She laughed "You sound like those real murders, don't say that" "I'm truly sorry but it's true" he looked at me "I'm sorry, I - I, I'm the one who killed our biological father" "WHAT!" We screamed in unison . . . _AZENATHI_ . I was going through some paperwork when Detective Mthembu rushed in without a knock, she was even sweating, she leaned on my desk while breathing heavily, "Mthembu!" "They they, damn it!" She hit the desk I stood up "what's wrong?" "I can't believe this" she started pacing around "Can you tell me what happened?" She stood still and sighed "the file is missing" "What file?" She looked at me "the one I showed you yesterday, on Lungelo Mbewu"

75 ____ "Tell me, how is it that the file is missing? Did you look for it?" "I don't know how, I had kept the file safely in my office until a few hours ago when I went to fetch it, and it was no longer where it was supposed to be" I scratched my head "then you can't keep him here" She sat on the chair, right then the door opened and some guy walked in, "I'm sorry to disturb, Detective I've been waiting" She looked at me "this is Mr Mkhize, Lungelo's lawyer" she sighed "can you give me some time, I'll go fetch it" "Fetch what?" I asked "The file you supposedly have against my client, it's been hours since she said she was fetching it" "Sir, we're still looking for the file" He frowned "if someone is looking for something for hours then that means one thing, it's missing, or it was never there from the first place. Detective did you just arrest my client without any proof? Because if it's like that then my client is not supposed to be here, you have nothing against him, you have to release him" I sighed he's right we can't keep him in here without any proof... . . . _RICH_ . I've been alone today, my family hasn't come to see me, I wonder what could have happened because I'm certain something happened for they wouldn't just stay home for nothing. "Rich you're up? How are you feeling?" The nurse said walking in "Better than yesterday" "I'm glad to hear that, I haven't seen your wife today" I chuckled "What?" "She's not my wife" "She's not?" She looked at me surprised "No" "Wow, I really thought you guys were

married you know" she pointed at my wedding ring "I'm married but not to her" "That's sad" "Why is that?" "Except for the fact that she was devastated to see you in coma, y'all guys look very good together" "Haha right" "I'm serious" I laughed, the door opened and an unexpected visitor walked in "oh you may come in, I've never seen you before" she exclaimed "Yea I'm Mr Mbewu's son in law, Zola" "Nice meeting you, I'll come back later" I nodded as she left "Zola, I didn't expect you here" "I'm sorry I hadn't come to see you, I've been taking care of the company" "About that" I sighed "it's good that you're here, we need to talk, how would you feel if I made you acting CEO?" "Holy... what!!?" He smiled . . . _THALITHA_ . After receiving that text, we packed our belongings right away, whatever it is that happened they must've made a mistake. Although I hadn't known Lungelo for that long I don't think he's capable of killing anyone. When I called Samantha she told me how they were accusing him of murder. Murder! Really! I'm sure he wouldn't even hurt a fly! I'm truly glad Nomsa is here with me supporting me, or I wouldn't be able to go through all this alone. "Thank you" I said to her. We were still in the bus to Joburg from there we'll take another one to Pretoria and then we'll book into a hotel. I had to let Kalen know about everything and he promised to occupy my post at work , he then sent me a few thousands to book myself in a hotel, told me that I should use this as a break and spoil myself, everything is a joke to him he

can't see how serious this is. "Don't thank me, I know you'd do the same if you were in my shoes" I smiled "either way thank you" She hugged me "I wish I had met you earlier, you're the best friend and sister" "At the end of the day we still met, I trust God's timing

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there's a purpose why we had to meet now" I said "You're right, whatever the reason must be perfect, heard that God's timing is the perfect timing" "Indeed" I sighed "I can't wait to see my brother" "Don't worry he'll come out of this one, they'll release him" "They have to. He's innocent" "Don't worry" . . _CHOCO_ . I was on the floor with my head buried down between my knees and my hands at the back of my head. The disappointment in my mother's eyes couldn't be hidden, even though she didn't say it, I know she never expected to find out that her son is a cold blooded murderer, I mean no mother would expect such. What hurts the most is the fact that she didn't even say a word, silence is the worst response ever. By this time they probably told Thalitha everything and she must loathe me. Sigh, I'm the worst human that ever existed in this lifetime. "Choco" I looked up "you look miserable man, it went that bad with the fam?" I sighed "you have no idea" "Well they can breathe, you're getting out of here" I stood up "What do you mean?" "The file is missing" "What! How?" I looked at him

"it wasn't you, was it?" He shook his head "that's not my style you know that, here I thought you were the one who pulled some strings" I shook my head "I didn't" I remained quiet, Thando didn't steal anything "if it's not you then who is it?" He shrugged "that doesn't matter anymore, what matters is you're getting out of here, infact here's the guard" he was with the Detective, he opened the cell, Thando smiled "Mthembu, you should be more careful, you're losing your touch" "This is your doing isn't it?" She looked at him "I wouldn't stoop so low" he spoke "Lungelo, be very careful I'll be watching you from heroin" she threatened "Let's go man" he pat my shoulder . . .

NOMSA . I was surprised that her siblings live at Pretoria. I never thought that I'd ever come back here again, but since I'm doing it for her then I got no problem with it. The first thing we did when we got here was to book ourselves in a hotel, her friend must be really loaded to give her so much money. The hotel looked beautiful just not as much as the one she works at, "I just called my sister she gave me the address of where my brother is held" she walked out of the bathroom "When are you thinking of going to see him?" "Now" "Let me freshen up quickly then I'll come with" "Okay" I went on to prepare myself... AFTER half an hour we left, it wasn't a long journey till we arrived at the station, Litha was very nervous she was literally trembling, may this nightmare end already I hate seeing her this way... "Where do we even go" we looked around

"maybe the reception" "Why don't you go I'll wait here" I sat on the bench as she went on to the reception. I couldn't hear them clearly but the lady pointed at this other woman in a police uniform. She walked up to the woman and spoke to her... "So?" She sighed and sat next to me "he's not here" "What? Where is he?" She looked at me "home" I smiled "then that's good, you did say he was innocent. Wait, you don't look happy?" "I'm not sure about that anymore. Seems like there was proof against him and now whatever proof they had is missing" "Oh my word, you think- ? She nodded "I need to find him, he has a lot to tell me" "Try to call him" she nodded and took out her phone . . . _NARRATED_ . Sbali was at the backyard smoking when his phone started ringing, he looked at the caller and hesitated answering but the caller wasn't backing down, he sighed "sho" "Sbali kuyabeda ndoda kumele uzwikile yiso now!!(it's bad man you have to get here now)" "K'hambani? (What's wrong)" he enquired "Sbali kuyavutha, intash , insango necoke zingaphakathi! (It's burning, the merchandise, the weed and coke is in there)" "Ini!!(what!!)" He jumped up and dropped the cigarette

76 ____ Sbali and his companions were running around with buckets of water trying to put out the fire at the warehouse, but instead of putting it out they were adding on the already existing fire. Seventy percent of the building had already caught fire the was no way they'd be able to put it out on their own. As they were busy running with the buckets, Sbali heard a familiar noise from afar, it was a police siren and it was getting closer each passing second, he let go of the bucket, ran after his guys and told them to immediately get out of there. He also forgot about everything else and ran to his car, without a waste of time he sped out, as he was driving he saw a police van through the review mirror speeding after him, that alarmed him, he accelerated but couldn't reach far for two more vans had stopped ahead of him blocking the only way forward! . .

SBAHLE . There's something great that happens when you got a lot of money, you get to buy anything and anyone. Money is all we need to buy, since everything has got it's own price even human. Making a passport is supposed to take weeks if not a month, but in my case it took a few hours if not a day. All I had to do was to pay up, and I did. It wasn't even a lot of money, more like it didn't hurt my pocket. We had just arrived at the airport, I didn't bother going back to fetch our belongings, the last thing I need is to quarrel with that maid or those brats. I also didn't go to see my husband, he'll have to forgive me for taking his daughter with me but this is my niece

and I would never abandon her, Smangele trusted me with her and I promised to take care of her for as long as I live. I smiled looking at our passports, I didn't change our names, I saw no use to do that, I mean I have absolutely no reason to hide my identity. I already paid Sparks so I have no one to hide from.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is the pre-boarding announcement for flight 89B to Spain. We are now inviting those passengers with small children, and any passengers requiring special assistance, to begin boarding at this time. Please have your boarding pass and identification ready. Regular boarding will begin in approximately ten minutes time. Thank you." The intercom went off. I carefully placed Princess on her pram then pushed, as I was walking I felt someone tapping my shoulder, I stopped and as I turned I was met by Aze she was with some guy in a police uniform, her eyes were blazing red, could it be that, nah "Aze what're you doing here?" I smiled nervously "Ungrateful Sbahle, I'm sorry you'll have to miss your flight" I frowned "you are under arrest for stealing a set of pearls, gold chains and diamonds" my eyes shot wide "you thought I wouldn't find out?" She looked at the guy "cuff her!" By now all eyes were on me... . . _RICH_ . My daughter had finally resorted to coming to visit me, although she seemed a bit weird not like her usual self, like something had happened with her

"Sammy?" She was sitting on the chair next to my bed glancing at space, "Samantha!" She snapped out and looked at me "are

you okay?" She nodded "why are you asking?" "I know you remember?" "I'm good dad" she was lying "Your boyfriend was here" "Ohh" that's all she said "You're not going to ask why he was here?" "Sorry" she scratched her nose "What was he doing here?" I sighed "to see me, I gave him the acting CEO position" She nodded "that's good" I frowned "I thought you'd be happy? What's going on with you? Is it him

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did he do something to you? Don't tell me he cheated !?" I sat up "What! No dad, Zola and I are good" "Then what's wrong?" "I - it's" she cleared her throat "it's nothing" "Where's Sonto?" Only she can be honest with me "Home" "Why hasn't she come to see me?" "She has a few things to take care off" "Like?" "Come on dad" she got up "look I have to go, I'll come back later or tomorrow" she didn't wait for my response, she literally ran out. Something is definitely going on in this family... . .

THALITHA . "Have you called your brother?" "Yes I have" Nomsa and I were in the hotel. I had called Lungelo earlier to let him know that I was in the city since I heard about his arrest I wanted to support him. He was not happy with the fact that I travelled all the way from KZN just for him but I assured him that I'd do it again if I had to. "You spoke to him?" I shook my head "I couldn't, he said he was a bit occupied but he promised to come here" "Here?" "Yes, he said it's not safe for me to be

roaming around in a foreign city" She smiled "what a gentle man" "He sure is" "What time will he get here?" "Not sure, Why?" "I'm just asking, you know to absent myself and give you guys some space" "You don't have to" "I want to" I smiled and went on to take a packet of Doritos "Here" she took some and ate but a usual thing for women in her state happened, she felt the need to puke and immediately ran to the bathroom, I chuckled I don't wish to be pregnant . . . _DETECTIVE

MTHEMBU_ . Being in the police industry can be very stressful at times, more especially when we have to deal with missing files. It's not everyday that a file goes missing but when we deal with crimes that involve notorious criminals they usually go missing. I don't understand how this Lungelo pulled this off, I sure undermined him, if it was his late mother I would have expected this but no! I suspect that he has his mother's contacts, he sure has them on his payroll. But again Thando Mkhize is his lawyer what did I expect... This doesn't look good for my reputation. I sighed and made my way into the interrogation room. "Are you ready to talk?" "Ayikho into engizokutshela yona(I won't tell you anything)" "I highly doubt you own a warehouse full of drugs, cocaine alone?" "I don't own a thing!" "Don't piss me off!" I hit the desk in frustration, this guy is making things difficult and I already have a lot going on "You found me at a wrong place at the wrong time" he said A knock came through and Kay walked in "you should have a

look at this" I grabbed it and went through the file, my mouth hung open when I saw the pictures and a disc. It was the same pictures of Lungelo shooting the guy, just that where it was supposed to be Lungelo, it was this guy, Sbali! "What's this?" He shrugged "Someone left it here" I threw one picture at Sbali "care to explain?" His eyes widened, I'm sure he didn't expect this. Now we have two pictures with different suspects, which one is real? "I didn't do this!" He screamed "akabhodiswanga yimi! (He was not killed by me)" this is crazy, one of them is lying! But who! . . . _CHOCO_ . I didn't want to do this, well at least not yet, but I guess time awaits for no man and the truth always comes out. Litha needs to know the truth, that I'm responsible for our father's death, that I took his life. Although I'll explain my reasons behind that, sigh, as if that'll bring him back. Why did he have to choose living the way he did? I wouldn't have been forced to do what I did. Litha opened the door after my third knock, she hugged me for some time then pulled me inside. I still wonder how she got to afford this hotel. "Sit" I sat on the couch next to her while running my eyes around the room "Where did you get the money to pay for this place?" "Kalen paid" she chuckled "Kalen?" "Yep my gay friend" I frowned "Don't even ask. Tell me how have you been with this whole jail thing, please tell me they made a mistake?" She chuckled "of coarse they did what am I even saying" I cleared my throat "Litha I - you deserve to know the truth" I held her

hands "Litha I..." "Sorry I just want a glass of wat..." I looked up and our eyes met, I let go of Litha and walked up to her. I'm dreaming, this is a dream, after how long looking for her, the woman who stole my heart "No - Nomsa" within a matter of seconds I felt a sting on my cheek, she just slapped me...

77 ____ "What was that for!?" Lungelo enquired obviously confused with his hand on his cheek. Nomsa couldn't stay more than a second in the same room as his. She immediately ran to the bedroom and locked the door behind her. She leaned with her back on the door, Lungelo rushed after her and banged on the door while calling on her name. "Nomsa! Open up what's going on!!?" He banged repeatedly "Nomsa!!" "Lungelo! What's going on! Do you know her!? I mean, why did she slap you!?" She enquired, she couldn't understand what was happening, she needed some explanation "Litha tell her to open the door" "I can't, atleast tell me what is going on" "She's the girl I've been telling you about" he said "What girl?" "The girl that left me!" Her eyes widened "What!? That means you're the guy that impregnated her!!?" "What!" He screamed in shock. On the other side, Nomsa couldn't believe that Litha let that slide, she sank down on the floor and covered her face with her hands as tears fell... . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . "Listen I may have made a few mistakes in the past like running a drug business but I've never killed no man for no reason! I didn't kill this guy, I had absolutely no reason to do that!" I looked at him as he continued babbling, shaking my head I looked at him "is that you admitting to being a druglord?" "I didn't say that" "Sbali you're currently being charged with two crimes" "I know, but I didn't kill him" "These pictures prove otherwise" He sighed "he pinned this on me, he wanted to free himself from

this one! Dammit!" He hit the desk "the threats, I should've known!" I frowned "what are you talking about?" He looked at me "I need to call my lawyer" "You can call your lawyer, but best believe that if you're guilty, I'll make sure that you age in jail" with that being said I walked out, there's a lot I need to break down on this case . . . _NOMSA_. He wouldn't stop banging on the door, since I sank on the floor crying as I replayed everything that happened between us, how he fooled me and cheated with my worst enemy. "Nomsa I'm not leaving until I talk to you" I really don't get why he keeps on insisting. My phone rang from my pocket, I took it and looked at the caller ID, it was Thulani, I dropped the call and switched it off "Nomsa!" "Why don't you leave her you'll come back tomorrow?" She enquired, how did I miss that the brother she always spoke about is in fact my ex. "I'm not leaving until I talk to her! Why is she acting like this in the first place, what did I do? I want to know why she left me, just like that, no explanation no nothing!" So he's gonna act like nothing happened, furiously I stood up and opened the door, he stood there looking at me, I could literally see rage from his eyes, why is he angry I'm the one who has the right to be angry "Why are you demanding an explanation when you exactly know what you did! You thought I wouldn't find out about your cheating tendencies! huh!?" "What!" Thalitha screamed but we ignored her "What are you talking about?" I chuckled "really Lungelo?

You're going to stand there and act innocent. You're were sleeping with my worst enemy while sleeping with me!! How can you do that to me?" "You did what!?" "Would you shut up!" We both said in unison, she raised her hands in surrender then walked away "Nomsa what are you talking about

I never slept with anyone, well atleast when I was with you. I didn't cheat on you, where did you get that?" I wiped my tears and kept my gaze on him, he placed his hand on my cheek "I don't know what makes you think I cheated on you. Yes I used to be a playboy, I changed girls like an underwear but since I knew you I never looked at any other female the way I used to. You stole my heart, you changed my thoughts about relationships, I want to be with you Nomsa, and our - our" he placed his hand on my tummy "our baby" he smiled "Lungelo" I whispered "Please..." . . _SBAHLE_ . I still couldn't believe that Aze would find out, how did she even find out that I'm the one who took those jewels. This was not supposed to happen, I wasn't supposed to be here right now. "Sbahle" I looked at her "I'm very disappointed in you, weren't we meant to be friends? Why did you steal from me? Was it money that you wanted, you could've simply asked me" "I'm sorry" that's all I could say She shook her head "I don't want your apology, I wanna know why?" "What do you want me to say? It's obviously about the money, I wanted the money" "Couldn't you ask?" "How did you even find out?" She sighed "it's obvious that I would never hide

gold without installing cameras" I held my head "I should've known" She frowned "aren't you sorry?" "I thought you said you didn't want my apology" She stood up "it's good that you didn't use most part of my fortune, although with the part that you used, I can guarantee you that you'll be in here for a very good time" "How's Princess? Where is she?" She shook her head "you're not worth it" with that being said, she left . .

RICH . "What's going on, why are you guys acting so weird?" Sonto had finally decided to visit She sighed "I don't think it's my place to tell you" "Why not? You always told me everything" "This time it's different" "Does it have something to do with you? I mean you look sad" She chuckled "I'm very disappointed, I've never thought my own son would be capable of doing such" she shook her head and wiped her tears "Sonto talk to me" I placed my hand on hers "Lungelo is a mur..." "Sorry to disturb" a voice spoke, it was Detective Mthembu "Mr Mbewu can we have a word?" "I'll be outside" Sonto left "What's going on?" "It's about your wife and daughter" I sat up "What happened?" "Your wife has been arrested for stealing she's currently in a cell as we speak" "And why no one told me anything!?" "I called your house and they told me you were here. Since we have your wife in custody we wanted to give you back your daughter who's currently in our care." I nodded repeatedly "Please do bring her, how can she involve my daughter in her crimes!" "She attempted to run with your

daughter but unfortunately for her we caught her before she could make it to that airplane" I shook my head "So much has happened in my absence" "Don't worry Mr Mbewu, tomorrow you're going home!" The doctor said walking in "Finally!" So this is what they've been hiding from me . . . _NOMSA_ . Lungelo and I decided to go out just to talk in private, I had just told him everything that happened before I left him... "You should've trusted me" he said "I know, but you can't blame me I mean I'm her worst enemy and she assured me that you two were seeing each other" He sighed "let's forget about her she's not worth it. Now tell me when were you planning on telling me about the pregnancy?" "I..." my phone vibrated on the table, we both looked at the caller ID it was Thulani. I bit my tongue and looked at him "Who's this?" He asked "A guy I met a few days ago" he chuckled shaking his head and went along to answer it while putting it on a loud speaker "talk to him" he whispered "Hi" I said suddenly nervous "Ma ka Sihle" I watched him as he clenched his jaws "what do you want Thulani?" "Ouch! Hormones I understand, I just want to see you, can I come?" "I -" He put on a normal speaker and placed the phone on his ear "lalela la wenkabi ngeke ukwazi ukumbona, ungaphinde ushayele locingo, ukhohlwe yindaba yaloSihle wakho ngiyathemba siyezwana (Listen here friend you can't see her, don't ever call this cell, forget about this Sihle of yours I hope we understand each other)" he ended the call and stared at me

78 ____ "Care to tell me what that was?" Thalitha enquired. She and I were both in bed preparing to sleep. "That." I chuckled "that was two love birds finding each other after being apart from each other for a very good time" She looked at me "that I noticed, how did it go on your lunch date?" I chuckled "it went well until Thulani decided to call and ruin the moment" She frowned "who's that?" "Oh I forgot to tell you about him. He's the guy that took me to the hospital the day I found out about my pregnancy" I said brushing my tummy "Oh yes, what did he want?" "To check up on me" "And how did my brother take that?" She raised an eyebrow "You can imagine. He turned red even in his dark skin tone" She laughed "serves him good, you should've went as far as to act like you like this Thulani guy" "What!" I shook my head "I wouldn't risk my life like that. It was clear that he hates it when I keep contact with a guy, especially a guy who's into me" "I'd go crazy too" "Wait, you haven't heard it all" she frowned "he called me Sihle's mom" "He heard that?" I nodded, her jaw dropped "I hope he didn't suspect that you slept with..." "What! Take that back!! Of course not. He trusts me" She held her chest "whew! Thank God." She smiled "so not only are we friends slash sisters but you're also my sister-in-law" I smiled and nodded "yep" She hugged me "I'm so happy" . . _RICH_ . Morning came and I got discharged, Sonto did the honours of fetching me, it's good that she can drive, she fetched me in Lungelo's car, told me that

mine he's currently using it. Nothing has changed in my house except the fact that it's awfully quiet, but not for too long since they'll be bringing back little Princess. "Where's Sam?" "She went to see her nephew" "Oh, why didn't they come here instead?" "I don't know, I think this Pamela girl is not on good terms with Lungelo, that's the reason she hardly shows up here" she exclaimed "That's not our problem, Junior is our grandson, he's a Mbewu. Whether they're in good terms or not she has to bring him here to be with his family" "I concord completely" I sighed as she helped me sit "You know I'm perfectly well don't you?" She smiled "I just want to make sure that you're comfortable" "Don't worry I'm very much comfortable now that I'm in my house on my couch" I looked around "and Lungelo?" She shrugged "I have no idea where he is" . . . _NOMSA_ . I was about to order us breakfast when a knock came through, I went to open and was met by a ratard smile, he stood there with paper bags. "Lungelo" I said in shock, why is he here at this time. "Good morning mommy to be" he kissed me and walked in leaving me at the door. I closed the door and followed him "What are you doing here?" "What do you mean? I'm here to check up on my family." He emptied the bags "I hope you two are hungry" the horrible smell of onion rings filled my nostrils, I immediately ran to throw up. Sigh... my pregnancy will be the longest. I rinsed my mouth and went back, Litha was now enjoying the breakfast that was supposed

to be mine. "I take it you won't eat what I brought you" I nodded, he sighed "then what do you want me to get you?" "I was actually about to order something to eat" "Oh what do you want to eat?" He asked "Coco pops with peanut butter" he made a nasty face "what?" I sat on the single couch away from Litha whom was amused by God knows what "Are you sure that's what you want to eat?" I nodded "yes is there a problem?" "It's just that" he cleared his throat "I don't think they serve that here" A tear fell from my eye "what do you mean?" "Oh no Nomsa are you crying?" I ignored her "I'm hungry" I started having hiccups as more tears welled up "Baby don't cry, it's okay." He kissed me "I'm going to get you what you want okay?" I nodded... . . _ZOLA_ . To say I've hit the jackpot would be an understatement. I knew that my plan would work and it did. "Sir!" My PA walked in. After speaking to Mr Mbewu, on the following day he ordered me to call everyone together for a conference call and there he announced that I'd be taking his position for time being. "Yes" I continued looking at the paperwork "We received a few calls from the clients, they're threatening to leave us and work with another construction company if we don't deliver within a week" I sighed "what's lacking?" "We lost a few employees, those that didn't get their salary this month" "Then replace them" "What!?" I looked at her "I said replace them, we can't be begging people who don't need a job" "I'm sorry sir

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but do you have the right to do that? I mean you're just an acting CEO" I gave her a death stare "I " she cleared her throat "I'll do that sir" she walked out . . . _THULANI_. Ever since I met Nomsa I haven't stopped thinking about her. I think it's safe to say I feel something for her, I don't know how to explain the feeling it's different from how I've ever felt for any other girl. "Thuthu" my grandmother walked in my room. See ever since my younger sister abandoned her and left, word says she left with a guy. I decided to come this side to live with her, my grandmother is very old now to stay alone and I happened to be the only one available to stay with her. "Ma" She sat on the bed "kwenzenjani mfana wami, angikutholi kulezinsuku (what's wrong my boy, I don't get you lately." I sighed "lutho umsebenzi nje(nothing it's just work)" "Akulona iqiniso lelo, ngiyakwazi Thulani (That's not true, I know you Thulani)" She's right she knows me better than anyone else, I might as well tell her after all I don't hide anything from her "kukhona intokazi...(there's a girl...)" She smiled "ungaqhubeka(you can continue)" I covered my face with my hands "uyamthanda?(You love her)" I looked at her and nodded "Ngicabanga kanjalo (I think so)" She took my hand into hers "kuyangijabulisa ukuzwa lokho, kade sengithi uzoguga ungakathathi (it makes me happy to hear that, I thought you'd grow old without getting a woman)" I chuckled "usebenza naye?(you work with her)" she enquired "Cha,

sihlangene erenkeni (no, we met at the rank)" "Usubikile uthando lwakho kuyena?(did you declare your love to her)" "Cha (no)" I sighed "kunenkinga(there's a problem)" she frowned "ukhulelwe kanti futhi kubukeka ngathi basazwana nobaba wengane (she's pregnant and it seems like they're still together with the baby daddy)" "Oh kwaze kwakubi ke lokho (that's very bad)" she squeezed my hand "eyakwabani lentokazi?(what's this girl's last name)" "Nkosi, uNomsa Nkosi" She immediately retreated her hand "ini!(what!)" I frowned "uyamazi?(do you know her)" She cleared her throat "ehh kufanele ngiyobhadala istokvel (I have to go pay stokvel)" with that being said she left, what was that... . . _RICH_ . "And here she is" it was Detective Mthembu and another woman whom was introduced as a social worker, they were bringing Princess. "Hello baby" I put her on my lap "thank you for bringing her back home, I still can't believe that she was about to abduct my daughter" "Would you like to add that on her case?" "As much as I would like to, but that's not what I want." I sighed "I believe there's an explanation behind all this" "Could it be money?" The social worker asked "It could be, but why include my daughter in her shenanigans" "Maybe she didn't want to be separated with her, remember she's the only family she has, not including you sir" "It's crazy" my phone disturbed us, it was a video call, I looked at it "You can take it sir, we're leaving, but she will stop by tomorrow" I nodded watching them leave I

picked up "hello" I couldn't see the person's face just the ceiling, "hello" The phone moved to the caller, "hi Mbewu" my eyes widened I couldn't believe it, she's supposed to be dead, this can't be "Nthati"...

79 ____ TWO WEEKS LATER In just a matter of two weeks a lot has taken place in my life, more like to a better transformation. I'm back in KZN and unfortunately I came back alone. Since Nomsa and my brother found each other they're not willing to let go of each other again that easily. She moved back with him, my aunt was not happy at all about this besides the fact that Nomsa isn't supposed to stay with him before marriage, I think she was happy that a baby would be part of our family. I also don't concord with their decision of staying together without tying that knot, but again who am I to make decisions for them... Lungelo did confess to me that he was part of the murderers that killed my father. I was very heartbroken to find out about that, I mean my own brother, his own son taking his life. But again he did explain what had led to that, I wish my father was still alive to explain to me why he would do such a wicked thing to other young girls when he himself had a daughter. It really doesn't make sense, either way I did forgive him, I mean if I didn't I wouldn't be at peace with myself. It's good to always forgive for the sake of your own peace. Being back at the office is really amazing especially when you have a best friend like Kalen who doesn't even have to an effort to make my day. Our real boss is back , that is , the rightful owner of the CEO position. When I saw him I couldn't believe that the rightful owner is actually the younger brother. He was more handsome and very humble, I'm amazed people in high

positions tend to be rude but not these Sangweni brothers. He had just walked in hand in hand with a female when they came directly to me, "Good morning" she was very beautiful, I couldn't help but feel a peak of jealousy, they sure look good together "Morning Mam, good morning sir" I spoke "Can you please order us something to eat, I'm very hungry" she said with her hand on her flat stomach "What would you like to eat?" "Anything dear" she placed her hand on his shoulder "let's go" they walked away, she whispered something on his ear and they laughed... . . . _NOMSA_ . I never thought that this pregnancy thing comes with being so uncomfortable. I can't relax one moment I'm in the bathroom throwing up, the next I'm hungry eating the weirdest food ever. I really don't understand why this child is making me feel like some old sick woman. Lungelo is always with me, he doesn't work or do anything, I was worried how he's going to be able to provide for us but he assured me that he's got more money than an employed person. I wonder how he got all the money, he must've had a good job before... "Heart" I looked at him "are you okay?" He frowned "I don't know" I was on a single couch wearing only my underwear, this is where my pregnancy has led me. "Do you need anything?" I nodded "Ice" "That's not good for the..." I gave him a death stare, he sighed "fine I'll get you" he went on to the kitchen and came back with ice cubes "here" I took them and put one on my head, I moaned with my

eyes closed as the coldness hit home, the cold liquid slowly streaming down on my face, "stop that" I opened my eyes and looked at him, "Please don't do that" "Do what... ahhhhh wow!" "Nomsa!" I ignored him, he wasted no time, he quickly rushed to me and carried me with my legs around his waist, I didn't dare reprimand him as he devoured me... . . . _SAM_ . A lot has happened in my family to a point that I made a decision for myself, my future. This place is really toxic for me, I need a break from everything. I spoke to my dad about my plans and he agreed to pay for my studies and everything else. I'm leaving to Canada, after doing some good research about the place I've found it to be an amazing place to settle. I didn't choose nearby countries for obvious reasons, I don't want my family visiting me every now and then, I just want some space alone, away from them. "Passport?" "Check" "Visa" "Check" my friends came by to help me pack

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later on tonight I'll be flying to Canada "I'm so going to miss you" Pam exclaimed "And I'll miss you more, you too baby" I said kissing Junior's forehead "tell me, did you speak to Choco?" She nodded "although it's not going to be easy I need to forget him, it's clear that he loves her, he's even supporting every step of her pregnancy, whilst with me, he couldn't even call" "You know what, let's forget him. This should be a party

our best friend is leaving" Bloom added "She's right, turn on the music!" . . _THALITHA_ . "You say he was with a woman?" Kalen had stopped by in my post "Yea and they were all over each other" I rolled my eyes "Is that jealousy I'm smelling" "What?" I chuckled nervously "of course not, why would I be, I'm single and happy" "Keep fooling yourself" he squeezed my cheek I hit him playfully "stop it" "Look he's coming" I looked at him, damn the guy is very handsome "don't show your jealousy" he whispered "Just go" "No" I sighed, he's a piece of work "Kalen?" "Yes sir" "I need you working on your post, why are you here?" "I came to drop a few things" he hit some documents then quickly left. Liar "Miss Ndabezitha" he smiled "Mr Sangweni, can I help you?" "Yes I need you to order flowers and chocolates make sure they put a romantic message" I swallowed "oh" "Yes, is there a problem?" I cleared my throat "sorry sir , but isn't that Kalen's duty?" He looked at me "I'm the CEO here remember?" "You're right, I'll do just that" I immediately looked for the florist number . . _ZOLA_ . Mr Mbewu decided to bless me with his presence "I've went through your work since I left you in charge" "Uhm yes" "It's very impressive, I know it hasn't been long, however within this little time I could note that you have a lot of potential, you're are capable, or rather you have a very bright future." "Thank you so much sir" "I've come into a conclusion" he exhaled "I'm putting you permanently on the CEO post of Mbewu

Constructions" "What!!!" I screamed in shock, this is the best news I ever received . . . _CHOCO_ . Later on I decided to take my heart to meet my father, every time when they're supposed to meet something comes up but I believe today is the day she finally meets my old man. We walked in, she looked a bit nervous, "relax you'll love him" I assured her "I'm scared, no I'm nervous, my tummy" I noticed that when she gets nervous her stomach starts grumbling and most of the time she has diarrhea, it's crazy "Relax will you" I kissed her "Finally you guys are here" Sonto smiled and greeted her. My father walked in, and so did Sam. She sighed she's not really a fan of Nomsa probably because she's friends with Pamela. We all sat. The door bell rang and Sonto left "I know you" dad spoke "aren't you friends with Zola?" I looked at her, she didn't mention this to me "Yes sir" she fiddled her fingers "What's your name again?" "Nomsa Nkosi" Immediately, dad stood on his feet "Nomsa" he came to help her up, we all looked at him completely in confusion as he held her hands into his "Nomsa my, my..." "No she's not!" We all turned, an old woman stood with Sonto "She's not your daughter, more than twenty years ago a mistake happened" what's really going on here, what mistake... "two little girls were exchanged, Nomsa is one of the girls and she's not your daughter" "What!" We all said in unison

80 GRAND FINAL _____ "Can someone explain to me what in the world is going on? What are you talking about? Did you think I was your daughter?" Nomsa asked "wait, now that you're saying that, I just remembered, I've seen your picture in my mother's stuff" "Relax, come" Lungelo helped her sit, and so did everyone else "I'm sorry to just come here unannounced. It's been years since I've been looking for you, this secret has been haunting me for years, my health hasn't been good all these years due to high blood, being an old woman with such secrets is not good." "Can you get to the point, I have a flight to catch, my father needs to take me to the airport" Sam spoke She nodded "more than twenty years ago I used to work at a hospital, I was a nurse there. One day like all the other days, it was very busy I was working a night shift in labour ward when a certain woman in a white coat pretending to be one of the staff pulled me aside, she made me a deal, threatened to kill my granddaughter whom was just a year old at that time, she said that if I don't exchange those babies then within a week I'll be burying my own granddaughter. She showed me the two families that I had to destroy, all I had to do was to change the name tags then the rest would follow" "Who's this woman?" Lungelo enquired "Honestly she didn't give me her name, but I still remember her very well, now that I'm seeing you I'd say you are her, but I know you're not, you just look very much alike with her" she said looking at Sonto Rich shook his head

"Nthathi" he whispered "Ma, then who's my daughter?" "There were two beautiful girls Nomsa Nkosi and a Pamela Khala"

"What!" Sam screamed "That's my friend, it's impossible" The woman shook her head and looked at Nomsa "you should've been Pamela Khala, but my cowardness destroyed and changed your life" she sighed "Wow" exhaled Nomsa . . . _ZANDY_ .

"Ngena sboshwa!(get in prisoner)" the officer pushed me inside. I couldn't take it anymore with those hood rats, I had to do something, last night on my way home, knowing that I'd find them somewhere on the road waiting for me to do me bad, I took one of the knives we use at the Chisa Nyama as my weapon. When they attacked me I did something that I never thought I'd ever do ever since I was born, fortunately I stabbed one of the girls on the neck, and she lost her life. Now I'm being locked up for murder. This is me paying for everything I did to Nomsa, if my grandmother was to find out about this, she'd be very disappointed, I don't want to mention my brother Thulani, it's a shame... . . . _THALITHA_ . I was packing my bag getting ready to leave after a whole long day of work. The flowers and chocolates were delivered in his office, he must really love that girl, who wouldn't though that girl is fire. Today I'll be leaving alone since Kalen went on a date with his partner, it must be good to have someone to take you on dates and everything, "I really hate driving alone you know" I turned, sigh... "Mr Sangweni" He smiled "would you like a ride?" "No uhm, I'll be

leaving with someone" "That's a lie" "I" I cleared my throat he sure was making me nervous "Kalen will be..." "Don't even think about it

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let's go" he stretched out his hand, I sighed and took my bag. We left the building to his car, I don't know much about cars but his sport car is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen. "Since we're out of the office what do you prefer I call you?" The car was speeding for my liking "Thalitha" "Beautiful name for a beautiful lady" I cleared my throat "would you please slow down" he chuckled and did "Kalen must be a slow driver" I nodded "uhm Mr Sangweni..." "Bafana" "Huh?" "Call me Bafana" "Oh yes Ba- Bafana, did your girlfriend like the flowers?" He smiled "I thought you wouldn't ask, she loved them" "I see" "You don't look happy for me" "I am, I'm very happy for you, she's a very lucky lady" He pulled over, I looked at him puzzled "why are you stopping?" "Let's quit playing, look those flowers, the chocolates they weren't for any girlfriend, for starters I don't have a girlfriend" I chuckled "right" "Listen" he rested his hand on my cheek "when I came back from the business trip and walked in the hotel, before my eyes could lay on anything or anyone for that matter, they saw you, at that moment nothing else existed except for you" I swallowed "when I got home my sister noticed the change from my

attitude I had to tell her about you, that's when she came up with this plan of playing the 'girlfriend' card" "Wait those flowers?" "She told me how girls get jealous when they like someone, and she was right. I saw that right through your eyes, I believe it's safe to say that you like me as much as I like you. Please make me the happiest man alive and go out with me?" "I- wow Mr... I mean Bafana, I didn't expect this" "Please" I smiled while nodding "okay" he did the unexpected, he gave me the most passionate kiss... . . . _DETECTIVE MTHEMBU_ . Lungelo's file never reappeared, and I couldn't break down any proof against him. I tried to find something but I couldn't, unfortunately for Sbali he couldn't free himself from this one, he was found guilty of murder and drug trafficking, he'll be inside for a very good time... MEANWHILE IN BRAZIL Nthati was having the best time of her life in one of the well known city Rio De Janeiro on a high building watching the biggest statue in Brazil 'Christ the Redeemer' statue. "This is beautiful" she said "Indeed" a voice behind her spoke, she turned and looked at the most handsome creature "como está bela senhora? (How're you beautiful lady)" "Bem e você? (Good and you)" she smiled "Feliz, o quê achas de beber um copo de vinho comigo? (Excited, what do you think of drinking a glass of wine with me)" "Por quê não? (Why not)" he made way for her... . . . _CHOCO_ . After hearing the biggest confession of that old woman, I still couldn't believe that the mother of my first born

is actually my father's real daughter. It's just crazy. THE following day we got up earlier than we usually do to see the doctor, you know how it is with this pregnancy thing, it's appointments every now and then but today it'll be more special since we'll know the baby's gender. "Are you ready?" Nomsa nodded "it'll feel a bit cold" she poured something like a gel on her stomach, I looked at the screen, I couldn't see anything, more like it wasn't clear. "Hear that?" The doctor smiled "What?" Honestly I don't get anything "The heart beat" "That's a heartbeat?" She nodded "wow!" "And there she is" "It's a she?" "Yes" "Wow" I looked at Nomsa "we're expecting a girl" she nodded happily "I'm the happiest man alive, I love you you so much Nomsa" I kissed her "I love you too Ngelo" "Marry me" She nodded rapidly "that's what I want more than anything, I love you" we shared a kiss, not just any kiss but we poured all our emotions... . . . _NARRATED_ . They watched as the cast filled the screen Nomsa as Lindiwe Skhosana Lungelo as Sipho Dlamini Zola as Njabulo Mkhize Samantha as Mpumi Khoza Zandy as Meladi Mphahlele Thalitha as Phumla Sekhute Nomasonto as Priscillar Lubisi Nthathi as Ubisi Mimi Swazi as Lunam Mhatu Pamela as Michelle Williams D Mthembu as Zamanzolo Gatyeni "And it's a wrap!" The director spoke although Sipho and Lindiwe continued kissing "hey Sika(Sipho) I said cut!" They broke the kiss "y'all guys have taken these characters too serious" The crew laughed "it's crazy guys this is

just yet another tv drama, stop taking things personal" Mpumi added "Mr director, I must say I enjoyed the last scene can we do it again?" Siphosaid "You're crazy!" They laughed "we reached our end guys, the end of Sheroe, thank you for your participation" Siphosaid "How about we go out?" "Sure thing why not" they held hands and left...

THE END

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