

PROLOGUE

After the shootout in Cape Town, Naledi and Noma went back to Limpopo until their wounds were healed while attending their trauma sessions. Their cousins and brothers have been helpful with the house chores, Refiloe does most of the cooking because Nathan and Philani are never around.

Since Felix and Ricardo joined them for Christmas lunch, they made it a point that when they return they will be coming for their wives and indeed that's what happened.

A few months later after that lunch, Felix sent his people to ask for Naledi's hand in marriage and Ricardo also followed. Everything went smoothly on both sides and the wedding preparations started.

The lobola for both Naledi and Noma was paid to Mr Mani, who later gave it back to the girls and asked that they get their own houses just in case something goes wrong. He did this because he knew their husbands wouldn't settle in Limpopo, and that meant the girls would be far from their family and should anything happen they will first need to be safe.

He trusts Naledi to keep both of them safe. He has taught her well and he is actually happy that she is with Noma.

The couples got married and went on their honeymoon. They returned to the houses their husbands bought for them in Cape Town and although it was a bad choice because of what had

happened, they managed to settle in and are now, 2 years later, doing great for themselves.

Noma still experiences hiccups along the way because the shooting added to the one that wiped out the other women of their family. The memories are still fresh in her mind that she sometimes closes herself in and doesn't want to talk to anyone. Ricardo and Naledi try to help where they can, but sometimes they fail because when she wakes up in those moods, no one can get through her.

BULELANI HADEBE

When the news of two women being shot at after a failed human trafficking broke out, he developed a sudden interest in one of them. He thinks there is something about her, a force of some kind and that has resulted in him being invested in her life, trying to find what nobody else knows about her.

He has tried to search for her on social media but the only pictures he got were the one of the marriage, and then one from the shootout. He is an artist, and when he saw what happened an idea struck him.

He is finishing the portrait, imagining the kind of a person she is, what she does for a living and where he can find her. The painting is of Naledi at the shootout, being the saviour with so much courage, trying to save innocent people while fighting her way through the bullets.

His girlfriend walks into the studio dragging her flip-flops and chewing gum loudly. He stops painting and turns to her with the brush still in hand.

Bulelani: (calmly) How many times should I tell you to stop walking like that when I'm in here?

Zanele: Oh, come on. I just woke up, how else should I walk?

Bulelani: And the gum? what do you even want in here?

Zanele: I miss you, you left me all alone in bed and I thought I would find you here.

Bulelani: I am working. I will come join you when I'm done.

She walks over to him, peeks at the portrait over his shoulder and then shakes her head.

Zanele: If I didn't know you I'd say you are obsessed with her.

He keeps quiet still looking at her.

Zanele: Anyway, let me leave before you chop my head off painter. I love you.

She saunters back to the door and then bangs it. Bulelani sighs and goes back to the painting.

He still has a long way to go with his gift and he is ready for all the challenges. Since he is responsible for his little brother, Bandile, he will do anything and everything to make sure he goes to the best schools. It's fortunate that he is still in grade 11 and has their aunt looking after him. That gives him enough time

to get the money he needs so he can top the one he already has. He also wants to marry this lunatic of his because as much as they butt heads, he loves her so much.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She is going through her restaurant plan that she needs to be built on the empty stand she bought when they arrived here. She wants to be able to buy a house in Joburg, and now that they are in Cape Town she needs a business to keep her going down here. Felix proposed that they work together but she is not interested in the kind of business he is in.

They stay in Camps Bay, a few houses from Noma's place where she stays with Ricardo. Felix has partnered with Ricardo and Wilson in a fish farming business

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on the other side the name "two C's" is only known to the illegal business involving drugs.

They will be at a farmer's market this weekend in Joburg, and that's where Felix is headed when he finds his wife going over her papers in the dining room. He approaches her, puts his duffel bag on the floor and then kisses her cheeks before sitting down.

Felix: You know you wouldn't be going through so much trouble had you agreed to partner with me.

Naledi: I love working for my own money.

Felix: You have the brains I need, babe.

Naledi: Then hire me. I don't want to partner with you, but I can be your employee.

Felix: (sighs getting up) Okay, I am leaving now.

Naledi: I will see you on Sunday then.

He kisses her cheeks again and then takes his bag and walks out.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI

She is doing her final year in Agriculture and she cannot wait to start working on the ideas she has. Her father is a wealthy man, he has provided her with everything needed to make life easier and because of that, most of her decisions are based on what makes her happy even if it's just for a brief moment.

For example, Bulelani is still an upcoming artist, he has little money and because she has her own she is simply with him because that's what she wants, for now. He is gentle with her, but more so with his canvases and paint brushes. Sometimes she doesn't get the attention she needs because he is more worried about making money, and not being in a relationship.

It's a Saturday morning and as always, he is in his studio doing what he does best. She leaves him a note in their bedroom and then goes out in her summer dress and sandals. They share an apartment because it didn't make sense for her to have her own when she will always be here. Bandile is back in Mpumalanga and she knows once he finishes matric he is coming to join them, maybe he will be a little more fun than his brother and she can't wait to see him.

She arrives at the park and the farmers have already set up their stalls. This makes her happy because it's what she is looking

forward to doing next year or so. Being here is satisfying and encouraging. She moves around checking the fresh farm produce unable to choose which to buy because they are all looking so healthy.

There is a fish stall with three guys busy chatting. Two seem coloured and the other is black. She approaches them, leaving the other produce behind and then greets them.

Ricardo: How can I help you, ma'am?

Zanele: I would love a pack of those orange ones, please.

She is focusing on Felix all this time while Ricardo tries to engage with her. He is silent as if thinking and his silence is the kind that's peaceful and beautiful to watch or experience. He catches her watching him, and his face does something, not a smile but an "I see you too" look. She smiles and then takes her plastic from Ricardo before turning back.

FELIX DELIN

He watched the woman who came to buy from them when she left until he couldn't see her anymore. She is a gorgeous human being, with thighs that are still coming together to the kind of thickness he likes.

Ricardo: (snapping his fingers in front of Felix's face) Earth to Felix!

Felix: (snaps out of it) What?

Ricardo: What are you musing on?

Felix: (looking away) Nothing.

Ricardo: I hope so.

He turns and leaves him with Wilson, going to his car.

Wilson: What do you think?

Felix: About?

Wilson: I have been your brother for a very long time Fel, I know you.

Felix: (sighs) I want to meet her again.

Wilson: I can get her for you. I don't think it will be hard.

Felix: Okay, but not forcefully.

Wilson: Of course not, her father is dangerous. Be careful.

Felix nods and then they change the topic.

Wilson: I managed to get on with our supply this side, I want them to supply us straight from Cape Town.

Felix: I also have an idea. I will let you know when the ingredients reach us.

Wilson: (smiling) That's my brother. I cannot wait to finally start operating.

They shake hands while smiling and Ricardo comes back.

Ricardo: Did I miss anything?

Wilson: No, it doesn't concern you.

He walks past him, slightly pushing him intentionally.

Ricardo: I swear one day I am going to kill this mother...(breathes out). Felix, how did you even become friends with Wilson?

Felix: We grew up together.

Ricardo: Why does he keep challenging me? does he feel jealous now that I have joined you or what?

Felix: He has always been like that, don't worry about him.

Ricardo: I think we are done here. Where is this going?

He points at the leftovers.

Felix: There is a truck that will fetch them, for some home or whatever.

Ricardo: Okay. I am coming.

He goes back to his car, and when he gets in he sees Wilson talking to someone. They exchange money and he swears he saw something else besides money.

THREE YEARS LATER...

To be continued...

She received a call from Hadebe's gallery three months ago, regarding hosting an exhibition at her restaurant. It's now only a few days before the big day and she is happy it's finally coming to an end. The way she has been so busy, she didn't even realise she was neglecting Felix and he spent a lot of time in Joburg.

Her phone rings as she walks out to the car, she quickly unlocks the car and then puts her things inside and answers.

Naledi: Hello.

Bulelani: Hi, I called your office phone and it rang unanswered so that's why I am calling here.

Naledi: Okay.

Bulelani: I am in Cape Town, and I would like to see you.

Naledi: You can come to the restaurant after 10.

Bulelani: Okay, thank you.

He hangs up and she is left confused. They have been talking via calls and video calls, everything is set so what does he want now?

She drives to her restaurant and even after two years of operating, she cannot believe this is all hers. Everytime she parks in her spot she takes a moment in the car, just letting every emotion settle before she faces everyone. Her mother and aunts would be proud of her and everyone else.

A delivery truck is offloading at the storeroom when she approaches, she goes over to see how everything is going.

Naledi: (asking one of her employees) It's fifteen boxes as agreed right?

Him: Yes.

Naledi: Okay, please make sure they are put on level ground. I don't want any mistakes.

She passes to the inside of the restaurant, and the guy offloads the 16th box and then takes it to the gate where Wilson has just slowed down.

He gives him money and then takes the box before driving off. The guy jogs back to storeroom.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

She is preparing to go join her husband in Cape Town for his exhibition. He left her behind because she had to attend meetings. Her phone rings as she is wheeling her bags to the car.

Zanele: Mtaka ma.

Ntombi: (sadly) Hello, unjani?

Zanele: Ngyaphila. Why does it sound like you are crying, what's wrong?

Ntombi: You need to come home, something happened.

Zanele: Ntombi you are scaring me, what is it?

Ntombi: Zanele please come home as soon as you can.

She feels her knees getting weak. If anyone calls and asks that you come home it's usually because someone has passed on. Who could it be? she hopes it's not her sister, Sonto. Or her mother, gosh she would die also. Maybe it's her grandmother, she was old and deserved some rest. May her soul rest in peace.

All these thoughts are driving her crazy she can't even feel that she is going up and down. She stops when thinking of Bulelani, and immediately calls him.

Bulelani: Babe.

Zanele: Hey, I just got a call from Ntombi and she asked me to come home.

Bulelani: (worriedly) Is everything okay?

Zanele: I don't know, but you know once you hear such words it has to do with death.

Bulelani: I am sorry.

Zanele: It's okay. I just wanted to let you know that there has been a change of plan.

Bulelani: It's okay babe. I will also come after the exhibition.

Zanele: Okay, good luck.

Bulelani: I love you.

She hangs up and then books an evening flight to Durban. Her phone rings and she rejects the call because now is not a good time to answer such calls.

BULELANI HADEBE

The call from his wife left him worried he can't even hide it. Naledi is looking at him after asking if he is fine, he said he is

but his mind has decided to let him on a journey that's left his eyes focusing in space.

Naledi: We can always reschedule or just leave everything as it is you know.

Bulelani: (snaps out it) I'm sorry, what was that?

Naledi: It's nothing. What helps eases your mind when you are not okay?

Bulelani: Painting.

Naledi: (getting up from her chair) Okay, fold your sleeves and follow me. You can leave your jacket behind.

He gets up and does as she says. They go down the stairs and before they could enter the restaurant, they turn to the basement.

Naledi switches on the light and her studio comes to life.

Naledi: I will leave you down here so you can get better. You will find me in the office when you need me.

She doesn't wait for him to answer as she goes out and leaves him there.

He is standing in the middle of the room

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looking at the pencil and pen drawings hanging on the wall and some still in progress on the table. He spots paints on one side of the wall in a shelf, and then goes over and starts picking up the ones to use.

He mixes them according to his mood and then sits in front of the canvas and starts painting.

BANDILE HADEBE

He is walking to his flat after attending his last class for the day. It's almost 5 PM and if he doesn't hurry Anne will arrive before him.

As if she heard him, he finds her black and white minicooper with his name on the number plate parked at the gate. Its windows are tinted and she only drives it when she comes to fetch him. He opens the door and gets into the driver's seat. How she goes to the back seat after parking is still a mystery because the space between the seats is small for her.

Bandile: Why didn't you call?

Anne: I've just arrived. I was going to call you. (cynically) You afraid I will catch you red handed if I don't announce that I am coming?

Bandile: (chuckles) You know I don't do any of that stuff.

Anne: I'm just pulling your leg.

Bandile: Okay. Let me drop my bag inside and then I will join you.

Anne: Don't worry. I am bringing you back tonight.

Bandile: Okay.

He drives off to her house. She lives a few minutes from his flat in Pretoria, and they have been together for a year and three months now.

Bulelani doesn't know any of this and should he find out he will be so angry. He has put the thought of having a child on hold because he wants to make sure his little brother is set before. But Bandile has a mind of his own, that sometimes seems to be faulty.

He has everything a student needs. He goes to a private college with crazy fees, he wears the latest clothes and owns some of the latest gadgets, all bought by his brother but no; it doesn't satisfy him.

Anne met him in one of the bars she owns around the flats he stays at, she targets boys like him, offers them money and then use them. It doesn't feel like being used to them though because the first few months are all about them, and when she starts changing it be too late to save themselves.

Anne: Go shower, I will be with you in a few minutes.

She says to him after he has parked in the garage. The security around this yard is tight you would even be scared to move around the house.

He goes inside while Anne answer her phone. When she finishes she sets up everything in the bedroom, food included because she doesn't want him dead just yet, especially not due to hunger.

He comes out drying himself and then sits on the bed and starts eating. Anne goes for a shower too before coming to join him. He finishes eating and then have a drink before kneeling in front

of the small glass table with a book lined with white powder, ready to be snorted.

This is how it works. She fetches him, offers food and a shower if he hasn't showered. Snort the powder, leans back while it kicks in and then have one crazy super-long round of sex before dozing off in a position that has him feeling like his bones are broken in the morning.

Anne: I am ready when you are.

She is naked on the bed, revealing her wrinkled body that's still very much in shape.

Bandile gets on the bed, leaving the towel on the floor where he was kneeling. He parts her legs and starts with his mouth on her kitten. She pushes his head deeper inside her while moaning, releasing him a few times so he can breath.

She tears open the condom sachet and get ready to fit it on his manhood.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI- HADEBE

She got home and immediately ran to the bedrooms to check who is missing. Her aunts and uncles from nearer are all here and this is a confirmation that there is a funeral. Ntombi is with her mother in her bedroom, her high blood increased and she is laying down now waiting for it to go down a bit.

Zanele: Ma, are you okay?

Ma Buthelezi: I will be fine my child. Come sit near me.

She goes over to the bed and Ntombi makes space for her. Nomasonto comes in holding a tray of food for her mother.

Sonto: Ma I brought some food so you can drink your pills.

Ma Buthelezi: Ngyabonga mntanami. Please join us, I want to talk to you about something.

They all gather on the bed, Ntombi helping her mother up so they at least look at her while they talk.

Ma Buthelezi: Zanele, I know you are asking yourself why you were called to come back home at such a short notice. The dark cloud has visited us, unexpectedly like always, and it left with the most important person in your life. I am sorry it happened while you were far. Your dad has left us my child.

She has never experienced such a pain to her heart ever since she was born. It feels like she is being slashed with a knife right on the heart and if it doesn't stop beating at this very moment, nothing will ever kill her.

She slowly gets on her feet, tears flowing down her face while crawling towards the door. The thing about being a daddy's girl is that no matter how much your father provide for you, once he passes on you lose a part of yourself more than those who weren't close to him as you were. It feels like you can never be yourself again without hearing his voice and being able to touch him.

To be continued...

NARRATED

Mari-Anne is a wealthy caucasian woman, one would wonder why she is a sugar mama when she can get any man her age that she wants. The secret is that little guys are the path to more money, and she needs them just like they need her money.

Her guys are back from Durban where she had sent them on a mission. Everything went perfectly and she will now focus on running the business as an owner. She cannot wait to call the shots and have everybody under her authority.

This also calls for a quick trip to Durban while everything is still hot and easy to bend. Her flights are booked and this evening, she will be landing in the home of the man who tried to con her but never lived to see the day. She smiles thinking of all this and how easy it was to finish him, despite being so heavily guarded and dangerous.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

Since she left the other day crying, she didn't come back that night until in the morning, when almost everyone was present.

It is a Saturday morning, the day of the burial and the hired pastor is giving a word to accompany Mr Buthelezi's spirit to his final resting place.

They start a hymn as the casket is being lowered into the grave. All was said and done, but it's now that reality strikes the whole family. It's now that the questions are going to be brought up by relatives trying to find someone to blame.

Zanele is quietly looking at the grave being filled with soil. There are no more tears left in her today but her heart is bleeding. Her mother is also not crying, just looking sad and so are her sisters. Guess they have already accepted that he is gone, forever.

They are back at home and the community is starting to scatter, going back to their homes because they had "free lunch". Those left are still waiting for leftovers to take home.

Mr Buthelezi's side of the family have left also. The aunts wanted to tell his wife a piece of their mind because to them, it's suspicious that he died without being sick but they hardly saw her. Her two daughters and her sisters were in the front shielding her from any harm.

The lawyer is coming tomorrow but Zanele cannot wait any longer and will join them via a video call. She is packing her stuff when her eldest sister, Ntombi, comes into the room.

Ntombi: You are leaving already?

Zanele: (shoving clothes in the bag) Yes. I have things to do back in Joburg.

Ntombi: That's not how things are done Zanele. We still have rituals to do as a family so the dark cloud doesn't loom over us.

Zanele: Write down for me what I should do, and I will do it in my own house on my own.

Ntombi: I know you are angry and sad, we all are but we should not forget that we still have our own lives to live.

Zanele: (sighs) I am not changing my mind.

Ma Buthelezi: Myeke a hambe.

She says calmly, joining them in the room. They both turn to her as Sonto walks in after her.

Ma Buthelezi: Your sister wants to act like she is the only one hurting, let her be.

Ntombi: Mama, please stop before this turns ugly.

Ma Buthelezi: No, I won't stop. Just because Zanele is the last born, and was her father's favourite doesn't mean we didn't love him. We are all hurting, but do you see us trying to ruin our lives because we think it is the end of everything?

Ntombi: (holding her mom) Let's go mama. Let me take you back to your room so you can rest.

Ma Buthelezi: I want her to hear what I have to say. Ubabakho was a drug dealer. I told him countless times to stop but did he? I -

Zanele interrupts her, leaving the bag on the bed and going straight at her mom.

Zanele: (angrily) It was that drug dealing money that fed us. You want to talk about ubabam, leave that detail out because it benefited you also. You got everything you wanted mama. A big

house, a car, all the other things wives don't get out there because of that drug dealing money.

Ntombi: That's enough Zanele, show some respect.

Zanele: Konje respect to you is when I don't talk back while being disrespected because I am the youngest.

Ntombi: (pointing at her) One more word from that mouth and I will slap you.

She keeps quiet and turns back to her bag.

Ma Buthelezi: You really are your father's daughter Zanele. I hope it all goes well for you because the decision you are taking now, will determine your future.

She walks out and the two sisters follows after her, leaving Zanele all alone.

NTOMBIKAYISE BUTHELEZI

As the eldest sister between the three sisters, she has been putting out fire ever since the death of her father. She knows what her mother is talking about, she has seen it but she couldn't do anything because her mother kept reminding her that she is a child.

She can't say she is not relieved that he died because her mother suffered at his hands. He failed to protect her, the only person he cared most about was Zanele. Their mother used to be kidnapped and beaten up as a way to send messages to him. She never speaks about those incidents, and the thought of other things that might have happened do cross her mind sometimes.

Her mother is in bed now and she tiptoes leaving her so she can at least rest for a while.

Zanele is walking out the main door when a black Jeep slows down at the gate. They all wait in anticipation to see who it is, Ntombi nearing the gate to welcome whoever this is.

A caucasian woman in all black steps down from the car, opens the gate and then walks through. Ntombi recalls seeing her at the cemetery but she just vanished into thin air.

Anne: Hi

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can I please talk to Mrs Buthelezi?

Ntombi: You can talk to me, I will deliver the message.

Anne: (smiles) Oh dear, you are still a child. I need a grown up for this matter, especially the deceased's wife.

The few people that are still around are curious as to who she is and what she is doing here. But of course they won't say a word, not when Ntombi is here. There is an element of "I knew your father" in her tone as she speaks, and it's not the normal knowing a person kind, but the deep one, like his naked self and stuff.

The two of them goes inside as Zanele drives out of the yard. Ntombi finds her mother already up and she talks to her before bringing Anne inside.

Ma Buthelezi: You can leave us baby. I will show her out when we are done.

Ntombi closes the door and stands by with her ear against it.

Anne: My condolences Mrs Buthelezi. Your husband was my business partner, a family man who always talked about his girls. I just came to pay my respects for the last time.

Ma Buthelezi looks at her defeated. What is it with women who know other people's husband naked and disrespecting the wives?

Ma Buthelezi: What do you want here Anne?

Anne: Sorry, how do you know my name?

Ma Buthelezi: So it's a problem that I know your name yet you even know where I live?

She keeps quiet still surprised. She thought she doesn't know her, and if she does then it means there are other things she knows also. She composes herself and then smiles at her.

Anne: My apologies, it's just that most people whom I am not close to calls me by my full name.

Ma Buthelezi: Then I guess I am also close to you since we were sleeping with the same man. Your man has died, what else do you want?

Anne: I wanted to talk to you about his-

Ma Buthelezi: Businesses? I don't care what happens to them. It was yours together so you will see what to do with them. If you

don't mind, I would like to carry on with my day without being reminded of him and his bullshit. (calling out) Ntombi.

She walks in immediately, her mom knows she never left the door.

Ma Buthelezi: Please show her out.

Ntombi: Let's go.

Anne stands up to leave and then Ma Buthelezi stops her.

Ma Buthelezi: And please, I don't ever want to see you anywhere near my home.

She nods and then follows after Ntombi.

BULELANI HADEBE

His exhibition went smoothly, most of his portraits were bought and he is preparing to have them delivered. His phone rings and he answers moving away from the crowd.

Bulelani: Babe.

Zanele: Hey, I am on my way back. You will find me in Jo'burg.

Bulelani: Were you not supposed to stay until everyone else has left?

Zanele: It's not a must, I have things that needs my attention this side.

Bulelani: Okay. I will see you in the morning.

He hangs up and then dials her sister, Nomasonto. She answers quickly and sounds as if she was sleeping.

Bulelani: Did I wake you up?

Sonto: Yes, but it's okay. What's up?

Bulelani: I hear Zanele saying she is going back to Jo'burg. What happened?

Sonto: I don't know. But there was an exchange of words between her and mom before she left.

Bulelani: Okay, thank you. Please send my condolences to mother, I will come down there soon.

Sonto: I will, bye.

He goes back to his work and they are almost done. He checks on Naledi, and asks her to unwrap the paintings he left in her studio when she has time.

FELIX DELIN

He is home waiting for Naledi because he left her at the restaurant. He had joined them for a brief moment, purchased a painting, and then left.

The delivery van arrives at his gate and he approaches it. They pull out his painting, give him the signing board, and then leave after he has signed.

He goes inside with the portrait, gets into his study, and then carefully removes it from the frame and takes out the small packages of drugs, packing them in a small box that is in one of the drawers.

Naledi's car drives through the gate and he quickly puts everything together, mistakenly leaving one of the packs inside. He rushes to their bedroom and hangs it on the wall.

She walks inside and drops her bags on the bed.

Naledi: (kissing him) Babe.

Felix: Hey, how did it go?

Naledi: Perfectly. I just want to shower and sleep.

Felix: I can give you a little massage.

Naledi: Let me get in here first.

She goes to the bathroom and he goes down to make a snack. His phone rings and he answers going outside.

Felix: Brother.

Wilson: Hey, there is a delivery arriving tomorrow. It's your turn.

Felix: Okay, thanks for reminding me. And please call tonight and ask to meet with me. I have other stuff I need out of the house as soon as possible.

Wilson: What time?

Felix: Even after thirty minutes.

Wilson: Sure.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

He arrived late last night and found his wife sleeping. She is only waking up now after 9 AM and she finds breakfast waiting for her on the bedside table.

Bulelani: Good morning sunshine. How are you feeling today?

Zanele: (rubbing her eyes) Hey, when did you get here?

Bulelani: You want to tell me you didn't hear or feel anything the whole of last night?

Zanele: I don't remember anything.

Bulelani: Okay, I arrived late last night. Kissed your forehead and took a shower. When I came back to bed you were sleeping on my side and when I went to yours, you rolled back to to find me, located my chest and slept.

Zanele: Was I snoring?

Bulelani: (chuckles) Like a tractor.

Zanele: (hiding her face) Oh my God!

Bulelani: I knew what I was doing when I put a ring on it, don't worry. Anyway; have breakfast so you can tell me all about Durban.

Zanele: I don't want to talk about it today, let's try some other time.

Bulelani: Okay. (standing up) I will be in the studio if you need me.

He leaves her to eat and then goes to his studio as his phone rings.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She is in her studio looking at the portraits Bulelani left behind. They have his signature, size and a name.

They are all so beautiful, releasing an energy she cannot explain. She calls him and he answers cheerfully.

Naledi: Thank you so much, I love them.

Bulelani: Hello to you too Mrs Delin.

Naledi: (laughs) Hi Mr Hadebe.

Bulelani: I hope you like your paintings.

Naledi: I love them, but I have questions.

Bulelani: I know, we will meet again and I will explain.

Naledi: How did you even manage to leave this here without my knowledge?

Bulelani: Let's just say I have connections.

Naledi: (smiles) Thank you. My husband also bought a piece, I saw it at the house.

Bulelani: I hope it will bring the peace I paint about to you whenever you feel troubled.

They continue to talk until Naledi hangs up and then asks one of the maintenance guys to hang the Naledi portrait on the wall. She takes the other one to her office.

NOMA SIBANDA

It's one of those days today. She has been quiet since she woke up and Ricardo has gone to work already.

She lays on the bed trying to sleep but her mind brings out recordings upon recordings of flashbacks.

She gets up and limps her way to the bathroom, where she takes a quick shower and then dress up to visit Naledi at the restaurant.

When she arrives, she is lucky to find her on lunch and they sit in her office.

Noma: You are very scarce these days.

Naledi: Don't worry, I am free now.

Noma: Are you fine though?

Naledi: Yes, I am good. You?

Noma: (sighs) I miss my mother.

Naledi stops eating, gets up and locks her door. Immediately Noma starts talking about her mother, it means she is not okay.

Naledi: I miss her too, everyone does.

Noma: (sniffing) I don't understand why God had to let things happen the way they did. Why did he allow our mothers to die in cold blood? Maybe they had sins he couldn't forgive or it was just time, but what about Amaria? She was young, had her whole life ahead and...

She starts crying and Naledi goes to her side and hugs her. Their mothers; three sisters, were killed on the same day by intruders who had failed to kidnap Naledi and Noma. They also killed Amaria, their little sister. Noma was raped on the same day and

even though the people who did this are dead, it still doesn't stop her from having all these feelings.

Naledi: (rubbing her back) It's okay sis, we don't know why it had to happen. But I know for sure there is a reason. It could have been us and our mothers wouldn't have survived these years that we have lived. I am so sorry that you are feeling this way, and I am here to support you.

She lets go of her and then gets her a drink from the bar fridge.

Naledi: Have this.

Noma takes it and then drinks, a few sips before turning her head around and her eyes lands on the portrait.

Noma: (pointing) Is that from the artist guy?

Naledi: Yes, it's beautiful isn't it?

Noma: Very.

She turns back to her finishing the juice but still manages to peek at the painting a few more times.

Noma: Thank you for always lending me your ear.

Naledi: I'm your sister. Of course I will always be here for you.

They continue chatting while food is brought to them.

WILSON

He is at the warehouse where everything goes down. It's a delivery spot for their fishes but they have a secret room, where the air is always filled with the smell of drugs.

Felix: I think this will be good. It should go for R400 per gram.

Wilson: Let me finish with the others so we can take them out to the streets.

Felix: I am coming.

He walks out to his car, drives a few minutes and the parks outside some dilapidated house. There is a couple that lives here, reckless people that would do anything for money. He uses them as his testers, and right now he wants to know how much dangerous this drug is.

He knocks and finds the woman only

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it seems the man is out to find food. She is shivering, probably because she hasn't had a fix in a while.

Felix: (raising the plastic) Here.

She snatches it out of his hand and quickly opens it, putting her long pinkie nail in the pack to scoop. She brings the hand to her nose and then snort on both sides before staggering to the couch.

He is filming her all this while, and once finished he leaves and goes back to the warehouse.

The packs are ready to go on the streets when he gets back. He approaches Wilson who is talking to some guys who does deliveries.

Felix: It's good.

Wilson: (smiling) I trust you with mixing brother, it's a gift you shouldn't take for granted.

They divide them into portion and gives them to the guys.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

Later that night she is in her man's arms, watching a podcast on the laptop. She lowers the volume and then turns to Bulelani.

Zanele: Babe, do you think I am like my father?

Bulelani: You look like him yes.

Zanele: No, I mean behaviour.

Bulelani: A part of it. I think most of the things you do were influenced by how he always protected you.

Zanele: My mother wished me luck on leaving the way I did, and standing up for my father.

Bulelani: What do you think?

Zanele: I think she has already moved on or something. Maybe even my sisters are not my real sisters and that's why dad loved me most.

Bulelani: I just think that you are angry that no one is going to protect you now that he is gone.

Zanele: What about you?, you are my husband.

Bulelani: Exactly, not your father. I cannot offer everything he used to do for you. I can only do my part.

He knows this conversation is going to lead to a fight but it has to be had, especially now that her father is no more.

Zanele: (angrily) I can't believe you just said that. Are you also happy that he is gone?

Bulelani: You don't like the truth, that's your problem.

Zanele: As if you do. I still believe at one point you wished you had smashed that Naledi of yours.

Bulelani: (sighs) Let's leave it, we will continue when we are both calm.

She gets up, angrily closes the laptop and then stands on her feet.

Zanele: So now that I mention Naledi we should stop? you love it when you are the only one judging others as if you are the most holy, with no sin. I have been watching you, I know you and just so you know I don't need your protection. I have money, I will use it to protect myself. What do you have, huh? what do you have Bulelani apart from those ugly portraits of yours you use to lure people into thinking you are some righteous man?

She clicks her tongue and then rushes out of the bedroom. Bulelani opens the laptop and before he can even play it, he hears glasses shattering on the other side. He jumps out of bed and then follows the sound of more shattering.

As he nears he can hear that the sound is coming from his studio. He opens the door and finds his portraits on the floor, the

ones from the wall even the ones he was still busy with. His paints are flowing on the canvases, his brushes are broken and the stands too.

Zanele: (screaming) You seem to be happy that my father is dead, just like my mother and my siblings. Let's see how you feel about losing all these too, surely the pain equates to what I am feeling now.

She stomps on the brushes and then walks out. A few minutes later he hears the car driving out in speed.

He finds a chair and sits in front of the mess, taking it all in and releasing it because he doesn't want to do something he will regret. He starts cleaning the room, careful not to be cut by the glasses.

RICARDO SIBANDA

Noma came back better from the restaurant. She is now finishing with her emails and he is going to join her in bed. When he walks in, he finds her rubbing her eyes. She closes the laptop and then puts it aside.

Noma: Hey.

Ricardo: Babe, are you done?

Noma: Yes, I need something to drink.

Ricardo: I'll go get it.

He walks back to the kitchen and bring her water. She drinks and then they both get into bed.

Noma: (yawning) You know babe I saw something today.

Ricardo: Yes.

Noma: There is a painting in Naledi's office, it's from the artist who did an exhibition not so long at her restaurant.

Ricardo: Yes, I remember that.

Noma: It's beautiful, I don't know. I felt somehow when looking at it.

Ricardo: You want one?

Noma: Not yet.

Ricardo: Do shout when you are ready.

Noma: (smiling) Thank you. I love you.

Ricardo: I love you too.

Noma: One for the night?

Ricardo: I thought you wouldn't ask.

They start kissing, Noma putting her leg over him to pull him so he can mount her.

To be continued...

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

She is coming back from the club where she had gone to, leaving Bulelani with the mess in his studio. It's almost 11 PM and he is obviously sleeping.

Her car is back at the club, parked in the basement parking that's safe for customers like her. The owner of the club is a friend of hers and seeing how drunk she was, he organised transport for her.

She walks inside staggering and dropping stuff on her way to the bedroom. When she switches on the light she finds Bulelani sleeping on his back on the bed, looking at the roof.

His silence is intimidating, unlike Felix's. This one is like he is planning a murder or something when he is quiet, but the percentages in her system tells her she cannot be intimidated by her own husband so she puts on an act for him.

She positions herself so she can appear sober, her right leg parted with her right hand on the hip, the left one straight and the left hand of her waist like she is posing for a picture.

Zanele: (drunkenly) Are you not supposed to be sleeping?

She is trying to be sexy but it's not working because her voice is hoarse from all the screaming she was doing at the club.

He doesn't answer her or even move to acknowledge her presence.

She takes off her clothes and catwalks to the bed, tripping on her feet and almost hitting the corner of the bed with her forehead.

She gets up breathing heavily while naked and then gets on the bed. Bulelani gets off immediately she reaches the pillows, and walks out to the guest bedroom and then locks.

He knows how much she wants to be by his side when drunk but he is not going to grant her that, not after what she did.

She comes to the guest room and starts banging on the door hoping he will open. He turns over and faces the other side then close his eyes.

It won't be easy to sleep with all the sound, but sleep doesn't care so it attacks him slowly until he is deep within.

FELIX DELIN

He has arrived early, together with Wilson to their workplace. They do this to avoid being caught by Ricardo. Each of them has their own space, their employees thinks they are all into this when in fact Ricardo knows nothing about yhe drug dealings going on here.

Firstly, he own a bar that serves as some underground club type of thing. Accommodating those who love night things.

Secondly, he is only ever around if needed. Today is a Friday and chances of him coming to work are zero to negative one.

Felix: I want to go home early today before Naledi notices there is something wrong.

He says as they get into the room.

Wilson: That's why I don't want to settle down. Women are a distraction.

Felix: Sometimes it's required that you find someone. Look now how easy it is for us to do our thing because my smart wife owns a restaurant.

Wilson: She isn't that smart if she hasn't realised what's going on.

Felix: I won't take no offence, but don't let her hear that.

Wilson: I still don't believe she could win against me.

Felix: Don't underestimate my dear wife, she kicks ass.

They laugh locking themselves inside.

Felix: I heard our stuff is selling like crazy out there.

Wilson: Yes, unfortunately the man who was in charge has passed on.

Felix: How do you even know these people?

Wilson: I follow the leads. I can't be working with people I don't know.

Felix: What did you have on him?

Wilson: He had a few enemies, three girls who aren't much in the public. He was killed on his way home from work. He died along with one of his guard and driver.

Felix: I wonder how his family reacted to the news.

Wilson: Same you would if your wife turned up dead. I just think it was bearable because they knew what he was into. This business is dangerous, that's why I don't want anyone to love because I will be putting their lives in danger too.

Felix: Who is in charge now?

Wilson: No one yet, I will let you know when I find out.

Felix sighs and then they continue counting the stock and how much money will come out of it.

RICARDO SIBANDA

He is at his bar having a drink when he gets a flashback of that day at the farmer's market. He wants to tell his wife but he knows how worried she gets, it could result in a disaster especially because she is now pregnant.

They have been trying but she always miscarries. The doctors said something about her womb being damaged and unable to carry full term. The babies also have a slim chance of surviving because it happens early, before they are even fully formed so he doesn't want to stress her now.

The only person whom he can talk to is Naledi. He grabs his keys and then walks out to his car and drives off to The Star Eatery.

When he parks at the parking lot

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he sees one of her employees on a call outside. It's as if he is hiding because he keeps looking around and at the door to see who comes out. He ignores him and then passes to the inside.

He doesn't waste any time but goes straight to her office and knocks.

Naledi: Come in.

He opens the door, steps in and then closes it and walks towards her. She is on the phone and she points at the bar fridge for him to get something to drink in the meantime. He grabs a beer and then takes a seat.

Naledi: To what do I owe this pleasure brother-in-law?

She says after putting the phone down.

Ricardo: Why the formality? I am Ricardo, macho man.

She laughs thinking of how they used to tease Noma because of his muscles.

Naledi: It has been a while, how are you doing?

Ricardo: I am well, how are you?

Naledi: I am also alive.

Ricardo: I have something I want to tell you. I don't know how you're going to take it but I believe it should be said.

Naledi: (leaning forward on the desk) Okay.

He takes a deep breath and then releases it.

Ricardo: I think Felix and Wilson are dealing drugs.

She keeps quiet for a moment, deeply looking at him. He doesn't know what to make of the look so the only way to find out what she is thinking, is to wait for a word from her mouth.

Naledi: (exhales) What makes you say that?

Ricardo: I saw Wilson exchanging money with some guy one time at the farmer's market. There was something white in a small plastic that the guy gave him when he took the money.

Naledi: And you think it was drugs?

Ricardo: Yes. There is also a room at the warehouse that only the two of them have access to. I don't want to be part of it because if the police gets tipped off I will also be arrested. I can't allow that to happen, not when Noma is pregnant.

Naledi: (raised eyebrow) Noma is pregnant?

Ricardo: Yes, she didn't want to tell you because she thinks it's still early and obviously she doesn't want to worry you.

Naledi: I understand. Well congratulations, and this Felix-Wilson issue, I will deal with it. Thank you for letting me know.

Ricardo: That's all I wanted to tell you.

He gets on his feet and it's now he notices the new painting.

Ricardo: That's beautiful. What does it mean?

Naledi: Emotional intelligence is power.

Ricardo: What language is that?

Naledi: French.

Ricardo: Okay, keep well then. I will be on my way.

She sighs as the door closes. Her heart is beating so fast and if it's true that Felix is involved in drug dealing then she should consider divorce.

MARI-ANNE

She just came back from Durban and the one person she wants to see is Bandile. She dials his number and it rings unanswered, she checks its location on her laptop and find that it is at the library.

She sighs hanging up and then goes inside and takes a shower before calling her guys for a meeting.

The drug business in Durban is closed down, and everyone who wants to deal has to get yhe products from her. She has been meaning to expand and get supplies from Pretoria to be distributed elsewhere, but that dead man never agreed. Now that everything is in her hands, she can do as she pleases.

It's even easier because they used to supply a lot of people, especially Joburg and Cape Town. But she has heard of a certain two C's who are getting way more than her, and that's something she will never agree to. She has to get her word out there to stop the madness.

She dresses and then drives out to the place she is meeting with her staff.

They are all seated in the room in a circle with her in the middle.

Anne: I know you were used to getting word from a male voice, but things have changed and I am a woman of order. As you all know, I was next in line to be the leader and right now I am claiming my position. I already made changes to what you were all used to. All supplies to the other provinces are going to come from here, anyone dealing out of our syndicate in this area will be dealt with. Anyone who decide to betray, lie and keep secrets from us will be punished. And don't forget, (lift up a file) I have all the information about you and your families. I will not hesitate to use it if I am being double crossed. Now, go and get word out there that Ms Anne, Mari-Anne, is now in charge.

To be continued...

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She gets home and finds Felix waiting for her at the table. He has cooked and set the table romantically with candles.

He gets up to help her with her bags and then directs her to her seat.

Felix: What would you like to drink ma'am?

Naledi: Red wine, please.

He pours the wine into the glass and then hands it over before sitting down.

Naledi: What is all this?

Felix: It has been a long time since we just sat and are together, and I know you never have the energy since you work hard so I decided to do a little something in the house.

Naledi: Thank you. I like it.

She is focusing on him and all this is suspicious. Maybe if Ricardo hadn't told her anything she wouldn't be as alert as she is right now.

They eat over a light conversation, mostly Felix asking about her goals regarding the restaurant.

Naledi: I want to upgrade my security and be as involved as possible. I cannot trust my employees to do their best at my responsibility because they know their roles, and not mine.

Felix: You being involved means being with them while they work?

Naledi: No, I want to start on the deliveries. I should always be present at every delivery made.

She watches him as she says that, and she can see how uneasy he gets when she mentions deliveries. That will be her next stop for now.

Felix: You work so hard babe, why don't you take tomorrow off, and then I will go check what's what.

Naledi: I would love that.

Felix: Good.

He will have to just see her there; there is no way she is going to stay at home for no reason.

BULELANI HADEBE

Zanele had gone to fetch her car and she is only arriving back now. Nothing was ever said between them regarding the damage and Zanele's behavior. They don't even talk that much and Bulelani has been using the guest bedroom.

He picks up his small luggage bag and walks out, bumping into her as she walks in. She stops surprised and then looks at him.

Zanele: Hey, going somewhere?

Bulelani: Yes.

He passes without saying where he is going and she lets him be. He drives out a few minutes later and Zanele dials someone on her phone.

He closes the door after coming back from buying snacks at the mall, and then takes out his phone and dials Naledi.

She answers on the second ring and tells him to wait while she connects the phone to the bluetooth so they can talk while she drives.

Naledi: Bhungane.

Bulelani: (smiling) Naledi, how are you?

Naledi: I am fine, what's the matter?

Bulelani: Is it that obvious?

Naledi: Yes.

Bulelani: (sighs) I am on my way there. I haven't made any bookings and I certainly don't know how long I'm going to be there.

Naledi: I can accommodate you.

Bulelani: Are you sure?

Naledi: Yes, unless you are coming for a mini shot' left, you are going to spend time in my studio so you might as well live with me.

Bulelani: Thank you.

Naledi: I will see you then.

He hangs up and then starts the car, driving out of Joburg headed to Camps Bay.

FELIX DELIN

He offered to come to hold the ropes for his wife because he knew there is a delivery coming today.

Wilson is inside, counting the minutes for the truck to drive through the gate.

It appears with Naledi's car behind it and Wilson quickly paces to the back door where Felix is. He arrives at the same time as she parks her car.

Wilson: (to Felix) Play smart.

He approaches the truck that's now parked and Naledi calls out to him.

Naledi: Please move back and let them do their job.

He moves away and in his heart, he is praying that something that needs her attention comes up so she can leave them.

Naledi gets off her car and approaches the truck, checking each box and package that comes out.

They finish unloading and then she goes inside. There might be nothing but she got the confirmation she needed.

Felix approaches the driver as Naledi goes inside and asks about their delivery.

Him: (giving him a small box) That's all that I received. There is a new boss, her name is Anne and she is reshuffling the whole syndicate.

He takes the box and then quickly puts it in his car. Wilson comes to him and he sees the box before asking.

Wilson: There is someone who is trying to ruin things for us, and I know who it is.

Felix: There is a new boss, she calls herself Anne.

Wilson: (gasps) Who?

Felix: You know her?

Wilson: She was dating the guy who died. Now it makes sense.

Felix: (pointing at the box) What are we going to do with this?

Wilson: I don't know but we will figure it out. I need to fix something now.

Felix: I hope you are going to cause trouble.

He doesn't answer as he walks back to the restaurant, leaving Felix at the back.

Naledi is snacking when Felix walks into her office. He doesn't know what he is going to say to her but he pulls himself together and then takes a seat.

Felix: I thought we agreed that you will stay at home today.

Naledi: Something came up and needed my attention.

Felix: What is it?

Naledi: It's solved now so it doesn't matter anymore.

Felix: (standing up) I think I should leave now that you are here.

Naledi: Okay, and Fel, you should stop accessing the other parts of this building without permission, together with Wilson. Next time you come here park at the front like every customer.

Felix: Okay.

He walks out cursing under his breath.

BULELANI HADEBE

Later that day, he arrives at the restaurant after talking to Naledi and she welcomes him.

Naledi: I was just waiting for you so we can leave.

Bulelani: That would be great

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I also need some rest.

Naledi: Let me just pack up my things then.

Bulelani: I'll be in my car.

She packs her stuff and then gets into her car before driving out. Bulelani drives after her and a few minutes later, they arrive at her place.

The house is beautiful, spacious, and has a pool. They park outside because Felix's car is inside and the only space left is for one car.

Naledi: I hadn't talked with my husband yet, but I doubt he will mind.

Bulelani: You sure? I don't want to cause trouble.

Naledi: You won't. Let's go in.

They walk inside and Naledi leaves Bulelani on the couch then goes to her bedroom.

Felix is on the phone and she only catches the tail of the phone call, he is saying he needs the break.

He doesn't turn to the footsteps but because Naledi knows her man, she saw the reaction from his back slightly lifted.

When he hangs up he doesn't face her but starts fixing her bag even though it's all packed and ready to hit the road.

Naledi: Can you sit down so we can talk?

He sits without answering her.

Naledi: We have a guest in the house, he doesn't know how long he is going to stay with us and I need you to welcome him so he can be comfortable.

Felix: Who is he?

Naledi: Bulelani, the artist.

Felix: Okay, I am leaving for Joburg by the way so it will just be you and your guest.

Naledi: How long are you going for?

Felix: I don't know, but worry not I will not surprise you when I come back.

Naledi: Okay, go well.

Felix: (standing up) Stay well.

He takes his bag and then walks out, Naledi follows after him and when he passes by Bulelani he greets him and tells him to enjoy his stay.

BANDILE

He wants to visit his brother because it's been a long since they saw each other. He also wants to tell him about this drug issue because he is addicted now and losing himself.

Anne tracks his phone and she has taught him to be a bad liar, he usually just leaves it at the library and goes where he wants. Like now, he is going to borrow it from his friend who loves books a lot. They are neighbors at the res and his only trips are to the mall, school, and library.

He will leave in the morning for Joburg and by evening he will be back.

WILSON

He got someone to plant drugs in Ricardo's bar because he cannot help but think that he is the one jeopardizing them.

How Naledi found out about them is not a coincidence, not after so long when they have been operating without hassles.

The person he sent will place the drugs in his office, she is her employee and would do anything for money. She also has access to his office because he makes sure his workers are always safe.

All she has to do is to pull a stunt that will make him take her to the office and then she will drop the package. This has to happen when they are close to knocking off so when the police arrive in the morning, they find it.

His phone rings as he is waiting outside the building, it's Felix.

Wilson: Brother.

Felix: Hey, you left in a hurry.

Wilson: You know I love solutions. I am taking care of business from the sideways, fixing the fence.

Felix: (laughing) Okay, I hear you.

Wilson: Why did you call?

Felix: I won't be around for some time, can you please throw an eye at my house? there is a man I left in there.

Wilson: (confused) A man?

Felix: Naledi brought that artist tonight, said she doesn't know how long he is going to stay.

Wilson: And you decided to leave them together. Are you putting Naledi on a test?

Felix: No, but I don't trust that guy.

Wilson: Where are you going?

Felix: To my other house.

Wilson: Jo'burg?

Felix: Yes.

Wilson whistles when it hits him.

Wilson: All this time you have been taking trips to Jo'burg...you know what, good luck.

Felix: (laughing) Keep your mouth shut.

To be continued...

RICARDO SIBANDA

He is up and ready to go check things out at his bar when Wilson calls him. He answers surprised because Wilson never calls, it might even be the first he is calling since they exchanged numbers.

Ricardo: Hello.

Wilson: Hey, I need you to come to the warehouse. There is something I need help with and Felix is not around.

Ricardo: But you know I am not available today.

Wilson: I wouldn't be calling if it wasn't urgent. I need your help.

Ricardo: (sighs) Okay, I am coming.

He puts the phone down as Noma gets back into the bedroom from bathing.

Noma: What's wrong?

Ricardo: I've just received a call to come to the warehouse.

Noma: I thought you don't have work there today.

Ricardo: I don't. Felix isn't around so I have to go help Wilson with whatever.

Noma: How is it working with him? he doesn't seem like a nice human being.

Ricardo: I guess I am surviving. He is friends with Felix and I think we are civil to each other because of that.

Noma: Okay, I will go to the bar and make sure things run smoothly just until you get back.

Ricardo: I don't want you stressing babe, my employees are going to do exactly that.

Noma: (laughs) I know you are worried but trust me, I am sister boss when you are not around. No one ever messes with me there.

Ricardo: You woke up in a better mood today, thank you.

Noma: Because I have the most wonderful husband.

She kisses him and then moves back and looks at his face smiling.

Noma: Do you know how much I love you?

Ricardo: (moving towards her) No, can you show me?

Noma: (giggles) Later, let's go make money for this one.

She says holding on her stomach. Ricardo also places his hand over hers.

Noma: I am hopeful that we will hold him in our arms.

Ricardo: Or her.

Noma: No, it has to be a boy.

He doesn't say another word. After what happened to her, she doesn't want a girl child because she is afraid she won't be able to protect her.

Ricardo hugs and kisses her before the mood becomes tense and then leaves.

BANDILE HADEBE

He arrived earlier than expected at his brother's house. It looks like there is no one in here.

He calls him after knocking at the main bedroom door and getting no response.

Bulelani answers cheerfully and he can hear a woman's voice in the background.

Bandile: Where are you? I am at your house.

Bulelani: Jo'burg?

Bandile: Yes.

Bulelani: You should have said something. I am in Cape Town.

Bandile: Is sis Zanele with you?

Bulelani: No. Maybe she went to her farm if she is not there.

Bandile: Okay, I guess I will just sleep the night and then leave in the morning.

Bulelani: You will visit next time then, and I hope you didn't come because you are broke.

Bandile: (laughs) Well it wouldn't hurt to get a few hundred for my trip back.

Bulelani: Fine, I will send later on.

Bandile: Thank you.

An unfamiliar car drives in and Zanele gets off, followed by some coloured guy.

Bandile: Let me settle in bro, we will talk.

He hangs up and finds a spot to hide.

The duo walks in hand-in-hand and starts kissing once in the living room. Felix lifts Zanele and walks with her to the open kitchen.

He puts her on the counter and they kiss hungrily, undressing each other. Bandile is watching them all this time, frozen.

They are devouring each other and the moans and groans are getting louder. They are not even using protection, but who is he to judge when he sleeps with a woman old enough to be his grandma. He keeps quiet, now regretting hiding in here because he cannot turn around. He closes his eyes until he hears the sounds dying off.

NOMA SIBANDA

She gets to her husband's bar and greets the employees before going into his office.

Everything seems okay, it's like no one even uses this part of the building. She sits on his chair and spins around before bringing it back into position.

She notices a plastic sticking out from under the table where there is a drawer. The drawer is locked so she puts her hand under the table and pulls out the plastic.

There is white powder inside and it cannot be anything else besides drugs. She has never seen any at such a close range, nor has she ever held them in her hands.

One hand goes to her handbag and comes back with a phone. She dials Ricardo and his phone doesn't go through. She calls Naledi after sending a picture and when she answers she tells her to check her WhatsApp.

Her phone rings a few minutes later.

Noma: What is it?

Naledi: Bring it to my restaurant immediately.

Noma: Let me check if there is any more?

Naledi: Be quick.

She hangs up and runs her hands under the table, trying to kneel so she can check well and she spots another pack at the corner of the table.

Once done she puts them in her hand bag and rushes out still trying to get hold of Ricardo.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She was in her studio when Noma called and Bulelani excused her. Noma has just arrived and they have locked themselves in the studio.

Noma: I don't know what to say. I just can't believe Ricardo would do this.

Naledi: I doubt it's him. I think I know what's happening here.

Noma's phone rings and she answers putting it on loudspeaker because it's from the bar.

Noma: Hello.

Voice: Sister boss, there are police here with a search warrant. They were tipped off about a drug business going on and they want to search the premises.

Noma: I am coming.

She hangs up, and the stress is visible on her face.

Naledi: Let me get my bag, I am coming with you.

She unlocks the door and rushes out to her office. Bulelani follows after her.

Bulelani: Is everything okay?

Naledi: Yes

I have to take care of something.

Bulelani: I am coming with you.

She doesn't protest so they all rush to the car where Noma is already waiting in the passenger seat. They are driving in her Mercedes Benz, and Naledi takes the wheel.

Bulelani never knew Naledi could drive like that. He is still in awe when she parks beside the police van and gets off, approaching the police officers.

Naledi: Is everything okay here.

One of them turns and informs her of their reason for being here. She leads them inside, Noma didn't even get off the car because anxiety is dealing with her.

Bulelani gets off after making sure she is okay and follows after the police.

They head straight to Ricardo's office and starts turning it upside down. After a while, their senior announces that they leave since they can't find anything and they do just that.

Bulelani: (worriedly) What's happening?

Naledi: I don't know yet, but I will find out.

Bulelani: Are you okay though?

Naledi: Don't worry about me. I will be fine. Let's go, I have to make sure Noma is okay.

They go back to the car and drive back to the restaurant. Naledi cannot show the drugs to Bulelani so she takes them to her office and puts them safely.

WILSON

He organised people to teach Ricardo a lesson by roughing him up a little. He arrived at the warehouse and immediately after getting off the car, they sneaked up on him and covered his head with a plastic.

He managed to bite it off so he can get some air but it doesn't help because he is tied up to the chair. These guys are also hitting him everywhere besides his face.

They keep saying something about drugs, asking him what he knows about two C's.

They are still beating him up when Wilson's phone vibrates. He walks out, careful to not make any sound and then answers his phone.

Wilson: Is it done?...What do you mean you didn't find anything?...okay, bye.

He sighs going back inside. He first stands by the door, cocks his gun and then call out Ricardo's name. The guys scatters, running away and he fires a few shots before rushing to untie Ricardo.

Ricardo: (groaning) Fuck, these motherfu**ckers almost killed me.

Wilson: What happened?

Ricardo: They ambushed me. I don't even know if they followed me here or what.

Wilson: (giving him his phone) Here I found it dropped outside not far from your car. You sure you don't know who they are?

Ricardo: (removing the plastic from his head) How would I even know?

He gets up limping and then head to the door.

Wilson: You should stop pissing people off, I understand now is not the right time but this is a workplace and I don't want things to go wrong.

He doesn't answer as he walks out the door and Wilson smiles to himself.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

They left after finishing up their thing with Felix because she had come to fetch her swimwear, and she is now coming back to fetch her laptop so she can get some work done while with him.

She finds Bandile watching TV, and she almost screams in fear.

Zanele: Banz, what are you doing here?

Bandile: I wanted to surprise y'all.

Zanele: When did you arrive?

Bandile: An hour ago maybe.

She is getting some feeling from him, he is not as excited as he knows him to be whenever they see each other.

Zanele: You look sad, is everything okay?

Bandile: I am fine.

Zanele: Okay, I am not staying. I came to fetch my laptop.

Bandile: Will you be back tonight?

Zanele: I don't know, but to be safe you can lock up and then I will use my spare keys.

Bandile: Okay. I am leaving in the morning, I wanted to see my brother.

Zanele: Great...I mean, it's great that you wanted to see your brother, that means you miss him.

She mentally punches herself because what is this?

Bandile: I do, but I guess I will see him some other time.

Zanele: Yeah. Well, feel at home. I will see you when you see me.

She rushes to her bedroom and then comes back with her laptop bag and brushes his head on her way out. The same hand that was holding that guy's pink dick, eeew!

To be continued...

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She walks down the stairs to join Bulelani in the living room.

Bulelani: How is she?

Naledi: (dropping herself on the couch) She is sleeping. I still can't get hold of her husband.

Bulelani: You seem to care so much about her.

Naledi: I do, she is the only female I am left with at home. I cannot afford to lose her too.

Bulelani: I understand. I also have a little brother I would kill for.

Naledi: You see.

Bulelani: (chuckles) I was surprised today when I saw you driving.

Naledi: Emotions got the better of me. I become something else when I am under pressure.

Bulelani: Well just so you know, it was nice to watch.

Naledi: (laughs) I bet it was.

Bulelani: What else does Naledi do besides driving like she is in a movie?

Naledi: I own a gun and I know how to use it.

He shifts uncomfortably hoping she will say she is joking but she doesn't.

Bulelani: I hate guns.

Naledi: Why?

Bulelani: I-

A car driving in disturbs them and Naledi gets up to check who it is.

Naledi: It's Noma's husband. I am coming.

RICARDO SIBANDA

His phone is off and the screen is cracked. It's late judging by the now setting sun and he is driving back home. He knows in his heart that Noma is worried to death wherever she is and it's not good for the baby.

He passes by Naledi's place first because the restaurant was closed when he passed there. He slows down at the gate as it opens and then walks inside.

Naledi meets with him before he can even park the car. He gets off and approaches her limping.

Naledi: (whispering) What happened?

Ricardo: Can we sit down first, I am in pain.

She leads him to Felix's office and locks the door. Richard takes a seat holding to his ribs with one hand. Naledi pours him a drink and he downs it at one go.

Ricardo: I don't know what's happening but it's not a coincidence. Wilson called that I come to the warehouse and upon my arrival I was attacked.

Naledi: (wrinkled forehead) Wait, wait, wait... what did Wilson say when he called?

Ricardo: That I should come help him out with something because Felix is not around, and it was urgent.

Naledi: So that means he was already there and waiting for you?

Ricardo: I suppose.

Naledi: Then where was he when you got attacked?

Ricardo: I don't know, he came after a few minutes and the guys ran away then he started firing at them.

Naledi: Did you end up helping him?

Ricardo: No, how could I possibly do anything when I'm like this?

Naledi: There were police officers at your bar about a drug tip off received.

Ricardo: What? what drugs?

Naledi: Well luckily, Noma found them before the police came. I have them with me.

Ricardo: (sighs) This is the reason I didn't want to be part of the fishing business because now I will be implicated in things I know nothing of.

Naledi: The question is how did the drugs get to your office?

Noma said they were under the table, hidden.

Ricardo: Maybe one of my employees is working with whoever is trying to frame me.

Naledi: (sighs) Let me see how the damage is on your body.

He takes off his blazer and t-shirt, there are visible cuts and bruises all over and because he is dark, the bruises appears as bumps with black blood inside.

Naledi: I don't think there is anything broken, you will be fine in a few days.

Ricardo: I am just worried about Noma seeing me like this, I don't want to stress her.

Naledi: Good luck with hiding this from her. She is sleeping in my bedroom, go home and clean yourself up. I will bring her later on.

Ricardo: Thank you.

She unlocks the door as he puts on his clothes back, and then they go out.

Bulelani is waiting by the door when Naledi comes back from seeing Ricardo off.

Bulelani: How is he? he seems to be in pain.

Naledi: He will be fine.

They go back inside.

Bulelani: What happened to him?

Naledi: He says he was attacked.

Bulelani: Do you believe him?

Naledi: Yes. Why?

Bulelani: I am just wondering what kind of attackers would leave his face alone when attacking him. It seems he was attacked for something he knows or by someone he knows.

Naledi: I didn't pay attention, are you sure he is not harmed on the face?

Bulelani: I saw him from a distance but trust me, the way he is limping means the shots he received were heavy, that would have been visible on his face too.

Naledi: Mmh, I will talk to him again and see what will come up.

Bulelani: Can you please just tell what's happening?, maybe I can help.

Naledi sighs and starts explaining to him what Ricardo told her.

BANDILE HADEBE

Zanele didn't come back last night and he also went out for a few drinks that resulted in him oversleeping. It's almost 11 AM when he wakes up and his head is heavy on him.

He goes to the bathroom first to relieve himself and then goes to the kitchen for some cold water.

The same car from yesterday drives in and this time, the guy doesn't come out but they kiss through the window and as Zanele turns to walk away the guy spanks her. She giggles walking inside and her heart almost stops when she sees Bandile in the kitchen near the window.

Zanele: Hey, I thought you have left already.

Bandile: No, I think I will stay for a little longer.

Zanele: What about school

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are you not writing your finals soon?

Bandile: I am smart, I doubt a few days could ruin my marks.

Zanele: Okay, let me get started with my day then.

She walks past him headed to her bedroom and he stops her.

Bandile: Are you and bhut' Bulelani in an open relationship or something?

Zanele: Why do you ask?

Bandile: I am just wondering if he knows this is what happens in his absence.

Zanele: If you have something to say just say it.

Bandile: I am asking if your husband knows you are cheating on him?

Zanele: Well obviously not, you wana tell him?

Bandile: No, he is not a fool I'm sure he will find out on his own.

Zanele: Then it will be his loss if he decides to end our relationship because of that.

Bandile: We shall see about that.

He rinses the glass as she walks away and then puts it where he found it. He is not staying any more hour here, he has to leave.

FELIX DELIN

His relationship with Zanele has been going on since the first time he saw her at the farmer's market. Wilson made things possible and they linked up, started talking and later started sleeping together.

He has his own house in Joburg that Naledi knows nothing about, and that is where he has been meeting up with Zanele each time he comes here.

His phone rings as he finishes with his exercises. He answers getting off the treadmill and grabs a towel to wipe the sweat off his face.

Felix: Brother.

Wilson: Hey, how are you doing?

Felix: I'm good. What's happening that side?

Wilson: Nothing much. I got the information and I need you to come back.

Felix: Give me a day or two.

Wilson: Okay, I will see you then.

MARI-ANNE

She has managed to find Bandile's location because he was out clubbing last night, at her territory. The club he was at is part of her property, the owner sells for her and another interesting part is that Mr Buthelezi's last born is also dealing.

This brings a twist to all this because she is married to Bandile's brother, and now that Bandile is misbehaving; the plan is to finish with him or lock Zanele out of the business by threatening her with his life. The choice lies with her.

She has already sent people to Bandile's residence because he has to come back for school. They haven't sent any word and that means he is not yet back.

NALEDI'S JO'BURG HOME NARRATED

Philani Mthembu, Naledi's brother and the eldest amongst the cousins and siblings has just landed in Jo'burg from a business trip.

He wanted to book for tonight's accommodation but he remembered that his sister has a house here. He is parked outside the building, the gates are locked and it's very dark.

He dials her sister so she can give him the access codes to the house.

Naledi: Philani, hi.

Philani: How are you Naledi?

Naledi: I am good, it's been long. How is the business trip?

Philani: It went well, I am in Joburg.

Naledi: What? why didn't you come to Cape Town so we can see you?

Philani: And miss the women from the city of Gold? please I have see you and Noma my whole life, I am even tired of your faces.

Naledi: (laughing) Well Felix is there, you can go to the house.

Philani: I am parked outside your house now and there seems to be no one here.

Naledi: Really? okay, let me send the codes. You will call me when you are inside.

Philani: Sure.

He hangs up and the message arrives. He punches the first code and the gate opens then he drives in. The garage door opens as he nears it and he parks his car before going inside the house.

It is clean, the type that suggest nobody lives here. He dials her again.

Philani: I am inside. There is no one here.

Naledi: Or maybe he went out.

Philani: I don't know, I will confirm in the morning if there are any car tracks outside the gate, and if he comes back.

Naledi: Okay, well I have a visitor now. We will talk in the morning.

Philani: Say hi to him.

Naledi: Why him?

Philani: Women don't visit at this time unless they're visiting indoda.

Naledi: Bye brother.

She hangs up laughing. Philani does a little tour around the house, and then finds a bedroom and sleeps.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

His phone rings as he is sleeping and he doesn't even recognize the number when he opens his eyes.

He takes some time before answering, still getting out of the sleep and then clears his throat.

Bulelani: Hello.

Bandile: (breathing heavily) Bhuti, they are going to kill me. I don't know where I am and one guy borrowed me his phone so I can call you. Please help, the woman's name is Anne. She is a drug dealer and-

The call gets cut and how he jumped off the bed is a mystery because he is now on his feet. He felt a rush of cold and numbness when Bandile started talking. The fear in his voice is hard to ignore, and why would anyone want to kill his little brother?

He doesn't even have a girlfriend whom he could say other guys are fighting with him over. He doesn't have a car to day he has been hijacked, he- (stops pacing around), "she is a drug dealer".

Bulelani: Oh God, please not my little brother. He is all I have please God.

He puts on his clothes and rushes to Naledi's room then knocks. She opens rubbing her eyes with a robe tied on her body.

Naledi: (stretching) What is it?

Bulelani: I have to go, my little brother is in danger.

Naledi: What danger?

Bulelani: He just called, someone is trying to kill him and he said he doesn't know where he is. He mentioned a name, Anne or something and said she is a drug dealer.

The sleep in Naledi's eyes vanishes and she looks at him, now seeing more clearly. He is fully dressed for a trip but time isn't on his side. It could be dangerous outside or even where he is going.

Naledi: Okay, let's sit down and talk.

Bulelani: There is no time Naledi, I have to leave.

Naledi: And I am not refusing, but if you leave in this state you might not make it to your destination. It's probably 1 AM if not 2, and you are not in the right state to drive.

Bulelani: The longer I stay here I will be putting his life in more danger.

Naledi: I know that. Let me see what I can do before you leave. Please stay here.

She goes to her room and then comes back with a bag of weapons. She unzips it and takes out a handgun then hands it to him.

He is hesitant to take it but he finally opens his hands. While Naledi is busy fishing for another one, Bulelani cocks the gun using his heel, trying to see if he still got it in himself.

Naledi smiles and hands him another one.

Naledi: Be safe.

He looks at her and then rushes out to his car before driving off.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She goes back to her room and when she puts the bag back in its place, her elbow hits the corner of the painting Felix bought and it falls to the floor shattering.

She carefully moves aside and starts picking up the glasses. Once done she sweeps and leaves the broom against the wall covering the glasses. She picks up the painting frame and everything falls off, including the pack Felix forgot that other day.

Her eyes bulges out in awe. This is a drug. She removes the painting and then searches all over the frame to see if there is any but she finds nothing more. She curses under her breath, now more angrier than before.

First thing in the morning, she is going to Joburg.

She sends Philani a message not to leave and then goes back to bed and lays there thinking of what she is going to do.

She gets off and goes to Felix's office. It is locked so she gets a spoon and opens it. Walking inside she wants to turn it upside

down to look for more of these packs, but she decides to leave the one she has on the table and then goes back to her bedroom.

MARI-ANNE

Her guys kidnapped Bandile when he got off at his residence from Joburg. They have kept him in another house where he has never been and Anne is now on her way there.

It's still early but the sun is already out and that means it's going to be hot. She told them not to give him any food or drink, surely the hunger will do the trick so he can confess quickly.

She arrives at the house and they take her to where they have kept him. She opens the door and walks in. It's a fully furnished bedroom and he is passed out on the floor tied to a chair on his feet and hands.

Anne: (kicking him) Hey, wake up. Wake up!

He doesn't move so she walks out and comes back with one guy holding a 20L bucket of cold water.

She stands at the door as he walks in and splashes the water on him. Bandile jolts up with his upper body shivering, and catching his breath to find Anne standing at the door with the guy already out of sight.

Anne: (smiling) Aah finally. How are you baby boy?

Bandile: (angrily) You are going to regret this.

Anne: (sitting on the bed) Whoa! slow down tiger. Let's have a small chat where I will ask and you answer as honest as you can be. Start by telling me why you lied about your whereabouts?

He clicks looking away still shivering. The chair doesn't make it easy for him to sit properly so he has his one shoulder against the bed and it keeps falling.

Anne: I am going to ask you this question for the last time. Why did you lie about where you were?

He maintains his posture still quiet and shivering.

Anne: (standing up) Okay, let me get someone to help you talk.

She walks outside and comes back with one guy known for heavy punches. She tells him to untie Bandile and help him up. He does as told and stands before him.

Anne: For each question that he chooses to not answer, give him two blows from his stomach going up. I am going to start again, why did you lie?

She doesn't finish his question because there is now a third person in the room. Bandile doesn't answer and the guy punches him twice on the stomach, causing him to fall back on the chair he was tied to.

Anne keeps asking the same question while the guy punches him, until the last blows are aimed at his face.

Bandile: (groaning) I went to see my brother in Jo'burg so I could talk to him about what I have been doing with you, actually what you have been making me do. I told him everything.

Anne: (to the guy) Excuse us.

The guy walks out and Anne approaches him.

Anne: Why did you keep silent all this while? I don't trust you.

Bandile: The fact remains, he knows who you are and he will come for you.

Anne: Well I also have some news for him too. I will give him a signal of where I am so he can easily find me. (standing up) See you later.

BANDILE HADEBE

Later that morning he hear voices approaching the room and when it opens, Bulelani gets thrown inside by Anne's guards.

He is only tied on the hands because Anne thought he might kill his brother when he gets here after what she told him. Not she cares, but they can't spill blood in her house.

Bandile: (tearfully) Bhuti, are you okay?

Bulelani: (getting up) Is it true Bandile?

Bandile: (surprised) What?

Bulelani: Is it true that you have been doing drugs?

Bandile looks down embarrassed and Bulelani brushes his face in disappointment.

Bulelani: (tearfully) But why Bandile? I did everything right, where did you lack?

Bandile: It's not your fault bhut' Bulelani, it's just a foolish decision I made.

Bulelani: That now costs me a lot more. Should I let them kill you so I won't have to worry about your stupid decisions anymore?

Bandile: I don't want to die.

Bulelani: But you want to kill me because that's what you are doing right now.

The door opens and Anne walks in with a file in her hand.

Anne: I am back with the last piece of information I have. Bulelani you might just want to sit down for this one.

Bulelani: I am fine.

She beckons one of the guys to make him sit and he pushes him to the bed.

Anne: That's more like it. Listen, I am going to give you options here because someone has to be punished.

She removes photos from the file pocket and then approaches Bulelani.

Anne: (moving the photo before him) This is your wife, Zanele Buthelezi,(shows him another) and this is her boyfriend, Felix Delin.

She moves back to the door.

Anne: Your wife is a potential enemy and if I don't deal with her, she is going to deal with me. You hand her to me, and I will let your brother live. Where can I find her?

As neutral as he can be, he gives her the address and her guards untie both of them before rushing out to the given address.

They give them back their phones after dropping them off a few metres from Bandile's residence, and the first person Bulelani calls is Naledi.

Naledi: Hello.

Bulelani: I found him.

Naledi: Is he okay? you sound sad.

Bulelani: He is fine. It's just some revelations I found about him, and my wife.

Naledi: Where are you? I have just arrived in Joburg.

Bulelani: I am in Pretoria. I will come see you when I get there.

Naledi: Okay.

He hangs up and then looks at Bandile who is holding on his stomach in pain.

Bulelani: What is it?

Bandile: They roughed me up a little.

Bulelani: We are almost there, hold on.

Bandile: Okay.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

They arrived at Bandile's residence to get his car and then got some of his clothes and drove off to Jo'burg. It has been two hours since they arrived they even went to the doctor and now they are back, making food.

Bulelani is the one cooking while Bandile rests his aching body on the couch while talking to him.

Bandile: She wasn't lying about Zanele.

Bulelani raises his head and looks at him.

Bandile: I mean Anne. She wasn't lying about Zanele cheating. They were here the day I arrived and they had sex. I saw them with my naked eyes.

Bulelani: (continues stirring in the pot) I have nothing to lose by divorcing her, I just didn't want to do it without proof. I had my suspicions for a very long time.

Bandile: I'm sorry.

Bulelani: No, it's all good. Don't worry about me. When are you finishing with your exams?

Bandile: I am left with three papers.

Bulelani: I will be watching you, once you are done I am booking you into a rehabilitation.

Bandile: I am not addicted.

Bulelani: Let's wait for a few days and see.

Bandile: What happened to your studio?

The door opens and Zanele walks in before he could respond.

She pulls herself together and cheerfully greets them.

Zanele: Babe, why didn't you tell me you are coming back?

She doesn't dare move any closer to him for a hug or a kiss because she smells like Felix.

Bulelani: (calmly) I wanted to surprise you.

Zanele: And I am surprised. Let me take a bath and join you guys.

She passes to their bedroom, or more like fleeing towards it and Bandile chuckles.

Bandile: I'm applying a role for her on one of these soapies next time they advertise. She is good.

Bulelani laughs while finishing off with the cooking.

He is done cooking and has even dished up for himself and Bandile. As they finish eating, Zanele comes down looking sick and apologizes because she cannot join them.

Zanele: Let me rush to the hospital, I think there is something wrong with me.

She rushes out and the two look at each other in awe.

Bandile: Is it still in act?

Bulelani: (shrugs) I don't know.

They finish eating and then wash the dishes. Later on Bulelani goes to his en-suite bathroom to bath, and Bandile uses the main one.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She is with Philani driving back to her house from Felix's. Philani called him and they tracked him then went over to the location and asked a few people around the place if they knew him.

One of the neighbours confirmed that he has been coming almost every month with the same woman, and the description given matches Zanele.

Naledi: Men are indeed Lucifer's sons.

She clicks her tongue as Philani turns to her with one eyebrow raised.

Philani: What did I do?

Naledi: You are annoying, of course I am not talking about you.

Philani: Okay, but shame it's your turn sis. Feel it. There is no any other way to heal if you don't allow yourself to feel the feeling.

She smacks his shoulder and he laughs.

Philani: Sorry.

A moment passes with both of them quiet and then Philani clears his throat.

Philani: How did he even buy a house without your knowledge, sis?

Naledi: We are married out of community of property, obviously most things do not require my details or anything.

Philani: But still, you are married and that means you are a team. He should have told you, or you should have found out sooner.

Naledi: It's fine, I am not worried about it. I just want him out of my life for good. Thank God I don't have children with him, yeses!

She drives through her yard and parks the car. They get off and goes inside as her phone rings.

Naledi: Hello.

Bulelani: Hey, I wanted to ask if it's possible to meet?

Naledi: You can come to my house, let me send you the location.

Bulelani: Okay.

She hangs up and sends the message then catch up with Philani who is almost at the door.

Naledi: How is everyone home? I never got a chance to ask since I got here.

Philani: Everyone is okay. Refiloe is still the same Refiloe you know, crazy about developing his body and stuff. Nathan is fine, I think he has a girlfriend.

Naledi: Nathan, a girlfriend? (claps once)

Philani: And they hurt him shame. If I was a girl I would date him and spare him the trouble.

Naledi: (laughs hitting him) Stop it.

Philani: (stops and look at her) Who is coming over? I heard you on the phone.

Naledi: You will see him when he arrives.

Philani: So you are not even divorced yet but there is already a he? I'm judging you.

Naledi: Who said anything about us being together? He is just a good friend

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and I think he's got a dark side I am not ready to face but we will deal with it when we get there.

Philani: I think I like him already. Please make the journey with him a little longer so I can get to know him.

They continue talking as Naledi starts preparing food for her guests.

FELIX DELIN

When Philani called he said he was coming to Joburg since Naledi told him that he will find him there.

He was about to leave when Zanele called him regarding the sudden sickness that attacked her, and he cut his trip to Naledi's house so he can accompany her to the doctor.

They left by his car and left hers at his place so she can come back there, in case it gets late for her to drive back to her place.

They found a queue at the doctor and had to wait but Felix left her there, and promised to come back for her.

He is driving through the gate at Naledi's house and is surprised to see Naledi's car parked outside. There are two more cars and he doesn't know who they belong to.

He parks and then gets off and walks in the house. From the main door he can hear voices in the dining room and indeed Naledi is here because that laughter, the one that sounds like it's forced to come out belongs to her.

This means she knows he hasn't been here, but she never said anything and that makes him scared.

Naledi greets him with most warmest smile ever and gets him a plate. She dishes for him how he likes and pours him a drink.

Naledi: Babe, this is Bulelani Hadebe and his younger brother, Bandile Hadebe.

She introduces them once he is seated and they greet each other, and then Felix greets Philani and starts eating.

No one is paying attention to him, they are just talking and laughing at their own stuff while eating. It's like everything is all okay but he knows it's not.

He is seating at the same table with the man whose wife he just fucked this morning. On the other side he is seated next to his wife, the one he has been lying to and cheating on all these years.

His phone receives a missed call message, it's from Zanele. He puts it back in his blazer and focuses on his food. Another message comes in and this time he stands up to take care of it.

Felix: Excuse me, I have to make a call.

No one acknowledges him as he walks out to his car.

WILSON

He has been doing his investigations about this Anne woman. Since they never got their delivery that time, things have been going slow and they are now getting the drugs at a more expensive price.

He is seated in front of the laptop where there is a slideshow of everyone dealing in Cape Town. There is no one new, it's all the same faces he has known for all these years.

He moves to Joburg and then starts scrolling to see if he will notice changes. A picture of Zanele catches his eye and he stops at it.

This information exists on a USB he has gotten through his sneaky ways. None of these people know that someone out there has their pictures.

He dials Felix to tell him of this new information but his phone takes him straight to voicemail.

She has been right under their noses for so long and they didn't notice anything. If Felix shared some of their secrets with her during their pillow talk it means it's over for them. You cannot trust anyone in this kind of business.

He tries him again and again but it still won't go through, and he is about to go crazy.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

She is done at the hospital and is waiting outside trying to call Felix so he can come fetch her.

They didn't prescribe any medication because of her condition, but they gave her a few things to keep her on the right way. Just foods she needs to help her gain strength.

The call doesn't go through and she is standing under the sun. She crosses the road so she can wait under the shade of the trees, or maybe a coffee shop or restaurant plus she is hungry.

A black Audi A4 without registration approaches her, slowing down on her side and she is not even paying attention to it as she fans herself with her hand.

When she hangs up after the voicemail, her phone rings and it's Felix. She answers turning to face the hospital.

Zanele: I am done, come fetch me.

Felix: Naledi is here.

Zanele: So what? it's hot out here and I will faint. You are the one who suggested I leave my car cause blah blah blah. Stop giving me excuses and come fetch me.

Felix: You sound upset, what did the doctor say?

Zanele: Are you coming or not?

Felix: I just want to know.

Zanele: Fine, I am pregnant.

One guy from the Audi gets off on the backseat and grabs her, quickly getting back into the car. She fights him screaming on top of her lungs while trying to bite his hand, and her phone drops on the ground.

Felix: Zanele! Zanele!

He hears tyres screeching off and then silence.

To be continued...

FELIX DELIN

He hangs up the phone starting his car. Naledi comes out before he could reverse and approaches him. He is sweating and fear is written all over his face.

She leans over on the opened window and looks at his face as if trying to read him.

Naledi: Are you okay? where are you going?

Felix: Something just came up at our branch this side. I have to go take care of it.

Naledi: I thought all your branches have people overseeing whatever.

Felix: It does, but I go by whenever I am this side. They know I am around hence they called me.

Naledi: Were you going to leave without saying anything?

Felix: I was going to send a message or something. I really have to leave.

Naledi: (moving back) Okay. I will see you when you see me.

He doesn't reply but reverses and she walks back inside.

His phone rings and he answers while driving off.

Felix: Now is not a good time.

Wilson: I won't take long, just listen.

Felix: (sighs) Okay.

Wilson: Zanele is dealing, the man who died was her father and she is the last born out of three girls. It seems she is the only one who took after her father because I cannot find any records of what her sisters do.

Felix: Whoa! you are going too fast, Zanele is what?

Wilson: She is a drug dealer, based in Jo'burg. For your sake I hope you didn't share any information about us because she can, and will use it against us.

Silence!

Silence!

Silence!

Wilson: This is what I meant when I said no women. Fuck!

Felix: I didn't say anything, but she might have found out because recently she has been asking me about such things.

Wilson: I'm going to kill her if she dares tries something.

Felix: You can't.

Wilson: Yes I can, and I will.

Felix: I will not allow you.

Wilson: We will see about that.

He clicks his tongue and hangs up.

Felix doesn't really know what he is going to do or where he is going. But the direction he is on right now is leading to the hospital. Surely someone saw something.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She is seeing Bulelani and Bandile off. Philani is in the house, Bandile is in the car and the two are a few metres from the car talking.

Naledi: (pointing by head) What's wrong with him?

Bulelani: I think he is addicted to drugs.

Naledi: He uses them?

Bulelani: Was, supplied by an old woman who was also sleeping with him.

Naledi: How old is he?

Bulelani: 20.

Naledi: He is young, how did he even end up using?

Bulelani: I don't know, a moment of weakness or something. He gets everything he wants Naledi. Every thing I do to get money is all for him.

Naledi: I am sorry, I can imagine how it feels.

Bulelani: I want to book him into rehab when he finishes with his exams.

Naledi: That's better. I hope it all goes well.

Bulelani: Thank you.

Naledi: I am going back to Cape Town tomorrow. My brother is passing to Limpopo.

Bulelani: I don't know when I will come back, but I will. I want to be able to keep an eye on this one for now.

Naledi: Okay, well we will be communicating via calls in the meantime.

Bulelani: Yeah, it was nice being hosted with such delicious food. I enjoyed the evening, and can you believe we had just eaten?

Naledi: Well you never say no to food when hosted.

Bulelani: (chuckles) Exactly.

Naledi: I enjoyed too, and I hope it's the beginning of many more.

Bandile presses the hooter and they both turn to look him.

Naledi: It looks like our time is up.

Bulelani: Yeah, I should get going. Have yourself a good night.

Naledi: You too.

He walks off to the car as Naledi stands by and watches. Bandile opens the door for him and he playfully pull his ears causing him to laugh. Naledi smiles looking at them as Bulelani starts the car.

She turns to go inside and finds Philani standing by the door with his arms folded.

Naledi: What?

Philani: I am just wondering what type of friendship exist between the two of you. I mean you look like a couple to me, all cute and stuff.

Naledi: (pushing him aside) He is just my friend.

Philani: Until he decides to cross the border. What will you say then?

She doesn't answer as she walks off to her bedroom.

Philani: You are my sister and I know you. I think I should start calling him sbará aka brother-in-law, you will see how you make that come true.

Naledi's bedroom door closes and Philani laughs going to his room.

BULELANI HADEBE

They have arrived back at his place and he is on the phone with someone who has to come fix his studio.

Right after hanging up, Ntombi's call comes through and he answers pouring himself a drink.

Bulelani: Hello.

Ntombi: Hey, how are you?

Bulelani: Alive, and yourself?

Ntombi: I am not okay. I have been having dreams about Zanele being shot

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so I went to consult today and they told me she was in danger.

Bulelani: (sighs) She is not at home as we speak. I came back from Cape Town and found the house all clear. She hasn't been sleeping here either.

Ntombi: You sound calm but I know you are upset. I also know your past with guns and I am pleading with you that you don't do it.

Bulelani: (chuckles) I am angry, more than angry even but I won't shoot her. I love your sister so much, I would never do anything to hurt her. It's a pity she is not mine to protect and

cherish anymore, so the bullet might hit her but it won't be coming from me.

Ntombi: You can't say she is not yours to protect while you are still married to her. If she dies the blame will be on you.

Bulelani: And I won't be bothered because I will be knowing the truth. Listen, if you want you can come protect her on your own. But make sure you leave your family protected first, you don't want to indirectly kill them chasing after a grown up who has made her decisions.

He hears her mother reprimanding her from the background then she takes the phone from her.

Ma Buthelezi: Mkhwenyana.

Bulelani: (calmly) Mama.

Ma Buthelezi: Unjani.

Bulelani: Ngyaphila ma, wen' unjani?

Ma Buthelezi: Nami ngyaphila. Please forgive my daughter for disrespecting you like this.

Ntombi: (in the background) I don't need his forgiveness ma. He is a man, he should man up.

Ma Buthelezi: If you don't close that mouth I am going to forget that you are a grown up woman, and whip you. I still have my sjambok and all your father's belts are still intact.

She keeps quiet and Ma Buthelezi goes back to the phone.

Ma Buthelezi: How is everything going there?

Bulelani: I cannot talk over the phone. It needs face to face.

Ma Buthelezi: Should I send my brothers to come talk to you?

Bulelani: No, I will make time and come there.

Ma Buthelezi: Okay, good night mkhwenyana.

Bulelani: Good night ma.

NARRATED

Anne made the call for Zanele to be kidnapped. Bulelani provided her with the address, and her guys followed her until they found the right moment to snatch her.

They saw everything from when she drove out to Felix's place, and they notified Anne on how things are going.

She is now kept in the same room they had kept Bandile. But luckily for her, they didn't tie her. They just locked her in until Anne arrives to have a talk with her.

The key turns on in the lock and she raises her head from the bed. One guy walks in holding a plate of food and glass of water.

He places them on the bedside table and then walks out. She looks at him until he is out of the door and the key turns to lock, then she attacks the food, eating as if she hasn't eaten in a month.

The food chokes her and she coughs taking snatching the glass to drink water, some even spills on the floor.

The keys turns again after what seems like forever. She is still up trying to figure out what's going on when Anne walks in.

Zanele: (glaring at her) You, how dare you come after me after killing my father?

Anne: (calmly) Because you decided to proceed from where he left off. You actually challenged me, called out for my name when I wasn't even paying attention to you.

Zanele: I am going to kill you.

Anne: (chuckles) Slow down before you run out of breath. I could kill you here right now and no one will know what happened to you. (sits down) I have a proposal for you.

She relaxes and stand down, giving her attention.

Anne: Something happened and led to your husband to be angry at you. He traded you in return for his brother. The person you should be angry at right now is him. But I am not part of your bedroom issues so I won't get involved in that, I just want you to tell me who the "two C's" are in exchange for your freedom.

Zanele: How will I know that you won't kill me after I have told you.

Anne: I don't know, you just have to trust me I guess.

Zanele: I don't know who they are but I can find out.

Anne: And I trust you to do exactly that. I will release you, give you three days to get me what I want.

She stands up to leave and Zanele stands up too.

Zanele: And if I don't deliver?

Anne: The first time you saw me was at your family home. I was riding alone and that means I came all by myself. I still know my way there, and I can go at anytime.

She turns and walks out the door, leaving Zanele sweating in her position. They bring her a phone to call someone who can come fetch her where they got her.

To be continued...



BULELANI HADEBE

He is sleeping when his phone rings, it's a number he doesn't recognise and he is afraid to answer because of what happened last time. But he is reminded that his brother is safe when he remembers that he is here with him.

He pulls himself together, getting up and rubbing his eyes then answers.

Bulelani: Hello.

Zanele: Babe, please come fetch me from the hospital.

Bulelani: (calmly) Where is your car?

Zanele: Just come fetch me and I will explain everything.

He sighs thinking of Ma Buthelezi, such a peaceful woman who has welcomed him in her home even after the community spoke bad about him. How she loves her daughter and wouldn't survive losing her right after losing her husband.

He brushes his head in annoyance because in his heart he is still mad at her, but there is still that tiny space of care.

Bulelani: Okay, I'm coming.

He hangs up and then puts on his clothes and check on his brother before leaving.

A thought sparks in his head and he tries not to focus on it, but as he is driving out he decides to act on it.

He calls Naledi and asks her to come meet with him at a certain location, which is a few metres from the hospital. And then asks for Felix's numbers so he can text him Zanele's location.

He knows she was kidnapped or something the minute Felix drove out in a hurry. Naledi also gave him the look to confirm everything when she went back inside after Felix had driven out.

The plan is to catch them red-handed because they are tired of their lies and secrets.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

She is waiting outside checking the time on her watch. The guys dropped her off and went back, and it's cold out here.

The sound of tires screeching startles her and she finds a tree to hide behind, in case it's criminals or something.

Felix's car appears floating in the air. The way the wheels rotates makes it look like the car is flying. He hits the brakes stopping a little further from her, and then abruptly opens the door and starts calling her name.

Zanele: (coming out) I'm here.

She looks around for Bulelani's car because how is she going to explain this?

Felix runs towards her, hugs and kisses her before kissing her belly.

Felix: I thought something bad happened to you.

Zanele: I am fine.

Felix: What happened?

Zanele: I will explain when I am relaxed. We have to go now.

Felix: (taking her bag) Okay, let's go.

He follows after her as she keeps looking around. They get in and then he lets out a heavy breath looking at her. She fakes a smile holding his hand and then puts on the belt so he can drive.

Zanele: Can you please borrow me your phone.

Felix: Check under the seats, it's somewhere there.

She moves her hands and feet around until she finds it. It's unlocked so she sends a message to Bulelani as Felix drives off.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She claps once as Felix's car passes by. They are in Bulelani's car, parked at a corner.

Bulelani: (reading) I have booked into a place for tonight because you are taking long to arrive and it's cold out here. Don't call or text this number, it belongs to the reception lady at this place. I will see you tomorrow.

Naledi scoffs leaning back on her seat and then claps again.

Naledi: Yah neh.

Bulelani: She even used his phone to text me. What kind of disrespect is this?

Naledi: I have seen enough. Let's go fetch my car so we can leave.

He starts the car and drives off. They are both just quiet in the car, each of them in their own worlds thinking of how wrong they married.

Part of them knows their partners were bound to become like this because marriage doesn't change anyone. In fact, it gives them more freedom to do whatever because at the end they will remain legally married to someone.

Bulelani drops her at the parking she had left her car and she drives off to her place.

What a waste of time, she could have slept and rested to gain all the strength needed for her trip back to Cape Town.

Early that morning, she is packing her bag when Philani knocks on her door all ready to leave.

Naledi: Come in.

Philani: Where were you going last night?

Naledi: And I thought you were asleep.

Philani: I know I am your brother and you respect me but this is your house. He could have come and spent the night with you.

Naledi: (laughing) I sometimes forget you have a loose screw.

Philani: I just worry about you. I know you are tough and all that but as your brother I have to worry.

Naledi: (zipping the bag) Which reminds me?

Philani: Yeah

Naledi: I think I am going to need help in these coming weeks and months.

Philani: What kind of help?

Naledi: Just be ready for war.

Philani: I doubt I still know how to fight or even use a gun.

Naledi: The scar on your hand should always be a reminder of what you are capable of. Respect Mr Mani's spirit.

Philani: I miss him sometimes you know.

Naledi: I know, me too. I think we should visit his grave this year, all of us.

Philani: Yes

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we will organise something.

Naledi: And I hope we will all still be alive.

Philani: Whenever someone speaks like that, it's their spirit letting the surroundings know that they are dying.

Naledi: (chuckles) Guns are not toys, they kill.

He doesn't respond as he hugs her and then goes back to his bedroom for his bags. They both walk out and lock then get into their cars and drive out. They hoot at each other as they part ways.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

She drives out of Felix's house all clean and fresh. Last night she managed to snoop around one last time and found what she was looking for.

All these years that they have been together she knew what Felix does. She is the one who brought his order through Bulelani's painting, and even told him where he was going to get it-well not using her real name and number of course.

But he just hasn't been paying attention because if he did he would know that she is dealing too. Or maybe he knows?

The problem now is that she is pregnant, and even though she has money, the baby needs its father and it cannot be Bulelani.

With the information she got, she is going to twist it a little and leave Felix and Wilson out of it.

Bulelani is up making breakfast when she walks into the house, after parking in the garage.

Zanele: Morning.

Bulelani: Good morning.

Zanele: Did you get my message last night?

Bulelani: Yeah.

Zanele: I'm sorry if you had already left.

Bulelani: No, I was still in the yard.

Zanele: Okay, let me lie down a bit. I will see you when I wake up.

Bulelani: Okay.

She goes to their bedroom and immediately locks the door.

The information she got, two C's which stands for two Capetonians, who are Felix and Wilson. She typed a new document that she has been busy with, in case Felix steps on her tail.

Now that she is way too involved with him, she has to sacrifice others.

She removes Felix and Wilson's names then enters Bulelani and Naledi's. With these two out of the way, she can enjoy her life with Felix in peace. The C in two C's will know change to Creatives, both these two love arts so it will make sense.

She dozes off while typing and then desert the work, comfortably falling back on the pillows.

NARRATED

Bandile was coming out of his room when Zanele walked in. He still doesn't understand how she is able to do all these things without Bulelani ever saying a word.

Bulelani serves him with breakfast and they sit down to eat.

Bandile: How are you able to be so calm when there is chaos in your house?

Bulelani: Sometimes not acting or saying a word is the best solution.

Bandile: But are you not affected?

Bulelani: I am, I just don't want to say or do anything that will later come back to me.

Bandile: Okay.

Bulelani: How are the withdrawals at night? you don't look so good.

Bandile: I will survive. I have to go back today though, to get some of my books.

Bulelani: I think it's best you just go back until you are done. This place is also not good for you. I want to go to Durban and I can't leave you here alone.

Bandile: Okay.

They hear a hooter coming from the gate.

Bulelani: (standing up) Let me check who it is.

He goes outside and then comes back a few minutes later with the delivery van driving in.

Bulelani: It's a delivery for Zanele, let me call her because I don't want to sign on her behalf.

He passes to the bedroom and knocks on the door. It is locked when he tries to open it so he knocks until he hears footsteps approaching.

Zanele: (sleepily) Hey.

Bulelani: There is a delivery for you outside.

He turns and walks down the stairs. She follows after him still rubbing her eyes.

Once she is outside, Bulelani goes back to the bedroom and what he is looking for is also looking for him.

The laptop is on, opened with the document looking right back at him. He skims through it and then chuckles.

There is a small book peeping from her handbag, he takes it out and does the same to its contents, skimming for the most important parts and then puts it back and walks out.

His phone rings and the people who are supposed to fix his studio tell him they have arrived. He goes out to talk to them and find Zanele instructing the delivery guys to take the parcels to her business location.

He doesn't say anything as he passes to talk to his guys.

To be continued...

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She arrived late last night and passed by her office to check how things have been going. Everything is under control especially now that the drug deliveries have stopped, and she also gets supplies from other retailers to avoid such things ever happening again.

She is getting ready to go to work when her phone rings, it's Noma calling. She answers sitting down to fix her hair because she is already dressed.

Naledi: Sis.

Noma: Hey, how are you?

Naledi: I am fine. How are you?

Noma: I am good. I miss you.

Naledi: I am back, please come have lunch with me at the restaurant today.

Noma: I will ask Ricardo to drop me on his way to work.

Naledi: How is he?

Noma: He is fine, he quit from the fish business.

Naledi: He did good, now there is nothing tying him to those two criminals.

Noma: (laughing) You'd swear one isn't your husband.

Naledi: I don't have a husband anymore.

Noma: Not yet.

Naledi: I am in the process, by year end I will be Naledi Mthembu.

Noma: Is it going to be easy?

Naledi: I will make sure everything goes well. I don't want this surname anymore, it's heavy on me.

They continue talking until she hangs up so she can drive.

MARI-ANNE

The report from Zanele came in early this morning. She is reading from her home office and it makes sense.

Everything entails how the operation works. How the deliveries are made to Naledi's restaurant via the delivery trucks, some via Bulelani's portraits.

It shows how they made a lot of money during his exhibition because most of the portraits had packages stacked in them.

She calls one of her guards and when he walks in, she prints two photos and hands them to him.

Anne: Find everything you can on them. I give you a week. Every little information will be useful.

He nods taking the photos and then walks out. It won't be difficult to trace their movements because they are quite popular in the area.

She organises her trusted recruits from Cape Town to start work this very morning. She is only sending a few from this side and she is confident her plan will work out perfectly.

Later that morning she walks into her business office and pours a drink. She came to check how things are going, and business is doing well.

She checks on all the rooms to see how everyone is doing and like always, they are well behaved in her presence because they fear her.

The women are packaging everything, some counting money and others dealing with deliveries which are going out tomorrow. It's only women inside, men are outside making sure no harm comes to the women.

One of the guards tell her there is someone looking for her, and she goes out to meet with him.

Wilson is standing outside in his police officer uniform. He has artificial beards covering his entire face.

Anne: To what do I owe this pleasure, officer?

She has that authoritative voice that would get you doing anything for her. But Wilson has been in the game for too long to be scared by the presence of anyone.

He pulls himself together so he can sound as genuine as a policeman.

Wilson: There is word out on the streets. I am here to help with what I can.

Anne deals with police on a daily basis because they inform her on which routes to take for her deliveries, when they are coming for a search operation and stuff like that.

She has never seen this police officer so she has to act smooth in case he has been sent to jeopardize her operation.

Anne: I am listening.

Wilson: I have documents I believe might be of use to you.

Anne: In what regard?

Wilson: Word has it that you are looking for some people who are trying to mess with you. I also deal, and I get frustrated now that we are losing money because these people cannot follow orders. (gives her the envelope) You can see for yourself. They are both situated in Cape Town, and they don't stay far from each other.

She opens the file, takes out four photos. One is of Naledi at the restaurant, the other is Ricardo at his bar, then Noma with Naledi at the restaurant and the last one Ricardo and Naledi sitting in Naledi's restaurant.

Wilson: The main culprits are these two women, but this one lets her husband do the work because as you can see he looks like a tough guy.

She looks at Naledi

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her photo also came with Bulelani's so she is surely involved. Such a beautiful caught up in this fire, it will be a shame to lose her life like this.

Anne: Wait here.

She goes back inside and comes back with Bulelani's photo.

Anne: What about him?

Wilson: He is having an affair with this one.

He says pointing at Naledi's photo.

Anne: And where is her husband?

Wilson: He travels a lot, I don't know about now but he is never around that much.

Anne: Very well. How much do I owe you?

Wilson: No, I'm good. I just want things to go back to normal so I can go back to dealing.

Anne: I have to pay you though, you did a good job.

Wilson: Thank you.

She beckons at one of the guys outside and orders him to bring cash. He comes back with one bag and hands it over to her.

Anne: (giving the bag to Wilson) For the trouble you went through for this.

Wilson: Thank you. There are pictures of the houses and streets they stay at in one of the documents inside.

Anne: Thank you.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-HADEBE

She is only getting out of bed now at 1 PM. Bulelani is back from accompanying Bandile to his res because he is leaving for Durban today.

He passes her as she makes something to eat and then opens the fridge to get water.

Zanele: You are not going to greet me?

She says as he turns to walks away.

Bulelani: The most important thing was for me to drink water first because I was thirsty.

Zanele: Oh, okay. Do you want something to eat?

Bulelani: No.

He passes to the guest bedroom and comes back wheeling his bag.

Zanele: (curiously) Where are you going?

Bulelani: To run my businesses.

Zanele: But you just came back from Cape Town, when are we ever going to spend time together?

Bulelani: You never even apologised for messing up my studio. Also, is the person you have been spending time with ignoring you now?

Zanele: What person?

Bulelani: (scoffs) You must think I am really stupid huh?

Zanele: Okay, I am sorry about the studio.

Bulelani: (chuckles) Apology denied.

He turns to walk away and she shouts at him, following behind his back.

Zanele: Oh, come on. It's not like I did much damage to that little box of yours, give me some break. And besides, it's fixed now. What more do you want?

Bulelani: (turns calmly) You want a break? Fine, my lawyer will be communicating with yours in a couple of weeks. Make sure you sign those divorce papers before you start showing. I won't have time to deal with questions about you being pregnant for another man while with me.

Zanele: What?

Bulelani: And just so you know, anyone playing with fire will surely get burnt. I hope you have on your fireproof gear because you will need it.

He walks out and leaves her shaking in her position. The report is already gone if that's what he is talking about. She runs to the bedroom so she can talk to Felix.

FELIX DELIN

Wilson called him last night to let him know he is in Pretoria, and will come see him before he goes back to Cape Town.

He is busy on his laptop waiting for Felix so they can leave together for Cape Town when he receives an email from Zanele.

She is asking him to quickly come to the house because they have to talk. In his mind he thinks maybe there is something wrong with the baby so he rushes to get his car keys and drives out, calling Wilson to let him know that he will see him back in Cape Town if he manages to come back today.

He arrives at Bulelani's house and finds Zanele waiting for him at the gate. He drives inside and parks then gets off.

Felix: Is the baby okay? Are you okay?

Zanele: I am fine. Let's go inside.

They get in the house and she offers him a drink before joining him on the couch.

Zanele: What I am going to tell you will shock you or even make you angry, but please understand my reasons and help me get ready for whatever consequences.

He remains the neutral Felix she knows. It's like the only thing that gets him emotional is the pregnancy only.

Zanele: I didn't tell you the whole story about my kidnap. I was released on the basis that I would provide information on who the two C's are.

She keeps quiet to see if he reacts but he doesn't.

Zanele: I know who they are and it's not complicated so I made my own report, erased the real two C's and put the ones I want to be dealt with.

Felix: Go on.

Zanele: The two fake C's are Bulelani and Naledi.

He chokes on his drink and starts coughing. She quickly goes to him and brush his back before getting him water.

The cough dies down and he drinks the water sitting down.

Felix: Why?

Zanele: (sighs) You even ask? I am pregnant and it's your baby. Both our partners are not stupid, they know what is going on and are planning something for us. This will work in out favour.

Felix: I hear you, but I don't think you know what you are doing.

Zanele: It doesn't matter. What I know is that soon Anne will be on to them, might even kill them and then we can move on with our lives. It's either us or them, and my child is not growing up without both his parents.

Felix: (leans forward with his finger intertwined on the table) Maybe you didn't understand what I meant. I have fallen out of love with Naledi and I know for sure she cannot wait to divorce me because even to this day she has never said anything about anything, so trust me when I say you don't know what you are doing. Naledi is not just a pretty face.

Zanele: What do you mean?

Felix: If you can run disappear, please do so cause even I cannot protect you from her rage.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

He has arrived in Durban at the Buthelezi's family. Ma Buthelezi is pleased to see him and she begged him to spend the night with them, he will use Zanele's room.

They are now watching TV while talking and Zanele's sisters are coming to join them.

Ma Buthelezi: How is Zanele doing?

Bulelani: Honestly ma, I don't know. She is never around at the house.

Ma Buthelezi: And you are not worried? That could only mean you are over her.

Bulelani: I love her so much, but she is now playing dangerous games that I won't be part of. I have a little brother who depends on me.

Ntombi walks in with bowls of dessert and puts them on the small coffee table.

Ma Buthelezi: Thank you.

Bulelani also thanks her and takes one bowl then starts eating.

Ntombi: I am sorry for how I spoke to you the other day. I am just angry and I saw it fit to blame everything on you.

Bulelani: It's water under the bridge.

Ma Buthelezi: So what brings you here? I know you came because you missed your father-in-law's burial, but there is something else bothering you.

Bulelani: (sighs) I want to divorce your daughter, and the respectful way is to return her home.

Nomasonto walks in, catching the last phrase of "returning her home."

Sonto: What happened?

Bulelani: (sighs) She will come explain everything on her own. I cannot speak for her.

Ma Buthelezi: (scoffs) You think she will ever set foot here?

Bulelani: She will. There is no place like home.

Right then Sonto's phone rings from an unknown number. She answers and then keeps quiet.

Zanele: Sonto.

Sonto: Zanele?

Everyone turns to her except Bulelani who is minding his dessert.

Zanele: How are you?

Sonto: I am okay.

Zanele: Is mom around?

Sonto: Yes, why?

Zanele: Put me on loudspeaker.

Sonto: Okay.

She removes the phone from her ear and then presses the speaker button.

Sonto: You can talk.

Zanele: Okay. Mama, it's me Zanele. I hope you are okay and healing. I want to let you know that I will be leaving South Africa for a while. I have made some stupid decisions that requires I disappear as soon as possible.

Bulelani is listening this whole time while looking at his mother-in-law, and finishing off the dessert. She doesn't seem moved by whatever Zanele is saying and that's expected.

Zanele: I won't be missing, but I am going to cut communication with everyone including you, my family.

Ma Buthelezi: Where are you going?

Zanele: I'm afraid I can't say.

Ma Buthelezi: I see.

Bulelani asks for the phone after placing the dessert bowl on the table, and Sonto hands it over to him.

Bulelani: Zanele.

She keeps quite for some seconds before answering with a breaking voice. That voice, it's now she realizes it has been friendly because they were in love and he was being soft towards her. She regrets comparing him to Felix because he is now showing her his true colours.

Zanele: Bulelani, I didn't know you are in Durban.

Bulelani: She is going to find you. I saw the report and honestly I could act, but I don't want to hurt your family. We are still married after all. But that woman you lied to isn't going to take this lightly. The truth will come out soon and your family will be at the receiving end, so I am not going to allow you to run away after the mess you created for everyone.

Everyone is looking at him with questioning eyes as he calmly talks on the phone. It's still on loudspeaker and Zanele is not answering.

Bulelani: You are not going anywhere. I don't want to be the one telling Anne the truth cause trust me I can, within a second and she will catch you before you even make it to the airport if you're flying. Remain where you are, I told you that you are playing with fire.

He hands the phone back to Sonto and stand up as the siblings and mother continues talking on the phone. Mainly Ma Buthelezi asking Zanele what she has done.

FELIX DELIN

Later that day he arrives at Cape Town and goes straight home before he can meet up with Wilson.

He started by bathing first and then making something to eat. Naledi is walking in from work as he comes out of his office holding the small pack he found on his table.

Naledi: Hey, when did you get here?

Felix: A few hours back.

Naledi: Okay. I am so tired I need to bath and sleep.

Felix: (looking at her suspiciously) Did you use my office while I was away?

Naledi: No, why?

Felix: Nothing, I was just wondering.

Naledi: Okay. Well you look like you are going somewhere. I brought some leftovers, you can warm them up when you want to eat.

Felix: Okay.

She passes him and walks upstairs. He lifts the plastic up, now carefully looking at it. It's the same as the ones he got from the painting, which were delivered during the exhibition. Maybe he had forgotten it there or something.

He goes back up stairs and finds Naledi already in the bathroom so he removes the painting from the wall to carefully examine if it was ever broken.

There is not even the tiniest damage he can spot on the frame or the portrait itself. He puts it back and then leaves.

He is with Wilson at Ricardo's bar. Ricardo saw them and went back to his office before they could say anything.

Wilson: I delivered a report to this Anne woman.

Felix: How is she?

Wilson: Old, closer to death. She doesn't deserve the boss seat, only a man should occupy it.

Felix: And that man would be you?

Wilson: I wouldn't mind.

Felix: I see.

Wilson: Don't you want it?

Felix: No, I don't need unnecessary enemies and having to look over my shoulder for the rest of my life.

Wilson: I don't have a family, I wouldn't mind having enemies.

Felix: So, what's in the report?

Wilson: Ricardo will take the fall for us.

Felix: And who else?

Wilson: (shifts uncomfortably) Just some rich guy I recently found out about.

Felix: Did she believe you?

Wilson: I guess, she said she will look into it. That gives us time to clear our names and records. By the time they arrive to us we will be clean.

Felix doesn't tell him of Zanele's report and Wilson is also omitting some other facts, it's now every man for himself.

Felix: Have you thought this thoroughly? I mean going after Ricardo means going after Naledi indirectly cause anything to do with Noma involves her.

Wilson: I am not afraid of her.

Felix: That's not what I asked.

Wilson: If what you mean is that you would fight with them against me just because she is your wife, then I don't mind that also.

Felix: I am going to tell you again, don't underestimate Naledi. She doesn't cause troubles for anyone, but when someone decides to move her from that position by frequently poking her she moves, swiftly and quietly at that.

Wilson: Don't forget I was with you when her and Noma killed Maya. I was there and I helped.

Felix: But they don't owe you anything. They paid you for your part, with money that helped you get off the ground to where you are today.

Wilson: (sips on his drink) I am not scared of women. I will deal with her if she decides to fight me.

Felix: (raises his glass) Good luck, brother.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She is in bed lost in thoughts regarding all that's happening. Felix is completely out of her; she is just waiting for the papers from her lawyer so she can serve him. Their marriage down the drain like they never loved each other so madly.

Her phone rings disturbing her thoughts and she answers.

Naledi: Hello.

Ricardo: I am sorry for calling this late, I have just arrived home and I think I am being followed.

Naledi: You are being followed?

Ricardo: Yes, even now I am still in my car parked in the yard and I can see the car on the road.

Naledi: What colour is it?

Ricardo: It's a black Audi A4.

Naledi: I saw a similar one today at the restaurant, and now that you mention it, I think they followed me too.

Ricardo: I don't know who they are, but I am sure they are tracing me for now cause if they wanted to kill me they would have.

Naledi: Yeah that's true. Be safe, and don't say anything to Noma.

Ricardo: Okay, be safe too.

He hangs up and she sighs closing her eyes. The bedroom door opens and Felix walks in.

Felix: Whose car is that down the road? I have never seen it around.

Naledi: What car?

Felix: It's a black Audi 4.

Naledi: I don't know. It wasn't there the last time I was outside.

Felix: Okay.

He takes off his clothes and joins her in bed.

It's a little awkward to start a conversation because he hasn't explained himself so he keeps quiet until he falls asleep.

Naledi puts on her robe and goes outside. She opens the gate and walks straight at the car, with her hands in her robe pockets.

She knocks on the driver's window and he opens up revealing the gun that's on his thighs.

Him: Baby girl.

Naledi: You are parked too close to my yard, and that makes me uncomfortable. Please leave.

Him: We are on the road; not in your yard. What are you afraid of baby girl, you got enemies?

Naledi: I am going to act as if I didn't notice you following me, and you are just parked here for your own business and not searching for something from my yard.

Him: And if we are?

Naledi: (smiles) You must just wonder why I am not afraid of facing you all by coming out here in the dark, all by myself.

She moves back and the ones at the backseat have also lowered the window to see her well.

Naledi: Tell whoever sent you to come face me themselves because you are little babies.

One of the guys cocks the gun in anger and points it at her. She chuckles as the others reprimand him and then walks away.

They drive off as she gets in through the gate and goes inside the house.

To be continued...



BULELANI HADEBE

He woke up and did some groceries for his mother-in-law with the sisters before he could leave.

They are now in Mr Buthelezi's office talking while the sisters prepares something for him to go back with.

Ma Buthelezi: I have been meaning to ask you my son. I have heard people talking about you and your past, is it true?

Bulelani: That I killed some people?

Ma Buthelezi: Yes.

Bulelani: (chuckles) Yes, it's true.

Ma Buthelezi: You don't look like a killer.

Bulelani: Because I am not. People only get the end of a story and think they know a person. Even if you tell the truth they will still believe what they want to believe about you. The people I killed maybe didn't deserve it, but I know for sure that I also didn't deserve to lose my female siblings and mother the way I did.

She can sense the sadness in his voice, it's also evident in his eyes that he hasn't healed even one bit. Do people ever heal from losing their loved ones?

Bulelani: (swallows a lump) It was my mom's birthday. My sisters were busy decorating the garden and my little brother and I decided to go cut our hair before my parents arrive. Dad had hired a photographer so we had to look the part. We arrived at

the salon, they attended to him first and before I could sit I received a call from one of our neighbours to quickly rush home. I knew at that moment that something had happened. The scene, (he chokes on his spit) the scene is a memory that's stuck in my head and will probably still be with me even in the afterlife.

She doesn't let him finish because she is also crying now.

Ma Buthelezi: (brushing his hand) It's okay son. I believe you.

He calms down, wipes his tears and then breath out.

Bulelani: Your daughter has gotten herself into a messy situation. She lied to save herself, and the person she lied to might come after her when the truth unfolds because she is protecting the culprits indirectly or not. Coming after her includes hurting the people closer to her and that's you and your daughters. You need to up the security around here and be alert at all times.

Ma Buthelezi: Is this someone Anne by mistake?

Bulelani: You know Anne?

Ma Buthelezi: Very well.

Bulelani: Yeah, it's her.

Ma Buthelezi: Thank you for letting me know about this. I will see what to do. Take care of yourself.

Bulelani: You too ma.

They stand up and hug before walking out. He bids goodbye to Nomasonto and Ntombi who gives him two Tupperware containers filled with food.

He drives out as they wave at him and the hoots at them before driving off.

He has stopped at a petrol station to fuel his car when he notices a black Audi A4 behind him.

There is something about how it mysteriously appeared, something telling him to be alert.

He drives out and dials Naledi. He has to tell her about the report before something happens to him.

She answers on the third ring and he hears voices from a distance.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She is at an accident scene where a child has been hit by a car. She is on her way to work and had to stop by and get help because the car ran away.

The community has started to arrive so it's getting crowded, but thankfully the ambulance is here and so are the police.

Naledi: Let me call you back in a few minutes.

She says without even checking the caller ID and then continues talking to the police officer who is asking questions.

The ambulances wails off leaving, and she goes to her car after talking to the officer.

She starts the car and drives off while checking who had called. She returns the call, connecting to the radio.

Bulelani: At last.

Naledi: Sorry about that. What's the matter?

Bulelani: My wife sent a report about you and I being the two C's, to a drug dealer. Apparently the two C's have been troublesome and she is looking for them.

Naledi: But why would that be you and I? I don't even know anything about drugs except what I read or hear about.

Bulelani: Because we are the perfect match. The amount that was made from drugs during my exhibition is insane. My wife packaged drugs into my portraits, delivered them to these two C's who added other types of drugs to make it two times strong.

Naledi: So this boss is angry that they make a fortune out of the supplies by adding other ingredients?

Bulelani: Yes, they are not supposed to make more money than her.

Naledi: I still don't understand how I fit in.

Bulelani: Your restaurant has been a pick-up point for a while now. The delivery trucks used belong to my wife. Even if they are yours or you trust them, there is some sort of an exchange that happens along the way before they arrive to you.

Naledi: (sighs) That's the reason I am being followed. Also I found a small pack of drugs in the portrait Felix bought at your exhibition. It means he left it by mistake when removing the others and the two C's is him and (thinking)...Wilson?

Bulelani: You catch up fast, I like that. I am also being tailed as we speak so I saw it best to let you know before they kill me.

Naledi: They won't.

Bulelani: Then I will kill them for sure.

Naledi: I knew you had it in you.

He chuckles and hangs up.

RICARDO SIBANDA

He is taking Noma to the hospital for her monthly check-ups. They are talking in the car when he sees the Audi from a distance.

It was still parked by the road when he woke up this morning, but he didn't see it when they were driving out now.

Noma seems to not be paying attention so he pulls himself together to ensure she doesn't notice a thing. This one is very fragile and paics quickly.

Ricardo: How are you feeling today?

Noma: I feel okay.

Ricardo: When do you think we can go to Limpopo?

Noma: Why?

Ricardo: I just feel like you need the home atmosphere to be able to carry this one.

Noma: Babe

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home is where you are.

Ricardo: I know, but I sometimes work late. You need to be with someone close by.

Noma: What are you hiding from me? you sound like you are chasing me away.

Ricardo: I am not, you know that.

Noma: Then what is it?

Ricardo: Let's leave it.

They approach the traffic lights and when they turn, the Audi follows them.

Noma looks at it twice before turning to Ricardo.

Noma: Am I overthinking or that car is following us?

Ricardo: Which car?

Noma: The black Audi. It can't be that they are not in a hurry hence they are slowly riding after us from a distance.

Ricardo: I don't know, I didn't notice.

Noma: Okay, pull over there. I want to see something.

Ricardo: And if they are really following us?

Noma: It's busy right now, they won't do anything.

Ricardo: No, I don't know that and I am not putting us all in danger.

Noma: Move over to the other side and open way for them.

Ricardo: Babe, if they really are following us then they might just shoot us when I open way. Let's drive straight to the hospital and if they are still behind us then I will see what to do.

Noma: (sighs) Okay, you are right.

He continues driving until they get to the hospital. When they get off she looks around for it but she can't see it anymore.

She sighs and then leads Ricardo inside who also looks around for the car.

NARRATED

Anne has been getting daily reports from her guards on the two C's. She has been comparing the two reports she received and something isn't adding up.

How is it that the other says Bulelani and Naledi, while the other is Ricardo/Noma and Naledi?

Surely there is one or two people who are innocent in this square.

Based on the personal info, Bulelani is the one who appears to just be an artist. There is nothing much on him except the loss of his family some years back.

He is defined as a calm and charming gentleman. No record of crimes or anything.

Noma and Naledi are a family and they have a history that's similar to Bulelani's, except with Naledi's, it seems there is something going on because she appears really tough.

Ricardo seems non-existent. Just a guy trying this life thing with his wife. So the truth might be that the two C's are indeed Naledi and Noma.

Now she doesn't know who to trust between Zanele and this mysterious officer. And the one who provided a false report should be dealt with excessively.

Her guys also told her of the stunt Naledi pulled and she is impressed. By the end of the week she will be paying her a visit at her so-called restaurant, before she strikes.

She is eager to face this fierce woman who is messing up her syndicate, and find out the reason she is challenging her.

Her phone rings and she answers pouring a drink.

It's from the guys sent to do a research on Bulelani from the place he grew up in. Some are in Limpopo for Naledi and Noma, and they haven't found anything because people there are stubborn and refuse to talk.

Anne: Yes.

Voice: Boss, we found some new interesting information about Bulelani Hadebe.

Anne: I am listening.

Voice: I have sent you the document to read, it should be there by now.

Anne: Okay, I will check. How is it going there?

Voice: Most people are afraid to talk and some simply walk away when we ask about him.

Anne: Have you seen anyone from his family?

Voice: There is a drunkard uncle that's currently not around so we will wait for him, surely he will give us the right information.

Anne: Good.

She hangs up and finishes her drink then opens her email for the document. It opens after she has clicked on it.

Anne: (reading slowly) The murder of sixteen men by one.

There are pictures attached and her mouth drops.

A FEW DAYS LATER

To be continued...



BULELANI HADEBE

He has just arrived in Cape Town for another artist's exhibition that's taking place tomorrow.

It's Friday and since he arrived yesterday he hasn't told Naledi that he is around. He wants to go surprise her later on before she closes at the restaurant.

The Audi has miraculously vanished, guess they are done with their work and are ready to attack so he has got himself some toys for when the day finally comes.

He is now with the artist wrapping up their meeting over coffee.

Bulelani: You don't have to worry man. All the pointers I gave you those months back will produce good results if you have put them to work. Going solo sometimes can be hard because what if people are not interested in the paintings? that's why you should have a signature in the sense that you are the one painting not what you paint. They should see that it's your work by just the patterns or colours.

The guy nods acknowledging the advice and he thanks him as they finish their meeting then shake hands.

Bulelani: You will be fine don't worry.

The guys leaves after saying his goodbyes and Bulelani remains behind.

He makes a phone call to his little brother to check on him and how things are that side.

Bandile: Bhuti.

Bulelani: Hey, how are the exams coming along?

Bandile: Very well, I am writing my last paper on Monday.

Bulelani: Make sure you pack all your stuff then. I will send someone to fetch them.

Bandile: And me?

Bulelani: He will come with you, your institution is in Jo'burg.

Bandile: Okay.

Bulelani: Good luck.

Bandile: Thanks.

He hangs up and and leaves. The artist had already paid for their breakfast since he was the one who called the meeting.

MARI-ANNE

In all her might, she has landed in Cape Town and is ready to face Naledi. She called for a reservation of the whole restaurant for tonight, and when she was asked of the meal she went for the most expensive.

The plan is to feed her before she can kill her, and she is going with her most trusted guards to pull off this plan right in front of her.

They are going to their accommodation in Camps Bay. A house big enough for all of them.

She has called a meeting to brief everyone on tonight's war and she will go meet up with them somewhere else before going to the restaurant.

FELIX DELIN

Business isn't doing well, both the farming and drugs one. They are losing money each day and that's not good.

They are now at the warehouse trying to come up with plans on what to do.

Wilson: I say we take out Anne and become boss.

Felix: I don't want to be boss.

Wilson: You can be my right hand man or something.

Felix: You wish.

Wilson: Your loss. I am going for the position with or without your help.

Felix: Good luck.

Wilson: Thank you. I think we should expand our farming business and start growing crops too.

Felix: Sound like a good idea, which do you think will be in demand?

Wilson: The ones that are not readily available at the moment.

Felix: That means we have to do research.

Wilson: Let us get on with it.

They take their belongings and get into Felix's car so they can visit supermarkets and other shops to see what they will need.

It won't miraculously happen overnight so they have to sit and review their plan before executing it.

NOMA SIBANDA

She has been snooping around to find any information she can on Wilson. Everyone has been overprotective of her and hiding things from her so she also did her things in silence.

As risky as it is to drive alone right now, she is on her way to meet with the person who has been helping her.

She gets to the dilapidated house just a few minutes from Felix and Wilson's business and knocks. A coloured woman in her late thirties comes out holding a file, and greets her before they go to the car.

The couple can be heard from outside arguing on something until the woman starts crying.

Noma takes out an envelope from a bag in the back seat and gives it to the woman.

Noma: Here is the payment.

Her: Thank you, (giving her the file) I think this file contains everything you need.

Noma: Okay, how are they?

She asks pointing at the house with her head.

Her: The situation is very bad, but I have made calls and with this money it will be easy to get them to a rehabilitation. Hopefully the transport will arrive today.

Noma: I hope everything goes well, and please be careful.

Her: These guys don't know me, they don't even know that I am here because they haven't been coming for a while now.

Noma: I appreciate your help.

Her: I appreciate it too, I have been searching for my aunt and uncle for a very long time.

Noma: You found them now, that's all that matters.

Her: Thank you

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and we don't know each other.

Noma: (chuckles) Bye stranger.

The woman gets off and goes back in the house. She has been tracing Felix and Wilson's movements since the Anne saga began. She has documented a lot of stuff they think are secrets.

Noma found her because they were doing the same thing so they agreed on working together because the woman wanted money, and Noma wanted information.

She drives out using the an alternate road that won't pass by the warehouse. She needs to sit down and go through this file before planning anything.

RICARDO SIBANDA

He is at the bar in a meeting with his his employees. Someone notified him on who dropped the drugs in his office and he is trying to see if the truth will come out.

Ricardo: When you choose to betray me for quick cash you are also destroying yourselves. The people who want to see me lose are not your family, they don't even care about you. Should I have got arrested do you think you'd still be working? do you think the person who sent you to set me up would have employed you? No! of course not. So I am asking for the last time, who planted drugs in my office to set me up?

They all keep quiet looking at him.

Ricardo: Shoul I fire everyone and get new employees whom I will build trust with? It's clear I can't trust you so it's better I let all of you go.

The other employees who knows nothing about the drugs starts complaining, demanding that the one responsible should take the responsibility of their action because they don't want to lose jobs.

No one gives an indication of taking responsibility so Ricardo sighs, releasing a heavy breath.

Ricardo: Please leave your uniforms in the locker on your way out.

He turns to walk away and the woman finally speaks, looking down in shame and her voice coming out as a whispering cry.

Her: It was me.

Everyone goes quiet and Ricardo turns to face her.

Ricardo: What was that?

Her: (wiping her tears) I'm saying it was me, I planted the drugs in your office.

Ricardo: Please follow me to my office.

She gets up the chair with every eye boring into her and then follows after him.

NARRATED

THE STAR EATERY

Anne arrives in her SUV and two Audis driving behind her. She gets off after they have parked and opened the door for her, then makes her way to the door with two guards leading him.

It's a little after 8 PM, and it's quite inside. They walk in and a waitress shows them their table, before giving them space. She announces to Naledi that the guests have arrived and by now she already knows who it is, judging by the cars in the parking lot.

She makes her way downstairs to the kitchen and asks everyone to leave immediately.

They all go out through the back door and then she wheels the food to the "guests".

Anne stands up with a smile when she sees her approaching in her suit and heels.

Anne: Mrs Delin, it's good to finally meet you.

Naledi: I wouldn't say the same about you.

Anne: No beating around the bush, I like that.

She puts the food on the table and turns to walk back to her office.

Anne: Are you not going to join me?

Naledi: I don't eat with my enemies.

Anne: But you do business with them.

Naledi: Money talks. I think you are also here because of it.

Anne: I was hoping you would want to die full.

Naledi: I am not hungry; and I'm certainly not the one going to die.

Anne: We shall see about that.

She starts eating as Naledi goes back to the kitchen. Anne points at two guys to follow after her.

Anne: Don't kill her just yet. A little massage will do to bring her down from the high position she is on.

They follow after her, taking out their handguns just in case.

Naledi is drinking wine in the kitchen when the guys walk in. She takes one look at them and then sighs finishing off the wine.

Naledi: You know everytime I tell myself I don't want to have people's blood on my hands, the blood comes running to me forcing itself on my hands.

They look at her in suspicion as she moves from the chair she was sitting on.

Withing a few minutes; they are both holding on their necks with blades stuck in them and blood gushing out.

How she threw the knives at them, at the same time and aimed at the same position is something they never expected.

She walks out leaving them to die and goes up to her office before the party begins. Surely the old woman has finished eating by now.

Meanwhile outside, Bulelani is approaching the restaurant when the notices the cars. He stops at at a distance, takes out his gun and a knife before closing the door and walking to the restaurant.

To be continued...



NARRATED

There are six guards outside the restaurant. All armed and roaming the front while chatting.

Bulelani moves by the wall and hides between the cars, snatching them one by one and slitting their throats with one hand while the other closes their mouths.

He turns to the back of the restaurant after taking them all out and before he can walk in, he sees Naledi getting down the stairs.

She waves at him with a surprised smile and then turns and walks into the restaurant. He cannot get in just yet because the ones inside will see him, so he waits for an opportunity to strike.

From where he is standing he can only see four guards but he is sure there is more.

His phone vibrates in the pockets, gosh he thought he had left it in the car. He moves back and leans against the wall then answers while checking the coast.

Sonto: (crying) Bulelani, they are here. The cars are parked outside and they are holding guns.

Bulelani: Listen to me, calm down so you can hear me properly. Ask your mother where your father's guns are. You are going to have to help each other take out as many as you can.

Sonto: (gasps) You want us to shoot them? I don't even know how to hold a gun.

Bulelani: You are going to learn tonight or they will kill you. Where is your mother?

Sonto: Let me go get her.

She rushes to her mother's bedroom and because it has a balcony she finds her setting up a rifle standing by the glass door.

Ma Buthelezi turns and looks at her holding a phone to her ear.

Ma Buthelezi: Haibo Sonto, we are about to be attacked and you are busy on the phone?

Sonto's mouth is almost reaching the ground in shock because she cannot believe what she is seeing. Her hardcore Christian mother is holding a gun and actually setting it up like a pro?

She hears Bulelani's voice on the phone and that brings her back to reality.

Sonto: (handing over the phone) Bulelani wants to talk to you.

She takes the phone and straps it on her shoulder so she can talk while finishing off with the setting.

Ma Buthelezi: Your people are here and I am more than ready. I cannot just leave my house because of them.

Bulelani: Be safe ma, please come out alive.

Ma Buthelezi: Even if I don't, I would be resting because it seems this is a never ending war. I didn't fight back then when it was my husband who put me in the position, I have to fight now. I have to go.

She hangs up and pushes Sonto into the closet.

Ma Buthelezi: Only come out when you can't hear any sound anymore.

She closes the door and walks back to her position.

The guys starts walking in and suprisingly, Ntombi has left the gate unlocked for them to lure them in.

They surround the house while some enters inside and the others are left outside. The electric trips and everything goes dark.

Ma Buthelezi starts firing, aiming for the heads of those still outside. She didn't even lock the door.

Ntombi plays hide and seek with the ones inside by leaving a torch illuminating the wall so they can follow it. Once they get inside she attacks with a knife from behind, stabbing them everywhere her hands lands.

She is scared but she still wants to live so she has to fight with everything in her.

The rooms have interconnecting doors so she uses them to access the other rooms and does the same to the other guards.

After a while, one guard walks in behind Ma Buthelezi. He waits for the moment she turns because she can sense there is someone behind her, and then hit her straight between her eyes.

Sonto's heart almost stops when she hears the gunshot at such close range.

FELIX DELIN

He is trying to sleep but his body is feeling somehow. There is something heavy and totally not okay with him.

He dials Zanele on the new number she recently gave him and she answers sleepily.

Felix: Hey, how are you?

Zanele: Sleepy, call in the morning.

Felix: Come on, I miss you.

Zanele: I know, but I feel tired.

Felix: Is it the little one?

Zanele: I don't know

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but I have been feeling sick lately and I don't know what's going on. I want to go to the hospital tomorrow.

Felix: Please do before it's too late.

Zanele: I will. How is everything going there?

Felix: Nothing much is happening, I am in bed trying to sleep but I can't.

Zanele: Where is your wife?

Felix: Still at work.

Zanele: Wait, Bulelani is that side. Don't you think they are together?

Felix: I don't know.

Zanele: Are you not worried?

Felix: No, they are both adults. I am worried about the little one. Are you sure everything is okay?

Zanele: Yes. All good.

Felix: Okay, go back to sleep.

Zanele: I am awake now, thinking of making food.

Felix: (laughs) Okay, I guess we will be talking while you are busy.

Zanele: I guess. Video call me.

Felix: Okay.

He hangs up and calls again, she smiles answering and puts the phone on the counter so he can see her while she moves around.

RICARDO SIBANDA

He is waiting for Noma to join him in bed when he notices lights hitting against the windows.

He moves closer and finds cars parking at the gate. The way it's so quiet you would swear there are no people around here; but it's late, they are probably sleeping.

Noma comes rushing from the kitchen where she had gone to get water before joining Ricardo.

Noma: What's going on? what are those cars doing at our gate?

Ricardo: I don't know, please calm down. I will take care of it.

Noma: They have guns, what can you possibly do?

Ricardo: I don't know but I have to protect you and the baby.

She takes her phone and dials Naledi. It rings unanswered for a while until she hangs up and the dials Felix.

It also rings unanswered and they can hear the gate moving.

Ricardo goes to his study and grabs a handgun then goes to the front door to wait on them.

He can see them slowly walking inside, with the one in front suggesting they surround the house.

He says a short prayer sweating because they are outnumbered and no matter what he tries, they might not make it out alive.

Ricardo: God please, may they not harm my wife and kid. Please protect them for me.

The front door opens slowly and he sees a boot stepping in. He aims for his head and shoots, then hears more footsteps running around.

A shot missed his head from the window and he dives then move to the other side as the shootout ensues.

Meanwhile Noma is holding on her stomach praying for a miracle to not lose the baby because she can feel it's going there. Her heart is beating fast and she is running out of breath. The gun sounds makes her want to scream.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She has her heel plunged in one of Anne's guard. Her leg is raised all the way to his neck and the blood is spilling all over the table and food.

Anne wipes her mouth and stands up looking at Naledi who is fearlessly staring back at her.

Anne: Kill her.

She orders the guys as she heads out.

Naledi tries to grab her but the guards are already in front of her. She removes a gun from her waist and starts shooting while diving to hide.

Bulelani walks in, shooting at them and it doesn't take long until it's only him and Naledi left standing.

Bulelani: Hi.

Naledi: Hey. Thanks.

They walk out and finds Anne standing outside in awe at the dead bodies.

Naledi: What do you have to say now?

Anne: I'm impressed.

Naledi: Leave me alone, I know nothing about your drugs and I am definitely not what you are looking for.

A gun goes off and the bullet hits Naledi's left shoulder. She falls back as Bulelani starts shooting at the direction it came from.

He shoots at the driver and the gun drops from behind the car, followed by his dead body. He paces back to Naledi to check if she is okay.

Anne: Such a beautiful scene to watch. You have killed all the men I came with-

Bulelani: And I could put the last bullets in your skull right now.

Her phones rings in her hand and she answers before putting it on loudspeaker.

Noma can be heard crying from the background and Ricardo groaning as punches are being thrown.

She hangs up still looking at Bulelani who is not closer to her with his gun on her head.

Anne: I know where they are, get me the real two C's and I will let go of them. I know you are not really involved but she (looking at Naledi) have to prove first because every arrow

points at her. As for killing my men for you Bulelani, I hope your in-laws survives.

She turns and gets into the SUV then drives out.

Naledi: (angrily) Fuck!

She get up an walks back inside with her shoulder still bleeding.

Bulelani: We need to put pressure on the wound.

Naledi: Follow me.

They go to her office and she shows him a first aid kit that has everything needed.

She directs him on what to do and a few minutes later they walk back to the restaurant.

Bulelani: This is a mess. What are you going to do?

Naledi: Drive me home first, we will have to go see what happened at Noma's place.

They lock up and drive out in Bulelani's car.

To be continued...

FELIX DELIN

He is awakened by Naledi walking into the bedroom with her heels clicking. She passes without saying anything and goes straight to the bathroom.

Felix gets out of bed and follows after her because he can see she is not okay. He finds her taking off the bloody clothes and he notices the bandaged area.

Felix: What happened? Are you okay?

He tries to touch her shoulder and she moves back then wipes her face, and continues taking off her clothes.

Naledi: You happened Felix. This is all your fault.

Felix: What?

She walks out in her underwear and opens the closet then takes out her jeans, t-shirt and a hoodie.

Felix: Are you seriously going to walk out on me while I am talking to you?

Naledi: I am not in the mood.

She puts on the clothes and grabs her boots by the shoe rack and slips her feet in before walking out.

He follows after her as she walks in her secret room and takes another gun, together with ammunition then walk out to the living room.

Felix: Naledi I am talking to you.

Naledi: I don't want to talk to you.

His eyes meets with Bulelani's who is sitting on the couch with a phone on his ear.

He stops and sighs as Naledi walks over to Bulelani.

Felix: So another man knows what's happening and the one you share a bed with doesn't know?

Naledi: The one I don't share a bed with has a mind that actually works. Noma

and Ricardo have been taken hostage, I have been shot and all because you decided to involve yourself into drugs. Should Noma's baby not make it I will kill you myself. (to Bulelani)
Let's go.

They walk out and get into the car with Felix standing in the room, watching as they drive out.

He goes back to the bedroom and dials Wilson.

Wilson: Get a prostitute or something to keep you busy if you're bored. What is it?

He says answering the phone sleepily.

Felix: What have you done? Naledi just came here bleeding and she says Noma and Ricardo have been taken hostage.

Wilson: I told you everything you needed to know. I am not backing down when my life is about to reach the end of the tunnel.

Felix: Noma is pregnant.

Wilson: (sighs) So what? women are strong, you know it too. She will be fine.

Felix: You don't get it.

Wilson: Don't even explain because no matter how you explain it I will still not get it. I don't have a wife or a baby. I don't know how it feels to be pregnant so count me out, and stop calling me at night.

He hangs up and Felix tightens his jaws in anger.

He rushes back to the bedroom and gets dressed then drives out to the restaurant.

He finds blood all over the front and it looks like something was being dragged.

He goes and parks at the back then walks inside and finds more blood on the table and floor.

Whatever happened here was a movie, total chaos.

He checks the other rooms before coming back to sit in his car.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

They arrive at Noma and Ricardo's house. The front door is wide open and there are traces of blood on the floor leading to the stairs.

Naledi goes up to their bedroom hoping to find something that will give her a clue of where they might have taken them.

The bed is messy and also has drops of blood. The room itself is disorganised and it's proof that there was some fight before they left.

She doesn't find anything still and then she moves on to the next room, until she finds herself in the study.

She opens the drawers until she finds one with a file.

Bulelani comes in rushing and finds her holding the file, scanning through it.

Bulelani: (whispering) They are back.

They get behind the couch as footsteps fast approaches the room. Naledi has the file in her hand and the other is reaching for a gun on her waist.

Voice: She said it's in the drawer, there is nothing here. Please check the other ones.

They can hear the drawers being forcefully opened and then the footsteps goes out.

Naledi: (whispering) I think they are looking for this.

She quietly rolls it and then puts it in her t-shirt and tucks the t-shirt in the jean.

They get up from behind the couch and listen to the car starting outside.

Bulelani: If they were here before they might have noticed my car and-

A bullet passes by his ear and hits the window. He turns to where it came from and finds the guys standing by the door.

They release another one and he pushes Naledi back behind the couch while reaching for his gun.

They shoot at each other in the study tearing the wood and books with their fiery bullets while ducking.

Bulelani looks around to see if there is any hideout. He sees a table that they can use as a shield to get to the other side where there is a wall they can hide behind.

He turns to Naledi to tell her what they should do.

Bulelani: Let's take the table, I'll cover you. Naledi!

She is not behind him when he checks, and he can hear the guys groaning as she attacks them.

It goes quiet for a moment and then he raises his head and finds her at the door, hissing in pain while holding on her wound looking outside.

Naledi: Two ran away

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but one is injured.

Bulelani approaches her and helps her up.

Bulelani: You are going to make it worse. Why did you do that?

Naledi: Anytime you take long to attack you will be attacked first. Which is why I should have killed Anne immediately when she walked into my restaurant.

Bulelani: You know it's never easy to kill a guarded individual before taking out the guards right?. They would have killed you.

He's got his hand on her waist leading her outside and even though they are in this situation, the electric shocks between them don't care. They make sure they are being felt.

Bulelani pulls his hand back as they approach the car. They get in and she dials Philani as Bulelani drives out back to the restaurant.

They arrive and find the cars and bodies collected. Felix is parked behind the restaurant and they use the front to access it.

Naledi: We have to clean up this blood.

Bulelani: I have already arranged for that. The cleaners will be here soon.

Naledi: Thank you.

She leads him into the studio and they get in then switch on the lights. Felix has followed them and he's now standing by the door listening as they read through the report.

He walks out silently and gets back in his car.

The cleaners arrives soon after and as they get in he drives out.

ZANELE HADEBE

She is sleeping in the early AM's when her phone rings. It's Sonto calling and her heart starts beating fast before she can even answer.

Zanele: Hello.

Sonto: (sniffing) I hope you are happy.

Zanele: I don't understand.

Sonto: You got what you wanted, so I guess you are happy. Congratulations on successfully killing our mother.

Zanele: Sonto you are speaking in riddles, what is happening? - Hello! Sonto!

She gets out of bed and starts pacing up and down dialing Bulelani.

He takes forever to answer but finally does.

Bulelani: Hello.

It feels a little awkward for him to answer this way. She is used to being called by a pet name or something.

Zanele: Hey, I want to ask if you have heard anything from my sisters. Sonto just called, congratulating me on killing our mother. I don't understand what she means.

Bulelani: Your drug people got to them, guess they figured out you were lying and thought of the only way to get back to you.

Her ears goes deaf for a moment and her eyes sees stars in the dark. She starts breathing heavily, holding on her chest and moving back slowly until her legs hits the bed base then she goes down, melting to the ground.

Bulelani hangs up as he drives through his accommodation. He decides to take a bath first and while in it, his mind tskes him to the moment he felt something when holding Naledi.

He doesn't want to read much into it, especially now that she is not okay but he definitely won't ignore it.

NARRATED

Anne has Ricardo and Noma in the same house she is staying in. She had sent her guards to Noma's house because she said she can prove who the two C's are.

The main reason she ordered for them to be taken hostage is because she still believes Naledi is involved, therefore trying to hurt her because of her relationship with Noma.

The couple is tied to the chairs they are seated on, and Ricardo has been pleading with them to untie Noma at least but they are not having any of it.

The guards' car drives through and the door opens then only one guard comes out running into the room.

The others attend to the one who is bleeding inside the car by taking him out and trying to keep him alive.

Anne has been sitting with the couple waiting for the file.

Him: We didn't find it. There were people when we arrived.

Anne: Which people?

Him: The restaurant woman and the artist guy.

Anne: Oh, so they might have got to it first?

Him: It's possible.

Anne: Okay. You can go.

The guard walks out and she turns to Noma.

Anne: I hope you are telling the truth about this file cause if not you will be dead by tomorrow afternoon.

She stands on her feet and then asks for one guard to make a phone call to Naledi and let her know that she should bring the file in the morning, or Noma is dead.

He does as told as she walks out to her bedroom.

It has been a long day and she needs the rest.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

He is ready to accompany Naledi to the location Anne chose. He couldn't let her go by herself because he wants to make sure she is safe.

Today he is on his protective gear that has small weapons stuck on the insides and in pockets of his clothing. He checks his gun and everything is perfect.

His phone rings as he starts his car and he answers switching the car off.

Bulelani: Hello.

Ntombi: Bulelani, hi. I just wanted to let you know that mama has passed on.

Bulelani: I am sorry to hear that.

Ntombi: She knew this could happen so I can say she was ready.

Bulelani: How is Sonto?

Ntombi: Not doing well, she was the first to see her. In fact she killed the guy that killed her.

Bulelani: I will come when I have time, I am still a bit held up.

Ntombi: Okay.

Bulelani: Do shout if you need help.

Ntombi: I will, thank you.

She hangs up and he sighs starting the car again before driving out.

Naledi calls him to let him know which route she is on and they meet along the way then drive to the location.

It seems to be out of town and isolated. It raises alarms and they are both hoping to come out alive.

They slow down at the open field and finally come to a stop. Anne's cars comes after them and she gets off with Ricardo beside him with his hands tied.

Naledi gets off holding the file and approaches Anne. As she gets closer to her, Anne's guards stands in front so she doesn't get any closer. Bulelani also steps out of his car.

Anne: Hand it over.

Naledi: Where is my sister?

Anne: I cannot release her without seeing the file first.

Naledi: You must be joking.

Anne: I wish I was.

Naledi sighs and throws the file over. One of the guards takes it and then hands it over to Anne.

She opens it, reads through and orders for Ricardo to be untied.

Anne: You can have him for now. That one still has to confirm if this is the right file.

Naledi: The agreement was to hand her over when I bring the file.

Anne: I changed my mind, or I'm not allowed to?

She keeps quiet and then they turn around and walk back to the cars.

Naledi takes Ricardo's hand because he seems dehydrated, and then goes with him to his car.

Naledi: (to Bulelani) He needs water and food first.

Bulelani goes back to his car and they drive off.

LATER THAT DAY
NARRATED

Noma has confirmed the file contents and they match, so they cannot hold her in any no longer.

Anne orders for her to be released while they look into Felix and Wilson.

The guards drives her home, parks a few metres and then drops her.

She walks into the house and finds Ricardo lying on the couch while Naledi talks to him.

They both get up and approach her.

Naledi: Are you okay? Is the baby okay?

She realises she shouldn't have asked but oh well.

Ricardo: I had to tell her.

Noma: (sighs) I am fine, we both are okay.

Naledi: Thank God.

They go back to the couch after Ricardo has hugged her and then sit down.

Bulelani walks in from the exhibition and joins them.

Naledi: Now that you are back and all right. I think we should either let go of this or kill Anne because we won't be lucky next time.

Noma: I don't want anything to do with this. We know the problem is with Felix and Wilson.

Bulelani: And Zanele.

Noma: Those are the people we should deal with.

Naledi: I called Philani, he will be arriving tonight with Refiloe and Nathan.

Noma: Oh my God, it's going to turn out bad now.

Naledi: We have to protect you and the baby. If it's just us we have a slim chance of succeeding.

Noma: It's fine, I understand.

Naledi: You are coming over to my house tonight, pack up and drive there because I want to go to the restaurant.

She gets on his feet with Bulelani, ready to leave.

Noma: Before you leave, I heard one of the guys saying the other report was brought by an officer who stays around here.

They stop to listen and she carries on.

Noma: According to the description I have no doubt that it's Wilson.

Naledi: So he might be the one who mentioned you and Ricardo because Zanele is the one who reported about Bulelani and I?

Noma: It makes sense.

Naledi: Okay.

Ricardo stands up first and get Noma's hand then they go upstairs.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She passes by the restaurant with Bulelani and they head straight to her office. It is closed for the rest of the week or until things are back to normal.

Naledi pours a drink for both of them and puts the glasses on the table.

Bulelani: How are you feeling?

Naledi: Okay.

Bulelani: No, I want you to tell me ezactmy how you feel right now.

Naledi: Exhausted. You know when Mr Mani taught us how to fight and fire a gun, I never thought we would need to use the skills after so many years. He took us in after our mothers passed on because the home we were in couldn't accomodate all of us. That man built a house for us, saw us through storms and protected us with all he had.

Bulelani: I don't know him but I believe he is proud of you.

Naledi: I promised to take care of Noma because none of us was there to protect her when she was being attacked.

Bulelani: Your story is very sad and intriguing at the same time. It's sad in the sense that none of you deserved what happened, but also interesting because of how you all came out. Have you seen yourself in action?

Naledi: (chuckles) You are crazy.

Bulelani: But for real

you look sexy in action yet all calm and stuff.

She stops and looks at him.

Naledi: Did you just say what you said?

Bulelani: (looking back at her) That you look sexy in action? Oh! yes, but even more so when you are just calm like this.

Naledi: Are you flirting with me Mr Hadebe?

Bulelani: (smirks) Do you feel flattered Ms Mthembu?

Naledi: (laughs) Oh my God!

Bulelani: You will always remain Ms Mthembu to a guy you are not married to.

Naledi: (getting up) Let's go before it gets too hot in here.

They follow each other out with Bulelani chuckling behind her as she blushes.

WILSON

He has managed to clear his name from the records of drug dealing. He only cleared his because Felix was challenging him.

He is packing now ready to leave so he can start afresh somewhere else no one knows him.

A knock disturbs him and he stops then goes to check who it is.

Felix walks in and his eyes lands on the bag.

Felix: Going somewhere?

Wilson: Yes. I have other businesses to take care of.

Felix: I see. How is it coming with the clearing of names?

Wilson: Almost done.

Felix: I ask because it seems the dust has settled on the other side.

Wilson: Yeah, it's almost done.

Felix: Okay, safe travels.

He turns to walk out and Wilson's mind tells him to act now.

He pulls out his gun and points it at him but before he cocks it, he hears a car outside and Felix turns to him.

It's too late to put away the gun so he points it at the door where Naledi and Bulelani are walking in.

Naledi: (calmly) Wilson! Wilson! The two C's, it's nice to see y'all checking on each other.

Felix turns to the two and Wilson puts his gun away.

Wilson: What do you want?

Naledi: I came to see you.

She passes Felix, pushing him aside and then approaches Wilson. He's got his guard up because Felix has warned him.

Wilson: Why would you want to see me?

Naledi: Because I have questions I believe you can answer.

She sits on the bed, on top of his clothes.

Naledi: What do you know about Noma and I dealing drugs?

Wilson: How would I know any of that?

Naledi: The more you keep answering like your head is not attached to your neck, the longer it's going to take and that will delay you. So let's try again? Are you the one who sent Anne a report of Noma and I being the two C's?

Wilson: I don't even know who Anne is, so no.

Naledi: I will try again, hopefully for the last time. Do you know anything about a report sent to Anne of Noma and I being the two C's.

He stops for a few seconds, getting his hand ready for the gun should the unexpected happen while thinking carefully about his answer.

Wilson: No, I-

She pulls his one leg by hooking both hers around it, and when he falls she steps on the hand that's holding a gun.

He let's go and she kicks the gun under the bed then help him up.

Naledi: I don't like people who hide their evile works behind behind my name. I have never done anything to you, but you saw it fit to throw my sister and I under the bus so you can save yourself. In fact you know what, I shouldn't talk a lot.

She raises her leg and kick his stomach. When she lifts a punch he ducks but she kicks his stomach again with her knee.

He groans moving back holding on his belly, and she kicks his chin letting him fall on his back with blood coming out before walking out.

Felix goes over to him and crouches before him.

Felix: Brother, was the gun pointed at me or I am seeing things?

Wilson: I told you it will forever be me, myself and I.

Felix: I thought we are brothers.

Wilson: You have just let your wife kick me, why didn't you step in like a brother?

Felix: Because you have been undermining her, and I warned you.

Wilson: Fuck you.

Felix stands up, fixes his shirt and watch and then kicks him hard on the face.

Felix: Fuck you too, brother.

A few days later

To be continued...

NARRATED

The final report is ready for Anne to go through. She steps out of the house all ready to finish her job so she can get out of this place and carry on with her business.

The cars are all lined up outside the gate. Guards ready with their guns and protective gear.

They don't know what to expect and because this person has been right under their nose, and they are in his territory it could turn out ugly.

She gets into car that's leading and then takes the file and starts reading through.

The name, place and other businesses he is involved in are all listed. His family...

She shakes her head looking at the wife's name.

Anne: I only see one name here, and I guess that's where we are headed. Start the car.

The drivers starts the car and drives out, forming a convoy with four more behind.

She wants to kill this one herself.

They are close to arriving at Felix's house when one guard notices him in a car passing by, going in a different direction.

He alerts Anne and they turn around following after him.

Meanwhile Felix is on the phone with Zanele.

Zanele: It's bad, they are not talking to me and everything is becoming awkward now.

Felix: Just wait a few more days then you can come back. I don't want you to stress cause you will stress the baby.

Zanele: (sighs) Okay. What are you doing?

Felix: Driving for some fresh air. Naledi has her siblings over and I don't fit anymore.

Zanele: Hold on. We are coming back soon and you will be with us.

He notices the cars coming after him in a high speed.

Felix: I will call you later.

He hangs up and just as he is about to hit the accelerator, he sees it, who they are and he might know why they are here so then he stops the car on the side of the road.

MARI-ANNE

The cars stop and she gets off holding a gun. She has to do this once and for all if she still wants her position.

Felix gets off his car as she approaches it, and raises his hands.

Felix: I am not the one you are looking for.

Anne: Shut up!

She gets closer and closer, two of her guards coming after her just in case.

Felix: (sighs) I know where he is, and I can take you there. You will be wasting time with me now and you will find him gone.

Anne: Turn around.

He doesn't move and she cocks the gun.

Anne: I said turn around.

He turns and she stands behind him ready to hit his head with the back of the gun.

He long calculated her moves and he swiftly turns, and takes the gun from her then point it back at her.

Felix: I can kill you right now but I won't because I am not your enemy, but I know you won't let me live should I let you go. So tell your guys to move back or I shoot your brains out.

He's got the gun on her head, his arm wrapped around her neck.

Anne waves the guys off and they slowly turn back until they are closer to their cars.

Felix: Get in the car.

She gets in and he follows after her then drives to Wilson's. It's every man for himself now, sorry brother.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

She is making breakfast for everyone when Refiloe comes to join her. Since the guys arrived she has been busy with the restaurant stuff and today she decided to spend time with them.

Noma and Ricardo are also around because they are fixing the mess in their house.

Felix has just left to god-knows-where, and he has been showing less interest in the guests.

Naledi: Hey, good morning.

Refiloe: Morning cuz, how are you?

Naledi: I am good. How is your stay here?

Refiloe: It's pleasant thanks. I love that there are gym equipments to keep me busy.

Naledi: You are still developing the body?

Refiloe: No, it's just to keep fit now and make sure I don't gain unnecessary weight.

Naledi: I can never shame!

Refiloe: You are naturally tough cuz you don't need to go extra mile.

Naledi: I also love food, I wouldn't survive on these gym meals y'all consume.

Refiloe: Fair. So what's happening with these drugs thing? I never got the whole story.

Naledi: It's messy. Felix is involved and they have been using my restaurant as a delivery and pick up spot.

Refiloe: (whistles) If Mani was still alive he would have killed him already.

Naledi: (laughs) I still believe someone out there will do it for me, that's why I want the divorce process to be quick.

Refiloe: You don't want to be a widow?

Naledi: To an unfaithful man, hell no.

They laugh as the rest of the gang comes downstairs to join them.

Philani: What time did y'all wake up?

Refiloe: Good morning Philani.

Philani: I was still coming to that.

Refiloe: Yeah! Yeah!

Naledi: Please sit, I'm almost done.

Noma: Let me help you.

They guys sits around the table and then Noma and Naledi brings the food.

Everyone dishes up and they start eating while talking.

Nathan: How long are we going to be here for?

Naledi: When everything else is done. I still believe Anne isn't finished with us, not until one of us is dead.

Nathan: What is she waiting for?

Naledi: I don't know, but it means we should prepare for the worst.

They continue eating as Ricardo and Noma keeps looking at each other and blushing.

After eating, they do the dishes while Naledi cleans and then they all bath. Noma and Naledi leaves together for the restaurant, while they guys goes with Ricardo to his bar.

WILSON

He had put his trip on hold because of the injuries, but today he is feeling better and he is getting ready to leave.

He won't tell anyone where he is going because he doesn't want Anne to find tge truth.

He buttons his shirt and brush back his hair looking at the mirror.

The dust outside and tyres digging the ground makes him rush to the front door, deserting his bags.

He notices Felix's car as he peek through the opening on his door, and he can see him coming out approaching his door.

He turns back and grabs his bag before jumping out of the back window. His shirt gets stuck on the window handle and he pulls it hard, tearing it and then jumps on the ground and starts running.

Felix: (knocking) Wilson! I know you are in there, open the door.

He calls out to him a few more times before kicking down the door.

The way the house is built, he can see the back window standing by the front door.

He sees Wilson running into the nearest fields like a mad man and he knows better than to let him flee because he will be the sacrifice.

Felix: (shouting) He is running away!

The other guards have already seen him so they start chasing after him while shooting.

He is not so fast on foot so they catch up with him and bring him back after some few minutes.

Felix: ...and that's why it's only my name appearing. He wants your position and he will do anything to get it.

He says after explaining what happened and they see the guards bringing him back. He is bleeding from the right calf and walking with difficulties.

Anne: (looking at Wilson) I have seen this man somewhere. I can't recall but I can feel like I know him.

The guards arrives and Anne steps out of the car.

Anne: (to Felix) I will take it from here. You can leave.

Felix takes one look at Wilson and then gets back into his car and drives out.

Before he could even reach the gate, he hears gunshots and momentarily close his eyes.

They have been together they were kids. Dodging the Cape flats bullets and surviving so it has to hurt a little.

BULELANI HADEBE

He is back in Joburg to get started on his divorce and maybe a little painting.

His phone rings and he smiles seeing that it's Naledi. He answering.

Bulelani: Ms Mthembu.

Naledi: (blushing) Mr Hadebe.

Bulelani: You miss me already?

Naledi: Maybe.

Bulelani: What are you doing?

Naledi: I am at the restaurant.

Bulelani: What are you doing there?

Naledi: Just came to see if it will be possible to open anytime soon.

Bulelani: And?

Naledi: It's going there.

Bulelani: I should be back by weekend and I would like to do something with you.

Naledi: Okay. What is it?

Bulelani: It's a surprise.

Naledi: Maybe you should just buy a house this side once and for all.

Bulelani: No, it will all work out in our favour just wait.

Naledi: Whatever that means. Are you not going to attend your mother-in-law's funeral? I heard you talking about it in passing.

Bulelani: I don't know.

Naledi: Okay, well I am with Noma and she is coming back to the office. Let's talk later on.

Bulelani: Sure.

She hangs up but the smile is still plastered on her face.

Noma walks in drying her hands and stops looking at her.

Noma: And then?

Naledi: (snaps out of it) Nothing. I am just feeling happy.

Noma: Okay. I am ready to leave.

She grabs her handbag and they go out.

RICARDO SIBANDA

They are having a good time at the bar. Stocko is galore and the guys are feeding their eyes while drinking.

Philani: Macho man, I have been meaning to ask you something. Why don't you and Noma come back to Limpopo or maybe settle somewhere else other than Cape Town?

Ricardo: Why? And are you ever going to call me by my name?

Philani: It doesn't matter, you know much

Philani: Naledi won't always be there, you need to at least keep your family first.

Ricardo: I hear you and it's true. I need to protect my family.

They continue drinking while getting entertained by the ladies.

To be continued...

NARRATED

It is the day of the burial and they are now in the graveyard. The pastor is giving a word to accompany Mrs Buthelezi to her final resting place, and then they start a hymn she loved as the coffin is slid into the grave.

It's a sad scene to watch especially when Sonto starts crying in the family gazebo, more than everyone else.

Bulelani has just arrived so he is standing at the back and it feels like he is reliving his parent's burial.

Zanele is crossing fingers that nobody gets dramatic about this, especially the crying Sonto because she doesn't want to trend as the girl who indirectly killed her mother.

The tombstone is ready and once everything is done, and the coffin has settled, they close the grave with the tombstone and everyone goes back to eat.

Ntombi helps with the food to make sure everything goes well. They have locked most of the rooms because people take advantage and end up stealing cutlery or anything they can get their hands on.

She dishes up for Sonto and takes the food to her room where her other aunt has been keeping an eye on her.

Ntombi: You have to eat something Sonto, you cannot continue like this.

She says giving her the plate. Sonto takes it and puts it on the bedside table then continues lying down.

Sonto: I need some space.

The aunt and Ntombi look at each other then turn around to walk out.

Her: I think this has affected her badly, and I am afraid of what she might do.

She says after they have closed the door and are going downstairs.

Ntombi: And it's understandable, but I don't know how to help her anymore.

Her: We all know Sonto has always been the quiet one, she won't say a word even now and she is going to explode one day.

Ntombi: That's what I am afraid of too.

They notice Bulelani walking in and Ntombi waves at him then he approaches them.

Ntombi: I didn't know you are here.

Bulelani: I arrived late and didn't want to stress you.

He greets the aunt and they explain to him how Sonto is.

Bulelani: Where is she?

Ntombi: In her room.

Bulelani: Can I go talk to her?

Ntombi: Let me take you there.

They leave together and go to her room as the aunt goes back to her duties.

BULELANI HADEBE

Naledi managed to convince him to go to the funeral and because she has that effect on him, here he is.

He hasn't seen Zanele at close range or even talked to her, and he is hoping to leave without coming into contact with her.

Ntombi leads him to Sonto's room and they knock before walking in.

Ntombi: I will leave you to it, come look for me when you are done so I can dish up for you.

Bulelani: Okay.

She walks out and close the door. Bulelani pulls a chair and sits beside the bed.

Sonto isn't sleeping, her eyes are wide open focusing in space but Bulelani cannot see this because he is sitting behind her so she won't feel nervous and crowded.

Bulelani: Sonto, I just came to check on you and see how you are doing. I know it hurts and I know right now you are imagining all the things you want to do to the people who did this. I understand very well, and I also know this pain won't go away unless you do what your heart tells you to do. I am sorry you are feeling this way, but please eat, you will need strength if you are going to do this.

He squeezes her shoulder a little before standing up to leave.

Sonto: I want to kill her.

She says as he is approaching the door.

Sonto: And I want you to help me.

The door opens and Zanele walks in.

Zanele: I didn't know you are here.

Bulelani: Hi.

He passes and goes out then she frowns looking at him and then back at Sonto.

Zanele: Did I miss something?

Sonto: Please get out.

She turns and close the door, rushing after Bulelani.

ZANELE BUTHELEZI-DELIN

She was surprised to see Bulelani because she thought he didn't come. But a more surprising sight was him being in Sonto's room, just the two of them.

Her mind is running wild as she thinks of a lot of things that this could mean.

Bulelani is asking for Ntombi and they tell him she is in the kitchen. A lot of people know him around here so this up and down he is doing isn't questionable.

Zanele catches up with him as he enters the kitchen and Ntombi is alone, warming up his food.

Ntombi: How is she?

Bulelani: Not good.

Ntombi: You can sit while I finish up here.

Zanele: What is going on here?

Ntombi: With what?

Zanele: Are you seriously going to serve my husband while I am here?

Ntombi: You weren't available when he arrived

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but you can take over. There is no need to be dramatic about it.

Bulelani gets on his feet and approaches the stove.

Bulelani: I would rather serve myself if it pains you when your sister helps.

Zanele: (scoffs) I can't believe this.

Bulelani: I am not your husband anymore Zanele so please stop calling me that. And another thing, erase those evil thoughts of how you see me and your sisters. Not everyone is like you.

Ntombi is already out the door because she doesn't want to be part of this.

Zanele: You can refuse all you want but we are still married.

Bulelani: Yet you are carrying another man's child.

Zanele: It doesn't mean anything. I would have welcomed your child if you brought one too.

Bulelani: Except I didn't, and I was never going to impregnate someone while married to you.

Zanele: You even comfort my sisters but can't do the same to me?

Bulelani: (chuckles) Being involved with drugs must have loosened a screw in your head.

He dishes up and sits down and as she is about to say another word, Ntombi walks back in with other women and she angrily walks out.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

Her brothers and cousin have gone back home without the drama ever happening. She is happy about this ending because she was scared they would leave with injuries.

Anne's goons have disappeared, and the news of Wilson being killed has reached the whole town.

The Star Eatery restaurant has opened doors and coming along just fine. She has also changed her supplies and the routes they use.

Felix doesn't spend much time at the house these days and that's a breath of fresh air.

She is on the phone with Bulelani like always, the thing between them is growing and they can feel it too.

Bulelani: I am driving, I can't wait to get home and rest.

Naledi: How was it?

Bulelani: It was fine, except the middle sister wants revenge.

Naledi: Revenge?

Bulelani: Yes, she said and I quote "I want to kill her."

Naledi: Are you serious?

Bulelani: Dead serious, and believe me with the right resources she is going to do it. She even asked me to help her.

Naledi: This is bad.

Bulelani: Her mother was shot in front of her, she killed the guy but the anger has built up in her because the guy was only a messenger.

Naledi: It scares me, when you fight with anger you go over the limit.

Bulelani: I know.

Naledi: What are you going to do then?

Bulelani: I don't know. Wait to hear from her maybe?

Naledi: (sighs) Okay, drive safely. We will talk when you have arrived.

Bulelani: Okay.

MARI-ANNE

She arrived in Pretoria earlier on and her guards have taken up with their duties. The ones who lost their lives are going to be buried tomorrow, she organised transport for them to be brought back to Pretoria and they arrived a day before.

One of her guards comes in after they have settled and asks to see her. He is one of her favorites so she lets him in.

Anne: You only ever come here if there is a problem. What is it tonight?

Him: I have been doing final checks on everything that's happened, and I think we made a mistake.

Anne: I am listening.

Him: Initially we were looking for the two C's, which turned out to be a complicated issue because of the many reports you received. If the guy that was killed was indeed one of them, then where is the other?

Anne: I think he was the main guy so having took him out means we are fine and business can carry on.

Him: I believe the one we let go is the second guy.

Anne: But he proved what was happening. I don't think he is a threat.

Him: On his own he is not; maybe, but we killed an old woman.

Anne: Because I was trying to teach Zanele a lesson.

Him: And Zanele has something going on with this guy that I believe is the second C.

She stops for a while to think and she can see where she went wrong. She should have killed Felix too.

Anne: I guess we should wait and see how it goes then we can act.

Him: We have left so many loopholes on this situation. Do you think everyone else we shuffled will just let this go?

Anne: They know I will kill them if they come after me.

Him: Even so, I think we should not relax.

Anne: Okay.

Him: That's all I wanted to talk to you about.

Anne: Thank you.

The guy leaves and she starts thinking of how she is going to close these loopholes she left behind.

Naledi, she messed up at the restaurant and even got her shot.

Noma and Ricardo, the whole hostage thing and their house being put out of order.

Mrs Buthelezi's other daughters, even though they don't seem to have it in them.

Felix and Zanele!

She sighs then pours a drink and downs it at one go.

To be continued...

FELIX DELIN

He is packing his bags to leave for Joburg because the atmosphere in this house is getting worse each day.

Naledi is no longer entertaining him, in fact she doesn't even pay the tiniest attention to him.

They live like roommates who are staying out of each other's way to avoid stepping on each other's toes.

Naledi walks into the bedroom from bathing and starts lotioning her body. She bends; carefully applying the body butter on her knees and feet, and Felix cannot hold himself so he adjusts his trouser and walks out clearing his throat as his boner rises.

Her flesh was all out in the open, clean and thick just like he knows it. Her twins that he saw from the mirror since he was standing behind her looked so fresh, and he imagines grabbing them in his hands while she ride him.

He heads straight to the garden so he won't have to jerk off, and distracts himself.

Naledi continues until she is done and then puts on a tight fit dress and heels. She does her hair and a light make-up then grabs her bag to walk out.

Felix walks back in, almost bumping into her at the door.

Felix: Sorry.

Naledi: Thank you.

She smiles passing and sways her hips going to the kitchen. He cannot hold it any longer so he follows after her.

Felix: Can we talk?

He is standing behind her as she fixes her lunchbox because she won't go to the restaurant straight away.

Naledi: I am listening.

Felix: I was hoping we could part ways peacefully, I don't want bad blood between us after being together for so long.

Naledi: We have nothing tying us to each other, no kid no nothing, so maybe we should just go with the flow.

Felix: Are you going to move on with Bulelani?

Naledi: You are crossing boundaries now.

Felix: Sorry. I am leaving, I think we both need space.

Naledi: No, you need to see your family in Joburg and it's understandable. You don't even have to let me know about it.

Her answers carry so much anger he can also feel it.

Felix: (sighs) Let me go finish up.

Naledi: Bye!

He goes back upstairs and finishes off. When he comes down he hears Naledi's car driving out.

It hurts a little that she no longer cares, but she had told him she wouldn't hesitate to leave him should such things happen.

He looks around the house one last time until whenever, then goes out and gets into his car.

He passes by Ricardo's bar because he knows he's already opened, and when he walks in he finds him checking stock with his employees.

He goes over and the guys give them some privacy by getting busy with other things.

Felix: Hey, how are you?

Ricardo: I'm alive.

Felix: How is business going?

Ricardo: Very well.

Felix: Don't you want to be of the farming anymore?

Ricardo: No, I want to do my own thing now.

Felix: Okay.

Ricardo: Drink?

Felix: No, I'm not staying. I actually came to check on you before I leave.

Ricardo: (raised eyebrow) Leave? Where to?

Felix: My Joburg house. Just to clear my head and stuff.

Ricardo: Okay, travel safely.

Felix: Look man, I'm sorry about what happened with-

Ricardo: It's okay, don't stress about it. I am fine and my wife is also okay. We just want a peaceful life going forward.

Felix: I understand. Well, I won't stay long. I will see you.

Ricardo: Sure.

He turns and walks out as the guys comes back to finish with their work.

It still feels like a dream that his brotherhood has just vanished, his marriage and everything else he was involved in.

Maybe starting aa life with Zanele is the change he needs.

BULELANI HADEBE

His lawyer just called to let him know that Zanele has received the papers. She is not yet back but probably on her way since she can't stay there for long.

He is making food, eager to finish and sit down so he can call Naledi.

As if she has read his mind, an incoming call from her gets him smiling from ear to ear.

Bulelani: Naledi.

Naledi: Bulelani. You look happy what is it?

Bulelani: You called, I was going to call you.

Naledi: You took long.

Bulelani: I am still preparing breakfast.

Naledi: I am already on my way to get some parcels I had ordered.

Bulelani: So early?

Naledi: I left the house without eating so I am hoping to arrive early, and eat before going in.

Bulelani: Okay, how is it going there? Any news on Anne?

Naledi: Nothing, it's like she doesn't exist. No trace of her

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nothing.

His phone rings and it's Ntombi calling.

Bulelani: Let me answer someone here I will call you back.

Bulelani: Hello.

Ntombi: (breathing heavily) What did you promise Sonto? She has left since last night and we can't find her. I am only finding a note now that we shouldn't look for her, she will come back. Bhut' Bulelani what happened when I left you together in the room? There is nowhere else she can go.

Bulelani: (sighs) Sonto wants revenge, and the only way for her to get back to normal she has to avenge her mother.

Ntombi: Those people are dangerous Bulelani, she will get herself killed.

Bulelani: How about I let you know if she calls me or something. I haven't heard from her for now.

Ntombi: Okay, thank you.

She hangs up and as he taps on Naledi's number, another call comes through from an unknown number.

Bulelani: Bulelani hello.

Sonto: Hello, it's Sonto. Can you please direct me to your place, I am lost.

Bulelani: Where are you?

Sonto: I am not sure but there is a taxi rank.

Bulelani: Can you please approach and ask one of the taxi drivers, or look out for a board names.

He hears someone calling out a place where one of the taxis is going, and immediately gets up and switches off the stove.

The place is dangerously dangerous for a woman walking alone and lost.

Bulelani: Wait there I am coming.

He rushes out after getting hold of his keys and gets into the car driving out. Hopefully she will still be in one piece when he gets to her.

NOMASONTO BUTHELEZI

She is sitting on the pavement near one of the taxis that's still loading. Her backpack strapped tightly on her back, her sneakers tightly tied and her cap almost reaching the eyes.

There are nyaopes lurking around for a feast, and she knows in her heart that she isn't going to lose anything to them.

All this time she avoided coming to Joburg because she wasn't ready to face all the things people talk about. She knows the dangers of walking alone without knowing where you are going.

She didn't want to be a statistic, but her mom's death changed everything and now she doesn't care anymore.

She has her phone in hand checking the time when one of the nyaope guy snatches it, and starts running.

She looks into his direction and sets behind him, sprinting like a maniac.

Bulelani's car stop a few metres and he tries to call her because she is out of sight. The phone rings until it goes to voicemail.

He starts sweating with fear and he doesn't even know what she is wearing so looking for her will be a job and a half.

He hears a commotion on the other side and the sight he comes face-to-face with is something he has never seen before.

He hurries over and grabs Sonto, pulling her away from the guy.

Bulelani: Stop, people are looking and taking videos.

She is groaning in anger and totally out of it. The guy lies unconscious on the ground, his face red with blood it even starts to swell.

Bulelani pulls Sonto away and they get into his car then drives off.

Bulelani: What's going on with you? Do you want to get killed?

Sonto: He was stealing my phone. This is the only phone I have.

Bulelani: Those guys are always in groups and they are very dangerous.

She winces holding on the side of her belly and she feels something wet.

Bulelani goes on talking, he doesn't even notice when she slips into unconsciousness.

He stops the car when he sees her slipping off the seat and that's when he notices the blood. She has been stabbed, probably by a screwdriver.

Later that night, he is on the phone with Naledi, telling her what happened.

He left Sonto at the hospital and they said she will be fine.

Naledi: Did you call her sister?

Bulelani: Not yet. I will call her tomorrow.

Naledi: Okay. I have just arrived, let me shower first.

Bulelani: I might sleep. I feel so tired.

Naledi: It's okay, we can still talk in the morning.

Bulelani: I miss you.

The door abruptly opens and Zanele walks in.

Naledi: I miss you too.

Bulelani: Bye.

He hangs up and turns facing her as she is standing by the door holding the divorce papers.

Bulelani: (sighs) What is it?

Zanele: (shouting) You couldn't even wait for me to come back so you can give me the papers yourself?

Bulelani: (calmly) You are making noise, and I am trying to sleep.

Zanele: Trying to sleep my foot. I am not going to sign this.

Bulelani: It doesn't matter, there are other ways to do this so I'll take advantage of that.

Zanele: I won't sign when I am not gaining anything. I came into this marriage with a lot of money but now I should leave with less? It won't happen.

Bulelani: Record your insults and send them to me on WhatsApp, I will listen to them when I wake up.

She jumps on him on the bed and starts slapping his back. He carefully rolls over and she throws herself on the side of the bed then starts screaming holding on her tummy.

Zanele: (crying) It hurts, my baby...

He gets off the bed and walks out leaving her in the room.

She gets up seeing he is not falling for her tricks, then clicks her tongue going out and he hears the car driving off.

He closes his eyes in the other bedroom and sleeps.

A FEW MONTHS LATER

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

His divorce was finalised a few weeks ago and he is ready to move on now. He knows for sure that it should be with Naledi, but for now they are getting to know each other because Naledi hasn't divorced Felix.

He has invited her over to his place because she is in the process of moving this side, and she was complaining of being bored since she is always alone.

She left the marital house to Felix because it belonged to both of them, but Cape Town is Felix's home and not hers.

His phone rings from the table where he is busy setting up nicely. He wants to feed her first before they watch movies, or whatever she wants to do.

Bulelani: Ms Mthembu.

Naledi: (smiling) Mr Hadebe.

Bulelani: I am almost done.

Naledi: I am at the gate, come fetch me.

Bulelani: I'm coming.

She hangs up and he chuckles shaking his head. It's not her first time here and she knows what to do, but women!

He goes out and opens the gate for her then gets into the car before she drives in.

He gets off first and opens the door for her then holds her hand so she can get off.

Naledi: Thank you.

He gets her handbag and close the door while she waits for him. It has become a tradition since they started visiting each other.

Naledi: Oh, wow. This is beautiful.

She says walking into the house, looking at the table.

Bulelani: I hope you are hungry.

Naledi: Even if I wasn't I would still eat.

Bulelani: (chuckles) Okay, take a seat while I bring the food.

He goes over to the kitchen and brings the food then dish up for both of them before sitting down.

Bulelani: How is everything going?

Naledi: All good.

Bulelani: We still haven't heard from Sonto this side.

Naledi: It's been long, she will come back.

Bulelani: I hope so. Her sister is always calling-

His phone rings and he puts the fork down then answers.

Bulelani: Ntombi. No, I haven't heard anything. I will call you if I see or hear from her. Yes, okay.

He puts the phone down and looks at Naledi.

Naledi: It's expected for her to be worried. She is the eldest and that's the only person she has left.

Bulelani: She is alive, there is a feeling I have when we talk about her that suggests she is still alive.

They continue eating while changing between topics.

After they are done, Naledi does the dishes while Bulelani packs the left overs away.

Bulelani: What do you want to do next?

Naledi: (chuckles) Is there a list I should choose from?

Bulelani: No, anything that comes to mind.

Naledi: It's (checks her watch) a little before 6 PM, we can have a drink and then watch movies afterwards.

He wants to ask if she is sleeping over but holds himself.

Bulelani: Okay.

He finishes and places the bowls where she is washing.

Bulelani: I will come clean these ones.

She smiles and he goes to the bedroom to fix things just in case.

Naledi washes, rinses and wipes everything before putting them in their places, and then takes off her shoes pouring a glass of wine to take with to the living room.

Bulelani comes out a few minutes later and finds her glass almost empty.

She had one while they were eating, this is the second. Hopefully; she is not the type that cries when drunk.

Naledi: Please pour me another one.

He takes the glass and goes to the kitchen. He can hear the music playing from the living room, a piano hit that has him whistling to it too.

Naledi is on her feet dancing as he comes back and he can't believe it.

This adds to the reason why they should know each other more before jumping into it.

BANDILE HADEBE

Ever since he came out of the rehabilitation, he moved back to Mpumalanga because there is no one at the house right now.

He has a girlfriend, and things are getting serious between them. They have been talking on the phone, meeting at the mall, going on dates and all that.

Today she is coming for the visit and he keeps checking his time because it's almost 7 PM.

A Range Rover stops at the gate, she gets off and gets an overnight bag from the back. The windows are tinted and he can't see who is driving.

He walks out and the car drives off. Tracy walks in with her bag and hugs him.

Tracy: Hey baby.

Bandile: Hey, who was that?

Tracy: Oh; that's my sister's husband. She asked him to drop me off because she was busy.

Bandile: Okay. I was coming to greet but he quickly drove off.

Tracy: He is in a hurry to get home or he will be accused of cheating.

Bandile: Let's go inside.

They walk in and goes straight to the bedroom.

He has a little freezer for his drinks because the big one is always filled with food.

Bandile: Let me dish up for you.

He goes back to the kitchen and locks the main door before dishing up for her. She comes out wearing his t-shirt, with no underwear.

Tracy: I was thinking that maybe we can start with something more fun first.

Bandile: I just thought you are hungry.

Tracy: I am, but not for food.

Bandile: Okay.

He covers the plate and takes it to the bedroom.

Tracy helps him out of his clothes while kissing him and running her hands all over him.

They are both naked now, standing by the bed while kissing and moaning in each other's mouths.

Bandile sits on the bed and she sits on top of him with her legs wrapped around his waist.

She can feel his third leg starting to poke her from beneath so she takes one hand there and starts massaging it, feeling it grow in her hand.

Bandile: I love you.

Tracy: I love you more baby.

She tilts her head back, feeling the third leg releasing the sticky liquid.

He gets up with her, kissing her neck and then gently places her on the bed before ...he holds his dick and circles it on the opening, rubbing her with it while it makes that wet sound. She moans beneath him, unable to stay still as her hands also goes all over the place.

She grabs his back skin as he increases the pace, rubbing on her vigorously until she struggles to breath.

He stops and then slides in, slowly and gently. She raises her thighs

opening them wider while crying tears of pleasure.

The dick finally rests in her and he starts circling slowly, moving his waist as if he is stirring with it while picking up the pace bit by bit. It finally gets to the point where he slams against her as his whole dick disappears into her, coming back coated with her juices.

Tracy: (crying) Uhh! You are so, aahh! Ba..ndi...l..ahhhh

She digs into his back with her short nails, thank God cause he would be feeling it. The feeling from the little pain causes him to be more active and he drills into her even worse while she continues to cry, unable to hold to hold herself.

He leans over to her, whispers into her ear before going down to nibble on her neck.

He follows the body trail and slows down, pulls out then goes down on her.

Tracy: (running out of breath) Fuck! I aaah! Lo...aahh, oh, yes baby. Yes, yes, Ban...di aaahhhhh

He moves back and still rubbing on her with his thumb and then directs his dick into her.

Tracy: (pushes him off while crying) No, why are you this good? Are you trying to kill me? Come here.

She pulls him back and he directs his still hard dick into her without holding it. It finds its path and then gets in, and the walls tighten on him.

Bandile: (groaning) Fuck!

He increases the pace holding her on her waist. They go on for a few minutes then he grabs her by her thighs, crossing her legs on his chest and then pushing them down to hers while fucking her.

She cries out cumming while fucking back. He gives her a breather and then turns her to face away from him, taking it from the back.

Tracy: This is my favorite.

Bandile: I can tell by the way you bend over.

She chuckles as he enters her while grabbing her butt. He pushes in and out for a few minutes; until he feels himself unable to stop.

He spansks her so hard on the thighs and butt. She is fisting the sheets, moaning as loud as she can while crying.

FELIX DELIN

He gets off Zanele panting after releasing in her. She folds her legs with her hand between them.

Felix: Did I hurt you?

Zanele: No!

Felix: Don't tell me you still want more.

She keeps quiet looking at him and he gets off the bed going to the bathroom.

She is in the last month of her second trimester and they have been having sex like crazy.

This is her third round for the night and she still wants more?
No, he can't!

He comes back with the towel and wipes her. She has her mouth pouted and arms folded underneath the blanket as he covers her.

Felix: I am going out for a few minutes, what do you want?

She doesn't answer. He goes back to the shower and does a quick one before coming back to dress.

Felix: Still don't know what you want?

She remains still.

Felix: When you hear my car driving out, start counting 30 minutes. If it passes and you haven't said anything, I will come back with nothing.

He takes his wallet and walks out.

A few minutes of driving out, she sends a list and he shakes his head.

At this moment he regrets making her pregnant. She even cries for sex.

He drives off still thinking of how and where he is going to get the energy going forward.

NARRATED

Nomasonto has been hiding in the streets of Pretoria. Getting to know her target, where she goes, when?, with how many guards and all that stuff.

She had also joined a club that teaches women how to fight, self-defence type of thing and then the more complex part of it where they learn fighting as a coping mechanism.

The people she linked up with have been showing her around, she even faked an interest in one guy who has connections when it comes to ammunition.

They are now in a relationship and because she allowed him to have other girlfriends, she doesn't worry about him wanting sex from her. It's like he fears her and that works in her favour.

Tonight she is doing the last rounds at Anne's territory, she will strike during the week when Anne goes for a check-up or whatever she does at the hospital.

She only goes with one or two guards who wait for her outside the gate.

Tomorrow she will go find out what happens in the hospital premises. Maybe it might even help her with her plan.

She packs her stuff and is ready to leave when two guys appears from nowhere.

Sonto: (sighs) What do you want? (raises the bag) This?

They nod taking position. One comes to the right and the other to the right with their okapis in hands.

Sonto: But you guys are never afraid of anything neh? You just look at a person once and then decided to rob them. If it's a woman it's even worse cause you think all she will do is scream. I am not in the mood guys, just go on and pass like you didn't see me.

She calculates their footsteps, the one on the left is coming rushed and that gives her a chance to deal with him first.

She positions herself to attack while counting his steps.

One, two, three, four steps, she foot her knee and it breaks then she throws her bag down and snap his neck before picking up her bag.

The second one raises his knife and she hits it with the bag. If falls to the ground and she kicks his chest before snapping his neck too.

Their knives have names on them, so she puts on gloves and places them on each of their chests before walking off.

She should tell Bulelani to expect her because that's where she will take refuge after her mission, and trip to Durban.

To be continued...

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

Last night she got so drunk she doesn't even remember half of the stuff that happened. She wakes up now, a few minutes to 10 AM and cannot recognize the room she is in.

She looks around for a clue of where she is and then a knock sounds on the door.

Bulelani: Naledi?

Her mind registers when she hears Bulelani's voice. She checks under the sheets and finds herself in a grey males' shorts, her upper body in a grey vest.

Naledi: Co..Come in.

He opens the door and walks in, holding a tray of breakfast.

Bulelani: Good morning.

He says after placing the tray on the bedside table.

Naledi: Morning.

Bulelani: (pointing at the bed) Can I sit?

Naledi: Yeah.

She makes way for him and he sits facing her.

Bulelani: Should I tell or wait for you to ask?

Naledi: Oh my God!

Bulelani: (laughing) I am sorry for changing you into those without your consent. You weren't going to sleep comfortable in the dress and I figured you might still have to wear it in the morning in case you are meeting other people or something.

He is over-explaining himself because he understands how it might seem.

Naledi: It's okay, thank you. What happened?

Bulelani: Nothing much, you were telling me more about your childhood, your marriage and all that stuff.

Naledi: I am sorry.

Bulelani: I don't mind, but please when we get into a relationship learn to talk when you are sober. Maybe not with me or anyone who knows you.

Naledi: You're not judging me?

Bulelani: No, you kept me entertained most of the time. I recorded you and only stopped when you started crying.

She looks away as she feels tears threatening to come out. This is one of those things you know you can never forget no matter how drunk you get.

Bulelani: I think you are a strong woman Naledi, but it doesn't mean you are no more human. You are allowed to feel, not only pain but all other emotions.

He moves closer and turns her face to look at him. She is a mess with tears that are overflowing.

He pulls her into a hug and she lets it all out, her body vibrating as she cries out silently. The most audible sound being when she catches her breath.

Naledi: I miss them everyday of my life. They didn't deserve to die that way and we also didn't deserve to be robbed of our only parents. My mother had 3 bullet wounds, my middle aunt too and then Noma's mother suffocated together with our youngest cousin. We had to become strong at a you age; even though Mr Mani was around that gap still remained. Looking at their graves, knowing we buried them on the same day-

She cannot hold herself anymore as she cries out loud. Bulelani doesn't say anything but holds her in his arms until she calms down and falls asleep.

NARATTED
MARI-ANNE

Business has been going well and because none of the people she let go of has tried anything, she believes they are no longer going to do anything.

Her most trusted guard walks up into her office and sits as she is finishing up on her books.

Anne: Yes.

She says raising her head, looking at him with the pen between her fingers as she plays with it.

Him: There has been someone spotted outside our premises. It looked suspicious and I believe we should be aware.

Anne: What's suspicious about it?

Him: The person looked disguised, taking snaps of the building and passing by quite a lot.

Anne: I know we may have a lot of enemies but please, this building is huge and very beautiful, admirable to say the least so a person taking pictures of it shouldn't bother us.

Him: (sighs) Okay, anyway, I won't be available to come with you to the hospital this time around because I have other commitments.

Anne: Not a problem, I won't be going anymore also. Someone will bring my medication here.

Him: Okay. That's all.

He stands up and as he is about to turn to the door she stops him.

Anne: I need you to do something for me. Remember Zanele, Buthelezi's last born?

Him: Yes.

Anne: Find her and bring her here. By tonight.

He nods and then turns and walks out.

Anne goes back to what she was doing and ends up taking out a photograph of all the people or "loopholes" she left behind.

She has Bandile's head circled amongst the others and the next arrow points at Zanele.

BANDILE HADEBE

Tracy slept in and woke up early in the morning to leave. The same car picked her up from the corner of the street and he has been scratching his head since she left about it.

A call from his brother comes through her phone and he answers.

Bandile: Bhut.

Bulelani: Hey, how are you?

Bandile: I am fine, you?

Bulelani: I am okay. Listen

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there is a friend of mine coming there in a few minutes. I asked him to come with you this side because the lost uncle is coming back from wherever and he is coming there.

Bandile: Do I really have to leave?

Bulelani: Is there something you should stay for?

Bandile: No, I am just- this whole up and down thing is getting tiring.

Bulelani: He is almost there, pack all your belongings cause you are no longer coming back.

He hangs up and he sighs going into his bedroom. He tries to call Tracy but she doesn't answer.

He puts the phone away and continues packing.

BULELANI HADEBE

Naledi comes downstairs all freshened up and alive.

He meets her half way to help her with the tray she is holding.

Bulelani: How are you feeling?

Naledi: Better.

Bulelani: There is ice cream in the fridge, you can have the whole tub if it will make you feel better.

Naledi: Thank you.

They walk to the kitchen together and Bulelani cleans the dishes then dries them.

Bulelani: I was talking to my little brother. I got him a lift to come this side.

Naledi: He wants to come back?

Bulelani: No, our uncle is coming back from god-knows- where and he is going to stay there. I don't trust him so I can't have Bandile staying with him. Besides, I want him to take responsibility, get a job and make money for himself.

Naledi: Okay. Why don't you trust this uncle?

Bulelani: He is just, that one uncle you can't trust.

Naledi: I hope he won't come here.

Bulelani: He won't, he is afraid of me.

Naledi: Okay.

Bulelani: I see you haven't, changed there are clean clothes in the closet.

Naledi: These are not dirty.

Bulelani: You slept in them. Come, let's go change you into something else.

He pulls her and pushes her forward. The piano hit from last night starts playing and Bulelani starts dancing and whistling the way Naledi was doing.

Naledi: (laughing) You are such a fool.

Bulelani: And you love me.

She blushes as her mouth stretches in a smile and they both start laughing while ascending the stairs.

NOMASONTO BUTHELEZI

Later that night she packs her stuff and leaves for Anne's place. The plan is to see what's happening tonight because she is bored, but when she arrives she finds an opportunity that she will never get her hands on anytime soon if she lets it pass.

The guards' cars are driving out and she knows this because she can see Anne remaining behind with only the guards at the gate.

Her security has been going down lately, maybe because she thinks she is out of danger or can no longer afford to pay them.

She takes out her phone and dials Bulelani.

He answers giggling and she can also hear a woman's voice in the background.

Bulelani: Sonto?

Sonto: Bulelani, how are you?

Bulelani: I am okay? Where are you?

Sonto: I am in Pretoria.

Bulelani: What are you doing there?

Sonto: Taking care of business. Listen, expect me early in the morning and if I don't arrive know that I am dead.

Bulelani: What?

Sonto: I am going into Anne's territory, one woman and I don't know if I will make it out alive.

Bulelani: Nomasonto are you crazy? Why would you do that?

Sonto: Because I have to. I will see you soon and if I don't then SYOTOS.

She hangs up and he is left calling her name.

He doesn't even know where Anne's territory is and even if he did he cannot leave. Bandile still needs him, he still needs himself alive.

Sonto moves closer to the gate, the building is surrounded by walls and shame yona intle, if only it was used for good things that are both positive and empowering to the community.

The gate opens and she walks in holding the bag closer to her chest.

These ones seems new and she is counting on them not knowing her.

“Ma'am what are you carrying in the bag? Please open it.”

One of them says blocking the way. More guards comes out from their positions and she realizes she didn't plan this well, but fuck it she is already inside and there is not backing down.

Sonto: One of the cars similar to this one dropped it on the way when driving off. I realized it must have been a mistake they didn't notice because they were speeding. It fell from the boot.

They hear a hooter at the gate. That's an alert for them to open up.

Sonto: It must be them.

“Wait here.”

He says and then goes over to the gate. Sonto looks at the ones she is left with, the others are following the one going to the gate just in case.

She walks back slowly until she is at the door, when she hits it with her back the alarm goes off and the guards turns to her, ready to shoot.

The car drives in and she falls to the ground as if experiencing an epileptic attack.

Two guards attendmm to her, taking her inside and disengaging the alarm.

They meet with Anne coming downstairs and she asks what's going on. Sonto's blood boils seeing her in flesh and she knocks the guards, one with her head and the other with her foot.

They fall back and she takes out a gun from the bag, points it at Anne as her main guard walks in with Zanele leading him.

To be continued...

NOMASONTO BUTHELEZI

Anne's guard has his gun on Zanele's head. He knows they are sisters because he has been around for a very long time and he knows that Sonto, being the big sister, will not let her sibling die in this manner. Not after experiencing the same with her mother.

He gives Sonto that cynical smile before opening his mouth.

Him: You know, I heard you were there when your mother got killed. I cannot imagine how it might have been to be exposed to such calamity. Now, imagine going through that twice (peeks at Zanele's stomach), or thrice.

He drops the smile and then puts on a serious look.

Him: Drop the gun or they are both dead.

Sonto looks at Zanele's stomach and then back at her face. She has tears flowing down her cheeks, her one hand is holding the tummy and she is visibly scared.

It's this same act that got their mother killed, she was trying to protect them and she did; with her life. Maybe Zanele should protect hers too, whether she dies or not it's up to her really.

Sonto: (calmly) I will still be alive so I don't care.

Him: (chuckles) I know what you are playing at so I will shoot elsewhere and see if I won't earn myself a reaction.

Sonto: Be sure you are fully loaded, it would be a shame to use your last bullet as a warning and then gets killed.

She looks at Zanele as if communicating. Zanele uses her head to hit him on his chin, as he moves back wiping the blood and feeling some pain; she throws an extra gun at Zanele who catches it and immediately cocks it then starts shooting.

They hear a car driving in and gunshots going off outside, followed by Felix calling Zanele's name.

Sonto pulls Anne to another room close by and then closes it and ties her to a chair.

Anne: I don't think you have it in you. You would have long done it.

Sonto: And that's your problem, thinking you know everything about everyone.

She is checking if anyone followed them but it seems Felix has them occupied in the other room.

Anne: I know what a killer looks like, and you my dear are not anything close to it.

Sonto: (approaching her) You talk a lot, you are going to die with your mouth open.

She takes out a gun from the bag, the same as that of her guards and then checks the bullets first.

Sonto: This is the same gun that killed my mother, and now it's going to kill you. I wanted you to feel so much pain before dying, but I think hell has been waiting for you for so long so I shouldn't waste time.

She points the gun at her, one, two, three bullets to her head and then drops the gun and quickly rushes out.

It's not going to be easy walking out of all these bullets flying so she fights her way out, shooting at whoever comes her way and getting injured while at it.

Most of the guards are dead but there are still many alive, and she is getting from the blood she is losing.

Zanele is bleeding as Felix takes her to the car, and a bullet miss her head by just an inch as she drops on the side of the car. Hopefullt the baby will survive.

They manage to make it out of the gate and it seems there was someone waiting for them cause the car drives off quickly.

She is now left all alone inside the yard, looking for a way out.

She turns around the house to access the corner so she can try to jump out, and what she is met with is something she didn't expect.

There is an armed group that immediately starts shooting at her. She ducks most of the bullets but some get to her, causing her to fall down.

She crawls until she finds herself beside one of the cars. The keys are still in the ignition so she gets in and drives out, breaking the gate open without care.

After a short drive she stops on the side of the road to make a call.

BANDILE

He has arrived at his brother's house and has been trying Tracy with no luck.

Bulelani walks in from Naledi's place, talking on the phone.

Bulelani: I am inside, I will call you back.

He hangs up and greets Bandile.

Bulelani: You look troubled, is everything okay?

Bandile: (sighs) Yeah.

Bulelani: (sitting next to him) You know you can tell me anything right?

Bandile: Yes.

Bulelani: Then talk to me. What is it?

Bandile: I found someone in Mpumalanga

my heart is broken cause I left without saying goodbye and her phone is not working.

Bulelani: How long have you been together?

Bandile: We started talking while I was in rehab.

Bulelani: Okay, I am sorry you had to move so quickly but I am doing this to protect you.

Bandile: I know, it's just-

His phone rings with an unknown number and he answers.

Bandile: Hello.

Tracy: (crying) Bandile!

Bandile: Tracy, what's happening with your phone? Are you okay?

Tracy: I don't have time to explain. Please get out of the house right now and hide. There are people coming there for you now and they will kill you.

He feels his body getting cold and numb. Bulelani is looking at him, he takes the phone and puts it on loudspeaker.

Tracy: Bandile, are you there? Bandile?!

Bulelani: Hello, I am Bandile's brother. What's going on?

The call gets cut and he looks back at Bandile.

Bulelani: What's happening?

Bandile: It's my girlfriend, she was telling me to leave the house cause there are people coming to kill me.

Bulelani: Why would they kill you?

Bandile: I don't know. She came not so long and we uhhm, (he swallows) it was nice and we were both happy when she left.

Bulelani: Wasn't there something suspicious you noticed?

Bandile: I don't know, but the car that dropped her off drove away before I could see who was driving, and when I asked her she said it's her sister's husband.

Bulelani: Give me her numbers and her full names, if they are real.

He stands up as his phone rings, and then answers walking outside.

BULELANI HADEBE

Bulelani: Hello.

Sonto: (coughing) I have been shot, I don't think I will make it there alive.

Bulelani: Where are you?

Sonto: I don't know, I am in so much pain.

Bulelani: Keep breathing and leave your phone on, I am coming.

Sonto: No, don't. Tell Ntombi that I died happy knowing the woman who killed both our parents is also dead.

Bulelani: Sonto please stay on the phone.

He hears a gunshot going off, and then everything goes quiet for a moment.

Footsteps approaches and the car door opens then closes.

Voice: The job was made simple for me, I can now claim my position.

The person moves away from the phone, and another gunshot is heard from a distance.

He has been tracking the phone and he now finds himself in front of Sonto's body.

She is already cold, her mouth and eyes open.

She is in the driver's seat of one of Anne's car. There is another guard a few metres from the car.

He closes Sonto's eyes, moves back and then dials Ntombikayise.

She answers on the third ring, sleepy and speaking in a whisper.

Ntombi: Bhut' Bulelani.

Bulelani: Ntombi, can you come to Joburg ?

Ntombi: When?

Bulelani: Whenever you can but as soon as possible.

Ntombi: Okay. I will let you know.

Bulelani: Bye.

He hangs up and then makes a call for the body to be collected.

FELIX DELIN

Zanele was bleeding profusely when they drove out of Anne's place. She is now being attended to in ICU because it was that bad.

He has been going up and down trying to calm his mind because he doesn't know what to expect.

The Doctor approaches him and he immediately feels cold.

Doctor: Mr Delin, sorry you had to wait this long.

Felix: How is my baby? Are they both okay?

Doctor: They are out of danger, for now. Zanele lost a lot of a blood and she will need a donor. We had to bring the baby earlier because he was in danger.

Felix: (gasps) The baby? It's a boy?

Doctor: (nodding) Yes!

Felix: (sighs relieved) Oh God, thank you so much. Can I see them?

Doctor: Yes, but only for a while. Zanele has to rest.

Felix: I will bring the baby's stuff in the morning.

The Doctor leads him to the ward and leaves him there for a few minutes.

He comes out a little later on, heads to his car and then sits for a while before driving out.

NARRATED

MPUMALANGA

The uncle is fast asleep in the same room Bandile used to occupy when a group of armed men comes into the house.

He can hear their footsteps from the main door, how hushed yet strong they are. He already knows that it's going to go down so he takes out his phone and sends a message.

They are approaching the room, and they way it seems it's clear they came here for this exact room.

He gets off slowly and then gets under the bed where he had put his gun.

The door opens and they fire at the bed for a few seconds before switching on the light to see if they have completed their mission.

Voice1: There is no one here, I told you that girl wasn't going to keep her end of the deal.

Voice2: It must have been the sex.

Voice1: I am going to kill her. Let's go.

Voice2: I did say sending a woman would ruin this whole thing.

They head out and and close the door. The uncle waits until they are out and then gets out of his hiding.

He doesn't understand what they were saying but he feels Bulelani it has something to do with it.

Why are they only coming now cause he is here? after he took his little brother away?

He makes calls to his people to start tracking Bulelani. It's high time this boy learnt that he is the uncle and should be respected.

To be continued...

FELIX DELIN

He is up early preparing to go visit Zanele. He couldn't sleep a wink last night, thinking of how everything happened, and why it happened the way it did.

The most important part though is that in all these, he is a father, to a baby boy. Hopefully he won't turn out like him.

They had already bought baby clothes and they are all packed and ready for the little one.

He takes a quick shower and then dresses casually before taking his keys and heading out.

They haven't named the baby yet, and he is thinking of a name while driving to the hospital but it seems impossible to get any without the help of his woman.

He passes by a food outlet and gets Zanele something to eat before proceeding to the hospital.

He arrives before visiting hours and wait in his car. When they open, he walks in to their ward with the bags and food.

The baby is left in the care of a nurse because Zanele is being checked.

Felix: Good morning.

Nurse: Mr Delin.

Felix: Where is Zanele?

Nurse: They took her to be checked, I don't really know what happened but I was called to look after the baby while she is in there.

Felix: How long has she been in there?

Nurse: Not long, please wait for the Doctor. I'm sure they'll be here soon.

He pulls a chair and sits close to the baby, putting his finger in the hole to touch his hand because he is still being kept in the incubator.

Felix: (talking to the baby) Hey champ, are you alright in there? We're going to be okay. Hang in there. Did mommy name you yet?

Zanele: Thandolwethu.

She says as she is being wheeled in by another nurse.

Felix turns and looks at her standing up. She looks weak and pale.

Felix: Hey, are you okay?

He hugs and kisses her then steps back.

Nurse: I will come back and help you lay down.

Zanele: Okay.

The nurses leave them and Zanele pushes herself towards the incubator.

Zanele: I named him Thandolwethu. He is our love, but there is still space for one more name if you have any.

Felix: I don't know. I thought we would come up with something together.

Zanele: We still can, what are your thoughts?

Felix: I don't know. (sighs) It's fine, let's leave it at Thandolwethu.

She chuckles at the accent and he laughs too.

Felix: (worriedly) What happened?

Zanele: (sadly) I am getting weak, we need a blood donor as soon as possible.

Felix: But won't you be placed on a queue if you're not the only one?

Zanele: Not if the blood donor is a family member or specifically for me.

Felix: I will test and see if I am not a match, and then I will donate.

Zanele: Yours alone might not be enough.

Felix: Then we better start asking for help.

Zanele: I know someone who can help me.

Felix: Who?

Zanele: My sister, Nomasonto. But I doubt she would help.

Felix: Let's try.

Zanele: Pass me my phone.

He gives her the phone and she dials Nomasonto's number. It rings for a while until someone answers, Bulelani!

Zanele: (surprised) Bulelani, hi.

Bulelani: Zanele.

Zanele: Where is Sonto?

Bulelani: She passed away.

She raises her eyebrow at that. It's the way he says it like he doesn't care.

Zanele: What do you mean she passed away?

Bulelani: I mean her heart stopped beating, and her body shut down. She is gone.

The nurse walks back in and helps her off the wheelchair onto the bed.

Zanele: (to the nurse) Thank you. (on the phone) And you have her phone?

Bulelani: I have all her belongings she had with her. Ntombi will fetch them when she comes.

Zanele: Are you really serious about Sonto passing away?

Bulelani: Yes, I'm sorry.

Zanele: (crying) When were you going to tell me?

Bulelani: Never, Ntombi would have been the one to tell you.

Zanele: What happened? Was she killed or what?

Bulelani: Yes, she was shot by Anne's guards. She went there to kill her and she did.

Zanele starts crying hysterically and then hangs up the phone.

This is all just an act, she knows what happened to Sonto

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I mean she was there and she knew there was no way out of the house.

She saw how tight it was and she knew Sonto wasn't going to make it out alive.

Zanele: She is dead.

She says to Felix after wiping her crocodile tears and Felix comforts her with a hug.

BULELANI HADEBE

He is with Naledi having lunch and he telling her about Bandile's saga.

Bulelani: The girl called, I guess she was sent to lure him.

Naledi: So if they indeed went there and found your uncle, isn't he dead?

Bulelani: I don't know. I want to go and see what happened.

Naledi: Be careful, your uncle sounds dangerous.

Bulelani: I am dangerous too.

They both laugh and then Bulelani stops and looks at Naledi.

Naledi: What?

Bulelani: You are so beautiful.

Naledi: (blushing) Stop it.

Bulelani: No, I'm serious. There's this glow that comes out when you're smiling or laughing and it gets to me all the time.

Naledi: You just want to make me blush, which I am already doing. My cheeks are going to pop if you don't stop.

Bulelani: Okay. I'm sorry. Let's finish up so I can leave.

They continue eating.

They walk out of the restaurant with Naledi leading, and then both go to her car first.

Naledi gets in and Bulelani stands by the door.

Naledi: Are you leaving tonight?

Bulelani: Yes, so I can be back by tomorrow evening.

Naledi: I am going to miss you.

Bulelani: (brushing her cheek) I will miss you too. I have to fetch Ntombi from the bus stop before leaving.

Naledi: Okay.

She notices someone with a camera and as she raises her head to get a clear look the person disappears.

Bulelani: What is it?

Naledi: I thought I saw something. I guess it's nothing.

Bulelani: Okay. Let me leave, I will see you tomorrow.

Naledi: Bye.

He kisses her hand and then moves back as she starts the car. He waits until she has disappeared and then gets into his and drives out of the parking.

Later on Ntombi sees Bulelani's car coming and then she pulls her bag towards it.

He opens the door for her and she gets in greeting him.

Ntombi: Bhut' how are you?

Bulelani: I am good, how are you?

Ntombi: I am trying. What's happening.

Bulelani: Let's get to the house first. I have a trip to Mpumalanga but we will talk before I leave.

Ntombi: Okay.

They drive to the house and he feeds her first before offloading the news. He tells her the message Sonto left and she is left crying after he is done. He comforts her with a hug, brushing her back.

He leaves a little later on and she is left with Bandile who asks a million questions because they had never been close before.

She informs the family that's left and it's better because Bulelani said he will take care of transport.

NALEDI MTHEMBU-DELIN

Her attorney called yesterday that he will forward the divorce decree as of today, and it's now she is checking when his call comes through.

She answers and they talk for a few minutes before hanging up.

She checks her emails and indeed it's there, all signed and complete. She is officially divorced and the plan is to love on. I mean the ship had long sailed before the divorce so why wait?

She opens her cupboard for a bottle of wine and she doesn't find any. She sighs and then takes her car keys.

Meanwhile...

Noma's private jet has landed safely and they couldn't be happier with her husband.

They have named her after her aunt, Naledi, and she doesn't even know yet because baby girl is only a few weeks old.

Noma: I still can't believe we made it to 9 months. I was so scared.

She says brushing the baby's cheeks, laying on the bed beside her.

Ricardo: She is a fine girl.

Noma: (chuckles) I bet she is going to be exactly like her aunt.

Ricardo: Have you told her yet?

Noma: No, i will send her a picture on WhatsApp. I haven't talked to her in a while.

Ricardo: Let me get your phone so you can do that now cause you're going to forget, or fall asleep.

Noma: (laughs) I want to use the bathroom first.

Ricardo: Let me help you.

He holds her hand and then helps her off the bed. She gave birth naturally so she still has pains.

Sje gets inside and then comes out to find Ricardo waiting by the door. She sighs as he hands her the phone and walks away.

A few minutes later, Naledi parks outside the shopping complex and goes to the wine shop.

She picks two bottle, one white and one red then goes to the counter to pay.

Her phone rings and then she answers taking out cash to pay.

A guy walks in the shop and gets one red bottle before queueing behind her to pay.

Naledi: (on the phone) Yes, I'm just paying for these bottles and then I am heading home.

Noma: We miss you here.

Naledi: Aaaw, I miss you too. When is our private jet landing?

Noma: I sent you something on WhatsApp.

Naledi: Okay, let me check.

She walks outside and gets into the car then opens her WhatsApp. Her mouth drops looking at the cutie with round eyes and a text follows.

“Hi aunty Naledi, meet your niece, Naledi Sibanda.”

She immediately dials her back with tears in her eyes.

Naledi: Oh my, Noma!

Noma: We agreed on the name with Ricardo. He was the one who suggested.

Naledi: Please thank him for me. I will come see the little one.

Noma: I hope she won't take my place.

Naledi: (chuckles) My heart is big enough.

The baby starts crying and they say their goodbyes before she starts the car driving out.

The car that was parked a few metres from hers follows after her. She doesn't take notice of it as she thinks they are just driving out at the same time.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

He didn't find his uncle at the house and even though he waited for a sign, he ended up leaving because the old man never showed up.

He is now driving through the gate at his place when he notices Ntombi and Bandile sitting outside. They seem to be in a good mood because they're laughing and snacking.

He gets off his car and approaches them as Bandile gets up to go inside.

Bulelani: Hey, how are you?

Ntombi: (still laughing) I am good. How was the trip?

Bulelani: (sitting down) I didn't find him, so it was meaningless.

Ntombi: Did you ask the neighbours?

Bulelani: Yes, some say they last saw him when he got in and the issue of a car coming around with what seemed like criminals. (sighs) No one saw where he went after that and there was no trace of blood in the house, just the bed that wasn't made.

Ntombi: Isn't there any place he might have gone to?

Bulelani: Not that I know of. I am tired anyway, maybe I will hear from him cause it seems as if he doesn't want me to see him.

He stands up as Bandile comes back outside. They greet each other and he goes inside, dialling Naledi.

Naledi: (drunkenly) Hey handsome, where are you?

Bulelani: I am at my place. Are you drunk?

Naledi: Just a little. (laughs) I didn't think it would get me here.

Bulelani: Did you lock the doors? Are inside?

Naledi: Yes, but I am going to unlock them now because I am coming there.

Bulelani: You can't drive drunk, stay there I am coming.

He hears the keys turning and he turns back rushing out to his car.

Bulelani: I am coming back now.

He says to the two who are already packing their stuff to go inside because it's late.

Bulelani: (on the phone) Naledi, please stay inside until I come there. You are drunk.

Naledi: Noma and Ricardo named their baby after me. (burps) Did you hear that? After me. That means I am a big deal. Oops! My shoe came off, I guess I will leave it here.

Bulelani: Where are you going?

Naledi: To the gate, I want to wait for you there. Do you know why I'm drunk? I am finally single. You can now call me Ms Mthembu without fear or favour.

She laughs out loudly after saying that and he hangs up then steps on the accelerator.

Meanwhile...

Naledi is walking to the gate with one slipper on. There is a car waiting by her neighbor's wall and when she walks out the gate, two guys get off the car and approach her.

Naledi: (squinting her eyes) Who are you?

The guys don't say anything but pace towards her and grab her before rushing back to the now open boot.

They throw her inside and get back in the car before driving off.

Bulelani arrives at her place and finds the gate open. He drives through, goes inside while calling out her name without any answer.

He tries her phone and it rings unanswered.

He rushes back outside and goes to the neighbours as the man of the house is driving out. He stops him to talk to him. The man confirms that he heard some noise a while ago but it all suddenly went quiet.

They go back inside to check their cameras and he notices the car. The number plate is hidden, the windows are tinted and they have never seen this car around.

Him: I think we should call the police.

Bulelani: No, I will deal with this on my own.

Him: But maybe the police would be of help especially because they have the resources.

Bulelani: I have them too, and I don't take orders from anyone. Thank you for your help.

He goes back to Naledi's place and he notices a glittering thing on the ground near the gate, it's her phone.

He bends and picks it up then goes inside and locks before leaving.

NARRATED AT THE HOSPITAL

Zanele is sleeping in her ward when the door slowly opens. A man in black walks inside, holding a pistol.

He approaches the baby's incubator, looks at him for a few minutes and then passes to her bed.

She is fast asleep but visibly in pain. He points the gun straight at her forehead and cocks it so she can wake up.

She leaps up the bed scared and pulls off the pipes attached to her body.

Zanele: (breathing heavily) Please don't do this
I have a baby who needs me.

Him: I am just glad your sister made it possible for me to take my seat, but I won't let you live to take revenge when you are back to yourself.

Zanele: (crying) I won't do anything, please let me live. I swear I will never even look in Anne's way.

Him: The first mistake she did was to let you go off easily, but I won't repeat that mistake.

He shoots her in the middle of her eyes and then quickly rushes out.

The baby is crying when the nurse walks in to find a dead body lying on the bed, with gunshot wound between the eyes.

She screams on top of her lungs to alert the others of what has happened.

They rush in and upon realising there's nothing they can do, they call the police and take the baby to another room.

Meanwhile, Felix is sleeping when his phone rings. He answers and is told to come to the hospital as soon as he can.

His heart is beating so fast as he puts on his clothes rushing to the garage and then driving out on a high speed.

He is praying on his way, asking God to protect Zanele and the baby. He doesn't know who might be in danger because both their situations weren't satisfactory.

He's scared most for Zanele because not having enough blood in her body means she is half alive, and if anything happens to her who will help him with Thando?

He doesn't take long to park in the hospital parking, and seeing police cars makes him even more scared.

He rushes inside and the Doctor catches him before he can make it to Zanele's ward.

He tries to explain to him what has happened and the anger on his face is scary. He has turned red and if he was to open his mouth, fire would sure come out.

He doesn't say anything as he finds balance on the benches and sits with his hands behind his head, face looking down and tears dropping between his legs.

LATER THAT MORNING NARRATED

“News headlines from Mpumalanga has it that a woman in her early 20's was found with gunshot wounds to her head in a house. It's not clear what happened but what's confirmed is that she might have been there for not longer than 4 hours, meaning this murder happened in the early hours of this morning.”

Bandile is looking at the picture of Tracy, lying face down in a ditch.

He is standing by the kitchen counter where he was making tea.

There are comments of people asking for the picture to be removed because it is sensitive, but the damage has already been done because the picture is being shared as a screenshot.

Bulelani walks down the stairs ready for the day and stops looking at Bandile who is filling the teacup with loads of sugar.

Bulelani: Bandile; where is your mind at?

He approaches him and takes the spoon away before snatching the phone from his hand.

He reads through and puts it down then walks out.

Ntombi's family is coming to fetch her and the body today. He is hoping to be back by then so he can see them off before continuing with his search for Naledi.

He turns on the radio and the news about a murder in a hospital catches his attention.

The reporter doesn't mention any names but he knows for sure that it's trending so he logs into Twitter and finds Zanele's picture doing rounds.

The original picture is from a fake account but the news matches with the ones on the radio.

People are dragging Zanele for the birth of another man's child which means she fell pregnant while with her ex-husband.

They tag him and he exits the app then puts his phone away. He doesn't know how Ntombi is going to feel about all this.

NALEDI MTHEMBU

They remove the plastic from her face and she spits blood from the punches she has been taking since they arrived here.

They are in an old house, upstairs because she can hear the sound of the footsteps descending the stairs.

There is an open field visible at a distance, from the torn curtain covering the window.

The man in front of her clears his throat and she turns to him.

There's no way this cannot be Bulelani's uncle. He looks a lot like Bandile, maybe it's their maternal's genes? Bulelani did say Bandile looks a lot like their mother some time ago.

She doesn't make it obvious that she knows him.

Him: I want us to have a little chat if you behave then we might let you go and focus on the person we want. Do you think someone will come looking for you?

Naledi: I don't know. I just got divorced and my family is in Limpopo.

Him: Anyone else?

Naledi: (shaking her head) No.

Him: (takes out Bulelani's pic from his pocket) What about him?

Naledi: What about him?

He takes out another picture of them together and shows it to her.

Naledi: I see two people talking, wearing formal, and probably from a business meeting. Unless you're seeing something else.

He leans back on the chair still maintaining eye contact.

Him: He is my nephew and I believe you are his new woman whom he love dearly or he wouldn't be at your house right now, searching for you.

He shows her his phone with Bulelani going up and down the yard, stopping a few times to look at something here and there.

Him: Now tell me, how deep is this thing if yours? I don't want to waste time on something that won't help me with what I am doing.

To be continued...

NARRATED

It's almost 4 PM and for all the hours Naledi has been kept here; being questioned about her relationship with Bulelani, she claims nothing is happening between them and stands by it.

The uncle has gone to wherever and she is left with these funny-looking guards that seem unprofessional.

They are all holding guns and in black attire, combat boots and hand gloves.

She is tied to the chair with her hands behind so she calls one of them to help her to the restroom.

He pushes her with the chair and once they're inside, he unties her one hand and then waits outside the cubicle.

A few minutes later, the other guard comes along to let them know that they should get back in the room because the “uncle” is coming back.

Naledi: If you hadn't tied me up like an animal I would have long finished. Now i have to work extra. (clicks her tongue)

She says from inside and they keep quiet when they hear the key turning.

She takes a few more minutes and before they can knock, the key and lock turns and she opens the door with one hand.

They pull her out and tie the hand then push her back to the room.

The uncle gets back inside and sits on his chair facing Naledi.

Him: I don't think we are going to need you anymore, but there is one thing you can do for me. I need the security logins for Bulelani's house.

Naledi: Why don't you let him know that you want to come to see him instead of trying to break into his house? (raised eyebrow) Are you afraid of him?

Him: (angrily) I don't fear small boys.

Naledi: Then go face him directly.

Him: You think you are smart? I don't know what he told you about me, but you both don't know half of it.

Naledi: And we don't have to, but the matter of fact is that you cannot face that small boy hence you got me kidnapped. And I feel sorry for you because you also don't know me and you never even took the time to get to know me.

Him: (to the guards) Get her out of here!

They don't wait for another minute but untie her and push her outside to the car.

They drive a little distance, 2 in the front and 2 at the back with her.

She unties the rope she had tied on her waist while in the toilet and then hit one of the guards with her elbow and put the rope around the other's neck.

By the time the one driving stops the car and the other reaches for his gun, she has already got hold of a gun from the two behind and she shoots the passenger in the front.

The driver gets out and when he opens the back door, she kicks it so hard that it hits his head shattering the glass and he falls back.

She shoots the one she had elbowed and then goes out and kicks the driver in his face before shooting him too.

She searches for a phone and she finds one then dials her number and it rings unanswered.

She tries Bulelani's and it rings a few times before being hung up and then try again and again before driving off.

BULELANI HADEBE

He is driving home after talking to Bandile who was letting her know that Ntombi has collapsed.

His phone was ringing with an unknown number and when he tried to answer it hung up, must be network.

He puts it aside and drives off in high speed. The fact that Naledi has not communicated doesn't sit well with him, he is worried to death but holding it up bravely.

He gets to his house same time as Ntombi's family is pulling over according to the directions they were given.

He talks to them and they all drive in then park in the yard.

Bulelani rushes inside and find Ntombi waking up from the wet floor.

Bulelani: (helping her up) What happened?

Bandile: She received a call about Zanele.

Bulelani: Oh God!

He helps her sit on the chair. She is just looking into space as if lost.

Bulelani: Your family is here, let me get them so they can help you change.

He rushes outside and apologises to them before inviting them inside.

They get in and take seats, the women take Ntombi to the room directed to and help her out of the wet clothes.

Bulelani remains with the men and they sit around the table.

Bulelani: I guess you are wondering what happened. I am sorry to let you know that Zanele was shot earlier this morning and that means you will be burying the two at the same time.

They are visibly surprised and a little hurt maybe.

Bulelani: I am sorry. I will find the numbers of the man she was staying with so you can communicate with him.

“They were not married so he has to give us our child.”

One of the uncle says.

Bulelani: I understand that. I just want to make things easier because I don't know what was happening.

They nod and he goes out to Naledi's phone. Hopefully he will find Felix's number.

He finds his phone with a lot of missed calls from the same number and he dials it back while pressing Naledi's phone.

The number takes him to voicemail and he puts his phone in the pocket and closes the door to go back inside.

Naledi emerges from the gate, sweaty and dirty with a few bruises on her face. She is limping and her clothes have blood.

He rushes to her

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hugs her and then steps back to ask what happened.

Naledi: I need to bath first and then we will talk.

Bulelani: Ntombi's family is here, but they will be leaving soon.

Naledi: It's okay, I can go to my house if it's a problem.

Bulelani: No, no. That's not what I meant. Let's go.

He takes her hand and they go inside. Naledi greets the elders first before passing to Bulelani's bedroom while he follows after her. They have earned stares from the elders but they obviously won't explain anything.

Bulelani: Zanele has been shot and they are here collect Sonto's body. I want to give them Felix's number so they can communicate with him regarding her body and all that.

Naledi: You have my phone, it's still in there.

Bulelani: Okay.

Naledi: Let me bath.

She walks into the bathroom and he goes back to the elders.

Ntombi is all ready to leave and the hearse driver calls to let them know he has arrived.

They thank Bulelani and he gives them the number before showing them out.

FELIX DELIN

He still doesn't know what to do with himself or the baby. Everything just fell apart and there is no one to help him.

His phone rings as he is about to pour another glass of drink.

Felix: Hello.

Ntombi: Hello, this is Ntombi, Zanele's sister.

She is trying to be brave as she talks on the phone but she keeps being choked by her own spit.

Felix: Yeah.

Ntombi: We heard about her passing and we would like to get the body so she can be buried home.

Felix: I will bury her myself.

Ntombi: You can't do that. You weren't married to her.

Felix: She was mine. I am not Zulu so I don't understand all these marrying things.

He hears shuffling and then something is said in Zulu before a man answers the phone.

Him: Mr Delin, this is Zanele's uncle.

Felix: I will bury Zanele on my own. I need to be able to see and visit her grave whenever I can.

Him: That's not going to happen, we want our child.

Felix: There are still investigations going on because she was murdered, so you cannot get the body anytime soon.

Him: Give us the number of the mortuary holding her body, we will talk to them.

Felix: I am not doing that.

He hangs up and then switches off his phone and continues drinking.

LATER THAT DAY
NARRATED

The hospital has been trying to get hold of Felix because Thandolwethu suddenly got sick.

They tried to help him but unfortunately, he didn't make it.

Nrombi's phone rings while they are still on the way. She answers and they tell her what happened and if she can come to the hospital. She replies that she is not around and maybe they can call the father.

Felix is only switching his phone on and he finds missed calls messages from the hospital.

He instantly becomes sober and rushes to the hospital.

Upon arrival, they tell him what happened and he collapses.

LATER THAT NIGHT
NALEDI MTHEMBU

They're in bed with Bulelani and she is telling him what happened. It's now he remembers what she said about the phone earlier on.

Bulelani: How did you know I had your phone?

Naledi: What?

Bulelani: I heard you saying I have your phone so I can check Felix's number. How did you know that?

Naledi: He showed me a video of you moving around my house and you picked up my phone from the ground near the gate.

Bulelani: Why did he release you?

Naledi: Cause he couldn't prove that we are an item and I was of no use to him.

Bulelani: Are we an item?

Naledi: Yes, but he is not sure of that.

He turns to her and gives her those puppy eyes.

Bulelani: Are we an item?

Naledi looks at him and starts laughing when she sees it.

Naledi: Yes, we are an item.

Bulelani: Oh my God, I can't believe what I'm hearing.

Naledi: (laughing) You're such a fool.

Bulelani: Your fool.

They both laugh and he hugs her.

Bulelani: He is going to pay for doing this to you.

He kisses her forehead and right then they hear a sound of glasses shattering. Bandile comes running to the room and barges inside without knocking.

Bandile: Bhuti what's happening? I heard something break.

Bulelani gets up and puts on a t-shirt since he was only wearing a short.

Bulelani: Stay here, I am coming.

He goes outside and they hear another breaking sound and someone groaning in pain, followed by a gunshot.

To be continued...

NALEDI MTHEMBU

She asks Bandile to leave the room so she can dress, and then follows after Bulelani who is already coming back into the house looking furious.

Naledi: (worriedly) What happened?

She asks coming down the stairs tying her robe.

Bulelani: I found this when I walked out. They are gone.

He is holding a paper in his hand.

Bulelani: They broke my car's windows.

Naledi: Who was it?

Bulelani: My uncle obviously. (reading the note) Come get me, Lani. This has him written all over.

Naledi: But why would he do that?

Bandile comes to join them, still shook.

Bulelani: Do you remember where they had held you?

Naledi: Yeah, why?

Bulelani: I think I should pay him a visit. He clearly wants to talk to me but is afraid or something.

Naledi: No, you can't go alone.

Bulelani: And you're not coming with me either.

Naledi: Of course I am coming. I am the one who knows the way.

Bulelani: (turns to Bandile) I need you to tell me about your story with Tracy from the beginning. I might have missed something.

Bandile: Okay.

He gets up to leave and Naledi sighs following after him. She already can't imagine being without him, and now that he mentions going after his uncle by himself she is afraid.

She finds him on the phone in the bedroom, changing his clothes while organising people to accompany him and others to make sure the house is protected when they leave.

Naledi: Are you seriously going to go out there and get yourself killed?

She says after he has hung up and is loading his handgun.

Bulelani: I will be dying for the right thing.

Naledi: What about me? Bandile? If you die what do you think is going to happen to us?

Bulelani: I am hoping not to die, and that means nothing will happen to you. Give me the direction.

Naledi: You're going to leave now?

Bulelani: The sooner the better.

Naledi: Okay, listen for a moment. This might be a trap or something babe. He could have attacked you while here but instead he left a note so you can follow the traces. I don't feel good about this.

Bulelani: Nothing you say is going to change my mind right now. I have decided and I am going to do exactly what I have to.

Naledi: Bulelani you are angry and that's the first mistake when going after an enemy. You are going to use your emotions and forget logic.

Bulelani: And that's exactly what I should do. Are you going to give me the directions or I should find the way myself?

She gives him the direction and then he leaves her in the bedroom and as she is about to follow after him, her phone rings and she sighs answering sitting on the bed.

Naledi: Hello.

Felix: (crying) I have lost it all, I feel empty and dead inside.

Naledi: Felix?

Felix: I am sorry if it's because I wasn't faithful to you. For dealing drugs at your restaurant and everything bad I have done to you, please forgive me.

Naledi: What's going on? Are you okay?

Felix: I don't know what I did wrong. Please come see me. I need someone to talk to.

Naledi: Where are you?

Felix: I'm at the hospital.

Naledi: Why, what happened?

Felix: Come see me and I will explain.

Naledi: Okay.

Felix: Thank you.

He hangs up and then sends his location. She is still surprised and doesn't know what to make of this.

She gets back into bed when she hears the car driving out, saying a little prayer that he comes back alive.

NARRATED

Bulelani drives through the gate of the place he was directed to, followed by a few cars that have accompanied him.

They park outside and then get off the cars and start looking around. It's all quiet and dark, you could even hear a needle dropping.

The house is dark with not even a single light on.

They all think maybe they're in hideouts waiting to attack, so they spread out holding their weapons to go into and around the house so they can see what is happening.

Bulelani and another guy goes straight to the door, and to their surprise they find it unlocked. It's all too good to be true but they are too late because the timer goes off, releasing the bomb that pushes them back outside and have them land by their backs on the hard ground.

There is coughing and heavy breaths all around the yard. Some of the guys have been hit hard and have broken limbs.

The one who was with Bulelani is taking his last breath as the others still able to walk come over to check on them.

They ask each other if they're okay and then try to get help. The house has burnt down mostly in the front where the bomb was placed.

Meanwhile, Naledi is sleeping in the bedroom when the door slowly opens and Bulelani's uncle walks in holding a small cloth in his hand.

He approaches the bed and before he could get to it

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Bandile screams from the other room causing Naledi to wake up.

She sees the figure in the dark and because of his strong cologne that smells like he was taking a bath in, she can tell that it's not Bulelani.

She rolls over to the other side of the bed and when he murmurs "fuck", she instantly knows that shit hit the fan and she has to act now.

The drawer with guns is in the closet and counting the steps, he will grab her before she makes it. He is also a strong man and fighting him straight from sleep won't be an easy task.

Bandile is continuing with screaming while calling out her name to come help her. The only plan she can make now is to outsmart him and get to the weapons.

Naledi: (murmuring) Think Naledi, think!

She looks around for anything she can use as a weapon and the only hard and strong enough thing in sight is Bulelani's laptop.

Naledi: Sorry babe, I will get you another one.

She crawls to the table as the uncle also approaches and when he reaches her, she pulls the laptop hard before using all her energy to throw it directly at him.

It doesn't get to him the way she had hoped as he ducks, and she uses that opportunity to run to the closet, gets in and then close it.

She gets a gun and quickly loads it before getting into Bulelani's t-shirt and slowly opening the closet door to see what's happening.

Bandile has gone quiet and she hopes it's not because he is dead. These people sounds to be a lot in the house, there is no way she is going to fight them all and win. Damn you Bulelani for leaving!

She hears gunshot outside and one of the guys comes to get the uncle, telling him they have to get out because it seems there are people who came after they had got into the house and are killing his guards. He clicks his tongue following after him.

Naledi comes out and hears Bandile coughing. She goes out of the bedroom and find him laying by the stairs.

She helps him up as the guys organised by Bulelani comes into the house to check on them. They are only a few and they tell him they had gone for a smoke when they heard gunshots and then came back as fast they could.

Naledi: We have to get Bandile to the hospital, come help me.

They carry him outside while Naledi gets him warm clothes and then joins them.

LATER THAT MORNING AT THE HOSPITAL

Bandile was taken to the same hospital as Felix and Naledi stayed with him the whole night.

She remembers that Felix is also here and then goes to check on him.

He is laying on his side with a drip connected to his hand. He turns when he hears footsteps approaching and his eyes all swollen from crying.

Naledi: Hi.

Felix: (sadly) Hi. I didn't think you would already be here.

Naledi: I brought someone, so I thought I can pop in.

She pulls a chair and sits facing him.

Naledi: How are you doing?

Felix: Not good. I lost my baby and I wasn't even there with him when he passed away.

Naledi: I am so sorry, I can imagine how painful it is to you.

Felix: Could it be that I am suffering all these because of what I did to you?

Naledi: I am not holding a grudge against you if that's what you're asking.

Felix: I can't help but feel like it's all because of my unfaithfulness during our marriage.

Naledi: I think death is one of the things that's already set before we are even born. It exists because of birth and each of us, when born, gets the date for our death. I always felt like I could have done something to prevent my mom's passing. Like if I was in the house that day she wouldn't have died, or maybe if I didn't involve myself with whatever I was doing my family would have been spared. But as time goes I realize it was just their time, no matter the age or anything. God allowed it to happen, with reasons only know to him. I have survived shootings and a whole lot of things that could have killed me, but you'd be surprised at what would actually kill me because it would be my time.

He is crying while she speaks and she doesn't know how to comfort him because she knows the pain. There is no amount of comforting that can actually comfort when the wound is still fresh, and sadly it never heals.

Naledi: I am sorry that you are going through this.

She stands up and looks at him one more time before turning to leave.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

His other guards got help and they transported him to his house where he is getting medical attention from his doctor.

He was bleeding when they arrived and visibly in pain, but he is now all cleaned up and resting comfortably on the bed.

They haven't informed Naledi because he doesn't want to stress her, and he is hoping she comes back tomorrow when he is much better.

They are in one of the rooms that hasn't been in use for some time. It will serve as his recovery room for now.

Some of his guards are dead and he is in no position to help with their burial, so he is going to send one of the guys to hold the fort for him.

Later on Naledi walks through the main door where more guards are chatting and making calls.

She is surprised to see them because they are not the ones she had an encounter with last night. They greet her and she passes to the bedroom, noticing one of the guards sitting by himself.

The doctor comes out as she is about to open the bedroom door and she stops looking at him as he gathers his stuff.

She walks over and the guards gives them some privacy.

Naledi: Who are you? What are you doing here?

Doctor: Hi, Ms...

Naledi: Mthembu.

Doctor: I am Mr. Hadebe's doctor and I am here for him.

Naledi: Okay...

Doctor: He is sleeping now, but he will be fine.

Naledi: Sleeping? Where is he?

He points at the room and she quickly paces over, leaving him stunned because she was ready to attack him.

Doctor: Please don't wake him up. He needs all the rest he can get. I should also get more supplies so I will be back in a few minutes.

He says heading out as Naledi turns to the door he had pointed at, opens it and finds Bulelani laying on the bed on his back.

She feels tears burning her eyes as she looks at his bloodied clothes on the chair and the visible bruises on his body. He also doesn't seem to be breathing well.

Naledi: (tearfully) I told you not to go. I knew something like this was going to happen.

She holds his hand and starts brushing it while sitting down. He is deep in sleep but can feel her presence so he squeezes her hand for a few seconds before relaxing.

Naledi stays in that position, just looking at him until she dozes off.

Earlier the following morning, Naledi wakes up from Bulelani's side when she feels him moving.

She rubs her eyes open and then gets off the bed to give him space. She doesn't even remember how she got on the bed with him.

Naledi: Good-

Bulelani: I need to pee.

Naledi: (sleepily) Let me get you a bucket.

Bulelani: I want to get off and go to the toilet.

Naledi: (walking away) I am not going to argue with you.

She walks out and then goes to the bathroom and gets him a bucket, upon returning she finds him on the floor struggling to get up.

Naledi: I said I will get you something, why do you like forcing things?

Bulelani: I am an abled-individual, why do you want to turn me into something I am not?

Naledi: You are still in pain Bulelani, the more you strain yourself the longer it's going to take for you to completely heal.

He doesn't respond as he tries to get up on his own and the Doctor walks in.

Doctor: (rushing to Bulelani) What happened?

Bulelani: I want to go the toilet.

Doctor: You could have asked me to accompany you. I thought we agreed on giving yourself time to rest.

Bulelani: I don't pay you to tell me how to live my life.

He helps him up and then gets him crutches before accompanying him to the bathroom.

Naledi walks out and gets ready to fetch Bandile from the hospital.

BANDILE HADEBE

He has filled his discharge form and they are heading out with Naledi when Felix approaches them.

Naledi greets him as Bandile gets in the car, totally ignoring him.

Naledi: I didn't know you were also leaving today.

Felix: The doctor said I can leave, and I have been longing to. This place is a no for me.

Naledi: Well, be fine and good luck.

Felix: Thank you for lending me an ear and making me understand things better. I now know what I should do, and I am going to do the right thing.

Naledi: I am glad to hear that.

Felix: Drive safely.

Naledi: You too.

She turns and gets in the car as he goes over to his.

Bandile: What did he want?

Naledi: (starting the car) Nothing.

Bandile: I don't like him and I don't think you guys should be talking.

Naledi: (chuckles) He is my ex-husband, and I am not like your brother's ex-wife. Also, you shouldn't fight your brother's battles. Be patient, yours are coming.

Bandile: I still don't like him.

Naledi: And you don't have to. Anyway, your brother is back but not in a good condition.

Bandile: Why? What happened?

Naledi: Your uncle set him up and he fell for it.

Bandile: I am just glad he is still alive.

Naledi: That makes the two of us.

Bandile: So, what is going to happen to uncle?

Naledi: I don't know yet

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I think we should focus on you and your brother getting completely fine.

Bandile: I wish he could be hit by a car and just die.

Naledi: Every dog has its day, don't worry.

They continue talking about Bandile's plans while she drives home.

Upon arriving, Bandile goes to see his brother first while Naledi fixes them something to eat.

IN THE KITCHEN

Naledi is stirring and frying while humming to a song playing on her phone when one of the guards passes by.

She stops and asks him to call someone outside, and the person arrives in a few minutes.

Naledi: Hey, can I get you something to drink?

She asks as the guy who is standing beside the table with his hands joined before his crouch.

Him: No.

Naledi: Okay, I need some information from you. Please sit.

They both take their seats and he looks a bit uneasy.

Naledi: Please answer me as simple as you can. No explanation, just straight answers.

Him: Okay.

Naledi: Do you know Bulelani's uncle?

Him: No.

Naledi: Have you heard of him before?

Him: No.

Naledi: If he was to offer you money to help take out Bulelani, would you take it?

Him: Of course not.

Naledi: That's all I wanted to ask. You can leave.

He almost falls off the chair as he trips over his legs.

Naledi goes back to the pots and continues cooking until Bandile comes to help.

Once she is done she dishes up for Bulelani and takes his plate to him.

Naledi: Here's your food.

Bulelani: Thank you. I am sorry about earlier on.

Naledi: It's okay.

Bulelani: I should have listened to you.

Naledi: Stop stressing over it. It happened and we should move on now.

Bulelani: Yeah.

Naledi: There's a guy I saw outside, he is one of your guards.

Bulelani: Yeah, I got more guys when uncle started his things.

Naledi: Did you do a background check on everyone?

Bulelani: I asked one of the old guys, and when they brought the report it was already late so I never had a look at it.

Naledi: Can I check it?

Bulelani: I don't know where I put it. Why, is there a problem?

Naledi: I think this particular guard knows something about this. I don't know how, but something tells me he knows.

Bulelani: I am exhausted right now, let's leave this thing for a while.

Naledi: I broke your laptop.

Bulelani: It's okay, I will replace it.

He continues eating while they talk. Naledi takes the plate after he is done and puts it aside.

Naledi: I will stay with you here for a while.

Bulelani: Thank you.

FELIX DELIN

He is home and trying to get hold of Zanele's family. Ntombi's phone rings unanswered for the fourth time now and he sighs hanging up.

He pours a drink and he swears he saw a shadow passing by the window.

He wants to check what it is when his phone rings so he turns to it and answers without checking.

Felix: Hello.

Ntombi: Hi, who's this?

He removes the phone from his ear to check the caller ID.

Felix: Ntombi, hi. Please don't hang up, it's Felix.

Ntombi: Why would I hang up?

Felix: I don't know. Listen, I want to make things right with your family so I need you to help me.

Ntombi: I am listening.

Felix: I need to have a meeting with your uncles so we can resolve this issue. I thought a lot about what happened and it's not right, so I need to try and fix things.

Ntombi: I can give you their numbers so you can call.

Felix: Or you can talk to them and give me a date.

Ntombi: (sighs) Okay.

Felix: Thank you, bye.

He hangs up and finishes his drink before going out to check if there's anything outside.

He doesn't find anything outside but as he turns to go back inside, he feels a shadow passing behind him.

He quickly turns, almost falling off, and then finds nothing.

Felix: I should see a Doctor. There's something wrong with me.

He goes back to the bedroom and lays on the bed looking up before dozing off.

A FEW MONTHS LATER.

To be continued...

BULELANI HADEBE

He has been taking it one step at a time and now he is almost at 100 % full recovery. His woman has been going out there for the bag and she is nailing it big time, while he focuses on healing.

She walks in from one of her meetings dressed formally in a blue suit and white heels. They click that “boss” sound as she makes her way to the bedroom.

She immediately takes them off after getting in and lays on bed unbuttoning her blazer.

Bulelani: (smiling)Hey mommy.

He says putting the laptop aside and goes to give her a kiss.

Naledi: Hey, how are you?

Bulelani: I am fine. How was work?

Naledi: You even ask.

Bulelani: Want a massage?

Naledi: That would be great, but are you not working?

Bulelani: It can wait.

She takes off her top and remain with the bra then lays flat on the bed while he fetches the massage oil.

He pours it on his hands first then rubs them together before pressing them on her back, and slowly rubbing his thumbs up

and down. He hears her muffled moans and then chuckles to himself.

Bulelani: Am I doing it right?

Naledi: Mmmh...

Bulelani: I doubt it.

She turns her head to the side so she can talk.

Naledi: It's better than nothing.

Bulelani: Ouch! That hurts.

Naledi laughs flipping herself over to face him.

Naledi: You never gave me that guy's file.

Bulelani: It's missing, I have been looking for it. What reminded you of it?

Naledi: I was talking to Philani and he seemed interested in finding your uncle.

He wants to interrupt her but she cuts him before he could even utter a single word.

Naledi: I know, I know! But please listen, he is just trying to make sure nothing bad happens again. I almost lost you and I would have been miserable today without you, so I am not letting that happen again and knowing your uncle he is not done with you yet.

Bulelani: But that's exactly what you are doing. The past few months have been peaceful, I don't want to ruin them by bringing up old issues.

Naledi: And so am I. But prevention is better than cure baby.
(getting up) Let me take a shower.

She excuses herself and then heads to the bathroom.

Bulelani goes back to his laptop and continues working. He should go to his office tomorrow and see what he can start on. Even after telling clients his situation, they didn't back down from paying for their art pieces and ensuring him it would still be enough to get them when he is healed.

He sighs typing something and then stops for a few minutes to take deep breaths before continuing. An exercise he was told to practise when he can't decide on something.

A few minutes later Naledi comes out drying her hair and finds Bulelani out of sight.

She hears him talking approaching the bedroom and he gets in holding a bottle of beer.

Bulelani: Thank God you are done. Your brothers are here.

Naledi: I totally forgot about them. I am coming.

He goes back to them while she puts on clothes and then joins them after.

Naledi: (hugging them) You are here.

Nathan: And I have to leave soon because the shoot is starting in a few hours.

Naledi: You were serious about that?

Nathan: I have to make money so yes.

Philani: I think I am going to rest.

Nathan: No, you are coming with me. Let's go.

Philani groans in annoyance while getting up the couch.

Nathan: We will see you later.

They bump into Bandile walking in through the door and they greet each other in passing.

Philani: You owe me for this.

Nathan: Stop whining and get me where I should be.

FELIX DELIN

He has been on and off from seeing shadows that are non-existent according to his Doctors.

The medical tests cleared him off any mental issues, but he still feels like there is someone following him around.

He has moved to Jo'burg full time and today he is going on a date.

He checks the time then puts on his shoes and gets into his car before driving out to the restaurant they have agreed to meet at.

It's a first restaurant meet-up he has ever been to, considering that the only women he has gone out on dates with are only, and it was not his first time meeting them.

He is both nervous and happy because this might be the beginning of his third chance at dating, and hopefully everything goes well.

He gets to the restaurant and parks before going in. It's not full and that's a bonus but he hopes Joy does not feel out of place, and scared for her safety.

Right after sitting down, she walks in like the model and stylist she is. Dressed in classic straight jeans, a white silk shirt and maroon heels matching her handbag.

She sees him, more like they see each other and then smile as she walks towards the table. She looks even better in person, but of course you never say that to a woman.

Felix: (opening the chair for her after a hug) Hey.

Joy: Mr Delin

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how are you?

Felix: I am okay. You look so beautiful.

Joy: You don't look bad. Thank you.

He goes over to his chair as the waiter brings their drinks.

Felix: I got water for you.

Joy: Thanks.

The waiter leave the menus and goes back to the kitchen. They decide on what to order and he realizes she orders a lighter meal to his.

Joy: I don't normally eat small portions, but I have a shoot after this.

She says after their meals have arrived.

Felix: Understandable. I was getting worried cause I know women and food to be best friends.

Joy: (chuckles) We indeed are. Hopefully next date I will be free and will eat as much as I can.

“Hhmm, second date. Guess he scored himself a girlfriend.”

Felix thinks to himself while eating. They are having a light conversation just until they finish eating, and that's when they will get to know each other.

Later on they both walk out the restaurant laughing. Felix walks her to her car and opens the door for her.

Felix: I had a good time, thank you.

Joy: I cannot wait to see you again.

Felix: Drive safely and let me know when you have arrived home after your shoot.

Joy: Bye.

She starts the car and drives off. Felix walks back to where he is parked and gets into the car before driving out.

JOY

She is originally from Mpumalanga, but is now staying in Pretoria full time.

Her life rules are pretty simple, “let your beauty work for you and do what makes you happy.”

She had it all grown up even though her mother was a single parent. It never even affected her in any way or so she thought, until recently when she heard rumours about her father showing face in Mpumalanga.

She wants to know him, get answers as to why he never bothered with her but most importantly to avoid shagging him or her half brothers if there are any in future.

The shoot venue is situated in Jo’burg hence she was able to meet up with Felix. She has read up on him and she is after the bag, nothing more.

She arrives at the venue and immediately gets dressed while they fix her make-up.

NARRATED

Philani was not allowed to go into the studio because he is not part of the team so he has been waiting in his car for Nathan.

It's now they are coming out, after two hours. He gets out of the car to stretch himself and right then, Joy comes out.

It's the way she is dressed, her laughter, her skin. Oh boy, he has to talk to her.

Nathan: What are you looking at? Let's go.

Philani: (ignoring him) Who's that girl?

Nathan: The model. She is not your type.

Philani: What do you mean?

Nathan: I will tell you about it on the way home. But for now, just know she is not your...

He sees him already approaching Joy's car and then sighs.

Nathan: ...type.

Joy is fixing her face when Philani knocks on her window. She rolls it down and her heart skips a beat, he is a fine guy, exactly the type she shags.

Philani: Hi, I was wondering if I can get an autograph.

Joy: (laughs) What?

Philani: I saw you on a magazine some time back and I have been looking for you.

She continues laughing and that's where he wants her.

Joy: Okay, where do you want it?

Philani: Engraved on my heart till eternity.

Joy: You are such a charmer.

Philani: Have I done enough to get your number?

Joy: Well maybe over some drinks.

Philani: I got a date too, that's awesome.

Joy: (laughing) Where are you guys headed to right now?

Philani: The question should be where are we going for the drinks.

Joy: I know just the place.

Philani: We will meet there. Drive safely my celebrity.

He walks off as she laughs looking at him through the mirror.

Nathan: I cannot believe you went on with it while I told you she is not your type.

He says after Philani has got into the car.

Philani: You don't know my types.

Nathan: But I know her.

Philani: (starting the car) What is so wrong with her that we cannot even greet?

Nathan: She is a serial shagger. Don't go into it with your whole heart.

Philani: Has she shagged you?

Nathan: No, but people talk.

Philani: I will see for myself.

He drives off while they talk.

Philani: I am taking you home and then I'm going out for drinks with her.

Nathan: Take some protection with you.

Philani: I won't need it.

To be continued...

JOY

It has been a few days since she went out for drinks with Philani. They turned up like crazy and she likes him, but not enough to lose her focus. She has to keep her eyes on the ball.

He is a Chemical Engineer, have shares in a family company he oversees and single. Imagine what that money could do for her.

She has to go back to Pretoria to prepare for her vacation with her other man, so today she is seeing both Felix and Philani.

Her phone rings and it's Felix, of course she is not that sexually attractive to him so she has to see him first so she can maybe get it on with Philani later on.

Joy: Mr Delin, how are you?

Felix: Such formality, call me Felix or Fel.

Joy: I like Fel.

Felix: (chuckles) I think it sounds even better coming from you.

Joy: So, are you ready?

Felix: I was calling to ask if you are.

Joy: Ready as I can be.

Felix: I am coming to fetch you, there is a place I have to show you and I want you to enjoy this day without worrying about driving. And don't stress, I will bring you back safely.

Joy: I guess that can work. I will send you my location.

Felix: Okay, bye.

She rolls her eyes as he hangs up and then gets ready to leave. The house she is in belongs to the man taking her out on a vacation. They have been together for eight months now.

He knows the kind of a person she is, or rather the kind of relationship she wants so they are in an open one but she still hides things from him.

Felix arrives as if he has been waiting by the corner, and she hops into the car dressed in casual with a backpack filled with snacks.

A girl's gotta have something to eat on her whenever she goes out.

Felix: You look beautiful.

Joy: Thank you. So where are we going?

Felix: You will see.

He drives off playing some music and they both move their heads along to it.

NARRATED

Philani is with Nathan in Naledi's garden, telling him about Joy because they had never talked about that night.

Nathan: How did you even know where she was?

Philani: There is only a few place women like her turn up at, and the first I started with happened to be the right one. That girl is a party animal.

Nathan: So, did you smash?

Philani: No, I didn't want to scare her off. But tonight I am hitting it.

Nathan: I hope you will take my advice.

Philani: I am not sure about that.

Naledi comes out holding a tray of drinks to join them. She sits in the empty chair before them after placing the tray on the table in the middle.

Naledi: What are you guys talking about?

Philani: Just a girl I met.

Nathan: A not-so-good human being that he refuses to be adviced on.

Naledi: What's up with her?

Nathan: She sleeps with everything that has a dick.

Philani: It sounds to me like you are angry or jealous. What is it? Did she refuse sleeping with you? So, you don't have a dick?

Nathan: That girl is bad news Philani, and she is going to bring you trouble.

Philani: What if I also just want to smash and nothing else? What if we agreed on a friends with benefits or fuck buddies arrangement?

Nathan: You are going to get into trouble and I hope this time we won't be affected.

Philani: (angrily) What is that supposed to mean?

Nathan: You forget so easily, was it not you who followed a fake Tshiamo on Facebook and even got shot.

Philani sighs looking at Naledi who is focused on her drink, and Nathan walks away from them with his glass in hand.

Naledi: How do you know this girl?

She asks after placing the glass back in the tray.

Philani: We met a few days ago at the shoot.

Naledi: Nathan's gig?

Philani: Yes. She was the model.

Naledi: So Nathan knows her better than you?

Philani: He doesn't know her. He thinks he does but he doesn't.

Naledi: Okay, just be careful.

Philani: Nawe futhi! What should I be careful for?

Naledi: Nathan means well, I know him and you know him too. Just take what he says into consideration and spare us the trouble. We have already been through shit and I don't think I can take it anymore.

Philani: So everything bad that happened was because of me.

Naledi: That's not what I meant.

He gets up from the chair, clicks his tongue and takes his juice before walking away from her.

Philani: (raising the glass) Thanks for this.

LATER THAT DAY
PHILANI MTHEMBU

He wanted to book a hotel room for the night, but Joy suggested he comes over to her place.

She sent him her address earlier on when they were setting up this “date” and he is now driving to her place.

He has a lot of ideas in running in his head on how he wants tonight to go. Joy seems like she knows her business, and he cannot wait to put on his A game too.

His phone rings and he smiles at her name flashing on the screen.

Philani: (cheerfully) Hey.

Joy: Hi, how are you?

Philani: I am okay. How are you?

Joy: I’m fine. Can you please arrive at 9pm. I am still a bit busy now, and I want to have time to make food and get the place ready.

Philani: I can bring food to ease the pressure.

Joy: I prefer cooking.

Philani: Okay. I will see you then.

Joy: Okay

bye.

She hangs up and when he checks the time, it’s a few minutes before 7pm. He starts thinking of ways to kill time, and nothing comes to mind.

AT THE RESTAURANT

Joy is sitting across Felix after returning from the restroom.

Felix: Are you okay now?

Joy: Yes, I just needed to fart.

Felix: (chuckles) Okay.

Their food arrives, seafood to be specific and it look all mouthwatering.

Felix: I only had this once a few years ago, I hope my stomach will not react badly.

Joy: It won't. I cannot wait any longer, let's dig in.

They start eating while chatting lightly. After today's activities, all Joy wants is her bed but of course she has another appointment she cannot miss or maybe that's the kind of bed she needs tonight.

NARRATED

Later on Felix and Joy comes out of the restaurant and into his car. They are laughing as he starts the car and they settle in.

Felix: So where are we going now?

He is actually hinting that they go somewhere to finish off the night.

Joy: I have exhausted all my energy for the night. I just want my bed right now.

Felix: We can go to my place, and I will give you a massage.

Joy: I don't think that's a good idea, we have just met and...
Felix: Yes, I'm sorry.

Then they keep quiet and Joy takes out her phone to order home cooked meal. The delivery will be in less than 25 minutes.

She keeps herself busy on the phone until they arrive at her place.

Joy: (getting off) Thank you for tonight. I enjoyed it.
Felix: It's my pleasure. Good night.

She waves at him as he drives off, and then rushes inside to take a shower so she can set the table after.

PHILANI MTHEMBU

He went to get a few drinks, and then got braaied meat before waiting closer to Joy's place.

He thought he was seeing things when a car dropped her off, and what made everything even worse is that he knows the person who is driving.

Nathan was right, and his chest is heating up real quick right now like it could explode.

He calms down and then drives towards the gate. A delivery car stops by and the guy comes out holding a box then goes to the

door before returning to the car empty handed, and then off it drives.

He takes another moment to breath in and out before proceeding to the gate while dialling her. She takes long to answer, and when she does she comes on the phone breathing heavily.

Joy: Hey.

Philani: I am at the gate.

Joy: Okay, I am coming.

He hangs up as the gate slides open, and then drives through and is met by her coming out of the house.

Joy: (cheerily) I am glad you made it.

Philani: (getting off the car) We agreed, and I take agreements serious.

Joy: Okay, you can come in.

He gives her the bottle of wine he got on the way and they go inside.

Joy: I was finishing up on the pots, you can have a seat while I bring the food.

Philani: Okay.

He takes two glasses and the wine then pours for himself while she dishes up.

They eat over a light conversation, Philani obviously uneasy and Joy acting all innocent.

Philani: What did you get up to today?

Joy: I never even got the chance to leave the house, my day was exhausting.

Such blatant lies, straight to his face. This is definitely a smash-and-pass kind of setting.

After eating they drink some more until they are both intoxicated and getting down to it.

Philani has both his hands on her waist, pulling her towards him while she grinds on his manhood. He moves one hand to her neck, fully grasping it from the back while kissing her hungrily.

She directs him to the bedroom in-between the kisses and he lifts her up, makes his way to the bedroom while holding her against the walls on the way.

Less than 5 minutes into the bedroom, she is screaming on top of her lungs while he drills her in all positions known to him.

To be continued...

PHILANI MTHEMBU

He wakes up to a badly handwritten note beside the pillow he is sleeping on. The bed is empty on Joy's side so he picks the paper and brings it to his eyes.

Philani: (reading sleepily) "Hey, I hope you had a good night. You were sleeping so peaceful and I didn't want to wake you up. I had a great night with you, and I hope we can do it again next time we meet. Thanks for last night, bye."

He abruptly gets up rubbing his eyes to ensure he read everything well. His mature mind has already registered what the note means.

He gets off the bed and rushes to check his car. Luckily, it is still parked where he left it last night. He sighs in relief and then goes back to fetch his stuff so he can leave.

Coming out he finds someone cleaning the kitchen and he doesn't know how to act.

The woman sees him and then greets him with a smile.

Her: Are you Mr Philani?

Philani: Yes.

Her: Okay, madam mentioned you in our conversation. Should I make breakfast for you?

Philani: No! I am okay, but thanks.

Her: Okay.

He saunters towards the door, then think of asking her where Joy might be. He clears his throat and then turns to her.

Philani: Did Joy...madam, tell you where she is going?

Her: Oh, she is going on a vacation with the boss.

Philani: Boss?

Her: Yes, Mr Wilson.

Philani: Okay, thank you.

He walks out and then gets into his car before driving out. His heart just did a whole tumble there.

There's a lot of thinking he does along the way, and by the time he gets home he doesn't even remember how he drove on the way because he was totally out of it.

Nathan is drinking water in the kitchen when he walks in looking scruffy. He turns to him and chokes on the water then starts coughing.

Nathan: (choking on water) My God, what happened to you? You look like you were hit by a train.

He doesn't respond but passes to the guest bedroom and takes off his clothes to shower.

A little later on he appears holding his bag and finds Nathan on the phone outside.

He goes to his car and puts his bag then come back to the house to grab something to eat.

Nathan: (on the phone) Okay, bye.

He turns to Philani who is headed to his car holding a plastic of what seems like bread and some fruits.

Nathan: Where are you going?

Philani: (sadly) Home.

Nathan: I thought you are still with me until I finish what I am doing.

Philani: No, I need to be home.

Nathan: (worriedly) Are you okay?

Philani: (shouting) Can you just stop pestering me with questions? I am fine, I just need to be home.

He gets in the car and drives out. Nathan remains still until the car has disappeared then sighs going back inside.

That is so unlike Philani, whatever happened has caused him a lot of pain.

BULELANI HADEBE

He has been tricking Naledi with games to get her ring finger size, and today he finally managed to get it.

She was fast-asleep after a steamy morning one and right after dozing off he lifted her hand and put a string around her ring finger then tied it before taking it off.

Her ring should be custom made, and he is now on his way to the jeweller that's going to be making it.

His phone rings as he is starting the car and he smiles answering.

Naledi: Thank you for the flowers.

Bulelani: Do you like them?

Naledi: I love them. They are so pretty.

Bulelani: I just thought of you when I saw them and decided to surprise you. How is your day going?

Naledi: With such a lovely display in my office, it is going even better.

Bulelani: That's what I love to hear. I will be home early today and maybe cook us something.

Naledi: Should I chase the boys out?

Bulelani: No, there won't be any need.

Naledi: Okay, I cannot wait to see you.

Bulelani: Later?

Naledi: Later, Bye.

She hangs up and he notices he had turned off the ignition; busy smiling at the phone. The things love makes us do neh. He starts the car again and then drive out.

LATER THAT DAY
MPUMALANGA

There is a man and two women sitting under the shade of tree. A table with a tray of food is between them and a small bowl with water kn the man's feet.

They are speaking Swati and Tsonga, their voices hushed as one of the women points to the back of the house.

The man is left alone to eat after some time. He starts by washing his hands in the small bowl and then goes on to eat.

He looks lost in his thoughts while taking the food bit by bit into his mouth, gradually chewing and then pausing for a moment.

After a while he finishes the food and washes his hands then gets up

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goes around the house and take some time there before coming back to find the table cleared and the women back on their chairs.

“Thank you for allowing me to do this. After everything I put your sibling through,”

He says after joining them.

“There is nothing else I can do to show you how sorry I am.”

“There is actually,” one woman answers and then calls to someone in the house. The child comes running and she asks them to bring the family photo album.

The child brings it and goes back to the house while the woman pages through it. She stops at one photo, turns the album to the man and he opens his mouth in awe when he comes face to face with the person in the picture.

He stays a little while as they explain what is what, and then bids them goodbye after they are done.

NALEDI MTHEMBU

She comes home to find Nathan sitting alone watching TV. They exchange greetings and then she joins him on the couch.

Naledi: (looking around) Where is everyone?

Nathan: Philani went back home this morning. Bhali(brother-in-law) is upstairs.

Naledi: Why did Philani leave so early, and without telling me?

Nathan: I don't know, but he didn't look good when he got here from wherever he slept last night.

Naledi: Did he at least tell you what the problem is?

Nathan: He almost bit my head off when I asked.

Naledi: I know my brother, he only acts like this when he is heartbroken. It means things didn't go accordingly where he was.

Nathan: I won't say I told him so, but I did.

Naledi: (sighs) I will call him tomorrow morning, maybe he will be calm enough to explain what happened.

Nathan: Hopefully.

Right then Bulelani descends the stairs with an apron on and approaches her while smiling.

Bulelani: My lady.

Naledi: (blushing) Hey baby.

Bulelani: Let me carry your bag for you.

He helps her up the couch and takes her handbag.

Bandile comes rushing to Nathan who is already on his feet, excusing himself from the lovebirds.

Nathan: I was about to leave you behind.

Bandile: I am here. Bye you two.

They head to the door and out they go.

Naledi: How did you manage to them to leave?

She asks as they climb the stairs.

Bulelani: I have my ways, and you know it too.

He winks at her and she laughs closing her mouth.

Naledi: You are so naughty.

Bulelani: Well to ease your curiosity, I just told them we are having a romantic night and they decided to excuse themselves in case it gets loud.

Naledi: (laughing) Did they actually say that?

Bulelani: (nodding) Uh huh.

They get to their bedroom and he has set up a table in the middle of the room. It's a big room so there is space left where he has placed a laptop, pillows and some snacks.

Naledi: Are we going to sleep tonight?

Bulelani: I don't know, but I don't plan on sleeping either. Come on, let's eat first.

She takes off her work clothes and finds something comfortable then join him.

They eat while reminiscing on the first time they saw each other.

Bulelani: I honestly don't know that feeling, but it was hard to ignore. I just felt like it was unfair for me to look at another woman while with the other. That's when I knew soulmates exists in all forms.

Naledi: I didn't really think we would end up together, but I knew you are hot.

Bulelani: (chuckles) Oh really? You never said anything.

Naledi: Well when you first came to the restaurant back in Cape Town, I didn't expect you as you were. I mean, I had seen your face over video calls but seeing the whole of you was something else.

Bulelani: And you were so professional, I even thought you don't look twice at men.

Naledi: It's not easy being a business woman, you have to grow a thick skin to deal with difficult customers and men who think businesses only suits them. So I smile less at men, or maybe even never.

Bulelani: I understand. I am just glad on this night, I am eating with you and will soon be holding you in my arms. You have brought all the warmth I never knew existed into my life.

Naledi: And you have brought all the peace.

Bulelani: (raises his glass) To us.

Naledi: (raising hers to click on the other) To us.

Both: Cheers.

The continue eating, and after they are done he takes her to the bathroom where he has filled the tub with hot water and bath salts.

They both get in, facing each other, and relax for a while before bathing and going to watch *How to Ruin Christmas* while snacking and laying comfortable in each other's warmth.

To be continued...

JOY

She had the time of her life in Mexico; Puebla, and they have just arrived in Cape Town because her man had a meeting with his business partners this side.

Her phones have been off and it's now she is switching them on to find messages from home, Philani and Felix.

She reads the messages - the ones from home, paying attention to what is being said and her heart starts thumping against her chest.

She tries to call them back but the calls don't go through and that makes the heartbeat increase its speed.

The door opens and she doesn't even turn to see who is walking in because she is still lost in her thoughts.

Wilson gets in undoing his shirt and puts his bag on the floor before joining her on the couch.

Wilson: (cheerfully) Baby girl, how are you?

He greets her while walking over, taking off his shirt and remaining with the vest.

Joy: (sadly) Hey.

Wilson: What's wrong?

She has to find the right words and approach to this matter because it is a fight factor in their relationship.

Joy: I got a message from home.

He stops and looks at her, that “don’t you dare look,” before dropping his gaze and continuing with what he was doing.

Wilson: But baby, we are not yet done with our vacation. I mean I know we are back but not officially.

He is now besides her on the couch, leaning on back in a relaxed position.

Joy: I know, but I have to go hear what they have to say. I have long wanted to do this and this might be the last chance.

Wilson: (aggressively) So you want to drop me and go to the man who never wanted anything to do with you? after all that I have done for you? I told you he never bothered with you because he didn’t want you, now he is back and you want to run to him for what? So he can spend that money I work hard for?

She snaps back at him with tears in her eyes. Something she never thought could happen, both the snapping and the tears.

She doesn’t even know if she is snapping cause he shouted or crying at the words that came out of his mouth.

Joy: You knew what was happening when we met, and you promised to not be against it when the time arrives. It has arrived now and-

He cuts her off pointing his finger at her.

Wilson: I also remember asking for a favor that even now you haven't reported back on.

She drops her head and starts playing with her fingers.

Joy: (sniffing) I met up with him. He sees a future with me but since I left he hasn't checked on me.

She lies because the men she was with before the vacation, have both texted her.

Wilson: We are going to leave in 3 days, invite him to my house and then I will meet up with him there.

Joy: (sighs) Okay.

Wilson: I am sorry for shouting okay?

She nods and then he pulls her closer and hugs her before starting to kiss her.

Wilson: I want to have some.

Joy: I am not in the mood.

Wilson: I got pills.

Joy: No, it's fine let's have.

They start kissing hungrily and then he takes off her clothes first followed by his.

He lays her on the couch while touching her all over, trying to turn her on. He can see that she is really not in the mood but continues until he has to put it in, and she is dry as a desert.

Wilson: (stops and looks at her) You know what, let me go buy cause clearly you don't feel me.

He gets off her and puts on his clothes before walking out of the house.

She wipes off her tears and then pulls herself together. Of all the people she has been with, Wilson seems to be the most dangerous and one of these days he is going to do something to her. The love for money has gotten her straight into the claws of a lion.

Not only does he get aggressive, he seems to also be suffering mentally. She has to leave him ASAP!

The first time they met he was sweet, bombarded her with love and money. Even opted for an open relationship because of how they met. But now he is something else, and she is in too deep.

At first it was just a meet and do business then leave

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until he sat her down and made this arrangement. It was absurd at first, I mean it's not everyday a man promises you heaven and earth without wanting something in return.

But of course he just felt the warmth between her legs and wanted it for himself whenever and wherever.

Now it's a very different story, and she hopes by getting him what he wants he will leave her alone to live the life she is used to. Vacations are good but she can now afford them on her own.

She decides to call Philani for help. Hopefully he is not angry at her for how she left.

PHILANI MTHEMBU

It has been almost a week since he came back and he has not been active at all.

Nathan asked to be fetched from town and even that feels like a lot of work, but he needs to forget about Joy and focus on what matters so he takes a bath and get ready to fetch Nathan.

It is quite amazing how he wanted a hit-and-run after being lied to, but his heart hurts to know she played him first. Indeed the last rod is the most painful if that's how they say it in English.

He talks to himself all the way to town, mostly consoling himself that maybe it's because he had evil thoughts and that maybe it was a lesson to listen when people warn you.

Finally he gets to town and Nathan is already off the taxi. He gets in the car and greets him before pulling his seatbelt on.

Nathan: How have you been?

Philani: I have been okay.

Nathan: What happened? You just left without saying anything.

Philani: I am sorry for the other day. (sighs) She played me.

Nathan: Who? Joy?

Philani: Yeah. Say it.

Nathan: What?

Philani: Come on, I know you want to jump in victory cause you were right.

Nathan: No, I was actually worried about you. That girl is dangerous because of some of the guys she plays with.

Philani: Can you believe we had the most amazing sex and then she was gone in the morning. Her helper said she went on a vacation with her man. I mean... I didn't even know she had man.

Nathan: Did you ask her?

Philani: No, but she could have said something.

Nathan: Would you say anything if it was you? Didn't you also tell her you are single?

Philani: But I am.

Nathan: Okay. Anyway, did she leave a message?

Philani: (shakes his head) No!

Nathan: Any clue of who she might be with, unless she went alone to this vacation.

Philani: The helper said her man is Mr Wilson.

Nathan: (thoughtfully) Wilson... Is that a name or surname?

Philani: I don't know. And the way she smiled at me it was as if I wasn't the first man she sees leaving "madam's" house. Nx.

A light comes on in Nathan's head, and as if he has noticed something unusual.

Nathan: Wait! wait! Wait! Isn't that guy who was friends with Felix?

Philani: I thought so too but no, that guy got shot and left to die.

Nathan: But no one has proof that he actually died.

Philani: It can't be him.

His phone rings and he answers almost going off the road seeing Joy's name on the screen.

It's like he has totally forgotten what happened. He stops the car and answers.

Philani: (cheerfully) Hello.

Joy: (sniffling) Hey, how are you?

Philani: I am fine, are you okay? You sound like you are or were crying. Is everything okay?

Joy: Yeah, I'm fine. It's just dust, I was outside and it's a bit windy.

Philani: Okay.

There is some awkward silence and then Philani clears his throat.

Philani: So you are back from your vacation?

Joy: Yeah. And I will be in Pretoria in 3 days, hopefully.

Philani: Where are you now?

Joy: Cape Town, taking care of business.

Philani: That's great.

Silence!

Joy: Listen, I need your help.

Philani: Yes.

Joy: I received a call from home, and I need to be there on weekend. Can you accompany me?

Philani: (chokes and starts coughing) Me? Why?

Joy: I feel safe when I'm with you, plus you are funny.

Philani: Where is home?

Joy: Mpumalanga.

Philani: Okay. I am in Limpopo though.

Joy: I will find a way to get to you.

Philani: Okay. I will hear from you then.

Joy: Bye.

She hangs up and he is left with his mouth dropped. Totally flabbergasted.

Nathan: Was that her? I thought you are angry at her.

Philani: I am, but she hasn't been answering my texts and I needed to know if she is safe.

Nathan: What does she want?

Philani: Nothing much.

Nathan: Be safe. I know you are probably lying to me, but be safe.

He doesn't respond as he starts the car and then drives off.

To be continued...

FELIX DELIN

He got a call from Joy for a meet-up at her place, but because of how things happened last time he doesn't know if he can go on with this.

She is beautiful but also young, still in the stage where she wants to do so many things, and achieve a lot and he on the other side; wants a stable partner who he will start a family with.

He doesn't want to rob her off that experience of feeling powerful and ready to take on the world, so he has to let her go and find someone who matches his needs.

Her call comes through after the last one which was fifteen minutes ago when he told her he is in a meeting.

He answers closing his front door and then goes to the kitchen.

Felix: Hey, we can talk now.

Joy: Hi, I think I should first apologize for the way I just left...

Felix: Oh no, don't worry about that. We're cool.

Joy: Okay, so what do you say about my invitation?

Felix: I do think we have to lay everything on the table and examine each, but not at your place.

Joy: I still feel tired from the vacation and I don't want to go anywhere, but I need to have this conversation with you.

Okay, now he is growing suspicious!

Felix: Isn't a vacation supposed to relax you? How come you still feel tired?

Joy: Jet lag, maybe.

Felix: We can postpone.

Joy: (sighs) Let's meet at the restaurant then.

Felix: Cool.

He hangs up and finishes drinking his water before going to his room.

JOY

She turns to Wilson who has been listening to their conversation all along and then back at her phone.

They are back in Jo'burg because he wants to take care of business, which is Felix.

He gets up and puts down the whiskey glass he has been sipping from then turns to her.

Wilson: Make it happen, when I get back I want him here.

Joy: But you heard him, surely he can feel that something is not right.

Wilson: And your job is to make sure he comes here. This is the only thing blocking my peace.

She gets up from the couch in an attempt to walk out on him but he grabs her wrist before she could go any further.

Wilson: Offer him what you have, he won't say no to that. It's not like you have never done it before.

He winks at her and then lets go of her hand before walking out first.

She sits back on the couch heaving a sigh of relief after he is gone out the door and then checks her phone.

She presses it for some time and then finishes off by sending a message to Philani before going upstairs to pack.

Wilson is only going to get back in the evening and by then she will be meeting up with Felix, and then running as far away from Wilson as she can.

PHILANI MTHEMBU

He was in a meeting with the company staff when he received a message from Joy. Of course as the boss he could have checked it and excused himself, but he is trying to be a good example so he is only opening the message now after getting into his office.

He settles down while reading and then within a few seconds, he jumps up the chair same time as he is grabbing his car keys and rushes out.

Philani: Cancel all my meetings for the rest of the week, if they are important someone will step in for me.

He announces to his PA on his way out while pacing down the passageway to the front door.

He has arrived home and is packing a small luggage bag when Nathan walks into his room.

Nathan: Where are you going?

Philani: I will send you my location. Right now I have to leave.

Nathan: You can't just leave without informing us, and besides Refiloe is on his way here.

Philani: Nathan, you are here and this is your home too. Refiloe is not a guest and definitely not someone who need babysitting from me.

He walks out zipping the bag and gets into his car before driving off.

Nathan calls Naledi to inform her of what's happening.

NALEDI MTHEMBU

She is having a late brunch with Bulelani who has been spoiling her rotten with gifts and outings.

Her phone rings while they are in the middle of a light conversation, mainly her asking what's under Bulelani's sleeve because she is wary of his actions lately.

Naledi: (laughing) It's Nathan, let me answer.

Bulelani: Okay.

She swipes to answer and then puts the phone on her ear.

Nathan: Naledi hi.

Naledi: Hey

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what's going on?

Nathan: Your brother has just left with a small luggage bag, in a hurry and he didn't tell me where he is going.

Naledi: What is he up to now?

Nathan: I don't know, but I think it has something to do with Joy...the girl he met...

Naledi: Yeah I remember. Let me call him.

Nathan: If he answers then he is going to cause an accident, but chances are he won't even answer.

Naledi: (sighs) Okay, calm down, and then we will see how to get to the bottom of this.

Nathan: Okay bye. Call me if you hear anything.

Naledi: You too.

She hangs up and sighs putting the phone on silent mode.

Naledi: I don't even know how I ended up with my phone on vibration while having company.

Bulelani: What's the matter?

Naledi: Philani has left home with a bag without telling anyone where he is going.

Bulelani: He is old enough to take care of himself, why are you all so worried about him?

Naledi: Because old as he is, his mind is extremely tiny and he always finds a way to get us all into trouble. Especially if it has a woman involved in it.

Bulelani: From my perspective, he might be going to help the woman he is involved with as a protector.

Naledi: And the problem is when we also have to turn protectors so we can protect him after falling into the pit. This has messed up my date, I have lost my appetite.

Bulelani: Let me finish up and then we can leave.

She sits back trying to call him(Philani) and as Nathan said, he doesn't attend to it so she gives up.

LATER THAT DAY

JOY

She is occupying a table alone waiting for Felix while drinking wine to get her the guts she needs for this, and he walks through the door in his casual wear.

Tonight she is nothing like what he has been exposed to and he is taken aback when he walks into the restaurant.

Felix: Hey.

He says after joining her and she lifts her head to look at him.

She has no make-up on, her hair is covered by the hoodie she has on and for the first time, she is wearing sneakers.

Joy: I thought you weren't coming anymore.

Felix: You just arrived early.

Joy: Anything to drink?

Felix: No, I'm good.

Joy: Okay.

She leans over the table and starts talking in a whisper.

Joy: We did not stumble upon each other. It was planned and it was not my idea. There's someone from your past out to get you, they are using me and I want out that's why I am telling you this. I don't know the whole story, all I have is what I was tasked to perform. Everything I did was to get you to a place of your final rest, and I just realized I can't go on with it anymore. Tonight I was supposed to bring you back to this address (she puts the paper on the table from the sleeve of her hoodie), you can check who it belongs to and then you will see your enemy who is out to kill you. I have done my part, and now it's up to you to take it further. Be safe.

She downs the wine and then grabs her backpack, which Felix didn't notice when he arrived, before walking out.

Passing by the counter she signals the waiter who takes the glass of whiskey to Felix.

Felix: (clears throat) I think I'm going to need that drink right now.

The waiter comes over and gives him the drink then walks away.

Felix: Thank you.

He doesn't ask any questions but just gulps the drink and then leaves money on the table and walks out to his car.

He has the paper in hand, and the first thing he does when he gets to his place is search for the address.

It takes a little while for everything to come on the screen, and when it finally comes it causes his world to spin around, landing him on the floor with one hand on his chest trying to stop the air from leaving his lungs.

To be continued...

PHILANI MTHEMBU

They have just arrived at Joy's place and he is waiting at the gate while she talks to the elders before coming back to him.

Philani: How is everything? Are they all okay?

Joy: (leaning back on the seat) Yeah. The meeting will be held tomorrow.

Philani: You still haven't told me the real reason you are here, and it looks like you ran away from wherever.

Joy: I didn't run, I just had little time to doll myself up. Besides, I was coming home and there is no need for me to be a model.

Philani: I just don't want trouble.

Joy: There won't be any. Are you coming in?

Philani: No, I have booked for the night. When are we going back? Or maybe I will be leaving alone?

Joy:(sighs) I don't know. I will see after tomorrow.

Philani: Okay. I have to go rest now, I will see you tomorrow.

Joy: Okay. Bye.

She hugs him and then gets off the car before he drives off.

He arrives at the lodge and then immediately takes a bath before getting into bed. He finds himself wondering what made him jump when Joy asked for help because he was still angry at her.

It's this kind of behavior that got him into trouble the other time, and maybe Nathan was right - there might be something off with Joy that's going to get him into trouble.

Philani: (speaking to himself) Yah, you like women shem.

His phone rings and he picks it up then look at Naledi's name flashing. He contemplates answering cause he know she is going to bite his head off. But again, having everyone worry over him while he is okay doesn't make sense so he answers.

Philani: Hey.

Naledi: Where are you?

Philani: I am safe.

Naledi: I said where not how. Do you really think even after so long we will be interested in having palpitations over what might happen to you? Do you for once, ever think about other people or you are just fine with always acting like a toddler?

Philani: (sighs) I am in Mpumalanga okay. I will be back in a few days.

Naledi: What are you doing there?

Philani: Eyi Naledi, isn't Bulelani available for you to nag him and leave me alone? Yeses.

He hangs up and then dials Nathan.

Nathan: Hey.

Philani: When are you going to stop reporting everything to Naledi? I said I would send my location but now I have Naledi calling me breathing fire. Stop being a sissy whenever you feel there's trouble.

He hangs up and switches off his phone then sleeps.

EARLIER THAT MORNING
BULELANI HADEBE

He will be working from home today so he woke up to prepare breakfast for everyone before they start with their day.

Naledi comes out dressed smart in a pencil skirt and a shirt.

Naledi: Good morning.

Bulelani: Morning Mrs Bulelani.

Naledi: (blushing) How are you?

They meet half way and kiss.

Bulelani: I am okay. I heard you fighting over the phone, how are you?

Naledi: (sighs) It's Philani. He says he is in Mpumalanga.

Bulelani: (raised eyebrow) What is he doing there?

She shrugs and turns to the table where she sits and wait for him to bring the food.

Bandile comes to join them and he has his eyes on the phone, texting back and forth.

Bandile: Good morning.

Both: Morning.

Bulelani: Who is he with there? Does he have friends?

Naledi: He hung up the phone on me while I was talking and no, Philani doesn't have friends in Mpumalanga.

Bulelani: Maybe he went for a little shot' left.

Naledi: I doubt. Whatever took him there is going to bring us trouble.

Bulelani sighs because this conversation is taking a turn he doesn't want to be involved in. It's like they are treating Philani as if he's a kid, worrying about him and wanting to always protect him.

How will Naledi even be a mother if all she cares about are her siblings so much she would do anything for them.

He joins them on the table and they pray while Bandile focuses on his phone.

Bulelani: You can always come eat later by yourself cause you're clearly not interested in having this breakfast with us.

He says to Bandile after they have said amen and dished up but he is still glued to his phone.

Bandile: I am talking to someone from home. They saw uncle a few days ago at the house.

Bulelani drops the fork on his plate while Naledi stops chewing and looks at Bandile.

Bandile: (showing them the phone) The picture was taken at a distance but if you know him you can see that's it's indeed him.

Naledi: (standing up) I have to tell Philani to leave that place.

Bulelani: Maybe they're not in the same town.

Naledi: Still, I don't want to risk anything.

She rushes back to the bedroom where she tries to get hold of him but his phone is off.

LATER THAT MORNING

JOY

She is getting ready for the meeting

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putting on a dress and tying her hair with a head wrap as per her aunts' request.

A knock sounds at her door and she tells the person to come in. Her eldest aunt walks in and greets her.

“I wanted to make sure you are ready.”

She says after sitting down.

Joy: I am. Have they arrived?

“Not yet, but surely they will be here any minute from now.”

Joy: (sighs) I don't know how I am going to face him. I know my mother told me what happened but I can't help it now that it's happening.

Her aunt taps on the side of the bed where she is seated for her to come and join her.

“I don't know how you feel and how you are going to feel seeing him, but I want you to know that I am here for you. We will get through this together. Your mother left home to start a life with you because a full house sometimes is not good. But it does not mean we are no longer a family. Sometimes we love each other well when we are not in the same place, it's actually a healthy relationship for grown ups who are family. I don't know why your father is back, but I want you to hear him out so you can clear your heart off the pain you have been storing.”

Joy: I don't know aunty. It feels like most of the things I did were due to him not being part of my life. A mother can only do so much, and there will always be that void even if you have never seen your father.

Another knock comes as the aunt wants to say something and the person tells them that their guests have arrived.

They go out and sit in the living room then starts addressing what needs to be addressed.

There was a lot of tears and laughter as they reconnected and the father has agreed to pay for damages.

Philani called when he arrived and Joy is now going out to the car to see him while their guests are eating.

She opens the door and then gets in and sighs.

Philani: How did it go?

Joy: Very well I guess.

Philani: Okay.

Joy: Can you drive us around for a while?, I need some air.

He wants to know the full information but looking at how she is, he decides not to push it but let her be.

Joy: You know, a part of me doesn't believe everything that man said.

Here it comes...

Joy: He says he never really knew my mother was pregnant because she never told him anything. And by the time he found out, he had just come out of prison and was still trying to find his feet.

Philani: What was he in prison for?

Joy: He didn't say. But I think my family knows, I will ask aunt when I get back. Even the guys he came with seems like ex-cons for serious crimes. All in shiny leather jackets and lightweights. Mxm.

Philani: I am just glad you got this over and done with.

Joy: Yeah, turn here. I have to see them off so I cannot go far.

Philani: Okay.

He turns and drives them back to her place. She notices Wilson's car from a distance and her heart starts beating out of her chest.

Joy: Is it possible to come with you to the place you had had?

Philani: Yes. Why?

Joy: Can we go there now?

Philani: I thought you wanted to be home. What is it?

He talks while driving and they are now two houses away.

Joy: Just drive.

She is visibly scared and looks like she is going to cry anytime soon.

Philani parks on the side of the road and turns to her.

Philani: What's wrong? Did you see something? What happened?

She is focused on the car and when the door opens she ducks.

Philani turns to where she was looking and sees the guy approaching them.

Joy: Is he coming?

Philani: Yes.

Joy: Oh my God, drive off. Fly if you can.

He starts the car and does a quick U-turn that leaves a cloud of dust. The guy paces back to his car and finds Wilson coming out of the gate.

Him: I saw someone like her, the car just drove off.

Wilson: Let's go.

They get in the car and as they drive off, Mr. Hadebe follows behind with his goons.

They had an ugly exchange of words with Wilson inside, and he is not going to watch his daughter die at the hands of another man.

To be continued...

PHILANI MTHEMBU

He had to be clever with his plan that he came up with when he saw the car can't after them. He used another route to get to the lodge where he picked his stuff and they drove off headed to Limpopo.

There's no way he is going to let those guys get to him, and Joy has a lot of explaining to do when they arrive.

He drives as fast as he could for a very long distance, hoping his fuel will take them as far from the car that's behind them as possible.

After what seems like forever, he feels confident that they are not being followed anymore then slows down a bit.

Philani: Who was that?

Joy: (breathing heavily) I don't know him.

Philani: (angrily) Don't bullshit me Joy, how can you fear what you don't know.

Joy: Because it looks scary.

Philani: (stops the car) Get out.

Joy: What? Why?

Philani: If you're not going to be honest with me you need to get out of my car.

Joy: Okay, okay I will tell you everything. But let's make sure we are safe first.

Philani: (starts the car) I can't believe this.

He drives off and doesn't pay attention to his phone that's been ringing.

Meanwhile, on the road where Wilson's driver lost the car. Mr Hadebe comes behind them and indicates with his car for them to stop.

He goes out of his car and meet halfway with Wilson who also came out of his when he saw who it was.

Wilson: We meet again.

Mr Hadebe: I followed you.

Wilson: And why would you do that?

Mr Hadebe: Because you are going after what's mine.

Wilson: (smiling) Oh really, then I guess we only own half of it and I am after my half.

Mr Hadebe: If you want Joy you are going to get her through me.

Wilson: And who exactly are you?

Mr Hadebe: Her father.

Wilson feels anger brewing in him and he clench his jaws while folding his hand into a fist. He throws it at Mr Hadebe who dodges then headlock him.

Mr Hadebe: I know I don't really look like someone who can take shots, but believe me you don't want to come face-to-face with me.

Wilson: (unable to breath) Where have you been all this time when I was taking care of your daughter?

Mr Hadebe: I was taking care of other people's daughters too, does that make us even?

Wilson's guy gets off the car seeing his boss about to lose a fight, and then points his gun at Mr Hadebe telling him to let go or he will shoot.

The ones in Mr Hadebe's car do not move as they wait for a signal from him, which never comes as he lets go of Wilson and moves back.

Mr Hadebe: You are going to let go of my daughter, or I will personally kill you.

Wilson doesn't reply as he brushes his sore neck that's already turned red.

Mr Hadebe walks back to the car and get in then drives off.

Wilson: (coughing) Let us go back and plan for this attack. Firstly, we need to find the person who was driving that car. I got the number plate.

They get back in the car and drive away in the direction of where they came from.

NALEDI MTHEMBU

She ended up not going to work because she can't get Philani on the phone and that worries her.

Bulelani is in his studio getting some work done because he has to deliver to clients. And he is less concerned about Philani.

The door opens and he walks in talking to the phone.

Bulelani: Okay thank you, I just wanted to make sure. Bye!

He hangs up and turns to her.

Bulelani: It's indeed him, I have to make sure Bandile is protected wherever he goes. I can't trust him to take care of himself and I believe my uncle will get to me through him.

Naledi: I still haven't heard from Philani, I don't know what is going on but I am scared.

Bulelani: Philani is an old man, stop stressing about him.

Naledi: Yet you want to protect Bandile.

Bulelani: It's not the same. You are a woman. Your job is not to protect but love.

Naledi: And if I love something I have to protect it from harm. Philani is my brother if you forgot.

Bulelani: And that's why you shouldn't be looking out for him but vice versa. Are you ever going to be able to mother our kids when the only thing you are focused on is your cousins and brother?

Naledi's phone rings as she is about to answer him, Noma's name flashes on the screen and Bulelani chuckles.

Bulelani: Go on

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answer it.

She sighs and picks the phone then swipes and puts it on her ear.

Naledi: Noma hi.

Noma: Hey, how are you doing? It has been long.

Naledi: Yes it has, I am okay. How is everyone there?

Noma: Everyone is fine. I wanted to ask if you will be going home anytime soon?

Naledi: I had not been thinking about it, but maybe I will. I need time out from the busy city.

Noma: Okay. When?

Naledi: Let me check and then I will get back to you.

Noma: Okay... Oh, machoman wants to talk to you.

They both laugh as Ricardo gets the phone.

Ricardo: Aunt.

Naledi: Hey, how are you?

Ricardo: I am fine. I just wanted to let you know that Wilson is back.

Naledi: What? How?

Ricardo: I don't know but Felix texted that he is after him, and was asking for my help. He didn't really give me much information.

Naledi: Is that why Noma wants to go home?

Ricardo: No, she had already planned to leave because she misses everyone.

Naledi: Okay, thanks for letting me know.

Ricardo: Bye.

He hangs up and Naledi turns to find Bulelani still looking at her.

Bulelani: Let me guess, you have to go to Limpopo because there is trouble and you must save everyone like the hero you are.

She gets up and goes to the closet then starts taking out her clothes.

Bulelani: I don't even know why I bother with you cause it looks like you enjoy being the center of the attention. You like being applauded for being a Hero and I bet you also feel like one of the women lead in movies where you are busy killing people.

She still doesn't respond and he walks out, slamming the door on his way.

LATER THAT EVENING

NARRATED

Philani parks in the yard and goes back to the gate to see if there is any car that followed them.

He goes back and leads Joy into the house where Nathan and Refiloe are playing cards.

They stop playing as the duo walks in and wait for an explanation.

Philani: Guys.

Both: Sho.

Philani: When did you get back?

Refiloe: This morning. Where have you been?

Philani: Around.

Refiloe: Are you going to introduce us?

Philani: No. (to Joy) Let's go.

He takes her to his room and lock the door.

Philani: Explain!

Joy sits comfortably on the bed and heaves a sigh. Where can she start?

Joy: I met with this man when I was still trying to make a name for myself. He elevated me, understood what I was about which is being free to sleep with whoever I want. That has been my life, going from one guy to the other for fun. I don't even remember the last time I was in a monogamous relationship. Anyway, when we first met, he said he wanted to have me by his side but I can continue living the life I want. He is rich and I wanted that for myself so I agreed and started dating him.

Philani: So you were with him for money?

Joy: Yes. Everything started to change when he told me he wants me to bring him someone from his past so he can finish what he started. I didn't bother asking, I was drunk with his money so I agreed. I made plans to be in the same space as the

guy so he could notice me and it didn't take time for him to fall into the trap.

Philani: Is this the same guy that dropped you off that night I spent at your place?

She drops her face and starts playing with her fingers.

Joy: Yes. Wilson wants to kill him, and he is after me now because I didn't bring him as we agreed. I was supposed to come with him to the house the night I texted you, but I met with him in a restaurant and warned him before running away to this side.

Philani: What made you change your mind?

Joy: My aunts sent me a message that my dad is back and I should come hear what he has to say. Wilson refused and wanted me to do my job first before I could go see my father. He didn't want me to go because he believes I owe him for everything he did for me, in the absence of my dad and they my dad doesn't deserve even the tiniest piece of me.

To be continued...

JOY

She is done explaining to Philani why she ran away, and he is looking at her as if trying see inside her-whether she is telling the whole truth or has altered it to make it bearable. But he cannot tell from just looking at her.

Philani: Are you sure that's all?

Joy: Yes.

Philani: Well, I don't think I should be telling you this but I know Felix, he is my sister's ex-husband.

Joy: What?

Philani: Yeah, but they're over so there is nothing to worry about.

Joy: And the two guys in the house?

Philani: They are family.

He doesn't explain how they are family to avoid confusions.

Joy: I hope me being here will not inconvenience them in any way.

Philani: No, it won't. You are my guest.

Joy: Okay.

Philani: Tell me, was I also on your hit list?

Joy: (hesitately) Yes... But I couldn't get you out of my mind after it. I felt something I never experienced with anyone else.

Philani: I also still can't get you out of my mind. I think I am falling in love with you.

Joy: I think I am too.

They look at each and as they lean in to try and kiss, someone knocks on the door. Philani sucks in his breath getting off the bed and then opens the door.

Philani: What?

Refiloe: I am still waiting for you to come tell me who is this person you brought with you. We don't want to be bombed in our own home cause of one person we don't even know.

Philani: Really? Did Nathan put you up to this cause I know he's got a big mouth.

Refiloe: Even if he did, I am the one talking to you right now so it doesn't make any difference. (turning to walk away)I will be waiting in the living room.

Philani groans in annoyance and then turns to Joy who is pressing her phone. Hopefully she didn't hear them because she looks so serious.

Philani: Come.

Joy: One second.

She finishes whatever she is doing on the phone and then goes to him and they walk out.

Refiloe turns down the volume on the TV when he hears them approaching. They get in and sit on the couch opposite him.

Philani: uhhm, Refiloe this is Joy, Joy-Refiloe.

Refiloe: Nice to meet you Joy.

She smiles but doesn't say anything.

Refiloe: So, Joy where do you come from?

Joy: Pretoria.

Refiloe: Okay, and what are you doing here?

Philani: She came to visit me?

He ignores him and wait for Joy to answer.

Joy: I came to visit Philani.

Refiloe: I see. Well, that's all I wanted to know. You are welcome in our family so long you don't bring us trouble.

Philani: You can go back to the room, I will come find you.

Joy: Okay.

He waits until she is out of sight and then turns to Refiloe.

Philani: What was that about?

Refiloe: You know very well what that was about.

Philani: (angrily) You people are starting to get on my nerves.

Refiloe: Lucky for you we are only starting, you have been on ours for a very long time now and you see how this girl of yours lied without a flinch, that's how she is going to mess you up one of these days.

He gets on his feet and clicks his tongue before following after Joy. She is on the phone when he gets in and he only catches the end tail of the conversation.

Joy: (on the phone) Yes, I am safe. I have sent the location pin. Okay, bye.

She hangs up and turns to Philani.

Joy: I want to sleep now. How are we doing this?

Philani: Do you want your own room or you are fine sharing the bed with me?

Joy: We can share.

Philani: Okay then, you can sleep right there.

Joy: Good night.

After Joy had passed out for almost an hour. Philani takes her phone from under the pillow and carefully hold out her hand to get the fingerprint. The phone unlocks and he starts by call logs.

He wasn't going to go through it but he has to know what he is dealing with. Maybe his family is right, and of course this is where he will find the whole truth about Wilson...and Felix.

The number she was talking to isn't yet saved, so he goes to her WhatsApp because she was talking about location, and right at the top-the first chat

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is the same number that just called.

He clicks on the picture and in all his mighty, Mr Hadebe looks back at him.

A cold flush runs down his spine and he feels hot flushes on his face. Mr Hadebe has replied that he will come in a few days to

fetch her, and it's only now it registers in his mind that this is the father Joy was talking about.

This issues just took a sharp curve he didn't see coming.

THE NEXT DAY NALEDI MTHEMBU

She didn't waste any minute in Bulelani's house after packing, but immediately hit the road and it is now she is parking at the family house.

The only person who is up is Refiloe and he is delighted to see her.

Refiloe: You don't say you're coming?

Naledi: So you can hide your all the stuff I am not supposed to see? Nope!

They both laugh and then hug.

Refiloe: I missed you.

Naledi: I missed you too.

Refiloe: You don't look okay, is everything fine?

Naledi: Yes, I am just tired and need some sleep.

Refiloe: Okay, we will talk when you are up.

She goes on to her room and gets into bed. Her phone rings as she is about to close her eyes and it's Bulelani.

Part of her doesn't want to talk to him but she knows she would be miserable if something was to happen to him and she doesn't know cause she is ignoring him. That's how she is wired around people she cares about so she answers the phone.

Naledi: Hello.

Bulelani: Hi, I just wanted to check if you have arrived safely?

Naledi: I have, I am in bed now.

Bulelani: I was hoping that we could talk.

Naledi: I am tired now and should get some rest. We can talk when I wake up.

Bulelani: Okay. Bye.

She hangs up and dozes off.

PHILANI MTHEMBU

Later that morning he wakes and takes a shower before having breakfast. Joy is still sleeping so he leaves some food for her before he walks out to his car.

Nathan is outside on the phone with Noma, excitedly chatting with her on how he cannot wait to see them when they arrive.

Philani notices Naledi's car and he quickly gets into his car so she does not see him. But it's too late cause when he starts the car, she comes pacing out of the house.

Naledi: We need to talk, now.

She says to him over the window and goes back inside. He turns off the engine and follows after her, same time Joy is coming down the stairs to the kitchen.

Naledi takes a step back looking at Joy, then back at Philani who is coming behind her.

Naledi: Good morning.

Joy: Hi.

Philani mouths to Joy to keep it moving and Naledi passes to the back of the house.

Philani: I wanted to go check things out at the company you know?

Naledi: You can still do that after we have talked.

Refiloe and Nathan joins them and Philani can already feel heat.

Philani: Before we start, I would like to apologize for everything.

Naledi: We don't want your apology, we want to know what happened and why you did it.

Philani: (exhales) Okay... Listen, I think we are all adults here and sometimes we don't have to explain ourselves when it comes to what our minds decides on. We really shouldn't expect any of us to allows us to be in their business just because we are family.

Naledi: Who is that girl?

Philani: Joy.

Naledi: What's her relation to you?

Philani: Friend.

He says that as Joy comes out to where they are. They all turn to look at her.

Joy: I am sorry for disturbing your family meeting, but there is someone looking for Naledi at the front door.

She says to them then looks at Philani who looks down in embarrassment before turning back to the house.

Naledi: Don't move, I am coming.

She follows after Joy and talks to the person who is delivering a present from Jo'burg.

Philani paces after Joy and finds her getting ready to leave.

Philani: Where are you going?

Joy: Home.

Philani: How are you going to get there? And it's dangerous because Wilson is still out there looking for you.

Joy: Someone will pick me up. I will make a plan.

Philani: Okay, I am sorry you heard me say that but you have to understand that I am still trying to get my family used to the idea of us being together.

Joy: Or maybe you just don't want them to know that we are together.

Philani: They are grown-ups. They already know that.

Joy: It's not about them knowing, it's you saying it.

Philani: Oh come one Joy, your family doesn't know me also but you don't see me crying about it.

Joy: They don't know you as a friend also.

Philani: Okay, listen I am sorry. I will go introduce you to them right now. Let's go.

She pouts her mouth as he hold his hand out to her.

To be continued...

NALEDI MTHEMBU

She puts the box on her bed and goes back to the back where Joy has now occupied her chair.

Philani gives her another one and she sits looking at him in disapproval.

Philani: I want to correct something, and because the reason we are here is me I would also like for Joy to be part of this meeting so we can both explain. Firstly, Joy is my girlfriend and I was helping her out when I left here in a hurry. She was in some sort of trouble and I thought I could offer some helping hand, which I did and that's why I came back here with her.

Naledi: What kind of trouble was she in?

Joy: I was running away from an abusive man who has been trying to isolate me from the people I love.

Naledi: Does he have a name perhaps?

Philani: I don't think it's necessary for you to know. He is no longer around now so it's okay.

Naledi: What I know is if he is powerful he will not rest until he gets her back. Are you certain you will be able to handle it?

Philani: I believe so.

Naledi: Okay. You can excuse us Joy, we need to talk to Philani alone.

Joy: Okay.

She goes back in the house and decide to give herself a little tour, ending up in Naledi's room where she finds her wedding picture.

There is some resemblance of some kind between the man on the picture and her father. Maybe he might be her brother and this alone excites her because she doesn't have any siblings.

She takes a picture of the photo and sends it to her father, asking if he knows the person.

Meanwhile Naledi informs the guys about Wilson and Bulelani's uncle being back from wherever.

Refiloe: I hope he won't come after us looking to finish what he started.

Naledi: I am only worried about Bandile.

Refiloe: Then maybe you can get him to come here, I mean it's safer here with all of us than it is there with just his brother.

Naledi: I will talk to Bulelani first.

Nathan: I am just looking forward to having my niece here in a few hours.

Refiloe: It's going to be a full house, like before.

Nathan: Yes.

Philani: I would like to leave if we are done.

Naledi: You can go.

Refiloe: What's wrong with him?

He asks after Philani has left.

Nathan: I don't know but there is something definitely not right.

Naledi: Only time will tell. I need to prepare lunch.

Refiloe: I will come help you.

They all go back inside and Naledi goes to check her box first.

She notices it's not in the position she left it in, but quickly shakes off the feeling and sits down to open it.

BULELANI HADEBE

He is doing final touches on his last order when his phone rings. He answers putting it on loudspeaker so he can talk while finishing up.

Bulelani: Hello.

Naledi: Hi, how are you?

Bulelani: I am fine. How are you?

Naledi: I'm okay. Thanks for the gift.

Bulelani: I am sorry.

Naledi: It's okay. I wanted to ask if it's possible for Bandile to come here for a few days?

Bulelani: Why? What's happening?

Naledi: Nothing, I just think he is not safe there.

Bulelani: I don't know. I want him close to me.

Naledi: You can come with him, I am just more worried about his safety than yours.

That hurts him a bit but he doesn't have to show it.

Bulelani: Okay. You can ask him.

Naledi: Is it okay with you?

Bulelani: Yes.

Naledi: Okay, bye.

She hangs up and he feels his throat drying up. He ever should have said all those horrible things to her the other day he is exactly like her.

He doesn't want anything to happen to Bandile the same way she would protect her siblings. He knows all of her, what she has been through and why she is the way she is.

Maybe to make up for this he can take Bandile there and try to see if he cannot fix things.

He sends Bandile a message to start packing, and then leaves the painting to dry with the order to his office people to take care of everything else.

NARRATED

Later that night, Noma and her family has arrived in Limpopo and everyone is happy to see them.

Ricardo is with the guys while Noma and Naledi finish up cooking. Philani walks in, since he left with his girlfriend in the evening.

They get into the kitchen and Joy can't help but salivate at the aroma from the pots.

Philani: Hey Noma, where is the little one?

Noma: You are not even excited to see me.

Philani: I am, but more excited to see my niece.

Noma: She is outside with her dad.

Philani: Okay.

As he turns to walk away, Joy follows after him but Naledi calls her.

Naledi: Come help us.

Joy: I want to change first.

She lies, she doesn't know how to cook.

Naledi: There is an apron here if you think you will get dirty.

She turns back and puts on the apron, hoping Philani could call her or something because she is not about to embarrass herself.

Naledi: You can make stew since we have prepared all the ingredients. Everything you need is here. Don't add anything else that's not here.

Joy: Okay.

She puts the oil on the stove and waits till it is hot enough and then drops the onions inside and add some spice.

Her phone rings while she is stirring and it's her father. She switches off the stove and walks outside where Naledi is also on the phone

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then stands a few metres from her.

Joy: Hello.

Mr. Hadebe: Hey, I have been looking for that man for a very long time. Is he where you are?

Joy: No, but maybe he will come because there has been people arriving.

Mr. Hadebe: Okay, I will also come and meet him there. But I need you to do something for me.

Joy: Okay.

Mr. Hadebe: He doesn't really know me so I will need a private space with him. Far from other people.

Joy: Won't that be suspicious?

Mr. Hadebe: It might be, but I think it's best I meet with him first alone before I can meet everyone.

Joy: How am I going to get to do that?

Mr. Hadebe: When I arrive, I will send you an address and then you will get him to accompany you to it.

Joy: And if he refuses?

Mr. Hadebe: You are a beautiful woman, figure something out. I have to go, bye.

He hangs up and before she could think more on what he said, Philani calls out to her to come back inside.

Philani: Who were you talking to?

He asks hugging her from behind and then kiss her on her neck and cheeks.

Joy: It was my father.

Philani: What did he want?

Joy: Just checking on me. I think I am going to need new clothes.

Philani: Why?

Joy: I didn't bring any clothes if you forgot.

Philani: I thought you loved wearing mine?

Joy: I do, but I need more girly clothes. And underwears.

Philani: Okay, we will go to town tomorrow.

They join everyone and she is relieved to see a bowl of stew on the table.

RICARDO SIBANDA

He has just put his daughter to sleep when he finds Noma staring at his phone. He forgot to lock it when he went to put Sedi to bed.

The only messages he doesn't want Noma to see are those from Felix, but luckily he deleted their last chats and he hadn't saved his number.

Noma: Who is this person texting that they're dying?

He feels drops of cold sweats forming on his back and his joints are about to fail him.

Ricardo: Let me see. (he grabs the phone) Oh, they might have sent the message to a wrong number. You see it's not even saved.

Noma: But maybe they are in danger.

Ricardo: Yeah, let me call and see if I can't help.

He walks out-more like running off, and leaves Noma on the couch while Naledi comes to join her. They have long finished eating and the only reason Naledi hasn't slept is because Bulelani hasn't arrived, and she wants to ensure everyone is safe before she goes to bed.

After finding a good spot where he can talk, he dials Felix with his fumbling fingers and puts it on the ear.

Ricardo: (on the phone) Felix, what's the matter?

He says after the call has been answered, not giving him a chance to even say hello.

Felix: (panting) He is outside, I saw him. There's nothing else that can be done. Please tell Naledi I never stopped loving her.

Ricardo: Let me call the police.

Felix: I will be dead by the time they arrive.

He hears something breaking and then footsteps approaches.

A gun goes off twice, then a few seconds pass and it goes off again four times and there is silence.

He could have thrown the phone away but he is frozen, until he hears someone talking on the other end.

“He was on a call, someone heard this.”

“Check the number.”

“Ricardo”

“Don’t hang up, bring the phone over here.”

The person takes a few steps and then hands the phone to another one.

Wilson: You are next.

To be continued...

RICARDO SIBANDA

The call shook him and he has been standing in the same spot for long now. Noma even came to check on him and thought he was still on the phone because his hand was up his ear when she saw him.

Memories of him and Wilson always on each other's throats comes back and he drops his phone as his body trembles in anger. The whole plan to have his club closed by planting drugs in his office... Everything floods his mind quickly after realizing what just happened.

He knows he doesn't owe Wilson anything, but because he is an animal he is going to come after him just for fun. It's not like there is anything he(Ricardo) can do about Felix's death, but Wilson has long wanted him dead even when they were still doing business together.

The car driving in snaps him out of it, making him wipe the sweat off his face and then picks his phone from the ground and goes back inside. He tries to look as normal as he can be.

Bulelani has arrived with his little brother, and he finds them greeting the ladies with hugs. That helps shift the attention from him to the guests.

Noma: There he is, I was getting worried about you. Is everything okay?

Ricardo: I am okay baby.

He kisses her cheek in assurance.

Naledi: Let me take you to your room and then I will get you something to eat.

She says to Bandile who follows after her, bumping into Joy going to the kitchen.

Meanwhile, Ricardo takes a seat after talking to Bulelani and he keeps looking at his phone as if waiting for a message. It feels like he saw his dead body after hearing the gunshots and it's these imaginations disturbing him.

Noma: (yawning) I should go to bed now. Naledi might wake up anytime from now to feed.

Bulelani: And that's why you should sleep when she sleeps.

Noma: (laughs) She sleeps way too early. I can't.

They both laugh as Naledi snr comes back. Noma turns to Ricardo who has been awfully quiet since he sat down.

Noma: Are you okay?

Ricardo: Yeah, I just feel tired.

Noma: I am going to bed. (stands on her feet) Good night fam.

Ricardo: I am coming now now.

She goes to her bedroom and Ricardo is left with Naledi and Bulelani.

Ricardo: (clears his throat) There is something I want to tell you.

Naledi: What's up?

Ricardo: Felix is dead.

Bulelani shifts uncomfortably but the two are focused on the matter at hand to notice him.

Naledi: Was he sick?

Ricardo: No, or that's not what killed him.

Naledi: What happened?

Ricardo: Wilson killed him, and he said I am next.

Bulelani: I need to go to the bathroom.

He gets up from the couch and goes to Naledi's bedroom.

Naledi: How... When did this happen?

Ricardo: When I moved to make a call. Felix had called and when I called him back he said they were there to kill him, and that I should tell you he never stopped loving you.

Naledi: Oh God! Joy.

Ricardo: Who is that?

Naledi: Philani's girlfriend. Wilson is looking for her too.

Ricardo: I am just glad my wife and baby are here with me.

Naledi: Don't answer any call he makes from now on because he might be trying to trace it.

Ricardo: Okay. Let me go before Noma comes looking for me.

Naledi: Okay, and I am sorry.

BULELANI HADEBE

The drive to here took its toll on him and is feeling exhausted. He had hoped him and Naledi would talk but it seems he is late seeing the news about Felix came early.

It's upsetting how they talked about Felix in his presence like he wasn't there. There was absolutely no need for Naledi to know that her ex-husband is dead, especially not in front of her man.

Anyway, he is tired too tired to be invested in this so he puts his phone on the bed and goes to take a shower. He didn't bring his bag from the car and Naledi doesn't have any male products in here. So he puts back on his t-shirt and goes out to the car.

Naledi gets into her bedroom and finds the water running from the shower. She gets in bed thinking Bulelani is in there and when his phone rings she decides to answer for him.

Naledi: Hello.

Voice: Hey babe, have you arrived in Limpopo?

She removes the phone from the ear, look at the screen and then puts it back.

Naledi: Bulelani's phone hello.

The person ends the call and she feels a lump blocking her throat.

Bulelani comes back and finds Naledi in bed, he goes and showers before joining her.

Bulelani: (trying to cuddle) Hey, can we talk?

Naledi: I am tired. I need to rest.

Bulelani: I won't take long.

Naledi: Talk to the person on your phone, we will talk in the morning.

He lets go of her and check his phone then sighs.

Bulelani: What did she say?

Naledi: Call her back and you will know.

She turns to the other side and closes her eyes. He gets off the bed and goes to the kitchen to return the call.

NALEDI MTHEMBU

THE NEXT DAY

No matter how strong you are there is just that one small thing that is going to hurt you in an unimaginable way. You will try to reason with yourself on why you shouldn't feel hurt but you will just be hurting yourself more.

The other thing is not knowing how to act during that time. For Naledi she knows the pain of losing someone to death

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she knows the pain of betrayal from friends and people she thought she might trust, but this one from the man she loves is a first.

She has a lot of questions and because it has weighed on her body, she's the last to wake up today.

Everyone is up and busy with whatever they have set for the day. Philani has gone to work, Bandile is working in his room, Noma is taking care of the baby, Ricardo is out to get more food, while Nathan and Refiloe can be heard working on something from behind the house.

Joy is in the kitchen making food when Naledi comes in. Bulelani comes from the front door and into the kitchen to get water.

Bulelani: Good morning.

Both: Morning.

Joy gives them space as her phone rings and she answers going outside.

Bulelani: How are you?

Naledi: I am okay.

Bulelani: I am sorry about the call.

Naledi: Okay.

Refiloe comes pacing toward them and hands his phone to Naledi.

Naledi: Hello.

“Ms. Mthembu, I am sorry to disturb you with calls but I need you to avail yourself for a meeting regarding Felix Delin.”

Naledi: What is this about?

“I am Mr. Delin’s lawyer and he had specifically told me to call you in case something happens to him, and last night he sent me a message to contact you as soon as I could because he is dying.”

Naledi: Okay, send me the location on this number.

“Thank you.”

He hangs up and she is left baffled at all this.

Bulelani: Is everything okay?

Naledi: Yes. Let me return this phone.

Bulelani: I am going to town, need something?

Naledi: No.

She turns to leave and Joy walks into the kitchen.

Joy: Sorry for eavesdropping, can I get a lift to town?

Bulelani: Sure.

Joy: Let me change into something.

Bulelani: I will be in the car.

JOY

Last night she overheard Naledi talking about Bulelani arriving and she contacted her father. The old man is already in Limpopo and just waiting for the plan to be executed.

The connections he made while in jail are paying off now because he just has to make a call and then things will happen.

One of his people has directed him to a dilapidated site where he can kill Bulelani in peace, and that is where Joy has to take him now.

She hasn't thought of how she is going to get him there, but hopefully she will think of something while they are on their way to town.

A few minutes after telling Bulelani that she is going to change, she comes out still dressed the same and gets into the car.

Bulelani: I thought you were going to change.

Joy: I received a call from home and-

She starts sniffing as if she is going to cry.

Joy: Just drive, I will be okay.

Bulelani: Okay, I am sorry.

He drives out and she smiles in between the sniffing.

Joy: Is there somewhere you have to be after town?

Bulelani: I'm coming straight here.

Joy: Can you do me a favour? There is a place Philani usually takes me when I am not feeling okay, I would like to go there and just cry it all out.

Bulelani: Where is this place?

Joy: I forgot the name but we were there not so long, it's out of town and away from people.

Bulelani: Okay, I will see if it's possible to do that.

Joy: Thank you.

To be continued...

PHILANI MTHEMBU

The plan when he left the house in the morning was to get some work done at the office, and then come back home. But when he arrived he was reminded about his meetings for the day, and right now he is in a meeting, far from the office and he is bored.

They are discussing new ways to get their business rolling and how they can merge other professions so they have a vast channel of income.

He puts in one or two words so they don't notice how bored he is, and then the meeting ends.

“It was nice meeting you guys, hopefully we will achieve more together if we keep uniting like this.”

One of the guys says as they shake hands and get ready to leave.

Philani: I am going to stay behind and get some food.

They all leave and he orders food and eats before going to his car in the parking.

He has to tell the family what he has gathered from Joy. He saw from the chats that Joy is Mr. Hadebe's daughter, and she is giving him information about the family which could mean Mr. Hadebe can and will pull a stunt soon.

Last night she was on the phone until he fell asleep and when he woke up to see who she was talking to, the chats were deleted together with the smss and phone calls.

They don't even have a spark in the bedroom anymore because she is always occupied on the phone. He just have to reverse the love he confessed to her if that's possible.

He sighs driving out of the parking and then heads straight home to have a chat with everyone. This is all weighing down on him, and had he been honest with them from the onset maybe this would have long been taken care of.

Everyone is around except Joy and Bulelani and he is asking himself if they are together wherever they are or maybe she has gone to meet with her father. If it's the latter then they should come up with a plan quickly.

He calls everyone to come join him in the garden because they have something serious to talk about.

Everyone comes and takes their seats and Noma is the last to arrive to the table because she was putting baby Lesedi in bed for a nap.

Philani: You don't have to be here.

Noma: I am okay.

They all look at her as if she is crazy but she doesn't move.

Noma: You should stop treating me like I am crazy. I am fine and I have someone who depends on me now so I have to be strong and it starts with this meeting.

Philani: Okay, without wasting any time. Joy is Bulelani's cousin.

Everyone: What?

Naledi: What is that supposed to mean?

Noma: Oh my God, does that mean he might come after us since he failed before? Oh God, my daughter.

Nathan: And this is why you weren't supposed to be here. Stop dramatic Noma.

Ricardo gives Nathan a disapproving look because it's his duty now to do what he is doing. But of course he won't say anything because Nathan has the right to reprimand his twin whenever and wherever.

Philani: I took her to Mpumalanga because her aunts had called her for a meeting with her father. She had never seen him until that day. I didn't get to see him while I was there, but I found their chats a few days ago on her phone.

Naledi: (hand on her forehead) What does this mean for us? Is she spying here or what?

Philani: I don't think she knows the deal between us and her father, so he might just be using her as a bridge to cross over without giving her the full information.

Naledi: She must leave this place immediately.

Philani: Or we can use her also. I mean if he comes here and finds that we have her, he might have to reconsider his plans. Where is she by the way?

Noma: I saw her leaving in Bulelani's car. He was with her.

Naledi: He said he is going to town.

Noma gets up and leave them. Ricardo follows but stops to say something.

Ricardo: I will be here if needed, you just tell me what I should do.

He follows after his wife.

Philani: I think you should call Bulelani and make sure he is safe.

Naledi: I'm on it.

She gets up and goes inside, bumping into Bandile.

Naledi: Hey.

Bandile: Why is everyone coming from the garden?

Naledi: We had a small meeting to discuss about something. I didn't call you cause I thought you are busy or sleeping.

Bandile: Okay. Where is my brother?

Naledi: He went to town.

Bandile: Okay.

She passes to her room and tries to call him but it rings unanswered.

Meanwhile

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Philani dials Joy's number and it shows that she is on a call. His heart is now pumping a little faster because he realise he might have been late with the information.

Refiloe: I have been thinking. If Joy is the daughter of this guy and she only got to see him now since birth, it might mean he doesn't care much about her.

Philani: I guess.

Refiloe: That is why he is using her to get to us or his nephew.

Philani: Where are you going with this?

Refiloe: If he doesn't care about her, then he can kill her. I mean he doesn't strike me like someone who leaves loose ends.

Philani: You might be onto something. I have to find Joy right now.

He quickly gets up the chair and runs inside the house.

JOY

They are in town getting whatever they are getting, each on their own. She cannot lure Bulelani by sex because he seems like he could leave her in the middle of nowhere if she dare acts somehow.

When she went into the house, she got a little something that will make him lose consciousness for a few minutes. And she is now getting them drinks so she can spike him.

Her phone rings while she is on the queue and she answers without checking who it is.

Joy: Hell-

Wilson: Where in Limpopo are you? I am approaching a town called Tzaneen and according to my research, that little boyfriend of yours resides somewhere this side.

His heart might have just fallen down now because that beat it skipped was enough to cause tremor.

Joy: What do you want?

Wilson: You.

Joy: Stop calling me.

Wilson: You know I will find you right? No matter where you go.

She hangs up and puts the drinks in the nearest basket then storms out of the shop.

Bulelani is already in the car when she arrives and she gets in and asks that they drive back home.

Her phone rings as he is about to start the car and it's her father.

Joy: Wait, let me take this I will be back.

She goes out of the car to the back of it and answers.

Joy: I am in town and that man who was after me just called to threaten me. He said he is approaching here and I think we should just let this whole thing go.

Mr. Hadebe: I wanted to do meet with him where there is no one else, but I guess I have to come to his place now. It's okay, go home. I will come.

Joy: Okay.

She hangs up and goes back in the car.

BULELANI HADEBE

As calm as he is when there are things that aren't making sense, he has the ability to also appear nonchalant.

Like now when Joy asked to take a call, he had been timing her to ask about the bottle she dropped in the car when they got her.

He is smart and he knows when there is trouble around him, and right now-he feels like he is being watched or something.

His phone rings from Naledi and he answers as Joy gets back in the car.

Bulelani: Hey.

Naledi: Are you with Joy?

Bulelani: Yes.

Naledi: Drive straight home, you might be in danger.

Bulelani: I knew it. I am driving out now.

Naledi: Don't stop for anything or anyone on the road. Even if she says she wants to do something along the road, do not stop the car until you get here.

Bulelani: I got it.

Naledi: Be safe. Bye.

Bulelani: Bye.

He hangs up and then puts the phone in its holder.

Bulelani: So, what did you want to buy cause you didn't bring anything from the shops?

Joy: I was just checking something.

Bulelani: Okay. Where are you from?

Joy: Pretoria.

Bulelani: I mean home.

She remembers that her father said she shouldn't give him much information about herself because he is smart.

Joy: I don't really know cause my mom and I used to stay in different places.

Bulelani: Where is she now?

Joy: She is abroad.

Bulelani: That means you come from a monied family huh?

Joy: Not really, she went with a man.

Bulelani: Your dad?

Joy: No I don't know my dad.

Bulelani: Sorry.

Joy: It's okay.

They talk until they arrive at home and she is the first to go out of the car. He calls her back and hands her the small bottle.

Bulelani: Be careful with such stuff next time, or you might end up being the one consuming them.

He flashes her smile and she paces to the house without looking back with her body shaking.

To be continued...

NALEDI MTHEMBU

She meets with Joy running up to Philani's room and then paces out to Bulelani's car and gets in.

Naledi: (hugging him) I am glad you are safe.

Bulelani: What is this all about?

She explains to him everything Philani told them and he feels his muscles tighten in anger. At least the car is dimmed and no one can see what's happening inside because he just punched the steering wheel in frustration.

Bulelani: She tried to poison me. I guess it was my last day on earth today.

Naledi: I am sorry.

Bulelani: She should leave this place.

Naledi: Philani suggested we keep her until the father grace us with his presence.

Bulelani: I can't believe this man. He kills my parents and then wants to kill me. What have we ever done to him except welcome him as the only father figure left in our lives?

Naledi: Unfortunately, we don't choose family.

Bulelani: Where is Bandile?

Naledi: He's in the house, check on him cause he was also asking about you.

Bulelani: Okay.

Naledi: I have to go back inside.

She opens the door to go out and he holds her arm.

Bulelani: I am sorry about the other thing.

Naledi: It's your business.

It feels like he was hit by wrecking ball straight on his chest and it left everything completely destroyed.

He holds his hand back and lets her get off before closing his eyes and leaning back on the seat.

Everyday feels like the last between them and it is all his fault. A moment of weakness is about to cost him a beautiful relationship.

The pain of realizing you have been faithful to someone who was going behind your back is unbearable. It's like "yeah, screw them cause I was good to them" but deep within you keep asking yourself why.

It doesn't matter how much you know your worth, knowing someone has been lying to your face is never an easy thing to forget. Like memories, it stays fresh in your subconscious waiting for the day you are going through a similar thing or maybe you have just been relaxing and then it comes back flooding.

As much as Naledi loves Bulelani and has been visualizing their future together, the picture has become blurry now for her. She

is only waiting for him to explain and then she can move on because there is no way she is going to tolerate cheating.

PHILANI MTHEMBU

He is with Joy in the bedroom and as always, she is on her phone chatting.

Philani: Who are you talking to?

Joy: My friends.

Philani: Can I see?

Joy: What? No!

Philani: Why?

Joy: Cause it's my phone.

He unlocks his and pushes it to her.

Philani: Exchange?

Joy: (standing up) I'm not doing this with you.

Philani: (aggressively) Sit down!

It startles her a bit and she slowly sits back on the bed.

Philani: Where did you get Bulelani's picture?

Joy: Who is Bulelani?

Philani: Naledi's man.

Joy: I don't have his picture and I don't know what you're talking about.

Philani: If another lie comes out of that mouth I am going to slap you. Where did you get Bulelani's picture?

Joy: (chuckles) Are you seriously going to shout at me while I am right next to you?

Philani: You are pissing me off with your lies and making a fool out of me.

She presses the phone deleting and archiving messages then hands it to him.

Philani: You think I am stupid huh?

Joy: I gave you what you want, what else do you want me to do?

He gets off the bed and walks toward the door then lock in and puts the key in his pocket.

Philani: You make drive you around like your chauffeur, running away from a mess you created and then want to come back and lie to me? I should not have brought you to this house because this is where my family is, but I thought I was helping you yet you are here lying to me and getting my family into trouble.

Joy: I don't know what you are talking about.

Philani: You don't know? I guess you really are your father's daughter.

He walks away with both their phones and then goes out the door.

Joy: How does my father feature in all this?

She is left talking to herself and then frustatedly sighs seeing her phone is not with her.

WILSON

Technology has been his best friend since he rose from the dead. It was the only way to keep track of the people he was hunting down without exposing himself, and today is no different as he has Mr. Hadebe's car on tracker.

Sometimes making friends of different people comes in handy when you need help. Had he not went back to Mpumalanga after that unsuccessful chase with Joy, he wouldn't have known who she was with in the car and he certainly wouldn't be here today.

All the vendor had to do was place a small component on Mr. Hadebe's wheel so it can give Wilson all the movements he makes, and he did exactly that.

“There is movement boss

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they are heading south.”

The message comes through his radio and then he smiles starting the car.

He is going to leave town with that girl's head tonight, together with her father's.

NATHAN

There has never been a need to install cameras around the yard since they no longer had real enemies. But right now he has to make sure everything is up to date so he can keep an eye on everyone coming in and going out of this yard.

He is busy on his computer setting everything up when Philani walks in looking stressed.

Philani: Hey man, how is it going?

Nathan: Very well.

Philani: (sits down) Look, I want to apologise for the other day. I didn't mean all those horrible things I said to you and about you.

Nathan: You meant every word at that moment, but I have learnt not to take things to heart or else I will murder someone one day. And you would not be apologising if this girl didn't turn out to be a scam, of which I warned you.

Philani: But still, I am sorry man.

Nathan: Apology accepted.

Philani: I asked her how she got hold of Bulelani's picture and she denied ever having his picture.

Nathan: Where is this picture?

He takes out his phone and search for the picture because he shared it then shows it to Nathan.

Nathan: That's the lobola day, he was wearing exactly like that.

Philani: That picture is only in Naledi's room.

Nathan: This girl is playing with fire.

Philani: (laughs) I can't believe I brought such a person into my family.

Nathan: That's a lifetime lesson.

Philani: Yeah.

They continue talking while Philani waits for any message that will come through Joy's phone.

LATER THAT NIGHT

NARRATED

The family has just had dinner and Joy had her eyes on her plate the whole time. Nathan was in the computer room to check at the cameras and now that he is coming down to wash his plate, Refiloe takes over.

Naledi: Anything yet?

Nathan: Nothing. Is everything in place?

Naledi: Yes. I have placed protective gears in every room.

Nathan: How is Noma?

Naledi: She is okay and has been holding on to her gun since the evening.

Nathan: You gave her a gun?

Naledi: I did no such thing, I don't know where she got it but it looks the same as ours.

Nathan: I hope she doesn't shoot one of us in mistake.

Naledi: (chuckles) Come on, she's just fragile but she knows how to use a gun.

Philani: Who knows how to use a gun?

He walks into the kitchen carrying some dishes.

Naledi: Noma.

Philani: Yes she does. Remember I was the one taking shooting classes with her.

Naledi: Nathan thinks she is going to shoot one of us in mistake.

Philani: Worry not, she won't do no such thing. Where will baby Naledi be this whole time?

Noma: Right here.

She walks in carrying the baby on her back.

Naledi: Noma no, you cannot do that.

Ricardo: I have been trying to talk to her, she will not listen.

Naledi: Rather put her in one of the secret rooms or something.

Noma: And if we have to run, will have time to fetch her or she will be left behind?

They all keep quiet and look at her.

Naledi: No one is going to run away from here. This is our home.

Noma: My baby is safe with me.

She walks away and right then they hear a window breaking.

Bulelani comes rushing with Bandile and they all stand in the kitchen while Nathan goes to check on Refiloe.

Naledi: I think it's we get ready. Philani your stuff are in Nathan's room. Bandile you're coming with me.

Refiloe comes rushing to them.

Refiloe: No one has made entry but I think they are watching from somewhere. We have to kill the lights.

Naledi: Let's change and meet in here before we switch everything off.

Everyone goes their direction saying a little prayer in their hearts.

To be continued...

WILSON

The thing about village buildings is that you cannot easily flank a house in time of war because there are no streets in between. Right now Mr. Hadebe's people are parked a few metres from this beautiful double storey house, and he is forced to park way far from him on the same street.

There are no street lights so it is dark out here but there is lighting from the neighbours, and cars are also passing by which makes it a little bit easier to see at a distance.

His backup is on the way so they should be done in a few minutes and get out of this place.

Wilson: One of us has to go see what's happening.

The guy he is with opens the door to go out but is forced back in by the flood of cars that passes by and stops right at the gate.

A man can be seen walking out of Mr. Hadebe's car to the ones that just arrived, and in a few seconds heavily armed men starts flocking out of the cars.

Some of the cars are even turning back, afraid to pass by the gate in fear of being shot.

Wilson: (whistles) Shit is about to go down.

He dials Joy's number but it goes to voicemail.

Wilson: I just wanted to tell you to warn your little boyfriend.

He puts the phone back in his pocket and they watch the movie unfolds while waiting for the others.

NALEDI MTHEMBU

They have been sitting in silence waiting to hear something, or see something after Nathan told them what is happening outside the gate.

Naledi: I need everyone to be safe out there, these people don't care about us and they will shoot to kill. None of them knows this yard more than us, if they get in we give them a runaround until they are all dead. We have done this many times back in the day, we can still do it again.

Bulelani's phone rings and he answers putting the phone on his ear before switching it to loudspeaker.

Mr. Hadebe: I am only here for one person and that's my nephew. Please come out and spare your extended family's lives. I will give you a minute to come out unarmed or we are going to kill everyone.

They hear the gate being dismantled and the alarm goes on, then off.

Mr. Hadebe: I also have my technology people here with me, don't try to be smart.

He hangs up and everyone is just dead quiet.

Naledi: He won't let us live after we witness what happens to you. You are not going out there.

Bulelani: Let me go while you find a way to fight back. We don't know how many they are out there and maybe if I go I can let you all know what is happening.

She hesitately look at him and it kind of feels good to know she still cares.

Naledi: (swallows) Okay, Philani bring your girlfriend.

He goes and brings her to the dining area. One has to go and see what is happening or they might be taken by surprise when everything happens, so if Bulelani has to go then he is going with the person who made all this possible.

Naledi: You are going out with her on your side. She is the cause of all this.

Joy: (crying) I am sorry, I didn't know he was going to do this.

Naledi: Yet you lied about everything cause he is your father? Go face him now so we can see if he really is a father.

Bulelani takes off his protective gear that is on the outside and then leaves the one inside and takes Joy's hand while she cries and kicks her legs.

Joy: Philani you said you love me, how can you allow them to do this to me?

They go all the way out while everyone watches and then straight to the gate.

NARRATED AT THE GATE

Bulelani appears where there is light and two guards appear from the sides and search him before giving his uncle a thumbs up.

Mr. Hadebe: I see you have met your cousin, what a small world.

Bulelani: I am here, what do you want?

Mr. Hadebe: I am good thanks, and you nephew?

Bulelani rolls his eyes and sighs.

Bulelani: If you are going to kill me just do it already.

Mr. Hadebe: Oh no, I will do no such thing. One of the people inside will do it for me.

A window breaks and he hears screaming from the inside. Another guard comes out holding Bandile by his side of the jean.

Mr. Hadebe: You know everything was going fine

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there was no need for you to search for your parents' killers.
You had other people.

Bulelani: Your day is coming.

Mr. Hadebe: Oh please, we both know you are incapable of killing me. Anyway, let's get this done and over with.

He pulls Bandile to his side and takes a gun from one of his guys.

Mr. Hadebe: Do you know how to use a gun?

Bandile: (shaking his head) No.

Mr. Hadebe: I am going to teach you tonight.

He checks the bullets and hands it over to Bandile.

Mr. Hadebe: Aim it at your brother, hold it steady and pull the trigger. Make sure you have balanced on the ground cause mistakes happen.

Bandile refuses to take the gun and he slaps him across the face.

Mr. Hadebe: You were able to open old women's legs but can't pull a trigger, what kind of a man are you? This world is not kind to anyone and this is one of the skills you are going to need if you want a family. Now hold the gun.

He shakes his head crying and the uncle punches him a few times on his ribs until he falls to the ground. Bulelani is watching the whole time with Joy by his side also crying.

Wilson decided to go through the neighbours so he can access the house and right now they have jumped into the yard with six of his guys.

He gives them orders with the hands on which direction they should go and they part ways. It's pretty much simple to blend in with the other guys because they are all wearing black.

Refiloe is on the roof when he spots them doing rounds behind the house and he takes out two before everyone scatters around the yard.

Bulelani has a small piece of metal wrapped on his wrist, and because he is wearing a jacket they didn't feel it when searching him.

He presses it, counting the guards and it sends the signal to Naledi who informs everyone in the house.

Bandile had hid behind the couch when they heard the window breaking and so he was found alone hence they took him.

Mr. Hadebe: I am going to hand this gun over to you for the last time. If you don't take it, I will shoot you. Now take it.

Bandile takes the gun, still crying and visibly in pain. He aims it at his brother, puts his finger on the trigger and looks straight at his brother's face.

He pulls the trigger and the bullet goes searing into Joy's skin as Bulelani quickly pulled her to shield himself.

She drops dead on the ground and in a split second Bulelani has Bandile on his back, shooting with the gun that just killed Joy while looking for cover.

Naledi and Ricardo comes out to help, meeting with Wilson's guards right at the front door and a fight ensues.

With the chaos going on out there, Refiloe is able to access the balcony and starts shooting from there with his sniper rifle.

One of Wilson's guy talks over the radio that the girl is dead but now they cannot leave the party because it just got lit.

NOMA SIBANDA

She has been hiding in the bedroom all this while and hearing the gunshots sounds has brought back memories she would like to erase from her mind.

The bedroom door opens after she has just closed the closet room where she put baby Naledi, and Wilson walks in.

He switches on the light so they can see each other clearly and she folds her hands looking at him.

Wilson: Oh, I didn't expect to find you here.

Noma: Welcome.

Wilson: I won't kill you cause I know you are already damaged and just a little puppy. I am looking for your husband.

Noma: He might be outside, I don't really know.

Wilson: I see your family is out there fighting for you while you hide, as always. Anyway, let me go find my old friend Ricardo.

He smiles cynically and turns around to leave, then turns back to say something but is met with a bullet straight to his heart.

Noma: Guess I'm a full grown dog now Mr. Wilson.

He drops on the ground and Philani comes running to the room. He finds her still holding on the gun pointed toward the door.

Philani: Whoa! It's me, I saw him coming here and I thought he shot you.

Noma: I am alive.

They hear Naledi screaming from the outside.

Naledi: Nathan's been shot!

To be continued...

NARRATED

The yard is filled with dead bodies and those who managed to escape have escaped. Once again the family is left to pick up the pieces and this time it includes another funeral.

Nathan has succumbed to his injuries and is lying dead on the dining area floor. Noma is crying on top of his lungs and so is her baby. Ricard tries to take the baby away but the two are clinging on each other, crying hysterically.

No one is saying anything except for Bulelani who is calling people who can clean the mess before it gets out of hand.

You can see the pain in everyone's eyes. Philani and Refiloe have tears sinking their eyeballs and Bandile is still traumatised from shooting someone. He hasn't really come back to life.

Bulelani: I think I should go check the damage done to the house so I know what and where to repair. The cleaners will be here soon and someone will also come fetch Nathan's body.

Naledi: Thank you.

The words come out as a whisper and he swallows then excuses himself and goes to the back of the house when he cries silently because it hurts. Everything brings memories of his parents' and sister's death. No matter how many loved ones you bury; you can never get used to the feeling. Every time it happens feels like the first time.

Nathan was a great guy, the computer guru and friendly to everyone. He cannot imagine what everyone in that room is feeling and he really hopes Naledi will be okay because she is the one who saw the bullets go through him, she's the one who held on to him until his last breath.

He wipes his tears and goes on to inspect while pushing time for the cleaners to arrive.

A FEW WEEKS LATER
NALEDI MTHEMBU

The funeral went well and Nathan was buried in the most dignified way. Community members came in numbers to support and have something to gossip about. But everything went well and the family did their ritual for after funeral.

Today is the day she has to go back to Jo'burg, and the realisation that she is never going to see Nathan ever again is unbearable.

She zips her bag and as she is about to walk out of the room, Noma knocks once then lets herself in.

Noma: I heard that you are leaving?

Naledi: Yes, I have to go back and take care of things.

Noma: How are you?

Naledi: I will live. That's all that matters.

Noma: Be fine, and if you want to talk I'm here.

Naledi looks at her surprised.

Noma: You have been carrying us on your shoulders since from the beginning. I am only starting to see how it must have felt, and I want to help in any way I can.

Naledi: (tearfully) It hurts, I don't want to lie. But I also feel like I have to remain strong for everyone. We all have purposes and mine is to protect the ones I love, so whenever I fail to do that it hurts.

Noma goes over and hugs her, caressing her back while she tells her it will be fine.

They break the hug and she wipes Naledi's tears with her fingers.

Noma: I love you, we all do and we appreciate everything you ever did for us.

Naledi: Thank you.

Noma: Safe travels.

She leaves her and goes back to her room then Naledi takes her bags heads to the door.

Bulelani is already gone and everyone else is staying behind for the time being. But Philani is not here and neither is his car.

They say their goodbyes and she gets into her car and drives off.

BULELANI HADEBE

The workshop has been keeping him busy since he came back from Limpopo after the funeral. He has accomplished a lot, and is looking forward to do more to keep his mind at rest.

Naledi just texted that she is at the house. He didn't know she was coming back today and seeing it's in the evening, she might have left home early.

He still doesn't know what to expect from her after what she found out, but he is hoping she won't leave him for this one mistake.

She is sitting by the kitchen counter when he arrives, holding a glass of wine in her hand and sipping while checking the time.

Bulelani: Hey, I didn't know you are coming back today.

Naledi: I arrived last night.

Bulelani: Oh!

Naledi: I was hoping we could talk

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now that we are back here.

Bulelani: Let me just take these off and then I am all yours.

She nods and he goes to his bedroom to change. When he opens the closet he finds it half empty on the side where there was their clothes.

It's only when he sees the bags missing that he realises what's going on, and his heart starts beating fast. She is leaving him!

He quickly changes and goes back to her pretending to not be hurting.

Naledi: Where is Bandile?

Bulelani: I am not sure, but he might be at his therapy session.

Naledi: Okay.

She gets off the chair, pour another drink and then goes and sits on the couch. Bulelani only takes water and joins her.

Naledi: I came to make sure none of us is left with questions after everything is done and dealt with. I don't even want to know her or when you met, I just want to let you know that I will not break the promise I made to myself. I love you, but I love myself more to recognise when I am being disrespected and when I should end that disrespect. Now my question is, did you sleep with her?

Bulelani: Yes.

Naledi: Without protection?

Bulelani: With.

Naledi: And did you also come back and sleep with me on the very same day?

Bulelani: No, I didn't.

Naledi: Okay. I took my things from here because I will be moving back to my house. Divorcing you will take a lot of time, and I don't have the energy now but I would love to remain separated from you. That means you don't come to my house for any reason. I also won't be coming here anymore.

Bulelani: Isn't there another way we can work this out? I don't want to be separated from you.

Naledi: You have no say in what you want or don't want right now. This is what I want as a result of you having done what you wanted so it's a 50/50 now.

She gets on her feet, down the remaining contents of her glass and puts it back on the table.

Naledi: I will see you when I see you.

She walks out to her car and starts the car. He wants to go out there and beg her not to do this but his phone rings and it's the other woman.

Bulelani: What do you want? I told you to stop calling me.

Her: I am pregnant.

PHILANI MTHEMBU

Nathan's death came because of him, or maybe it was his time but it was the results of his actions after he told him not to be with Joy.

He should have listened to him, he should not have gone out of his way to help a stranger he had just met because she is a woman. If he wanted to spend life with her he could have told her to fix whatever issue she had, then come back when she is single and not in trouble.

But he is here now to fix things. He drove here to bring Joy's things but also find her father so he can put an end to this.

He arrived late last night then came here in the morning to bring the stuff and asked where Mr. Hadebe stays. Fortunately, they told him he will be coming later on and he just drove through the gate now.

Philani checks the coast to see who he came with, and tonight must be his lucky day because he is driving alone.

He puts on his balaclava and gloves then takes his gun fitted with a silencer and goes to the car.

It's a bit dark and of course the old man didn't lock the car because he is doing an in and out kind of visit.

He opens the car door behind the drivers' seat then gets in.

Another car comes behind and parks then one of Mr. Hadebe's guards comes out and rushes inside the yard.

“Someone brought her phone and a few clothes this morning. It was my first time seeing that boy but he said he was her friend.”

Mr. Hadebe: Did he tell you his name?

The old women shake their heads as the guard comes in and whispers in Mr. Hadebe's ear.

Mr. Hadebe: I have to rush somewhere, I will be back.

He stands up following after the guard.

Mr. Hadebe: What does his tracker say? I can't believe we are only being told now when he has entered our place. Who are you with in the car?

Him: I'm alone.

Mr. Hadebe: Go fetch the others, we will meet on the main road.

The guy gets back in the car and drives off. Mr. Hadebe starts the car and drives away until he reaches where Philani parked.

He feels a cold metal on his neck from behind and instantly kills the engine.

Philani takes off the balaclava and looks up the mirror for him to see who he is.

He doesn't wait for any word to come out of his mouth but shoots him twice and waits until he is no longer breathing, and then gets off and gets into his car before driving off.

THE END!

