

Chapter 271  
Senamile Madlala

I wanted us to be with her in labour, holding her hand but Lwazi's head is hard like cement these days. I won't see her when she arrives, I'm in the waiting area with Lwazi and Quinton.

"Did you call your mother?" I ask.

"I will call her"

Sigh!

"Lwazi you need to call her, we need a name from Hope" I say.

"When she has given birth we will call. There is no rush"

I hold my peace. I don't want us to fight, not now. We've been fighting like mouse and cat ever since Zenande came. I'm glad she is giving birth, there will be some peace.

Quinton is carrying a teddy bear, it's a 'welcome' gift to his sister. I'm a little bit scared, sleepless nights and diaper changing again. But I'm happy, Jay must be smiling in heaven. I hope he guide us and protect his daughter. Our best gift ever.

My mother? What is she doing here?

"I called them" Lwazi say before I can ask.

Them? Shweet my father is also here. I appreciate their support, I was going to call them when she has given birth. No shade but the Biyela drama is the last thing I need right now.

"Mrs Madlala why didn't you tell us?" Dad ask.

"I planned to call you later" I say.

"Have you decided on the name?" Mom ask.

"Her aunt will name her"

"Your aunt want you to name her Lydia"

I laugh out loud.

"Umhlola!" I say shaking my head.

The doctor walk to us with a smile on his face. My heart start dancing. I'm a mother again.

Lwazi scoop Quinton. Him and my father share a look. I wonder what's going on between them.

"Mr and Mrs Madlala" he say.

"Has she given birth?" I ask agitated.

"Yes, a healthy baby girl. She weigh 2.9kg"

Wow! I hug Lwazi happily. We follow the doctor. This is the last day of long nails. Hello diaper changing!

"Where is she?" I ask the frozen Zenande.

Oh there comes the nurse with the princess wrapped in a pink blanket.

"Oh my God!" I whisper covering my mouth.

"Nurse don't give her" Zenande say out of the blue.

The nurse stand confused.

"Nurse" Lwazi say taking the baby from the nurse.

She clear her throat, "Congratulations"

"Oh my word, can I see her?"

Lwazi is now acting like this is his daughter alone.

"Baba" he call my father.

"No ways" Dad say making his way to him.

Am I supposed to snatch this baby from him? I take her, by force but slowly.

"Hello pretty...."

Wtf! The baby is darker than Akon.I keep blinking thinking when I look again she will at least have sharp nose.Not a single trace of Jason from her.Even if she took after her mother the complexion would've been diluted.

My knees get weaker.Lwazi quickly take the baby from me.

"What's this?" I ask faintly.

"I told you guys I wasn't carrying Jason's baby"

I see double of everything.I feel my soul leaving my body.

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I open my eyes and look around.I'm on the hospital bed,there is a tube connected to my arm.

The baby! I don't understand.

"Sena" it's Lwazi's voice.

"No Lwazi"

"How are you feeling?" he ask.

"Where is Zenande?"

"Baby how are you? Forget about Zenande" he say.

I open a tap of salty water, "Lwazi where is she?"

"They are transferring her to Groote Schuur.Your father requested it"

What???

"Lwazi she can't leave" I say.

"That's not Jason's baby.The girl played us.Jason was too desperate,so were you.Desperate people always get played"

He is rubbing salt to fresh wounds.How can Zenande do this to me? To Jason?

He wanted to have a baby.She kept him from other options by deceiving him.How can she be so heartless?

I wipe the tears, "This girl need to pay"

"How? She didn't rob you,you and Jason gave her the money"

"She robbed us because she lied.I'm opening a case against her and her mother"

He hold my hand, "My love this was not a legal process, it might come back to bite us"

"Okay but I'm going to kill her" I say taking out the syringe in my arm.

"Sena!" he warns.

"No, she will pay.This is my family she played"

The nurse walk in and ask me to lie on bed and drink some pills.

"No I want to see that bitch first" I say.

"Baby we will deal with her, right now she is not in the right state"

I let out a chuckle, "I don't care Lwazi"

I make my way out.He follow behind me.I find the nurse helping her with her bag.I bought this bag and everything inside.I grab it and throw it away.

"Senamile!"

The nurse stand infront of her, shielding her.I don't want to put my hands on the nurse.I beg her to stay out of the way.

"You cannot attack the patient Mrs Madlala"

This is a scammer not a patient!

I take my shoe out and throw it at her.She is now crying...tears of joy.

Lwazi grab me from behind.I fight to break off but his grip is too tight.I look like a madwoman.

"Babe let's go home" he pull me out.

"No Lwazi, I want to deal with her"

Now there is attention on us. I know how much Lwazi hate being the center of attention but I can't let this girl get away with this.

"Let's go Sena" he say letting go of my arm.

I break free and return back inside the ward. This time he doesn't follow me, he leaves.

The security guards hold me before I can reach to her. Biyela walk in and pull me out. I'm crying all the way to the parking.

"Stop crying Quinton is in the car" he say.

I wipe the tears. I don't know what I'm going to tell him. He was excited about having a little sister.

Mom have him on her lap. He don't ask much questions except his daddy. The rest of the journey is quiet. I'm holding back a river of tears.

They drop me off and take Quinton with them. As soon as I close the door I let tears flow.

I go to the bedroom and lie on bed. Just like that my dreams have been shattered.

He walk out of the bathroom. He only have a towel wrapped on his waist. He don't look like someone who just had his heart broken.

He just clear his throat and dress up.

I lift my head up, "How are you so fine?"

Silence.

"Lwazi why are you okay?" I ask again.

He put his jacket on and tie his shoe laces. He is going somewhere.

"Where are you going?" I ask.

"It's none of your business"

"Excuse me" I say shocked.

He make his way to the door. I jump off bed and run after him.

"Lwazi" I call.

I stand in front of him. His eyes are burning with anger.

"Where are you going?" I ask.

"Please move out of the way"

I exhale, "Now you are being childish. Why don't you talk to me?"

"And say what?"

He push me out of the way and walk on. I stand with my arms folded.

"If you leave don't come back" I yell.

"If you don't want to see me coming back pack your bags and go home"

Whaaaat? My eyes pop out.

"Lwazi!" I follow him again.

He stop and look at me. I don't know what I did to him.

"You are the most annoying, stupid person I know. Yet you act like you know everything"

My ears are deceiving me. I'm stupid and annoying?

"What did I do?" I ask tears escaping.

"I'm tired of you. You are standing me here" he point his neck.

What did I do to him?

He walk out.

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241 Comments

6 Shares

## Chapter 272

Fikile Biyela

It's already dark when I get to Inkandla. After Aunt Lydia cancelled the wedding I took Anga and our bags and left Durban. If I knew Aunt Lydia would be a run-away bride I would've gone to the funeral instead of putting make-up for nothing.

Anga has been sleeping half of the journey. He just opened his eyes and saw the unfamiliar place.

"Mommy where are we?" he ask.

"We are in Daddy's home"

Confusion dwell on his face. He didn't know his father have another home. The houses aren't familiar to him, he is asking why the houses are round.

Nobody is expecting us. There is a tent in the middle of the yard, there is still commotion going on. There are drunkards finishing umqombothi near the kraal. Lungile and some other girls are washing dishes in front of the kitchen.

I get off the car with Anga and take our bags. I'm not married yet, so I cannot just roam in the yard. I go straight to Skhumbuzo's house.

"Mommy!!" he is standing in the middle, looking around like he is in a foreign country.

I lift him and put him on bed.

"This is your home Anga" I tell him.

"Nooooo"

I laugh out loud. I shouldn't be laughing, there was a funeral a few hours ago.

I take my phone and call Sthelo. He come within minutes. Sadness is written all over his face.

"How are you?" I ask.

He shrug his shoulders and say he is fine. He greet Anga with a fist bump.

"Dawg"

"Hello" reply the Pretoria cheesy boy, Anga.

I have to address this 'dawg' term. Is he a gangster now? Skhumbuzo is going to faint.

"Where is Dad?" he ask me.

What kind of a question is this?

"He is here" I say hesitantly.

"Uncle Nceba and mkhulu are looking for him, he is not here"

My heart start racing. I quickly dial Nceba's number. It rings unanswered.

Wtf is going on?

Lungile walk in with a tray of food. She waste no time, hey.

"Sanibonani" she greet.

"Luh where is Skhumbuzo?" I ask.

She look at Sthelo, disappointed. I keep my eyes on her, I want to know.

"We don't know where he is, but I trust he is fine where he is. He probably wanted some air, today was hard on us" she say.

"When did he disappear?" I ask.

"Around 4pm"

Jesus! I check the time, it close to 7pm now. What kind of air is he looking for?

"Relax, Nceba will find him" she say.

I exhale and sit on bed. My mind start roaming. What if he end up like Nqubeko too?

She pass a glass of juice and tell me to drink. I take few sips, I can't stomach it.

"Let's go to the kitchen, you need to keep your mind busy"

She is right, sitting like this will drive me more crazier. What is it with these Nkosi guys with disappearing with no trace? They are making it a trend.

Wait where is Anga???

"Luh where did Anga and Sthelo go?" I ask.

I'm panicking.

"They walked out, maybe they are in Aunt's house"

I get on my feet. She is going to poison Anga. I didn't want him to leave my side for that reason.

"He can't be there" I say.

"Huh?"

Now she is faking confusion, she knows how wicked her aunt is. I make my way out.

Gawd! I'm not allowed to enter MaMvelase's house. I stand in the middle of the yard and call Sthelo. He don't pick up, I'm being tested.

"Is this Fikile?" a voice come behind me.

I know it's Bab' Mzingelwa. This is what I get for dating a neighbour guy.

"Baba" I say turning around to look at him.

"What are you doing here?"

Here we go!

"I just came, to bring Nceba's son" I say.

"Hhayi bo why didn't they fetch him themselves?" he ask.

"Baba really?"

I can't believe he is still treating him like a boyfriend. He paid lobola for goodness' sake.

"Does Muzi know that you are here?" he ask.

I can't deal with him. I know there will be consequences if I disrespect him but I do it anyway, I have to find Anga. I don't have time to explain myself.

"Baba I have to go" I say and walk away without listening to his English curses. Deshetons and swineful.

I bumb to a little figure running to the opposite direction.

"Mah" it's Mfundi.

"Hey baby, where is Anga? Uncle Nceba's son?"

"He is with us" he say.

"Who are you with?" I ask.

"Just us, the guys"

They are guys??? I'm relieved though.

"Oh.. I'm going to the kitchen, come sit in your father's house and watch a movie on his laptop"

He is not a typical child that get excited by electronics or toys. He walk back to call others.

"Is this Muzi's daughter?"

Urgh! Dad's hommies can be exhausting. I pretend as if I didn't hear him and walk past.

They come and crowd on bed. I give them Skhumbuzo's laptop and give Anga food.

"Sthelo call me if you guys need anything" I say and make my way out.

I've never seen so many dirty dishes before. Were they not washing a pile of them when I arrived?

"Can you wash dishes?" one of the girls ask.

I look at her, slightly offended.

"Yes" I say.

Washing the dishes is easy. The pots are a problem. I think I'm going to break my nails, and these girls would laugh. Their eyes are monitoring every move I make.

It's around 9pm when we finish everything.I'm so tired,I feel like my joints are breaking.Sthelo told me Anga will be sleeping with them.I'm not comfortable with it,but I trust MaMvelase is still mourning Nqubeko's death.She has no time to mix rattex and battery.

Reality strike as soon as I enter, he is not here.I plug water and prepare my bath.While bathing I hear loud voices,in them I recognise Nceba's.He is shouting, he is drunk again. I sit on bed and wait.I had hoped he was with Nceba,but he is not.I don't want to cry yet.I keep praying by heart.

My eyes are half closed when the door opens.He nearly faint when he see me on bed.He is wearing dirty black boots and long brown coat.

"MaBiyela" he say after clearing his throat a number of times.

I sit up and lean on the headboard.

"Skhumbuzo where are you coming from?" I ask.

He don't answer my question,

"When did you arrive here?"

I exhale, "In the afternoon,Aunt Lydia cancelled the wedding"

He plug water and start undressing.I notice a gun on his waist.

"Where were you?" I ask,more steadily.

"I went to fetch Dalizwe"

Now I have to dig who this Dalizwe is,and why he left without telling anyone.

"And???" I say.

"Fikile you don't like these things"

"Which things?" I ask.

"The muthi stuff"

Oh gawd no!

"Skhumbuzo"

He exhale, "I may not be able to find my brother's killers,but they have to pay.One way or another"

"So what did you do?" I ask.

"We went to his grave and gave him the weapon,he will fight for himself.He knows who killed him"

I don't even want to know how they gave a burnt skeleton a weapon.Sometimes things get too much for me.I slid under covers and save my breath.

"I'm not bewitching anyone" he say,desperate for approval.

"Yeah" I keep 'whatever' under breath.

I wish I can fall asleep immediately,but my sleep is on strike.I listen to the sound of water splashing against his body.

I wonder how he is, about this whole situation.Nqubeko is dead, Nceba is becoming a drunkard.It's not easy.

"Anga is here" I tell him.

"Thanks"

Right now is not the time,I can be mad at him any day,just not today.

"Do you want me to lotion your back?" I ask.

"No, I'm fine"

I wait for him to get on bed.We cannot be intimate since he is still mourning,but I can cuddle him to sleep.

I've never lost a sibling so I don't know how it feels like,but looking at his eyes right now I know it's the most devastating thing.

"How are you?" I ask.

"I'm fine" he say.  
Pity his face is saying the opposite.  
"Everything is going to be okay sthandwa sami" I don't know how, I'm just comforting him.  
"Can I hold you?" he ask.  
I drop my eyelids, "Babe"  
He pull me to his chest and squeeze me tightly.I can hardly breath,but if this is bringing him warmth then it's fine.  
"It's hard to accept that I will never see him again" he say.  
"It's going to be alright my love"  
He squeeze me tighter,his warm breath flush over my shoulder.  
"He loved Zanda, I denied him the chance.He could've died a happy man" his voice is breaking.  
I run my fingers on his back, "Babe don't say that, it's God's plan"  
"I miss him already, my life will never be the same without him.Yes he was not perfect but he was my brother,God could've waited, he was about to change"  
I push and break from his tight embrace.I take his face in my hands and stare at his eyes.  
"Babe let him rest in peace.I know I'm not Nqubeko, neither is Nceba or your sons.But please let him rest in peace, he wanted you to be happy.Take care of your family,like he would've wanted you to.Honour his fighting spirit and fight to keep the Nkosis together"  
He take a deep breath, "I'm lost Fikile, I don't know where to start"  
"Start by saving Nceba from your mother,before it's too late"  
His hand grab my butt.He is staring at me with his jaws clenched.  
"He have his imperfections but he is good guy and a great father.You will lose a good brother to alcohol Skhumbuzo" I say.  
He smash his lips on me and kiss me like his life depend on it.  
"Okay I will" he say.  
I smile, "I love you,and I feel your pain"  
His hand is skimming all over me.I think he might break the mourning rules.

Chapter 273  
Senamile Madlala

I'm alone.Nobody understand how I feel,it's like nobody cares.I expected support,the same amount of support that was given to Fikile,Simtho and Ziphe when they lost their babies.But it's different for me,my father is expecting me to be at work.My mother calls and talk like everything is okay.  
My sisters are trying,but the only way they know is cheering me up with lame jokes and wine.Yes I wasn't pregnant,but I was expecting.  
Isn't that the same thing? It should be,it amount to the same pain.I lost a damn child.I have a nursery that I look at every day.Clothes,little pink dresses and hair bands.I have a picture in my head, a picture of me holding a little girl.A picture of Jason crying,disappointed and broken into thousand pieces.

"No way in hell, we need to get that bitch. Cape Town is not abroad" that's what Zethu wanted.

The money I lost is the last thing on my mind. It didn't leave a dent in my bank account. The truth about the pregnancy is what left a dent in my heart. Each day that passes by pass with a piece of me.

He walks in, there is no ounce of pain in his eyes. He asks if I'm going to the movies with him and Quinton. Everything is normal to him.

"No" I say.

"It's not fair on Quinton, you can't be depressed over a baby that wasn't yours and neglect your son"

He is like everyone else, he doesn't understand what I'm going through. In fact he is happy, this is his dream come true.

"I'm not going to the movies Lwazi" I say.

"Fine" he says and walks out.

Five hours later they are still not back. I've tried Lwazi a number of times on the phone, it goes straight to voicemail. I'm starting to panic.

I go to make coffee and wait on the kitchen stool. Seconds turn to minutes, minutes turn into hours. Right now time reads 10:22pm, my palms are sweating.

I know Sbu is bedroomically busy right now but I need help urgently. I call him, luckily he picks up.

"Mmm Sena ay!" that's how he answers.

"Hey brother I need help, I don't know where Lwazi is with Quinton" I say.

"You are his wife, if you don't know how would I know?"

He sounds annoyed. Maybe I disturbed a blow job.

"His phone is off Sbu, I'm worried sick" I say.

"Okay give me ten minutes"

Ten minutes feel like hours. He is not getting back to me, I don't know what's taking him so long.

He sends a text; **\*\*He is on his way\*\***

I sigh in relief and return back to the bedroom. Lwazi has a lot explaining to do. He knows Quinton's bed time.

I hear Quinton's bedroom door opening. They are here, Quinton is probably asleep right now.

He walks on me sitting on bed with my phone on the lap. I have a dead expression on my face.

"Why are you still up?" he asks.

"Where are you coming from Lwazi with my child?"

I'm fuming, I feel hot air coming out my nostrils.

"If you came with us you would've known where we are coming from" he says, not bothered one bit.

"Lwazi what time is it now? I was worried sick. And why was your phone off?" I ask.

He takes his clothes off and walks to the bathroom without responding to any of the questions.

I go to check on my son. He is fast asleep, fully clothed. I don't want to wake him up, it's already late. I kiss him and return to the bedroom.



The shower is still running. I'm happy they are back, we will resolve everything in the morning even though I'm mad at him.

I'm about to doze off when he gets on bed. His hands are cold, I yank them off.

"You don't want me to touch you?" he asks.

"Your hands are cold Lwazi"

He holds my waist again, "Who is supposed to keep me warm kanti?"

I sigh and cover him with my arms.

"I miss you" he says planting a kiss on my lips.

The last couple days have been emotional draining for me, I couldn't engage in sexual acts.

"I miss you too, I wish I had your support" I say.

He doesn't care about me needing his support. His hand is skimming around my butt.

"Are you still on the pill?"

Wow! I can't believe him. He is like a lightning that was waiting to strike.

"It may not mean anything to you but I'm still broken. I'm still hurting, for me and for your late brother who has been betrayed" I say.

He exhales, "Sena, I want a baby"

"Can't you wait Lwazi until I emotionally recover?" I snap at him.

I mean how insensitive can one person be?

"I don't understand you Sena, I really don't"

My eyes widen, "I'm the one who doesn't understand you. You didn't want to raise your brother's child from the start. Now that there is no baby, you are rejoicing you don't care he has been betrayed. This was his last wish"

"I'm not rejoicing Sena, I don't care. Nobody told me about raising his baby until he was dead. I didn't even know he wanted to have a baby. I wanted my own baby, I told you and begged you but you went behind my back and made deals with my brother. Trust me I felt betrayed too, by you and him. How can he go over my head and make deals with my wife? Deals that concern both of us"

I sit up, "Wow! That's how you feel? I'm shocked Lwazi"

"You shouldn't be, I'm being a big baby as usual" he says.

"So you hate Jason?" I ask.

"No, he was my little brother and that's how I expected him to be. My little brother. I expected him to respect me and my marriage, to see me as his big brother and talk to me"

I let out a chuckle, "You are mad because he talked to me instead of you?"

"See it how you want to see it" he says and switches the lamp off.

"I want to understand you Madlala, I really do but I don't. What is your problem?" I say lying down.

"I don't have a problem, I just want to have a baby"

I sigh, "Can you give me a moment to recover from this?"

"You are just delaying on purpose Sena, you don't to give me a baby. Quinton wasn't planned, this makes me question your love for me. Do you want me to get a baby somewhere else?"

What's the fuck???

"Lwazi you wouldn't dare! Is there a bitch who promised to open her legs for you?" I ask.

"If we don't see eye to eye and can't reach common grounds I think it will be better for us to go our separate ways.I've done everything I could, there is nothing I haven't done to be the best husband to you.If there..like if there is something I'm not doing enough I think you should search somewhere else because this is who I am"

Now he is thinking about divorce! How did it get to this?

"Lwazi I didn't say you are not enough.I simply asked you to give me time, I'm not emotional ready" I say.

"Okay"

I hate his okays, they are just a way of ending the conversation.

"You are the most amazing husband and father.I will give you a baby, I just need some time and support to get through this"

Well, he is done talking.I always end up talking alone, story of my life.

I put my leg over him and caress his head.

"I love you baby"

He brush my arm, "I love you too"

Chapter 274

Ziphelele Mokoena

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I didn't a crawling baby was such a piece of work.I'm considering getting a helper, every night I go to bed with a pounding headache.Last week I bought a new phone because the mighty Phakade decided to give my phone a shower.

I'm on my wifey duties folding husband's t-shirts.My phone rings, it's Zanda.I wonder what has happened today.Her and Mandla fight everyday.

"Hey love" I answer.

"Hi Ziphe"

Judging from her voice another fight has happened.

"Are you okay?" I ask.

"I just found a packet of condoms in Mandla's car" she say.

"Okay...??"

"We don't use condoms Ziphe" she say.

I sigh, "Every guy have condoms on standby Zanda, even Thapelo,although we don't use them"

"Mandla don't, this is his first time.And they are not on standby in our bedroom,they are on standby in his car"

"Ask him about it" I suggest.

"It's not easy talking to him,he will be angry"

"Is he still attending therapy?" I ask.

"He miss some appointments,but he goes"

I think they need intervention.It's time his friends intervene.It's either he break up with Zanda or man up and accept what happened.One moment he has forgiven her,the next he is sulking about it and emotional blackmailing her.

But first,I need to fish some information.Is Mandla cheating or not?

Today I'm not cooking dinner,it's Thapelo's turn, but he doesn't know.I've defrosted meat for him, he will decide whether he grill it or cook curry.

"King P" he recite from the door.

Now that Phakade is a bit clever his father think they are buddies, like they have some kind of secret man-thing that I don't know of. Sometimes when I walk in he stop talking to him and look at me like I just walked on Mokoena hardcore gangsters planning a drug deal.

"Hey Mrs" he finally greet me after a long conversation he had with the babbling Phakade.

"Hey Mokoena how was your day?" I ask.

"Babe you don't want to know. All I want is a cold shower, food and bed"

Oh my bad!

"But it's your turn to cook" I say.

His eyes widen, "I have a turn?"

Bathong!

"Yeah, it's today" I tell him.

He shake his head, disapproving and make his way to the pots. They are on the stove, shining, waiting for him to start cooking.

He check inside and look at me in disbelief.

"Ziphe you're not serious!" he say.

"Thapelo it's you turn"

"I've been attending endless meetings all day Ziphe, I'm tired"

I pick banana and pull a chair. Who is not tired? I've been running after uncontrollable Phakade, doing laundry and packing the closets.

He take his phone out, "Never, I'm ordering"

What? He cannot order, I want him to cook.

"No" I say.

He raise his eyebrow, "No???"

"I want home cooked meal"

"Then you should've cooked it" he say.

"Okay I will help you"

He hiss a grunt, "You want me to die"

He go take shower first, I remain in the kitchen going through his laptop. I was hoping to find an email from Mandla or something like that. There is nothing, I end up watching The Prison Break.

"Urgh babe!"

I look up, he look frustrated.

"What?" I ask.

"You haven't started on anything"

"I was waiting for you... wait give me a few minutes" I say moving my eyes back to the laptop. I love this movie. Wentworth Miller is the starring, he is a good actor. I watched his speech on YouTube, it touched me and made me deeply look at the society and their objections against the LGBT community, mostly gays. Why can't we allow people to be who they are? Why do they have to spend half of their lives living inside the closet because they are scared of us and our judgements?

"Must I grill this or cook curry?" he ask.

"You are the chef babe" I say with my eyes fixed on the laptop.

I'm absorbed in the movie I only snap when something break next to my leg.  
"Yey yey yey!" I yell.  
I thought shouting mothers were bad moms until my own Phakade started breaking everything he crawl across.  
"Ziphe what did I say about raising your voice?"  
I sigh, "He only stop when I shout"  
"That's how he will always be if you don't change"  
He spend nine hours away from home,he don't see half of the chaos Phakade make.But I get his point, Phakade must know I mean business even when I speak softly.  
I look at him, "How is Mandla?"  
"He is fine"  
"You know Zanda think he is cheating on her,she is so heartbroken"  
He take spices out of the cupboard, "Yeah well"  
I let out a chuckle, "That's insane, I mean Mandla would never cheat on her"  
He look at Phakade, "Boy boy"  
Geez! I'm trying to get information.  
"What do you think?" I ask.  
"I think I'm going to make rice"  
I roll my eyes, "I'm talking about Mandla cheating on Zanda"  
"Oh that, I don't know, all I know is I want massage tonight.Today has been hell for me"  
Mxm! I'm not going to help him cook.Phakade has crawled to his legs, now he knows what I go through everyday preparing his news-stingy ass food.  
"Take him to the lounge" he say.  
"No, he want you"  
"But I'm cooking Ziphe"  
He sound so frustrated, I have to press my lip to stop myself from laughing.  
"Give him something to chew" I tell him.  
He skip everything and pick a big slab of chocolate.I call order in the house when he is about to give it all to him.  
"Break a small piece" I tell him.  
After he has given him piece of chocolate there is some peace in the house.  
"So you are not helping me?" he ask.  
"You only cook once in a decade.Do you know that Skhumbuzo cook for Fikile?"  
He burst out laughing, "Cook what? Don't even try such lies with me, that is Nkosi"  
"Fine, but Mandla cook for Zanda"  
"Mandla was married to the chef,you can't compare me to him"  
"You are also married to the chef mos" I say.  
He burst out laughing, "Yeah right"  
"I think you should talk to him, he is hurting Zanda.She made a mistake, she was in a bad space"  
He give me a look, "This bad space excuse is getting boring" he say.  
"Okay,but please talk to him"  
He shake his head, "We are minding our own business Ziphe,their relationship got nothing to do with us"  
"Zanda is my friend, Mandla is your friend, we need to help them" I say.

"Help them? You mean I must go tell Mandla how to feel"

I exhale, "Not exactly, but talk to him. He needs to decide whether he still wants to be with Zanda or not, instead of sulking and sleeping around"

"He is sleeping around?" he asks.

"That could be the only explanation of the condoms in his car"

He chuckles, "So that's why I'm cooking? It's because my friend had condoms in his car"

"No, you are cooking because it's your turn" I say.

"I've never had a turn until Zanda found condoms in Mandla's car"

It's about time I continue with my movie. He cooks for two and a half hours, my stomach is growling.

My phone beeps.

It's Zanda's text. Mandla is not home, his phone is off. She is leaving.

"Thapelo where is Mandla? Zanda is leaving"

He grins, "Leaving to where? Do you want coffee?"

Like really?? I send Sbusiso a text, he will know what to do.

## Chapter 275

Zethu Biyela

I couldn't come at night, I was cuddled in Tyson's arm. Besides I thought Zanda was just pulling a prank. Ziphe called me early in the morning and told me Zanda is untraceable. Her car, which is Mandla's car by name, is here, together with her clothes and Leano's bottles. Her phone was found on the couch, it means she left it after texting Ziphe.

"She didn't even take her purse" Ziphe says.

"I still haven't got the answer. Where were you Mandla?" Fikile asks.

"I was still at work" he says.

He looks devastated. I understand why, his son is out there without nappies or milk. Zanda didn't think her decision through, she should've packed necessities.

"At 8pm???" Ziphe asks.

"I was wrapping a few things up"

"Your new working hours go very well with the condoms in your car. This is your fault Bhuti Mandla, you should've dumped her if you didn't love her anymore. Why did it hurt her?"

My eyes pop out. He was cheating on her?

"Babe" Thapelo says with a steady look.

"It's okay mfethu but I didn't cheat on Zanda. She should've talked to me instead of leaving" Mandla says.

Ziphe is on the verge of tears, "Talk to you how? You are always angry, shouting at her in front of Leano and emotionally blackmailing her"

Sena sighs, "Guys will amaze you! They treat you like trash and expect you to turn a blind eye on other guys who want to have a chance with you"

Now it's Lwazi's turn to shoot a look at Sena. They are not touchy today, I sense trouble in paradise. Today she shut up with just a look from Lwazi. I'm shocked, where is my sister? The one who talks over people.

"I don't blame her, she has lived under Phumla's shadow for too long. She is brave though, I would've left on the first day" Simtho says.

Mandla stands up and leaves the room. They know how to rub salt on a fresh wound.

"That's not fair, Zanda cheated on him. I don't see how that is Mandla's fault, cheating is a choice" his sister come into defense.

"He pushed her, he was treating her like Phumla's substitute all these years" Simtho say.

"If Mandla's love wasn't enough for her she could've left, without Leano"

She is getting worked up, her lips are quivering. I expected her to understand Zanda's pain as a woman, but I guess blood is thicker than water. She is on her brother's side, and she is going to kill someone.

"Zanda and Leano are a package" Ziphe say.

The argument go on for almost five minutes. It's getting tense within minutes, harsh words are being exchanged. It's Nozipho vs Fikile, Simtho, Ziphe and Sena. I haven't utter a word, not that I don't have anything to say, sometimes I enjoy being an audience.

Sbusiso stand up, "All of you leave, now"

"No Sbu the truth must be spoken" Fikile argues.

"Out!!!" he shout.

They grab their bags and make their way out. Nozipho remain on the couch with a proud look on her face.

"You too" Sbu say.

What? This is not happening. Nozipho's eyes are wide opened.

"Babe??" she is in shock.

"Follow them Nozi, go argue outside. We are trying to find solutions here, not to listen to your stupid fight" he say.

Nozipho walk out angrily, pushing her stomach.

Well I just proved to myself and everyone that I'm the quietest Biyela diva. My Dad has been calling nonstop, he is still caught in the meetings, he is coming later but he sent his people.

They say Mvuse was here earlier, he vowed to kill Mandla if Zanda don't come back. I don't wish to be Mandla right now.

Sbusiso and Thapelo follow Mandla. I also want to follow but I don't want to risk being kicked out. I want to see everything.

"What's up with you today?" Don ask.

I raise my eyebrow, "What do you mean?"

"Why are you quiet?"

I chuckle, "I'm natural like this"

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**\*\*Inside the bedroom\*\***

"Bru you need to calm down" Sbusiso say.

"My son is hungry and cold somewhere on the streets Sbu, how do you expect me to calm down?"

Thapelo sigh, "I'm sure they will find them, she won't get anywhere on foot"

"You don't know an angry woman, she can get to Joburg on foot. She left everything that associate her to Mandla. Her clothes, car and money. It's like she was cutting all ties" Sbu say cutting deep on Mandla's fresh wound.

"I love her, I just want her to come home" he say fighting back tears.

"You dragged this punishment thing for too long ndoda. And the condoms added fuel to a fire, she is fed up"

He take a deep breath, "I have to go look for them"

"Where? We've been looking all day Mandla" Thapelo say.

"I don't know but I can't just sit here. My son has injured leg"

Ten minutes after he drove out Biyela call Sbusiso, she has been found but she is refusing to come back. She is walking home, Eshowe.

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[#Zanda](#) Dlamini

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I've been walking for two hours, with no rest. I know this is stupid because my home is like Mandla's house, there is no love, no happiness. I'm running away from Mandla's house the same way I ran away from home. It's times like this that make me wish I had a mother. She would've offered me a home, somewhere I can run to and be sure I'm welcomed.

A car pull up few feet away from me. I'm not looking for a lift from private cars, maybe a truck would've been better.

"Zanda" say the guy coming out of the car.

I don't know him but his black clothes quickly tell me who is he. They called Biyela!

I keep on walking.

"Zanda get in the car"

"Please leave me alone" I say.

"Get in the car with the baby"

So he is deaf!

Luckily the car don't follow me, I keep walking. It's funny that I've been walking for more than 5 hours but I'm still in Durban. Last night I slept in the garage, luckily there was a generous guy who gave me 1.5L juice and rolls. Leano have been drinking that juice. He is not happy with it but my back is soothing him to sleep.

I should've known, they called him. I want to run but I'm on a freeway, that would be stupid. Both him and Sbusiso get out of the car.

"Really Zanda?" Sbusiso ask, he look angry.

I'm standing still, unsure of what to do next.

"You are a crazy woman, you need to see a specialist" he say.

Okay, I pass through them and keep walking.

"Zanda" it's Mandla's voice.

"Leave me alone"

My arm is held! I take a deep breath and turn to face him.

"What do you want?" I ask.

"Let's go home"

I blink rapidly, "You call your house a home?"

"Let's talk, please"

Two months later he want to talk. Now that I'm leaving he want to talk, he didn't care when I was soaked in tears next to him.

"About what Mandla? I cheated on you, I'm a hoe. What do you want us to talk about?"

"I forgave you, let's go home"

My widen in disbelief, "You forgave me?"

Sbusiso's voice cut us in, "Can we do this in the car? We are breaking the rules by parking here"

When we get in the car he start the car and drive back. Like wtf! I didn't get in the car to return back to Mandla's house.

I have put Leano on my lap, he is staring at his father on the next seat who is busy making his bottle. They brought hot water and milk.

"Are you not hungry?" he ask me.

I don't answer him. The last time I checked he didn't care about me. He ask diapers from Sbusiso and start changing Leano. He is soaked in urine.

"Do you guys know I could be getting divorce papers because of you?" Sbusiso say.

I don't know what happened between him and Nozipho and I don't care. I know they will never divorce.

Leano suck the bottle like a calf. My heart break, I didn't think about him. I should've packed his necessities. I lift my eyes to Mandla, he is watching his son sucking milk like it's the end of the world. His jaws are clenched, when our eyes meet tears flow out of his eyes.

"Why Zanda?" he ask.

I fold my hands and keep quiet. I don't know which reason he want. Me cheating on him or me leaving without Leano's milk and diapers?

"Over one mistake Zanda? You do this to me over one mistake, you cheat on me and starve my son. His leg is injured, you didn't care about that. If this is my punishment then it's too much, you've hurt me enough now please stop"

I swallow the lump on my throat, "You've been treating me like trash Mandla and cheating on me. Is it an eye for an eye?"

"I didn't cheat on you, I only bought a packet of condoms" he say.

"Why? We don't use condoms"

He exhale, "It was Sbu's idea"

"Yey please keep my name out of your fights. My wife could be getting divorce lawyers as we speak, I'm depressed" Sbu say from the front.

"Please stay with me" he say staring at me.

I hold his teary stare. He look genuine right now, but how long will it take for him to get back in his old ways again?

"How will I stay with someone who fail to forgive me?" I ask.

"We will start afresh"

## Chapter 276

Senamile Madlala

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I went home to help my mother with shopping. She is going to Skhumbuzo's home, ukuyokhuza, with Aunt Lydia.

"So when are you giving Madlala a baby?" she asked.

I was hurt by her question. Not to mention that not even once did she ask how I'm feeling after the baby saga.

She, out of all people, should know the pain I'm going through at the moment. I expected her to.

I also don't understand why my parents together with Lwazi put so much pressure on me.

I gave her silent response.

"If you don't give him the baby he want someone else will, and I know you won't be able to handle it" she said.

Her words are still ringing in my ears. Do I have a choice?

I don't want to lose my husband, not to another woman. We've come too far. He has loved me, unconditionally. His love has overlooked my mistakes. Not to say I'm unworthy but I will never find a man like him. I have to save my marriage, even if it means emotional-unprepared pregnancy.



I find him watching soccer with Thapelo.I greet and look for Quinton.

"Mommy!"

He saw me first.I have to drop everything and hug him.

"Where is Kuhle?" he ask.

"I wasn't fetching Kuhle,I went to shop for granny"

He run infront of me, "Come see how we cleaned for you"

Cleaned for me? He is running to the baby's nursery.

It's empty.

Everything is packed.I don't know how to react.Quinton is looking at me,expecting me to be happy.

"Who packed the baby's room?" I ask.

"Me and Daddy,are you happy?"

I force a smile, "Yes I'm happy baby,thank you"

Lwazi had no right.He didn't lend a finger when I was setting this nursery up but he is the first one to destroy it.

I won't cook,I order pizzas and stay in my room.Quinton is my little spy,he keep running downstairs and coming back to tell me what they are doing.When the pizzas I arrive I serve them and eat with Quinton in the kitchen.

Zethu is calling,I wonder what she wants.

I answer, "Hey babe"

"Hello GORGEOUS" she say dragging the word.

She want something,no doubts.Maybe it's money.Ever since Dad told her to stop working and go back to school she has been sucking us dry.If it's not petrol it's grocery money.

Mind you this person is engaged to Tyson Givanston,her father is Muzi Biyela,she get allowances left,right and center.

She is playing Ziphe's role very well.She is like the annoying,greedy last born of the family.The pet and apple of Biyela's eyes who is getting umemulo and house as a bonus.

Yeah,I heard they bought her a surprise house.

"What do you want?" I ask.

"Chill I just want to come over for dinner"

I laugh, "I didn't cook, I'm having pizza"

"I will also eat pizza"

"Order it,there is no need to drive here for pizza"

"I don't have money"

She is pulling a stunt.

"Tell your father" I say.

She let out a grunt, "You're boring you know"

"I know bitch"

"Heeeey before I forget what's going on between you and Lwazi?"

Oh gosh! Really now?

"Nothing" I say.

"Don't lie,I saw the way he was looking at you.What did you do?"

I sigh, "He want a baby and respect"

"And???"

"I have to fall pregnant" I say.

"What? Are you even ready?"

"No,but I don't have a choice.I don't want him to leave me or to get a baby somewhere else"

She exclaim, "Yoooooh! Is that how marriage works? Ay I'm getting cold feet"

"Yeap,it's not always rosy"

I don't think Zethu is ready for marriage,let's just hope Tyson know what he is doing and he is ready for flames.

Quinton still can't bath himself.He is too spoilt, Sphiwo can bath himself.I take him to his bathroom and fill water for him.

"Today you are bathing on your own" I tell him.

"Nooooo"

I expected that!

"I'm not playing Quinton,get in the water I will tell you what to do"

He take his clothes off slowly and stand next to the tub.

"Get inside" I say,steadily.

"No Daddy will bath me"

I lift him up and put him inside the bathtub.Now he is fuming,he starting splashing water with his hands,it jump to my leaning face.

"What are you doing?" I ask.

"I want Daddy to bath me"

I take my shoe off, "You will get what you want"

African mother loaded!

He continue splashing water to my face.I pin the shoe three times on his back.The whole South Africa shake,the mountains move, the valleys close up.

"Shut up and take your soap" I say.

He is still crying for Malema to hear from Pretoria.I lift the shoe up and narrow my eyes,he scream even worse.

"What's happening?"

Wow! It didn't even take him three minutes to get here.

"Take the soap" I tell Quinton.

He see his father and think 'Here is my Chuck Norris' and splash water to my face again.I give him the shoe one more time.

"Let me bath him if you don't want to"

Really? I shoot a look at him.

"He is my child too,and I'm disciplining him.If anything was to happen to us nobody would take this child in" I say.

"That's insane,you can't beat my son like this.Look at his back"

It's nothing rare,light skinned people turn red if you beat them.

I turn to Quinton, "Take the soap"

"No!"

I lift the shoe up,he take it in a lightning velocity.

I hate the fact that I had to be violent in order to get him to participate.I only help him with washing his head then coach him throughout.His father left,which was great for him because I would've ended up losing respect.

Children are forgiving,not my Quinton.He sleep without listening to a bedtime story.

I return to the kitchen to clean up.Thapelo is still here.I wonder if Ziphe approve of this late visit.

Think of a devil!

"Hey thanks for the snack"

Snack? That was a full meal.

I take the plates and put them inside the sink.

"How are you doing?" he ask.

For a moment I'm standing still, unsure of what to say.  
Then I clear my throat, "I'm okay"  
"Be really okay Sena, it wasn't your fault. I can relate to how you feel right now"  
I wipe my cheeks. Damn!  
I clear my throat, "Thanks"  
"I'm sorry"  
He turn me around and give me a warm hug. He has been drinking, the smell of his cologne is diluted with beer. Maybe it's me, I feel like there is strong folded fist on his bottom front.  
"You will be okay" he say putting his hands on my shoulders.  
I breath in, "Yeah"  
He smile, "I must go before your sister kill me"  
He walk away. I stare until he disappears. I thought they were watching soccer, by the way his arms are healing.  
I hear Lwazi walking him out. He is laughing, I feel tears racing down my cheek. I start weeping like a widow.  
Why???

[#Continues](#)

Chapter 276

[#Continues](#)

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For an hour I sit in the bathtub, allowing cold water to penetrate my skin. My chest is dry, I've cried a river. All is well, I need to find a way to heal. Jay know it was not my fault, I did everything he asked me to do. I would've taken good care of his daughter, I loved her before I even met her. I did everything, provided her mother with everything she wanted. I would've mothered her perfectly but she didn't exist.  
He walk in the bathroom when I'm making my way out. He glance at me once and walk in the shower.  
I switch the lights off and get on bed. Ten minutes later the lights switch on. I hear few movements around the room then he get on bed.  
He wrap his arms around me and ask if I'm okay.  
"Yeah" I say.  
He's been drinking too. The smell of beer is diluted with fresh minty smell.  
"Please turn around" he say.  
I take a deep breath and face his side. He stare at me for a moment then brush my cheek.  
"What's wrong babe?"  
I blink tears away. He is asking what's wrong? Like he doesn't know.  
"Nothing" I say.  
"Quinton helped me clean the nursery, he was handful today"  
I exhale, "That's great"  
He kiss my lips and smile.  
"I'm horny, we watched a movie with crazy sex scenes. I just want to bury myself in your warm cookie" he say and kiss me again.  
I allow him to suck my lips, run his hands all over my body, take my underwear off and insert his fingers inside my cookie. I watch him lick his fingers, his erection poking me like a fist. I open my legs and let him insert his penis. I move with his thrusts and allow

him to plant love bites all over my chest. He moans with pleasure, cursing and professing his love at the same time.

He groans and throw all his seed inside me. I got rid of the pills so this is the beginning of the journey.

He recover and open his eyes. He give me the most strangest look.

"Are you okay?"

I nod, "Yeah"

He kiss my cheek and lie next to me. His hand is playing inside my cookie.

"I stopped taking the pill" I tell him.

His eyes widen, "Are you serious?"

"Yeap"

He smile and plant kisses on both my cheeks.

"Thank you Mrs Madlala, I can't wait to be a father again. You know with Quinton I never got to do my duties well, I was not financial secure. But now I will hire a chef to cook all your cravings, you won't be short of anything. I love you more than anything"

He smile, "I think I need another round"

I close my eyes and sigh, "Why Lwazi?"

"Mmm???"

"I understand what you are feeling, maybe it was wrong of me to take up on Jason's plea. I should've let you handle the matter as his family. I may be a bitch, disrespectful and hot headed but I still go through pain. I'm not a robot, I get hurt and need someone to be there for me. I'm not being dramatic Lwazi and I'm not looking for pity. I'm going through pain, this is my life she played with. It's Jason's life, it haunts me"

He exhale, "Is this about the nursery?"

"No it's about the baby I was promised to hold"

"Sena we are going to make our own baby" he say.

"And that's what you wanted all along, you never wanted Jason's baby"

This time he don't hide behind excuses.

"Yes I didn't"

I blink a couple of times, in disbelief.

"He was your brother Lwazi" I say.

"Who wanted my wife"

Wtf!

I sit up, what did I just hear?

"Look I'm not mad at the baby for that, I would've raised her with love. But I was hurt by your secret deals, promises to each other and everything that went on behind my back"

I'm beyond shocked, like my jaws are underground.

"Jason was a teenager, what the fuck is this? You think a child wanted me and we made secret promises?" I ask.

"I didn't know anything about the baby, you also never came to me to discuss it like your husband. Everything happened behind my back"

I count to three silently. I need to stay calm.

"So he wanted your wife because he asked her to raise his baby?" I ask calmly.

"And he kept inappropriate pictures of you and your dirty underwears"

He is not losing his mind, is he? I sit for a good while just staring at him.

"I will get his bag" he say getting off bed.

This I have to wait and see. Which dirty underwears? And inappropriate pictures, what is that supposed to mean?

He come back with a NIKE backpack. He open it and hand it over me.

"It was inside his closet" he say.

Wtf! I'm in the bathroom in these pictures, completely naked. There are finger emojis pointing to my...fuck no! In some I'm picmixed with his naked body.

Jason didn't do this! He wouldn't have. Yes he wasn't a normal boy, that was because he had a heart disease.

My hands are trembling, this is beyond shocking. I'm out of words.

His hand get inside the bag and come back with two black g-strings and one lacy white panty. There are used pantyliners inside and a bra. These are my underwears, I never noticed they were missing until now.

He take a deep breath, "He could've raped you. Like father like son"

"Jason wouldn't have done that. He just liked spending time with me and he trusted me"

"How do you explain this? Did you have any knowledge about it?"

My eyes widen, "Of course not Lwazi"

"His baby deserve to be raised by my mother, it will give her peace. Jason wanted you to raise his baby out of his sick reasons"

Sigh! I thought I knew Jason. He was a good boy, at least he acted like one, he was always friendly.

"I'm really shocked, maybe Zenande was a blessing in disguise" I say.

He clear his throat, "Maybe"

Wait!

"Why are you speaking about the baby in the present tense?" I ask.

"I took decisions on my own and I'm sorry. I just didn't know to approach the matter, you were too excited and I knew I didn't want to raise Jason's baby. Not after discovering the motive behind his decision"

I nod, looking at him attentively.

"She is in Australia with my mother" he say.

I'm lost.

"Who is in Australia?" I ask.

"Jade"

Who the fuck is Jade?

He exhale, "The baby exist, she is Jason's"

"But..."

He cut me in, "She gave birth to a coloured girl, we made you believe she gave birth to a black baby by borrowing someone else's baby and hide Jade"

"I don't understand what are you saying? Who is we?"

"With my colleague" he say hesitantly.

This has Biyela written all over it. He was there, he is the colleague. How dare he butt in my marriage like that!

"So I was lied to?" I ask.

"I didn't have a choice but to do things my way"

Wow! Do I know any of Natalya's child? Jason was not who I thought he was and now I'm finding out that Lwazi is not who I've been thinking he is.

I put my gown on and take my cellphone.

"Where are you going?" he ask.

"I just need some fresh air"

I make my way out to the balcony and dial Biyela's number. I call him three times before he pick up.

"Hello" he answers.

I can tell from his tone that he is annoyed.

"Baba I have a problem with you" I say.

"Mmm I'm listening"

"Why can't you let Lwazi be my husband? Why do you have to interfere and spoil everything for me?" I ask.

"Did you see the time Senamile? I'm not Madlala, I don't have time for your whining" Unbelievable!

"I'm not whining Baba, stop interfering in my marriage. I've had enough of you, concentrate on your thug life and murdering people" words just escape my mouth.

"Right now I'm with your mother, I can't leave her on bed and come to Durban. But come tomorrow morning you will learn one thing or two about respect" he say.

"What do you mean?"

"See you in the morning Mrs Madlala" he say and drop the call.

What is he up to?

I dial my mother's number, it rings unanswered. I don't give up, I keep calling until she pick up.

Ouch! It's not her.

"Stop disturbing my wife" he say and drop the call.

I walk back inside and find Lwazi staring at the ceiling.

"Baby" I say.

"Mmm"

"We need to go"

He frown, "Go where?"

"To your mother's house in Cape Town or anywhere, I don't know"

I'm panicking, my palms are sweating.

"Why?" he ask calmly.

"I spoke to my father, he is breathing fire. Please get up and help me pack"

He chuckles, "Relax and get on bed"

Relax??? He don't know my father like I do.

"No Lwazi we need to leave"

"Babe" he say stretching his arm.

I exhale and go lie on his chest.

"Relax" he say kissing my forehead while chucking.

He is chuckling, I could be dying tomorrow!

## Chapter 277

Sbusiso Biyela

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Early in the morning I got a call from my father, he want me to call all his girls for dinner this evening. This is quite strange, not to mention that my pregnant wife has to burn with the pots. Today is Sunday, I would've taken my little family out for dinner.

"Don't mention that I asked for that dinner" those were his last words.

This man is confusing AF. But he is ageing, that could be the reason.

I had to call all my sisters and invite them to dinner. They asked to come with their partners. That's our norm though, no matter how exclusive a gathering is the Biyelas will always show up with their partners.

Zethu is the first one to arrive. I check the time, it's only 2:33pm. So she is here for lunch and dinner.

"What are we celebrating?" she ask.

"Family" I say.

She only glance at the kitchen and make her way to the kids.It's a good thing that she is marrying to a white family,she wouldn't fit being married to a black family.She has a kitchen fever.I doubt she even know how to fry eggs.

"Menziwa!" that's my wife's voice.

I turn around,she is already next to me.My little one is growing,her tummy now look like a rugby ball.

"I have decided,I will only do salads and pap" she say.

Only? Are we going to eat pap and salads?

"Oh okay" I say with my forehead furrowed.

She collect orange peels infront of me and throw in the bin.

"Then you will grill the meat"

Oh gawd!

"I have to get off this couch?" I ask.

"Yes,grilling meat is a man thing"

Who made that rule? I can't imagine my life without this couch.

"I'm tired mama,I can't.Call Don or Lwazi" I say.

She sigh, "They must drive all the way here to grill the meat.Sbu seriously? You don't even want to move"

Eish speaking about that...

"Can you take the remote for me? I want to change the channel"

It's only a few centimetres away,but my body only want to rest.

She take it and pass it to me.

"So are you going to grill?" she ask.

"No"

We call Don and ask him to come over.He arrive after an hour and take everything with label that says meat.Sausages,pork,chicken,red meat to lamb.

"I didn't say grill all my meat bru" I say.

"We are accommodating everyone.For instance,I don't eat red meat,Simtho don't eat pork and Junior don't eat lamb"

Since when they choose which meat to eat???

"This is not about your family and their preferences.Butcheries cost arm and leg" I say.

"Hey don't forget I'm doing you a favour"

Sigh!

I watch him throwing all my meat on the fire,some inside the oven.I've never seen someone tasting his cooking so much.He cut a four pound piece only to taste salt.

"Why don't you buy ox liver?" he ask.

"I do" I say.

"Where is it?"

Holy ghost! His mission is to fridgerupt me.

"Nozi!!!!" he yell.

"What do you want from her?" I ask.

"I want to taste the pap"

I click my tongue, "So you go on diets in your house and eat like a hunter in my house. What is your purpose?"

He laughs, "Umdala kangaka ukhulumela ukudla"

Mxm! I laugh and get myself piece of steak too.

The Mokoenas are in the building. Thapelo has grown, I feel like we've done it all. We are grown men with our own families. The only person I'm worried about is Mandla, he was once our role model. He got married first, took good care of his single mother and his wife. Unlike us, he didn't live the fuckboy life. He found Phumla and settled down. Things didn't work out but he found Zanda. They've been together for five years, she gave him his first child. He considered getting married again and sent abakhongi to her home. But lately things are not going well for them.

He also walk in with his son on his arm, Zanda walking behind him. Maybe they will be okay. I hope they will be.

"You should host more surprise dinners" he say without greeting.

He is smiling, maybe things are not so bad.

"My thoughts exactly" Thapelo say, he is also chewing.

By the time the meat go to the kitchen table half of it has been eaten. Nozi said no with her pap but that didn't stop us from eating the meat.

Sena is drinking juice! Did chickens start peeing? Maybe Jesus is about to come back.

"You guys should host the Zethu celebration dinner"

"What did you do?" Fikile ask.

"I'm alive"

Well, we all know who she is.

Halfway through dinner Lwazi receive a call. Someone need him urgently outside his company.

"Who doesn't know Sunday is not a working day?" I ask.

He shrug his shoulders, "I don't even know the person calling"

He kiss Sena's cheek and leave. Simtho bless herself with his plate.

Don whisper something in her ear, she smile and put her thumb up. I hope he didn't hide meat for her somewhere. He go extra miles for her to have food, she does the same for him. Their love is crazy, but they don't fake anything to each other. They are who they are and they love each other like that. However he need to pay lobola, it's long overdue now. My phone beeps. It's a text from Nduku, he went for the weekend.

Usefikile ubaba lapho?- the text read.

I'm confused. Bab' Mzingelwa is coming here?

I reply and tell him he haven't arrived. This is eyebrow raising, first my father ask me to host anonymous dinner, now Bab' Mzingelwa is on his way here.

"Daddy!" say Sphiwo running to the table.

I look at him.

"Grandpa's car is here" he is happy.

"Which grandpa?" Sena ask with her eyes popped out.

"The other one and the other one and grandpa"

His explanation is boss.

I leave the table and go check. It's my father and his brothers. What is going on?

"Menziwa" Bab' Mzingelwa say stretching his hand for a handshake.



I shake their hands and ask what's going on.  
"Are you done eating?" my father ask.  
"Almost" I say confused.  
"Tell them to take the kids and leave.MaZungu can go to Mokoena's house for a while"  
"What is going on?" I ask again.  
Bab' Thobela walk on, "Fikile should stay too,she is way over her head.She went to the Nkosis without anyone's consent"  
"Leave that one, she still know her elders" my father say.  
So they are here to attack my sisters.Now I want to know what they did.  
"Biyela what's happening in my house?" I ask more steadily.  
"We are here to see Aunt Senamile"  
Oh shit is about to happen! What did Sena do now?  
"Where is she?"  
Well, Sena is no longer on the table.This means she know what she did.  
"Mokoena,Mandla,Donald take your kids and leave.MaZungu go with Mokoena,Sbusiso will fetch you later" my father orders.  
"What is going on?" Fikile ask.  
"Who taught you to leave when I speak to you?" Bab' Mzingelwa ask her.  
"Fikile leave" say my father.  
Zethu is the first one to see the door.They all leave with the kids.  
"What did Sena do?" I ask.  
"She woke me at midnight to tell me I'm murderer and live a thug life.Now I'm here to get explanations,this is not the first time this child throw words at me.I'm not her husband,the one she pull with the nose to all directions"  
Has Sena lost her mind? She is about to die.  
"This child know nothing about respect,she talk however she likes" Bab' Mzingelwa say.  
Bab' Thobela shake his head, "I've seen her rolling her eyes at me a number of times"  
My father leave the room.He is looking for her.I wish I can save her but I don't want to end up getting unnecessary slaps.Bab' Mzingelwa is capable of beating a 31year old man.  
Minutes later we hear Sena screaming.  
"You are a magistrate now?" my father ask.  
"I'm sorry" she is already soaked in tears.  
"Who am I to you Senamile?"  
"You are my father" she say sobbing.  
In the blink of an eye Bab' Thobela has took out his belt.Bab' Mzingelwa push me out of the room.They are cruel,Sena is their child if she did something wrong one of them could've handled her.She is crying,asking for forgiveness.My heart is bleeding, I can never do this to my daughters.  
"Muzi why are you standing there?" Bab Thobela's voice ask.  
She start screaming my name.I make my way inside the room.My father is pulling her out the balcony door.  
"Sbu!!!"  
I follow them.Bab Thobela and Mzingelwa remain inside the house.  
"Stay out of it son" he say in Mr M's voice.

He pull her to the pool.  
No no no!!!  
He press her head inside the water and lift her up after two minutes.  
"Who am I to you?" he ask.  
She can't talk,she is still gasping for air.He push her inside water again then lift her up.  
"Who am I to you?"  
This time she manage to speak, "You..are..you are my father"  
Lord again!  
"Who is Madlala to you?" he ask lifting her up.  
Inside water again!  
"Who is he?"  
Her mouth is wide opened.She is going to die.  
"Baba no!" I say.  
He push her inside again.  
"He is my husband"  
No this is enough! I jump inside water and pull her away.  
"Sbusiso!"  
"No Menziwa,this is enough"  
I lift her out of the pool and carry her inside the house.I don't know if she fainted or she just closed her eyes.  
"Sena" I say slapping her cheeks.  
She turn and lie on her stomach.Her body is shivering.Her back is bruised.I get a bath towel and Nozipho's gown.She is hardly moving,I take her clothes off and dry her with a towel.  
"Sit up Sena,I will make you coffee" I say.  
She sit up and lean by the wall.  
I rush to the kitchen and plug the kettle.  
"They have closed now,we will get goats in Mandeni"  
Really? They are talking about goats after nearly killing their daughter.  
"Must I fetch MaZungu for you before leaving?" my father ask.  
I shake my head.They walk out with their hands in their pockets,chatting about goats.  
I need to call Lwazi.I wouldn't be surprised if the urgent call was orchestrated by Biyela to get him out of the house so that he can attack his wife.

## Chapter 278

### Mandla Zungu

.  
I'm not perfect but I'm trying.Sometimes it's enough,sometimes it's not.I did the ceremony for my father,so far there has been no difference in my private life.He only helped with Leano.My boy is getting better,each day comes with a difference.  
His mother! I love her,I can't imagine my life without her.Maybe I need to learn new tricks.Love the new way.Care in a different angle.Support with new strategies.I don't know which one will work,I just have to be different.  
Starting now,I've substituted booze with a cold drink.I have to explain myself to the gents,lately I owe them elaboration of every little detail of my life.

"So you think drinking Coke is going to keep Zanda?" Sbu ask.

"Firstly it's not Coke it's Iron Brew,secondly I'm not drinking it to keep her.I'm avoiding alcohol because I have a lot to process with a sober mind"

Thapelo lift a can of Heineken like he is trying to tempt me.Is he allowed to drink now or he is risking sleeping on the couch?

"Do you want free advice?" Sbu ask.

I look at him flatly.Whatever advice he is going to give I'm not going to take it because it's going to be stupid.The last advice he gave got me running all over Durban looking for my son and his mother.

He give me regardless, "Make her pregnant again.She will know which dick is capable of changing her life"

"No,Leano is still young.I'm not a dog,anginyelezeli" I say.

"What are you trying to say about me?"

We laugh at him.Even dogs don't get pregnant five a year.I'm a guy but I know birthcontrolling methods.My sister is slowly turning into a babymaking machine.

"Oksalayo" he say and drink his beer.

Lwazi has been quiet.It's nothing new,he is always like this.But I can't help feeling like he is going through something.

"What's up Madlala?" I ask.

"His wife is angry and need a world hug" Sbu answer on his behalf.

Oh! I expected her to be.She is Senamile,drama is her middle name.Biyela has opened a can of worms.There will be no peace in South Africa until he get on his knees and apologise to he

"A lot mfethu" he say.

"We have all day" says Thapelo.

He exhale, "I think my wife need counselling,she is going through a lot.I have to wait with the baby"

I laugh, "She need counselling because she got whipped?"

This means I also need counselling,my mother didn't talk twice when I was a kid.Her belt talked for her.

"She was drowned inside water by her father,at the moment she needed family support the most.We all undermined the pain she was going through,I don't know how she fell inlove with a baby she hadn't met so much"

"Then she must make her own" I say.

Thapelo nod, "Seconded.If she want a baby she must make her own"

"She is not emotionally ready.I want her to love our baby as she love Quinton" he say.

"You think she will ever be ready? I mean she didn't want to carry a baby in the first place"

"I don't know mfethu" he say.

I don't like seeing him like this.Sena should reconsider her decisions,Lwazi has been nothing but a good husband to her.He want a baby,is that too much to ask? Or she want him to get it somewhere else and make the babymama's life a living hell.

Someone whistles from the entrance.He is late!

"Where are the drinks?" he ask.

Nobody answers him.He can see the drinks on the table.

"BARMAN!" he yell and take a seat.

"What kept you? We are about to leave" Thapelo say.

He is right, at 6pm I'm leaving.I have to be home when my son go to bed.I don't want to give Zanda a reason to be angry with me.

"My thick muntu is addictive,I couldn't leave" he say.

"Fuck you,when are you paying lobola?" Sbu ask.

"Anyday bruh,tell your sister to allow me to marry her"

I don't know why Simtho don't want to marry him.She know everything about him,they've been crazy together for years.Maybe she think things will change after marriage.Just like Sena changed for Lwazi.

"Who has checked on Skhumbuzo? I feel bad,maybe we should arrange a little braai and cheer him up" Thapelo says.

"Is he back from Inkandla?" Don ask.

"He came back yesterday" Sbu say.

"Let's do it Friday"

I clear my throat, "Count me out gents"

Thapelo look at me, "Don't be like that,he had nothing to do with what his brother did"

"I know,however I'm not ready to rub shoulders with any of the Nkosis.He need to mourn his brother without any fake support" I say.

I leave them drinking and go home.Unfortunately I find Leano already asleep.I don't know if she is angry or not.She doubted my condom story.A part of her believe I cheated on her.

"Baby" I say walking through the door.

She is cuddled on bed reading a magazine.

She look up, "Hi"

"I'm back"

She put the magazine aside and stare at me.I sit next to her and kiss her cheek.

"You didn't drink?" she ask.

"No"

She smile, "Why? I love you when you are drunk"

Wtf! Months ago she told me to stop drinking,now she love me when I'm drunk.What is a woman? The definition of her.

"Must I drink now?" I ask.

I have my bottles of whisky and icy cold beers,getting drunk wouldn't be a problem.

"No,what for?"

"You said you love me when I'm drunk" I say.

She frown, "What? I didn't say drink"

I rest my case! I don't know women.

I go to the bathroom and take a shower.When I come back a plate of food is waiting for me.I should marry this girl.

"When is your next session?" she ask.

"Wednesday"

"I want to come"

A smile creep out of my face, "Really?"

"Yeah I like the activities you do.I could learn a thing or two"

"There will be no activity this week,I'm meeting with other divorced men"

She chuckles, "What for? You guys want to cry together"

"No,we are trying to create anti-indod'ayikhali platform"

She nod, "That's great,I guess I will come next time"

Sometimes we have to let the past be what happened and let it stay at 'was'.When I hold her under covers I see nothing but my woman.I don't care who has held her the same way,she is mine.If there was anything wrong with me she would've left.Phumla told her to leave me a thousand times,she didn't.Nqubeko promised her what was not Mandla and asked her to leave me and be with him.But she didn't leave.She stayed because she want to be with me.She believe I can do better.

"I love you Zanda"

I catch her off guard,she look at me,blinking rapidly.

I put my hand on the side of her face, "So much"

"I love you too"

I smile, "Can I send what was left to the Dlamini?"

"Yes"

I drop my face on hers and kiss her.She is the best,our worse times can't erase that.Only if God can extend this period of my happiness.I'm ready to say "I do" again.

Chapter 279

Ndukwenhle Biyela

.

I've had girlfriends before,some were official,some were just side snacks.Not even once had I sweat when they were visiting.Nonto is probably fed up by now,plus she is a short tempered person.I've been calling after every ten minutes,asking if everything is set.I'm on my way home,angihambi ngedwa namhlanje ngingomlungu wami.She is excited to take this journey with me.She didn't care when I told her she will sleep in the rondavel and sometimes goats will knock on our door.

"I don't care Bhiyela,it's your home I will love it" she said.

It's safe to say I speak and understand English,even though sometimes I ask her to repeat twice or speak a bit slower.The girl love me,it's the craziest thing that has ever happened in my life.One dumb day after watching a movie in a cinema,I don't even know why we had to drive all the way to Musgrave just to watch TV,I guess it was God's plan to make us meet.So on that dumb day I packed my Zulu audacity and went to a white girl who was standing alone like she was waiting for someone who was taking too long.I didn't expect her to acknowledge me,you know how apartheid affected their social interaction with black people,I just greeted in my Nkandla lingo.

"Hheshe ntombi!"

Surprisingly she smiled at me and said "hello".I don't know if she understood what I said or she was just being civil.Eitherway I introduced myself,using all the English words Miss Kubheka taught me.She understood and told me her name.Today she is MaMeya and she has slept on my chest a couple of times.

We couldn't do things the traditional way as my father wanted.MaMeya is white,she don't even know what iqhikiza is.To respect my father's house I asked her to buy the doek and panifore for my mother,a sleeping blanket and my necklace which is a

substitute of ucu. This is to honour the idea of ukuqoma, I want her to rightfully step inside the Biyela promises. My mother will ululate, the ancestors will know their son has chosen.

Nozipho is the one who dressed her up, she looks like a respectful white Zulu wife. She is taking pictures all the way to Inkandla. Pictures of trees and cows, it's really unnecessary. She was happy to see a donkey, a bloody donkey! White people will amaze you.

Eish! It's still early for her to enter my home, my father is still sitting outside.

"This is your home right?" she asks.

I nod, "Yes"

"Let's go then"

I scratch my head, "You can't go in yet, you have to wait until it's dark"

"Why?"

"Ummm to respect"

She chuckles, "I will never understand, will I?"

"Sometimes even I don't understand, please be patient with me"

"It's okay, I will sit here I guess" she says.

"I need to check a few things inside, I will come back"

She yawns and nods her head.

I greet my father and walk to the kitchen. Nonto and my mother are busy cooking.

"Sanibonani" I greet.

"Hello son, you are here"

I nod, "Yes"

"Where is MaMeya?" she asks.

Lately all she wants to know is where is MaMeya, how is she, when is she coming to visit.

"She is in the car outside" I say.

"Take her inside the house, I will disturb your father he won't see her"

I just laugh at her. She can disturb my father but Bab' Thobela may be somewhere watching. I don't want any trouble. A few days back they did the things to Sena, I don't want to be the second one on the line.

"No, she is fine with waiting. Nonto come here for a minute" I say.

We walk out and go to my house. Everything is arranged nicely. I sent her money to buy me new bed and curtains. She bought beautiful ones, I like the size of my new bed. MaMeya will sleep like a queen.

"MaMeya bought the things, you have to get them for me" I say.

"Oh izinto zokuguqa?" she asks.

"Yes"

Ten minutes later my mother is ululating in the yard, wearing her new panifore and doek. It's official, MaMeya is my girlfriend.

Urgh! They cooked dumplings and chicken.

"Mah I asked you not to cook Zulu food" I say.

"Nonsense! I put yeast in these dumplings they are soft, she will love them" she says dismissing me with her hand.

"Where did you get the chicken?" I ask.

"We bought it eMayezeni"

Sigh!

I look at Nonto,I sent her money to buy appropriate grocery.These people have a refrigerator and braai packs.There is rice in the buckets.Why couldn't they cook curry and rice?

"Please don't dish for her on isithebe" I say.

That's the least they can do for me.The damage has been done already.

The sun set,my father take his chair inside the kitchen.It's time for MaMeya to enter.

Dogs!!!!

This bloody boy,Oluhle,bought a dog.It start barking at us.Why he didn't leave with his dog when he left?

"Eyy voetsek mgodoyi!" I yell.

MaMeya exclaim next to me, "Love why are you cursing the poor dog? Oh my gosh,what's her name?"

"Felakuyena" I tell her.

"Fela???"

Oh Lord!

"Just call her Fela" I say.

She snap her fingers at Felakuyena.

"Fela Fela Fela" she sing.

The dog wag its tail and run around her legs.She is finding it funny.

"This way" I say directing her to my rondavel.

She follow me,Felakuyena follow her.This is a test,eitherway I let them play.Anything for my white girlfriend.

"Welcome home baby" I say.

She smile and give me her lips to kiss.Dating her is nice,she don't care where we kiss.She even kiss me infront in public.I take her bag and place it on the small table.

"I feel honoured to be here.How many girls have you brought here?"

I grin, "You are the first"

"Liar!"

"Okay two,but not on this bed.This one is yours"

She smile, "You are romantic baby"

Well I'm honoured to be called the romantic guy.Who knew this day would come?

She look at the dog, "Are your feet clean Fela? Come here"

My eyes widen, "She must come where?"

"On bed, isn't you are still busy?"

Whooooah!

"Hey MaMeya don't dare! Don't test me,this bed costed me R5 000

namanikinikana.Ungangigili nje"

She laugh, "Fela won't shit on it,is it Fela?"

It wag its tail and look at her.I don't care they are best friends,this is my new bed.Fela have her shack,her father built it for her before leaving.That child!

"Voetsek wena phuma!" I say lifting my foot up to kick it.

It run out immediately.MaMeya look at me disappointed.

"My sister will keep you company,not the dog,worse on my bed" I say.

She lie on the pillow and keep quiet. Being white don't make any difference, she is a girl like any other. Sometimes she has tantrums.

Surprisingly she eat the dumplings and wipe the plate. My mother is impressed with herself. Nonto only stayed with MaMeya for ten minutes, I think her English ran out. I pour her bathwater in a bucket, today she will bath in a dish.

My father call me to his house for a private chat. I know what it's about, the lobola.

"You know you have to pay for what you are about to do?" he ask.

I nod, "I know"

"So which ones are you selling? You said these people don't want livestock"

"I'm leaving three in the kraal, they want R65 000"

He laugh, "Who counted for them?"

"Baba don't mention it, it's my luck"

Well it is luck, MaMeya is a virgin, her lobola is eleven cows which means it's somewhere around R110 000 since a cow cost around R10k.

After taking a bath I say goodnight to the family and go to MaMeya. She is already on bed, in her silky night dress.

"I'm sorry for taking long" I say.

She smile, "It's okay, your mother told me you are with your father"

My mother???

"She came here?" I ask.

"Yes"

I wonder how they understood each other. The only English word my mother speak is Amen, after praying.

I get on bed and wrap my arms around. Her body is warm, it makes my blood rush. I lift her face and kiss her lips. Well I complained about her hair frightening me at night, now she wrap a scarf on her head when she sleep. She is slowly turning black. This one day I woke up in the middle of the night and felt something soft creeping on my back. I jumped higher than a ZCC member and looked for my shoe to kill whatever snake it was. Only to find out it was MaMeya's hair.

She has given me the best tongue experience, this white girl can make my knees tremble. Although we haven't done the actual deed, we have given each other pleasure. But today I need more than that, I need my anaconda inside her. She is not a furniture, I can't be polishing her everyday. I need to feel her. I know it's wrong but how many have committed that sin?

"Lorry" I say looking at her.

"Yes my love"

"Did you see my cows inside the kraal?" I ask.

"Yes, they are fat"

I smile, "They are well taken care of, just like this one"

She smile and hold my hand on top of her wewe.

"Can we do an exchange? Give me this one, I will give you them"

Her eyes widen, "Is that a proposal?"

"Yes"

She laugh, "Oh my God!"

I press my erect anaconda on her, "So what are you saying Lauren Meyers?"



"Okay" she say.  
I lift my eyebrow, "Okay???"  
"Let's exchange love"  
I smile, "Thank you"  
In I enter the garden of Eden!

Chapter 280  
Nceba Nkosi

Today I got her call, I didn't expect it at all. The last time we spoke she was not interested in any thing I had to say. She didn't even want me to be her friend, for the least. I don't know what changed her mind, I'm happy anyway.

I get ready for my date. I tell Fikile I'm meeting with an old friend, I know if I tell her the truth she will tell my brother and I will be in trouble. She is still a married woman.

I see her in a peach dress, sitting on the table, she look beautiful. I saw her beauty the first day I saw her, I saw it behind blue eye and swollen cheeks. She is a gorgeous lady who need nothing but a good man.

"Good afternoon" I greet.

She look up at me, "Hey Nceba"

She don't sound like other days, today her voice sound alive.

"Hug?" I ask smiling.

She nod, we hug. She smell nice, I plant a kiss on her cheek.

"You look beautiful Siza" I say.

She blush, "Thanks, you are not bad yourself"

"Not bad??"

"Okay you're handsome"

"I was happy to get your call, really happy" I say.

"I wanted to check on you, I heard about your brother"

Wow! I didn't expect this. It's nice of her.

I exhale, "It's still hard to accept but I'm getting there"

"I could've came to the funeral but you know Fikile is..."

I have my eyes narrowed, "Fikile is what?"

"We don't get along, I'm sure she would've caused drama if she saw me there"

"Fikile is a great person, maybe you need to get to know her better" I say.

"I want to get to know you better"

A smile creep out my face, "I'm an easy book"

"What title are you?"

"I Died Before Death" I say.

She flutter her eyes, "That's some title!"

"I know. Where is your husband?"

"Business trip"

My heart sink, "So that's why you called?"

"Are you mad?"

"No, he is your husband. I'm just not looking for a side dish position"

She clear her throat, "I didn't say I want to make you a side dish"

"Why are you still with him Siza?" I ask staring at her.  
"He is my husband Nceba, marriage is an eternal union"  
I let out a chuckle, "If so why is the divorce rate so high?"  
She sigh and put her hand up for the waiter.  
"I'm still busy here...Phindile!" say the waiter.  
I guess he is calling another one to attend to us. This place is packed today.  
"Where is your son?" she ask.  
"He is home, probably bothering Fikile with million demands" I say.  
She smile, "Kids are cute"  
"Do you want them?"  
"Yes I want to be a mother"  
I smile, "I can be the father of your kids"  
Someone clear her throat next to us.  
"May I take your order please?"  
No greeting!  
I look at her, our eyes meet. My heart start beating fast, her eyes are about to pop out. Am I scaring her by staring? She look really young, but she look like her. The lady in black panty.  
"Nceba what are you going to drink?"  
Oh snap!  
We put our orders, her hands are trembling as she put them down.  
"Do you know the girl?"  
I exhale, "No but she look like someone I know"  
"Maybe they are related"  
I nod, "Maybe"  
I collect myself and bring my focus to the table. She want me, I can see it in her eyes, however she don't want to leave her husband. I don't know what I need to do in order to win her heart. She is 32 years old, it's not that bad, she is only 3 years older than me.  
I exhale, "I should get going, I don't want to find the chap already on bed"  
"Oh okay"  
She sound a bit disappointed.  
"We can meet again tomorrow" I say.  
"Is it okay if I book a hotel? I don't like being in public that much"  
This is heading to the wrong direction but I tell her it's fine. I was hoping for something serious with her, I didn't expect her to make me her snack. I want to be the main course.  
We hug and part. I get to my car and sit. I can't bring myself to start the car, my mind is inside the restaurant. I need information from that Phindile waitress.  
I get off the car and make my way back inside the restaurant. I stop one of the waitresses and ask for Phindile.  
"Oh she is a bit sick, she has been vomiting all day" she say.  
"Is there a way I can speak to her?"  
Fortunately she appears followed by the manager. She have her bag, I think she is leaving. I wait a minute then follow her out.  
"Excuse me" I say.

She stop and look back.

"I want to ask you something" I say.

She don't say anything,she just look at me.

"I'm looking for someone,you look like her.Do you have a sister?"

She shake her head.

"A cousin?" I ask.

"Who are you looking for?"

"I don't know her name...I don't remember her name,we met for few hours"

I sound stupid,that's for sure.

She shrug her shoulders, "I don't know the person you are looking for sir"

"I'm Nceba Nkosi" I say.

"Mmm"

She don't look okay.In a minute her face is wet with sweat.

"Must I get you water?" I ask.

"Get..." she don't finish her sentence.

I couldn't save her,I snapped out too late.People are rushing to us asking what's wrong.I have no answers.They sprinkle water over her face,she don't wake up.

"Call the ambulance" someone scream from the crowd.

Ambulance will take too long.I lift her to my arms and rush to my car.One of her colleague offer to come with me.

She did great by coming along because I don't know Phindile.Nurses need her details in order to admit her.The girl is only 19years old.I can't say I'm wondering why she is working instead of studying because it's the reality of many South Africans.

"Thanks bhuti,you really helped her" say the girl who came with me.

"It's nothing.I'm the one who was with her when it happened" I say.

"Oh Zethu is here!" she say looking behind me.

Zethu???

Oh! I know her.She is Fikile's sister,the one who is dating the white guy.

'What happened?" she ask.

"She was not well since morning,she was vomiting and crying with headache.I don't know what happened,she fainted outside with this guy"

I exhale, "We were talking, the next thing she was on the ground.I don't know what went wrong"

She rub her hands together, "I hope the baby is fine.I swear if I find that guy I'm going to kill him with my bare hands"

"What guy???" ask the girl.

"The dog who made her pregnant He didn't even bother with a condom.Phindile is a good girl,she has taken care of herself all these years only for a motherfucker to break her while she was drunk and run away.Some perverts!"

She is fuming,she don't even realise how private the details of the story are.The other girl is awestruck.I'm not,my palms are sweating.

"You are related to her?" I ask.

"No,but she is my little sis"

This is not a coincidence.Phindile is my lady in black panty but she is 19years.I want earth to open up and swallow me.I was drunk but I remember the episode of that night.She

gave me the best sex of my life. I didn't realise she was a virgin although I felt her tightness, it was not easy penetrating her.

Zethu is right, I'm a pervert. She is a teen, I'm 29 years old. She was drunk, she didn't know what she was doing. She wouldn't have agreed if she was sober, girls fight tooth and nail for their virginity. Although I was drunk, consented to do it and lied to about her age, I still feel like I violated her.

This Zethu girl is not about nonsense, she demands to see the doctor. God! She is very loud, I feel sorry for the white family she is marrying to.

"Why are you not telling us anything? You also want us to faint and admit us so that you make money"

The doctor just smiles, "Not at all, Phindile is fine"

"And the baby?"

"The baby is okay too. I'm keeping them for a few hours, just to make sure she is fine"

I've heard enough. I leave quietly, without anyone noticing. My life keeps taking turns, turns I don't like. Why on this earth am I bringing another innocent soul?

I'm not even sure Phindile will want me in the baby's life. Zethu on the other hand wants to kill me, but I deserve it. A 19-year-old???

I park my car and walk inside the house. I've taken longer than I promised. I hope Anga is not mad.

"Finally!" it's my brother.

I look around for Fikile and Anga, they are nowhere. The house is quiet.

"Hey bhuti, where are the people?" I ask.

"They took themselves out. I thought you went drinking as usual"

I sit on the chair, "No, I'm done with alcohol"

"I hope you're being honest Nceba. You know you are the only brother I have now. I fear getting a call to come fetch your dead body on the street one day. Durban is not a safe place, especially at night. I don't want to lose you too"

I look at him. He looks worried. I know I've disappointed him a million times. For him to trust me again and let me in his house shows that he cares for me.

"I promise Nkosi" I say.

"Please focus on building yourself, find a job and focus on your career and Anga. In clubs you will meet girls and make unplanned babies and contract diseases"

I can't look at him in the eyes. I push my sweaty hands under the table. Again I will disappoint him.

"Ncebayenkosi I hope I'm not too late" he says.

My hands get to my face. I brush it and exhale.

"You can start talking" his voice has changed from caring to demanding.

I clear my throat, "I just found out I made a girl pregnant while drunk"

"You are not drunk now, did you make her pregnant?"

"I guess so, we didn't use the condom"

"How do you know the baby is yours?" he asks.

"I was her first and she is..."

He narrows his eyes, "She is what?"

"She is young"

"How old?"

I swallow hard, this is a disgrace.

"She is 19 years"

"What???"

I exhale, "She told me she was 25 that day, she didn't even tell me she was a virgin. I just found out today from Sis Fikile's sister, Zethu"

He frown, "Zethu? How did she know?"

"She said Phindile is her little sister"

"Phindile as in the little girl?" he ask.

He knows her?!

"Yes" I say.

"You made that little girl pregnant?"

I explain all over again. He start laughing at me.

"Do you know Thapelo Mokoena?" he ask.

"I know the name" I say.

"Oh you will see him little brother, he look like John Cena"

"I will see him?" I ask confused.

"Soon Ndlangamandla, trust me he will kill you for his little girl"

I'm more confused than ever. Is this Thapelo Phindile's father?

"What do you mean?" I ask.

"I mean there will be another funeral"

He walk away laughing, it's the first time I see him this amused after Nqubeko's death. I'm now worried. Am I in bigger trouble than I thought?

Chapter 281

Zethu Biyela

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Finally she is ready to go home. When I heard she collapsed I phoned her family, they are in my apartment as we speak. She is not speaking, that's her normal mood lately. She hardly talk, I bet it comes with the stress of not knowing the father of the baby.

"Do you need anything?" I ask.

"No"

"Thapelo called earlier, I don't know what to tell him"

She sigh, "Just tell him I'm not too sick"

"Still, you have a medical aid. Why haven't you gone to the doctor? That's his question. You know he want you to be okay"

She keep quiet. The longer she drag this secret the worse.

"It's time you tell him and your family the truth. They will be disappointed but they will support you"

"I'm scared"

"I will be there with you. You know I'm Tyzee-the-tamer, they won't touch you"

She exhale, "I just feel so stupid"

"You are not stupid for being pregnant, many young girls have babies. It's God's change of commandments. But you are stupid for not knowing the baby's father"

"I know him"

What???

"So you were fooling me?" I ask.

"No, I saw him today. He don't know me though, he think I have an older sister or something, he wanted her"

My eyes widen, "You lie! Did you tell him it's you, you lied about your age?"

"No, he was with Zanda's sister-in-law and they were cosy, talking about making babies"  
Holy Spirit!

"What's his name? He need to be dealt with" I say.

"Nceba Nkosi"

"Not Skhumbuzo's brother, right?"

She shrug her shoulders, "The only thing he told me was his name then I fainted"

This is more shocking than Brad Pitt's divorce. What's the hell? Nceba Nkosi is the father!

"I think you will have a better explanation now, your family is waiting for you. We might as well call Thapelo and do it once"

Her eyes pop out, "Where are they waiting?"

"In my apartment"

She want earth to open up and swallow her. She did this to herself, it's time to face the music.

They are with Simtho, I asked her to come keep them company. Nkabhle has recovered, he only limp if the weather is cold. He is cold too, as a person. He is no longer that Nkabhle, the cold one. What I'm trying to say is he is two times cold now. I think he need a woman in his life. Ziphe has made sex probably fifty thousand times since they came back from Kalahari desserts. He don't look like he has had a kiss.

Maybe he is gay. If he is then I should contact Dina. There is fresh out-of-the-oven muffin waiting for him.

"Sanibonani" we greet.

Their eyes are on Phindile, her head is bowed down. She can't even look at them.

"What's wrong Phindile?" Nkabhle ask.

"The doctor released me, he said I'm fine. It was ulcers"

Ulcers really? I thought we were here to tell the truth.

"I'm so sorry" he say pulling her for a hug.

I still can't get over his brotherness. He kiss her cheek and make her sit next to him. Sbusiso should see this.

Her mother haven't said anything. Simtho is cooking in the kitchen, I need more urgent situations. My own chef!

Thapelo arrives, he greet and sit next to me. Him and Nkabhle don't see eye to eye. Phindile must do this quickly and end the awkwardness.

"How are you son?" Phindile's mother ask him.

"I'm fine Ma, only worried about Phindile"

He look at her, "How are you feeling?"

"I'm better now" she say.

I'm still stuck on her mother's silence and lack of empathy. She ask Thapelo's wellbeing before her daughter's who just came back from the hospital.

She look at Phindile, "We are waiting to hear the ulcers' father's name"

Whoooooah!

I'm unable to hold back my laughter. Simtho come speeding from the kitchen. Thapelo and Nkabenhle are hell confused.

"How far are the ulcers?" she ask glaring at her.

Phindile look down with shame, "Four weeks"

"Where is their father?"

Phindile look at me.

I jump in, "He live ten minutes away from here"

"What is going on?" Thapelo ask.

"The ulcers are the baby in her tummy" Phindile's mother say.

"What???" both him and Nkabenhle exclaim.

She start crying, "I'm sorry, it was a mistake"

"How Phindile?" ask Nkabenhle.

He don't look angry, he is just disappointed. His arm has got off her shoulder.

"I was drunk" she say.

Thapelo look at me, "She was drunk Zethu? How did you let that happen? You took her from me and said you will look after her"

"Don't pin this on me, she knocked off from work and went to the clubs. I didn't even know where she was"

"Who is the baby's father?" he ask her.

"Nceba Nkosi"

Thapelo frown, "Why does the name sound so familiar?"

"It's Skhumbuzo's cute brother" say Simtho jumping in.

"How long have you known him?"

She cry even harder. I have to explain what happened on her behalf, her mother keep clapping her hands, exclaiming.

Thapelo exhale, "This is shocking Phindile, I didn't expect it from you. I'm very disappointed"

"I'm sorry" she say sobbing.

"She must go report the pregnancy to the boy right now. She is not longer your responsibility, her hospital bills must be taken care of by that boy"

I look at her, "What do you mean report the pregnancy Ma?"

"My leg hurt, I can't go with her. I don't know what's gonna happen but I need that boy to know what he did"

Simtho grins, "We can go with her"

Oh yes! We can go.

"I would appreciate that" she say.

"What are we going to say when we get there?" I ask.

"Tell them their dog ate the eggs"

Their dog? I like the tone of that.

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Fikile Biyela

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Tonight he is compensating all the mourning days he didn't touch Apple on. He is murdering my poor nana. This is the third round, I'm about to faint when he cum. He pull out and go down on me with his mouth.

"MaBiyela" he say masturbating his shaft up again.

Okay it's time to run. I roll off bed and run to the bathroom. He follow me laughing. I get inside the shower and turn cold water on.

He get in with me and hold me. There is a smirk on his face. His shaft is cooling down, thank God. When we get out of the shower he lift me up and take me to the bathroom.

"I'm not ready to sleep yet" he say.

I laugh, "This is abuse Skhumbuzo"

"Let's go get something to eat and continue with the job"

He pull me down the stairs to the kitchen. I take the yoghurt and strawberries, I'm trying to be romantic.

"Mina ngifuna i-orientshi" he say.

What was I thinking?!

"Strawberries taste like orange" I say.

"I don't care, I want orange"

I take it and give it to him. He take the knife and cut it. I eat my strawberries alone, he don't even bother with yoghurt.

Something bang the door. I nearly faint.

"Go upstairs" he say.

"No"

"Fikile!"

The door is still banging.

"Go upstairs" he say angrily.

"What if...?"

Zethu's voice break in, "Yeyi bo!!!"

My heart start beating normal, but what's the fuck!

"Is that your sister?" he ask.

"Yes"

We make our way to the door and open. It's Zethu, Simtho and Phindile. I hope it's not what I think it is. I heard the pregnancy story.

"Where is the dog?" Zethu ask walking in.

"What's going on?" I ask.

"We want our eggs" say Simtho.

Zethu nudge her, "No the eggs have been eaten already, we want the dog"

"Oh we want the dog that ate the eggs"

I can't believe they are doing this to me, we are sisters. Disturbing my night like this is out of line.

"Take them to the lounge" Skhumbuzo say before walking away.

I ask them to come to the lounge. They ask what I'm going to serve them. I wasn't aware it was Christmas in disguise.

"Phindile can I get you anything?" I ask.

"No I'm fine" she say.



"Two glasses of Chardonnay" Zethu say.  
Simtho add, "And whatever you had for supper"  
I can't believe Nceba did this to us.This is torture,I was in the middle of something.  
"Are you guys even supposed to be here?" I ask.  
"Yes,we were sent by Phindile's mother.Unless if you want us to go back and fetch her"  
No I can't deal with an angry mother.  
"Fine, I will get your drinks" I say.  
A while later Skhumbuzo walk down followed by Nceba.His eyeballs are going to roll on the floor soon.  
"They are waiting for you" I tell him.  
"What must I do?"  
Skhumbuzo chuckles, "I wish we got the same question when you impregnated the girl"  
"Please brother"  
Sadly I don't know how this whole thing goes.I've never reported any pregnancy.  
"Here is the dog"  
Trust Zethu to say that.  
We sit down with them.  
"Phindile is this the guy who made you pregnant?" Simtho ask.  
Phindile look like she is ready to die and go to heaven.  
"Yes" she say in a low voice.  
"Yes or no brother?"  
Nceba clear his throat, "Yes"  
"Great! Thapelo will contact you.You need to take responsibility,cover the medical aid,buy her favourite food and buy her comfortable clothes"  
"Don't forget paying for the damages" say Zethu.  
Well this is absurd.Nceba look more shocked than ever.He didn't expect all this.  
"How far she is?" Skhumbuzo ask.  
"Four weeks down,only thirty four weeks to go" Zethu say.  
"Then we meet Ulcer"  
Who is Ulcer now? They are laughing their lungs out.  
"Before we forget we need money to cleanse ourselves,R500"  
What???  
"You're crazy,it's silver money" I say.  
"R1 and R500"  
Zethu is something else.They are getting no R500,not under my watch.  
"Guys we are not even sure she is pregnant" Skhumbuzo say.  
He look at me, "Can you go confirm?"  
No ways! I'm not MaMvelase.  
"Nceba must go" I say.  
He hesitate for a moment then go kneel infront of Phindile and lift het t-shirt up.They are both scared of each other,it's funny to watch.They can't even look at each other in the eyes,how did they make out?  
"And?" I ask.  
"She is pregnant" he say.  
"We told you Ulcer is here" Zethu say.

I wonder why they are calling the baby Ulcer.It's sound awful.

"We will talk with the elders,our home is in Inkandla.This is just my house but it's okay we've heard you"

Nceba glance at me.I know what he is thinking.Which elders? Which home? Skhumbuzo is just putting a nice cover,this house is Nceba's home.

Chapter 282

Skhumbuzo Nkosi

I knocked off work and drove to KwaMashu to check on my mkhayas.It's Friday,apparently on this day couples must go out together.So I have to take Fikile out for dinner then go to the cinema.I barely watch movies,I prefer soccer,so my presence in the cinema is always absent.Nevertheless I get the movie review all the way back home. There are cars parked outside my house.What has happened now? These are Biyelas.Fikile's brother's Jeep is parked right where I was going to park my car.Do I even have a parking space here?

"Mr Party is here" someone shout as I enter the door.

I look around,hoping to see Mr Party.I don't see anyone,everyone's eyes are on me.

"Good evening" I greet.

"Yizo bra!" say Don.

We bump our fists.Other guys greet me too.I still have no idea what's going on.

"Heeeeeeeey"

It's the crazy little one.Not really little because there is Ziphelele but she has resumed the last born position very well.She bothers Fikile every chance she get,she get on the phone and request a lump sum of money.Unlike other sisters she don't care,she hug me and walk infront of me generating every word that comes to her mind with her mouth.

"We came to throw you a party" say Nduku laughing.

We grew up together,we are neighbours.He is dislocated as I am.

"What do you know about parties?" I ask.

He shout, "Sbu where is the cake?"

They cannot be serious.Maybe I can take the surprise party thing but not the cake.My first born is 16years old,I can't be cutting cakes.

"What's going on?" I ask.

"We are here to check on you" Sbusiso say.

"Oh thanks"

Don walk toward us, "So where are your drinks Nkosi?"

Where is my woman? I see everyone,but not her.

"Check the refrigerators Don" I say.

"There is juice only"

Eish!

Sbusiso chuckles "Are we allowed to buy our own drinks at least? We won't make it to 9pm with juice and Coke"

They will be here till 9pm? My Friday plans are doomed.

"It's okay sbari,I will send my brother to go buy drinks"

"He is not here" Zethu says.

I frown, "He is not here?"

"We don't have cooked food in the house. I will eat here, his baby mama is not well so he went to cook for her"

What???

"He went to cook for her? Why couldn't Phindile come here?" I ask.

"I told him to go"

I give her a look. She is going to play with my brother now? I take out my phone and dial Nceba's number. I distance myself from Don's loud voice.

Nceba: Brother

Me: Nceba where are you?

Nceba: I'm in Zethu's flat

Me: Doing what there?

Nceba: She said the girl is hungry

Me: (Inhaling sharply) It's not 'the girl', it's Phindile. Anyway why can't you bring her here or buy her a takeaway?

Nceba: I bought it but she is not opening the door.

Me: Why?

Nceba: I don't know, I've been knocking for almost thirty minutes

I wish to feel sorry for him but he did this to himself. Phindile is a child, she could be playing hide & seek with her dolls inside.

Me: Well good luck, I have a party to get to

Nceba: You need luck yourself

He is right, with the Biyelas in my house I need luck. Worse they are about to drink alcohol. I walk back to them and join in the soccer conversation. That's the only common interest I have with them. I haven't seen Thapelo and Mandla. Even Tyson is here.

"Where is Mandla?" I ask.

Don turn and chat with Simtho. I look at Lwazi and Sbusiso expecting an answer. They are ignoring me. I read between the lines, Mandla hate me. I warned Nqubeko, now it's happening.

I should go change the formal wear and find Fikile. Fortunately I bump on her coming down the stairs.

"Baby" she say planting a peck on my cheek.

I put my arm around her waist, "Are you okay?"

"Yes I'm okay, I was just worried about you. Your phone was off earlier"

"Maybe it was network problems, my phone has been on the whole day"

She nod, "Okay, did you see Thapelo?"

"No"

"He is grilling all your meat. I mean everything that says meat, even your chicken head and feet"

I just laugh and ask her to walk me to the bedroom. Tomorrow we will be buying grocery, Sena and Nozipho are doing number one in the kitchen.

"So where were you?" she ask.

"In the hostel"

She sigh dramatically and sit on bed.

"I didn't die" I add.

The drinks!!!!

"Baby can you go to the shops quickly and buy alcohol for your family?" I ask.

She give me a look, "Really now?"

What have I said wrong now?

"We are not a family of drunkards" she say.

"I didn't say that"

"But you are implying the exact thing"

I know I won't win this argument so I apologise and beg her to go.

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Nceba Nkosi

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It's starting to be cold,I'm only wearing a t-shirt.She is not opening the door,but the security confirmed that the door is locked from inside.It's time I go to that security guard again and ask him to open the door with his keys.

I take a few steps and hear the door opening behind me.Who in their right mind lock a person out for an hour?

I walk back to the door and greet her.She reply with a nod.I don't know if it's hormones or she is naturally like this.

"I brought you food" I say.

She nod and walk away.I have to follow her,I guess.She sit on the couch and fix her eyes on her hands.

"How are you feeling?" I ask.

"Good"

"Must I warm food for you? Where is your microwave?"

"I don't like chicken but thank you"

Urgh! I should've asked what she likes.

"I will try to find something else down the cafeteria" I say.

Oh before I buy something she hate again I ask, "What must I get for you?"

"Pies" she say.

I buy three different pies and juice.She devour two of them at one go.I find myself staring at her as she chew.She is really young,just a few years older than Sthelo.My phone disturb the silence.I check the caller, it's Siza.She is not giving up,I cancelled her on last minute Wednesday.My life just took another turn I can't afford to be her wing guy.

Phindile stand up and walk away.

"Are you done eating?" I ask.

"Yes"

I follow her, "You didn't drink the juice"

"I have water in my room,I want to give you space to take your call"

"It's no one important" I say.

She stand still,I bet she want to get away.

"Phindile I would love to talk with you"

Thank heavens! She walk with me to the lounge and sit.She wait for me to start talking.

"I understand why you hate me, but I didn't mean to do this. I was in a bad space, I don't even drink alcohol. I thought you were 25 years, being drunk as I was I didn't realise it was your first time. I'm sorry if I violated you"

She don't say anything, I take a breath and continue.

"I will take full responsibility of what I've done. All I'm asking is for you and your family is to give me a few months to get a job then I will pay for damages. I don't have a job right now, I have to save what I have for you, Anga and the baby"

Her eyes widen. I realise I just blurted out my son's name.

"I have a son, his name is Anga" I say.

She nod with a frown on her face.

"His mother left him so I'm a single parent. Fikile and my brother help me with him"

I look at her, "What about you?"

"I'm nineteen and pregnant. My family hate me, do you know how hurtful it is being hated by your own mother?"

Wow! I didn't expect this reaction. She sound angry.

"I know, it's hurtful" I say.

"Maybe you only read about it. I'm experiencing that hurt at first hand, my own mother don't speak to me. The woman who brought me on this earth don't have my love in her heart. Where am I going to get my blessings? She is the only parent I have"

I clear my dry throat, "It's still early, she is just disappointed. Give her time she will accept the situation and forgive you"

"Who am I crying to while she is angry at me? I want to cry on her shoulder"

She is mommy's girl.

"Cry on me, I'm the reason why you're crying right?" I say.

She exhale, "The point is I need my mother"

I'm trying not to let her words get to me. I don't want to reflect on them.

"She will come around" I say.

She fold her arms and rest on the couch.

I clear my throat, "I didn't lose your black panty"

She look down embarrassed. She didn't even know what she was doing yet she gave me so pleasure. I was hoping to find the lady in black panty so that we can do it again. Now I've found her, she is nineteen, I'm not sure I still want to pursue my wet dreams of her. But at the same time I don't want another man to be on top of her. He might hurt her.

"I've never broke any girl's virginity, you were my first" I don't even know why I'm telling her this.

"Ummm okay" she say with hesitation.

I kneel in front of her and lift her t-shirt up. I enjoyed it the first day I did it. I fell in love with Ulcer instantly. I don't even know why my baby is called Ulcer but it's trending like that.

I hold her stomach and plant a kiss on it. She is not big yet but it shows that she is pregnant. She carrying my little baby. I'm grown, I'm about to be the father of two kids.

"Phindile can I ask you a favour?" I say.

"Yeah"

"No matter what happens between you and I please don't hate my baby. He will always need your love, you brought him on this earth"

"I won't" she say without hesitation.

I leave her watching TV and drive back home.I'm hoping to find their braai over.I'm not okay,I don't want to be the crowd.

Urgh! They are still here.I will use the garage door.

Unfortunately they are everywhere,I walk on the coloured dude drinking a glass of whisky.It's only him though,he is sitting on the kitchen chair lost in his thoughts.

"Good afternoon" I greet.

Silence.I doubt he heard me,I walk past him and take water out of the fridge.

"How are they?"

His voice surprise me,I thought he was unaware of his surroundings.He is talking about Phindile and the baby I guess.

"They are fine mfethu" I say.

"Your face don't look happy about that"

"I'm happy,it's just that...dude!" I sigh and walk away.He probably won't understand,they have good lives.

>>>>>It Continues

Chapter 282

(Continues)

Nceba Nkosi

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I'm lying in my room trying to sleep.It's not possible with the noise in this house.Maybe I should've went to Nqubeko's house.It strike my mind that I could use this time to apply for jobs online.

Eish! My laptop is in Skhumbuzo's study room.Now I have to walk out of this room and risk bumping on these people.By the way I saw Thapelo Mokoena,he is a taller than John Cena.He didn't say anything,maybe he understand,he also married a teenager if I hear correctly.His wife was 19years when he married her.

I bump to the designer,she have a little baby on her arms,she is also pregnant.I've never seen anything like this in my life.

She look up and see me, "Oh hey"

"Hello"

"You're back,go have some meat"

I clear my throat, "Thanks but I'm not hungry"

"Dude did you taste that meat?" the voice comebehind us.

It's Simtho.

"Thapelo is a husband material" say Nozipho.

"I also want to marry him"

They both laugh.His wife appears followed by Zanda.I haven't seen her in a long time.We share acknowledging look and smile.

"So are you and Phindile together now?"

The question is a bit personal.I don't know how to answer her,she have her hands on her big hips staring at me.

"No we are not" I say after a minute.

"Do you know how bad it is being a single mom? No child deserve to be raised by one parent while both parents are alive"

I nod my head, "I know,I'm still trying to figure things out"

"What things? Ulcer is coming in eight months"

Zanda clear her throat, "Simtho give him a break"

She roll her eyes, "I'm just giving free professional advice"

"Professional?" ask the voice.

It's Sbusiso Biyela.They keep coming,I want to leave.

"Yes,I'm a professional person so my advice is professional as well"

"Stop patronising Nkosi"

He look at me, "Come join us"

I don't have a choice,I follow him outside and join the rest of the guys.

"Haybo Nceba you cut your hair like this now?"

I laugh.I haven't seen him in a while,he is my homeboy.

"I heard you got yourself an English girlfriend"

He is eating a pile of meat, "I'm telling you mkhaya,I sleep with GOODNIGHT and wake up with GOODMORNING"

"So how is it like?" Don ask.

Nduku frown, "What?"

"Her fruit"

"Kuyafiwa bafo,juice only"

Wtf! They just speak like this.

"You're traumatizing us" Zethu say.

I'm seconding her.This talk is going to give me nightmares.

"How are you holding up?"

I look at him,he is looking at me.He don't match with his wife,maybe he would've been okay with Simtho.I pray he don't bring the pregnancy issue up.

"I'm good" I say.

"Great"

His eyes stay a little longer,it's making me a bit uncomfortable.This is John Cena,my brother said.

"WHO TOOK MY FOOT?"

Everyone look at her.I haven't seen her,she is coming out of the house.

"Your foot?" Fikile ask.

"Yes my foot"

Now our eyes on her legs,she have her two feet.She sit on the coloured guy's lap and glare at everyone.She look angry.

"Do you perhaps have a third foot dade?" Nduku ask.

"My chicken foot dummy.I put my meat in the microwave now one foot is missing"

They had a braai of chicken feet? Who does that!

Everyone look at Simtho,she burst out laughing.

"Are you guys serious? I don't eat chicken feet"

"Who else is capable of stealing someone's food?" Sbusiso ask.

She point at Nozipho, "Your pregnant wife"

"What???"

"You've been in the kitchen the whole time"  
Sbusiso jump in, "Don't even try,mama come here"  
His wife snuggle in his arm and look at them with 'I'm untouchable' face.Suddenly everyone is sitting next to their partners.Luckily Nduku is here so I'm not the spare wheel.  
"Skhumbuzo I want you to borrow me your Maskandi cd's.I have umemulo coming up,I have to be Nandi" Zethu say.  
Skhumbuzo chuckles, "You won't be singing Maskandi,there are umemulo songs"  
"I know umemulo songs,I also want Maskandi cd's"  
"Which ones do you know?"  
Hey! She is up singing and dancing in a second.  
"Balele balele uBaba noMama...."  
Zanda scream, "Whoooooah!"  
This girl is my therapy.Why did Zanda stop her,I wanted to hear her sing the rest of the song.I'm sure she would've sang the exact lyrics.  
"Don't stop Zethu,sing" Don say.  
Zanda shake her head, "There are kids inside the house"  
"Okay okay I will do the hlala phansi one"  
There is a hlala phansi one? This I got to hear.  
Then she burst out with isigiyo, "HLALA PHANSI!!!"  
She look at us, "You guys must say SENGIHLELI and clap your hands"  
"It's not a song" Skhumbuzo say dead with laughter.  
She don't care.She say it again,they have no choice but to chant after her.She stop and look at me and the coloured guy.  
"Really Nceba and Lwazi? You guys are not supportive at all"  
Supportive? I don't even sing in the bathroom,why am I going to do it now,infront of people?  
Lwazi chuckles, "Tyson is not singing either"  
"He is taking a video and he don't know Zulu"  
Lord have mercy!  
Nduku take over and start singing his own song.Don throw up his leg twice and jump.I think he was trying the Zulu dance

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Fikile Biyela

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Now we are being black people.We are making so much noise,if the neighbours don't get us arrested us today they are too good.Nduku and Zethu have decided to have umemulo right here,right now.Skhumbuzo is having the time of his life.They are clapping hands,singing and chanting izaga.It's crazy,even the kids are here.

Sbusiso and Donald don't even know what they are doing,they are just jumping and laughing.They are yelling above everyone else.

"Yizo yizo!!!!"

Someone must remind these people that this is not Inkandla! This noise could get us arrested,for disturbing peace.



"Show me what you've got" he say in my ear.

"No"

"Are you serious? What are you going to do on our wedding day?"

I look at him, "I will practice"

He is smiling,happily.We are not just a family of drunkards after all.

"Where is my card?" he ask out of the blue.

I ignore him and watch Zethu dancing.She is pretty good,I should learn a few moves from her.His arm slide around my waist and rest on top of my vagina.My brother is here,the journalists are here! He don't know how fast they spread news,especially journalist Zethu.

"Where is my card?" he ask again.

"I will give it back"

I didn't give him his credit card earlier.He take care of everything in the house,even my cars are taken care of by him.However I feel like I deserve to spoil myself with this card tomorrow,it got amazing balance in it.

Around 20h30 they leave.Anga has seen Junior,he is leaving too.Nceba was uncomfortable with it,I had to assure him Simtho is going to take care of him.

Now the worst part is cleaning all the mess.Their kids were all over the house, my dishes are dirty.

"Do you need help?"

I turn and look at him, "No, I'm fine"

He pull the chair and sit.He look worried.

"How is Phindile?" I ask.

"She is not happy,her mother don't talk to her"

"That's normal,well according to black families.They don't kiss your cheek for being pregnant at a young age,unmarried" I say.

"The thing is I can't afford paying for the damages yet"

What???

I look at him, "Nceba!"

"Well I can,but I don't have any money coming in.I need to save what I have,I don't know how long it would take me to get the job" he say.

"But you know how black families are,ihlawulo is very important.It will show them that you respect them and know that you've done wrong by impregnating their daughter"

He sigh, "At the same time I have to save for the baby,I don't want my baby to suffer"

"You have to pay ihlawulo" Skhumbuzo's voice burst in.

Nceba look at him, "I know"

"Then start preparing,you need a truck to transport the cows from Inkandla to Darnall"

"Nkosi you know I won't get the cows,your mother won't allow that" he say.

"Those are our father's cows,not hers"

He take a bottle of water and walk away.MaMvelase is going to have a fit and I can't wait.

Chapter 283

Precious Dlomo

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I don't understand the look on his face. He has never smiled ever since we met. They say he lost his memory, maybe he forgot to smile too. I don't understand why Amos insists that he stay here. How is he going to regain his memory if he is not in a familiar place? Who is he by the way? Not just the name, what's his background? His story.

"Can I get you anything?" I ask.

He gives me one of his nerve-shattering looks and keeps his mouth shut. There is something about him, something dark evident through his eyes.

I pour whiskey in a glass and put it in front of him. He lifts his eyes up and glares at me.

"Cool the day" I say, covering my face with a smile.

"No, take this thing back"

"You don't drink?" I ask.

He drops his eyes and taps his fingers on the arm of the chair.

"I'm sure you drank before, it's what everyone does" I say, inviting myself on the chair next to him.

I don't know when Amos is coming back, I hope not soon. I know I'm being evil but I pray a very sick patient keep him, better an injured one.

"I heard you were shot" I initiate the conversation.

I will take his silence as a yes.

"Do you know how dangerous smuggling drugs is? Let alone across borders. I understand that you don't have a family but you can find legit work, you're still young. Amos is not what you think he is, when shit hits the fan he will be throwing you in the lion's den"

He displays his teeth, not in a smile, just an evil grin.

"Yet you work for him" he says.

"You think I want to be here? No, I don't have a choice. I have a daughter, she is nine years old. I'm protecting her by being here"

"Bad for you" he says.

"Everything you know about you is what he told you. Do you trust him?" I ask.

"Yes, we come a long way"

Right! I saw their pictures. They were in their early twenties but that doesn't mean anything. Amos can sacrifice anyone for his beneficiary.

"What if he is keeping something from you? What if there is more to your past than he is letting you on?"

"You are like a whistle, do you ever stop talking?"

A whistle, really?

"You are a Xulu, that means you are a Zulu. Can I investigate about you? Maybe I could find something"

"No" he says.

Sigh!

"You were not born here, the Xulus are in KZN"

He wrinkles his forehead, "What's your problem? Go mop the floors and do your wifey duties"

Cold shivers run down my spine. He looks like he wants to murder me. I get off the chair and leave him turning his chair around.

Dinner is awkward.Mxm! It's always awkward anyway.My palms are sweating,if Amos find out that I've been interrogating his partner,that's how he call him,I will be dead.

"Ey Xabhashe things are not good,we might have the Niger Bees behind us,the lane we used was theirs"

"Okay" he say.

He don't even care,my guts tell me he don't even know how dangerous the Niger Bees are.

Amos,who is my fiancée by the way,look at me.My face compose a smile.I have trained myself very well.

"We are moving to Seychelles"

Whaaat?

"Where? Why?" I ask.

"Don't question me woman!"

I exhale and smooth my face.

"What about Melo? She can't just up and leave" I say.

"She have no choice,unless if you want her to stay behind and suffer the consequences of your doing"

Sigh!

I don't even know where Seychelles is on the map.I've been travelling half of my life,mostly to Russia.I thought last year was the last year of running.I can't do this anymore.My daughter has finally found friends,she love her aunt.I can't take away that from her.She just found her happiness.

I clear the table and leave them talking.My head is already pounding.Why did I put myself in this mess? It only took me one stash of cocaine to be here.I was just trying my luck,I didn't know the owner of that boy was this cruel man.

He is still downstairs,probably planning our next move.I check if the coast is really clear.Well they are still watching TV.

I have no idea what I'm looking for.My PI skills are inactive.Where do I start searching? There are so many Xulus on social media.

Urgh! I don't even know why I'm bothering myself,I'm not even sure the guy want to quit.He don't look like he care.My motivation was if I can find someone special,whether it's a family member or old friend,he could have a different outlook on life.One thing I've noticed is how Amos fear this guy.He try in everyway not to piss him off.That's why I need him on my side.

Oh shit! I close the window and click on our old pictures.

"You are still up?"

I smile, "You expected me to sleep without you?"

"You love me too much"

I could roll my eyes till they touch my brain.

"You know the story boo.How is your schedule tomorrow?"

"I will be in the surgery from 7am to 12pm" he say.

I nod my head, "That means you will be home for lunch?"

"You know I have other businesses,I will be home late"

I fake a sigh,he plant a kiss on my cheek and apologise.Only if he knew how much I enjoy his absence.

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I've spent almost two hours on this couch. I'm not finding anything that relate to him. What if I take a picture of him and upload it on FB? People could know him. But no, that would be like signing for my own death.

I hear footsteps and turn my head. It's him. He is back early today.

I close the laptop and get on my feet, "Hello"

He say a cold 'hi' and sit on the opposite couch.

"How was your day?" I ask.

"Good"

"I haven't cooked yet. Is the sandwich okay or I should warm leftovers?"

He frown, "What's your name again?"

Really???

"I'm Precious" I say.

"You do have a precious mouth, you just don't keep it shut"

Wow! I'm only being nice to him, there is no need for him to bite my head off like this. Can't the world be a bit nicer?

I take the remote and switch the TV on. He put his foot on the coffee table and watch with his arms folded. So he enjoy TV more than a human company?

Urgh! These girls again. They love the spotlight. Today they are interviewing the elder one, asking her old same questions about business.

The host smile at her, "Rumours have been going on, we heard lot of people talking about your wedding"

She roll her eyes, "People just can't get their noses off my business"

"Is it true though?"

She smile, "Well I might have my wedding around March, I'm not inviting anyone though"

I change the channel. They are now the Kardashians, we have to keep up with their lives.

"Go back" he say out of the blue.

"Huh?"

"Back to that channel"

I let out a chuckle, "You love reality stars wannabes? She is only talking about their successful businesses and luxurious life"

"Who is she?"

He don't know who Fikile Biyela is? That's some late... Damn, the guy lost his memory. He probably don't even know who Nelson Mandela is.

"It's Fikile Biyela from Durban" I tell him.

"Oh"

Unfortunately the interview is about to end. He watch attentively then leave when the interview end. I'm left with a huge frown pasted on my face.

Maybe he knows her!

I follow him out and find him walking around the garden.

"Do you recognise her?" I ask.

He look at me with his brows furrowed.

"Who?"

"Fikile Biyela" I say.

It take him a minute to tell me no,so I will rubbish that no and investigate.Time is not on my side.We might be leaving in weeks,that's how inconsiderate that man is.

Do these famous people ever reply? I've sent this Fikile a number of e-mails,she is not responding.Maybe I need to set an appointment in order to send an email.Rhaaa!

Zethu Biyela! Why haven't I thought of her? That one is always online posting, I should DM her and ask her sister's number.

Yasss! My plan worked.She is not picking up though,but I will keep trying.Finally she pick up.

"Fikile Biyela hello"

"Hey sisi you're speaking to Precious Dlomo,I asked your number from your sister" I say with my breath held.

"Okay, is there anything I can do for you?"

I look around first then tell her about Mazwi Xulu.

"No,I don't know any Mazwi Xulu" she say.

"The thing is he lost his memory,he don't remember much things about his life.But when he watched you on the interview he looked at you like he know you from somewhere"

"Maybe he does but I don't know him"

Sigh!

"Okay thank you"

"My pleasure,enjoy your day"

Chapter 284

Fikile Biyela

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He put his whole body on top of me,a whole 50kg man just throw himself on me.

"You are hurting me" I say.

He roll off, "You are moody these days what's up?"

"Nothing"

He pinch my cheek and smile.I want to roll my eyes,he is annoying.

"Simile is coming tomorrow" he say.

I frown, "It's Thursday tomorrow"

"And Friday is a holiday"

Yoh! My mind is fucked up.I don't know what's wrong with me,I have severe anxiety.

"Did you speak to my Dad?" I ask.

"No,I spoke with Sbusiso,he is the one who spoke with him for me"

"Let me guess,Kuhle said no"

He chuckles, "Yeah"

"He is a granny's boy,what are your plans vele?"

"We are having a men's Friday,me,Nceba,Sthelo,Mfundi,Nkanyezi,Simile and Anga"

My eyes widen, "What about me?"

"You are not a man,sorry"

This is bull!

"Where are you having your Friday?" I ask.

"Here,you are going home"

What? He is kicking me out.

He laugh at my shocked face.

"It's not funny" I say.

"Go have a girls Friday with your sisters.I know something is troubling you,you can't talk to me about everything.Maybe your sisters will help"

Well I don't know what's troubling me,there is nothing heavy in my heart.It's my mind that keep overthinking then I get tired of thinking and get moody.

"Your phone is ringing" he say.

I snap out of my thoughts and take it.The caller end the call when I'm about to answer.The same number called me a couple of days ago.I call her back,she don't pick up.

"Who is that?"

I raise my eyebrows, "Really now?"

He keep quiet and stare at me.

A message follows: \*\*He know you,sadly he cannot remember very well.I need your help,urgently\*\*

Who is this bitch? Zethu is so annoying,she give strangers my number now I have to deal with annoying calls.This girl could be plotting something,I need to block her.

Another message follows,now it's a voice note.Can you believe it!

I click on it and listen.

Voice 1; Her name is Fikile Biyela,she stay in Durban.

Wtf! They she is discussing my name.

Voice 2; I'm not related to the Biyelas,right?

Voice 1; I don't know

Voice 2; It could be just someone I met,she is beautiful though.

I play the record over and over again.Skhumbuzo is scrolling his phone,paying no attention.

I poke him, "Baby listen here and tell me you don't find anything wrong"

He take the phone and listen to the record.

"Who are these?" he ask.

"I don't know,the same girl called me Monday about some Xulu guy who lost his memory"

He frown, "How does it concern you?"

"She said the guy know me,he recognise me on TV and paid extra attention"

"Oh yeah" he get back on his phone.

I listen to the record again.I may be crazy but I know this voice.I need to find out who this girl is and when were these records taken.

I send her a text; \*\*I need a videocall with you\*\*

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**#Ten** Minutes Later

I don't how the fuck she think I'm going to see her face in that dark room.

"Can you speak louder?" I ask.

"I'm sorry I can't" she is whispering.

"Do you have a picture of the guy you are talking about?"

"No"

Sigh!

"How am I supposed to know if I know him or not?" I ask.

"I will try to take a picture,I don't know how but I'll make a plan"

"Why are you whispering?" I ask.

"I don't want my fiancee to find out"

"Are you in danger?"

She sniff, "Yes"

"What is your name and your fiancée's name?"

"I'm Precious Dlomo, he is Amos Mlaba"

Now I have to look up for them. They could be tricking me into sympathy, girls are the most dangerous criminals.

The Amos Mlaba I'm finding here is a doctor. Something is off here.

"Skhumbuzo" I shake his arm.

Silence.

He is asleep, like really?

"SKHUMBUSO!!!!" I yell.

He opens his eyes and looks at me, frightened.

"Who was that doctor we talked to about Nqubeko?"

"Are you serious? You woke me up for that?" he asks, annoyed.

"Yeah" I say.

"Dr Amos, what's your problem?"

Oh no! Something fishy is going on.

"Can you listen to the record again?" I ask.

"No"

Mxm! I get off bed and go knock on Nceba's room. I'm the worst sister in law. He opens after a minute.

"Is everything okay?" he asks.

I walk in, "Yes, I want you to listen to something"

"Oh okay" he says with a frown.

I play the record and give him the phone.

"That's my brother, where did you get this?"

I explain the whole Precious thing to him. He is confused as I am.

"It doesn't make sense" he says.

"What's even more confusing is the fact that her fiancée is the same doctor who was handling Nqubeko's case, now a strange guy with no memory and Nqubeko's voice stay in his house"

"What do you think?" he asks.

"That maybe I was right, some dots don't connect in his death"

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Senamile Madlala

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I'm getting ready to get on bed, today was tiring. I went to Quinton's school meeting and rushed to Tongaat. Fikile decided to take a break from work, I don't know what for. Being Biyela's favourite must be nice, I guess.

"Baby" he is walking through the door with Quinton on his arms.

"Mmmm"

"Your father is here"

What???

I look up, "He is here?"

"Downstairs"

What is that man doing in my house? I don't talk to him and his wife. It's not out of disrespect or anything, I chose to keep my distance. Maybe it's better that way, I have zero chances of dying on my father's hands.

He puts Quinton down and walks to me. I know he is about to beg me, like he always begs me to call them.

"Sthandwa sami" he say holding my hand.

I sigh and look at him.

"Go talk to him"

"No"

"He is your father and your boss,at the end of the day you have to talk to him" he say.

"Okay,I'm only talking business though"

He nod, "That's okay,as long as you go"

I tie my gown and walk down.He is comfortable in the lounge,watching football.I greet formally and sit opposite him.

"How are you doing?" he ask as if he cares.

"I'm doing great,thanks"

"Thanks for handling things in Tongaat,I asked Simtho to help you here and there"

I nod my head, "Okay"

"Your mother miss you"

So he was sent by her.I just look at him plainly.

"I understand you hate me but what did your mother do Senamile?"

"She did nothing,that's what she did" I say.

He chuckles, "Come see your mother tomorrow"

He is not asking,not begging,just making a statement.You know his statements right?

They always carry subtly threats.

"If she miss me like you say she does then she will come and check on me"

He switch the TV off and sit up straight.His stare is going to drive me to the grave but I hold it anyway.He can drown me again if he want.

"Do you know what your name means?" he ask.

"Yeah"

"You were the first baby we got in marriage.Fikile was a surprise,I was not even employed when we got her but she arrived and became uFikile.She didn't get the best of everything,as stupid as it may sound but my struggle got me cheating on your mother.That's what created Sbusiso,and I got involved in crime.I got lifetime stack of money and married your mother.I wanted to be a better a father and good husband to your mother.Luckily I got another shot,your mother fell pregnant with you.We were happy,senamile.It doesn't make you special than your siblings but there is a meaning behind your name.You brought joy to us,you passed your matric with flying colours.You didn't repeat a single class,you stayed four years in varsity and obtained your degree with cum laude.You are one of the best Biyela business woman we have.You found a husband,a kind one.You are blessed Senamile and I'm proud of you.You have everything; education,brain and beautiful family.You only lack one thing"

He lift his brow, "One thing Senamile,tell me what that is?"

I take a deep sigh, "Respect"

"Respect,that's what you don't have and because of that you stand to lose everything.I know I was not a good role model to you,I did some things I shouldn't have done in front of you.But your mother was,you can't tell me you don't know how a woman carry herself"

"Baba you are a good role model.We look up to you regardless of how rough you had it in the past.But you tried to kill me,that's not how you treat your child"

He nod, "You're right,it's how I treat my rivals.The moment you insult me like I didn't raise you is the moment you step to the other side of the line"

"Wow!"



"I'm not here to apologise, the same way you speak to me is the same way your children are going to speak to me. I can't have that, everyone must know their place" he says. I had no intentions of apologising but after listening to him with understanding I see where I went wrong. However he shouldn't have drowned me in the pool, that was inhuman.

"Alright, I apologise for speaking to you in that manner" I say.

"All is well, are you coming home tomorrow?"

I smile, "I might, if I get petrol money"

"I'm sure all you need to do is go withdraw in the ATM"

I go straight to the ATM, his pocket, and take his wallet out. I withdraw R300 and sit my ass down.

"That's my grandkids pocket money" he says.

He is referring to Wokuhle and Simile. They are all his grandkids but those two top his charts. Maybe it's because they are fatherless, in his mind he is their father and I applaud him for that.

"Go to the ATM and withdraw money" I say.

## Chapter 285

### Ndukwenhle Biyela

I think I'm about to have the worst day of my life. I'm meeting MaMeya's family for the first time. I have to honour her culture as much as she honoured mine. I have to gather around the table with her family and have a chat with them. It's something that never happens in our culture.

"Bafo if they give you a glass of wine don't gulp it down like a donkey all at once. Take sip after sip" that's Sbusiso for you.

He thinks I don't know all of that. The few months I've spent with MaMeya has taught me a lot.

I'm squeezed in a tight jean that Donald recommended. It's hell uncomfortable but not as uncomfortable as the tie. I feel like I can't breathe properly.

Why am I wearing it again? I feel apostolic.

I bought a bunch of flowers and bottle of champagne. This is what people do when they are invited for dinner.

"Do you want us to come with you?" Simtho asks.

"What? No"

Who come with his sisters to dinner with his inlaws?

"Fine, wear a watch then" she says.

I look at my wrist, where is watch gonna stay here? I have three sbandlas on my left and one on my right. I can see time on my phone.

"They will think you are a sangoma" Sbusiso says laughing.

"I'm not taking them off, my ancestors stay here"

They laugh it off, they think I'm joking. White family or Asian I'm never taking my skin-bracelets off.

I'm a Zulu man, I herd goats, I eat goats and I wear goats.

Khuzani dropped a new album, I'm dying to play it as I drive but I'm in the white neighborhood, these people don't like noise and I don't like soft music.

I'm in the right place, MaMeya is standing on the driveway. She is wearing large sweater and stretchpant. White people know everything except dressing up. Hopefully the Biyela fashion killer a.k.a Senamile will show her which clothes to buy in stores. My girl dress up to cover her body.

She walk to the car with a smile on her face, I have no smile. My nerves are rocking back and forth. What if I'm not what her family imagined me to be?

"Heeeey" she let herself inside and kiss my cheek.

I exhale, "MaMeya"

She narrow her eyes, "You are nervous?"

Obviously!

She smile, "Don't worry, it's only my mom and her friend"

Friend? What is her friend doing here? White people are too foward. I sense two angry-white-women vs Nduku Biyela.

Protect me dear Biyelas!

"You bought me flowers?" she ask picking them up.

"No, they are for your mother"

She laughs, "You bought her flowers?"

"And champagne"

"Babe" she peck my lips.

She is happy. I pull her for a hug and exhale all the frustration. I should've drank at least two beers.

We get out of the car, she is carrying champagne, I'm holding a bunch of flowers. I'm not even sure I'm holding them the right way.

"Come this way and please relax" she say leading me across rooms.

I thought she said friend, I see a white chubby man here.

"Sanibonani"

Damn!!!!!!!

I clear my throat, "Excuse me, good evening"

I can't believe English is doing this to me! I thought we had a deal.

"Hey Zulu man" say the chubby man.

I don't like how he refers to me. Yes I'm a Zulu man, but that's not how you greet someone. I want to say yebo mlungu, but I'm doing this for my girl.

"Hello sir" I say.

Her mother signal for me to sit down. She is chubby too, with curly hair. She look like MaMeya, just a little bit.

Handshake? Let me do what I know. I reach out for handshake, she smile and shake it. The man also shake it, I'm welcome I guess.

"He bought you flowers" MaMeya says.

See my dumbass, I should've gave her when I walked in.

"Mrs Meyers" I say passing them to her.

She chuckles and inhale them. A smile appears, she glance at her 'friend'. He don't look pleased nor annoyed. He look rather bored.

"I would've got you flowers too, nobody told me you will be here" I say.

"No need to worry about me. So what brings you here?"

I look at MaMeya, this gotta be a joke.

"I was invited for dinner nje" I say.

No matter how much I try Zulu has a way of slipping out. What's that 'nje' doing in my nice English sentence?

"Did you invite him for dinner Maggy?" he ask Lorry's mother.

Her mother smile and look at her, "Did I?"  
She chuckles, "Yes"  
If this is a game then it's boring as a fuck. I feel uninvited.  
"So what brings you here?" he repeat his question.  
I look at MaMeya, her face change immediately. I'm thoroughly annoyed.  
She clear her throat, "I think we should stop with the teasing. Mom this is my boyfriend Nduku Biyela, the one who sent you a letter. Baby this is my mother Maggy and Luther, her friend"  
I nod my head, "I'm pleased to meet you"  
"Likewise, you need to loosen up"  
This man! I think he should take his own advice.  
"Your family is quite famous" Maggy says.  
"Well not me" I say.  
"Why is that?"  
Sigh!  
How do I start explaining?  
"The famous family is my other father's family" I say.  
"You have two fathers?" she ask, pouring drinks.  
"Three" I say.  
"Three fathers! How?"  
"They come after another"  
She look confused more than ever.  
I exhale, "The famous one is my small father"  
I need a drink. Not this weak thing they are giving me, I want Castle.  
"Well I don't understand" she say.  
"Me either" says the Luther.  
What's complicated there? My father is a big father, then there is a middle father Thobela and my small father Muzi. They come after another, in their parents.  
I look at MaMeya, "Explain to them, ngikhathele mina"  
"It's his uncle, from the father's side"  
Excuse me? Muzi is not my uncle.  
"He is not my uncle, he is my father" I say.  
"A brother of your parent is an uncle" Luther explains.  
"In your nation, in mine that's a father"  
He shrug his shoulders, "It's confusing though"  
And this? What are we eating? Not MaZungu's things, please Lord. Yes I was born on November, I'm a Scorpion but that doesn't mean I eat scorpions.  
"I must say I'm impressed with the way you've been treating Lauren. She is happy and confident, thank you"  
I smile, "She make it easy"  
"She also told me about your night"  
I frown, "What night?"  
"When you took her virginity, I'm glad you were not rough with her"  
Wtf! She told her mother? I feel my palms sweating.  
"Paying the bride price don't mean stop using the condom, you guys should condomise all the time. You are both young, there is a lot to achieve. Lauren still need to complete her degree"  
I'm defeated. This is not a conversation a man hold with his mother-in-law.  
I nod my head, "I understand"

"Do you eat swordfish?"

Am I the only one who heard 'sword? Who eat swords?

"No" I say without any hesitation.

"That's a disappointment,I marinated it with miso and ginger,my special.I hope you will like rum-glazed shrimp then"

That's MaZungu's Wednesdays special,scorpions.God knows how much I hate them.The sight alone make my body shiver.

I glance at MaMeya,she look like she is holding her breath.

"I'm sure I will enjoy the rama grazing shrimp" I say nodding my head.

She clears her throat, "Do you need a refill my love?"

"Please MaMeya"

I take it and gulp it down.Oh God! Sbusiso said no drinking like a donkey.

Scorpions here we go!

"Are you enjoying?" her mother asks.

"Definitely,it's the best"

I want to puke.I will call Sbusiso to keep warm water for me.

"When are you buying your own house?" Luther ask.

"I have my own house back home" I say.

"Is it? I thought you live with your cousin"

Sigh! Sbusiso is my brother,not cousin.

"Yes I stay with my brother but I have my own house back home in Inkandla"

He look at MaMeya, "You didn't mention it"

"Ummm yeah,it's a rondavel inside his father's yard"

He burst out laughing.I look at him a bit offended.What is tickling him?

He sip his drink, "That's where you and Lauren are going to raise your kids?"

"Yes"

He sigh, "Lord!"

"Lauren is aware of a man I am,she knows my home.Of course I will buy a house here in Durban because I'm based here with work but she is marrying to Inkandla.In the rondavels,yes it's where we will raise our kids"

"Do you think they will survive?"

Wtf! I let out a chuckle.He is a special human being.

"It's not an earthquake,there are no survivors.It's a place in rural areas that live according to traditions,I don't understanding your 'surviving' sir" I say.

"No offence but those places are poor.Lauren can't raise her kids there or even stay there"

"It's my home,if we get kids in future it will be their home too.So it's up to her"

Her hand rest over my arm, "We talked about it.Can we not talk about kids? You guys are creeping me off"

Her mother chuckles, "Dating a black man should've creep you off,they want families.That's why he want to marry you"

She look at me with her eyes widen, "Not true,right?"

I shake my head, "Not true,I love you"

"Oh thank God!"

Lala lulaza! Let me eat my scorpions and finish.

"Have you been out of South Africa?" Luther ask.

I think he have something against me,all his question are off the line.What will I be doing outside South Africa? My grandparents were buried here.

"No" I say.

"You should join us for summer trip in Portugal next year"  
"What's special about Portugal?" I ask.  
"Cristiano Ronaldo,Azulejos tiles and top surfing destinations like Peniche"  
I'm amazed,by one thing only.  
"You mean Maronarona was born there?" I ask.  
He frown slightly, "Excuse me?"  
Well,there is no way I'm declining this invite.Next year I'm going to Portugal.  
"I will be happy to join" I say.  
MaMeya laughs, "Ronaldo may be not home,he play internationally"  
"Don't be a mood spoiler" her mother says.  
I think I love her mother more than her.Let me wipe this plate of hers so that she think I find it delicious.  
She glare at MaMeya, "Lauren don't be stingy,it's not how I raised you"  
She reach out for a big silver dish, "I'm sorry"  
She take my plate and put more shrimp and grits or grinds,whatever it is.I need someone to come shoot me now.  
Her mother smiles, "I know you Zulu men eat for the whole village"  
We do eat for the whole village,but not shrimp and grits-grinds.  
Sigh! Sigh! Sigh!

Senamile Madlala

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I honoured my Dad's wish and went home.I didn't know Fikile was coming home too,I found her occupied in my room.We are too old to fight over rooms,I will be a bigger person and move to the guest room.  
"Mom do you want me to cook supper?" I ask.  
"No,Fikile will cook" she say.  
Fikile look up from her laptop,her face is protesting.  
"You will cook,Senamile and I have to arrange my closet" she tell her.  
She sigh, "But I'm busy, can't you order something?"  
"I'm home,I don't want take-outs" I say.  
"Then you will cook and do the closet"  
Bullying is her talent.I don't know what's in that laptop,we are heading to a long weekend there is no work.  
"Have you checked on the boys? I'm worried about Kuhle,he will give Nkosi a hard time"  
Mom ask.  
She is not even giving her full attention.Her eyes are running from her phone to the laptop and forth.  
"No,I'm sure Skhumbuzo can handle him" she say.  
No shade but Kuhle is a brat,he is actually worse than Quinton.Skhumbuzo is going to have the hardest time of his life.  
Eventually I ask, "What are you busy with?"  
"I'm not sure,but it's something bad"  
I let out a chuckle,she sound like an investigator investigating a critical case.I need to see what's going on.  
"Who is this?" I ask pointing at the picture displayed on the screen.

"Dr Amos Mlaba,he examined Nqubeko's DNA"

Who is Nqubeko again? Oh the late Nkosi brother.He was not friendly,no wonder I forgot him so easily.I wonder if he is in hell or heaven.If in heaven,is he smiling to Moses or he is an ass even in front of Jesus?

"Are you crushing on the doctor?" I ask.

"No,something fishy is going on but I will tell you once I get confirmation"

I put my hands up and walk away.Her life got complicated the day she met Skhumbuzo.I open the fridge and take out the meat.

"Ah Senamile! Your father is tired of meat,he was craving beans curry yesterday"

Hebana! I hardly cook beans for my own husband.

"He can get it from the market" I say.

"Come on,he buy grocery so that he can have home cooked meal"

Sigh! I take a packet of beans and put it on the stove for boiling.

"I will help you with roti" she say.

Wtf! I burst out laughing.

"Who said I'm going to make roti?"

"He like it with beans" she say.

This woman,I'm slaving on her duties now.And what's up with that man and roti? Is he an Indian now? Muzi Maharaj.

Her closet is a mess.She have ten year old dresses and skirts she never wear.

"You don't give away clothes,do you?" I ask.

"No I don't.Everytime I want to get rid of something my love for it just revives"

I laugh, "Can you keep shut while I do it for you?"

"Go ahead"

She is about to get heartbroken,I'm getting rid half of her closet.Most of these clothes were Winnie Madikizela's style.She is dead now,no need for her style to keep on trending.

"Your daughter-in-law is a designer but look at you" I say shaking my head.

"Your father love me like this"

I roll my eyes, "You guys are an old boring couple.You should spice things up otherwise he is going to get a gorgeous second wife"

She chuckles, "It will be a wife,not second because I won't be around"

"If my father was to take a second wife you'd leave?" I ask shocked.

"No, I mean I'm dying"

I turn and look at her, "You are dying or you will die?"

"I'm dying, I have pancreatic cancer"

What the fuck is going on now? I don't understand her.Is this a joke or delayed April's fool?

"Mom what are you talking about?" I ask.

"I may have less than a year to live, I just hope I will make it to Fikile's wedding"

She is serious.I throw clothes on the floor and walk to her.

"Mom you are not joking,are you?" I ask.

"No I'm not"

This is hard to believe, I don't even know how to react.

"Does the family know? Have you seen the doctor? Got second and third opinion? Have you seen a specialist? Are you sure?"

"Your father and Sbusiso knows. Yes we've tried everything, it was detected late so there was no early intervention. I've accepted the situation, I want to spend the last days of my life happy"

Tears make their way down. This cannot happen, we still need her. She has grandchildren who still need her. My father is nothing without her.

"You are the strongest, that's why I told you first" she says.

"I'm not strong enough to lose you, there must be something that can be done. Ubaba akakwazi ukuyeka i-cancer isiphuce wena"

She put her arm around me, "He has fought with me through it all. Can you stop crying so that I can talk to you?"

It takes me five minutes to pull myself together.

"Make sure your father is well taken care of. He is allowed to have any woman he wants after I'm gone but make sure everything on his will stay as it is today. I sacrificed my conscience and humanity for all of this" she says pointing around.

"Everything that's in here belongs to you, Sbusiso, Fikile, Simtholile, Zethu and Ziphe. We recently added Zanda and your Inkandla cousins. Nothing must ever change, you must make sure of it"

I nod my head, "I hear you"

"And please don't tell your sisters, a therapist needs to be present when I tell them"

So they think I'm a rock, this doesn't need a therapist for me? Hell, I'm traumatized. She is my mother, I have never imagined life without her.

"I'm so sorry sweetheart" she says pulling me for a hug.

I don't want to let go, it feels like I'm hugging her for the last time. I want to scream my lungs out but I have to put a brave face for Fikile.

"Okay about that blue blouse, it's not going anywhere" she says.

I sigh, "I have no energy left in me"

"Baby come on, I need you to be strong"

No pain can compare to the one I'm feeling right now. I'm not ready to bury her, I'm not ready to be motherless.

"Good evening" Dad's voice fills the room.

"Hey love"

They hug and peck.

"Mr Madlala" he says.

I look at him dead, "I hate that"

He chuckles, "Are you not a man?"

"A hug would've been nice, from daddy to daughter"

He hugs me with one arm, I fold my arms and not welcome the lousy hug.

"You have drama for days" he says.

"One arm, really?"

He walks past, "I'm not your husband"

Yet I'm cooking his meal of choice. I should give them their space, he probably wants to walk naked in front of his wife.

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Fikile Biyela  
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Her phone is off.I've been trying her the whole day.I'm still waiting for the guy's picture,I've convinced myself it's Nqubeko.I did have a feeling he didn't die but DNA test proved me wrong.

Phone beeps.I know it's Nceba,he is anxious to find out what's going on.Only him believe me, Skhumbuzo think I'm crazy.He said he want his brother to rest in peace,his focus is on his children.

What if something happened to the girl? The last time we talked she was whispering,she sounded scared.

Luckily I find this man alone.Sena is with Mom in the kitchen cooking.

"Dad I need help" I say grabbing a seat next to him.

"As long as it's not money"

Geez! He seriously think I'm broke? He need to research who my man is.

"It's about Nqubeko" I say.

"Who?"

"Nqubeko,Skhumbuzo's brother"

"Oh"

I exhale, "I think he is alive"

He chuckles, "You think he rose from death?"

I expected him to take it as a joke.

"No,he didn't die in the first place.There is a guy with new identity,who is said to suffer from memory loss.The guy knows me even though he can't remember me.I listened to a recorded voice note,he speak like him"

He have his eyebrows raised, "This is not America Fikile"

I stop him, "Dad listen,the guy recognise me and the person keeping him is Dr Amos.The same doctor who worked with the police on his case"

"What???"

Exactly,this is how I wanted Skhumbuzo to act.

"The girl who called me is not reachable on the phone,I don't know what's going on"

"What is your boyfriend saying about this?" he ask.

"He don't believe it and he don't want to associate himself with it"

He stare at me for a moment,not breathing a word.

"Dad I need to find out if my instincts are correct" I say.

"If they are not?"

I shrug my shoulders, "I don't know,all I want is getting to the bottom of it"

"You are digging on fresh wounds.I understand why that boy don't want to investigate this,he have accepted his brother is no more.This is going to raise useless hopes,he might feel the pain twice"

"What if he is alive?" I ask.

He exhale, "What do you want me to do?"

"Look at it,their location is Cape Town"

He shake his head, "What about Mandla and Zanda?"



Sigh! I thought this would be easy.

"A person is innocent until proven guilty. All we know is someone shot them the same day Nqubeko disappeared. That doesn't qualify him as the culprit, for all we know he might've been kidnapped by this doctor before it happened"

He get off the chair, "You keep putting me between my family and the Nkosis"

My heart sink, "I'm sorry if that's how you feel"

He shrug his shoulders and walk away. He is going to do it. I hope the truth comes sooner than later.

I make a video call to Skhumbuzo, I need to see what's going on. He doesn't answer the call, I try him two more times.

After a minute he calls. It seems like he ignored the video call on purpose.

"MaBiyela" he greet.

"What's going on there?"

There is so much noise. I can hear Nkanyezi's voice screaming in the background.

"Nothing" he say.

"Let me video call you"

"No, Fikile I'm busy"

This is eyebrow-raising. Something is totally wrong in my house.

"Skhumbuzo don't make me angry" I say.

I hear him taking a loud breath, "There was a fire in the kitchen but we are sorting it out"

"What do you mean there was a fire? Where did it come from?"

"Simile and Sthelo burnt the pot with oil, but only the cupboards got affected. I'm replacing them in the morning"

I'm dumbstruck. Something about this 'boys weekend' didn't sit well with me. I'm not mad about the kitchen and cupboards, the kids! They could've died. I don't understand how he let them near the stove.

"Are you angry?" he ask.

"No, I'm coming back tomorrow"

"What? Nooooo"

I chuckle, "You are going to kill the kids"

"It won't happen again, please stay there"

"I will be video-calling you the whole day, if you don't pick up I will be forced to come"

"I will pick up" he say.

"Okay, bye"

Sena walk in, she look exhausted. I'm sure trying to look like Beyonce all day is not a joke.

"Are you okay?" I ask.

"That's all you know, making calls and asking people if they are okay and pasting your ass on the couch all day"

I burst out laughing, "You don't have to be nasty, I will cook tomorrow"

She sit opposite me and brush her hair with fingers. She look tired, poor thing.

"I need my husband" she say.

"Really now?"

"Yeah"

I roll my eyes, she has been here for few hours already she miss Lwazi's dick.

"Sex addiction cause pelvic cancer" I say.

"That's not funny Fiki"

She get up and walk away. She is moody, maybe she is pregnant. I was joking, if that was true she would've died at 19 years.

Chapter 287

Ziphelele Mokoena

I decided to take a nap before Thapelo comes home. He went out with Don, I don't know where they were going. They said "sisathi shwi", I don't know what that means.

When I wake up his clothes are on the floor, meaning he is back and his maid is going to clean after him.

Phakade is still asleep so I slip off bed quietly and pick the clothes of a king and go put them inside the basket.

The shower is a mess, there is soap all over. I will use the bathtub until he cleans it. I'm tired of being Thapelo's servant.

He is standing in the middle of the dining room with his hands on the waist.

"You're back my king" I say.

He look at me, "Where are the keys Ziphelele?"

"Which keys?" I ask.

"The keys Ziphelele. The keys!"

Oh gosh! He is going to block my ears. Where did I put the keys by the way?

I rub my cheek, "I can't remember correctly, maybe they are in my bag or somewhere in the house"

"So how am I supposed to get in the store room?"

I shrug my shoulders, "I don't know"

He charges to the lounge and come back with a key tray. His mood is 0,01%.

"What is this Ziphelele?" he ask.

"It's a key tray" I say.

"Exactly, key tray. It means the keys stay here, we bought this to store the keys"

I close my ears and walk away. I'm looking forward to a great evening, an angry husband is not part of the equation.

He follow behind me, "Where is your cellphone?"

"Upstairs somewhere" I say.

"That's why you didn't pick up, you don't know where it is"

I sigh, "Are we really doing this Thapelo?"

"You are annoying Ziphelele, really annoying"

I sigh and walk away. I have my hands on my ears so that I can't hear half of his yelling. Marriage is not always pap and wors. Living with a man totally, it's not always bling-bling. Sometimes you fight over stupid things, like the keys.

I don't where I put the keys, he must get over it. He will get in the store room when we find them, it's not like someone is dying.

I open the closet and take my coat. I'm going out for a walk, hopefully when I come back he will be better.

I check Phakade, he is still asleep. He didn't sleep the whole day, he could sleep until 8pm. It's not easy arranging house the whole day. No, not his toy house, the real house. He open the cupboard and remove everything inside and then store himself inside.

Hubby is now fixing his car. I don't remember him being a mechanic but there he is with tools in front of the car.

Why am I taking a walk? I will be tired when I come back. This can be sorted out, easily.

I walk to him, "Hubby"

He don't even look at me,he is too occupied.

"What's wrong with the car?" I ask.

"Nothing"

Mmm! I put my hands on his waist and push him aside.There is no enough space but I manage to kneel infront of him.

"What are you doing?" he ask.

I unbuckle his belt and pull down the zipper of his jean.I grab both jean and boxer down.

"Ziphe what are you doing?" he ask,his eyes are going to pop to the ground.

"Fix the car Thapelo" I say.

"We are outside Ziphelele" his voice is begging.

Does anyone still remember the balcony day? If I remember correctly he humiliated me on broad daylight after the Niresh saga.I'm glad nobody noticed and took a video.It was public sex without consent.

I start by licking the underside of his frenulum.I swirl my tongue around the edge while moaning softly.His body start tensing up,the screwdriver he is holding on his left hand fall to the ground.

You know the gluteal fold? That area where the thigh meet the butt,yeah lick that part.They say it contain all the senses,split those senses.He nearly jump up when my tongue circle around the area.

"Ziphelele" he is almost whispering.

His dick got excited too early, I'm still dealing with surrounding areas.His balls are big but I've been married to him for half a decade,I know how to fit them in my mouth.

"Jesus Christ" he groans.

I don't think we should involve God in this.

I grab the excited animal and rub it.He is no longer fixing the car,he is holding onto it,moaning like a sick mechanic.I stroke it a few times with my hand before licking it from base to tip.

I look up at him, "Are you not fixing the car?"

Veins are popping out on his face,his eyes are getting smaller and smaller.

I pick the screwdriver and give it to him.He take it with shaky hands and get on duty.  
Good mechanic!

I tug his balls and start sucking the head of his shaft.The screwdriver fall again,hebana!

"Let's go inside" he say.

I shove his shaft deep in my throat and gag on it.I don't want to go inside,this is exactly where I want us to be.

"Baby" he cry out.

I take it out and lick it clean.My coat is not buttoned so it's easy,I rub it between my cleavage.He go crazy,trying to thrust in my boobs.

He is too ambitious,Phakade suck these boobs I can't have them fucked.I take it back inside my mouth.

"Baby Mandla is here" he say.

I can hear the car pulling up.Now the question is,how is Mandla any of my business?

I suck the tip until my breath runs out.He is moaning and grabbing my hair.

I stop and look at him, "Fix the car"

He pick the pan and start doing nothing.I resume my job.

"He is coming" he say in a vibrating voice.

I want to ask how that is any of my business but I'm too occupied.

"Mandla don't come" he yell.

I nearly burst out laughing.He could've came up with something less dumb.  
"Why? What's wrong with the car?" Mandla ask,his voice sound nearer.  
"Nothing...Go use the balcony door,this one is jammed"  
Really now? I shove it in my throat and rub his perineum.He start breathing audibly through his mouth,like an athlete who just ran a long marathon.  
He is lucky it's Mandla,if it was Sbusiso or Don they would've came regardless of his stupid protest.  
I slip my finger in his anus, I saw this on Facebook I've never tried it.  
"Ziphe!" he exclaim.  
Unfortunately I can't get it in,he is squeezing his ass.I press my tongue on the tip and run it in circles.  
"Ziphe wait,please wait" he cry,pushing me away.  
I have no time to wait, Phakade is alone inside the house.  
Oh! He is with Mandla,but Mandla doesn't know he is now babysitting.  
I give his balls a gentle tug and pace up my rhythm.  
He shoot right at the back of my throat,I have no choice but to swallow.I lick him clean and wipe my mouth.  
"Bye" I say.  
His knees are trembling,his eyes are closed.I leave him there and walk back inside the house.  
Mandla is helping himself with snacks.He frown when he see me walking in.  
"Hey brother" I greet.  
"I thought that door was jammed"  
I frown, "Who said that? The door is perfectly fine"  
"Your husband said so"  
"He was lying" I say.  
"This fool!" he say making his way to the door.  
I hope he find him with his jean still down on his knees so that he will think he is a weirdo who masturbate infront of the car.  
My baby is still asleep,thank God.I need to brush my teeth and go cook supper.  
They are both sitting in the lounge,chatting.  
"What must I cook?" I ask.  
"It's Friday,eat take-outs.Zanda is not cooking today either" Mandla say.  
I like how he think.Why do I have to cook seven days a week? Let me place my order.  
"Where is your remote guys? I want to watch Australia" Mandla say.  
Thapelo look at me, "Where is the remote?"  
I don't know where the fuckin' remote is.Phakade may have taken it and threw it somewhere or I misplaced it myself.  
"I don't know" I say.  
He open his mouth to speak but shut up when I narrow my eyes at him.He must not make the same mistake of shouting at me again.I make a whisper, "Ngizokuphinda"  
He rub his head, "Mandla we don't know the remote,go press the side buttons"  
I'm glad he know his lane now.I hum a song and walk away.

Chapter 288

Phindile

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A knock come through the door. I'm alone, I'm not expecting anyone. I check the time, it's just minutes after 9pm. Zethu went to Tyson, the only reason I'm opening this door is because I trust the security.

It's the father of my baby. He is carrying large brown food bag. Looking at him in the eyes is still hard for me. His presence make me uncomfortable, I always pray to see his back sooner than later.

He should've warned me that he is coming. I'm in my ugly brown dress looking like a hobo.

"Hi"

"Hi"

He also find it awkward being around me. Sometimes he stare at me and say nothing. We go for check ups together, he is very supportive and weird.

"Zethu said you're hungry"

I should've known it's Zethu. I don't know where she got that, I'm not hungry.

"So you brought food?" I ask.

"Yes"

I take it and go put it on the kitchen counter. He don't leave, instead he walk to the lounge and make himself comfortable on the couch.

"How is Ulcers?" he ask.

"She is fine"

"Can I sit with her?"

What? The baby is in my stomach. How is he...? Ok, he want me to sit next to him. It's not comfortable being massaged by him, but his baby is inside what can I say.

"Are you okay?" he ask.

I nod, "Yeah"

His hand is resting on my stomach. He always look stressed out but today he is worse. We are going to make awkward parents. He is a decade older than me, he look fancy and troubled. I, on the other hand, look like a poor, pregnant teenager.

"Are you not scared?"

The question catch me off-guard and confuses me.

"Scared of what?" I ask.

"Of giving birth"

Well I haven't thought that far, I'm enjoying the pains of morning sickness and crazy cravings. I will cross that bridge when I get there. Girls younger than me give birth, I'm sure I will be fine.

"You're not scared?" he ask again.

"No, I'm not"

There is a ghost of a smile on his face.

"You will fail at natural birth-giving" he say.

I wasn't aware he is a doctor.

"Really?"

He chuckles, "You're still intact"

"How?" I ask.

I'm really confused.

"Down here, you're still tight"

Oh My God! I need the floor to open up and swallow me. I feel like he is shifting closer to me, my palms are sweating.

"I miss you" as he say his hand is marching down to my waist.

I push him off. He is a chancer, it doesn't suit him.

"You are here because you want to sleep with me?" I ask.

"No"

"Then what are you doing Nceba? I'm your baby momma, not lover"

He swallow and nod, "I know"

"I would like to respect your girlfriend, whatever she is to you that lady. What we did was a mistake that had consequences"

I'm glad none of the Biyela sisters are here, they wouldn't mind calling my baby 'Consequences' after this.

"I don't have a girlfriend" he say in weak defense.

"I'm young not stupid, I heard you want to have babies with her"

Okay, I should calm down. I'm acting like a jealous babymama whereas I don't give an inch.

"I'm not denying that, I said it but the feeling wasn't mutual" he say.

"So now you want me?"

I can't believe he think I'm going to settle for the alternative position.

"Yes"

My eyes widen. He just said yes like it's the right thing to say!

"You are the best thing that can happen in my life right now. The purest thing!"

There is something about the sudden change of his voice, it makes me less angry and co-operative.

"Is it because I was a virgin?" I ask.

"It's because I think you can love me and be there for me"

"What if I can't?"

He stare at me for a moment, his eyes are penetrating my heart.

"That's fine too" he say.

I put a cushion behind me, "It's not something you want so badly, is it?"

"Phindile there is nothing I can do to make people who don't love me love me. It's beyond who I am and what I've done, they just can't find it in their hearts. No matter how badly I want to be loved by them it can never happen, and that's fine too"

"Are we still talking about me?" I ask.

He take my hand and look at me.

"I know you're way too younger than me. You have brighter things and better people awaiting you but I want you to be in my life. We have to raise our baby together, create our home and never leave each other. I want you to be more than just a one-nightstand."

"Is the baby the...?"

He cut me in, "Phindile I'm asking for your love"

That was asked in a deep manner, I find it hard to look at his direction.

"I love both Ulcer and you. If you want to leave I'll never stay in your way" he say.

"I don't know Nceba, this is so off guard"

He put his hand over Ulcer and lean over my tummy and plant a kiss.

"I love you Ulcer kaBaba"

He look up,our eyes meet,I try to look away but he pull my head.The space between is closed in seconds,he is breathing right on my face.I didn't know being intimate with someone was this hard.His hand press on my tummy slightly.

"And your mommy,she is beautiful"

I can't help the smile on my face,he is talking to a fetus.

"I don't know how you taste like when I'm sober" he say staring at my lips.

I need a guide of how to act with a man.This is too hard for me.

With no permission,he grab my face and kiss my lips.When I start kissing him back he deepens the kiss.He place his hand behind my neck and push me down on the couch. I have pubic hair,lot of it.I know it's not hygienic,shaving is not something I've ever bothered myself with.It's not like somebody cared,I washed my nana.But now Nceba's hand is coming closer to my panty,I'm starting to get uncomfortable.He is sober now,what is he going to think of a bushy nana?

"I just want to touch,I won't do anything" he say.

"No!"

"Why? You think I will force myself on you?"

I sigh, "I didn't shave"

He chuckles and bury his face on me.Funny,right?

"Do you have toothpicks close?"

I shake my head, "No"

He smiles and kiss me.I don't understand humor behind that,I'm too slow.

He doesn't care about my bush.He pull my panty down and spread my legs.I feel uncomfortable,especially now that he is staring at it like it's the strangest thing he has ever seen.

He look at me, "I feel special"

"I'm cold" I say.

"No you're not,you are just shy"

Damn!

He kiss my lips again then go down on my nana.I've never felt anything like this in my life,my body is shattering apart.

"Nceba please stop doing that" I say pushing his head deeper in my thighs.

How is he supposed to stop when I'm the pushing him? God.

Something boils up,I fight to get up.He pin my waist down and suck my clit harder.It get beyond control,my body stiffen as something electrifying explode.

"Are you okay?" he ask.

"Yes,no"

He chuckles and kiss my lips.He smell weird but I kiss him back anyway.

"Phindile you're pregnant and clear from infections.What's the worst that could happen?"

Can he give me a minute to get back on my senses?

I close my eyes and catch my breath.

"I will only put the tip in" he say.

Sigh!

"Okay"

He scoop me up in his arms,I let out a giggle,it's so unexpected.He put me on bed and kiss me all over again.His breath pattern is changing,getting unsteady and louder.He pull down his pants.He is suddenly a shy one,he don't want me to see him.

What's the fuck? This cannot get inside me.

I change my mind instantly, "No"

"Only the tip babe,I won't put all of it inside" he say.

I exhale and nod.My chest is dry,if he put all of it inside it's clear I will have a borehole down there.Wait...Did he put it all inside the first day? I need to check myself on the mirror.

I feel my muscles stretching as soon he pushes in.I wince in pain,he pull out and stare at me.

"It will be better today,don't panic"

I nod and close my eyes.

He push in slowly,if I wince he pulls out and restart.Eventually it get better,he lift my dress up and hold on my breasts.

"You guys are my family,I love you so much"

He doesn't sound like a person on his right senses.He is biting his lips and groaning.I must say the sound of his groans will keep me warm at night.

"Baby" he calls.

That's weird,baby?

He thrust in harder and moan even louder.

"I will give you the second round,please"

Do I even understand what he means? He can do anything he likes as long as this pleasure doesn't end.

"Second one baby,this one is mine" he say.

His voice is ripping his throat apart.He lift my legs to his shoulders,I feel him digging to my deep ends.

"It's mine mamakhe"

He is grinding on me,gripping on my thighs like his life depends on it.A loud cry breaks,his eyes roll back before he fall on top of me.That was strange,yet beautiful to watch.

After a moment he look at me, "Thank you"

He suck my lip and brush my brows with his thumb.I feel someway,every organ in my body is melting.

"The next round is yours" he say.

"What do you mean?"

"I'm going to give you multiple orgasms"

"Oh okay"

He smiles, "And thank you for letting the whole of it in,you're warm"

What? We are not even in a relationship yet already he is breaking the promises.What happened to tip only?

Chapter 289

Fikile Biyela

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I'm running out of patience,my dad is not getting back to me.I know he is not a magician he need time but FOMO is going to kill me.Is Nqubeko alive or not?

"Mom when is Dad coming home?" I ask.

"Very late,he went somewhere"

Urgh! I pick my phone and try Precious again.Luckily it's go through! I dash to the balcony with a phone against my ear.

She finally answers,

"Precious!"

"Hey Fikile,sorry things were a bit tight this side"

"Are you okay though?" I ask.

"For now,yes"

"Is Nqubeko okay?"

"Who?"

She is shocked,I remember we didn't talk about his name,I was a bit sceptical at that time.

"Is the guy okay? Did you manage to take a picture?" I ask.

"Yes but the picture is not clear,it was taken from a distance"

I ask her to send me the picture.The phone beeps when it comes through,I don't need to zoom to know who it is.I was correct all this time.

I don't wait for my Dad,he will be too late.I pack my bag and get in the car and drive to Durban.

Skhumbuzo's car is driving in right after me.It seems like they are coming from somewhere.I know he will hate me for this,the weekend was purely about him and his sons.

The house is a mess.Cushions are on the coffee-table instead of couches.One cupboard is opened.Ya neh!

He walks in, "MaBiyela"

"Hi"

The boys walk in after him,they greet and walk past.I'm surprised by Kuhle,my presence doesn't shake even his toe.I thought he would be happy,but no he is a big boy walking with other big boys.

"I thought you are coming back Sunday" he say after pecking me briefly.

"We need to talk, it's serious"

He have the bored expression on his face,he suspect what I'm about to bring up.But I have proof now,the ball will be on his hands.

"What is it?" he ask.

"It's your brother Skhumbuzo"

He exhale, "Fikile..."

"The girl sent the picture"

He take the phone and look at it.He zoom the picture in and out a couple times then look at me.

"What is going on...? I don't understand,is this a game or trick or what?"

"It's Nqubeko,he is alive" I say.

"Noooooo!"

He hold on the couch and sink down.I don't know if it's shock or he is in denial.My father calls in that mist,I have to answer him and get the confirmation.

"Baba unjani?" -me

"Why did you leave?"

"I got a picture from the girl"

"Oh so you already know it's him? They're leaving the country Monday, relocating to Seychelles for six months"

Whaaaaat???

"Do you have any information on the doctor?" I ask.

"He is dangerous, that's all"

Sigh!

"Can't you help Menziwa?"

"I've done enough Fikile, Mandla is my son"

Ya neh! I drop the call overwhelmed with fear. I know Skhumbuzo is about to go to war just like the last time.

"The guy is planning to leave the country with them"

He look up, already fuming with anger.

"What???" he ask with his forehead creased.

"Monday, meaning tomorrow is the last day"

He leaves the room, he is making calls. The doctor is dangerous, my Dad is not helping. My nerves are all over the place, I know Skhumbuzo doesn't care how dangerous getting his brother would be. He will do it or die.

He walk back with a small black bag. He is going, he didn't even do little investigation on the guy.

"Tell them I went to see a sick friend" he say.

"Where is Nceba?" I ask.

"He is on his way with Anga, don't let the kids go to town alone"

I nod my head, this situation is fucked up in so many levels.

He peck my cheek, "I love you"

"Skhumbuzo be careful"

He nod, "I promise"

I watch him walk out the door and wonder. What if this the last day I see him? The guy is capable of anything, he got Nqubeko Nkosi!

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SKHUMBUZO NKOSI

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It's Mdumiseni's first time in the hotel, I don't know if it's excitement or drama. He was supposed to share a room with Mzimba but he is here with me and Gadla making noise. He has been into my house, he knows a beautiful room I don't know what the fuss is all about.

"Hey Gadla awuthi khaxa khaxa izithombe ezimbili lapho" he say posing next to the decorations on the mini table.

"There is no time for that, we need to rest, in the morning we have a mission"

Gadla and I are similar in lifestyle. He lives in Glenwood with his wife and kids, he is a successful music producer working with Maskandi Durban-based musicians. Mdumiseni is his cousin who dropped out at Grade 10, he is a construction worker. Mzimba is a landlord in KwaMashu, he is my friend from childhood. Both him and Mdumiseni lives in hostel, I cannot tell you why he don't want to move to better places.

We are not criminals or gangsters, we defend ourselves against enemies. That's how we were raised up, a boy fight his whole life.

Mzimba is more like Nqubeko, he don't hesitate to pull a trigger through the temple of a man. He took down Anthony Faya and gunned down his bodyguards. I'm glad and confident to have him and the guys accompanying me to Cape Town to get Nqubeko.

I still can't wrap my head around the idea of him being alive. I haven't called home and told the elders. We have buried someone's son on our grave site, we mourned for nothing. This feels surreal.

"I want Facebook pictures" he say.

He have Facebook???

"Now is not the time" -Gadla

"Give me the phone, I will do a selfie"

Gadla sigh and give him his phone. He ask for the selfie-stick, time doesn't allow me to laugh, but I fail to hold myself. We don't take selfies, worse with a selfie-stick, wtf!

Mzimba walk in, he is shocked to see Mdumiseni taking pictures.

"And then?" he ask.

"Facebook baba, I'm showing them the view"

He shake his head and sit on bed. He is carrying a little packet, I know what's about to happen.

"We lick here madoda, three times. Then we will chew this when we get there, don't spit it out until we're safe and out of danger"

Argh! His thing is bitter, I need two bottles of water.

We don't sleep that much, around 4am we take off to Pinelands where Amos Mlaba is keeping my clueless brother. He will be punished for what he did but the first step is to talk, if he doesn't obey we will be forced to be violent.

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PRECIOUS DLOMO

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Something is happening. I just fetched my daughter yesterday, this is fucked up. I thought Fikile Biyela would help me, clearly she wasn't interested. She said Mazwi's name is Nqubeko, I thought it counted for something.

They told me to lock the door and stay inside the house. I put Melo behind the couch and tiptoe to the window. There is a car parked, four strange men are standing outside. I only see Amos with them, I don't know where Mazwi aka Nqubeko disappeared.

There is a tall, dark guy wearing a brown coat. He have a gun in his hand, he is waving it while talking. Within a minute Amos is on the ground, out of nowhere Amos' guys appear and start shooting. I run to my daughter and take her in my hands.

She is crying, I'm a bad mother. I should've protected her from this kind of life.

When the guns finally stop blazing there are footsteps coming closer to me. My heart stop beating, I locked!!!!

"Don't come out Thabile" he say.

I don't know where he came from, he is walking out like he is going to enter a soccer field. Did he call me Thabile? He was inside the house this whole time!

Oh My God! Is Amos okay?

"Hide nana" I say.

I need to see what's going on.

The yard is bloodied. Amos is on the ground, yelling at Mazwi to shoot. The other guys are yelling at him too, calling him Nqubeko.

It's the rescue team from Fikile Biyela! I should've known.

"Don't shoot Xabhashe!" I yell running out the door.

"Shoot Xabhashe, it's the bees"

That tall guy step forward and push his gun behind the waist.

"I'm your brother, Skhumbuzo Nkosi. Your name is Nqubeko Scebi Nkosi, not Mazwi Xulu"

"Lies, shoot him"

Bang! Bang!

Did he just...? Oh Jesus Christ.

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FIKILE BIYELA

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"Sis' Fikile!!!"

His scream make me jump. What's the fuck is going on? Anything can happen with these kids around.

"What's happening?"

My eyes land on Anga lying on the floor, Nceba is slapping his cheek calling his name. Blood is coming out of his nose.

"He just fell... I don't know" he is panicking.

Jesus Christ!!

"GET WATER, STHELO GO START THE CAR" I'm yelling.

We pour water on his face, get ice and place on his nose. He doesn't respond to anything. We have to rush to the hospital.

"Take care of your brothers, stay inside the house, don't open the door for anyone"

"Will Anga be okay?" he ask.

"Yes Sthelo, he just fainted"

The drive is too long. I have his head against my chest, my eyes have been on the road trying to minimise the journey.

"I want my tall uncle to come back"

What? Oh My God! He is awake.

"Nceba he is awake!" I scream.

"Thank God! Boy how are you?"

"I'm tired"

I rub his back, "Don't worry I will carry you on my back when we come back from the doctor"

"Why are we going to the doctor?"

Nceba chuckles, "Because you fell and fainted five minutes ago Anga"

"I'm fine, I just want my tall uncle to come back"

Sigh! I haven't got hold of that uncle. Precious' phone is also off, at this moment I'm clueless of where he is and what's going on.

"He is coming back with your new PlayStation" I say.

He keep quiet, thank God.

Nceba find the parking and walk to our side and open the door.

"He is asleep?" he ask.

"Gosh! No wonder he is so heavy, lift him carefully"

"Anga!" there is panic in his voice.

"Don't wake him... up... Is everything okay?"

Why is Anga like that?

He sink on the ground with him on his arms

"He is cold Fikile" he say faintly.

"Is he breathing?"

"No"

I get on my knees and feel his pulse. There is nothing.  
No no no!!!!  
"Heeeeeelp!"

Chapter 290  
Fikile Biyela

I expected the doctors to come back and tell us they made a mistake. Anga was fine, he didn't complain with anything. Aren't people supposed to be sick, even if it's for a few minutes?

God didn't take him, he stole him! How can he steal such a young, cheerful handsome boy from us? How can he do this to Nceba?

I don't know my state of my mind, I feel light-headed and lost. Lungile came, she is the one who has been doing everything regarding the body. Nceba is dead, spiritually. The nurse had to help him get off the chair. I don't know how God give someone so much luggage of tears and make him helpless.

Lungile is stronger than us, she have to be. She ask me aside before we get in the car.

"Did you get hold of Skhumbuzo?"

He is the last thing on my mind.

"No" I say.

"Mmmm"

The journey back home is filled with silence. Nceba is going through the most, I don't know where I'm going to start comforting him. Skhumbuzo should come home, he need him more than ever.

Sthelo walk out and stand by the door when the car park outside. I told him Anga will be fine, but I'm not God, he had other plans.

"Ma where is Anga?"

Nceba walks in, Lungile follows him. He need to be under someone's watch.

"He is in hospital" I say.

He stare at me, he is old, he can see through me.

I swallow nothingness, "Please clear the dining room with Simile, move everything to the empty bedroom"

He don't ask further question, he call Simile and go.

I've never been through anything like this in my life. I've had people close to me dying, but it wasn't a child so close to me. I know we have to light the candles but I have no further knowledge. Skhumbuzo should be here, taking the lead.

Before letting my family know I should let the Nkosis know. I know neither Lungile or Nceba thought of it. I call his mother, my fingers are crossed.

"Mama Nceba's son has passed on" I say.

"Okay"

There is no lost sympathy in her voice.

"Skhumbuzo is not here, he went to Cape Town. I can't get him on the phone, we need help"

"Ma Biyela that's your family, you took them in so I don't understand what is it exactly that you want me to do. I'm a wife at the Nkosis, so are you. If Nceba's child is dead, arrange the funeral. It was raining days ago, the soil is still wet"

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## LUNGILE

There is a scream coming from upstairs. I rush there to see if everything is okay with Fikile.

She is on the floor, crying her lungs out. There is a phone next to her, I take it and check what's going on. In my mind I have Skhumbuzo, I know something bad has happened to him.

MaMvelase is the last person she was on the phone with. I know she said something to her, right now I have no strength to deal with her. She is going to bring Nceba down whereas he is already crumbling on the ground. She is his biological mother, I don't understand why she hate him so much.

"Calm down Fikile, we need to be strong for Nceba" I say.

She pull herself together, I know this is not fair on her. She should have a right to express her pain as much as she want, Anga is like her child. But we have to be strong for Nceba, he is at his weakest. There are kids too, we have to let them know.

A woman arrives dragging a huge bag, she is wearing big afro wig and sunglasses.

I greet her, "Hello mama"

She take the sunglasses off and look at me from head to toe.

"Go dress up" she say and walk past me.

I'm dressed properly except that my shirt is sleeveless. Who is... Oh nx Aunt Lydia!

"Switch off the TVs, dress properly, no body showing"

She is throwing orders like nobody's business. I tell the kids to go to Sthelo's room upstairs, only Nkanyezi and Kuhle are talking. It look like others already know something is going on.

"Fikile where is your mother-in-law?"

Fikile look at me, she expect me to be the one to tell about my dysfunctional family.

She glare at both of us, "Aybo I'm talking!"

"She don't love Nceba aunty, she said it's all on me"

"She don't love him? Isn't the boy her son?"

She can't keep her voice low, naturally.

Fikile sigh, "He is her son, I don't understand why she hate him so much"

"So she think you are responsible for someone she pushed out of her vagina? Give me her cellphone number please"

Her 'please' is boss. She take the number and disappear in one of the rooms. I wonder what she is going to say to her.

Fikile's sisters start arriving, it's unbelievable that Nceba is getting support from his brother's in-laws than his family.

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## AUNT LYDIA

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I'm single, salty and moody. I don't have any tolerance, especially for women who give birth to children and hate them afterwards. Some of us wished to have kids but God didn't bless us with them. And somewhere in Inkandla there is a woman taking for granted her blessing. Her son is going through unimaginable pain, he need no money or gold, he only need a shoulder to cry on.

"Have you got hold of Skhumbuzo?"

She shake her head. What is happening in this house? The child is dead, the head of the house is MIA.

"That woman will be here in the morning"

"How did you convince her?" Lungile ask.

Did she just say convince?

"I told her to get her ass here, I don't convince I tell"

Who does she think I am? Hhayi bo.

I should talk to the boy and see how he is doing.He's been locking himself in the room for hours.The candle is burning, someone should be sitting on the mattress.Everything in this family is upside down, where is the mother of the child? No where.

He open the door and return back on bed and lie on his stomach.There are photos of the dead boy scattered all over bed.

Just a few hours ago he was talking to him, playing with him and touching him.In the blink of an eye all that is taken away from him, he is holding his pictures and memories.

"I don't need to ask how you are doing" I say.

He is a mess of tears,I can only imagine the pain of losing a child.He is young himself, he is so cute and innocent.How can someone hate such handsome son?

"Do you believe in God?"

"No" he say with no hesitation.

"God have the upper hand son, his timing is different from yours.It may be not perfect in your eyes but in his plans it is.I understand you feel like he has turned his back on you,but the truth is he is present and watching.He will guide you and show you the light"

He sit up and lean by the pillows, "He will guide me and show me the light?"

"Yes, I know he will"

He wipe his tears with the back of his hand.

"I'm 29years old, what was he waiting for all this time?"

"You are alive today because of his mercy" I say.

"I'm alive???"

He is in disbelief.The tears he was holding backing come out flooding.

"You are old you should know the difference between breathing and being alive.My mother killed me, God has killed me too and left only my heart beating.I thought I've felt pain, what I feel today cannot be compared to anything.I'm praying for death, I want to follow my son.Maybe death is the only peaceful state I can ever be at,but then God has trapped me on earth.I need to be here for Ulcer,he want me to feel every ounce of pain he is inflicting"

I shake my head, "That's not true, he is not a cruel God"

"He is a cruel God.There are murderers,rapists and drug dealers who are happy in life"

Sigh! This is harder than I thought.His mother should be here,talking to him.Everything is going to be okay but for now that's far-fetched in his eyes.

He look at me, "Can being born be such a sin?"

"No" I say.

"Then what did I do wrong? I didn't ask to come on this earth.Why did my mother keep me? She should've aborted me.Why did God give me a son and let me love him if he knew he was going to take him away from me? What's tickling everyone with my tears?"

I walk to him, "Okay I'm sorry"

He don't hug me immediately but eventually he does.I'm glad he is not bottling things out,he is crying as he should be.

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\*\*\*\*\*INSIDE RED CROSS HOSPITAL\*\*\*\*\*

"What's taking them so long?" -Mdumiseni.

Gadla sigh.

"How should we know Mdu?"

"What did you go to school for? You should at least know how long the process take"

"We didn't go to medical schools, you cannot know that with Standard 12"

"Then your education is useless"

Mzimba click his tongue, irritated to the core.

"Can you guys stop? Skhumbuzo is in a critical condition,as well as Nqubeko,now is not the time"

"You shot Nqubeko,so why do you care?" -Mdumiseni.

"He was going to kill Skhumbuzo, didn't you see that man is crazy now?"

"You should've shot his leg"

Gadla grunt with his teeth, "You always suggest, why didn't you shoot his leg?"

"Ay fokof wena!"

The argument is broken by the nurse who walk to them and ask if they are with two shot patients.

"Are they okay?" -Mdumiseni.

"Yes they are okay,you can see them"

They start by checking Skhumbuzo,the bullet went in his arm.The same happened to Nqubeko,Mzimba aimed the hand he was shooting with and shot his arm.Amos was left injured with his three people dead or injured.Precious escaped with her daughter,the case is not opened.

"Where is my phone?" he ask them.

Gadla hand it over, "It's here"

He take it with his free hand and dial a number.

"MaBiyela"

Fikile start crying when she hear his voice.It's almost midnight,she almost gave up.

"I'm in hospital,we found Nqubeko"

"What are you doing in the hospital?" she ask.

"He was told to shoot me,but we are both okay.They will transfer us to Durban tomorrow, it's nothing much"

"You need to come home now Skhumbuzo" she is crying again.

"I'm coming back,please take the boys to the beach for me.Ask Nceba to go with you"

"Skhumbuzo you need to come home, Anga is not...Anga is gone"

"Gone where?" he is alarmed.

"He just fell and died on my arms on our way to the hospital.I don't know what to do,your mother is not helping.Please come home sthandwa sami we need you,Nceba needs you"

He control the tone of his voice and ask, "When did all this happen?"

"Early today,everything is a mess"

"I will be there before the day end tomorrow"

The injuries???

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Fikile Biyela

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Sena and my mother came this morning.Aunt Lydia is in charge of everything,as much as she shout I'm glad she is here.Sbusiso and Lwazi came,they are with Nceba.Basically



only the Biyelas are here, MaMvelase is on her way. God knows what Aunt Lydia said to her.

"Fikile where is Skhumbuzo?" Zethu ask.

She's been pestering me with this question the last two hours.

"He is coming"

It sound like a verse now.

Around 3pm the Nkosi elders arrive, I give Aunt Lydia a begging look. I hate MaMvelase but right now is not the time to fight.

"Makoti where is Skhumbuzo?" the uncle ask.

"I don't know, he said he will be here today"

"Where is he?"

Lord!

"He went to Cape Town"

"To do what there?"

I cannot be the one breaking the news to them, it's Skhumbuzo's place. I lie and say he went on work. Lungile is the one on the mattress, it's still hard to believe that Anga is gone. My son, my little baby.

Out of the blue someone scream. It's MaMvelase, she is not crying for Anga or Nceba, she is crying for Skhumbuzo walking through the door with white bandage all over his right arm. He look pained.

"What happened my boy?" she ask walking to him.

Two other men walk in, I recognize the other, one he usually visit him.

Fuck no! It's like I'm dreaming.

Everyone in the house scream and run. MaMvelase collapse on the floor. Skhumbuzo walk past her and ask where Nceba is.

Nqubeko is standing, staring at me. He haven't changed, not a little bit.

"Babaaaaaaaa!!!!!"

Mfundi scream running to him. They look alike, he is the future Nqubeko.

"Hey"

He squeeze his hand, his voice is filled with confusion.

"He is your brother's second born, others are upstairs" I explain.

MaMvelase start wailing asking where Nqubeko is coming from.

And....? Zethu come from under table and grab the cupboards open, next thing we know there is salt all over Nqubeko's face.

"Oh My God Fire!!!"

Sigh!

"Zethu he is alive, please stop" I say exhausted.

"Is this Jesus episode repeat?"

Like really now?!

"Zethu please"

She take her shoes off and pass far from Nqubeko. Mfundi start laughing, I'm surprised by his reaction. He should be scared of Nqubeko, like any normal child would.

"Nqubeko where are you coming from?" his uncle ask.

"Cape Town"

"We buried you, what kind of circus are you this?"

I clear my throat, "Baba can we please let him adjust, he lost his memory"

He frown, "How?"

Yoh! How should I know? I'm not a doctor. Skhumbuzo rescue the moment, he walk to MaMvelase and ask her to step aside. Whatever it is it's not good.

"That's your mother by the way" I say.

"Where is Nceba?"

My eyes widen, "You remember him?"

"No, they told me about him"

Mfundu lead him to Nceba. I thought my family was episodic, this one take the crown. Tell me how both Nqubeko and Skhumbuzo got injuries on similar arms?

"Fikile"

I turn to the voice, Zanda!

"Hey" I say.

"Nqubeko is still alive?"

I nod, "He was taken by a doctor and memory washed. Our accusations were wrong, Dr Amos may be the one who shot Leano aiming at you"

"Why?"

I shrug my shoulders, "You got involved with his target"

"I don't know, either way I don't want to be around him. I'm sorry but I have to leave"

"I understand babe"

She give me a hug and walk out. I hope this won't cause any trouble between her and Mandla.

## Chapter 291

Simtholile Biyela

We attended a funeral of Anga in Inkandla. I don't understand, I'm still in denial. Yes I watched the little coffin going down and Fikile crying her lungs out but my mind refuses to accept that he is gone.

Junior is not so strong, he's been crying his eyes out. He cried more than Anga's brothers. In his mind Anga was his little brother, he loved being around him and acting like a big brother.

He was well disciplined, I'm used to Sbusiso's kids, those make your head pound. But with Anga I didn't even feel like I was babysitting, he was well mannered. Nceba was a bit stronger today, I think he have cried enough.

Oh there is a ghost! That brother who died and got buried, well he is alive and kicking. They say he lost his memory, I don't understand how he didn't forget to throw dead looks though. The way he is I bet no community member had guts to ask him how he is alive again.

I must say I'm glad I'm Donald's girlfriend not Skhumbuzo's. We had our fair share of pain and tears, I don't think I came close to what Fikile is feeling right now. It's episode after episode after episode. When is my sister getting a break? She is going to age soon. We are in the rural areas, there is no catering services for funerals. The relatives cook and serve. I'm the dishing queen, Sena was on the pots with two other ladies. Ziphe was the smart wife who attended the funeral with her husband. They stood side by side till the end, now they are in the car leaving because Phakade is giving his temp nanny a hard time. It's a normal black family funeral, two plates of food and icy cold drink have to be rushed to their car.

Zanda and Mandla didn't attend, I think it's about Nqubeko being alive again. Mandla is being challenged here, imagine thinking your enemy is dead boom he is alive. Zanda is in trouble, she have to deal with Mandla's insecurities again.

"I think everyone is served now" says one of the girls who was serving.

"Okay you guys can help yourselves,I'm done"

I close the pots and wash my hands.I need to see Fikile,we are leaving soon she will be alone.

I bump to Zethu, "Hey Don is looking for you"

"You surely know how to dodge work"

"I'm going to help with the dishes" she say.

I know she is lying, she will be requesting for a dishwasher.I look for my man and find him with his squad.

I pull him aside, "Zethu says you were looking for me"

"I haven't seen you, are you okay?"

I exhale, "Yeah"

"Your father said you're all sleeping in your home"

I saw this coming,we have to see the ancestors and burn impepho and all that since we are in Inkandla already.I haven't been home in a long time, I take Mandeni as my real home whereas the Inkandla homestead is my real home.It's where my daughter was buried, where all my ancestors lie.

I haven't visited my princess in a long time,this grant me a chance to go see her.

"Leave Junior behind" I say.

"No he will be fine with me"

"I don't think he is over it, I want him next to me so that I can make sure he is okay"

He nod, "Okay it's fine"

He peck my lips, Sbu say something under his breath.Now we are not supposed to kiss because his pregnant wife is not here!

"How are the cravings?" I mock him.

He smile, "How are yours?"

Wtf!

"I got no cravings"

"You have it easy sister" he say laughing.

Well he is usual stupid when his wife is not around,let me leave him.I go to Skhumbuzo's rondavel where I think Fikile is.Indeed she is here,seems like the whole family is here.

Wuuu the Nqubeko guy is boring me with his eyes.

"I'm Fikile's sister" I say.

Fiki clear her throat, "Simtho!!"

Her voice carries a warning.Wtf! The guy doesn't remember me.

"Are you guys okay?" I ask.

"Yes"

"How is Junior?" Skhumbuzo ask.

"He is still emotional but he ate so there is progress"

Nceba look at me, "I'm sorry"

What is he apologising for? Fikile take a deep sigh and glance at Skhumbuzo.

Zethu come in running,she nearly trip on the chair by the door.Now we are looking at her like she is a madwoman,which she is.

"We have to go" she say looking at me.

"Go where?"

"I came in your car, I need to leave now"

I frown, "Is everything okay?"

"No Phindile is in hospital"

Whaaaat?

"What's wrong with her?" I ask.

"Ummm...I think...Tyson just took her to the hospital,can we go?"

Lungile get on her feet, "What's wrong with her? We need to know."

"Gosh! I can't say now,the doctors are trying to figure out what caused her bleeding"

Yeses! This is bad news,we shouldn't have asked.

"Go tell Don, I'm coming tomorrow" I say.

She rush out, she is panicking.

Skhumbuzo break the awkward silence, "Nqubeko we need to go seek"

He frown, "Seek?"

The guy doesn't know anything.

"Something is wrong here"

His mother walk in with other two women.Aunt Lydia tamed this woman but the cruelty in her eyes didn't go anywhere.I fear for Fikile,this is what they call monster-in-law.

"MaBiyela did they take their medication?" she ask.

Fikile don't say anything,so does the brothers with injured arms.Nceba get up and walk outside, he haven't said a word about Phindile's dilemma.

"Mamkhulu is it okay if we go somewhere now? Me and Nqubeko." Skhumbuzo ask looking at another woman.

"You can't leave the premises today"

"We need help, Nceba's pregnant girlfriend is in hospital.Something is not right here"

This is a private family moment, I should be leaving but curiosity killed a cat.I want to know their final decision.

Nceba walk in, barefoot, physically worn out.I didn't notice tears in his eyes until he faced my way.

"Skhumbuzo please remind me,what did I do? I'm trying to remember,I can't trace anything" he say.

"Nceba we are going to the sangoma"

He shake his head, "The sangoma won't help, you can help me"

The state he is in make my eyes burn.Nobody deserve this.

"Please brother,try to remember maybe I was 2years or younger.What did I do?"

Skhumbuzo shake his head, "You didn't do anything Nceba"

He kneel infront of Nqubeko,tears rolling down his eyes.

"Brother I'm sorry, please forgive me"

Nqubeko is lost as everyone else.

He look at Skhumbuzo, "Big brother I'm sorry about uMaka Sthelo, I'm sorry about any other wrong I did to you"

"Nceba stop this" he say clenching his jaws.

"MaBiyela did I do anything wrong to you? Please forgive me,please"

Fikile let down a river of tears, I'm holding back mine.

"Nceba!!!" Skhumbuzo roars.

He don't pay attention to his warning he go to his mother and kneel before her feet.He cries,loud and painfully.

"MaMvelase I'm sorry, I know I did you wrong even though I've forgotten what I did.I know I'm being punished for something,all I'm asking for is forgiveness.You don't have to love me, I will not take the cows nor step in your premises again, as long as you forgive me"

He didn't do anything.WHY? I fail to blink back my tears, I find myself wiping my eyes with hands.

"I've lost my son,he was my everything.Please spare me Ulcer I'm begging you,soften your heart"

Lungile is crying too, I thought she was the strongest.

"Nceba don't do this,nothing is going to happen to Phindile" Fikile say.

Nceba hold on his mother's leg, "Nqubeko,Skhumbuzo I'm begging you,ask her to forgive me"

"Mama Nceba didn't do anything to you" Skhumbuzo say.

Veins are protruding on his temple,his voice is breaking, Fikile is holding his arm.

"Go burn impepho and ask the ancestors to forgive me.Mamkhulu you pray,ask God to forgive me.I've heard and I own up to my mistakes,my son died because of me.I just want another shot with Ulcer,please save him"

I can't take this! I bump to my father,he ask what's wrong, I can't speak.He pull me to the car and put me on his chest.

God please save Phindile and Ulcer,this is a lot for one human being.

## Chapter 292

### Fikile Biyela

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They've been in that rondavel for hours,the smell of impepho has taken over the whole yard.It might sound stupid but the smell scares me, it's worse because it's not even my home's incense.

There is a sangoma,they've been doing things and slaughtering chickens.Apparently Nceba have to make an apology to the ancestors on behalf of his father.I can never understand, it's so ridiculously unfair.

"Mah!"

He just ran in with his eyes popped out like he just saw a ghost.

"Mfundu what's wrong?" I ask.

"I saw Anga outside,near the toilet"

Say what???

"Are you sure?"

He look frightened, "He was standing,facing the yard"

My knees tremble, this kid is insane! He is seeing things.

"That's not possible, we buried Anga" I say.

"I saw him, he is in the same clothes he had on the day he left for the hospital"

I feel dizzy and sit on bed.Mfundu is young but too matured for his age,he know what he saw.But how is it even possible?

I take my phone and buzz Skhumbuzo, I'm not sure how I'm going to tell him this but they need to know while the sangoma is still here.My mother said something,I ignored it but now I realise she had a point.I need to have a psychologist I see at least once a month, my life is traumatizing.

Someone scream outside, "No Nceba!"

"I'm done" it's Nceba's voice.

The quarrel get nearer and nearer until Skhumbuzo walk through the door barefooted.Nqubeko is with him, they're not angry, there are unreadable emotions clouded on their faces.

"Mfundu go to your brothers" he say.

"He can't, he is scared" I tell him.

He give Mfundi a stare, he get up and walk out.

"Skhumbuzo why are you kicking the child out? He is going to have nightmares,he just saw..."

Nceba walk in,he is holding his bag.He stand infront of Skhumbuzo and glare at him.

"Are you happy now?" he ask.

Nqubeko exhale, "Nceba sit down"

He turn to him, "You don't even know yourself, I want to have a talk with the head of this family"

This doesn't look good, Nceba is spitting fire and it's directed to Skhumbuzo.

"Guys what's going on?" I ask.

"They killed my son, I hate them.I hate you and mother,you knew what was needed but you didn't do it for Anga.His sin was being my son, that's what he died for"

I look at Skhumbuzo, I'm lost.

"You didn't tell me,you didn't warn me.Now I've paid back for Thembeke,I hope you will find peace"

He turn to look at Nqubeko, "As much as you forgot but you could've done something but you didn't.Skhumbuzo have been always your favourite brother,I hope you gain your memory"

He is making his way out when MaMvelase walk in.He stop her,folded fist on her breast.This is so unlike him.

"I've been loving you since I was born,even though you didn't love me back.I cared and included you in my prayers,today for the first time ever I HATE YOU.You've disowned me so many times,today I disown you too.You are not my mother and you're going to rot on earth before you go rot in hell"

He push her aside and walk out.MaMvelase break down and cry.I don't understand what she is crying for, she deserve every word he said.

She follow out, yelling "Nceba come back."

I should've left with my family, this is too much to handle.Nqubeko walk out, Skhumbuzo is still standing on the same spot.There is a car driving away, Nceba's I think.

"Babe what is all of this?" I ask.

"He say it's my fault"

I can see the timing is wrong but I need information.What really happened when they were with the sangoma?

"How is it your fault?" I ask.

"Anga was never introduced to the ancestors in an appropriate way, I was supposed to do the ceremony for him and give him isiphandla"

"Was it a must?" I ask.

"In this family it is"

"Then why didn't you do it for him when we found out about him?"

He sit on bed, "I've had a rough year,I couldn't remember everything"

"You couldn't remember something that could cost a life?"

"Okay I've failed, Nqubeko will take over.I'm tired,emotionally and physically.I lost a baby and had to take the blame and be strong for you and the kids.I never got time to think things though,I had to come to terms with the betrayal from Nceba and forgive him.I'm

juggling two jobs to make my kids life better.Nqubeko had his fake death, there I still had to be in charge and fix everyone.I'm sorry"

I realise how insensitive my question sounded.I'm not blaming him for Anga's death, he is not God and I know how dearly he loved him.

"I'm not saying it's your fault" I say.

"But that's what everyone is saying,even the sangoma was throwing questions at me.I loved Anga too,he left huge gap in my life.I'm not Nceba's father or my mother's husband,but I provide for everyone.I sent him to university and tried my best to fill my father's shoes but at the end of the day I still need a leader and someone to take care of me too."

I sigh and sit next to him, "I'm sorry, Nceba is just hurting he didn't mean everything he said"

"I think he meant it,it how he feels"

Lungile walk in.They don't even knock.

"Skhumbuzo uMamkhulu needs you,it's about your mother"

He look at her, "What now?"

"I don't know, come"

He get up and walk out with her.As soon as they leave I remember what Mfundi saw and run to close the door.Why is my baby not resting in peace? I find myself in tears,wondering what Nceba must be going through where he is.If he ever hear this he will be shattered.

Ten minutes later he walk in and get on bed without saying a word.

"Is everything okay?" I ask.

"No,nothing is okay.Go home in the morning, I'm coming back Wednesday"

"Why must I go home?" I ask.

"You need to breath"

He is correct but what about him? He said he is tired,when is he going to breath?

"It's fine I want to be here with you" I say.

"Fikile!"

"Skhumbuzo!"

He look at me, "This is not the life I planned for you, I didn't want you to cry.This family is dysfunctional, please go home"

"It's my family too"

He go mute, I decide to break the news about Anga.

He sigh and sit up, "Are you not scared?"

I shake my head.

"I need to chase him away" he say.

My eyes widen, "Chase him away? He is a child!"

"He is dead Fikile, he shouldn't be standing outside the yard"

"Call the sangoma,don't chase him away he is a damn child, maybe he miss us"

He exhale, "No he don't miss us, he want something.I will go seek in the morning and see what I can do"

He take a glass of water and walk out.I don't know why I'm crying, it feels like he is chasing the real Anga away.Maybe he is scared of the grave,he want to come back to us.

I can hear his voice yelling; "Angomuhle go,you're no longer with us"

I'm on bed, nearly asleep when he walk in. He pour water in a dish and wash his feet.

"Don't switch the lights off, I'm scared" I say.

He nod and slide in bed. I know a cheeky Skhumbuzo, I know a cocky Skhumbuzo, I know a sad Skhumbuzo. Right now I'm looking at a sad one who is fighting so hard to look strong.

"You did nothing, God decide on our birth and death. You've given your family your all, I'm sure your father is proud of you where he is"

"Please switch the lights off" his voice is dragged out.

"It's okay, I'm here for you"

He grab my chest to his face and start crying. I lock my own emotions and embrace him.

"I'm trying Fikile, I fix the other side the other one collapses. I would've been there to save Anga but I had to go fetch Nqubeko, I'm so sorry"

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PHINDILE

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"Vula!"

It's so early in the morning, I hardly slept last night because of fear. Every hour I woke up to check if there is no blood dropping. What happened was an awakening call, I have to be cautious.

I wake up and open for her. She is dressed up and slaying already.

"Nceba is here"

Say what?

"Are you sure?" I ask.

She roll her eyes, "Wash your face, brush your teeth and definitely wash your p-u-s-s-y"

"Wow! That's great advice, where are you off to so early?"

She show me her ring, "Breakfast with fiancée"

Nice life!

"Okay, take care of yourself. Call me if anything happens and comfort your baby daddy, he is not in a good space"

I run to the bathroom and wash my face. I was sarcastic on her advice but I wash all the secret places and brush my teeth. I didn't expect him to be here, his son was buried just yesterday.

His head is turned downward, I slowly walk in and sit opposite him.

"Good morning" I greet.

He get off the chair and come next to me.

He squeeze me in a tight hug, "How are you?"

"I'm good, how are you holding up?"

He brush my stomach and stare at me. I don't know him that much but I can see huge difference in him.

"Did it happen again?" he ask.

"No"

He pull my head and grab my lips with a surprise kiss.

"Let's go Phindile"

I'm still recovering from the kiss, "Go where?"



"To Pretoria, I want to go with you and Ulcer"

I'm dumbstruck for a moment. Pretoria???

"Why?" I ask.

"I want to be with my family"

He don't sound normal.

"Shouldn't you be home?" I ask.

"I don't have a home, I want to build one with you"

I don't know how to answer him, he is dealing with pain strangely.

"I can't go without you, you're my last hope. Please come with me, I need you guys closer to me"

I exhale, "I'm sorry I cannot leave, I have my family here in KZN"

"We will come back to sort it out"

"No"

"You don't love me?"

His question throw me to a dark corner. I haven't placed my feelings about him, a part of me feels like he is way out of my league.

He sit back on the chair, "I can't live without him, I wish every breath I take was my last breath"

"What about me and Ulcer?" I ask.

"You will both leave one day and I'll go through the same pain"

Sigh!

"Did you eat anything?"

"No I want to sleep"

I prepare for him in my room, Zethu will understand. He climb on bed and ask me to get on with him.

I've never been squeezed so tight in my life, my breath is shortening.

"You'll hurt him" I say.

He loosen the grip but his arms don't leave my tummy.

Chapter 293

Ziphelele Biyela

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Fikile called and asked Thapelo to go check on Nceba in Zethu's place. He has been gone for hours now, he was supposed to babysit Phakade while I go for my spa day. He is not sending any update, I'm getting frustrated.

Oh by the way Phakade can walk and he is not even 1 year old. I thought it would get easy when he start walking but I was wrong, he is handful more than ever. I have to put four eyes on him, now I need a full time nanny.

There is someone at the gate, my family is still in Inkandla so I'm wondering who it is.

A whole quantum in my yard? This is strange.

"Sawubona" greet a man I've never seen before.

His accent is "taxi rank", he is making his way toward the door where I'm standing with Phakade on my hip.

"Hey sitera kuhambani?"

"I'm good" I say hesitantly.

He look at my bottom, I get a strange uncomfortable feeling.

"I'm here to deliver your parcels" he say.

I frown, "Parcels"

"Hey there your husband's big headed chipmunks, I'm next on the stand"  
And taxi rank attitude as well.

"I don't think I understand, who are you?"

"My name is Smanga, the taxi driver. I was hired by another sistera from my hood to deliver your husband's rats, isn't your father shoot anyone who dare come near you?"

My husband's rats? I need to call Thapelo, he told me nothing about rats.

The Smanga guy walk back to his quantum, he take something inside.

A baby!

"What is this?" I ask.

"I told you amavezandlebe omyeni wakho"

Whooah! This guy need to be serious before I call the security.

He put the baby on my feet and walk back to the quantum. He come back with another baby. My stomach turns, this one look exactly like Phakade. Everything, from head to toe, he is a young version of Phakade.

"The cute one is a boy, the ugly one is a girl. They are twins, Imogen and Melody"

The door is wide opened, the boy crawl inside. The driver is on his third trip, now bringing two huge bags. Thapelo is not picking up, I need him to come and sort this dilemma.

"I think you will find everything you need here, I have to run"

He run to his quantum and drive out. I'm not stupid, I know the girl was real pregnant by him. He denied it and promised me they were not his.

A deep scratch come to my face, it's Phakade he want me to put him down. I hold him tightly, I don't want him to play with these babies I don't know. They are crawling all over, they don't care about me or strange house. It's not normal, is it?

I call my mother, she doesn't pick up. It direct me to my father. I don't want to talk to that one yet, he will take things his 'Biyela' way.

"Ziphe" she sound busy.

"Hey Sena"

She keep quiet, waiting for me to speak. I don't even know where to start.

"Are you okay?" she ask.

"The twins were his, they are here"

"What twins?"

Phakade force his way down and walk to the babies.

"Remember the girl who said she is pregnant and disappeared?" I say.

"Say what? Oh fuck it, you and Nozipho are cursed? Did she dump the babies with you?"

Oh Lord! Now what are you going to do? God please save my marriage"

I called the wrong sister, I should've called Zanda. She is asking questions and answering them herself, I have no chance to speak.

I sigh, "I don't know what to do"

"You have to face reality, ask Nozi for advice"

I haven't took their bags from the door, I pray they don't start crying because I'm going to lose it.

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THAPELO MOKOENA

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I've never been through what this guy is going through. I wish his brothers were here instead of conducting mourning processes. Phindile cannot handle him on her own, she is too young. If he doesn't seek professional help he is going to lose his 25% sanity. Time has fled, I have many missed calls from my wife. I know she is fuming where she is, I promised to babysit while she goes to do her things. The best way to calm an angry wife is to send the 'Don't cook' message.

I top our take-outs with chocolate and flowers for the shining beauty.

Just as I thought, she is angry.

I put food on the counter, "I'm so sorry baby"

She keeps quiet.

"I will babysit the whole day tomorrow, you can go the whole day"

She just stares at me. I hear squealing voices coming from one of the rooms and smile.

"Leano is here?" I ask.

"No, Melody and Imogen are here"

Who the hell is Melody and Imogen?

She grabs the flowers, "I postponed my appointment to six thirty, you will be babysitting until 8pm"

Sigh!

"Can we come with you? Phakade has never been to a spa" I say.

She chuckles, "Go check in the room, I will see you later"

I don't understand her mood, this is more than just my delay. She puts flowers inside the vase and grabs her bag and walks out.

"Dadadada"

It's my smile-keeper, I pick him up and peck his cheeks.

"My boy!"

He slaps my cheek and points on the floor. We should address the slapping, he is a bit violent.

With! There is a baby next to my leg, looking up at me. He looks exactly like Phakade and me.

"Phakade who is this?" I ask the 10-month-old baby.

"Dadada" that's his reply.

I put him down and kneel in front of this baby.

I lift his face up, "Hey boy"

Phakade slaps me again, "Dadada"

My meet a baby girl making her way to us on her knees. She is coffee-brown in skin, her eyes can zoom the whole Durban. She stops and sits when she realises I'm staring at her.

I reach for my phone to call Ziphe, I need an explanation.

Four messages from her, I didn't pay attention to them earlier because I thought they were 'yelling' messages.

1st one reads: There is a man dropping your rats here.

2nd one reads: That girl sent taxi driver to drop babies here, he says they are yours.

3rd one reads: Where are you Thapelo? The boy looks like you, the driver left them.

4th one reads: You will find me gone

This is crazy! I asked her to do the DNA test, she disappeared. Now I have two babies dropped to my house with no warning, this could've been arranged if she allowed me to do the test. Ziphe is mad and I understand where she is coming from. She cannot give me more babies and I was totally fine with it, but now someone has given me doubles.

What do they eat? Do they drink milk? Where are their documents? I'm going to lose my mind.

There are bags dropped by the door. I open the first one, there are milk bottles and baby necessities. The second bag have clothes and blue file.

Melody and Imogen Khumalo, both born on the 12th of May. They are twins, Melody is a girl. She look nothing like me, she is a dark-skin goddess. I find it hard to believe she is mine, I've never pictured myself fathering a girl. She is staring at me with her thumb inside her mouth, saliva dropping on her chest. It's like she is blinking with machine, everything about her is extraordinary.

Imogen is his father's son, and he is his brother's brother. He has crawled away, now sitting under the table pushing chairs. Phakade is the happiest child alive.

I call Mandla, he is the best person to talk to right now.

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ZIPHELELE MOKOENA

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I come home exactly at 8pm as I said. There are hysterical screams all over the house, amongst crying voices is Phakade. Now I'm one of those mothers, I fight my battles with a baby. I shouldn't have left for so many hours, I'm sure he has ran out of milk.

He have the girl in his arms, Phakade and the boy are crying on the floor. My Phakade is on the floor crying!!

"Ziphe" he call after me.

I pull my son and disappear. I can't believe he watched him crying like that.

He is hungry, he suck like a calf. He is not even bathed, no wonder he is not asleep at this time.

One hour later his babies are still crying. I've made food for Phakade, we are on our pyjamas heading to bed after this.

He walk in, "Ziphelele I need help."

"With what?"

"I don't know, they've been crying for hours"

I raise my eyebrows, "You told me they are not yours, what kind of help should I give you?"

"I didn't know, I was honest about everything"

"Your honesty is productive, congratulations daddy"

I put the bowl inside sink and walk away with Phakade. He took the girl down and left the boy crying alone upstairs, like how stupid can one person be?

He stop crying when he see me walk in, when I pass him he start crying again. I'm a mother more than I'm a betrayed wife, my motherly instincts fail to keep me walking further. I put Phakade down and lift him up. I don't know who is Melody or Imogen.

His diaper is okay, it's either he is hungry or he need a bath. Time reads 22:03 and I'm still up bathing babies.

"Where are they going to sleep?" he ask me.

"I'm not their father, I don't know"

Sadness transform his face. His audacity!

"They will sleep with you" I say.

"The five of us on one bed?"

"Me and Phakade will use the spare bedroom"

Their stupid mother packed their clothes, at least one side of her head is still working. I dress them up and prepare their bottles. They have only one tin of milk, it won't even last

them two days. I need to have this girl tracked down, she owe me an explanation. None of her actions add up to sane human being.

Phakade is fast asleep, I'm still up counting my sorrows. They told me marriage is hard, I didn't think it was this unbearable. It hurts, we agreed on adoption but now he have babies.

The lights switch on, he is here. His babies must be asleep, good for him.

"Ziphelele" he say in his 'not so friendly' voice.

I look at him, indeed he is angry.

"What?" I say.

"Do you understand the meaning of this ring you put on my finger? I'm your husband and you vowed to stand by me, what made you change your vows?"

Emotional blackmail, really now?

"Did you not betray your faithfulness? It seems like we are all changing the vows" I say.

"I was in a bad space and I admitted all my mistakes. What more do you want me to do? I didn't say I'm not human, I still make mistakes like everyone else"

"What do you want me to do? Mother your kids?" I ask.

"Help me come up with a plan" he say.

"Find their mother and make a plan with her. She is alive, not dead."

He invite himself next to me and sit.

"My wife, what do you mean?"

Sweet talking won't help him.

"I'm not ready and I would appreciate if you find them somewhere else to live, not here"

He frown, "You don't want them here?"

"Absolutely"

"They are my children"

I shrug my shoulders, "I'm aware"

"Why are you punishing them, not me? They are innocent and need a warm home to live in while I make a plan about them"

Wow! He is not a narrow-minded person after all, this is why I fell in love with him.

"You're right, in the morning you will pack your bags and leave"

"Excuse me?"

"I want you out of my house, I will let the kids live since their mother sent them packing"

He exhale, "I cannot leave my children's side, they need their father and you also need your husband. Melody is a girl, and I can't leave her unprotected"

Oh Melody is a girl, so Imogen is a boy one. He is specific about her, I pick up favouritism instantly. She was the only one being carried while Phakade and Imo cried their lungs out on the floor.

"Why?" I ask.

"I'm scared, she is not strong as the boys"

I roll my eyes till they touch my brain. Who said girls are weak, the mentality is exhausting.

"I'm being honest, I'd rather give you space and leave with them if you need time"

Wow!!!!

"So you are choosing them over me?" I ask.

"You won't be able to protect her should anything happen, I don't want her to go through what my sister went through. I cannot let... Ziphe I just can't, the world is cruel I fear for her."

I glare at him, "What are you scared of?"

"That someone might hurt her and she wouldn't be able to defend herself. She is so innocent, so perfect. A part of me cannot believe she is my seed."

I push silly thoughts away, of course I cannot give him a girl even if I want to. His whole world has changed, a part of me is happy for him but I'm also jealous.

"I'm sorry, I know it's insensitive" he says.

"So you will leave with them?"

His eyes turn red, "I didn't think you would make me choose"

"I didn't make you choose, I said pack your bags and you said you will take them with you because you don't trust me. Apparently Melody needs you more than Imogen, Phakade and I."

He exhales, "I didn't say that, you're twisting my words"

"That's exactly what you said. I'll tell you what, you need to direct your energy to your boys because if boys were raised well girls wouldn't need protection. You are dividing your love unequally. If there were not rapists there wouldn't be rape victims, if there were no women abusers there wouldn't be any domestic violence victims. Don't water branches, water the roots. Phakade needs you, as well as Imogen"

There is a cry coming from the main bedroom. He kisses my cheek and leaves. I pull my phone and call Fikile, I'm in tears.

"Ziphe you need to know how you feel. Are you angry or jealous?" she asks.

"I'm angry" I say.

"Angry at what? Didn't you say you forgive him or your forgiveness was conditional" Sena was better than her, she sounds like one of those women.

"I cannot give him a girl, you should see how happy he is" I say.

"Then you're jealous, my father was also happy when he found Sbusiso but my mother didn't compare and analyse every move he made. It's natural, Skhumbuzo is also crazy about baby girls"

"You can give him one, that's different" I say.

"And you can accept his kids, it's not like he cheated on you. You are the quietest one and yet the most difficult one urch!"

I sigh, "Okay bye, they're crying"

I walk to the main bedroom and find him on his feet with Melody. Imogen is the one on the floor again. He sees the expression on my face.

"I was going to pick him when Melody falls asleep" he explains.

Yeah ne! I take Imogen and one milk bottle and walk out.

Our sleeping arrangement is like that, me and the boys and him and his Melody.

I'm woken up by a loud cry, Imogen fell off bed. Life of crawling babies!

"Morning guys" he greets walking through the door.

"Hey"

He puts Melody down, she is not ugly she has a dark skin. Only in South Africa dark skinned babies are called ugly. She is beautiful and going to end the yellow bones beauty soon. It's unbelievable that she is Imogen's twin.

"How did you guys sleep?"

"Good" I say.

He kisses my cheek and takes Phakade. Guilt is written all over his face. We had plans, we were going to give him three or four years before adopting a sibling for me. His 'baby' moments are gone, he is now an old brother.

He looks at me, "Do you still want me to leave?"

"No, you can stay. I'm being difficult for nothing, they happened I will deal with it."

"I love him, he is still my 'forever.'"

I force a smile, "Cool, I hope there won't be any favouritism"  
"You're my favourite" he say.  
I raise my eyebrow, "Is it?"  
"Always my favourite, are we going to have our morning sex today?"  
WTH! Did he just ask that in front of the kids?  
He chuckles, "They don't know anything. Seriously I can do with some sex, I had a stressful night. I need your touch"  
"Who is going to look after them while I ride that cock?"  
He sigh, "This is pure torture"  
"Our lives have changed Thapelo, it's not what I imagined to be but I made a vow so I will stay"  
He lean over and kiss my cheek, "Thank you"  
"Can I hold Melody?"  
He smile, "Yes"  
"The taxi driver said she is the ugly one"  
"He said she is ugly? Did he leave his name?"  
I look at him, "You're being dramatic now, it was a silly comment"  
"I'm not going to allow 'just silly comments' to destroy my daughter's self-esteem. She is dark, not ugly"  
I have to warn my sisters, especially the unfiltered Zethu. Thapelo is going to kill anyone who dare throw a silly comment about Melody.

## Chapter 293 (Bonus Insert)

Simtholile Biyela

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We are coming from Inkandla, all three cars are heading to Thapelo's house. We couldn't wait any more time to see Thapelo's twins. I'm very happy for him even though he cheated on my sister. Ziphe sent us a text telling us to control our tongues around the babies. She didn't say much, just that.

"Can we have ice-cream stop?" Fikile asks.

"No" Sbusiso replies.

I look at her, "Why do you need ice-cream?"

"It's hot, duh"

Why do I suspect pregnancy? These girls love falling pregnant.

"I want ice-cream" Nozipho says.

She is heavily pregnant and ugly as a fuck. Even Ramaphosa's nose ain't this big, her unpredictable moods make her even more ugly. She has spoken, thee Mrs Biyela. Hubby makes a U-turn and drive to the garage.

"You couldn't stop for your sister but it takes you less than a minute to turn for a Zungu" I say.

"She is not a Zungu and she is my wife"

I switch to a typical sister-in-law for a moment.

"Did you feed my brother love portion?" I ask Nozipho.

"Yes I did, why do you ask?"

She is being sarcastic.

I roll my eyes, "I will tell Dad to take him to a healer."

"Nobody is stopping you from feeding Don, don't meddle in my marriage"

Sbu laughs, "You need to feed me more my love I'm starting to have a crush on Jennifer Lopez"

Say what? I burst out laughing.

"Have you seen that girl's legs Nozipho? Commit suicide babe"

She give me a dead look and tie her three braids. Yes she have three big braids on her head, the fashion mogul.

"What inspired this hairstyle for a real world?" Fiki asks.

I thought I was the only one finding this hairstyle lazy and unattractive.

She laughs, "You guys have something against me, I want you to hate me for something solid. Sbusiso I want all your bank cards, you will ask money from me."

Whoooah! That's not happening, not while I'm still breathing.

"You will get ass-whooped Nozi" I say.

"And traditionally dealt with, my man knows sangomas in high places" Fikile adds.

Oh about that, she never updated us on what happened after Mfundi saw Anga's ghost.

"Did Skhu find out what's troubling Anga's soul?" I ask.

She sigh, "Yes, it's an ancestor thing. He was not welcomed by the Nkosis as he was buried as Nceba's child."

"I don't understand" I say.

"The ancestors know Thembeke as Skhumbuzo's wife, every child she bears is taken as Skhumbuzo's, that's where confusion erupted. The Nkosi problems are bigger than me."

I can see how frustrated she is about this whole predicament. A part of me is glad my family is not as traditional as the Nkosis.

"How are you feeling after everything?" Nozipho asks.

She shrug, "I don't know, I'm hurt but I feel like showing my pain would be selfish of me. Nceba and Skhumbuzo are not having it easy, I have to be strong"

"I'm scared one day you're going to suffer from mental illnesses, if not heart diseases. You are doing so much for that family and sacrificing a lot. Don't get me wrong I'm proud of you and happy you've found love, but somehow I feel like you're losing your morals and sense of who you are."

Sbu is hardly serious so when he get serious we pay attention. His concerns are valid, Fikile is hardly happy in her life.

"I'm still who I was" she protest.

I clear my throat, "No, Fikile is a selfish bully not this mother of the world who put everyone before herself"

She laughs, "I was selfish because I wasn't loved properly. Skhumbuzo came and changed all of that, you guys don't even try to convince me otherwise I love that human being"

Nozipho roll her eyes, "He fed you the love portion."

"He must feed me more"

We all laugh, the whole journey is filled with stupid jokes. We are jabbing at Nozipho most of the times, Sbu is annoyingly in love with her. Their love is fueled up by each look they share, even Romeo and Juliet didn't have it this way.

Sena drove with Nduku and the kids, they haven't arrived yet. Mandla and Zethu are here, this thing is going to turn into a family gathering.

"FAAAM!"

Her scream wake Yamihle from his mother's arm.

Nozi is annoyed, "See what you've done"

Of course Zethu don't give a fly, she grab Yamihle and walk away with him.

"I will bring him back if he cries" she say.



Ziphe appears with Phakade on her arm, she doesn't look like a happy wife.

"How are you?" Sbu asks.

"I'm fine"

I know she is not fine, this changes her whole life.

Thapelo walks to us with a baby girl on his arm. How do I know it's a girl child? She is wearing pink clothes, otherwise I would've thought it's a transgender baby whose surgery went wrong.

"Hello" he greets with a smile.

"Hi Thapelo"

Only Fikile returns the greeting. Sbu and I are just shocked.

"This is my princess, Melody. Baby say hello to Uncle Sbu"

His smile is wider than the oceans, there is a significant look Ziphe is giving me.

Fikile takes the baby, "Hi Melo"

"Look at how she is looking at your hair" he says smiling.

I can see this baby is his world.

Sbu's first words are, "Do they both look like this?"

"Like what?" he asks.

"Coke ambassadors"

I can't contain my laugh, Thapelo is making it worse with that expression on his face.

"Don't look at me like that, you exaggerated everything over the phone saying your girl is the most beautiful creature on the planet and you've never seen anything like her in real life" Sbu says.

"Are you calling my daughter ugly?"

Hell is about to happen on earth!

Sbu chuckles, "Well she is my daughter too and that makes her beautiful."

He gives him a dead look, "You will go to your house buddy"

"Come on, my daughters are beautiful and you said you've never seen a beautiful girl in your life, Melody is the first one."

Their argument is so petty and funny. Nozipho and Ziphe married immature boys, they don't even know how to react as the argument goes.

"Beauty lies in the eye of a beholder and my daughter is the most beautiful girl I know so get over it"

He takes his girl and walks away kissing her dark chubby cheeks, Ziphe turns to Sbu laughing.

"I warned you, we have a Goddess in the house" she says.

"How do you feel wena-ke?" asks Nozipho.

She shrugs, "I'm fine."

"Are you warming up to them or you're Ziphe Biyela?" I ask.

"I'm Ziphe Biyela and I feel bad because they're innocent"

Jesus Christ!

"Ziphe that's not how..."

The big sister cuts me in, "She must take all the time she needs, nothing is forcing her to love them yet."

"Bad advice, they are her husband's children that make them her children" I say.

She gives me a look, "As if that's easy."

"I loved Junior on the first encounter" I say.

"Because you knew you wanted his father, here we are talking about children conceived during marriage. I asked her to let them in but that doesn't mean she must put pressure on herself, I know she will eventually fall in love with them"

Nozipho nod, "I agree"

Well I give up, why can't you embrace an ugly tedbear?

Ziphe exhale, "I'm just scared, the way Thapelo love these babies, I'm sure he expect me to mother them like I mother Phakade. Honestly I don't think I can divide my love equally, Phakade is my only child"

"It will happen, you will love them all trust me" says Nozipho.

Zethu walk in with Phakade...no, it's not him. Phakade is tall with four teeth and unruly hair. The first thing he say when he see a person is 'tay tay tay', translated as 'I will beat you and beat you to death'. He is a rare baby, this one looks like him but he is younger.

"Meet the other twin" she says.

"He is more like Phakade's twin" Fikile says.

Not all twins are identical but these two look too different.

I find my way to the kitchen to find something to eat, I have friendly appetite and I've gained more kilos. It stresses me but I can't starve myself just for a slim body. I need to text Don and tell him to buy pizza on his way.

I need to pee, again! Why do they need mirrors in the toilets? I hate looking at my reflection these days, my cheeks are a big turn off.

"There must be something you can do" that's Sena's voice.

She has arrived! I wonder if she saw the twins.

"We've tried Sena, Dad is trying to be strong but I know deep down he is dying with her" That's Sbu's voice, what are they talking about?

"I don't want her to die Sbu" her voice is on verge of tears.

Who is dying now? This sounds like a private conversations.

"Me too but we have to be ready for anything. I'm worried about Fikile, her man is stubborn he won't agree to cut his family mourning period. The wedding need to happen sooner, while she is still around"

I cannot stop myself, I walk out and enter the room they're talking in.

"Who is dying?" I ask.

They are shocked to see me, now I'm convinced they are hiding something. Sbu excuse himself and walk out, Sena is district.

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SKHUMBUZO NKOSI

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Nqubeko is staring at me, he don't remember his past but he is adjusting.

"It's the Biyelas, they want the wedding to happen sooner" I tell him.

He frown, "Why?"

"The mother is sick, Sbusiso say she may have a few months to live."

"Oh, then make it sooner" he say like it's easy.

"And say what to Nceba? The mourning period is at least two months before the cleansing ceremony. He is accusing me of causing Anga's death, how is it going to make me look if I cut the mourning period of his son just to get married?"

"MaBiyela would love to have her mother on her wedding day" he say.

"I know, but Anga's death need to be mourned fairly as well. I cannot add salt to the wound by mourning him like he was a baby cat. No ceremony can be done while we are morning, I have to do things right by Nceba"

He exhale, "I understand, hopefully the Biyelas will understand as well."

The only person I'm worried about is Fikile, how is she going to handle her mother's death? She has been through a lot in this year alone, I thought this coming year would be her year of peace.

"I need to find Precious and her daughter" he says out of the blue.

I frown, "What???"

"I want them with me"

## Chapter 294

### Fikile Biyela

I went and begged Nceba to come home, he is back but the situation hasn't improved. He doesn't talk to them, it's really awkward. Skhumbuzo has asked for forgiveness a number of times but it's like throwing water on the duck. I partly regret getting him back home, the real reason why he had to come back was because he was stressing Phindile. She is too young to comfort a 29-year-old man every day from morning to noon. He needs professional help.

We are chilling in the bedroom shortly before dinner time, he is not okay at all. He has been like this ever since they came back from Inkandla, I know he is going through a lot but the mood in the house is making me sick. Not that I want us to move on and pretend as if Anga never existed, I want us to talk and heal. I want us to miss him, talk about his crazy tantrums and big baby moments. The silence is killing me, it's isolating me and making me feel like I have no one to share memories of my baby with.

"Are you okay?" I ask knowing the answer very well.

"I will be fine baby."

I exhale, "Why can't we talk about our troubles Skhumbuzo?"

"I don't want to stress you, I'm a man I will figure it out."

That line bores me to death, he doesn't sleep at night, every time I wake up he is wide awake. When is he going to figure things out? I'm here to help him.

I get off bed, "I'll always be here when you need me."

"Are you angry?"

I give him a once-over, "No, why would I be angry? You'll find me on the table, don't take too long."

I know this attitude is the last thing he needs but he is honestly getting on my nerves. I find Nqubeko sitting alone in the kitchen, I don't think he cares about anything that's happening. His memory may be flushed but his persona is still the same, cold AF.

I don't know how to hold a conversation with him, I'm very comfortable around Nceba and don't mind him in the house at all, but with him I wish he can move out soon.

"Are you good?"

I look up and nod my head.

He doesn't take his eyes off me, it's like he is studying me.

"Thanks" he says.

I'm going to ignore how weird that is and continue with setting the table.

Nceba is in his room, lying on bed. He hasn't cleared the room, Anga's toys are where he left them, his clothes are still inside the closet, his Vaseline and toothpaste still in their cosmetic drawer.

"Nceba dinner is ready" I tell him.

I'm not sure he is going to follow me, he don't care about lot of things, I'm sure food is the least of his worries.

Oh! Thank God he comes.

I also have to march up the staircase to remind another grown-up that 19:45 is dinner time.

Times like this make me miss home, dinner is the most enjoyable time of the day, we were taught everything but not table manners. We laugh, gossip and fight on the table. Here it's tense and filled with heavy silence.

"Nceba" he say looking at him.

Maybe silence was better, argument is the last thing I want to witness before bed.

"Next week Saturday we have to do the cleansing ceremony" he say.

I'm not the only one shocked, it's been only a week since we buried Anga!

"Is it supposed to happen so soon?" I ask.

"I'm requesting his consent."

It's too soon. Nceba is not giving any reply, just looking at him.

"Please, umembeso is overdue, I cannot send it while we're mourning. The Biyelas want a date."

WTH! My family haven't talked to me about that.

"The wedding date? It's on March, why are we rushing? Let's mourn Anga properly" I say.

He exhale, "I know but we have to make it January."

I'm dumbstruck, January is in 43 days.

"Can we talk privately?" I ask.

"It's okay, he can do it whenever he want. I mean the wedding is more important than a dead son"-Nceba.

He push the chair and storm out of the dining room. Can you believe that Nqubeko is eating? He give zero reaction to what's happening.

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\*\*\*\*Inside the Hotel\*\*\*\*

Sizakele tie her robe and go meet Nceba at the door of their booked room. She wasn't sure he was going to come but here he is.

"Oh My God! Are you okay?" she ask.

He put on a brave face and nod. She hug him briefly and lead him to the bedroom..

"I heard, it wasn't possible for me to attend the funeral. I'm so sorry"

He force a smile, "Thanks."

"I didn't think you would come."

He shrugs, "I needed to get out of the house."

"Are you hungry?"

"No"

She exhale, "Things have been tough on my side, it's one problem after another, I missed our friendship"

"I'm sorry for not reaching out, things are not smooth."

She nod, "I know, and I kinda pushed you away on our last conversation."

"Well I cut my losses, I didn't dwell on it" he says.

Disappointment flush through her eyes.

She run her hands on his back, "I'm still here Nceba...If you need comfort"

"I'm fine Siza, I found someone else."

She chuckles, "I'm talking about comfort, not relationship."

"I don't want any comfort" he say.

She look at him a little disappointed, " What do you want?"

"I want my son."

It's choke her, she regret asking him what he wanted.

"I feel like I'm gonna see him again Siza, but I won't and they'll be burning his clothes and forgetting about him Saturday."

She frown, "I don't understand."

"Neither do I, how can life turn like this in a second? I want to help him bath, shout at him and take him out for a walk but I can't, I don't understand."

Siza sigh and wrap him in her arms, "God is aware of everything."

"Don't tell me about God, He didn't do anything for me, he took my only son."

She pull his head closer to her face and stare at him. The pain is there, written boldly. She may not have children but she understand there is nothing that can measure to the pain of losing a child.

"I'm so sorry babe" she say.

"Why am I alive Sizakele?"

"You're alive because there are people who still need you, people who love you."

He shake his head and bury his himself on his hands.

"Must I get you something to drink?" she asks.

"If it's something strong"

She had a bottle of Vodka stored 'just in case', she get it and pour him.

"You're not drinking?" he ask.

She smile, "I'm not allowed to drink Nceba, it goes against Christianity."

"You being here with me don't go against Christianity?"

She laughs, "One sin is better than two."

Two hours later the bottle is almost empty, Nceba has melted, his cute smile is back.

"Where is your husband?" he ask.

"He is in Port Elizabeth, he won't be back until next Monday."

He chuckles, "That's why I'm here, you didn't care about me, you just wanted temporary replacement."

"You're stubborn, but I like it. Unlike my husband, you can resist challenge and keep your zip up"

He kick his shoes off and lie on bed, totally out of it.

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\*\*\*\*3 Hours Later\*\*\*\*

NCEBA NKOSI

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I'm drunk, my eyelids are heavy, I want to open my eyes but they keep shutting. There are voices shouting, breaking sounds in the room.

"Nceba!!!!"

It's Fikile's voice.

"Nceba be careful!" she scream again.

It's not Fikile's voice, I don't know whose voice is this.

Something bang near my head, I force my eyes to open, that's when I feel cold air all over my body. Wait...I'm naked, in a strange room.

Siza...???

Oh fuck!

"What are you doing with my wife?"

The question is emphasized with a gun between my eyes.

"Mvuse please,we didn't do anything" she is bleeding from her nose.

He turn the gun to her, "Do you think I'm a fool Sizakele? Are these chocolate wrapping?"

Condoms! Did I...No this is not happening!

"I'm sorry babe" she cries.

Everything happens fast,the gun goes off twice then there are security guards all over.Siza is down, as well as Mvuse.I cannot tell you what happened.

"Rush him to the hospital" one of them says.

They rush to me with alarmed look on their faces,only then I realise I've been shot.My wish of following my son has been met, I close my eyes waiting for my soul to depart.

3.2K3.2K

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## Chapter 194 (Bonus)

Fikile Biyela

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That knock at 3am in the morning,when you go open the door and find two tall policemen.Your first thought is the less-smiling brother, what has he done? Did he kill someone in Cape Town?

"Do you know Nceba Nkosi?"

Well it's not about Nqubeko, it's about Nceba Nkosi.My intestines turn cold immediately, he didn't sleep at home.

"I'm his brother" Skhumbuzo says.

"Nceba Nkosi was shot around 11pm, he was admitted to Addington Hospital and rushed to theatre."

I was not ready!

"He was shot???" he ask beyond shock.

"The late Mvuselelo Miya found him in the hotel on bed with his wife."

That bitch! Nceba was told to stay away from her, why did he go to her? He didn't think about Phindile who has been consoling his ass day in and out, the girl who is carrying his child.

"Okay thank you officer" he says.

He close the door and look at me, I cannot control the anger on my face.

"It keep getting worse, now we have to go to the hospital"

We???

"I'm sorry but I'm not going" I say.

He frown, "Fikile my brother was shot,he might be dead in hospital."

"I know, isn't that what he wanted? I'd rather go comfort the teenager who is about to raise a baby alone"

He exhale, "Okay, I'll go with Nqubeko."

He squeeze me in a tight hug before they leave, as much as I'm angry at Nceba I still kneel on the floor and pray for his life.

The house is quiet, the emptiness match last week's when Anga died. I have longed to do something but always felt like someone is watching me. I go to Nceba's room and take Anga's police car, it was his favourite. Sometimes I had to lie on bed as the road for it, sometimes I had to go with him to the carwash (the sink) and help him wash it. Sometimes I had to be the mechanic and fix it. He gave me the experience I never got to experience. I didn't raise my sons, now I've experienced how being a mother is.

Well Simile is giving me that chance, he try to involve me in everything he do, unlike Kuhle who don't care whether I'm arriving or leaving, as long as his grandmother is by his side.

The car haven't been taken care of since the owner died, I need to do right by him. It's weird, isn't? A woman wiping a car toy in the wee hours of morning! I end up wiping all the toys and arranging them the way he would want, it's surprising how short life is. It feels like yesterday when I first laid my eyes on him, he was everything his father is. Cute, smart and gifted with brains. I miss him, every hour of the day. He taught me how to be a mother, that experience was the greatest gift, he will always be in my heart.

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\*\*\*\*SKHUMBUZO NKOSI\*\*\*\*

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Fikile is fed up, I understand where she is coming from. I would be fed up too, my family is too much to handle.

"So this dog died before he could answer?"

Some things never change. I'm worried about our brother who is fighting for his life in hospital, he is worried about a dead perpetrator.

"Even if he was alive, he would've answered to the police not you" I say.

"That's my brother, of course he would've answered to me first."

"You're not going back to that dark life Nqubeko, I need peace for once in my life."

He roll down the window and shout at the driver who just overtook us. She park exactly on our space, yes it's a 'she'.

"This bitch! She have to..."

Lord! I sigh.

"We will find another space, no need to insult a woman like that. Back home you'd pay a cow for calling a woman you've never fucked or caught with a man a bitch, control your tongue."

"I wouldn't pay that" he says.

I have no time to argue with him, maybe he wouldn't pay it but you know how it rolls, Skhumbuzo would pay it.

Nceba is in a ward, they removed the bullet successfully. He is in lot of pain, judging from his facial expression.

"Did they give you anything for pain?" I ask.

"Yeah"

I want to hold in and not say anything, we are not in good terms as it is, but I'm not about to succumb to a 29 year old feet, he fucked up.

"Why did you go to someone's wife Ncebayenkosi?" I ask.

He look away, "I needed fresh air."

"How are you going to explain this to Phindile? Never mind, do you know you're behind Zanda's brother's death? How are you going to explain this to her?"

"Who is Zanda?"

Not him!

I ignore him and look at Nceba demanding answers.

"How do you fuck someone who is married Nceba? Are you making it a habit?"

He look at me, "I didn't sleep with her."

He have the nerve! He was caught on bed with her,naked.

"Oh the police lied?"

"I drank, I don't remember what happened" he says.

"I told you to stop drinking,you're doing one shit all over again.Did you remember you fucked Phindile and impregnated her? No you didn't,again today you don't remember sleeping with someone's wife yet you did it."

"I did remember Phindile, I just didn't know her" he protest.

"So you didn't sleep with that man's wife?"

He blink repeatedly, "I did but I was drunk, I don't remember how it happened."

The voice come out of nowhere, "What do you mean you don't remember?"

It's a nurse,you know there is no privacy in public hospitals.

"I slept with my clothes on and woke up naked with a gun on my face."

"Was the woman drunk as well?" she ask.

Nceba shake his head, "No."

"Did you force yourself on her? Phela some people are aggressive when they're drunk" Wtf!

"No, my brother is not the aggressive type" I say.

She click her heels and walk away.Now I wish I had Nqubeko's tongue and call her a 'bitch' because she is being one for accusing my brother of such.

"That girl is a churchgoer,she can change the story to protect herself from disgrace, you have to remember what happened Nceba.The police will need a statement soon, remember."

He moan in pain and ask for Fikile, I don't want to worry him, he need to recover before he can face her.

"She was asleep,she will visit soon" I say.

"I want to talk to her,urgently"

Nqubeko jump in, "She won't talk to you, you disappointed her.Everyone is trying to be there for you Nceba but you are pushing us away.Did this Mrs Miya give you comfort better than hers and your baby mamas? It's like they failed so you ran to this Mrs whatever to share your pain."

"No, that's not true..I had...Bhuti can you ask Zanda to come? I need to talk to her I know she will understand."

He gotta be joking!

"After what happened?" I ask.

"Honestly, the security shot her brother,not me.I want to explain to her"

"Mandla don't want us anywhere near his woman,you know what Nqubeko did"

Nqubeko look at me, "What did I do and who is Zanda?"

"You're not the one to speak when it comes to sleeping with people's women, that's all I can tell you."

He is confused, it's better that way.My phone rings, I check the caller's name and know it's about to go down.

"Hey Skhumbuzo" she greet.



"Hey Zethu"

"Where is Nceba?"

I look at him, "He is here."

"Is it true? Please give him the phone."

I put the phone on loudspeaker and signal him to speak.

"Is he there? Hello."

He clear his throat, "I'm here."

"Why uyinja kanje Nceba? Usungaze ufele umfazi oshadile and leave Phindile pregnant behind!"

His silence don't mean a thing to Zethu, she go on and give him her piece of mind. I knew she would come gunblazing on him, he played her girl.

"I'm not forcing you to be her boyfriend, you can be the useless babydaddy but the fact that you've been pumping your dick on her the whole week and jumped on bed with another woman 24 hours later is disgusting. She may be not enough for you but she deserve some respect."

"Can I talk to her?" he ask.

"And waste my airtime? No, call her with yours bro."

Nqubeko laughs, "Damn!"

At least he knows her number by head, I dial it and call her. He don't want us to hear, he lower the speaker and put it on his ear.

Nceba: Are you okay?

Phindile:.....

Nceba: That's not how it happened but I know I've hurt you and I'm sorry

Phindile:.....

Nceba: Please don't say that, I care about you and him.

Phindile:.....

Nceba: I'm alive babe, I'm here. God gave me another chance, I want to be there for you and protect Ulcer.

Phindile:.....

Nceba: I'm sorry, please....

Call ended!

He look at me, "Had you not proposed the stupid umembeso over my son's mourning I wouldn't be here."

"If it makes you feel good then it's okay, I will be your Jesus and take everyone's fault as mine."

I take my phone and walk out, Nqubeko will find me in the car.

I'm emotional tired, I can do anything to escape this life, even if it means alcohol and drugs. Morals haven't done a thing for my sanity.

Phone rings, it's MaMvelase. Maybe Lungile told her, I'm not in the mood she better stay on her lane.

"Hello Ma" I answer.

"Skhumbuzo how could you?"

Sigh!

"I was going to tell you, I'm still in the hospital" I say.

"How did you let him go to a married wife?"

Honestly....I can't.

"You're supposed to look after them and guide them, first it was Nqubeko. You brought the wrong body and made us bury it as Nqubeko, now it's Ncebayenkosi!"

"I have three sons,named Sthelo,Mfundi and Nkanyezi.In addition I have Simile and Wokuhle, I don't know Nqubeko and Ncebayenkosi" I say.

"Boy you said what?" she ask.

"I'm leaving, make a plan how your son Nqubeko is going to get to the house from Addington Hospital and how Ncebayenkosi is going to be transferred from the public hospital.Goodbye MaMvelase"

I see Nqubeko making his way to the car and start the engine and drive off.

3.4K3.4K

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## Chapter 195

Zanda Dlamini

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I'm alone, I don't know what to do.He was the last sibling I had from my mother's side, I had a brother to run to, I had what I considered home.Now he is gone, I have no one.I know he was not a good husband but it doesn't stop the hatred I have towards Sizakele.I wish she dies on that hospital bed, divorce was an option, there was no need for her to get my brother killed.

Mandla's mom arrives but she cannot do much until my aunt arrives.She was alerted in the morning, it's almost 6pm and she is not here.There is nothing called family,it's the same people who bothered Mvuse every month for money, today they don't care because he is dead.

My phone beeps, I jump thinking it's Aunt requesting to be fetched from town but it's not her.

\*Zanda I need to talk you urgently\*- sms from Nceba.

He have the nerve! He shouldn't be contacting me after what he and Sizakele did.For sure he knew she was married, he is making 'snatching people's wives' a habit.

\*You're my last hope, I know you will listen, please come to the hospital\*- another sms. I sigh, "Babe I have to go to the hospital."

He frown, "Why?"

"Nceba Nkosi want to talk to me."

"Okay"

Just like that? I had my breath held up.

"Are you sure?" I ask.

"Yeah, maybe he will give you an explanation."

Does he remember Nceba is a Nkosi? I'm happy about the new Mandla, he buried that insecure, paranoid Mandla.

"You can come with me if you..."

He cut me in, "I have to make preparations for your brother's funeral."

"Some of his documents are in his study"

He nod, "Okay, grab a few things for mourners on your way back"

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\*\*\*\*Senamile Madlala\*\*\*\*

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"Are you good?"

His voice bring me back on earth, as expected I've been stressed out a lot lately. I haven't come to terms with my mother's illness. I can't imagine life without her, I make calls every second hour to check on her. Maybe she should tell the family sooner than later, they deserve to have last days expressing their love to her.

"I'm good babe" I say.

He sit next to me, "I hate that I cannot help you."

"You're here, that's all I need."

"Do you think it's a good thing to let your sisters know? I mean Zethu is having umemulo in a couple weeks, Fikile is getting married. Don't you think it will affect them?"

"It will affect them, especially Fikile. It's not just life without a mother, her kids are going to be devastated"

I don't even want to imagine what will become of Kuhle, Fikile have to be strong for the life that is about to come. Skhumbuzo is a traditional man from the rural areas, his fathering techniques will be total different from my father's. Kuhle is not a well-behaving child, adjusting to new rules and household will be a problem.

Who is going to stay with my father? Who is going to take care of him and guide him?

"I need to talk to my father" I say.

He sigh, "Don't keep on reminding him Sena."

"We need to plan the future."

"No, everything will fall into place, don't stress him about it."

He is right, they need space and peace.

"I have some gossip that can brighten your day" he say.

Gossip? He never gossip, that's my language. I'm the one who is always bringing hot gossips home, he don't find half of them interesting.

I fold my legs, "Woza nazo myeni wami."

He start by laughing then drop the bomb. I don't know whether to laugh or cry, it's so unexpected.

"This person went to white schools, why is she dumb?"

He chuckles, "Don't tell her, Don will tell her."

Of course I won't tell her, she is dumb. How can you be pregnant and not know? I'm going to have so much fun with this.

"You haven't took me out in a while, I need to unwind" I say.

He raise his brows, "I offered and you refused"

"The point is I want to go out Lwazi."

He grin, "And the guy next door"

"Quinton? He will be sorted, there is someone who need mommy-classes"

Kuhle may be a spoilt, granny's little boy but no kid in the family match my Quinton. I've tried every discipline form, none is working, plus his father is always defending him. So what's other better way to welcome a diva to motherhood beside sending a spoilt-brat to her house? She will need tons of luck.

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\*\*\*\*Simtholile Biyela\*\*\*\*

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I'm about to go to bed when Sena arrives with Quinton and a mini sleep-over bag. I have my eyebrows raised, she didn't inform on anything.

"Hello Mommy Simtho" she say beaming with excitement.

I'm a little pissed off, I don't know why.

"Hey guys" I say.

"Well Mommy is going out with her dearest husband, your little nephew is in need of a place to sleep"

The little nephew is chewing gum, staring at me like he is ready for action. Are kids allowed to chew gum?

"Why wasn't I informed?" I ask.

"It was a last minute decision and his nanny was already gone"

I check the time, it's 19h25. Don is not coming home today, Junior went to Aunt Lydia, maybe this is not such a bad thing.

"Did he eat?"

She grins, "Nope"

"Okay come Quinton."

"He haven't took a bath either" she say behind us.

"He is a grown ass kid, he can bath himself."

"No Simtho, he don't bath himself on Mondays"

She have to get serious.

"That's not my routine, but yours" I say.

"Be a great Mom, Quinton behave yourself baby"

Oh no! How is the child going to eat hot relish? Lord I'm not about to cook at half past seven.

"Quinton do you want to eat bread?" I ask.

"No"

"How about sausage roll?"

He shake his head, "Uhhh ah"

"Pizza?"

"No"

Lord! I look at him, he is not even concentrated on this, he is playing with his iPod.

"Do you want noodles?" I ask.

"No"

Fuck it!

"What do you want ke?"

"I want mangos"

What???

"You want mangos?"

I need to be sure I heard correctly.

"Yes, I want mangos" he say boastfully.

"That's a fruit and I don't have mangos here, what do you want for dinner?"

He look up, "I want a bird."

See this is why none of us have offered to babysit for her, her child is crazy.

"For dinner?" I ask.

"I will eat whatever you give me if you promise to get me a bird"

We should teach our kids about blackmail, it's not a good thing. It's not like I will be hungry if he don't eat, my stomach is full.

"Okay I will get you a bird in the morning" I say.  
He settle for noodles, can you believe I have to feed him? This person is in Grade 1.  
"Are you going to bath yourself big boy?" I ask.  
"No, it's Monday, I don't bath myself."  
Sigh! My eyelids cannot take this, I need bed.  
"You'll take a shower then I'll help you after" I say.  
We don't fight on that, the problem now is he don't want to get out of the shower, the water bill is going to be crazy.  
It's like I'm lotioning a little whitish person, he is jumping and moving while I'm trying to lotion him. And this hair? Wasn't it cut a few months ago? Oh Gosh!  
"We need a towel to dry your hair" I say.  
"No, I want to use a hairdryer"  
He is full of demands.  
"I'll get you two birds" I say.  
He smile, "Okay, towel."  
I should've listened and used the hairdryer, the towel is taking more of my beauty sleep.  
"Do you gossip?" he ask.  
I burst out laughing, "No, why?"  
"I wanted to gossip with you."  
Oh well..  
"I gossip, just a little bit" I say.  
"My granny is going to die"  
I'm almost shocked but reality kicks in, this is a child.  
"Why do you say so?" I ask.  
"My mother told daddy and she was crying."  
Weird, isn't?  
"Granny is not going to die baby, mommy was probably...umm sad" I wanted to say 'horny'.  
"Okay, are you going to teach me how to speak Tshivenda?"  
Lord! He jump from one topic to another, I WANT TO SLEEP.  
"Why do you want to speak Tshivenda?" I ask.  
"Because my friends speak it."  
Well I cannot speak Tshivenda to save my life.  
"Just say mukwevho" like honestly that's all I know.  
"Mom you're not clever"  
Whoaah! I laugh my ass out.  
"And if you were clever Quinton you'd know how to speak Tshivenda, we are both dumb, let's go to bed"  
I'm woken by a loud singing, Sena's child! I check the time and find missed calls from Don. I need to call this woman, she need to come get her child. I'm not about to beg a child to eat again, this boy can say no to every food in South Africa.  
"Morning mama"  
At least he greet in the mornings.  
"Morning honey, why are you making so much noise?"  
"I'm sorry" he say and walk out.  
I never thought he had a zilch of manners in him, let me go back to my sleep.  
"Where is my bird?"  
Huh!  
"Oh no, it's two birds, I want them" he is standing in the doorway.

I lift my head up and look at him.  
"It was a joke Quinton, where do you think I'm going to get birds?" I ask.  
"I'm not going to get two birds?" he is astonished.  
"No sweetheart" I say beneath laughter.  
Euuuuu! This child! Who cries like this? Neighbours are going to think someone is dying.  
"Okay okay, stop crying" I beg.  
He don't stop, instead he cry even louder.  
Now I need to call his father since his mother is ignoring me.  
"Do you want ice-cream?" I ask.  
Every child loves ice-cream and would do anything to get one, but not this Jan Van Riebek.

3.1K3.1K

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Chapter 195 (Bonus)

Zanda Dlamini

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He is in pain, I cannot tell whether from the injuries or internal pain. Unlike any other time we've met I didn't smile when I walked in and I won't greet him.

"Zanda" he say.

I just look at him, saying nothing.

"I'm so sorry... I really am sorry"

I take a breath, "Sorry for what Nceba?"

"For the passing of your brother."

Alright, he is mocking me.

"Thank you, your sorry changes everything. And congrats on getting Sizakele, the best man won" I say.

He shut his eyes firmly for a few seconds then look at me again.

"This may be not the best time but I need your ears for a few minutes. I only need someone to listen, Fikile is not coming to see me"

I pull the chair and sit, a huge part of me now feel sorry for him, I cannot believe myself.

"I miss my son, the pain I'm feeling has made it impossible for me to celebrate his life. I haven't cherished his memories, I'm always crying and asking myself thousand questions. If I did not do this, if Skhumbuzo did this, maybe if I wasn't born that way. It's too much, I'm tired of crying as well. Siza took advantage of me because I'm always vulnerable, if I was..."

I cut in, "Took advantage?"

"She called me to the hotel, I was mad at my brother for choosing his wedding over mourning for my son so I went to her for some fresh air. I know I shouldn't have went

there, and because of that I've lost Phindile. I started being the usual me then she offered me a bottle of whisky and slept with me when I was drunk."

No ways!

"You mean she raped you?" I ask.

"No, I don't know, maybe I agreed when she did it. But I told her when I was sober that I have a girlfriend and I don't want to engage in casual deeds."

I remember catching Siza with a foreign guy in Mvuse's house. I know she is no angel and I believe Nceba.

"Did she use condom?" I ask.

"I suppose, there were foils in the room."

"So you don't remember well? She could've used them for some rounds and went raw on others"

He exhale, "I'm scared of doing tests... If she did infect me with something what am I going to say to Phindile? Nobody is going to believe me."

"You need to get her arrested Nceba, this is rape and she planned it. Why would she buy alcohol? She is a servant of God, drinking one glass of wine on Easter celebration services only. I was young and poor, you have money, you can afford justice for yourself."

He shake his head, "People are going to laugh, police never believe such stories. I remember the other guy who went through the same thing and went to open the case, guess what they said?"

"He is lucky" I say.

He nod, "Yep"

Sigh!

"So you'll pretend as if nothing happened?" I ask.

"Yes"

"How are you feeling? Be honest."

He take a breath, "Dirty, worthless and childish at the same time. It's not like I've never had sex with a stranger before, I made Ulcer the same way, but the smell that was in my mouth was so weird... I hate myself Zanda."

"Gosh Nceba, I'm so sorry. Did you tell your brother?"

He look behind me with a frown...

"Tell his brother what?" ask the voice I know very well.

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\*\*\*\*Nqubeko Nkosi\*\*\*\*

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Something is off between Skhumbuzo and I. First he left me stranded outside the hospital, recently he don't act normal around me. Maybe I've overstayed my welcome in his house, I'm a grown ass man, I need to find my way. What worries me is that him and Fikile are seemingly cutting their ties with our young brother. A two minute visit from them could mean a lot to him. Luckily my mother is coming to town today, she can look after her son.

Thanks to Ubers, I'm able to come to the hospital alone. I didn't expect to find him with any visitor, that's why I'm surprised to find him with a girl. They are in a heated conversation and I can't help but eavesdrop some of it.

"Gosh Nceba, did you tell your brother?" the girl ask in a sorrowful voice.

When Nceba sees me he frown, a but surprised and frightened.

"Tell his brother what?" I ask

The girl turn around and look at me.I feel a hot rush running down to my stomach,she is nothing I've set my eyes on before.My tongue is dry, I cannot take my eyes off her.

"Nqubeko!" she say calmly.

I glance at Nceba, he need to tell me who this girl is.

I force words out of my mouth, "Sawubona."

She push the back forcefully and walk to me.Now she looks angry, I'm trying to understand her beauty and this sudden anger.

"Zanda please don't" it's Nceba.

Oh! I have history with this girl,no wonder I felt this strong connection.

"Why did you shoot my son?"

I frown, "Excuse me?"

"Why didn't you shoot me instead of my son? You nearly destroyed my life

Nqubeko,why?"

I cannot remember but her tears prove that I did her wrong.She is beautiful,even when she is crying.

"I'm sorry Zanda" I say.

She sniffs, "Your sorry doesn't change anything, you said you love me and yet you are..."

"I do love you"

I don't know how I said that,words just jumped out of my mouth.

"You hurt me more than anyone,if you ever cared about me you would've let me go and be with the man I love."

I'm trying to reply but I cannot find the right words.

"I'm glad we are the past, please bother my family again"

She look at Nceba, "We will talk later, I have to go"

"Thank you for coming" he say.

She take her back and make her way past me.I grab her hand,I just can't help myself.

"Are you leaving because of me?" I ask.

She look at her hand, "Let my hand go, I don't owe you any explanation."

"And I owe you an explanation but I cannot remember anything.All I can do is ask for forgiveness."

"Okay,can I go now?"

"What's your surname?"

She sigh, "Dlamini"

"MaDlamini if I said I love you,I did love you.And nothing have changed,my heart is racing, I feel like I'm in the right world."

She swallow, "I have to go."

My hand let go of her and go up to my chest,my heart is pumping abnormal.

"I wish to see you again,go well Zanda."

I need two bottles of water, I have weird feelings, I want to laugh but I'm sad at the same time.Nceba is staring at me with disapproval.

"Your life begins with finding someone else to share your life with, part of the reasons you lost your past life is because of getting involved with her.You couldn't handle being without her, I had never seen you cry, you were just the meanest brother but the day she chose the father of her baby over you I heard you cry.I don't want you to go through that again,she may love you deep down in her heart but she will always choose him because their lives are indebted to each other."

"I can pay him his price" I say.

"He found her broken,took her from the street and rebuilt her confidence.He turned her into rape survivor from the victim,he loved her unconditionally,they fought their



weaknesses together.It's not really a price.It's time,emotions and life,you can never pay him back."

I nod, "I hear you."

"Brother I'm serious,you need to find someone else.Who is that gangster wife chick?

Maybe her,find someone else."

Nxxx!

"I heard you the first time,call your babymama and beg her love.Your love life is more broken than mine."

He laughs so hard he end up hurting himself.

"Ouch!"

"Good" I say.

3.5K3.5K

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## Chapter 196

### Nduku Biyela

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I'm attending a business 'thing' with MaMeya.She asked me to dress up nicely,we will socialise with business people.I don't like those type of events where people take your pictures without permission,I'm only going for her.MaZungu's helper did a great job with my trouser,it's perfectly ironed.My shoes are shiny,everything is just on point.Oh where is my hat?

"You are dressed to go?" MaZungu asks.

Her pregnancy is something else.Of course I'm dressed to go,who ever look this smart to hang in the house?

"Kuyahanjwa manje koti" I say.

"Why didn't you wear a jean? This look is too 'rank'."

Luckily there is mirror by the corner of the room,I check myself infront of it.I'm not the type that girls put on their screensavers but today! Even if I have to say it myself,I look good.

"MaZungu what are you talking about? All I see is Handsome here" I say.

She laughs.

"Okay handsome,I was just saying,the function you're attending is about economic growth and young entrepreneurs."

"I'm not attending to talk about any of that.I'm accompanying my woman" I say.

"Okay go well,tell them to visit my page for new designs."

I need to carry a shoe brush,just in case they stop shining before the event is over.I get in the car and head to Mount Edgecombe.Mfiliseni Magubane did another number with this CD.The volume is too low for my liking,I need a speaker here.

I find space and park, at least there aren't many cars. I need to call MaMeya and find out where I'm going to get her.

"Are you the one playing loud music?" She asks.

"Ukuphi?"

"Can you keep it down, they are complaining?"

But this track! Okay I switch it off.

"Ukuphi?" I ask again.

"I'm coming to the parking lot."

I wait for more than ten minutes. There is no need for me to sit inside the car bored, I turn my music on.

There is a knock on the window. It's her, at last!

The first thing she does is switching the radio off. She is beautiful, her dress touches her ankles. Her hair lean over her eyelashes.

"Hawu MaMeya why you didn't tell me we are attending a wedding?" I ask.

She smiles, "What wedding? It's just a business event, you can find clients for your uncle here. Put on your best impression."

These shoes! I brush them one more time and adjust my hat. She is looking at me and shaking her head. Girls and pictures! She subject me in a sudden photo-shoot right in the parking lot.

"Don't put a leg behind."

She is judging my pose.

"But this is how I want to look in the picture."

She sigh, "Just stand up straight and put your arm around me Menziwa."

Oh, when she calls me by my clan name I comply with everything she says. I reveal my bank codes and phone password.

After 20+ pictures we walk inside the venue. These people are wearing shiny suits! Is this a wedding or what? Who wear a suit just to meet with people of his profession. It's not like award-giving ceremony where there is red carpet and all. They are just walking around and shaking each other's hands.

"There is Jacob Smith, let's go greet" she say.

She have her hand around my arm all this time.

He smiles before we reach to him.

"My darling" he say hugging her.

Did he just call my woman his darling? I step aside and watch as they kiss each other's cheek and locking hands.

"This is my husband-to-be, he co-work with his uncle, Muzi Biyela."

He smiles, "Really? I know Mr Biyela, a very intelligent business man."

He step foward and shake my hand.

"I'm Jacob Smith, many call me Smith the farmer" he say chuckling.

Oh he owns a farm!

"How did you get that farm?" I ask.

MaMeya clear her throat and tighten her hand on my arm.

"Mr Jacob owns a lot of farms, some were left by his late father."

I pull my brows, "And how did the late father get them? Umhlaba wobaba mkhulu wonke lo."

They just smile,they didn't understand the last part at all.What I was trying to say is Jacob should bring back the land.

"So Biyela Junior do you have any ideas on how we can target the fixation of this high inflation and exchange rate? The annual percentage of inflation rate is 300% in Zimbabwe,means of trading are like donating."

Tell me why did I come here? What's this inflation thing I'm supposed to fix? How does it affect my sleep as Ndukwenhle Biyela!

"You white people are clever,you invented computers and HIV.I'm sure you will make a plan" I say.

MaMeya pulls my hand, "We'll talk again Mr Jacob."

We head to an open bar area.I'm not familiar with these beers...They seriously didn't store any Castle!

"Can I have strawberry daiquiri?" She say to a lady mixing drinks.

She turn to me and ask what I'm going to drink.

"We have Long Island as well..." the lady suggests.

I nod my head,in Rome you do what Romans do.

We take our drinks and stand aside.She is staring at me while sipping.

"What do you want to say?" I ask.

She sigh, "You're not being classy."

I literally choke on Robben Island...I'm not sure that's what it's called,anyway I choke on it.Did she just say I'm not classy?

"I'm classy" I protest.

"You're racist,not classy."

Lord! Are we really going to fight here?

"What you are doing is not classy either,let's not fight" I say.

"Okay."

I kiss her cheek and take a walk,looking at this place.Her white associates are looking at me like I'm some alien.Shoes! I wipe them a little bit and adjust my hat.This brentwood is a little wide on the sides,MaMeya should fix it.

"Sweetheart yazi you should seam this trouser at the sides" I say walking back to her.

She sigh, "Not now babe,we will talk about it later."

I let her be and take another drink.A man calls for everyone's attention on the microwave.Everyone looks at him,MaMeya is recording him with her phone.

"Ladies and gentlemen as you all know the consumer price index is expected to be 113.99 points...."

Again,why am I here? He takes almost 15 minutes with his boring speech.I'm the only one who is not nodding,I only clap when everyone claps.I wonder how Orlando Pirates is going to play this Saturday.I hope Erasmus and Nyauza will play in the middle.Eyyy but Cape Town City is dangerous,especially Makola.

"Are you kidding?" she whispers.

I look at her...Fuck,I'm surrounded by cheering people.They are shaking hands,I'm the only one standing with hands in the pockets.

She is officially not talking to me as we leave.I'm not sure what is exactly that I did,she is looking outside the window,not talking.

MaZungu and Sbusiso are cuddling on the couch. We are here to pick my clothes and then head to our hotel room. She haven't said anything so I guess we're still on for the night.

"Are you guys okay?" MaZungu asks.

"I wish I knew. Ask your sister here."

She look at MaMeya, she make a look that make MaZungu burst out laughing. Girls have all gossiping skills.

"What did I do?" I ask.

"You know what you did."

I'm not a sangoma, how do I know? The only thing I saw is her cheeks changing colour and her rubbing her nose every minute.

"Were you classy bafo?" Sbusiso asks.

"I'm always classy, what are you talking about?"

He laughs, "Your idea of classy isn't everyone's"

Well that's their problem. I am classy!

I change to my less-classy wear and pack few necessities. She is back at her smiling self, we bid goodbye to pregnant lovebirds and leave.

"I will never invite you to my events again" she says.

"Awu, why?"

I'm just asking, it's not like I care to hear about inflation rates and drinking weird-tasting juices. In fact she will be doing me a huge favour.

"You just don't get it" she says.

"What don't I get?"

"How to be classy. You need some lessons."

This is going far, now I need lessons!

It turns out she is serious about lessons. The first thing I wanted to do was to strip that long dress off her but she have something else in my mind.

"Bhiyela I want you to do everything I say, no questions" she say.

Sigh!

"Alright."

She stand in front of me and broaden her shoulders. She pull out her hand and say,

"Biyela Jnr it is pleasure to see you here."

I'm bored already!

"In response you pull out your hand with a little smile on your face and say; likewise sir, how are you doing?"

I do what she said and then slide my hands in my pockets. She have a look on her face, it's brewing war.

"What? I did exactly what you told me to do." I say.

"I didn't say put your hands in the pockets. At least put one hand and talk using the free one."

I sigh, "Can you accept me for who I am? I'm not this kind of professional person you want me to be. I say what I want to say, and stand however I want."

"Yet I adjusted to your world and learnt everything I had to learn in order to fit in."

"That's how it should be, you are marrying to the Biyelas. I'm not marrying to the Meyers" I say.

She nod her head and storm off to the bathroom.I wait for more than thirty minutes,she is not coming out.

Don't tell me we are having another fight!

I walk in and find her sitting on the floor crying.She is a cry baby this one,I don't know if it comes with genes of her type.

"Sengenzi-ke futhi?" I ask.

"If you don't know get out!"

I don't know and I didn't do anything but you know who is always wrong! A woman is never wrong.

"My kentucky fried chicken,I'm sorry for being an asshole.You are right on everything you said."

She look up even more angry, "You're not sorry,get out."

"But I am." I insist.

"Can you tell me what you did wrong?" She asks.

Well,absolutely nothing.

"Everything,I disappointed you and I'm sorry" I say.

She stand up, "Do you promise to change your attitude?"

I cross my fingers, "On Nomafu's grave."

"Who is Nomafu?"

It's a name that came to my mind.

"My great,great,grand-godmother" I say.

She smiles, "Thanks,I love you."

"I love you too.Do you need help taking off this dress?"

She chuckles, "Yes."

"Wadla mzukulu kaNomafu!"

She laughs and turn her back on me to unzip.

Chapter 297

Fikile Biyela

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So we are pretending as if everything is okay! Nqubeko is the only one going up and down to the hospital.His brother is leaving for work in the mornings and coming straight home in the evenings.His mother is in Lungile's house, it wasn't her choice, she wasn't welcome here.The Nkosi drama is too much, these days I'm a Biyela, only bothered by my family affairs.

We have umemulo in two weeks, meaning we have to leave in a week to Inkandla for preparations.Tyson should be the one handing umkhonto over but race isn't making it possible, we have a male relative standing in for him.Zethu already left to start with umfundelo.I'm looking foward to something positive, hopefully nothing ruins my week.  
\*\*Aunt want to see you,urgently\*\*-A text from Lungile.I just got home, I haven't took a shower nor eaten.Skhumbuzo will be home in two hours, I should be starting with dinner.

"Hey, you're back," says Nqubeko coming from the lounge.He looks like he just got here, his shirt is tucked in, he don't just do that.

"Yes but your mother want to see me urgently." I say.

He frowns, "I was with her in the hospital, she didn't mention it."

"Oh!" I say holding back the urge to ask about Nceba, but he reads my mind.  
"They are discharging him tomorrow. I will move our staff in the morning." He says.  
"You're moving out?" I ask.  
"It's the best thing to do."  
Maybe Skhumbuzo is a bit harsh, they are his brothers and both of them aren't fit enough to be on their own.  
"I will be back soon," I say.  
He clears his throat, "Ummm do you have Zanda's cellphone number?"  
Lord, not this again! Zanda is busy with funeral arrangements, after that she is preparing for umembeso. Nqubeko is the last thing she needs.  
"I don't give out people's personal details without their permission," I say.  
He nods, "Alright."  
"She is with Mandla, don't do this." I say.  
"I saw her MaBiyela, I know I love her."  
Sigh! I should leave, this will be sorted by Skhumbuzo. Mandla and Zanda are in a good space right now, they worked so hard to reach it. Nqubeko was a test to their relationship, but now he is not, he is the competitor. What scares me is I don't know where Zanda's heart stands with him. If Mandla wasn't in the picture would she go for Nqubeko? I don't want to know.  
I find Lungile moping, she directs me to the guest's bedroom. I love this flat, this is where our love began to blossom. I ate my first Skhumbuzo-made breakfast of polony and bread here.  
This woman! One day she is wrinkled grandmother, next day she is dressed up like Winnie Mandela. I can't wrap my head like her, she looks good today.  
"Sawubona Ma," I greet walking in.  
She doesn't greet me back. OKAY!  
"You called me," I say.  
"I want my son back."  
I'm very confused, did I abduct one of her sons? She turns and looks at me. Her face is red, not literally, she is dark-skinned. She is angry, that's what I mean.  
"The same way your mother took Muzi from his brothers, you are taking Skhumbuzo. Listen, I won't allow that! You're not going to separate my sons."  
Whoah! This train is driving too fast.  
I raise my eyebrows, "My mind is slow, can you rewind and start from where you mentioned my mother?"  
"You can chow my son's money with your children but you're not going to take him away from his family." She says.  
I look around for a chair or anything I can place my ass on. She can be a monster-in-law to Phindile and whoever Nqubeko marries. Not me!  
"You're right, I can never do that. I like how you highlighted how I'm chowing Skhu's money. He pays for everything, next year my sons will be sent to school with his money. I do have my own money, lot of it, but I choose to chow your son's. You know why? Because I bend my back making sure he goes through all the hardship you and the rest of the family put him through. I take care of him emotionally and he takes care of me

financially. You probably don't know that since your life revolves around breaking people."

"You are saying that to me?" She asks in disbelief.

"I'm not Nceba MaMvelase. You can bash me all you want but the moment you get my mother and my children on your tongue is when you evoke the Fikile you don't know." She points a trembling finger to me. If she had enough strength she'd be strangling me by now.

"Nobody speaks to me in that way. Fezeka was way better than you!" She is screaming now.

I flash a smile, "WAS!"

"You're not going to marry my son."

I pick my bag, "Maybe I should do it, take Skhumbuzo away from you. We will get married in Home Affairs with R75."

"Heeeh!" She is struggling to breath, I'm sure her secret places are sweating.

I walk out and close the door softly. Next time she think she is going to come for me from the North she should do what they call background check, just to find out who she is dealing with. We will spend Christmas here in Durban, I will personally go fetch the kids.

Lungile stop what she is doing and look at me with eyes popping out.

"And???" She asks.

"Don't text me if it's a message from that woman."

She frowns, "Did she do something wrong?"

"Just don't text me about her," I say and walk to the door.

I need a few drinks before I go home. This life need a bit of Gin.

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SKHUMBUZO NKOSI

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I lived many years of my life as a bachelor, cooking is not a problem. I've cooked and dished up for Sbusiso and Nqubeko. Of course they thought it was funny, Sbusiso told me he'd rather go to a restaurant than to cook. Well that's not a problem, the real problem is Fikile's whereabouts. We have something serious to tell her. Lungile says she left two hours ago in her flat. There is no accident reported in Durban, so I'm certain she is okay where she is.

"Are you sure she is not with other sisters?" I ask.

"No, I checked with all of them."

Sigh! It's almost 8pm now, I won't be able to go to bed without her.

Nqubeko stand up, "I should go pack, it's late."

"Pack?" I ask.

"Nceba's stuff and mine."

I didn't know they are moving out, this means Nceba is getting discharged soon.

"Maybe you will be a better brother to him," I say.

I walk out and go to the car. I have no idea where I'm going, I'll just search and search.

I'm approaching Zanda's brother's house when Sbusiso calls. My instincts told me she is here, but they are wrong, she just got home.

There is so much noise in the house. I walk in eager to see what's going on. My woman is dancing in front of her brother, barefooted! She is fuckin' drunk.

I understand that she drinks, I have nothing against it but THIS! I can't stand it.

"We'll try another day Menziwa," I tell Sbusiso and leave them in the dining room. She calls my name until I disappear.

Locking her out crosses my mind but I remember all the shit I've put her through this year alone. She don't drink everyday, it's just the way she did it today. I deserved a phone call or a text explaining where she was.

"Your mother don't know me." That's how she enters the door.

Now I'm wondering what MaMvelase did to her, I heard she was summoned to Lungile's flat. But I won't ask now, I don't want drunk narration.

"I'm going to keep you away from her, FOR GOOD!"

I don't say anything, not that I don't have questions to ask.

She goes on, "I respect everyone but the moment someone get my mother and my children in her mouth is when I lose all respect. You don't talk about my mother like that, you fuckin' don't mention my children! They don't have fathers but they're not short of anything. We don't depend on you, I've never made them your luggage. Yet I've taken care of you and everything that is yours. Your children, your brothers, your crazy ex-wife and everything."

She is crying, I don't know where all this is coming from. Could someone be my mother?

"What's going on Fikile?" I ask.

"I mother your children, I'm there everytime they need me. And my sons! They don't bother you, my father is their father. What the fuck are you talking about? My father is sending them to school, he is doing everything for them. When do they milk your money?"

I can't explain the feeling brewing inside me. So MaMvelase called her to bash our children! I pull her to bed and pull her head to my chest. She is stinking alcohol and soaked in tears, nevertheless I hold her and listen to her biting my head off until she doze off. There is so much her mouth have said. So many pointers!

I cannot ignore the fire burning inside me. It's 00:14, I haven't slept a wink. Finally I give in and dress up. I grab my car keys and leave without making noise.

Lungile don't listen, she still don't leave key inside the holder. I open using my keys and go straight to the guestroom.

"MaMvelase vuka!" I say, not too loud nor too soft.

I call her twice before she open her eyes.

I don't see my mother, I just see a woman.

"Mfana," she says.

"Let's go."

I don't know where I'm taking her, I don't even know why I'm here.

"Where are you taking your mother mfana?" she asks.

I don't know why she is calling me 'Mfana' today. She haven't called me that since I left for university.

"Why are you abusing everyone I love? My little brother, my woman and my children?" I ask calmly.



"Oh I see, yilesi smuka-nandwendwe sakwa Biyela. That girl don't respect her elders, we've done so much for her as the Nkosis. We don't accept bastard children, but we lowered ourselves for her. And this is how...?"

I have no idea what she said next. All I remember is her dropping out of the moving car and the car reversing over her.

I get home and slip on bed next to her, without making any noise.

## Chapter 298 Fikile Biyela

I don't know when I came to bed last night, my body is sore. I'm definitely not going to work. I turn to Skhumbuzo, he is wide awake, staring at me. I can't even open my mouth, my head is pounding.

"Mmm," I greet him.

He just looks at me. Maybe he is angry, I didn't tell him about my last night's whereabouts. I drag myself off bed and go to the bathroom. I'm craving hot chutney and a whole bottle of wine.

He is no longer on bed when I come back. I check the time, it's almost 7am. He should be getting ready for work. Oh I'm a woman, I should iron his clothes and make lunch tins.

"I don't know Skhumbuzo!" Lungile is crying in the kitchen. Why is she here so early in the morning? Nqubeko and Skhumbuzo look hopeless.

My mouth can open now, "Morning."

"MaMvelase is missing," she says.

"Huh?"

"She went to the bedroom after supper, I don't know when she left. The door wasn't locked when I woke up in the morning."

I'm probably hung-over. MaMvelase is an old woman, how can she leave the house without telling Lungile? In the middle of the night!

"Where do you guys think she went?" I ask.

"She don't know anyone except us," Skhumbuzo says.

I shrug my shoulders, "Maybe she went to look for a hitman that's going to kill the gold-digger."

Chutney? I'm lazy to chop tomatoes, let me go buy hot wings. I know this may be one of her stunts, she wants Skhumbuzo to get worked up and look for her high and low.

While waiting for my order the phone rings. It's Lungile.

"Hey," I answer.

"Come home immediately." She says and drops the call.

I won't leave before I get my hot wings. MaMvelase's whereabouts are not my problem, I know where I stand with her.

I have notifications popping nonstop, I have several annoying apps. My eyes come across highlighted news headlines: An Old Woman Admitted In Hospital After Hit and Run.

The story is trending, my subconscious doesn't allow me to ignore it. I take my order and rush home. The door is locked, they are gone.

I try several times to call Skhumbuzo but he is not picking up. I'm trying to think straight, why would MaMvelase wander on the streets at night. No, it's another woman, not her.

Two hours have passed, I have no idea where everyone is. They are not updating me on anything, maybe I should use this time to go see Nceba. I don't know what I'm going to say to him but as much as I'm fed up I still don't want him to leave the house. They need to resolve their issues, Anga loved both of them, the fight is not how his memory should be honoured.

When my eyes land on him my heart breaks. Maybe I shouldn't have stayed away, he lost his son, as much as he acted stupid he still needs his family. He look at me with half-smile and show me the chair. Hospitals smell different, you never get used to it.

"Hi," I say.

"Long time."

I take a deep sigh, "How are you?"

"I don't know."

The next minute is filled with awkward silence. I have lot of questions but they're personal and they are none of my business.

"I heard you're being discharged today," I say.

"Yeah."

"And you're not coming home?"

He exhale, "I don't think my brother want me there, we will move to Nqubeko's house."

"Nqubeko is not fit..."

He cut me in, "We were going to move out anyway, you guys need your space as well. We are grown men, we can't be crowding our brother's life."

"Who said you're crowding him?" I ask.

"It seems like we are always giving him problems, I heard he is stepping down from everything, including impepho" he says.

"It's been years, almost three decades of leadership. And it seems like he didn't do a good job, I mean nothing is ever enough. Maybe if Nqubeko take the ropes he will do better."

He shake his head, "It's his job and he is doing his best."

Oh, that's new!

"How when he killed your son?" I ask.

He sigh, "I was in pain when I said that. God have the upper hand, he make and end life. He didn't hate Anga, even though he should have. My son had amazing last months of his life. I'm grateful to you and him. He is an amazing brother, father and uncle."

How I wish he was telling him these words. He disowned them but he is not fine. Nothing hurt like being unappreciated by your family, he was robbed the chance to mourn for Anga.

"I heard your mother was here," I say changing the subject.

"I don't have a mother."

I guess it didn't go well but what was she thinking! Time for mommy duties are over, he has felt every kind of pain thete is.

My phone rings. It's Skhumbuzo at last.

"Love where....?"

"They found her, she was hit by a car."

Oh God!

"Is she alive?" I ask.

"Half alive, go fetch Nceba from the hospital."

He drop the call before I can ask other questions. What is half-alive, is she breathing with one nose?

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\*\*\*SKHUMBUSO NKOSI\*\*\*

I don't know how she is still alive, even the doctors are in shock. I don't know how I'm standing in front of her pretending as if I don't know anything. When did I become this heartless? This woman is my mother, I'm her favourite son. So I just chose Fikile over her? Did I have to choose? Why couldn't she respect her and accept Nceba as her child? I need a chair.

"Can I have a moment with her?" I ask Nqubeko.

"Ummm...sure." He say doubtfully but walks out.

They said she can hear when someone is talking.

"Ma I'm sorry," I say and take a deep breath.

My own mother!

"I couldn't stand to hear her cry. I love her together with her children, how can you say hurtful things to her? If you hurt her you're hurting me. I acted out of anger, this is not who I am. It's not how I'm supposed to live. I've tried my best to be a good son, a good brother and a father figure. Sometimes I lock my feelings to make sure your kids are fine. I sacrifice my mental well-being taking everyone's problems on my shoulders. Now I killed Anga? The child I lived with while his father went to nightclubs to make more babies? If I didn't want him to live why didn't I take a knife and stab him to death? Nceba is in hospital, again that's Skhumbuzo's fault. Nqubeko faked death, his friends falsified DNA, but it was my fault as well. Do you understand that the only person who appreciate me and my little efforts is Fikile?"

I don't want to be emotional, not now.

"I'm fulfilling your duties MaMvelase, and Baba's. When am I going to catch a break from this life? I have someone who loves me but I'm hardly happy...."

She move her arm! Didn't they say she can't....

"Nceba," she whispers.

I thought she was unconscious. Nceba!

"What about him?" I ask.

"I won't...go...until...I...see...Nceba."

She is talking! I ask her more questions, she don't respond but she is breathing. I call the doctor, he don't believe me when I tell him she was talking.

She could tell the doctor about the accident, jail is facing me. I don't know how long I blanked out, Nqubeko slap my shoulder.

I look at him, "That's all you know, violence."

"I've been talking to you. Why are you so angry vele?" He asks with annoyed frown.

"My mother is dying, why should I rejoice?" I walk back inside the ward, I need another moment with her.

I wait until everyone leaves and walk closer to her bed.

"I'm going to ask Nceba to come, and I'll get a special doctor to treat you. Don't send me to jail, my children need me."

Desperate times call for desperate measures, I sound so selfish right now.

Nceba? How am I going to start him? I'm not his favourite person at the moment.

I haven't seen him in a while, now I'm here to ask for favours. He is with Fikile, he looks better than the last time.

"The patient is back," -Nqubeko.

He chuckles, "I'll always rise."

They are closer than before. Fikile is staring at me, I haven't given her any update. I pull her to the room and hug her.

She looks at me, concern all over face.

"How is she?"

"Bad, she want to see Nceba," I say.

"For what?"

I shrug my shoulders.

"I don't think he will agree," she says.

"I promised her he will come."

She frowns, "Why? You know how she feels about Nceba, she hates him."

"It's her wish," I say.

She run her hands on my chest, my heart has been racing ever since.

"Are you okay?" She asks.

"No." I can't lie to her, I'm far from being okay.

"She will be okay, that's an old wi...woman."

I know she wanted to say witch.

"Please get me water," I say, not sure if I was audible enough.

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\*\*\*FIKILE BIYELA\*\*\*

I walk back with a bottle of water and find him lying on the floor.

"Skhumbuzo!" I call.

He don't move. His eyes are shut, he is lying still. My heart start racing, I scream for help. Nqubeko comes in the blink of an eye.

"What happened?" He asks.

"I don't know, he wanted water."

He shake him several times and pour water over his head.

Still, no movements.

I cannot lose him!

"Go start the car Fikile."

## Chapter 299

Zanda Dlamini

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Siza couldn't even fake sadness. This was more of a function than a funeral to her. There is a lot that I want to say to her but I'm not that kind of girl. Her family is everywhere in the house, her cousins are gallivanting with his cars yet nothing has been cleansed. A part of me want to fight for him, this is unfair but then again everything that belonged to him is hers now. The best thing to do is to leave.

"Have you seen Monde?" Mandla asks.

He's been handful, he organized a lot of things. The Biyelas came only for the funeral, it was for emotional support. Mvuse didn't have good history with them, Fikile didn't come at all.

"I haven't seen him since we came from the cemetery," I say.

"He don't look okay, maybe you should talk to him before we leave."

I'm a bad aunt, probably the kind that promise heaven and earth after your mother's funeral then disappear without a trace. That's exactly what I've been since Phumla died. I search and find him outside with other boys and ask him aside. He have sores on his head, he look a bit thin. I don't even know if he passed his trial exams or not.

"Have you seen the doctor about these sores?" I ask.

"No."

"Why?" I ask.

"Mamncane said she will take me when the month ends."

Who is Mamncane now? His father is not a struggling man, this shouldn't have waited for the month to end.

"Where is your father?" I ask.

"Home."

He don't talk too much, that's what hinders me from getting closer to him. Reaching through him is hard, only Mvuse was able to crack him.

"Who is this Mamncane?" I ask.

"His wife."

Oh...I didn't know he was married.He wasn't when Phumla died, maybe he got married recently.This says a lot about household changes, he is no longer the same.This, to me, has painted another picture about this Mamncane.

"Tomorrow we should go see the doctor.Is there anything else that's troubling you?" I ask.

He shake his head but I'm an adult, I can see what Mandla was talking about.He don't look okay at all.Maybe he should be the one to speak to him, he will know how to approach him.

Everyone have a problem with me leaving just a day after the funeral.I can't stay and watch what has became of my brother's house.Siza is not even dressed as a widow, she rather look like a slay queen.I thought she was injured, it clear she faked it or she only got a rough wound.I haven't talked to her and I have no interest in doing so.

"Monde is coming with us," he says.

He have his backpack ready, I don't know if Inkanyamba (my aunt) would approve.She walk on us and give me a once-over.

"You are calling bad lucks on yourself," she says.

I sigh, "I don't have the energy to stay here longer."

She chuckles and adjust her head scarf.

"We shall see Zanda!" It sounds more like a threat.Her eyes are over Siza's family enjoying a warm breakfast over a cheerful conversation.

"Don't raise your BP," I say.

"Don't worry about me, mina ngiwunsimbi igoba eMzinyathi kuphela." She brags patting her thigh.I foresee a big drama coming.Taking Monde is the right thing to do, things will be tense here.

When we get home I clean the house and make brunch.Mandla is in a deep conversation with Monde, Leano is patrolling his house.He is able to crawl now, that's a big step for him.I thought maybe he will start after a year, I'm raising such a brave young man.The conqueror!

We gather around the table to eat, Mandla is awkwardly silent.His silence means only me and Leano are talking.Curiosity is killing me, I wanna know what's going on with Monde.

I take him on a house tour, showing him the room he is going to use and everything he could possibly need.

"Did you tell your father you are here?" I ask.

I don't want it to look like I'm snatching him, his father is one in a million.He took care of him since he was just an infant.

"I did." He says.

"Feel free, I'm going to check on your uncle."

He was once his stepfather, life is just a circle.

He is holding a conversation with his son.Leano is a member in this family, sometimes I pass my decisions by him and he reply with whatever alphabets come to his mind.

"You talked to Monde," I ignite the conversation.

He exhale, "Yeah."

"What is going on with him?"

"He is not getting enough attention.I'm not going to say his stepmother is mistreating him,but he is not happy.There are a lot of changes in his relationship with his father, he is no longer the first priority.He get excluded in family trips, certain celebrations and the quality of financial care he gets have downgraded."

That explains untreated sores on his head. I've jumped to conclusions, this woman is mistreating my nephew.

"Maybe you should contact him and raise these concerns. He is a great man, he will rectify his mistakes." He says.

"What if they aren't mistakes?" I ask.

He shrug his shoulders. This is a tough one, I can't just judge Monde's father, he's been fathering him without any help, up to this age. But I can't let Monde live unhappily either, one way or another I will be an ungrateful aunt who come out of nowhere with Miss Goody ass.

"I'm stressed yazi," he says.

I raise my brows, "By Monde?"

He chuckles and shake his head. I'm waiting to hear him out, he is not giving any answer, just staring at me.

"What did I miss?" I ask.

"I miss you."

"But I'm here, duh!"

His eyes land on my boobs, now I get it. He is worried about 'another' mourning period. It's a torture, my loved ones keep dying.

"It's only a month," I say.

"Zungu down here don't count days and months, he miss his thing."

"Now???" I ask shocked.

He grins and point his manhood.

"Check him out."

I laugh, "No!"

I can't break the rules so early! He pull me on bed, his eyes are filled with lust. What is wrong with him? I'm fully clothed, his manhood is being ridiculous.

"You're killing me." He say planting few wet kisses on my lips. I'm getting turned on, we haven't touched each other in a week and half.

"I'm mourning Mandla." I say.

It's more like the last kick.

"We will pray after." He says.

He is hilarious, stupid as well. I give in and throw my leg over him and lean over for a kiss. Phone disturbs us.

I answer, annoyed.

"Zanda speaking, hello."

Silence.

I check the screen, the call is ongoing.

"Hello?"

The person keep quiet. I can hear someone breathing over the phone. I don't recognize this number but I can't help myself, I ask if the person is okay. The call ends after I ask the question.

"Who is that?" Mandla asks.

I shrug, "I don't know."

This is weird, but I brush it off and throw the phone away and carry on with the deed.

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\*\*\*\*\*NQUBEKO NKOSI\*\*\*\*\*

I need strength to stand up and face the possibility that my brother could be dying. I stole Zanda's number from Nceba, her voice is the only thing that can make me

strong. Fikile is absent from the scene, her mind is not here at all. She has been sitting on that chair for an hour, not talking nor moving.

She picks up, "Zanda speaking, hello."

I know if she finds out who I am she will drop the call. Just hearing her voice warms my heart. I don't know what this girl did to me, there is a feeling I can't describe. She speak again, I breath heavier than usual. I want to tell her how much I love her but I'm not allowed. I shouldn't even be having this phonecall.

"Are you okay?" She asks.

I was not, but her asking the question make me feel better. I end the call and release long held breath.

-You may not know it but I love you more than anything. Your voice alone heals me, I could be complete with you.-

I snap out of my fantasy zone. Nceba is home alone, he is not well either. He should be under supervision of someone. His babymama...? I haven't thought about her.

"Hello," she picks up.

Damn! She sounds so young, even over the phone.

"Hey you're speaking to Nqubeko, Nceba's brother." I say.

"Oh Sawubona."

"I'm asking for a favour, my brother is in hospital. I'm here with Fikile, nobody is home with Nceba. If you can, please go to the house and look after him."

She don't reply immediately, I think she is still shocked and trying to think of a respectful declining approach.

"I wouldn't have asked if I had other means," I say.

"Ummm...Okay."

Thank God! I see the doctor walking towards Fikile and make my way to them. We've been waiting for hours, they haven't given us any feedback except that 'it's bad'.

It seems like I've already missed something, Fikile is on her feet, glaring at the doctor.

"What happened?" I ask.

"He had a heart attack."

WTF!!

"Is he alive though?" I ask.

"Yes."

Oh, thank God!

They allow us to see him. There is a machine connected to him. He is sweating like someone poured water on him. Is this normal? Fikile haven't shed a tear since the incident occurred, only now she start crying.

"Nqubeko go check on MaMvelase," he say after removing the thing covering his mouth.

I don't understand why he is not referring to her as 'mother'. I ask Fikile to keep me updated and leave.

My mother is in a worst condition. The only way I know she is still alive is because she is not moved from the bed.

"She can hear you," says the nurse.

She keep giving me weird looks.

"Unenkinga yini sisi?" I ask.

"No, not at all." She give a fake, short smile and collect her files and walk out.

I don't know how to talk to half-dead people, I'm not Skhumbuzo.

"Mama it's Nqubeko here," I say.

Her fingers move, the nurse was right.

"Skhumbuzo is...."

Should I be telling her bad news? No.

I clear my throat, "Nceba is out of hospital."

"Nce..ba.." she whispers.

"He is recovering." I say.

"I want...Nceba...yenkosi."

I'm not sure she is okay, I rush out and call the nurse. Apparently she's been asking for Nceba since yesterday. At this point the doctors can't do anything to help her. She breathes perfectly on her own but most of her body organs are dead. She can't urinate or do the first number. She is a breathing corpse.

I rush home to Nceba.

\*\*\*\*\*NCEBA NKOSI\*\*\*\*\*

I'm thinking about taking painkillers and going to bed. My mind is going wild, I don't know what happened to my brother.

The knock comes through the door, I gather myself up and open. I'm expecting Fikile or Nqubeko, but it's not them.

For a few seconds I'm shocked, Phindile is the last person I expected to see. I cast my eyes on her tummy, Ulcer is growing. How I've missed communicating with him!

"Hello." She greets.

"Hey...Come in."

I had hoped that this day comes when I've fully recovered. I owe her an explanation, right now I don't even know where to begin.

"Nqubeko sent me here." She says.

"Oh." My heart drops, she didn't come here on her own, it's on request.

She put her bag on the table, "Are you okay?"

"Yes, I'm okay."

"Have you eaten?"

I shake my head, "Yes..no..no."

God! I mean I was about to eat but I'm not hungry anymore. The only thing I'm hungry for is to know where we stand.

"Phindile I've been wanting to see you." I say.

"Aw." She shows zero interest.

"Seriously, I want you to know that I'm sorry. I made a mistake and I can't make any excuses. I still love you and want a future with you and my little Ulcer." I say.

"You can have a future with us, as a family. But we don't have future as lovers."

I grab a chair, I'm not too strong to keep standing.

"Because of one mistake Phindile?" I ask.

"It's not just one mistake. I asked if you're seeing that woman you said no, you came to me broken and I tried, using my body, to comfort you. Clearly that wasn't enough, you went back to her and risked your life so that Ulcer can grow up without a father. My family is on my back wanting damages, you are not fulfilling any of your promises. I'm not getting the peace that I deserve."

My heart breaks. I thought I'd be working by now, life keeps throwing me in a hole. I want to dust my life, I really don't want to use the Nkosi cows.

"My brother is in hospital, when he comes back we will sort it out."

"He will sort it out," she says in emphasis.

It dawns to me how much I depend on Skhumbuzo, how everyone in this family depends on him. A lot can go wrong if he doesn't make it.

Nqubeko walks in without knocking. He looks a bit shaken up.



His eyes stay on Phindile for quite a moment then he greets and ask me aside. My mind is expecting the worst.

"Is he alive?" I ask.

"Who?"

Wtf!

"Skhumbuzo, who else?"

He click his tongue, "Yeah that one, he had a heart disease."

"What heart disease?" I ask in shock.

"He is alive Nceba, that's what matters. On the other hand mother is not okay."

"Thank God! I was so scared. I don't want to imagine life without him, we need him more than anything." I say taking a loud exhalation.

"We need mother as well, you're her motivation right now. Her wish is to see you." He says.

It's my turn to click my tongue.

"Kwagog' eZola!" I say and walk away.

"Nceba come on, she could die."

I wish I can say there is a little part of me that cares but there is none. She can die or live, I don't care.

"Mfethu please, just for a few minutes." He is following me behind.

I stop and look at him, "Nqubeko you lost your memory, you don't know half of the things that woman put me through. But I don't care about all that, I'm still alive so it doesn't matter. What I won't forgive her for is mistreating my son in his life and death. I won't go to her and I want no update regarding her."

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\*\*\*\*\*ZETHU BIYELA\*\*\*\*\*

"Zethu washa ibhodwe elikhulu."

"Keku kaka ikokwe ekuku nxxx." I talk to myself, pissed. I have log out of Twitter. These people have no limit, no timing. As the main character, the VVIP of the upcoming ceremony, I thought they will cut me some slack. Dad said I won't do any activities, I will sit in my prepared hut with izintombi until the big day. I haven't sat for more than five minutes since I came, it's orders after orders.

"Akulona uphuthu lolu olushayo?" She asks, Nduku's mother.

"I don't know," I say. My head is inside the pot, I'm scrapping one month old pap, how should I know what's burning!

"Aybo Zethu, how can you not know? Go check."

I stand up, "I'm washing the pot Mah."

"That can wait, go stir uphuthu."

Sigh! Sigh! Sigh! Their kitchen is 100 miles away, I don't know how she was able to catch the smell.

This isn't just uphuthu for two, it's a gigantic pot that can feed the whole Ethiopia. Stirring it feels like paddling a boat. I can't wait for my memulo to be over, I miss Durban and my man.

I have to blow the fire as well! I removed my nails, now it's time I take the weave off before it burns.

"Are you...okay?" Asks the voice from behind.

MY DAD! I didn't know he was coming. I sigh and throw myself on him.

"No, they are sending me around."

He chuckles, "And you're blowing fire while firewoods are miles apart."

I sigh, "I hate this Baba."

He move me aside and take over. It doesn't take him seconds to get the fire burning, he look inside the pot and stir all over again.

"This is how you should do it." He says.

"Who is going to eat all this food anyway?"

He chuckles, "They send you around because you have a big mouth."

Really now? This is his fault, he told me to come here early.

Someone clap hands from the door. It's Nduku's mother.

"Ay Menziwa this is unacceptable!" She scolds.

What is unacceptable? She is looking at me like I killed Michael Jackson. What have I done now

"This is a disgrace! Your father shouldn't cook for you... Menziwa I will do it, go under the shade we will bring you something to drink."

I'm shocked. Is that what she was clapping for? A man cooking!

"No it's fine, I'm showing her how it's done." He says.

She shake her head, "It's her mother's job to teach her how to cook, go under the shade Baba please."

He sigh in defeat and walk out.

"You're lucky you're marrying to white people, nobody would've married you." She says.

"Really?" I ask.

"Don't mock me, I'm telling you. Tomorrow you're going to your hut, there you can stay on Fesibhukhi all you like."

I smile, "I can't wait."

"That's all you know, angithi ningo Mesi." "

She have deep issues. I think she needs to go to school and take few classes. Who still think a man who cooks is a disgrace, this is not 1972 when she had her first menstruation. But I'm keeping my mouth shut, Bab' Mzingelwa's stick is always nearer. RESPECT!!

3.1K 3.1K

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## Chapter 300

### FIKILE BIYELA

They are keeping him a bit longer. This is a new chapter for us, amongst other things he has been diagnosed with high blood pressure. He can't stomach that more than anything, I've ran out of words to motivate him. He will live on medication, change his diet and make few changes but life is still the same. We will fight this together. He don't talk to me, he carry everything on his own which is what could've led to heart failure.

"MaBiyela you're going to leave me," he says.

Now he breath normally, he don't sweat much.

"I won't leave babe, stop being negative."

He exhale, "This high blood pressure will destroy me, you won't be satisfied."

Geez! I'm worried about his health and he is worried about sexual performances.

"You let nonsense stress you, that's why you are sick." I say.

"I did something bad Fikile, very very bad."

Oh God! I hope he didn't kill anyone.

"What did you do?" I ask.

"You don't have to know, just know that I love you and I'll do anything in my power to protect you. All the kids will stay with us now. Do the boys need anything?"

I shake my head, frowning a little. He loves my sons, yes, but he never asks what they need. I know I might've said something the day I was drunk.

"Can I speak to them?" He asks.

I take out my phone and call Simile and pass the phone to him. I can count times he spoke with them over the phone. It never bothered me until I got drunk and here we are. He is calling him "Boy", I don't think he likes being called like that. He is a good son though, their conversation is flowing. Skhumbuzo asks for Kuhle, as expected he doesn't come to the phone. He leaves his regards for him and promises Simile he will see him soon.

"Thank you," I say.

He exhales, "I'm sorry MaBiyela, from now on I will be a better partner and better father to our boys."

"Thanks, but for now you're focusing on getting better." I say.

"I know, come closer."

The doctor walks on us while we are smooching. He clears his throat and asks me to step aside. I feel like a little bitch.

"You're finishing his oxygen," he says.

The fool chuckles, I want the floor to open up.

I only leave his side when Lungile arrives. I will take a quick shower and come back with home-cooked food.

Biyela is calling. What now? I told him I'm taking a week off.

"Menziwa," I answer.

"Where are you?"

"I'm on my way home from the hospital."

"Is he okay?" He asks.

"Yes."

"Good, tomorrow you are all coming home."

What??? My man is in hospital, he needs me.

"I can't come home tomorrow." I say.

"I was telling you. Zethu won't be able to help from now onwards, Nonto can't work alone. There is a lot that needs to be done before umemulo."

"I'm sorry Dad but that's none of my business, you excluded all your five daughters and decided to do umemulo for Zethu only. I have other responsibilities, I can't come home."

I say.

"Okay."

Call ended! That's so unlike him. I call him back, he doesn't pick up. He is doing it on purpose, I'm sweating. This is the same man who drowned Sena in the pool. I send him a text, apologising and call Sbusiso.

He picks up, "And then?"

"I'm older than you, answer with respect. I need your help."

"Wrong number!"

Sigh! He is such a fool.

"I'm serious, Menziwa dropped the call on me and now he is not picking up. Can you call and soften him? Convince him that my stay here is a good thing, I will come home two days before the ceremony."

"What am I going to get in return?" He asks.

"You have a beautiful old sister, that's what you get."

He click his tongue, "How is Skhumbuzo?"

"Recovering."

"I had my suit ready." He say laughing.

I need to end this call sooner, he take everything as a joke.

"Please do that Menziwa, I love you more than life itself."

The house is quiet, it's like nobody is inside.

Wow! Phindile is here.

"How is he?" Nceba asks before I can greet.

"It's just a few things but he will be okay."

He sigh, "Thank God!"

Phindile get off the couch and clasp her bag.

"Hey...ummm I will leave since you're here." She say looking at me.

Nceba look at her, "But...?"

"There is someone in the house, there is no need for me to be here."

"Babe come on, I still want to be with you." He says.

Yoh idrama!

"I'm not staying, I'm just here to freshen up and make food for him. Phindile you can stay." I say.

"I have things to do in the...."

Nceba sigh, "You don't have anything to do, but you can leave, maybe I'll be fine."

That get her, emotional blackmail works like magic. She is hesitant of what to do next, he is looking at her with a sad face. She ends up getting back on the couch.

"Toodles! My man just rose from death, I gotta hurry." I say walking away.

Phindile is too young, she thinks when a man cheat on you it's time to leave his ass. That only happens in books and movies, in real life women put up with their men's shit. You only leave when you're fed up and she wasn't, she was only disappointed. Wait until a man Mvuselise you! She must ask me.

Sms from Sbusiso:

\*\*Your stay is granted but I think there will be some consequences\*\*

What consequences? Biyela is getting cruel by day. I'm going to push myself up his ass, he will forgive me. I need to send a few emails, get him some clients then I'm safe from 'consequences'. Let me start by sending him a long text about Gala T.

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\*\*\*\*SIMTHOLILE BIYELA\*\*\*\*

And then? Is it onions or he is crying for real?

Okay I'm stupid, there are no onions, this is the bedroom.

"Babe are you okay?" I ask.

It's not everyday that you walk out of the shower and find an old man weeping. We were laughing together before I went to the shower.

Lord I hope his extravagant parents are not dead.

"Vukile" I say touching his arm.

"Mmmm."

"What's wrong?" I ask.

His head is facing away, he is lying on his stomach. He is no longer crying. I slide on bed and face his back.

"U-right?" I ask once more.

"I just feel lonely."

Mother of all insults! What am I? A statue.

"Lonely?" I want to confirm what my ears heard.

"Yeah."

"How do you feel lonely with a girlfriend and son in the house?"

He turn his head and look at me. My poor boyfriend, there are tears in his eyes.

"Do you need a hug?" I ask.

He nod his head and pull me to him. This destroy my plans, I wanted a long massage and endless sex, tomorrow I'm leaving.

"Don are you 100% okay? Don't tell me about loneliness." I say.

He smiles, "I'm fine babe."

This is awkward, he just cried and smiled two minutes later.

"Do we need a mental analysis? You're scaring me." I say.

He exhale, "I'm not crazy, I get emotional these days. You know sometimes I miss my parents but I'm not their priority. I've made a new family with you and Junior, you love me and complete me. I just never thought I'd be this happy in my life. I don't think I can be able to live if you ever leave me. I'm scared of being alone, I don't know...."

I stop him, he is getting emotional again. Is there any crying disease? I think he have a crying disease, I wonder if it's not contagious.

"Babe calm down, nobody is leaving, we are together for life." I say.

"Okay, I love you."

He hold onto me like a little baby. These are the type of things I gossip to my sisters about. Now I'm a nanny, babysitting a....wait, my periods!

"Bra Don can you wake up!" I say pushing his head off.

He frowns, he was almost asleep.

"Where are my periods?" I ask.

"What was I doing with them?"

This is a fuckin' joke! Yes I agreed on trying for a baby but I didn't try for soon.

"I missed my periods," I say.

He smiles, "I know, JJ on the way."

He knows! This is my womb we're talking about, how come he knew and I didn't?

"How did you know?" I ask.

"I'm a doctor Biyo, just that people don't know. I'm actually good in pregnancy and stuff, maybe I'm a gynecologist. Not that I can't help with HIV treatment."

Gawd! He think this is a joke. I'm pregnant, like there is a human inside me. He/she is going to live through me, connect to me and interact with me then disappear before we can meet.

"My love," he says.

I shouldn't be crying, this is like a second chance.

"Everything will be fine, I promise." He says.

"I know that, things are going to be fine. God knows it will be the end of me if this one doesn't survive."

He sigh, "This is why I was scared to tell you. You are panicking and it's not good for the baby."

"I'm not panicking, you don't understand what I went through. It's the reality you can't face."

"You're being negative," he says.

"If that's how you see it I'm sorry."

I sleep facing the other way, a few minutes later there are sobs in the room. This crying disease is getting frustrating, I need Dr Nala's holy water.

"Biyo you don't understand how much this means to me. I knew this day was going to be sour. I wish to have a chance to experience things, to be a father from the conceiving day and to be someone's husband."

Whooooah!

"A crying husband?" I ask.

"What do you mean?"

"You're crying for no reason, what kind of a husband would you make. You will cry along with JJ."

"I'm not crying, it happens" he says.

"Husbands don't cry. Have you seen Thapelo crying?" I ask.

"Is he the only example of a husband?"

I shrug my shoulders. Thapelo is a different kind of husband, even if Ziphe is not next to him and he have no ring on people would still know he is someone's husband. He is just the husband material.

"Do you want me to be like Thapelo?" He asks.

"Nooooo."

He roll off bed, "Well I want to be like him since you idolize him so much."

Ties? What the heck is going on!

"What are you doing?" I ask.

"Give me your wrists."

I burst out laughing. Are we really going to do this? Aybo, wait a sec.

"How do you know how Thapelo is like in the bedroom?" I ask.

"Hee baby we use to bang... I mean this is the wrong tie, let me get..."

My vagina dries up. He is dirtier than I thought.

He peck my lips, "Can I continue?"

"No, I'm sleepy."

It's not going to work. I'm not attracted in the idea of Thapelo that way, I wouldn't want his sex imitation. I heard Nozipho talking about this thing of group sex, it annoys me as much as it annoyed her. I don't know how to describe them.

3.1K3.1K

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Chapter 301

ZIPHELELE MOKOENA

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I'm on the phone with Nkabhle. He is having another suicidal thought. He just went back to the dark phase of his life.

"I don't know why I'm still breathing Ziphe, I don't.I've been trying to get life back on track, it's not working.Nothing is ever going to be okay" he says.

"You have a purpose to live Nkabhle, don't let this end you.I need you, your family needs you as well."

"But I'm in pain," he say.

Pain is evident in his voice.I've tried my best, referred him to psychologists, it seems like nothing is working.

"Just think about Phindile, she is one thing that kept you going for years.She is having a baby, surely she needs her brother more than ever."

I hear him taking a deep sigh.I look at the door, Thapelo is standing with his legs crossed.He is openly listening to the conversation.

"I will pass by you tomorrow, please be strong." I say before ending the call.

He walks in, "A good therapist."

He is mocking.I preferred when he didn't like Nkabhle openly, not this pretence he does now.One minute he is okay with him, next he is throwing shades.I understand that his past can't be forgotten, but we can all forgive.He is not perfect but he is trying.

He chuckles and walk past, to the bathroom.I hear the shower running, he is wasting water, he took one an hour ago.

I check the kids, they're all asleep.Welcome to my marriage, you give birth to one baby and get two more.How am I going to travel with three babies to Inkandla? I can't leave the twins behind, that would make me a bad stepmother.Melody is the princess of the house, sometimes we watch her instead of TV.You can't walk five strides in this house without bumping on a pink toy or barbie doll.I love her as well, she is less trouble than the two boys.But the boys are my favourite, it doesn't sit well with Thapelo that I give them more attention.I think we need some coaching, I'm also not okay with the divided attention given to my boys.

"Babe I was thinking of a trip," he say walking back, his lower body wrapped in a towel.

"Mmmmm."

"They'd like Disney Land, I checked Orlando-Walt." He says.

"Phakade cannot leave the country." I say.

He sigh, "His terms and conditions are too much."

Oh wow! Now they are called terms and conditions.

"You can take Imo and Melody," I say.

"I wanted all of them to go."

I shrug my shoulders, "The other one have terms and conditions that are too much so go with less complicated ones."

His face turn red within seconds.He throw the towel and get on bed naked.

"You always treat me like this.Phakade is not just your child alone but lately I can't even discipline him.Everything comes back to bite me."

I roll my eyes and turn to the other side.His hands grab my waist, he turn me to him a bit violently.

"Don't roll your eyes on me," he say in a fixed tone.

"Okay."

"And stop judging everything I do, I love Phakade, nothing will ever change that."

"Okay." I say.

He stare at me, he is angry.

"Okay?" He asks.

"What do you want me to say?"

"Nothing."

Oh well, I switch off the lamp on my side and pull the covers up.I'm not in the mood for a fight or argument.

"Tell me what's wrong with saying my son have lot of terms and conditions." He says.

"Nothing, I was being judgmental.Have a goodnight."

I have my eyes closed, pretending to be asleep.He is sitting up against the pillow, suffocating in his anger.I don't know who is wrong between us, my woman instinct tells me I'm right though.A woman is always right, isn't?

Eventually he switch the lamp of and shift closer to me.He pull me to his chest and wrap me with his arms.

"You're not asleep," he says.

"I'm trying to get sleep."

He breath closer to my face.

"Am I a bad father to him?" He asks.

"I cannot answer that question, I'm judgemental remember."

He exhale, "This tension is killing me, nothing is the same."

"We should seek for help, managing three kids is not easy.We are both lacking, maybe Sbusiso can advice us better, he raised the twins and Sphiwo all at once."

"I don't want any of them to think I don't love them equally," he says.

I sigh, "You know I'm still angry...Actually I don't know if it's anger or jealous, I can't have more babies and you can.Why doesn't Phakade's condition affect you as well?"

"I won't have babies outside our marriage if that's what makes you angry.I've been always committed to our marriage, it was that period when you left.It's so unfortunate that Imo and Melody came but again they are a blessing.Phakade is not bored, he will grow up with siblings." He say and let out a chuckles, "He is already a big brother, he is in charge of the playroom."

"More like a bully.Like father like son," I say.

He give my hip a little squeeze, his face is melting.

"Who do I bully?" He asks.

"Me, all the time."

He grins, "Give me a few occasions."

"I mean everyday, there are no few occasions.But if I have to name one,how you broke my virginity top them all.You blackmailed me emotionally, since then you've been bullying me."

He laughs, "You have grudges."

"No, I don't."

"Sbusiso wanted to kill me, your father came to demand you.It was me against the Biyelas, they thought I was too old for you but you didn't."

He was too old for me.I should've started with a high school boyfriend and have dates behind trees.But I went straight to a 24year old who tied my wrists and ankles and banged me like it was the end of the world.

"You were innocent back then," he says.



"What do you mean -were?" I ask.

He chuckles, "You didn't do all the crazy things you do now. Now you shout, order me around and get naughty on bed."

But he made me do all those things. If I didn't marry him I'm sure I'd be somewhere overseas running a successful business and minding my own life. Now I have a 11 months old human being who, unapologetically, look like his father. My mouth have to open every two minutes.

"Well I'm your student, that means you're doing a great job." I say.

"Oh I'm a teacher? I want to teach you a few things then."

He switch the lights on. One can never get used to men's butt. It looks funny, like little steamed bread that didn't have enough yeast.

"Why are you laughing?" He asks.

My ribs are going to crack.

"Nothing, I'm thinking about something."

His lip curl up, "What thing?"

"My mother once made steamed bread and forgot to put yeast. It came out small and hard." I say.

"That fucked up."

I laugh harder, "Yeah it is."

He pull down my nightdress and shut me with a steamy kiss. His head smell good and familiar.

"I love you. Did you use my shampoo?" I ask.

"Yes, it smells heavenly. Look, I want to give you a sexperiment."

It looks like I'm gonna have a good farewell night. I hope it nothing with chains, my skin is a bit lighter. I don't want to explain red ankles and wrists to Bab' Thobela.

I expect him to suck my nipples or something like that, but he pulls me up and get our gowns. I'm like 'boo where is my sexperiment?'

"Let me take a toothbrush, we are going to the laundry room." He says.

WTF! I'm not doing laundry at this time. What are we going to the laundry for?

He comes back and quickly dash to the kids room. He is checking on them, he comes back and pull me down the stairs.

He push the laundry room's door and switch the light on. I still don't know why we are here, there are two basket full of clothes.

He plug the washing machine and throw his sneakers inside.

"Are you for real?" I ask.

"You'll love this."

I'm not lazy but I definitely don't like doing laundry at this time.

"Take the gown off," he says.

Are we having sex in the laundry room? That is sexperiment for today! Gosh.

"Now sit on the machine," he says.

I let out a chuckle, like wtf! He is going to fuck me on top of the washing machine.

He kiss my neck and suck my lower lip.

"I want you to have as much orgasms as you can. We are going hungry the whole week, I want the picture of you enjoying yourself to carry me through." He says and switch the machine on.

I let out a hiss, "This is...warm."

He pull my legs apart and press the toothbrush and place it on my clit.This is so fuckin' good.

"Are you having fun?" He asks.

He is disturbing me, I'm in a spaceship.

"Ziphe should we stop?"

"I'm going to kill you Thapelo," I say with my eyes closed.

He chuckles and roll my nipple with one hand.He is forcing me to cum, my body can no longer hold this in.

"Baby I'm cuming." I scream.

He grab me off the machine and wrap my legs around his waist.I scream my lungs off when he push himself in.I'm used to him teasing his way in, this feels like his dick is deep inside my womb.

"Are you okay?" He asks.

"No, I want to cum."

He stroke me two times, fluid run down his thighs.I'm gasping for air, he is not giving me time to breath and collect myself.

I'm a bit dizzy when he put me down.He lift me up and put me back on top of the machine.He pick the toothbrush and hand it to me.

"You know what to do." He says and position himself infront of me.His hands is tighten around his hard dick.

I've never felt anything like this.It's surely a sexperiment.

By the way, whose toothbrush is this?

## Chapter 302

Zanda Dlamini

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Unfortunately I can't leave today for Zethu's umemulo.I just can't leave my man for a whole week, and I'm avoiding the work.Zethu complained about too much work.I will go two days before the day.

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Someone is lost in the middle of the aisle.At first my heart beat loud, he has seen me, I calm myself and walk on.He is holding a shopping basket, there are few items inside.I want to pass like we don't know each other, he is not looking at me but his whole attention is on me.

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"Oh...Ummm do you know where I can buy cooked food?"

"Cooked food?" I ask.

"For the house, Fikile is in hospital."

Typical men! He can't cook following recipes. I walk him to the Fast Food counter, it's uneasy. He orders samp and usu, I'm not surprised.

"Bye," I say.

He looks at me, completely surprised.

"I'm still shopping," I say.

"Can I help you as well?"

What does he know? I shake my head and walk away. I can't concentrate on the shopping, he is distracting my mind. Only if I avoided him! Maybe I should go back home.

"Zanda." He says right behind me.

We are in the parking lot, he is driving Skhumbuzo's car, it's just behind mine.

"Hey..."

"I want us to talk...Can we talk?" He says.

"About what?"

I shouldn't have been civil with him, I was good with the idea of us being enemies.

"Us, you know I don't remember much but I know what we had was special."

I frown, "There was no us."

"But they told me we were...."

"We weren't nothing, we cleared that the day before you disappeared." I cut him in.

This time he stares and keeps the stare longer.

"You shot my son Nqubeko, an innocent soul." I say.

"I didn't," he says.

"How do you know?"

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"I'm taken, find someone else to love." I say opening the car door.

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"Did you call me the other day?" I ask.

His eyes wander around, he doesn't give any reply.

"Don't call me again, Mandela won't appreciate that, you're still the number one suspect." I say.

He swallows, "I needed to hear your voice."

"Don't do it again," I say firmly.

I drive off, leaving him on the spot.

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Nqubeko walks in, he is coming from the shops. He passes me like an object and takes out the plate. He bought samp.

"Why didn't you buy pizza?" I ask.

"Ungazonginyela wena!"

The leopard never changes its spots. How am I sitting on him? It was just a question.

He opens another one and dishes out usu.

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"I didn't send you to someone's wife, this is a favour."

Geez! He is blowing.

"It doesn't mean I have to eat food of your choice. Why are you angry?" I ask.

He sigh and put the plate in front of me.

"I saw Zanda."

I should've known!

"Did you talk?" I ask.

"We did." He says and blank out for a minute.

"Have you ever loved someone you can't have?" He asks.

His heart didn't forget about Zanda, he is about to walk the same journey of wrecked feelings all over again.

I shake my head, "I'm not that experienced in love department."

"You're lucky because it hurts. Sometimes I wish I didn't meet her again, it's making sick. My feelings are real for her, she is on my mind every single hour. Sometimes I call just to hear her say 'hello.'"

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His face contains all the emotions his words convey. He is not a man in love, he is a man hurt by being in love.

"Nceba I love everything about her, if whatever Amos used to erase my memory didn't work what is going to make me forget my feelings for her? I feel like I'm in the wrong world, being denied access to the right one because of who I am." He says.

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It is the part that Skhumbuzo don't want him to find out about. It held him back and turned him into a monster.

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I don't want to go to the bedroom yet. There are so many memories, at times I see him and hear his little voice. I switch the TV on, trying to distract my mind. His image, lying on Fikile's arms dead. His mother haven't sent even a Please Call Me to check if he is still alive. He loved his mother, she was his everything. I knew my life was taking the worst turn when he came, but I was willing to go through hell for him. My Prince!

"Good evening," says the voice walking in.

Bloody Nqubeko, he didn't lock. Luckily it's one of Fikile's sister's husband. He is here to check on Skhumbuzo's situation, I guess.

"Sho," I say.

"How are you holding up?" He asks.

"I'm getting better."

He drag a chair across the room, I don't know why he can't sit on the couch. It's the mixed race one.

He looks around, "So you're alone here?"

"Yeah, everyone is in hospital."

It feels like a curse, every Nkosi is ending up in hospital.

"You shouldn't be alone, it will suffocate you."

I shrug, "I can't change the situation, indoda ayikhali."

"That's why we are so fucked up. I came to check on you, my wife said you are alone."

Fikile asked her sister to send her husband here, the drama queen that she is. But this is good, I was already suffocating.

"I heard you're expecting a little one," he says.

"Yeah, God gives and take."

He nods, "I know how it feels like."

"You also lost a child?"

"I lost a sister, the only relative of mine who loved me. She committed suicide before my payday, before I could repay her for everything she did for me. Some wounds heal, some we just learn to live with them."

He is definitely living with this one. I thought they were perfect judging by their little families and cars.

"How are you with your family now?" I ask.

This is making me curious, maybe I can get inspiration from his story.

"I'm good, don't know about them. I forgave them so I could move on, meeting my wife played a major role. She gave me a job, fed me, gave me a car and cute son. She is not everyone's ideal wife material but trust me she has never mistreated me because of my less-fortunate background. We fight like a couple, she is a loving person. She taught me to love myself, accept my past and forgive those who wronged me."

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"And God is keeping you alive to correct your mistakes."

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"Lwazi, I thought you knew me." He says.

"Are you a celeb?"

He chuckles, "Yeah, check my wife's Instagram."

"Udlisiwe wena," I say getting off the couch to get him a drink.

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"I know you're listening." I say.

"Ufunani?" She keep her voice low and unfriendly.

"I want to hear your voice."

"Do I have to open protection order?"

I exhale, "I'm not trying to hurt you, I respect you and your family. I just don't know how to live, better come rip this heart off me. This love is painful, we shouldn't have met again."

"Nqubeko" she whispers.

"I can't stop thinking about you, it's like I'm going crazy."

"What do you want me to do?" She asks.

"Just love me."

"I can't, please stop calling me."

"I love you," I say.

She drops the call. When I call again it rings once and goes to voicemail. She has blocked me, I wish she can block my love as well.

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Nqubeko is back by force, I don't know why I'm feeling guilty. I cook uphuthu and cabbage, Mandla's favourite. I'm not sure what I'm making up for, there is nothing I did wrong.

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"Pay it via me."

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I watch as he walks away, kind of hurrying as if the food is going to run away. He made efforts, attended therapy every week to get over his wounds. He is not perfect, he don't have to. I know how deep...

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It's private number. I'm sceptical about answering, Nqubeko is everywhere.

"Hello," I answer with hesitation.

"Ma."

My cheeks stretches, it's Monde.

"Hey boy, why are you calling with private number?" I ask.

"It's not my phone."

He don't sound okay.

"Are you well?" I ask.

"I...ummm...I don't have food, Dad is not home."

"He left with food?" I ask, this doesn't make sense.

"No, they'll buy when they come back. They left bread, it's finished."

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"Who are you with?" I ask.

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"I just got a call from Monde, they went to a family trip and left him with no grocery, just bread."

He frowns, "The house have no food?"

"Yep! I'm pissed, I want to call his father right now."

"No baby, fighting won't solve this." He says.

"I'm not fighting, if he don't want to parent Monde he must say. He is not an orphan, I'm here."

Damn! I even forgot his tomato sauce.

"He have full custody, we have to be nice about this issue. Rather let me handle it, if you want Monde to live with us I'll get him."

I exhale, "Courts take their time."

"We won't go to any court, I'll speak to him, man to man."

I have to put my trust on him, he has never let me down.

After dinner I go take a bath, my mood has dropped. My phone vibrate as I brush my teeth. I'm on the edge, Monde is alone and hungry where he is. I don't know the worst that could happen.

It's a text from a strange number:

\*\*A mighty pain to love it is, And 't is a pain that pain to miss; but of all pains, the greatest pain is to love, but love in vain. No matter how painful and unforbidden it is, I will always love you.

-Nqubeko Scebi Nkosi\*\*

## The Biyela Divas

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"He has full custody, we have to be nice about this issue. Rather let me handle it, if you want Monde to live with us I'll get him."

I exhale, "Courts take their time."

"We won't go to any court, I'll speak to him, man to man."

I have to put my trust on him, he has never let me down.

After dinner I go to take a bath, my mood has dropped. My phone vibrates as I brush my teeth. I'm on the edge, Monde is alone and hungry where he is. I don't know the worst that could happen.

It's a text from a strange number:

\*\*A mighty pain to love it is, And 't is a pain that pain to miss; but of all pains, the greatest pain is to love, but love in vain. No matter how painful and unforbidden it is, I will always love you.

-Nqubeko Scebi Nkosi\*\*

Simtholile Biyela

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Fikile just arrived today, tomorrow is the ceremony day and she only came today! It's unfair to us, we've been bending our backs cleaning the houses and cooking for the Biyela large clan.

"Where is Biyela?" she asks looking around with a fearful face.

"Probably waiting for you in the big house," I say.

"Is he angry?" she asks.

"I don't know but he must be angry, he has to be."

He asked all of us to be here 3 days ago, even Zanda came yesterday. The married ones are here, who does she think she is? Skhumbuzo was discharged about 5 days ago.

"Let me go tell him that you've arrived," I say.

"No, are you crazy? I don't want to see him."

"Too bad, I'm calling him here right now," I say.

She folds her arms and lifts her eyebrows up.

"Does he know that you're pregnant?"

She is such a bore!

I get my ass back on the chair while rolling my eyes.

"Where is Sena?" she asks.

"Probably asleep in her car, she never do anything here."

Throughout this time Sena has been forgetting her sleepers or charger in the car and fetching it for hours. She is never present for chores but whenever something is needed from town she is always available to drive there.

"That doesn't sound like her, is she pregnant as well?" Ziphe asks. She has her husband's 15 babies around her. I don't know how she manages, they're almost the same age. Phakade and Imogen are a terrible pair, they break things and cry till their faces turn red.

"That would be nice, Lwazi wants a baby," I say.

"How is she going to be a diva when she is pregnant?"

We all laugh, but unfortunately Miss Diva is walking through the door and by the look of things she heard everything.

"So what do you guys get for gossiping? Money, gold or silver?"

"A good laugh," I say.

She rolls her eyes and sits on the chair. This is Inkandla but she is wearing stilletos, her hair almost touches her ass.

"Aunt Lydia has arrived, you should be moving around instead of gossiping. That pot is not shining the unmarried ones should wash it," she says.

What's the fuck? We didn't even eat enough food at her wedding, she is the last one to talk.

"Not me, I have washed half of the dishes," Zanda says.

"Not me either, I'm tired and I'm the eldest," -Fikile.

They mustn't look at me, I've been doing...things since morning.

"Where is the wife?" I ask.

"Sleeping as usual," Zanda replies.

Urgh! Nozipho hardly do anything. I get that she is heavily pregnant but her hands are working okay. She wakes her, does her make-up and wears those African wife dresses and do nothing all day.

Ziphe is the youngest and the soft one, she is the one who end up washing the pot. Later today MaMeya is coming, we are not sleeping there is umvalelo. She will realise how it's like being Inkandla makoti.

"Are you cooking stones?" It's Aunt Lydia walking through the door.

"Hello Aunty how was your journey?" I ask.

She doesn't even look at me, she waves me off and open the pots.

"Who cooked here?" she asks.

"Ziphe," I say.

She looks at her, by the look of things she is not impressed by what she sees.

"Ziphelele don't just cut eyebrows, cut onions as well. What is this?"

"Ooooooooooh!" We all break into laughter except Ziphe.

"You're being ungrateful Aunty," she says.

"Your husband is here as well, is he going to eat this?"

Ziphe secretly rolls her eyes and walks to the table to dish.

People are scattered all over the yard, serving them is tiring. I'm wearing a huge jacket because I don't want to be Inkandla top news.

I bump into Sbusiso, he really need a gym. My father looks sexier than him, he has six pack and all. Sbusiso is growing a belly, I don't know what his problem is because he has every gym material in his house.

"You don't look hungry, do you want food?" I say.

"No I'm not hungry," he says.

Great, I go to the tent with his plate and wipe it clean.

When I get back in the kitchen they're dishing for us. I add more meat on my plate and eat like I haven't eaten all day.

Nozipho walks in dragging sleepers.

"Mrs B," Fikile says hugging her.

"I thought you were no longer coming," she says and looks at Ziphe, "Why didn't you dish for my husband?"

Ziphe frowns and tell her she dished for everyone.

"He hasn't eaten all day, how can you do that guys? His mouth is dry, nobody cared to feed him."

"Who was serving the guys?" Aunt Lydia asks.

"It was Simtho," they say.

Sbusiso is such a hypocrite! He said he was not hungry 10 minutes ago, now he wants his wife's attention by faking hunger.

"I gave him food he said no," I say.

"Okay where is his plate, I will warm it."

"I ate it," I say shrugging my shoulders.

"Simtho! I can't believe you right now, so my husband must die of hunger because of your cravings."

This girl must not start with me.

"You should've cooked for your husband so that he doesn't die of hunger instead of sleeping all day. I don't have time for Sbusiso's tantrums and preferences. He always has this attitude whenever he is served by someone who is not you."

"You never think for anyone except yourself, you need help," she says opening cupboards.

"Don't even start a food fight, we don't do that here you should've left that habit at the Zungus," I say.

"The Zungus don't fight for food," Zanda says.

I roll my eyes at her. She is not a Zungu yet, there is no need to be their spokesperson.

"Maybe she learnt it at the Fayas," I say.

She grabs bread rolls and roasts a piece of steak and wors, and makes salad. She looks mad as hell, her and her husband are getting bossy.

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\*\*\*\*\*LATER\*\*\*\*\*

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I'm getting a call from Biyela, he wants me in his house immediately. I haven't done anything wrong so I'm lost as to why his tone sounded so fiercely.

He is with my mother, they're not supposed to be together today, all women are in the kitchen, men are in the kraal skinning the cow.

"Lovebirds!"

They frown. Aren't they lovebirds?

"What did I do?" I ask.

"Sit down," Biyela says.

It seems like I'm in sort of trouble.

I sit on the chair and look at them.

"What is your problem with MaZungu?"

Hebana! Is Nozipho the reason why I'm here? That little stupid fight!

"We only argued," I say.

"I asked you what is your problem with her?"

Okay this old man is angry, he has pronounced lines on his forehead.

"I don't have any problem with her, we argued over food and I told her she must've left that tendency at her home," I say.

"Is that how you speak to your brother's wife?" my mother asks.

"She is the one who started, I gave Sbusiso food and he said no. If she wants her husband to be fed properly she must not sleep all day."

"Why not?" Biyela asks.

"Come on Dad, she is his wife."

"His pregnant wife, she can sleep for weeks if that's what her body wants. Even if she wasn't pregnant there is no need for her to be on her feet all day to prove any point. You are not going to treat her like that and you're going to apologise to her."

Whaaat?

"Baba no!" I say.

"Now Simtholile!!!"

One condom could've prevented all this, they shouldn't have went raw and conceived me.

I walk to Sbusiso's rondavel and knock while preparing the 'sorry' speech. I hate apologising, it makes me feel like I'm losing points in life.

"Vulaani!" I scream.

Two minutes later the door opens. What are they busy with? They shouldn't be together as well, other guys are busy in the kraal. And other wives are....well we aren't supposed to say it but other wives are in the kitchen working.

"Hey lovebirds," I say.

They keep quiet.

Sigh sigh sigh!

"I'm here to apologise to Nozipho, I'm sorry I talked to you that way," I say.

"You owe me an apology as well," Sbusiso says.

"Really? You are the one who started this, you're a hypocrite. You said you're not hungry and went to Nozipho twenty seconds later and said you're hungry," I say.

"No I didn't say I'm not hungry, I said I'm not hungry," he says.

"I'm not drunk that's one thing," I say.

He is lying on Nozipho's thighs as we talk, Nozipho is brushing his head. They're too much.

"Okay fine I wanted my wife to serve me and both of you were wrong. You are sisters you shouldn't argue to the point where you exchange harsh words to one another," he says.

"But she twisted the story and made me the sister-in-law from hell to my father. He wanted to beat crap hell out of me, no scratch that, he wanted to shoot me," I say.

"Okay I'm sorry," Nozipho says.

"I don't forgive you, why are you not in the kitchen? MaMeya is going to be lost in the kitchen alone."

She sighs.

"You guys will be there to guide her, I'm too tired," she says.

"You're useless!" I say

"So are you, what did you do all day long?"

Sbusiso clears his throat.

"Not this again guys!"

I roll my eyes as Nozipho rolls hers.

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\*\*\*\*\*AUNT LYDIA\*\*\*\*\*

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Where are these girls?

"Zethu!" I yell.

Silence.

Nx that one is in her hut, my memory is not fresh as my body.

'Ziphe!" I call.

"She went to sleep with her children," Nonto answers.

She is the only one working, literally. MaMeya is plainly useless, she doesn't know how to do anything. I asked her to make fire and she's been on it for hours.

"These girls are lazy, who is supposed to work here?" I talk to myself as I make my way out.

MaMeya is still struggling to make fire, we should be cooking goat's intestines people are waiting.

"Let me help you, go wash the meat inside," I say.



Two minutes later there are flames of fire, what was hard? I walk back to the kitchen to take the pot and find her staring at the dish with dirty intestines.

"Don't tell me you haven't wash them," I say.

"Why are we not throwing this away? To be honest this looks filthy and unhealthy."

Nonto laughs, this is not funny, it's is our food.

"MaMeya wash the meat I need it. Where is your sisterwife?"

"Sleeping, I think," she says.

Nozipho though!

We understand that she is pregnant and she has the upper word in this family but she should be helping MaMeya.

Muzi walks in and looks around.

"Where is everyone?"

"Nozipho is sleeping," I say.

"She should be, where are the girls?"

"We don't know, MaMeya is here alone," I say.

He frowns and makes his way out. I hope he is looking for his spoilt brats.

Minutes later Senamile walks in dragging her shoes. She doesn't look pleased, so are her sisters behind her. All they know is Twitter and Instagram.

"MaMeya take a seat, they'll do everything," I say.

Their eyes widen.

"Hawu Aunt!" Simtho is the one to exclaim first.

She is the laziest but she's always Caster Semenya when it comes to eating.

"I don't understand why we are here, it's Zethu's ceremony not ours," -Senamile.

"Exactly! She is being pampered and treated like a queen there," -Fikile.

Zanda sighs and picks the dish and starts washing the meat. She is the one who deserves sleep, she's been working the whole day.

"Give Senamile that dish," I say.

"Whaaat? I can't, that's literally washing cow's poop."

Dung not poop, and it's not disgusting.

"I'm not even a Biyela anymore, where are the kids of this family? Simtho, Fikile!"

"Don't fuck with me, I'm not your age-mate go wash the meat," Fikile says.

She rolls her eyes and takes the dish from Zanda. Her face is squashed as she washes.

They're too fancy.

"Who is cooking the rice?" I ask.

"MaMeya," Fikile says.

She is a bully, just that she is not blunt about it.

MaMeya takes one small pot and looks at her holding a cup with one hand.

"How many cups?" she asks.

I don't want to laugh...Cups?

"We are cooking the whole 10kg MaMeya," I say.

"Whaaat?" She is shocked.

"Did you see how many people are here?" I ask.

"I'm sorry I don't know how to cook 10kg rice all at once," she says.

"Kanti where is Nozipho?" Fikile asks.

Who has seen that wife? Even asking her whereabouts could land us in trouble.

Oh speak of the devil!

She pushes the door and her stomach and walks in. She looks tired but all she's been doing is eating and sleeping.

"Just when we needed you, please cook the rice," I say.

She looks around and stretches her arms.

"I'm here for my ice-cream, Sbusiso says he put it in this fridge," she says

"We need your help here, you can have that ice-cream later," I say.

Her phone's screen brightens, she reads whatever it is with a smile on her face.

"Ummm...Sena will do it Sbusiso is calling me." She takes the ice-cream and walks out with her phone beeping endlessly.

"Can she give birth already?" Senamile says.

"What's the use? She will make another one," -Simtholile.

Gossips make the kitchen alive.

"This one would commit suicide if Sbu ever cheated," Fikile says.

"Who wouldn't? Do you know how it's like being cheated on? You keep beating yourself, thinking something is wrong with you. I remember Loyiso, it...it broke him. It drove him to death and I'll never forgive myself for it. Rather dump a person than to cheat," - Simtho.

"You're right, I saw how it affected Skhumbuzo. Even though he found out later, when he was already in a happy place, but finding out that his wife cheated broke him," Fikile says.

They're boring, men should accept life as it is. Women cheat all the time.

"That's why you must make sure that your man never find out if you cheated, destroy evidence and come back home as the innocent woman," I say.

"Aunty!!" Exclaims.

"I'm telling you kids, don't lose your man over nothing," I say.

Zanda looks up, she's been quiet the whole time. I've noticed that something is bothering her.

"What if you catch feelings for the guy?" she asks.

"They'll fade away. When is Monde coming?"

"Monday, Mandla is fetching him," she says.

I'm proud of that boy, he doesn't care that Monde is his bitter late ex-wife's son, he is willing to raise him just to keep Zanda's peace and happiness.

"You're blessed, your family keeps growing. Respect that man and give him another baby," I say.

She smiles and looks down again.

Chapter 305

Zethu Biyela

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"Hey vuka!" the person roaring could only be Aunt Lydia, Satan's angel!

She hits my head with a pillow, I have no choice but to open my eyes. It's still dark outside, what is wrong with her. Tomorrow is my big day, I need my beauty sleep, I have to look fresh tomorrow.

"Ntombizethu get up maarn!" she roars again.

Sigh!

"Really Aunty?" I ask.

"The girls are waiting for you, get up you need to go to the river."

Go to the river? Where is the river? We have enough water mos.

"Why?" I ask.

"To bath, take everything off."

"Huh?" I'm lost.

"Don't hush me, you shouldn't be sleeping in the first place, umvalelo here! Take everything off before they leave you behind."

It's 5degrees here, they want us to die of pneumonia.

Wait.....

"Are we going to the river naked?" I ask.

"Yes, hush hush!!!"

I thought weird stuff were over. What if we bump into someone while parading to the river naked?

"Zethu!" now it's Nonto. This one means business, I have to get my bare ass out in this cold. I miss my white fiancée. This has been the longest week of my life.

They are happy, singing and dancing all the way to the river. I'm the only one with arms folded and developing chicken skin from the cold.

"SADLALA ABELUNGU WEEE

"SADLALA ABELUNGU BASIPHUC' IZWE LETHU

ABABUYELE KWELAKUBO"

WTF! They're all singing, jumping and going crazy. I need to be excused, nobody is going to be shading white people. White people is my man, my man is white people. The land issue is being sorted, people should breathe in and relax.

"Silence!" I order.

"Yini manje?" -Nonto.

"I don't like the song you're singing, sing another one. Maybe that "sebengithathile abangithandayo" one, I liked it," I say looking at my engagement ring.

"Idrama mntase, the song is not directed to you," she sighs.

As long as Helen Zille is not here I'm gonna be white people's president, their spokesperson. Even if I have to choose between the two races I'm damn choosing white....help them take the land again.

Lord! I'm dick-whipped.

"We're changing the song or going to the river in total silence," I say.

Can you believe that the river is ten metres away from home? Lord, the water look fresh and super cold. I just hope there are no snakes or crocodiles inside.

I'm frozen, I can hardly part my jaws. It looks like there will be no sun today, talk about witchcraft!

"You took so long, Nonto make sure everyone is getting ready," she turns to me, "Your mothers will help you with isidwaba," she says. Inhloko on her head looks so big, she looks like those women who acted on Kwakhala Nyonini.

"Aunty my make-up artist hasn't arrived, she said she'll be here by eight."

She stops and frowns. Sighs!

"I have to look good, you know that," I say.

"And why can't one of your sisters do your make-up or me for that matter?"

"You???" I ask laughing.

"Oh you think that I'm stupid, I can't do make-up. I'm going to make Ziphe looks more beautiful than you....she has been always more beautiful, I'll just enhance her. Wena you need it anyway."

I roll my eyes and wrap myself with a blanket. She can go to hell with her make-up skills.

"Tell Simtho and her sisters that I want strawberry protein smoothie, should I need anything else I'll tap my fingers," I say.

"Can this day end already!" she says making her way out.

I'm sad this Queen Elizabeth life is coming to an end soon.

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Fikile Biyela

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The lady of the moment is getting ready. I didn't expect to see the make-up artist, I mean it's umemulo, and besides people of this place don't care about the artificial looks. White people are modelling all over the yard, wearing sunglasses and high heels. It's crowded, now I understand why Biyela slaughtered a fat cow and four goats.

"Fikile!"- someone calls from the door. It's one of izintombi, her eyes are widened and glued to someone.

Oh she is seeing a white guy standing cluelessly at the front of the door with a bunch of flowers in his hands.

"Thank you girl," I say and step outside holding my breath. If Bab' Mzingelwa sees him standing like this, in the middle of the Menziwa yard like he's not at his in-laws' hell will break loose.

"Tyson you can't just stand like this," I say.

He looks around with a little frown on his face. He has no idea where he is.

"This is Inkandla, my fathers will eat you alive, act like a husband to-be," I say.

"I'm just here to give Queen this....Can I see her?"

Nkosi yami! I just told him to get his act together.

"You'll see her later, she needs to go to esigcawini," I say.

Disappointment flushes across his face.

"Okay I can't wait to see her perform. Tell her I said- ngiyakuthanda," he hands me the flowers and leaves.

Not accurate but he is trying and it sounds so sexy. The flowers smell nice, Skhumbuzo needs to take some lessons from him. Reminds me that I haven't checked on that man since an hour ago. My heart is not here, I don't know if he is coping with Nceba also injured and Nqubeko hardly doing things like a normal person.

"MaBiyela zazinhle izimbali," the voice comes behind as I'm about to enter the house.

"MaBiye.....?" I don't finish asking, damn! What the fuck is he doing here?

"Nqubeko what are you doing here?"

I'm shocked, he should be with his brothers and taking care of them.

His eyes are glued on the flowers. Lord, he is unbelievable!

"They're not mine, Tyson sent them for Zethu," I say.

There is relief on his face, he nods and glances down at the kraal. He is not dressed like someone who came to help, he is too smart. I didn't know he has such clothes, if he was Nceba's size I would've said he borrowed them.

"I'm here on Skhumbuzo's behalf," he says with his eyes wandering around.

"You didn't have to, you should've stayed and looked after them. How are they? Did they eat something?"

Silence.

"Nqubeko.....?"

His eyes are glued on something, he doesn't even hear me. He is lost in his world now, he looks like he is holding his breath.

"Sawubona Zanda,"

Oh it's Zanda, it defines the look on his face.

Zanda looks like she can faint anytime, like she is seeing a ghost. Did Nqubeko really leave his brothers to see Zanda? I'm pretty sure he doesn't care about umemulo or anything. He is not even dressed like someone who is attending a traditional ceremony.

Zanda clears her throat more than necessary before greeting him back. There is so much awkwardness between them.

"You look so beautiful," his eyes are on her. He is different when talking to her. He looks at her like she is the only existing thing on this planet. He has completely forgotten about my

presence. His palms are folded as if he is stopping himself from doing something, from reaching out to her.

"Thank you....ummmm I have to do the thing....nice to see you," she looks in his eyes briefly and blinks with control and then walks inside the house like she can't wait to disappear.

Awkward, isn't?

"What's going on?" I ask Nqubeko.

Only now he remembers that there is me next to him.

"Oh, nothing. I will see you around."

I hope nothing is going on, he was told to leave Zanda over and over again. She is in a happy place with Mandla, they have their little family. I hope Mandla and him don't bump into each other here, I'm not sure if Mandla has forgiven him yet. We don't need drama, at least not today.

"MaBiyela..."

I turn around to see this strange woman staring at me. She must be knowing me from the Nkosi side to call me like this.

"Sawubona Ma," I say flashing a brief smile.

"I hope you and the boys are okay," she says. There is something in her eyes, it scares me.

The colourful bangles and animal-skin bracelets around her neck and wrists scare me. I don't do well with zangomas and traditional healers.

"Which boys?" I ask in confusion.

"Your husband and his brothers."

Oh...I feel like I'm not ready for whatever she is about to say.

"We are okay, they're recovering well," I say.

She does a thing with her shoulders and sighs heavily.

"That's great to hear, it's great. What about MaMvelase?"

I did say I wasn't ready for this. I should be helping the girls dress up and checking how Nozipho is coping in the kitchen. We all know she can stop cooking those dumplings whenever she feels like and nobody can say a damn thing about it.

"She is critical but stable," I say what the doctors have been telling Nqubeko when he visits her.

"Why don't they complete the job? Her soul is in the palm of their hands, they'll decide when she dies. It's their decision, it had been their call from the beginning."

I hear her but I don't understand what she really means. It's been their call from the beginning? Who?

She raises her eyes, they're bloody red and evil. There is cold that rushes down to my stomach.

"Your husband has a lot to answer to his ancestors, the sooner they let her soul go the sooner they can sort things out. You don't spill your own blood, you don't mntanami! No matter how bad things are, you don't go that far." She shudders and lets out a piercing one scream that draws everyone's attention to us and then walks away.

This is the Biyela time, I should be enjoying the ceremony, but no my mind is troubled with the Nkosi problems. Who has spill his own blood? Anga collapsed and died, MaMvelase is not dead yet and she was ran over by a car. What was that woman talking about?

[#Next@18h00](#)

Chapter 306

Muzi Biyela

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I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for her. Things were bad when we had Fikile, we were living off the peanuts I made from selling fruits on the streets. There was no reason for

her to stay after I cheated on her while she had a newborn, but she forgave me and stayed. I was nothing, nobody. I had to make means to survive, the last thing I wanted was to have my daughter growing up in a shack. I hooked up with Bra K, he was the well-known gangster in Esikhawini back then. I didn't want it to be a permanent thing, I was supposed to stop after buying my first house and truck. But I didn't, I wanted more. Bra K died, leaving me with his connections and advices. I took charge, made more money and I was in it for life. More money meant more power, more employees meant more mouth to feed, I couldn't stop. I didn't want to go back to poverty.

Within a few years I already had three beautiful daughters. My children mean everything to me. I want them to always have everything they want. I vowed to give them the best life, I got so rich and so sure that they'll never go short of anything. But anyday from now they might lose their mother and there is nothing I can do about it. Believe me I've tried, sent emails all around the continent. We did everything money can do to save her, but nothing worked. Death is knocking at my bedroom door.

"Baba they're grown, they'll figure it out without me," she said, trying to be strong.

"What about Simile and Kuhle?" I asked.

Tears welled up in her eyes, she shook her head and convinced me that they'll be okay. I know I cannot raise them alone, I don't have proper working hours. Fikile has to take the responsibility for her children, I don't know if she is ready. I'm not sure I want them to be the Nkosis, to grow in that home where people die and rise again.

"Mkhulu!"

It's Kuhle. I worry about him more than I worry about Simile. Simile has outgrown the Gogo's child age, he is starting to warm up to his mother. Kuhle on the other hand wants nothing to do with Fikile, just getting him to visit her is a problem. How is it going to be when he lives with her permanently? I don't want them to be unhappy.

"Ay Muzi! We're talking as elders, you can't allow a child to walk in and out as he pleases," -my brother Thobela says.

I've been judged my whole life. I do what I think is right for my children, they can keep their traditions and morals.

"Did you eat Kuhle?" I ask.

"No, I don't want cow's meat."

Oh, this is new.

"Why? You are not allergic to beef," I say.

"Yeah, but this one was slaughtered. It had blood mkhulu, Malume stabbed it."

I don't want to hear what my brothers have to say about this. I pull his hand and take him to the kitchen.

"Where is Fikile?" I ask from the door. There are so many people here, the girls are still cleaning and washing the dishes.

"I'm here!" She appears with her hands covered in dish-washing foam.

"And then?"

"Your son hasn't eaten anything, he doesn't want slaughtered cow's meat," I say.

"Really Baba? Kuhle always eat beef from the butchery, how does he think they killed those cows? They were massaged to death? Aybo!"

"You have to be patient with him. Get him some chicken and go put him to sleep. When you're all done here get all your siblings and come to the big house," I say.

"Why? Is everything okay?"

"Don't give him any juice, just water and food," I say.

She nods and looks into my eyes with fear. I don't go back to the hut with my brothers, we've completed all our tasks. Sbusiso will come through if there is anything more. I

have to check on my wife, she didn't look okay after the ceremony. I know behind the smile she puts for everyone to be okay, I can see through her. I find her lying on bed and sit next to her.

"Mama,"

She looks up and flashes a smile as her eyes meet mine. She has lost weight but her beauty haven't changed.

"Your face looks different, who did your make-up today?" I ask.

"Aunt Lydia, she has been complimenting me the whole day," she says.

I grin and shake my head. I don't know anything about make-up but I know eyebrows shouldn't look like Audi A7 mirror indicators.

"You should let me do it as well," I say.

She laughs and cocks her head to the side.

"You?"

"Yes me," I say.

She laughs even more. She's good at burying everything and pretending as if everything is okay.

"So how are you feeling? I saw that you were not okay earlier."

She sighs, "No Baba, I'm fine. I just needed to take my supplements."

"The girls will be here anytime, are you ready?" I ask.

"There will be the right time to tell them this," she says shrugging her shoulders.

"I still think having someone with us would've been better, they won't take it well."

"Don't start again Muzi, we gave birth to them so we will swallow our fears and tell them. There is no one in perfect position to tell them this except us," she says.

I hold her hand and squeeze it. When she calls me by name I know she's losing her temper. The last thing I want to do is to anger her.

"Okay, we will do it," I say.

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Fikile Biyela

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"I want to go sleep, what is this about?"

Sighs!

"I don't know Zethu," I almost snap at her.

I know that something is wrong. Biyela looked so uncomfortable and empty. I have checked with all my siblings and children, they're all okay so I don't know what could it be. My father only stresses about work and his children. Everything is good workwise, and we are all okay.

Oh Mom is also here.

"Sit," she instructs with a smile on her face.

I relax a bit, whatever it is must not be that bad.

Biyela appears pulling a plastic chair and looks at all of us.

"MaZungu you can go to bed," he says.

Oh hell no, we're in trouble. If he excuses Nozipho it means whatever it is it's bad. I look at Sena on the couch across me. She's been awfully quiet the minute I told her there is a meeting. They all made noise and asked questions about the purpose of the late meeting, but not her. She didn't say anything. It's so unlike her, now I'm more worried. I hope she is not in trouble.

"What is going on?" I ask.

“One family selfie with umemulo girl,” -Zethu says forcing us into facing the screen of her phone. She can make everyone's life miserable this one.

“Okay Ntombizethu sit now,” -Mom says.

She is smiling but there's something behind her smile. She is covering something, her eyes give it away.

“We have important news to share with you. But before everything please know that I love you so much and I'm glad that God gave me you as my daughters,” she looks at Sbusiso, “And you my boy, thanks for making me the ‘son's mother.”

“Are you dying?” Simtho asks.

We all laugh. Can she shut up and let her talk, nobody is dying here.

“I'm still talking Simtholile.” She shakes her head with a smile and takes her husband's hand. Can they stop with the Romeo and Juliet before we hear what is what here.

“I'm happy my children, your father is an ass but he gave me his all,” she says.

My father's eyes widen, they both break into brief laughter. Gosh!

“I'm kidding, he's always a sweetheart,” she says.

I sigh, “Mom, Dad! Not now, you can do this when it's just the two of you. Why are we here?”

“We have important news to share, I told you guys,” -her.

“We're listening, I have 3 children waiting for me,” Ziphe says.

“There is no easy way to say this. Your father and I have tried everything, we've fought this till the end. We fought till we realised that instead of fighting and wasting money we should use this time to be together for the last memories.”

I can't believe this!

“You guys are divorcing?” I ask.

“You're too old for that, rather live in separate houses,” -Simtho.

“No, they must get over it. Whatever it is that they're fighting about, they must get over it!” Ziphe blows up.

Biyela sighs and pulls Mom closer to his shoulder.

“It's not that, we'd never divorce. Only death can do us apart, nothing else,” he says.

“Great! Neither of you is dying so.....wait, are you both okay? Is someone sick?”

Silence.

“Ma???”

She blinks rapidly, stopping tears from dropping.

“Baba what's going on?” Zethu asks, she's already on her feet.

“Your mother has pancreatic cancer, she doesn't have much long to live. I'm so sorry.”

What? No! That can't be true. She is on strict diet, she is not sick. It can't be, what are we going to be without her? My kids!

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Chapter 307

Zanda Dlamini



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They took down the lights that were installed outside, I'm using the phone's torch going from the kitchen to the hut I'm going to sleep in with Ziphe and Phindile.

"Zanda....."

Oh hell no! Nqubeko can't do this. He is still here!

"What are you still doing here?" I ask in a whisper. The local boys are still roaming on the yard looking for left overs and beers. I don't want to be seen interacting with him.

"I wanted to say goodbye," he says panting in front of me.

He must've lurk somewhere and ran to me as soon as he saw me making my way back.

That alone is creepy, he can't be stalking me at night like this.

"You didn't have to, I can't be seen with you," I say.

He smells so heavenly. He keeps stepping closer, filling my nose with his cologne.

"I miss you. You're the only thing that has been on my mind, can I touch you?"

Lord, I made a mistake. Now he thinks that he has a right to touch me. He is getting comfortable around someone's fiance.

"No!" I almost scream but suppress myself.

"Please walk me to the car, I only want two minutes of your time."

I know how stubborn he is, it's either I walk him to the car or we continue standing like this with him in front of me. I follow him to the car that is parked outside the yard.

Mandla was drunk, I'm sure they're asleep wherever they are.

"We're here, get in the car and leave," I say.

I hear him taking a deep breath. His hand touches mine, he has stepped closer again.

Before I know it he has taken full ownership of my hands. We're in the dark but I can feel his eyes on my face.

"I miss you Zanda," he says in a low deep voice.

"Nqubeko I have to go," I say softer than I intended.

He exhales and tightens his hands on me.

"That day changed everything," he says.

If it was up to me we wouldn't talk about that day, we would pretend as if nothing happened. As much as I've replayed the scene in my head over and over again, I still wish I could forget about it.

"I made a mistake, it shouldn't have happened," I say.

He leans over and brushes his lips on the side of my face. How can such a lousy thing awakens so much feelings? I find myself gasping as he does this.

"I'd do it over and over again, but I'd never do it with someone else."

Is he being serious?

"You'd never do it with someone else? You mean sex?" I ask shocked.

"Yes that, I won't do it with anyone else. I don't know much about my past but my body is my treasure Zanda. Giving my body to someone is giving my soul," he says.

"Oh wow!" That's all I manage to say.

"I love you,"

Here we go again!

"Ngyakcela, ngeke ngidlale ngawe," he's begging. I don't like this side of him, the weak one. I want the side of him everyone knows.

"Have a safe trip," I say and turn to walk away. He grabs my hand and pulls me to his chest. I'm trapped between his arms. He is standing against the car with me on his chest, he is panting like he just came from a run.

"Tell me what to do,"

We're back to square one.

"Nqubeko let me go," I say.

"You have taken everything away from me Zanda. My heart, my mind and my body. It was better when I knew that I had one thing. One thing that you didn't take away from me, and that was my body. But now you've taken it too, I don't want to be touched by anyone else except you. Now tell me what to do, how do I claim all of me back?"

I've never been in the situation like this. Mandla and I got together, I don't remember how we fell in love but we didn't have anything like this, it never got to this point.

"If you can't love me please bring Nqubeko back. Thatha uthando lwakho ungibuyisele ubumina."

This is hard, he is making everything my fault.

"I didn't ask you to love me," I say.

"So you know that I love you?"

Really now?

"That's not the point," I say.

"What is the point then? Tell me."

He is back at being the Nqubeko everyone knows, he is not just asking he is demanding.

"The point is I can't be with you, I'm already committed to someone else," I say.

He exhales and tightens his arms around me. Maybe he's finally getting it. The reality is we can't be together, not in this life.

"Then tell me what to do," he says.

"Find someone to love," I say.

His hand is behind my neck, my face is turned upwards. I can see his eyes glittering in the dark.

"I have found her, she is right in front of me," he says and smash his lips on me. I try to pull away but he has his hand behind my neck. The way he kisses me is different, I don't know, it's like he brings his whole entity into it. The way his other hand is holding onto my waist, bringing me closer like he doesn't want me to ever leave him.

"I really need you in my life," he says, he is back at being weak.

"No Nqubeko," I say trying to sound firm.

"We can be together Zanda. I don't belong in the world where you and I are not together, I don't!"

I push him and exclaim. He lets me go like he is also shocked.

"What? Did I do something wrong?" he asks.

He's been doing everything wrong but I'm not there.

"You've said that," I say.

"Said what?"

Oh he doesn't remember.

"You said that before you died....I mean before the incident. You said the exact thing, that you don't belong in the world where you and I are not together," I say.

"Oh, wow! I don't know how that happened, what else did I say? What else happened between us?"

Sighs! The less he knows the better.

"Nothing important," I say.

"Zanda we're meant to be. God gave me a second chance, please make it worthy living." There is someone coming towards us. I can't be seen standing here with him!

"I have to go,"

Again he holds my hand and pulls me back.

"Nqubeko!" I whisper and pinch his hand.

The person is getting nearer, I can't scream at this fool because it will draw more attention. My palms are sweating, what if this is.....

"Zanda? Nqubeko?"

Thank God it's Fikile!

Well not really, I still need to explain myself to her.

"Nqubeko let me go," I say.

"No Zanda, please listen to me."

"Let her go, now!" -Fikile.

He listens to her, they all do. But not today.

"I love her MaBiyela."

Is he crazy? Mandla is like Fikile's brother.

"She is not yours to love. How many times do we need to tell you to stop this nonsense?"

You're destroying someone's home, Mandla worked hard to build his family."

He lifts my hand to his lips and plants a kiss and then exhales.

"You can call a family meeting and tell everyone to disown me. Call imbizo and tell the king to ban me, but I won't be shy about how I feel. I love her and I'm not sorry," he says. I think Fikile is shocked as well. The Nkosis don't speak like that with her, according to culture she is their old sister.

"If you love her as much as you claim you'll let her go take care of her man, who has been taking care of her while you were busy killing people."

What? Killing people? This is going far.

She turns to me, "Mandla is not well, he is vomiting inside the tent."

Oh hell no! He shouldn't have drank beyond his limits.

"You're disgusted?" she asks.

Sighs! Who appreciate vomit in the world?

"Yes, I mean no, I'm going to check him."

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FIKILE BIYELA

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"Look Nqubeko, I'm not against your happiness but I'm against you tearing Mandla's family to gain your it," I say.

We've been standing here, looking at Zanda as she hurries inside the yard to look for Mandla. He is watching her like she is leaving with his kidney.

"Mandla is finally happy, I don't want him to go back to that dark place," I say.

He shifts his attention as Zanda disappears and faces me.

"You're my sister, I can't believe you're choosing your brother's friend over me."

Seriously? He can't play that card with me.

"He is not just Sbusiso's friend, he brothered me way before you came along. I don't sacrifice old relationships for new ones, that's not me," I say.

"I'm not saying sacrifice your relationship with him, but let it be a fair game. I can be with Zanda, I can be happy, but my family is the wall standing between me and her. Why don't you let us be? Let Mandla fight his own battles."

"I can't do that," I say.

"Why? Is it because you know that he won't win?"

Dr Amos needs to come and kidnap this idiot again.

"Because it won't end well, I don't want you to be in my father's list. Trust me, you don't want that either," I say.

"He doesn't want to be on my list either."

Huh???

[#Next](#)@21:00

Chapter 308

Phindile

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She is never like this, no matter how bad things are. I have no idea what happened, she's been like this since last night. What could've gone wrong, yesterday was her big day. I expected her to be happy, and to brag about it the whole month. This is not the Zethu I know.

"Sisi are you sure that you're okay?" I ask.

She sniffs and hugs her knees. She's been sitting on the mat, lost in her thoughts with tears glittering in her eyes, for hours.

"Yeah Phindile, I asked Nceba to come pick you. We won't be going back to Durban soon, we have to be home with our mother," she says.

"Okay, but you shouldn't have called Nceba, I can take a taxi," I say.

"It's just a ride Phindile, don't...." she sighs and closes her eyes.

I know that something is wrong. I excuse myself and go out to look for her sisters. Maybe something happened between her and Tyson.

Ziphe has one of her boys on her arm, the other one is crying on the ground. I can see the frustration on her face, I won't bother her with questions.

"Phindile can you take him to his father?"

"Of course," I say picking him up. I don't know if it's her biological son or the one Bhut' Thapelo got outside marriage.

"Thank you," she says and walks inside the house.

She is the uptight one. Although Zethu is loud and crazy I'm happy she took me in, I don't think I can survive a day living with Ziphe. She looks like the strict type that judges people silently. Sometimes she just looks at you and says nothing at all.

Oh, I don't think Bhut' Thapelo will enjoy babysitting. They're sitting outside the tent, on plastic chairs with a bucket of icy beers in front of them.

"Maka Ulcer," -Sbusiso.

This name will never go away.

"Good morning," I say turning to Thapelo with the baby, "Bhut' Thapelo,"

"No maarn Phindile, who is this?"

Is he asking who his son is? He can't be that drunk.

"Ziphe asked me to bring him to you, she is taking care of the other two," I say.

He opens another beer and takes a huge gulp. He raises his hand, stopping me from giving the baby and takes another one.

"Let me finish this one," he says.

Jesus! Is that even acceptable?

The baby starts crying again. I haven't had any experience with crying babies, I'll cross that bridge when I get there.

"Please take him, I have to go somewhere," I say.

He looks at Don, "You need to practice, this is the opportunity."

"What? No, I can't practice with the obese one," -Don.

Donald though! This baby is chubby, not obese.

"Fuck you, I won't beg. Phindile give me my son."

At last! It feels like I was carrying a bag of cement. I stretch my arm to get my muscles back in place.

I bump into Fikile, just someone I'd like to see. She is easy to talk to.

"Hey sis' Fiki, can we talk?" I ask.

She calls a little girl racing past and gives her the kettle she was carrying.

"Is everything alright?" she asks.

She has the warmest personality. Maybe it's because she is the eldest, she has that 'mothering' thing around her.

"Yes, I'm just worried about Zethu. She doesn't look okay," I say.

She sighs. I don't know if she was aware of it or she is sighing because she has burdens of her own.

"She is just not her usual self," I add.

"She'll be fine, don't worry about her. Have you eaten anything?"

It seems like she knows, and whatever it is bothers her too.

"No," I say.

Her eyes widen.

"Nceba will arrest all of us! Go get something in the kitchen, please."

I have no appetite, I also forgot my Vitamins in Durban. But to shut her up I go to the kitchen and grab a cup of tea.

"Why are you not eating?"

Oh shit just got real. Aunt Lydia!

"Ummmm....I'm not hungry," I say.

"I don't care about you, the baby is hungry." She grabs the plate and puts 4slices of bread, huge piece of meat, two eggs and salads leftovers.

"I want that plate clean," she says.

I smile thinking about my mother, she always say this.

How am I supposed to finish all this food?

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\*\*\*\*Three Hours Later\*\*\*\*

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Things have been tense, we don't talk like we used to. I've forgiven him, we were not in a relationship and he never promised me anything. I just felt betrayed, he slept with another woman a few hours after being with me.

"Hi," I say after fastening the seatbelt.

"How are you?"

"I'm good," I say.

He puts his hand on my tummy, I have missed this. I feel something moves at the side of my stomach and scream in shock.

"Phindile are you okay?" he asks, alarmed.

"He just kicked, it's so scary."

His lips form a smile but it doesn't reach his eyes.

"He's happy to see Daddy," he says and lifts his eyes to me, "Are you happy too?"

This is when I shut up, he knows that I can't answer such questions.

"Yeah neh," he sighs and starts the car.

This is going to be a long journey, taking a taxi would've been better. It's so awkward to be with the father of your baby and have nothing to talk about.

We're on the road and I'm pressed. I've been holding in for the last hour, if I hold on any longer my bladder will burst.

"I need to pee," I say.

"Like right now?"

Geez! No tomorrow.

He takes one glance at my face and switch lanes and stops at the side.

Where am I going to pee here? There are no trees to hide behind, and he is watching me like a hawk.

Fuck it! I drop my panty and squat right there, with him watching.

He doesn't say anything and that's great. The whole 2hours journey in silence, we'll make weird parents.

Oh we are here! I just need my bed, I haven't had proper sleep in days.

"Thanks for the ride," I say.

"I will help you with the bags."

I didn't want his help. I don't want him to enter the flat when it's just him and I.

"I can manage," I say.

"You're pregnant."

Yeah right! Pregnant is paralyzed.

He enters the apartment with me, walks on to my room and puts my bags on top of bed and doesn't walk out.

"Thank you," I say.

He nods and keeps on staring at me.

"What?" I ask.

"Do you still hate me for what happened?"

"No," I say.

"Your actions say otherwise, but I want you to know that I'm sorry. I really appreciated the time we spent together, you had nothing to do with what happened. You were enough, I was just a dog."

I sigh and sit on bed. We might as well talk things through, this bad vibe is not good.

"Let's find a way forward, Ulcer will be here soon," I say.

"Can we try again?" he asks.

Well, Zethu told me that I need to get back with him. He is sweet and cute, and deserves a second chance.

"Nceba if you do that again I swear I'm going....."

"It won't happen again," He pulls me to his chest and embraces me in a tight hug. When I look into his eyes I expect to see him happy, I mean we just fixed things.

"You don't look happy," I say.

"I'm happy Phindile." He plants a kiss on my cheek. I don't know him that much but I know that something is bothering him. He's been like this the whole day.

"How is your brother?" I ask.

"He is getting well,"

“Wena?”

He chuckles.

“Don't I look well?”

“Your mother?” I ask.

He exhales and removes his hands from me and brushes his face.

“To be honest I don't know how she is, I haven't seen her.”

He hasn't seen his mother? That woman has been hospitalised for weeks, and from what I heard her chances of survival are very slim.

“She wants me to come and see her. Why Phindile? She never loved me in health, she hated me and all that was mine. Even my son Phindile! A mere child!”

I know that forgiving someone who has wronged you this much is not easy but his mother is about to die. The least he could do is to see her and get answers.

“Do you realise that you'll never see her again? Never talk or touch her?” I ask.

“Yes,” he says.

“This may be satisfying for now, to see her in pain and denying her the chance to talk to you. But you're going to feel guilty for the rest of your life, and ask yourself questions that nobody will answer. She has made your life messy while alive, if you don't go see her your life will be messy even after her death.”

“It's not that easy Phindile, I don't want to see her,” he says.

“I will go with you,”

He shakes his head.

“No, I don't want you around that devil.”

“I will go with you to the hospital, then you'll go inside her room alone.”

He takes a huge sigh and shrugs his shoulders.

I need to change this top and grab something I can eat in the car.

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NCEBA NKOSI

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She already looks like a corpse. Her eyes are closed, I don't know if she heard me walking in, but the doctor said she can hear and talk.

How do I make her realise that I'm here? I can't call her, what would I say.

“N...c....e....b...a...y...e...n...k...o...s...i,”

What? She knows that I'm standing next to her! She can feel my presence, and she just knows that it's me without seeing me.

For a moment my tongue is tied, I can't respond.

“I'm...so...sorry mfana...”

I feel a wave of fury crashing through my veins. I'm not mfana, I've never been. Skhumbuzo and Nqubeko are 'mfana', not me.

“Your father hurt....he hurt me and turned Nqubeko into a monster,” she says.

Sighs!

“How is that any of my fault?” I ask, harshly.

“I'm sorry....I shouldn't have.....treated you....bad...”

This is bull, funny I imagined this visit to be like this.

“You're only sorry because you're dying,” I say.

“This is....my last...chance to...to tell you that....you're a good son. You are...handsome, intelligent and....I'll look after my grandson in heaven....Look after the coming one, I'm sure you'll be a great father.”

“Really now?” I let out a chuckle.

“I love you,” she says.

I let out another chuckle that is accompanied by a drop of tear. It took her whole life to tell me this!

"And your brothers, I love them,"

Nothing new there, she always worshipped them.

"I didn't... know that my own son....would...that he would kill me, but.....I forgive him."

Woooooah! My ears are deceiving me. What's the heck am I hearing?

"Your son did what?" I ask walking closer to her bed.

I take her hand and lift it up. She is cold, and lifeless.

"What do you mean?" I ask.

She opens her eyes and looks at me.

"....." her lips are saying something, but her voice is inaudible.

She smiles and closes her eyes again.

The machines start beeping.

"Mama!" I scream.

She needs to open her eyes and say what she wanted to say.

"Mr Nkosi please step out," - it's the doctor.

"She was smiling just a second ago doctor," I say.

"Nurse please take him out."

MaMvelase can't die like this. She was evil and deserved pain, but not this. We were still talking, she was telling me something. Her son killed her, how dare Nqubeko! I knew that he was evil but not to this extent of killing even his own mother.

"Nceba," says the voice behind me.

Phindile? I've forgotten that I came with her.

"How is she?" she asks.

"She is dead," I say.

"What? Oh my gosh I'm so sorry. Are you okay?"

"I want to see Nqubeko," I say.

"Oh yes, maybe you should call him, he needs to arrange...."

"Stop talking Phindile!" I snap.

God! This is Phindile, she might stop talking to me forever.

"Babe I just need to think," I say.

Silence.

"I'm sorry," I say.

Silence.

I open the door for her and get on the wheel and drive away. I'll talk to her when I'm calm, right now I need to talk to Nqubeko.

Good grace, his car is here. He fooled us all, pretending to be checking on MaMvelase everyday whereas he is the one who killed her. I just want to know why, me and Skhumbuzo could be next.

"Stay in the car," I tell Phindile.

"Okay,"

She is talking? Wow!

I plant a kiss on her cheek and leave.

They're watching a maskandi DVD and laughing like everything is okay.

"I'm back," I say.

Skhumbuzo lowers the volume and looks at me.

"Ubuye nani?" -Nqubeko.

There is a small vase next to the stand, it cracks on the wall above his head. He ducked, the devil!

"What's wrong with you Ncebayenkosi?" Skhumbuzo asks, getting off the couch.

I'm sure he can't wait to jump to his defense.



"Nqubeko I want to talk to you," I say and make my way to the bedroom.

"What did he do?" -Skhumbuzo behind us.

I stop and glare at him.

"Your mother is dead, put your efforts in arranging the funeral than taking sides in something you know nothing about," I say.

"What? No!!!!"

Fuck! I didn't mean to break the news like this to him, he is still weak. Fikile will kill me for this.

"Mother is dead?" -Nqubeko.

I slam the door behind him and glare at him.

What kind of a monster is he?

"You should be celebrating," I say.

He frowns.

"This is what you wanted Nqubeko," I say.

"Nceba our mother is dead, it's over. We are orphans, God has taken our last parent."

He is good, he needs to contact Mfundu Mvundla, he might secure a role on Generations.

"You took her, not God. Nqubeko why would you kill your own parent? She loved you, why did you kill her?" I ask.

"What's the fuck Nceba?" He frowns, his eyes emit fire.

"You don't have to act with me, she told me that you're the one who killed her. I didn't know that you kill family too. Who is next? Me or Skhumbuzo?"

He doesn't have answers. He just freezes with crocodile tears running down his cheeks. He didn't think I'd find out. Now what do I do? Do I tell Skhumbuzo and the family?

Am I safe?

## Chapter 309

### Fikile Biyela

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I've been trying to keep busy, my kids cannot see me crying. I have to be strong for them and my siblings. I need to find time where I'll be alone, in a dark room, and wrap my head around the idea of living without my mother. Soon I have to figure out how I'm going to raise my sons without her. I've never been the kind of a mother who attends school meetings, take them to the doctors, do their laundry and lunch. I have never imagined this time coming, not even once.

"Fikile,"

It's Sena.

She took this better than I expected. She has her emotions in place, unlike Zethu and Simtho.

"What is the doctor doing here?"

I haven't seen the doctor, it's hilarious that she is asking me this question.

"I have no idea," I say.

She folds her fists and paces around.

"Oh no, it must be bad!"

"What?" I ask, getting on my feet.

"Obviously he was here for Mom," she blows out and continues pacing in front of me.

She is making me dizzy.

"Maybe her condition got worse," she says.

She is frustrating me even more with her guesses. I put my jacket on, it's almost 28 degrees, I'm not sure what's going on with my body. I had my periods last month, but there are some changes I keep noticing on my body.

Indeed it's Biyela's doctor driving off. He wouldn't have come all the way here if it wasn't an emergency. Biyela keeps hiding things from us. This is our mother, we should know if anything is happening. It's enough that they hid the truth from us for months.

The door is closed, really!

"Who is it?" Biyela responds to the knock.

"It's Fikile,"

"I'm coming." He takes more than two minutes, raising my suspicions further.

Finally the door opens. He stands in the middle and looks at me. My father never cries, but when I look into his eyes I can see that he's been crying. His eyes are red and a bit swollen.

"What is wrong?" he asks.

I should be asking him that question.

"I want to see my mother," I say.

"She is still resting Fikile," he says.

His voice is croaky, he is trying to keep his eyes away from me.

"Baba, I want to see her," I say

"Okay but don't ask her questions, she is fine."

He steps aside, allowing me in, and closes the door after me.

When she sees me walking in she smiles. I feel a tight knot inside my stomach.

"Mama," I stand in front of her and look at her face that is half buried by the blanket.

"Did they eat?" -her.

"Who?" I ask.

She chuckles,

"Your kids Fikile."

Grannies! It's almost 11am, everyone has eaten.

"Yes Ma, I'm taking care of your grandchildren," I say, rolling my eyes.

"Good," she shifts her head and groans in pain. Seeing the fright in my eyes she forces a smile, "I'm good. You know I don't like this place, I miss my house."

"You're so fancy," -Biyela says and slides in bed with her.

Why can't he leave us for a moment?

"This is awkward," I say.

"What is awkward?" -him.

"You two on bed together and me standing like this," I say.

He wraps his arm around her and gives me a look. I know he wants me to leave now.

"Do you need anything?" I ask looking at my mother.

"Yes, make sure the boys are fine. And please start packing, we're leaving this afternoon, I'm tired of listening to the cows and goats in this place."

"Mmmm!" -Biyela.

"What? I'm not a village wife," she says, purposely pushing my village father's buttons.

He chuckles and plants a kiss on her neck. This is my cue to leave. I hope he is not having sex with my mother while she is sick.

"Baba tell me if she needs anything," I say.

"I will, now get out," he says.

I roll my eyes and open the door. Just as I step out my phone rings.

Oh my man!

I forgot to call him back earlier, I saw missed calls, my head is all over the place.

"Sthandwa sami," I pick up.

"Hello,"

His voice is kept low, he can't be still on bed.

"Are you okay? I hope you ate and took your meds," I say.

"No I didn't," -him.

I'm not sure what he is responding to. He didn't eat or he didn't drink his meds.

"Skhumbuzo you know what the doctor said, you need to look after....."

"MaMvelase is dead," he says.

I stop and reposition the phone against my ear.

"What???" I ask.

"My mother is dead," he repeats.

I knew that she will die any day, but receiving these news right now is devastating. I just found out that my own mother is sick, she might die as well.

"When did that happen?" I ask.

"This morning, Nceba went to see her."

Oh gosh! I wonder how Nceba is feeling, he was her ticket to death. I hope he's not blaming himself for anything.

"I'm so sorry babe. Where are you now?"

"Still sorting some stuff, we're coming that side tomorrow."

"We are leaving Inkandla today, I won't be able to see you,"

I can't believe this is happening. He surely needs me next to him and the kids. But my mother needs me as well, I have to take care of my sons.

"What do you mean?" he asks.

"My family needs me, we're going to be at Mandeni for some time. My mother is not well, I can't leave her, if anything happens while I'm away I'll never be able to forgive myself," I say.

"Fikile I don't know how I'm going to face the kids alone, I thought you'd be with me. It hurts like hell seeing Nqubeko breaking down and Nceba fighting with everyone. I can't handle this pain and this....."

My heart sinks. We said we'll always stand by each other's side, supporting each other through difficult times.

"I wish I can be there," I say tears burning my eyes. I can't believe I'm crying for that witch. Am I even crying for her or the fact that I have to choose whose kids to support. Mine or Skhumbuzo's? His sons were partly raised by MaMvelase, they'll need a mother figure to hold their hands through this time. On the other hand, my mother's peace lies in Simile and Kuhle's wellness. Now the ropes have been thrown to me, I have to take care of them.

"You and the kids won't come?" he asks, and I can't miss the pain in his voice.

"Anything can happen to my mother Skhu, I'm really sorry," I say.

"But we're your family too Fikile, you can't just...I can't be on my own, we need you."

Sighs! I was hoping that he'd understand, for peace sake.

"We will come for the funeral, please understand," I say.

"Okay kulungile," he sighs heavily and says his goodbyes and ends the call.

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Mom and Dad have left. They passed by Skhumbuzo's home before leaving. Right now I don't know whether I'm coming or going. I never imagined my year to end like this.

"Fikile,"

Gosh! I want to be alone.

"What is happening Fikile?"

It's Zanda, I have no idea what she is talking about. What is happening where?

She exhales and looks around then sits next to me.

"Don't kill me," she says.

I take a huge sigh and look at her.

"Just say what you want to say Zanda."

"Nqubeko called....."

Lord! I don't even want to know how he got her number.

"And?" I ask.

"He didn't say anything," she says.

Isn't that good?

"What did you want him to say?"

"He was crying, I could feel how broken he was over the phone. He had hiccups Fikile, he couldn't voice anything out."

Nqubeko is the strongest brother. He has a heart made out of stone, I don't expect him to laugh at his mother's passing, but breaking down doesn't suit him. He's never been a mama's boy, I expected that from Skhumbuzo.

"Their mother passed on," I say.

Her eyes pop out, she covers her mouth in shock.

"OMG! I didn't know."

"Zanda,"

She looks at me, she is still shocked and filled with sympathy.

"You're not his shoulder to cry on. Did you sleep with him?"

She clears her throat and looks down at her hands. I had my suspicions after the night I caught them by the car. Nqubeko had a fire of confidence and hope in his eyes.

"You have messed up," I say.

"I know Fikile and I'm willing to cut all ties with him. He just doesn't get it," she says.

"No you messed up Zanda, you're doing exactly what Mandla was scared of. I understand that you haven't experienced much in life, but you're playing with fire. You're going to lose everything, even your baby."

She swallows, the sympathy in her eyes is substituted with fear. I know that Mandla will take Leano if he finds out, and he'll have every reason to do so.

"I don't know what to do," she says fighting back tears.

"Draw the line now, stop entertaining Nqubeko," I say.

She digests my words for a minute then look at me, more fearful than before.

"What if I don't want to?"

It has got out of hand. She has fallen in love with him.

"Do you know him that much? He loves you, yes, but you can't spend the rest of your life with someone like him. I know him Zanda, his life is different," I say.

"How do I forget about him? I keep wondering what would my life be like if I was with him. I know it's unfair, but I can't help my curiosity."

"Stop entertaining him and focus on Mandla." I say.

"I've never entertained him, he keeps following me," she says.

"Think about everything that Mandla has done for you, how much love he has shown you the past six years. Don't allow this test to destroy what you two have together.

Leano can't live with step-parents, you can't put him through that and you know it," I say.

She exhales and nods.

"You're right...."

I raise my eyebrow.

"But?" I ask.

"I have to see him one last time," she says.

Was I talking alone all this time?

How stubborn this girl is!

"Nqubeko is not strong Fikile, that's what you don't understand. He is just angry, even with his memory lost his anger still haunts him. It is deeper than what everybody think. One day look into his eyes, beneath the cruelty firing in them is a young man who never got any guidance. He is angry at someone, or maybe at the certain part of his life."

She sighs, "I want him to get help, I will move on with my life but I want him to be okay." It scary how she has started to care for him.

"Until he realises that he needs help there is nothing we can do," I say.

"You'll take them to the counselling as a family after their mother's funeral."

What? I don't believe this.

"I need counselling myself Zanda, my own mother is dying!"

"Your man needs counselling as well, he has so much on his shoulders. One day he will just drop and die and you will have 5 boys to raise with unstable uncles,"

Fuck her! I get the point but where will I even begin telling Skhumbuzo to talk about his problems to a stranger.

"I will try," I say.

She sighs and looks at me with concerned eyes.

"Please don't tell anyone about me and Nqubeko,"

I burst into laughter, it's so unlike her to cheat. Now I believe what they say about quiet girls.

"Firstly tell me how was it," I say.

"Fikile!" she exclaims and laughs.

"Talk little bitch," I say.

She mustn't act shy with me. I want to know wide she opened her legs for him.

"He was powerful, when he held me in his arms he owned me. He wasn't gentle but he didn't hurt me. I swear I've never felt anything like that. The groans, hard strokes, his sweat dropping on me and the way he grabbed me."

She smiles and lifts her eyes up. Her smile disappears in the blink of an eye, fright transforms her face.

"Mandla!"

Chapter 310

Zanda Dlamini

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I don't know how much he heard, he's just standing there with a blank face, staring at me.

"Mandla!" I can't control the shock and fear in my voice. How am I going to explain this? I was closing the Nqubeko chapter, and now this! I'm ready to focus on my family, and to love him like he's the only man in the world. My stomach turns, every part of my body is burning as sweat begins to form on every inch of my skin.

"Go on!" -Fikile.

I turn and look at her. Is she selling me out? She can see the trouble and wrath facing me.

"You said you remember every part," she says and turns her eyes to Mandla. She looks very calm, hardly bothered by Mandla's presence.

"You're disturbing us Mandla, your girl is Alexa Riley's reviewer."

"She is what?" -Mandla.

"We're busy reviewing Alexa Riley's book, Stay Close. Now you better get out before you hear something you shouldn't be listening into."

Mandla frowns and looks at me. Expression grows back on his face.

"Are you leaving or not?"

Mandla stands still. Fikile turns back to me.

"Well, here we go Zanda. Williams was gentle, his soft touch sent chill all over my body. His head leaned too close to my face causing our breaths to combine, his shaft was growing heavily on my....."

"Okay okay girls, too much sex talk, we should be leaving now. What is it with reading erotic books anyway?"

I've never been so relieved in my life. I take one huge sigh that causes Fikile to shoot an icy stare at me. I can't believe she saved me, so quickly and so brilliantly.

Thank God Mandla only heard the last part of our conversation.

"They keep us entertained while you people are drinking and forgetting that you have women to give attention to," Fikile says.

He looks at me with his eyelids sliding. I know he's about to mock me of something.

"Have you been whining?"

"No!"

Fikile's chuckle breaks in, she gives Mandla a look and they both laugh.

"She's been crying the whole morning: I miss spending time with Mandla bla bla bla."

He walks to me and leans over and lifts my face up. He's been drinking, that's what they've been doing since the day of umemulo. He brushes his lips on me and smiles. He knows how much I hate it when he kisses me while he is drunk.

"This is the last time I drink alcohol, I promise." There is a cheesy smile on his face, I know that he is lying. As long as he is friends with Don and Sbusiso he'll never stop drinking.

"Really?" I ask. My voice is still unsteady, my chest is still beating like a drum. I was too close in losing him.

"I love you, I'd even stop eating food if you want me to," he says and kisses me again.

"That's enough!" -Fikile.

"Jealousy doesn't suit you." He pouts his lips, "Muntu wami?"

I kiss him and brush his lips with my thumb. It sends his lips to his ears.

"Love you mncwa mncwa mncwa....." He chants 'mncwas' until he gets out the door. He is drunk, this means I'll be driving.

Fikile gets up and walks to the door and slams it close. She leans on it and takes a huge breath.

"Thank you," I say.

"Fuck you Zanda, do you know how hard it was looking in his eyes and lying to save your ass?"

She is angry!

"I know and I'm sorry," I say.

"You are not going to see Nqubeko, ever again. I'm going to help him sort his life out. You focus on your family, do you hear me?"

"Yes." I nod my head in emphasis but it seems like it's not enough to convince her. She stands in front of me and glares at me.

"Zanda you're not going to chase new dick and whatever heavens Nqubeko promised you. Help Mandla. Help him to love you the way that you want to be loved. I know that he is not good in bed but....."

"Whooooah!" I put my hand up and stop her.

What's the heck! How can she talk about him like this, in front of me.

"Who told you that?" I ask.

"Is he good na?" she asks, raising her eyebrow.

"No....I mean yes,"

Fuck her!

"He does his best, okay!" I say.

"Then what is the matter if you're satisfied?"

"It feels like I'm with my brother, except that of course we sleep together. His love is cold, I want to be loved the way Nqubeko loves me. Show me your emotions, hold me like you don't ever want to let go and be mine."

"And when did you realise that?" she asks.

"When I met Nqubeko," I say.

She sighs and walks around the table.

"I hate to say this, but change him instead of leaving him. Transform him into what you want, Nqubeko has his sides as well. Are you going to leave when you realize that he is not the whole package of your dreams?"

She doesn't wait for my answer she opens the door and turns around with the expression I've never seen on her face.

"Don't hurt him," she says and I can't miss the threatening tone beneath her voice.

"Because if you do I will have to take Mandla's side and you'll end like Phumla. Six feet under, and Mandla will get another girl just like he got you. And he will raise Leano with that girl, just like he is raising Monde with you."

"That's mean Fikile, I realise my mistakes and I'll make it up to him."

"You better. I don't want to ever hear Nqubeko's name coming out of your mouth. I love you, this is what's best for you."

I understand that she is angry, but I didn't expect her to threaten me like this. She won't hesitate to end me. It makes me wonder if the other sisters would have my back.

"Make sure you get some romance books in your library, just to back up your story if you have to," she says. I nod my head and make my way to the door.

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SBUSISO BIYELA

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This pregnancy has been the longest. She is always tired, grumpy and eating. I cannot wait for three weeks to end. I swear after this baby I'm going to wait a few years before I knock her up again.

"I'm tired of being in the car." She's been quiet half of the journey. Funny she just stopped talking in the middle of the conversation. I don't know what I said wrong.

"What does that mean?" I ask.

"I mean that we need to stop, I want to breathe."

What the hell! We're in the middle of the road, there isn't a single restaurant around.

"Can't you make it to the nearest garage at least?"

"No!"

God why did you give me a penis?!

Thank God the kids are travelling with Aunt Lydia.

Now we're standing in the middle of nowhere, looking like fools.

"Are you stretching your legs?" I ask.

"More like I want those yellow guavas."

What on earth? I'm not about to climb trees looking for guavas. I don't remember her helping me while I had my cravings. Thank God those horrible days are over. And it really confuses me why her cravings just started when she's about to give birth. Maybe she is just punishing me.

"Sbusiso!"

Sighs!

Nobody has ever walked here, it's a bush. I can hear snakes hissing with joy as they see their supper.

"Get the lime ones as well," she yells from the road.

"I bet you want blue ones as well," I whisper and pull the branches down. I get the first one, I have no idea how many guavas she wants.

"I have five, are they okay?"

Silence.

I can't do with her mood swings.

Why isn't she answering me?

"Okay, I'm getting eight and that's it!"

You know what, this is the last child, I swear to God.

"I have your guavas, blue and gr....."

What happened? She can't sleep on the road like this.



"Nozipho what are you doing?" I ask running to her.  
She has blood on her dress, and she is not moving.  
The guavas scatter all over the road. I scream for help but my voice isn't strong enough.  
"Nozipho don't do this, just open your eyes and tell me what happened."

## Chapter 311 Senamile Madlala

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"What happened?" I ask again. He haven't answered any of my questions, I know that he doesn't know but I want him to say something.

"We're waiting for the doctor, Sbu found her on the ground, he doesn't know," -Simtho.  
"Who takes a stop in the middle of the road? Out of nowhere!" My forehead is sweating, I take a piece of cloth out of my bag and wipe it. Nozipho is like a glue of this family, the moment she came into Sbu's life we all united. She's dramatic and loves sex more than she should but we can't function without her. Who will host unnecessary dinner and make sure that everyone is happy?

"This shouldn't have happened!" I say and receive a dead look from Biyela. Yes he's here, he arrived before anyone else. I don't know how he turned from Mandeni and got here so fast. But this is his beloved son's wife, he'd take a jet to get to her.

"Wait...." Fikile looks around like something just came to her attention.

"Who is with Mom?"

She is paranoid. Ever since she found out about her illness she is not letting anyone breathe. In her mind Mom will just drop and die any minute if people let her out of sight.

"She is resting," Biyela says.

"That's for sure, the question is who is looking after her as she rests?"

I think her paranoia will drive all of us crazy.

"I mean all the house workers are off." She is pushing her phone inside the bag. She zips it and gives Sbu a pat on the shoulders and rushes out.

"That's pretty dramatic," Simtho whispers after her.

A nurse appears holding a stack of documents, as she's about to pass Sbu stops her. It's not a good move, the poor nurse looks scared, he just pushed her chest and glared at her like she owes him something.

"What's happening with my wife? I'm not going to sit here and watch you catwalking up and down doing nothing."

I understand that he is hurting, we're all going through the same, but punishing the poor nurse for it isn't the answer. This is a public hospital, patience is the key.

"Ndodana!"

"No. Two hours ngilindile!"

"Can we just let them do their job?"

"It's not your wife that is dying, that's why it's so easy for you to stand there and talk shit."

Okay, this is the other side of him. Sbusiso doesn't disrespect anyone, and nobody talk back more than twice to Biyela.

"Don't mention my wife, do you hear me?" He charges towards him and pulls the nurse off his grip.

"Do you hear me?" He grabs his neck and pushes him against the wall.

"This is not the time to....."

Punches!!!!!!!!!!

Wtf! Is Biyela crazy? Sbusiso is going through the most, this is not the time for fighting.  
"Baba!" Simtho screams.

"I'm here to support you, I left my sick wife at home. My wife of three decades! Have you seen me throwing tantrums? Grow the fuck up."

He gives him another slap and throws him down. We are all in shock, like what's gonna happen when Mom passes on? When she's gone, gone forever.

"Are you Nozipho's family?"

We didn't even see her, we're still trying to put sense into Biyela's sudden outburst.

"Yes....ummm that's her husband," I say pointing at Sbusiso, he is still wiping the blood off his nose.

"It's urgent," she says looking at him. It must be a private matter, she steps aside and signals for him to do the same.

I should calm down, she is not dead. She would've told all of us, and Sbusiso would've fainted the second she told him.

"No no no!"

We all turn around and look at them.

"What is it?" I ask along Simtho and Zethu.

"There must be something you can do."

"Sbu yini?" I almost scream. My heart is beating off my chest.

The doctor sighs and walks towards us.

"We can only save one of them. It's either we rush Nozipho for a C-section and save her son or we give her the injection that's going to stop the poison before it reaches her heart. Unfortunately the injection won't be good for the baby, he won't survive."

"What poison?" We ask.

"She was bitten by a deadly snake, it was a little bit too late when she got here. As you saw her body was already swollen and turning green."

"How did she bleed then?" I ask.

"She might've fell hard when she fainted."

Holy crap!

"We need to call Dad's doctor, she is an expert," Simtho suggests.

"Let me call her," I take my phone and scroll down for the number, my fingers are shaking. I can't believe this, talk about bad luck.

"We don't have time," -the doctor.

"What must we do Mr Biyela?"

"Save my wife," he says with his jaws clenched.

"And kill your son? An innocent baby Sbu! You might not know it but this is a grown baby. He has eyes, nose and a body. It's your son, your baby boy." Simtho, tears are running down her cheeks. I know this hit home to her, she is pregnant and has bad history with a baby dying before birth. But this is hard, can't she see how torn our brother is.

"What must I do? I can't raise them alone." He is referring to their children. I wish Biyela and Fikile didn't leave, this is beyond Sbu.

"But denying your baby a chance to live? Nozipho would've wanted the same," -Simtho.

He blinks tears away and slides down on the steel chairs and looks at the doctor. He is drained out of all hopes. I've heard people saying they died ten times, today I can see my brother dying a number of times.

"Don't do this," I say turning to Simtho. Right now we don't need emotions, Sbu have to decide and he needs to do it now.

"I'm so sorry Mr Biyela, please sign before we proceed." She passes him a piece of paper. He runs his teary eyes on it and for a few minutes he is just staring at it. "Please!" -the doctor. He puts the pen on the line and closes his eyes and draws his signature.

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\*\*\*\*\* 3 HOURS LATER\*\*\*\*\*

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I knew that I'll find him in the parking area. Nozipho just got out of theatre, they have removed the baby. He didn't survive, there was only 15% chance of his survival. I think it's what Sbusiso held on, he thought a miracle was going to happen and both of them would've survived.

I open the door and sit. He has been crying, there is a picture on his lap. It looks like the ultrasound scan of the baby.

"I know it hurts," I don't know how I'm going to comfort him. I've never gone through something similar to this.

"Nozipho is going to recover, you took a brave decision. I'm proud of you. You've gone through the most in your life but you've always managed to man up and....."

"I connected with him." He just cuts me off, and lets his tears drop. He wipes them immediately and looks at me.

"He connected to me. Whatever he wanted he communicated to me and I craved for it. I know that he would've been his father's son, my son loved me Sena."

He is making me emotional. I take his hand and hold it. I won't forget the pain written in his eyes.

"Let's call Dad," I say.

"I don't want to bother him with my problems."

"He has to fetch the baby," I say.

"Call Aunt Lydia," he says.

"That's....."

"She was there when I lost my mother, she won't mind."

Now he is being dramatic. We didn't even know him then. He thinks that it's funny that we never met our aunt.

"We are your family!"

"Sena are you going to call her or not? I can do this myself, I already killed my son on my own I'm sure I can bury him alone."

"You should've agreed to counselling," I say shaking my head.

"I wish Mom was here, she wouldn't have let this happen. She would've done something."

He is talking about our aunt, he'll never stop calling her Mom.

"Maybe you should go inside, I'm sure Nozipho needs you. She hasn't seen you since she woke up," I say.

He sighs.

"I can't."

What????

"You can't?" I ask.

"I'm not ready to see her without a big tummy."

This is hard, and the way I see it is that he'll never forgive himself.

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\*\*\*\*\* 3 HOURS LATER\*\*\*\*\*  
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Nozipho is not in the right state of mind. Her and Sbusiso haven't spoken, they didn't even share a mere eye contact.

But we are here, it's just me and him and the baby. We are heading home, there are no elders. We are fancy but we're from a traditional family. There should be ihlahla with us, we are not going to bury a puppy.

Simtho stayed behind with Nozipho, the rest of the family is in Mandeni. Nobody knows about the baby, Biyela must be really angry, he hasn't checked on the situation. Aunt Lydia's phone didn't go through and she was the only person I was allowed to call.

"So there'll be no coffin?" I ask.

"What must I do Sena? He was born still, he'll be buried over night."

"I know but he deserves some decency," I say.

"When he is dead Sena? When he can't feel and experience the joy of being Daddy's prince. He will never feel how milk tastes like, the oranges that he liked so much!"

Maybe it will be for the best if I keep quiet.

"I'm sorry," he says. I don't know who he is apologising to, me or the baby.

We arrive home in total silence.

Biyela is outside the garage cleaning his car. He doesn't even look at the car as we park.

I'm not sure we should even enter the yard with a dead baby, with no acknowledgement or whatsoever.

I leave him inside the car and go to Biyela.

"I'm not in the mood Senamile," he says before I even get to him.

"Baba you just left....."

"I got a doctor, he is landing in an hour."

Too late!

"What is your doctor going to do?"

He sighs.

"What do you want me to do? To go there and be disrespected by your brother?"

"The baby is dead, he had no choice. They killed him to save Nozipho," I say.

"Whaaaat?"

"And the baby is here, we are having a funeral."

The brush in his hand drops to the ground. I can see all the emotions reflecting in his eyes. Sadness, regret and pain.

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Chapter 312

Ndukwenhle Biyela  
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“I can't believe you!”

It's so early in the morning and I'm already being shouted at. Even worse, I'm being shouted at in English.

“Ngenzeni vele?” I can't speak English so early, my left brain is still resting. I was looking forward to a peaceful morning, yesterday was crazy. We had to drive here in the blink of an eye and bury Sbusiso's baby.

“It's our anniversary, how can you forget such an important day?”

Sighs!

“Okay Happy Birthday, it must've slipped my mind there is so much happening,” I say with a suppressed yawn.

“It's not my birthday, it's the same day we became lovers!” I can hear how annoyed she is through the tone of her voice.

“Oh yes I remember,” I lie. I don't even know what day it is today, they don't even have calendars in this house.

“I can't believe we've come this far. Guess what?” -her.

I don't have time for guessing. Not only is it too early, I'm also worried about my brother. He is going through the most, I doubt he ate anything yesterday. I can't imagine how Nozipho is in the hospital. How did things turn sour so fast? It was just umemulo celebration a few days ago.

“MaMeya!” I sigh.

“I have something for you, there is a driver outside the gate. Happy anniversary Meeenziwa.”

My face can't refuse a smile spreading to the ears. She has learned so much, soon she will be able to make umqombothi.

“I had a lot in my mind, but I will get you something later. What are you doing there?”

“I'm about to open the shop. When are you coming back to Durban?”

“Not anytime soon, there is a lot happening,” I say.

“I tried calling Nozipho but she didn't pick up,” she says.

“Give her some time,” I say getting off bed. I put my jacket on and end our chat. I don't understand this anniversary thing, I just hope she bought me a bottle of whisky or beer. I do need something to help me start this day.

Biyela is walking through the front door, he is fully dressed and looking fresh. He is always the first one to wake up. Bab'omncane is having a cup of tea on the kitchen table, Mam' Biyela is sitting with him. I still can't believe that she is dying. I don't know how she affords to look at everyone with a smile on her face.

“Whose car is parked outside my house?” -Biyela.

He must be talking about MaMeya's driver.

“My associate,” I say and walk past him.

“Associate?” -Bab' omncane asks with a chuckle.

I ignore him and make my way to the gate. The guy opens the door as soon as he sees me. He opens the back door and takes a small blue cage box.

My anniversary gift.....

“Sir,” he acknowledges me with a head bow and hands the thing to me.

“What is.....” I'm interrupted by a bark coming from it. It nearly drops to the ground, I'm shocked.

“It's a dog Sir, happy anniversary.” He gets in the car with a smile and waves his hand before reversing the car and driving off.

I can't open this thing now, the air is freezing cold. I close the gate and rush inside the house. The dog is still barking inside.

"What is that?" Biyela asks with a frown. His eyes are glued on the blue cage box in my hands.

"It's my gift," I say.

"Your birthday is today?" -Mam' Biyela asks with a pleased smile.

"Does it even matter? What is the dog doing here."

I wish I had answers. I let the dog out of the box. It's not a normal one, it's fluffy and snowy white. I don't know what was MaMeya thinking. Yes I have dogs at home, big vicious dogs. They hunt and chase witches at night, that's why I have them. They stay outside and eat leftovers of whatever we're eating. This is a first class dog, the fancy one that eat selective food and sleep on the bed.

To make matters worse it runs straight to Biyela's legs and jumps on him. Oh Bawo!

"Nduku wenzani umgodoyi endlini?" -Bab' omncane just had to meddle. I'm still trying to make sense of this as well.

"MaMeya sent it to me as a gift," I say trying to pull it off Biyela's expensive jean. I can see the anger rising in his eyes. He is not in the best mood lately, this dog needs to play far away from him.

"Isipho senja?" he asks.

It sounds ridiculous when he puts it that way. I also can't believe MaMeya, isipho senja pho!

My phone is beeping.

-Do you like Zizi? - her text.

-Zizi??? -my text back.

-I wanted her to have a Zulu name, I don't even know what it means- her text.

"Eyyy fuseg maarn!" someone screams.

This dog is here to cause troubles. What now!

It's Fikile, she is making her way to the table. She kicks the dog off her legs with a look on her face. Poor dog, now it looks confused and scared.

"That's Nduku's gift, don't kick it," Mam' Biyela says and throws a look that is accompanied by a smile to me. Why can't everyone be like her? Understanding and nice.

"Isipho senja?" She frowns and then sighs like she just remembered something.

"Dating white people!"

She makes her way to the fridge and takes out the milk.

"Where are you going to keep this thing?" Biyela asks.

"Her name is Zizi," I tell him.

He shakes his head and leaves. He raised a valid question, where am I going to keep it. It won't survive in Inkandla, I can't take it to Sbusiso's house either.

"Who is Zizi?" Aunt Lydia is walking in.

"Is Sbusiso up?" Mam' Biyela asks.

"No, he is resting," -Aunt Lydia.

"Well he needs to wake up and go to his wife in hospital."

Aunt Lydia stops and looks at her with her lip curled up.

"He just lost a baby, let him sleep," she says.

"Simtholile has been in the hospital since yesterday and it's not her job to look after Nozipho. Tell Sbusiso to wake up before I go there and wake him up myself, nawu umhlolo!"

"They're both hurting, let him deal with this on his own," Aunt Lydia begs. I know that he has a soft spot for Sbusiso, he was raised like an egg but Mam' Biyela is right. He can't

ignore his wife, not after what happened. They need to talk, Nozipho needs her husband by her side not the sister-in-law.

"No! He is waking up and going to check on his wife," Mam' Biyela puts her food down.

"Nontombi don't involve yourself in this, your husband said don't stress," Aunt Lydia says with a sigh.

"This is my family, I can't just....." The dog bites her foot as it drags the sleeper off. She screams and then laughs when she realises that it's a dog.

"Zizi, geez!"

She shakes her head and picks her mug and sips the tea.

"Zizi???" Aunt Lydia looks shocked.

"The name of Nduku's new dog," -Fikile says rolling her eyes.

Aunt Lydia turns and glares at me. What have I done? The last thing I need is to argue with this crazy aunt.

"Don't test me. How dare you name a dog after my great-grandmother!"

Hheh Jesus!

"Don't test me too. How the hell was I supposed to know your great-grandmother's name? And I'm not even the one who named the dog," I say.

"Deformation of character! I'm going to sue you and that white girlfriend of yours. You called my great-grandmother a dog, how dare you!"

Fikile can't stop herself from laughing as Aunt Lydia storms out of the kitchen. When did I call her great-grandmother a dog? She is the great-grandmother of drama.

"Is she really going to sue us?" I ask Fikile.

"Deformation of the ghost's character? Get out of here."

I can't do this! This dog is going back to where it came from. She will have to forgive me, I can take any gift but not a dog. I'm not white, if it can't hunt then it's no use to me.

"Shouldn't you be with Skhumbuzo?" -Mam' Biyela. Now she is on Fikile's case.

"Ma we talked about this." Fikile sighs.

Mam' Biyela chuckles and puts her cup inside the sink. She has lost weight but she is not allowing this to put her down. And it's one of the things driving Biyela crazy, he only wants her to sit on bed all day. Sbusiso on the other hand is not speaking to him. There is no peace in this family.

"Let me go check on my step-son, he lost a baby last night. Unlike some stepmothers, some of us treat and care about our husband's children and want to make sure that they're comforted in their time of need," she says with her eyes scanning Fikile from head to toe, then leaves.

Wow! That must've hit the nerve. Anyway I need to find Zizi and put her back in her cage, she has a long journey ahead of her.

"I'm here for her. Is that wrong?"

She is staring at me. What am I supposed to say? She already decided not to go support her man and his children.

"I don't know, please show me how to put this dog back in this thing."

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Chapter 313  
Senamile Madlala

Fikile and her kids are heading back to Inkandla. She had a talk with Mom, I don't know how she convinced her to finally go to Skhumbuzo's home.

"Guys please call me if anything...if you need something," she says dragging her bags down the passage.

"I'm sure we won't need you," I say.

She rolls her eyes at me and looks at Mom. She has to nod in agreement because in Fikile's head we can't function without her.

"Gogo are you staying behind?" Kuhle asks.

Did he think.....? Gosh, this kid.

"I will come for the funeral," Mom says.

"What? I'm not going either." He folds his arms and snaps his brows together.

Fikile sighs and stands mindlessly looking at Mom.

"Come on Kuhle, that's your other granny, you have to go," I say.

"No." He grabs his Spiderman backpack and races back to the stairway.

Honestly, I don't know how Fikile is going to manage this child if anything happens to our mother. Kuhle is not bonding with her the way that Simile has. Maybe the age has some effect, what a difficult child!

Mom convinces them to go and leave him behind. He will throw tantrums and make his 100 demands, and Fikile will be too busy to look after him.

"When are you gonna leave?" She is looking at me.

"To where?" I ask.

"To the Nkosis. You always do the same for others, but none of you have gone nor checked up on Skhumbuzo."

That's not entirely true. Nobody went to Lwazi's brother's funeral either. Though the checking part maybe true, I don't think any of us is that close to Skhumbuzo. And comforting a man is an unknown skill.

"I will talk to Lwazi." That's all I say. I don't know if he'll be able to go to Inkandla before the funeral given his busy schedule.

"Sbusiso can't go, so Nduku will have to go," she says.

"Nduku?" I choke on the drink as I crack into laughter.

Biyela walks in. He kisses his wife's cheek and sits beside her. He is clingy, Jesus!

"Is Sbusiso ready to fetch Nozipho?" Mom asks.

"I don't know, he is not talking to me," he says.

Speak of the devil! He looks ready, dressed in a red sweater, red stretchpant and red sneakers. There is an attitude written all over his face.

"What's up?" I ask.

He dismisses me with one look and stares at Biyela. I hold my breath because I can sense another fight brewing.

"I went to the bush, right?" he asks.

Biyela remains silent.

"The snake should've bitten me, not her. Tell me Baba, how did that happen?"

"Do I look like the snake mind-reader to you?" -Biyela.

Jeez! He should calm down, this isn't the right time to snap at Sbusiso. His wife finds his hand and squeezes it with a narrowed eye.



"I don't know." He emphasises with a shrug. Sbusiso has thrown enough accusations at him, but it's only emotions playing with him.

"When are you planning to do my mother's ceremony? Didn't you and your brothers do ceremonies for every late Biyela?"

He is not bringing this up again!

"Sbu," I call.

He ignores me and continues staring at Biyela like he had a hand in our aunt's death.

"No Sena. Your father still hates my mother for what Khoza did. No, in fact, for what my father did. The one who left the money that raised me up."

This time Mom's hand lets go of Biyela's hand. She furiously points her finger at Sbusiso.

"He may have left you money but he killed your grandfather. Don't ever bring his name in this house again."

Sbusiso lifts his eyes up to her, rage is pumping from them.

"Mah I don't want to make you angry. But you won't speak ill of him. How many people don't have grandfathers out there because of your husband? What makes you think that my grandfather had a right to life and all these people that your lovely husband kills everyday don't have the same right?"

I'm about to call him out. The last time I talked this way to Biyela I ended up drowning in a pool.

Oh, better me than him. He has a gun pointed at his temple.

My state of shock doesn't last long as I remember that the kids are in the play room, not far away from the living room we are in.

"Baba, no!" I scream and jump off the couch.

"Let him shoot me. He has shot so many sons, why wouldn't he shoot his own? Just to feel what other fathers feel out there," Sbusiso says staring right at him.

"You don't take your words back in 5 count I'm gonna blow your brains," -Biyela.

"Muzi take the gun off my son!" Mom says.

I thought she was on her husband's time.

"5....4....3,"

Fuck!

"Say you're sorry damnit!" I throw a glass at him. I would've slapped him but I'm not the one to step into a danger zone.

"2....."

I close my eyes. I don't know if he can really blow his son's brain off but I know he's capable of shooting him and I don't want to witness that.

"1...."

"Sbusiso!" I scream and open my eyes.

He is still standing, thank God. I turn my eyes to look at Biyela, he is holding my mother on his knee, the gun is on the floor.

"Go start the car you son of a bitch!" Biyela yells at Sbusiso. It takes him a second to record what is being said.

"Ma! No, no, no!" He runs towards them with his eyes popped out.

Biyela kicks him.

"The car, motherfucker!"

"Shut the fuck up and do the CPR," Sbusiso yells back and forces his way back to them.

Only when he does chest compressions my senses crawl back. My mother fainted! I rush to the kitchen and grab a bottle of water.

"If she doesn't wake up I'm gonna kill you with my bare hands," -Biyela.

"If she doesn't wake up I'm gonna cremate you and cast your ashes in the sea," -Sbusiso.

Instead of splashing water on my mother's face I splash it on both of them. What the fuck are they doing? This is not the time for their stupid fights.

"And I'm gonna slice your balls, both of you," I say.

Mom opens her eyes and shoots a look at me. The murdering one she always gave us as kids.

"You're awake?" I ask overwhelmed with excitement.

"If you all don't stop this nonsense I'm gonna faint for real this time and die."

This woman!

"You didn't faint?" Biyela asks shocked.

"Ma!" Sbusiso exclaims.

You know what, I give up on this family.

Zethu walks in and removes the earphones.

"What is this?" she asks and steps over Sbusiso's legs making her way to the TV stand.

Mom dusts herself up and takes the gun off the floor. Biyela's eyes pop out.

"We need to wear bulletproofs in this house, we don't know who might shoot who," she says, obviously more angry at Biyela than Sbusiso.

"I'm Tyson's fiance, obviously nobody can touch me," Zethu says. She doesn't see the gun and is clearly undermining this whole situation.

"You're still here?" Mom asks Sbusiso with her eyebrow raised.

He sighs and gets up with his sweater wet.

I'm packing my bags and leaving this place as soon as possible. Now I realise that I love and enjoy being with my little family.

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Fikile Biyela

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I have arrived in Inkandla, although I'm disappointed that Kuhle refused to come I'm glad that Simile came. And I feel ashamed of myself, I haven't given Skhumbuzo enough support.

Nkanyezi is the first one to see us. I don't think he understands what's going on, or should I say care. He is smiling and giving us big hugs.

"Where is your father?" I ask him.

"I don't know, he left in his car."

"Okay, call Aunt Lungile for me," I say.

He runs off and disappears in one of the houses. I let myself in Skhumbuzo's rondavel.

The heavy silence inside reminds me that I'm in a deceased woman's home, I cringe and pull myself together when I realise that Simile is staring at me.

"Are you scared?" he asks.

"No. I just... I've never been here when MaMvelase is not."

He walks past me and puts the bags on top of the bed.

"And Anga too. You haven't been here since you buried him," he says.

I let out a sigh. He is right, I don't even know how he read me.

"Yes, it's scary how things keep happening," I say.

"Maybe Bab' Skhu should seek from witches."

Witches? I crack out and laugh.

"Maybe he will," I say shrugging my shoulders.

He leaves to look for Sthelo. I sink on bed, my mind is just occupied with too many thoughts. Skhumbuzo wanted a wedding, he was ready for umembeso and now this! I

also want to have a wedding while my mother is still alive, but is he going to be able to break his mourning traditions for it?

Nqubeko walks in and greets me. Despite being a man of few words by nature I can see that he is not himself.

"How are you?" he asks.

"I should be asking you," I say.

"I'm the bad guy, as usual."

"I heard what about Nceba, he is just hurting."

He shakes his head and steps towards the window and leans with his head facing down.

"You know I remember something....."

I look at him even though I can't see his face.

"What?" I ask.

"Just one night from my childhood. I shared a bed with Ma, and something weird happened." He has a frown on his face like he is still processing it.

"Oh," I don't want to push him.

"My uncle came that night....." he doesn't go on. He stares at an empty space until the silence is disturbed by Lungile walking in.

"It's great that you're here, we need tea to the uncles," -Lungile.

Amen!

"Later Nqubeko." I doubt he hears me, he is still silently staring into space.

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3 Hours Later

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Finally I'm going to bed. I swear some of these neighbours come to eat. I don't know how many times I've made tea and food for them.

And this man is not back at this time! I try his phone one last time, I hear it ringing as I turn the door handle. Well he is back but he is not inside the house.

I didn't dish for him, he knows his way to the kitchen. I send Simile a text and freshen up. When I come back from the bathroom that is miles away from the yard I find him sitting on bed.

"Finally you're home." I throw what I had in my hands and embrace him in a big hug.

"How are you?" I look at him in the eyes for the first time since his mother passed on and I see a dead man. He looks like someone who haven't eaten in months. The cheekbones are poking out, he has turned more dark.

"Skhumbuzo!" I scream and hold my mouth before I break the roof with my loud voice.

"I'm glad you came," he says in a dry voice.

"You look...." Maybe I shouldn't say this, I don't know what he is dealing with.

"How are things?" I ask.

"I don't know. I keep slaughtering goats and I don't know if things are going to be okay. I don't even know who I am anymore."

"Slaughtering goats?" I ask.

"The blood, it's too much."

That woman! She talked about this and I thought she was bluffing.

"You think that Nqubeko did it?" I ask.

He stares at me, through his hollow eyes I can see his broken soul.

"No, he didn't." He shakes his head.

Why is he so sure? That look in his eyes, the empty soul I see in it.

“Was it you?” I ask.  
Silence.

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## Chapter 314

Fikile Biyela

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His silence has answered me, but I want to hear it coming from his mouth. I want to hear him confess that yes he killed his own mother and I want him to look at me in the eyes and tell me why he did it. I would've understood if it was Nceba, he had every reason to want his mother gone. I wouldn't be surprised if it was Nqubeko either, taking a life is a norm to him.

But Skhumbuzo! My man is not a cold hearted person and his mother loved him. He was the perfect son in her eyes.

“Are you going to answer me?” I ask.

He stands up and walks to the door. I yell out his name, he mustn't dare walk out on me. He shut the door and looks back at me hopelessly.

“You killed your own mother?” I ask louder than I intended.

“Fikile,” he holds my hand and pulls me so hard that I slam on his chest. He embraces me tightly, I almost feel my ribs breaking.

“Don't leave me,” he says.

I haven't thought about leaving him. Whatever confession he will make I won't leave him. My feelings are deep that even if I was to find out that he is a criminal I'd stay.

“I won't,” I say.

He lets go and stares at me with disbelief.

“Fikile I killed a woman. Not just any woman, my own mother!” he says in a low whisper like he's still trying to come to terms with the new reality as well.

“But why Skhumbo? Why did you do it?” I ask.

“I wasn't thinking straight. I did it for Nceba, and for you and my kids,” he says.

Anything was possible with that woman but I find it hard to believe that she would've hurt his kids. She was their caregiver and she looked after them so well.

“Did she do something to your kids?” I ask.

“That night when you came home drunk you told me that she discriminated Simile and Kuhle. I already failed Nceba, I didn't want her to put them through the same thing. Everything just flooded in my head, I lost control over my emotions and drove to Lungile's flat and took her.”

Holy crap!

“Skhumbuzo!” I exclaim in shock.

"You didn't do anything wrong, you were right to tell me. I could've reacted differently, I don't know what happened to me that I was able to run over my own mother with a car repeatedly."

"Yes you could've reacted differently. How are you going to sort this out? Nqubeko can't be blamed for something that he didn't do," I say.

"I feel bad for him. I don't even know where to start. Who is going to look after this home? It's like after this we won't have a home anymore. I can't even look at my children in the eyes. Now I have to move them to Durban to start a new life. The life I didn't want them to live."

My kids are also moving to Durban, I don't know if they'll be able to adjust. Now we're going to live with five boys, prepare them for school and all. This life is moving too fast, his brothers are also living with us.

"I'm a murderer Fikile. I'm what I told Nqubeko not to be," he says.

"Don't blame yourself too much, your mother was not a saint," I say.

My words seem to go in vain. He buries his face, and for a moment I thought he was crying. When he looks at me again he is broken than before.

"Babe I'm not okay," he says.

I kiss his chest and look at his poor eyes with pity. He is going through the most.

"I know. When the time is right you'll forgive yourself," I say.

"I'm not okay physically. I had another heart attack this past week."

Heart attacks? That's extreme.

"Really?" I ask.

"I felt it, my heart pounding fast and running out of breath. But I recovered, it wasn't bad as the last one," he says.

"I'm sure it was a panic attack. But don't worry, I'm here now I will take care of you and we'll get through this."

"So I was not sick?" There is some excitement mixed with hope in his voice.

"You just need counselling and someone to be there for you. I'm sorry I deserted you when you needed me the most."

He smiles for the first time. I reach up and kiss his dry lips. He still smells like the Skhumbuzo I know despite the change in his looks. He is the same man I fell in love with, the mistakes he has committed won't change that.

"I miss you Ndlangamandla." I pull him and deepen the kiss. His hands are caressing my back but he is not in it wholeheartedly.

"Sthandwa sami....." He slowly pushes my arms off and lets out a guilty chuckle.

"We can't be intimate, I'm mourning remember."

Urgh! I forget that I'm dating a 70 year old grandpa.

"It's called sex therapy. You think I'm going to go three months of your mourning period without sex?"

"Come on, you know these things and it won't be three months, just a few weeks."

Weeks! I've already gone two weeks without some. It's not like his mother was a church-going, innocent woman. And she is not going to heaven anyway.

"That means I need to get a dildo," I say.

"You wouldn't dare!" He squeezes my arm and narrows his eyes.

I roll my eyes and sit on bed. Of course I won't buy a dildo, however I do need an orgasm.

"Are you angry?" he asks and sits next to me with his arm wrapped over my shoulder. He takes my silence as a yes and tickles me.

He is so old fashioned! I don't have the strength to giggle like a 6 year old.

“Stop you're going to make me vomit.” I punch his hands until he stops.  
He lies on the pillow and pulls me to sleep on his chest. I didn't realise how much I missed this. We haven't spent enough time since he came back from the hospital.  
“When did you last have your periods?” he asks.  
Phewww! I've been dodging this question from my sisters.  
“Why are you asking me this?” I ask.  
“You're pregnant with our baby girl.” His hand runs down to my stomach.  
I just sigh loudly. Deep down in my heart I know that I'm pregnant, I've known for weeks. I haven't embraced the idea, there's so much that is happening and I'm not even sure we're ready to be parents again.  
“We already have five grown kids that we're going to live with for the first time. A sixth one without my mother's help! I'm not sure how I'm going to manage,” I say.  
“I'm here for you,” he says.  
“Aren't you always there for everyone?” I tease but it comes out a bit naked.  
“That's what my destiny entails.” He shrugs his shoulders.  
“I'm just happy that I met you, even though I complicated your life.”  
He is damn right. My life is too complicated, I thought he was a simple rural man when I first met him. But you know what, even if I had the chance to go back I'd do it all over again.  
“So Skhumbuzo Nkosi will you make me the happiest woman on the planet.....” I kiss his lips.  
The frown on his face.  
“Will you fuck me?”  
He breaks into a loud laughter. I bet people outside are wondering what is going on. I don't want to be a makoti who cracks jokes while her mother-in-law is dead.  
“Stop laughing. Yes or no?”  
“No!”  
He is still laughing.  
“I'm the woman who is carrying your child, the one who cooks for you and suck your dick at night,” I say.  
“I'm still in a dark cloud MaBiyela, please understand.”  
Sighs!  
“How much is one round? I'll pay if I have to,” I say.  
“I'm not your prostitute,” he says and breaks into another laugh. He is no longer in the state I found him in forty minutes ago. His mood has lighten up.  
“It's called a gigolo,” I say.  
“Like there are men who get paid for sleeping with women and they're called gigolos?”  
He sounds so shocked that I wonder which part of the planet he's been living in all along.  
“Yes,” I say.  
He looks thoughtful for a moment.  
“I spent 7 years studying whereas I could've became a gigolo.”  
Really now? That thing between his legs belongs to me, unless if someone have a death wish.

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Chapter 315

Zanda Dlamini

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He refused to go with Lwazi and Don to check on Skhumbuzo. I didn't expect him to go but I still think his reaction to it was too cold. Skhumbuzo hasn't done anything wrong to him, and he needs support more than ever.

"I'm going to the office." He walks in and takes his cellphone from the charger. He is dressed in his casual wear and curved cap.

"Why?" I ask.

"I need a few things so that I can be able to do some work here," he says.

I don't believe this!

"It's December, you should be spending this time with your family not doing office chores."

He pulls me and gives me a light peck. He is going regardless of my concerns. With the kids gone I thought we'd spend this weekend together.

"Don't cook." He is trying to soften me up. It won't work because I'm craving samp today, I don't care about his takeouts.

"I want to be with you," I say.

He smiles and kisses my forehead.

"You read too many books with Fikile. I have to make money for us babe, we can't spend the whole day staring at each other."

"Why not?" I frown.

"I want us to live a comfortable life and also have a guaranteed future."

I sigh and let go of his hands. He kisses me one more time and grabs his car keys and leaves.

I sit on the couch miserably. The Biyela sisters won't be here this festive season, now I realise how less sociable I am. I don't even know the lady nextdoor.

How is it going? -I text Ziphe.

I'm slowly becoming a keyboard junkie.

Good. Have you heard from Nqubeko? -Her text.

Was I supposed to hear from him? I've cut all ties with that man and changed my number.

He is missing and it's his mother's funeral tomorrow -Another text.

Nqubeko is missing again? I'm on my feet with my hands sweating. The last time he went missing they had a funeral for him.

I call Fikile. I know how she is going to take it but right now I don't care about that. I just want to know what's going on.

"Hey Zanda," she picks up.

"I just heard that Nqubeko is missing."

I hear her taking a deep sigh and wonder how the situation is. How is Skhumbuzo coping with everything.

"Things are out of hand Zanda, and I'm scared he might hurt himself," she says. My heart skips a beat when I hear the words 'hurt himself'. I don't want him to get hurt. Yes he can't have me but I still want him to be okay.

"What happened?" I ask.

"He is remembering some things, and they had a fight with Nceba," she says.

"Fight about what?" I don't understand. Their mother is lying in the mortuary and they're fighting! This doesn't sound like the Nceba I know.

"Look I have to go, Lungile needs me," she says and drops the call.

"Fuck!" I curse under my breath and accidentally bang my fist on the couch.

Where is this person? He needs to be home and bury his mother. I don't know him as an emotional person, I also don't know Nceba as the fighting type. Skhumbuzo needs him to be home, he needs his help. Maybe he should've thought about him for once, he just came out of the hospital all this is too much for him.

I send Mandla a short text letting him know that I'm going somewhere. He doesn't respond, this works in my favour because if he asked where I'm going I wouldn't have come up with a good answer. I'm not sure where I'm going either, I guess I'm just searching. And if my instincts are wrong I will come back home and try to forget about it.

I can't get used to this house's loneliness. It's just high walls with no life. The silence around the yard is unsettling.

The windows are opened so I know that my instincts were right. He is here, but the energy I had driving here has been replaced by fear. I don't know the state he is in. Maybe he has already hurt himself.

"Nqubeko," I call softly as I step on the soft rug. I don't close the door completely, I leave a space enough for my body should I need a reason to run out.

The kitchen doesn't look like it has been disturbed in ages. I stand for a moment contemplating where I should go first. The bedroom or that empty room with weird buckets? Maybe I should start in that room, I'm getting uncomfortable with the thought of entering his bedroom.

"Nqubeko," I call outside the door.

I'm scared of turning the door handle. What if he is hanging on the ceiling? What will I tell the police? And how the hell will I explain myself to Mandla?

"Nqubeko," I call louder, hoping that he'll open the door in one piece.

"Zanda," - the voice comes behind me.

I turn around with my eyes popping out.

"You're okay!" I throw myself to him and release a long held breath on his chest. He is okay!

"Zanda." He lifts my head up and looks at me like he's seeing me for the first time.

"I came to look for you, Ziphe told me that you are missing."

He doesn't say anything. I came here to convince him to go back home but now my throat has dried up I don't know where to start.

"Are you...ummm...are you okay?" I ask.

"Yes I'm okay," he says. When I look at his eyes they're saying the complete opposite.

"When are you going back home?" I ask.

"I don't have a home," he says in a low painful voice.

He still has a home, it's his emotions talking. Now I know whatever fight they had was deep.



"What happened?" I ask even though I know that he might not be comfortable telling me.

"The Nkosis abused my mother Zanda. And Nceba, just like his father abused my mother, he has abused me emotionally. I know that I'm not perfect and I'm far from it, but I wouldn't spill my own blood."

Nceba! Sigh.

"He still insists on that?" I ask.

"I'm not good vocally. The only way I can defend myself is physically, and I can't do that to him I'd hurt him badly."

I narrow my eyes at the last part. He takes my hand and leads me to the living room. He is different and surprisingly I'm more comfortable around him.

"Skhumbuzo must be worried about you," I say.

"No, he is not. He is too broken, my disappearance won't bother him any bit. In Nceba's eyes I'm the cause of that as well," he says.

"So you're okay with not burying your own mother?"

He stares at me, I shift uncomfortably and clear my throat.

"No," he says.

"Then go home," I say.

"Nceba believes that I killed our mother. The woman who never mothered him or showed him love until her last moments. Now he believes that if MaMvelase didn't die he was going to have that "Mama" chance."

Now I understand what drives Nceba crazy. But it won't last, he is just grieving and will soon come to his senses.

"He hates me Zanda, at least if I'm not there he will say his goodbye in peace."

But I'm confused by this. Why did MaMvelase put Nqubeko in this position? Why would she lie about something like this? Most people want to leave their homes in peace when they die.

"What about your goodbyes?" I ask.

"I've sacrificed so many things in my life. I've had to let go of things that meant the world to me. I've never had anyone who understands who am I or how I feel. I've never had anyone who cared about my feelings and I've learnt to accept that. There is always gonna be someone who deserves what makes me happy better than me."

I'm holding my breath again. I don't look at his eyes, I'm scared of the emotions I might find there.

"Nceba deserves to have that moment. I've lost far more precious things in life. My memory...."

His fingers slowly pull my hand. I look up and meet his grieving face.

"And you," he says.

My heart might've stopped beating for a second.

"Don't say that. Please let's not talk about us," I beg.

He nods his head and looks away. Something cuts my heart into two pieces. He is hurting once again because of me.

"Please let Fikile know that you're okay, she is worried sick." I gather myself up, I don't trust myself staying here one more minute. I need to leave, I can't stand the pain on his face.

"Goodbye Nqubeko," I say after a deep breath and head to the door. His silence follows me, making me uneasy. My hand stuck on the door handle and I can't turn it without taking a look back.

He is looking at me with tears cascading down his face silently. He doesn't move nor take his eyes off me.

Wow, Zanda!

"I didn't mean to hurt you. I'm sorry that we met and things are this way. I'm sorry about your mother and what Nceba said." I walk back and reach to him and kneel in front of him. He is trying to hold his lower lip with his teeth but it keeps slipping out.

"I'm sorry," I repeat.

He closes his eyes and pushes out all his tears.

"My love for you is not blind. I can see the truth, but the truth doesn't care," he says in a breaking voice. I know that Mandla loves me, I mean he can do anything for my happiness and stability. But I don't think it's anything like this. This love comes with obsession.

"My truth cares," I say.

He is fighting back tears that threaten to troll down again.

"I love you. I really do."

"Nqubeko!" I exhale.

"You don't have to love me....."

Oh really? My eyebrow is lifted.

"Just don't leave me, at least for tonight only."

Hell no!!!

"You know I can't do that," I say.

"I will let you go. And I won't mind holding onto one night for the rest of my life. What I'm sure of is that I'll never stop loving you, even if you're not in my life," he says.

He is willing to let me go? I'm relieved, but at the sametime I'm overwhelmed with grief.

"But I can't stay the night here, Mandla will certainly look for me and find out," I say.

"You're protecting him from getting hurt by hurting me. This is painful Zanda, your love hurts me more than the bullets that have penetrated my skin. Please feel some sympathy for me too. I know that I'm not perfect. I don't deserve you, but my heart wants you."

"Your mother is dead!" I snap. I didn't come here for his love, I wanted him to go back home and bury his mother. I do care about him too.

"So is my hope for happiness. It's dead Zanda." He steps back and bumps onto the couch with his heel. I see him trips over but I don't know how he landed on the floor with his face so fast. I just hear the collusion as his head hits the tiles and my name softly escaping his lips.

God no! He's not moving. I check if he's still breathing before I run out of the house and run back in again.

What am I going to do?

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\*\*\*\*\*In Inkandla\*\*\*\*\*

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"Your mother has arrived. Where is Nqubeko?" -Skhumbuzo's aunt asks. She has a scarf covering her shoulders. All the kids are crowded in one room, they've been instructed not to go out until they're told to do so.

"I don't know where he is," -Skhumbuzo.

“What do you mean? Whose watch are they under? You had a whole day to look for him. Who knows how he is? He might be in danger, he is not allowed to be out of the premises when his mother's corpse comes home.”

Nceba stands up and briefly looks at his brother who is rubbing his knees. He knows that he has to save the day for him, after all Nqubeko left after their fight.

“It's not his fault that Nqubeko is not home,” he says.

“What do you know wena? Get up, let's go.”

They all walk out after her. Their uncle and few other relatives are standing around the coffin.

“Where is Nqubeko?” -one of them asks.

All eyes go to Skhumbuzo.

“I don't know,” he says and mentally prepares himself for whatever they're about to say. Fortunately they let it slide because they can't argue over the coffin.

“People can't see her, she is badly injured. Only you and Nceba can. Those who didn't know her will see her in the pictures.”

Fikile inhales deeply and gives Skhumbuzo a look of faith. Hopefully he knows that she got him. No matter what happened he is still a good man in her eyes.

“Open the coffin,” -they instruct him.

He looks back at Nceba. He is strong but he needs someone next to him.

“Come,” he says.

Instead of coming forward Nceba steps backwards. He doesn't want MaMvelase's lifeless body lying inside the coffin to be the last picture of her in his mind.

“See why you needed Nqubeko,” His uncle pushes him aside and opens the coffin.

Skhumbuzo takes one glance inside and looks at Fikile who is standing several feet away with other women.

“No, don't!” Fikile mouths inaudible, only Skhumbuzo can make out her words. He swallows back tears and steps aside. Nceba stands still, they don't beg him they close the coffin and lay a blanket over it.

The phone rings, Fikile steps away from the crowd and answers.

“Zanda,” she says in a low voice.

“He tripped and fainted Fikile. I don't know what to do.” Zanda's voice is shaking, you can tell that she's pacing and sweating where she is.

“Who? Mandla?” Fikile asks confused.

“Nqubeko, I'm in his house.”

Fikile curses as relief washes all over her. If something had happened to him it would've killed Skhumbuzo.

“They will fetch him right now,” she says.

“Fikile this person is not moving, he needs the hospital!”

“That's because he is stupid. His mother is here, he has no business getting cosy with another man's woman.”

“What if he dies here?” Zanda is almost breaking at Fikile's breathlessness.

“He won't, just sprinkle cold water on his face. I will call someone who will get him here. Go home, I hope you didn't do anything with him.”

“No, of course I didn't,” Zanda stutters.

“Good.” She drops the call and scroll down the contacts. When she reaches the number she was looking for she puts the phone on her ear.

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## Chapter 316

Nozipho Biyela

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They're discharging me today. Simtho has been supporting me from day one, and the communication has been good with the whole family except my husband. He's been forced to come here and check on me. A part of me understands, he is also going through a tough time. But a huge part of me feels like he is failing me. This is not the time for him to let go of my hand.

"Mrs Biyela, your husband has arrived."

I pretend as if I didn't hear the nurse. I'm not ready to see him, to be with him in the same car and go face my children. I'm not ready to answer their questions about the baby.

"Hey," he walks in before I can collect myself. He stands far from me.

"They told me that you're ready to go home," he says. A flame of anger rises, I look away from him and exercise breathing. I don't want to blow up, at least not here.

"I'll take the bags," he says. I watch him walk around me and picking the bags without offering a single hug. I guess he has signed all the necessary documents because the nurse walks in and hands him a small sealed envelope. She smiles at me, I can't even fake a smile back. I follow behind Sbusiso, they injected me but I do feel some pain and I can't walk fast.

When we get to the car I open the back door and hop in. He looks at me with disapproval but doesn't say anything. I have no doubt that the journey is going to be filled with the same silence, I unlock my phone and tug headsets in. We're husband and wife, but right now it's like we're just strangers connected by the same pain.

At times like this I hate the fact that I married into a big family. Quinton sees me first and yells out for Sphiwo to come. Before I know it I have 5 kids talking non-stop in front of me. Each is telling me their story and expecting me to smile.

"Okay kids! Let's give Aunt some space," -Quinton says. I don't know who told him he was older than them.

"You shut up kid! Mom where did the snake go after biting you?" -Sphiwo asks, and before I can answer him Sbusiso has hushed them away. I'm relieved but it only lasts a moment because when I step inside the house the whole Biyela family is staring at us. I hate the pity they're giving me.

"Should I get you anything?" -Mam' Biyela.

"Oh Nozi! Are you alright?" -Sena.

"If you need someone to talk to don't hesitate to call me," -Zethu.

I was dreading this moment. I don't want to be a centre of attention because I'm in pain. I don't want to look in their eyes and remember that I lost a baby.

"She is going to lie down a bit," Sbusiso says. I shoot a look at him. Who told him that? As much as he's right I hate that he is standing up for me when I don't need him to.

"No I don't want to lie down," I snap.

The house grows quiet. I sigh and walk away, heading to the bedroom to lie down. I feel Sbusiso walking behind me and my heart sinks. He also needs to give me space, we're awkward around each other, being in the same bedroom is not a good idea.

I sit, he stands by the door and looks at me. For the first time his eyes are directly on me. We stare at each other, silently asking ourselves what did we do wrong? Haven't we gone through much already?

"Sbu," I exhale. He walks to me, like me calling his name was the permission to get close.

"I didn't want to stop Nozipho, but you demanded me to."

What? So he thinks it was my fault. I don't believe this!

"I shouldn't have stopped." He scratches his face and tucks his head on his hands.

"It wasn't my fault," I say.

"I know....I know...I know!" He gets up on his feet and goes to the window. He is burying his pain with anger.

"When you said that you didn't want another child I didn't listen, but when you demanded that we stop in the bushes for the stupid guavas I listened to you."

"I'm in pain too Sbusiso! Stop being selfish and ask me how I am," I yell.

"Nozipho I'm trying to....."

"You are trying what? You don't know what I'm going through. The only thing I got from this pregnancy is the scar, and nothing else." I can't stop tears from running down. What hurts me more is that he is keeping the unnecessary distance between us.

"I didn't even get my husband's sympathy, ONLY A SCAR SBUSISO!!!"

He walks back to me, and now he wants to play cute and hold my hands.

"Don't touch me! You think the world revolves around you, I lost that baby too. You're still Mommy's boy, the only child that thinks he deserves everything alone. Listen here Vivi's precious boy, you're my husband and you better act like it."

He tries to touch me again, this time I flip and shove him away. Ouch! I should take it easy.

"Get out, I don't want to see your face." I point him to the door and pull the pillow and lean on it. I don't see him walking out, I close my eyes and only hear the door slamming.

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Senamile Madlala

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And now???

"What happened?" -Zethu asks.

I don't think he's going to answer. He grabs his jacket on the chair and leaves.

"Is he crying?" Zethu whispers, but her whisper isn't as soft as she thought.

"Would you shut up Ntombizethu?" Mom shoots a look at her and then looks at Biyela who's reading a newspaper, hardly feeling his surroundings.

"Baba you have to follow him," she says.

He looks up, "Who?"

"Sbusiso, can't you see that something is wrong?"

He is not in good terms with Sbusiso but with my mother's dead look fixed on him like that he has no choice but to stand up and follow out.

"I'm going to check on him too," I say.

"And Nozipho?" -Mom.

Well.....

"Go check on her," I tell Simtho.

I don't stand to listen to what she has to whine about. I run after my brother. He is the only brother we have, I hate to see him in pain. Biyela is not the type of person to be sent for consolation. He'll add salt to the wounds and tell him to lick it off.

"Where are you going?"

Seriously, this is what he asks instead of asking what is wrong!

"I just want some fresh air," Sbusiso says.

"You don't look okay," I say.

"Sena I'm....."

Biyela cuts in, "Go get fresh air by your wife's side."

This old man!

"Nozipho doesn't want me near her," Sbusiso says.

"Obviously, who'd wants you near? Go hug that woman and listen to her pain."

"And who'll listen to my pain, because my father won't?" He leaves us and walks back inside the house.

Maybe Biyela is being too hard on him.

"You're taking this 'man' thing way too far," I tell him.

"And you'd know that very well because you're Mr Madlala," he says and walks back inside leaving me panting with anger. He can't take a simple advice. I'm not a man, I hate people who judge my marriage without living a single day in my shoes.

"And then? What made y'all angry outside?" Mom asks.

"Your husband," I say.

We are better scattered around Durban in our houses. I don't even know how we once lived together in peace.

She looks at Biyela and smiles. She thinks what he does is cute, SMH.

"Is the food ready?"

Here comes another one! She shuts herself in her room and sext her husband, then comes here thinking we're her maids.

"Go check in the kitchen Ziphelele," Mom says.

"Mmmm," she grunts and goes towards the lounge where the kids are hyping. Maybe the only good thing about being here is that you don't have to look after your child.

They feed and beat each other away from us. I don't know when did I last hear: Mom Please Scratch My Back.

Ziphe walks back with a frown on her face, Phakade is running after her. Now he remembers that he needs milk from his cow.

"Where are the twins?" she asks.

"Are they not with others?"

"No!" She pushes Phakade off and checks the other rooms. Now we have to listen to Phakade's wail!

"Your cow is coming back," I say picking him up. I still don't know why he hasn't stopped sulking milk, he is already walking and has six teeth.

"Ma!" Ziphe yells as she rushes back to us. She is in panic mode. What makes her think that the kids can get lost in this house?

"Maybe they fell asleep somewhere, you know how weird twins are," Mom says and gets up to help her with the search.

I bet they're sleeping somewhere here.

"Where is the nanny?" Simtho asks.

"She had an early day, she had to rush somewhere. The other twin was here not so long ago playing," I say.

"Really? Are you sure you weren't seeing Phakade?"

I roll my eyes and follow her upstairs. She is calling them out and looking under the cupboards and tables.

I stand outside Sbusiso's room and ask if they're not inside. I don't get any answer so I push the door and let myself in.

Oh.....Are they playing the staring game, whoever blinks first loses!

"Guys have you seen Thapelo's twins?" I ask.

No answer. Great!

I look around and see nothing. I leave before I witness something else.

An hour passes, we have looked everywhere and there are no signs of the twins. Kuhle says they played with them, he didn't see them disappearing. These are babies, they couldn't have left the house on their own.

"Baba!" Now she's crying and shaking.

"They're checking the footage, they'll know if anything fishy happened." His phone rings as he says that. He answers it and stands a few feet away from us. The frown on his face tells me whatever it is bad.

"How did that happen? What is your job if you don't even know that our cameras jammed?"

"What!!!" we all exclaim.

"Baba who took my babies?" Ziphe asks angrily.

"I'm going to find out, go sit down and don't stress."

This is not light. Someone took the babies right inside our house. Who knows if that person is still around here lurking for Quinton?

"How did this happen?" Simtho asks.

"I don't know, we have the tightest security, even entering the gate is not easy," I say.

Ziphe's phone is ringing. She looks at it with tears pouring out and doesn't answer.

"Is it Thapelo? We have to tell him what has happened," Mom says.

"No Ma, I can't," Ziphe refuses.

I raise my eyebrows. Thapelo has the right to know, what if Biyela doesn't find them? What if they're hurt where they are?

"I said I'm going to be a good mother to them. I promised him that I'll look after them.

What am I going to say to him? That somebody took Imogen and Melody in my father's house with everyone watching and all our kids are okay?"

Ziphelele Mokoena

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"Ziphelele!" He calls slowly, with an underlying rage. I know from the look on his face that I'm in deep trouble. Whatever is running in his mind doesn't have my best interest. I feel my eyes burning with tears again. Where are my babies? Who could've taken them inside the house full of people?

"Thapelo." My voice is not loud enough, I can hardly hear it myself. The hatred steaming from his eyes breaks me.

"Where are my kids?" The question cuts like a sword. I know that I gave him a hard time about them. It was hard for me to just accept them, but they're my babies too. Our kids.

"Dad is trying the best to....." I do not finish, he has grabbed my arm and brought me closer to his face. I hear my mother screaming and Zethu cursing close by. He lets me go and steps back. I look behind him and see that Sbusiso is the one who pulled him.

"Ziphelele didn't do anything," Sbusiso says in a firm voice. They once fought over me, I don't want it to happen again.

"You don't know what you're talking about Sbu. She promised to look after them, and now they're missing and all the Biyela ones are here?! I'm not stupid Sbusiso, where are my babies?"

"So you'd feel better if our children went missing too? Yazi you're just one step away from becoming a witch," Sena says. Well right now is not the time to get into an argument with Thapelo.

"Don't!" I tell her and look back at my exploding husband.

"You think that I kidnapped them?" I ask even though I already know the answer to this question, I guess I just want to hear him utter it with his own mouth.

"What I'm thinking does not matter. I want my babies Ziphelele, and I want them now," he says.

"I don't know where they are, but my father is doing his best to find them," I say.

He stares at me. He doesn't believe me one bit.

"I swear." I'm defending myself, a part of me feels like he has the right to accuse me. Like it makes sense why I would become his first suspect. My sisters' children were here too, but whoever it was chose to take only the twins.

Phakade appears out of nowhere. He sees his father and his face brightens up with joy.

He calls him and grabs his leg. That's what he does to people, he loves grabbing legs.

"You and your gangster father will give me my children Ziphelele. I swear on my mother's grave!" He shakes Phakade off his leg and storms out of the house.

Wow! I rush to Phakade and lifts him up.

He is confused and sad, he's never seen his daddy angry at him.

"Really?" -Zethu.

They're all shocked.

"He is not thinking straight." Sbusiso comes into defense. Thapelo is still his friend and he loves him like a brother.

"I'm going to.....get Phakade some food." I say. I just want an excuse to leave the room.

I've been set as an example of the most loved wife, and my marriage is idolized by many.



But nobody knows the hardship and sacrifices I have to make everyday. I can't believe that my son has become the second best in his father's eyes.

I put him on the counter and kiss his forehead. He is my world, I'd choose him over everything.

"Mommy loves you baby, more than anything in this world," I say.

He smiles. All is forgotten and forgiven in his little heart. He is perfect in every way.

"Are you okay?" Mom asks coming behind us.

I wanted to be alone but privacy is a foreign word in this family.

"Yeah." I shrug my shoulders and keep my teary eyes away from her.

"My husband will bring them back," she says.

If it was any other day I would've rolled my eyes at 'my husband'. Lately they're acting like newlyweds, my husband this my wife that.

"I hope so, they mean the world to Thapelo," I say.

She comes closer, I breathe in and wipe my eyes.

"You and Phakade too," she says.

"I'm starting to doubt my marriage. I don't think it's going to last Ma," I say.

"That's nonsense and you know it."

I doubt it's nonsense after he treated Phakade like that, an innocent child!

"I doubt I'm going to stick around for too long. I just want the twins to be found then I'll decide where to from there," I say.

She takes Phakade off the counter and puts him down. He disappears within a second.

"You're emotional right now and I understand. But Thapelo loves you and Phakade.

When Zethu went missing my husband didn't sit back and massage you and your sisters' feet, he went crazy and looked for her."

Sigh! How is this even a comparison?

"Ma we are not talking about 'YOUR' husband here," I say.

"What I'm trying to say is if one of your children is missing all that matters in that moment is finding them in one piece. You shouldn't take this personal at all."

"But this is not the first time." Tears make their way down. All along I thought I was delusional, he told me that I was imagining things and that he loved all of them equally. But he kicked off my son like a puppy!

"And your husband, what's taking him so long? How can someone take the babies in his house? He is the most feared man in this place, I hope he doesn't have a hand in this."

"Whaaaat? Are you mad Ziphelele!" She is on my heel, her voice carries so much anger.

I don't even know what to think right now. Nothing makes sense.

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3 Hours Later

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"He is back," Sena says leaning on the door.

I've been locked in my room with Phakade for the last two hours. Crying, thinking about divorce and arguing myself. How did things escalate so fast? One day I was so happy to come home to my husband, I couldn't wait for us to be family with our son. Next minute there are twins coming out of nowhere and replacing my son.

"Did he find them?" I ask.

"Kind of," she says.

I don't know what she means by that, it'll be better to go to him myself. I give her Phakade and go to Biyela's study room, I know that's where he is.

"Where are they?" I ask as soon as I push the door open.

"Their mother took them, she used the nanny who happened to be her cousin."

What the heck!!!!

"Baba! Don't you do background check on everyone who steps inside this house?"

"I do, but....."

"This bitch! Why did she have to fuckin' kidnap them? She could've sent her taxi driver just like she sent him to drop them off."

I can't believe this!

"Go wash your mouth," Biyela says.

This old man thinks this is a joke! I've been fucked up. I've been taking care of this bitch's babies for months and this is how she thanks me!

"I mean it! You're washing your mouth for accusing me of kidnapping the babies," he says.

Mom is unbelievable! She even said it herself that I was emotional, why did she tell him?

"I'm sorry, I was thinking of all the possibilities," I say.

"Oh so I'm a possibility for kidnapping. Huh, stepmother?" He bangs the desk and the documents scatter around. He is really angry.

"I'm really sorry Menziwa," I say.

"Then go wash your mouth," he says.

He means it. I can't believe he is treating me like a 10 year old.

"That doesn't work, I already said what I....."

He stands up, grabs me and pulls me to the bathroom. I'm already going through the most, I have to talk to Thapelo and.....

"Wash your mouth Ziphelele!" he demands.

He is really getting old. I'm going to be the one to sign him into the old-age home. I hope that day comes soon.

I open the tap and wash my mouth with his hand on my neck.

"Where is your excuse of a husband? Has he bought the cow for tomorrow?"

Okay I'm mad at Thapelo for some reasons and a few minutes ago I was thinking about divorce. But I'm not going to let Biyela call him an excuse of a husband.

"Don't call him that. And what is the cow for?" I say.

"Phakade is turning one," he says.

Oh hell no!

He shakes his head and leaves me with my eyes popping out.

We totally forgot about the ceremony. Tomorrow could've been Phakade's last day, all because Thapelo has put him as the second best. He is no longer the first priority in the house.

The door opens again.

Did he forget something?

"Tell him after the ceremony I want him to apologise with a goat for raising his hand on you inside my house. And I don't want a thin goat," he says.

He leaves me with my mouth hanging open this time. What is going on with him? Since when is being pulled by arm counts as raising a hand.

## Chapter 318

### Fikile Biyela

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Thapelo called me earlier, he said he had no one else to call except me. Apparently my whole family has turned against him, including Ziphelele. I don't know the whole story yet, all I know is that my sister is going to fight custody of the twins. I don't know much about her marriage, it seems to be rocky.

Well, I have my own issues too. Nqubeko and Ncebayenkosi.

They're kept in separate houses, Nceba nearly killed Nqubeko and I had to stop Skhumbuzo from confessing.

Someone clears throat behind me, I turn around and find Simile standing with a plate of food.

"Aunt Lungile says you haven't eaten anything, let's go inside the house so that you can eat."

I frown.

I haven't eaten?

Oh well, things have been hectic. I can't believe I'm being ordered by my son to eat though. He is so matured, I don't want to disappoint him I follow him to the house.

"Thank you," I say and dig the first spoon. It's salty and the rice is overcooked. I cannot eat further than three spoons.

"Are you full already?" he asks.

He is seriously watching me like I'm a small naughty child.

"I don't like it, okay?" I say.

"Whuuuuuuuh! And we say Kuhle is a choosy spoilt brat." He takes the plate and walks out chuckling.

Did he....? Spoilt kid with no respect.

A moment later Nqubeko walks in and stands by the window with his jaws clenched.

"And now?" I ask.

"I'm going to hurt him, I'm tired of defending myself," he says.

I don't know what to say or how to defend Nceba's behavior anymore. I thought by now he would've come to his senses, there's no need for him to fight for MaMvelase.

"Stay calm for your mother's sake," I say.

"I'm tired of sacrificing my feelings for other people's sake. This time I'm putting Nqubeko first, I don't care anymore."

Oh, this is interesting.

"Is it?" I ask.

"Yes, I'm going to start here and then....."

I frown.

"Then I will go to Zanda," he says.

He is fuckin' mad.

"No!" I say.

"I wasn't asking MaBiyela. If you genuinely love my brother you'll not let this get between the two of you. Zanda has to decide who she loves between me and Mandla, and she's going to do it in front of him."

"So you're going to tell Mandla everything?" I ask.

"I'm tired of living like this, like a prisoner of love," he says and gosh he is dead serious.

"You can't destroy her like that, you always say that you love her more life itself," I say.

"Exactly why I'm doing this, I want her to be happy. I can make her happy and I know that we're meant to be. She's just scared of leaving what she's always known for something foreign. But life is about swallowing your fears and making every minute of your life count."

Oh, he is a motivational speaker now? Life is about nywe nywe nywe.

"Have you thought about the kids? Her son and her late sister's?" I ask.

"Bafo took you and your sons, I can do the same," he says.

I crack up and laugh. He thinks that he is a father material! He can't compare himself to Skhumbuzo, he doesn't even have a job.

"And Mandla is going to let you raise his son?" I ask.

He breathes out loud and moves from the window with his hands tucked in the pockets.

"You will have your answer tomorrow morning." He walks out.

After a while there's uprising commotion in the yard. I can hear Skhumbuzo yelling at someone.

It's going down again! Maybe it's a good thing that Kuhle refused to come. I've never seen such a dramatic funeral day.

Nqubeko is holding Nceba's throat. Skhumbuzo is holding a gun behind them. I don't know who is fighting who, everyone looks horn-mad.

"Let him go Nqubeko damnit!" Skhumbuzo shouts.

It kinda looks like a three-some fight. The drama MaMvelase left!

"Ngzokubulala boy!" Nqubeko warns Nceba and throws him on the ground.

I notice that Nceba's nose is bleeding. He moves his arm and takes something.

"Uyinja Nqubeko!" he curses.

I see an object flying towards Nqubeko, everyone is screaming for him to watch out. He ducks and it flies straight to me.

I'm on the ground with my face covered in blood. My face is too hot, I don't know where I got hit but judging by the amount of blood it's not a minor injury.

"You're hitting my woman!" - Skhumbuzo.

I know that sound very well. Lungile is helping me up, I look at Skhumbuzo. He is pointing the gun at Nceba.

"No bafo! Calm down, he didn't mean to hit her. I shouldn't have ducked," Nqubeko says.

"Nceba why are you doing this?" I ask.

"Fikile I didn't mean to....."

"No, why are you causing all this havoc? What are you planning to achieve? Your mother has fought death for weeks, why can't you let her rest in peace?"

"I want justice," he says.

"Justice is you uniting with your brothers, building this family from scratch with love.

Justice is you finally having a warm home. Nqubeko hasn't taken anything from you," I say.

He looks at Nqubeko, they stare at each other. I can see hatred melting in their eyes. My eyes meet Skhumbuzo and I can't read his face.

"I will manage," I tell Lungile before I take off to the house.

I have an open wound on my forehead. MaMvelase really didn't like me, her funeral day ends with me being injured.

"Sthandwa sami,"

He is here holding a dish of water.

"I'm fine, I just need to cover this up and drink some painkillers," I say.

"I'm sorry MaBiyela, this shouldn't have happened. I'm sorry you got caught up in my mess," he says trying to help me.

"I just want things to go back to normal. Have you taken care of the spiritual stuff?" I ask.

He sighs and nods his head.

I know how much he regrets it, but now he has to control the damage. There is no turning back.

"Everything will be fine Mphazima," I say.

"Maybe not, Nqubeko is going after Zanda."

Urgh, that!

"What are we going to do?" I ask.

"Maybe we should let Zanda worry about it. It is her decision after all," he says.

"But I can't let him destroy Mandla's family."

"Sthandwa sami you can't control everything. We have 5 boys to raise, you can't mother everyone. Let people deal with their problems."

This is not going to be easy. I was taught to protect my loved one. Mandla will not survive this one, I just know that he won't.

Nceba knocks, I give Skhumbuzo a look and tell him to come in. The wild Nceba is gone, he looks apologetic and sad.

"What do you want?" Skhumbuzo asks.

"I want to apologise to Fikile. I don't know what got into me, I'm not a violent person and I'd never hit a woman," Nceba says.

"Well fuck....." -Skhumbuzo.

"It's okay Nceba, I know that it was a mistake. But please apologise to Nqubeko as well, you really hurt him with your accusations," I say.

"I have apologized to him and I'd like to apologise to you brother as well, for all the noise and drama," he says.

Skhumbuzo waves him away and cleans the table. Now he is being dramatic.

A different cologne fills the house. Nqubeko walks in dressed in a military bomber and Nike sneakers. He looks like someone who is going to a war. The look on his face is the look of someone ready for stones and bullets.

"I'm leaving," he says.

There is no arguing him, his tone tells that these are his final words.

I know that Skhumbuzo has something to say but he can't say anything because I'm here. He taps his shoulder and gives him a nod.

He looks at me, for a moment he's not blinking or saying anything.

"A true lover will break the rules for the right reasons. He will not conform to the ideals bestowed upon him by society. Instead he will fight for a climate of freedom that allows him to pursue and obtain his heart's true yearning. He will appear incorrect in his upright form, but such perception only through the eyes of those travelling under the hypnotic notion of social paradigms. Do not judge he who is breaking the rules, rather try to understand his motivations. If his intent is pure then his fight is not in vain," he says and bow his head.

I look at Nceba with a frown on my face. Is he William Shakespeare now? Making long love quotes?

Well he is gone. Tomorrow is a few hours away and we'll find out who Zanda loves the most.

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Chapter 319

Zanda Dlamini

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I'm putting Leano to sleep, we just came home from the restaurant. I want to take a shower and go to bed as well.

Where is my phone? I hope I didn't forget it in the car again.

I tiptoe my way out and return downstairs.

Urgh! It's on the kitchen counter.

"Babe when are you.....?"

My eyes meet Nqubeko. Wtf! For a moment I don't think I'm breathing, my heart stops beating as well.

"What are you doing here?" I ask.

Mandla appears behind him. I've never seen him so angry. I wish I can faint right now, but God works his own way I'm still standing with my breath held in the chest.

"Get out of my house!" -Mandla.

I don't even want to know how Nqubeko got here. He should be in Inkandla, he just buried his mother.

His eyes stay on me. His dress code speaks war. Lord! My family is about to fall apart.

"Not without her, she loves me and you know that Manzini. I'm not trying to disregard what you've done for her, but you have to let her go," he says.

He is an idiot! The guts he has coming in his house and disrespects him like this.

"Nqubeko please leave," I say firmly but my eyes are begging him. This is my home. The place I felt warm and loved after years of slavery. Mandla could've helped me from a distance. He could've found me a job and helped me with rent for the first few months. But no, he took me in and gave me a home. He is the first man that spent months in the house with me and not even once did he take advantage of my body. His friends didn't approve of him taking a stranger in but he trusted me with his property. He healed me, mended me and built me.

"Must I leave because you don't have feelings for me or must I leave because you're scared of....."

He glances back at Mandla and lifts up his eyebrow.

"Because you're scared of hurting him?"

"Don't ask me questions, LEAVE!!!" I say.

He chuckles, and I can see the devil in his eyes. What have I got myself into? He's not going to leave.

"Zanda what is going on? Is there anything I should know?"

My stomach turns into a knot. Mandla doesn't deserve this.

"We love each other. I have tried to convince her to tell you the truth but I guess she doesn't have the guts and of course she cares about you," -Nqubeko.

"I asked Zanda, not you," Mandla says.

Fuck! I'm in deep shit.

"Nothing is going on Mandla," I say.

"Then why is he here?" he asks.

I wish I knew the answer.

"I want to go to bed." I turn around and walk away. I just want to disappear before I see the pain in Mandla's eyes. I won't be able to handle it. I know how he was after Phumla cheated on him. I don't want him to go in that place again.

He grabs me and pulls me back. Both him and Nqubeko stand in front of me.

"You love the guy who wanted to kill my son?" he asks pointing at Nqubeko.

It's a bit of an insult that he is here in this house whereas he was the main suspect for the shooting.

"I didn't try to kill your son. Zanda you know me by now, I'm not crazy," he cuts in.

Maybe he is drunk, the Nqubeko I know doesn't talk this much.

"You've been seeing him behind my back?" Mandla asks calmly but his eyes are emitting fire.

"No, it was only once and I was trying to tell him to stay away from me," I say.

Nqubeko stares at me with a smile on his face.

"But that didn't happen, love is not that simple," he says.

I wish he can shut up for once. All along I thought he was shy and quiet.

"Are you sleeping with this guy Zanda?" -Mandla.

"What? No!"

Nqubeko's eyes widen.

Did he think that I was going to confess to this madness?

"You are scared of him, aren't you?" - Nqubeko.

"Fuck off!" I say.

The smile and pride that was on his face disappears. Now he realises that I might not leave with him as he hoped.

"Zanda what is going on?" Mandla asks again. This time he is plainly hurting. His voice is shattering.

"Is he telling the truth?" he asks.

"No!" -Me.

"Yes." -Nqubeko.

Really now? He is not even giving us a chance to talk.

"Do I look like a fool to you guys?" Mandla asks.

Nqubeko shrugs his shoulders, he doesn't care about anyone's feelings but his only.

"He doesn't want to leave me alone," I say.

"That's because I love you Zanda. I don't stoop this low but you leave me no choice. I'm tired of sacrificing my feelings for him. This has dragged long enough, you need to make a decision right now. Are you in love with me or him?"

"You are really crazy Nqubeko," I say.

"Just answer him damnit!" Mandla roars.

"I love you and you know that," I tell him.

"Really? Then tell me that you don't love me. I swear I will leave, look at me in the eyes and tell me that you don't have any feelings for me," -Nqubeko.

Well that's easy. I look at him. He is staring at me. He doesn't look like someone who is breathing. There is so much pain waiting to break in his eyes.

"I'll leave this place and never bother you again. Don't worry about hurting me, I've been hurt more than a thousand times,"

Oh, really! I lift my eyebrow at him.

"Don't you love me?" he asks.

"No I don't. Who do you think you are? I have a man that I love with all my heart. I allowed you to stalk me and didn't tell him because I was scared of hurting him by something so useless. I protect people that I love, wena go to hell. And I'm getting a protection order after this, you don't respect me at all."

"Zanda!"

Didn't he say he will leave me alone and handle it like a pro?

"Babe call the security," I say.

"I love you Zanda, please follow your heart I know that you feel the same way too."

"Leave Nqubeko!"

"Please, we can raise the boys together. I'd do anything just to be with...."

A fist lands on his cheek. He groans and looks at Mandla shocked.

"You may have fucked my woman but you're not coming anywhere near my son!" He punches him again and again. Nqubeko does nothing except shielding himself.

"Babe please stop this," I cry.

He doesn't hear me, he keeps punching Nqubeko and pushing him to the wall.

"What do you want from me? Why are you destroying my family?" he asks.

"I'm not going to fight you Mandla, I respect Zanda," -Nqubeko.

He respects me? Does he even know the definition of the word? We wouldn't be here if he had any respect for me.

"I'm going to kill you two. Ningijwayela kabi!" Mandla pushes Nqubeko to the wall and grabs me and pushes me to him. He locks the door and runs up the stairs.

"We need to leave, now!" Nqubeko says pulling me towards the balcony. Mandla didn't lock the balcony doors, I don't know what he is fetching upstairs but I don't want to leave.

"I'm not going anywhere," I say.

"He's going to shoot you," he says.

"That's what you wanted, isn't?"

He holds my face and looks at me in the eyes. He is scared for me.

"Please Zanda let's go, your son still needs you. This person is still angry, he will hurt you," he says.

I don't know why he keeps referring to me only as if Mandla is going to spare him.

Maybe he is wearing a bullet proof or he is untouchable.

"I don't want to kill him, but trust me if he comes back and hurt you I'm going to kill him." Darkness covers his face. A cold shiver runs down my spine. I know that he will kill Mandla if he tries to hurt me. And I don't know what's going on in Mandla's head, I just don't want anyone to get hurt.

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NQUBEKO NKOSI

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Things didn't go my way. Even though I have her next to me her heart is not here. She refuses to speak to me and I understand her anger.



I didn't have everything figured out, all I knew is that I had to fetch the woman I love. I'm stuck in the kitchen with no idea of what to make for her to eat. I've never done this before.

I can't ask Fikile, I'm not her favourite person after this. Nceba is my only option, he co-habited with Thembeke for years surely he knows everything about women.

He advises me to order food online. He is so stupid and clever. Why didn't I think of that? He tells me to run a bath for her as well and not watch men channels.

She doesn't argue with me when I tell her that I've prepared a bath for her. She disappears in the bathroom without taking a single glance at me.

I change the bedsheet and pillows. I would've done anything to get her on my bed again.

I dreamed about this day everyday, but it's here and I can't even celebrate. In the morning she might go back to Mandla. She chose him over me, I've never seen her so hateful towards me.

She comes back wearing the T-shirt I left for her. My lotions smell so good on her. I want to smile but her teary eyes strike another fear in me.

I have no right words to say, I have nothing she wants to hear. I just watch as she gets on bed and pulls the covers over her head.

Food finally arrives. I have no appetite, I dish for her and take it to the bedroom. I'm not sure if she is going to eat my food.

"Zanda get up and eat," I say.

I don't get any response, instead she shifts further on bed. I take the cover off her head and find her sobbing quietly.

"You have to eat MaDlamini," I say.

"I'm not MaDlamini, I'm Zanda!"

I guess she won't be eating my food. I tell her if she feels hungry she must wake me up and I'll warm it up for her.

Her clothes are on top of the basket, after taking a shower I wash them and put them on the hangers, hopefully they'll be dry in the morning.

She is snoring softly. Her hand is placed on her cheek, her lips are slightly parted. I'm glad she removed the cover off her head, I can stay all night watching her sleeping so peacefully.

How is it possible that she can't see how much I love her? I'd do anything to spend my life with her. I don't see my future with any other woman except her. Mandla met her too early and I met her too late. My life is upside down because of her. Unrequited love hurts more than anything on earth. To love someone that cannot love you back and to be unable to get her out of your mind! What is love? Why is it called love if it hurts so much?

She wakes up before me, but I'm not a heavy sleeper I hear her getting off bed and open my eyes. It's so cold I wish I can hold her, wrap myself around her and listen to her heart beating against mine.

The shower is running, I need to make her something to eat. I have to wash my face first and brush my teeth. I hope she doesn't find it weird that I'm entering the bathroom while she is inside.

She is just stepping out of the shower, completely naked. It's too late when I shift my eyes away I've already seen her bottom and my body has reacted. I remember how warm she was, her little whispers and the taste of her flesh. Nkosi misses her so much.

"Where are my clothes?" She is unfriendly, you'd swear we've never shared anything special. Maybe we didn't, it was all in my mind.

"I washed them last night, put a gown on I'll iron them for you," I say.

She rolls her eyes and walks out.  
Now I don't know whether to start with food or clothes. She has a gown on maybe starting with food is a good idea.  
I hope today she'll eat. I put food inside the microwave and pick up the incoming call.  
Nceba: How is it going?  
Me: Bad  
Nceba: Didn't she choose you?  
Me: Not really, she might be going back to him  
Nceba: Bad. What are you doing?  
Me: I'm making her food  
Nceba: What food?  
Me: Chicken and.....  
Nceba: Whooah! Are you trying to make her fat?  
I'm lost, food makes people fat? I eat every morning, we all do.  
Me: No, she didn't eat last night so I'm trying my luck.  
Nceba: They don't eat meat in the morning. Make a smoothie for her.  
Me: What is a smoothie?  
Nceba: (Sighs) Just give her fruits and some yoghurt.  
Me: Yoghurt? Nkanyezi haven't been here in a long time, I doubt I have any.  
Nceba: Just go get it. If she is still there around by 9am toast bread and cook some eggs. Not your kind of egg, the overcooked brown one that's shaped like a boat. Add some mushrooms, tomatoes and sausages.  
Me: Oh...okay.  
I don't remember half of the things he mentioned but I know that I need to get yoghurt and fresh fruits asap.  
She is back on bed, I walk in and switch on some Indian thing and leave the remote next to her.  
The shops are just around the corner, I get everything I need and drive back fast. My biggest fear is finding her gone. I put everything on the counter and check her.  
Pheew! She is still here, watching white people talking.  
I'm not sure how to prepare this. I take a tray and put different fruits on the plate and 1kg yoghurt and spoon.  
"Have some smoothie," I say.  
The frown! Her eyes are almost shutting.  
"You don't like it?" I ask.  
"No I.....thank you Nqubeko."  
She takes the apple and eat. I've never been so relieved from watching someone eat.  
Oh snap! I have to check on the clothes, then I'll find out if she is going back to him or staying.  
I pray that she stays, we'll figure it out together.

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## Chapter 320

Ziphelele Mokoena

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If it wasn't for my father nothing would've gone right. Nkabenhle came here at the last minute, the cow was delivered late and Thapelo's sister got lost and only arrived after the cow slaughtering. We were unprepared but we managed to complete the ceremony. Things are tense between Biyela and Thapelo. Biyela is convinced that Thapelo is abusive and he is not changing his mind about the goat thing.

I haven't really talked to Thapelo. I want the ceremony to end so that I can go back home. I do want the twins to come back for Phakade's sake. He loves his siblings and has grown close to them. It's not fair on him and I'd like to prove this babymama wrong. You don't use children to fight your battles, I'm not her nanny that she can send babies to whenever she feels like and then take them again. She is not fit to be a mother, neither is Thapelo fit to be Phakade's father.

"Thapelo is not eating," Mom says as she stands next to me in the kitchen. I swear she works for Thapelo. She's always ready to defend him.

"I only have one child, his name is Phakade," I whisper in her ear and take the drinks to the table. I can hear a sigh behind me, she'll be strong.

"You must have another miracle baby Ziphelele, this meat is too nice," Aunt Lydia says. I can't believe she's calling my son a miracle baby.

"She can't have another one," Zethu jumps in.

She can be so insensitive. Yes I can't have another baby but I don't need a reminder. It's a bitter pill to swallow, especially now that Thapelo has more children outside marriage.

"You need to learn to zip your mouth," Sbusiso says.

He looks better, I guess him and Nozipho are working things out. Anyway I doubt they can stay away from each other that much.

"Angithi uqome umlungu," Biyela says, directing to Zethu. He is eating like he's having meat for the first time. The only person eating with limit here is Lwazi. Oh and the slimming Thapelo Mokoena, he hasn't touched his plate. I guess he is worried about his children.

"I'm dating umlungu because I'm good for that. As for you and your Grade 9 English, you're better off with Mom. It's not easy speaking English day in and out," Zethu responds, and we all roll our eyes.

"Lisho uliphinde mntase! (Say that again sister)" - Nduku.

"You also speak English 24/7?" Mom asks.

"Thoroughly Ma. It's English from top to bottom. Repeatedly, non-stop everyday," he says.

"Egg-xactly Menziwa, we are the face of this family," -Zethu.

Are we really going to listen to them bragging about dating a different race? I pick my glass and leave. I hate that Thapelo keeps looking at me. All I see is him shaking off my son like a puppy. I don't care much about the accusations, but that was off the line. I just can't get over it, and today he's here acting like a father of the year. He forgot his own son's birthday! So much for a father!

"I hope you left meat for your first son," -the voice comes from the front door.  
Simile!

I snap out of the misery and smile. I didn't know they were coming back today. He has grown out the Nike tracksuit thing, he dresses like a smart 20year old guy. Cute jeans and slim fit shirt and nice shoes.

"Damn you look so cute! Come in, they're eating that side."

I can't believe he is so tall. Geez! I can't wait for Phakade to grow up as well.

"And where is your mother? She stayed behind?" I ask.

Her stilettos answer me first. She has her makoti dress on and a scarf wrapped on her head. Honestly I never thought I'd see this day.

"Where is the meat?" she asks.

"A hello would've been....."

WTF happened on her face?!

"What happened to your forehead?" I ask shocked.

"Oh this, it was a minor accident." She waves her hand and grabs a glass and pours the bottle Zethu left on the counter.

"Ugh!" she grunts and takes the scarf off her head. I guess being a makoti isn't so easy after all.

"This is too tight...Have you talked to Zanda?" she asks.

Things have been hectic, I haven't talked to her today. But it's so strange that her and Mandla didn't come to the ceremony.

"No, you just reminded me to call her. I have so much scoop. Bad fathers, unfaithful husbands and....."

She clears her throat. I look up and see Thapelo standing with Phakade on his arm. Well I don't care whether he heard me or not.

"Looking for something?" I ask.

"Ummm....He is crying for you."

Oh my poor son!

"Children and their senses! They can feel it when they're not surrounded by love." I take Phakade off his arms and put him on my hip and turn to Fikile.

"Have you talked to her?" I ask.

She frowns.

"Zanda," I say narrowing my eyes.

"Their phones are off. Do you mind coming here for a second?" she says.

Another lecture coming!

We leave Thapelo grounded on the same spot and go to the lounge. Her face is full of disbelief.

"What really happened?" she asks.

"You know that the twins went missing right? Well I became the main suspect for the disappearance and my son got kicked for it," I say.

"Oh My God! That was....."

Heavy footsteps approach us. It's Biyela with a big frown on his face looking at Fikile.

"What happened to your face?" -him.

"Hello Menziwa, I got a minor accident after the funeral."

"Explain? What kind of accident?" -him.

I'm also curious. She doesn't look comfortable at all.

"I got hit by a stone," she says.

"A stone?" we ask simultaneously.

"It was meant for Nqubeko, they were fighting. It was an innocent accident." She turns to Biyela and begs him not to overreact. She tries to explain what was happening and how her injury wasn't anyone's fault, but Biyela's face is just icy cold.

"Trust me Baba I'm fine," she convinces.

"Oh, I see." His tone is very clear, he doesn't see anything he will probably confront the Nkosis about it.

"When is my goat coming?" Now he is looking at me.

I shrug my shoulders, I haven't talked to Thapelo.

Fortunately he is here, he can answer himself.

"Dad wants to know about the goat," I tell him.

He walks in and stands a few feet away from me.

"I didn't hit you Ziphe," -him.

I was not starting an argument. This is between my father and him. I have nothing to verify.

"You know the truth, I didn't raise my hand on you. I can't justify what I did, I was wrong in so many levels but I didn't touch you Ziphelele," he adds.

Biyela takes a few steps towards him. He is so unpredictable, a moment ago he was laughing and now he is a monster.

"So you don't see me at all Mokoena? You come to my house and harass my daughter inside. You're getting physical with my daughter?" he asks.

"With all due respect Biyela....."

"Do not provoke me." He points his finger at his face. This might turn ugly. We're not in good terms but I don't like seeing him this way. The finger on his face in front of Phakade!

"I don't want to interfere in your marriage again but don't think I'm going to let you mistreat Ziphelele. My children mean everything to me. You hurt one of them you touch me," - Biyela.

"Okay," Thapelo says and turns around and walks away.

"I'm being tested. Inside my house! Who does he think he is this boy?" Biyela shakes his head with so much despise on his face.

"But Dad you can't treat him like that in front of his son," I say.

He gives us no further attention, he scrolls his phone and walks out with it on his ear.

"Skhumbuzo is in trouble as well," Fikile says.

I frown.

"Why?"

She points at her face,

"For this."

Oh yeah, they better get their facts straight.

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LATER THAT DAY

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Everyone is gone, except Thapelo's sister and the friend she came with. We've never been close but she's a humble woman. She has done most of the cleaning, now I only have to clear the refrigerators. But first I need to check on Phakade. I hope he is still sleeping, working with him following me around is not easy.

He is not in his room???

My heart is going to stop. It's the same feeling I had when I couldn't find the twins. I walk in my bedroom with my hand across the chest. I sigh with relief as I see him sleeping on Thapelo's chest on our bed.

"I thought you were gone too," I take him and hug him so tightly that he wakes up and starts crying.

"I'm sorry baby, shhhhhh!" I brush his back and take him to his room. His hands are skimming inside my top, he is looking for his nene. Mom suggested that I take him off breast milk now that he is one-year old, but I don't think I'm ready. I don't want to break the bond that we have. I love every moment of being his mother and him depending on me for milk.

He finally sleeps again. I put a blanket over him and tiptoe my way out. I bump into someone, my face hit his chest and I meet a pair of red eyes staring down at me.

"I am really sorry, you have to be angry at me and I deserve it. But to treat me like this babe. I love Phakade, he is my son too," he says.

"I'm not ready to talk," I say.

"But we can't carry on like this."

"And we won't, I'm leaving tomorrow morning."

He didn't expect that. He thought I'd stay and he would manipulate me into forgiving him as usual.

"We are married Ziphelele, you can't just leave because you're angry at me," he says.

"Actually, I can," I say.

"Yeah right, you have a father to fight your battles and I don't."

He hasn't moved out of my way. I fold my arms and let out a sigh.

"You've never seen my father coming here to fight my battles. You're the one who went to his house. But I don't care about the issues between the two of you, I care about my son more than anything in life," I say.

"I'm not a bad father, I was in a bad space. Surely you can understand, I didn't know where his brother and sister were. I wasn't thinking straight, it was a moment of confusion."

I didn't want to talk about this now but he keeps pushing me.

"You didn't start yesterday or last week. You've been a horrible father ever since you found out that you have Imogen and Melody. The favouritism in this house makes me wanna pack my bags and leave for good. I've been hoping that you'll change, that you're just adjusting, but yesterday you pulled the last one. Being a good husband won't make me stay if you're not a good father to my son. We will go our separate way, I mean it." He wanted to talk but now he has nothing to say!

"Get out of my way," I say.

"I love my son Ziphelele! I love my son. How can you say something like this? He is my blood."

There he is, the Thapelo we all know. The bully.

"Don't feed me lies. Get out of my way," I say.

He doesn't move. My words mean nothing to him.

"Why are you making such horrible assumptions? I'm doing my best, I'm giving everything that I have. I'm taking orders from your rapist-friend on how to raise my son and....."

I slap him....I'm not even sure how that happened. Nkabhle is the reason why Phakade and I are alive. He has never treated my son as the second best, in fact he is better than him.

"Ziphelele you're hitting me?" He is in disbelief. He is still holding his cheek like I broke a cheekbone.

I don't know whether to apologise or let it be. I told him that I didn't want to talk about it now, I'm still emotional about it. But no he kept pushing and went as far taking a jab at Nkabhle. The guy made one mistake and he got punished for it over and over again.

My phone rings, breaking the awkward moment. It's Zanda, I have to pick it up.

"Zanda, I've been trying to call you all day."

"If anything happens to me today please look after Leano for me. I didn't want things to be this way, it got out of my control and I'm really sorry."

Just like that she drops the call.