

MKABAYI



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The Burning Flame by Ndumiso

Chapter 1

A loud bang of pots and loud chatter wakes me up from my sleep, I breathe in and out stretching myself before opening my eyes to find Busani starrng. I have grown fond of these stares over the years.

“Happy birthday babakhe” he smiles wide still looking at me.

Today is his birthday another year added and he still looks fine as the day I met him.

“Morning Nathanjekwayo” he says placing his index finger on his lips. “Qabula phela” he says.

I sit up straight and give me him a kiss, he loves his morning kiss to him the kiss is life itself.

He moves and gets in between my thighs pulling his pants down,he kisses my forehead and pulls away to look at me.

I look into his beautiful eyes and swallow the last of my saliva. In all my years of being married to this man the way he looks at me still makes my heart beat and my knees buckle an

Ocean of love, desire and so much more is what lies behind his beautiful eyes.

Without warning I feel his hard cock press against me, he pushes himself in and growls at the feel of our nakedness. I cling on to him for dear life when he starts stroking and thrusting inside me, I swear the first strokes are the best.

“I love you” I get drunk in his whispers and moan his name as he pumps inside me and releases while I clamp up and bite my lips at the feel of my own orgasm. He pulls out and turns me over pulling his pillow and placing it under me. He enters me from behind while leaving wet kisses on my back and shoulder.

“Mphemba” my voice comes out in a pleasing tone.

Busani knows just how much I love being taken from behind.

He deep strokes and thrust slowly yet precise.

“I love you Mkabayi” he says pulling out and only leaving the tip of his cock.

“I love...” my voice trails off as he thrusts in growling and seething.

“I love you Mkabayi or should I stop to hear you say you love me too” A bite on my neck brings me back.

I shake my head bringing my arse up to him.

He chuckles and thrusts deep I bite on the pillow to muff my screams. He moves his hands from my waist all the way to my hands entwining both our hands.

“I love you so much Busani” I manage to get these words out and that somehow gives him free reign to up his pace, I scream my release while he groans. The door flings open with Busani quickly pulling out, I turn and face the door to find Mhlengi and Kababa starring Mhlengi tilting his head.

I look at Busani and wish the ground would open up and swallow me.

“Baba nenzani” Mhlengi asks still having his head tilted to the side like he wishes to understand the position he found us in.

Busani slips into his pants and get off of the bed rushing to the bathroom, he comes back and picks both of them up giving each of them a kiss on the cheek.

“Daddy was giving mommy a massage” Busani says looking at me.

“Can we give mommy a massage too” Kababa asks.

He quickly shakes his head and laughs.

“No..no that won’t do” he says clearing his throat.

I smile looking at them it’s days like these I realize I married one of the best.

“Why” the kids ask simultaneously.

“Because uhm..” he looks at me hoping for a save.

“Because mommy is okay now” Busani laughs at that and raises his eyebrow.

“Let’s leave mommy to get dressed” He says taking the kids and closing the door.

I get out of bed and get on my knees saying a small prayer, I open my eyes once done and laugh Mama would be ashamed if she knew I turned to the big guy even when I reeked of sex and still wanted it more than anything. I fix the bed and make my way to the bathroom and take a long shower bracing myself for what awaits me in the kitchen. I dress into my long black and white striped dress with a head wrap, I grab my hand bag and make my way to the kitchen.

“Who sleeps till this hour kodwa Ma” Khathazile asks her mother.

And just like her namesake she’s nothing but troublesome.

26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“I don’t know what Busani saw in that girl all she does is eat my son’s money

and sleep all day” Mrs Mphemba says. “The only thing she’s done right is give him three beautiful kids” she says.

“I wish Busani had taken you instead ngane yami” she continues looking at Nandipha Khathazile’s bestfriend and preferred makoti.

“She doesn’t even know a days work in her life yet she lives in such a big house and drives only the best cars” I smile it’s like every time Busani does something for me his mother unknowingly takes a step further into her grave.

I swear this woman will die of jealousy and an evil heart.

“We have been warning Busani but he hears nothing when it comes to Mkabayi” Khathazile says.

“I think we all know she bewitched him” Mrs Mphemba says.

I remember the first time she met me, to her I was nothing but a poor young girl who had trapped her son. I tried with this woman but nothing ever worked she hated me from the day she set eyes on me, I have been called names cursed by this woman but my mother always said “Mkabayi if Busani loves you then nothing else matters” I have carried those words with me for the longest time.

“Kanti lutho Ma your son loves the Thanjekwayo cookie it’s sweet and juicy” she stops talking and looks at me.

“Sawbona Mkabayi” she says.

“Sawbona Ma, Khathazile, Nandipha I hope you all slept well in my big house” Khathazile gives me a side eye.

I look at Nandipha and smile tilting my head.

“My husband loves sex and I mean lots and lots of steamy sex, that thing you’re doing there doesn’t impress him or me so if ever you wish to become Mrs Ntuli then I suggest you know your sex game or get a didlo and practice” her eyes pop while she closes the pot.

Busani’s mother shakes her head defeated.

“Ma please tell Busani that I had to step out for a moment” I grab an apple and make my way out.

The drive to the cemetery is long and I dread stopping the car and stepping out, I dread walking over to my son’s grave today marks two years since he passed. Thingo was such an amazing soul the quiet one out of the three. He always clung on to me even when his siblings were having the time of their lives playing or running around the house.

“Phumulani cemetery” I read the huge notice board and drive inside,

It doesn't take long to find Thingo's grave but my feet refuse to carry me out of this damn car. I close my eyes as I remember the day we lost him, I don't know what happened but I heard a splash outside Thingo had gotten outside and slipped falling inside the pool, by the time I got down stairs it was too late my son was gone. Thingo was gone my baby boy was gone and his nanny was sleeping instead of taking care of my son.

I finally get out of the car and walk over to the grave, and get on my knees cleaning the edges and wiping the dirt on top of it.

I run my hands on his engraved names and wipe my tears, they were three and now they are two.

I couldn't protect him, I couldn't protect my baby and I will live with that for the rest of my life.

I open my eye when I feel Busani's strong arms embrace me.

"I miss him too" he says.

"He was too young Busani we were not supposed to lose him" he holds me tight.

"I know and I am sorry I wasn't there" he says.

"He was so cold Mphemba my son was cold" I hear him sniff and clear his his throat.

While I called the ambulance and tried my best to save him he was getting colder by the minute, I remember taking off my cardigan and wrapping it around him so he could get warm.

“Mkabayi please don’t do this to yourself” he begs.

I turn and look at him.

“Busani promise me that you will never leave me, that you won’t let me raise these kids alone” he looks at me and tightens his jaws.

“Busani promise me that you won’t please” he nods his head.

“I promise I won’t leave you sthandwa sam” he says bringing me into his arms.

Busani refuses to leave the taxi business even though his life has been threatened more than I can count.

I say a silent prayer to God to keep my husband and protect him at all time.

He places his hand on Thingo’s grave and then helps me up.

“Let’s go home Nathanjekwayo” he says walking to the car.

2

I wake up to an empty bed with a note on top of Busani's pillow.

"Morning sthandwa sam sorry for not waking you but I took my morning kiss, Love your husband"

A smile spreads across my lips but fades when I remember the meeting he's going to head.

It's a route thing and it has been going on for weeks till the men decided it was time they handled it the best way they know how.

I grab my bible next to the bed lamp and pray for his safety if only he would listen to me and leave this whole business.

I reached under my pillow and call my Thandazile, she picks up on first ring and for a while both of us remain quiet.

"Mtaka Ma" she laughs softly reminding me of our childhood and the conversations we would have at night when none of us had any sleep and the comfortable silence that would settle between us when we had run out of things to say.

She's always been there holding me down loving and supporting like a sister should.

"Sawbona sisi" my voice shakes already I could never hide my feelings or hold back when talking to my sister.

“Hey what’s wrong?” She asks.

“Nothing it’s just that Busani went to that meeting even though I asked him to send someone else” I say.

“Mkabayi I know you are worried about him but his word carries weight and they respect him” she says.

I shake my head Thandazile doesn’t know half of the things I hear when Busani thinks I am not listening, they might respect him but they also want him dead and buried.

“Sisi these people want him dead” I tell her.

She sighs and goes silent for a while.

“I think that dream you had is messing with your head” she says softly.

I shut my eyes and breathe ever since I had that dream about Busani being shot I haven’t been okay.

“I told you to pray against it because I did and trust me nothing will happen to Busani” I nod my head.

“Should I come take care of you” she asks.

I nod my head laughing

“Mkabayi” she calls out laughing on the other side of the phone.

“Yes I would love that” I say.

“Okay I will be there first thing tomorrow morning and yes I will be careful on the road” she says before I can say anything about the dangers on the road.

“And just so you know my Inlaws are here and they brought a guest” I tell her.

She laughs to my annoyance.

“Kahle nje ukuqethuka” she continues laughing knowing my sister tears are coming out of her eyes.

“I am sorry just don’t eat anything cooked by them and make sure Busani doesn’t either” she says.

“I don’t trust that woman” she says.

A knock comes through and I bid Thandazile goodbye before making myself decent.

I step out of the bed and make my way to the door, I find Khathazile standing by with her arms folded.

“Morning aunt wezingane zam” she scoffs and clears her throat.

“Ma would like to see you” she says giving me an attitude.

She attempts walking away but I stop her.

“Yini” her pretty face turns sour making her look ugly.

I smile and shake my head.

“You know Khathazile if you tried smiling more then you would be the most pretty young woman in this house after me of course” I seem to make her angry but continue nevertheless .

“Do you hate me out of your own freewill or you hate me because your mother hates me” she parts her lips but nothing comes out of them.

“Thought as much anyway tell Ma I will out in a minute” I close the door on her face and walk to the bathroom.

I must say I love staying in this house it has been easier and less painful. After Thingo’s death Busani sold our old house and bought me this one and a car too. Too many I might have bewitched him but the truth is I love my husband and that man loves me too.

I hate speaking for people especially when they aren’t here to defend themselves but my husband loves me and he’s proven that over and over again.

I freshen up and change into a pair of tights with Busani’s t-shirt.

I pass by my babies room and find Maria already checking up on them.

“Morning sisi” she says looking at me.

“Morning I was just checking up on them didn’t mean to disturb” she smiles.

“Its okay sisi I was about to wake them up and prepare their breakfast “ she says.

I nod my head closing the door and proceed to the kitchen.

I find my guest already eating and laughing about something.

“Good morning” they all look up and mumble their good morning.

“You wanted to see me Ma?” I ask looking at Khathazile grinning.

“Please sit down” she says.

I grab a seat and focus on her.

“Mkabayi sisi I need to ask you something” she says.

I nod my head when ever she’s this calm it’s always about money or something else.

“As Busani’s wife I thought it would be best I speak to you about this” the palm of my hands start sweating with each word that comes out of her mouth.

“I had a talk with the family and we think it’s best Busani takes Nandipha as his second wife” She says.

I inwardly count to ten holding myself back this woman is crazy.

“Did he tell you that he wants a second wife” I ask.

“Like I said we as the family decided that it’s what’s best, with the route business being fixed and more money coming in he can afford another wife” she says.

“Ma did Busani tell you that you he wants another wife” I ask.

She looks at me and says nothing.

“We want him to follow his brother’s footsteps and take a second wife that way people will respect him” Mrs Ntuli says with a straight face.

I think I must be dreaming this has to be a dream.

I pinch my self and realize this woman right here is spewing rubbish.

“Who said people don’t respect him” I ask biting my lip.

“Does Aunt Sinazo even know about this” I ask.

“Leave that witch out of this, I am Busani’s mother and I know best” she raises her voice at me.

“Cha uyabazisa ubuthakathi mama one would swear you bewitched your own husband” I say.

A slap lands on my face. I hold my cheek and look at Nandipha.

“Do you want my husband” I ask looking at her.

She looks at Busani's mother then me nodding her head.

I chuckle and look around since I am lucid then I must be on some prank show.

"Uyadelela wena Mkabayi" Busani's mother shouts.

"And you are heartless all you ever think about is money and power, you don't care about Busani or his life, this route thing is putting his life at risk but because it will bring in more money stuff the consequences and give him another wife" Nandipha drops her head while Khathazile folds her arms.

Mkhetheni has two wives and he's respected, I can't say the same about my Busani you are making him weak" she says still looking at me.

"You have said enough Ma ngicela ningiphumele" she looks at me blinking but I am already on my feet asking them to leave.

"Asiyi ndawo" Khathazile pipes up.

"You can call me all the names you want but you will never disrespect Busani in my presence, ngomoya we sonto mama ka khathazile please leave my house seningikhathizile sekwaneke" I say through gritted teeth. "This is my son's house" she says.

"We mama musa nje ukungihlola usathane ngithe phumani" I walk over to the kettle and switch on.

"Konje uyashayana" Busani's mother says.

I watch them scurry to the door but grab the kettle still walking out.

“Nise la?” I ask “Yazi nina nifuna ukushiswa” Mrs Ntuli runs for the gate while Khathazile drives out the car.

I walk back inside the house and start cleaning my kitchen.

“Ubaxoshile” I nod my head and settle down on one of the chairs.

“I don’t know why that woman hates you when you are one of the most kindest people I know” she says.

“I long stopped asking myself that question Maria, I even stopped asking God to fix our relationship she hates me and that’s it” I say.

“Let me make you some tea it will calm you down” she says.

“I hope the kids didn’t hear anything” she laughs and shakes her head.

“Lutho sisi I played them some music” she says.

I sit back and wonder if Busani would ever want a second wife, would he go as far as wanting to bring a third person to share our bed. I shake my head Busani would never do that to us he knows I would kill him.

Maria places the tea in front of me and smiles.

“Maria don’t we have something strong” I ask.

She raises her eyebrows and claps her hands.

“I don’t want to get into trouble with Bhuti Busani” she says walking away. “I am going to check on the kids” she shouts.

The day goes faster with me worried sick about Busani, I tried cooking and spending time with the kids but it didn’t work.

I look at the time and it’s past 7 in evening, by this time he should be tucking in the kids to sleep. I drape my gown and make my way to their bedroom I find Mhlengi holding the book Bambi.

He looks behind me and frowns.

I study his face and laugh with each day that passes Mhlengi looks so much like his father.

“Mommy where is Daddy” Kababa asks.

“Daddy is working tonight meaning that mommy will read you a bed time story” they both laugh.

“What’s funny Mhlengi” I ask.

“Daddy makes voices when he reads to us” he says.

I try my best imitating Busani with them laughing at me till they both fall asleep. I kiss them goodnight and turn off the lights in their bedroom and stand by the door looking at my daughter

God has been good to us, Oyintandokababa has a heart condition she had her first open heart surgery when she was just a year old. The doctors prolonged the operation so she could have a fighting chance I wipe my tears and walk back in to kiss her one more time. I close the door and walk to the bar. I pour myself one of his expensive bottles the Bunnahabhian 25 year old Islay single malt scotch whisky. I fill the glass up and walk back to the lounge throwing myself on the one seater couch and look at the time taking a sip.

Time passes by with no Busani in sight, I take a few gulps and doze off hugging myself I should have worn my nightdress underneath this silk gown.

I get startled by some noise and quickly get up only to find out it's Busani.

I run in to his arms and hold him tight, it's wasn't supposed play out out like this I am supposed to be angry at him but seeing him standing in front of me brings relief.

I pull away and get back to my seat.

He turns the lights on and looks around spotting the glass on the table.

“Angiyithandi lento yakho Busani” my voice is shaky.

“Ngiyaxolisa muntu wam” he says making his way to me.

He gets on his knees and places his hands on my lap.

“Busani do you want a second wife” I ask.

He frowns.

“What am I going to do with a new wife” he asks looking confused.

“So you don’t want a wife ever ever” he laughs showing off his beautiful smile.

“No I don’t I only want you” I smile kissing him.

He turns and looks at the glass then me.

“Ngathini kuwe Mkabayi” he asks undoing his belt.

Busani hates it when I drink the only person allowed to do that is him and only him in this house.

I bite my lower lip and watch him pull his pants down still on his knees.

He moves his hand up my thighs and finds his way into my wet narvana parting my legs, he raises my one leg and places it on his shoulder his lips and tongue enter me taking my breathe away. He eats my pussy up and comes up to kiss me, I taste myself on him and pull him even closer while his fingers thrust inside me.

“Ngathini ngotswala sthandwa sam?” he asks removing his finger.

“Ngiyaxolisa Mphemba” I tell him breathing heavily.

“Why are you drinking Mkabayi” he asks making me feel the tip of his cock against my wet pussy.

I try pushing myself towards him but he pulls away.

Him punishing me always ends with me begging him to give it to me. “I needed to calm down” he raises his eye brow.

“So you couldn’t wait for me to come calm you down” he ask slowly undoing my robe.

His eyes dance with excitement when he sees my nakedness. He strokes himself and pulls me close to him.

He runs his cock against my wet self and pushes himself in growling. He lifts me up with him still inside and places me on the table. He strokes and thrust inside me while I moan and scream his name.

“Umsindo Nathanjekwayo” he whispers.

It dawns on me that I haven’t told him about his mother I swear that woman deserves a special place in hell right next the evil guy himself.

He pulls out and turns me around having me hold on to the table.

“I don’t ever want to smell alcohol on your breath siyezwana” I nod my head pushing my arse to his hard cock.

“Mkabayi” he calls out.

“I won’t drink again Mphemba” he thrusts inside me.

He gives me deep strokes while holding my waist.

He knows just when to hold tightly and let loose.

“I kicked out your mother and sister” I blurt out.

He stops moving and kisses my back his teeth grazing my shoulders.

“Angizwa?” His voice is stern yet comes out as a whisper more than anything. “Ngibaxoshile” I tell him.

I feels his cock in between my thighs as he positions it and pushes himself in, I gasp feeling my breath leave me this man knows how to use his God given gift.

“I guess we will be at it the whole night then” he says fully thrusting inside me.

I give him full excess to my arse and wonder if I will make it through the night.

3

Two days later and the Thanjekwayo cookie still hurts and I find it hard to walk. Busani enjoys the shows especially when I have to pee and scream his name, he's such a goof ball sometime but I couldn't have it any other way.

Thandazile arrived as promised and my house has been filled with love and warmth.

The door to my bedroom opens with Thandazile making her way in.

"Hau kodwa Mkabayi these people are waiting for you" she says.

I roll my eyes and sighs Busani's family called a meeting to address what happened.

I don't understand why we need to address anything when it's evident for everyone to see that his mother hates me.

"I don't see the need for this meeting" I tell her.

She settles next to me and takes my hand.

"I know everything in you is telling you not join them but listen to that one voice that says walk out of that door" she says.

"It's not there" I say.

“Okay fine listen to me your sister then and join your In-laws” she says.

“What if I strangle that woman to death I don’t want her blood on my hands” I tell her.

She sighs and scratches her head.

“Then block her out and look at Busani and think about him making love to you” she says.

“So you want me to moan Busani’s name and scream yes harder oh Busani” I ask being loud.

She places her hand over my mouth and laughs.

“No that’s not what I am saying” she says.

“Shame on you Thandizile” she hides her face laughing.

“You know I would never tell you such a thing” she says.

I pull her close for a hug.

“Thank you for coming sisi having your here means a lot” I say.

“You know I would do anything for you” she says pulling away.

“Am I disturbing” Busani asks.

“Lutho Sbali I was just leaving” Thandazile says walking out.

He looks at me and sighs closing the door standing against it.

“Woza la”he says

I walk over to him and stand in front of him, he wraps his arms around me and kisses me.

“Busani your mother hates me” he nods his head.

“I know sthandwa sam but I love you and I married you” he says assuring me.

“I know but there’s only so much that I can take” I tell him.

“I know and I am sorry that you have to go through this” he says placing my hand on his chest.

“I wish I could open my heart and show you how much I love you and the kids, I wish I could show the whole world that you are my world”he says resting his forehead on mine.

“You are the best husband and father to me and the kids,I love you Busani more than you will ever know. You put me together you mended my heart and made whole again”he smiles and grabs my arse.

“The meeting” he let’s go and takes my hand.

We make our way to the living room with everyone present Mr and Mrs Ntuli,Khathazile and Mkhethini Busani’s brother.

I take a seat next to my husband with my head slightly bowed greeting everyone.

“Mkabayi” Mr Ntuli says.

This man has always been gentler kind and has been a father to me since I was welcomed into this family.

“Your mother here says you kicked her out of the house” he says.

“Yes I did baba” Busani tightens his grip over my hand.

“Why? What happened” he asks in his so ever gentle tone.

“Kahle Ntuli don’t ask what happened tell what we have decided as the family” Busani’s mother barks.

“And what is that” Busani asks.

“We saw it fit that you take another wife and Nandipha would do” his mother says.

“Ubani othe mina ngifuna uNandipha” Busani asks.

“Busani look at your brother don’t you want to be like him” his mother asks.

“What’s so special about Mkhetheni Ma” Busani asks looking at his brother.

“He is well respected and envied” his mother says.

“Well I am envied by most man isn’t that so brother” Busani says looking at Mkhetheni.

I don't like it when he goes head to head with his evil brother.

Mkhetheni looks at me then at Busani.

"I wouldn't know" Mkhetheni says.

"I don't know where you get the idea of me wanting a wife from but I will make it clear now, I don't want a wife I don't need a wife because I already have one" he says looking at his mother. "Ma I have made peace with the fact that you will never like Mkabayi but she's my wife the mother of my kids and I love her more than anything in this world" he swallows hard still looking at his mother.

"Don't make me choose between you and her" he says looking at me.

His mother gasps shock riddling her.

"The mother of your kids how sure are we that those kids are yours" his mother says.

"Kahle Priscilla" Bab' Ntuli shouts.

I look at Busani and I can see that it's taking all of him not to react after what his mother said.

Even the grip of his hand over mine loosen but I tighten my hand placing another one on top of his.

I look at Busani's mother and ask myself what she gets from tormenting me and hurting Busani.

Busani stands up and clears his throat.

"I love you ma but until you learn to respect my wife and our family ngicela ungi-phumele" he says.

Mkhetheni stands up and looks at Busani.

"Busani she's our mother you can't just choose a stranger over her" Mkhetheni says.

Busani chuckles and looks back at his mother.

"We all know aunt Snazo has been more of a mother to me than this woman has" he blurts out.

"Busani" his father pleads.

26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">"It's the truth Baba your wife loves Mkhetheni more than she loves me or Khathazile" Busani says.

He brings his hand together and looks at his mother.

"Six year's Ma since I married Mkabayi and still you treat her like dirt, you don't see her you don't respect my wife and that has been troubling me. I have had enough of you Ma please leave my house and never come back" he says walking away.

His mother looks at me clearly furious.

“I will never forgive you for this” she says looking at me standing up.

“I curse the day you came into my son’s life” she says.

“That’s enough mama” Busani shouts.

“Busani I am your mother” she says.

“And a toxic one too” he says softly I can tell he’s broken his voice says it all.

“I think we should leave” Mr Ntuli says.

I wipe my tears as they walk past and head for the door.

Kababa comes running but Busani picks her up.

“Gogo” she calls out but Busani carries her back to her room.

Thandazile comes and sits next to me.

“Am I a curse for being in his life” I ask.

She shakes her head No and smiles.

“You two found each other at a time when you needed one another” she says.

“Then why hasn’t he had peace since I came into his life” I ask.

“Hayibo Mkabayi that man knows peace and love because of you and those kids,do not let that old hag take that away from you” she says.

“It hurts when he is hurting Thandazile” I say.

She nods her head.

“I know but you are not the cause of his pain his evil mother that refuses to acknowledge that her son is happy is the cause” she says.

She stands up and give me a kiss.

“I will spend the night with kids in the cottage that way you and Busani can have some alone time” she says walking away.

The day does by with Thandazile helping me with the kids, she helps me cook a nice meal for Busani who decided to leave soon after his parents.

“I think we are done go take a shower while I make some popcorn” she says.

“How about I join you guys” she shakes her head kicking me out.

“I don’t think he’s going to come back home” I tell her.

“We don’t know that Mkabayi just go take a shower and come back” she says.

I walk to my bedroom and take the longest shower ever. I step out and get the fright of my life when I find Busani sitting on the floor.

He looks up and my heart shatters seeing tears in his eyes.

I met him when I was just 19 carrying the weight of this world on my shoulders and he became everything I needed and more.

I walk over to him and crouch to his level getting on my knees.

“I am sorry” he says.

I wipe his tears but they keep falling I have never seen him like this.

“Busani please don’t allow what your mother did get to you” he smiles kissing my hands.

“I won’t” he says standing up walking to the bathroom.

I grab my gown and get dressed and make my way out to the kitchen.

I find Thandazile with the kids glazing their popcorns.

“Mommy” Kababa screams.

She flings into my arms and holds me tight, Mhlengi also steps in and holds me tight.

“I love you mama” My son says.

“I love you more mama” Kababa says.

I look at my sister and she smiles.

“Grab your pillows we are leaving” She says.

The kids grab their pillows and follow her.

I close the door and get Busani’s food walking to our bedroom.

I open the door and find him already in bed.

“Babakhe nakhu ukudla” I say.

“I am full sthandwa sam” he says.

I nod my head and just as I am about to close the door, I feel his arms around me turning me.

He takes the tray and settles down eating a few full spoons.

“Ngiyabonga” he says.

I take the tray back to the kitchen and stand by the sink wiping my tears.

I pour myself a glass of water and gulp it down before walking to the bedroom.

I find the lights off and take off my robe putting on his t-shirt.

I get inside the bed as snuggle up against him dozing off.

I come out of my sleep turning to Busani's side of the bed but find his space empty, I open my eyes looking around and notice the door open. I hear sounds coming from the other side and walk out.

"Busani" I call out when I hear something break.

I run to his office and find it thrashed.

"Busani" He looks at me his chest heaving.

"I am not a man Nathanjekwayo" He says looking at me.

I bite my lip shaking my head.

"That's not true please don't say that" I plead.

"Yindoda enjani engenanzalo" he asks.

"Busani those kids are yours in every sense ngiyakucela Mphemba don't do this to yourself" he sinks to the floor and runs his hands over his head.

I get on my knees and pull him to my chest this will forever be an open wound that never heals

4

A day after the meeting and my husband hasn't said anything, I don't want to push but at the same time I can't watch him hurt like this. I remember when I met him he had nothing but a dream and the most kindest heart I had ever come across. I remember calling Thandazile and telling her about this handsome man who wanted to marry me that was two months after I had met him. Too fast I know that's what I believed too but we took that leap of faith and look where we are right right now.

I look at him sleeping peacefully this man saved me when I needed saving he loved me when I needed it the most and I gave him kids something he had wanted for a very long time.

I was young and he was wise and we made the best of our situation.

"Busani" he opens his one eye looking at me.

"Ngicela uvuke" he fully opens both his eyes and looks to me.

I lean over and kiss him.

"Morning" I say.

"Sawbona" he says in a groggy voice

"Please pray with me Mphemba" he nods his head.

We both get out of the bed while he walks over to my side and kneels next to me.

I hold his hand as we both close our eyes.

“Baba Jehova Nkulunkulu onomusa I come before you together with my husband, we humble our selves in your presence and ask that you guide us and protect us from all evil. I ask that you give my husband strength I ask that you protect and show him the way,I pray that you heal him for me and may he know that you are God and that everything is possible with you. God you are the one who gave me this man you blessed this union may no one come between what you have brought together, I pray for the little family you have given me may you continue to bless and protect us against all evil. I know that it is done for you are God of mercy and grace and you will never forsake me or my husband in Jesus name amen”I open my eyes and find Busani smiling.

He leans over and gives me a kiss that deepens and has me onto of him in seconds with his cock deep inside me,I hold on tight as my legs straddle him we both come panting and sweating.

I move my head from his neck and laugh seriously I need to stop this sex and praying business my mother would have a heart attack should she hear of this.

He looks at me and kisses my forehead.

“I love you Nathanjekwayo you are the best thing that has ever happened to me” I feel his cock harden and him move.

I close my eyes moving my arse side ways.

“I want you to know that no matter what happens to me you and the kids will always be taken care off” he says stroking me nicely .

“Don’t talk like that Busani” I say shutting him with a kiss.

He pulls away and searches my eyes whilst they well up.

I don’t understand why this moment has to be ruined with talks like these.

He gently lays me on the floor with him still buried inside me.

“Promise me that you will be strong no matter what”I shake my head and move it away from him.

“Ngithembise Mkabayi” he shouts while giving me slow strokes.

“I don’t want to be strong for anything Busani” I whisper wiping my tears.

“Nothing is going to happen to you”I place my hand on his Jaw and try smiling.

“Your timing is bad Mphemba really bad” he laughs and raises my leg locking it with his arm.

“I can never get enough of you” he says doing me slowly kissing my neck.

A soft knock comes through and that could only mean one thing the kids.

“Ningangeni” Busani says growling his release

He gives me a few more deep strokes before pulling out.

“Can’t we sell them at gum tree or takealot” he asks cleaning me up.

“Are you serious Mphemba” he shrugs his shoulders and laughs.

I put on my nightdress while he puts on his pyjama pants, he walks over to the door opens it with Mhlengi first walking in followed by his sister.

My son looks around and sighs he always find everything to be drag and at such a young age he asks a lot of questions.

“Morning” Busani says looking at Kababa.

“Morning Baba”she says hugging him.

“Mhlengi where is my hug” Busani asks.

“Baba please sit down”Mhlengi says.

Busani picks up Kababa and settles down next to me while Mhlengi get an audience.

“Next year I am going to grade 2 and that means I am old” he says nodding his head.

I look at Busani and stifle my laugh Mhlengi will surprises you

“I am now a man right Baba” he says at his father who encourages him to go on.

“I will no longer take or give kisses is that okay with you two”he asks.

I blink and look at Busani laughing at only six years Mhlengi already thinks he’s a man.

“I will be in the kitchen making breakfast please deal with this little man before I panel-beat him with my slipper” I say.

Mhlengi looks at me and clears his throat.

“My teacher said you are not allowed to hit us on our bums mama,I can ask Baba to call the police and you will taken” he says with a straight face.

“Konje who came up with idea of these two going to a white people school”I ask looking at an amused Busani.

I reach for my slipper and look at Mhlengi

“Who’s your mother” I ask.

“It’s you mama” he says looking so ever cute.

“Good now is mommy allowed to hit those bum bum if you are being naughty” he looks at his father then me.

“Yes” he says hesitantly looking at my slipper.

“Okay now give mommy a kiss” he drags his feet and gives me kiss.

We walk to the kitchen and find Thandazile cooking and singing, she looks and smiles and when she sees us holding hands.

“I hope this means everything is okay” she says.

“Everything is more than okay Sbari” Busani says looking at me

We all settle down and wait for Thandazile to dish up.

A knock disturbs is with Busani getting the door he comes back followed by his mother.

“Gogo” the kids stand up and run towards their grandmother.

“We missed you where is Mkhulu” Kababa asks

“Mkhulu is home but he promised to come visit” she says.

I look at Busani’s facial expression and I can’t read if he’s angry or not.

“I will take the kids” Thandazile says excusing us.

0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">Busani's mother takes a seat and looks at us.

"If you are here to insult my wife then please" Busani says.

"Busani I am not here to fight or insult you or your wife, I am here to apologize and ask for forgiveness. It's not a secret that I do not like Mkabayi but I love you Busani you are my son" she sighs looking at Busani.

"When Mkabayi came into your life I lost you and I think that is why I have been hostile towards her, I know you are happy I know she makes you happy" she says.

"I don't want to lose you Busani and I don't want to lose my grandchildren" she says looking at me.

"I am sorry Mkabayi for everything and I am sorry for wanting Busani to take another wife" I nod my head and look at Busani who is still unreadable.

"I will try my best and not be a horrible mother, I should have embraced you the minute you came into my family but I failed ngiyaxolisa Nathanjekwayo" she says.

"It's okay mama all I want is for you and Busani to be okay" I say.

I might be naive at times but I don't trust Busani's mother.

“Baby I will be in the bedroom” I give him a kiss and stand up leaving them to talk.

I make my way to the cottage and find them watching a movie Dumbo.

“Mama buka the flying elephant” Kababa says.

“Elephants can’t fly Oyi” Mhlengi says looking bored.

“This one can right mommy” she says looking at me.

“Yes my baby this one can fly because of his big ears” I tell her.

“See” Kababa says sticking her tongue out.

Mhlengi pushes her off and starts running with Kababa running after him.

“I can already hear her saying mtanami that witch” Thandazile says laughing.

My sister is good people but some how she’s never really liked my mother in law not that I don’t blame her.

I look at her for a while and smile.

“Sisi when are you getting a man” I ask.

“And leave uMa no Baba alone I don’t think so” she says.

“Look I am happy the way things are, I love my space and when the time is right I will meet someone and start my own family” she says.

I nod my head and leave it at that even though I have heard this a thousand times, Thandizile is a well respected accountant financially stable and she’s loving I know she would make a great partner to someone.

She looks at the kids then me.

“How about I take you guys out for ice cream” she says.

“Let me get myself and the kids ready then we can leave” I say standing up heading to the house.

Ice cream turns to shopping with Thandazile spoiling me and the kids, I even get myself an evening dress that she insists I buy.

We have been out all day even the sun is setting I look at Thandazile and ask that we drive home my husband can’t be left alone for too long he might just burn the house.

We drive home and Thandazile asks me to freshen up and change into my dress before heading to the house, I find all this odd but she points out my sweaty forehead and sunburned skin.

I quickly freshen up while she puts on some Tv for the kids.

She sprays on some perfume on me and gives me her earrings.

“Kahle Thandazile this is too much I am just showing the man the dress nothing more” she laughs and turns me around.

“I know but we both know he might want to take it off and ravish you” she says laughing even more.

We walk to the house with her leading the way, she opens the door and a song starts playing. I place a hand over my mouth when I realize this is the same song Busani proposed to.

I continue the walk to and realize this was all planned me leaving the house and staying out so long.

My husband appears in the small crowd of friends looking handsome and polished, he makes his way to me and give me a hug then a kiss.

I look around and hit him on the chest here I was thinking he is down not knowing he was planning.

“Mphemba” he smiles and holds my arse.

A soft giggle leaves my lips for a moment it feels like it’s just the two of us.

“I love you” he whispers.

“I love you too kodwa what is this, I look ashy and I have no make up on” I tell him.

“And you are still most beautiful woman in the room” he says.

I look around and notice Mkhetheni with his two wives and then Busani’s best friend Cain with his wife and a few more familiar faces.

He looks to the crowd still with his hand on my arse knowing what Busani is capable of my clit starts throbbing.

“Bakithi mina ngashada la” People laugh and cheer clapping hands.

“I normally don’t do such even Nathanjekwayo knows this but I felt like I needed to” he says looking at me.

“Sthandwa sam ngiyakuthanda” he says smiling wide.

“I asked our friends here so they could celebrate with us as I ask you to be my wife again” he says going down on one knee.

I look at Thandazile who nods her head smiling.

“Mkabayi Thanjekwayo will you do me the honor of being my wife once again” he asks

I nod my head close to tears.

“Yes I will” he stands up and kisses me grabbing my arse.

He twirls me around and and puts me down,

“I am getting married people” he shouts walking over to his brother sharing a hug then moving on to Cain his best friend.

I greet the guest and move along to Mkhetheni.

“Congratulations” he says.

“Thank you” he chuckles and gulps down his drink looking at Busani from where is standing.

“Why him” he asks.

“Why not him” he clears his throat and nods his head.

Busani joins us and wraps his arm around my waist kissing my cheek.

“I want you” he whispers

I laugh to Mkhetheni’s annoyance.

“I will leave you two love birds alone” he says moving away but turns to look at us.

“One of these days brother” he says walking away.

That leaves a sour taste in my mouth but Busani being Busani brushes it off kissing me.

Thandazile and Busani stepped out of the house a while back leaving me with Maria, they mentioned running a few errands and the kids were dropped off at their grandmother's house.

I don't know how I agreed to that but when Busani asked I found myself saying yes and beside the kids love their grandparents. Maria walks in holding the washing basket.

"Do you think she will mind me doing her laundry" Maria asks.

"No she won't and beside Thandazile likes you so I doubt she will have a problem with you handling her clothes" I tell her.

She smiles and for a second I think I see a twinkle in her eyes.

"You think she likes me" she asks.

"My sister likes everyone Maria" she nods her head and walks but quickly turns like she just remembered something.

"Can I ask you something sisi" I nod still holding my smile.

"Do you perhaps know if she's seeing someone" I almost choke on my saliva.

"As in dating someone" she nods smiling.

"No I don't know" she nods and walks away.

It takes a while for everything to sink but it does real good, I find myself laughing and shaking my head I don't remember the last time my sister was in a relationship.

My ringing phone brings me back from my thoughts and Maria's possible crush on my sister.

"Sawbona ma" she laughs and calls out my father.

"Phakade ucingo" She shouts for my father.

"Who said I wouldn't hear you if you didn't shout" baba asks.

My mother mumbles some incoherent words as my father laughs.

"Uzoxolisa kancono ekamelweni" my father says.

I move the phone away from my ear my parents haven't changed one bit their love still amazes me to this day.

My mother softly laughs and tells him that I am listening of the other side.

"Mkabayi is married and we both know those kids did not fall from the sky" my father says.

"Baba" he laughs even more and greets.

"How's my baby girl doing" he asks.

"I am doing good baba but your grandkids are a handful" I tell them.

“Well you and your sister were not angels yourself” Ma says laughing.

“How’s Busani” Baba asks.

“He’s okay Baba doing good, the business is growing and everything is fine” I tell him.

“If that’s the case then send him my greetings, I was on my way out when you called” he says.

“I will call you later Baba I love you” I hear some shuffling and a soft giggle.

“Nenzani” I ask.

“What Busani does when he leaves the house” Baba says.

“Phakade” Ma says in a blushing tone.

“Tell your sister to call me” he says.

“Mkabayi” my mother’s sweet voice comes through.

I feel tears sting my eyes and clear my throat.

“Talk to me Ndlovukazi how are you” The softness of her voice leaves me vulnerable.

The Ndlovukazi terms brings back bitter yet sweet memories that have been embedded on me, memories that are buried but carved on my soul.

“Ma I am afraid” The words leave my mouth and my heart sinks.

“What’s wrong tell mama so she can fix it” I laugh shaking my head she can’t fix this.

“Even you can’t fix this mama” she laughs and I know what she is thinking.

“But God can fix it” she says.

“Pray to him that he protects my husband because I have this feeling that won’t leave me” she sighs and I wish she was here to hold me.

“What feeling” she asks.

“Mama they want to hurt my husband” Tears fall down my cheek.

“Mkabayi don’t say that” she reprimands.

“The same feeling I had when he was shot is the same one I have now” I tell her.

“I taught you to pray and I made sure that you have a relationship with God, pray about this and he will never forsake you trust in me and he show himself to you” she says softly.

“Close your eyes” she says.

I close my eyes and listen to her pray, her powerful prayer brings me to tears.

“Everything is going to be okay” she says.

“Thank you ma” I wipe my tears and grab a glass of water.

“Now tell me when was the last time you treated him like a king” she asks.

I laughing taking another sip.

“I treat him like a king everyday” I tell her.

“Inkonzo yona uyamupha” she asks.

“Ma” I say.

“It’s only a question Mkabayi” she says.

“Ngiyamupha ma” she laughs and reminds me of how a husband should be appreciated once a in a while.

“I want you to know that no matter how old you get you and your sister will always be my babies, I love you more than anything in this world” she says.

“And we love you too mama” I tell her.

“Don’t forget to tell your sister to call us and tell her to come home we miss her” Ma says.

“I will, have a great day mama”

I end the call and make my way to my bedroom, after that phone call with my mother I will try staying calm and let things be.

All day I been trying to wrap my head around what Mkhetheni said, although Busani brushed it off but it sounded like he was threatening him.

A text from Busani comes through with him telling me that, him and Thandazile decided to go past Cain's house to watch soccer.

I put the phone down and look around the house, being a stay at home mother and house wife can be daunting especially when I think about my teaching degree. Can you believe I only used it for two years after obtaining it and after that Busani asked me to stay home and take care of the kids, I could have said no but I thought about it and decided to raise our kids.

I walk over to the closet and reach for a shoe box at the far end of my shoe collection.

I run my hands over the box and sigh before opening it and taking out some of the pictures that are inside.

I married the most handsome man both on the inside and the outside.

A knock comes through with Maria letting herald in.

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Sorry to disturb you Sisi but Mkhetheni is here asking to see Bhuti” she says.

“It’s okay I will be done in a minute” she closes the door while I put back the box in it’s place and walk out passing by Busani’s study’s and grabbing Mkhetheni’s wrist watch.

I find him in the kitchen leaning against the kitchen counter.

“You must be looking for this” I place the watch on the counter and watch as he slowly grabs it.

“I was actually here to see my brother” he says confidently.

“Well your brother is not here he went out” he nods his head looking around.

“So we are basically alone” he says walking over towards me.

“You have your watch Mkhetheni now leave” he stops in front of me smiles.

“You are beautiful” he says.

“Mkhethini leave before I stab you to death”he chuckles mocking me.

“I see why my brother loves you so much you must be a tigress in the bedroom” he says.

I swing my hand but he catches it before it lands on his jaw tightening his hold over my wrist.

He moves my hand to his face and forcefully runs it down his face and smells it closing his eyes.

I push him off trying to get my hand back but he still holds on.

“You are a disgusting human being” I spit on his face and only then does he let go of my arm.

He wipes himself clean and looks at me.

“If I had the money he had I would be sharing your bed” This shameful man says.

“Even if you had all the money in the world I would still hate you” I say.

“That’s a lie we all know you are with my brother because of his money, I am the eldest and I should have been the one heading the family business. My uncle wronged me when he chose Busani over me” he says.

“You didn’t care about your uncle, he did what was best and that was to choose his rightful heir” I tell him.

“I am the eldest” he shouts.

“And Busani cared about your uncle more than anyone in your family, he loved and treated your uncle with respect the same

way he did your father. Your uncle had no sons but Busani was a son to him and he loved him” he gets angry and hits the counter.

“If that’s is why you hate your brother and allow your mother to influence you then you are a sad man, please leave my house Mkhetheni before I burn you” he walks out and that gives me a chance to breathe.

The day passes by quickly with Maria keeping me busy, by the time she knocks off I have already cooked Busani a meal. I soak my self in the bath tub ridding my body of the all the day’s tiredness. I finish my bath and clean the bathtub wrapping a towel around my body.

I pick out my new lingerie wear and silk gown lotion then putting them on, I put on some red lipstick and spray on his favorite perfume.

The door opens with Busani making his way in.

“Babakhe” I give him a kiss and pull away bending to put on my slippers, he grabs my arse and rubs himself on me.

“How was your day” I ask standing up.

“My day was good just don’t go in the cottage” he says.

“Alright then please take a shower” he takes my hand and places it on his already hard cock.

“Shower” I say.

He parts his lips and says nothing when he sees me raising my eyebrow.

“Thank you babakhe” I close the door behind me and make my way outside to the cottage.

I haven't seen them since morning and I am told not to go to the cottage pssh..

I knock a couple of times and the giggles come to a halt.

Thandizile opens the door in her pants and bra only.

“Came to say goodnight” I tell her.

“Baby who's that” a female voices asks.

“It's the landlord” she says.

I place a hand over my chest hurt that just called me a landlord.

“Land lord mina Thandizile” I ask perplexed.

“We will pray about this in the morning,I love you” she says closing on my face.

I turn around walking to house and with my mouth still on the floor, Busani must have done something to my sister because that part of her life she said she closed a long time ago.

“I told you not to go there” Busani says when he sees me.

I snap out of it and focus on pleasing my husband tonight.

He asks if anyone was around and I tell him about his brother omitting a few things that took place.

He goes to the lounge while I dish up and place his food nicely on the tray with a beer on the side.

I take the tray first and place it in front of him and go back to the kitchen to fetch the water in the basin with a dish cloth.

He looks both amused and surprised when I go down on my knees and allow him to wash his hands.

“Ngiyabonga Nathanjekwayo” he says not taking his eyes off me.

I come back and hand him the tray watching him eat and telling me about his day in between.

He finishes eating and drinks his beer, I clear the table and come back with another basin and a towel.

“I must go watch soccer more often” he says.

I laugh looking at him trust Busani to make a joke about this.

“This is a once off Mphemba” I tell him.

I take off his slippers and place his feet in the warm water, I wash his feet while looking in his eyes.

“Weh Mkabayi what did I do to deserve this” he asks.

“Can’t I treat my husband like the king that he is” I ask.

He smiles and frowns still looking at me, it’s been a while since I loved him like this a while since I honored him like this.

“I love you” he says.

“I love you too” I wipe him dry and move the basin clearing everything out.

I come back and walk over to him slowly untying my gown.

He puts his beer down and swallows licking his lips.

I stand before him and sway my hips pushing him back on the chair, he chuckles as I go down on my knees and place my hands on his thighs seductively moving them up. I get my hands inside his pants and free his hard cock taking it into my mouth. It doesn’t take long for him to grab my hair pushing me down to his big cock.

Just as I predicted he pulls me up for a kiss.

“I am the one pleasing you today today Mphemba” I say.

He breathes heavily and helps me out of my expensive wear.

I sit on top of him with my back facing him and slowly insert his cock inside me.

He grabs my boobs and resting his forehead on my back.

“Damn it Mkabayi” he growls as I start moving my arse in circles.

7

A few days after talking to Busani he gave me permission to start packing so we could move to our new home, we had time to think and finally decided that we are relocating to Cape Town. I have put Busani through a lot with the moving first when Thingo died and now when I think I am going crazy.

I love how he has put us his family first through everything, throughout this marriage he has been an amazing man.

His mother called yesterday and insulted me for bewitching her son and trying to take him away from her.

Honestly the witch term is starting to tire me, I wish she would come up with something new or creative.

I don't think there's any word she didn't call me she even cried and begged me to stop what I was doing to her son, I know my mother said I shouldn't stop praying for Busani's mother but I am tired and I am done.

I look at the boxes piled up in the living room and sigh so much needs to be done but I am glad Thandazile decided to extend her stay.

"I can't believe you are leaving" Thandazile says helping me pack and few house utensils.

I look around the house and smile so many beautiful memories have been shared in this house.

“I will miss this house but for my kids and husband’s wellbeing and my sanity I need to leave” I tell her.

“I don’t know you like this running away from something instead of facing it head on” Thandazile says.

“I would stay if I knew I could win this thing but deep down I know I can’t” I say.

She looks at me and sighs, she hasn’t been herself since I told her about my moving.

“How about Busani gets bodyguards that way you will know he’s safe” she says.

“Thandazile we are not dealing with strangers here we are dealing with own family” I tell her.

She nods her head and stands up.

“I guess you are leaving again” she says chuckling.

“Thandazile I am not leaving you I never left you, you will always be my big sister and I love you” she smiles and shrugs her shoulders.

“Besides Cape Town is not that far and you have money” she laughs and throws her head back.

“You need to stop telling people that I have money Mkabayi they might just want to kill me” she says

We both laugh and carry on packing.

Maria walks in and I decide to leave the two of them alone and head to my bedroom.

I walk past the kids bedroom and find the door open, I take a peek and remember it's tea time.

Busani has on a pink ribbon on his head while Kababa pours both him and Mhlengi some tea.

“What's on the agenda today madam” Busani asks.

“Baba you have to drink some tea first even you Mhlengi” she says.

They both up the cups taking sips.

“Good” kababa says giggling.

She stands up and gets an envelope under her bed handing it to her father.

Busani places his cup on the floor and opens the envelope.

“To the best daddy in the whole world I love how you take care of us and mommy, thank you for the bed time story thank you for chasing away the monster and thank you for my candy money

Baba you are my hero

Love Oyintandokababa” he reads out loud.

I smile that letter is the sweetest thing ever, I didn’t even know about the candy money I guess it’s their thing.

“Thank you princess” he says giving her a hug.

Mhlengi pulls out a letter too while I wipe my tears.

“Did mom put you up to this” he ask.

“No,our teacher said we can write a letters to our heroes” Kababa says.

“I love you dad for always being there when we need you, thank you for raising us and teaching us what is right. I love that God made you my dad when I grow up I want to be just like you. You are my hero Love Mhlengi” he reads out loud and sniffs giving Mhlengi a hug.

“I love you two so much” he says.

“Baba are you crying” Kababa asks pulling away and putting her small hands on his face.

“No I just have something on my eye”he says laughing.

Kababa holds his face and blows air into his eye.

“Is that better baba” she asks.

“Yes thank you princess” he says clearing his throat.

I move along to our bedroom and stand by the window looking out.

The door opens with Busani walking in he walks over and wraps his arms around my waist kissing my neck.

“How was your tea date” I ask.

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26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">He turns me around smiling.

“The best one I have ever had” he says.

“Thank you Mkabayi for mothering these kids,thank you for loving me for making a father” he says.

I place my hand on either side of his face and smile.

“You are my anchor Mphemba my husband my love” he smiles and shakes his head.

“I am sorry that you had to feel so scared for so long,and thank you for staying strong for our kids and always standing by me” he says.

“When you married me I made a vow to stay strong and be by your side, I know a lot of things have happened but I am never going to leave your side” I tell him.

“I thank God for you and kids everyday” he says.

Rain starts pouring from the sky while he holds me tight and whispers in my ears.

“Remember how we met” he asks.

“Busani no don’t even think about it” he picks me up and walks out the bedroom heading for the outside.

“Seniyahlanya nina” Thandazile asks when Busani walks past her with me still in his arms.

I shriek when the rain hits my skin with Busani not letting go.

“You were wearing a dress and you couldn’t find a taxi” he says eating his forehead on mine.

“And you driving around aimlessly” he chuckles and grabs my arse.

“Do you regret ever meeting me” he asks.

“I regret not meeting you sooner Mphemba you have been my peace” his lips part mine having me close my eyes.

“I love you Busani” he cups my breast right in the middle of the rain and chuckles.

“I love you too” he says.

“Can we go back inside now” he looks up to the sky and shakes his head.

“May I have this dance” he says wrapping his arm around my waist.

“This is crazy Busani” I tell him.

He laughs and somehow I think reading the kids letters got him this excited and crazy.

“Indulge me Nathanjekwayo” he says.

We dance in the rain and if it was any other day I wouldn't be seen standing here knowing lightning can strike anytime.

“Ngiyabonga” he says kissing my forehead.

This is so movie like but I won't tell him that.

We make our way inside the house passing Thandazile and the kids. We proceed to our bedroom and take a shower together.

We decide to take a nap with Busani cuddling me.

“Mkabayi” I open my eyes and see Busani all dressed up in his tracksuits.

I yawn still dazed by my sleep

“Sthandwa sam I need to step out but I promise I will be back before you know it”he says

“But it's raining” I tell him.

“I know but I will be back to tuck in the kids” he says.

“Please bring home some ice cream and those chocolate wafer sticks” he kisses my forehead and soon enough I hear the door shutting.

I had to put the kids to sleep because Busani hasn't come yet, the rain has been pouring heavily with thunder and he hasn't been picking up his phone.

“Drink this it will calm you down” Thandizile says giving me some tea.

“I don't want tea Thandazile I need Busani to walk through that door” I shout.

“Mkabayi calm down” she says.

I pace up and down tapping my phone waiting for his call

I try calling him again but he phone goes unanswered,

“Thandazile where is he” I ask.

Something doesn't feel right he should have been home by now.

“I don't know but what I know is that he will come home just calm down” she says .

“Let me go fetch my phone” she says walking out heading to the cottage. I leave my phone on the table and walk her out settling in one of the chairs.

A few minutes pass with the door opening, my heart drops when Thandazile walks in and closes the door behind her.

I run to the living room when my phone rings.

“Hello” the person on the line keeps cutting without me hearing anything.

I hand over the phone to Thandazile who moves away from me for better network coverage.

“Thandazile who is it Bathini” I ask looking at her pale face.

8

Thandazile looked at her sister and tears burned her eyes, the thought of telling her that something bad had happened to Busani broke her heart. The call was clear as daylight and they needed to go to the incident area.

The details were a bit sketchy but she knew that something bad had happened and she didn't even know where to begin telling her little sister that.

Mkabayi looked at Thandazile waiting for her to say something, anything that would put her mind and heart at ease.

"Who was that what did they say" Mkabayi asked her eyes swollen from all the crying and rubbing she had been doing.

Thandazile looked at the phone and thought for a while if they left now who would look after the kids.

Maria wasn't here and they wouldn't take the kids without knowing what lay ahead of them.

She tried speaking but stumbled on her words and choked on my own tears looking at Mkabayi.

"I couldn't hear the caller clearly but something happened to Busani" Thandazile said.

"Is he dead" Mkabayi found the strength to ask.

Thandazile shook her head she didn't know, but she thought her sister was brave for having asked that question.

"Did they give you the address" she asked and Thandazile nodded.

"Please write it down" Mkabayi said rushing to her bedroom.

She closed the door and sank to the floor biting her fist as fear crept in and her heart fell to pit of her stomach.

She knew something was wrong but she held on to fact that her husband was strong and would hold on just for her.

She stood up but her legs failed her, fear did that to her sometimes crippled her that is, she finally gathered the strength she needed and stood up grabbing Busani's jacket putting it on.

She stood for a while and clasped her hands together praying more than she ever did in her entire existence, she then opened the door and walked out finding Thandazile in the living room holding the piece of paper that would lead her to her husband.

"Please stay with the kids I don't want them waking up with no one in the house" she said taking the piece of paper.

She walked out the house and found her way to the garage, she struggled breathing as she held on to the steering wheel.

Busani wouldn't do that he wouldn't allow death to take him not now, not when things were looking up and they were planning to move.

She started the car and drove out, the rain seemed to be passing as a loud crack of thunder hit and her car came to a stand still.

Tears welled up as it felt like her last breathe was leaving her body.

"Busani" she whispered as she started the car driving to the heart of the taxi rank.

She finally approached the place and stopped her car when she saw not one but a number of police cars parked by.

A part of her wanted to run and never look back but she needed to do this if not for her then for her children.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">She stepped out of the car and and it looked like it never rained even though it was a bit dark she could see everything.

One of the police officers spotted her and met her half way.

"Mam please step away this is a crime scene" the police officer said.

Tears fell down her face as the word crime scene rang in her head.

“I am looking for my husband Busani Ntuli” she said in a shaky voice wiping her tears.

“Please wait here” the police officer said walking back to the scene and coming back with a familiar face.

Mkabayi looked up and relief washed over her Cain would clarify things for her.

“You don’t need to be here” Cain told her as she looked behind him seeing more than one dead body lying on the ground.

She looked into his eyes and there it was pity and hurt.

“Move out of my way Cain” she screamed looking at her husband’s bestfriend.

He moved out of the way and Mkabayi slowly walked over to where the dead bodies were, she looked around and saw her husband’s car. She fell to the ground and held her on to her chest as it closed up tears fell down her cheeks, she stood up and walked over to the car and noticed that a body was laying next to it but her legs failed her once again.

Cain ran towards her and tried helping her up but she fought him off pushing him away.

She saw Busani's wedding band and her lips trembled tears falling as she crawled over to the body uncovering it.

She felt her soul leave her body and something tore inside her.

Busani was still holding his gun and right next to him was the plastic of the things she asked for, and two photo frames that had fallen off out of the plastic bag it was the kids letters beautifully framed.

"Busani" she shook him but he remained still not moving.

"Ngiyacela Mphemba please wake up" she pleaded as his eyes didn't open.

She pulled him close shaking him hoping he would open her eyes.

"Busani don't do this to me please, I can't do this without you Mphemba wake up I am begging you" she cried holding on to Busani as the rain started pouring over them.

Cain and the other police officers stood by looking as Mkabayi sobbed holding her husband.

"Ngizozithini lezi Ngane" her loud sobs made men cry as she shook Busani begging him to wake up.

She couldn't believe that her husband could leave her like that, what happened to doing this together, what happened to never leaving each other's side.

She looked to the sky as she pulled Busani close to her chest and cried bitterly.

She wished that all this was a dream but suddenly strong arms held her and pulled her up.

“Leave me alone” she said fighting off these strong arms but Mkhetheni pulled her away and the police covered the body and removed it.

“Leave my husband tell them to leave my husband alone” she said sobbing in Mkhetheni arms.

“Busani” she screamed as her husband’s body got carried to the car.

“It’s okay I am here now” Mkhetheni said still holding her.

I wake up to Thandazile holding my hand I don't remember much but my heart feels heavy, my mind is still foggy I scan the room and realise I am laying in one of the guest bedrooms.

I jump up like my pants are on fire and run to the kids bedroom.

I find Maria fixing their bed she looks at me bursts into tears, I walk into every room of this house calling out for Busani.

I finally reach my bedroom and find his sister Khathazile and his Aunt Snazo fixing the mattress.

"Kwenzekani la where is my husband" I ask.

Khathazile makes her way to me and pulls me inside.

"You need to calm down" she says.

I look at her and chuckle.

"Aunty is this some kind of a joke because I feel like I am in a horrible dream" I tell her.

The door swings wide open and his mother walks in followed by Thandazile.

These people are dressed for mourning.

"Mkabayi Ngane yam" Busani's mother says breaking into a loud sob.

I move away from everyone and stand by the window.

“I need to see Busani someone please call him for me” they all look at me like I am crazy with his mother crying the loudest.

“Sisi Busani was short last night and he didn’t make it”
Thandazile says.

I shake my head not believing her the last time I had a dream Busani was sitting on our bed next to me.

“That’s not true Busani left the house and he said he would be back” I tell them.

Thandazile shuts her eyes and sighs.

“You don’t remember what happened when you left for taxi rank” she asks.

I feel my heart pound and my knees buckle when everything comes back.

A loud piercing sob escapes my lips with Thandizile and Khathazile holding me.

“Hold her” Busani’s aunt says.

“He can’t be dead Busani can’t be dead sisi tell them” his mother cries more.

I look at her as anger consumes me but most of all denial takes over.

I look at the mattress and shake my head.

“I won’t sit on that thing until I see my husband” I tell them.

“Mkabayi please” his mother says.

“We mama ungangiqali please not today” she uses the shawl around her shoulders and covers her face.

“I need to call my husband he promised that he would be home” I tell them.

“Wena Thandazile I don’t understand why you side with these people and lie to me about Busani, please borrow me your phone I need to call him” she looks at Busani’s aunt who nods before giving me her phone.

I dial Busani’s number but the phone rings unanswered.

“He must be in a meeting” I say looking at everyone.

“No he’s not in a meeting he’s gone Busani is gone” Thandazile says.

“Why would you say that, why would you hurt me like that Thandazile” I ask.

Khathazile holds on to her aunt as she breaks into a loud cry.

“I need to call my mother” I say but Thandazile snatches the phone away placing both her hands on my arms.

“You need to snap out of it Mkabayi okay Busani is gone,he was gunned down and he’s dead” she shouts.

I watch tears fall from her eyes and faintly smile.

“If that’s what you want to believe then fine” I say attempting to walk out but have Khathazile and Thandazile hold me back while Aunt Snazo locks the bedroom door.

They sit me down and narate everything that took place while my mind takes in everything that is being said,my hearts denies denies and desputes.

“I am sorry Mkabayi” Aunt Snazo says wiping her tears.

“Ma where is your son” I ask looking at Busani’s mother.

She moves closer to me and holds my hand.

“They killed him sisi they killed my son” she starts wailing again.

I feel my throat burn and close my eyes.

“Bring her a glass of water” Aunt Snazo says.

Khathazile rushes out and comes back with a glass of water followed by Mkhetheni and his father.

His father looks at me and sighs.

I know that he loved his son more than anything in this world.

“How is she holding up” Mkhetheni asks.

“She doesn’t want to believe anything” Khathazile says.

Mkhetheni crouches next to me and takes my hand but I pull it away.

“I am so sorry” he says.

“I need to sleep” I say.

Mkhetheni and his father leave the room while I lay down on the mattress and doze off.

“Sthandwa sam” I slowly open my eyes and smile when I see Busani laying next to me.

He kisses my forehead and smiles entwining our hands.

“Busani what is going on” I ask.

He looks around and laughs

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26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Ngiyeza Bab’ mncane” he says.

I look around but see no one.

“I have to go Nathanjekwayo” he says softly.

“Where are you going” I ask.

He rests his forehead on mine shutting his eyes.

“I will always love you Mkabayi and I will always be here” he says placing his hand on my chest.

“I am sorry that I couldn’t hold on I tried sthandwa sam” he says.

I bite my lip trying to pull away but he holds me still.

“I need you to be strong whatever happens I need you to be strong” he says.

“Angifuni Busani I don’t want to be strong” I say.

“I love you” he says.

“Busani don’t do this please ungayenzi lento” he smiles and stands up turning his back and walking away.

I wake up screaming his name holding my chest, I open my eyes to find everyone looking at me.

“Nathanjekwayo” My father calls out.

I look at him as my lips quiver reality kicking in all these people are here to bury my husband.

“We are here sisi” he says holding me.

“Hayi baba he can’t be gone” he holds me tight as I cry in arms.

“I need to see him, I need to see him Baba” I stand up and my mother holds me.

“Okay you will see him but you need to eat and take a bath first” she says cupping my face.

She takes my hand leading me to the bathroom and helps me bath.

She dresses me up in black dress,doek and shawl.

I look at myself in the mirror tears falling at just 24 I am a widow mourning my husband.

I remember when people said I was too young to get married

“She married young” they would exclaim upon hearing my age.

But I am young to be mourning my husband.

The drive to the hospital morgue is long and draining,I don't know why but Mkhetheni is the one driving the silence and everything is getting to me.

The car finally comes to a halt and that feeling again of knees getting wobbly hits me.

“It's okay I will hold her” My father says.

We make our way inside and get directed to where Busani is.

“I will go in with you” Mama says.

I shake my head no and walk in alone.

I walk over to the body and uncover it seeing my Busani.

“Oh kodwa Mphemba why would you do this to me” I ask looking at his pale face.

I move the sheet further down and see six bullets holes that took him away from him.

“You promised me Busani you said you wouldn’t leave me” I say holding his cold face.

“I can’t do this without you Mphemba please don’t make me do it please” A loud sob comes out.

My mother walks in and holds me.

“It’s okay sisi lets it all out unkulunkuku ukhona” she says.

I pull away from her hold.

“God don’t tell me about God” I shout.

“Mkabayi” she says.

“It’s true ma God forsake me and took my husband away, I thought he was truthful God that he was a faithful God but he’s not”

I hold my chest looking at Busani.

“I prayed to him ma I really did and still he took him away from me, look at him Ma he’s cold and pale and there’s no breathe in

him but I prayed. I prayed Ma why is God doing this to me” she wipes her own tears.

“I know it hurts but please don’t lose your faith” I shake my head swallowing this burning lump on my throat.

“It’s hurts mama so much what am I going to tell my kids, how am I going to live without him” I ask.

“You pray for strength to do all that” she says.

I shake my head my heart is tearing apart.

“I am done praying, you pray to your God he did nothing for me and I am done” I say getting on my knees clasping my hands together.

“Dear Heavenly Father I ask that you take me too, I ask that my soul leaves my body. I ask that you take this pain away and end my life” I say.

“Mkabayi don’t say that” Ma says.

“I curse the day you made me believe in him” she places a hand over her mouth and cries.

“I hate him for taking my Husband away from me” I burst into a bitter cry.

I shut my eyes imagining him holding me but the picture of his pale face floods my brain.

“Mama kubuhlungu ngifuna uBusani” she holds me close letting me cry on her chest with her warm arms draped around me.

Mkhetheni walks in and looks at me.

“You killed him” My father looks at me with eyes filled with tears.

“Mkabayi” Mkhetheni says.

“I will never forgive you for this Mkhetheni” I say looking at him.

“I will never forgive you”

My father walks over to me and lifts me up taking me to the car.

I look at everything happen so fast and I can't do anything to stop it, I feel like I am watching my life play out in front of me without being able to do anything about it.

It's been three days since I saw Busani in that hospital morgue yet my heart just won't believe that I have lost him. I haven't told my kids about their father because I don't know where to begin telling them that he's gone. Where do I start explaining that they will never see their Dad ever again.

Oyintando has been asking about her father while Mhlengi has been quiet and observing everything that has been happening.

My heart breaks everytime when she walks into our bedroom and looks around hoping to see her father, yesterday she asked why we had so many people in the house and I couldn't bring myself to tell them.

I am not allowed to speak my mind and I am not allowed to do anything, his mother made that clear that I am to do everything they say I should do.

I hate that woman but my mother begged me to behave, she asked me to do it for my husband and that what I am trying to doing.

I haven't been to my kitchen and I don't know what it going on in my house since I am only allowed to go to the bathroom.

“I think I should tell them” Busani’s mother says.

She’s been throwing her weight around the house barking orders as if I am not around.

“Ma those are my kids and I will tell them when I think the time is right” I say.

“Even in mourning Mkabayi you can still backchat” she says.

I deeply sigh and look at her.

“For someone who just lost her son you seem fine” I tell her.

She looks at Aunt Snazo and starts sniffing.

“Niyambona this is the rude girl Busani married,I don’t know what my son saw in you” she says.

“He loved me everyone here knows that and they all know you couldn’t stand it” I shout.

“Mkabayi” my mother calls out

“Ma this woman here is evil she pretends to be hurt over Busani’s death but deep down she’s rejoicing” I say.

“Uyangithuka” Busani’s mother says wailing.

“Mkabayi please calm down you are in mourning if you carry on like this uzokonakala” My mother begs.

“Then tell this woman to let me me mourn my husband in peace” I tell them.

Busani’s aunt looks at me and nods her head.

“How do you mourn someone you killed huh, didn’t I say she was after my son’s money and no one believed me” Busani’s mother says.

“Will you be quiet Pricilla” Aunt Snazo says looking at Busani’s mother.

“Mkabayi is Busani’s wife she will tell us how she wants her husband to be buried can you atleast give her that” Aunt Snazo says.

“And he was my son I gave birth to him if it wasn’t for me then she wouldn’t have had a Busani to marry” Busani’s mother shouts.

“And if it wasn’t for you and your son’s greed then my husband would still be alive” I say.

Silence falls upon us once those words part with my lips.

“I might not be able to prove it Ma but you killed Busani, you and your son killed my husband.

namuhla ingane zam yizintandane ngenxa yakho” I tell her.

“I don’t know what I did for you to cause me so much pain by taking him away from me, but I will never forgive you and I pray to my mother’s God that he doesn’t forgive you too and that you burn in hell” I say biting my lower lip.

“It’s okay sisi” Aunt Snazo says.

“May I please see my children” I ask.

Thandazile walks out and comes back holding them by hand.

They jump in and settle next to me with Mhlengi on one side and Oyintandokababa on the other.

I bring the Bambi book and show it to them it’s a story about a small deer prince that lost his mother.

“Are you going to read Bambi for us” Kababa asks.

I shake my head and brush the cover of the book and breathe out heavily.

“I want daddy to read for us” My baby girl says cheerful.

“I will read for you but I want you tell me about Bambi” I say,

They both look at me and smile.

“That’s simple we always do this with Dad” Mhlengi says.

I nod my head.

“Okay then tell mommy about Bambi” I say.

“Bambi is prince he lives in the forest and one day bad people come to forest and hurt his mother” Kababa says.

“That’s true” I say.

Although my mother whispered to them in their sleep they are still asking about their father.

“What happens to Bambi’s mother” I ask.

“Bambi’s mother goes to heaven and never comes back” Mhlengi says.

I wipe my tears and hold them close to me.

I look at my mother and shake my head how do I carry on telling them that their father is in heaven.

“Are you going to heaven mommy” Kababa asks.

“No

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but mommy needs to tell you something very important and I want you to listen very carefully” I tell them.

They both nod their head.

“A few bad people hurt daddy” A lump burn my throat and I struggle to breathe a little.

“Daddy tried fighting but they hurt him bad and he didn’t make it, Daddy is in heaven just like Bambi’s mother and we will never see him again, but he always be with us in our hearts okay” I say.

Mhlengi stands up and looks around the room tears welling up, he might be young but he’s always understood things better than we expect.

“But he didn’t say goodbye” Mhlengi says.

Hearing him say that hits hard i never got to say goodbye, he left and I didn’t know it was the last time I would see him.

“We never said goodbye mama” Kababa says breaking my heart.

I hold both of them tight and bite my lip not wanting to cry.

“I am sorry” The words come out in a whisper.

That’s all I can say a mere sorry because even I don’t know how to console myself.

Kababa cries until she sleeps while Mhlengi holds on tight.

The day passes by quickly with the funeral preparations being made, I hate being in this mattress the finality of it hits hard.

I look up when the door opens with Khathazile walking in holding a tray of food.

Her mother left with Mkhetheni and I didn't even bother asking where they were going.

"I brought you some food" she says.

"Thank you" she looks at the kids sleeping next to me and cries.

"I am sorry Mkabayi I truly am" she says quickly wiping her tears.

"He loved you so much more than anything, when he told me you were moving he was skeptical but happy he was to be doing it with you. I am sorry that she's gone" she says looking at me.

"Thank you" she stands up and walks out.

I wake the kids up so they can eat but Kababa refuses to eat and wants her father.

I try convincing her but she ends up screaming for her father.

The door swings open and Thandazile walks in with Kababa running into her arms, she cries so loud my heart breaks I hold my son close and shut my eyes.

"Cubby come to mommy" she looks at me and shakes her head.

“It’s okay I will look after them” My sister says.

“Woza Mhlengi” Thandazile says.

The door shuts and just like that I am left alone, I asked my mother to look after my house to oversee everything that is being done.

I get up from the mattress and make my way to Busani’s study, I shut the door and turn the key walking over to his chair.

I run my hands over the chair and finally sit down grabbing a glass and pouring myself his Hennessy X.O cognac.

I take the picture of our wedding perfectly framed and hug it, I chuckle thinking about him asking me why I am drinking.

“Nothing will ever be the same Mphemba” I say.

I look at the photo and smile he was so happy when he said I do.

I don’t know what to do with myself, I wish I could open myself up and take out the most painful part.

“I miss you so much” I try holding myself but a bitter cry leaves my mouth.

I get on my feet and thrash his office.

All this and he’s not here how do I move on knowing I will never wake up next to him.

“Mkabayi” Mkhetheni calls out knocking on the door.

I grab the whole bottle and gulp it down, Mkhetheni finally breaks the door and walks in.

He stands by the door and looks at me.

“Mkabayi don’t do this your self” he says sounding genuine.

“Are you happy” I ask.

He looks at me puzzled but I know better than to trust him.

“I will make you pay for this Mkhetheni” I say.

My father walks in and takes the bottle away from me.

“Please excuse us Ntuli” he says looking at Mkhetheni.

“Cubby you need pull yourself together please” he says.

“It’s hard Baba” I tell him.

“I know but this too shall pass” he says.

“We are here for you and I need you to respect and honor your husband one last time” I nod my head standing up.

He walks me back to my bedroom and meets my mother at the door.

“Ngiyabonga baba” my mother says helping me inside.

“Guilty conscious has a way of doing that to you drive you to the bottle, I knew something was wrong with the moment I laid eyes on you now I know ungumbulali nx” Busani’s mother’s says.

I think about my father’s words and bite my tongue settling down on the mattress.

I look at my wedding ring and sigh so much is going through my mind, how will I get tomorrow knowing that we lay my husband to rest for forever. I don't know how to be strong without thinking about my kids and that fact that they have just lost their father.

Busani wasn't just a husband and father to me but to many other wives whose husbands worked for him.

I have decided who let my mother in law do things the way she fits, from the funeral program to the coffin he will be buried in. I only asked that he wear his wedding suit because he always said if he died that's what we should bury him. He always said our wedding day was the happiest day of his life following the birth of our kids and that the suit was his lucky suit.

I have been keeping my head down like a respectful and dutifully makoti should, If there is one thing I am grateful for is that my parents and Thandazile are here and helping me with the kids.

I look up when the door opens and Thandazile walks in followed by Nqaba.

Thandazile locks the door and looks at me.

"He asked to see you alone" she says.

“It’s okay” I say.

Nqaba settles on the chair closer to the mattress and holds my hands.

He was Busani’s right hand man he knew his every move and Busani trusted him with his life.

He sighs and lets go of my hand rubbing his forehead.

“I am sorry Mkabayi” he says.

“It’s okay Nqaba such is life” I tell him.

He shakes his head.

“I swear to God if I knew what they were planning then I would have given my life for him” he says.

“I know you loved him Nqaba but he’s gone now and there’s nothing we can do about it” I tell him.

“Nqaba what happened” I ask.

He looks at Thandizile probably not trusting her.

“She would never say anything” I tell him.

“He wasn’t killed by strangers if that was the case then we would have known and we would have been prepared” he says.

“On the day of the shooting he called me and said Mkhetheni had called him to come to the taxi rank but he never showed

up, he the called me in the middle of the shooting to tell me that the call was to lure him into a trap and that Mkhetheni had betrayed him. He was alone outnumbered and that's how they managed to kill him, by the time I got there it was too late he was gone and the police were some how already on their way" he sighs and wipes his tears.

I have never seen Nqaba shed tears beside when he lost him mother.

"I was taken in for questioning I was only released this morning" I nod my head.

"Today I went past the taxi rank and the men told me that Mkhetheni and his mother have been frequent at the taxi rank asking questions and ordering people around, Mkhetheni has been telling the that he's now the boss.

I don't know what is going on but my loyalty lies with you and so does that of Busani's man, we will stand with you no matter what" he says.

"Thank you Nqaba" I say.

"What should we do with Mkhetheni" he asks.

"Nothing" I say.

He looks at me surprised and eventually nods his head.

“I don’t know if its possible but we would like to accompany him for the last time” he says.

Images of Busani’s last journey on this earth hits me.

“I would like that very much and Nqaba please tell your men that I said thank you” he stands up and Thandizile opens the door for him.

She comes back after walking Nqaba out and settles next to me.

“Now you have your answer as to why he hasn’t bee around” Thandizile says.

“He sold his own brother” I say.

I look at her tears welling up.

“Mkheteni sold his own brother” I whisper.

“Mkabayi don’t do this the law will deal with him” she says.

“What law Thandazile huh the one that hasn’t found Busani’s killer”I ask.

“What are you going to do” she asks.

“Nothing I am going to do nothing” I say swallowing the burning lump on throat.

The door swings open with Busani’s mother walking in she looks at me and puts one hand on her hip.

“Is everything okay mama” I ask.

“I was at Mr Shaw’s offices and they said he wasn’t available to talk to me” she says

“Okay” I say calmly.

She looks at me fuming.

“When I finally spoke to his son he said they weren’t at liberty to say anything” she says.

“Because you are not Busani’s wife” I tell her staying the obvious.

“But I am his mother he should be able to talk to me about my son’s affairs” she shouts.

Aunt Snazo walks in followed by my mother they have been seeing to it that everything is ready for tomorrow.

“Pricilla yini umsindo” Aunt Snazo asks.

“uMa went to Shaw and Son to enquire about Busani’s will I suppose and they couldn’t help her” I say.

Shock riddle Aunt Snazo as she looks at Pricilla.

“Wenzi” Aunt Snazo asks.

“I was just trying to help seeing that Mkabayi is grieving” Busani’s mother says.

“No one asked for your help Pricilla shouldn't you be sitting on the mattress grieving”

She looks at everyone and sighs.

“I just want to know if my son's things are in order” she says.

“Thank you for your help Ma but I as Busani's wife will see to it that everything is in order” I say.

“Can I sleep please I need to rest tomorrow we are burying your son and my heart aches thinking about it” I say.

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If ever there was a day I wish never came is this one, I don't know if I should scream or cuss at God one more time for allowing this to happen.

Everyone is ready for church while I look at myself in mirror so this is what it feels like to be a young widow, this is how it feels like to wale alone search for the person you said I do too. I shut my eyes darn it this is how it feels when death do you apart.

I put on my flat shoes and doek I never thought I would sitting here alone about to say goodbye to my love.

“It's time sisi” Thandazile says.

I brace myself for day and walk out my bedroom going into the kids.

They run into my arms and hug me tightly.

“Today we lay daddy to rest okay, I don’t want you to be strong if you miss Daddy and want to cry then hold mommy and cry” they both nod their head and each hold my hand.

I walk out of the house with Mhlengi and Oyintandokababa on either side.

The drive to church is quiet with Kababa holding on to me tightly while Mhlengi acts like the big man he said he was.

We finally arrive at church and take our seats.

“I don’t want to leave daddy alone, we can’t leave him alone” Mhlengi says.

I look at him then the coffin and breathe how am I supposed to answer that.

A pig portrait of him rests beside the coffin, his beautiful smile flashes and if I didn’t know better I would say he is smiling at me.

I look around and notice his family his mother crying the loudest and his father looking like a part of him has been ripped out.

I look at Mkhetheni take to the podium and say a few words about his brother.

“Don’t do it” Thandizile says.

Mkhetheni looks my way and clears his throat.

“I want you to know that I will always be here for you and the kids. My brother loved you so much and I will carry on his duty of taking care of you and the kids” He says.

My mind trails off as the service goes on and on till my turn to speak about you husband comes.

Thandazile stands up and walks to the podium holding my letter.

“Dear Mphemba today we lay you to rest sthandwa sam, today we say goodbye to you forever. I never thought this day would come where I look at your coffin and know that I am never going to wake next to you ever again.

These past few days have hard waking up without you, I don’t know what do with myself Mphemba. Yesterday it hit me that I have lost my love I want to be strong sthandwa sam but I don’t know how to be that. I miss you and I will always love and remember you as my best-friend,lover husband and father of my kids.

I know you tried your best sthandwa to hold on for us but it was hard.

Ngiyakuthanda myeni wam lala uphumule Ntuli Mphemba omuhle” she clears her throat and walks back.

The time to leave for the cemetery comes with everyone standing up.

Busani’s coffin gets carried out with me holding the kids as we follow suit.

I tighten my grip on the kids hands and walk head tall accompanying my husband to his final resting place.

A hymn starts and I feel like letting out a bitter cry and begging God to bring him back even if it’s just to say goodbye.

‘Xa bufik'ubumnyama nobubi emhlabeni

Intliziyo yob'ilindele intsindiso

noluncedo

Umasendiwelile ngaphesheya Kwe-

Jordan

Ingelosi yob'isindibiza ethuneni lika-

Yehave

Ziyosulwa iinyembezi nokufa nezintsizi

Ayibalwa iminyaka ubusuku abukho

Yonk'imihla ngemihla

Ndiyoculeli'nkosi

Inyembezi zosulwe nya

Uvalo luphele nya

Mhla sendifika kuye

Yena wondibamba ngesandla

Andombathi'singubo

Bese mina njalo ndihlale naye

Ziyosulwa iinyembezi nokufa nezintsizi

Ayibalwa iminyaka ubusuku abukho

Thina sobusa no-Jesu

Sohlala naye

Sophakamis'ubukhulu bakhe

Sithi bayethe

Sithi uphakeme mdali wezulu nomhlaba

Nguwe wedwa, nguwe wedwa

owafel'izono zethu,

“Lala uphumule Mphemba” I whisper biting my lip.

“Mkabayi” Nqaba shouts when loud gun shots go off and people start screaming.

Kababa and Mhlengi’s hands slip from mine when I fall to the ground.

12

It is said that when you die your life flashes before your eyes but mine never did or maybe in that moment it just wasn't my time.

I know I got shot and fell to the ground I could hear my kids calling out for me, I heard my daughter scream from the top of her lungs and I couldn't keep my eyes open.

In that moment I realised what Busani felt wanting to hold on and stay awake but feel your body lose the battle of waiting.

I open my eyes and lift my heavy head from the pillow.

"Careful you might hurt yourself" My mother's sweet soothing voice says.

"You are in the hospital" she says

I nod my head but still try to sit up straight.

"Mkabayi you will hurt yourself please" she begs.

"Ma I have a husband to bury" I say.

She looks at me and parts her lips bringing them closer again.

"I feel fine Ma but we need to go now" I tell her.

"Where are the kids Ma" I ask.

"Thandazile took them home" she says.

I nod my head it's good that they are home after the shooting.

"Mkabayi you have been sleeping for two days this is your third" she says.

"Okay" I say recollecting my thoughts.

"The Ntuli's buried Busani on the day of the shooting" she says

I look at her and laugh.

"Ma that's impossible" I say.

"Ngiyaxolisa Sisi but they buried him when we took you to the hospital his mother said the funeral must proceed" she says.

I feel my chest tighten and tears well up.

"Why" I ask.

"I don't know sis" she says.

"Mama why would they bury him without me present, he was my husband I stayed with that man for years" she nods her head and holds me tight.

"I know Ngane yam and I am sorry that you are going through this" I pull away raising my head.

"Ma they took him away and now they took this away from me, they buried Busani and I wasn't there" I say.

“Did the kids go” she shakes her head and my heart sinks the least they could have done was take my kids so they could see where they laid their father to rest.

“Mkabayi these people are evil sisi I have never seen such in my entire life” she says.

“They buried him ma ngingekho couldn’t they wait for me” I ask.

She holds me tight.

“Unkulunkuku uzokuphendulela” she says.

“Kungani engaphendulanga when they killed him,when they buried him?” I ask.

“I am taking you home your father and I talked about this we are taking you and the kids home” she says.

“My home is here mama with Busa..” my voices trails off home is not home without him anymore.

“Please these people will kill you and I won’t handle it let us take you home, your sister and I can take care of you” she says.

“I can’t leave mama” I tell her.

“Ufuna ukufa Mkabayi huh look at what they did to you” she says.

The door opens and my father walks in.

“Cubby” he says.

I look at him and my lips quiver my father has always been there for us.

He used to call me cubby when I was young, and then I gave birth to Oyintandokababa then he started calling her that.

“You scared us” he says.

“They can’t kill me even if they try” I tell him.

He laughs and looks at my mother.

“Have you spoken to her” he asks looking at my mother.

“I tired baba but she doesn’t want to hear anything” mama says looking at me.

“I will go get the doctor please talk to her” she says walking out.

He grabs a chair and takes my hand into his kissing it.

“Will you come home with us” he asks.

I shake my head and watch him smile.

“There are days I wish you were a boy because your resilience and strong stubborn nature is that of a man” he says.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“I love you and I know these people have treated you badly but coming home will help you” he says.

“Mkabayi these people are after his money and they will kill you and anyone who stands in the way for it” he says.

I wipe my tears and smile.

“They won’t get their hands on the money” I tell him.

“Because you plan on fighting them” I nod my head.

“And what about your children what will become of them if you die” he asks.

“Walk away from this Mkabayi I am begging you after what I saw I will never forgive myself if I let anything happen to you” he says.

“Nothing will happen to me baba but I would like it if you take the kids with you until things have settled down” I tell him

“That we can do your mother missed them” he says.

“I am sorry that I can’t protect you from all this” he says.

“It’s okay baba” I say.

Thandazile walks in carrying a bouquet flowers.

“Baba” Thandizile says.

“Nathanjekwayo” Baba says smiling.

“Ma is asking for you” Thandazile says.

He stands up and walks out.

“How are feeling” she asks.

I shrug my shoulder God knows I feel empty.

She snuggles up next to me holds me.

“I am so sorry” she says.

“It’s okay” I say resting my head on her shoulder.

“I miss growing up when I would take all your hidings and make everything better” she says.

We both laugh my sister was and still is the best,I was always in trouble but she would take the fall for me. Back then things were simple but now not everything can be fixed with a snap of the finger.

“I miss it too” I say.

“I asked baba to take the kids with them” she nods her head.

“Please don’t leave Ngicela unghambi sisi” I say.

“I won’t leave you” she says.

We stay like that till the doctor walks in and asses me, I was shot on the shoulder but somehow slept for three days because my body was exhausted.

I am told that I will be leaving later in the day and the only thing I look forward to is seeing my kids.

Thandazile drives me home and the moment we get there I see different cars in the drive way. She parks in next to Mkhetheni's car and comes to me side to help me get out of the car.

We walk inside and anger fills me up when I see Mkhetheni's first wife Phumzile in my kitchen.

I walk past her and in to the living room finding Busani's mother and her son.

"Mkabayi" Mkhetheni says standing up.

I look at them and thoughts of proceeding with Busani's burial come crashing.

"We were going to come check up on you" he says.

"Where is Busani" I ask looking at them.

"We buried him we were not going to wait for you to wake up from your sleep" his mother says.

"You hate me that much" I ask.

She stands up and walks over to me.

“You wanted to take my son away from him it was only fair I take this away from you” she says.

I want to slap the evilness out of her but I remember that I am still mourning my husband.

I step away and breathe.

“You had no right to bury him ngingekho” I say.

“I had every right angithi he’s my son and I birthed him” she says.

“In fact I think it’s best you start packing since you no longer have a place in this family” she says.

I swallow hard hearing her say that hurts.

“If you think you will get Busani’s money then you are sadly mistaken, I want all of you out of my house by the time I wake up” I tell them.

His mother laughs out loud and claps her hands together.

“Listen to me and listen good you came into my son’s life with nothing but a belly and you will leave with nothing uyangizwa” she says.

“Leave her Mkabayi let’s get you rested” Thandazile says.

I turn around and walk to my bedroom feeling gutted why am I being tested like this,why are they still in my house tormenting me. She's not even sorry for burying her son without me there his wife.

13

My house is full of strangers and they refuse to leave, I can't scream nor mourn Busani in peace with all this happening.

If only I knew what married life had in store for me then I don't think I would have married him. I don't think I would have given myself to this man freely had I known I would lose him along the way in the most heartbreaking way.

My parents left early in the morning they had to my father didn't want to stay another day in this house with these people.

It was hard letting go of my children.

I feel like I made them lose another parent so soon after losing their father.

Busani's mother couldn't wait to remind just how much of a bad parent I am, she told me to my face that she would take them away from me.

I deeply sigh getting out of bed seen hard today, I have been awake all morning but I can't seem to get out of bed and get on with my day.

I don't know what to do with myself suddenly nothing makes sense everything is messed up.

Thandazile walks in carrying a tray of food and closes the door.

“Morning” she says placing the food in front of me.

“Morning sisi” I say.

She walks over to the window and opens the curtains up.

“It’s a sunny day today” I nod my head and smile even though I feel gloomy.

“I was thinking we could bake just to take your mind off things” she says.

I laugh shaking my head not even baking can lift my mood up, nothing will so much needs to be said but to whom because these people take me for a fool.

These people don’t see me and they mock me whenever I try to make them see reason.

“I want to go to Busani’s grave” I tell her.

“Okay I will drive you” she says.

“Thank you” she nods and sits down facing the window.

I move the tray without touching the food and lay down facing her.

“Mkabayi you need to eat” she says.

“I am not hungry” I tell her.

“You know he wouldn’t want you starving yourself” Aunt Snazo says shutting the door.

“But he’s not here anymore to speak for himself” I tell her.

“I know it doesn’t seem like it but you will be fine everything will pass” she says.

I smile looking at her this woman has been trying to be the peace maker in this house since she got here, but her word alone isn’t enough when her brother watches everything unfold and does nothing.

“I want you to go home ma and have some rest and grieve for Busani” I say.

“I am sorry that I couldn’t stop the burial” she says.

“It’s okay ma bab’Ntuli was supposed to put his foot down but he didn’t” I tell.

“My brother is no longer the man he used to be” she says deeply sighing.

“I know and it hurts to see him fade away and become a shell of a man with time” I say.

“I will always be here for you Mkabayi whenever you need me” she says.

“I need you to go home ma that’s all. I want you to be home, I can’t afford to lose you too” I say.

She gives me a hug and stands up walking away.

“I will run you a bath” Thandizile says.

I get up and make my bed carefully placing the pillows and smiling.

If Busani was here I would be on the floor ridding him or we would be fighting about the alignment of pillows.

I make my way to the bathroom and take a quick shower, I walk and find my clothes already on the bed.

“Inzilo” I whisper.

I get dressed and look at myself in the mirror black has always been my favorite but no this kind.

I grab my bag and walk out heading to the kitchen.

“Morning Mkabayi” Busani’s mother says.

“Morning ma I hope you slept well” I say proceeding to the kitchen.

“Please join us in the living room” she says.

I place my bag on the kitchen counter and walk to the living room finding Mr Shaw junior.

I take a seat and look at Busani's mother wearing a proud smile on her face.

"Mrs Ntuli I am sorry for your loss" he says.

"Thank you" I say.

"May we please start as you can see we all have busy days"
Busani's mother says.

I want to ask her how dare she call my husband's lawyers who happen to be my lawyers too without telling me.

"I believe my father called you with regard to the reading of the will" I nod my head.

"Very well I will proceed" he says.

"The last will and testament of Busani Ntuli" he says clearing his throat.

"Can you please skip the unnecessary grammar and get to who gets what and when" Busani's mother says.

"I Busani Ntuli leave all my possessions properties, businesses and money to my wife Mkabayi Ntuli sole heir to my inheritance" The lawyer reads.

Busani's mother gasps grabbing the piece of paper Mr Shaw had in his hands.

“My father will contact you with the detailed documents concerning everything” he says looking at me.

“What do you mean everything goes to Mkabayi” Mkhetheni asks.

“Your brother wanted it that way” Mr Shaw says.

“Mr Shaw senior was your brother’s lawyer and at the moment he’s not available but as soon as he is, the detailed will be read out stating that all that Mr Ntuli has is to be given to his wife only. I only came here as a courtesy to my father and Mrs Ntuli apart from your persistence” He says.

“My brother was not that stupid he would never give Mkabayi the taxi business never” Mkhetheni says.

“Well if you wish to contest the will I suggest you get a lawyer” he says looking at me.

“Congratulations Mrs Ntuli you have just become a rich woman” he says standing up.

“As soon as my father lands you will be contacted” he says walking out.

I look at Busani’s mother fuming finding it hard to breathe.

“If that was all I would like to be excused” I say.

“I would like all of you to be out of my house when I get back” I tell them standing up.

I don't reach the far with Busani's mother grabbing me.

I push her off and a slap lands on my face.

“What did you feed him” she asks.

“Ngamnika inquza I guess it was so good it had him signing everything to me” I say.

Another slap lands on my face.

Unlike you I didn't feed my husband some love potion and ended up having him weak and a shell of what he used to be” I say.

“That's enough” Mkhetheni shouts.

“Don't even talk to me you woman beater your brother was a better man than you will ever be. You are nothing but a weakling Mkhetheni a sorry excuse of man” I say.

He grabs my arm and pulls me closer to him.

“I am not Busani say that one more time” he says through gritted teeth.

“You are a sorry excuse of a man my husband was a better man than you” I say.

“I dare you” Thandazile says walking up to us.

Mkhetheni puts his hand down and let's go of my arm.

"This is not over" his mother says.

I breathe out shutting my eyes if Thandazile hadn't walked in then Mkhetheni wouldn't have hesitated.

"Thank you sisi" she gives me a hug.

"Stop provoking this man if he can beat his wives who are you" she asks.

"I am Mkabayi Ntuli" I say.

She pulls away and laughs.

Thandazile cracks a few jokes while driving to the cemetery with me telling her about the will.

"And we are here" she says.

"Come lets go" I shake my head no.

"Stay in the car I want to do this alone" I say.

"Okay I will be here waiting" she says.

I get out of the car and walk towards Busani's grave. The soil is still fresh and red one can tell it's a new grave.

I get on my knees and run my hands over the soil, a tombstone will be erected during the weak.

I had everything planned out everything I wanted to say I knew but now my mouth runs dry.

I run out of things to say and simply settle for silence.

“I can’t say goodbye Mphemba saying goodbye hurts” I say standing up.

I walk to the car and realize saying goodbye is hard, if I pour my heart out now then I am saying goodbye and freeing myself from him in a way and I don’t want that.

I get in the car and Thandazile looks at me.

“You’re not crying” she says.

“Sisi I don’t know how to let go, I don’t know to accept that this is happening that he’s gone” I tell her.

“It’s going to take time but I know you will get there” she says.

We drive home going past my favorite Chinese shop for takeaways.

She parks the car while I dash inside making my way to the toilet.

“Thandazile please bring my phone I need to call Ma and check on the kids” I say.

It takes a while till I decide to go look for her, I find her on the couch tears falling from her eyes.

“Sisi what’s wrong” she quickly wipes her tears and switches off the phone. “Nothing” she says.

I notice that the phone she’s holding is mine.

“Let me see” I say extending my hand.

“It’s just article nothing more” she says.

“Okay let me see that article so we can cry together then” I say.

“Thandazile give me the damn phone” she gives me the phone her hands shaking.

I switch it on and go through my texts messages finding nothing, I move to my WhatsApp and find Mkhetheni at the top of the chat list.

I tap on his name and find a video.

“Hear how your better man begged for his life” The text following the video says.

I feel my knees get wobbly and my heart race as I press play on the video.

“Jehova” the word leaves my mouth as I watch Busani on his knees already bleeding with his gun still in his hand.

“Mkabayi please don’t watch that” Thandazile says.

He tells them that he has kids and a wife but they still gun him down.

“Hayi hayi” the gun shots go off till he’s down on the ground.

The phone slips out of my hands. “Mkabayi”Thandazile calls out.

I run to Busani’s study and open his safe taking out a loaded gun.

“Uyaphi” she asks following behind me.

I grab my car keys and jog to my car driving out.

Tears blur my sight and my arm hurts but I keep on driving.

I drive through passing red lights not caring, I get to Mkhetheni’s house and Phumzile let’s me in.

“If it isn’t my noble brother’s wife” Mkhetheni says chuckling.

“How could you do that,why?” I ask tightly clasping at my bag.

He takes the last sip of his drink and sighs.

“Him negotiating to be let go I see but him begging that was classic didn’t you think” he says laughing.

Tears fall down my cheeks the more he speaks the more anger consumes .

“The great Busani falls and begs pathetic if you ask me” he says turning his back me.

I pull out the gun and cock it, he turns and I let out three shots I stagger to the back due to my shoulder.

He falls on his knees and images of Busani begging them to spare his life come blazing.

“Mkabayi” he says blinking.

I let out another two shots and watch him fall bleeding.

Phumzile comes running and screams turning Mkhetheni over.

“Mkabayi what have you done” she asks looking at me.

“Call an ambulance” she shouts grabbing her dish cloths trying to stop the bleeding.

I watch her beg Mkhetheni to stay awake and I feel sorry for her, this man once broke her ribs and cracked her skull yet she still cries for him.

I feel sorry for her because this is the only man she knows and ever loved yet he was never faithful and true.

“Let him die Phumzile he deserves it” I say.

I look at him coughing and wish death takes its time taking him and that he feels the pain.

I walk out of the house and get into the driving out not knowing where my next stop will be.

14

I drive around aimlessly not knowing where to go till it dawns on me that I have shot and possibly killed a man. I stop the car outside Nqaba's house and cry making sure my well of tears is dry as the Kalahari desert.

He comes running to the car and gets in shutting the door.

"I shot him Nqaba" he looks at me puzzled.

"I shot Mkhetheni and I don't know if he's alive or not" I tell him.

"Where is he now" he asks.

"I left him at his house" I say.

He cusses under his breath and looks at me.

"Where is the gun" he asks.

"I need to get rid of this gun and go to his house so I can rid of the body" he says.

I shake my head when it hits that I might be sitting here as a murderer, I am no different from Mkhetheni and his mother.

"Okay I will take the fall" he says looking at me.

I quickly shake my head I can't let Nqaba go to jail for something he didn't do.

“I need to go to the police and hand myself over” I say.

“Let me go to his house first and check then we can go to the police, but for now please go home” he says.

“I will drive behind you kodwa ngethembise sisi that you will not go to police” he says.

“I won’t go to the police” I tell him.

He gets out of the car and gets into his driving out.

We both drive into our separate direction with him driving to Mkhetheni’s house while I drive home.

I get home and find Thandazile pacing up and down.

I put my bag on the kitchen counter and pour myself a glass of water splashing water on my face.

“Mkabayi what did you do” she asks.

I don’t get to answer her as the intercom for the gate goes off and Thandazile let’s whoever is at the gate in, my first thought is Nqaba. But a loud knock comes through at the door and soon the whole house is filled with police officers.

“Mkabayi Ntuli” I nod my head.

“You are under arrest for the shooting of Mkhetheni Ntuli” one says handcuffing me.

“Officer you have the wrong person my sister is not a killer”
Thandazile says.

“Call Baba then my lawyer” I tell her.

I get dragged out of the house.

“Thandazile tell them to bring Nqaba with” I shout.

I get escorted like a criminal and get shoved into a private car.

The drive is long and quiet making me wonder where we are headed, I look outside the window and only realize now that the windows are tinted making it hard for me to see anything.

“We are here” one of the officers says.

The door opens and I get pulled out of the car and thrown to the ground.

“Pick her up” relief washes over me when I hear Cain’s voice.

I get dragged to what seems like a building.

“Cain” I call out.

He walks in wearing his formal clothes, I look around and notice that he’s not the only one but a few familiar faces too aren’t wearing their uniform.

“What did you do” he asks making his way to me.

I manage to sit up straight and look at me

“Can you give me a moment boys” he says.

His goons walk out leaving the two of us alone.

“All you had to do was turn a blind eye and let him run his brother’s business” Cain says crouching down forcefully grabbing my chin.

“You know Busani didn’t want him handling the business” I say.

“I don’t care what Busani wanted” he shouts.

My eyes widen when it dawns on me that Busani has been surrounded by enemies instead of friends and family.

“You were in on it all along you knew Mkhetheni killed him” he laughs bringing my face closer to his.

“So many people have a lot riding on this and we won’t let you mess it up” he says.

“Why are you doing this” I ask.

“Money and power Mkabayi” he says.

“I have always liked you Mkabayi so much” he whispers

I feel sick when his tongue runs up my face.

Why am I surrounded by dirty sick men who see nothing wrong in hurting and violating women.

He moves his hands up my thighs and rubs his finger over my underwear.

I look at him this man played with my kids him and his wife babysat for us sometimes, Busani trusted him with his life they were best friends.

I clasp my thighs together and let my tears fall.

“Please don’t do this” I beg.

“Just one night with me won’t hurt, Busani is dead he won’t know and I won’t tell” he says.

“Cain please” he puts a hand over my mouth and forces his finger inside my underwear.

I bite my lower lip and hold my breathe as he pushes his finger inside my walls.

“You’re so tight no wonder Busani never cheated” he says hissing.

He vigorously starts moving his finger pushing in the second one, I scream and kick which is the only thing I can do as my hands are tied.

“Please stop” I beg him to stop but he goes hard and eventually pulls his fingers out and pulling down his pants.

“Cain no” I say trying to back away but he pulls my legs bringing me close.

“Suck it” he says.

He slaps me across the face and grabs me by my hair.

“If you want to walk out of this place alive do it” he says.

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">He pushes my head tightly pulling at my hair.

I look at his big cock and gag almost puking.

He strokes himself using one hand while the other pushes my head.

I put him in my mouth and hear him moan.

“Yes that’s it” he says.

I bite him hard and hear his manly screams fill the entire building followed by a hard blow to my head.

“What the hell” another voice asks.

“Teach her a lesson but be careful with the face” Cain says painfully groaning.

Despite my deserting God I say a silent prayer that these man don’t kill me.

I feel kicks all over my body followed by punches till I cough out blood.

“You are so stupid Mkabayi all we want is the Taxi business” He shouts.

“Sign everything to Mkhetheni and this possible murder case will be dropped” he says.

I can hear the agony in his voice but being beaten like this causes me more agony and pain.

The last kick has me thinking about my kids and if I will ever see them again, my stubbornness has gotten me in trouble before but not this kind.

“I will do it” my voice comes out low but I will do anything to get out of this place.

“Finally” he says.

I don't hear much after that because I pass out from the beatings.

I wake up in a holding cell after being splashed with cold water, I am still in my mourning clothes but my shoes seem to be missing.

“Akusi semqhashweni la vuka” one police officer says.

I have heard of police brutality but I never thought I would experience it first hand.

Cain makes his way in finding it difficult to walk.

If it was any other day I would be proud of what I did to him but I feel disgusted more than anything.

I slowly sit up and breathe tears stinging my eyes.

“Clean yourself up your lawyer is here to see you” he says.

“And don’t make the mistake of thinking that I will let what happened slide” he says.

“And if I had a chance I would cut it off and feed it to you” I say.

He walks away and soon I am led to where my lawyer is.

I find David sitting with Thandizile, my sister runs to me and gives me a hug.

I yelp when she squeezes me and almost fall.

“Hey” she says holding me before my body hits the ground.

“What did they do to you” She asks.

Tears fall when what Cain and those men did to me flashes.

She helps me down and reaches for my face her warm hands wiping my tears.

“I read through your charge sheet and your charges are serious, if your brother in law doesn’t wake up then I am afraid you will be charged for premeditated murder” he says.

I feel numb my body hurts.

“But she’s wasn’t in her right mind she didn’t plan this she was provoked, there is evidence in her phone that shows that” Thandazile says.

“But the police have her phone and there’s nothing on it” David says.

I feel like the walls are closing in on me.

“I want to sell the taxi business” I blurt out.

They both look at me like I am crazy.

“That’s insane that is one lucrative business and it will make you more money” David says.

I slowly get on my feet and lift up my dress not carrying if he seen my nakedness.

“This is what they did to me last night because of that business,they need me alive to sign the business to Mkhetheni. I had to lie and say I would do it just so they could stop” he clenches his jaws while Thandazile stares in disbelief.

I fix my dress and slowly sit down.

“I will speak to the Captain about this” he says.

“Don’t bother he won’t listen to you I bite his cock while he violated me” His eyes widen and Thandazile puts a hand over her mouth.

“Did he rape you” She asks.

I shake my head.

Cain owns this whole station he’s the Captain and now suddenly acting station commander.

“I know that after this they might get a way to freeze everything, so I am asking you to please draft papers for the sale of the transport business” I tell him.

“I can do that but won’t that get you killed” He asks.

“I want the offer to have a clause stating that whoever buys the business will kill Cain Mentjies” I say.

“I can’t do that seeing to it that someone is killed” he says in a low voice.

“You are one of the few people I trust please I am begging you, I will pay you for your services” I say.

“Okay but this needs to be done quickly” he says.

“One more thing please sell it to the most ruthless man you know” I say.

He nods his head standing up.

“Let me make a few calls so we can get you out of this place today” he says.

He walks out and Thandazile moves her chair coming to my side.

“Phephisa mtakama” she says hugging.

“I wanted him to feel what Busani felt, I wanted him to beg him for his life but I have gone and opened a whole can of worms.

I didn't think about my kids Sisi I didn't think I just shot him, whether he dies or not I go to Jail these people will sure that I rot in prison” she hugs me tight.

“I am sorry” she says.

“I might as well screw them over right” she pulls away and shakes her head.

“Whatever happens to me please take care of my babies please” she nods her head holding me.

The blows keep coming my way and for the first time I don't know which one to block, my father couldn't come because he collapsed soon after hearing I shot a man. I should be grateful though to my mother for bringing the kids over and leaving her husband to come see me.

Nqaba on the other was found dead in the same building I was took to, I feel guilty for ever dragging him into whatever this is.

I swear it feels like I am in a nightmare of some sort waiting for death so can I wake up.

On the other hand Busani's mother has been breathing down my neck, while Cain and his people keep reminding me that they can end me any time.

I don't remember feeling this small, David took me through the whole taxi business and I realized this is more than I can handle.

No wonder men with deep pockets want it Busani's trucks and taxis own half the routes they want, his trucks can cross borders and contain any shipment without question.

I didn't know know all this but once David walked me through it I saw why they killed him, he must have refused to do their dirty work and of course Mkhetheni would do it hence he needed to be at the helm of things.

I have been home for three weeks now awaiting trial and no matter how I look at this I am going to prison.

Mkheteni slipped into a coma and hasn't woken up.

Frankly I wish him not to wake I prefer him dead or crippled it would suit me either way.

I am still in mourning yet I have done things a widow shouldn't, I look at Busani's photo and sigh.

"Oh Mphemba I wish you were here to hold my hand, I miss you sthandwa sam and in just a week I now understand your calmness in every situation. I now understand and value your way of doing things because I need that right now" I smile running my finger over the frame.

"Bangakhela uzungu Mphemba everyone of them" I say.

A soft knock comes through and Thandazile walks in, I don't think I could have done it without her here and I grateful to have a sister like her.

"David called" she says.

I don't have a phone and I decided against having another one.

"What did he say" I ask.

"He found a buyer and they have agreed to your terms and conditions" she says.

“So they are going to kill him” I ask.

“Yes and the price to buy is more than enough, it’s like this person wants this and has been waiting for a very long time” she says.

“This is how the Ntuli’s created their wealth by buying taxi’s” I say.

“You need to call him back to confirm the offer” she says.

“I will” I say.

“What happens after this” she asks.

“I talked to David and he will fix everything you guys will not want for anything” I say,

“That’s not what I am asking and you know it” she says.

Of course I know what she’s asking but who wants to accept they are going to jail.

“I am going behind bars Thandazile I will be arrested for trying to kill a man” I say.

“Years will pass by and I won’t be there to see my kids grow, I will miss them everyday till my heart learns to live without them. I will cry myself to sleep till I learn that once the lights switch off that’s it time to sleep and allow those walls to eat away at me” I say.

“Don’t talk like that Mkabayi I am sure David will do everything in his power to get you out” she says.

“That’s the thing David can’t save Cain will make sure that I rot in jail,I am no use to them now that I have sold their gold mine” I tell her.

“Okay let’s take the kids and run as far away from this place as possible” she says.

As appealing as that sounds I would never put my kids or our parents through that.

“Cha running away will only destroy the kids and I don’t want you to ruin your life for me” I say standing up.

“I just need you to take care of things while I am away” I say.

She nods her head and rests on my shoulder.

Hours pass with David dropping by the house.

“I have brought you the offer to buy,I didn’t tell the buyer much about you just that your husband is late and you wish to sell” he says.

“Did he ask about my request” I ask.

“Yes he was more than happy to do it he’s name is ..” I raise my hand up.

“I don’t want to know anything about him or them” he nods his head.

“I understand” he says.

I look over the offer and sign giving it back to him.

“You are no longer the owner of Ntuli Logistics” he says.

I breathe out as he talks me through portfolios I should invest in I sign all the documents making Thandazile my proxy.

“I discussed your case with a few of my colleagues and the best thing I can do is get you a reduced sentence and then appeal the courts decision” he says.

“I tried fighting for you but like I said there are powerful forces at play here, everything is rushed and it with the evidence brought forward it look like you planned to kill him” I nod my head.

He stands up with Thandazile walking him out.

She comes back and looks at me.

“We need to get rid of these clothes” she says.

“Hayi Thandizile” I tell her.

“I am mourning my husband and a year is what I will give him” I say.

His mother told me that she wouldn't perform the cleansing ceremony should the time come.

The house is soon filled with laughter from Mhlengi and Kababa, my mother took them out for some ice cream just so they could breathe outside the house.

Advertisement

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">"Come let's go to garden mama wants to talk to you two" they both follow me outside.

I look at them and fail to hold myself my impulsiveness has just robbed me of seeing my kids grow up.

"Is everything okay mama" Mhlengi asks.

I shake my head and sigh.

"Do you miss baba because I miss him too" Kababa says.

"I miss him too but that's not why mommy is crying, mommy is crying because she has to go away for a long time" They look at me confused.

"Are we leaving" Mhlengi asks.

I shake me head looking at my mother.

"No, mommy alone is leaving" I say.

“Why? don’t you love us anymore is it because baba left, we can find you another dad right Mhlengi” kababa says.

“Mommy loves you, I love you two with all my heart but mommy did a bad thing and now she has to go away” I say.

“We don’t want you to go” Mhlengi says.

“I know and I don’t want to go but mommy has to go” I say.

“You don’t love us” He says running back into the house.

“Mhlengi” I shout.

“Myeke Mkabayi” my mother says.

I look at Kababa and wipe my tears.

“Uyasithanda angithi mama” I choke on this burning lump and swallow.

“Nginithanda kakhulu” I say hugging her.

She places her small hands on my cheeks and smiles.

“Don’t cry God will send us another Dad and you will be happy again” she says.

I give her a kiss and hold her tight.

“I love you so much and I will miss you” I whisper.

“I love you too mommy” she says.

I place her down and watch her running inside the house.

Mama comes and sits next to me.

“Ma I don’t my son to hate me, I don’t want him to have anger towards me. I know I did this to myself but I don’t deserve to leave my kids alone” I say.

She holds my hand and hands me her bible.

“I know you have lost all faith in him but I want you trust him as you take this journey” she says.

“I know you think he has forsaken you and that he’s an unfaithful God but trust me when I say,he sees and hears everything and he will answer” she says.

“What this family did to you is painful they turned you into something you are not,they took your husband away and now your freedom away. I want you to look into your heart and let go,I want you to forgive them Sisi okay” she says.

I shake my head casting my eyes on the floor,I am so angry and I don’t see myself forgiving these people.

“Ngiyakuzwa mama” I say.

“I will forever keep you in my prayers Mkabayi,no matter what happens or what people say you are my daughter and I gave birth to you. I fell in love with you the moment I found out I was carrying you. You are strong and beautiful and one day you will

heal. I am sad that you are leaving but I will always be there waiting in that hall to see your beautiful face.

I know Baba not being here hurts you but give him time and he will come around, I love you Ndlovukazi “ she says embracing me.

I hold on tight and weep till I feel hands on my thigh.

“I don’t want you to go mama,ngifuna ukuhamba nawe”.
Mhlengi says.

He cries hard and rests his head on my lap.

I pull away from my mother hold and pick him up holding him.

“I am really sorry Mhlengi” I say still holding him tight.

I tap my foot waiting in anticipation as my doom day is here, we get called inside as the Judge presiding in our case is about to be seated.

I look at my mother and give her a hug.

David came prepared but nothing much will be said today apart from the judge handing down my sentence.

With Mkhetheni still not waking up I have been charged with attempted murder and possession of a fire arm with the first charge possibly changing to murder.

We all rise as the judge enters the courtroom.

“Case between Ntuli, State vs Ntuli.

I have taken into consideration all the evidence provided and I have heard all your arguments and prayers” he fixes his glasses and looks at me

“This is not an easy matter but a man is fighting for his life and a woman shot him. If tables were turned marches would have been held seeking justice, with everything that has been said the court hereby finds you Mkabayi Ntuli guilty of attempted murder, Possession of a fire arm” my hearts sinks as I look at my family. “The court hereby sentences you to 8 years imprisonment, should you wish to appeal the courts decision you may do so” he says standing up adjourning the court.

My mother reaches over and gives me a tight hug while Thandazile bolts into a cry.

“I will appeal the courts decision” David says.

I get pulled down the dock and taken to holding cells awaiting my transportation.

This was by far the shortest trial in history but then again I am just a small fish in a big pond.

I look at Kiara doing her morning push ups and smile, I have known her the past three years since I got here making this year our fourth since we met. In a few days time she will be out and about tasting her freedom after spending 9years in this hell hole.

“You know I could give you it to you if you want” she says looking at me.

“Kiara you know I don’t roll like that” I tell her.

“You have been saying that for the past three years since you got here,are you that afraid of pus@y” she asks.

“No I just like dick that much not to compromise” I tell her.

“Suite your self then” she says getting back to her push ups.

I shake my head and lay back on my thin mattress shutting my eyes.

The first year of being locked up was the worst.

I remember the first months of being here I was a regular in the infirmary, I got beaten and mistreated till Kiara took me under her wing and things got better.

Kiara saved me from being smothered to death with a pillow, I have been grateful ever since and I consider her to be a friend a sister from another mother.

In all my life I never had friends the only friend I had was my sister, she was my confidante and more still is but today I have two of those her and Kiara.

I open my eyes and find her going through her stuff, probably deciding what she will keep and not keep when she leaves this place.

“Kiara” I call out.

“Mhmmm” she says

“I love you oe” she quickly turns her head looking at me.

“Are you on your periods” she asks.

“No I just love you” she laughs and shakes her head.

“Just because I am leaving this place doesn’t mean you need to be all soft and mushy on me” she says.

“Where will you go” I ask.

She sighs and hugs her mother’s picture shrugging her shoulders.

The only person whose ever bothered visiting her.

I remember asking her why she was here and she looked me in the and said “For killing my father” I couldn’t bring myself to understand why she would kill her own father but once she told me her life story a part of understood.

Kiara’s mother was a young domestic worker, she had just started work very young at first the family she worked for was good. They treated her very well but one day the wife went to work while the kids were dropped off at work and she remained alone with the husband.

Kiara says her mother still has scars from the first time it happened, the husband locked all doors and made sexual advances towards kiara’s mother and when she refused she was beaten senseless and raped repeatedly. This act went on and on till her mother was pregnant with her, it was then that the wife fired Kiara’s mother she couldn’t bare the thought of her husband impregnating a black woman their help for that matter.

Kiara’s mother went on to get married but still the stigma of falling pregnant for a white man followed her, her husband was never kind and mistreated Kiara even her siblings made it known that she wasn’t one of them. All her life the only thing she ever wanted was to belong but once she knew the truth she couldn’t take it.

“I went to his house and they chased me away like a dog,all I wanted to know was why but he couldn’t even afford me that and so I stabbed him to death” Those were Kiara’s words and she’s never spoken about it since.

“I was thinking maybe you could stay with my sister till you are back on your feet” I tell her.

“I don’t want to be a bother Mkabayi already you have done so much for me,I don’t want to trouble you any further” she says.

I sit up and straight and look at her.

“Kiara you are my friend and I want to do this please allow me to do it” I say.

She nods her head and smiles.

It doesn’t take long till visitation hour starts and I am led to the visitation hall.

For the first six months of being here I used to see my family through the window,I must admit it was the worst six months of my life not being able to hold them.

I look at Thandazile smiling and give her a hug settling down.

So much has happened between the two of us,for a few months she stopped coming soon after mama’s death.

“You look good” she says.

“Well Kiara takes good care of me” I tell her.

Kiara neh” ” she says smiling.

She and Kiara get along pretty well.

“How are the kids” I ask.

“They are fine I read them all your letters and the fact that you call helps” she says.

“And how is baba doing” I ask.

“He’s not okay you going to prison and mama dying really hit him hard” she says.

I nod my head swallowing hard.

Things haven’t been okay between my father and I, I think he never found it in his heart to forgive me for missing Ma’s burial and going as far as shooting a man.

“Don’t be sad baba will come around especially since your release date is soon” she says.

I smile knowing in a month’s time I will be out of this place.

“Speaking about that I would like you to do me a favor” she nods listening.

“Kiara is being released in a few days and she doesn’t have a place to stay, please take her in put her in the flat outside while you stay inside the house with the kids” I say.

“I don’t mind as long as she won’t bring trouble to the house” she says.

I assure her that Kiara is good people and would never start trouble with her.

Silence falls upon us as I look at her life has passed me by and I have missed out on three years with my kids.

She reaches in her pocket and takes out an envelope.

“Ma wrote this before she died” she says handing it to me.

“I was angry Mkabayi when you refused to come to the funeral, I was sad that we lost ma and you weren’t there. I wanted to give you this letter a long time ago but whenever I would think about you walking back to your cell when I sat here and begged you to come. I couldn’t bring myself to give it to you because you chose to stay away when I needed you the most” she says wiping her tears.

“I am sorry but I couldn’t do that to you and kids, I didn’t want Ma’s day to be all about her jailbird daughter. I am sorry Thandazile” I say.

“It’s okay we are past that now and I know you haven’t dealt with Ma’s death and I wish you would talk to me about it” she says.

“You should get going I don’t want you getting stuck in traffic”
we both stand up and share a hug.

“I love you” she says

“I love you too and I will call you later” she pulls away and nods
watching me be taken away.

I get to my cell and find Kiara reading a book no visit for her
today, her stepfather probably forbade her mother from coming
today.

“Hey I just had a talk with Thandazile and she agreed to house
you till you are back on your feet” I say.

She screams and squeezes me in her arms tight.

“Thank you so much I promise I will be good I will clean, cook
and baby seat the kids. I won’t make any trouble for you or
your sister” she says getting emotional.

“I know you won’t” I say.

She pulls away and looks at me.

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto; ">“What’s that
on your hand” she asks.

“A letter from my mom” I tell her.

“Want me to read it for you” she asks.

I nod and sit down next to her.

*I don't know where to start so I will start at the begging, I am sorry that I couldn't fight for you. I am sorry that I couldn't protect you when you needed me too. I allowed those people to turn you into something you are not and told you to pray instead of fighting back. I don't regret telling you that Mkabayi because even now I am on my knees praying to God that he keeps you safe,I pray that you find healing and love.

I am sorry that I am leaving you behind so soon,I am sorry that my heart can't take it and hold on.

I am sorry that I leave you when you need a mother's love the most. I am sorry Ngane yami that it had to be this way that I had to see you behind bars,with each visit I would see a fresh bruise or a swollen cut lip and I would go home and cry to God that he takes you out of that place and gives me strength for the next visit. I know you stopped taking my visits because you didn't want me to see you in that state or place,but I am happy that I could see you and hold before I depart this earth. I don't want you to blame yourself for this because it's not your fault. I will always love you Mkabayi and I will always be watching over you.

Never stop praying and asking God,Take care of yourself Ngane yam uyakuthanda ma Ndlovukazi*

She folds the letter and holds me close to her chest.

“I wasn’t there when they buried my husband and I wasn’t there when they buried my mother” I say letting out a painful sob.

The pain of what I went through losing Busani comes back.

“She died of a broken heart because I wasn’t there” I say.

“Your mother loved you so much and that’s all that matters, I saw that love each time she came to visit you” Kiara says pulling away looking at me.

She stands up and takes her hair shaving machine plugging it in.

“I think now is a good time to do it” she says

“GOODBYE'S (THE SADDEST WORD)..

Mama

You gave life to me

Turned a baby into a lady

Mama

All you had to offer

was the promise of a lifetime of love

Now I know

There is no other love like a mother's love for her child

And I know a love so complete

Someday must leave

Must say goodbye (oooh)

Goodbye's the saddest word I'll ever hear

Goodbye's the last time I will hold you near

Someday you'll say that word and I will cry

It'll break my heart to hear you say goodbye

Mama

You gave love to me

Turned a young one into a woman

Mama

All I ever needed was a guarantee of you loving me

'Cause I know

There is no other love like a mother's love for her child

And it hurts so

That something so strong

Someday will be gone

Must say goodbye (oooh aaah)

Goodbye's the saddest word I'll ever hear

Goodbye's the last time I will hold you near

Someday you'll say that word and I will cry

It'll break my heart to hear you say goodbye

But the love you gave will always live

You'll always be there everytime I fall

You are to me the greatest love of all

You take my weakness and you make me strong

And I will always love you 'til forever comes (oooh oooh ooooh)

And when you need me

I'll be there for you always

I'll be there your whole life through

I'll be there this I promise you

Mama

I'll be your beacon through the darkest nights

I'll be the wings that guide your broken flight

I'll be your shelter through the raging storm
And I will love you 'til forever comes
Goodbye's the saddest word I'll ever hear
Goodbye's the last time I will hold you near
Someday you'll say that word and I will cry
It'll break my heart to hear you say goodbye
'Till we meet again
Until then
Goodbye.....”

Kiara sings beautifully as always while shaving my hair,I silently weep saying goodbye to my mother,the greatest love of all.

I look at myself on the small broken mirror and smile my hair is sprouting back which means I will have hair in no time.

I can't believe the day is finally here where I walk free and get to see my kids and hold them knowing that even if I sleep and wake up they will still be laying next to me.

I pack only my valuables and sighs waiting for the guards to walk me out, David was here just yesterday to let me know about my release.

I look around and sigh these four walls have heard my daily prayer, tears and frustrations.

I have cried myself to sleep inside these four walls, I have mourned two deaths in these four walls and broke down only to pick myself up again.

I wipe my tears thinking how I got dragged here just two weeks after burying my husband, three years later my mother died and I couldn't bury her.

I wait anxiously tapping my foot so much is going through my mind, will the kids be happy to see me won't they think I abandoned them when they need me the most.

I don't even know what I am going to say to them will they love me like they did before I stepped foot here.

The warden comes strolling and looks at me smiling, it took a while to get used to this place not finally some how it registered that I was stuck here.

"We don't want you back here Mkabayi" she says laughing.

"I promise you won't see me here ever again" I tell her.

"And tell that friend of yours too" she says.

I laugh as I get ushered to their offices to sign a few papers.

"And that's it you are a free woman" she says looking at me.

I must say this one has always been one of the kind ones.

I grab my bag and walk out wearing a black dress grey shawl over my shoulders and head wrap.

I stand by the gate waiting for Thandizile till a taxi parks right next to me.

People start getting off and making their way inside the prison.

The driver looks at me and hoots I look up and smile thinking about the days Busani used to court me.

"Ngena sambe" He says.

I look around and shake my head.

“I am waiting for someone” I tell him.

“It will take time before another taxi comes here” he says

“I won’t steal you and if I did it would be for you have a place in my heart” he says.

A smile spreads across my lips taxi drivers have always been charmers of note.

“You are a stranger” I tell him.

He steps out of the car and whistles to one of the prison warders at the gate.

“Gumede who am I” he asks.

Bab Gumede looks at him and laughs.

“Kahle Mashimane ukudlala ngengane ufunani” he asks.

“Bab Gumede am I a thief do I go around stealing woman” he asks.

Another laugh from Bab Gumede.

“He’s name is Banzi Maphumolo and he’s a womanizer” Bab Gumede says.

Banzi shakes his head and opens the door for me.

“I promise I won’t hurt you this is me giving someone a lift it’s totally harmless” he says.

I find myself taking the front seat while he runs to his side and bangs the door.

“I have never seen you around here and I come often to drop people off” he says.

I tightly clasp at my bag and faintly smile.

“You wouldn’t have seen me because I was on the inside” I tell him.

He pauses for a while and smiles beautifully.

“So you work there” he says.

I shake my head looking ahead.

“No I was in prison for shooting my brother in law” I tell him.

He nods his head and carries on driving.

“Why did you shoot him” he asks.

“He killed my husband and gloated about it” I tell him.

He nods and clears his throat.

“Did it feel good doing it” I look at him shocked no one has ever asked me that question before.

“Yes it did” I say.

“Then you are one strong woman and you did good” he says.

“My name is Mkabayi Ntuli” I say.

I direct him to the house and get nervous when he parks outside the gate, my palms get sweaty and my heart races.

I look at him and realize I am not ready to face my kids, I can't bare all the questions and most of all I am afraid of the rejection.

“Can you take me to the nearest mall” I ask.

“Or you can just drop me off the corner and I will walk,I have just realized I don't have any money” I tell him.

He laughs like I have just cracked the funniest joke.

“Take it as a welcome home gift me being your chauffeur” he says driving off.

He parks next to the park.

“I guess this is goodbye thank you for the ride” I say getting off.

0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">He drives off and leaves me sitting on the cold bench. I take my time closing my eyes basking in the sun breathing in fresh unpolluted air.

“Feels good doesn't it” I open my eyes and turn my head finding Banzi standing there holding two ice cream cups.

I smile at this stranger's kind gesture.

“I didn't say goodbye” he says sitting next to me.

He hands me the ice creams and sighs.

“How did your husband die” he asks.

I shut my eyes at the brewing delicious sensation happening in my mouth, such delicacies were a treat.

I open my eyes to find him staring.

“I am sorry but the way you had your eyes shut had me staring” he says clearing his throat.

“It’s okay” I say.

“My husband was gunned down” I say.

“Are you over his death I mean have you forgotten” he asks.

I shake my head I doubt I will ever be over Busani’s death.

“No” I say looking at him real good.

He looks good and smells good so much so I am enjoying this distraction.

“Can I call my sister” I ask.

He hands me his phone I look at his hand and notice that he’s not married.

I dial Thandazile and tell her my whereabouts.

It only take an hour for her to arrive.

“Seriously Mkabayi how can you be this selfish” Thandazile asks.

“Girl are you telling me that you missed dick this much you had to leave without us getting there” Kiara asks.

“I am sorry” I say.

Thandazile pulls me in for a hug and pulls away looking at Banzi.

“Whose this” she asks.

“Banzi Maphumulo her personal chauffeur” he says.

“I didn’t get one of those when I got out” Kiara says.

I notice them holding hand and look at Thandizile, she subtly retreats her hand and looks at me.

“You don’t just leave Mkabayi do you know I almost turned that place upside down looking for you, I even threatened them if they didn’t bring you out” she says.

I look at Banzi who seems amused.

“And where was Kiara in all this” I ask.

“I was in the car letting your sister handle things” She says.

Banzi looks at his wrist watch and clears his throat.

“I should get going it was nice meeting you ladies” he says looking at Kiara and my Sister.

I walk him to his taxi and thank him for being a kind stranger.

“I guess I will see you around” he says getting in the taxi driving off.

I walk back to Thandizile and Kiara hugging them.

“You didn’t tell me it feels this good to be outside those high walls” I say looking at Kiara.

“Wanted you to feel it for yourself” She says.

“How have you been I hope everything has been okay” I say.

“Everything is fine now let’s go home” Thandizile says.

“I don’t think I am ready to see the kids I am afraid” I tell her.

“I know but we are taking you home” she says.

We walk to the car and the soft leather and fresh smell of lavender reminds me of the life I used to have before going to prison. I look outside the window and smile four years might seem like nothing to someone whose been on the outside, but to me it felt like a lifetime.

We park in the drive way with my heart racing so hard my palms sweat.

I step out of the car and walk to the outside shower where there is some water in a basin with herbs. I bathe in that water and put on my dress without drying myself.

I appreciate my sister doing this for me it means a lot.

I slowly walk towards the house feeling like I am going to faint at any given moment.

I walk past the kitchen recollecting all the beautiful memories that were once created here, I make my way to the living room and picture Busani sitting at the head of table while I served him his food. I finally walk make my way to the lounge and Oyintando screams running into my arms.

I hug tight twirling her around.

“Mama I missed you” she says.

I inhale her scent and shut my eyes.

“I missed you so much” she says breaking down.

“I missed you too Cubby” I say still holding her.

“Mhlengi” he looks at me and reluctantly walks over.

I place Oyintando down and look at him, I can tell he’s confused probably angry too.

“Sawubona” I say.

He falls into my arms and cries clasping at me for dear life.

I break down and bring Oyintando close.

“I missed you” Mhlengi says.

“I missed you too” I whisper.

We stay like that for a very long time till they both pull away.

I look at my son and realized he looks like his father so much it scares me.

There's is so much that needs to be done so many questions that need answering but I am glad David came through and got me out of that place.

18

I couldn't sleep last night laid awake watching my kids, and when I would fall asleep I would get such a fright waking up thinking I was still in prison.

Thandazile wakes up to find me sitting in kitchen the house already clean and breakfast already cooked.

She settles down next to me and rest her head on my shoulder.

"You couldn't sleep" I nod.

"Kiara has that problem too of waking up in the middle of the night" she says.

"Sisi what is going on between you and Kiara" I ask.

She shrugs her shoulders.

"I don't know we are just friends and I guess we are close now" she says.

"So you are not dating and you haven't done anything" I ask.

"We haven't done anything I don't think she's interested in me in that way" she says.

I sense a bit of disappointment in her tone.

"Do you like her" I ask.

She sighs and shrugs her shoulders again giving me the answer that I want.

“Ngiyabonga Thandazile for taking care of my home and kids for loving them while I was away” I say.

“I would do it over and over again” she says.

“We are family Mkabayi and now that Ma is gone we have each other” she says.

“Now that you are back you need to reclaim your life starting with a cleansing and visiting Ma’s grave” she says.

“Busani’s mother told me she would never give me a cleansing” I tell her.

“Then focus on what you can fix which is your relationship with Dad” she says.

I nod my head looking at the time.

“I will go wake the kids up so I can prepare them for school” I say.

“Let them sleep I called the school and informed them they won’t be coming today, I thought they would want to spend time with you” she says

“Thank you I would love some time with them too” I say.

A knock comes through and Kiara walks in.

This one right here is beautiful and has an amazing voice not to mention her well toned body.

“Morning beautiful people” she says coming over to where we are.

She kisses Thandazile on the cheek and hugs me.

I look at the two of them and wonder what happens in the mornings when I am not around.

“Something smells good” Kiara says breaking the silence.

“I cooked” I say standing up.

“Where are you going” Thandizile asks.

“No where just stretching my legs outside” I say walking out.

I walk towards the gate and see Banzi’s taxi stopping.

He steps out and smiles waving his hand.

I reach the gate and step out meeting him.

“Hey” he says.

I notice how fancy he’s dressed and shake my head.

“Hi” I say smiling.

“Hey” he says laughing running his hand over his bald head.

“Banzi what do you do for a living” I ask looking at his R2000 Pringle shorts and expensive wrist watch.

“This and that” he says laughing.

I nod my head thinking he’s not an ordinary taxi driver.

“Okay mr this and that what can I do for you” I ask.

He clears his throat.

“I thought I should come check on you and see how you settled in last night” he says.

“I settled in fine will take some getting used but I am good thank you” I say.

He reaches for his pocket taking out his wallet.

“I don’t mean to offend you or assume anything but here take this” he says handing me money.

I look at him and smile not knowing if o should take it or tell him I don’t need it.

I take the money with a wide smile so as to not bruise his ego.

“Thank you” I say.

“Mama” I turn my head when I hear Oyintando calling.

“I should go that’s my daughter calling” I say.

I turn walking but he quickly calls my name.

“Can I come check up on you later in the day if that’s fine with you” he says.

I nod my head closing the small gate.

Oyintando runs into my arm and holds me tight.

“I woke up and you were gone” she says.

I pick her up and look at her.

“Mommy is never going away ever again” I say.

She smiles and buried her head on my neck.

We walk back inside the house and find Thandazile already plating up.

I join them and kiss Mhlengi bringing Oyintando closer sitting down.

Being home feels good having my children close feels good.

A knock comes through with Kiara standing up to get the door.

She comes back followed by Busani’s mother I instantly lose my appetite.

“I just had to see it for myself” She says looking at me.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“I will take the kids to the garden” Kiara says.

“Ma what do you want” I ask.

She looks at me and claps her hand together.

“After what you did to my son you have the nerve to call me Ma” she says.

“Pricilla Ntuli what do you” I ask.

“It’s a shame I thought being in jail would teach something” she says.

I stand up and look at her.

“Weh mama ndini ngicela uhambe” I tell her.

“I want my grandchildren” she say boldly.

I raise my eyebrows watching her reach inside her bag.

She pulls out papers and places them on the table.

“I am taking you to court you are unfit to raise my grandchildren, imagine a jailbird like you raising them I will not allow that” she says.

“Mkheteni will raise them better and be a father to them” she says.

“Yazi ngizokugwaza” I say moving from my chair.

She stumbles backwards and blinks her eyes.

“Mkabayi” Thandazile says.

“Ngizomgwaza vele if she doesn’t walk out now” I shout.

“Ask your son about me if you don’t believe me” I say.

“You might think just because you went to jail and paid your due but that’s where you are wrong, you will pay for what you did to my family and for selling my son’s business” she says walking away.

She turns and looks at me.

“I am taking you to court and you will wish you never messed with my sons,I will take Mhlengi and Oyintandokababayou will be sorry. What you felt when Busani died will be nothing compared to when I take those precious babies away uwungazi Mkabayi” she says walking out.

I look at Thandazile my chest heaving.

“She can’t take the kids Mkabayi she can’t” Thandazile says.

I settle down back on my chair and wish my mother was here.

The day goes by with the kids clinging on me,I think they eat that I might leave again something I won’t do.

I had to call David to go through those stupid papers so we could find a way toward.

I put them to sleep and walk out of their bedroom joining Thandazile and Kiara.

Kiara pours me a full glass of wine bringing back good memories.

“You seem to need this” she says.

I smile and take a few sips breathing.

“Busani hated it when she drank” Thandazile says laughing.

Kiara looks at me shocked.

“He would punish me in the most desired way” I say.

“No ways girl I would drink everyday of my life” she says.

I laugh and take another few sips.

“Whoa slow down” Kiara says while Thandazile takes a call.

Sips turn into gulps with Kiara joining me on the couch.

“Thank you for this” she says holding my hand.

“I really appreciate you taking me in and giving me a roof over my head” she says.

“I owe you my life Kiara so this is nothing” I tell her.

Thandazile comes back and hands me the phone.

“Ngila ngaphandle” Banzi’s voice comes through.

He cuts the call and I look at these two giving me eyes.

I pull my dress down and gulp the rest of my glass making my way out.

I find Banzi leaning against his taxi looking fine.

I salivate at his toned body and imagine him naked.

He puts his phone back in his pocket and looks at me smiling.

“Hi” he says.

“Hey” I say.

“I am sorry for dropping by without telling you first” he says nervously.

“I am glad you did” I find myself saying.

I think the wine travels to my clit because I look at his lips and wish they would lock with mine.

He leans close and smiles.

“You are beautiful Mkabayi” He says leaning even closer.

“I don’t know why I am here but I found myself here” he says.

His lips brush against mine.

“May I kiss you” he asks

I nod my head feeling his warm lips part mine kissing me.

He wraps his arm around my waist pulling me close.

I pull away when my senses kick in reminding me that I am still in need of a cleansing.

“I shouldn’t be doing this ngiyaxolisa” I tell him.

He licks his lips and nods his head.

“I should go goodbye Banzi” he pulls my hand and brings me close kissing me again.

“I want you Mkabayi” he whispers.

“And I can’t give you what you want” I say.

He looks at me and nods getting inside his taxi.

I walk back inside my heart pounding I don’t remember the last a man held me so close.

19

It's been a month since I have been home and trying to find my feet, the kids are slowly getting used to going to school freely and coming home to find me there waiting for them.

Maria is still around I am glad Thandazile decided to keep her, she's good and has always been good with the kids.

Kiara has a cleaning job working at Shaw and Son the pay is good and I am glad that she's saving up to get her own place.

Things are working out perfectly apart from Mkhetheni and his mother tormenting me everything is going well.

I am glad Busani liked investing in property in his words property appreciated and I must say his investments are paying up.

I know that with David by my side my husband's investments will be on good hands and well looked after.

I grab my phone and dial Aunt Snazo one of the few people of bothered coming to see me.

"Mkabayi sisi" she says.

"Sawubona Ma" I say.

"How are you sisi I hope the kids are okay" she says.

"I am fine ma and the kids are good" I say.

“I am glad to hear that” she says coughing.

She’s been coughing for a very long time now which worries me.

“Ma did you go to the doctor for that cough” I ask.

“I did sisi but we both know it’s not just a cough anymore I am tired Mkabayi and I miss my husband” she says.

I know the feeling of missing someone and feeling lonely.

“I want to leave this earth I have lived my life seen things and I have loved but I am tired now, my kids are all grown and they each have lives of their own they don’t need me anymore” she says.

“But I still need you” I tell her.

She laughs.

“You need to move on and find love again ukhohlwe ngezalukazi” she says.

I think about moving on and sigh so much goes into it.

“And when are you having your cleansing it’s been four years already” she says.

“Pricilla refuses to give me one” I tell her.

“Don’t worry about that I am still here and I can do it for you” she says.

“Ngiyabonga Ma for everything” I say.

“How are things between you and your father” she asks.

“Still the same” I tell her.

“Give it time your father loves you and right now you and Thandazile are the only thing he has left, he’s just hurting but once all that is gone he will be fine” she says.

“And don’t forget to pray your mother might be gone but she left something with you and that is prayer” she says.

“Before I forget Ma Pricilla wants to take the children away from me, she says I am an unfit mother” I tell her.

She laughs so loud I end up laughing too.

“She must be crazy” she says.

“Let her go to court and make a fool of herself it’s time Pricilla got cut down to size” she says laughing.

“The cleansing will be on the weekend, I want to get it over and done with so you can move on with your life” she says.

“I appreciate that thank you Ma” I say.

I end the call and dial Banzi I don’t know what is going on between us but I feel things I haven’t felt in a very long time.

“Mashimane’s phone hello” A female voice says.

I get tongue tied not knowing if I should speak or not.

“Hello” the female voice says.

“Hello may I speak to Banzi” I say.

“Who are you and what do you want with my man” she asks.

I run out of words to say and end the call.

I spend the rest of my day lazing around and preparing the kid’s studying material.

Kiara walks in followed by the kids she walks over to the fridge and takes out a bottle of water and gulps it down.

“Hello to you too” I say.

She turns and looks at me.

“I don’t get why people have kids these little people don’t stop asking questions” she says.

Mhlengi gives me a kiss and walks to his bedroom while Oyintandokababa places her bag on the kitchen counter and settles down looking at Kiara.

“Auntie Kiara why don’t you have kids” she asks.

“I told you why cubby” she says.

“Can you tell me again I need to write it down” she says batting her eyelids.

“Cubby can you ask your mom something anything” Kiara says.

I laugh looking at Kiara frustrated knowing Oyintando she asked questions all the way here.

“Mama are we going to have another Dad” she asks.

“No Cubby remember Daddy is in heaven” I tell her.

She nods her head sulking.

“Talk me what’s wrong” I ask.

“It’s Father’s Day on Friday and I need a Dad I have been praying to God for one but he still hasn’t answered me” she says in a low tone.

My heart shatters hearing her say that the void Busani left is huge.

“I can come” I say.

She looks at me then Kiara.

“Auntie please tell her she can’t come because she’s not a Dad” she says.

“You are not a Dad Mkabayi so stay in your lane” Kiara says laughing.

“You do know what a mommy and Dad is right mama”
Oyintando says slowly looking at me.

I feel like a child being taught something.

“Yes I do know Cubby” I tell her.

“Good tell me if you don’t know anything I can teach you” she
says taking her backpack walking to her bedroom.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">I look at Kiara who
busts into laugh.

“See your life” she says.

Banzi’s call comes through but I quickly cancel it.

“Hey what did he you do” She asks looking at the screen.

“Nothing he’s just not the guy I thought he was” I say.

“Trouble in paradise already” she says looking like she’s in deep
thought.

“Everything okay” I ask.

“Yes” she says lying.

Being locked up with Kiara had me learning her every trait.

“Seriously when did we start lying” I ask.

“It’s nothing I am just tired” she says.

I nod my head and carry on preparing lunch.

The day goes by with Thandazile coming home looking grumpy,
I don’t know but I have feeling she and Kiara fought.

She walks to the lounge and give me her phone.

I suspect it’s Banzi and end the call standing up.

I make my way outside and find him leaning against the taxi.

“Akenivume nithi Shwi lay’ndlini no M’ntekhala”the song plays
making me shake my head.

This is a quiet neighborhood the police might be called on us
for disturbing the peace.

He sees me and knocks on the window,the music turns down
and a young girl steps out of the taxi.

“Banzi” I say folding my arms.

“Yini ungabambi incingo zami” he asks.

I have a good mind to tell him where to shove that question but
seeing this cutie here stops me.

“I just didn’t want to disturb you if that’s all you came here to
ask I have kids to get back to” I say.

He raises his eyebrow looking at me.

He sighs and clears his throat.

“I know you called and someone answered my phone” he says.

I figure it’s his wife or girlfriend since he’s not even phased about the fact that someone answered his phone.

“Khuluma wena” he says looking at the young girl.

She looks up and bats her eyelids like Oyintandokababa.

“My name is Thulisile and I answered bhuti’s phone ngiyaxolisa” she says sweetly looking down.

I recognize her voice and laugh.

She looks up and smiles running back inside the taxi.

“I am waiting” Banzi says smiling.

“Ngiyaxolisa Mashimane” I tell him.

He pulls me close and kisses me.

“Ngiqome Mkabayi” he says looking into my eyes.

I laugh like a teenager and nod my head.

“Is that a yes” he asks.

I think about the cleansing which is on the weekend and nod my head.

“Yebo” his lips parts mine as we both get lost in the kiss with him moving his hands to my arse.

He pulls away when someone clears their throat.

My heart almost stops beating when I see my father standing in front of us. I didn't even hear his car pull over or the door shutting when he stepped out.

I move away from Banzi almost falling on my back.

“Baba” I say.

He looks at me then back at Banzi.

“Use la” My father says raising his eyebrow looking at Banzi.

He quickly gets inside the taxi and drives off while I walk inside and watch my father drive in.

We walk inside the house making our way to the living room.

We find Kiara and Thandazile cuddling.

Thandazile almost trips and falls but Kiara catches before she hits the floor.

“I've got got you” she says.

“Are you don't catching each other” Baba asks.

I want to laugh but hold myself.

“Please excuse us I want to talk to Mkabayi alone” He says settling down.

The two cuddlers leave the room and I sit across my father.

“Baba how are you” I ask.

He sighs and that tells me a lot.

“I am sorry Baba for disappointing you” I say.

He wipes his tears and that makes me cry.

I move from here I am sitted and get on my knees looking at him.

“Baba ngiyaxolisa” I say resting my head on his lap.

He places a hand over me and snifs.

“When you went to study Mkabayi I was a proud father, I used all my savings to put you through school and what did you do you came back pregnant. Your mother asked me to forgive you and I did lucky Busani did right by and married you. You then went and shot a man and your mother still asked me to forgive you and I did. The same person who fought your battles and always stood by you died and you couldn't even say goodbye, you refused to come bury your own mother and I couldn't understand why. I was angry and sad that the person who used to ask me to forgive you and talk sense was gone and you

couldn't bother yourself coming to pay your last respects" he says.

"Baba that's not true I loved uMa but I couldn't say good to her in my state" I say.

"I now know and I finally understand why you stayed away, you loved her enough to stay away and allow her to be buried peacefully. Today she's gone my voice of reason is gone and I am left a stubborn old man, I am sorry Mkabayi for making you go so long without a father's love. Please forgive me for staying angry for so long I love you Mkabayi you and your sister are my whole world" He says.

I stand up and give him a hug.

Hearing him say that heals him it frees me knowing I still have my Dad and that my loves me.

"Who was that boy standing at the gate" he asks

I laugh resting my head on his chest.

"Ngabe wazwani ko driver" he asks laughing.

I don't know how to feel about this but the cleansing took place two weeks ago, Aunt Snazo really came through for me she fought a good fight and freed me from these black clothes.

It's funny how I was still wearing them even though I came out of jail, even after four years of Busani being buried I was still mourning him.

I won't lie and say I am over his death because then I would be lying. Busani was taken away from me and then I was robbed a chance to peacefully mourn and bury him and cry freely as much as I needed.

In prison all that you know goes out the window all that you feel is overlooked, and once you step foot there you need to toughen up.

It feels good wearing my clothes though and showing off my legs.

Today I decided to bring the kids to Busani's grave.

They start cleaning the edges while I clean the top of his tombstone and smile.

This man was amazing a true father and gentleman and I will always love him with every being of me.

“I miss you Mphemba and I will always love you,I wish you didn’t have to go so soon and leave us. I will never understand why you of all people had to leave me but I want you to Rest In Peace sthandwa sam and know I will always love you. I know that one day we will meet and I will fall into your arms and you will embrace me for I will be at home where I belong” I say.

“I love you baba” Oyintandokababa says.

“I promise to take care of mama and Cubby,I love you baba” Mhlengi says.

I look at them proud my babies are growing up, I clean them up heading back to the car.

I turn and look at Busani’s grave it still hurts badly but I know he would have wanted me to be strong for our kids.

I reach for my ringing phone and look at the screen written Banzi.

I let it ring till he ends the call and wipe my tears.

They say time heals but this time I am living on refuses to let me heal my heart just won’t.

Thandazile said I was angry more than anything she said I felt rob hence I can’t let go,for the first time I didn’t have a come back because everything she said the truth.

I park in the drive way with Mhlengi and Oyintando getting out running into the house. I don't understand their need to rush into things but then again they are kids and being impulsive is in their nature.

I walk round the house making my way to garden, I join my father and rest my head on his shoulder I missed this man as stubborn and hard headed as he is.

"How was it" he asks.

"It was okay Baba I needed that" I tell him.

"Tell me Mkabayi what is happening between your sister and Kiara" he asks.

"I don't know Baba" I tell him.

I guess he too has seen the tension between those two and suspects that something might be going on.

"Okay" he says.

"Would it be a problem if something was going on Baba" I ask.

He looks at me shakes his head.

"I might be old fashioned but I am not blind I know what your sister likes and prefers,if your mother a God fearing woman who lived her life by the book of God could love and embrace her then who am I to judge" he says.

“If the society finds fault in her preferences and judges then that’s the society’s problem not ours. I love your sister she’s no different from you and she doesn’t need to come out to me just like you never came out and told us you are heterosexual” he says laughing.

“All I know is that to judge is not for us but the father” he says.

I hug him tight and smile seems like mama’s wisdom somehow fell unto him.

“Nginyanithanda nobabili” he says,

“Now tell me about that taxi boy” He says.

“There’s nothing to tell baba he’s a very good friend of mine” I tell him.

“I believe that’s how it started with Busani right,him being a good friend”he says laughing.

“Baba stop it Banzi is a good friend that’s all” I tell him.

“Mhmm good friend who drive a taxi” he says shaking his head.

I stand up and kiss his cheek.

“We need to find you a young thing to make you happy” I tell him.

He laughs throwing his head back.

I walk inside the house and find Thandizile cooking, my father loves a home cooked meal for lunch.

“He needs to go Mkabayi I can’t do this anymore” she says dramatically.

“He’s been here for two weeks and already you are tired kahle wena” I tell her.

“Hayi kodwa Mkabayi baba wants porridge for breakfast and that’s about six in the morning and a full greasy one at 8 then lunch at 13:00, no ways someone needs to tell him that we are not Ma” she says.

I laugh and place my bag on the kitchen counter.

“You can’t tell him if you want” I say.

“Mxm” she say close her pap pot.

“Where is Kiara didn’t see her all day” I say.

“She went to visit her mother” she says.

I nod my head looking at her smile.

“And then” I ask.

“Nothing I just want to know what’s going on between you and Banzi are you dating” she asks.

“I really like him and I agreed to be his girlfriend” I tell her.

She screams and jogs over to me hugging me.

“Oh my word I am so proud of you for taking this leap of faith, and he is handsome” she says.

“Oh my his stroke game must be on point” she says closing her eyes.

“Really Thandazile baba is outside and he can walk in at any moment” I tell her.

“Forget about baba I need to get you some sexy underwear and you need to shave that bush of yours” she says.

“Who said anything about giving it up” I ask.

“Don’t tell me you want to wait another four years of not getting laid kahle wena ukulambisa inquza” she says.

It doesn’t take long for Kiara to walk in looking ready to burn anything in her way.

I know Kiara when she’s angry and it’s not a pretty sight to witness, she starts breathing in heavily and tears well up from her beautiful eyes. I stand up and give her a hug not letting go.

“I will give you a moment” Thandazile says.

Kiara pulls away from my embrace and looks at me.

“I love my mother Mkabayi but she knows how to hurt me” she says.

“What happened” I ask.

“Her husband told her to chase me away and she did like a dog Mkabayi she chased me out of her house “ I will never house a murder who might kill me too in my sleep” those were her husband’s words and she stood there saying nothing” she says.

I wipe her tears like she used to do when I cried myself to oblivion.

“I am sorry” I say.

“Look at me you have me okay ,you have us and we love you. I don’t want to see you hurting this is our new start remember what we said about starting a afresh and looking out for each other”she nods her head sniffing.

“Well this is it”I tell her

“I know it hurts but look at the positive you have two amazing asking questions and food gobblers of a niece and nephew, and they love having you around. And there’s my sister who enjoys your company focus on us the good in your new start and forget the old okay” she nods her head smiling.

“Thank you” she says.

She breathes in and out calming herself down.

“Let me go greet the kids and take a shower” she says making her way to the lounge.

The afternoon sails off beautifully into the evening with my father reading the kids their bedtime story and tucking them in, he retires to bed leaving the three of us watching tv.

I look at Thandizile and Kiara sharing a couch why don't they just kiss or fu@k rather and get it over and down with I think.

“I will be the kitchen” I say standing up.

They don't even pay attention to me but carry on laughing and whispering in each other's ears.

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26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">I miss Banzi I know I didn't take his call but I miss him, a hoot goes off outside making me run to check it out.

I spot his taxi parked in front of the gate.

I don't think he knows that my father is still here I jog towards the gate and step.

He turns the volume up a notch and steps us looking good as always, a thought crosses my mind I might be falling for this man.

“Sawubona” he says reaching for my hand.

He pulls me close smashing his lips on mine, I taste beer in his mouth and pull away looking into his eyes.

“Is everything okay” I ask.

He nods his head and smiles.

“Stove Sami samalahle ngikuthanda noma uvutha” he says kissing me again.

I get lost in the malt and mint closing my eyes.

“Wangbamba kwamancane

Wangbambel’ eduze (Isthandwa sami)

Wangkhumbuz’ eGoli mama

EZola (Stimela sam saseZola)

Wangbek’ esifubeni weh mama

Yelele mama, njengengan’ encane

Thambo lam lekhentaki

Sambulela sam (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Sambulela sam selanga

Sthuthuthu sami (Stimela sam saseZola)

Sojika emadireni ah we mama

Yelele mama, njengengan'encane

Welcome dova baby

Stofu sam samalahle (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Ngikthanda nom'uvutha baby

Stimela sam saseZola

Iyho Iyho Iyho

Yelele mama njengengan'encane

Sengihamba ngo Commisioner

Ngigqok' u-arrow shirt (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Aw'bhek'ezansi florsheim shoes baby

Stimela sam saseZola

Ngyobona wena baby eZola

Yelele mama njengengan'encane

Ngigibel' iE20 eCarlton center (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Esdididini mama

Ngeshumi lam' ngelhandi lami wemama

Ngyophumula kuwe baby edairy lovey

Yelele mama njengengan'encane

Welcome dova baby

Wowu stofu sam samalahle (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Ngikthanda nom' uvutha baby yho

Stimela sam saseZola

Weh lavi wami bo, we mama aww

Yelele mama njengengan'encane

Wangthinta ngakhukhumala

Ngafana ne Self Raising

Ngahamba ngagcwal'istrati

Ngafana nomabhalane (Stimela sam saseZola)

Wemama, weh lavi weh baby

Yelele mama njengengan'encane

Thambo lam lekhentaki

Sambrela sam (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Sambrela sam selanga

Sthuthuthu sami bo (Stimela sam saseZola)

Sojika emadireni ah we mama

Yelele mama, njengengan'encane

Welcome dova baby

Stofu sam samalahle (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Ngikthanda nom'uvutha baby

Stimela sam saseZola

Yelele mama njengengan'encane

Wangbamba kwamancane

Wangbambel'eduze (Dudu sthandwa sami)

Oh wangkhumbuz'eGoli mama

EZola (Stimela sam saseZola)

Wangbek'esifubeni weh mama

Yelele mama njengengan'encane''

The song keeps playing with him dancing around me pulling me in for a kiss in between, he finally stops and stands behind me his lips buried on my neck his hands moving up my breast.

He stops and tickles me and for a moment all this I want all of it.

He turns me around lifting me up, my legs straddle him as he pins me against the taxi.

“I love you Mkabayi” I part my lips to give him a response but he shuts me up with a kiss.

“I know it’s too soon but in the shortest time of knowing you I have been happy something I haven’t been in the longest time” he says putting me down.

“Ngijy...a..ku...tha..tha...”his words slur.

“Banzi” he blinks and shakes his head staggering back.

“Banzi yini” I ask holding my breath.

He falls to the ground and starts bleeding through his nose.

I get on my knees screaming for help while holding his head.

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I am not a doctor but I can tell when something is not right and Banzi is sick.

He fell and started bleeding through his nose only sick people do that, Baba helped get him in the house and parked his taxi in drive way.

He refused for me to call the ambulance and said he was fine.

He wasn't in any state to drive so I asked my father if he could sleep over.

I didn't sleep well last night checking up on him making sure that he's okay and breathing.

I found myself in that very same situation I had with Busani fearful of the worst that might happen.

I woke early took a bath then prepared breakfast then the kids for school and I have been sitting here staring at him sleeping peaceful he doesn't snore nor drool which is attractive, he reminds me of someone I used to know his darkness pulls me in so much I just want to look at him all day while breathes.

He moves and opens his beautiful eyes looking at me, a smile spreads across his lips making me smile too.

There's is something about a dark man that gets me wanting to confess my sins.

"Morning" he says sitting up straight.

He looks around and squints his eyes.

"This is the spare bedroom I couldn't let you drive" I say.

He pats the space next to him.

"Come here" he says

I reluctantly stand up and get in having him wrap his arm around me.

"I am sorry if I scared you"he says.

"What's wrong with you Banzi" I ask.

He looks at me and smiles.

"Nothing is wrong sthandwa sam I am perfect fine just a headache" he says.

"A headache that had you falling to the ground and bleeding, right now you can't even remember half of what happened yesterday" I say.

He holds my hand and kisses it.

"Mkabayi nothing is wrong with me I am fine like I said this is just a headache, it comes and goes" he says.

So this is a frequent thing meaning it's definitely serious.

"If it was anything serious you would tell me right" he looks at me and faintly smiles.

"I would" he says hugging me.

"I think I love you Banzi and I want this" I confess.

He chuckles.

"You don't think, you do love me it's just a matter of time till you realize it" he says laughing.

I turn and look at him giving him a kiss getting out off, I walk out and come back to give him his breakfast.

"Can I take a shower first" I show him the way and come back to the bedroom to fix the bed.

His phone rings while I lay down his clothes on the bed.

"Banzi's phone hello" I say.

"Hello this is Philisiwe Maphumulo Banzi's mother May I speak to him" A soft calm voice on the other end says.

I fix myself up and clear my throat stupid I know since she can't see me.

"Mrs Maphumulo Banzi's is in the shower" I tell her.

She sighs and calls out to someone in the background, I wait till her voice comes through.

“I was worried about him when I couldn’t get ahold of him, please do tell him to call me” she says.

“Ma before you go I think you should know that he isn’t feeling well, I don’t know what’s wrong but he fell hence you could get through to him” I tell her.

I give her my address and end the call waiting for Banzi.

He walks through in nothing but a towel.

I look away and swallow when was the last time I saw a naked man good lord have mercy on me.

He closes the door and my whole body gets excited.

He walks over to where I am and cups my face making me look at him.

He leans close and kisses me pulling me up.

He lifts me up and sits down with me ontop of him my legs wrapped around his waist.

He pulls my top up while I move my waist feelings his cock harden.

He cups me breast taking each one into him mouth.

“Banzi” I moan trying to get my pants.

He puts his hands on mine stopping me.

“Not like this I can’t disrespect your father or kids like this” he says pulling away catching his breath.

“Kancane nje Banzi” (just a little)I say.

He chuckles and stands up laying me on my back pulling my pants down.

He parts my legs and gets in between my legs coming up to kiss me, he leaves wet kisses going down to my pu@\$y. I feel his warm breath and tongue maneuvering inside me.

He moves his finger to the pulse of my clit and starts rubbing while he eats me up his teeth gently grazing at my libia.

I feel myself going crazy pushing his head deeper and deeper.

He stops moving his tongue and pushes his finger in.

“Damn you’re so tight” He says

I clasp my my thighs together when a distant memory comes full force with my present.

Images of Cain shoving his dirty fingers in me flash.

Thinking about that’s night leaves me stripped and feeling angry what makes matters worse is that Cain disappeared he ran.

“Mkabayi” I blink and find him staring.

“What’s wrong” he asks.

“It’s nothing I am sorry” I say feeling ashamed.

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Don’t be sorry” he says holding me.

“I should leave you to get dressed” I say.

I quickly get dressed finding it hard to even look him in the eye, I am the one who initiated all this wanted him to touch me and make me feel something I haven’t felt in a long time.

He holds me into his arms before I reach the door and holds me close his chest.

“Whatever it is I am sorry” he says.

I cling unto to him and hold myself from crying.

He eventually pulls away after a while and kisses me.

The kids left for school and the two ladies went to work, I am left with my father and Banzi two men who eat.

My father asked if I can cook him imbuya from my garden I decided to cook it with pap, wors and some of the left over stew.

I plate the food up and got to serve my father in the garden while I serve Banzi in the kitchen.

I love how my father has given us space and hasn't scare him off.

"Thank you" he says eating.

He closes his eyes and smiles standing up,he stands before me and kisses my nose.

"You are a damn good cook" he says.

He goes back to his chair and eats like he's hasn't in a long time.

I walk out and spot a SUV parked outside the gate I press the remote and watch it drive in.

A beautiful woman steps out followed by a man.

They walk over to me and greet.

"You must be Mkabayi" the woman says.

"Yes" I say getting tongue tied.

She's beautiful and well dressed and so is the man she's with.

"I am Philisiwe Banzi's mother" she says.

"This is my son Zamani Banzi's brother" she says.

I lead them inside the house and find Banzi with my father.

I introduce them to my father while Banzi stands up to give his mother a hug.

“Thank you for taking care of him” his mother says smiling.

My father excuses himself walking out to the garden, lately he loves the garden and listening to the birds twirp.

“Uzofela emanyaleni Banzi” (you will die in disgraceful places) Zamani says.

Banzi laughs and pulls me close holding my hand.

“Ma this is Mkabayi” his mother smiles looking at me.

“It’s good to finally meet you sisi and thank you taking care of him this means a lot to me” she says.

“It’s nothing ma but I will say he scared me” I say.

Zamani looks at his mother and clears his throat.

“His headache was probably severe” Zamani says.

I look at Banzi standing up.

“Careful Banzi” his mother says helping him.

“I think we should leave” Zamani says.

I get Banzi’s phone from the bedroom and bring it to him.

His mother walks out followed by his brother leaving him behind.

“I will call you okay” he spans my arse and gives me a kiss before walking out.

I fetch the kids from school coming back to my father asking me endless questions about Banzi and his fall. I don't know either but when I heard Zamani mention headache I realized it might be nothing like Banzi said.

I spend my afternoon plaiting Oyintando's hair.

"Wuu mama I look pretty" she says.

"Mama is that man our new dad" She asks.

I almost choke.

"No but he is mama's friend" I say.

"I don't want a new dad" Mhlengi says.

I notice the hostility in his voice and look at him.

"We are not getting a new dad okay and no one will ever replace your father" I tell him.

He looks at Oyintando folding his arms.

"And you must tell Oyintando to stop praying for a new dad I promised baba I would look after you" he says making his way to the kitchen.

Oyintando stands up and wraps her arms around my neck.

"I love you mama" she says.

“I love you too Cubby” I say kissing her.

“Let me go tell Mkhulu about my day” she says walking away.

My phone rings with Banzi’s name appearing on the screen.

“Sthandwa sam” I say.

He laughs making me smile his laugh has become my favorite tone.

“I miss you” he says.

“I miss you too Mashimane” he laughs even more.

“Kune ngoma ehostela this weekend please come with me” he says.

I remember the time I used to attend ingoma, the place would be filled with men while some danced some were spectators.

“I would like that” I say feeling excited.

“Great see you on the weekend I love you” he says

“I love you too” I end the call and bite my lip.

I need to prepare for the weekend because whatever happens I am giving it up to Banzi.

It's amazing how time quickly flies when you are awaiting something, I have been looking forward to this day since Banzi told me about it.

I know the place will be packed but being with him is what matters.

I haven't been really out since I came out of prison and I am really looking forward to today, partly because I intend to take things to the next level.

I look at myself in the mirror and smile the kids are going to the park with Thandazile and Kiara.

I am glad I have these two babysitting is in their blood.

My father is leaving today although I will miss him, but I am happy he's going home and giving us space to breathe.

He said he missed being in his own house but I believe he misses mama more, that house holds so many memories and scents hence he wants to leave.

I make my way to the kitchen and find everyone already seated.

"Good morning everyone" I say cheerful.

"You look happy what's going on" Kiara asks.

“Are you happy that Mkhulu is leaving mama” Oyintando asks.

Kiara laughs clapping her hands.

“This child” she says grinning.

“Are you happy that I am leaving Mkabayi” baba asks looking at me.

“No that’s not why I am happy” I tell them.

“Then why are you happy” baba asks.

“Because it’s a beautiful day” I say.

“Hayi asazi” Thandazile says.

I look at Mhlengi and sigh my son has been closed off and it’s been a while now.

“Mhlengi” he looks up and smiles.

“Are you okay my boy” he nods his head.

“I am okay mama” he says sipping his juice.

“Are you okay going to the park with Auntie Kiara and Thandazile” I ask.

He nods his head again and goes back to eating.

I clear the table once everyone is done with Mhlengi helping me.

He carefully hands me all the dirty dishes while me putting them in the dishwasher, Busani used to do this with him and it got him talking even though half of things he said never made sense but they bonded over the smallest of things.

“Mhlengi are upset about something” I ask.

He shakes his head

“How is school is everything okay at school” he nods his head again.

“If anything was the matter you would talk to mommy right” he nods his head and hands me the last plate.

“Mama” he calls out.

I look at him and smile.

“Are you going to leave us again” he asks.

“No,Mhlengi why would you ask that” I ask.

“Oyintando kept praying to God to give us a new dad and now you have uncle Banzi,are you going to marry him is he going to be our new dad” he asks in a low tone.

I pick him up and place him on the counter.

“I don't want you to leave us like Josh's mother” he says.

I juggle my memory trying to remember his friend Josh and it clicks explaining his sudden withdrawal, the boy's mother left her marital home to stay with another man and left her kids behind.

“Mhlengi I am not Josh's mother and I will never leave you ever again, uncle Banzi will not take me away from you guys okay. When mommy left it was hard on all of us and I am sorry that I left you soon after Baba left, I am sorry that I wasn't there but I promise you I will never leave you guy ever again. I don't want you to be angry or sad because of this okay trust that mommy won't leave” I say.

He wraps his arms around my neck hugging me.

“I love you mama” he says.

“I love you too Ngiyaxolisa yezwa” he nods his head.

I put him down and watch as he heads to garden.

“If it isn't my brother's wife” he says.

I quickly turn and find Mkhetheni standing by the door.

I didn't open the gate meaning he must have used the small one.

The last time I saw him he was on the floor holding on by a thread.

“Don’t be afraid I won’t hurt you I just came to say hello” he says looking around.

I want to scream and call out for my father but my voice fails me, I never thought he would be this brave to come here ever again.

“Why did you do it” he asks.

I hold on to the kitchen counter and breathe standing up straight.

“All I wanted was to carry on my brothers legacy and build his empire but no you had to sell our family business to him of all people” he says getting angry.

“I don’t know what you want or who you are talking about but please leave my house” I say.

“My brother’s house you came into this family in nothing but rags my brother made you what you are today” he says.

“But you can still make things right marry and I will look after Busani’s investments and raise the kids like he would have” he says.

I tilt my head trying to remember if I ever shot him in the head.

“Mkheteni I don’t remember any bullet going through your head,are you really that thick how many times must I tell you I do not want you” I tell him.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">"I can make you happy Mkabayi and I could even forget what you did to me" he says.

I laugh so much to his annoyance.

"I don't want you to forget infact I wish you live each and every day of your life knowing I once crippled your arse" I tell him.

He nods his head.

"I guess my mother was right the only way to teach you a lesson is to take those kids away" he says.

I call for the kids to join me in the kitchen,they both stand next to me looking at their uncle.

"Look at them Mkhetheni don't rush look at them carefully" I say.

He looks at them then me.

"Mama are we done" Oyintando asks.

I nod my head,they run out back to the garden.

"Those are my kids now get out of my house" I tell him.

He turns and walks out.

I grab my phone and call David.

“Mkhetheni was just at my house I think now is the right time to send those letters” I tell him.

“I will send them as soon as I get to the office including the will” he says.

“Thank you” I end the call and sigh.

My father left soon after Mkhetheni’s visit, he wasn’t impressed about how the Ntuli’s are doing things ever since Busani died.

Thandazile, Kiara and the kids left too and Banzi should be here any moment now.

I look at myself in the mirror and smile Thandazile’s said I should wear a dress and sneakers seeing that I will on my feet most of the time.

I lock the house and walk towards the gate when I receive a call from him telling me he’s outside.

He steps out of the car and give me a kiss now I am fully convinced he’s not an ordinary taxi driver, I have a good mind to ask but I hold my tongue and let things be.

He places his hand on my thigh while driving.

“Mashimane you seem excited today what’s going on” I ask.

“Nothing I am just happy that you agreed to come” he says.

I clear my throat and look at him.

“I was thinking of spending the night at your place tonight if you don’t mind” I tell him.

He chuckles and smiles

“I don’t mind in fact I would love you hold you all night long” he says.

We drive down to the hostel listening to Khuzani’s song ijele.

He finds parking in the midst of many cars and taxis, we both step out with him holding my hand.

The place is packed the people here are lively, traditional songs being sung and many dancing.

He introduces me to a few taxi drivers and walks over to the crowd dancing, I look at him and smile admiring his Zulu dance he looks handsome and the ladies can’t help but drool and swoon over him.

I spot Thulisile and two other ladies making their way to me.

“You made it” Thulisile says giving me a hug.

I greet her back returning the hug.

She pulls away still holding her beautiful smile.

“This is my sister Khosi and this is bhuti’s fiancé Kayise “ she says.

“It’s good to meet you” Khosi says.

Kayise just nods her head and forces a smile.

I look at her heels and conclude she’s never attended ingoma before,or maybe she has and just likes wearing heels.

Khosi and Thulisile chat me up till their brother swoops me to the side to give me a kiss.

“Bhuti stop kissing her you’ll finish her” Thulisile says laughing.

All this is new to me Khosi and Thulisile seem friendly.

“Yeka ingane Banzi and go see your brothers we will bring your food right now” Khosi says.

Banzi pulls close for a hug and kisses me before disappearing to one of the hostel houses.

Khosi look at me and smiles.

“Whatever it is that you are doing to him keep doing it I haven’t seen him this happy in a very long time” she says.

“Is Kayise Zamani’s fiance” I ask.

She laughs throwing her head back.

“What no she’s my older brother’s fiancé” she says leading to another house.

We plate up for the Maphumulo men and head to the other house.

You can tell by the roaring laughter that the room is filled with man only.

Banzi meets me by the door and take the plate of food from me holding my hand.

“No one will steel her” Khosi says.

I am so wrapped up in Banzi whispering sweet nothings in my ears I barely take notice of the people in the room.

“Sthandwa sam I would like you to meet my older brother Nkosenhle” I raise my eyes meeting his.

I blink twice feeling faint.

“Mkabayi” Banzi says holding me before I hit the floor.

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I open my eyes and find Banzi sitting next to me, I look around and spot Nkosenhle sitting on a chair facing us even the girls are here.

I close my eyes again and open them if this is the universe's way of playing a prank on me then I give it to it hands down.

I sit up straight feeling Nkosenhle's eyes on me drilling me piercing at me.

"You scared me" Banzi says kissing me.

I close my eyes and breathe.

"What happened" he asks.

"Nothing it must been that I didn't eat" I tell him.

"Shame bandla" Kayise says.

I force a smile and look at Banzi.

"Can you take me home" I tell him.

"Zamani took my car can we wait for him then I can take you home" he says.

"I can drive you two" Nkosenhle says.

I quickly shake my head and look at Banzi.

“It’s okay Sthandwa sam I can call Thandazile she can pick me up” I tell him.

“I think we should give them some space” Khosi says.

They all walk out with Nkosenhle asking to speak to Banzi on the side.

I reach for my phone and call Thandazile to come pick me up, I send her my location and wait for Banzi to come back.

I get on my feet and pull my dress down, I raise my eyes and find Nkosenhle staring at me.

He hasn’t changed one single bit still tall, dark, handsome with an enigma that just pulls you in.

“Sawubona Mkabayi” he says.

I look at him and say nothing.

“Ngikhuluma nawe Mkabayi” he says.

I had forgotten what he sounds like, how deep and soothing his voice is when he’s calm.

Banzi walks in before he can part his lips and say anything further.

“Thank you for the car” Banzi says.

I cling on to Banzi for dear life as we walk past Nkosenhle.

We get to the car and Banzi opens the door for me, I look back and notice that Nksosenhle is watching.

Banzi gets in the drivers seat and sighs.

I look at Banzi driving and notice the resemblance he has to Nkonsenhle, the charm and charisma is all there he only lacks the dark aura.

We drive in silence till we reach my house

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he parks outside the gate and steps out coming to my side opening the door for me.

He pulls me into his chests and wraps his arms around me.

“I will call before I sleep I love you” he says.

I pull away and nod my head.

“Hey I love you” he says raising his eyebrow.

“I love you too” I say smiling.

He drives off and I take time to collect myself before heading inside the house.

I walk into a pastry mess that smells heavenly.

“Close the door we are baking” Kiara says.

I close the door and walk past the kitchen feeling numb.

“And then I thought you were spending the night at Banzi’s what happened” Kiara asks.

“Something came up” I say.

I feel a lump on my throat with each step I take it’s days like these I miss Busani so much.

I reach my bedroom and close the door heading for my closet.

I reach for the shoe box with old pictures in it and pour them on the floor tearing them up stupid memories I kept for God knows what.

The door opens and Thandazile walks in followed by Kiara they close the door and look at me.

My sister picks up the pictures and sighs.

“What’s wrong” Kiara asks.

“Mkabayi why are you tearing these up this is the only thing you have left of Nkosenhle” she says.

Tears well up apart from my kids that’s what I thought too that these stupid pictures were the only I had.

“What happened talk to us” Kiara says.

“Nothing happened I am just tired” I say.

“Shout if you need anything” Kiara says standing up.

They both walk out leaving me to my misery and confusion.

I finally find the strength to pick myself up from the floor and walk to Busani's study, I punch in the code to the safe and take out one of the letters I got from David.

I pull the chair and sit down opening the letter.

“Nathanjekwayo sthandwa sam I know you never wanted to speak about this matter or revisit your past but there will come a time where I won't be there anymore. I know you hate it when I speak like this but the business I am in is a tricky and dangerous one, I want you to know that I love you with all my heart. I will forever be grateful for the gift of fatherhood that you gave me. I want you to do one thing for me when I am gone from this world I want you to find him, you might hate him now but the kids will need him once I am gone. I am sorry that he hurt you that he left when you needed him the most but he is their father. I would rather he raise them than to have my family taint them. Ngiyakuthanda Mkabayi”

I wipe my tears looking at the letter.

Meeting Busani was a blessing he came into my life when I needed him the most, he couldn't have kids of his own he was honest from the word go. He raised the triplets like his own even when we both knew the truth.

He loved these kids more than anything in this world, I was carrying another man's children yet he didn't care and loved me still.

A call from Banzi comes through I let it ring till cuts the call

"Hey I am worried about you please pick up my calls I love you"
a text from him says.

Tears blur my eye sight brothers out of the all the messed up things that could happen to me I had to fall for his brother.

24

A loud knock wakes me up, I grunt getting out of bed up going to get the door.

I open the door and Mkhetheni followed by his mother walk up pushing me to the side.

One of these days I need to take my remote key back.

She turns and slaps me across the face while Mkhetheni looks by. I push her away and try to return the slap but her son holds me back.

He grabs my wrist and twists my arm pushing me down the floor.

I sit on my arse and look at them.

“What the hell is this Mkabayi” he asks shoving the papers in my face.

“What did you feed my son huh” Busani’s mother asks.

“First you took all his money now you want to take my grandchildren away from me” she says.

“Those are not your grandchildren and they will never be” I say.

Tears well from her eyes clearly this whole issue upset her.

“How could you do this to my son Mkabayi he loved you and let him raise another man’s children thinking they were his” she says sounding defeated.

“Busani knew that those kids aren’t his he knew from the very first day” I say.

“You are evil Mkabayi” she says.

“Stop with that custody battle nonsense and leave me and my kids alone” I say.

She shakes her head.

“After everything he did for you you” she says.

I stand up and rub my painful wrist looking at Mkhetheni.

“Busani couldn’t have kids okay he couldn’t have his own kids and he knew that they were not his, but he loved them still and if you want to fight me for their inheritance or mine you have another thing coming. His will stipulates that he leaves everything to me and his kids kid’s although they are not his biologically” I say.

“It was alway about the money with you,you never loved him now you get to finish his money and those bastard kids of yours” Pricilla says.

“That’s enough aren’t you people tire of making Mkabayi the bad guy here” Kiara says walking in.

She gives Mkhetheni a look and clicks her tongue.

“Leave before I show how we used to butcher a person on the inside” she says looking at Busani’s mother.

Pricilla looks at me.

“I curse the day I met you may you not find peace ever” she says walking out followed by her son.

“Was I wrong Kiara for giving my husband what he always wanted” I ask.

“I never asked to meet Busani but we did,I never asked to fall in love with him but I did. He knew that those kids were not his and he never asked me to abort them,he loved them before he even saw them.

Was I wrong for allowing him to me and my kids” I ask.

She shakes her head bring me into a hug.

“Don’t let that witch to get you” she says.

“Maybe I should give them everything and start afresh” I say.

“Are you crazy do you know how hard it is to get a job in South Africa worse with a criminal record,Busani left all this for you and the kids so that you don’t suffer” she says.

“Do not let those kids suffer because of that woman, you are giving them anything if her son wanted them to have the money he would have given it to them” she says.

“Everything is a mess Kiara I don’t know what to do, I miss my mom and I need her with Nkosenhle in the picture I don’t know what to do. What will I tell Banzi I don’t want to hurt him I really don’t” I tell her.

“You will tell Banzi the truth and once you are ready you will tell Nkosenhle about the triplets, you will tell him about Thingo’s death and allow him to grieve the son he lost” she says wiping my tears.

“You survived the inside like a pro and you will get through this with me and Thandazile by your side” she says.

I fail to hold myself and cry in her arms, I think about Kiara’s words telling Nkosenhle about the kids will be hard but telling him about the death of Thingo will even be harder.

“Mama why are you on the floor” Mhlengi asks.

“Are you crying” Oyintando asks.

“No antie Kiara and I were just talking” I say.

“Okay” Mhlengi says.

Oyintando makes her way to us and sits down.

“Can I also talk” she says.

I nod my head smiling with my daughter there’s never a dull moment now that I have met Thulisile I believe she takes after her aunt.

“Let’s get you up from the floor we don’t want you missing school because if a cold” Kiara says helping her up.

We make our way to the kitchen Oyintando already telling us her day ahead.

“I will check on Thandazile” I say

I head to her bedroom and find her deep in sleep.

“Thandazile wake up” I say.

She opens her covers instead of her eyes.

I remove my slippers and snuggle in silently crying.

“I miss mom” I whisper.

She holds me tight and allows me to be.

“I miss her too”she says.

Kiara said I am strong but right now I don’t feel strong I want to cry and have my mother hold me.

Being a housewife wasn't all bad when Busani was still around but now being at home all day waiting for kids to come home with no husband gets to me. When Busani asked me to stay home I didn't mind but now with him gone these walls are getting to me, I keep getting reminded of what I lost and truly speaking I need to keep busy or I might go crazy.

My phone rings I look at the screen and see Banzi, I contemplate whether to pick it up or not I finally do and breathe with a smile spreading across my lips when I hear his voice.

"Sthandwa sam" he says.

"Muntu wam" he chuckles.

"I miss you dali wam" he says.

I look around the house and figure I could pop out for a moment and see him.

"I can come over and see you maybe even wear something nice and small underneath" I say.

"Tempting but my day is busy I was thinking of something better" he says.

"And what is better than seeing me" I ask.

"Nothing but I would like you to come have dinner with me tonight at my parents house" he says.

“Mkabayi” he calls out at my silence.

“I don’t think it’s a good idea” I tell him.

“Please I promise that you will have a good time, I just want my parents to meet you nothing huge please” he says.

“Okay but I won’t stay long” I tell him.

“Great I will tell ma” he says sounding excited.

“I love you Mkabayi”he says.

“I love you too Mashimane” he laughs ending the call.

He sends the location as I sit back and think about his parents do they know that I was married,that my husband died,that I am a young widow or the fact that I married into the Ntuli family.

Will they want their son dating someone who lost a husband and has two kids?

The night is here and I am about to leave.

“This isn’t too much right” I ask turning around.

“I still say walk away from all of this stay away from the Maphumulo’s” Thandazile says.

“Babe come on she can’t do that” Kiara says.

Okay when did they start calling each other babe.

“Okay then how is this going to work huh will you tell Nkosenhle about his kids” my sister asks looking at me.

I shake my head No.

“Exactly you are not going to tell him, okay what what Banzi will you atleast tell him” she asks.

I slowly nod my head.

“You look stunning Banzi will go mad seeing you in this dress” Kiara says

“And don’t mind your sister I will fix her” she says smiling.

I don’t know what that means but in my mind it sounded sexual.

I am wearing a black long sleeve frickem dress decent enough to meet Banzi’s parents in. Red bottom black shoes a touch of red lip stick and a weave to top my look.

I walk past the twins bedroom and kiss them goodnight.

I haven’t used this in a very long long but I get inside and close my eyes remembering when Busani bought it home.

Advertisement

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">The Jeep Wangler was a gift from Busani the day after he asked me to marry him again he bought this car.

I feel tears sting my eyes good God that man asked me to marry him again and it never happened.

I start the car and drive out heading to Banzi's parents.

These people have money I think to myself when I park in the drive way, Banzi is already standing guard waiting for me to get off.

He looks at the car then me.

"You never told me what you did before going to prison" he says jokingly.

I laugh it off and take his hand making our way inside the house, I get mesmerized by the beautiful decor and every detail that surrounds the house.

I hear Banzi's mother laughing followed by a manly laugh their laugh ceases and erupts again and I think to myself these two are doing something they shouldn't.

We proceed to the dining table with Banzi holding my hand, we find his parents in each other's arms kissing with Khosi taking a video while Thulisile has her face covered.

"They are here" Khosi says turning the camera to us.

“I am sorry about this my family tends to get carried away” he says.

“It’s okay” I say.

“Mkabayi how are you” his mother says giving me a hug.

“I am good thank you Ma” I say.

“So this is the lovely Mkabayi” his father says giving me a handshake and a kiss on the cheek.

“Babe these are my parents Ma,Baba this is Mkabayi” Banzi says smiling.

I look at Banzi’s father the resemblance his sons have to too him is uncanny.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you” they say.

We all settle down after greeting Khosi and Thulisile.

I get comfortable knowing Zamani and Nkosenhle are not here.

“I am glad you could make it” Banzi’s mother says handing me a glass of wine.

“When he asked I couldn’t say no” I say looking at Banzi.

“Right on time I was getting worried” Mr Maphumulo says looking at the entrance.

Nkosenhle walks in resting his hand on Kayise's back followed by Zamani.

Kayise in is a long beautiful shimmery dress while Nkosenhle is dressed in black formal pants a black polo neck and shoes. His look give me Idris Alba vibes I quickly chuck that thought at the back of my head and sip my wine.

They greet and sit down,they seem like a happy family warm and loving.

"I just saw a Jeep Wangler outside didn't know a new car was bought" Kayise says.

"Oh that's Mkabayi's car" Thulisile says.

"Oh it's a beautiful car I have been nagging Nkosi to buy it for me" Kayise says.

Nkosenhle gives her a disapproving look.

"What job do you do" Mr Maphumulo asks.

"She's a teacher baba" Thulisile says eagerly.

"Musa ukuphapha wena since when are you Mkabayi was Baba talking to you" Nkosenhle asks.

"I am sorry Baba" Thulisile says.

"I am a teacher Baba" I say.

He nods his head looking at Banzi.

“I didn’t know teachers could afford such cars on their low pay”
Kayise says.

“At least she earns her money” Khosi says.

“My husband bought it for me” I find myself saying.

I look at Banzi who nods his head squeezing my hand.

Nkosenhle raises his eyes looking at me.

“Oh you are married” Kayise says.

“Kayise” Nkosenhle warns.

“I was married but my husband passed away” I say.

“I am sorry to hear that” Mrs Maphumulo says.

“Was it an accident? I am sorry for asking but you are still
young meaning he was too” Khosi says.

“No he was killed” I say.

Nkosenhle’s eyes soften.

“Was he from around here” Zamani asks.

I think this is the first time I have sensed any softness in his
tone.

“Not really” I say.

He nods his head giving me a side smile.

“Banzi said your surname is Ntuli” Mr Maphumo says.

“Yebo Baba but my maiden name is Thanjekwayo I got married into the Ntuli family” I say.

“Do you perhaps know the well known Ntuli family” he continues asking.

“Baba the poor girl will run if you keep asking so many questions” Mrs Maphumulo.

“It’s okay Ma I don’t mind” I say.

“She’s an open book Ma” Banzi says kissing my cheek.

“If you are referring to the Ntuli’s I know then yes they are my In laws” I say.

The table goes quiet with everyone looking at me.

“I was married to Busani Ntuli Baba and he died” I say.

“I am sorry for your loss” he says looking at Nkosenhle.

I get saved by Thandazile calling me I asked to be excused and stand up.

“How is it going” Thandizile asks.

“Apart from the questions everything is going well” I say.

“Is he there” She asks.

“Yes” I respond.

“Still handsome as he was or” she asks.

“I am not doing this with you goodnight I am spending the night at Banzi’s” I say ending the call.

I take out an ointment she have me and roll my sleeve applying it on my bruised wrist.

“Kuqubuku mhleza, umzimba wonke,

Makuqhamuka wena lovie

yini ngishawa luvalo

Umlenze wakho dali ubhubhuzel' umoya, isinqesakho sasekuseni”

I quickly turn my head and find him staring.

Why would he even sing that stupid song here of all places.

“Sena paka kangaka Mkabayi”(You got so full) he says walking over.

I roll down my sleeve down but he holds my hand.

“What happened”he asks towering over me.

He was always tall and intimidating.

“It’s nothing now let go” I say.

“Mkabayi” my name softly falls out of his lips his eyes searching me.

I don’t know what Nkosenhle is playing at but I don’t like it one bit.

“Who did this? did Banzi do this” he asks finding it difficult to phantom the possibility of Banzi hurting me.

“Banzi would never hurt me unlike you” I say trying to yank my hand.

“Nkosenhle let go of me” My attempt to pull away results in me bumping into his chest our lips colliding. For a moment he breathes my air and trembles.

“Mkabayi” Banzi calls out.

He quickly lets go and steps back.

Banzi walks in and looks at his brother then me.

“Is everything okay” he asks.

I nod my head grabbing my bag.

“Mashimane we need to talk” I tell him.

25

He holds my hand as we walk back to the dining table.

“Is everything okay” Mrs Maphumulo asks.

“Everything is fine Ma” I say.

We all dine striking a conversation here and there, apart from what happens with Nkosenhle I am loving this family.

I watch Banzi’s mother fuss over everyone including her sons.

I think about the love she could my kids given the chance.

I turn my head and look at Banzi he seems very fond of his big brother, the three of them share a joke and erupt into laughter.

Thandazile was right I can’t do this I can’t break this brotherhood up. I need to stay away from this family they seem like a very close one and I am not about to break that up.

“UBhuti uphuma umongozile mama” (He’s bleeding) Thulisile says looking at Banzi.

I get a napkin and place it against his nose stopping the bleeding.

“I am okay” he says.

“You are not okay this is not the first time I have seen you bleeding Banzi” I say.

He turns and looks at me.

“I am okay really” he says standing up.

He takes a few steps and falls hitting the floor.

I push my chair and run to him supporting his head on my thigh.

“Banzi” he shuts his eyes breathing heavily.

“Banzi vuka” I say.

“He’s fine let us help him up” Zamani says.

Nkosenhle lifts him with the help of Zamani taking him to his bedroom I presume.

His mother helps me up while I look at them stunned.

“Call an ambulance clearly he needs one” I say.

“He’s going to be fine” His father says calmly.

I nod my head fixing myself grabbing my bag, there’s more to this Banzi thing than they are letting on.

They will never understand my fear losing someone close to me.

“I think I should leave” I say.

“Please stay he might ask for you when he wakes up” his mother says.

“I will go say goodbye” I say.

Thulisile takes me to Banzi’s bedroom, we find Zamani on his feet while Nkosenhle in the bed holding his hand.

“I came to say goodbye” I say.

Nkosenhle moves and stands next to Zamani.

“You keep scaring me Banzi I don’t know what to make of this” I say.

He smile trust him to be calm when everyone else is not.

“I promise you I am okay” he says.

I nod my head leaning for a kiss not caring if his brothers are in the room.

I rest my forehead on his and smile.

“I will call you when I get home I really need to talk to you” I say.

He takes another kiss and pulls away.

“I love you” he says.

“I love you too” I say.

“I am putting you in charge okay take care of him” I say looking at Thulisile.

“I will guard him with my life” she says jumping on the bed.

I cringe a little and wish to tell her to be careful not hurt him.

I walk out and bid everyone goodbye.

I drive home with scenes of Banzi falling replaying in my head, I can't shake this feeling that he's not telling me everything.

He could have called but doesn't want to respond to it, I sigh getting irritated at the driver behind me flashing his lights at me.

I wish I could spread one can never trust anything at night especially when traveling alone.

The car hoots signaling me to stop, I check my review and notice Nkosenhle's car.

I pull over on the side of the road and step out breathing.

He pulls over too and steps out of his car walking over to me.

You would think he would have changed but he's still the same man I met back in varsity, still handsome and arrogant as hell.

"What do you want from me Nkosenhle" I ask.

He rubs his forehead and sighs.

"Sawubona Mkabayi how are you? It's been a long time" he says.

I look at him dumbfounded.

“You really want know how I am” I ask.

I chuckle and hold my tongue this man is testing me.

“You don’t deserve to know anything about me Nkosenhle, turn around get in your car and go back to your fiancé” I tell him.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Ungizonda ngaleyo ndlela Mkabayi that you would date my brother ulale nengane yakithi ” (You hate new that much you would sleep with my brother) he asks.

I slap him on the face feeling my anger rise.

He stands there doing nothing,I slap him again and again till tears fill his eyes.

“Banzi is a man that loves me and unlike you he is not using me” I say.

“I never used Mkabayi” he says.

“Unlike you Banzi is not a cheat,a liar or bully” I tell him.

“God dammit Mkabayi I never cheated on you ngifunga bonke abakithi abalele” he says.

“Last but not least he’s not going to leave me” I say.

He clenches his jaws fighting his tears.

“I love him and I am begging you please don’t ruin this for me please” I say.

He moves closer and hesitantly wipes my tears kissing my forehead totally disarming me.

“Thank you for loving him” he says pulling away.

He walks back to his car and watches while I get inside mine and drive off.

I get home to find Thandazile and Kiara waiting up, I slump on the couch and sigh.

“Must have been dinner from hell” Kiara says.

“Not exactly” I say.

“Then what happened spill” Thandazile says.

“They seem like lovely people they were kinds but asked a lot of questions” I say taking off my shoes.

“And then” they both say.

“Nkosenhle ambushed me in the kitchen but nothing happened and Banzi feel again” I tell him.

“Did you tell him about Nkosenhle” Thandazile asks.

“No I couldn’t tell him but I will” I tell him.

“Mkabayi” Thandazile says.

“I wanted to tell him but then he fell and I just couldn’t” I say.
She nods her head and shrugs her shoulders.

Last night I called Banzi and we talked for a while before going to bed,I asked him to come by the house if he wasn’t going to be busy.

I look at the kids all dressed up and looking smart.

Mhlengi smiles and I see his father in him even those small traits.

I bring both of them close and hug them.

“I love you so much” I say.

“Have a good okay” they nod taking their back packs walking to the car.

Thandazile and Kiara step out holding hands making their way to car.

I have decided to mind my own business and not ask since I am not told.

I tidy up the house and bake some brownies and muffins,Oyintando loves brownies and she asked if I could make some.

I finish baking and take a shower heading to the kitchen.

I find my phone ringing and open the gate for Banzi to park inside.

I meet him outside and fling into his arms although I am about to tell him about his brother I am still very much excited to see him.

“Come let’s go” I take his hand but he remains standing.

“Banzi” I say.

He smiles and looks at me.

“What’s wrong is it your headache” he shakes his head and reaches inside his pocket taking out his phone.

He scrolls and gives it to me.

My mouth opens when I see pictures of me and Nkosenhle on the side of the road, Nkosenhle’s hands on my face his lips on my forehead.

“Banzi I can explain” I tell him.

“Are you sleeping with my brother” he asks.

I shake my head holding his hand.

“No I am not sleeping with him I swear to God I am not sleeping with him” I say.

“Then what it is this” he asks.

“I know what it looks like but it’s not what you think,I wanted to tell you but then you fell and I didn’t want to overwhelm you” he nods his head.

“So you guys know each other” he asks.

“Yes but from a long time ago Banzi I didn’t know he was your brother you have to believe me” I say.

He looks hurt and bites his lower lip.

“We dated a long time ago but things didn’t work, when I met you I didn’t know he was your brother. I was shocked Banzi when I saw him that day you introduced us. Ngiyaxolisa Banzi I am sorry” I say.

I hold his hand but he gently pulls away.

“Banzi say something” I beg.

“I have to go” he says turning and walking away.

“Banzi unghambi please I was going to tell you I swear” I say.

He steps into his car and drives out leaving me standing there.

I bite my fist and scream God knows I was going to tell him.

So Nkosenhle followed me and had someone take pictures of us so he could hurt me.

It's been a week of not seeing Banzi and having only received a text telling me that he needs time, I know what those pictures depicted but I love him and not Nkosenhle.

I didn't know I could have feelings for another man after Busani but here I am feeling this love for Banzi, so much so that I am willing to do anything to fix us I want us.

I grab my phone and scroll down his pictures I must say the Maphumulo men are handsome, they have bushy thick eyebrows and long beautiful lashes you can imagine how beautiful and drawing their eyes are.

I sigh going through my contact list this is it, I dial Khosi and she picks up on the second ring.

"Khosi hello" she says

"Khosi Hi you're speaking to Mkabayi" I say.

"Oh how can I help you" she asks.

"I am looking for Banzi but I can't get ahold of him" I lie.

My calls have been going through just fine but he hasn't be picking up.

"He just left the house for his" she says.

I clear my throat not knowing if I should ask or not.

“I can give you his address if you want then you can go see him” she says.

“Please do I would appreciate that” I say.

Silence befalls us till she clears her throat.

“Mkabayi do you love my brother” she asks.

I don’t know where the question stems from but I answer it nonetheless.

“Khosi I love your brother” I tell her.

It feels good saying I love someone and not just anyone but another man after my husband.

“Okay I will send you his location” she says.

“Thank you so much” I end the call and wait for her to send the address.

I find myself driving to his place it’s an apartment and judging by the area the place is for the rich and elite.

I stand on his door step and dig deep finding courage to knock.

It’s takes a couple of knocks before he opens up.

“Hi” I say.

He moves out of the way despite being shocked.

He closes the door and looks at me.

“Mkabayi” he says.

“I am sorry for coming without letting you know but I needed to see you” I say.

He nods his head.

“Can we at least sit down” he says.

I nod my head and it’s only then that I notice the weight loss and paleness on his face.

We settle on the couch and look at each other I notice the dark circles under his eyes.

“Banzi are you okay” I ask.

“I have been having severe headaches lately” he says.

I nod and take his hand into mine.

“Banzi I want to explain” I say.

“I should have told you this the minute I saw your brother that day but I didn’t know how because I was still shocked. I met your brother back in varsity I was young, naive and blind to the worlds doing. He posed himself as a student when in actual fact he was a graduate that preyed on first year students. I fell into that trap and found myself pregnant I guess he heard rumors of my pregnancy because after that he disappeared. I was a joke and laughing stock to everyone at campus, I was the gullible fool

who was blind while everyone else knew that I was being used and lied too. I couldn't believe all the things I was hearing about him till one day his friends paid me a visit and told me to stay away and stop asking about Nkosenhle. I almost lost my babies that day but after that day I stopped asking, that's how I know your brother he's the father of my kids" I tell him.

He wipes my tears and kisses my lips.

"I am sorry" he says.

"I should be the one saying sorry for not telling you the truth,when you walked away I thought we lost this us" I say.

"Don't be sorry sthandwa sam yes I was disappointed but we haven't lost this,I might have been clouded in that moment but in these past months I have gotten to know that you are this amazing,truthful,strong and beautiful woman" he says.

Hearing him say that brings tears to my eyes.

"Was he ever violent" he asks referring to Nkosenhle.

I shake my head Nkosenhle was never violent towards me but guys who would hang around me. His temper and jealousy would have a way of erupting and coming out to play.

"So the kids are his" he asks.

I nod my head and watch a smile spread across his lips.

“Are you going to tell him” he asks.

I shrug my shoulders honestly I don't know if Nkosenhle deserves to be a part of my life or that of the kids.

“I don't know” I tell him.

He nods his head and sighs.

“I am sorry for being a jerk I should have stayed and listened” he says chuckling.

“I should be one saying sorry for not being truthfully ngiyaxolisa Mashimane” I say.

He pulls me into his chest with his arms wrapping around me.

“I love you” he says.

“I love you too” I say.

“No more secrets” I say.

He nods his head and faintly smiles.

I should have left hours ago but I couldn't Banzi started throwing up and getting a fever, he said it's normal since he's hasn't been feeling well these past days.

He did mention going to the doctor which put me at ease, I gave him his painkillers and watched as he dozed off.

I grab my phone and call Thandazile.

“Hello I am not available please try again later” she says laughing.

“Really Thandazile” I ask.

“What do you want” she asks.

“Can you look after the kids tonight I am not coming home” I tell her.

“Who’s picking them up” she asks.

“Kiara” I say

“Mmmm let me guess you and Banzi fixed things and now you’re not sleeping home” she says.

Sometimes she acts like my mother.

“Yes we fixed things” I say.

“Thatha girl” she says laughing.

“Look I have to go I need to cook for man and feed him right” I say

She laughs ending the call.

I carefully move Banzi’s head from my lap and place it on the pillow.

I raid his kitchen and start cooking careful not to make noise, I make him some Mac and cheese, grilled chicken and salad.

I turn my head and find him filming me.

“What are you doing” I ask.

“Admiring your beauty” he says.

I smile turning off the stove.

He starts playing a song by PJ Saxe and Julia Michaels singing along to it to.

“I tried to imagine

Your reaction

It didn't scare me when the earthquake happened

But it really got me thinkin'

That night we went drinkin'

Stumbled in the house

And didn't make it past the kitchen

Ah, it's been a year now

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">Think I've figured
out how

How to think about you without it rippin' my heart out

I know, you know, we know

You weren't down for forever and it's fine

I know, you know, we know

We weren't meant for each other and it's fine

But if the world was ending

You'd come over, right?

You'd come over and you'd stay the night

Would you love me for the hell of it?

All our fears would be irrelevant

If the world was ending

You'd come over, right?"

He stops singing and focuses the camera on me.

"I love you Mkabayi" he says.

I hide my face and laugh.

"Hayibo muntu I said I love you" he says.

I turn and face him.

“I love you too Mashimane” he moves from where he is and joins me.

We both appear on the camera with him kissing my cheek his one hand on my belly.

He stops filming and turns me around kissing me passionately.

“I just want to hold you in my arms all night long” he says.

“Let me finish up here first” I tell him.

He walks over to the couch while I finish cooking and plate up.

I change into his t-shirt since I didn't bring any clothes to change.

He puts on the movie “The fault in our stars” followed by “The note book”

He complements the food while we watch the movie my legs resting on his lap.

He takes a few sips of his beer and takes the plates to the sink coming back to snuggle against me on the couch.

“Baby” he mumbles his response clinging on to me his arms around my waist with his head on my belly.

“Mashimane vuka” he lifts his head up and smiles.

“You make me happy” he says.

“Why don’t you go to bed I will follow you after cleaning the kitchen” I say. We both stand up with him pulling me close to his chest.

“I want you to know that it never hurt that spending time with you has made me the happiest man on earth” he says kissing me.

I close my eyes feeling tears nearer.

“You have given me another reason to move again” he smiles and makes his way to the bedroom.

I clean up and put the dishes in the dishwasher while I handwash the pots.

I switch off the lights and make my way to the bedroom finding him already in bed.

I walk over to the bathroom and pee freshening up.

“Baby do you have a spare toothbrush” I ask calling out to Banzi.

“Banzi” I call out but he doesn’t respond.

I walk out of the bedroom and get in snuggling up against him placing my phone on the side of the bed. “You’re so cold” I tell him. “Banzi” I call out. He lays still not moving

I shake him a couple of times trying to wake him up but he remains still not waking up.

I jump out of bed and look at him.

“Banzi wake up” my voice cracks as I slump to the floor putting a hand over my mouth.

I look around not knowing what to do this can't be happening to me not again.

I crawl to the side of the bed and reach for my phone calling for an ambulance followed by the police.

Tears stream down my face as I watch him laying there still not breathing.

A lump forms on my throat just like that he's gone another heartbreak, another painful death and there's nothing I can do about it.

I sit there bolting into a cry hugging my legs what is it that I have done to deserve this.

I want to beg him to wake up but I have done this before I know the drill, I have sung this song before and I ended up dancing the dance.

I hear some commotion and sirens outside, I feel numb the pain is unbearable I can't even stand up my throat is clogged up.

I hear the door breaking and footsteps soon the bedroom is filled with medical personnel and police.

One the medical personnel shakes his looking at his partner.

“Mam can you hear me” they ask.

“Please wake him up” my voice is shaky but audible enough.

“I am afraid he’s gone” one of them says. My heart shatters hearing those words hits hard.

Banzi’s phone rings and one of the police officer takes.

He steps out for a few minutes and comes back to crouch down looking at me.

“Someone is on the way” he says.

“Please wake him up I am begging you” I say.

He stands up and tries reviving him just for a few seconds but nothing.

“See why I cursed the day I found out about you because you have done nothing but hurt me” I scream to God so loud my ear drums hurt.

An hours passes with Banzi’s body covered while the police and medical personnel stand guard.

Another set of commotion I hear Zamani and Nkosenhle demanding to be let in.

I look at them my lips quivering they have just lost their little brother.

The room clears and only Zamani, Nkosenhle and I are left in the room.

Zamani pulls over the sheet and breaks down going down on his knees.

Nkosenhle kneels in front of me and he pulls me into his arms but I push him away.

“This is your fault” I tell him.

He looks hurt his eyes fill with tears.

“Why him Maphumulo why not you for hurting me all those years” I ask. He says nothing and allows me to be.

“You can’t say that Mkabayi” Zamani says.

“Let it go Mashimane this is not your fight” Nkosenhle says.

I look at Zamani and bite my lip.

“Banzi was sick he had cancerous tumors in the brain and there was nothing the doctors could do” Zamani says.

“Zamani shut up” Nkosenhle roars.

“She deserves to know that there was nothing anyone could do, he had little time left and all he wanted to do was spend it

with you because you made him happy and made his journey easy” he says.

My eyes widen when I think back to the headaches and bleeding he was living on borrowed time.

“Nathula Maphumulo nathula ngamthanda nazi kahle ukuthi uyaya” (And you said nothing and allowed me to love him knowing he was dying) I ask.

“We couldn’t take what you had away from him we couldn’t” Nkosenhle says looking into my eyes.

“Ngiyisiphukuphuku sakwa Maphumulo mina Nkosenhle” (Am I the Makhumalo idiot” I ask. He shake his head.

“No you are not but he was happy Mkabayi he spent his last days on earth happy, he didn’t want you to see him like this hence he stayed away because he felt himself leaving this earth” he says. I look at Banzi’s dead body and sob.

“I loved him Nkosenhle and now he’s gone” I say.

He pulls me into his arms and cradles me.

“Ngiyaxolisa Ndlovukazi I truly am” he says.

I open my eyes to find myself in Nkosenhle arms, I run my eyes around the room and notice that it's Banzi's bedroom.

Tears fill my eyes when I think about last night, my heart aches I want to scream out loud but it hurts to even let out a sound.

I silently cry holding on to Nkosenhle.

He tightens his hold over me inhaling my scent.

The door creaks open with his mother walking in.

Nkosenhle lets go and gets out of bed rubbing his eyes.

"Ma" he says yawning.

I look at this woman who has just lost her son and feel for her. A mother should never have to bury her child and a child should never have to lose their parents.

"I am so sorry Mkabayi" she says.

"Ma how could you allow me to love your son knowing he was going to be taken away from me like that, I had to see and feel his cold body that picture will never go away. Had you people been honest I would have had the chance to prepare myself and love him enough" I say.

I might be sounding harsh but they stood by and watched their son reel me in hook line and sinker only to let go of the rod and watch me sink from the other side.

“I am sorry that we kept the truth from you that we stood by and watched you give him the best months of his life, when they diagnosed him it was the second time and this time they couldn’t help him. I had to accept that my son is dying and that nothing can be done. I had to watch a part of him die each and every day and there was nothing I could do but to love him. I am sorry that I allowed him to be happy for the last time, I am sorry that I chose his happiness over telling you the honest truth.

He didn’t want to die he came to me and said ‘mama I love her and I can’t leave her it’s not fair,

As his mother the only thing I could do was to hold him and let me cry in arms, what is not fair in knowing how long you are left with to live that’s unfair” she says.

“I am truly sorry and I hope you forgive us for wronging you” she says.

She looks at Nkosenhle and wipes her tears.

“You father wants to see you” she says walking out.

Nkosenhle settles next to me and sighs.

“I am sorry that you lost him” he says standing up.

I feel numb all I need right now is to hold my babies and feel her small hands on my face.

“Can you please bring my phone I need to call my sister to fetch me” I say.

“I can drive you home Zamani already fetched your car” he says.

“I don’t want anything to do with you I just want to go home and be alone” I say.

“You can’t drive alone Mkabayi you are not in the right state of mind to do so” he says.

“You don’t get to tell me what to do Nkosenhle give me my phone and car keys,I want to go home” I say.

“I am trying here Mkabayi” he says.

“I don’t want you to try Maphumulo I want nothing to do with you” I tell him.

“You don’t know what I am feeling right now the rawness of everything,the pain I am gutted Maphumulo so gutted I don’t think I can do this anymore God knows I don’t want to go on, he has taken so much away from me and there’s only so much that I can take”he moves closer and settles on the bed looking at me.

“I wish I could take your pain away but I can’t and I am sorry”
he says.

“There’s nothing you can do my heart is what aches and there’s
nothing anyone you can do to ease that pain” I tell him wiping
my tears.

He stands up and walks out.

It’s takes a few minutes before he walks back in holding my
dress phone and car key.

Khosi walks in holding a tray and settles next to me.

I guess everyone is going through their own pain.

“I brought you something to eat” she says.

“Thank you” I say.

She walks out and Nkosenhle remains.

“Dlana” (eat) he says.

I look at the plate and push it away I can’t stomach anything
right now.

“I am not hungry” I tell him.

“Ngithe dlana Mkabayi noma ufuna ngikufunze?” (I said eat or
do you want me to feed you) he says tilting his head raising his
eyebrow.

I know Nkosenhle and he does not mind feeding me.

A distant memory comes to mind I remember being sick and refusing to eat he would always feed me just so I could have strength.

I take a few bites and only drink the juice.

“Ngiyabonga” he says softly.

He moves the tray and sighs.

“Can you please tell excuse me I need change” I say.

He steps out and I am left hugging Banzi’s t-shirt tears falling. I want to be immune to the pain but I can’t I am trying not to cry but I am failing to hold my tears.

I quickly change into my dress and look around the bedroom soon the house will be filled with mourners and I need to leave.

I suddenly feel light headed and sit on the bed.

The door opens and Nkosenhle walks in.

“I am not feeling good” I tell him.

My sight gets blurry with my eyes closing I fall on the side trying to open my eyes.

I feel Nkosenhle pick me up as I doze off to sleep.

I breathe in the fresh crisp air around me hearing the waves calling me. I open my eyes and see the waves clashing against each other. I smile thinking this has to be one of the most calming dreams I have had in ages.

I fully open my eyes and assess my surroundings, I am laid down on a blanket right in the middle of the sand facing the beach.

I sit up straight and blink this isn't a dream I am sleeping in the middle of the beach, I look around and spot Nkosenhle on the far end sitting down his knees raised and his arms hanging over them.

I look to the beach and reality kicks in, only for today the pain will only go away and tomorrow it will ache like never before.

The beach used to make me feel better it would always put a smile on my face as I would cast all my pain in it and he remembered.

He stands up and walks over to me.

26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“You drugged me” I say.

He kneels in front of me and I look onto his red eyes he's been crying but I have never heard him cry.

“I am sorry but this is the only place I could think of bringing you too, I know it always used to calm you down” he says.

“Thank you” I say.

He looks shocked and I am shocked too by my response, I should be kicking his arse for drugging and dragging me here.

He must have had called in favors to get us here because I know he didn't drive.

He settles next to me and we both look ahead.

“I came back Nathanjekwayo I swear I did” he says.

“I don't want to talk about that now” I tell him.

“I brought you here because you were hurting and I need to say a few things” he says.

“I never meant to hurt you Mkabayi lying to you was never my intention” he says.

“Yet you still lied over and over again Maphumulo and then you left when I needed answers from you” I tell him.

“Had I told you truth would you have given me a chance or you would have ran and never looked back” he asks.

“That's unfair and you know it” I say.

“We both know you wouldn't have given me a chance yes I lied but I never lied about my love for you, I loved you then and I have always loved you all these years” he says.

“I left because I had to not because I was running from the truth, my father fell gravely ill and I had to stand tall and take my place in the family. I had to be the head of the house and protect my mother and siblings providing for them when he couldn’t I am sorry that I left you but I never ran and I came back but when I came back you were long gone” he says

“You couldn’t even call” I tell him.

“With the kind of things I did I had to stay away I couldn’t put your life in danger Nathanjekwayo” he says.

“And the people you sent to beat me up was that also you trying to keep me safe” I ask.

“What are you talking about I never sent anyone to beat you, you know I would never hurt you Mkabayi” he says.

I look at his soft gaze and sigh there’s no point in dwelling in the past.

“I swear I didn’t send people to hurt you” he says.

I believe him he sounds genuine.

All my firsts were with this man I gave myself to him and after all these years I am sitting next to him grieving the loss of his brother who happened to be my lover.

“How was he your husband” he asks after a while of silence.

“He was a good man and an amazing husband I met him soon after you” I tell him.

He nods his head swallowing.

“Did you love him” I suppose the soon after him has him questioning my love for Busani.

“More than anything I loved him till he took his last breathe” I say.

“I am glad that you were happy and I am sorry that you lost him” he says.

“I have lost so many people Nkosenhle my mother, husband, my so.. “ I bite my lip thinking about my beautiful son Thingo.

“And now your brother you would think my heart would be able to take it but no it shatters each time” I say.

“Pain does that it breaks even the strongest of people” he says.

“You don’t know how that feels because you’ve never lost anything in your life” I say.

“I lost you Mkabayi and now I have lost my young brother” he says.

My lips quiver as I look at the water suddenly still.

I try standing up but almost fall Nkosenhle holds me.

“I want to get closer” I tell him.

His hands wrap around my waist as we slowly walk closer to the water.

He stands behind me and holds me tight.

“I am sorry about your mother Nathanjekwayo” he whispers.

I look at the still water and cry for all those times I held back. I remember my mother telling me to never stop praying I wish for her strength now more than ever.

We stay like that for a while till my feet get tired.

“Come on” he picks me up and groans.

“Uyasinda maan” (you are heavy) he says.

We both laugh as I wrap my arms around his neck.

I notice a car coming and it pulls right in front of us we both occupy the backseat my heart pounding as I rest my head on his shoulder. I am walking away from this family as soon as we get back home I don't want anything to do with Nkosenhle it's best for all of us.

We reach the hotel we are staying at for the night and make our way inside.

We get to my room and all of me wants to take a shower the sand wasn't gentle.

“I will go check in at reception about my room call me if you need anything goodnight ” he says stepping out.

I take off my dress the minute the door closes and walk over to the shower.

The cold water runs over me I want to feel anything beside the pain that I am feeling.

I step out of the shower and notice that there aren't any towels here, I remember walking past them carefully laid on the bed.

I walk out and find Nkosenhle in my room looking my way.

I try hiding all my bareness but there's only so much two hands can hide.

“Phuma Nkosenhle” I shout.

He quickly reaches for the towels and hands me them looking away.

I wrap myself up swallowing.

“I am sorry the hotel people booked us for one room I wanted to tell that I will sleep in the car” he says.

“You don't have to sleep in the car you sleep on the couch” I say. He nods looking everywhere beside my way.

I step away noticing his hard cock fighting it's way to be let loose.

Mkabayi had made him a bed on the floor just so he could get comfortable the couch would break his seeing how tall he is.

He couldn't sleep but stare at her sleeping her eyes puffed up and her lips pouting.

After all these years she was still beautiful and had become thick over the years.

Her hips were the perfect size and her butt good god a man could rest,he could only imagine his hands running down her body and his seed filling up her.

Yes she was beautiful the last time they saw each other but now she was a walking queen,the name Ndlovukazi fully befitted her not more than ever.

He still couldn't believe she was here right in front of his eyes,the one that got away the woman his heart used to beat for and still did even now.

He looked at her tiny feet and chuckled thinking about his brother. He still couldn't believe that his small brother was dating her, he wondered if they ever had sex if he ever made love to her.

He sighed the thought of his brother loving Mkabayi in that way left him crippled,he didn't know why but it did.

He stood up and walked closer to the bed admiring her beauty he was a fool for ever letting her go for walking away and assuming his place in the family.

He sighed and got back on his chair answering his ringing phone.

“Kayise” his tone was harsh and cold but Kayise was used to him.

“Mashimane where are you everyone is worried about you” Kayise said.

“When you say everyone usho bani ngempela” he asked.

She cleared her throat to tell her truth she missed her man it had been long since he touched her.

“I miss you Nkosi please come home” she said.

“I will be home tomorrow morning” he said.

That spark was no longer there it had died over the years.

The call went silent then Nkosenhle remembered how he had been neglecting

his almost fiancé.

He had proposed and never got to send his uncles over to her family.

He clears his throat and shut his eyes.

“I am sorry my love I promise I will be home tomorrow and I miss you too” he said looking at Mkabayi.

Talking to Kayise in her present although she was sleeping didn't sit well with him.

“I love you Nkosi” Kayise said.

For the first time in a long one he couldn't say the words back he couldn't bring himself to utter them.

“Nkosenhle are cheating on me” Kayise asked.

“No I am not cheating on you” he said.

He was telling the truth he wasn't cheating physically but emotionally and mentally his body was betraying him his heart was the worst of them all.

“Then why can't you say a simple I love you” she asked.

He thought for a while and walked over to Mkabayi and quietly ran his finger down her cheek.

“I love you” he said.

The words came out soft longing and endearing.

She ended the call and Zamani's call came through.

He stepped away from Mkabayi and took the call.

“Mashimane” he said.

“Bafo how did it go” Zamani asked.

“I think it went fine Bafo she cried and I think maybe that’s a step to her healing” he turned and looked to a sleeping Mkabayi and his heart ached knowing she had lost so much.

“She’s been through a lot Bafo she even lost her mother” he said deeply sighing.

“But she’s strong she will pull through I mean after everything she’s survived” Zamani said.

“What do you mean after everything she’s survived” Nkosenhle asked.

“After Busani was killed she went to prison for shooting her brother in law five times,I also found out that she inherited all of Ntuli’s wealth”Zamani said.

After Busani’s death and the selling of the Ntuli logistics people started asking themselves who inherited Busani Ntuli’s wealth,and right here in this room he stared at the woman who had it all.

He thought back to the beach and realised that Mkabayi must have shared something amazing with her husband.

“Does this mean she’s the one who put that clause in the contract” he asked confused,why would Mkabayi want to kill a man.

Buying the taxi business he never wanted to know the owner all he wanted was the business which would bring in more revenue.

He wondered about the condition of that transaction and now he looked at the woman behind it, his head started spinning Nathanjekwayo was no longer the same girl he left she had grown into a woman.

“What do you want me to do” Zamani asked.

“Is he still breathing” Nkosenhle asked.

“Yes but sooner or later we need to do something about him I suggest we kill him and cut him up” Zamani said.

“Don’t do anything to him till we bury Banzi, I think it’s time I handle this one on my own” he said.

“Can I rough him up a bit” Zamani asked chuckling.

“Just don’t go over board Mashimane I need him alive” he said ending the call.

He sat back fighting the bed to wake Mkabayi up and ask her these questions that riddled his mind.

He stood up and settled on the bed being next to her made his blood hot, he shook her waking her from her sleep.

Her soft moan brought back memories taking him back to their first night together, how her screams turned into soft melodic moans how he treasured that moment.

She opened her eyes and looked at him.

“Maphumulo” he smiled.

It was amazing how she could still call him by his surname even after all these years.

“Vuka sikhulume” (wake we need to talk” he said

She sat up straight and he couldn't stop staring at her soft lip every cell in his body wanted to sin with her right this moment.

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26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;”>“Do you know a man by the name Cain” Nkosenhle asked.

She looked at him as her eyes filled with rage.

“How do you know that man” she asked.

He could never tell her that he was keeping the man captive that would make him seem like an animal in her eyes, and he didn't know how to tell her he bought her husband's business.

“Answer me Nkosenhle how do you know that animal are you one of him is that why you on this bed” she asked jumping out staggering back.

“Mkabayi calm down” he said.

She reached for a glass and broke it pointing it at him.

“If you think of doing anything to me I will use this” she said shaking like a leaf the fear in her eyes shook him.

He stood up and looked at her his heart breaking clearly that monster had done something to her.

Her back was against the wall yet she held that glass with her two hands ready to strike.

“What did he do to you” he asked walking over towards her.

“I won’t hurt you I just want to know about this man what did he do to you” he asked finally closing the gap between them the glass held close to his chest but he didn’t care in that moment.

He could easily grab and twist those hands into dropping the glass but he didn’t want to scare her.

“They took me to an an abandoned building and beat me up till I passed out” he nodded his head as tears fell down Mkabayi eyes.

“And” Nkosenhle asked slowly lowering the glass.

“He shoved his filthy fingers inside me and forced me to give him a blow job, I was humiliated scared and had lost my husband he violated me” she said breaking down.

He clenched his jaws holding Mkabayi in his arms putting the glass away.

He lifted her up and put her back to bed and brought the chair close and watched her fall asleep.

Morning came and Mkabayi woke up bright and early she looked around the room and there was no sign of Nkosenhle.

She remembered the events of last night how she told Nkosenhle about Cain and how she once again cried in his arms darn it this was becoming a habit.

She searched for her phone and found it, there were missed calls from both Kiara and Thandazile.

She dialed her sister and sat on the edge of the bed waiting for her to pick up.

“Mkabayi where are you” Thandizile asked.

“I am in Capetown but I should be back today” she said.

“I head about Banzi phephisa sisi” Thandazile said.

“It’s okay mtaka ma death is a part of life right” she said deeply sighing.

“I am worried about you I don’t even want to know what you are doing there or who you are with just come home so I can take care of you” Thandazile said.

“Can I speak to twins please” she asked.

“I will put you on loud speaker” Thandazile said doing so on the other end.

A shuffle here and there and soon the kids were giggling on the other end.

She hated being away from them after having promised she would never leave them, but with the school closing soon she would spend every day with them.

“Mommy when are you coming home I miss you” Oyintando said.

“Mommy is coming home today okay” she said smiling.

“Mhengi” she called out and her son answered.

“Why are you so quiet my boy” Mkabayi asked.

“Because I miss you and I want you to come home” he said.

His fear of losing his mother again was what kept him quiet and Mkabayi knew that.

“Tell you what when I get home we can wait for school to close and go visit Mkhulu” She said.

Their giggles and excitement rubbed off on her as she smiled.

“Are we going to see cows and sheeps” Oyintando asked.

Mkabayi laughed. “Yes” she answered.

“I love sheep mama can you buy me one when you come back I promise I will take care of it” She sis.

“I don’t want a sheep” Mhlengi said.

Mkabayi laughed as the kids got into it debating about a sheep,if only Cubby knew that people eat sheep that she eats sheep.

“Hey you two I love you so much” she said ending the call.

The door opened and Nkosenhle walked in he looked at Mkabayi and felt the pain coming back, if only he could carry her pain and make everything better even if it meant bringing her Husband and brother back into her life and giving her mother back.

Last night he found himself praying to the most higher that he heals her soul and mends her heart.

He placed the shopping bags on the table and greeted her.

“Morning” Mkabayi greeted back looking down.

He walked over to her and kneeled in front of her taking her soft hands into is,she still had her innocence the same that reeled people in.

“What happened is not your fault,you shouldn’t feel ashamed over something you had no control over. He should castrated and shamed for he did to you uyangizwa” she nodded her head and looked up smiling.

Right there he saw his chance to say goodbye knowing the kind of man he was walking away was the best thing.

He leaned close brushing her lips using her thumb,Mkabayi closed her eyes as that feeling took over her.

Nkosenhle parted her lips and kissed her passionately until they both pulled away.

He stood up and kissed her forehead saying goodbye God knows it was having to say goodbye for second time to the same woman.

“I bought you something to change”Nkosenhle said breaking the silence.

“Thank you I should go take shower so we can leave”she said standing up takin the bags.

Nkosenhle nodded not wanting to saying anything should his voice sell him out.

It's been over two months since Banzi got buried and I am trying my all to make the best out of a crappy situation.

The kids are doing good finally we are in a good place and I don't want anything to mess that up, Thandazile on the other hand made sure that I was taken care of making sure that I bounce back to my old self.

School closed a week ago and I plan on taking the kids to my father's, I think we need time away from the busy life and Oyintando can see her sheep and leave me alone.

I decided it was best we move house and occupy one of the houses Busani had, I needed a change of scenery and the new house is closer to school making my drop offs easier.

So many things have happened a part of me is at peace knowing that Cain was found dead right on Mkhetheni door step.

I don't know who killed him but whoever did deserves to be thanked for making the world a better place.

I look at the kids playing in the garden and suddenly have this feeling of guilt consume me.

The only man they have ever known as their father is Busani and he's gone now, how will I even begin to explain that their real father is alive.

Keeping this away from them feels so wrong but at the same time I don't know how to tell them without confusing them.

Then there's Nkosenhle how do I begin telling him that he fathered three kids and that one died, won't he take them away from once he learns that I kept them a secret.

"They are growing fast" Kiara says.

I turn my head and smile.

"Yes they are and they need their father" Thandazile says.

"I know" I tell her.

"Then what are you going to do about it let them go another year without their father or are you going to tell them" she asks.

"It's not that easy Thandazile and you know it" I say.

She shakes her head looking at me.

"You are the one not making it easy just tell Nkosenhle about the kids" she says.

"And what about the confusion it will bring my kids huh" I ask.

“Tell him when you are ready and once you do allow him to get to know the kids first then break the news to them” Kiara says.

“I know I wouldn’t want a stranger being my dad” she says shrugging her shoulders.

The idea of Nkosenhle being friends with them before telling them he’s their father sound like a plan.

“Oh before I forget there’s a club opening tonight my boss is partner so he gave me tickets” Thandazile says.

I look at the kids and shake my head.

“I will stay home with these two and have an early night” I say.

“I already asked Maria to babysit” Kiara says.

“I really don’t feel like going out and I need to prepare for my trip remember I am taking the kids home with me” I tell them.

“That’s already done and taken care of”Thandazile says.

“Fine but I will come home early” I tell them.

“Great” Kiara says.

The day goes by quickly with Kiara,Thandazile and I preparing for the evening it’s a Friday and most people are out enjoying them selves.

I put the kids to bed after putting on a performance of a life time.

“Sisi if anything happens please call me I will come home as soon as possible” I tell Maria.

She looks at me and smiles sweetly.

“Sisi go have fun you need this night out and forget about the kids I will take care of them ” she says.

I give her a hug and pull away.

“Thank you” I say.

Although we are going out my heart is staying behind.

Kiara is driving with Thandazile on the front passenger seat,I am in the backseat watching them touch hands and giggle in between.

I am basically the spare wheel here I don't know why they dragged me along,I press my phone catching up on News 24 and ENCA.

We park next to this grand building stepping out of the car there's is a queue of people waiting to step in,we walk to the front of the line and flash our vip tickets walking in.

I guess being friends with the boss sometimes helps,the personal invitation saved us a lot of time.

The place is already packed and buzzing but then again Jozi's city night life has always been alive.

We grab a few drinks and make our way to the vip section.

"Look alive please" Kiara says.

I gulp down my glass of wine and look at her.

"Easy for you to say you have Thandazile while I am lighting the candle for you two" I tell them.

Thandazile laughs and throws her head back.

She stands up when a handsome white man approaches us.

"Ladies" he says.

I look at him from head to toe and smile he's definitely doable.

They share a hug with Thandazile and I can already tell Kiara is not liking it one bit.

"This is my sister Mkabayi and this is my girlfriend Kiara"

Thandazile says excitedly.

I almost choke when she says girlfriend talk about being left in the dark.

"Pleasure to meet you ladies my name is Forest White" he says.

I immediately think of this amazing movie Forest Gump starring Tom Hanks and smile.

“Come let’s go dance” Thandazile says taking Kiara’s hand.

I think this is some kind of match making.

Forest joins me and awkwardly smiles.

“Run Forest Run” I say stifling a laugh.

He looks at me and beautifully laughs showing his dimples.

“Forest Gump” he asks amused.

I nod my head

“One of my favorites had a crush on Forest” I tell him.

He laughs shaking his head.

“Well I have watched it a 100 times its my mother’s favorite” he says.

“Well this Forest is real and finds you extremely beautiful indeed” he says.

“Oh” I say.

“I have see your pictures in your sisters office” he says.

He reaches for his drink and I stare at his hands.

He’s not married and he’s handsome maybe this night will end differently or maybe that’s the wine talking.

“I am sorry for the ambush I swear I didn’t know your sister was going to do this although I am not disappointed” he says.

He moves closer filling the space between us,he’s too close but a part of me wants him closer.

“I am not angry nor disappointed because this night might end up with me kissing Forest” I tell him.

He raises his eyebrows clearly amused by braveness.

He leans closer and sighs before he can kiss me.

“Can I have your numbers please” he says.

I reach for my phone and give it to him.

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Rather put in yours” I tell him.

He punches in his numbers and smiles.

“Now can I get my kiss mr White” I say biting my lip.

He leans close and gives me a kiss.

We both pull away and laugh.

I raise my eyes and catch Thandazile and Kiara making out good God these two are having so much fun.

Is this their way of coming out to me or what because they are pulling out all the stops.

“Usuyis’dakwa Mkabayi” (Are you a drunkard now) I get startled when I find Nkosenhle standing before us.

I run out of words to say and just reach for my glass slowly gulping it down staring him in the eyes.

“Cha uyangilinga” (you are testing me) he says.

He doesn’t even pay attention to Forest which is rude.

I turn and look at Forest smiling.

“I am sorry but I have to go,I will call you” he stands up and pulls me into a hug.

“I will be waiting” he says slightly nodding his head walking away.

I look at Nkosenhle and look around around searching for Zamani.

I spot him near the bar with a bunch of girls hanging over him.

“Sawubona Nkosenhle” I say calmly.

That defuses him and takes him by surprise he probably thought I would blow a gasket.

“Is everything okay” I ask placing my hand over his chest.

He swallows and clears his throat.

I place another on his chest and blink my eyes like Cubby.

“I am sorry I didn’t mean to be rude” he says.

I don’t take my eyes away from his but move my hand down to his crotch, I rub my hand against his jeans and bite my lip either being celibate is messing with me or it’s the wine.

He starts sweating and shut his eyes.

“Mkabayi please stop” he whispers pulling me close.

I gasp at the feel of my work.

“Oops big daddy is up” I say.

He coughs a little and holds my hand.

“You are drunk” he says.

I nod my head smiling.

“See what you have done and it won’t go down not unless attended to”he says.

He turns me around and pulls me close making me feel his hard cock on my arse.

“Start walking”he commands.

I want to laugh poor man but I hold myself and start walking with him making me his shield.

We get to the outside and head for his car holding hands.

He drives to the hotel and we go up to his suite still holding hands, people are staring and I think I have sobered up a little to notice.

He opens the door as we walk in and shuts it heading straight to the bathroom.

I hear the shower taps go off and settle on the bed what the hell was I thinking, I stand up and walk over to the mirror and stare at myself laughing.

I hug myself and sigh man I miss Busani so much if he were here I would be screaming his name.

It takes a while before Nkosenhle walks out and comes out wrapped in nothing but a towel.

"I am sorry I shouldn't have done that" I say standing up.

I feel embarrassed for coming on to him after not seeing him for so long.

"It must have been the wine I understand" he says.

"I should go" I say.

He looks at his phone and rubs his forehead.

"Please stay" he says.

"I don't have anything to sleep in" I say.

He walks back in the bathroom and comes back with t-shirt.

“This should fit” he says walking back in the bathroom

I take off my clothes and wear his shirt inhaling his scent.

He comes back and finds me already in bed.

“I should get that” he says when a knock comes through the door.

He comes back with a tray and places it in front of me.

“This should calm you down” he says giving a cup of hot chocolate topped with torched marshmallows.

I might throw up but I take it still and drink a few sips.

“There are many things you don’t know about me I have changed Maphumulo, I am no longer the same girl you left so don’t expect me to be” I say.

He nods his head taking another sip.

“I know I just don’t know how to behave when I see you” he says.

“I feel like there’s still a lot of unsaid things between us” he says.

I know the feeling.

“Do you think that if you didn’t leave and if I stayed would we be together” I ask.

He goes silent for a while.

“It’s okay if you don’t know” I tell him.

“We would be married for years now I would be coming home to you every night after a long day”he says smiling.

“And we would be parents of the most beautiful children I have ever laid eyes on”he says laughing.

“Two boys and one girl and we would name them Mhlengi,Oyintandokababa and Thingo” I say.

His eyes sparkle and a smile spreads across his lips.

“And they would look like you”he says.

I laugh knowing the kids look like him more than me.

Guilt strikes again as we continue the baby talk I want to blurt out the truth but I am scared.

“And I would love you all the days of my life” he says.

I look at him and smile.

“But we moved on and life happened” I say.

He nods his head.

“But my heart never stopped” he says.

“Maphumulo unengoduso” I tell him.

“I know” he says leaning close.

I turn my head and sigh not like this not when I will be hurting another woman.

He takes the cup away from me and holds my hand.

“Would it be crazy if I asked you to have my child” he asks.

I blink twice my mouth going dry is this man crazy.

“Mkabayi ngiphe ingane” he says boldly.

I look at him and run out of words

30

Mkabayi looked at the sun rising and carried on sweeping the yard, she had already cooked their morning porridge and left it on the stove to keep warm.

She carried on swiping and sung her mothers favorite song wearing her faskoti.

She missed her beautiful mother and being brought her some peace.

She finished up and took a bucket walking over to one of those big Jojo tanks, although they had running water her loved to be prepared should anything happen.

She took the full bucket and washed her hands pouring the water on the grass.

“Never waste water Mkabayi” her father would always say.

She hurried inside the house and dished up for everyone and smiled hearing the chicken roosts.

Two weeks here and already she had forgotten about all about her troubles, she listened carefully and the peacefulness of her father’s house settled inside her.

Soon the kitchen filled with her father and the twins as they all gathered around the table.

“Mama can I go see my sheep” Oyintando asked.

“Finish your good first then we can go together” Mkabayi said.

Mhlengi looked at his grandfather and smiled looking forward to their cow milking.

“Mkhulu and I will milk cows angithi mkhulu” Mkabayi’s father nodded having the kids around was a bliss.

The house was getting quieter with each day that passed and knowing that soon the silence will once befall it broke his heart.

“It tastes just like how your mother used to make it” her father said smiling.

While Thandazile resembled her father more Mkabayi resembled her mother more and her father was grateful.

“Mama I am done” Mhlengi said standing up.

Oyintando looked at her brother and pushed her bowl standing up too.

“Cubby finish your food” Mkabayi warned.

Tears filled her small eyes and she blinked looking at her grandfather.

“But Mhlengi is finished” she said.

“And you are not finished so sit down and eat” Mkabayi said.

Her lips trembled and Mhlengi walked over to him and took the bowl finishing his sister's porridge.

A smile spread across her lips and she stood up and ran out the door.

"Mhlengi you shouldn't have done that Oyi needs to eat her own food okay" she said.

Mhlengi nodded his head and sprinted outside.

"These two will be the death of me" Mkabayi said clearing the table as her father looked at her she was no longer the young girl who used to climb trees and go around starting fights with boys.

"Your sister called me last night" her father said.

She sat back down and listened her hand sweating her father had that serious look on his face.

"I have always known that these kids were not Busani's your mother told me a long time ago" her heart sank although he didn't show it he was sorely disappointed in her.

"I was going to tell you baba well I figured Ma was going to tell you" she said quickly.

"It's okay but what I don't understand is you keeping them a secret from their father" he said.

She cast her eyes down as guilt crept in she thought about all those nights she spent in Nkosenhle's presence but never once told him the truth.

"I didn't know you could keep secrets Mkabayi" her father said still looking at her.

"I am sorry baba" she said softly.

Her father shook his head and sighed.

"I want you to tell that boy about his kids I am not asking you but telling you, as soon as you get back you will call him and tell him he has two children" he said.

"I hear you baba" Mkabayi said standing up.

"If you don't tell him I will" he said standing up walking out.

Mkabayi stood next to the sink and sighed no matter how she didn't want to hear it but the truth remained she needed to tell Nkosenhle the truth about the kids and stop stalling.

As soon as she got home she would tell him the truth and nothing but the whole truth.

She walked outside and joined Oyintando while she walked amongst the sheep petting and trying to hug them.

"Cubby don't touch them" she said softly.

Oyintando looked up and smiled at her.

“Mama I want a sheep” she said sweetly.

She could never say no to Oyintandokababa but getting a sheep was out of the question.

“I will get you a sheep once you all grown” Mkabayi said.

Oyintando nodded her head and looked at her mother.

“Mama does God only give you one dad” she asked curiously eagerly waiting for the answer.

Mkabayi couldn't answer her question she didn't know how to.

“Well does he” Oyintando asked.

She wanted to know the answer since her prayers weren't getting answered if only she knew that God had already answered her.

“Why would you ask that” Mkabayi asked.

“Because he doesn't want to answer me” Oyintando said sulking.

“I have been praying and praying but still nothing do you think he's going to bring baba back” she asked.

Mkabayi's heart sank.

She picked her up and kissed her cheeks.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Baba is gone forever but he will always be here in your heart okay and maybe one day mommy will find another daddy who is going to love you so much” Mkabayi said.

Oyintando shrugged her shoulders and carried on looking at her sheep.

The day went on as the kids played around and got dirty in the mud today was their last day with their grandfather and they wanted it to count, she looked at her father and her heart ached knowing she was leaving him behind and that he would be alone didn't sit well with her.

She found herself thinking about getting him house help a person who would keep him company and ease the work load.

Her phone rang and she smiled looking at the name Maphumulo.

She answered and headed inside the house.

“Maphumulo” she said softly.

His heart danced at the sound of his name parting with her lips.

“Ndlovukazi” he said smiling.

Every since that day they had been in contact,he loved being able to call her whenever he felt like it.

He loved hearing her voice in the morning and hearing her giggle like a young girl.

“I thought you had a busy day and wouldn’t be able to call” she said.

“I just needed to talk to you before I sleep I miss you” he said shutting his eyes.

He knew that this was wrong on so many level this was nothing compared to what he did over the years,this wasn’t just physical it was emotional his heart yearned for all this while his body yearned to hold her close and love her.

“Maphumulo I am coming home tomorrow and there something important that I need you tell you” she said.

He smiled thinking about holding her in his arms.

“You can tell me now Nathanjekwayo” he said.

She shook her head this wasn’t something to be discussed over the phone.

“I can’t tell you over the phone I need to see you” she said.

“Will you come to the hotel” he asked.

“No I will send you the address to my house” she said.

He stood up and smiled finally he got an invite to her home.

“Okay I will wait for you call then” he said.

“Mkabayi”he called out softly.

“Yebo Maphumulo” she said softly.

“I know you said you can’t do this,that you have been hurt so much you don’t see yourself loving anyone again but I want you to know that I love you” he said not feeling an ounce of guilt for saying the words.

“You don’t have to say anything Nathanjekwayo I guess I will always love you” he said ending the call.

Mkabayi looked at the phone and closed her eyes.

She didn’t know what was happening to her suddenly all these emotions wanted to take over her.

There was a time she loved Nkosenhle more than anything and maybe she still did but their love was now tainted by her betrayal keeping the kids a secret and his by walking away and lying to her.

Morning came and Mkabayi woke the kids up before the sun could rise,she bid her father goodbye and got on the road.

She needed to beat the traffic and drive without an hiccup along the way she was carrying precious cargo after all.

Also she needed to call Nkosenhle and tell him about the kids she needed to to this today and get it over and done with.

A few hours on the road she finally she saw the welcome go Gauteng sign and her heart started racing a few a few more hours and she would be home.

The kids woke up and looked around finding themselves in the car.

Mkabayi made a stop at the garage so they could pee and get some refreshments.

They got back in the car and she started driving

Oyintando started singing her favorite song with Mhlengi joining in.

“Anyone hungry”Mkabayi asked as they approached the shopping center.

“Can we have burgers please mommy” Mhlengi said.

Mkabayi nodded and made a turn approaching the mall.

She parked her car and got the kids out taking off their huge jackets as the sun was already out and scorching hot.

She held Mhlengi on her right then Oyintando on her left making their way inside, the closest shop being Macdonald she got the kids their burgers and proceeded to woolies.

The kids walked close by as she made her way to the wine aisle.

She picked two bottles of wine and some ice cream.

She moved her eyes and the kids weren't in sight she panicked and she walked around searching and found them on the snacks section with their own basket throwing in everything they could lay their hands on.

Mkabayi walked over and watched Oyintando giving orders while Mhlengi placed everything inside the basket.

"That's enough that's too much sugar" Mkabayi said.

The kids paid her no attention and carried on filling their basket.

"Mkabayi" A voice said behind her.

She turned and came face to face with Nkosenhle's parents.

Oyintando moved and held her mother's hand looking up at these strangers.

"Mama can we take all of them" Mhlengi asked showing her the full basket.

Mr Maphumulo looked at the kids and blinked he knew the Ntuli's and nothing about these two kids said that,he swallowed and held on to his wife there was no doubt they were his blood. This was the same Mkabayi his son could never get over even with Kayise in the picture his son was never fully happy.

“Hi,my name is Oyintandokababa Ntuli” Cubby said smiling.

“Mhlengi come say hi” she said looking at brother.

Mkabayi stood there not knowing what to say.

I look at the Maphumulo's and run out of words to say. They look at me then back at the kids I wish the ground would open up and swallow me.

How will I explain the kids looking like one of their own without looking like a horrible person for keeping home away from him.

"Can we find a private place to talk" Mrs Maphumulo says.

I nod my head and put everything I have done there's no use paying for these things when my heart is on my knees.

Mhlengi takes Oyintando's hand and leads the way, they don't even protest about the sugar filled basket and just walk out chatting up a storm with their grandparents.

"I think it's best we go home that's more private" Mr Maphumulo says when we get outside.

I nod my head at this point I don't really have a leg to stand on, I can't even protest their request.

They get to their car while I get in mine, I drive behind them and keep checking the review mirror to see if the kids are okay.

"Mama who are these people" Mhlengi asks.

"They are grandma and grandpa Maphumulo" I tell them.

Oyintando smiles and looks at Mhlengi.

“I told you they are old people” she says.

I smile and look back to the road ,we arrive at the Nkosenhle’s home and get out of the car.

Nkosenhle’s parents look at the twins in a way that I can’t explain,they lead us inside the house stealing glances at the twins.

“Is there somewhere they can eat” I ask looking at Nkosenhle’s mother.

She quickly gets on her feet and calls out the house help.

“Please take the kids to kitchen and give them some ice cream once they are done eating” she says.

I give the lady their food and look at them.

“Mommy will come fetch you once I am done here” I tell them.

“But we don’t want to go” Mhlengi says.

“I want to go and have some ice cream” Cubby says folding her arms.

“Fine” Mhlengi says.

The lady walk them to the kitchen leaving me with Nkosenhle’s parents.

I feel my hands sweat and my mouth going dry they are too quiet for my liking I can’t even read their faces.

“These kids they can’t be Banzi’s he died a few months ago” Mr Maphumulo says.

“They are not Banzi’s baba” I tell him.

“The twins are Nkosenhle’s children” I feel ashamed for even saying the words seeing that I was married.

“But Nkosenhle never mentioned them he never told us” His mother says.

“That’s because I never told him about them” I say.

I can already see the judgement and confusion on their eyes.

“So you kept his children away from him and passed them on to another man,another family” his father asks.

I see Nkosenhle in him calm yet scary and intimidating.

“Calm down Baba” Nkosenhle’s mother says softly.

“With all due respect Baba I never told your son about my kids because he left me when I pregnant,your son was nothing but a liar his intentions were never pure in the first place” I say.

He looks at me and sighs he probably knows our history his son told him his eyes are telling on him.

“Are they truly his” his mother asks.

I nod my head.

“They are his children Ma but I lost the other twin his name Thingo and he drowned” I say.

The hurt in their eyes can't be mistaken.

“He died” Mr Maphumulo says.

I fight the tears and sigh.

“The nanny fell asleep and he went outside and fell into the pool” I tell him.

Nkosenhle's mother moves from where she's seated and comes to give me a hug.

“I am so sorry sisi” she says.

“When did he die” Nkosenhle's father asks.

Tears fill my eyes as I remember the exact day he died and the exact day we buried my boy.

I narrate everything and I wish Nkosenhle was here so I wouldn't have to retell the details.

“That's the day Nkosenhle got into an accident” his father says shaking his head.

“An accident” I asked.

His mother nods.

“He was driving and then suddenly he couldn’t breathe he lost control of the car and was in a coma for a week” his mother says.

“I am sorry that I didn’t tell him but I promise that tonight I will, I didn’t even know that him and Banzi were brothers ngiyaxolisa for inconveniencing your family. I know this comes as a huge shock but both Nkosenhle and I made mistakes which led us here, my kids had an amazing father although he wasn’t theirs biologically but he loved them and they loved him too. He knew that they were not his and loved me still so I am begging you not to trample my husband’s memory in my children’s eyes” I say.

I look at them and sigh Busani was their father in every sense and I want it to stay like that.

I look at the time and clear my throat.

“I should leave the kids are tired and so am I” I say standing up.

“We will wait for you to tell him he deserves to hear it from you” his father says.

Mrs Maphumulo fetches them from the kitchen.

“Say goodbye to grandma and grandpa” I tell them.

Mhlengi gives them a handshake while Oyintando gives them a hug, they hold on for too long and finally let go of them.

I know this hurts but I can't just tell them that these people are their family.

Nkosenhle's mother gives me her numbers and pulls me into a hug.

"If you need anything please call me" she says.

I nod my head walking out.

"I really like these old people they don't shout like gogo" Oyintando says.

"I like them too mama" Mhlengi says.

I arrive home and find Thandizile and Kiara cuddling on the couch watching a movie.

The kids greet and run to the bedroom while I squeeze myself in between them.

"They didn't even hug us" Kiara says.

"Long trip" Thandazile says.

I nod my head.

"Can you guys take the kids out to a movie night or something"
I ask.

"You want us to take the kids out on a weekday" she asks.

“I want to tell Nkosenhle about the kids and I don’t know how he will react” I say.

“Oh what changed your mind” Kiara asks.

“I bumped into his parents and they saw the twins,I went to their house and explained how those two look like their son” I tell him.

“They probably think I am hoe moving from one brother to the other” I say.

“Lalela their son is the hoe here,the only people that know that vjay vjay of yours are two namely Busani and Nkosenhle. Your husband died, years passed and you met their selfish son who chose to keep quiet about his looming death,so what if you dated Banzi you never slept with him and beside you didn’t know they were brothers ” she says.

“If they want to call you names they better get their facts right” she says laughing.

Kiara stands up and comes back with a glass and wine.

“You need it” she says pouring me a glass.

“So you two are officially an it thing” I ask.

They both nod.

“And didn’t tell me why” I ask.

“If you want we can move out if you are not comfortable” they both say.

26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“The question was why wasn’t I told simple” I say.

“I really don’t know I just thought you wouldn’t be comfortable with us dating” Thandazile says.

“You two mean the world to me and yes someday you’re going to leave and have your own place but I don’t want you to leave, I love you and I know that should anything happen to me my kids will be taken care off. I am happy for you two” I say.

“We are happy if you happy” Kiara says.

I take a few gulps and pour myself another glass sending Nkosenhle my address.

I took a nap and I woke to an empty house seemed like Kiara and Thandazile took the kids and left.

I take out the babies photo albums and place it on the table, each one has their own that was Busani’s idea for them to have their own personal album their names and both their surnames.

I pour myself another glass of wine and settle down.

How do you tell someone that he's father do you seat them down and tell them or do you just blurt it out and wait for their reaction.

I deeply sigh getting the door soon after Nkosenhle tells me he's outside.

He looks handsome as always tall and dark with the Maphumulo charm,I close the door behind him and swallow shutting my eyes inhaling his scent.

I lead him to the lounge and sit next to him,man I was once crazy about this one didn't see nor hear nothing when it came to him.

"Hey"he says.

"Maphumulo" I say.

He smiles and looks at the glass on the table.

"I am not judging" he says.

I reach for the photo albums and lay them in front of him I have gone over so many scenarios in my head but none seemed better.

He looks at the name and laughs confused looking at me.

"What is this Nathanjekwayo" he asks.

"Go through them" I tell him.

He hesitates and a part of me wants to plead with him not to get angry but I hold my tongue knowing I don't have that right.

I watch him go through the first album his hands shaking, he clenches his jaws as he reaches the second one tears fall on the third album.

He looks at Oyintandokababa's baby pictures and then looks at me.

"Is this some sick joke" he asks.

I shake my head biting my lips.

"Dammit Mkabayi what the hell is this" he asks hitting the small table.

I jump up and settle on the couch's arm rest, he's angry fuming and I am the cause.

"When you left I found out I was pregnant with triplets, I met Busani he took over raised them" I say.

"You sold my kids to another man" he shouts.

I shake my head hiding my face.

"I didn't Maphumulo I swear I didn't" I tell him.

"You kept my kids away from me Mkabayi gave them another man's surname" he says angrily.

“You left me and he was there loving me and my kids Busani loved us” I shout.

He shakes his head tears falling from his eyes.

“Three kids Mkabayi and you kept them away from raised them as another man’s children why” he asks sounding defeated.

“I was young Nkosenhle and alone I had nothing” I tell him.

“Where are they I want to see my kids all three of them” he says.

My lips quiver tears falling down my cheeks.

“Thingo passed away” I tell him.

He charges at me, I fall on my arse moving backwards till my back hit the wall.

He pulls me up by my shoulders and shakes me.

“And I wasn’t there to hold him to get to know him because you kept them away” His voice cracks.

“I am sorry Maphumulo” I say.

He let’s go and I hit the floor weeping.

“Ukhohlalekele Nathanjekwayo” he says failing to hold himself.

He looks at me and grabs Thingo’s album and hugs it breaking down.

“My son” he says.

I move closer to him and try to hold him but he raises his head.

I come face to face with his anger, rage and hurt.

“Don’t touch me” he says.

I slowly extend my hand all the way to his face.

“I don’t want hurt you Mkabayi don’t touch me or I swear I will” he says.

I take heart in knowing he would never lay his hand on me and place both my hands on his face.

He breaks down as I pull him into my arms, he wraps his strong arms around my waist and weeps.

I remember how Busani weeped and broke down when he was called to the hospital.

“He was my son” he says.

“I am sorry Maphumulo” I whisper.

I pull away and look into his eyes straddling him.

“They are your kids Maphumulo yours” I tell him.

I move his hands to my breast and squeeze them letting out a soft moan.

I lean close and give him a kiss as he forcefully returns the kiss.

We help each other out of our clothes kissing in between, he stands up and lays me on the rug pulling down my pants.

His tongue circles around my nipples while his finger circles around my clit.

I take a glance at his black big cock and swallow.

He kisses me and moves all the way to my navel.

He parts my legs and moves his tongue from my clit to my hole pushing it deep in.

I push his head deep inside and moan biting my lip.

He stops and rubs my hole while massaging my breast gently twisting my nipples.

We are both hurting and although this is wrong but it feels good on so many ways.

He grabs his cock and strokes himself rubbing the tip of his cock on my hole slightly pushing it in teasing me, I push myself closer to him spreading my legs wide.

He positions himself and pushes his cock in he finds difficultly fully pushing himself in and groans running out of breath when the tip of his cock stretches me.

I try moving away from him but he holds me steady and pushes himself in fully and trembles.

He looks into my eyes and kisses my forehead slowly stroking me.

I hold on to him for dear life as he slowly strokes and thrusts his black cock inside me.

He pulls out and gets on his knees grabbing my thighs pulling me closer to him.

He doesn't move his eyes from mine and gives me full deep strokes and thrusts.

"Don't stop please go harder" I beg him to f\$ck me.

He moves his hand from my thigh and places it on my clit rubbing vigorously.

My body goes stiff my toes curling as I scream my release jerking off.

He soon groans after me and pulls out with his d\$ck soaked in my juices and cream.

He turns me around enters me from behind, I feel my womb shift as he strokes deep groaning loud gasping for air.

"Maphumulo" I find myself whispering.

He gives me a few deep slow strokes before filling me up with his seed.

"I love you" he whispers still inside me

I watch him get dressed without saying a word, he reaches for his shoes putting them on the rush is over now we are back to reality.

“Nkosenhle I am sorry” I tell him.

He give me one glance and carries on putting on his shoes.

I stand up and put on my clothes feeling like I have just committed the biggest sin in the whole world.

“I want to see my kids” he says.

He’s cold and angry which is justified but we are both at fault here.

“I need to tell them how you are first” I say.

He clicks his tongue and shakes his head.

“Nina bafazi nikhohlakele kabi” (You women are evil) he says

“You don’t mean that” I say.

He looks at me and the more he does the more that anger comes back filling his eyes.

“Nkosenhle you and I made mistake okay In fact you are the one who left your kids, you are the one who chose to leave me not the other way around” I tell him.

“And I apologized Mkabayi” he says.

I shake my head if one apology could make things better then he wouldn't be this mad.

“Yes you are apologized but it doesn't change the fact that you left and chose to stay away,all this is your fault them being raised by another man is your fault for being a liar” I tell him.

He nods his head.

“Says someone who watched my son die” he says.

Tears fill eyes as he looks at me.

“Take that back Nkosenhle because you don't know what you talking about”I say.

“He died in your care my son died in your care” he says.

I tilt my heads and chuckle.

“Oh please Maphumulo you are nothing but a sperm donor uyangizwa nothing but a mere sperm bloody donor” I say.

He clenches his jaws that hit him hard but I don't care.

“I will take them away from you and you feel like what I am feeling” he says.

“I know you are hurting and I understand your pain but if you dare take them,not only will I hate you but I will show you what I am capable of don't test me Nkosenhle” I say.

He tilts his head and walks over towards me till my back hits the wall.

“Kuyasho ukuthi uwungazi Nathanjekwayo”(It’s clear you don’t know me) he says.

I swallow hard and my hold my breath.

“Don’t try me Mkabayi you will definitely come second best like I said I want my kids” he says stepping back.

I take a step back and reflect a few minutes back he was buried inside me trembling and groan and now he can’t even look at me because he’s angry.

I look at him and hold my tears back.

“I am sorry Maphumulo for hurting you like this for keeping you away from your children, I was wrong I should have gone and looked for you even when you were the one who left. I am sorry that I watched your son die isn’t it he died in my care. I am sorry for allowing you to cheat on your fiancé with me for having you say you love me when you are promised to someone else ngiyaxolisa” I say.

“I will not stop you from seeing your children and doing things the way you deem fit” I say.

He parts his lips but I shake my head raising my hand.

“All this was a mistake I was hurting and needed something to take the pain away. This was the last time you touched me, again Maphumulo I am so sorry engani mina ngikhohlakele wena umsulwa” I move past him and head to the kitchen.

“Mkabayi” he calls out.

I look at him and open the door.

“I am sorry” he says.

I shake my head and force a smile.

“Don’t apologize Maphumulo I am the stupid one here for sleeping with someone’s man for allowing myself to get carried away like that” I tell him.

He looks me in the eye.

“You want to take my kids away from me do it if that’s going to make you feel better then do it, for now please leave my house” I say.

He walks out and I close the door behind him.

I walk to the lounge and start cleaning and spraying some air freshener.

The sex my good it feel amazing having inside me the way he stretched me as filled me up.

I loved every moment of it but it was wrong Kayise might not know but I know and the guilt will eat away at me.

I run to the bathroom and get myself cleaned up the tears fall from my eyes,I missed being touched being loved like that and that he did he feel ashamed.

I finish everything and look around I need my mother more than anything.

I find myself going down on my knees and praying to the same God I turned away from,I cry to him and pray for my mother I pray for my family and then Nkosenhle.

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Nkosenhle

He leaned against his car and rubbed his eyes no matter how hard he tried he couldn't fight the tears,he couldn't understand if these were tears of joy or anger.

Zamani made his way to him and looked at him he knew how to read his brother very well but now he was confused,Nkosenhle never cried he was cunning ruthless and killed without blinking.

To the society he was an upstanding man but to those who really knew him, he wasn't a man to be messed with.

"Maphumulo what's wrong" Zamani asked.

Nkosenhle's chest started heaving those words came back to him he was a father, not to one but three beautiful children with her.

He told him the whole story and felt his heart ached for the death of a son he never knew.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">"So I am an uncle" Zamani asked laughing.

"Congratulations bafo" he said hugging his brother.

"One of the twins died" Nkosenhle told him.

Zamani pulled away and noticed the sadness in his eyes.

"I am sorry to hear that" Zamani said thinking about the loss of a child none of them knew.

Did he ever take after any of them or was he sweet like his mother.

"I could have been there, I should have been there Mashimane to see my son to hold him and send him off well" Nkosenhle said shaking his head.

“But you are the one who left her to the vultures left without an explanation” Zamani told him.

He knew the truth but he couldn't bring himself to come to grips with it.

“I never thought she would betray me like that” Nkosenhle said.

“The same way you betrayed her, what you are feeling now is nothing compared to what she felt when she was alone and pregnant when she lost everything and you weren't there” Zamani told him the bitter.

“Did you hurt her” he asked looking at his brother.

He shook his head and relief washed over Zamani.

“I couldn't bring myself to hurt her if I did I would never forgive myself”he admitted.

He thought about the night from the slow sex they had to the way he looked at Mkabayi and told her he would take the kids away.

“What did you do” his brother asked looking at his facial expression.

“I told her I would take the kids away” Nkosenhle said.

Zamani nodded his head.

“Come you really need a drink” he said leading him to the house.

Nkosenhle sighed and walked behind his brother thinking about how he made Mkabayi feel,he had waited a long time to touch and love her like that.

He loved Mkabayi and that was the honest truth her touch made him tremble,but after all those things they said to each other he knew Mkabayi would never forgive him.

He thought about the kids and sadness filled his heart he missed out on a lot of years partly his fault and now he wanted to step up and be there for his kids.

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Mkabayi

I slept with a heavy heart thinking about Nkosenhle and all the things we said to each other.

I want to be angry but somehow I just can't bring myself to be.

I managed to clean the house from top to bottom, in the early hours of the morning sleep eluded me and the best thing to do was to wake up and put myself to good use.

The kitchen is soon filled with laughter from the kids.

I even made brownies Oyintando's favorite.

"You look better" Kiara says.

I nod my head smiling.

"I feel better now that the truth is out I feel lighter" I say.

"But this is not over we still have the Ntuli's to deal with" Thandazile says.

"I don't think we should worry about those baba said he would come and take of everything" I say.

Thandazile and Kiara look at each other then me.

"So what happened last night Mkabayi" they ask.

I look at the kids and shrug my shoulders.

"So many things happened but we didn't part on good terms" I tell them.

They nod and carry on eating.

"Now I need to tell my babies the truth and make them understand" I say.

I look at Oyintando and notice she hasn't touched her brownies.

"Cubby what's wrong" I ask.

"Nothing" she says softly.

"Then why aren't you eating baby" I ask.

"I am not hungry" she says standing up.

She moves from her chair and comes over me resting her head on my lap.

I pick her up and feel her high temperature.

"You're burning up" I say.

Kiara reaches the medicine cabinet and brings back her medication.

She clings on to me and my first thought is that she has flu but then with Oyintando you can never be too sure.

"How about mommy take you back to bed" I ask.

She shakes her head.

"Can we watch All Hail King Julian" she asks.

"Anything for you my buttercup" I say standing up Mhlengi follows.

We settle on the couch with Mhlengi next to me with my hand wrapped around him.

“Mkabayi” Thandazile calls out.

“Yebo” I shout back.

“You have a visitor” she says.

I turn my head and find Nkosenhle standing tall looking at me his eyes go soft as soon they land on the kids.

Oyintando moves and takes a peak with Mhlengi doing the same.

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I move and carefully place Cubby next to me.

The kids stare and he stares it's becoming a staring contest.

I clear my throat and kiss the twins making them to focus on Julian.

"Mommy will be right back" I tell them.

Cubby looks at me and sulks.

"Mhlengi hold your sister I am coming" I say.

I walk past Nkosenhle and wait for him to follow.

"I hope you are not here to hurt my sister" Thandazile says looking at him.

He shakes his head.

Kiara and Thandazile walk to the lounge to join the kids leaving me with Nkosenhle.

"May I sit" I nod my head and lean against the fridge.

"Please sit down" he says.

I look at him trying to read his face he's calmer now,

"Ngiyakucela Nathanjekwayo" (please) he says.

I sit and look at him.

“About yesterday I am really sorry Mkabayi” he says deeply sighing

“I am sorry for everything that I put you through, I am sorry for hurting you for walking away and for putting all the blame on you when I am at fault” he says.

“The thing is I couldn’t understand why you would keep this away from me it’s been months since you saw me but still you said nothing, we have shared moments together Mkabayi moments where I have poured out my heart to you and still you said nothing. I asked you to have my child right there you could have been honest but still you looked me in the eye and said nothing” he says.

“I can’t take back what I said but I know you would never watch our child die, I am so sorry for allowing my anger to control me and I am sorry I said those hurtful words” he says.

I fight back the tears but they fall, I subtly wipe them and sigh sometimes all it takes is for someone to say sorry and all becomes well.

“Ngicela ungibuke” (Please look at me” he says.

I raise my eyes and look at him.

“Ngicela ungakhali phela” (please don’t cry” he says moving from his chair to where I am.

“Don’t touch me Maphumulo” I tell him.

He nods his head and looks at me.

“I meant what I said last night was the last time you touch me” I say.

“Ngisho noma usukhala” (even when you cry” he asks.

I don’t know what he wants me to say.

“What do you want from me Nkosenhle” I ask.

“I want us to start over I don’t want any more secrets between us” he says.

“I would never take the kids away from you I would never hurt you like that,I said all those things because I was angry not because I meant them” he says.

I call the kids the kitchen and wait till they are both here.

Oyintando stands behind me while Mhlengi stands tall and looks at his father.

“I want you to say hi to uncle Nkosenhle is that okay” I ask.

They both nod.

“My name is Mhlengi” my son says giving him a handshake.

“Cubby go say hi” She looks at me then Nkosenhle and smiles.

“My name is Oyintandokababa Ntuli” she says smiling.

Trust her to say her surname.

Nkosenhle crouches to their level seeing how tall he is.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you my name is Nkosenhle Maphumulo but you’re can call me uncle Nkosi” he says smiling.

“Do you want some brownies mama baked some” Oyintando says,

He looks at me for approval leaving me no choice but to nod my head.

“I would love to have some brownies” Nkosenhle says.

“Mama can we have brownies and milk please” she says.

His eyes sparkle as the kids sit down next to him.

“Are you mama’s friend” Mhlengi asks.

Nkosenhle clears his throat before he can say anything.

“Yes but I can be your friend too if you like” he says.

Mhlengi looks at me for approval the same way his father did.

“Can I “ Mhlengi asks.

“Yes you can baby” I say.

I plate up for Nkosenhle and place the brownies next to him.

“Thank you” he says.

I settle down and watch him look at the kids.

“Mama did you tell uncle Nkosi that I want a sheep” Oyintando asks.

“A real sheep” Nkosenhle asks.

“Yes” she says smiling.

Nkosenhle looks at her with his eyes pouring with love.

“Cubby we talked about this I said you will a get a sheep once you are older” I tell her.

She sulks and looks at Mhlengi.

“Mama just buy her the sheep we can even ask Mkhulu to give her one” Mhlengi says.

“I promise I will look after it” she says.

“And I will help too” Mhlengi says.

Nkosenhle abruptly stands up almost spilling his coffee.

“I am sorry” he says looking at me.

“Mhlengi take your sister to the lounge I am coming okay” I say.

“Bye uncle Nkosi” Mhlengi says.

He nods his head clenching his jaws.

Oyintando hugs his legs and finally let’s go

“Bye uncle Nkosi please come see my sheep” she says running off.

He breathes heavily and rubs his eyes.

“I am sorry” I say.

“They are everything I imagined my kids would be” he says chuckling.

“I am their father” he says.

I nod my head smiling this tall fool wants to cry and scare my children.

“I will tell them tonight about you being their father” I say.

“Can we wait a few more days Nathanjekwayo just so I can get to know them” he says hesitantly.

“I don’t know if they will want me as their father am I good enough to their father” he asks.

His voice cracks he fears the rejection that might come.

“I should get going” he says.

I look at him giving me a shallow smile.

He turns and takes me surprise pulling me into his arms.

“Thank you for keeping them even when you were alone and scared thank you so much Nathanjekwayo” he says pulling away looking into my eyes.

“Hamba Maphumulo” I tell him.

He let’s go and walks out leaving me stunned.

I spend the rest of my day in the garden watching the kids play and annoy each other, more like Mhlengi getting annoyed at all the kisses his sister gives to him.

I have my mother’s bible but can’t bring myself to open it.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">I place it next to me turning for just a second.

I turn to the kids upon hearing a thudding sound Oyintando falling to the ground.

I get on feet and rush to Oyintando’s side.

“Cubby” she looks at me whizzing struggling to breathe.

I pick her up and run to the house.

“Kiara get the car” I shout.

I reach for the fleece blanket that's on the couch rushing to the car.

Kiara grabs the car keys while Thandizile gets Mhlengi.

I hold my baby close to my chest hoping we make it to the hospital just in time.

"Sisi please call Nkosenhle" I say looking at Oyintando squeezing her hand.

We get to the hospital with Oyintando's doctor already on standby.

They take her to a room without saying anything.

Thandazile takes my hand pulling me to a chair.

I look at her as tears fill my eyes I pull Mhlengi close to me, I can't lose another child not now not when I have come this far bearing all this pain.

My phone rings in my pocket, I reach for it and answer the unknown number.

"I want to see my brother's children" Mkhetheni says on the other end.

I shut my eyes and sigh.

“Look I am not in the mood for your games my daughter in the hospital and I seriously don’t have the energy for a back and forth with you” I say ending the call.

Hours pass with the doctors saying nothing.

“They are here” Kiara says.

I turn my head and the whole Maphumulo clan is here walking tall.

Nkosenhle walks over to me and tries giving me a hug but I subtly block him by bringing Mhengi close to my chest.

He sighs and steps back.

“We came as soon as we could what’s wrong” His father asks.

His mother holds my hand and takes Mhlengi from me.

“Everything is going to be okay sisi” she says.

“What’s wrong with her” Nkosenhle asks.

“Oyintando was born with a heart defect” I tell them.

“A heart defect” Nkosenhle asks.

I nod my head.

“But it her heart was reconstructed as soon as her body could handle surgery I thought everything was fine,I don’t know what could be wrong now” I say wiping my tears.

His father looks at me and opens his arms.

“Come here” I slowly get on my feet and sink in his arms.

He wraps his arms around me and holds me tight.

“You poor child you have been through so much” he says still holding me.

He lets go when the doctor makes his way to us.

“Mrs Ntuli” the doctor says.

“How is she” I ask.

“There is some narrowing of the aortic valve in her heart restricting the blood flow” I nod my head.

“What now” Nkosenhle asks.

“We are going to perform the catheter procedure using a small tube called a stent to get the blood flowing” the doctor says.

“Do it” I say without hesitation.

“Very well I will come back get you once we are done” he says walking away.

We sit and wait for the doctors hours passing by.

I look at Thandazile and Mhlengi sleeping in her arms, I move over and kiss him on the forehead.

“I will be fine please take him home if anything happens I will call you” I say.

I give Kiara a hug and watch them walk away.

Mrs Maphumulo pulls me into a hug while I look at the Maphumulo men converse.

“I am sorry that you going through this but she’s going to be fine” Mrs Maphumulo says.

“Thank you ma for being here this means a lot to me” I say.

“You don’t have to thank me because of you I am grandmother to the most beautiful and humble children, from now on you have a mother in me whatever troubles you just know that I am here” she says.

Mr Maphumulo makes his way to us and smiles.

“I asked Nkosenhle to call us if anything happenes please don’t hesitate” he says.

“Thank you baba” I say.

He takes Mrs Maphumulo’s hand walking out

I am left with Zamani and Nkosenhle these two are always together.

“This should keep you warm if you need anything I will be in the car” Zamani says giving me some coffee.

“Thank you Zamani” I say.

“No stress Koti” he says smiling.

I laugh shaking my head.

It takes a few minutes before Nkosenhle settles next to me and reaches for my hand.

His hand is warm I want to break down and have him hold me.

“She’s going to be okay our baby girl is going to be okay” he says.

The doctor calls us in with Nkosenhle helping me up, we walk to her ward and find her sedated sleeping.

We settle down and hold her small hands, I look at Nkosenhle’s eyes fill with tears.

He kisses her hand and breathes heavily.

“She is so small to be going through this Nathanjekwayo He says.

This is the first time he’s experiencing something like this when I have lived it all my life.

“I don’t want to lose her not when I have just found her” he says.

I stand up and walk over to his side, he wraps his arms around my waist and rests his head on my belly.

I let him be till he pulls away and stands up,he kisses Oyintando and turns to give me a hug kissing my forehead.

“I will tell Zamani to leave” he says stepping out.

I look at Oyintando and smile she’s a fighter just like her mother and I know she’ll pull through.

“Guess what God answered your prayers my angel so I need you to rest and when you wake up your father will be sitting next to you” I say kissing her forehead.

I step outside Oyintando’s room when I hear some commotion.

I find Nkosenhle pinning Mkhetheni to the wall I notice the blood coming out of his mouth.

“Those are my brothers kids I am allowed to see them”
Mkhetheni says

Nkosenhle headbutts him and punches him in the face.

Mkhetheni looks my way and smiles.

“So this is the new guy are fucking sies Mkabayi” he says.

That angers Nkosenhle more because he throws in another punch shutting him up.

“As if buying my brother’s business is not enough you had to go for his wife and kids” Mkhetheni says.

I look at Nkosenhle shocked he's just like Busani ubizwa yithuna(the grave is calling him).

I shake my head when I think about another feud that's about to erupt between the Ntuli's and the Maphumulo's with my children and I getting caught in the middle.

"I am going to teach you how to respect people" Nkosenhle says tripping him.

Mkhetheni falls on the floor with Nkosenhle punching him,I watch as he mercilessly hits Mkhetheni repeatedly without a care in the world an animal is what he becomes.

Zamani strolls in unbothered and takes a sit in one of the chairs looking at his brother beat Mkhetheni into a pulp

He's taking out all his anger and hurt on him he pulls away when the security guys come by.

He drags Mkhetheni through the corridor like trash with everyone watching by.

Nkosenhle

It had been two weeks since Cubby was admitted the doctors were only keeping her for observation.

Nkosenhle never missed a day of Visiting and seeing his daughter, he was learning how to be a father with Mhlengi and knowing that he had a son that looked like him brought him immense joy.

As for his princess he couldn't imagine anything happening to her.

And their mother God their mother was the most beautiful woman he had ever laid his eyes on, he had walked this life thing and met beautiful woman but Mkabayi was beautiful both on the inside and outside making her a true Queen in his eyes.

He sighed remembering the first time he met her she was shy but very outspoken stubborn yet calm, she had a way with him a look she would give him diffusing him immediately.

He smiled letting out a soft laugh this was all new but he wanted all of it including Mkabayi.

“And that smile” Kayise I asked sitting on his stomach.

He smiled and looked at her although she was difficult and cunning sometimes but she was beautiful.

He still had to tell her about the kids.

Kayise slid her hand inside his pants and pulled out his already hard cock.

She leaned close and kissed him rubbing herself over his hard on.

“I miss you” Kayise said.

“I miss you too”he said.

Kayise lifted her arse and eased herself on his hard cock.

Nkosenhle shut his eyes as his cock filled Kayise up.

“Oh Nkosi”she said moving her arse side ways.

Nkosenhle moved his hands all the way to her breast and massaged them.

She threw he head back going up and down on Nkosenhle.

“Yes right there”Kayise murmured.

No matter how many times they have had sex she could never get used to Nkosenhle being inside her.

She loved everything about him including the sex he gave her.

Nkosenhle tightened his hold over her waist as he pumped up from under.

“Oh Mkabayi” he whispered.

For the first time ever he had uttered another woman’s name while inside Kayise, yes Nkosenhle was a Casanova but he had never disrespected her like that.

She stopped moving and looked at him, it took a while for him to realize he had called out Mkabayi’s name.

He opened his eyes and found Kayise looking at him tears welling up.

“I am sorry MaZungu” he said seeing the hurt in her eyes.

She moved and sat beside him.

“What is this Nkosenhle” she asked looking at him.

He sighed and sat up straight helping her get back on top easing her down him.

As much as she wanted to protest she wanted this, her body ached for a release.

Nkosenhle started moving he then turned over and lay her on her back him being on top.

He started deep stroking her thrusting in and out till she came crying out her release.

Nkosenhle pulled out and reached for the towel wiping her clean.

He laid next to her and pulled her to his chest.

“Who is she Nkosenhle” she asked.

“I was going to tell you I was just waiting for the right time” he said.

Her heart pounded was he leaving her for another woman her mind raced.

“A long time ago I was in a relationship with someone and they got pregnant,I left without knowing her situation and now she’s returned with my kids” he said.

Her heart sank while she kept delaying for a baby he was already a father.

“Children Nkosi” she asked.

He sighed and rubbed his forehead.

“Yes she was pregnant with three but only two are alive”he said.

“What about me” she asked.

“What about you Kayise”Nkosenhle asked looking at the frown she had on her face.

“Are you leaving me for her and her kids and how sure are you that they are your kids” she asked

“I am not leaving Kayise” he answered not wanting to entertain her thoughts of the kids not being his.

“When did you find out” She asked.

The questions were getting to him and he was starting to tire answering her.

“A while ago and I have been spending time with them”he said.

Kayise lifted her head and looked at him his face unreadable but definitely not sorry.

“And what about the mother” she asked.

“What about the mother Kayise do want to meet her” he asked irritated.

“She’s the supposed mother of your kids so yes” she said.

“Well the same Mkabayi you sat across at the dinner table at my parents house is the mother of my kids”he said.

she nodded her head thinking about Mkabayi.

“And somehow she ended up dating Banzi and right on your face” she said.

Nkosenhle reached for his phone and looked at the time.

“I have to go I need to fetch Cubby from the hospital” he said getting up.

Kayise looked at her man walk towards the shower with a smile on his face after mentioning that name.

She stood up once the shower tap went off and reached for Nkosenhle’s phone, she tried his password but it didn’t go through.

She sat back on the bed and thought about Mkabayi clearly this woman had the upper hand, she was the mother of his kids not one but two she placed the pillow over her face and screamed.

This hurt it wasn’t fair for her to come back and take over her life to give him the kids he long wanted.

A few minutes passed and Nkosenhle came out of the bathroom in a towel he changed into his black jeans matching t-shirt and white sneakers.

He looked handsome and smelled so good she couldn’t believe he was going to her.

She stood up and went to block the door.

“Have you slept with her” She asked looking at him.

“No” he lied.

“Then why would you call me by her name” she shouted.

“Kayise move out of the way I want to leave and go fetch my daughter” he said calmly.

She shook her head and folded her arms.

“So you can sleep with Mkabayi and come back smelling like her huh” she asked raging.

The possibility of Nkosenhle having slept with her enraged her.

Nkosenhle reached for his phone and called Zamani.

“Bafo can you go by Mkabayi’s house please drive her the hospital and tell her that I will come by later on” he said looking at Kayise boil.

He ended the call and looked at Kayise he walked over to her and pulled her into his arms.

“I don’t know what’s your problem but I will not apologize for having my kids in my life” he said lifting her up.

He placed on the bed and pulled down his pants and turned her over having her on her knees.

He stroked himself and shut his eyes Mkabayi’s face flashing.

Without warning he fully thrust inside her, she screamed trying to pull away from his hold but he held her down.

“You will never ever talk to me like ever again uyangizwa Kayise” he said mercilessly hammering her.

His fingers dug deep into her soft waist and he drilled and thrust deep inside her,

He wanted to do this to Mkabayi so bad to f@ck that stubbornness out of her.

“Those are my kids and you will never assume otherwise siyezwana” he said.

She nodded her head feeling her choochie burn knowing him he wasn't going to stop, this session would put her off sex for a long time and make her sore,

“If you don't want my kids then you leave my house and stay away from me” he said stroking her deeply.

He pulled out and rubbed himself over her wet hole and pushed in again slowly thrusting in and out.

He was taunting her making this moment both painful and pleasurable.

.....

Mkabayi

Nkosenhle couldn't make it here which is understandable the man has a life,I can't expect him to drop off everything and run my way.

After the hospital drive I asked Zamani to stay over and bond with the kids

they seem to love him or maybe it's the blood that runs in their veins.

I stupidly look at my phone and sigh he hasn't called and somehow that bothers me.

I walk back to the house and pour myself some water.

Thandazile and Kayise decided to occupy the cottage for privacy's purposes,I am happy they aren't moving out yet I still need them and surely they still need me too.

Zamani walks in laughing.

"Those kids are happy people they are smart and pretty good listeners and they ask a lot" he says.

"I guess they take after their mother because their father is an angry man"he says.

"Speaking about their father did you mention why he couldn't make it" I ask.

He shakes his head bummer I shouldn't have asked.

He looks at the stove and smiles.

“Seeing that he’s no longer coming can I have his plate I am sure he ate wherever he is” he says.

I dish up the last of the food and place it in front of him.

“You are a great cook just like my mother” he says digging in.

The kids kids run into the house and look at me.

“Mama there’s a car at the gate” Mhlengi says.

“Kababa what did I say about running” I asks

She folds her arms and rest her head on Zamani’s lap.

“I don’t like you mama yoh” she says.

Zamani laughs and picks her up placing her ontop of the kitchen counter while Mhlengi takes a seat next to him.

I step out and watch the gate slid open and Nkosenhle’s car driving in.

He steps out looking handsome in blue jeans and a white t-shirt.

I drool as he walks towards me smiling.

“Hi” he says.

“Sawubona” (Hello) I say.

“I am sorry I couldn’t come over in the morning I had something to do” he says.

“It’s okay Zamani and the kids are inside” I say.

He looks at me and smiles heading inside the house.

I follow behind him and look at his firm butt his woman has to be one lucky fish.

He greets the kids and picks up Oyintando looking at Zamani and the plate in front of him.

“When I said fetch Mkabayi I never mentioned you eating her food” he says.

“This was yours actually and I thought it would be best I have it on your behalf” Zamani says.

Nkosenhle looks at me he called and asked if I could cook him something.

“And you just gave it to him just like that” he asks looking at me.

“He fetched me here and took me to the hospital its the least I can do” I tell.

He nods his head looking annoyed.

“I want you to leave this is not your friends house” Nkosenhle says looking at his brother.

Zamani laughs and lets out a small moan.

“This plate is more tasty and delicious than the first one I had” he says laughing.

Nkosenhle clicks his tongue and focuses on Cubby who is resting her head on his chest.

Zamani leaves after him and his brother argue about the last plate and who’s the eldest.

I start with the pots with Nkosenhle and the kids helping out.

They make silly jokes and keep asking to be picked up.

“Cubby,Mhlengi” they look at me and smile.

Seeing her this happy and back on her feet makes me so happy,my baby girl is fine.

I wipe my hands and place both of them on the kitchen counter pulling a chair facing them.

“Mommy has something to tell you” I say looking at Nkosenhle.

“If there’s something you don’t understand just ask and mama will answer you” they both nod.

“Uncle Nkosi is your dad” I tell them.

They look at me then Nkosenhle.

“But you said daddy died did God bring him back” Oyintando asks looking at Nkosenhle confused

“But he doesn’t look like baba” Mhlengi says.

“No he doesn’t look like baba he looks like uncle Nkosi” Oyintando says.

“He’s not daddy because we buried daddy and he went to heaven remember” I say.

They both nod still confused.

“What you don’t know is that you two are especial and had two daddies uncle Nkosi and Daddy Busani” I tell them.

“Josh has two dads his real dad and the other one” Mhlengis says.

I nod my head looking at him.

“Are you from God” Oyintandokababa asks looking at Nkosenhle.

“Let’s just say God brought him back in our lives okay uncle Nkosi is your real father” I tell them.

They both nod.

“We had two dads” Oyintando says smiling.

Nkosenhle moves close and smiles looking at them.

“Hi my name is Nkosenhle and I am your real father” he says.

They both smile and give him a hug.

It will take time for them to get used to what we have told them but eventually it will settle in.

“Can we call you dad” Mhlengi asks.

“I would love that very much” Nkosenhle says smiling.

“See mama gogo was right if you pray wholeheartedly with a pure heart Gods answers you” Oyintando says looking at me.

I smile nodding my head I was once just like her happy and had this sparkle of hope in my eyes.

The kids give him a hug now I know my son will have someone to look up too.

Nkosenhle’s phone rings he excuses himself and comes back after a few minutes later.

“Please don’t kill me” he says looking at me.

“I have a surprise for you princess” he says to Oyintando.

Mhlengi laughs and runs outside I follow behind and find a tiny baby sheep outside.

“It’s a sheep” Oyintando screams.

She runs to the animal and hugs it, my poor baby hugs it and screams.

“I helped baba pick it” Mhlengi says.

Nkosenhle smiles when Mhlengi utters the magic word.

“Baba” Oyintando says running towards him he lifts her up in the air and hugs her.

I want to scream careful a thousand times but hold myself.

He picks Mhlengi up gives him a hug.

“You did good your sister loves it” he says putting him down.

I make my way inside the house and carry on cooking while Nkosenhle stays outside watching the kids.

The evening goes by quickly, I bath the twins and pray with them Oyintando giving thanks for her sheep.

Nkosenhle asks to tuck them in and gives in to their many demands.

“I can’t get over watching them sleep” he says making his way in.

Today was fun seeing him with the kids was beautiful.

I rinse the dishes and watch him come stand behind me.

He presses himself against me and runs his hands up my body all the way to my breast squeezing them.

“Maphumulo please stop” I tell him.

His tongue twirls around my earlobes his lips kissing my neck.

“Ngicela ungizwisa kancane nje Nathanjekwayo” he whispers.

I bite my lips shutting my eyes and squeeze my thighs at the feel of my throbbing clit.

He chuckles and moves his hands to my arse giving me a booty rub.

I come back to my senses and push him away breathing heavily not again I am about to make that mistake again.

“Get away from me satan” I say.

He smiles and walks over to me till my back hits the cupboard.

“Leave Nkosenhle and take that sheep with you because I am not keeping it” I say

He towers over me and leans closer to my ear.

“Uyohlezi uyikhaya lami Ndlovukazi”(You will always be my home” he says stepping away with a grin on his stupid face.

35

She sat on the toilet seat and looked at the pregnancy test, she couldn't believe her eyes the stick had two lines on it.

She was pregnant Nkosenhle was going to be a father, she smiled but her smile disappeared when she thought about him already having other kids.

She wanted to be the one to bore him his first child, she wanted to be Queen mother of his kids and just like that all that had disappeared.

She stood up and flushed then washed her hands stepping out of the bathroom.

She changed into something loose and headed to the kitchen to make herself something to eat, she was no longer eating for one but for two.

Early as it was she smiled and rubbed her belly.

Nkosenhle made his way in looking tired he didn't sleep home last night said something about a late meeting that dragged throughout the night.

A part of her wanted to believe that story but then she remembered Mkabayi and sighed.

He made his way to her and kissed her hugging her from behind.

He inhaled her scent and closed his eyes.

“My love” he said turning her to face him.

She looked into his eyes and forced a smile.

“I hate seeing you like” he said looking into her eyes.

He hated seeing her this hurt it was never his intention and yes he still cared deeply.

“Why are you still with me Nkosenhle” Kayise asked.

“Because I want to be with you” he said truthfully.

His heart might have been torn but he still cared about her and he only slept with Mkabayi once she has been pushing him away despite his advances.

She held his hand and placed it over her belly and smiled.

“I am pregnant” she said.

Nkosenhle looked at her and broke into a soft laugh.

“Don’t play like that Kayise” he said.

“I am telling you the truth I just found doing out today” she said.

He picked her up and spun her around the room.

“Oh sthandwa this is the best news ever” he said kissing her lips.

She held the back of his neck and received that kiss.

“We need to go to the doctor and find out how far along you are” he said looking at her.

“Are you really happy Nkosi” she asked.

He nodded his head and kissed her again this was the best news.

He smiled and thoughts of Mkabayi finding out crossed his mind damn she would be hurt.

“Please don’t hurt me Nkosenhle” Kayise said holding his hand.

“I won’t” he said.

A thought came to her mind and she smiled still looking at him.

“You need to send your people to my father’s house I think I am ready now” she said thinking.

There are so many things she had been putting off like having a baby and Nkosenhle sending his people to her people.

With Mkabayi in the picture she thought now was a good time to go ahead with everything, a baby and a wedding she would have her hands full.

Nkosenhle’s phone rang and he answered it moving away, he ended the call and looked at Kayise.

“Sthandwa sam can we do the doctor’s thing later Zamani needs me” he said kissing her forehead.

“It’s okay I will be home all day you will find me here” Kayise said.

Nkosenhle rushed out and Kayise went up to her bedroom, she changed into clean clothes and grabbed the test then her bag walking out.

She drove out heading to Mkabayi’s place she had stolen the address from Nkosenhle, she parked outside the gate and chuckled this was probably Nkosenhle’s money that bought this huge house.

She honked the bell and the madam herself stepped out of the house looking beautiful in her long dress.

The gate slid open and she drove in and parked in the drive way.

She stepped out of the car and made her way inside the house.

The house looked beautiful and clean too you wouldn’t tell she had two rascals around the house.

You could tell it was still new everything inside the house screamed new and expensive, she sat on the couch and looked at Mkabayi wondering what her man saw in her what her dead husband saw in her.

In her eyes she was simple and had short hair it reminded her of Nomzamo Mbatha.

“Hi how are you” Mkabayi said looking at her guest.

“I am good thank you look I am sorry for coming here unannounced but I felt like I needed to” Kayise said.

Mkabayi nodded smiling.

Kayise looked at her and wondered was she forever this calm and kind suddenly everything about this woman irritated her.

“I didn’t come here to fight I just came here to iron out a few thing between us” Kayise said.

“Oh I didn’t know that we had things to iron out” Mkabayi said still calm like still waters.

“Well I feel like we got off on the wrong foot and now that Nkosi is said to be the father of your kids I feel we should understand each other” Kayise said.

“Said? Oh no not said he is their father” Mkabayi said.

“Right they are his children but you have to understand that Nkosi has a family of his own now, me and our baby” she said.

Mkabayi looked at her as she pulled out the pregnancy test and placed it on the table.

She swallowed and looked at Kayise trying her best to keep smiling although it was hard.

“Congratulations being a mother is one of one of the greatest gifts life has to offer” she said.

“Soon he’s going to pay lobola and marry me so as a woman surely you understand that your time came and passed, what I am trying to say is this please stay away from Nkosi he’s spoken for and he needs to focus on his family” she said smiling brushing her belly.

“I am sure you can find another rich man to milk dry but not mine” Kayise said.

Mkabayi looked at her and chuckled it took all of her might not to slap her.

“I hear you mrs soon to be Maphumulo you had the time to bath, put on makeup, get dressed and drive all this way to tell me to leave your spoken for man alone” she said looking at Kayise.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Maybe if you stayed away from him I wouldn’t have had to be here in the first place” Kayise said.

Mkabayi nodded her head and sighed standing up.

“I think you have gotten your point across you want me to stay away from Maphumulo and find myself a rich hunk to milk dry thank you for the advice I will sure use it”Mkabayi said.

Kayise stood up and fixed herself smiling.

“I am glad we understand each other” she said walking out.

.....

Mkabayi

Kayise’s visit keeps plays itself in my head over and over again,she’s pregnant and getting marrried although I am happy for Nkosenhle that’s finally he’s going to experience what marriage feels like,what having a pregnant woman feels like my heart aches.

I know it shouldn’t heck this man isn’t even mine he belongs to her.

I stupidly laugh at myself for allowing myself to feel anything for Maphumulo.

For allowing him once again to infiltrate my heart and body.

I chop the fruits and toss them into the blender,my mind drifts away to when I was carrying my children the hardships I went through Kayise is definitely going to need Nkosenhle.

A knock comes through and Nkosenhle soon walks in,he looks tired drained like he's carrying the weight of the whole world on his shoulders.

He greets and grabs a chair settling down

I pour him a glass of water and plate some food putting it in front him,this is the last meal he'll ever have in this house.

He doesn't say anything and I allow him to be,he starts eating quietly till he finishes everything on the plate.

"Thank you"he says.

I look at him and smile he's really handsome despite his faults this man is truly handsome inside and out.

He deeply sighs playing with his keys.

"The kids will be out in a moment my sister is getting them ready" I say.

He nods his head without even looking me in the eyes.

I wash my hands and walk over to where he is and settle next to him.

"Look at me Maphumulo" I say.

He raises his head and looks at me.

“It’s okay I understand” I tell him.

Saying these words hurt more than anything, how could I possibly understand that I am losing him for the second time.

It feels like dejavu all over again only this time I can take the pain and smile through it.

Damn I never thought our second chance would be this way so complicated and unclear.

“I know that she’s pregnant” I say.

“I am sorry” he says.

I shake my head.

“You can’t be sorry for having a family of your own I am happy for you, now you get to experience what you never did with the twins. You will wake in the late hours of the night and make her cravings, you will hold her belly and feel the child kick while she smiles and looks at you with eyes filled love.

There are days she will cry for nothing you are going to hold her and say all the right things, her moods swings will be the worst and her cravings too but in the end all that will be worth it” I tell him.

Tears well in his eyes he places a hand on my cheeks having me close my eyes feeling his warm palm.

“It’s okay to be there for her and your child she’s definitely going to need you” I tell him.

I feel his lips lock with mine even though I kept pushing him away deep down I wanted him another chance with him.

“I love you Maphumulo” I say opening my eyes to find him staring his eyes sparkling with tears.

He’s lost for words and maybe that’s a good thing.

“I never meant to hurt you Nathanjekwayo” he says softly.

I nod my head.

“It’s okay” I say.

He shakes his head.

“It’s not okay and you know it” he says.

I hear the kids laughing and get on my feet.

“Baba” Mhlengi says excitedly.

He gives him a hug and looks at Oyintando.

He gives her a tight hug and lets go.

His parents asked to see the children hence he dropped by.

“I want you two to behave okay don’t trouble gogo and mkhukulu niyezwa” they both nod running out.

“From now on I would like it if Zamani or Khosi fetches the kids” I say.

That comes as a shock he frowns.

“Mkabayi don’t do this” he says.

“Can I have my keys back” I tell him.

He reaches inside his pockets and places them on the kitchen counter, I only gave him the gate key to make things easier him when he comes to fetch the kids.

He walks out and that gives me a chance to blink and breathe.

He walks back in and shakes his head looking at me.

“I can’t leave not when you’re hurting like this” he says.

I smile fighting my tears.

“I have lost so much Maphumulo I can stand one more loss trust me” I tell him

He nods walking out.

The door shuts behind him and my heart cracks the sad reality I had been running away from hits me, he was never mine I pushed away because I knew if push comes to shove this would happen.

I look at the time and sigh Oyintando said she was grabbing her sheep, I decided that we can't keep the live one and she cried throwing a fit. Her father had to convince her and buy her a stuffed one, speaking of her father it's been a while since I've seen him.

We last spoke on that day his fiancé showed up at my house and despite how we parted ways I am okay I am finding each day to be easier.

She comes running with her stuffed sheep and smiles.

"I want everyone to behave when we get there okay" they both nod their heads and smile.

I don't want my kids causing trouble or being a burden to anyone hence I always remind them to behave.

"But we always behave mama" Mhlengi says.

I know they do but some people might not think so.

I start the car driving to the Maphumulo's they are hosting a braai and they asked if I could bring the kids along, I wanted Khosi to fetch them but Mrs Maphumulo insisted that I come because they also wanted to speak to me.

I can smell the braai meat the moment I step out of the car, the kids go running when they see their father.

I watch as he picks both of them up giving each of them a kiss, he's been a great father since he found what about the kids and the twins love him.

I walk towards the whole family and greet with Thulisile giving me a hug.

"I am sorry that we are late Cubby wanted to bring her sheep along" I say.

How I wish she would get over her sheep obsession.

"It's okay Nathanjekwayo we are glad that you are here" Mr Maphumulo says.

I look at Kayise and flash her a smile she looks beautiful this pregnancy thing is treating her right.

"Mkabayi" Zamani says smiling.

I must admit the first time I saw Zamani I thought he eats people like me for breakfast but now I think he's nothing but a soft big bear.

Nkosenhle just nods looking my way.

"I thought this was a family thing Ma" Kayise says.

"She is family" Khosi says looking at Kayise.

These two are always quarreling about something honestly it's tiring but I mind my own business and smile.

“Beside the fact that I was invited I just didn’t want the kids troubling anyone” I say looking at her.

“Hayi asazi” she says clapping her hands walking away.

I grab a chair and sigh I feel out of place.

Mrs Maphumulo settles next to me and smiles.

“How are you sisi” she asks.

“I am well Ma” I say.

This woman is always soft spoken I doubt she knows how’s to shout.

“You don’t look well or let me say you don’t look comfortable” she says.

“Ma the only link I have to this family is the kids I shouldn’t be here and I don’t want to step on anyone’s toe” I tell her.

She nods her head like she understands my predicament I don’t want people thinking I am throwing myself in Nkosenhle’s face.

“Who said you were stepping on toes Mkabayi I know that you and my son are over, that he is with Kayise and is planning on raising his son or daughter with her. I have never chosen for my sons and I will not start now sisi, but you are the mother of my grandchildren and I meant what I said in me you have a mother” she says.

“I know that you lost your mother and that your mother in law was nothing but a monster” she says laughing.

“I am a woman of my word I want to get to know you as the mother of those kids” she says.

“You, Kayise and Nkosenhle will fix your mess isn’t you are all adults” she says.

I nod my head smiling.

“Thank you ma this means so much to me” I tell her.

She looks at me one more time and smiles.

“Mkabayi you are glowing” she says.

“Thank you ma it must be the new face cream my sister got me” I say.

“Face cream you say” she says.

I nod my head standing up the food looks amazing.

Thulisile crushes into my arms and hugs me giggling.

“I missed you please come around more often” she says.

I nod my head scrunching my nose suddenly her perfume smells awful.

We are all seated around the wooden table eating when Mr Maphumulo stands up and smiles raising his glass.

“I am not a man of many words but today I would like to say something” he says.

“Today I asked Mkabayi to join us because I have something important to tell her,it wouldn’t be fair for us to discuss this without her present” he says looking at me.

“A date has been set and soon the twins will be introduced to their ancestors,I would like to thank you Nathanjekwayo for for giving us these beautiful children” he looks at Nkosenhle and proudly smiles.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“May God and our ancestors keep and protect you ndodana I am proud of you” he says.

I look at my kids and faintly smile pretty soon thru won’t be calling Busani’s surname anymore,it’s a bitter pill to swallow big I know he would have wanted this.

The day drags with me keeping my eyes on the kids watching them as they play with their father.

Kayise and the girls clean up once everyone is done eating,I decide to help too and clear the table heading to the house.

I find Kayise washing the dishes together with Thulisile while Khosi is sipping on her juice mixed with wine.

“It must be nice being Queen you just eat then up and leave” Kayise says mockingly.

I deeply sigh and look at her this is same thing I didn't want happening.

“Kayise I am sorry that I am not behind that sink doing the dishes okay” I say.

“Why are you here Mkabayi huh those two kids are more than capable of taking care of themselves” she says smiling wiping her hands dry.

“Kayise you first came to my house and insulted me, you told me to stay away from your man and I did. As if that was not enough you called and told me that my kids are nothing but trouble, you asked me to bring a nanny along with them should they visit because you are their mother to be looking after them” I say.

“Today I am that nanny I don't want my kids being bothersome” I tell her.

She smiles and nods her head

“Wena Mkabayi uyadelela if I were you I would be home under a blanket crying my eyes out knowing I am about to mourn my son for the second time” she says.

“Kayise” Khosi calls out.

“What are you saying Kayise” I ask feeling myself go cold.

“Oh shame Nkosi didn’t tell you he’s planning on exhuming your son to have him reburied” she says.

I feel light headed and blink.

“Baby tell her” Kayise says scoffing.

I turn and find Nkosenhle standing behind me.

“I was going to tell him you Mkabayi” he says.

“Tell me what that you want to dig up my son” I ask.

“Don’t start with me Maphumulo” I say.

“It’s Nkosenhle to you dammit are you that thirsty” Kayise says.

“Yey wena uwuyeke ukungipetula” (stop provoking me) I say still looking at Nkosenhle.

I take a moment and breathe turning to face her.

“I don’t get what your problem is with me or my kids but trust me Nkosenhle is not all that, it’s sad how you are so set on bringing me down each time you get just for a man that doesn’t

even love you. Are you such a bitter person that you would use my pain and throw my son to my face just to make yourself feel better” I ask.

“And you Nkosenhle stay away from my son’s grave” I tell him.

I walk outside and bid everyone goodbye taking my kids with me.

“Mkabayi please” Nkosenhle says pulling me by my arm.

I look at his hand and watch as he slowly lets go.

“Kids say goodbye to your father” I tell them.

The kids hug him and get inside the car.

“One day I will slap that girlfriend of yours pregnant or not ngizomshaya” I say.

I drive the kids home leaving them with my sister and drive out heading to the cemetery its a long drive filled with tears,I park the car next to a tree and look at my son’s grave from where I am.

I step out and walk over to his tombstone and kneel next to it,Thingo was a happy child my son my curious about anything and everything.

I bet that day he wanted to feel the water or maybe he thought he could swim like a pro just like his dad but he was wrong.

Nkosenhle can not do this he can't dig up my son the pain would be unbearable.

It would be like burying him all over again only this time it would hurt ten times more.

"Mkabayi" I look up and find Nkosenhle looking at me.

I turn my head and Thandazile is leaning against the car.

"You can't dig him up you just can't" I tell him.

"I have too Mkabayi" he says.

"He's my son Maphumulo he's resting in peace please don't do this" I beg him.

"Why are you trying to hurt me" I ask.

"I am not trying to hurt you Mkabayi I would never do that" he says.

"Yet you want to dig up my son and take him" I say.

"I want all my kids to be buried where their forefathers are buried where I will be buried home" he says.

I shake my head and bite my lip.

“They are not yours, traditionally Nkosenhle those kids are mine Thingo is mine you have no claim over him” I say.

He looks at me shocked this man hasn't been to my father nor has he paid anything for the twins, now how do I let him do all that when he wants to take my sons remains all the way to his home.

“You will not touch my son's grave I swear if you do I will have you arrested” I tell him.

I walk away leaving him standing there.

37

She tapped her foot waiting for the kids this was becoming a norm them being slow that is.

She shouted one more time for them and just like that they walked out holding hands, that's the thing with the twins they always found a way to melt their mother's heart.

She had been a cry baby this past month but she held her tears and smiled, she was taking the kids to the mall they were going to have their mommy all to themselves.

She looked at them and smiled with each day that went by they looked like their father and that irritated her.

Thandazile walked in and looked at her sister she was more fuller than usual and yes she was a picky eater but lately she ate anything she could get her hands on.

Despite having three kids her breast still looked good but now they had grown big and plump.

Her arse was bigger and those hips were getting wide Mkabayi was thick in all the right places.

She cleared her throat and Mkabayi turned looking at her, she had this glow that left her face smooth and soft.

Thandazile moved closer and touched her belly poking it.

“Yini manje wena” Mkabayi asked annoyed at her Thandazile’s poking.

“Mkabayi are you pregnant” Thandazile asked.

Both the kids looked at their mother and poked her belly.

“Stop it you two” Mkabayi said looking at them.

“No I am not pregnant” she said defensively.

“When last did you see your period” Thandazile asked not minding the kids.

“Kids go wait for mama in the car I will be right there” Mkabayi said walking over to the fridge.

She took out the last piece of the thick rich chocolate cake and sat down eating while looking at her sister, she was definitely her mother’s daughter always asking questions.

“Did you sleep with Forest” Thandazile asked.

The cake went through the wrong pipe and she hit her chest coughing.

“What no he’s a really nice guy but I didn’t sleep with him” Mkabayi said laughing.

Forest was handsome and all but the only thing she did with the man was that peck on the lips.

“If it’s not Forest then who is it” Thandazile asked adamant to get the truth out of her little sister.

She had been dreaming of fruits and water these few days and seeing Mkabayi look this radiant made her wonder.

“Look I am not pregnant okay” she said only this time her mind drifted to the time Nkosenhle was full inside her giving her slow strokes.

The cake left a bitter taste in her mouth or was it the thought of being pregnant that did, she looked at Thandazile and couldn’t bring herself to tell her about her sex escaped with Nkosenhle.

“If you say so anyway I hope for all our sakes you are not” Thandazile said taking the fork and cake before she could finish it.

“The kids are waiting go” she said helping herself to the cake.

She walked out to the car and joined the kids her mind trying to process what her sister had just told her.

She drove to the mall and took the kids to spur they ran to play with other kids while she chose the corner table away from people’s eyes. She kept any eye on the kids but then her mind drifted back to that night both their emotions were high. They

were both hurting and needed comfort it led to them sleeping together.

“Dammit Mkabayi how can you be so careless” she said to herself.

She remembered every touch kiss and stroke but more importantly they never used a condom.

Her food arrived she called the kids and they ate despite her sudden mood change she still enjoyed the food, food made her feel better but it wasn't hitting the right spot.

“Mama when is baba going to live with us” Oyintando asked.

“When are you getting married” Mhlengi asked.

She looked at the twins and almost choked where was this coming from all of a sudden.

“No we are not getting married and remember your father has aunt Kayise” she said.

“So he can't stay with us” Mhlengi asked looking at his mother.

Mkabayi nodded.

“We can all stay together baba can even bring aunt Kayise we have a big house” Oyintando said.

Mkabayi shook her head and smiled.

“Things don’t work like that Cubby but baba loves you so much and I love you too” she said.

The kids nodded and carried on eating.

Mkabayi looked at them and thoughts of what they might be feeling made her heart ache,so this is what it meant having two separate parents.

“Aunt Kayise shouts a lot but she’s not a bad person she even likes my sheep” Oyintandokababa said out of the blue.

Mhlengi just shrugged his shoulders and ate his food.

Mkabayi sat there and sipped on her drink watching the kids talk about everything and anything.

They finished their meal paid and left the restaurant Mkabayi held the twins hands one can never be to careful these days she thought.

“Oh sorry” she said raising her head.

She had bumped into an older woman.

“It’s okay sisi these things happen” she said.

Mkabayi recognized the lady and smiled she was Kiara’s mother.

She extended her hand still holding her smile.

“My name is Mkabayi I am Kiara’s friend not sure if you still remember me” Mkabayi said looking at the woman’s lips spread into a smile.

“I remember you” she said faintly smiling.

Mkabayi could tell she was tired and the fresh bruise on her eyes broke her heart and the way she clasped at her handbag told a lot.

“How is she Kiara I mean” the old woman asked.

“She’s fine ma” Mkabayi said looking at the kids they were getting restless.

She took out a pen and paper then wrote her numbers giving it to her.

“If you ever wish to visit her please call me anytime and I will make means to fetch you” she said smiling.

She then pulled out a few notes from her wallet and placed them inside her palm clasping it together.

“Oh sisi I can’t take this” The woman said but Mkabayi shook her head.

“Have a great day ma” she said walking.

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26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">The woman held her hands as tears filled her eyes.

“God bless you my child” she said.

They parted was and Mkabayi looked back and sighed she wasn't going to tell Kiara that she saw her mother it would break her heart knowing that man still laid a hand on her mother.

Mkabayi stood close to the window looking out as the rain softly poured,her grandmother used to say if thunder struck then it meant the rain would stop but of it rained softly without thunder then it would go on and on.

“Your baby daddy is here” Kiara said walking in.

Her thoughts were running wild and she couldn't help but be worried.

Kiara moved close and placed her hand over her shoulder.

“What's wrong” Kiara asked.

Mkabayi turned and smiled her life was nothing but a rollercoaster.

“Nothing I am just tired” she said deeply sighing that's all she ever did sigh and take each day as it comes.

“Emotionally I feel drained and tired I have been feeling like this for a while now” she admitted.

“I am just surprised you haven’t had a meltdown” Kiara said honestly.

Mkabayi laughed and shook her head.

“You want me crazy” She asked.

“No but I want you to be human” Kiara said looking at Mkabayi her friend had built walls around her, she had chanted the words “I am strong” for too long that she was now strong for everyone else and eventually it would take a toll on her.

“I am not in the mood to see that man” Mkabayi said walking out Kiara following behind her.

She walked into the kitchen and the smell of Kiara’s lasagna engulfed her, her nostrils danced while her mouth watered.

Nkosenhle was already seated waiting for her.

“Maphumulo” Mkabayi said looking at him.

He smiled and greeted her back.

Her stomach rumbled and Nkosenhle looked at her.

“I came here to talk about Thingo” he said breathing heavily.

She had thought he would let the matter go but clearly she was wrong.

“I don’t have anything to say to you” Mkabayi said.

Nkosenhle looked at her and noticed the sadness in her eyes. It tore at him seeing her like this she didn’t deserve any of this.

“I am not trying to hurt you Mkabayi I am doing this for our son,when Thingo died I was not here he was buried with another man’s surname. Those ancestors do not recognize him because he’s not their own. I just want to bury my son in peace to take him home where he would be that’s all I am asking for” he said.

Mkabayi nodded her head.

“My father will be coming here this weekend you can discuss all that with him,as for me I have nothing to say to you” she stood up and called for the kids.

They came running and jumped on their father.

Oyintandokababa pulled away and poked her mother’s belly.

“Baba Me and Mhlengi are having a baby sister” she said hugging her mother.

Mkabayi’s heart pounded when Nkosenhle looked at her.

“Auntie said mama is pregnant and my teacher said a pregnant mommy gives birth to a baby” Mhlengi said.

“Baba what is giving birth” Mhlengi asked.

“I think it’s time to go to bed” Mkabayi said.

They kissed their father and ran to the lounge.

“Is it true” Nkosenhle asked.

“It’s getting late Maphumulo you should leave” Mkabayi said.

He nodded his head and stood up walking out.

He got into his car and drove to the nearest hospital pharmacy, the minute he entered Mkabayi he could himself lose his mind and he knew that he left his seed inside her.

He was invading her privacy but he needed to know damn he knew he wouldn’t be able to get through the night his mind was going crazy.

An hour passed and he parked outside Mkabayi’s gate he searched for his phone and realized he had left it on the stool.

He honked his car till Mkabayi stepped out and walked back inside by the house, a few minutes passed and the gate opened.

She stood by the door holding his phone.

“I was going to call Zamani to bring it” She said.

“May I come in please” he said.

Mkabayi moved out of the way allowing him access.

He placed the two pregnancy tests on the table and shoved his hands deep inside his pockets.

“Please take the test and I will leave” he said.

Mkabayi looked at him shocked this man was insane.

“So you drove all the way to a pharmacy to get these stupid test based on what the kids said” she said still looking at him.

“All I am asking for is that you take the test” he said calmly.

“I am not going to take a stupid test take all these and go” she said.

Nkosenhle settled down and sighed this was going to be a long night.

“Did you sleep with anyone else after me because I know that before me your husband was the last person” he said.

“What does my sex life have to do with you huh”Mkabayi asked folding her arms.

She didn't want to want knowing she is carrying his child would hurt her.

“It's a simple yes or no Nathanjekwayo ukhona yini omunye umuntu owazi amathanga akho” (Is there anyone else who knows your thighs) he asked.

She remained quiet.

“Then take the test I will be waiting” He said in a stern voice.

Mkabayi took the two tests and went to the bathroom she peed on the two test and placed them horizontally while she waited.

The waiting was unbearable she took the test not for him but for own sanity too, the thought of being pregnant made her weak.

A knock came through and she quickly pulled her underwear up and pulled her dress down.

She picked up the two tests and opened door.

“What do they say” Nkosenhle asked his heart racing.

I give him the tests and walk past him heading to my bedroom, I shut the door and sink to the floor biting my fist.

The strength to scream leaves my body and only silent cries come out of me.

I don't want the kids to hear me they would be worried seeing me this messed up.

A soft knock comes through I sniff wiping my tears out of all the stupid things I could do I did this and forgot to take precautions.

People won't understand, Kayise won't understand heck I wouldn't understand too.

"Nathanjekwayo please open the door" he says.

His voice is calm.

I slowly stand up and open the door allowing him in.

He tries to hug me but I push him away.

"I can't be pregnant Nkosenhle I just can't" I tell him.

"I don't know what to say I am even afraid to show you how happy I am" he says.

"Happy how can you be happy Maphumulo when I have helped you hurt another woman" I ask.

“You did nothing I am the one who slept with you knowing full well I am with Kayise” he says.

“Ngicela ungakhali Nathanjekwayo” (please don’t cry) he says.

“I can’t be pregnant Maphumulo not like this” I tell him.

He nods his head.

“Can we go to the doctor then just to make sure I will make a phone call” he says.

I nod my head and watch as he shuffles around my bedroom.

He helps me put on my shoes and coat.

I walk out to the cottage and ask Thandazile to look after the kids and make my way to his car and sink into the leather seats wishing they would just swallow me up.

The drive is silent he reaches for my hand but I move it and hear him sigh.

Everytime I walk away from this man something has to pull me close back to him.

“Whatever the case I will always be here by your side” he says.

We step out of the car and walk inside the hospital, there’s a doctor already waiting for me prepped and everything.

“Doc” Nkosenhle says shaking the doctors hand.

“I didn’t mean to trouble you this late but it couldn’t wait” he says

“I understand other things are just too important” the doctor says.

“The process will be quick just a gel over your abdomen it’s might be cold but that’s just about it” the doctor says looking at me.

I lay in the bed and lift my top up.

“See nothing to worry about” The doctor says.

He puts the gel on and runs the machine over my belly.

“Ahh there they are” he says.

“They” Nkosenhle asks.

“Yes it seems like we have two in there see those blots those are your guys” the doctor says.

“Two” I ask finding it difficult to breathe,

Nkosenhle comes over to my side and holds my hand squeezing it.

“Breathe Mkabayi” he says.

I can’t be carrying twins the last time was hard my belly was huge and stretched it took time and intense gym days to get my belly back to what it is now.

The doctor wipes me clean and looks at Nkosenhle smiling.

“Congratulations Mashimane” he says standing up.

I pull my top down and look at Nkosenhle.

“How are you feeling” he asks.

I shrug my shoulders standing up.

“Mkabayi please talk to me even if you yell at me” he says.

“What do you want me to say Maphumulo huh I am pregnant again with your children again and I will be alone again, shono ke uthi angithini” I ask.

“You won’t be alone Nathanjekwayo I am here and I am not going anywhere” he says.

I look at him and chuckle.

“Really really Maphumulo and what about Kayise” I ask.

“Let’s be realistic here I am going to be alone while you play happy family with your wife” I tell him.

“I love you Mkabayi” he says.

“You might love me but it’s not enough,love is not is enough Maphumulo and I am fine with it now leave me alone” I say.

She shakes his head.

“I am not fine with it because I love you more than anything and I want to be with you” he says.

I shake my head and head for the door walking out.

I can't think clearly not when he's around and pushing.

We both walk to the car silent one can hear the other breathing.

He starts the car and drives off stealing glances of me.

“I know this is scary but I promise you I will be here no matter what” he says.

“I don't want to talk about this Nkosenhle if it were up to me I would wake up tomorrow not pregnant” I tell him.

He looks hurt by my statement but that's the honest truth ten years later and I am pregnant by the same man.

He parks the car in the drive and sigh killing the engine.

I step out of the car and he follows blocking my way.

He pulls me into his arms and locks me in.

“I love you Mkabayi and I am sorry that I am always hurting you that I am the reason for your tears, I am sorry for putting you in such a situation that you hate me ngixolele Nathanjekwayo” he says pulling away.

I nod and walk inside the house, I take a shower and put on my pajamas heading to the kids bedroom. I remove my slippers and snuggled up with Oyintandokababa shutting my eyes.

I am woken up by Oyintando screaming from the top of her lungs, I open my eyes and find Thandazile looking at me I yawn and stretch sitting up straight.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">"What time is it" I ask.

"Just after twelve" she says.

"I must have been tired my body hurt" I say.

She pulls out of the test from her pockets waving it in front of me.

"I found this in your bedroom" she says,

I look down not knowing how to explain myself.

"How far along are you" she asks.

"I don't know I didn't ask" I say.

She nods her head standing up.

“I can’t believe you slept with Nkosenhle the same guy that broke your heart or you don’t remember” she says.

“Sisi ..”she raises her hand up looking at me.

“You are old Mkabayi there’s nothing I can say” she says sounding disappointed.

“I just came to tell you that Baba is here and you are going to tell him about that child today” she says.

I look at her my eyes widened.

“Thandazile I can’t baba will kill me” I tell her.

“You should have thought about that before allowing Nkosenhle between your thighs,the Maphumulo’s are going to come very soon and I think he needs to know what their son did again” she says half shouting.

“Get up your food is in the oven we don’t want you dying of hunger” she says shutting the door.

I get up and fix Oyintandokababa’s bed deeply sighing with my mother gone my father will definitely kill me.

I walk to my bedroom and take the longest shower of my life.

I look at my phone ringing and see Nkosenhle’s name flash I switch it off and sigh walking out.

I find my father watching the 13:00 news and give him a hug holding him tight.

I look at Thandazile and shake my head I can't tell my father not now at least.

"Baba" he smiles and wraps his arms around me.

"You came early" I say.

He laughs showing his teeth my father still has the looks if only he would open himself to love again

"I missed you guys so much" he says.

"We missed you too baba" I say.

Oyintando squeezes her self between us and rests her head on baba's shoulder taking my time.

I wave my hand to the kids as Kiara drives out to get us some takeaways, I have been walking on eggshells the whole day avoiding Thandazile.

"Mkabayi" Thandazile calls out.

I brush my hands over my thighs wiping the sweat.

I walk to the house and find them in the kitchen my father drinking his tea.

“You called” I ask.

“What is wrong with you two” baba asks.

“Nothing” I say

“It’s not nothing it’s definitely something” Thandizile says.

I clear my throat feeling my scalp itch.

“Tell him” Thandazile says folding her arms.

“Tell me what” Baba asks looking at me.

I twiddle my thumbs looking at Thandazile yes she’s disappointed but to do this.

“Baba please forgive me” I say.

He clenches his jaws placing his cup down.

“What did you do” he asks giving me that scary look.

My lips quiver how I wish my mother was here to calm him down.

“What did she do” he asks looking at Thandazile.

“Mkabayi ngizokuhlephula ngempama uma ungakhulumi” (I will slap you if you don’t talk) he says fuming.

“Baba ngikhulelwe” (I am pregnant) I say.

He looks at me then at Thandazile who nods her head.

“Who is the father” he asks.

I jump up when he shouts and look at Thandazile.

“Yeyi nina musani ukungicasula ngiphenduleni ” (stop annoying me and answer my question) he shouts hitting the table.

“Nkosenhle Maphumulo” I blurt out.

“Dammit Mkabayi that boy again” he says.

“Baba I am sorry” I say.

He looks at me shaking his head.

“Maybe it’s time I teach that boy a lesson” he says grabbing his car keys.

“Baba where are you going” Thandazile asks.

“Give me that boys address” he says looking at me.

I shake my head.

“We Mkabayi give me that address or I will beat it out of you” he says.

Thandazile gives it to him.

“Baba please don’t go there please I will not keep this pregnancy” I lie trying to stall him.

He turns and slaps me senseless.

“Baba uzom’limaza” (You will hurt her) Thandazile shouts.

I hide behind her and hold tight crying.

“Not only did he get you pregnant but now he’s turned you into murderer” he shouts.

“Baba I am sorry” I say.

“That’s it that boy will do right by you whether he likes it or not, I will teach him a lesson he will never forget. The first time he wasn’t here but now he is and my fists are itching to teaching him a lesson” baba says.

He licks his tongue walking out.

“Thandazile, Thandazile he’s going to kill him” I say carrying my hands over my head.

Mkabayi

She looked at her sister tears filling her eyes she couldn't believe Thandazile had done that to her.

"Even if you get angry at me I am your sister and I am looking out for you" Thandazile said.

"What if something happens to baba on his way there did you see how angry he was" Mkabayi asked.

Thandazile's mind drifted and she sighed she didn't think that far.

"I am sorry okay but he needed to know I am tired of seeing people walk all over you" Thandazile said looking at her little sister.

"I know you love Nkosenhle but he needs to know that he can't just use you and walk away, he's done it before he can't do it again I am sorry but I am not sorry that he's going to beaten you" she said laughing.

Mkabayi laughed too wiping her tears now that she thought about it she didn't mind Nkosenhle being beaten up. She held

her face and laughed even more her father had slap her for him so surely he deserved some beating too.

“See everything is going to be okay just trust baba’s way of fixing things” Thandazile said hugging her.

“I promised mama that I would look after you and that’s what I am doing” Thandazile said pulling away.

“Thank you” Mkabayi said smiling,

She felt better this huge weight that had been heavily weighing on her shoulders was gone and was glad her father knew about about the pregnancy.

“I am hungry” she said opening the fridge.

“Why don’t you people but some food” She asked then she remembered Kiara has gone out to get some.

“Please call Kiara I need to ask her to bring me a few things” she said settling down rubbing her belly two kids on the way thought that will make her squad five.

She shook her head and sighed her grandmother was the last person to carry twins of any set.

“Her phone is not going through” Thandazile said.

Mkabayi looked at the time and smiled she could make it to the shops in time.

“It’s fine I will go get my cravings” she said freely and for the first time.

She walked to her bedroom and got her sweater then she got her car keys.

“I love you sisi so much” she said giving Thandazile a hug.

She walked out and got into her car and got on her playlist playing Kelly Khumalo’s song Ngathwala Ngaye.

She turned up the volume and smiled scary as it was she was looking forward to having these two.

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The Maphumulo’s sat across the table waiting for their dinner to be served, Nkosenhle and Kayise had just arrived to join them although his mind was far he still honored their invite.

His mind had drifted to Mkabayi so many times today he didn’t want to be here, he wanted to be in her company to hold the mother of his kids and love her right.

He looked up and found his father staring at him.

“Is there something bothering you Nkosi” his father asked.

Mr Maphumulo knew all his children and he could tell his eldest wasn't okay.

"Baba may I have a word with you" he said standing up.

The two man stood up and went to the study.

Mr Maphumulo closed the door and sat down while his son stood.

"Baba Mkabayi is pregnant and the doctor's think it's twins" he said smiling.

His father nodded the thought of being a grandfather warmed his heart.

"Congratulations ndodana somehow I knew it would'nt take long before you found yourself with her again" Mr Maphumulo said.

Nkosenhle pulled out his wallet and looked at the old picture he had of Mkabayi when she was still young and knew nothing about the heartaches of this world.

"I love her baba and I never truly thought I would ever see her again,I never thought I would be given a chance to love her again and be there for her. When I left I left a big part of my heart with her, I loved her and longed for her even when she wasn't near me" Nkosenhle admitted.

“I guess at the back of my mind I always told myself that I would go back and maybe just this time I would find her there waiting” he said breathing heavily.

“What about Kayise” Mr Maphumulo asked knowing the answer.

Nkosenhle shrugged his shoulders he cared about Kayise but the spark had died over the years and the love was no longer there.

“I care about Kayise baba more especially now that she’s carrying my child but I love Mkabayi and I want to be with her” he said.

Mr Maphumulo nodded.

“Then you know what to do make a decision do you want Mkabayi or Kayise in your life” he said standing up.

“I want Mkabayi I want to further build the Maphumulo empire with her by my side” he said.

“Spoken like a true man although this will hurt Kayise but I believe setting her free now is the best thing you can do” he said walking.

They both stood up and walked out joining the others

A few minutes into their meal Khosi walked in followed by Mkabayi’s father.

Mr Maphumulo stood up and looked at the man.

“I apologize for barging in like this I am Mkabayi father and I am looking for a boy called Nkosenhle Maphumulo” He said respectfully looking at Mr Maphumulo senior, he was in another man’s house and needed to at least show some little respect.

“I am Nkosenhle Maphumulo” Nkosenhle said looking at Mkabayi’s father.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">Mkabayi’s father gave him one look and the anger came back, he had calmed down from driving to this boy’s house and not finding him to driving here.

He walked over to him and pulled him by his shirt.

Screams erupted at Mr Maphumulo looked by doing nothing.

Mkabayi’s father punched him in the face his one hand still holding him by his shirt.

“So the first time wasn’t enough you had to do it again” Mr Thanjekwayo said giving him another punch.

He tried pulling away but another punch landed on his jaw.

Zamani stood up but his father held him back.

“He wronged Mkabayi’s father let him take the heat” Mr Maphumulo said.

Mkabayi’s father finally left go after what seems like forever and kneed him on the stomach.

A part of him wanted to kick this boy but he just put his foot on his neck and pressed hard.

“I want you to stay from my daughter I don’t care what or who you are but leave Mkabayi alone, the first pregnancy I could overlook because you ran away like a coward but this one I will not hluhana nengane yam if you can’t do right by her then walk away” he said breathing heavily.

“What pregnancy is this” Kayise asked looking at a blooded Nkosenhle his nose was bleeding.

“My daughter is not a play thing that you can use whenever you are bored try me mfana and I will beat the nonsense out of you” Mr Thanjekwayo said.

“You will pay heavily for disrespecting me and my daughter” He said looking at Mr Maphumulo senior.

“I am sorry for disrespecting your home but I have had it with you son” Mkabayi’s father said walking out.

The whole family looked at Nkosenhle and his mother stood up walking to her bedroom.

“So you couldn’t wait to shove your d*ck inside her,you couldn’t wait to make a fool out of me Nkosenhle” Kayise screamed.

“Kayise please not now” Nkosenhle said wiping himself standing up.

He couldn’t believe the man had punched him so hard.

“When then Nkosenhle huh when your little brats are born” she asked standing up.

She pushed Nkosenhle tears falling down her eyes.

“Why am I not enough for you” she asked looking at him seeking answers that only he could give.

“Can we go home let us go home so we can talk about this” Nkosenhle said taking his car keys walking out.

This is not how he pictured his night this is not how he pictured news of him impregnating Mkabayi coming out.

Kayise looked out the window tears falling down her face at first it was never love for the both of them,she was doing what any pretty woman did and that was to secure her future,she had everything in Nkosenhle love and money and now she was losing it all.

Nkosenhle parked the car in the drive way and walked inside the house while Kayise stayed in the car collecting herself.

She finally stepped out and sighed walking inside the house and found Nkosenhle rinsing his face in the kitchen sink.

She sat on the stool and looked at him why was he hurting her like this, their relationship wasn't perfect but to do this get another woman pregnant and tell the whole world that he loved her.

She was hurt seeing him this calm hurt knowing he was going to leave her for Mkabayi hurt.

"Just like that Nkosenhle you're going to leave me and our child for her" she asked shouting from the top of her lungs.

"Kayise I am sorry" He said looking at her.

He hated himself for having to do this but there was no other way to do things.

"All of this isn't enough for you to stay and love me like you love her" she asked wiping her tears.

"I am sorry for hurting you Kayise but I love her I tried fighting this but the more I do the more the more I hurt myself and her" he said.

She nodded her head.

"What about me" she asked.

“I will still take care of you and the baby you will not want for anything, you can have the car and house but I can’t give you me” he said.

“Nkosenhle please don’t do this to us please” she pleaded.

Nkosenhle’s eyes filled with tears as he looked at her crying.

“I am sorry Kayise I really am” he said pulling her into his arms.

He pulled away and sighed this was harder than he thought breaking her heart hurt him more than he thought, this was the mother of his child after all.

“I will spend the night home” he said grabbing his car keys turning his back.

Kayise looked at the kitchen knives and slowly pulled out one if she couldn’t have him then no one would.

She stood up and forcefully plunged the knife on his back.

Nkosenhle gasped as she pulled out the knife and plunged it again not looking where she stabbed.

He turned and looked at her before falling to the floor.

Kayise looked at him and dropped the knife running out.

She got into her car and sped off tears falling from her eyes.

She had killed him she thought to herself and cried even more panicking.

She passed so many red lights she didn't care if she got fined or arrested but Mkabayi would answer to what she did.

She wiped her tears taking her eyes off the road just for a second, she somehow lost control of the car and collided with someone else's

The car rolled down over the edge as her car hanged over.

She slightly opened her eyes taking a glimpse of the car she had hit but her eyes closed before she could see clearly.

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Nkosenhle opened his eyes and felt the pain from the stab wounds, he had been drinking earlier on and figured he would bleed out.

He turned and groaned raising his arm, he managed to pull out his phone from his front pocket and dialed Zamani.

He looked around the house and sighed all this was ruined Kayise had ruined it the moment she stabbed him.

He sat there finding it hard to move and thought about his kids had she plunged the knife in all the right places he would be dead.

It took a while but Zamani finally arrived.

He found Nkosenhle bleeding and took one of the dish cloths to stop the bleeding.

“I am sorry I got stuck in traffic apparently there’s an accident “ Zamani said helping his brother up.

“What happened“ Zamani asked

“Kayise stabbed me” he said letting out a chuckle.

Zamani fumed he couldn’t understand why his brother hadn’t slapped the craziness out of her.

He helped him to the car and drove out.

“How many times have I told you about Kayise look now she tried to kill you”Zamani said.

Nkosenhle said nothing the only thing he could do was clench his jaws because of the pain.

“How many times have you forgiven her,how many times has she embarrassed you in front of people in front of our parents” Zamani asked.

“You know she has no one but me” Nkosenhle said.

Zamani shook his head and chuckled that was the thing with Nkosenhle sheltering stray dogs till they turned and bite him.

“Funny she never thought about you when she brought a man into your house your bed” he shouted hitting the steering wheel.

Nkosenhle looked at his brother and shook his head.

Zamani was hotheaded he never minded lifting his hand to woman. But Nkosenhle was different from his brother he could never bring himself to hit a woman.

Man and woman are different one blow from him to a woman would be fatal,and he knew if he ever hit a woman she would never looked at him the same she would never love him the same.

Her love would turn into fear and he didn't want that.

“I am going to teach her a lesson and there’s nothing you can do about it” Zamani said.

“She’s carrying my child Bafo” Nkosenhle told him.

“Are you sure that’s even your child” Zamani asked.

“Kayise is a lot of things but she would never lie about the child being mine” Nkosenhle said.

Zamani nodded his head and stopped the car they had arrived at the nearest hospital he got out and went to the other side helping his brother out.

Nkosenhle was soon attended to and stitched up nothing was broken or ruptured, Kayise had stabbed him on the side and on the shoulder.

Zamani’s phone rang and he answered it putting it on loud speak it was his father calling.

“Zamani” Mr Maphumulo said.

“Baba” he said.

“You left the house in a hurry where is your brother we have been trying to call him but he’s not answering” Mr Maphumulo said.

“He left his phone at the house but he’s okay we are at the hospital Kayise stabbed him” Zamani said.

He father sighed on the other line.

“Which hospital we are on our way” he said.

Zamani gave him the name of the hospital and ended the call something was off his father didn't sound like his usually self.

A few hours passed and his parents walked in they had this sad look in their eyes.

His mother went to hug Nkosenhle and pulled away.

“What happened” she asked looking at Zamani.

“His girlfriend stabbed him and left him for dead” Zamani said not mincing his words.

“Zamani” his mother said softly.

“It's true ma that crazy woman tried to kill him had she put the knife in the right places he would be dead” he said.

“Don't mind Zamani Ma I am fine as you can see” Nkosenhle said

The painkillers were easing the pain making it bearable for him to move.

“Maphumulo what's wrong Zamani” asked.

“There was an accident” Mr Maphumulo said deeply sighing.

“Oh Zamani mentioned something like that” Nkosenhle said.

His mother held his hand as her heart broke how were they going to break the news to him.

Zamani looked at his father clear his throat and finding difficulty saying anything.

“I don’t know how to say this” Mr Maphumulo said looking at Nkosenhle.

“Your mother got a call from Mkabayi’s sister when she couldn’t reach you” Nkosenhle nodded looking at his father.

“It’s seems like when Kayise left your house she drove and got into an accident” Mr Maphumulo said swallowing.

“And,what happened is she okay is the baby okay” Nkosenhle asked.

“Kayise is fine but her car collided with Mkabayi’s car sending it over a cliff”Mr Maphumulo said.

Nkosenhle looked at his parents hoping they would say it was a mistake but tears filled his mother’s eyes.

“Ma” Nkosenhle said.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">His mother held his hand squeezing it.

“Is she alive” Zamani asked.

Mr Maphumulo nodded his head when the call came her family was headed to the hospital and it was said she’s in a critical condition,they said she was in pretty bad shape hanging by a thread now how was he supposed to tell his son that.

“She’s in a critical condition” Mr Maphumulo said.

“And my babies” Nkosenhle asked.

“They didn’t say anything about the pregnancy” Mr Maphumulo said.

With how people described the scene he was sure Mkabayi would lose her pregnancy but he didn’t want to scare his son.

Nkosenhle slowly sat up straight and put on a brave face.

“I need to go see her” he said getting out of bed.

Zamani helped him up even though he wasn’t in any state to leave the hospital but he couldn’t stay knowing both these woman were lying in the hospital.

They got him discharged and drove to the next hospital where Kayise and Mkabayi were admitted.

They got to the hospital and Nkosenhle walked over to Mkabayi's family his heart pounding, he couldn't bare the worst happening Mkbayi wouldn't handle it he thought to himself.

He greeted everyone and looked at Thandazile her father wasn't here, he was probably home with the kids he thought.

"Thandazile" he said feeling his mouth go dry.

"This is all your fault you did this" Thandazile told him.

"If you stayed away non of this would have happened" she continued.

Somehow she blamed him for the accident for her sister lying on that bed fighting a losing battle because she was losing her babies and she couldn't stop it.

"Where is she" he asked.

"They took her she's in so much pain" Thandazile said crying even more as Kiara held her close to her chest.

Nkosenhle walked over to the doctor handling Mkabayi's case and talked to him, he was allowed to see her and his heart sank the moment he laid eyes on her.

She was in pain bruised and bleeding although her eyes were closed she was crying.

“Can’t you do something for the pain” Nkosenhle asked feeling his heart ache.

“We can only ease her pain” the doctor said adamant.

“Why is she bleeding” Nkosenhle asked.

“She’s having a miscarriage sir and like I said there nothing we can do beside ease her pain and do a suction which is Dilation and curettage the procedure will remove any remaining tissue from **the uterus.**”the doctor said.

His heart stopped beating for a while Mkabayi had lost the twins.

“Please wait outside” the nurse said.

Tears welled up in a blink of an eye he had lost it all.

He walked over to everyone and looked at them.

“She lost the babies there’s nothing they can do”he said walking towards Kayise’s ward.

Zamani followed him and helped open the door,they both walked in and Nkosenhle took a seat next to Kayise.

She wasn’t bad had a few scratches on her face a bandage over over head.

He leg was lifted in the air metal had gone through it.

She opened her eyes and looked at Nkosenhle fear crept in as she thought about her heartless act of leaving him to die.

“I am so sorry Nkosi I didn’t mean to hurt you” she said looking at him.

Tears fell as he placed his hand over her belly the baby was safe she was still carrying hers while Mkabayi was losing her hers.

“I want to strangle you to death right now,I want to kill you with my own bear hands but I have never killed a woman before and I won’t start now”Nkosenhle said clenching his jaws.

Zamani tightened his fists had it been him he would have smothered her to death in her sleep.

“Mashimane I was angry I didn’t mean to stab you” she said still looking at him.

Nkosenhle held her hand and kissed it then let go looking into her eyes, the pain he felt was indescribable his chest was burning and there was a lump stuck in his throat.

“You have hurt me Kayise in the worst possible way, I will never forgive you for what you have done my babies are gone because of you Mkabayi might die because of you” he said.

Kayise’s heart pounded tears filled her eyes as pictures of the accident came back she shook her head.

“No I didn’t mean to hit her car I swear to God I didn’t mean to hit her you have to believe me” she said.

Nkosenhle shook his head and stood up.

“I am sorry that I hurt you but what you did to Mkabayi is unforgivable”he said walking out.

“Mashimane ngiyaxolisa please forgive me I swear I didn’t mean to hurt her”she screamed letting out a painful cry, two souls had been snatched just like that and she was the cause.

“Nkosi” she shouted.

“Nkosi please” she begged as the door shut.

Hours passed and finally they could see Mkabayi Thandazile went in with Kiara,then Nkosenhle got a chance to see her.

He stood by the door gathering some strength she was fast asleep the doctors has sedated her.

He grabbed a chair and rested his head on her belly and soon his groaning turned in a silent cry.

He no longer felt the physically pain because his heart had taken in all the pains and was aching.

He wiped his tears and held Mkabayi’s hand and started praying not for himself but for her. Surely God would hear his

prayers Mkabayi was one of his children the last time he remembered.

“God I am not a praying person but for her I would do anything, heavenly father she’s been through so much pain her heart can’t take it anymore please help heal her.

Give her pain to me let me carry her pain while she heals peacefully, please give her strength to carry on when she wakes up from this bed. May this be the last time she sheds any painful tears, I pray from son and twins may you keep their souls in Jesus name amen” he said opening his eyes.

He looked up and sighed if only God could hear him and take away her pain, he couldn’t bear hearing her cry nor seeing her cry.

#41

A week passed and Mkabayi had woken up physically she had pulled through but emotionally she awaited the most heart wrenching pain.

No one said anything apart from that she was in an accident and that her family was coming to see her, during the week she would wake up and fall back into sleep again.

I guess it was easier for the whole family because then they wouldn't have to tell her the painful truth.

Nkosenhle walked in carrying the twins they missed their mother and understood that she was hurt .

Mkabayi smiled and opened her arms as Nkosenhle placed the twins next to her, soon she wouldn't be able to carry them or cradle her daughter she thought.

"Mama how are you feeling" Oyintando asked.

"I am okay a bit sore but I am fine I missed you two" she said kissing them.

"We missed you too mama" Mhlengi said.

"Oh I missed you too so much" she said feeling some pain stem from her back.

“Baba has been taking care of us and taking us to school every morning” Mhlengi said.

“And he brought me my sheep back” Oyintando said smiling.

Having a father was great they loved him.

Mkabayi looked at Nkosenhle and smiled.

“That sheep again Maphumulo” she said titling her head.

He said nothing and forced a smile.

The door opened and soon her father was by her side followed her sister then Kiara.

“This feels like some memorial or something guys I am still alive and kicking” she said laughing giving them a hug.

“I am glad that you okay Cubby” her father said smiling.

Thandazile took Mhlengi while Kiara took Oyintando.

“Let’s get you icecream and leave mommy to rest” Thandazile said.

The door shut as the twins left with their aunties.

Nkosenhle moved closer and held her hands smiling.

“Sqeda sam” he said kissing the palm of her soft hands.

Mkabayi smiled while she used to call him Maphumulo he would call her Sqeda because she loved bringing him one when ever she was having one.

She took Nkosenhle hand and placed it on her belly and smiled, she was carrying parts of him even though she could never have him but she was carrying parts of him so she thought.

Nkosenhle breathed heavily as tears filled his eyes.

He didn't know where to start he looked at Mkabayi and his heart tore.

"Mawabo" he said clearing his throat he had never called her that before this was the first.

"Something happened when you were brought in here you were in bad shape and bleeding the doctors couldn't do anything I am sorry" he said.

"Why are you sorry Nkosenhle" she asked looking at her father.

"I am sorry but you we lost the babies" he said.

Suddenly Mkabayi went deaf she could see Nkosenhle's lips moving but she couldn't understand what he was saying.

"Mkabayi" Her father called out.

She snapped out of the trance and looked at Nkosenhle failing to hold himself.

She placed her hands on her belly and closed her eyes tears falling from the corner of her eyes.

“Ngenzeni mina lengaka” (what did i ever do) she asked.

Her lips trembled and her sniffs turned into loud uncontrollable sobs, she cried so hard the whole corridor could hear her scream.

“Oh mama, mama ngiyakudinga nakhu ngihlupheka” Oh mother I need you I am suffering) she said wailing.

Her father held her close as she weeped for her children.

“Baba ingane zami” (my children) she said holding on to her father.

The doctor walked in and looked at Nkosenhle.

“We just told her the news” Nkosenhle said.

“I can sedate her if you wish” the doctor suggested.

Nkosenhle shook his head.

The doctor walked out and shut the door behind him.

Mkabayi’s father wiped his tears and looked at a distraught Nkosenhle.

He let go of his daughter and cleared his throat.

“I will be right back” he said walking out.

Nkosenhle stood and settled next to her on the hospital bed and held her close.

She cried herself to sleep tightly clasping at Nkosenhle resting her head on his chest.

Somehow this felt like the only safe place she could find refuge his chest and heart.

She woke up and Nkosenhle was still there holding her tight, she looked at him and wondered if his pain amounted to hers.

She shook him and he opened his eyes to kiss her forehead.

“What happened ” she asked looking at him when he flinched moving his arm.

“Kayise stabbed me” he said.

She nodded not wanting to know more.

“Do you remember what happened” Nkosenhle asked.

She shook her head.

“Kayise hit your car I don’t know how but she’s the one who hit your car” Nkosenhle told her.

She nodded her head the pain was there unbearable and she couldn't bring herself to utter anything, the more she talked the more a lump grew on her throat making it difficult for her to breathe.

"Is her baby fine" she asked.

Nkosenhle nodded.

At least one of them still had their child she thought.

"I guess I am the unlucky one" she said closing her eyes.

Sleep seemed like the only thing she could do right now just to numb her pain.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">Tomorrow came and Nkosenhle stood outside Mkabayi's ward she was going home today and he wanted to take her to his house.

Mkabayi's father shook his hand they had totally forgotten about their differences for the sake of Mkabayi.

"Baba May I have a word with you" Nkosenhle asked.

"Go ahead" Mkabayi's father told him.

"I would like to take her home with me I don't want the kids to see her like" he said.

Mkabayi's father thought for a while and nodded his head.

"I will come tomorrow morning to fetch her I am taking her home with me" the words echoed as Nkosenhle listened.

"Baba you can't take her she needs me" he said.

Mkabayi's father shook his head.

"She needs to be home she needs her father,I know you love her but right now she doesn't need your love she needs her mother and since she's not here I will step up" Mr Thanjekwayo told him.

"And my kids" Nkosenhle asked.

Mkabayi's father sighed.

"Those kids have been through a lot I don't want to disturb their routine,they will travel back and forth to see their mother. I want my daughter to heal she's been through a lot I want the best doctors to help her emotionally" Mr Thanjekwayo said.

"I understand" Nkosenhle said,although he didn't buy there was nothing he could do.

They both walked in and found her staring at the wall all dressed up and ready to go.

Her father looked at her and he couldn't believe what life kept throwing at her daughter, she was slowly becoming a shell of her self.

Nkosenhle kneeled down and looked at her but her eyes were just staring at the wall.

Her father brushed his hand over hers and smiled.

"Come we are taking you home" Nkosenhle said.

"I don't want the kids to see you like this" Nkosenhle continued.

The night was bad she cried self to sleep and woke up mute as she was right now.

She stood up and Nkosenhle held her walking out.

He drove to the new house the one he bought weeks after finding out he had the twins, this was the house he wanted to gift Mkabayi the house he wanted a fresh start in new memories but all that would have to wait now.

He helped out of the car and walked inside the house, he was healing nicely which was good the twins liked it when he picked them up.

They made their way into the house and walked to the bedroom, Nkosenhle helped her lay down and stepped out when his phone rang.

He looked at the screen and Kayise's name appeared.

"Kayise" he said taking the call.

She sniffed clearly she was crying.

"Nkosi I am sorry I didn't mean to hurt her" she said breathing heavily.

"I know, but what about me did you mean to hurt me" he asked.

"You cheated on me you slept with her Nkosi" she said.

"Okay I guess then I should have stabbed you too the day I found you with a man in my house, I guess I should have killed you when you stole my money and lied about it" he said thinking of all the things Kayise did.

"I am sorry Nkosi I really am but we can still be together nothing is standing in our way now, those babies are gone and I am sure she wants nothing to do with you" Kayise said.

"Kayise are you hearing yourself" he asked.

The line went silent and she screamed.

"That's karma for sleeping with my man" she said.

"So what she's going through is Karma for sleeping with your man, if that's the case then you better be ready for the karma

that's coming your way for all the bad things you have done to people" he said.

"God dammit Nkosi she can't have you" she said.

Nkosenhle shut his eyes there was no point and arguing with Kayise.

"I wish you all the best Kayise but what we had is done" he said ending the call.

He never believed in Karma because if it existed then all bad people would be going through bad things for their sins or mistakes.

He walked back to the bedroom and found Mkabayi sitting up with her hand on her stomach, she looked up and faintly smiled.

"Did you feel it how your heart ripped from your chest, how you struggled to breathe and your throat clogged up and all you could do was cry" she asked looking at Nkosenhle.

He clenched his jaws.

"Did you feel your heart ache so bad you wanted to pull it out and fix all the broke pieces" she asked.

Nkosenhle nodded his head.

“That’s how it feels to lose something you hold dear to your heart” she said laughing till she broke into sob it was painful having to go through another loss.

“The first time I lost something was when you walked away the second time was when I lost my son and from downwards I stopped counting” she said biting her lips.

Nkosenhle got close and held her hands.

“You won’t lose me this time it’s different it’s going to be you, me and the kids” he said.

Mkabayi pulled her hands away and stood up feeling something moist between her thighs.

She froze as she saw blood on the bed and she remembered her pregnancy.

She got on her knees and cleaned the spot off but the stain wouldn’t come off.

Nkosenhle held her and locked her in his arms.

“It’s okay it’s just blood” he said.

She shook her head crying.

“It’s not okay I am not okay Maphumulo” she said holding him.

They stayed like that for a while till Nkosenhle stood up and walked out to the bathroom,he filled the bath tub with some warm water and foam.

He then walked back to the bedroom and helped Mkabayi out of her clothes and picked her up not minding the pains from his arm and back.

He placed her inside the bathtub and reached for the sponge and washed her body,his love was broken torn apart.

He never pictured himself doing this but here he was doing it.

“I should have been more careful” Mkabayi said.

“You did nothing wrong a reckless driver put your life in danger, I don’t want you to blame yourself for this okay. I know it hurts but one day you will look back and say God pulled you through” Nkosenhle said.

She finished her bath and changed into clean clothes then laid on the bed,she couldn’t pin point the aching part but she knew that her soul ached her pain was no longer physical but it went deep far into her beautiful soul.

Nkosenhle laid next to her and held her close as they mourned their loss.

Nothing mattered their differences didn’t matter but being there for each other is what mattered most.

42

I don't know if I am coming or going my father kept to his word,I had to say goodbye to my kids and leave them in the care of my sister and their father.

I didn't want to go but the truth is I am not in the right state of mind to look after them,I love them so much that I want to get better for them to have a happy mother.

I have been home for two weeks now I can't even make calls because my phone got damaged,my father offers me his whenever I need to call the kids.

The kids miss me but then with how our talks end I have a feeling Nkosenhle and Thandazile have everything figured out.

I am sitting across my therapist her name is Sphelele she's matured,beautiful and single she doesn't have a ring on her hand great.

"Shall we begin" she says.

Her voice is gentle and sweet reminds me of my mother.

I look at her fix her glasses and clear her throat she's serious and she wants to fix me.

"Mkabayi" she says.

I look at her and smile the way she calls my name is gentle and soft more of a mother's tone, but then maybe she's like this with all her patients I clear my throat lately I have been drifting away with my thoughts.

"Tell me about your son" she says.

There she goes asking me about my son I have been coming here all week and all my answers have been vague or none at all.

"You are beautiful and educated" I tell her.

She pens down something and looks up at me.

"You are diverting" she says.

"Huh" I say.

"Complementing me is you diverting you don't want to talk about your son" she says.

I shake my head.

"No that's not the case I am just thinking about my father he's handsome and well educated too, he's old fashioned but you would two would make the perfect couple" I tell her.

A smile spreads across her lips subtle enough not to be seen but if you look carefully you might spot it.

"Tell me about your father" she says.

“Well he’s an amazing man but he lost my mother years ago and he’s been lonely since,he’s the one taking care of me now since my sister is taking care of my twins” I say.

“Twins” she asks.

“Yes I had triplets my first pregnancy but then my son died” I tell her.

“Your son” she says.

I nod my head deeply sighing.

Its a takes a while but I chuckle and look at her shaking my head she’s really good talking about my father has led us to talking about my kids.

“Do you blame yourself for his death your son I mean” she asks.

A moment of silence passes with her looking at me.

“Take your time” she says looking at her wrist watch.

“There’s not a day that goes by with me not blaming myself for his death,I was home that day although the nanny was there but I was also there and I couldn’t protect my son. He died in my care his own mother and I couldn’t save him I was too late to do anything, he was cold so cold I couldn’t keep him warm” I say.

She reaches for the box of tissues and hands them to me.

“Did you talk to someone about how you feel” she says.

I wipe my tears shaking my head, Busani was supportive but his mother blamed me there wasn't a day that would go by without her reminding me how careless and stupid I was for leaving the pool open.

“Did you love your son” she asks.

That's a weird question of course a mother loves her children.

“Yes I loved my son” I tell her.

She smiles.

“Then you are not to blame for his death what happened was an unfortunate accident, you were his mother carried him for nine months and you would never have harmed him in anyway” she says.

“What is the last memory you have of your son” she asks.

“Him floating on that damn pool” I tell her.

She nods her head and jots down.

“Close your eyes and see past the pool see past his death and remember him as that happy sweet child, dig deep and see his smiles once you have that run with it and never look back” she says.

It feels like I am in a dream tears prickle my eyes as I hear my son's laughter and see his smile.

She lets me be silence looming in the room as I dance with my memories.

I open my eyes to find her smiling.

"How does that feel" she asks,

"It feels good" I tell her.

"Good now I want us to talk about your husband and his death leading to your prison time" she says.

"Isn't our time up" I ask.

She shakes her head.

"Double session today Mkabayi" she says.

I sigh breathing heavily.

"My husband was good man he didn't deserve to like that,he was gunned down like a dog his brother orchestrated his death all that for money and just to have me. His death still hurts me even today because on the day of his funeral I was shot and admitted waking up I found out that he was buried without me there" I say.

"And how did that make you feel" she asks.

“Angry so angry that I shot his brother and I ended up in prison” I say.

“Did you feel better after shooting his brother I mean he was the one behind his death after all” she says.

“It felt good my husband was kind and had a beautiful soul,he wasn’t supposed to die so yes trying to kill his brother felt good” I say.

She nods her head not once giving me a judgmental look.

“Do you hate your brother in law” she asks.

I nod my head.

“Okay now prison tell me about prison” she says leaving it at that.

“I hated every moment of being there, I almost died in there it was hell I wished death upon myself while I was there. It was hard being away from my children soon after they had lost their father. I lost my mother while I was in there and I couldn’t bury her” I say.

“Your mother how was she” she asks.

“She was a beautiful and kind woman strong in her beliefs and everything she was a praying woman,she raised us well and she was taken too soon from us” I say.

“She was everything to me and now she’s gone despite her faith and love in God she was still taken away from us” I say.

She removes her glasses and looks at her like she’s searching for something anything.

“You blame God for your mother’s death” she asks.

Her tone is questioning assuming I have just said an outrageous thing.

“Yes I blame him for everything that has happened in my life for every loss I blame him,for everything heartache I blame him he’s supposed to be a forgiving,loving and faithful God he’s supposed to always provide but all he’s done is take and take away from me” I tell her.

My chest heaves and I have said more than I have said in all these years.

I shift from the chair and sigh my buttocks hurt I have been sitting here all morning doing nothing but pouring my heart out.

It feels like I am in a lecture hall and I am pointed at to provide an answers.

“I see” she says looking at her wrist watch.

0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Our time is almost up but before that I would like us to touch on the father or your kids” she says.

I sit back and think about Nkosenhle he’s supportive away and out of sight but he’s been great, he doesn’t call but he’s send kind beautiful gestures every day to tell me that’s he and the kids love me.

“There’s nothing to tell he’s just the man that happened to knocked me up twice” I tell her.

“What broke you up I mean you two were once in a relationship right and you broke up” she says.

I chuckle thinking that Nkosenhle and I never broke up,he left to be there for his family and I moved on and so did he.

“Nothing in particular we just went our separate ways” I say.

“Do you love him” she asks.

I blink a few times processing her question.

“I don’t know” I say.

“Yet you slept with him and that resulted in the twins you lost” she says.

I nod my head

“We were both hurting and I guess he was there and I was there” I tell her.

She raises her eyebrows and nods her head.

“Could it be that you never stopped loving him that and that night was just you two making each other aware of the feelings and physical attraction between you two” she asks.

I shrug my shoulders looking to the side.

She stands up and places her pen and note pad on the table.

“On our next session we are going to talk about the father of your kids more and your miscarriage” she says.

I swallow and nod my head standing up.

I walk towards the door but turn and look at her.

“Thank you for listening” I say.

“It’s my job to listen and help” she says.

I nod my head smiling.

“My father is really handsome you know” she laughs shaking her head.

“See you on our next session Mkabayi” she says.

I deeply sigh closing the door I walk out the building towards my father’s car.

He steps out and gives me a hug holding me tight.

“One day at the time” he says pulling away.

He looks behind me and I turn my head and see Sphelele walking out of the building.

“That’s my therapist her name is Sphelele” I tell him.

He stands there while I get inside the car.

The old man is smitten if only he would get closer then he would die of her sweet elegant scent.

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Nkosenhle

I look at the time and breathe being a hands on father is more harder than I thought.

With Mkabayi gone I asked Thandazile to start giving me a week with them and this week is mine.

I place their lunch on the kitchen counter and bring the milk closer to their bowls.

They both walk in holding hands this is what I look forward to every morning when I have them over at the house,

“Morning baba” they both say.

I give them each a kiss and smile helping up their chairs.

Oyintando looks around and glares at me folding her arms.

Her every action reminds me of her mother it’s scary.

“What’s wrong princess” I ask.

“Baba where are my brownies” she asks.

Dammit the brownies I knew I was forgetting something.

“We are supposed to bring cookies today you remember right”

Mhlengi says.

I quickly nod my head smiling.

“You are the best daddy” Cubby says.

I reach for my phone and send Khosi a text asking for her to bail me out.

“Done” Mhlengi says.

Cubby moves her bowl to Mhlengi and bats her eye lids smiling.

That’s the devils look she can get you to do anything with that sweet look of hers.

“Cubby finish you food” I say.

I give her one look and she sulks grabbing her bowl.

The drive to the school is short with Oyintando forcing us to sing King Julian's theme song.

I park the car at the gate with Khosi parking here right next to me.

The kids step and give their aunt a hug.

"My babies" she says shouting.

I secretly move to her car and get the brownies great she managed to put them in a plastic container.

These are bought but who cares no one will know.

"See daddy didn't forget" I say showing them the container.

She smiles while Mhlengi looks at me shocked he knows I forgot.

Cubby looks at the container and frowns.

"Baba did you make these" she asks.

I nod my head.

"When" she asks.

"Uhm you see I baked them late at night when you two were asleep" I say.

"Baba look at me" she says.

Khosi laughs leaning back taking out her phone.

“Mama has to see this” she says.

I look at her and she smiles making me feel guilty.

“You do know that if you lie you go to hell right” she says.

I swallow and nod my head.

“Good I love you baba” she says.

Their teacher walks towards the gate and smiles at us.

They say goodbye and walk in while Khosi and I watch them.

“Mhlengi hurry up” Cubby says to her brother.

I shake my head this daughter of mine is bossy and stubborn just like her mother.

“I will drop by later to see you guys” Khosi says walking back to her car.

I reach for my phone inside my pocket and send Mkabayi’s father a picture of the twins.

Not a day goes by that I don’t miss Mkabayi but her healing comes first,I just wish she would do it with me by her side.

43

Nkosenhle

I am woken up by the tv playing loud and put the pillow over my head, it's a Friday and the kids aren't going to school all parents were notified that today it's these little people's day off.

I look at the time and it's six in the morning shouldn't they be asleep and dreaming or something.

I drag myself out of bed and walk towards the bathroom I brush my teeth and walk out heading to the lounge.

I find Mhlengi and Oyintando on their feet dancing and singing along to Sofia the first.

If it's not Sofia the First it's Elena of Avalor or King Julian which happens to be my favorite.

Oyintando turns her head and looks at me.

"Baba come" she says.

I move closer and have her put a Tiara on my head, is this what being a father entails being dressed up and made to dance.

I look at Mhlengi and he's having a good time I have come to realise that my son is not much of a talker, he is quiet, smooth and observant just like his father.

"Baba sing" Oyintando says giving me the remote.

I guess this is my microphone.

"I was a girl in the village doing alright

Then I became a princess overnight

Now I gotta figure out how to do it right

So much to learn and see"

Oyintando sings dramatically running around the room.

"Up in the castle with my new family

In a school that's just for royalty

A whole enchanted world is waiting for me

I'm so excited to be

(Sofia the First)

I'm finding out what being royal's all about

(Sofia the First)

Making my way it's an adventure everyday

(Sofia)

It's gonna be my time

(Sofia)

To show them all that I'm

Sofia the First!"

We all sing along till the song finishes.

"That was fun thank you baba" she says finally settling down.

"Shouldn't you be in bed" I ask catching my breath after being made an airplane.

"Baba you need to go to the gym josh's dad goes to gym all the time" Mhlengi says

I nod my head.

"I don't feel like making breakfast how about we go out and order anything we want then go see your grandparents" I tell them.

“I want a milkshake” Oyintando says.

“Baba can I have coffee” Mhlengi asks.

“You are not supposed to drink coffee” I tell him.

“But I am a man and men drink beer and coffee” he says.

“Okay man” I say ruffling his hair.

“Can also have coffee” Oyintando asks.

“Both of you look at me” I say.

They look at me not blinking.

“No one is having coffee caffeine makes young children crazy and I can’t deal with that” I say slowly.

Mhlengi shrugs his shoulders while Cubby nods her head.

I don’t know how Mkabayi does it but getting these ready is a lot of work, I dress them both in blue jeans white t-shirt and top Oyintando’s look with her mini black bicker jacket and white sneakers.

I dress myself the same as them and then take pictures of three of us.

“Wuuu baba I look nice” Oyintando says twirling around.

We all walk out and bump into Zamini he looks at me then the twins and smiles.

“And then” he says.

Oyintando tilts her head and smiles.

“Morning bab’omncane” she says.

“Morning baba” Mhlengi says.

“Morning” Zamani says.

“We are going out baba says he doesn’t feel like cooking” She says.

She leaves all of us standing and walks to the car.

“Bafo that child is old I am telling you”Zamani says.

He decided to join us us and offers to drive with Mhlengi while I drive with Oyintando.

We get to mall and my head buzzes what do kids eat are they even allowed at a restaurant.

Zamani isn’t much help he leads the way taking us to woolies.

“I need a few things for my lady” he says.

We follow him inside and soon Oyintandokababa has her own basket filling it up, she struggles to pick it up and decides to push it around.

“Let me carry this for you” I say.

She smiles and takes my hand leading the way.

“Oh excuse me” I say.

I can't exactly navigate my way since Oyintando is the one pulling my hand.

“It's okay I should look where I am going” the woman says.

“I am Noma” she says extending her hand smiling wide.

“Nkosi” I say looking at Oyintando next to me.

“It's a pleasure meeting you” she says not letting go of my hand.

“Baba” Oyintando says

I retract my hand and focus on Cubby. The lady looks at her and smiles.

“Oh my she's so cute is she yours” The lady asks.

I nod my head.

“My name is Cubby and this is my daddy he's going to marry my mom” Cubby says holding my hand.

I cough stifling a laugh this child.

“Baba wait here I am coming back okay” she says.

I nod my head and watch as she walks away and comes back holding Zamani by hand.

What is wrong with my child Zamani was right this one is old.

She places Zamani next to me and pulls my hand walking away.

“Bafo call me when you are done” I tell him.

We leave him standing there with this Noma woman.

I walk away with my kids not knowing what to make of what just happened did she save me from a thirsty woman.

“Baba can we have burgers” Mhlengi asks.

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26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Anything you want” I say smiling.

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Mkabayi

I sit back and watch as Sphelele settles down on her chair, she’s wearing a red dress today it hugs her waist perfectly her hips standing out.

My father will definitely have something to hold on too, She looks beautiful and like always she smells heavenly.

“Good morning Mkabayi” she says.

“Morning” I say.

She fixes her glasses and opens her notepad clearing her throat.

“How are feeling today” she asks.

I have come to know that asking these three words is very important.

“I am feeling good” I tell her.

The more I talk the more my heart eases the more I feel light and at peace.

“That’s very good” she says.

I nod my head smiling.

“Do you want to be happy Mkabayi” she says.

This woman and odd questions.

“Yes I want to be happy” I tell her.

“Then what’s stopping you from being happy what’s holding you back” she asks.

“The pain” I say.

She nods her head.

“Is it really? is it the pain holding you back or is it you allowing the pain to hold you back” she asks.

I have never really thought about it that way me allowing the pain to hold me back.

“See sometimes we are the ones allowing pain to hold us back,sometimes we are are worst enemy for not wanting to let go or to seek help” she says.

I nod my head breathing out some of the things she says make sense.

“Now let’s talk about Nkosenhle the man who fathered your children” she says.

I nod smiling.

“Oh is that a smile” she asks.

“He’s been sending my father pictures of him and the twins and today he sent a picture of them dressed in the same outfit” I say.

The picture is adorable and he looked handsome.

“How do you feel about him” she asks.

“I feel everything” I admit.

“Do you hate him for leaving you, do you blame him for what happened to your babies” she asks.

“Waking up and seeing him next to me I was excited and happy that I was carrying parts of him,happy that once again I was

carrying his seed but then they told me I miscarried. I wanted to be angry but I ended up being sad,sad that my babies were gone that Kayise was still carrying hers while mine were gone. I wanted to blame everyone but I couldn't instead I blamed the man upstairs. I blamed God for leaving him when I needed him the most. So no I don't blame him and never did although I was once angry for him leaving without even saying goodbye but Busani taught me forgive him and along the way I did" I say.

"Busani sounds like he was a remarkable man" she says.

"Yes he was" I say.

"And you loved him" she says.

"More than anything" I say.

"Do you think maybe that's why you haven't fully opened yourself up to love again because of him" she asks.

"I don't know maybe" I say.

"You do know that loving again doesn't mean disrespecting his memory,he would want you to move on and open your heart to someone else" she says.

I nod my head smiling.

"Tell me Mkabayi what is that you want to let go" she asks.

“I want to let go of the anger, hurt and pain I want to be happy again for myself and my children” I say.

She nods her head jutting every down then looking at her wrist watch.

“That’s it for it for today on our next session I want to discuss your mother in law and brother in law” she says.

I nod my head standing up.

“Before you leave here’s some homework I want you to think about what attracted you to the father of your kids” she says.

“Will you come over for supper” I ask.

She laughs shaking her head.

“I don’t mix work with pleasure” she says.

“But my father is not your patient” I tell her.

She laughs even more.

“Does your father know that you playing matchmaker” she asks.

“Trust me if he knew he would grateful he needs someone by his side and I won’t be here forever” I tell her.

She smiles clearly tempted.

“I did say the man is handsome right and loving” she nods her head.

“Great if you change your mind call these numbers” I tell her.

I put down my fathers numbers and walk out of her office.

I walk to the car and drive home thinking about these sessions,I didn't realize I was harboring so much pain this talking business really helps.

I park the car outside and step out making my way inside the house.

I find my father making lunch and give him a hug and watch him smile.

“I guess your session was good” he says.

“Thank you baba so much for loving me for taking care of me” I say.

“Whatever happens Nathanjekwayo I will always be here for you thumbu wam” he says.

“Those came for you” he says showing me flowers that rest on the tables a bouquet of white roses.

I pull away and pick them up reading the note

I still love you Sqeda and I am not going anywhere it reads

My father's phone rings,he picks it up and hangs it over to me.

“Nathanjekwayo” Nkosenhle’s voice comes through.

I feel butterflies in my stomach and smile stepping out.

Sphelele’s words come to mind I remember the first time I saw him, his tall nature took me by surprise then his dark complexion and beautiful smile.

Then I fell in love with his loving and kind heart and I never looked back.

“Maphumulo” I say, he chuckles and that puts a smile on my face.

We haven’t spoken since I got here he’s been giving me time.

“How are you Mkabayi” he asks.

A moment of silence passes between us

“I am doing good Maphumulo” I tell him.

“I was just checking up on you we miss you so much” he says.

“I miss you too more than you know” I find myself saying.

“Did you get your flowers” he asks.

“Yes thank you” I say.

He goes quiet for a few seconds and sighs.

“I want to love you Nathanjekwayo the right way” he says softly.

I run out of words to say.

“You don’t have to say anything I will call you back when the kids come back from my mother’s place” he says ending the call.

I look at the phone and sigh this man wants to love me but can I love him back the right way after what I have been through.

45

The knock persisted and Mkabayi quickly got on her feet, she looked at a naked tall Nkosenhle and smiled this man was dripping hot and clearly he frequent the gym.

She still couldn't believe he came all this way just to deliver flowers and see her.

Suddenly it felt like her eyes were opened for the first time and she didn't know how to feel about it.

"Under the bed" she whispered looking at Nkosenhle.

"Maphumulo please or my father is going to kill us just get under the bed" she begged.

Nkosenhle moved closer and pulled her into his arms.

He lifted her up and placed her the bed.

He parted her legs and kissed her while the knock persisted.

Mkabayi's heart raced this man was crazy not when her father was standing on the other side waiting for her to open the door.

"Mkabayi should I break this door what did we say about locked doors" Mkabayi's father asked.

Nkosenhle felt her moist underwear and smiled he loved it when she responded to her his touch.

He got on his knees holding her legs down pulling her underwear.

“Maphumulo please don’t do this” she begged.

She wanted this to feel Nkosenhle deep inside her but not like this.

“I am just showing you what you are missing” he said kissing her belly button.

Her skin was smooth and soft like silk he couldn’t stop rubbing her swollen clit, his tongue swirled around her hole and pushed inside while it moved up her clit pulling her labia.

She moaned not being able to hold herself.

“I am breaking this door I don’t you killing your self on my watch” her father said.

“Oh baba I am praying” she said shivering at Nkosenhle eating her up delicately.

He pushed his finger deep inside her and moved in and out.

“I want you come and scream my name Nathanjekwayo” he said whispering.

She shook her head this man was playing a dangerous game and he knew it the very well the satisfaction on his face said it all.

He pulled out his fingers and pulled his huge black cock out and stroked it biting his lower lip.

She looked at it veins had popped and it was dripping.

She moved up the bed but Nkosenhle pulled and held her down.

“That’s it I am breaking this door down” her father said.

He was afraid something would happen to his daughter people snap and that’s what he told himself.

“I love you” Nkosenhle whispered.

He held his cock and tapped it on Mkabayi’s clit and ran it down her juicy lips.

Breathing heavily as he felt the heat.

“Oh Maphumulo” Mkabayi cries out.

Nkosenhle knew what he was doing and loved seeing her this vulnerable.

He stroked himself once more and pushed in only the top of his cock and pulled it out.

They both trembled at the blood rushing moment.

Mkabayi opened her beautiful eyes and found him picking up his clothes, this would teach her not to stop him when he wants to leave a another man’s house.

“Nkosenhle what are you doing please don’t do this to me” she begged her with her eyes getting teary.

“Talk to your father I will be outside” Nkosenhle said putting on his pants.

He opened the window and realized they had steel bars.

He looked at the wardrobe and sighed he was tall this thing would surely be uncomfortable.

He looked at Mkabayi and chuckled softly.

“I am going to fuck you hard for this mark my words” Nkosenhle said.

Mkabayi’s walls closed up at the sound of that damn she was going to hell she thought.

She got up and made herself decent covering up with her robe.

She didn’t know being horny could be this painful, she wanted to cry and drag Nkosenhle out of that wardrobe and rid him till he filled her up.

The cool air blazed inside the room and she opened the door.

Her father walked in and sighed.

“What is wrong with you huh” he asked looking at her.

“I am so sorry baba I was praying” she lied.

Her father nodded and walked in settling on her bed.

He looked around the room seemed off like she was in rush but why.

“Come sit next to me” her father said patting the bed.

“It’s okay baba I am fine here weren’t you supposed to be out” she asked crossing her legs this was torturous, Nkosenhle would never see heaven for doing to her.

“Midway into our meal I realized that this is the first time I have left you all alone, I kept thinking out the worst things that would happened with you alone in this house. I kept thinking that maybe this was an opportunity for you to hurt yourself seeing that you have never been alone in the house” her father said.

She smiled and moved closer and sat next to her father.

“I would never put any of you through that baba I would never hurt myself never” she said honestly.

Although life was hard sometimes but she never thought of killing herself.

He deeply sighed and looked at Mkabayi he wondered who the boy was because he hadn’t seen a car coming in.

He could smell a man in this room in his house and shook his head the things kids got up to when parents weren’t around.

“Go have fun baba I am okay” she said.

He nodded head and stood up smiling.

“My date is outside we are going to drive to her house I will be back in the morning” he said.

“I will make breakfast”Mkabayi said.

He smiled and kissed her forehead,Mkabayi walked her father out and the man saw a bouquet of flowers on the table it clicked.

That boy was in his house and he was sure going to cleanse his house for this.

Mkabayi locked the door and ran to her bedroom almost breaking her legs.

She opened the door and found Nkosenhle already inside the covers sleeping.

This man was full of games she thought

She took off her clothing and got in next to him she hugged him and giggled they had the house all to themselves.

“Maphumulo ngiyacela” (Maphumulo please) she said.

“Angisafuni” (I no longer want to) he said holding back.

Mkabayi’s jaw dropped she needed to release she had too or should wouldn’t be able to sleep.

She turned facing the other way and Nkosenhle had no choice but to turn and cuddle her, she played around with her arse pushing it against his hard rod.

She then placed her soft warm hand on his crouch and smiled, Mashimane was hard up and ready to play.

“Maphumulo” she said softly.

He shut his eyes biting his lip this woman was tempting her and she she knew how.

“Asilale keh Maphumulo” (let’s sleep the Maphumulo) she said deeply sighing.

0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">Nkosenhle turned her over and looked at her smiling.

She giggled this felt like before it brought back memories of them loving each other like they were the only two people in the world.

He got in between her and rubbed her leg lifting it up not taking his eyes off her.

She was wet from all her thinking and Nkosenhle’s touch alone.

“I love you” he said stroking himself and entering her tight juicy walls.

He gave her two strokes and stopped to catch his breath she was warm and tight.

She softly moaned spreading her other leg open giving him full excess.

“Look at me Nathanjekwayo” he said giving another stroke.

She looked into his eyes and right there Nkosenhle knew he would never be able to let her go no matter what.

He gave her another stroke and pulled out to catch his breath.

“Maphumulo please” Mkabayi said locating his hard rod navigating it inside her.

This moment was sweet and filled with so many emotions.

He gave her long deep sweet strokes cupping her breast kissing her neck moving to her lips.

This was everything he thought it would be making love to the love of his life.

He pulled out again and shook his head he was dying to fill her up but he needed her to come first,he wanted to pleasure her first and he was going to do exactly that.

He slid back in and deeply thrust inside her biting his lip,he moved faster stroking her for dear life.

“Oh Maphumulo yes right there please don't stop, oh yes yes oh Maphumulo I love you” she cried out holding on to him for dear life.

He held her tight almost breaking her ribs and pumped hard inside her.

He pulled out and watched his semen slip out of her,he reached for the towel and wiped her clean then he wiped himself.

She opened her eyes and smiled the night was still young and for now they needed to rest.

He laid back and watched her close her eyes with some sweat on her forehead,she was beautiful her lips were slightly pouted he gently pulled her over to his chest and closed his eyes wrapping his big arms around her.

Morning came and Nkosenhle was the first one to wake up,he went to the kitchen made some breakfast tyding up his mess and that of Mkabayi's for last night.

He took the flowers and placed them in a a vase and smiled thinking about last night.

The woman woke him up in the middle of the night and rod him like never before,she did that thing of swaying her hips and twerking on top of him.

He had never experienced that before and he was used to being in charge but Mkabayi held him down last night he didn't know what to do with himself.

He felt Mkabayi's hands wrap around his waist and her head resting on his back.

He turned and lifted her placing her on the kitchen counter.

He perked her lips and smiled.

"I don't want this to end" he said holding her hand kissing it.

She smiled and sighed.

"I want us to try Maphumulo" she said honestly.

"I want to be with you I want us to raise our kids together" she said.

Nkosenhle nodded his head he wanted more than to be together he wanted to marry her.

"I want to marry you Mkabayi" he said not mincing his words.

"Take time to think about it because I want more than to visit your house,I want to wake up next to you I want this" he said looking around.

"I want to wake next to you to love all night long and come back home to you and the kids" he said.

She nodded her head and smiled.

“I want that too Maphumulo but can we go back to our lives and take it from there” he nodded and smiled.

He leaned over and kissed her but his phone interrupted them.

He looked at the screen and saw that his father was calling.

He pulled away and answered.

“Baba” he said stepping back.

“Where the hell are you Nkosenhle” his father shouted.

He cleared his throat and looked at Mkabayi who stood up and walked to the lounge

“I am attending to my person business” he said.

“Personal business you mean that thing between Mkabayi’s legs” he asked.

“Baba please” Nkosenhle said.

“While you were busy feasting off the mother of your kids your brother was being attacked” his father said.

The words hit hard his brother being attacked.

“What do you mean he was being attacked” Nkosenhle asked.

“Zamani is in the hospital he was shot” Mr Maphumulo said.

Nkosenhle clenched his jaws who would so stupid as to go for Zamani.

“Baba is he alive” he asked.

His father remained silent and his heart skipped.

“Baba is my brother alive” he shouted.

He didn’t mean to shout but he found himself doing it.

“His in a critical condition Nkosi come home we need you” his father said.

He ended the call and walked to the lounge.

Mkabayi looked at him and stood up.

“Maphumulo” she said.

“Zamani was shot I need to go” he said looking at her eyes well up.

This moment was sweet she did want it to end and she did want him leaving.

“The taxi business” she said swallowing hard.

She knew a time like this would come but she didn’t think it would be this soon.

“I don’t know I am sorry but I have to leave” he said.

He walked to the bedroom and got dressed then he settled on the bed and sighed.

He stood up and walked back to the lounge to find Mkabayi on her knees praying.

“I know he’s not Mphemba but death has no shame it knows no boundaries,for the first time in ages I believe in you that you are God and that you will never forsake me no matter what I think. I pray for his safety as well as that of his brother may he wake up and pull through, Heavenly Father please protect him please guide him his children need him I need him,I ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ amen” she said.

Nkosenhle walked up to her and held her tight.

“I won’t die on you” he whispered

“I have heard this before Maphumulo” she said still having her eyes closed.

“You were right about one thing I am not Mphemba and I will fight harder than he did” he said.

She looked at him and smiled her heart didn’t want to understand but his words assured him and she had no choice but to take his word for it.

#46

Zamani woke from the his deep sleep and saw his brother sitting next to him,he shook his head and closed his eyes again feeling the pain.

Nkosenhle raised his head up and found his brother looking at him.

“And then why are you here” Zamani asked.

He knew that Nkosenhle had gone to see Mkabayi and he had hoped the trip was a success.

“Ukuncishe ikhekhe yini” (did she deny you some p@ssy) Zamani asked trying to laugh but he couldn't because of the pain.

Nkosenhle laughed shaking his head the way he laughed gave it away.

“You sly dog you got it all” Zamani said.

“What happened” Nkosenhle asked looking at his young brother with Banzi gone they had each other to protect.

“I don't know didn't even see the shooter” he confessed.

“I was going home then suddenly a car pulled up next to me shots were fired and I got shot luckily I am still alive” he said.

“Baba said you were in a critical condition” Nkosenhle said.

“And you believed him you know how baba is everyone who’s in the hospital is critical” Zamani said laughing.

“Do you have any idea who it could be” Nkosenhle asked.

“I was thinking your baby mama but she’s not smart enough to pull this off just crazy and stupid” Zamani said.

“Then that leaves Mkhetheni”he said leaning back on his chair.

Zamini nodded Mkhetheni was the only one who had balls enough to orchestrate a hit on Zamani.

Nkosenhle sighed and stood by.

“I will come by later to check up on you” he said heading for the door.

He walked out and got into his car driving to the taxi rank.

He was tired from yesterday’s trip but someone was messing with his brother and he needed to take care of it.

He drove in and parked next to one of his taxi’s and killed the engine and stepped.

He looked around and finally spotted Mkhetheni sitting with other men he took a deep breath and walked over to them.

The man stood up and looked at Nkosenhle.

“Skhulu” some of them said while others looked by and moved.

Mkhetheni raised his head and looked at Nkosenhle.

“If it isn’t the man eating my brother’s left overs” Mkhetheni said.

Nkosenhle chuckled he hated doing this bringing Mkabayi into their conversation.

“And she’s so sweet and tight I have never tasted anything like it before” Nkosenhle said smiling.

Mkhetheni frowned clenching his Jaws.

“Lalela la wena skhotheni angik’sabi, angilisabi mina i Jele now stay away from my family stay away from Zamani are we clear” he said.

Mkhetheni stood up and laughed.

“Untill I have my brother’s wife and his money I think I will stick around” he said arrogantly.

“You mean my wife” Nkosenhle said smiling.

Mkhetheni’s eyes widened.

“What” he asked looking at a satisfied Nkosenhle.

“She’s my wife Mkabayi is my wife now get that through your thick skull and leave her alone” Nkosenhle’s said.

“One more think akuna mzila ozowuthola” he said walking away.

He turned before he could reach his car and looked at Mkhetheni.

“Here’s the thing about Mkabayi she likes man not cowards men and I am her man” he said getting in the car.

He drove off playing some music and his phone rang an unknown came through.

He answered and Mkabayi’s voice came through.

“Nkosenhle” she said softly.

“Wothi Maphumulo” Nkosenhle said laughing.

“Maphumulo” she said.

He smiled and looked to the road driving to his parents house.

“I was checking up on you I was worried” Mkabayi said.

“I am fine Nathanjekwayo” he said smiling.

“I am flying in this afternoon my father will drop me off at the airport” she said.

His heart skipped his woman was coming home.

“I miss you Maphumulo and I miss my kids” she said.

“We miss you too Sthandwa sam” he said.

“I should get ready before my father comes back” she said.

“I love you” he said.

“I love you too mashimane” she said ending the call.

He parked into the drive way and stepped out of the car heading inside the house.

He bumped into his mother who was already on her way out to see Zamani and gave her a hug.

He settled down next to his father and smiled.

“Mashimane” he said.

“Did you see your brother” his father asked.

“Yes and he’s fine” Nkosenhle told him.

“Baba I want to marry Mkabayi” he said.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">His father shook his head and laid back watching his son.

Marrying Mkabayi meant having them pay lobola to the Ntuli’s and he knew this wouldn’t go well.

“I know all about the traditional route we have to take and I am ready to do it all,I also want to cleanse her father’s house for disrespecting it” he said looking down.

His father slapped him and he just moved.

“That man will kill you Nkosenhle how many times must you poke him” Mr Maphumulo asked.

He shrug his shoulders thinking about that sweet moment he shared with Mkabayi,he suddenly became grateful that her father wasn't around during her varsity years.

“I know I have wronged that man and I am willing to make things right” he said.

His father nodded his son was marrying the woman he loved and he would experience pure love just like him.

.....

Mkabayi

She looked at her suitcase and smiled she has come a long way and she was proud of herself,she had started packing early in the morning and cleaned around the house even made breakfast but her father was still a no show.

He didn't sleep home last-night said something about his friend needing him.

She shook her head wondering what her father was getting up too, the man was still young and he sometimes went to the gym the yard work kept him fit her father hated not doing anything.

She looked at the old mtn black phone he gave him and smiled, her father gave her this phone to call in case something happens.

She wondered if they were doing it all night long or maybe they talked about their blooming love and looked into each others eyes and got lost in each other.

She shook her head and poured herself some coffee smiling her father was happy and that's all that mattered, she laughed almost burning herself with the hot beverage would Sphelele handle all those young ladies throwing themselves at him.

She sighed and looked at the phone again who still carries such a hideous thing she thought to herself.

.....

Sphelele

Phakade was in the kitchen making breakfast and the whole kitchen smelled heavenly.

She leaned against the fridge and smiled looking at her man,if felt good having a man in the house and being able to say her man.

She couldn't believe they were at it till the early hours of this morning,this man was a stallion and she loved everything about him.

She loved his salt and pepper beard and how it hung over his chin, she loved his strong arms and man the way he kissed and spoke to her was everything.

And the fact that he didn't have a pot belly and that he is packed down there was a bonus.

Phakade plated everything and looked at her smiling.

"Morning sthandwa sam" he said.

He missed having to love someone and right here was his chance to do it the second time.

She smiled bring the collar of his shirt to her face hiding it.

It still smelled like him and she felt like a school girl for being this happy.

"Morning Phakade lam" she said.

"Aw Kodwa mama" He said smiling.

"Don't just stand there come sit down" he said.

She shook her head and smiled.

“I am hungry” she said biting her lower lip.

This woman was sexy and a bit younger than him which was great.

He sat down and drank his coffee then Sphelele moved and sat on top of him he was in his briefs.

This man was clean and smooth and came with his own money compared to all the man she’s ever met.

She moved her hand down to his hardening d*ck and smiled leaning close to give him a kiss.

She didn’t want him to leave and he was about to so he could drop Mkabayi off at the airport.

He shut his eyes as Sphelele slightly moved and pulled out his hard d*ck.

“Sphelele” Mkabayi’s father said through gritted teeth.

She was spontaneous and freaky and he loved all that, a woman who could take charge the thought alone made him more hard.

Sphelele massaged his hard rod and smiled raising her arse in the air she slowly slid down and gasped.

Phakade grabbed her waist and helped her go up and down.

This was heaven in a way being inside her that is.

“Oh Phakade” she screamed.

Mkabayi’s father spanked her arse and grabbed her butt cheeks as she moved up and down swaying her hips.

“Ngicela ungibhronze ngemuva baba” (please take it from behind) she said looking into Phakade’s eyes.

“Ngingo wakho mama” (I am yours””he said pulling out.

They both stood up then Sphelele held on to the chair bending her waist having her full arse of display.

Phakade stroked himself before he spanked her and thrusted inside her.

He groaned the moment he was deep inside her and started moving while Sphelele met him half way.

He held on her waist it felt good having something to hold on to.

His rhythm picked up as Sphelele moaned and screamed his name.

He grunted filling her catching his breath.

“Oh Thanjekwayo I think I love you” she blurted out.

47

It was hard saying goodbye to my father but knowing that he is in good hands with Sphelele put my heart at ease.

The plane landed an hour ago and I decided to go past Kayise's house, she's one of the few loose ends I need to tie before I leave the past in the past.

I stand outside her door step waiting for her to open the door, my palms are sweating my heart is skipping so many beats.

This is the same person who stabbed her man, she finally opens the door with her hand resting on her showing belly and gets shocked when she sees me standing on her doorstep with my luggage.

"Hi how are you" I ask.

She blinks and rubs her belly.

"Mkabayi" she says.

I force a smile not knowing what to do with myself.

"May I come in please that's if you don't mind" I say.

"Of course please come in" she says moving out the way.

We awkwardly make our way to the kitchen.

She offers me a seat and stands beside the sink looking at me.

I look around and notice a few boxes it seems like she's moving out but I doubt Nkosenhle would put the mother of his child out in the cold.

"Would you like anything to drink" she asks.

"Water please" I say not wanting to be rude for not accepting.

She hands me a cold glass of water as if she read my mind.

I gulp the water and look at her as she takes a seat.

"I am probably the last person you want to see and I would totally understand if you threw me out right now" I say.

She shakes her head and sighs.

"I have been meaning to come to your house but I have been afraid that you might call the police on me or worse" she says.

We both laugh trying to ease the tension.

"I wanted to apologize for causing you so much pain although it was an accident but I caused your miscarriage and I am sorry" she says.

"Coming here I had this whole speech as to what I was going to say when I apologize for sleeping with Maphumulo" I say.

She laughs shaking her head.

"You are the only one that calls him Maphumulo" she says nodding her head.

“I guess it stuck from when I used to call in varsity” I say.

A moment of silence passes as we both deeply sigh.

“I am sorry Kayise for hurting you I didn’t want to be the cause of your tears” I say.

Tears well up as she looks at me in awe.

“I should be the one apologizing when I found out you lost the babies I wanted Nkosi back because somehow I convinced myself that there was nothing standing in our way anymore” she says.

“I feel like a monster for even thinking that way, I know I have hurt you deeply and I am sorry I didn’t know what it meant being a mother to carry life inside you till I felt my baby move it was then that I realized the pain I caused you and Nkosenhle” she says.

I nod my head.

“I hope that one day you forgive me for taking them away from you” she says wiping her tears.

“I long forgave you hence I am here” I tell her.

She sighs and chuckles shaking her head.

“You know I am not angry that he’s with you,I was just bitter and angry at myself for staying so long and letting go of the person I love” she says.

I look at her and watch as she wipes her tears away.

“Nkosenhle is a good man he has his faults but he’s a good man, he loved and took care of me when I was at my lowest. But the truth is I was never really in love with him he was my safe net. He was that one man who could do anything for me without even feeling a dent,yes at some point we loved each other but along the way we lost that and that’s the truth” she says deeply sighing.

“When I stabbed him I was angry at him but more at myself for letting go of a man that loved me for one who could provide for me” she says shaking her head.

“I was once in love Mkabayi but he didn’t have money he only had my love and I had his,but life happened and I chose Nkosenhle. I then cheated on Nkosenhle with the same man I left funny neh” she says laughing.

I smile shaking my head.

“We all do what we must that’s life” I say.

“I remember how he looked at me and smiled telling me he would wait for me,he would wait for my love and I didn’t believe him till now” she says.

I feel the warmth in her voice and her eyes twinkle.

“Driving that car I was angry I kept asking myself why was it easy for him to give it all up and I walk away,when I left my love for him and I realized that despite everything he was willing to fight for his love something I couldn’t do. I did this to myself but no more I am willing to fight for my love too and it feels good saying it” she says smiling.

“I am moving to Durban” she says.

“What’s in Durban Kayise” I ask.

“Everything”she says smiling.

“Thulani is coming to fetch me we are going to start our life afresh in Durban away from everything” she says.

“I am giving our love a chance like you are doing with Nkosenhle”she says.

“Did you talk to Nkosenhle about this not that you need his permission but the child” I say.

“I have already spoken to him and he’s fine provided I don’t keep the child away from him,it’s funny how I never wanted children even though I could see that he wanted them with all his heart but now I am excited to be a mother” she says genuinely smiling.

“I think being a mother is probably one of the greatest gift life can give us” I say.

She nods her head.

“You are a good person Mkabayi and you raised your kids well I wish you all the best” she says.

I nod standing up.

“I wish you all the best too may this fresh start be everything you need” I tell her.

She opens her arms smiling.

“Kayise you will make an amazing mother” I say.

We share a hug and hold on for longer till she clears her throat.

“Goodbye” I say pulling away.

She walks me to the door and I wish things were different that we met at a different stage just maybe something beautiful would have bloom between us.

I take out my father’s old phone and make a call to Khathazile.

“Hey I was just letting you know that I am back” I say.

She sighs in relief and clears her throat

“Oh okay can we meet today if possible” she asks.

I look at the time and its past midday I am hungry and tired but her plea has me agreeing.

We decide to meet at the park I call a cab and wait for it to arrive.

It takes a few a minutes to arrive and take me to the park

I wait at the park watching people walk past couples holding hands and remember my first day walking as a free woman.

Banzi took to me to the park it's funny how times passes by quickly.

I feel a hand on my shoulder and get a freight.

"Sis' Mkabayi" Khathazile says.

I look at her and get the shock of my life she has lost a lot of weight she looks frail and troubled.

I quickly get on my feet.

"Hey" I say.

"Please seat" she says.

We both take a sit and my heart breaks seeing her like this.

"Khathazile what's wrong" I ask.

She puts her hands over her face and burst into a cry.

I deeply sigh pulling her close.

She cries even more till she has hiccups, she stays still as I brush her back till she pulls away and wipes her tears.

“You were right all along” she says.

I am seldom right about everything so I am confused as to what I was right about.

She looks at me and half smiles.

“About my mother you were right all along she’s a bad person in fact she’s a witch” she says.

My eyes widen.

“What do you mean she’s a witch” I ask.

“She’s been using muthi on my father all this time, she’s been bewitching all of us all these years” she says wiping her tears.

I knew Pricilla was a bad person but this takes the cup.

“How did you find out” I ask.

“My aunt took my father to a healer and he came back a different man, he came back my father but not my father” she says shaking her head.

The pain in her voice cuts deep it's raw and there eating away at her.

"He came back a violent man towards my mother, I don't know him like that he was never violent Mkabayi but now nothing my mother does is good enough.

He always shouts at her for the smallest things he easily hits her and that's not my father" she says.

I shake my head if you toy with dark forces be ready to dance in the dark.

My grandmother always said when a woman uses muthi on a man the day it wears off all hell will break loose.

"She turned my father into a monster she turned him into an angry man and I don't know what to do anymore" she says defeated.

I hold her hands looking at her.

"He's angry Mkabayi that Busani died and he couldn't protect him, he's angry that life has passed him by that when Busani died he wasn't in his right mind" she says.

"Things are a mess and I have decided that I am leaving I can't stay here not after what my mother did" she says.

"I wanted to meet so I can look at you and apologize for everything that I put you through, I am sorry for everything that

I said and did to cause a drift between you and my brother” she says.

I nod my head.

“Where are you going” I ask.

She shrugs her shoulders and smiles.

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26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“I don’t know but my father has given me enough money to start over” she says.

“How bad is it” I finally ask.

She didn’t expect my question her face says it all she breathes out heavily and shuts her eyes opening them up again.

“It’s really bad” she says.

“And Mkhetheni” I ask.

“My father wants nothing to do with him” she says.

I nodded my head life sure has a funny way of working out.

“I guess my mother never really loved me or Busani as much as she loves Mkhetheni, it’s sad to finally admit it but it’s the truth my mother never truly loved us” she says.

The says the words to more to herself than me it sound like some affirmation of some sorts.

My heart breaks for her if only Busani was here he would know how fix all this.

“I am sorry” I say.

She laughs drawing out some breath.

“You were always sorry even when you did nothing” she says.

I laugh shaking my head I don't want to admit it but there's some truth in it.

She stands up and faintly smiles.

“Take care Mkabayi” she says giving me hug.

I am taken aback by everything and watch as she walks away

My heart suddenly feels heavy this day has been good but at the same time it all feels like its coming to an end.

I sit by the park catching my breath thinking about today and the events that unfolded.

I feel weak drained my heart feels heavy for Bab' Ntuli then Pricilla but then there's a saying that says if you live by the sword you die by the sword.

She is paying for turning a blind eye to her precious son murdering my husband.

I finally get the strength to stand up and walk to my taxi heading home.

The drive is filled with some excitement I am going to see my two favorite people in the world.

The cab parks outside my gate and a smile grows on my face when I see my house well kept and clean.

I carry my bags and sigh getting outside the driver drives off as soon as I am inside.

Thandazile walks out and sees me she screams and goes back inside the house.

I shake my head trust my sister to call the whole house out, I take my time strolling these people better be out soon.

Her screams dies down as I approach the house I make my way inside and the smell of a home cooked meal hits my nostrils.

Being home feels good I hear some chatter on the outside and make my way to the garden.

A song starts playing and a smile grows on my face

As tired as I am I know this song like the back my hand

“Kuqubuku mhleza, umzimba wonke,

Makuqhamuka wena lovie yini ngishawa luvalo

Umlenze wakho dali ubhubhuzel' umoya, isinqesakho

Ksasekseni ngiqonde phiri, ngiyokhipa mathousand

Kuncono ngiyolobola, ngivali bank account (woooo...)

Intwengibonayo, ngofangilanda

My fohloza

Sthandwa se nhliziyo, wethemba lami

Helele my fohloza, lovie

We Dudu wami, sthandwa sami, my fohloza dali wami,

Helele my fohloza

Dali, lovie, sweetie...

Woza my phathakahle (wongishawa luvalo)

Woza my sondeza, ulale'sifubeni

Baby you're the one, akekhofana nawe

Dali wami, lovie wami, woza my fohloza

Mangibona wena ngishawa luvalo, ng'julukubala,
ng'cwaluthando, ng'thuthumelumzimba wonke

Nomungang'dlisa sekuyafana

Hambu'yolandumuthi, lethakimi intando, ngigaxijazi dali,
ngidlisemina

Ishaya kabuhlungu inhliziyo yami dali, umangicanga wena
sweetie

Yini ngishawa luvalo (wuuuu...)

Ngiqhaqhazela madolo

Inhliziyo yami icweluthando

Kuba'buhlungi inhliziyo

Umangicabangana nawe

Ngishawa luvalo ngijulukubala

Ngiqhaqhazela madolo woza my fohloza.,

“Welcome home” Kiara and Thandazile scream.

I smile looking around and spot my people standing with their
father looking smart wearing naughty smiles on their faces.

They look so grown I can just eat them up.

“Sqeda sam Nathanjekwayo wam” Nkosenhle says looking at me.

He didn’t tell me that he would be here and why are these kids glued to their father like this.

“I love you” he says.

I clear my throat and smile.

“I love you too” I tell him.

My feet are aching but then I can’t really sit down seeing that he’s about to make a whole speech.

“I know you are tired so I will make this as short as possible, like the song said even if you feed me some love potion I will gladly eat it all” he says laughing.

“Baba what’s a love potion” Cubby asks.

“It’s nothing baby” he says looking down at her.

“Oh okay” she says shrugging her shoulders.

Nkosenhle looks at me and smiles.

“I meant what I said I want to do this with you and no one else, I want to love and adore you. I want to wake next to you all the days of my life you and only you” he says taking a deep breath.

“Are you guys ready” he asks looking at the kids.

They nod their heads smiling.

“Close your eyes Nathanjekwayo” Nkosenhle says.

I close my eyes still holding my smile.

“Open them” he says softly.

I fully open my eyes and find them holding placards written will you marry us.

He dragged the kids into this he’s holding two while the kids are holding one each.

This is beautiful it brings tears to my eyes this man sure knows how to pull my heart strings.

“Mkabayi will you marry us” he asks looking at me going down on one knee

Tears well up as I run out of words.

“Mkabayi” he says softly.

“Say yes mama” Mhlengi says.

I open my mouth but nothing comes out marriage seems so soon, yes we spoke about it but I didn’t think he would propose so soon.

“Mama do you love us” Cubby asks.

I nod my head.

“Then marry us” she says.

I nod my head smiling my daughter is way older than her age.

“Yes I will marry you” I say.

They run towards me and finally give me my long awaited hug.

Nkosenhle steals a kiss and pulls away picking up the kids.

“We missed you” he says.

“I missed you too” I tell them.

He puts the ring on my finger and kisses my hand.

“I love you Nathanjekwayo” he says.

“I love you too Maphumulo” I say smiling.

“We are getting married” Thandazile screams.

I turn and look at them raising my hand.

“Start planning a wedding bitches” I scream.

“Mama what is a bitch” my daughter asks.

I look at her and smile will there ever be a day she doesn't ask questions.

I still can't believe Nkosenhle proposed he asked me to marry him, I have done this before wedding jitters but I can get over the feeling or marrying my first love.

I love this man and I am going to marry him I am going to be Mrs Maphumulo and it feels good.

The Gods are finally smiling down on me and I can't help but be grateful.

Today I woke up early and prepared breakfast for everyone.

I have said this a thousand times but being in my kitchen feels good, I was starting to get tired of waking up to my in love father at his old age.

I set the table and place the food in the middle with Kiara and Thandazile walking in holding hands.

"Morning you love birds" I say.

"Morning to you too ms I am getting married" Kiara says smiling.

"Morning sis" Thandazile says.

They both take their seat next to each other.

Noise erupts from the passage and the twins grace us with their presence.

“Come sit next to mommy” I say.

“Morning mommy, morning b@tch*s” Cubby says.

Thandazile chokes on her juice and violently coughs.

“Oyintando” Kiara says gasping

Mhlengi kisses my cheek and settles next to me.

Oyintando does the same while we are all still in shock.

“Mama can you pour me some juice please” she says.

I was excited when I said the B word didn’t mean for them to hear and use it.

I pour her some juice and then plate up for Mhlengi.

“Thank you mama” my son says smiling.

I look at Oyintando and clear my throat.

“Cubby when mama said the B word she didn’t mean it okay,the B word is wrong it shouldn’t be said okay nana” she nods.

“Promise me that you won’t use the B word” I tell her.

She sweetly smiles and nods her head.

“I promise not to say the B word anymore” she says.

“Great now can we eat” I say.

I watch everyone eat and smile soon I will be moving out and leaving my sister behind.

I excuse myself when my phone rings and walk outside.

“Aunt” I say.

She starts ululating and I move the phone away from from my ear.

I called and told her about Nkosenhle proposing and she’s been happy since .

“Mkabayi sisi how are you” she asks.

“I am good Aunty is everything okay” I ask.

“Everything is fine I wanted to let you know that I arrived yesterday and I would like you to come to the house” she says.

I think for a while.

“Your father in law just wants to speak with you that’s all” she says.

I deeply sigh and clear my throat I haven’t been to Busani’s home since he died,I haven’t set foot there in a every long time and I don’t know how to feel right now.

“We are fixing things Mkabayi starting with your lobola negotiations” she says.

“Thank you for doing this aunt Snazo it really means a lot” I say.

“Okay then we will be expecting you later then” she says.

I end the call and take a seat breathing heavily situations like these make my stomach turn.

I took a nap soon after the kids had left for school and woke up to pack a small bag and braced myself for my visit now.

I am sharing a couch with aunt Snazo while Bab’ Maphumulo occupies the one seater couch.

Mkhetheni’s is sitting on a chair looking at me, I can’t even raise my eyes because of this murderous look he’s giving me.

The house is super clean spotless even the tiles are shining bright.

Pricilla walks in and places the tray of tea on the table.

She looks different more tamed and quiet she’s not the mrs Ntuli I know and dislike.

“Nali I tiye baba” (here’s some tea baba) she says.

She walks back to the kitchen with her head slightly bowed.

I can tell Mkhetheni doesn't like this one bit he hates every moment of this.

"Would you like some tea Mkabayi" Bab' Ntuli asks.

"No thank you baba I am fine" he smiles taking hold of the cup of tea.

I can't believe he still eats anything prepared by Pricilla had it been me I would be weary of everything.

"I have already spoken with your father and we talked like men" he says.

I nod my head holding my smile

"Yebo baba" I say.

He looks like the man I once met but there's a different energy I am getting from him.

"Your lobola negotiation will go smooth my son loved you and now he's gone, it's been years since his death and I know he would want you to be happy" he says.

"I called to let you know that you don't have to worry about anything we will not stand in your way uyezwa Mkabayi" he says.

I nod my head smiling.

“Thank you baba” I say.

“I don’t agree with you baba” Mkhetheni says coming out of his sullen mood.

His father looks at him raising his eye brows.

“Mkabayi owes us baba we simply can not let her go just like that,you can’t hand her over to another man while I am here ready to assume my brothers duty” he says standing up.

“Stop it Mkhetheni” Aunt Snazo says.

“No you stay out of this Aunty this is all your fault” Mkhetheni says pointing at his aunt.

“So your mother poisoning me all these years turning me against my own sister,against my son is my sisters fault is that what you saying Mkhetheni” Bab’ Ntuli asks.

Mkhetheni shamefully looks down and sighs raising his head.

“Baba why are you allowing her to take Busani’s money to go support another man huh” Mkhetheni asks.

I want to laugh doesn’t he know that Maphumulo has his own money.

0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Says the same man who killed his own brother for that very same money,and now

you want to marry your brothers wife and squander her money” Bab Ntuli’s says.

His voice cracks but he clears his throat.

“Mkheteni do you want me to beat you to death huh,so you want me to strangle you to death with my own bare hands right in front of these people. Do you want me to have my own son’s blood on my hands is that what you want” he asks.

“Bhuti” Aunt Snazo says.

Bab’ Ntuli shakes his head still looking at Mkheteni.

“Uyizibulo lam Mkheteni kodwa ukwazile ukubulala igazi lakho” (you are my first born Mkheteni but you we were able to kill your own blood) he says sounding defeated.

I guess it’s true he was blind to everything now he doesn’t know how to handle the raw truth.

“Baba” Mkheteni’s voice is cracking and I don’t know if he’s genuine or not.

“Stay way from Mkabayi she’s nothing to you and you will never have her,you killed your brother for nothing you will never be half the man he was” he says taking deep breathes.

“I had a talk with the rest of the family and I am striping you of everything I have ever given you” Bab Ntuli says.

“Baba please you can’t do that Mphemba please” he begs.

“You should have thought about the consequences” he says.

He turns and looks at me.

“I am sorry for all the pain my family has caused you thank you for coming Mkabayi take care of my grandchildren” he says.

The fondness in his voice is still there and that puts a smile on face.

“We love you sis and we want to see you happy” aunt Snazo says.

“Thank you” I say.

Aunt Snazo walks me out, I give her a hug and climb in the car driving off.

I look at over at night bag in the car Nkosenhle asked me to spend the night with him and I am looking forward to it.

He sent me directions to the house it’s the one he took me too soon after my hospital stay.

I park in the drive way and step out heading inside the house,he opens the door and takes my bag closing the door behind us.

The house smells great and he's wearing an apron clearly he's out to impress.

He disappears and comes back holding my sleepers smiling.

"You must be tired Nathanjekwayo" he says.

I remove my shoes and put on my sleepers.

"Please take a sit" he says.

I settle down and watch as he pours me a glass of wine.

"Just this once" he says.

I gladly take the glass and take a sip closing my eyes.

"Cha uyisidakwa ngempela" (you really are an alcoholic) he says laughing.

"That's not true" I say.

"How was your day sthandwa sam" he asks.

I tell him all about my day taking sips in between while he stuffs his chicken breasts wrapping them in bacon.

"I guess I need to tell my father to proceed with the lobola negotiations" he says.

"I can't wait to be married to you Nkosenhle" I tell him.

"And I can't wait for you to be mrs Maphumulo" he says smiling.

He hands me a business card.

“That’s the number of the property agent I spoke to” he says nervously.

I nod my head.

“Why would I need a property agent Maphumulo” I ask.

“Because I want to buy you a house” he says.

“Maphumulo you do know that I have my own money right” I tell him.

He clears his throat and wipes his hands off.

He comes over to where I am and holds my hand.

“Yimina indoda yakho Nathanjekwayo ngivumele ngikondle wena nezingane” (I am your man Nathanjekwayo allow me to take care of you and the kids) he says.

“Angikubangisi imali yakho kuhle vele ukuthi umuntu wes’ mame abe nemali yakhe kodwa usu nendoda manje”(I don’t have a problem with your money it’s good for a woman to have her own money but you have a man now) he says.

I blush shaking my head the wine is going straight there.

“I want to love you I want you to spend my money in whatever way you see fit” he says.

I nod my head there's nothing wrong with a man providing for his woman right.

"Fine Maphumulo your wish is my command I will spend your money the way I see fit" I tell him.

He laughs hard standing up.

"Phela wena uyindlovukazi ngifuna ukhombke ngophakathi" (you are a queen and I want you to be spoiled" he says.

He carries on preparing food and I stand up joining him.

I offer to peel veggies and he agrees.

He moves and stands behind me.

"Maphumulo what are you doing" I ask him.

He kisses my neck and wraps his arms around my waist.

I reach for my glass and gulp down what's left of it.

"I love you Mkabayi all of you" he says.

"And I love all of you Maphumulo" I say.

"You are my burning flame Nathanjekwayo" he says softly.

I laugh holding his strong arms.

"Awungimithela phela Nathanjekwayo" (Carry my children)he says laughing.

“You know carry in pairs are you ready for that” I ask.

He pulls up my dress and chuckles.

“More than ready” he whispers.

I bend a little and feel him pull down my underwear.

“Maphumulo what are you doing to me” I ask shaking my arse.

He spanks me and grunts.

“Damn woman I want to feed you” he says.

“I love how you feed me” I say biting my lip.

I feel his cock in between my thighs as he positions himself and thrusts deep inside me.

I shut my eyes Nkosenhle is big and it will take time to adjust to him, but nothing a little sex here and there won't fix.

I let out soft moan biting me lower lip

“Moan for me Nathanjekwayo” he says moving slowly inside me.

49

I wake up to Nkosenhle kissing my shoulders his lips moving to my neck.

He moves and gets ontop of me getting in between my thighs, I fully open my eyes smiling.

“Good morning” he says kissing my back.

“Morning Maphumulo” I say.

“I want to please you Ndlovukazi have me at your mercy” he says.

I gasp feeling him enter me.

He grunts resting his head on my back.

“I love you Maphumulo” I tell him.

“I love you more Mkabayi” he says.

This blood rushing moment has tears welling up in my eyes.

“Oh Maphumulo” I whisper.

He pulls out breathing heavily and enters me again giving me slow strokes that leave me breathless.

He moves his waist and deeply thrust inside.

I scream when he hits parts he shouldn't.

“Ngixolele Nathanjekwayo” he says deeply thrusting in again.

I hold my breathe biting my lip this man is on a mission to kill me.

He pulls out and thrusts inside again.

“You’re so warm” he whispers.

He goes hard on his stroking game having me scream his name loud.

He wraps his arms around my waist crushing me as he fills me up.

He catches his breathe and pulls out.

I turn and look at him smiling he has this grin on his face.

He reaches for the towel and wipes me clean pulling me close to his chest.

He deeply sighs wrapping his one arm around me.

“What’s wrong” I ask.

“Nothing” he says.

“It can’t be nothing when you have just sighed like that” I tell him.

“I don’t want to mess this up sthandwa sam,I don’t want to do anything that might cost me you or the kids. My heart is content I am happy so much that it scares me” he says.

I sit up straight and look at him.

“We are in this together and we are going to do this together,I promise that I will stand by you no matter what happens ngiyakuthanda Maphumulo” I say.

He reaches for my hand and kisses it.

“You and the kids are the are the most important people in my life.Ngibanithanda Nathanjekwayo” he says.

“And I will be the best husband ever” he says.

“I shouldn’t have left I should taken you with me” he says.

I shake my head.

“Don’t say that life happened for a reason we parted for a reason,look at us all grown and back together I wouldn’t change anything that happened between us” I say.

“Remember that night I came from the hospital and you bathed me,you looked me in the eyes and said one day I would look back and say God pulled me through” he nods his head smiling.

“Well look at God he has pulled me through from the deepest and darkest hole, look at us together taking huge steps raising out kids starting a family and having more kids” I tell him.

“I am one lucky man” he says smiling.

“Let me go run you bath” he says getting out of bed.

He’s naked and I feel like taking a picture of his firm sexy butt.

“You sexy tall arse man” I say.

He looks at me and smiles shaking his head.

“Is that your way of wanting more” he asks.

I wiggle my eyebrows and smile.

“I need to take this” I say when my phone starts ringing.

I look at the screen and see my fathers name I quickly compose myself and clear my throat.

“Baba” I say softly.

“Yini ngathi lendaba yakho yokuzola isiyakujwayela”(why does it seem like this sleeping out thing is starting to be a habit) he asks.

I bet Thandazile spilled or maybe it was Cubby that child has no filter.

“I am sorry baba but we finished discussing the wedding issue late and I couldn’t drive” I lie.

“Mhmm I bet what you were discussing is between your legs” he says.

“Baba” I say.

“We Mkabayi buya ekhaya that boy will spend the rest of his life with you” he says.

I nod my head.

“I don’t hear you” he says.

“I am coming home baba” I say laughing.

“Good I will be waiting for you” he says.

I didn’t think he would be here so soon it’s still early this doesn’t make sense.

I drag myself out of Nkosenhle’s soft bed and make my way to the bathroom, I join him on inside the shower and wrap my arms around his waist.

He turns and looks at me as the water flows down my face.

“My father called I need to leave” I tell him.

“Your father will kill me one day” he says.

“Not if I have anything to do with it” I tell him.

“How so” he asks.

“I would die for you” I tell him.

He smiles and pulls me into his arms.

“Don’t say such things Nathanjekwayo” he says.

I nod my head but that’s the honest truth I doubt I can take another heartbreak I would rather take my last breathe than lose anyone I love next.

I would rather sleep forever than to walk through pain and hope to come out whole again I just can’t.

We take a quick shower and step out clearing the room and getting ready to leave.

We drive our separate ways while I head home, I play freshlyground’s buttercup my daughter loves the song she’s my buttercup and she knows it.

I arrive home and park in the drive making my way out last night was just beautiful, Nkosenhle and I talked all night we talked about the future the many kids we both want.

I make my way inside the house and find Thandazile in the kitchen making some tea, there’s laughter coming from lounge.

“Sisi” I say placing my bag on the kitchen counter.

She smiles and places the cups on the tray.

“Morning” she says.

“Why are you in a good mood” I ask.

“Because my father is here and he looks good and happy” she says.

26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“He even brought a guest” she says.

I nod my head making my way to the lounge.

I find my father sitting on the couch with Sphelele resting her head on her chest, the kids are their entertainment and the oldies seem to enjoy the show.

Cubby raises her head and smiles running towards me Mhlengi follows and they almost topple me over.

“The Maphumulo twins” I say.

Their father sometimes calls them that.

They pull away and smile looking at me.

“How was your night” I ask.

“It was good mama” Mhlengi says.

“Auntie Kiara read us the lion king story” Cubby says.

“And you loved it” I ask.

They both nod.

“Good I missed you” I say.

“We missed you too” Mhlengi says.

I hand him my phone and smile.

“Go tell aunt Thandazile to dial baba so you can talk to him” I say.

They run to the kitchen not caring if they fall and hurt themselves or not.

I greet my father and Sphelele taking a seat on the other couch.

I am surprised to see Sphelele here baba is even holding her hand, he looks well kept clearly this woman knows how to take care of a man.

“Hello Mkabayi” Sphelele says.

“Sphelele” I say with a smile on my face.

My father gives me a look not but then I am not sure what to call her.

“Baba when did you arrive” I ask.

“Had you been home you would have known” he says.

“Phakade” Sphelele says.

He looks at her and sighs.

I smile looking at Sphelele she knows how to deal with the old man, she knows how to talk him down I think I am going to love this woman.

“We arrived yesterday and booked into a hotel, Ntuli called me and we have scheduled a meeting with the Maphumulo’s. Your father in law wants this to be fast and smooth for your sake and he wants me present” he says.

I nod my head things are finally moving up.

“We are meeting the with them this coming weekend” he says.

“Thank you baba” I say.

Thandazile makes her way in and sits next to me.

My father smiles and brushes Sphelele’s hand.

“I am glad you are both here I wanted to say this once and once only, I have decided to move on with my life and be happy this is Sphelele and she makes me happy. I hope that you both welcome her with open arms and love her as I do” he says.

Clearly this man is smitten he’s in love.

“I am happy if you are happy” I say.

“I am happy baba and thank you Sphelele for making him happy buka nje he looks good” Thandazile says.

“Thank you” Sphelele says looking down.

Just like that they are seeing each other and who would have thought that Sphelele would ever be shy and this clingy.

The day goes by with the new couple sleeping over, the kids didn't want my father leaving and he didn't want Sphelele leaving alone for the hotel.

This whole afternoon has been nothing but a mess, I make my way outside after Nkosenhle calls telling me he's outside.

He steps out of the car holding a bouquet of flowers in his hand.

"Sthandwa sam" he says.

I fling into his hold and smile pulling away taking the flowers.

"Maphumulo" he laughs shaking his head.

"As kodwa smakade" he says beautifully smiling.

His eyes beautifully dance to the moon.

"How did it go with your father" he asks.

"It went well he even brought a guest with" I tell him.

He nods looking at the time.

"Is it possible to see the kids before I leave" he asks.

“You know Oyintando will cry” I tell him.

“Can you guys atleast visit me tomorrow I miss them” he says.

“Cancel all your plans we will be there first thing in the morning” I say.

He smiles looking down on me.

“I remember the first time I laid eyes on you and I knew I had to have you, the first few dates I knew my heart belonged to you. I don't want to spend another miserable second without you Nathanjekwayo ...” his speech is disturbed by a screeching sound.

He opens the passenger seat and takes out his gun.

“Stay down” he says.

A few bullets are let out hitting Nkosenhle's car while he confidently shoots back.

The noise eventually dies down and the shooting ceases the car running away.

I open my eyes and notice some blood on his arm.

“You've been shot” I say panicking.

He looks at his arm and presses hard breathing heavily.

“It's nothing it's a flesh graze” he says helping me up.

“I need you to do go inside the house okay I want to take care of this” he says.

I shake my head.

“No” I say.

“Mkabayi I need to nip this in the bud before it escalates who ever did this needs to know that they can mess with me but no my wife and kids” he says.

“Mkabayi” my father calls out running toward the gate.

“Nkosenhle you are not going anywhere let’s go in the house and see the kids and stay with them” I plead.

“Ndodana” my father says.

Nkosenhle greets back and looks at me.

“Baba please take her to the house I need to leave” he says letting go of me.

“Nkosenhle” I whisper.

He kisses my forehead and pulls away.

“I love you” he says.

I bite my lip as they quiver tears welling up.

He drives off and my father pulls me into his chest.

“He’s going to be fine” he says.

50

I am woken up by some laughter and fully open my eyes, I sit up straight and watch as the kids walk in followed by their father.

This tall fool is holding a tray and the kids each have a rose in their hand.

He picked us up yesterday and we spent the night at his place, it's been two days now and he hasn't said anything about the shooting.

The kids hop on the bed and each kiss my cheek.

"Goodmorning mama" Oyintando says.

"Morning my babies" I say.

"These are for you baba gave them to us" Mhlengi says.

I smile taking the flowers.

"Thank you" I say.

I look at their father and shake my head he's using the kids typical.

"Go watch tv with aunt Khosi I want to speak with your mother" he says.

The twins sprint and close the door behind them.

He walks over to me and settles on the bed placing the tray next to me.

“Awungikhulumisi namanje Nathanjekwayo” (you’re still not talking to me Nathanjekwayo) he asks.

“I don’t see the point since you refuse to tell me what’s going on” I tell him.

“But I told you that it was nothing that I have sorted everything out” he says.

I look at the bandage around his arm and swallow.

“This is nothing” he says.

“Then tell me what that shooting was about” I say.

“It was about our route and it’s sorted now some boys thought they could pull a fast one on us but everything’s fine now” he says softly.

Relief washes over so that imbecile had nothing to do with this.

“Mhmm” I say.

I reach for the tray and take a bite looking at him.

“Was there anything else Maphumulo” I ask raising my eyebrows.

He clears his throat and his shaking his head.

“Ngicela ungiqhumele ngifuna ukudla ngokuthula” (please get out I want to eat in peace) I say.

“Kanjalo nje Nathanjekwayo” (just like that Nathanjekwayo) he says.

I nod my head taking a sip of the creamy coffee.

“This is delicious thank you” I say.

“I am sorry Nathanjekwayo for scaring you but this is in my line of work” he says.

I scoff yeah right maybe dying should also be in his line of work.

“So I should be fine with the fact you might drop dead anytime of the day, that me and the kids might be targets next time. You are telling me that just because it’s in your line of work I should be fine with it it that’s what you are saying” I ask looking at him.

“No that’s not what I am saying” he says.

“I have felt fear Maphumulo and I don’t wish to feel like that ever again” I say.

“Awufuni ngikubhake” (Don’t you want me to bake” he ask.

I put on a straight face even though I want to smile so hard.

“Ngicela ungiqholele sthandwa sam” (please forgive me my love) he says.

He stands up and poses.

“No Mashimane naye uyaxolisa” (Even Mashimane is sorry) he says.

I look at him take off his clothes and almost burn myself with the coffee.

“Maphumulo what are you doing” I ask.

“Apologizing to the love of my life” he says leaving only his briefs on.

He moves the tray and gives me a side smile.

He starts moving his waist still holding his smile.

I hide my face laughing.

“Wangbamba kwamancane

Wangbambel’ eduze (Isthandwa sami)

Wangkhumbuz’ eGoli mama

EZola (Stimela sam saseZola)

Wangbek’ esifubeni we mama

(Yelele mama, njengengan’ encane)

Thambo lam lekhentaki

Sambulela sam

Sambulela sam selanga

Sthuthuthu sami

Sokujika emadrayini ah we mama”

He moves close and takes my hand helping up,he pulls me into his chest and starts dancing with me.

“Welcome dova baby

Stofu sam samalahle

Ngikthanda nom’ uvutha baby

Iyholyho! Iyho!

Sengihamba ngo Commisioner

Ngigqok’ u-arrow shirt

Aw'bhek' ezansi florsheim shoes baby

Ngyobona wena baby eZola”

He stops singing and looks down on me smiling.

“I am sorry” he says leaning close for a kiss.

He moves the straps on my silk nightwear dropping it to the floor.

He cups my breast and deepens the kiss

“I said I was sorry Nathanjekwayo” he whispers.

I have already forgiven him, forgave him the moment he took off his clothes and gave me that silly naughty smile the song was the cherry on top.

He lifts me up as my legs cradle him he’s already hard and stiff.

“Awungifuni” (You don’t want me) he asks.

“I need you” I say.

He places me on the bed and spreads my legs smiling.

He takes off his briefs and positions himself looking into my eyes.

“Good morning sthandwa sam” he says thrusting in.

I shut my eyes softly moaning.

“Oh yes” I say.

He pulls out and rubs his cock on my clit all the way down to my hole.

I move my arse up trying to have him put it back inside but he chuckles.

“Kahle Nathanjekwayo” he says softly.

He holds his cock and taps it on my clit before putting it back in.

“Oh my Maphumulo” I scream loud.

He slowly moves inside me giving me slow strokes that have me grabbing on to the sheets and moaning his name.

He pulls out and looks at me.

I turn around and place a pillow under me bending just enough for him to take it from behind.

“You are going to kill me Nathanjekwayo” he says.

“I want you eat me up Maphumulo” I say.

He spans my arse and thrust inside hollowing his breath.

He pulls out and spans me again.

“Please don’t stop” I plead.

He gives me fast strokes and pulls out to spank me again.

The pain brings this immense rush and indescribable pleasure.

He thrusts inside again and gives me slow strokes.

“Oh Maphumulo right there” I scream.

He holds on to my waist and goes hard going in and out till we both come.

He slides out as I catch my breathe collapsing on the bed, he collapses next to me and pulls me close breathing heavily.

“Cha umnandi Nathanjekwayo” he says kissing my forehead.

Trust a Zulu man to say something like that.

We spend the the rest of the day with Maphumulo and his family, the grandparents bonding with the twins they even offer to look after them as I leave the house with Thulisile and Khosi.

Khosi is the one drinking we had something to drink on our way here and passed by the liquor shop to get some savannas.

The music is on full blast I am well fed and and excited that this Saturday my lobola will be concluded.

Khosi parks in the drive way and we all step out out of the car heading inside.

“Angisona isidakwa ngenziwa wukoma” (I am not an alcoholic it’s just the thirst) Thulisile sings.

Maphumulo will chop us all for allowing her to be this wasted.

“Surprise” Thandazile screams from the top of her lungs as we walk inside the house.

“We had to keep you out of the house” Khosi says.

I see Maria and Kiara wearing their nightwear so it's a lingerie party of some sorts.

These ladies look flame, Maria's body is to die for and I wonder if Kiara and Thandazile haven't noticed that,

I quickly shake my head and smile.

"You guys, thank you" I say.

"You three go change" Thandazile says.

We walk to my room and change into our sexy wear.

I have never done this before but I am excited they even thought of it.

"This is your bachelorette part slash kitchen party" Kiara says.

There are even sex toys here these girls are serious.

"Thank you" I say.

26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">"Enough about the thank you where's the booze" Thulisile asks.

I shake my head looking at her.

"Just give that one water" I say.

"We are getting waisted tonight just us girls" Maria says.

"Then we drunk dial bhuti" Khosi says.

“You want me dead weh khosi” I ask.

She laughs so hard sipping on her beverage.

I settle on the cushion and grab one bottle gulping it down.

Kiara puts on some music, I sit back and watch them dance who knew the Maphumulo sisters are such freaks.

“Time for the big guns” Kiara says bringing shots.

“I am not doing those” I tell them.

“Ladies gather around we are about to begin” Thandazile says.

“Okay first question, have you ever lied to your parents just to get d*ck” Thandazile asks.

We all take shot including her.

“Pussy in your case right” I ask.

She nods her head laughing.

“Next question have you ever given head” the next question goes.

We all take shot laughing.

“I don’t like this game worse we are all seated” Maria says laughing.

“Next question” I say out loud.

“Have you ever had a threesome” the next question.

We all laugh but Kiara, Maria, Thandazile and Khosi drink up.

“Oh my God you sluts” Thulisile says laughing.

“I don’t even want to think that far” I say.

I try standing up to get myself a glass of water but feel the urge to throw up hard.

I run to the kitchen sink and throw up.

“Sies maan that’s white people stuff” Thandazile says.

“Are you okay” Khosi asks.

I shake my head feeling like throwing up again.

“It’s coming ladies move back” Maria says.

I turn and throw up again laughing.

“Grab the car keys we are taking you to the hospital it might be alcohol poisoning” my sister says.

Khosi helps brings the small metal bin and helps me to the car.

“We need to leave bandla” Kiara says.

Thandazile locks the door holding a pack of Savanna in her hand.

“I think we should call an Uber” I say.

“No time” Thandazile says.

We all squeeze ourselves in the car with Thandazile driving, she plays the music loud while I keep throwing up.

She passes the bottles to the back and starts driving, I bury my head in the bin and sigh today we are sleeping in the holding cells.

She bobs her head to the song playing looking at me.

“Let me call Nkosenhle” She says dialing his number and putting him on loud speaker.

“Thandazile” Nkosenhle says on the other end.

“We Sbari we have a problem here your woman is tshwala sick and we are taking her to the hospital” She says.

“What do you mean tshwala sick” Maphumulo asks sounding confused.

“I don’t know but we are driving her to the hospital” She says.

“Put her on the phone” he says.

“Hayi khululeka ugcwale ibhavu khuluma nje sbari sam sizovala izindlebe” (Its okay talk freely we will close our ears) she says.

I hear Zamani laughing in the background with the girls erupting into their own laugh.

“Ngiyabatshela” (I am telling them) Thulisile says out of the blue.

“Is that mncane” Nkosenhle asks sounding shocked.

“Batshele” (tell them) the girls say laughing.

“Ngiyisidakwa” (I am an alcoholic) she says laughing.

I fail to hold myself and laugh hard.

“Nathanjekwayo” he says softly.

“Sthandwa sam” I say.

“Sthandwa sam sokunuka why are you drunk and why are you all in a car while under the influence” he asks.

“I don’t know” I say shrugging my shoulder.

“Uzokwazi keh when I get to that hospital” he says clicking his tongue.

We get to the hospital and we all step out all eyes are on us,we aren’t fully dressed and the people here are shocked.

I suddenly feel really sick because of that phone call with Nkosenhle.

We make our way in inside and head to reception.

“Uyaxhophala lo gesi” (this electricity is blinding) Thulisile says.

I want to get away from these people but Thandazile has me close by her.

“Weh nurse weh nurse hayibo we nursoo siphethe isiguli lah” (nurse,nurse we have a patient here) Khosi says.

“Mam please calm down you are making noise this is a hospital not a brothel or strip joint” one of the nurses says looking at us from head to toe

“My sister is not feeling well she’s been throwing up and it’s not a pretty sight” Thandazile says.

“That would make sense she has been drink right” the nurse says.

I nod my head and hold my stomach.

The nurse walks over to me and puts her hand on my forehead.

“I think it’s just a stomach bug nothing more” I say.

“Please come this way” the nurse says.

I leave the bin there and get taken to her one the rooms.

The nurse looks at me and laughs.

“So what’s with the costumes” she asks.

“My bachelorette” I say.

She nods her head.

“Cha nibahle kodwa”(you are beautiful) she says.

“Please take this cup and go pee right there” she says.

I look at the cup and laugh.

“With things like these we start with the cup even clinics do” she says.

I take the cup and do the walk of shame to the toilet.

I come back and lay on the bed fastening my robe,the nurse hands me a bottle of water to drink.

“This will help you”she says.

She places her pregnancy test inside the cup and looks at me smiling.

The door opens and the girls walk in at least we are all in our robes.

The nurse pulls out the pregnancy test and smiles looking at me.

“Congratulations are you pregnant” she says.

The room is soon filled with noise as I look at the nurse.

“What” I ask burping.

“You are pregnant with a child” she says slowly.

I nod my head and watch her step out leaving us alone.

“Oh Sisi congratulations” Thandazile says.

Khosi wipes her tears.

“I am going to be an aunt again” she says.

“Budlala ngawe utshwala” (that’s alcohol playing you” Kiara says looking her.

We all burst into a laugh and watch the door open.

Maphumulo walks in followed by Zamani.

Thulisile hides behind Maria laughing.

“Na nqunu nje nina” (Why are you naked) Zamani asks looking at us.

“Woza la wena” (come here) he says looking at Thulisile.

She moves close to her brother and just laughs throwing her head back.

“Ningangi cebi kababa” (don’t tell on me) she says laughing.

Zamani shakes her up and she stops laughing.

“Uzobuhlanza bonke lo tshwala” (you will throw up all that alcohol) he says.

Maphumulo is defeated he is looking at me but I am looking at Zamani and the girls.

The nurse walks in and looks at the men.

“I think we should step out now” Kiara says.

“Izinto zo private and confidential singobani to stand in the way” Maria says.

I hold myself from laughing I have never seen her this free and open.

They scurry out making noise, the door shuts and I am left with an angry Nkosenhle.

He settles on the chair and sighs.

“Kahle hle yini inkinga yakho” (what’s your problem) he asks.

I clear my throat twiddling my fingers.

“Why are you so irresponsible drinking and driving Nathanjekwayo” he asks shouting.

“Do you want to kill me huh ufuna ngizikhulise ngedwa lezingane” (Do you want to kill me huh, do you want me to raise these kids alone) he asks.

I shake my head pursing my lips.

“Maphumulo” I say softly.

He shakes his head standing up.

“No you are not going to do that you will reel me in” he says.

I blink smiling looking at him.

“Sthandwa sam” I smile tilting my head.

“Don’t give me that look Nathanjekwayo” he says.

“Ngikhulelwe” (I am pregnant) I say.

His eyes soften and a smile grows on his lips.

“Really as in like with a baby and all that” he asks.

I nod my head and watch him move closer.

“Phephisa uyezwa benginga qondile ukuthetha” (I am sorry I didn’t mean to shout) he says calmly.

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This weekend went by faster than I had anticipated, my lobola was concluded on a last weekend and everything went well.

The Ntuli's have been great in all of this and I will forever be grateful to Busani's father for being this kind.

This weekend though we had a few ceremonies done from Thursday till Sunday such as the umembeso (the giving of gifts) and ukuvuma abakhwenyana (to welcome the groom and have the bride given to the grooms family)

I didn't think we could pull all that off but we did and now I am traditionally Mrs Maphumulo.

We are yet to have umabo and the white wedding which will happen on the same day.

Maphumulo wants a small thing he doesn't want his private life splashed all over and with the type of work he does I understand, it's funny how we tried keeping past two whole weekends a secret but somehow it made it to the social streets.

I can't wait to move in with my man but all that will happen once the wedding is over and done with.

What amazed me the most was the twins ceremony and them being welcomed and introduced to the Maphumulo ancestors.

I am tired from all the standing and smiling Nkosenhle couldn't even love me right because we were both exhausted.

I guess we both wanted to do the important stuff and get it over and done with, we can now both look forward to the wedding.

I look at myself on the mirror and smile I am not showing yet but I am excited about the baby.

We last saw the doctor on that drunk night and I have been taking care of myself, partly the reason why we wanted to do the important stuff to focus on the pregnancy too.

I make my way to the kitchen and find Thandazile on the kitchen counter with Kiara between her legs, it's a good thing the twins are with their grandmother.

"Don't mind me" I say opening the fridge getting myself a bottle of water.

Kiara leans in for a kiss before she moves and allows Thandazile to get down.

"What with the dress where are you going" Kiara asks.

I am wearing a new dress and a head wrap.

"I am visiting Busani's grave" I say.

Thandazile smiles and holds my hand.

“Saying goodbye” she asks.

I nod my head.

“Are you sure you want to do this alone” she asks.

“Yes I am sure” I say.

I look at Kiara and smile.

“You need to fix things with your mother not for your stepfather’s sake but for yours and your mother’s” I tell her.

“I know not seeing her troubles you hence I am saying this” I say.

“I will think about it” she says.

“Sisi talk to your person she needs this more than anything” I say.

“Hello I am still here” she says.

I look at her and laugh I promised they could still live in the house while I move out or better yet have it, but they are still deciding on that one.

I grab my bag and cloth walking out heading to the car, I drive out and stop the car when Pricilla’s comes behind me.

I take small deep breathes and walk out of the car, I am happy today and I don’t want anything messing with my peace non at all.

I step out of the car when she does the same and looks at me.

“Mkabayi” she says.

Her voice is strained and she looks tired.

“Mrs Ntuli” I say.

She faintly smiles nothing is binding me to her family anymore I bet she’s ecstatic about the whole thing.

“I didn’t come here to fight I came here to apologize” she says.

My eyes widen I never thought I would see the day.

“Apologize” I say.

She nods her head and sighs.

“All those years I was wrong and brutal when it came to you, I was vicious and heartless so much so that I pushed my son away with my behavior and blamed it all on you” she says taking a deep breath.

I look around and realize this is not a prank this woman is for real.

“I am so sorry Mkabayi and I am sorry that it took this long for me to actually say the words, I have lost so much because of the things I did in the past and I am losing my husband for all the bad things I have done” she says.

“I can’t ask for forgive from my son because he’s dead but I can ask it from you,I remember the first I saw you I was reminded of myself so much.Your family was stable but you didn’t come from money after what I did to my husband to keep him,fear creped in and I thought here’s another me and she will do the same thing I did. I saw how much Busani loved you and I immediately thought you had finished with him little did I know that your love was pure and beautiful from the very first you met each other.

I am a bad mother Mkabayi for causing a drift and hatred between my children,I will never forgive myself for that and yes I blame myself for Busani’s death.

I will not walk away from Ntuli because I feel I deserve everything that is happening to me” she says wiping her tears.

I clear my throat feeling my own tears burn.

“I didn’t mean to keep you that’s all I came here to say” she says walking back to her car.

I am left dumbfounded taken aback by this act,I don’t know what or how to feel after this.

I collect myself and step into the car driving off.

I go through my playlist and a play a song by Kholeka.

“Elakho ilizwi alibuyi lilambatha
Elakho ilizwi alibuyi lilambatha
Alibuyi lilambatha
Alibuyi alibuyi lodwa,alibuyi alibuyi lodwa
Elakho ilizwi lifana nemvula
Eyehla phezulu yehlela emhlabeni
Athi lowo na lowo ophethe imbewu
Atshale ahlwayele
Elakho ilizwi lifana nemvula
Eyehla phezulu
Yehlela emhlabeni
Athi lowo na lowo
Ophethe imbewu atshale ahlwayele”

Tears fall from my eyes this song has always been my source of strength one song Busani would play when I was feeling down and out.

I arrive at the cemetery and cool down before stepping out of the car, I walk over to his grave and smile this man didn't deserve to die.

He died holding a plastic of all the thing I had asked him to bring.

He died begging them not to take him away from us his family his kids.

I take the bottle of water and dampen the cloth wiping his tombstone clean, I clean the sides and edges deeply sighing as I read what's writing on the head.

"Mphemba" I say closing my eyes.

I try to remember his smile and tears fill my eyes when memories of him flash through the windows of my soul.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">"Oh sthandwa sam how I miss you" I say.

I open my eyes and purse my lips together.

"I have been prolonging this for a every long time now but I want you to now that I finally did, I final opened up my heart to someone else and I am giving myself to him.

This is not goodbye my love I will always love you, you will always have a place in my heart and I will always remember you" I say.

"I wish you were to see the kids although their father in their lives but they still ask about, they miss you everyday and I miss you but life moves on and I am trying my best to do so.

Thank you Mphemba for everything for loving me for raising our kids, thank you for being the husband you were till you took your last breathe. I will always come Mphemba I will never stop but for now I am saying goodbye.

Mina nawe sehlukaniwe ukufa nje kuphela kodwa inhliziyo yam iyohlezi ikuthanda lala uphumule Ntuli, Lala uphumule Mphemba omuhle" I say standing up.

I walk away not looking back as tears fill my eyes.

I get into my car and play the song again dialing Maphumulo.

"Sthandwa sam" he says.

"Maphumulo" I say.

"Are you still coming should I pick you up from the house" he asks.

“It’s okay I will be driving myself I am already on my way there”
I say.

“Are you okay” he asks.

“I’m okay I just needed to hear your voice that’s all” I say.

“Okay please be safe on the road” he says.

I end the call and start the car driving out.

I arrive at Maphumulo’s house and park in the drive way
making my way inside the house.

He opens the door before I do allowing me in.

He gives me a kiss and smiles pulling away he looks happy.

“This way please” he says.

We walk to the lounge and the furniture is moved around with
a picnic setting in the middle.

I look at him and smile.

“Oh baby all this for me” I ask.

“Well it’s for my baby but you too” he says laughing.

I hit him on the chest and looking at the edible platters.

There’s cheese, grapes and strawberries the only thing missing
is a bottle of shiraz.

He helps me out of my shoes helping me settle down.

He is wearing short and a shirt laid back you would swear he's dressed for the beach or fun day out.

"I miss you" he says.

"I missed you too" I say.

A male chef walks in and my eyes widen talk about being spoiled.

"A chef really Maphumulo" I say.

He laughs shaking his head.

"Sir would you like anything to drink" he asks.

"Water for my wife and a glass on cognac for me please"
Nkosenhle says.

"You are flushed muntu wam and water will calm you down plus my baby needs to drink fresh water" he says.

"Weh Maphumulo what am I to you an incubator" I ask.

"No you are my beautiful wife whom I love" he says with a silly smile.

He pours me some of the juice and feeds me strawberries dipped in chocolate and cream.

His cognac arrives a he twirls the glass before taking a sip.

He moves closer bringing me between his legs rest the back of my head on his chest.

“Are we still on for the house viewing Mrs Maphumulo” he asks.

“Yes and the kids are coming with” I tell him.

“So no christening of the house” he asks.

“No” I say laughing.

He kisses the top part of my head and entwines our hands.

“I can’t believe we are doing this one more step to go” he says.

“You just want to be inside me 24 7” I tell him

He makes me turn to look at him.

“You don’t get it Nathanjekwayo I love you so much I don’t even understand it, when I am with you the whole world comes to a stand still and only you and me exist” he says kissing my lips grabbing my arse.

The chef walks in and clears his throat having us stop.

“Your food is ready sir shall I bring it in” the chef asks.

“Give us a moment please” Nkosenhle says.

The chef disappears and I burst into a laugh.

“I want you right here right now” he says resting his forehead on mine.

“I think we should get rid of him” I say.

“You think so” he asks.

I nod my head and watch him sprint off like a kid.

I rest on one of the cushions and sip on my juice.

I hear Zamani’s voice and shut my eyes why now.

He walks in followed by a frowning Nkosenhle.

“I found him at the door” Maphumulo says.

“Koti” Zamani says.

“Bhuti” I say.

He looks at us then the set up and laughs.

“Heh Bafo senadla ama grapes awuthi ngizwe nami” (brother you have started eating grapes)he says helping himself.

“Ngihlaliseni phela nami” (make space for me) he says squeezing himself next to us.

Nkosenhle looks ready to murder him.

“Ngibone ukudla ekhishini Maphumulo hambo landa ukudla ngifile yindlala” (I saw some food in the kitchen Maphumulo got the food I am dying of hunger” he says.

“Its okay I will get it” I say.

He shakes his head sitting me back down.

“Maphumulo please excuse us I need Nathanjekwayo’s womanly expertise” he says looking at his brother.

“Futhi nje ngadutshulwa mina udokotela wathi ngiyjwayeze ukuphumula” (I was shot and the doctor told me to rest) he says.

I crack up looking at Nkosenhle standing up.

Zamani is a bit tipsy making him less scary and uptight.

“I got dumped” he says shaking his head.

“Now I need your help koti phela siyabaswa istove laphana akudlalwa” he says whistling.

I laugh throwing my head back this is going to be one fun interesting afternoon.

Nkosenhle has given me free reign to do what I want when it comes to the wedding.

I have hired a wedding planner just to smooth things over, it's going to be a simple church wedding attended by family only nothing big.

I remember when my mother told us about her wedding day, she wasn't really nervous because deep down she knew my father was the man for her.

She said walking down the aisle she knew that only death would do them apart and seeing him in that tux she had no regrets.

I know I feel the same about Maphumulo as she did with my father but I want to close my eyes and walk down that aisle and feel what she felt.

Today we are going for the house viewing I had so many options to choose from but I settled for this one, I think I like it more and today's visit will determine whether we buy it or not.

I look at the time and sigh the kids are at it again running late but so am I, I pack the lunch I prepared for the four of us.

I made some fried chicken, chicken and mayo sandwiches and a few rolls for Maphumulo.

I know he's going to complain but he needs to lay off pap till the wedding which is in a weeks time.

I pack a few bottles of water, paper cups and some fruits for the kids.

Thandazile walks and looks at me leaning against the fridge.

"Hey" she says.

"Hi" I say.

She smiles and I smile back having her means having a mother, sometimes it feels like my mother never left.

I walk over to her and give her hug holding on tight.

"Thank you sisi for everything you have done for me, for taking care of me and the kids when I couldn't " I say.

"And I would do it over and over again you are my baby sister" she says.

"I know one thing for sure you are stronger than anyone I know and mama would be proud of you" she says pulling away.

"I miss her" I say.

"I miss her too but I promise that whatever happens I will always be here" she says.

“You won’t stop loving me” I ask.

She shakes her head.

“I will never stop loving you Cubby,I have always taken care of you and I will never stop not now not ever” she says.

She looks at the picnic basket and laughs.

“Having a picnic today” she asks.

“No, it’s house viewing thing and later on last wedding dress fitting” I say.

“The designer will come straight to the house right” she asks.

I nod my head.

“Great can’t wait to see how it looks on you” she says.

“Let me help you get these in the car” she says.

She helps me pack and takes the basket and blanket to the car.

The kids walk in holding hands smiling I wonder if they will ever out grow this.

“Mama are we going to see to baba today” Mhlengi asks.

“Yes we and after that we are going to have a picnic” I tell them.

“I love picnics” Oyintando says.

I look at her and smile she's been in a mood or rather let me say she's been traumatized by the slaughtering of animals.

"Come let's go baba is waiting for us" I say.

We all head out and get into the car, I strap them in safely and get on the drivers seat driving out.

This is what most of our days will be like me dropping them off and fetching them from school.

I finally arrive at the house and park in the drive way.

The house is huge and the first thing that caught my attention is its beautiful garden. Maphumulo's car is already parked here he did say he would arrive first.

"And we are here" I say.

They smile looking around as I step out of the car and unstrap them helping them out.

Maphumulo meets us outside he picks the twins up and gives me a kiss.

"Don't I get a hug" he asks.

The twins each give him a hug and I don't know how he can balance these two on his arms.

He puts them down and looks at me.

"Hello my people" he says brushing my belly.

“Maphumulo” I say.

He pulls me into a hug and holds my waist burying his head on my neck.

“I missed you” he says.

“I miss you too” I say.

He runs his hands down to my arse and firmly grabs it.

“How’s the wedding preparations coming along” he asks.

“Everything is going well” I tell him.

I pull away and give him the keys to the car.

“There’s food in the car please bring it” I say heading inside.

He gets the basket I packed and follows me inside the house.

“What do you think” he asks.

I look around and smile.

“I love the open plan space” I tell him.

“I think we should look around the whole house”he says.

The open kitchen alone has me swooning and already picturing myself cooking.

“Baba why did you kill those animals”Cubby asks with her arms folded.

“Because they are meet and we eat meet” Mhlengi says.

I shut my eyes slightly shaking my head and open them up looking at their father.

“Baba” she says.

Nkosenhle looks at me and then scratches his head.

“My teacher says killing of animals is inhumane and wrong, animals have rights too” she ways.

Mhlengi sighs looking at us.

“I know and I am sorry” Nkosenhle says.

“Then why did you do it” she asks sulking.

“Because we needed meet” he says nervously.

Its funny how he sweats when Mhlengi or Oyontando put in a corner.

“I am glad my sheep is safe” she says.

“Mama should I tell her” Mhlengi asks.

I hold myself from laughing and nod my head.

“Cubby sheep also falls under meat mama cooks sheep meat angithi mama” Mhlengi says.

I cough why am I being dragged into their conversation I didn't say or do anything.

“Then me and baba won’t eat meat anymore right baba” she says looking at Maphumulo.

He violently coughs and brush his back.

“Right baba” she says tilting her head.

“Yes starting from tomorrow I will no longer eat meat just for you my angel” he says.

“Good Mhlengi come lets go see the garden” she says.

“I will go check the pool” Maphumulo says walking out with them.

He comes back and looks at me.

“The pool is covered” he says.

We walk around the house with smiles on our faces there’s even a man cave and this man can’t stop grinning.

“I love it Maphumulo” I tell him.

He wraps his arms around my waist and looks at me.

“I am glad you love it I will make a call and it shall be ours” he says.

I give him a kiss and pull his hands to the kitchen.

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">I unpack the food and plate up for the kids first.

“Uthi angiwenzi lama rolls yini ungaphekanga iphalishi” (what am I to do with these roll why didn’t you cook pap) he asks.

I laugh because I had anticipated this.

“You should be worried about the fact that this is the last time having meat” I tell him.

He laughs.

“Why did I agree to that again” he asks.

I shrug my shoulder smiling.

“I love it when you smile sthandwa sam it warms my heart” he says.

“You make me happy Maphumulo and that’s God’s honest truth” I tell him.

“Remember that conversation we had about you possibly going back to work” he says

I nod my head remembering my exact words how I wish I could start teaching again.

“I spoke to a few old friends and if you still want to go back to work then I can give you the numbers of a few principals you might want to contact for a job”he says.

I scream and move closer to him wrapping my arms around his neck.

I pull him close for a kiss and pull away from his hold smiling.

“Thank you so much Maphumulo”I say.

He smiles and shrugs his shoulders.

“Anything to see you happy muntu wam” he says.

Maphumulo drove behind us and decided to take the kids with him back at his parents house.

I appreciate the breather with how things are going I need time to myself.

I took a nap when I got him and now that I am awake and making my way to the kitchen it dawns on me that very soon this won't be my home anymore,I won't be sharing the pots anymore day and night I will be on the stove alone cooking for my man the kids.

I chuckle no more free time Thandazile walks in followed by the designer.

She looks jolly and her makeup is beautiful you can tell she's a happy person, forward too at times.

"Mkabayi" the designer says kissing my cheek.

"I thought you were still asleep" Thandazile says.

"I was just woke up now" I say.

"Great meet us in the lounge we have the dress" the designer says walking ahead.

I drink some water and walk ahead following them.

"This has to be the wedding of the year" she says.

"Not really it's a small ceremony" I say.

"But you are pulling out all the big guns I must say you are one lucky lady" she says.

"How so" Thandazile asks.

"I am sorry but I looked you up and saw that you were married to the late Busani Ntuli and now you are marrying mr Maphumulo, both these man are wealthy girl you must be bathing with something to attract such" she says.

Thandazile laughs clapping her hands.

"Not wealthy just hard working I prefer to call them that hard working man because they worked hard for what they have and had" I say.

She looks at me and clears her throat.

“I am sorry I did mean it in a bad way” she says.

She hands me the dress and smiles.

“I hope it fits” she says.

“I hope so too” I say standing up.

I walk to my bedroom followed by Thandazile she helps me into the dress.

I stand in front of the mirror and smile looking at her behind me.

“I am getting married” I say.

“You are getting married to the man of your dreams” she says.

I feel tears sting my eyes.

“Hey what’s wrong” she asks.

“I miss ma I really do” I say.

She holds my hand and smiles fighting her her own tears.

“The first time you did this she saw you and she was proud, she was the happiest woman ever on that day” she says.

“Picture her smiling her dancing and ululating” she says.

“Ma was never a sad person she was always happy, I want you to be happy Nkosenhle loves you so much and that’s what is important” she says.

“Baba will hold your hand and walk you down the aisle giving you away to the man your heart beats for” she says.

“You look beautiful Mkabayi you are beautiful Nathanjekwayo” she says.

I nod my head smiling I look beautiful and I can’t wait for Maphumulo to see me in this dress.

The afternoon sets into the night with me getting ready for bed, Thandazile and Kiara have been watching movies all afternoon.

It turns out that Kiara finally listened and went to see her mother she’s in a happy mood I can only guess that things went great.

My phone rings a smile spreads across my face when Maphumulo’s name appears.

“Sthandwa sam” I say.

I rub my belly and wonder if I am carrying any set or just one.

“Mawabo” he says.

“Is everything okay Maphumulo” I ask.

“Everything is fine Ndlovukazi I was just checking up on you before I sleep” he says.

“Aren’t you a gentleman” I say.

He laughs that deep laugh from the pit of his stomach.

“What are you doing” he asks.

“Nothing I about to sleep I guess I am tired from today” I say.

“How was the dress fitting” he asks.

“It was perfect I looked beautiful” I say.

“You are always beautiful Nathanjekwayo” he says.

This man knows just what to say to put a smile on my face.

“Don’t you want to watch the stars with me with Nathanjekwayo” he asks softly.

“I do” I say hesitant.

“Then walk up to the balcony and look to the sky” he says.

I get on my feet and make my way to the balcony.

“Are you there yet” he asks calmly.

“Yes I am” I say softly.

“Then look at the sky and tell me what you see” he says.

I raise my eyes and see a thousands of stars shinning bright.

“I see stars sthandwa sam” I say smiling.

“Kuhle makunjalo uyabona lezonkanyezi uthando lwami lufaniswa nazo lujulile, luyakhazimula futhi linguaphakade”(good because that my love for you deep,beautiful and forever) he says.

I fight the tears back sniffing.

“Ungakhali” (don’t cry) he says softly.

“Ngikuthanda indlela eyisimanga Mkabayi”(I love you in the most amazing way) he says.

“I love you too Maphumulo” I say.

“Good usuyazi ukuthi uMaphumulo ukuthanda kangakanani hambo lala ke manje muntu wam ukhathele”(You know how much Maphumulo loves you,go to sleep now you are tired) he says.

“Goodnight Nkosenhle” I say.

He laughs on the other side.

“Cha awungizwa sengubize kamnandi kangaka uzongibiza nge gama” (You don’t see me after calling you so beautifully you call me by name) he says laughing.

“Wothi Maphumulo noma Sthandwa sam”(Rather say Maphumulo or my love) he says.

I clear my throat laughing afterwards.

“Sthandwa sam” I say seductively.

“Yebo dali” he says.

“Uyakuthanda uNathanjekwayo yezwa” (Nathanjekwayo loves you) I say.

“Kwashaya khona”(that hit the spot) he says so softly.

I shut my eyes and smile this man might be crazy but he’s is one in a million.

They say marry your best friend and I have to agree with the saying those people know you from the inside out. Best friends know you when you are broke and out, they know you when you are sad and crazy, they know you when you are at your lowest and happiest and somehow they still stick around.

Today I am marrying the father of my kids someone I would like to say is my best friend.

I am marrying another part that makes me whole and it feels exciting, I know he makes me whole just like I make him whole.

My bedroom is packed with the ladies having their makeup done this feels so unreal not so long ago I didn't want anything to do with this man, I had sworn my hate for him but look at us now it feels like the old days but even better.

I have five bridesmaids and Nkosenhle had to make a plan with his groomsman.

Everyone is happy we are just feeding off each other's happiness and I love it.

Thuli is well behaved today I had to ask Khosi to keep the champagne away from her, I don't want Maphumulo being angry at me for their mncane getting drunk.

I reach for my phone and tap on the text from Maphumulo, we have been at it the whole morning since I got up.

“And then what’s with the smile” Thandazile asks.

“It’s must be her man making her blush” Maria says.

I look at her and smile.

“Says someone who can’t stop laughing at everything Zamani says” I shoot back.

“Kahle ngamatshe Mkabayi yini manje” Maria says blushing.

“What is it with you and the Maphumulo men” Kiara asks.

“Do you really want me to answer that” I ask looking at her.

“Please don’t” Thulisile says.

“See I don’t want to traumatize the poor child” I say.

“I am not a child” she says.

“No you are not wena mncane” Khosi says.

I look at my phone and download the song he sent me via WhatsApp.

A call from him comes through before I can even play the song.

“Ssh” I say

“Maphumulo” I say.

“Let me move away from the noise” he says.

I can hear the noise and laughter from the background.

“Mawabo” he says softly.

“Sthandwa sam how are you” I ask.

“I am okay my love just missing you” he says.

“In a few minutes I will be there walking down the aisle looking at you and only” I tell him.

He chuckles and that puts a smile on my face.

“How are my babies doing” I ask.

“They are fine your daughter is excited she looks so beautiful in her dress” he says.

“And my son” I ask.

“He’s a true Maphumulo handsome and strong” he says.

“I am glad to hear that” I say.

“I sent you a song” he says.

“Listen to it that’s the song that will play when we have our first dance” he says.

“I hope it’s not a crazy song Maphumulo” I tell him.

He laughs even more.

“It’s not I hope you will like you the song talks about Ava and you my own Ava”he says.

“I love you Nkosenhle so much” I say.

“I love you too Nathanjekwayo with all my heart I can’t wait to see you” he says.

I end the call and laughter erupts from this crazy b*tches.

“I have never seen two grown people so love sick” Thandazile says.

“I still can’t believe Bhuti is capable of saying I love out loud” Khosi says.

“Easy that’s my man you’re talking about” I say.

“Ntab’ezikude weMa zingisithele wena

Ntabe’ezikude weMa zingisithele wena” Khosi starts singing.

I get on my feet and join them.

“Dilika ntaba sibonane

Dilika ntaba sibonane

Ngithi ntab’ezikude weMa zingisithele wena dilika ntaba sibonane” they all sing.

“Dilika ntaba ngibone uMaphumulo” I sing along getting back to on my chair.

“Please sit still” the makeup artist says smiling.

I sit still and let her do her magic.

The door opens and Sphelele walks in and the girls quickly get on their feet.

“I walk out and all you do is sit around doing nothing” she says.

The girls mumble a few words and she raises her eyebrows.

“I need all of you to be ready the only person allowed to be late is Mkabayi and her only” she says.

The girls do a few touch ups and scurry out the bedroom leaving me with Sphelele and my makeup artist.

“You look so beautiful” she says holding my hand.

“Thank you” I say.

“You have been through so much and I am glad to see you this free and happy” she says.

I smile nodding my head.

“I know I can never replace your mother but if ever you need anything I am here and I will always be here” she says.

“Thank you so much my father is lucky to have you” I say.

The door opens and my the man of the moment walks in looking handsome, Sphelele looks at him and smiles.

“I will leave you too alone” she says walking out.

“Done” the makeup artist says.

She packs her stuff and walks out.

“You remind me so much of your mother resilient and strong” he says.

“I am happy that today I am sitting here with you ready to give you away to that young man. I have told you this before and I will say it again you will always be my little girl no matter what.

If that man ever hurts you and it gets so bad that you lose yourself then you pack take the kids and come home.

If you are no longer happy and have exhausted all your options then you come home because you weren't chased away. You still have family that loves you and will do anything for you” he says.

I nod my head smiling.

“I love you Mkabayi” he says.

“I love you too baba” I say.

He gives me a hug and stands up.

“Let me go call your sister so we can pray and make way for you today” he says walking out.

The door shuts and I turn reaching for my phone playing the song Maphumulo sent me.

“Today I caught you laughing, Ava

It sounded so fantastic, Ava

Don't you ever stop your smiling, Ava

But don't apologise for crying

Ava, no, no, you're never on your own

We're never fully grown

You'll grow through this

Painful as it is

You've always got this shoulder

Feeling lonely, you come over, Ava

My, my love, my, my love

My, my love, my, my love

My Ava, don't be scared

My Ava, don't be scared

Wishes on your birthday, Ava

Fight to stop you hurting, Ava

Don't try pushing me away, Ava

Know that I am here to stay

Ava, no, no, you're never on your own

I will pick up the phone

Kisses and hugs

I just love you

No, I don't mind you crying

And I think of all the times when you were there for me

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0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">And you cared for me

My, my love, my (Ava), my love

My, my love, my (Ava), my love (It's alright)

My Ava, don't be scared (Ava, Ava, it's alright)

My Ava (You can cry), don't be scared

My, my love, my (Ava), my love (It's alright)

My, my love, my (Ava), my love (It's alright)

My Ava (My love, my love), don't be scared (Don't be scared)

My Ava (My darling, Ava), don't be scared"

It's a beautiful song I blink a few times fanning myself not wanting to ruin my makeup.

I look at the dressing table and notice that there aren't any tissues I get on my feet and walk to the bathroom to get the box.

I hear my bedroom door shut and dab the corner of my eyes making my way out.

He stood next to his brother as they waited for the bride, his brother was happy the happiest he had ever seen him.

Yes he loved but right this moment he was in love he was getting married to the love of his life.

He was getting married to his first love the mother of his kids and it hit hard.

He looked at close family invited while some took pictures some waited eagerly for the bride to come.

He looked at his brother and smiled he too wished to take such a huge step and get married but he hadn't found the one.

He wondered how it felt like to meet the love of your life would he even know if that person was the one.

He cleared his throat and looked at the time it had been an hour since the bride said she would be here, but then it was fashionable for the bride to arrive late.

The chapel door opened and Thandazile walked in the people stood up but quickly got back on their chairs upon noticing she wasn't the bride.

She slowly made her way to the alter not knowing where to begin telling them the news.

Nkosenhle stood up straight as his eyes twinkled this meant his woman would walk in any minute now.

She looked at Nkosenhle and sighed handing him a written letter.

"What is this" Nkosenhle asked.

"I really don't know Nkosenhle I am hoping maybe you will tell me" she said.

Nkosenhle slowly opened the letter and read it.

"This is bullshit Thandazile" Nkosenhle said looking at the letter.

Zamani moved closer.

"Bafu what's going on" Zamani asked.

Nkosenhle handed him the letter as his heart beat fast.

He looked at everyone and clenched his jaws.

“That’s not her handwriting” Nkosenhle said heading for the door he needed to find her speak to her.

Mutter and mumble erupted from both families as Nkosenhle walked out followed by Zamani.

“Maphumulo where are going” Zamani asked.

“To look for my wife” Nkosenhle told him.

Zamini shook his head where was he going to begin.

“And the letter” Zamani asked.

Nkosenhle quickly turned and held Zamani by his collar.

“That’s not her writing” he shouted.

Zamani looked at the fear in his brothers eyes and felt it.

Fear of the worst happening to Mkabayi the fear of losing her.

“What do you need me to do” Zamani asked.

“I am going to Mkhetheni’s house he’s the only person who can tell me where my wife is” he said heading for the car.

Zamani followed behind and got in the driver’s seat.

“I will be driving” he said.

He started the car and drove off looking at his brother's hands shaking.

"I swear I am going to kill him" Nkosenhle said.

"I warned you about this man I told you we should have dealt with him long before" Zamani said.

Nkosenhle looked at him although Zamani was telling the truth he didn't want to hear it right now, he could only imagine the fear and confusion Mkabayi was going through at the hands of that lunatic.

Although he had the letter in his hands he still didn't believe a word written on the damn piece of paper.

Mkabayi would never leave him she would never leave the kids behind no she wouldn't.

They arrived at Mkhetheni's house and were let in peacefully.

Phumzile opened the door holding a glass of wine she has been crying Zamani could see for some he noticed her her eyes.

"Where is your husband" Zamani asked.

She chuckled and burped.

"So you too are looking for my useless husband" she said tilting her head.

“I will not ask you twice where the hell is your husband” Zamani shouted.

“I don’t know” she said honestly.

Nkosenhle nodded his head losing his patience and made his way inside the house looking for Mkhetheni but could not even find a trace of him.

“He’s not here I haven’t seen him in over a month he must be with one of his floozies and I bet this one is pretty young and sweet for him not to come home” she said as tears welled up on her eyes.

“But then again I am not complaining having bruises all the time is tiring” she said.

“I am sorry to have bothered you” Nkosenhle said upon seeing the pain in her eyes.

“Whatever it is that he’s done when you find him kill him save us all from that man” she said swallowing hard.

“We have to find her” Nkosenhle said shutting his eyes.

They drove around searching and looking for her in places she could possibly be at but found nothing.

Nkosenhle called his men and put out a search for her.

They drove back to the chapel and Nkosenhle got out of the car.

He made his way inside and breathed heavily what was supposed to be the best day of his life had turned into a nightmare.

He walked up to his parents and his mother gave him a hug.

“There’s no wedding anymore baba” he said looking at his father.

News of Mkabayi running has traveled but they didn’t think it would be this serious as to cancel the wedding.

“We have looked everywhere baba and we can’t find her” he said sounding defeated.

“Ma please take the kids home I don’t want them hearing anything” he said.

He turned and walked over to the kids and kissed them goodbye as he again headed out.

“Get out” he said to Zamani.

Zamani frowned as he slowly got out of the car.

Nkosenhle got in the car and rested his head on the steering wheel.

Tears stung his eyes he called Mkabayi's phone and it went straight to voice mail.

"Sthandwa sam I am going crazy not knowing what's what please I am begging you call me" he said leaving a message.

He repeatedly hit the steering wheel breathing heavily what was the point of leaving a message when he knew something was wrong.

He drove to Mkabayi's house and found her father looking distraught nothing made sense.

Nkosenhle looked at the man heaved a sigh.

"I can't find her" the words fell off his lips and he clenched his jaws.

"My daughter would never leave her kids behind" Phakade said settling down on the couch as Sphelele massaged his hand.

"Phakade calm down maybe she got some wedding jitters maybe she needs some time to process this, it could be nothing but cold feet" Sphelele said trying to make sense of everything.

"May I please see her bedroom" he asked.

"Of course ndodana" Phakade said.

Nkosenhle dragged himself to Mkabayi's bedroom.

He walked in and closed the door he could still smell her perfume and knowing that she wasn't here broke his heart.

The room looked fine no signs of any struggle or anything like that only she wasn't here, she was the missing part in this room in his arms and embrace.

His lips quivered as he sank on the floor biting his trembling lip, so much went through his head questions and doubt poured in as he stared at the letter.

God dammit this wasn't her handwriting she would never run away from all this, she would never give up on them not in a million years.

He thought about the child she is carrying and shook his head someone must have took her but who, no one just disappears without a trace it impossible.

He looked at the letter and wiped his eyes

"I am sorry Nkosenhle I can't do this, I thought I could but then I realized I can't be with you Mashimane not now not ever.

Please forgive me and take care of my children"

He tore the letter apart and stood up Mkabayi didn't call him "Mashimane" someone definitely wrote the letter but it wasn't Nathanjekwayo.

He made his way out and headed to the lounge calling Zamani.

"Bafo we still haven't found anything" Zamani said.

"That's why I called Akulalwa Mashimane namuhla sizomfuna ubsuku bonke kukhona osedlala nge geja kuziliwe" he said ending the call.

Nkosenhle

I look at the time and sigh I have been up all night trying to find my head around Mkabayi's disappearances.

She's been gone two nights and two days I don't even know what to do with myself, I don't know where to start telling my kids that their mother is missing.

While Oyintando has been quiet Mhlengi has been asking so much about her my kids are worried they haven't seen their mother and I am worried too.

The police are useless as always making up excuses about running low on resources and man power, they looked at the letter and concluded she left on her own will.

I wasn't even going to waste my time going to the police but her father insisted.

I run my eyes and yawn pouring myself another glass of whiskey.

I gulp it down in one go and sit back resting my head on the couch.

"Nkosenhle" My mother calls out.

She's been coming in the last two days.

"Baba" Oyintando calls out too.

I quickly get on my feet and clear the table hiding the bottle.

I stand up and clear my throat fixing myself making my way to the kitchen.

The twins run to me as I pick them up.

"Hey" I say putting them down.

My mother looks at me and shakes her head.

"You don't look good" She says unpacking some food placing it on the counter.

"Baba where is mama" Mhlengi asks.

"She once left us for a every long time do you think she left us again" he asks.

I pick him up clenching my jaws.

"No she didn't mama loves us so much she just needs time alone" I say.

He looks at me and smiles.

"Promise" he asks.

I nod my head.

“I promise” I say placing him down.

I turn and find Oyintando holding a plastic container.

“Baba I asked gogo to make you some food” she says.

“Thank you my angel” I say.

“There’s meat lots of meat Mkhulu said it will make you feel better” she says.

“Mkhulu said that” I ask.

She nods her head smiling.

“He told us that you are sad because of mommy and that if you saw us you would be better” she says.

I chuckle shaking my head.

“Mkhulu was right seeing you makes me feel better” I say.

“What about our no meat promise” I ask.

“Just this once baba when you get better you will stop eating meat right” she says.

I nod my head kissing her cheek.

“Right” I say.

I look at Mhlengi my son is worried about his mother the last time she left impacted him badly.

I pick him up and hold him tight.

“I miss mom” he says holding on to me.

“I miss her too buddy” I say holding myself from breaking down.

“How about you guys go watch tv gogo will make you something to eat” My mother says.

They run to the lounge leaving me with my mother.

She moves closer and gives me a hug.

“Ma” I say.

“It’s okay to cry Nkosenhle you are human” she says.

I pull away and she places her hands on my face.

“My kids ma my kids miss their mother,I miss her and I am going crazy not knowing where she is or who took her” I say.

She smiles through her tearful eyes.

“Wherever she is I know she is holding on for you to find her,she’s strong and she needs you to be strong too for her and the kids” she says.

“Someone took her and she’s out there praying that you find her” she says.

“Ma what’s if it’s too late what if I am too late” I ask fighting my tears.

“Don’t think like that” she tells me.

“You need to pull yourself together Nkosenhle okay” she says.

I nod my head wiping her tears.

“I don’t want us to lose her we can’t lost her” she says putting a hand over her mouth.

“We won’t ma” I say.

“Good your brother and father have been working tirelessly to find her please go get showered and sit with the kids even if it’s for a while” she says.

“I will make you some food” she says.

I nod my head walking away.

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Mkabayi

I wake up to some soft music playing this has been going on for a day or so I can’t really remember my mind is foggy.

The first day I couldn't even open my eyes I couldn't even see where I was but today I am a lot stronger.

I fully open my eyes yawning my body hurts it feels like I have been asleep for a while now.

I sit up straight and look around my surrounding the room looks clean,I try to move but my leg is chained to the bed.

It's one of those steel one bed bunks.

There's a table in the middle my heart starts skipping when I see pictures of myself plastered all over the room,pictures I dont know when or where they were taken.

What kind of a sick joke is this could it be that someone was stalking me.

I look at myself and realize I am still in my wedding dress tears fall when it all comes back to me.

I was taken on my wedding day I didn't get to the alter I didn't say my vows,I didn't see my kids or Maphumulo nor did I have my first dance.

Maphumulo must be going crazy he must be worried sick about me and my kids must be having a hard time.

The door opens bringing me back from my thoughts.

I look at the man walking in and hold my breathe my heart starts pounding this is it I get to see my holder.

He shuts the door his back still facing me he locks and starts whistling while turning to looking at me.

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26, 26, 0.301961); -webkit-text-size-adjust: auto;">“Sawbona Mkabayi” he says.

My backs hits the wall the moment I see his face.

It can't be this can't be truth Busani is dead.

Tears well up as he moves closer and settles on the bed.

I saw him dead and cold no life in him and we buried him.

“Mphemba” I say.

He looks at me and smiles hesitantly running running his hand down my face.

I close my eyes and bolt into a sob what's happening this doesn't make sense.

“But how” I ask looking at him carefully he looks like Mphemba but he's not him.

His eyes are cold nothing like that of Mphemba's eyes.

“You are not Mphemba” I say pushing him off.

He gets on his feet's and breaks into a laugh.

"You really knew your husband that's sweet" he says.

My eyes widen when his voice registers in my head.

"I figured if you can't love me as the man I am I going to bring my brother back from the dead" he says.

"Mkhetheni" I say.

He chuckles nodding his head.

"How do I look, good right you can't even tell the difference right" he says.

"Oh my word you are sick Mkhetheni you are crazy" I say.

He moves close and looks at me.

"Mkabayi I did this for you for us so we can be together" he says.

"You are a cruel man how can you do this this you made yourself look like your dead brother and you say you did that for me are you crazy" I ask.

"Crazy in love with you" he shouts.

"Dammit Mkabayi I love you so much" he shouts.

"I don't love you Mkhetheni I never did why can't you accept that" I ask.

“But you can to love me it’s possible look at me surely you can try” he says.

“You are not him Mkhetheni I lost him because of you nothing you do will make me love you nothing” I say.

He shakes his head.

“That’s just the confusion talking I know you will love me” he says adamantly.

“I love Maphumulo if it wasn’t for you I would be in his arms right now” I shout.

He slaps me so hard my head hits the wall.

“Don’t you talk about that man in presence do you hear him,he’s just an obstacle standing in our way and I am going to kill him” he says.

I look at him.

“You killed your brother and I still couldn’t love you,even if you kill Maphumulo I will never love you I would rather die” I say.

“What must I do for you to love me” he asks.

“Nothing just let me go please” I say.

He shakes his head and settles on the chair looking at me.

“What do you want me to do Mkabayi should I rip myself open so you can see how much I love” he asks.

“I loved you first Mkabayi and I still do” he says.

I remain quiet just looking at him he’s shouting and scaring me.

“It hurts loving you it hurts so much I just want it to stop” he says looking at me.

“I know I can love you better I would give you everything you want if only you could love me back” he says.

I bite my lip looking at him break down.

“That’s all I ever wanted for you to love me for your eyes to go soft when they look at me,for your fingers to trace my lips.

For you to give yourself to me in every way possible for you to give me your heart” he says wiping his tears.

“I am sorry” I tell him.

He nods his head standing up walking out.

“Maphumulo where are you” I whisper closing my eyes.

I fall asleep and get woken up by the key rattling.

He walks back in and settles on the bed.

“I have made a decision” he says.

“If you and I are going to work then I need to get the kids out of the way” he says. I shake my head no,

“No Mkhetheni not my kids” I plead.

“It’s the only way, I need you sever any communication or connection you have with Nkosi that way we can be together forever” he says sounding convinced.

He stands up and nods his head.

“I love those kids so much because they are a part of you but I know I can give you other kids” he say heading for the door.

“Mkheteni please don’t do this” I say trying get out of the chain.

My plea falls on deaf ear he’s determined to do this convinced that I will love him.

“I can love you” I shout before the door closes.

He stands still for a while and walks back in.

I nod my head forcing a smile.

“I can love you Ntuli I promise I am can love you I swear I can” I say. Tears well up as he clenches his jaws.

“You are playing me Mkabayi” he says.

“I am not just leave my kids are they are young please don’t hurt them” I say extending my hand reaching for his.

“I can love you I can even leave this place with you and forget about Maphumulo just don’t hurt my babies” I say.

He settles on my head and I swallows hard my head hurts from the blow I took.

I shut my eye and open them again looking at him.

I place my hands on his jaw and smile.

“Give me time and I swear my heart will belong to you and only you” I say.

He leans over and kisses me it takes a while for me to respond but I eventually do.

He breathes heavily and deepens the kiss pulling away.

“We leave first thing tomorrow morning” he says.

I nod my head biting my lip holding myself from crying.

He kisses my head and walks out.

My lips quiver as I silently cry hugging my legs.

A week passed by without any lead of Mkabayi's whereabouts. Nkosenhle was going crazy not knowing if she had eaten bathed or if she was even alive.

With the rate of woman and children going missing he couldn't help but feel helpless.

He had tried everything put out a search and heads had been rolling yet no one could tell what really happened.

He looked at the kids sleeping and sighed this week had been rough on the twins and no amount of cheering them up worked.

They had been asking about their mother till they stopped.

He walked inside their bedroom and kissed their foreheads smiling, they were his but he couldn't do this life thing without their mother.

He couldn't bare the thought of raising them alone he just couldn't.

He fixed Oyintando's blanket looking at her and saw Mkabayi.

She had so much of her mother inside her strong feisty and sassy.

He stood up and walked out closing the door he walked to the kitchen and found Zamani leaning against the fridge.

He sat down and picked up his gun polishing it he had been doing that all night long.

“It’s been long now Maphumulo” Zamani said.

“We need to find Mkhetheni” Zamani said.

Nkosenhle raised his head and looked at his young brother even if he told him he wouldn’t understand.

He could still feel that she was alive his heart knew better and it told him Mkabayi was out there waiting for him.

“I know” he said.

“Then what are we going to do every minute that she’s not find could be fatal” Zamani said.

Nkosenhle nodded and deeply sighed.

“What do you want me to do Bafo because I have tried everything and I am still trying” he said.

“I want my brother not this man sitting here polishing his gun” Zamani half shouted.

“Careful Bafo my kids are asleep” he told him.

“I am a father now Mashimane with every move that I make I need to be strategic,I can’t act impulsively and put her or the

baby in any more danger” he said thinking about the call he had made during the week.

“One day when you become a father you will realized that life sometimes places you in hard situations it places you between a rock and a hard place” he said.

“I will do anything to find Nathanjekwayo but I have a feeling that whoever took her is waiting for me to slip up and hurt her in the worst possible way” he says placing his gun down.

Zamani nodded having a family had tamed his brother it has grounded him and he didn’t know how to feel about it.

A knock came through and Nkosenhle quickly got on his feet,he got the door and Pricilla walked in her head covered with a scarf.

Nkosenhle closed the door and looked at Mrs Ntuli he had begged her for her help,for the first time in his life he had begged another woman to save Mkabayi’s life.

“I couldn’t leave earlier things were hectic at the house” she says looking at Zamani.

“Thank you for coming I hope you bring me good news” Nkosenhle said. “Nkosi what’s going on here” Zamani asked.

“Kancane nje Bafo” Nkosenhle said.

Pricilla took a seat and searched through her hand bag.

She pulled out Mkhetheni's picture or rather his new identity.

"That's Busani" Nkosenhle said looking confused.

"We mama didn't your son die" he asked.

"That's not Busani that is Mkhetheni he got himself surgery to look like his dead brother" she said.

Zamani's eyes widened only a crazy obsessed man would do that.

Nkosenhle only nodded he had crossed paths with far more complex men in his lifetime.

"He's going crazy my son is going crazy he thinks that if he can look like Busani then maybe Mkabayi could love him" she said shaking her head.

"That's why he took her" Nkosenhle asked.

She nodded her head as tears welled up she had created a monster.

"My son is a monster and he's dangerous he took her and is holding her captive" she said.

Relief washed over Maphumulo this woman had come through.

"I am sorry I truly am" she said.

She took a pen and paper and wrote down the address where Mkhetheni was holding Mkabayi captive.

“Thank you so much for this I know it’s not easy but I will forever be grateful” Nkosenhle told her.

She tightly clasped at her bag and shook her head.

“I have hurt Mkabayi in the past this is the least I can do” she said swallowing hard.

“I need to leave now” she said heading for the door.

“Good luck I hope you find her alive” she said honestly.

She closed the door and put a hand over her mouth she had sold her son out,one way or the other her son was going to die she could feel it and she had sent him straight to his death.

She walked to the car and got in then she cried holding her chest.

Mkabayi

The door opens and I slowly raise my head looking at Mkhetheni make his way in.

I can’t believe he went as far as making himself look like Mphemba.

I never knew his obsession was this deep but after this my heart is shattered,It was never really about the money it was about him having me and since Busani stood in his way it was best he kills him.

After telling him that I could love him I cried myself to sleep and realized if I am going to die I rather do it knowing he saw the hate I have for him in my eyes.

I went back on my word and tried to make a run for it after stabbing one of the guards and paid dearly for it.

He places the bowl of water next to me on the floor.

The room is empty he made sure to take out everything, I have been sleeping on the cold floor.

He dips the cotton in the water and wipes my face.

My one eye is slightly shut, he moves the damp cotton on my lips and wipes the corners.

“Do you take pleasure in seeing me like this Mkhetheni” I ask.

“I wouldn’t be doing this if you could only follow instructions if only you could stop lying to me” he says.

I see the frustration in his eyes.

“I am scared of you Mkhetheni” I say in a shaky voice.

“I am afraid that you are a cold monster” I tell him.

“I am not a monster Mkabayi I am just teaching you to love me and respect me” he says. I nod my head.

“The same man you want to be so badly never once lifted a finger on me, I never went to bed with any bruises on my body” I tell him.

“His love wasn’t fists his love didn’t hurt it wasn’t torturous” I say.

He stops and drops the cotton in the water.

“You claim to love me Mkhetheni but you have done nothing but hurt me all the years I have known you, this isn’t love Mkhetheni you don’t know what love it because if did then you wouldn’t be doing this” I say.

He looks at me running out of words to say.

“I feel sorry for you I really do” I say blinking me tears away.

“You took me away from family my kids the man I love, is that your way of loving me” I ask. He tries touching me but I move away. “Don’t touch me” I say. He snaps and pulls me by my neck. “I own you Mkabayi and there’s nothing you can do about it so you better get used it” he says.

“If you want to kill me then kill me but I want you to know my heart belongs to Nkosenhle Maphumulo, my heart belongs to my kids and if I die I will die a happy woman because I experienced it all.

I experienced love so beautiful pure and kind you can only imagine. I experienced something you have longed for but could never have” I tell him.

He lets go of my neck and punches me in the face and places his hand over my thighs.

“I can only be patient for so long Mkabayi” he says.

“Go ahead Mkhetheni rape me you have taken a lot from me so far so what more my soul” I ask.

He nods his head biting his lip and moves away his hand.

I forcefully grab it and place it my breast tears falling.

“Do it we both know you are going to it one of these days, and I will beg you to stop and you won’t so why don’t you save us the trouble and just do it” I shout. He pushes me away and stands up. “I just want to go home to my kids please” I beg.

He starts walking heading for the door.

“Mkhetheni please I am begging you can’t you see that I don’t want to be here” I ask.

I try standing up but sharp pains shoot through.

I hold my belly and grit my teeth as the pain persists.

“Hang in there baby I know daddy is coming he’s going to find us just hold on for mommy” I say brushing my belly.

The pain subsides it's still there.

Nkosenhle

The drive to Mkhetheni's hideout place is long my heart is pounding my hands are sweating.

I have been waiting for this for a week now and now that the time is here I can't help but feel overwhelmed.

So much is riding on this my kids need their mother so bad and I need her more than anything.

I reach for my phone in my pocket and answer the call.

"Ma I can't talk right now" I say. "Baba" Oyintando's voice comes through. I shut my eyes and breathe.

"Yes my angel" I say. "I can't sleep I miss mommy" she says.

"I miss her too" I say.

My heart refuses to tell her that I am bringing her mother back should things go wrong.

"How about daddy tells you a story" I say.

"Yes please" she says.

I look at the guys and clear my throat my my daughter loves to use her imagination hence one needs to be creative.

“Once upon a time there was a handsome king who had the most beautiful Queen ever, they had two beautiful children a prince and a princess they were happy till one day the Queen went missing” I say. “Baba who took the queen” she asks.

“The big bad dragon took the Queen but because the King loved his Queen he went out to look for her” I say breathing heavily.

“Did they find her, baba did the Queen find the Queen” she asks eagerly waiting for the answer. I shut my eyes and smile.

“They found the Queen the King slayed the dragon and saved his Queen” I say.

She giggles making happy sounds.

“I think I like the King” she says.

“I love you baba” she says.

“I love you too my angel now sleep” I say.

She gives the phone to my mother.

“That should be motivation enough to bring back Nathanjekwayo home safe” she says.

“I will be praying for you I love you and tell your brother that I love him” she says.

“We love you ma” I say ending the call.

“We are almost there” Zamani says.

I nod my head.

“Sibulala kwasani madoda” Zamani says.

“Leave Mkhetheni for me” I say.

It takes a while but we finally reach the place it’s just outside town in the newly built houses.

The development is new not gated or guarded.

Zamani steps out and quickly comes back once he’s checked the place out.

“It’s not heavily guarded we can take them” he says.

I look at Mbiza and Mlenze nodding my head.

“We have your back Maphumulo” Mlenze says.

We all get out of the car and manage to infiltrate the house bumping into two guards outside the house while I use my knife to slice the other ones throat Mlenze stabs the other.

These two are hitman nothing is ever hard for them.

“Mbiza get the door” Zamani tells him.

Mbiza cocks his gun and kicks the door his weight and muscle playing a huge role.

He fires first and the whole thing turns into a blood bath.

The guys cover my back while I bust open each and every door of the house.

“Well well if it isn’t the husband” Mkhetheni says.

I look at him holding Mkabayi at gun point she looks a mess her eye is swollen and her lip is cut.

My heart breaks seeing her this bruised up cripples me.

I clench my jaws tightening my hold over my gun who beats a pregnant woman.

“Mkhetheni let her go” I say.

He nods his head chuckling.

“So my mother did she sold me out” he says breathing heavily.

“Maphumulo” Mkabayi says looking at me.

Her eyes are still soft it’s in the way she looks at me.

“You came” she says nodding her head.

“I am sorry that I took so long” I say.

“It’s okay you came and you found me” she says smiling.

I look at Mkhetheni pressing his gun on Mkabayi’s head and heart starts pounding. I raise my hands in the air partly letting go of my gun. “Let her go” I say.

“Then what you two run off to the sunset and play happy family” he asks shouting. “She doesn’t love you” I say.

“That you are right about which is why if I can’t have her then no one can” he says. Zamani looks at me and I nod my head.

“Sthandwa sam close your eyes” I say.

“Oh that’s how you want to play it okay” he says cocking his gun placing it against her back.

“One wrong move and I kill her” he says.

“Lower your gun Bafo” I say.

“Maphumulo let me shoot this bastard” Zamani says.

“Bafo look at her face he won’t hesitate shooting so please lower your gun” I plead with Zamani.

He lowers his gun and Mkhetheni loses sight whispering something in Mkabayi’s ears.

Zamani manages to take a shot but Mkhetheni’s gun goes off too.

Mkabayi eyes widen as she gasps for air I run to catch her before she hits the floor, with Zamani putting more bullets in Mkhetheni.

He puts the final one on his head making sure he is dead.

“No no no” I say putting pressure on the wound.

“You came for me Maphumulo” she says.

I nod my head lifting her up.

“Stay with me Nathanjekwayo doesn’t close your eyes” I plead with her. She holds my hand tightly grasping at it.

“I never said our wedding vows” she says.

“I know but we can worry about that tomorrow” I say.

She nods her smiling.

“You are the first man I have ever loved the first man I have given myself too fully, I love you Maphumulo for giving me three precious souls. You don’t know this but you are my heart Maphumulo you make me whole” she says.

Tears fall from the corner of her eyes. “Stop talking okay” I say.

“I promise to love you now and forever till death do us apart” she says crying. “Please don’t leave me MKabayi don’t leave us” I say. Her lips quicker as still struggles to breathe.

“Lay her on the side he must have punctured her lung” Zamani shouts. He is driving like a crazy man to the hospital.

She coughs out blood and tightly holds my hand.

“I don’t want to leave you Maphumulo I don’t want to go, I don’t want to go sthandwa sam” she says.

She looks into my eyes and smiles placing her hand on my face.

“Life has never been Maphumulo” she says.

I break down holding her close. “Don’t do this to me Nathanjekwayo I am begging you just hold on” I say wiping her tears. “I am tired” she says slowly letting go of my hand.

I watch as the burning flame in her eyes dies down as she slowly closes her eyes.

The car screeches coming to a stop with Zamani getting out shouting for help.

.....**The End**.....

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