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PROLOGUE

Owethu is on her way to surprise her bestie, Tshegofatso, and with each step taken she gets more excited of finally seeing him. It has been four months since she left for college and she hasn't been able to keep up with him on the phone either. She is home for the weekend and she decided to spend the day with him as she will be leaving in the morning.

The walk to his place is less than thirty minutes and from the tarred road you can actually see his gate positioned directly to the soccer field. There are some guys on the field practicing football and they throw comments on how these two are chowing each other as she passes by checking her phone.

She's got a plastic of goodies in one hand and her phone on the other. There's a bottle visible on the plastic and one guy shakes his head then give an audible comment that they're going to

blame the alcohol after the deed. The other guys start laughing then continue passing the ball.

Owethu doesn't respond cause they're not directly speaking to her anyway. One of them nudges the one close to him then whisper something and the two weirdly look at her but she still doesn't pay attention to them as she pass through the field in a hurry.

A few minutes later, she's at the gate and luckily; it's unlocked so she quietly walk in and close it then head to the house.

There's some soft music coming from the house. It's bass hits straight in the gut and unintentionally whines the waist from inside. Owethu smiles recognizing the song and turn to the back of the house where Tshegofatso's room is at. The music is coming from his room and it sounds to be turning down as she finally gets to the back door.

She is walking as quietly as she can and the door is unlocked; it makes the squeaky sound and she often has to sneak out

without alarming the elders so he obviously had to leave it open because he's used to coming out through it.

Their friendship is somehow weird and confusing because they act like lovebirds yet it's just a friendship. They met at a young age, with Tshego older than her they have become brother and sister. It doesn't help that Owethu is the only child and has little friends, having Tshego as a best friend has proven to be the best thing to ever happen to her.

Tshego's door opens and he rush to the kitchen as Owethu quickly hide. She saw a glimpse of him and he's wrapped a towel on his waist, parading his yummy upper body for everyone to see. As he goes back inside, he just kick the bedroom door to close and it leaves a crack.

Owethu comes out and head to his door slowly, the music is turned up now and there's another tune that's not in line with the song. She reach the door and before she could push it open, she sees Tshegofatso's behind; he's pushing in and out. There are legs hanging on each side of his shoulders and the bed is violently shaking—he's having sex!

She drops the plastic on the floor and the bottle breaks as she turn around running outside. The girl on the bed is startled and

she tries to push Tshego off but he's almost reaching his climax and he's stuck in her. It's only after he's released that he turns to find his door opened and alcohol flowing from a broken bottle.

He turn down the music and weakly put on shorts still hypnotized by his climax to examine the damage.

Tshego: did you see the person?

The girl shakes her head while putting on her clothes then sit up on the bed. She's obviously mad but what did she expect from someone's boyfriend.

Meanwhile on the soccer field, Owethu is flying with the speed of the light and the guys are just shaking their heads while confirming their suspicions and others feeling sorry for her.

"I told you that they're doing the things. How else would you explain her anger right now?. I would never date a female bestie cause I know I wouldn't be able to keep a chicken as a pet," one of the guys says.

They go back and forth on the matter they don't even notice Tshegofatso approaching them with the other girl. The moment she gets into the taxi, one guy approach Tshego to inform him about Owethu but he seems to have it all under control as he dismiss the guy heading back to his place.

The truth is he knew who it was after seeing the bottle label and actually finding a card in the plastic. One thing he doesn't know though, is how he's going to solve this cause that girl is not worth what he shares with Owethu.

PRESENT

OWETHU

She's back in College and she couldn't be happier to not be in the same space as Tshegofatso. He has been trying to reach out to her hoping they could talk but she's not budging. Her boyfriend calls as she's packing her books for her class.

Owethu: munchie.

Ayabonga: hey baby, how are you?

Owethu: I'm good, how's yourself?

Ayabonga: I'm fine. I'm passing by your place

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need a lift?

Owethu: you even ask, hell yes I need a lift...and lunch.

Ayabonga: okay, I'll be at the gate. I'm not getting off.

Owethu: I'm coming.

She grabs her bag and head out locking the door. It doesn't take long for Aya to pull over next to her and she jumps in.

Owethu: I was already done.

Ayabonga: I was about to ask how you made it before me.

They both laugh then he drives off.

Ayabonga: what time are you finishing?

Owethu: I'm not sure yet cause another lecturer might want to see us, we are writing soon so they're trying to push us.

Ayabonga: okay, let's do this. Text me when you're done so we can grab lunch. I won't be seeing you this weekend so at least if I spend some time with you.

Owethu: okay.

Ayabonga: I forgot to ask, how was your weekend home? I saw your statuses but didn't want to pry.

Owethu: (sighs) my best friend of 7 years did something unforgivable.

Ayabonga: okay...

He waits hoping for a more clear explanation but she sighs heavily then lean back on the seat.

Owethu: let me not bore you with my things. How was your weekend?

Ayabonga: it was fine, I had some good time with Lonwabo.

Owethu: does it include ladies?

Ayabonga: (chuckles) what? No, I'm too old for that.

Owethu: how old are you again?

Ayabonga: old enough to know that a good time does not equal to whoring.

He stops at the campus gate then pecks her cheek before turning to her mouth as she playfully wipe with the back of her hands. They hug then she gets in the campus as he drives off.

AYABONGA

After dropping Owethu at the campus, he head to his cousin's workplace cause it's almost his lunch time. He parks the car outside to call him but he sees him jogging towards the car.

Lonwabo: drive out before anyone sees me.

Aya: what's the matter?

Lonwabo: I left my station before time. I don't want to find myself working during lunch.

Aya: (laughs) I thought you loved being around the new girl?

Lonwabo: she's not my type. I don't want "my name it's" kind of girlfriend.

Aya laughs out loud and his laughter causes Lonwabo to join him too.

Aya: you will never get a girlfriend, the way you're always complaining.

Lonwabo: you have a beautiful girlfriend who knows who's eloquent in English and you want me to just date whoever? I want my package full too.

Aya: not all that glitters is gold cuz.

Lonwabo: (raised eyebrow) trouble in paradise?

Aya: no, I'm just saying.

They get to a fast food outlet and Aya gets a space to park as Lonwabo goes to buy food.

TSHEGOFATSO

He's just got back to his apartment from work. He drops his bag on the floor then throw himself on the couch. His phone rings and he's hoping to see Owethu's name flash but it's his girlfriend instead.

He sighs then answers putting it on loud speaker so he can take off his uniform.

Tshego: babe.

Ntsako: hey, how are you?

Tshego: I'm all good, you?

Ntsako: I'm okay. Are you back from work?

Tshego: yes, just got here.

Ntsako: okay, there's an order coming for you.

Tshego: what is it?

He can hear her giggling on the other side.

Ntsako: just some goodies and stuff. Something you will be munching on while waiting for me.

Tshego: babe, what do you mean?

Ntsako: I'm on my way back with my sister and she's agreed to drop me off at your place.

His heart is doing a mini vosho at that and he get up to check if the place is clean for madam. Of course he smashed someone for the fun of it but his woman is this Tsonga goddess he's on the phone with.

Ntsako: I'll see you soon. Bye.

Tshego: bye.

He cleans the bedroom and pack everything nicely then takes a shower. He comes back to the pots while clearing the living room and putting everything in its place. He's already in a good mood thinking about her. He finally finish cooking and check his whatsApp. Owethu has posted a picture of her lunch followed by Ayabonga's hands holding hers on the table.

He sighs then tap on the status to comment but a knock sounds at the door and he gets up leaving the phone on the couch. It's his order, he smiles getting the box after signing then close the door and put the box on the counter to unpack.

To be continued...

1

TSHEGOFATSO

He unwraps the box and is met with a bottle similar to the one that was broken in his room a few days ago. He cannot be mad at his woman because she's not the one giving him a cold shoulder but this bottle is bringing up all the memories of the first few two years with Owethu. How she cried the first time she got drunk by this wine and how he had to piggyback her from the soccer field to her gate because she couldn't walk. They were celebrating Valentine's and their friendvesary, with his heart broken he was switching from the wine of his last relationship and building new memories.

He is so lost in his world he doesn't even hear his phone ringing. He snaps out of it as the call ends and it's Ntsako. He returns the call and she answers on the third ring.

Ntsako: I'm approaching the mall, you want food?

Tshegofatso: no, I have cooked.

She picks on his change of mood but decide to brush it off.

Ntsako: I'll be there in less than fifty minutes.

Tshegofatso: okay.

She hangs up and he gets plates then start setting the table. His mind can't get over his relationship with Owethu and he can't believe how much he's missing her right now. She is in Phalaborwa and he's in Pretoria so the distance is not making things easy too.

He clicks on his phone after setting the table and start going through the loads of pictures and videos of him and Owethu in his calculator app. Later on, Ntsako calls and gets up the couch to get her.

OWETHU

It is a few minutes after 2am and she is looking at her pictures with Tshego, one where he's got ice cream on his cheeks trying to wipe it off. She laughs remembering that day; he had

surprised her with a heart locking pendant after a mini date where they were celebrating their third friendvesary. The pendant came as a promise to never break each other's hearts, no lying and no cheating and obviously a form of love towards their relationship.

She smiles touching hers on her neck then sigh. The pendant has their initials at the back starting with those of the owner so hers is written O.T. She stops at another picture of Tshegofatso putting on his t-shirt, it was taken a day before she could leave for her first year to college and she remembered how hard she cried that day because she was going to a whole new place by herself. She looked at his flat stomach zooming at his chest and foolishly smiling at herself, why did he have to be her male bestie? What a waste!. He looked absolutely gorgeous and it kind of unsettled her to think someone was claiming him as theirs.

She has known him for 7 years and even though his girlfriend joined them a year ago , she still doesn't regard her as his girlfriend. She has no relationship with the girl and doesn't even like her. She starts huffing thinking of all the times she's had to hang up the phone because he was with her or the girl

answered the phone while Tshego was in the shower and kind of gave her an attitude...

The phone is ringing, she did not even check the time nor does she know how she managed to dial the number but she's breathing heavily waiting for the person on the other hand.

Tshego: Hello.

He's sleeping, his rough voice sounds like he's within arm's reach and she can just touch him. Unlike Ayabonga, Tshego has a sexy sleepy voice when he's just woke up and it's a huge turn on.

Owethu: Hey.

She answers clearing her throat as if unsure of what she called for and she can hear some shuffling. Her anger flew out of the window the second Tshego answered the phone.

Tshego: hey, how are you?

Owethu: I'm okay. Are you sleeping?

Tshego: I'm in the bathroom now.

Owethu: okay, I just wanted to check on you.

Tshego: okay, I'm glad you got back to me.

Owethu: yeah. When are you coming back?

Tshego: not anytime soon.

Owethu: okay. I'll call you in the morning then.

Tshego: no, I'll call you.

Owethu: bye.

She hung up then throw her phone on the bed and try to get some sleep. At least they talked, she was really missing him today and was ready to chop his head off with insults but it's okay.

NTSAKO

She arrived late last night and it's now 3am when she shoots her eyes open. She was happy to see her boyfriend but it quickly turned into an argument when he refused with sex. The whole weekend he was away and now they're back but it's like

he just had her yesterday. Not even once since they started dating has he ever refused to have sex, this is suspicious.

She rolls over to the edge of the bed then get off to go to the bathroom, leaving him sleeping. She was deep in her sleep she didn't even hear him answering a call about an hour ago. She comes back and get on the bed snuggling closer to him but he just hold her hands into his then sleep. She sighs pulling back her hands and he gently let go.

Ntsako: Tshego.

He turns and face her rubbing his eyes. She is probably mad if she is calling him by his name.

Ntsako: what's going on? You never refuse sex, what happened? And why are you quick to wake up as if you were playing sleep? am I boring you?

Tshego: babe I told you I'm not feeling well. I'm still here with you, I'll give you whatever you want. Also I'm not answering all those other questions.

Ntsako: why did you allow me to come here knowing you won't touch me? I came here for sex cause it's been so long but you're not even giving me that attention.

She's trying to hold in her tears but they find their way to her cheeks

rolling down into her ear and then the pillow. Her voice is shaky and she sounds like she's about to lose it.

Ntsako: why are you like this? Am I not attractive anymore or you have found an alternative? I even bought the wine that I know will work magic but you didn't even take one sip...

Tshego: okay, come here, stop crying so early in the morning. It's still dark and we should probably rest so we can have the energy for sex when we decide to have some.

He pulls her into a hug and she sobs on his bare chest as he brush her back over the pajama top. He's such a gentleman and there's no getting angry at him no matter how hard she tries.

Tshego: baby there's nothing wrong with you and no I don't have anything on the side. I was just not feeling well and you're now breaking my heart crying like this. Please stop crying. You're even getting cold. Naku rhandza, I love you so much and it hurts to see you like this.

Ntsako pulls back from his chest then wipe her tears sniffing with a soft chuckle over Tshego's Tsonga accent. She finally calms down and a wave of shame engulfs her. Did she just cry for dick? But then it's not just any dick, it's her dick and only she knows how good it is, well maybe not her alone but yeah...

Ntsako: I'm sorry, let's sleep then.

She gets under covers pretending to be okay but she knows in her heart that she still want it.

Tshego: you sure?

Ntsako: (nodding) yeah!

She turns and face the other way then Tshego pulls her waist towards him and her butt fills his whole crouch. He sneaks his hands in her top and start playing with her twins, rubbing and pressing on the nipples hard. He's actually feeling bad for not welcoming her like how he normally does. But then he is not having sex with her a few days after he's had sex with someone else. He used protection but still, maybe after seven days. Maybe.

Tshego: (softly) I'm sorry babe okay?

She's moaning at his touch she can't even respond. He knows she's getting ready for a steamy one but he'll settle for head so he takes off her top and turn her to face him. Her eyes have narrowed and it doesn't help that she's light skinned, she is slowly turning red. He takes the lead to ensure she doesn't outsmart him because once she gets on top of him it's over. He takes off her short and her shaved haven comes out to play. It's so fat and he could just pound it until he's out of breath but no. His dick is also getting hard but he pays no attention to it. He checks the time and it's almost 03:30am. A thirty minutes session will have them sleeping for the next 2 hours then he can wake up at 6 to prepare for his day.

He gently spread her thighs then pulls her to the edge of the bed, getting off with his feet to kneel on the floor. He's taller than her so he needs to be relaxed so he doesn't tire early.

Tshego: how do you want it?

Ntsako: (moaning) slowly delayed.

He doesn't wait to be told twice, he goes on his knees on the mat, grab both of her legs and bury his head in. He starts off by kisses on the fat meat then goes down the lips sucking them slowly. He moves right back up before he could reach the opening and play with his fingers on her, delaying the process. Her legs start shaking and he chuckles reaching for her twins.

Tshego: too soon babe, too soon.

He circles her tits with his index fingers then grab each with his two hands and playfully pull them while kissing her belly. He trails her body with his fingers from the chest all the way to her opening where he insert his finger and pulls it in and out a few

times before burying his head back again. This time he's not letting go until her inner walls break. She is crying out in pleasure arching her body, closing his head in with her thighs but he's not stopping-in fact he goes wild grabbing her exposed ass while his tongue swirls and dance on her haven.

Ntsako: (moaning) I'm feeling, ohhhh fak! it's so good. I love... you.

She can feel her inside getting ready to break and she hold his head with his tongue deep inside her. He quickly insert his finger and it comes out decorated in her cum while she loses herself on the bed, rubbing her bean uncontrollably. It's not because she's not satisfied but because she still feels the pleasure and she doesn't know what to do with herself.

Tshego is looking at her with a smile on his face, so this is what she was crying for, this little demon.

He gets on the bed and help her on her second climax while she breathe heavily. He gets off to get a towel and she's already

gone with sleep when he comes back. He wipes her as she whine in her sleep then get behind her and sleep.

TSHEGOFATSO

Earlier that morning, he wakes up first and switch off his alarm before it could ring. Ntsako is still fast asleep, he gets off the bed and prepare their bath. He's testing the water temperature when she walks in naked rubbing her eyes.

Tshego: morning baby.

He gives her a side smile as a way of mocking her about last night.

Ntsako: morning.

She brush her teeth first then get in the water. Tshego joins her and they bath silently with just the water sound. After they're done Tshego gets the towels and help her out while naked. She keeps glancing at his third leg dangling between his thighs as he

cleans the tub. They lotion their bodies in the bathroom then head to the bedroom to get dressed.

Tshego: I'm sorry about last night. I'll make it up to you.

Ntsako: I feel embarrassed.

Tshego: you should.

He laughs as she pick the pillow to hit him.

Tshego: no, but on a real note you should. I mean what would your parents say?

Ntsako: what would yours say for starving the woman you claim to love?

Tshego: you're going to be rearranging labour ward beds getting ready to give birth. Keep crying for sex you'll see.

Ntsako: fetus deletus is not a sin. If you intentionally leave your seed in me and you don't see it growing don't ask me anything.

To be continued...

2

OWETHU

They're now in talking terms with Tshegofatso and she is chatting with him lying on her bed. Ayabonga is not around for the weekend so she is spending it indoors. Tshegofatso asks if he can video call since he never returned the call that morning and before she can reply, the call comes through.

Owethu: no, don't call.

Tshego: (chuckles) it's too late.

Owethu: how are you?

Tshego: I'm okay, you?

Owethu: I'm fine. Are you alone?

Tshego: yes.

Owethu: (raised eyebrow) where is she?

Tshego: (chuckles) she's got her own place.

Owethu: that's good. I was thinking that since you're not coming back anytime soon then I can visit.

Tshego: what are you going to tell your mom?

Owethu: why should I tell her?

Tshego: and your boyfriend?

Owethu: what about him? I'm talking about us now. Why are you involving other people?

Tshego: I'm just saying. I wouldn't want Ntsako leaving for such a long distance without informing me.

Owethu: well I'm not her, and please let's refrain from involving other people in our conversations.

Tshego: you really don't like my girlfriend hey.

Owethu: I don't have to, she's your girlfriend not mine.

Tshego: (sighs) okay, I'll see what to do when you're coming.

Owethu: thank you.

Tshego: (hesitantly) so, about the other day...

Owethu: in person, I have a lot to say I won't finish over the phone.

Tshego: (sighs) okay, I'll see you soon I guess.

Owethu: okay bye.

He hang up then she checks on Ayabonga, telling him of a trip coming soon. She is obviously lying but whatever.

TSHEGOFATSO

After the call with Owethu, he goes back to the bedroom where Ntsako is sleeping and snuggles behind her. He still haven't had sex with her but she didn't want to leave early because her sister was going to ask questions and probably get her to pour it all out. She stretch her hands waking up then smile seeing his face looking at her.

Ntsako: I'm leaving today.

Tshego: I know. Is there anything I can do to change your mind though?

Owethu: why? So you can laugh at me for crying while not feeding me.

Tshego: (laughing) I won't laugh at you anymore, are you serious there's nothing I can do?

Ntsako: (smiling) no.

Tshego: nothing at all?

Ntsako: nothing.

He gets on top of her and start kissing her neck while tracing his hands on her body.

Tshego: you sure?

Ntsako: (breathing heavily) y..ye..yes...

Tshego: huh?

Ntsako: no...

He chuckles taking off her clothes while kissing her and they have a hot session. He didn't make it to seven days but at least it wasn't two days apart. They're sleeping on their backs looking up while breathing heavily.

Ntsako: are you bribing me to stay?

Tshego: did it work?

Her phone rings before she can answer and she picks getting off the bed as Tshego's fluids flow down her inner thighs.

Ntsako: Hello...okay.

She throws the phone on the bed and rush to the bathroom to clean herself up. Coming back she quickly packs her bag and wait for her phone to ring again. Tshegofatso comes back into the bedroom from outside to tell her that her sister's car is waiting for her. She give him a body wrecking hug, squeezing the life out of him.

Ntsako: bye baby, I'll see you soon.

Tshego: bye.

They kiss then she leaves him standing by the bed. He throws himself on it and sighs putting his hands over his eyes. He thinks of the bottle in his cupboard then make his way to the kitchen. He takes a picture and send it to Owethu. She immediately calls and he answers laughing.

OWETHU

Owethu: I'm still angry at you.

Tshego: don't worry, you'll be fine.

Owethu: whatever.

Tshego: do you still remember the first time you had this?

Owethu: don't remind me please.

Tshego: (laughing) you're weak.

Owethu: that's why I have you on my side.

Tshego: I'm never taking you anywhere near alcohol.

Owethu: or we can just drink in the house.

Tshego: do you act that way when you're with your boyfriend?

Owethu: I've never got drunk with him.

Tshego: what? And he's not worried about it?

Owethu: I don't know. I'll ask him.

Tshego: you should. Every guy should know what their girlfriend is like when drunk.

Owethu: why?

Tshego: so they know what they're getting themselves into. Imagine your girl acting up at the groove and you're clueless on how to handle her. What if they're the type that cry for their exes when drunk? Or even worse, pees on themselves and wana dish it out to just anyone.

Owethu is uncontrollably laughing and she can imagine the whole thing playing out.

Owethu: you're just making this up right?

Tshego: you've never been to the groove I see.

Owethu: and I don't want to if that's what happens there.

Tshego: I'm planning to take you with me, take a video and send it to your boyfriend so he can see the real you.

Owethu: you wouldn't dare.

Tshego: (laughing) maybe because I love you, yes.

Owethu: I love you too.

Tshego: but I'll think about it.

They continue chatting while reminiscing on their memories together. Owethu has changed since Ntsako became part of Tshego

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it's like she wants him all to himself but having a boyfriend on the side.

NTSAKO

They've just arrived at their place. She shares it with her sister, Tintswalo. They get in the apartment and she goes to her bedroom to put her bags. Her sister follows her after some minutes and stand at her door with her head stuck in.

Tintswalo: how was your week?

Ntsako: it was just a few days sis.

Tintswalo: close to a week.

Ntsako: it was fine. I had a good time.

Tintswalo steps in and sit on the bed besides her.

Tintswalo: you're always hyped up coming from your boyfriend's. What's the matter?

Ntsako: I'm just tired, I want to rest.

Tintswalo: oh, that means you were fully fed.

Ntsako: (chuckles) you really want the ins and outs of it?

Tintswalo: you're my baby sis, it's only me who can listen to all your problems and offer the right solutions without judging you.

Ntsako sighs not sure if she can tell her about Tshego's behavior. If she knows this information and it turns out to be something bad, she will never forgive him and that would make things worse.

Ntsako: I appreciate that you want to help and all, but I'm okay. I promise I'll let you know if there is anything troubling me.

Tintswalo: okay, let me leave you to rest.

She goes out the door and close it behind. Ntsako rest her head on the pillow to rest. As much as she doesn't want to think about this she can't help but wonder if he's innocent. What if he is sleeping with his bestie? she seems to have an attitude and even though they've never met she knows for real they're not going to get along. Maybe she can tell her sister, she'll know what to do, she's been through these mjolo streets longer than her. She doze off while thinking.

AYABONGA

It's almost 6pm when he check his phone to find messages from Owethu. He calls her and she takes a while to answer but finally does. There's music playing in the background.

Owethu: Babe.

Aya: hey, you good?

Owethu: yes, I'm just dancing in my room.

Aya: okay. I saw your messages.

Owethu: yeah, we have to go for some research and stuff. I chose Pretoria because I've never been there and most of my classmates will be going there.

Aya: okay, I can come with you.

Owethu: that won't be necessary, we have transport for the whole group. It's going to be more like a trip.

Aya: I see. Well I'll send you some money then. Just remind me when the dates are close.

Owethu: okay, thanks and I love you.

Aya: I love you too. I have to go now. bye.

Owethu: before you hang up, when are you coming back?

Aya: I'll see you during the week, I'm not sure of the day.

Owethu: okay. bye.

He hang up and pause a little thinking then head back to the family house. His sister asks if he's okay and he nods then join his family on the table. His mom announce that there's a wedding coming soon so they'll need all the help they can get. It's a few days before month end March and the wedding will be on June.

Her: that's enough time to fix what needs to be fixed and get all our things in order. Ayabonga please find a date for the wedding or I will personally match you with someone.

They all laugh as Aya looks away chuckling. He's 27 years and they've never heard of any woman involved with him. It's only Lonwabo who knows all his exes. He's never brought anyone home.

They recently moved to this new home in Hoedspruit to be closer to their kids, but they have other houses in different provinces. Their main being back home in the Eastern Cape.

Aya: I'll bring a date but it won't mean I'm next in line to get married.

Her: but you should marry son. I want grandchildren.

Aya: you have loads of grandchildren. I've just started work, I'm still working on myself as an individual.

Her: my grandchildren from you are the only ones who will grow our name. These ones are going to their fathers when they grow up.

Aya: I hear you but don't expect them anytime soon.

The old woman sighs dropping the topic.

To be continued...

3

OWETHU

She's getting ready for her class while texting back and forth with Tshegofatso on WhatsApp. It's her birthday so her every social media app is filled with happy birthday messages and she's trying to comment on each of them.

Her mother called earlier on and even sent her some money to celebrate. She still doesn't know what she's going to get up to because even Ayabonga hasn't said anything about today. He's not one to forget though, so he's probably caught up wherever he is.

She is dressed in blue Jean to Jean with a white round neck t-shirt, some jewellery on her neck, hands, and ears then white sneakers. This is a change from her usual sandals and tight dresses.

She walks out of the gate to find Ayabonga waiting for her, leaning against his car. She is so happy that she throws herself in his arms forgetting she was busy on her phone.

Ayabonga: (smiling)happy birthday my love.

She is clinging onto him so tight, her legs are now wrapped around his waist while letting out whispers of gratitude.

He puts her down after a while and then opens the front door for her. There is a bouquet of white roses on the seat she's supposed to occupy. It has a happy birthday card inside and there are other gifts in the back seats.

Owethu can't hold herself as she smiles through her tears lost for words.

Aya: let's get you to school before you're late.

She hops in and he takes the wheel playing Best Friend by Sun-El musician ft Msaki. He's nodding to the sound while Owethu steals glances at him and smiles to herself. She finally reaches over and touches his beard, he turns to her then smile with his

hand holding the wheel and the other reaching over to her for a little squeeze on the cheek.

They get to the campus and she takes a slab of chocolate from the back seat, leaving her bouquet there. Aya takes a few shots at her to post on his WhatsApp.

Owethu: I have to get in now. Thank you once again for making this day so special.

Aya: it's okay. I will see you later.

Owethu: and this?

She asks pointing at the back seat.

Aya: give me your room keys so I can drop them off before fetching you later. I have to get to work also, I've been away for some time now.

She reluctantly gives him the keys then step out of the car and blows him a kiss before turning to walk away.

TSHEGOFATSO

Later that day he's just gotten home from work when Ntsako calls. He answers fetching a drink and then sitting on the couch.

Tshego: hey.

Ntsako: hello, you still good?

Tshego: yes, you?

Ntsako: (sighs) I'm fine.

Tshego: what's wrong? you don't sound fine.

Ntsako: I'm just wondering how things would be if I had a male bestie doing all these things you do with your friend.

Tshego: am I not doing enough as a boyfriend?

Ntsako: I feel like you're doing more to your bestie as a male bestie than you are to me as a boyfriend.

Tshego: are you saying I suck at boyfriending?

Ntsako: not entirely, but you put your friendship first.

Tshego: babe, had I found you with a male bestie I wouldn't have had a problem because he would be your childhood friend and there's honestly no way I would expect you to just drop him because of me.

Ntsako: even if it meant you would compete with him for my attention?

Tshego: are you competing with Owethu?

Ntsako: you don't get it, let's leave it. Happy birthday to her by the way.

Tshego: babe...

She hangs up and he sighs finishing his drink then gets up to prepare food. He logs into his WhatsApp, Owethu has since left him on read in the morning but she's uploading pictures left, right and centre.

He sends another text and it instantly gets double ticks. He waits for a little while and then she goes offline without texting back. He sighs then text Ntsako so they can talk. She replies that she's busy with her books before going offline also.

AYABONGA

He's a Millwright so his work doesn't keep him in one place. He's been lucky though to be employed in one of the mines in Phalaborwa; that keeps him around his family and of course his girlfriend.

He is not a man of many words so even communication sometimes becomes a strain especially if he has to express his feelings. The only person who can get through him is Lonwabo and that's why they have a tight relationship.

He's had a couple of romantic relationships before but they all ended because the girls would cheat on him. It was worse when he wasn't working because although his family has money

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it doesn't just come on silver platter, everyone has to work for their own.

His love language is gifting because he believes it makes up for all the feelings he keeps within. He's only met Owethu a year

ago, they celebrated their first year together last month on Valentine's. He loves her so much but he's still getting to fully know her because this thing of besties isn't sitting well with him. He believes in monogamy but he's got bad luck when it comes to finding that one person who's also monogamous.

He found pictures of Tshegofatso and Owethu earlier on when he was dropping Owethu's gifts. They were shoved under the pillow as if hidden and he wanted to leave some money there. It's pictures he's never seen before and they're not innocent pictures. The one that got his attention though, is of them kissing. It was taken back in 2017 as written at the back.

He left the pictures as they were and also the money then went to work.

They're now having dinner at some restaurant. He had to send a taxi to take Owethu to the mall because he was running late and she had no keys to her place.

She used the time to get her hair done. Cut short with a some woman styling ways then dyed.

Aya: I'm sorry for arriving late.

Owethu: it's okay, you're here now.

Aya: I forgot to tell you that you're beautiful when I dropped you off in the morning.

Owethu: (blushing) thank you.

Aya: I also love your hair colour, it complements your skin well.

Owethu: remind me to never dye with any other colour besides blonde.

Aya: (chuckles) I believe any colour would suit you.

The waiter comes to take their orders then leave and return after some few minutes.

They eat over a light conversation then later on head out to her room.

She walks in first while Aya follows behind after parking the car.

Owethu: I missed my room today. I feel like I've been gone for a week.

Aya: (chuckles) how are you going to survive a vacation if being away for some few hours gets you like this?

She quickly turns looking at him as he settles on the bed.

Owethu: are you hinting that we're soon going somewhere?

Aya: I'm just saying.

She gets on top of him and look at his face as he wraps his hands on her waist.

Owethu: please tell me in time so I can be prepared.

Ayabonga chuckles looking back at her then pull her into a kiss.

Aya: so tell me about your best friend.

He says after letting go of her. She gets up then head to the fridge taking out drinks before changing into a dress.

Ayabonga has never been interested in talking about Tshegofatso so why now?

Owethu: what do you want to know?

She's back on the bed and has given him his drink.

Aya: the basics.

Owethu: you have to be specific.

Aya: let's start by his name.

Owethu: Tshegofatso Benedict Mokoena.

Aya: Age?

Owethu: 24, turning 25 in August.

Aya: when did you meet?

Owethu: 13th February 2015.

Aya: If there was ever a chance that you feel the desire to explore your feelings with him, what would happen?

Owethu: he's my friend; for six years now, there's nothing to be explored between us anymore.

Aya: I see.

Owethu: can I enjoy the last few hours of my birthday now?

Aya: (nodding) yeah.

She gets up the bed and turn on the music on a low volume then gather her gifts on the bed for pictures and videos.

LONWABO

He's almost dozing off on the couch when he hears the car driving in. He gets up to open the door then wait for Ayabonga to come in before closing and locking it.

Lonwabo: I thought you were never coming back.

Aya: I don't sleep over at my girlfriend's you know that.

Lonwabo: well it's almost 11pm.

Aya: even if it can be 12 expect me home.

They sit on the couch as Aya exhales heavily.

Lonwabo: I'm not going to ask, just say it.

Aya: (chuckles) I feel like this whole best friend thing is complicated for me.

Lonwabo: then why don't you search for the truth?

Aya: I don't want to be heartbroken by going after things that are not in the open.

Lonwabo: then you're going to die when the truth finally comes out, believe me.

Ayabonga lean back on the couch with his head then close his eyes.

Aya: I found a picture of them kissing, it was taken in 2017.

Lonwabo whistles while shaking his head.

Lonwabo: I suggest you leave that girl right now before you drop dead because of mjolo.

Aya: it doesn't make sense to leave someone when they haven't done anything wrong to you.

Lonwabo: what did this girl do to you? she's going to kill you cuz.

Ayabonga keeps quiet with his eyes still shut.

Lonwabo: I just hope you'll yet again survive because I don't want to lose you, the whole family wouldn't be pleased to lose you over a girl.

Aya: I'll be fine.

Lonwabo: I hope so.

Aya: anyway, we have a wedding at Hoedspruit in June. Get a date or they're going to find you one.

Lonwabo: so long she's got a degree and has a good command of English then we're sorted.

Aya: your standards keep rising, once again, good luck.

He gets up and leave to his room. Lonwabo sighs then follow him to his room also.

One thing about Ayabonga, he'll wait for the heartbreak to unfold before his eyes before he accepts that it really is a heartbreak. No matter how many times he's been through it he still waits for a confirmation before he can move on.

He seems to be so deep in love with Owethu and he might not survive this one.

To be continued...

4

NTSAKO

She wakes up feeling bad for how things went last night. She was only trying to communicate her feelings not quarrel, but then anything involving Owethu seems to be a fight with Tshegofatso.

She gets ready for her class, contemplating checking on him. She knows he'll soon be busy and won't have time to answer calls so she ends up dialing him.

Tshego: (shuffling) hello.

Ntsako: (softly) Hey how are you?

Tshego: okay.

Ntsako: I called to apologize about last night.

Tshego: which part?

Ntsako: everything, I will find time to check on you this weekend so we can talk.

Tshego: okay.

Ntsako: yeah, have a nice day.

He doesn't answer back and she hangs up. Sometimes being the bigger person is just useless because she is now feeling worse when she was just trying to fix things. Sighs!

She goes out to find Tintswalo all ready to leave then she gets a lift. She is not her usual bubbly self so she gets an eyebrow-raising from her sister.

Tintswalo: what's happening with you lately?

Ntsako: it's nothing you should worry about.

Tintswalo: I hope you're not pregnant.

Ntsako: I'm not.

Tintswalo: I won't pester you but just know you're going to tell me when we come back.

She doesn't respond as Tintswalo turns heading to her campus. She drops her off and then heads to work.

TSHEGOFATSO

He needed that phone call from Ntsako even though he was pretending to be mad. He slept with a heavy heart last night because even his bestie wasn't free to chat with him. One thing he knows though, Ntsako is always going to come around because she loves him and him only. And Owethu will never break the friendship so he's just got to wait until she also comes back to him.

He is whistling while working on his panel for electrical connections. He's been placed alone today but his joyful song is stretching to the other side and has invited his senior to where he is.

Mr. Majola: (whispering) keep it down, you're disturbing others.

Tshego: sorry sir.

He gets back to work now just nodding to the sound in his head.

OWETHU

She doesn't know how many drinks she had last night and she's only waking up now at 10 am with a banging headache.

She thought she would wake up on a man's chest but her man doesn't do sleepovers, at least he fed her before leaving last night.

She gets off the bed and drinks water before heading out to the bathroom. She's still taking off her underwear when she feels a ball rising from the pit of her stomach to her throat. She swivels and holds on to the toilet seat with her hands while her knees bend to support her on the floor.

After taking out all the alcohol in her she flushes the toilet and takes a piss before flushing again then weakly drag herself back to her room.

Her phone is ringing as she enters, she drops on the bed and crawls up to answer it.

Owethu: hello.

Ayabonga: how are you?

Owethu: not so good, I just threw up and I'm feeling like a zombie.

Ayabonga: take a cold bath, I'll bring you something to eat.

Owethu: okay.

Ayabonga: I'll be there in less than an hour.

Owethu: hurry up, my stomach is empty.

Ayabonga: I'm coming.

He hangs up then she closes her eyes for a few minutes and falls into a sleep.

She's woken up by the door opening, the first thing that hit her nostrils is the chicken Ayabonga has in hand.

Owethu: hey.

She is so weak she can't even get up from the bed. Ayabonga put the food down and then help her up.

Owethu: thank you.

Her breath is another pandemic waiting to happen, Ayabonga almost retches it.

Ayabonga: let's brush your teeth first.

He helps her to the bathroom, luckily most of the people staying in this yard have early classes and some work.

She manages to brush her teeth and Ayabonga forces her to take a cold shower. She's resisting at first but her body finally adjusts and she starts moaning to the pleasure coming from the water.

AYABONGA

While Owethu is showering, he makes the bed and put everything in its place then dish up for her. He even brought extra hot sauces to help with the hangover. The money and photos are still under the pillow so he leaves them as they are.

She had told him she loves wine but he didn't expect her to drink half a bottle within a few minutes on her own. She was stupidly drunk last night he even had to sneak out when leaving. He brought the bottle with the gifts yesterday but now looking at it, he should've settled for something else.

Owethu comes back into the room to find it all clean it even embarrasses her. She moisturizes her body and put on a tight without underwear and a skinny top then sit before the table and starts eating.

Ayabonga: I have to leave. Call me when you need anything.

Her mouth is filled with the chicken she just sliced with her teeth she can't even talk.

Owethu: (chewing) I will, thanks for the food.

He kisses her on her oily cheek from the chicken then grabs his keys leaving.

NTSAKO

Later that day her sister informs her that something came up at work and she won't be coming home until tomorrow evening.

She quickly packs an overnight bag and heads to Tshego's place.

He's not yet back when she arrives so she starts with the pots

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making an easy meal, pap, and chicken stew.

She takes a shower and proceeds to the bedroom to see if everything is in place. There's a pendant on the bedside table. She sits down to examine it, he's always wearing it so he might have forgotten today.

She turns it upside down, trying to see all its details. It's really beautiful, with a heart shape that is hollow in the middle suggesting there's a part that was taken out, maybe.

It has two letters at the back, more like initials but it can't be because it is T.O and Tshego doesn't have a name starting with O.

Before she can start thinking of what the letters mean, she hears the front door opening.

Ntsako: hey baby.

She appears from the bedroom in her silk nightwear. Tshegofatso is standing by the door confused as to why it's

unlocked but everything is still intact. He sighs in relief when he sees Ntsako.

Ntsako: (smiling) relax, I just thought I should come cook for you.

Tshego: lock the door when you're inside.

She takes his bag from him and helps him out of the PPE he's got on.

It all registers in his mind and he can feel his heart doing a mini mlando.

Ntsako: go take a bath while I set the table.

He goes off to the bathroom all blushy and stuff but hiding it.

TSHEGOFATSO

His day didn't end badly at all. He's showering while playing music on his phone. After he's done he goes to the bedroom and put on his shorts then come back to the table.

Everything is set and waiting for him. He takes his seat then Ntsako brings him water to wash his hands, warm water to be precise.

Tshegofatso: thank you.

She removes the plate that she had closed his food with and they start eating.

Tshegofatso: what did you say to your sister?

Ntsako: she's not around until tomorrow evening.

Tshegofatso: I see.

Ntsako: eat up so we can talk, I have to leave early tomorrow just in case.

He feels his appetite going down but the food is nice so he eats until he's done and washes his hands.

Ntsako takes the dishes away while he helps with the leftovers. Soon they're done so they sit on the couch for a few minutes before they can go to the bedroom.

Ntsako: I'm not here to fight or try and change your life, I'm just hoping we can put all our plans and everything in the open so we can enjoy this relationship and make the best of it. I wasn't fighting when I asked about your friendship with Owethu but I guess I pressed some buttons and I'm sorry for that.

Tshego: I'm sorry too if I came across as defending our relationship, it's just I don't understand why you now have a problem with her.

Ntsako: we are going for 2 years Tshego. I thought you would have realized by now that it's not okay. Maybe when you're single yes but in a relationship, no.

Tshego: so what should I do?

Ntsako: I won't tell you what to do cause only you know what you want, besides I don't want this relationship to be on one side, we should both enjoy and not feel like we're walking on

eggshells because of the other person which is what you're making me do now.

He keeps quiet just looking at her. He knows in his heart that she's telling the truth but he just can't admit it.

Ntsako: I think I've apologized which is the main thing that brought me here. If you don't have anything else I would like to go to sleep.

Tshego: Stop being insecure, stop with the jealousy. You and Owethu hold different titles in my life, don't worry about anything else apart from being my girlfriend because that's your position.

She wants to tell him a piece of her mind but she swallows and then stands up.

Ntsako: you'll find me in the bedroom.

To be continued...

5

OWETHU

It's a Friday morning and she is feeling better. Last night Ayabonga came to check on her and they had some. She is not attending today but she woke up early to do her laundry.

She changes the bed sheets and the pictures come flying from her pillow. She turns around the bed to pick them up and that's when she sees the money.

She is excited about the roots of evil before her but her mouth quickly narrows as her brows rise in the question of how the money got here.

Okay, the only person that's been coming in here is Ayabonga and it's very sweet of him to leave money for her but the question is did he see these pictures?

Her heart starts thumping rapidly but she consoles herself with the fact that he hasn't asked so it could mean he didn't see anything.

She's whispering "oh my God" to herself as if it's going to wipe the panic mode she's in but it's not helping because naturally, Ayabonga isn't a loud mouth so he might have seen everything but decided to keep quiet and wait for her to confess.

Her phone brings her back to life when it rings on the table. Ayabonga's name flashes on the screen and she takes a deep breath before answering.

Owethu: hello.

Ayabonga: hi, you good?

Owethu: hmm yes, yes I'm okay. Are you good?

Ayabonga: yeah...I just called to remind you of our outing. I will come to pick you up at one o'clock.

Owethu: (jumpy) it's today?

Ayabonga: yes... are you sure you're okay? you sound different, not good different.

Owethu: (scratching head) oh no, I'm good. I will be ready by half twelve.

Ayabonga: okay. bye.

She lets out a heavy breath after the call end tone and then falls on the messy bed with her back.

TSHEGOFATSO

He's all ready for work when Ntsako awakens. She stretches herself on the bed while he does the last touches to his PPE.

Ntsako: morning.

Tshego: good morning.

She gets off the bed and heads to the bathroom to brush her teeth before turning on the taps for hot and cold bath water and scurrying to the bedroom to get her stuff.

Tshegofatso is now in the dining area. He takes his bag from the couch and waits for her to come back from the bedroom so he can say goodbye. She passed with a speed of an angry woman ready to kill so he just kept quiet.

Ntsako comes out holding her bathing set and a towel.

Tshego: I'll see you later.

Ntsako: won't be around.

Tshego: oh yeah, that.

Ntsako: yes, have a nice day and please lock the door on your way out.

She gets into the bathroom and closes the door behind her.

Tshego sighs then head out locking the main door with his key.

AYABONGA

He's with Owethu at a guest house. There are performances happening tonight for a 2nd-anniversary party so he's here to attend since he got the invitation.

He likes this particular place for the beautiful gardens they have and the neatness.

They're having lunch before the performances can start. Owethu keeps stealing glances at him but he's focused on his plate.

She clears her throat to say something when one of Ayabonga's acquaintance recognizes him and approach them for a greeting.

They talk for a while with Ayabonga introducing Owethu as his girlfriend. The guy leaves and they finish up eating and then head to the hall.

There's music playing in the hall, more like a live session kind of thing except they're stopped here and there to give the MC time.

Once finished they play music throughout until after nine when the celebration comes to an end.

Owethu: (yawning) I'm tired. Are we leaving?

Ayabonga: we can sleep in and leave in the morning.

Owethu: have you already booked?

Ayabonga: no, but for sure there's an empty room. These people are all leaving.

Owethu: no, let's go. I have to do laundry in the morning so it will be a little difficult if I'm coming from here.

Ayabonga: okay, let's go.

They walk out to the parking holding hands then get in the car.

Ayabonga: plug my phone

there's a playlist I've made for you.

She connects the phone while he tells her where to go for the playlist. She doesn't even check before pressing play and leaning back on her seat.

Chris Browns' under the influence plays and Owethu's heart almost jumps out of her chest.

Ayabonga looks at her smiling with his hand on the wheel while tapping to the sound.

Ayabonga: I've heard you playing this song so I thought maybe I can compile a playlist so you don't have to listen to what I prefer. You don't seem to like my taste in music.

Owethu: (grinning) I do, I'm just not used to what you play cause you never stick to one genre. Can I change this song? it's making me feel a little hot and you're driving.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Okay.

She presses next then mentally rolls her eyes.

OWETHU

Ayabonga didn't come in tonight and she's got her mind racing on why he dropped her at the gate.

She gets into her room and locks then change her clothes before sending Tshego a message to call her.

He takes his time but finally, her phone rings.

Owethu: hello.

Tshego: pumpkin what is it?

Owethu: I think I messed up.

Tshego: talk before I faint.

Owethu: I think Aya saw those photos.

Tshego: (confused) what photos?

Owethu: 2017, your place?

Tshego: how did that happen? I thought they were at home.

Owethu: I left them under my pillow and now I found money there so there is no way he didn't see them.

Tshego: okay has he said anything?

Owethu: nothing, except he was playing our song on our way back here.

Tshego: (chuckles) which one?

She remembers that it's the same song Tshego was playing on that day so she brushes her anger off.

Owethu: as a man what do you think he's thinking?

Tshego: nothing, don't worry about it if he hasn't asked.

Owethu: I hope he doesn't strike unexpectedly. I will always have to be cautious around him and that causes me anxiety.

Tshego: relax, he is your man. Even if something happens he'll come around.

Owethu: (sighs) anyway I'm coming on Friday next week.

Tshego: I'm all ready for you.

They continue talking for a few minutes until Tshego runs out of minutes.

LONWABO

He's been working at this call center while waiting to hear from the companies to which he's been sending his CVs. None of them has responded and he's slowly losing hope.

He planned to remain in Pretoria after completing his Media studies, majoring in Journalism. He's sent CVs to media houses both for newspapers and magazines but nothing ever came forth.

He ended up following his aunt, Ayabonga's mom, and the rest of the family to Hoedspruit for greener pastures, and because he has a call center experience he managed to get something.

He was at his workplace earlier having lunch when his phone rang. It was from The Scoop magazine telling him to check his emails and respond by Monday.

He could not use the company's computer so he saved his joy inside when he finally read the email.

He's coming back from having drinks with his colleagues and he unlocks the house to find Ayabonga watching TV.

Lonwabo: cuz, I thought you'd still be out.

Ayabonga: I came to chill with you.

Lonwabo: well we do have a reason to chill and celebrate.

He sits next to him and takes out two bottles from his jacket. Ayabonga chuckles shaking his head.

Ayabonga: old habits die hard.

Lonwabo: grab one.

He pops his open using the other bottle and Aya opens his using the edge of the table.

Lonwabo: I received a call from Pretoria. I got an interview for next week Tuesday.

Ayabonga: is it from the...

Lonwabo: The Scoop magazine. I had already given up.

Ayabonga: I'm so happy for you. At least now there will be someone at the family house.

Lonwabo: yes and that means you will stop turning down job offers from Pretoria as well.

Ayabonga: I'm not sure about that. I love it here.

Lonwabo: I hope you're not staying because of a girl. She will get an opportunity to move across the world and leave you here.

Ayabonga: I'll then move on.

Lonwabo: you make me so angry sometimes.

Ayabonga: you'll be strong. So, the colleague?

Lonwabo: well if I get the job I will surely need some farewell kind of thing and then I'll hit it up with her.

Ayabonga: you're such a manwhore.

They both laugh while drinking.

NTSAKO

She's watching TV alone. Tintswalo has a night shift at the club.

She takes the plates she was snacking from to the kitchen and rinses them. Tshegofatso's assertion from last night still lingers in her head. She just can't believe how someone who claims to love you could be so rude for no reason at all.

She leaves the plates to dry then heads to Tintswalo's room. There's a wooden drawer by the window that's always closed and a while ago Tintswalo had said she can open it if she feels really sad and alone.

She unlocks the door and is met by nicely stacked bottles of both red and white wine. She doesn't even know the names or what does what so she checks for a familiar name.

She locks the door and then heads out to the kitchen, taking a wine glass and going back to the couch.

She settled for Robertson's and she read the "chapel natural sweet red" slowly before opening it then poured half a glass.

She takes a sip and lay back swallowing with her eyes closed.

Ntsako: not bad.

She plays music and then loosens up as the percentages start kicking in with each sip.

A WEEK LATER...

To be continued...

6

LONWABO

He aced his interview and has already started with the briefing and being shown his roles; more like training and stuff.

It's a Friday morning and he's brought his contract back after signing it. He will be handling all things editing, writing, and interviews if needed. He is happy with the pay also and cannot wait to have an article published under his name as the writer.

He drops the contract at the Editor-in-chief's office and then heads out.

He has to fetch his clothes at Hoedspruit and buy groceries because the house is fully furnished, just needed someone to stay in full time.

He gets a taxi to his place and arrives at the same time as the house helper.

They greet and introduce each other again.

Mam' Adelaide: you have grown so much my boy. At least there is someone to keep me company now.

Lonwabo: (chuckles) you won't even know I'm here.

Mam' Adelaide: what's wrong with the youth of today and not wanting to just chill with their elders? I suspect these technology phones you carry around.

Lonwabo: well mam' A there's life in these phones, it's not like the olden days when you had to travel across the world just to say okay.

Mam' Adelaide: (laughing) you're exaggerating now.

They take a moment laughing at that then calm down.

Mam' Adelaide: I should start with my duties and I don't come on weekends. I also used to come just three times a week but now that you're here you'll be seeing a lot of me. My daughter helps out when I'm not okay or sometimes she just comes on her own when she's not attending so that's how we'll be

working. Don't be frightened when you see her, she will be filling in for me and she knows her job.

Lonwabo: okay well I'm heading to Hoedspruit tomorrow morning, I will be back on Sunday so I will see you and your daughter next week.

Mam' Adelaide: okay.

Lonwabo: don't cook, I'm going out in an hour I will grab something to eat.

Mam' Adelaide: okay, have a nice day and evening.

Lonwabo: you too.

He goes to his bedroom and freshens up while waiting for a call from his friends. The perks of making friends everywhere you go, you don't have to worry about who to go out with.

A few minutes later he walks out smelling nice in his jogger pants and a jacket and then bids mam' Adelaide goodbye.

NTSAKO

She's with her sister and they're just chatting while watching music videos.

Tintswalo: are you going to your man's place tonight?

Ntsako: no, he said he's got loads of work this weekend.

Tintswalo: so how about we hit the club? I'm off and I have money.

Ntsako: you know me and crowds don't mix.

Tintswalo: just for tonight, I found one bottle missing from my heaven so maybe you can do it even tonight.

Ntsako: I don't even want to think of that night.

Tintswalo: (laughing) what happened? I found you passed out on the couch with the bottle empty in your hand.

She sighs leaning back on the couch then place her hand on her forehead before turning her head to her sister.

Ntsako: had I known wine tastes that good I would've long started satisfying my dry throat with it. I poured half a glass that night then took one sip and relaxed. When it finished I poured another half glass and then drank in one go. It felt like it

wasn't doing anything much, I mean I could feel my body relaxing and a little light-headed but I still needed more so I drank straight from the bottle. When it was half I took my phone and called Tshegofatso. I don't know what I was saying and luckily my phone doesn't have a call recorder so I'm not feeling guilty.

Tintswalo is laughing while clapping her hands.

Tintswalo: sis let's go out, you have a lot of stress and maybe being around people will reduce some of it. I'll even ask the DJ to play your favorite songs so you can dance your stress away.

Ntsako reluctantly looks at her but Tintswalo holds her hand and stands up pulling her off the couch.

Tintswalo: let's prepare our outfits.

TSHEGOFATSO

Later that day he's at the bus rank waiting for Owethu. He approaches the bus that's slowing down and waits just by the door so she can see him.

Owethu gets off holding her small duffel bag and then throws herself in his arms.

Tshegofatso: pumpkin.

Owethu: hey baby, how are you?

Tshegofatso: I'm good now that you're here.

They break the hug and then look into each other's eyes before chuckling and hugging again.

Tshegofatso: okay let's go now. We still have to catch a taxi.

They leave hand in hand headed to the taxi rank going to Tshego's place.

It doesn't take long for them to arrive and Owethu throws herself on the couch.

Tshegofatso takes her bag to his room and comes back to take off her shoes. She is wearing sneakers today and a jean.

He takes the shoes to his room and she follows behind him. She gets in and unbutton then unzip her jeans before lying on the bed and raising her legs for him to take off the jean. She takes off the rest of the clothes

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remaining with her thong underwear then open his wardrobe and takes out his t-shirt to put on.

Owethu: where is madam?

Tshego: as if you would have loved to find her here? and are we not supposed to talk about us and us only when we're together?

Owethu: I was just asking.

Tshego: and I think you've been answered.

They take snacks from the kitchen counter then go to the couch and start catching up.

AYABONGA

Later that night he checks on Owethu and she tells him he can't call cause they are using the same room and it's cold outside.

He settles for chatting on WhatsApp as he asks how the trip was and all.

She goes offline and he calls Lonwabo. He answers after a few rings and he can't even hear him because of the music in the background.

Lonwabo: cuz, howzit?

Ayabonga: let me guess, you're with Tee.

Lonwabo: (laughing) the whole squad is here cuz. You're the only one missing.

Ayabonga: are you serious? Bongani also?

Lonwabo: he's here with his four eyes.

Ayabonga: (laughing) you are making me miss Pta.

Lonwabo: don't worry I'll be home tomorrow, but I'm leaving on Sunday. I'll bring the Pta mood right to your doorstep.

Ayabonga: or maybe I can drive there tomorrow morning and we'll chill with the guys on Sunday. I'm off on Monday. You'll have a difficult time going to Hoedspruit and coming back to me.

Lonwabo: That's a great plan, I'll tell the guys not to leave the city before you arrive.

Ayabonga: alright man, you be good. I'll see you in a few hours.

Lonwabo: okay, bye.

He can hear the guys in the background asking who he was talking to then he smiles and hangs up. He can't wait to see them, they have such a solid friendship you'd swear they've known each other forever. Well, at least Bongani's been there since childhood but he also left for some time and they met again in Pretoria.

It's always like this, chill for a day or two then disappear for years. He hopes this time they stay around longer, it's nice having them around to talk to and just be.

TINTSWALO

They get into the club with Ntsako holding her hand from behind. They're both in tracksuits and sneakers; you can't dress up for the cold weather right.

Tintswalo signals her colleagues in a greeting only known to them and they smile at each other.

They pass to the couches where a group of guys is busy chatting with food and drinks before them.

Tintswalo leaves Ntsako there to get drinks and a group of girls approaches the guys, trying to entertain them. Ntsako sighs in relief because how was she going to remain calm with all those eyes on her; well not literally but yeah.

Soon Tintswalo comes back with a six-pack of Savanna and the girls are excusing themselves as the guys laugh at their jokes not minding them.

Tintswalo: are you good? comfortable?

Ntsako: yes, but don't leave my side.

Tintswalo: girl I'm not your boyfriend.

Ntsako: I'll go home then.

Tintswalo: okay I'm joking. Loosen up and enjoy the night. You are safe with me. I plan on getting wasted cause I'm not driving so you should too.

Ntsako doesn't respond as she catches one guy eyeing her. He looks handsome and stuff but with how Tshego's been acting lately, she doesn't want any male near her.

The DJ plays Gyakie's need me and Tintswalo gets up with her bottle in hand whining her waist while singing along.

Other people join in and with time moving into midnight, soon everyone is by the stage where the DJ is and they're all just dancing their hearts away.

Ntsako has finally decided to join the crowd and she is enjoying herself too.

TSHEGOFATSO

It's almost 1 am and Ntsako hasn't texted or called or anything. Owethu is sleeping on his thighs with her legs on the couch, she fell asleep while watching movies.

He carefully moves her head and goes to fix the bed then comes back and carries her to the bedroom.

He gently lay her on the bed then tuck her in and walk out to call Ntsako.

Her phone rings unanswered and he sighs getting up from the couch to lock the door before switching off the lights.

He gently gets behind Owethu on the bed and put his hand over her then close his eyes to sleep.

Owethu: good night.

Tshego: good night pumpkin.

She put her hand over his and they both slept.

To be continued...

7

AYABONGA

He's on his way to Pretoria, he passed by Hoedspruit to get other things Lonwabo had left there.

It's almost 9 am and he's been on the road since 6 am. He dials Owethu hoping maybe they can see each other when he arrives.

She answers in a sleepy voice then sounds like she's getting up before yawning.

Ayabonga: Are you not supposed to have started with your trip things?

Owethu: We are only leaving at 10.

Ayabonga: Okay, is there a bathroom nearby?

Owethu: Yeah, just a few metres from the beds.

Ayabonga: Why can't I hear any sound of others getting ready? you sound like you're alone.

Owethu: They're outside. There are other bathrooms outside for privacy purposes.

Ayabonga: Okay. I'm driving there, do you think there's a chance I can see you?

Owethu: No, I won't be allowed to wander alone. We should stick to the group we will be in so that we don't get lost.

Ayabonga: Okay, I guess I'll see you on Monday night then.

Owethu: How long will you be here for?

Ayabonga: Two days only.

Owethu: Okay, drive safely.

Ayabonga: Bye.

He hangs up then plugs his phone to continue playing music. There's a lot of loopholes surrounding this trip story but he'll have to wait and see.

TSHEGOFATSO

He was woken up by Ntsako's call at about 4 am. She was drunk and loud on the other end busy insulting him then crying while professing her love for him.

One thing she said that caught his attention was that she was going to come and cook for him today so he can get some rest after doing his job.

He had taken the call out of the bedroom and when he came back Owethu was up waiting for him to explain.

They're now not talking because he refused to explain.

He comes into the bedroom holding a tray of breakfast and put it on the bedside table.

Tshegofatso: good morning pumpkin.

She doesn't respond so he get on the bed and pull her out of the blankets to hug her.

Owethu: (hugging him back) I'm still angry at you.

Tshegofatso: Pause your anger for now and start by eating then you'll go back to it when you're full.

She involuntarily laughs then swat his hand that's still on her shoulder.

Owethu: Does that even make sense?

Tshegofatso: What else can I say?

He gets up to take out clothes for the day.

Tshegofatso: I was thinking we can go out today, maybe an ice cream date or something?

Owethu: Oh no we can't. Ayabonga is around.

Tshegofatso: You see what dating people with cars does? now we can't even get fresh air because we will just hear by a hooter stopping us.

Owethu: (chewing) I think there's more advantages to having a partner with a car than the disadvantages you're focusing on now.

Tshegofatso: (sighs) Yeah whatever. Finish up so we can see what to do to keep ourselves busy.

LONWABO

He didn't hear Ayabonga driving in because he was tired and deep in sleep.

He walks down the stairs to voices chatting in the kitchen. He can make out Aya's voice as he approaches but the woman's voice is not familiar.

The smell and sound of oil frying something has his stomach grumbling out of control.

He is not much hungover because he's executed the style of drinking bevs while also drinking enough water to keep balance, so hangover is the least of his worries.

Ayabonga: and here is my cousin. Come say hi.

He says to Lonwabo soon as he emerges into the kitchen.

Ayabonga: This is Belinda, mama Adelaide's daughter.

Lonwabo: Hi, nice to meet you.

Belinda: Hey. I thought there was no one in the house. It was unlocked when I came in.

Lonwabo: I might have forgot to lock when I came in this morning. I was tired.

Ayabonga: And drunk.

Lonwabo gives him a side eye and that makes him chuckle.

Belinda: Okay, I'm almost done with breakfast, let me set the table.

Ayabonga: You don't have to, we will sort ourselves out.

Belinda: I'll let you know when I'm done then.

The guys walk to the couch and sit with Lonwabo holding on to his stomach.

Ayabonga: Are you okay?

Lonwabo: Yes, just hungry.

Ayabonga: So, how was last night?

Lonwabo: You know the guys

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I was so tired when the Uber dropped me. My legs still hurt from dancing.

Ayabonga: I guess you needed that since you never got your farewell shag from that ex-colleague of yours.

Lonwabo: (sitting up straight) You remind me, I saw someone at the club last night. I need to find her.

Ayabonga: (raised eyebrow) My cousin in love?, that's a first. I thought you would never come back after that breakup.

Lonwabo: (getting up) I'm going to lose my appetite if I sit near you any longer.

Ayabonga chuckles and then follows behind him. Lonwabo doesn't want to ever talk about the breakup that almost landed him in ICU. He did everything for a woman and she did not only break his heart but stole from him while at it.

He lost his favorite baseball jerseys and a whole lot of other things because of her, and he never even opened a case cause he thought it wasn't worth it. He hasn't healed and that is why before last night he was only open to being friends with benefits and nothing else.

NTSAKO

She wakes up with her head pounding from the drinks she had last night.

The sound also made things worse and she is mad that she alone, has to deal with the aftermath.

She brushes her teeth first then makes cereal and takes the bowl to her bedroom. Tintswalo is nowhere to be found in this apartment and that could only mean she's at the gym.

She takes a spoonful of the cereal and it tastes funny this morning. Her stomach signals that it wants something else. She puts the bowl on the bed and takes her phone to see what she can get on these restaurant apps.

Tintswalo walks into the front door calling her name so she takes the bowl and walks out of her room.

Tintswalo: Sis o'mcane, how are you last born.

Ntsako: I'm hungry.

Tintswalo: Get plates I brought food.

She takes two plates from the cupboard then sit besides her sister by the kitchen counter.

Tintswalo cuts the full chicken into half then put one side into each plate before taking out the pap and hot gravy from the plastics.

Ntsako is already salivating at the smell and it's even better when she grabs the warm pap.

She breaks a small piece then start shaping it in her palm until it's soft, she then dip in the gravy and throw the mixture in her mouth before tearing the meat with her hands and taking a huge piece to join the pap and gravy being crushed by her teeth.

Tintswalo: I still can't get used to how you eat when you're starved.

Ntsako doesn't answer until she's finished eating. She licks her fingers then burp.

Ntsako: Sorry! stop talking to me while I'm eating. I don't want to choke on food.

Tintswalo: I should catch you on camera someday and if you're able to keep quiet throughout watching the video then I will stop commenting too.

She takes their plates to the sink and wash them. Ntsako washes her hands then get some water and drink before turning to her sister.

Ntsako: Who's that guy who was all over you before we came back?

Tintswalo: Which guy?

Ntsako: The one who drove us back. I think he was also playing or something.

Tintswalo: I don't remember.

Ntsako: You'll slip one day and I'll catch you red handed.

Tintswalo laughs dismissing her then heads to her bedroom.

Ntsako: Let me catch some breath so I can get ready for my man.

She talks to herself while going to her bedroom.

A few minutes later she goes to bath then bids her sister farewell informing her she'll be back by noon.

OWETHU

She just finished bathing when she hears the front door opening. Tshego has gone out to get them more snacks.

Ntsako walks in calling out babe then throws her handbag on the couch.

She doesn't bother going to the bedroom but starts by cooking while trying to reach him on the phone.

Meanwhile Owethu lotions her body in the bedroom and put on Tshego's oversized hoodie. She hides her bags in case

madam comes in here but apply perfume of which it would put it out there that there is a female in here.

She sends Tshegofatso a message lying on bed and then starts thinking of all the drama that could unfold should Ntsako see her.

It's been long overdue and maybe it should finally happen so she can know who comes first in Tshegofatso's life between them.

NTSAKO

Almost 2 hours later, she finishes cooking and that's when Tshegofatso walks in. His heart skips a beat but he pretends to be fine.

His phone is off so he doesn't know what's happening. He didn't think she was going to come because that's how she is when drunk. Maybe that's why it caught his attention this time, or it was guilt of knowing there's someone in here.

Ntsako: Hey, good timing, I just finished cooking.

Tshego: (anxiously) Hi. What time did you get here?

Ntsako: I don't know but it hasn't been that long. Are you okay?

Tshego: Yea, I just feel tired. I went out to get some snacks because they're running out and I won't have time during the week.

Ntsako: Okay, let me help you with those.

Tshego: No, it's fine.

Something is not right and she is not leaving without an answer.

Ntsako: I'll fix the bed for you while you put your snacks away.

Tshego: I don't think that would be necessary, just sit down and rest then I will join you for a few minutes. I need to get back to my work and get some rest.

Ntsako: (sighs) Okay.

She goes back to the couch and sits then Tshego passes to his bedroom and takes forever before coming out.

He finds her on her feet with her handbag in hand.

Ntsako: I think I should leave, I also have things to do.

Tshego: I'm sorry I can't spend time with you. I'll make it up to you.

He hugs her and the perfume hits her nose causing her to sneeze. The part she fears most about actually going in the bedroom now is finding a woman, so she swallows and break the hug and then turn to leave.

To be continued...

8

NTSAKO

She gets to the apartment and find Tintswalo watching YouTube videos on her laptop.

She sits closer to her lost in mind and Tintswalo pauses the video then turns to her.

Tintswalo: Are you okay? what happened?

Ntsako: (sadly) I think there's Tshegofatso is hiding from me, another relationship maybe.

Tintswalo: Explain.

Ntsako: I got to his place and he wasn't there, then I started cooking and when he came back he was acting strange. He refused me going to fix the bed for him so he can rest but when he went into the same bedroom he took so long, I was even ready to leave by the time he came out.

She omits the part about the perfume because as much as she's feeling heartbroken now, she still loves Tshego and she doesn't

want her sister to be too involved before she knows for sure she can move on.

Tintswalo: I'm sorry. I don't know what else I can say cause I don't know how you're feeling.

Ntsako: (tearful) I think I need to get some sleep, maybe i'll wake up better.

Tintswalo: We will talk when you're up.

She gets up from the couch and then goes to her room.

Her face has already turned red from both anger and disappointment.

Soon as she lays her head on her bed tears starts flowing down her cheeks and wet the pillow.

She sniffles holding on her chest with her mouth open as she breathes heavily trying not to alert her sister.

It hurts so much she can still smell the perfume scent on her and although it smells like flowers, right now it's suffocating her.

She wipes her tears then gets off the bed and quickly changes into her pyjamas. She gets back on bed and sleep face down crying some more until she feels like her chest is closing in on her.

AYABONGA

He's preparing for the chill out with his friends. He's never troubled himself by constantly checking on Owethu since she made it clear that they can't meet.

They arranged to meet today because some of them have places to be on Monday morning so they have to get some rest tomorrow.

Lonwabo joins him when he's done and they go out to the parking then takes one of his father's car and drive out.

Lonwabo: How is it going with your girlfriend?

Ayabonga: I don't know.

Lonwabo: I long told you to leave that girl.

Ayabonga: Should I remind you of how hot-headed you once were when coming to the woman you were dating?

Lonwabo: And that's the reason I want you to leave before your mind gets messed up. You're going to wake up in a mental institution when she delivers your heartbreak.

Ayabonga: Don't worry about me.

Lonwabo: (sighs defeated)Okay.

They keep quiet for some time.

Lonwabo: No, I have to worry about you. This girl is going to destroy your whole outlook on relationships.

Ayabonga doesn't respond and they drive in silence until they get to this restaurant-bar place they're meeting at.

The other guys are already here and they get up to do their signature handshake and shoulder-bumps while laughing and making noise.

They're a squad of six and their friendship is really beautiful.

They settle down and then order food and drinks then starts with their silly conversations and catching up with each other's lives.

OWETHU

Later that night she is sleeping when Tshegofatso comes to join her.

He is feeling sad for Ntsako because he knows how fragile she is. She never contacted him since she left and he also doesn't know what he's going to say because it's all going to be lies.

He takes off his clothes and remain in his underwear then gets under the blankets.

Owethu turns and looks at him as he sighs heavily. She looks at his chest and it has grown a little broader and stronger so she traces her fingers on it, hoping it will relax his thoughts.

Owethu: Can I give you a massage or anything to help you relax?

Tshegofatso just nods unable to say anything.

Owethu pulls him over so he lie on his stomach, she then gets on his back and starts massaging him from the neck all the way to his middle back.

Owethu: Is it working?

Tshegofatso: (muffled voice) Yes.

Owethu: I know I'm the cause for all this but I thought she was never going to come.

Tshegofatso: It's not your fault, I should have told her the truth from the beginning.

Owethu: She would've still got mad. Don't worry though you've got her eating out of your palm, she'll come around.

Tshegofatso: One day she won't.

Owethu: Then you have to formally introduce us. I don't have to like her, we can just be civil towards each other.

He keeps quiet while she continues massaging him.

Owethu: I'm thinking since I'm leaving tomorrow, can we at least just be enjoy these last moments. I mean I'm not thinking about anyone other than us right now. You and I have been together since forever, let's not forget that.

Tshegofatso sighs with his eyes closed. He has grown so fond of Owethu that he seems to be unable to draw any line when it comes to her.

Once done she lays on his back and traces her fingers to his waist caressing him on the sides of his stomach.

He giggles as it tickles, almost dropping her off the bed and she gently falls on the side and then get up to run away from him.

Tshegofatso follows after her pacing and then grabs her by her arms before she could get to the couch in the dining area.

Owethu: (laughing) I'm sorry.

He tickles her as they both fall on the floor laughing then he pulls her up and put her on his shoulder going back to the bedroom while she playfully kicks in the air.

TSHEGOFATSO

He tosses her on the bed and start tickling her while she laughs uncontrollably trying to block him with her hands.

She grabs the pillow and hit his head and then he lets go of her and also grab another pillow hitting her face with it.

They pillow-fight for a few minutes and then starts playfully fighting until Tshegofatso mounts Owethu and pin her hands above her head then look into her eyes.

She giggles and then turn him over and sit on his stomach.

Owethu: That day when I found you, who was that girl?

Tshegofatso: I forgot her name but we met on Facebook and she was charmed so she made means and I just went along with it.

Owethu: Were you starved or what?

Tshegofatso: No, nothing like that. It was just a moment of whatever. Are you jealous?

He says with a smirk, his hands holding her waist.

Owethu: (getting off him) Who? me?

Tshegofatso: Yes you.

Owethu: Maybe..

Tshegofatso: It doesn't suit you pumpkin.

She hits him with the pillow and he laughs before pulling her over. They look into each others eyes and then lean in slowly while breathing heavily.

Their lips smashes and they hungrily devour each other in a rushed heated kiss.

Everything is happening so fast and they're all over each other.

Owethu gets on top of him and start grinding on his manhood while his hands travels behind her waist to pull out whatever clothing that's on the way.

He gets up with her in his arms and then make her stand on the floor while he takes off his underwear and help her with hers.

They're both in it for it so their hands are exploring each other's bodies while their lips are on a journey of their own.

Tshegofatso: (whispering) Are you still on contraceptives?

Owethu: (moaning) Yes.

He picks her up and put her against the wall. His one hand goes between her legs and he flicks her erect bean while he nibbles on her neck.

He grabs his hard third leg and rubs himself on her.

Tshegofatso: Are you sure about this?

She rapidly nods while moaning with her back against the wall.

He slowly enters her and then settles in for a few seconds as Owethu closes her eyes moaning. He's not an animal down there so it's bearable; although Ayabonga is a bit thicker than him, the length is pretty much the same to her.

He starts pushing in and out slowly and then pick up his pace hitting her insides with each of his inch.

He carries her back to the bed then mount her and slip it in again. They're facing each other and then facing the same direction as he takes it from the back while spanking her butt and kissing the back of her neck. Owethu on top riding him with her nails scratching his chest, Owethu on all fours and Tshegofatso behind at the edge of the bed.

Owethu rolls her eyes to the back and Tshegofatso tightens his grip on her neck as he fills her up groaning.

He slowly lets go of her already melted self and she drops on the bed.

OWETHU

She woke up late this morning but luckily her bags are packed.

She takes a quick bath and then dress while Tshego cleans and put everything in order. No one is saying anything about last night.

Tshegofatso holds her bag as they go to the taxi rank.

Tshegofatso: Please be careful. Text me when you're in the second taxi.

Owethu: I'll be fine. Take care.

They hug and then she gets in the first taxi and Tshegofatso turns to leave.

She makes it to the second rank and gets into a taxi to Phalaborwa. She plugs her earphones and plays music to shorten the journey.

When the taxi drives out it hits her that she's got no proof of the trip or whatsoever. No pictures of anything.

She thinks of downloading pictures from the internet but then Ayabonga is not stupid. She has no option but to lie like she did when she was coming her.

As if he's read her mind, he tells her he's on his way also and if she arrives early he will come see her.

She feels balls of sweats forming on her forehead and the sudden need for air kicks in too.

To be continued...

NTSAKO

She woke up in a good mood and it's now getting better as she's dancing to the music from her headphones while cleaning her room.

Spring cleaning is a type of remedy for when she is feeling down and out. It rejuvenates her and that plus music is an excellent combination.

She moves the items in her room to new locations, a bed on the other side, study table and chair facing the window, she even feels like getting some fresh plants to keep her room all green and stuff.

Tintswalo walks in after knocking for God -knows how long and raises her eyebrows at her before walking over.

She taps on her shoulder and Ntsako turns startled.

Tintswalo: I've been knocking.

Ntsako: Sorry, I didn't hear you.

She looks around the room and then back at Ntsako pointing.

Tintswalo: And then?

Ntsako: (smiling) Just cleaning.

Tintswalo: How are today? are you okay?

Ntsako: (sighs) I'm fine. I'm just hurt but it'll pass. Nothing lasts forever.

Tintswalo: Don't try to get over it quickly because you won't heal.

Ntsako: I'll be fine. If it gets heavy I'll talk to you.

Tintswalo: Okay, be fine. I love you lil sis. I'm going out, there's ice cream in the fridge.

Ntsako: Thank you.

She walks out and then Ntsako plugs her headphones back in and starts dancing to Lady Zamar's Collide while singing along.

Ntsako: (singing) You are a citizen, a resident, a resident in my heart.

It's crazy how she's singing this song while going through what she's going through but then she likes it and it makes her feel alive, so why not?, maybe one day she'll find the citizen to her heart because Tshego isn't it and it's the attachment holding them together now.

OWETHU

She gets to her room and quickly takes out ice blocks from the fridge after putting her bags away.

She lies on her back and then open her legs tracing the ice on her opening.

After that chat with Ayabonga she searched ways to tighten the haven after a sexual encounter and everything seemed

complicated or time consuming, so she remembered this method from her high school classmates she's heard talking.

She's hoping it works because she just can't say no to Ayabonga without a reason. I mean she is always ready to open her legs for him.

The ice makes her punani numb and she circles it until the it is completely dissolved.

Her phone rings and she answers pulling up her panties.

Ntsako: Hello.

Tshego: Have you arrived?

Ntsako: Yes, I just got in.

Tshego: How was the journey?

Ntsako: It was fine.

Tshego: Okay, about last night, I enjoyed it.

Owethu: I did too but I would like if we don't talk about it.

Tshego: Why?

Owethu: So we can be safe.

Tshego: I understand. When is Ayabonga coming to see you?

Owethu: I don't know.

Tshego: Please don't let him in for a few days. He can't get in a day after me.

Owethu: I'll try.

Tshego: Try harder, we can't have him finding out-

She hears a car driving through the gate and she rushes to peek through the window.

Owethu: He's here

bye.

She hangs up and then quickly put things in their place before changing into comfortable clothes.

An idea pops in her head and she gets in bed covering herself with a blanket.

AYABONGA

He knocks on the door and can hear Owethu coughing from the inside.

He tries the door and it's unlocked so he opens and gets in to find her nestled in bed as if sick.

There's a packet of pills on the bedside table with a glass of water half empty.

Aybonga: (worriedly) Babe, are you okay?

Owethu: (coughing) I think I'm coming down with some flu. It must be the water I was using at Pretoria.

Aybonga: Let's get you to a doctor.

Owethu: I'll be fine. I just need some sleep so I can rest.

Aybonga: Let me lie with you for some time. I'll leave later on.

She moves for him and then he takes off his t-shirt and joins her.

Ayabonga: Are you warm enough?

Owethu: Yes.

Ayabonga: How was your trip?

Owethu: It was fine, just tiring.

Ayabonga: Did you get everything needed for you to pass?

She's holding her breath for this conversation to not escalate because she's running out of lies and if she lies too much she will forget her own lies.

Owethu: Yes, even more.

Ayabonga: That's good news.

Owethu: How was yours?

Ayabonga: I was with my boys from high school and college. It was nice.

Owethu: What did you get up to?

Ayabonga: Just chill and drink then went our separate ways.

Owethu: Okay.

Ayabonga: Are you going to school tomorrow?

Owethu: I'm not sure, why?

Ayabonga: I was thinking now that I'm alone at my place; how about you come with me tonight because I know I won't sleep if you're not where I can see you. You are literally alone here and if you get worse there's no one who will help you.

Owethu: How about I come tomorrow?

Ayabonga: You are sick today, come.

He gets off the bed and takes her overnight bag then put clothes in.

He grabs the one she just came back with and takes her toiletries together with her pendant.

Ayabonga: I'm coming, please get ready.

He puts on his t-shirt and then grabs his keys and walks out.

Owethu breathes out heavily and then grabs her phone and charger and fix the bed before walking out, bumping into Aya at the door.

Ayabonga: Go wait in the car, I'll lock up.

He walks back in and grabs the packet of pills from the bedside table and then walk out switching off the light and locking the door.

TSHEGOFATSO

Later that night he dials Ntsako and she answers on the first ring as if she's been waiting for him to call.

Tshego: Hey.

Ntsako: Hi.

Tshego: Uhm...are you okay?

Ntsako: Yes.

Tshego: You seemed a bit upset when you left.

Ntsako: I'm fine. It has passed.

Tshego: Can I come see you?

Ntsako: No, it's late.

Tshego: Okay. Tomorrow then?

Ntsako: I'll let you know if I'm free.

Tshego: Okay. Bye.

She doesn't respond but hangs up.

He sighs massaging his face as a bunch of thoughts fills his mind.

He takes out his phone and dials Owethu hoping she can help calm his racing thoughts.

His call is declined and then followed by a text telling him it's not the right time.

He clenches his teeth and then heads out to get some fresh air.

He's got work tomorrow and should probably rest but not when he's like this.

AYABONGA

He's sure he heard Owethu declining a call and then texting before putting her phone under the pillow.

He gets up and switch on the lights then goes to the kitchen to drink water before coming back to the bedroom.

He squats near her face and then place his hand on her forehead. There's not even a single feel of a rise in temperature so he sits up and wakes her even though he knows she isn't sleeping.

Ayabonga: (gently) Babe.

Owethu: Mmmh...

Ayabonga: Wake up.

She rubs her eyes as if she was sleeping and then gets up slowly opening them while making those sinuses sounds.

Ayabonga: How are you feeling now?

Owethu: A bit better.

Ayabonga: Would you like if I lied to you while you know I did something behind your back?

Owethu: No.

Ayabonga: Why do I feel like you're hiding something from me and in turn lying to me?

Owethu: What makes you feel like that?, maybe that can help point us to the why.

Ayabonga: (sighs) Maybe it's all in my head. Sorry for waking you, let's get back to sleep.

She internally sighs in relief and then gets back in bed.

Ayabonga also gets in bed and snuggles closer to her.

Ayabonga: I missed you, maybe that's why I'm feeling insecure.

He strokes her arms trying to get her in the mood.

Owethu: I'm not feeling okay babe, let's try tomorrow.

Ayabonga: I'll be quick, just to get my mind off things.

She gives in and he starts kissing her but he can feel that she is tense.

He removes her clothes while kissing her but when he goes down on her she almost closes her legs and he raises his eyebrows at her.

Ayabonga: (suspiciously) Are you okay?

Owethu: (anxiously) Yes.

He kisses her tummy going down and when he reaches her punani it looks swollen. It is completely different from how he knows it and when he touches her she flinches.

He shakes his head and then gets off the bed and goes to his bag.

He comes back with a condom and a lubricant bottle.

Owethu doesn't say anything as he mounts her and roll the condom on his length then slowly enters her.

She can feel the pain because she hasn't healed from that rough sex so she winces in pain mixed with pleasure.

Ayabonga goes on until he's finished and then rolls off the condom and goes to the bathroom to clean himself.

It's the first time since they've started dating that he didn't care about making her cum.

She closes her legs as tears threaten to come out but quickly pulls herself together when she hears footsteps approaching.

Ayabonga gets in the bedroom and switches off the lights then lie behind her.

Ayabonga: You will be fine in the morning, sex is a good remedy for flu. Good night.

He turns to the other side and doze off while Owethu silently cries herself to sleep.

A FEW DAYS LATER.

To be continued...

10

LONWABO

He's now got the hang of things at his workplace and he's enjoying being in the office.

He loves his job very much and it doesn't even feel like he's working because this is what he's always wanted.

There's a recent job coming up to interview a celebrity musician coming over to perform at one of the clubs around. It's the same club he saw his soulmate and he's been on the search for her with no luck.

He's smiling thinking of her face and silently praying that he meets her again.

He's being briefed together with his team by their chief editor on what's going to happen and what she's expecting.

CE: Anything else?

Lonwabo raises his hand and she points at him to talk.

Lonwabo: Do we also party when we're out there in the club?

The rest of the staff laughs and the Chief editor smiles shaking her head.

CE: So long you get the job done. It will be on a Saturday, three days from today, so you have a chance but please report to the office on Monday morning. We are The Scoop, we should be the first to get hold of every story worth telling.

She asks if there's anything else and then dismisses the meeting.

Lonwabo goes back into his cubicle and starts on research about the musician.

OWETHU

She's been avoiding Ayabonga since that incident. She doesn't know how to even start talking to him because he saw right through her.

More than anything else, she's embarrassed because Ayabonga has been a good boyfriend to him and she just messed it up.

He had no right to do what he did but she's also trying to think of how she would react to such and it seems she can't think of anything because whatever reaction comes out of such situations is uncontrollable.

She also has been ignoring Tshogofatso who's been asking what's happening because it's evident through her statuses that she's going through something.

Her phone rings and speak of the devil.

Owethu: Hello.

Tshego: Hi, what's going on?

Owethu: With what?

Tshego: What's with the statuses on WhatsApp?

Owethu: Nothing. What do you want?

Tshego: I was just checking on you, you've been ignoring my texts and stuff.

Owethu: Because I don't want to talk to you or about my statuses.

Tshego: What did I do? we had a great time when you were here but suddenly I'm your enemy?

Owethu: Bye, Tshego.

She hangs up and puts her phone on silent. The best thing to do would be to go home for a few days.

She pulls her backpack and starts pacing to her room hoping Ayabonga doesn't pull up next to her.

NTSAKO

She's having her best time going on solo dates. She's just posted a picture of herself having lunch and she can see Tshegofatso typing.

She pays the bill and walks out of the restaurant to the taxi stop.

"You look beautiful."

A text comes through from him. She heart reacts and then log out of WhatsApp.

Her phone rings and she sighs answering as she gets into the taxi.

Ntsako: Hello.

Tshego: Hi

Advertisement

how are you?

Ntsako: I'm good.

Tshego: I was just checking on you.

Ntsako: Okay.

A moment of silence passes and then he sighs.

Tshego: Can I come see you today, please?

Ntsako: (sighs) Sure.

Tshego: I'll call when I'm outside.

Ntsako: Okay.

Tshego: I love you, bye.

He hangs up and she heaves a sigh. She's been missing him and maybe he's learnt his lesson. He's still her boyfriend after all and she has to get over what happened. She can't be mad forever.

She plugs in her earphones as the taxi starts moving.

AYABONGA

He's knocked off earlier and he's now at his place cooking.

There's a lot on his mind and it's affecting his routines.

He finds himself thinking of Owethu, what he did was wrong and maybe he should have just kept quiet and not reacted at all. But how do you control yourself when such happens unexpectedly?

He can't even share with Lonwabo because the wound is still fresh.

He's been contemplating texting her since he dropped her at her place on Monday morning after driving in silence.

He heard her crying herself to sleep that night and he wasn't moved at all.

He's afraid of what's becoming of him because of mjolo and if he's not careful he's going to be worse.

Maybe he can go see her today and apologise because he wants to go to Hoedspruit this weekend.

He switches off the stove and takes his car keys and then drive out.

A few minutes later he parks at her gate and then gets off. It's now he's reminded that he should have brought something to go along with the apology.

He walks in and knocks on her door and she opens with her eyes puffy and face messed up.

Ayabonga: Hi.

She looks at him and fold her hands not giving him space to walk in.

Owethu: What do you want?

Ayabonga: Can I please come in so we can talk?

Owethu: Say whatever you want to say and leave.

Ayabonga: Okay, I thought you will be mature about this but clearly I was wrong.

Owethu: Mature after you sexually used me?

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Used you? Let me leave before I say something I'll regret.

He turns and walks away then she slams the door behind him and starts crying.

Soon as he gets into his car he sends her a text.

"I know you had sex at Pretoria and I'm trying to think it wasn't with that male bestie of yours. You didn't even try to stop me

knowing clearly that you're swollen down there... I'm going to Hoedspruit this weekend and I came to tell you that."

He drives off in speed with his heart beating out of his chest.

TSHEGOFATSO

He's with Ntsako at his place. He went to fetch her and because Tintswalo was around, Ntsako agreed to come with him.

They're seated on the couch facing each other.

Tshego: (softly) I want to apologise to you for how things went the last time you were here. I'm sorry that I acted out of character, I just wasn't feeling well and as a man my ego would be bruised if I allowed you to see me at my lowest and weakk like that. I was just not okay and I didn't want you to feel sorry for me.

He can see that she's not believing him so he leans closer breathing on her face.

Tshego: I am sorry and I miss you. Our bed is cold without you babe. I miss being inside of you and feeling your warmth running inside my blood...

He strokes her cheek and she drops her gaze as her breathing rises.

Tshego: Please allow me to show you how sorry I am. It's the only way I can apologise so you can see how starved I am.

He places his lips on hers and she responds. He's mentally punching the air as she wraps her hands around his neck and starts kissing him hungrily.

Tshego: I love you babe and you're the only woman for me.

He says in between the kiss while mounting her.

Their clothes flies across the room as they head to the bedroom.

He lays her on the bed and parts her legs burying his head inside of her.

She's screaming his name because well, it doesn't feed on pap so she missed this.

She lets herself enjoy him and when he buries his inches in her she feels like he could just park it there forever.

They're at it for some time, taking breaks in between and going again.

By the time he's done with her she's weak and ready to sleep.

He cleans her haven with a warm towel and then covers her with the blankets.

He takes her phone to see who she's been talking to and there's no one. He sighs in relief and goes to take a shower.

To be continued...

11

NTSAKO

She's up and stretching herself when Tshegofatso walks in with a tray of food.

Tshego: Good morning my Queen.

Ntsako: (smiling) Hey, how are you?

Tshego: I'm okay. Here's your food.

Ntsako: Thank you.

She takes the tray and sit back then starts eating.

Tshego: Am I forgiven?

Ntsako: I'm still eating, and no, not yet.

Tshego: (sighs) I understand.

Ntsako: I won't miraculously get over everything but I'm willing to try. I will also need the truth from you so I can forgive you.

Tshego: Okay, the truth is there's a perfume I got for you and I thought you would like it but I wanted it to be a surprise.

Ntsako: Where is it then?

Tshego: It's a surprise babe. (getting up) Finish up so we can start with our day.

Ntsako: (raised eyebrow) Start with our day?

Tshego: Yes. I'll be getting ready.

AYABONGA

He's driving to Hoedspruit when his phone rings. It's his mom.

Aya: Mama.

Her: Hey baby, how are you?

Aya: I'm good, and on my way home.

Her: Oh! what's the matter?

Aya: What do you mean?

Her: You're my son, just a few years old but I know you.

Aya: (sighs) We will talk when I get there.

Her: Okay, I was just checking on you.

Aya: Okay. Bye.

She hangs up and he plays music, Best friend comes on and reminds him of Owethu's birthday and how he went all out to make her day.

He clicks and press next then listen to another song that's got no memory behind.

OWETHU

Later that day she's all ready to get home when the taxi stops in front of her.

She gets in and close the door then sit down plugging her earphones listening to music.

She decides to scroll through Facebook and WhatsApp and the statuses rolling in from "Bestie" are enough to cause her a heart failure.

She can feel tears threatening to come out because how is he having it all perfect while her relationship is going down the drain and the reason behind it was made possible by both of them.

She wants to comment but she holds herself and logs off then play goes on listening to music.

She hasn't been listening well to the music or maybe the statutes made her lose her hearing ability.

Best friend is playing and it's only now she can hear the lyrics and what Ayabonga might have meant when playing it for her on her birthday.

"I'm pretty tough, but you don't know how scared I am, scared I am to lose you..."

A tear escapes her eye and she wipes it looking around for anyone who might have seen him.

Everyone is minding their own business so she composes herself and focus on her journey and the song.

LONWABO

It's a Saturday morning and he's getting ready for his day.

He's going to the office before his interview today, just to go over the artist's background as a team and come up with ways to tackle this whole thing.

He's got a good feeling about this and he can't wait to showcase his skills to the world, maybe at a later stage he can start blogging and other creative stuff.

He arrives at the office and find his team already there. They're in their casuals and just chatting.

He greets them and then they start with the brainstorming. It seems they have been waiting for him.

TINTSWALO

Later that night she's working at the club. She tried dragging Ntsako over but hey, the girl is with her man.

She serves the guys on the table their drinks and then goes back behind the counter.

The guy working with him is still serving other customers when Lonwabo walks in with his team.

He comes to her and orders drinks. He turns to leave but slowly turns back to her remembering her from that night.

He clears his throat and looks at her while she does her thing.

Tintswalo: I was going to bring them to your table.

Lonwabo: Actually I'm not waiting for the drinks. I'm Lonwabo and I saw you that other weekend with another female. I have been looking for her because I liked her and would love to pursue a relationship with her.

Tintswalo: (smiling) Well, if you're really looking for her then you'll find her.

Lonwabo: You're not going to help me?

Tintswalo: You never asked for my help.

He chuckles and then turn to walk away as Tintswalo follows after him to the table.

She places the bucket of drinks on the middle of the table and then turns to walk away.

OWETHU

She's home and has already had her dinner. Her mother is working late and she's all alone.

She switches off the TV and goes to her bedroom where she dials Tshego.

Meanwhile Tshego is pillow-talking with Ntsako while she caresses her hair.

Ntsako: I don't like being lied to cause I can also lie and it won't be nice. Imagine I start and then you find out the truth and-

Tshego's phone rings and "Bestie" flashes on the screen.

His heart skips a beat and there's no lying about this because it's out in the open.

He answers it and tries getting up but Ntsako's hand presses his head on the pillow.

He compresses the volume button so it can go low and Ntsako grabs the phone then puts it on loudspeaker.

Owethu hears silence on the other end. She know for sure that maybe they're together but so what?

Owethu: Bestie.

Tshego: (jumpy) Hey, how are you?

Owethu: I'm good, I'm home.

Tshego: Really? I thought you would never leave Phalaborwa. Who did you leave Ayabonga with?

Owethu: He also went home. What are you doing?

The tricky questions, he clenches his teeth.

Tshego: I'm in bed. You?

Owethu: I'm also in bed, trying to sleep but it's not giving in.

Tshego: I see.

Owethu: Where is that yellow bone girlfriend of yours? Did you tell her you have a female bestie that comes first before romantic relationships?

Heart-attack!

He doesn't know how to answer that and he can feel Ntsako's gaze on him.

Tshego: You're crazy.

Owethu: I am, especially about that golden-

He quickly gets up the bed with the phone and turn it off.

Ntsako clicks on her phone and then gets dressed before walking out.

Tshego is standing by the couch cursing when he sees her coming out of the bedroom.

Tshego: Babe, Babe!

She yanks his hands off as he tries to hold her.

Tshego: Babe we can fix this, please don't leave. It's late and not safe out there.

She unlocks the door and goes out slam it behind.

Tshego runs back to the bedroom to put on clothes and shoes. By the time he walks out the door he finds her closing the door of an Uber and it drives off.

Tshego: Shit!

He switches on his phone and dials Owethu back.

She answers in a sleepy voice like she didn't just spit nonsense a few minutes back.

Owethu: Bestie.

Tshego: Bestie my foot! what are you playing at huh?

Owethu: What did I do?

Tshego: You just ruined my relationship Owethu.

Owethu: I have what she has, what's the matter?

Tshego: (chuckles) You are so evil.

Owethu: Then we're even cause you went on to enjoy your relationship after mine was destroyed by the sex we both took part in.

Tshego: Did I force you to have sex with me Owethu? was it not your idea to come visit me? So you wanted to use me but now that it got back to bite you you want to blame me?

Owethu: You'll be fine bestie. I wana sleep now. I love you.

She hangs up and then smiles dozing off.

TINTSWALO

She received a text from Ntsako and she's now waiting for her outside the club.

It's getting crazy in there as the crowd is buzzing for the artist who's taking the stage.

Ntsako's face is all red and swollen as she gets off the Uber. She falls into her sister's arms.

Ntsako: (crying) I can't do this anymore sis. It hurts, it hurts so much.

Tintswalo: (brushing her back) It's going to be okay baby sis. Let's get you home, you can't be here when you're like this.

She pulls back and then wipe her tears.

Ntsako: No, I need to be here. It will make it feel better. Let's go inside.

Tintswalo: (hesitantly) Okay bring your bag so I can put it safe.

She gives her everything she's got on her and she's left with only R200.

Ntsako: You'll meet me at the bar.

She walks in and it's good that people are focused on the stage. She sits by the bar and wait for Tintswalo who appears shortly from the back.

She serves her drinks and tells her to stay at the bar.

Lonwabo is coming to fetch another round when he notices her on the stool. She looks like she's drowning in whatever and he doesn't want to talk to her in that state.

He greets her and she greets back.

Lonwabo: Are you okay?

Ntsako: (burps) I'm fine. Are you okay?

She chuckles after that question and when Tintswalo comes to check on her she finds Lonwabo seated next to her.

Tintswalo: Tonight must be your lucky night.

Lonwabo: I guess.

He takes the bucket and then leaves them. He wants to talk to her because what if he never sees her again soon.

As he turns after dropping the bucket at the table, he sees a guy coming through the door and approaching Ntsako.

He looks pretty angry and as he nears Ntsako he stretches his hand and hold her which seems to upset her.

He goes nearby and when Ntsako sees him she runs into his arms.

Ntsako: Tshego leave me alone. Go to your bestie because you've clearly been hitting it.

Tshego: Babe, let's go talk outside please.

Lonwabo: Can you please just respect that she doesn't want to talk to you.

Tshego: (shouting) I'm not talking to you. I'm talking to your girlfriend.

Tintswalo: And she doesn't want to talk to you, leave before the bouncers get to you.

He looks down and then brushes his face.

Tshego: Please get back to me. I love you.

Ntsako: Not like you love Ayabonga's girlfriend.

To be continued...

12

LONWABO

He's lying on his back on the bed. He just woke up after coming home at 1am.

He stretches and then rubs his eyes waking up. The thought of how things played out last night comes to his mind and he sighs brushing his face.

He had his soulmate in his hands at the club and she was fighting with her boyfriend who is allegedly in love with Ayabonga's girlfriend.

He would love to rejoice over the moment he held her in his arms but the argument that involved his cousin's name is lingering in his head and he is afraid of the reality being exactly his cousin.

For his cousin's sake he hopes it's not him because the pain he'll feel will make him go crazy.

He decides to send Ayabonga a text so he can call and it doesn't take long for his phone to ring.

Ayabonga: Cuz.

Lonwabo: (shuffling) Hey, how are you?

Ayabonga: I'm good. Are you okay? you sound off.

Lonwabo: (sighs) Something happened last night and I don't know how to go about it.

Ayabonga: Let me go to my room cause I'm home so we can talk.

He keeps quiet and can hear shuffling on the other side.

Ayabonga: Yeah, let's talk.

Lonwabo: Remember the girl I told you about? the one I saw at the club that weekend you were here.

Ayabonga: Yes.

Lonwabo: I found her.

Ayabonga: (smiling) I'm happy for you cuz.

Lonwabo: But she was not in the right state and she was fighting with her boyfriend who walked in the club a few minutes after her.

Ayabonga: Then that's not a good thing, you can't be with someone like that.

Lonwabo: What made me call you though is that during the word exchange part, she told her boyfriend that he doesn't love her like he loves Ayabonga's girlfriend.

Silence!

They both wait on each other to say something. Lonwabo is holding his breath hoping Ayabonga takes it lightly.

Ayabonga is waiting on his cousin to laugh and say it's a joke.

Neither is happening. They're just silent.

After a good two minutes, Lonwabo sighs and then break the ice.

Lonwabo: I'm sorry cuz.

The line goes off.

Lonwabo sighs getting off the bed and goes to the bathroom.

AYABONGA

He knows there are other Ayabongas out there but what are the odds?

His girlfriend just came back from Pretoria not so long. It can't be a coincidence, it just can't.

His heart is doing the exact same thing it did when he saw her swollen haven and he doesn't know what to do cause that night he solved it by having sex with her with a condom.

He also wants to go on about this thing to confirm but he's got no energy for it anymore, or maybe he's scared of the outcome?

A faint knock on his door disturbs his racing thoughts and he wipes his tears and then goes to open.

His niece walks in with her hands raised to him so he can pick her up.

He laughs taking her and walking out to the dining area where the baby's mother is asking if anyone saw her.

Ayabonga: I'm with her, she came to knock at my door.

They all laugh as he tries to put her down but she clings on him crying and put her little hands around his neck hugging him.

Her mother tries to take her but she's not giving in.

Ayabonga: It's okay baby, I won't let them take you okay.

She nods as he walks out to the garden.

NTSAKO

She finds a bottle with quarter green liquid inside waiting for her by the bedside.

There's a note besides it and it reads:

"For the energy you lost last night and might need back today, drink me before you do anything else."

She opens the cap to smell the liquid and it doesn't smell bad, it's actually just green because of the ingredients used maybe.

She takes a sip and shame a book should be judged by it's cover especially if you can see the colour of the pages.

She can't spit it out anywhere because this is her bedroom and it's clean.

She wakes up to go to the bathroom and the front door opens. She hears a male's voice followed by her sister's.

Tintswalo: She might still be sleeping, let me check on her.

She closes the bathroom door and could feel her insides turning because she actually swallowed the liquid.

Within a few seconds she's all over the toilet seat with her throat returning the percentages she took in last night.

Tintswalo: (knocking) Ntsako are you okay in there?

Ntsako: (scratchy voice) I'm..fine...

She stretches her mouth wide open again making way for the vomit, and then she flushes the toilet and stand up.

Slowly but surely she reaches the shower and takes a quick warm one before coming out to brush her teeth and walks out.

She changes and joins her sister and his boyfriend in the lounge.

Tintswalo finally does the introductions and they shake hands before digging into the food the two brought.

OWETHU

She's going back to college later today and she's now just taking a walk around the neighborhood when she comes across her former classmate and friend, Lesedi.

Lesedi: Hi Owethu.

Owethu: Hi.

Lesedi: It's been a long time. How have you been?

Owethu: Good.

She is keeping the conversation as short as it can be because she doesn't like Lesedi that much.

They used to be friends in early high school years and Lesedi slept with Tshogofatso which resulted in her and Owethu's friendship failing.

Lesedi: When did you come back?

Owethu: Lesedi we're not friends anymore

I don't have to answer all these questions.

Lesedi: Don't tell me you're still upset about Tshogo and I.

She doesn't answer and then Lesedi sighs.

Lesedi: Okay, I will leave you alone but at least I tried. I didn't even have to apologise because it's not like you were dating

him. You decided to be his friend but you are always destroying his relationships, you must be crazy.

She walks away as Owethu clicks and then heads home.

She finishes packing her bags soon as she gets home and freshens up before going to the taxi stop.

In about 25 minutes after getting a taxi, she's in Tzaneen and she gets into the Phalaborwa minibus then waits for it to fill up before they can pay and go.

TSHEGOFATSO

Later that day he checks for an opening for a job in Tzaneen. He feels like being in Pretoria doesn't make sense anymore because he has lost his girlfriend and he doesn't like his bestie now.

His mother's call comes through as he's scrolling past a few assistant jobs.

Tshego: Ma Mokošana.

Mrs. M: Hey baby, how are you?

Tshego: I'm good, and how are you?

Mrs. M: I'm okay. Your dad is coming home for your brother's birthday, will you be around?

Tshego: I had totally forgot about it. Let me see what I can do and then I will let you know.

Mrs. M: Okay, I'll hear from you then.

Tshego: Bye!

He hangs up and contact his boss to see if he can get a few days off.

It's a tradition for the family to have lunch together on each birthday celebration. This is just to make those beautiful memories because they're hardly at one place for long unless it's during December.

His boss gives him Friday off and he decides that he'll come back on Monday morning. At least he'll come back refreshed.

He wants to text Ntsako but he finds himself blocked on all apps. He sighs and then drop the phone on the couch and heads to the kitchen.

AYABONGA

Later on he calls Lonwabo back. He's had time to process what he was told and it's now he is thinking of ways he could have reacted.

Lonwabo answers after a few rings.

Lonwabo: Cuz.

Aya: Hey.

Lonwabo: What's up? you good?

Aya: Ya. I'm sorry about earlier on.

Lonwabo: It's okay, so long you're fine.

Aya: Yeah. I want to confirm this whole thing, can you help me out?

Lonwabo: Yes.

Aya: Can you get the girl so she can maybe confirm if the Aya that's being talked about is me?

Lonwabo: How about you get me a picture of the guy and then I'll confirm if he's the one I saw or not.

Aya: That can also work. I'll steal when Owethu puts up her status, she likes flaunting him.

Lonwabo: I'll hear from you then.

Aya: So are you still going to pursue the girl?

Lonwabo: Yes, but I want her to heal first. Who knows, I might score myself a date for the wedding.

Aya: (chuckles) Don't remind me. It seems I'm going to be dateless.

Lonwabo: If I was you I would find someone cause knowing my aunt, you already have a girl from EC as your date. They have shown her your pictures and she's always dreaming about you. She sees herself being the next to get married and coming to live at Hoedspruit.

They both laugh at the possibility of this imagination.

Aya: (sighs) I will have to make a plan then.

Lonwabo: Please do.

Aya: I have to go now. We will talk.

He hangs up and goes in the house where they're setting the table.

NTSAKO

Later that day Tintswalo comes back from wherever she had gone with her man.

She finds Ntsako watching movies and then joins her.

Tintswalo: How are you feeling now?

Ntsako: I'm fine.

Tintswalo: Do you know that guy you ran into his arms last night?

Ntsako: (surprised) I ran into a guy's arms?

Tintswalo: And actually clung onto him because you didn't want Tshego to touch you.

Ntsako: I did that?

Tintswalo: Bathong, Ntsako! do you even remember anything from last night?

Ntsako: (brushing her face) I don't but you seem to have captured every moment.

Tintswalo: (chuckles) Okay. Let's start from the text you sent and how you arrived with your bag at the club.

She takes out her phone to show her and Ntsako cannot believe it. The text is in capital letters, clearly showing how angry she was.

To be continued...

13

AYABONGA

He had an awesome weekend that was almost ruined by the news Lonwabo told him but he tried to enjoy himself anyway cause that's what he had gone home for.

Being home always does the trick when one is feeling down and out. The air is just so different and being surrounded by people you grew up with or your family makes things better.

He also managed to circumvent his mom's concerns about his love life once again and only told her he was just missing them hence the sad mood she felt on the call.

As always, she didn't believe him and he's also getting tired of telling her lies.

He's at his place getting ready for work and he is planning on going to see Owethu later on. It's Wednesday already and he hasn't seen her since he came back. She never also texted back

so it's all the "if you're quiet then I'll also be quiet" thing.
Childish if you ask me.

He opens his WhatsApp to check if she's online so he can be the bigger person and text. He does not want to risk going there only to find something worse than what he's already seen.

Owethu has posted a picture of Tshegofatso with Ntsako, captioned, "my bestie and his girlfriend" with heart emojis.

Ayabonga chuckles in disbelief and quickly takes a screenshot of the picture for his investigations.

He doesn't send the text anymore but decides he will just go and get it done with.

He finishes up and goes out dialling Lonwabo.

Lonwabo: Hey.

Ayabonga: I know you're busy but I got the picture and it's even better, I'll send it to you when I get to work.

Lonwabo: Send now, I'm not that busy.

Ayabonga: Okay.

He hangs up and then forward the picture and drives off.

OWETHU

After seeing that Ayabonga saw her status, she deletes it and put up theirs together captioned with a heart emoji.

He's offline and she hopes he can see it because she misses him, and maybe it will do the trick so he can forgive her.

One thing about long distance relationship is that you might not miss them when they're away because you're occupied by whatever. But once you find yourself in the same place as them yet not with them, it's then you feel like the pain of being "neglected" especially if y'all are not in good terms.

Owethu is a natural attention seeker and she is selfish, but she hides it well from the people she's involved with. She wants her bread buttered both sides and doesn't care if it's going to hurt others.

When she was home she had Tshegofatso's relationship to keep her company but now that she's all alone at Phalaborwa, she realizes she needs Ayabonga.

She's thinking of all the outings, eating at restaurants and sometimes being surprised by a drive around and shame she's not that financially independent for all that and need someone else for that.

Ayabonga ticks all the boxes of a good man for her but with how she is doing things, she is going to lose him to someone else and lose all the benefits that comes with being his girlfriend.

She gets ready for class and then leaves with her head ringing with all these thoughts.

LONWABO

He's at a restaurant near the club where Tintswalo works.
They're getting food with his colleague.

Tintswalo is in early today and she sees him getting into the restaurant and then quickly paces to wait for him outside.

He comes out with the colleague holding their food and Tintswalo waves her hand at him so he can stop.

Tintswalo: Hi, I'm sorry to disturb you. I have my little sister's numbers to give to you. I talked to her and she will be waiting for your call.

He takes the numbers and saves them with her name as told by Tintswalo.

Lonwabo: Thanks.

Tintswalo smiles as they part ways.

Lonwabo gets into the car of the colleague and apologise then they drive back to the office.

Their story sold like crazy on Monday. It was well written and brought all the information people needed about the artist.

Lonwabo didn't forget to brag about it on social media and that brought more people's interest on the whole magazine because he had them anticipating on the big announcement he had hinted on since the weekend started.

He's got a large following and he takes advantage of that.

TSHEGOFATSO

He's talking to one of his friends who has to help him with tracking down Owethu.

He decides to call her so they can do their thing and she answers.

Owethu: (cheerfully) Bestie, how are you? I thought you'd never call, thought you were angry at me.

Tshegofatso: Why wouldn't I call? you're still my best friend.

Owethu: You were all angry at me because of that misunderstanding with your girlfriend.

Tshegofatso: And I guess you want to be my girlfriend then because why else would you go to such measures.

Owethu: No

I'm good as your bestie, and besides I didn't know y'all were together.

Tshego: Where are you?

Owethu: I'm at Phb, my place.

Tshego: Okay.

Owethu: You wana come?

Tshego: Maybe.

Owethu: You can't, I'm still trying to fix my relationship with my boyfriend.

Tshego: (chuckles) I don't care.

The guy tells him that they're good and he talks with her for a few more minutes before hanging up.

Tshego: Thanks man.

They finish up and he packs his things and then leaves.

Tshegofatso packs his bag and get ready for tomorrow night.

He sends his mom a text that he'll be home on Friday evening.

His transport is ready for him and he can't wait to execute his plan.

OWETHU

The call with Tshegofatso was off but she doesn't read much into it.

She just finished eating when someone knocks on her door.

She opens in her short pyjama to find Ayabonga standing at the door.

His perfume greets her first and gosh she missed this smell.

He greets her and she's looking at him tongue-tied.

She finally breathe out after coughing and lets him in then close the door.

Owethu: Hi, would you like something to drink or eat?

Ayabonga: No, I came to see you and I'm not staying.

She sits down on the chair facing him as he's seated on the bed.

He's still in his work jacket that's two buttons undone and a jean with work boots.

She is salivating at him but his serious look quickly wipes the smile she's got on her face.

Ayabonga: Come sit closer.

She reluctantly goes over and sit.

Ayabonga: How was home?

Owethu: It was fine.

Ayabonga: Did you get the rest you needed?

Owethu: I guess.

Ayabonga: (nods) Now that you're back, are you ready to tell me the truth?

She tenses up, sweat forms on her forehead and her heartbeat is picking up.

Ayabonga: I need to know what happened so I can have choices to base my forgiveness on, and decide if we are still being together or not. It won't make sense for me to just walk in blindly because then it would mean I'm only doing it for you. What happened in Pretoria?

Owethu: (softly) I got horny and I used a cucumber. I think it was a larger size than you...

She whispers the last words while looking down and playing with her fingers.

Ayabonga: I want to ask where and how you were able to that since you were always busy, but I will believe whatever you say is the truth.

He gets on his feet and looks at her then sighs.

Ayabonga: I need to leave now, I will see you around. I have work tomorrow so I won't be here to see you.

Owethu: Okay.

Ayabonga: Goodbye.

He walks out the door and she's left glued to the bed.

He didn't show any sign of being in love with her and now she sees that the game she's playing will only hurt her at the end.

She blocks Tshegofatso with the hopes that they will only ever talk when they're both home but another part of her tells her that blocking him won't solve anything because the damage is already done.

Ayabonga can't even hug her or something.

She throws the phone on the other side of the bed and then closes her eyes trying to calm her mind.

NTSAKO

She's dozing off on the couch when her phone rings.

It's an unsaved number and she hopes it's not Tshegofatso because she is done with him.

Ntsako: Hello.

Lonwabo: Hi, I'm Lonwabo. I got your number from your sister, Tintswalo.

She laughs at the accent and they both start laughing.

Ntsako: I sent her, I wanted to apologise over what happened at the club.

Lonwabo: I only accept apologies said or done in person. How about we go out tomorrow evening and then talk?

Ntsako: I don't know, I'm still embarrassed.

Lonwabo: You don't have to be embarrassed about that. We've all done things we're not proud of but life goes on.

She only sighs without an answer.

Lonwabo: You can sleep on it, text me tomorrow.

Ntsako: Okay.

Lonwabo: Goodnight.

He hangs up and the smile on her face is wide her cheeks even hurts.

Lonwabo checks on Whatsapp and find Ntsako's profile picture, he saves it and sends it back to Ayabonga.

A call comes through and he answers.

Ayabonga: So?

Lonwabo: It's her... It's them.

Ayabonga: Okay; thanks.

Lonwabo: What are you going to do?

Ayabonga: I don't know.

Lonwabo: Be safe and be fine.

Ayabonga: Okay.

To be continued...

14

AYABONGA

He did not sleep a wink last night after his call with Lonwabo. He can't seem to find what's wrong with him regarding his mjolo because it never lasts.

The possibility of being bewitched makes sense in this situation but he does not believe in that so it doesn't count.

He is in the shower as the water runs down his back while he's lost in thoughts. He is also crying because it hurts so much to invest your all and not get anything in return.

He is not even thinking of all he's done for her but the love he thought would mature into something beautiful and worth talking about with his family, but it has proven to be a waste of time.

He is grateful he hadn't introduced her to his family because it would be a lot to deal with now.

He finishes showering and slowly walk out of the bathroom to get dressed. His day is already messy and he's literally dragging himself to work.

He wants to take a day off but that will worsen things because he's all alone with his thoughts.

His cousin's call comes through as he's driving out.

Ayabonga: (sadly) Hey.

Lonwabo: Cuz, how are you?

Ayabonga: (sighs) What can I say? I don't know.

Lonwabo: Should I come back?

Ayabonga: No, you can't leave work to come baby me. I'll be fine.

Lonwabo: I don't mind babying you, I know you'd do the same for me.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) I will be fine. I'm busy sending CV's that side, if everything goes well I will be joining you.

Lonwabo: I would love that. I have to get busy now, please call or text when you want to talk.

Ayabonga: Thanks man. I'll do that.

OWETHU

She's starting with exams soon and she is preparing for them. She has been studying whenever free and because her study technique is listening, she has downloaded classes to listen to while making her own notes.

She has dedicated this time to her books because what else would she focus on. Since her relationship is sinking she might as well focus on other things but after trying for the last time.

She gets ready for her last class for this term when Ayabonga's words comes ringing back in her mind.

It's very much possible for them to separate now and she wants to make things right before the last thread holding their relationship falls off.

She sends him a text to come over later and he tells her he'll update her before 9pm because he is having a busy day.

It's a lie but then he can't just leave her on read, that's not like him.

She takes only one book because it might be a half day and that will give her time to get some stuff at the mall.

LATER THAT DAY

TSHEGOFATSO

He's locking up as his special transport hoots at the gate.

He paces down the stairs and hop into the car and then it drives off.

Driver: Phalaborwa right?

Tshegofatso: Yes, I'll give you the directions when we get in cause I don't know the exact place.

Driver: I know a few places, maybe I know it.

Tshegofatso: Maybe, let me lie down a bit.

He closes his eyes and falls into a sleep. They're still fetching two more people on the way.

NTSAKO

She's getting ready for her date while Tintswalo fixes her clothes.

She does her make up and help her dress while checking the time.

Ntsako: I'm so nervous.

Tintswalo: (smiling) Don't be, I'm sure you'll enjoy.

Ntsako: I hope so. How do I look?

Tintswalo: You look beautiful but you will look even better if you let me get done with what I'm doing.

She sighs relaxing on the chair as Tintswalo does the last touches on her.

They hear a knock on the door and Tintswalo raises her eyebrows.

Ntsako: It must be him, I couldn't go to the restaurant alone and suffer waiting for him or arriving late. It's best we go together.

Tintswalo: (laughs) Okay, let me attend to him because you will fumble and ruin the make up.

Ntsako: I told you I wanted my natural look so I can be able to wipe my sweat in peace.

Tintswalo laughs going out of the bedroom to the main door.

She open to Lonwabo holding a drink in his hand.

They greet and she invites him inside. He gives her the bottle and Tintswalo loves it.

Tintswalo: Please give her 5 minutes. Should I get you anything to drink?

Lonwabo: No thanks.

Tintswalo: Okay.

She rushes to the bedroom and help Ntsako finish up.

Tintswalo: Go and have a good time, you haven't been on a date in a while and please try breathing or else you are going to faint and scare him away.

Ntsako chuckles taking breaths and then finally walk out.

Lonwabo cannot believe his eyes when she steps out of the bedroom.

He's on his feet by the time she reaches the couch and gazing at her in awe.

She smiles looking at him, waiting to hear something coming out of his mouth.

Lonwabo clears his throat and finally find words that comes out as a whisper.

Lonwabo: You look so beautiful.

Ntsako: (blushing) Thank you.

He points at her to lead them out and follows after her while Tintswalo smiles at them and gives Lonwabo a thumbs up.

OWETHU

She has been waiting for Ayabonga's text but he hasn't said anything.

She doesn't know if he's still coming or not and she looks at the table she had set for them and then sighs.

She decides to sleep for some time while waiting for him.

Her alarm is set to 9pm and that's when it will be confirmed that he's not coming.

Her alarm rang and she slept

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covering the food on the table and switching off the candles.

It's almost 2am when a knock sounds on her door.

She drags herself out of bed and goes to it. Ayabonga has a car so it might be him because it's convenient for him to travel at whatever time.

She doesn't even ask who's at the door because the person is calling her name and it's a familiar voice.

Tshegofatso stands facing her as she opens the door and she instantly loses her sleep widening her eyes with her mouth dropped.

Owethu: What are you doing here?

Tshegofatso: Open the door, I'm freezing out here.

She unlocks the burglar and then walks out to see if he came with anyone but it's just him.

He's already in the blankets when she walks back into the room, eating from one of the plates she had covered on the table.

Owethu: What are you doing here?

Tshegofatso: (chewing) To cry on your shoulder.

Owethu: (sighs) I'm serious Tshego.

Tshegofatso: So am I.

She gets back into bed and then release a long sigh.

Owethu: Switch off the light when you're done eating.

Tshegofatso: Okay.

He clears the plate and get something to drink before taking off his clothes and switches off the light.

He joins her in bed and she's still wide awake but looking at the other direction.

Tshegofatso: (softly) Can we cuddle?

She doesn't respond so he puts his hand over her to test the waters, she doesn't protest and he moves closer scooping her head to lay on his chest.

He manages to turn her to his face and she lays comfortably on her chest.

Tshegofatso starts stroking her so she can relax.

LONWABO

He's on a video call with Ntsako, their date ended at 10pm and the driver took Ntsako home first then Lonwabo.

They both decided they would freshen up and then get on their phones.

They texted until their thumbs hurts and it's now Lonwabo decided to give her a call.

Ntsako: Hey, I was even dozing off.

Lonwabo: Your face is swollen, you need to get some sleep.

Ntsako: I didn't want to disappoint you.

Lonwabo: I wouldn't be disappointed, I understand; I mean I'm also sleepy.

Ntsako: (chuckles) Then why didn't you sleep?

Lonwabo: I can't get enough of you.

She blushes and her face turns red.

Lonwabo: Your face is always going to sell you off.

Ntsako: (hiding her face) Oh my God.

Lonwabo: (laughs) It's way past my bedtime, let's rest and then we will talk in the morning.

Ntsako: Okay, goodnight.

Lonwabo: Good morning.

They both laugh and then he hangs up and sighs.

Their date was amazing and they got to talk about the important things first.

Lonwabo loves that Ntsako will be a degree holder soon and boy her English accent, he's found himself a gem.

She ticks all his boxes, she is thick, she is beautiful, she is an awesome human being and he's not letting go of her.

He lays his head comfortably on the pillow and dozes off while smiling.

AYABONGA

He's been drinking at his place and it's now he remembers that he was supposed to go to Owethu's place.

He doesn't even know where his phone is at or what time it is but he's going there.

He gets up the couch staggering towards the door. His car and house keys have been in his pocket since he got back from work.

He goes out and fiddles with the keys so he can lock the door. He finally succeeds and then walks out to his car that's also parked in a way only known to him.

He drives out talking to himself and laughing at his own jokes.

He arrives at Owethu's place and get off the car then gets in the yard.

He has his finger placed on his mouth to keep it shut so he doesn't make noise.

Owethu's light goes on and he can hear voices inside.

Tshegofatso: I don't like having sex in the dark, I want to be able to see your face.

Owethu: (chuckles)No, you just enjoy seeing me faint.

Tshegofatso: Well that too.

They starts kissing and moaning in each other's mouths.

Meanwhile Ayabonga's knees are failing him as they get weak with each step.

He searches for his phone but it's nowhere to be found.

The distance back to the gate is longer than to the door and his breathing is escalating.

He knocks faintly and someone comes up the door. It opens a crack and he can see the guy's body with his erect penis that's coated with juices.

He holds his chest that's expanding and raises his head to see the person's face and it's now Tshegofatso realises who it is.

He curses and runs back inside to cover himself, Owethu is confused and goes to the door that's being pushed to fully open.

Her eyes meets with Ayabonga's and before she could also run in embarrassment, Ayabonga falls head down to the floor and closes his eyes.

To be continued...

15

AYABONGA

He slowly opens his eyes to a beeping sound in an unfamiliar space.

Looking around he feels a pain shooting at the back of his head, coming back to the front and that's when he realizes his head is bandaged.

This place smells like pills, all kinds, detergents, or whatever and before he could start panicking, he sees a nurse walking in holding a tray.

She rushes over to him and put the tray on the table then helps him up.

Ayabonga: Where am I? what's happening?

Nurse: You're in a hospital, do you remember anything?

Ayabonga: I remember falling...

He flinches at the pain coming from his head and then closes his eyes.

Nurse: Let me get you a doctor.

She paces outside as Ayabonga tries to remember what happened. It's all coming back vividly and he wishes he could take back the hands of time.

The doctor walks in and examines him before asking a few questions.

Doctor: You were brought in unconscious and we immediately attended to you to check for any effects you might have suffered from the fall. Fortunately, you didn't have any major injuries, just a few scratches on your back and the head. Do you remember anything?

Ayabonga: I remember falling.

Doctor: That's what we were told also. You were drunk and fell, hitting the wall and injured your head and back.

He sighs and then looks at the Doctor hoping for another explanation because this isn't the truth.

Ayabonga: When am I being discharged?

Doctor: Today, a nurse will prepare your papers and medication then you're good to go.

Ayabonga: Okay, thank you.

Doctor: The bandage was just to protect your head you won't need any dressing after, and please get as much rest as you can you need it. Also, take a break from the bottle.

He nods as she walks out and Ayabonga sighs rubbing his head and relaxing.

They gave him his car keys and cellphone when he was discharged. He finds his car in the parking and then gets in and drives out.

Getting to his place he calls Lonwabo and explains to him what happened.

Lonwabo cannot believe his ears and he's fuming with anger.

They finish the call with Lonwabo promising to make time to visit when he's got time.

NTSAKO

She's having a lazy day because she has no classes and she's in love.

It still feels like a dream to have someone so invested in a relationship like Lonwabo. It's still early to come to such conclusions but she's loving it and the whole experience is just beautiful.

She is sitting cross-legged with her back arched as she goes through her messages with Lonwabo.

He's such a cute human being and loving; she is so in love with him and it's only been a few days.

Tintswalo has gone to work so she has to do the house chores and cook before she comes back.

Her phone rings as she throws it on the bed to go start with the chores.

It's an unsaved number so she answers politely waiting to hear who it is.

Tshegofatso: (softly) Hey, it's me. Please don't hang up.

Ntsako: What do you want?

Tshegofatso: Can we please talk? I miss you.

Ntsako: Don't ever call me or I'll report you for harassment and have you served with a protection order. It's over between us, get that through your head.

She clicks and then hangs up and walks out of the room aggravated.

OWETHU

Later that day she is in class but her mind is far away from the lesson. It's only her body attending this class.

What happened early morning was never supposed to happen. She regrets opening for Tshegofatso and she also regrets not asking who it was when she heard the knock.

She has lost Ayabonga for good now and there's no explanation to save her.

The lesson is finally over and she packs her bag and then walks out pulling the hoodie over her head.

It feels like everyone knows what happened and they're staring at her as she passes.

Soon as she walks out the gate she spots Ayabonga's car on the side of the road and her heart does a flip over; almost falling over.

He's out leaning against the car and looking straight at her. It looks like he's been waiting for her to come out and at this stage she wants the ground to swallow her.

He waves at her and she shamefully walks over looking down.

Ayabonga: (smiling) Hey, need a lift?

Owethu: (nervously) Hi, no. I want to pass by a friend's house. I can walk.

Ayabonga: (stunned) I can drop you there.

Owethu: (sighs) Okay.

He opens the back door for her and goes to the front and starts the car.

Ayabonga: Where were you last night? I came to your place and found other people I didn't know recognize.

Owethu: I was out with my yard mates, (clears her throat) we had some outing thing for a few hours, just to chill.

Ayabonga: I didn't know you rent out your room to couples when you go out. It was quite busy and loud when I arrived.

Owethu: I was just doing a friend a favor.

Ayabonga: Okay.

Owethu: What happened to you?

Ayabonga: I fell.

Owethu: Are you fine?

Ayabonga: I'll be fine. Where am I dropping you?

Owethu: (checks her phone) On the next turn.

He slows down and then she gets off and starts walking away as fast as she can.

Ayabonga chuckles as he drives off. This girl's lying skills are top-tier.

TSHEGOFATSO

He's home and his mother is so happy to see him. He still can't believe everything that happened early this morning

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it all feels like a dream.

He's absent-minded when his mom asks him which restaurant she should make a booking at and he almost jumps off the chair when she nudges him.

Tshegofatso: You scared me, what were you saying?

Her: Are you okay? you have been off since you arrived.

Tshegofatso: I'm fine.

Her: Get some rest and then we will talk when you're up.

He goes to his room and calls Owethu. She answers on the third ring and he hears some shuffling.

Owethu: Hello.

Tshegofatso: Hi, how are you?

Owethu: (sighs) I don't know. He gave me a lift from school.

Tshegofatso: Were you not scared that he would do something to you?

Owethu: I was, he is too calm for my liking. He's never asked anything or said anything.

Tshegofatso: I would suggest you stay away from him.

Owethu: With what reason?

Tshegofatso: Exams maybe, or something. People like him are very dangerous.

Owethu: I don't know. I guess I will have to ignore him maybe.

Tshegofatso: Okay, be safe.

Owethu: Are you fine?

Tshegofatso: Yes.

Owethu: (chuckles) It was crazy though.

Tshegofatso: I was deep in you when the knock disturbed us.

They start flirting and laughing at all their memories together.

LONWABO

He's gone to see Ntsako after work. They met at the mall.

Lonwabo: I'm tired, do you mind coming over to my place?

Ntsako: (hesitantly) I don't know.

Lonwabo: I won't do anything you don't want to do. I'm just tired but I want to spend time with you. I will call an Uber for you when you want to leave.

Ntsako: Let me inform my sister first.

Lonwabo: Let's get some food while at it.

Ntsako: I will cook, I don't like buying cooked food when I have time to cook myself.

Lonwabo: Okay snacks then.

Ntsako: (smiles) Okay.

They buy snacks and head over to his place.

When they get there Lonwabo goes to shower and Ntsako starts cooking. By the time he comes out, she's already dished up and waiting for him.

Lonwabo: I'm sorry I took long, the water was refreshing.

Ntsako: It's okay, I hope the food is still warm.

He sits down and they say a short prayer then starts eating.

Lonwabo: I know it's too soon but I would love to introduce you to my family. We have a wedding coming up soon in Hoedspruit and I would like to go with you.

Ntsako: When is the wedding?

Lonwabo: June.

Ntsako: Okay.

Lonwabo: So are you coming?

Ntsako: It depends.

Lonwabo: I will pay for everything. Give me a list.

Ntsako: (chuckles) you're such a charmer.

Lonwabo: (laughing) I aim to impress. I love the food by the way.

Ntsako: Thanks.

They eat over a light conversation and then both clear the table and clean the dishes.

There's a surplus that Ntsako intentionally added, she stores the food in containers and put them in the fridge.

Ntsako: These are for the days I won't be able to come to cook.

Lonwabo: I can cook, what are you saying?

Ntsako: Mine has a woman's touch, soft and warm.

Lonwabo: Says someone with cold hands.

She hits his shoulder with her hand and he grabs her and then holds her waist from behind while they playfully wrestle.

Lonwabo: (panting) I have to go check on my cousin at Phalaborwa, he's going through some stuff and I want to be there for him.

Ntsako: I don't have a problem with that if you're asking for my permission.

They both laugh and then settle on the couch still in each other's hands.

Ntsako: I'll be busy with my exams anyway and I hope the wedding will be towards month end.

Lonwabo: I hope so too, I want to take you somewhere after the wedding just to relax.

Ntsako: That's nice. Thank you.

She lies on his chest and something she's never felt before surrounds her; peace.

She closes her eyes and lets her mind wander freely.

TINTSWALO

She's just got home when Ntsako gets in through the door.

Tintswalo: I was about to send a search party.

Ntsako: You are dramatic hey.

Tintswalo: (laughing) How was it?

Ntsako: (blushing) I love him, sis.

Tintswalo: I am happy for you. I don't even have to worry when you're with him, unlike that asshole you were dating.

Ntsako: You don't have to taunt his name because he wasn't a good boyfriend for me.

Tintswalo: Yeah whatever. Come let's eat.

Ntsako: I'm full, let me change into something and then we will chill.

She goes to her bedroom and when she clears her bag she finds snacks. A smile appears on her face and she checks her phone for any messages.

He's already texted "enjoy the snacks," and she puts her hand on her chest feeling grateful.

To be continued...

16

AYABONGA

A few days later he's at work when he hears chattering as a group of students approaches the workshop he's in.

He's just finished what he was doing and was about to knock off.

He dusts his hands and starts packing his tools while whistling.

The students have come for induction because they will be participating in an internship that will be taking place.

He does not pay attention to them as they pass by the door because a student he so loved has shown him flames he's even thinking of going for older women or leaving mjolo all at once.

The students are looking around, all excited about the opportunity they got because maybe most of them have been applying with no luck.

He waits for them to disappear before he can start packing his tools. He was fixing some machines in the workshop.

A few minutes after the students have passed, another female student comes in pacing in his direction. She looks lost as she's scanning the place while approaching him.

“Hi, did you see where the other students went? I am late and I'm supposed to start with them at the same time.”

She's puffing and her voice hitches with each word coming out of her mouth.

Ayabonga offers to show her the way even though he also doesn't know where they went.

Luckily they're at the second gate and about to get in the hall. She thanks him and then paces to them.

He smiles turning around when he meets the security guy coming in his direction.

Security: Did you see the girl that just walked in here? (raising his hand) She dropped this.

Ayabonga: (pointing) She went in that direction.

Security: Okay, thanks.

He walks past him and then Ayabonga gets an idea. He whistles to the security guy as he's almost approaching the gate and jogs towards him.

Ayabonga: Can I give it to her if you don't mind.

The guy smiles and hands the purse to him as they meet halfway.

Security: Good luck.

They both chuckle walking back to their spots.

OWETHU

Exams are dealing with her vehemently and it doesn't help that she always gets flashbacks in the middle of writing.

They're in the hall and an hour has lapsed yet she has not even finished question 1.

Her mind is all over the place; she hasn't been sleeping well and that means not getting enough rest to be refreshed on exam day.

By the time the clock hits 12, the chief invigilator announces the end of their session and that they should stop writing.

The invigilators collectt the question papers and answer sheets.

She only managed to write 5 out of 7 questions but at least she wrote what she knew and is sure of.

After signing out she leaves the hall. It's scorching hot outside and it's at this moment she wishes Ayabonga could be there to take her home and buy her lunch.

She walks home blocking the sun with her timetable as her stomach grumbles in hunger.

AYABONGA

He has been waiting for almost 4 hours in his car he even bought food and some drinks to keep him company.

He sees the group of students coming out the gate and the late-comer is walking slowly behind them while searching herself.

She looks so sad and he can only imagine how she is really feeling inside.

She stops by the security guards and he can see them pointing at his direction.

She approaches him and he gets out of the car before she could reach it.

Ayabonga: Hi, I am Ayabonga. I have something I think belongs to you.

He reaches in the car and comes out with the blue purse.

The smile on her face and relief when she realises it's what she was looking for is priceless.

"Thank you, I am Lerato by the way."

Tears are visible in her eyes and when she looks down they drop on the ground.

Ayabonga: Hey, don't cry.

Lerato: I am just... I thought I lost everything.

Ayabonga: Which direction are you going? I can give you a lift.

She is hesitant and he understands shame.

Ayabonga: It is okay if you don't feel like getting a lift.

Lerato: It's fine. I need it, I am going to the mall.

He opens the door for her and she climbs in and then he starts the car.

She opens the purse to check if there is anything missing but everything is still intact.

Ayabonga notices a R200 note, a Shoprite savings card and a piece of paper; probably a list of the things she should buy maybe.

He doesn't enquire about it but offers her food and a drink which she doesn't take long to finish.

NTSAKO

Since exams have started she hasn't had time with Lonwabo because "he doesn't want to disturb her," in his own words.

At first, she felt like he was pushing her away but with time she understood what he meant.

Exams are a drag and sometimes she just wants to sleep when she comes back so Lonwabo understands the assignment.

He's already working and he wants the same for her so he chose to distance himself during this time so he doesn't distract her.

She is back from writing and lying in bed feeling sleepy. She dozes off with her shoes on.

She didn't even hear the front door opening and she is surprised to find Lonwabo in bed with her.

She smiles laying on his bare chest and he squeezes her shoulder tighter.

Ntsako: I thought you were sleeping.

Lonwabo: I just arrived not so long. I was still trying to catch some sleep.

Ntsako: I'm happy you're here.

Lonwabo: I'm leaving when I wake up. I brought you food and other stuff you might need to make these exams bearable.

She gets up from his embrace and then looks at his face before kissing him all over while he laughs pushing her off.

Lonwabo: I know you're just happy about the food.

Ntsako: I was hungry.

He laughs as she goes to the kitchen and comes back with two plates.

Ntsako: Come let's eat.

He wakes up to eat. Ntsako finishes hers first and starts giving him puppy eyes until he pushes the plate to her.

Lonwabo: Do you ever get full though?

She shakes her head and he laughs getting off to get a drink.

He has even forgotten that he's not wearing anything on top and when the door opens he almost trips running back to Ntsako's room.

Lonwabo: Pass me my t-shirt.

Ntsako: What is it?

Lonwabo: I think your sister is back.

Ntsako: Then why are you running?

Lonwabo: Because she can't see me like this, I'm naked.

Ntsako: (laughing) Babe you almost fell

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you could have just walked back in here.

Lonwabo: And risk being seen like this by my girlfriend's sister?
no thanks. I also have to leave.

Ntsako: Don't tell me you're also leaving because of her.

Lonwabo: (checked the time) No, I just have to leave.

He kisses her and takes his stuff the walks out as she follows him.

He sits for a few minutes greeting Tintswalo and informing her of why he is at her place and then leaves.

TSHEGOFATSO

He's back at work and he's never felt so depressed and confused in a long time.

Everything is just a mess and he couldn't even enjoy his brother's birthday celebration.

He is looking for a transfer to go work home because Pretoria is not doing it for him anymore.

He has been trying to check on Ntsako with no luck and he has mentally made a note to check for the last time tonight and if nothing has changed then he will move on.

His work seems to have doubled because of the off he took on Friday but it is just because he is tired of everything and unmotivated.

He finishes testing the motor and taking readings and then closes the log book and hands it over to the ones who will be doing maintenance.

They are doing him a favor because he is supposed to do everything.

LONWABO

He finds cooked food at his place and Belinda is ready to leave.

Lonwabo: Hi.

Belinda: Hey, I was on my way but I can dish up for you before I leave.

Lonwabo: Don't worry. I want to shower first anyway.

Belinda: Okay, my mother will be coming in tomorrow. I have exams.

Lonwabo: Okay, good luck.

He passes to his bedroom and then straight to the shower.

When he comes out he finds his phone ringing and it's Ayabonga.

Lonwabo: Cuz, how have you been?

Ayabonga: I've been fine. I met someone today.

Lonwabo: Tell me more.

Ayabonga: I don't know man, I'm still scarred from my past relationship.

Lonwabo: What's her name?

Ayabonga: Lerato.

Lonwabo: That means love right?

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Yes. She is 24 and doing an internship at my workplace.

Lonwabo: Mmmh, both in the same working space.

Ayabonga: Well she's doing Electrical.

Lonwabo: And your trade is everything. I suggest you get to know her and maybe tell her how you feel and the state you're in now. Who knows, she might be the one.

Ayabonga: I'm no longer looking for the one but love.

Lonwabo: Talk to her cuz, it won't hurt.

Ayabonga: Yeah, I think I should take her out this weekend and that means you don't have to come to see me because I will not have time.

Lonwabo: You saved me too, I need time with my girl.

Ayabonga: Oh, you don't say. How is it going?

Lonwabo: She is the best, I am enjoying this one.

Ayabonga: Have you uhm, (clears his throat).

Lonwabo: (chuckles) What are you asking me cuz?

Ayabonga: Never mind.

They both laugh and continue chatting about their lives.

To be continued...

17

LERATO

She completed her NQF Level 4 Electrical at 20 years and she has since been looking for work with no luck.

She tried applying at other provinces but it was just not her time.

Being the middle child with her eldest sister married and staying at her own place, she is left to help her mother where she can and besides, she also has needs as a woman.

They're now only three at home, her little brother who is 10 and her mother who has now found a job at farm where she only comes back on weekends to come home, so they're mostly just two.

They are not a rich nor poor family but are just going by well, trying each day.

The three years that she was looking for a job related to her studies, she worked part-time as a cashier standing in for another woman who was going for maternity at Shoprite.

She also had some odd jobs like cleaning house and yards, doing people's laundry and actually baking and cooking at some point.

It's not in her nature to wait for money from someone. She loves freedom that comes with affordability and that means working her ass off to get those papers and coins.

She loves being busy hence the experience she has now because she did a little of everything.

She takes care of her little brother like he's her own and yesterday was his birthday.

The R200 note she thought she had lost was her last and she was going to get a cake and snacks for her him.

When she found out that someone had kept her purse safe she felt relieved, and even better when he offered the lift.

Ayabonga left her at the mall because she said she will manage. He wanted to wait but didn't want to come off as creepy.

She is not looking for a relationship because she thinks these things needs money that she doesn't have at the moment; however her standards for dating is set pretty high and she is trying to get to that level so she can get her match.

Ayabonga seems to be her match but he doesn't talk much and she is wondering if he's always like that or maybe he didn't find her interesting to hold a conversation with.

It's Friday and she is on her way to the campus. Her brother goes to school with the neighbours and she makes sure his lunchbox is packed and his uniform is ready before she starts preparing herself.

She is late as always and is pacing towards the campus in her PPE and backpack.

AYABONGA

He's ready for work when his phone rings. He answers going out to the parking to drop his toolbox in the car.

Ayabonga: Ma.

Her: I need you to come here tomorrow morning if you can. We have started with the preparations and we are only left with two weeks.

Ayabonga: (worriedly) Can't I come on Sunday?

Her: It's fine you can bring her along but she will be bored because you will be busy the whole time.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Wow.

Her: Please be on time, before 11am.

Ayabonga: Okay. Bye.

He shakes his head locking the house and then leaves for work.

He's hoping to see Lerato again today and maybe have a little conversation with her and find her interests.

Who knows? she might agree to come with him to the wedding even though that seems a bit stretched because they've just met.

He drives out playing music to distract himself from thinking of Owethu.

He's never talked to her since the last time, she also has kept her distance and he hopes it stays that way forever.

He gets to work almost half an hour later and clocks in. The students have already started with their daily tasks so he gets busy also and he feels as though the time is moving slowly because he wants to see Lerato so bad.

NTSAKO

She is going write her last paper next week and then accompany bae to the wedding in Hoedspruit.

She's hoping to visit some of the popular places and eat at the restaurants for some experience.

Her mood has been good lately and she feels the burden she has been carrying from Tshegofatso's saga has been lifted off.

She is not writing today and she is planning a surprise lunch date with Lonwabo, and to ask if they can do some of the things on her to-do list for this trip. Yes, it's a trip.

She texts him to be ready for lunch and that it's on her before getting ready for the day.

OWETHU

She is laying on bed when she is reminded of her periods.

Her last cycle was about two months back and it's now counting to the third month.

She panics at the thought of being pregnant and what's worse is not knowing who the father is or Tshego being the father.

She loves him but he can't be the father if she's pregnant.

It feels as if the baby is also kicking and she regrets having nothing to do that led her to thinking of her periods.

She has to go buy a pregnancy test and make sure before it's late.

Her last paper is also next week and she is not sure of what she will get up to after that, hopefully she's not pregnant.

Going home has always been exciting when she knew she would be in the company of her bestie but now things are awkward and stuff and hopefully she's not pregnant.

The thought alone is terrifying!

She rolls off the bed and then goes to the bathroom before coming back to sleep again. She will go to the mall when she wakes up.

LONWABO

Later that day he's on lunch when his phone rings.

He answers smiling looking at Ntsako who is approaching him with her arms spread out for a hug.

He hugs her and kisses her forehead.

Lonwabo: Cuz.

Ayabonga: Hey did mom's call you.

Lonwabo: Yes and ruined my plans. She even had transport fixed for me from here straight to Hoedspruit.

Ayabonga: (laughing) I know her like that. I wonder what we're needed or rather wanted for.

Lonwabo: I also don't know but I think it's important if everyone is expected to be there.

Ayabonga: Okay. I was waiting for someone

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she's here. We will talk.

Lonwabo: And here I am ignoring my woman for you.

Ayabonga: You didn't tell me she's there. Ntsako hi.

Lonwabo: (laughing) She is waving at the screen imagine.

They both laugh and then hang up.

LERATO

Ayabonga asked to talk with her during lunch because he will be going to his place and won't see her after work.

She walks to his car and stands by his door.

He opens and she invites her inside, opening the back seat for her.

Lerato: Hi.

Ayabonga: Hey, how are you?

Lerato: I'm okay. how are you?

Ayabonga: I'm also good. Do you want something to eat?

Lerato: No, I normally don't eat before 4pm.

Ayabonga: Okay, can I buy you food for after 4 then?

She keeps quiet.

Ayabonga: I won't poison you.

A laughter escapes her mouth and she covers it with her hand.

Lerato: Okay.

Ayabonga: So, I want to get to know you. I like you and maybe we can have some sort of relationship.

Lerato: I didn't expect you to get straight to the point like that.

Ayabonga: I'm not much of a talker so I'm trying to talk less but be understood.

Lerato: Okay, I think we will need more time to know each other and then we can see where it leads.

Ayabonga: Okay, thank you for your time.

Lerato: Are you not going to take my number?

Ayabonga: (raised eyebrow) Do you want mine?

Lerato: Not like that, but-

Ayabonga: (chuckles) I'm joking.

He takes out his phone and she inserts her number and then saves it.

Ayabonga: Should I buy you the food or come get you when you're done so you can buy on your own?

Lerato: I don't know.

Ayabonga: Okay, I will decide then.

She gets off the car and goes back inside after saying her goodbyes.

He watches her for a few minutes, until she disappears and then smiles to himself starting the car.

LONWABO

He's one of the lucky guys whose girlfriends don't mind using their own money on them.

He ordered what he wanted without limits and Ntsako gladly paid for it.

Lonwabo: Before I forget, I'm going to Hoedspruit tomorrow. I got a call that everyone should be there.

sako: Such a short notice. Should I come sleep over tonight?

Lonwabo: Why do you ask?

Ntsako: (blushes) Because I don't want to cross boundaries.

Lonwabo: You're such a drama queen.

Ntsako: (giggles) So I was thinking of places we can visit while at Hoedspruit. I know we're going for the wedding but please...

Lonwabo: Was this lunch to bribe me?

Ntsako: Not really, but I guess.

Lonwabo: You know you could get me to do anything without bribing me.

Ntsako: Yes but I shouldn't make it obvious that I'm bribing you.

Lonwabo: Okay, send me a list of what you want to do and I will take care of the rest.

Ntsako: Thank you baby.

Lonwabo: But we won't attend to everything right? I will choose 4 or 5 things.

Ntsako: Okay.

They continue eating.

LATER THAT DAY

AYABONGA

He's driving to the mall with Lerato in the front seat.

She agreed to go buy food on her own and he is her driver and buyer.

Ayabonga: What are you going to buy? I want to park closer to the store you're going in.

Lerato: I can get something from Shoprite.

Ayabonga: Okay.

He drives in the mall and parks near Shoprite.

She gets off same time as Owethu approaches the car.

Ayabonga can see the puzzled look on his face but he ignores her.

Ayabonga: I am going to KFC, we will meet here or you can come there if you won't be comfortable waiting for me.

Lerato: I will stroll around for a while to buy time.

He laughs closing the door and hands her some money before turning to KFC.

Owethu passes as though she didn't see anything but her heart is betraying her as it expands her chest.

To be continued...

18

OWETHU

She gets into the Pharmacy and goes to the aisle with pregnancy tests.

She looks around before taking two pregnancy tests and goes to the counter to pay.

The cashier is a woman and she feels like she's judging her for being pregnant, or having sex.

It feels weird to be doing this but hey, a girl's gotta do what a girl's gotta do.

She still can't believe she might be pregnant and the thought is terrifying.

She goes out after paying, her throat desires wine but not before she knows for sure she's pregnant or not.

She finds herself in the same direction as Ayabonga's car. It's still parked near Shoprite and although she had thought she will ignore this, her heart isn't taking it well.

She sees the girl who came with Ayabonga walking towards the car with two Shoprite plastic bags in hands.

She paces towards her, checking out for Ayabonga and then taps her shoulder startling her.

Owethu: (softly) Hey.

Learato jumps startled and then relaxes holding her chest standing at a distance.

Owethu: I'm sorry, I didn't mean to scare you.

Lerato: It's okay, how can I help?

Owethu: I just want to ask something.

Lerato nods leaning against Ayabonga's car and putting the plastics down.

Owethu: Is that guy your boyfriend, the one you came with? I saw you getting out of his car and I was just wondering if you're friends or a couple.

Lerato has her eyebrows raised because what the hell? A total stranger concerned about her.

Lerato: Are you related to him or something?

Owethu: He's my boyfriend, we are just going through some rough phase so I'm kind of surprised to see him with a new woman.

She says and chuckles a little bit.

Lerato: And you're wondering if I'm here to take your space, or already took it.

She sighs feeling stupid for even approaching her. I mean she doesn't know nor have ever seen her anywhere and that could mean she is someone new to Ayabonga.

Owethu: Never mind, I'm sorry for wasting your time.

Lerato: Don't be. Let's wait for him to come back so you can ask him all these questions because I don't have answers to them.

Owethu: No, I have embarrassed myself enough.

Lerato: Wait...

She quickly walks away and Lerato is left surprised as Ayabonga approaches her.

AYABONGA

He comes behind Lerato who's still looking in Owethu's direction and clears his throat.

Ayabonga: Have you been waiting for long?

She swivels and face him startled, AGAIN!

Lerato: No, I just came out.

Ayabonga: Okay, let's go.

They get inside and she takes out the change to give him.

Ayabonga: No, it's fine. The money was all yours. Did you get what you wanted?

Lerato: I bought a few meat trays that I can cook at home.

Ayabonga: You didn't get anything to eat now?

Lerato: No, I have to share with my brother at home.

Ayabonga: Oh, I understand. It's only the two of you?

Lerato: My mother too; my sister has her own home.

Ayabonga: I see.

They drive in silence and Ayabonga spots Owethu from a distance.

He saw her when he was coming to the car but wasn't sure. Now that he's getting closer he can confirm that's it's indeed her.

Ayabonga: I saw you talking to the girl we just passed.

He says after they've passed Owethu whom he looked back at through the mirror.

Lerato: Yes

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she was acting weird also. Do you know her.

Ayabonga: Yes, what did she want?

Lerato: She was asking if I'm your girlfriend.

She omits the other parts because she's waiting on him to get to it himself.

Ayabonga: And what did you say?

Lerato: I told her to wait for you so she can ask you.

Ayabonga: Pity she didn't wait, now we don't know if you're my girlfriend or not.

He looks at her smiling with his one hand on the wheel and the other on his thigh.

Lerato: (chuckles) I also don't know what I am to you. It's really a pity.

A few minutes later they park a few houses from Lerato's place and Ayabonga turns to her smiling.

Ayabonga: Thanks for the little time you have allowed to be with me. I enjoy being around you.

Lerato: (smiling) Thank you for the food and the drive, and the change.

They both chuckle as he reaches to the back and gives her the KFC pack.

Ayabonga: Go share this with your brother so you won't have to cook tonight.

Lerato: Thank you.

Ayabonga: I'm going to Hoedspruit tomorrow, I will call when I have time and I don't know when I'll see you again so I'll also let you know when back.

Lerato: (concerned) Will you be driving?

Ayabonga: Yes.

Lerato: Okay, drive safely and please text when you get there.

Ayabonga: (smiling) I will. Goodnight.

She opens the door and takes out her plastics before thanking him once more and then turns to leave as he drives off.

He waves at her smiling and she waves back blushing. Maybe he's won her heart.

LERATO

She is smitten and blushing walking into the house.

Her brother gladly welcomes her and helps with the plastic bags enquiring what's inside the KFC pack.

She decides to cook pap after checking the KFC packs. He got her meat, lots of it and some salads. It's only now he's checking and she thought it was small stuff.

In only a few days of being with him she already can't stop smiling when she thinks of him because he's just so beautiful.

He's gentle and thoughtful. For her it has always been the small things that drives her crazy. Like that smile he gave her when they were driving back here.

She finishes cooking and set the table. Her mother is coming back so they are going to wait for her so they can all eat together while catching up.

She also can't wait to tell her about Ayabonga.

NTSAKO

She is waiting for Lonwabo to finish bathing so they can watch movies.

She got here and cooked before starting with the pots. They ate and she took a shower while Lonwabo did the dishes because she was feeling cold and wanted to come back to rest.

She has fixed the bed with comfortable pillows and a fleece to cover them. A tray with snacks and drinks is on the bedside table and the laptop is on the bed.

Lonwabo comes back and gets into his short after lotioning his body.

Ntsako: Most men don't lotion after a night bath.

Lonwabo: Because most men don't bath at night.

Ntsako: (laughs) I didn't expect you to say that.

Lonwabo: I don't want to have a dry and unhealthy skin. I also want to glow.

Ntsako: Wow, okay.

He kisses her forehead and joins her in bed scooping her in his arms.

Lonwabo: Do you know how much I love you?

Ntsako: Oh, really?

Lonwabo: I am so happy with you baby.

Ntsako: I am too. It has been so long since I've felt the way I feel around you.

Lonwabo: (kissing her) I love loving you.

She turns and kisses him before turning back to the screen with their arms wrapped around each other.

It feels so warm in this room that she closes her eyes taking in the feeling.

She doesn't know what heaven feels and looks like but that's where her heart is right now because they say it's peaceful.

It's even better because just being in his arms like this satisfies her.

TSHEGOFATSO

Today feels like the pits as he's alone in his flat. It feels empty and cold without a feminine scent.

He checks his phone and finds Ntsako's statuses with a man's hand and legs.

It looks cosy and lovely where they are he's even jealous. He's never thought of the small things with her because he always got that from his bestie.

He decides to go out and maybe get a hook-up for the night to clear his mind.

His phone rings as he walks out and he answers locking the door.

Tshego: Hello.

Owethu: (sniffling) Hey.

Tshego: Are you crying?

Owethu: No, I was just clearing my nose.

Tshego: Okay.

Owethu: Are you busy?

Tshego: Yes.

Owethu: Okay, call me when you're free.

Tshego: Okay, bye.

He hangs up and gets into a taxi to a club. It's half empty when he gets there because it's still early.

He gets himself a few bottles and sit on his own, checking out stock he can hook for the night.

A few hours later, the drinks are working their way to his head and it's then that the real stock starts arriving.

He decides to go to the toilet and when he comes out he bumps into Lesedi going in to the ladies'.

She throws herself onto him and hugs him cheerfully.

Lesedi: Hey, how have you been?

He's surprised to see her here and happy at the same time.

Tshego: Hey, I'm okay. How are you? when did you get here?

Lesedi: I've been around for some time.

Tshego: Well I'm happy to see you.

They chat for some time and he tells her to go inside while he waits for her. She comes out after a few minutes and they walk back together.

Tshego: What do y'all do in these bathrooms that takes so long?

Lesedi: We don't have a penis that comes out through the zipper when we want to pee.

Tshego: (laughs) I didn't think you'd talk about penises.

Lesedi: Well it's the first thing that came to mind when you asked.

Tshego: So who did you come with?

Lesedi: My friends whom have already made plans with their men.

Tshego: And where will you go after?

Lesedi: I can request home.

Tshego: Or you can come with me to my place.

She turns and looks at him with an eyebrow raised.

Lesedi: Where is your girlfriend?

Tshego: She left me for someone better.

Lesedi: Are you heartbroken?

Tshego: Not really, it was good while it lasted.

Lesedi: Hhmm! okay.

Tshego: So are we leaving together?

Lesedi: I don't know. I'm not promising.

Tshego: Fair enough. Let's go sit together at my table.

They drink together with Tshego filling their table.

When the songs come on they dance together like a couple in love, holding hands and looking into each others eyes.

For a moment Tshego lets his mind free from everything else and focuses on the feeling that's surrounding him at the moment.

He holds her waist and turns her around, spanking her butt a few times while dry humping on her back to the rhythm of the music.

When they take a break, Lesedi sits on him and they exchange kisses a few times while whispering and giggling.

To be continued...

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NTSAKO

After Lonwabo left early morning, she went back to sleep and it's only now she's waking up.

She makes the bed and cleans the room, takes a bath, and makes breakfast before sitting down to call her sister.

Tintswalo answers yawning and she can hear a male's voice behind her.

Ntsako: (giggling) Morning sis.

Tintswalo: (sleepy) Good morning. What's up?

Ntsako: Nothing, I wanted to check on you.

Tintswalo: I'm still sleeping.

Ntsako: A long night?

Tintswako: (groaning) Ntsako!

Ntsako: (laughing) Okay, sorry. Bye!

Tintswalo: Are you coming back?

Ntsako: I don't think so, I like it here and maybe I will stay until my man gets back.

Tintswalo: Your man? I didn't know you're married.

Ntsako: Says someone who's probably got her butt rubbing against a man's organ at this second.

Tintswalo: (laughing) I didn't expect that. You know what, stay there. Don't ever come back.

Ntsako: (laughing) I love you too my dear sister. I'll see you on Monday, maybe.

Tintswalo: I'm no longer your sister. You're disowned.

They laugh as she hangs up and continues eating while smiling alone.

She finishes and rinses the bowl and glass and then look for something to do.

She finds a box with books in one of the rooms downstairs. She takes it and walks out as Mam Adelaide walks in the front door.

She forgot there's a helper in this house but she composes herself and stops.

She bows a little greeting the old woman and mam Adelaide smiles greeting her back.

Mam Adelaide: Have you had breakfast?

Ntsako: Yes.

Mam Adelaide: Okay, I will start with cleaning then. You won't even notice I'm here.

Ntsako: Okay, I'll be upstairs if you need something.

Mam Adelaide: Okay.

She goes up and throws herself on the bed. I guess it already sold who she is because she is wearing Lonwabo's clothes, or rather shirt instead.

Hopefully it won't get him into trouble with his family.

Speaking of him, he sends a text that they're still busy and he will call later on.

She snaps a few pictures and send to him before paging through the book.

TSHEGOFATSO

He stretches himself on the bed hoping to land his hand on a booty but the bed is empty.

He would have loved to be woken by a mouth on his hard on.

He quickly wakes up and the headache pulls him back to the bed.

He groans in pain holding his head with both hands and his eyes closed.

He turns over to find a note on the bedside table and reaches over for it.

“Thanks for last night. It was amazing as always. Till we meet again.”

He puts it back and then tries to get off the bed.

The room is spinning and his head feels heavy.

He manages to drag himself to the bathroom with the support from the walls and opens the shower taps, letting the water run over his body.

He comes out after he's had enough and he feels better.

He makes the bed after dressing and then order something to eat.

OWETHU

Both the tests came out positive and she has never been so confused in her entire life.

Maybe she should go to the hospital and see how far she is then that's when she'll know who the father is.

She is afraid that if it counts back to when she went to Pretoria she will still need further tests after the baby is born because, she had slept with Ayabonga before going there, and the whole saga that led Ayabonga to hospital? this is surely Tshego's baby.

She wanted to tell Tshego last night but he sounded busy and he's been distant lately.

Maybe she should send the pregnancy tests to Ayabonga and see what his reaction will be.

It felt painful when he passed her like that on the road and she still can't believe he has moved on so quick.

Tshegofatso's call comes through and she answers.

Tshego: Hey, how are you?

Owethu: I'm fine, how are you?

Tshego: I'm okay. I forgot to tell you that Ntsako has broken up with me.

Owethu: Good riddance.

Tshego: (laughs) Wow! how is it going there?

Owethu: I saw him with another girl, I don't know what's happening but I won't force it out of him.

Tshego: Does it hurt?

Owethu: (sniffles) A lot.

Tshego: I'm sending virtual hugs. I had a long night but I wanted to check on you because I couldn't talk when you called and you sounded a bit off.

Owethu: I'll be fine. I was just missing you I guess. I miss us, the old us.

Tshego: Come see me.

Owethu: I thought you were coming home.

Tshego: Not immediately, but I am.

Owethu: Then I will see you when you're home. I can't afford to do the up and down.

Tshego: Okay. Now that I know there's someone waiting for me home

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I'll be quick.

Owethu: Yeah. I am sleepy, good-bye for now.

Tshego: Bye. and pumpkin..

Owethu: Yes.

Tshego: I still love you.

Owethu: I love you too.

AYABONGA

Later on they come out of the final meeting for the wedding.

He's walking besides his other cousins chatting and then he goes to his car.

The house is not enough for them because almost everyone is here.

They were discussing what's left off the preparations, and the reason everyone had to be here is because there are some family cultural things that should take place before.

Lonwabo goes to Ayabonga after chatting with others and joins him in the car.

Lonwabo: Cuz, you good?

Aya: Yes.

Lonwabo: Is it the noise?

Aya: (chuckles) You don't even have to ask.

Lonwabo: Is there a way that we can dash out for some minutes? I want to call my woman.

Ayabonga: Let's go by foot, driving out will have my mother shouting at us as if we're kids.

Lonwabo: Okay, let me get a sweater.

He goes back inside and they leave immediately, circumventing all the old people present.

They're now out on the road going nowhere.

Lonwabo: How is it going?

Ayabonga: It's going well.

Lonwabo: Lerato?

Ayabonga: I'm still getting to know her, but I like her.

He's smiling, Lonwabo stops and shake his head chuckling before punching Aya's shoulder.

Lonwabo: My cousin is in love.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Stop it.

Lonwabo: No, but I'm happy for you.

Ayabonga: I'm happy too.

A message comes in and he checks his phone.

He stops walking and looks at the screen as if he's trying to understand what he's seeing.

Lonwabo: Cuz! Cuz!

He calls Ayabonga while nudging him but it's like he's seeking a ghost.

He takes the phone from him and he's left standing in the same position.

Lonwabo looks at the screen and back at Ayabonga in awe.

LONWABO

He gives the phone back to Ayabonga to answer his that's ringing in his pocket.

Ayabonga's mom tells them to come back because there's something he wants to talk to them about.

Ntsako's call comes through after he has hung up.

Lonwabo: Babe.

Ntsako: Hey, how are you?

Lonwabo: I'm fine. Can I call you back in a few minutes babe?

Ntsako: No, I want to tell you something quickly. There's a woman that came in the morning...

Lonwabo: That's mam Adelaide, she's the caretaker of the house. I forgot to tell you about her.

Ntsako: I overheard her talking to someone whom I believe is part of your family about me being here.

Lonwabo: Shit, maybe that's why she said we have to talk.

Ntsako: Who? I hope I didn't get you into trouble.

Lonwabo: No, I'll explain to them. I have to go.

Ntsako: Okay. Bye.

He hangs up and then pace after Ayabonga who's already turned walking back home.

He catches up with him and then they walk back silently, still digesting what they saw.

When they get home they find Ayabonga's mother waiting for them and they join her.

Her: I hear there's a woman at the house in Pretoria, Lonwabo?

Lonwabo: (clears throat) Yes, she's my girlfriend.

Her: And why am I hearing all these from mam' Adelaide while you're here with me?

Lonwabo: I was still going to tell you about it.

Her: I want you to be careful about having women at that house while you're not around. That's a family house and it means anyone who wants to go there might just turn up unexpectedly. Now what would happen if the person arrives at night and they don't know her, she doesn't know them? it's going to be a chaos. And apart from family, if something

happens to her do you know that her family might make you pay?

Lonwabo: I didn't think it that far because we have just started dating.

Her: For your sake I hope nothing disappears from that house.

Lonwabo: She's not like that.

Her: Next time talk to me first when you're going to leave strangers at my house. And Aya, have you also left someone at Phalaborwa?

Ayabonga: No.

Her: Does that mean you still don't have a date for the wedding?

Ayabonga: I do.

Her: I hope so.

She gets up from the couch and smiles at them.

Her: Lonwabo give your cousin strategies or better yet, find him a girlfriend.

She walks away the guys look at each other shaking their heads.

Lonwabo: What are you going to do?

Ayabonga: I don't know. I have to find out the truth about this first. It's a big step and I just can't jump into it.

Lonwabo: How does it feel though?

Ayabonga: It would have been exciting under normal circumstances but right now it's a mess.

Lonwabo: I'm here for you.

Ayabonga: I know.

To be continued...

20

AYABONGA

He's driving to Phalaborwa, eager to see Lerato that he doesn't even go to his place but calls her to come to the street where he dropped her the other day.

It's Sunday evening so her mom is still around and she told him to come inside because she wants them to meet.

He parks the car at the gate and she comes to fetch him.

Lerato: Hey, how are you?

Ayabonga: I'm okay, can I get a hug?

Lerato: My mom's watching. I'll hug you when we drive out.

Ayabonga: Okay. I didn't bring anything with me.

Lerato: It's okay. Let's go inside, they're waiting for us.

Ayabonga: I'm scared.

Lerato: Don't be. I'll be right by your side.

They walk inside and she doesn't miss the window peeking from the neighbours.

She leads him to the dining area. They have a clean house, it is small but neat.

Lerato announces that they're here and her mother reduces the TV volume.

Ayabonga takes a seat and greets her, she smiles at him greeting back and the interview starts.

She asks his name, surnames and parents' names. Age, where he lives, particularly all the information she will need should anything happen to her daughter while with him.

Lerato offers him a juice which he gladly accepts because his throat is dry.

The mother finishes talking and asks him to say whatever he wants.

Ayabonga: There is a wedding this coming weekend at the family house in Hoedspruit. I had not asked your daughter to come with me because I figured out I'm still new in her life and she might be scared to come with me. Now that I have met you, I am asking for her to come with me to the wedding. We will leave on Friday and come back on Sunday or Monday morning. She has explained that she stays with her little brother when you are not around so I don't mind going with both of them.

The old woman is paying attention as he speaks. She clears her throat after he's done.

Her: I don't mind you going with her anywhere, I believe it will also do her good because she never leaves the house. I am only asking you to bring her safe and sound to me. With that being said, I mean she must come back still not pregnant.

Lerato: Mama!

Her: I'm not speaking to you.

Ayabonga chuckles looking down and Lerato stands up and then walks out.

Her: I am truly happy to see that my daughter is involved with a respectful young man. I don't monitor her love life and it's my first time meeting someone she is involved with in that way. She told me a lot about you on Friday and I have no doubt that you will be happy together. All I ask is please; do not ever abuse my child in any way. If you feel you don't want her anymore along the way, let her know and she will come cry to me, just don't hurt her intentionally.

Ayabonga: Thank you mama.

Her: Okay; you can go. Lerato!

She appears from changing and her mother tells her to see him out.

Ayabonga: Goodbye ma.

He breathes out as he walks to the gate and Lerato comes after him.

They meet with her younger brother and greet him before getting into the car.

Ayabonga: I think I need that hug now.

She smiles hugging him and he holds on her for a little longer.

Ayabonga: There's something I need to talk to you about before we take our relationship further.

He says after breaking the hug.

Lerato: It sounds serious, what is it?

Ayabonga: Let's go somewhere to talk.

Lerato: Okay.

He drives off heading to his place.

OWETHU

She sent the pregnancy tests to Ayabonga and he hasn't responded.

The urge to delete the messages is there but what will it solve because he's seen them and they won't delete on his side.

She feels sick today and she's been in the house since she woke up.

She has been sleeping a lot lately and now that she's confirmed the pregnancy she can feel changes on her body

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or maybe it's her mind.

This is her last week in Phalaborwa and she has to go face her mother who is actually a nurse by the way.

She holds her stomach with both hands and closes her eyes.

Owethu: I don't know what's going to happen, I don't know who your father is at this moment but I hope whoever it is will be able to step up and give you the fatherly love you deserve. We lost a good candidate who would have been our world had we waited and acted accordingly. (sighs) It's no use crying over split milk baby, I just hope you're safe and you'll make it through. I love you so much.

She starts crying and then wipes her tears after some time.

LERATO

They're at Ayabonga's place, seated on the couches while having snacks.

Ayabonga is cooking while checking on her because she is watching TV.

Lerato: You have been cooking for long now, I'm hungry.

Ayabonga: It's not even an hour I've been standing here.

Lerato: Still.

Ayabonga: Okay, it's getting there.

He leaves the pots and comes to her.

Ayabonga: You still haven't told me if you agree to be mine.

Lerato: I haven't, really? shame.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Let me dish up so we can eat. I don't want to fight with your mother for coming back late.

He walks up to the stove and dish up. It's pasta and mince meat. He puts the plates in a tray and grabs a bottle of wine.

Ayabonga: If you don't drink wine you can sort yourself out. There's plenty of water in the fridge.

Lerato: (laughs) I thought I was a visitor and you're taking care of me.

Ayabonga: Not anymore.

He offers her water to wash her hands and then brings two glasses and they eat while talking about nothing.

He cleans the dishes after and Lerato is clinging on the wine bottle.

He comes back to sit with her and it's now or never.

Ayabonga: (clears throat) I want to open up to you because I haven't told you anything.

She puts the glass down and looks at him, paying attention.

Ayabonga: I was in a relationship with someone around here. She has a male bestie and when my cousin told me there might be something between them I didn't take it serious. She told me of a trip to Pretoria and what I found weird was that I couldn't talk to her on the phone during that trip. When she came back her uuhm, (clears throat) was swollen suggesting

she had sex a day before or on that same day. I used protection with her because I was already aroused. It happened that I forgive her and went to check on her where she stays. On the early morning, I found them naked in her room, I guess I disturbed their session. I haven't talked to her. I woke up in the hospital after that incident with a bandaged head because I fell and hurt my head, but luckily it wasn't bad.

Lerato: Is it the same girl from the mall?

Ayabonga: Yes.

Lerato: I see.

Ayabonga: Another thing.

Lerato: Yes.

Ayabonga: She sent me a positive pregnancy test yesterday and I might be the father.

Silence!

Silence!

Silence!

Lerato gulps down the remaining glass contents and exhales.

Lerato: I'm trying to process this.

Ayabonga: I will give you some time.

Lerato: Okay.

Ayabonga: What should I do now? do you want to leave or I should give you space?

Lerato: I don't know, just-

She stands on her feet and walks out. Ayabonga follows her just to make sure she doesn't walk home or do something.

She stops at the gate and then looks back at him. It won't make sense to leave things hanging like this.

She walks up to him and stands in front of him.

Lerato: I am still trying to figure out what is what and I don't want to rush into anything. Can you give me some time.

Ayabonga: I understand.

Lerato: I don't want to leave just yet, can we go back inside?

Ayabonga: Sure.

They walk back in and Ayabonga doesn't know what he should do or say so he waits for her to break the ice.

Lerato: What are you going to do?

Ayabonga: I will confirm if the baby is mine before I can step in because it will hurt me in the end if I do everything only to find out that the baby's not mine.

Lerato: I understand. I still don't know what's going to happen but I love you so I will support you.

Ayabonga: (raised eyebrow) You what? I didn't hear you.

Lerato: (giggles) I said I love you.

Ayabonga: Look at me and say it to my face.

She hides her face on his chest blushing.

Ayabonga: I thought you were going to leave me. Thank you and I promise to love you like I've never loved before.

Lerato: Thank you for loving me too.

They hug and their cheeks rub as they break the hug.

They stare into each other's eyes for a second and then slowly lean in for a kiss.

It is slow, unrushed, passionate and just magical.

They are in close proximity with their bodies rubbing on each other while their hands travels on their bodies, exploring God's creative hands that formed these curves and chest and breasts.

A FEW DAYS LATER

To be continued...

21

OWETHU

She is done with her last paper and the campus is buzzing with relief chatters from students.

The way everyone is excited about going home or finally putting books aside for a moment is refreshing, but not for her.

She is forcing smiles when she meets her classmates who tries to hug her goodbye since they are seeing each other for the last time until results are out. She just wants to vanish right now and never come back.

As she heads out the gate, she finds Ayabonga waiting for her and although she isn't happy to see him, she is just relieved he's here to drive her to her place.

He doesn't wave at her as usual but gets inside the car and starts it before going into her direction.

He stops besides her and open the back door. She gets in and greets him closing the door and then he drives off.

They drive in silence and she was hoping he would ask if she needs anything to eat but he doesn't say nothing so she also keeps quiet in embarrassment.

She realises along the way that they're going to her place and she doesn't know what he's up to.

They get there and he climbs off the car and then waits for her to get off before pulling a plastic from the front seat and follows after her.

Owethu: (unlocking the door) Don't mind the room, it's a little messy because I was packing.

They both get inside and he gives her the plastic with her things she had left at his place. Underwears and a few clothes that were either left in the car or she forgot during sleep overs.

Owethu: Thanks, can I offer you something to drink?

Ayabonga: No, I'm fine.

Owethu: Okay. I would like to rest if you don't mind. I am going home tomorrow and I feel tired already.

He pulls his hand out of the pocket and comes out with a pregnancy test box.

Ayabonga: I don't know how these things work but I asked and they gave me this one. It shows how far you are.

He hands her the box and she chuckles looking at him.

Ayabonga: Are you going to do it now or you will send me a picture?

Owethu: I will do it now, just give me a few whatever.

Ayabonga: Okay, I'll be in my car.

He walks out and leaves her dumbfounded. He has changed so much and she knows it's all her fault but it hurts.

She goes to the bathroom and reads the instructions then take the test and goes with it to her room, waiting in anticipation.

She is holding her hands together and praying for a miracle. When she checks the test after what seemed like forever, tears fill her eyes and she throws herself on the bed crying.

Ayabonga has waited enough so he comes to the door and knock before opening.

Seeing Owethu crying on the bed is a confirmation that something is wrong but maybe it's a good sign for him.

He checks the test and then takes a picture of it and turn to walk out.

Owethu: (crying) You're just going to leave like that? I knew you're not man enough hence you couldn't impregnate me even after so long with you. I guess that's why you impressed me with money because you knew you ain't shit. Walk coward.

Ayabonga turns and shakes his head blocking the words that want to escape his mouth.

He swallows and then opens the door and goes straight to his car before driving off.

AYABONGA

He goes to the campus as it nears lunch time and then waits for Lerato. Seeing her will brighten his day and he will forget about Owethu for a minute.

She comes out smiling and then starts pacing towards his car. He's asking himself why she was all cool and collected before they started dating because she is something else now, in a cool way though.

He smiles to himself and roll down the window as she gets to the car.

Lerato: Hey, you good?

Ayabonga: Yes, come in.

She gets in the back seat and hops to the front before hugging and kissing his cheeks

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making that loud sound.

Ayabonga: Someone is in a good mood.

Lerato: (smiling) Who wouldn't be?

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Oh! I see, I see. Is this about yesterday?

Lerato: Maybe.

Ayabonga: We didn't even go all the way and you're like this. I'm afraid of the day I will put my length in there.

Lerato: (hitting him) Shut up.

Ayabonga: You're giving me toxic vibes you know. You look like you're going to cry when you want some and I can't give it to you, or maybe you will act crazy if I leave your sight for a minute.

Lerato: (pouting) I don't like you right now.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) I love you too.

She laughs and then breathes out heavily.

Ayabonga: What's the matter?

Lerato: I'm just thinking about our conversation.

Ayabonga: What about it?

Lerato: Did you confirm the whole pregnancy thing?

Ayabonga: Yes, she's two months pregnant and that means I'm not the father.

Lerato: Are you sure?

Ayabonga: Yes.

Lerato: Well that's a relief.

Ayabonga: It really is, I don't even want to imagine the kind of set-up the situation would have required because a lot has happened.

Lerato: I'm just glad you're completely out. I don't think dating a baby daddy is easy, especially in this case where the baby isn't even born yet and the mother is somewhat crazy.

Ayabonga: Yeah, but it's all okay now. You don't have to worry about anything.

Lerato: Okay. I have to go back now. I will see you later.

Ayabonga: Are you coming to my place? I can fetch the little guy from school and then we can have dinner together.

Lerato: I would appreciate that, thank you.

They hug and kiss one last time before Lerato gets off and goes back inside.

NTSAKO

She's out shopping alone using Lonwabo's card.

He's almost knocking off so he will come find her.

She gets into a fast food outlet and orders before sitting down.

A group of guys in Electrical PPE comes in chattering and in their midst is the one and only Tshegofatso aka male bestie.

They lock eyes for a few seconds and then he looks away first.

The guys orders and wait for their food and Tshegofatso sees it as a chance to “greet” Ntsako.

She's busy on her phone when he sits in front of her. She doesn't look at him but she knows it's him.

Tshego: Hey.

Ntsako: Hi.

Tshego: How are you?

Ntsako: Good.

She receives a text from Lonwabo telling her he's here. She directs him to where she is.

Tshego: Long time.

Ntsako: Yeah.

Tshego: I can see you're even glowing.

Ntsako: The man I'm having sex with only has sex with me.

Tshego: Oh!

He gets up as Lonwabo gets in through the door.

Tshego: I'll see you around.

He bumps into Lonwabo as he turns and then walks past him.

Lonwabo hugs and kisses Ntsako and then sit down as Tshegofatso shakes his head looking at them.

Lonwabo: What did he want?

Ntsako: I don't know.

He takes out his phone and shows it to Ntsako.

Lonwabo: Ayabonga say the baby is not his.

Ntsako: I'm just glad I am out of that madness of a relationship I was in.

Lonwabo: (smiling) What did you get?

She points at the plastics on the floor. He gasps and then quickly goes to his banking app.

Lonwabo: Baby, I think I should give you cash next time because with the card you don't even check the prices.

Ntsako: I got you something also.

Lonwabo: What?

Ntsako: (giggles) A lace underwear.

They look at each other and then starts laughing as Ntsako's order comes through.

They share the food because it's a lot and then leaves after they're done.

AYABONGA

He's cooking with the help of Lerato's little brother.

They fetched Lerato about two hours ago and she went straight to bed when she got here complaining of a headache.

They finish cooking and Ayabonga sets the table before going to get her from the bedroom.

He gently wakes her up and then help her off the bed.

Ayabonga: Let's go eat and then I will drive you home.

Lerato: My head hurts.

Ayabonga: I know and I'm sorry. Let's feed you first and then you will take medication.

He pulls her up and they join her little brother who has already dug in.

They all eat in silence and when they're done, Ayabonga gives Lerato some pills and then lets her sleep for some time while he cleans up.

It's almost 7h30 pm when he gets to her house. She was sleeping in the car and when he opens the door to take her to the house, he feels something wet on her clothes.

He looks at his hands and it's bloody, guess her periods have arrived hence the headache, shame.

He follows after the little man and tell him to pack clothes for the night and tomorrow while he packs for Lerato.

He takes her sanitary towels together with whatever he found with them because he doesn't know what she uses and doesn't use.

When they get back to the car they find her awake and glued to her seat.

She doesn't ask when she sees bags being loaded into the boot.

They get in the car and drive back to Ayabonga's place.

He unlocks and fix the spare room for the little man before going back for Lerato who is still in the car.

Lerato: I'm afraid of getting up because it's going to come out gushing.

Ayabonga: Okay, stay here I'm coming.

He gets a towel and comes back to lift her inside; all the way to the shower where indeed when she steps on her feet the blood runs down her legs.

She takes off the clothes she was wearing and showers while Ayabonga brings her clean ones.

She puts them on and then wash the dirty ones and hang them in the shower before joining him in his bedroom.

TSHEGOFATSO

Seeing Ntsako brought back many memories and for a second he wished he hadn't broken her heart.

She seemed really happy though and that's what matters even though it hurts to not be the one making her happy.

He's finished eating at his place and he wants to hit the club for a few cold ones.

It's not busy as it's during the week but he's going to come back wasted and with someone's daughter.

To be continued...

22

AYABONGA

He opens his eyes and traces his hand on the side of the bed hoping to hold his girlfriend, but it lands on an open space.

He thought she wouldn't go to work today, but she's up preparing her brother's lunchbox he can even hear them talking in the kitchen.

She comes into the bedroom and finds him awake and then sits beside him before kissing his face.

Lerato: Hey baby.

Ayabonga: Hi.

Lerato: I was coming to wake you up.

Ayabonga: What for?

Lerato: Work, and breakfast. I'm leaving in about an hour.

His phone rings as he's about to answer her and she leaves him to check if his clothes are prepared.

Everything in the closet is packed neatly. His clothes are ironed, shirts hung, and t-shirts nicely packed by colour.

She turns around and looks at him in awe before walking out.

A few minutes later he joins her in the kitchen and they all eat with the young one who has already bathed and after, he goes to dress in the guest bedroom leaving the two together.

Ayabonga: I'm going on a long distance today so I won't be driving, they're coming to fetch me and I don't know what time I'll be home.

Lerato: Okay, I have to go home after work and do laundry because we are leaving tomorrow.

Ayabonga: Are we going with him?

Lerato: No, mom said she'll be around until Monday morning.

Ayabonga: Okay, so we have to go shopping for your dress and shoes.

Lerato: Will we manage?

Ayabonga: I don't know, or maybe you can order online or something.

Lerato: I know this other girl who sells amazing stuff, maybe I can order from her and she will have them delivered to Hoedspruit.

Ayabonga: That can work, but please also get back up

Lerato: What are you going to wear?

Ayabonga: I'm sorted, just get something with a blue colour.

Lerato: Okay.

He stops in his tracks as he's about to go to the bathroom.

Ayabonga: Can you drive?

Lerato: (furrowed forehead) Yes.

Ayabonga: Good. You are driving your brother to school and yourself to work.

Lerato: (worriedly) Babe I get so anxious when I have to drive, I don't think I can do that.

Ayabonga: And you won't overcome it if you don't challenge it. Anxiety makes you doubt yourself and the only way you can win against it is to force doing the one thing it tells you you can't do. Repeat it twice and three times and the fourth you'll feel a little better until you get used to it.

She sighs as he goes to the bathroom and starts by brushing his teeth before taking a bath.

He comes back to the bedroom and finds her dressing.

Ayabonga: How are you feeling today?

Lerato: There is some discomfort but the pains are gone.

Ayabonga: (kisses her forehead) You'll be fine.

Lerato: It's going to burst if someone hoots at me on the road while driving.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Stop overthinking.

He dresses and his transport hoots at the gate as he ties his shoes. He has already done all other things and when he heads

out after kissing Lerato goodbye, she gives him a small bag with his lunch inside.

He wants to ask when she prepared all these but time is not on his side so he paces to the gate and hops in the car greeting the driver.

TSHEGOFATSO

His alarm rings and he doesn't even know where the sound is coming from.

He gets off the bed naked while holding his buzzing head and starts looking for his phone so he can switch off the alarm.

He kneels on the floor to look under the bed and when he lowers his head it feels like his whole body wants to follow.

The phone is ringing on the bed in his jean pocket.

He pulls the jean violently and the phone comes flying towards the wall where it smashes and then scatters on the floor.

It goes silent and a piece of his heart goes with it.

He turns to go to the bathroom where he pees first and then goes under the shower.

He looks down on his third leg and it's coated in white powdery stuff, he doesn't even know who he slept with last night and if his dick is like this it means he went in raw.

The thought of impregnating someone he doesn't know or worse catching STIs is terrific. He makes a mental note to go and get tested.

He finishes showering and then brushes his teeth before getting dressed.

He looks at his bedroom and how messy but is but he doesn't have the energy for it so he leaves it like that.

LERATO

She is on the way to work after dropping her little brother off at his school.

She is keeping it together

taking deep breaths where required, and trying to remain calm.

There's not much traffic on the road so it works to her advantage because should someone shout at her to “drive” she might lose control due to anxiety.

When she parks outside the campus she lets go of the wheel with her eyes closed and then takes a long deep breath before getting off.

She makes her way inside and for the first time she's not late, guess having a car does help. She just needs to get used to it.

OWETHU

She is on her way to the taxi stop when the phone rings. Her mother tells her she is on her way to come fetch her because they're done writing.

She is not the one who told her that and she is shaking with fear right now because she will have to explain what is going on.

She tries to tell her that she's already at the taxi stop but the woman is adamant about coming to fetch her.

She realizes her mother isn't far and then waits at the bus stop since there's a shade.

Almost an hour later, her mother stops on the side of the road and gets off to help her with the bags.

Her: I forgot to tell you about a wedding of a friend in Hoedspruit. We are going there.

Owethu: Mama I want to go home and rest.

Her: Remember I promised to take you there sometime because you had seen a restaurant you wanted to go to, this is your chance. Come on, loosen up.

She doesn't respond as she looks out of the window and her mother starts the car.

Her: How was the exams?

Owethu: Fine.

Her: Do you think you did well?

Owethu: I don't know but I hope so.

Her: (raised eyebrow) Are you sick?

Owethu: No, why?

Her: You are wearing a hoodie in this hot weather.

Owethu: It's fashion, this is an oversized hoodie that serves as a dress. There's enough air getting in to keep me chilled.

Her: Okay.

She concentrates on driving and Owethu's mind drifts off until she falls asleep in the car.

AYABONGA

The work he thought would take long lasted for 4 hours. He didn't want to wait any longer so they immediately left and passed by their workplace.

He's not at his place taking a shower. When he finishes he cleans the house and then watches TV to push time.

A knock sounds on his front door and he fetches his wallet in the bedroom before coming to open. it

The delivery guy greets him and he hands him the order before taking it inside as the guy drives off.

He smiles looking at the basket of goodies and then switches off the TV and takes a cap before locking the doors, heading over to his woman's workplace.

He gets there during lunch and steals her for some few minutes to feed her.

They come back and he drops her before driving off.

LERATO

She just knocked off and she finds Ayabonga waiting for her with his little brother.

He drives them to their place and goes back to his to prepare food for them while Lerato is busy with laundry.

Later on he fetches them and they have dinner at his place.

They eat over a light conversation and when they're left together having wine, Ayabonga turns to her and smile.

Ayabonga: I got you something.

Lerato: (smiling) What?

Ayabonga: It's in the bedroom.

She puts her glass down and heads to the bedroom where she finds a lingerie beside the basket filled with goodies and stuff.

She has tears in her eyes because it's the first time anyone has ever been thoughtful like this towards her.

She doesn't even have the strength to scream because this has got her emotional.

As she turns rubbing her tears, she finds Ayabonga waiting for her with open arms and she paces to the door to hug him.

Ayabonga: (brushing her back) It's okay baby, don't cry.

Lerato: It's beautiful, I love it. No one has ever done this for me. Thank you.

Ayabonga: Well, thanks to social media, I also didn't know there is anything called Japan hamper for women and I bet that name came up with a woman who wanted men to spend more on women.

Lerato: (chuckles) Are you complaining?

Ayabonga: Not for you baby, I have the money so I don't mind.

Lerato: Thank you once again.

Ayabonga: Say it.

Lerato: What?

Ayabonga: Babe?

Lerato: Yes.

Ayabonga: Say it.

Lerato: Okay, I love you.

Ayabonga: I love you too. Now, grab your things let's get you home. I want to rest and be ready for the drive tomorrow.

She gets her stuff and they walk out to the car with her little brother who was already sleeping.

Lerato: I got the dress and other things.

She says as they drive off.

Ayabonga: How much is everything?

She takes out her phone and shows her the price. He laughs looking at her and the back on the road.

To be continued...

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OWETHU

They're preparing for the wedding with her mother. They booked in at a hotel and the experience has been refreshing.

Owethu kept on her baggy clothes but her mother didn't suspect a thing because the weather was quiet chilly.

This morning Owethu was the first to wake up and quickly took a bath before putting on her pyjamas that and got back in bed.

Her mother woke her up for breakfast and after eating she went to bath leaving Owethu still in bed.

She is doing her make-up and hair and when she offers to help with the dress Owethu refuses.

Her: What's the matter?, you can't zip it up on your own. Let me help you.

Owethu: Let me put it on and then you will help zip it up.

Her: Okay, let me do my hair in the bathroom then.

She quickly takes off her pyjamas and tries to put on her dress. But because she is in a hurry to finish before her mother comes back in here, the zip hooks her hair and they have a match trying to get it off.

She is sweating and cursing under the dress that's on a mission to expose her because what else does this mean.

Her mother comes back in and finds the dress covering her head while she fights to take it off.

Her: You were supposed to put it on through your legs. Let me help you with that before you tear it off.

Owethu quickly turns and faces the other way. Her mother unhooks it and it has already messed her hair.

Her: (sighs) Now we are going to be late. Here, put your legs in I'll help you.

She turns slowly facing down and then put her legs inside the dress. When her mother pulls it up, she stops at her little bump that has the black line unmistakable.

Her eyes bulges same time as her mouth opens and she stares at the stomach, and then back at her daughter's face.

Her: Owethu, what is this?

Her voice is breaking and she is about to lose it.

Owethu keeps her eyes on the floor while playing with her fingers.

Her: Owethu?

She still doesn't respond. Tears escapes her eyes, falling on the floor and she sniffles.

Her: You know what? Get dressed, we will talk about this when we come back.

She continues helping her with the dress and then zip it up and fixes her hair while chuckling in disbelief.

They drive off in silence with Owethu's mom focusing on the road and Owethu looking outside the window, imagining what will go down when they come back.

NARRATED

The decoration is out of this world and so is the couple getting married. The music is playing softly as everyone takes their seats and waits for the bride to walk down the aisle.

As the song changes they all turn to the door standing up and smiling at the bride who is looking beautiful in her white gown. It has shaped her body, revealing the curves and all details.

The groom also looks handsome in his fade cut and turquoise suit. The colours are blending in well with the theme and the decor.

He looks like he's about to cry as his bride approaches with the veil over her head.

When her father hands her over to him, they shake hands and then he squeezes his bride's hand before facing the pastor as the crowd takes their seats.

The couples here are so beautiful with their matching outfits and all.

The bride and groom's families are seated on the same side but the ones who are unmarried are sitting at the back because

their girlfriends and boyfriends haven't been introduced to the families.

Everyone has followed the theme and reserved their traditional attires for the reception.

The pastor officiating the wedding is from the groom's family and they have agreed to have one from the bride's family for the reception.

Owethu and her mother are sitting with other guests and she has been looking at Ayabonga who doesn't let go of Lerato's hand.

He keeps kissing it when the couple exchange vows and all.

Had she known this was the wedding they're coming to, she would have stayed at the hotel or forced going home.

The pastor finishes officiating and instructs the groom and the bride to kiss, the cheering going on in the hall is wild.

When they stop kissing, a loud voice from the back says it wasn't enough and everyone starts laughing.

The families have taken pictures and now it's only the couple and their bridesmaids and groom's men, everyone else is eating.

Lerato comes with two plates for her and Ayabonga while Ntsako brings Lonwabo's.

They sit comfortably on the table and while eating Owethu's mother comes with Ayabonga's mother to see the last born.

They greet each other with Aya's mother introducing Owethu's mom as the bride's friend and ex colleague.

Ayabonga smiles greeting her and right then Owethu comes behind her mother.

Lonwabo clears his throat giving her an evil look and Lerato continue eating as if she didn't see her.

It is now awkward and she doesn't know what to say. She waits until her mother is done and they leave going back to their table.

Owethu: I won't make it to the reception

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I'm not feeling okay.

Her: Yes, we are driving home after this.

They continue eating while others takes pictures and stuff.

THE RECEPTION

Later that night everyone is in their traditional attire, handing over the Xhosa makoti to her Pedi husband.

She changes into a Pedi traditional attire and the Pedi women are singing with her, doing a dance they rehearsed.

Everyone is looking beautiful in the right mood for the night.

A chance for some of the family members to advice the newly comes and they take the stand talking about how they grew up and all that.

The cake is cut and shared amongst the people.

The couple shares a dance together and everyone else joins in with Ayabonga complaining that he can't dance.

TSHEGOFATSO

He is living recklessly, after work on Friday he never went to test and tonight he's back at the club drinking like a fish.

Lesedi spots him as he's sitting by the bar alone and she approaches him.

Lesedi: Hey.

Tshego: Hi.

Lesedi: Are you alone?

Tshego: As always.

Lesedi: Mind if I join you?

Tshego: No.

She sits beside him and he gets her a drink.

Lesedi: When are you heading home? we can go together.

Tshego: In a few weeks.

Lesedi: I can come crash at your place till then because where I am now the girls are leaving and I'll be left alone.

Tshego: Okay.

He checks the time and it's already past 11 pm.

Tshego: I should get going.

Lesedi: Well it's not that busy, let's go.

He gets another twelve pack and then they leave.

Getting to his place Lesedi cannot believe how messy it is. He has bought food so they start by eating and then he tells her he's going to sleep.

She follows after him and the bedro is even worse.

Lesedi: What's going on? I don't know you like this.

Tshego: I haven't been feeling well lately, don't worry I'll clean in the morning.

Lesedi: Okay.

They get under the covers and Tshego snuggles closer to her.

He starts stroking her and they end up kissing, but he's too drunk to have sex so they sleep.

AYABONGA

It's Monday morning and he's driving back to Phalaborwa with Lerato.

Ntsako and Lonwabo also went back to Pretoria last night after their tour.

Lerato: Thank you for the weekend, it was absolutely amazing and you have such a beautiful family.

Ayabonga: Thank you for coming with me. Did you see that girl who was running after my mother their whole time? she was going to be my date had I not come with you.

Lerato: So I messes it up for her? shame.

Ayabonga: You didn't do anything wrong. I'm the one who asked you to come.

Lerato: And I'm glad I came, it was such a wonderful experience.

Ayabonga: Yeah.

She gets a message and then she checks it and clicks.

Lerato: My order is only arriving tomorrow and the lady is asking if I am still to fetch it at the last location I sent.

Ayabonga: I'm sorry; but you looked beautiful in the other dress too.

Lerato: Let me call her.

She dials the number and talks to her. Ayabonga is paying attention at how she's not shouting but reprimanding the woman and he's thinking to himself how he got such a woman all to herself.

She ends the call and starts complaining on how these people will agree to anything when they want money but they don't stick to their end of the deal.

Ayabonga: Babe, calm down. Maybe it was also a short notice to her because you ordered late, don't you think?

Lerato: She should have told me she can't deliver then.

Ayabonga: Okay, I'm sorry on her behalf because you're screaming at the wrong person now.

Lerato: Oh, so I'm screaming now? why are you siding with her? do you know her?

Ayabonga: But babe, come on.

She folds her hands pouting and a chuckle escapes Ayabonga's mouth.

He closes it with a fist and this time a laughter comes off uncontrollably and he even has tears in his eyes.

Lerato also starts laughing at how he's laughing and she realises what she said is stupid.

They share a good laughter and then look at each and start all over again.

Ayabonga: You are hilarious sometimes.

Lerato: And you're annoying.

Ayabonga: I didn't even do anything wrong.

Lerato: Yeah, yeah. You stood up for a person you don't even know.

Ayabonga: I was just trying to help, don't worry you will wear the dress when we go out sometime.

She smiles and he shakes his head turning to a fast food outlet so they can get something to eat.

To be continued...

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OWETHU

They arrived late last night with her mother and she hasn't asked anything about the pregnancy which terrifies her.

She immediately went to bed when they arrived and she hasn't gone out since morning.

She can hear her mother humming in the kitchen and she is afraid to face her even though she really wants to use the bathroom.

A few minutes later she hears footsteps approaching her bedroom door and she closes her eyes as if asleep but her bladder is about to burst.

The door opens and her mother peeks in.

Her: Come eat, I have places to be and I'm not leaving without talking to you because you might flee the country.

She pulls the door and leaves a crack going back to the kitchen.

Owethu wakes up annoyed and then pulls her gown together going out.

She passes by the bathroom first and then joins her mother.

She finds her waiting at the table and then joins her.

They eat in silence and when they're done her mother puts the dishes away and starts with the questions.

Her: How far are you?

Owethu: Two months, going to three.

Her: And who's the father?

She keeps quiet.

Her: Don't tell me you were reckless you can't even remember who you had sex with two months ago.

Owethu: (mumbling) Tshegofatso.

Her: Soeak clearly so I can hear you. I don't have all day.

Owethu: I said Tshegofatso.

Her: Tshegofatso Mokoena?

She nods looking at her fingers which are tangling on the table.

Her: (claps her hands) Hayi ere wa dlala, you must be joking. Isn't he your friend?

Owethu: He is.

Her: And now he's about to be the father of your child. What happened to your boyfriend, and his girlfriend?

Owethu: Mama I told you all there is to know.

Her: And I'm angry because I taught every little thing there is to know but you decided to do this.

Owethu: Stop judging me. I won't answer any other questions.

Her: Well good, call your uncles and arrange to go to your baby daddy's family then because if he has told them then they're expecting you.

Owethu: (tearful) What is that supposed to mean?

Her: His family has to know about this and the only way is for elders to bring the matter to them. They are to pay damages so the baby can use their surname.

Owethu: I haven't even told him yet and you want me to go to his family?

Her: I suggest you tell him at this instant because the longer you take the harder it's going to be for them to believe you.

She gets up and leaves her at the table. Things took a sharp turn and she isn't ready to face Tshegofatso about this.

She wants to text him but maybe she should wait until he's back which is almost at the beginning of the new month.

TSHEGOFATSO

He calls Owethu while Lesedi is gone out. It has been a few days with her and he has changed his mind about her.

They have spent some quality time together and got to know each other beyond sex.

Maybe she's the light at the end of his tunnel because he's single anyway, but it has to pass by Owethu first; just to clear the air.

She answers on the second ring and he can hear shuffling.

Owethu: Hey.

Tshego: Hi, are you okay?

Owethu: Yeah, you?

Tshego: I'm fine. I miss you.

Owethu: Me too.

Tshego: There's something I want to tell you.

Owethu: Okay.

Tshego: I have met up with someone from the past and I think I'm ready to move on.

Owethu: Okay?

Tshego: I'm running this past you as my friend because I don't want issues regarding this. I deserve happiness too and I think I've found it with her.

Owethu: Do I know her?

Tshego: Yes.

Owethu: And you expect me to be civil and not cause problems for you?

Tshego: Exactly.

Owethu: Okay, what's her name?

Tshego: (takes a deep breath) Lesedi.

It takes about only a second and he hears the call ending tone ringing in his ears.

Withing a few seconds he's already blocked.

He sighs and rubs his head.

Tshego: I'm sorry bestie, I won't let you ruin this one.

Lesedi walks through the door holding a plastic with snacks.

Lesedi: Hey, I stocked up on these because we're running out.

Tshego: Thank you. Come sit, I want us to talk about something.

Lesedi: Okay.

She joins him on the couch and he puts his phone away.

Tshego: I have done a lot of things I am not proud of and that includes what happened in my last relationship. I toyed with it because I thought I had it all figured out. I don't want to repeat the same mistake so I'm asking you to be my girlfriend. I think there's more to us than what we're doing now and I want us to experience whatever it is. I haven't had sex with you since you got here because I saw how you have been towards me. From that first morning when you made sure everything was in place it just clicked in my mind that if you ever slide out of my hands then it'll be for good. And please hear me out, I'm not saying

you auditioned for it but I am not feeling the same way and I want to be able to feel this way for as long as I can.

Lesedi has her eyes narrowed at him as he talks. She relaxes once he's finished and then leans back on the couch before facing him again.

Lesedi: How do I know if you're not using me as a rebound?

Tshego: Because I am not going to rush you into anything and besides, i'm only asking you so you have a choice.

Lesedi: Okay, well I thought you'd never ask.

A smile forms on Tshego's face and his face brightens up.

Tshego: Really?

Lesedi: Yeah, you have just been blinded by whatever to notice me, but I have been around for a long time.

He is happy to hear this he doesn't even know how to react so he just hugs her tightly for some time before kissing her forehead.

Tshego: You have just made me the happiest man. Thank you.

NTSAKO

She is ready to go home and because Lonwabo will soon be taking a break maybe she can visit him.

He is with her for the evening because she is leaving in the morning and they're in her bedroom as she packs the last bag.

Lonwabo: Why are you packing like you're never coming back?

Ntsako: Babe I'm a woman. I am going to need all these clothes.

Lonwabo: I believe you.

She rolls her eyes at him and he smiles.

Lonwabo: I am going to miss you.

Ntsako: Me too. I don't want to go.

Lonwabo: Your mom will be worried. Go see her and then you will come back to dzadzzy.

Ntsako: (chuckles) Can you come with me? get under my skin or something.

Lonwabo: (laughs) Babe.

Ntsako: Okay let me live under yours then?

Lonwabo: And what will I tell Tintswalo when she comes looking for you?

Ntsako: I'll answer her from within and explain. You don't have to worry about that.

Lonwabo: You have thought this through huh?

Ntsako: (nodding) Yes.

Lonwabo: Come here.

She stops packing and gets between his legs as he hugs her standing up.

Lonwabo: (whispering) I can't let you under my skin because that would mean I can't put my stick in you and I wouldn't like that.

Ntsako: (chuckles) It's going to be a dry season for you now that I'm leaving.

Lonwabo: No, my dick is going to rest.

Ntsako: (hits his chest) You are so mean.

Lonwabo: (breaks the hug) And you're a crybaby, even worse crying for the organ God gave me. Imagine!

Ntsako: (pouts) That's my organ, yours is this one.

She says pointing between her legs and Lonwabo's pants rises at that.

Ntsako: I think they want to play.

That sends Lonwabo off and he starts laughing.

Ntsako: One for the road?

Lonwabo: Obviously. Let me calm down first. You're hilarious.

OWETHU

Later that night she is trying to sleep but she keeps tossing and turning.

The thought of Tshegofatso and Lesedi is a nightmare to her and that's why she can't sleep.

She takes her phone and unblocks him before dialing.

Lesedi answers on the other end and she tightens her jaws angrily but composes herself quickly.

Lesedi: Hello.

Owethu: Hey, where is Tshego?

Lesedi: How are you too?

Owethu: (clicks) Where is the owner of the phone?

Lesedi: Being cheeky isn't going to help you. I'm here to stay.

She hears Tshego's voice in the background before he answers.

Tshego: Hi.

Owethu: Hey, how are you?

Tshego: I'm good.

Owethu: I'm sorry about earlier on.

Tshego: Okay.

Owethu: Yeah, but I don't approve of this relationship. Can't you find someone I don't have a history with?

Tshego: And what's your history with Lesedi?

Owethu: We used to be friends before y'all started fucking.

Tshego: And you are still mad because?

Owethu: You were both my friends, you shouldn't have done that.

Tshego: But because you long didn't like her you cut her off. Why didn't you do the same to me?

Owethu: You're my best friend.

Tshego: Exactly, not your boyfriend.

That hurts and it stings her heart she gasps.

Owethu: Oh! okay.

Tshego: I love you but this time I will put my relationship first because I don't think you understand what friendship is.

Owethu: (tearful) So now that you have slept with me you feel it's okay to toss me off and not even care where I land.

Tshego: Did I force you?

Owethu: This is why I don't think you're ready to father this child.

She hangs up and Tshego is left with a thousand questions.

To be continued...

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TSHEGOFATSO

When he turns around he finds Lesedi with her arms folded behind him. He didn't realise his speaker was loud and now he doesn't know what to say to her.

He's wondering if she heard everything or she's just curious since she's the one who answered.

Tshego: (clears throat) What are we doing tonight?

Lesedi: I heard everything, explain.

He keeps quiet looking at her with the hopes that she is joking. She is dead serious and even her face confirms it.

Lesedi: I intentionally increased the volume because I knew you weren't going to tell me the truth after. Don't test me.

Tshego: I don't know what she's talking about.

Lesedi: But you do remember sleeping with her right?

Tshego: Yes.

Lesedi: Then start counting because to me it appears that she knows you're the father hence she said what she said.

Tshego: (sighs) I don't believe her, I mean she was with her boyfriend and all.

Lesedi: And why would she risk telling you this if the father is her boyfriend?

Tshego: They're no longer together and that's why she is pinning this on me.

Lesedi: (claps once) So when you had sex with her, the possibility that she could fall pregnant wasn't there. You labelled yourself as infertile because you were sleeping with someone's girlfriend, your very own female bestie?

Tshego: Why are you like this? I feel like you are judging me.

Lesedi: Like I should. I am like what? Any man who questions a pregnancy he might have caused annoys me. You don't even have proof but your first instinct is that the baby isn't yours. I'm seeing that as a huge red flag.

Tshego: Babe, come on. Okay, we will wait for the proof.

Lesedi: Have you counted the months?

Tshego: No.

Lesedi: I am not going to be a spectator in my own relationship, and as time goes you will have to choose between me and her because the play you and her have been at of being in a relationship as a team will not work with me.

Tshego: And if she's really pregnant for me?

Lesedi: You are still going to choose. It's between me and her, not the baby.

He releases a deep breath and then brushes his face.

Tshego: Okay. I guess we will know the truth when we get home.

Lesedi: I guess so.

She turns around and leaves him standing there.

If Owethu is really pregnant then it's going to mess this newly formed relationship with Lesedi.

Also, he's not ready to be a father!

OWETHU

It has been a few days since she blocked Tshegofatso. She is still angry at him or maybe it's the moods. Whatever it is, she doesn't want to talk to him.

She rolls off the bed to go to the bathroom when a car stops outside.

It's her uncles and aunties. They get off and her mother greets them leading them inside.

She closes herself in the bathroom and does her business before coming out, bumping into her mother who was on her way to call her.

Her: Your uncles are here, come greet them.

Owethu: I'm coming.

She goes back and Owethu proceeds to her room.

She changes into her baggy clothes and then comes to join the elders.

After greeting them

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her eldest uncle tells her the reason they are here and that they are not staying.

They ask for the directions to the noy's family so they can deliver the letter before officially going for a meeting with her.

She is embarrassed about this whole thing because even now she hasn't "told" Tshegofatso and it's going to be worse when the village learns about this. To top it off the step mother is Lesedi!

They leave immediately with the letter written by the younger uncle to deliver it and because it's a walkable distance, they leave the car behind.

Owethu goes back to her room and her mother joins her.

Her: I want to see you card.

Owethu: I don't have.

Her: What do you mean? so you have never been to the clinic?

She keeps quiet.

Her: You keep driving me to my limits everyday. Get up, I'm taking you to the clinic myself.

Owethu: I'm not going.

Her: Owethu?

Owethu: (yelling) I am not going anywhere!

Her mother puts her hand on her chest in surprise that her daughter is yelling at her.

The aunts comes running to the bedroom wondering what is going on.

While they ask her mother, Owethu slips into her slippers and walks out leaving the three of them at her door.

She closes herself in the bathroom and starts crying.

AYABONGA

His relationship with Lerato is blossoming they even have a formal trip to Hoedspruit so she can meet the family.

He is excited about it and even counting days. It has been a long time he experienced love like this.

This is one of the relationships he feels he doesn't have to look over his shoulder or wonder what the other person is doing wherever they are.

Lerato has proven to be in this with her whole self and he is happy with her. The trip to Hoedspruit might seem premature but at least he will have people to wipe his tears should she dribble him also.

He has just got back from work and he is getting ready for his date with her. She is finally going to wear her dress and shoes tonight because she has never worn them.

He also got her a matching set of bras and thongs. Next stop is a lingerie and other accessories.

He got a helper to stay with her little brother at his place just until they come back, which will be less than five hours.

He knows the lady through a friend whom she sometimes babysit for.

He decides to call her and ask if she's ready because they're running out of time.

Lerato: Babe.

Ayabonga: Are you ready?

Lerato: I'm still fixing my hair.

Ayabonga: I told you to do braids so you won't have to take forever with it.

Lerato: My hair has to breathe babe. I'll be done in a few minutes. After this I'm getting dressed.

Ayabonga: I'm coming there now. I have to fetch the girl also.

Lerato: Okay.

He hangs up and then grabs his keys walking out.

He passes by the girl's place and then heads to Lerato's.

He cannot believe his eyes when she steps out of the house.

He didn't even know she can do make-up because besides that day at the wedding, had never seen her with make up. Her lashes are screaming baddie but hey, sometimes that's what a man needs.

The lady can't help herself also as she marvels at her. She offers to take them a picture and they pose by the car as she snaps a few pictures of them together, and some with Lerato's little brother before driving back to his place.

Later on they are at a restaurant. Ayabonga can't stop himself from complimenting Lerato because she looks absolutely beautiful.

He keeps throwing sweet words to her and she is blushing.

Lerato: Babe my cheeks are going to hurt, please stop.

Ayabonga: You don't see what I'm seeing babe. I don't even know how to describe this.

He takes out his phone and snap a few pictures of her as she smiles, blushes and laughs.

Their order arrives and they eat over a light conversation.

He looks so intently at her as she speaks and he's thinking of how blessed he is.

He doesn't even realise that he has stopped eating.

Lerato: Babe, are you okay?

She waves her hand in front of him and he snaps out of it.

Ayabonga: What was that?

Lerato: Are you okay, you were staring at me.

Ayabonga: (clears throat) Promise you won't laugh.

She starts laughing immediately and he stops talking.

Lerato: Okay, tell me I won't laugh. I was laughing in advance so I won't have to when you tell me.

Ayabonga: (whispering) I'm imagining you out of that dress with my hands trailing your gorgeous body and then where they end my lips takes over...

She gasps with her eyes widened before he can finish talking. It's the way he's saying the words as if reading from a novel.

Lerato: (slowly) Babe...

Ayabonga: I know.

They look at each other for a few seconds and then look around before going back to their plates giggling.

Lerato: Save that thought for later.

They continue eating as she steals glances at him and smiles. Such a gorgeous human being.

Later on they walk out of the restaurant holding hands and then get into the car.

Ayabonga lets Lerato drive while he strokes her thighs from the passenger seat.

He traces his middle finger all the way between her legs and moves her thong to the side with the thumb.

Lerato: (hitched breath) Babe...

Her voice trails off as she moans to his touch while trying to focus on the road.

She slowly turns to him with her eyelids moving lazily. He stops until she looks back at the road and then goes back to touching her.

Ayabonga is doing all this looking at where they're going and because Lerato has to pay attention to the road, her hands can't move from the steering wheel.

She attempts to move one hand so she can touch him but he stops caressing her until she puts it back on the wheel.

Ayabonga: Focus on the road or you're going to cause an accident.

She is struggling to drive while he touches her so she indicates and stops on the side of the road breathing heavily.

They switch seats and he quickly gets them home.

Her brother is already sleeping when they arrive and the lady has left about 10 minutes ago because that was the time they agreed on.

Lerato slowed them down on the road while focusing on being fingered.

She is the first to go into the bedroom after checking on her brother and Ayabonga locks up before joining her.

They do not waste any more time but immediately gets to it.

A FEW WEEKS LATER...

To be continued...

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OWETHU

It is the day for the meeting regarding her pregnancy and her uncles are already here. She is not ready for this but what other choice does she have?

She finishes bathing and then puts on a long dress that conceals her pregnancy, it was her eldest aunt's idea but doesn't want to make it obvious that she had unprotected sex.

Thankfully, her face isn't swollen like how she has seen other pregnant women or maybe it's still early? Her aunts have been complimenting her on how smooth her skin is and that she might be carrying a girl because she is glowing. She doesn't see any glow but a fat pig picking up on the already heavy weight, she has learnt her lesson shame.

A few minutes later, they all get into the car together with the aunts and her mother, driving to Tshogofatso's place.

She isn't asked for directions like she's seen on Facebook that the mother will keep saying nasty stuff throughout the way to the guy that made you pregnant.

Her uncle still remembers the way and he is playing his old school music while whistling to it to ensure no one says anything out of the way.

They have all give her their pieces regarding this pregnancy and now they should just let her breath a little.

Owethu and her mother's relationship has been rocky since the pregnancy news because she feels her mother is being unfair towards her, and the mother is trying to let her take responsibility of her actions. She will help where she can but cannot take over 100% of the work.

The card issue was resolved and the nurses had a field day with her at the clinic, but fortunately, everything is good now and because she is in the last month of her first trimester, the load is getting heavier.

Mood swings are a bitch, back pains and cravings even worse. Her sexual drive has also picked up and not having anyone to scratch the itch is driving her crazy.

Her aunts assures her that everything will be okay and if she needs something she can always call them to come help. She doesn't see herself doing that because these old women still have the olden days mindset and for her and the baby's sake, she hopes they won't embarrass her at this meeting. They are even arranging for when she gives birth to come stay with one of them and she isn't going to give in to that.

She is praying silently as they approach Tshego's gate, hoping that everything will go well as the aunt said and there won't be any quarrels.

The thought of Tshogofatso refusing this pregnancy is high and she wouldn't blame him.

There is someone waiting for them at the gate and the uncle slows down before switching off the engine. They all get off and goes inside following the person who was waiting for them.

TSHEGOFATSO

He arrived late last night and his parents informed him of the meeting that will be taking place today.

He couldn't believe it when he realised its all getting serious now. Owethu is pregnant and he is the father.

The guests are already here because he can hear his mom telling someone to come and call him.

He fixes himself and then joins everyone in the living room.

The elders greets and start with the meeting. Owethu's uncle is the one talking on behalf of his family.

Owethu is sitting in the middle of the two women on the couch looking down. She looks really beautiful, it must be that pregnancy glow.

Tshego's uncle: Now that the matter has been explained, it is their turn to tell us what is what. Fatso, do you know this girl?

He clears his throat before looking at Owethu's direction. He swears she smiled at the mention of that name.

Tshego: Yes uncle, I know her.

Him: Okay

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young girl he says he knows you and that means you're at the right place. Do you agree to damaging her?

He asks looking at Tshhofatso who is rubbing his hands together. Owethu is holding her breath waiting for him to reply.

Tshego: Yes.

Owethu lets out the breath she's been holding.

Him: And what are your intentions with her?

Tshego: For now I will be taking care of what I should take care of and what she allows me to take care of.

Owethu's uncle interjects angrily not understanding why Tshego is responding like that.

According to him, Tshegofatso's statement means he's not ready to marry her yet he made her pregnant. This is the reason they should pay that R3000 fine, he should also add on a goat or a cow.

His uncle manages to control the situation and gives Tshegofatso a chance to explain what he means.

Tshego: (clears throat) With all due respect elders, I don't want to come off as disrespectful but I think this meeting was called to finalize a way forward. I agree to sleeping with her knowing the chances of her falling pregnant are high. But she never told me about the pregnancy and she is now going to four months. She has blocked me on the phone and that means I can't communicate with her. Saying I will take care of what she

allows me to take care of means when she has given me the chance to communicate with her, and step over as the father of the child. I will do my part from a distance until she lets me in.

He doesn't miss the evil stare from Owethy but he wasn't going to let her get away with this because it was going to come back to bite him.

Owethu's family isn't pleased about this because no one said anything.

They release the kids and remain as elders after a agreeing on a few things.

Owethu's uncle has mentioned the fine they should pay which is R3000 because for the whole months left, Owethu will be in the care of her own family who will have to deal with her mood swings and cravings.

It doesn't seem like there's a relationship between her and Tshegofatso so that means she is everything needed will have to be supplied by her family.

They agree on the R3000 but not the goat part. They both took part in making the baby so they should both take the responsibility.

Meanwhile outside, Owethu goes to the car and waits for the elders.

She sees Tshegofatso coming into her direction and as she is about to get off, she sees Lesedi passing in front of the car.

They hug and then steal a kiss while checking the coast. Lesedi giggles looking at the car and then whispers something to Tshegofatso who laughs and hugs her one last time before letting go of her.

She proceeds to the playground and Tshego turns to Owethu.

She quickly lock the doors and sit folding her arms.

He knocks on the window after trying to open and he can see she's angry. He makes the puppy eyes at her but she doesn't budge.

He goes back to the house and she bursts crying in the car, taking a few seconds to breath and then going at it again.

Later on the elders comes out and they say their goodbyes before driving off.

Owethu's mother realises Owethu has been crying because her face is swollen and red around the eyes and cheeks.

She makes a mental note to ask about it when they get home.

LESEDI

She deliberately went over to the car because she saw Owethu getting inside, just to give her a taste of her own medicine.

For the longest time she has watched her attitude towards Tshegofatso's relationships from a distance, and she patiently waited for her turn to be in his life so she can prove to her that she ain't shit.

As much as she is here to enjoy being with Tshegofatso, she is also here to teach Owethu a lesson. It's a pity she is pregnant, she would have loved a physical match with her some day.

She is with Tshegofatso going to his place because his parents have gone out. They waited for the car to drive off before coming here.

They enter through the gate and then goes straight to his bedroom.

Lesedi: (sitting on the bed) I missed this place. How many have you brought here?

Tshego: Just you, you know I don't bring women in here.

Lesedi: I believe you.

Tshego: (chuckles) Let me get you something to drink, I'm coming.

He goes out to the kitchen and he hears his father's car driving in.

He takes the glass to his bedroom and instructs Lesedi to keep quiet because the 'rents are back.

She rolls her eyes at that, sipping her juice as Tshego goes out to the back door. He leaves it open for an escape if it gets ugly before going out through the front door.

He finds his mother offloading plastics from the car with his younger brother and he offers to help her.

Tshego: (looking around) Where is dad? I thought he was the one driving.

Her: He went to your room through the back door, said he wanted to have a word with you before he forgets. Take this, make sure you put those in the fridge immediately.

To be continued...

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TSHEGOFATSO

He puts the plastics down in the kitchen before rushing to his bedroom.

He bumps into his father on the passage and then stops, leaning against the wall to gain balance.

Tshego: Uhm, dad.

He's brushing his head realising the old man has already passed by his room.

Him: Let's go talk outside.

He follows him all the way to the shade near the gate. They both sit down and they can hear the mother shouting from the house.

Tshego: I forgot to put the packs in the fridge like she instructed.

His father keeps quiet still digesting what he saw, and trying to put his words in a more understandable way so they won't ever have this conversation again.

He is also trying to calm himself because what's happening right now in his yard is something he has never expected.

He clears his throat after some minutes to get his son's attention.

Him: (calmly) I just want to know what your intentions are with both these girls. Maybe if you can start by explaining from the beginning, I will be able to understand .

Tshego: Lesedi is my girlfriend, I was yet to introduce her to you guys.

Him: That's not how I taught you. What is she doing in your bedroom without any of us knowing she is here? and what about the one carrying your child?

Tshego: Dad you don't understand. Owethu wants to ruin my life. She doesn't want to see me happy with someone else. I don't dispute making her pregnant but it wasn't my intention and I don't think our relationship will go past co-parenting.

Him: You still haven't answered my question Tshego fatso.

He looks down and then sighs. He has never really expressed himself to anyone and maybe his father is that person. But he is his father, it is not easy.

Tshego: Owethu is my best friend, I have long wanted to explore with her but never had the opportunity. We both got involved with other people but ended up getting entangled with each other while still with the other people. Both our relationships failed and that's when I got involved with Lesedi. I found out about the pregnancy at a later stage and I couldn't end my relationship with Lesedi because I wasn't even sure the baby was mine.

He murmurs the last part looking down.

Him: What are your intentions with both of them? one is carrying your child and I suggest you start thinking like a father, lest that child gets caught in the crossfire because I don't see this ending well.

Tshego: It sounds to me like you are already disapproving of this relationship?

Him: I'm not, I don't even care who you date so long you take care of yourself. I am only worried that you are taking this lightly and if you're not careful it will lead into a tragedy you will never recover from. Son, there is a child involved here, the mother needs you in this difficult time and so does your girlfriend. As time goes they are going to make you choose, it will be the mother of your unborn child whom you still regard as your best friend and your girlfriend. Let me tell you, you will never choose the baby and not the mother so long they are still one, and your girlfriend will not like that. Looking at you now, I don't think you have this figured out. Find time to yourself and think this through.

As he stands to go to the house, they hear the mother screaming Tshego's name from the back.

Tshego rushes over leaving his father behind who is shaking his head. He finds his mother at his door looking at Lesedi who is cuddled on the bed busy on her phone.

Her: (shouting) What is this? what is this, Tshegofatso? A pregnant one just left and you have already brought another one? Are you trying to kill me? huh?

He doesn't know what to say and when he turns to Lesedi she looks unbothered by his mother's fit.

His father manages to pull his wife aside but she can still be heard quarelling all the way to their bedroom.

Tshego: I think you should go.

Lesedi rolls her eyes and then gets off the bed and put on her shoes.

Lesedi: Organize proper introductions next time, your mother is dramatic.

He doesn't say anything as they go out through the back door and turn around to the gate.

His father is right, he didn't think this through.

OWETHU

The elders dropped her and her mother off and then left. Everything is still okay now and her mother has agreed to put in more effort to help her.

They are watching TV and her mother keeps glancing at her. She wants to ask if she is okay but an answer to that will just be a one word

which won't help in any way.

Owethu puts the cushion aside and stands on her feet.

Owethu: I need some air.

Her: Can I come with you?

Owethu: Let me change my shoes and then we can take a walk.

She goes to her bedroom and then her mother reduces the TV volume and waits for her.

A few minutes later she comes out and they both leave. It's a bit chilly outside but nothing they can't deal with.

Owethu keeps pulling her cardigan to her stomach but it doesn't fit anymore so she lets it be.

Her mother finds this a perfect time to get her to open up.

Her: I think we should get you some maternity dresses and shirts.

Owethu: Yeah.

Her: Are you still comfortable in pants and jeans?

Owethu: No.

Her: Shoes?

Owethu: No.

She keeps giving this one word answers and her mother doesn't know if she is just not interested or it's the moods.

Her: What happened in the car when we were still inside?

Owethu: Nothing.

Her: (sighs) Owethu I'm trying here, meet me halfway.

Owethu: I don't want to talk about it.

They see Tshego and Lesedi approaching and then Owethu stops.

Owethu: I feel tired, can we go back?

Her mother looks at the couple and then back at Owethu. It makes sense now. She turns to find Owethu already a few metres from her heading back home.

Tshego and Lesedi also saw them and Lesedi intentionally held on to Tshego even though he didn't return the act.

Again, his father is right!

AYABONGA

They came back from Hoedspruit about three hours ago. It's a Saturday and because Lerato's mom is around, she is spending the night with him.

Aya: What do you want to do?

Lerato: Sleep, maybe?

Aya: Or we can go out, have a few drinks and then come back to sleep.

Lerato: Where will we go? I am not familiar with these clubs and stuff.

Aya: I know a good place in town, we can head there.

Lerato: Okay. Let me change then.

She takes about 20 minutes in the bedroom and when Ayabonga goes after her, he finds her drawing brows.

Aya: (exclaims) Babe, really? it's already late.

Lerato: You might meet someone you know there, they will be with the partners who would have gone all out for the night and it won't look good on you.

Aya: But you're fine the way you are.

Lerato: Let me finish up, you will thank me later. I am doing this for you.

He chuckles stepping over to get a closer look. She is focused on the mirror she has placed in front of her.

He stands behind her, his chin on her shoulder and then whispers.

Aya: Make sure you wash your face immediately we get back because you won't like the image that's going to reflect from the mirror in the morning.

He gives her that flirtatious look and she feels her panties soaking.

Ayabonga walks away and she takes a moment to pull herself together. He has ruined this outing and she is not going anymore because now she wants him inside of her.

She wipes off the make-up and then takes off her underwear and goes to the sitting room in his t-shirt only.

He has taken off his shoes and t-shirt, got a bottle of red wine and two glasses with a plate of snacks.

Lerato: Why didn't you tell me we are no longer going?

Aya: Well it looks like you have read my mind so it doesn't matter anymore. Come join me.

She takes a seat near him and then he pours the wine and they start drinking.

Lerato: I think this is better than going out.

Aya: Agreed, but sometimes the vibe is needed.

Lerato: I can give you the vibe.

Aya: (raised eyebrow) Really?

Lerato: Just say when.

He stands on his feet and goes to the laptop that had a movie playing. He goes to the playlists he's long created for when he finds that someone and then selects play.

He goes back to the movie and lets it play with the music in the background. Lerato is on her second glass, she has filled it up to the brim.

Lerato: How did you know I was going to change my mind about going out?

She asks after he's taken his seat.

Aya: I know what your facial expressions mean, and the one I saw after talking to you told me to come set this up and forget about going out.

Lerato: It didn't lie, but it left out one detail.

Aya: What?

She seductively stands up and then starts dancing. Ayabonga is intently looking at her and she holds the gaze too.

She heads to the table, comes back with a chair and then slowly reaches to him before directing him sit on it.

Beyonce's dance for you is hitting her in all the right places to dance for this man and she is doing just that. When she sits on him he grabs her butt, and she starts grinding on him while looking straight at his face. She traces her fingers from her chest to his waist while getting off him and the last place she comes in contact with her is his member.

She turns and faces away, slowly goes down as the t-shirt goes up.

To be continued...

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OWETHU

She wakes up in the middle of the night and unblocks Tshego before dialing him.

He answers sleepily and she can't even hear what he's saying.

Tshego: Mmmh.

Owethu: (tearfully) Tshego, it's Owethu.

She hears shuffling, guess he answered without checking the caller ID.

Tshego: (worriedly) What's wrong? are you okay?

Owethu: Yes. No! I'm just-

She starts crying. Tshegofatso doesn't know what to do so he rushes to his parents' bedroom while asking Owethu where her

mom is. He is thinking she's all alone and after the chat with his father, he has to man up even if it means dealing with Owethu's mood swings.

His father opens for him and he asks for his car keys because he has to go check on the crying Owethu and he cannot walk at this time.

Tshego: (on the phone) Listen, sshhh, I'm coming there. Don't move from the phone. I will call you or send a message when I'm at the gate okay?

Owethu nods on the other side as if Tshego can see her. His father comes back with the keys, he offers to drive him but Tshego says he will be fine because it's just across the soccer field.

He walks him out and then closes the gate and tells him to hoot when he comes back so he can open for him.

Tshego drives in a speed only known to him, hoping to not bump into any car because it will be a mess.

Meanwhile, Owethu's mother knocks on her bedroom door because she heard her crying when she was going to the bathroom.

She peeks inside and asks if she can come in. Owethu nods and then sits up the bed, making space for her mother.

Her: (worriedly) What's wrong baby?

Owethu: I'm just tired of holding everything in mama. I messed a good thing with Ayabonga and I'm now jealous of his relationship. He did everything right but because I was blinded by lust I never thought I would get caught. Now Tshegofatso has also found someone and not just anyone, but the friend who betrayed me and I'm supposed to be fine with that and respect their relationship. It's all too much for me mama. I can't do this.

She is crying all this time as she pours out from her heart. Her mother is looking at her sadly because she didn't know anything about it. On the other side, she is happy that her daughter is finally opening up to her.

Owethu: I am carrying a child for my best friend and I don't think our friendship will ever be normal again. How do I fix this mama?

Her: I can't tell you what to do because I am not feeling what you're feeling, but for now let the pain take its course and then you will have an open mind to introspect and rectify this. There is always light at the end of the tunnel, no matter how long the tunnel is. It's up to us to have the courage to make it till the end so we can have a clear vision. I am so sorry you're going through this, it will pass.

She hugs her and they see lights bouncing on the windows. Owethu's phone vibrates and she answers wiping her tears. Her mother can hear a guy's voice so she steps back until they're done talking.

Owethu: It's Tshegofatso. I called him and he decided to come see if I'm okay. I hope you don't mind.

Her: Let me go open for him before he gets hijacked or something.

She leaves her in the bedroom and goes outside. Tshego parks in the yard and then gets off to greet her. She wants to direct him to Owethu's room but they see her coming out in her robe.

Her mother leaves them after telling Owethu to not stay out in cold. She doesn't want to imagine what will take place in her absence, so she rushes to her bedroom to get busy.

TSHEGOFATSO

Owethu's face is already swollen from all the crying and when her mother is out of sight, he turns to hug her. He's surprised when she returns it and hold on a little longer and tighter. They go inside and straight to her room, what will they be hiding now because they have proven to everyone that they know each other naked?

As if Owethu's mom has read their minds, she is playing radio in her room and the door was closed when they passed by.

Tshego: What's wrong? why were you crying?

They are sitting on the bed with Owethu leaning against the headboard and Tshegofatso facing her.

Owethu: I'm just overwhelmed by everything. My life has took a sharp turn that I was never ready for and now I don't know how to fix this.

Tshego: I am sorry for being the source of that turn or adding to it. What can I do in the meantime to make you feel better?

Owethu: It's fine, I already feel better.

Tshego: (smiling) Is it because I'm here or what?

Owethu: Maybe. How have you been?

Tshego: Hanging by a thread, I don't know what I should do when I'm around you. Even that hug earlier, it took everything in me to initiate it because I didn't know if you were going to scream or what.

Owethu: (chuckles) Come on, I'm not dramatic.

Tshego: You? I don't even know if it's this pregnancy or what but you are worse.

Owethu: You're just teasing me.

Tshego: (clears throat) I have been meaning to talk to you and now that I'm here, I think it's the right time.

Owethu: Okay, let sit comfortably for this one.

She puts a pillow behind her back and then lean back on the headboard. Her legs spread and a blanket covering her.

Tshego takes one of her feet on his thighs and starts massaging her

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making sure she relaxes and maybe sleeps cause he is seepy too.

Tshego: There is a lot of things I have been thinking about lately, I don't know even know where to start.

His phone rings as he's about to say another word. One glance at it and he sees Lesedi's name flashing. He hasn't talked to her since she left and he is wondering why she is calling at this time.

He wants to reject but what if it's something serious? He leaves Owethu's feet and she pulls her leg back into the blanket.

Tshego: Hello.

Lesedi: Hey, you good?

Tshego: Yeah.

Lesedi: You don't sound sleepy, what are you doing?

Tshego: I'm with Owethu, she wasn't feeling okay and I wanted to see if everything was fine.

Lesedi: Must be nice being impregnated by a neighbour, you just snap your fingers and then they're at your service.

Tshego: Can I call you once I'm done here?

She starts an argument and even Owethu can hear the sound from the phone. Tshegofatso sighs without a word until she's

done talking and then hangs up on him. Again, his father was right!

Tshego: (pulling her leg out) Where was I? yes, how soon can we name the baby?

Owethu: Anytime, any suggestions?

Tshego: I was thinking, Boitumelo or Bontle if it's a girl, and Tshegofatso Jr if it's a boy.

Owethu: Okay, I had not thought of any name yet. I was still locked up in everything happening.

Tshego: I understand, and once again, I'm sorry.

Owethu: It's not your fault Fatso.

They both laugh and he tickles her under the foot.

Tshego: I knew you weren't going to take long.

Owethu: (laughing) It's cute though.

Tshego: I'm Tshegofatso to you please and thank you.

Owethu: Or baby daddy.

Tshego: Already?

Owethu: (pointing at her stomach) Well...

He stops massaging her and then gets on the bed and snuggles closer to her.

Tshego: Apart from the angry bird I have been subjected to these few days, I can still see my best friend and our connection is still tight. What's wrong?

Owethu: (sighs) I have been stalking Ayabonga, he posts about her, he posts her, it reminds me of what I took granted of.

Tshego: I know, but you have to move on because if this continues you're going to have a serious problem.

Owethu: How am I going to move on with this?

Tshego: I meant gradually, not immediately.

Owethu: Are you happy with her?

Tshego: I don't know, I feel like I rushed into it.

Owethu: But do you love her?

Tshego: I don't know, but whatever it is it's not love.

Owethu: I see. (yawning) I'm sleepy, mind cuddling me to sleep?

Tshego: No.

They slide under the sheets and closer to each other. Tshego puts his hand on her tummy and starts brushing it.

Tshego: When will he starts kicking?

Owethu: You will know.

Tshego: Okay.

LERATO

She is awakened by Ayabonga rubbing himself on her butt. He's got one hand on her boob and the other working its way between her legs.

She moans in her sleep trying to help him but sleep overpowers her and the only thing she can do is to lift her leg for better penetration.

Ayabonga curses when he feels the warmth between Lerato's legs. He pulls back as though he wants to feel the entry pleasure again, but instead of going back in, he gently pushes her to sleep on her stomach and takes it from the back.

This one will fall pregnant soon because stove is at 6, four plates plus the oven.

To be continued...

AYABONGA

He wakes up before Lerato, she is peacefully sleeping and he loves the view. Today is a happy day for him and not because it's Sunday, it's the shandis between her lover's legs that kept him awake throughout the night.

He still can't believe how it's so different everytime he goes in there. It's the feel good kind of different though so he's not complaining.

Lerato turns facing the other way and exposing her face that was slightly covered. Ayabonga snaps a few pictures and then goes to the bathroom, before the kitchen to prepare breakfast for her Majesty.

He is whistling while frying and stirring on the other side. The one thing that tops it all is that his family has welcomed her with open arms, even the sisters are planning an outing with her soon.

A few minutes later he walks into the bedroom and wakes her up. She winces at the pain between her legs and Ayabonga puts the tray aside so he can inspect her.

He spreads her legs and makes a torch so he can have a better view. She is indeed swollen, the pink flesh is exposed and seems to be closing the entry.

He gently rubs the skin to see how she will react and she hisses trying to pull back.

Ayabonga: It's not bad, you are naturally sensitive because I have noticed even if we go a day without sex, when we do have it you become swollen.

Lerato: I don't feel any scratches but hey this is going to fill my panties. It will feel like I'm carrying something.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Like balls.

Lerato: You're crazy.

Ayabonga: In love with you.

They both laugh as her phone rings, she answers talking to her mother. When she hangs up she looks at Ayabonga with the look he know very well.

Ayabonga: (standing up) Let me prepare water for you can bath before leaving.

Lerato: (sadly) And my food?

Ayabonga: I'll pack a skhafthin' for you, lunchbox from sleepover kind of things.

He says with a smile and that makes Lerato giggle softly. She follows after him to brush her teeth while he's balancing the water temperature. He adds some salts to help with the swelling and then helps her in.

While she takes a bath, he goes back to clean the bedroom so he can drive her home.

He is blushing to himself as flashbacks from early this morning comes rushing into his mind. Wow, Rato!

OWETHU

She wakes up to find Tshegofatso still wrapped in her arms. It's almost 8 am and his parents might be worried.

She gently nudges him and he bats his eyelids before fully opening his eyes to look at her.

Owethu: (whispering) You have to leave.

He groans getting up while rubbing his eyes.

Tshego: Do I really have to?

Owethu: Yes. We are not yet married and this is my mother's house, it's not right.

Tshego: Okay, promise me one thing and then I will leave.

Owethu: What?

Tshego: You will spend the day with me.

Owethu: Okay, fine. Now go.

He gets off and puts on his shoes before walking out.

His phone rings as he drives out. He ignores it and opens the gate then drive out before coming back to close it.

Tshego: Hello.

He answers annoyed while headed to the main road.

Lesedi: So you decided to ignore me because you were with Owethu huh? I think it's time you choose so I know where I stand with you.

He doesn't say anything and that makes Lesedi more angry.

Lesedi: You're just going to keep quiet while I'm talking to you?
okay, we will see about that.

She hangs up and he throws the phone on the other seat
focusing on the road.

When he drives through the gate he finds his mom cleaning the
yard. They greet and he passes to the house after telling her
how Owethu is.

He gives his father the keys as they meet in the passage, and
they have a chat which he doesn't forget to inform him that
Owethu will be coming today.

The old man is impressed and he pats his shoulder in pride. This
is how he taught him, you don't just bring strangers home
without telling anyone.

Him: (smiling) Now I can give you advice on how to deal with
pregnant women.

Tshego: I'm already fed up with the moods.

Him: (laughs) Wait for the sex part, you will even feel like cutting your penis off and throw it far away.

Tshego: (gasps) Dad do you realise what you're saying?

Him: It doesn't matter son. We have been living in this house forever and you have never heard us.

Tshego: (closing his ears with his hands) I can't believe you're saying this. Oh my God!

Him: (whispers) A sexually active pregnant woman is better than the one annoyed by it. But you are lucky because you have two.

Tshegofatso bursts into an involuntary laughter as her mother walks in through the door.

Tshego: (laughing) Let me go rest, I will see you when I wake up.

Him: I also have things to do outside, son.

Her: Are you parting because of me?

Both: No.

They both leave her standing by the door with her hands on her waist.

LESEDI

Later that day she is all dresses up with a basket filled with goodies in her hand. She lives a few street from Owethu's street so it's a little far to Tshego's place when walking.

She stops a taxi and gets in greeting the passengers while taking a seat.

15 minutes on the dot, the taxi stops at Tshego's gate. She gets off and goes inside where Tshego's parents are chilling by the gate and his little brother is busy kicking the ball.

Lesedi: Dumelang.

Tshego's mother greets her back.

Lesedi: Is Tshegofatso around?

Her: He's inside.

Lesedi: Okay

thank you.

She sways her dress filled butt going behind the house.

TSHEGOFATSO

He bumps into Lesedi at his door and gets startled.

Tshego: What are you doing here?

Lesedi: I came to see my man.

She gets inside to find a cosy setting of "chilling and Netflix."

Lesedi: (smiling) Mmh, this is nice baby. You read my mind. Let me guess, you're trying to apologise for last night.

She puts the basket down and then goes to him with open arms.

Lesedi: (hugging him) Aww, you're forgiven baby boy. And you smell nice too, I could sleep on this chest forever. (breaks the hug) come, let's sit down and chill.

Tshego: Actually, my mother wants to send me somewhere. You can stay here, I will come find you.

Lesedi: Okay, make it quick.

She kisses his cheeks and then takes off her sandals to step on the mat.

Tshego walks out and passes his parents who gives him looks. He tells his little brother to call him when the "gir" has left.

OWETHU

She has just finished getting ready when Tshego sends her a text that he's arrived. He came by foot so they have to go straight to his place because she cannot walk long distances.

Tshego: I was thinking we can get ice cream first.

Owethu: I will be too tired when we come back, can't we just go sit down?

Tshego: Okay, we will get a taxi to the ice cream spot and then it will drop us straight at home.

Owethu: (sighs) Okay.

He holds her bag for her and they go to the taxi stop.

It drops them at the spot and Tshego gets off first before helping her. She isn't even showing yet but he is already holding her with care.

He finds them a space to sit and then goes to the caravan to buy.

He gets two containers, vanilla and chocolate with cherry toppings. Owethu is already salivating when he comes with the containers, she even gets up to meet him halfway.

They go to sit and starts eating. Owethu finishes first because, well, she started eating while on the way to come sit.

She looks at Tshego with puppy eyes and he takes the spoon to feed her, but instead slips the spoon to her cheek.

They start laughing, reminded of the good old days when they used to come here in school uniforms and promising each other heaven and earth.

He ends up giving her the container and takes his phone out to capture a few memories.

He teases her so he can get a reaction to snap and she is giving him all and more.

He takes a few selfies too and ask another customer to help them.

Owethu: We can leave now, I'm tired.

Tshego: One more picture.

Owethu: No, you will find me there.

She turns to leave and had takes the phone from the customer, thanking her.

His phone rings as he paces after Owethu who has already stopped a taxi. They both get in and it drops them at Tshego's gate.

Meanwhile Lesedi is looking at them all happy and stuff. She follows after them when they get in and because there is no one at the house- the reason she also left, she has all the chance to cause chaos.

Tshegofatso leads Owethu inside and make sure she is comfortable before coming to dish up for her.

The back door makes the squeaky sound and because Tshegofatso has left Owethu in there, he doesn't make much out of it.

He continues dishing up and then makes juice and puts everything in a tray to take to the bedroom.

To be continued...

OWETHU

She is in the bathroom taking a piss when she hears voices coming from the passage. It sounds like there is a fight because the people are arguing and she sure head something drop on the floor.

What surprises her though, is how the other person got in because they unlocked the door when they arrived to show there wasn't anyone around. Maybe it's Tshego's mom, but that one is a saint.

She doesn't flush the toilet because she doesn't want to disturb whatever this is. She peeks through the door and that's when she hears Lesedi's voice shouting.

She figures out that's hurt and crying voice but what did she possibly think? that Tshegofatso would leave her pregnant self for her? Never going to happen.

The tray slid between Tshego's hands and fell to the floor when Lesedi tipped it over with a kick. Yep, the mixture of juice and the food in the plate looks like a kindergarten painting by a 2 year old and she regrets not taking that leg further up his chest because it should be him on the floor now, not the tray.

Tshegofatso is leaning against the wall while Lesedi hurl profanities at him in all directions. He is counting from 100 to keep himself calm.

She is undressing him with words from head to toe and back again. Some involving her parents and his whole family.

Lesedi: (shouting) Where is she? where is she because I saw you two coming in here together? I want her to look me straight in my eyes and tell me if I look like a fool. Where was she when you confessed your feelings to me at your flat? Where was she when we had our weekly hook-ups because you couldn't get enough of my sweetness. You literally fetched me from wherever I felt comfortable and brought me to this- this...

She seems to be in search for the right word that will describe her disgust and disappointment at Tshego but she doesn't find it.

Lesedi: You're a manwhore and that best friend of your is a witch. (chuckles) But she has another thing coming, i'm not going to lose you to her. I will hold on until she gives birth and then we can resume with our relationship. I understand you have to be there for her so I will wait. I knew this was going to happen but I will wait.

Owethu appears behind her folding her arms. She waits until she is done talking and then clears her throat.

Lesedi turns and faces her wiping her tears. She flashes a smile at Owethu and then claps her hands.

Lesedi: The award for the witch of the year belongs to you. You have outdone yourself i'm even jealous.

Owethu: (calmly) It's not worth it Lesedi. You don't deserve this. Get yourself a man who will only love you. A man who hasn't made covenants with other women.

Lesedi: I gave up once, I'm not doing it again. You go find yourself a man.

Owethu: (chuckles) I tried, but the bond between us (pointing at Tshego) will never allow it. I know for sure that you also feel it in your heart that you don't belong here. You are a third wheel and because none of us ever goes flat, you will never be needed. Just let it go.

Lesedi: You should be glad you're pregnant or else my long foot would have long made you one with that wall.

Owethu: (chuckles) You underestimate me, you really do and I feel sorry for you. But don't worry, I will give birth and we will have this discussion again.

She turns and walks back to the bathroom to flush and wash her hands before going back to the bedroom.

LESEDI

She is now calm and cleaning the mess. Tshegofatso doesn't know what to say or do because he is to blame for this.

He holds her hands as she finishes wiping them and look int her eyes.

Tshego: I'm sorry, I didn't think it would get to this.

Lesedi: It's fine. I will wait.

Tshego: I don't want you to wait.

Her heart starts thumping, beating in her ears.

Tshego: Let's sit down.

They go to the couch and sit and then he sadly looks into her eyes.

Tshego: I think we should take a break just until Owethu has given birth. It's not healthy for you to go on like this.

Lesedi: (crying) Are you breaking up with me?

Tshego: Not entirely, we will see how it goes like after we have stayed far from each other for some time.

Lesedi: Nobody gets excited by a break if they don't have a lunchbox, does it mean you are going to have sex with her? I know a pregnant woman needs sex so does it mean you are the one who will be giving it to her?

He doesn't reply but pulls her into a hug, stroking her back before pulling back.

Tshego: You will be fine okay.

Lesedi: I know I will, but I'm not leaving you.

She gets up and leaves him sitting there. The side he saw tonight scared him and even these last words feels like a threat.

He sighs in relief as the door closes behind Lesedi, but a part of him is not so relieved because with Owethu you just never know.

TSHEGOFATSO

He goes back to the bedroom and finds Owethu sleeping in front of the laptop. He covers her with a fleece and reduces the volume before walking out to get some air.

His parents drives back before him and his mother passes to his room. She finds Owethu sleeping and when she dials Tshego his phone rings on the bed.

She goes to her man so he can help find her because she is now worried.

Him: I don't think he is far. The door wasn't locked and he possibly cannot leave that girl here if he is going far.

Her: I am just worried because it's getting late, you won't understand.

Him: Stop worrying, he will be back.

The front door opens and Tshego walks in. Her mother runs to him and hugs him relieved.

Her: I thought something happened to you.

Tshego: No, i'm fine.

Her: Is she sleeping over because it's already late?

Tshego: I will have to ask her first. Is she still sleeping?

Her: I don't know

go check on her and let me know.

He passes to his bedroom and he can hear his father telling his wife that he told her he would be back.

He gently shakes Owethu and she wakes up as if she has been waiting for that shake.

Owethu: What time is it? I have to go home.

Tshego: Actually, my mother was asking if you will sleep over.

Owethu: I don't my mother will agree to that.

Tshego: How about you call her and ask?

Owethu: Where's my phone?

He passes it to her and she dials her mother. There is a bit back and forth on the phone but she ends up agreeing.

Owethu: I'll sleep over, but I have to be home in the morning before 9.

Tshego: Let me deliver the message.

He walks out and leaves her adjusting the pillows so she can sleep well.

AYABONGA

He is chatting to Lerato while busy on his laptop. They are talking about the weekend at Hoedspruit, this morning's exercise and life in general.

An emails notification pops up on the screen and he clicks on it while blushing at Lerato's words.

He scans through the long email, checking who it's from before running his eyes through the content.

A joyful scream escapes his mouth and he puts his phone down, closing his mouth and checking if he is still alive and not dreaming.

After a few seconds of not breathing, he releases a long breath and screams punching the air with his fist before jumping up and down. He dials Lonwabo excitedly, tapping his foot in anticipation.

Lonwabo: Cuz.

Ayabonga: I got it, I got the Pretoria job cuz.

Lonwabo: What? that is amazing, I can't wait for you to come here.

Ayabonga: It just got in now and I should be there in a week to finalise everything.

Lonwabo: I will be waiting for you. I am so happy.

Ayabonga: Let me call my woman and share the good news with her.

Lonwabo: Okay.

He hangs up and dials Lerato. She takes forever to answer and when she does he can hear her little brother crying in the background.

Ayabonga: What's wrong?

Lerato: I hit him. I didn't mean to. He almost got himself burnt, the whole kitchen is filled with smoke now.

Ayabonga: I'm sorry, but you shouldn't have hit him.

Lerato: I know, I just lost it because I was scared. I can't lose the only sibling I have.

Ayabonga: I understand.

Lerato: So, what's up?

Ayabonga: Remember that post I told you I applied for after my break-up?

Lerato: Yes.

Ayabonga: Well I just got an email now, I got the job.

Lerato: (excitedly) What? that's so great, I am happy for you.

Ayabonga: I am too. I have to leave in a week.

Lerato: Okay, well I will see you before you leave then.

Ayabonga: You're not protesting?

Lerato: No, why would I do such? This is is big for our relationship babe. I mean, finally I will also know Pretoria and be able to apply for jobs that side too.

Ayabonga: I didn't think it like that.

Lerato: I blame the people you have been with. I am nothing like that babe, even if it was overseas my only worry would be your safety.

Ayabonga: (emotionally) Thank you, I love you.

Lerato: I love you more.

To be continued...

AYABONGA

Lerato has come to bid him goodbye as he is leaving tonight. He opted to drive at night because there's less traffic and he can get to drive at his own pace.

Lerato isn't happy about this because she is worried about his safety, the streets are known to be dangerous at night.

She is helping him pack the necessities he had forgotten while talking to him while packing his clothes, and they are discussing the issue of driving.

Ayabonga: Babe, don't worry I will be fine.

Lerato: But a lot of things happen during the night. The roads are too quiet and it's just scary. What about the zombie stories we have read and heard of? Hijackings?

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Babe, you believe all that? even so, those things have their targets and I'm definitely not one. And with regards to hijackings, it happens anytime and anywhere.

Lerato: But it doesn't mean you shouldn't take precautions to curb them. (sighs) I am just scared and feeling uneasy about all this.

Ayabonga: And you shouldn't be, I will be fine. I promise.

Lerato: Still, why can't you wait for morning so you can drive during the day.

Ayabonga: You just don't want me to leave, say it.

Lerato: I'm worried. I don't want anything bad happening to you because I won't be able to deal with it. I have just got to know you and I'm afraid to lose you.

He goes over to her as she zips the bag and then hold her hands looking into her eyes.

Ayabonga: (calmly) It takes about 4 hours to get there when I'm driving so give me an extra hour, if I don't call or send a text you can then be worried.

Lerato: You should call so I can hear your voice and tell if you are really okay.

Ayabonga: I will call you then.

Lerato: I am going to miss you.

Ayabonga: Me too.

He tightly hugs her, brushing her back so she can relax.

Ayabonga: I will make sure you don't feel the distance between us.

Lerato: How?

Ayabonga: Don't worry about that. Let me take care of it.

Lerato: Okay.

He kisses her forehead after breaking the hug before looking into her teary eyes again.

Ayabonga: I love you. Don't cry, you won't lose me.

She hits his chest with her small fist laughing and the teardrops races on her cheeks. He laughs holding her hands to his chest.

Lerato: I am not crying. I love you too.

Ayabonga: (wiping her tears) Let's finish up.

They take the bags to his car and because he still has some time before he can leave, they chill for a few minutes- in silence, with just the sound from the breaths and their heartbeats.

TSHEGOFATSO

Since Owethu spent the night here it has become a habit, thanks to the pregnancy. Now she can walk in at anytime for whatever reason, but it hasn't been all rosy because she doesn't want to have the damn sex.

This frustrates Tshogofatso because she wants him to be with her 24/7 but she never mentions anything about the deed.

Schools are re-opening soon but she won't be going back until she gives both, which is required since she gets sick from time to time. This won't delay her though because if she has passed she can still continue in whatever trimester she gets back om, and besides, her mother pays the school fees on her own.

Tshego has to leave though because duty calls, but the agreement is that he will come home whenever he has time but he is not looking forward to it.

They are in each other's arms watching movies in Tshego's bedroom, this might be the right time for him to ask about it so he clears his throat to get her attention.

Tshego: Have you done any scans, to see the gender?

Owethu: No, but I hope it's a girl.

Tshego: Why?

Owethu: So she can be my twin, a little sister to do matching outfits with and stuff.

Tshego: I'm hoping for a boy so we can have soccer plays and stuff.

Owethu: We will see.

Tshego: Can we go together, you know, for the scan thing before I leave?

Owethu: I think it's too soon though.

Tshego: I read somewhere that you can see the gender at 3 months, even from the positions and stuff.

Owethu: Are you sure they said 3 months?

Tshego: They talked about weeks and my calculations says it's 3 months.

Owethu: You have been doing some homework huh?

Tshego: (chuckles) Yes, I'm about to be a father so it's only fair.

Owethu: (laughs) Okay.

Tshego: I also wanted to ask if you never want to have sex.

Owethu: I do, sometimes.

Tshego: You have never asked though.

Owethu: Because you are someone's boyfriend and I don't want to cause my baby any harm.

Tshego: (laughs) Not anymore. We broke up the following day after that drama. I think she came to her senses.

Owethu: Okay.

Tshego: So?

Owethu: What?

Tshego: Don't you want some?

Owethu: No, not now. Maybe later.

Tshego: (disappointedly) Okay.

Owethu: I need you to test first and then we will talk about this. You also shouldn't sleep with anyone else.

Tshego: But you just said maybe later.

Owethu: We will use protection.

Tshego: Okay.

He sighs looking at the screen, this set-up isn't working in his favour and he won't hold on because even after birth she will do this run around.

LESEDI

She sent Tshego a message that they should go back to their "no-strings" arrangement because she wants to have sex with him only.

They have been doing it for a while and she feels she can't connect with anyone else, which is a lie, she is just obsessed with him.

She had expected him to reject the offer but he agreed and since he is going back to Pretoria it means they are going to be together without that annoying Owethu.

She is planning to fall pregnant for him. I mean it seems the only way to tie him down is by a baby so she is going to do exactly that.

She opens her vision board that has pictures pasted with arrows connecting them. It's written in bold and uppercase letter at the top, read : My perfect family.

She smiles hugging the board and closing her eyes for a moment.

Lesedi: You are mine and mine alone.

OWETHU

Later that day Tshego is accompanying her home. They are walking, passing through the community ground.

They never had the “maybe, later” thing because this moody pregnant woman said she isn’t feeling it. He tried asking to just out the head so he can cum but she flat refused, he is even thinking there is somewhere she is getting it.

She is holding his hand as they walk past eyes boring into them. They are a couple on these streets, some envy them because of the time they have been together while others are disgusted by how their relationship is.

Tshego: Where should I turn back?

Owethu: My gate. What if something happens and you’re not there?

Tshego: Something like what?

Owethu: A fall maybe, I don’t think I can be able to hold myself if I trip.

Tshego: (rolls eyes) You are dramatic.

Owethu: I know.

They get to her gate and he hugs her before she gets in.

Owethu: Come spend time with me tomorrow, mom won't be around.

Tshego: Okay.

She waves at him heading to the front door and he takes out his phone to text Lesedi.

Almost an hour later, Lesedi shows up wearing a short dress and slippers at the playground.

She greets him and then sits on the rock beside him. He can smell the fresh perfume she has on and he notices she just took a bath, must be the reason why she arrived late.

Lesedi: Hey.

Tshego: Hi, you good?

Lesedi: Yeah.

Tshego: So since we are back at our agreement-

She cuts him off by placing her index finger on his mouth. She knows the agreement and she also came prepared because she knows why he texted.

Lesedi: I know. Let's go.

They turn to the nearby bushy area. It is a little after 7 pm and the playground is now almost empty.

Lesedi: Don't ask me how but I know a place.

Tshego: Okay.

She leads him to this other tree that has a curved branch like a bench. The ground is freshly dug to indicate there has been an action going on here. Even the path that leads here is quite clean for a bysh.

There are other trees surrounding this one, making sure no one can easily see what is happening in here.

Lesedi: We call it Room 7.

Tshego: Who came up with such a name?

Lesedi: People who come here for what we came here for.

Tshego: Why is it called Room 7?

Lesedi: 7 is perfection and this is built like a room so it's a God-created perfect room for the nighters.

Tshego: (raised eyebrow) I see.

She directs him to sit on the branch because he is still lost, looking around and clearly not comfortable.

She unzips his jean and her touch brings his member to life.

Lesedi: Try to relax, no one's going to come in here.

She goes down to his length and starts kissing his member slowly before guiding his member in her warm mouth. She takes him in slowly, not breaking the eye contact even though it's dark and they cannot really see each other. Tshegofatso is uneasy because it's his first time here and he is worried about a lot of things.

Firstly, this is a bush, not entirely thick but there must be living things in here. Secondly, his butt is out in the open because he had to fully free his member so he doesn't hurt himself.

Lesedi isn't paying much attention to him as she is busy with his dick that's filled her mouth.

She goes down to its base and takes his balls inside one after the other, sucking back and forth. To the tip of the dick, swirling her tongue on his hard length.

Lesedi: Let's make this quick before you lose your erection.
Stop worrying, nothing's gonna happen to you.

Tshego: How do y'all survive in here?

Lesedi: We don't overthink, try to relax.

She turns her back to him and slowly lowers herself on his shaft. Once he is fully inside she starts going up and down on him.

Lesedi: You can't leave your semen here because a lot of people use this space. You gotta cum inside.

She is talking in between moaning as he butt slaps against his stomach.

He is pounding from the bottom and then turning her to face the other way, holding on her butt in a doggy.

She holds on the branches, screaming, moaning and then fucking him back with her dress disturbing them.

Lesedi: uuuhhh, Tshego, it's so good. Don't stop, yes right there. Uhhh...

He isn't saying much except for the deep groans. At this moment he just want to release because he have to get out of this place.

Lesedi: Don't forget to cum inside...

He is already deep into it he doesn't even pay attention to her because he isn't getting anyone pregnant no more.

He switches back to the sitting position so she is on top. He humps her from the back so much he even gets on his feet and hold on her waist tight.

He feels his blood rushing as his balls tightens and he can't control his speed anymore.

Tshego: I'm gonna cum.

Lesedi: (moaning) cum inside, don't stop.

She holds his waist, hurting her hands that are forced to meet behind him so he doesn't pull out.

He freezes for a moment and then quickly pulls out, making her fingers snap she even loses balance and they both fall back on the branch.

Lesedi: Tshego what the fuck? what was that?

Tshego: (groaning) I am not ready for another pregnancy.

Lesedi: (angrily) They are going to bewitch your seeds, you won't have another baby.

Tshego: That would be a bonus because I don't want another child.

He shakes off the last liquids into his underwear, before taking off his beanie to wipe himself off.

Nothing fell to the ground and even if it did, it's better there than in this lunatic.

To be continued...

TSHEGOFATSO

He arrives home and takes a shower before joining his family for dinner.

He's still in awe after the stunt Lesedi pulled, he sure should cut contact with her for good.

His mother asks when he will leave and he says in a few days because he has to go back to work. He is in a rush now that he wants to run away from everything and everyone.

Her: How are the arrangements between you and Owethu? Won't she need you close?

Tshego: I will come see her when I have time. It won't be frequently because I have to work extra hard now.

Her: Okay, I'm just glad you are stepping up to raise your baby even before birth.

Tshego: Yeah, I just want to make sure everything is ready when he arrives.

Her: He? have you seen the gender already?

Tshego: Just a wish.

Her: I see. What about her? school?

Tshego: She will go back after giving birth. Her and her mom's decision.

Her: I can't wait to meet my grandchild.

She laughs a little and his father swallows his food before drinking from the glass and turning to Tshego.

Him: Did you make use of my advice?

Tshego: Yes.

Him: I hope so.

Tshego: I am going to spend time with Owethu at her place tomorrow.

Him: That's good. The bond is needed even before the baby arrives.

Tshego: That's what I'm trying to achieve.

Him: Do shout when you need help.

Tshego: Okay, thank you.

They continue eating over a light conversation.

Once done eating, Tshego clears the table while the rents have drinks in the living room.

LERATO

She just woke up since she got here and slept. It is a little after 11 pm and counting the hours, Ayabonga is late with the call.

She sends him a message and then waits for a while hoping he responds, which he doesn't and that gets her heart racing.

Lerato: God, I hope everything is okay. Please protect him, please don't let anything bad happen to him. If you this one thing I promise I will go to church every Sunday. Please God!

She logs into Facebook so she can leave a message and that's when she sees a post of an accident that happened. It's on the route Ayabonga said he was going to use and it happened about an hour ago. It doesn't help that the car identified is the same as his and it's said it was a collision with another car which resulted in the death of two men.

She feels tears running down her cheeks and she can't help but let them pour as they burn her cheeks.

It feels like her chest is closing in she can't even answer her ringing phone with a number she doesn't recognise.

She is praying for his safety while crying and the phone now feels heavy in her hands.

Lerato: God please, not him. Please!

AYABONGA

He has just arrived and found Lonwabo waiting for him. His phone's battery is low so he asks for Lonwabo's phone so he can call Lerato.

She doesn't answer for the few times he tries her so he takes a seat with Lonwabo to catch up a little bit.

Lonwabo: I saw an accident post on your route.

Ayabonga: It was very bad, that's why I arrived late. I was one of the few people who arrived first. To see their bodies lying on the road like that... not a pleasant view at all.

Lonwabo: I would have fainted.

Ayabonga: Eish, I think now I understand why Lerato was scared of me driving at night.

Lonwabo: Or maybe it has to do with her past, she might have lost someone through an accident.

Ayabonga: I never asked. I'm sure she will tell me when she is ready if that's the case.

Lonwabo's phone rings and he answers as Ayabonga gets up to drink water.

Lonwabo: Lonwabo, hello.

Lerato: Hey, where is Ayabonga? I saw that there was an accident and the car is the same as his and there are men dead, has he arrived? please tell me he's okay.

Lonwabo: Hey; calm down. He's fine, let me give him the phone.

He calls out to Ayabonga who comes pacing and then answers the phone.

Ayabonga: Babe.

Lerato: Oh my God, I thought it was you. I was so scared...

She starts crying all over again and it breaks Aya's heart. He doesn't know what to say so he waits until she is calm.

Lerato: Are you okay? were you not involved in any way?

Ayabonga: I'm fine babe. It had already occurred when I got there.

Lerato: I just saw the car and thought it was you.

Ayabonga: No

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I'm fine and I'm sorry you had to go through that moment of thinking you have lost me. I'm fine babe.

Lerato: Okay. Where is your phone?

Ayabonga: I have put it on charger, I will video call you in the morning so you can see that I'm fine.

Lerato: Okay. Go get some rest now so I can also go back to sleep.

Ayabonga: I love you.

Lerato: I love you too.

He hangs up and gives the phone back to Lonwabo before they both heads upstairs to their rooms.

OWETHU

She has finished bathing and is waiting for Tshogofatso to arrive. He said he would be here around 1 pm and it's now 12:45 pm.

She sighs checking the time and then goes back to her bedroom and lie on the bed.

A message dings in his phone, it's someone from childhood and she hasn't seen him in a while.

They start texting, asking about life and stuff. She tells him she is pregnant and it's Tshogo's. He seems to have been a victim of mjolo and he doesn't care about that, he wants to pursue a relationship with her.

Time flies past and she doesn't even realise it's close to 2 pm.

Tshogo's message comes through that he's at the gate and she drags herself to go let him in.

Owethu: You're late.

Tshego: I'm sorry, I was still running errands for mom.

He follows her inside and they sit on the couch.

Owethu: There is food in the microwave if you are hungry.

Tshego: No, I'm good.

Owethu: Suit yourself.

She goes to her bedroom and takes off her t-shirt dress, remaining in her bra and underwear.

Tshego follows after her seeing she isn't coming back where she left him.

Tshego: What are you doing in there?

He says after barging into her bedroom. She is applying oil on her stomach.

Owethu: I want us to go sit outside at the back. I feel hot in here.

Tshego: Okay.

Owethu: Please lock the front door, and bring the fruits from the fridge, you will see them in a pack.

He goes out and leaves her taking a few snaps to send to her newly found old friend.

He sends love emojis and compliments her glow.

Tshego comes back and they go out.

Owethu: How was your night?

Tshego: It was fine, yours?

Owethu: Just okay. I was thinking hey.

Tshego: About?

Owethu: Why don't I come stay with you in Pretoria and then I will come back when I'm close to giving birth.

Tshego: Pretoria is far, a lot can happen and you shouldn't be that far from your mother because I will be blamed.

Owethu: It was just a suggestion.

Tshego: I am leaving in a few days.

Owethu: I know, don't worry about us we will be fine.

Tshego: What about the scan?

Owethu: I can send you pictures if you won't be available to go with me.

Tshego: Why does everything have to go according to what you want and not what's best?

Owethu: I'm the one carrying the baby, and if you don't have any other means for us to exchange this weight amongst us then don't complain.

Tshego: I see what you're trying to do, you are pushing me away from the baby because maybe he isn't mine.

Owethu: You can go stay at Pretoria until I give birth and if the DNA says he's your you will sign off your parental rights to me for doubting him.

Tshego: You don't like seeing me happy, you are always trying to mess with my life. You don't like my girlfriends, you always

push them away yet you also don't want me. What should I do to satisfy you?

She keeps quiet looking at the sun. She sips on her juice and then turns to him.

Owethu: I also lost a boyfriend because of you and I will never forgive you for that. You are not him, I want to have sex with you but you can never be him. You think I'm happy to be carrying your seed? I'm not! You were supposed to remain a friend, nothing more and nothing less. I hate you right now for getting me pregnant.

Tshego: (chuckles) You are crazy. You knew what was going on yet you spread your legs for me knowing the outcome but now you want to blame me. Fuck off.

He stands up and barges into the house leaving her outside while clicking his tongue.

She doesn't follow after him until she hears the front door closing or more like being broken down.

She gets steps into her slippers and by the time she reaches the front side of the house, she sees him already headed to the playground.

She closes the gate and walks back inside to fetch her phone and go on with her “friend”.

A few weeks later...

To be continued...

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OWETHU

She hasn't been communicating with Tshegofatso and today she is visiting the hospital for an ultrasound scan with her old-new friend, Paul.

He is driving them in his blue Polo with the GP registration. Because she is 4 months now, the tummy is showing on her dress.

Paul: How is the little one doing?

He asks brushing her tummy while driving.

Owethu: Fine, just weighing me down. I'm already tired.

Paul: You still have a long way, keep on mama. Don't get tired so early.

Owethu: (blushing) I will try.

Paul: What do you want for lunch, maybe I can grab something while you do your thing and then we can eat before we head back. I know you don't want to go out.

Owethu: (chuckles) I'm glad you have been paying attention, but I need you to come inside with me. We will buy on our way back.

Paul: Okay.

He drives through the hospital and then park his car before opening the door for Owethu. She feels like a queen already and cannot wait to fully be into this after birth. This baby is taking long.

She has been having sex with Paul like he is the father of the child. Even though he tested first, she isn't even afraid of other sicknesses because she lets him hit it raw.

They do the admin things and then head to the sonographer's office.

He lets them inside and they greet him before sitting down.

Him: Please change into this before we start. I will be getting the room ready for you.

She goes and changes into the gown and when she comes back they all head to the dimmed room where she is instructed to lie on the bed.

Him: Would you like a photo or video or both?

Owethu: I didn't know you do videos too, I would like both please.

Paul: Doesn't it require extra charges?

Owethu: I think my medical will be able to pay for all that.

Paul: No, I will take care of it.

Him: Okay, I will need a USB to send the video.

Paul: I think I have it in my car, let me fetch it.

Owethu: Wait a little bit, let's do this first and then you can go.

Paul: Okay.

The sonographer puts on gloves and then applies the ultrasound gel on her tummy. He passes a probe over her tummy and the picture of the baby appears on the screen.

Him: It looks like we found him in action, I can see an erect penis.

Owethu: What?

Paul: Really?

Him: (laughing) Yes, it's a boy. Those are his legs, and that pointy little thing there is the penis. He just made my job a whole lot easier.

They all laugh in disbelief. He tells them the boy is all good, they listen to the heartbeat and it all takes about 25 minutes before they head back to the office.

Owethu changes into her clothes while Paul goes to fetch the USB. He comes back and they do the transfers, printing the picture out and then pay at the front desk before leaving.

Owethu: I can't believe this child had an erection on his first time to a scan.

Paul: He must have been happy.

Owethu: I'm still in awe.

They drive out chatting and head to an eatery.

AYABONGA

He served his notice at his old workplace and he has been having the time of his life at this new job.

He clocks in whatever time because with his experience, he got a high position.

He is not working today so it's just him and Mam' Adelaide at the house.

Ayabonga: I missed you gogo.

Mam' Adelaide: You're the only person who calls me that and because I like you I won't refuse.

Ayabonga: Where is your daughter?

Mam' Adelaide: She went to see her person.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Is that what she said when she left?

Mam' Adelaide: No, she said she is going out and will be back after the weekend. I know what that means.

Ayabonga: And you don't have a problem with it?

Mam' Adelaide: It's not like my not liking it will make her stop so...

Ayabonga: Okay. But at least she is into girls, you won't have to worry about her falling pregnant.

Mam' Adelaide: I do want her to have a baby. I don't even know how I should ask because she thinks I don't know that she is dating that girl.

Ayabonga: I hope it goes alright the day you decide to ask.

They continue their chat until Ayabonga's phone rings. He stands up and tell Mam' Adelaide that he is going to attend to his person and they share a good laugh before he disappears into his room.

NTSAKO

She is back from class, she nailed last semester and with her always-in-the-mood for partying sister, they are already planning a celebration.

Ntsako: You just need a reason to drink.

Tintswalo: Because my throat is always open.

Ntsako: I want to spend time with my man.

Tintswalo: You can invite him to this celebration, the more the merrier.

Ntsako: He won't agree

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Lonwabo isn't like that.

Tintswalo: I will talk to him, you seem to forget that I'm the one who made the pots to be cooked.

Ntsako: (groaning) Will you ever let me forget that?

Tintswalo: Nope.

She stands up to get a drink and her phone rings.

Tintswalo: Hello, yes I'm available. Okay.

She looks at Ntsako who's waiting in question.

Tintswalo: I got a gig, rain check?

Ntsako: (happily) Yes.

Tintswalo: More weekends are coming. I will get you.

She proceeds to the kitchen.

LESEDI

She regrets wanting to be pregnant by Tshegofatso and that's because she is getting help.

She blocked him from everything in her phone before booking herself in for therapy.

Her sessions have been going well and she also can see and feel the changes.

She is on the queue to make a call because they don't allow personal cell phones in this institution, for a better session that won't have the patients relapsing because of what they feed on through their cellphones, especially in the first few weeks.

The phone rings for what seems like an eternity before it directs her to voicemail.

Lesedi: Hey, I just wanted to tell you that I am getting help. I know it's been long but I hope your promise still stands. I am going to come back a better person and I hope I will find you still available. I know we didn't part ways peacefully, I also take responsibility for the part I played and I hope you will forgive me. I won't be able to communicate with you on my personal cellphone. I will call you again next week. I love you, never stopped.

She hangs up and then goes back to what she was doing. Apart from getting psychological help, she is also dealing with what led to the need for this help.

Other activities include having some time in the garden to herself, owning a diary which is something she never wanted because what's the use of writing things down without solving it. But she has realised that it helps, whenever she writes how she feels the load lessens on her side and when she comes back to read she realises it has passed and it was just that, a phase of that part of her life.

TSHEGOFATSO

He is at Owethu's gate waiting for her while dialing her.

She is not answering her phone and he cannot go inside because her mother's car is around.

He goes and stands at a distance under the shade and decides to wait for a while.

Meanwhile; Paul switches on his phone as he is approaching Owethu's gate.

Owethu: You can drop me here, the elders are home and I don't have time to answer their 1000 questions.

Paul: Okay, when can I see you again?

Owethu: You know you can see me anytime you want. Just call and i'll let you know if I'm available.

Paul: Okay, here is food for the little one.

She takes plastic and then kiss him while Tshegofatso is watching. He walks out to the road as she gets off and he knows the car. He swallows approaching her and her heart almost stops as she sees him.

Tshego: Hey, let me help you with that.

Owethu: No, I'll be fine.

Tshego: Okay.

Owethu: When did you come back?

Tshego: Last night, I was hoping we can go do the scan today.

Owethu: I already did it. It's a boy.

Tshego: (excitedly) That's wonderful. Please send me the picture.

Owethu: I will send it when I get home.

They reach his gate and he turns home as she goes inside.

She goes to the toilet first and then her bedroom.

Taking out the scan, she snaps it and sends to Tshegofatso on WhatsApp.

"There is a video also if you want it," she text him.

He reads the message and then saves the picture before posting it on his status captioned, “the best gift for my birthday, I am waiting for you baby boy.”

He texts her to send the video also and when she transfers the video to her laptop, she views the statutes.

It's his birthday, oh my God. She wants to send an apology for forgetting but Paul's call comes through and she even forgets what she was doing.

Paul: How are y'all?

Owethu: We miss you.

Paul: Can I come over?

Owethu: After 7 pm.

Paul: I will call you when I'm there.

Owethu: Okay.

To be continued...

TSHEGOFATSO

The video never came through from Owethu and it has been a week now since he was left on seen. He is even back at work, trying to figure out his life without her.

A lot has happened in a space of one month and he can confidently conclude that Owethu will never change.

The idea of their bestie relationship was fine when they were still in school because she was still young for the kind of thoughts she now possess.

Everything took a nasty twist when she discovered what dating was all about, and he wish he had set boundaries then.

He sees her statuses with Paul and of course he knows him because they went to the same school. He decides not to ask about it because he was never even told about the shoot.

This guy literally begged Owethu for almost 2 years to be his girlfriend, but she refused on the basis that it is him she's not interested in, not what he does or anything but just him. Now this sudden change of heart is confusing, but he will have to wait and see.

It is Friday and he is catching a few cold ones at the bar close to his residence. Nothing heavy though, just to quench the thirst he has been holding in for weeks now.

There is a group of girls who seems to be celebrating something and the one going up and down catches his eye.

She is getting drinks and food for the rest of the group, taking pictures and all. He waits for moment when she comes closer to him so he can greet her.

She is in blue jeans and a white silk shirt tucked in on one side. Light make-up, and a maroon lipstick that compliments her melanin skin. Braids in a gold and black hairpiece.

She comes for the ice bucket at the bar and as the barman is busy, Tshegofatso greets her with hopes that she won't give him an attitude.

Tshego: Tshegofatso Mokoena.

He says after greeting. He is smiling and has his hand out to her.

Amanda: Amanda Brynston.

She greets him back and they hold their hands for long enough that they both feel whatever it is.

Amanda is the first to pull her hand back and as she looks around she finds her group looking at her with questioning eyes.

Tshego: How are you? you look beautiful.

Amanda: I'm good, yourself?

She intentionally ignores the compliment, eager to disappear from his presence before her mouth and face sells her out.

Tshego: I'm good. I see you're in a celebratory mood.

Amanda: Yes, my cousin's birthday. The one in yellow.

Tshego: That's nice. I love this for y'all.

Amanda: Thank you.

She chuckles at that feminine language as she takes the bucket and turns to leave.

Tshego: I would like to see you again if you don't mind.

She stops in her tracks and looks back at him before smiling.

Amanda: You will.

She walks away and side eyes him as she gets to the table. He was still looking at her so they both smile at each other before she turns all her focus on the girls.

Tshegofatso finishes his drink and asks the barman for a pen and paper. He writes his number down and asks him to give it to her should she ask for it.

He walks away before Amanda could see her and when she turns to the bar she feels a little disappointed that he already left- without letting her know.

OWETHU

She is having the time of her life, going on dates, getting it whenever she feels like it and it is just an awesome part of her life.

She never thought this pregnancy would be easy especially because of how it came about.

For a moment; she is not thinking about Tshegofatso. He is out of her mind.

Paul is offering her all the support she needs, sexually, physically, moneycally and all the other “ally” she never knew existed so why would she want anyone else.

This guy literally worships the ground she walks on and she can't believe she was blind all this time.

He is a second version of Ayabonga and she is grateful that God has remembered her again, even though she never asked for forgiveness for how she treated him.

She had gone to a maternity shoot with the “step father” earlier on, she even took some pictures with him as the father, and she has now posted them on WhatsApp.

Paul seems happy on the pictures, even holding the bump and kissing her forehead. He sure is going to be a good father.

Even though they're social media worthy, they have agreed not to go public with their relationship

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so she only posts on WhatsApp.

Her mother knocks on her door and she tells her to come in. She takes a seat beside her on the bed and Owethu puts her phone aside to give her full attention.

Her: I will be having long shifts this coming month and won't have time to be around you, so I asked your aunts to come stay with you.

Owethu: But mama you know I would be fine by myself.

Her: It's no longer about you but the baby. You are going into your third and final trimester soon, you will need all the help you can get. I don't want mistakes to happen.

Owethu: (sighs) If you put it like that.

Her: They will be here tomorrow morning.

Owethu: Already? No ma, come on. At least on Monday.

Her: I just came to let you know. I am going out now, I will be back in 2 hours. Call me when you need anything.

Owethu: Okay.

She walks out and leaves her mumbling to herself in anger. Paul's text comes through as a compliment to the picture she posted.

She smiles chatting with him and the anger quickly dissolves.

Paul: "What are you busy with?"

Owethu: "Nothing, actually. Mom is going out and I will be alone."

Paul: "Is that an invitation to come over?"

Owethu: "Maybe."

Paul: "Say no more."

She sends laughing emojis and goes out as her mother starts the car.

Her: Lock the gate and the doors, I will use my spare when I come back.

She waves at her and once the car is out of sight. She goes into her and quickly put everything in its place and get ready for Paul.

AYABONGA

Work has been crazy this week but at least he is doing what he loves. It is a little after 7 pm and he is tired from the fitting of machines they were busy with today.

Lonwabo and Ntsako are busy with the pots in the kitchen and chatting loudly. It's mostly Ntsako giggling at her man and it reminds Aya of Lerato.

He gets in and greet them with a smile on his face, like always.

Ayabonga: I have to shower first.

Lonwabo: We are almost done, don't take long.

He chuckles and heads to his room where he strips off his clothes and head to the shower.

When he finishes he finds his phone ringing and then answers.

Aya: Babe.

Lerato: Munchie, how are you?

Aya: I'm good. How are you?

Lerato: I'm okay. How was work?

Aya: Tiring, I just got out of the shower.

Lerato: (moaning) Mmmhh.

Aya: You're such a pervert

Lerato: For you, I can be everything.

Aya: Oh really?

Lerato: Just name it and I will gladly deliver.

They flirt through their conversation and it takes Ayabonga forever to dress.

He is brought back to Earth by a knock on his door and that's when he realises he was even rearranging his closet while on the phone.

Lonwabo: Cuz, you good in there? we have been waiting.

Aya: I'm coming. (to the phone) I have to go eat babe, I will call you.

He puts on his shirt and damn the clothes are all over the bed now. Great!

PAUL

He is driving Owethu home from a nearby guest house. He didn't want to risk having his car stolen or something by leaving it outside the yard, and he also couldn't park it inside.

His phone rings and he answers while driving. It's his little brother telling him the sim he gave him received a message from someone who might be from his past.

Paul: What does it say?

Him: I recorded everything, let me send to you.

Paul: Okay.

He hangs up and finds Owethu suspiciously looking at him. Thankfully they're already at her gate and whatever minute she takes to interrogate him, will have her mother arriving at them parked at the gate.

Paul: And we're here.

She doesn't say anything and he figures out she might be mad. He doesn't say anything more but gets off the car to open her door.

She gets off mouth pouted, arms folded and lastly, bangs the door when she closes.

As much as this hits Paul in his sensitive spot, he doesn't react because he doesn't want to upset her further.

Paul: Let me open the gate for you.

He waits until she is through and inside the house before turning back to his car.

He drives off and immediately when he gets to his place, he checks the audio sent by his brother.

He lays on the bed and presses play. Before anything else, he recognizes the voice so the first time he is listening to only that.

He plays it for the second time and it's now he gets the message and the reason for this recording.

He sits up on the bed, tears streaming from his eyes and then lets it all out.

This changes everything.

To be continued...

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TSHEGOFATSO

He is only waking up now at 9 am since he got into bed last night. He dozed off with the thoughts of him and Amanda together and he had beautiful dreams too.

The sun is out already, it's going to be hot today and since he doesn't have plan he might go swimming.

He gets off the bed and then heads to the shower first before coming back to make the bed.

His mind can't help but wonder what Owethu's plan is. He feels like he is missing out on bonding with the child but he hopes once he is born he will be given the chance to be a father.

He sits on the bed to check his messages and it's just updates from the groups he's in on WhatsApp, still nothing from Owethu.

He looks at the scan picture and even though he doesn't understand it, it gives him pleasure to know he has a part of his son with him.

He changes his wallpaper and put the scan before dropping the phone on the bed to go make food.

As he gets to the door, his phone rings and he walks back to answer it. The number is not saved in his phone but he can see it's a personal number.

Tshego: Hello.

Amanda: Hi, it's Amanda. Amanda Bryn-

He cuts her off excitedly it's even evident on the other side, causing her to giggle.

Tshego: Oh, hi...

Amanda: I got your number from the barman.

Tshego: I know.

Amanda: So I was thinking maybe we can link up.

Tshego: Okay, just send me the details and I will be there.

Amanda: How about today at 12, at the same place we met.

Tshego: That's fine. It's a walkable distance from my place.

Amanda: Okay, you will find me there. Bye.

She hangs up and his mouth has dropped. A gorgeous human being just asked him out without tatazeling? this one is for keeps.

The hunger he had is replaced by butterflies so he starts checking an outfit for the day, sorting out shoes and socks, pants and shirts, underwear and accessories...

OWETHU

She is still angry at Paul for not explaining the call last night, she overhead whatever and the thought of it being about a baby mama or a long lost girlfriend infuriates her.

She was still enjoying his time and making Tshegofatso jealous for that stunt he pulled on her with Lesedi.

Of course it wasn't going to last forever but maybe if he could hold on until birth, she will have a reason that she is a nursing mother and her child needs all her attention.

She is sorting her bedroom with the help of her aunts. They arrived this morning and after resting they decided to spring clean her bedroom.

Owethu: (mumbling) I don't even know why I'm part of this cleaning because I was fine with my room the way it was.

The eldest aunt answers that everything should be out in the open and they're creating space for when she cannot move around easily.

Owethu: I need to take a walk.

She goes out leaving them still moving things around.

She calls Paul as she walks out of the gate.

Owethu: Can you come fetch me? these old ladies are making me clean and I'm tired.

Paul: Hello to you too, how are you?

Owethu: Not good obviously. Are you coming or not?

Paul: Where are you?

Owethu: Walking from home to the main road.

Paul: I'm coming.

She hangs up and continues walking while talking to herself on how annoying everything is.

AMANDA BRYNSTON

She is an adopted daughter in this English family from an orphanage where she was dropped by her mother.

It never really became a problem when she learned about it because her parents are loving and they're the ones she knows since she was 3.

Yesterday was her sister's birthday and as tradition, they all go out to celebrate with their friends before the family dinner.

She was in charge of everything because she was hosting everyone. It hasn't been rosy for her in the mjolo department, and for a few months she had to get help due to a mental illness caused by the trauma she endured in her last relationship.

It was her way of thanking the girls for being supportive during that journey.

She is 25, the same date as Tshegofatso and because her cousin's date is also in the same month, yesterday was a double celebration for them.

Tshegofatso walks in as she is busy on her phone, telling her girls how it's going.

He sees her and then places an order for his drink before joining her.

Tshego: Hey.

Amanda: Hi, I thought you were no longer coming.

Tshego: Am I late?

He checks his watch with his forehead furrowed and it's 12 pm. She is looking at him with the straw between her lips as she sips on the orange juice. Such a charmer.

Tshego: I'm on time

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but sorry.

She seems to have lost her talking ability and thanks to the waiter for saving her.

Tshego: Thanks.

She swallows the juice and snaps out of it.

Amanda: I arrived earlier, you are not late. What do you want to eat?

Tshego: Whatever you are having.

Amanda: Even if it's seafood?

Tshego: No, no that.

Amanda: (chuckles) I'm joking. I ordered a full platter of ribs, chips and burgers.

Tshego: That's fine.

They continue talking as their order arrives, and then digs in while asking each other questions about their lives.

PAUL

He went to the same high school as Owethu and Tshego. He was actually a little close to Tshego because they're guys and have no beef.

He was so deep in love with Owethu and no one knows, but they once kissed at the school premises because Owethu was angry at Tshegofatso for sleeping with Lesedi “behind her back”.

She wanted to take things further and have sex with him but because he dearly loved her, he didn't agree to such before they could reach an agreement.

After matric he kind of disappeared and there were rumours that he left because he got sick after sleeping with Lesedi, and didn't want people around knowing.

But the truth is even though he was involved with Lesedi, there was never anything related to being sick from that relationship and it absolutely wasn't the reason he left.

The message he got last night was unexpected and it opened old wounds. The main reason he came for Owethu was to make her pay for all the time she used him.

He noticed this trend that she uses people for her own pleasure yet leading them on, and once done she tosses them off like a piece of used toilet paper.

He wanted to hurt her like how she did him, because on yountless times she had him bail her out on a mess she would have intentionally involved herself in. She did this because she knew how much he loved her.

He has been watching her every move, how she behaves and all. He can also tell now that she is only with him because there is no one else, and obviously she knows he's got something to offer.

However, he is about to cancel that plan because the recording he received changes everything about this.

He waited for some time before leaving to meet with Owethu and as he is driving out, she sends a text that she is already at the main road.

He chooses to ignore it because he is already driving there.

A few minutes later he arrives and she gets in the car.

Owethu: You sure took your time.

Paul: I was busy with other things.

Owethu: You should have said so instead of letting me stand here for long looking lost.

Paul: Or you could have texted a before leaving the house.

Owethu: Yeah, whatever. You're here now.

He sighs and she turns to him.

Owethu: What are you waiting for? drive.

Paul: Where are you going?

Owethu: Let's go to the mall, I am craving KFC.

Paul: You got money?

Owethu: Why are you asking?

Paul: You are not holding any purse or handbag. I am just curious.

Owethu: Is that how this is now? you no longer take care of my cravings?

Paul: I never said that.

Owethu: You also never asked about money before the call you received last night. What is it? is it a baby you didn't know about? baby mama coming back? what is it?

Paul: I will buy the KFC for you.

He starts the car and drives off in the direction of the mall. Once they arrive, he parks at the parking lot and switch off the engine.

Paul: Are you coming?

She keeps quiet with her arms folded and mouth pouted.

Paul: Okay, I will go by myself.

He gets off and closes the door before heading towards the KFC door.

He comes out later on and gets into the car, handing her the paper packs.

She checks inside and frowns not seeing anything she wants at this moment.

Owethu: This is not what I want.

Paul: (starting the car) You have no choice now. I asked you before I left and you decided to ignore me.

He is driving out and she is causing a scene, shouting at him in the car it even invites eyes to his car.

He drives out calmly while she throws a tantrum and not even once does he look in her direction.

They get to her place and she is now calm, eating the food.

He goes straight to her gate, parks the car and lock the doors before turning to her.

Paul: (calmly) I hope what you did today was solely because of your hormones or moods because I wouldn't tolerate that coming from you. I don't ever want to see such behaviour anymore. I am not your servant and I certainly am not the reason you are like this. I know you are used to using people and tossing them aside, what happened those moon years is never going to be repeated. Are we clear?

She has her mouth full and she can only nod with her head. He unlocks the doors and she quickly gets off the car.

To be continued...

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TSHEGOFATSO

Yesterday was a total bliss and he has been smiling since he came back from the date.

Amanda is a great person, she kept him entertained the entire time and because it all went good, they have decided to spend more time together starting from today.

It is a beautiful chilled Sunday. Tshegofatso decided to host her because they wanted somewhere quiet.

They both agreed to his place, no one was forced or convinced otherwise. He is cooking today, ingredients have filled the counter even those he has never used before.

It's all good because he had done enough grocery and since he hardly cooks, today he is even using his hidden skills.

His phone rings as he is waiting for the sauce to coat his chicken wings with to be done.

He wipes his hands with the dishcloth that's in the apron pocket, and then answers his phone.

Tshego: Hello.

Owethu: (sniffles) Hi.

If it was any other day, he would fly over to Limpopo so he can solve whatever is causing her to cry but times have changed, and he doesn't care anymore.

He waits for her to finish her performance so she can tell him why she called.

Owethu: How are you?

Tshego: I'm good. How are you?

Owethu: Trying.

Tshego: Okay.

Owethu: I wanted to ask if you are coming home anytime soon.

Tshego: No.

Owethu: Can I come to see you?

Tshego: Why?

Owethu: Just to get away from this place for a while. I need fresh air.

Tshego: I think we should wait until you have given birth before you can start going up and down.

Owethu: I just thought you might want to be with your son.

Tshego: I will have plenty of time with him when he is born because then, he will be making decisions on his own.

Owethu: Okay, well bye then. See you after I give birth.

She hangs up and he swears he heard her click her tongue before the call ending tone.

He switches his mind back to yesterday and a smile forms on his face.

OWETHU

After the call with Tshogofatso, she felt a whole lot angrier than she was at Paul last night. It seems both these guys are not taking her seriously so she has to do something.

She googles ways to miscarry or abort and everything seems dangerous, she might also lose her life in the process.

On the other side; losing the baby might mean losing Tshogofatso and this time it will be forever.

The only option left now is to ignore him until he gives birth and maybe seeing the baby will soften him up and he will forget about all these. It's just pregnancy hormones, she is going to be back to the old he fell in love with and masked it with friendship.

She sighs going to her gallery where she has created albums of all their pictures. A smile appears on her face as she watches the videos too.

AMANDA

She drives through the yard after checking with the security and she is amazed they have let her in.

She walks up to Tshego's door after parking her car and knocks.

He opens with a wide smile plastered on his face, his scent is the first to greet her and she can't help but smile back.

Tshego: Welcome to my mini palace, you may come in.

She steps into his floor and he gets her handbag as she proceeds to the couch he has directed her to.

Tshego: Can I get you something to drink?

Amanda: Juice, please.

Tshego: Coming right up.

He goes over to the kitchen and pours two glasses of juice.

Tshego: Here you go.

Amanda: Thank you.

He joins her on the couch and they sip on their glasses before putting them down.

Tshego: Can I have a hug, I was afraid to ask when you got in because I was feeling a little nervous.

Amanda: Are you a mind reader?

Tshego: (confused) Huh?

A few seconds pass before he gets the joke. They both chuckle and then stands up to hug. It is intense, unrushed and extremely warm. They both take in their scents, eyes closed and then just hold each other in one spot like they have stopped breathing.

They break the hug, look into each other's eyes until they drop them to the ground and then sit down attending to their glasses.

Tshego: I think I can set the table for us now.

Amanda: Let me help you.

Tshego: No, you're my guest.

Amanda: Then I can just keep you company while you do your thing.

Tshego: Okay.

They head to the kitchen where he takes two plates and starts setting the table while they talk.

Tshego: Do you drink alcohol?

Amanda: Yes.

Tshego: No need to ask me, you already have the answer.

Amanda: I wasn't going to. Do you live by yourself here?

Tshego: Yes.

Amanda: It's neat

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I love it.

Tshego: Like there's a woman?

Amanda: What does neatness have to do with women? Have you seen my room?

Tshego: (chuckles) It's hard to believe.

Amanda: Well it's not that messy, just turned it upside down on my way here.

Tshego: And you are only seeing my front now, you don't know what's at the back.

Amanda: I will be the judge of that.

Silence!

Does she mean she will be into her room sooner than he expected?

Amanda: No, not like that. If it's for what you're thinking, I won't even know what your it looks like once I'm inside.

Okay, she is pushing him further into the bushes. Does she mean she is that wild? oh God!

Amanda: (chuckles) Tshego no, okay I'm going to stop talking.

Tshego: (laughs) What?

Amanda: I'm not giving it up anytime soon and no I am not wild.

Tshego: Did I say that out loud?

Amanda: You didn't have to.

She follows him as he takes the last dish and they sit to eat.

Amanda: Impressive, it's good one of us can cook.

Tshego: So that he can teach the other.

They laugh at that, unexpectedly.

Tshego: It's nice having someone over. I also didn't know I can cook like this.

Amanda: It's nice having someone I can be free with.

They have already let each other in on what's been happening in their lives, just a little bit.

They dish up and start eating while continuing with their conversation. The atmosphere is filled with carefree laughter and the aroma of the food.

AYABONGA

He misses his woman so much he doesn't even know what to do. It also doesn't help that Ntsako and Lonwabo are at it at this minute that he is stepping into the house. They are making noise thinking they are alone because he had gone out.

He quietly goes into his room and that's when he realises the sound isn't coming from Lonwabo's room but the outside shower.

He immediately calls Lerato so he can block out the sounds.

Lerato: Babe.

Aya: Love, you won't believe this.

Lerato: What's up?

Aya: Lonwabo and Ntsako.

Lerato: What's happening?

Aya: Hold on.

He walks out and stands by the door leading outside with his arm stretched towards the shower. They are so careless they have left it open or maybe it's because the shower is covered?

He hears Lerato giggling on the other end and then sigh putting the phone on his ear as he goes back to his room.

Lerato: How do you survive that?

Aya: It's my first I'm hearing this. I had gone out and because I took long they thought I would be back around midnight.

Lerato: I can't believe it. Don't y'all have neighbours or something?

Aya: Do you think they care?

Lerato: (laughs) Let them explore.

Aya: Now I am forced to stay in my room because should Ntsako see me, she will never be able to look at me in the eyes anymore.

Lerato: I would be embarrassed too.

Aya: Let me shower while they are busy so I won't make noise when they are back.

Lerato: Okay.

He hangs up and he hears them giggling walking into the house. They are asking each other if he is back and they aren't sure because he had left on foot.

TSHEGOFATSO

The second date went well. They have eaten and are now watching movies while chatting.

They have fully let themselves inside their lives and they are looking forward to more outings and experiences.

Amanda's phone rings and she answers as Tshego stands up to go to the restroom.

Amanda: Yes, no you didn't. I know you set me up you fool. You are going to pay for this.

She hangs up as Tshego comes back and she doesn't know how she is going to say this to him.

Tshego: You still good?

Amanda: Yes, but something happened. A Change of plans.

Tshego: Okay...

Amanda: I was supposed to go sleep at my cousin's place, she has her place not far from here and because I had already informed her of what's happening she decided to have her boyfriend over so I won't come.

Tshego: Why would she do that?

Amanda: To have me sleep here, she knows I won't drive home at this time.

Tshego: And you are worried if something will happen to you if you sleep here.

Amanda: Not entirely, I just didn't think it would get to that so soon.

Tshego: I understand.

Amanda: (sighs) It's fine, I will sleep.

A message comes through from the very same cousin telling her to check her boot for an overnight bag. Sneaky bastard, what if Tshego is a human trafficker or something else?

She counts to 10 so she can calm down and then turns to Tshego who has already got clothes for her to change into.

Tshego: I figured out the jeans might be tight to sleep in, you can use this. I also got you socks if you are the kind that sleeps with socks on.

Amanda: Thanks. Can I change in the bathroom?

Tshego: Yes.

He directs her and she goes inside as he goes to get the bed ready. He is not a fan of sleeping on the couch for any matter, but to make her comfortable he has to take it tonight.

She comes back in the early t-shirt and her hair tied up in a bun.

Amanda: My cousin says there is a bag in my car, can you accompany me to fetch it? I need my bonnet unless you have a head wrap somewhere in the house.

Tshego: No, I don't. I can go get it for you seeing you have already changed, it's quite chilly outside.

Amanda: Thanks.

She gives him the keys and he goes out.

To be continued...

AMANDA BRYNSTON

She opens her eyes and yawns before stretching her arms. It is a beautiful sunny morning and the sun rays have lit up the room through the window.

Last night Tshego cuddled her to bed and then sneaked out to sleep on the couch because they had not agreed on anything yet, and he didn't want to be that guy.

He did that to control himself because he wants this to work. During the cuddle, they opened up about their struggles and whatever issue that was left off from their first and second date.

Amanda gets off the bed dragging her feet to the door because she wants to see his pretty face.

She walks into a full breakfast set table and can hear a whistle from the shower. It would be rude to eat without him while he went through all this trouble.

The whistle is a happy song and that suggests he is in a good mood right?

She decides to go join him, hoping he won't turn her down because this is taking forever and they both know what they want. Call her loose, but it won't change that sooner or later she was going to give it up.

The water stops running as she opens the door. Tshego turns and finds her stripping out of her clothes.

His mouth is almost on the floor and he cannot even control his hand that's still on the tap, which goes on unexpectedly.

Tshego: Shit!

He curses as the water hits his body with a force. Amanda is laughing as he quickly steps out and then closes the tap.

Amanda: Sorry.

He is wiping his head not looking at her. She takes a few steps and closes the gap between them.

TSHEGOFATSO

He can feel her near him but is afraid to remove the towel from his face. They are butt naked and he wouldn't know where to look.

She is probably looking at his dangling third leg and passing comments on the length, colour and structure. It has shrunk also and probably looks like a worm, but a big worm- gosh why is he driving himself crazy over this?

He has all these thoughts running in his head and he is feeling embarrassed because when did he become afraid of girls? If it

was a few weeks back he would have ravished this human being before in no time.

Amanda: Are you not going to finish wiping your face?

Tshego: (clears throat) I'm done.

Amanda: Drop the towel then.

He drops it, passing by his neck and as he is about to wrap it on his waist, Amanda quickly pushes it down looking straight at his face.

Her slim fingers touches his body in passing and that soft touch sends waves through his body.

Amanda: I was thinking we can shower together before we go eat. You made a mistake of not inviting me to shower.

Tshego: (looking around) I didn't want to disturb you.

Amanda: I need my back washed, guess I can do the same for you. Let's go before you are late for work.

There is still that? oh God! Right now he wishes there was no work today.

She leads him back into the shower and opens the tap. He has already bathed so no, he is not doing it again but because he cannot just stand there, he starts rubbing his body as the water washes down on him.

Amanda: Let me start so you will know how to do it.

She turns him around, takes the men body wash tube and squeezes it on the sponge. She place it on his neck before going in circles as slow and sensual as possible.

He is relaxing as she goes down while her other hand traces his waist, coming to the front and then back to hold the sponge with the other.

She finishes and as he turns to face her, she starts circling his stomach with the sponge, from the chest down to his groin.

His member is already excited and when the water washes the foam off, she has his length in her hand, slowly going back and forth on it.

He is still lost in it as her fingers carefully lifts his balls and he squirms. It's not just the touch but the person touching him.

She squats in front of him and then directs his member into her mouth while he holds on the shower walls for balance.

She licks, looks at his flushed face and then quickly takes him in all the way to the back before releasing him.

At this moment he is losing his breath and he has tightened his butt as part of balance.

The tap gets turned off, the only sounds in the shower is him groaning and Amanda's tongue against his third not-so-wormy length anymore.

She gags and spits on it

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releases and then takes it back in. This is the best head he has ever received.

She takes his balls in, his toes curls and he feels like he is about to fall it she isn't letting go of him until he sprays her face with that sticky liquid.

He steps out of the shower and leans against the tub while she wipes the corners of her mouth. Her eyes are teary but she is coming to him all ready to swallow his hard on again.

PAUL

Later that morning as he is driving to his workplace, he is reminded of the recording out of nowhere and he immediately dials his brother.

He has to find this person immediately because as much as he never seemed to be involved, the thought of them have kept him awake most nights.

Him: (whispering) Hello, I'm in class.

Paul: I know, please check the number that left the message. I want to call it back.

Him: Let me check and send if I haven't deleted it.

Paul: You better not have.

He hangs up approaching a red light, when it turns green his phone dings and he drives a little further before indicating and turning to the side.

He doesn't recognize the number sent, so he makes it a mental note to call using his office number.

He gets back on the road as Owethu calls him. He rolls his eyes before answering.

Paul: Hello.

Owethu: Hey, I just wanted to apologise for my behaviour the other day. I was just overwhelmed and not in a good space. I think it's this pregnancy.

He was about to accept the apology but when it became about the reason for her behaviour, he knew it's not sincere.

Paul: Are you ever going to take responsibility for your actions or will always find something to put the blame on? this is starting to annoy me honestly.

Owethu: A normal me doesn't act this way, you know it.

Paul: If I remember correctly, you were also like this those years back. In your mind you think you are a glass that everyone else needs to be careful around. We all have to tiptoe around you while you perform all kinds of dances around us. Come on!

Owethu: I do deserve to be treated like a glass.

Paul: And so does everyone else, but they don't treat other people like shit.

She keeps quiet for a moment and as he is about to hang up, he hears a loud cry breaking out from the other end. That gives him a whole lot of reasons on why he should hang up.

AYABONGA

Earlier when he left for work he didn't see much of his cousin and now that they are all back home, it's just the two of them - they have enough time to talk.

They are sitting on the couch watching TV while chatting.

Lonwabo: I didn't hear you coming in last night.

Aya: You wouldn't have.

Lonwabo: Why?

Aya: It was pretty loud in here.

Lonwabo: Fuck you, did you hear that?

Aya: All of it, I didn't know you had that kind of groan.

He says that side eyeing him. Lonwabo hits his shoulder and that makes Ayabonga to laugh.

Aya: I'm impressed, but I don't think mama Adelaide would have loved to hear that.

Lonwabo gives him that "you're annoying" look and that makes him to laugh even more.

Lonwabo: You are no longer my cousin.

Aya: I don't have a problem with that. We can still live together though as strangers, and now you won't even mind me when you perform because I mean nothing to you.

Lonwabo gets up and hits his head with the pillow. They start to wrestle after Ayabonga has returned the favour and the house is filled with laughter.

Lonwabo: I think we should get Lerato here so she can get rid of these kilograms of salts you are carrying. They have made you so strong now I can't even fight you.

He says as they are catching their breaths sitting on the carpet with their backs on the couch.

Aya: She will come this Friday hopefully. I haven't asked her but I know she won't refuse.

Lonwabo: Please make sure you have enough sex when she arrives so we can all go out the next day.

Aya: Says someone who has been having sex 7 days a week but still can't get enough of it.

Lonwabo: Don't start with me.

They get up and head to their rooms still teasing each other. Ayabonga opens his door, puts in one foot and then turns to Lonwabo before imitating his groan. He quickly gets in and locks the door as Lonwabo runs to him.

Lonwabo: (yelling)You're such a fool.

Only laughter can heard from Ayabonga's room as Lonwabo turns back to his, laughing and shaking his head on the way.

To be continued...

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LERATO

She is in bed about to doze off when her phone rings. She had a really long day and she would love some rest so this call is disturbing her. She answers without checking the screen because her eyes are closed.

Lerato: Hello.

Aya: Babe, are you sleeping?

Lerato: Yes, I am tired. I had a long day at work.

Aya: Give me two minutes only I will be done.

Lerato: Okay.

She forces her eyes open, and then sits up rubbing them.

Aya: I want you to come here on Friday if possible. I am actually asking that you come spend the weekend with me.

Lerato: Babe you know I am afraid of travelling alone, especially long distances.

Aya: And that's why I will be waiting for you when you get here.
Please babe.

Lerato: (hesitantly) I don't know. I am afraid of that place babe
and right now just thinking of it, my stomach is trying knots.

Aya: But I want to see you and I want you to see Pretoria.

Lerato: I will think about it.

Aya: Okay, and please let your mom know in case you decide
that you're coming. I don't want last minutes things.

Lerato: Okay, bye.

Aya: I love you.

Lerato: I love you too.

Aya: I love you more.

Lerato: (chuckles) Bye.

Aya: Good night.

He hangs up and then put his phone aside so he can sleep.
Meanwhile, Lerato cannot go back to sleep because her mind
has decided to bring up all the bad things she has even heard
about Pretoria.

She tosses and turns while everything plays out like she was there when it happened. Even her stomach is getting upset.

AMANDA

She left immediately after breakfast because Tshego was going to work and when she arrived at her cousin's place, she didn't find her. It's only now she is arriving from wherever.

As she opens the door she finds Amanda sitting on the couch looking straight at the door.

She smiles and then paces up to her while taking off her jacket and getting out of her sandals, kicking them off

Her: (excitedly) I want all the details.

Amanda: Can you please start by telling me why you packed me a bag without talking to me first? What if that guy was a monster?

Her: Which question should I answer first?

She looks at her like she is about to murder her.

Her: (raising her hands) Okay, because I knew you were going to need it. I mean it confirmed to me that it was a sleep over.

Amanda: And the other things?

She is referring to the lingerie that she found under the clothes, together with her pink fluffy handcuffs.

Her: I'm sorry then.

Amanda: For what?

Her: For being thoughtful.

Amanda: (rolls eyes) I sometimes think your mind doesn't work. What if that guy wasn't who he said he was?

Her: Well did anything happen? Anything bad? (wiggling her eyes) anything good?

She sighs looking down and that gets her cousin's attention.

Her: (gasps) You went all the way? oh my Go-

Amanda: I only gave him head, geez.

Her: (laughs) I knew it, and I bet you didn't have sex because maybe time wasn't on your side.

Amanda: He was going to work and I had to come back. Where were you?

Her: I was out. What's he like? is it big? curvy? slim or fat?

Amanda: What the hell?

Her: All of it, from when you walked into that building.

Amanda: (getting up) I can't believe this.

She walks away and the cousin follows after her demanding the details.

OWETHU

It has been a while without talking to Paul and she misses him. There is nothing she can do about it because her aunts have her

under house arrest. This whole set-up annoys her because she can no longer have sex.

She also can't go anywhere except for her appointments at the clinic, these old women do all the other things for her.

She is now watching TV after eating and she feels like sleeping. Her eldest aunt wakes her up and tells her to go get some air outside before she can sleep.

Owethu: When are you guys leaving? I really need my space back.

Her: I will let that slide for now because you are pregnant, and I do hope it's the pregnancy talking now.

Owethu: How long am I going to stay in the house after I give birth?

Her: Six months

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where do you want to go?

Owethu: Back to school.

Her: And who is going to look after your baby?

Owethu: You guys, what are you here for kant?

Her: We gave birth and raised our children on our own. Our parents only helped where they could but the rest was up to us. We are here to see that you follow tradition and you have the support you need. Everything else regarding your child is up to you.

Owethu: (murmuring) Well I don't want your help.

She says that walking out and the aunt sighs shaking her head.

Her: You will thank us one day.

Owethu is already out the door and when she meets her younger aunt at the door, she pushes her aside and then walks out.

Later on that day, she goes through her phone to see who she can call. It's now she realizes she doesn't have any other friends besides Tshegofatso.

She clicks on his phone number with the aim to call but she feels some type of way so she exit the contacts and toss her phone aside.

The baby is growing and she is feeling some vibrations. At least next month she will be having company from his flutters that will be visible.

TSHEGOFATSO

He only texted Amanda good night last night because he was tired, and now he woke up missing her.

They haven't said anything about what happened but they both enjoyed it in a way, maybe him more than her but they felt the spark.

He is smiling to himself so early in the morning and it's all because of a woman.

He dials her number and baby girl was still sleeping because her voice is raspy.

Amanda: Hey.

His member twitches at that and he almost loses his voice trying to respond.

Tshego: How are you?

Amanda: I am still sleeping.

Tshego: (chuckles) I miss you.

Amanda: I miss you too.

Tshego: When can I see you?

Amanda: I am coming on Friday, we can go out or stay in for the whole weekend.

The whole weekend? he should get those emergency pills ready.

Tshego: That would make me happy. I cannot wait to see you.

Amanda: Me too.

Tshego: Let me get ready for work then Ms Brynston.

Amanda: Okay.

He hangs up and starts preparing for work. He receives a message from an unknown number, it is quite lengthy and because he has little time now he saves it for later.

PAUL

He spent last night searching for the owner behind the number. The only thing he got is an address and he is getting ready to go there because it is not far.

He booked an appointment because it seems as if there are offices he has to pass through before.

He is excited and scared at the same time because he doesn't know what to expect. You know that feeling when you haven't seen someone in a long time and now you don't know if they will welcome you, if they are still the same or not and if they will like the current you.

He finishes up and then drives out listening to music to calm himself.

Almost 2 hours later, he arrives at the place. The building is tall with glass walls and the name on the front wall in blue.

He checks with the security and they let him in while directing him to a parking space for visitors.

He parks the car and says a little prayer before getting off the car and going inside.

Paul: Good morning, I am here for a visit.

He says to the front desk lady. They check his information and then lead him to the waiting area where another person comes and takes him to the person he is visiting.

LESEDI

She has just finished with her session for today. It has been really helpful and she might leave sooner than expected.

The notebook writing thing is also helping her because she can now control her emotions.

As she is walking back to her room, she is called that there is someone here to see her. She is used to only her family coming to check on her, so she is looking forward to seeing them as she happily turns back and down the corridors.

One thing she is most happy about is leaving this place so she can make it up to everyone she has wronged, starting with Paul.

As she reaches the tables where other patients are with their visitors, she only sees one person sitting alone and in her mind, she is thinking her family is still outside and this person is waiting for someone else.

The nurse tells her to go join the very same person because he is the one visiting her.

She takes a few steps towards him, he turns and looks at her before they both recognise each other. Paul smiles at her pushing back his chair so he can stand up and the unexpected happens.

Her heart starts beating fast, her knees lock and she cannot move her feet any longer. She feels tears threatening to come out and her ears are blocked for a second.

Nurse: Lesedi, are you okay?

She is not. She is hyperventilating and drawing attention to herself. Everything seems distant and she wants to run away from it all.

The nurse gets help and she is taken away while crying.

To be continued...

PAUL

Driving back to his place feels like the longest drive he's ever had. He had a lot of expectations regarding the visit but what happened wasn't one of them.

He doesn't know what to do or how to feel. The little image of Lesedi he saw brought contentment to him in a way. She looked beautiful and fit, unlike when they parted ways.

Lesedi, after the whole drama of her sleeping with Tshego. She got together with Paul because he felt she wasn't well appreciated and besides, Owethu was showing him flames.

They dated for almost a year until he discovered something was wrong with her.

Lesedi's mood were always unpredictable and she seemed really obsessed with Tshegofatso. At some point, she refused to eat and that's what made her lose weight. On other days she

would be extremely depressive he wouldn't even know how to help her.

He brought up the issue of getting help before it was late because as much as he loved Owethu, he loves Lesedi more but she was still lost in it and thought she didn't need help.

The last time he saw her was about five years ago, and they fought parting ways. He promised to still be available for her if she gets help.

Seeing her today was beautiful and as much as she acted the way she did, he understands.

He plays the recording in his car as he drives through the gate and then takes some moment in the car before getting off.

He has changed numbers so obviously, they won't talk until she is out, and he will be waiting for her.

LESEDI

She didn't expect to see Paul so soon. A part of her was happy, but the still in the process of healing part got scared and because it is still dominant, it made her react that way.

Paul still looks gorgeous, he has always been gentle and even at that table he was ready to embrace her in a tight warm hug.

She is smiling now in her room thinking about him. The nurses managed to calm her down in no time but she couldn't go back to her visitor.

She opens her notebook and starts writing letters to him.

Hopefully, he will still be waiting for her when she comes out so he can read these letters that she is pouring from her heart.

A FEW DAYS LATER

LERATO

They have agreed with her mother that she will be leaving this evening. It's Friday and she her nag ready for a visit to indoda.

Her mother waits with her at the gate for her special transport. They have prayed for the journey and her mother still can't believe she prayed for a mjolo trip.

The car arrives, it's only the driver inside. Lerato's mother asks her name and all the other important information.

She writes everything down, from his age to the number plate and his adress.

Her: Please don't come back pregnant, I prayed so hard for this trip to be safe. Don't disappoint me.

She says hugging her daughter and then helps her inside.

The driver starts the car and then drives off as Lerato waves at her mother. The driver turns to her with a smile.

Him: Don't be scared, Ayabonga is my guy. I am going to drop you right at the gate. You can sleep and rest, use the pillow that's there. I will wake you up when we are there.

Lerato: Thank you.

His phone rings and he answers telling Lonwabo that he just fetched her and they're driving out.

Ayabonga: Please be safe, you are driving the most important person in my life right now.

Him: Don't worry.

He hangs up and Lerato is blushing at the back. This man is going to kill her.

NTSAKO

She is out with Tintswalo drinking when Tshego walks in with Amanda to get drinks.

She nudges her sister who is standing next to her and they both look at them.

Ntsako: I wonder what lies he told this one.

Tintswalo: I don't think she knows about the bestie. No sane woman would walk right through such a trap.

Ntsako: (laughs) Yehe u sasekile, lies don't suit him shem. He is a fine man.

Tintswalo: (turns to her) You are complimenting him? I thought you hate him.

Ntsako: Not anymore, my man gives me good stuff so I removed the grudge to make more space for the nice things.

Tintswalo: Wehe ina drama hey, you are dramatic.

They share a good laugh as the couple approaches the bar.

TSHEGOFATSO

He sees the sisters and decides to not give them any attention.

Amanda says she wants to use the bathroom so he can buy it while waiting for her.

She leaves his sight as he places his order and pays with the card then waits.

Ntsako: I wonder what lies you told this one.

She says beside him. He doesn't turn to look at her or anything. Her sister has left her side.

Ntsako: Does she even know you have a female bestie you fuck? Oh wait, I heard she is pregnant and it's yours poor woman; she is so going to regret this.

From her accent, he can tell she is tipsy but he still doesn't react.

Amanda comes back from the toilet and she can see the way this woman is looking at her man, isn't innocent at all.

She walks over and only catches Ntsako's statement on how she doesn't regret leaving Tshego because he will always be a manwhore, and he probably hooked up with Amanda for a fuck.

Amanda: Do we have a problem here?

She says behind them and Tshego is the first to turn with his 12 pack.

Tshego: Let's go, ignore her.

Ntsako: Who are you? oh! the hook-up. You better not invest in this because this one only loves his female bestie.

Tshego pulls Amanda to the side.

Tshego: Babe, let's leave before it gets out of control.

Amanda: No, let her finish.

Okay, now it's going to be dramatic and he doesn't need that.

Ntsako: Lol, sis come hear this. He just called her babe. He is trying to see if I will be hurt.

Amanda: I'm his babe, I don't think he cares much about you at this point.

Ntsako: Shame, you feel yourself high and all. He will disappoint you.

Amanda: I will take it like a big girl that I am and never harass him in public acting drunk.

Ntsako: I have a man who loves me, not this cheater who's got you all dizzy now.

Amanda: I don't think your boyfriend would be pleased to see you made over your ex moving on. What do you think that's going to be like to him?

Tshego lifts Amanda up and carries her on her shoulder with her legs swinging on his stomach, and her head on his back.

She laughs as he puts her down outside and they walk back to his place teasing each other.

OWETHU

She is viewing her WhatsApp statuses and everyone seems occupied.

Ayabonga cannot wait to spend the weekend with her girlfriend. Tshegofatso is having the best of his life with a new girl he keeps referring to as Baby A. Paul is also happy about something he doesn't describe.

She feels anger brewing inside her and the only person she is going to vomit at is Tshegofatso.

She doesn't waste any more time as she dials his number.

It takes him a while to answer and when he does, she can hear the girl singing in the background.

Tshego: Hello.

Owethu: (pretending to cry) There is something wrong with the baby. I am in pain.

Tshego: Let me call my mother to come to check on you.

Owethu: You should come to check on me. It's not your mother who made me pregnant.

He can tell from this tone that she is on her mission to destroy his happiness.

Tshego: I am in Pretoria in case you forgot.

Owethu: Come tomorrow or something, we need you. You can't be enjoying life out there with your baby A while I'm stuck her with a swollen tummy.

Tshego: This isn't even about the baby and you know it. Please stop calling me if it's not about my child.

Owethu: I am going to call you whenever I want. You promised that till death-

He cuts her off before she could finish.

Tshego: That till eternity was for when we were both loyal to each other but you want to control me like I'm your boyfriend. I have let you do whatever with whomever but when I get a girlfriend you have to be annoying and break it up.

Owethu: Because they all are not good for you, I am.

Tshego: I will tolerate you for these few last months, after that I don't even want anything to do with you.

He hangs up and joins his woman who is dancing to the sound from the speaker.

AYABONGA

It's almost 11 pm and he is in his onesie and slippers, waiting right at the gate.

Lonwabo came and joined him but went back inside, he is coming back for the second time and he finds him still waiting.

Lonwabo: It's cold out here, let's wait inside he will call when he gets here.

Ayabonga: You're right it's cold, let me get something warm for Lerato.

Lonwabo: If I didn't know, I would say you are whipped.

Ayabonga: And I wouldn't argue.

He paces back inside and gets his gown before coming down to the gate.

Car lights approaches and then the car stops at the gate.

He excitedly opens the gate and goes out as the driver gets off to shoulder bump with him.

Him: She is still sleeping, she doesn't even feels that the car has stopped.

Ayabonga: Shame, she is tired. Let me wake her up.

To be continued...

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LERATO

She is woken up by the cold breeze coming through the open door, and then rubs her eyes waking up and stretching her arms.

Aya: Here, put this on so we can go inside. I didn't want to wake you up.

He gives her the gown and she hugs him, kissing his cheeks before leaning back on the seat

Lerato: (yawning) It's okay. I can't believe I slept throughout. I wanted to see the way and all that stuff.

Ayabonga: You were tired, it's understandable.

He helps her outside and the driver has already taken out her bags from the boot. Ayabonga fist-bumps with the him and they go inside, Lonwabo leading the way and Lerato in the middle as the driver disappears into the night.

Lerato: This is a beautiful house, it's clean too.

Ayabonga: You will see it well in the morning.

They get inside and it's then Lonwabo greets her before going to his bedroom.

Ayabonga: Do you want something to eat before you sleep.

Lerato: No, I just want to bath and then hit the sack.

Ayabonga: Babe you can just sleep and then you will bath in the morning.

Lerato: I will wake up sick if I don't bath. I am sweaty and I also have to brush my teeth.

Ayabonga: (sighs) Okay, at least shower then so you can be quick. There is hot water.

Lerato: Okay.

Ayabonga: I'm coming, let me lock up.

He goes back downstairs and finds Lonwabo in the kitchen drinking water. He decides to make a snack for Lerato because he knows how women are.

Lonwabo: I bet your roof is going to explode tonight.

Ayabonga: Some of us are actually gentle you know.

Lonwabo: Gentle is boring, sometimes you need to fire it up until you see her blowing air into it and asking for water to put out the fire.

He says this laughing and because Ayabonga knows he's a fool, he doesn't take him serious.

Ayabonga: I really don't know how your mind works sometimes.

Lonwabo: Anyway, make sure you are all ready tomorrow for the double date.

Ayabonga: I have plans for the morning, we will be ready by evening.

Lonwabo: Okay, goodnight and don't mind me. Perform like you own that stage.

Ayabonga: Well I own it.

He goes back upstairs with bowl of fruit salad and a glass of water.

Lerato isn't done yet so he goes to check on her, and she is just standing under the water holding on the wall.

He strips off his clothes and joins her, the water is warm and probably soothing to her hence she is taking forever. The trip must have been really long for her.

She looks at him over her shoulder and then back to the wall.

Ayabonga: (calmly) Are you okay? you have been in here for long.

He says wrapping his hands on her waist and kissing her nape. She tilts her head to the side to give her access.

Lerato: I'm fine, the water just kept me here because it is perfectly warm.

Ayabonga: Let's go, you have had enough now.

Lerato: I thought you are joining me.

Ayabonga: There was no way I would talk to you without touching you so it made sense that I come in here.

Lerato: Or you just miss me.

Ayabonga: I haven't seen you well so yes I miss you. Come.

She turns and faces him. He kisses her while turning of the taps and then holds her hand leading her out of the shower.

He follows after her as she was the first to finish wiping herself.

He finds her lotioning her body and then gets into bed naked, before pulling the bowl and starts eating.

Ayabonga chuckles getting into bed besides her and she doesn't even pay attention to him as she continues eating. He takes his

phone and snaps her a few pictures while she pays no attention to him.

NTSAKO

She still regrets saying all those things to Tshegofatso because she feels embarrassed up to this day.

It is a Saturday morning and Lonwabo has planned a double date for them later on. She is looking forward to seeing Lerato because she last saw her at the wedding.

She hasn't told Tintswalo about the other night because knowing her, she is going to fuel such inappropriate behaviour.

Tintswalo is making breakfast when she walks into the kitchen. It's just eggs and sausages.

Ntsako: Morning sis.

Tintswalo: Hey, how did you sleep?

Ntsako: I slept fine.

Tintswalo: Didn't Mr cheater give you any problems that night?
you never said anything.

Ntsako: No, he didn't. Did you count me?

Tintswalo: Yes, here.

She hands her the plate and a loaf.

Ntsako: I won't sleep here tonight. Ayabonga's girlfriend arrived
last night and we are spending the day together.

Tintswalo: Oh

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that's nice. I am glad you have someone else, a woman for that
matter, whom you can be able to spend some time out with.

Ntsako: Are you tired of me?

Tintswalo: Yes, we have been together for our whole lives and
we still have time together. Of course I'm not tired of you, but
some things are better discussed with an outsider.

She doesn't reply as she starts eating. After clearing her plate she decides to bath and that's when she receives a message from Lonwabo to come early.

AYABONGA

He has the day all planned out for him and his woman. She is dressing up while he takes her videos because she doesn't want to finish.

He thinks she is done when she applies the lipstick but baby girl pulls her make up brush back, and starts applying things he doesn't even know.

Ayabonga: Babe please finish up, I made a booking and we're going to be late.

Lerato: I'm almost done. Five more minutes.

Ayabonga: You have been saying that for the past 30 minutes.

She puts on her earrings and then stands up.

Lerato: How do I look?

Ayabonga: Absolutely gorgeous, let's go.

She rolls her eyes and grabs her handbag walking out. He stops recording and then follows after her.

She is in a denim boyfriend jean, white sneakers and a white shirt. She somehow reminds him of Owethu but he quickly wipes that memory off his mind and focuses on her.

They drive out to do a little shopping and he regrets coming with her because his feet hurt right now.

She keeps changing into the clothes and then coming to ask if they are alright. The shoes are even worse.

They also get a few things for his little brother and then finally goes back to the car.

Lerato: I am hungry.

Ayabonga: I even forgot about the food because you didn't want me to leave your sight.

Lerato: Well I am hungry.

Ayabonga: Okay, let's get something before we proceed with the day.

He drives to KFC because it's the closest and they have to leave. After buying he drives them to a spa for their massage sessions.

Lerato is so happy she didn't even have the slightest thought that they would go to a spa.

Lerato: You are so sneaky, why didn't you say anything.

Ayabonga: Surprise, surprise.

He takes her hand and they go inside greeting the receptionist who directs them to their room.

LATER THAT EVENING

NARRATED

The couples are looking dazzling in their outfits for dinner. The ladies are in dresses and heels, handbags complementing their dresses and their hair and make-up is on point.

They walk into the restaurant, gets directed to a table and sits.

The waiter comes to check if they need anything. The girls have been complaining of hunger so they order right away.

The waiter goes away, brings back their drinks and then goes back again for their order that's still being prepared.

There is a joyful laughter coming from the table. Ayabonga keeps Lerato the "I'm going to chow you after this" look, and she responds to it with a naughty side smile.

Their order arrives and they start eating while chatting.

Ayabonga: I think we should head home after this.

Lerato: I agree, I need some sleep.

Lonwabo: You two can just say it out loud we won't judge.

Ayabonga: (chuckles) Well I hope you won't be disturbing us tonight because we too need the space.

Ntsako: Did you hear that? oh my God, I told Lonwabo to go easy.

They laugh and Ntsako's face has turned red in embarrassment.

Ayabonga: You don't have to be embarrassed hey, it's just me.

Ntsako: You don't understand.

Ayabonga: Trust me I do. My mother once walked up on me stuck in someone's daughter.

Lonwabo almost chokes on his food as he laughs and that makes everyone else join in.

Lerato: This is news to my ears.

Lonwabo: We received an hour lecture for something we knew nothing about.

Ayabonga: And I keep wondering how my butt was because I was all naked.

Lonwabo: I would have pulled out.

Ayabonga: I stopped but the girl kept pushing and moaning because her head was buried in the sheets. I took the fall for both of us, double embarrassment.

They can't help it but laugh even more and Ntsako has loosened up also.

Right then, Tshegofatso and walks in with Amanda and they head to the table right besides the couples' one.

Ntsako chokes on her food, starts coughing and drawing attention to herself.

Lonwabo: Babe are you okay?

She cannot answer and it's only after Lerato comes to her and tries to rub her back that it gets better.

Ntsako: (coughing) I am fine. The food just went down the wrong pipe.

Lonwabo: Okay, have some water then.

She drinks the water, side eyeing Tshegofatso and Lerato catches that moment but brushes it off.

To be continued...

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LESEDI

It has been a long 5 months admitted in here and she is happy to be leaving today. The one thing she is proud of is making it this far, holding on for the first few days that she wanted to end it all with the hopes that there is greener pastures on the other side.

Today is the day she can finally see that holding on was the best thing she ever made. It is confirmed that there are results for when you choose go face your fears and not run away each time they demand a meeting.

The nurses have organized a little farewell for her and they are all wishing her well on her new journey. She is walking out of that door a new person, understanding who she is, what she wants and how she is now going to face everyday challenges.

This few months that she has been in here taught her to put herself first, and that means all of herself. Her mental health leading because that is where everything else stems from.

A lot of people are sick but they don't know from what, and they refuse to get help. Some think mental health problems are associated with people who have money because they keep wondering if someone is out to steal from them.

There is also a lot of stereotypes concerning mental health and because she came, saw, heard and felt it all, she is going to enlighten others out there.

The farewell doesn't last long as the nurses have to go back to work. They each hug her for the last time before giving her the stuff she came with, including her cellphone and the notebook.

The phone is fully charged and the first thing she has to do is organise an Uber, and then call her family on the way.

She thanks everyone and walks out with her bag. The outside world is refreshing as she steps out of the building, and she is ready to leave a mark with each step.

She releases a deep breath before walking down the stairs, past the parking lot and all the way to the gate.

The security officers congratulate her and she smiles walking out and tall.

PAUL

Lesedi made another call to his old number that she will be coming out today, and as always, his brother told him and he decided to do something for her.

He is waiting outside the gate, a cap on his head and looking all handsome and clean. He looks at her as she walks out the gate smiling. He can see a new and healed person and that makes him happy.

They never talked after that day he came to visit and he also never came back. He felt it was right to afford her some space to deal with everything without crowding her because he knew he would get a chance to be with her once she is out.

He walks over to her as he is parked on the other side, and he can tell she didn't see him. He is hoping and praying for a better reaction this time around.

She turns as he is about to reach her, hearing his rushed footsteps. For a moment she doesn't recognize him and it's only when he removes his cap does she see who he is.

She gasps

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tears running down her cheeks and her throat instantly going dry. Today isn't like that other day, her feet are moving and she has her arms opened up to embrace him while crying.

They meet, hug with tears all over and then look into each other's eyes before sharing the most passionate kiss.

Lesedi: (crying) Please forgive me, I didn't want to be closed in there because I thought it's for mad people and I know I'm not

mad. Forgive me for all the profanities you have heard coming out of my mouth.

She says after they have stopped kissing but still holding each other in a hug.

Paul: (rubbing her back) Sssshh... it's okay. I somehow contributed also because I didn't know then what I know now. I love you so much, never stopped.

They break the hug and look at each other standing on the side of the road. He wipes her tears and they both smile as Paul's phone disturbs them. He answers standing in front of her while she waits for him to finish so they can leave.

OWETHU

The burning sensation at the back of her waist is the reason she will never fall pregnant, ever again.

When it hits she turns groaning with her one hand on it and other other holding on her tummy. Her aunts just came to check on her and she pretended to be fine because she only wants to go to the clinic after her water has broke.

The pain she is feeling now is unbearable but there is nothing she can besides taking it like a big girl.

She now has her elbows pinned on the bed, ass up in the air and toes tightening with each pain as if she is praying.

At some point it feels like she is being cut by a fiery machine and then it switches to just being hot on her back. She moves around until it is less painful and then takes her phone to call Paul.

Tshegofatso said she should call him but her pride is dealing with her now and she doesn't want to see him.

She heard he is back with a new car and a woman, it even makes her more mad that he is enjoying while she is in so much pain.

Paul answers letting go of Lesedi's hand. He gives her the car keys and directs her to the car.

Paul: Hello.

Owethu: (groaning) I am dying, please come take me to the clinic.

Paul: Where are your aunts?

Owethu: They don't know how to drive you fool.

Paul: (sighs) Okay, I am coming.

He sighs and goes to the car.

Paul: Do you know Tshego's number?

Lesedi: Let me check in my phone. What's the matter?

Paul: His baby mama has called and she needs to go to the clinic because she is in pain.

Lesedi: Oh, okay. Here.

He gives her the phone and then he dials Tshegofatso before driving off.

TSHEGOFATSO

He is with Amanda at his mom's for the first time since they started dating. They arrived last night because he wanted to be present at the birth of his son.

The family loves Amanda and the mother has already made friends with her.

They are sitting outside when he goes in his room to check if his phone is full. He finds it ringing and then answers.

Paul explains what's going on and he panics but hides it from his voice. He thanks him and then hangs up.

Owethu's phone isn't working when he tries her and it's alarming because Paul said she called a few minutes ago.

He rushes outside to tell his parents before getting into his car.

His mother comes from the house with a plastic full of clothes, baby bags and all that stuff.

Her: Go with this and please update me.

Tshego: I will. Babe let's go together.

Amanda joins him and they drive off to Owethu's place.

OWETHU

Her eldest aunt found out why she has been hiding herself and she is angry that she kept silent the whole time, but now is not the time to quarell.

Her: Where are your bags? your mother is on her way to take you to the hospital. Hold on.

She looks like as zombie now because she is tired and the pains are showing her flames.

Her aunt helps her to sit and starts brushing her back.

Her: Did you call the father?

Owethu: No, he didn't ask to be told.

She is hissing in pain and when she stands up her water breaks.

Her: Okay, we are leaving now.

She gets a mop and cleans the water while the youngest aunt helps her into clean clothes.

They hear a hooter at the gate.

NARRATED

Tshegofatso is out calling to anyone who can hear him from one gate as Owethu's mother parks behind him before rushing inside to fetch her daughter.

She comes out following the aunts and that's when Tshego attempts to help.

The aunts tell him that he cannot be with her because he is sleeping with someone else. Owethu only took one glance at his car and almost fainted when she saw Amanda. There is a difference between hearing he's got a new girlfriend and seeing her in the flesh.

She starts crying and the aunts are thinking it's the labour pains but only she knows why she is crying like this.

They all drive out following each other and Amanda keep asking if he is okay because she saw how things are.

They have arrived at the hospital and everyone is eager to know what is happening in there.

The nurses are just passing before them with no information regarding Owethu who has been in there for almost an hour now.

Tshegofatso keeps pacing around and Amanda is trying her all to keep him calm. The aunts are also looking at her with that eye that's asking what she is doing here but she doesn't mind them.

NTSAKO

She had a talk with Lerato after that double date thing a few months back, and since then she has been checking herself out to see if she is moving on.

Such behaviour is sometimes caused by trying to appear strong. It's like she moved on before moving on and now the feelings are out to be felt, and it's a war in her head when she sees Tshegofatso.

She is however; in a happy space now, her man is still the same she fell in love with and she is always reminding herself why she is with him.

Lerato comes to Pretoria more often now and they go out together without the guys. In simple terms, they are friends now.

To be continued...

TSHEGOFATSO

The midwives comes with Owethu's mother and asks to see the father. He steps forward but tells them that they can talk in front of everyone since they are here for the same person.

They congratulate him on being a father to a healthy baby boy and that gets everyone cheerful as they feel relieved.

Tshego: Can we see him?

Eldest aunt: You are not allowed to see him just yet. Wait for a few months.

Tshego: A few months, what for?

Her: You can see you already have someone you share a bed with, we don't want your dark clouds falling on the child.

Tshego: I don't know what that means but because that's my child, trust me the dark clouds will locate him whether I am there or not.

He turns around and walks out with Amanda following after him. They get into the car and the way he is angry, Amanda is afraid he will drive recklessly.

Amanda: (calmly) Babe let me drive, you are not in a good state.

Tshego: I'm fine, don't worry.

He waits for a little bit until he is calm and then drives back home.

They are both quiet in the car and Amanda keeps stealing glances at him, making sure he is fine.

Tshego: Stop that, you are distracting me.

Amanda: Sorry.

He focuses on the way until they get home. Amanda goes into their bedroom to give him space to talk with his parents.

OWETHU

She is happy to see her son and boy there is no confusion here, he is his father's son. Guess Tshego is going to be a part of her life forever.

The aunts are in here with her as she is breastfeeding and they inform her that the father has left because the girlfriend didn't want him to stay, and her mother is outside.

Owethu: I don't care about him, my baby is here and all my attention will go to him, right baby? yes. If your father wants to be all over then we will let him be.

Younger aunt: So have you thought of the names yet? I was thinking we should give him Sepedi names.

Owethu: Yes. He is Kemoratile, I wanted a Xhosa name for him too but because I am not rooted in that, I will settle for Pedi.

Eldest: What did the father want to name him?

Owethu: Junior, Tshegofatso Junior. I think there is also a family name they wanted to give him.

Eldest: Such a terrible name. I was thinking maybe we can name him after your maternal grandfather, Simon or maybe Mokibelo since he was born on Saturday.

Owethu: Those are ancient names and they doesn't suit him. I don't like them.

Eldest: It's not about suiting him but making sure he carry his ancestors' name. You kids of today have forsaken your culture.

Owethu: No, Kemoratile is fine.

Her mother walks in from getting food and find them arguing on the name.

Her: I think it's fair we also let the father name him.

Owethu: Where is he now? If he wanted to name the child he would have been here to see him.

Her: Your aunt refused him coming in.

Owethu: No, I know him. He even brought his smelly girlfriend here to spite me. He will only see this child on my terms and his name is Keratilwe, it's clear I'm the only one who loves him.

Her: I am your mother and I am telling you to involve his father in his life because he is willing. They paid for their part but now

you want the baby all to yourself. You will think you are punishing the father, but let me correct you. The only person who will be hurt is this innocent baby.

Eldest aunt: (to Owethu) Don't listen to her, she also didn't listen when we gave her the right advice that is why you are both staying away from your family. You even have a Xhosa name but you don't even know Xhosa.

Her: This is not 1620 or something, things are done in a different way now.

Owethu: I think aunty is right. This baby is mine and I know what's best for him. You need to stop with your superstitious mindset.

She continues chatting with the aunts as her mother sighs giving her the food.

A little later on she gets discharged since they had already cleaned her.

LESEDI

She had to go home first because her family was expecting her. Paul dropped her off and promised to come fetch her later for a surprise he's got in store for her.

She is waiting for him, her family knows him and they are glad things are working out between them now.

Her phone dings and she gets up to take her night bag as instructed by Paul, before walking out waving at her sisters.

She gets to the car and he opens the door for her before greeting her.

Paul: How are you?

Lesedi: I'm fine. How are you?

Paul: I am great. Can I blindfold you or it will cause you anxiety?

Lesedi: Don't

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I would rather close my eyes.

Paul: Okay.

He starts the car playing some of their favourite songs they used to play back in High school.

Lesedi smiles turning her head to him as if she can see him and he laughs as they both start singing along.

Later on he parks the car and then comes to open her door before helping her out.

Paul: Wait here, I am coming.

He goes back to his side and takes his wallet, phones and a box before locking the car.

Paul: Here is my hand, come.

They start walking towards the house that is well lit and beautifully built. He takes her up the stairs and then they walk

in all the way to the setting he has in one of the rooms he call
cinema.

Paul: You can open your eyes.

She slowly opens her eyes and the view in front of her is
magical. It is everything she has ever wished for.

Paul: (smiling) I don't forget easily. Surprise.

Lesedi: (crying) This is so beautiful, thank you.

Paul: You can hug me I won't refuse.

She laughs through her tears and then hug him as he brushes
her back.

Paul: It's okay. I did this all for you, well us since I'm also here.

Lesedi: I love it, it's all beautiful.

They break the hug and he kisses her forehead.

Paul: Let me help you out of those shoes.

She sits and he takes off the shoes, brushing her feet in passing and then tickling them.

Paul: Come, we have to start somewhere. I was just excited about this part.

She takes his and they walk out.

TSHEGO

He has talked with his parents and they also don't agree with what happened but they told him not to fight her.

He is only worried that he should go back to work and soon, so it means he will leave without seeing his son.

Amanda is brushing his head that's on her thighs while they talk.

Tshego: She is just trying to play dirty because of how things went between us. Can you imagine she didn't even call me when she felt the pains? She is testing me, not with my son.

Amanda doesn't say anything. She has lended him her ears and that's about all she can do for him now.

Tshego: There are things we are supposed to do for the child. Her family couldn't wait to even charge us a goat when they came to inform us about the pregnancy, but now they act like they don't know us. What's next? asking me to marry her so my son can take my surname? I am so angry right now.

Amanda: Can we take a walk? I think it will help clear your mind.

Tshego: I'm sorry, I haven't been paying attention to what is happening here.

Amanda: It's okay, you are mad and I get it. Let's go.

Tshego: Can't we drive?

Amanda: No, we won't go far. Just take me to your favourite spot.

Tshego: My favourite spot reminds me of her.

Amanda: And that's why you should go with me, to create new memories.

Tshego: (sighs) Okay.

They get ready and then leave to the ice cream spot.

PAUL

He is so excited to be here with Lesedi. This is his new home, his house in his name. He has planned the evening for them to relax and ignite that spark back.

They started by eating at the decorated table. Candles and whatsoever. He cooked, plated and set everything.

The food was nice even Lesedi was stunned, she kept asking who prepared them.

They are now going back to the cinema, the setting is a large room with sofas that can fit two people. There is a screen on the wall, a big one like a real cinema.

There are bar fridges and cupboards for snacks and drinks.

Paul: Are you comfortable?

Lesedi: Yes.

Paul: Okay, it's going to play now.

They wait in anticipation as their favourite movie comes on.

Lesedi screams involuntarily because she is excited.

It's Camp Rock, and because she used to love the songs in high school he thought why not.

Paul: You can sing along, I don't mind.

She watches with so much focus as if it's the first time and she cannot even begin to explain the feeling she is experiencing from this.

As she turns to look at Paul, she finds him looking at her with that "grateful" face and she can't help but blush to herself.

Lesedi: I love you so much.

The words comes out as a whisper and he kisses her hands before they turn back to the screen.

To be continued...

TSHEGOFATSO

He has to continue with work so he is back in Pretoria doing what he does best. The little time him and his woman had in Limpopo was amazing, Amanda is even talking about a second visit. Guess it's his mom's pap that's got her hooked.

He is on lunch when his phone receives a WhatsApp message from an unsaved number. He wonders who it could be because he doesn't recall giving anyone his number.

When he clicks on the account, he is surprised to see pictures of his son and he can tell it's him because he looks exactly like him when he was a baby.

He is still a tiny human being but he looks fresh like normal babies, chubby shiny cheeks and little feet and hands looking smooth as ever. The text giving out details follows a few minutes after. It's Owethu's mother explaining the situation at her house and why she is sending the pictures.

He screenshots everything and then thanks her. His day has just got better by seeing this little boy and he loves the effect he has on him, he cannot wait to hold his little self in his arms.

He smiles to himself finishing off his lunch and then goes back to work.

OWETHU

Her baby is just a few days old and she is hoping these old women will leave as soon as she is healed, especially the younger one because there is nothing she is doing to help except order her around on what to do.

Owethu is naturally lazy and it has doubled now. When it comes to attending to Keratilwe, he cries until his voice doesn't come out anymore if it's just the two of them in the house.

Right now she is going through Tshegofatso's Facebook account, stalking him to see if he has posted anything about the baby but there is nothing.

She mistakenly like one of his old posts and because she wasn't paying attention, she leaves it at that.

Her mother walks into her room from work and the way it is so messy baffles her. She stands at the door looking at her daughter who is in pyjamas, her bed is filled with baby stuff and there is a small space that indicates where the baby sleeps.

Her: When last did you take a bath Owethu?

She doesn't answer as she changes sleeping positions, now on Ayabonga's account and sabaweling every little thing he posts about Lerato. In her mind she reads Lerato as Owethu.

Her: I don't think this is normal. Talk to me, what's going on?

Owethu: I am a new nursing mother, it might be the sicknesses I have read about concerning giving birth and stuff.

Her: Or maybe you just don't want to take responsibility of your actions.

Owethu: Give me a break. I need the rest.

Her: (sighs) If you continue with this behaviour I will take steps to find Rati a new home.

Owethu: Keratilwe is my child, I will take care of him.

Her: Not when you are like this. I am going to call a meeting with his father's family to discuss this matter.

Owethu: Then that would mean you don't love me anymore.

Her: I am thinking about the child involved right now, you can sort yourself out.

Owethu: (waving her off) Close the door behind you.

She pulls the baby wipes and remove one wiper before blowing her nose on it and then shoving it back in the pack.

Her mother shakes her head walking out to where the baby is sleeping in his cot, guarded by the aunts who are watching TV.

PAUL

Things are going well between him and Lesedi and they are already discussing relationship goals.

They both don't want to get married because they think it's a lot of work, it also means labeling what they share and that's not what they want.

Lesedi is back in Pretoria to continue with her studies. She has seen Tshegofatso and they resolved their issues, apologized and wished each other well in their new relationships. She is happier and more lively than before and that is a good thing.

With Paul home, she will be doing a lot of ups and downs because Paul still wants to fix a few things before he can come back to Pretoria.

He is chatting with her now, updating her on what's happening this side and likewise.

AMANDA BRYNSTON

Later that day she is fetching Tshego from work, taking him out for a quick bite before they can go to his place.

She arrives a few minutes before they can knock off and that gives her the chance to take this man a video in his work suit while he comes to the car.

She is good at this he doesn't even notice a thing.

Amanda: Hey baby

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how are you?

She says hugging him after putting her phone away.

Tshegofatso: What can I say when I'm being fetched by a beautiful woman from work, and also going out at the expense of the same woman? of course I am fine.

Amanda: Such a lengthy response just to explain that you're fine.

Tshegofatso: It had to be detailed.

Amanda: Let's go, you are driving.

She gives him the keys and then gets into the passenger seat.

Tshego starts the car, takes out his phone and asks her to open WhatsApp so she can see the little man.

Amanda does as she is told and her facial expression says it all.

Amanda: He is so cute, oh! I wish I could touch his chubby cheeks and kiss him all over the face.

Tshegogatso: With that mouth, please no.

Amanda: Then you are also forbidden from kissing him.

Tshegofatso: (laughing) Go down and read the message.

It is quite lengthy because it explains every little information he needed to know.

Amanda frowns reading through and her mouth drops at the names and surname.

A message comes through from the same number and she reads it out to him.

Amanda: Don't you think there is something wrong with her? Like this is not normal.

Tshegofatso: I would believe she is if she wasn't sneaky around this issue. She is just looking for my attention and she won't get it

Amanda: I still think she should be checked out.

Tshegofatso: Have you already forgotten the drama she put on the day she gave birth. I sweat that crying part had nothing to do with labour.

Amanda: (laughing) I saw that too, I thought you forgot about it.

Tshegofatso: I have made a lot of mistakes in my life and the one I regret most is letting her take control of my life thinking she is doing it for the benefit of our relationship. I shouldn't have slept with her.

Amanda: It's okay baby, you don't have to explain.

Tshegofatso: It's just frustrating babe.

They get to the eatery and then go in before placing their order.

Tshegofatso: I don't even understand why I had to come here looking like I have money.

Amanda: (giggles) You look handsome in those, look how these women are looking at you.

Tshegofatso: I see men.

She laughs hitting him and then they change the subject.

Later on they park in the yard and gets off the car going to the house. Tshegofatso's phone rings and he answers giving the keys to Amanda so she can unlock.

Tshego: Ma.

Her: Your people just called, they want a meeting with us.

Tshego: When?

Her: As soon as possible. Apparently your baby mama isn't doing okay and they want us to talk about the baby.

Tshego: I have work here, I cannot just take off at any time. I just came back.

Her: Baby I know, but I think it's best if you come hear them out. It was the mother who called and coming from another mother; she sounds stressed.

Tshego: Okay, send me the dates and then I will see what to do.

Her: Please bring Amanda.

Tshego: I don't think she would like to be part of the drama that's going to unfold.

Her: Let me ask her on my own.

Tshego: (sighs) Okay.

He gives the phone to Amanda and they are already inside the house. He goes to take off his clothes because he already knows the answer Amanda is going to give her.

OWETHU

Her eldest aunt came to help her clean her bedroom and put everything in its place.

Owethu: When are you leaving aunty?

Her: Are you chasing me away?

Owethu: No, I am just curious. Also, I don't want you to leave cause you seem like the only one who gets me.

Her: I will stay for as long as you need me, but my little sister is leaving tomorrow.

Owethu: Okay.

Her: Did they tell you about a meeting coming up?

Owethu: Yes, mom did.

Her: I think you should dress up like a true makoti so that boy can take you back.

Owethu: I don't really want him back aunty.

Her: But this child does. Listen, right now it's no longer about you but him. You have to do what's right and remove your feelings from all this.

Owethu: Well, I think it would be nice because we have come far.

Her: Yes, that's how it's supposed to be. Don't worry, I have something that will help you.

She smiles to herself, already seeing a wedding and all that stuff. They finish cleaning and she takes a bath before snapping a few "revealing" pictures that she will use to lure him back into her claws.

To be continued...

TSHEGOFATSO

He has changed his wallpaper and put his baby because that's the first and last person he wants to see when opening and closing his cellphone.

His days have gotten better and he has even forgotten about the meeting he is supposed to go home for. These people think he has magical powers that don't require financing to move up and down.

He is leaving tomorrow as it's Friday, Amanda is coming over tonight and he is waiting for her so he can lock up and go to bed.

His mind drifts off to everything that has been happening. How he lost it and started fucking around, thank God he didn't catch any sicknesses. That has taught him a great lesson to always be careful and take a moment to reflect on everything before moving on.

A knock disturbs his thoughts and he sighs getting up the couch. He drags his feet to the door, leaving his phone on the coffee table.

He opens to Amanda carrying her small luggage bag and then smiles hugging her.

Tshego: Hey, I thought you were arriving a little later

Amanda: I took a taxi so I had to be early.

Tshego: Okay, come in. I was even dozing off.

Amanda: Was work that hectic today?

Tshego: You don't wanna know.

They are talk while walking in.

Amanda: Have you cooked?

Tshego: No, we can order in. I am tired.

Amanda: I am hungry, let me take these off so I can check what's available.

Tshego: My phone is on the table. Let me put these away.

He passes to his room and then Amanda takes his phone first before throwing herself on the couch.

She smiles seeing the baby's face on the screen before unlocking and the switching on the wifi. She unties her boots while tapping on the phone. A WhatsApp message comes through, she doesn't want to check it because the main reason she is holding this phone is to order food. But another message dings, disturbing her and she taps on the notification bar to open the message.

Owethu has sent her nude pictures with a different number from the one that's saved in this phone. She knows her and because Tshego has explained the type of a person she is, she is trying not to let this get over her head but there is something telling her otherwise. The female instinct is telling her something is not okay and that changes her mood.

Tshego: Have you ordered? I brought cash but I don't know if it will be enough.

Amanda: (clears throat) I'm still checking what to order.

Tshego: Okay, here is R300.

He puts it on the table and turns to walk to the kitchen. He can feel the change in the atmosphere but he brushes it off.

Amanda closes the app and then proceeds to place an order for them. Her appetite has vanished but she has to eat something.

OWETHU

The Tshegofatso that she knows would never leave her on seen. For a moment she thought he was typing, she waited to see a reaction but it has been over 30 minutes and he hasn't said a thing.

She clicks on his number to call him but decides otherwise. The meeting will be held tomorrow and obviously that girlfriend of his won't be around because this is a family matter.

She decides to wait for a little longer before deleting everything if he still doesn't respond.

Her aunt comes in holding the baby so she can breastfeed him and she sits for a little chat.

Her: This baby looks like his father, I didn't get a look at him but now seeing this little face I can confirm it.

She says after handing her the baby.

Owethu: Yeah he does, they're twins.

Her: (chuckles) So, how did you two meet? It seems you have been together for a very long time.

Owethu: We met when mom and I first arrived here. He welcomed me and then we became friends.

Her: So you have been together for a long time?

Owethu: Yes.

Her: Doesn't it feel sad now that he is slipping out of your hands? I mean if you have been together for that long and now even a child is involved, surely you must be meant for each other.

Owethu: (sighs) I don't know.

Her: Let me tell you a secret, never be afraid of removing another woman from your man if you think you deserve him. I guess you know that my husband had two wives.

Owethu: I have heard of her

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what happened?

Her: She died in her sleep because she had stress that my husband was coming back to me. What I know is that she had fed him something so he can hate me, but because love conquers all he came back and left her.

Owethu: What did you do? it can't be that you just sat and did nothing.

Her: Well I did something and that's what I am going to help you with. It's nothing sinister at all.

Owethu: (smiling) But nobody's going to die right?

Her: If they don't stress then they will be fine. People die from stress of being unable to keep people's men after snatching them.

Owethu: Okay.

Her: We will do everything tomorrow night before the meeting on Saturday. Let me leave you to it then.

Owethu: Okay.

She walks out and leaves Owethu thinking about all this and how beautiful it all seems at the end.

She has a clear picture of how everything is going to look. A baby girl holding her brother's hand and the parents on the side at a holiday outing in Maldives.

AYABONGA

He is on the phone with Lerato and they are just talking about general stuff. He wants to know what she thinks of marriage because he wants to take the next step.

Ayabonga: What do you think about marriage babe?

Lerato: That's a big step, and question. I already feel like you are asking me to marry you.

Ayabonga: Well then, what's your answer?

Lerato: No. It's too soon.

She hears him sighing disappointedly.

Lerato: Understand me, I'm not saying I won't -

He cuts her off calmly so as to not appear aggressively.

Ayabonga: It's okay. It was just a question babe.

Lerato: I do want to get married but only if I have enough knowledge on everything because I have seen a lot of people losing their possessions due to divorces and stuff.

Ayabonga: I understand. We will get all the right information because I want to marry you.

Lerato: Now?

Ayabonga: No, when you are ready.

Lerato: What about you?

Ayabonga: I have always been ready since I met you.

Lerato: (blushing) Really?

Ayabonga: I knew the day I saw you coming in late after everyone had arrived that I wanted to put a ring on that finger.

Lerato: (giggling) Don't remind me hey, I was so late because this one here had wet his school uniform. I had to iron another one and since then, I iron everything all at once.

Ayabonga: That's a great lesson, please do tell me what your plan is regarding your life in the next months and years.

Lerato: Well, I want to be able to renovate mom's house. Build my own and then yeah.

Ayabonga: You have everything figured out and I hope it works out exactly how you have put it to mind.

Lerato: We plan but God decides babe.

They continue talking until they hang up to sleep.

AMANDA BRYNSTON

Tshegofatso hasn't said anything about the message and she is waiting on him to explain or something.

He is coming from the shower to sleep and he can see she is restless because normally, she would be sleeping now.

Tshego: Babe are you okay?

Amanda: Yes, why?

Tshego: I don't know but there is something off about you. What happened?

Amanda: Nothing.

Tshego: Come on, I won't know if you don't tell.

Amanda: (sighs) Have you checked your WhatsApp?

Tshego: No, why?

Amanda: Check it.

He gets in bed and then pulls his phone from the bedside table and opens his WhatsApp.

He finds Owethu's pictures in the first chat and then sighs turning back to Amanda. He doesn't even know what to say because what can one say about such things.

Tshego: Is this why you are feeling the way you're feeling?

Amanda: Yes.

Tshego: I don't know why you feel like that but I want you to know there is nothing you should worry about. That ship has long sailed and I am committed to you now.

Amanda: I feel embarrassed to have let that stress me, and I think it's because I know she is going to be a part of us for as long as we're still together.

Tshego: I understand, but believe there is nothing you should worry about. Come here.

She moves closer to him and he hugs her kissing her hair.

Tshego: Don't let this get to you.

She nods holding on her shoulder with one hand, her head laid on his chest and a sense of relief enveloping her.

It doesn't take long for her to fall asleep and Tshego lets her on his chest for a little while. He gently moves her to her pillow so he can switch off the lights and when he gets off the her, she wakes up looking for him.

Tshego: (chuckles) I'm coming.

Amanda: Why did you leave?

Tshego: (getting back in bed) I'm here, come sleep.

She snuggles closer and then turns facing the other way before pulling his hand over her.

Tshego: (smiling) Good night baby.

Amanda: Night.

He kisses her back and they sleep.

To be continued...

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NTSAKO

She is getting ready for her morning class when Tintswalo walks in from a night gig. It's still a mystery in her mind, how her sister is able to do all these things and excel them with little sleep.

Ntsako: Sis you look like a zombie.

Tintswalo: A girl's gotta do what a girl's gotta do.

Ntsako: You should take a break and focus on school only.

Tintswalo: And where will I get the money for other needs?

Ntsako: Isn't it our parents pay for all this?

Tintswalo: And they are old, their clock is surely ticking.

Another thing, I am going to have my own family one day.

Ntsako: Okay, I wasn't fighting. I am just worried about you cause you hardly rest.

Tintswalo: That's where tomorrow comes in. We are going to a spa treatment tomorrow.

Ntsako: I have plans for tomorrow.

Tintswalo: (sighs) Let me guess, Lonwabo?

Ntsako: Yes, we are having a movie night or something.

Tintswalo: You don't even know what time I want us to go there but you are already writing me off.

Ntsako: It's not like you are also always here.

Tintswalo: Because I work. I even take you to my workplace with me because I want to spend time with you. What happened to us being indoors together sometimes and just doing what sisters do?

Ntsako: I can't believe you are turning this into a fight because there is a man involved. You wouldn't have a problem with me if it was your man.

Tintswalo: It's not even about that, I just miss my baby sister.

Ntsako: Tough luck, I also miss my man.

She walks away and comes back with her bag ready to leave, even though it is still early.

Tintswalo takes a warm bath before going to bed.

LONWABO

It's almost lunch time and he is wrapping up his work for today. He has enough time to get busy with whatever before his movie date with Ntsako.

The clock hits lunch hour and everyone closes their laptops going out.

He decided to call Ayabonga since he knows he didn't go to work and he answers quicker than he thought.

Aya: Cuz, what's up?

Lonwabo: Is it possible to catch a few cold ones after work? I am thirsty.

Aya: Okay, are you coming home first?

Lonwabo: No, come get me.

Aya: Let me get ready then.

He hangs up as Ntsako's call comes through.

Ntsako: Babe, you good?

Lonwabo: Yeah, you?

Ntsako: I'm fine. What time are watching the movie?

Lonwabo: Are you sleeping over?

Ntsako: Yes.

Lonwabo: Let's say 8 pm.

Ntsako: Okay, what time should I arrive then?

Lonwabo: Anytime, but I won't be home until 7.

Ntsako: (sighs) Okay.

Lonwabo: Let me eat so I can back to work.

Ntsako: Bye.

OWETHU

Her aunt has a brought a mixture of a lotion and ashes that she should use. She mixes the ash with her bathing water after bathing with a soap, and then apply the lotion to her body.

They are in her room going over the instructions once again because she wants to bath.

Her: Put half of the ash today and the rest you will use it tomorrow. You first bath with a soap and then put clean water in your tub and half of the ash. Get inside and wash your face first while calling all his names and surname telling him what you want him to do. The ash we will only use for two days and the lotion until it is done. After bathing with the ash mixture, don't dry yourself let the water dry on it's own and then apply the lotion.

Owethu: Are you this will work?

Her: If you doubt it, it won't work. Have some faith.

Owethu: Okay. Hold this one while I go bath.

She leaves her baby with her and goes into the bathroom, doing exactly as told.

Later on she walks out all dressed and because the lotion had some things they are visible on her body.

Owethu: How are we going to deal with these?

Her: You have to wear long clothes.

Owethu: Not my favourite but okay. How long does it take to start working?

Her: Just keep quiet, you will see tomorrow at the meeting.

Owethu: I cannot wait.

They continue chatting because they are now besties. This old woman is even giving sexual advices to keep a man, and because Owethu is not her normal self right now, she is caught up in all these, she is laughing and having the time of her life.

TSHEGOFATSO

They are ready to leave for Limpopo and because they both can drive

hopefully when one is tired the other will help.

Amanda: Babe please get me rough salt first thing in the morning, mine is finished and I bath with it.

Tshegofatso: What do you use it for?

Amanda: Bathing, but as you know it also helps with night stuff.

Tshego: You think you're being bewitched?

Amanda: No, I use it to cleanse.

Tshego: Okay, remind me when we get there. I can ask mom maybe she has it in the house.

Amanda: Okay.

They walk out and lock the doors leaving.

Tshego: Don't sleep.

Amanda: (chuckles) I won't. Let's go.

He drives out of the yard and they get on the road disappearing into the night.

AYABONGA

He drives through the gate with Lonwabo laughing drunkenly. It is a few minutes after 8 and Ntsako is boiling in the house.

She comes running to the main door when she hears the car driving in and almost into the glass door.

She is angry and it is visible on her face. Ayabonga gets off first and then helps his cousin, holding him with both hands so he doesn't fall.

Ntsako: What is this? what happened?

Ayabonga: Can you please lock the car for me?

She goes to the car and takes Lonwabo's things before locking and follows after them.

Ayabonga: You have to put him in bed.

Ntsako: He can go on his own.

Ayabonga: He can't walk, he is drunk.

Ntsako: And he shouldn't be. You are the one who took him out to get wasted because you are bored. Your girlfriend isn't here and you are trying to make Lonwabo live like you.

She is shouting at him and he has never seen her like this. It makes him feel a certain way that he doesn't want to so he ignores her and takes his cousin to bed.

She is still on his tail shouting, and when he has laid Lonwabo on the bed, his phone rings and it's Lerato.

Ayabonga: Babe, I'll call you in a few minutes.

Lerato hears Ntsako in the background insulting Ayabonga and because she doesn't know what's going on, she hangs up and waits for him to call back.

He takes off his jeans and t-shirt to make sure he sleeps comfortably, before tucking him in while he blabs on how much he loves and appreciates him.

Ntsako: Why are y'all acting so gay? I should have known this beauty isn't just genes but something else.

Ayabonga walks out the door and she follows after him, he stops at his door and turns to her.

Aya: (calmly) I allowed you to say whatever since I walked in this house but this is where I draw the line. Stand right there and say whatever then go back to your boyfriend's room.

Ntsako: You are a manwhore and you hide it so well, why did you take him to drink while you knew I am here waiting for him. I looked like a fool waiting here while I tried his phone.

Aya: Ntsako I am not your boyfriend. Go sleep and say all these to him when he is awake. If you don't mind, I would like to get some rest.

He gets into his room and locks but when he is about to take off his clothes, she starts banging on the door insulting him.

He ignores her and takes a shower before coming back to call Lerato.

OWETHU

She is sleeping when her baby starts crying. You know that loud piercing cry that makes you want to close your ears?

He is crying on top of his lungs, legs floating in the air because he is sleeping on his back.

Her aunt and mother comes running unto the room and they find her awake, trying to shush him but he is not having any of it.

She has forgotten the long clothes rule because she sleeps in short pyjamas. Her mother scans her body and turns to her aunt.

Her: Owethu what is that on your body?

Owethu: Ma, seriously. The baby is crying and there is something wrong but you want to focus on my body.

Her: Owethu I am going to ask for the last time, what are those things on your body?

Owethu: It's a lotion, happy now?

Her aunt has taken the baby and is trying to shush him by calling him with names from his mother's side.

Her: I think he is crying for a name, call his father.

Owethu dials Tshego while her mother dials Tshego's mother.

Meanwhile Tshego's phone rings in the car and he asks Amanda to answer it.

She puts it on loud speaker and the piercing cry gets him in a panic mode.

Amanda brushes his arm trying to calm him.

Owethu: (crying) I don't know why he is crying, call him with your people's names maybe he will keep quiet.

Tshego: I don't know them. Let me call my mother.

He hears her mother's voice in the background busy calling the names but none is working.

Tshego: What happened? did he just start crying? what's going on?

Owethu: We were sleeping and he just broke out into a loud cry, I don't know what's happening.

Tshego: What should I do now?

Owethu: I don't know. I am scared because his temperature is fine but he is crying.

Amanda: If there is a scent that he is only being exposed to tonight please remove it from the room. It might be flowers or a new perfume, even hair spray.

Owethu: Keep quiet, this is not about you. My mother is a nurse she would have known.

Tshego: Owethu just do as she says so the child could stop crying. It's clear you also don't know what you're doing.

Owethu: There is no new scent in my room.

She hangs up and Tshego is fuming with anger he's even stepped a little harder on the accelerator.

To be continued...

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NTSAKO

She goes back to Lonwabo's room and finds him snoring. The way she is so angry she feels like strangling him so he can sober up and answer for himself.

He turns to the other side sleeping peacefully, and then pulls up the blanket to close his face.

Ntsako gets off the bed and then pulls the blanket off him. He doesn't react so she leaves him like that and goes to sleep on the couch in his room.

Sleep requires peace and that's something she is lacking right now so she keeps turning on the couch, careful enough to not fall.

Bit by bit sleep overcomes her and she lets go of the blanket as they fall off. A few minutes later, she rolls over and hits the corner of the table with her forehead.

The pain is enough to wake her up and she starts crying holding on the bump.

OWETHU

She doesn't want to admit it but Amanda might be right. The baby hasn't stopped crying expect he is now doing it silently.

Her mother has called his partenal grandparents and they have arrived to take him.

Tshegofatso's mother walks inside Owethu's room following her mother and they find her in bed, still caressing her son.

Owethu: He is calm now, there is no need to go with him.

Tshego's ma: We are not here to take him, we just wanted to make sure he is okay.

Owethu: As you can see.

She senses a bit of disrespect in her tone but decides to ignore it.

Tshego's ma: Okay we will be on our way then.

She turns back and Owethu rolls her eyes imitating her. The aunt is in her room avoiding contact with the paternal grandparents.

They are still talking at the door when the baby starts crying again and this time, louder than before.

Owethu wraps her in his blankets and when the grandmothers reach her door, she already has him ready for them to take him.

Tshego's mother gladly takes him and he doesn't stop crying until they are out of the yard.

Meanwhile inside the house, the aunt comes to Owethu's room while her mother locks up.

Her: Don't worry, the baby has given you time to rest so you can be fresh tomorrow morning.

Owethu: This lotion is smelly, are you sure it works?

Her: What did I say? have faith. Let me go to sleep I will see you in the morning.

She walks out and Owethu sighs sleeping. She is even dreaming of Amanda holding her baby and that wakes up feeling like she can go over there do fetch her baby.

TSHEGOFATSO

Later that night he drives through the gate and parks his car in the garage. His father comes out to see them and they greet each other before going to their rooms.

Amanda throws herself in bed and she hears footsteps approaching their room. Someone knocks and when she opens, because Tshego is still changing, she closes her mouth as happiness clouds her.

Tshego's mother also can't contain herself as she smiles.

Amanda: Oh my God, he is so cute.

Her: I know right.

Amanda: Too bad I can't hold him.

The baby raises his hand playfully and they are all just stunned by his chubby self.

Tshegofatso comes running to the door and he stops at a distance, smiles and then closes his eyes before rubbing them as he opens them to see if he is not dreaming.

He attempts to hold her but her mother moves back and Amanda also hold him back.

Amanda: You will hold him in the morning.

Tshego: He is so beautiful, is he mine?all mine?

They have a few moment just looking at him sleeping peacefully and then go back to sleep.

Tshego cannot stop talking about him and Amanda is convinced he is going to dream about him tonight.

LONWABO

Earlier that morning he is awakened by the cold breeze hitting his body. He feels like he is sleeping outside and when he wakes up he finds himself uncovered on the bed in his underwear only.

He wakes up wondering where Ntsako is because it's still early and when he gets off the bed, he sees his blankets on the couch.

Afraid to wake her up, he goes out to knock on Ayabonga's door.

He lets him in and he pulls his gown from the closet to put on while shivering.

Ayabonga: What's the matter?

Lonwabo: I woke up with no blankets, I think I'm going to be sick.

Ayabonga: (getting up) Get inside the blankets I will make tea for you.

He gets in and then pulls the blankets over him. He can't even talk properly because his teeth are hitting against each other.

Ayabonga makes him a cup quickly and takes it up to him. He finds him dozing off and then gently wakes him up.

Ayabonga: Drink first and then you will sleep.

Lonwabo: You don't mind me sleeping here?

Ayabonga: Of course not.

Lonwabo: Thank you.

He takes the cup and then drinks until it's finished before giving it back to him.

Ayabonga: Are you okay now.

Lonwabo: Yeah

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I am a bit warm.

Ayabonga: Let me switch on the heater, I will put it on your side.

He gets up and switches on the heater placed on Lonwabo's side before getting back into bed, pulling the blankets on him.

He is still shaking so he waits for a few minutes and he finally stops dozing off.

NTSAKO

She wakes up to no one on the bed and that could mean he woke up first, to apologize maybe.

She walks out looking for him when she meets Ayabonga in the kitchen making tea.

She doesn't know if she should greet him or not after what happened last night or just keep quiet and act as if he is not here.

He puts her out of her misery by greeting her and she sees it as a chance to ask if he's seen Lonwabo.

Ayabonga: I haven't seen him since last night.

Ntsako: (talking to herself) He knows u have to leave this morning, why is he doing this to me?

Ayabonga walks back to his room with the cup in his hand.

She wants to follow him and ask further about his cousin because she feels like he is lying, but she quickly reprimand herself and then goes back to his room.

Later on she comes out all dressed to leave. There is no one in sight so it means she is just going to send him a message that she left.

TSHEGOFATSO

They are up and getting ready for the meeting. Her mother decided to cook with the help of Amanda and they are chatting in the kitchen while busy.

Amanda: They had to teach me how to add salt because my hand was a little aggressive when it comes to that.

Her: My mother used to say it's proof that I am not a witch. I was just like you.

Amanda: I guess they are not lying when they say the first time you do something you're bound to make mistakes so you can learn.

Her: Here we are as proof.

Amanda: I bet I will also be good when I reach your age.

Her: (laughing) What do you mean? you are already good, have you tasted your stew? they are going to bite their fingers today I tell you.

They both laugh as Tshego's father comes rushing to fetch the baby bottle from the cold water.

Him: He has started, what time are they getting here so she can feed him?

Her: They said 10 am. It's 9:30 am now.

Him: Okay, let me feed him.

He turns back and Amanda is stunned at how he is hands on. Tshego's mother picks up on it and smiles bringing her back to earth.

Her: He has always been like that. I never felt the load of being a nursing mother with him around.

Amanda: Has he passed it on to his son?

Her: (laughs) Yes, you will see as time goes.

They finish off and she asks for the salt so she can go bath.

She finds Tshego still in bed and he joins him to bath.

Tshego: I thought maybe it's different from bathing with just water.

Amanda: It's not. The salt dissolves fast and because it's also water, it feels like a normal bath.

They continue bathing until they are done and then Tshego makes the bed while Amanda dresses.

Tshego: Are you joining us for the meeting?

Amanda: No, I will just help with serving the food.

Tshego: Okay.

THE MEETING

NARRATED

Owethu arrives with her family, today it's just the four of them. Her mother, eldest uncle and aunt and her.

They are welcomed warmly and led into the lounge. The house is clean as always and it smells divine in here.

They take their seats and are told that the baby is still sleeping. Owethu seems a little annoyed at that because she wanted him to distract her from whatever this is.

Tshego's ma: We are grateful you came forward to have a meeting with us because we also have things we would like to discuss with you.

Eldest uncle: We are happy that you have welcomed us in your home once again.

Tshego's ma: Let me bring you drinks so you can at least wet your throat while we talk.

She says that with a smile and the eldest aunt asks if Owethu can come help her.

Tshego's ma: No, she is a visitor I will be fine.

She goes to the kitchen and when she comes back with Amanda holding another tray for her, Owethu and her aunt almost burst with anger. Amanda picks up on the energy and quickly excuses herself.

The meeting starts with Owethu's mom explaining the condition at her house. The eldest aunt has to leave because she has done her duty, she agrees that she wasn't the most reliable structure but she is all they have.

Owethu is given a chance to talk and she mentions how the very same aunt has been helpful, and how she doesn't want her to leave because her mother is never around.

Tshegofatso's father explains that since the child has taken her mother's surname, does it mean they will return the damages they paid? An argument starts and even Amanda can hear it all the way from the bedroom. The baby starts crying from the parents' room and Tshego's mother gets up to fetch him.

As she gives him to Owethu, he starts kicking and crying hysterically. This shocks everyone and they all turn looking at her.

To be continued...

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NTSAKO

Lonwabo only responded with “Ok” to her goodbye message this morning and since then he has never said any other word.

She wants to ask but another thought tells her to leave it because he is a grown man, and he knows how to communicate.

She keeps hoping that it’s him when her phone vibrates but it’s everyone else besides him. She sighs getting out of bed to at least get some energy from the sun since she got back into bed when she arrived.

Tintswalo is busy in the living room with her books when she passes without greeting her.

Tintswalo: Hi pfuka swinwe mpundzu lowu? why are not greeting me? did we share the bed last night?

Ntsako: I didn’t want to disturb, you are busy.

Tintswalo: Okay. I am fine by the way, thanks for asking.

She raises her head to look at her and the bump on her forehead catches her attention.

Tintswalo: What happened to your forehead?

Ntsako: I bumped into a wall.

Tintswalo: (raised eyebrow) Doing what?

Ntsako: Walking.

Tintswalo: (attempting to stand) Let me see.

Ntsako: (dismissively) No.

She turns and then walks out with her phone in hand. She takes a walk to the gate, there is a closed dustbin that's almost full since the trash truck collects on Sundays.

Her phone vibrates and she leans against the wall with her back so she can get a shade to be able to see on the screen.

The message is from Lonwabo, and that presses all her excitement buttons she doesn't even pay attention to where her legs are taking her.

She starts reading while blushing, "I am sorry about early this morning. I woke up feeling cold and didn't want to disturb you on the couch so I went and slept in the spare room. I am also sorry for not pitching for our movie date as agreed, I didn't think the few minutes I wanted to spend with Ayabonga drinking would eat on our time to be together. Please forgive me, and also give me some little break while I figure out why you had to leave me with no blankets throughout the night just because I was drunk. Love Lonwabo."

The sound of the dustbin toppling has Tintswalo rushing outside and then all the way to the gate. Ntsako is crying out in both a heart-break and pain from the dustbin tripping her, and then laying down to catch her when she falls over it. The results are her bumping her forehead on it and then further falling onto the dirt that flew out of it. At least there are no any other people here at this moment.

NARRATED

The meeting was able to proceed as Owethu's mother got the baby and walked outside with him. He calmed down and then peacefully laid in his grandmother's arms.

There was no shade nearer where she could sit, so she turned to the side of the house and found Amanda sitting there alone.

Her: How are you?

Amanda: I'm fine, are you his grandmother?

Her: Yes.

Amanda: Okay.

They sit in an awkward silence and Owethu's mother's phone rings.

Her: Can you hold him for me so I can answer my phone?

Amanda is reluctant but her hands are already open to hold him. Owethu's mother gently puts him in her arms and walks a little further to answer her phone.

The baby is playful, he hasn't reached a month so he is still being covered with blankets but he is actively moving his hands and feet.

Meanwhile inside the house, the two families are placing their options on the table to see which will be suitable for the parties involved.

The father will be allowed to see the baby at three months. The aunt is going back home, and Tshego's mother will take her space even if it means staying here with Owethu.

It doesn't sit well with Owethu's uncle because it feels like they are giving their daughter up for "free".

Owethu's uncle: I feel like we are no longer walking but flying now. Let's get one thing straight, our child is not married therefore she cannot come stay here. Another thing, I heard you talking about the child taking your surname. That also cannot happen because her mother is not married. If that's how you want things to be, let's set a date for lobola negotiations right now.

Tshego's dad: We paid the damages

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the child is born and has to be introduced to the ancestors so they can protect him. Are you also going to charge us for the ceremony by forcing marriage down our throats?

Owethu's uncle: Marry her so you can do everything without fear and guilt.

Tshego's dad: The issue of marrying her is not up to us. Tshego, what do you say?

At this moment Owethu feels like the her lotion is doing push-ups, ready to make the impossible possible and shock everyone; especially the one playing makoti here busy serving juices, nx. She is having flushes as Tshegofatso takes a deep breath, slightly raising his head so he can be audible enough for all to understand.

Everyone waits in anticipation to hear from the horse's mouth because his response holds the solution to all these back and forth meetings.

Tshego: (clears throat) I don't want to marry her.

Double thumps from Owethu's heart in a split second, hot flushes and then...and then...she melts to the ground.

AMANDA

Owethu's mother had to rush inside because Owethu has fainted and she left the small one with her.

She takes him inside because she doesn't want to be accused of anything. Owethu is laying half naked on the floor as they had to take off some of her clothing.

The men are all outside waiting for the women to finish so they can go on and finalise the discussion.

Amanda: (to Tshego) Can you please hold him so I can help inside?

She says after coming out because she doesn't want to put the baby in Tshego's room, and all his grandmothers are occupied inside.

Tshego: Am I allowed to?

Amanda: At this moment, I don't know.

He takes the baby and then Amanda goes back inside to help. She finds Owethu already up and everyone is acting as if they didn't notice the stuff on his body.

Her mother helps her up and Amanda leaves seeing everything is back to normal.

TSHEGOFATSO

He is not worried about Owethu's little stunt, and now that he is holding his baby in his arms it feels like everything makes sense.

He baby talks him playfully and the scene is beautiful to watch.

The women comes out and Owethu and Tshego are dismissed so the elders can continue. Tshegofatso takes the baby in his room for a little while before taking him back to Owethu who is inside her uncle's car.

Tshego: Hi.

Owethu: Hey.

Tshego: I brought him back, thought maybe he might be hungry or something because he was starting to cry.

Owethu: I don't think I am his favourite person today, his bottle is inside you can feed him.

Tshego: Okay.

He turns to walk away and that breaks Owethu's heart because he didn't even ask how she is.

Owethu: Can I ask you something?

Tshego: (stops walking) Yeah.

Owethu: Are you happy with how everything is going?

Tshego: Not entirely, but I'll be fine.

Again he doesn't ask anything about her. He turns and walks back into the yard and she starts crying.

OWETHU

They are back home and the final decision is that the father will have equal rights to the mother in terms of seeing him, taking care and all the other stuff.

She is not happy about this as she keeps complaining on how it's not fair since she is the one who carried the child alone, with no support from him.

Her mother has packed the aunt's bags and she is getting a lift from the uncle. After seeing them off she comes to join her daughter for some chat.

She knocks on the door and gets in as Owethu is busy on her phone.

Her: Can I come in?

Owethu: Yes.

She goes over and sits on the bed. The baby is sleeping in his cot on the other side.

Her: I want us to talk.

Owethu: Okay.

Her: I am sorry about everything wrong I have done, including getting your aunt here to help while I knew the type of a person she is. I was desperate and because you didn't want anything to do with his father's family, I was only left with the option of asking them for help.

Owethu: It's okay mom, we have done things we are not proud of.

Her: I am your mother and my duty is to protect you. I will find a nanny to help around because you don't agree with Tshego's mother helping. But I want you to know that this baby belongs to the both of you. If you decide to keep him away from his father it's going to cause problems in the future for him.

Owethu: But mom Tshego has another girlfriend, what if she doesn't like my child and then tries to kill him so she can have Tshego all to herself?

Her: Was it not your plan now to remove the very same girlfriend from Tshego? also, you ignored Tshego your whole pregnancy while busy with someone else. Don't you think he also deserves happiness?

Owethu: Not when I am not part of him.

The baby starts kicking and that cuts their chat short. Owethu's mother leaves them and goes back to her room.

A few months later...

To be continued...

TSHEGOFATSO

Everything is going well between him and Amanda. They are having the best time of their lives and are back in Limpopo to see and celebrate Rati's first month.

It was Tshego's idea and then he talked to Owethu and they agreed to be civil for this one thing that involves both of them.

Tshego, Amanda and Tshego's mother planned the day very well, with a little decor, cake and drinks. Amanda has brought Rati a few clothing items which were just so cute to ignore in the shop on their way back here.

Tshegofatso's mother is helping on the last touch-ups before the photographer arrives. Everyone has taken a bath and will just change into their clothes for the pictures.

Tshego: Let me go fetch them, I will be back shortly.

He says to the ladies showing them the keys in his hand, and then leaves with his little brother.

Tshego's ma: I hope Owethu won't give him problems when he gets there. She can be dramatic sometimes.

Amanda: I don't think she is fine, she needs help.

Tshego's ma: I tried and she only attended one session. Maybe she will go through with it when she decides to.

They continue talking, switching between the subjects.

A few minutes later Tshegog parks at Owethu's gate and then goes inside. He knocks on the door and he can hear the baby crying.

His little brother remained outside but in the yard.

Owethu opens in her pink-turned-brown pyjama, one breast out with breast milk dripping. One leg on the pyjama folded up to her knee and the other under her foot. Her hair, a total mess with blanket pieces all over it. It is also raised like Goku's except hers isn't well presented to be called a style.

Tshego: Hi, I am here for the baby.

Owethu: Come get him.

She turns and it's then he sees the flattened hair at the back of her head, she might have been sleeping facing up for a very long time.

He follows after her and it seems she has been alone for a few days.

Tshego: Where is your nanny?

Owethu: She doesn't work on weekends.

Tshego: So was she here yesterday?

Owethu: I'm going to get tired of answering your stupid questions.

They get to her room and from the door all the way to the baby's cot is clothes, baby bottles-empty and some half empty, diapers, bath towels, a baby's tub with dirty water probably from last night. Everything is just a mess. Even if the nanny was here, no sane person can mess a house by just few hours. It's either the nanny wasn't here or something else happened.

Tshego: It's quite messy in here.

She doesn't respond but keeps walking until they get to the baby's cot.

Owethu: I haven't fed him or anything. His bag is there and formula on the bed, bottles you can take the ones on the floor you will wash them when you get home.

She is pointing at these things while her other hand is scratching her head. Tshego lifts the baby up and his diaper is full and stinky.

He makes space on the bed and then changes him into a clean one.

Tshego: Where should I throw this?

Owethu: You can leave with it.

He sighs and wraps the baby in a blanket before walking out. There is plenty of his stuff where they are going so he will sort him out there. He is pissed that she didn't do anything even though they agreed on the time. It doesn't bother him that she is not ready to join them because today is about his baby.

He gets into the driver's seat after placing him in his baby seat and then drives back while the uncle-his little brother, plays with him.

NTSAKO

She has been thinking about Lonwabo, and how he just dropped her like they never shared something special. He has never said anything about that night, he never texted or

anything. The relationship is basically over with one party still hopeful that it will be fixed.

She is on the phone with Lerato explaining the issue because she needs help.

Lerato: Why don't you go there and see what's happening?

Ntsako: What if I find another woman there?

Lerato: Then you will come back with answers to your questions.

Ntsako: (sighs) I don't know.

Lerato: Give it a try.

Ntsako: How about you give me Ayabonga's number so I can ask him to intervene.

Lerato: (dry chuckles) After what you did you him? I don't think he will want to talk to you.

Ntsako: Come on, it's not like I was lying. He did this.

Lerato: Are you done talking so I can hang up?

Ntsako: Stop acting like he's your husband, we are still talking and I am allowed to voice my opinion about him.

Lerato: Maybe to your sister, not me. Bye.

She hangs up and Ntsako curses dropping her phone on the couch. Maybe she should go there.

OWETHU

After Tshegofatso left she took a bath and did make-up then hid her messy hair with a weave. She snaps a few pictures for her dating app and then goes out for a walk.

It lands her at Tshego's place and the laughter coming from inside has her by her nursing tits. She feels a rush of envy and bitterness passing through her when she thinks of Amanda being a part of this.

Right then Tshego's mother comes out holding the baby.

Her: Look who's here

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mommy.

She says playfully and they take a seat on the chairs outside.

Her: I even thought you were no longer coming.

Owethu: I was still busy cleaning.

Her: Okay, well there is cake inside you can go serve yourself. Unfortunately, the photographer has left so you won't have pictures with him.

Owethu: It's fine, I will use my phone.

She gets up and goes inside. The couple is giggling in Tshego's room and just that, raises her jealousy levels to the maximum.

She approaches his door and as she is about to knock, Amanda opens and walks out greeting her. She doesn't greet back and Amanda passes heading to the kitchen.

Owethu: I want the baby's bag so we can go home. It's late.

Tshego: It's only half three, I will bring him back.

Owethu: I want to leave with him.

Tshego: I'm still spending time with him, and I didn't take any bag from your place.

Owethu: I don't see you spending time with him, you are busy giggling in your room with that-

He is on his feet already and he stands in front of her then responds calmly.

Tshego: I let you get away with so much that it has left you feeling like you control me, you don't. I'm not even your best friend anymore, the only thing tying us together is that baby. Keep my girlfriend out of your mouth if you don't want to see my true colours.

Owethu: There is no colour about you that I don't know.

Tshego: (chuckles) Your baby is outside.

He closes the door on her face and then goes back to what he was doing. Owethu goes outside and finds Amanda sitting with Tshego's mother laughing at whatever. She wants to vanish from all this and it's like Amanda can read her mind because

she gets off the chair and goes back inside, leaving her standing there.

Owethu: I came to fetch the baby, it's late.

Tshego's mother hands her the baby and it's then she sees the new clothes he's wearing. She scoffs wrapping him with the blanket and then walks out.

LONWABO

He is watching a comedy show with Ayabonga, laughing and drinking when a knock disturbs them.

Aya: I'll get it.

He walks up to the door with a bottle in his hand. Ntsako stands outside all dressed up for the night with an overnight bag.

Aya: Hi, come in.

Lonwabo: Who is it?

Ntsako walks over to him as Ayabonga closes the door and follows after her. Lonwabo is still focusing on the show he doesn't even pay attention to Ntsako, but because he knows her scent, he can tell it's her.

He doesn't turn to face her or anything but keeps sipping from his bottle. Ayabonga sits, minding his business.

Ntsako: Can I go to the bathroom?

Lonwabo: Sure, use the main one.

She leaves her bags on the floor and goes to the bathroom.

Ayabonga: And then?

Lonwabo: What?

Ayabonga: Don't tell me you don't see what's going on here.

Lonwabo: A person came uninvited so surely she know what she is here for.

Ayabonga: Okay.

Ntsako comes back and sits. Lonwabo doesn't seem interested in whatever she is here for so she calls an Uber because she is clearly not welcome here.

A few minutes later Ayabonga's phone rings and he stands up answering, leaving the two together.

Ntsako: (clears throat) Are you not going to ask why I'm here?

Lonwabo: No.

Ntsako: Okay, I will leave cause I can see you don't want me here.

Lonwabo: I don't remember asking you to come so...

Ntsako: (tearfully) Why are you so rude to me?

Lonwabo: I am not rude, just trying not to pretend like everything is okay.

Ntsako: What did I do to you?

Lonwabo: Google what hypothermia is, its effects and dangers then maybe you will understand why I never want to see you.

Ntsako: So you have broken up with me without telling me?

Lonwabo: I am telling you now.

Ntsako: (standing up) Why? is there another woman in your life? is she the reason you came back drunk that night?

She attempts to go to his room and he blocks her.

Lonwabo: I don't hit women, but if you push me I will do exactly that.

She slaps him unexpectedly and he just chuckles looking at her. Ayabonga comes back and find them staring at each other before Ntsako storms out with her bags.

To be continued...

TINTSWALO

She hears the door opening while sleeping and the way it flied open scares her because she is alone in the house. She gets off bed and then puts on her gown before taking the pepper spray from her table. Her plan is to release the gas, grab a knife and stab whoever is here. She then walks out to the main door where Ntsako is fiddling with the key to lock the door and sighs putting the spray down.

Tintswalo: Hita mi dlaya siku rinwan' mara wativa Ntsako, yeses, I almost killed you. You want me to be arrested for murder.

Ntsako doesn't turn but Tintswalo can hear sniffles as the keys makes the annoying sound. Ntsako throws them away in, and kicks her bags while in anger while crying.

Ntsako: I want my boyfriend, he can't do this to me.

Tintswalo as the big sis she is, she feels her heart breaking at this sight of her little sister crying.

Tintswalo: Ntsako what's the matter, why are you crying? you are scaring me.

Ntsako: (hysterically crying) It's Lonwabo, he dumped me.

Tintswalo: Okay, I will give you a few minutes to calm down and then we will sit and talk.

Ntsako: (shouting) I don't want to talk, I want my boyfriend back.

She throws herself on the floor and starts rolling while crying, the cold surface makes the pain bearable so she rolls back and forth with tears streaming down her face.

Tintswalo: Okay, I know and I understand, calm down now so we can see how we solve this. Get up.

She offers her a hug and then help her up and they sit on the couch while she still cries some more. Tintswalo doesn't know

what to do because she doesn't know what happened and Ntsako is making things worse by crying non-stop.

AYABONGA

He has been trying to talk to Lonwabo about his actions and they are now arguing about it.

Lonwabo: You saw it, you were there when I almost died from being cold.

Aya: But you didn't, come on. You can't break up with her just like that. Maybe make her win your trust back but not a break-up. That's a bit extreme.

Lonwabo: I am still angry at her.

Aya: And you still love her. You are angry up to this day because instead of facing the matter at hand, you decided to ignore it. Where did you think it was going to take you?

Lonwabo: Lerato has never done anything like that to you, you won't understand.

Aya: I also don't understand how you are the one who made her angry, but now you are breaking up with her because of the

reaction due to your actions. You cannot blame her, sure maybe she should have reacted in a better way but trust me we don't know what you would have done if it was you.

Lonwabo: I would have kept quiet.

Aya: Giving her the silent treatment that would in turn make her walk through eggshells around you. The point is you both contributed to this, solve it like adults. She waited for a month to see if you will do anything about the matter but you didn't, and now that she is doing something about it you shut her out.

He doesn't respond but murmurs to himself.

Aya: Go solve this matter right now because we both know that girl makes you happy. Who would risk being caught having sex outside if there's no love involved? She did it because she knew your love for her would provide a space to hide her embarrassment should people catch you in action.

Lonwabo: (chuckles) I hear you cuz, I guess I let my anger decide for me.

Aya: I am happy to see and hear that you realize your mistakes and are ready to correct yourself.

He gets on his feet with his phone in hand.

Aya: The car keys are where they stay, I will personally open for you when you get back.

Lonwabo: I will request, surely I can find someone available.

Aya: Okay. Be safe.

NTSAKO

She is calm and explaining to her sister what happened on that Friday night that led to tonight.

Tintswalo: Why did you feel jealous of him?

Ntsako: Because he wasn't thinking of me at that moment, he was having the best time of his life with his cousin and when I thought of how I dismissed you it hurts.

Tintswalo: I always tell you to have a life of your own. No boyfriend

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Ntsako: (sighs) I can't lose him sis.

Tintswalo: But do you understand what I'm saying now?

Ntsako: Yes.

Tintswalo: Thank you. He will come around don't worry, just don't go kneeling or do something stupid to be forgiven. We don't do that here.

Ntsako: (chuckles) I guess you are right.

Tintswalo: Do you feel better now?

Ntsako: Yes.

Tintswalo: Thank you, let me go back to sleep.

Right then Ntsako's phone rings and her heart starts beating fast as she sees Lonwabo's name.

Ntsako: It's him, it's him.

Tintswalo: Answer it.

She takes a deep breath and then answers.

Ntsako: Hello.

Lonwabo: Please wait for me at your gate, I'm a few houses away.

Ntsako: Okay.

He hangs up and she quickly run to the bathroom and washes her face.

Ntsako: He's here.

She says to the stunned Tintswalo who is wondering what's going on.

Tintswalo: I'll be in my room.

She says the last word in a whisper because Ntsako is already out the door.

OWETHU

A few days later, she is still stuck in her world where she sees everything working in her favour.

The problem is not what she has been through or what she is going through, but what she has in her mind.

She thinks she deserves everything, all the good whether or not at the expense of other people. She cannot move on because she thinks she did nothing wrong to anyone.

Her mother has advised her to get help because the issue is getting serious and deadly. She doesn't take care of herself, she chases the nannies away or give them a hard time and they all

never stay, her room is always messy and she is always in her pyjamas when at home.

Today is Tshego's mom's turn to look after the baby and she has arrived to fetch him. Owethu's mom is at work with the knowledge that there will be a person cleaning her house but she didn't stay even 2 minutes.

Tshego's mom knocks on the door and finds it locked. She peeks through the window, the TV is playing but there is no one in sight. She sighs taking out her phone to call Owethu's mother.

Tshego's ma: I'm at your house, the door is locked.

Owethu's ma: Let me call her and ask where she is. She knew you were coming.

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She hangs up and then sits down. A few minutes passes, and almost an hour when Owethu's mother drives through the gate.

She greets her and then attempts to unlock but her key doesn't go through the hole.

Owethu's ma: She has locked herself inside, let me try the back door.

Tshego's mother follows her and she manages to open the door. They follow each other inside and when they reach Owethu's door, Owethu's mother asks her to wait at the dining area.

Tshego's mother leaves and then Owethu's ma tries to open her door. It is also locked and the key is removed.

Owethu's mother: (yelling) Owethu! I know you're in there, open this door before I kick it down. Owethu! Owethu!

She goes into her room to check for the spare key but she doesn't know where she last put it.

Tshego's mother comes to inquire about the situation since she heard her yelling and the baby's cries catch both their attention. They both get into panic mode because this baby can scream, if it was a competition he would have won before it even started.

Owethu's ma: We have to break down the door.

Tshego's ma: With what?

Owethu: I don't know, let me call my neighbour.

She runs outside and Tshego's mother calls the baby, talking with him trying to calm him but he is not having it, and knowing him, he won't stop until someone holds him.

Owethu's mother comes back with the neighbour, luckily the husband had just arrived so he came along and they walk straight to the door. He asks everyone to move away and then he kicks the door a few times with his work boots until it breaks down.

They all rush inside and Tshego's mother rushes to the baby while Owethu's paces to her daughter. There is an emptied pills container besides her bed.

Owethu's ma: Oh my God, what have you done?

She puts her index and middle finger on her neck to feel the pulse but it's not there. Rati is calm in his grandmother's arms and she is walking out to prepare a bottle for him.

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To be continued...

NARRATED

It has been a few days since Owethu got admitted, the doctors were able to flush out the pills from her system and she is now awake but still in pain.

Her son has been in the care of his paternal grandmother because Owethu's mother is busy. Tshegofatso got the news and he is back home but hasn't come to visit her yet.

In all these happening, Owethu is only looking forward to having Tshego's support. She will never try to commit suicide ever again because it is painful.

She now sees the importance of therapy but her main reason for swallowing those pills, was to get Tshego's attention. She can never get past how he isn't recognizing her now because of Amanda and the only way he will give her what she needs, is if she spends more time with him and that's what is going to happen right now.

The nurses walk into her ward for the daily check-ups and they are happy with her response to their medication. They will soon discharge her but she is going straight to psychiatry because according to the tests they conducted, she is a danger to herself and everyone around her.

Hopefully it will do her good and she will come back a better person for her son, and herself.

PAUL

He is with Lesedi ticking off their bucket lists, their next stop from Modjadji Cycads in the Bolobedu south region, is the restaurants in Tzaneen before checking in at Magoebaskloof.

They decided to do this together before settling down because Paul is already talking marriage, and he knows the pressure that comes with preparing to have kids because that's one thing Lesedi is looking up to.

Paul: I didn't know this place was so rich in cultural stuff. I never see Balobedu people wearing this stuff.

Lesedi: It's beautiful neh?

Paul: Very beautiful, I also love the rondavels and just the atmosphere around here.

They talk while following the tour guide who is showing them and other tourists around.

Him: This is how they used to store crops for preservation. The inside is cemented to keep the coldness intact so the crops stays fresh until they are used in the following years. They can stay for over 3 years, used to sow more and for mielie meal.

He continues showing them the staff around, and everyone is just excited to learn about the Balobedu tribe and how things were done in the olden days. One person asks if they can see where the Rain Queen used to perform the rain making rituals, but that's a sacred place and not for public view and they understand then move forward.

After the long hours of being amazed by this information. They go back to where they parked and then get into their car to drive back, with the promise that they will be back for a hike because they missed it today.

AYABONGA

He is back in Phalaborwa to see the love of his life and her mother is happy to see him.

Her: It has been a long time, I thought this one has left you.

Aya: (chuckled) I was just busy with work ma, I won't let her leave me.

Her: I am happy that you are still alive and well.

Aya: I'm happy to see you.

Lerato comes out all dressed up and they leave after she has bid her mother goodbye.

Aya: How have you been baby?

He asks once they are driving out.

Lerato: I have been okay, I just missed you.

Aya: I missed you too. Where are we going?

Lerato: We can start at your place to get your clothes and then we will head out to a secret location. I will drive.

Aya: What are you up to?

Lerato: What we are going there for is a surprise, but the place itself isn't. Here.

She gives him his phone and he checks the latest bookings she made. They are going to spend a night at Masorini Bush lodge.

Aya: (blushing) Babe...

Lerato: You have been working so hard and I think you deserve this. We will go to a spa for a fully body massage afterwards.

He stops the car on the side of the road and then gets out to hug her. He is all emotional because he is used to being the one

doing things for her; and quite frankly, she is the first girlfriend to ever do this.

Aya: Thank you so much, you don't know what this means.

Lerato: (wiping his tears) I got you.

He chuckles and then they get back in the car and drive off.

TSHEGOFATSO

The news of Owethu being admitted reached him at night after work and he immediately got on the road, leaving Amanda behind. He had received an audio text on WhatsApp from Owethu but could not listen to it because he was still at work, and when he got home the call disturbed him.

He is lying on the bed after coming back from the hospital and is listening to the audio.

Owethu: Hey bestie, I hope this finds you well. I want to let you know that I love you and I'm hurt that we have drifted apart and I can't even reach out to you like I used to. I don't know what went wrong because we were the best of friends even people envied us. I still don't know what I did wrong for you to hate me, because the only thing I remember is loving you with everything I got and making sure these women don't play you. We made a vow to love each other till eternity and I think you didn't really understand what you were saying

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but hey I guess you will soon find out what it really meant. I will see you on the other side.

He is glad she is still alive and there's a chance that they can fix this, for their boy.

AMANDA

It has been a few days since Tshago left, he only updated her that Owethu is fine but still in the hospital. He omitted the part about the audio he received and the reason she is hospitalised.

She is back at her place because she could not stay at Tshego's alone for that long.

Her phone receives a message from an unknown number, the message reads "...till eternity". She doesn't know who it could be and when she tries the number it doesn't go through.

She decides to call Tshegofatso who answers sleepily.

Tshego: Babe.

Amanda: How are you?

Tshego: I'm good, how are you?

Amanda: I'm okay. How is everything going?

Tshego: She is fine, but still not up. I went to see her today and I think she will be up maybe tomorrow.

Amanda: Okay. What happened?

Tshego: I don't really know, they said she just collapsed. I think it might be something related to childbirth.

Amanda: I hope everything goes well cause I miss you.

Tshego: I miss you too; but now I have to stay here for a while to see how the situation goes.

Amanda: (raised eyebrow) Oh; okay. You will update me.

Tshego: Yeah, let me sleep. Good night.

Amanda: Good night.

She hangs up trying to understand what he meant by what he said, she even forgot to ask about the text.

NTSAKO

She is spending the night with Lonwabo, after that fight they decided to sit down and resolve issues. The night Lonwabo came to see her, they talked and talked throughout the night until they fell asleep around 1 am. In the morning he left and later on she came to his place.

She apologized to Ayabonga and everything is now back to normal. They are watching movies while cuddling on the bed.

Lonwabo: I think I should get my own house you know.

Ntsako: Why? are you no longer comfortable around here?

Lonwabo: I am a grown man now, I should have my own space because I want kids someday.

Ntsako: Someday as in how many years from now?

Lonwabo: I'm not in a hurry, we will discuss the matter when it's due.

Ntsako: Okay, I'm just glad we managed to resolve our issues and you are back to me.

Lonwabo: I'm sorry I acted that way, I was just so angry.

Ntsako: I was wrong too, I'm just glad it's all over. That was the worst month of my life.

Lonwabo: I'm glad too.

They continue watching until they both fall asleep.

NARRATED

A few days later, they are discharging her from the hospital and her mother is here to fetch her. They sign all the papers

required and her mother hasn't yet been informed of the decision to have her daughter admitted to psychiatry.

They talk with her and the Doctor asks for a moment with her. She goes after her into her office.

Doctor: You may sit down.

Her: Thank you.

Doctor: They tell me you haven't been informed of the decision we took for your daughter regarding her situation. We ran some tests and evaluated her mental state for the days that she was here. It is a protocol for all patients who come in with her type of problem, and it has come to our attention that although we can help with what we can, she needs mental care that can only be offered by professionals in that field.

Her: So you mean I can't go home with her?

Doctor: Unfortunately not. We have booked her in, all costs are taken care of she only has to go there so they can start with the sessions.

She has tears in her eyes as the Doctor explains what the problem might be. The fact that she didn't realise how big the issue is, even though Tshego's mother mentioned it over and over hurts her. She leaves the office after they have talked and then goes to fetch her daughter because she wants to drive her to the institution herself.

Later on they arrive at the gate, Tshego and his mother are also present to give support. They get off inside as the nurses arrive to take her because she is giving them a problem.

The sight of her screaming and kicking as they take her inside is painful to watch, but everyone is trying to be calm.

The promise stands rooted between her and Tshegofatso as she looks at him, and they do their signature that means eternity. Now he will be left to look after their child until she comes back to join them, forever.

EPILOGUE

NARRATED

It's the 13th of February, Amanda is five months pregnant and hardly goes anywhere except work and clinic checkups.

Tshego's mother has offered to take care of her after giving birth and she is looking forward to holding her baby in her hands.

It has been 5 years since the news of Owethu escaping from psychiatry broke out, and even up to this day- no one has seen her. Tshegofatso hasn't been the same after Owethu was admitted, and Amanda was thinking it's because Rati was still small but the issue seems to be another reason which he doesn't want to talk about.

Their relationship has also been rocky and got worse after the news of Owethu escaping the institution. This pregnancy wasn't planned but Amanda feels like it's the one thing that will give her hope so she chose to keep the baby.

Kemoratile is all grown and going to school while staying with his father and step-mom. Amanda has been a great mother figure to him, making sure she never feels the void her mother left.

Owethu's mother is still trying to find her daughter because there are clues that she is around, but doesn't want to be seen. Even after so long, she still finds her birthday letters from Owethu, freshly handwritten and waiting for her in front of her door. She has talked to everyone who was close to her but none has seen her.

Tshegofatso has just dropped Amanda at her baby shower celebration. He will be back to collect her when they are done because he cannot stay.

Kemoratile is at a school trip and that means Tshegofatso will be home alone. He unlocks the door and finds his laptop playing Lenny Kravitz's It ain't over 'til it's over.

He left his laptop closed on the coffee table but now that he is sure no one has walked in here, he feels confused as to what happened.

He checks the rooms and can't find anyone or anything suspicious then he goes to his room where he finds Owethu sitting on the bed with both their necklaces in her hands.

On the other side of Limpopo, Ayabonga and Lerato are celebrating their first marriage anniversary with their family and friends. Everyone is reminding them of how their wedding was top tier and that if they could, they would repeat the day.

Ayabonga proposes a toast, and after everyone has toasted to whatever he said, he asks that they give him a moment to announce the big news he has been holding in for days.

Aya: I thank you all for the support and love. It would not have been possible without you all. The last announcement, which

even my wife doesn't know is that we are moving to our new house that's spacious enough for family and friends gatherings and of course, our children.

The crowd is cheering but they seem to have missed it.

Aya: (to Lerato) Thank you for making me a father.

Everyone stops cheering, Lerato looks at her flat stomach and then back at Ayabonga.

Aya: We are pregnant, and I hope it's twins.

Lerato starts crying because she thought her periods are just being abnormal like always, but her sneaky husband did a test on her and found out that she is 2 weeks pregnant.

The cheering proceeds and Lonwabo goes to Ayabonga to hug him. He whispers in his ear.

Lonwabo: I am proud of you.

Ayabonga: I'm proud of you too.

Right then, the DJ changes the music to one of Ntsako's favourites and Lonwabo asks her for a dance.

She is still putting her glass down and fixing her dress, and when she turns she finds him with one knee down on the ground and his hands holding a little box.

She gasps closing her mouth and he pops the question which she answers to while crying. It's obviously a yes because she loves this man to death. He slips the ring on her finger and they kiss while everyone claps for them.

Ntsako takes a few pictures of the ring and send them to Tintswalo. She replies with a picture of the old men waiting at her father's gate for lobola negotiations. How everything was planned without her noticing baffles her. She was wondering why the men were only a few here because she knows Lonwabo'Lonwabo's family is big.

He hugs her from behind and she doesn't even know how to start explaining the kind of joy she is experiencing.

OWETHU

She looks clean and sane, in a short dress and sandals like those years back. A coat is on the bed and she has a mask on, like always when they meet.

Tshego: What are you doing here?

Owethu: I came for this, it's only now I realise we exchanged them on our last encounter.

Tshego: But what if Amanda was here?

Owethu: She isn't, so? come sit.

He sighs going over to her. She stands on her feet and hugs him tightly before kissing his lips which he responds to. They have been seeing each other in secret; he still doesn't know where she lives and how.

Owethu: I did say I will give you some time. I am back now, for good. I have brought tickets for us to leave this place and never come back.

Tshego: I haven't decided yet.

Owethu: Then you leave me with no choice.

She stands

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put on her coat and mask and then grabs her necklace and walks out. Tshegofatso bury his head on his palms and sighs. He should call the police and let them know about Owethu, but he risks being arrested if they find out that he always knew her whereabouts.

His phone rings, it's a landline, he answers going out of the bedroom.

Tshego: Hello.

Voice: Tshegofatso Benedict Mokoena?

Tshego: Speaking.

Voice: Please come down to the Pretoria Hospital, you are labelled as next of kin to Amanda Brynston and she has just been brought in.

He doesn't wait to be told twice but hurries out, kicking the card Owethu left in his dining area.

AMANDA

The machines beeping are driving her crazy because she is in so much pain. She opens her eyes and is greeted by a nurse who immediately calls the doctor.

Her one hand goes to her stomach and her baby...

One of the nurses helping her is Lesedi, she is trying to calm her down as the situation is close to heart but it's not helping

because she is still in shock. She was brought in unable to breath and bleeding.

Tshegofatso is stung by her cry from the door and he already knows it's bad news. The last part he hears is that she suffered a miscarriage and at the same time, he receives a message from Owethu saying there is no longer a reason for keeping him here so they should leave.

He wants to cry because he caused this to himself, he has been lying to Amanda, refusing to even marry her because he was waiting on Owethu.

The nurses ask him to step out while they attend to Amanda.

A few days later Amanda is discharged and Tshego is here to pick her up. She is quiet all the way and when they arrive she immediately gets into bed.

The whole thing happened fast and she still doesn't understand how it all happened. One thing she is enjoying with her family, the next she starts bleeding and then rushed to the hospital and just like that, the baby is gone.

The doctors explained a possible thyroid problem being the reason because the baby couldn't feed and other stuff. She didn't even want to hear any more of it because it doesn't make sense to her at this moment.

Tshego has gone out to get food when her phone rings. It's Tshego's mother asking how she is, they talk for a while and she ends up in the dining area when the call ends. A piece of paper catches her attention under the table and she picks it reading.

“Happy friendversary Bestie - Owethu.”

This is handwritten and even signed. The date is the same as when she was fighting for her life in the hospital, and she also remembers it from somewhere.

It's not a coincidence because she has even noticed that Tshego's stuff have been moved from how she knows them.

She gets up to check if the hand writing is the same on the letters Owethu used to write to Tshegofatso when they were still young. The front door opens and Tshego walks in before she could even reach the bedroom door.

She turns, glaring at him, her hand raised and then charges at him.

Amanda: What is this?

Tshego: (frowns) What?

She throws the card at him, he reads it and his face sells him out. Amanda chuckles and then turns to go into their bedroom, Tshego follows after her while pleading that she calm down so they can talk. She is not saying anything while packing her bags and then requests an Uber.

It feels like it's taking long and she walks out, putting her bags one by one at the gate so she can wait for it there. On a distance; there is a car waiting and when she gets into the Uber, the car drives to the gate.

Owethu steps out and walks into the house as Tshegofatso is changing into warm clothes so he can follow after Amanda.

Owethu: She is gone, you won't ever see her or at least not anytime soon.

Tshego: I'm not up for your games Owethu.

Owethu: I told you you belong to me. We belong together and that's how it has always been.

Tshego: I'm calling the police to come take you.

Owethu: Then you will explain why you were quiet the whole time. I have proof that I have been seeing you since I escaped and trust me wherever I go you will come with me.

The front door opens, Amanda walks in and straight to the bedroom to take her other clothes that she had left behind.

She is surprised to see Owethu in the bedroom and her anger levels are at their peak, but she chooses her battles and then takes her clothes and heads out.

Owethu: It has always been till eternity babes, it was never about you.

She says to Amanda who just keeps on walking without looking back. Tshego sinks back into his bed, there is nothing else he can do now.

Owethu: We will love each other till eternity. A promise isn't meant to be broken, and it won't start with us.

.....**THE END**.....

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