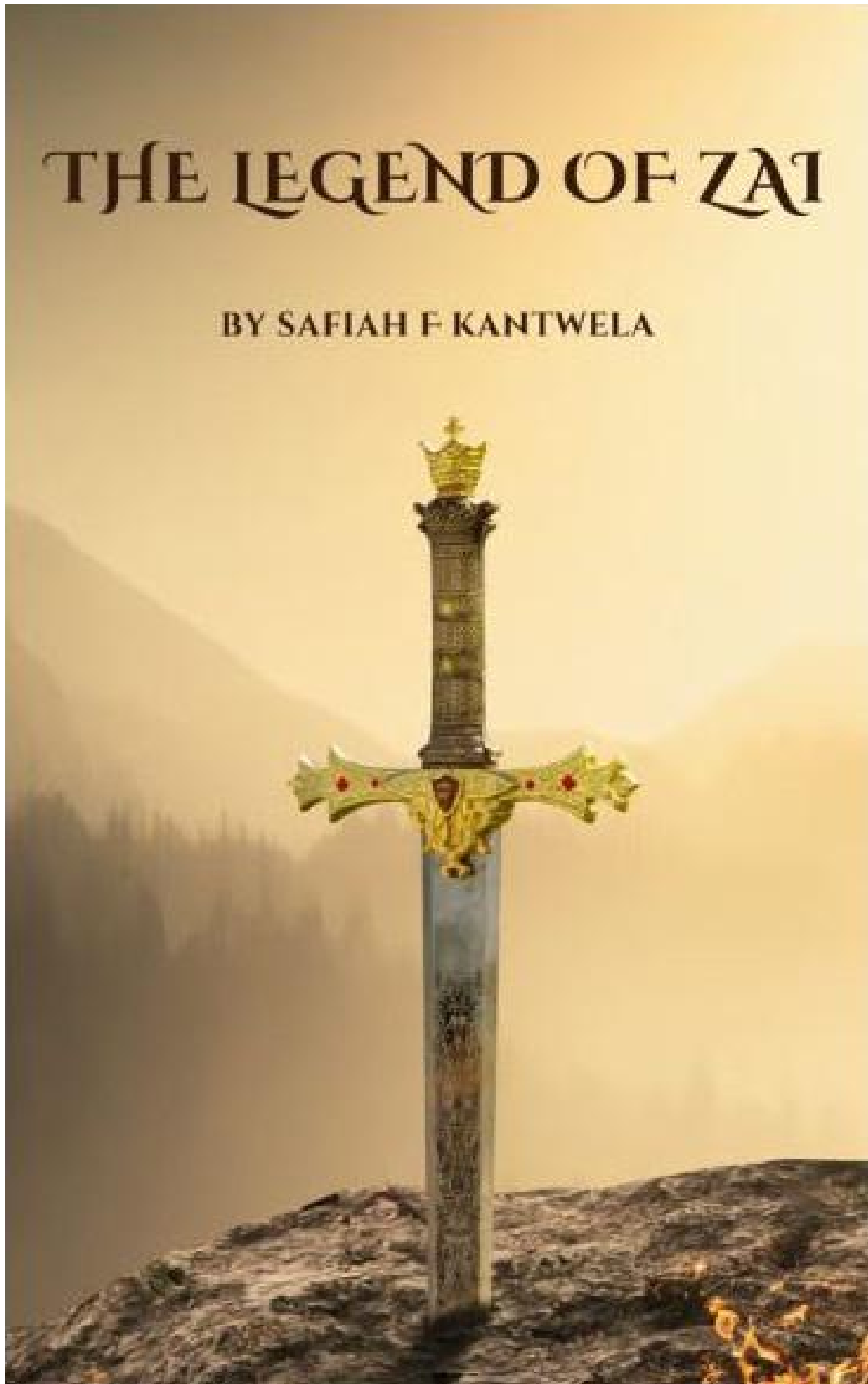


# THE LEGEND OF ZAI

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## One

### One

This place was everything that the internet said it would be. It's was beautiful, and the people were also loving and sweet and very helpful. It's Sunday so the public is allowed to go to the Palace and look at the rich history of it all and of cause hear about the king Zai who is a young fellow that took the throne on his 18th birthday when he removed the sword from the carved stone that was cursed by his aunt who swore that no heirs will be born to her brother but then he was born and things changed for better. I grinned at this cause the internet wrote all about it to attract us to this beautiful coastal country just on the outskirts of South Africa. I wore my summer dress and sandals and straw hat and took my sling bag, and walked out of the beautiful chapel house that I am renting for the next two weeks. I walked through the beautiful homes and down the road to the city greeting the kids playing outside and got to the city center then jumped on the bus that was so full taking all tourist from around the world to the beautiful stone wall palace. We listened to the stories the tourist guide told us and the jokes and the mythical stories. When we got there, we wore blue tags and were shown the stone that had the sword stuck in it.

Guide: This is where the sword was... our king Zai was playing with his two brothers and sisters here when his little sister, who was 8 at the time, asked why the sword was stuck? They told her, and she asked if it really stuck? The twins jumped to pull at it and showed her that it stuck. Knowing how powerful Zai is and how there was a prophecy on Zai being the breaker of the curse since he was born even though the Aunt curses his father, his sister asked him. So Zai grinned and walked to

the sword and swiftly lifted it as if it was not stuck and the world froze for a moment so out of fear he put it back where he found it and they told each other never to talk about it. But you guys know how little sisters are like, right? " Everyone laughed, and I smiled thinking how I used to rat my siblings.

Guide: few days later Zai took the sword and a prophecy came that he is the next king and he is to lead us at that young age and 12 years later here we are being lead by the most kind king ever. He loves us as if we are his own children and takes care of us. I raised my hand, and he looked at me.

" What happened to the Aunt?" The guide looked at me shocked but looked at everyone looking at us.

Guide: he showed her no mercy for the pain and suffering he caused us and his family. Now, let move along. We walked around the beautiful grounds and saw the most beautiful garden iv ever seen. At some point, there was a setting where they offered tea and biscuit for free, and one could sit there for as long as they liked. So I picked the one closer to the sun flowers and poured the iced tea , took a few lammingtons, and ate, looking at the beautiful garden. I took my hat off my hair and undid the pony I had and let my hair flow as I lifted my face to the sun, soaking it all on. This is the most relaxed iv ever been all my life. I closed my eyes and enjoyed the peace and the chipping birds and the hush tones of people talking.

Zai

Am never around to see tourists walking around the grounds, but today was one of those days where I just chose to be lazy and do nothing at

all. So I watched the tourist walk about at the grounds and that when I spotted her. I spotted her when she asked about my Aunt in a hush sweet voice, I then spotted her again admiring the garden and then when she sat down with so much ease and elegance allowing the sun to kiss her flawless skin. I watched everyone follow the guide and she just sat there relaxed with eyes closed facing the sun so I walked towards her. I don't know what pulled me towards her, but I just walked and stood before her blocking the sun, and she opened her eyes and looked at me.

" To much sun is not good for the skin." she shifted wore her hat and got up, dusted herself, and looked at me without any recognition.

Her: It felt so good.

I nodded, and she looked around to see that everyone had gone and only the staff was cleaning up.

" I can walk you towards the rest of the tourist."

Her: Thank you, I always tend to get lost at times. I watched her eyeing the garden one last time, and I smiled.

" I can take a photo if you have a phone of you next to the flowers."

She looked at the flowers then at me and smiled.

Her: Oh, I don't want to trouble you.

" I did offer. Now sit back down, and I'll snap you." She grinned the most heartwarming smile as she sat as she did and handed me her phone. I moved a bit well aware that my staff was looking at me, but

she has no idea who I am, so why pop her bubble. She relaxed again, soaking up the sun, and I snapped a few pictures of her. I know I shouldn't have, but I airdropped some to my phone and gave her the phone. She was smiling pleased with herself, then got up and wore her hat.

Her: Thank you

" pleasure" she dusted herself again, and I walked with her in utter peaceful silence as we navigated the green maze. We stopped by the statue of my mother and father at the center sitting down. She stood there admiring the iconic statue.

" it's said on this day the senior king and his wife declared picnic day. Every year on the 12th of November, any couple that wishes to come here on these grounds have a picnic on them is allowed too. "

Her: Does the new king allow this?

" he can't really change what makes his people happy."

Her: I am sure a lot of engagements take place on that day.

" Yep," she was quiet and said nothing for some time as if thinking, then slowly walked away and again in silence till we got to the opening where the rest of the tourists were. I hang back cause someone might recognize me. I watched her walk about, and she stood by the wire ornaments that my brothers and i did when we were teens. She traced it with her hands smiling and moved back, taking a picture. I watched the guide move to her and told her.

Guide: Our king and his brother spent days fascinated by what this was shaping up, too.

Her: was this before he was king or after?

Guide: before.

She nodded, and I smiled at how she always had questions as if she wanted to know more about me. I turned and walked back to the house and watched her from the balcony when my little sister walked in.

Zong: Rumors say you kissed her.

" Kissed who?"

Zong: a beautiful woman in a summer dress wearing a straw hat. I laughed cause she was fishing and looked at her.

" Your rumors are wrong today,"

She looked down and watched them get in the bus.

Zong: You can ask for her number, you know.

" No."

Zong: Hmmm

" What?"

Zong: You're turning 30 in a few days, and the prophecy said...

" I know what it said."

Zong: Then? How come you not out there actively looking for her?

" cause good things come to those who wait "

Zong: we can't lose you

" you wont" she moved closer, placed her head on my shoulder, and I smiled content. My baby sister and I have always been close. She may be 22, but in my eyes, she is always that young girl who always speaks sense and has so much wisdom.

Zong: For what it's worth, I liked her.

I laughed

" You don't even know her,"

Zong: I know she has the power of letting you leave whatever you were doing and indulge her in taking a photo for her then walk her back to the group even though you had over 10 staff members there willing to help her. So yep, I like her..

I grinned and looked out at the beautiful sky am not going to read too much into this...

## Two

I finally got home and took a long shower, then sat on the bed, went through the pictures of the day, and went to my Instagram for the first time ever since I was left at the altar alone. I deleted every picture I have of him and even on Facebook. Then, I posted the picture of myself soaking up the sun and wrote.

" Everyone who knows me knows that the past week has been the hardest week of my life, but today I told myself I am gonna stop and smell the flowers. Stop and soak in the sun, and that is exactly what I did in this magical land where dreams come true and where all the impossible becomes possible. To I Hlobisile Ngema, you are more than enough. " I posted my picture on both Instagram and Facebook and grinned, looking at all the pictures I took for the day. I went to my whatapp and unblocked everyone that I blocked and posted my status of the same picture, then I switched off my data and called my father. Ever since the break up, he wants me to call every night, so I'll oblige.

Dad: Princess

I grinned

" Am getting ready for bed,"

Dad: And you still good?

" Am perfect, dad. I needed this. Am finding myself"

Dad: That's a good thing

" Yeah, visited the Palace today. This place is rich in history,"

Dad: So long you are enjoying.



" I am, kiss Mama for me and say hi to everyone else."

Dad: I love you, Hlobisile.

" I love you more, dad, and thank you for being a perfect father that every girl wishes for."

Dad: My pleasure. I hung up and went to bed smiling. Today was a good day and yep its an early night today.

Zai

I was staring at her photo when Zong walked into my office.

" I need to lock my doors,"

Zong: What are you doing? She snatched my phone and looked at the picture, and smiled.

Zong: So you are thinking about her?

" No, I am not,I just like the picture,"

Zong: Hmm, not the person in the picture? I grinned and closed the laptop, and she took it and did some things on my phone, then punched the laptop for a few minutes and grinned.

Zong: her name is Hlobisile Ngema. She is 28 this year and has a degree in historical research. She was engaged for two years to a sucker who left her at the altar (I watched her expression) a week ago. She looked up at me.

" explains why she here"

Zong: Yes

" Your ability to track anyone amazes me

"

Zong: I did study IT for a reason.

" What else?"

Zong: has a mother and father still alive and has a brother and sister older than her. She is the youngest. And works at the University of Johannesburg as a lecturer. She has no kids, owns a small apartment, and Toyota yaris. She has two friends by the name of Zanele and Thandeka.

" Hmmm."

Zong: was once hospitalized for a fractured rib. No one knows why and what happened to her.

" Hmmm."

Zong: Do you think she is the one? I mean, it's a few days to your birthday and ...

" and you reading too much into things. We have been through this already, and I don't want to make a mistake again."

Zong: But the books

" books which are written by a living soul, a soul that makes speculations"

She was quiet and looked at me pressing a few keyboards.

Zong: she only has a week here. She has been here for the whole week, and she has insta and Facebook. Oh, look, she posted today pictures after a whole week of not posting anything.

" Hmmm, you reading too much into things again,"

Zong: The twins are coming back tomorrow. They are done with their assessment.

" Send me the profile of what was done so I can docket it and send it up to higher chains."

Zong: Cool, but we are not done with this.

" we done with you meddling in my life."

Zong: That's what baby sisters are for. If you are not out there saving the world, you are here saving us.

" Which is what a king is to do?"

Zong: I want you to have what mom and dad have.

" All in due time, now can I have some privacy?" I watched her write down something on a piece of paper and left it on my table.

Zong: I got her number if you want. I hear that around 10 pm there is a river boat cruise for couples followed by dinner at the shore restaurant by the river. Maybe she isn't busy. She walked out, and I sat there for a while and looked at the piece of paper for some time and then took the number and saved it on my phone. I closed my eyes and pressed the calling button. It's only 8:30 am sure she is just watching TV, right?

Hlobisile

I could hear the vibrating, and I woke up and searched my phone and looked at the number, and answered.

" You sleeping?" That question came as a shock, and I shifted in bed.

" I was resting my eyes,"

Him: Really?

" Yes," I could hear the voice. Was that hunk that I met earlier with the beautiful smile and calm features but was tall.

Him: Well, I know you here for some fun, so I called to ask if you game to go out tonight. I looked at the watch and it almost 9

" depends where we are going."

Him: What if that was a surprise but I know you will like it and cause I'll buy you dinner too.

" Food, how can I say no to food?" he chuckled. I found it easy to talk to him. He has that chilled back vibe.

Him: I'll pick you up in an hours time. Wear something warm. We might be on water.

" On?... hmmm, boat ride?"

Him: I am not giving out more information.

" Will you tell me where you got my number?" He was silent for a while, then cleared his voice.

Him: hmmm let me fetch you first and take you out. Then you can tell me if I should delete your number or not. I chuckled.

" An hour it is." he hung up, and I sat there grinning. Look at you Hlobisile grinning. If a week ago someone said I'd even smile, I would have laughed at them. I got out of bed and decided on wearing my black leggings with a baggy jersey and some boots and scarf just to throw off the chill and tied my hair in an untidy bun and wore one of my grandmother rings. Hopefully, this will be fun...

## Three

Hlobisile

There was a light knock, and I walked to the door to find him standing there. He had a book in his hand. I looked at him.

Zai: I didn't wanna show up empty-handed, and I got you a book to read moving on if this doesn't turn out to be good. He handed it to me . It was " Kite Runner," by Khalid Hussein

" I love his books, thank you." I placed it by the side table and walked out with him by my side to the black car. There was a guard by the door, and I figured it was his driver. I said nothing as we got in the car.

" So everyone is named Zai here? Iv literally meet a million Zai"

Zai: Some believe naming your child after the king brings prosperity.

" What does the name mean?"

Zai: to prosper. I smiled and nodded.

Zai: Have you seen the king? Meet him or even Google him? I watched the driver shift the rear view mirror and look at him.

" Nope, iv heard so many stories about him, and I like the mystery around him, so seeing him won't be as I pictured him in my mind, and that will be a disappointment."

Zai: How have you pictured him?

" a humble man, a simple man and a man full of love and patience."

Zai: And how does that man look

" Good looking, I am saying this cause every female iv meet wants to marry him."

Zai: And you wouldn't wanna marry a king?

" Nope, I would wanna be married to a man that has to give all of him to his people, and what about me? Yes, I am being selfish, and after what I have been through, I am allowed to be selfish. "

Zai: What have you been through?

" Nothing worth mentioning now,"

Zai

She looked out of the window, and I guess that stops the conversation.

" I think that if the king did have to marry, he would be able to give his all to his wife as much as he gives to his people."

Hlobisile: Then he must have some magic powers.

We got to the boat ride, and I must say it was so quiet, and I kept telling people who wanted to bow and show am the king not to do it. It was so cozy just us two in a little boat with a blanket while one of my villagers rowed us around as we looked at the beautiful view and the stars and the moon set the scene.

Hlobisile: This is beautiful, thank you. She learned in on me like how my sister usually does and placed her head on my shoulder content with where she is. I fished out my phone, took a picture, made her smile, and posed for the next one. I took a few pictures of the view and when we were off the boat we went to the beautiful low light restaurant making it hard for people to see who I am and when the waitress was

about to bow, I shook my head no. Obviously, I tipped them all for keeping my little secret, and I enjoyed the evening with so much conversation and laughter and just being a regular person with a beautiful lady in front of me. She really looked beautiful, simple but beautiful with her dimples and a smile that warmed my heart. Zong was right. This feels different as if it were meant to be. This feels safe, and she makes me feel things that make me think. Just maybe this is it. She sipped on her wine and looked at me.

" What?"

Hlobisile: This was nice, thank you.

And then all hell broke loose as a few flashes were taken, and in horror, I watched my team of security come to shield us and walk us to the car. I should have planned ahead for this, I should have worked harder, but it's close to midnight. Who thought the press would do this? I watched the horror on her face as we got in the car and drove straight to the tunnel that would get us to the Palace underground garage. When the drivers parked and I got out helping her, Zong was already there rattling orders. I pressed the elevator, going to my chambers, and she kept quiet, hugging herself

not even looking at me. When we got in, she stepped out and stood there looking at me.

Hlobisile: I don't want any drama, I've been through so much the past few weeks, and I can't afford to be in newspapers again.

" Am sorry."



She nodded and looked away, walking to the balcony, and stood there. She was looking straight to the garden where, earlier today, she was sitting there having tea and lamingtons. She slowly turned and looked at me in disbelief.

Hlobisile: Zai? As in thee Zai? The original Zai?

I nodded, and she looked at me in disbelief.

Hlobisile: Why didn't you say anything? Warn me? Tell me and be like, "Hey, am king?... or hey you in my garden or hey you tourist this is my land!!! Anything, but can I take you out?" she stopped breathing and looked at me as if waiting for an answer.

" If I said hey... am Zai, the king, and I would like to take you out. Will you be standing here?"

Hlobisile: No

" Then, hey, am Zai... just Zai"

She grinned, and I watched all the panic that was there a few minutes ago disappear. I really thought this was an ugly end of my day, but I watched her turn look at the garden, and I stood a few feet away from her.

" it's hard trying to ask a person out on a date when you are me,"

She looked at me shyly.

Hlobisile: That was a date?

" After all the trouble I went to, to get your number? This was definitely a date. "

Hlobisile: And how was your date, your highness. ( she teased me, and I smiled)

" Everything I imagined when I saw you sitting there a few hours ago"

Hlobisile: So you coming to me was after you watched me for some time? You are such a stalker.

I grinned.

" Tomorrow morning, the whole world will know of our little date, and they will have some stories brewing in they midst from the little they saw. Am not sure how much of the press got from our date, but whatever it is, they will spin it as they see fit. If you have family that you wish to warn, then now is the time to call them and explain"

She kept quiet for some time and looked at me smiling.

Hlobisile: I wonder what the caption will say?

" King finds it, Queen... or mystery woman with king or ..."

Hlobisile: Is she our next queen?

We both smiled. I opened the door, and we walked to the balcony as she sat on the couch and took the little blanket there wrapping it on herself.

Hlobisile: Now that I know who you are, I have so many questions, but I don't wanna sound like a fan.

I chuckled, seeing how she was changing the topic.

" we have the whole night... might as well indulge" that exactly what I did. I sat there with her sipping wine and nibbling on some meaty

platter, and we talked. Spoke about her childhood, about mine and her going through internet stuff, making me verify if it's true or false, and when the sun rises, we sit there together looking out at the sunrise in silence. I did manage to steal a few photos here and there when she wasn't paying attention, and I watched her do the same. I noticed I loved her laugh, and the way she looked at me when I'm telling her things.

She leaned on my shoulder and sighed

Hlobisile: What a date

I chuckled and closed my eyes, leaning on her head.

" perfect"

## Four

Ngema residence

The morning paper headlines got us all silent, listening to dad read it out loud.

" ditched and coming back with a bang," that was the headline as we see our lovely sister leaning on a handsome guy shoulder at the most beautiful scene ever. Then another picture of them in a garden looking at a beautiful statue and then another picture of her sipping wine and him grinning in a beautiful lit restaurant.

" Hlobisile Ngema was ditched by her business moghel fiancée that she been with for 10 years at the alter and she went on her honeymoon package alone and yep, fate did and she fell in the arms of his highness at the coastal kingdom of Zai. As pictures can tell, she is all up in his highness business who we have never seen him date publicly or be with any female unless his sister is around or it business but here he is laughing at the Fiesty lecture who earlier posted that she is enough earlier that night. Is this it? Was fate doing it job giving Mr Mashaba cold feet the week before?

Dad closed the newspaper and took another one that has her smiling, which has been rare ever since her ordeal that shocked her to the core.

Mom: she would have told us if things were like how the papers are saying?

Dad: I spoke to her last night, and she said she is sleeping.

I looked at my parents and grinned. Way to go, sis.

Zanele

The minute I saw the paper, I called my best friend to no avail. I called Thandeka

Thandeka

" iv been calling her and it on voice-mail."

Zanele: same

" she would have told us, right?"

Zanele: that she meet a hunk that is to die for? Of cause, she would have

" Let's give her time, I should have gone to these coastal regions with her when she offered."

Mashaba residence

I read the paper and saw her smile, then went online and saw her pictures, and closed my eyes. This isn't true. She has been with me for years. She ain't going to just forget about me just like this and go to a royal home. She hates attention, and this isn't happening.

Zong

I know I shouldn't have called the press, but hey, my brother needs that little push, and I saw how they look at each other. I know in the bottom of my heart that she is the one. She is the one for him. I can't lose him. Not now. I did sneak in his chambers in the early morning during sunrise and saw them watching the sun. So I took a video of it and a couple of pictures and disappeared. I went on my Instagram said a little prayer and then posted " it's gives me so much joy, watching him in the

shadows enjoying the finest moments of life with a woman that makes him smile as he is right now" I posted it and a few pictures of them laughing and closed my eyes. My brother is going to kill me for this, but the press needs to confirm the story, and this is it. People ran with the story of me confirming the allegations and the news all over the world had this, now let see how you back out of this brother. I grinned when it was lunch time, and they were still in his chambers.

Hlobisile

I woke up, I was in bed and starving. I shifted and found half of his body on me, pinning me down in a cuddling manner. I sat like that for a while then he shifted, taking me with him, making me giggle and him waking up. He let go, and I got up, went to pee and washed my face, and then walked towards him.

His was on his phone, and it was buzzing like crazy and I snatched it and switched off the data looking at him.

" Did our little date get you in trouble?"

He chuckled, moving closer to me and holding me in a way that I started feeling things iv never felt before.

Zai: I'll like to have a lunch date today. But I am scared they will just marry us off.

" Hmmm, let have fun then," and that is exactly what we did. A whole week of fun with the media following us everywhere. I shut it all out and enjoyed my time out as he showed me his kingdom in full. From the farmers to the market to playing games and doing every single adventure together. I loved how easy it was to be around him and to

talk and just be me in his presence without being on guard. Instead of calling dad, I would switch on my phone and send him a message just so he knows I am okay. I know everyone wanted an answer as to if we are dating and if I am their next queen, but all we wanted was to have fun. Enjoy our time together and laugh it all out, and that is exactly what we did.

"What the one thing you have never done as king?" I asked him, laying on his bed after a lovely day out. It was Friday today, and I had two more days left in this magical island. He was playing with my hair, which is something I noticed he loved doing.

Zai: clubbing... iv never been to a club

I shifted and looked at him, laughing

"So am i,"

Zai: they just don't make sense

"Well, tonight is your lucky day," he laughed, shaking his head.

"Yep, we are going clubbing."

Zai: Noooo am a king, a king can't go to club

"Watch this handsome King take a girl out to the club,"

Zai: Will I get a kiss?

"You will get everything that happens at the club,"

He jumped off the bed and walked to his closet while I laughed my lungs out. He really is a joy to be around, and I think I am feeling more than just a friendship with him.

## Five

Zai

I had on my black skinny jeans and a baggy jersey and she had on some hugging knee high boots and a baggy top and looked stunning with a messy bun and hoop earring and she looked at me excited.

Hlobisile: I can't believe that at 28, this is my first time going to the club.

" Well, this is me at 30 attending a club, let go before we change our mind." she chuckled, and we drove to the club where it was packed, and the music was playing people dancing. Some did notice me, and some didn't. At some point, we decided we would get beer like normal people and drank. 30 minutes in, we were drinking shooters and having so many friends that were cheering us on. 1 hour later, we were the life of the party, and dancing and drinking , we sure had fun. I think at some point we had the club cheering us on since it was our first time at the club, and Lord, we danced. She can dance too. She moved closer, whispered.

" I need to pee." I walked her to the toilet where I checked it was safe, and I helped her undo her pants since she was giggling that her hands were like rubber. I watched her pee, which was weird and funny at the same time, then helped her get dressed, and instead of walking back, we went to the car that drove us home.

Hlobisile: How do people do it

" I have no idea how they party every weekend." When she was in, she took off all her clothes, and I sat there watching how beautiful her body



looked and saw the scar from under her boob to her back. She walked to the bathroom, and a few minutes later, water was spraying. I was not sure when I took off my clothes but I did. I walked in the shower with her and let the water wash away all our night sins away. I could feel the sexual tension between us and when she turned to get the soap am not sure what made me pin her against the glass but I did and moved my hand all over her body as she trembled in my touch. I slowly parted her legs as I felt my shaft get stiffer, and I held her still.

I really didn't wait for her to say anything but her body responded to my touch so I slowly bend her back so she gives me access and slowly filled her with my shaft and heard her gasp and moan in a same breath and Lord have mercy I felt my knees go weak with pure pleasure as I slowly devoured her. I took my time and took my fill as she allowed me to.

Hlobisile

My mind was blank, and all I could feel was him touching everything in me with his strokes. I felt myself lose my senses and felt him lose his as he filled his seeds in me. Then he slowly slipped out and washed me throughly as I stood there like a statue. I felt his fingers trace the scar on my body, and he bent his head, then kissed it and turned me around. Then his lips found the little bud on my boobs and kissed it, making me moan. Zai is beautiful. His body is so muscular and ripped with muscles, yet it was smooth and soft to my touch. His left arm had wat looked like a tail of something drawn on him, and I traced it with my hand to his back, where one of those Chinese dragons here drawn on his body with a lion. It's like the lion and the dragon were one. I traced my hand all over it while he stood there in silence then he

moved me to the back of the shower where he swiftly picked me up and my legs wrapped around him as his shaft found me and again entered me slowly and I moaned in pleasure. He was so slow as if making love to my soul. I've never had sex like this before. I enjoyed it throughly as my hands dug to his back and the steam surrounded us as he moved so steady making me squirt all over him as my body shake with a climax which then made him come too while he groaned like an animal, a sound that sent vibration all over my body making my muscles cling onto him making him growl. He then slipped off me and washed me again, making me steady in my wobbling feet. He grinned, picked me up to bed. We got in and laid there as if getting our minds in order. I was sober all of a sudden as he made traces on my body awakening me again.

Zai: You leave in two days.

" Yeah,"

Zai: You have my seeds in you.

" I can't have kids

"

We were both silent for some time, and he shifted.

Zai: wanna talk about it?

" Nothing to talk about, I was with my ex for 10 years, had unprotected sex all the time, and not once did I fall pregnant while he made every girl he shoved his dick in pregnant."

Zai: Why stay?

" he said he loved me, he made future plans with me and showed me I matter so I stayed."

Zai: Hmmm

I chuckled.

" You know when you been with a person for so long that your family knows him,your friends, and everyone thinks that you and him are couple goals. That when things are going south, you just hold on to the good times you once shared. I once tried to leave, and he fractured my ribs, and I stayed in hospital for two days lying to my family that I got mugged. He made two girls pregnant, and I stayed cause when I tried to leave, he gave me this scar. Everyone loved the image I gave them of him that leaving wasn't an option, so I stayed. He promise to make me his wife and when he finally did that, my love for him grew again and I ignored all the red flags until I was in a hotel room with 100 of our friends and family waiting for him to show up but he never did. An hour turned into two, and finally, it was lunch, then dinner, then the next day.

Zai: I am sorry

" it's okay, it hurt at first, but then again, all the red flags started showing themselves again, and I figured I was better off without him."

He drew circles on my belly.

Zai: And now you are here

" And now I am here,"

Zai: I don't wanna scare you off, but you have my seeds in you

I shifted, looking at him, I saw the lust in his eyes, and I felt myself go wet.

" The oven doesn't bake."

He chuckled and rolled me over and pinned me to the bed and shifted my legs apart with his dick on my entrance, looking into me

Zai: I don't want a week with you.

He slowly entered me, awakening my soul.

" Don't complicate life."

Zai: I don't do one night stands

" I was a first to many things this week,"

He shoved in roughly, making me cream all over him as I started shaking off my climax that rocked me. His eyes flashed grey like a storm.

Zai: Am close

I shifted slowly, dancing underneath him as I encouraged his climax and his eyes were dark grey as he clenched his teeth while I danced beneath him coaxing the climax that shattered him and I heard him roar like an animal that has been freed from a cage and I heard my whole body vibrate and thunder and lightning struck followed by a soft rain as he rode his climax with me screaming my head off as wave after wave of a climax rocked my body till tears of joy escaped my eyes and I heard myself. I swear I heard myself say I love you and him growling pinning me to the bed harder as he emptied his seeds in me whispering " I've loved you the moment I laid eyes on you" and I felt vibrations all over

my body. Fuck am screwed physically and emotionally. I laid there thinking what to do next, and that left one choice. Which is exactly what I did. I waited for him to fully doze off and I grapped my clothes and sneaked out of the place with my bags since I technically moved in the day of the paparazzi and switched on my phone checking available flights got one at 2am and got the driver to drive me straight to the airport and I felt my heart shatter as I told myself. It was just a phase. I needed this so I could fix me, I can never be queen. I can't have kids and I don't know him like that and it was amazing while it lasted, but his better off without me...

I closed my eyes as tears rolled down my face as sadness overwhelmed me....

## Six

Zai

I woke up and looked at the empty side of my bed. I checked the bathroom and then opened my closet to see that her bag wasn't there. It's the middle of the night and she is not next to me. I wore my pants and dashed to my sister room

" she gone,"

Zong: And hello to you too

" she left, get the whole team to find her."

Zong: Can you just breathe? I saw her leave nkosiyami. I have a plan, iv been playing Cupid all week with you guys now. Can you just go to bed and relax!!!

I stood there looking at my sister, who was so calm. My twin brothers Zing and Zang walked in, in all black, and looked at me.

Both: Happy birthday

" shit, it's my birthday... shit "

Zong: What?

" shit!!!!" I left her room with them following me around like they used to when they were kids.

Zong: You're scaring me.

I turned to look at her.

" Get her back...get her back here in one piece... you were right. She is the one for me. " I ran to my room and closed the door as I could feel the change in me. I focused on breathing slowly and calmly... it's my birthday... fuck!!! I watched my eyes change to dark grey in the mirror, and I knew I was going to change as my body started shifting, and my bones started cracking to adjust to the new body.

Hlobisile

Intercom: Good morning, fellow passengers. There is a delay with our trip that requires us to go back to the coastal of Zai and lay over for 30 minutes. Kindly stay calm and enjoy breakfast on us.

My heart was beating fast, it's 3 o'clock maybe he knew I was not there maybe, I closed my eyes and calmed down. This is so stupid. Why am I feeling the way that I am feeling.

Zong

The roar that was coming from his bedroom made us stop. We know he has changed, and we kept quiet outside, allowing him to process things.

"I am gonna drive to the airport to get her, I need you guys to call our parents. Tell them that it's true, the prophecy is true. I need one of you to call the prophet and let him know that it happened and I need a meeting with all the elders "

Zeng: You really play your role as princess of this place well.

" I just don't wanna lose him that all,"

Zing: same here.. same here

Hlobisile

We were waiting at the lounge after the plane landed when I watched a beautiful girl walk in with security as people around the airport did a little bow, and I knew she was related to Zai. She sat next to me and said nothing as I sat there looking at the people around us pretending like they were not interested in us.

Her: Zong

" Hlobisile "

We were both silent, and she turned to look at me after some time.

Zong: you scared I know. But you doing exactly what was done to you.

I felt tears sting my eyes and tried to blink, but they just rolled down my face.

Zong: He really is a reasonable man and...

" I don't want to be Queen."

She smiled and wiped a tear from my face, and I could see the love on her face. How can you love someone you have never met?

Zong: I'll still run things until you get the hang of it, and I am always going to be by your side, so really speaking, there is nothing to worry about.

Thunder clapped, and soft rain started.

Zong: Stay for a few days, process things, and then make a decision. I swear I won't stop your next flight home.

" Is he up?"

Zong: No



My brains were telling me about sneaking into bed and pretending this never happened. I know I am being silly, but I really don't want to hurt him.

" Okay

help me sneak back in." I watched her smile as she took her phone and texted on it with my heart beating fast. I know I am being childish but am really scared.

Zai

I was calmer after a shower and in bed as Zong instructions pretended to be asleep. I could feel the beast in me calmer and could feel my heart beating calm. I heard the door open and heard her tip toe around, putting things into place. I heard her un zip her pants, and I felt myself grow. I heard her shift into bed and felt her naked body next to me, and I felt a calming wave vibrate throughout my body. My hands reached out to her and I touched her silky body as I got stronger, the urge was overwhelming so I brought her ass closer to my shaft so she feels it as I moved my fingers to feel her wet and a little tender from earlier. I lifted her leg up and felt her curve and slowly entered her and groaned with pleasure. She moved a bit, giving me more room, and I moved deeper, making her moan. Slowly, I woke her insides as I made sweet, soft love to her with rain splashing on my windows. I flipped her with her ass on my face and slowly ate her up while she grabbed the sheets. When she was close, I slowly went in, and she screamed, and that was enough for me to go crazy grabbing her ass and going hard and fast. Her juices were all over while I roughly went in and out of her. I could feel everything in me relax, and I knew I was close, and I went in

hard spilling all my seeds in her and collapsing with me still in her. I could hear the soft cries as I cuddled her and said nothing for a while.

" I love you,"

I held her tighter and felt tears on my arm.

Hlobisile: it's only been a week

" i know, I want it to be a lifetime."

She shifted out of my grip and turned, looking at me with tears all over her face.

" we have a lifetime to learn each other, a lifetime to find what works for us."

Hlobisile: I can't be Queen, I know nothing about running a whole country.

" Is that the only thing stopping you?"

Hlobisile: I can't have kids and ...

I touched her belly grinning and looked her right in her eyes.

" Will you marry me? No questions asked if in 6 weeks' time you find out that something is in there?"

I watched her eyes fill in tears.

Hlobisile: If not?

" Look, I want you, Hlobisile. I love you with all of me. I know it's been a week, but I can't explain it... I want you"

Tears rolled over her face, and she looked at me tormented between what she felt and what her mind wanted her to say.

Hlobisile: Promise me one thing

" Anything "

Hlobisile: Promise me that when you want to have a heir for your throne, you will leave me first before you marry another.

I grinned cause that will never happen.

" I can promise you this. I'll never touch,look, or smell another warm so long we both live." I turned her on her back and parted her thighs and grinned when she closed her eyes

" Look at me ( she did, and I slowly entered her). I'll never enter another soul as I am doing to you now. ( I moved and heard her moans) your moans will be the only music I want to hear.( moved faster and she moved her hips with me and I felt the electricity in my body and she grinned cause she knows how crazy that drives me.

Hlobisile: Yes

I moved faster, looking at her

" Yes?"

Hlobisile: I'll....be ..you...Queen

Then she screamed as her climax gripped her, and my seeds overflowed in her with lightening and thunder rumblings in the sky as we rode out our joy's shaking..

## Seven

Hlobisile

I woke to the sun shining bright and Zai looking at me, and I looked right into his grey eyes.

" Your eyes are darker,"

He grinned and planted a kiss on my lips, making me yearn for him

Zai: I want you to have lunch with my siblings.

" I met your sister last night,"

Zai: she thinks she is in charge of my life that one.

" I read somewhere you have twin brothers?"

Zai: Zeng and Zing.

" Hmm."

Zai: Zong is all knowing, a scholar that what her name is, and she makes it her business to know everyone business.

Zeng means an expressor of feeling. He says things as it is and is very good with words. I'll ask him to write my vows( I giggled)

Zing means energy, and he really is full of life.

" You have lovely names."

Zai: Thank you

" Your parents?"

Zai: Touring the world. I'll call my dad today. Let him know about you and hear what he says.

" I have to call home, I never called last night, and as it is, they are on the edge about the papers and...

He planted a kiss on me, and I grinned this is really happening?

Zai: we can still go back home on Sunday. You can introduce me to your family and get more of your valuables that you would love to bring here with you and...

" This is really happening? Am I getting married? Like you really want me?

Zai: Like a heartbeat.

" How about we focus on your lunch with your siblings?"

Zai: How about I get my morning glory first, then we can talk about meeting my family. I grinned as he moved his hands on my body and ravished me till I couldn't scream.

Zong

I made sure that the staff cooked everything they could think of cooking, and I made sure the table was beautifully set, and I made sure the cake was everything. I know he never said anything about his birthday, but ever since I could talk, I made sure we celebrated it. I made sure everyone is always here so when my parents landed last night in the mist of everything else that I was dealing with, I made sure they stay at the far wing of the house and relaxed.

Mom: You really are a princess

She placed a spoon on the setting

" I learned from the best"

Dad: he really found her?

" looks that way, I love her and her calmness, and no, she doesn't know everything yet. It's only been a week. "

Dad: Do you think they did it.

" ewww and yes, I think so."

Mom: The rain and thunder yesterday wasn't normal.

Dad: I thought you did that?

Mom: No, I didn't.

Zing: I wish I had the power to control the weather like your mother.

I watched everyone walk in dressed in black but looking casual and sat and I heard her footsteps before I could even see her and watched my brother glow in her presence his face changed when he saw our parents but kept his smile and hugged mom and kissed her forehead like how he always does.

Zai: You back?

Mom: And miss your birthday lunch? Do you want Zong to kill me?

Everyone chuckled, and I watched her lean into him for physical support

and he held her hand.

Zai: Well, everyone knows iv been seeing Hlobisile for some time now and figured you wouldn't mind if she had a birthday lunch with me.

Hlobisile: it's your birthday?

Zai

I saw the shock on her face, so I leaned in her ear only for her.

" Hence, iv been chowing that cake." she turned red, and I knew Zong heard with her extra hearing power cause she chuckled and shooed everyone to eat. I watched my family speak and welcome her as their own. I watch how my father was looking at me as if trying to see the change the prophecy said I'll have.

Mom: I never thought I'll say this, but I am happy... happy with how things are shapping up, son.

" So am i,"

Dad: Words can never describe the feeling I am feeling.

Zeng: Well, in that instance, then I say we toast to more life.

Everyone raised their juice glasses and toasted them, and I saw her wiping a tear and I squeezed her hand in support, and she smiled. This is going to be a new beginning, and I think I am going to love it.

I think I am finally at that point in my life where everything makes sense.

Zong: I have the elders meeting on Monday

" we leave tomorrow,"

Zeng: Are we on the detail?

" Yes, if you are free,"

Zong: So am I

" Yes ( I looked at Hlobisile ). My siblings are head of my security." Shd nodded, took a few sips of her juices

Hlobisile: I was engaged before. She whispered, but everyone was silent looking at her.

Hlobisile: I came here to get away from the shame of it all. I'm going home now, going home with him. I don't know what will happen cause the person I was engaged to is well known.

There was silence

Zong: Read about it

Hlobisile: Will it be too much if I ask we kind of sneak in the country? I don't want to press and I don't...

Zing: I can,...

" Can we talk privately, please?" everyone left, leaving us.

Hlobisile: we are moving too fast.

" Oh,"

Hlobisile: I am not changing my mind about us, but we are moving too fast.

" Okay, what do you want next?" ...



## **Eight**

Mr Ngema

" Who picking her up from the airport?"

Susan: i think it is one of her friends

Nomazwi: Nah, she said she has it sorted.

" sorted?"

Nomazwi: I spoke to her yesterday, and she sounded lighter than normal. Canceled me from picking her up and said she has it sorted.

" Hmmm."

Susan: Did she speak to you about the king?

Nomazwi: mom

Susan: I am just asking if she spoke to you about the king?

Nomazwi: I am not going to answer that, and plus, you know how she is. I doubt the papers are reporting solid things. She has been with Mdu Mashaba all her life.

" True."

Susan: You both said she was different, and when he stood her up at the altar, I saw a change in her.

" A change?"

Susan: I am telling you guys that the Hlobisile you know is not the Hlobisile that is coming back.

Nomazwi: Come on, mom

" Even so, she won't jump into marriage after that traumatic experience, and worse of all, the guy is a public man. A whole king, we all know she will never put herself on the spot like that.

Susan: Did you guys even look at the pictures? The press may be writing something else but those pictures. Those pictures say there is something going on there.

We all kept quiet and ate our breakfast. Hlobisile has always been a private girl. Even when things were going bad with Mdu, she never said anything, just kept her head down.

Zai

Hlobisile: iv never been in a private plane before

" You will get used to it now,"

I watched her look out the window thinking and wondered if I am putting too much pressure on her.

Hlobisile

I looked out of the window thinking about my friends and family and their take on this. I know I am engaged to a king, and I should be happy instead of being worried, but I am. We got to Johannesburg, and I showed him around and again. The mood was so effortless between I and him, and by the time we reached my place, we were laughing and chilled. We walked around the little apartment.

" I can fit your whole bedroom here

He laughed, and I smiled.

" You can go take a shower. I'll call my family in the meantime, and I might join you."

Zai: You should have started with that. He kissed me and disappeared to the bathroom when I fished my phone out to hear my door opening and Lord behold Thandeka and Zanele walking in with loads of junk and wine.

Thandeka: told you she home. They walked in and we hugged, and I smiled, looking at Zanele. "Look at the bags.

Zanele: Since when do you have LV bags?

" Now, I love that you guys are here to check on me, but I can't catch up tonight."

Thandek: Why not?

Zanele: his here???

Then he walked out with his towel around his waist and half dripping on the floor carrying an empty shower gel . He saw the ladies, and I watched him blush. I think I heard them breathe.

Zai: Hi

" uhm... I have an extra bottle in the cabinet under the sink:

Zai: I checked, and you all out.

I moved to the bags unzip them in the tense silence and got a shower gel and gave him and I watched him turn with his tattoo on full view and then turned to the ladies.

Thandeka: showers take 20 min or so... give us all the highlights

They both looked at me and Lord. I love my friends, but I really don't wanna share this.

" The papers are right."

The shock on their faces, and I nodded

Zanele: Are we doing lunch tomorrow?

Thandeka: late breakfast, I can't wait till lunch.

" Fine,"

We hugged and kissed, and I walked them out.

Thandeka: I know I should have said this sooner, but you were so happy, and I didn't wanna ruin your love story, but Mdu was an ass. I hugged her again and left. I locked the house and walked to the bathroom, undressing and getting in the shower to find him just standing there.

" Sorry."

Zai: For having friends over? It's good to see that you have people who care about you.

" Am having late breakfast tomorrow with them,"

Zai: I'll do my formalities in the morning. I can't really be in another country without formally seeing officials and so on.

" Hmmm."

Zai: I'll leave Zeng and Zing as your body guards. And no, they are not there to spy on you, but they are the only people that I can trust with your life.

" Hmmm."

Zai: Talk to me.

" Do I need to be worried?"

Zai: Just a formality, love. Sometimes desperate people see us as a gateway to a good life, so we take precautions

" Hmmm."

Zai: I'll have Zong book you guys a table on me.

" Thank you,"

Zai: No, I figured I might scrub your back. I giggled cause I knew that it was not all. Is this going to be my life now? Bring taken care of?

## Nine

Hlobisile

I watched his brother blend with the guest and order stuff and not show they were my security detail. I can't fathom that I have two prince's, not one but two, looking after me. I watched my girls walk in, grinning, and sit across from me.

Thandeka: we are not going to say anything but listen to you talk from the first day you put your foot down on that coastal land to today. And so I told them. I told them everything from our dates to the newspapers while they sat there and ate and looked at me with wonder.

Zanele: So what the issue.

I was silent

Thandeka: uhm, you were not listening, Zanele?

Zanele: I hear her. She has met the most amazing men in her life. And even when she was with Mdu, she never spoke about him the way she spoke about Zai, and now she is sitting here as if she has doubts, so I wanna know... what the problem? Iv always respected how smart Zanele is and how she always sees through me.

" Am scared, am scared that this isn't it. Am scared that his just a rebound and am scared that when I am with him, everything feels possible. Life feels safe, and most importantly, I feel his love. Am scared that I'll wake up and all this will be gone. "I am not sure when a tear escaped my eye, but I wiped it.

I watched them teary up too, and I smiled.

" I know his not Mdu, I know he will never hurt me the way he did, but I am just scared."

Zanele: which is perfectly fine. You being scared means this matters to you. It's means you are invested in this and that a good thing cause it shows you will give it your all. look you never said anything bad about Mdu even though we could see he was suffocating you but you wanted our supported and needed it and we gave you. When he ditched you at the Alter I was beyond ecstatic but not because he ditched you but because I know he can't fix this, there is no way in hell you will take him back after this. Yes, Mdu is all you know, but there is more out there, and you have landed in a pot of gold, so don't let the past spoil the present for you. Glow in this, glow in the love and glory of this all.

Thandeka: And we are here, we will walk this glorious path with you.

I smiled, wiping my tears

and felt their love and support.

" This isn't me,"

Thandeka: iv never had a friend who is queen, so this is new for me too, but you don't see me complaining.

I laughed and drank my water and looked at them.

" Thank you for this."

Thandeka: we got you. Always

I smiled and we ate and enjoyed each other company.

Mdu

I heard her laughter through my meeting and turned to her voice to find her laughing with her friends, so I excused myself and walked over to them. They looked at me silent.

" You look good, Hlobisile."

Hlobisile: Thank you

" I tried calling you, but my calls were not going through."

Hlobisile: i was out of the country

" saw the newspapers"

She nodded and drank water calmly. There was something about her, her glowing skin, and her calm nature. She has never been this relaxed around me.

" I'll like for us to meet sometime,"

She looked up at me and said nothing, just looking at me, and I felt uncomfortable. She always had her head down. Always been that shy girl.

Hlobisile: Don't you think iv given you enough chances, Mdu?

" I think I need to explain my...." I watched her face glow the minute the king walked in, and she blushed as he walked right to her table and greeted her friends, and planted a kiss on her forehead. Making her blush and glow. I didn't wait to be dismissed, but I left just as she was introducing her friends, and I sat down and looked at my associates after clearing my throat. She really has moved on? A week after our supposed marriage, she found a guy? A guy she trusted enough to



introduce to her crazy friends? I did my best to focus on the meeting, but I kept looking her way. I really need to talk to her.

Zai

Walking in on him standing there and her looking at him did make my heart beat faster, but I saw my brothers were ready for anything and when she saw me and glowed. Everything went back to normal. My world went back to it norm. I chilled with her friends till she bid them well. Walked her to my car while the twins took the car they drove with, and we drove in silence for a while hands entwined.

Hlobisile: I think I am okay

" Okay?"

Hlobisile: with us and where my life is heading. I think I am okay.

" What brings this on?"

Hlobisile: seeing him confirmed that I am better off without him and that I am better off.

" I have something for you." She grinned, looking at me. I gave her the small gift bag, and she took out the chain that had a little pendant of a butterfly.

" I think that you just like a butterfly, you changed with time and you changed to come out better as it change to gain it beautiful wings to fly and so did you. You are beautiful and as delicate as butterfly but you still go out there and let the world soak on your presence even if you might get crushed but you have faith " she wiped an eye and looked at me smiling.

Hlobisile: Help me put it on. She shifted, allowing me to, and I did and activated the tracker on my phone and smiled, looking at her. She truly is beautiful. And she is mine.

**Ten**

Zong

The meeting went well with the officials, which was expected. My brother knows how to speak, but he still wants a tracker on her to keep her safe. I smiled, looking at the system on my computer, I hope that when she learns the truth, she doesn't run.

Hlobisile

" They are a nice family." he parked the car outside my family home, and I looked at him. Okay, I am more nervous than he is.

Zai: Do you need a moment?

" I think I'll be okay." we got off the car and went in my home and was engulfed by my family with their love and a million questions.

I saw my brother couldn't make it, so it was just my sister, mom, and dad.

Dad: You look good, honey.

" Thank you,"

Mom: So the newspapers had a lot to say.

Dad: Susan

Mom: I am just wondering how much of it is true.

Nomazwi: Here we go.

" I wanted you guys to meet Zai first, then you can question me, mom."

Mom: which was a lovely meet

Dad: he is still here.

We were all silent, and I looked at mom.

" The papers have some truth in them, mom. Yes Zai has asked that I open my mind to the possibility that I become his which is why he is here, to talk to my dad about the possibility of sending his elders here" and that how my family lost it in front of the king himself. I watched them talk all at once and then realized am still here and his still here, so they kept quiet and looked at us.

Dad: If you okay with all of this, then yes.

" Yes, you will get your brothers to come negotiate, and this time not be bullied into an agreement?"

Dad: Yes

I grinned, hugging him, and I watched Zai and my sister talk with my sister, doing most of the talking. My mom stood next to me and lowered her voice.

Mom: iv never seen you like this.

" Good or bad?:

Mom: Good

" Thank you,"

Mom: I'll like to have lunch with you, just us two

" I'll love that too," she hugged me

and I looked at her genuinely happy for me. Well, that went well, I think.

## Chambers in the Palace

" As you all know, my son just recently turned 30 and am sure you read the papers so you are aware of what has been happening."

Elder: Is she the one?

" I believe so."

Elder 2: What we are asking is that, is she the one from the prophecy...

There was silence, everyone waiting for my answer.

" Look, I know we are all on the edge here, and we all want what is best for the kingdom and its people and sustainability. You all know Zai. He has never dated a woman openly after that incident, and he has never let the press sniff in his business until now. I think him being open about this is him showing you that this woman is the one for him.

Elder Zack: And if she isn't? If it ends badly? How do we recover from this?

" I rather we focus on who coming with me to South Africa to get this woman?"

Elder Zack: Look, I know this isn't what you want to hear, especially from me as I am your brother, but last time things were bad. I do not want to go through that uncertainty again.

" And you won't."

Elder Zack: Then we need to prove she is the one. Something that proves to us that we are supporting the right cause.

I looked at my brother.

" Am not sure I follow."

Elder Zach: You heard me right. Prove to us that this is it. That this woman will stop the prophecy from happening, that the inner spirits that are within Zai will just be that. Inner spirit , that what Zai is doing, he is well informed and knows about it and that we are not in our heads. Tell me that little girl knows what she is marrying!!!

The room was silent as I looked at the elders looking at their hands while my brother spoke.

" This is Zai we talking about. The same boy who stopped a tsunami with his bare hands from hitting our shores a few years ago. The same Zai who put us on the map with all his innovative ideas. The same Zai....

Elder Zack: I am not disputing my nephews abilities but this... this is about the prophecy. We can't lose him nor our lives while we can do something about it. So prove to us that she is about to stop the hell gates from opening, and I'll support this marriage. Cause if she isn't the one and she marries him, then we are all doom.

Zai

The drive back to her place was pleasant as she was content. I looked at her now and then made her smile.

Hlobisile: What?

" You have a loving family,"

Hlobisile: they can be extra and well have no pause button.

I nodded and parked at her place and watched my brother check the place out, then signal for us to go through. Funny how I have abilities to protect them, and yet they are putting their lives out there for me.

Hlobisile: You are thinking hard.

" When is your period? Am just asking. " she stood there for a second thinking and then looked at me and ran into the house, mumbling no no as she went to the bathroom. I calmly followed her as she went through her bag and opened her dairy, then looked at me with huge eyes.

Hlobisile: I am late... oh my gosh, I am late.

" Am sure it's coming,"

Hlobisile: I am never late!!! I watched her eyes fill up, and I felt a tug at my heart and looked at her. The past two weeks we haven't been keeping our distance from each other. Yes, a week and some days won't make her pregnant, but I pray she is so she can see she meant for me. I tugged her closer to me, and I could feel her whole body shaking. Was it shocked? Or fear of the possibility?...

## Eleven

Zai

She hardly slept, and I could see her eyes were red from the silent cries. I watched her prepare us for breakfast, and my brothers kept looking at me for some sort of explanation, but I said nothing. Zong wasn't here she had an early meeting, so it was just us 3 and her.

Zeng: I don't want to middle in your business, but are you okay?

Hlobisile looked at him and plastered a fake smile on her face with trembling lips.

Hlobisile: Yes

Zing: and am a strip dancer.

" she will be okay,"

Zeng: I am a good listener.

Hlobisile: I am late

Zing: late on what?

Hlobisile: periods. Am late on my periods.

The whole room was silent for a while.

Zeng: These things happen, right?

" That's what I said."

Hlobisile: I am never late. I am early at times but never late

Zing: Okay... so what next?



Hlobisile: I have to wait 3 days, then do a test to see if I am pregnant or not.

Zeng: If you are?

Zai: I will cross that bridge when we get there.

So the next few days was Hlobisile doing her best to pull herself together, and I and my father tried to understand what Uncle Zack means and wants.

Mdu

I have been trying to get ahold of her, and her phone has been going to be answered. So I decided to drive to her place where I knocked on the door to no avail, so I put two guys on surveillance there just to check for me when she back so I can come over. I don't really believe that the king will marry her or that she will allow this after all that she has been through. I truly believe that I stand a chance on her maybe fix things, and explain to her where I am coming from.

Zai

We were staying in a hotel. The past three days since we have sold her apartment and moved out of there taking things that she doesn't want to go to a pawn shop and keep what she wants to ship it to the Palace. I was then able to set a date with her father to go through what he expects from us for his daughter hand in marriage and now here she was looking herself on a mirror preparing to go downstairs and have lunch with her mother just the two of them.

" You look nervous,"

Hlobisile: My mom and I hardly have girl time, so yes, I am nervous. For her to request this. She may have a load full to share with me.

" I just think you reading too much into things just as you read too much into your periods being late"

She was silent for a while and looked at me.

" we will go see a doctor the minute you done with your mom." she nodded and planted a kiss on me and walked out of the room. Zing walked in since Zeng was going to be her security.

Zing: her ex has people by the old apartment.

" Hmmm."

He was quiet for some time, and I looked at him.

Zing: I don't wanna sound bad or that I wish bad for you too, but when will you tell her.

" When she ready,"

Zing: When is that?

" I'll let you know the minute I am ready,"

Zing: I think the sooner you tell her, the better.

" I know, I will,"

Zing: The pregnancy...

" I said I will"

## Twelve

Hlobisile

I sat across my mother and looked at her look around.

"mom,"

Mom: This is fancy. I don't even know what to order.

I grinned and settled on my chair.

"wanna tell me what on your mind?"

She looked at me for some time and drank her water.

Mom: Is this what you want, love? She looked serious and worried.

"If you asked me that a few days ago, I would have said no, but now. Now I think it's a solid yes"

Mom: That good to hear, I don't want to make the same mistake as last time

"What mistake is that?"

Mom: Not being there for you. I know that things with you and Mdu were not great, but I kept telling myself that you would come to me. Talk to me about things, and then we figure it out, but you never came.

"I didn't wanna bother you,"

Mom: I am your mother. I am made to be bothered by you.

I was silent as the waiter placed starters on our table, and I laughed cause I knew this was all Zai doing.

Mom: Now tell me everything.

" I feel like I am moving too fast with him, but at the same time, it feels good. It's feels good to be loved, and it feels good being able to love without fear."

Mom: Hmm, iv never seen you like this before. You are so calm and so content with who you are .

" he brings that out,"

Mom: And you ready to spend the rest of your life with him?

" Yes. Mom, in all the years iv been with a person, iv never felt so alive. So in touch with myself. He doesn't consume me. "

Mom: And that is good.

" Thank you for this."

She grinned, feeling pleased with herself

and we ate and spoke and laughed till she left, and I walked back to the hotel to find Zai on the phone. I went in the bathroom and washed my face and then walked out. And watched the anger on his face as he stood there looking outside. I stood next to him.

Zai: How was lunch?

" Nice, thank you for the food,"

He sighed and moved to the couch and pulled me closer to him, making me sit on his lap while he sat there, not saying anything.

Zai: I wanna share with you something.

" Okay,"

Zai: Have you ever wondered why I never dated?

" Not really, but since you are talking about it. Why?"

He was silent again and looked at me.

Zai: I am different

" we have established that"

Zai: Well, I mean, I am really not normal. I looked at him, trying to understand him, and he shrugged and looked at me.

Zai: If I show you something, promise me that you would hear me out?

" Okay,"

Mdu

It's been a few days since she was not going to her place, which was weird. I asked a few guys to go to her parents' place and followed them around when they followed her mom to the hotel. That when I knew that she there cause they sent me a picture of her having lunch with her mom. I know she wasn't gonna give me a time of her day, so I got a team to go in there, guns blazing to find her. I got the information as to what room she and that guy is in and I got the stuff in my pocket too so I know how ill distract that king while I take her out of there just to talk. Yes, kidnapping her is a bit extreme, but it's all I could do. So I sat in the car waiting for my guys to bring her to me and maybe change her mind about everything.

## Thirteen

Zai

I know I should wait on this until I know she can't leave me, but she deserves the truth. She deserves to know what exactly she is getting herself into, and then there was a knock before I could even show her. I walked to the door and looked at the staff member who was standing there, and the hair on the back of my head stood. It stood the same way it does before anything bad happens

Staff: Sorry to disturb your stay here, Sir, but we need you at the front to clear a few things.

I nodded and closed the door on thdm and fished out my phone, calling my brother Zeng.

Zeng: sho

" eyes alert."

Zeng: Okay, I'll do a sweep now.

I hang up called Zong.

Zong: Yes?

" Check why I am needed at the front desk and keep your eyes on alert."

Zong: told her yet?

" No, but I have a feeling."

Zong: I'll do a sweep.

" zeng on it, I'll drive her out to the doctors. Maybe I am panicking about what I wanna do,"

Zong: Okay.

I hung up and looked at her calmly, standing near the window looking out.

Hlobisile: You were.... that when I heard the door unlock and without thinking as much cause, I know my siblings never let themselves in. I pushed her behind me and leaped into a transformation from human into a lion. A full-blown white Katanga lion and I stood there panting and looking at the guy that was wearing the hotel uniform but didn't look like he works here. Before he could grasp what was happening I leaped to him and held onto him throwing him to the wall when the door opened and two more guys came in and I roared and watched them turn running as the hotel alarm went off and I turned to find Hlobisile standing there looking at me not blinking or moving or saying anything at all and when the door opened again with two bullets ripping through I leaped and transformed into a Chinese dragon king that is black with fire blue eyes and whipped my tail at intruders making them fly to the wall creaking a few bones here and there and being unconscious. When my heart stopped beating fast. I transformed into my human form. I fished out my phone and called my sister

Zong: In the middle of something, her ex is here.

" Cool, handle it while I handle what just happened." She was silent for a while, and I knew she was reading our room with her abilities .

Zong: You morphed?

I heard a few bullets

and I know she was shooting as tires screeched.

" later" I switched off the phone walked to the closet leaving her standing there and then walked back with a top on and watched tears roll down her face and then she screamed holding her stomach and I watched blood soak off her leg and she looked at me with nothing but fear as I picked her up and closed my eyes with my heart pounding and found myself in my family well trusted doctor hospital back at our costal home as he rushed attending to her needs. I stood there and said nothing as everyone rushed to her. What have I done? Couldn't I protect her by changing? Couldn't I.... I felt the bubbling in me and ran out of the building before the katanga came full view as I ran to the nearest woods and ran till I was exhausted then went back to the hospital where I found my sibilings standing there and Zong with a top for me to wear. I knew she read the room after she fixed what was happening at that hotel. I looked at her, begging her to read what in the room next door and what they were doing to Hlobisile, and she looked at me with worry on her face.

Zong: I can't read her, it's blank and black. I can't tell what is happening.

Zing: You always know.

I saw the panic on her, and I knew she really couldn't see.

Mdu

The after math was too much one of the guys was rambling about a lion and black dragon and I knew they were going through so much but I



kept going back to the female in full black that was shooting at my car and hitting all the right places almost nibbling me.

Mrs Ngema

There was a shooting at the hotel that I was in a few hours ago and I tried calling Hlobi and her phone kept ringing and it was frustrating so I turned going back to the hotel and parked to find polices everywhere and I ran to one.

" My daughter is in there," I kept saying to him, and he looked at me.

Him: In there for the restaurant or to stay?

" she staying there and...." I saw the guys that i usually saw with Mashaba being wheeled out in ambulance stretches, and I felt my heart pound fast as I left to the car and drove away going home. I knew that boy would be a problem, and I knew it wouldn't end well for him. I took my phone out and called Hlobisile again, and this time, someone answered.

" Hlobisile....."

Voice: Sorry... do you know the people in this room?

" My daughter, is she there?"

Voice: No man and you are?

" Who are you?"

Voice: one of the polices on sight.

I nodded. Maybe she went out. Maybe all this happened after she went out. She did say she was going out with Zai, right?

" I want my daughter, and you have her phone and... I broke cause I wasn't looking where I was driving, so I almost hit a car. I paused breathing and kept quiet for a while. I took a few deep breaths to calm myself and remembered the words of the

of the Sangoma I once saw while pregnant with Hlobisile " one day when you think that all is well and that things are going well and calm and she is getting married to ubukhosi( royalty). The truth about her( she pointed to my belly) will come out. The truth about who and what she is will come to light. " I felt my lips tremble, and a tear escaped my eyes as I quickly wiped them off. Ngema will be crushed if he was to know the truth about Hlobisile, and she was to know what I did almost 30 years ago. She would hate me!!!

## Fourteen

I watched the doctor walk to us and look at me. This is the same doctor I used on the other girl who lost her life before of me.

Doctor: She is alive, under shock but alive.

I felt air leave my lungs, giving me a sense of relief.

Doctor: I'll keep her for one day just to see how she is and if her bp lowers.

" uhm, the bleeding?"

Doctor: Some people bleed when they have experienced an out of body experience and am judging by the shock on her face that she has a lot to digest mentally.

" her and I were thinking that she might be..."

Doctor: Yes, she is pregnant.

" Did you tell her?"

Doctor: I figured you both know

" An the baby is fine even though she bleed?"

Doctor: Yes.

I nodded and said nothing.

Doctor: she is okay. He gave her a few medd to help her rest, and if the BP continues to go up, that might be a problem with the child .

" Thank you,"

Doctor: You can see her. I nodded and looked at my siblings.

Zing: Congratulations

" Thank you,"

Zong: I'll tell the elders and fast-track the negotiations.

" Yeah, if she still wants me,"

Hlobisile

I know what I saw. I know I am not crazy, but I know what I saw. I looked at the empty room and curled up in a ball, hugging myself as tears rolled down my face. He just changed in a blink of an eye. One minute, he was Zai, my zai, and next, he was a huge lion standing before me and the little guy with a knife, and then boom, he was a flying dragon. Dragon are extinct and.... I felt his presence before he even said anything, and I just laid there. He moved closer, and I felt my chest tighten, and he stood a few feet from the bed, and I just laid there my back toward him.

Zai: I am sorry.

He mumbled, and I felt the pain in his voice and my heart tied up into knots. I wiped my tears and felt my body tremble. Is he sorry for who he is or when I was bleeding.... I woke up like a blot and moved the blanket to look at my numb naked legs. I looked at him with my heart in my throat. He looked tired and worried.

" I was bleeding," I mumbled for him to hear. He moved closer, his eyes sparkling as he fixed the little sheet covering me. Then he placed his

hand on my belly, his eyes changing to light grey like a beautiful beach day.

Zai: I know you digesting a lot of things about me right now, and I know that you are probably thinking the worst, but you are carrying my seed. A seed I intentionally planted in you with both our consent. A seed that belongs to you as much as it belongs to me. A seed that I plan to nature as much as you are doing right now. A seed that part of who I am and what I am. A seed that will bring nothing but joy to you as much as it will to me. All I am asking is, can this seed grow in a home that his father and fore fathers created for him, and can he....

" How do you know it's a he?" I mumbled with tears running down my face as I placed my hand right on top of his on my belly, and I watched the simple gesture bring tears to him.

Zai: I always wanted a son for my first child.

" iv always wanted a child." I sighed, and he looked at me for some time.

Zai: I am different

" Yeah

I saw."

He shifted un easy.

" That day, you told me I might be carrying your seed, and if I was, what would I do? I never answered you cause I already said yes to what I'll do. "

Zai: What that?

He asked as if scared of the answer.

"Marry you... I'll undoubtedly be your Queen"

We both looked at each other with tears.

Zai: What did you see?

"You will have to do it again and explain it to me,"

He wiped his tears and moved closer, looking at me as if his ears were deceiving him.

"Come here." he shifted closer, and I placed my shaking hand on his heart and looked at him.

"So long this is beating, am here" then he crashed onto me holding me tight and cried like a small child and I felt a shift in my body, a shift as if I am a new person that ready to be explored. A shift as if the old Hlobisile is gone and now a new Queen Hlobisile, a mother Hlobisile, a worthy Hlobisile. I felt rejuvenated and loved. I held him in my arms and told myself that no matter what happens and what he is, I am never leaving his side. Am always going to be Hlobisile the Queen to the legendary Zai of coastal lands.

Zong

I walked in the royal chambers to see my father and his brothers sitting there.

Uncle Zack: What is so important that we were rushed here?

I swear my uncle can be a pain in a ass that I forget that he is an elder too.

" we need to send delegates to the Ngema family asap."

Uncle Zack: iv stated where I stand in all of this.

" I have proof that she is the one for him."

Uncle Zack: him feeling that way and you having proof, solid proof....

" she pregnant." The whole room was silent as they all remembered the last time we went through this. The last girl we thought was the one, and all hell broke lose.

" she having his child"

I told them about our trip in Johannesburg everything and how she is in hospital and how we thought that it might be another of those unfortunate events that she passes on but " she is alive and pregnant with his child. He knows it is his cause she was with this one person for more than 10 years and not once was she pregnant and now she has been with him for a few weeks now and she is carrying his child. One more thing he morphed in front of her"

Everyone eyes bulge out cause only a handful can say they have seen Zai in any other form, but his true human form.

Uncle Zack: And she is alive?

" Yes,"

Elder 1: She is still going to marry him even though she saw things that a human brain can take months to wrap it mind on?

I was silent cause I didn't know what to say.

" I can't read her... I can read everyone in this room mind,soul and thoughts, but I can't read her. When I try too, everything goes black as if there is a black wall standing before me and her"

They all looked at me skeptical cause they knew I always read people.

Dad: But how do you feel about her?

" she is the perfect piece of a puzzle in my brother life. I know you have a difficult task here, but the prophecy said it's self. " By the time his 30, he will meet his other half, a woman Destin to be his other half. A woman who will be connected to him from mind, body, and soul. A woman who will make his mortal life immortal. A woman that will make sure that he goes past 30 and if he goes past 30 all his people will live, the land will preserver and so will all his people and if within his 30 years on earth this woman doesn't come into his life then he will turn into dust and his people will suffer for eternity ...iv memorized these words even though at times I didn't know what they meant. Even though he once fell in love with a woman who lost her life. Even though none of this makes sense but his my brother, I serve him, and every single person in this room does too. So trust me when I say, send delegates to her home and send them now!!!.... "

There was a rumble of clouds, and I looked at them reading the room and feeling they energy change to being acceptance of Hlobisile Ngema, and I grinned.

Dad: I'll be speaking on everyone behalf if I say talk to her and see if the day after tomorrow is okay.

I grinned and kissed my dad cheek and got up and looked at everyone, especially my uncle Zack.



" You will never have a son, so long as your heart still thinks that the throne should have been in your lineage." Everyone gapsed and looked at him. I walked out of the chambers smiling, I have a sister. Am officially getting a sister that will always be by my side in this jungle....

## Fifteen

Somewhere in the world

" What you mean he has a true seed?"

The room became silent. The Queen looked at me, but I never looked at her cause I knew what the healer was saying, I knew what she meant.

" Hlanganani is the king first daughter, she...."

Healer: The bones say she is the second, and there fore she can not sit as the crowned princess. She is a princess by blood but not a crowned princess. The bones.....

" Do not tell me what the bones say.... Hlanganani is Hlanzeko first daughter. I don't care what these bones say. "

Healer: Then your people will continue to suffer. If the king doesn't acknowledge that Hlobisile.

" Hlobisile?" I asked, looking at the Healer.

Healer: That's what the spirits say her name is. She named her Hlobisile.

I know I shouldn't be smiling, but I felt a smile and felt my heart become lighter and looked at the healer.

" Nothing changes for my daughter Hlanganani, she loves the young king I set up for her, she will continue to marry him and she will not be crowned Princess but will continue to be crowned Queen in her new home with the king.

Queen Shaya: Hlanzekho???

" iv spoken, my love,"

She was silent, and I looked at the elders in the room and my wife of 3 children.

" I've never spoken about this because it was my past. Back in my traveling days and I couldn't come back to my land and tell my father, a king known of powers beyond measures that I slept with a woman. A woman that was not in the same tribe as I, a woman that was modern and knows nothing about our ways, and I couldn't admit that I have sinned on my wife. Left her here thinking she can't bear kids and went to Father a child outside our ways, but the Healer is right. I have a child that is known about for years, I just never confirmed it, but I had dreams about her. Dreams of who and what she is, but I then hoped it was Hlanganani who had these powers. You all have seen how exceptional my daughter is, and everyone praised her beyond words, but as time went on. I knew she never had the family gift, the family power. I knew that I was to pass my great great family powers into my first child. And when Hlanganani was born and did nothing of that power, I knew that I had a child with the other woman. I kept it to myself cause I know how it will hurt you. I looked at my wife for the first time to see tears in her eyes.

" Am not proud of my actions, but things happened that led to her being conceived." There was silence for a while, and I looked at my only son, and he looked away. I know this hurts, and I looked at the two girls that I love whole heartily, it must be hard finding out that you have an older sister.

Hlobisile

It's been two days since the incident, and we haven't spoken much about it cause I had to prepare for the delegates coming to my family

home. My mom has been a little nervous around me, which was unusual, but I figured the hotel incident had put her on edge. I haven't told anyone about the pregnancy, and I plan to keep it that way until everything is done. My big brother walked in, and I smiled, looking at him. I haven't seen him since the day he was supposed to walk me down the aisle with my father.

Nkosana: You look radiant

" So

are you?"

He chuckled, sitting by the couch .

Nkosana: You vanish for a few days, and the next thing you all over the news?

" the perks of marrying into royalty "

Nkosana: Never imagined you being in a public eye like this, especially after everything.

" Yeah, life has a funny way of throwing things on you. "

He looked at me. My brother and I have always been close to one another. He really treated me like his princess.

Nkosana: You know I always have your back?

I nodded

Nkosana: And you will always have a home here

" I know."

Nkosana: Good. ( he got up smiling), then let me negotiate things on your behalf, ke.

" I love you," he grinned and walked out of my room.

King Hlanzekho

We sat there with my daughters and son watching the news and watched a whole show of the king Zai of the coastal, showering the Ngema family with his customs on taking Hlobisile Ngema. I knew right then that she was my daughter. every time the crew tried to take glimpses of hee throughout the proceedings, she would shy away from the camera. I watched how she and the king had a couple of stolen glances and subtle smiles here and there, and I watched how he looked at her.

Hlelo: she marrying into royalty?

Hlelile: aaaah Zai... I swear I had sleepless night about that king

I looked at my daughter, who is the youngest of them all.

Hlelile: Come on, dad, every king around the world wanted to line up their girls for him. Don't tell me you have never thought of getting Hlanganani to him.

I smiled and looked at Hlanganani.

Hlanganani: Thank God you found me the match I have now.

There was silence, and I looked at my children.

" I know iv robbed you guys,"

Hlanganani: Actually, it's a relief that I am not the oldest. Yes, I am shaken, but I am also glad.

Hlelo: I know we have been giving you some hard time the past few days, but

" No need to explain, son.i deserve it,"

Hlelile: Have you thought about how you are going to approach this?

I turned to the TV in time of them interviewing Zai himself with Hlobisile by his arm shying away from the screen.

Anchor: You have a date, your highness?

Zai: Soon

I watched my little girl giggle like a small child and fan herself while her siblings laugh.

Anchor: How does today feel for you, Hlobisile?

She flashed the most perfect smile and looked at Zai with love all over her eyes.

Hlobisile: as if I am dreaming.

Mdu

I don't know when, but I have thrown a glass of my scotch to the TV, and I was breathing fast. How can she? I turned to find a tall, slim girl standing there in full black, holding a head of what looked like a lion dripping blood on my marble floors. She threw it to the Persian rug, and I felt myself cringe.

Her: Mdu Mashaba

" You are?"

Her: the girl that visits after you try kidnapping a friend.

I said nothing and looked at her. Then two guys appeared next to her who were definitely twins wearing a full suit, charcoal like but with blood splatters all over their white shirts which shows they were in full battle with the lion that they ripped the head off.

Her: I want you as far from Hlobisile as possible, or I'll set my brothers on you. And your head will be laying on the floor in your father lounge just as this lion head is.

" Am not...."

She was so fast that she was so close to me within seconds. Her warm breath on my face.

Her: You don't want my wrath.

I blinked, and just like that, I was alone, and for a second, I thought I imagined things until I saw the head on my rug....

## Sixteen

Mdu

I sat there thinking to myself on that has happened. I looked at her pictures on my phone. Why didn't I pitch? Why did I allow Thando to stop me from pitching to my wedding and then for her to leave me for a better catch. I've lost everything with Hlobisile. A life that I built with her, a life that I took for granted. A life that was so perfect yet not appreciated. I sat there watching the pictures of how happy she was compared to the pictures we took for our celebration. I sat there and looked at how at ease she was instead of how she was with me. I switched off my phone and a whole scene of how that girl with a lion head threatened me. Should I just let this be? Or I should plan things through this time and what about the lion, and some say they saw a dragon. What of that lion and dragon? Was it something they imagined? Or they are just playing tricks on me.

Hlobisile

It's been 3 days since the negotiations and the celebration, and I have been preparing on up rooting my life from here to the coastal land. I was having breakfast with the girls who have been nothing but supportive in all of this.

Thandeka: You know, you haven't told us how's the sex?

" Am not talking about that,"

Zanele: Come on

" Guys, it's breakfast time. We can talk about other things."



Thandeka: Like, did you get some?

" I always get some"

They all roared with laughter. I grinned

Advertisement

looking at the two beautiful souls.

Zanele: I can't believe this is life. I know, s Queen.

Thandeka grinned and looked at me with nothing but love.

Thandeka: a whole Queen

I raised my cup of tea as if making a toast.

" to Palace vibes " every one laughed as we toast and enjoyed our morning.

Mrs Ngema

I know I should be telling her, I know I have no right to keep such things from her, but first, I need to share this with my husband, but how when his so close to her. How do you tell a man that the little joy that they find from they last born is actually not theirs to have? I sat by the bed and looked at the photo of Hlanzekho and I. The one we took on my girls' trip led to a whole new chapter that I never knew I could explore. I grinned and then walked the short distance to my closet, put it in my memory box and hid it ay the back of the closet, and closed my eyes for a second breathing. How does one break such news when one's marriage is so perfect? What do I do? How do I even do this?

## Seventeen

Zai

She was fast asleep when I heard the first thud. I got up fast and looked around and there was nothing. Then, I closed my eyes, and again, I heard a few thuds, and I shifted closer to a sleeping Hlobisile, and the closer I got to her, the louder the thud beat. I placed my hand on her belly, and I felt it thumping through my hand to my heart, and I smiled. It was light and steady, and I knew it wasn't her heart am hearing but the heart of my little one, and I wiped my tears and shifted closer to her as peace engulfed me. This is what iv always wanted, a woman to love and a little one to bring peace into our home. Yes, I haven't told her, I haven't shared with her who and what I am, but she has love for me, and she is right here even after all that has happened. She is still here. I shifted, and I felt the little thud as she sighed and looked at her.

Hlobisile: You okay?

" iv never been better,"

She shifted on me, and I wrapped her in my arms.

Hlobisile: My brain has been trying to wrap itself around everything that has happened the past few days, and I just can't explain it nor begin to understand it.

" Well, I can explain, I think."

Hlobisile: All that I wanna know is that I am being with you. Does it hurt me? Does it affect me in any way?

I looked at her and saw how worried she looked, and I lowered my lips on her, which she welcomed whole heartily.

" I'll never hurt you. You see, I knew about you years before I met you. I know that at some point in my life, I'll meet a woman who made it for me. A woman that can take who I am and wear it as if it hers to carry.

They say you are to bring out the greatness in me. You are for my people, and with you in my life

I can live. The beast in me can live in harmony without them trying to kill each other. "

Hlobisile: You changed into a dragon and a lion, a huge lion that doesn't look normal at all.

" katanga lion... they are African lions who look after their herds. And the Chinese dragon. It's has been worshiped for years, and it said to bring peace and draw universal powers. I am that. I shape shift however I want. I can hear things that the human ear can't hear, and I can feel, feel things that are beyond human comprehension at times. It's just that I am wired differently but am still me. "

She was silent for a while and shifted, looking at me, letting the sheet drop off, exposing one of her boobs.

Hlobisile: I feel different. Iv always felt different with you, and I figured it was just the new love kind of vibes, but iv been feeling different around you, different when I see you, and different when I think of you.

" Is it a good difference?"

Hlobisile: Yes.

" So long it good. Look, I am also new in this phase of my life. I once tried it, but it wasn't good."

Hlobisile: What happened to her?

" she passed on, I slept with her, and the next thing she wasn't well and things just went sour from there,"

She was silent, and she shifted again, looking at me with wonder. I moved my hand to her belly and felt the heart beat again, and smiled at her.

Hlobisile: What if I have complications?

I looked at her.

" Don't think about that, just stay calm, and we will figure things out, okay?"

She nodded and moved closer, and I pinned her underneath me, and she looked at me smiling as I found my entrance and made sweet love to her.

Mr Ngema

I woke up and walked to the kitchen to see Susan walking around and making a feast. I sat down and waited for her cause I know she usually does this when she is panicking. I let her be. I sat there and watched her fuss on tiny things. Then, when I was done eating I got up and helped her clean the kitchen.

" wanna talk about it?"

She blinked away the tears and looked at me.

" it can't be that bad,"

She took a few breathes and looked at me.

Susan: I never thought I'll ever be in a position where I hurt you.

" Hurt me?"

I was a little confused but she wiped a tear that escaped her eyes and looked at me with so much sadness and shame at the same time.

Susan: There's no easy way to say this

" Okay,"

Susan: it's about Hlobisile

I looked at her waiting for whatever was going to come next.

Susan: she..... she.....( she licked her lips) .... she isn't yours!!!.... I looked at her and I felt my world spin.

## **Eighteen**

Mr ngema

I felt my heart thumping hard, and I held my chest and looked at my wife, who had nothing but panic in her eyes. I held my chest and felt the sharp pain go right for my chest and my left arm going numb. I looked at her not being able to breathe as she grabbed her phone now crying and looking at me while talking to the phone and I closed my eyes as blackness welcomed me and I felt my body go numb.

Hlobisile

I woke up to Zai on the phone and mumbling things. I walked to the bathroom and took a shower, and wore a dress. The minute I saw Zai, I could see something was wrong.

Zai: we need to go

" Everything okay?"

Zai: Come.

He helped me with my shoes and walked out to the car where his brothers kept looking at me.

" zai??"

No one said anything as we walked the short distance to the car. I got in, and he got in next to me

Zai: Remember you have our little one in you, and your bp shouldn't be high, so whatever happens, think of him, okay?

I nodded. I nodded cause he looked so serious, and I knew he meant business. I watched them drive me to the hospital and park and walk in. The minute I walked on, I found Nomazwi, Nkosana, and Mama by the benches and mama eyes red.

" What's going on?"

Nkosana looked at me with eyes red, and I looked at all of them.

Nomazwi: they working on dad.

" Working on him?"

Nomazwi: he.... the doctors walked out of the rooms, and I watched my relatives get up and look at the doctor. I saw her shake her head, and I heard Mama cry, and I felt my knees not being able to hold me, and I buckled to the floor

and they caught me before I fell. I heard the scream rip out of my mouth and felt my body shake as tears rolled down. I knew Zai was holding me. I could feel the air on me close in on my lungs, and I could feel the pain in my heart.

Zai: Breathe..... just breathe.....

I tried, but instead, hot air was oozing in and out of my lungs. I couldn't breathe at all. I looked at him with fear in my eyes, and he was calm.

Zai: Breathe

" The baby... the baby...." I felt a little dizzy, and he held me while I tried to breathe. I could hear Mama's cries and Nomazwi and closed my eyes doing the best to breathe, and I felt his hand on my belly, and I looked at him with fear.

Zai: his okay, but you need to calm yourself. I nodded, and he turned to his brothers, and they turned with water handing it to me, and I took a few sips.

Zai: Stay calm, okay?

I nodded. I can't believe that my father is no more. The first man to show me love and teach me what love is.

Somewhere in the world

" we wake up with the sad news of Mr Ngema. Father to King Zai fiancé who has sadly passed this morning. The cause of death is heart attack, and the Ngema family are beside themselves with this sudden death. As you can see, King Zai is with the family, and so are his siblings in these trying times. Our heartfelt condolences to the Ngema family. I stood there, my heart torn for the family, and I felt for my daughter. This must be difficult for her, knowing the only father figure she has is now no more, and then I pop up and introduce myself...



## Nineteen

Susan

I killed my husband. I killed the only man who has ever loved me, protected me, and gave me all my heart desires. I killed him. I sat there looking at the coffin slowly go down. I heard my daughters big sad cries, and I felt it rip my heart. I felt the energy in me slowly fade. Am dying with him. My soul is dying with him. Yes, we had our problems. We had a rocky on and off situation, but we worked through it, and by the time we did. I was pregnant with Hlobisile, and by the time the doctor told me when she will be born. I knew it wasn't his. I felt a piece of me die with every shovel of the sand and when everything was done and I was sitting alone in our bedroom. I knew I had to tell them. I knew I had to let them know what happened and what cause his heart attack.

Zai

The funeral was beautiful, my whole family with it elders were here. When all was done and they left

I walked Hlobisile to her room to let her lie down. After some time, I watched Mdu leave, leave without any trouble, which made me more aware of him. The door opened and I watched

Her mother walked in, I got up and excused myself leaving them but when I got to the door I felt the air change and I turned looking at her mother for some time.

" i think you both need rest ma, for tonight just find comfort in each other presence" I watched her lips tremble and tears rolled down her face and she looked at me for some time.

Hlobisile: come get in bed with me mama. The door opened and I watched nomazwi and Nkosana walk in and just like that I watched Mrs Ngema and her children cuddled up in bed finding comfort in each other warmth. I looked at her and that when I heard her thoughts.

" how can I tell them that I killed their father? How do I tell Hlobisile that the man she is grieving for is not her father and his do I tell Nkosana that he has just buried the last member of his biological family? How do I tell him that he came into my home when he was a few weeks old after his mother left him here screaming and banging on doors begging Mthunzi to take him. That when he came into this house problems started, problems that lead to things being said and done. How do I even share all of this with them. I know Mthunzi and I told ourself that we would never talk about such. " I closes my eyes stopping myself from hearing her thoughts and looked away. So Hlobisile is not a Ngema and Nkosana is not Mrs Ngema son even though she loved him as if he was hers. That leaves Nomazwi... is Nomazwi Mrs Ngema daughter and if yes, is Mr Ngema her mother? I looked at her.

" I wish I could tell them what brought the heart attack. I wish I could tell them, that their father is gone because of Me telling him the truth about Hlobisile. I wish I could tell them everything " her mind went black again as she touched her children with nothing but love oozing out of her. I felt it and u saw the love in the way she touched them....

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## Twenty

Hlobisile

I woke up to finding myself in the room with my siblings and my mom, and I remembered them walking in and us napping together. I shifted and, in doing so, woke them up. When we were all awake, Nkosana walked to the chair and sat there looking at mom and us.

Nkosana: I just don't understand it. How he can just die like that without a warning. How can that just happen?

We were all silent, and I looked at Mama, who looked away.

" it's God will Nkosana."

Nomazwi: he sure is a crazy creature this God of ours.

There was silence, and Mama cleared her throat and looked at us.

Mama: You know i love you guys, right?

Nkosana: Aw ma

Mama: Seriously, I want to know if you guys know that you are my everything.

" Iv never doubted it,"

Nkosana: You the first female I fell for hard.

Mama smiled

Nomazwi: You everything a child wishes for in a mother ma

Mama licked her lips and looked at us with blurry eyes.

Mama: Your father and I have been carrying a secret for more than 35 years. A secret we told each other that if one of us had to die first, we would then break the silence and share it with you guys, but the thing is, his death was not expected. His death was.....( she took a deep breath) a mistake

We all looked at her, and I felt much heart beat hard against my chest.

Mama: The truth is , I killed your father.

We all gasped, looking at her with shock.

Mama: I told him news that broke his heart, and I never told him gently

" Mama"

Mama: Let me finish love.

I kept quiet and felt Nomazwi touch my hand

and I watched Nkosana stand up and pace a bit and looked at Mama.

Nkosana: I know.

Now I was confused as I watched my brother look at my mom with tears in his eyes and mom lips trembling looking at him

Mama: You know?

She whispered, wiping tears in her eyes

Nkosana: I was 15, Nomazwi was 10, and Hlobisile 7 when I walked in one you and dad and another woman talking. I know I should have turned and walked back out of the house and continued to watch the girls play in the backyard, but I stood by the door and listened to the conversation. I stayed cause you were crying, and dad was angry, and

the woman was begging too. I heard her say the word. I heard her tell dad that she is better now and that she hasn't had a drink in years and that she would take care of her child cause she is working now and can keep a job and has been renting an apartment not far from us. She begged dad, and she wanted her son. She needs iNkosana yakhe, and that life without him has been blank.

I felt tears roll down my cheek and looked at them openly crying.

Nkosana: I heard you tell her that I was the only thing keeping you sane. I heard you tell her that you would rather die than risk my stability to her. I heard you tell her that I am yours. Yours since the first day dad came with me in his arms with nothing but a bottle and a pack of pampers cause the lay in the Shabeen called him off work and told him that she left me there and it's the third day and my milk coming to the end. I remember you telling her that you loved me the minute that you looked at me even though dad cheated on you to have me. I know, Mama. I know I am not yours biologically, but he'll you have been my everything. You have treated me the same way as Nomazwi and Hlobisile. You have loved me as if you carried me in your womb.

Mama was now crying, and so were all of us looking at him shocked

Mama: Why didn't you say something?

Nkosana smiled, looking at her.

Nkosana: I didn't want you to stop loving me. For the longest time, I thought you loved me the way you do cause I don't know the truth, but as time went, I figured you just love me because of me. It's not because of how I was brought in your life, but it was simply because you love me.

There was silence, and Mama looked at me.

Mama: There is something else.

I wiped my tears and looked at her lick her lips a few times. Then she looked at her lips.

Mama: Hlobisile.....( she took a few breathes and looked at me with tears rolling down her face).... He isn't your biological father.

I felt my lips dry up and felt my heart stop for a second and looked at the shock on my siblings face and then looked at Mama, who was crying again.

" Ma???..."



## Twenty-one

I stood outside the door, and I could hear my child heartbeat being stable. I stood there knowing they needed to sort this out amongst themselves.

Hlobisile: What do you mean, Mama?

Hlobisile

I looked at my mother, and she wiped away her tears, and my brains kept telling me to breathe, and I did just that.

Mama: Your father and I were going through a rough patch so my friend organised a trip for us to go cool off and we went to Cape Town and things got heated when I meet a man by the name of Hlanzekho.

I gapsed and looked at my mom to see that she was very serious.

Mama: it was a week affair, and he knew I was married, and he told me he was married too, just going through a hard time having to accept it.

Nkosana: Ma?

There was silence.

" Does he know about me?"

Mama: I think so

" and Dad heart attack?"

Mama: I was telling him about it, and I just blurted it out and....

She wiped her tears as Nomazwi gasped and looked at mom with so much hurt.

Nomazwi lips were trembling as she looked at Mama

Nomazwi: and me?.....( she took a deep breath).... Nkosana is not yours biologically, and Hlobisile is not dad's biologically. What about me? What is the secret that you and dad have been holding about me?

There was silence as Mama looked at her hands and tears falling on her hands.

Nomazwi: Maa

The room was so quiet and so tense that a knife could cut the tension.

Mama: A student.....

Mama didn't even finish her sentence when Nomazwi crushed in me and wailed like a small child shaking, and I held her feeling her pain.

Nkosana: Our lives were lies?

He was standing there looking at us with tears all over his face.

Nkosana: I knew about me but them.

Mama: it doesn't change anything. You are my children, and you will always be my children. Family is made by love, not genetics. Your father loved you all dearly. He worshiped the ground you grew up on. Yes , him and I had our differences

but the one thing we didn't fail on is being your parents.

There was silence, and I wiped my tears and held my sister in my arms.

" Why you never told us?"

She looked at me.

Mama: And take away the joy you guys had about having a stable home? I was not going to break that, and me telling your father about you was my biggest mistake. A mistake that led to him going to his grave heart broken.

Nomazwi shifted and looked at Mama.

Nomazwi: Why tell us now?

Mama was silent for a while and then looked at us, and I felt chills go up my spine.

Mama: cause with your father gone, I don't know how long I can do life without him. Our marriage wasn't perfect. We both made mistakes that cost us dearly, but i knew where I stood with him. I knew he had mad love for me and I knew that after his 3 children there was me and before me there were his children. He lived for this family, strive for us, and with him gone. I dont know how long I can hold on. I blinked a few times and looked at her.

" My child has already lost a grandfather. I don't want him to lose a grandmother, too. And I most definitely want him to know his uncle and aunt." Everyone looked at me, and I felt my sister hands on my belly since she was closed and everyone was grinning and crying at the same time mumbling sweet nothings.

Yes, my family isn't perfect, and we might not have genetics binding us, but we have mad love for one another and that enough to carry us through our tough times. I grinned as they grabbed me, hugging me, and the door slightly opened, and I saw Zai peeping through smiling and closed the door again. I am truly blessed.

## Twenty-two

Nomazwi

I waited for everyone to leave, and it was just mom and I. She looked at me with nothing but love.

Mom: I was a high school teacher before your dad and I retired. There was a student there called Nomazwi and Lord she loved me and I loved her too. On her final year doing grade 12, she got pregnant and told me that she couldn't have it. So I took her in. Stayed with her till she gave birth to you, and I decided to call you Nomazwi cause you are as bright as she was. When she finished her matric, she got a bursary to go study at UCT and would send whatever cash she could for the first few years, but she refused to see you or even visit, so I never pushed. As years gone by once in a while I would receive an email asking about you and I'll bombard her with pictures of you and your siblings and a long paragraph about you and then she would be silent.

I wiped the tears away and looked at mom.

" How you do it?....how do you love two kids that are not even yours nor related to you in away?"

She smiled, and I felt my heart burst with the love she had for me.

Mom: What not to love about you, Nomazwi? You loved me the minute you were born. Became a good mannered child, and now you are a lawyer. I raised a whole lawyer. Nkosana is a splitting image of your father, and I loved him so much

so why would I hate an extension of him and look at him now? He takes care of all of us and is always there for you girls, and he turned out to

be a businessman. Hlobisile brings nothing but peace in my life. She came at the time when your father and I were going through so much, and she restored peace. I guess I never told Ngema who Hlobisile is cause I wanted him to feel like she was his, and I wanted us to mend the things we were going through...( she shifted and touched my cheek smiling)

And look at you now, I can talk to you about anything and everything and you will look at me with nothing but love so why wouldn't I want you as my daughter?"

Zai

She walked straight to me and hugged me, and we shifted to the room that we use as ours since we had been here for a week.

Hlobisile: I am not a Ngema.

" I know." I held her while she processed it and looked at her.

" doesn't change that he loved you"

She nodded and sat on the bed and looked at me, wiping her tears.

Hlobisile: Will it be too soon or selfish of me to want to know my Dad?  
To want to know where I am from and who I am?

I shook my head no

Hlobisile: Then why do I feel like I am betraying dad in wanting to know my father?

I sat next to her and hugged her.

" I think if your Dad didn't die soon, he would have done the same. Search for your dad and make sure you guys have some sort of a relationship. I'll get a team to look into it for you. "

Hlobisile: Thank you.

I nodded, holding her next to me. I already know who her father is. I saw him here paying his respects at the funeral and keeping as far from people as possible. I know royalty from a mile, and that man is king. I've seen him before, but I can't seem to remember his name.

Mdu

Watching her suffer the way that she did broke me. I need to move fast on my plan. I need to move now since everyone is hurting...

## Twenty-three

Hlanzekho

I really wanted her to meet me, but after seeing her devastated like that about her father's passing, I saw it wise not to trouble her. She was already grieving a father who loved her. I shouldn't impose. So I took a few days touring South Africa when the day before I leave, I bumped unto the Zai. He stood before me, tall and elegant, and everything that a father wished in a son.

" Zai"

Zai: South Africa agrees with you

I chuckled and moved to the seat that he indicated for me to sit on.

" I'll say the same for you,"

He smiled and signaled for a waiter who came with water and took our drinks order.

Zai: I am sure you understand your highness why I want to see you?

He can't know? Does he?

" I wouldn't know, but I must say this is the most kings that the South Africans have seen in a week on they land."

That made him smile.

Zai: I agree, so let me be short. My wife.

" Ah, congratulations, I heard the news."

Zai: Thank you. We leave tomorrow for the coastal land and will be honored if you make it to our ceremony. She is welcomed as the Queen of the coastal lands in 3 days' time.

" You going fast, don't you think?"

Zai: I know

" Well, I'll honor the invite,"

Zai: The thing is I'll like for you to go as her father, not as a neighboring king.

I kept quiet and looked at him. How did he know? How does he know that I am her father?

" Am not sure I follow."

Zai: we know... Hlobisile is well aware of you being her biological father and would love for you to honor the invite as her father. This means a day after your arrival, I'll be sending my people over to do right by you, and a day after that

you honor the invite as her father.

I looked at him for a while.

" You have already honored her father on this side."

Zai: I'll do the same to you so long my wife is happy and you have the ability to stand before my people as her father and both our kingdoms are united as one. I really do not mind that at all.

I felt the tears blur my eyes and look at him.

" she knows about me,"



He nodded, and the waiter placed our drinks, and I took a sip and said nothing.

Zai: she with child. My child.

I looked at him and couldn't hold my tears as I wiped them off me.

" The plan was to introduce myself to her, but after what I saw at the cemetery, I figured it was insensitive of me to do so, and now here we are,"

He drank the last bit of his drink and smiled.

Zai: Well, I am glad I bumped into you. He got up, and I watched his sister get up from afar. So it's true that his only protection detail is his sister. I watched him walk away, and I thought to myself, does he know about Hlobisile powers? Are her powers showing as yet, or will they show in time, and if they do, will Zai still want her as his queen? Or are the stories about him having powers too real?

Zong

The drive back was silent and I watched my brother on the rear view mirror looking outside the window.

" wanna share?"

He looked at me for a second and shake his head.

Zai: I have a bad feeling at the pit of my stomach. Like something is about to happen and I can't shake it.

" I'll pay Mdu a visit then"

He smiled and looked at me once more.

Zai: thanks

" no problem. I've already sent a message home to get delegates to go to the coastal land of Hlanzekho and pay their respects.

Zai: what will I be without you

" lost i guess"

He was still silent and I looked at him after parking.

" tell me what wrong?"

Ge sighed and looked at me a little worried.

Zai: the king thoughts when I left I could read them.

" and?"

Zai: he wonders if I know of Hlobisile powers.

I looked at him shocked cause she truly looked like a normal human being.

Zai: do you think she might hide such from me, given I can't read her thoughts at all? Do you think that...

" don't think too much about what if. Maybe she also doesn't know. She not 30 yet maybe her powers come into play when she is 30 and maybe....

Zai: let forget about it. You right in reading too much into it. He walked out of the car and I sat there, thinking about all the times that I was with Hlobisile and how I could miss her powers.

## Twenty-four

I closed the door of the room we were sleeping in while we were in her village and moved closer to where she stood looking out to the beautiful sky filled with stars.

Hlobisile: I never had a void in my life, but for some odd reason, I feel full. I feel like all the missing puzzles are in place, and yet iv never felt out of sort.

" it's called being home, love." I stood behind her and hugged her from behind, looking out to the beautiful sky. We were silent for some time until she turned looking at me. I know she wanted me, and I know that because of the look in her eyes. I shifted her dress up, and my hand found her underwear while she looked at me with dreamy eyes. I slowly slid my fingers in her to find her moist, and I grinned as she groaned. I unbuckled my belt fast and dropped my pants to the floor and lifted her one leg while she balanced on the other, and swiftly while she still looked at me, I entered her. She watched her eyes shut and watched her face relax, and a grin spread on her lips. I shifted, and she moaned softly, adjusting to my length and fullness. I shifted slowly a few times watching her take her fill on me and when she was on the edge I felt her whole body vibrate and her other leg go numb so I lifted her off her feet and went in her a few times before she exploded into a million pieces. I turned with her and walked to the bed where I laid her on her back and removed myself from her, looking into her dreamy eyes.

Hlobisile: I love you. She mumbled, and I grinned cause we hadn't shared these words yet.

" I love you more than life" and I heard thunder and the sky's opened up as I removed all her clothing and mines and made love to her the whole night as our body danced to our heartbeats.

Hlobisile

I was feeling more connected to myself when I woke up to a plate full of breakfast by my bedside and a simple note from Zai

" Sorry, I had to be up early to meet with your father and the elders. Hope this fills you guys up,if not, I'll try other means.

Love Zai"

I grinned

remembering the sweet love making we shared and ate. The food when there was a light knock and then Zong entered with a bunch of flowers grinning as she placed it on the table by the couches.

Zong: You look good.

" Thank you,"

She walked over and took a piece of bacon.

Zong: I can see by the flowers that it was a nice night. I blushed and looked at her grinning.

" Am not about to talk to you about your brother and I,"

Zong: Hmmm, great night indeed. She stood there, and I could see her looking at me, looking at me as if waiting for something. I shifted, making sure the sheet didn't expose my boobs.

" You know if you tell me what you are looking for, I might help,"

She blushed and smiled, looking at me with so much intensity.

" You do know you can talk to me about anything, right?"

Zong: Well, yes, but this is kind of personal for me to straight out ask you.

" Zong, you in my bedroom, am naked underneath these sheet. I think we have passed the point where being personal is an issue."

She looked at me for some time and said nothing, then sat by the edge of the bed and took deep breaths

Zong: Zai will kill me for jumping the gun on this.

" Oh, so Zai knows this too?" I took a few sips of my coffee and looked at her. She really was having a hard time telling me this.

Zong: I don't mean it like that.

I watched her body sway, and I could tell she was lying.

" I thought we don't lie to each other,"

She straightened and looked at me.

Zong: it's okay... I'll wait.

" For?"

Zong: things to show itself.

I looked at her for some time and shrugged.

" You know I get you uncomfortable sharing whatever you want to know, but do know that even if you do share it. Our relationship won't change"

Zong: I know....

## Twenty-five

Hlobisile

When Zong left, I decided to shower and wear one of my dresses when I froze hearing footsteps. I kept quiet cause this was my first time hearing footsteps and being alert of my surroundings, and when there was a pause by the door, I knew that it's wasn't Zai. I finished dressing, and a light knock tapped on the door, and before she even walked in, I knew it was Hlanganani. I could smell her and see her in a different light, like be aware of who she is. Slight movements she made, I knew them. Kind of like predicted it before she even made them.

Hlanganani: mom said to check on you.

I smiled and looked at her.

" Am okay, and you?"

She sat down and sighed.

" That bad?"

She smiled and looked at me.

Hlanganani: When we heard about you, we had mixed feelings.

" That understandable"

Hlanganani: Yeah, but my brother. Well, you saw him, and you saw how his putting you at arms length.

" which is also understandable. You and Hlelile can warm up to me cause we girls and we will bond and him, well he is being out numbered and his the only guy."

Hlanganani: You are a very understanding person.

" Thank you, now tell me what else is bothering you."

She looked at me, and I watched her body language change as she shifted.

Hlanganani: for the longest time we thought I was the first born, so my father kept an eye on me because of the family beliefs and he wanted to be and guide me on things so he taught me a few things on how to manage " the gift"

" The gift?"

She took a deep breath and looked at me.

Hlanganani: Yes, the gift of being the first child of Hlanzekho, the great one.

" Okay, what that gift?"

She looked at me as if assessing me and then sighed.

Hlanganani: powers.

I looked at her and said nothing. First, it was Zai with his powers, and now me? Am I supposed to have some sort of powers?

My hand moved protectively on my belly. If I have powers and Zai has powers, then what about the baby? What kind of a baby will I give birth to?



Hlanganani moved closer to me, I guess she could see the fear I had on my face.

Hlanganani: Come, let me take you to the well. Who knows, maybe they are wrong. Maybe you don't have powers, and maybe it skipped us. Maybe...

I guess something stopped her from explaining cause if I don't have powers, then I am carrying a child that might do, and that doesn't sit well with me.

Hlanganani

I walked her over to the well that my father always took me to, to see if I have powers and if they have bloomed in yet. I touched the golden stone, and the walls shifted, taking me to the secret well where my sister and I walked in, with her looking all over and admiring the beautiful peaceful place.

Hlobisile: This is beautiful.

" I come here at times to run away from mom,"

She chuckled as I scoped up some water from a well and drank and scoped some for her too, and she drank. When done I did everything my dad did to me, then we sat by the pond and dipped our legs in the warm water.

" Feeling different?"

Hlobisile: No, but I am more alert on things now. Earlier on, I figured stuff based on your body language, and I heard your footsteps

" Interesting, maybe it just who you are,"

Hlobisile: Maybe the baby will have the gift.

" Possible, does your king have any powers?"

She paused and looked at me.

Hlobisile: Yes, but I won't share what they are

" iv always known he does. Iv been to his island a few times and I saw the love he has for his people so when dad said his looking for a spouse for me, I figured it him cause we visited his island more the four times last year."

Hlobisile: And were you disappointed that it wasn't him?

" Actually

I was great full. Marrying a man of his status means a lot of responsibilities, too, so I would rather marry a man of less status."

Hlobisile: makes sense, I never thought I'll be a queen one day and to so many people and.....

Hlobisile

I looked to see Hlanganani sleeping and the sun diming and flowers getting brighter and a soft wind blowing the petals to form a human shape so I just sat there frozen with my hand on my invisible belly looking at the old woman that formed before me.

Her" aaaaah my beautiful granddaughter"

I got up and stood in front of the older version of me. Growing up, my mom used to make an excuse that I looked like her grandmother and

that I took my dad's color, but right now, I am standing in front of a mirror. It's like looking at myself in a few years' time.

" You are my mother mother?"

She chuckled and touched me.

Grandma: You are my son daughter.

I kept quiet, feeling peace overwhelm me.

Grandma: Did your little sister explain things to you?

" that I have powers"

Grandma: Yes, and that with that power comes responsibilities.

" she skipped that part,"

Grandma chuckled. I touched my belly, and she looked at me smiling.

Grandma: No need to worry about your son.

" Son?"

Grandma: Oops

I smiled, feeling more fond of the little guy in my belly.

Grandma: You have beautiful powers. Why do you think I gave you a beast for a husband? Why do you think you are carrying the most powerful child the world has ever seen? It's because of who and what you are, my love.

" What am I?"

She smiled and kissed my forehead.

Grandma: A Goddess, your power is that you are whatever you think... you can do whatever you set your mind to.

" That's what every mother tells her child, though." she touched my shoulder, turning me to a tree, and made me look at it.

Grandma: If that tree could bear one fruit, what fruit can it be.

" I grinned cause I always wondered how strawberries would look on a grown tree."

She chuckled.

Grandma: Go touch it, and keep those strawberries in mind.

I looked at her, shocked that she could hear my thoughts, but I walked to the tree and touched it and I watched it bloom for strawberries, and it clearly was a beautiful sight to see.

Grandma: See... anything your mind and body wishes happen. You can sense things that not normal humans can, and after drinking from this well, your body, mind, and soul are now in the link with your powers.

" My child?"

Grandma: has a combination of you and his dad. What do you think that makes him?

I was silent for a while and looked at her.

" Does Zai know?"

Grandma chuckled

Grandma: Your husband can read minds, so yes, he can.

I looked at her, shocked.

Grandma: Not yours, but you are in sync with him. The only thing he can do is hear your thoughts or read your mind. The rest he knows. He knows of your powers, knows you carrying a son, and monitors the heartbeat. He has fears, fears you not strong enough to carry his seed and which is valid since you are human in every sense, and his not.

I was silent and looked at her.

Grandma: Some days you will hear inner voices don't panic, that is just us guiding you, and some days you just need to trust your instincts, but remember, never use your powers to kill.

" What if I am in danger?"

She laughed and kissed my forehead.

Grandma: Do you think the man that you married will ever let anything happen to you? She moved close, touched my belly, and grinned.

Grandma: he really is a handsome boy and very powerful. When the time comes, I would like you to name him Agnar. It's means warrior, and that little man is a warrior.

I smiled at her as she disappeared as she came, and I watched Hlanganani wake up and look around me with huge eyes.

" Did you just doze off on me?"

She got up and walked to the strawberry tree, took one , ate it, and then turned to me.

Hlanganani: You did this?...

## Final

I walked into the room we shared, and she wasn't there. I walked out to see her laughing with Hlanganani, and I waited for her as she saw me and smiled. Hlanganani dashed off, leaving us two. She entwined her hand in mine, and we walked in silence, leaving the houses behind going to a forest. I said nothing and watched her lead the way, and when we got there, she turned and looked at me.

Hlobisile: What kind of marriage do we have?

" The kind where we share everything."

Hlobisile: I have powers.

I looked at her, and she looked at me.

" Okay,"

Hlobisile told me everything with the encounter she had with her grandmother and looked at me.

" Show me."

Hlobisile: What do you want me to do?

I grinned, looking at her. This isn't how I pictured finding out about her powers. So I shifted and moved close to her.

" Can you hear things that humans can't hear?"

Hlobisile: Does it count that I can hear footsteps?

I grinned, looking at her.

" Yes,"

Hlobisile: Then yes, I can

I placed my hands on her belly and took her hands to cover the other parts of her invisible belly, and looked right into her eyes.

" i want you to tune everything out and focus on your heartbeat

then focus on mine and just let your hands guide you to listen to our child's

Hlobisile

I did as he said and I felt my heart beat slow and steady and then I felt his too in I grinned cause iv heard it when my head on his chest and I just like that I felt the little heart beat against my hands and I felt tears roll off my face as we both stood there looking at each other listening to our son heart beat and I know that I would fight mountains for my little family....

9 months later

Zai

Life has been nothing but amazing. Hlobisile has been an excellent queen given how hard our pregnancy has been. Her mother has decided to move to our coastal island to be closer to her, and I must say it has been a remarkable change. Nomazwi usually visits, and her bond with Hlobisile is still rock solid, and so is Nkosana, who adores his sisters. Hlanganani got married and is a queen to a beautiful village. Hlelile still have a crush on my brothers and Hlelo finally made peace with Hlobisile and adores her as their father does who visits Hlobisile twice a month with his wife Shaya who has taken Hlobisile and treated her as her own. we have been happy, Hlobisile been learning her

powers and involving me in everything that she does and the bond between us has been unshakable. I stood behind the closed doors with my brothers and father and Hlobisile brothers as I heard her scream and then, after a while thunder, rippled through the clouds as a loud cry burst in the room I really didn't wait to be called by the midwives as I busted in the room to find them placing him on his naked mother chest. I went to them and looked at the perfection of what God is giving me now. And I cried. I felt the tears roll off my face as I cried. I kissed him, and he made a sound that made me chuckle as I kissed her a million times.

" Agnar... my little warrior. " he made a sound, and the clouds opened rain, and I smiled.

Hlobisile: his perfect

" In every way and form love... I love you, Ma Ngema ka Hlanzekho. "

Tears escaped her eyes as she smiled, and I knew that this was a beginning of perfection....

This is the end of part one, where we learned of King Zai and Hlobisile and they past and how they got their powers and who the king and Queen is... now it is time for part two called " beyond the walls." we get to explore Zair's family, and most importantly, the little member calls Agnar....!