

A CLEAN SLATE

The New Generation

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* PROLOGUE *

NGCEBO

"Dear Mom and Dad. I know it's been three years without hearing from me. You're probably worried sick about me but I'm ok, My journey has just begun. I miss all of you especially my siblings. Please accept things as they are as they are meant to be, I love you guys so much and I will see you soon, please do tell Mcebisi to never take off his bracelet because I can feel his emotions whenever he takes it off I know this is hard for him but I will come back one day. Love Ngcebo."

I fold the letter and put it in a brown envelope, I go to the post office and give them my home's postal address. People are looking at me in a weird way, probably wondering why I am walking barefoot while wearing white pants and my traditional cloth around my upper body tied on my left shoulder. "Thokoza." An old woman says clapping hands bowing her head, I smile and do the same. "You live in a hut across the river?" She asks and I clap hands nodding my head. "I have seen you singing and going to the bush everyday, I don't live far from your place." I nod. "Bakhona labazako."(There are people coming) Me: "Ngembulelwe."(I had a vision) She claps hands and walk away. I go back to my hut that I built from scratch three years ago. I used woods, water and soil to build it up then on the roof I used dry grass, I did it with my own hands, the door is made of steel I picked up from the bushes. Swaziland, I would be lying if I told you I know how I got here, I just know that the ancestors led me here, It's like having a blackout and waking up into an unfamiliar environment but I saw the mountains in my dreams from the age of 14 but only left home after I got my matric results at 17. I travelled for days using different modes of transport. I am 20 years old now and my parents have never seen or heard from me, this is my first time writing a letter, when I left everyone was asleep but dad knew it was coming. What I have learnt from my calling is that everything has it's own time, you don't do as

you please you follow instructions. I hear a grunt outside I step out and see a girl kneeling and going through transition, she is shivering and shaking, her feet have thorns and blood.

Me: "Thokoza Dlozi." She starts clapping hands shaking her head, I hold her hand she stops shaking and open her eyes staring at me then she looks around. "Where am I?"

Me: "Home away from home, welcome Lwandle." She looks at me confused. I take her inside and start making fire. I have five blankets and mattresses I bought at the market few months after I got here, the first week here I sold some herbs and used the money to buy what I was told to buy and that is everything I use inside this hut, it's not fancy but it's comfortable for me.

Lwandle: "What am I doing here?"

Me: "To accept your calling and I will help you with the journey, you are one of many to come."

Lwandle: "Mom doesn't know I'm here, I have to go back home." I chuckle and sit down on his the floor with my knees up looking at her.

Me: "I would also love to go back home but I'm here, to help people like you find their path." Lwandle: "I don't want this."

Me: "Sadly you can't decide on your own." She stares at me. Lwandle: "How old are you?" Me: "How old are you?" She giggles looking down.

Me: "Let me be clear on something.." She looks at me. Me: "You're here to understand your calling that's it, and it should remain that way, are we clear?" She quickly nods.

Me: "Nginomuntu ongilindile ekhaya ozoba umfazi wami."(I have someone waiting for me at home, she will be my wife.) She clears h unier throat and nod. Me: "Kuzomele uyogeza emfuleni ohambayo, angihlangani nokungcola."(You will have to go cleanse in the river, I don't mix with dirt) She looks down in shame, I know she has been up to no good and the ancestors dragged her here from that dirty place,

she has been rebellious but it was all the spirits inside her, they were overwhelming her. She is around my age or a little older. I show her the river then go back inside. I start cooking pap, I only eat meat I killed myself so after the pap I boil the chicken I bought from the market alive I did everything else myself. After an hour and a few minutes, the girl comes back and food is ready, she has my other traditional cloth wrapped around her body. I dish up and we start eating in silence. Lwandle: "So I can hear you speak deep IsiZulu, where are you from?" Me: "KZN South Africa." She nods. Lwandle: "So your girlfriend is ok with you away from home? She is waiting?" I chuckle. Me: "I don't have a girlfriend." Lwandle: "But you just said you have someone waiting at home." I chuckle ignoring her, we are not here for that. I let her sleep on the other side of the hut while I sleep on the other. In the middle of the night I hear someone clapping hands right on my doorstep, I open the door and allow the little boy inside, I know he is 11 years old, I had a dream about him before he woke me up. I quickly make a comfortable space for him to sleep because he is feeling cold, at least he is still clean he doesn't need cleansing like the girl. In the morning I wake up and go take a bath at the river first then wake the girl up to do the same then take the little boy there. "Bhuti, how did I get here?" He speaks for the first time he came here, we are sitting under the tree next to the stream. Me: "Abaphansi bakuthumele kimi." (The ancestors sent you to me) "I heard drums playing and I started walking coming here." I nod. Me: "You're where you're supposed to be, this is not a mistake." He nods. "Uyisangoma?" I chuckle. Me: "I'm more than that." He touch my hand then let go smiling, I chuckle shaking my head. Me: "What did you see?" "A beautiful little girl." I smile looking down. "You only have the image of her as a little girl." He says laughing. Me: "You're prying, but yes I last saw her when she was a little girl I know she's still pretty and she's a grown woman now." I look at him, he is laughing so hard. Me: "What is so funny?" "What if she's with someone else?" I chuckle. Me: "You're 11 years old, I shouldn't be discussing this with you also, you don't use your gift to spy on people's affairs." He looks down as

my voice is stern. "I'm sorry." I nod. "Will this journey be hard? I have heard my parents arguing, they were scared for me." He shares with me. Me: "Mine wasn't hard probably because the ancestors did all the work themselves, I just went to seek guidance from my dad's Aunt where it wasn't clear." He nods. Me: "Having a calling isn't hard, running or delaying it is what makes it look hard." "I understand." I let him take a bath then walk away picking up wood so I can start making fire and cook for myself and those I was trusted with by their own ancestors.

** MCEBISI **

We are sitting around the fire back at the palace with our parents. No matter how happy we are but we always feel the absence of my twin brother it's been three long years but we are still hoping that one day we will see him walking through those gates. My mother has never been the same but she tries to be strong so we can't see her pain, but most of the time she calls me Ngcebo and I understand.

Bukhosi: "Dad...tell us that story about Prince Ngcebo again please."

Nkosiyabo: "Which one?"

Bukhosi: "The story you told us years ago about the first little girl he healed." I chuckle. They love that story dad used to tell them how my twin brother saved a little girl's life when he was just 5 years old it fascinated them it still does after so many years and Ngcebo has healed so many kids after that little girl but that is one story they always admired more about our brother. Dad starts telling them the story.

Makhosini: "Is the little girl still alive?" Nkosiyabo: "I think so, they moved away after three months Ngcebo healed her and we've never heard from them again." They nod but mom is just staring into space.

Uuka: "My Queen.." Mom looks at him and force a smile on her beautiful face.

Thabsie: "Yebo Nkosana."(Yes Prince)

Uuka: "Ngcebo will come back one day, believe that please." She smiles genuinely this time. Thabsie: "I know he will baby."

The next day I drive back to Durban to check on our house. When we moved to the palace years ago mom and dad bought a new house where we visited whenever we wanted then when we finished matric me and Uuka moved to stay there to further our studies that's when Ngcebo left home. Uuka is now a graduate but he chose to stay home full-time to learn about his own path as a future King from our father. I do some shopping because I will be staying for the weekend, sometimes I just want some space and time alone so I come here often. I open my car and put my groceries in my boot then close it and turn only to see a girl being slapped by the other who is with three girls. They keep insulting her I cross the road and stand next to the girl, they stop talking immediately, their mouths hung open eyes wide open. "Prince..Prince." One of the girl says, I look at the girl next to me and feel my heart beating in an unusual way, I bow my head a little.

Me: "Nkosazana."(Princess) She looks like a shy girl because immediately she drops her eyes. Me: "Can I take you home please." She shakes her head.

Me: "You can trust me, I just want to make sure you're safe."

I totally forget about the three girls and stretch my hand to hold hers and lead her to the passenger seat of my car then get in the driver's seat driving out of the parking lot.

Me: "My name is Mcebisi Gumede." "Hlelo." She quickly says that and look out the window. Me: "Ngicela ungazise indlela eya kini Nkosazana."(Please show me the way to your home Princess) She directs me to her home until I park next to her house.

Hlelo: "Thank you for saving me from those girls." She says in her sweet innocent voice. Me: "Stay away from those type of people, you seem like a good girl." She nods and step out of the car I see her touching the side of her head closing her eyes, I quickly step out and rush to her but I don't step close, my father taught me never to touch a woman in any way without consent

. Me: "Can I help you?"

She opens her eyes, they are bloodshot red.

Me: "Is everything ok?"

Hlelo: "Yes, I just have a strong headache, I have to go take my medication." I nod, I'm worried. Me: "Are your parents home?" She nods.

Me: "Ok good, can I have your number so I can check on you later, I'm really worried your eyes are so red."

She hesitantly give me her number then walk away. I get back in the car and drive home. I pack my groceries while sitting on the floor, I can't get the girl's face out of my mind, she's pretty, I wish my twin brother was home I was going to share the news with him, we used to tell each other everything about how our day went and right now miss him...

CHAPTER 1

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NGCEBO

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Lwandle is outside beating drums, she is sweating and in spirit, it's been a week since they led her here and the ancestors show me the way through her dreams, I only do what is asked of me to do from her

dreams. She has a very aggressive spirit and she is failing to control it but I am taking her through it little by little because I understand that sometimes it's just not you but those within you. She let go of the drums and starts convulsing on the floor, she keeps repeating colours and I know they are showing her the colour of the beads.

Me: "Hlathi.."

The little boy rush to me and kneel clapping hands, Hlathi is his clan name, he is iWushe lako Mjoli those people called Amabhaca.

Me: "Help me with making beads for Lwandle. This boy doesn't need a lot of work because already he knows his abilities, he's just here to understand his strongest and weakest side and I'm happy to help it's been lovely having them here, they sometimes remind me of my siblings because I get to laugh and talk to them. Lwandle finally wakes up and she goes to the river then come back we all sit around the fire while we are busy with the beads.

Lwandle: "I thought people said answering your calling is hard also that the person helping you can be abusive, how come you're not like that? You give us food anytime and you don't shout you do the total opposite of what people make Gobelas look."

I chuckle.

Me: "I have a spirit of Amanono, those living in me don't allow me to shout or mistreat people, I deal with pure souls most of the time so this is my character and it will remain this way till forever."

Lwandle: "But you don't know that. Before you're a Gobela you're human, you're bound to face life challenges other than those of Idlozi, how will you deal with them?"

Me: "Like I said, this is the Ngcebo I have always been and I don't think I will ever change."

She nods.

I let them sleep and go sit outside looking at the stars.

Me: "Ngizobuya mama, ungangikhaleli sengathi ngifile."(I will come back mom, don't cry for me like I'm dead)

I look down, I need to write another letter that will bring mom back because she is slowly slipping away even from dad and our siblings, she is detaching herself from everyone because her mind tells her to prepare to lose more but she can't do that, everyone needs her presence, she is the Queen, a mother and a wife she needs to keep it together.

I see a shooting star and my mind is filled with my twin brother's face, he has found love I can see his smile, I find myself smiling as well then go back inside and sleep.

The next morning I burn incense and call them at my alter and we start communicating with our ancestors we are in spirit We call it ukuphahla the candles are lit all over this hut.

Me: "This journey is yours and yours alone free your hearts, no one abandoned you, they are prideful they don't want you to graduate one day to people telling you you made it because of them that is why they take you far from home to someone you hardly even know just so they can show off, idlozi lelo."

"Thokoza."

They clap hands.

Me: "The journey doesn't end after your graduation that's just the beginning, the ancestors will now teach you what they want you to know themselves."

I step back and let their ancestors communicate with them directly.

Sunday morning I wake them up around 5 O'clock it's still dark outside and it's winter but we have a long way to go.

We walk for about an hour around the forest showing them different herbs then let the ancestors guide them into finding what they want them to find.

I bend down and stare at the flower that produce the root I once cured a little girl with meningitis. I dig it up then stare at the root for a while, I still have her picture in my head as a little girl but I do have visions of how she looks like now that she's grown, I would love to meet her again one day. I touch my wrist I still have the necklace she gave to me when she was appreciating me for saving her life, her parents took her home and she gave me the necklace I used to wear it around my neck but now I have grown I just put it on my wrist like it's a bracelet.

Me: "Hlelokuhle."

I sit down closing my eyes and create a picture of what she looks like but quickly open my eyes when I feel like someone close to me have crossed paths with her, the great connection they had, I can feel it, that can only mean my twin brother have met her.

Me: "It...it can't be."

I rub my eyes.

Me: "Maybe...maybe they just had a meaningless interaction, it can't be more than that."

I get up and find Hlathi and Lwandle then head back home. I am stressed out and I am drained so I just make fire outside and cook pap and braai some meat, we all eat and I decide to go sit in front of the river that's where I find peace whenever I feel alone.

Me: "Ngikhumbula umama wami."(I miss my mother."

"Qina nkosana, uzophinda ekhaya."(Be strong Prince, you will go back home.)

By the end of the week I have five new initiates, which means I have 7 altogether so I have started building more huts to accommodate

everyone and they are helping me with everything. Most of them are so respectful and most of the time it's people a lot younger than me, teenagers to be precise and I enjoy having them around. They take me as their big brother more than being their Gobela.

I have decided to stop stressing about the girl of my dreams but just focus on what brought me to Swaziland I was trusted to guide these young people on their way to becoming Sangomas and I can't do that well if my mind is on something else, liyahlonishwa idlozi.(the ancestors should be respected).

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MCEBISI

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I am looking at the number Hlelo gave to me a week ago, I never called her and asked about how she was after that headache because I got cold feet, I was so scared of calling her but now I think I have to because I can't stop thinking about her.

It rings for a while. "Hello" she answers with her sweet voice my heart skips a beat.

Me: "Hi, uhm..I'm..it's Mcebisi, I took your number a week ago, I wanted to ask how are you feeling now."

Hlelo: "I'm at the hospital."

Me: "Is it that headache?"

Hlelo: "Yes, it got worse so I was admitted."

Me: "Is it okay if I come see you?"

Hlelo: "Ok."

She tells me the name of the hospital and the ward number. I take a shower then drive to town first to get her something to eat and some

snacks. I walk in her ward and find her with a guy but looks like he is already leaving.

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

She sits up and look at the guy that is just staring at me, he looks a little older than me.

Hlelo: "Please leave Thula, your girlfriend and her friends are harassing me."

The guy looks at me once again and step out. I sit on the chair next to her bed and put the plastic bags down.

Me: "How are you feeling?"

Hlelo: "I feel better, they changed my medication."

Me: "So you take medication everyday for a headache?"

Hlelo: "It's not just a headache, I have meningitis, years ago it was said that I was cured with some herbs but now they have tried everything so they opted for medication."

Me: "So you can't find those herbs anymore?"

Hlelo: "I don't know the herbs or the person that gave them to me."

Me: "But your parents should know."

She looks at her hands.

Hlelo: "I was only 5 years old when I moved to South Coast with my parents and that exact same day we got into an accident that took their lives and I was the only one who survived the accident, I don't remember much about my life before the accident."

I hold her hand.

Me: "I'm so sorry about your parents."

Hlelo: "Its okay..I can now talk about them without shedding a tear so I'm fine now."

I nod looking down I feel emotional because even though she is not crying but her voice carries so much pain.

Me: "So who do you live with?"

Hlelo: "My dad's sister and her husband."

Me: "Are they treating you good?"

She nods.

Hlelo: "I'm fine."

Me: "But that's not what I asked."

She removes her hand from mine and look away.

Me: "I need you to be honest with me so I can help you."

Hlelo: "Why would you help me? You don't even know me."

Me: "I know your name and I know you're a good girl that's enough for me to want to protect you as a woman, I have a sister that I would appreciate a stranger being her savior should she need help and I'm not around."

Hlelo: "I...I need a place to stay!"

She breaks down, I sit in bed and hug her tight.

Hlelo: "I'm doing my final year, I just need a place to stay just until my last exams then I will look for a job and find my own place."

Me: "It's okay, stop crying you are burning up, you gonna get sick all over again."

I wipe her tears.

Me: "I will help you with a place to stay."

She nods.

Hlelo: "Please..I promise I will leave the day I finish my last exam."

Me: "Ok."

I look at her but she drops her eyes.

Me: "Do you ever make eye contact?"

She smiles covering her face I chuckle.

Hlelo: "Yes but you're a Prince I shouldn't be looking at you in the eye."

Me: "Then how are you going to stay with me?"

She quickly stares at me but look down again.

Hlelo: "Stay with you?"

Me: "Uhm you will stay in our house Hlelo."

Hlelo: "Oh.."

Me: "But most of the time I'm at home so it will practically be your house."

She nods but I can see she's uncomfortable.

Me: "Or maybe you prefer a flat?"

Hlelo: "No, anything is fine, beggars can't be choosers anyway."

Me: "But I just gave you another option and you're not a beggar."

She sighs.

Me: "What happened with your aunt."

Hlelo: "Uhm she believed her husband over me, he kept making remarks about my body and making advances at me I was uncomfortable so I told her, she said I'm trying to ruin her marriage"

and that I have gotten too comfortable in her home I should find my own place to stay."

I squint my eyes.

Me: "He made you uncomfortable?"

She nods.

Hlelo: "And they were getting tired of paying my medical bills, they said the money my parents left for me ran out because I am always in and out of the hospitals."

I see a couple walking in, they stand on the other side and look at me.

"So you have a friend?" A man says smiling but I just keep a straight face.

Hlelo: "I will pack my clothes today, the doctor is discharging me."

"Kuhle you don't have to leave we will talk about this." A woman says touching her shoulder.

Hlelo: "No Auntie, I don't want to make you guys uncomfortable, I will leave, also you have wasted too much money on me."

"So you think the young Prince will pay your hospital bills and medication?"

She shakes her head.

Hlelo: "He doesn't have to, I will go to the public hospital maybe they will help me."

The man shrug his shoulders.

"Honey let's go, we tried."

He hold his wife's waist and walk out.

Me: "I need to make a call."

She nods I get up and walk out calling my dad, I think I just remembered something but I need dad to confirm it.

Nkosiyabo: "Nkosana."(Prince.)

Me: "Sanibonani baba."(Greetings dad)

Nkosiyabo: "Uyaphila?"(are you well)

Me: "I'm okay dad, uhm..you once told us the name of the first girl Ngcebo healed."

Nkosiyabo: "Yes, uHleloKuhle."

I rub my beard.

Me: "I think I have met her."

Nkosiyabo: "You have?"

Mr: "Yes, but she still have meningitis."

Nkosiyabo: "Your brother would be so happy, he always wanted to meet her again."

I look down when I realize what this means, because Ngcebo always made it clear that he won't date until he meets Hlelo again that only means she is his dream girl.

Nkosiyabo: "Mcebisi."

Me: "Baba."

Nkosiyabo: "Please come home today, we need to talk ok."

Me: "Ok."

Nkosiyabo: "Ngiyakuthanda."(I love you)

I laugh, we told him that at some point he needs to stop, he never drops the call without telling us that he loves us.

Me: "I love you too dad."

I see a doctor walking in Hlelo's ward I follow him and stand by the door, he is discharging her.

I drive to her house.

Hlelo: "Are you okay? You've been quiet since the phone call."

Me: "Uhm...go pack we will talk when we get home, I will wait for you here."

She nods and walk in. After a few minutes she walks out dragging the suitcase. I step out and help her load it.

Hlelo: "They asked the helper to pack my stuff."

Her eyes are teary.

Me: "It's okay."

We load everything in the car and drive to my place. I show her Ngcebo's room because it's the only available room, Bukhosi and Makhosini use the other two then there is Princess Thingo's room and our Big brother Uuka's room.

Hlelo: "This room, it feels so sacred."

I nod and sit in bed, she sits next to me.

Me: "It's my twin brother's room, Ngcebo and you're the first girl he healed from meningitis dad confirmed your name, it's really you."

She widens her eyes.

Hlelo: "So I...I will get to meet him? Where is he?"

I can hear some excitement in her voice.

Hlelo: "Are you guys identical? Is he kind like you? When can I meet him."

I chuckle, suddenly she is so talkative and full of life, she looks very interested in meeting Ngcebo.

Me: "He is away because of his calling, it's been three years but we keep hoping one day he will come back."

She has a smile on her face.

Me: "Are you ok with staying here alone or should I call our housekeeper to come stay with you, I need to go home."

She asks me to call the housekeeper I leave them getting to know each other. I drive home and find dad sitting with Uuka outside I join them after greeting them.

Nkosiyabo: "Mcebisi.."

Me: "Yebo baba."

Nkosiyabo: "Uhm..so about the girl, what is going on?"

Me: "She is my friend, I just recently met her."

Nkosiyabo: "You do know how Ngcebo badly wanted to meet this girl right?"

I nod.

Me: "He said he won't start dating until he meets her so I understand that maybe she is the one for him, I promise I won't say or do anything to her."

He stares at me until I look away.

Nkosiyabo: "You have feelings for her?"

Me: "I'm not sure, what I know is that I want to keep her safe."

I look at him.

He nods.

I get up and bow first before I walk away to greet my mother.

Uuka: "I hope it doesn't get complicated baba"

Nkosiyabo: "It won't..I raised them right.."

I can hear them talking in low voices when I look at them they are both looking my way clearly worried.

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A CLEAN SLATE

The New Generation

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CHAPTER 2

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MCEBISI

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I am back at our house in Durban today, I didn't even have guts to tell dad that Hlelo will be staying with me but I have to call him and tell him today, we don't lie or hide things from our mom and dad.

I walk in and find the house spotless and there is some aroma coming from the kitchen I put my backpack on the couch and go to the kitchen I find Hlelo there looking around, she is wearing jeans and a baggy top, she tied her hair up.

Me: "Morning."

She looks up and smile looking at me briefly then look away.

Hlelo: "Hey, uhm..the housekeeper had to rush home she left early and I decided to cook and clean."

I nod and sit on the barstool.

Hlelo: "Thank you for letting me stay here I promise I won't be any trouble."

Me: "I know you won't."

She dish up and it's a full meal, it's not even 10 O'clock yet but it smells really good so we start eating.

Hlelo: "So..is it possible to communicate with your brother?"

I shake my head.

Me: "He only writes letters."

She nods.

Hlelo: "So what's his name again?"

Me: "Ngcebo, you once gave him a necklace as a token of appreciation for helping you with your meningitis."

She smiles so beautifully.

Hlelo: "I hope to meet him soon."

I nod. I see her touching the side of her head.

Me: "Where are your medication? Did you take them today?"

She shakes her head.

Hlelo: "I started with cleaning, I wanted to eat first then take them."

Me: "So you didn't have breakfast?"

Hlelo: "I saw white bread here, I don't like white bread."

I chuckle.

Me: "You're just like Ngcebo he is the only one that likes brown bread."

Her eyes sparkle whenever I mention Ngcebo's name.

Me: "So..the guy I found in your ward at the hospital, who is he?"

Hlelo: "My ex boyfriend, he didn't tell me he was dating a girl from our neighborhood, the girl was harassing me as you saw that day."

Me: "Sorry.."

Her eyes starts turning red, I get up and walk to her side standing next to her.

Me: "Ngcebo should come back soon, he is the one that can help you with this."

She looks so weak, she lets go of her body I hold her before she can fall and take her to Ngcebo's room. I get a wet towel and put it on her forehead, she slowly opens her eyes.

Me: "Where is your medication?"

Hlelo: "In that bag?"

She slowly points at the bag, I get her water and help her drink up. I let her sleep while walking out to call my dad.

Nkosiyabo: "Mcebisi.."

Me: "Dad..uhm I need to tell you something."

Nkosiyabo: "What is it boy?"

Me: "Hlelo, she is staying in our house just until she finishes her exams, she needed a place to stay so I was helping her out."

He keeps quiet for a while.

Me: "Baba.."

Silence. I sit down because I know if he is quiet like this it means he doesn't like something.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

Nkosiyabo: "What is going on? Be honest with me."

Me: "I am just helping her baba."

Nkosiyabo: "You won't do this to me Mcebisi you hear me? This won't start any fight between my kids!"

I shake my head like he can see me.

Me: "It won't baba, I will never fight my brothers dad, I promise I will step back when Ngcebo comes back, she needed my help."

I further explain how her parents died and the situation with her aunt.

He drops the call, I think he is angry at me.

She wakes up later looking better, I warm up the food left from earlier we eat again.

Me: "Please write down how you take your medication so I can remind you."

She nods.

Hlelo: "I will, thank you."

I hear the key turning on the main door and the door is pushed open dad and Uuka are here it's around 5 pm. I get up and put my hands behind my back then bow before them, they do the same. Hlelo slowly get up and stand behind me like she's hiding.

Nkosiyabo: "Nkosazana."(Princess)

She moves to stand next to me looking down. Dad walks up to us and stand in front of her pulling her chin up then he smiles.

Nkosiyabo: "You still look the same just grown a little."

He hugs her tight, Hlelo starts sobbing holding on to dad.

Nkosiyabo: "Mcebisi told me what happened to your parents, I'm so sorry for your loss."

We all sit down on the couches but Uuka's eyes are on me.

Uuka: "Can we talk in my room."

I nod and wait for him to walk away first because we don't follow right behind his back because that's disrespect, he is our older brother the next king. I sit in his bed while he sits on the chair in front of me.

Uuka: "Dad is worried about this whole thing, he doesn't even want to share it with mom because it will scare her you know how she is ever since Ngcebo left, she feels she will lose more of us."

I nod looking down.

Uuka: "Please try brother I know maybe you have already developed feelings for Hlelo but please just do it for mom, don't act on them because telling you to stop when you've already fallen for her it's pointless."

Me: "I'm sorry."

Uuka: "Don't be sorry, this is not your fault Scebi you didn't do this on purpose, you'll find out that maybe it's not even love but you just want to keep her safe for Ngcebo because he is your twin brother, you are him."

I nod.

Me: "I really hope he comes back soon."

Uuka: "We don't think you staying with Hlelo here is a good idea though."

I look at him.

Uuka: "But if you think you can control your feelings then we will let you be."

Me: "I love my siblings more than anything so if I do something to Hlelo that will mean I don't love Ngcebo the way I claim I do, I won't hurt him."

He nods.

Uuka: "Thank you."

We get up and shoulder hug. We go back to dad and Hlelo and find him showing her pictures on the phone.

Nkosiyabo: "Now can you tell me which one is Ngcebo here?"

She points at the phone dad smiles.

Nkosiyabo: "How did you know?"

Hlelo: "The pictures are clear but when you stare at the picture for a while it looks like a lot of people combined in one person, In his room I can feel how sacred it is, he is different."

I look at Uuka as Hlelo explains what we always talked about at home, Mom liked taking pictures of us together but when we stared at Ngcebo he was just how Hlelo explained, his pictures came out normal but when you look deeper it shows you something else, we're still identical but he is really different.

Nkosiyabo: "Enjoy your stay here, we will check on you from time to time, maybe Ngcebo will come back soon and cure you completely this time."

She smiles nodding.

Hlelo: "Thank you for allowing me to stay here."

Dad hugs her again and I walk them out.

Nkosiyabo: "She haven't changed much just grew older."

I chuckle.

Me: "She will be your daughter in law."

I say chuckling but they are staring at me.

Me: "I mean Ngcebo will marry her, she is everything he wanted his future wife to be, polite, down to earth and have a beautiful smile."

I really miss my brother, our conversations were always meaningful and always about our future.

Nkosiyabo: "You miss him don't you?"

Me: "I do, sometimes I want to take off the bracelet and let him feel what I'm feeling but I know that will disturb him in his journey delaying him from coming back home, I don't want that."

He hugs me patting my back.

Nkosiyabo: "But maybe you finding Hlelo means he will be home soon, and she's sick again he will come home."

I nod. They drive out I go back inside and find her staring at something in her hand.

Me: "What is that?"

She smiles.

Hlelo: "Your dad gave me Ngcebo's picture, it's you."

I laugh sitting next to her.

Me: "You just said it's Ngcebo how can it be me at the same time?"

She giggles.

Hlelo: "I'd think it's you if no one told me about the other one, I'm just fascinated by the way his pictures look I wonder how he is like in person."

I smile.

Me: "He always smell rich even though ephatha amakhambi."(he always have herbs)

We both laugh.

Hlelo: "Tell me more about him."

Me: "Why don't you ask me to write a book, because 17 years is a long time, even that 9 months we both kicked each other on our mother's tummy I remember it."

She laughs so hard holding her tummy.

Me: "Let me show you something."

I remove the bracelet then hold her hand, she shivers closing her eyes.

NGCEBO

I am sitting at the stream mixing the first Herb I mixed for that little girl. I quickly let go of the herb when I feel like there is a warm hand touching my hand, I stare at my hand and Hlelokuhle's face as a little girl flashes in my head I close my eyes and allow to feel her warm hand on mine.

Me: "Mcebisi."

I know this can only mean he took off the bracelet so I can feel Hlelo is close too him, and I know it's not malicious he is trying to tell me he found her. I open my eyes when the feeling stops. My ancestors didn't allow me to use phones for now because anything can distract my jounery.

Initiation doesn't have a time frame, it operates in different levels so my initiates won't graduate at the same time, it's all up to the spirits

within them so I can't say when I will be able to go home from now also I have one initiate that had her dreams blocked so we are trying to undo the spell because dreams are the most important and critical thing which they use to communicate with them so I can tell them which direction to take. Initiation doesn't need to be rushed it's an ongoing process.

Two months have passed since that first initiate Lwandle came in and today she is going home with the other two Hlathi and the other little boy included so I will be left with only 4 of them. They are wearing different traditional cloths and different beads that complement their own callings, they have started ukuxhentsa(dancing) outside I kneel before them and clap hands they do the same.

Me: "I won't say good luck, your journey awaits may the ancestors give you iNgcobo(Wealth) through your callings, don't ignore dreams, your ancestors trusted you with this gift use it the right way."

A month ago I made a lot of money by selling more herbs at the market with their help and that is the money they will use to find their way home I know they will get home safe.

"So you don't ask for cows and a lot of money from our parents after graduation." One initiate ask as we watch the others leave.

Me: "Why would I ask for cows and money?"

"I don't know, as payment maybe."

Me: "My name should tell you something, I am not doing this for money but to guide you guys in a right direction."

"So you're rich?"

I chuckle.

Me: "I'm wealthy."

He laughs.

"Arrogance?"

Me: "Facts."

I say walking away leaving him laughing.

The boys are making fire and I'm just staring into space when I feel someone's touch, it's intense because I can feel it all over my body like they are hugging me, the touch is getting warmer in a very alarming way.

Me: "Hlelokuhle."

Mcebisi is not wearing his bracelet and he is holding Hlelo I don't know if I should be worried about that or her body temperature that is heating up in an abnormal way.

I feel it for a straight 10 minutes and I am now thinking about the worst, is it possible that they are getting intimate but why would he take off his bracelet if he does that? To let me know perhaps that he have her?

I walk inside and try to get some sleep. At night I walk through the forest to look for a root that I used to make Mcebisi's bracelet I want to make my own because it seems like he will forget putting it on and I will feel what I shouldn't be feeling.

I find it and make my own bracelet.

Three months later, I never felt anything from Mcebisi again because I don't make a mistake of taking my bracelet off. I am left with only one boy, three of them left two months ago.

Me: "You have also completed your journey with me Manzini."

He bows before me and clap hands in excitement.

Me: "You couldn't wait to leave huh?"

He laughs a little.

Me: "Go inside and pack your things you have a long way to go."

Manzini: "When is he going home?"

I chuckle, they talk to me in a third person.

Me: "I'm not sure."

Manzini: "What is he afraid of?"

Me: "The unknown.."

I want to see my family but ever since that day I felt Hlelo I'm scared that I will meet her and find out she is with my brother in that way.

Manzini: "We don't run away but we face our fears head on, that's what he always tells us also uMama uzojabula ebuya ekhaya."(Mom will be happy to see him back home.)

I smile when I think about my Queen.

Manzini: "We are both from KZN so I was hoping we leave together, today."

I chuckle.

Manzini: "Ngizokupakishela."(I will pack for you.)

He doesn't wait for my answer but just clap hands and walk inside.

I go to the stream and take a bath, there is no use running away I miss all of them also I think I will be back here sooner than later my journey here is far from over I can feel it.

We have been on the bus for hours, I am wearing white clothes and sandals today and I have my traditional cloth hanging around my shoulders.

We get off the bus and I look around, it's been three years and months. Manzini rush to get a taxi to his home and I find a cab to take me to our house here in Durban.

I walk through the gate and I feel like I'm dreaming it's been too long. I walk in and find the house clean. I can hear two people laughing in the backyard. I put my bags down and walk down the passage to the back. I stop on my tracks when I see them together laughing at something on the phone.

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

They both turn and look at me in shock. She is just like how I saw in my dreams. I feel butterflies in my tummy as she walks closer to me. She stands before me looking into my eyes.

Hlelo: "Ngcebo.."

She says like it's a question I nod my head, she wraps her arms around me, her head on my chest I hold her back closing my eyes, I remember the first hug we shared when we were little after she gave me the necklace. When I finally open my eyes I see Mcebisi slowly walking away.

Hlelo: "They have told me so much about you."

She says looking up at me with tears in her eyes.

Me: "You left without saying goodbye."

She giggles looking down.

Hlelo: "I don't remember much, we got into an accident most of the things I heard it from my aunt and the rest from your family."

Her voice is so soothing very low and calm.

Me: "I always wanted to meet you again and now here we are, you still owe me a play date."

She laughs.

Me: "You remember this?"

I show her the necklace I wrapped around my wrist, the sun rays hits it, it shines blinding my eyes for a second I look at her as she stares at the bracelet.

Hlelo: "I remember opening my eyes and seeing you when I was sick.."

I smile.

Me: "You remember me?"

She nods wiping her tears then she rush away. I walk around the yard to look for my brother I find him leaning on the wall looking up. I clear my throat, he looks at me I bow my head, he does the same. His eyes are teary.

Me: "Nkosana Mcebisi."(Prince Mcebisi)

He gives me a tight brotherly hug that makes me so emotional.

Mcebisi: "Umama uzojabula ubuyile."

(Mom will be happy you're back.)

He wipes his tears.

Mcebisi: "I'm happy you're back."

I put my hand on his chest, his heart is racing.

Me: "Uhm...have you..uhm..is she yours?"

He shakes his head.

Mcebisi: "I won't do that to you. Go back to her brother."

He smiles walking away, I can still feel his heart racing as he walks away.

CHAPTER 3

*

NGCEBO

*

Last night I slept in Uuka's room because I found out that Hlelo is using my room, after talking to Mcebisi yesterday I came straight here in this room and slept because I was tired from travelling such a long distance, taking a bus after the other.

I take a cold shower because I am used to cold water by now, I was bathing in a stream even in winter for over three years.

After shower I wear Uuka's black jeans and red t-shirt I can't believe we still wear the same size also it's been long since I wore any colour other than white, I feel lighter when I'm in white clothes.

I hear a knock on the door as I put on his sneakers, I get up and open the door it's Hlelo carrying a tray with breakfast.

Hlelo: "Sawubona."(Hello)

I smile.

Me: "Don't offend those I am with Nkosazana."

She looks at me confused. I chuckle looking at her, she is a shy girl.

Me: "How are you?"

She drops her eyes.

Hlelo: "You didn't eat yesterday when you came back and I was scared of coming to knock I didn't want to disturb you but today I thought I should make breakfast for you."

I take the tray and put it down, I get to eat every food cooked at home now not when I'm doing the ancestors work where I have to eat an animal I killed myself.

Me: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu."(Thank you so much.)"

Hlelo: "Uhm..I will use a couch now that you're back and you will need your own room."

I shake my head.

Me: "No, it's ok you can continue to use it I will use any of my brothers room."

She nods.

Me: "Please join me."

She sits next to me, I eat and feed her as well but she's really uncomfortable.

Me: "Is my brother around?"

She shakes her head.

Hlelo: "No, he left last night, he didn't come back and it's unlike him I tried calling him but his phone is off."

Me: "You care about him huh?"

Hlelo: "He has been there for me ever since we met."

Me: "Are you guys together?"

She looks at me not answering my question.

Mcebisi walk in his hands behind his back then bow his head a little.

Mcebisi: "Hi, are you going to see mom today? I will drive you."

Me: "Yes I'm leaving."

Hlelo get up and hug him but he doesn't hug her back.

Hlelo: "I was worried about you last night I tried calling you, you didn't say anything."

Mcebisi: "I went out."

She nods.

Mcebisi: "You will find me in the car."

Hlelo: "I made breakfast and saved some for you."

Mcebisi: "Thank you, but I already ate."

Hlelo: "Oh."

He bows his head and walk out leaving Hlelo upset. I get up and take the tray.

Me: "I will go now, see you when I come back."

She nods. I take the dishes to the kitchen and walk out I find Mcebisi already in

The car with his head on the steering wheel.

Me: "Are you ok?"

Mcebisi: "Yeah I just didn't sleep last night."

Me: "Because I'm back?"

He looks at me.

Mcebisi: "I'm happy you're back Ngcebo! You're all I have been thinking about for the past three years!"

He raises his voice a bit, I look out the window.

Mcebisi: "I'm sorry...sorry for shouting, I really am happy you're back brother I can't wait to see mom's reaction, you will make her whole again."

I nod.

He drives us home.

I step out and look around I see cheetahs walking down the mountains I smile, I'm home.

Dad and Uuka walk out first and both rush to me, we group hug.

Nkosiyabo: "iNgcebo yami ibuyele ekhaya."(My wealth is back home)

He says shouting causing my mother to walk out of the house, when she sees me she falls on her knees and wail, I rush to her and kneel in front of her holding her.

Thabsie: "It's really you."

Me: "It's me mama."

We hold each other tight she can't stop crying, dad pulls us apart and picks her up walking inside with her I wipe my face and get up.

Uuka: "Welcome back home Prince."

I smile as the cheetahs walk inside the gate followed by the whole village people already ululating and making noise some are even singing, it's good to be back home to such a huge welcome. Dad ask the men of the community to fetch two goats in the fields, he burn incense sage appreciating the ancestors for bringing me back home alive then they slaughter those two goats and two cows, every one is cheerful I am with my mother inside the house she keeps kissing my cheeks.

Thabsie: "I really thought they were taking you away from me for good."

I smile.

Me: "I'm your son they can't take me away from you. I just want you to be strong because maybe I will leave again."

She nods.

Thabsie: "At least now I know you will come back home again, the first time it was hard because I wasn't sure if you'll ever come back."

I hold her hand.

Thabsie: "So...have you met Hlelo?"

I smile nodding.

Thabsie: "And?"

Me: "She is everything I claimed she would be."

I sigh.

Thabsie: "What's wrong?"

Me: "Mcebisi, I think he is in love with her."

Thabsie: "What about you?"

Me: "If my brother is in love with her mama I will let them be."

I look down.

Me: "She's the girl I have always prayed for, I carried her picture in my heart all these years as a little girl but I would create an image of how she looks like now and she looks exactly the way I envisioned her to be."

Mcebisi: "I'm not in love with her Ngcebo."

I look at him he is avoiding my eyes.

Mcebisi: "I'm not in love with Hlelo."

I think he is convincing himself more than me, I look at mom she looks so worried.

Thabsie: "Come sit next to your brother Mcebisi."

He sits next to me.

Thabsie: "Please don't fight, promise me you won't fight for a woman."

Me: "I won't mama, Mcebisi is in love with her I will let it go, he knows her more than me, he found her so it won't be fair to want her for myself."

He looks at me.

Mcebisi: "I don't want her."

Me: "You're not being honest."

Mcebisi: "Or maybe you just don't know me anymore."

I blink looking down.

Me: "I never want to fight with you Mcebisi or anyone for that matter."

Mcebisi: "And you think I do?"

His voice is so low but his words sounds a bit harsh to me, tears fill my eyes I didn't want to come home to this.

Dad walks in and put his hand on my shoulder and the other one on Mcebisi's shoulder.

Nkosiyabo: "Can you guys talk like brothers, Mcebisi."

Mcebisi: "Dad, I promise you I'm not fighting and I won't fight, when I realized who Hlelo is I made a vow to protect her until Ngcebo comes

back and I did just that all these months and never even once have I made a move on her I respect Ngcebo so much."

Me: "And I respect you so uhm..I will just be her friend."

Mcebisi's phone rings he answers then quickly get up grabbing his car keys on the table.

Mcebisi: "I'm on my way."

Nkosiyabo: "What is going on?"

Mcebisi: "It's Aunt Lizzy, she says she found Hlelo on the floor unconscious she called an ambulance I have to go."

He rush to the door but before he could step out he turns and walk back to the table again and look at me.

Mcebisi: "Uhm...I think you should go."

He says giving me the car keys, we all stare at him, I think he realize what he is doing because he lowers his hand. I can't drive when we were 17 dad taught us to drive but I failed dismally because of my calling, I had to leave.

Mcebisi: "Sorry.."

Me: "You should go."

I can see that he really wants to go, he is worried. He rush out and I can hear his car driving away. Dad put his hands on my shoulders and squeeze them.

Nkosiyabo: "I'm happy you're back home son."

Me: "Thank you dad."

It's around 4 pm but our yard is still full of villagers, they are doing traditional dance people are drunk and happy.

Uuka: "Prince.."

He sits next to me I am just watching people dancing from a distance.

Me: "King.."

Uuka: "I missed you."

Me: "I missed you too brother."

I see two big cars driving in I smile getting up.

Me: "That's too much protection for one person."

She has three guards keeping her safe, two with her in the car and one driving behind her. They are doing Grade 11 and their school is a bit far from home but they travel everyday.

She step out I go on one knee and bow my head, she screams pulling me up and we hug tight I am spinning her around as she cries on my shoulder.

Me: "Nkosazana kaBaba."(Daddy's princess)

Thingo: "You're really back bhuti."

Me: "I'm back Nkosazana, you've grown so big and beautiful."

She hugs me again. My brothers car drive in, they have their own driver they both step out and rush to me they clap hands first before both attacking me with hugs. I am laughing.

Bukhosi: "Thokoza mtwana wedlozi."

I laugh.

Me: "You're still forward."

Makhosini: "You look good bhuti I really thought you will come back looking like an old grandpa with grey beard."

I laugh shaking my head.

Me: "It's so good to see you again."

The princess is holding on my arm for dear life.

Uuka's phone rings, he answers then look at me before handing the phone to me.

Me: "Hello."

I even forgot how speaking on the phone feels like.

Mcebisi: "You're the only one that can help her Ngcebo, please she is dying."

Me: "What's going on?"

Mcebisi: "Hlelo she was admitted and she's getting worse."

Me: "So that's why the ancestors wanted me to do the same herb I did for her years ago, she is sick again?"

Mcebisi: "So you can help her?"

Me: "Yes just discharge her from the hospital, at this point those medications are a big threat to her health, I will ask brother Uuka to drive me there now."

Mcebisi: "Thank you so much."

I give Uuka back his phone.

Me: "Hlelo is admitted I need to go to Durban today please drive me there."

He nods.

Uuka: "Go tell mom and dad."

I walk in and find mom and dad holding each other in a loving way.

Thabsie: "Our son is back home Nkosiyabo, I'm so happy."

Nkosiyabo: "I can see that I'm having my wife back now."

They kiss so I quickly clear my throat looking down.

Me: "I'm sorry, I came to ask to leave for Durban now, Mcebisi called saying Hlelo is getting worse I have to help her."

Thabsie: "Oh ok boy you guys can go and make sure Hlelo gets better."

I bow my head and walk out. Uuka drives to Durban we find Mcebisi with Hlelo in my room, she is covered in sweat, Mcebisi is sitting next to her, he keeps wiping her face.

Me: "Hi, how is she?"

He put the towel away and get up.

Mcebisi: "She is not waking up but her heart is still beating."

I nod and walk out to get that herb I kept it with me ever since I made it I didn't forget to put it in my bag when I came back.

I go back to the room and shake her a little.

Me: "Hlelokuhle."

I call out her name she moves a little then open her eyes.

Me: "Please help her sit up so we can help her drink."

Mcebisi and Uuka help her up and I help her drink the herb.

Me: "Let her sleep till tomorrow I will check on her in the morning."

Mcebisi nods. I walk out and sleep at Bukhosi's room because Kumkani is around.

In the morning I wake up early and go to my room I find Mcebisi already there laughing with Hlelo who looks a lot better.

Me: "Morning."

Hlelo smiles sitting up, Mcebisi stands ready to leave.

Me: "You don't have to leave I just came to check how she is doing."

Things are just tense and awkward between us.

Hlelo: "Thank you for helping me again."

Me: "I will do it all over again, you're special to me, I saw my ancestors powers through you."

I look at my brother.

Me: "Can we talk please."

I walk out he finds me sitting outside.

Me: "I don't like how things are between us, are we fighting?"

He shakes his head.

Me: "I'm willing to let it go brother, I can see you have feelings for her and that's ok, you can continue with her I won't have any problem with that."

He chuckles.

Mcebisi: "No way, I know how you feel about her so you can ask the girl out."

He says with a smile on his face but it's hiding a lot of pain.

Me: "Have you guys ever gotten intimate?"

He shakes his head.

Mcebisi: "No, I made it clear that I won't ever make a move on her Ngcebo, I know how you feel about the girl from when we were still kids you always talked about her."

Me: "But that didn't stop you from having feelings for her."

Mcebisi: "I was drawn to her the first day I met her I didn't know who she was then."

I nod.

Me: "I'm happy you're not denying it now, I promise I won't say anything to her I respect you and your feelings I don't want to hurt you."

He looks at me.

Mcebisi: "I'm sorry."

I touch his shoulder.

Me: "It's okay.."

He get up I do the same then we both bow a little and shoulder hug.

We walk in and find Hlelo in the kitchen we both rush to her and hold her.

"What are you doing out of bed." My brother and I say in unison I quickly let go of her and Mcebisi does the same.

Hlelo: "I feel fine, I'm just hungry."

Mcebisi help her to the couch and kneel in front of her.

Mcebisi: "Sit here I will make a quick snack for you."

She nods and Mcebisi rush to the kitchen I am looking at my brother, he can't even hide it. I look at Hlelo and our eyes lock I walk to my room and take my backpack walking out.

Me: "Uhm..I'm going back home."

They look at me.

Mcebisi: "I will drive you home."

Me: "Don't worry, I will take a taxi, look after her. Get well soon Nkosazana."

She get up and stand in front of me.

Hlelo: "I can feel the tension between you two and it's getting to me, what is going on?"

I look down.

Hlelo: "Am I the problem? I can leave just please...I thought when you come back we will all spend time together getting to know you."

Me: "I need to be with my mother for now Nkosazana, I will see you some other time."

Hlelo: "Uyancela?"(You breastfeed?)

I chuckle.

Me: "Yes I do, bye."

I bow my head and walk out. Mcebisi shouts after me and hold my hand.

Mcebisi: "You are my brother Ngcebo we shared a womb I would choose you over anything in this world believe me, please don't resent me I won't do anything with her, once she is done with her exams she will leave I promise and I won't stand in your way even if you want to ask her out now..please let me take you home, I will call aunt Lizzy to come look after her."

He stutters when he is upset and blinks a lot.

Me: "It's okay, you can take me home."

He heaves a sigh of relief and quickly make a call.

Hlelo: "You want me to leave?"

We both turn and look at her, she is standing behind us, she probably heard everything Mcebisi said.

CHAPTER 4

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MCEBISI

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I just followed Hlelo inside the house, I find her packing in Ngcebo's room and she's in tears. I sit next to her holding her hand.

Me: "Hlelokuhle.."

She wipe her tears.

Me: "I don't want you to leave."

Hlelo: "I can't stay, I didn't come here to cause any fights between you and your twin brother, I didn't even know you had feelings for me I thought we were friends."

Me: "We are friends please don't leave, where will you go?"

Hlelo: "I will find a place to stay."

She close her suitcases. Ngcebo walk in and hold her hand but he quickly let go and starts shivering and grunting.

Me: "Ngcebo, what is it?"

He keeps groaning I can see it's scaring Hlelo so I push him out taking him to my room, I try to calm him down he is trying to communicate with me but he is already in transition his whole body is trembling.

I let him sleep in bed facing up he stares into the ceiling not blinking.

Me: "Brother.."

He screams in pain I don't even know what to do.

Ngcebo: "Hlelo!"

He close his eyes, I rush out and look for Hlelo in his room but she's not here just her bags. I hear moans in the kitchen I find her on the floor with a knife on her tummy blood is everywhere.

Me: "Hlelo! What did you do?"

I can't even take out the knife because she will bleed to death.

Me: "How can you do this to me Hlelo?"

She shivers like she is feeling cold.

I take out my phone and call an ambulance because I don't wanna possible cause more harm while trying to move her.

Me: "Please don't close your eyes ok."

She put her hand over mine.

Hlelo: "I'm sorry.."

Me: "No, please I'm sorry you heard what you heard, askies Kuhle."

Hlelo: "What's going on?"

She is breaking as she takes deep breaths in-between words.

Me: "Uhm...I don't know how to explain it but I have feelings for you and my brother feels the same way."

Hlelo: "No.."

Me: "I didn't mean to, I thought I will get over it but I couldn't even hide it."

She groans.

Hlelo: "Tell Ngcebo that his wish came true, we met again but I'm not what he thinks I am, I stayed this long to fulfill his wish, I should have

died the day of the accident with my parents but his wish to see me again kept me alive."

Me: "What? Hlelo then what about me? Why did I meet you? Why did you come into my life then!"

She takes a deep breath again and blood oozes from her tummy.

Hlelo: "You..led..me to your brother, kept me alive until he came back."

Me: "Then why am I in love with you! Can you answer that!"

I scream at her but she slowly blinks then close her eyes, I hear sirens I rush to the door and open for paramedics I show them where Hlelo is they run to her. I look down the passage my brother is leaning on the wall. I go to him and try to touch him but he stops me, I look at my hands they have blood in them.

Ngcebo: "Her spirit lingers all over you."

I look at him confused.

Ngcebo: "Hlelo died in your arms."

I stare at him then run back to the paramedics.

"We can't take her, she's already dead."

Me: "You're lying."

I kneel next to her and try to shake her but she's not moving.

Me: "Hlelokuhle! Come on open your eyes."

Ngcebo hold my shoulders pulling me up then hug me as I break down.

Ngcebo: "I'm sorry...maybe I shouldn't have came back."

I call Uuka and tell him what happened.

The police come to take our statement before she goes to the mortuary and we tell them it was suicide. I take her phone to get her aunt' number she wails over the phone when I break the news to her and I don't even have time to entertain her because she threw her out of her house, she didn't care about her.

It's at night our parents and siblings are here, Ngcebo has been quiet ever since.

Nkosiyo: "How can this girl do this to my sons."

Me: "She didn't do anything baba."

Nkosiyo: "You call what she did nothing Mcebisi! Her dying in your arms is nothing!?"

He shouts and we all keep our eyes down.

Thabsie: "Honey, please calm down."

Nkosiyo: "Well she did us a favor by killing herself because you and your brother in love with her was gonna break my family!"

Me: "How can you say that baba? An innocent girl is dead because of me."

Nkosiyo: "Did you drive that knife through her gut?"

Me: "No but.."

He clicks his tongue and walk out. Mom sits between me and Ngcebo because there was this space between us on the couch.

Thabsie: "I'm so sorry for what happened to Hlelo, I know how you feel about her."

I look at her, she is talking to both me and my brother and him being this quiet is getting to me.

Me: "Ngcebo are you ok?"

Ngcebo: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu."(I'm sorry)

Me: "This is not your fault."

He rubs his eyes.

Ngcebo: "It is, If I consulted the ancestors about it sooner I was gonna find out that she was not meant to be mine in that way but just meeting her again was enough."

I look at him.

Ngcebo: "I am going back to the palace today."

He get up and walk away. I look at Uuka, he nods and walk away to check on him.

I decide to just take a walk around the neighborhood, I'm really not okay.

My head is filled with the images of Hlelo's cold body laying there on our kitchen floor. I hear tyres screeching a girl step out banging the door.

"Are you crazy! I almost knocked you out!"

She screams totally frustrated.

I look around and notice that I have been walking in the middle of the road I look back at the girl.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

"It's fine I'm sorry for shouting at you uhm..are you okay?"

I sit on the pavement and bury my face on my thighs.

"Do you want to talk about it?"

She says kneeling in front of me I shake my head looking at her.

"I didn't know that even Princes go through problems."

I squint my eyes.

Me: "Princes are human too Nkosazana."

She looks down.

"I have to go now I'm late for work."

Me: "I'm sorry for making you late."

She nods, I get up first and help her up it's now that I notice that she's wearing a nurse's uniform.

"I hope you get better Prince."

Me: "Thank you."

She get in her car and drive away, I go back home and walk in. I look for Ngcebo and find him in his room kneeling down there is smoke from the incense I sit on the floor opposite him. He looks at me.

Ngcebo: "She wasn't mine or yours."

Me: "Then why did we feel the way we did?"

Ngcebo: "A heart is meant to feel Scebi and it always chooses on its own, you wanted to protect her so bad and I wanted to meet her again so we confused that with love."

Me: "So you want to convince me that I wasn't in love with her?"

Ngcebo: "You loved her but being in love has a whole different meaning to it and you'll know how soon."

I look at him confused.

Me: "What do you mean?"

He smiles and shake his head.

Ngcebo: "Let's go to the beach.."

Me: "No, for what?"

He laughs out loud and I missed that annoying laugh so much, he doesn't laugh often but when he does it's always exciting to hear.

Ngcebo: "I need to cleanse you from Hlelo's spirit so you can move on."

Me: "Can't we do it some place else?"

He laughs again.

Me: "It's not funny I don't like that place and there is no way I will get in that water."

Ngcebo: "How can you not like such a peaceful place Mcebisi?"

Me: "Peaceful for you because you have a calling, the ancestors can always warn you about the danger but what about me?"

He smiles.

Ngcebo: "You're my other half I would know if there is a danger towards you."

I smile looking at him, he is a peaceful person by nature I love him.

Ngcebo: "Nothing will break us up Mcebisi kaBaba, we will have our ups and downs but you will always be my brother and dad told us to always choose each other"

I look down.

Me: "I'm sorry about Hlelo, I know you're hurting."

Ngcebo: "I'm sorry too bhuti."

We get up and shoulder hug..

It's a weekend we are at the cemetery to lay Hlelokuhle to rest, her aunt and husband arranged everything as her family. I am standing

next to my brother who is the only one wearing white, people are looking at him weirdly but he doesn't like black at all.

After the service I go to my car and see a familiar face walking to the car in front of mine. I go to her and touch her shoulder she turns and smile.

Me: "Hey.."

"Oh hey, uhm I wanted to greet you but I wasn't really sure which one I almost knocked out a few days ago."

We both laugh.

Me: "It was me, and that is my twin brother Ngcebo."

I say pointing at my brother who is standing at a distance with his hands on his back he is looking our way smiling.

Me: "I didn't get your name Nkosazana."

"I'm Ndabezintle Gwala."

I smile.

Me: "Zindabezintle, I'm Mcebisi Gumede."

I give her my hand and we handshake.

Me: "So you knew Hlelo?"

She nods.

Ndabezintle: "Her aunt is my colleague I have met her a few times."

I nod.

Ndabezintle: "So she was with you?"

I clear my throat.

Ndabezintle: "Sorry, I didn't mean to pry it's just that her aunt did mention she was staying with the Prince."

I nod.

Me: "Yes she was staying with me."

She nods.

Ndabezintle: "I have to go, bye."

Me: "Bye Nkosazana."

I bow my head, she stares at me for a while then quickly walk away. My brother walk up to me and stares at me.

Me: "What is it?"

Ngcebo: "Who is she?"

I chuckle.

Me: "Her name is Zindabezintle."

He smiles.

Me: "Why are you smiling?"

Ngcebo: "I'm hearing good news, see what I did there? Zindabezintle, Good news."

I shake my head.

Me: "You're ridiculous you know that?"

Ngcebo: "Gumede..."

He bows his head and get in the passenger seat, I drive us home.

Later I go check on him in his room and find him in bed staring at a necklace on his hand.

Me: "Brother.."

He sit up, I sit next to him.

Me: "Are you good?"

He chuckles and put the necklace next to him.

Ngcebo: "All this time I stopped myself from finding love because I had this picture of me and Hlelo together but now I know it was never gonna work even if I met her sooner, she was supposed to die long ago but I kept her alive, She lived through all that pain because of me."

Me: "You can't blame yourself for feeling Ngcebo, I'm just happy your wish was granted, you saw her again even if it was just for a little while but it meant a lot to you."

He nods.

Ngcebo: "Now it's time to let go and allow love to find me."

I smile.

Me: "I'm happy you're back I just hope we won't fall in love with the same girl again."

Ngcebo: "We won't...I'm sure of it now."

He says winking I chuckle.

Me: "Do you know something I don't?"

He laughs.

At night we go to the beach and he force me to get in the water to cleanse myself then we go back home.

Ngcebo: "Now we start over our clean slate is about to begin."

He bows his head and walk away, maybe Hlelo had to die don't get me wrong I loved her but I pray from now on that God and my ancestors

eliminate anything that may cause rift between me and my brothers now and forever because I will always choose them over anything.

CHAPTER 5

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NGCEBO

*

I have been having sleepless nights lately and it's because of this baby that has been screaming in my dreams I keep looking for her but I can't seem to find her at all. I just woke up and when I check the time on my wrist watch it's just past 12 midnight. I get off bed and sit on the floor crossing my legs. I close my eyes and meditate, that is what I do before I consult with my ancestors I want to have a clear understanding whenever they communicate with me.

After a long session of meditating I kneel down and start listening to what they are telling me, I keep clapping as they show me where the little girl is. I sigh and get up wearing my clothes then walk out.

I walk for almost an hour following the path I was shown by my ancestors.

I finally stop at this small house and the dog starts barking, I stand there not knowing what to do because I don't like dogs especially when they bark. I see a man walking outside looking around then shout for a dog to stop with the noise. I see him walking towards me then stop a few feet away from me, it's dark but there are street lights.

"What are you doing in my house at this time? Are you a witch?"

He shouts so loud.

"There's a witch in my house! Vimba!"

He shouts again.

Me: "Baba I'm not a witch I was sent by my ancestors to a sick little girl."

I hear some noise, neighbors starts coming out of their houses with sticks and stones.

Me: "I came in peace I promise I'm not a witch."

I feel a stick on my back I groan and another one hit the back of my leg I go down on one knee, they start beating me up taking turns.

Me: "Please..let me explain.."

"What are you doing in my house!?"

He keep asking but never gives me a chance to explain.

Me: "Your daughter! I am here to save your daughter!"

He push people away and grab me by my t-shirt, my whole body is numb.

"What do you know about my daughter? Who sent you? Are you the one causing that sickness."

Me: "I am Prince Ngcebo Gumede, I am not a witch I came to help the little girl as a healer."

He quickly let go of me, It's only now they all realize who I am, they were all quick to beat me up without even looking.

"Prin..Prince Ngcebo, No..I...I'm so..."

People start running away going in different directions they probably don't want my father to find out they were involved in beating me up.

"I'm so sorry, I didn't think it was you, I'm sorry."

He goes on one knee and bow his head.

Me: "Can..can I see the little girl?"

"But you're hurt I need to take you to the hospital."

Me: "I'll be fine, I just need to see her."

I limp all the way inside his house and find a woman by the door looking scared she has a crying baby in her arms she keeps moving around rocking her back and forth.

"How is she?"

A man ask his wife they both look down at the baby looking so worried.

Her: "She is getting worse, we need to call an ambulance."

Me: "Can I hold her please."

The woman gives me a beautiful baby girl.

Me: "How old is she?"

Her: "9 months."

Me: "Please give me warm water and a clean towel."

I put her on my lap, she is getting hotter by the minute and it might starts seizures if I don't cool her down.

They give me what I asked, I put warm water in a basin and put my herb that will help stabilize her body temperature. Now she has stopped crying but just staring at me.

Me: "Nkosazana enhle."(A beautiful princess)

She giggles and cause the woman to sob.

Me: "You will feel better now."

I take her out of the water and wrap a towel around her, I make her drink some herb.

Me: "Can you make her a soft porridge please."

I groan, I now feel some great pain on my body but I won't leave before seeing that the little girl is really ok.

Once the porridge is cooked, I feed her then put her to sleep, she didn't cry ever since I took her from her mother.

Me: "She's asleep now, you can take her and she's okay now."

Her mom takes her, I get up and take my small bag walking out the man shouts my name.

"I can drive you back home, you're hurt and it's my fault I need to apologize to the king, it wasn't my intention."

Me: "I'm fine."

I slowly walk back home as soon as I walk inside the house my body gives up I collapse on the doorstep.

I wake up to a strong smell of different medications I even feel like vomiting. I sit up and my brother is next to me.

Mcebisi: "Brother, who did this to you? You have bruises all over your body."

I sit up clenching my jaws, my body is still in so much pain.

Me: "I'm fine."

Mcebisi: "That's not what I asked Ngcebo."

Dad walks in and stand next to me.

Nkosiyabo: "Who did this to you?"

I look away.

Nkosiyabo: "You better start talking right now."

Me: "It was a mistake dad they didn't..."

He chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "A mistake?"

I nod.

Nkosiyabo: "Ngcebo!"

He shouts I flinch, I hate it when someone shouts, I don't shout.

Me: "He thought I was a witch, I was standing at his gate in the middle of the night dad."

He chuckles in disbelief.

Me: "His daughter was sick so he wasn't thinking straight."

Nkosiyabo: "I know for a fact that you weren't beaten up by one person Ngcebo, I know that for a fact!"

Me: "Uhm..he called his neighbors."

He completely lose it.

Nkosiyabo: "You gonna give me the name right now Ngcebo and I mean right now!"

Mcebisi: "Dad, please don't shout at him."

Nkosiyabo: "He needs to tell me who did this to him."

Mcebisi: "I will talk to him baba."

Dad walks out leaving Mcebisi staring at me I just look away, I won't tell him anything.

Mcebisi: "You want dad to beat the truth out of you? You're already in pain why are you protecting this person."

Me: "I was at his gate at midnight, so its understandable why he would think I'm a witch."

He shakes his head and walk out.

I stay at the hospital for two days I haven't told dad the name and he is angry at me, he last came here on the first day I was admitted. Today I am going home Uuka walks in and bow his head, mom follows behind him, I get up and hug her.

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

Uuka: "Are you ready to go home?"

I nod.

Uuka: "You look better than the day we rushed you here."

Mom lifts my t-shirt up.

Thabsie: "Whoever did this needs to pay! They almost killed you "

Me: "But I didn't die."

Uuka drives us home, there is a car in front of us that the security have opened for.

As I step out of the car I notice that this is the man that had me beaten up, he is with his wife and that little girl, I want to tell them to leave but dad is already outside asking them questions. The man go on one knee in front of dad.

"I'm Themba Dlamini, I came to apologize to you and your family for what I did to your son I was..."

Dad cuts him off.

Nkosiyabo: "So you're the one who almost killed my son?"

He roars causing the baby to start crying in her mother's arms, I take her and stand a few feet away from them calming her down. Dad

grabs the man and start beating him up and I'm getting upset that my brothers nor my mother are just standing there not stopping him. After a very long beating he ask the security to drag the man out of our gate the woman is wailing for her husband but the child has fallen asleep on my shoulder.

The woman takes the child from me and walk out leaving their car in our yard. I walk out and find them still outside the gate.

Me: "I'm sorry about that, can I help taking you to the hospital?"

He groans in pain.

Me: "I take the car keys from his pockets since he is laying on the ground in his side.

I drive him and his family to the nearby hospital then walk back home. Driving seemed easy and I drove for the first time since I came back.

Me: "Dad you didn't have to beat that man in front of his wife and kid, that is wrong, you stripped him off his dignity as a man of the house, a protector."

He stares at me.

Nkosiyabo: "He ordered a mob on my son! Excuse me for not wanting to lose you to death! It was hard enough when you left home for more than three years for your calling."

Me: "I understand that you want to protect me and I appreciate that but it was wrong to be violent in front of a child."

He wipes his face and sigh.

Nkosiyabo: "I wasn't thinking straight, I was just angry that he showed his face here after what he did to you."

Me: "He was here to apologize Gumedede."

He nods.

Nkosiyo: "I know, and I'm so sorry for being violent in front of all of you."

I nod and go to my room.

The following day I go to the stream to take a bath early in the morning, I stop on my tracks when I find a woman inside the water facing the other way, water is on her waist level naked on the upper body but I just see her back. I look around and see ibhayi emaroon(maroon ancestors cloth) on the ground I pick it up, this means the person whom it belongs to is a sangoma that prays.

"Can I have that back please."

A hoarse voice speaks behind me, I turn to look at her but quickly turn around again closing my eyes because she is naked just as she was born.

Me: "Uhm..I'm..I'm so sorry I..I didn't know someone was going to be here."

I hear a little giggle.

"Can I have ibhayi lami back?"

I give it to her while still facing the other way.

"You can be free now and do what you came here to do, I'm leaving."

I slowly turn, she is smiling. She has short hair and it's pitch black, she has her cloth wrapped around her body now.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu Nkosazana."(I'm really sorry princess)

She smiles and bow her head a little clapping her hands together twice.

"Thokoza."

She then cross the river I guess she is from another village because I have never seen anyone like her in my own village.

I hear a loud purr across the river, I cross the river and run to the direction a girl went to. I find her staring at a cheetah in the eye and it looks ready to pounce on her. I stand in front of her pushing her back.

Me: "She's not a threat to our village, let her pass by she's leaving to her own village now."

It purr once then runs away.

Me: "Are you okay?"

She nods.

"So there are gate keepers here? The cheetahs?"

I nod.

Me: "They are protecting our land from outsiders."

She smiles.

"My name is Wenzile Khathi."

Me: "Hi Wenzi, I'm Ngcebo Gumede."

"Thank you for saving my life, I was acting brave but I was scared."

Me: "It's okay.."

Her skin is light but pale with hazel round eyes.

Me: "Why did you choose this river though, didn't your Gobela tell you about the gate keepers?"

Wenzi: "He did but I don't listen."

I smile.

Me: "I wouldn't want a initiate who doesn't listen."

Wenzi: "I listen to my ancestors more than a Gobela, besides he only told me about gate keepers but didn't tell me to never come here."

Me: "So you are daring my own ancestors."

She squints her eyes then widens them.

Wenzi: "Gumede? You are a Prince? I heard that this land is ruled by a young King."

I nod.

Me: "That's my father."

She giggles shaking her head.

Me: "What?"

Wenzi: "You are exactly how they described your father, do you look and act like him?"

I chuckle.

Me: "You seem to have heard a lot."

Wenzi: "Well we do have a lot of time in our hands, also I have been an initiate since I was 14 years old they have been coming and going but I remain there."

Me: Amadlozi akho anenkani. "(Your ancestors are stubborn)"

She sits down crossing her legs, I sit next to her.

Wenzi: "I want a life of my own."

Me: "You know that's not possible for people like us."

Wenzi: "I'm 20 years old with nothing on my name."

Me: "I can't believe you're saying that, I feel your presence, and that can't be nothing, your gift would shake this whole entire village."

Wenzi: "I feel lonely, I'm even scared of becoming close to anyone because they always leave."

Me: "I can be your friend."

She laughs.

Wenzi: "I can't be friends with a Prince that's insane, I'm just an ordinary girl an initiate at that."

Me: "I'm human you know."

She smiles and get up.

Wenzi: "I have to go now."

Me: "Go well Nkosazana, I hope to see you again."

She walks away, I watch her until she disappears from my eyes. I get up and go back home. I can't get her face out of my mind and I think that's a problem I have, I had it with Hlelo and it gave me a lot of confusion, I don't want a repeat of that with Wenzi.

See

CHAPTER 6

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NGCEBO

*

I have been taking walks to the streams hoping to see that girl again but it hasn't been happening I guess maybe that cheetah scared her.

My brothers have been patient with me about learning to drive and it's not as difficult as before probably because I was set to leave for Swaziland around that time I tried to learn how to drive.

I just came back from hunting, I hunted with two cheetahs and I came back with a deer, so my little brothers are excited busy making fire outside.

Bukhosi: "We're happy you're back bhuti, now we are eating real meat again."

I chuckle.

Me: "You weren't eating real meat all along?"

Bukhosi: "No, you can't call chicken, cows and goat real meat, I want meat like this one."

Mcebisi: "Then you should start hunting."

Bukhosi: "Dad won't allow me, he says it's dangerous."

Me: "It is but I will teach you."

As I sit down I feel my whole body getting stiff I start grunting.

Makhosini: "Baba!"

I can hear him shouting but his voice sounds a bit far and it's like there's an echo. I can see a girl running in the wild with blood all over her body.

Me: "Khulumani nami."(Speak to me)

She keeps running until she trips and fall on her head it hits a stone I see blood splashing everywhere, I can literally see her spirit detaching from her body but she's facing the other way as I try to call out for her I feel a sting on my cheek I quickly open my eyes and stare at my father.

Nkosiyabo: "Are you okay?"

He helps me sit up, I was sleeping on the ground all along.

Me: "Did I say something while I was in transition?"

Bukhosi: "You just said "khulumani nami" we don't know who you were referring to."

Makhosini: "The ancestors obviously."

Me: "I have to go somewhere."

Thabsie: "But it's getting dark."

Me: "Darkness have never stopped me mama you know that."

Thabsie: "But you recently survived a whole mob attack! I won't have you going out there again!"

She shouts with her shaky voice.

Me: "I need to go I will be back."

Thabsie: "And I said no!"

Nkosiyabo: "Sthandwa sam."(My love)

He says trying to calm her down.

Thabsie: "No baba kaUuka! No."

Nkosiyabo: "You know it's not up to us."

Thabsie: "I can't believe those bloody ancestors! They send him to do something but fail to protect him! They almost killed my son and I'm supposed to be happy about everything!"

She is shouting and tears are rolling down her cheeks.

Me: "I..I won't go mama, please don't cry."

She get up and walk inside the house, dad follows her and they start arguing we are all quiet looking down, I am blaming myself they are arguing because of me. We know dad hates it when mom cries in front of us, he always told her to walk away when she gets too emotional but we're old now we see and hear everything even when they try to shield us most of the time, like right now, I don't think they are aware that we can hear them arguing.

Thabsie: "I fucken hate everything that has to do with that calling! I spent more than three years not knowing how my son is doing! If he's eating or was even still alive, I was dying inside but I had to act fine for my other children! I'm done with that! My son is done Nkosiyabo."

Nkosiyabo: "That's not your decisions nor is it Ngcebo's! We will be making his life harder if we try to go against his gift."

Thabsie: "So I must watch my son die Nkosi! You want Ngcebo to die! You want him to die?"

I get up and walk inside as her sobs get louder, she is in dad's arms crying painfully.

Me: "Ma.."

She bury her face on dad's chest.

Nkosiyabo: "It's okay, She will be fine."

I go to my room and look around, this is what I've known all my life, the spirits living inside of me have been there for as long as I can remember, I never go against them I always do what pleases them but now, it's affecting my mother, it's making her unhappy and I don't want that.

I start collecting my white cloths together with amabhayi then take my pink candles that I use when I communicate with those within me. I walk around the back and start lighting one candle and drop it on everything. I feel some pain in my gut and it moves straight to my heart. I go on my knees groaning in pain, I feel like someone is trying to rip my heart out of my chest.

Me: "Mcebisi!"

I'm sweating and breathing heavily I feel a raindrop on my nose then heavy rain starts pouring, I can't get up the pain is getting worse.

I hear my little brothers calling my name but I can't say a word I am now leaning on the wall, what is scary is that even though it's raining but the fire is still burning harder than before.

Bukhosi: "Baba! Nangu ngapha!"(Dad he is here.)

He shouts and they both kneel in front of me.

Makhosini: "Why are you sitting here it's raining."

I point at my chest as the pain intensifies.

Dad and Uuka help me inside the house.

Mcebisi: "Aybo baba! UNgcebo ushise zonke izinto zedlozi."(Ngcebo burnt everything that has to do with the calling)

Nkosiyo: "Wenzeni!?"(He did what?)

Mcebisi shows him what was left of my cloths.

I groan putting my hand over my chest, I feel like I'm on fire now my whole body is burning up.

Thabsie: "Ngcebo.."

Nkosiyo: "Ngakutshela kodwa Thabsile ukuthi gada indlela owenza ngayo phambi kwabantwana! Uyambona uNgcebo wenzeni! Uyambona ukuthi unjani huh?"(I told you to watch the way you act around the kids! Do you see what Ngcebo has done? Do you see how he is?)

Thabsie: "I'm..I'm sorry."

Nkosiyo: "Uqalile futhi! Get out!"(you've started again)

He roars and everyone cringe. Mom get up and walk out.

Me: "Ngicela amanzi."(Can I please have water)

I manage to say with the little energy I have. Makhosini runs to the kitchen and come back with bottled water.

Me: "I don't want to drink it."

I slowly grab it from him and pour it on my face and neck.

Me: "I need more, please."

Dad takes off my t-shirt then they keep wetting the towel and put it on my body but it's not making me feel better.

It's probably around midnight I still feel worse like my whole skin will peel off because of feeling so much fire in my body the water they keep pouring on my body doesn't help I'm now wearing just my boxer shorts.

Me: "Uphi umah baba?"(Where is mom, dad?)

He looks away, haven't seen her around me since dad shouted at her.

Me: "Makhosi please call her for me."

Makhosini looks at dad for approval first but dad shakes his head.

Me: "Please.."

Nkosiyabo: "Ok, you can all go inside and ask your mother to come here."

They walk inside and after a few minutes mom comes out alone and kneel next to me since I'm sleeping on the mat. I hold her hand and look into her eyes, I can see she is holding back tears so bad.

Thabsie: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu Gumede."(I'm very sorry Gumede.)

Me: "It..was..my..own decision."

Thabsie: "And it's all because of my reaction I'm so sorry, I don't want to see you in pain, I watched you living differently from your brothers, I want better for you too."

Me: "We all have our own path mama."

Thabsie: "But your path shouldn't be this hard, it shouldn't separate you from your siblings, your mom and dad, I hate that."

I groan as the pain in my heart comes back sharper than before.

Nkosiyabo: "Where does it hurt?"

Me: "The heart.."

I hear drums playing right outside the gate, dad get up and walk out. My brothers come out and help me sit up supporting me with big pillows. Dad comes back with a girl and another one that is beating drums hard, the girl starts the spiritual dance in front of me she is in that maroon ancestral clothing around her, she then kneels in front of me and start praying so hard I groan as the heat leaves my body and it's so painful I even stop breathing for a second.

I keep grunting, I manage to get up and join her in dancing the other girl is still beating those drums, we are at it for almost an hour I kneel down and the girl kneels in front of me.

"Bathi angikutshele ukuthi awuzulahla ithawula manje! Usanendlela okumele uyihambe, usanabantu abakulindile."(They said I must tell you that you won't give up now, you still have a long way to go, there are people waiting on you.)

I clap hands.

Me: "Thokoza Gogo." I acknowledge the spirit that guides her.

She finally calms down and slowly look up at me, she is not in transition anymore just herself.

Me: "Wenzile?"

She looks around then quickly drop her eyes bowing her head.

Wenzi: "Greetings Great King, I'm so sorry to come into your home unannounced."

Nkosiyabo: "I'm sure those greater than me announced you here Nkosazana, thank you for gracing us with your presence."

He bows his head a little but Wenzile is still looking down, the other girl has seated down now.

Mom asks everyone to come inside, I don't think anyone has eaten anything even the meat I hunted is still in the bucket.

Wenzile and the girl sit on the floor, I start in my room to bath with cold water I feel better now. I go back to join them and everyone is eating, mom gives me my plate.

Nkosiyabo: "So you're still initiates?"

Wenzi nods.

Wenzi: "Yebo Nkosi."(Yes King)

Dad nods.

Me: "You have been at the wrong place all this time, both of you."

She slowly look at me then drop her eyes again.

Wenzi: "What do you mean?"

Me: "The ancestors choose your Gobela not who your parents see fit."

Nokzola: "So Umkhulu is not meant to be our Gobela?"

I chuckle.

Me: "You're not here by chance, both of you came to my rescue because I am supposed to guide you, your ancestors sent you to me because I'm supposed to be your Gobela."

Wenzi: "That is insane, uGobela ulashwa amathwasa?"(A Gobela healed by initiates.)

I chuckle.

Me: "Isangoma asizelaphi vele Nkosazana. Just be happy you tested your powers through me."(a Sangoma doesn't heal himself princess)

Nokzola: "We have to go now Umkhulu uzobona ukuthi asikho."(Mkhulu will see that we're not there.)

They put the plates down and kneel clapping hands then get up.

Me: "Nisazobuya."(You will come back.)

Wenzi glance at me then walk out.

We go to sleep because it's late but I'm restless I keep tossing and turning because of the nightmare that keeps coming back, that girl that hit her head on the stone.

Early around 6 am I slowly walk to the stream then take a path to the other village but before I can go any further I hear noise from people it's like they are calling out for someone I just go back home because I still remember that mob attack I wouldn't want that again.

The Princess just came back home today, she was visiting grandpa in town she bows before everyone then we hug her, she's the apple of everyone's eye really, a sweetheart, our dad's princess.

We just had breakfast so we are sitting outside under the tree I hear a loud purr and I'm the first to get up and look at the gate, there are two cheetahs, the gate keepers. I run to the gate and what I see there makes my skin crawl, there is a dead girl in front of them, her clothes are torn and her head has a very big hole on it like it hit the stone. I close my eyes as I remember my nightmare, it has come to life before me.

Bukhosi: "This is the girl that was here beating drums last night Ngcebo."

I kneel next to the girl and stare at her, it's really her, Bukhosi has a very sharp memory, nothing pass him.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa Nkosazana, angikwazanga ukukuhlenga."(I'm sorry Princess I failed to save you.)

I quickly get up when I think about Wenzile, is she safe? What if she is also dead somewhere.

Me: "I need to find Wenzile now dad."

Nkosiyabo: "Ok, your older brother and I will try to fix this, you can go."

I go back inside and take the only cloth I didn't burn yesterday that was a gift given to me by my great grandmother Ziyanda when I accepted my calling, I wear it around my waist over my white pants then walk out barefoot.

I climb up the mountain and look down at the other village I can see a house with a lot of rondavels I believe it's where the girl's Gobela live.

I get to his yard and I see a man walking out in his full healer's attire, he stares at me.

Me: "I'm looking for a girl, her name is Wenzile."

He chuckles.

"Please leave my yard."

Me: "Trust me Mkhulu I don't want to be here too, this place is dirty I can sense it all the way from the gate."

He steps closer to me.

"You are playing with forces beyond your little powers young man."

That sounds like a threat.

Me: "I don't know witchcraft I heal people so if you are threatening with witchcraft trust me you won't be fighting with me but those who came before me."

I bow my head and walk out of his yard, Wenzile is not around, I tried to sense her presence but I can't feel her.

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CHAPTER 7

NGCEBO

I have been walking in the wilderness for hours now looking for Wenzile but I can't find her I am sweating and my skin is itchy because the sun is hot. I go to the stream and wash my face then drink some water. "Ngihawukele thonga lami."

A sweet melodic voice sings in my head I close my eyes and start clapping in the same rhythm as the person singing in my head. I start seeing black beads, and I know they are for protection, she needs protection. I start shaking as the voice stops singing and the screaming starts. I get up and start walking all around the forest again looking for Wenzile. I trip over something but quickly balance on the tree, I slowly bend down and find a maroon ancestral clothing, it has blood on it when I look down there is so much blood where I picked it up. I follow the little trail of blood until I see a big hole and I almost fall on it. Me: "Wenzile!" I shout her name until I give up and sit down closing my eyes.

Me: "I want to help her, I will help her with everything I can, I'm sorry that I couldn't save the girl but I will do everything to help Wenzile." I hear a very light moan not far from where I am, it's coming behind the big oak tree, I slowly go there and find her covered in blood looks like she is trying to hide.

Me: "Wenzi.." She screams covering her face I kneel before her removing her hands from her bruised face.

Me "It's just me, I'm not gonna to hurt you." She open her eyes then wrap her arms around my neck tight, I slowly wrap my own arms around her. Me: "It's okay, I'm here to help you."

Wenzile: "He will find me, he killed her and I couldn't help her, I'm a bad friend I ran away and left her to die!"

Me: "It's not your fault." Wenzile: "It is because I saw it! I could have prevented it!" Me: "I..I saw it too, I'm the one who was supposed to prevent it, I'm sorry." I touch her face, looks like she fell on her face. She starts breathing heavily then moan in pain I look down at where her left hand is there is so much blood coming out of it my mind flashes to the day Hlelo died.

Me: "Please just hold on ok, don't die please." I am panicking as I remove ibhayi around my waist and wrap it around her waist pressing down on the wound.

Me: "Please try to keep breathing ok." She nods, I can see she is in a lot of pain as I scoop her up and start taking a way back home. Me: "What happened?" She takes a long deep breath, I want to keep her talking, I'm desperate to hear her talk so she doesn't stop breathing.

Wenzile: "Mkhulu found out about us meeting you.." She takes another long deep breath and close her eyes

Me: "Please don't close your eyes Nkosazana, talk to me." She opens them I look into her eyes, she giggles.

Wenzile: "A Gobela that panics like you, ay!"

Me: "So you have jokes?" She moans.

Wenzile: "I'm in a lot of pain iNgcebo." Me: "My name is Ngcebo." I get to the stream and put her down and look at her.

Me: "I need to clean your wound before we can cross this river or else you might get worse and bleed to death." She nods.

Me: "Can I touch you?" She nods her breathing is slowing down I'm trying so hard not to panic. I tear her vest around where she is hurt and look at the wound it's deep.

Me: "Ugwazwe ngomkhonto?"(You were stabbed with a spear?) She nods.

Wenzile: "I don't even remember how I escaped." I take some leaves and wet them putting them directly on her wound, she flinch.

Wenzile: "It hurts.."

Me: "You gonna be okay." I hear some noise she starts shaking vigorously.

Wenzile: "He sent his initiates to look for me, they are coming for me." Her eyes roll back then she close them, I think she fainted. I pick her up and cross the river and run with her in my arms all the way home. I walk in my ancestral hut with her and lay her down at the alter and sprinkle water on her face she wakes up shaking. My sister walk in after taking off her shoes and kneel next to me. Me: "What are you doing here Thingo?"

Thingo: "I saw you walking through the gates I thought maybe you needed some help." She removes the cloth and stare at the wound.

Thingo: "You need to stitch it up and then you can use your herbs while it's closed." Me: "How?" She walks out and come back with a sewing needle and a thread. She kneels and start stitching a screaming Wenzile up, even Thingo keeps closing her eyes, this is disturbing.

Thingo: "It's okay Nkosazana, I'm done now I'm so sorry." I put some herbs that will help with the healing and stop the bleeding then help her drink something for the pain, she haven't stopped shaking. I let her rest and cover her with a blanket. Thingo sits next to me and lay her head on my shoulder.

Me: "Where did you learn that?" She smiles.

Thingo: "You've been gone for a while, On my spare time I go to the hospital and help around, I see a lot of similar cases and I always want to learn more."

Me: "Thank you Princess." She looks at me leaning over, I kiss her forehead, she smiles so innocently and put her head back on my shoulder again.

Me: "So, do you have a boyfriend?" She chokes on her spit and start coughing so hard I get up and get her water giving it to her then sit in front of her staring into her eyes.

Thingo: "I don't have a boyfriend bhuti, dad said no dating until I finish school." I raise my eyebrow, her eyes become teary same time, she is just like mom, they are so emotional.

Me: "Why are you crying?"

Thingo: "I don't have a boyfriend, and I'm going to tell dad that you asked me about boyfriends!" She shouts getting up and walk away, uneconsi lo.(she's dramatic) After a while I check on Wenzi she is still sleeping so I leave her and go to the main house, the princess is sitting on dad's lap crying.

Nkosiyo: "Ngcebo yami." I bow my head and sit down, everyone is here and it's like they want to laugh so bad.

Nkosiyo: "What did you say to your sister?" Me: "I asked if she has a boyfriend baba."

Nkosiyo: "She's a baby why would she have a boyfriend?" I smile.

Me: "That's why she is crying? Oh she is a real baby." Everyone finally starts laughing out loud.

Thingo: "Why didn't you throw bones and ask the ancestors." I frown.

Nkosiyo: "Don't speak like that with your older brother Thingo lamaQwabe." She get up and stand in front of me bowing her head.

Thingo: "I'm sorry about what I said, I'm just upset that you don't trust that I will not date until I finish school." I nod.

Me: "I'm sorry too for asking you that question. I was just making a conversation I guess it was out of line." She nods and sit next to me holding my hand, this is the reason I asked her about boyfriends, whenever she gets close to me I can feel a man's aura all around her but it's not our blood.

Uuka: "Ngcebo!"

I blink looking around then look next to me Thingo is crying I look at our hands, I am holding it too tight it must hurt, I quickly let go she cries walking away everyone is staring at me in shock.

Nkosiyabo: "What was that Ngcebo!" I blink a couple of times.

Me: "I didn't mean to, I don't know what came over me, I'm sorry baba."

Makhosini: "She is crying Ngcebo! She is in pain and it's because of you!" He shouts charging at me I get up looking at him, he wants to fight but I don't fight, Mcebisi is next to me in a minute staring at him.

Mcebisi: "Step back Makhosini right now."

Thabsie: "Uuka stop your brothers." He just sits there and look at us shaking his head.

Me: "I'm sorry." I understand why, siblings do fight and I hurt the princess they are triplets so they are quick to react if someone hurt her even if that someone is their own brother just like Mcebisi always fights for me.

Makhosini: "First you ask her about boyfriends and now you almost break her hand."

Me: "I blacked out, I will never hurt her on purpose." He push me so hard I stumble back removing my hands from my back, Mcebisi slaps him.

Nkosiyabo: "Futsek!" He shouts and we all bow our heads putting our hands on our back. Nkosiyabo: "Makhosini!"

Makhosini: "Baba. I'm sorry but the princess was crying, she was in pain." His voice starts getting shaky and I feel very bad.

Nkosiyabo: "So you want to fight your older brother? The most peaceful brother amongst you! What makes you think he meant to hurt his own sister?"

Makhosini: "I didn't think that far baba, I just hate that he hurt her."

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa, it's just that...I felt a man's aura around her, it's like she's being watched." Dad and Uuka rush to me.

Uuka: "Watched by who? You mean her life is in danger?"

Me: "I don't know, I couldn't get much." Dad takes out his phone.

Nkosiyabo: "Kumkani call Mondli here now." He says walking away with a phone on his ear, Mondli is Thingo's driver.

Makhosini slowly raises his head and look at me.

Makhosini: "I'm sorry bhuti."

Mcebisi: "You need to stop acting impulsive wena it will get you killed." He nods, I give him my hand and we shake it out. I walk back to my hut Wenzi is still asleep I look at her wound it doesn't look bad anymore. I sit next to her and start singing the songs that makes me feel better and mostly are songs sang by Sangomas.

Wenzi: "You have a nice voice." I look at her, she still have her eyes closed. I chuckle.

Me: "How is the pain?"

Wenzi: *"I feel a little numb." I nod.*

Me: *"That's better than being in pain right."*

Wenzi: *"Yes." She slowly open her eyes staring at me.*

Wenzi: *"You are not married and you don't have kids, why?" I smile.*

Me: *"I'm not in a rush, my older brother will get married first and we will all follow." She nods.*

Wenzi: *"Umkhulu had 8 wives and they all gave him children."*

Me: *"And let me guess all his wives were once his initiates and you were next." She coughs a little then moan.*

Me: *"Let me help you drink this again." I make her drink something that will quickly heal her wound.*

Bukhosi stands by the door and ask for me. I go to him.

Bukhosi: *"Can you try and find out who is after the Princess please, Mondli is saying he never saw anything suspicious and so are the other guys." He is feeling uneasy and it's understandable, that's our baby sister, we all want her safe.*

Me: *"I will try to get more on it." He bows then walk away. I sit next to Wenzile again quietly.*

Wenzi: *"You saw a man but he was hiding his face." I look at her she is staring into my eyes.*

Wenzi: *"I saw him too when her hand touched me."*

Me: *"Is the man dangerous?" She shrug.*

Wenzi: *"There wasn't much to feel because the man haven't been in close physical contact with her, he is just watching her from a distance."*

Me: "That doesn't make me feel better, I want to know who is this man and why is he watching my sister." I look at her smiling.

Me: "Your gift is amazing even though you were there to be groomed to be a wife more than a Sangoma but it's in you and very strong." She smiles.

Me: "Thank you for coming back alive, dad took the other girl to the mortuary and we will be looking for her family."

Wenzi: "I will help with the information I have." I nod. We stay together for hours, I get to know a lot about her, she has last seen her parents since she was 14 years old, and now she's 20 but she did speak to them over the phone but it was always scripted that Gobela of hers told her what to say to them.

Me: "Do you want me to take you home first once you get better? Then we will come back and your journey will start on a clean slate."

Wenzi: "You will allow me to go home?" I smile.

Me: "No, you will go now because you haven't started your initiation with me but I will allow them to come visit you from time to time."

Wenzi: "Thank you so much, had I found out sooner that I am supposed to be here I wasn't gonna waste so many years in that place."

Me: "You came at the right time, I believe every bad thing that happens to us is a test, and we will always come out stronger." She smiles.

Wenzile: "You're wise."

Me: "That's why I'm a Gobela and you're my initiate." She laughs but moan touching her wound.

Me: "Take it easy ok. Let me get you food." She nods. I go to the main house and ask my mother for food, she dishes up and I take it to

Wenzile. I get pillows from my room and support her back then feed her.

Wenzile: "I'm full now thank you."

M: "But you haven't even eaten half of it."

Wenzile: "I don't eat much."

Me: "No, you need to eat so you can get better." I feed her until she finish the whole plate.

Me: "That's better.." I give her some juice then take the plate back to the kitchen. I find my brothers with dad I join them.

Nkosiyo: "I think you guys need to use one car from now on and ride with your sister, I trust you to look after your sister and make sure she's safe." Bukhosi and Makhosini nods.

Uuka: "I will be a phone call away every time you see something suspicious give me a call." They nod again.

Me: "I will also try to find out what is going on, the person who will help me is still recovering so I don't want to push her too hard."

Nkosiyo: "It's okay, we need to make sure no one gets to the princess." We all nod.

Nkosiyo: "And please no one should tell mom and Thingo about this because they will panic, we don't want that." I go back to my hut and sleep on the other side while Wenzile is on the other, I can't leave her alone here. I keep tossing and turning the whole night I feel like there is a huge storm coming and I need Wenzile to be okay because I feel like her gift matches mine.

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CHAPTER 8

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NGCEBO

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Things between me and my sister are a little awkward, she greets me and check on Wenzile but I just can't shake off the fact that I hurt her the other day it's eating me up everyday, we protect her not make her cry.

She just walked in the room with a tray, she puts it in front of me and Wenzile, it's been a week since she came here and she's recovering well and we did find the girl's family they were devastated about their daughter's passing, dad helped them with the funeral arrangements and took care of all the costs.

Thingo: "Nkosazana, how are you feeling today?"

Wenzi: "I feel a lot better and I'm tired of sleeping, I'm usually up at 4 O'clock every morning so resting is new to me."

Thingo: "I will give you my dress so we can take a walk around the neighborhood."

Wenzi nods, Thingo get up because she was kneeling the whole time and walk out. Today she totally ignored my presence.

Wenzi: "Gumede."

I lift my eyes looking at her, she usually calls me iNgcobo but today I'm Gumede.

She giggles.

Wenzi: "You look shocked, I won't be calling you by your name since you're now my spirit guide."

I chuckle.

Me: "I get it."

Wenzi: "Talk to your sister."

Me: "About what?"

Wenzi: "She has been trying all this time to connect with you but you kept brushing her off, she is upset with you because she has long forgiven you."

I look down.

Wenzi: "Go talk to her."

I nod and get up walking around the yard looking for Thingo I find her under the guava tree looking around she loves this fruit but she has a fear of climbing trees and also she is a little short.

Me: "Princess."

She turns looking at me then look up again.

Me: "Can we talk please."

Thingo: "I need to get Wenzi that dress."

She says and rush off to the main house leaving me standing there. I look around and get her about four guava and look for her again. She's in her room I walk in and sit in bed as she looks around the closet.

Me: "I got you your guava."

She looks at me for a while then nod.

Thingo: "Thank you."

Me: "Are you angry at me sisi?"

Thingo: "No, but you're the one who has been ignoring me, distancing yourself from me so I got tired of forcing myself on you."

Me: "I'm sorry for hurting you."

Thingo: "I told you I forgive you, I know you blacked out, this is not something new to me! I know you!"

She shouts, I see dad walking in.

Nkosiyabo: "What's all this shouting lamaQwabe?"

She cries sitting in bed and face the other way.

Nkosiyabo: "Ngcebo.."

Me: "I want to apologize, I have been ignoring her because of what I did, and Wenzile made me realize how wrong I was towards her, she has been trying but I kept brushing her off."

Dad looks at me I drop my eyes because I can feel tears filling my eyes.

Nkosiyabo: "Come here."

I get up and he put his arm around my shoulders then call Thingo, he does the same to her, we are facing each other.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

She nods, I wipe her tears.

Me: "I promise I won't ignore you ever again"

Thingo: "Ok."

We hug and I feel better already.

Nkosiyabo: "Siblings do fight but remember we don't go a day without fixing things, right?"

Thingo: "Yes baba."

I hug her again but quickly let go before I hurt her again, someone touched her.

Thingo: "Are you okay?"

I grunt and my whole body trembles.

Me: "He was too close today, he actually touched her."

Dad goes crazy, he shouts Uuka's name immediately, they are best friends, they have that brotherly relationship more than the father and son, they do everything together.

Nkosiyabo: "Kumkani!"

Uuka rush in and look around.

Uuka: "What happened, is everything ok?"

Nkosiyabo: "We are going to Thingo's school I need to find out who is after my daughter."

Thingo: "After me? What is going on?"

Dad and Uuka follow each other out.

Me: "Uhm..don't panic dad will fix it ok, don't worry about it."

She goes to Wenzile while I go to the stream for a bath.

I go under water closing my eyes.

I can literally see someone snatching Thingo from me I quickly rise from the water gasping. I wear my clothes and run home I find my hut empty I guess she left for their walk with Wenzi. I walk out the gate and look for them I see them a bit far. I run to them while calling out their names. They stop walking and look at me.

Thingo: "What is it?"

Me: "We need to go back home, uhm..the..the weather is changing."

They look around then stare at me with a frown on their faces, I can't tell them that I want them to go back home because I feel like someone is after my sister but that was a bad lie from me because the sun is up and shining in the sky.

Me: "I.."

I draw a deep breath and close my eyes, I feel rain drops.

Me: "See it's raining, let's go."

They walk ahead of me, I sigh, manipulating nature is not something I want to do because I never learnt to control it so I'm afraid it would get out of hand.

We get home and there is no rain at all, the sun is still up.

Thingo goes to mom and I remain with Wenzhi in the hut.

Wenzhi: "So you can manipulate nature?"

Me: "Why do I feel like you're always in my head?"

Wenzhi: "Sometimes I feel like your thoughts are my thoughts, it doesn't happen every time but most of the time."

We stare at each other and she smiles looking down.

Me: "What is it?"

Wenzhi: "You think I'm beautiful.."

Me: "What? No...I mean...I.."

She giggles shaking her head.

Wenzhi: "So I'm not beautiful?"

Me: "I..uhm.."

She get up and take ibhayi that I gave to her and wrap it around her waist and kneel down taking the drums and start beating them.

As she continues beating the drums furiously sweat dripping down her face I get in spirit as well, all those people within me are out to play, I'm not myself anymore I am in another world. Wenzhi doesn't stop beating drums I have taken off my t-shirt because it's getting really crazy in here.

She stops playing drums and come kneel in front of me staring into my eyes, I feel so much heat running through my veins. She starts clapping hands calling oGumede, oPhakathwayo.

Me: "He was sent by someone dangerous."

She keeps clapping.

Me: "I can see the face of a person who touched the princess."

She smiles shaking her head.

Wenzile: "Khuluma mntwana."(Speak child)

She hasn't stopped shaking her head. I close my eyes and try to locate Uuka.

Me: "Bheka eduze kwakho Kumkani."(Look closer to you Kumkani.)

I open my eyes, Wenzile is now on the floor not moving, she drained her body to help me find the person who was watching my sister, I pick her up and take her to my room in the main house, she should sleep in the comfort of the bed for now so her body can fully recover from that transition.

I wait for Uuka and dad to come back I see their car driving in and they step out looking like they were fighting someone.

Me: "Are you ok?"

Uuka: "We found the guy when we were about to drive out of Thingo's school, he is her classmate, he had beads around his ankles and wrists, looks like someone used some muti on him not to be able to speak when asked questions, a lot was happening to that boy."

Me: "Where is he?"

Nkosiyaabo: "I beat the hell out of him before letting Mondli keep him, I believe maybe you can try to talk to him."

I nod.

Me: "I will go after Wenzile wakes up."

Uuka: "So Wenzile is your initiate now?"

Me: "Yes."

He nods.

Later I check if Wenzile is up I find her sitting up in bed looking around. I stand by the door watching her.

Wenzi: "So this is your room?"

I nod and sit next to her in bed.

Me: "You've recovered now I think we should take you home to see your parents tomorrow then we can start with your journey."

Wenzi: "So you meant it?"

Me: "I don't say what I don't mean Princess."

She nods.

Me: "I have to go somewhere, I will see you later and thank you for earlier you helped me find the guy who has been following the princess."

She nods.

Me: "Thank you."

I clap my hands twice she does the same and I walk out.

Uuka takes me to Mondli's house, I walk in and find the guy bruised on the couch, he keeps wincing in pain. I sit in front of him.

Me: "Sawubona bhuti."(Greetings brother)

He looks at me and starts shaking.

Me: "Do you need water?"

He starts shaking and there is foam coming out of his mouth. I call Mondli to help me lay him down.

Mondli: "Should I call the ambulance?"

I shake my head.

Me: "It's too late, he was blocked from saying anything and it's like they knew I will try to get him to speak so he is dead now."

Mondli widens his eyes and look at the boy, he is already dead.

Mondli: "He is dead?"

I nod closing his eyes.

Me: "Someone else is after the princess he just used him to keep an eye on her, I trust you to make sure she is safe and I will do everything I can to protect her as well."

He nods and I walk out as he calls dad and tell him about the boy, I don't even want to know what will happen to him.

I start by the stream and take a bath it's already dark then I go home, I find everyone eating dinner on the table but Wenzu is sitting on the floor I take my plate and join her there. We eat then I let her sleep on my bed again while I go sleep in my hut.

In the morning I wake her up and ask Mcebisi to drive us to her parents home. They welcome us with open arms and they are happy to see their daughter after so many years, also they are shocked that the man they trusted with their daughter turned out to be an evil man who hurt their daughter. They are skeptical about her leaving again but I assure them that she is where she is supposed to be now, they didn't choose me for her neither did she but the ancestors did.

We go back home and she looks genuinely happy now, she can't stop thanking me.

Me: "You do know there are certain things you should avoid when you are in this journey right?"

She smiles. She's a pretty girl.

Wenzi: "Yes I know Mntwana."

I nod.

Me: "Good, you have a very stubborn ancestor in you, so I have to try and be tough on you I hope you understand."

She kneels and clap her hands.

Me: "Thokoza dlozi.."

Wenzi: "Thokoza Mtwana weDlozi."

She grunts and start hitting her shoulders like there is something heavy on them.

She still have a long way to go, she was born with an amniotic sac around her but it was stolen from her so she needs to find a way to appease to the ancestors for losing that Sac but I will help her, she was sent to me for a reason.

** CHAPTER 9*

** NGCEBO **

Wenzile's parents have bought two goats for the ceremony they have to do for Wenzile. We need a sac that will replace the one they lost. The sun has set her family is now slaughtering the goats, I am guiding her father in everything he has to do. He has put the sac around her and isiphandla around her right wrist then the gall is used in all the right places in her body. She sleeps alone in the hut where everything was taking place. Mcebisi takes me back home I will come back tomorrow to fetch Wenzile.

Me: "You've been scarce nowadays." I say getting in the passenger seat of his car. He chuckles.

Mcebisi: "I am busy with my final exams brother, can't you give me some herbs to help me remember everything in the exam room." We both laugh.

Me: "What else is happening?"

Mcebisi: "There's a girl I'm asking out but she's not hearing any of it, she says a lot of things, "I look like a player and I look arrogant and and.." yhoo!" I laugh.

Me: "Are you a player?"

Mcebisi: "I'm not." Me: "Then assure her you're not, this whining doesn't suit you." He laughs.

Mcebisi: "I thought you gonna feel sorry for me and give me something to make her fall for me."

Me: "That never ends well my friend, you don't want to have a relationship with a Zombie. Those things destroys people he or she becomes a puppet and you pull all the strings, where is the fun in being with someone who is forced and not in her right minds?" He frowns.

Mcebisi: "Woah, I was only joking man, I will win that girl by just being myself." I nod.

Me: "Sorry, I know you're joking I was just pointing out that I don't know why people do it, it's not ok." He nods.

Once we get home I go to my hut and lit 7 pink candles talking to the ancestors asking them for Wenzile's ceremony to be a success. In the morning I take one of dad's car and drive to Wenzile's home, it's in another village so I woke up really early I have to be the first one to get there and I didn't want to wake any of my brothers so I am driving really slow I'm still not that good with this driving thing and I don't

think I will ever be. I knock where she was sleeping alone, she opens the door rubbing her eyes, I smile looking at her, she blinks looking at me with a frown on her face.

Me: "Is that how you greet your Gobela?" She blinks a couple of times then kneel down bowing her head then clap her hands, she is still sleepy, she has a peaceful sleep today I know if she didn't she was supposed to be already up by this time.

Me: "Thokoza Gogo." I pull her up and look into her eyes.

Wenzi: "I slept like a baby, ngiyabonga."(Thank you) I raise my eyebrow.

Wenzi: "It's one of those days where I can read your mind."

Me: "I need to block you from doing that."

Wenzi: "But why? You're afraid I will find out your secrets?"

Me: "I don't have secrets." She giggles and open the door wide so I can walk in. I sit where she was sleeping, she sits next to me.

Me: "The ceremony was a success now you need to ask your parents to keep it safe for you, a person getting hold of this can destroy your life into ashes." She nods. Me: "They need to wake up and cook the meat so we can leave."

Wenzi: "I feel light like something heavy was removed from my shoulders." I nod. She walks out I remain inside minding my own business. Mid day they are done with everything and everyone is eating. Wenzile finally walk in with a plate full of dumplings and meat she has a cold drink on the other hand. She sits next to me. Wenzile: "Sorry for leaving you for so long, I was helping with the cooking."

Me: "It's okay."

Wenzi: "I got this for you." I smile.

Me: "Thank you but I don't eat anything that is made out of flour even bread, it looks good though."

Wenzi: "Oh I'm so sorry uhm... I didn't know I will make pap for you."

Me: "No it's..." She is already out the door before I could even finish speaking. She comes back after a few minutes with pap it looks hot you can see smoke from it, I chuckle as she put it in front of me.

Me: "You didn't have to make pap for me."

Wenzi: "You weren't gonna leave without eating."

Me: "Thank you." I start eating, and she prepared it just the way I like it, I can eat it alone without any curry or meat the way it's so good. After I finish eating she walks out with the dishes. We say our goodbyes to her very humble family then I drive us back home. We get home and go to the hut, Thingo walks in because she saw us driving in. She gets along with Wenzile though she is older than her. They are laughing until Thingo touch Wenzile's hand she grunts and the princess jumps up on her feet in fright.

Wenzi: "He wants revenge, I have to go back to save the princess."

Me: "IamaQwabe, please leave the room." She slowly nods and rush out.

Me: "Wenzile.." She looks at me.

Wenzi: "I have to go, he is seeking revenge and he wants to take the princess since you took me."

Me: "I didn't take you, the ancestors led you here."

Wenzi: "He doesn't care about that." She get up, I get up as well and hold her hands. Wenzile: "I have to go back, I can't put your sister's life in danger."

Me: "We will protect you and Thingo, at least now we know who is the enemy." She shakes her head.

Me: "You can't leave Wenzile and you know that." She sit down in defeat and put her hands above her head. I kneel in front of her.

Me: "Nothing will happen to you, I just have to prepare you for this fight because I can't do it alone, I need you by my side." She nods.

Me: "I need you to let go of this fear ok, or else one of us will die and it might be me and you won't be able to live with yourself." She stares at me.

Wenzi: "Are you scaring me using yourself? What makes you think I care if you die?" I laugh.

Me: "You wouldn't care?" She shakes her head with a smile on her face.

Me: "We can do this, right?"

Wenzi: "But he is powerful."

Me: "Everyone has their own weaknesses." She looks down.

Wenzi: "I know his weakness is women."

Me: "What do you mean?"

Wenzi: "I have to go back so I can destroy him from the inside."

Me: "No, you won't gamble with your life like that, we will find another weakness it can't be only that." Wenzile: "We don't have time to find out more."

Me: "Wenzile you're not going back there."

Wenzi: "Who is going to stop me?" I look down, she knows I won't force her to stay, I feel like I am an open book to her, every page is in bold letters, she knows me

. Me: "Please.." Bukhosi and Makhosini barges in with their shoes on I feel like my whole skin will peel off.

Makhosini: "Is Thingo here bhuti?" They look distraught but the shoes are making me sick, literally.

Me: "Remove your shoes please."

Bukhosi: "Bhuti, we can't find Thingo anywhere!"

Me: "Remove your shoes Bukhosi." They slowly remove their shoes and I feel like I can breath again, I wasn't gonna hear anything they say if they hadn't removed them.

Makhosini: "Thingo is gone." I look at Wenzu.

Wenzi: "I will get her back."

Me: "I will go with you."

Wenzi: "No." She get up and run out, the time I step out she is already running towards the stream then cross the river. I see one cheetah staring at me then run in a different direction I follow it running. When I get to where it stopped I see the other one dead blood coming out of it's mouth and the tale is missing.

Me: "They..they got the tail of the Qwabe gate keeper?" I look down.

Me: "They will destroy all of us! They will turn my father's kingdom upside down." I get up and run to where Wenzu went, I stop at the gate stepping back then call on my brother, I start by pinching myself on my neck hard until I feel like my skin is tearing, I know he will feel it and find me. I can hear screams from one hut my head is spinning.

Me: "Mcebisi!" I pinch myself again harder than before. One gate keeper is next to me in a minute I can hear the ground shaking as Uuka and Mcebisi emerge from the forest and they are behind me. I can finally walk in now that my brothers are here, I go straight to the rondavel where there is a woman screaming, I open the door and find out it's a young woman and she is about to give birth all alone in the hut, she is sweating and naked facing up, screaming in agony. I kneel next to her, there is an innocent baby there.

Me: "Nkosazana." She is losing her breath looks like she has been here for hours. Me: "Please let the baby out, you're not pushing but just screaming, he will die please."

"Angikwazi."(I can't)

Me: "Yes you can, I'm here to help you ok." She nods I brush her tummy then apply pressure at the upper part of her belly so the baby can move towards the entrance. Me: "If you feel like pushing don't hold back Nkosazana." She nods, I keep applying pressure on her belly, she push so hard until I hear a little cry, I quickly take the baby and cut the cord using the razors I always keep in the small bag that is always around my waist.

Me: " Igama lakho uYonda, it means Growth, it was your great grandfather's name." He starts sneezing.

Me: "Bless you." I grab the blanket on the floor and wrap him with it.

Me: "Love him and protect him until he grows up and protect you." The woman slowly nods.

Me: "I have to go, please go back home with your son ok."
"Ngiyabonga kakhulu."(Thank you so much) I place the baby on her chest and walk out. I look around I see Mcebisi holding Thingo in his arms.

Me: "Did you find Wenzile?" He shakes his head. Mcebisi: "We found Thingo passed out in one of the rondavels, we searched everywhere but we couldn't find who they call a Gobela and Wenzi."

Me: "Ok, where is Uuka?"

Uuka: "I'm here, I can't find Wenzile and the healer I think he kidnapped her."

Me: "I am going to look for her." I say running to the opposite direction walking around the forest pushing away the branches the cheetah is still running next to me. I look for her until the sun set, I sit

down because my feet hurt I have been walking barefoot in a forest full of thorns.

Me: "Bantwana bedlozi ngiboniseni indlela."(Spiritual children show me the way.) I sit there with my head buried on my thighs until the cheetah push me with it's head I look at him, he turns his head looking at the other side of the forest, there is a torch somewhere down there. I quickly get up and head there. When I get closer I see that it's a small tent there and there is a deep voice speaking inside. "I want you to give me a child, your eggs are blessed, you will give me a very strong baby boy." I can hear soft moans inside, the cheetah next to me jumps tearing the tent. Wenzile is sleeping naked on the floor and the old man has his pants on his knees. "Yewena mfana!"(Hey you boy!) I look at Wenzile again, she looks so tired.

Me: "Let me take her and leave."

"Never! She is mine! She sacrificed herself to save the princess, she agreed to this!" He pulls his pants up and take the spear pointing it in my direction but the cheetah jumps in front of me and sleeps on it's side I see it bleeding immediately, I don't know what happened.

Me: "I didn't come here to fight, I am here to take Wenzile home with me." "No, she will bare my child, a boy child that will carry her gift and mine and become a very powerful Sangoma to ever live."

Me: "You mean you want her to carry a child that will be a witch like you, give him your evil bags to destroy people's lives?" He points the spear at me again, I close my eyes clenching my jaws, strong winds starts, blowing the tent away first then the spear.

Me: "I don't want to taint the pure souls living in me, I don't want your blood in my hands." I raise my hand up and lightning strikes right between us, I see him falling on the ground, it didn't hit him but I guess he was shocked. I remove ibhayi and wrap it around Wenzile then pick her up. I start by kneeling in front of a cheetah and bow my head.

Me: "Your journey in the circle of life has ended, you've fulfilled your purpose of protecting the kingdom of our forefathers, thank you, Qwabe.." I get up and walk home with the girl in my arms, she has fainted now. I keep taking breaks along the way because it's a long way home. By the time I get in my hut it's already 3 in the morning. I slowly lay her down, she opens her eyes and look into my eyes.

Me: "He didn't hurt you?" She moans. I look at her thighs she is badly bruised like she was hit by a sjambok.

Me: "I'm sorry I couldn't find you sooner."

Wenzi: "You got there when it mattered most, he didn't get to mate with me to create a monster of a child."

Me: "I'm sorry."

Wenzi: "The princess is safe and that's all that matters."

Me: "You matter too you know." She smiles a little.

Wenzi: "Can you give me those herbs to help me with pain please." I nod and mix them for her then help her drink.

It's been three months since Wenzile came here, she is close to finishing her journey I'm sad that she will be graduating soon and she will leave, we've gotten close. We have never heard of that man ever since that day, I know he is somewhere preparing his army of witches but I'm not afraid I know we are never alone, one thing that worries me though is that tail of a cheetah he is in possession of.

Wenzi: "Thokoza Mntwana.." She kneels in front of me.

Me: "Thokoza." She looks at me.

Wenzi: "You are delaying on purpose." I look down in shame.

Wenzi: "You are delaying my journey."

Me: "I'm not."

Wenzi: "Let me go don't be like that old man that kept me in his home for his own selfish reasons."

Me: "I'm nothing like that man Wenzile."

Wenzi: "Then why are you still keeping me here while I am done with my initiation." Me: "Because..I...I have found a friend in you but you're right it is selfish of me to make you stay here while you're done with your initiation, this weekend you can tell your parents to attend umcimbi wakho wokuphothula."(your ritual for graduation) She stares at me not replying.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry) She claps twice and get up walking out. The weekend is here, her parents bought a cow out of the goodness of their heart, I never ask for cows, those that sent me never ask for payments, they know money is not everything, I get money the way they see fit and that is not asking it from people I am helping with their ancestral journey." She has done ukugida(Dancing) my family is now saying goodbye, she has four new goat skin around her wrist that I bought for her so the ancestors can lead her from now on, clearing her path.

Wenzi: "Hey.." I chuckle turning to look at her.

Me: "So we're on the "heys" now." She laughs

Wenzi: "Thank you for everything." I bow my head.

Me: "Nkosazana."

Wenzi: "Are we allowed to hug uMntwana?" I chuckle.

Me: "You greeted me with a Hey so you might as well hug me." We hug for the longest of time until I feel my shoulder getting wet, she is standing on her toes.

Me: "This is not goodbye, it's see you soon, don't cry." She let go and I wipe her tears.

Me: "Soon.." She giggles giving me her hand and we handshake.

Wenzi: "Soon."

I watch her getting in her family's car and it drives away. I huff and go back to my hut. Thingo was also crying for her friend. I now need to prepare myself for the worst by making sure my family is shielded from witchcraft, if he wants to fight he needs to do it like a man and face my father.

CHAPTER 10

NGCEBO

It's been three weeks with Wenzile gone, I have two new initiates, a boy and a girl 15 and 19 years of age. They are easy to work with and their dreams are very clear which makes my work with them easy.

I haven't been myself since Wenzile left, feels like she left with a huge part of me. She communicates with Thingo over the phone but not even once has she asked to talk to me, maybe she is angry or just want to start her journey without me in the picture and I understand if that's the case, I was just her Gobela anyway nothing more I guess, but I saw her as a friend.

Mcebisi sits next to me holding two cold drinks, he hands one to me I take it.

Me: "Thank you."

Mcebisi: "I haven't seen you genuinely smiling ever since Wenzile left, it's like she left with something precious to you."

Me: "Yeah she did, she was precious to me."

Mcebisi: "I'm sorry you're feeling this way."

Me: "It's okay, we do meet to part."

He hit me with an elbow and point at the gate, it's Wenzile's family car I quickly stand on my feet as she step out of the car, she is wearing a very short white dress with pink sneakers, she still have the beads I made for her around her ankles and wrists and so are the goat skin, she looks beautiful and the dress suits her, she has her hair tied up. Thingo rush out of the house screaming running towards her, the gate is opened and they share a tight hug.

Thingo: "I missed you so much."

Wenzile: "I missed you too, that's why I'm here you've been whining."

I am still standing there looking at her, the dress suits her though it's too short but it's like it was made for her body.

They finally walk in, she bows before me and Mcebisi then she claps hands saying "Thokoza" I was expecting a hug really.

She get up and give me a very brief hug before going to do the same to Mcebisi, she didn't come here for me so I excuse myself going to my hut.

After hours of mixing my herbs I hear her taking off her shoes then she walks in and take one of my cloth wrapping it around her waist then she kneel next to me.

Me: "I thought you've already left."

Wenzi: "I came to say goodbye, everyone was that side except you."

I nod.

Wenzi: "You don't look happy to see me."

Me: "Why would I be, you didn't come here to see me."

Wenzi: "But I came to see all of you iNgcebo."

Me: "Ok."

Wenzi: "You're cold, what's wrong?"

Me: "Maybe I'm dead, how can I be cold?"

She stares at me then get up removing my cloth around her waist she walks towards the door I quickly get up and hold her hand, she stares at my hand until I let go.

Wenzi: "You're rude, too much for being a peaceful brother."

Me: "Oh is it?"

Wenzi: "I guess this is where umnono is said to be childish at times?"

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "You're calling me childish?"

She storms out. I rush behind her calling her name.

Me: "Wenzile."

She looks at me.

Me: "You talk to Thingo everyday over the phone but you don't ever ask to talk to me, ngakuphatha kabi yini kade ulana?"(Did I mistreat you when you were here?)

Wenzi: "I respect you and I did set boundaries, you are my Gobela so speaking to you over the phone wasn't something I saw fit."

Me: "But I thought we did develop some friendship, why am I suddenly just a Gobela to you now? What did I do wrong?"

She doesn't answer and that makes my heart beats faster.

Me: "Did I say something that hurt your feelings?"

Wenzi: "No."

Me: "Then what is it?"

Wenzi: "I have to go iNgcebo, my older sister is waiting in the car for me."

I nod.

Me: "Nihambe kahle."(Go well)

She bows her head and walks away. I sit behind the rondavel beating my drum slow. I see mom coming with a bowl, she gives me a lot of different types of sweets.

Me: "Thank you so much my Queen."

Thabsie: "You're welcome my Prince, where are your children?"

Me: "In the forest looking for some herbs."

Thabsie: "They went alone?"

I nod.

Thabsie: "But with Wenzile you always went with her."

I look down.

Thabsie: "Did you guys fight? I have never seen you this sad."

Me: "I think I might have said something she didn't like when she was still here because now she has set some "boundaries" between us and I have no idea what happened, I thought we were friends."

She smiles touching my shoulder."

Thabsie: "Go visit her when you get time."

Me: "She called me childish."

She giggles.

Thabsie: "And she knows why better than anyone."

Me: "She does?"

Thabsie: "You have a spirit of Amanono she knows that very well, probably the reason why you have finished your sweets already."

I look at my bowl I have been eating those sweets while talking to her I didn't even realize I already finished them.

Thabsie: "I like that she understands you."

Me: "Understands how when she insults me using that, saying I'm childish."

Thabsie: "When someone points out I am dark skinned no matter how rude he or she says it I don't get bothered because it's me, a part of me I can't change it for anyone so I accept it."

She looks at me.

Thabsie: "Part of who you are is how you sometimes react, what you love, what makes you happy, that's Ngcebo uMntwana weDlozi, that is why they never say Thokoza Gogo or Mkhulu because you have a spirit of abantwana inside of you."(Spirit of children)

Me: "Thank you mom, I feel better already."

Thabsie: "I love you boy."

Me: "I love you too Ndlovukazi."(Queen)

She takes the bowl and walk away. My children come back from the forest with everything I asked.

The next day I decide to drive to Wenzile's home, it's still early in the morning but she's already up sweeping the yard I park the car at her gate and step out. She rushes to me.

Wenzi: "What are you doing here?"

She says whispering looking around as to see if no one sees me I don't understand because people know me around here now.

Me: "I came to see you, can we talk."

Wenzi: "You have to leave before people see you."

Me: "You're really confusing me, I am your Gobela what's wrong with people seeing me?"

Wenzi: "iNgcebo please leave."

Me: "Kodwa yini, ngikwenzeni?"(But why, what did I do to you?)

Wenzi: "Hamba."(Go.)

I go back to the car and drive to a nearby waterfall, it's beautiful and the grass is greener.

The hair at the back of my neck rises up I grunt as she stands behind me.

Wenzi: *"I knew you were not going home but coming here."*

Me: *"Ungiphoxile."(You disappointed me) I came to see you and you rejected my visit."*

Wenzi: *"I didn't.."*

I turn to look at her behind me, she has my cloth around her body, she didn't have it earlier.

"I'm sorry." We both say in unison.

Wenzi: *"Sorry for the way I spoke to you, I was worried that people will see us and start talking."*

Me: *"Don't you think it's all in your head that people will start talking because of your feelings, which they won't even know until you start acting weird around me."*

Wenzi: *"What..what feelings?"*

Me: *"I know you care about me though you try to hide it."*

She shakes her head.

Me: *"I'm not asking you."*

Wenzi: *"You're slacking with your Dlozi children."*

Me: *"I blame you for that."*

Wenzi: *"What did I do?"*

Me: *"I don't know, but you're all I think about, ever since you left I have never been the same."*

She stares at me, and something in her eyes draws me to her, I step closer and place my hand around her waist pulling her closer to me, she gasp.

Me: *"Allow me."*

Her lips involuntarily part as I look into her eyes and slowly move my lips to her, as soon as they touch I feel shivers down my spine I look up arching my back and rain starts falling. I start kissing her she doesn't kiss me back for a while then she starts moving her lips in the same rhythm as mine, rain is still pouring we are wet but I don't care, this moment right here is everything and more.

I untie ibhayi on her and let it fall, I watch the rain drops on her bare skin, her pointy breasts and erect nipples, she is in her white panties only. I see her shivering her lips are still parted and very pink. I kiss her again picking her up and her legs are wrapped around my waist. I get inside the water until we are in the middle then I go down with her and let her go. After a while I step out of the water and look deep on there, she rises up as well looking so beautiful still in just her panties, her beads are glowing as so does her skin. I watch her as she walks towards me I pick up the ancestral cloth and wrap it around her.

Me: "Ngicela ube owami."(Please be mine)

She looks down.

Me: Ngiyazicelela nje."(I am begging you)

She nods while still looking down.

Me: "Ngicela ungibheke phela Nkosazana."(Please look at me Princess)

She giggles shaking her head.

I touch her chin and move her head up, she looks at me.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda and lokho angikususeli noma ikuphi kodwa kuphuma la.(I love you and I'm not taking that from anywhere but here)

I say pointing at my chest, where the heart is.

Wenzi: "What took you so long?"

I smile.

Me: "You're not supposed to be dating when you're an initiate, you have to remain focused on only idlozi, linomona kabi."(It's so jealous)

She giggles looking down.

I look up and the rain stops.

Wenzi: "I'm cold."

Me: "Let me take you home."

I pick her up and take her to the car then drive her home, people are up and moving around.

Wenzi: "I should have walked here."

Me: "Why?"

Wenzi: "People will be wondering what is going on."

Me: "I'm not gonna hide my feelings for you from anyone, there is nothing wrong with being with me, we are on the same age group."

She nods.

Wenzi: "So..when will I see you again?"

I smile.

Me: "I will see you soon Princess, for now I have to focus on helping those children, like you said, I have been slacking."

She nods.

Wenzi: "I still have to come to your ancestors to ask for umsebenzi wedlozi."(the work of the ancestors)

Me: "Abangeni abantu?"(People are not coming in?)

She shakes her head.

Wenzi: "Just one old woman and they were testing my powers she wasn't genuine."

I nod looking up.

Me: "Maybe we are supposed to be working together."

Wenzi: "How?"

Me: "I don't know, *ngisazophahla ngikhulume nabaphansi bazongibonisa indlela.*"(I will lit the candles and speak to the ancestors they will show me the way.)

She nods and get off the car walking away. I go home and take a bath first changing my wet clothes then go check on the children I find them collecting beads of the same colour putting them together. I start hitting the drum, they stop what they were doing and start dancing to the beat going into trance, their journey wasn't long with me, they already were in an initiation with their ancestors they just came to me to learn a few things.

By the weekend they are already gone now I am consulting in regards to Wenzile's journey.

I am sitting at the alter staring at the candles, they start blowing like there is some winds inside the hut, she is here.

She walks in and kneel next to me.

Wenzi: "You were right, I am supposed to be working along side with you."

We hold hands and thunder strikes right in the center of the hut. She smiles looking at me.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda."(I love you)

She smiles looking down.

Wenzi: "Sidinga ukubethela igcceke(we need to do a protection ritual around this yard)

I nod.

Me: "usakhumbula ukuthi sihlanganisani?"(Do you still remember how we mix it?)

She smiles.

Wenzi: "I remember but you should do it."

I sit down she kneels behind me and put her hands on my shoulder I grunt, she get up and start beating drums, I start mixing everything I will need to protect my ancestral home.

I walk out and tell my mom and dad what I am about to do, they let me, I start by the gate and get Bukhosi to dig up a hole for me there then I put what is needed , He close the hole then Wenzile prays kneeling down, we do it all around the yard then we go back in the hut. I think I am more powerful when she is around because she transfers most of her energy to me.

Wenzi: "I trust you."

I smile.

Me: "Thank you for coming back to me."

I hold her hand tight .

CHAPTER 11

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NGCEBO

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I am sitting with my brothers and my father outside the house mom is preparing lunch with the princess inside. We are just talking about life in General. Wenzile went back home after we did that ritual of protection around our yard but she will come back because apparently there is one initiate on the way that will need both of us working together so she will come back then.

Makhosini: "Mntwana!"

I look at him moving my eyes around, they are all looking at me.

Me: "What is it?"

Nkosiyabo: "Why are you smiling?"

Me: "I'm not."

I say raising my eyebrows.

Nkosiyabo: "Come on, tell us what's going on these days you've been overly happy."

I look down smiling.

Me: "Wenzile and I are together baba."

My little brothers starts cheering and Uuka squeeze my shoulder they look so excited.

Bukhosi: "I knew it, the way you're so over protective of her, I knew there was something there."

Uuka: "Wazini wena!?"(What do you know?)

Bukhosi: "Nothing bhuti."

We laugh at him.

Nkosiyabo: "So what is going to happen?"

Me: "I can't do anything baba since Kumkani is not married yet I guess we have to wait for him."

Uuka: "Wait for what?"

Nkosiyabo: "Culturally you have to get married first before your brothers."

Uuka: "Oh no then they gonna wait forever I'm not ready to get married, not after Funeka cheated on me with all these village boys."

Me: "I told you to look somewhere else, you were just setting yourself up for a heartbreak there."

Uuka: "Now you gonna tell me who to date Ngcebo?"

I look down.

Me: "No, sorry."

Uuka: "If you want to get married you can go ahead, I'm not getting married anytime soon."

He says walking away.

Bukhosi: "Ave ezitshela lo."(He's so full of himself this one)

They all laugh but I'm worried about him, the first heartbreak is not easy to get over, so I've heard.

I find him sitting under the tree, I bow before him.

Me: "Kumkani.."

He looks up at me.

Me: "I'm sorry if I stepped on your toes earlier, it wasn't my intention."

Uuka: "It's ok, sit down."

I sit next to him.

Uuka: "You are right you know, I ignored all the signs with Funeka from the beginning, she was always not available and the little time she was she wouldn't even let me touch her."

Me: "That's a good thing Kumkani because she wasn't meant for you in the first place."

Uuka: "It still hurts though because I loved her."

Me: "It's about compatibility more, you guys had nothing in common, she is a wild girl with a lot of friends and you're a daddy's boy but more of an introvert, bowuyohlezi umlanda ematarven."(You were always going to fetch her in taverns)

He burst in laughter and it's always good to hear him laugh out loud.

Me: "There is nothing wrong with you Uuka but everything was wrong with her, stop asking yourself questions, you will be enough for the one meant for you."

Uuka: "So the pressure of me getting married before all of you?"

Me: "I didn't mean to put pressure on you, take your time we can always talk to the ancestors, also Wenzile and I have work to focus on for now, we will talk about marriage after all that."

He nods.

Uuka: "I'm proud of you little brother, you have taken your role seriously, it hasn't been easy all those years watching you getting sick but you pulled through and accepted who you are."

I smile.

Me: "Thank you for always being there."

He smiles.

Me: "Ngicela ungenzele ijuice."(Please make juice for me.)

He laughs nodding.

Uuka: "Ice cream and sweets awukufuni kona?(You don't want it?)

I smile looking down, everyone knows I love sweet stuffs, they sometimes mock me about it but I have to feed some cravings there are children within me. He walks away for a while then come back with a tray full of sweets, ice cream and fruits. He place it in front of us and he eats only the fruits while I eat my ice cream and sweets.

I feel some ground shaking mom screams inside the house we all run there, she has blood in her hand and the knife on the other, it's too much blood that Bukhosi and Makhosini starts bleeding on their noses due to the strong smell of blood. Dad rush to take the cloth and wrap it around her hand.

Nkosiyabo: "Sorry my love, sorry, where is Thingo?"

I go look for her in her room and find her bleeding as well, I take her towel and wipe her nose.

Me: "Are you okay?"

She shakes her head.

Thingo: "I feel dizzy."

Me: "Ok, rest a bit."

She get in bed and close her eyes I put a blanket over her and walk out. Bukhosi and Makhosini are sleeping as well. Dad is taking care of mom in the lounge Uuka is with them.

Nkosiyabo: "What is going on?"

Before we could answer, we hear a knock and Wenzile is here in one of her very short dresses, I remove ibhayi around my shoulders and give it to her, she wraps it around her waist and kneel bowing her head.

Nkosiyabo: "What's happening, I thought you guys put up protection around the yard."

Wenzi starts clapping then look at me.

Me: "That man had the cheetah's tail with him, the cheetah that was born on the same day the triplets were born, here in the same land where they had their first cry, he is testing the waters by burning a little piece of it, that tail can kill them including..."

Nkosiyabo: "Including what?"

Me: "Our mother as her blood hit the ancestral ground on that same day the triplets were born."

Mom looks like she doesn't hear a thing, she looks so tired. Dad picks her up and take her to their room. He comes back and stand in the middle of the room, we bow our heads.

Nkosiyabo: "What are you saying to me Ngcebo?"

Me: "The cheetah was connected to mom, Makhosini, Bukhosi and Thingo, mom is a Queen of this land, a mother to all beings and her giving birth on the same day that cheetah was born, it made them share a bond like they were given birth by the same mother."

Nkosiyabo: "So what happens if he burns the whole tail?"

I look at Wenzile, she slowly look up.

Me: "They will die."

Nkosiyabo: "So you're telling me my wife and kids life are on somebody's hands?"

I nod.

Nkosiyabo: "Why didn't you tell me this Ngcebo! Why were you quiet all along?"

I look down as he shouts.

Wenzi: "He didn't know my King, he only knew that him having that tail is a bad omen but didn't know how deep it goes, it was only shown to him now. Please forgive us."

Nkosiyabo: "But still Ngcebo yami, you should have told me about him cutting off that cheetah's tail."

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa baba."(I'm sorry father)

He wipes his face sitting down.

Nkosiyabo: "What now? Kumkani call that city guy you call a brother to come home right now."

He is referring to Mcebisi because he spends a lot of time in Durban than here.

Wenzi: "I will go look for him, part of my journey here is to protect the Princess uThingo lamaQwabe, I will find him."

She claps her hands and get up walking out, I follow her.

Me: "Wenzile.."

She turns to look at me.

Wenzi: "Don't try to stop me."

Me: "I won't but I am coming with you."

Wenzi: "You need to stay and..."

Me: "No."

I fix ibhayi around her waist then go take another one wrapping it around my shoulders then we take a walk in the wilderness. We stand on top of the mountain looking around, she is slightly behind me then I feel her hands on my chest, she is hugging me from behind, I smile to myself.

Me: "Whenever you're around me I feel complete."

Wenzi: "I feel the same way."

I turn and pull her to my chest. My body is hitting up as she moves her hands on my back. She looks at me, I immediately kiss her pinning her on the tree, my bulge is growing bigger and she can feel it because I'm too close.

Me: "Let me teach you something."

She nods.

Me: "Look at that cloud."

She looks up in the sky.

Me: "Control your mind, tell yourself that this tree will be hit by lightning right now."

She stares at the cloud then stares into my eyes, she finally close her eyes I pick her up moving away as the tree we were leaning on breaks into half because of lightning, she stares at me in shock.

Wenzi: "I can do that?"

I smile.

Me: "I read your thoughts then I manage to manipulate the nature using them."

She keeps quiet for a while I laugh as it starts drizzling for a while.

Wenzi: "This is fun."

I stare into her eyes.

Me: "I'm teaching you this because I want you to always remember that whenever I am in a situation where I can't seem to be able to do anything, you can let me in your thoughts, it can save the both of us."

She blinks wrapping her arms around my neck.

Wenzi: "Are we gonna get in trouble?"

I nod.

Me: "Yes and I hate fighting but if they touch what is mine they will be forcing my hand and it is bound to get ugly, I don't have my emotions intact because mostly I am led by the spirits of babies in me they tend to get a little out of hand."

She giggles.

Wenzi: "I love you."

I perk her lips.

Me: "I love you too. So how about you help us locate that monster."

She nods.

Me: "Picture him in your head ok then I will do the rest."

She close her eyes but quickly opens them I feel her body shaking, she's still in my arms.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Wenzi: "I just...the day he tried to rape me, that's the whole episode that came into mind."

Me: "I'm sorry love. Zama futhi muntu wami ngikhona."(Try again my love I'm here)

She close her eyes again I can see her clenching her jaws, I stare at her, she is replaying the day he was hitting her with a sjambok all over her body.

Me: "Baby..stop hey, open your eyes."

She quickly opens them and stare at me.

Me: "Maybe this was a bad idea, I didn't teach you this to bring back those memories, I'm sorry ok."

I hug her, she hold me tight.

Wenzi: "Let me try again."

Me: "No, it's okay we will find another way."

Wenzi: "I will do it."

She looks at me and draws a long breath before closing her eyes, I can now see a clear picture of him, I create a path in my head that will lead me to him then we open our eyes. I see a cheetah standing next to us then it's starts running leaving its paws on the ground.

Me: "We will follow in those paw prints, it will lead us to him. You did great my love."

She stares at me and smile.

Wenzi: "Wow.."

I kiss her and put her down.

We follow the paw prints of the cheetah until we don't see them anymore, I stand on top of the big stone I can see two huts made with mud just like how I made mine in Swaziland.

Wenzi: "Do you see anything?"

I nod and step down.

Me: "He is here."

Wenzi: "Let me go first to distract him."

Me: "No, I won't let you out of my sight."

We get to his yard and find that there are people singing Sangoma songs.

Wenzi: "Let me walk in first iNgcobo I will be fine."

I sigh and peck her lips, she walks around the rondavel and I hear her starting a song but no one sings after her they are probably shocked by her presence, but she doesn't stop singing then I hear drums playing, as she keeps playing the clouds start getting darker, she is beating them too hard lightning strikes on the nearby trees about 8 people come out of the hut running then lastly it's Mkhulu he is staring at me like he wants to tear my flesh apart.

Mkhulu: "You keep provoking me young man."

M: "You provoked me first by taking my sister and tried to force yourself on Wenzile."

Nkosiyabo: "And that was your biggest mistake, not my princess."

I smile as they come out of the forest dad is already rolling the sleeves of his shirt, they must have followed the trail of the cheetah's paw prints.

The lightning doesn't stop, I run inside the hut Wenzile is alone sweating still beating those drums with her eyes closed, she is not in control of her emotions at all.

Me: "Wenzile.."

She doesn't stop, I grab the drum from her and throw it outside, she screams so loud and the roof that is made out of grass starts burning.

Me: "Open your eyes baby ok, I'm here with you."

She is draining herself, the grass starts falling on us, it burns my arm so bad I manage to grab her and run out of the hut, dad is beating up that healer throwing punches at him while Uuka fights a male initiate.

Mkhulu falls on the ground dad get on top of him and keep punching him.

"It doesn't matter what you do! I have finished you!"

He says with a grin on his face, dad takes out his spear and slice off his throat I pull Wenzile in my chest, she is still shaking and lost a lot of energy.

I help Wenzile sit down then go inside the other hut, I find the tail of a cheetah but it's smaller now, I walk out with it.

Me: "I found it baba.."

I show him the tail. He nods and look at Uuka, the man he was fighting with is not moving on the ground I don't know where others ran off to.

Uuka: "You're bleeding."

I look at my arm, it looks ugly, the burn mark.

Me: "I'm fine."

Dad takes the tail.

Nkosiyabo: "We have to bury it where no one will find it."

The cheetah emerges and walk around my father staring at him, it's like they are communicating.

Nkosiyabo: "I know the place, I will see you at home."

We bow our heads and he walks away following behind the cheetah.

Uuka: "Are we leaving?"

I nod and pick Wenzile up she sleeps on my shoulder and take a very deep breath.

Me: "It's ok."

We follow Uuka until we get to the stream.

Me: "You can go home, we will find you there."

He cross the river and I look at Wenzile.

Me: "Are you ok?"

She nods.

Wenzile: "I'm tired."

Me: "You need to control your emotions because if you can't I also fail to control myself, we almost got hurt."

Wenzile: "I'm sorry, I couldn't get the abuse I suffered at the hands of that man out of my head."

It's okay. I put her down and remove ibhayi and her dress, I remove ibhayi around my waist leaving my pants then I take her under water for cleansing, I do it often because I don't want any dirty evil spirits lingering around me.

I come out of the water and she does the same, I help her in her dress then wrap ibhayi around her shoulders because she is cold.

Me: "We're ok."

Wenzi: "Something doesn't seem right, that man wasn't afraid of dying, why?"

I look at her.

Wenzi: "He said he has finished you, what does that mean?"

Me: "Don't worry about that for now, whatever it is we gonna fight it."

She nods. I get home and make a comfortable space for her to sleep in my hut then cover her with a blanket. I kiss her cheek.

Me: "I can't believe you're mine."

I groan as I start feeling pain where I was burnt. I sit down and start attending to it then walk out I find my father sitting outside staring into space.

Me: "Baba.."

He looks at me and sigh.

Nkosiyabo: "Does it hurt?"

Me: "A little. Seems like you're far in thoughts."

He chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "That man, I feel like he did something but I don't know what it is, I just hope it doesn't destroy my family."

Me: "We wouldn't allow that, we've come too far dad, you left your life in the city to be here with all of us, you raised us well the ancestors will see us through anything, I believe in them."

Nkosiyabo: "And they believe in you, thank you Gumedede."

I smile, hearing how everyone is proud of me always boost my confidence. I am who I'm supposed to be, iNgcebo kaNkosiyo uMntwana weDlozi.

I check on Wenzile in the hut and find her awake I sit next to her.

Me: "How are you feeling?"

Wenzile: "I feel a lot better now, thank you."

She touch my arm.

Wenzi: "Does it hurt?"

Me: "A little."

I look at her.

Me: "I want us to get married Nkosazana.

She has her eyes wide open but I'm not joking I don't want to date her for years with no direction while I know she's the one for me.

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CHAPTER 12

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NGCEBO

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Wenzile didn't give me any answer when I proposed marriage to her, she just looked at me and we were disturbed by Thingo barging in checking on us, they are all fine now.

She has been avoiding me by spending more time with Thingo.

She just walked inside the hut I am sitting quietly on the mat. She sit next to me.

Wenzile: "I'm going home, I will come back once that initiate comes."

Me: "Ok, so you're going to ignore my proposal?"

She looks away.

Me: "What is it?"

Wenzi: "I haven't done much in my life Ngcebo as an individual and now you want us to get married that means I will never know what independence feels like."

I look at her.

Wenzi: I left home when I was only 14 doing Grade 9, I don't have anything, haven't achieved anything on my own."

I nod.

Me: "I hear you and I'm sorry for everything you went through."

Wenzi: "Do you really understand what I'm saying?"

Me: "I do, go and achieve everything you've always wanted for yourself princess, some of us understand that we are where we're supposed to be, I don't envy people who have qualifications because I understand myself better and idlozi lami takes care of me, I'm breathing and that's all that matters."

She drops her eyes.

Me: "I'm freeing you, and I'm saying that genuinely."

She claps her hands and walk to the door but she steps back as someone is standing on my doorstep looking like he hasn't taken a bath in days, his clothes are torn and so are the shoes, this is the man Wenzile and I are suppose to help together I guess she's not going home anymore.

I get up and look at him bowing my head.

Me: "Welcome Nkosana."(Prince)

He has a huge dirty afro and a beard but it's nothing I can't handle some have come to me looking worse.

I don't let him inside my hut instead I take my bag and put everything I will need, I take a new ancestral cloth that I bought a few weeks back then walk out.

Me: "I am taking him to the river."

Wenzile nods and walk back inside the hut. I walk with him quietly to the stream, he keeps looking around, looks like he has been mentally ill and I know it's only because he tried to run away from his calling. I ask him to sit on down and I cut his hair using a scissor and a razor then shave his beard.

Me: "I need you to take off your clothes and take a bath in that river I will wait for you here."

He do exactly what I said without saying anything. He get inside the river until I can't see him anymore. After a long hour of waiting he comes out looking brand new, very clean I give him ibhayi he stares at me, looks like the fog that was covering his mind is gone he can see things clear now.

He slowly takes ibhayi and wrap it around his waist.

"Where am I? Who are you?"

Me: "I'm Ngcebo Gumede, you're at the Qwabe kingdom ukuzothwasa."(For your initiation)

"No."

He shakes his head.

Me: "If you keep denying who you are, you will suffer more than you've already suffered prince."

He looks at himself, he has a tattoo of a snake on his upper arm that is showing its tongue out. I bow my head smiling.

Me: "Mathenyoka.."

He looks at me confused.

Me: "Thokoza mkhulu."

I clap my hands but looks like he is in denial probably the reason why he got mentally ill in the first place. No matter how far you run away it will find you, those people are your bloodline they will always find you.

Me: "Let's go home."

Mathenyoka: "Where is home?"

Me: "This way.."

I walk ahead of him, he is around 27 or a little older if I'm not mistaken and has a well built body like he used to go to gym often. We get to my hut and find Wenzile sitting on the floor making beads.

Wenzi: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

She says clapping her hands but the guy stares at her like he is seeing a diamond.

Mathenyoka: "Sawubona ntokazi."(Hello lady)

Wenzile get up and ask for his hands, he stretch them out to her still staring, Wenzile put his beads around his wrists then go down to put them around the ankles, looks like he is attracted to the beauty of Wenzile that he doesn't even ask questions but just stare at her.

I clear my throat and we all sit down.

Mathenyoka: "How did I get here?"

Me: "Your ancestors brought you here."

He close his eyes and touch his forehead, looks like they are showing him something after a while he opens his eyes.

Mathenyoka: "What? I was eating in the dumpster, collecting papers? So I was crazy? People saw me like that?"

I look at him.

Wenzi: "You worry about what people say a lot that is why you ended up where you were, you couldn't accept your calling because it was gonna stop you from your flashy lifestyle and changing women."

She tells it like it is, probably why I fell in love with her.

Mathenyoka: "Why me? I have sisters couldn't they choose them?"

Wenzi: "All that doesn't matter anymore, they chose you now you have to face it."

Mathenyoka: "I don't have time for this."

He get up and walk to the door but lighting strikes he step back rubbing his eyes.

Mathenyoka: "What happened? Why can't I see anything.?"

Wenzile takes the drum and start beating it, I chuckle as he starts walking all around the room and starts hissing like a snake, he grunts I start clapping hands to the beat of the drum. He goes on his knee and start clapping as well.

Me: "Vuma idlozi."(accept the calling)

He shakes his head but keep clapping.

I get up and take ishoba lami, I start hitting his shoulders his grunts are getting louder.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyavuma."(I accept)

Wenzile stops playing the drum. He finally looks up.

Mathenyoka: "I can see again?"

I nod sitting down again.

Me: "Arrogance can be a good thing to have as a man with pride, but it can also be your downfall. A relationship with your ancestors is a give and take relationship, you have to give them something so they can shower you with what you desire, if you don't give them anything they snatch everything back."

He look down.

Me: "They can even snatch your soul because sometimes you are a reincarnation of the ancestor that once lived, you have a spirit of your great-great grandfather Mathenyoka, a striking resemblance of him, that's a blessing take it as that not a curse, a calling is never a curse."

He slowly clap his hands Wenzile chuckles and kneels.

Wenzile: "We say Thokoza mntwana weDlozi."

Mathenyoka: "Oh, but why not Thokoza Mkhulu or Gogo."

Wenzile: "Because he is uMntwana weDlozi."

I chuckle, sometimes she is impatient when in trance The guy kneels in front of me and do as Wenzile did.

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

I leave him with Wenzile and ask my mother to prepare some food for him I usually do it but I'm not really okay emotionally. I give him food then walk out to sit outside just to clear my head. Wenzile sit next to me and take my hand.

Wenzi: "Ungidinelwe?"(Are you angry with me?)

Me: "How can I be angry at a beautiful princess like you."

Wenzi: "You don't have to pretend with me, I know ufuna ukungiduba kodwa inhliziyo yakho ayivumi."(I know you want to give up on me but your heart won't allow you.)

I look down.

Wenzi: "Ngiyakuthanda, ngakuthanda ngosuku lokuqala ngikubona ngigeza emfuleni, there was something about you."(I love you, I loved you the first day I saw you when I was bathing in the river.)

Me: "Then let's get married, I promise I won't stand in your way of achieving your dreams, you will still be able to do everything you want, ngiyakuthembisa."(I promise you)

Wenzi: "Ngiyavuma."(I accept)

Me: "Uvuma ini Nkosazana?"(What do you accept Princess)

I say already on my feet

Wenzi: "Ngivuma ukushada nawe."(I accept getting married to you.)

I pick her up spinning her around, she is giggling.

Me: "Oh ngiyabonga Khathi, Nandisa, Nyende."

I sing her clan praises she is laughing so beautifully.

Me: "Thank you."

I hug her again.

Me: "I need to let my family know the good news also we have to inform the ancestors that I am getting married before Kumkani."

Wenzi: "Enza ekumele ukwenze Gumede, ngizolinda wena."(Do what you have to do Gumede, I will wait for you.)

I feel like dancing but instead of that I hold her waist and kiss her lips until someone clears their throat, it's Mathenyoka.

Mathenyoka: "Thokoza Mntwana, uhm..I didn't know kuyajolwa la."(You're dating here.)

Wenzi: "Asijoli, siyathandana."(We're not dating we're in love.)

I chuckle.

Mathenyoka: "Can I use your phone I need to call someone."

Me: "No, you can't use a phone and please don't be rebellious here, you're old enough no one should be running after you."

He frowns.

Mathenyoka: "So I am supposed to bow to you kids everyday?"

Wenzi: "Keep that attitude going and I won't be nice to you."

She walks away, I look at him shaking my head.

Me: "You don't want your journey with us to be hard, just try to tone down that bad boy attitude. I'm a nice and patient person but my woman's ancestors are very impatient and aggressive you don't want that for yourself trust me."

I walk away and find my mom and dad playing Bukhosi's video games laughing their lungs out, I want this kind of relationship for Wenzi and I, to never allow age to limit us from anything, they still run after each other like kids, dad still picks her up they play around it's beautiful to watch.

Me: "Baba anginiphazamisi?"(I'm not disturbing you?)

Nkosiyabo: "No, you can have a seat."

I sit on the opposite couch and smile as they give me their full attention.

Me: "Uhm..Wenzile agreed to marry me baba."

I say proudly.

Nkosiyabo: "That's great news, right baby?"

Mom smiles.

Thabsie: "I can't believe we're here my love, one our children talking about marriage already, it's been a journey."

She says looking at dad with so much love in her eyes.

Nkosiyabo: "You fought for us to have more children and they have been a blessing, it's all thanks to you sthandwa sami, ngiyabonga maKhumalo."(Thank you maKhumalo)

They kiss I think they forgot that I'm here, I clear my throat looking down mom giggles.

Thabsie: "I'm so sorry about that baby, I'm happy for you."

Nkosiyabo: "So should we inform the ancestors about you getting married before Uuka?"

Me: "I think sending a letter to her family asking for a date first then if they accept only then we can inform the ancestors."

He nods.

Me: "It will be strictly traditional, also I have to also marry idlozi lakhe because she will be a Gumedede fully."

Dad claps his hands.

Nkosiyabo: "Thokoza.."

I smile.

Me: "Thokoza baba."

I walk out and go around the back where

There is my own kraal, my father's kraal is in front of my hut, mine is at the back, I have about 19 cows there and three calves that I bought

with the money I made from just being a healer, this is what I meant when I said I have my own INgcebo(Wealth) from my ancestors.

Me: "Zizophuma zonke ziyowushaya kaKhathi."(They will all walk out to pay lobola at the Khathi residence)

I chuckle as I see the oldest cow in the kraal sitting down.

Me: "Inkuz'emnyama, eyokwakhela umkami isidwaba esisha sha."(A black bull, they will use to make my wife's new traditional skirt.)

I chuckle as it get up and stares at me like it can hear me.

Me: "Niyozalana nande kwaKhathi manje."(You will multiply at the Khathi residence.)

I open for them and take them to drink water, we have three boys that looks after them. I bath in the river then watch them as they eat some green grass, the grass of our land never runs dry even in winter.

Mid day I go back home and find Wenzile in trance she is throwing down hot coals on the ground, Mathenyoka is also in trance dancing on them, this is probably why they wanted Wenzile to do this with me, I'm not capable of such but the man is strong but stubborn my woman is led by his own ancestors, they want him to feel the heat, sometimes it's not abuse but your own ancestors punishing you through a Gobela, Mathenyoka wasn't a nice man by nature he was this type of Gobela that wasn't laughing with any of his initiates so he is making his stubborn great grandchild feel it.

I leave them and go to the main house to eat some breakfast with my family.

Uuka: "I hear you are getting married congratulations bhuti."

I smile as all my siblings congratulate me.

Thingo: "Uzomiswa yimi uWenzi."(I'm gonna be her bridesmaid.)

She says excitedly.

Me: "We still need to send a letter, they can decline.

Thingo: "Then I will go there myself and talk to them, who wouldn't want a good man like you to be a son inlaw."

We all chuckle staring at her.

Thingo: "I'm getting old I see things clearer, when I get older I want to marry a man that will be like all of you, love, affection and respect."

We look at her in shock.

Me: "iNkosazana yababa ikhulile."(Daddy's princess has grown.)

Dad smiles proudly looking all around the table, he takes mom's hand and Mcebisi's who is next to him, we all hold hands and mom starts praying for our family.

** CHAPTER 13*

** KUMKANI-UUKA **

I believe in speaking things into existence, I remember as a young boy vowing that me and my siblings will not inherit the enemies of our parents, no generational curses and that we will all start our lives on a clean slate and this is a it, we haven't had any enemies from the past, It was just that one man that thought he could try Nkosiyo's iNgcebo. My little brother is getting married today after the lobola negotiations and umembeso(exchange of gifts) that happened a month ago, I have seen him happy but never this happy, he has that twinkle in his eyes and that smile that never leaves his face even for a second. I smile as I see my great grandfather, Ntsika and his brothers, he has grey hair now but his wife doesn't seem to age at all, she looks pretty right next to him, all the men of the family are wearing. a Prince and white goes well with his gift as a man with idlozi lamanono (pure souls) I greet my elders by bowing my head, they always act shocked at how grown I have become, I'm the oldest even my younger brother

is getting married I don't understand why it's shocking that I'm grown. A series of big cars starts driving in our huge yard, Prince and Princesses from different parts of the world are gracing us with their presence, Ntsika is a well known king of kings, my father a humble King an a former soccer star so of course people want to attend his son's wedding. I go to Ngcebo's hut and take off my shoes, I find him sitting at the altar with four pink candles in front of him, he is in his full traditional regalia looking really perfect. I kneel next to him and clap my hands.

Me: "Thokoza Mntwana." He smiles looking down like a little child, he looks exactly like our father, we all do.

Me: "How are you feeling?"

Ngcebo: "Nervous but excited at the same time, ubucu obuhle buhamba ngabubili, I have found a heart that pairs with mine."(beautiful things travel in pairs) I smile.

Me: "You're younger than me but I look up to you." He looks at me.

Me: "I really do, you've taught me a lot about life, it is all about acceptance, accepting who you are and also always being humble." He blinks rubbing his eyes.

Me: "I'm happy for you and may the ancestors guide and protect you always." Ngcebo: "Ngiyabonga Phakathwayo."(Thank you Phakathwayo.) I hug him as he gets emotional then wipe his tears.

Me: "Gumede, Mnguni kaYeyeye, Khondlo, Qwabe, wena waseMthendeni ezweni loju nezinyosi...." I recite the clan names, he grunts loud aching his back, I start clapping my hands, he is going into trance, I hear drums playing outside, he starts dancing to the beat of the drums outside then he stops and kneels on the floor. He finally stands and we walk out, I am walking behind him, there are sangomas kneeling next to his hut wearing white clothes and amabhayi around their shoulders in different colour, I have never seen any of them before, they start playing drums all over again as he walks out, this is

beautiful. Outside the gate there is Wenzile's family and her side of the community behind there, there are Sangomas with her as well wearing white just like the ones inside the yard. Wenzile is covered in a blanket. My father opens the gate for them people start ululating cheering joyfully. All my brothers are standing behind Ngcebo as his wife stands before him in her traditional regalia, she is in sisidwaba that was made by the skin of the bull that Ngcebo bought first with his own money, 18 cows were sent to Wenzile's family only imvulamlomo was money but the rest were Cows. They both kneel in front of each other.

Wenzi: "Thokoza Mntwana weDlozi." She says in her sweet angelic voice with a wide smile on her pretty face, my brother chose well.

Ngcebo: "Thokoza Gogo." He get up and help Wenzile up, they will be getting married in the presence of Wenzile's family pastor, he didn't have a problem with joining this union. I am looking around when something shinning blinds me by the entrance of the tent, I blink a few times then look again, it's a crown with a huge diamond between the crystals, a very beautiful girl is standing there looking around probably for a place to sit. I quickly move from my brothers and go to her. I bow my head before her.

Me: "Nkosazana." I look at her, she is smiling at me.

Me: "Let me show you where to sit."

"Thank you."

I take her hand and lead her to my seat next to my mom and dad.

"Oh no..I can't sit here."

Me: "Please, you can't stand at the back the sun is hot." She sit down crossing her legs, she is in a white long dress that has a slit on a thigh, so as she cross her legs her thigh is all out. "Thank you." I find another place to sit, the pastor bless their union and they put on the rings, after that we move to the open space so our bride can gift us

with blankets starting from our old great great grandfather Luyolo to his wife Ziyanda, God blessed them with so many years on earth but you can see old age is catching up with them now but she still looks pretty as hell. I'm then called first before my brothers, I sit down and they give me a blanket then wrap a towel around my head. They call everyone and give them their gifts. I get up and leave the blanket on the floor.

Me: "Kwath'angigiye."(I feel like dancing) The crowd replies with "Giya"(dance) I start doing the Zulu traditional dance, I'm a Zulu man and my brother is getting married so I'm happy so why not. People are going crazy, mom runs to hug me happily once I'm done, I am sweating that was fun, I don't usually do this but come on I'm happy.

Thabsie: "Wow that was so beautiful! I never thought you'd do that in front of so many people." I laugh.

Me: "You have to go out of character sometimes to show how happy you are." My brothers also come to me, they hug me excitedly.

Ngcebo: "What! What was that!?" He says shoulder hugging me laughing happily. Me: "I'm proud of you Gumedede." My father get up.

Nkosiyabo: "Akengihlabe u1 nami ngeke ngehlulwe izinyane lami."(Let me just give you one strike I won't be defeated by my own cub) Everyone laughs and mom starts a song for him happily, he gives us strictly on strike that leaves people amazed. I look at Ngcebo he is smiling like a kid, you can just tell how happy he is. The only Princess amongst boys shows off as well with her traditional dance skills, she does it so well and she is dressed for the occasion a full traditional regalia that girls wear when they attend umkhosi womhlanga. We move to the well decorated tent where everyone is going to eat, I look around trying to locate the girl with my eyes, I see her talking on the phone. "Papa I did attend the wedding on your behalf but I haven't talked to King Ntsika, I will send your regards and tell him you couldn't come because of your health." "Ok, I will see you on these coming

holidays papa." She drops the call and turn bumping into me, she gasp in shock as I snake my hand around her waist so she doesn't fall.

M: "I'm sorry for startling you." She nods and shift uncomfortable I remove my hand on her waist. Me: "My name is Kumkani-Uuka Gumede." "I know who you are."

Me: "May I know who you are?"

"Bonolo Modise,

My father knows King Ntsika so he forced me to attend this wedding on his behalf since I'm close and he is back home."

Me: "Where's home Princess?"

Bonolo: "North West." I nod. Me: "You look beautiful by the way." She smiles. Bonolo: "Thank you, you look even more handsome in person." I chuckle.

Me: "So o bua SeTswana?" She chuckles.

Bonolo: "yes, ngiyasikhuluma nesiZulu."(I can speak IsiZulu also." I smile as it comes out so fluent effortlessly.

Me: "Ngiyajabula ukukwazi ntokazi enhle."(I'm pleased to meet you beautiful lady.) Her phone rings again, she stares at it then look at me.

Bonolo: "Sorry, I have to take this." I nod. She turns looking the other way.

Bonolo: "Baby.." I wait for her as she speaks to her man from what I've gathered listening to her conversation. She finally looks at me.

Bonolo: "Sorry about that."

Me: "It's okay." I see my ex walking towards us with a glass in her hand it's obviously alcohol.

Funeka: "Oh there you are baby, I have been looking for you." She is clearly drunk and to me that's embarrassing to be called "baby" by a drunk woman in a yard full of respective people, I'm the next king, I dumped her for this behavior and fooling around, at first she made me believe she is a well mannered girl now I just don't even know how I was with her but then she is the pretty girl in the village but with bad behavior I guess her beauty is the only thing that attracted me.

Funeka: "Sis can you excuse us please." Bonolo nods but I shake my head gentle holding her hand.

Me: "Don't leave please."

Funeka flips her hand and Bonolo gasp as the drink splash all over her face moving down to her exposed part of her breasts. I quickly pull her close wiping her face with my hands because the drink surely went in her eyes.

Me: "I'm so sorry. Funeka please leave." I am trying so hard to keep my cool. She clicks her tongue and walk away. I take Bonolo's hand and lead her to the main house going to my room. I take my face cloth and wipe her face with it, she takes off her crown putting it down. Me: "Sorry about that."

Bonolo: "It's okay." She looks at her white dress, it has alcohol stains now and I feel bad because Funeka did this on purpose.

Me: "You can stay here I will quickly go to the shopping centre close by and buy another dress for you."

Bonolo: "You don't have to do that." I take my car keys. Me: "You can lock the door and take out the key I will come back soon." I walk out rushing to my car and drive to the shops. I walk around in frustration because I didn't even ask her size. I keep walking around until I spot a dress that looks similar to the one she had on but it's red in colour so I ask for it then pay. I unlock my door and walk in, the shower is

running so I close the door and put the dress in bed. She comes out of the shower with my towel wrapped around her body.

Bonolo: "Oh I'm sorry, I used your shower I didn't like the smell of alcohol on my skin."

Me: "It's all good, I hope this will fit. " She takes the dress and look at it.

Bonolo: "Wow.. thank you." She goes to the bathroom with it and come back looking great in it, it fits her just like the other one she had on.

Bonolo: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you.) She seems like a humble girl. Me: "So, you're a Princess?" Bonolo: "Yes. I have to go someone will be here to pick me up soon." I nod and get up bowing my head.

Me: "It was great meeting you Princess Bonolo." She smiles and bow her head as well.

Bonolo: "It was nice meeting you too Prince Kumkani-Uuka and thank you for the dress." I take a plastic bag and put her dress inside giving it to her.

Me: "Again, I'm sorry about your dress." I walk her out, I see a car flashing lights by the gate, the yard is still full but it's getting late. She get in the car that is driven by a man, another car follows behind it. I walk back to my room and pick up her phone in bed looking at it. We will meet again soon.

CHAPTER 14

*

NGCEBO

*

It's the first night together as a married couple we are in my room, it has been a long day but I was happy throughout. My family's support and them showing how genuinely happy they are for me was priceless I'm so grateful for everything.

My wife just came out of the shower, she came back already dressed in her very short white satin nightdress, she's sitting at the edge of the bed looking nervous, I stand in front of her wearing only my pants because I also took a bath before her and just wore my pants.

She is moving her eyes around.

Me: "Uyayisaba yini indoda yakho?"(Are you scared of your man?)

She giggles nervously.

Wenzi: "I'm not scared of you."

Me: "Then look at me."

She looks at me briefly then look away again.

Me: "Usabani?"(What are you afraid of?)

She doesn't answer.

Me: "Is it sex?"

She glance at me I shrug my shoulders smiling.

Me: "Can I kiss you?"

I take her hand, she slowly get up and we share a kiss but she quickly breaks it and stare at me, I love her eyes, it says a lot of unspoken words, I know she loves me by just staring back at them.

Wenzi: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu ngosuku lwanamhlanje Gumede, beluluhle."(Thank you for this day Gumede, it was beautiful.)

Me: "Kubonga mina, ungenze indoda emadodeni namhlanje, manje bengisacela ungenze indoda ephelele."(I am thankful, you made me a man amongst men, now please can you make me a complete man.)

She nods and wrap her arms around my neck I gentle sweep her off her feet and wrap her legs around my waist. I have never done sex but when we reached puberty dad taught us all about it and how to practice safe sex but he always said he recommended we get married first just like him before we could be intimate.

She tenses up as I gentle lay her in bed on her back and get on top of her kissing her.

Me: "Angeke ngikulimaze."(I won't hurt you.)

She nods. I take off her nightdress then follows her panty, I kneel and look at her body, she doesn't hide anything but just look at me. I slowly take off my pants together with my boxers freeing uGumede that is already hard and dripping of pre-cum. She slowly sits up and play with her hands I chuckle kneeling in front of her with my knees on her either side of her legs she doesn't know where to look and it's amusing to me.

Me: "Are you okay?"

Wenzi: "You're making me nervous why are you so calm?"

Me: "Why are you so worked up? It's my first time too."

Wenzi: "Really?"

I chuckle.

Me: "Ucabanga ukuthi bengilala nobani? Namathwasa ami?(Who do you think I slept with? My initiates?)

She laughs, she is letting go of this nervousness.

Me: "Bengilinde wena."(I was waiting for you.)

Wenzi: "Nami bengilinde wena Gumede."(I was also waiting for you)

That is enough for me to kiss her and lay her on her back again getting in between her thick thighs, I am getting hot flushes all over my skin as I feel her softness with my hands, I rub it with my hands I hear her moaning softly on my ear, my own man is throbbing at the sound of these soft moans. I kiss her neck as I rub the tip on my penis on her soft lady part.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo.."

She calls it differently today, very low.

Me: "Sthandwa sam."(My love.)

She doesn't say anything but digs her nails on my shoulder I groan as the sexual desire intensifies. I finally stop rubbing and guide it to her opening, she moves back a little.

Me: "Angeke ngenze kabuhlungu ngiyathembisa."(I won't hurt you I promise.)

She nods, my body is trembling as I push it gentle and slow her nails digs even deeper and that to me is motivation. I finally feel something pop as I push deeper and stop moving, she let out a soft scream pushing me back.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda."(I love you.)

I slowly pull out and look down at my penis it has a little blood.

Me: "Ngicela ungivumele ngiqhubeke."(Please allow me to continue.)

She slowly nods, I gentle push it in again then start moving slow, those nails on my skin makes me up my pace every second until I'm groaning as the sexual pleasure gets too intense.

Me: "Sthandwa sam..mmmh..yhoo ngiyabonga."(thank you)

I grab on the bed sheets and shoot all my seeds inside her, I am sweating and shaking with goosebumps all over my body.

I slowly pull out and stare at her, she looks away.

Me: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu maKhathi wam odalelwe mina."(Thank you so much maKhathi, that was made for me.)

I see a little smile, I gently pull her up and scoop her up taking her to the bathroom.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda kakhulu."(I love you so much.)

She stands on her toes and wrap her arms around my neck I hold her waist as the water falls on our skin.

After softly taking care of my precious fruit my wife just gave me, I take her back to bed and sleep next to her. She sleeps on my chest I hold her, I never thought it's this beautiful to share a bed with a woman, a woman you love, that will give you children one day.

Wenzi: "We won't use the ancestral alter tomorrow without cleaning right?"

Me: "Yes, I will mix the herbs for us and they will always be here so we can cleanse, Mathenyoka still needs our full attention."

Wenzi: "You say always? You will always want it?"

I laugh.

Me: "Sekuyisithelo sami semihla ngemihla lesi."(This is my everyday fruit now.)

She giggles.

Me: "There will come a time where you will want your own fruit as well my love, just wait till it doesn't hurt."

She laughs softly punching me.

Wenzi: "But can I brag that I'm the first girl in my village to have such a big traditional wedding and my lobola was real cows, that's something you don't see nowadays. 18 cows Gumedede! No you deserve me."

I laugh.

Me: "I do?"

Wenzi: "You do, and the fruit as well." She says laughing out loud.

I laugh getting on top of her and we make love again, and looks like this time she enjoyed it or she is letting loose."

In the morning she is the first to wake up and reminds me of cleansing because she wants to make breakfast for our family as the new bride. We cleanse inside our bathroom with my herbs it's still dark outside, it will be like our daily soap because we have an initiate we need to be in that hut everyday, it's not a struggle at all, this is part of who we are and it will be normal to us soon.

I go to the hut first and find Mathenyoka looking like he is meditating.

I sit opposite him and clap my hands.

Me: "Thokoza."

He opens his eyes and stare at me for a while, I don't know if he thinks he is intimidating or what, I don't get intimidated by anything.

Mathenyoka: "When am I going home?"

Me: "When your ancestors say so."

He squints his eyes.

Mathenyoka: "I really want to go."

I look at the door.

Me: "The door is always opened."

He clicks his tongue.

Me: "I'm all for peace Mkhulu but did you really think your womanizer tactics were gonna work on my wife?"

I can see through him, he wanted Wenzile the day he came here, he has been acting different when she's around.

I sigh.

Me: "Just do what you came here to do Mkhulu then we will part ways peacefully so."

He look down.

Me: "I can see that it bruised your ego when she didn't respond to your flirtatious ways, you find it hard to believe that a woman rejected you but she is not your type of woman lawa ehlisa amaphenti mekubona.(the ones that drop their panties at your sight.)"

He groans he is getting mad, I'm mad too but those within me always keep me calm.

Me: "I may be a child of peace but you don't want to try me."

Wenzile walks in with a tray and kneels before us, she puts the tray down and clap her hands, we don't clap back she slowly raise her eyes and look at me.

Me: "Thokoza Gogo."

She is confused. I get up and pull her up taking her hand.

Me: "You woke up early, did you eat?"

She shakes her head.

Wenzi: "Not yet, I was waiting for you."

She says blushing.

Me: "Let's go."

We walk back to the main house and she leads me to our room where our food is, she already made a full meal for me, I don't eat bread ever.

Me: "You cooked?"

Wenzi: "When I was making breakfast for everyone I was cooking for you."

I look at her.

Me: "You could have made soft porridge baby."

Wenzi: "I wanted to cook for you Gumedede."

Me: "Ngiyabonga sthandwa sami."(Thank you my love.)

I kiss her lips then we sit in bed and eat together.

Me: "You look beautiful as a new bride, this look suits you."

She is on her full mode wife and I love it.

After my meal I ask for another full meal and she allows me to explore and admire her body. We cleanse then she goes back to the kitchen.

It's been two months as a happier married man, I wouldn't trade my wife for anything, she is a gem. We still have that Mathenyoka who is full of attitude but I don't entertain any of that, he will be leaving in two weeks finally my wife and I can relax.

We are sitting together around the fire in one of the huts at home, it's raining outside.

I am looking at my wife she is sitting at the straw mat with Thingo next to her, we are eating some meat dad slaughtered one of his sheeps, he does that often then give some to our close neighbours.

I hear gagging sounds, it's my wife.

Thingo: "Are you okay Sisi?"

Wenzi shakes her head then push a plate with meat in front of her. I kneel in front of her, she is sweating.

Me: "What's wrong?"

She shakes her head and gag again I help her up and we walk out, she starts vomiting all the meat as soon as we step out. Thingo rush to us with water. My hand automatically touch her tummy as she bends down, I feel goosebumps all over my skin I let her go.

Me: "Kunengane."(There is a baby.)

She quickly look at me then at her tummy, there is no baby bump.

Wenzi: "Ingane kuphi Gumede?"(A baby where Gumede)

I want to be excited I really do but something doesn't feel right, something is wrong my body muscles are strained it's like something is pulling them, I groan bending as my stomach turns.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo..are you okay?"

I go on my knees as the pain gets worse.

Wenzi: "What's wrong?"

She is crying kneeling in front of me.

Nkosiyabo: "Ngcebo.."

I slowly look at him.

Me: "That man...he put a curse on us and our first seeds."

I am groaning in pain.

Nkosiyabo: "What do you mean?"

Me: "I don't know what it means but the child my wife is carrying, there is something wrong baba."

Wenzi remove ibhayi around my waist and put it around her shoulders and walk to the ancestral hut.

Wenzi: "Get out.."

I can hear her shouting inside the hut, she must be shouting at Mathenyoka. I see him walking out confused. Smoke starts coming out she is burning incense and grunting. After a while she comes out looking tired. She looks at me once then walk out the gate. I want to follow her but I'm still in pain.

Uuka: "Where is she going?"

Me: "I...I don't know."

He follows her, dad helps me inside the hut again I sleep where my wife was sitting the pain is still there.

Uuka comes back with Wenzile, she kneels next to me touching my face.

Me: "Did...they..show..you...anything?"

She shakes her head.

Wenzi: "They didn't show me anything and that's not a good sign."

I feel her tear drops on my face, I hold her hand.

Me: "I will do something okay, don't cry, mmmh."

Wenzi: "Kubuhlungu kuphi?"(Where do you feel pain?)

Me: "I'm fine now."

I'm lying I don't want her to worry about me.

CHAPTER 15

THINGO-LAMAQWABE

*

I have been busy with my school work since the year is at its peak and the final exams will be starting soon. I am sitting under the tree busy with Maths assignment, I am trying not to worry about my brother and Wenzi who seem to be in a very bad space right now dad promised that everything will be fine with them in time I should focus on my school work.

"That answer is wrong."

I jump in fright and look behind me, it's Ngcebo's initiate holding a bowl in his hand.

Me: "You scared me."

He chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "Sorry."

He says shrugging his shoulders.

Mathenyoka: "Here, I got this at the forest."

I look inside the bowl it's blueberries I slowly take the bowl, I have never had a conversation with him I just greet and pass because he always look grumpy.

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you.)

He nods and turn.

Me: "Uhm...you said something about my answer being wrong."

He looks at me and nod.

Me: "How? Did I do the calculations wrong or?"

He nods again.

Mathenyoka: "The whole equation is wrong but only on that last sum you did."

I look at my book then look back at him.

Me: "May you help me please?"

He takes my book and write for a while then give me back the book.

Me: "That was quick."

Mathenyoka: "I repeated Grade 11 three times, always failed I don't even know how because in class I was the smartest."

Me: "Maybe it had to do with your calling, don't you think?"

Mathenyoka: "I didn't know then I just felt weird but always brushed it off I masked it all off by being rebellious and a bad boy."

I nod.

Me: "I didn't know you can talk."

Mathenyoka: "I can but sometimes I choose not to."

Me: "Why?"

He chuckles and I notice he has two silver teeth on the either sides of his mouth and a very huge tattoo of a snake on his upper arm.

Me: "Idlozi likulande phakathi ebugwilini huh?"(The ancestors fetched you deep in the riches)

He burst in laughter for the very first time, I stare at him waiting for him to stop.

Mathenyoka: "Uyedelela wena."(You're rude)

I smile.

Me: "Sometimes ancestors don't care about how much of a cool kid you are."

Mathenyoka: "Ngimdala njalo kunawe I finished school two decades ago so please respect your elders."(I'm older than you.)

He is still laughing.

Me: "How old are you?"

Mathenyoka: "Now you're pushing it, why do you want to know my age?"

Me: "I'm making a conversation."

Mathenyoka: "You talk a lot for a princess."

Me: "Princesses don't talk out there?"

Mathenyoka: "My type of princesses don't."

Me: "What does that even mean?"

Mathenyoka: "If you don't get it forget about it."

I roll my eyes.

Mathenyoka: "Mxm."

I stuck my tongue out at him. He stares at me for a while like he sees something shocking then step closer.

Mathenyoka: "Ngicela ukuthinta isisu sakho."(Can I touch your tummy.)

Me: "Ay..why?"

Mathenyoka: "I see something.."

I nod confused as hell. He put his hand over my abdomen then starts grunting his eyes change colour for a second I am scared so I step back pushing his hand away.

Me: "What..what is going on?"

Mathenyoka: "Can you call your brothers and your parents to Mntwana's hut now please."

He talks like he is panicking I run to call mom and dad and my siblings. We all go to Ngcebo's hut, Ngcebo and his wife are there sitting next to each other quietly, Ngcebo has been sick for a week now and his wife has been on his side ever since.

We sit down on the floor.

Ngcebo: "What is going on?"

He says with a husky voice he has dark circles around his eyes, he is not himself at all my brothers are all handsome just like our dad.

Mathenyoka: "Thokoza Mntwana.."

He says kneeling in front of him, Ngcebo only nods he look tired.

Mathenyoka: "I saw something, I don't know if you will allow me ukuhlolela umndeni wakho?"(To consult for your family.)

Ngcebo: "Go ahead.."

Even speaking seems to be taking a toll on him, Wenzile hold his hand.

Mathenyoka kneels in front of us and burn the incense, he starts hissing like a snake and I'm scared, he normally has brown pupils but when he is in trance it changes to black it's scary.

Mathenyoka: "Mmmmh.."

He shakes his head.

Ngcebo: "Khuluma dlozi."(Speak ancestor)

Mathenyoka: "I see a curse planted by an old man kubantwana besende linye."(to children of the same man.)

Wenzile kneels and starts clapping hands like she is encouraging him to continue.

Mathenyoka: "Izingane zakho baba."(Your children baba)

He says looking at my father.

Nkosiyabo: "What is this curse?"

Mathenyoka: "All their first seeds will have abnormalities, extreme abnormalities and the princess, her womb won't carry any baby to full term."

Nkosiyabo: "What!?"

He shouts and we all get startled.

Ngcebo: "So..so the baby..the baby my wife is carrying won't be normal?"

He starts hissing again hitting his shoulders with ishoba."

Nkosiyabo: "Can we reverse this curse?"

Mathenyoka: "Mntwana and his wife are powerful together have they found out sooner they would have found the way to reverse it unfortunately for the baby his wife is carrying it won't be reversed but he can find a way to save his siblings seeds."

Ngcebo looks at his wife and sighs in defeat.

Ngcebo: "Siyabonga dlozi."(Thank you)

Mathenyoka get up and stumble all the way outside then we hear him gagging I get up and rush to him, he is kneeling down vomiting.

Ngcebo walk out and touch his back.

Ngcebo: "He is going to be okay, it's his first consultation, he is gonna get the hang of it."

He finally stops vomiting and look at Ngcebo, he shakes his hand.

Mathenyoka: "I didn't know I can do that.."

Ngcebo smiles a little.

Ngcebo: "There is so much you can do you just have to stop thinking so highly of yourself the ancestors will block you in everything."

He nods.

Ngcebo: "You've come a long way, thank you for coming, Thokoza mkhulu."

Mathenyoka: "Thokoza."

Ngcebo walks back in and I feel bad for him about this curse because it has already affected his first baby.

We walk back inside and find Wenzile crying in mom's lap, mom is also crying, Ngcebo is just sitting with his knees up head on his thighs.

Ngcebo: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu kunina nonke ngiyathembisa ngizokwenza ngawo wonke amandla ami ukuphindisela lesiqalekiso."(I'm really sorry to all of you I promise I will do everything in my power to reverse this curse.)

He says with his shaky voice tears fill my eyes.

Me: "Why does it feel like you're blaming yourself bhuti, this is not your fault."

Ngcebo: "I should have tried to find out sooner."

Uuka: "Ngcebo you're not perfect we don't expect you to know everything brother, you've done a lot, went through a lot and I am happy that for once you chose your happiness over everything, you chose your heart right there next to you, don't blame yourself for this please."

Mcebisi: "We know had you known about this sooner you would have done something to reverse it, you're one selfless person and we love you as you are, being a Sangoma doesn't mean carry all these burdens of wanting to protect everyone yourself, you're human too."

I look at him as he wipes his tears, the pain in his eyes so I just walk out and sit at the back of the hut wiping my tears.

Mathenyoka: "Don't cry..he is going to be ok."

I look at him.

Me: "How? This is a lot for him, emotionally he is already drained but now he needs to find ways of reversing this curse for us."

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry."

I wipe my tears.

Mathenyoka: "Want to take a walk just to clear your mind."

I shake my head, he stretches his hand.

Mathenyoka: "It will really help."

I take his hand and we take a walk through our beautiful green forest, there are different fruits here but they grow in different seasons we never run out of fruits.

There is a big rock here, I feel hands under my arms picking me up and help me sit on the rock, I laugh.

Mathenyoka: "Why are you laughing?"

Me: "I have always wanted to sit on this rock but couldn't because I'm too short."

He chuckles, he speaks like he is tired and has those lazy eyes like he could just fall asleep any minute from now.

Me: "There is someone behind you."

He turns and falls on his butt fear written all over his face I laugh so hard. The cheetah walks closer to him then slowly turns walking away I'm still laughing because the way he fell was amusing.

Mathenyoka: "Uhlekani I almost peed on myself."

Me: "Yeah I saw that."

Mathenyoka: "And why are you referring to it as someone?"

Me: "Because these cheetahs are one of us, some spirits of our great great ancestors live within those cheetahs."

Mathenyoka: "Sounds like a myth."

Me: "If it was you would be a snack right now."

He laughs a little shaking his head.

Mathenyoka: "Thought you were a snob you know, that's why I never bothered to even make a conversation with you."

Me: "But today you did."

Mathenyoka: "Yes because I saw you sitting alone I thought you needed some company and I was also tired of sitting with depressed couple so I wanted a different scenery."

I nod.

Me: "So you're leaving next week?"

He nods.

Me: "Can't wait to go back home huh?"

He huffs.

Mathenyoka: "Honestly I don't know how they will receive me, I did a lot of people dirty before never cared about anyone then I ran mad I don't remember most of the things I did then so I doubt they will be happy I'm back."

Me: "But they will need to give you another chance."

He chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "I was a very bad guy Princess, I still am."

I laugh.

Me: "You are?"

Mathenyoka: "I am, sometimes I don't want to speak or get very rude so yes I'm bad."

Me: "What's your real name."

Mathenyoka: "Kwanda Ndlovu."

Me: "Awu Gatsheni, Boyabenyathi."

He stares at me and his eyes changes colour again but quickly goes back to normal.

Me: "How do you do that?"

He raise his eyebrows.

Mathenyoka: "Do what?"

Me: "Change your eye colour."

Mathenyoka: "I don't know what you're talking about."

He steps closer to me and grab something when I look at his hand he is holding a green snake just next to its head. I scream jumping down the rock. He laughs.

Mathenyoka: "Now look who almost became a snack right now."

He puts the snake down it hisses slithering its way through the forest I am shaking like a leaf I hate snakes.

Mathenyoka: "Come on it wasn't gonna do anything to you, calm down."

I shake my head.

Me: "Let's go back home."

He laughs and take my hand, he keeps picking up fruits for me because we were deep in the forest.

Mathenyoka: "So your name is just Thingo or you are Thingolwethu or Thingolenkosazana."

Me: "I'm Thingo lamaQwabe."

Mathenyoka: "Oh..I get it."

Me: "Jaa bhuti Kwanda."

He chuckles.

Me: "You're not so bad after all, I was really scared of you."

Mathenyoka: "I can be a little intimidating at times."

I smile. We walk through the gate and go our separate ways.

A week ends pretty fast and I have been busy at school coming home late because I'm studying. Today it's the day Mathenyoka goes home, he will leave in the evening so I walk in the hut and find him with Ngcebo, he has been trying to find ways to reverse the curse I don't think he even sleeps at night judging from the way he looks, he is skinny and his beard is getting too much he looks old, Mcebisi tried to talk to him to take it easy but he didn't hear it.

Me: "Thokoza Mntwana, Thokoza khehla."

Mathenyoka looks at me and drops his eyes.

Ngcebo: "Believe it or not I will miss your attitude."

He says smiling a little, my heart smiles seeing that smile means a lot to me, he hasn't been good these days.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu ngakho konke ongenzele kona ngiyazi bengiwuhlupho kodwa awuzange ungilahle Thokoza

dlozi. " (Thank you so much for everything you have done for me I know I was trouble but you didn't give up on me.)

Ngcebo: "I never give up on people sent to me no matter how difficult they are, I respect the ancestors so much."

He claps his hands.

In the evening Mathenyoka is getting ready to leave he is already standing outside with all of us Ngcebo starts a song in a very low voice he keeps rubbing his nose until I see blood in his hand.

Me: "Baba.."

Dad looks at me I point at Ngcebo, dad is quick to hold him before he could his body hits the ground. Uuka helps him take Ngcebo inside the hut and everyone follows them except for me and Mathenyoka.

Me: "I guess this is goodbye huh?"

He doesn't answer so I just turn and walk to towards the hut.

"I'm not leaving yet."

He says behind me I look at him confused.

Mathenyoka: "I can't leave when things are like this, I will be ungrateful if I do, I will stay and help him find a way."

Me: "You...you will do that?"

He nods.

Me: "Thank you so much..Thank you."

We walk inside and find Ngcebo still asleep on the straw mat and Wenzu is just staring into space.

Mathenyoka: "Thokoza Gogo."

Wenzi nods.

Mathenyoka: "Please teach me how to create a portal between the living and the dead."

Wenzi stares at him.

Mathenyoka: "You both need to cross over in the spirit world and find that man."

Wenzi: "That can only last for a few minutes we might not make it back."

Mathenyoka: "You will find a way, together. I promise I will try to keep it open until you come back."

Wenzi: "You won't be able to do it alone."

He looks at me.

Mathenyoka: "I will draw the energy of the rainbow princess right here if she allows me."

Nkosiyabo: "How?"

Mathenyoka: "A rainbow is a bridge between physical and spiritual planes, she will help me keep the portal open for as long as it needs to be."

Nkosiyabo: "It won't hurt her?"

Mathenyoka: "It won't.."

Me: "I can do it."

Wenzile nods, they sit at the alter talking in low voices then Mathenyoka comes back and kneel next to me, he takes my hand I feel like a part of me is drifting away. I hope this works so my brother can try to work on healing and then we will accept things that we can't change.

CHAPTER 16

*

NGCEBO

*

I can feel my spirit detaching from my body when I open my eyes I can feel that I'm in a different world, I feel so much close to children that lives within me. I am so confused, am I dead?

"You're not dead sthandwa sam, I'm here with you."

She says standing next to me taking my hand.

Me: "How are we here?"

Wenzi: "Mathenyoka opened a portal for us to cross over to a spirit world."

Me: "What? He can't do that alone, we won't make it back."

Wenzi: "He is doing it with the help of Thingo lamaQwabe, he draws the energy of the rainbow in her."

Me: "That will drain her energy baby, how did she agree to do this?"

Wenzi: "What you don't understand is that the same way you love and can do anything for your siblings is the same way they feel about you."

I smile when I hear those words, so comforting and fulfilling knowing that there are people who would do anything for you."

Wenzi: "Let's go find that man Gumede to break the curse of the generations to come."

I nod and we start walking in greener pastures.

Me: "He can't be in a peaceful place like this, he was too evil to be here."

Wenzi: "Do you think we can find him the way we did in the world of the living?"

Me: "We can try my love."

She nods and close her eyes, I close mine and get in her mind, I create a path to lead us to him then we both open our eyes and look down there is a way through the big beautiful green grass.

Wenzi: "We did it.."

There are peaceful souls here so calm.

"Mntwana."

A voice calls out to me I turn to look it's two beautiful young girls but they look older than me , when I look closely I can see Thingo in them, they look just like her.

Me: "Who are you?"

"Ubaba wethu wasiqamba ngoKuhle konke, nginguKuhle and she is Onke." (Our father named us Kuhlekonke, so I'm Kuhle, she's Onke.)

The smiles never leave their faces they are so pure as they speak their voices hits me to the core in a very beautiful way.

Me: "Who is your father?"

They giggle looking at each other.

"uNkosiyabo kaManqoba Gumede."

I smile and bow my head.

Me: "Makhosazana kaBaba."(My father's princesses.)

I know my mother once lost her pregnancy before she had us, they must be those babies she lost, but no one knew it was two but dad gave them a name suitable for twins when he did the ceremony.

Me: "Niyakhula."(you're growing)

"Yebo ngoba senzela okufanele."(Yes because they did right by us.)

I smile.

"Sizohamba nawe kodwa asingeni thina la niyakhona."(We will walk with you but we don't enter where you're going.)

We walk for a distance just talking, it's so soothing my wife is next to me holding my hand throughout.

We stop at a place full of mud it's dark.

"Sizoma la sinilinde, Thokoza."(We will stand here and wait for you you)

Me: "Siyathokoza."

I bow my head and we walk through the muddy place, it's hard and painful because the mud is hot and we are barefoot, I'm not letting go of my wife's hand.

Me: "You should turn back baby and wait for me there."

She shakes her head and tears start rolling down her face but she has a smile on her face.

Wenzi: "I'm never leaving you, I won't let you do this alone."

I wipe her tears.

Me: "After this we will go through anything and we will create memories no matter how difficult it gets but as long as we're together it's all worth it."

She smiles and nod.

We walk inside what looks like a cave, there is

Too much heat my nose is itchy.

Wenzi: "He is here and he is not alone but with his ancestors."

I nod and walk ahead of her.

Me: "Mkhulu Mathambo.."

That's his name they gave to him when he went to initiation and he instead chose witchcraft.

He emerges and smile looking at me.

"I knew we will meet again, you really are a Gobela, your initiates come out stronger and brave, they can even open portals."

He says with a smirk on his face.

"Unfortunately you won't go back you will be stuck with me here."

He starts hitting the ground with his feet, people emerge behind him, old men with long beard.

Me: "Reverse the curse now."

"Or what?"

I look around and draw a long breath before breathing out loud, wind starts blowing the cave starts shaking on his side blocking the people that were behind him, he looks behind him in shock.

Me: "It's you against me and my wife now, do you think you have a chance?"

He chuckles.

"I'm already dead I have nothing to lose but you..you have a lot to lose."

He hits the ground it divides into two we almost into the fire but I am quick to push my wife back and she pulls my hand before I could fall.

Me: "Break the curse now!"

"NO."

I hold both Wenzile's hands and stare at her.

Wenzi: "Fire and flames."

I close my eyes and erupt the flames from the depth of this cave and make a ball of fire and direct it to him, I hear him scream in pain I open my eyes and look at him, he is on fire.

Me: "Remove the curse now or you will face the eternal fire before the judgement day comes."

He is screaming in agony.

"I don't know how to reverse it."

Me: "You spoke words through your mouth! Speak up!"

The cage starts trembling again, rocks starts falling.

Wenzile: "DO IT!"

She shouts and more balls of fire hit him.

"I..I reverse the curse I brought to King Nkosiyo's seed! They shall all be able to have normal children and the princess will carry to full-term. I reverse the curse."

He keeps repeating it over and over I feel pain in my gut I groan, it goes on for a few minutes and it goes away.

Me: "I think it worked."

Wenzile: "Let's go."

We run towards the entrance then something blocks us we stop walking, I look at Wenzile in shock, I know about the angel of death and now it is before us.

“Let them go, they are not of this world let them go!”

The two sisters shouts on the other side, the angel moves out of the way and we see greener pastures again.

Me: “Thank you boGumede.”

They nod.

Me: “Hope to see you again.”

They giggle.

“We are always with you Mntwana, us and more.”

I smile and bow my head.

“Now go, they can’t hold the portal open for long, tell our mother and father to keep well, Thokoza.”

I smile and close my eyes holding my wife’s hand.

I wake up gasping for air, I feel like I was suffocating in my sleep, I look around everyone is here, Thingo’s nose is bleeding and so are my brothers, Makhosini and Bukhosi. I rush to her holding her.

Me: “Are you okay?”

Thingo: “Yeah I’m fine just a little tired.”

Mathenyoka is sweating and shaking.

Me: “Ngiyabonga kakhulu, the curse has been broken.”(Thank you so much.)

He nods but his eyes are half open, he is tired what he did took everything in him he needs to rest.

We leave him to rest and go to the main house.

Uuka: "You were shaking in your sleep throughout."

I nod.

Uuka: "Thank you Gumede I know you did this to save all of us, Thokoza.."

I bow my head and smile looking at Thingo.

Me: "Thank you Nkosazana kaBaba."

She is sleeping on dad's lap, she nods and close her eyes.

Wenzile and I go to bed, she is quiet looking at her tummy, I am looking at her through the mirror. She brush her tummy and release a deep sigh. I sit next to her and put my hand over her hand.

Me: "We're all going to be ok."

Wenzi: "You believe that?"

I nod.

Me: "We will accept everything sthandwa sam, akukho okusazoshintsha manje."(Nothing will change now)

She nods and brush her tummy again, there is a little baby bump visible now.

Later I take food and go to the hut to give to Mathenyoka I find him awake stretching his muscles.

Me: "You look better than earlier."

Mathenyoka: "Strangely I had a very peaceful sleep."

Me: "Thank you for what you did for me, I know you didn't have to but you stayed and helped me, thank you."

Mathenyoka: "You've taught me a lot about self discipline, you're younger than me but you are so wise."

I smile and give him his food. He eat then walk outside for a while. He comes back and sit down in front of me clapping his hands.

Me: "Ufuna ukukhuluma?"(You want to talk.)

Mathenyoka: "I'm worried."

He wipes his face.

Mathenyoka: "I have done so many wrongs I don't even know where to start apologizing."

Me: "The fact that you want to apologize it's a start, start right there."

He huffs.

Mathenyoka: "I know some won't even give me a chance."

Me: "You have to do it. Go back Khehla and go on your knees if you have to and ask for forgiveness for your own healing as well, so you can start over."

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "I will do that, thank you."

I go back to my wife and find her already in bed, I sleep next to her.

Wenzi: "I want to go to the hospital and do those check ups people do."

I nod.

Me: "We will go tomorrow."

Wenzi: "You will go with me?"

Me: "I will always be by your side, we're one."

She smiles and snuggle closer to me.

In the morning 8 am we are already at the hospital, waiting in the doctor's office she just walked out. The hospital is fairly close King Ntsika built it from the ground. I look at Wenzu's hands they are shaking, she is nervous and it hurts me seeing her like this I hold her hand squeezing it, she gives me a faint smile.

The doctor walks in and greet us, we greet her back.

Doctor: "Prince Ngcebo I didn't know you believe in western ways since you are a traditional healer."

Me: "I believe in everything that has to do with healing I just focus more on traditional but it doesn't mean I turn a blind eye on the work you guys put in to save people's lives."

She gives me a big smile.

Doctor: "Wow, I wasn't expecting that answer."

Me: "I'm not a judgmental person by nature so expect less to nothing of that from me."

She stares at me then nod a little.

She asks questions that my wife and I answer about the pregnancy then she does a scan, and she gives us good news about the heartbeat but she stops and look at the screen closely.

Me: "What is it?"

Doctor: "It looks different."

Me: "How?"

I say holding my wife's hand who is looking away not at the machine or me.

Doctor: "The fetus looks malformed, let me go call our senior Dr Miller."

She rush out and come back with a male white doctor, he moves the wand across my wife's abdomen then they look at each other.

Miller: "Maybe it's growing slow, we will check it out at 5 months if it's still like this."

I am holding my breath, I look at Wenzhi, she is fast asleep the doctors smile looking at her.

Doctor: "She looks so tired."

Me: "Baby.."

She opens her eyes I kiss her lips.

Me: "We need to go home now."

She looks around.

Wenzhi: "I fell asleep? Is the baby ok?"

The doctors nod.

Doctor: "The heartbeat is there so that means everything is well.

You can tell he is not completely sure about what he is saying, he just doesn't want to scare her. They give us some supplements and a clinic card.

We go back home and find Mathenyoka already carrying his bag that has everything that he bought while he was here. I would go with him to town from time to time and he would buy everything he needs, I'm not stingy with money because I don't really sweat for it my ancestors provide through the gift of healing that I have.

Me: "You're ready to go Mkhulu?"

He nods, but he seems worried.

Me: "Don't over think it, oBoyabenyathi bahambe nawe."(Your ancestors are with you)

He claps his hands and walk out, I follow behind him and see Thingo bowing in front of him and clap her hands.

Mathenyoka: "Goodbye Princess."

Thingo smiles.

Thingo: "Uhambe kahle, siyabonga."(Go well, thank you)

He says goodbye to my mom and dad then walk out the gate, local taxi stops next to him, he looks back and bow his head then get in the taxi.

Wenzi: "He came out alright."

I smile and pull her to my arms.

Me: "It was all you, you didn't baby him like I did, we do make a great team."

Wenzi: "We do.."

5 months later...

I am staring at the doctor in the eye livid as hell, I don't remember the last time I was this angry even the humming voices at the back of my head trying to calm me down is making it worse I don't wanna hear it.

Me: "Abortion! Who gave you the right to suggest anything to me! Who do you think you are!?"

Miller: "The baby shows signs of physical deformities sir, I've never seen anything like this in my entire 10 years in this medical field!"

Me: "I don't care about your education and I don't care about what you have seen in your entire life! There will be no abortion here!"

Miller: "That's fine, it's okay we won't do it just calm down Prince."

I take deep breaths holding onto the bed next to me, Wenzile is just staring into space.

Me: "Let's go home."

I help her up and grab her bag going to the car, I'm calm now but I don't want to be calm, I want to be angry!

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CHAPTER 17

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THINGO-LAMAQWABE

*

I just finished writing my final exam for the year, I take off my school blazer because it's hot, I am walking to where Mondli parks. He parks with the teachers he has his own parking just for driving a princess. I stop on my tracks when I see a car I've never seen in my life in my parking space I look around and see Bukhosi's driver on his own parking. After that evil old man died we went back to riding in different cars. As I walk to my brothers driver a voice stops me from walking.

"Princess."

I slowly turn and jump up hugging him tight he laughs picking me up and spin me around.

Me: "Oh my God, it's really you!"

I look at him, he is wearing a black t-shirt with black chino pants and black shoes, he still has his beads on his wrists but he looks really different.

I hug him again then slowly step back.

Me: "I'm sorry, Thokoza Mkhulu, it's just that I didn't expect to see you."

I say clapping my hands.

Me: "It's been three long months since you left."

He chuckles and lean on the car.

Me: "This is your car?"

He nods.

Me: "Back to the riches huh?"

He laughs and move past me, my brothers are so happy to see him, they do those brotherly hugs.

Makhosini: "Woah is that your car?"

He laughs.

Mathenyoka: "Before I ran mad I was working khosini."

Bukhosi: "Can we ride with you?"

Mathenyoka: "Yes that's why I'm here, I asked permission from the King first to fetch you guys but your driver insisted on following behind for your safety.

We get in his big flashy car and he drives us home.

I walk in as he converse with my loud talkative brothers. I take a quick shower because I really feel sweaty.

I wear my shorts and a overlapping t-shirt then take Uuka's big flip flops wearing them. I walk out and find Mathenyoka with Ngcebo now sitting under the tree I ask if I can join them and they allow me.

Me: "So how was home?"

He clears his throat.

Mathenyoka: "It..it was good."

Ngcebo: "He never went home."

Me: "What? Why not?"

Ngcebo: "Scared of humbling himself. Still have so much pride, I thought you said you've learned a lot from me but I can see you were just telling a big joke."

I look at Ngcebo, he is rubbing his short beard, he still is not completely himself but he is trying. He told us that the doctors were suggesting Wenzile does an abortion because the baby is malformed and he wasn't hearing it, Wenzile is in support with her husband and so am I, just because the baby is malformed doesn't mean he or she doesn't deserve to live.

Mathenyoka: "It's...it's not like that Mntwana I was..."

Ngcebo: "You went back to a flat, a flat, you were supposed to go straight home from here and inform the ancestors that you are back from the initiation but no, you do things your own way. A flat?"

He is not shouting or anything but speaking in a very low voice, he sounds so disappointed.

Ngcebo: "Humble yourself before the ancestors do it for you in a very cruel way."

He get up and walk away, I look at Mathenyoka he is looking down.

Me: "How bad is it that you don't want to go home?"

He brush his head.

Mathenyoka: "Very...very bad."

Me: "Walk me through it."

Mathenyoka: "I used to call my mother a witch and my sisters her minions, I was always angry, she only cared about her two children and not me."

Me: "What made you think like that?"

Mathenyoka: "We are all just a year apart, there is my older sister, I'm the middle child then the youngest."

He chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "She took them to multi-racial schools but I went to public schools because I was different I was gonna embarrass her in school "when I start getting crazy" that's how she would call it."

I look at him, he seems hurt.

Mathenyoka: "I fought hard to be better than them but something kept pulling me back, I would pass with straight As during the terms of the year then fail at the end of the year I blamed her because she was the "I told you so, I knew it" type everytime something goes wrong in my life, hated her and every single person I met paid for it I made sure I hurt every single person I come across."

Me: "I'm sorry."

He chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "I studied, had my own Architectural firm then I rubbed it on their faces every chance I got, I remember the last time I went there I vowed that I will never step foot there ever again and even spat on the floor."

He looks at me.

Mathenyoka: "Now how do I go back to that? Where do I even start?"

Me: "Start by admitting you're wrong, my father always taught us that first you acknowledge your wrongs then apologize for it."

Mathenyoka: "But they did me wrong."

I shake my head.

Me: "That's fine but if you apologize never let a "but" follow, because it is a justification, you can't apologize but then justify what you're apologizing for."

He rubs his knuckles then take a deep breath.

Mathenyoka: "Can you accompany me please."

I widen my eyes.

Me: "To where?"

Mathenyoka: "Home, I would ask Ngcebo but he is going though a lot I don't want to be a burden to him."

Me: "You will have to ask my father and ensure my safety."

Mathenyoka: "You can always have your bodyguard follow us if you're skeptical."

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "Let me go try talking to the King."

We walk inside the house and find mom and dad sitting in the lounge, we bow first and sit on the opposite couch.

Nkosiyo: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

Mathenyoka chuckles nervously, dad always shows respect to everyone, he doesn't carry being King in his head.

He asks mom and dad what he asked me outside.

Nkosiyo: "But I don't know where you're from, don't know how safe she will be there."

Mathenyoka: "We will go with Mondli to ensure her safety."

Nkosiyo: "Nkosazana kaBaba."

I smile looking at him.

Nkosiyo: "You want to go with him?"

I nod.

Me: "Yes baba and if I don't feel safe I will call you I promise."

He nods.

Nkosiyo: "You can go."

I change into something decent, a dress just a little above my knees then go to his car. Mom and Dad have never been those controlling parents probably why we are so close to them and we do open up to them because they have made a safe space for us to express ourselves, so open but protective of us.

He drives out and Mondli is right behind us. We go to another village, it's an hour away from home but there are big houses here and also rondavels you can tell that people here are well off.

He stops just outside the beautiful peach painted big house and one rondavel.

Mathenyoka: "This is it."

He says nervously I see some people stopping on the road looking at him. He knocks and a middle aged woman opens the door and claps at the sight of him.

"WeNono wozongibonisa."(Nono come see this)

A young girl comes to the door and laugh out loud in a mocking way, I step back from the door standing behind Kwanda.

Mathenyoka: "Sanibonani mama."(Greetings mother)

She gives him a very long clicking of a tongue and walk away leaving the other girl staring at him.

“Ufunani Kwanda.”(What do you want Kwanda?)

Mathenyoka: “Can I come in?”

She walks away leaving the door opened, she is still in her pyjamas and it’s around 2 pm.

There is another girl sitting on the couch breastfeeding a child, she also laughs when she sees Kwanda, these people are giving me weird vibes honestly.

Mathenyoka: “Mama ngizoxolisa ngezinto ezimbi zonke engazisho kuwe, ngiyaxolisa kakhulu maMbhele.”(I came to apologise for every bad thing I said to you, forgive me MaMbhele.)

His mom walks to the kitchen and come back talking on the phone informing them that “ibuyileinja.”(The dog is back)

I cringe at those words, what kind of woman would call her own child a dog.

Me: “Let’s go, you’re not welcomed here we will come back some other time.”

“So he thought bringing royalty here was gonna scare us, well think again we don’t give a damn!”

Me: “My name is Thingo translated as Rainbow I don’t know who you are referring as Royalty.”

I say in a polite way, I’m really trying to explain to her who I am genuinely.

She looks at me I look back at her and smile.

Me: “Let’s go.”

We walk out and find the yard full of people Mondli push through them and grab my hand taking me to his car.

Me: "What is going on?"

Mondli: "We have to go, looks like this guy has stepped on so many people's toes."

"We meet again Ndlovu, the arrogant bastard that burnt my shop down!"

One man says holding a stick in his hand.

Mathenyoka: "Bab'Mthiyane I'm sorry about your shop I was angry that you attacked me for courting your daughter I'm not that person anymore please forgive me."

These people are not hearing it, they are angry and baying for his blood. As Mondli starts the car the man is swinging his stick at Mathenyoka and he is quick to grab it but then they all attack him at once some even have bricks and stones in their hands. They beat him up until he is down, some looks like they just want the opportunity to cast those stones at him. One of the young guys raises his hand up and it has a big stone in it then he hit him with it.

Me: "Bhut'Mondli stop the car!"

He doesn't answer.

Me: "Please stop the car."

Mondli: "No, I am meant to protect you! We're going home."

Me: "Stop the car!"

I scream so loud he stops. I open the door and run to the crowd, I push everyone out of my way then fall on top of him trying to cover him.

Me: "Please stop!"

They all keep quiet and step back from us. He is just groaning in pain.

Me: "This is not how we do things, how can you do this to one of your own."

None dares to reply.

Me: "Can't you sit down and talk like decent people not this attacking like vultures! I don't know what he did but violence doesn't solve anything it won't fix whatever he did."

"How will talking fix anything."

One man shouts.

Me: "One way or another, we all have intentionally or mistakenly hurt other people, no one is perfect but what is important is accountability! He is here now he is owning up to his mistakes, he wants to apologize and I believe talking things out is the best way than being violent."

"This boy has been nothing but trouble in our community, we don't want him here."

Me: "You can't turn your backs on a young man who wants to fix his mistakes baba, it makes you just as bad as him, where will he go? This is his home. His ancestors are here, inkaba yakhe yawela khona la."
(his bellybutton fell off right here.)

The man who was talking about his shops step forward and give me his hand pulling me up.

"Nkosazana yeNkosi."(King's Princess)

He bows his head.

"Allow me to apologize for our behavior, Let me talk to my community then we will call a meeting with this boy. We will inform the king if that's okay with you."

I nod.

Me: "It is more than ok, thank you so much."

I kneel down and try to help him up, Mondli comes to help me and one of the young men also help take him to Mondli's car.

"Lemoto angiyifuni la."(I don't want this car here)

His mother shouts.

I sigh.

Me: "Bhut'Mondli can you allow me to drive?"

He huffs and nod a little, I can drive but I'm not allowed to drive a distance because I don't have a license yet.

Mondli: "I will drive behind you."

I drive back to our village all the way home. Then mondli helps him to Ngcebo's hut. He chuckles as soon as we walk in.

Ngcebo: "If you went there sooner none of this was gonna happen, the ancestors doesn't have much patience."

I kneel next to him checking him out, they sure did a number on him.

Me: "Ncese uyezwa."(Sorry you hear me.

He tries to smile.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

Ngcebo walks in with a bucket full of hot water then take a towel putting some herbs in there. He starts moving a towel on his bruised face.

Mathenyoka: "Aya..shisa la..

Manzi."(This water is hot)

Ngcebo just continues what he is doing quietly ignoring the groans of this bruised guy.

Mathenyoka: "Ngabe..konke..kuzolunga kodwa?"(Is everything going to be okay?)

He ask with a pained voice.

Ngcebo shakes his head.

Ngcebo: "Let them be, we will find a way. I don't like noise! Your mother is one loud woman I don't want to deal with her"

Mathenyoka chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "I guess we always do find a way."

Ngcebo: "We accept and move on, you won't force yourself on people that don't even want to listen to you."

He keeps flinching in pain.

Ngcebo: "I will talk to my father on your behalf, to give you land where you will build a home from scratch then we will go and fetch your ancestors from your home to that house you will build so you can do a ceremony for your graduation from idlozi, it has to be quick before things get crazy for you."

Mathenyoka: "Can it get any crazier than this?"

Ngcebo chuckles.

Ngcebo: "You have no idea. Ay kodwa nawe."

I laugh so hard when he says that.

Ngcebo: "To burn an elder's shop."

Mathenyoka: "Wangishaya kabi lowamuntu ngingakwazi ukuhamba isonto lonke ngoba wangishaya amasende ethi ngifuna ukumithisa ingane yakhe."(He beat me up so bad I couldn't walk for a week, he hit my testicles because he said I wanted to impregnate his daughter.)

I am laughing, he is hilarious it's even worse that he talks funny because he uses one side of his mouth.

Ngcebo: "Bakushaye kancane."(They didn't hit you enough.)

I smile looking at Ngcebo he is loosening up and even joking around, I guess being around people does get your mind off things a little, he looks so much better now.

We all sit together just the three of talking and laughing, Ngcebo and Mathenyoka are a bad combination especially if Ngcebo is in his "childish mode" because he really does switches up and act like a child sometimes and we understand him and it becomes more exciting to be around him and Mathenyoka becomes a kid as well, like he understands Ngcebo's mood and switches up too it's crazy, my tummy even hurts from laughing so hard their conversation is so calm and peaceful yet very funny.

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CHAPTER 18

* NGCEBO

It hasn't been easy, being told that your child is malformed and that they have to abort it. It is painful, this is my first child for goodness sake how can I allow them to abort a baby like it doesn't matter? I have been watching my wife talking to the baby in her tummy brushing it and I don't know how to feel. I walk in the room and stand by the door looking at her, she will give birth any day from now. We stopped going to those checkups at the hospital because they were emotionally damaging, being constantly told that your child has abnormalities inside the womb is not easy to deal with.

Wenzi: "Your father and I will accept you just as you are ok baby, I promise you." She is moving her hand slowly on her belly. She looks at me and smile, she is taking this better than me I have been an emotional wreck ever since.

Wenzi: "I can feel movements." I sit next to her and place my hand on her tummy I can feel them too. They never told us if a baby is a girl or a boy but I know it's a girl I can feel it.

Me: "I love you and thank you for carrying this precious gift for me." She smiles. Me: "I'm going to see Mathenyoka's house, the boys are doing final touch ups now, Thingo will call him and tell him." She nods. I spoke to my father about giving Mathenyoka land and he agreed so he built two rondavels first then now a very big house I'm checking it out for him because he is away to check on his business that he has been away from for months so he needs to keep track of that, the ancestors allowed it because we consulted with them first and we did inform them that we will do their ceremony soon. I kiss my wife's lips then her belly.

Me: I will come back soon." I walk down the road and walk inside Mathenyoka's house it's fairly close, apparently he got it designed by Thingo, she drew his vision and now it is here before our eyes, my sister can draw everything under the sun.

Me: "You did a very good job here, thank you." I talk to the guys they bow their heads in respect. As I keep walking from room to room I hear an infant crying in my head I run home and go straight to my wife's room I find mom already there, helping her up

. Me: "Where are you taking her?"

Wenzi: "The hospital Ngcebo, it hurts.."

Me: "No, you're not going there, I will help you give birth." She shakes her head. Wenzi: "But they said this is different, please." I slowly nod. I hate everything that has to do with doctors for now but I will try to keep it together for my wife's sake. I drive her to the hospital, I force my way inside the room, there is no way my wife will give birth without me. After a long wait of them saying it's not yet time, I am sitting next to my wife who has been screaming I don't know what to do or say anymore. It's 12 pm, mid day, two doctors and a series of

nurses walk in. I notice that one nurse has a phone in her hand but quickly get startled by my wife's scream I rush to her side and assure her that I'm here.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo.."

Me:: "Yebo Sthandwa sam."

She doesn't say anything, I still see beauty behind that messed up hair, that sweat all over her face, I love her so much. The doctors ask her to push while I hold her hand tight, she does it so well. I keep encouraging her, in my life I think I have helped about 5 women give birth and the kids are still healthy even today. After a long push they shout that they can see the head, now I'm nervous my whole body has goosebumps I keep tapping my foot on the floor. I hear gasp then a nurse that had a phone step closer to them I can tell she is filming it. I let go of my wife's hand as their eyes don't move from the baby. I slowly push them away and look down at my baby as she cries her lungs out tears roll down my face I can't hold it. They all step back from her, fear written all over their faces looks like no one wants to get close. I slowly take one of their sharp scissors and cut the cord and block blood. I grab the sheet next to me and roll her with it then pick her up holding her in my arms, tears hasn't stopped rolling down my face. She has her legs fused together, there are no feet at all and no private parts, nothing on her lower body. "So the baby is literally a mermaid?" One of the nurses shouts. "I never thought this was real, so sirenomelia is real we are seeing it right before our eyes, a baby mermaid." I am holding her securely in my arms.

Miller: "Sir, this child won't make it, I don't want to say I told you so but I did suggest an abortion at an early stage." I can hear him but I'm not listening to him.

Me: "I'm so sorry." She is not crying anymore and my body is shaking.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo..". She says softly, they haven't done anything to clean her up, nothing! They are just standing there.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo, can I see the baby."

I quickly wipe my tears and stand next to her giving her the baby, she starts crying on her chest. She slowly removes the sheet and stare at her lower part of the body then nod, she keeps nodding tears starts rolling at the corner of her eyes.

Me: "She's okay, don't cry, she's fine."

"How does he even know it's a she?" One of the nurses ask clearly amused because there is a chuckle after that sentence. Wenzile cover the baby again and hold her in her arms. I move to clean her up and it's only then that they realize they have been doing everything wrong, my wife is still on this bed and they are letting her bleed. "Sir that's our job, we will do it." Me: "It's fine, I will do it, you can all continue to laugh and make jokes about my daughter, you were already filming for the world to see, go right ahead, you will come to me begging for mercy I won't let you find rest."

Wenzi: "Ngcebo, No."

Me: "She will come to me crawling." The room is turning darker my shoulders are heavy I grunt loud they all jump in fear.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo..now is not the time please stop." I stop everything I'm doing and shake my head, strong winds blows in the room things starts falling everywhere, they all rush out leaving me with just my wife and child, I am not calm anymore the weather has changed, earth is in tremor. But I hear a baby's cry everything stops, I calm down instantly and rush to my wife's side taking the baby from her. I look at her face, she's so innocent and perfect, she's beautiful. M

Me: "Princess of peace, Princess Serena." My wife starts convulsing on the bed, I put the baby down on the little bed and rush to my wife.

Me: "Wenzile...baby.."

Wenzi: "No.." She keeps shaking her head, Doctor miller comes back and rush to her side, she is awake but she keeps screaming "No" , the doctor injects her, she slowly calms down and close her eyes.

Miller: "I will ask the nurses to come clean her up and take her to the ward sir, this must be because of trauma." I look at him, he is looking at me with pitiful eyes. Miller: "You can spend as much time as you want with her sir, we will allow it." Me: "Because you don't want to get any close to her right? No check ups nothing? What will you write on your medical report? That she is a "mermaid" like your nurses said, just that?"

Miller: "I..I will do a check up on her." The nurses come back, they can't even look at me in the eye. I slowly walk out and find mom, dad, and Uuka in the waiting area. I walk past all of them and sit outside. They are all here.

Thabsie: "How...how is Wenzile and the baby?" I shrug my shoulders.

Nkosiyo: "Ngcebo! How is your wife and the baby?"

Me: "I don't know baba, check your phones I'm sure it's all over the news now." Uuka's phone beeps he takes it out and widen his eyes in shock.

Uuka: "Ngcebo.."

I look down and sob, it's painful, my heart is in pieces I don't think I will ever be okay after this.

Thabsie: "Nkosi.."

I want to stop crying but there is a lump in my throat I want to scream it out. I try breathing with my mouth because my nose feels blocked but I find it so hard. Uuka: "We need to call Mcebisi dad, we need him to calm him down."

Nkosiyo: "Call...call him here now."

His voice sounds shaky, mom is nowhere in sight.

Me: "Baba...I...I can't breathe." I say gasping for air, now my chest feels blocked. Nkosiyo: "Your brother will be here soon ok, just hold on ok, calm down...take a deep breath ok." He is holding my hand tight. After a while of struggling to breathe I can feel that my twin brother is close. I open my eyes and stare at him, he stares right at me. He is kneeling in front of me. He hold both my hands and hold his breath, I feel the tightness on my chest loosening up, believe it or not he is literally sharing his oxygen with me right now. I let go of his hands he finally breathe out loud then hug me tight.

Mcebisi: "I'm sorry.." I wipe my face and get up.

Me: "I...I have to go back inside." I walk in and find my wife in a different ward, everyone is looking at me weirdly now, some are even scared of me they move far away from me when I pass. I sit down next to my wife and take her hand, she's looking at the baby sleeping peacefully on her little bed. The doctor walks in before I can even say anything.

Miller: "Uhm...." He looks scared to even say anything.

Me: "How long do we have with her?"

Miller: "It can be..a minute, hour or even a day we don't know, most babies with Sirenomelia also known as Mermaid syndrome are miscarried or stillborn but she's breathing it can't be for long, she has one kidney and she can't feed because there is no way to eliminate waste and toxins on her body." My wife is crying painfully, I look down.

Miller: "You have to spend as much time with her as possible."

Me: "When can I take them home?"

Miller: "We will discharge your wife tomorrow sir." I nod, looks like he has already decided that my daughter won't make it past midnight or

even an hour. Mom and dad walk in followed by Uuka and Mcebisi. Mom's eyes are puffy, she has been crying. I get up and help mom sit down she hold Wenzile's hand.

Thabsie: "I have called your mom they will be here soon. How are you feeling?" Wenzile: "I don't...I..." She sobs. I take my daughter they have covered warmly with the grey and white blanket mom came with. I hold her staring at her face then slowly hand her to my father. He takes her quickly wiping his eyes. Nkosiyabo: "Nkosazana, umzukulu wami wokuqala, Phakathwayo.." (Princess, my first grandchild) He says in his shaky voice and chuckle.

Me: "She doesn't have much time to live." Mom get up and take her from dad.

Thabsie: "She's so pretty." I smile.

Me: "Her ears are dark, I guess she is going to take your complexion mom, Was.." I say the last part in a low voice. Uuka and Mcebisi take turns holding her as well. She starts crying, I take her from Mcebisi.

Wenzi: "Let me hold her." I give her the baby, she tries to calm her down but she cries even louder.

Thabsie: "She's hungry."

Wenzi takes out her breast and put a nipple in her mouth she starts sucking immediately we can all hear it, Wenzile is flinching but she has this smile on her face. After a few minutes the sucking sounds stops, I grunt once and open my eyes Wenzile stares at me.

Me: "Give me the baby." She shakes her head.

Me: "Please...give me the baby." She *vigorously* shakes her head, I forcefully take the baby from her and turn facing the other way as I feel her soul slowly detaching from her body.

Me: "No.."

Wenzi: "Letha umtanami Ngcebo!"(Give me my child Ngcebo) She screams. Nkosiyo: "Ngcebo.." I turn to look at them.

Me: "She's gone baba, she's gone."

Dad quickly takes the baby from me and stare down at her. I walk out the hospital's gate and start running, I run as fast as a cheetah I don't even know where I'm going but I'm leaving! Leaving everything behind, all this pain! A CLEAN SLATE

The New Generation

CHAPTER 19

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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We are sitting in the hut quietly, we just came back from the hospital, When Ngcebo walked out Mcebisi ran after him but both of them are still not back yet, I don't even know if he was able to find Ngcebo, his phone is on voicemail. We came back with Wenzile because she needs to be close to the people that loves her not those people that did an inhumane thing as filming a baby at birth and posted it on social media for clout. Mom is with Wenzile in Ngcebo's room her parents are here as well.

I walk out to look for my father I find him sitting under the tree looking down.

Me: "Baba.."

He quickly looks away wiping his face, this is the first time I see my father shedding tears, he always try to keep it together for us.

Nkosiyo: "Kumkani, your brother hasn't called?"

He ask still looking the other way.

Me: "No, his phone is still not going through."

Nkosiyabo: "All I ever wanted was peace, I moved back here for that but where is it when my son is suffering like this?"

I look down, my heart is racing I can't imagine the pain Ngcebo is feeling right now.

I get up and rush to the gate as Mcebisi comes back holding Ngcebo by the hand. I hug him tight but he doesn't hug me back, he is not even blinking just staring into space.

Me: "Uhm...do you need to rest?"

I don't even know what to say.

Me: "We're here for you ok, always remember that."

He doesn't answer but just removes Mcebisi's hands from him and walk inside his hut, he starts beating the drums furiously inside. I walk in, he has his eyes closed but tears making their way out of his eyes. I walk out and go sit alone, I don't want to see any of my siblings in pain, I wish I can carry all this pain for him, he is my younger brother.

I take my car keys and drive to the hospital. I walk in and everyone is looking at me.

Me: "I want all the nurses and doctors that were in that room my brother's wife gave birth into in the boardroom right now, every single one of them."

I say to the receptionist, she quickly nods and make some calls I walk in an empty boardroom and stand by the window looking outside. I can hear footsteps, people are coming in.

Me: "Are you all here?"

I haven't turned I'm still looking out the window.

No one answers so I turn and look at them, they are looking down.

Me: "I asked you a question, Miller?"

He nods, there are like 10 people in this room.

I take out my phone and make a phone call putting my phone on the big table.

Ntsika: "Kumkani, I can see your car on the driveway of the hospital, where are you?"

Me: "Boardroom, I'm glad you're here."

I look up at all these faces here they are looking at each other, they are nervous and they should be.

Ntsika walks in followed by grandpa, I shoulder hug both of them.

Ntsika: "We saw the video circulating and I wanted to fly here as soon as I saw it."

He has this frown on his face that my father usually have when he is angry.

Ntsika: "Miller!?"

He roars and the doctor blinks rapidly nodding his head.

Ntsika: "I need to understand how did the nurse walk in with a phone in that room? Who asked the nurse to film that?"

Miller: "I...I don't know."

Me: "You don't know?"

I ask unbuttoning three buttons on my white shirt I'm angry to a point where I am even starting to sweat. I was coming back from a meeting when mom called and told me about Wenzile so I drove straight to the hospital I'm wearing formal but have removed the tie earlier.

Ntsika take a seat, me and grandpa stand on his either sides.

Ntsika: "Who took the video?"

They hesitantly point at a young nurse, she is looking down the whole time.

Ntsika: "Why were there so many of you in that labour room Miller?"

Miller: "It was...they wanted to see the baby no one believed me when I told them we are about to have a case of a "mermaid syndrome" in our hospital."

Me: "The hospital is full of people who needs help and you all run in that room for gossip? Is this a circus? My brother's baby was a joke that you all wanted to watch? It was a show to you?"

I'm getting really angry.

Miller: "No..no."

Manqoba: "So you told everyone about it huh? There is no doctor-patient confidentiality in this hospital?"

Me: "Grandpa the reason why I called is because I want people who respect their jobs here, I want doctors and nurses who respect patients! These people are none of the above I want all of them gone today!"

They all gasp.

"But some of us were there to help Mrs Gumede give birth not for anything else." One of them mumbles

Me: "Tell that to someone who cares really now I want you to take all your trash and walk the hell out of here."

"You can't get is fired like this Prince, it's against the hospital policy."

One of the male nurses says bodily.

Me: "Policy yamasimba? Did the policy say you should leave other patients and run to that room to make fun of a baby with disability and film it at that! You all didn't touch that baby! Ngcebo did everything while you were all standing there! The fool you asked to film showed all of that, how you all stepped back from the baby! Now tell me I can't get you fired again! I want you to say it!"

I say stepping closer to him.

Me: "You want me to show you that I can?"

He doesn't say anything, I grab his neck and pin him on the wall.

"We were just doing our job!"

I bump his head hard on the wall.

Me: "Boy you don't want to get cheeky with me, trust me."

He tries to push me off I squeeze his neck even harder his eyes rolls back.

Me: "I'm not your mate my friend! You're the type of people that wants to see the worst in people, you thought just because we're quiet and peaceful we will let you all walk all over us, you thought you can do as you please? You messed with the wrong one! No one messes with my brothers while I'm still alive, no one."

I smash his head on the wall again, I am taking out all this pain and anger I am feeling on him. I let him go as soon as I see him bleeding on his head.

Me: "I'm giving all of you 15 minutes to collect everything that has your name on it and the securities will show you the way out."

They walk out, I sit down and wipe my face.

Manqoba: "Calm down.."

He says massaging my shoulders.

Me: "I can't, what they did was very disrespectful and inhumane, that video will always be out there, Ngcebo might not be on social media but the fact that he knows his daughter's video is circulating will hurt him forever."

Ntsika: "We just lost two of our senior doctors and 8 nurses, we need new staff but I will talk to relevant people."

I nod.

He walks out, grandpa sits in front of me.

Manqoba: "Everyone is coming, I'm sorry, I know that this hurts you too, I know how much your siblings mean to you and how protective you are of them, you need to be strong for them ok."

I nod.

Manqoba: "Let's go home."

We drive back home and find our yard already full, our whole family is here, Aunt Isisekelo is sitting with my father outside comforting him because really this is hard on everyone in our family.

I look for Ngcebo and find him sleeping on the straw mat but he is shaking like he is feeling cold, I take the blanket and cover him sitting next to him.

Mathenyoka walks in and sit next to me.

Mathenyoka: "I came as soon as I could, I left in the middle of the meeting after hearing everyone talking about this video."

He whispers in frustration, he doesn't want to wake Ngcebo up.

Mathenyoka: "How is he?"

Me: "Bad..I don't think he will ever be okay after this."

Mathenyoka: "He will, he is strong and he has Wenzile by his side, they will go through this together."

I sigh wiping my face.

My phone rings, its Bonolo calling, we never talked after she called her cellphone and asked that we meet so she can take it then she came with her boyfriend I had already saved her number on my phone but I have only called her once asking how she is doing that's it and she has never called me on my phone, my focus was on my brother ever since he found out about the curse.

Me: "Hello."

Bonolo: "Kumkani uhm...are you ok?"

Me: "Yeah I guess."

She probably saw the video as well.

Bonolo: "I'm so sorry."

Me: "Thank you."

Bonolo: "Uhm...I'm in Durban, please keep me updated on when is the date of the funeral or the memorial service anything to show my support, my father always speak highly of your family since he is far I will come on his behalf."

Me: "I will do that, thank you for calling."

I drop the call and more calls keep coming in I just put my phone on silent mode, I'm tired.

Ngcebo wakes up, Mathenyoka kneels and clap his hands.

Ngcebo: "She didn't even give me a chance to see much of her pretty face, indodakazi yami beyenzi?"(What did my daughter do?)

Mathenyoka: "Keep your faith and your ancestors will see you through, that's what you always say to me remember?"

Ngcebo: "The ancestors have failed me so bad this time around, they failed my wife and they failed my innocent daughter."

He sounds so tired.

Me: "I'm so sorry brother."

He stares down at his feet.

Ngcebo: "I want her to be buried like a Princess that she is."

Me: "As you wish. Thokoza."

He shakes his head, I feel like he has given up on idlozi, he's drained and asking himself a lot of questions.

I leave him with Mathenyoka and go to my room changing into trackpants and a white vest. I take my spear and walk up the mountains, I'm going hunting, she will be buried like a Princess.

I come back in the middle of the night carrying a cheetah's skin still smelling blood I hang it inside the hut in the alter then go take a shower and try to get some sleep.

In the morning I'm the first person to wake up and go check on Ngcebo, He is still under covers but he's up, Mathenyoka is sleeping on the other side of the hut.

Me: "Ulale kanjani?"(How did you sleep?)

Ngcebo: "Angikaze ngilale, bengihleli ubusuku bonke."(I didn't get any sleep, I was awake the whole night.)

Me: "Have you talked to Wenzile?"

He shakes his head.

Ngcebo: "What do I say to her bhuti? Do I say sorry? Will it make her feel better? Because to me it doesn't."

Me: "Even if you don't say anything, just being next to her will mean a lot."

Ngcebo: "Ngiyesaba."(I'm scared)

Me: "Come on, go check on her, she's an early bird I know she's already awake now and I'm sure she needs you."

Ngcebo: "Can you go with me please."

I nod.

He wakes up and take a jug of water walking out to wash his face.

We are standing by the door of their bedroom he looks like he wants to turn away but I hold his hand then open the door. We find mom folding a blanket but Wenzile is still in bed.

Me: "Sanibonani ma."(Greetings mother)

She nods, she also looks tired. She hugs Ngcebo for a while then walk out without saying a word, she's a very emotional person especially when something hurt her children so I understand. We sit in bed but Ngcebo is looking the other way, he is even scared to look at his wife as she sits up looking like she is carrying the whole world on her shoulders.

Me: "You still look beautiful even when you just woke up."

She gives me a faint smile, I want Ngcebo to look at her and I see him slowly turning to look at his wife his eyes are red and is trying so hard not to let the tears fall."

Ngcebo: "H..How...are..."

Looks like words are stuck on his throat, so he get up and walk out. I hold Wenzile's hand as she cries.

Me: "You will go through this, the pain will always be there but with time it will get better."

She nods and sleep in bed I cover her with a blanket then walk out.

I sit next to my father who is staring at his coffee on the table.

Me: "Baba wami."(My father)

He smiles a little.

Me: "Ngcebo wants a proper burial for Princess, so we need to give him that."

He nods.

Nkosiyo: "My first grandchild will get just that, she deserves to be buried like a Princess she is even though we were given such little time with her."

The pain in his voice.

Nkosiyo: "I will talk to my sister because I don't think your mother is strong enough to make any arrangements, this opened up old wounds."

I nod.

Isisekelo suggest that she is buried on Saturday that's in two days because they don't keep babies for long at the mortuary.

During the day I take my phone and stand outside calling Bonolo.

Bonolo: "Hello."

Me: "Hey, I'm calling to inform you that the Princess's burial is on Saturday."

Bonolo: "Ok thank you, I will see you then. Are you ok though?"

Me: "If I say no, bowuzoza namhlanje uzongibona?"(Were you going to come today to see me?)

She laughs a little.

Bonolo: "I just want to know how you're holding up."

Me: "I'm getting there, just worried about my brother and his wife."

Bonolo: "This must be hard on them."

Me: "Can you come tomorrow and help out, we need all the help and support we can get."

Bonolo: "Uhm..tomorrow It's Friday and I have back to back meetings, I'm sorry I can only make it on Saturday."

Me: "It's okay I understand."

We say our goodbyes and drop the call.

The yard is full, Thingo is really not coping because she is more closer to Ngcebo so when he is not okay she gets worse. Makhosini and Bukhosi are also not feeling well, they are both sick but it's not that bad, their health always goes with the energy around them that time, if there is bad energy they get sick instantly.

It's Friday and there are more cars in the yard all the Gumedes are here from the oldest to the youngest some Journalist are trying to snake their way in asking questions like "why was the funeral of a baby announced and is made a big deal?" And Ngcebo went off! He mentioned that video asking them why was his daughter's disability made a joke all around the world he was so angry and when he gets angry the weather changes with his mood, they had to leave him alone.

I am standing outside alone just looking around I see a car parking at the gate and the security walks closer to check who it is. She steps out I am mesmerized by the woman at the gate, she's breathtaking in that long sleeved black dress that is a little above the knees, and a scarf loosely wrapped around her shoulders, she has black heels on. I walk to the gate and open it for her as the security keep asking her questions.

Me: "I know her."

He bows and walks away. I stand there staring at her, she even have her head wrapped with a doek, so much respect! I bow my head.

Me: "Princess Bonolo."

She smiles.

Bonolo: "King."

Me: "I thought you said you had meetings."

Bonolo: "I cancelled so I can come help out."

Me: "Thank you so much, I appreciate that a lot."

I look at her.

Me: "Can I hug you?"

She laughs and open her arms, I chuckle hugging her, she smells good.

Me: "You look beautiful."

She smiles.

Bonolo: "Thank you, so which side should I go?"

Me: "Let me take you to my mother."

I take her hand and go to my mom, she is cooking outside on those big black three legged pots.

Me: "Mama."

Bonolo does a little bow putting her hands together greeting my mother, she smiles wiping her hands on the pinafore she's wearing.

Thabsie: "Oh Sawubona, I think I have seen you before."

Me: "She is princess Bonolo Modise, she was at Ngcebo's wedding on behalf of her father who is a great friend to King Ntsika."

Thabsie: "Nice meeting you Bonolo, you look beautiful."

Bonolo: "Thank you, umuhle kakhulu nawe mah."(You're also beautiful ma."

The way she pronounces Zulu words melts my heart.

Mom smiles looking at me.

Me: "She came to help out, so.."

Thabsie: "That's great I was busy here alone she can help me the other ladies are in the kitchen. Can you cook?"

Bonolo: "Oh yes.."

She removes her scarf and hand it to me with her car keys and a purse, mom laughs. It's good to see her laughing.

Me: "I will leave you to it then."

I leave them talking and laughing like old friends. I go put her things in my room and park her car in the yard. I pass them outside again, Bonolo has an apron on now and Mom's sleepers she took off her heels, I take them to my room as well, she can lose them here since there are so many people.

I sigh when I see a group of girls from our community coming to help out, Funeka is with them. They walk in and greet me respectfully some are blushing, they have this idea that when I take a wife I will choose from them so they always act strange around me. I go sit with Mcebisi facing where Bonolo and mom are.

Mcebisi: "That lady with mom, she's hot!"

I chuckle.

Me: "I know, but she is in a serious relationship."

Mcebisi: "Oh, so?"

Me: "So what?"

Mcebisi: "Wouldn't you want a sight of that everyday? Look at them."

I look at Bonolo and mom, I think she's great at communication judging from the way mom is so free around her while they literally just met 15 minutes ago.

Me: "I think she's really in love with his guy man they are even staying together."

He chuckles.

Mcebisi: "You dated Funeka who was with every guy in this community and now just one guy will stop you from getting the girl?"

I ignore him and focus my eyes back at Bonolo, she is so beautiful. I see Funeka walking up to them I quickly get up and walk over to them standing behind Bonolo.

Funeka: "Ma do you need help with anything here."

Thabsie: "No sisi Bonolo and I are almost done here."

Bonolo is staring at her, she does remember her ruining her dress.

Funeka: "Oh where is she from usisi?" (The sister?)

Me: "Uzosiza la noma uzoba intatheli yesgodi?"(Did you come to help out or you came to be a village gossiper?)

She turns looking at me and blink, she used to charm me with her beautiful face but I have seen better, I mean there isn't much you can do with a woman with no brains just a spoilt brat.

Me: Go back to your friends and help out that side."

She opens her mouth to say something but quickly look behind her, I guess she wanted to say something rude but remembered that mom is here. She walks away.

Later Bonolo is with Ntsika, he recognised her as soon as his eyes landed on her and he was over the moon, now they are talking to her father on the phone.

I wait for her until Ntsika walks away.

Me: "So you're sleeping over right?"

She nods.

Bonolo: "I can't be driving back and forth, Durban is far from here."

I nod.

Me: "You can use my room, I am sleeping with my brothers at the rondavel, we have a small ceremony to do."

Bonolo: "Ok, thank you. Uhm..so your girlfriend came to me earlier and told me you guys are expecting and I should stay away from you."

Me: "Expecting what?"

Bonolo: "A baby, what gives her an idea that I'm with you?"

I chuckle.

Me: "I'm not even gonna entertain that shit and I suggest you ignore it as well especially the part of "expecting" we broke up months ago if she was really expecting I would be a dad right now."

Bonolo: "You guys should sort things out and talk to her, she can't be fighting people she doesn't know over you, I'm not gonna accept it next time."

I bow a little.

Me: "I'm sorry for that Princess."

She nods and I take her to my room.

It's the day of the funeral, yesterday Grandpa, dad, Mcebisi and I went to fetch the Princess's body and spirit from the mortuary then we did a small ceremony to introduce her to the ancestors and that they should welcome her spirit then we put the cheetah's skin over her coffin instead of a blanket. In the morning Manqoba let Ngcebo and Wenzile see their daughter one last time, they go separately because Wenzile is held by her mother I don't even think they have talked after he walked out of the room that day.

Ngcebo: "Lala kahle Gumede, Phakathwayo, Mnguni kaYeyeye, Khondlo, Qwabe, Nkosazana kaNgcebo, Princess Serena iGumede bakwamulele ngezandla ezifudumele."(may the ancestors welcome you with warm arms.)

Wenzile let out a heart wrenching scream that touches every person in this room you can hear that "mmmh" it's painful. Ngcebo doesn't stop reciting the clan praises until Mcebisi and I get up and hold the little coffin to her final resting place. She is buried like the Princess she is and there is already a tombstone written "RIP Princess Serena kaNgcebo Gumede" then a dove there. We all leave Wenzile and Ngcebo kneeling there next to her grave. I go to Bonolo looks like she is ready to leave.

Me: "Leaving already?"

She nods.

Bonolo: "The ceremony had so much dignity, I hope your family heals."

Me: "Thank you for coming."

We hug briefly then she get in her car and drive out. I see Ngcebo stumbling then he collapse on the ground I rush to him holding him tight, he slowly opens his eyes.

Me: "Don't do this Ngcebo, just try...I know it's hard but try mfowethu."(my brother)

He nods and take a deep breath, tears roll down his face. I help him up and take him to his room. The wound is still fresh but they say time heals all wounds.

CHAPTER 20

*

NGCEBO

*

How do I move on from this pain? How do I look at my wife and not feel like I failed her? She was looking forward to our baby, she always talked about accepting any disability she will be born with, how she will make everything easy for her by being a full time mother and she was ready to let go of all her dreams for our baby only for her to be taken from us on a day we met her, how do you move on from that.

I always feel like I'm suffocating, I can still hear her heart skipping a beat by the second then it stopped beating completely.

I will never forgive those doctors and nurses in that room maybe if they took her immediately like they always treat normal babies they would have saved her in any way, I don't care even if they had to do a kidney transplant at her age I don't care I wanted her to live even just for a week it would have made me feel better, but No, they made a joke out of her, they even asked how I knew it was a girl because they were patronizing me, seeing me as a crazy person, I'm still angry inside, my heart is boiling and that woman will never know peace until she comes back crawling and I will do the same to her! She will pay dearly for what she did.

My wife sits next to me for the first time since we lost our daughter and buried, I'm scared of even looking at her, she is wearing a black dress and a black headwrap with a black scarf around her shoulders,

she has lost weight, of course she carried a baby for the whole nine months, gave birth to her only to lose her in a day so I can only imagine what she's going through.

Wenzi: "You've been ignoring me?"

She says with a little giggle but her voice is shaky.

Wenzi: "But I know how you feel, I feel the same too. I failed our daughter and I failed you, we already made plans of making her life a lot easier with any disability she would have had. No one told me she was gonna die! We had accepted that curse! They said nothing about her dying Ngcebo!"

Her voice is stern, she sounds angry. I look down.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu sthandwa sami.(I'm really sorry my love.)

Wenzi: "Don't shut me out Ngcebo, I feel like I lost the both of you because you are distancing myself from me, ngifuna ungiqinisekise ukuthi unami futhi usangithanda."(I want you to assure me that you're still with me and you love me.)

Me: "Of course I still love you, I just wish she's here."

I kneel in front of her wiping her tears.

Me: "Umbonile ukuthi ubemuhle kanjani?"(Did you see how pretty she was?)

She giggles through the tears, I keep wiping them.

Wenzi: "She was pretty."

Me: "You gave me a beautiful daughter and I will forever cherish you, you're in my heart forever."

I hug her tight we pour our hearts out through tears while holding each other until our tears dry up.

We are now silent she has her head on my lap.

Me: "ulele yini?"(Are you sleeping?)

She giggles.

Wenzi: "No, I'm just thinking about how it would have been now, I feel like she was gonna be a daddy's girl, I watched you holding her so safe in your arms, you were going to be a great father."

I smile.

Me: "It was love at first sight, the minute my eyes landed on her I fell in love I wanted to protect her, even when I saw her disability I accepted instantly I saw a very rare beautiful gift."

Wenzi: "Kuzobangcono?"(will it get better?)

Me: "Uuka said time heals all wounds so I guess with time we gonna learn to live with this pain because it won't go away but focus more on the good things, I still have you."

Wenzi: "I still have you."

Me: "We have each other."

I kiss her cheek and join our hands together.

I help her up and we go together to our room, I have been sleeping in my hut ever since but today I want to hold my wife in my arms and assure her that I'm there and I will always have her back no matter what.

She get in bed after going to the bathroom to change into her long pyjamas, I let her get in my arms then hold her.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda mama wengane yami."(I love you mother of my child.)"

She sniffs and hold me tight.

In the morning I wake up and look next to me, my wife is still sleeping, first time I sleep the whole night ever since we lost her. I kiss her lips she opens her eyes and smile.

Me: "Hey."

She nods wiping her eyes.

Wenzi: "Uyazi ngiyaqala ukulala kuze kuse seloku...(It's the first night I sleep the whole night ever since...)"

I nod.

Me: "Me too, maybe our daughter wants us to be together, she wasn't happy with the distance I created between us."

She smiles.

Wenzile; "She is Serena a princess of peace after all."

Me: "She's in peace that's what comforts me most, she is in spirit with her aunts, my mother's daughters."

Wenzi: "I can feel she will be a great ancestor to you, your guardian angel, her innocent aura is all around you."

I smile.

Me: "You know I wanted to give up on Idlozi so bad."

Wenzi: "Don't, Idlozi is what makes you who you are, a pure soul, uMntwana."

She place her hand on my chest.

Wenzi: "We are who we are and we still have a lot to live for, Serena would want her daddy to carry her in spirit like all those inside of you."

I bite my lower lip as I get emotional.

Wenzi: "Singabantwana bedlozi Gumede."(We are the children of the ancestors)

I chuckle.

There's a knock on my door so I wear my pants since I was in my shorts then open the door, it's my two twin brothers.

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

They both bow clapping their hands.

Makhosini: "Uyaphila bhuti?(Are you okay brother?)

They haven't looked at me in the eye their heads are still bowed.

Me: "I'm ok."

Bukhosi: "We have something for you but we know dad will beat us up for doing this."

I look at them, they have mud on their sneakers and Bukhosi's t-shirt has a big hole in it.

I walk back inside and wear my t-shirt, my wife is already up as well. I walk out and find dad tapping his foot on the floor staring at Bukhosi and Makhosini.

Bukhosi: "Baba we only went hunting to cheer our brother up, we know how much he loves a deer meat."

I stare at them in shock, dad never lets them go hunting because he feels they are still young but today they went there for me and came back with a deer.

Dad seems calm now that they explained that they did this to cheer me up. I shoulder hug them.

Me: "Thank you so much, ngiyabonga boPhakathwayo."

Makhosini: "You won't beat us up anymore right dad?"

He smiles faintly and put them under his wing brushing Bukhosi's head.

Nkosiyo: "I won't, you did this for your brother I can never beat you up for looking out for your big brother, Qwabe."

He walks away, they happily show me the biggest deer I have ever seen. I started hunting at the age of 9, I would go to the mountains for some roots to make herbs but see a deer I would surround it until I pounce on it, I have unimaginable speed that I would win a marathon without any hassles.

Me: "How did you do it?"

Bukhosi: "We stole Kumkani's spear please don't tell him and we both surrounded the deer it didn't have anywhere to run and Makhosini threw the spear it went straight to its neck."

He whispers the first part then narrate how they did it even doing the gestures. I have a very dramatic yet smart brother here.

Me: "Did you take his spear back?"

Bukhosi: "No, I want to wash blood first.."

Kumkani walks out of his own hut that great grandpa built specifically for him, we all have our own huts as boys in the family though but Kumkani's is bigger.

Makhosini: "He is gonna kill us, he knows Bukhosi.."

He says in a low voice as Uuka steps closer. They quickly put their hands behind their backs and greet him, I want to laugh at how scared they are.

Kumkani: "Bring back what belongs to me Khosini."

Bukhosi: "Bhuti we're sorry.."

He nods.

Kumkani: "I don't care just bring it back, how are you?"

He hold my shoulder. Bukhosi and Makhosini look at each other they thought Uuka is gonna shout or even beat them up but no, he is very calm.

Me: "I'm getting there, talking to my wife really helped, thank you, all of you for the support."

Mcebisi: "Sengibasile akosiwe!"(I have already made the fire let's braai)

He says coming towards me and hug me tight.

Mcebisi: "You look better today and that makes me feel better."

I smile and we all sit around the fire, they are telling jokes and I'm laughing I know they are doing all this for me and I'm grateful. Mom, Thingo, Mathenyoka, dad and my wife joins us, I move from the chair and sit on the straw mat next to my wife holding her hand.

During the day I walk in the hut and sit down looking at Mathenyoka who is quietly sleeping on his back facing up. He sit up as he sees me and clap his hands. He has been very supportive to us and I see a huge difference in him lately, he spends more time with Thingo since both their interest is art.

Me: "Mkhulu, siyolanda amadlozi ksasa siwafaka ekhaya labo elisha."(We're going to fetch the ancestors tomorrow to bring them to our new home.)

Mathenyoka: "But..Mntwana are you sure now it's the right time, you're still grieving."

Me: "I am grieving, the pain is there and it will take a while to heal but umsebenzi wedlozi kumele siwenze(the work of the ancestors should be done) you don't wanna end up like me, with curses and bad lucks, we should do it so you can start over."

He claps his hands.

Mathenyoka: "NgiyaThokoza Mntwana.."

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

He sit down I can tell he is worried, he told me that they promised Thingo to call a meeting for him but they never did.

Me: "Don't worry this time they won't do anything to you, asihambi sodwa."(We're not going alone)

My brothers walk in I smile looking at Mathenyoka I can see him relaxing a bit, nobody would want to attack him when he is with all my brothers, Kumkani, Mcebisi, Makhosini and Bukhosi since I'm really not a fighter I trust them with my life. It's not like I don't know how to fight but I just choose not to because I'm gonna sweat or even get dirty and I can't have that because usually I'm in my white clothes.

Kumkani: "Ngcebo."

I look at him.

Kumkani: "You blacked out for a second."

Me: "I keep having flashbacks of my daughter's face she is communicating that she's at peace and she really is."

They all smile looking at me.

Me: "She lives in me so I'm gonna live for her."

Bukhosi jumps and throw himself at me.

Thabsie: "Mbulale phela ngoba owakho angithi."(kill him, he's yours right?)

Mom says taking off her shoes at the door followed by dad and Wenzi, everyone cracks up, she is referring to Bukhosi the way he jumped on me I almost fell on my back since I have my legs crossed in a meditating position, I have always sat like that when I'm in my hut,

my comfort zone, my place of peace. She sits next to me and clap hands.

Thabsie: "Ngicela ukuhlola ukuthi ubaba wabantabami uzongithengela nini imoto entsha."(I want to consult because I want to know when is my husband buying a new car for me.)"

We all laugh.

Nkosiyabo: "Ay Thabsile."

The room is full of laughter, they keep following me around but I don't mind because I know they just want to see me smiling. I'm gonna be ok and so is my wife.

CHAPTER 21 *

THINGO-LAMAQWABE *

I'm in a car with Mathenyoka, he is driving to his mother's house all my brothers are driving behind us in Uuka's car, I can't believe the support they are willing to give to someone who came into our lives as a total stranger and just my brother's initiate but now they dropped everything to go there I know they want to keep Ngcebo safe but I have seen how they are around him, they take him as a brother now, he is one of us. He is biting the side of his cheek obviously nervous, I hold his free hand as the other one is on a steering wheel. He glance at me then look ahead. He asked me to be around apparently "I bring him so much peace and quiet in his life even in the mist of total misery" whatever that means, those were his words but he is cool to be around and he is interested in Art just like me, I can draw anything that comes to mind even in the middle of the night I wake up and draw. He takes a deep sigh I grab my bag taking out my drawing pad, it is small I carry it around with me everywhere I go but I do have a drawing board at home. I start drawing him, exactly the side view I

am seeing and the steering wheel, everything I can see when I look next to me then slowly show him he takes a glance then chuckle.

Me: "This is how grumpy you look right now even on the side view and I'm not enjoying this ride with you at all." He laughs but it's not his usual bold laughter. Me: "Don't worry everything is gonna be fine." He nods and give me his hand again, I hold it all the way till he parks in front of his mother's house. His mother step out first and put her fists on his waist staring at us. "Ngiyalingwa."(I am being tested) She shouts charging towards us but stops when my brothers step out of their cars, Ngcebo is the first one to bow his head and they all follow suit, he greets Kwanda's mother in a very polite and respective way. "Kumkani Gumede?" Uuka just looks at her not saying a word.

Mathenyoka: "We just need to go where my father is resting and the rondavel then we will go." She looks at her son up and down then chuckle. "Usuyathwasa wena masimba? Nifike nenze konke ukungcola loku bese nicasha ngokuthwasa."(You're an initiate you shit? You do all the dirt and hide behind initiation.) Ngcebo clears his throat and step forward.

Ngcebo: "He is not hiding behind anything, he is not an initiate anymore but he finished all that was needed of him." She is struggling to go off as my brothers are here, Uuka is just like that you count your words when you're in his presence without him saying a word.

Ngcebo: "We just need to go to the graves and that ancentral rondavel then we will leave your house, it is heavy anyway." "I can't let you walk around my house with this piece of shit."

Ngcebo: "Then let me walk around then we will leave your yard." I don't know how he always manage to remain calm and respectful even in these kind of situation. "Wena uzongazi namhlanje!"(You will know me today) She walks out the gate shouting for people to come out because "ubuyile umgulukudu" which means the thug is back. Ngcebo points his head to the side looking at Mathenyoka he leads the way

going around the back and Ngcebo ask us to remain there next to the cars. We hear a group of people making noise asking Kwanda to come out. Uuka push me back and Bukhosi, Makhosini and Mcebisi stand in front of me. Uuka: "Nifuna bani?"(Who are you looking for?) "Sifuna uKwanda, asilwi nawe Nkosana sifuna uKwanda la kuphela."(We're looking for Kwanda, we're not fighting with you Prince we just want Kwanda only)

Uuka: "Well, he is with me so if you want him then you will have to go through me." They look at each other then raise their weapons up in the air.

Uuka: "You really don't want to do that, there is my father's princess here and he made us promise that she will remain unharmed but if you act this way you are threatening her safety." He is still calm, they all are except for Makhosini he keeps clenching his fist and he keeps turning to look at me I know he wants to make sure no one is touching me. The old man that was talking about Kwanda burning his shop step forward and look at Kumkani in the eye. "I'm your elder and If I say Kwanda is what I'm looking for then I'm gonna get him." Kumkani chuckles.

Uuka: "No you won't." We hear noise at the back and Mcebisi runs there immediately calling out for Ngcebo. My brother's put me in the middle as Mathenyoka's mom push the gate open and they all walk in, I see Uuka's hand moving to his waist taking out a gun, I knew he owned a gun but never thought he actually uses it.

Uuka: "If anyone dares take one step forward I won't hesitate to shoot and move on with my life like I just killed a useless dog." They never raise their voices at all even when they try to shout it just doesn't get really loud. They stop moving and look at each other, looks like they want to attack us.

Me: "Stop! All of you stop! We will give you the person you want?" Everyone looks at me confused.

M: "He will come before you and he will apologise since he can't change the past." I look behind me and Mathenyoka comes out holding his shoulder I rush to him.

Me: "Are you okay? Where is Ngcebo and Mcebisi?" He stares at me for a while then walk past me going to the mob, he goes on his knees still holding his shoulder. Ngcebo and Mcebisi come out looking fine.

Me: "What happened there?" Mcebisi: "Two guys sneaked in at the back and tried to attack Mathenyoka, they ran away when they saw us." I rush next to him. Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry to everyone I have wronged." They step closer, I step back then push my brothers back as they try to move past me. The mob start beating him up and I close my eyes because his groans are sad.

Me: "Enough!" I shout and stand before him they all step back as my brothers move closer to me.

Me: "Do you feel better now? Will it change anything now huh? He burnt your shop now you beat him up do you feel better?" I ask looking at the man straight in the eye.

Me: "It doesn't change anything, he still did you wrong but he is here now, apologising for that can't you all move on from this? please forgive him." "I want compensation! When I heard he is now owning a big company I thought he will compensate me for burning my shop."

Me: "Oh..so this is about money or you are all angry that he turned out great than what you all expected?" Silence.

Me: "This is not about what he did, you are just angry that a troublesome young man like him made it in life regardless of everything that was thrown at him! You beat him up for courting a girl? Isn't what all young boys do? Was it the first time you see a guy courting a girl?" "He was not genuine! He wanted to play her!" He shouts angrily.

Me: "I'm sure you also had your own fair share of mistakes and most of you here didn't marry your first lovers, or am I wrong?" They keep quiet. Me: "It's a good thing that he is moving away from this toxic place and its people and you will never get any compensation, MOVE ON!" I get in the drivers seat of his car while my brothers help him get in the backseat of the car. I drive in silence till we get to his house Ngcebo carries on with the ceremony even though Mathenyoka is injured, I am nursing his wounds.

Mathenyoka: "So you really fed me to the wolves Princess?" Me: "No I saved your life twice now they will live with regrets for the rest of their lives because they know the truth."

Mathenyoka: "Aah, what truth?" He flinch as I wipe his face.

Me: "Judging from all the stories you told me, your anger was justified! Those people always provoked you because they all knew how your mother was towards you so they added to the abuse, you were retaliating and they know it now it hurts them that you were able to rise above all that hate and abuse, they don't know that their hate was a stepping stone to where you are today. You proved them wrong." He stares at me then his eyes changes colour but quickly go back to normal again. I still ask myself how he does that but he always says he doesn't know.

Me: "I'm done now." I try to get up but he hold my hand.

Me: "What is it?"

Mathenyoka: "Thank you, you are wiser than your age and fierce."

Me: "I use common sense which most people lack these days." He chuckles. Ngcebo walks in.

Ngcebo: "Ey vuka ndoda ubani ozokhuluma namadlozi oGatsheni ngiwuGumede mina."(Ey man wake up who will speak to the Gatsheni ancestors I'm a Gumede.) I laugh.

Mathenyoka: "But I'm hurt, thought the whole point of going with me was to protect me."

Ngcebo: "They protected me and the princess you were on your own we weren't there at your rebellious days." I laugh so hard, they always do this back and forth its amusing, Ngcebo makes him unleash the young boy in him that is full of life not that one that was always in trouble.

Mathenyoka: "UGobela ohlukumezanayo."(A Gobela that is a bully)

Me: "Red flag!" Ngcebo chuckles and walk out. I help this big guy up and we walk slowly to the rondavel and they do their ceremony of welcoming the ancestors home.

Me: "So your mom's house literally ayinawo umsamu? (Has no ancestral alter?) He nods.

Mathenyoka: "This is where oGatsheni are." I nod, he looks at me, his eyes has changed again.

Mathenyoka: "I have accepted that I have no family now."

Ngcebo: "Then why are we here?" We are all sitting around the fire in one of his huts, all my brothers are here. He looks at him.

Uuka: "Those people treated you the way your mother treated you so yeah you can't call that family but you can call us that, you've shown incredible support to Ngcebo and all of us but most of all we see you as you are now, your past will remain just that, you're here now on a clean slate and we're riding together till the end brother." He gives him his fist, they all put their fists together quietly for a moment.

Uuka: "To brotherhood." "To brotherhood." They all say in unison.

Me: "Hey! Did you forget about me?" Uuka laughs pulling me under his wing kissing my cheek. Uuka: "The brotherhood literally lives for you, you will always be our first priority."

Ngcebo: "Ay leave me out of that, let me go to my first priority." He says getting up and walk away whistling, we all laugh.

Mcebisi: "Mntwana.." We all clap our hands twice as he turns when he is at the door and give us a little bow walking out. Uuka's phone rings, he smiles getting up then walk out.

Makhosini: "Uyajola ubhuti."(Bhuti is dating) He whispers to Bukhosi.

Bukhosi: "I hope it's not Funeka again because if it is we are all going to put him in the room and take turns beating him out kuphume idimoni.(to remove the demon) We laugh so hard, they are clown!

Mcebisi: "I need to go and rest tomorrow I'm going to Durban." We nod as he walk out, he is graduating soon so he is busy with suits and stuff, it's still early though but I guess he wants to make sure everything is on point.

Makhosini: "Bhuti uzolala namadlozi?(Brother you will sleep with the ancestors." Kwanda laughs.

Mathenyoka: "That doesn't sound right..I will sleep in the ancestral hut, yes." Makhosini: "Ok siyokulandela ukudla ekhaya ke ngoba izinkukhu sizozidla ksasa."(We will go fetch food for you at home because we will eat the chickens tomorrow.) I laugh, they love meat, there are chickens that Ngcebo and Kwanda used for the ceremony but it will be eaten tomorrow morning

. Bukhosi: "Sozohamba nawe mase sibuya Nkosazana."(We will leave with you when we come back Princess.) I nod. I am left with a quiet Mathenyoka. I touch his back.

Me: "Are you okay?" He looks at me.

Me: "Why do I feel like your eyes changes when you look at me? And why do I seem like the only one who sees it?" He looks away and start grunting

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu.." I clap my hands until he stops grunting then look at me again, his eyes are normal now

. Mathenyoka: "I need to rest.." I nod and help him go to his hut where there is a mattress on the floor. He sleeps there facing up

. Me: "Don't be sad, you gonna be ok." He smiles

. Mathenyoka: "Oh I'm not sad I'm just deep in thoughts."

Me: "And why do I feel like you always brush me off when I ask about your eyes?" He doesn't say anything, I try to get up he hold my hand.

Mathenyoka: "Thank you once again, for everything." I clap my hands.

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

Mathenyoka: "NgiyaThokoza Nkosazana." I laugh and walk out. I go check out his empty huge house while I wait for my brothers, it is exactly how I designed it, it's beautiful.

KUMKANI-UUKA

Bonolo and I have been talking often on the phone she asks mostly about how Ngcebo and Wenzile are holding up. I'm on the phone with her now.

Bonolo: "So how are things that side?"

Me: "You can come and check on us you know." She laughs.

Bonolo: "I have a lot of meetings Kumkani."

Me: "You can reschedule Nkosazana."

Bonolo: "That would be very unprofessional of me and also I already have plans this weekend." I rub my beard.

Me: "With your boyfriend?" She doesn't answer that question. I walk inside the house and give mom the phone.

Me: "It's Bonolo, please tell her to come visit." I whisper, she just give me a death stare then start chatting with Bonolo about other things.

Me: "Mama." She push me out of the way as she starts mixing her ingredients, she is baking. The phone is still on her ear she is supporting it with her shoulder. I sigh taking the juice from the fridge and watch her as she tells her to come because baked these "lovely scones". I am sitting down now because they are still at it.

Me: "I need my phone now mom." She laughs out loud then tell me to come take the phone. I take it and Bonolo already dropped the call. I call her again going to my room but it's on voicemail. In the morning around 8 am I am woken up by my mom's laughter in the kitchen I can tell she's with a woman but Thingo is at school. I go to the bathroom to shower then wear my shorts and a vest then walk barefoot to the kitchen, laughter is coming from the lounge. I stop making tea when I hear the other voice clear now. I go to the lounge and Bonolo is really here. I greet them, Bonolo get up we both bow a little before we hug, she is in a green dress that hugs her body so perfectly then a scarf, I have noticed that she loves scarfs she will do great as a wife. They are eating scones I fetch my tea and join them.

Me: "So your meetings? You cancelled them?" Bonolo: "Oh no, after your call yesterday the client I was meeting committed suicide I got a call from her mother."

Me: "Huh?"

Bonolo: "I'm a psychologist dealing mostly with depressed children in schools by giving them counselling, psychotherapy or hypnosis."

Me: "Oh..I'm sorry about your client."

Bonolo: "It was gonna be the first time meeting her, I guess we were too late to try to help her." I nod.

Bonolo: "So I decided to visit my mother."

Me: "Oh so she's your mother?"

Bonolo: "Yes and that makes us siblings."

Me: "Ngeke, never uzoba umakoti walayikhaya."(You will be a bride here.) She laughs.

Me: "I'm serious." Around 11 am they cook lunch together I just leave them and go for a little walk but before I could go any further I see Funeka I stop walking and turn back but I hear running footsteps and she grabs my arm. I look at it and shake my head she let go of my arm.

Funeka: "Uuka, I want us to fix things please, I have grown I don't fool around anymore."

Me: "You're too late." Her eyes moves and look at the yard, I look where she's looking, Bonolo is standing next to her car talking on the phone

. Funeka: "So...so you really moved on?" I chuckle as I watch Bonolo blushing because of that phone call.

Me: "Awuphume kimi wena."(leave me alone) I say looking at Funeka.

Me: I'm just glad people never believed I was really with you because you would have ruined my reputation, you slept with every guy here and got drunk in tarvens then acted like a foolish woman busy fighting for different men, I wasn't gonna be seen with that, I'm sorry but I'm way out of your league and I'm not saying this because of status I mean that in terms of class. I leave her standing there and walk inside. I stand in front of Bonolo and she's already saying goodbye to her boyfriend, telling him she loves him too.

Me: "I want that to be me."

Bonolo: "What?"

Me: "I want you to give me your love."

Bonolo: "That's just crazy." She tries moving past me but I move closer to her she leans on her car, she stares at me her eyes are glowing and her breathing changes.

Me: "Give me a chance I promise that I will respect your relationship with your man."

Bonolo: "You are asking me to cheat on my boyfriend with you?"

Me: "I'm only asking for a chance to show you how Kumkani loves a woman."

I slowly touch the back of her neck and peck her lips once then step back from her, she doesn't move for a while then she quickly walk away. I'm giving her options and that boyfriend of hers a competition. Why would he cohabit with a beautiful woman like that and not put a ring on it, that's just plain disrespectful and I'm sure her father doesn't know about it.

CHAPTER 22

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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Bonolo have been ignoring my calls ever since her visit, she didn't even tell me when she was leaving that day, I only heard her car

driving away while I was in my hut. She is not picking up my calls I go to my father and sit next to him.

Me: "Baba, can I use your phone please."

Nkosiyabo: "Why? What's wrong with your phone?"

Me: "Uhm..someone is ignoring my calls so I want to call with a different number."

He laughs at me.

Nkosiyabo: "If bayakuziba, zibeka phela."(If they are ignoring you, be ignored.)

Me: "I can't do that.."

He stares at me smiling.

Nkosiyabo: "It's a girl?"

Me: "She's a lady, a woman."

His smile even more.

Nkosiyabo: "Who is she?"

I laugh.

Me: "I can't tell you yet because there is a situation. Uhm she is with someone."

He chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "May the best man win then."

He gives me his phone and walk away, I chuckle dialing Bonolo's number.

Bonolo: "Hello."

Me: "Hey, it's me why are you ignoring my calls?"

Bonolo: "Kumkani."

Me: "Come on..so you don't trust yourself and your relationship huh?"

Bonolo: "What do you mean I don't trust myself."

Me: "If you did you weren't gonna ignore my calls, you were gonna be able to tell me where to get off."

Bonolo: "Can you stop please."

Me: "I can't, I want you."

She drops the call. I go straight to google and search her professional profile then take all the details.

I give my father his phone and go to my room.

In the morning I take a shower then wear my white shirt with a black tuxedo and black shoes, I put on my watch on my left wrist then spray some cologne a little.

I grab my car keys and phone then walk out of my room, Bukhosi and Makhosini whistles as I step into the room everyone is staring at me.

Me: "What?"

Bukhosi: "Something is missing."

He get up and rush down the passage then quickly come back with some shades giving them to me, I laugh.

Me: "Really?"

Bukhosi: "Just put them on."

I do as he says.

Bukhosi: "Perfect."

Nkosiyo: "You look good!"

Me: "I know right."

I see mom stealing some snaps and I know I really look great if she does that.

Thabsie: "You look so much like my husband!"

Nkosiyo: "That means he doesn't just look good but he looks hot!"

We all laugh.

Nkosiyo: "Go get them.."

I chuckle.

Me: "I will see you later but if I get lucky it might be tomorrow, I don't know."

I say walking out leaving them laughing.

I get in my father's black GR sport and drive to Durban playing some slow jam.

I just walked in the building and every single person is staring at me, both ladies and men I chuckle fixing my shades then lean on the reception desk. The receptionist is blushing so hard her cheeks look like a tomato.

Me: "Hello."

"Oh my God."

She whispers panting, I want to roll my eyes, so dramatic.

Me: "I came to see Bonolo Modise, is she in?"

"No...Yes..I mean.."

The glass doors slides open and there she is gracefully walking in now I'm the one staring at this goddess in that dark green cut out one shoulder bodycon dress just about her knees. For a minute she stops

walking and stare at me then she clears her throat looking around people are looking from me to her now, we are getting a lot of attention yet we are standing a distance away from each other.

"Oh there she is, uhm..Doctor Modise, Prince Kumkani Gumede is here to see you."

The receptionist says loudly for everyone to hear.

Bonolo finally stands in front of me and give me her hand, We do a handshake.

Me: "I wanted to set up an appointment but the phone wasn't picked up."

Bonolo: "Is it?"

Me: "Yes."

She keeps looking around uncomfortable.

Me: "We can go to your office so we can talk business, I have another meeting in an hour."

She looks at the receptionist that is still staring at me looking like a love-struck puppy.

Bonolo: "Do I have any appointments this morning Buli?"

She says referring to the receptionist.

Buli: "No. These are your files."

She says giving her a lot of files as she tries to take them.

Me: "Let me get them for you."

I take the files she leads the way, I am staring at her round ass and hips, the woman is hot.

We walk in her office, I close the door and put her files on her desk, the office smells fresh and it's so clean. There is a white leather couch on the corner and her big white leather chair behind the desk. She wipes the already clean desk and chair then sit on her chair looking at me.

Bonolo: "You can have a seat."

I sit on the chair opposite her and smile taking off my shades putting them on her desk.

Bonolo: "What can I do for you Kumkani?"

The way she calls my name, God damn!

Me: "I think I am at a breaking point doctor and I need your help."

Bonolo: "What breaking point?"

Me: "My mental health, I need you.."

She sighs leaning on her seat.

Bonolo: "What do you want Kumkani?"

Me: "I want my sanity back and only you can bring it back, I think I'm going crazy because I only think about one thing ever since I met you, and that is you."

Bonolo: "I have a man Kumkani so stop doing this."

Me: "Is that the only argument you have, that you have a man?"

Bonolo: "I don't see you in any way than just being a friend."

I shake my head.

Me: "When did you come to that conclusion that you and I are friends baby?"

Bonolo: "You need to leave."

A knock on the door stops us from talking. The door opens before she can even invite the person in. She smiles awkwardly and get up from her seat.

Bonolo: "Baby."

They hug and his hand goes to her ass, he is holding coffee and a small paper bag on the other hand.

"Buli didn't tell me you have a meeting she was busy gossiping."

She giggles.

"Sawubona."

He says to me, I get up fixing my suit I always feel weird when someone greets me with "Sawubona" because I grew up knowing that I am always walking with my ancestors so "Sanibonani" sounds right to me.

"Kumkani Gumede?"

He sounds surprised.

Me: "Niyaphila?"(Are you well?)

He is a good looking chap, looks a bit older than me.

"I'm good, baby you know Kumkani?"

Bonolo: "Uhm..I did go to his brother's wedding baby and uhm..I met his mom remember?"

"Oh yeah I forgot about that. Hey nice meeting you in person man, so you live in a real world after all I thought you all live in a different world and everything comes to you."

Me: "That's a crazy mentality though don't you think."

He chuckles.

I feel like he is patronizing me really.

"I'm just saying it's rare meeting you in public spaces or maybe if you go to malls they clear everyone so you can shop alone."

I smile looking at him, he has a condescending attitude.

Me: "Wouldn't you like to be me then?"

"Oh no I'm good, uhm..baby this is your coffee and your favorite sandwich I will see you later."

He put it down then hold the back of her neck and kiss her his other hand grabbing her butt, you can see Bonolo is uncomfortable judging by her body language, her hands are up like she wants to push him off but she doesn't really know how to. He breaks the kiss then look at me.

"Nice seeing that you're actually a real human being K."

Me: "My name is Kumkani-Uuka, next time you see me refer me as that or just don't look at me at all."

He laughs walking out. I look at Bonolo she is just standing there. I grab my car keys and glasses then stand in front of her, her eyes are moving around. I kiss her cheek.

Me: "Can I take you out for lunch."

She raise her eyebrows in disbelief, I smile.

Me: "I'm not giving up that easily baby, that's not me, so please say yes to lunch please."

She sighs and nod.

Me: "I will send you the address ok."

Bonolo: "Ok."

Me: "And please tell your boyfriend to google me, I am a qualified Engineer I didn't get that at home."

I kiss her cheek again.

Me: "Enjoy your coffee Nkosazana."

I bow my head and walk out.

I drive to my father's house find Mcebisi there cleaning.

Me: "Bhuti."

We shoulder hug.

Mcebisi: "I didn't know you're coming I was gonna save breakfast for you."

I smile.

Me: "I was in the DrDrjDr brother. Thank you for cleaning because I have a visitor between 12 to 1 pm today."

Mcebisi: "Oh who is it?"

Me: "The Princess."

He smiles fist bumping.

Mcebisi: "Damn!"

Me: "It's just lunch man."

Mcebisi: "Then let me finish up here and help you cook, we don't want her to die of food poisoning."

I laugh, my brothers and sister can cook good food but I only try a few things."

He finish cleaning then we cook together, beef stew, yellow rice, some salads then I send her the address and pray she comes.

Mcebisi: "Good luck and goodbye I am meeting with my designer."

We shoulder hug.

Me: "Thank you, and I'm proud of you for completing your degree man."

Mcebisi: "We learnt from the best, and that's you brother."

I smile as he walks out, love him, I love all of them.

11:50 am I am sitting on the couch my shirt is unbuttoned now I was slowly dozing off, I woke up early. I don't even have my shoes on just white socks but at least the house is spotless. I open the door and there she is holding her little purse. I wipe my face.

Me: "You came.."

She step inside and look around.

Bonolo: "I was expecting a restaurant not a house when you said lunch.

Me: "I cooked us lunch baby."

Bonolo: "Were you sleeping?"

I chuckle.

Me: "Not really..come this way."

I hold her hand taking her to the kitchen and help her sit on the barstool.

Me: "You eat beef I hope."

She nods, I dish up for us.

Bonolo: "You cooked all this yourself?"

Me: "No, my brother helped me then went out."

She nods and start eating.

Bonolo: "Mmm not only does it smell nice, it tastes good as well.

I smile.

Me: "So how's work?"

Bonolo: "Tiring, but at least I'm done for the day."

Me: "That's good."

I pour us some juice after we are done eating then move to the lounge
I play some music but in a low volume I hate loud noise.

I sit next to her and take her hand.

Me: "I want to be your peaceful place, where you come when it gets
too loud and too much."

Bonolo: "I have all that at home Kumkani."

I chuckle.

Me: "You can't compare this voice with that of your man baby, that
guy is a loud mouth not to badmouth him or anything but he is really
loud."

She removes my hand from hers.

Me: "Nolo come on you know I have everything I want in my life but
there is just this one missing piece and that's you baby."

Bonolo: "But I love Sboniso."

Me: "And I love you, ngenzenjani?"(What should I do?)

She shakes her head.

Me: "Ngeke ngize ngikuhluphe, you will set boundaries and I promise I
won't cross them."

"For now", I say at the back of my head.

Bonolo: "I can't.."

Me: "Awu qoma phela ntombi uGumede uyazicelela."(Accept my request lady Gumede is begging you.)

She blushes looking away.

Bonolo: "I can't do that, we've been together for years and he is the only man I know."

Me: "Then you will get to know me too, vuma ntombemhle."(say yes beautiful lady)

Bonolo: "I have to go."

Me: "I am staying at the village baby, I won't be a problem at all, no threat to your relationship at all, I will respect your man I promise, I will appreciate a little time you make for me."

I brush her cheek and go for a kiss on her already parted lips, we share a slow yet intense kiss, I hold her waist then slowly pick her up putting her on my lap, her dress rolls up my hands are on her bare ass, she is wearing a thong underneath, as the kiss get more intense I can feel her slowly grinding on me I'm horny as hell. I get hold of the string of her thong on the side and use my hands to rip it she gasp but her lips doesn't leave mine. I pull down her dress and play with her nipple, she moans grind on me even harder, the girl is a kisser, I can tell she loves kissing and damn she is a good kisser. I get up with her then lay her on the couch taking off what used to be a thong a minute ago. I go down on her shaved soft pussy and eat it as a desert that it is, her hands are on my head pushing me deeper in her clean pussy.

Bonolo: "Aaaah..yes."

She cries out as her juices comes out her legs shaking I pull down my pants and boxers then stroke my hard dick looking at her, she wants it I can tell with the way she is biting her lower lip looking at me

seductively. I go back to kissing her while slowly pushing my dick in her very tight pussy.

Me: "Baby.."

Bonolo: "Ohhh fuck.."

She's not a virgin but feel like it the way she is so tight. I am sweating as I give deep strokes.

Bonolo: "Shit...yes."

I put out and sit on the couch, she doesn't ask anything but her on top of me and slowly slides in my deep holding my shoulders tight, she rides my dick so good, I release deep groans as I feel myself getting close.

Me: "Shit...Bonolo...fuck.."

She rides faster and faster I feel her getting hotter I just cum deep in her holding her waist tight.

Me: "Fuck.."

I have been with three girls at varsity then Funeka but none of them have ever made me cum while on top, they really failed but not this one here.

Me: "You're so beautiful."

She gives me a lazy smile her eyes half opened, her red nails running down my abs. She get off me, I get up and scoop her up she giggles as I go with her to my room and we shower, I swiftly turn her around and push her against the wall then slide my dick from behind while grabbing her butt cheeks.

Bonolo: "Kumkani..."

Me: "Yes baby..."

She doesn't say anything but bend even more giving me all access to her pussy, I slam on it and cum once again. I turn her around and hug her picking her up I feel her moving her hand at the back and slide my semi-hard dick in her pussy again, I give her one last round and we finally step out of the shower. I give her a towel she wraps it around her waist, her hair is wet, she has long natural hair, she tied it in a bun before we got freaky and shit.

She is quiet as she dries her hair with another towel. I walk out going to Thingo's room and take a hairdryer. I go back to her room and ask her to sit down then I dry her hair. I do this with my sister every time.

I tie it the way she did it then fetch her dress and phone in the lounge picking up even that thong going back to my room. She wears her dress then look at her thong.

Me: "I will buy another one for you."

She nods a little, she doesn't look ok.

Me: "Are you okay?"

She looks at me.

Bonolo: "This is wrong."

I chuckle.

Me: "What is wrong Bonolo."

Her phone rings before she could answer me, she checks it out then cuss under her breath and take her purse and keys and grab her shoes from the floor.

Bonolo: "Ke derile phoso I shouldn't...I..."(I made a mistake)

She rush out.

Me: "Bonolo.."

I call out her name rushing behind her and hold her hand.

Me: "Baby.."

Bonolo: "No Kumkani, the sex was great I enjoyed every moment of it but..it can never happen again, I'm in a relationship."

Me: "But I told you I respect that."

Bonolo: "If you do then let's stop meeting up and stop calling me."

She walks out.

Me: "Fuck!"

I brush my head sitting down. I shake my head, I'm not giving up without a fight I'm gonna get her. That wasn't sex but it was love making and the feeling was mutual I saw the way she was looking at me, the way she was touching and holding me, she feels it I'm not giving up on that

CHAPTER 23

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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I am still in Durban it's been three days here and Bonolo blocked my number and that frustrates the hell out of me.

"Hey!"

I open my eyes and sit up I was sleeping on the couch, it's my sister and Mathenyoka behind her. I get up and hug her tight picking her up she giggles laughing like a baby she is. I shoulder hug Mathenyoka.

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

He laughs and take a seat.

Me: "What are you guys doing in Durban?"

Thingo: "He is going to some Art exhibition here in Durban and I asked if I can tag along."

I nod.

Me: "That's great you love everything about Art."

Thingo: "I'm an artist and I'm good at it."

Me: "Yes you are.."

She is growing but to me she will always be my precious little princess.

Mathenyoka is looking at at her I can notice the difference in his eyes but when he moves them and look at me they go back to normal.

Me: "Are you okay?"

Mathenyoka: "Yes, why?"

Me: "Uhm..I think I saw your eyes changing colour."

Thingo: "So you see it too? I thought I'm crazy bhuti! Bhut'Kwanda's eyes does change colour."

Mathenyoka: "I have never heard of anything of that sort it's impossible."

Me: "But I saw it and Thingo knows it."

He moves his eyes to Thingo again then grunt looking down for a while then slowly looks up. I chuckle.

Me: "Thokoza."

He shakes his head.

Me: "You are going to keep grunting like that in an exhibition full of white folks? You gonna scare the hell out of them!"

Thingo laughs so hard.

Thingo: "And his inner voice is so big it's scary."

They spend a lot of time together and it's always about drawing and painting, he is like an art tutor to her since he is a professional in this field also I trust him because he has shown great support to our family so far.

Mathenyoka: "Let's go, we gonna be late, Uuka you don't wanna come with us?"

Me: "No, I am dealing with a lot man, someone is not answering my calls I swear I want to cry, ngishawe ngehit and run bafo."(she did a hit and run brother)

He laughs so hard.

Thingo: "Hit and run? What's that? Was there a car? Were you hurt?"

We both stare at her then laugh so hard, she's so confused.

Me: "Just leave already."

They walk out, I can hear her asking about the hit and run to Kwanda but he bluntly ignore her. I laugh shaking my head.

I take my jacket and walk out driving to Bonolo's office. I greet Buli and ask if Bonolo is in and she nods, the girl is looking at me checking me out but she is more focused on my dick print, today I am wearing sweatpants so you can imagine the print there it's hard not to see it even when it's not hard.

I knock in her office and she invites me in, I stand by the door she is staring at the computer with her glasses on. She slowly raises her eyes and sigh taking off her glasses.

Bonolo: "Kumkani.."

Me: "I feel used."

Bonolo: "Used? You wanted the sex as much as I did."

Me: "But I didn't block you few hours after Nolo."

Bonolo: "That's because I have a man at home, I told you this! You can't keep calling me."

Me: "You call that a home? Ukipitile Bonolo akukho ring emunweni wakho.(You're cohabiting Bonolo there is no ring on your finger) so I won't stop courting you, you deserve better than playing wife to a man who doesn't see a need to marry you."

Bonolo: "You need to get out of my office Kumkani."

Me: "Make me get out."

Bonolo: "Please leave my office."

I just stand there looking at her as she get up from her chair and step closer to me.

Bonolo: "Listen I'm sorry but that sex meant nothing to me, it was fun but I don't want a relationship with you."

Me: "So you did use me for sex Nkosazana?"

Bonolo: "No, we both wanted it."

Me: "I didn't want just sex I want the whole you baby."

She shakes her head. I hold her waist and look at her, she bites her lower lip as our eyes lock.

Me: "Ngiyakucela ung'unblocke.(please unblock me)

I perk her lips.

Me: "I will send a text asking if I can call you first, I won't just call anytime I promise."

I perk her lips again.

Me: "Uyangizwa angithi?"(You hear me right?)

She nods already panting.

Me: "Should I lock the door?"

She doesn't answer so I take a step back and lock the door. I pick her up and put her on the table then open her legs wide I push her panty to the side then pull down my pants and slide my dick in she balance her hands on the table I cuss "fuck" as her warm walls grab hard on my dick.

Me: "Sthandwa sami."(My love)

Bonolo: "Kumkani...baby..ahh.."

I grab her neck and kiss her to stop her from moaning out loud, she push me back and get off the table, she turns around.

Me: "Yhooo!"

The view just get my dick twitching, I slide my dick in and start thrusting in and out of her wet pussy, we go on for a few minutes until I nut in her then pull out. She takes her bag taking out wet wipes. She wipes herself then I take one and wipe my dick, I fix my pants looking at her as she pulls down her dress.

Me: "Baby."

She doesn't look at me I hold the sides of her face and kiss her.

Me: "I love you ok."

She nods.

Me: "And I won't mess your relationship up I just want to love you and you to love me."

Bonolo: "Uhm..I have a meeting soon, you have to go."

I nod.

Me: "Uhm what time should I call you?"

Bonolo: "Sboniso get off work 5 pm and get home around 5:30 to 6pm, you can call me before that."

Me: "Ok, you can call me anytime, I'm going home tomorrow."

Bonolo: "Ok."

Me: "Can you tell me you love me in your language."

She giggles.

Bonolo: "Ke a go rata."

I smile.

Me: "Le nna ke a go rata."(I love you too)

She blushes covering her eyes.

Me: "I will see you, ok."

Bonolo: "Ok."

I kiss her lips and walk out I bump into someone and coffee spills all over my white t-shirt.

"Fuck you man! Fuck you!"

He shouts, I raise my eyebrow and chuckle thank God it wasn't that hot I would be a mess right now. Everyone is looking at us because the man is throwing tantrums even Bonolo has rushed out of her office but stops on her tracks when she sees us. Buli rush to us with a tissue

and starts wiping my t-shirt I don't know for what I mean how can one wipe coffee on a t-shirt.

Bonolo: "Uhm...Sbo, baby."

The guy goes off, he didn't even look who this is because of his tantrum.

Sboniso: "Fucken shit! Do you see what you did?"

People are always ready with their phones taking videos.

He finally calms down after a while then look at me. He clicks his tongue.

Sboniso: "So it's you! Man here in the real world we look where we're going ok! This is not your stupid palace."

I put my hands on my back and just stare at him.

Me: "Are you done?"

He push me to the side and I watch him walk to Bonolo's office. I look at Bonolo.

Me: "I will call you. Thank you Buli."

"He knows my name."

I walk away leaving her screaming. I get home and take a shower then go join my brother watching soccer. Dad calls I put it on the table.

Me: "Mnguni."

Nkosiyo: "Makhosini just showed me a video of you being harassed in public who is that stupid boy?"

Mcebisi: "Harassed? Where is the video?"

He shouts pressing his phone.

Nkosiyo: "It's on Facebook and Twitter."

Me: "Don't worry about it baba I can handle it."

Nkosiyo: "Please do because should you not I will find that boy myself and kill him."

Me: "I promise you I will handle it."

Nkosiyo: "When are you two coming home, Mcebisi you are always away now uthole intombi?"(you have a girlfriend?)

Mcebisi laughs.

Mcebisi: "You know I'm busy with my suits and shit."

Nkosiyo: " Graduation vibes and stuff."

Mcebisi: "You know it!"

I laugh.

Nkosiyo: "Proud of you son, mom wants you home tomorrow both of you, ngizohlaba igusha kade ngayigcina inyama."(I will slaughter a sheep it's been a while since I ate meat.)

Love how dad speaks IsiZulu differently I think I adopted it because I am always with him.

Me: "We will come back early in the morning, is Thingo coming back today?"

Nkosiyo: "No, they will sleep there in Durban."

Me: "Ok."

Nkosiyo: "Are you winning?"

I laugh.

Me: "I'm getting there."

Nkosiyabo: "If you feel she's the one, don't give up."

Me: "I won't dad."

I drop the call and Mcebisi watch the video laughing.

Mcebisi: "Whoa this guy seems unstable."

I chuckle.

Me: "Maybe Bonolo is with him because she is a Doctor and thinks she can handle him."

Mcebisi: "What? This guy is with the Princess?"

Me: "Yep, he is the boyfriend."

He laughs.

Mcebisi: "She deserves better."

Me: "And I'm that better she deserves baby bro."

He dish up for us and I go to bed before 6, I call Bonolo.

Bonolo: "Hello."

Me: "Baby, are you good?"

Bonolo: "I was about to call you, are you good after what happened?"

Me: "I'm always good especially when I hear the sound of your voice."

She giggles.

Me: "Can't you sneak out to see me tonight baby? Tomorrow I'm leaving early in the morning."

Bonolo: "I can't Sb..."

She stops talking and I hear the door closing.

"Hey mama."

Mama? Yet he can't even marry her.

Bonolo: "Uhm...hey baby."

I hear some shuffling sounds on the line then kissing sounds, I remove the phone from my ear then put it back on, I can hear soft moans and groans, Bonolo didn't drop the call so I can hear her having sex huh? Is this what being a side mean? Listening to your woman having sex? I click my tongue dropping the call, she doesn't even moan the way she does with me, her moans are way lower now. If that was me she would be loud and calling out my name. I'm upset so I'm trying to console myself.

I wait for her to call me back until I dose off. In the morning I find Thingo in the kitchen making breakfast, I kiss her cheek picking her up from the back.

Me: "Nibuye nini?"(When did you come back?)

Thingo: "Around half past 7, I tried waking you up but you didn't wake up."

I nod and put her down.

Me: "Uphi uKwanda?"(Where is Kwanda?)

Thingo: "He slept in Bukhosi's room."

I nod and sit down. Kwanda and Mcebisi comes in we eat then drive home. My phone keeps ringing but I don't answer at all.

I park the car in the yard and take my phone as it beeps.

"Are you ignoring my calls Kumkani?"

I call her.

Bonolo: "Hello."

Me: "Hi."

Bonolo: "Are you busy?"

Me: "No I'm not, when I said I will respect your relationship I didn't mean disrespect me Bonolo."

Bonolo: "What?"

Me: "Check your call log and check how many minutes you were on the phone with me then get back to me."

I drop the call and walk inside, I hug my mother and fist bump my little bros and dad. We start slaughtering two sheep because dad Nqobasi is here with his wife and our brother Hero with Princess Malaika.

Me: "I haven't seen you in a while Princess."

I hug her tight, she is beautiful.

We call close neighbours and have a feast.

Me: "Ngcebo.."

He looks at me, he is getting better everyday and so is Wenzile but they need to cleanse soon so she can take off the black clothes for mourning, she wanted to do it.

Me: "How is everything going?"

Ngcebo: "We're getting there."

I nod.

Ngcebo: "And you, you are not home these days."

Me: "I'm perusing the future Queen brother."

He smiles.

Ngcebo: "Finally."

I laugh.

Me: "Yeah but it's not easy
,there is someone."

Ngcebo: "Ngeke uhlulwe enye indoda."(You won't be defeated by another man Uuka.)

I nod.

Me: "I won't."

I go back to my room and find so many missed calls and two text messages.

"Kumkani please answer your phone" that's the first one. "I'm sorry."

I call her back.

Me: "You're sorry for what?"

Bonolo: "I...I wasn't aware that you were still on the line I'm sorry you had to hear that."

Me: "Ok."

Bonolo: "Kumkani."

Me: "Yindaba?"(What is it?)

Bonolo: "Uhm...I'm really sorry."

Me: "It's all good I guess I signed up for this, hearing you moan while another man keeps eating my cake."

Bonolo: "But he doesn't eat it better than you though."

Me: "Usho ukuthi ulidla engathi uyesaba?"(you mean he eats it like he's scared?)

Bonolo: "All I'm saying is that sex with you is magical I didn't know it felt like this."

Me: "Then come to me baby, I will treat you better I promise."

She sighs.

Bonolo: "When are you coming back to Durban?"

Me: "Anytime you want me there I will come."

Bonolo: "Uhm..tomorrow can I see you in the afternoon?"

Me: "Of course baby. Ngikuphathele inyama yegusha?"(Should I bring meat for you?)

Bonolo: "God yes! I would be so happy."

Me: "See you tomorrow then, ngiyakuthanda uyezwa?"(I love you)

She giggles and drop the call, I want this to be more than just a good sex relationship I want her to fall in love with me and she will. I fall asleep at night without talking to her, it's hard being a side.

Today I'm already in Durban it's around 4 pm I just got off the call that she's on her way.

I open the door as she knocks, we kiss the minute she closes the door I pick her up taking her to my room, clothes are flying and seconds later moans and groans fill the entire room and we have our steamy session.

We sleep next to each other catching our breath.

Me: "Uyashisa ngathi awukazwe uqaqwe ubuntombi."(You're hot like you've never lost your virginity.)

She chuckles.

Me: "Uyangithanda Bonolo?"(Do you love me Bonolo?)

Bonolo: "Can we not talk about love please."

Me: "But why? You belong with me can't you see? You're a princess and my eyes found you the minute you entered our yard, you are meant to be with me."

Bonolo: "I'm in love with Sboniso, Kumkani, We've been together for over 6 years."

Me: "So what? All that six years was a joke Bonolo! A huge joke you are my Queen."

She get up and take her clothes.

Me: "If you want to leave then it's cool I won't stop you but you're still wasting your time with that lunatic you're with."

She wears her clothes angrily.

I chuckle and sleep facing the other way.

Bonolo: "Please walk me out."

Me: "Get in bed Sthandwa sami."

Bonolo: "I want to go."

I sit up and hold her waist she sits on my lap.

Me: "I'm sorry if I said hurt your feelings, ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry)

She nods and get in bed. I watch her as she slowly dose of in my arms, I kiss her lips and run my hands through her hair. I hear the phone vibrating somewhere I look next to me my phone is there and not ringing. I look down her phone is on the floor, I take it and see "Love" written on the screen he keeps calling a couple of times then a message comes through "I am home, I was late for my flight where are you?"

I toss it back on the floor and hold my woman tight in my arms.

In the morning I wake up to her ass on my dick and she's doing it on purpose because she has been moving her ass I ignored her because I

was still sleep but now my guy is ready for action, I move her leg up and she doesn't resist I slide it in slowly, she moans softly.

Me: "I love you so much.."

We cum then take a long shower.

I warm up her meat and dumplings I came with yesterday but she didn't eat. We eat together then go back to bed.

Bonolo: "Uhm..where is my phone?"

I shrug my shoulders, she get up she's wearing my t-shirt only. She pick her phon up from the floor and stare at it in shock I act like I'm not looking at her.

Bonolo: "Uhm..Kumkani I..I have to go Buli called I need to rush to a meeting."

She is stuttering.

Me: "It's Sunday."

She nods changing into her dress.

Me: "Ok."

I get up and walk her out. I kiss her cheek and watch her driving out, she's so nervous.

I go back to bed and sleep.

I wake up and check my phone, there are no calls or messages. I make myself a sandwich then eat.

At night I'm getting worried she hasn't called me, I hesitantly dial her number but she doesn't pick up.

I search her on Facebook and my heart stops beating for a moment when I see that one Bulelwa Makhaye tagged her on a picture and a caption "She said Yes!" It's Bonolo and that boyfriend of hers in what

looks like a picnic setup but I can tell it's in her office, she has a ring on her finger, I'm shaking in anger! Why would she say yes to marrying another man while she slept in my arms the whole night? Am I a joke? I didn't sign up for this! I won't accept it.

A CLEAN SLATE

The New Generation

CHAPTER 24

*

KUMKANI-UUKA

*

I am taking deep breaths as I see them kissing at the parking lot then this Sboniso guy drives out. Bonolo cat walks past my car I step out and stand in front of her she jumps in fright stepping back.

She slowly move her left hand to her back I grab it softly and stare at her ring.

Me: "It's beautiful."

Bonolo: "I..I can explain."

Me: "Explain that you slept in my arms the whole night only to say yes to another man's marriage proposal?"

Bonolo: "It's not like that Uuka, I was caught off guard everyone was there, my colleagues and his I couldn't say No."

Me: "Bonolo do you even have feelings for me or it's all just vibes?"

She steps closer and put her hand on my chest.

Bonolo: "You're all I think about Kumkani, I just...I need some time to understand all this! I mean I have been with Sboniso for years I have never looked at any man but now there's you and I'm scared."

Me: "Scared of what baby? I will treat you like a Queen just come home please."

Bonolo: "Please give me some time, Ok."

I nod and kiss her forehead.

Me: "I love you."

She nods and walk inside the building I brush my head.

Me: "Fuck!"

I hate that ring on her finger, I don't want it there.

The whole day I have so much anxiety that I can't even stomach food.

I go to bed early without even getting a phone call from her.

I wake up when I hear a knock on the door, I check the time on my phone it's 11 pm, I go open the door confused. I am shocked to see Bonolo standing there shivering, she is butt naked on my doorstep. I quickly pick her up and close the door behind me using my foot taking her to my room. She is crying on my shoulder.

Me: "Baby.."

She hold me tight.

Me: "Askies baby, I'm sorry ok."

I help her wear my long sleeve t-shirt and help her get in bed. I make tea for her and slowly help her drink up. She can't even look at me in the eye I notice she doesn't have a ring on my heart jumps for joy a bit.

Me: "What happened Sthandwa sami? Why are you naked in the middle of the night."

She is staring at the cup in her hands.

Bonolo: "We were talking uhm...in bed and I told him I wasn't ready for marriage and also told him I can't accept his ring because I have never met his family and he has never met mine, that is not how we do things, he got angry and chased me out of the house, I was lucky because earlier I was in rush I left my car unlocked and left the keys there and forgot to take them, that's how I managed to get here."

I am fuming in anger.

Me: "What kind of a man put a woman out of the house this time of the night! Naked! Is this man crazy?"

Bonolo: "I...was so scared that I might get here and not find you, that maybe I will be stopped by cops and they will see me naked and do something to me."

She cries all over again.

Me: "It's okay, you're safe and that's all that matters."

I take her cup putting it down then pull her to my lap hugging her, I pull the bed covers and sleep on my back with her on top of me. She's here with me my heart is at peace.

In the morning my phone keeps beeping I grab it next to me.

Me: "Mmm."

Bukhosi: "Bhuti kuzomele ubuye ekhaya Ngcebo had a seizure and was calling out your name."(You have to come back home)

He is panicking.

Me: "Nika ubaba iphone."(Give dad the phone.)

Nkosiyabo: "Kumkani."

Me: "UNgcebo, is he okay? What's wrong?"

Nkosiyabo: "He is sleeping now, your brothers are panicking because they were with him."

Me: "Ok I'll be there soon."

Nkosiyabo: "Ok."

I look next to me, Bonolo is awake but so quiet.

Me: "Sthandwa sam."

She blinks.

Me: "I'm sorry about what happened to you last night."

Bonolo: "Thank you."

She push me till I'm on my back and she get on top of me and take what she wants until we both cum.

Me: "I need to get home, you can stay here till I come back, I will leave my phone with you so I can call you when I get home and check on you."

She nods.

Me: "I love you."

She nods.

I take a shower then wear my clothes, she is playing with my phone in her hands.

Bonolo: "I'm thinking of going home tomorrow to check on my family, it's been a while."

Me: "Oh.."

I kiss her lips.

Me: "Make yourself at home, our helper will be here to clean the house so don't be scared if someone unlocks the door."

She nods.

Me: "I will call you."

I take my keys and walk out. I drive home in speed, I need to see how my brother is doing.

I get home and rush to his rondavel, I find him awake he is with everyone.

I kneel in front of him.

Me: "Are you ok?"

Ngcebo: "You need to protect her, if she goes back it will be all over."

Me: "What do you mean?"

He close his eyes.

Ngcebo: "Dangerous people are those who manipulate people's minds and instill so much fear in them."

I am so confused.

Ngcebo: "You shouldn't even be here, Go Uuka."

Me: "Ngcebo can you tell me what's going on?"

Ngcebo: "I just said it."

I sigh.

Me: "Is this about Bonolo?"

Ngcebo: "Kumkani please you're never slow don't start now."

Me: "Ukhuluma nami kanjalo?"(You're talking to me like that?)

He takes a deep sigh and open his eyes.

Ngcebo: "You need to understand that sometimes what comes out of my mouth is a warning from those within me."

I sigh.

Me: "I'm sorry, Thokoza Mntwana."

Ngcebo: "Thokoza."

I get up and walk out. I ask Makhosini to borrow me his phone and call Bonolo on my phone it rings for a while before she could answer.

Bonolo: "Uhm...Hello."

Me: "It's me. Are you good?"

Bonolo: "I need my clothes and my bank cards at home so I'm going there."

Me: "Going where Bonolo?"

Bonolo: "That is my flat Kumkani, I paid for it."

Me: "Wait for me then don't go alone."

Bonolo: "He won't hurt me , we just gonna talk."

Me: "Ngicela ungangihlanyisi ngiyazicelela nje(Please don't make me go crazy please I'm begging you), he won't hurt you? Usho njalo?(that's what you're saying?)

Bonolo: "He doesn't hit me if that's what you're implying."

Me: "He is still the same man that chased you out of the house naked in the middle of the night, your flat you say!"

Bonolo: "I..I will wait for you then."

Me: "Good."

I give Makhosini his phone back and drive back to Durban. I find her with our helper just talking I greet them and go to my room and sleep

in bed facing up. She comes in and sit next to me, her hand is brushing over my dick then underneath my t-shirt I keep groaning.

Bonolo: "Asihambe phela."(Let's go)

Me: "To where?"

Bonolo: "You said you are going to go with me Uuka."

I chuckle.

Me: "I can buy you new clothes and give you money to go home."

Bonolo: "You're talking to Doctor Bonolo Modise, a Princess at that."

Me: "So you hid the fact that you're royalty from the people here?"

Bonolo: "Yeah most of them don't know."

Me: "Even your man?"

She nods.

I chuckle.

Me: "I don't like secrets if you're with me I want you to be honest all the time."

She nods and change into my trackpants and a jacket, it's big on her but she still looks cute. I hold the back of her neck and kiss her.

I drive us to her place and step out of the car, it's a beautiful small commune flat. There is a car parked in the front yard. She sighs.

Bonolo: "Sboniso is here."

Me: "You want me to walk you in?"

Bonolo: "No I'll be fine."

I watch her walk in. 10 minutes later I hear her shouting I step out of my car and walk in, this guy is holding a gun to his own head.

Sboniso: "If you leave me Bonolo I will kill myself and my blood will be on your hands!"

Bonolo: "Ok..I won't leave baby put the gun down I will stay I'm not leaving you."

He cocks the gun Bonolo screams loud going on her knees begging him not to do it.

Bonolo: "Please...I will marry you...please."

I chuckle. So this is what has been happening, when she wants to leave he threatens to kill himself, bloody bastard.

Sboniso: "What is he doing here Bonolo? Where did you sleep last night?"

Bonolo slowly get up wiping her tears.

Bonolo: "I..I went to a friend's house."

Sboniso: "And What is Kumkani Gumede doing in my house?"

Bonolo: "I..asked him to accompany me to take my clothes and cards I'm going to my father tomorrow."

Sboniso: "No, you will leave next week we still need to talk."

Bonolo nods I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "So..should I go?"

She nods looking down.

Me: "Ok."

I walk out but I can hear footsteps behind me, so I turn looking back at her. She throws herself in my arms but I don't hug her back.

Bonolo: "You said I should come home, where is home?"

Me: "I am your home."

She looks up at me and nod.

Bonolo: "I will come home."

Me: "I will wait for you."

I watch her walking inside then go to my car driving back home.

At night I hear a very loud knock I open the door, it's Bonolo still wearing my clothes.

Bonolo: "I want to go to my father."

I nod and open my arms for her, she get in them and I hug her.

There is a car in the yard.

Bonolo: "I called a cab, my clothes are in there."

Me: "Ok, go to my room I will get your bags for you."

She walks in and I take all her bags in the car and pay the cab driver.

I go to my room and find her sitting in bed.

Me: "Should I book a flight for you?"

She nods.

Me: "Ok, what happened?"

Bonolo: "We talked and I promised him I will stay and marry him."

She takes off her ring that was already back on her finger.

Bonolo: "I am leaving for good Kumkani."

Me: "What about us?"

Bonolo: "Being with my father is the only way I will feel safe."

Me: "Why are you so scared of this guy?"

Bonolo: "I don't know..he never hit me, he had a lot of suicide attempts. Everytime I leave he does something the last time I tried to leave he drank poison, he survived then later I found a note where he wrote that I'm the reason why he is dead and wrote a lot of things making me look like a bad person, everyone was gonna blame me, some were going to even suspect that I poisoned him."

Me: "So now you're running away?"

Bonolo: "That's the only way Uuka, if he kills himself now and I'm here in Durban I can even get arrested I will be a number one suspect because the things he writes about me are extreme, I deal with hypnosis and mental issues so he makes me look like I make him see things and that's what everyone will think."

Me: "What about me? Should I move on?"

Bonolo: "It's better we part ways now, it won't hurt much because it hasn't been long since we started this."

Me: "That's what you think?"

She wipes her face.

Me: "That's ok, you can book a ticket using my phone."

I walk out and go to the kitchen I make sandwiches for us then give one to her, we eat in silence then I take the dishes to the kitchen.

Me: "You can sleep here I will sleep in the next room."

Bonolo: "Oh..."

I nod walking out and sleep in Mcebisi's room.

In the morning I wake up and go check on her in the room and find her packing her clothes, she has a panty and a bra on only.

Me: "What time is your flight leaving?"

Bonolo: "11 am."

Me: "Ok you will lock the door when you leave and leave the key at the window around the back."

Bonolo: "Where are you going?"

Me: "Home."

She get up and her body is making me feel things but I won't touch her.

Bonolo: "You're angry at me?"

Me: "No."

Bonolo: "Kumkani."

Me: "I am moving on and the day you will realise you have lost me will be the day you see my wedding being broadcasted for the world to see and it will be too late for you to come back to me."

Her lower lip is quivering.

Me: "It was nice knowing you Princess."

I turn to walk out but I hear a soft moan I don't turn to look back I walk out slamming the door shut! I drive back to the palace the minute I walk in Ngcebo rush out.

Ngcebo: "Awuzwa kodwa Kumkani?"(You don't listen Kumkani?)

I ignore him. I see tears rolling down his face and that gets my attention I go to him.

Ngcebo: "Ungivusela amanxeba ebengizama ukuwapholisa."(You are opening up old wounds I was trying to heal)

He walk away leaving me so confused and upset, I hate to see them cry. I look for him and find him sitting at the back sobbing, I kneel in front of him.

Me: "Ngenzenjani bhuti?"(What should I do brother?)

Ngcebo: "Beg her to stay Kumkani! Go on your knees if you have to before its too late, I don't know what will happen if she leaves but it may bring us so much pain and I know it would hit me so hard I don't know if I'll ever recover."

I take my phone and look at the time, it's already 9:30 am I try to call Bonolo she's not picking up my calls. Ngcebo's loud grunt leave me shaking.

Me: "Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "Hlukana nami Kumkani."(Leave me alone Kumkani.)

He says walking away, I keep trying to call Bonolo but I can't get hold of her. I rush to my car and drive back to Durban.

When I get there I can see her car is not here anymore, she really left.

I drive to her work place and rush inside I pass Buli without even greeting and I find her looking around holding a box in her hands.

Bonolo: "I will miss this place."

Me: "Don't leave please."

She turns looking at me.

Me: "Or at least promise me you will come back, please my brother gave me a warning Bonolo, something bad is going to happen maybe to you or me, I don't know but please don't leave."

Bonolo: "I have to go."

She moans.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Bonolo: "Period pains, they come and go."

I hold her hand.

Me: "Can you go for at least a week then come back."

She huffs and take the letter on the table she starts tearing it up then wrap her hands around my neck.

Bonolo: "That was my resignation letter I guess I'm not resigning anymore."

I smile.

Me: "I will wait for you."

We kiss then I drive behind her all the way to the airport. She gives me her car keys.

Bonolo: "Please keep the car for me."

I nod and kiss her again.

Me: "I love you."

Bonolo: "I love you too."

I smile and watch her walk inside. I drive my car back home then take a cab to fetch her car.

I go to bed early so I can go home in the morning and talk to my brother.

I am back home sitting in front of Ngcebo he is not even looking at me.

Me: "She promised she will come back Ngcebo."

Still no response from him.

It's been two days since Bonolo left and her phone is not going through I'm really getting frustrated because Ngcebo is still not talking to me.

Three months later.

I am sitting at the veranda looking at my father's cows in the kraal, There are so many of them but no woman to marry. Bonolo left and never looked back. I went to her workplace and Buli told me she heard that Bonolo sent an email resigning from work, I just left and told myself that I am letting it go but three months later Ngcebo is still giving me a cold shoulder I don't know what he wants me to do.

Ngcebo: "Men do the chasing, it's been like that from the beginning you can even ask dad."

I look behind me, I am the one who have been trying to make small talks but today he talked to me first I'm happy.

Me: "What do you mean?"

Ngcebo: "I mean you gave up too easily."

Me: "What was I supposed to do?"

He shakes his head.

Ngcebo: "Should have spoken to King Ntsika."

I realise that when we met she was here because King Ntsika and her father are friends I should have spoken to him and got her father's number.

My phone beeps indicating a message.

"I'm sorry Kumkani, but I couldn't come back after finding out that I am pregnant, You're a Prince and you weren't gonna be with a girl that is carrying another man's child, please forgive me and I hope you find your Queen, Bonolo."

I quickly try to call the number back but it goes straight to voicemail Ngcebo starts shivering.

Me: "Brother.."

Ngcebo: "If she is not here at the break of dawn, you might as well die or you will live with regrets for the rest of your life."

I widen my eyes as he slowly walks away with his hands behind his back. I rush to my car while calling King Ntsika.

Ntsika: "Gumede."

Me: "Mkhulu, I need King Modise's number, home address anything you have that will help me get to North West in time please."

Ntsika: "What?"

Me: "Please baba and can you call Mason for me I need his jet in an hour I will pay all the costs please."

Ntsika: "What is going on Kumkani?"

Me: "I need to find Bonolo, I need to take her home. I will explain everything when I come back baba."

Ntsika: "Ok, I can go with you if you'd like."

Me: "I'd appreciate that a lot sir."

Ntsika: "Meet me and Mason in an hour then."

I sigh dropping the call, I don't know what my brother is on about but all I know is that it scares the shit out of me.

CHAPTER 25

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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After taking such a long flight, Grandpa is parking at the side road because I am getting sick I have been vomiting ever since I stepped out of the plane today and it hurts because I haven't ate anything today. On the way I explained to Grandpa about the whole situation with me and Bonolo and the man was just over the moon that it's Bonolo and that his friend will now become part of his family.

I drink water and get back in the car, he keeps driving until he stops at a very huge yard with a lot of houses but there is this one huge house, it's a glass house all round, this man clearly has a lot of money. There are livestock all over the yard.

Ntsika: "This is it."

I sigh and we both walk in, one of the girls notice us and quickly rush to us going on her knees dad laughs and pull her up hugging her tight.

"King Ntsika I have missed you so much."

Ntsika: "Princess it's been three years, you look grown."

She giggles, and that giggle reminds me so much of Bonolo, she looks like her but much younger.

"You came to see my father?"

Ntsika: "Yes, this is Prince Kumkani-Uuka my grandson."

She stares at me then smile bowing her head.

"I know who he is! The next King."

She ushers us inside the glass house, an old man's laughter fills the room as he looks at Grandpa, they greet each other happily, he looks good for his age you can only see that he is old because of the grey hair all over his beard, he even have tattoos on his body the old man was a bad boy in his time. I chuckle when I see a picture of Bonolo on the wall in her graduation gown. Grandpa introduce me and we get

introduced to the beautiful mother then we sit down around the table as they serve us breakfast.

Ntsika: "It's been years man, you still hate travelling."

Modise: "I just want to always be around my wife man."

They share laughter I chuckle now I get why they got along, they both love laughing and it's loud.

Modise: "So what brings you this side Gumedede."

Ntsika: "Uhm..my grandson was given a warning, he should bring Princess Bonolo home before the break of dawn."

The old man stares at me confused but I keep my head down.

Modise: "They know each other?"

I slowly nod. He chuckles.

Modise: "Tina please call Bonolo for me."

He says to the lady that was busy serving us tea, she immediately bows then walk away. Bonolo walks in and stop on her tracks staring at me I absent mindedly stand on my feet staring back at her, she still looks beautiful but you can't miss the baby bump, her natural hair is tied in four blocks with a wool, it makes her even more beautiful. I bow my head.

Me: "Nkosazana."(Princess)

She looks like she wants to run out of here..

Modise: "Bonolo."

Bonolo: "Pa..papa."

Modise: "Have a seat."

She slowly sit next to her father.

Modise: "Do you know Prince Kumkani?"

She slowly nods.

Modise: "Here we speak up ok."

I can sense some hostility in his voice towards his daughter.

Bonolo: "I know him papa."

Modise: "How do you know him?"

Bonolo: "We..we were friends."

He chuckles.

Modise: "Didn't you tell us about one Sboniso guy, why is Kumkani here asking to take you home."

Bonolo: "Take me home where?"

Modise: "His ancestral home Bonolo!"

He shouts a bit.

Modise: "Were you sleeping with different men in that Durban Bonolo? Do you even know who is responsible for your pregnancy?"

Now I understand the hostility, like any father he is mad that her daughter came home pregnant and with just a name of the person who got her pregnant but he is nowhere to be seen, Royalty respects culture.

Me: "Uhm..Modise I was the one who persuaded a relationship with her knowing very well she was with someone, I apologise on that but I need to take her home now then my brother will tell me what to do next."

He sighs.

Modise: "I still don't understand what is going on but if the ancestors want it that way you can take her home."

Me: "Thank you. Bonolo I have to take you home today."

Bonolo: "No."

Me: "What?"

Bonolo: "I don't want to go."

Me: "Did you hear me asking you?"

Bonolo: "I don't care my answer is still no."

She moans putting her hand over her belly.

Modise: "What is it?"

Bonolo: "My stomach hurts."

Modise: "Go and change into something decent Bonolo and do what you're told to do."

She slowly nods and walk away.

After a few minutes her mother rush in.

"Papa I called an ambulance papa Bonolo is bleeding and that is not a good sign since she's pregnant."

Modise quickly stand on his feet.

Modise: "Is she okay?"

Me: "She's not going to the hospital I am taking her home with me.

I ask her mom to show me the room, I walk in and find her sitting in bed brushing her tummy frowning.

Me: "Let's go home."

She is already dressed so I scoop her up and walk out with her. I put her on the backseat of the car and grandpa get on the passenger seat. I bow before the King.

Me: "I promise to bring her back safe and sound King."

He nods looking so worried. I drive to where Mason is then help Bonolo inside the jet.

Me: "Are you still bleeding?"

She nods.

Bonolo: "You should take me to the hospital Uuka before I lose my baby."

Me: "You should be home before dawn."

I sit next to her and brush her tummy but she quickly push my hand away.

Me: "Uhm..I'm sorry."

I move away from her looking up.

We get home around 10 pm all the lights are on as Mason lands on the nearby sport ground I call Mcebisi to pick us up with a car because Bonolo is asleep now. We drive home and as soon as he parks Ngcebo opens the car on where Bonolo is and help her step out of the car. He is smiling so hard but Bonolo moans in pain bending a little.

Bonolo: "Kumkani.."

I go to her.

Bonolo: "I need to go to the hospital, something is wrong with the baby."

The cows in the kraal starts making so much noise Ngcebo takes Bonolo's hand and lead her towards the kraal then he opens the gate, all the cows sit as Ngcebo takes Bonolo in the middle of the kraal and

ask her to kneel down, she does exactly what Ngcebo tells her, everyone is awake we are watching as Ngcebo calls on oGumede, oPhakathwayo after a long 30 minutes or so he finally help Bonolo up and bring her to me.

Ngcebo: "She needs to rest."

Me: "Uhm..what about the baby? She feels some pain."

Bonolo: "I'm not in pain anymore, I feel fine."

Me: "Oh..ok."

I take her to my room and sit down.

Bonolo: "I need to shower."

I point at the bathroom she walks in there.

She comes back wrapped in a towel.

Me: "Are you still bleeding?"

She shakes her head.

Bonolo: "No."

I chuckle.

Me: "So you deceived me Bonolo, lied that you gonna come back."

She looks down.

Me: "You lied to me."

Bonolo: "I wanted to stay at home ok especially after finding out I'm pregnant and dad was disappointed so I wanted to stay and make things right between us!"

Me: "And where did you get to that conclusion of saying that baby is Sboniso's! Was I nutting water!?"

I am shouting in frustration."

Bonolo: "I counted the..."

Me: "Counted what Bonolo!? You were going back and forth from me to him! I want to know how did you conclude it's his baby!"

Bonolo: "I don't know ok! Stop shouting at me."

Me: "You see now you almost lost my child because you kept giving the baby stupid surnames, uSboniso wamanyala! He couldn't get you pregnant for 6 long years and you thought he would do it now! You felt like a virgin because all along he was doing shit on top of you!"

She slaps me so hard I chuckle.

Me: "I'm taking you back to your father's house tomorrow nx."

I click my tongue walking out. I go to Ngcebo and sit in front of him clapping my hands, he has this smirk on his face, he looks happy.

Me: "So Bonolo is carrying my child?"

He nods excitedly. I breathe as I feel my chest closing in, the fear of almost losing my unborn baby starts kicking in now.

Ngcebo: "He is going to be ok."

Me: "It's a boy?"

He smiles even wide. I feel goosebumps all over my body.

Me: "It's a boy?"

He nods.

Me: "Gumede, Phakathwayo uMnguni kaYeyeye, uQwabe.."

He laughs.

Ngcebo: "And that curse was really broken, he will be normal."

I hold his hand with both my hands.

Me: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu Phakathwayo."(Thank you so much Phakathwayo.)

I feel so alive, I'm a happy man. I go back to my room and find Bonolo with mom she is holding a plate I stand by the door.

Thabsie: "You should eat so the baby can grow healthy."

She nods and wipe her tears.

Me: "Mama."

She get up and hugs me then walk out. I close the door and sit next to Bonolo. I take the plate then wipe her tears first before feeding her in silence. After she's done I put the plate down and look at her.

Me: "You wanted him to be Sboniso's baby so bad huh? Just because he is your first love?"

She doesn't say anything.

Me: "You still want to fix things with him?"

Silence.

Me: "If yes then please do me a favour, wait till you give birth to my son then give him to me after that you can go to the nearest hell for all I care."

I just realised how angry I am with her for leaving me with false hope.

I take off my clothes and go take a long shower to calm myself down before I say more things I would probably regret later.

I go back to my room and find her already under covers, I get in behind her because she is facing the other way. I slowly brush her baby bump and the feeling is amazing. I slowly touch her face and my hand comes back wet, I turn her around and wipe her tears and pull her to my arms.

Me: "Ngizoyihlawula ingane mase izelwe."(I will pay damages once the baby is born.)

She nods.

In the morning I wake up first and stare at her as she looks so innocent in her sleep, a beautiful woman she is. She slowly opens her eyes.

Me: "When do you want to leave?"

Bonolo: "Can I get some air first outside before I shower then I will go."

I nod and help her up, she wraps a doek around her head and wear the dress she was wearing yesterday then walk out. After a while I go check on her and find her near the kraal balancing her elbows on the wood there she is looking at the cattle.

Me: "So this is your idea of getting some air?"

I say standing behind her.

Bonolo: "I like the smell of cow dug.."

I chuckle.

Me: "Really?"

Bonolo: "I didn't know until your brother took me in here, it was all I wanted to smell the whole night."

Me: "That's crazy."

Bonolo: "I know.."

She slowly turns and look at me.

Bonolo: "So...your brother really confirmed that it's your baby I'm carrying?"

I nod, she looks down.

Me: "You look disappointed."

Bonolo: "It's just that...I feel cheap, I have never cheated ever since Sboniso and I started dating then when I did I got pregnant, That's not how my father raised me, I have been doing everything wrong, cohabiting being one of them."

Me: "It is what it is baby, if you don't feel like raising my baby I will gladly take him."

Bonolo: "How can you say that?"

Me: "You sound like you're saying my baby is a mistake now yet it was all cool when you thought it was Sboniso's baby."

I huff..

Me: "It was hard but I accepted that you don't love me so I moved on."

She blinks rapidly.

Bonolo: "Are you getting married?"

I nod.

Bonolo: "To..to who Kumkani?"

She shouts shoving me back I hold her hands.

Me: "You don't have a right to be angry! You don't. One simple phone call from you was gonna make a difference but no, you changed your numbers."

I let go of her.

Me: "You gonna watch me raise that baby with another woman baby so you will know that my life doesn't revolve around you."

Bonolo: "Dad won't accept that! You won't do that to me."

Me: "Oh he knows that once that baby is born he won't survive anywhere else but here so no matter how far you run this is where my son will be, with me."

She keep shoving me back screaming at me, crying until Ngcebo comes to us and pull her into his arms trying to calm her down.

Ngcebo: "You're really trying me Kumkani."

Me: "Trying what?"

He let go of Bonolo and come face to face with me.

Ngcebo: "Here."

I look at his hand, he is giving me a spear.

Ngcebo: "Why don't you shove this spear through her gut and kill that baby because it's obvious you want him dead!"

Me: "I will never want my son to die Ngcebo!"

I know how he is when it comes to children, he can even fight me right now.

Ngcebo: "It's ok sisi go inside and rest I will bring you something to eat."

Bonolo walks away leaving Ngcebo staring at me.

Ngcebo: "I get it that you want her to feel what you felt when she left you but this is not the time to be childish! There's a baby in that body it depends on her health to survive so if you upset her how do you think the baby will survive?"

I look down.

Me: "I'm sorry."

Ngcebo: "We are about to have a son Kumkani just let go of this anger and be happy bhuti, also respect that woman for ukuzalela indlalifa."(Giving you an heir)

I nod.

I walk in on Bonolo talking on the phone.

Bonolo: "We need to talk..I made a mistake I'm not carrying your child Sboniso I.."

I feel my armpits getting itchy.

Me: "You told your psycho boyfriend that my child is his Bonolo?"

Ngcebo's words fly out the window, I came to apologise but not anymore.

Bonolo: "I..thought it's his child I wanted him to meet with my father."

Me: "And do what?"

Bonolo: "Make things right. I'm sorry ok I'm sorry just don't shout at me, Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu."(I'm so sorry)

She slowly goes on her knees and hold my hand.

Bonolo: "I'm sorry."

She sit on the floor and cry painfully, I kneel in front of her hugging her tight.

Me: "It's okay, stop crying, you gonna hurt the baby. I'm sorry for upsetting you I'm so sorry."

I help her up and help her get in bed.

She wipes her tears.

Bonolo: "You're getting married to that rude girl?"

I chuckle I know she is talking about Funeka.

Me: "I'd be damned."

She giggles.

Bonolo: "So who is it?"

Me: "Why do you want to know?"

She shrug her shoulders.

Bonolo: "I want to know the woman that will raise my baby."

Me: "We gonna raise him together, hlehlela."(move over)

I get in next to her and lay her head on my chest.

I can hear my son crying out for me I can feel that it's him because of the deep connection I have with that crying voice in a place that looks like a tunnel, it's dark and I can't find him, he is screaming I am also drenched in sweat looking around for him. I sit up and look around, Bonolo is looking at me concerned.

Bonolo: "You were sweating and shaking in your sleep, are you ok?"

I nod.

Me: "I'm fine."

I sleep back in bed and wipe my face, maybe Ngcebo will interpret that dream for me because I am so confused and shaken.

CHAPTER 26

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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Bonolo and I are in Durban she's leaving tomorrow, we are like strangers because I have decided to just keep my mouth shut because I don't want to say something that will upset her, that might hurt my baby, I still don't understand why she would badly want to have Sboniso's child after she went back home running away from him, to me that doesn't make sense.

Bonolo: "Kumkani."

I open my eyes, I am resting on the couch she hands me the plate with three slices of pizza and a drink.

Me: "You went out?"

She nods and sit next to me.

Me: "Did you eat?"

She nods. I eat then take the plates to the kitchen. I find her still sitting in the same position when I come back.

Me: "How's the baby?"

Bonolo: "He's fine."

I nod.

Bonolo: "I think I have put his life in danger before he is even born."

I rub my beard.

Me: "I won't let him hurt you or my son, I promise you."

She nods.

Bonolo: "I hope one day you will find it in your heart to forgive me for leaving I can see you're still angry but you're trying so hard to hide it, it still shows."

Me: "Don't leave again."

She looks at me.

Bonolo: "Where will I stay Uuka?"

Me: "I will send my uncles to your home to ask for your hand in marriage."

She widens her eyes.

Bonolo: "What?"

Me: "I want you to marry me and we will give our son a home."

Bonolo: "But..what kind of marriage will we have if you don't love me?"

I chuckle.

Me: "You think I don't love you Bonolo? I was so heartbroken when you left and I couldn't get hold of you on the phone I was shattered but I accepted that you didn't love me I guess the sex was all you wanted from me."

Bonolo: "That's not true."

Me: "Why didn't you come back to be with me then?"

Bonolo: "I really thought our thing was a fling but I was catching feelings so fast it was scary then I found out about the pregnancy I was so confused that I must have counted the weeks wrongly and concluded Sboniso was a father."

Me: "So you have feelings for me?"

Bonolo: "From the day you bought me that dress, when you asked me to come help out in your family, I was really taken by your charming way of expressing yourself. You told me we're not siblings but I will be your wife, I was really taken."

I smile when I hear her confess to all this to me.

Me: "Then let's not waste time baby, Please marry me mamakhe."

She giggles hiding her face.

Bonolo: "A true definition of a Zulu man, proposing without a ring Kumkani?."

I laugh.

Me: "Ngizokutholela iring sthandwa sami."(I will find you a ring my love)

She sits on my lap and wrap her arms around my neck.

Bonolo: "If I say yes that means I am saying yes to be a future Queen?"

Me: "Of course and you do look a part from the moment I saw you, I knew you were mine."

She kiss me passionately while taking off my t-shirt.

Me: "So is this a yes baby?"

I ask grabbing her butt, she moans.

Me: "Ngiphendule Nkosazana."(Answer me princess.)

Bonolo: "Mmm..yes."

I get up with her and pin her on the wall her legs are wrapped around my waist I pull down my pants and pull her panties to the side smashing on her.

Me: "Imnandi kakhulu sengidla ngedwa."(It feels so good more now that I am eating it alone.)

She giggles as I turn her around and brush her butt cheeks then slowly thrust from behind holding her waist tight. My strokes get faster and deeper until I cum hard I pull out stroking my dick, she turns staring at me with lustful eyes.

Me: "Awenelanga?"(You didn't get enough?)

She nods shyly I chuckle and pull up my pants walking away.

Me: "You will find me in my room."

I take off everything and sleep facing up, my guy is up waiting for her, she walks in and get straight to it until we both cum.

We sleep in bed facing each other.

Me: "Sthandwa sami."(My love)

She smiles.

Me: "Please promise me you won't ever contact that guy ever again ok, I'm not gonna dictate you in this relationship we're trying to build but for your safety and that of my sons I am asking you just this one thing baby, he is not stable and seems like he can manipulate you."

She nods.

Me: "Also I would like to apologise for overreacting with this whole thing, I asked you out knowing very well you're with someone I shouldn't have acted like you cheated on me or anything."

Bonolo: "I'm sorry too, I haven't been thinking straight ever since I left, I really wanted to come back to you but..I couldn't."

Me: "It's okay baby, let's start over and have a healthy relationship for our son's sake."

Bonolo: "Dad will kill me."

I smile.

Me: "He won't because angizukuthatha mahhala ngizozishaya zonke."(I won't take you for free but I will pay in full.)

She laughs.

Bonolo: "I'm gonna have a really cute baby."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "Damn right you will, I mean look at me."

She laughs.

Bonolo: "You are not all that Uuka."

Me: "You wish I wasn't.."

Bonolo: "You really want to marry me?"

Me: "I don't want anyone else but you."

She snuggle closer and close her eyes drawing a very deep breath I kiss her forehead and close my eyes.

In the morning for the first time ever since we met I hear her singing happily moving around the room, I sit up and watch her drying her hair, she just took a shower.

Me: "Umuntu akavuswa nje kanjalo maModise."(You can't wake a person up like this maModise.)

She turns laughing then walk up to me and kiss my cheek.

Me: "Really?"

I pull her back and peck her lips.

Me: "You can't kiss a man on the cheek."

She goes back to lotion her body.

Bonolo: "Can you buy a new dress for me daddy?"

My heart skips a beat when she says "daddy" I can already imagine my son calling me that.

Me: "Anything you want my love."

I take a shower then drive to the nearby mall, I park my car and walk in. I look for a dress suitable for my queen and ask for assistance from the girl at the shop. I buy more than one item, I want to see her in jeans and heels with maybe one of my t-shirts I know she will look good.

I walk out and spot Sboniso with some guy talking, I slowly walk up to him, his face changes the minute he sets his eyes on me. I put one hand on my pockets holding a plastic bag on the other.

Me: "We meet again Sboniso."

"Kumkani Gumede!" The guy he is with exclaims, looks like a fan.

Sboniso: "You..are you the one who was fucking my woman behind my back"

I smirk.

"Woah Kumkani is with Bonolo?"

The guy ask but we're just staring at each other.

Sboniso: "Where is Bonolo? I want my baby then she can go fuck anyone she wants."

I chuckle.

Me: "There is no baby."

Sboniso: "What do you mean? So that bitch aborted my child? I'm gonna find her!"

Me: "And do what?"

Sboniso: "I will bring her on her knees like I always do, she knows what I'm capable off, you should ask her about me I can see you think I'm a joke. I control her mind, body and soul."

Me: "Well, not anymore brother, I'm in the field now and there is no way I will ever let you win."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "Like I said before, you don't know the real world and I will show you."

I remove my hand on my pocket and grab his throat, I'm fuming in anger now the guy he is with push us apart standing between us.

Me: "If you do something to Bonolo then I will have to play God and cut your days on earth really short my Guy, I will show you My world."

I click my tongue and walk away. I get my woman something to eat then drive back home.

I find Bonolo in the kitchen eating some left over pizza from yesterday. I kiss her lips.

Bonolo: "You've been gone for a while I will miss my flight."

Me: "We are cancelling your flight I want to take you out on a date."

She looks my way.

Bonolo: "In a Public space?"

I nod.

Me: "You gonna be my wife B, people should get used to seeing us together."

I give her a plastic bag, she laughs when she sees panties and bras.

Me: "I do hope I got the sizes right."

She wraps her arms around me and give me a kiss that leaves me yearning for more, the girl can kiss really good!

Bonolo: "Thank you, Phakathwayo."

I smile as she walks away, I think she will turn out just good and will be perfect for me.

She comes back in jeans and my white t-shirt tucked in a little just on the side with some heels on, she looks exactly like how I imagined she would in jeans, I have never seen her wearing them.

Me: "Fuck.."

I cuss under my breath and she stands in front of me then peck my lips.

Bonolo: "Everything fits me perfectly, thank you."

Me: "Can I undress you and see all of this?"

I say brushing her curves. She giggles shaking her head.

Bonolo: "No, right now you need to take me out like you promised me."

I nod and give her my hand. She ask me to drive to a salon first, she braids her hair in a straight up that is so long almost touching her ass but she looks amazing in it, I insist to pay for it then we go out to eat and just as I thought people start taking pictures of us, one even comes to us and ask if we're a couple, I know by the end of this day everyone will know everything about Bonolo's background.

We spent a lot of time doing some shopping for her of course you know how women are. You can tell she is uncomfortable by the attention we're getting, she's gonna get used to it, I think she is one of those Princess's that went to private schools in a young age and managed to stay away from the public eye, you can tell by her home that they are humble people even though their father is a King.

When I'm about to open the door for Bonolo I hear a gun being cocked behind me, I push Bonolo inside the car and close it turning to the gun that has his gun now pointed at my face. I don't know the guy I have never met him in my life.

Me: "Are you gonna stand there and point the gun at me or you gonna tell me what you want or better yet, are you gonna shoot?"

His hand is shaking I shake my head.

Me: "Who would hire an immature hitman to kill a whole Prince?"

He lowers the gun and start running away leaving me chuckling. I get in the car and Bonolo is clearly shaken I hold her hand while calling my brother.

Mcebisi: "King K, you're all over the gossip columns with our baby mama."

I chuckle starting the car.

Me: "Yeah and we're getting a lot of attention that caused someone to hire an immature hitman because they knew where we are."

Mcebisi: "What!?"

Me: "Don't worry we're safe, for now, I guess he didn't have much time to find the right person for the job so he might hire professionals next time."

Mcebisi: "Then you need to come home Kumkani."

Me: "I will but I need to make sure Bonolo is safe first, she needs to take the first flight home tomorrow morning. I need you to tell dad that I need a letter written to the Modise's asking for Bonolo's hand in marriage as soon as possible, if he writes it you will come here with it today."

Mcebisi: "Ok I will do that, be safe okay, keep the doors locked there or go to a hotel Uuka, people know that house belongs to our father."

Me: "Don't worry about me just talk to dad and ask him to call me if he needs more information."

Mcebisi: "Ok, I will see you soon."

I drive us home and take Bonolo to my room. She takes off her clothes and get in bed. Later Mcebisi arrives with a letter written by dad I read

it first then seal the envelope, I give to Bonolo asking her to give it to her father first thing when she gets home.

In the morning she looks upset as she gets ready to leave.

Me: "Are you okay?"

Bonolo: "I'm fine."

Me: "Bonolo."

Bonolo: "You didn't want us to talk about what happened yesterday Uuka."

Me: "Because there's nothing to talk about baby, the guy ran away it's not a big deal."

Bonolo: "Not a big deal how when he had a gun pointed at you?"

Me: "Don't worry about it, just make sure you are relaxed and calm all the time for my baby's sake, I will call you everyday and call me anytime you need something."

She chuckles.

Bonolo: "And if I need you?"

I smile.

Me: "I will fly to North West obviously."

She roll her eyes.

Me: "I love you."

Bonolo: "I love you too."

I drive her to the airport, I notice my brother's car driving behind me on the side mirror I hug my woman and kiss her goodbye then go knock on Mcebisi's window he rolls it down.

Me: "You are my bodyguard now?"

Mcebisi: "I'm just being on a lookout! A hitman was hired here Uuka."

Me: "Stop panicking phela, how will Ngcebo, Bukhosi and Makhosini react if you're the one panicking like this? You are the one who always keep it together."

He sighs.

Mcebisi: "I don't want anything to happen to you."

Me: "And nothing will happen to me brother, I have you."

He nods.

Me: "Let's drive back home."

He starts the car, I go to my car and drive behind him all the way home.

CHAPTER 27

*

BONOLO

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I have been living a fake life all my life, I had to hide that I am a Princess because unlike the other tribes our throne created rivalry amongst siblings then there was division in our community, some went for my father's brother and some for my father a rightful heir to the throne and everyone knew but I guess the brother couldn't accept because he was older but problem is, he was born out of wedlock so we went to boarding school at a very young age, being me and my younger sister Didintle so people know Modise have two daughters but don't really know it's us, they have tried to find our faces but we lived a normal life didn't have big cars driving us because nobody knew us and we didn't want to draw attention.

I moved to Durban eight years ago then met a guy two years later by the name of Sboniso I was doing my second year in Varsity then but didn't have friends, I always kept to myself and they would call me a weird girl for always being alone so Sboniso came to me and introduced himself, I was happy that someone noticed me and didn't think I was weird for always being alone. We became friends for a few months then he started asking me out he was two years ahead of me so that meant he was gonna finish varsity before me.

I had a fully paid flat in Durban then after Sboniso finished studying fresh from varsity he didn't have enough money to get his own place so he asked if he could crash in my place for a few months until he gets a job in which he did after doing his internship but after that he didn't even touch the topic of moving to his own place so we stayed together after a year or so he started acting weird, he made me stop wearing pants or jeans because "it revealed too much" and he didn't like that, I had to drive straight home after my classes so he can come back home to a full home cooked meal I literally became his wife. There was this one time we had an argument and I asked him to leave he told me that if I break up with him he will make my life a living hell that day he really made my life a living hell, he locked me up inside the house and will inject me with something and I would hallucinate the whole day while he is at work, I would scream and shout seeing scary animals but no one would hear me on a sound proofed ceiling in our room that he insisted and when things are cool I would ask him to leave my flat he would threaten to kill himself and leave clues that will leave people asking questions if it was really suicide or I made it look like it.

But few months ago, I met a guy, Kumkani-Uuka Gumede, what a gentleman, I was taken the first time I saw him, he was staring at me like he knew me from somewhere, gave me his seat at his brother's wedding then bought me a dress when his ex messed it up. I didn't want him to get into my crazy world but I couldn't stop myself he had a way to play with words, a Zulu guy with a smooth tongue I fell in

love with him the day I visited his mom, pecked my lips and told me he respects that I have a man. Our first day indoors together, a home cooked meal and great sex that I haven't had that week because Sbonelo always came home and said he was tired then after spending the night with Uuka he actually wanted sex that is why I thought that maybe he was the father but I was crazy because, why would I even forget about someone who I was sexually active with the whole week, different days then Sboniso came on the last day of the week and I didn't even feel the guy cumming because all I was thinking about was the sex with Uuka, he introduced me to a completely different world of intimacy, I didn't know it felt that good! Sboniso did it but not the way Uuka does, not to compare but Kumkani knows a woman should cum as well, that it's not only about his pleasure but both of us should get there.

Right now I just arrived home after Uuka came here with King Ntsika to take me to his ancestral land it had everything to do with a baby's life, he is theirs so they perform rituals the way their ancestors tells them to.

I am sitting in my bed staring at the brown envelope Uuka gave me to give to my father, I know what is inside I was there when he told his brother to tell King Nkosiyabo that he wants to send the letter to my father.

My phone rings it's Kumkani, my heart always skips a beat when he calls or whenever I think about him. I answer his call.

Me: "Hello."

Kumkani: "Bonolo, I know you've been home for over an hour now but you didn't bother to call and tell me you're safe and sound, I have been worried."

Me: "Sorry I went straight to bed when I arrived."

He sighs.

Kumkani: "Ok, are you guys ok?"

I brush my tummy and chuckle.

Me: "We're okay."

Kumkani: "And the letter?"

Me: "I'm going to give it to him now."

Kumkani: "Ok call me ok."

Me: "I will call you."

He drops the call, sometimes I ask myself how they remain so humble and down to earth while they have it all, even though he has a bit of arrogance but never have I seen him look down on people with this little time I have known him.

I freshen up then wear an oversized t-shirt to hide my baby bump, my father knows I'm pregnant because mom told him, she is the one who saw it first before I even knew I was, I still feel embarrassed to be walking with a baby bump in my father's house, I really disappointed him. He always told us to get married first before we can make babies.

I kneel in front of him, he just stares at the TV totally ignoring me.

Me: "Papa..ke gopa tswarelo hle."(I'm sorry)

He doesn't breathe a word.

Me: "Uhm..I have a letter, King Nkosiyo wrote it."

He looks at me then take the letter from my hand.

Modise: "Have a seat."

I sit on the opposite couch nervously as he reads the letter. After a while he chuckles and throws it on top of the coffee table.

Modise: "Who is Kumkani?"

I look at him confused, he knows who Kumkani is I'm sure of it.

Modise: "Ke botse gape?"(Should I ask you again?)

I shake my head.

Me: "He is..he is King Nkosiyoabo's son."

He swings his stick it hits my arm hard I scream in pain getting up.

Modise: "Sit down!"

I quickly take a seat brushing my painful arm."

Modise: "I'm asking who is Kumkani to you?"

Me: "Uhm..he..is the father of my baby."

He swings the stick again on the same spot my whole arm feels numb.

Mom rush in

And sit next to my father.

"Papa, Don't do this she is pregnant please."

Modise: "She came here and we asked about this pregnancy he told us about Sboniso Kheswa now Kumkani is asking for her hand in marriage and to pay damages for the same baby! Did we send her to Durban to sleep around!?"

"Please calm down papa, I understand your anger but please don't hit her."

Modise: "There won't be any marriage, you want to give Ntsika's bloodline a illegitimate child?"

I shake my head wiping my tears.

Me: "He confirmed papa that my son is his."

Modise: "I don't care Bonolo! I didn't raise you like this! What example are you setting for your sister? That it is ok to sleep with different men to a point that you don't know which one fathers your baby?"

Me: "I'm sorry dad."

Modise: "Leave my presence this instant."

I run to my room and get in bed crying. My phone keeps ringing but I don't answer it.

I wake up later and look at my phone, there are several missed calls from Uuka. I call him.

Kumkani: "Bonolo, I've been worried sick about you!"

I start crying because I can't even move my arm because of pain.

Kumkani: "Are you crying? Baby what happened? Is the baby ok? Are you ok?"

Me: "My arm, it's painful."

Kumkani: "Stop crying my love and tell me what is going on please."

Me: "Dad hit me on my arm after he read the letter, I can't move it, go botlhoko."(it hurts)

Kumkani: "He did what? B you're pregnant how can your father do that?"

I just cry harder.

Kumkani: "Ok..uhm stop crying, I'm going to call Mason and see if I can't get him to fly me to North West right now."

Me: "No, it's gonna make things worse don't do that I'm gonna be fine."

My door opens Didi walk in with a dish and a towel.

Didi: "Mom told me what dad did, I'm sorry, let me check if your arm isn't broken."

She sits next to me and stretch my arm I cry out in pain.

Kumkani: "Bonolo.."

Didi takes the phone from me.

Didi: "She will call you again, I'm trying to stretch her arm."

She toss the phone on the side and keep stretching my arm quietly, she is younger than me but never wants to act like it. She is a very caring sister.

Didi: "It's starting to swell but it doesn't look like there is a broken bone."

She studied medicine, was doing her internship last year but now she is staying at home saying she needs a break.

She sleeps with me the whole night.

In the morning I can hear voices outside and one of them is definitely Kumkani's voice, I wear my gown and walk out I want to run back inside but its too late everyone has seen me now I have to greet, it's Kumkani, his father and King Ntsika. Kumkani is looking down the whole time. I greet them then rush back inside.

Dad walks in and look at me. I keep my head down.

Modise: "Kumkani made me understand your situation, he explained to me how everything happened so I will allow the negotiations to happen."

Me: "Thank you."

Modise: "But I need a family meeting first before the negotiations, we have something very important to discuss."

I nod.

Modise: "He would like to talk to you before they leave."

I slowly walk out making sure I keep my distance away from me.
Kumkani pulls me into his arms then check out my arm.

Me: "Didi said it's not broken."

He nods.

Me: "What did you say for my father to allow the negotiations?"

Kumkani: "I told him the truth. I persuaded you knowing well you were in a relationship and I didn't take no for an answer."

I nod.

Kumkani: "Now we are going to wait for him to give us the date because he asked for some time to meet with the family."

Me: "Ok."

Kumkani: "You don't look well, maybe we should go to a doctor before I leave."

Me: "I'm fine, my shoulders are heavy like I'm gonna hear some bad news or something."

He kiss my lips.

Me: "Thank you for coming, maybe things between my father and I will be less tense now."

He hugs me once again and get in the car then drive out.

It's two days later the yard is full of people of the community and dad's councilors with family members that chose dad's side. He is about to introduce Didi and I after so many years most of them don't know our faces, it will be the very first time meeting us. Our father's house is has high security when we came home we were fetched by tinted cars so no one can see us.

After an hour a meeting started we are finally called outside. Didi and I walk out and people exclaim some cheer, I don't even see one familiar face except for mom and dad here, we lived the life of hiding our identities.

Dad clears his throat and stands up.

Modise: "These are my daughters, Bonolo and Didintle, you all know the reason I had to hide my daughters from you, I was protecting my Princesses from being used to fight for the throne, they were my weaknesses."

They people nod, I guess they understand.

Modise: "Uhm..but there is one important person I want all of you to meet! An heir to the throne, nobody knew about this except my wife and I."

He clears his throat again, people are confused and so am I. An heir?

Modise: "Before my wife and I got married she was already pregnant but because I knew I was next in line to the throne we hid the pregnancy by going to study in Durban."

He sighs.

Modise: "She gave birth to my first born."

I look at Didi, she looks just as confused.

Modise: "She gave birth to a boy."

People are shocked, what!? I am the first born and I'm not a boy.

Modise: "But because we knew chances of him being killed because of the war that was happening in our family we decided it's better we give him to an old woman to raise him for us until he is old enough to come home and take over the throne."

I chuckle, this is a big joke.

Modise: "He is here today."

The gate opens about seven black SUVs drive in and park in our yard. Everyone step out in those cars wearing black suits except for one who is just in his white t-shirt and black pants. Our eyes lock I feel my stomach turning.

Modise: "Everyone, meet my son Kgosi Modise."

I feel something ringing in my ears, this must be a huge mistake or maybe I am dreaming! It can't be.

CHAPTER 28

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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I am at home and King Ntsika is here at home with his wife just for a little visit, they love their own space in the city. Nqoba got remarried and moved out of the house and so is Tamia and Nqobasi they bought a house and moved out with their children so it's just the two of them, they do come to visit from time to time.

He walks in the lounge and ask Thingo to open one of those many news channel, I never pay attention to them because most of the time it's gossip if not it's long media briefing that bores the shit out of me.

He settles on the couch and I widen my eyes as I see a familiar yard they are showing from corner to corner then a TV personality starts talking about King Modise introducing his children to the media and the whole Kingdom.

Me: "Aybo! So everyone didn't know Bonolo and her sister Mkhulu?"

Ntsika: "They knew they existed but didn't know their faces."

Me: "What? That's absurd why would a man hide his own kids?"

Ntsika: "Siblings rivalry was real it got really ugly, people would use your children to get to you so I guess he had no choice but to hide them."

I move my eyes back to the TV and see my beautiful woman standing next to her sister, she looks so beautiful I smile but it vanishes when I hear that there is another sibling hidden somewhere.

Me: "Bonolo never told me about any brother."

I see Ntsika sitting at the edge of his seat, looks like he didn't know about this either.

Modise: "Meet my son Kgosi Modise, an heir to the throne."

My world literally goes on a standstill when the camera moves to show his whole face, he is surrounded by bodyguards but he looks distraught himself. I see Bonolo being picked up by one of the guards. I quickly take my phone and try to call Bonolo's number.

"Hello."

A shaky voice answers.

Me: "Dintle..What is going on? I'm watching the news channel what the hell is going on?"

"I don't know."

She is crying.

Me: "Is Bonolo okay Dintle? Is she ok?"

She sobs, I drop the phone looking around, Ntsika is shocked. There must be a mistake somewhere. I call Mason and he tells me he is in Cape Town and will only land back to Durban tomorrow morning.

Mcebisi: "Uuka, isn't this the same guy Bonolo was dating?"

Ntsika: "What!?"

I stare at the screen as Bonolo is being taken by the ambulance, my world is moving in a slow motion I don't know how to react.

Mcebisi: "Kumkani?"

I look at him and notice some drops on the floor I touch my nose and come back with blood, we all have that problem of bleeding through our noses if we get too stressed out or shocked. I wipe my nose and look at my father, for the first time I feel so powerless, how will the mother of my child survive all this, what about my child.

Me: "I need to go."

I try to get up but I feel light headed, I sit back on the couch as I feel the room spinning.

Ngcebo: "Kumkani.."

I look at him everything is a bit blur, even my eyes are heavy, the smell of incense is getting stronger.

Ngcebo: "He needs to get some rest, he will wake up tomorrow and Mason will be here to pick him up."

I try to speak but words won't come out of my mouth. I close my eyes dozing off.

In the morning I wake up to a throbbing headache, my brothers walk in and stand next to my bed.

Makhosini: "Can we help you up Bhuti?"

I nod, they help me sit up and Ngcebo gives me a snuff, I inhale it then start sneezing so bad.

Ngcebo: "That will help you with the headache."

I nod and look for my phone.

Mcebisi: "Your phone is in the charger. Let me help you to the bathroom, Mason will be here soon and we will leave together."

Me: "You're all going with me?"

They nod.

Ngcebo: "I need to make sure this baby lives, it will take a lot for his mother to go through this."

I nod and Mcebisi helps me to the bathroom, I stand under the shower, the water is cold but I need this to wake me up, I need to look strong for Bonolo's sake I don't even want to imagine the pain she's in right now, sleeping with your blood brother is an abomination, I hope it's one sick prank.

After shower I find my brothers already have my clothes picked out for me. A white shirt and black pants, I sigh looking at them, they are wearing just the same but with Makhosini and Bukhosi they are in t-shirts instead of shirts. They smile looking at me.

Me: "It's enough that you all look like me but this..this is too much I'm not doing it."

Bukhosi: "Just this one time Uuka, you're the only one who didn't have someone pushing you around inside our mother's womb."

Me: "That makes me special."

Makhosini: "Good things comes in twos or threes bhuti, not one!"

I chuckle as they all laugh. I wear the clothes then we all walk out.

Nkosiyo: "Go and support the mother of your child ok, know that we're with you even if it's not physical, we're one."

We shoulder hug.

Me: "Thank you dad."

Mom hugs me then I hug my little sister.

Thingo: "If its too much come back with her bhuti."

Me: "I will do that Princess."

We all walk out and I see kids running towards the sport ground as Mason lands. If politicians can do it so why can't Royalty do it.

We step inside the plane and it fly off, I have my eyes closed thinking about how Bonolo is doing.

When we land we get in the hired car Mason had waiting for us and Mcebisi drives to Bonolo's home because we don't really know which hospital she was admitted to. The guards let us in because they know me already.

Mcebisi parks next to Didintle who was about to get in the car.

We all step out and she stares at us one after the other.

Didi: "Is it still a reincarnation if there are so many of you looking alike?"

I chuckle and hug her briefly.

Didi: "Prince Kumkani, Prince Ngcebo, Prince Mcebisi, Prince Bukhosi and Prince Makhosini."

She says calling us one by one not even mixing up the twins but of course Ngcebo has his traditional cloth over his shoulder.

Mcebisi: "How do you tell Bukhosi and Makhosini apart sis it's your first time meeting them."

She chuckles.

Didi: "I admire your family, how your father never hid you but protected you with his all, there are always fights for the throne, we weren't the first but dad did things differently, look how everything turned out."

We are all staring, soft spoken and the way she articulate draws more attention to her.

Me: "How's Bonolo?"

Didi: "I'm on my way to see her Prince."

I bow my head.

Me: "After you then Princess."

Mcebisi: "I can drive with you."

He says already opening the passenger door of her own car. I chuckle. He get in the drivers seat and drive out, me and my brothers get in the car and follow behind them.

At the hospital I'm so angry to see Sboniso here in the waiting area with King Modise, I have lost all respect I had for him at this point.

Me: "Didi can you show me Bonolo's ward please."

She pass her father without even greeting and as I walk past them too I feel a hand grabbing my shoulder pulling me back Makhosini is quick to push him away from me, I stare at my shirt then look at him.

Sboniso: "Where do you think you're going?"

Makhosini: "And who are you to ask him that?"

He chuckles pushing my brother back but Bukhosi is quick to move past me and punch the hell out of Sboniso, the waiting area is a war zone because Bukhosi and Makhosini won't stop throwing punches at this guy until the securities try to grab them.

Me: "Hey..don't touch them like that, we are going to step out on our own."

I pull my little brothers under my arms and walk out with them.

Me: "Hey..."

They are both breathing heavily, they still want a fight.

Me: "I understand ok, but now is not the time, we are here to check if our son is still good and his mother ok."

They nod calming down.

Me: "Do you need some water to cool off."

Bukhosi: "I'm fine Bhuti and I'm sorry for embarrassing you by fighting."

I smile.

Me: "You were fighting for me little bro and you can never embarrass me, you are a mini me I fucken know I was gonna do the same thing if anyone grabbed you."

They both nod.

Me: "Calm down.."

After I am certain they are calm we walk in again, Ngcebo and Mcebisi are not in the waiting area anymore I ask my brothers to go look for them while I stand in front of a king and his bruised son.

Modise: "Kumkani, what is going on? Why do I sense some tension here with Kgosi around, even Bonolo got sick when I introduced him to all of them."

I chuckle shaking my head

Me: "You ruined your daughter's life sir and if anything bad happens to her or my son it will be on you."

Sboniso get up and grab me by my shirt.

Sboniso: "Your son! Bonolo is carrying my child Kumkani! Leave her alone!"

I slowly remove his hands from me and push him lightly he stumbles back.

Modise: "What are you on about?"

I just walk away and find Bonolo's ward, Didintle and my brothers are all standing around her bed and that makes my heart beat faster I'm nervous. They move away as I walk in and Bonolo looks pale, she has a IV on her arm and an oxygen mask on. I look at Ngcebo, he is quiet looking down at Bonolo I know he knows I am looking at him but he is avoiding my eyes. I slowly put my hand over her baby bump I start feeling kicks for the first time, she is turning five months in a week. I chuckle.

Me: "Gumede.."

I hold her hand, she moves a little then open her eyes.

Me: "Hey baby."

Looks like she wants to talk so I remove the mask, her mouth is dry it's like she has been sick for some time.

Bonolo: "You're here...so it was just a dream right.."

She is counting words there is a smile of relief on her face I look down.

Bonolo: "Kumkani...I had a bad dream dad..he introduced Sboniso as my brother, can you imagine that?"

She says with a very soft giggle.

I nod.

Me: "Yeah..it was all a dream, when you get better I will take you home with me ok."

She flaps her long natural eyelashes. Everyone is looking at me but I'm not gonna make things worse I am thinking about my son.

She looks around and frown.

Bonolo: "Why am I here Kumkani? Didintle?"

Modise and Sboniso walk in, her eyes stares at Sboniso and she starts shaking.

Bonolo: "Kumkani, Why is he here?"

Modise: "What is goin...Bonolo!"

I think he realizes what he has done, he has his eyes popped out.

Modise: "Sboniso?"

He stares at his so called son next to him. Bonolo starts breathing heavily.

Me: "Get out all of you."

My brothers walk out first Didintle force out his dad and "brother". I put oxygen mask on her and sit next to her holding her hand tight.

Me: "Don't do this to me Bonolo, to our baby sthandwa sam I'm here I will help you get through this."

She close her eyes, I walk out and look at Ngcebo, he nods.

Ngcebo: "He is gonna be ok K, he has your blood running through his little veins, a fighter."

I sit down rubbing my palms together.

After an hour I tell my brothers to check into a nearby hotel so they can rest while I buy some food for Bonolo then go check on her.

I walk in her ward and sit next to her, she is awake.

Me: "How are you feeling?"

She removes her mask and look at me with tears coming out of her eyes.

Bonolo: "So it's true, I slept with my brother?"

I look down.

Bonolo: "So I guess that's why I couldn't conceive, I was never on any birth control I..."

She wipes her tears.

Bonolo: "That is just disgusting Kumkani, I am disgusting!"

Me: "You didn't know baby, this is not your fault, you can't blame yourself for this."

Bonolo: "Why would he hide him for so long? What was he hoping to achieve because right now he only achieved on ruining my whole life."

I hold her hand tight.

Bonolo: "You gonna have to move on from me Kumkani, find the right woman and raise our baby with her."

Me: "Uzobe ukuphi wena Bonolo? I won't raise my son with another woman."(Where will you be Bonolo?)

I look into her eyes.

Me: "Let's go home ok, we will take it one step at a time. I will marry you and we will raise our son together."

She shakes her head.

Bonolo: "I don't want to get married anymore."

I sigh.

Me: "Please my love."

She shakes her head.

Bonolo: "But I will leave with you, just to make sure you receive your baby boy, I don't ever want to see Sboniso ever again."

I kiss her hand.

It's been a week since Bonolo was discharged from the hospital, my brothers and I took a flight back home with her. I make sure she is resting I am ignoring calls from her father.

We are in our room in bed.

Bonolo: "Kumkani.."

I look at her. She still have shortness of breath from time to time but we manage it at home.

Bonolo: "Your ex? Does she live far from here?"

I frown.

Me: "Why are you asking?"

Bonolo: "I'm just asking."

Me: "Why?"

Bonolo: "Nothing Kumkani, let's take a walk."

I help her up. We take a walk around the village, she is so quiet on the way.

Me: "Why are you asking about Funeka?"

Bonolo: "Do you ever think if she wasn't a drunkard and ratchet you were gonna work out?"

Me: "No."

Bonolo: "Why?"

Me: "She wasn't my type, just beautiful."

Bonolo: "What's your type?"

Me: "You.."

She stops walking and stare at me for a while.

Bonolo: "So you prefer a Princess?"

Me: "Not just any princess, wena." (you.)

She nods.

Me: "What is going on here Bonolo?"

Bonolo: "You will hold your baby boy soon."

Me: "Four months or less."

She nods, I stop walking when the hair at the back of my neck stand..

Me: "Bonolo why do you keep using you instead of us."

She looks at me.

Me: "Don't you dare do that to me and my son!"

Bonolo: "Do what!?"

Me: "Your questions, I can feel it! I know what you want to do! I swear to God Bonolo I would never forgive you if you kill yourself!"

I am shouting at her in the middle of the road.

Me: "You won't do that to me.."

She looks away. I hold her shoulders making her look at me.

Me: "Promise me you won't do that to our son Bonolo."

She drop her eyes.

Me: "Please.."

She looks around then quickly move past me, I look at her she is going to a tap, Funeka is there with a bucket in front of her, she's looking at us.

Bonolo: "Hi."

Funeka doesn't reply.

Bonolo: "Can I help you with that."

Funeka: "With what? You..you are pregnant?"

She fix her eyes on me.

Bonolo: "Yes.."

Funeka: "Oh, he never forced using a condom with you?"

I chuckle.

Me: "She's nothing like you Funeka."

She bends and pick up her bucket angrily Bonolo help her putting it ontop of her head. Funeka stares at me for a while then walk away.

Bonolo: "She's not that bad."

I just walk back home ahead of her she is following a few feet behind me. When I get home I find two cars parked in the yard. I wait for her to walk inside the gate then we both step inside the house, I huff when I see Sboniso with Modise here, My father is sitting in front of them quietly.

I sit next to him and pull Bonolo next to me.

Modise: "Nolo.."

She keeps quiet.

Modise: "Kgosi explained to me everything that happened between you two."

Bonolo: "Did he tell you that I was his guinea pig? Experimented every drug in my body whenever we have a fight? Did he tell you I would hallucinate the whole week because of him injecting me with different drugs just so he would study my reaction to the drug?"

I raise my eyebrow looking at this sick guy.

Bonolo: "I stayed with him all these years against my will because he was threatening me! I...I..."

She starts breathing heavily.

Bonolo: "I couldn't run home because you would tell me about wars and fights happening! I didn't have anyone to run to papa you didn't want us home."

Modise: "I was only trying to protect you."

Bonolo: "That protection led to incest baba! I slept with my brother! Why would you hide him even from us? Was he that important to you that you thought even us would sell him out?"

Modise: "I didn't want anyone to know about him Bonolo."

Bonolo: "Me and Didintle aren't just anyone dad, we are your daughters!"

I keep brushing her back because she is really upset and shouting.

Modise: "Let's go home Bonolo so we can fix this, as a family."

She shakes her head

Bonolo: "I don't have a family or a home, I have never had one, I want that man to stay away from me."

Sboniso: "Bonolo, all I want is that child, I also didn't know about you guys all I knew was that I was a Prince and I had to stay hidden because some people were going to kill me if they knew I existed."

Me: "What child wena msunu!"(you cunt)

I hear my father groaning, he will have to forgive me, this is my child.

Sboniso: "Umsunu unyoko!"(cunt is your mother.)

I let go of Bonolo's hand and grab him by his neck pulling him up only to shove him back down on the couch with a punch. I press his stomach with my knee and throw punch after punch. After I feel like I have had enough I move away from him and walk to my room. I come back few seconds later with a gun.

Nkosiyabo: "Kumkani.." he reprimands me.

I point at Sboniso pulling the trigger, Bonolo screams. I shot his knee.

Me: "Say something about my mother again I dare you!"

Modise: "Ntsika never told me he raised lunatics!"

I chuckle.

Me: "Ntsika raised his sons, I am Kumkani-Uuka kaNkosiyabo. Now with all due respect sir take this thing you call a son and leave my land right now."

Modise: "Do you know who I am?"

Me: "What I know is that there is only one King in this Kingdom and that King is not you but my father! He rules around here."

I turn to Bonolo and help her up taking her to my room. Like a lion I will protect my cub with my all even if it means killing the opponents.

CHAPTER 29

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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"My baby boy, I hope your daddy will read you this letter when you get older and mommy is not here. I made a decision to go be with the angels because this world hasn't been easy for me but one thing that has been easy is carrying you in my womb, watching your father fall in love with you before even meeting you, that's the best feeling ever. I love you so much and I know you will grow up in a good home filled with so much love and..."

I stop reading and walk out the door going to the lounge holding them in my hand.

Me: "Yini le Bonolo?"(What is this Bonolo?)

I ask shouting showing her the letters, she is with my mother, her stomach is big she's about 8 months pregnant and it hasn't been easy because she once had an emotional breakdown and we almost lost the baby, her father was the reason, he came back here with that son of his and the cops to take Bonolo home of course I wasn't gonna allow Sboniso anywhere near my son and his mother so I fought.

Me: "Answer me, what is this?"

Bonolo: "It's....It's a..."

She keeps looking at my mother.

Thabsie: "Kumkani, why are you so angry? What is that?"

Me: "She wrote letters for our son ma, she wants to kill herself, she wants to be that selfish to me and my son."

Thabsie: "Bonolo.."

She looks down on her feet.

Thabsie: "But we're all here to support you, you're not alone in this."

Bonolo: "They deserve better, I will never be the same again Ma, I tried forgetting about everything but it just doesn't happen."

Me: "But why would you want to put me through that pain, how will I raise our son without you?"

She doesn't say anything.

Me: "Don't do it, if you really love us like you claim you do, you won't do it."

She wipes her tears then a frown.

Bonolo: "Aw..."

Me: "What is it?"

Bonolo: "That was a hard kick.."

I kneel in front of her and brush her belly another kick makes me widen my eyes.

Me: "Those kicks are too hard today."

She moans in pain.

Bonolo: "And painful..mmmh."

Mom stares at her then look at me.

Thabsie: "She's in labour."

Me: "She's only 8 months mom."

Ngcebo walk in barefoot, with nothing on his upper body and white pants.

Ngcebo: "It is time."

He tells me to help Bonolo up and walk out with her. She stands in one position I look down on her feet it's wet.

Thabsie: "Don't be alarmed, her water just broke."

Me: "Ngcebo, aren't we taking her to the hospital?"

I ask because he is busy opening the kraal taking out cattles.

Ngcebo: "Never! No child of our generation will be born in those hospitals after what they did to my daughter."

Bonolo: "What does he mean Kumkani?"

I see my brothers walking through the gate sweating they are also not wearing anything on their upper bodies just pants and they are dragging the cheetahs skin, one has his own.

Ngcebo: "Phakathwayo."

Ngcebo takes the skin Makhosini has and lay it down in the middle of the kraal, then hang another one on the wood it still dripping blood.

Ngcebo: "Come Nkosazana."

He says holding Bonolo's arm and help her sit on that cheetah's skin on the centre.

Makhosi and Bukhosi walks away.

Bonolo: "Am I not going to the hospital?"

She asks Ngcebo politely.

Ngcebo: "No, a Prince will be born right here Nkosazana."

Bonolo screams in pain.

Ngcebo: "Ma I need you right here and you Kumkani."

I kneel next to Bonolo as she lays down on her back, she's in a gown and a nightdress underneath. Ngcebo walks away to his hut.

Bonolo: "Can you please take this shit off Uuka.."

Me: "What?"

Bonolo: "My panty..ahh."

Me: "Ubuligqokeleni?"(Why were you wearing it?)

She gives me a death stare, I look at mom embarrassed she is laughing silently.

Thabsie: "Take it off Kumkani, that's how you made that baby in the first place."

Me: "Ma.."

She get up.

Thabsie: "Let me go fetch some towels."

She laughs walking away. I hold the strings of her panty and pull it down putting it inside my jeans.

Bonolo: "Why the hell are you making everything sexual?"

Me: "Aybo how am I doing that?"

Bonolo: "The way you're taking it off!"

She is shouting at me.

Me: "Just tell me if you're horny my love."

She grabs the wet cow dug next to her and throw it in my face.

Me: "Bonolo!"

Ngcebo is laughing coming towards us.

Ngcebo: "That was a good one."

I wipe my face.

Ngcebo helps her drink some herbs that will make my boy come to the world quicker.

Mom comes back and Bonolo starts screaming Ngcebo is staring at her tummy.

Me: "Is everything ok?"

Ngcebo: "He wants to come out, feet first."

Thabsie: "What? How?"

Ngcebo: "Guess he can't wait to step into his land mother."

He says proudly.

He touch Bonolo's belly.

Ngcebo: "He really doesn't want to turn his head down."

Me: "But is it even possible for him to come out like that?"

Ngcebo: "He is a Gumede, any thing is possible."

He starts grunting Bonolo's screams are getting louder, people of the community starts coming in but stand a bit far surrounding the kraal. Wenzile step inside the kraal as well and kneel next to Ngcebo, they keep grunting.

Ngcebo: "Kukhona ozama ukubopha ukuzalwa kweNkosana."(Someone is trying to tie the birth of a Prince.)

Wenzile starts clapping her hands, Bonolo is screaming in pain but the baby is not coming out.

Ngcebo: "Gumede, Phakathwayo, boKhondlo.."

Mathenyoka joins us in the kraal and they look like they are having some fights with spirits that none of them can see. Bonolo is in agony.

Ngcebo: "Ngeke!"(Never)

He shouts and stand on his feet walking around the kraal hitting his shoulders with ishoba.

Mathenyoka and Wenzile starts clapping louder and harder.

Bonolo: "Kumkani!"

She squeeze my hand tight.

Me: "Baby.."

I'm panicking I don't know where to be or what to do.

Ngcebo stands behind Wenzile and hold her shoulders Wenzile starts grunting, Mathenyoka's eyes change, they are all in trance, I can feel more spiritual presence in the kraal but it's just us.

Bonolo starts pushing Mom kneels in front of her legs.

Thabsie: "Keep pushing baby.."

She push holding my hand tight.

Me: "You can do it baby.."

Thabsie: "Ngcebo..I see feet."

Ngcebo starts tapping his foot down his hands are still on Wenzile's shoulders. I look over and see tiny feets touching the cow dug and the ground starts shaking (tremor) making everyone go down on their knees. Then his tiny little body finally lay down on the soft cow dug.

Ngcebo: "Kumkani..Nkosiyabo..."

He says kneeling and taking the baby into his arms, I am sweating and I can feel tears in my eyes. I kiss Bonolo's forehead.

Bonolo: "Is he alright?"

Ngcebo gives me the razor, I cut the cord and he ties it with a wool and place the baby on Bonolo's chest. People finally get up and start cheering and clapping.

Ngcebo ask Bonolo to push again for uMzanyana to come out. She does that and it comes out. Ngcebo put it in a small bucket then ask mom to clean up her blood.

Bonolo: "What's his name?"

I chuckle looking at my son then take him getting up, everyone is watching with smiles on their faces as I hold him in my arms he is still naked.

Me: "Inkosana yami uPhezukonke Mbusi Gumede.(Above all, the ruler)

Dad walks towards me with a baby's blanket with a huge smile on his face. He wraps the baby up and hold him in his arms.

Nkosiyabo: "Phezukonke.."

I nod smiling proudly. He walks inside the house with him and people starts leaving.

Me: "Thank you so much, all of you."

Wenzile nods and wipe her cheek, I pull her into my arms hugging her, she is crying.

Me: "I'm so sorry."

She giggles stepping back.

Wenzi: "Why are sorry? These are tears of joy, my husband's son is my son, I'm just happy he is healthy and we managed to block the evil that wanted to engulf him."

Me: "Thank you."

She walks away, I know seeing a little baby might have been a trigger and I understand.

Everyone walks inside I help Bonolo up and we go to our room. I help get in the bathtub and sit next to it brushing her cheek.

Me: "Thank you for giving me a precious gift baby."

She smiles.

Bonolo: "He is so innocent."

Me: "Just like his father."

She laughs.

Bonolo: "There's nothing innocent about you Uuka, you put that baby in me."

I laugh. She hold my hand.

Me: "Remember what we talked about earlier?"

She looks at me.

Me: "Are you still having suicidal thoughts after meeting him?"

She looks down.

Me: "You just said he is innocent, how do you want to put an innocent baby through the pain of not having a mom?"

I look at her.

Me: "You know the pain I'm talking about baby, you were all alone for years without your mom and dad, you want your own son to feel that?"

Bonolo: "Ukhona."(You're here)

Me: "Yes but I'm his father, he needs us both, there are certain things that needs mother's presence, take it from me, I know this. Dad and I are close but I still run to mom for so many things I need her and our son needs you."

She nods, I kiss her lips.

Bonolo: "Thank you for taking me in your home, loving me, the support I have never met a person like in my whole life."

Me: "I'm one of a kind baby."

She chuckles.

Bonolo: "I love you."

I smile and hear a knock on my bedroom door. I open the door it's dad with my son in his arms. He smells fresh and now wearing warm clothes.

Nkosiyo: "Your mother and I gave him a bath."

Me: "You did it together?"

I ask laughing taking my son from him.

Nkosiyo: "Well, yeah I'm a pro in that department you know that very well."

Me: "I know dad and that is how I know I am going to be a great father to my son, I saw it in you."

He smiles.

Nkosiyo: "Thank you Qwabe."

He looks at the baby who still has his eyes closed but moving his hands.

Nkosiyo: "He needs to feed."

I nod.

Me: "Ok."

He walks out closing the door. I sit in bed smiling at my son, he opens only eye eye, I chuckle.

Me: "Don't be lazy put an effort in opening the second eye as well."

I chuckle as he close the eye again.

Me: "Bonolo! Are you done?"

I shout but there is no answer.

Me: "Baby, dad said he needs to feed."

The baby starts crying. I get up to check on Bonolo in the bathroom. I stare down in the bathtub, her head is under water, there is a strong smell of blood, I quickly hold my son tight as I almost drop him.

Me: "Baba!"

I step back and rush out. I give the baby to dad and run back inside my room. I pull her under water, she is not breathing.

CHAPTER 30

*

KUMKANI-UUKA

*

"I have been fighting from when I was a little girl, shipped off to a boarding school and met different people some were kind but most were cruel and bitter. I don't expect anyone to understand why I did it but I had to free myself from the pain, free my child from having an unstable mother. I was a doctor but I couldn't help myself, meeting Sboniso was the worst time of my life but finding out he is my blood brother was the last nail on the coffin. Dear Uuka how I wish I had met you sooner maybe your love would have healed me but I had already decided way before I even met you that I will end the pain one day. My King, Father of my child I thank God for choosing you to father my baby I know you will be the best daddy ever. I love you."

I chuckle after reading the letter that I found on our son's baby bag, we used to buy baby's items everytime we went to town.

She has been fighting but I was too blind to see, I should have helped her sooner.

The door of my bedroom opens, Thingo walks in carrying a tray.

Thingo: "Bhuti."

I quickly wipe my tears and smile looking at her. She place the tray next to me and sit on my lap hugging me.

Thingo: "Mom said they will be leaving soon and asked me if you're coming with them."

I shake my head.

Me: "I will stay with my son."

Thingo: "But I can look after him."

Me: "We will look after him together then."

She get off me and sit next to me holding my hand.

Thingo: "She is being moved to a mental institution today Bhuti, don't you want to see her before she goes in there? You've never seen her ever since she woke up."

Me: "I really don't want to talk about Bonolo right now Thingo."

Thingo: "But she..."

Me: "LamaQwabe! I said I don't want to talk about her!"

I shout at her, she quickly nods and get up walking out. I sigh. I still can't over her unconscious state I found her in, how I had to perform CPR on her but she didn't respond even though water did come out but she didn't wake up. We called an ambulance and only then her pulse started picking up she started breathing again.

I breathe out loud and tear the paper throwing it across the room then take deep breathes calming myself down, my son is just a week old and he almost lost his mom. Bonolo has been in a hospital for a week now I haven't visited her, not even once but mom and dad are always

by her side even my brothers. Didintle is coming today I called her and made her promise not to tell anyone about my son, I trust her.

He starts crying behind me I take him into my arms and give him his bottle. After he is done with his milk I put him over my shoulder and walk around with him until he burps.

Me: "Mom will get all the help she needs okay, then she will come back home to us."

I am brushing his back.

Me: "She will love you so much, like daddy loves you."

I kiss his forehead and lay him back to bed covering him warmly then walk out. I find my sister in the kitchen.

Me: "Baby sis.."

She nods, I hold her tight.

Me: "I'm sorry for shouting at you earlier."

Thingo: "You're under a lot of stress so I understand."

Me: "Ok, who did mom leave with today?"

Thingo: "Dad and Mcebisi went with her."

I nod.

Thingo: "You can't ignore her forever, she needs you."

I nod.

Me: "I will go see her when I'm ready."

Thingo: "Ok."

I go back to my room and eat the food she made for me then get in bed, she joins us sleeping on the other side while Phezukonke sleeps between us.

A month later.

I still avoided every single person who has been asking me to go see Bonolo, I am just not ready! They should understand that.

My phone rings while I'm changing my son's nappy. I answer it then put it on a loud speaker.

Me: "Hello."

"Kumkani.."

A very low voice speaks on the line, I hold my breath and stop changing the nappy, my son starts crying.

"Oh my God.."

She sobs, I drop the call and continue with my son then pick him up giving him his bottle.

Me: "Sleep little guy."

I rock him to sleep then put him to bed.

My phone rings again, it's a landline.

Me: "Hello."

Bonolo: "Hi."

I keep quiet.

Bonolo: "I'm sorry Kumkani."

Her voice makes my heart skips a beat, I'm still in love with her so bad that it hurts that I haven't seen her for a while now.

She drops the call again. I sit in bed and huff looking at my sleeping baby boy.

Me: "Do you want to go see mom boy?"

I sigh and change into something decent since I was just wearing my shorts. I go make his bottle then go to mom and dad in the lounge.

Me: Sanibonani.”(Greetings)

Thabsie: “Hey, where is my handsome grandchild.”

Me: “He is sleeping. Uhm..I have decided to go see Bonolo and I’m going with him.”

They smile.

Nkosiyabo: “That’s wonderful, maybe that will help her see the worth on why she’s doing this.”

Me: “Uhm...how is she?”

Thabsie: “She’s taking it one step at a time and the fact that she’s willing to take those steps is what matters.”

I nod. They tell me the address. I put my son in his car seat and put his bag next to him.

I am in the parking lot of the institution then look behind me. My son is sleeping peacefully I step out of the car then take him and his bag.

Me: “Let’s go see mom.”

I walk in the reception area and talk to the girl there.

Me: “I’m here to see Bonolo Modise.”

“Ok sir this way.”

I follow behind her to some room, she knocks once then open the door. She turns and walk out. I look at Bonolo, she is looking down at the book she’s holding.

Me: “Nkosazana.”(Princess)

She screams once jumping up then cover her mouth tears rolling down her cheeks. I step closer to her and hold her in my chest while my son is on my shoulder. I am holding my own tears from falling as her sobs get louder.

After some time she finally comes down and excuse herself walking in what I assume is a bathroom.

She comes back after a few minutes and find me still standing in the same position. She stands in front of me her eyes are bloodshot red but no tears anymore.

Bonolo: "I'm....so sorry."

My son starts crying on my shoulder, she blinks once a lone tear drops on her cheeks, she quickly wipes it.

Bonolo: "I..was so selfish, I'm sorry Uuka."

Me: "But you're here now, you do want to get help right?"

She nods rapidly.

Bonolo: "Yes..I do..I want to get help."

Me: "Then that's all that matters."

She keeps looking at the baby on my shoulder.

Me: "You want to hold him?"

Bonolo: "Yes..if that's ok."

Me: "You are his mother of course it's ok."

I give her our son, she hold him to her chest immediately I can tell she is trying so hard not to break down.

Bonolo: "I'm so sorry baby, Mommy never meant to hurt you..so sorry.."

I pull them into my arms.

Me: "It's ok."

We sit in bed, I keep wiping her tears as she stares at our sleeping son in her arms.

Bonolo: "He is so handsome."

I smile.

Bonolo: "I knew he is going to be this cute."

I smile looking at her, she is still so beautiful like the first time I saw her.

Me: "When are you coming home to us?"

She looks at me.

Bonolo: "I am still welcomed?"

Me: "It's still going to be your home for a very long time baby because...."

I go on one knee in front of her and take out the ring that I have had with me before all the drama with Sboniso being her brother came out so I waited for the right time and it hasn't been easy but now I want to do it.

Me: "My son and I need you, I still want you to be our Queen, I love you with your flaws and all."

She is blinking rapidly.

Me: "I read your letter and in that letter you seemed like you wondered if my love would have healed you now I don't want you to wonder I want you to experience it, to feel it, I want to love you the way you deserve I don't care about what happened before I came into your life, I care about our future together with our son."

I open the box.

Me: "Please marry me sthandwa sam."

She slowly give me her hand, I slide the ring in and stare at her beautiful hand.

Me: "If the stone seems smaller you can tell me I can get you a bigger one."

She looks at the ring with her glassy eyes.

Bonolo: "This one is perfect, thank you Gumedede."

I kiss her lips.

Me: "Thank you."

Bonolo: "But...uhm my family."

Me: "Leave that to me, don't you worry about it ."

She brush our son's cheek.

Me: "I want you to promise me you will get better and come home to take your rightful place as my wife."

Bonolo: "I will get better, now I see I have so much to live for."

Me: "And so many kids to give me."

She laughs and I missed that a lot.

Me: "My beautiful Queen."

She kiss me passionately.

We stay with her the whole day I even ask the doctor if she can just reschedule her session for today.

Me: "It's getting late, we have to go now."

She nods brushing her arms.

Me: "Don't be sad we will come see you again soon, I just need to fix a few things."

Bonolo: "Ok thank you so much for coming to see me."

Me: "I will love you back to life baby."

Bonolo: "I already feel so alive."

I pick my son up, she kiss his cheek then give me his bag.

Me: "Siyakuthanda."(We love you)

I walk out leaving her tearing up. I drive home and take my son to my room then go join my brothers that are sitting around the fire outside. I greet them then take a seat.

Mcebisi: "You look way better today."

Me: "I went to see the mother of my son. I saw that what I was doing ignoring her was wrong, she needs to know I still love her regardless of her mental state, they deserve our love and support not judgements and grudges."

They nod.

Me: "I want to pay lobola for Bonolo, nothing and no one will stop me."

Mcebisi: "But her father hates you right now, do you think he will accept that?"

Me: " Like I said nothing and no one will stop me from marrying the mother of my child, if I have to kill a little snake to get the attention of the bigger one then I will do that."

Mcebisi: "You want to kill Sboniso?"

Me: "I really hope it doesn't get to that but I will if they try me this time."

Bonolo is going to be my wife and they should know I won't take no for an answer.

CHAPTER 31

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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I am sitting inside the hut at Bonolo's home waiting for the King to grace me with his presence I came prepared with only Bukhosi and Makhosini but I told them to wait for me outside.

Modise steps in the room and chuckle staring at me.

Me: "King Modise."

I say giving him my hand but he just stares at me, I smile taking a seat then lean back on the wall looking at him.

Modise: "What can I do for you?"

Me: "I want to marry Bonolo."

He laughs.

Me: "I don't need your permission to do that I just want you to sit in those negotiations like a good father that you are and accept my cows then after that I want you to do a ceremony to inform the ancestors that she is no longer a Modise but a Gumedede."

Modise: "Are you giving me an ultimatum in my house about My daughter?"

Me: "Yes sir!"

He roars in anger charging at me but I don't shake nor move I just remain in my position, he stops in front of me.

Modise: "You will marry my daughter over my dead body."

Me: "I was hoping you say over your son's dead body because really that would be arranged real quick, I have a bone to pick with him, you on the other hand I have no beef with you whatsoever I don't even know what's this hostility towards me is for."

He squints his eyes.

Me: "Have you ever wondered how this whole thing is doing to Bonolo? All these unnecessary fights are draining her."

Modise: "Then she should come home!"

Me: "Home is a place where you feel safe, where you feel wanted and loved! Where is all that here! Even Didintle is gone!"

Modise: "They will come back."

I laugh.

Me: "Keep consoling yourself with lies."

Modise: "Get out of my house!"

I smile.

Me: "My uncles are coming this weekend sir you better be here."

I say getting up fixing my pants.

Modise: " Or what?"

I smile.

Me: "Do you really want to know?"

He chuckles I sit back down on the chair crossing my legs.

Me: "I have some information on your dirty son, information that he thought he buried! Bribed the police officials but I'm Kumkani I got my hands on it."

He looks at me confused.

Me: "Oh yes, ask him about one teenage girl he once raped in his office when she went to collect her mother's medication huh ask him how he got away with that because I have the files he thought were destroyed."

Modise: "You are lying my son was raised well."

Me: "How do you know when you had children but ditched them? Shifted your responsibilities to other people? How do you know! Those two girls know nothing about love of a parent they yearn for it that's probably why Bonolo stayed with a monster mistaking it for love!?"

I am getting angry.

Me: "And that monster I'm referring to is your son! It's all your fault that your kids committed an incest and abomination, you will reap what you sow one day the ancestors may seem slow but in the end one thing for sure is that they are always there to serve you with karma."

I get up and bow my head.

Me: "I will hear from you baba, I am giving you two days to confirm the negotiation date, you can call Ntsika for confirmation if I don't receive that call Modise, your prodigal son will be well known for being a rapist that he is and I will make sure he rots in jail for it and that will be pay back for what he did all those years to Bonolo!"

I walk out and get in the car.

Bukhosi: "I was hoping we meet that Sboniso I really want to mop the floor with him."

Makhosini: "It's always fun beating up older, arrogant, disgusting bastard like that."

I chuckle and drive us to a hotel. I hate that I have to be away from my son this whole week but I am doing this so Bonolo can be recognized as my wife. I asked mom to send pictures of my son everyday for the whole week that I will be away from him, I'm doing this for our family but I do miss him we always sleep together.

It's Friday morning I am pacing around the room waiting for a phone call telling me Modise agreed, I want this to happen I want to marry my woman as soon as she step out of that institution. My phone rings I quickly answer it.

Me: "Yes.."

"Ouch, I was expecting something like "Hey love" words like "Honey" you know nice names."

I close my eyes rubbing my forehead.

Me: "My love I'm so sorry I didn't even check who is calling, unjani baby?"(how are you baby?)

Bonolo: "You sound stressed, are you good?"

Me: "Yeah, yeah I'm good baby."

I didn't tell her about meeting her father and threatening him so he can allow me to marry her, I don't want any set backs on her mental health I don't want anything stressing her at this point, she's been doing really great.

Bonolo: "Oh, how is Mbusi kaMama."

I smile.

Me: "He's great baby, growing as well."

Bonolo: "I don't have any session today I was hoping you guys visit me."

Me: "Uhm..we can't baby uhm...I have an important meeting today."

Bonolo: "Oh ok."

My phone beeps indicating an incoming call from Ntsika, my long anticipated phone call, I end her call and answer Ntsika's call.

Ntsika: "Gumede."

Me: "Mkhulu."

Ntsika: "So should we fly down to North West today."

Me: "He agreed baba?"

I ask excited.

Ntsika: "Yes but he doesn't seem happy about it."

Me: "He doesn't have to be he's not the one getting married to the most beautiful girl in the world."

He laughs really hard.

Ntsika: "Really?"

Me: "Yep, thank you."

Ntsika: "Your father, Sonwabile, Sbani and myself are flying down there in an hour or so."

Me: "Ngiyabonga Phakathwayo."

I drop the call and chuckle sitting down, I'm gonna destroy that Sboniso. I got a PI to look into him, I want every dirt he has ever done even when he was still a toddler I want to leave no stone unturned, this is just a beginning.

I call my woman back but she doesn't pick up, I bought her a cellphone so we can talk and send her pictures of our son when we can't visit her.

I call her again she finally picks up but doesn't say anything.

Me: "Baby..Hello."

Still nothing.

Me: "Bonolo, are you there?"

Bonolo: "I'm here Kumkani, you just dropped the call on me after telling me you guys can't visit me so I don't know how to feel."

Me: "Oh..baby I'm so sorry grandpa was calling about a very important meeting tomorrow I'm so sorry."

Bonolo: "It's all about those meetings now Kumkani?"

Me: "Yes, they are important because it's about us starting our family as husband and wife."

Bonolo: "What do you mean?"

Me: "I mean tomorrow my uncles are going to pay lobola for you and pay damages as well so I can do a formal ceremony for my son at home."

Bonolo: "How..how did you get my father to agree?"

Me: "I didn't give him much of a choice baby, I fight for what I want until I get it, you're my witness."

She laughs.

Bonolo: "Why am I in it?"

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda angithi uyazi?"(I love you, you know that right?)

She giggles.

Me: "And I know damn well you're blushing where you are, you're so beautiful baby."

Bonolo: "Come on...stop it."

Me: "I can't wait to marry you."

Bonolo: "My father has done a lot of things but one I will never forget and will always be grateful for is him forcing me to attend your brother's wedding, I met you."

I smile.

Me: "It was meant to be."

Bonolo: "I miss Konke..and you."

Me: "We will see you soon, get better ok."

Bonolo: "I'm doing it for the both of you now so it's all worth it."

I smile dropping the call then call my mother.

Thabsie: "Uuka.."

Me: "Mom how's my boy doing, I miss him."

Thabsie: "Your dad have been spraying your cologne and he sleeps in his arms ever since you left, he knows how you smell now."

I smile proudly.

Me: "I can't wait to get home to him yhoo I didn't think being away from him would be this hard."

Thabsie: "Your father was like that with you guys as well."

Me: "Uhm..I need you guys to do me a favour."

Thabsie: "Ok."

Me: "Can you please take Phezukonke to his mom for a little visit then take Bonolo's measurements for how you will dress her respectfully when she becomes a Gumedede bride."

She starts ululating over the phone I hear my son crying.

Thabsie: "Weee uyaxolisa uGogo boy..sorry baba."(Grandma is sorry boy.)

I laugh, mom calling herself a granny? I know her and dad are grandparents but it still feels weird hearing a word Gogo or Mkhulu being referred to them they look pretty young for that.

Thabsie: "Uhm...Kumkani..we will go today with your sister and Didintle, I'm proud of you."

She drops the call I know she wants to attend to my son, they love him, everyone loves him even Wenzile, I thought she will find it hard being around him but no, she always buy him clothes bath him and even sometimes ask if they could sleep with him in their room, Ngcebo found a gem.

Around 11 am my father is here and everyone else. He has a bag full of cash. I shoulder hug him.

Me: "Thank you for making this happen dad, my bank was gonna take long to approve this amount of money."

Nkosiyabo: "That's why I'm here as your father to make things happen when you can't do it yourself. We already burnt incest at home and informed the ancestors that the cows are going to the Modise family."

Me: "Gumedede."

I am asked to buy two sheep so I can cleanse Bonolo's home for getting her pregnant before marriage, we walk around town asking where we can find sheep and we finally find the place. I want to do everything right even though we don't see eye to eye with her family.

The next day my fathers and grandpa leave early in the morning before the sun rises, I keep checking the time. My brothers get in bed with me on my either side.

Makhosini: "Are you okay?"

I nod.

Me: "I'm fine, what is it?"

Bukhosi: "Bhuti Mcebisi said we should check on you because it's the big day, he said you might be nervous and we should come keep you company."

I laugh.

Makhosini: "Ngcebo also asked you call him."

I sigh.

Me: "They are just exaggerating now I'm fine."

Bukhosi: "But you're biting the side of your cheek and have a frown on your face that can only mean you're nervous."

I sigh.

Me: "Get out of my room you two."

Bukhosi: "No we promised to stay with you."

I punch him lightly he jumps and fall on the floor, we laugh at him.

Bukhosi: "What if I broke my bones bhuti?"

I shrug.

Me: "You'd stretch yourself, you're a twin mos."

Makhosini laughs at him.

Me: "I want to sleep a little."

Makhosini: "Me too."

I sigh as they fix the pillows and close their eyes I thought they will leave me alone. I smile when they both start snoring very low, they started snoring at a very young age mom even took them to a doctor thinking they had a problem but it was nothing serious also it's not that big irritating snore but it's very calm and low, funny too.

I hear a door being opened I sit up rubbing my eyes I also fell asleep. Dad looks at his sons smiling.

Me: "Baba you're back already, did something happen?"

He chuckles.

Nkosiyo: "Nothing went wrong son we are just going to the next step after this."

Me: "So he accepted the lobola?"

Nkosiyo: "He did but he was bitter throughout and Ntsika had to force him to burn the incest to accept the cows."

Me: "Thank you so much for doing this for me."

Nkosiyo: "If it means so much to you, it means so much to me too."

I smile and call my wife telling her the great news. She tells me mom took measurements yesterday and also asked which colour she likes then I will have to make a similar outfit for that wonderful day coming.

It is the week after the lobola was paid, everyone is busy preparing for my big day which is in a few weeks. I am fetching Bonolo today at the institution because I have to take her home, we are following all the traditional steps. I am worried though since she has to be home until we arrive, she's not safe there at all.

Didintle: "I will keep her safe Kumkani, it will only be for a few hours."

I look at her.

Didintle: "You're thinking out loud, wondering if Bonolo will be safe for those hours waiting for your family to arrive."

I park the car and huff brushing my head.

Me: "If tradition wasn't this important I was gonna skip this part, but Bonolo has to leave home this way so she can be welcomed as a Gumede bride fully."

Didintle: "Like I said, nothing will happen to her."

I shake my head.

Didintle: "Ok how about you ask one of your brothers to come with us then."

Me: "Which one?"

She smiles looking out the window I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "Yewena!"(Hey you)

She laughs looking at me.

Me: "Are you blushing?"

Didintle: "No I'm not."

Me: "Heee so which brother?"

She looks away again.

Didintle: "Mcebisi."

Me: "Amen.."

Didintle: "What?"

I laugh stepping out of the car then open the door for her.

Me: "You're right, I will ask Mcebisi to come with you."

The smile on her face makes me widen my eyes.

Me: "WeeDintle.."

She quickly walks away leaving me shaking my head.

I hug my woman tight as she steps out of those buildings. She is coming back a better version of herself, she's not fully ok but I'm here to be her safe space.

She cries on my shoulder I keep brushing her back.

Me: "You made it baby."

To someone else this might seem like a little thing, I mean it's just a mental institution but to me and everyone around us it means a lot, she is a fighter and a survivor.

Me: "We have a flight to catch baby."

I wipe her tears.

Bonolo: "Where is our son?"

Me: "Mom left with him early this morning, they are already that side making sure everything is in place."

She nods and hug me again and I drive to the airport. Everyone already left so it's just us three now.

We go to a hotel that everyone is booked in and ask to talk to my brothers in our room, we all decided to share one room to cut the costs, not like we can't afford but we are a huge family, even baba Nqobasi and his own family are here.

Ngcebo: "Gumede.."

Me: "Uhm..I need one of you to go with Didintle and Bonolo to her home to keep her safe just until we get there please."

Mcebisi: "You think something might happen to them?"

Me: "I don't trust any of those people especially that Sboniso if he's around."

Mcebisi nods

Ngcebo: "I will go with Mcebisi."

Me: "Are you sure?"

Ngcebo: "Yes, he can fight physical battles and I can fight spiritual battles we don't know what we might come across there."

Now I am worried sick.

Ngcebo: "Don't worry we will keep our Queen sa..."

He doesn't finish talking he grunts loud looking around.

Me: "Thokoza Mntwana.."

He grunts again.

Ngcebo: " Princess Malaika and Thingo lamaQwabe should stay in one room with Prince Phezukonke so Wenzile can put protection in that room."

Me: "Is my son in trouble Ngcebo?"

He shakes his head.

Ngcebo: "Wenzile will stay with them when everyone leaves, nothing will happen to him."

I nod nervously

Me: "Can't we leave with him?"

Ngcebo: "No, he can't be surrounded by strangers yet we will be putting his life in danger."

I wouldn't leave if it wasn't that important for Modise to hand over Bonolo to me after the ceremony so I can take her home, so I won't enjoy this day at all, how can I when I will be worried about my son.

CHAPTER 32

*

MCEBISI

*

We just drove in the Modise household with the Princesses, people are looking at us weirdly I don't care I just want my brother's wife to be safe and her sister as well.

Ngcebo grunts startling the two sisters walking slightly in front of us.

Me: "Thokoza."

I look at him as he stops walking.

Me: "Is everything ok?"

Ngcebo: "Yeah, they can't stay in that room that is set for them, ask them to give you a different room.

Didintle nods looking nervous.

Me: "Don't worry we will be with you until we leave home."

She nods, a woman stops in front of us and smile but it doesn't reach her eyes, she looks sad.

"Bonolo, Didintle."

Bonolo: "How could you allow all this mma? You allowed dad to throw us away and at that I even slept with my own brother? How do you sleep at night huh?"

"I didn't know, I thought I was doing this to protect you."

Bonolo: "I'm leaving I will have a family I can call my own now, people who actually understand what the word family means."

"Nolo, we tried our best."

Didintle: "Mma we just want to get ready and wait for the Gumede's to take my sister to her new family."

She chuckles.

"Where have you been Didintle? What are you in that Gumede family?"

Didintle: "I'm everything I want to be, they do treat me like I exist unlike you! There is a real mom and dad there something you and Modise will never be!"

She's now upset tearing up I have this urge to hold her in my arms but the yard is full and people are still giving us looks.

"I'm your mother Dintle don't talk to me like that."

Didintle: "You're not my mother!"

Everything happens so fast Dintle has her hand over her cheek, her mother just gave her a huge clap, I pull her back and hold her as she cries painfully.

Ngcebo: "Nkosazana don't shed a tear, it's your big day, chin up and don't allow negativity to get into you, ask for that room so you can change, Kumkani and our family will be here soon."

He says then bow his head before Bonolo, I see a little smile on her face she nods looking straight at her mother.

Bonolo: "Can you give us a room to get ready MmeModise."

She points at the main house Ngcebo shakes his head.

Ngcebo: "They will take one of the huts thank you."

They walk in one of the huts, we stand outside and give them their bags.

Didintle: "Are you gonna stand here until we finish dressing up?"

I nod.

Me: "Yes, we will wait for you here we're not going anywhere."

She nods and walk inside then close the door.

"WeeBonolo, uphi! Bonolo iphi ingane yami wena Sfebe!"(Bonolo, Where is she? Where is my child you bitch!)"

Sboniso is walking towards us in a beast mode, modise is behind him trying to calm him down.

Sboniso: "Bonolo!"

I shake my head looking at Modise.

Me: "Ukubukanisa nabantu lo, ufuna ingane yakhe kudadewabo, yini leyo?"(He's embarrassing you asking for his child from his own sister what is that?)

Modise is trying so hard to calm him down, should this come out then everyone will lose respect for him and his entire family, his own kids sleeping together?"

Modise: "Kgosi let's sit down and talk like adults don't shout like this people are watching."

Sboniso: "No baba I want my child."

I sigh, he is a special case.

He tries to walk past me I push him back.

Me: "You don't want to do this with me, I'm too clean to fight with you."

Modise: "What are you two doing here? This is unacceptable."

Me: "Unacceptable is you destroying your daughter's lives and not even showing remorse about it! A definition of a dead beat father thinking that money raises a child! You're a shame of a man angifuni ukungasho."(I don't wanna lie)

He tries to swing his stick but Ngcebo is quick to grab it.

Ngcebo: "We're not here to fight anyone especially you because you are already facing a battle of a lifetime with your own ancestors sir."

Bonolo and Didintle finally step out of the house we all stare at them, I have seen natural beauty but this is beyond that, they have no make up on, Didintle has her dreadlocks tied up loosely while Bonolo tied her natural hair up very neatly. They are wearing matching outfits but Didintle's dress is short.

Me: "Naze nabahle."(You are so beautiful)

They both smile, they do look so much alike.

We hear people singing at the gate I chuckle, It's Kumkani in front of everyone wearing the outfit that matches his wife's.

Kumkani: "BoModise nginikeni okungokwami."(Modise give me what belongs to me.)

Bonolo giggles, she's happy and that's what matters today, her happiness and that's what she'll get.

Ngcebo: "Niyomthela ngenyongo yembuzi ukumukhipha ekhaya uma ungakwenzi loko oGumede bayomthatha ngenkani kanti ngeke ukuthande loko."(Go give her a gall of a goat to take her out of this home if you don't do that the Gumedes will do it by force.)

He says staring at Modise who looks like he doesn't want to do this ceremony of handing over Bonolo to Kumkani.

Modise: "You won't tell me what to do in my home! Bonolo won't get married to Kumkani Gumedede! He has shown so much disrespect in this family."

As he finish his sentence lightning strikes right in front of us leaving a line on the ground, Kumkani starts singing traditional songs louder and they all sing with him, lightning didn't shock them at all, my brother can sing he is leading that crowd and the voice comes out effortlessly.

Ngcebo: "This is a warning Modise! Do as I say."

Sboniso grabs Bonolo's shoulders I see Kumkani lifting his eyes looking at me but he doesn't stop singing, I know he trusts us with his wife because he is not allowed to come in until Bonolo is taken to an ancestral hut and the ceremony is done then Modise can open the gate for Kumkani and give him his wife.

I grab Sboniso by the neck, he let go of Bonolo and try to punch me I grab his hand and twist it so fast I hear his bone cracking.

Me: "Ungawenzi lawomasimba la kmina wena."(Don't do that shit to me.)

Me: "Modise are you doing this or not?"

He looks at his son who is holding his hand in disbelief I think it really broke.

Modise: "I will do it."

Sboniso: "Baba."

Modise: "Kgosi, I have to do this to save myself and my family."

Didintle: "What family?"

His father looks at her and sigh giving Bonolo his hand, she hesitantly takes it and walk into another hut I see two boys walking in with a goat.

Sboniso: "Ulibambe lingashoni njandini."(Make sure the sun doesn't set you dog.)

Me: "You don't scare me at all so bring it on."

He clicks his tongue walking away, bloody fool."

After a few minutes the goat is slaughtered and they do everything necessary. After a while Modise comes out holding Bonolo's hand they walk straight towards the gate and Modise opens it for Uuka giving him Bonolo's hand.

Kumkani: "Thank you so much, now allow us to give you some gifts to thank you for giving me such a beautiful woman, thank you."

He bows a little Modise just chuckles walking away. My family walk in singing joyfully and give all the gifts to the family, including blankets and groceries.

Just as we are about to get in the cars three guys come out of nowhere and starts firing shots I look around searching for my little brothers.

Me: "Makhosini..."

I run to where he is laying blood coming out of his mouth, his hand is on his stomach and blood coming out of it.

Me: "Bhuti...hey Don't close your eyes ok I'm gonna get help for you."

Nqobasi: "Where is Bukhosi? Come on let's take him to a car."

We lift Makhosini up carefully to a car, as I'm about to get in I can see Didintle is also looking lifeless on the ground I rush to her picking her up then take her to the car speeding off to the nearest hospital that I happened to notice when we came here yesterday.

They are taken in immediately and I am pacing around, my little brother was shot so you can imagine the trauma.

My phone rings it's Kumkani.

Me: "Uuka."

Kumkani: "How..how is Makhosini?"

Me: "I don't know Bhuti they haven't said anything."

Kumkani: "And Bukhosi? Is he with you?"

Me: "No, where is mom and dad are they okay?"

Kumkani: "Yes, we are on our way ok."

Me; "Ok."

The doctors come out and walk up to me.

Me: "Are they okay?"

"The boy lost a lot of blood when we performed surgery, he will need blood transfusion as soon as possible."

Me: "I can donate for him, we have the same blood type."

"That's wonderful, we can go this way sir."

Me: "What about the girl? Is she going to be fine?"

"Looks like she just suffered from shock but she's gonna be fine."

I nod, I didn't even notice that she wasn't bleeding anywhere I thought she was also shot."

Mom, dad and everyone else walk in as I'm about to go donate blood for Makhosini.

Thabsie: "How is my son Doctor? Is he ok?"

"The surgery to remove the bullet on the side of his stomach was successful because it didn't penetrate any arteries and it wasn't that far but he lost a lot of blood so we need a donor but his brother already offered."

Kumkani: "I'll do it instead, Go back to the hotel where Ngcebo is and try to find Bukhosi."

Me: "You didn't find him?"

He shakes his head, he is sweating and Bonolo is shaken sitting on the chair, she is even shivering like she's cold.

Me: "Should I leave with her? She doesn't look ok."

Kumkani looks back at his wife then kneel in front of her.

Kumkani: "Hey.."

She looks at him with tears in her eyes.

Kumkani: "Everything is going to be okay, Go and be with our son I will see you soon ok."

She nods and wipe her tears. They hug and I hold her hand taking her to the car.

I walk in our room and find Ngcebo grunting clapping his hands kneeling on the floor.

Me: "Thokoza.."

He shakes his head.

Me: "Where is Bukhosi? Do you see anything."

He opens his eyes and stare at me.

Ngcebo: "Go save our brother."

I nod as he gives me the bracelet for protection.

Ngcebo: "I will show you the way."

I nod and go to the car.

I start the car and I feel that I'm not alone heavy presence is with me but the aura is very calm I know it's my brother so I start the car I'm driving back to Modise's house Ngcebo is guiding me.

I park my car at a distance and look around I can see police moving around the yard.

I step out of the car and walk up to them, I tell them that I'm here to look for my brother and they allow me.

I look for him everywhere I don't see Sboniso or Modise anywhere so I keep searching until I hear groans from one of the huts I knock there but no one answers I try to open but it's locked so I start pushing and kicking it by force until it swings open. My brother has blood all over his body upper body Sboniso and his father are staring at me dead in the eye.

Me: "Bukhosi.."

He coughs and blood come out of his mouth he is not wearing anything on his upper body just his pants.

I rush to untie him but feel a stick right on my spine I groan letting go of Bukhosi. I slowly stand and look at Modise.

Me: "You're both cowards, a real man doesn't use kids to fight the enemy, you're so scared to face Kumkani you chose to go for his younger brother, that's a move of a coward."

Sboniso steps closer.

Sboniso: "I'm not scared of your brother I will never be scared of him."

Me: "Your actions are the opposite of what comes out of your lips and just a warning, you should be scared of him after what you did today."

He throws a punch at me I chuckle wiping my mouth.

Me: "Clearly you don't know who you're messing with."

Sboniso: "Oh I know a lot, a bunch of snobs who marry hoes!"

Me: "You need to get help boy I really feel sorry for your ass, you're not okay upstairs."

My brother groans in pain I untie him again then support him by hooking his arm around my neck then hold his waist we walk to the door.

Me: "Again, you messed with the wrong one."

I walk out and help my brother into a backseat then drive to the hospital he needs medical attention. I find Kumkani and the parents still there.

Thabsie: "You found your brother?"

I nod and show her where the nurses are wheeling Bukhosi into a ward she rushes there and walk in with them dad follows after her. Kumkani stares at me like he is waiting for me to speak.

Me: "Sboniso and Modise held him hostage and were beating him up."

His face changes I can literally see his jaws moving.

Kumkani: "I want my brothers to heal and get out of here then I will take my wife home. I will deal with both of them later."

I nod and go check on Didintle, I find her awake but staring into space like she's in deep thoughts I close the door she screams jumping out of the bed. I rush to hold her in my arms as she slowly go down on her knees and sob.

Me: "It's ok, you're safe ok I'm here."

Her body is trembling.

Dintle: "Where..is my sister okay? Where is Bonolo!"

Me: "She's fine, Bonolo is at the hotel with Phezukonke, she's fine."

Dintle: "I want to go to her, I want to see her please."

I nod.

Me: "Let me go find the doctor and see if I can take you home."

I try to get up but she hold on to my hand.

Dintle: "I'm sorry I'm just...I'm scared."

Me: "I understand, that must have been a very traumatic experience for you, those gunshots messed me up as well."

Dintle: "No one was hurt right?"

Me: "Uhm both my brothers were hurt but they are going to be ok."

Dintle: "I'm sorry."

Me: "It's ok."

I get up and give her my hand pulling her up. She hold on to me looking deep in my eyes, there's something about her, I feel some chemistry, there's fire in her eyes. I hold the sides of the neck and stare at her beautiful face.

Dintle: "Wha...What?"

Me: "What?"

Dintle: "Why are you looking at me like that?"

Me: "I want to feel your lips on mine so bad."

She blinks touching my hands.

Dintle: "Then what's stopping you?"

Me: "I'm not a cheater."

Dintle: "You have a girlfriend?"

I nod. She nods and remove my hands from her stepping back looking rather disappointed, wait, So I had a chance with her? And right now I just ruined it.

Me: "Didi."

She sits in bed looking down.

Me: "Ngicela ungibheke."(please look at me.)

She looks at me.

Me: "Are you ok?"

She nods giggling.

Dintle: "Uhm it's just that I had this stupid crush on you from the first day I saw you but it will fade away..I'll get over it."

I look at her as she giggles nervously.

Dintle: "I don't even know why I thought I had a chance with someone like you."

Me: "Someone like me?"

Dintle: "I mean, you guys are well known Princes, good looking, rich, and I'm sure every woman wants to be with you but I'm just an ordinary hidden princess there's nothing interesting about me really."

Me: "Is that how you see yourself?"

She shrug her shoulders.

Dintle: "That's what I am."

She rubs her forehead.

Dintle: "Uhm..so the doctor?"

I nod and walk out feeling like shit, she seems pretty hurt but maybe she's right the crush will fade away and maybe she will meet someone soon, my heart beats fast when I think about that I stop walking and turn back stepping inside her ward again.

Dintle: "You're back already where is the doc..."

I don't let her finish talking I pull her up and hold her waist, I don't waste time I smash my lips on hers she freeze for a second.

Me: "Come on baby.."

I speak on her lips moving my hands to her cheeks, she kiss me back so good that I feel my bulge growing immediately. We break the kiss when we hear the handle turning she quickly step back from me her face is pink, she can't even look at me.

Thabsie: "Oh baby..how are you feeling?"

She says rushing to her putting her hand over her forehead.

Dintle: "Uhm...I'm fine Mma I guess I fainted."

Thabsie: "Ok uhm..we should go the doctor said you're free to go he is coming now and also we will be able to see Makhosini and Bukhosi tomorrow."

She nods.

The doctor discharge her and we go back to the hotel she goes straight to her sister and cry they are all sitting together Thingo is asleep in bed probably sick because those she shared a womb with are not ok.

At night I'm in my room ready for bed I hear a knock on the door I open it and Dintle is standing there looking down.

Me: "Come in."

I make way for her then close the door locking it.

She sits at the edge of the bed looking at me as I stand before her.

Dintle: "I..I don't wanna sound desperate but I just want to know...that kiss we shared did it mean anything?"

As I'm about to answer, my phone rings I take it and it's Ndabezintle, my girlfriend. We started dating a few weeks after meeting her at Hlelo's funeral we used to bump into each other a lot so I started thinking it's fate and asked her out she agreed after rejecting me a couple of times, I even invited her at my graduation party which is next week to introduce her to my parents.

Me: "Hello."

Ndabe: "Baby I found this nice dress I'm thinking of changing the one I already bought and wear this one at your graduation party."

Me: "That's cool, you look good in everything anyway."

She giggles, she's excited about meeting my family. Dintle slowly get up I quickly hold her hand.

Me: "We will talk tomorrow ok."

I say to Ndabe.

Ndabezintle: "Ok, I love you."

I drop the phone and throw it in bed, she calls again and I know she wants to ask why I didn't say I love her back.

I answer.

Me: "Baby.."

Ndabe: "Are you with family?"

Me: "Yes."

Ndabe: "Oh ok, bye then."

She drops the call, I know women wants to always hear it, they want declaration of your love every damn time.

Dintle: "Why are you holding my hand, I have my answer already Mcebisi."

Me: "Dintle."

I don't even know why I'm calling her name because honestly I have nothing to say.

Dintle: "I just don't understand why you kissed me."

I don't know either.

Dintle: "Goodnight."

She says trying to walk past me but I pull her back and hug her.

Me: "Spend the night with me."

Dintle: "What?"

Me: "We won't do anything, just..spend the night with me."

She nod looking down. I help her out of the dress she was wearing leaving her with just a thong only, I take my t-shirt and help her wear it then we get in bed. She get in bed but doesn't get any close to me.

Me: "I don't bite, come closer."

She moves closer and I hold her.

Me: "Uhm..look, I think I see you as my little sister I care about you like I care about all my siblings so this is not love, I know love."

She looks at me with sad eyes and nod.

Me: "I'm sorry for that kiss I don't know what came over me."

Dintle: "It's ok."

She turns giving me her back.

Me: "Things won't be awkward between us right?"

Dintle: "Yeah.."

I sigh.

Dintle: "Thank you for being honest, I know some other guys take advantage if they see that you have a crush on them but you're not that, I'm glad you don't even wanna entertain it giving me false hope, I will get over it."

She speaks still facing the other way, I close my eyes as the hurt in her voice breaks my heart.

In the morning I wake up and look next to me, she's not here anymore, I chuckle when I see a piece of paper and a pen next to me.

*I went back to my room, I couldn't sleep next to you the whole night."

I sigh and take my phone calling her.

Dintle: "Mmmh?"

Me: "Was I snoring?"

Dintle: "What?"

Me: "You said on the note you couldn't sleep next to me the whole night."

She drops the call, I get up and take a shower then walk out I bump into her and her phone falls on the floor, I quickly go down to take it and look at it.

Me: "I'm so sorry I will get it fixed or get a new one for you."

Dintle: "No it's fine."

She says taking it, she can't even look me in the eye.

Dintle: "Bye.."

She rushes away, ok things are really awkward now I think I made it worse by that kiss.

We go check on our brothers and Kumkani makes arrangements for them to be moved to Durban since they are both clear and it's safe for them to travel.

He needs to get married to his Queen you can see how much he loves her by the way he watches every step she takes like he is ready to jump when she happen to trip over something, he is very protective of her and so will I be to the woman I will marry.

CHAPTER 33

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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Today I am marrying the mother of my child and even more to come, the love of my life after that shootout I was determined to shame the devil and proceed with what I promised her, they will never win with me I am the man I think I am and if that doesn't sit well with anyone they should take a hike.

It's a traditional wedding, I'm not really a fan of a white wedding all that matters to me is my wife to be fully recognised as a Gumede wife, my other half ozokhulisa umuzi kababa.(she will grow my family name)

I am sitting on my chair in front of everyone wearing ibheshu, I see Dintle walking in with my wife holding hands, she is wearing isidwaba, a full Zulu traditional attire she looks so beautiful as she smiles at me. I get up and meet them halfway taking her from Dintle, it's only her from her side of the family and I think she has made peace with

everything happening in her family and I'm glad because her mental health is more important.

Me: "Umuhle kanjani."(You're so beautiful)

She giggles.

Bonolo: "Ngiyabonga myeni wami."(Thank you my husband)

I lose it and start doing the traditional dance right there, people are ululating some cheering, a proud Zulu man I am.

We perform every ritual needed then a pastor is there to bless our union, I think people should really do it like this I do believe we communicate with the ancestors because they are closer to God I will never understand why people always want to separate the two I mean God created all of us so when we die how do they become demons? But that's just me I won't impose my beliefs on anyone though.

After a long wonderful day my wife and I are now in our room we just finished taking a shower together now we are in bed holding each other, she keeps giggling.

Me: "Ok What is it?"

Bonolo: "I can't imagine life without you now, and to think I once made you a side."

I laugh, she's really healing now that she can talk about this with a smile on her face while it concerns Sboniso.

Me: "I was never a side though and you know it, you already had deep feelings for me, way too deep baby."

She laughs.

Bonolo: "You're a man I always dreamed about, I would see myself married to a strong man and have his kids."

Me: "So you're open to making another baby right now."

She shakes her head.

Bonolo: "No, our boy is still a baby."

Me: "Come on, they will grow up like twins baby."

She laughs out loud and that is music to my ears.

I kiss her neck and grab her hip she gasp, I have always loved that gasp.

Me: "We're married now."

Bonolo: "Yes we are."

She push me off her and get on top of me, we're naked because it's hot so she just grabs my dick and start licking the tip.

Me: "Fuck!"

She sucks it like a lollipop I grab her hair and start thrusting in her mouth until she gags, I pull out and quickly pull her on top of me again and she sits on my dick and start fucking me real so rough I like it. She turns and all I see is her ass bouncing with my dick going in and out of her.

Me: "Bonolo...yhoo mama.."

She starts shaking it.

Me: "Ngiyachama baby yhoo.."(I am cuming baby)

She doesn't stop you can tell she wants to cum so desperately I can't hold myself so I just let go deep in her with my knees shaking she doesn't stop bouncing until she cums as well screaming my name then her body vibrates. I turn her around and let her rest on top of me.

Me: "You made me scream like a baby Bonolo."

She laughs.

Me: "That was the best sex ever."

Bonolo: "We're married now I am going all out, you gave me a home Kumkani and I will forever be grateful for that."

I smile kissing her.

Me: "Thank you for loving me back, giving me a precious son we're doing this together till death do us part right."

She hold me tight closing her eyes.

Me: "Goodnight Mrs Gumede."

Bonolo: "Goodnight Baba kaPhezukonke."

I smile proudly, I'm a dad married to a very beautiful Princess.

When I hear that she's asleep I kiss her parted lips and slowly get off bed wearing my briefs then take my phone making a call to Jason who used to be my driver when I was still in school we are friends even though he is older.

Jason: "Mntwana weBoss."(Boss's son)

Me: "Jase, I need that guy here in Durban tomorrow I don't care if you guys have to drag him here on his knees bleeding."

Jason: "Consider it done K.U"

I drop the call and look at my baby sleeping peaceful on our bed. She moves and slowly sit up looking around.

Bonolo: "Kumkani.."

She calls my name low while rubbing her eyes.

Me: "I'm here baby."

I sit next to her.

Me: "Go back to sleep mama, I'm here."

She nods and sleep again. I smile, she loves me!

The next day around 4 pm my phone rings while my wife is busy serving us some tea I clear my throat and get up walking out I can feel Bonolo's eyes on me.

Me: "Jason."

Jason: "We've just arrived in Durban we are at my house with him boss."

Me: "I knew I can count on you. I'm on my way."

I walk inside and my wife is alone in the kitchen I stand behind her wrapping my arms around her kissing her cheek.

Me: "Hey.."

She nods.

Me: "Uhm...I have to go somewhere I will be back soon."

Bonolo: "You didn't even drink your tea."

Me: "You will make another one for me later, this is important."

She nods and move away from me cleaning the kitchen.

Me: "Baby.."

She glances at me.

Me: "I have an important meeting I promise to come back, I can see you're not ok but I have to do this."

Bonolo: "I understand I just thought that maybe since we just got married you will cancel your meetings but I guess not."

Me: "I'm doing this for our family baby please don't be mad."

She sighs and wipe her hands wrapping her arms around my neck.

Bonolo: "I'm sorry, I feel like I'm already a nagging wife."

Me: "You can nag me all you want I still love you to death."

She smiles and hug me tight.

Bonolo: "Come back before sunset ok."

I nod.

And take my car keys, I check on my son first then rush out. I drive to Durban and take a route to Jason's house.

I walk in and find Sboniso tied on a chair I feel so angry thinking this is how they held my brother hostage torturing him Mcebisi told me how he found Bukhosi.

I punch him he groans and spit blood I can see a tooth coming out, he is already messed up I guess he tried to fight Jason which was his mistake because Jase is ruthless and very buff he has been with me ever since I started high school.

Sboniso: "So you sent your goons to kidnap me because you couldn't face me yourself huh?"

I smile.

Me: Jase can you leave us to talk please, the guy wants me to face him."

Jase chuckles walking out. I untie him then roll up my white long sleeved t-shirt. I lock the door and push the chair away with my foot.

Me: "You wanted me to face you huh baby boy?"

He spit on my face I laugh wiping it with my t-shirt then take it off throwing it on the floor.

Me: "So you had the nerve to kidnap my little brother."

He groans loud and charge at me I move out of the way and elbow his spine fast turning to stare at him.

Me: "I want to teach you a lesson before I get you locked up for everything you did to Bonolo."

He laughs.

Sboniso: "You may have scared my father but I don't scare easily."

Me: "You should be scared."

I grab him by the neck and start punching him, I beat him until he is down I start kicking him until he stops moving on the floor. I squat next to him and pour water on him he gasp opening his eyes.

Me: "Weak ass! So you fainted? Too much for not being scared of me huh."

Sboniso: "What..do you want from me? You took Bonolo from me, my son everything."

Me: "It's not like you treated her like she deserves, she long wanted to leave you but was just afraid of you, so I didn't take her from you I woke her up from a nightmare that is you."

Sboniso: "My son."

Me: "He is not yours."

I take out my phone and show him my photocopy.

Me: "He is my son."

Sboniso: "You fucked my fiancé behind my back."

Me: "I don't owe you any loyalty I don't even know you."

Sboniso: "But you do..."

I frown looking at him.

Me: "Know you?"

He coughs.

Sboniso: "You saved me when we were young boys, I was bullied a lot in school you came and had a fight with a group of boys that had me pinned down taking turns beating me up, the next day I came to you to say thank you but you ignored me like I didn't exist, I wanted us to be friends but I guess I wasn't in your league I even started hating you and when I saw you again now we were older I remembered how you ignored me when all I wanted was a friend."

I stare at him as I have flashbacks of me fighting six boys that were bullying a boy that had just came to school I was always alone I didn't want any friends at school but that day I got angry with what those boys were doing I beat all of them up and left I didn't even see the boy's face."

Me: "It was you?"

He nods. I help him sit up he leans on the wall.

Sboniso: "You looked down on me and walked away, you never even gave me a chance to talk."

I look at him shaking my head.

Me: "I wasn't gonna fight those bullies only to look down on you the next day, I didn't even see your face that day."

Sboniso: "It doesn't matter! You were supposed to listen to me but you just looked at me like I'm garbage and turned your back on me, I only needed a friend Uuka."

I sit next to him leaning on the wall as well.

Sboniso: "I tried several times to get you to talk to me but you never gave me a chance because you were a Prince everyone worshiped you and you saw us as peasants."

Me: "That's not true I was a little boy I never saw anyone as peasants."

Sboniso: "You're a liar!"

I look at him, I see a vulnerable young boy, I can see it in his eyes he is taking out all that anger now on me because maybe I was gonna be able to help him with whatever he was going through.

Sboniso: "I still have letters I wrote to you to give to your dad so he can help me, I always thought Princes and Kings helped people but you didn't give me a chance to give you those letters, why?"

Me: "I...I didn't have friends I didn't want any because I had my brothers that's why I didn't want anyone close to me, I didn't know you wanted to reach out for help."

Sboniso: "Rich kid, expensive school bags, expensive cars picking you up, of course you didn't want anyone close to you!"

I sigh looking down.

Me: "I'm sorry, I am not the type to look down on people I was young If I knew you needed help I was gonna help you."

Sboniso: "Can you drive me to my house?"

I slowly nod and I get up helping him up.

I drive to his place that he once shared with Bonolo and we walk in. He goes straight to his bedroom and come back with a small brown box and put it in front of me.

Sboniso: "These are all the letters I wrote to you thinking you were gonna be my bestfriend."

I open the box and take one letter opening it.

"Uuka, last night I slept outside the house after Coco kicked me out, I was so scared but I imagined you were with me so we started talking about your father, a famous soccer star and I want to be like him."

I look at him as he wipes his blood on his face with a wet towel.

I take another letter.

"I guess you will only be my imaginary friend because you don't even want to greet me back when I greet you."

My heart breaks as I read these short letters.

"Thank you for saving me from those bullies yesterday Uuka, can we be friends?"

I groan and stop reading the letters, I wipe my face looking up.

Me: "Who is Coco?"

Sboniso: "A woman that raised me, she was nice out there always smiling to strangers but to me she was the worst, I wanted you to be my friend so I can confide in you then you can tell your father to help me but you never gave me a chance."

Me: "I'm really sorry, I promise if I knew about your situation I was going to help you."

Sboniso: "Yeah right.."

He says with a chuckle.

Me: "She abused you?"

Sboniso: "You have no idea! Emotionally, physically and sexually, and...and everything I did to Bonolo I did it because I imagined her as Coco I wanted to hurt her everytime I think about what Coco did to me."

I sigh.

Sboniso: "Had my first sexual encounter with the woman I thought was my mother, that was the day I found out I'm not her son. She played with my dick until it got hard sucked it and forced me on top of her I was scared and shaking I kept asking her what she was doing but she continued until I got hurt I told her it hurts then the next day she took me to the hospital to get circumcised so she can continue having her way with me."

My body is shaking thinking about how a woman can do this to a little boy, boys go through rape too and people often laugh about it but it's real it's out there and it is just as damaging I can see right through him what that woman did to him destroyed him and I feel bad because I could have saved him had I given him a chance and listened to him.

Sboniso: "So are you killing me or you are going to leave my house?"

Me: "Please forgive me."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "Please leave I have things to do if you're not killing me."

I take my car keys and get up walking out and drive to the house here in Durban. I call my wife as soon as I walk in.

Bonolo: "Daddy.."

I smile rubbing my eyes, I feel so drained.

Bonolo: "Are you coming back?"

Me: "No baby, my meeting took longer I'm so sorry I will sleep here in Durban and drive back home tomorrow morning."

Bonolo: "Oh..."

Me: "I'm so sorry but I'll make it up to you, we are going on a honeymoon."

She screams excitedly I smile.

Bonolo: "Really?"

Me: "Yes really you can just get in bed now and start going through google searching for places you might like to visit."

Bonolo: "Aàaaah let me go to Didintle so she can help me look, goodnight baby bye."

She drops the call leaving me smiling, when she's happy I'm happy.

I get in bed but I can't really sleep because I keep having nightmares of that day Sboniso was bullied but in the dreams feels like I'm the one getting beat up.

I wake up panting drenched in sweat and look around it's dark I take my phone and check the time it's just after 11 at night. When I try to sleep again I feel like someone is suffocating me I quickly sit up and check the time again I step out of bed and wear my clothes. I take my car keys and drive to Sboniso's house. I knock several times and try opening the door but it's locked. I walk around and punch the window it breaks and open it getting in then look around I can see Sboniso laying lifeless on the floor I can see an empty bottle of whiskey on the floor and two empty pills containers and an injection I rush to check his pulse, its there but very faint I quickly take out my phone and call an ambulance. I look at the brown box that is still there where I left it but now it is written "THE LETTERS HE WROTE" outside the box in bold letters with a black marking pen. There is another letter on the floor.

"We would have been best friends I was gonna protect you and you were going to do the same for me but the universe had other plans.

To Uuka, my imaginary friend."

If he dies then his death will be on my conscience for the rest of my life.

I look at the paramedics as they put him on a stretcher and wheel him outside, I pick up the box and take it to my car.

"Sir are you coming with us?"

I sigh.

Me: "I'm going to drive behind you."

CHAPTER 34

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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"I was locked up in my room for the whole weekend without food that is why I fainted on Monday at school I last had something to eat on Friday morning, I saw you eating lunch alone I wanted to talk to you but you keep ignoring me, I'm even scared of going back home today I want to run away but where will I go? I have no one.

To: Uuka"

I am in my car outside the hospital premises they are still draining the pills on his system I have been reading these letters written to me some to my father whom he adored judging from the way he was praising him in all those letters. I feel so fucken angry at myself I should have let him speak to me, I should have listened! How can I let a person suffer like that while he needed my help and tried to reach out so many times! How could I do this?

I rub my eyes as my phone rings, I'm so tired and my eyes hurt.

Me: "Hello."

Mcebisi: "Bhuti, you're not home are you okay I'm sorry for calling so late I am with Ngcebo we are talking about you."

Me: "I'm good, Uhm...I'll be home tomorrow and we'll talk."

Ngcebo: "What's wrong? Why are you blaming yourself?"

I sigh, he reads our emotions so accurately.

Me: "I will tell you about it when I get home."

Ngcebo: "Ok, we love you ok."

I smile.

Me: "I love you guys too, did you go check on Makhosini?"

Mcebisi: "Yes brother they will be discharging him tomorrow."

Me: "That's good thank you."

Bukhosi was discharged a few days ago but the bruises are still visible though they are healing.

I sigh and rest my head on the steering wheel closing my eyes.

I wake up when my phone rings, I answer it without checking who is calling.

Me: "Hello."

Bonolo: "Baby I'm sorry for waking you up, I wanted to ask if I can come to Durban I need to buy a few things for myself."

I wipe my face.

Me: "Oh yes baby, I will ask Mcebisi to drive you to me then I will take you anywhere you want to go."

Bonolo: "Thank you so much."

Me: "I love you Bonolo."

Bonolo: "Babe are you ok?"

I sigh, I feel so emotional those letters hit me, what kind of person was I to ignore a little boy like me who needed me so bad.

Me: "I'm fine baby, come with our son I miss him ok."

Bonolo: "Ok."

I call my brother and ask him to bring my wife to me.

I drive home to freshen up first then go back to check on Sboniso. I walk in his ward and find him awake. I sit next to him as he removes the oxygen mask and look my way, he looks pale and his lips are so dry.

Me: "How are you feeling?"

He groans.

Sboniso: "Why..did..you...come..back last night? Why did you save me?"

I look down, guilt is eating me up.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu mfethu."(I'm really sorry my brother.)

Sboniso: "You should have let me die Uuka, It's too much you know, worse knowing I slept and abused my sister for six years! How does one move on from that? I damaged my own sister I shared a bed with her, forced her to stay with me! I will never have a normal life that's why I want to end it all."

Me: "Please don't do that, I will help you with anything, if you still need a friend I'm willing to be there please."

He shakes his head.

Sboniso: "It's too late for that now, you're too late."

I look down.

Me: "I'm so ashamed."

He groans.

Sboniso: "I want to die. I don't have a family, my father thought I would be this precious well mannered boy but I'm the opposite I'm a disappointment."

Me: "Now that's all his fault how you all turned out! He ran away from his responsibility real men raise their sons and daughters through thick and thin even if it means walking through the fire with them! Not just discard them!"

He clench his jaws.

Sboniso: "When he came to find me, I was happy you know, I didn't ask any questions I was happy that I have a mom and a dad out there, that I had family but..."

He shakes his head.

Sboniso: "That's not family! I slept with my own blood sister Kumkani! I broke her every chance I got, how do I live with myself after everything I did?"

Me: "You have to learn to live with it, I won't let you die."

Sboniso: "It's not like I will report to you and stuff."

I chuckle.

Me: "Then I will have you chained in that mental institution like a dog until you get back into your senses."

We both chuckle.

Sboniso: "What will you say to Bonolo? She hates me and I don't blame her at all. I know she won't like that you're talking to me. You should go."

I shake my head.

Me: "Not until I get you help."

I take my phone and call Jase.

Me: "Can you find the best recommended Psychiatrist in Durban, Private practice preferable."

Jason: "I will get back to you as soon as I find something."

Me: "Thank you."

I drop the call.

Me: "Do you think you can eat anything right now?"

Sboniso: "I don't know but I'm really hungry."

Me: "I will ask your doctor then go to the shops, Bonolo is on her way to Durban so I have to go home soon."

He looks away.

Sboniso: "Having a family, brothers and sisters have always been my dream but now I ruined that chance before I could even grab it with my hands , I have two sisters that hate my guts."

Me: "We gonna try to fix this."

Sboniso: "Some things are better left broken Kay unless you want those little pieces to hurt you even further."

I smile, well articulated guy, clever too I mean he is a doctor just those setbacks and hardships he went through.

Me: "So you've been crazy for a while huh? You made me your imaginary friend yet you hate my guts."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "I hate you but I would never hate my friend, what we could have been, creating that imaginary friendship between us is what kept me alive till...well, yesterday."

I sigh.

Me: "I'm not a bad person Kgosi."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "My ribs hurt and you say you're not a bad person huh? I could get you arrested."

Me: "I know crazy one. So is your imaginary friend here now?"

I ask looking around laughing, he chuckles and groan in pain.

Sboniso: "Go to hell."

I get up.

Me: "Let me get things you will need while I wait for that call ok, I'll be back."

Sboniso: "I..I need a favor."

Me: "Yes."

Sboniso: "I want to remove all my clothes from Bonolo's flat and burn them, that's her flat."

Me: "We will talk about that once you're well."

I go to the shops and get him toothbrush, toothpaste, towels cosmetics then something to eat, Jase calls.

Me: "Jase."

Jason: "Found one not far, Pinetown."

Me: "That's good, are they open to take in a patient today?"

Jason: "Just send me all the details I will book and let you know."

Me: "Thanks."

I go back to the hospital and put the plastic bag down, the nurse was feeding him soft porridge.

Me: "So what's your name on your ID?"

He tells me his name and the surname he has used his whole life and it's not Modise. I send the details to Jase and he calls me after a few minutes and tell me they are open to take anyone in today.

Me: "Are you okay with going to a Psychiatric hospital today?"

He nods.

Sboniso: "I will go. When you left I wanted to go to a rooftop and jump so I guess these suicidal thoughts won't go away unless I get help, right?"

I nod.

Me: "Bonolo went through the same as well."

He looks away.

Me: "I'm sorry."

"Send me the address for a pick up."

That's a text from Jase I send the address and look at Sboniso.

Me: "They are on their way."

He nods looking nervous.

Me: "I will visit you, not in your imagination but in a flesh."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "I didn't know you can hold a conversation with a regular person like me."

I chuckle.

Me: "Kgosi means Kumkani, I guess we're on the same league."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "I don't believe that I'm the next in line to be king, to me that feels like a big joke."

Me: "One day you will believe it boy."

Jason walk in and ask to talk to me. I get up and we talk, he is telling me they are here so I talk to Sboniso's doctor and explain the situation he discharge him. They wheel him to a car I stand outside and look at him.

Sboniso: "Uhm...I...I.."

Me: "What is it?"

Sboniso: "Will you go with me please if it's not any trouble."

I nod and get in next to him. They drive to Pinetown and admit him.

He sits in bed looking around. A nurse walks in with cuffs.

Me: "Uhm..he doesn't need that."

Sboniso: "Maybe I do, it's ok."

She help him lay on his back then cuffs him on the bed in both hands, this is not sitting well with me.

Me: "I will see you tomorrow."

He shakes his head.

Sboniso: "There will be no progress, I don't want any visitors until I start seeing a doctor for maybe three, four weeks."

Me: "Oh.."

Sboniso: "Thank you, you can go now I will be fine."

He says closing his eyes. He really does need help, he switches up real quick and that's not a good sign maybe cuffs are not a bad idea after all.

Me: "Get better ok."

Sboniso: "For what? I have nothing waiting for me out there."

I sigh.

Me: "I'm here, I will teach you what my father taught me about being a great Kumkani, Kgosi."

He opens his eyes and I see hope in them.

I give him my fist, he raise his cuffed fist up, we fist bump like I usually do with my brothers.

Me: "See you soon Kgosi."

I bow a little then walk out.

My phone rings as soon as I get in Jason's car.

Me: "Scebi.."

Mcebisi: "We're already at the house bhuti I thought we will find you here."

Me: "I'm on my way give me like uhm...20 minutes or so."

Mcebisi: "Ok cool."

I get home and hug my wife tight not letting go.

Bonolo: "Gumede."

I let go and kiss her lips.

Bonolo: "Are you sure you're okay?"

I nod.

Me: "I'm fine baby, where's my son?"

Bonolo: "Taking a nap with Ncane.."

That's Mcebisi, they are all his Ncanes since they are younger than me, younger dads.

Me: "Are we leaving him with Mcebisi?"

She nods.

Bonolo: "Dintle is here as well baby sleeping in SisThingo's room."

I nod and take her hand and take Mcebisi's car keys.

Bonolo: "Where's your car?"

Me: "Uhm...at the hospital."

Bonolo: "Why? Is that where your meeting was?"

I nod and open the door for her.

She does her shopping and our son's shopping and I pay for everything then drive back home.

I find my brother in the lounge while Dintle is in the kitchen with Phezukonke wrapped on her back I chuckle and kiss my son's forehead.

Me: "Was he crying?"

Dintle: "No, but I wanted to make porridge for him, he was awake and Ncane was fast asleep so I took him."

I chuckle.

Me: "Thank you Auntie."

I take him and walk back to the lounge, I find Mcebisi quiet.

Me: "Are you good?"

He nods and his eyes moves with Dintle.

Me: "What's up bro?"

Mcebisi: "Uhm..Nothing bhuti I'm fine really."

I can tell he is lying to me but I won't push him to tell me what's wrong, I know he will eventually.

We watch soccer together, Bonolo has been in our room for a while now so I get up and go check on her I find her with one of the letters in her hands, the box is on her lap, her hands are shaking.

Me: "Baby."

Bonolo: "This...this is Sboniso's hand writing Uuka."

She is holding a letter that I found on the floor yesterday that he wrote before trying to take his life so it is the most recent letter so that's why she easily recognised the handwriting.

I look down.

Bonolo: "What is all this?"

Me: "Uhm...he..he is at the hospital."

Bonolo: "How do you know? And how is that any of your concern, and the letters? How is he writing letters to you Kumkani?"

Me: "He was...He is suicidal so I helped him by taking him to a psychiatrist."

Bonolo: "O kena kae Kumkani?"(how does that any of your concern?)

Me: "He needed my help ok! From way back when we were little boys but I ignored him because I always thought I was better than

everyone! That's how it concerns me! I would have helped him but I ignored him."

Bonolo: "ha ke tloganyeni."(I don't understand)

I sit down wiping my face.

Me: "We went to the same school, I didn't know him but he knew me, tried to reach out to me for help from his abusive mother but I brushed him off I would have helped him and took him out of that hell he was in but I acted like a brat!"

I am so frustrated and angry at myself it's not even funny.

Bonolo: "But you can't blame yourself for the way he turned out, Sboniso is a dog Uka he doesn't deserve your help or anyone's for that matter! We both know he ordered that hit that hurt your brothers that day and you're here feeling sorry for that!"

Me: "I don't expect you to understand where I'm coming from B, he needed my help and I ignored him!"

Our voices are loud I can't believe I am fighting my newly wedded wife because of Sboniso.

Me: "I'm going to help him like I should have when we were young boys."

She throws the box on the floor getting up.

Bonolo: "You're helping the same man that put me through hell for years!"

Me: "This is not about you Bonolo."

She chuckles and tears roll down her cheeks. She wipes them.

Me: "I'm sorry, I'm..so sorry baby I understand what..."

Bonolo: "You don't understand shit! I'm leaving."

Me: "Where are you going?"

She just grabs her stuff. I hold her hand.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa mama."(I'm sorry Mama.)

She let of her things and walk out. I really understand where she's coming from and I was wrong for saying this is not about her because she was the one on the receiving end of Sboniso's abuse but now I made everything about me and my guilty conscience.

CHAPTER 35

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KUMKANI-UUKA

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I am watching my wife sleeping on her sister's lap in bed as she keeps brushing her hair with her own tears streaming down her cheeks, she keeps wiping them. I sit next to her.

Me: "Didi.."

She quickly looks away, she didn't realise I have been standing by the door for a while now seeing her crying painfully looking at her broken sister.

Dintle: "What happened? Are you gonna hurt her too?"

I shake my head.

Me: "No, I will never hurt her we had a misunderstanding."

Dintle: "She tells me you're helping Sboniso, why bhuti?"

I sigh.

Me: "Uhm...I don't know if you're ok to read all the letters he wrote to me growing up."

She looks at me confused.

Me: "He needed a friend but I ignored him so I became his imaginary friend, he would write letters of everything he was going through hoping to give them to me one day but I never gave him a chance, we went to the same school but I never looked his way even once."

Dintle: "She saw those letters?"

I nod and get up walking out. I come back with a box and give them to her while helping Bonolo sleep in a comfortable position and cover her with a blanket kissing her cheek.

Me: "These are all the letters he wrote."

She nods. I walk out and sit with my brother.

Mcebisi: "What happened? I heard you and Bonolo shouting and she walked out crying."

I narrate to him the whole story about Sboniso.

Mcebisi: "What? So you're blaming yourself for how he turned out?"

Me: "It's my fault vele, had I listened dad was gonna take him away from that evil woman, he would have turned out fine."

Mcebisi: "But it's not your fault, you didn't know. Growing up you were always this quiet guy except when you were with us so don't blame yourself for this Uuka."

I rub my forehead.

Mcebisi: "Let me cook."

Me: "I will help you."

I help him cook quietly, Didi and Bonolo haven't been out of the room ever since and I am getting worried. Mcebisi dish up for the four of us and I take their food to the room. I find them sitting up reading the letters with tears in their eyes.

I put the tray down and look at them.

Dintle: "He went through all of this?"

I nod.

Me: "You can tell the hand writing was a bit sloppy then, he was still a young boy."

Dintle: "This letter..he wrote that...that Coco tied him up and made him watch her playing with her private part. He sounds scared in all these letters, who is Coco?"

Me: "The person who raised him."

They both frown staring at me.

Me: "He was sexually abused by the person he thought was his mother."

They both cover their mouth.

Didi takes her phone and make a call.

"Didintle, when are you coming back home."

Modise's voice speaks on the line.

Dintle: "What have you done papa? Do you know what you did? The damage you put us through? Do you understand the pain all of us are going through because of you!"

She shouts crying uncontrollable.

Dintle: "You should have gave up the throne and chose us papa."

Modise: "Didintle.."

Dintle: "I hate you so much, I hate you."

She covers her face and sob, Bonolo drops the call and hold her sister.

Bonolo: "It's ok."

She is trying to blink the tears away.

Me: "I'm sorry for the way I spoke to you earlier, I am helping him because he was still calling out for help, years later he still believed I can help him even though it was all in his head but these letters are a cry for help, I'm just reaching out I should have done it sooner a lot of thing could have been prevented."

Bonolo takes my hand.

Bonolo: "I understand now, and I'm sorry for shouting too I was just so confused."

I nod and look at Dintle.

Me: "I think you should also go for therapy just to offload we don't want you having suicidal thoughts as well."

She nods.

Dintle: "I will do that, thank you, you're so kind."

I smile.

Me: "Eat your food before it gets cold."

Dintle: "You cooked?"

I laugh.

Me: "Mcebisi did I only helped him with cutting onions and stuff, I'm not really a good cook."

She nods.

Dintle: "Can I...uhm if it's okay Bonolo can I go see Sboniso?"

She says looking at her sister, Bonolo sighs.

Bonolo: "You can go but I can't...not now"

Dintle: "I understand sis."

I walk out leaving them eating and go check on my son I find him awake looking at the light bulb. I pick him up hugging him.

Me: "Hey buddy."

He starts making baby noises I smile to myself.

Me: "I love you so damn much man and I'm gonna be the best daddy ever."

I change his nappy then take him to the kitchen making him something to eat.

At night Bonolo asks to sleep with Dintle in one room and I sleep with my son.

The next day Dintle and I are getting ready to go check up on Sboniso, I'm in the lounge with Mcebisi when she walks in the room wearing a short blue long sleeved dress with black heels, her dreadlocks are falling on one shoulder. She stops walking and stare at us I look at Mcebisi, he is also staring, Ok let me rephrase that, they are staring at each other until Mcebisi clears his throat and move his eyes around like he is nervous about something.

Dintle: "Uhm...Bhuti I'm ready to go."

I smile and take her hand.

Me: "You look beautiful, where is my wife?"

Bonolo: "I'm here."

I move my eyes to her, she looks so damn good in that black high waist skirt that is a bit below her knees and a white shirt she is also in black heels.

Me: "Baby you look so..damn..you look beautiful mama."

She blush looking away a bit.

Me: "Uhm..are you going somewhere?"

She huffs.

Bonolo: "I'm coming with you guys to see Sboniso."

Me: "Are you sure mamakhe?"

She nods.

Bonolo: "I didn't sleep the whole night reading the letters, one of them was about me, how she pictured Coco whenever I'm vulnerable and in his mercy, he says he loved seeing me cry because to him it felt like he finally got his revenge, I want to know why he saw that Coco in me."

I nod.

Me: "Ok baby, uhm..but if it gets too much you will tell me and we will leave, you don't have to do this now."

She nods.

I drive to where Sboniso is and we step out I can see Bonolo is nervous so I hold her hand.

Me: "I will be right next to you, I won't leave your sight."

She nods and breathe out loud.

I walk in first as the girls are still comforting each other outside.

Me: "Hey.."

He sits up smiling, only one hand is chained today.

Sboniso: "Uuka? Uhm...I didn't think you really meant it when you said you gonna come see me."

Me: "I keep my word."

He smiles, you can tell it's genuine, he seems happy that I came.

Me: "Uhm...I'm not alone."

Sboniso: "Uhm who are you with?"

Me: "Bonolo and Didintle."

He widens his eyes and stare at the door as Dintle walk in first and Bonolo follows standing behind Dintle.

Sboniso: "Hi..Hello uhm...I'm.."

He is stuttering, doesn't even know what to say.

Dintle walks closer and stand next to me.

Dintle: "Hi."

He nods looking down. Dintle gives him her hand.

Dintle: "I'm Didintle Modise, your...uhm your little sister."

Sboniso covers his face instead of shaking Dintle's hand, his whole body is shaking, he is crying but no sound is coming out.

Dintle sits on the bed and hug him, they are both crying. I go to my wife and hold her in my arms.

Me: "Are you ok with being here?"

She shakes her head wiping her tears.

Bonolo: "I will wait for you in the car."

She storms out, I sigh looking at them.

Dintle stares at Sboniso for a while he looks down.

Dintle: "Stop acting shy, I've heard stories about you..you're a bad guy."

She says with a giggle, Sboniso looks like he wants to vanish.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry...I just... "

Dintle: "We read your letters."

He blinks looking at me.

Dintle: "You went through so much, how I wish dad didn't separate us, if he took us to one place maybe we were gonna be able to protect each other."

Sboniso: "I don't know anything about protecting anyone, I failed to protect myself and I failed to protect Bonolo, instead I inflicted so much pain on her."

Dintle: "You're here now, you are willing to work on yourself, your weaknesses I hope you get better then we will take one step at a time, I would like to get to know a better version of you King."

He smiles.

Sboniso: "I don't feel like a King."

Dintle: "You're it."

The door opens Bonolo walks back in and stand next to Dintle looking at Sboniso, she doesn't have any tears in her eyes anymore just anger written all over her face.

Bonolo: "Why? Why me?"

Sboniso looks at her with so much pain in his eyes.

Bonolo: "Do I look like this Coco that you wanted me to feel so much pain for the pain she caused you?"

Sboniso nods, Bonolo slaps him so hard that startle Dintle she jumps up from the bed. Sboniso is looking down in shame.

Sboniso: "You...you do look like her Bonolo I'm not trying to mock you or anything, everything about you is her! From the smile, the body structure and you keeping that natural hair everytime it's her! That's why I hated it so much when you kept your hair natural I forced you to braid it most of the time but you would quickly remove the braids! You look like her!"

He shouts tears rolling down his cheeks.

Dintle: "But...how? Where is this Coco?"

Sboniso: "I don't know, I haven't went back to that place in years maybe she moved. The first day I met Bonolo I saw how much she looked like Coco I got angry but I had to bring her close so I can plot my revenge all I saw was her."

Dintle: "This doesn't make sense."

Me: "Call Modise and ask him who raised Sboniso and what relations does she have with him."

Dintle takes out her phone and make a call.

Modise: "Dintle, I'm in Durban I was about to call you."

Dintle: "Wonderful, I will send the address, you owe us some explanations."

She drops the call and type on her phone then we seat in silence.

Me: "Do you eat well here?"

Sboniso: "Of course, I think the fact that you brought me here is making them give me some sort of a special treatment."

I chuckle as he looks annoyed.

Me: "Unomona yin?"(Are you jealous?)

Dintle laughs.

Sboniso: "There's absolutely nothing special about you Kumkani."

Me: "That!...that name says it all boy, I'm it."

Sboniso: "And I'm Kgosi in case you forgot."

Me: "That was two minutes ago."

Sboniso: "If I wasn't cuffed heeh.."

I laugh.

Me: "Don't go there.."

Bonolo moves her chair closer to me and rest her head on my shoulder closing her eyes I kiss her forehead.

After waiting for almost an hour Dintle's phone rings she answers it walking out, then she comes back in followed by Modise and his wife, Bonolo is shaking like she's feeling cold now.

Me: "Baby.."

She doesn't answer so I remove my jacket and help her wear it but she doesn't stop shivering.

Sboniso: "She...she does that when she's nervous."

I look at him, he quickly looks away.

Dintle: "We want answers papa."

The nurses walk in with two chairs then walks out again. King and his wife sit down next to each other.

Dintle: "Dad, did you know that the woman who raised Kgosi abused him?"

Modise: "No, Coco would never do that!"

He shouts.

Sboniso: "But she did...I would spend days without food, she would force me to sleep with her and..."

He doesn't finish the sentence Modise is on his feet shouting at him to stop lying.

Dintle: "Why did you trust this lady so bad that you gave him your son to raise all these years?"

He doesn't answer but he is fuming, breathing heavily.

Sboniso: "The first time I saw Bonolo all I saw was Coco, why does she look like her Modise?"

MmaModise: "Uhm...Coco is your father's half sister, they shared the same father but because her mother was a commoner she wasn't really accepted in the family."

Dintle: "Amen!"

She says standing on her feet leaning on the wall in defeat.

Sboniso: "So...so I was molested by my aunt baba! It's a circle! It's a curse that is why I slept with my own sister you did this Modise! It's all your fault."

He tries to move his cuffed hand so hard that it's hurting his wrist, he is losing it.

Bonolo get up and sit next to him in bed.

Bonolo: "Calm down ok, breathe, it's ok."

He is groaning like an animal, his eyes are red.

Bonolo: "It's over now, Coco is not here, she will never hurt you again."

He makes eye contact with Bonolo they stare at each other.

Bonolo: "Coco is not here.."

Sboniso: "Coco is not here.."

Bonolo: "So she won't hurt you ever again."

Sboniso: "She won't hurt me ever again."

He keeps repeating everything Bonolo says, I think this is some kind of a hypnosis she's doing on him.

Sboniso finally lets out a sob and pulls Bonolo to him, Bonolo hesitantly hugs him back.

Sboniso: "I'm so sorry...I'm sorry."

Me: "They need to do a ceremony to break this curse Modise or it will keep reoccurring on Generations to come and I don't want that for my son."

MmaModise: "Coco abused my son?"

She says in a low voice and tears roll down her face.

MmaModise: "That's why she only left a letter on where to find Sboniso and we never made contact with her again, she abused my son while she promised to take care of him."

Me: "Why didn't you take care of him yourself huh? I know if I was in your shoes I would have rather left that man and walked away with my son but you chose him over your own children, wasn't child birth painful that you just gave up your children like that?"

MmaModise: "You don't understand!"

Dintle: "I think we do understand mma, you chose your man over us, you guys chose each other over us and right now I am choosing my siblings over you guys, I'm not your daughter anymore Modise continue to live with your wife and die miserable with just the two of you childless."

Modise: "You don't mean that Didintle, I have fixed everything at home, your lives are not in danger anymore I fought for you."

Bonolo: "You are too late Papa, we raised ourselves and so we don't need you now, we will have each other."

She hold Sboniso's hand and hold Dintle with the other.

Modise: "You mean you have each other in bed Bonolo! You and Sboniso committed incest and that will follow you for the rest of your lives, you slept with your brother you will never erase that! You will always be siblings that committed an abomination."

I get up and stare at him with my hands in my pockets.

Me: "I will show you that there is always something called a clean slate, where you live everything behind and start over, you leave the past in the past. You don't forget but you move on, that's exactly what they will do, they are with me now."

He shoves me back I chuckle.

Me: "Don't make children if you're not willing to go through whatever come what may with them, my father went to war in the mountains and came back with me as a newborn wrapped in a cheetah's skin, that to me is a father. I can't say the same about you."

He is breathing heavily.

Me: "He will make a better king than you'll ever be because I, Kumkani Uuka Gumede will give him a real King's teachings, that is my father, the greatest King to ever live a man who chooses family over the throne and let the throne choose him instead."

Modise: "Let's go."

He says grabbing his wife's hand and walk out. I look at the siblings, they are really broken I can't imagine growing up without Thabsile and

Nkosiyo so this must be hard for them, growing up without parents while they are alive and kicking must hurt.

Sboniso: "How...how will I move on from everything, the pain I put you through, the incest we committed? Will you ever see a brother in me?"

Bonolo: "Being here is a start for you, it worked for me everything else will fall into place in time you'll see."

He shakes his head.

Sboniso: "I don't think I'm strong enough to do this."

Me: "So you want to give up?"

He look down.

Me: "You don't want to know how it feels to be a big brother?"

He chuckles.

Dintle: "I want to know how it feels to have a big brother."

He looks at Bonolo.

Bonolo: "It will take some time to actually move on from everything that happened but I am willing to try to forgive you."

Sboniso: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu."(I'm so sorry)

She nods and get up.

Dintle: "Thank you Gumede, I think we needed this and it wasn't gonna be possible without you, Siyabonga."(Thank you.)

I smile and bow a little.

Me: "Zingane zaseBukhosini."(Children of Royalty)

I take my wife's hand pulling her to me.

Me: "We're leaving you now, get well Doc."

He smiles.

Sboniso: "Phakathwayo."

I smile and walk out holding my wife's hand. Giving someone a chance doesn't take anything away from you as a person but it gives them a chance to start over on a clean slate and that makes you a better and a bigger person.

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MCEBISI

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I am with Ndabezintle in the lounge, we are talking about my graduation I can see how excited she is especially by the fact that I want to introduce her to my mom and dad, she has been talking about it a lot.

Ndabe: "Uhm...so only two days left babe, is everything set? Your suit and everything?"

I nod.

Me: "Yeah everything is set baby."

She nods.

Ndabe: "But you look so stressed, what's wrong?"

Me: "Just nerves you know, you're the first girl I will be introducing to my parents."

Ndabe: "Hopefully the last."

She says smiling pulling my beard then kiss me.

The main door open, Kumkani walks in with his wife first then Dintle comes in right after them, I didn't expect them to be back so early. I get up, Kumkani has never seen me with a girl before especially here

in our house except for Hlelo of which is different from this one, Ndabezintle insisted on coming today but I thought she will be gone before Kumkani comes back.

Me: "Uhm...bhuti.."

He looks at Ndabezintle then me and nod a little.

Kumkani: "I didn't know you had a visitor I was gonna take the ladies out to give you some space."

Me: "Uhm..."

Kumkani: "You're Ndabezintle."

Ndabe nods.

Kumkani: "Nice to finally meet you."

She looks at me, she thought it will be the first time everyone sees and hears about her at the graduation party but I did tell my brothers about her but they have never met her also I did tell my parents that I will be bringing a friend at the party.

Me: "Uhm...this is my brother's wife Bonolo and Didintle her sister."

She get up and handshake Bonolo and Dintle, our eyes lock with Dintle she is smiling awkwardly. She has been avoiding me a lot these days and I feel really bad for kissing her it feels like I led her on ever since I've learned that she has a crush on me.

Ndabe: "Bonolo, it must be nice to marry a Prince who is next in line to be King huh?"

Bonolo smiles.

Bonolo: "Uhm..it's really not about who he is."

Ndabe: "But still that is just cherry on top."

Kumkani: "Uhm baby let's check on our son."

He pulls her hand walking away leaving Dintle standing there watching us.

Dintle: "Uhm...nice meeting you Ndabezintle."

Ndabe: "What's your name again?"

Dintle: "Didintle."

Ndabe: "So uwumakotshana kaSis wakho."(So you're your sister's bridesmaid)

Dintle: "Uh..yeah."

She looks my way then quickly walk away. She comes back a few seconds later.

Me: "Are you going somewhere?"

Dintle: "Yes I need some air so I'm going out."

I nod, she walks out again.

Ndabe: "Where do you get those girls with such hot bodies? It's like those Kardashian except that this is real and natural."

I clear my throat, she can talk alright.

Ndabe: "Anyway, I'm leaving now see you later baby."

She kiss my lips and I walk her out. She drives away.

It's 10 pm I am in the lounge alone watching TV Dintle is not back yet and I'm getting worried but I hear a car pulling up outside I peek on the window and see Dintle stepping out and a gentleman does the same and hold her waist but she push him back and leave him standing them staggering all the way towards the gate and walk in. I look at the door as it opens.

Dintle: "Think about it, there must be higher love, Down in the heart or hidden in the sky above..Without it..."

She stops singing as soon as she looks at me then she giggles.

Dintle: "I'm so sorry I thought everyone is asleep by now."

She's drunk and still holding a bottle of wine in her hand.

Me: "What's wrong with you? Do you know that guy that brought you here? What if he took advantage of you since you can't even walk?"

Dintle: "Are you judging me Prince? Just because I had just a little to drink mmmh?"

Me: "Just a little? You call this a little Didi?"

She stumbles and almost fall but I hold her and help her sit down taking off her heels, Women are strong! How do you get drunk and still be able to walk in heels?

Dintle: "I never thought alcohol is this nice you know, it makes me so happy I should have drank it sooner."

She tries to open the bottle of wine but I snatch it from her.

Me: "What's wrong Didi? Drinking won't solve anything you will still wake up tomorrow sober and realise that your problems are still there, so it's better to solve them head on."

Dintle: "I'm facing one of my problems as we speak."

She says widening her eyes staring at me, she's still pretty even when she's drunk.

Me: "Let me take you to bed."

Dintle: "Can you take out your phone and go to google search then type 'how do you get over crushing on someone's man?' Can you do that for me real quick?"

Me: "Dintle you're drunk let me take you to bed now."

Dintle: "Fine I will goggle it myself, Google has the answers to everything."

She takes out her phone that she didn't want me to fix when I bumped into her and the screen broke but she still uses it I guess it's not that bad.

She types on her phone for a while.

Dintle: "accept your feelings, Give it time, Grieve the lost of what you hoped for..."

She is reading it down on her phone so she really googled this.

Dintle: "This sounds easy..."

She toss the phone next to her and get up I quickly hold her and help her sit down again.

Me: "You gonna fall."

Dintle: "Mcebisi I need the bathroom."

I pick her up and take her to a spare room. Before I can put her down we make eye contact as she stares down at me.

Dintle: " O motle."

I stare at her, she brings her face closer but I quickly put her down and step back from her.

Me: "Go to bed ok."

She nods looking down. I go to my room and throw myself in bed, I don't want any complications so I'm gonna stick to my girl and stay faithful to her.

CHAPTER 36

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MCEBISI

*

We are going back home today after Didintle came home drunk last night. I am making a cup of strong black tea for her I heard it helps if you got too drunk the previous I'm sure she has a headache.

I knock in her room but no one answers so I walk in and I wish I didn't because she is sleeping on top of the covers on her tummy wearing just a panty only. I step back but she moves opening her eyes, she quickly pull the bed covers covering her ass.

Me: "I'm sorry, I knocked and you didn't answer, I bought you some tea."

The lavender scent in this room makes me shiver, it's her perfume I always smell it when I'm close to her just like last night I guess she took a shower.

She sits up and her dreadlocks are on her face, I give her a cup then remove her locks tucking them at the back of her ear. She stares at the coffee.

Me: "You don't have a headache?"

Dintle: "I do."

She slowly look up at me.

Dintle: "I'm sorry about last night I had too much to drink, Askies."

Me: "Why are you sorry?"

Dintle: "I...I tried to kiss you please forgive me."

Me: "You don't have to apologise it's cool."

She nods.

Dintle: "So..uhm your Graduation party, she is your plus one?"

I nod.

Dintle: "Lucky girl.."

She says looking down at her coffee.

Me: "You'll find someone as well."

She chuckles.

Dintle: "Yeah I will."

Me: "Uhm..is there someone asking you out?"

Dintle: "Look at me Mcebisi, men always wanna smash this ass and that's all they care about, I want love not being used as a sex toy."

I swallow hard, as she speaks I can imagine what she's talking about and I hate it that my mind is thinking about the ass I just saw a minute ago.

Dintle: "I don't wanna be used."

I clear my throat.

Me: "Uhm...let.me go make breakfast."

I walk out and stand at the kitchen drinking some water as I am having hot flushes. She comes in wearing a white crop top and high waisted jeans, she's not wearing a bra and her nipples are erect very visible.

Me: "Dintle, can you wear another t-shirt or a bra underneath that top."

She stares at me then look at herself, she covers her nipples with her hands.

Dintle: "I'm so sorry uhm..."

She walks away, I am making her uncomfortable and that makes me feel bad but I don't know what to do everything about her turns me on now and that's not okay I have a girlfriend and she is my brother's wife's sister.

Uuka and Bonolo walk in, Uuka is carrying their son.

Me: "Morning guys."

Bonolo: "Morning Ncane, uhm..is Dintle awake?"

I nod and she joins me in making breakfast. Didi comes back when we are already seated around the dinning table, she is now wearing a skinny and a tank top. She greets and stare down at her plate.

Bonolo: "Are you ok Dee."

She nods.

Dintle: "Uhm...I want to start looking for a flat and a job now it's been long overdue after I went back home I sold my flat."

Kumkani: "But you can stay here if you're looking for a job here in Durban, Mcebisi is the only one who comes here often some of us prefer the village for now."

Dintle: "Thank you but I need my own place."

He nods.

Bonolo: "Are you gonna drive with Ncane?"

She looks at me then nod a little.

Dintle: "Yeah.."

Kumkani and Bonolo drive out first and I drive behind them, Dintle is sitting at the passenger seat quietly.

Me: "Look I'm sorry about earlier I had no right to tell you to change what you were wearing."

Dintle: "It's fine."

Me: "Can we be friends Didi and not let things be this awkward between us."

Dintle: "Sure."

I sigh and our drive is silent till we get home.

The tent is already up and mom and maTamia are busy with the people who are decorating the tent. I'm really proud of myself for achieving this.

Everyone is busy helping out, dad is making this a big deal three cows are going to be slaughtered and some goats, he also did like that with Kumkani also with Ngcebo when he graduated from his initiation with the ancestors, he goes all out for us and I'm grateful for having a father like him.

I walk around the yard people are in a jolly mood except for Didintle who is sitting under the tree alone busy with her phone. I sit next to her she look down.

Me: "Why are you sitting here alone?"

Dintle: "It's quiet here and that's what I need for now."

She smiles looking at me.

Dintle: "I'm happy and proud of you Scebi."

I chuckle.

Me: "Thank you. I heard you have a degree as well."

Dintle: "Yeah we all have that title, Doctor. Without a mom and a dad, we did that."

I guess she is referring to her siblings.

Dintle: "None of us got a party just a ceremony at the University that's it."

There is so much pain in her voice.

Dintle: "I even want to look for just an ordinary job because my achievement feels useless, dad just said congratulations like it was a Grade R Graduation."

I hold her hand.

Me: "Will you wear your gown at my party?"

She chuckles.

Dintle: "I don't have it with me hao."

Me: "Would have loved to see you in it."

Dintle: "We can still drive to Durban and fetch it, I left it at Bonolo's house when I moved back home."

I nod and rush to take my keys. We drive back to Durban listening to music from her playlist.

Me: "Your playlist are of a broken hearted girl."

She chuckles.

Me: "Who hurt you?"

Dintle: "My ex, loved that guy but he didn't just understand that I wasn't ready for sex I wanted to see if he's serious about me first, I'm scared of relationships at school girls always told me that boys only want to use me for sex because of my body they don't love me I guess they were right because they can't just wait to have sex with me.."

I look at her.

Me: "They were so jealous it's disgusting."

She laughs and take off her shoes pulling her legs up on a seat.

Me: "You're so short, I wouldn't be able to sit like that in this car without touching the roof top."

She laughs.

Dintle: "I'm a baby."

I am happy with how we're talking right now, it makes me feel better.

We get to Durban and go straight to Bonolo's house, she takes her gown and Bonolo's.

Dintle: "Are you ok to drive me to see Sboniso?"

I nod and drive her there. We both walk in and find Sboniso sitting in bed looks like he just finished eating because there are plates next to him. Dintle sits in bed and hug him, you can tell this is making him emotional as he wraps his arms around her.

Dintle: "Hey.."

Sboniso: "Hey, Uuka is not with you today?"

Dintle: "No, but Mcebisi is here say hi."

He looks at me nervously.

Sboniso: "Hi, uhm...we got off on a wrong foot I want to apologise for the things I said and did to you and your family."

Me: "It's okay, Kumkani explained everything to me."

Dintle: "I will see you tomorrow ok."

Sboniso: "You don't have to come here everyday Ntle."

Dintle smiles and hug him again.

Me: "You're not sick don't you want to attend my party at home I will organise a car for you to take you home to look good then it will bring you back here, you need some air."

He blinks staring at me.

Sboniso: "You're...you're inviting me to your party?"

I nod.

Me: "We royalties should stick together."

Dintle laughs.

Me: "So should I organise a car that will take you there?"

He nods a little, I can Jason and ask him to do that for me.

Me: "I believe you do have a nice suit and your gown."

He smiles rubbing his eyes.

Sboniso: "I do..thank you for your forgiving hearts Gumede I'm really sorry and I'm working on myself believe me."

Me: "I believe you."

We walk out and Dintle stretch her hand.

Me: "What?"

Dintle: "I want to drive your car."

I chuckle and throw the keys to her. She drives us home and she's so sexy in that wheel.

My phone rings and it automatically get answered.

"Baby.."

Her voice fills the car.

Me: "Hey."

Ndabe: "I'm bringing my two friends with me so you know..things don't get awkward being around people I'm not used to."

Me: "That's ok baby."

Ndabe: "Uhm..what are you doing? I miss you so much you know, we've been too preoccupied that we haven't had sex for a while."

I clear my throat as Dintle stops the car on the side road and step out.

Me: "Baby..we will talk when we get home ok I'm driving."

Ndabe: "Ok, I love you."

Me: "I love you too."

I step out and look at Dintle as she throws stones at some dam close by.

Me: "Uhm..let's go."

She nods and wipe her hands on her jeans and get back in the car, she drives us home and we're back to being awkward again.

It's my day today I am wearing my black tuxedo, I look good man. Dad walks in and stand in front of me fixing my collar.

Nkosiyo: "I'm proud of you son, you've been a good boy, respectful too walking right on your older brother's footsteps I guess I did great as a father, I see it in you guys."

I smile.

Me: "Ngiyabonga baba ngemfundiso zakho zingikhulisile zangifikisa la."(Thank you for your teachings they made me grow into where I am today.)

We hug then he brush my head.

Nkosiyo: "Enjoy your day Phakathwayo."

I smile as he helps me into my gown and a hat then we follow each other out. The yard is full, our whole family is here, those with gown are wearing them, it's beautiful to watch.

I see Jason's car and it parks in the yard, Sboniso step out in a black suit and his gown hanging on his arm. I go to him and we shoulder hug.

Me: "You don't look like a man who stays at a looney."

He laughs shaking his head.

Sboniso: "Thank you for inviting me here."

Malaika and Thingo walk up to me holding hands smiling.

Malaika: "Bhuti, you look good. Sawubona bhuti."(hello brother)

She greets Sboniso who just stares at her without greeting back.

Me: "Uhm...they are saying hi."

He blinks and nod still looking at Malaika.

Sboniso: "Sanibonani."

He greets back.

Thingo: "Mom is calling you inside."

Me: "I'm coming now Princess."

They walk away.

Sboniso: "So that's Princess Thingo and Malaika? They are so grown now than the last time I saw them at some conference in Durban."

I chuckle.

Sboniso: "Yhoo."

I stare at him.

Me: "Don't even think about it, Dad would slice off your throat and Nqobasi, you don't want to know what he'd do to you."

Sboniso: "I didn't say anything though."

Me: "You better not, this way sir."

I show him the way and Dintle sees us first and rushes to us, she hugs her brother tight and ends up crying.

Sboniso: "What's wrong? Why are you crying?"

Dintle: "I'm just...I'm happy you're here."

Sboniso wipes her tears.

Sboniso: "Don't cry, have you seen how beautiful you look?"

She's in a short red dress and a gown over it she really looks gorgeous. Bonolo and Uuka step out of the house in their gowns as well, they are holding hands, so beautiful.

Kumkani: "Kgosi."

He says bowing, Sboniso does the same then they shake hands.

Kumkani: "I'm glad you could make it."

Sboniso: "Bonolo.."

Bonolo: "Hi."

I guess things are still tense between them but I believe they will get there in time.

Two cars park in the yard and Ndabezintle steps out in one of them then her two friends, she's in a white dress that hugs her curves but has a slit from the thigh down, she has a curly wig on and it suits her.

I walk up to her and we hug.

Me: "You look amazing."

Ndabe: "Thank you."

I greet her two friends.

Me: "Uhm...do you have your gown with you?"

Ndabe: "Yes but I decided not to wear it, it's hiding all the right things."

She says turning around I smile holding her waist and pull her to me.

Me: "You really look hot, let's go inside."

I take her hand and go to mom and dad while everyone goes inside the tent.

I'm holding Ndabezintle's hand dad is helping mom with her shoes. I clear my throat they look at me as I sit down and pull Ndabe to sit next to me.

Me: "Mama no Baba, uhm..I would like you to meet Ndabezintle, my girlfriend."

Mom smiles.

Thabsie: "Hello Ndabe.."

Ndabe: "Hello King and Queen nice to finally meet you."

Thabsie: "How long have you guys been together?"

Ndabe: "Uhm...over six months now ma'am."

Mom nods.

Thabsie: "Welcome.."

Ndabe: "Thank you."

Thabsie: "Baby, let's go."

Dad get up looking at me for a while then he takes his wife's hand and walk out.

Ndabe: "So is that it?"

Me: "What?"

Ndabe: "I thought you're going to introduce me to everyone, I mean everyone in that tent Mcebisi."

Me: "That's not gonna happen Zintle, my parents and brothers are enough it's not like we're getting married soon."

Ndabe: "Oh.."

I take her hand but she snatch it and walk out first.

I sigh and walk towards the door but step back when Dintle walk in walking barefoot holding her heels.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Dintle: "I broke my heel, your girlfriend bumped into me and she didn't even say sorry."

She looks so upset.

Me: "She was upset I apologize on her behalf I'm sure she didn't notice that she bumped into you."

Dintle: "She didn't notice Mcebisi? I'm short but definitely not invisible."

Me: "Sorry Dintle."

She clicks her tongue and walk away. I wait for her in the lounge, I can hear music playing in the tent. She walks out wearing another pair of shoes but they are not tied, she sits on the couch and try to tie them but I stop her by kneeling in front of her and tie them for her. We gaze into each other until someone comes in I get up and look at the door it's Kumkani with his hand on his pocket.

Kumkani: "We are waiting for you."

I nod and walk up to him he touch my shoulder before I could walk out and speak on my ear.

Kumkani: "What are you doing?"

Me: "What do you mean bhuti?"

Kumkani: "With Dintle? What are you doing?"

Me: "Nothing, I was helping her tie her shoes, my girlfriend is outside Uuka."

He chuckles and nod walking out. Dintle pass me walking to the tent.

The party is great but Ndabezintle is not okay anymore she is just upset.

After the party I take Ndabezintle to her car.

Me: "I'll see you tomorrow baby, thank you for coming."

Ndabe: "I wish I didn't come Mcebisi, you promised me an introduction, you call what you did introducing me to your family?"

I sigh.

Me: "Not this again please."

Ndabe: "I can't do this anymore, it's over Mcebisi."

Me: "What!?"

Ndabe: "If you don't want to do right by me then I don't see why we should be together."

Me: "Ndabezintle come on baby, we only dated for just 6 months and you already have demands stop it ok! I'm not a push over! If you want to dump me then it's fine but if you're doing it to put pressure on me then you're in for a surprise ngizokuyeka."(I will leave you)

She stares at me.

Me: "I'm not joking."

Ndabe: "Ok, I'm sorry I just want us to be together forever."

I smile.

Me: "And we will if you stop acting crazy."

She smiles and wrap her arms around me.

Ndabe: "I love you so much."

Me: "I love you too."

She drives out I go to my hut but I can hear a sweet melodic voice singing outside. I step out and walk around the back. It's Dintle in the tent collecting dishes alone.

Me: "Aren't you tired?"

She shakes her head and continue to sing.

Dintle: "I didn't know what I had, until I lost it I'm so, so damn stupid but boy I love you."

I smile.

Me: "You have a lovely voice you know you should enter idols."

She chuckles.

Dintle: "Don't bore me please."

Her phone rings she takes it out between her breasts and put it down on the table.

Dintle: "Hello."

"Hey, Didintle I really thought you gave me the wrong number."

She giggles.

"Mkhuseli, right?"

I frown. Mkhuseli?

"Yes, I want to get to know you."

Dintle: "Well you already know my name."

"Can we meet tomorrow and talk please if you're not busy."

My heart is beating out of my chest.

Dintle: "It should be early because I'm leaving later."

"I can drive you back to Durban if you don't mind."

I just walk out. Mkhuseli?

I go straight to his shop and find him on the phone so it's really him. I bang the counter he frowns and turn to look at me.

Mkhuseli: "I will call you back soon Didintle ok."

I chuckle.

Mkhuseli: "Prince Mcebisi you look upset is everything ok, by the way your day was beautiful congratulations."

Me: "So you went there to court girls not for the party you were invited to."

Mkhuseli: "You saw me with Dintle? Yhoo she's something else that girl."

Me: "Iphi ingoduso yakho Mkhuseli?"(Where is your fiancé Mkhuseli?)

He frowns again.

Me: "Did you tell Dintle you paid lobola two months ago to the mother of your child?"

Mkhuseli: "Why are you so worked up, owakho yini?"(Is she yours?)

Me: "I don't want you breaking her heart, so stop whatever you're doing if you don't wanna be my enemy."

He sighs.

Mkhuseli: "I will stop calling her, it's just that! Her body man yhoos that ass I can imagine grabbing it."

He does hand gestures I punch him so hard he stumbles back and stare at me in shock.

Mkhuseli: "Uyayidla yin lengane Mcebisi?"(Are you fucking this girl Mcebisi.)

Me: "Ungangijwayeli amasimba Mkhuseli."(Don't mess with me Mkhuseli.)

I walk out and decide to take a walk to calm myself down before going back home.

When I get home Dintle meets me by the gate and shove me back.

Dintle: "Who do you think you are Mcebisi! You went to fight Mkhuseli for what huh!? For what!?"

Me: "To protect you Dintle, that guy will be getting married soon and he only wants one thing you're afraid off, he wants to fuck you and leave you."

Dintle: "Ungenaphi wena! O kena kae!"

Me: "I care about you."

Dintle: "Care about me? You care about me yamasimba!"

I frown.

Dintle: "Stay out of my life, it's better cause I'm leaving your home and I will never see your face again!"

Me: "I was just looking out for you."

Dintle: "Don't! And I changed my mind I don't wanna stay in Durban anymore I'm going to Johannesburg, Durban will be too small for the both of us!"

Me: "Come on don't..."

Ngcebo walks out of his hut and so is Kumkani.

Kumkani: "Why are you guys shouting at each other outside can't you go inside and talk like adults?"

Dintle: "I don't want to talk to him! I'm done!"

She walks away cussing in her language and surprisingly I find her angry side very attractive.

Ngcebo: "What did you do to make such a sweet princess that angry?"

I chuckle.

Me: "I punched Mkhusele, he was testing me."

Kumkani: "How?"

Me: "He has a wife for goodness sake!"

Kumkani: "Oh yeah...that's all that worries you?"

I ignore him walking inside the house.

We are at the dinner table with everyone. I clear my throat.

Me: "Uhm...mom and dad what did you guys think about Ndabezintle?"

Mom clears her throat.

Thabsie: "She's beautiful."

I look at dad.

Nkosiyabo: "Are you sure about her?"

Me: "What, you don't like her?"

I ask disappointed.

Nkosiyabo: "We only just met her once briefly Mcebisi we can't conclude if we like her or not."

Me: "Oh..."

I can tell they didn't like her and that upsets me cause I really do love her.

Thabsie: "We will invite her for dinner some time next week to get to know her, how is that?"

I smile.

Me: "Thank you."

Dintle clears her throat.

Dintle: "Uhm..tomorrow I'm leaving for Durban and I will be searching for a job in Johannesburg, thank you for welcoming me into your home I appreciate it a lot, thank you so much."

Kumkani: "Uhm Dintle, I know one hospital that is short of doctors you can try there and check if it's your type of field."

Dintle: "Where is the place?"

Kumkani: "Durban."

Dintle: "Oh ok I will try there."

I go to my hut and sleep facing up. I hear a knock on the door I open, it's Dintle looking down.

Dintle: "I'm sorry for causing a scene earlier, I'm glad you told me sooner that Mkhusele is married."

I make way for her to walk in then we sit in bed next to each other.

Dintle: "I want to shoot my shot and I want you to reject me if you don't want me."

I look at her.

Dintle: "I have feelings for you Mcebisi from the first day we met, I want to be with you."

I look down.

Me: "I have a girlfriend Dintle."

She nods.

Dintle: "Ok."

She takes my hand and put it on her chest.

Dintle: "I don't know why I strongly believed you would have given me the love I know I deserve."

Me: "Didi you will find someone who will love you and only you, I'm with Ndabezintle and I love her."

Dintle: "I understand."

She let go of my hand and touch my cheek, she brings her face closer and kiss me passionately I am stunned. She breaks the kiss and look into my eyes.

Dintle: "Bye.."

She get up but I pull her back and kiss her, now she's the one stunned.

Me: "Fuck..."

I pull her to my lap and her dress roll up, her hand goes to my member and squeeze it a little my body shakes.

She push me down and take off her dress, she takes off her panty and pull down my boxers a little, she looks nervous as she hold my hard dick and guide it to her pussy. She is struggling to put it in because she is too tight and looks like it hurts.

Me: "Stop...stop.."

I get her off me and look at my dick, it has a little blood on it.

Me: "Get out..."

Dintle: "Mceb..."

Me: "No Dintle, wear your dress and get out."

She nods and bend down to pick up her panty, she wears it and wear her dress slowly walking out. And the minute she's out strong wind starts blowing outside out of nowhere. What am I doing?

I can't sleep the whole night, I keep thinking about what I almost did, cheating, dad wouldn't like that, he taught us never to date two women at the same time because that will be hurting them, we don't do that to women but...I think I did hurt Dintle.

CHAPTER 37

*

MCEBISI

*

In the morning I decide to wake up early so I can clean the yard to keep myself busy. So I take spade and get busy. I see Dintle coming out of the house already in jeans, t-shirt and sneakers. When she sees me she stops walking and look at me.

Me: "Morning."

Dintle: "Hi."

Me: "Are you leaving already?"

She nods.

Me: "Why so early?"

Dintle: "I'm taking a taxi."

Me: "I can drive you to Durban."

Dintle: "No thank you."

Mom walk out behind her and help her tie her dreadlocks.

Thabsie: "I don't want you to leave, I will miss you so much."

She says hugging her.

Dintle: "I will miss you too ma but I promise to come visit often."

Thabsie: "Please do consider staying in Durban baby please."

Dintle: "I will."

Thabsie: "Mcebisi are you busy? Please drive Dintle to Durban she'll stay in our house until she gets a job and find her own place."

Me: "I will take her to Durban Ma."

I go to my hut to freshen up. We put her bags in the car and drive to Durban after saying her goodbyes to everyone even dad is sad that she's leaving.

We get to Durban and I take her bags to the spareroom then join her in the kitchen as she drinks water.

Me: "Dintle."

She doesn't turn nor answer.

I hold her waist turning her around.

Dintle: "You're too close Mcebisi."

Me: "I want to confess something to you."

I pick her up putting her on the kitchen counter and stand between her legs.

Me: "I have feelings for you too, but the timing is bad because I'm with someone else and I don't wanna cheat."

She nods.

Dintle: "I understand."

She's so tempting as I look into her sexy eyes. I pick her up and kiss her taking her to my room.

Me: "My body wants you so bad, and so does my heart but my conscience...."

I shake my head and take off my t-shirt. I kiss her neck and look at her.

Me: "Please take off your jeans for me."

She slowly takes them off, I push her back and pull her knees up and push her panties to the side. I pull her clit with my tongue she gasp..I grab her butt cheeks pulling her close to my face and lick her pussy.

Dintle: "Aaaa..Mcebisi.."

I let go of her buttcheeks and pull down my pants taking them off then stroke my dick. I position my shaft on her pussy and try to enter her but she's too tight.

Me: "Has anyone ever entered here?"

She shakes her head.

Me: "So I'm your first?"

She nods nervously.

Dintle: "Don't stop..I want you to be my first."

I kiss her lips to distract her from the pain as I push all of it in as gentle as possible, she moans in my mouth.

Me: "Fuck...shit."

She scratch my back I groan moving faster.

Dintle: "Haa aaa....babe."

Me: "I'm cuming baby, fuck...aah shit..."

I cum with my knees shaking I catch my breath first and slowly pull out looking at her beautiful face, I remove her dreadlocks on her face.

Me: "O motle."

She giggles covering her face.

Me: "That was amazing baby, thank you."

Dintle: "Baby?"

Me: "Yeah I'm done playing this hide and seek, I want you."

Dintle: "So...what about Ndabezintle?"

Me: "I will break up with her gentle so she doesn't blow up."

Dintle: "You will leave her for me?"

I get up and pick her up going to the bathroom, she is staring at me waiting for an answer.

Me: "I saw the sign, you're mine."

Dintle: "What sign?"

Me: "I can't reveal that to you but you are the one."

We shower and go back to the room, she's walking ahead of me I am holding her waist.

She stops walking I lift my eyes up and I am staring at a livid Ndabezintle, her friend is next to her. I push Didi behind me.

Ndabezintle: "What..what is this Mcebisi?"

Me: "Zintle can we talk without fighting ok."

She moves past me and grab a towel around Dintle's body.

Me: "Stop ok, I get it you're angry but come on just let me explain."

She storms out and her friend follows her. I look at Dintle she looks shaken I pull her to me kissing her forehead. I feel something sharp on my back, then another stab I hold Dintle tight as pain shoots through my whole body.

Dintle: "Mcebisi..."

Me: "Wear your clothes and take my car driving back home ok."

I clench my jaws and move to sit in bed Ndabezintle is shaking her face is wet with tears, Dintle slowly pick up her clothes. I am in so much pain but I don't wanna show it and scare Dintle, Ndabe stabbed my back two times.

Dintle: "There's blood..on the floor Mcebisi."

She stares at me then move to look at my back, she screams.

Dintle: "What did you do!?"

She says charging at Ndabezintle who is breathing heavily.

Me: "Dintle I'll be fine just leave ok, go baby.."

She comes back to me and hold the sides of my face.

Dintle: "I should call an ambulance you're bleeding."

She's crying. Ndabezintle is still holding a knife she moves so fast I push Dintle away she falls on her butt and Ndabe manages to stab my arm instead.

Me: "Enough ok! Enough! I said let's talk stop what you're doing! It won't change anything you saw what you saw and it is what it is!"

I grab the knife from her, her friend is standing by the door watching in horror.

Ndabezintle: "How could you Mcebisi! How could you!"

I sigh and sit down holding my painful arm.

Me: "I'm sorry, I really am sorry."

Ndabezintle: "That's why you didn't wanna introduce me! You call that bullshit you did introducing me to your family! All along you've been fucking this bitch!"

Dintle: "Don't call me that! He might be afraid to touch you because you're a woman but I'm not afraid of you but I will wipe this blood on this floor with you."

Ndabezintle: "I'd like to see you try bitch!"

Dintle slowly get up. I'm losing so much blood and I'm getting weaker I can feel it.

Me: "Didi, baby don't fight ok, don't.."

Ndabezintle: "Baby? Then what am I Mcebisi? Who am I to you?"

Dintle: "Ok! I'm calling the cops you need to get your ass out of here right now!"

She says taking out her phone, Ndabe's friend drag her out and Dintle rush to me and look at my arm then my back.

Dintle: "Do you have a first aid kit here?"

I nod and show her the bathroom, the pain is unbearable I groan.

She walks in taking out a thread and a needle.

Me: "Baby you can't possible think of stitching me up while I'm sober."

Dintle: "What am I supposed to do then Mcebisi? Should I call an ambulance?"

I shake my head.

Dintle: "Then let me do this I won't hurt you."

When she's about to start stitching me up I stop her.

Me: "No, call an ambulance I can't do this."

She nods and call an ambulance. She sits next to me looking down, she keeps sniffing wiping her tears.

Me: "Why are you crying?"

Dintle: "This is my fault I wanted to be with you so bad that I even lost my morals and asked you out knowing very well you have someone, I'm sorry."

Me: "I wanted this too Dintle I was just indential."

An ambulance come they take me to the hospital and I am injected as soon as I get there then when I'm numb they start stitching me up. I sleep on my tummy and I'm feeling drowzy, Dintle is sitting next to me.

Dintle: "Mcebisi.."

Me: "Mmm."

Dintle: "I love you."

Me: "Mmmm."

Dintle: "I will call your brother and tell them you're here."

I nod, she get up and kiss my cheek.

Dintle: "I'm so sorry."

She walks to the door.

Me: "Didintle."

She stops walking.

Me: "Uyaphi?"(Where are you going?)

She doesn't answer but just walk out I want to call out her name but I can barely keep my eyes open so I just close them and allow my body to shut down.

I wake up to the excruciating pain on my back I groan opening my eyes. I can see my brothers,mom and dad all here.

Kumkani: "Mcebisi, what happened?"

He helps me turn then I lean on the soft pillow.

Me: "Can...can you ask the doctors to give me something for the pain."

Mom rush out and come back with a nurse, she injects me and I feel myself getting numb after a few minutes.

Nkosiyabo: "Kwenzekeni?"(What happened?)

Me: "Uhm....Ndabezintle...she uhm...she stabbed me."

I say looking down at my hands.

Nkosiyabo: "Why?"

Me: "Uhm...she found me and Didintle...."

Nkosiyabo: "You and Didintle?"

I nod looking down. I cough out as a punch lands on my chest mom screams.

Thabsie: "Nkosiyo! What are you doing!"

Nkosiyo: "What about you and Didintle huh?"

Me: "We...baba I'm sorry."

He punch me again harder than before, mom push him away.

Thabsie: "He is hurt ok, don't do this Nkosi, not now please."

Nkosiyo: "I will do it right here, right now Thabsie. This boy introduced someone to us not so long ago and now I hear him and Didintle, I want him to tell me if Ndabezintle and Didintle are the same person."

He walks back closer to bed I am holding my painful chest even the pain on my arm and back are coming back.

Nkosiyo: "What did I say about dating two girls at the same time smarty?"

Me: "I'm sorry."

I remove my hand on my chest which is a big mistake because another fast punch lands there once again.

Me: "Aah.."

Nkosiyo: "Where did you learn that from Mcebisi."

Me: "Ndawo baba ngiyaxolisa."(Nowhere dad I'm sorry)

Nkosiyo: "You're still going to be sorry boy."

I slowly look at Kumkani so he can talk to dad but he just looks away and so does Ngcebo.

Nkosiyo: "Mamabo tell the doctor to discharge him today."

Me: "But...I'm still in pain."

He gives me one look I look down.

Nkosiyabo: "I will get the doctor myself then."

He walks out I look at mom.

Me: "Mama."

She shoots me a look as well I guess I'm on my own.

Dad comes back and look at Kumkani.

Nkosiyabo: "Help your brother up, we're going home."

Uuka helps me up and take me to his car driving back to the house.
They help me sit on the couch while mom and dad walk to their room.

Ngcebo: "You're still gonna feel the heat, take it like a man."

I look at him.

Me: "Really? You're ok with your twin brother being beaten."

Ngcebo: "That's one thing dad always warned us about! Never date two women at the same time so you're on your own here brother."

I look at Uuka.

Kumkani: "Hlampe intombi yakhe izokwazi ukumehlisa umoya."(Maybe his girl will be able to calm him down.)

Just then dad and his girl walk back in the room. He grabs me from the couch making me face him.

Me: "Mama please tell him I'm sorry I didn't mean to hurt anyone."

Nkosiyabo: "Yeah, you got hurt instead because you act like your dick is the best thing ever created you keep dipping it on every woman you meet!"

I hear a chuckle from Kumkani.

Nkosiyabo: "What if she stabbed Didintle instead huh? What would have happened! You put her life in danger knowingly I don't blame her for leaving!"

Me: "Leaving? Where did she go?"

He slap me pushing me back to sit on the couch.

Nkosiyabo: "I'm still gonna deal with you."

He takes out his phone and make a call.

Nkosiyabo: "Jason did you find her?"

He drops the call and Jason walks in with a crying Dintle, dad pulls her into his arms.

Nkosiyabo: "Shhh don't cry, it's ok. Bring in her bags."

He takes Dintle's bags I guess she was leaving.

Nkosiyabo: "Let's talk ok."

He pulls her to sit next to him.

Dintle: "I didn't mean for him to get hurt, I'm the one who pushed this relationship to happen I'm sorry."

Nkosiyabo: "He is a man that thinks with his dick instead of his brains. He should have told you to wait while he dumps that crazy girl."

She nods wiping her tears.

Nkosiyabo: "Do you still want to be with him?"

Dintle slowly shakes her head.

Me: "Dintle.."

Nkosiyabo: "Shut the fuck up!"

I look down.

Dintle: "I just want to leave."

Nkosiyo: "You won't leave and be alone again I won't allow you to be alone again, you will stay and no one will bother you ignore him pretend he doesn't exist."

Me: "Baba are you telling her to dump me? Why?"

Nkosiyo: "She deserves better than a man who is putting her life in danger, she has been through a lot and she deserves peace not a man dating psychopaths, she will find the right one soon who has his head in a right place not a little boy who still wanna play games thinking dating two women is a flex, you don't love yourself man."

I swallow looking down, I feel like crying.

Nkosiyo: "Thabsile and I are here whenever you need a mom and dad, Bonolo is there and these are your brothers you can call them anytime you need someone to talk to."

She nods wiping her tears.

Nkosiyo: "Again, date a man not a little boy with no direction."

Dintle: "Thank you baba."

Thabsie: "Let's go baby, you need to rest."

She says taking Dintle's hand and walk away with her, why are they babying her and leaving me here with painful wounds.

Kumkani and Ngcebo starts laughing as soon as dad leaves the room.

Kumkani: "Waze wakurabhela ke ubaba wakho."(Your dad ruined things for you)

I sigh.

Ngcebo: "Like he literally told Dintle to date someone else and not you."

Me: "She won't do that to me."

Ngcebo: "Watch her introduce another man to mom and dad in a few weeks."

I widen my eyes looking at him, he laughs so hard he even have tears in his eyes.

Me: "Oh go to hell!"

I go to bed without talking to Dintle because she's sleeping and her room is locked.

In the morning I feel a hand slapping my back I groan getting up using my knees.

Me: "Baba ibuhlungu lento oyenzayo, uthi uDintle akangiyeye uphinde uyangilimaza."(Dad what you're doing hurts, first you said Dintle must dump me now you're hurting me.)

Nkosiyo: "You're still gonna get hurt bhuti, your girlfriend and her aunts are here."

I widen my eyes.

Nkosiyo: "Go wash your ugly face now and join us in the lounge, uzobola induku namhlanje."(You are gonna get the beating of your life today.)

I go to the bathroom and wash my face then wear something decent going to the lounge.

I sit down, Ndabezintle is seated between two women in one couch then another woman on the other couch, my brothers mom and dad are here and so is Dintle sitting quiet looking down next to my father.

Nkosiyo: "What can I do for you?"

One woman chuckles and look at Ndabezintle's mother I have seen her pictures but never met her.

"My daughter told me what happened with your son yesterday, we just came from the hospital."

Me: "I didn't hurt her."

I say in my defence but the woma just chuckles just then Ngcebo grunts loud and stare at me, I shiver.

"She had severe cramps and started bleeding, I took her to the hospital and they found out she was having a miscarriage."

Dad nose is sweating as he glance at me.

"So I want to know was it your son that was responsible for the pregnancy."

Thabsie: "Ziphendulele Mcebisi umyeni wami akazuphendula into angayazi."(Answer that question yourself Mcebisi, my husband won't answer things that he doesn't know off.)

Me: "She...she was with me."

"Was?"

The woman ask raising her eyebrow she speaks calmly but she is very angry I can tell.

Me: "Zintle, you didn't tell me you're pregnant."

Ndabezintle: "Found out yesterday then lost it yesterday because of you! Linda and I were coming from the doctor when we passed by your house and we saw your car so we came in and found you in the shower with her."

I look down.

Me: "I'm sorry."

Ndabezintle: "Your sorry doesn't change anything! You wanted this after seeing that your mom and dad didn't like me, none of them even

tried having a decent conversation with me! I guess they like her for you.”

She says with a pained voice.

Thabsie: “Sisi you need to understand that he introduced you as a girlfriend that didn’t mean anything unless he told us that his intentions were to marry you, we won’t be building any relationships with our sons girlfriends before they make their intentions known to us or we will keep taking in different girls because relationships nowadays don’t last.”

Dad holds her hand.

“We demand damages then for what your son did to our daughter and you will be responsible for cleansing our daughter for the miscarriage she suffered.”

She speaks in a stern voice the woman is angry but just knows how to hide it but I can see right through her.

Me: “I will do everything that needs to be done I promise, again Zintle I’m so sorry.”

Thabsie: “I’m sorry for the pain my son put you through sisi and the miscarriage I know the pain and I promise we will do everything that needs to be done.”

“Like getting them married?”

The woman ask calmly so.

Nkosiyabo: “Getting who married?”

“Your son and my daughter after that miscarriage we don’t know the damage it did on her and your son needs to take responsibility for that.”

Me: “I’m sorry but I can’t marry your daughter.”

"Can't or won't?"

Me: "Both."

Kumkani smiles looking at me I'm getting irritated really.

Nkosiyo: "We've heard you and we will contact you about everything I need some space with my family."

They get up and bow a little walking out we hear their cars driving away.

Nkosiyo: "Can you all leave me with my son please."

He says looking down, I am shaking in my seat. Mom is the first to walk away she doesn't even look at me, I know she's angry with me.

It's just me and dad now he is staring at me.

Nkosiyo: "When I tell you don't do something it's because I know the consequences, I'm older than you I have seen the world longer than you."

Me: "I know dad I'm sorry."

He shakes his head.

Nkosiyo: "You're the cause of that girl losing the baby, do you know the pain you have put her through?"

I look down.

Nkosiyo: "Do you know it!"

He growls getting up, he takes off his belt and it lands right on my back I grab on the couch tight clenching my jaws. He hit me with a belt everywhere all I can do is take it like a man as Ngcebo said. After he is done he walk out of the room.

I slowly get up and stumble all the way to my room then land on my knees looking down, my back is wet it's probably blood. I feel hands helping me up and make me sit in bed the she takes off my t-shirt.

Thabsie: "Your dad is trying to show you the right way I hope you know this is not abuse."

Me: "I..I know I disappointed you guys and I'm sorry."

She cleans up my stitches and give me painkillers I get in bed and close my eyes, what have I done?

I feel a hand on my cheek, I open my eyes and look at her pretty face.

Me: "Hey.."

Dintle: "I'm sorry for everything now I feel bad for pushing, I shouldn't have done that now it has caused so much pain on another woman, it's all my fault."

She sighs.

Dintle: "I guess I just wanted to be loved, looked for it in wrong places."

Me: "So I'm the wrong place Didi?"

Dintle: "Yes because you told me countless times that You're a with someone that made you off limits."

She sighs.

Dintle: "Maybe you and Zintle will fix things, I...I am stepping back you need to be with her during this time, comforting her for the pain of losing your baby, I'm letting the feelings I have for you go."

Me: "No ..."

Dintle: "I'm sorry."

She get up and kiss my cheek then walk out leaving me in so much pain physically and emotionally. Zintle lost our baby and it's all my fault.

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CHAPTER 38

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MCEBISI

*

I have been in my room for the whole day scared to face my mom and dad because of shame. Dad taught us morals so if I'm backsliding it means I didn't take his lessons serious I am a disappointment.

The door opens and dad walks in I slowly sit up clenching my jaws, I'm still in so much pain, the belt and the stab wounds are killing me.

He grabs the chair and sit next to my bed, I can't even face him.

Me: "Baba I..."

He raise his hand up stopping me from talking.

Nkosiyabo: "I'm sorry."

I look at him.

Nkosiyabo: "I shouldn't expect you to be perfect, you're human and a little boy still growing finding your feet so you're bound to make mistakes. I went about it the wrong way beating you up while you're in pain isn't right I'm sorry."

I nod.

Me: "I'm sorry too for doing the opposite of what you taught us growing up, I didn't mean to I just....the first time I saw Dintle I fell in love with her but I had Ndabezintle, it was hard to ignore my feelings for Didi so I gave in. I know it was wrong of me because I was supposed to let Ndabe go first but I couldn't wait, Dintle is the one."

He chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "Is it?"

I nod.

Me: "She is the one baba, she dumped me but I will win her back, ngeke angehlule."(She won't resist)

Nkosiyabo: "Confident much?"

I smile.

Me: "I'm a Gumede I will get my woman just like you got mom."

He smiles brightly.

Nkosiyabo: "That one is my soulmate man, love her so much, there's never even a day I ever dream of cheating or hurting her, she's precious to me."

I smile.

Me: "I love the way you love mom I want to love my woman like you love her one day."

Nkosiyabo: "Which one? Dintle or Ndabe?"

I look down. He get up and kiss my forehead.

I chuckle.

Nkosiyabo: "Stop locking yourself up, come and eat."

I nod.

Nkosiyabo: "Let me help you to the bathroom."

He supports me to the bathroom then walk out I sigh in relief and freshen up a little.

I join them in the living room and greet, they all greet back.

Me: "Where is Dintle?"

She walks in looking so beautiful in a black dress with a red coat hanging on her shoulder and red heels her dreadlocks tied but falling on her back.

Thabsie: "Wow you look great they will definitely hire you and you might score yourself a good husband."

I clear my throat looking down. I guess she have a job interview.

Thabsie: "Join us please."

I slowly get up and pull out a chair for her, our eyes lock she quickly looks away.

Dintle: "Thank you."

We eat breakfast in silence.

Me: "Uhm can I please drive you."

Dintle: "You're hurt you shouldn't drive."

Me: "You can take my car then."

Dintle: "Ok thank you."

I fetch my car keys then walk her out opening the drivers side for her, she stares at me before stepping in.

Me: "Good luck Nkosazana."(Princess)

She smiles a little, I close the door then she drives out, I am hoping every man out there sees that she is driving her man's car and stay away.

I walk back inside, Ngcebo offers to clean my stitches and give me his herbs that are so soothing.

Me: "You should have gave me these herbs sooner."

He chuckles.

Ngcebo: "I just wanted you to feel the pain and take it all in."

Me: "You're not my twin brother anymore."

Ngcebo: "I love you I just don't like what you did to Didintle."

Me: "I cheated with her not the other way around."

Ngcebo: "I don't care she's still hurting."

Me: "She's so beautiful."

He chuckles.

Ngcebo: "You can still lose her to a doctor where she's going to work."

Me: "That's never gonna happen, She loves me."

Ngcebo: "They say sometimes love is not enough."

Me: "Don't do that Ngcebo."

He laughs and walk away.

After 2 hours or so Dintle comes back and walk in the room we all keep quiet, she slowly smiles.

Dintle: "I will be starting work next month."

Everyone claps hands for her.

Thabsie: "That's great news baby, so did anyone ask you out?"

She blush looking down my heart skips a beat.”

Dintle: “No, ma.”

Thabsie: “That’s a lie, are the men out there blind?”

I clear my throat I know she is doing this on purpose, to hurt my feelings.

Kumkani: “Someone is turning red, are you ok over there Scebi?”

He says laughing out loud and everyone looks my way.

Me: “Didi can we talk please.”

She looks down shaking her head then walks away maybe she’s scared to say yes before mom and dad. I look at dad.

Me: “Can I talk to her please?”

He nods. I slowly get up and go to her room and find her sitting in bed taking off her coat. I kneel in front of her ignoring the pain on my back and hold her leg taking off her heels once I’m done I slowly get up and sit next to her she’s quiet looking down.

Me: “Baby..”

She doesn’t say anything.

Me: “Please forgive me my love for what I made you see, that must have been traumatic for you, I’m sorry.”

She still doesn’t breathe a word.

Me: “Sthandwa sami, please say something I’m sorry.”

Dintle: “I don’t have anything to say Mcebisi I love you but can’t be with you right now until you and Ndabe sort out your issues especially the cleansing they talked about.”

She get up and take off her dress right in front of me I groan as my bulge grows in my pants. She wraps a towel around her body.

Dintle: "Can I get some space please."

I clear my throat and get up walking up to her and hold her neck.

Me: "I need you, you know as you ignore me my love for you grows stronger please don't do this to me, I need you."

She touch my hands looking into my eyes.

Dintle: "I love you but the timing is bad, it's hard for me too to ignore you but I have to, please understand baby."

I kiss her lips then hug her she hold me tight and start crying.

Dintle: "I'm so scared, I have never felt like this for anyone it's scary because I can see that I will lose you, her mother talked about marriage."

She sobs, I stare at her face as tears roll down I have never seen love like this, I can see it in her eyes, so it wasn't just a crush she was in love with me.

Me: "I'm not gonna hurt you Dintle I promise."

Dintle: "Please let me be until you do what needs to be done, let me go."

I shake my head.

Me: "I can't do that."

I really can't let this kind of love go, I wish I saw it sooner. I hug her again and kiss her forehead.

I step back and walk out of the room. I go to my room and take something for the pain then join the family for lunch.

After finishing lunch there's a knock on the door and Ndabe and her mom are here I sigh. Dad asks us to move to the lounge so we can talk.

Nkosiyo: "I thought we made it clear that we will contact you."

"It couldn't wait, her father is chasing her out of the house because you don't wanna come and do right by our daughter I can't have that."

Ngcebo: "By doing right you mean paying damages?"

"Yes and lobola."

Ngcebo chuckle and grunts.

Ngcebo: "That's not possible."

"Askies?"

Ngcebo: "The ancestors won't allow their Prince to pay damages, they don't recognise your daughter as a person who was even carrying a Prince or a Princess but he will pay damages, just not for your daughter."

Ndabe: "What do you mean?"

He get up and bow.

Ngcebo: "Baba I haven't seen my wife in two days so ngisacela indlela."(I'm taking my leave.)

He says walking out just like that leaving the room in silence.

Ndabe: "Mcebisi you said you loved me."

Me: "I did but what I feel for Dintle is more than that, again I'm sorry for the pain I put you through."

Ndabe: "I'm grieving for the lost of our child and you're here talking about Dintle!"

Me: "How many months was the baby?"

She slowly eyes her mother.

Me: "Because there were no signs and we haven't had sex for a while now."

Ndabe: "I only found out when it was already too late."

Me: "But still the doctors can estimate or find out how far along were you."

Ndabe: "I was too traumatised okay!"

She says tearing up.

Nkosiyabo: "As my other son said, there will be no damages paid until they tell us to, we don't go against the ancestors."

"That's bullshit! If your son doesn't do right by my daughter by the end of this month, he'll know what I'm made off."

She get up and pull Zintle up waking out.

Thabsie: "Waze wasifaka ekukhulumeni Mcebisi." (what have you gotten us into Mcebisi)

I look down.

Me: "I'm sorry."

A month later. We haven't heard from Ndabe's mother ever since that day they came back just the two of them, she haven't even tried making contact with me.

Dintle has started work which takes most of her time, if she doesn't come home very late at night she comes back early in the morning and go straight to bed sometimes I even think she found someone because she hardly even talks to me, it's like I don't exist anymore and it hurts.

I have healed now but I still feel light pain from time to time on my back.

I wake up early today I want to talk to Dintle before she leaves. I walk out of my room and find her in the kitchen already dressed she is stuffing her face with everything on her plate and it's full.

Me: "Hi."

She looks at me, her mouth is full it's like she's in a rush. She slowly waves her hand and continue to eat.

Me: "Can we talk?"

She covers her mouth and grab her bag.

Dintle: "I'm late."

She walk past me but I gentle grab her hand.

Me: "Why are you doing this to me?"

I grab a juice on the kitchen counter, she looks like she can't swallow food in her mouth. I help her drink and laugh at her.

Me: "uphangelani?"(Why are you eating in a hurry?)

Dintle: "I'm hungry and in a rush."

Me: "You're hardly home when you become my wife you will have to tone it down a bit."

Dintle: "Your wife is Ndabezintle not me."

Me: "Uwena umfazi wami nje."(You're my wife)

She shakes her head.

Me: "Can we have a late night dinner today I will pick you up from work."

She nods.

Me: "I can drive you there even now if you don't mind."

She nods again and give me her bag while she takes her plate of food and start eating walking out. We get in the car and I drive her to her work as she eats all the way there.

Me: "Are you okay?"

She nods wiping her hands and mouth with a napkin.

Me: "Are you full?"

She shakes her head no, I stare at her in shock. She step out of the car and go to a lady that sells just outside the hospital and comes back with baked cookies. She get in the car and eat them.

Me: "Uhm...should I bring lunch for you?"

Dintle: "Yes, there's a Shisanyama where I usually buy the meat it's not far from here."

Me: "Ok bye."

I lean over to kiss her lips then she step out and catwalk inside the hospital premises.

I drive back home waiting for her lunch time.

Thirty minutes before her lunch I drive to that Shisanyama and get her braai meat with some pap and salads then drive to her work place. I stop at the reception area and ask for her office they tell me it's on the third floor so I get in the lift and it takes me there. I knock and slowly open the door, she is busy on the computer with her glasses on I smile staring at her.

Me: "Doctor Modise soon to be Gumedede."

She slowly look up and smile a little getting up fixing her dress. I give her the paper bag she takes it opening it then she smells it, you can tell she is enjoying the smell because she closes her eyes.

She put it down then hugs me.

Dintle: "Thank you Mr Gumede."

Me: "I'm taking care of my woman, Didi ngicela unginike ithuba futhi sthandwa sami ngeke ngikuzwise ubuhlungu."(Please give me another chance I won't hurt you)

She sighs and lays her head on my chest.

Me: "Is that a yes baby?"

She nods and look up at me, I kiss her slowly and handle her ass wrapping her legs around my waist.

Me: "I want you right here on this table."

She bite her lower lip so I put her on top of the table and step back to lock the door and go back to her opening her thighs.

Me: "Move your panty to the side for me my love."

She slowly moves it with her hand shaking a little.

I go down on her licking those pussy lips to that clit so furiously she is gasping for air.

Dintle: "Baby..."

Me: "Mmm baby?"

Once she cums I get up unzip my pants then slowly thrust in her pussy slowly she's wet so it's so much easier. I watch my dick that is filled with her cum sliding in and out of her pussy.

Me: "Fuck..tell me you love me baby.."

Dintle: "I...aaah.."

I grab her thigh and move faster and deeper she screams holding my shoulders tight.

Me: "Say it baby.."

Dintle: "I love you."

I move her from the table without pulling out and hold her ass moving her she starts getting a hang of it because she starts fucking me so good while kissing me. I put her down and bend her over on the table she starts shaking and aching her back as soon as I fill her up.

Dintle: "Mcebisi..."

Me: "You're mine ok."

Dintle: "Yes..."

I move faster and shoot my cum deep in her pussy then slowly pull out. I turn her around and make her sit on the table opening her thighs I watch as cum dripping out of her pussy I stroke my dick releasing the remaining cum from my dick. I touch her pussy and slowly slides my middle finger in her she throws her head back I replace that finger with my dick as we enjoy the second round after I'm done I take off her panty and wipe her with it then myself and put it in my pocket. She walks around the table and take out wipes from her back wiping herself clean. She seems shy all of a sudden while I trace her every move.

Me: " Are you ok my love?"

She nods looking down.

Me: "Bheka indoda yakho phela."(Look at your man)

She smiles looking at me.

Me: "I'm not giving up without a fight, always know that, Ok?"

Her smile is making my heart whole again. I kiss her.

Me: "Let me leave you to work baby I will fetch you later."

Dintle: "Bye and thank you for lunch."

Me: "Just lunch mam'Gumede?"(Mrs Gumede)

Dintle: "Ok everything."

She giggles with a huge smile on her face. I kiss her cheek again and step out of her office. I open my car and before I walk in I take out her panty on my pocket and chuckle putting it on my bag that is always behind my drivers seat. I feel a hand on my shoulder I turn to a guy that just starts shooting me at a very close range for about four times then run away I lean on my car and slowly go down Dintle's smile flashes before my eyes before it becomes all dark.

CHAPTER 39

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NKOSIYABO

*

My wife and I are getting ready to go back home to the village I don't really like staying in the city for long anymore but our son wasn't ok so we had to stay and make sure he's fine again.

I hold my wife's waist looking into her eyes, she smiles looking at me.

Me: "My Queen."

She giggles.

Thabsie: "King, years later you still look at me like I'm the only girl in the world."

Me: "That's because in my world you are the only girl, mama wabantwana bami."(Mother of my kids.)

I smile kissing her lips.

Me: "You gave me children that I'm so proud of even though they sometimes become a headache I still am grateful for all of them, thank you maKhumalo."

I hug her tight and I take out bags walking out we find Kumkani and his wife with their son in the lounge ready to leave as well.

Me: "Where's your brother?"

Kumkani: "He said he is going to buy lunch for Didi but he should be back any minute from now."

His phone rings. He answers.

Kumkani: "Bukhosi.."

I look at him.

Bukhosi: "Bhuti..."

I frown as I hear a loud scream over the phone.

Me: "Bukhosi! Is that Ngcebo?"

I ask letting go of my wife and grab the phone from Uuka.

Me: "Is that your brother?"

Makhosini: "He just started screaming baba we don't...we don't know what to do, Wenzile is trying to calm him down but it's not working."

I can tell he is crying and Bukhosi failed to even talk.

Me: "Go to him now."

Makhosini: "He's here."

Me: "Ngcebo yami.."

Ngcebo: "Ba...baba uMcebisi.."

I quickly look at Kumkani as he takes his mother's phone who looks like she wants to pass out. I help her sit down and kneel in front of her brushing her thigh to calm her down.

Thabsie: "Izingane zami Nkosiyabo."(My children Nkosiyabo.)

She's already shaking.

Kumkani is trying to make a call but looks like whoever it is, is not picking up.

Me: "What's wrong with your brother? Is he okay?"

Ngcebo: "He's..he's not! He's not..."

He sobs again now I am getting really worried I don't even know how to react.

Me: "Bonolo stay with your mother, Uuka and I will go find Mcebisi."

Thabsie: "No, I'm coming with you, I want to see my son Nkosi."

I shake my head.

Me: "Stay here Thabsile I will come back home with him I promise."

She nods.

Me: "I promise sthandwa sami."

I kiss her then rush out, Uuka gets in the drivers seat and I on the passenger seat then he drives to the hospital where Dintle works. We find the cops and journalists on the parking lot next to my son's car it's a crime scene I push everyone away as I see blood on the ground just next to an opened driver's side door.

Me: "Where is my son?"

"Sir so it's true the Prince was the one shot here and died on the scene?"

One journalist says I go insane, I literally go crazy!

Me: "Where is my son? Who took him?"

I say grabbing one cop.

Me: "Where is he?"

"Sir he was taken in, he's wasn't declared dead but it doesn't look good."

I run inside calling out his name hoping he will show up and tell me he's ok.

Me: "Mcebisi! Scebi, Where is he?"

I am shouting looking around hoping someone tells me where my son is.

"Sir..sir the doctors are still in theatre with your son, he was shot four times on his chest we don't know if he's gonna make it, we're praying for him."

One woman says touching my arm I remove her hand from me, my wife touches me not some strange woman out of nowhere.

I spot Didintle looking around in confusion then she rushes to me hugging me, I can feel her body shaking.

Dintle: "They are saying a Prince was shot at the parking lot baba, Mcebisi was here bringing me lunch, he's not the one who is shot, right?"

She says looking up at me with glassy eyes hoping I say no.

Dintle: "It's not him right? It's not Mcebisi?"

I sigh helping her sit down. She is starting to sweat on her face.

Me: "Calm down, he's..he's gonna be fine."

Dintle: "So it's him? No.."

She get up and run to the theatre room I follow her as she barges in I stop on my tracks when I hear machines beeping.

"We're losing him!"

Dintle: "Mcebisi, no.."

Me: "boGumede...Phakathwayo...Khondlo...you can't let this happen to me and my wife please."

I am speaking through my teeth my whole body is sweating.

One doctor spots me and Dintle by the door he ask that we step out.

Dintle: "No! I want to see him."

Me: "It's ok, come with me let them save him, let's go."

I am trying to calm down for her sake now because she's so close to losing like I did earlier. We find Uuka on the phone pacing around.

Kumkani: "Jason I don't know how you will do it but I want a parking lot footage of this hospital today!"

He drops the call and make another one.

Kumkani: "Wenzile, how is he?"

Silence.

Kumkani: "Who is driving?"

He nods.

Kumkani: "Ok ok thank you."

He drops the call and sit down wiping his face.

Me: "How is your brother?"

Kumkani: "He's not ok but Wenzile is driving them here. Mcebisi, is he gonna be fine?"

Me: "He have to be okay I'm not losing any of you, I'm not gonna bury any of my children! That's not how it's supposed to be! You should bury me not the other way around, No."

My phone rings in my pockets it's my wife.

Me: "Mamabo.."

She just starts crying.

Thabsie: "I just saw the news Nkosi, is my son dead? You promised to come back home with him Nkosiyabo?"

She's crying so painfully.

Me: "I'm coming home now baby, just...please stop crying."

Thabsie: "I just want to know if my son is alive or not!"

Me: "He is...alive baby...Mcebisi is fine Mama."

Thabsie: "But they say he was shot four times Nkosi, I'm driving there right now."

She drops the call I sigh and wait for the doctor to tell us something. We wait without anyone telling us anything I get up when my wife walks in followed by journalists, she stops walking and stare at me like she is reading my emotions. I walk up to her and hold her in my arms, she is in jeans and my t-shirt with morning shoes, she hardly wears like that in public but today nothing matters but our son.

Thabsie: "How is he baba? Have they said anything yet?"

She speaks while still on my chest.

Me: "He's gonna be fine, our boys are strong."

I take her to sit next to Dintle and go to my children, my youngest look shaken and Ngcebo looks so weak. Kumkani rush to him as he slips from Wenzile's hold and collapse on the floor, journalists are having a field day everything is happening in front of their eyes whoever did this to my family is smiling wherever he or she is but I swear it won't last long. The nurses put Ngcebo on a stretcher and walk away with him. I go back to my wife and kneel in front of her holding her hand.

Me: "Asizubakhalela Thabsile abafana bethu besaphila sula izinyembezi sthandwa sami."(We won't try for our boys while they are still alive, wipe those tears my love)

I am so trying to keep it together for my family. My boys and the Princess are sitting quietly next to each other Thingo being in the middle.

The doctor finally comes out of theatre and walk up to us, I am trying to read his face but nothing gives anything away he's just keeping a straight face.

Me: "How is he doctor?"

He looks at all of us first then back at me.

Doctor: "We managed to remove only three bullets, one of them is in a very dangerous position an inch from the heart and we're afraid if we continue with surgery we might lose him."

He sighs.

Doctor: "Unfortunately your son has slipped into a coma and need ventilators to help him with breathing, also the bullet in his body might keep moving we are just waiting for it to reach a part where we can easily perform surgery."

Dintle: "But...but what if it penetrates the heart, he will die!"

Doctor: "There's nothing we can do Doctor Modise, he already lost so much blood during that surgery and right now he can't even breathe on his own so another surgery now will put his body in so much distress we can even lose him while it's not even looking good now."

Me: "Can we see him please."

Modise: "Uhm..we can allow only two people at a time and you need to change into scrubs and sanitize your hands."

I nod and look at my wife then Dintle.

Me: "You both can go in first while I check on Ngcebo."

They nod and walk away following the doctor.

Me: "Uuka look after your siblings I'm going to check on your brother."

Kumkani: "Yebo baba."(Yes dad)

I walk in his ward and sit next to him, he is pale sleeping like he is dead I know his spirit is probably not here but with his brother.

Me: "Phakathwayo.."

I wait for a while and he gasp opening his eyes.

Me: "Uzizwa unjani?"(How are you feeling?)

Ngcebo: "He is in so much pain, he is trying to fight baba but the pain is too much for him."

I look down as tears roll down the sides of his eyes.

Ngcebo: "I wish I can take his place, he needs to wake up."

Me: "Is there any hope?"

He slowly shakes his head.

Me: "Please Ngcebo, convince your brother to fight, tell him not to give up, he must think of mom, Dintle, his siblings! Tell him to fight please."

Ngcebo: "He is trying to hold on but I don't know for how long, the pain is unbearable."

I wipe my face shaking my head.

Ngcebo: "Protect Didintle baba, she has something precious that belongs to us and they want her next."

I blink.

Me: "So it's Mcebisi's ex girlfriend that ordered that hit on my son huh?"

I clench my jaws, they don't know me but have only heard about me in books and TVs, nobody touches my children and get away with it I'll go on a rampage!

Me: "Will you get better?"

He sighs.

Ngcebo: "He is my twin brother, we are one baba, when he stops breathing I also suffocate."

I sigh.

Ngcebo: "But I hate this place, spirits are roaming around and it's a torture for me because some are bad spirits."

Me: "You want to go home?"

He nods.

Ngcebo: "Yes please."

Everyday is a battle for my son, he is still in a coma and they can't remove the remaining bullet in his body and it keeps moving on his body. Ngcebo is still weak but he's getting there.

Its been three weeks now with my son in a coma, Thabsile is not taking it well, we are here at the hospital I am staring at the machines as they keep beeping by each second passing. The doctor walks in and stand on the opposite side greeting us.

Thabsie: "Are there any changes?"

The doctor sighs looking down at the file in his hand.

Doctor: "His heartbeat is getting weaker and his blood pressure is also dropping everyday, he is not responding to anything so I think it's better if we switch off the machines...."

Thabsie: "No!"

Doctor: "Ma'am his heart will shut down on its own eventually I was just saying let him rest."

Thabsie grabs a vase with flowers next to Mcebisi's bed and throws it the doctors way and luckily she miss. I hold her waist as she wants to attack the doctor.

Me: "My love...stop..don't do this."

Thabsie: "Did you hear what he said? He is saying I should kill my son! He is still breathing that should mean something I don't care how low is the heartbeat but it's there!"

Me: "I understand and we're not switching off the machines I promise you, we won't let our son die."

She wraps her hands around me.

Thabsie: "We're not losing him."

Me: "We're not.."

Isisekelo walks in and stand next to Mcebisi kissing his cheek, she has been around everyday as well, She loves all my kids but with Mcebisi and Ngcebo it's beyond the word love, they have a strong connection, she breastfed them when she never even had a baby of her own, she was a mother to my boys when my wife was kept hostage and I was hospitalized, that bond they shared never broke between them.

Isisekelo: "Scebi come on man, you need to do better than this, fight boy, your siblings are about to start their matric soon and you being here isn't easy on them and Dintle, how can you claim to love someone only to slowly give up on them like you're doing to Dintle?"

The machine starts beeping loud and Mcebisi starts shaking vigorously, this is the first time this is ever happening.

Thabsie: "What's happening?"

The doctors press the emergency button next to Mcebisi's bed nurses and more doctors rush in and we are told to wait outside.

We stand there quietly I am holding my wife tight in my arms I can tell how scared she is and so am I.

The doctors finally come out and pass us without saying anything then his doctor comes to us.

Doctor: "Sir...uhm..we have some good and bad news."

Dintle rushes in and stand next to us, Isi wraps her arm around her neck pulling her close, the girl is too short.

Doctor: "He is awake."

I smile.

Doctor: "He is asking to see the whole family before we perform another surgery."

Me: "Another surgery for what?"

Doctor: "The bullet, it is in his heart."

I widen my eyes, how will he survive that? How is he even awake now.

I call all my children and tell them to come to the hospital.

We all walk in the room and stand around his bed. I remove the oxygen mask on his face, his cheekbones are visible my son looks bad.

Mcebisi: "Baba.."

Me: "Yes son."

Mcebisi: "I...don't...want..that..surgery."

He is drawing long breaths after each word.

Mcebisi: "I am.. in.. a lot of ...pain..I want to rest..tell...them to let me be."

Dintle: "What...what do you mean Mcebisi? You want to give up? You can't do that to me.. please."

Ngcebo: "Is that what you want brother?"

He slowly nods.

Ngcebo: "Then who will raise your babies for you huh? Who will raise them for you when you give up on them before they are even born? You want to be that selfish!?"

He screams at him.

Mcebisi: "The...babies?"

We all look at Dintle, she looks just as confused.

Ngcebo: "She's carrying a boy and a girl brother, you're going to be a dad you don't want to miss that..please fight, give it your all and come back to them."

Dintle's hand automatically goes to her tummy she is shocked.

Mcebisi: "You're...pregnant?"

His face becomes full of life as soon as he ask those words, there is a light smile on his face.

Dintle moves closer to bed and take his hand putting it over her tummy, we all thought she was gaining weight because she has been eating a lot. I can see tears in his eyes.

Mcebisi:

"But..what...if..I...don't..make...it..out...of...that..surgery...alive?"

Ngcebo: "You have enough motivation to make it out alive now brother..Dintle needs you and so are the babies she's carrying."

Dintle: "Please..I need you...we..we need you."

He nods.

Mcebisi: "I..I...think...I'm...ready."

Dintle: "You promise to come back?"

Mcebisi: "I..promise."

I wipe my face and walk out. I tell his doctor to perform that surgery. We all watch his being wheeled inside the theatre room with a lot of what ifs.

What if he doesn't make it, what will become of Dintle and their unborn babies? He needs to come back to us alive, those babies came at the right time, they will indeed be his motivation.

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CHAPTER 40

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DIDINTLE

*

I have started showing a little baby bump. I confirmed what Mcebisi's twin brother said the following day after he asked who was gonna raise his babies if he gives up, I did a pregnancy test and it confirmed I was 8 weeks pregnant which means they were conceived the first day we had sex together and Ndabe caught us. Now it's been four whole weeks since the surgery he still haven't woken up he went on a coma once again and it's been hard for me because I'm thinking a lot. What if he dies? He will leave me with two babies to raise on my own.

Today I just came back from my 12 weeks appointment so I am sitting next to his bedside holding his cold and pale hand, he looks lifeless just those machines are keeping our faith alive.

Me: "How can you let me go through all this on my own Mcebisi? It's my first pregnancy and I'm so scared yet you don't wanna wake up and be there for me."

I wipe my tears, this is what I do everyday, I go to work then come here everytime I get a chance to just beg him to come back to us.

Me: "I'm three months pregnant and I'm doing this without you! How selfish can you be huh! How could you do this to me."

I hold his hand tight with both my hands.

Me: "You said you don't give up without a fight, please fight for our unborn babies and me."

I feel his hand moving a little I quickly get up and look at him.

Me: "Babe...can you hear me? Mcebisi baby."

I rush out to call a doctor just as his parents walk in.

Me: "He moved his hand! He is awake."

I say happily walking back in the room, the doctor checks on him but there seems to be no response.

Doctor: "Are you sure it wasn't just your imagination?"

Me: "Are you calling me crazy?"

Doctor: "No...no I'm just saying maybe it was all in your head I mean we all want him to wake up."

Me: "I know what I felt ok! His hand moved! I felt it, I was holding his hand!"

I shout at him because he is making me seem like I'm crazy.

Thabsie: "Dintle my baby, calm down ok."

Me: "Please tell me you believe me, I'm not crazy I felt his hand moving."

Thabsie: "I believe you ok, I believe you."

I start crying so hard, it hurts because he's here because of me, I kept pushing like a desperate bitch that I am, I begged a man to love me!

She helps me sit down then fan my face.

Thabsie: "Calm down ok, for the little one's sake."

I nod and try to breathe. Ngcebo walks in and stand next to his brother.

Me: "Can you communicate with him and tell him to come back please.."

He stares at his brother then look at the doctor.

Ngcebo: "Switch off the machines."

"WHAT!" We all say in unison.

Nkosiyo: "What are you saying Ngcebo?"

Ngcebo: "Let the doctor switch off that machine baba."

Thabsie: "Ngcebo you want your twin brother to die?"

She ask in a low voice. He doesn't say anything but literally pull the plug I feel my babies turning in my tummy I let out s scream falling on my knees, my chest is closing in and I can feel so much pain in my belly as I close my eyes.

I open my eyes and I feel like I have been in a very deep sleep having a long dream, a nightmare. I quickly touch my belly and I can feel the baby bump is still there but when I remember Ngcebo pulling the plug of that life support machine I start screaming all over again, I'm alone in the ward.

Me: "What have I done to deserve so much pain! NO! He can't leave me with his babies!"

I think I am going crazy I can't stop screaming but I want to, I really want to stop. The doctors and nurses rush in trying to calm me down but it's not working. Ngcebo walks in I get off bed and go straight to him punching his chest with my fist I'm angry at him, I want to kill him so he can follow his brother.

Me: "You killed him!"

I fall on my knees and cry, it's so painful.

"Didi..ntle."

Everything stops at the sound of his voice, am I dreaming?

"I'm not dead baby, I'm here."

I can't even lift up my eyes, someone is playing tricks on me.

Me: "No.."

"Look at me baby, I'm right here."

I shake my head closing my eyes as the pain shoots through my abdomen I moan in pain touching my belly.

I slowly get up with my hand over my abdomen still with my eyes closed.

“Is that blood?”

He asks with so much panic in his voice I open my eyes and stare at him. He is on a wheelchair naked on his upper body he has white patches on his chest it’s really him.

Me: “Mcebisi?”

Mcebisi: “She’s....bleeding.. do something! Dintle..baby.”

I slowly step closer to him but the pain on my abdomen stops me on my tracks I bend down. I feel light headed so I just let go of my body and it becomes dark.

“I fought baby, I fought to come back to you and my babies so please just hold on, stay with me.”

I feel his hand brushing my tummy. I open my eyes and slowly look next to me, his face is wet with tears, he lost so much weight and is a bit lighter than he usually is, he’s actually pale.

Me: “Mcebisi you’re here, are my babies ok? Why was I bleeding?”

He wipes his tears and smile looking at me.

Mcebisi: “I missed seeing your beautiful face, your smile, please smile for me.”

I chuckle with tears in my eyes.

Me: “Tell me if my babies are ok.”

Mcebisi: “They are ok, you were under a lot of stress but the babies are fine.”

I heave a sigh of relief. He brush my tummy all over again.

Mcebisi: "I can't believe I knocked you up first day we actually made love, this is such a precious moment to me, being here seeing you again and you're carrying my seed. Thank you so much Dintle, you guys pulled me back in that dark place I was into."

Me: "I missed you so much, I was always crying for you."

He chuckles.

Mcebisi: "I heard everything, when you told me how selfish I was that moved me that's when I was able to even move my hand."

Me: "Thank you for coming back to us."

Mcebisi: "So I almost left you with not just one but two babies. You weren't gonna be able to move on because I wasn't gonna allow it I was gonna fight from the grave, you belong with me Dintle, I ate it first and will be the only one till forever."

I smile shyly. He groans in pain touching his chest.

Me: "Are you okay?"

Mcebisi: "Yeah just a little pain on my chest."

Me: "They need to give you something for the pain."

He nods. We look at the door as it opens a nurse walks in wearing scrubs and a mask I'm confused because I'm just in a normal ward what are scrubs for. She greets and hold the drip she has an injection on her hand.

Mcebisi: "What are you doing?"

She doesn't answer as she injects the drip Mcebisi quickly get up and remove the drip on my arm painfully I moan in pain as the nurse quickly rushes out. Blood oozes from where he pulled the needle on

my arm, he is also bleeding on his chest the patches have blood on them.

He is in pain as he balance one hand on the bed and press the emergency button.

Me: "What is going on?"

He grabs the sheet and press it on where I am bleeding.

Me: "Mcebisi."

His father walks in first.

Mcebisi: "Baba, take Didintle back home please."

Nkosiyo: "Why? Did something happen?"

Mcebisi: "Ndabezintle was here, she tried to put something on her drip, she's not safe here."

His voice is shaky and his breathing heavily might be because of pain on his chest. So that nurse was actually Ndabezintle, I heard she's a nurse but not in this hospital so she wanted to kill me.

Nkosiyo: "Ok I have given these people enough freedom, it's time they know never to mess with me and my children ever again."

His voice sounds deeper than usual.

He helps Mcebisi sit on his wheelchair first then help me sit up making a call.

Nkosiyo: "We're taking your brother and Didintle home, they are not safe here, come with another car I will hire a doctor to come check on him at home."

He makes another call.

Nkosiyo: "Mamabo, give Kumkani Didintle's clothes to change and Mcebisi's they are coming home."

The way he speaks to his wife always gives me goosebumps so much love and respect, I want a man that will respect me and love me like that one day.

Nkosiyo chuckles I look at Mcebisi he is looking down.

Me: "Uhm...what is it?"

Nkosiyo: "You're thinking out loud."

I bite my lower lip, so I said all of that out loud.

They drive us home and Mcebisi is quiet all the way there.

He goes to his room to rest while I go to the kitchen and hug mom.

Me: "Sanibonani."

I greet as she hugs me back tight, she's a natural when it comes to motherhood I am learning a lot from her which is something I wouldn't have learnt from my own mother.

Thabsie: "How are you and the babies?"

I smile brushing my belly.

Me: "Their daddy is home so we're happy."

She smiles and make food for us I keep eating while she is still making food.

Thabsie: "This is Mcebisi's food, can you give it to him."

I nod and take Mcebisi's food to his room. I get in next to him in bed, he is leaning on the headboard.

Me: "Hey."

He nods.

Me: "Are you okay?"

He nods again.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Mcebisi: "You're hoping to find another man?"

Me: "What?"

Mcebisi: "What you said earlier that you hope one day you will find a man that will love you like dad loves mom."

Me: "Aren't you gonna love me like your dad loves your mother?"

Mcebisi: "But the way you said it, it's like you're looking for someone else."

Me: "That's crazy all I said is that I hope I will receive the same love from a man, didn't matter who it is!"

Mcebisi: "That's exactly my problem Dintle, you're carrying my childre but you're here telling me about other men!"

I sigh getting off bed.

Me: "I don't wanna do this with you right now Mcebisi."

Mcebisi: "Come back to bed Didi."

Me: "I have my own bed here."

I walk out maybe my statement didn't sound right to him or maybe he just read too much into it.

Later at night I walk in his room and find him asleep. I get in next to him.

Mcebisi: "Dee.."

He says with his eyes closed.

Me: "I'm sorry, I think the whole thing came out wrong."

He sighs opening his eyes.

Mcebisi: "No I took it the wrong way, I'm so sorry."

I nod. He groans touching his crotch I look down and his dick is up, I clear my throat as my pussy starts clenching I squeeze my thighs together.

Me: "Uhm...I...I'm going back to bed."

Mcebisi: "Why can't you spend the night with me?"

Me: "What if I hurt you."

He chuckles.

Mcebisi: "Hurt me how when we are sleeping Dintle?"

I bite my bottom lip, I really need him so bad.

Mcebisi: "Fuck..."

He says grabbing his dick squeezing it and it's making things worse for me. I slowly move my hand to my clit and rub it.

Mcebisi: "What are you doing?"

Me: "No..nothing."

He touch my hand and find it there on my pussy then he guides my middle finger deep in my pussy I finger myself we are staring deep into each other's eyes.

Mcebisi: "I'm hurt baby I can't get on top of you, you have to do all the work."

He tells me to sit on his face.

Me: "No.."

Mcebisi: "Come on baby..."

I finally give in making sure I don't hurt him, he eats my pussy so good I am calling out his name I even moving my waist it's so good.

Me: "Baby..Aaah.."

He moves me away from him and quickly pull down his boxers.

Mcebisi: "Do it like you wanted to do the first day you got on top of me."

I look down in shame he chuckles and pull him towards him. I get on top of him and allow his dick to fill me all up.

Mcebisi: "Fuck...you're so sexy."

I am naked he keeps licking his lips looking at my breasts, I start moving as his dick hits the spot I make sure it remains in that spot till I feel like I want to pee, I don't stop even when we get really wet I am shaking I want more of this.

Mcebisi: "Fuck...Dintle baby..what are you doing to me."

He flips me over and bend me chest down ass up then he comes from behind I think we even forgot he is hurt. I cum throughout him banging me from behind the bed is wet. He finally slams to me once then groan loud grabbing my ass tight. We sleep in bed facing up catching our breaths.

Mcebisi: "Yhoo you're hot fuck.."

I giggle I'm so satisfied I want to just close my eyes and sleep in his arms.

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MCEBISI

*

I watch her as she sleeps peacefully next to me, it's been one hell of a ride in such a short period of time we started making things official.

Finding out she's carrying twins was a beautiful moment for me regardless the circumstances, I love her and I want to do right by her. I groan as pain shoots through my chest there is blood stains on the patch we did get a little too rough I guess it broke some stitches here and there I haven't fully healed my stitches still feel new sometimes.

I sit up and cover her naked body with a cover then get up going to the bathroom. I pee then walk out of the room I find Dad with Kumkani talking in low voices.

Me: "Hi."

They look at me then dad get up and help me sit down. He stares at my chest then at me.

Nkosiyo: "Couldn't you wait?"

Me: "Wait for what?"

Nkosiyo: "Wait until you your stitches heal completely before having sex?"

I choke on my spit and start coughing, Kumkani is laughing so hard.

Nkosiyo: "Come on I know you have sex Dintle didn't get pregnant by just staring at you."

Me: "Baba..."

Nkosiyo: "You couldn't wait huh?"

Kumkani: "Ay baba this is awkward even for me."

Nkosiyo: "So sex talk is awkward now because you're doing it and making babies at that?"

Kumkani get up laughing and walk away.

Nkosiyo: "Come back here!"

Kumkani: "No way! I'm out dad."

I chuckle.

Nkosiyabo: "The doctor will come check on you tomorrow morning."

Me: "Thank you."

Nkosiyabo: "I found Ndabezintle and her mother."

Me: "When? And what are you going to do with them?"

He chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "I'm not gonna do anything I don't wanna seem like an abuser you know GBV is kinda reversed, overlooked when it's a woman doing it but only taken serious when it's a man."

I nod..

Nkosiyabo: "I'm taking them on a tour to the Qwabe mountains, I do hope they find their way out."

Me: "But there are gate keepers there."

He get up taking his drink on the table.

Nkosiyabo: "Exactly my point..."

He says walking away. So he is gonna feed them to those ruthless cheetahs? Well but I guess they deserve it.

I go back to my room and find Dintle awake.

Me: "Hey."

I kiss her cheek.

Dintle: "Hi.."

I get in between her thighs and make love to her.

Me: "Sizoshada nini?"(When are we getting married?)

I say thrusting in and out of her slowly, she moans sinking her nails on my arms.

Me: "Mmmh?"

She breathes out loud as she cums I pull out and sleep next to her.

Me: "So...?"

Dintle: "So what?"

Me: "About us getting married? I don't want my children born out of wedlock."

She doesn't say anything.

Me: "Didi? You don't want to get married to me?"

Dintle: "Were you gonna ask to marry me if it wasn't for the babies I'm carrying? Are you marrying me because of them?"

I look at her.

Dintle: "I'm just asking, I didn't mean to offend you."

Me: "No I'm not offended at all, yes I want to marry you because of my babies."

She blinks rapidly like she wants to cry.

Me: "I also want to marry you for love, I don't want to lose what we have Dintle, it's special I love you."

She nods.

Me: "So please say yes so we can talk to your mental case brother because I don't want to deal with your father shame."

She giggles pushing me lightly.

Dintle: "Don't say that about my brother."

Me: "He's the one who will receive your lobola and all the ceremony necessary will be led by him."

I am getting married, life is too short I saw my life flash before my eyes so I don't wanna wait because tomorrow might never come.

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CHAPTER 41

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THINGO-LAMAQWABE

*

It's been a rough couple of months for our family when my brother got shot and went on a coma but now it's finally over, he is back home and stronger than ever, he is talking marriage and I'm happy I'm gonna be an aunt again, sisDintle is carrying the precious twins for our brother.

I am at Mathenyoka's house in the room where we use it as our studio, we do the paintings and drawings here and there is everything an artist needs in here.

I feel his heavy presence behind me as I start drawing a sketch of the house his client asked for, I sometimes do his work for him whenever he is busy and he makes it look professional.

Mathenyoka: "That's perfect.."

I smile getting up and turn to look at him, I have gotten used to how his eyes change colour but I still love noticing it, it's intriguing.

Me: "You're back."

He nods putting his hands on his pockets.

Me: "I'm not gonna get a hug? It's been a week without seeing you."

He was away on business but he always called asking about Mcebisi, he is close to my brothers especially Ngcebo.

He takes out his hands from his pockets and hug me briefly, we usually hug for longer, he gives the best hugs but not today. I can smell an unfamiliar scent on his clothes.

Me: "Were you with a woman?"

He frowns raising one eyebrow.

Me: "I can smell her perfume on you."

Mathenyoka: "It's Zamo's perfume they are in the lounge with Fana."

I nod. Zamo and Fana works for him, Fana is a man and Zamo a female.

Me: "Let me go say hi."

He nods and we walk out.

Fana: "There's my favourite Princess."

I smile as he bows a little then hugs me, I hug Zamo as well then sit down, they are busy with work.

Mathenyoka: "There's a bridge they want us to sketch out but it's complicated, there are two rivers that merges and goes into four different directions so I don't know if it should be vertical or horizontal."

He shows me the pictures of where they want a bridge. Big companies hire him to draw sketches for them before taking everything to the engineers, he makes a lot of money from it, he is actually a very humble millionaire everything fell into place after Ngcebo helped him bring his ancestors here.

Me: "Why not do both.."

Zamo: "Both how princess?"

Me: "We make it a cross, both vertical and horizontal."

They look at me confused I start drawing what I'm talking about I can see Mathenyoka's eyes changing colour as he stares at me then he quickly looks away, he still does this even after so long we've known each other it's like he is hiding who he really is from me but I know who he is and the man within him, his ancestor Mathenyoka.

Mathenyoka: "We're going with what LamaQwabe drew Fana, make it look professional."

Fana nods, I look at him as he stretches his hand to me I hold it getting up and he takes me outside. We sit under the tree.

Mathenyoka: "I want to talk to you about something."

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "Uhm..I value your opinion a lot so I want to ask is it ok if I gift Wenzile and Ngcebo with cars of the same model, after everything they have done for me I really feel like I should do something just to show appreciation."

I smile looking at him, I feel very special seeing that he really wants to know what I think, he never takes me as a baby but an adult who can make sound decisions.

Me: "I think that's great, They are both humble so they will appreciate it a lot."

He nods and look down at his feet.

Mathenyoka: "Uhm..how would you feel if I tell you I have found a woman in my life?"

Me: "What?"

Mathenyoka: "I'm not getting any younger, this house is too big for just me."

Me: "But you're always at work and if not I'm always here with you, why would you need a woman for?"

He frowns.

Mathenyoka: "I want children, I want to start a family."

Me: "Fine, go get that woman."

Mathenyoka: "Why do you sound upset?"

Me: "What if that woman doesn't like me and tries to get between us? What if she tells me to stop coming here?"

Mathenyoka: "No one will get between us I promise."

I nod as tears burn my eyes.

Me: "I'm going home."

I get up and walk away.

Mathenyoka: "LamaQwabe wait...."

I ignore him running home.

I find mom and dad in the lounge I sit between them and lay my head on dad's lap.

Nkosiyo: "You look upset what's wrong?"

Me: "Kwanda found a woman and I won't be able to spend time at his house anymore."

I start crying.

Nkosiyo: "Did he say that?"

Me: "No, but what if that woman doesn't like me."

Thabsie: "Baby you're cute what's there not to like about you, you're beautiful, smart and very cute everyone would love to have you around."

Dad wipes my tears.

Me: "I won't have a studio session with him anymore he will give all his attention to his woman!"

I am throwing tantrums, I don't understand why he needs a woman now!

Nkosiyo: "You need to understand that Kwanda is older and he wants to start his life, have children and he can do that when he finds a woman, understand where he is coming from ok."

I nod sitting up.

Me: "So I should apologise to him for being upset?"

Thabsie: "He is your friend it's okay to be jealous of him having someone takes all his time but he is old he needs to start a family soon."

I nod.

Me: "Ok."

I go to my room and shower then change into jeans and t-shirt with flip flops.

I walk in his house and find him sitting quietly in the lounge with his eyes closed.

Mathenyoka: "My Rainbow."

I smile clapping my hands, he can sense my presence without even opening his eyes.

Me: "Thokoza.."

Mathenyoka: "You're back."

I go sit on the mat inbetween his legs, he sits up and put his hands on my shoulders.

Mathenyoka: "You're not upset anymore?"

I shake my head.

Me: "I understand that you want to start a family so it's okay if you have found a woman."

Mathenyoka: "Uhm...there is no woman yet I was just asking you how would you feel should I find one soon."

Me: "Oh that's better."

I say smiling.

Mathenyoka: "What's better?"

Me: "We will still have our studio sessions before she comes in and ruin us."

He hold my shoulders tight and grunts.

Mathenyoka: "Hhoyiii!"

He hiss like a snake I start clapping hands as he lets go of my shoulders and kneel on the floor in front of me. His eyes are glowing as he stares at me I should be scared but I feel drawn to him, this is fascinating to me.

He is back to being himself after a few minutes of transition but he is so quiet.

Me: "What did you see? I feel like you saw something in me? What did they show you?"

He clears his throat.

Mathenyoka: "My ancestors are fond of you, Mathenyoka often takes over just to stare at your pretty face."

I smile brightly.

Me: "Really? Can you let me communicate with him?"

He shakes his head but I touch his shoulder he shivers and his eyes changes.

"You're brave."

His voice is deeper I guess that's ancestor Mathenyoka speaking through him.

Me: "So you like me?"

I ask smiling.

"Yes and some people love you they are just afraid of the unknown."

Me: "I'm a sweetheart thank you for liking me."

He grunts and Mathenyoka stares at me shaking his head.

Me: "I can't believe I talked to your great grandfather, he said he likes me! Can you believe it?"

I am so happy, he smiles shaking his head.

Me: "Are we drawing anything today?"

He shakes his head.

Mathenyoka: "I'm not in my best moods today I don't want any pen or brush."

Me: "Then you can watch me do everything."

I get up and pull his hand but he doesn't move so I end up on his lap laughing, he push me so hard I land on the floor I stare at him in shock, my brothers walk in while I'm still on the floor.

Makhosini: "Hey Princess, Bhuti we came to take out your goats."

Mathenyoka smiles a little and nod, they both walk out, he have goats and sheep, his three cows stays at home with Ngcebo's livestocks.

I slowly get up from the floor.

Me: "Why did you push me like that? What if I got hurt?"

Mathenyoka: "It's inappropriate for you to sit on my lap I'm sure your brothers weren't gonna understand that."

Me: "So hurting me was the only thing appropriate enough for you to do."

Mathenyoka: "Did you get hurt LamaQwabe?"

I just shake my head.

Me: "I'm leaving, I'm getting tired of you."

Mathenyoka: "What?"

Me: "Ungizwile."(You heard me.)

I storm out of his house taking a walk home.

The holidays are over me and my brothers are going back to school doing our Matric, I'm excited that I will finally be done with school.

I am in Mondli's car after our first day of school where we did absolutely nothing but get some books and stationary list. I see Mathenyoka's car parking at his gate I haven't seen him in three days after he pushed me to the floor and I left his house angry. I ask Mondli to stop the car so I can greet he stops behind his car and I step out. Just as I'm about to knock on his window I stop myself when I see him exchanging spit with a woman, I lower my hand and slowly go back to the car, he finally got the woman I guess.

Mondli: "What's wrong Princess?"

Me: "Uhm...he...he is with someone in his car, please drive home."

I have a lump in my throat, there goes our fun time together, going to art galleries, big Art events, studio sessions, doing his work for him, it's all over he will take her now to all our events and he will be too busy to have time for our sessions.

I get home and take a shower then go help mom with cooking dinner.

Thabsie: "How was your first day at school Thingo ka baba?"

I smile.

Me: "It was ok, I have my stationary list."

She nods.

Thabsie: "Kumkani will go buy it for you."

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

Thabsie: "You don't look fine."

My brothers walk in making so much noise.

Makhosini: "Bhut'Kwanda's girl is hot! Did you see her yhoo ipentshisi.(peaches)

I blink looking at them, so they saw her.

Thabsie: "Hey!"

She shouts at them they stop walking and smile kissing her cheek then Bukhosi picks me up, I think they sometimes forget we're triplets, they always want to act older.

Bukhosi: "You don't look too good."

I rest my head on his shoulder, Makhosini's hand is on my back.

Makhosini: "What's wrong Princess?"

Me: "You saw Kwanda's girlfriend?"

They nod.

Me: "Is she nice? Will she like me?"

Bukhosi: "Everyone likes you, you're kind and beautiful even though you look like a man."

Mom starts laughing so hard, I smile, I always love it when people point out that I look like my dad, I love that, and I also see it, dad is a beautiful man with his offsprings.

Before dinner I go to his house and knock on the door, he opens it wearing nothing on his upper body, I stare at his snake tattoo it always looks creepy like it's alive.

Mathenyoka: "LamaQwabe what are you doing here?"

I blink as my heart breaks at that question, he never ask me that, I even have keys to the house.

Me: "Uhm...I saw you earlier with a woman, is she the one? You guys were kissing."

His eyes starts looking everywhere but me, he looks nervous.

Me: "I can't come in?"

He slowly shakes his head. I nod and step back.

Mathenyoka: "Thingo wait..she's not here, she didn't come in I didn't let her inside the house YOU designed for me."

He emphasise that part that I designed his house for him.

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry for what you saw earlier, I was still gonna tell you first that I found someone before coming here with her."

Me: "Ok."

I turn and walk away, he usually ask about my day at school but today he didn't ask any of that but it was my very first day as a Grade 12 learner.

I have decided to focus on school more and stop painting and drawing so it won't distract me also I don't have an Art Studio anymore I took all my things to Kwanda's house when I first learned that he is also into Art but now I don't go there anymore.

I am standing by the parking lot waiting for Mondli but I see Mathenyoka's car instead. I sigh as he step out and stand in front of me.

Mathenyoka: "I have been trying to call you."

Me: "And I ignored you so why are you here?"

Mathenyoka: "What's wrong with you?"

Me: "Nothing I'm just distancing myself from you before you do, you will start a family soon and I won't have a place in your life like I used to."

Mathenyoka: "That's not gonna happen, you don't know how much you mean to me, you really don't."

He stares at me I chuckle, his eyes changing colour isn't exciting to me anymore, not today so I just stare back at him blankly.

Mathenyoka: "You're a bit selfish don't you think?"

I look at him confused.

Mathenyoka: "Why don't you want me to have a woman? Your brothers are married already starting their families and you want me just to look at you! I'm not growing in reverse Thingo lamaQwabe I'm not!"

Me: "I didn't say don't have a woman! Ngihlanganaphi nezintombi zakho mina."(Why should your women bother me?)

Our voices are not loud but very stern.

Mathenyoka: "Get in the car let me take you home."

Me: "No, I'm going with my brothers."

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry...I'm sorry for shouting."

I try to walk away he grabs my arm I collide with his chest, he stares down at me, I was lying, his eyes still gives me goosebumps.

Mathenyoka: "I don't want to fight with you, I'm already fighting so hard please....just let me find someone else maybe I will forget all about a child."

Me: "What child?"

He sighs letting go of me.

Mathenyoka: "Allow me to fall for someone else."

Me: "I never stopped you."

He chuckles looking down.

Me: "You can have a woman Kwanda, I just hope you find the right one."

He nods still looking at his feet, hands on his pockets.

Me: "I will fetch my things later today."

Mathenyoka: "You don't have to do that, we can still have our sessions."

Me: "No, I think it's better I go back to drawing in my own little room."

He opens the car for me in the passenger seat but I get in the backseat instead, it's good to know your place!

He drives me home. I eat freshen up then go to his house. I unlock and walk in going the room we turned into a studio, Black Motion-

Rainbow is playing in the background he is sitting in front of a drawing board I can tell that's me in the drawing, he grunts as I stand behind him.

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

He is quiet so I grab a box and start putting my things in there.

Mathenyoka: "You're really doing this Thingo?"

He ask staring at the board in front of him.

"Uhm..the door was opened so I let myself in I hope you don't mind."

A very petite woman stands there looking all cute with her clear smooth skin, I guess this is the peach my brothers were talking about, Kwanda really has an eye for beautiful things, I mean! A goddess.

I move my eyes to Mathenyoka he looks like he wants to vanish.

Me: "Uhm..if there is anything I left please bring it at home."

He starts yawning and grunting, I look at the girl she looks shaken, I just walk out leaving them there. I guess I have lost a friend now...

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CHAPTER 42

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THINGO-LAMAQWABE

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I feel so lost and lonely I am always crying myself to sleep these days, I have gotten used to being around Mathenyoka. He taught me the professional side of Art when I only used to do it for fun. He advised

me to pursue it as a career so we can work together but now it's all gone.

I wake up and get ready for school, I am just dragging my feet I don't feel like going there today.

I walk out of the house and Mondli is already waiting for me outside. I hop in and he drives me to school.

The whole day I'm just not feeling ok, so I go tell my teacher I'm not feeling well and I need to go to the clinic she allows me so I call Mondli to fetch me and drive me to the clinic first luckily I don't stand in line when I go there I just walk in straight to the nurses and tell them what brings me here. So today I told them I have a headache they give me some medication and Mondli drives me home, I decide to take a walk to Mathenyoka's house, I miss him.

I knock on the door, he opens it and those eyes, I look down.

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

He doesn't answer, so I slowly look at him.

Me: "Uhm...I came to give you back the house keys."

I say reaching to my school bag and take the keys, when he stretches his hand to take them I feel like crying. I give him the keys and look away as tears stream down my face. He close the door on my face I open it, I'm now so angry I find the girl sitting in the lounge wearing a nice beautiful red dress.

Me: "So is this how you gonna treat me now?"

He just stares at me, he is so cold but his eyes won't stop changing colour everytime he looks my way.

Me: "Tell her to get out I want to talk to you."

Mathenyoka: "The only person getting out is you Thingo."

Me: "You wanna bet?"

I look at the girl, she is bigger and obviously way older than me.

Me: "Get out ntombazane."(girl)

She frowns.

"Are you talking to me in that manner?"

Me: "Hey I said get out I want to talk to my friend ! You don't know half the things we went through together to come here and be comfortable on that couch! Get the hell out!"

I am so angry even my armpits are itchy.

Me: "Tell this girl to get out Mathenyoka!"

He grunts and I hear hissing sounds and it's not from him but a snake coming in on the front door it's Green in colour, Mathenyoka stares at me with his eyes popped out. The girl screams as soon as she sees a snake, she grabs her bag and jump over the couch running outside. The snake stops at the corner of the house and rolls itself there, I'm not scared of it I don't know why because usually I'm scared of snakes.

Mathenyoka: "LamaQwabe please...just let me be ok! Please."

Me: "Remember how I helped you find your rhythm in Art, you couldn't draw anymore and you were blank I held your hand and we did it together but now you want that girl to take you away from me, the time we had together."

I am crying.

Mathenyoka: "I...I didn't know you valued our friendship like this, I never thought a young girl like you will make me feel this way, when you're around I become one with my ancestor you help me connect with him more."

I sit down and cry so hard, he kneels in front of me.

Mathenyoka: "I didn't mean to make you cry, I just want to be away from you for a little while just so I can keep our friendship pure and also I have so much respect for your family I don't wanna lose that."

Me: "But we've been friends for a while now why would you want to be away from me, make me understand."

He shakes his head.

Mathenyoka: "You're young you won't get it, I don't wanna ruin this Thingo your family has been so supportive to me throughout they have helped me a great deal I am here because of them."

Me: "What has that got to do with you having a girlfriend then ditching our friendship?"

He sighs shaking his head.

Mathenyoka: "You don't get it, you're still a baby you might never get it because I can't jeopardize my friendship with your brother because of lacking self control and respect."

Me: "What does that even mean?"

Mathenyoka: "It means our friendship is over Thingo! It's over!"

He roars making the snake hiss lifting it's head up.

Mathenyoka: "Don't ever come to my house again!"

He grunts balancing his hand on the couch.

Mathenyoka: "Stay out of it Mkhulu!"

I get up with my knees shaking vision blurry going to the door, the snake slithered out first.

Me: "I have never said these words

To anyone before you're the first and probably

The last person I'm saying it to. I HATE YOU and I hope all these women hurt you like your mother did! I HATE YOU!"

I cry running home, I find dad in his car he quickly rush to me holding me tight.

Nkosiyabo: "What's wrong? Who hurt you?"

I just cry sleeping on his chest.

Nkosiyabo: "Talk to me Lama..what's wrong?"

Me: "He was my bestfriend dad and he chased me out of his house because of a woman he just met!?"

Nkosiyabo: "Kwanda?"

Me: "I don't ever want to see him again."

I walk to my room and lock myself up.

It's the weekend dad called a meeting and I don't even know what the agenda is because I only go to school and come back, lock myself up in my room, mom had to force me to eat.

I am sitting on the couch everyone is here then Mathenyoka walks in and scans the room his eyes stops at me then he clears his throat and bows a little, I didn't know he was also called here.

He sit down.

Nkosiyabo: "Uhm..I called you here to understand what is going on? You're all my children so if any of you doesn't see eye to eye I have to intervene and try to find the common ground I don't want you getting angry at each other."

He looks at me.

Nkosiyabo: "Thingo and Kwanda what is going on?"

He clears his throat rubbing his knuckles.

Mathenyoka: "She cursed me baba, she said she hopes every woman I meet hurts me like my mother did."

I stare at him.

Me: "Did I just say that out of the blue? Why don't you tell him that you chased me out of the house because of that bleaching woman you just met!"

Ngcebo: "LamaQwabe! Respect!"

He shouts I look down in shame.

Me: "I'm sorry."

Mathenyoka: "I..I found a woman and I only want Thingo to step back a little just so I can get to know this woman and probably get married I want a family of my own now."

Kumkani: "So why is Thingo being chased out?"

He looks down without answering.

Kumkani: "So you're already letting a woman get inbetween you and family? Your friendship with Thingo?"

Mathenyoka: "That's not what I'm doing brother, I...I just want time to get to know her."

Mcebisi: "Time means fight those closer to you?"

He shakes his head keeping his head down.

Nkosiyo: "We never let a stranger between us Mkhulu, you hardly know this woman and already you want to throw away what seemed to be a strong and solid friendship, I trust you with my daughter but now you've shown the other side I don't like, choosing a strange woman and chasing her out doesn't sit well with me."

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry baba."

Ngcebo: "And Thingo, it was wrong to tell him about his bad mother in a heat of an argument that was low!"

Me: "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, I shouldn't have said that."

Mathenyoka: "Uhm..I'm going away for a week, it's a business trip."

Nkosiyabo: "Are you guys okay now?"

He smiles a little and get up. I get up as well and we start by shaking hands then he hugs me briefly.

Mathenyoka: "See you after a week, uhm Bukhosi and Makhosini please go look after the house."

I swallow a lump in my throat, I guess he is just pretending that we're ok because usually he ask me to look after his house.

He walks out, I follow shortly after him.

Me: "Do you forgive me for mentioning your mother?"

He nods.

Me: "Where are you going?"

Mathenyoka: "Durban.."

Me: "Ok."

He get in his big car and drive away leaving dust behind.

I go back inside and sit next to Kumkani, he wraps his arms around me.

Kumkani: "Don't be sad you guys are going to be ok, he loves having you around him all the time."

I nod.

It's been a week and I have decided to go hard on my studies while it's still early.

It's Friday I just got home taking off my school uniform my phone rings it's an office number.

Me: "Hello."

"Hey TLQ it's Fana here."

Me: "Oh hey."

He calls me TLQ because apparently my name is too long for him.

Fana: "Uhm...I hope I didn't catch you at a bad time, we need your help."

Me: "My help? Why didn't Kwanda call me."

He sighs.

Fana: "He went blank again and we have to submit this project tomorrow afternoon, you helped us the last time so please help us, this is a huge deal we can't afford to lose it."

I sigh.

Me: "Why didn't he call me himself?"

Fana: "He is frustrated and he believes he will find his rhythm soon but it's been four days, there's no progress."

Me: "Let me talk to dad, I will get back to you."

I go to my mom and dad and sit down.

Me: "Mama, Fana called asking for my help, Kwanda is struggling to find his rhythm and they have a project that needs to be submitted tomorrow."

Thabsie: "You want to go to Durban?"

I nod.

Me: "I will come back tomorrow once I'm done with the project."

Nkosiyabo: "Let me call Mondli to drive you to Durban."

I nod and go pack things I will change with and cosmetics.

Mondli drives me to Durban, at Mathenyoka's gallery and studio. I find Zamo and Fana in their office alone I greet them.

Fana: "I'm so glad you're here."

Me: "Where is he?"

Fana: "His office."

I walk in there and find it dark he is sitting on the floor leaning on the wall looking down.

Me: "Hi."

Mathenyoka: "Why are you here?"

Me: "To help you like I used to when you went blank before."

He looks at me, I feel some butterflies in my tummy, I don't know why.

Mathenyoka: "Why would you want to help after everything we said to each other the other day?"

Me: "I still see you as a friend, fighting doesn't mean I will stop caring about you."

I hold his hand.

Me: "Come let's do some work."

He get up and I read through what is needed then start sketching on a book, he starts doing it on his computer coping everything I sketch on paper. We spend the whole day designing a structure of a mall it takes

some time because they want something different. Around 7 pm Fana and Zamo walks in with food. We eat in silence while they call it a night. After we are done eating he drives us to a flat where he stays when he's around.

Mathenyoka: "You saved me from the embarrassment, I don't know what I was gonna present tomorrow."

He says sitting next to me and hand me a glass of juice while he drinks a beer.

Me: "I'm glad I could help."

I look at him.

Me: "Why are you suddenly so mean to me?"

Mathenyoka: "I'm not mean I just needed some time to get to know that woman and find out if she's what I want."

Me: "What do you want?"

Mathenyoka: "A woman who will understand me, understand that I'm not alone, I'm not just Kwanda I'm Mathenyoka as well, I want to grow my empire then have children who I will leave all of this for, I want someone I can rely on, someone who will jump in to help me whenever I need help, a person who will do anything for me."

He says staring into my eyes.

Mathenyoka: "I did find all of that in a person but she's too young for me, I don't think she even understand what being with someone means."

Me: "Oh..so the girl you're with now do you think she is all those things you mentioned."

Mathenyoka: "I don't think so, this girl I'm talking about, she's the only one but I can't be with her."

Me: "Then what are you doing with that woman?"

He sighs.

Mathenyoka: "I don't know, I'm a man I have needs and I have seen that she wants a transactional relationship."

Me: "What do you mean?"

Mathenyoka: "She is in it for money while I'm in it for sex that's a transaction, she gives me what I want and I do the same."

Me: "How long are you gonna keep up with that?"

Mathenyoka: "For as long as it takes to stop feeling this way towards this woman I'm talking about."

Me: "Who is she? Where is she from maybe I can talk to her for you, I believe sex is sacred you can't just do it with anyone."

He raise his eyebrow.

Mathenyoka: "What do you know about sex?"

Me: "I go to school, my father used to have these talks with us to respect ourselves and our bodies and not give ourselves to just anyone."

He nods.

Me: "I'm going to bed now."

He nods and we both get up then he pulls me into a tight hug then breaks it holding the side of my neck, the butterflies are back on my tummy it's crazy.

Mathenyoka: "You're gonna grow up into an amazing woman, the man that will marry you will be one lucky man."

I smile touching his wrists that is full of beads and goat skin he slowly moves his face closer my heart starts beating so fast as he moves his face closer, he plants a kiss on my forehead.

Mathenyoka: "I don't know if I should wait or move on, I don't know, if I wait will it even be allowed?"

Me: "What are you talking about?"

He huffs letting go of me.

Mathenyoka: "Go to bed princess."

I nod and go to my room, Yes I have a room here and in his house as well.

In the middle of the night I can smell incense in the house so I wake up and wear a gown walking out, he is sitting on the floor white candles in front of him and incense, naked on his upper body with just ibhayi hanging on his shoulder.

Mathenyoka: "If it's not me then may she find a man that will love and respect her, she deserves happiness."

He grunts shaking.

Mathenyoka: "I'm trying so hard to control myself and you're making it hard for me Mkhulu."

He grunts once again and starts hissing. He get up and quickly turn staring at me, He walks up to me I step back until I lean on the wall. He stares down at me and I feel his lips on mine I am stunned for a second then after realising what's happening I push him and punch his face as hard as I can then run to my room shaking locking my door, I'm scared, what was that about? Why did he kiss me?"

I hear a knock on the door.

Mathenyoka: "Thingy, please let me explain please...don't call uBaba let us talk ok, let me explain."

Me: "No.."

My voice is shaky.

Me: "I am calling Mondli he will take me home."

Mathenyoka: "Please let me explain."

I look around then go open a window so I can use it to walk out.

Mathenyoka: "LamaQwabe, I'm so sorry but that wasn't me."

I open the door and look at him as he looks down.

Me: "Why did you do that?"

Mathenyoka: "I...uhm...Mkhulu pushed me to do it Thingo, he took over so fast I couldn't stop."

Me: "Don't lie!"

I scream at him.

Mathenyoka: "I'm not lying Princess you can summon him and ask him yourself, he always listens to you."

He gives me his hands I grab them and hold them tight. He grunts and his eyes starts changing to brown like that of a snake.

"Thingo LamaQwabe."

His voice is deeper I know it's really him, great grandfather
Mathenyoka.

Me: "Why? Why did you do that?"

"I only pushed him to do what he desired from the first day he held a conversation with you in that forest."

I stare at him in confusion.

"I don't have the power to make him do what he doesn't want to do Thingo, I'm only a spirit this is his body, he long wanted to be with you he is just afraid."

I let go of his hands, his eyes changes back to normal but he can't even keep eye contact with me.

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry."

Me: "I'm...I'm the child you've been talking about that you can't be with?"

He nods keeping his head down.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry)

Me: "You have...you have feelings for me?"

He nods.

Me: "Dad will kill you!"

Mathenyoka: "I know Thingo, that's why I have been fighting it, please don't tell him what I did I won't ever do it again, I don't want to lose any of you guys please.."

I grab my phone from the bed but he quickly snatch it from me then pull me into his arms hugging me tight.

Mathenyoka: "I won't ever do it again, I promise."

I push him away and push his tummy he groans and grab my hand as I want to punch him again.

Mathenyoka: "Stop.."

I just let tears fall.

Me: "You have a death wish! You want to die!"

He quickly wipes my tears. I shiver as he does it again, he is kissing me again I am shaking all that is ringing in my head is that he is going to die, dad will kill him.

He breaks the kiss and rub his head stepping back from me.

Mathenyoka: "I messed up didn't I?"

I can't seem to move from where I'm standing.

Mathenyoka: "I love you, you're the woman I see in my future no matter how much I try to see you as just a friend but I can't, you're my future Thingo."

Me: "I..want to go home."

I say looking down, I'm scared because what he is saying is making my heart skip a beat, I have this unusual feeling now and it's scaring me.

Mathenyoka: "I can..I can wait for you until you get a bit older I promise I will wait..you're only 17 I don't want to complicate your life, I still want you to honour your dad's wish of you starting dating after finishing high school, I will wait for you just say yes."

I look at him as his eyes starts glowing I want to be in his arms so bad, I get up and hug him he hold me like a baby that I am to him.

Me: "I'm too young. You're a year older than Kumkani, my oldest brother, that's just wrong."

Mathenyoka: "Feelings knows no age, I saw that with me, it's been so long since I had these feelings for you maGumede."

I rest my head on his shoulder, he is holding my waist and my legs are wrapped around his waist I'm tiny and he is a big guy.

Me: "What about peaches?"

Mathenyoka: "Who is that?"

I chuckle as I remember that he doesn't know that name.

Me: "Your "transactional relationship"."

He sighs.

Mathenyoka: "I will break things off with her, I will respect you and I won't touch you until you're done with school and ready to start a relationship with me."

I huff closing my eyes taking in his scent.

I wake up in the morning in bed, I guess I slept in his arms then he laid me in bed. I sit up and find a piece of paper on top of the covers.

"I went to submit our project, please don't go home without me tell Mondli you will leave with me, again, I'm sorry for scaring you last night, I love you."

I sleep in bed facing up, I slowly touch my lower lip thinking about how he kissed me last night, is it wrong to feel all ticklish when I think about it? I think it is wrong, this whole thing is wrong and dad would flip!

He comes back wearing a black tuxedo even the shirt and shoes are black. He stares at me with his hand on his pocket I am just standing in the middle of the room looking back at him.

Mathenyoka: "They loved our project. Give me a high five."

I smile and we high five.

Mathenyoka: "Ngcebo and Wenzile's cars are delivered back home as we speak so let's go I want to see their reactions."

I nod as he takes my hand walking me to the car.

Mathenyoka: "I'm done taking credit for your hard work, I want you to sign this."

He takes out what looks like a contract inside his car.

Me: "What's this?"

Mathenyoka: "A 30% share of my company, well, our company."

I stare at him in shock.

Mathenyoka: "When I went blank the first time you helped me with 5 important projects, when I was away on business Fana asked you for help and you did it without complaining and yesterday you did it again so I want that company to be yours as much as it is mine, I know you're still in school but I want to do this."

I shake my head.

Me: "No, this is your baby."

Mathenyoka: "You raised that baby when I almost dropped it to the ground so please take this."

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "You can go through it at home then sign, you can even ask Kumkani to look at it."

I nod.

We get in the car and he drives to his house first. When we walk in there is home cooked meal, three plates dished up Makhosini and Bukhosi walks in and Peaches comes in as well smiling.

Peaches: "Food is ready boys."

They happily grab their plates. I look at Mathenyoka, he looks defeated.

Me: "Who let her in Bukhosi?"

They all look our way shocked, they didn't see us all this time.

Bukhosi: "She is the one who let us in, we found her already here."

I nod and notice she is wearing my gown.

Me: "You went into my room?"

Peaches: "Your room? You have a room here?"

I clench my jaws looking down, I feel a hand on my back I calm down instantly.

Mathenyoka: "It's okay, let me talk to her. Linda let's talk outside please."

They walk out, I stand there looking at my brothers as they enjoy the food, I realise that I'm actually angry so I step out and ask to talk to Mathenyoka. He comes towards me.

Me: "You know what, you can go on with your transactional relationship or whatever you call it, tell her she can keep my stuff as well as the room, I'm going home."

I walk all the way home and go to my room. I don't want whatever Mathenyoka wants from me, I think it's better he stays with his girl, if he wants to die let it be on him alone I don't want to be part of it.

*

CHAPTER 43

*

THINGO-LAMAQWABE

*

I am sitting at the Veranda waiting for my brothers to come home. I rush to then when I see them walking through the gates.

Me: "Hey.."

Bukhosi: "Hey little one."

Me: "Uhm is the girl gone?"

He chuckles.

Bukhosi: "Yes, Kwanda threw her out but at least she prepared some food for us before she left."

I nod and wait for them to go inside before I go back to his house. I walk in and find him sleeping on the couch, I get on top of him and smile staring at him. He slowly opens one eye then hold my waist tight, I sleep on his chest quietly. I wake up when he gets up with me.

Mathenyoka: "Sleep baby.."

I close my eyes again, I always sleep when he is around, my body is always relaxed that's why.

I wake up and he is sleeping next to me fully dressed. I stare at him then get curious, I want to learn how to kiss and so I plant my lips on his and do how he did it last night from lip to lip a groan startle me I jump up sitting up. He opens his eyes and chuckle.

Mathenyoka: "What was that?"

I look down.

Me: "Sorry, I wanted to learn how to do it."

Mathenyoka: "You can always ask me to teach you not do it while I'm asleep."

His voice is lower yet deeper because he just woke up. He pulls me to him and start kissing me.

Mathenyoka: "Follow my lead baby."

I do exactly what he's doing until he groans holding my waist tight I stop when I feel something poking me underneath I move away from him.

Mathenyoka: "Don't be scared that only means I enjoy kissing you that's all, I won't do anything."

I nod.

Me: "Did I do it right?"

He smiles while I bat my eyelashes waiting for an answer.

Mathenyoka: "Inyoka yami ibingeke ivuke ukube bowungenzi kahle." (My snake wasn't going to wake up if you didn't do it right.)

I clear my throat, I know he is referring to his penis. It's up that means he will want sex.

Me: "So how long are you willing to wait for me?"

Mathenyoka: "Until you're 18 if you're still not my wife then, then 21 it is."

Me: "You mean you won't have sex for that long? Or you gonna have it and hide it from me?"

He chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "You don't trust I can wait that long without cheating on you?"

Me: "It's not cheating when we're not dating."

Mathenyoka: "Right! So you want me to have sex with other women?"

I quickly shake my head.

Me: "No."

Mathenyoka: "Then this topic is really not worth it, as long as I am waiting for you I won't have sex with anyone till I have you."

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "Asizujola Thingo until you fulfill your no dating rule till you finish school, that's it."

I nod. He smiles.

Mathenyoka: "I'm hungry, please do that pasta for me or better yet show me how you do it."

We both go to the kitchen and we make pasta together, he puts his hands around my waist from time to time and that makes me feel so special. The way he looks at me leaves me so confused, is this what they call love or I'm just reading too much into it?

After we're done cooking he sits down and pull me to his lap, we eat together in one plate then his phone rings. The cars are here. We both get up and walk out they are outside so we direct them home while taking a walk behind the huge truck.

I open the gate and the cars are now in the yard, personalized plates NGCEBO-ZN and WENZI-ZN. Everyone walks out of their room Mathenyoka kneels in front of his Gobelas and clap his hands, they are in Awe.

Mathenyoka: "Ngibonga konke eningenzele kona Dlozi, ningikhulisile nangihlenga ezintweni eziningi."(I thank you for everything you have done for me, you helped me grow and protected me from so many things.)

They are in disbelief.

Mathenyoka: "This is not payment but it's a gift just to say Thank you for not giving up on me. Thokoza Mntwana, Thokoza Gogo."

Ngcebo and Wenzi both kneel in front of him and start clapping hands greeting each other then appreciation words follows that means they are accepting the gifts.

Ngcebo: "Your business must be blossoming, my wife and I appreciate this a lot Nyoka."

His eyes changes colour then quickly go back to normal I smile.

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

Mathenyoka is also happy, uMkhulu.

Mom cooks lunch and we all sit outside talking and laughing my eyes can't leave this man's beautiful eyes and smile whenever he talks he shows his perfect set of teeth. I walk in and take the contract in my bed then show it to my father, I won't be doing this behind their backs I'm only 17 I can't be signing contracts without my parents consent.

They read the contract.

Nkosiyo: "You are giving Lama 30% share of your company?"

He bows his head.

Mathenyoka: "Yebo baba, you all know she helped me pick up my business when I couldn't do anything, she did it over and over so I think she deserves this, Should she decide to persue Art as a career I will give her another 20 % making her my partner unless she starts her own firm then I will support her in any way."

Nkosiyo: "Wow, thank you Gatsheni, you're a man amongst men we appreciate this."

I look at my brothers they seem so happy but Ngcebo is just staring at the fire then he starts whistling out of nowhere.

Mathenyoka: "Mntwana..."

They stare at each other, Mathenyoka quickly drops his eyes, I feel like Ngcebo sees something and Kwanda knows that.

He excuses himself saying he's got some work to do.

It's Monday, back to school lunch time so I finally sign the contract Kwanda gave me then smile putting it back inside my bag. Someone

stands in front of me it's a a very tall and handsome coloured guy, he smiles and it's contagious so I find myself smiling as well.

"Princess Thingo.."

I smile as he bows his head.

Me: "Hi."

"You're more beautiful up close I have been scared to get any close for a while now but finally got some courage to come to you."

Me: "Thank you."

"Uhm...so I know it's still early in the year but people already chose their matric dance partners I was hoping you could be my partner before anyone else can ask you."

I chuckle.

Me: "I don't even think I will be attending."

"It's okay I just want you to know I would appreciate it if you be my partner and don't promise anyone else."

I nod.

Me: "Ok."

He smiles and walk away. I chuckle.

After school the boy offers to carry my bag and we walk to the parking lot in silence he's sweet. Mathenyoka is there leaning on his car staring at me. I take my bag from the boy and thank him.

Me "Thokoza.."

I clap my hands in front of this man who has a very serious look on his face.

Me: "Uhm...Hello."

Mathenyoka: "Let me take you home."

He opens the door for me, then he drives in silence.

Me: "Uhm..that guy offered to carry my bag and also asked me to be his matric dance partner."

Mathenyoka: "Uchazelani?"(Why are you explaining?)

Me: "I just felt like it if you don't wanna hear it then I take it back."

He smiles shaking his head.

Mathenyoka: "Small boys don't scare me Lama, ngizobashaya ngezulu."(I will hit them with lightning.)

I roll my eyes as he laughs.

Mathenyoka: "I need your help with something at home."

I nod. We walk in and he shows me another project of his and ask for my input I gladly tell him what I think and he always takes my advice I guess he really values my opinion.

I give him the contract and he is happy I signed.

I am sitting on the couch, he kneels between my legs his hands on my hips. We are kissing and it's making me feel so good.

"What the hell!"

I quickly jump up as Mathenyoka get up. It's Makhosini and Bukhosi they look so angry, I am so scared that I start gagging I feel like vomiting.

Bukhosi grabs me and slap me so hard I feel my head spinning.

Mathenyoka: "Don't do that to her! Let's talk like adults please."

They look like they want to slice his head off but maybe they are scared of him.

Makhosini: "The only adult you'll talk to is my father!"

He walks out first and Bukhosi follows him banging the door hard the glass shatters on the ground. I am shaking and I feel like peeing.

Me: "You..you need to leave! Dad will kill you."

He shakes his head his eyes turns green and it's the first time ever seeing this colour on his eyes.

Mathenyoka: "I won't leave you."

I hold his hands.

Me: "Please just leave Kwanda, please.."

He shakes his head and take my hand.

Mathenyoka: "Let's go to your father."

I snatch my hand away from him.

Me: "I will go to my father but wena you should go, I will talk to him."

Mathenyoka: "You're not gonna face your father alone."

He takes my hand and I am shaking all the way home. I stop by the door because I am thinking of running away but the door opens before I could mom squints her eyes and I just start crying so hard.

Thabsie: "Sula lezonyembezi ningene endlini."(Wipe those tears and get inside the house)

I quickly wipe my tears and walk in first, Mathenyoka is behind me. Dad is sitting on his single couch, Bukhosi and Makhosini are standing next to him looking so angry. Kumkani, Ngcebo and Mcebisi are sitting on a three seater couch. I go on my knees before dad and bow my head.

Me: "Gumede, I'm sorry."

He chuckles and it doesn't sound good at all.

Nkosiyo: "All this time trusting you with my daughter thinking you're a big brother to her kanti you're using her!"

He is speaking through his teeth and that's what he does when he is angry.

Mathenyoka: "Baba I..."

Nkosiyo: "Baba? You're calling me baba?"

His voice comes out low, he sounds so disappointed.

Mathenyoka: "Ngehlulwe uthando enginalo ngendodakazi yakho I couldn't help it, I'm sorry."(The love I have for your daughter failed me)

Kumkani is the first one to get up and punch Mathenyoka he stumbles back and wipe his lower lip, he doesn't look like he wants to fight back. I look at him, his eyes keeps changing rapidly he doesn't look good.

Kumkani: "Ubona intombi kwingane?"(You're seeing a girlfriend in a baby?)

Nkosiyo: "How long has this been going on under my nose ThingoLamaQwabe!"

He shouts getting up I quickly get up and step back from him, dad has never hit me but usually lets mom do it when I do something wrong.

Nkosiyo: "I asked you a question."

Me: "Nothing is going on baba."

He slaps me I go on my knees immediately, Mom walks up to him and push him back.

Thabsie: "No babakhe..."

Nkosiyo: "uThingo uzinikela emadodeni amadala Thabsile and you're saying no! She's my daughter! My baby girl if she doesn't see that she's a baby then I'll remind her!"(Thingo is giving herself away to old men)

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa baba, angeke ngiphinde."(I'm sorry dad, I won't ever do it again.)

He pass me and give Mathenyoka a beating of a lifetime then stops and spit on the floor in so much anger.

Nkosiyo: "So I let you in, treat you like my son but you're a snake slithering your way in to get my little girl! She's a child! What do you want from a child!?"

Mathenyoka: "My intentions are pure baba I promise I'm not gonna harm her and I am willing to wait until she's older."

Dad chuckles.

Nkosiyo: "And I guess you will be getting younger meeting her halfway right!?"

He grabs the collar of his shirt and pull him to his face.

Nkosiyo: "I want you to listen and listen good! Stay away from my daughter don't even look her way, I was gonna chase you out of my village but I'm not that petty but if you push me boy, if you dare push me I will slice off your head in broad daylight and feed it to the wild dogs! Please just try me you'll see what I'm made off!"

He punch hIm one more time.

Nkosiyo: "Get the fuck out, I never want to see you ever again! Bloody pedophile! I treated you like a son but you didn't see my daughter as your little sister!?"

I slowly look at him as he get up with blood coming out of his nose and mouth, he walks out the door I let my tears fall, what was I

doing? Why did I let it happen! Now he just lost something he valued so bad, our family, he was part of it but I guess not anymore.

Me: "Dad I..."

Nkosiyo: "Get out of my face LamaQwabe! Just fuck off!"

I go to my room and lock the door and try to call Mathenyoka, luckily he picks up.

Me: "Are you okay?"

Mathenyoka: "I'm good."

Me: "Uhm...I'm sorry, I shouldn't have allowed whatever happened between us to happen I'm sorry, maybe I got too close that you even saw a girlfriend in me I will stay away, I'm sorry."

Mathenyoka: "Thingo..."

Me: "Please forgive me."

I am blaming myself, I got too close, would wear anything while around him, even shorts and gowns maybe I led him on and he stopped seeing a child but a woman. I drop the call and cry when I think of the look dad gave me, he is disappointed.

Nkosiyo: "Ukhiyeleni! Ikwakho la?"(Why did you lock, is this your house?)

I quickly unlock the door then go stand very far from him.

He sits in my bed quietly while I remain standing scared as hell.

Nkosiyo: "So you will stand in my presence? Have you lost respect for me just because sowuyajola?"(You're dating?)

I sit down looking at my hands.

Nkosiyabo: "Awusahloniphi nomfowenu uNgcebo ujola nethwasa lakhe elidala nakunaye."(You don't even respect your brother Ngcebo you're dating his initiate that's even older than him.)

Me: "Baba, I'm sorry, he said we won't date until I reach 18 or 21."

He chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "Your brothers saw you kissing him! What was that!?"

Me: "It was a mistake dad it won't ever happen again."

Nkosiyabo: "It won't because if I ever see you with him again, I will kill him right in front of you traumatizing you your whole life, you hear me?"

I nod.

Me: "You won't ever see me with him dad I promise, I made a mistake."

He walks out and a few minutes later mom walks in with her hands behind her back.

Me: "Mama.."

Thabsie: "So you've never dated before and now you're here dating a man that is almost twice your age?"

She doesn't let me answer but start whipping me with dad's belt so hard I am screaming my lungs out jumping all over the room. She stops and stares at me.

Thabsie: "Why him Thingo? Why not at least boys your age?"

I look down.

Me: "It was a mistake mama, I will never do it again I swear to God. I don't even know what I was doing."

She walks out clicking her tongue I sleep on my tummy and cry. My phone keeps ringing under my pillow I grab it putting it over my ear.

Me: "Mmm.."

Mathenyoka: "My Rainbow..."

He says in a very low voice my heart skips a beat.

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry for what I did, I shouldn't have told you how I feel, you're only 17 I should have kept my feelings to myself."

I just cry.

Mathenyoka: "Hearing you cry because of me makes me feel even worse Thingy."

Me: "Can...can I come talk to you?"

Mathenyoka: "When?"

Me: "Now, I will walk out the back."

Mathenyoka: "Ok, I will meet you halfway then we'll go home."

I wear my gown then sneak out at the back, he's already waiting for me there it's almost dark. I jump out because the gate is always locked he catch me and hold me tight flinch.

Me: "My back hurts."

He loosens his arms and he walks home with me in his arms like I weigh absolutely nothing.

He put me down then give me some pills, his face looks bad but he still looks good.

He chuckles sitting on a chair in front of me.

Mathenyoka: "Why are you here after getting that beating?"

Me: "I wanted to see if you're okay."

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "You always wondered why my eyes change colour."

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "I'm a reincarnation of Mathenyoka but the only difference we have are the colour of our eyes so when he takes over my eyes changes to brown."

Me: "But earlier I saw Green, what does it mean."

Mathenyoka: "Look closely."

He says opening his eyes wide and his eyes keeps changing colours I am stunned, amazed you name it!

Mathenyoka: "What did you notice?"

Me: "Uhm..the seven colours.."

He squints his eyes, that's what he does if he's not satisfied with the answer you're giving him, I noticed that when he taught me about the professional side of Art.

Me: "The seven colours of the rainbow."

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "I only realised that my eyes can do that after letting myself actually feel and not try to be indential about how I feel about you."

Me: "So you are really in love with me?"

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "But seeing uBaba that angry I will stay away like he asked me to. I respect him Thingo, he has been like a father I never had growing up, my father died when I was still a toddler."

I touch his cheek, his eyes starts changing all over again there is something I feel in me but I don't know how to explain it, it's foreign.

Me: "So I won't be seeing you?"

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "Just focus on your school work for now."

He kiss the back of my hand.

Mathenyoka: "I will be in Durban for a couple of months working, I think it's better if I stay clear off uBaba right now, he is still angry and disappointed in me I want to give him time to cool off."

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "You're beautiful."

I blush looking down but tears are burning my eyes.

Mathenyoka: "I love you."

I nod, he chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "You don't love me?"

Me: "I..I think I do."

He smiles.

Mathenyoka: "Let me take you home."

We walk home, he helps me sneak in at the back again then I go to my room and cry myself to sleep.

In the morning I wake up with a headache but the first thing I do is stand outside and look at Mathenyoka's yard I can see him putting his bags in the car then he get in and drive out, I watch his car until it disappears from my eyes. I rub my arms looking down.

Nkosiyo: "Where is he going?"

I jump in fright because I don't know how long he has been standing behind me.

Me: "He's going to stay in Durban for a few months."

I am keeping my eyes down.

Nkosiyabo: "Good."

I have a lump in my throat, I am fighting back the tears so he wouldn't see how much it is hurting me seeing Kwanda leave.

Nkosiyabo: Thingo LamaQwabe."

Me: "Baba.."

Nkosiyabo: "You won't start dating old men like you have daddy issues, I'm here I've been here your whole life and I love you, you're my only princess I will protect you from the world, you hear me?"

I nod.

Nkosiyabo: "Come here, you will start dating when you're ready and you will date your age mates not someone who is older than all your big brothers that's insane, he left because he knows he is wrong."

I nod and lay my head on his chest, tears fall me because they fall freely from my eyes, why am I feeling so much emptiness in my heart? Is he that important in my life? Is this what they call LOVE?

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CHAPTER 44

*

NGCEBO

*

I have been sitting under the tree looking down at my hands for the whole morning, I haven't even had breakfast, I told my wife that I will eat later.

I am thinking about my friend, he left for Durban and I know he thinks I am angry but to be honest I'm not, I know what he feels for my little sister is real, I saw it in him long ago but I just wish he came to me first for advice I was gonna tell him how to go about it because this isn't just about him but Mathenyoka as an ancestor wants this as well, we are his Gobelas we're still here to guide him.

I walk inside and find my wife sitting at the ancestral altar looking down. I sit next to her but notice she is crying.

Me: "Mkami."(My wife)

She looks away wiping her tears.

Me: "What's wrong mama? You're crying."

Wenzi: "I became a Gumede wife first Ngcebo but I have nothing to show for it but a grave of my baby girl. Bonolo gave Kumkani an heir and Didintle is giving Mcebisi two babies, I have nothing."

My heart breaks as she speaks like that. I look down, we've been trying but nothing is happening.

Wenzi: "The ancestors are quiet Gumede, why aren't they saying anything?"

She cries painfully I hold her hand, I don't know what to say.

Wenzi: "Sometimes I want to just get up and leave so you can find a wife without a rotten womb."

I shiver as she says that.

Me: "A..a rotten womb?"

Wenzi: "I gave you an abnormal baby Ngcebo and now I can't even conceive."

Me: "You know I want her memory to remain pure Wenzile and you're here talking about a rotten womb! My daughter was like that because your womb was rotten!?"

I ask her shouting and letting go of her hand, she sobs.

Me: "Indodakazi yami le Wenzile anginandaba ukuthi yazalwa injani kodwa indodakazi yami okusalayo!"(That's my daughter Wenzile I don't care how she was but she's still my daughter.)

I get up and take my car keys that Mathenyoka bought for us and walk out.

Wenzi: "Uyakuphi?"(Where are you going?)

She is standing by the door looking down. I get in the car and drive out. Once I get in Durban the traffic cops stop me I park on the side and step out. They squint their eyes staring at my feet.

"You're driving barefoot?"

I look down at my feet and nod.

Me: "I'm sorry."

That's all I manage to say, I don't want to talk I'm still hurt by what my wife said.

They hint that they want me to pay them so I give them money and drive to Mathenyoka's flat.

I park the car in his yard and knock on his door. He opens the door widening his eyes, I chuckle.

Me: "You're not gonna greet Mkhulu?"

He clears his throat then clap his hands.

Mathenyoka: "Thokoza Mntwana."

Me: "Makhosi."

He makes way for me to walk in, I go to his kitchen and open the fridge taking bottled water. I have been here a couple of time so I know my way around this house.

Me: "Ubalekeleni?"(Why did you run away?)

He can't even look at me in the eye, his eyes keeps wandering around.

Mathenyoka: "Baba was angry so I didn't want to piss him off by being in his face while my mistake is still fresh."

Me: "What's a mistake Gatsheni?"

He doesn't say anything.

Me: "I'm going through a lot so you have to forgive me for being quiet, I switch off these days."

Mathenyoka: "What's wrong?"

He ask concerned.

Me: "We're trying for another baby but it's not happening so it's taking a toll on my marriage."

He sit opposite me.

Mathenyoka: "So you and Wenzile are not in good terms?"

I nod a little.

Me: "She said something I didn't like, I felt like it was an insult to my resting daughter."

Mathenyoka: "But you know she loves Serena too she wouldn't say something to disturb her peace."

I sigh.

Mathenyoka: "So now I am asking, ubalekeleni?"(why did you run away?)

We both chuckle.

Me: "I want a child so bad Mkhulu that I am even questioning my manhood."

Mathenyoka: "Don't do that, we both know you're capable or princess Serena wasn't going to be conceived, God's time is always the best just wait on him."

I wipe my face and huff.

He clears his throat.

Mathenyoka: "How is she?"

He is referring to Thingo.

Me: "You won't stay away from each other for long, Mathenyoka will drag you back slithering."

He looks down.

Me: "I was gonna be angry too though, someone so old to be exchanging spit with my daughter I would flip but at the end of the day what's meant to be will be."

He nods.

His phone rings and he answers, he speaks for a while then give me a phone, he walks away.

Me: "Hello."

Wenzi: "Ngcebo."

Me: "Yebo mama."

Wenzi: "Uzobuya namhlanje?"(Are you coming back today?)

Me: "No, I will see you tomorrow."

Wenzi: "Ok.."

I sigh as she drops the call.

I just go straight to bed.

In the middle of the night I am tossing and turning I can't seem to get some rest. Mathenyoka barges in my room fully dressed and he is on the phone.

Mathenyoka: "Baba, he's with me we will be home soon I will drive."

I sit up when I hear panic in his voice.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Mathenyoka: "We need to go home now."

Me: "What's wrong? Is someone sick?"

He just throws my pants and t-shirt with ibhayi to me then rush out. I quickly wear my clothes then find him already in the car.

He speeds home I have decided not to ask anything because he looks like he is panicking but trying so hard to keep it together.

Once I step foot in the yard I know my wife is not ok. I run to my hut and find her sleeping on the mattress facing up, she is with Mom, Thingo, Bonolo and the pregnant Dintle. Dad and my brothers are pacing outside the lights are on.

I kneel next to her holding her hand tight she's sweating.

Me: "What's wrong my love?"

Wenzi: "I...I don't know Aaaaah..'

She screams I feel my spine moving I ache my back grunting..

Me: "Please can you all step out for a few minutes."

They all walk out as I pull her legs up and move down her panties.

Wenzi: "What are you doing?"

Her water breaks right in front of me.

Wenzi: "Aaaah..Ngcebo!"

She screams once again.

Me: "You need to push my love."

Wenzi: "Push? Push what Ngcebo?"

Me: "Our miracle, please baby.."

She let out a very loud scream I can see the head as she push so hard giving it her all until the baby is finally out. I am shaking as I stare at him.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo! What was that!? What is that Ngcebo?"

I slowly pick him up as he screams his lungs out.

Wenzi: "A baby? It's a baby?"

She looks so traumatised. My heart breaks.

Me: "No..God not again please."

Wenzi: "What's...what's wrong.."

I look down at him, his legs are stuck together but with him unlike Serena I can see where his legs are stuck, he even have toes, his private part is there even the testicles but the legs are stuck together I am even afraid to show him to Wenzile.

Me: "Gumede, ngenzeni kanti?"(What did I do?)

Wenzi: "Ngcebo what's wrong?"

She ask crying, I take off ibhayi and wrap him with it, I feel so drained. I put my son down and clean my wife up.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo, the baby is crying, give him to me please."

Me: "No."

Wenzi: "What do you mean no?"

Me: "I'm saying no Wenzile! NO!"

I shout and pick up my son walking out. I go to my ancestral hut and lock the door, I passed everyone outside like I didn't see or hear them. I put him next to me at the alter and cross my legs there, he is not crying anymore but I'm the one crying now, maybe he is dead just like my daughter died in my arms.

Me: "You said the curse was reversed but only my daughter was gonna be affected because she was already conceived, what is this now? Why are you doing this to me?"

"The curse was reversed Mntwana uNgcebo."

A voice echoes in the room.

Me: "But look at my son! Why are his legs stuck together like how Serena was! Why are you doing this to me?"

They have been knocking for a while but I don't answer.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo! Please open the door ngiyacela."(Please)

She is crying painfully as my son starts crying again.

Wenzi: "Ngcebo please...I need to feed the bsby, please."

She sounds weak, but of course she is, she just gave me a miracle without even knowing she was pregnant there were no signs at all, I guess he was hidden by the ancestors.

Nkosiyabo: "Ngcebo! Open this door! Don't be selfish man! Your wife is crying and the baby is crying just open the damn door before I kick it open and you won't like that!"

I slowly get up and pick my son up, he is still breathing but I don't know for how long.

I look at all of them as they stare at me. My wife is sitting on the doorstep crying.

Wenzi: "I'm sorry for what I said earlier, maybe you're punishing me for it. Let me see the baby."

Mathenyoka stares at me as he sees that I'm not moving, he slowly kneels and start clapping his hands together.

Mathenyoka: "Give the baby to his mother Mntwana."

He keeps begging me until I give in and slowly give my wife our son. She slowly removes ibhayi around him then let out a very heart wrenching sob. Everyone is crying they all can see the baby, the repeat of the most painful moment in my life.

Mathenyoka: "Mntwana.."

He stares at me shaking, he is in a trance.

Mathenyoka: "We need to go to the sea."

I slowly nod and try to take the baby from Wenzile.

Wenzi: "No! Our daughter died in your arms Ngcebo! Let me hold this one till his last breath! I don't know how long it will take! I don't know how much time I have with him."

I nod, I think I just lost my voice. Everyone get in the cars and Mathenyoka drives out first I am with Mcebisi and my wife in the car who is holding our son to her chest crying.

The cars stop at the sea, Mathenyoka opens the door on Wenzile's side.

Mathenyoka: "Give Mntwana the baby, you're still weak you won't be able to do this."

She slowly give me the baby, I step out with him then Mathenyoka and I walk to the sea leaving everyone in the cars it's still dark. I see the light in the middle of the sea, my third eye open showing me a mermaid standing in what looks like a light. I get in the water with my son Mathenyoka is kneeling down clapping his hands.

They take my son as I'm under water and wrap his legs with what looks like a green grass then put beautiful small white shells around his waist.

"Phindela ekhaya nomfana wakho Mntwana, ungowasemanzini uma kukhona ongakuqondi ngaye wamukelekile noma inini ukuthi ungeza kuthina."(Go home with your boy Mntwana, he is of the sea if you have something you don't understand with him you can always come back to us.)

I take my son and when I look at his legs, they are moving and they are not stuck anymore. I step out and find Wenzile sitting on the sand everyone is standing behind her. I kneel in front of her and give her the baby. She laughs happily with tears rolling down her cheeks.

Wenzi: "He is okay! Ngcebo our baby is okay!"

Mathenyoka takes the bottle from his car and get sea water.

Mathenyoka: "He will have to bath with it for the rest of his life."

I brush his litte head and kiss his forehead still in Wenzile's arms.

Me: "Prince Aqua...one from the sea"

Mathenyoka: "Thokoza.."

We go back home, I am still feeling drained but my son is gonna be ok.

I sit at the alter burning the incense.

Me: "Uyidlozi elihle Serena ndodakazi yami, you gave your brother life, ngiyathokoza."(You're a good ancestor Serena my daughter, Thank you.)

I go to our room and find mom with my wife and son, mom is helping him wear clothes that belonged to Phezukonke when he was still little, Wenzile looks fresh and so beautiful sitting under the bed covers. I sit next to her and watch mom as she covers our baby warmly in a baby blanket.

Thabsie: "Done now he needs to feed then he will sleep peacefully, congratulations you two I'm so happy for you."

She kiss my cheek and hold Wenzile's hand. She gives her the baby and walk out. I watch as he latches on his mother's breast.

Me: "He is perfect."

Wenzile is just staring at our son blankly.

Me: "Baby."

She ignores me. I try to kiss her cheek she turns her head away my heart breaks into pieces.

Me: "I'm sorry for everything I did Wenzile, a lot was going through my head I wasn't thinking straight."

She wipes her tears I try to hold her but she push my hand away.

Wenzile: "Can I be alone with my son please."

Me: "Baby I..."

Wenzile: "Please.."

I nod and walk out, I find the situation tense in the lounge I sit down.

Mathenyoka: "I'm leaving now."

Nkosiyo: "Where are you going?"

Mathenyoka: "I'm staying in Durban."

Dad chuckles.

Nkosiyo: "If I discipline my children I expect them to acknowledge their mistakes and apologise not run away, I don't hate you I just hate what you did with Thingo, she's still young and you're older this can't happen, she needs to finish school and then start her life making her own decisions in which I will respect but right now what you did was wrong it feels like you're grooming my daughter and I won't accept that."

Mathenyoka: "I swear I didn't mean to disrespect you baba."

He sighs.

Nkosiyo: "I can see how miserable she is away from you, I saw the bond you shared and I hate to be the one to break it so you can come home but one wrong mistake I will kill you."

Bukhosi: "You're agreeing to this baba? He was kissing her!"

Nkosiyo: "I am giving him the benefit of the doubt, a second chance hoping their friendship will remain pure just like before, am I clear?"

Mathenyoka nods.

Mathenyoka: "I promise it will remain pure."

Makhosini: "No touching and kissing!"

He says with a stern voice Mathenyoka nods.

Mathenyoka: "Again, I'm sorry for the disrespect baba."

He nods and get up walking away.

I walk Mathenyoka out.

Me: "Thank you for always being around to help me."

Mathenyoka: "I'm where I am today because of you."

I bow my head.

Me: "Gatsheni."

I see Thingo looking at us then she walks inside the house.

Mathenyoka: "I don't think she wants to be frjends with me anymore, she is cold."

I chuckle.

Me: "She's the only Princess, very hard to please."

I go back to my wife and find her sleeping with our son on her chest, I try to take him but she opens her puffy eyes looking at me.

Wenzi: "I don't want you here Ngcebo."

Me: "Baby let's talk please."

She get up and carefully put the baby in bed. She opens the door.

Wenzi: "Get out!"

Me: "Mama."

Wenzi: "Get out Ngcebo!"

She screams hitting my chest I pull her into my arms holding her tight as she sobs hard. I understand how she is feeling, I also thought we will lose yet another baby and also I made it worse by not showing her the baby and locking us up in the hut.

Me: "I'm so sorry."

I pick her up and tuck her in bed next to our son.

Me: "You still want me to leave?"

She nods.

Me: "I understand, I will see you in the morning."

It's already morning but still a bit dark, we need some rest.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda kakhulu and thank you for our miracle."(I love you so much)

I get up and go to my hut, I'm trying to get some sleep but I can't, I don't know how long my wife will be this cold towards me but I'm grateful for one thing, my son Prince Aqua NgceboJnr Gumede.

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CHAPTER 45

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MATHENYOKA

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I'm at my house back at the village I just finished reading an email from one of the construction companies in Durban they need my help in designing a new shopping centre, they want a unique landscape but I think I will be going blank again because I really don't know where to start and Thingo hasn't been talking to me since I came back a week ago when Wenzile was giving birth to Aqua. I'm so in love with that little guy, the first time I held him was three days ago but it was so brief because he started crying, he always wants to feed, his eyes are ocean blue he really is a gift, a son from the sea a true Aqua, I love how unique they name their children they are so meaningful.

I hear a knock on the door I open it and there stand Linda, apparently she is peaches according to Thingo.

Me: "Lindelwa, why are you here? I made it clear that whatever we had is over."

She chuckles pushing me away from the door.

Me: "Please get out before I drag you."

The door swings open Thingo stands by the door looking furious, I am looking at her smooth legs and thighs since she's wearing a denim bum shorts with a top that shows off her belly button, her tummy is so flat.

Me: "Thingo LamaQwabe."

I say stuttering and I don't know why.

She turns to the door but I quickly rush to her holding her waist looking into her eyes, she flap her eyelashes but keeps eye contact.

Me: "Why are you leaving? You came to see me right?"

She nods.

Thingo: "But she's here.."

Our voices are low almost whispering.

Me: "You're more important to me, more than anything."

I hold the side of her neck and kiss her forehead.

Me: "I missed you."

She wraps her arms around me and cry on my chest I even forgot there is someone else in the room.

Thingo: "Tell her to leave."

Me: "Ok baby."

She doesn't move or let go of me. I hear hissing sounds I chuckle, so everytime Thingo doesn't want someone here they will send snakes? That's harsh. Linda starts screaming at the sight of a snake and rush out I hold Thingo tight. She looks at me and stand on her toes kissing me so unexpectedly I am taken by surprise, I groan holding her waist.

Me: "Baby.."

Thingo: "Mmmh."

She breaks the kiss and look at me.

Thingo: "You promise you will wait for me?"

Me: "I will wait my love, no matter how long it takes."

Thingo: "I feel so jealous whenever you have a woman around, I don't want to lose you as my.. friend."

I smile.

Me: "You won't lose me."

I take her hand and we go to my room, she sits in bed I sit next to her showing her the email I was reading earlier.

Thingo: "You're an expert in this though you don't need my input."

Me: "But I do my love, I don't even know where to start."

She starts drawing up a plan then show it to me, she is so fast on the pen and also very smart.

Me: "I don't know what I would do without you Thingo."

She giggles staring into my eyes, she loves doing that a lot, she looks fascinated.

Thingo: "Your grandpa was a very handsome man."

I grunt as Mathenyoka appreciate the compliment, I chuckle as she claps her hands twice.

Thingo: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

This girl knows everything about me in just a short period of time, she notices even the slightest changes in me that even I myself doesn't know.

Thingo: "Why are you staring at me?"

She is blushing.

Me: "Ukuthi ngiyakuthanda."(Because I love you)

She giggles hiding her face with her hands, she's such a beautiful baby.

We finish up the project then we go to the kitchen to cook.

I help her here and there with cooking then Fana and Zamo walk in, they work for me and they are doing an amazing job. I shoulder hug Fana then hug Zamo it was supposed to be brief but she hold on to me and inhale my scent.

Zamo: "You smell so good."

I slightly push her away from me then look at Thingo, Fana is standing too close to her around the kitchen counter, looks like he is complimenting her looks and the food. I clear my throat, Fana smiles and move away from her.

Me: "What are you doing here?"

Fana: "We came to check on the project, is it done yet we have to submit tomorrow."

Me: "Yeah we're done with the project."

Fana: "Ok cool, Thingo helped you?"

I raise my eyebrow."

Me: "Yeah she did."

He smiles pulling her cheeks.

Fana: "I think she deserves this company more than you."

He says laughing and Zamo joins him.

Fana: "You really are nothing without her bro, you go blank everytime it's not funny anymore."

I look at Thingo she looks worried staring back at me.

Fana: "Like, how did you start the company in the first place? You have nothing bro, we did all the work for you and now Thingo is doing the same, you're exploiting us while your name is on the billboard."

Me: "Why don't you give me your resignation letter then?"

Fana: "I will once I find a company with a leader that is actually talented, bro like I said you have nothing!"

His little laughter gets to me but there is Thingo in the room I don't want her to see me in the state this boy is pushing me to.

Fana: "Ooh I'm joking man! You should look at your face right now, I'm joking."

Me: "Please close the door on your way out."

I walk away sitting at the back patio with my laptop in front of me I keep looking at the projects that I did ever since I met Thingo and really Fana was right most of these projects are Thingo's idea and planning.

Thingo: "I dished up for you."

She says behind me I look at her, she has a tray in her hands with food and a beer. She put it in front of me then take a seat next to me.

Me: "Thank you baby."

Thingo: "Are you ok?"

I nod.

Me: "Yes."

Thingo: "Don't let what Fana said get to you, he was just joking."

Me: "It's okay I have been belittled by my own family my whole life, Fana ain't shit."

She looks worried.

Thingo: "But your eyes, they are dark, you're angry and sad."

I smile.

Me: "I'm fine baby really."

She nods.

Later I take her home then go back home, I call my lawyer to draft another contract for me.

In the morning I drive to Durban to take the contract then drive back home.

Thingo's driver drops her off while she's still in her school uniform. I hug her kissing her cheek.

Me: "How was school?"

Thingo: "It was ok, how was your day?"

Me: "It was fine, Uhm I need your signature again baby."

Thingo: "For what now?"

I take the contract and give it to her. She frowns staring at the contract.

Thingo: "You're giving me another 20% of the company?"

I nod.

Thingo: "But you said you are going to give this once I'm done with school and if I persue Art."

Me: "I changed my mind, I want us to be partners you've been doing all the work."

Thingo: "So this is about what Fana said?"

I look down.

Thingo: "You listen to what people say?"

I don't say anything.

Thingo: "I'm not signing this."

She throws the paper on the floor and get up.

Me: "Where are you going?"

Thingo: "Home."

She walks away I follow shortly after her and find her and Fana locking lips I go into full transition same time.

Thingo pushes Fana away and slaps him I calm myself down by trying to take deep breaths.

Thingo: "Kwanda.."

She rush to me and push me to the couch it's like I'm getting blind all I see is grey.

Thingo: "Hey, look at me."

I stare at her as I finally regain my sight.

Thingo: "He took me off guard I wasn't expecting it, I'm sorry."

Fana: "What's going on between you two kanti? Aren't you supposed to be a big brother now you're acting like a couple."

My heart is beating so fast I'm scared I will lose my cool right now, I don't want to snap in front of Thingo.

Thingo: "Why the hell would you do that you piece of shit?"

She say stepping closer to Fana who has a smirk on his face, Thingo slaps him again but he grabs her hand and pull her to him kissing her again. I lose it, so bad that when I look at my hands they are bloody and shaking. I look at Thingo, she is standing at the corner in horror with her hands on her cheeks, Fana is motionless on the floor. I am breathing heavily when I try to move to Thingo she screams for me to stop, I raise my hands up.

Me: "I won't hurt you, I'm so sorry."

She runs out leaving me with tears in my eyes. I sit down and stare at Fana who is not moving on the floor, Ngcebo rush in and check on Fana then slowly look at me.

Me: "Is he ok?"

He chuckles shaking his head.

Ngcebo: "He's gonna be fine but he might want to press charges against you for this."

I rub my head.

Me: "I didn't mean to hurt him."

Ngcebo: "Oh really?"

I look down.

Ngcebo sprinkle water on Fana's face he gasp opening his eyes, Ngcebo helps him sit up, his face is swollen and there is blood coming out of his nose and mouth.

Fana: "I'm pressing charges for assault! You won't get away with this."

He speaks through his teeth, I look down, I hate losing mt cool because it always gets me into trouble.

Ngcebo: "Or you can just go to the doctor I will cover the costs."

Fana: "No! He will get used to this, he needs to be taught a lesson."

He slowly gets up then walk out, I sigh looking at my hands.

Ngcebo: "What's wrong with you?"

Me: "He was provoking me on purpose?"

Ngcebo: "Then why did you give in? What will happen to Thingo should you go to jail?"

I sigh looking down.

Later I call Thingo, she keeps rejecting my calls then I see her walking in.

She sits on my lap and hug me tight.

Me: "I'm sorry for what I did."

Thingo: "It's ok."

I hold her tight.

Me: "Should anything happen to me I want you to have everything that belongs to me, everything."

Thingo: "What will happen to you?"

Me: "He wants to press charges."

She sighs. I hear a knock on the door she stares at me then move away. I open the door it's the cops and Fana with them. Thingo stands next to me holding my hand.

"We're looking for Kwanda Ndlovu."

Me: "I'm Kwanda."

"Sir you're under arrest for assaulting Fana M..."

Thingo: "Woah I'm sorry for cutting you off officer, but Kwanda was protecting me. Fana was holding me inappropriately and I tried pushing him off he didn't listen, Kwanda was only trying to protect me I don't know what would have happened if he wasn't there."

They look at Fana who has his eyes popped out.

Fana: "It was just a kiss when did I hold y

Ou inappropriate?"

Thingo: "Officers please ask all the relevant questions when someone is coming to you for cases like this. Why did he kiss me are we in a relationship? To me that kiss was inappropriate and Kwanda could see I was uncomfortable the whole time so he defended me."

Looks like the police understand what Thingo is saying because after a few minutes they leave with their Fana. I look at Thingo she looks upset.

Me: "Uhm..thank you for the way you handled that situation baby, I don't know what I would be without you."

She nods.

Me: "Are you okay?"

Thingo: "You need to learn to control yourself or you gonna get arrested and leave me!"

She says punching my chest in frustration, I hold her hand.

Me: "I will control myself I'm sorry ok, I don't want to leave you."

She shakes her head and walk out, I sigh, she is everything I want and I am planning to keep her happy from today onwards.

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NGCEBO

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Things are still a bit tense between my wife and I we don't even spend time together with our child, I just take him whenever she's busy and go stay with him in my hut because she doesn't want me in our room yet.

I walk in and find her taking off his clothes.

Me: "Uhm..is he taking a bath?"

She nods, her eyes are puffy like she cries herself to sleep.

Me: "Mama."

She doesn't even spare me a glance but just concentrate on the baby.

Me: "Uhm is he keeping you awake at night? I can sleep here tonight so I can help you with him."

Wenzi: "He's not."

Her voice is hoarse like she was screaming.

Me: "Wenzile what's going on? Please talk to me."

She takes our son and put him in his water, she giggles with tears running down her cheeks I get up and look at our son's feet, they are stuck together and he is swinging them from side to side, he is still so tiny.

Me: "He's perfect."

His mom bath him then take him out drying his body then give him to me as she cleans around, I lay him down and lotion his body his feet are up in the air now not stuck together, his eyes are wondering around.

I give him his bottle once he is warm then he falls asleep in my arms, best feeling ever, I am grateful to my ancestors for giving me this miracle.

I sit next to my wife and hold her hand.

Me: "Please forgive me my love, I'm sorry."

I wipe her tears.

Me: "We should be happy together, our son is alive and well, we finally have a baby."

Wenzile: "I'm so sorry for what I said about my womb, I almost cursed our baby boy."

She cries on my chest I hold her tight closing my eyes, I missed holding her so much the tension between us was killing me.

Wenzile: "I'm sorry."

I nod.

Me: "Uhm..can I come back and sleep with you guys here?"

Wenzile: "Yes."

Me: "Thank you."

I hug her tight, I feel better now that my wife forgave me.

At night I wake up to my boy crying, Wenzile is sleeping peacefully I go to my son's cot and pick him up.

Me: "Hey boy, what's wrong?"

He continues to cry Wenzile is not even moving, She is in deep sleep not even Aqua's scream is waking her up.

Her phone rings I answer it.

Me: "Mathenyoka, why are you calling my wife this time of the night?"

Mathenyoka: "I'm parking outside we have to take Aqua to the sea right now."

Me: "Ok, uhm let me wake Wenzile up."

Mathenyoka: "She won't wake up Mntwana, they made her fall in deep sleep because they know she will try to fight this."

Me: "Fight taking our son to the sea? She knows he should go there from time to time mos."

He sighs.

Mathenyoka: "She doesn't know this and we also don't know this Mntwana, we should go."

I look at Wenzile first then walk out with our crying son.

He drives us to the sea and we walk in the sand and see that light again, the Mermaid is here. She stretches her hands I give her my son.

"I will take care of him Mntwana weDlozi."

Me: "What do you mean? Am I not going in with him?"

"Not this time, Go home you will know when to fetch him."

My heart starts beating fast.

Me: "What do you mean?"

She flips and all I see is a tail, she left with my son, I sit down in defeat.

Me: "What am I going to tell Wenzile? We just fixed things now this. How am I going to explain this to her?"

Mathenyoka squeeze my shoulder.

Mathenyoka: "We will explain everything to her, I'll be there."

We go back to the car but I keep looking back hoping they bring back my son but deep down I know we won't be seeing him for a while and it hurts, we just got him, we want to enjoy being parents but it looks like it won't be happening anytime soon.

I go back home and find everyone awake Wenzile is standing by the door looking a mess.

Me: "Baby..Mama I.."

Wenzile: "Ngcebo."

She says in a shaky voice, she looks so angry her face is hard.

Wenzile: "Where is my son!"

Her voice is stern.

Wenzile: "Where is he?"

Me: "Uhm..they took him, he needed to be in the sea, I woke up he was hysterical and...uhm we had to drive there and the mermaid took him she promised to take care of him and said they will show us the sign when we can fetch him."

I am talking so fast.

Wenzile: "Who is we?"

Me: "Uhm..I went there with Mathenyoka."

She nods.

Wenzile: "How long are they keeping him there?"

Me: "I don't know.."

She nods and hold the beads on her left wrist and pull them they scatter on the floor, she does the same on her right then her legs, she removes all the beads on her body then walk away. I follow her to our room.

Me: "I...I wanted to wake you up but you were in deep sleep my love, I'm sorry."

Wenzile: "It's ok."

She is not herself, I wasn't expecting this reaction from her.

She get in bed and close her eyes, I sit next to her.

Me: "Please say something."

She opens her eyes.

Wenzile: "If I say something right now Ngcebo it won't be anything nice so don't force me to talk! Let me be okay!"

Me: "I just want to know how you feel, I know this is hard."

Wenzile: "I don't feel anything."

Me: "Why did you break your beads?"

Wenzile: "I'm tired of everything Ngcebo, I want to be free! And being free starts right here."

She is not making any sense to me but maybe she is just hurt, maybe she will wake up tomorrow and share how she feels. I stay awake for the rest of the night I don't even bother getting in bed I just sit in bed and bury myself in sorrow. I thought finally my wife and I will be happy now this. I guess happiness is out of my reach.

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CHAPTER 46

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NGCEBO

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It's been two weeks and there hasn't been any signs from the mermaids, I sometimes wake up in the middle of the night and drive to the ocean just to feel closer to my son.

My wife. Sigh. She's been doing everything she normally does everyday, but she's too quiet and never even ask about our son it's like she switched off her feelings and kept them locked up somewhere. I tried talking to her about making new beads for her but she blatantly refused and said she is not a sangoma anymore she quits but I know the consequences won't be good for her so I will keep trying to beg her to wear them again.

She comes in carrying a washing basket going to the bathroom then she comes back and sit in bed taking off her sleepers.

Me: "Wenzile."

Wenzile: "Ngcebo."

Me: "Uhm..don't you miss Aqua?"

Wenzile: "Who is Aqua?"

I look at her.

Me: "Don't do that Wenzi, I know it's hard but don't erase our son."

She stares at me in confusion.

Wenzile: "A son? We have a son?"

Me: "What do you mean?"

She get under covers but doesn't sleep.

Me: "Uhm..baby are you ok?"

She shakes her head.

Wenzile: "I have a headache."

She doesn't look sick but she keeps staring at one direction not moving her eyes.

Wenzile: "Where is Serena?"

I frown.

Wenzile: "She must sleep with us tonight."

Ok something is wrong with my wife. She get up and go to our son's cot she picks up a little teddy bear and hold it hushing it like a baby.

Wenzile: "Stop crying baby, mommy is here."

I rush to her and hold her shoulders.

Me: "Mama.."

She stares at me.

Me: "What's going on? You're scaring me."

Wenzile: "Serena is crying, can't you see?"

Me: "Who is Serena?"

I'm trying to figure out her state of mind because she is really scaring me now.

Wenzile: "Our daughter Ngcebo, she's crying, shhhh askies baby."

She says moving around the room. I take the phone and call Mathenyoka.

Mathenyoka: "Mntwana."

Me: "I need your help, my wife is not ok."

Mathenyoka: "Is it possible to come with her here now?"

I look at Wenzile she has tears rolling down her cheeks but she is still hushing the teddy bear.

Me: "We're coming."

I drop the call.

Me: "Wenzile."

She wipes her tears.

Me: "Why are you crying baby?"

Wenzile: "I can't calm my baby down Ngcebo, I'm not a good mother."

Me: "Uhm..let's go talk to Mathenyoka, he might help us."

She nods and take our son's blanket covering the teddy, I'm getting really worried.

Me: "Mama."

She looks at me with those teary eyes my heart breaks.

Me: "We're going to be ok."

She nods.

Wenzile: "I will manage to calm our daughter down?"

I nod, she has those hopeful eyes and a little smile on her face.

I take her to Mathenyoka's house and find him in his hut. He starts grunting as soon as we walk through the door.

We sit down in front of him.

Me: "Mkhulu, can you please find out when are they bringing back our son, they are messing around with my marriage and I don't like that."

I'm getting emotional.

Mathenyoka: "That you will find out on your own Mntwana."

I look down.

Me: "Then what about my wife."

Mathenyoka: "I made new beads for her but what she believes is in her brain and I can't help with that."

Me: "So she believes Serena is alive but not our son?"

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "She is blocking things that hurts her at the moment, which is her son being taken away from her so she is erasing him and chose to keep Serena alive instead."

I don't understand.

Mathenyoka: "Selective memory loss, she remembers certain things that only her mind allows her to but it all starts with her, she created all the lies she believes."

I sigh wiping my face.

Me: "They need to bring back my son!"

Mathenyoka begs Wenzile to wear the beads again and she finally agrees I am just sitting there quietly, I'm tired.

I close my eyes when I hear some humming playing in my head it's so calm and soothing.

Mathenyoka: "Are you ok?"

I open my eyes looking at him.

Me: "I hear some sounds in my head, humming sounds."

He smiles.

Mathenyoka: "It's the mermaids."

I stare at him.

Me: "Really? Is that a sign I have been praying for?"

He nods, I quickly look at Wenzile and hold her hand, her eyes are carrying so much pain.

Me: "Baby, let's go fetch our son."

Wenzile: "We have a son?"

I pull her into my arms hugging her tight.

Me: "I love you."

I look at her, she is smiling but you still can't miss the sorrowful eyes.

Mathenyoka drives us to the beach around 7 pm and it's quiet.

We sit on the sand, my wife is resting her head on my shoulder with her eyes closed. I hear some humming again my spiritual eye opens up I look deep in the sea and I see mermaids a lot of them then the one who took my son shows up carrying him in her arms smiling at us, I quickly get up and walk towards the ocean. I bow my head before her.

"Thank you for your patience Mntwana."

I sigh.

Me: "You've made my life a living hell."

She giggles looking down at my son.

Me: "Can I hold him please."

She gives him to me, he has grown, he is naked and his eyes are closed. I take ibhayi around my waist and cover him with it.

Me: "Can I take him home now?"

She smiles, a beautiful mermaid she is with long black hair.

"You can take him home."

Me: "Please don't ever do this to me again."

She chuckles.

"I am his spirit guide he needs me."

I sigh.

Me: "Just give us time to be his parents, to enjoy having a baby, I am not asking for much just time, I am begging you."

She touch my shoulder and her hands are fins, she doesn't have fingers.

"You're a good man so I will give you some time."

Me: "Thank you."

Her eyes glows as I stare at her.

Me: "Uhm..can I ask you something?"

She nods.

Me: "Why do I feel like you've walked on this earth before?"

She chuckles.

"Go Mntwana."

I step out of the water then look back, she swims towards me then once she's out of the water she stares at her tail as it glows the bright light shines in my eyes I close them. When I open them all I see is a

woman standing in front of me her breast are covered with a long green leaf and so is her waist, she is standing on her two feet.

Me: "How...how is this possible?"

She smiles widening her beautiful eyes.

"I was just like your son, born with two feet stuck together, I am from the sea but also from land but I chose my own path, I chose the sea, this is my home."

I stare at her.

Me: "So...so my son will one day live here forever?"

"No, he has parents that loves him I doubt he will choose the sea, I chose it because I found a family in them."

She points behind her, where other mermaids are waiting.

"Something I didn't have in land because I was different, my parents didn't want nor tried to understand the way I was so I came here and asked them to change me completely so I can become one of them."

I nod. She is speaking calmly with a smile that doesn't leave her face.

Me: "I understand and I'm sorry that they didn't accept you as you are."

She smiles.

"And you've accepted your children as they are, from Serena to this one."

She says brushing my son's cheek, he opens his eyes and I see a little smile on his face, I can't help but smile too.

Me: "So he smiles now?"

"He can feel my presence, I'm more than just a human."

She laughs so hard tears roll down the corner of her eyes I can't help but stare at her, her aura is so calm.

"Thokoza Dlozi."

She says stepping back inside the sea then flips I see her tail and she goes deep in the ocean. I smile looking at my son I kiss his forehead, he makes baby sounds I smile with tears burning my eyes.

Me: "I missed you so much buddy, we missed you."

I walk towards Wenzile and Mathenyoka they are looking at me.

Me: "Mama."

She looks at me.

Me: "Our son is back baby."

She blinks a couple of times then tears roll down her cheeks.

Wenzile: "Can I hold him?"

I give him our son, she sobs going on her knees with him in her arms. I guess she remembers him now, her motherly instincts kicked in as soon as she saw me holding our son.

Me: "It's okay, everything is gonna be fine my love."

I wipe her tears and hold her hand pulling her up then hug them.

Wenzile: "He is so beautiful.."

Me: "I know."

He is staring at us with his ocean blue eyes.

Mathenyoka: "iphumile inkosana emanzini kuzonetha manje asambeni siyekhaya."(The Prince is out of the water it's about to rain let's go home.)

Just then we feel rain drops we rush to the car and Mathenyoka speeds home as heavy rains starts falling. We rush inside the ancestral hut I burn the incense thanking the ancestors for keeping my son safe for bringing him back home and most of all I thank them for trusting us with him.

We spent the whole night in the ancestral hut, we're spending some time with our son even though he is sound asleep but the fact that he is here makes everything better, I am happy he is home.

In the morning Mathenyoka joins me in my hut, I just took Wenzile and our son to my hut so they can rest.

Mathenyoka: "So, did you notice anything familiar with the mermaid?"

I nod.

Me: "She can be in her full human form."

Mathenyoka: "Just that?"

Me: "Is there anything more I should have noticed?"

Mathenyoka: "You have met her before, you tried to ask her parents to help her but they refused because they didn't want to accept her as she is."

I widen my eyes.

Me: "I have met her?"

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "And there is a reason she is Aqua's spirit guide."

Me: "What could that reason be?"

Mathenyoka: "Blood. That Mermaid is Wenzile's older sister that her parents couldn't accept so she left home when she was just a toddler and went to the sea so the mermaids changed her into who she is today."

I stare at him in shock.

Me: "Wow.."

Mathenyoka: "So Serena's curse wasn't about her physical appearance but was that she doesn't live a day on this earth."

Me: "That's..wow, so Wenzile doesn't know anything about her?"

Mathenyoka: "I don't think so."

I nod.

Parents and their decisions sometimes cost us a lot in this life.

*

MATHENYOKA

*

I am taking Thingo to Durban today I told her parents it's about work I'm happy that dad still trusts me with her even though it's not like before but he asked to talk to Thingo first and they had a long conversation before we hit the road.

I am driving with one hand and the other hand is holding my girl's hand. I have never thought I would fall in love with someone so young, something in me moves everytime our eyes lock.

Me: "So what did baba say?"

She chuckles looking out the window.

Thingo: "He said I should behave and mom said there are certain parts of my body that I shouldn't allow you to touch because I'm still young."

I widen my eyes.

Me: "So they have accepted that we are together?"

She shrug her shoulders.

Thingo: "They just said they trust me and I also trust myself."

Me: "In what manner baby?"

I ask amused.

Thingo: "I wouldn't allow you to touch me because I want to finish school first and I know you understand that so we really didn't have to talk about all that with mom and dad but they are parents I guess they saw the need to remind me."

I smile, some women are older than her but not half the woman she is mentally, she's a very straightforward clever girl that's what I like most about her.

Me: "I love you uyakwazi loko angithi?(you know that right?)

She giggles.

Thingo: "I know, you've told me countless times but it always feels like the first time hearing it."

Me: "Really?"

Thingo: "Yes, it sounds like you mean it."

I chuckle.

Me: "I mean it."

We get to my flat I open the door for her

And hold her waist from behind as we walk in.

Thingo: "So why are we here? I know you lied about having some work."

Me: "How did you know I lied baby?"

She turns and wrap her arms around my neck then jump on me wrapping her legs around my waist I hold her.

Thingo: "I've been around you for some time, it all lies in your eyes, I can read every emotion by just staring at you."

Me: "What emotion do you see now?"

Thingo: "Love."

I peck her lips.

Me: "I can't wait to spend the rest of my life with you, to hold you like this everyday till my last breath."

Thingo: "We gonna have babies?"

We both laugh.

Me: "Yes, you're gonna be a mother of my kids one day."

She giggles happily, my heart smiles.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda kakhulu."(I love you so much.)

I hold her with one arm while taking out my ringing phone with the other.

Me: "Nomzamo."

She sniffs.

Me: "Hello."

Zamo: "I am stranded I really need a place to stay, I was chased out of the apartment because I failed to pay my rent."

I feel my blood rush as Thingo touch my neck with her soft hand, I release an unexpected groan then quickly clear my throat looking at my heart staring deep in my eyes then she step down from me walking away to the kitchen.

Zamo: "Hello Kwanda, are you there?"

Me: "Where are you?"

Zamo: In a cab."

Me: "I'm here in Durban so I guess you can come stay here for a while until you find another flat because I really don't understand how you're unable to pay rent, you're working."

Zamo: "Ok thank you I'll be there soon."

I sigh and drop the call. I am still trying to find a replacement for Fana after he called the cops on me for beating him up after he kissed my baby, we haven't talked ever since that day and I don't want to ever meet him again because I am still angry.

I go join my woman in the kitchen and find her defrosting some meat, I know she loves cooking she took lessons from her mother at a very young age who is a very good cook.

Me: "What are you making? I thought we're going out."

She shakes her head.

Thingy: "I want to stay indoors with you, and watch movies."

Me: "Oh uhm...Zamo is on her way here, she will be staying here for a while, she was chased out of her flat."

Thingy: "Oh, I thought it was just gonna be me and you here like old times."

She's clearly disappointed.

Me: "I can ask her to go to a hotel baby so we can spend time together."

Thingy: "No it's fine, you've already agreed."

She starts chopping some vegetables quietly.

Me: "LamaQwabe."

She just focuses on chopping. I hear a

Knock on the door I walk away to open the door, Zamo is here with a lot of bags she throws herself at me I slowly hug her back as she cries on my shoulder. Thingo clears her throat I let go of Zamo, she frowns looking at Thingo she is leaning on the wall with her arms fold.

Zamo: "Uhm..I didn't know you had company."

Thingo: "Hi Nomzamo."

Zamo: "Hi Thingo."

I am sensing a bit of tension between them but they never had a problem before.

Thingo: "Why are you here?"

Zamo frowns.

Zamo: "And what are you? A woman of the house to ask me that question?"

Me: "Nomzamo, I think it's best you book a hotel until you find another flat that you can afford this time."

Zamo: "A hotel is expensive I'm already saving for a new flat Kwanda."

Thingo: "Why are you making your problems his kanti, he is your employer nothing more than that, right?"

I look at her.

Zamo: "Ok Princess you need to know your place I don't like how you're meddling in adults business you're a just a kid."

Thingo: "He is my business."

Zamo raise her eyebrow.

Zamo: "In what way baby girl?"

Thingo: "Every way you can think off auntie."

Zamo is getting angry.

Me: "Uhm..ladies can we all calm down please, Zamo please know your place you won't be questioning Thingo's presence here, that's not your business just stay for a day and go look for a flat tomorrow I will pay for it."

She nods, I show her the room while Thingo goes back to the kitchen.

After she is done cooking she dish up two plates and give one to me then starts eating her own food.

Me: "Thank you."

She doesn't even look my way, I take her free hand and hold it.

Me: "I'm sorry for ruining our time here together by allowing Zamo to stay."

She doesn't say anything, Zamo walks in wearing a short silk gown and sit next to me crossing her legs.

Zamo: "This smells good.."

She takes a meat on my place then eat it.

Zamo: "Is there any food left?"

I look at Thingo, she doesn't look like she wants to answer any questions from Zamo.

Zamo: "Princess?"

Thingo just get up with her plate and go sit on the couch.

Zamo: "Uhm..so thank you for allowing me to stay here Kwanda."

She brush my thigh then slowly kiss my cheek.

Me: "Sure."

Zamo: "So are you with someone? I have never seen you with a woman before?"

Thingo: "Am I a toy?"

She says standing behind me and put her hands on my shoulders.

Zamo laughs.

Zamo: "You're just a child that needs baby sitting not a woman, a man like Kwanda needs a real Queen, a matured lady."

I sigh, I really am not up for this drama between these two.

Me: "Let's go to bed baby."

Zamo frowns, I pick my baby up and walk away leaving Zamo gasping in shock.

I lay her down in bed and sleep next to her holding her closer to me.

Thingo: "We gonna share a bed the whole night?"

I smile.

Me: "I will keep my hands to myself I just want to watch you fall asleep."

She nods and take off her clothes leaving just her panty, I have seen how she doesn't really hide her body to anyone she's just so innocent. I take my t-shirt and help her wear it then I take off my clothes leaving only my briefs on and get in next to her again.

She smiles and kiss my lips.

Me: "I thought you were angry at me."

Thingo: "I was but I don't want to be angry at you for long, that will make a gap between us for another woman to fill in and I don't want that."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "Are you sure you're only seventeen?"

She close her eyes while she laughs her lungs out.

Thingo: "I use common sense often which most people lack these days."

I go in for a kiss and she welcomes me by kissing me back, sensual kiss it is evokes so many emotions my bulge is growing and I'm afraid it might scare her.

Me: "Thingo.."

Thingo: "Mmm."

Me: "Sthandwa sami ngicela ungigudlise."

She opens her lazy eyes.

Thingo: "What's that?"

Me: "I will put my penis on your thighs, you will keep your panties on, I promise it won't get us into trouble."

She blinks looking a bit nervous.

Thingo: "You mean ukusoma? Gogo teaches us that everytime we go for testing."

I nod.

Me: "Yes I mean that."

She slowly nods.

Thingo: "But I don't know how they do it, I have never done it before."

Me: "I know baby."

I turn her she lies on her tummy I pull up the t-shirt showing her spine I groan arching my back. Her butt cheeks are visible on her red lace panty I slowly kiss her back going down to her butt cheeks she giggles.

Thingo: "It tickles."

I chuckle, I am so close to losing all my senses her body is amazing, smells fresh and looks appealing. I choose to just masturbate behind her back instead of thigh sex because the friction might hurt her. After I cum I go to the bathroom and wipe myself then wash my hands.

I sleep next to her she looks sleepy.

Me: "Close your eyes baby and sleep I'm right here."

She nods.

Thingo: "Please hold me."

I smile as she moves closer to me and hang her leg on top of me I hold her.

Thingo: "I love you."

I grunt, first time she tells me those words first. She stares into my eyes for a while smiling then she closes her eyes.

Thingo: "Now I can sleep."

I watch her fall asleep, I wouldn't mind this sight from now to the rest of my life.

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CHAPTER 47

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THINGO-LAMAQWABE

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I can feel his hands around my waist I love them there but his penis keeps poking my butt I try to move away but he hold me tight and kiss the back of my neck I shiver.

Mathenyoka: "Where do you want to go?"

His voice comes out husky yet soft I remove his hands and turn looking at him, I will never get over his beautiful eyes, I smile, he smiles back.

Me: "Morning."

Mathenyoka: "Nhliziyo yami."(My heart)

I blush.

Me: "Boyabenyathi.."

The colours in his eyes when I say that are amazing I just start kissing him, I didn't know kissing felt so good I always thought kissing is disturbing but now I see why mom and dad are always doing it, it's amazing.

He gets on top of me and keeps groaning and shockingly I love those groans. There's some friction between us of our private parts over the fabrics of our underwears and I'm enjoying it, it is touching a very sensitive part in me that I didn't even know exist.

Mathenyoka: "Eish...Thingo."

I sink my nails on his shoulders and he increase his pace and the pleasure is intense I find myself moving underneath him my blood getting warmer I can feel it.

Me: "Kwanda.."

He stops moving and pull down his briefs I look away as he strokes it, it's so big with veins around it, looks scary. He keeps going until I move my eyes back to it out of curiosity, the way he is doing it makes that sensitive part he was brushing throb I pull my thighs together but he pulls them apart again and move my panty to the side, his groans are getting louder and he is stroking faster until I see his hand getting wet he is ejaculating and I feel this exciting me in my private part I am curious to scratch the itch I feel deep inside my lady part I have never felt it before.

He get off the bed and go to the bathroom, he comes back and pull my legs up again moving the panty to the side, he plants a very soft kiss right on my vagina I squirm with my whole body shaking.

Me: "What..what are you doing?"

He starts using his tongue I grab on the sheets as I feel like peeing and I actually let go I hear him chuckling. After I stop shaking I want to disappear, did I just pee unexpectedly in front of my very first boyfriend. Tears are burning my eyes as he fix my panty with a smirk on his face I pull the bed covers and cover my head, I start crying hard.

Mathenyoka: "Aybo..baby."

He tries to remove the cover on my head but I hold it tight. I am so embarrassed.

Mathenyoka: "Look I'm sorry for what I did."

Me: "But I'm the one who should be sorry I peed on your bed."

He chuckles once then starts laughing so hard making me cry even harder.

Mathenyoka: "Thingo come here baby...sorry for laughing, just come to your man let me explain something to you."

Me: "I can't even look at you so NO!"

He pulls me up by force and make me straddle him I cry on his shoulder.

Mathenyoka: "That was not pee my love I promise you, stop crying you gonna get sick."

Thingo: "It was not?"

I ask looking at him, he smiles wiping my tears.

Mathenyoka: "You're too sensitive my love, just one lick you squirt all over me."

His eyes are different if I knew better I'd say it's lust.

Mathenyoka: "Just like you saw how my dick shot that cum it's the same thing that your pussy did, the pleasure was intense you released some cum as well."

I blink rapidly.

Mathenyoka: "It means you enjoyed the oral pleasure I gave to you."

Me: "So I shouldn't be embarrassed?"

Mathenyoka: "No, it's amazing I now know where to touch once we start having sex."

I now feel better.

My phone rings it's dad so I get off Kwanda and answer the call.

Me: "Daddy."

Nkosiyo: "Ntombikayise."(Daddy's girl)

I smile brightly.

Me: "Ngiyakukhumbula."(I miss you)

Nkosiyo: "You decided to leave me here and leave with your boyfriend nje.."

Me: "Baba..he..he is not my boyfriend."

Kwanda raise his eyebrow I look away.

Nkosiyo: "That must hurt if he hears you saying that."

He says laughing, I smile.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda, you're my boyfriend."

Thabsie: "Aybo nangu efuna ukuthatha indoda yami."(She wants to take my man)

She says talking next to dad I laugh.

Me: "Mamam."

Thabsie: "Hey baby, I miss you I hope you're still behaving because when you come back uGogo will be here."

Me: "I..I didn't do anything mama."

Suddenly guilt is eating me up, I allowed Kwanda to touch me down there I even enjoyed it.

Thabsie: "Gogo will confirm that nana, I love you."

Me: "I love you too mama no baba."

They drop the call, I look at Kwanda he looks upset.

Me: "Gatsheni."

I smile as he starts grunting like crazy.

Me: "Thokoza."

Mathenyoka: "Why do I get the feeling that you will be so manipulative in our relationship since you know me so well."

I smile, he push me lightly I laugh.

Mathenyoka: "I was angry Thingo but you always know what to say, when to say it."

I kneel in front of him in bed his hand brush my butt.

Me: "Gogo will be waiting for me at home tomorrow."

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "Nothing will show, I didn't even finger you."

I nod.

Me: "You want us to shower together so we can go out for breakfast I am not in the mood for your girlfriend."

He widens his eyes.

Mathenyoka: "Am I slow or something? I have another girlfriend beside you?"

I chuckle and get off taking off his t-shirt then go in the shower leaving him cussing under his breath. He joins me in the shower and it's a breeze I feel so good as he wash my body so slow.

Mathenyoka: "This is killing me."

Me: "What?"

He stands behind me and cup my breast his fingers play with my nipples.

Mathenyoka: "This.."

I bite my lip as he pinch my nipples. He let go and step out of the shower leaving me breathing heavily. I dry my body and join him in the bedroom and find him already in his pants but nothing on his upper body, his tattoo is intriguing, I move my hand on it he turns looking at me.

Me: "Once I turn 18 I want a matching tattoo but on my back."

Mathenyoka: "Really?"

I nod and wear my short black dress with a jacket and sneakers.

Mathenyoka: "You look beautiful."

I smile and peck his lips walking out first he is behind me. We find Zamo busy in the kitchen in a bikini, I look at Kwanda looks like he doesn't know where to look the girl has got huge butt.

Me: "Awuzihloniphi wena."(You don't have respect for yourself)"

She smiles looking behind me then pass me going to Kwanda trying to hug him I pull her back by the string of her cheap bikini.

Me: "Ungazongihlanyisa wena."(Don't make me go crazy)

She turns and I don't know if it's reflex or she slapped me on purpose Kwanda is quick to hold me to his chest brushing my cheek softly.

Zamo: "Sorry Princess I didn't mean to, I was just trying to push your hand away."

I chuckle and push Mathenyoka away from me then slap her so hard she stumbles back and lean on the wall for balance holding her cheek.

Me: "Oops sorry I was only trying to teach you some RESPECT! This is not your man's house you won't be entering the kitchen half naked here it's disgusting, you're not even that hot."

I hold my man's hand and we walk out. He is too quiet in the car.

Me: "Are you ok?"

Mathenyoka: "Yeah I'm good baby."

I look down.

Me: "I know you don't like what I did back in there I'm so sorry but she slapped me first."

Mathenyoka: "I know baby I just don't want to put you in situations where you have to fight, Zamo needs to leave today."

I chuckle.

Me: "Thank you for considering my feelings always."

He drives us to a restaurant and we order our breakfast, we eat and he keeps brushing my cheek or holding my hand, he is showing so much affection and I love it.

His phone rings, he answers it I can literally hear the scream because I am sitting closer to him.

Mathenyoka: "Hello Nomzamo."

I roll my eyes, oh it's her.

Zamo: "There is a huge snake in this house! It's in the bedroom I slept in!"

Kwanda sighs rubbing his forehead.

Mathenyoka: "You can leave I will bring your clothes wherever you're going."

Zamo: "Why are you not shocked? You have a snake, uthwele Kwanda?"

Mathenyoka: "Ukuthwala kwamasimba, idlozi lelo, phuma emzini wami Nomzamo."

He drops the call looking irritated.

Me: "There's a snake in the house?"

He nods and lean back on the chair.

Mathenyoka: "She shouldn't have made you angry, Mathenyoka removes anyone who is hurting you."

I smile.

Me: "Really?"

He chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "Highly favoured."

I smile happily.

Mathenyoka: "I really wish to marry you soon but you're still so young I don't think dad will allow it."

I nod.

His phone rings again, he answers and I can see him sweating immediately I hold his hand, he drops the call and look at me.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Mathenyoka: "Uhm..Zamo has a video of us, apparently she planted a camera in my room yesterday while we were eating and she was in the room, She wants to leak it."

Me: "A..a video of us doing what?"

He clears his throat.

Mathenyoka: "Let me drop you off at home I have to go somewhere."

Me: "You're not dropping me off I'm coming with you."

He pays the bill and take my hand pulling me up.

He drives us back to the flat then try to tell me to stay but I refuse.

Me: "If you're going to meet with Zamo then I'm not staying, this is not just about you! You said it's a video of US!"

I raise my voice at him, he nods, I'm just as curious to know what video I don't know why he wants to shut me out.

We walk in some flat, he chuckles shaking his head.

Mathenyoka: "She lied about being chased out Thingo..this is where she has been living ever since she started working for me."

He knocks on the door and Zamo opens the door and she stares at Kwanda shaking her head.

Zamo: "I wonder what the King will do to you after seeing this."

She makes way for us to walk in and we find the guy in a computer wearing glasses.

Mathenyoka: "What did you do Nomzamo? Why did you come to my house?"

She chuckles.

Zamo: "So you have a snake? I bet you're only with the princess because it wants you to sleep with virgins huh?"

I raise my eyebrow, so she made up a whole theory on this already.

"My work here is done." Her guy says.

Zamo: "So you edited the important parts?"

"I did, I have to go now."

Zamo: "Ok leave all your details so I can pay you, you did great thanks."

The boy gives Zamo the hard drive and a memory stick before walking out, she puts a memory stick in her own computer and smile staring at the screen.

Zamo: "Oh how I wish it had a sound."

I see Kwanda rushing to a laptop and snatch it from Zamo, he stares at the screen I stand next to him as his eyes glows in green, he is

boiling I touch his back his eyes go back to normal but he is still angry he keeps clenching his jaws.

I widen my eyes when I see a video of Kwanda with his head buried between my thighs my body goes cold, it then shows him jerking off, it's a lot happening there it's like a compilation of everything nasty we did in that room.

Kwanda swings the computer and it shatters on the wall and he keeps grunting.

Me: "Baby.."

Those words just roll out of my lips.

Zamo steps back with her eyes all out, Mathenyoka's eyes are brown now the change is clear even Zamo sees it.

He steps closer to Zamo but I stand in front of him, he doesn't look at me at all.

Me: "Kwanda, you will not do what you did to Fana please."

He lightly push me away from him then grabs Zamo by the neck she screams.

Me: "Kwanda stop...please."

He doesn't let go of Zamo's neck, he is now grunting and hissing it echoes all around the room.

Me: "Mkhulu..."

I clap my hands together looking down he slowly let go of Zamo and look my way, I keep clapping my hands and his eyes starts changing into those 7 colours of the rainbow. His ancestors are dangerous it always looks like he is possessed everytime he transition.

He pulls me to his chest, his heart is beating so fast.

Me: "It's ok."

He finally calms down I look for a sink and get him water with the glass I found near the sink, he drinks it all up in one go and throws the glass away it also shatter into pieces on the floor, I push him to sit down on the couch he is touching his head like it hurts.

Zamo is rubbing her neck.

Me: "What did you do?"

She wipes her sweaty forehead.

Zamo: "If he does something to me he must know that Fana already have this video and it's not just him."

Me: "What do you want from him?"

Zamo: "He gave everything to you! The shares! While we've been with him for years! Couldn't he at least give us 10 percent, no he gave you the whole 30% and we only heard from the company lawyer that he gave you another 20% to make you his equal partner!"

She screams in my face and I hate it.

Me: "It's his company if you want to own something you work for it you fool! Go start your own company!"

Zamo: "Oh no baby girl! I deserve a share. He is retarded you might not see it because of his body and looks but the way he shuts down whenever he has to work and we had to do all the work for him before you came here, we deserve something!"

I sigh.

Me: "So you want to blackmail him using this?"

Zamo: "He went missing for months and we held his company and the staff down just me and Fana and when he came back he decided on his own to give you half of everything, all our hard work."

I look down, maybe it isn't fair to them, I guess she is talking about the time Kwanda went crazy and had to go for initiation.

Me: "Couldn't you just be civil with him and talk about this instead of plotting these silly stunts!"

Zamo: "We just want him to do right by us that's all."

Me: "But I didn't take the other 20%."

Zamo: "Then he should give it to me."

Mathenyoka: "You don't know how hard I had to fight to get that company up and running and you're here calling me names, I am retarded while I hired you?"

Zamo shrug her shoulders.

Mathenyoka: "You're playing with fire ntombazane."(girl)

Zamo: "If anything happens to me just know that you'll be the first suspect just try me!"

He chuckles and get up, he walks up to me and kiss my lips.

Mathenyoka: "Let's go home."

I look at Zamo.

Me: "Please don't leak those videos We will talk about this."

She smirks.

Zamo: "It better be a good talk and must be very soon I don't have enough patience."

We walk out and Kwanda drives back home to the village, our drive is quiet which is very unusual when we are together.

He drives inside his house and there are two cars in the driveway.

Mathenyoka: "Who the hell are these people."

We step out and walk around the house, they are sitting at his garden quietly I can see his mom and two sisters they are with three old men and two women. I look at Kwanda he looks very sad as he stares at his mother.

"Kwanda.."

He breathe out loud.

Mathenyoka: "Mam'Ndlovu."

She sighs and look at me.

"Can you give us space girl so we can talk to my son, this is a family matter."

I take a step back but Kwanda is quick to hold my waist and pull me closer to him.

Mathenyoka: "She is my family. What being a you to my house?"

"We kept asking around and we finally found you it's been a week we've been living with a neighbour."

Mathenyoka: "Why?"

"My house burnt down out of nowhere and these people helped me with a place to stay for a while I now asked them to accompany me so I can talk to you."

Me: "Why do you need people to accompany you to your son?"

She gives me a look that is supposed to be intimidating but I don't flinch I want to understand where this is going.

Mam'Ndlovu: "Kwanda can you tell this girl to leave our family matters alone! Being a princess doesn't give her the right to poke her nose where in our business."

Mathenyoka: "Like I said, she is my family now please can you all leave my house, we have things to do."

"Didn't you hear what our mother said? We don't have a place to stay!"

His older sister shouts getting up, she is even leaking milk I can see it on her top I didn't even notice a baby sleeping on a stroller next to them.

Mathenyoka: "Do I look like I give a fuck!?"

The other people exclaim, he takes his phone and dial a number.

Mathenyoka: "Those police better answer my call right now before I catch a case!"

He shouts, he is angry!

I see the old men getting up and they ask the other two women that they should leave.

Mathenyoka: "Get out!"

He roars that everyone gets startled even the sleeping baby wakes up, I have seen him angry but not this angry, he is breathing fire!

They all rush out he removes the phone from his ear as soon as they are out of sight.

Me: "Are you good?"

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "I..I want us to talk."

I nod.

Me: "About what?"

Mathenyoka: "Uhm..I..I want to let you be a child, date, have fun and I feel like it's not time yet for us to be together."

Me: "What..do you mean?"

Mathenyoka: "Focus on school, date your peers with less problems, just act your age ok forget about us, we can stay as friends but keep our distance."

I stare at him.

Me: "Uhm..is this a break up?"

I ask blinking away the tears that are burning my eyes.

Mathenyoka: "I love you, but this is not the time baby, I need to fix the mess I created I don't want to ruin your image as the only daughter to a King, I want you to pull you into this crazy shit! I'm sorry."

Me: "Ok."

I try to walk away but he blocks my way.

Me: "Get out of my way phela!"

Mathenyoka: "I don't want you to be angry at me Thingo."

Me: "I hate cowards and people who don't know what they want! As old as you are right now you're acting like a child I hate it!"

I push him out of my way but he pulls me back by my waist and turn me around staring at me.

Me: "Ngizoqoma njengoba ungithuma nje."(I will date as you're asking me to)

I remove his hands from my waist and head home angry as hell! Why am I being dumped for what other people did I don't understand why he is hurting me.

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CHAPTER 48

*

MATHENYOKA

*

I have been drinking the whole night, my head is spinning I can't think straight, maybe I am really a bit slow and retarded. I did repeat Grade 11 three times, I went mad and left my company in the hands of people I thought I could trust, Zamo and I went to Varsity together then I met Fana at some art exhibition in Durban, he forced me to look at his work and was so desperate because I was already known by my work by the people who had interest in Architecture but now they betray me like this.

I take my phone and dial Thingo's number.

Thingo: "Mmm..."

Me: "I can't live without you Thingo, baby please can I see you."

I hear some shuffling then she clicks her tongue.

Thingo: "It's 4 O'clock in the morning! Are you crazy!"

Me: "My heart please I want to talk to you, I don't know what I said earlier I was going through a lot I need you I don't want us to break up Thingolwami, please."

Thingo: "Are you drunk?"

Me: "No."

She drops the call, I just sit on the floor and continue to drink whiskey straight from the bottle everything is coming back, the abuse I suffered at home then from the community nobody cared about me and I don't blame them they saw it from my own mother.

I hear the door opening then footsteps I grunt, she's here. She kneels in front of me.

Me: "You came."

I try to smile but my heart is painful, there is a video that might mess up her whole life out there I don't even know where to start fixing this. She takes the bottle from my hand and put it away.

Thingo: "Get up and go to bed."

I just sit there and stare at her, how can someone be so beautiful? A girl looking like her father and 5 brothers yet she's the prettiest girl I have ever laid my eyes on. She get up and walk away, she comes back with a bucket and pour cold water at me I gasp in shock I think the alcohol leaves my body for a while.

Me: "LamaQwabe.."

Thingo: "Go to bed."

I slowly get up and look at her, I don't see her loving eyes anymore she's still angry at me.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry)

Thingo: "I have been here the whole time! Protected you from the mob! We faced your mother together before but with Zamo you think I can't handle it so you chose to dump me!"

Her voice is breaking, she's mad as hell.

Me: "I'm sorry."

Thingo: "I don't want your sorry I want you to pull yourself together I know what you've been through, I know it sets you back from time to time because you think about it too much but face it like a man that I know you are, don't let your past intimidate you, it's part of you, you survived it now move on."

I nod, I'm feeling cold from that water she poured at me.

Thingo: "Go to bed, I'm leaving."

I hold her hand but she removes it.

Thingo: "I have to go, we're not together anymore, remember?"

I look down as she walks away.

I stumble all the way to my bedroom and remove all my clothes stepping in the shower I sit there and let water hit my whole body.

I wake up and the water is still running I fell asleep under the shower, I get up and switch the shower off then go straight to bed after drying my body.

I have a pounding headache and I just woke up to the knock on the door.

I open the door and it's my mother and my two sisters now I sigh rubbing my painful eyes.

Mam'Ndlovu: "Your father would have been so proud of you."

I look at her I have nothing but so much painful memories of her, the three of them, as for my father I don't even remember his face, he died when I was still young I don't even have a picture of what he looks like he doesn't even visit me in my dreams.

Mam'Ndlovu: "Can we talk?"

I slowly shake my head.

Me: "We can't..not now please just..just stay away from me."

Mam'Ndlovu: "Please Gatsheni we can fix what was broken please."

I look down as tears fall from my eyes.

Me: "I'm sorry, I can't."

I walk away and try to call Thingo but she's not answering my calls. I decide to call Wenzile's phone because Ngcebo never picks up his phone I don't even know if he uses it.

Wenzile: "Snakes."

I chuckle wiping my tears.

Me: "Mama ka Aquaman, how is he?"

She laughs.

Wenzile: "He's good."

Me: "Uhm...I need a favour and I'm sorry for doing this I know it's wrong but I need to talk to Thingo please."

She giggles.

Wenzile: "I will call you back now ok."

Me: "Ok."

She sounds like she's in a great space and that warms my heart they deserve happiness and peace I'm grateful for everything they did for me.

My phone rings it's Wenzile..

Me: "Hello."

Thingo: "What do you want Kwanda?"

Me: "I need you Thingo."

Thingo: "Oh when did you realise that? Before or after dumping me?"

Me: "Uhm...my mother is here."

Thingo: "Ok."

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa maMnguni."

She drops the call I just sit on the floor and let pain consume every part of my body like all the beatings I suffered at the hands of my own mother and sisters, they used to do it together I had the power to

fight back but I couldn't because, it's my mother man I still loved her regardless.

"Gatsheni.."

I look up, it's Thingo's mom and dad standing in front of me. Thingo's mom goes on her knees and hugs me tight as I can't stop the sob coming out of my lips.

Thabsie: "Askies.."

She is brushing my back and that's all I ever wanted from my own mother, I wanted her comforting me whenever I am in pain but how when she's the one who inflicted so much pain in my life.

I finally pull myself together, she wipes my tears but I push her hand away gently they laugh at me.

Nkosiyo: "Thingo said you needed us so we came as fast as we could and there is a woman causing so much drama here and my people don't like that, we're all for peace in this community."

Me: "Uhm...Thingo didn't come?"

He shakes his head and pull his wife up holding her waist.

Nkosiyo: "We will wait in the lounge while you freshen up."

I nod. They walk out. I wash my face and brush my teeth.

I wear something decent and go to the lounge, I find the King and his wife sitting on a three seater couch but Thabsie moves and points between them I sit there facing my mother and sisters.

Nkosiyo: "So you didn't know that when you're not from this community and you want to enter you start by asking for a meeting from the King himself?"

Mam'Ndlovu: "So I should ask permission from you to talk to my son?"

Nkosiyo chuckles.

Thabsie: "May you please address my husband with respect ma'am, can you please do that for me real quick?"

Mom just chuckles.

Nkosiyo: "We do things differently here, and the day he built this home here in my land he became my own son so yes it's a MUST to ask permission from me if you want to disturb his peace."

Khuli: "So you're still a weakling that you have people who speak on your behalf?"

My older sister Khuli says clapping her hands.

Thabsie: "I don't think I want to sit down with disrespectful people my love, I hate being disrespected!"

Mam'Ndlovu: "I came here to talk to my son anyway so you can leave."

Thabsie: "I wish my husband wasn't here I would have dragged your ass all the way to that door by now."

I chuckle as mom looks away, so there are people who can put her in her place? Wow!

Me: "I don't want to talk to you maybe one day I will try to listen to you but not now, not when you come with so much disrespect for people who welcomed me in their home and treated me like one of their own, I'm sorry."

Nkosiyo: "Please leave my land and come back once you know your place and learn some respect."

Mam'Ndlovu: "This is my son's house."

Nkosiyo chuckles and we hear a puur outside it's loud then the gate keeper steps into the room.

Nkosiyo: "He will accompany you back to your village."

My two sisters jump on their feet scared as hell mom has her eyes all out.

Nkosiyabo: "Leave now!"

They run out like they are being chased, Nkosiyabo brush the cheetahs fur then it runs out as well.

I breathe out loud.

Me: "Thank you for coming baba nawe mama."

Thabsie: "We will always be around when you need us."

Me: "Ngibonga kakhulu."(Thank you so much)

I go with them so I can see Aqua, a peaceful child.

I am with Ngcebo in his hut holding his son in my arms.

Me: "Are you sure he's a boy? He is pretty."

He laughs.

Ngcebo: "He looks just like his dad man."

I chuckle.

Me: "Yeah right!"

Ngcebo: "You look troubled what's wrong? I heard about your mother."

Me: "She came back to ruin my life further."

He sighs.

Ngcebo: "I wish I could tell you what to do in this situation but this time I can't, you have to make a decision that you think is best for you, only you know the depth of the pain you suffered at their hands so now all you need is closure I don't know how you gonna find it but you need to move on from this pain and start over."

I nod.

Me: "Uhm..is Thingo around?"

Ngcebo: "She said something about meeting her matric dance partner."

I nod looking down at the baby.

Ngcebo: "What's wrong?"

Me: "Uhm...I said we must keep our distance, a lot is happening at once but I didn't mean it, everything makes sense when I'm with her."

Ngcebo: "You gonna lose her and that will make your life so difficult since it's not just you that wants her in your life but your ancestors too."

I sigh.

Me: "My life has never been easy you know I only get a glimpse of happiness that doesn't even last long."

He sighs and hold my shoulder tight.

Ngcebo: "You're still here after all you've been through so that can only mean you're a survivor so never give up."

I nod and give him a sleeping Aqua then walk out. I get in my car and drive out I can see Thingo standing with a boy a bit far so I slowly drive and stop next to them stepping out of the car.

Me: "Sanibonani."

I greet but only the boy greets back, he is staring at my car in Awe.

Me: "LamaQwabe, can we talk?"

Thingo: "I'm still busy we'll talk some other time."

She says not even looking at me. I nod and get in the car driving back to my house.

I am pacing around the room trying to call her but she's not picking up, I feel like I'm going crazy.

She finally picks up.

Thingo: "Kwanda."

Me: "Thingo, you better not do what you want to start!"

Thingo: "And that is?"

Me: "Whatever you're planning with that boy! You better not do it."

Thingo: "Oh usho lento engiyithunywe uwena?"(You mean what you asked me to do?)

Me: "Thingo please you know I didn't mean it."

Thingo: "Too late we are already going on a date tomorrow."

My eyes get itchy same time I start grunting I'm not in control anymore but I can feel everything my body is convulsing and it hurts every bone in my body I go on my knees and feel my snake tattoo burning my arm. It feels like someone is twisting all my joints, Mathentoka is taking over full force something he has never done before because he is hurting me when he does that, I lay down on the floor not able to move I don't feel any bones in my body I'm numb, he is angry yet quiet.

I can hear the door opening then running footsteps, she kneels next to me and touch my hand I grunt loud that she even let go of my hand.

Thingo: "Mkhulu.."

I close my eyes.

Thingo: "Why are you so angry? What's wrong?"

"ThingoLamaQwabe."

A voice within me comes out of my lips I have no control over it but I am aware of everything that's happening it's my body after all even though my spirit has taken a step back because Mathenyoka decided to come out.

Thingo giggles and touch my cheek.

Thingo: "Thokoza.."

"Ungamlahli."

Thingo: "Ngenzenjani uma kunguye ongilahla kuqala?"(What should I do if he's the one who is letting me go first)

His chuckle is so bold that it hurts my ears then my muscles feels like they are being pulled I groan in pain then tightly close my eyes I am slowly drifting into a deep sleep.

I open my eyes I am still sleeping on the floor Thingo is still here wiping my face with a wet towel.

Me: "Ba..baby."

She stops wiping my face and try to get up but I gently hold her hand.

Me: "Please forgive me."

She shakes her head.

Thingo: "If I allow you dump me and take me back everytime you feel like it you will get used to it. I'm not a toy I have feelings too, so it's over Kwanda, it really is over."

I slowly sit up and shake my head.

Me: "Don't do this to me LamaQwabe you know that I love you."

Thingo: "I don't know much about relationships but I know one thing I don't want to be with an unsure man, I want to know where I stand

but with you today I'm the love of your life tomorrow I'm told to stay away, I don't want that anymore I'm done!"

My heart is beating so fast.

Me: "I'm so sorry I won't do it again."

She shakes her head and tears roll down her eyes I look down.

Thingo: "You're hurting me and I don't even know if it's suppose to be like that because I don't know much about being in a relationship! Maybe I should just start dating my age group like you said, people with less problems."

The chest pain is getting too much.

Me: "I don't want to lose you."

Thingo: "You've lost me already."

She get up and walk out. I wipe my tears and get up taking my phone and sit on the couch my body still hurts.

Zamo: "Kwanda what a nice surprise."

I sigh wiping the remaining tears in my eyes.

Me: "Let's meet, I will give you the shares and you will give me all the footages you have including the one you gave to Fana."

She laughs.

Zamo: "Fana doesn't have anything lover boy, I'm doing this for myself I worked for it while he failed to do what he was supposed to do, a simple task really! Making the princess fall in love with him, how hard can it be to manipulate a child? You did it."

I rub my painful eyes.

Zamo: "I will drive to your house in the village and we'll have our meeting there with the company lawyer

, you better not do anything stupid with your snakes Kwanda.”

I drop the call and sleep on the couch facing up.

After a few hours Zamo and the lawyer are here.

Zamo: “So do you have the contract I asked you to draft?”

She ask the lawyer he chuckles and take out some papers giving them to Zamo.

Zamo: “What! This is 10% where is the rest? I wanted 30% where is it?”

Lawyer: “Unfortunately ThingoLamaQwabe owns 90% of the company and Kwanda only have this 10% he can only sign over this 10% he can’t sign over Thingo’s share, she owns that company now.”

I look at the lawyer confused. I see two officers walking in then go straight to Zamo and pull her up, they grab her bag she looks so scared.

Zamo: “Hey what did I do?”

Officer: “Do you have all the footages here?”

Zamo: “What? What footages Kwanda did you pull this stunt?”

“I did.”

Thingo walks in wearing ripped jeans and a white t-shirt walking barefoot.

She sits on the couch and cross her legs.

Thingo: “I am one step ahead of you Auntie Nomzamo, I have a fresh mind unlike you.”

I am so confused, what’s going on?”

Thingo: "I traced your IT guy and bribed him to delete everything he has on us then asked how many copies he made and guess what he broke into your house and took the hard drives and USBs and replaced them with empty hard drive."

Zama: "No!"

Thingo: "Everybody's got a price my love I just gave him an offer he couldn't refuse so now just fuck off from MY company if you know what's good for you."

Zama: "You will pay for this you piece of shit! You will pay."

Thingo: "You counted your chickens before they hatched way too fast my love, ispeed sakho!"

Zamo has turned pink.

Thingo: "Officers please give her the lift, she came with My company's car I'm taking it back."

Zamo: "Kwanda, don't let her do this, Kwanda you know me, we've been together for years.."

I don't even know what to say as the officers drag the screaming and kicking Zamo out and the lawyer follows behind them after giving me another contract to sign.

Me: "Uhm...what is going on?"

Thingo: "Take your full ownership of the company."

I look at the contract, she wants to give me back all the share I gave to her, my heart shatters into pieces once again.

Me: "Why?"

Thingo: "I just don't want it anymore."

I swallow a painful lump in my throat.

Me: "I made a mistake Thingo and I'm sorry Sthandwa sam don't do this."

Thingo: "I suggest you put up post and hire new staff also you may need an assistant."

Me: "Because I'm dumb huh?"

I ask with a chuckle.

Thingo: "I didn't say that."

Me: "Are you still gonna help me?"

She shakes her head.

Thingo: "From now on I'm focusing on school and nothing else."

I nod.

Me: "Thank you for your help with this but I really think I should sell it I don't see it working out without you. I won't be able to do anything."

She shrug her shoulders.

Me: "You're giving up on me when I need you the most Thingo and that's not fair."

Thingo: "You dumped me!"

Me: "I didn't mean it! You know I didn't mean it! You know me better than anyone Thingo! I didn't mean it."

She tries to walk out but I push the door close standing behind her.

Me: "Look into my eyes Thingo and tell me what you see...please."

She slowly turns around and lean on the door staring at me.

Me: "I know you see something."

She blinks and tears run down her cheeks.

Thingo: "The fear of being alone, the pain you've been through, the love you have for me, that's all I see."

Me: "Then why do you want to leave me?"

She hugs me tight I start huffing to stop the tears from falling but I fail."

Thingo: "I'm sorry..."

She looks up at me and her hands wipes my tears, she giggles.

Thingo: "Don't be embarrassed you're only human."

I look away but she hold my face in one position and stand on her toes pecking my lips.

Thingo: "Say something to me."

I sigh.

Me: "I can assure you that I will never dump you again I'm sorry for making you unsure of our relationship."

Thingo: "You cry I cry, you smile, I smile and when you fight I fight alongside you."

I hold her in my arms again, I will never be so stupid to let her go ever again. Not to sound cheesy but she is my reason for breathing.

*

CHAPTER 49

*

THINGO-LAMAQWABE

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I am sitting next to his bed watching him sleep, he is not as peaceful as one should be when they are asleep, you can tell he is troubled even in his sleep.

I brush his cheek, he has a smooth skin, he takes care of his body and always clean, he is very good looking. I peck his lips and his eyes shoots open he quickly sits up looks like he was having a bad dream.

Me: "What's wrong?"

He is breathing heavily then look around.

Me: "Baby..."

He smiles immediately.

Mathenyoka: "When did you get here? I had a dream of you packing your bags and leaving me, please don't do that to me."

He says with a very sad frown on his face.

Me: "I'm not leaving you, I don't even live with you so why would I pack?"

He chuckles nervously.

Mathenyoka: "It's a dream baby, anything can happen there."

I take his hand and hold it.

Me: "What's troubling you?"

Mathenyoka: "I dream of everything from rivers to waterfalls, up the sky and deep in the sea but not even once have I met my father in my dreams, why doesn't he visit me in my dreams I miss him even though I don't have any memory of him."

Me: "You've been troubled your whole life, I believe some people become angels when they pass on so I think you should open up your heart invite some peace in you only then he can come to you."

Mathenyoka: "You think so?"

I nod and ask him to get off bed. I instruct him to lit a candle and put it in front of us as we sit in a meditating position.

Me: "Just try to forget all about your past painful memories, think of peace."

Mathenyoka: "So I should think of you? You're my peace."

I smile as he hold my hand and close his eyes. I chuckle as there is a very calm aura around us cold air hits us and I sense some presence in the room.

"Kwandile oGatsheni."

A voice that sounds like his speaks I quickly open my eyes and the first thing I see is his face full of tears as he stares behind me. I slowly turn my head and look behind me there is an actual figure of a human wearing white clothes, he is smiling staring at him a complete version of him.

"I have been watching over you son."

Mathenyoka: "Baba."

"I'm just sad I had to leave you at a very young age but death comes knocking any day we don't choose it."

Mathenyoka: "Why? Why did you leave me with such a cruel woman?"

He sighs.

"She is your mother."

Mathenyoka: "It don't feel like it baba, please find a way, please come back Boyabenyathi."

Tears are streaming down his cheeks I have never seen such a broken man, I can't stop my own tears from falling.

He slowly fades away and Kwanda lose it, he quickly get up and starts shouting for him to come back and start throwing stuffs all across the room then slowly slid down the wall with his hands above his head I kneel in front of him.

Me: "Don't do this, you're scaring me."

The depth of his pain is way too deep. A loud sob escapes his lips I just wail.

Me: "Kwanda stop! You're scaring me!"

I smell the incense Ngcebo walks in already holding a plate with it on his hand, he kneels in front of Kwanda as he starts breathing heavily like he is having a panic attack.

Ngcebo: "Calm down Gatsheni, you're stronger than this pain! You can go through this! We're here for you come on."

His own tears are falling, Kwanda now has his hands covering his face though he has calmed down. Ngcebo put the plate down and walk out. He comes back after a while with his eyes bloodshot red. We are sitting quietly on the floor I can't even look at Kwanda now. Ngcebo kneels in front of him and start clapping his hands.

Ngcebo: "Thokoza Mkhulu.."

Mathenyoka starts grunting and remove his hands from his face, he is so beautiful as he starts doing those snake sounds with his lips.

Ngcebo: "Give him strength, transfer all your energy to him please Mkhulu."

"He is strong he just doesn't know it yet but I found him something precious that will show him his capabilities, his strength Mntwana."

Ngcebo claps hands.

Ngcebo: "Makhosi."

Mathenyoka slowly blinks then stare at me and he breaks into a beautiful smile that matches the beauty of his eyes.

Mathenyoka: "Mnguni omuhle."

I smile blinking the tears away.

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry for scaring you sthandwa sami."

Ngcebo: "I'm still in the room and she's still my little sister."

Mathenyoka: "Sorry Mntwana.."

Ngcebo chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "Thank you for coming I felt like I was suffocating you've been saving me, both of you ngiyabonga."

Ngcebo: "Mesithi sinawe sisuke singeve sidlala."(If we say we're here for you we are not joking.)

He smiles.

Ngcebo: "Asigoduke LamaQwabe."(Let's go home LamaQwabe.)

I look down.

Me: "I will come back in the morning bhuti please."

He chuckles and get up walking out whistling I laugh.

Mathenyoka: "You're not hungry?"

Me: "I am, I'll cook."

I go to the kitchen and start cooking, he joins me after a while wearing just his black shorts and socks, nothing on his upper body. He stands behind me and kiss my neck holding my waist.

Mathenyoka: "Hey."

Me: "Hey.."

He turns me around and kiss my lips softly.

Mathenyoka: "Ngikulethelwe idlozi on a silver platter."(You're brought to me by my ancestors)

I giggle.

Me: "I know."

I dish up for us, we eat then go to bed early, we're cuddling.

Me: "You look and sound like your dad baby."

He tenses up a bit.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Mathenyoka: "I just don't wanna talk about him."

Me: "Why?"

Mathenyoka: "He left me so I think his memory should remain buried like that forever, I'm good, I don't wanna talk about him."

I sigh and hold him tight.

Mathenyoka: "Good night nhliziyo yami."(My heart)

My own heart dances the way he says that hits me deep.

Me: "Goodnight Gatsheni."

In the morning we wake up to a very loud knock I open my eyes Kwanda is awake but ignoring the knock.

Me: "Let me go open."

He let go of me and sit up. I open the door and I'm faced with this woman and her two daughters I'm bored and tired already.

"Ngoba umncane nje abazali bakho bakuvumela kanjani ukuthi uthandane nomntanami? Noma kudliwa imali yakhe?"(You're young

how can your parents allow you go date my child? Or you're eating his money?)

I chuckle.

Me: "Imali?"(money?)

"We all know money is never enough you greedy people always want more."

I sigh as she push me to the side and walk in with her daughters.

Mam'Ndlovu: "Kwanda!"

She shouts and sit on the couch crossing her legs.

Mam'Ndlovu: "Don't just stand there hambokwenza itiyе makoti mbumbulu emzini yabantu ekuseni kanje!"(Go make tea wanna be bride in people's houses so early in the morning.)

Mathenyoka: "Akukho tiye la."(There's no tea here.)

He says walking in the room and stand next to me and hold my waist.

Mathenyoka: "Thought I made it clear that I don't wanna talk to you."

Mam'Ndlovu: "You're in a relationship with such a young girl don't you know your age mates?"

Mathenyoka rubs his forehead in frustration.

Mathenyoka: "I said get out!"

He shouts.

Khuli: "Mom I think it's time you tell him!"

Mathenyoka: "Tell me what?"

Khuli: "That we don't have a father because of you Wanda!"

He looks at them confused.

Mam’Ndlovu: “You...you watched your father die, you didn’t call anyone for help.”

Mathenyoka: “I don’t understand..dad died when I was still young.”

Mam’Ndlovu: “But you were old enough to shout for help! Me and your sisters were outside the house I left you and your father inside when we came back you were just standing there watching your father convulsing on the floor with foam coming out of his mouth when I rushed to him it was too late, he took his last breath right in front of you! Had you called for help we were gonna take him to the hospital in time but you wanted your father to die!”

Me: “What do you mean he wanted him to die!? He was just a child probably traumatised by what was happening in front of him that time!”

Mam’Ndlovu: “There’s no such thing! This one always had demons, he killed his father.”

Mathenyoka slowly removes his hand from my waist I look at him, he is looking down on the floor not moving his eyes.

Me: “Don’t let this get to you! You were only 6 years old when your dad died they can’t blame you for it!”

Mam’Ndlovu: “You owe me so much for killing my husband Kwanda! You owe me so much!”

She screams crying.

Me: “He doesn’t owe you shit! It’s not his fault!”

Mam’Ndlovu: “I shouldn’t be stranded with no where else to go while you live comfortable here, me and my children deserve better you costed them their father.”

Mathenyoka: “So the last memory I had of my father was him dying?”

His voice sounds shaky.

Mam’Ndlovu: “Don’t pretend Kwanda you wanted him to die.”

Mathenyoka: “I didn’t mama I promise I didn’t.”

Mam’Ndlovu: “Now I have nowhere else to go! We lost a home yet you’re here living large.”

Mathenyoka: “You...you guys can stay I’m sorry for letting dad die mama, I’m really sorry.”

I huff.

I see a smile on her older sister, the other sister doesn’t talk much I think she is not okay mentally I could be wrong though.

He walks out, I squint my eyes looking at this woman and her children.

Me: “He might have his emotions all over the place but mine are intact and I can see right through you! I won’t let you hurt him again.”

Mam’Ndlovu: “Who do you think you are?”

Me: “I don’t think I am but I am Princess ThingoLamaQwabe Gumede and your presence here doesn’t sit well with me.”

They clap once staring at me.

Me: “You’re making Kwanda blame himself for something he didn’t do, what kind of a mother are you that manipulates her own child into believing something so hurtful? I thought you came here with remorse for everything you put him through but you’re here to destroy him even more.”

I click my tongue and go look for Kwanda, I find him in the ancestral hut quietly I take off my shoes and sit next to him.

Mathenyoka: “So that’s why dad wasn’t even visiting me in my dreams, I watched him die and didn’t help him, he is angry at me.”

He says calmly.

Mathenyoka: "So all the abuse from my mother is justified, I killed the father of her children."

I just sit there and listen to him vent.

Me: "Baby.."

He looks at me and smile.

Me: "I love your eyes so much."

He blush I feel some butterflies in my tummy.

Me: "Uhm..are you ok if we drive to Durban?"

Mathenyoka: "Today?"

I nod.

Me: "Right now."

Mathenyoka: "Oh uhm...what about my mother and...."

I shake my head.

Me: "We're putting ourselves first today."

He nods. We go to his room I wear his hoodie and we take a drive to Durban. I give him directions to Aunt Jennifer and Zola's house, they are family, Jenny is Great grandpa Lukhele's adopted daughter and Zola is her husband.

We walk in their yard I am holding Kwanda's hand as I knock on the door, Uncle Zola opens the door and widen his eyes staring at me.

Zola: "Woah!"

He picks me up and spin me around I am laughing so hard, it's been a while.

Zola: "Look at you! You're a grown up now! Uhm...hello."

He put me down and shake Mathenyoka's hand.

Me: "Where's Azola?"

He chuckles.

Zola: "That one has so many friends I don't even know which one she's visiting today, uhm and also my wife is not around."

I nod.

Me: "We came to see you, this is my friend Kwanda Ndlovu."

Zola: "Gatsheni."

Kwanda chuckles.

We walk in their huge house and I go straight to the kitchen to make us tea, this is home.

Zola: "So uhm...what brings you here Princess?"

Me: "I came here with my friend because I know your history you guys talks about your past experiences publicly so I know what you went through, having your father die in front of you blaming yourself for it, how did you move past that?"

Kwanda looks at me and his eyes glows with passion.

Zola stares at Kwanda and give him a tight smile then lean back on the couch closing his eyes.

Zola: "I woke up one day and told myself that holding on to the past won't change what happened, blaming myself for my father's death wasn't gonna bring him back so I chose my sanity, I chose peace within myself."

He opens his eyes and look at Kwanda.

Zola: "People deserve to know exactly who you are and they can't see that when you're holding on to pain and misery, when you're not as

free as you should be. You need to break that chain you've cuffed yourself with, she's here! She deserve better than what you're offering her! A broken man!"

He says with a stern voice staring at Kwanda in the eye.

Zola: "It's not easy trust me but you're not alone man, do it for her, heal so you can give her a better version of you."

I wipe the lone tear that has escaped my eye.

Zola: "You need to break free from those thoughts, your father died because it was his time, there's nothing you could have done to prevent it and if someone is blaming you for it like you pulled a trigger or choked them then that is bullshit! Stop blaming yourself for shit you didn't do."

I look at Kwanda he is rubbing his palms together looking down.

Zola: "You guys are young, you should be enjoying life not mopping around, even I don't mop around I have a hot wife I have to look after and a daughter that gives me grey hair in my early 40s."

I smile and sit next to him on the couch I hug him tight.

Me: "Thank you so much Malume."(Uncle)

Zola: "I'm happy you came here with your friend, you should visit your sister sometimes."

Me: "I will, thank you Ngcolosi."

He smiles and walk us out.

Zola: "You seem like a good guy and the fact that King allowed you around his precious daughter makes me believe that you truly are so try to move on from the past, create beautiful memories with this gorgeous woman in front of you, she has proven to care so much for you, she wants you to be ok please just try for her."

Mathenyoka: "Thank you so much I heard everything you said and I understood, she deserves so much more than broken pieces of me."

Zola: "Yeah, pull yourself together."

They shoulder hug and we get in the car and he drives to his flat. We go to bed I am listening to his heartbeat I know he's not asleep but his eyes are closed.

Me: "I love you."

Mathenyoka: "I know Sthandwa sam, I know you love me Thingo."

I smile and hold him tight.

In the morning I wake up alone in bed, I start in the bathroom taking a shower then wear his clean t-shirt only since I didn't bring any of my clothes. I go to the kitchen he is not here so I make a sandwich for myself then clean around a bit.

He walks in holding flowers, I giggle walking up to him and hang my arms on his shoulders, he hold my waist with one hand and gentle pull me up I wrap my legs around his waist. He groans.

Mathenyoka: "Awugqokanga Thingo."(You're naked Thingo)

I laugh hiding my face on his shoulder.

Me: "I took a shower and washed my clothes including my panties."

He put his car keys and flowers down then hold me looking deep into my eyes.

Mathenyoka: "You truly are a Rainbow, after all the rain you still shine beautifully, you give me hope that better days are coming, you're my peace, my sanity and I want you in my life forever."

He put me down then slowly go down on his knee.

Mathenyoka: "Please accept this ring my love, I want to send my uncles to your home, I want you to be mine please."

He opens the box I gasp at the small ring with a very huge diamond rock in it. I slowly give him my left hand I'm already wet with tears. He get up and hold me in his arms.

Mathenyoka: "A few months left for you to finish school, so I will wait till you turn 18 for the actual wedding but I hope baba will accept my lobola now."

Me: "We will talk to him, thank you for wanting to make me a woman the right way, Boyabenyathi."

He grunts loud, I giggle.

Me: "Ngiyakufela."(I die for you.)

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyakuphilela."(I live for you)

I kiss him, we will take one step at a time it doesn't matter how long it takes but we will get there eventually, I am not going anywhere he is my home.

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CHAPTER 50

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THINGO-LAMAQWABE

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Kwanda is driving us home today I have been talking to dad over the phone and he is upset that I just left without letting them know but I explained to him why I had to go see Uncle Zola and he understood my reasons.

I am staring at the ring on my finger playing with it absent mindedly I feel his hand on mine I slowly look at him, he has stopped the car and I didn't even realise it.

Mathenyoka: "Are you good?"

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "Thingo."

Me: "I just hope dad will accept that you want to take me as your wife so soon."

Mathenyoka: "You think it's too soon?"

I look down at my hand, the ring is beautiful I can't keep my eyes off it.

Mathenyoka: "Uhm...I don't want to put pressure on you baby it's ok if you want us to wait, you can take off the ring but I would like you to keep it."

He is disappointed and I hate it.

Mathenyoka: "You can finish school first, I'm sorry I told you I will wait now I'm doing the opposite I just don't want you to slip away from me."

Me: "I won't, I love you too much."

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "So you want to take it off?"

I shake my head.

Me: "We will talk to mom and dad when we get home."

I hold his hand tight he smiles but it doesn't reach his beautiful eyes.

Me: "I love you."

He nods and start the car, I pull my long sleeve and hold it to my palm hiding my hand I can hear him breathing out loud I look at him, he has glassy eyes.

Me: "Kwanda.."

Mathenyoka: "You can take it off instead of hiding it LamaQwabe."

I can tell he's hurt and I don't want that I am just scared.

We get home, he parks at the gate.

Me: "You're not driving in?"

He shakes his head.

Mathenyoka: "No, please give me the ring."

I look at him.

Me: "What?"

Mathenyoka: "The ring, you are not ready for this and I don't want to seem pushy and desperate Thingo, I want us to both want this but now I can see it's just me."

Me: "Kodwa Ngiyakuthanda nje."(But I love you.)

Mathenyoka: "I know that but loving me doesn't mean you're ready, I can see you're not I caught you off guard and I'm sorry for that."

He takes my hand and slowly remove the ring I start crying. He get off the car and open the door for me then give me my bag. He hugs me then get in the car driving to his house. I wipe my tears and walk in the yard. I hug my father first and stay in his arms for a while.

Thabsie: "Hey, are you okay?"

She says brushing my back, I step back from dad and turn to her hugging her tight.

Me: "I missed you guys so much."

Thabsie: "Did something happen in Durban?"

I shake my head and we sit down.

Nkosiyabo: "I can tell you've been crying Thingo, what's wrong?"

Me: "No...it's nothing daddy."

He nods.

Mom dish up for everyone, we eat then I go to my room for a nap. I call Kwanda he picks up sounding down.

Mathenyoka: "Hello."

Me: "Gatsheni."

He is quiet for a while then clear his throat.

Me: "I miss you."

He just chuckles.

Me: "Are you gonna be this cold towards me just because I'm afraid of dad's reaction?"

Mathenyoka: "I don't know Lama I don't have a dad so I wouldn't understand."

Me: "Ok now you're being childish and petty."

Mathenyoka: "Oh, is that how you see me now?"

Me: "That's how you're acting!"

Mathenyoka: "I guess you should just drop the call then, seems like I'm annoying you so much."

I drop the call and start crying. I don't like fighting with him, I hate it.

In the middle of the night I have been tossing and turning and I know he is also restless so I wear my gown over my pyjamas and walk to his home. I can see his ancestral hut is opened so I take off my shoes.

Mathenyoka: "I want a family of my own so I don't understand why you gave me a child that is not ready to give me what I desire the most, family. I'm all alone."

Tears fill my eyes when I hear pain in his voice.

Mathenyoka: "I want something to hold on to and I thought love has finally located me but it doesn't seem that way, I think she only feels pity for me."

Me: "Is that how you talk about me to your ancestors?"

I kneel next to him, he looks away.

Me: "I only feel pity for you?"

He is quiet.

Me: "You don't understand why they gave you a child?"

I feel so offended by everything he said and I'm disappointed in him.

Me: "So when you gave me the ring you didn't see a woman but you saw a child?"

Mathenyoka: "Thing.."

Me: "What!?"

I raise my voice a bit he start grunting and hissing eyes keep chasing colour rapidly.

Me: "Mkhulu..."

"ThingoLamaQwabe."

He always calls my name differently when he is in trance I find myself smiling.

He goes back to normal and look at me.

Mathenyoka: "Uhm...you should go home and get some sleep it's past mid night."

Me: "I want us to plan where we will begin telling my parents that you want to marry their daughter."

He widens his eyes I giggle.

Me: "I'm gonna be with a man that is prettier than me."

He laughs.

Mathenyoka: "Don't play with me, you're gorgeous."

I smile.

Me: "I don't want us to fight anymore Gatsheni."

Mathenyoka: "I didn't mean to hurt your feelings with everything I said mama."

I nod and look at his alter, my ring is there on the floor in between the candles.

Me: "You really do love me."

He squints his eyes, I laugh.

Mathenyoka: "I'm obsessed baby."

I take both his hands and ask him to pray and the first thing he does is acknowledge my ancestors and his then he starts praying I even feel goosebumps.

I look at him as sweat is dripping down his forehead.

Mathenyoka: "So should I give you back the ring?"

I nod.

Me: "We will ask bhut'Ngcebo to be present."

Mathenyoka: "Are you sure about this my love? We can wait till you're ready."

Me: "I want to be yours."

He smiles looking down.

Me: "You're always blushing."

Mathenyoka: "A man doesn't blush maPhakathwayo."

Me: "Mine does."

He picks up the ring on the floor and wipe it with ibhayi then take my left hand and put it on again.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyakuthanda kakhulu."(I love you so much.)

Me: "I love you too."

We go to his room and he allows me to sleep on his chest, we are both quiet I think we are stressed out what my parents will react.

Early in the morning he wakes up and kiss my lips before taking his phone I didn't sleep a wink I just had my eyes closed.

Mathenyoka: "Mntwana."

He clears his throat.

Mathenyoka: "I need to talk to you about something."

He nod his head.

Mathenyoka: "Ok."

He looks at me and chuckle kissing my lips again.

Mathenyoka: "You're awake."

Me: "I didn't sleep."

I sit up.

Mathenyoka: "Ngcebo just came back from the river he is on his way here now so I can inform him first about us."

I nod.

Me: "Ok."

Mathenyoka: "Are you ok?"

He says feeling my forehead with the back of his hand.

Me: "I'm fine just tired from lack of sleep."

He sighs.

Mathenyoka: "Come here."

I sit on his lap he hold me tight.

Mathenyoka: "We gonna be okay."

He brush my back and we hear a baby crying, I stare at him.

Me: "Uhm...your family is still here?"

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "I told them they can stay, remember? And when I came back the house was full of my older sister's kids, the lounge was a mess."

I sigh.

Me: "Are you ok with them being here?"

He shakes his head.

Mathenyoka: "But for now I want to focus on us."

I nod and get off him going to the bathroom. I walk back in the room and find Ngcebo standing by the door with a baby in his arms, it's

Khuli's baby you can never separate Ngcebo with kids, he loves them and they love him too, the little girl is beaming in his arms.

Me: "Sanibonani bhuti."(Greetings brother)

He nods and sit on the chair in front of Kwanda's bed putting a baby on his lap.

He looks at me and chuckles.

Ngcebo: "Take off the ring."

I look at Kwanda he is staring at Ngcebo confused.

Ngcebo: "You can't say you're asking for permission while you already put the ring on her finger, take off the ring but carry it when you go home."

I think I understand what he is saying. Kwanda takes the ring and put it back in the box.

Mathenyoka: "So uhm..are you gonna be there to support me?"

He chuckles.

Ngcebo: "Yes."

Kwanda's eyes lights up I smile, he is happy.

Mathenyoka: "Really? Thank you so much."

Ngcebo: "This is not just about you, Mathenyoka adores her."

Kwanda grunts I giggle shyly come on now, who wouldn't when the ancestors of your lover acknowledge you, when they feel your presence.

Ngcebo: "We can go now. Ntombi enhle umalume uyahamba manje uyezwa yini?"(Beautiful lady, uncle has to go now you hear me?)

He says pulling her cheeks playfully but the child starts tearing up.

Ngcebo: "I am going to buy a lot of sweets for you and your siblings I promise."

The girl quickly nods and get off Ngcebo running out probably to share with her nasty mom, the kids are so innocent and adorable while the mother is total trash.

We walk home I am dragging my feet as we get closer Ngcebo hold my hand tight and pull me to him.

Ngcebo: "You gonna pass out if you continue to hold that breath."

I start breathing out loud and look at Kwanda he is quiet with his hands on his pocket. We walk in and find everyone having breakfast, dad eyes me then look at Ngcebo and Mathenyoka.

Nkosiyabo: "I have been quiet but you're making it a norm to sleep out now Thingo, when do you give your books attention?"

He asks with a stern voice I look down putting my hands on my back.

Me: "I'm sorry dad, Uhm...Kwanda and I were working but we're done now I will focus on my books."

He chuckles and points at the empty chairs, the three of us take seats mom dish up for us but Kwanda is not eating he is just staring at his plate.

Ngcebo clears his throat my armpits starts sweating immediately.

Nkosiyabo: "Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "Uhm...baba, Mathenyoka has something he would like to talk to you guys about."

Nkosiyabo: "What is it?"

Kwanda clears his throat and he looks at me first then drops his eyes again.

Mathenyoka: "Uhm..baba nawe baba angiqondile ukwedelela ngiyazi nangikhuza ngaphambilini kodwa angisakwazi, ngiyamuthanda uThingo ngicela ningivumele ngimulobole ngokuphelele zonke izinkomo ezifanele inkosazana yasebukhosini ezalwa nezinsizwa zodwa, ngiyacela ngenkulu inhlonipho Phakathwayo."(Mom and dad I don't mean any disrespect but I can't I know you reprimanded me before, I love Thingo please allow me to pay lobola, all the cows suitable for the royal princess born with males only, I am begging you with all due respect Phakathwayo.)

His eyes are still down and I am shaking on my seat.

Nkosiyabo: "Didn't you promise that what happened was a mistake and it will never happen again because she's way younger than you?"

He ask in a very low voice.

Mathenyoka: "My love for her didn't allow me to just leave her alone please, I came with good intentions, Ngcebo can attest to that, you can even bring other Sangomas and consult about me."

Dad is now quiet.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyakucela Mnguni."

Dad chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "So you're actually begging me to allow you to ruin my daughter's future?"

Mathenyoka: "I would never do that baba."

Ngcebo clears his throat.

Ngcebo: "You all saw it, they are different people when they are together, the connection they share was there from day one there's no use fighting it baba because if we do we might lose one of them."

Nkosiyabo: "I don't do well with emotional blackmail Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "It's not baba and you know I wouldn't lie to you Gumede, please bless their relationship the ancestors approve."

Dad draws a long breath then exhale.

Nkosiyo: "I can't go against the ancestors and I guess it's better because I know the kind of man you are, I trust you won't change on my daughter."

Mathenyoka quickly looks at dad.

Nkosiyo: "I believe you will put her first like we all do here at home, her happiness should be the first priority, I will allow you to pay lobola to her."

I am shocked, that wasn't how I thought this would turn out but I'm happy.

Mathenyoka takes out his ring and hold it on the table opening it.

Mathenyoka: "So may I?"

Dad nods chuckling. He goes on his knee next to me and smile his hands are shaking.

Mathenyoka: "I will do everything your dad said, you will be my priority like you've always been nothing will ever change, please accept this ring again my love."

I nod and he put the ring on again and get up holding my hand tight, looking at me with his loving eyes I know he wants to hold me but afraid of my father.

Mathenyoka: "Thank you Great King nawe Ndlovukazi."(Queen)

Mom is hiding a smile so she just nods and start collecting the dishes.

Later Mathenyoka leaves and I go check on my two brothers I find them already in their separate beds I sit in Bukhosi's bed facing Makhosini.

Me: "Bhuti."

They put their phones down and look my way.

Me: "Are you guys angry at me?"

Makhosini: "Why would be the reason Lama?"

Me: "Uhm..that you don't support my relationship with Kwanda."

I say looking down, they have been cold towards me ever since they found us kissing, they do talk and greet but it's not the same anymore.

Bukhosi: "We saw a baby sister and someone thinks you're a woman old enough to get married so we're giving the same energy nothing personal."

Me: "So I'm not your baby sister anymore?"

He chuckles and takes his phone again.

Makhosini: "You date older men and expect us to treat you like our age mate or a younger sister?"

Me: "So you won't talk to me anymore?"

He takes his phone as well and get busy with it I can see I'm now talking alone they are ignoring me, so I get up and walk out with a broken heart going to my room.

I sit in bed and watch my phone rings, I can't pick it up my whole body is shaking cause I'm crying, my brothers are not talking to me and it hurts. He doesn't stop calling so I just answer it and continue to cry.

Mathenyoka: "Baby, are you crying?"

Me: "Bukhosi and Makhosini are giving me a cold shoulder, they....they don't wanna talk to me anymore."

He sighs.

Mathenyoka: "Give them some time baby they are probably just worried that maybe I want to play with you but once they see how serious I am about you everything will go back to normal."

Me: "Ok."

Mathenyoka: "Don't cry Sthandwa sam, I love you ok."

Me: "I love you too."

I get in bed and try to get some sleep. I wake up when I hear the door opening I sit up rubbing my eyes I can see my brothers standing there looking at me.

Me: "Sanibonani."

They both nod then sit in my bed looking at me.

Makhosini: "I'm sorry for the way we've been behaving towards you lately, Bukhosi and I talked and we realised how unfair we have been, we don't choose who to fall in love with it just happens naturally so being angry at you wasn't gonna change anything except breaking our special bond as triplets so we're sorry Nkosazana kaBaba."

Bukhosi: "Yes, please forgive us MaGumede omuhle."

I smile and jump on Makhosini he hold me laughing, Bukhosi joins the hug.

Me: "I'm sorry too that you once saw me in that position with Kwanda."

Bukhosi: "At least we know now that his intentions are good so I just hope dad will let us sit in on the negotiations because I want to milk Snakes dry."

I laugh.

Me: "Don't be like that."

Makhosini: "You're our only sister and he wants to take you away so he needs to know that we will ask for probably a million or two."

They fist bump. We stay together just the three of us talking and laughing like old times, I'm happy.

*

MALAIKA

I'm sitting at the balcony of my room in my father's house, it's a double storey house I love it here he recently bought it because I suggested we move to the North for a change and get some ocean view with some sea breeze. I didn't actually tell my parents the full story that I wanted to move away because a boy broke my heart, he was my second boyfriend and got to break my virginity then after that he started acting out, he would ask for a huge amount of money telling me about outstanding varsity fees and his mother couldn't handle them anymore and I would be so naïve and give me then he would leave for weeks without contacting me so I later found out he has a "main chick" that he was spending my money on going on vacations so I decided to just move because he lived close to home I would see him everyday with his new girlfriend.

I just finished my degree a year ago but haven't started job hunting, mom and dad told me to take my time and so I am doing just that.

I see a truck from a beautiful house I am facing, it is just like our house a double storey , someone is moving in and I do hope there is a girl my age so we can go out, I left everything behind even changed my number because the people I called friends they knew very well that the piece of shit was cheating on me and they laughed behind my back.

I get up and fix my short dress and walk down the stares going to check out the new neighbours.

I walk in the gate and look around there are so many people moving the furniture inside so I ask one brother where the owner is and he points at the gate with his head there's a black latest BMW driving in I gasp, I love that car.

He step out and my stomach does something, like there is something moving in there I touch it. He is also staring at me wearing all black, his t-shirt fits him so perfectly especially on his upper arms, he is wearing black shades. He slowly takes off his glasses and I chuckle shaking my head, he smiles shaking his as well then bow his head.

"Princess Malaika."

I bow my head as well.

Me: "Prince Sboniso or should I say Kgosi?"

He chuckles. I have met him before but he didn't look this great or I just didn't pay attention.

Sboniso: "Sboniso is fine, so uhm how are you here? Am I in the wrong housecome

I smile.

Me: "Uhm no I saw that someone is moving in and I thought I should come s9ay hi, I live in that house."

He looks at the house then smile wide.

Sboniso: "Oh I didn't know you guys lived this side."

Me: "We're also new, we moved in a week ago."

Sboniso: "I'm glad I'll live next to royalty that means our protection will be prioritized."

I laugh.

Me: "You're a king."

Sboniso: "Well not yet."

He walks closer to me and give me his hand, I take it only for him to kiss the back of it.

Sboniso: "It's an honour being in your presence Princess."

Me: "Likewise Kgosi."

He bite his bottom lip.

Sboniso: "So uhm I don't know if it's okay to ask for help."

Me: "You should just ask."

Sboniso: "I need help with bed covers and stuff I already bought everything though, I was gonna ask one of the girls in the moving company to help me."

Me: "Then let me not change your plans you can ask her."

He raise his eyebrow and his smile drops.

Me: "I'm just kidding, I'll help you."

He smiles again.

Sboniso: "Thank you."

Me: "You do look really great for someone who was in a looney."

His laughter fills the entire neighbourhood I just smile shaking my head.

Me: "I hope you're fully healed now we don't want you going rogue here."

He continues to laugh so hard and it makes me feel great I didn't know I can make someone laugh so hard I always thought I am that boring rich snob, a daddy's girl I didn't even have a lot of friends.

He wipes his eyes.

Sboniso: "Uyedelela weMelika."(you're rude Melika."

I chuckle.

Me: "My name is Malaika."

Sboniso: "Same shit to me."

We walk in his huge house and people are fixing his furniture it's gonna be beautiful.

Me: "Why such a huge house? Do you have a wife and kids joining you later."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "I wish!"

Me: "It's not hard really, you find the girl, get her pregnant, ask her to marry you, that's it."

Sboniso: "In that order?"

Me: "Whatever comfortable for you."

He nods and we go to what I believe is the main bedroom it has a huge ass bed so we start putting sheets and covers there grey and white.

Me: "You need huge portraits on these walls and my sister ThingoLamaQwabe and her friend Kwanda can do it for you from scratch you can tell her what you want."

Sboniso: "Oh thank you, you will set up a meeting with them for me right?"

I nod.

Me: "I can do that."

We move to the next bedroom, it had two double beds.

Me: "Whose room is this?"

He chuckles and shrug his shoulders.

Sboniso: "I'm starting my life afresh Princess so I believe on this new journey I will meet new people make friends and maybe have a family so that is what I had in mind when I bought this house."

Me: "I feel you."

Sboniso: "Maybe you can be my first friend."

I smile.

Me: "Aren't we friends already baba?"

He squints his eyes.

Sboniso: "Baba as in dzaddy?"

I laugh throwing a cushion at him.

Me: "Baba a sign of respect to you as a man."

Sboniso: "I love it you should call me like that often."

I roll my eyes and we keep moving from room to room, we even are the only ones left here.

Me: "A play room?"

He sighs and sit on the floor I sit next to him.

Sboniso: "Yeah I am hoping one day my sisters will visit me with their kids and they will play here."

Me: "I'm glad that you're thinking ahead, that's being positive it's a good thing, from your mouth to God's ear it will happen."

Sboniso: "Amen!"

I click my tongue and get up.

Me: "Want to join us at home for dinner? It's already late you can't cook."

Sboniso: "Oh no! There's no way I'm gonna be in one room with Prince Nqobasi and your brother Hero."

Me: "What's wrong with my dad and brother?"

Sboniso: "No."

Me: "Ok bye be hungry then."

Sboniso: "Thank you so much for today you really helped me, I owe you."

I nod.

Sboniso: "Tomorrow breakfast is on me I saw a coffee shop not far from here."

Me: "Time?"

Sboniso: "8 O'clock that's when I have my first coffee."

Me: "See you tomorrow then."

Sboniso: "A hug?"

I shake my head.

Me: "Goodnight King."

Sboniso: "Let me walk you home."

Me: "I could jump this fence and fall on the other side."

He laughs.

Sboniso: "I'm a doctor so go ahead I will nurse you back to life."

We laugh until I see Hero stepping out of the house holding something in his hand, it looks like a gun.

Sboniso quickly says goodbye and walk away, I walk towards my brother and laugh.

Me: "A gun really?"

Hero: "Who is he? Should I be ready to kill somebody?"

Me: "Don't be dramatic, come carry me."

He smiles and sweep me off my feet walking in with me, mom and dad are laughing inside I love the peace in our family.

My name is Princess Malaika Ka Nqobasi Gumede.

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CHAPTER 51

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MALAIKA

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It's a beautiful day! I roll out of bed and open my curtains then open the window stepping out to the balcony and I smile when I see a man in only his black pants talking on the phone on his own balcony. He turns and look my way he then waves, I wave back. He put his on his pocket then points at his wrist. I nod and raise my thumb up.

I walk in and take a shower I haven't been going out for a while now so I have to look good even if it's just coffee. I tie my hair up and put on some earrings then my white short dress heels then take my purse walking out. Hero and dad whistles as soon as I step in the room I am blushing.

Me: "You guys stop it!"

Hero: "Look at you! You look so pretty."

I hide my face with my hands.

Nqobasi: "Iyaphi indlala baby?"(Where are you going baby?)

Me: "Out for coffee with a friend."

Nqobasi: "Just coffee looking like that? Better take you to a cruise you're too hot to be going at a coffee shop! Right mamakhe."

I look behind me mom is smiling walking in, I hug her, we're the same height now we could be sisters.

Tamia: "Boy.."

Hero: "Mama."

They hug and Hero kiss her cheek.

Tamia: "You look so beautiful who's the lucky guy?"

I laugh.

Me: "There's no guy ma, we're just friends."

Hero: "Weee.."

I chuckle and say goodbye to them. 8 O'clock on the dot I walk in the coffee shop I can see him already sipping his coffee today he is formal his white shirt looks good on him. As I approach him he looks my way and get up pulling a chair for me.

Me: "Thank you."

Sboniso: "You look so beautiful."

Me: "Thanks, you don't look too bad yourself."

He chuckles and calls a waiter for me, I order a muffin and coffee.

Me: "You're going to work?"

He nods.

Sboniso: "It's my first time after the Looney so I'm nervous feels like my first time."

Me: "You gonna do great."

His phone rings he chuckles and answer it.

Sboniso: "Uuka.."

He keeps quiet for a while then burst in laughter the guy can laugh you just can't help but smile when he does.

Sboniso: "Thank you man, thank you so much you've been there for me the time when I really needed a friend, Gumedede."

I smile as he hold my hand absent mindedly with his manly hand wearing a very expensive watch. He finally drops the call but the smile doesn't leave his lips.

Me: "You seem to be in a very great space."

Sboniso: "I have made peace with a lot of things, things I cannot change so it's been working out for me really great.

Me: "That's great to hear."

He looks around when he sees people looking our way some taking pictures.

Sboniso: "So uhm..your boyfriend won't mind seeing you with me in gossip columns?"

I chuckle.

Me: "I only have exes luckily."

Sboniso: "So you're single?"

I nod.

Sboniso: "Wow.."

Me: "What's wow about that?"

Sboniso: "Uhm...I mean you're too hot I'm sure your DMs are buzzing! Look even now the guys are staring at you, you're beautiful."

I smile.

Me: "I might just give one a chance if they stop being so scared of me and just walk up to me asking for my number."

Sboniso: "They wouldn't dare while I'm right here."

I chuckle.

We have our coffee ignoring the stares and gossips around us then we walk out going to his car I walked here I didn't bring my car the place is close I can even see home.

Me: "Have a great day at work."

Sboniso: "Please take me to work and come back with my car."

Me: "You want me to drive your car?"

I ask already excited, I love this car. He throws the key at me I scream running to the driver's seat. I drive him to work we are listening to some slow jam.

Me: "So your car?"

He gives me his gate remote.

Sboniso: "I will call a cab later."

Me: "Ok uhm how will you get in though?"

Sboniso: "You will give me your cellphone number so I will call you for the remote."

I smile.

Me: "Ok, have a nice day then."

Sboniso: "Thank you."

He step out and take his bags walking away. I drive to the mall first to get some take aways for my dad since he is the only one at home not working today, mom and my brother went to work, dad owns an oil company it's a family business Hero runs the finance side he did Financial Accounting.

I park Sboniso's car then head home. I find dad reading some Newspaper.

Nqobasi: "Princess."

I kiss his cheek sitting next to him then we start eating.

Nqobasi: "So how was your date?"

I laugh.

Me: "It wasn't a date baba."

Nqobasi: "You're old enough to date now I understand I just want you to find a decent guy introduce him to us."

Me: "So you're okay with me dating now after years of fighting it?"

He smiles.

Nqobasi: "You won't get married to these walls Princess and they won't give me grandchildren also you've made us proud you finished your degree without ever giving us any trouble so I am finally setting you free. Your mother and I have been talking, since Thingo will be getting married soon that means her Memulo will be done before she reach 21 so I am thinking we should do it for you as well on the same day."

I clear my throat, he chuckles and take my hand.

Nqobasi: "You don't have to be embarrassed I know what you're thinking but I am doing a 21st of my daughter because she respected us until she finished varsity, so don't worry about other things."

I look at him.

Nqobasi: "You're my daughter I raised you, I know even the birthmark on your buttocks so I noticed the change, I know you're not a virgin anymore and it's okay you're growing and that won't stop me from doing this for you."

I look down in shame.

Me: "I'm sorry."

Nqobasi: "It's all good, I'm still proud of the woman you've become, making mistakes is part of life but baby, you made it!"

I smile and hug him tight.

Me: "You're the best dad ever."

Nqobasi: "I know, mom, you and Hero are my life I live to see you happy."

Me: "Phakathwayo."

I cook dinner then go to my room, my phone rings with the unsaved number I answer it with a clue of who's calling.

Me: "Hello."

"Nkosazana."

I feel a shiver down my spine, the bold yet soft voice speaks on the line I find myself exhaling like I have been holding my breath for a while.

Me: "Kgosi."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "Please come out I'm waiting."

Me: "I'm coming."

Sboniso: "You're coming?"

I drop the call and take his remote walking out I tell Hero that I'm coming back, he is an overprotective brother but aren't they all?

I find him holding his bags at the gate, he opens his arm I hug him briefly and give him the remote.

Me: "I'm sorry for keeping you waiting."

Sboniso: "Oh no it hasn't been long."

I nod.

Me: "Uhm..goodnight then."

Sboniso: "Can we step in for a second, I need to buy appliances online and I had hope you'd know the right brands to buy."

I nod and we walk in, he has a paper bag on his hand I guess he bought dinner. I order for him while he takes a shower. He comes back after a while wearing sweatpants it's revealing his package so hard and I'm sure he is wearing nothing underneath, I force my eyes on his laptop.

Me: "Uhm..I need your banking details now then I'm done."

He gives me all the information I need, he dish up for the two of us, I eat but I already ate at home.

Me: "I have to go now."

I say getting up, he does the same and pull me into a hug I touch his bare skin, it's so smooth I stop and step back when I hear him groan I think I might have been lost in that hug that I even sank my nails on him.

Me: "Uhm...I..I gotta go."

He nods and we both hold the door handle I quickly let go.

Sboniso: "Why are you shaking?"

Me: "I'm not."

He touch my back I am wearing a dress that reveals all my back. He turns me around and stare down at me.

Sbonelo: "Is it the sexual attraction that I'm feeling towards you? You're feeling it too?"

Me: "No.."

He chuckles and plant a kiss on my neck I moan involuntarily.

Sboniso: "Will it ruin this friendship before it even starts if we get this tension out of the way?"

Me: "I have to go."

He let go of my waist and step back.

Sboniso: "Thank you for your help ok."

Me: "Ok."

Sboniso: "Are you taking me to work again tomorrow?"

I laugh.

Me: "I'm not your driver."

He smiles.

Sboniso: "Please."

Me: "8 am sharp same place, same time don't be late."

He laughs as I walk out.

I go to bed after taking a cold shower Durban is hot around this time, we are approaching summer very fast.

Around 11 at night I hear a whistle it keeps persisting I step out of bed. I stand on my balcony and see Sboniso standing on his then my phone rings on my bed I go back and pick it up going back to the balcony.

Me: "A whistle really? Are you from the village?"

Sboniso: "That's where I grew up mami.."

I chuckle.

Me: "Why did you wake me up?"

Sboniso: "You have a nice body."

I chuckle when I notice that I'm in my panties and a gown over but it's not tied. I tie it.

Sboniso: "I can't sleep."

Me: "Why?"

Sboniso: "I was having serious wet dreams about you and I'm too old for that."

Me: "Then go see a doctor."

Sboniso: "I am a doctor."

I smile, he a proud man you can tell by how he speaks that he oozes self confidence.

Me: "Why did you call me?"

Sboniso: "Can I see you right now?"

Me: "You're looking right at me."

Sboniso: "Up close."

I drop the call and walk out I find him already at his gate, our gates are literally a few feet away from each other.

We walk inside the house and he pins me on the wall as soon as we're inside.

Sboniso: "It's been a while since I have been intimate with a woman and I don't even wanna think about it because it was..."

He shakes his head looking down.

Me: "So you want to use me to forget your past traumas?"

Sboniso: "I wouldn't dream of using someone like you, you're every man's dream Ika.."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "What?"

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "Mala..Ika.."

I smile shaking my head.

He pulls the rope of my gown it exposes my breast and a panty, he looks at my body biting his lower lip.

His warm lips covers my nipples I shiver closing my eyes.

Me: "What are you doing?"

Sboniso: "You can tell me to stop.."

He says staring into my eyes like he is waiting for response but suddenly I went mute so he goes down and hold the strings of my panty pulling it down then hand my leg on his shoulder then his tongue touch the most sensitive part which is my clit.

Me: "Fuck.. Yes!"

Those words just roll out of my lips. He does things that I never thought could be done down there, he gets up and quickly holds my waist. I hold on to his broad shoulders for balance. He lifts me up and wraps my legs around his waist.

Sboniso: "Can I take this into the bedroom?"

I nod, he walks with me to his bedroom and we're just staring at each other. He carefully lays me in bed and pulls down his sweatpants and his dick is dark, long and hard. I swallow looking away, he gets on top of me and for the first time ever I feel his soft lips on mine, he kisses me so good and I can feel him trying to enter me but it's not easy so he turns me around. I sleep on my tummy and he spreads my buttocks apart then I feel his dick enter my pussy slowly.

Me: "Aaaah.."

Sboniso: "Shit.."

He pulls out then enters me again. I cuss under my breath.

Sboniso: "Fuck..I think I'm gonna cum real quick."

He grabs my buttocks and goes in hard and fast. I grab on to the sheets as a huge wave of pleasure hits me. I shake as I cum hard, he pulls out and I feel drops of his cum on my butt.

Sboniso: "Aah fuck...shit!"

He gets off bed. I just lay there catching my breath, he wipes me then turns me around sleeping next to me.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry for cumming so fast, I don't even think you reached your own orgasm."

Me: "I did."

Sboniso: "Oh that's better, I was a little embarrassed thinking I robbed you."

I chuckle.

Sboniso: "That was amazing, I loved every minute of it."

Me: "You mean second?"

He widens his eyes.

Sboniso: "Don't bruise my ego like that Princess I thought you said you did cum."

He seems really embarrassed and upset.

Me: "I'm joking, why does it seem you're taking it serious?"

He sits up and wears his pants then walks out. I wear my dress and walk out I find him drinking beer, I pick up my panty and wear it, he is not even looking my way.

Me: "Uhm...are you gonna take me home?"

Sboniso: "Sure."

We walk out, when we reach my gate he walks away without saying a word.

In the morning I walk in the coffee shop and he is already paying the bill then he walks towards me, he stops in front of me.

Me: "Morning."

Sboniso: "Hi."

His eyes are moving around like he can't even look at me.

Me: "Do you have a minute?"

He nods and passes me walking out. We stand next to his car.

Me: "What's wrong? You had your coffee without me and you asked me to take you to work, looks like you've changed your mind."

Sboniso: "I have."

Me: "Oh..couldn't you call and tell me so I don't bother myself waking up for nothing?"

He shrug his shoulders.

Me: "I'm sorry."

He looks at me.

Me: "I'm sorry about a bad joke I said last night."

Sboniso: "Were you really joking?"

Me: "I was, I did cum and it was amazing I promise."

He nods.

Sboniso: "I'm late for work."

Me: "Sure."

Sboniso: "Uhm...later I have colleagues over for a small braai and drinks, you can join us, even bring your brother."

Me: "Ok."

He get in his car and drive away.

Later Hero agrees to come with me and it's buzzing it looks like a house warming kind of thing. He welcomes my brother and I and ladies seem to have eyes on my brother and Sboniso. I sit down near where the guys are doing the braai. Sboniso comes with a sealed redbull.

Sboniso: "I don't think you drink alcohol."

Me: "I don't."

I take the drink and open it.

I watch as people dancing, sophisticated crowd they are, a group of nurses and doctors it's chilled vibes.

Hero is busy with one lady with a very nice body, fully figured lady. I look around and I don't see Sboniso anywhere so I walk inside because I want to go home. I find him in his room looks like he was using a bathroom.

Me: "I'm leaving and my brother is still busy."

He close the door behind me and kiss me right at the door. He picks me up and everything is rushed because he pulls my panty to the side then fill me up so good I close my eyes and enjoy his fast strokes as I am getting in the mood he quickly put me down and stroke his dick fast cum shoots out I fix my dress and my panty. He finally comes back from his own world and look at me, he looks a little drunk.

Sboniso: "You're good?"

I nod. So it wasn't in my head he really does cum fast yesterday I just thought maybe it's because he said it has been a while and also it was the first round but no man."

He stares at me for a long time and stop fixing his pants.

Sboniso: "Uhm...are you okay?"

Me: "Yeah sure...I have to go."

I walk out and look for my brother, he is still with the lady, she's giggling.

Me: "I'm leaving."

Hero: "Oh uhm..where's Sbo? Let me quickly take you home and drive the lady home, she had a little too much to drink. I nod and he hold my hand take me home making sure he leaves me in my room like I have been drinking while I had none to drink.

The whole week I don't hear from Sboniso I don't even see him.

It's Saturday morning I see him moving around his room shirtless I guess he is not working today or maybe it's a night shift. So I go over to his house and knock on his door he doesn't answer I walk in and find him in his bedroom looks like he is on his way out.

Me: "Hi."

Sboniso: "Hi."

A very cold Hi it is, looks like he is not happy to see me here.

Me: "What's wrong with you? I thought we were getting along."

He shakes his head.

Sboniso: "You thought wrong."

He takes his iPods and plug them on, looks like he is going for a jog or a gym I don't know.

Me: "I'm still talking why do you wanna act childish."

Sboniso: "I'm late. Please close the door on your way out."

He jogs out I sigh and look at his room it's a mess. I sit down on the bed and start folding his clean clothes and take the dirty ones in the laundry room. I clean his house here and there because only his bedroom was a mess. When I'm about to go back home he drives in and he looks shocked to see me here.

Sboniso: "You're still here?"

I nod.

Sboniso: "Why?"

Me: "I'm still hoping we could talk?"

Sboniso: "About what?"

Me: "Hawu, you're being cold for no reason!"

He chuckles.

Me: "It was just sex why you're acting like this now?"

Sboniso: "You weren't joking the first time when you mentioned that it was "seconds", I saw how you looked at me the second time, you were disappointed."

He says looking down the whole time, this is not the so confident Sbonelo anymore, he looks so ashamed and upset.

Sboniso: "Am I wrong?"

He says slowly raising his eyes at me.

Me: "I...I don't know what you're talking about."

He nods.

Sboniso: "I thought I could do this but I don't wanna set myself up for a heartbreak, you going for the other guys because I can't satisfy you, I don't wanna hurt myself like that so uhm..can we forget we ever done anything and become strictly friends."

I nod, I don't even think I understand everything he said.

He nods and smile a little but it's not that panty dropping smile I am used to, that can charm even a Nun.

I help him take the grocery inside and we cook together, he can cook and he loves traditional food more. We're chatting up a storm but I can see he is unsettled.

Me: "So uhm you went for therapy?"

He nods.

Sboniso: "My daily bread for the past months to almost a year."

Me: "Do you have subject that you avoided and didn't wanna mentions during therapy?"

He frowns.

Sboniso: "No, I was honest."

Me: "With everything?"

Sboniso: "Where is this going Princess?"

Me: "Uhm..nothing."

Sboniso: "I don't wanna talk about my therapy I'm still going there and I am talking to my therapist about my problems, you don't have to worry about me."

I nod.

Me: "Sorry.."

We eat our food then we watch some TV, I am actually watching him, he looks so handsome as he keeps biting his bottom lip absent mindedly. I move to sit on his lap and try to kiss him but he moves his face away.

Sboniso: "No."

I stare at him in shock, is he rejecting all of this?"

Me: "What?"

Sboniso: "I'm done exposing my disability to women out there, one day you will find someone who does it better and leave me shattered, I don't want you and I think it's better you leave."

I get off him my whole body is ice cold, what kind of rejection is this!

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CHAPTER 52

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THINGO-LAMAQWABE

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Today our parents decided to merge our ceremonies with Malaika, they are doing Umemulo for us, we've just finished our exams Dad respectfully asked Kwanda to let me finish my studies first then do this Ceremony then thereafter there will be Lobola negotiations.

Malaika and I are getting dressed, I am wearing a short traditional skirt with beads around my waist and nothing on my upper body except for beads around my neck but Malaika is wearing a vest and she explained to me that it's because she's not a virgin anymore, so they will slaughter two cows for us separately and only I will put on umhlwehlwe.

The yard is buzzing, people we don't even know attended this event, journalists everywhere I haven't seen my love for the whole week because of the ceremonies I had to do before this one.

We just came back from the river for cleansing Ngcebo is guiding this ceremony doing what the ancestors ask me to do.

We do the Zulu traditional dance then Malaika and I kneel on the floor as we receive money from our father's first then our moms, the whole family follows. After a while there's a long silence I slowly look up Mathenyoka is walking towards me with an umbrella full of money I smile as he kneels in front of me and give me the umbrella I hold it.

Mathenyoka: "You're so beautiful nhliziyo yami."(my heart)

I giggle, he get up and put some money on Malaika then walk away. Another moment of silence Malaika has her eyes all out face to face with the Prince himself, Prince Sbonelo Kgosi Modise he has a stash of cash in his hand, someone starts a song in the crowd as Sbonelo starts showering Malaika with money people are ululating, he moves to me

and take another roll of money he showers me with money it's a joyous moment for Malaika and I, she seems so happy and so am I. After this part people are asked to move to the tent for food. I walk up to my love as my aunt collect the money in different buckets.

Me: "You're leaving without eating Gatsheni?"

He smiles and take the umbrella from me closing it I removed the money from it and put it in the bucket but I've been walking around carrying it.

He pulls me by my waist and plants a kiss on my lips.

Mathenyoka: "I didn't know usina kangaka."(you dance like that)

I laugh.

Me: "I was showing off.

He smiles.

Mathenyoka: "I have to go, I am meeting my father's brother who wanted nothing to do with me until I bribed him, tomorrow they are coming here for negotiations."

He looks so stressed.

Mathenyoka: "So I need to know if he is still going to do this for me."

Me: "I understand, everything will work out just fine baby."

He nods nervously.

Mathenyoka: "I want this to happen so bad Thingo, I need you in my life, ngifuna uthelwe ngenyongo ubikwe emadlozini akoGatsheni."

Me: "It will happen as you wish baby."

I peck his lips then he get in his car and drive out.

I go to the tent and sit next to Malaika.

Me: "So uSboniso why is he making you blush like that?"

Malaika: "You're seeing things mntase."

Me: "Am I?"

She laughs pushing me playfully.

Malaika: "Don't be nosey you're going to be someone's wife tomorrow."

I giggle.

Me: "I know, I'm so nervous."

Malaika: "But you're marrying your best friend."

Me: "Yes I am."

In the evening I try calling Mathenyoka and his phone rings unanswered I'm getting worried, he always answers my calls. I keep trying until it now sends me to voicemail I feel like screaming.

I spend the whole night trying to call him but I'm not winning.

Around 5 am mom comes to my room and find me sitting in bed staring at my phone with tears in my eyes.

Thabsie: "Baby, did you get any sleep?"

I shake my head.

Me: "I can't find him on the phone, maybe something happened to him."

"Thingo!"

He shouts I widen my eyes, why is he here? Where are his uncles? Why is he even shouting in my father's yard like that.

I rush out and find him outside everyone is staring at him, he looks like a mess, he is wearing clothes he was wearing yesterday he is sloshed.

Me: "Gatsheni.."

He grunts going down on his knees then he slowly stares at me with his brown eyes, they are full of tears and should he blink they will fall down.

Me: "What's wrong?"

He moves his eyes to my father and bow his head.

Mathenyoka: "I'm so sorry for promising to send my uncles King yet they are not here."

His voice is shaky.

Nkosiyo: "What happened?"

Mathenyoka: "I begged them, even paid them to do this for me just one day but they refused."

He is so hurt I could feel it.

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry.."

He burps loud and starts hissing, his eyes turns green. Ngcebo rush to stand in front of dad and bow his head with his hands on his back.

Ngcebo: "Baba allow me and my brother to represent oGatsheni, we will stand in as his uncles we will in form both the ancestors about it, please."

Nkosiyo: "But you know someone from the Ndlovu clan should be present."

Kumkani: "Let me quickly go talk to uBab'Ndlovu uphill I'm sure he can help."

Nkosiyo: "Ok do that."

Kumkani rush to his car and drive out. Mcebisi help Mathenyoka up who was still kneeling with his head forced down on the ground.

Mcebisi: "Come on let's go back to your house to we can burn incense, we're doing this today."

He nods and look at me with sadness in his eyes.

Mathenyoka: "I'm sorry.."

I look down as they get in Mcebisi's car and drive out. I start crying as soon as they are out of the yard mom pulls me into her arms.

Thabsie: "Don't cry he is gonna be ok."

Me: "They keep doing this to him! Why do they keep hurting him?"

Thabsie: "After today he will be fully happy, with you by his side, he won't even mind with just being with you, take it from me, your father and I were once in that position where it was just us two, we survived."

Nkosiyo: "Your mother is right, we all just need that one person and our lives will be whole again and for Kwanda that one person is you."

He wipes my tears and kiss my forehead."

Nkosiyo: "Go inside and make yourself look more prettier than you already are, it's your day today and dad is proud."

I smile and hug him tight then walk to my room feeling better.

I am wearing a dress just a little above my knees helping mom with cooking.

Thabsie: "Come and see this?"

We peek through the curtain, Bab’Ndlovu is reciting our clan names outside there is another old man next to him, Ngcebo and Mcebisi are standing with them as well. Mom hold my hand.

Thabsie: “Everything will be fine now.”

My heart softens up, I smile brightly.

They go to the rondavel I walk out and look over at Mathenyoka’s house the yard has people moving around and I can see Bab’Ndlovu’s wife amongst them, Bab’Ndlovu is a well respected member of our community he has shops and livestock.

Ngcebo comes and calls me to greet my in-laws, the negotiations were successful I’m happy. Mom gives me a doek and I walk in the rondavel and sit on the straw mat greeting the elders.

Bab’Ndlovu: “oGatsheni can really choose well, if I knew this boy was a Ndlovu I was gonna take him under my wing, thina boGatsheni asilahlani.”(Us Gatsheni’s don’t turn our backs on each other)

Nkosiyo: “Well now you know Boyabenyathi, the boy will need family from time to time, don’t give up on him.”

He nods and I hear people singing outside dad smiles looking at me then take my hand and we get up and walk out. Bab’Ndlovu’s wife is here with a group of women carrying blankets, there’s a sheep and everything you can dream of, I see a series of cars my whole family is here I didn’t know it was gonna be such a big deal but Kwanda did ask about my family a few weeks back on who would get the blankets should he decide to do everything in one day the gifts and all but he didn’t tell me he will be doing it I guess it was because he didn’t know where he will get the family to do this for him. He rented a place for his mother and sisters I suggested it because they weren’t treating him right under his own house.

Everyone is given gifts there is even food. We didn’t cook food enough for all these people so Bonolo and Wenzile starts cooking outside in

those big pots, Other Gumede wives joins them. Bab'Ndlovu's wife ask me to come with her and they remove the dress I am wearing and give me a beautiful brown Shweshwe dress with white designs she wraps a white net scarf around my shoulders and a doek on my head.

"This is how a Gatsheni wives wears sisi Welcome to oBoyabenyathi."

I smile and bow my head in respect.

Me: "Thank you so much, and I know this was short notice but the way you're carrying this Ceremony it shows you guys are good people."

"If someone needs help and you have means, you help them."

Me: "Gatsheni."

She giggles and hug me. She walks out with me singing, Mom ululates as soon as she sees me, more people follows.

People starts eating Ngcebo ask me to take food and pills to my "drunkard husband", his words.

I go to his house with food on the containers I walk in his room and find him sitting in bed looking down.

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

He slowly lifts his eyes and they start changing, I smile as he grunts loud.

Me: "Thokoza Mkhulu."

Mathenyoka stands on his feet and stares at me like he is shocked.

Mathenyoka: "Sthandwa sami."

I smile shyly looking down, I am a new bride. He brush his head and look at me in disbelief.

Me: "Are you still drunk?"

He quickly shakes his head.

Mathenyoka: "I...I just woke up I'm sorry for the scene I caused earlier, umuhle mkami."(You're beautiful my wife)

I laugh, it sounds so good hearing him actually calling me his wife and he has done the right thing.

My phone rings in my pocket I take it.

Me: "Bhuti."

Ngcebo: "Come back, sizokukhipha ekhaya

Bese bakuthathe bazokufaka koGatsheni."(We will take you out of this home then they will receive you at the Gatsheni's.)

Me: "Ok."

I put my phone in my pocket, he hold my neck and kiss me I hold his hands.

Me: "Go and look good, your wife is coming home."

He smiles innocently, I am in love.

I give him food and go back home. My father and Ngcebo takes me to a rondavel and slaughter a goat.

Nkosiyabo: "This is my daughter boGumede, my only daughter uThingo LamaQwabe, she's leaving home now in a joyous way for all of us, she's going to be a bride koNdlovu but please do protect and guide her, she is still our daughter and always will be, thank you for giving me the honour to raise such a respectful and well behaved angel, my child I love you and it gives me joy that I will still be able to see you everyday because you're my neighbor."

Everyone laughs, I have tears in my eyes.

Mom starts a song and grandma prays.

Now I am standing at the Gatsheni gate with a crowd behind me I have a blanket covering me, Bab'Gatsheni opens the gate and I am taken to Mathenyoka's rondavel to be introduced to the ancestors Kwanda is already there wearing his white vest and black pants and ibhayi wrapped around his waist, he smells so good as I kneel next to him, he removes the blanket. Everyone screams outside, hissing sound fills the entire yard a huge snake enters the rondavel and moves in circles all around the rondavel I shiver I still have a fear of snakes but I know this one will never hurt me.

Mathenyoka: "Usefikile boMkhulu, uNkosikazi wami usekemagcekeni oGatsheni."(She has arrived my ancestors, my wife is now at the Gatsheni yard)

I smile looking at him as he grunts the snake rolls itself in front of me and raise it's head moving it to my face then it's mouth touches my forehead.

Mathenyoka: "Ndlovu, Gatsheni, Boyabenyathi, Mpongo ka Zingelwayo, Mthiyane."

The hissing starts again the snakes slither out I giggle and hold Mathenyoka's hand.

Me: "Ngiyabonga myeni wami ngosuku lwami ulenze lwaba luhle kakhulu."(Thank you my husband for my day, you made is so beautiful)

He smiles.

We walk out. He goes on one knee in front of Bab'Ndlovu and his wife with everyone they came with.

Mathenyoka: "I don't have words.."

He swallows and look at Bab'Ndlovu taking his hand into his.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu baba (Thank you so much father) you did what my own family couldn't do for me, thank you so much to you too Mah, all of you boGatsheni."

Bab'Ndlovu: "A few days ago a man came to me while I was sleeping and he told me to help his son I woke and told my wife about it, so when Kumkani came this morning I knew the man was somehow related to you."

I smile.

Bab'Ndlovu: "You have a guardian angel watching over you, respect your wife and your family son, I will come see you from time to time you're family now."

They all leave me with my darling husband his mom didn't even show face.

We are in our room, he is helping me take off my clothes because we want to get ready for bed.

Mathenyoka: "I can't believe you're here and you're officially my wife traditionally."

I giggle and he hold my waist from behind, I am now left with just my panty and bra, it was a gift from Malaika the day of Umemulo we gave each other gifts and other family members gifted us as well.

Mathenyoka: "When do you want our white wedding to be?"

I turn around and wrap my arms around his neck.

Me: "Anytime, all that matters is that I am your wife right now by tradition, I am your family."

He smiles and kiss my lips picking me up.

Mathenyoka: "Yes you are."

He lays me on my back and get on top of me kissing me. His hand goes under my panty and rub my clit while he flips his tongue on my nipple I cuss arching my back.

Mathenyoka: "Sthandwa sam."

He stares down at me.

Mathenyoka: "Are we doing this today, or we are still going to wait?"

I giggle.

Me: "I don't know."

Mathenyoka: "Hawu.."

Me: "What I know is that I want to feel your touch, it makes me feel good."

Mathenyoka: "Does it?"

I nod and he kiss my belly button and slowly remove my panty. His tongue does magic to my cookie I find myself screaming his name, my knees are shaking I don't know where to touch so I just grab on the sheets.

Mathenyoka: "Fuck..you're so wet baby."

He takes off his pants and stroke his shaft.

Mathenyoka: "Just relax for me baby ok, it will hurt but I will be gentle I promise."

I nod as he balance his hand next to my head and raise my knee up, he rubs his penis on my clit I feel some intense pleasure all over again, he keeps poking me on my hole and rub me again it's pleasurable until he push it in I scream grabbing his shoulders.

Mathenyoka: "It's ok my love, I'm almost done."

I nod vigorously, it hurts. He push it all in I am biting my lower lip hard because of the pain. He doesn't move but it's fully in I can feel it throbbing inside me. He starts sucking and licking my nipples so good I am getting on the mood as my inner walls clench on his big shaft in me he groans.

Mathenyoka: "Ooh Fuck.."

He doesn't stop licking my nipples I hold him tight and start moving my waist which is a big mistake because he starts moving as well pain comes back but I want this, there is something nice to it never mind the pain. He moves slowly yet it's in too deep.

Mathenyoka: "Thingo...yhoo Sthandwa sam...fuck...aaah shit."

He is having a time of his life watching his penis going in and out of me, I grab on the sheets as he goes a bit faster I feel like there is something he is hitting that makes me wanna pee right away so I let go it feels so damn good, he goes crazy and start groaning loud.

Mathenyoka: "Yes baby....fuck Thingo! Shit that's it baby come on do it again my love, do that again."

He moves faster hitting the same spot again, I fail to hold it and so I give him what he wants.

He is sweating, he grabs on my butt cheek and make me meet his fast stokes then he groans deep biting his lip I can feel his dick throbbing in me.

Mathenyoka: "Haaa.."

That's all he says as he pulls out and stare down at me with a smile on his face. I cover my face shyly.

He pulls me up and hold me in his arms. He stares down at the bed I look where he is looking, there is blood stain on it.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

He walks to the bathroom with me in his arms, I am holding him tight with my head rested on his shoulder I think I love him more now.

*

CHAPTER 53

*

THINGO-LAMAQWABE

*

I just woke up to my husband's strong arms I snuggle closer to him he hold me tight and kiss my forehead.

Mathenyoka: "Morning Mfazi wami."

He hasn't opened his eyes I giggle.

Me: "Morning."

He opens his beautiful eyes and peck my lips.

Mathenyoka: "Ulale kanjani?"(How did you sleep?)

Me: "Great, I was in your arms."

He kiss my forehead again.

Mathenyoka: "Thank you for not giving up on me baby, you've been my light from day one."

Me: "Giving up on you will never be an option."

Mathenyoka: "Thank you. Kusabhlungu la?"(Does it still hurt here?)

He says brushing my pussy since we slept naked.

Me: "Not like yesterday."

Mathenyoka: "So I am allowed to feel you again?"

I smile and nod shyly it felt good I wouldn't mind him taking control of my body again.

His head disappears between my thighs I arch my back as soon as I feel his tongue down there.

Me: "Kwanda..."

I don't even know why I'm calling his name. He gentle thrust in me looking into my eyes, it feels so amazing that I feel so emotional, he is groaning in pleasure I hold his shoulders as he slams into me once then sleep on his back pulling me on top of him, I sleep on his chest, he is also sniffing we are quiet for some time because we're both emotional he has come a long way, been through hell but he got one thing he wanted the most, me. And I am not going anywhere.

I look at him and wipe his face.

Me: "I love the way you love me."

He wipes my tears and kiss my lips.

Mathenyoka: "Thank you for agreeing to spend the rest of your life with me maGumede."

His phone rings, I move away from him and walk to the bathroom taking a shower, he joins me in there and it's uncomfortable because his penis is erect.

Mathenyoka: "Is Gatsheni making you uncomfortable?"

He says amused.

Mathenyoka: "You know you are the only one who can put him to sleep baby."

Me: "How?"

I don't get it so he picks me up and pin me on the wall, Gatsheni finds his way inside his own hole.

Mathenyoka: "I don't think I will ever get used to this...fuck!"

He grabs my butt cheeks and move faster and faster without stopping I grab on his shoulders tight.

Mathenyoka: "Fuck...yes baby let go, you know I love it when you cum for me."

I cum and he follows I know that because his body has tensed up and his dick is throbbing inside of me.

Mathenyoka: "Mmmm.."

He step out with me without pulling out. He pin me in bed and hold both my arms above my head, he goes for another round I'm not complaining I feel good that he wants me like this, he can't get enough of me I enjoy it.

I wear a traditional dress that mom made for me, it's blue and white then I put a doek and that white scarf around my shoulders. He can't keep his eyes off me. He is leaning on the wall as I get dressed I keep stealing glances at him from the mirror.

Mathenyoka: "Yhoo Thixo wami."(My God)

He exclaims, I look at him.

Me: "What?"

Mathenyoka: "Okwami konke loku?"(Is this all mine?)

I smile as he whistles turning me around.

Mathenyoka: "Ngathi ngiyaphupha."(I feel like I'm dreaming.)

Me: "Let me go make breakfast for you baby."

He pulls me into his strong arms hugging me tight.

Mathenyoka: "I want to show off so bad, I want to scream to the world that you're mine, people should know!"

Me: "They already know my love."

Mathenyoka: "They don't know enough."

I laugh walking out. I make breakfast for the two of us, we eat then I start cleaning the main house then move to all the rondavels and also sweep the yard, I am a bride people should see me moving around EMZINI WAMI.(My home)

I cook for my husband while he works in the lounge, we're talking because I can see him.

Mathenyoka: "So we're finally going 50/50 in the company right?"

He ask coming to sit on the barstool, I open the fridge and pour juice for him.

Me: "Yes so I can be a rich housewife and enter one of those shows on TV."

He laughs.

Mathenyoka: "But I need you working side by side with me."

I nod.

Me: "We will work together and I will study part time."

Mathenyoka: "You're pursuing Art?"

Me: "Architecture to be precise."

Mathenyoka: "You're following your man."

Me: "Yes I am."

The door opens and his mother walks in and throw her handbag on the couch and put her hands around her waist. She laughs, a full blown laughter then clap once.

Mathenyoka sighs.

Mathenyoka: "I thought I told you to stay away from me mama, you failed to ask oBabomdala bangilandele umfazi wami, ufunani la?"(you couldn't ask my senior father to fetch my wife for me, what do you want here?"

"You call this a wife, how did she enter the yard without doing proper procedures."

Mathenyoka: "Umfazi wamin owamadlozi ami mebemvumela ukuthi angene ekhishini uzongena ikwakhe la ayi kwakho."(My wife is also the wife of the ancestors if they allow her to enter the kitchen she will enter, this is her house not yours)

She claps again.

"This is vat n sit as long as I wasn't part of it."

Mathenyoka: "Amasimba ke lawo."(That's bullshit)

I gasp silently.

"Uthini?"(What did you say?)

Mathenyoka: "I'm not gonna squirm in your presence anymore mama especially if you come for my wife that shit won't fly with me!"

He has never talked like this with his mother, he was always this little boy ready to cry but I guess not anymore.

"Weee Kwanda!"

Mathenyoka: "Phuma uphele emzini woMkami we mama wabantu."(Leave my wife's house woman.)

His mother is also shocked.

Mathenyoka: "Leave."

He grunts and balance his hands on the counter he raise his eyes and stares at me, they are so scary today, dark grey colour, he starts hissing looking at me and this shockingly makes me fall deeply in love with him. The room turns cold as a grey snake slither its way in I shiver as it goes straight to Kwanda's mom it's huge so I can see it opening it's mouth I close my eyes as it's sharp teeth comes in contact with her ankle, she looks down and scream at the sight of a snake, she stumbles back and sit on her butt it wraps itself on her leg I shake my head and look at Mathenyoka he is breathing heavily his eyes are still grey.

Me: "Baby..Gatsheni calm down my love please."

I touch his cheek and kiss his lips his eyes slowly goes back to normal.

Me: "I love you and they don't always have to get a reaction from you, don't give them that satisfaction my love I'm here and I'm everything you need, you always tell me that."

He nods and pull me into his arms. The snake slither out I look at Kwanda's mother she looks so scared she is shivering.

Me: "Please leave."

I go over to her and try to help her up but she push me so hard I step back and my husband hold me.

Mathenyoka: "Get out of my house."

She get up and limp out, she needs to get that snake bite checked out because it won't end well for her.

Later after dinner we cuddle on the couch.

Mathenyoka: "So do you think I have to change my wardrobe now that I am a husband?"

I laugh.

Me: "But you dress just fine babe."

He laughs.

Mathenyoka: "I'm just making sure I am doing everything right, I'm new at this husband thing and it feels great."

I hold his left hand and look at him.

Me: "We should talk to my father about signing in court and have a small ceremony to bless our union, I don't like that your hand has no ring, they should know you're taken."

He smiles.

Mathenyoka: "I want to wear your ring more than anything my love so we'll talk to ubaba ksasa."

Me: "Thank you."

Mathenyoka: "You won't lack anything baby, intimacy, you'll get it. Love, it's there. Money, you can take all of it. Dick, I can feed it to you all night and day."

I laugh so hard punching his chest playfully.

Mathenyoka: "No but seriously you won't lack anything here with me I didn't take you from the comfort of your home to make you miserable here, No."

I kiss him and he takes it too far by removing our clothes then he asks me to sit on him, I slowly sit on his hard penis it still hurts when it get in but not more than the pleasure I feel.

Mathenyoka: "Move for me my love."

He grabs my butt and help me move my waist.

Mathenyoka: "Yes, like that baby...fuck yes.."

He pinch my nipples I shiver throwing my head back and start moving on my own without his help I can tell I am too loud but I can't help it.

Mathenyoka: "Don't stop baby..that's it..fuck I love how you moan.."

I sink my nails on his shoulders as he moves underneath I bite his neck as I cum hard, he groans and cum as well, we're wet with sweat all over our bodies.

Mathenyoka: "You are amazing you know that?"

I wipe his sweaty forehead and kiss him again, he slowly moves underneath again I meet his every thrust, sex is really nice man!

We go to bed and I sleep in his arms.

The next day I wake up first and he is sleeping peacefully I kiss his cheek and go to the bathroom. I take a shower then wear my makoti clothes. I prepare breakfast and take it to him I find him on the phone and it's business.

He smiles as soon as he sees me.

Mathenyoka: "Yeah uhm..my wife and I will hold the interviews together thank you."

He chuckles and drops the call he pulls me to him and kiss me.

Mathenyoka: "We are finding replacements for Fana and Zamo."

I nod.

Mathenyoka: "I want us to expand baby, grow our family business and I hope this time I find right people."

Me: "I will kill anyone who comes for my husband this time."

He chuckles.

We eat breakfast together then we get in the car he is driving us home.

Mom starts ululating as soon as we walk in I smile looking down.

Thabsie: "You guys look so beautiful together."

She hugs her son in law first while I hug my dad.

We sit down drinking tea, my brothers are here Makhosini and Bukhosi are sitting on the same couch with me on my either side and my husband is sitting on the one seater couch, they wanted to sit with me and they are both holding my hands.

Nkosiyo: "Hey you two are suffocating my daughter now, move away."

Bukhosi: "But dad we miss her."

Nkosiyo: "She lives right next door also she left just the other day."

Makhosini: "You don't know how it feels dad, we really miss her."

Nkosiyo: "I know how it feels I'm a twin too remember and my sister lives in Durban while I'm here but you don't see me suffocating her when she's around."

We all stare at him.

Thabsie: "Don't lie Nkosi, you still even sleep in one bed when she's around."

We all laugh at him.

Mathenyoka: "Baba..uhm Thingo and I want to get married have a small ceremony at home and have a pastor bless our union, Traditional wedding was more important but I want her to take my last name."

Dad smiles.

Me: "I really don't care about a big white wedding I want something small and intimate with just family and friends."

Nkosiyabo: "I hear you and that's fine by me, you will let us know about the dates and all and if you need help with anything just shout."

Me: "Uhm...I want to get married in our house in Durban please, the backyard is big I think it will accommodate everyone invited."

Nkosiyabo: "That's okay. So uhm..are you planning on joining business full time?"

Me: "Yes, I will study part time."

He nods..

Nkosiyabo: "As long as you're able to balance the two."

Me: "I will do it baba."

In two weeks our wedding ceremony takes place at home in Durban and people come in numbers even the uninvited guests, journalists to be precise, I have seen handsome men out there but on our wedding day Kwanda was a different kind of handsome, wearing his black tux with white shirt and I was in a white dress that had a slit from the thigh down not a wedding gown though, pastor joined us in matrimony and I couldn't be happier. I got him a ring I took from the lobola money and the money I was gifted from my Umemulo and he got me a new one and put my engagement ring on my right hand. We signed and got our marriage certificate I am now Thingo-LamaQwabe Ndlovu, I dropped the Gumede surname because I already have it as my name LamaQwabe, I am Mrs Kwanda 'Mathenyoka' Ndlovu.

We've been married for four months now and we are running our business together, we found two talented girls replacing Fana and Zamo we want to hire more stuff because business is booming we even have people from other countries wanting us to design their infrastructures it's amazing.

I am in my office, my husband walks in with a paper bag, he has gained so much weight and also is more buff now, I also have gained a few pounds but not much.

Mathenyoka: "Mam'Gatsheni."

I smile getting up.

Me: "Mthiyane."

We hug and I take the paper bag from him.

Mathenyoka: "Got your favourite."

I open the paper bag and the smell of food makes my stomach turn so I quickly close it and sit on my chair taking a deep breath.

Mathenyoka: "Baby..What's wrong?"

Me: "The food smells funny I don't like it."

Mathenyoka: "Oh uhm...sorry I will get something else I didn't notice it wasn't right, we always buy their food."

I fan myself as I feel like the room is getting hotter.

Me: "Can you turn on the air conditioner please."

He do that then sit in front of me.

Mathenyoka: "You're sweating baby yet your office is cold."

I unbutton my shirt I see him smiling.

Me: "What?"

Mathenyoka: "I can help you take off everything."

I giggles as he get up and turn my chair around. He put me on the table and have his way with me passionately.

We are now wearing our clothes.

Me: "We are going home today right?"

Mathenyoka: "Yeah we haven't been home for two weeks, things are about to get hectic so we need to relax before we get really busy."

I nod.

After work he drives us home to the village, we take a shower then go to my father's house, they are happy to see us. Mom pulls me to their room.

Me: "Ma.."

Thabsie: "Sit down girl."

She says like those women who gossips a lot.

Thabsie: "You and your husband are glowing and gaining weight."

I laugh.

Me: "I guess we're happy."

She giggles. She opens the drawer and give me two pregnancy tests.

Thabsie: "I saw you two weeks ago but I just thought it's my eyes but no girl you look way too pretty now and your skin is more lighter."

I stare at the pregnancy tests.

Thabsie: "Do you know how to use it?"

I shake my head.

Thabsie: "Don't be nervous come I will show you."

She shows me how to use it, I use both of them then we go sit in her bed waiting for a few minutes she is holding my hands.

Thabsie: "Why are you so tense?"

Me: "If they are positive I will be giving my husband everything he has ever wished for, a family of his own."

Tears roll down my cheeks.

Thabsie: "So you're hoping for positive?"

I nod. She wipes my tears and ask me to go check but I shake my head.

Me: "Please go check for me."

She go to the bathroom then come back with the sticks, she shows me but I can't see anything I am blinded by the tears.

Me: "What does it say mama?"

Thabsie: "Both positive."

I wipe my tears.

Thabsie: "We can go confirm at the hospital before you tell him."

I nod.

She takes her bag and we walk out, my husband is having a good time with my dad and brothers they are watching soccer and they are very loud. Mathenyoka is looking at me but I look away.

Mathenyoka: "Uhm...can we talk Mam'Ndlovu."

Thabsie: "I will wait for you in the car."

She kiss my dad's cheek and walk out, we follow her but stand away from her car.

Mathenyoka: "Were you crying? What's wrong my love? Did something happen and where are you going with your mother?"

Me: "I'm fine, we're coming back soon."

He nods, he is worried.

Mom and I go to the hospital and she ask they do an ultrasound. I feel goosebumps when I hear some noise on that machine it fills the entire room.

Thabsie: "Oh my God!"

Tears roll down her cheeks but there is a huge smile on her face. She kiss me all over my face.

Thabsie: "Oh my baby!"

She is screaming making the doctor laugh.

Thabsie: "We need the pictures girl to show it to her husband."

I sit up clueless mom is overly happy that they even forgot that I know nothing about what is going on but I gathered its good news.

The doctor writes something on the file then tell us she is coming. So she walks out.

Me: "Mama.."

She looks at me and show me the picture.

Thabsie: "These are your babies sthandwa sam."

She shows me tiny bean shaped little things.

Me: "Babies?"

She giggles.

Thabsie: "You are your father's daughter. You're having twins!"

I cover my mouth, fresh tears come out of my eyes.

Me: "Ngempela mama?"(Really mom?)

She nods.

Me: "Let's go home, I have to tell Kwanda."

I say standing on my feet ready to walk out, the doctor walks in and give mom some card and pills I'm already out the door rushing to the car, I want to tell my husband the good news.

As soon as mom park in the yard I step out and rush inside they are still watching soccer but he is quiet sitting on the one seater couch.

I go on my knees in front of him still holding that picture.

Mathenyoka: "What is going on?"

I give him the picture and stare at his confused face.

Mathenyoka: "Baby?"

He grunts arching his back looking up, I smile. He stares at me still looking confused.

Me: "I'm pregnant, we're having babies."

He widens his eyes, he is in disbelief.

Mathenyoka: "You're not joking right? Mama she's not playing with me right?"

Thabsie: "She's not, we just came from the doctor and it was confirmed she's carrying twins."

He stares at me and get up walking out. Ngcebo helps me up and hug me tight.

Ngcebo: "He's fine.."

I feel his hand on my back as I am still in my brother's arms, he pulls me to his chest his heart beat is so fast.

Mathenyoka: "Please tell me again so I know I'm not dreaming."

I am still on his chest.

Me: "I'm pregnant with twins."

He goes and his knee and brush my tummy I didn't even get how far along I am. He grunts.

Mathenyoka: "Boyabenyathi..."

He looks down shaking his head, he is still in disbelief.

He stares at the picture I gave to him.

Mathenyoka: "Ngiyabonga Qwabe, Mnguni, Phakathwayo, ngiyabonga Nkosazana."(Thank you princess)

I smile, his eyes are full of tears, he is happy and his happiness matters to me more than anything.

He get up and hold me in his arms again, I feel tear drops on my forehead and his body is shaking a bit I wrap my arms around him even tighter, this is an emotional moment for the both of us for I know where he comes from what he has been through so this is what he has been praying for, a family of his own and now I, his wife will be giving that to him in a few months to come, his ancestors didn't make a mistake for choosing me for him, I am in his life to serve a purpose, the babies I am carrying will heal and restore then his family will multiply. My husband uBab'Ndlovu, Gatsheni uBoyabenyathi.

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CHAPTER 54

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MALAIKA

*

It's been four months since I started working at my father's company and I spend most of my time there since I don't have a boyfriend to

keep me busy. Haven't been seeing much of Sboniso and even if I do he just greets like he is greeting a stranger so I can say our friendship ended before it even started I tried to call and talk to him but he blocked my number I was upset at first but now I'm over it.

I am standing at the balcony, I'm not working today so I am just sipping on some cold drink looking over at his house, I see a cab driving in then he walks out with a woman wearing the shortest dress I've ever seen. He puts something on her boobs before she get in the cab and it drives out.

I decide to swallow my pride and go over to his place.

I walk in and find him doing sit ups in the lounge his body is prefect, he has iPods plugged on so I stand in front of him and wave so he can notice me. He removes them and sit up taking a towel wiping his face with it. My eyes are on his abs down to the v-shaped torso then a dick print, he clears his throat I quickly move my eyes and look at his face, he has well treamed side burns that goes well with his mustache and a black and grey beard then his shiny short hair.

Sboniso: "What can I do for you?"

I swallow, he is still this cold.

Me: "What did I ever do to you? I apologised for the bad joke I said so what is it that you want from me."

He chuckles and throw the towel on the couch.

Sboniso: "I don't want anything from you."

Me: "Or your woman won't approve me as your friend?"

He raise his eyebrow.

Sboniso: "My woman?"

Me: "I saw a lady that was here this morning."

Sboniso: "Oh..that was a prostitute."

He says so freely walking to the kitchen I follow him. He takes out bottled water from the fridge.

Me: "You are sleeping with prostitutes?"

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "Yes I am."

Me: "Why?"

Sboniso: "Want me to sleep with you so I can disappoint you? Ok let me answer your questions Prostitutes don't judge because they don't care! They take the money and leave, cuming fast doesn't bother them as long as you gonna give them their money."

Me: "So what I said offended you?"

Sboniso: "It did but then I don't care what you think of me anymore, Prostitutes are much better than you."

I gasp as he smirks.

Sboniso: "More advanced, not missionary everytime."

I chuckle.

Me: "You wanna go there with me? What's everytime with you? You cum in less than a second where was I gonna find time to change positions because you were gonna cum as fast as I can put it in."

His face changes instantly, he won't hurt my feelings to feed his bruised ego, never!

Sboniso: "What did you just say to me?"

Me: "You heard me, that prostitute is probably telling her friends about you as we speak."

He is in front of me in a flash I blink rapidly as his face is a few inch from mine, he grabs my neck not too tight and kiss me roughly my body reacts. Clothes are flying in a minute and I push him to the couch getting on top of him, getting my point across, I slowly put all his dick in and it feels so good. I move once, twice, third time he grabs my waist tight stopping me from moving then pull out and cum just like that. I get off him and grab my clothes on the floor irritated as fuck. I wear them, he is looking at me emotionless.

Sboniso: "This is exactly my point! A prostitute won't give me that attitude you're giving just because ngichame fast."(I came fast)

Me: "Go to hell."

He slowly get up and wear his clothes, he picks up my bra on the floor and walk up to me, he gives it to me, I grab it and wear it then my t-shirt.

Me: "Why don't you go to a Men's clinic or something because that shit is irritating."

Sboniso: "I'm not your man so I have nothing to fix for you, this is what you'll get, nothing more."

I chuckle and nod.

Me: "I'm glad you're not my man then because I won't settle for this."

I walk to the door I hear a glass shutter.

Sboniso: "Fuck!"

I look at him, looks like he threw a glass on the wall. He goes down and pick up the pieces.

Sboniso: "Shit.."

I rush to him and find him holding his other hand with the other there's blood coming out.

Me: "Hey...let me help you."

Sboniso: "I don't need your help!"

I sigh and get up looking at him as he hurt himself even more.

Me: "Kgosi..stop."

Looks like now he is holding the glasses tight on purpose so they can cut him further.

Me: "Yeka lento uyenzayo."(Stop what you're doing.)

He is breathing heavily.

Boniso: "Call my therapist, Dr Mthembu."

I take his phone and scroll down to doctor Mkhize then call the number.

DrMkhize: "Modise.."

A soft voice of a woman answers.

Me: "Uhm...I need your help, I mean Sboniso need your help I don't know if you know his new house address."

DrMkhize: "I will be there soon."

The young beautiful doctor walk in, wearing a white shirt and a black skirt with long heels. Sboniso is now sitting on the couch staring at his bloody hands. Mkhize sits next to him and slowly brush his back I raise my eyebrow.

Sboniso: "I don't like women."

The doctor chuckles.

DrMkhize: "I'm a woman, are you including me?"

Why does it seem like this doctor is more flirting than helping him.

Me: "Aren't you supposed to be finding out why he is saying he hates woman instead of selling yourself here?"

I'm annoyed really. She stares at me.

DrMkhize: "Excuse me, are you telling me how to do my job?"

I chuckle.

Me: "Flirting is not your job, are you new in the field? We know therapist and you are just giving me weird vibes, why make this about you?"

Sboniso: "Malaika please leave."

I walk out but when I reach the gate I remember that I had my phone and a cold drink with me so I slowly walk back in and find Sboniso is a very compromising position with his doctor, her skirt is up on her waist and that black dick is all up in her pussy. I stand there angry as hell, I can't believe this. I hear him groaning then he quickly push her away, this guy is a master of pulling out I give that to him.

As she fix her skirt I walk up to her and turn her around, I slap her so hard she falls on top of Sboniso's lap.

Sboniso has her eyes all out, I don't what's shocking him, if it's the position I found him in or that he doesn't respect his body in a way that he sleeps with every woman a few hours apart without even using protection, showing off his weak sex drive.

DrMkhize: "Sboniso what is she to you!"

Me: "You wanted to make him love women by opening your legs for him instead of trying to find the root of the problem and help him.

Me: "Sis you're about to lose your licence I don't like unprofessional people, you are using his vulnerability to your advantage and that's disgusting I'm gonna report you for sleeping with a patient that came to you for help!"

She get up and tries to speak but I shut her up with another slap. Sboniso pull up his pants and hold both my hands, his hands still has blood in them.

Sboniso: "Stop this! I initiated the sex not the other way around!"

Me: "Do I look like I care! She's a doctor she knows better!"

I am screaming and if he doesn't get my point I'm gonna cry right here, my tears are so close to coming out.

DrMkhize: "Please don't report me."

Me: "Get out! We won't be needing you anymore."

She quickly takes her bags and rush out.

Sboniso: "Uneskhwele Nkosazana?"(You're jealous Princess)

I slap his face, he chuckles.

Me: "Why? Why are you doing this?"

Sboniso: "Doing what?"

Me: "You just slept with me, why did you fuck her?"

Sboniso: "You're never satisfied with me so I am looking for that one woman who will take me as I am."

Me: "Why can't you fix this instead of sleeping around hoping for acceptance, nobody wants to settle for bad sex."

He chuckles.

Me: "There are Mens clinic I'm sure they could help."

He shakes his head and go to the fridge taking out a beer.

Sboniso: "My problem is psychological not physical, it's all in my head."

Me: "What do you mean?"

He pulls me to the couch I sit next to him, he place my head on his lap and make him face him, he stares down at me for a very long time then chuckle.

Sboniso: "It's a very long story but to cut it short, I was sexually molested by someone I thought was my mother."

I widen my eyes.

Sboniso: "When I was 7 years old it started with just stroking my dick whenever she helps me bath."

I try to get up but he gentle push me down and look deep in my eyes.

Sboniso: "8 years I could now get a little erection from the strokes that were given to me, then it went to sucking."

All this time he is staring into my eyes.

Sboniso: "From there my dick got a very hard erection it went to rubbing her pussy."

He chuckles and widen his eyes at me with a scary smirk on his face.

Sboniso: "You know what was next? Bouncing on top of an old woman and even get hurt on my dick, she got me circumcised just so I can satisfy her needs I don't know what she felt from that little dick but it sure got her wet."

He grabs my hand and squeeze it still keeping eye contact I flinch.

Sboniso: "12 years old I learnt that I too can actually cum so I surrendered but made sure I cum way too quickly just so I can move away from her, my dick would be flaccid once I cum and it was hard getting it up again, so that's what I did everytime, chase my own orgasm so I can quickly pull away from a creature called a woman."

Me: "Please let go of my arm.."

He let go but doesn't let me get up.

Sboniso: "So do you understand now that cuming early to me is like a habit I had from when I was young, I can't get away from it no matter how hard I try! Probably why all the women I have tried this "serious" relationship with always cheated on me."

He wipes the tears that are falling from the corner of my eyes.

Sboniso: "I will never satisfy any woman sexually, I grew up with this, it won't go away but don't feel sad for me I am working on myself for the trauma I went through."

Me: "I'm sorry."

Sboniso: "It's okay."

He pecks my lips and allow me to get up.

Sboniso: "I hope you find a man that will satisfy all your sexual needs."

I am an emotional mess I can't stop crying.

Sboniso: "I don't even know how it feels when a woman cum, I never care I know the first time you did cum but I only realised because of how wet you were but I don't think I have ever felt a woman cum on my dick I don't even know if it's possible to feel it."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "I even hate being sucked, that shit irks me!"

He looks at me and smirk.

Sboniso: "I am just laying everything out for you to stop judging me! I mean I started having sex at a tender age why would I want to enjoy it now?"

Me: "I'm so sorry."

He chuckles and nod his head.

Sboniso: "Let me shower I just had three different pussy in a row and it didn't last even 3 minutes all together."

He says laughing but I'm hurt on his behalf, this can't be his whole life, his normal life. He walks away leaving me sitting there crying I'm hurt that he went through all of that.

I decide not to leave but cook something fast then dish up for him I'm not hungry at all after hearing his story. He walks in and stop on his tracks when he sees me, his dick is just the perfect size just that problem of cuming way too early.

Me: "Uhm..I dished up for you."

Sboniso: "You want to babysit me now?"

I shake my head looking down.

Sboniso: "I'm just kidding, thank you it smells really nice."

He eat his food and ask for more, then he sit on the couch watching music videos on TV. I walk over to him and kneel in front of him.

Sboniso: "What are you doing?"

I slowly pull down his sweat pants with a bit of a struggle because he is stunned not working with me at all. Once it's on his knees I gent hold his dick and stroke it a bit it doesn't disappoint it gets hard instantly. I take off all my clothes he is still confused.

Sboniso: "Malaika..what are you doing?"

Me: "Please allow me...don't over think it, it's just me."

Sboniso: "Wha...t.."

He doesn't finish talking my mouth has already covered all his shaft.

Sboniso: "Wha...."

I don't let him talk I just start gagging on it I feel him grabbing the fistful of my hair that sends the sensation straight to my lady part.

Sboniso: "Malaika...I hate this..."

He says but he keeps thrusting deep in my throat I gag as he shoots cum deep in my throat my eyes are even teary, I swallow and look up at him I find him also staring at me still with a confused look on his face.

He gives me his hand I hold it and he pull me up to his lap and get up with me.

He lays me in bed and stand there looking at me.

Sboniso: "I'm gonna disappoint you again, I can't.."

He leaves the room. I slowly get up and go look for my clothes in the lounge then go home.

At night my phone keeps beeping I take it it's messages from Sboniso.

"I'm sorry for being a coward."

The second one reads "Please forgive me for not being man enough."

Another one comes through.

"I'm sorry about earlier, I just don't want to keep disappointing you."

Then another one.

"Have a goodnight."

When I'm about to put the phone down another one comes through.

"Just respond to at least one so I know you're not angry at me, I'm sorry."

I sigh and send him a text "I'm not angry, goodnight."

I put my phone under my pillow and sleep.

The next day I am lazy to drive so I call a family driver to take me to work. He drives in the yard and step out. He bows before opening the door for me. I get in and look around Sboniso is standing next to his car staring at this car I'm riding on it takes me to work.

The whole week ends with me busy with work Sboniso and I have been avoiding each other this time around. I am washing my car outside walking barefoot wearing shorts and a sport bra. I see a car driving in Sboniso's yard he comes out as that doctor lady steps out of her car. They hug briefly I just focus on cleaning my car but I want to look at them and hear what they say so I move to stand on the corner pretending to be cleaning my carpets.

"I will stop being your therapist, it hasn't been long anyway.

I have feelings for you, I'm gonna refer you to another therapist."

Sboniso: "So you're willing to accept me with all my flaws?"

"Yes."

I raise my eyes up and they are hugging I guess that wasn't the first time they fucked when I caught them. I go back to my car my brother step out of the house and whistle at Sboniso, he responds with a whistle as well

Hero: "Imama leli?"(Is this your woman?)

Sboniso chuckles I can't even look at him I'm hurt.

Sboniso: "Yeah.."

That's all he says then he walks in with his woman.

Hero: "Why didn't you ask me to clean your car for you?"

Me: "I was bored."

Hero: "Ok baby sis let me go search for your sister in-law."

I chuckle.

Me: "Good luck."

I go back to my room and throw myself in bed all the energy I had today is gone. I take my laptop and go sit at the balcony. Sboniso is standing in his balcony looking my way. He waves his hand at me I just ignore him and continue doing my work.

Later he calls and tell me to come over to his house. I find him with two guys and "his woman".

Sboniso: "Uhm Princess these are my colleagues Bandla and Khulani, you've already met Doctor Mkhize, her name is Cwayita."

I nod, I didn't expect these people I don't understand why he called me here.

Sboniso: "Uh so Khulani was at that house warming party and he has been asking about you."

I raise my eyebrow when I realise where he is going with this.

Sboniso: "He just wants you to get to know each other also you and Cwayita got off on the wrong foot I was hoping we could all get along."

Me: "Did I said I'm bored that you want to set me up with your friends?"

Khulani: "No uhm Malaika I'm the one who forced him to call you, I want to get to know you."

Cwayita walks over to Sboniso and wrap her arms around him I chuckle; she's trying to make me jealous.

Me: "Ningangijwayeli amasimba nonke la."(Don't shit on me all of you here)

Sboniso widen his eyes.

Me: "Lose my number you bastard!"

They are all shocked but I'm fed up. I stop outside and try to breath I feel like I'm suffocating so I sit down on the veranda and try to catch my breath. Sboniso squats in front of me and put his finger under my chin and make me face him.

Sboniso: "Are you okay?"

I nod and remove his hands from me.

Me: "I will leave your house I just wanted to breathe a little."

I say getting up, he hold my waist and look deep in my eyes.

Me: "I...I want to say I'm sorry for judging you without knowing your past traumas, uhm...I thought when you opened up to me we gonna find a way, but..I'm happy you found someone who is willing to love you past your flaws, but I was also willing."

I say truthfully, my voice is shaky I am blinking slowly so tears don't fall.

Me: "But it's too late, right?"

He shakes his head.

Sboniso: "No, it's not."

Tears fail me, he quickly wipes them off and kiss my shaky lips.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry...I let my insecurities get the better of me, I failed to communicate with you right from the start, forgive me."

Me: "I'm sorry."

He pulls me to his chest.

Sboniso: "It's ok, I don't know if you're willing to work it out with me, I'm not perfect you know that I just want you to please promise me that if you're not happy and want to maybe go outside to find some sexual pleasure that I can't give you, be content with me, I don't want to go crazy over you cheating please."

Me: "I won't do that, we gonna work on it if you let me."

He nods.

Sboniso: "You're giving me your word?"

I nod.

Me: "I give you my word."

I can't believe we're planning an entire relationship outside while there is a woman inside who believes she's starting something out with my man.

We hear someone clearing their throat I turn to look behind me, it's the girl.

Sboniso: "Uh...Cwayita I'm sorry but..."

She raise her hand up to stop him from talking.

"I get it! I heard everything I just wish you had been honest about your feelings but I'm glad I found out early."

She walks in and come back with her bag and get in her car driving out. He takes my hand and walk in with me.

Sboniso: "Uhm...gents I'm sorry but she's my girl and we need some space."

"What?"

A guy that was said to be interested in me ask confused.

Sboniso: "We were going through something but we're good now, she's mine."

He understands and they leave us alone. He is looking at me with his hands on his pockets, he keeps squinting his eyes, I chuckle looking down..

Me: "What is it?"

Sboniso: "Are you sure you wanna do this Princess?"

I nod. We go to his room and take off our clothes, he goes down on me until I orgasm. He slowly get on top of me and look at me as he thrusts, but I notice that he completely shuts his eyes when having sex or he looks elsewhere, no eye contact, nothing.

Me: "Kgosi.."

He opens his eyes sweating then close them again, he tenses up and pull out cuming on my tummy. He quickly get off bed.

Sboniso: "Fuck!"

Hw cuss in frustration facing the other way, I sit up. He turns looking my way.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry.."

I nod.

Me: "Its ok."

I'm consoling myself that at least he was able to make me cum using his tongue and fingers, I have feelings for him so I will take it.

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CHAPTER 55

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MALAIKA

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I have been juggling work and being a girlfriend for a while now. Sboniso and I made our relationship official we're dating and he

showers me with gifts all the time, sometimes I just think he is over compensating for his low sex drive I don't like that, I accepted him for who he is I knew what I was getting myself into he doesn't have to over do everything else.

I am in his office because he called and asked if I could come see him.

He takes off his white coat and sit on his chair looking at me with a serious look on his face, the man is all sort of handsome.

Sboniso: "Unjani baby?"(How are you baby?)

Me: "I'm good, you?"

Sboniso: "I'm great..uhm so I called you here because I know you have a glimpse of a life I have been living, changing women and stuff and I think it's only fair we do blood tests together, an HIV tests, STDs and STIs so I know how safe you're from me."

Me: "Oh.."

Sboniso: "Are you okay with all that?"

I nod.

Me: "Yeah we can do it."

He nods and call another male doctor to draw some blood from the both of us then walk out. Sboniso sits on the desk in front of me.

Sboniso: "You've been so queit these days, is everything ok?"

He ask holding my hand.

Me: "Yeah I'm good just work is getting too much I didn't know working can be this stressful."

Sboniso: "You gonna fight your feet it's still new to you."

Me: "So, have you found a new therapist?"

He nods and brush my cheek. He shows affection and a gentle side effortlessly I know he cares about me probably loves me but I can't be sure yet.

Sboniso: "Can you get a little time away from work this weekend so we can spend some time together getting to know each other better."

Me: "I'm not working on weekends."

Sboniso: "That's great, we're going to a resort at Umhlanga rocks."

Me: "Ok."

He frowns.

Sboniso: "Baby, you're not ok, please talk to me."

Me: "I'm fine really."

I get up and kiss him but he clears his throat and move his face away.

Sboniso: "I will see you later."

I nod and take my bag, he hold my waist and give me a peck on the lips.

I walk out and drive back to work. I go to mom's office and find her with dad they seem so tense staring at a laptop.

Me: "Hello."

Mom quickly close the laptop.

Me: "Uhm...are you planning a surprise?"

They both chuckle awkwardly looking at each other.

Me: "Is Hero around?"

Nqobasi: "I think he is in his office."

I nod.

Me: "Can we go out tonight for a late night dinner like old times, you guys are always busy with work now we don't spend much time as we used to as family."

Tamia: "Oh I'm so sorry if you feel that way, we are definitely going out later today."

Me: "Thank you, let me check on my brother."

I walk out and go to Hero's office he looks busy.

Me: "Big brother.."

He smiles getting up, he hugs me spinning me around.

Me: "I'm too old for all this now Hero, you need to stop!"

Hero: "You will always be little to me."

He laughs and take his laptop, he shows me old pictures of us as kids, he was always around me, all over me.

Hero: "I loved you from the first day mom and dad came home with you, I will always love you."

We continue to look over the pictures, some he is still a baby with mom and dad when they were teenagers. We know they had him when they were still in school then had me after they got married.

Dad walks in and smile looking at the pictures as well.

Hero: "Dad, mom was so tiny in this picture how did she look like when she was pregnant with me?"

I can see him clenching his jaws then slowly smile.

Nqobasi: "She was just as pretty, she looked beautiful."

Hero nods and we all stare at a photo of the four of us together, dad was holding mom, Hero and I were standing in front of them holding hands.

Hero: "I want this as a portrait up in my room it's beautiful and it's clearer than the other old pictures we have."

Dad nods and quickly walk out.

Me: "Do you think mom and dad are okay?"

Hero: "Yes, why?"

Me: "I don't know, they just seem tense."

Hero: "Mom and dad are always okay Malaika, those people don't even fight."

I nod.

Me: "I guess I'm seeing things."

Later we are at the restaurant having dinner as a family Hero and I are taking pictures it's been a while since we did this so I'm having so much fun.

As we are still chatting up a storm an old woman wearing like those Nigerian rich wives walks up to our table and greet with an accent.

Nqobasi: "What can we do for you?"

"Tell the truth before it reveals itself, his people are coming! Your ancestors have tried shielding him from those people but they found a way, by blood he is one of them after all."

She leaves the table, mom looks at dad with teary eyes.

Hero: "What was that all about baba?"

Nqobasi: "Uhm...let's...let's go home."

Me: "But we haven't finished our food."

Nqobasi: "Malaika! Get your ass up and go to the fucken car now! I won't repeat myself young lady!"

He says banging the table causing Hero and I to quickly get up and walk out we wait in the car. He comes out holding his wife's hand and mom keeps wiping her tears. Hero step out of the car and rush to them.

Hero: "Baba what is going on? Why is mom crying."

Nqobasi: "Get in the car Hero."

Hero: "I want to know what's going on!"

He shouts and dad push him out of the way and get in the car. We are riding in the same car.

We get home and mom rush inside and we all follow behind her.

Hero: "Baba..."

He stops on his tracks and look at us, his eyes are bloodshot red.

Nqobasi: "I don't want to talk Hero, not now son."

He walks away.

Me: "Do you think they are having problems? Mom and dad are going to divorce?"

He pulls me into a hug.

Hero: "No, no they won't, even if they want to we will force them to stay together! Don't cry."

He takes my hand taking me to my room. He removes my shoes and tuck me in bed kissing my cheek.

Hero: "Goodnight Princess."

Me: "Goodnight bhuti."

I close my eyes.

I am kicking and screaming there are people who are pulling me and Hero apart as we try to fight them off."

Me: "Let me go! I want my brother! Let go!"

"Malaika!"

I quickly sit up, mom and dad are in my bed, I quickly hug dad.

Tamia: "You were kicking and screaming in your sleep, were you having a bad dream?"

I nod. We hear loud screams coming from Hero's room which is opposite mine I am the first to jump out of bed and run to his room. We find him in bed with his eyes closed he also looks like he is having a nightmare. I wake him up.

Hero: "Malaika!"

He shouts my name and sit up, he squeeze me into a tight hug, his body is shaking. We are both sweating.

Nqobasi: "You guys were both having a nightmare?"

Hero: "Someone was trying to pull Malaika and I apart, we were fighting them off but it was hard."

He says still holding me in his arms.

Nqobasi: "You also had the same dream Malaika?"

I nod. He looks at his wife and shake his head.

Nqobasi: "I need to call Nkosiyabo and Isisekelo."

He walks out. Mom sit in front of us then we group hug.

Tamia: "I love you guys so much, you know that right?"

Hero: "We know mom and we love you too."

Tamia: "No matter what happens always remember that."

We nod.

Dad walks back in looking so down.

Nqobasi: "My love, let's go to bed."

He says taking mom's hand.

Hero: "Utheni ubaba omdala?"(What did dad say?)

Nqobasi: "Uhm..I'm meeting with him and your aunt tomorrow."

We nod.

Me: "I'm sleeping here now maybe that nightmare won't come back."

The next day we all don't go to work, it's Friday mom said because we didn't get much sleep yesterday we don't have to go to work.

There is a knock on the door and Bab'omdala is here with his twin sister. I hug him tight, he laughs.

Nkosiyo: "Someone missed ubaba wakhe."(her dad)

I laugh and hug Aunt Isi.

Sisekelo: "You look prettier everytime I see you, do you have a boyfriend?"

I shake my head laughing. They walk in, Hero greets them excitedly as well.

Nqobasi: "Hero take your sister for a drive or something I want to talk to my siblings in private, go have your own sibling conversation somewhere."

We laugh. Hero and I take a drive, he is quiet though, I'm the only one talking.

Hero: "Do you think mom and dad are keeping a secret from us? That woman at a restaurant told dad to tell the truth."

He seems so worried and I also can't stop thinking about the same nightmare we had last night.

Hero: "It wasn't a coincidence that we had the same dream Malaika, something is wrong sis and I have a bad feeling about it."

We have lunch together then go back home we find the house upside down Bab'Nkosiyo is holding her and Aunt Isi is standing in front of dad they haven't seen us standing by the door.

Tamia: "You want to do to my kids what was done to you Junior!? You want to send my children away?"

She moves away from Bab'omdala and grab the vase throwing it across the room, the coloured girl in her is out to play I thought they were joking when they say coloureds will break everything in the room in a heated argument but here I am witnessing it with my own two eyes.

Nqobasi: "Londeka please stop, it was just a suggestion muntu wami I'm sorry."

Tamia: "How do you suggest such huh! How do you suggest something that almost ruined you!"

Nqobasi: "I was young but they are adults now, they..."

Mom doesn't let him finish she moves past dad trying to get to my father but Isi is quick to hold her.

Hero: "Mama..."

Silence. Mom looks our way her face is red tears are streaming down her cheeks.

Hero just walks out.

Nqobasi: "Hero..."

Dad rush behind him while mom tries to come to me but I shake my head and walk out. I see Hero's car driving out. I go to my car ignoring dad who is calling me and drive to Sboniso's work place. I find him doing rounds but he ask me to wait in his office.

He walks in while I'm crying.

Sboniso: "Baby..hey..what's wrong?"

He pulls me up and hug me.

Me: "When are we leaving for that resort? I want to go today."

Sboniso: "Uhm..I booked for tomorrow morning till Sunday but we can leave today my love."

I nod.

Sboniso: "Khuluma nami."(Talk to me.)

Me: "Mom and dad are fighting, so I want to go away I don't want to see that."

Sboniso: "I'm sorry..we will leave today ok."

Me: "Ok."

I call my brother but he is not picking up so I send the text. *Tell me you're ok."

He replies *I'm ok sis I will call you later.*

I sigh and put my phone down.

Sboniso: "Uhm...I was already knocking off are you gonna go home and pack first?"

I shake my head.

Me: "You will buy a few things for me."

He smiles, he likes spending on me so I know what I suggested makes him happy.

We start at the mall to buy a few items I will need for our weekend away then he also buys his own stuff so we don't go anywhere near home then he drives us to a beautiful resort. I don't know if I will even enjoy being here, I am worried about my family. In my whole entire life I have never seen my parents fight so this scares me so bad.

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CHAPTER 56

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MALAIKA

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It's Saturday morning I just woke up from Sboniso's arms there is air coming from the balcony we didn't close the sliding door the whole night just the curtains because the air was refreshing. I tried initiating sex yesterday but he stopped me having all kind of excuses so I am done doing it I will wait for him if he wants sex I know he is still caught up in the fact that he cums way too early so he doesn't wanna get me in the mood and not reach the orgasm from his dick just his lips and finger.

I wear my silk short gown over my panty and stand at the balcony looking at the nature and the beach I feel hands around my waist then a kiss on my neck.

Sboniso: "Morning.."

Me: "Hey.."

My phone rings, it's dad calling, him and mom have been calling me since last night but I just couldn't answer I'm scared that maybe one of them will say they left home and they are divorcing. Hero and I growing up we had a mutual friend who was living next door to our old house, her parents went through a divorce and we watched how it affected her, having to choose which parent she was gonna live with so she decided to just end her life, that day she was with us the whole day saying she was visiting she seemed happier than the past weeks her parents were fighting then later she went home, all we heard was a scream from her mother, Hero and I were alone so we rushed over there only to find her in the garage with a rope around her neck hanging on the planks up the roof, we both went to therapy after that, dad suggested it because what we both saw was traumatic and we were so close to her she was part of us we treated her like a sister. So now watching my parents fight takes me back, I don't want that to happen to my brother and I, having to choose one parent from the other.

I feel a hand on my cheek.

Sboniso: "Stop..don't cry baby...come here..it's okay."

He says hugging me brushing my back.

Sboniso: "Don't do this to yourself, your parents just had an argument, it happens but it doesn't mean they are separating."

I nod wiping my eyes and nose.

Sboniso: "Let's eat breakfast and go for a swim you will feel better."

We eat breakfast then I wear my bikini while he wears shorts, I can see him staring at me and can actually see his dick print over his shorts he is hard but I know we won't do anything so I just grab a towel and walk out.

At the beach it's just us and the other couple but they are a few feet away from us. I sit on sand, he comes and sit behind me and let me sleep on his chest.

Sboniso: "You don't wanna get in?"

Me: "I'm scared of the sea, I just like the view it gives not getting in."

Sboniso: "Kodwa ikhona indoda yakho nje. Nothing will happen to you." (But your man is here)

He convince me to get in with him I finally agree and it's not that bad once you're in. We have fun he is holding me the entire time making sure I'm safe.

When we are about to walk in we meet the couple that was in the beach and they suggest some dinner together outdoor promising to tell the staff to set it up for us.

I wear a long summer dress that have a long slit from the thigh down it shows all my left thigh. Sboniso ties the strings that are on my back then turn me around kissing me.

Sboniso: "You look beautiful."

Me: "Thank you."

We join the couple, they are already at the table getting served. They serve us as well and we get to know that they have been married for 8 years and have two kids, they seem like good people.

Later we go to our different room, Sboniso sit in bed and take off his shoes. He keeps chuckling.

Me: "You want to say something?"

Sboniso: "Uhm...did you see how that man have been looking at you?"

Me: "What man?"

Sboniso: "The one we had dinner with, he had his eyes on you the whole time and it's like his wife didn't mind that."

I frown.

Me: "That's just crazy."

Sboniso: "I don't trust these people Malaika it's a good thing that we're leaving tomorrow I don't like weird people."

I nod and take off the dress getting in bed. He sleeps next to me but I am facing the other way, I have feelings for him but there's no happiness in this relationship, no spark nothing I just feel better when I'm with him though.

He moves closer and I feel his hand around me, his dick is up I can feel it poking my ass but I know we won't do anything, he won't make any move and I won't either.

We hear a knock on the door, I walk out and open the door I find the woman we had dinner with on our door.

Me: "Uhm..what can I do for you?"

She peeks in then look at me with a smile on her face.

"I was hoping we could have a drink but I can see your boyfriend is already in bed. My husband and I ordered some drinks you can come over."

Me: "Oh uhm..I don't drink."

"Oh...you can just have a cold drink listen to music you know."

I look back at Sboniso looks like he is not even interested to know who's at the door.

I go to him in bed he is awake just busy on his phone.

Me: "Uhm..since its still early I will just join Mane and her husband just to chill."

He nods dismissively.

Me: "Kgosi.."

Sboniso: "You can go, I'm sleeping."

He put his phone down and sleep.

We're in the room with this Mane lady and her husband they keep giving each other tongue kisses right in front of me. After a while I get tired of watching them making out in front of me so I get up.

Me: "I'm calling it a night guys, thank you for inviting me."

The woman get up and hugs me then slowly lick my ear I step back staring at her in shock, he husband walks closer as well I'm still stunned, what was that? He kiss me so unexpectedly but I push him back.

Me: "What the fuck!?"

"We just want to experience a threesome for the first time, we have been looking for a third party and I don't see why not you, you look like fun."

I frown.

Me: "I have a man!"

"We know that, it will be just for fun and we will all move on with our lives I love my husband but we want to try out new things."

Her hand goes to my butt and she squeeze it, I am so confused, what the hell is this!?

Her husband kiss my neck and it even stings a bit, he even squeeze my boob I almost moan but I remember I left my man in our room so I push him away and walk out the door going to my room. I get in next to Sboniso who is awake but looking so damn pissed.

In the morning we take a shower together but he is standing behind me, he tilts my head so rough and hold my neck.

Sboniso: "You have a hickey Malaika."

His voice is stern, I turn trying to talk to him but he bangs the shower door stepping out. I follow him and find him throwing his clothes and cosmetics in his bag.

Me: "Kgosi.."

Sboniso: "Who gave you that hickey? Didn't I tell you that if you wanna cheat you gotta be content with me huh! Why are you making a fool out of me?"

Me: "I didn't cheat, I didn't do anything."

Sboniso: "Then how do you explain that thing on your neck huh!?"

Me: "Uhm...it was...they suggested a threesome but I didn't agree I left."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "Didn't I tell you that those people are weird? You did want that threesome, aningiboni mos."(You don't rate me mos)

Me: "If I wanted it I was gonna do it!"

I scream at him.

Me: "I thought coming here was gonna make me feel better and forget about everything that happened at home but No, I'm not happy here!"

He stops what he is doing and look at me with pitiful eyes.

My phone rings it's Hero so I answer after clearing my throat because it is shaky.

Me: "Bhuti.."

Hero: "I just got home and you're not here."

Me: "I will be home soon Qhawelam."(my Hero)

He chuckles.

Hero: "Ok Angel."

I giggle and pack my things too. Sboniso is so furious as we bump into that couple, he let go of our bags and punch the husband so bad I can see tiny drops of blood on the floor I think it's from the nose. He grabs the bags on the floor and grab my arm pulling me out. He is driving in high speed I am holding my breath.

He stops at his gate and signal me to step out with just his head I do that and just walk inside my yard. I find Hero in the lounge with our parents, Bab'Omdala and Aunt Isi are here even today.

Nqobasi: "We've been waiting for you to come home, your brother told us you're coming. I have been worried sick about you two, you never picked up our calls."

I sit next to Hero, he takes my hand.

Dad sighs as he sit on the armrest of the couch where mom is sitting.

Nqobasi: "Uhm...I want you guys to know that what I will tell you doesn't change anything in this family I love you guys so much, you guys are my life both of you."

Me: "Are you...are you guys divorcing each other?"

I ask already crying.

Nqobasi: "No, never I'm never divorcing your mom Laika, I love her we just had an argument it happens and I'm sorry you had to witness that."

Hero: "What was the argument about baba?"

He sighs looking at Bab'Omdala he just nods his head.

Nqobasi: "Uhm..when your mom and I were still in high school we started off as friends, best friends."

He sighs and rub his eyes.

Nqobasi: "I...I dated a girl named Candice for a brief period of time, her mother had a bad reputation so we found out she had put a spell on me."

He looks at mom and take her hand.

Nqobasi: "Months later we found out that she is pregnant and she pinned it on me but I knew I had never had sex with anyone that time but it was hard to prove because I was under the spell that time."

I look at Hero, he is listening attentively staring at dad in the eye.

Nqobasi: "Uhm she finally gave birth I went to the hospital and confirmed that the baby wasn't mine but her step father's baby and she was scared of him so she gave me the baby and told her step dad that she slept with me and it's my baby."

Me: "So she continued with the lie even after you confirmed it wasn't your baby?"

He nods.

Nqobasi: "I took the baby home and kept the baby, somehow the step father found out that the baby is his, he fought me, wanted to sacrifice the baby for riches but I couldn't let that happen I had fell in love with the baby, Tamia and I were already raising the baby as our own as young as we were."

Hero: "Baba..."

His voice comes out low as he sits at the edge of the couch.

Nqobasi: "One day the father came with his Nigerian brothers looking for a fight, Nkosiyabo and Isi were with me and so are our ancestors, we defeated them."

Hero: "So where did that baby go?"

Mom looks down wiping her tears, even dad's eyes are bloodshot red.

Hero: "That Nigerian woman said you must tell the truth baba so where is that baby?"

Nqobasi: "It's you Hero."

I look at him confused.

Me: "What?"

Nqobasi: "My ancestors gave him to me, he is my firstborn blood doesn't mean anything I..."

Hero stands up.

Hero: "What do you mean baba? I don't understand, mom?"

Nqobasi: "We are not your biological parents, your mother's name is Candice and your father was her stepdad from Nigeria."

Hero: "So..so she's not my mother and you're not my dad?"

Nqobasi: "We are your parents Hero, I gave you that name, I was there from day one, you're my son!"

Hero: "No I'm not! I'm not baba! You lied my whole life! All of you lied to me my whole life! Malaika did you know!? Did you know that I'm not your brother?"

I slowly shake my head tears falling.

Me: "It's not true, they are playing a prank on us, right dad? It's not true?"

Nqobasi: "I'm so sorry."

I get up and try to hug my brother but he push me so hard I fall on my butt, my heart almost stops we're all staring at him.

Tamia: "Hero!"

Hero: "What!? You fucken lied to me Londeka, I always asked you guys why you didn't have a picture of you pregnant with me and you made up a lie that it's because you were young and still in school! It was all lies, lies after lies!"

He looks at me.

Hero: "She's not my sister."

I just wail, no, I actually scream Aunt Isi rush to me holding me rocking me till I stop, my heart hurts, what is going on?

Nkosiyabo: "Hero, sit down son."

Hero: "Son?"

Nkosiyabo: "Sit!"

He commands and Hero sit down wiping his tears with his t-shirt, I have never seen him like this.

Nkosiyabo: "Your parents love you boy, blood meant nothing to them when they held you in their arms you are Hero kaNqobasi Gumede and that will always be who you are, uwuPhakathwayo, uQwabe..mesiya emsamu siya nawe."(when we go to the ancestral altar we go with you.)

He takes both his hands.

Nkosiyabo: "This on both your wrist, we did it at the Gumede household after you finished varsity because you're one of us, we were proud of you, ingane yakomunye umuzi ayingeni emsamu wakithi kodwa wena ungena ushise impepho ubabize bonke oQwabe bakuphendule futhi."(A child from another clan doesn't enter our ancestral altar but you do and even burn incense calling all our ancestors and they answer you.)

Hero: "But..I'm not...I have been living a lie baba."

Nkosiyabo: "No, Tamia and Nqobasi are your parents, Malaika is your sister and that's the truth! Your truth."

He shakes his head and walk away. He comes back holding his backpack and car keys mom quickly get up and walk up to him..

Tamia: "Hero...please don't leave, we can fix this ok."

Hero: "Can you fix my blood and make it match with yours and dad's?"

Nqobasi: "We've have been there from day one Hero because Blood only makes you related to those people but our loyalty makes us Family, you're my son please don't leave, let's talk please."

He shakes his head and walk out. I get up and run behind him.

Me: "Bhuti.."

He ignores me opening his car.

Me: "So our nightmare is coming to life but the only difference is that now it's you pulling me and you apart..why are you leaving?"

Hero: "I am not your brother Malaika.."

Me: "So all these years together don't mean nothing to you?"

He get in his car I hold the door before he could close it.

Me: "Please don't leave me.."

Hero: "I need some time okay!"

He lightly push me away and slam the door shut. He starts his car and when he makes a turn he drives straight to the pole the car crash,I scream. Dad run to his side and open the door taking him out, he has blood on his forehead.

Nqobasi: "Are you trying to kill yourself Hero!? Why are you doing this to me and your mother huh?"

Hero: "Who's my mother?"

He ask and sit on the ground holding his head, that was a bad crash and I think he didn't have his seatbelt on his head must hurt.

Bab'Omdala checks out the car then look at dad.

Nkosiyabo: "Take him to the hospital to get him checked if he's okay."

Hero: "I'm fine baba."

He get up and walk in stumbling all around. Dad looks at me, I'm hurting so bad. He hold me I keep breathing out loud to stop myself from sobbing.

Nqobasi: "It's okay...we will be happy and be a family again with your brother."

Me: "You promise?"

Nqobasi: "I promise princes."

He walks in, I look at Sboniso's yard his car is here so I go over there and knock. He opens the door but block me from getting in.

Me: "Hi.."

It takes a lot of breathing for my voice to come out.

Sboniso: "What do you want?"

I take a very long deep breath its like something is blocking my chest.

Me: "I..I'm not okay."

Sboniso: "So..why don't you go and be with the man you were fucking yesterday?"

My body shuts down I can feel him holding me before I fall, I feel so tired.

Sboniso: "Baby..Malaika.."

My eyes are half open, he picks me up and take me to his room. He lays me in bed with my head on his lap he keeps brushing my hair.

Me: "I'm sorry."

Sboniso: "You said you're not happy with me, why do you keep coming back?"

Me: "I love you..but it's not enough Kgosi, there's no chemistry between us, no spark and you hardly even touch me, there's no life in our relationship, I want more and you're not giving me anything and I am not just talking about sex I am talking about everything."

I take a deep breath I am still so tired.

Me: "I think it's better we just break up, it's not working out anyway."

He wipes his face.

Sboniso: "I won't ask you to stay where you're not happy so uhm...it's okay, we can go our separate ways."

Me: "Because you can't compromise and give me everything that I want from you Kgosi?"

Sboniso: "I don't know how to."

I nod and sit up.

Sboniso: "Sleep a little I'm coming."

He walks out and come back with a glass of water. I drink up and its actually a suger solution.

Sboniso: "Do you feel better?"

I nod and get up, I still feel dizzy. He pulls me into a hug.

Sboniso: "Hope you find what you're looking for."

I nod, he walks me out holding me. We stand by the door looking at each other. It hurts that I am in love with a man who shows less of everything like this, he seems uninterested in everything most of the time, we're just not compatible, he lacks affection which is my love language, I want phone calls, text, I want to be touched and kissed most of the time, I want that sexual pleasure of having my man take me in all positions possible, I want assurance but he is giving me none of that except gifts and vacations and it makes me feel like he is buying my love, those things aren't important more than being affectionate, they mean nothing if you don't show me you love me.

Sboniso: "I'll see you around I guess."

I nod. He's just not ready to love and be loved, he is holding back so bad and it hurts.

Sboniso: "Uhm..your things that are here."

Me: "You can burn them.."

I turn to walk away but he grabs my arm turning me around then kiss me passionately with his hands on my neck. He breaks the kiss I am hoping he actually tells me he loves me at least.

Sboniso: "Bye.."

I go back home and walk in. I find mom and dad with a woman wearing Sangoma attire.

"They are coming for your children Gumedede, they are coming."

The woman speaks like she is crying, dad looks at mom. I just walk out and sit at the Veranda looking down, a lot is happening at once I can't stop crying.

The woman leaves and I walk back in and I find Hero sitting in the lounge looking down, mom and dad are sitting opposite him.

Nqobasi: "Hero.."

He slowly look up, his forehead has a scratch from that crash.

Nqobasi: "I'm sorry for keeping such a secret from you, I just wanted us to be completely happy and not have you thinking you're not one of us."

He nods.

Hero: "Thank you for taking me in baba nawe mama, I don't know where would I be if it wasn't for you. Thank you so much I just wish I could erase the fact that now I know you're not my biological parents."

Nqobasi: "We're family that all that matters."

He nods.

Nqobasi: "Uhm...there was a Sangoma here with a warning, someone is coming for you and your sister I know it's probably that man's family, I had their son killed so it will be an eye for an eye, they are coming for my children."

He looks at me then Hero.

Nqobasi: "I want you to leave the country for a while so when they come they don't find you."

Mom has her hands on her face.

Nqobasi: "It will be just for a month or two, Nkosiyo and Isisekelo will be here with me but you have to leave."

Me: "Where will we go?"

Nqobasi: "Colombia."

He looks at Hero.

Nqobasi: "You will keep your sister safe right?"

I look at him and think of the way he pushed me away from him.

Hero: "I'm sorry Princess for the way I pushed you and talked to you earlier, I was hurt but that doesn't justify what I did, I am meant to protect you not hurt you, you're my little sister."

Me: "It's okay."

Nqobasi: "You will leave tomorrow afternoon."

We nod.

Hero: "Mama, are you ok?"

Mom shakes her head with tears in her eyes.

Tamia: "I'm sorry it had to come to this for our family."

Hero: "We will be fine. We will come back and be happy again like old times."

They do their handshake with dad then hug, I go to my room and sit in bed looking around. We just recently moved and I thought we will have a great life here but that's not it.

I take my phone and call Sboniso.

Sboniso: "Hello."

Me: "I am leaving tomorrow for Colombia for a few months, I just thought of letting you know."

Sboniso: "Oh..uhm ok."

I swallow a painful lump on my throat.

Me: "Ok."

I drop the call and block his number then delete it, there's no way I am ever gonna be in a relationship that feels forced.

Today is the day, we are at the airport to Johannesburg, our parents, Nkosi and Isi are with us, Hero is holding my hand and our bags we didn't carry much dad said we will be able to buy things that side.

Nqobasi: "Take care of yourselves, I will call every hour to check on you ok."

I nod with tears in my eyes I have never been away from my parents all my life, this is the first time ever, Hero as well.

Nkosiyabo: "Remember we're doing this to protect you, so our family can be together again living in harmony like old times."

Hero: "We get it baba and thank you, if you didn't love me you were just gonna give me to those people but you are willing to fight for me, I'm grateful."

Nqobasi: "You're my one and only son I will never let anyone hurt you."

We all hug each other, mom is shaking and crying it's so painful to watch. We board our flight holding hands as it takes off. I hope we will be able to come back home soon.

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CHAPTER 57

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MALAIKA

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We've been here for two months with my brother and it's not easy because we miss our mom and dad even though we talk to them everyday but its not the same as being with them.

We are sitting quietly in the lounge, we do that a lot these days we spend days not talking to each other I think it's because we are miserable and we miss home. Hero's phone rings he answers putting it in front of us.

Hero: "Baba, Malaika and I are coming back home tomorrow I'm tired of being here! We miss mom! You're not telling us anything."

He shouts at dad and we hear him sigh on the line.

Nqobasi: "I met that Nigerian woman again and she told me they won't be coming to negotiate but to take you, I can't have that and I don't even know when they will strike Hero please understand this."

Hero: "I'm coming back home unless you don't want me in your house anymore."

Nqobasi: "So you gonna do that to me now? You gonna blackmail me everytime things don't go your way Hero? Did I raise you like that?"

Hero: "No dad, I'm sorry I am just frustrated we are actually stuck here our lives are on standstill."

Dad sighs.

Nqobasi: "I know son, just give me a little time to figure this out."

Hero: "Ok."

Nqobasi: "Princess, you're quiet."

Me: "I'm tired too dad I miss home, I miss mom she hardly even talks to us these days."

Nqobasi: "Your mother is just upset that you're not home and it's been two months, she miss you deeply."

I sigh.

Nqobasi: "Uhm..a few days ago Sboniso came and asked about you, I gave him your new number I don't know if that's ok."

My heart skips a beat, I have told myself to forget about him but it has been hard but we've never communicated ever since.

Me: "It's fine dad."

Nqobasi: "Ok I will call you again later."

He drops the call, mine rings it's an office number from Durban. I get up and go to my room closing the door then get in bed.

Me: "Hello."

Sboniso: "Nkosazana.."(Princess)

Me: "Sawubona."

Sboniso: "Unjani?"(How are you?)

Me: "I've been better."

Sboniso: "Ngiquke isbindi ngaya kubaba wakho ngiyocela inumber yakho."(I found courage and went to your father to ask for your number.)

I feel butterflies in my tummy as he speaks deep IsiZulu.

Sboniso: "Malaika.."

Me: "Mmmh?"

Sboniso: "Ngiyaxolisa ukuthi angikuthandanga ngendlela ekufanele."(I'm sorry for not loving you the way you deserve.)

Me: "It's okay I guess we were just not meant to be."

Sboniso: "When are you coming back?"

Me: "I don't know yet but looks like we're still gonna be here for a while."

Sboniso: "I want to see you Malaika, is it possible to come see you for a few days please."

Me: "I'm in Colombia Kgosi."

Sboniso: "I don't mind travelling across the world for you just say yes I will book a flight to where you are."

I laugh, he is bluffing I don't believe him. I tell him where I am and he ask how to book a flight to another country apparently he has never travelled to another country so he is clueless about these things even though he does have a Visa. I tell him everything then send even an email to him about every details but I don't believe he will come, the man is just playing with me as he's been doing from day 1.

It's been three days since I sent that email to Sboniso and he hasn't contacted me ever since then, I knew he was just playing but I'm upset, a part of me wanted to see him travel all across the country just for me.

My phone rings I stare at the screen it's a Colombian code. I look at Hero he is busy on his phone. I answer and slowly put it over my ear.

Me: "Hello."

"Nkosazana."(Princess)

I widen my eyes jumping up on my feet.

Me: "Kgosi?"

"I'm in a hotel, I landed five hours ago I was trying to find my way around and get a new phone it wasn't easy."

Me: "You're...you're here?"

Sboniso: "As I promised."

Me: "You're lying to me!"

I am excited tears are falling, Hero is looking at me worried.

Sboniso: "I need to see you, uhm I don't know I asked around and apparently the hotel I'm in should be 15 minutes away from where you said your place is. Can we meet please."

I look at my brother and wipe my tears.

Me: "I will be there soon, I know the closet hotel around here."

Sboniso: "Ok."

He drops the call I go to my brother and sit on his lap hugging him. He chuckles hugging me back, we haven't done this for a while so it feels good hugging my brother again.

Me: "Do you think I will get in trouble for driving Luscious's car here? I'm going just around the corner."

Hero: "I will drive you and come back you will call when you want me to pick you up."

I nod and go take a quick shower and make myself look beautiful. He drives me to a hotel then look at me.

Hero: "Who is this guy you're meeting here because I gathered he is from South Africa."

I look down.

Me: "It's Sboniso."

He laughs.

Hero: "I knew it, I saw how jealous you got when he was with that hot lady."

I frown.

Hero: "So he came all the way here for you?"

I slowly nod.

Hero: "Ok good luck, uziphathe kahle and call me when you want me to pick you up."(Behave yourself)

Me: "Thank you."

I step out of the car and call his number, he answers and tell me his room number and he has already informed them at the front desk that someone is coming.

I knock on the door of his room holding my breath. When he opens I blink rapidly at his sight, he's so handsome.

Sboniso: "Can I get a hug?"

I literary jump on his arms crying on his shoulder and he walks in and close the door. He hold me till I'm calm then wipe my tears.

Me: "You really came."

Sboniso: "I want to do better, no woman want to be with a man who shows no affection so I understand where you're coming from I'm really sorry."

We kiss passionately and I'm shocked when he slowly unzips my dress taking it off.

Sboniso: "I want to try baby..I want to try to please you just the way you want."

I shake my head.

Me: "You don't have to I understand."

He kiss my neck picking me up again and lay me in bed, he goes to my boobs licking them then down to my pussy, he gives me a mind blowing orgasm by just fingering me and sucking my clit. He finally comes back to my mouth kissing me while he slowly thrust deep in me I hold on to his shoulders. He shuts his eyes I push him back, he opens his eyes and stare at me.

Me: "Please don't close your eyes."

He makes eye contact for a while then shuts his eyes again I push him off me again and get on top of him, I slowly slide in his dick and start moving my waist, I am playing with my nipples biting my lower lip seductively I think he can't help but keep his eyes on me while groaning.

Sboniso: "Fuck..."

It's like I'm dreaming when I reach my orgasm before him, there after he starts thrusting fast underneath then flip us over and turn me around coming from behind, he goes hard spanking my butt.

Me: "Baby..."

Sboniso: "Ooh shit..."

He pull out and turn me around and do it missionary and his eyes doesn't leave mine even for a minute after a while he groans and thrust faster then cum, I am even shocked that he didn't pull out for the first time ever. He sleep next to me catching his breath. I look at him, he gaze into my eyes and damn I'm in love.

Me: "What is going on?"

Sboniso: "I don't know..."

He says like he is confused himself.

Me: "We switched positions three times without you cuming."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "It's just that..when I look into your eyes I see a woman I love the woman I want to be with, not the woman I have hated all my life, You're different. I love you."

My heart beat faster, it's the first time hearing him say those words to me.

Me: "You do?"

He nods.

Sboniso: "I love you and I am willing to change for the better, I just have one favour to ask."

I nod.

Sboniso: "When you come back to South Africa, will you go to therapy with me please."

Me: "I will do that, thank you for coming, I love you too so much and I'm sorry for what I did when we went for that mini vacation, I shouldn't have went to that couple after you had warned me about them being weird."

Sboniso: "It's okay."

I smile pulling his beard.

Me: "So do you think we can do it again?"

He laughs.

Sboniso: "Uyaluthanda ucansi muntu wami."(You really love sex my love)

I hide my face with my hands. He removes them as he get on top of me and give me another mind blowing round I still can't believe it, he made eye contact the whole time told me he loves me in between every stroke I and believe him, I mean, he is here.

I wake up when its dark outside, I go to the bathroom to take a shower. I wear my dress and take my phone trying to call my brother but he wakes up stretching his arms.

Sboniso: "Hey...were you planning on leaving while I was asleep?"

I shake my head and sit on his lap, he is still naked while I only had my dress on without wearing a panty so I put it in while we're still talking he is holding my ass moving me slowly.

Sboniso: "Answer me.."

I am moaning in pleasure so I can't find words to answer.

Sboniso: "Malaika.."

Me: "No..Yes baby...aah.."

Sboniso: "Mmm.."

He shuts his eyes so I dig my nails on his shoulders he quickly opens his eyes and stare into my eyes until we reach our orgasm a few seconds apart.

I put my forehead on his.

Me: "One step at a time right?"

He nods.

Sboniso: "So are you leaving me to sleep alone?"

Me: "No, I want to call my brother and tell him I won't be coming back."

He nods and kiss my lips.

Sboniso: "How do we buy food around here?"

I smile and get off him, his cum drips down my inner thighs I just take off my dress again and we shower together then I ask the reception for food.

Me: "What made you want to come all this way?"

Sboniso: "I couldn't stop thinking about you, yes I was angry about the hickey but I missed you so much, I want you in my life and this time I am planning to keep you."

I smile snuggling closer to his chest.

Sboniso: "Call your brother before he gets worried."

I take my phone and call Hero, he is already asleep and told me to come back early in the morning.

In the morning I am the first to wake up and look next to me, I smile, I can't believe he is here all for me, maybe we can try this thing out, he is trying to be the man I want.

Sboniso: "You've been staring at me for a while now baby.."

He says his voice deep and eyes closed I smile kissing his lips.

Me: "I am still in disbelief, you came here for me Kgosì."

Sboniso: "You know, I'm not used to that name I didn't even like it but when you call it, it sounds different I actually fall in love with it."

I giggle.

Sboniso: "You will come back again right? I'm leaving tomorrow I took only a week leave at work."

I nod.

Me: "I will come back soon. I just want to check on my brother."

Sboniso: "Ok I will be in bed waiting for your return."

I take a shower wear my dress then go downstairs taking a taxi back to our place. I find Hero sitting outside with his hands on his face.

Me: "I'm back brother."

He quickly looks away wiping his eyes.

Me: "Hero...are you crying?"

I ask sitting next to him, he shakes his head hiding his face, a sob escapes his lips I brush his back I don't know what to do or say I also want to cry now. I take out my phone and call dad.

Nqobasi: "Princess."

Me: "Baba..Hero is crying."

Nqobasi: "Where is he? Give him the phone."

Me: "He's right here."

I wipe my own tears.

Nqobasi: "Nkosana."(Prince)

Hero: "I don't want to talk to you baba!"

Nqobasi: "Hero I don't like what is happening either son, ngiphoqwa isimo." (I'm forced by circumstances)

Hero: "Mom was right! You are doing to us what almost destroyed you! You sent us away from home for so long! We've never been away from you dad!"

His face is pink, We are both light skinned I think that is why there has never been even rumours of us not being biological siblings, people always said we took our mother's complexion but we both look like our dad, maybe it's because he raised him as his own, Hero does look like dad.

Nqobasi: "Hero."

He wipes his tears sniffing.

Nqobasi: "Uhm...son I promise you guys will come back in...in four days."

Hero: "Really?"

Nqobasi: "Yes, what other choice do I have? My children are far from home and they are crying, what other choice do I have Hero? Malaika?"

We keep quiet.

Nqobasi: "I will call you later."

Hero walks back inside the house, I follow shortly behind him. I find him drinking whiskey from the bottle, there is a mini bar here.

Me: "Hero.."

Hero: "Leave me alone Laika.."

Me: "Dad said we're going home why are you turning yourself into an alcoholic?"

Hero: "You don't know how it feels Malaika! You're here in a foreign country because of me! I took you away from your parents."

Me: "your parents?"

He chuckles and continue to drink I just freshen up and wear white jean and a black top taking my bag then walk out.

I go back to a hotel and join Sboniso in bed.

Me: "You smell so good."

He chuckles pulling me closer kissing my lips.

Me: "We are going back home soon."

Sboniso: "That's good, I will get to see you anytime I want."

I smile as he makes me lie on my tummy and pull my panty to the side sliding his dick in.

Me: "Kgosi.."

Sboniso: "Yes baby.."

Me: "Please don't close your eyes.."

Sboniso: "I won't sthandwa sami."

I grab on the sheets as he goes in deep then pull out.

Me: "Don't tease me...please."

Our moans and groans fill the entire room, he pull me to my knees without stopping then flip us over letting me take charge and I make sure I cum then after a while he slams into me once then hold me tight his body tensing up.

We sleep in each other's arms the whole night.

In the morning I help him pack his clothes.

Sboniso: "So I should expect you home soon right?"

I nod.

Me: "Yes dad said we will be going home soon."

He kiss my lips and hug me tight.

Sboniso: "I love you."

Me: "I love you too."

He get in a taxi to the airport while I take one home. I find Hero throwing our clothes in our bags. Our passports and other documents are scattered in bed.

Me: "Bhuti."

Hero: "I booked us a flight for tonight I only got one to Cape Town."

Me: "But dad said in four days."

Hero: "I don't care okay! I want to go home today Malaika! If you want to stay here then it's fine but I'm going home today."

Me: "Did you tell dad?"

Hero: "No, it's clear he doesn't want us home I am going back for mom."

I sit in bed and watch him pack even my panties he doesn't care this is my brother, my day one.

Hero: "Are you going back home with me?"

I nod.

Hero: "Come here."

We hug tight.

Hero: "We gonna be ok."

Later we board a plane to Cape Town, my heart is heavy I am not sure about this since we didn't inform our dad.

We land in Cape Town in the morning early hours, we are walking towards the exit I have my backpack while Hero carries two bags in his one hand and the other hand is holding mine.

Suddenly we have six black men in black suits and shades walking around us then the one close to us slowly shows his gun under his blazer I stop walking and hold Hero's hand tight, he looks around and pull me closer to him.

"You can make this easy by just coming with me without a fight or we can do this the hard way."

He says finally pointing a gun at Hero I look around for securities but I can't spot even a single one.

One of them grab me but Hero pull me back and push me behind me and start fighting the guy but the one at the back grab me I am kicking and screaming people don't seem to care they are watching standing far from us no one wants to get involved.

They drag Hero out then the guy carry me effortlessly outside. My head spins when I hear the gun going off and Hero groans going down on his knees.

Me: "Hero!"

They throw me in a car and I can see them taking him to the car in front of me. I am screaming and trying to open the doors but they are locked. I feel a sting on my arm I feel my body slowly shut down.

Me: "Hero.."

I try to shout but it's like I am in a very big hole, I can hardly keep my eyes open and the dream Hero and I had flashes before my eyes.

CHAPTER 58

*

NQOBASI

*

I am pacing up and down my living room, I have been trying to call my kids the whole day and not even one of their phone is going through, I am going crazy. I don't know what's going on.

My wife walks in the room and look at me I try to smile so she doesn't see that something is wrong.

Tamia: "Did they finally pick up their phones, I want to talk to them."

I look down.

Tamia: "Junior, call my children I want to talk to them."

She hasn't been herself ever since they left, even in the bedroom things are dry, she sleeps facing the other way everyday sometimes she even pretends to be asleep just to avoid me.

I try calling Malaika's number again but it's not going through.

Me: "Maybe they went out or something I will keep trying to call them."

She nods walking away.

Me: "Londeka."

She turns looking at me.

Me: "I didn't send my children away because I wanted to, I am protecting them."

She nods.

Me; "Please baby, stop being this cold I need you, I want us to be ok."

She sighs and come back wrapping her arms around me I hold her kissing her forehead.

Me: "I don't want to lose you or our kids baby, I will do everything I can so they can come back home."

Tamia: "Thank you Gumede, I know you want our family protected all the time."

I sigh and let her go. She walks away, years later I still feel the same about her, I still love her the same if not more.

I try to call my children again but still not going through. My phone rings it's Nkosiyabo's number.

Me: "Bhuti."(Brother)

“Impilo yenkosana ne Nkosazana isencupheni.”(The lives of a Prince and a Princess are in danger)

Ngcebo grunts on the line and it goes off my body turns cold immediately. My children are in Colombia, so they found them there. I quickly dial Luscious’s number, they were in his house while he went away with his wife they were supposed to go back to their house today.

“Junior..”

Me: “My Kids baba, I can’t find my kids! Their phones are not going through.”

“But my car was last used yesterday, where did they go?”

Luscious keeps track of everything he owns that’s how he knows his car was used while he wasn’t even there.

Me: “Please try to call someone you know to go check the house.”

Luscious: “I will do that.”

I quickly drop the call and answer Nkosiyabo’s call.

Nkosiyabo: “Nqobasi..what’s going on? Ngcebo collapsed and this means something bad is happening.”

Me: “I can’t...I can’t find Hero and Malaika on their phones Nkosi...my kids are in danger.”

My phone indicates an incoming call from Luscious, I put Nkosi’s call on hold.

Me: “Did you find something.”

Luscious: “They took all their belongings, maybe they took the flight back to South Africa.”

Me: “But how? I told them that they will come back in four days!”

Luscious: "Let me talk to the guys I know and see if I can find something like maybe they bought flight tickets."

Me: "Please call them now I need to know please."

I drop the call and get back to Nkosi.

Nkosiyo: "I'm driving to Durban now, Ngcebo and Kumkani are with me, Isi will be there soon."

Me: "Thank you."

After 30 minutes or so without Luscious getting back to me, Isisekelo walk in without knocking and rush to me, we hug.

Me: "My Kids are missing, what if those guys got to them? But how?"

Isisekelo: "We will find them, don't worry."

Nkosiyo walk in with his sons, we shoulder hug. My wife walks in the room carrying a washing basket I guess she was doing laundry. She looks around the room then at me.

Tamia: "Uhm...Hi.."

They all greet back. She looks confused. My phone rings I stand on my feet.

Me: "It's Luscious."

Nkosiyo: "Let's hear what he found, put him on speaker."

I steal a glance at my confused wife then answer the call.

Me: "Hello."

Luscious: "They took a flight to Cape Town yesterday and landed early hours of the morning but they didn't board their flight to Johannesburg."

My heart is beating out of my chest.

Me: "What..what does that mean?"

He sighs.

Luscious: "Try to see if you can find the footage from the Airport in Cape Town, I will be landing in a few hours."

He is old with grey hair they have all retired, from Luyolo, Kwanele, Lucian, Mandisi, Ntsika, Langa, Nkanyezi and Nadia, they just travel the world with their partners now, even have grey hair but still think they got it.

I drop the call and look at Nkosi.

Isisekelo: "Kumkani, see if you can get Mason to take us to Cape Town in an hour."

Kumkani get up taking out his phone and walk out.

Tamia: "Junior.."

I can't even look at her.

Tamia: "What is going on?"

Me: "Uhm...We're going to fetch Hero and Malaika in Cape Town."

She smiles a little.

Tamia: "They are coming back?"

I nod. She frown and put her hand over her tummy bending a little. I rush to her.

Me: "What's wrong?"

She sighs.

Tamia: "My gut, it hurts."

She looks at me.

Tamia: "Like the day Malaika and Hero got in the fight in our neighbourhood and got hurt."

She stares at me squinting her eyes.

Tamia: "Where are my children Nqobasi?"

Me: "I will...come back with them."

Tamia: "They are hurt..something is wrong with them, I can feel it in my gut."

She says that literally.

Me: "They will be fine I promise."

I look at Nkosi.

Nkosiyo: "I will call my wife to come stay with her here, Mondli will be around to keep them safe."

I nod.

Me: "I will come back soon, ok?"

She nods.

Kumkani walk in.

Kumkani: "I told Mase what's going on and he says if we're ready we can leave now."

Nkosiyo: "Ok Let me call Mondli to drive your mother here."

He makes a call and we drive to the airport, finding Mason already waiting with his Jet, it takes off as soon as we settle down. I am so anxious and nervous, where the hell are my children?

When we get there we start by asking the Security and he tells us he just clocked in and looks like he doesn't even want to talk to us.

Ngcebo grunts loud going on his knees touching the ground.

Ngcebo: "They have been here, I see blood! Royal blood was spilled."

Me: "Ro..Royal blood? Were my kids hurt?"

Ngcebo: "Igazi lenkosana."(The Prince's blood)

I brush my head.

Me: "No.."

Nkosiyo: "We have to go to the Police Station so we can have access to the CCTV footage of this whole place."

We go to the Police and luckily we're known because of Nadia. Two police cars drives behind us to get that CCTV but when we watch it we can tell by the time difference that there is a missing footage.

Kumkani: "Can you go back a little."

The head of security shows us the footage and the time is 3:30 am I can see Hero and Malaika holding hands with their bags then after that nothing, we don't even see if they reached the exit.

Me: "Someone tempered with this footage."

I grab the Security guy and pin him on the wall with my hands on his neck.

Me: "Where the hell is the missing footage! Where is it?"

"I don't know what you're talking about, it's all there."

Isi push him away and we hear a scream from the Security, Isi's hand is on his balls squeezing them, I cringe.

Isisekelo: "You better start talking."

The guy is gasping for air but he still says he doesn't know anything.

My phone rings it's my wife,I clear my throat.

Me: "Hello baby."

Tamia: "Hey..are you with them now? Can I talk to them?"

Me: "Can I call you back."

Tamia: "Don't you dare hang up this call on me Junior, uyangizwa?"(You hear me?)

Me: "I won't hang up."

Tamia: "Then let me talk to my kids! What is so hard about that?"

I just drop the call because I don't know how to answer her questions anymore, she starts calling none stop but I don't answer.

Me: "What now? Where do I go from here?"

"I say we start putting up the missing person alert, your family is famous I'm sure people will be on a lookout and will want to help You find the Prince and the Princess."

An officer says. I slowly nod. All of a sudden Ngcebo collapse on the floor and doesn't move. Kumkani and Nkosiyabo take him to the car I am left with the Police.

Me: "So what now? I should just sit and wait?"

"Do you have a suspect?"

Me: "A family of my adopted son, they are from Nigeria."

"Then we have to focus on all the airports and the borders to make sure they don't skip the country with them."

I nod.

"Don't worry we will do everything we can to find them."

I go back to the Police station so I can now file the missing person report. We book a hotel and sleep there because I still have hope that they will call me and tell me where they are.

Later I look at my phone I have more than 50 missed call from Tamia and a text.

You won't find me here when you come back since you chose to ignore me when I ask about my children.

I quickly call her number but it's on voicemail. I call Nkosiyabo's wife.

Thabsie: "Tamia your husband will come back just stop packing ok, he will come back and explain everything! Leaving is not an option you love that man and he loves you anything that happens you will have to go through it together, don't do that to him please."

Tamia: "He is not telling me anything!"

She is crying, I look down.

Thabsie: "He will tell you something when he comes back just calm down and trust your husband ok."

Tamia: "Ok."

I sigh dropping the call, looks like Thabsile answered the call unaware.

My phone beeps indicating a message.

I won't leave, I will wait for you to come back. I love you.

That's my wife, I should be relieved but how can I when I will be going home to throw a bomb on her.

I sleep facing up reminiscing the good times I have had with my wife and kids, how they both grew up being called spoilt brat because they got everything they needed, I provided for my kids..I wanted more kids after Malaika but it didn't happen but then again God already gave me Hero so I had nothing to complain about, two was enough.

I get off bed and go on my knees, my wife grandmother Lathitha told me about praying so I start communicating with God, asking him to keep my kids safe.

I stay awake the whole night, I don't have any plan, I don't know where to start. I fucken told them to wait for four days but they didn't listen, I know Hero hasn't been ok ever since finding out the truth but what they did was pure stupid!

In the morning we are having breakfast at the restaurant but Ngcebo asked to wait in the car he is not ok, he looks weak.

Nkosiyabo's phone rings, he answers then put it on the table.

Nkosiyabo: "Mama kaUuka."

Thabsie: "Nkosi!"

We all get startled by her scream.

Nkosiyabo: "What is it?"

Thabsie: "Someone gave us a box at the gate and Tamia says the clothes belongs to Malaika and Hero, they are full of blood Nkosi.."

She sobs on the line, my world stops.

Nkosiyabo: "Where was Mondli!?"

He growls grabbing his car keys and a phone walking out. Isi pays and help me up I think I just lost all my senses.

We get to the airport with the hired car. The jet takes us back to Durban, Nkosiyabo is driving like a mad man on the road.

When we get home he starts by beating up Mondli who was standing by the gate smoking.

Nkosiyabo: "I ask you to keep my wife safe and you go out leaving them alone!? Running your own errands? What if that person hurt them huh!"

Mondli: "I'm so sorry boss! I just went around the corner to get cigarettes."

Nkosiyo: "So cigarette is more important than my wife's safety! If you were there you were gonna be able to get the registration number of that car! But now we have nothing."

He continues to beat him up so bad, Kumkani hold his father back and ask him to calm down respectfully. Nkosi spit on the floor and rush inside. I follow shortly behind him and find Tamia sitting on the floor with the clothes that are full of blood, these are my children's clothes. Nkosi is holding his crying wife in his arms. I kneel in front of Tamia she looks at me she is not crying but there are dried up tears on her face, she even has hiccups.

Tamia: "Where..?"

She stops talking for a second.

Tamia: "Where are they?"

Me: "I will find them."

Tamia: "Where are they Nqobasi?"

I look down.

Me: "I don't know, they landed in Cape Town but..."

I sigh.

Me: "I told them to wait Londeka.."

She nods.

Tamia: "So they are dead?"

I quickly shake my head.

Me: "No."

Tamia: "Then how do you explain their clothes! The blood! How do you explain this Gumede?"

Me: "I don't know Sthandwa sami but I promise you I will find our kids."

I get up and help her up taking her to our room. She get in bed and cuddle a cushion crying her eyeballs out I just walk out I can't console her I know my children are not dead.

Ngcebo ask me to come to a guestroom with those clothes. I find him already burning the incense I kneel in front of him, he takes the clothes from me and move it around the smoke.

Ngcebo: "Sibiza nina boGumede, oPhakathwato, oMnguni ka Yeyeye..nina boKhondlo, oQwabe..."

He grunts loud and starts shaking holding his head.

Ngcebo: "I can hear the scream of the Princess, An Eye for an Eye they are back for Vengeance and they want to complete the sacrifice their son wanted to do with the Prince."

Me: "Can you find out where they are please...please."

Ngcebo: "It's a dark place, they are keeping them apart, I can only ask our ancestors to protect them while you find the way Phakathwayo."

He claps his hands grunting. I sigh getting up and walk out. This feels like hell.

Three days later Ngcebo is in a coma, when I left him in the guestroom the other day we found him laying on the floor with blood coming out of his nose, he was trying too hard to communicate with Malaika and Hero and it drained him. Being a traditional doesn't mean you're shown everything under the sun, he can only do so much and I understand there are some places he can't enter spiritually because the energy and aura is dark and he only carries pure souls with him so now he was forcing entry at an evil place, We didn't take him to the hospital but we kept him at home and his wife came to look after him because she knows him better, she understands their gift better.

I am standing outside looking around, there is no lead at all. I see Sboniso walking through the gate I know him through Kumkani I know a bit of his history and apparently he has been talking to Malaika as neighbours.

He greets me respectfully I greet back.

Sboniso: "Baba, ngiyaxolisa seloku ngikuhlupha nje."(I'm sorry I keep bothering you.)

He says chuckling nervously, he keeps moving his eyes around.

Me: "What can I do for you?"

Sboniso: "Uhm..I have been trying to call Malaika for the past couple of days and her phone is not going through, she told me she is coming back soon."

I put my hands in my pocket taking a deep sigh.

Me: "Malaika and his brother are missing, it's been five days, I don't even have a lead."

Sboniso: "I don't understand sir, I went to Colombia and met with her, how is she missing?"

I stare at him.

Me: "You went there?"

He drops his eyes.

Sboniso: "I..I did."

I nod, I'm too tired to ask more questions but I would like to know what is going on between him and my daughter for him to even travel to Colombia.

Sboniso: "I don't know...I want to help..my father and I are not in good terms but I was gonna ask for his contacts to help me find Malaika, if you allow me."

He says bowing his head.

Me: "I need all the help I can get Son, I..need my kids back home, they have never been away from me for this long, maybe I shouldn't have sent them away."

He seems upset as he takes out his phone and make a call moving it closer to him mouth.

"Hello."

Sboniso: "Modise, it's me Kgosi."

Silence.

Sboniso: "Please I need your help, please."

He chuckles.

Modise: "You? Need my help?"

He sighs and look at me, signaling that he's leaving, I nod. He walks back into his house.

I see a car stopping at the gate, Kumkani comes out of the house and stand next to me. Someone step out of the car with a small brown box. I walk closer to him and he tells me it's a parcel I should sign. I hear a gun being cocked behind me I look back it's Kumkani pointing a gun at the guy, he throws the box on the ground and run to the car and drive away. Kumkani starts shooting all the tyres till it flips over. He rush out the gate and run to the car. I squat down and take the box, there is a piece of paper at the top of the box.

You kill one of our own, we make your own suffer, little by little.

I open the box and there is a strong smell of blood when I look inside my stomach turns, there is a knife full of blood and a skin, I don't know which part but it's a skin it shows that it was peeled off, I know it's Malaika she has more hairy skin than Hero.

Me: "God No..."

I can imagine the pain my daughter is in right now, the screams.

I just sit down on the ground defeated. Kumkani comes back.

Kumkani: "That guy is badly injured, I don't know if he will make it, I called the ambulance but the way he is breathing he is not promising."

I nod. He looks at the box.

Kumkani: "What the fuck!"

Me: "Its..Malaika..they are torturing my daughter and I can't do anything about it, what kind of father am I who failed to protect his kids like this!"

Kumkani: "Don't show uMah this baba, she shouldn't see this."

I get up and walk in. I take my phone and call one of the morning shows requesting an interview, I will give everything I own to these people even my soul if they want it just so they can bring my children back home to their mother, I will leave every detail they can contact me in, I will sell my soul to the devil if I have to.

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CHAPTER 59

*

MALAIKA

*

I have never been in so much pain in my life. I am shivering and judging from the sun that comes from the window and the darkness in the room I have spent two weeks in this hell hole. It's a huge room with just a bed and a small ensuite bathroom, it's not painted so the walls are more depressing than being locked up. I haven't seen my brother ever since that day they shot him I don't know if he's alive or not. There is someone who comes in everyday just to torture me, I have been beaten up, they cut my skin on the back of my thighs and should I survive this I will never wear shorts again.

The door opens I tremble, I don't know what he will do to me today. I look at the short dark skinned man in front of me, he has a knife on his left hand.

Me: "Please just kill me already."

He chuckles.

"I grew up without a father and it's because of your father now he will know how it feels to have someone he loves taken away from him!"

He has a thick African accent.

Me: "Please take me to my brother just this once?"

He laughs.

"You mean my brother?"

He steps closer to me and unexpectedly stab my thigh I scream so hard grabbing on the bed covers.

He pulls it out and blood oozes from there.

Me: "Just kill me already!"

He shakes his head.

"Not yet princess."

He walks out, I take off my t-shirt leaving a bra on, and tear it up. I tie my wound up so I don't bleed to death, I still have a wish to see my brother before I die.

I slowly sleep on my back and cry out of pain, I should have tried to stop Hero from not listening to dad! I blame myself for not even calling to inform him we're coming back home, they must be going crazy.

After a few minutes the guy comes back I sit up, he stares at me then down to my upper body, I am wearing a red bra they took off the things I was wearing the day they took us and gave me back my other clothes to change into. He moves his eyes back to my face.

Me: "Can I see my brother please I am begging you."

He pulls me up I moan in pain because of the pain on my thighs back and front.

I limp all the way out as he drags me to another house at the back, it looks like someone was building here but abandoned the place before doing much.

I walk in and find my brother just groaning on the ground three men are beating him up, looks like he was trying to fight because there is a broken chain next to him.

I slowly go down on my knees and cover him crying on top of him. They stop beating him up.

Me: "Hero..."

He looks at me and I can hardly recognize him from the bruises on his face.

Hero: "Pri...ncess...I'm...sorry."

I cry so hard as his voice breaks.

Hero: "No..matter...how long..it takes and how much it takes from me..I will...take...you to dad..I promise."

I wipe mucus and tears on my face.

Me: "Please let me stay with him...just for today, please."

They look at each other and walk out locking the door behind them.

I help Hero up and get him in bed. He opens his puffy eyes and stare at my thigh, he groans and let out a little gasp.

Me: "It's fine..I'm fine..I'm ok."

I am lying, the pain is excruciating.

I sleep next to him putting my hand over him closing my eyes.

Hero: "Dad..will...never forgive me..I will try to negotiate with them to let you go and keep me instead."

Me: "No! We will be together, if we die here, we will die together and if we live, we will live together."

He keeps groaning. I pull up his sweater and touch his ribcage looks like everything there is broken I sob.

Me: "No.."

Hero: "I'm...gonna...be ok don't cry."

For the first time I fall asleep.

I am in a room with a huge snake it is staring into my eyes then it slowly covers me in a protective manner and I'm not scared. After a while it lets go of me then it starts spitting what I believe is venom on the wound on my thigh then it slithers around my back and spit its venom on my wounds there.

I gasp sitting up and look around, I find Hero sitting up too, I don't feel so much pain on my thigh anymore.

Me: "Hey..."

He nods, his face is really messed up.

Hero: "I had a dream of a huge snake."

Me: "Me too and my wounds aren't that painful anymore."

He nods, I pull up his sweater again and his body has marks all over it and I can see he is breathing through the broken ribcage and it must hurt.

Me: "I'm sorry mntaka Ma."

We hug each other then let go.

Hero: "I overheard them saying we are leaving for Nigeria today because that's where I should be sacrificed."

Me: "Who are these people?"

Hero: "My biological father's side of the family, apparently the man wanted to sacrifice me when I was just an infant."

Me: "What are we gonna do?"

He smiles.

Hero: "Remember when we both got in the fight when we were teenagers?"

I nod laughing a little, those boys messed us up but we also did a number on them.

Hero: "You fought like a man."

I giggle.

Me: "You taught me how to defend myself."

He nods and hold both my hands.

Hero: "We will fight like that when we get even a slight change, we give it our best shot and you will leave and go home."

Me: "But what about you?"

Hero: "I will stay, they won't stop Laika, they will keep coming back for me so it's better they do whatever they want with me."

Me: "No! I won't leave without you!"

Hero: "Please, mom and dad can't lose both of us, its better if they lose me."

Me: "Why? Because you're not theirs?"

He looks down I punch his chest, he groans so loud putting his hand over where I hit him.

Me: "That what made you make that irrational decision of us coming back in the first place! If you keep bringing that up that means you are ungrateful for everything our parents did for us! You're saying you're not theirs after everything?"

Hero: "I didn't mean that in a bad way.."

Me: "Fuck you!"

I look at his knee his pants have a hole.

Me: "Can you walk?"

He shakes his head and pull up his pants, he has a patch on his knee.

Hero: "They took out the bullet, it still hurts a little but I can't put my foot down."

Me: "Then we can't run, I also lost so much blood from the stab wound on my thigh and the cutting on the back."

He shakes his head.

Hero: "I wasn't thinking straight, forgive me Princess."

I nod.

The door is unlocked then the guy who has been making my life a living hell walk in with those three guys that beat up my brother, we are outnumbered even if we wanted to try to fight.

The guy keeps staring at me, I see my brother slowly taking off his sweater and help me wear it, I think he saw that "his brother" has been staring at my boobs.

One of them steps closer and quickly put a needle on Hero's shoulder he starts shivering instantly.

Me: "Please don't do this, dad can give you all the money you want please."

He takes another needle I try to get up but he is fast to inject my arm painfully because I was moving I sit down as my head spins. Someone picks me up I can't even open my eyes I'm too weak to move.

I wake up and look around feels like I have been asleep for a days. I quickly sit up when I see that I am in luxurious bed, it's actually a plane, a private jet it's beautiful inside. Just when I try to get off bed, the short black guy walk in carrying a paper bag.

"Hi."

It's the first time he ever greets me, it's always torture after torture. I don't greet him back.

"My name is Anold."

I chuckle. Does he really think I care about who he is?

Me: "Where is my brother?"

Anold: "He is already home."

Me: "Where is home? Where are you taking me?"

Anold: "Home in Nigeria, they had to leave with him first because people are on a look out for you two so we had to travel separately."

Me: "Why are you doing this?"

Anold: "My father left home for South Africa to work, leaving us with mom, he came back for a few years then suddenly stopped going home, he had found another woman, he put a spell on him."

He sighs and walk closer to my bed, I move back he stops on his tracks.

Anold: "He never returned home so we went back to being poor. After years of poverty we went to consult and found out he had a son and had found out what that woman did to him so. He wanted to sacrifice this son for riches so he can come back home to us with something."

I look at him like a crazy man he is.

Me: "So you want to continue where he left off."

Anold: "His maternal grandmother did this to us and her daughter got pregnant with your brother, so yes they destroyed my father and your father!"

His face gets hard and very scary when he mentions my father.

Anold: "Your father killed him before he can get home to us."

Me: "He wanted to kill an innocent baby!"

Anold: "That wasn't his business!"

He says throwing away the bag in his hand and rush to me grabbing my neck and pinning me on the bed, I am gasping for air trying to remove his hand from my neck.

He stares into my teary eyes and slowly let go of my neck, his eyes soften. I cry so hard, can't they just kill me.

He get off me and grab the bag on the floor and throws it at me.

Anold: "Take a bath and change, you stink!"

He walks out leaving me crying.

After a while I take a bath then wear the huge tracksuit I found on the bag.

He comes in again with food this time and it's been a while since I ate anything. So I grab the takeaway and start eating with my hand, I don't care any more, I can feel his eyes on me.

Anold: "You have a huge appetite for a woman."

I ignore him.

After I'm done eating I throw the container on the floor and kick him on his groin he cusses bending over and kick him again on his left side of the head he falls groaning in pain.

When I try to kick him again he takes out his gun and points at me I step back.

Anold: "Fuck you woman! Fuck you!"

He slowly get up and hit me with the back of the gun on my head I bleed immediately.

He push me to bed and get on top of me.

Anold: "You want to act tough huh? Is that what you want!?"

He toss the gun far from us and pull down his pants showing his huge hard manhood.

Anold: "Tough woman turns me on! This feels like foreplay to me!"

I flip us over and we both fall on the floor I am on top of him throwing punches at him. He is getting weaker but I don't stop punching until I see blood coming out of his eyes, nose and mouth. Someone pulls me up from the back.

Me: "Let me go! Let me finish this piece of shit off!"

He smash my head on the wall, I fall on
The floor.

He help Anold up he looks so weak.

I get in bed, my head is pounding.

I wake up and I can feel I am in a different environment. The room is huge I'm in bed and there is a huge TV on the wall playing some music on a low volume there are even couches. I look at my body I am wearing just a robe I quick check myself down on my lady part and I feel ok I thought maybe I was raped because I don't remember anyone taking off the tracksuit I was wearing.

I touch the side of my head, I have a huge lump from the back of the gun Anold hit me with.

I step out of bed and look out the window. I guess we're now in Nigeria, I only see houses like this on TV watching those Nigerian movies, there is even small little room next to the gate.

A door opens and an old woman and man walk in, they are wearing like the rich Nigerians.

"So your father killed my brother and thought he will get away with it oo?"

Me: "You look like rich people so why do you need my brother huh? Why do you need me here?"

"We are doing what need to be done, what my brother wanted! And you, we're doing this for sweet revenge!"

I nod, I have told myself that I am gonna die soon far away from home, they are probably going to kill me and throw me away like a dog and I'm all for it man! I'm done with this life shit.

The woman is staring at me not saying anything.

"I think we should keep her here for a while and ask for money from her father then we kill her later after milking him dry."

She finally opens her mouth.

"NO! We will get enough from the sacrifice it's a pity we have to wait for his wounds to heal before we can perform the ceremony."

She touch his hand lovingly, I guess they are husband and wife.

"My love, money is never enough! Just think about what I'm saying now."

He nods and he spits on the floor staring at me then they follow each other out.

It's been another two weeks here, I eat good food but I'm always locked up. I haven't seen my brother but I find comfort in knowing that he is still recovering from the wounds so they can't sacrifice him yet, maybe help will come I don't know how but I still have hope.

Anold walk in, I also haven't seen him since I kicked his ass.

He chuckles and close the door.

Anold: "So you landed me in the hospital, you're really tough."

Me: "Thought you said you love foreplay."

He sit next to me but I move away.

Anold: "So it's true what they say about South African girls?"

I look at him.

Anold: "Beautiful and have a nice body, well at least most of you."

I click my tongue.

Anold: "I heard your brother stabbed himself last night. Looks like he is ready to die."

I hold my breath, maybe he also heard about what they said about not being able to sacrifice him while wounded I refuse to believe he is giving up, maybe he is just buying time.

Me: "Good for him, when I get the chance I will do the same."

He keeps staring at me, I am so disgusted in a way that I even hate how he smells next to me. I swallow some spit as I feel like something is stuck on my throat.

Anold: "What's wrong? You look constipated!"

I go on my knees and vomit I know I wouldn't have reached the bathroom.

Anold: "Fuck.."

I can't stop, it keeps coming even stomach hurts now.

He helps me up and give me bottled water I don't even know when he got it my vision is blurry I feel really sick.

Me: "Can't you take me to the hospital please."

Anold: "I can't..."

He walks out and come back to clean my mess up, I raise my eyebrow. Maybe I can use him to get me and my brother home. But he looks like a ticking time bomb will I make it out alive? But I won't find out if I don't try right?

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CHAPTER 60

*

MALAIKA

*

I have been feeling sick lately it's worse because no one cares, I have asked Anold countless times to take me to the hospital and he said it's risky I might do something stupid there.

I sit up, my head is spinning and my throat is dry I don't know what's going on with me, maybe it's the food that is making me sick I eat just about everything and all the type of food we eat here is new to me.

Anold walk in with a man carrying a briefcase.

Anold: "Hey Malaika, my doctor is here to check on you, just tell him what's wrong."

I nod and tell him I have been feeling nauseous, dizzy and my tummy hurts most of the time and just like me his first guess is the different type of food from what I'm used to, I think he knows I'm not from here.

He checks my temperature.

Doctor: "Your temperature is a bit high, I would have suggested you come in the office because I don't have much with me now."

Me: "Please..allow me to go."

I say looking at Anold.

Anold: "I will speak to Uncle first."

I sigh. That old man is vile he won't allow it.

The doctor leaves after giving me something to help with nausea he recommends I drink a lot of water and promise to check up on me again soon. He leaves me with Anold who spends most of his time here asking me questions that doesn't concern him but I answer him

because I want him to get close so he can at least help me see my brother.

He sit next to me and touch my forehead.

Anold: "You are really burning up."

He quickly opens the windows then give me water to drink the pills the doctor gave me.

I sleep in bed facing up I end up crying when I think about Sboniso, he was making progress, he was willing to make us work, he even asked that I go to therapy with him but I'm here now, I wonder how he is. I promised to be with him.²

I feel Anold's hand wiping my tears, I feel like strangling him but I hold myself.

Anold: "Don't cry."

Me: "I miss mom and dad, I miss my brother."

He sighs looking down.

Anold: "You promise you won't do anything stupid if I take you to see your brother just for a few minutes."

I quickly nod.

Me: "I won't do anything, I'm far from home I don't even know where I would start should I find a way to escape."

He gives me some big flip flops then we walk out I am in a pink robe today.

We walk down the passage to the far end of the house and he opens a room. I walk in and rush to my brother hugging him, he was sitting at the corner with his head buried on his thighs.

Me: "You're still alive."

He stares at me, his eyes have no life, he is not even showing excitement to see me.

Me: "Bhuti.."

Hero: "Who are you?"

I blink staring at him.

Me: "Don't...don't play like that."

He stares at me with a frown.

Hero: "Who is playing? I asked you a question! Who the hell are you?"

I swallow a painful lump on my throat.

Me: "I'm Malaika, your sister."

He chuckles.

Hero: "I have a sister?"

I nod looking down, more tears run down my face.

Hero: "Are you crying?"

I shake my head and get up.

Me: "Please take me back to the room."

Anold hold my arm and take me back I climb in bed and sob, he forgot about me it must be from all those knocks he kept getting from these stupid people. Anold brush my back.

Anold: "So he chose to forgot about you."

Me: "It's all your fault! Why are you doing this to us? My whole family can even raise a hundred million rand for your family! We are a huge family dad can ask everyone to meet him halfway, please!"

He sighs.

Anold: "Honestly, at first I wanted to kill you for what your father did but spending time with you made me realise how wrong we are, I don't even think you were born when your father killed mine! It's not fair to do this to you."

Me: "Then help me and my brother go home."

He sighs.

Anold: "That will mean laying down my life for you and your brother! They will never hesitate to kill me!"

Me: "So you're afraid of your own family? Let's all run together, dad will pay you any amount I promise. You will start over where they will never find you."

Anold: "They found Hero who was said to be protected by the most powerful ancestors, so who am I"

I nod looking down.

Me: "I just know mom is not okay."

Tears roll down my cheeks.

He wipes my tears and hold me to his chest. I slowly move away then kiss his lips, for a moment there he is stunned I quickly move away from him and look down.

Me: "I'm sorry..I just...I.."

Anold: "It's ok...I understand."

He get up and clear his throat.

Anold: "Let me get you some food."

Me: "Do you give Hero food?"

He nods.

Anold: "They wouldn't want him to die of starvation, that ritual demands a lot and it wants him pure with not even a single wound on his body especially the head."

I nod, h stares at me for a while then walk out. He seems to be opening up little by little and I won't stop pushing I want him to at least allow me to use his phone.

He comes back after a few minutes carrying food, I dig in immediately he even ask me to slow down.

He ask if I want more and I say yes, he get more food for me I finish up then drink some juice.

Me: "Thank you."

Anold: "You eat like a pregnant woman."

I chuckle as he laughs at me.

He sit in front of me and give me an intense look.

Anold: "I enjoyed that kiss, can you do it again."

I look down shyly.

Me: "I was just upset I didn't mean it."

Anold: "Can you mean it this time."

I look at him.

Me: "Mean it how? I am here waiting for my death, so what's the point? Even if I feel something for you it won't matter."

Anold: "You have feelings for me?"

I slowly nod.

Anold: "Oh...uhm..I have been feeling the same."

Me: "It doesn't matter though, we can't do anything about it I'll be dead soon."

He moves closer to me and kiss my lips, I really feel like dying right here, right now, my stomach is turning but I keep swallowing saliva, I want to make him believe that I feel this.

He push me to bed getting on top of me but I push him back.

Me: "Uhm..."

He move away.

Anold: "Sorry I got carried away."

I giggle as fix him bulge.

He is looking at me with a face full of lust but he won't get it the only man I want to feel right now is Kgosi.

The whole week he's been spending more time here he even sneak in at night to sleep with me but whenever he initiates sex I get sick, I vomit so bad he is even thinking of taking me to that doctor but just scared of his uncle.

I feel a hand on my forehead I open my eyes, he is sleeping next to me.

Anold: "You're wet with sweat, this is getting serious."

He removes the bed cover from me I shiver.

Me: "I feel cold."

Anold: "But you're sweating Malaika."

My teeth are even grazing on each other, it's bad.

He quietly get off bed and pick me up taking me to the bathroom. I sit down as he fills up the bathtub with water, I feel dizzy so I slip from the bathtub where I was sitting and sit on my butt.

Anold: "Malaika...hey..hold on baby I'm gonna take you to a doctor now."

He removes my gown I want to stop him but I can't do anything my whole body is numb.

I am just sitting there not able to wash my body I am watching someone else do it, someone I hate so much.

He takes me to a doctor with a big black tinted car. It looks like a private practice so he takes me in and give me a drip immediately I close my eyes.

Anold: "What do you think is wrong with her? It can't be food all this time."

I moan as I feel a sting on my arm but I don't open my eyes they are too tired and heavy.

Doctor: "Let me take this to my lab I will come back, it might take a while."

Anold: "We will wait."

I hear the door closing then a hand on mine.

Anold: "Maybe you're sick because you miss your mom and dad."

He sighs.

Anold: "Or maybe you're worried about your brother, Tomorrow evening they will start with the ceremony they made sure they locked him up where are no weapons to hurt himself with. I don't know how you will feel when that happens."

I want to talk but I feel drowsy.

Anold: "I want to protect you, I really do but who will protect me?"

I am drifting into sleep I can hear him still talking but I can't make up what he is saying anymore.

I wake up and look around I am still in this bed and Anold is resting his head in bed next to me. The doctor opens the door and touch Anold's shoulder. He wakes up wiping his face.

Doctor: "I'm sorry I took too long."

Anold: "Did you find out what's wrong with her?"

The doctor looks at me and nod.

Doctor: "She is 8 weeks pregnant."

Anold: "What!?"

I widen my eyes.

Me: "No, maybe there's a mistake somewhere it can't be."

Anold looks at me, this is ruining everything for me, I won't ever get out and this baby won't ever see the light of day.

Anold: "Are you sure doctor?"

He nods.

He get up and take my hand helping me step out of bed as soon as the doctor removes the needle on my arm.

He drives back home quietly.

I go back to my room, he sit in front of me quietly staring at me I'm just defeated.

Anold: "You know the father?"

I slowly nod.

Anold: "Ok."

Me: "I didn't know I was pregnant."

Anold: "Uhm..I will try everything to get you out."

Me: "You will?"

I wasn't expecting that after those news.

Anold: "It might take a while but you have to trust me."

I nod.

Anold: "You will go back to the father of your baby when you get out?"

I shake my head. I don't want to ruin my chances of getting out.

Me: "No."

Anold: "Why not?"

Me: "There's you."

Anold: "And the baby? You gonna be ok with me raising him?"

I look down and nod touching my tummy, This is Kgosi's baby so if we make it we're going back to daddy.

He kiss my lips and touch my hand that is over my tummy. He looks upset I don't care I just want to get out of here with my brother.

Me: "Can I see Hero?"

He nods and take me to him but he leaves us alone to answer his phone.

Me: "Bhuti."

He looks up and look at the door before he quickly get up and attack me with a big hug I cry.

Me: "You remember me?"

He chuckles with tears in his eyes.

Hero: "I will never forget you."

I smile holding him tight.

Me: "I heard Anold saying the ceremony will take place tomorrow now because you're okay now, I don't want you to die."

Hero: "Then we only have one option."

Me: "And what is that?"

Hero: "We fight Malaika, they believe I don't remember you so we will pretend like I attacked you first and you will retaliate make sure it counts Laika I trust you."

Me: "No I won't hurt you."

Hero: "Then you will have to watch me die tomorrow."

He says and pin me on the wall squeezing my neck.

Me: "What are you doing?"

Hero: "Fight back!"

I shake my head with tears rolling down my cheeks.

Hero: "Fight back Malaika!"

I knee his tummy he let go of me, I step closer to him and knee him again pushing him on the wall, he is stronger than me so I know he is not fighting back on purpose. I remember what Anold said about the head, so I stand on my toes because he is tall and push his forehead shoving his head straight to the wall, I see him touching the back of his head it comes back with blood. The door opens Hero shoves me back Anold is quick to get in between us.

Anold: "What are you two doing?"

Hero: "I told you I don't know this girl but you keep coming here with her!"

Anold clicks his tongue and take me back to the room after locking Hero up.

Anold: "How can he do this? What if he hurt the baby."

He looks at my neck it's probably red and have marks, Hero did strange me hard.

Anold: "Nx let me get some water for you."

He walks out. I stare at the phone then quickly grab it and dial dad's number my hands are shaking I keep looking at the door.

Nqobasi: "Hello.."

His voice sound so low.

Me: "Dad.."

Nqobasi: "Malaika!"

Me: "Dad....please help me."

Nqobasi: "I will baby! I will, just hold on ok! I can see the number is from Nigeria, Grandma will help, she knows the ins and outs. I am coming to get..."

I see the handle turning I quickly drop the call and rush to the bathroom to delete the number then hide it on my waist going back to the room. He is holding a glass of water I sit where he was sitting and put the phone where it was.

Anold: "I went to check on your brother."

He shakes his head.

Anold: "My uncle will be mad Malaika, you hurt your brother that means they have to change the dates."

Me: "I was defending myself! He wanted to kill me."

Anold: "I know I just..."

The door swings open, his uncle walk in with three guys and he ask them to bring me to him. Two of them grab me and throw me down in front of him I wince in pain..

Anold: "Uncle don't do that..."

Uncle: "You ruined everything by that fight with your brother! I thought it was Anold and I was here to teach him a lesson but I overheard you talking! You messed up my plan!"

He screams and his stick hit my back I scream because I wasn't expecting it. Anold try to stop them but they drag him out kicking and screaming, he is too short from these men. The old man beat me up so bad with a stick all I can do is protect my tummy by my arm, if it happens I walk out of here alive I want to walk out with my baby alive too.

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CHAPTER 61

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NQOBASI

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I am pacing all around the room waiting for Nkosi and Isisekelo, they have been with me all these weeks trying to find my children but today they went to check on their families for a day but I called them to come back. My wife..Tamia left two weeks ago because she got really sick, she asked me if she could go home to her mother because I have also been neglecting her trying to find my kids. I even moved out of our room I know that was a wrong move but I wasn't ok emotionally that made her more upset and she left, I allowed her to go because I

saw she was getting worse and I couldn't take care of her since I was always travelling trying to find out where Malaika and Hero are.

Sboniso walk in with about 10 men behind him wearing all black carrying big guns. He bows his head. He has been also restless even went as far as bowing down to his despicable father so he can get his men to help find Malaika.

Sboniso: "My father finally allowed them to help me find Malaika and we know where to start, Nigeria, but we don't know the exact place."

Me: "I received a call a few minutes ago from this number."

I show him.

Me: "It was Malaika.."

He widens his eyes I see hope in his eyes.

Sboniso: "So she is still alive?"

I nod.

Me: "I forwarded this number to grandma she once lived in Nigeria, she will know how to trace it."

He nods.

Sboniso: "I had already found the private jet to take us to Nigeria, we were gonna search every city if possible."

Me: "Thank you so much son for this, let's wait for Lathitha so she can give us the exact location."

He nods and ask his men to wait outside in the buses they came with.

We sit down I am facing him but he has his eyes on the floor.

Me: "You are dating my daughter?"

He looks at me then nod dropping his eyes.

Me: "For how long?"

Sboniso: "It hasn't been long, we've been on and off because of my past but I'm working on it."

Me: "That's good..and I'm glad you care about her."

Sboniso: "She was slowly pulling me out of the dark cloud I was living under, she is the one."

I smile.

Me: "I'm glad to hear that."

The door swings open Grandma is here with Grandpa behind her. She opens her arms I get up and walk up to her, she hugs me tight and kiss my cheek.

Lathitha: "I have done my research baby, we're taking the jet to Nigeria tonight and we need all the help we can get those people are said to be dangerous they just took over from three massive businesses, their security might be too high."

Sboniso clears his throat then bow before grandpa and ma.

Ntsika: "Kgosi?"

Sboniso: "Yes..uhm my father allowed some of his men to help us find the Princess and Prince."

Ntsika: "Oh that's great, my brothers and sister are on their way."

I nod.

Nkosi and Isisekelo walk in followed by Ngcebo, he immediately burn the incense and we all kneel on the floor as he chants our clan names asking for protection. My dad and his brother joins us and I am grateful for all the help.

I pack some of my clothes and we go to the airport, Kwanele is here and there are two military airplanes, all this is giving me hope, I will come back with my children.

Sboniso is talking on the phone looks like he is giving order to someone.

Sboniso: "You should be here by now Captain, you promised me."

Three airplanes touch down not far from us and they have a flag from Lesotho, I see Sboniso walking up to them and they shake hands. I walk up to them and greet.

Sboniso: "They are from Lesotho Defence force, they are here to help."

I pull him to the side.

Me: "Where do you know all these people from?"

Sboniso: "I asked the guys my father sent to me, dad usually deploy these people when there is war so I did the same."

Me: "So you used all your money to pay the military?"

Sboniso: "I want to help bring Malaika home."

I shoulder hug him then the family get into Mason's private jet and take off. All the way I am praying that my children are still alive.

After long hours on the plane it finally touch down to Nigeria-Lagos. There are a series of cars already waiting Grandma seemed to have planned this trip well.

Lathitha: "Nqobasi come here."

I go over to her and grandpa.

Lathitha: "I have a house here it's big it will accommodate all of us for planning our next move, we've already made headlines someone

leaked pictures of Ntsika and the other Princess so the people who have Malaika and Hero must be on high alert.”

She knows how these type of people move, she spent years working for them so I trust her.

We drive to this huge double storey house I am amazed, she never mentioned to me that she have a house here and we’re very close but I think her husband knows and maybe that’s where they come when they take their endless trips.

We all gather in a huge lounge with maybe four different sets of couches, the military guys remain standing with their guns I don’t even know how we were allowed in the country with all these weapons.

Grandma stands in the middle of the lounge and look around the room.

Lathitha: “We’re looking for two people, two people only and that’s Malaika and Hero I don’t care what happens to anyone else in that house we are going into. Their security might be too tight but ours will be tighter because of prayer.”

She hold grandpa’s hand and everyone hold hands with someone next to them and she starts saying a very powerful prayer.

The minute she says amen windows starts shattering there are gunshots outside but they must be outside the gate when they military guys try to walk out and shoot back grandma stops them.

Lathitha: “Not yet! This is what they want! They want us to use all our defence materials right here and run out before we could even get to them, let them shoot just take cover they won’t be able to get in they will just shoot from the outside.”

They understand her. After minutes of gunshots it gets quiet.

Her phone beeps, she looks at it then give it to Kwanele.

Lathitha: "Someone just sent me pictures of that house so we get all the entrances."

I walk outside and sit there brushing my head, a lot is happening I'm just scared for my children.

Nkosiyo: "Bhuti.."

He says sitting next to me squeezing my shoulder.

Nkosiyo: "We're here now and we are not going home without our kids trust me."

I nod a little.

Nkosiyo: "Don't lose hope now, I need your head on the game right now, we kill or be killed and I'm not ready to lose any of you."

We hug and Kwanele comes out and give me a gun.

Kwanele: "Nkosi, you're good?"

Nkosiyo: "Yeah I have it with me."

He nods.

Kwanele: "We will be leaving in an hour."

I nod.

Me: "Can I use Grandma's phone I need to call my wife."

He gives me the phone, I call Tamia, she answers but keeps quiet probably because of the number.

Me: "Baby..it's me."

Tamia: "Junior."

I sniff looking down, it has been too much for me, I lived for my kids all these years only for some random people to snatch them away from me like this.

Tamia: "Are you crying?"

She says with a giggle but I can tell she's also crying by her voice.

I wipe my face as Nkosi keeps squeezing my shoulder.

Tamia: "I miss you so much, I miss my children."

Me: "We're in Nigeria, I need you to pray for us, pray that I come back with my children alive."

Tamia: "I will, I will pray my love."

Me: "I love you Londeka."

Tamia: "I love you too Phakathwayo, when you come back you will find me home."

I smile.

Me: "Ngiyabonga maButhelezi."(Thank you)

I drop the call and huff.

Nkosiyo: "At least we always fight with determination because we have wives and children to live for."

I nod and we hug again.

Grandma and grandpa walk out first wearing all black with shades, these people have great grandchildren yet they still look so good for their age. Grandma is even wearing black gloves. Grandpa throws the gun at her and she catches it and cocks it immediately I see a smile on his face.

Nkosiyo: "Do we call it gangster love or what?"

Ntsika: "Call it whatever you want, we are just meant for each other."

He hold her waist and they kiss, Nkosi and I look away, they laugh.

Nkosiyo: "Please stop..."

We all laugh, I know I will hold my children in my arms today, I can feel it.

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MALAIKA

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I'm in bed Anold is nursing my bruises with warm water, my whole body has green lines from the beating I got from his uncle.

Anold: "Do you think the baby is hurt?"

I don't answer but just let tears fall, I can feel pain on my abdomen I have already concluded that I am losing the baby.

Anold: "I'm sorry."

We hear door banging and sirens outside the yard I just lay there feeling all sort of pain on my body. The door opens.

"We need to move them in one room and lock it, no one is going to mess up my plans, take her away."

Someone grabs me from the bed and grab me down the passage to where Hero is, he throws me on the floor I can't even move. Hero picks me up and put me to bed.

Hero: "I'm so sorry sisi, all this is my fault I'm sorry."

He is holding my hand too tight.

Hero: "Don't close your eyes Malaika, you're scaring me."

Me: "I..called...dad...I know he is coming for us.."

He touch my cheek.

Hero: "Ok..let's talk ok don't close your eyes."

I smile a little but stop as soon as I feel a sharp pain again on my abdomen it feels like strong period pains.

Hero looks out the window as we hear airplane sounds.

Hero: "That's a flag from Lesotho."

I pull the bed covers with the little strength I have because I am feeling cold.

Hero: "Malaika! There's also Military airplane here! I think dad is here."

I close my eyes and allow pain to sink in, physical pain and emotional pain, I am losing my baby my body is going through so much.

Hero: "Malaika..no sis open your eyes please...dad is here Princess please."

I want to tell him to stop panicking but I can't open my mouth so I just remain quiet though I hate that he is panicking.

My eyes shoots open as I hear gunshots even on the roof. I feel my body being picked up I slowly open my eyes Hero is holding me like a baby I am on his lap then he pull the bed covers over my body then he starts rocking me.

Me: "Just..like..old times."

He smiles and kiss my forehead.

The gunshots sounds are getting closer there are running footsteps all over this house I am just in my brother's arms, whatever happens, happens I am tired.

The door swings open, they grab me from Hero but he pulls me and push me to bed and start fighting them off and get hold of their gun, he shoots three men down then rush back to me.

Hero: "I'm sorry, did I hurt you?"

I shake my head. He pick me up my legs and hold me with one arm I sleep on his shoulder.

Hero: "Hold on to me tight ok."

I nod. He step out of the room and the gun in his hand go off he keeps shooting from back to front I am tightly closing my eyes.

Hero: "Shit! I'm out."

He go around the kitchen counter and gently put me down on the floor.

Hero: "Stay here I will come back."

I nod and sleep on the cold tiles as cold as I already am.

"Malaika! Malaika! Where is she? Where's my daughter?"

I can hear his voice and it makes me break into a loud sob.

He kneels next to me and his hands starts shaking, I am wearing a short gown, he is looking at bruised body.

Me: "Baba you came.."

I try to get up but it's hard so he just picks me out and walk out with me. Bullets are still flying people are dead on the floor.

Me: "Where's Hero?"

Nqobasi: "Don't worry he is already in a car."

He put me at the back of the car, Hero is here loading bullets in a gun.

Hero: "Rest here, we're safe now."

He step out and stand next to our dad, I spot Sboniso walking over to them holding a gun as well pain comes back worse on my abdomen I put my hand over it. He looks back at the car I'm in, the guns go off again as more people come out from the house, A car passes and I

swear that's Anold driving so he managed to get out. After a while the uncle comes out alone with his hands up Hero throws the gun down and charge at him, he beat the crap out of the old man then dad finish him up by the bullets. He raise his thumb up in the air then they run out getting inside the car, we see grenades flying the house is caught in flames in a second. Dad drives away followed by a series of cars. It's just me and Hero here and dad is driving I don't know which car Sboniso is.

We get in the Jet and it's a good thing Kgosi is not with us again, I don't know if I'm ready to see him yet while I don't know if our baby is fine or not. Granny give me pills and I sleep the entire journey to Durban.

I wake up to my body throbbing I look around and I can tell that I am in my room by the air that comes from my balcony, I'm home at last!

Mom walks in with a tray and she smiles rushing to put the tray down then hold me in her arms, we are both crying.

Me: "I missed you so much.."

She is crying so hard and it's breaking my heart.

Me: "We're home now, don't cry."

Dad walk in and pull her up hugging her tight.

Nqobasi: "It's ok my love, this will never happen again to our kids I promise you."

He smiles looking at me.

Nqobasi: "Eat your food and drink those pills for pain someone is here to see you but nervous to get in."

He walks out with his wife before even telling me who it is. I eat a little then drink the pills. I try getting up and I can feel that I am wet I look at the bed, there is a blood stain I just sit back down. The door opens

Kgosi step in looking fresh in his black pants and white shirt rolled up on his sleeves. I can tell that he is nervous.

He finally sit in front of me on a chair I am looking down at my hands I can't stop the tears from falling.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry..Princess maybe if I stayed a little bit longer in Colombia none of this would have happened, I'm sorry."

I sob, he moves from the chair and sit in bed holding me tight, I wail.

Sboniso: "It's ok...you're home now."

I break the hug and look down at our hands as he holds them tight.

Me: "I'm..I'm pregnant but I think I'm losing the baby."

He looks at me confused.

Me: "I am carrying your child."

Sboniso: "What?"

It comes out low.

Me: "But I was badly beaten I think I am losing our baby."

Sboniso: "No."

He shakes his head.

I move away a little he gasp at the sight of blood.

Sboniso: "Malaika..what is going on?"

He looks really scared and confused.

He get up and rush out the he comes back in again followed by my mother.

Sboniso: "Please explain this to your mother, I don't understand anything."

He looks so traumatised I feel so bad for him.

Me: "There was time I got really sick in that house I was in and the guy there took me to a doctor that confirmed I was pregnant."

Mom widen her eyes.

Me: "But after that last beating I got, I started feeling period pains and they got intense and now I am bleeding, am I losing the baby mah?"

She removes the bed cover and there's a silent gasp from her, Sboniso is leaning on the wall with his hands above his head looking up.

Mom rush out, I look at Sboniso he keeps groaning.

Hero walk in and he doesn't ask anything but picks me up taking me to the bathroom then walk out, mom helps me bath then she gives me a pad and my panty I wear my gown. Kgosi is now sitting on the floor, mom walk over to him and touch his shoulder.

Tamia: "Do you want to come with us to the hospital?"

He wipes his face and nod, his eyes are bloodshot.

We get to the hospital, mom and Sboniso get in the room with me while Hero and dad wait outside. They are doing a scan and it's so quiet in the room.

"You said you started bleeding yesterday?"

The doctor ask, I nod.

"You're losing the baby miss, I'm so sorry."

I look away covering my face, I knew it but I wasn't ready for this confirmation.

They tell me they are keeping me here for the night and give me medication to remove all the blood clots.

Sboniso walk in the room and sit down.

Sboniso: "Guess I'm not meant for beautiful things, I'm not meant to be genuinely happy."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "I didn't think I was able to make a baby and this one time I did it only to lose it, maybe this is my punishment for the bad things I have done in the past and now it has affected you, I'm sorry."

I try to hold his hand but he moves it away.

Sboniso: "I have to go back home and make things right between my sister and I maybe words are not enough, maybe there is something I have to do. I committed incest, I'm cursed."

I nod.

Sboniso: "I lost my first child Malaika.."

He looks down his hands are shaking. He get up and walk out.

Today I am going back home the doctor came to check on me then discharged me. I have a lump in my throat now it has sank in that I miscarried my first child and Kgosi is not taking it well because yesterday he didn't even come back.

Dad picks me up and take me home, I stand by the balcony and look at Sboniso his curtain is opened I can see that he is packing. So I limp down the stairs going to his house.

I walk in the room.

Me: "Kgosi.."

He doesn't even turn to look at me.

Me: "Are you leaving?"

Still no response I pull his arm so he could look at me.

Me: "Don't leave now..I need you."

He can't even make eye contact with me.

Me: "Please..I want us to do this together."

He sit in bed and pull me to his lap, we hold each other and cry together.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry..but I have to go, I already told my father I am coming, Bonolo and Dintle will be going home as well, so we all get cleansed."

I nod and get off him.

Me: "Uhambe kahle." (Go well)

He nods and take his bag. I walk out first and watch him get in his car. I go back home and find dad whipping Hero so bad mom is trying to stop him.

Nqobasi: "Do you know the pain you put us through by not listening! Doing things your own way! Do you see the damage you have done?"

Hero: "Ngiyaxolisa baba."(I'm sorry dad)

He says on his knee bowing his head.

Nqobasi: "You really disappointed me, what if you died with your sister? What would have become of me and your mother huh?"

He slap him I take a step back like I was the one being slapped.

Me: "Dad..stop..I think we learnt our lesson ok! We did! We suffered for not listening to you! We got it so stop it!"

I walk away, get in bed and cry myself to ssleep

CHAPTER 62

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MALAIKA

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I am woken up by my father, I sit up looking at him.

Nqobasi: "How are you feeling?"

I shrug my shoulders.

Nqobasi: "We'll get through this together as a family, I'm sorry for the loss of your baby."

I nod.

Me: "I didn't like how you beat up Hero yesterday baba, you know his emotions were high he just had found out you're not his biological father it was all too much for him and he wasn't thinking straight."

He wipes his face.

Nqobasi: "I'm sorry I was just so upset that he didn't listen to me and your mother was going through it, forgive me and I will also apologise to him."

Me: "Ok, I knew you were gonna find us you're the best daddy in the world."

He laughs hugging me.

Nqobasi: "You gonna be fine sthandwa saBaba."

I smile.

Nqobasi: "Sboniso is waiting for your call."

He gives me his phone and walk out, I call Kgosi.

Sboniso: "Hello."

Me: "Hey.."

Sboniso: "How did you sleep?"

Me: "I think the medication made me fall asleep easier."

Sboniso: "I couldn't sleep, I should have protected you and our baby but I failed."

Me: "This wasn't your fault Kgosi."

Sboniso: "I feel so bad, I was going to have a baby. I'm not coping."

Me: "Then please come back to me, we will figure it out together."

Sboniso: "We will do a ceremony later today then tomorrow we're coming back, I want to pay damages for getting you pregnant out of wedlock, it doesn't matter that the baby didn't make it, you also need to be cleansed but your father already told me Ngcebo will do it."

I chuckle.

Me: "So you and dad are best friends now?"

Sboniso: "He will be my father in-law one day."

I smile.

Me: "Do you still love me?"

Sboniso: "I love you more now that I know you carried my seed in your womb, you are definitely the one."

I can't stop smiling.

Sboniso: "You're not feeling any pain?"

Me: "It comes and goes."

Sboniso: "I will come back and check on you myself, you know when you told me you are losing our baby I lost my mind and even forgot I'm a doctor."

I chuckle.

Sboniso: "I love you maGumede."

Me: "I love you too my King."

Sboniso: "I will buy a new phone for you when I come back."

Me: "Thank you."

I drop the call and step out of bed joining my family in the lounge, I sit down and Hero walks away and come back with a fleece blanket. He sit next to me and cover the both of us then he pull me to sleep on his lap, mom and dad are smiling looking at us.

Nqobasi: "You love your sister more than everyone in this room you can't tell me nothing."

Hero laughs.

Hero: "Fell in love with her from the day you guys came back home with her from the hospital."

He brush my hair and kiss my forehead.

Nqobasi: "I'm happy you will always have each other's backs even when I'm no longer around."

Hero: "Dad not the death talk please."

We all laugh.

Nqobasi: "I love you guys so much."

Hero: "We love you too Gumede."

Later Ngcebo comes home with all our brothers and my heavily pregnant sister Thingy. They hug me while I'm seated because I'm still weak.

Ngcebo touch my tummy.

Ngcebo: "I'm sorry for your loss, may our ancestors bless your womb with children in future."

I look down as tears fill my eyes.

Ngcebo: "Uhm..baba I won't do the ceremony today because Sboniso will be coming tomorrow to pay damages then we will cleanse my sister after the father named his child.."

Nqobasi: "I understand."

They go to their rooms then come back, we share laughter because of Makhosini and Bukhosi narrating stories that are clearly lies but very funny for a moment I forgot about what happened to me and my brother in that foreign country I am genuinely laughing I wish they never leave.

At night dad walk in my room and give me a phone.

Nqobasi: "I really don't like being an errand boy for you boyfriend but ngizothini..(what can I do)

I laugh as he shrug his shoulders walking out. The phone rings and his name flashes on the screen I smile touching my tummy thinking of the baby of this man I would have carried in my womb, pain comes back sharp I start crying.

Sboniso: "Sthandwa sami, ungakhali phela mama."(My love, don't cry mama)

I giggle wiping my tears, what was that?"

Sboniso: "I am coming back tonight with my sisters, I don't want to sleep without seeing you, luckily Dintle managed to get the flight back for us tonight."

Me: "You're coming back for me?"

Sboniso: "Yes, I feel like I understand your pain better so I should be closer, we're done with the ceremony and we're now driving to the

airport. I will call you when I get there, try to get some rest I will call you soon.”

Me: “Ok.”

I drop the call and smile, maybe our baby will bring us closer I believe that the spirit does live on, I’m from a family that lives by tradition and we have strong beliefs that we will never move away from.

I scroll dad’s phone looking at pictures and it’s mostly his wife, dad loves mom and there are our pictures as well but mom is dominating and she’s pretty as hell.

I am woken up by a phone ringing in my ear I answer it.

Sboniso: “Hey, I’m sorry for waking you up love, I just got here, I don’t want to strain you, will you be able to come to me?”

Me: “I’m coming just give me two minutes.”

I go to the bathroom and change my pad the blood is not much as before. I brush my teeth and wash my face then wear my warm gown over my pyjamas.

I find him leaning on his car but as soon as he sees me he takes quick takes to me and pick me up taking me inside. It’s around 11 pm and my sisters in-law are here. Sboniso put me gentle on the couch, I greet them.

Bonolo: “Sisi Kgosi told us what happened I’m so sorry for your loss, just know that we’re here whenever you want to talk.”

Me: “Thank you so much.”

Dintle has her baby girl on her lap, Sboniso picks up a boy that is sleeping on the couch then they both walk away with the twins, Mcebisi’s children, they are almost a year old now also their parents got married and Sboniso stood in for Dintle as her father during lobola

negotiations till the wedding day because they were still not in good terms with their father.

Dintle and Sboniso comes back, Sboniso sits next to me and Dintle next to Bonolo.

Bonolo: "Brother why are you quiet, we need something to eat."

Dintle: "We said we will be here for three days only to starve."

Sboniso widens his eyes.

Sboniso: "It's almost midnight."

Bonolo: "Still doesn't change the fact that we're hungry."

Sboniso sighs and takes his phone making a call making Bonolo and Dintle to laugh in silence.

He orders Pizza and take my hand to his bedroom. We sit down looking at each other. I touch his cheek.

Me: "How was the ceremony?"

Sboniso: "I feel like a new person baby, like something heavy has been lifted off of me. Bonolo and I bought two goats as a peace offering to each other after apologising for the way I treated her also cleansed the incest we committed."

He huffs.

Sboniso: "I took my rightful name Kgosi and left Sboniso behind but it will always be a part of me though it holds painful memories but it's all me."

I peck his lips.

Me: "I'm proud of you."

He smiles.

Sboniso: "I still have a long way to go and I would like you to be with me and be patient with me because some days are better some are worse."

Me: "I understand you better now and I'm not going anywhere."

Sboniso: "Thank you so much."

He touch my tummy and sigh, it still hurts that we never even got a chance to see my tummy grow with a little human inside.

Sboniso: "My uncles are at the hotel, I didn't want them to stay here because they kept talking about the past, the incest even after the cleansing so I just want them to accompany me to your father tomorrow then they can leave."

Me: "How is your relationship with your dad?"

Sboniso: "Well, he want me as his son but the way he is treating my sisters I can't do it, he can't even apologise and acknowledge his mistake of keeping us apart, I don't want that type of people in my life, when you're wrong you apologise you don't expect people to just move on."

I nod.

Me: "I get it."

Sboniso: "Ngiyakuthanda."(I love you.)

I smile.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda nami." (I love you too)

We hear a knock on the door, he opens.

Dintle: "Pizza is here, I need money to pay."

Sboniso: "Your sister is a doctor, you're a doctor Didintle, you both are married to Princes also you're are princesses! Just pay for the Pizza!"

Dintle: "Don't be stingy, you're a doctor and a Prince!"

Sboniso: "Aybo Dee."

She gives him her hand, Sboniso sighs and opens his wallet taking out money and shoves it to her, she laughs walking out.

Me: "Big brother."

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "I feel like I will be manipulated already by these two."

Me: "I'm happy for you, this is a huge step you've taken for yourself and your siblings, a true definition of a big brother."

We cuddle under the duvet because I am always feeling cold these days.

Sboniso: "I will take you in for a check up tomorrow after the meeting of our families."

I nod.

Me: "Thank you."

Bonolo and Dintle comes in the room so we can all eat together.

Bonolo: "Our husbands are not allowed to sleep over? They are just opposite us."

Sboniso: "No, and get out of my room I want to sleep."

Dintle: "But you're sleeping with our sister in-law."

Sboniso: "My house, my rules and get out!"

Bonolo: "Can they at least come say goodnight to the kids."

Sboniso sighs.

Sboniso: "But it will be disrespectful if they find their little sister here Bonolo, just go to sleep man!"

He is even shouting at them yet they are just staring at him.

Dintle: "Uthethelani?"(Why are you shouting?)

I am laughing because they are pressing his buttons on purpose and he is falling for it, it's sweet to watch this side of him. I love how they speak IsiZulu but they did grow up here in KZN.

Sboniso: "Bonolo, take your sister and get the hell out of my room now please."

Bonolo: "Ok! We're leaving calm down will you!"

Sboniso: "I will calm down once you're out of that door."

They walk out.

Sboniso: "They better pack their stuff tomorrow and leave, I can't deal with adults acting like kids! No way."

He is so angry it's too funny, that's how my brother feels about me sometimes but I know he loves the hell out of me.

I sleep in his loving arms, by 5 O'clock in the morning he wakes me up.

Sboniso: "Sorry for waking you up but I have to take you home before your parents and siblings wake up."

I nod, he gives me his hoodie to wear underneath the gown and put his socks on my feet.

Sboniso: "You will be fine after a few days, it's the medication that makes you feel numb, it can make you feel cold as well."

I nod.

He pulls me up and hug me.

Sboniso: "You made me a man Malaika in a way you can never imagine, our baby didn't make it but you will give me kids one day, I won't leave a woman that carried my first child, ever."

I hug him tight then peck his lips.

Me: "I love you."

I get home and go straight to my room to sleep again.

I wake up when the Modise family get here. Sboniso looks good in his black suit sitting between his two uncles.

They tell us why they are here and pay damages, there are two sheep outside, Sboniso explains that one is for getting me pregnant out of wedlock and the second one is for the baby we lost. Ngcebo starts by cleansing me, I do it behind our house in some corner with herbs then we get inside his room. He lights up only pink candles.

Ngcebo: "Did you get everything I asked Modise?"

Sboniso nods and give Ngcebo a plastic bag, Ngcebo takes out baby clothes and lay them down next to the candles, I can't help but cry by the little clothes I see in front of me. He put the sweets and other fruits on the bowl.

Ngcebo: "You bought pink clothes, why?"

Sboniso smiles a little.

Sboniso: "I strongly believe it was gonna be a girl."

Ngcebo smiles.

Ngcebo: "Inono lentombazane."(A pure girl)

Sboniso: "So my instincts were right?"

Ngcebo nods.

Ngcebo: "Do you have a name?"

Sboniso: "Khazimula.." it means shine, I look at him as he hold my hand tight.

Ngcebo calls both our ancestors to accept her because though she was born out of wedlock and my ancestors acknowledge her but also her father's ancestors recognise her so Ngcebo does the ceremony to favour both ancestors so she won't be caught in between.

Ngcebo: "Khazimula an angel, do look after your mother and father."

He does everything needed to be done and we walk out of the room. I know how important all these ceremonies are whether you did an abortion or miscarried at some point you have to acknowledge the spirit of that baby, I feel better now that everything has been done right.

Sboniso: "Baba bengisacela ukuthatha uMalaika ngimuyisa esibhedlela ukuyobheka ukuthi konke kuhamba kahle yini."(father can I take Malaika to the hospital to check if everything is well with her)

Nqobasi: "Yes it's ok."

Dad gives him his hand.

Nqobasi: "You're a man and I will never forget what you did for my family thank you Modise."

They shake hands and shoulder hug.

At the hospital he walks in with me already holding my hand with his manly walk, people are staring and I think that's what he wants the way he is so confident, I am wearing black jeans and a white poloneck to hide the bruises on my body.

We get to his office, he wears his coat first and gloves then tell me to lie down. He touches my abdomen giving me a little squeeze I flinch.

Sboniso: "Sorry.."

He shakes his head.

Sboniso: "Looks like the miscarriage is incomplete baby."

He helps me sit up and walk out with me to a ward with a scan, he moves the wand then nod.

Sboniso: "That doctor didn't do shit! There is a huge clot still stuck in your womb."

He looks so angry as he walk out again then comes back with some pills. He helps me drink them up again. After 30 minutes I feel some excruciating pain I scream, he sit next to me and hold my hand tight.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry Sthandwa sam..I'm Sorry."

He makes me lie on my back and brush my tummy in circular motion then take off my pants and panties that have a pad on them. He put a paper underneath my ass then continue to brush my tummy.

Me: "I'm in pain."

Sboniso: "It will soon be over my love I promise, this was gonna keep hurting you if it stayed inside of you."

I feel something slippery between my thighs. Sboniso's forehead is sweating as he put a very big clot in a bowl, he comes back to me and pull up my legs cleaning me up I keep flinching in pain.

Sboniso: "Sorry baby."

I see him removing a pad on my panty and put a clean one helping me wear it and my pants. He hugs me tight not saying anything.

Me: "Are you that gentle with all your patients?"

I say trying to break this sad silence. He chuckles and step back from me looking away while wiping his eyes. I touch his hand.

Me: "We are going to be ok."

He nods.

Sboniso: "I am actually a Surgeon not a Gynecologist, But I wouldn't let anyone touch my woman, I'm a jealous type. When you give me more babies I will be your gynecologist throughout."

I laugh shaking my head.

Sboniso: "I didn't go to medical school all those years for my woman to be handled by someone else in a hospital room."

Me: "Come on now!"

Sboniso: "I'm sure you can also manage my finances, CA."

I laugh pushing him away from me.

Sboniso: "I love a smart woman, a qualified Chartered Accountant at 23 years old."

I smile looking down.

Me: "You've done your research huh."

Sboniso: "Your father was blessed with two accountants, my father only gave birth to Doctors in different fields, we're a match."

I laugh.

Me: "That doesn't make sense."

Sboniso: "It does, to me."

My brother and I both did Bcom Accounting but I am the only one who trained for a Bachelor of commerce Honours to be a CA but in our family business he is into finance because he started working there first and also he's smarter and I'm lazy.

He takes me out to eat I am now wearing a new jacket he bought for me at the mall because I was feeling cold.

I am staring at him as he eat his food, I can see the change in him, even his aura, he is more calmer now and can express himself more.

We go back to his house, Bonolo and Dintle are cooking up a storm. He smiles and walk over to them kissing both their cheeks, as they stand there all three of them you can tell they are siblings just Sboniso is a bit darker in complexion than the girls but they all do look alike.

Bonolo: "How did it go?"

Sboniso: "The ceremony went well, but can you believe the doctor discharged Malaika without a proper check up. She still had a clot stuck in her womb, I would have understood if it was those small clots but that was in size of my fist."

"What!" The girls exclaim, I don't understand shit as they start speaking their medical terms clearly pissed at the doctor.

Me: "So you guys argue using science?"

They laugh, they've been at it for a couple of minutes.

Sboniso: "You guys in your family argue with figures."

They crack up. Phezukonke walk in, I laugh because at his age he is already acting like my brothers especially his father Kumkani.

Phezukonke: "Auntie Malika."

I smile and bend a little to hug him since I can't pick him up.

Me: "Love how you call my name baby boy, how are you?"

Phezukonke: "I'm good Princess."

I kiss his forehead.

I eat dinner with them then go back home.

At night I am standing by the balcony I see a car with lights on just opposite my gate. I rush out to mom and dad's room and luckily I find them dressed.

Me: "There's a car at our gate baba."

I'm already panicking. He rolls over the bed and kneel on the bed taking out a gun on his mattress then he rush out. I follow behind him.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot sir it's me, Malaika knows me."

He step out of the car raising his hands up, it's Anold.

Nqobasi: "What are you doing in my gate at this time of the night huh?"

Anold: "I'm sorry I just wanted to speak to Malaika, please."

Dad cocks his gun, I think he can tell by the accent that he is one of them.

Me: "Dad stop..don't do it I know him."

He chuckles and step back a little. I step closer to Anold.

Me: "Hey.."

Anold: "I'm happy you guys got out."

I nod.

Me: "You need money to start over?"

He look down.

Me: "We will meet tomorrow, write down your number."

He goes back to the car then come back with a piece of paper with his number, dad is still pointing a gun at him.

Me: "Bye."

He drives away.

Me: "Dad he's not here anymore put the gun away!"

I laugh at how dramatic he is.

The next day dad ask his two securities to accompany me to a restaurant where I'll meet Anold. I sit down after a brief hug.

Anold: "Are you okay? How is the baby?"

I look down.

Me: "I lost the baby, the last beating was too much my body couldn't handle it so I miscarried."

He touch my hand.

Anold: "I'm so sorry."

I hear someone clearing their throat I slowly look up it's Sboniso with a small plastic bag.

Sboniso: "Hi."

Me: "Hey...uhm...this is Anold a friend."

Sboniso: "Mmmh friend, where are you from?"

Anold: "Uhm...I'm from..I come from Nigeria but.."

Sboniso raise his eyebrow I don't like the frown on his face right now.

Sboniso: "I got you a phone I promised you, I didn't expect to see you here I thought you were home resting."

He put down a plastic from iStore. He walks out and I can see his car driving away in high speed through the window.

All of a sudden I hear two gunshots then Anold is down bleeding from the neck and chest I rush to him but dad's guys pull me up and take me to the car, I know it wasn't them because they were standing where I could see them, the bullets came out of nowhere and whoever that was is a professional because Anold died on the spot I just hate that it happened in front of me.

I start at Sboniso's house first, I find him in his room topless.

Me: "Thank you for the phone."

He nods.

Me: "Are we okay?"

Sboniso: "Yes Malaika, I do get intimidated but not that easy."

Me: "Did you kill him?"

He chuckles.

Sboniso: "He's dead?"

I sigh.

Me: "Why are you not surprised then?"

Sboniso: "I'm just laughing at his liver! Unesibindi(he's got guts) to show face here while he was one of the people who got you kidnapped and beaten up like a dog to a point of losing my baby! He had the audacity to show up here! In Durban?"

He is so angry veins are popping on the sides of his head. I decide to just leave him because he looks like he is about to explode.

*

CHAPTER 63

*

MALAIKA

*

Kgosi and I haven't been talking for two days now I'm upset that he hasn't tried contacting me because of Anold. He is letting this get inbetween us in a time like this.

My new beautiful and expensive phone my boyfriend bought for me rings. I answer it, I know it's him I am using the simcard he bought with the phone so he might have took the number then.

Me: "Hello.."

Sboniso: "Sthandwa sami."(My love)

I keep quiet.

Sboniso: "Ngicela ukukubona."(Can I please see you)

Me: "Where."

Sboniso: "My house."

I drop the call and wear my flip flops, my brothers and sister left yesterday and I was sad because having a house full made me forget about my pain a little.

I walk in his house and stop by the door when I see the curtains all closed there is a picnic set up in the middle of the lounge, red rose petals on the floor. He walks in the room with his white socks with shorts and nothing on his upper body.

Sboniso: "MaMnguni."

He says walking up to me then take my hand leading me to a comfortable cushion on the floor then he sit opposite me.

Sboniso: "I know you're probably angry at me for not contacting you for two days but I was panicking planning all this, it's new to me so I wanted it to be perfect for you I was so nervous."

I look around as he press the remote soft music starts playing, he pours non-alcoholic wine in our glasses and give on to me.

Me: "Thank you."

We eat good food that he prepared and there's a chocolate cake too my favourite.

Sboniso: "Baby."

I look at him.

Sboniso: "Are you upset about your...friend?"

I shake my head.

Me: "Did you kill him?"

Sboniso: "And what if I did Malaika?"

I look down.

Sboniso: "Was there something going on between the two of you?"

Me: "No."

Sboniso: "You're not honest with me."

Me: "Uhm...I was trying to get him close so he can get us out of that house."

Sboniso: "How were you doing that Sthandwa sami?"

Me: "I acted like I was interested in him?"

Sboniso: "And you ended up having feelings for him?"

Me: "What!? No."

He raise his eyebrow and chuckle.

Sboniso: "Did you even think about me? Were you happy finding out about our baby?"

I chuckle and throw the drink at his chest then get up. He tries to hold me but I push him away.

Me: "How can you say that to me?"

Sboniso: "I'm sorry..I'm sorry Sthandwa sam it's just that..I saw how upset you were that day when you confronted me about him being dead, I saw how much you cared for him. I just want to know were you in love with him?"

Me: "I'm going home."

Sboniso: "Malaika..you know you're running away because you did develop feelings for your kidnapper!"

Me: "Ok fine! I did care about him! He took care of me at some point! He would give me food, took me to a doctor, cleaned my bruises! So kill me for caring for a person who was there for me!"

He blinks a bit then nod.

Sboniso: "So you forgot about me at that moment because I wasn't there to take care of you?"

Me: "Your jealousy is not cute at all! He's dead! You killed him so let it go."

His breathing is changing by the minutes he looks hurt but he is not even denying killing him.

Me: "I'm going home."

I walk to the door.

Sboniso: "Please don't leave."

Me: "Why should I stay Kgosi you're accusing me of cheating on you right now."

Sboniso: "Ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry)

I shake my head and go home.

I sleep in my bed looking up, I hate that he may be right, why am I so hurt that he is dead? He once hurt me and even tried to rape me.

In the middle of the night I decide to walk over to his house, I don't like it when we fight. I find the setup still there in the lounge. I go to his room and find him sleeping in bed holding a pillow. I get on top of him.

Me: "Hold me instead."

I say removing a pillow and get in his arms, he holds me without even opening his eyes.

In the morning I am still sleeping on top of him but his erection keeps twitching so I try to move away he hold me tight.

Me: "Hey! Let go of me."

He smiles with his eyes closed.

Sboniso: "I am attending my therapy session today, I haven't forgotten that you promised to do it with me."

I chuckle.

Me: "I want to apologise first, for being so defensive yesterday when you asked about Anold, honestly I did care about him but not a single day passed without thinking about you especially when I found out I was pregnant I kept praying we both make it out alive so we could be with you, but..."

I bite my lower lip to stop myself from crying.

Me: "I have dated guys before and none of them has ever made me so angry like you."

Sboniso: "Hawu baby."

Me: "And none of them has made me feel the way you make me feel, I love you and it scares me sometimes it's like I will wake up and find you not there!"

Sboniso: "But you're my dream girl, from day one I saw you at your home with Princess Thingo, Mcebisi even told me your dad would kill me."

I raise my head up to look at his face.

Me: "That was a year and a half ago, why didn't you say something?"

Sboniso: "I was gonna hurt you then, I was gonna bleed on you so bad you wouldn't even recognise yourself, you were gonna be just like me, I was at my worst then but I could hide it very well in public but I had my eyes on you the entire time there, you've always captured my heart even when I saw you on TV."

He flips us over making me laugh, he get on top of me.

Sboniso: "You're beautiful and I need you in my life, you're my remedy at this point."

I laugh.

Sboniso: "So are you coming with me to my session Sthandwa?"(love)

I nod.

Sboniso: "Ok, how is the bleeding now?"

Me: "Not much."

Sboniso: "Can I check?"

Me: "Ay check what?"

He laughs and kneel in bed taking off my short pyjama, I don't stop him. He check my pad then nod pulling up my pants.

Sboniso: "The blood is a bit dark now so maybe we will give it a day and it will be over."

Me: "Ok."

Sboniso: "Are you horny?"

Me: "What?"

Sboniso: "You're horny, your breathing changed the minute I pulled down those panties, it's understandable, this is now more like periods, the blood is hot and your body is reacting, it wants my dick."

I widen my eyes and push him lightly with my foot, he laughs.

Sboniso: "You know I'm right!"

Me: "No you're not."

Sboniso: "Then let's take a shower together I want to prove something."

Me: "I won't take a shower with you while I'm bleeding."

Sboniso: "Hey! That blood is a part of me and also it will stop as soon as I thrust in you."

Me: "I'm definitely not taking a shower with you pervert!"

He is laughing so hard, my heart smiles, I love seeing him happy.

Me: "I'll see you."

I say walking out but he starts chasing me I run around the house like a child screaming for him to stop. He finally catch me and picks me up.

Me: "Sboniso stop we're too old for this."

Sboniso: "I'm too old to love you?"

He hold my leg and wrap it around his waist then do that to the other one.

Sboniso: "Your horniness is rubbing off on me."

Me: "I'm not horny!"

Sboniso: "You can't convince me otherwise baby, I see right through you."

Me: "Then you're clearly blind."

I get off him and run out going home, it's still a bit dark so I go to my room and take my time making myself look adorable, I don't have to look like my problems and I have to match my handsome boyfriend. I wear my blue ripped jeans, a white formal shirt and a blue blazer then complete the look with my black stilettos . I do my make-up and straighten my natural hair.

My phone rings and it's my babe.

Me: "Hey honey."

Sboniso: "Baby?"

I chuckle, I look good so I feel so confident right now, I feel like I deserve him!

Me: "Hey.."

Sboniso: "Malaika.."

His voice is low sending shivers down my spine.

Me: "Kgosi.."

Sboniso: "What are you doing to me Sthandwa sami?"

Me: "What did I do Modise?"

Sboniso: "God..Fuck.."

Me: "When are we leaving babe?"

Sboniso: "Uhm...are you done getting ready?"

Me: "Yes I am."

Sboniso: "I'm coming, I want to tell your father where we are going."

Me: "Ok, see you soon then."

All this time I am watching myself in the mirror, Good Lord I look great! It's been a while since I have been this confident about myself.

I take my phone and handbag then walk down the stairs my stilettos are making a statement and it makes everyone turn to look at me. They all have their eyes popped out. Hero quickly get up and help me down the remaining stairs. Sboniso looks like he can't believe what he's seeing in front of him.

Me: "Morning mom and dad, brother."

I smile and look at Sboniso.

Me: "Morning King."

I take a little bow. He slowly get up.

Sboniso: "Nkosazana."(Princess)

Tamia: "You look so hot! Wow baby!"

Nqobasi: "Like! Hhaayi maaarn!" He exclaims.

I laugh breaking the eye contact with Sboniso who is just staring at me.

Hero: "Uhm...Kgosi you need to breathe brother."

He blinks rapidly then look down shyly.

Sboniso: "I...Uuuh...uhm we will leave now baba thank you."

He takes my hand and we walk out. He kiss me as soon as we are out of sight.

Sboniso: "Ayboo baby.."

He makes me take a turn then hug me.

Sboniso: "I don't think I will be able to concentrate on that session baby, look at you!"

My confidence is now shooting up the roof! The compliment is real I can tell by how he is looking at me scanning my whole body.

Sboniso: "Yhooo!"

I giggle.

Me: "Baby...stop."

He open the passenger door for me then drive to his hospital. We take a lift to the fourth floor. He is holding me closer to his body while holding both our cellphones and keys on the other hand.

He knocks in the office once then we walk in, a male slowly turns and he looks stunned, he looks a bit older than him.

Sboniso: "Doctor Zungu."

They shake hands but Zungu's eyes are on me.

Sboniso: "Am I too early?"

Zungu shakes his head and moves his eyes from me.

Sboniso: "This is MY woman, Malaika Gumede and she will sit in for my session today."

Zungu gives me his left hand and I give him mine I thought he wanted to shake it but he stares down at my hand then smile.

Zungu: "I don't see a ring on her finger so how is she your woman?"

I can feel my man tensing up next to me.

Me: "You can't provoke your clients sir that's so unprofessional, If he says I'm his woman then I'm his woman it doesn't matter what you think."

I say trying to sound as polite as I can but I'm annoyed.

Zungu: "It was just a silly joke Miss, I'm really sorry."

I shake my head. I think this day is already ruined Sboniso is not here anymore. I stand in front of him and peck his lips.

Me: "Your therapist shouldn't be your colleagues, I will find the right one for you. Someone who doesn't know us and won't make silly jokes. This one is unprofessional and childish."

Zungu: "But our sessions have been great so far I just made one silly joke I'm sorry."

Me: "I hear you."

I walk out making a call to my brother Kumkani so he can ask Bonolo or Didintle if there are any good therapists they can recommend for my baby.

I feel his hand on my waist and we walk out of the building. Kumkani calls me back.

Me: "Bhuti.."

"It's me sisi Bonolo."

Me: "Oh hey sis."

Bonolo: "I called Doctor Nissan, a white woman and she is free today, I already made the payment for today's session because we didn't book in advance."

Me: "Oh thank you so much."

Bonolo: "Put the phone on speaker."

I do what she says.

Bonolo: "Kgosi."

He widens his eyes.

Sboniso: "Bonolo.."

Bonolo: "This time, just open up more you'll see, you will feel better I promise you."

Sboniso: "Ok..thank you."

Bonolo: "Your nephews and niece loved you, Phezukonke can't stop talking about you, so you have to get better so they can be able to visit alone to starve in your house."

We all laugh at the last part.

Sboniso: "Thank you so much Modise, I will call them later."

Bonolo: "Bye.."

She drops the call, I hug my man.

Me: "She paid for today's session."

Sboniso: "Oh wow, really?"

I nod. The phone beeps Bonolo sent us the address and told us to not be late. I'm glad they gave him a chance.

We meet with Dr Nissan, a beautiful white lady probably in her middle 40s. We introduce ourselves and take seats.

Nissan: "Uhm..Can you tell me about yourself a little more."

She says looking at me.

Me: "Uhm..he's actually the reason we're here."

Nissan: "Yes he's the reason you're here, he trusts you, I want to know why?"

She says happily, she's a free spirited person I like her already.

Me: "Uhm...well, he loves me that's the first thing I can say."

Sboniso's bold laughter fills the entire room.

Nissan: "Love it for you!"

I laugh.

Me: "We've been together for a few months but feels like we've known each other for years, I believe I understand him better."

Nissan: "In what way?"

Me: "Every way, emotionally, physically, I can read his body language, I know when he's upset, angry or just not in the mood and also I understand him sexually."

Sboniso chokes and start coughing I look at him, he is frowning staring at me.

Nissan: "So what do you think is the problem?"

I look at my baby, he is also looking at me then nod.

Sboniso: "I'd love to see me from your point of view."

Me: "Well at first I didn't understand certain things about him and it frustrated me to a point that I wanted to give up on our relationship but one day, he opened up about his past to me."

Nissan: "Care to share it with me? It will stay between us I just want to hear it from you like he said, he wants to see himself in your point of view."

I look at him again, he nods.

Me: "He was living alone with a person he thought was his mother. At the age of 7 she started touching him inappropriately on his private part, it went on to oral sex then she raped him."

He hold my hand.

Me: "He saw her in every woman and he would shut his eyes everytime we get intimate."

Nissan: "What do you think that was about?"

Me: "He wasn't really into intimacy but just wanted to cum and get it over and done with."

She nods and start writing something down.

Me: "But one day I forced him to look at me that was the first time he made love to me, I think all this time he had the picture of this woman when he shuts his eyes that's why it wasn't as passionate."

He squeeze my hand.

Nissan: "Mr Modise.."

He nods, he looks really emotional.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry.."

He says looking at me.

Nissan: "You had a traumatic childhood sir."

Sboniso: "I..."

He clench his jaws.

Nissan: "You still think a lot about your past?"

Sboniso: "How can I not? I didn't have time to play with my peers because I had to learn to please an old woman."

He raises his voice a bit, I gentle squeeze his hand.

Sboniso: "It's worse cause I met a girl and she looked so much like her so I asked her out just to pay revenge using her and later I found out the girl is my sister, from the same mother and father! How do I move past that completely! How do I undo all the bad things I did to her!"

He is trembling on his seat but doesn't let go of my hand.

Nissan: "You're harbouring so much anger inside of you that is why it is so hard for you to move on."

Sboniso: "I have so many questions! Why she did that to me I was just a little boy."

Nissan: "Have you tried confronting this woman?"

He quickly shakes his head.

Sboniso: "No, I ran away when I turned 15 years old, she is my worst nightmare! I'm scared of her."

Nissan: "You need to know that what that woman did to you wasn't your fault, you did nothing wrong. Stop punishing yourself and the people around you for that. Stop giving her so much power in your life while she's not even around, live! You have someone who cares about you, don't you want to be better for her?"

Sboniso: "I do..I want to get better for her. We just lost our first child through miscarriage I don't even know if I'm doing enough for her to see that I'm there."

Nissan: "Oh I'm so sorry for your loss, how do you feel about that?"

Sboniso: "I'm still asking myself questions like, am I meant for beautiful things."

Nissan: "But she's right there next to you, beautiful as ever, what do you mean?"

I chuckle looking at Sboniso.

Sboniso: "I'm proud of myself that I scored such a beautiful girl."

Nissan: "Then focus on the positive, don't let the past hold you back, you're here, a survivor you should be proud of yourself for coming out of that dark place alive, continue to live for yourself and shame the devil."

Me: "Amen!"

Sboniso laughs shaking his head.

We end our session after an hour, Sboniso shared that he still gets suicidal from time to time and on our next session we will find solutions and coping mechanism for him.

He is driving but then takes a different route outside of Durban.

Me: "Where are we going babe?"

Sboniso: "To confront my past."

I look at him as he hold the steering wheel tight I put my hand over his thigh so he can calm down.

He stops after a long drive, there is big house and a small rondavel next to it. He is breathing heavily now.

Me: "Maybe we should go home baby, we'll do this some other day."

Sboniso: "I...I want to do it today."

His eyes turns red as he stares ahead I look where he is looking, there is a woman who looks like she is her late 50s if not 60. My stomach turns when I think that this is the woman. Sboniso is 29 years old that means this woman was 3 decades older than him when she raped him.

We step out of the car, he pulls me closer to his shaking body. The woman frowns and just sit down on the ground and start panting, I don't know if it's an act or she's really sick. We just stand there and watch her drama then she finally stops panting and stare at Sboniso.

Sboniso: "Ma."

He whispers and go on his knee before her, the woman has tears rolling down her cheeks.

Sboniso: "I'm scared of you, I can't even look at you."

"Where did you go? I thought something bad happened to you."

Sboniso: "You are something bad that happened to me!"

He shouts hitting the ground with his fist.

"What did I do?"

I look at this old woman, is she really asking that?"

Sboniso: "The things you forced me to do to you! You ruined my life! You raped me countless times you didn't even care if I get hurt."

"How was having sex ruining your life? You're a boy I was teaching you to be a man and satisfy a woman, I am sure you turned out great."

I am disgusted.

Sboniso sit on his butt and sob with his hands above his head. The woman is showing no remorse.

I kneel in front of him and force him to look at me.

Me: "It's ok my love, let's go home ok, you've taken a huge step coming here, you did great it's ok."

He get up and walk inside the house I hear glasses shattering I run inside and find him holding a knife pointing right on his chest. His eyes are tightly closed.

Me: "Baby..Kgosi...put that knife down please my love."

His hands are shaking, the knife looks sharp.

Me: "Please..I just lost our baby I don't want to lose you too, don't do this to me please, we gonna be ok sthandwa sami please Modise."

He slowly lift the knife up.

Me: "I'm begging you..I will be there every step of the way, I won't leave you..just open your eyes, it's me.."

He opens his eyes then tears stream down as he let go of the knife and rush to hug me tight.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry...I'm so sorry."

Me: "It's ok..let's go home."

I hold his hand walking out, the old woman is panicking she's trying to get up but she's failing.

Sboniso: "You will die all alone, like a dog that you are, I hope you rot in hell."

"Sboniso...Niso...I raised you!"

She shouts.

Sboniso: "I'm actually glad I came here, seeing you all wrinkled up and alone makes me believe karma has visited you, may you not die now but feel pain for the next 7 years, an age of a little you used as your sex toy."

He spits on the ground heavy rains starts pouring. He opens his drivers seat and ask me to drive then sit at the back. I drive us back to Durban. He is sitting there with his face covered in both hands. I am worried about him.

We walk up to his room and take off our clothes because they are a bit wet. He hold my waist from behind and pull down my panties slowly, I have a panty liner on today and it's clean, he did say he is giving it one day.

Sboniso: "Your abdomen doesn't hurt anymore?"

Me: "No."

He turns me around and push me to bed. His hard dick fills me up I grab on the sheets. He cusses.

He keeps his eyes on me, I know it's too soon since the miscarriage but I think we both need this; I feel like he is pouring his soul to me, he is making love to me in a way I can't even explain, gentle and passionate. We change position he lets me be on top, I move on top of him we both have tears in our eyes. We cum holding each other tight.

Sboniso: "Thank you so much for being there for me."

I nod and move to sleep next to him.

Me: "Always.."

Sboniso: "I guess old age brought her back because when my father went to her house the neighbours said she moved years ago and left a boy to look after the house."

He sighs.

Sboniso: "I'm sorry for scaring you Malaika."

Me: "I know you won't just heal and move on over night, it will take time and I have all the time in the world I will wait here with you."

Sboniso: "I found a Gem."

Me: "And don't you forget."

He laughs and kiss my cheek. We sleep after I called mom and dad and told them I'm right next door they shouldn't worry about me.

In the morning I wake up alone in bed, I move my fingers on my left hand there is something irritating there so I look at my hand and scream in shock sitting up.

Me: "Kgosi!"

I scream his name staring at a huge diamond in my slim ring finger.

He walk in holding a bunch of flowers dressed casually. He goes on his knee next to bed.

Sboniso: "I already figured out that we're soulmates I just want you to tell me you see it too by saying yes to being my wife, please.

I scream again and jump out of bed butt naked throwing myself at him, he falls on his back laughing with his hands holding me.

Me: "Yes!"

He kiss me right there and then and we make passionate love on the floor. I know he is not perfect and he has a lot going on so why not support him a hundred percent as his wife than just a girlfriend. I am marrying Kgosi Modise with all his baggage, I'm all for it!

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CHAPTER 64

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THINGO-LAMAQWABE

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I feel like I have been pregnant forever, I'm 10 months pregnant now way over my due date and my husband is not taking it well. He spends time in his ancestral hut asking if he did anything wrong or should he do something for our babies to come out but Ngcebo told him everything is fine, he should be patient. We both took leave at work two months ago thinking I will give birth the following month but I'm still here.

I dream of snakes lately, they are always around me.

I just woke up and try to get off bed, my tummy is huge my waist hurts. Mathenyoka walk in wearing his pants and has ibhayi over his shoulder. He rush to me and help me up.

Me: "So I slept alone again today?"

I ask as he takes me to the bathroom.

Me: "Kwanda.."

He looks at me.

Me: "Ngcebo told you everything is fine but you're making me sleep alone because you keep consulting for no reason."

Mathenyoka: "No reason baby? My kids should be born by now but it's not happening, forgive me for being scared ok."

Me: "But I'm fine, I can still feel them moving around."

Mathenyoka: "Then why did we move way past the due date?"

He is so upset.

Me: "Our kids will be fine."

I kiss him, he groans pulling me by my waist. He has been avoiding having sex with me because it starts off great then I feel uncomfortable because well my stomach is not so little then I make him stop without even cuming I can tell it frustrates him but he takes it like a loving man he is, he got me pregnant so he understands all these changes better than anyone.

He takes off my gown and turn me around with my hands on the wall , he slides his dick in from behind making sure he holds my waist carefully. His strokes are slow and gentle I am feeling so much pleasure I can't stop cuming with each stroke.

Mathenyoka: "Fuck...Sthandwa sam..baby...shit.."

He moves faster and deeper then tenses up squeezing my waist tight, he groans.

Mathenyoka: "Mmmm...Aaaah shit!"

He pulls out and take my hand I get in the bathtub, he get in behind me. The pain on my back comes back as he wash my body.

Me: "My waist hurt so much."

Mathenyoka: "Let me rub it maybe you'll feel better."

He does it while we're still inside the tub. I feel the kick and it's like it's in my vagina.

Me: "Mmm.."

Mathenyoka: "What's wrong?"

Me: "There's a very strong kick on my tummy it hurts."

Mathenyoka: "Sorry.."

I feel kicks all over my tummy Mathenyoka grunts and starts shaking..the room gets cold a big snake slithers in. I feel something like a knife cuts through my abdomen I scream, something is gushing out my vagina. Mathenyoka doesn't stop grunting he is so loud I am even getting scared as the snake moves around the tub.

My husband finally calms down and step out of the tub then wrap ibhayi around his waist, he goes on his knees in front of the snake and clap hands, he keeps clapping and the babies turn on my tummy.

Me: "Kwanda!"

I scream his name he get up and take me out of the water I bend balancing my hands on the tub. He removes the water we used only to fill up the bathtub with clean water. He help me get inside again I don't ask any questions but just get in.

I sit there shivering. He is now on the call with Ngcebo.

Mathenyoka: "I was told that she needs to give birth in the water."

Ngcebo: "Yes, I'm on my way burn the incense so long."

He walk out and come back wearing his pants now. He kneels down and burn the incense. I scream as pain shoots through my abdomen again.

Mathenyoka: "Sthandwa sam..breathe ok...my ancestors are with us, you gonna deliver our babies safely."

I nod, he is sweating already.

Ngcebo walk in with mom and Wenzile. Ngcebo tells them to sit down as he starts chanting Ndlovu clan names then switch up and call oGumede. The snake is still slithering all around the tub. Mathenyoka get in the water and start rubbing my tummy I hold on to his knees as the urge to push comes stronger I push so hard I feel something getting heavy on my pussy. I look down between my thighs the baby is out under the water. Ngcebo quickly takes the baby out, cut the cord with a razor and wrap him up with his father's ancestral cloth and give the baby to mom.

Ngcebo: "It's a boy."

I smile but for a second because more pain comes back I hold on to my husband's knees again and push, the little human is out too, Ngcebo gives the baby to Wenzile.

I feel like the room is spinning as more excruciating pain comes back.

Mathenyoka: "Ngcebo, what's happening?"

Ngcebo chuckles. Mathenyoka starts groaning then his loud grunt makes the room shake something comes out again I'm shocked to see another baby in the water I thought I was carrying two.

Mathenyoka step out of the water and takes the baby out, he cut his cord then kneel down, he is in disbelief as the snake release it's saliva on the baby and does the same to the other two.

Mathenyoka starts laughing happily carrying the last baby in his arms.

Mathenyoka: "I have three boys...Sthandwa sami. You gave me three boys."

His laughter is followed by tears, I smile feeling so tired, he's happy and that has always been what matters most to me.

Ngcebo: "Name them phela so we can greet.."

Mathenyoka: "Gatsheni, Boyabenyathi, Mpongo kaZingelwayo, Sonkophe, Nina bakwa shlangu sihle Mthiyane, Ngokuthiya amadoda emazibukweni."

I smile proudly as he recite his clan praises, you can tell he is over the moon.

Mathenyoka: "The one who saw the sun first is Shlangu."

Mom smiles and get up showing me my baby boy, Shlangu.

Mathenyoka: "The second one is Sihle."

Wenzile shows me Sihle.

Mathenyoka chuckles and look at his son in his arms.

Mathenyoka: " Wena unguMthiya...Gatsheni."

Ngcebo moves them around the incense.

Ngcebo: "Shlangu, Sihle no Mthiya grow up boGatsheni and be strong like your father, thank you for Mthiya, our surprise baby."

They walk out with the baby my husband cleans me up after I pushed out the sac. He is so gentle and he can't stop kissing me and thanking me.

Mathenyoka: "Mama wezingane zami."

I smile as he hold my hand supporting me to our bedroom. Mom and Wenzile already dressed my babies we only bought two pairs of everything matching because we thought we are having two boys but we have three now so daddy has to add more clothes, their surprise brother is wearing differently from the two.

I slowly sit down and mom shows me how to breastfeed, she has been ululating. Mathenyoka get in bed next to me holding Sihle, I am breastfeeding Mthiya and Shlangu is with Wenzile.

I breastfeed all three of them Mathenyoka put the two in their cot beds he bought two months ago then Mthiya sleep between us, he is so tiny.

The whole family walk in and they all take turns taking my babies.

Malaika hugs me first sitting next to me then ask to hold Mthiya.

She is holding him gentle but I can see tears in her eyes.

Malaika: "He's so tiny and cute.."

I smile and brush her back, I know why she's emotional, she miscarried her baby the pain is still fresh.

Me: "It's ok..when did you get here?"

Malaika: "This morning Dad and I came to speak to uBab'Omdala, Sboniso wants to marry me."

She says showing me the ring, I scream holding her hand.

Me: "Wow! I'm happy for you sisi."

She smiles and stare at my baby boy.

Malaika: "I think I will come back home often so I can see these cuties."

I laugh.

Me: "Please do, I will need all the help I can get."

Later they all leave us with our sleeping babies. Their dad keep checking on them.

Me: "But if they are awake yiu will hear them cry Kwanda."

He chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "I just can't get over watching them sleep."

I smile holding his hand.

Me: "You've been so supportive throughout my pregnancy, thank you Gatsheni."

Mathenyoka: "Even though the last month I have been going crazy."

Me: "It's understandable I was also scared when the due date passed."

At night they wake up on different times I breastfeed them and their father is up with me all the time.

In the morning I bath and breastfeed them, one after the other my husband helps me bath them then we go to the lounge. I relax on the couch while they sleep on the comfortable space their father made for them on the floor. We hear a knock and Mathenyoka opens thre door. I hear him taking a deep breath.

"Hi, I heard your wife gave birth I came to say congratulations."

I can hear that's his younger sister's voice Nonto, the one who seems slow and quiet.

Mathenyoka: "I don't want you here Ntobe, I want nothing to do with you."

Ntobe: "I brought this for them I made it myself, I heard yesterday that the Princess gave birth so I stayed up all night making these."

She tries to give him the plastic bag but Kwanda doesn't take it. Her speech is slow and a bit slurred I don't know if it's just how she is or something is wrong with her.

Me: "Uhm..can she come in baby..I'm sure she won't do anything."

Mathenyoka looks at me and sigh letting Nonto in, he always says I can manipulate him without doing much because he hates saying no to me, he loves me too much and I'm happy I found a man who would do anything for me, I feel the same about him, him and the boys now are my life.

Nonto sits down and look around like it's the first time she's here.

Me: "Are you okay?"

She nods, she seems shaken, Mathenyoka starts grunting, all my boys wake up and start wailing I don't even know who to pick up first.

Mathenyoka: "Ungena emzini wami nesilwane Ntobeko? Uzobulala izingane zami?"(You come into my house with evil spirits Ntobeko? You're here to kill my kids?)

He charges at her and grab her neck squeezing it I can see Ntobeko's eyes rolling back.

Me: "Kwanda...stop baby.."

I slowly get up and pull him away from her, she falls on the floor not moving.

He rush out and come back, he sprinkle holly water all over the house while praying. I take Shlangu first and breastfeed him while rocking him.

Their dad finally comes back and pick up both Sihle and Mthiya and pace around with them. After they are all calm he takes them to our bedroom while I check on Nonto. She is still breathing so I sprinkle some of that holly water on her face she wakes up and gasp sitting up.

Me: "Why did you come to my house to do evil Nonto, you also have a child why would you want to kill my babies?"

She opens her mouth but looks like words won't come out. I notice something strange with her tongue. I go check on Kwanda in his room and find him kneeling down praying for our kids, I walk back out and wait for him.

He comes back and stare at Nonto in anger.

Mathenyoka: "I stayed away from your family and you are following me, what do you want from me?"

Me: "Something is wrong with her baby, calm down and try to consult."

Mathenyoka: "Consult to my ancestors for this piece of shit Mam'Ndlovu? I won't do that!"

I look at him with pleading eyes.

Mathenyoka: "No Thingo, you and our kids is where I draw the line! I'm done with these people! I should just put bullets through their skulls then move on!"

Me: "I understand you're angry but please just this one thing Baba wabafana."(Boys daddy)

I see his eyes softening up, he looks away hiding his smile.

Mom and Malaika walk in and I'm happy they are here, they greet us and Malaika rush to our bedroom to see the babies. She's here to prepare for her Lobola negotiations that will take place in three days.

Mom follows her and Kwanda asks that I go with them in the ancestral hut since mom and Malaika are here to look after my babies for a few minutes.

Nonto is sitting quietly looking lost, Mathenyoka takes his ancestral bones and scatter them in front of Nonto.

He grunts loud and shake his head, he keeps grunting Nonto just collapse out of nowhere.

I check on her. Kwanda opens her mouth her tongue is almost in half, someone clearly was trying to cut it. Mathenyoka removes her head wrap and look at the top of her head I see him shaking his head. I look over and see that she has a hole there but it's not deep.

Mathenyoka: "Bebezama ukumenza umkhovu."(They were trying to make her an evil spiritual animal, a walking corpse)

I look at him shocked.

Mathenyoka: "But I don't understand why they want me to help her! She was always on mom's side she helped her abuse me."

Me: "But what if this started long ago, maybe she wasn't herself even then?"

He stares down at her.

Mathenyoka: "There was a time where we got along, after dad's death she would sneak in and give me food but it was very brief she also started changing and acted like mom and Khuli."

He sighs.

Mathenyoka: "They did this to her."

Me: "Then maybe we should help her Sthandwa sami, it won't take anything away from us."

He slowly nods.

Mathenyoka: "Dad is fighting, he's the one protecting her, that's why they can't finish what they wanted to do with her but they can still use her to get to me."

He is getting angry.

Mathenyoka: "I'm getting tired of that woman, and I'm running out of patience."

Nonto wakes up and look around.

Nonto: "Kwanda.."

I feel bad for her, the way she talks is sad they almost turned her into a mute, an animal.

Mathenyoka: "Do you want to be free?"

She looks at him and slowly nod.

Nonto: "I made clothes for your babies last night."

She smiles wide Kwanda chuckles.

Mathenyoka: "Thank you. You used to make me play dolls with you and you would make clothes for them, I can't believe that turned out to be a real talent, I hated all of it."

They both chuckle.

Nonto: "I'm sorry, sometimes I will do something and not remember but I now remember everything we did to you."

Mathenyoka: "Why did you do it?"

Nonto: "I don't know, mom would snap her fingers and whisper things to my ear I would do exactly what she ask of me."

Kwanda nods.

Mathenyoka: "I will help you then you will leave Nonto, go overseas and start over away from mom and Khuli, be what you've always wanted I will help you."

Nonto: "Really?"

He nods and they hold hands. Mathenyoka starts grunting and hissing a snake slither in and moves all around us in circles, my husband is praying and sweating then he turns and start hitting drums hard. I see Malaika waving at the door I leave them and go to the main house because two of my babies want their milk.

My husband joins me in bed at night after taking a shower.

Me: "Is there any hope? She's gonna be ok right?"

He nods.

Mathenyoka: "There isn't much to do because dad was already protecting her, Tomorrow I will try to get her documents and her son so she can leave."

Me: "Ok uhm...maybe they can go to Colombia, we have two houses there Luscious and Lucian are always travelling so she can stay there for the time being, I will speak to my father."

Mathenyoka: "Thank you my love."

In the morning we wake up to someone banging on our door. I wear my gown and follow my husband. His mother and Khuli are here.

Mam'Ndlovu: "My daughter said she was coming here yesterday and she never returned home! What did you do to my daughter?"

Kwanda chuckles and open his door wide.

Mathenyoka: "Ngenani."(Come in.)

He pulls me to the kitchen.

Mathenyoka: "Call Mondli give him their address so he can take Nonto's child, he's about 4 years old and any documents that has her name Nontobeko Ndlovu on it, I will keep these two here."

I nod and walk away.

They are shouting for Ntobeko while I tell Mondli the message from my man.

They spend the whole day here cussing and shouting banging the door but the ancestral hut is locked where Nonto is. She doesn't even care to see her grandchildren. Later they leave threatening to come back with the Police. Mondli walks in with a boy and a brown envelope.

Mondli: "I got everything, it's in there."

Mathenyoka: "Thank you, we'll talk tomorrow."

I call dad and ask him about the house and he's ok with Nonto staying there but once she get on her feet she will move.

She's happy to get away from the evil woman, Kwanda talks to Mason to speed up the Visas.

Two days of torture from that evil woman's voice Nontobeko finally leaves with Mason on his jet about to start a new life.

Me: "I'm proud of you baba ka Shlangu."

He smiles and pull me closer to him.

Mathenyoka: "You bring out the best in me mama wezingane zami, Thank you."

The Ndlovu ancestors for choosing me for him I am forever grateful, I find everything in this man, Security, Love and stability..this is our home singaboGatsheni oBoyabenyathi..oShlangu Sihle Mthiyane...

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CHAPTER 65

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BUKHOSI

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I am doing my first year at University of KwaZulu-Natal while my brother is at Durban University of Technology, we look exactly the same but we have always had different interest when it comes to Education. We're best friends though! We stay together just the two of us.

I am what they call a crowd puller, I am always at the center because usually I make people laugh, they enjoy being around me.

I just had two classes and I just finished having my lunch I'm now sitting outside the campus premises listening to music. I find myself in the middle of the crowd and we are just talking and laughing, it's boys and girls, we're so loud.

I see a very slim girl passing by and she's keeping her head down like she's scared of something.

"Aw nangu uMjovo!"(Here's injection)

One of the guys shouts and they burst in laughter. I look around confused as the slim girl rush away. I don't even know these people's names.

Me: "Uhm..What was that about?"

I ask the girl sitting closer to me. She shrug her shoulder. My brother calls telling me dad left one of his cars so he is coming to fetch me in 15 minutes, we usually use private transport and pay month end because we don't have our drivers license yet.

I get up and walk towards the gate to wait for my brother but I bump into someone.

Me: "I'm so sorry I wasn't looking where I'm going."

She slowly look up, her skin is pale and she has big eyes and they are very white like those of a newborn. It's the slim girl.

"I hope you never have children, you're a vile human being!"

She says and rush away leaving me with my mouth hanging, that actually sent shivers down my spine. My phone rings I check it out, it's my brother so I just go to the car and we fist bump.

Makhosini: "Khosini, you look distraught what's up?"

Me: "A girl just came out of nowhere and cursed me bafo."

Makhosini: "What? Why?"

I shrug my shoulders.

Me: "Earlier the guys I was hanging out with were laughing at her."

Makhosini: "I told you to stop hanging out with these groups Bukhosi, that girl probably thought you are the instigator since you're always the one talking and making jokes."

Me: "I don't make fun of people though."

Makhosini: "But your friends obviously do and there's a saying "show me your friends and I will tell you your future" in this case a girl cursed your future because of the type of friends you keep."

I look ahead as he drives the car to our house, I'm really not ok after what that girl said.

At home, my brother and I start cooking together then we eat. Ngcebo calls and he hardly ever calls.

Me: "Phakathwayo."

Ngcebo: "You need to ask for forgiveness."

Me: "Bhuti?"

Ngcebo: "Apologize Bukhosi."

Me: "Ok I will."

He drops the call I sigh.

Makhosini: "What is it?"

Me: "If Ngcebo tells me to apologize that means that girl really cursed me bafo, I need to find her tomorrow and apologize."

Makhosini: "Do that Gumede."

Before going to bed I call my sister, we used to be inseparable the three of us but we grew up, she found love and I'm happy for her even though accepting their relationship was hard at first because Kwanda is older but after a while we got to see that his intentions are pure, he loves my sister without even have to say it in words just his actions shows.

I'm in class but I can't hear anything because I want to find that girl so bad. I just take my bag before the class is over and walk out. I walk around campus hoping to see her. After a few minutes of looking I see her about to walk out the gate.

Me: "Hey! Mjovo wait up.."

She stops on her tracks and turn around, when she sees me, her eyes are full of rage. She takes fast steps towards me and slap me do hard I touch my cheek in disbelief.

Me: "Hey what did I do wrong? I just want to talk to you."

She slap me again and shove me back with her bag I step back as her stuff scatter on the ground. She rush away crying. I slowly pick them up I am shocked to see a lot of injections.I rush to the direction she went to. I find her at some corner with her head buried on her thighs she is crying so hard, I kneel in front of her and touch her shoulder.

Me: "I didn't mean to make you cry, I'm sorry."

"You go around making fun of people without knowing what they are going through! You disgust me!"

I take out the tissue I saw in her bag and wipe her tears and mucus I feel so bad that I made her cry.

Me: "Please forgive me."

She shakes her head and push my hand away grabbing her bag from me. She takes out one injection and pull up her t-shirt. I widen my eyes as the whole needle disappears in her skin right on her tummy.

Me: "What is that?"

"This is the reason why you and your friends call me Mjovo, making fun of my sickness."

Me: "I thought it's a nickname I didn't think it was because of what you're going through."

"I really hope you don't have children because you will be a bad father! You will raise disrespectful children like you!"

She repeats those words again and it still sends shivers down my spine.

Me: "Please don't say that."

She wipes her tears and try to get up but I can tell it's hard so I help her up. She stumbles back and look at me, she is starting to sweat.

Me: "Are you feeling hot?"

She nods, I quickly hold her as she almost fall.

I call my driver to pick me up. He takes us home I take her to my room.

Me: "Should I call an ambulance for you? You don't look ok."

She shakes her head and close her eyelids.

"Do you know how to make glucose?"

I shake my head.

"Mmmh?"

I rub my forehead I forgot that she has her eyes closed I'm scared as hell.

Me: "No."

"Google it and make it for me I'll be fine then go home."

Instead of goggling it I just call my mother to walk me through it and she does without asking questions.

She drinks it up, I look at her.

Me: "Are you sick?"

She nods.

"I was diagnosed with diabetes since birth."

Me: "What!?"

I'm shocked! Never heard of such.

Me: "How can a newborn have diabetes?"

"I have to go home."

Me: "Let's wait for my brother to come back so I can drive you home."

She nods and sleep back in bed.

Me: "So what's your name?"

"Sesona Sondzaba."

I nod.

My brother comes back, I left Sesona sleeping in my room.

We talk for a while and I tell him about the girl and borrow a car. I drive Sesona home, it's a huge house more like a mansion and she told me she was born here but her roots are in the Eastern Cape.

I stop the car in front of the high security gate.

Me: "Uhm..can I hang out with you tomorrow during lunch at campus."

She shakes her head.

Sesona: "No, stick to your friends I'm fine without friends. Thank you for today."

She step out and walk inside her home. I drive back home and find my brother cooking I sit at the barstool.

Makhosini: "So that is the girl that cursed you?"

I nod.

Makhosini: "Did you ask for forgiveness?"

Me: "I did.."

My phone rings It's bhut'Ngcebo again.

Me: "Gumede.."

Ngcebo: "Ukubophele inhliziyo zama indlela yokuxolisa Gumede."(She is holding a grudge find a way to apologize.)

I rub my eyes.

Ngcebo: "Your brother tells you about groups all the time but you don't listen manje into iphume nawe."(You're paying for other people's sin.)

Me: "I will find a way."

I drop the call and walk to my room. I do research on diabetes and it all scares me that she went through all that is being said about it from birth till now that's so scary.

The next day I have only one class and it's Friday so I ask around for her class and finally find out where she is. I find her coming out of the restroom.

Me: "Hey."

She doesn't greet back.

Me: "Can I please take you out so we can talk?"

Sesona: "What do you want?"

Me: "I want to explain everything to you, who I am and how I was raised please."

She sighs and nod.

I ask my driver to take us to a restaurant. I ask for the manager and ask him to tell the chef to prepare food that I read yesterday is fit for someone with diabetes I know I will pay a lot of money since I asked for something out of the menu but it's ok. I find her staring at me as the waiter walks away.

Sesona: "You asked them to prepare food specially for me?"

I nod and for the first time she breaks into a wide smile shaking her head.

Sesona: "You're over compensating for making me a laughing stock?"

Her teeth are pure white and she have those two extra teeth on the side that makes her smile even more beautiful.

Me: "I promise you I didn't say anything I was also confused I didn't get what they were laughing at, dad would kill me should I make fun of someone like that."

She nods looking down at her drink.

Me: My name is Bukhosi Gumede."

She nods.

Sesona: "I know who you are, everyone talks about you and always want to hang out with the "funny guy."

Me: "I am funny and handsome yes."

She laughs.

Me: "I'm really sorry for being in that group that made fun of you, forgive me."

She nods.

They bring our food and she is in disbelief when she looks at her plate.

Sesona: "How much is it gonna cost you for this? We should split the bill."

Me: "Don't worry about it."

We enjoy our food then go to the car getting at the back because my driver is still smoking outside. I see her taking out the injection again I look away as she injects herself.

Sesona: "Are you scared of needles?"

She says laughing.

Me: "No but this scares me..the way you're so ok with injecting yourself."

Sesona: "I started doing it when I was 9, mom taught me how to do it myself then."

I nod.

We take a walk at the beach holding hands.

Me: "Can you take back the words you said about me not having children please."

She looks at me.

Sesona: "I take them back, you look like a very respectful clown I've ever seen."

I laugh.

Me: "A clown?"

She has a sense of humor after all.

Sesona: "You make people laugh that what clowns do."

I chuckle.

Me: "We should get going, it's getting cold, you gonna catch flu."

I hold her hand and the driver takes us to the house. We find Makhosini home.

Sesona: "Hi."

She greets my brother then we all hang out just talking about life. I find out she's actually a nice girl.

Later my brother leaves for his extra lessons.

Me: "So Uhm...your boyfriend understands your sickness?"

She looks away shyly..

Sesona: "I've never had a boyfriend, nobody wants to be seen with someone like me, everyone can tell that I'm sick without me having to share it and they have different opinions some went as far as saying I have AIDS. Look at me."

She shows me her neck, the bones are visible there, I think stress and being worried about how people view her is what makes her lose weight more than the sickness itself.

Me: "But you're still beautiful, the most beautiful girl I have ever laid my eyes on."

Words just come out of my mouth, we look at each other for a while until she looks away breaking eye contact with me.

Sesona: "It's getting late."

I get up and hold her hand carefully pulling her up.

Sesona: "I'm not gonna break."

I am confused.

Sesona: "The way you've been so careful with me today I feel like an egg."

I laugh.

Me: "Is that a bad thing?"

She laughs.

Sesona: "Not entirely but I'm not used to outsiders treating me like I'm human."

Me: "But you're human."

Sesona: "People don't see it that way."

Me: "But I do.."

She smiles.

Sesona: "Thank you so much for today Bukhosi."

I drive her home using dad's car. I step out of the car and open the door for her helping her out of the car.

Sesona: "Goodnight."

I hug her and when I try to kiss her cheek she moves her head making our lips lock, we're both stunned I have never kissed a girl before. I have never had interest in dating maybe because I am always the centre of attention spent all my time around crowds didn't even have time to ask girls out.

I step back, she is looking down.

Me: "Sorry.."

She rush away. I get in the car and drive back home. I can't stop touching my lips..this was so sudden and brief yet it makes me feel things I have never felt before.

In the morning I wake up wet in my short I had my first wet dream and it's all because of that kiss,I dreamt of doing things to her things I have only seen lovers do on TV and videos . I am late, my brother had his first wet dream when we turned 15 years old and I just had my first at 18 years.

I take a shower and I hate that I didn't ask for her number.

I take the car and drive to her home. I buzz at the gate until I see it slide open. I drive in then knock on the door. A very beautiful woman opens the door she's about mom's age, I notice she has the same eyes as Sesona, big beautiful clear eyes.

Me: "Hi, Uhm..I'm Sesona's friend is she in?"

"A friend?"

She ask with her eyebrows raised.

Sesona: "Mama where are my white jean..."

She stops talking as she sees me at the door.

Sesona: "Bukhosi?"

Me: "Hi..I came to see you."

She eyes her mom who looks emotional.

Sesona: "Uuuh..I...mom this is Bukhosi a..we go to varsity together."

Her mom nods.

"Come in."

She wipes her tears with her hands walking away.

Me: "Is your mom ok?"

She nods covering her upper body because she has only a bra on.

Me: "I'm sorry for just popping up."

Sesona: "My mom is taking me to a doctor for my monthly check up."

Me: "Oh sorry I will go."

Her mother comes back looking less emotional now.

"I'm sorry about earlier it's just that my daughter has never introduced anyone as a friend before I'm happy she has found one."

I nod.

Me: "Can I talk to her outside for a minute please."

She nods and we walk out. She is still covering her upper body.

Me: "I'm sorry for coming here I wasn't thinking straight."

She nods looking down.

Me: "Can I have your number so we can be able to communicate."

She gives me her number.

Me: "I will call you later. Sorry again."

Sesona: "Ok."

We share a very brief hug then I go back home. I study for a while then call my sister.

Thingo: "Ebukhosini."

I laugh.

Me: "Hey sis how are the little ones."

Thingo: "A handful but we manage, their daddy is always around and we are at the process of hiring a nanny since my exams are coming soon and he needs to go back to work."

Me: "Ok, do visit Durban with them so we can hang out."

Thingo: "I will.."

We say our goodbyes. I cook for my brother and I then go to bed. I call Sesona first before I go to bed.

Sesona: "Hello."

Me: "Uyaphila nkosazana?"(Are you well Princess.)

She giggles and that sends electric shock all around my body I hold my dick as it starts twitching growing bigger.

Sesona: "I'm ok, I told mom about the meal you told the chef to prepare for me yesterday, I think it's my new favourite meal."

I smile.

Me: "I have the recipe on my phone I did screenshots I will send it to you so you can make it."

Sesona: "Thank you."

Me: "Or I can come and show it to you."

Sesona: "Oh..Uhm..ok."

I freshen up and change into shorts and a vest with a hat because it's hot. I drive to her house and call her once I'm outside she comes out wearing white jeans and a black top. She get in at the passenger seat. She smiles opening her already big eyes wide I laugh. She is so skinny and that's ok.

Me: "What is it?"

Sesona: "Mom has been talking about you. She's so happy that she saw you here and you said we're friends."

Me: "But we are friends, right?"

She looks down.

Sesona: "I guess.."

I send the recipe to her phone.

Sesona: "Thank you."

I am looking at her because there is something about her that gets my attention that I have never seen any girl manage to do before.

Sesona: "Mom wants to prepare this meal for us so I gotta go."

Me: "What did the doctor say? Are you good?"

She nods looking out the window.

Sesona: "I'm tired of taking insulin everyday, I want to quit."

Me: "You can't do that."

Sesona: "I can, I see that even mom is affected by this. Two years ago my aunt even asked that I come stay with her just so I can be away from mom, they saw hoe stressed she would get whenever I get sick so my aunt wanted to give her some time off..I can tell she's tired."

Me: "Your mom will never get tired of taking care of you Esi.. what you're thinking is wrong."

She sighs I see her hand going to her face. I turn her head so she can look at me.

Me: "Don't do this to yourself."

Sesona: "People pity me if not pity they have opinions about me so I'm getting tired really."

Me: "But I don't pity you nor have any opinions about your health..I took what you told me and I don't mind being your only friend."

She chuckles.

Sesona: "Bye Bukhosi."

Me: "Thank you Sesi."

She step out of the car and walk inside.

Monday, we're at campus having lunch together she's laughing at my silly jokes but suddenly she stops laughing and keep her eyes down. A group of girls and boys are standing around us.

"Eyo B, what are doing with Mjovo?"

One coloured guy says to me.

Me: "Her name is Sesona."

Sesona looks like she wants to run, I can see her hand shaking holding the glass but she doesn't lift it up.

Me: "Can you all give us some space please."

"So Mjovo what are all the injections for huh? AIDS has reached its peak?"

The guys speaks again, I get up and look at all of them one by one.

Me: "Leave.."

I say with a stern voice hoping they listen but they think I'm joking I can see. So I grab the loud mouth by his shirt.

Me: "Tell your friends that I said they should walk away, and you should follow right behind."

"B, what's up with you, you pity this girl so much that you don't wanna hang out with us anymore?"

I let go of him and take Sesona' lunch box closing it then I grab our bags and her hand walking away leaving them trash talking me.

We go back home because we both didn't have classes after lunch.

Sesona: "I don't want you to lose friends because of me."

Me: "I have friends already so I don't need those."

I let her put her head on my lap and close her eyes I play with her neat braids.

Me: "Isn't there a way of taking your insulin orally?"

She laughs.

Sesona: "You're really not ok with my needles huh?"

Me: "I'm just really scared of them."

She giggles opening her eyes.

Sesona: "Dad is coming back today, I haven't seen him in two weeks so I want to be there when he gets home."

Me: "You want to leave now?"

Sesona: "Yes."

I nod disappointed, I was still enjoying being with her.

I take her home then drive to the hospital where Malaika's husband works.

I greet him with a handshake I'm here to gather information about diabetes I don't know why but I want to know everything about it.

Me: "Uhm..is there anything else she can use to take her insulin instead of injection?"

Sboniso: "She can get an insulin pump instead of having to inject herself daily."

He explains a lot of things leaving my head buzzing. I say my goodbye and go home making it a note to buy it for her then she can take it to her doctor to learn how to use it.

I am Prince Bukhosi Gumede..

*

CHAPTER 66

*

BUKHOSI

*

I used almost half of my six months allowance yesterday and bought an Insulin pump at Durban Medical Supplies for Sesona, she hasn't been picking up my calls I guess she is still enjoying her time with her dad which she haven't seen in two weeks.

I send her a text "Call me when you're free" then toss the phone next to me staring at the insulin pump reading the instructions, at least she won't have to inject herself everyday I gathered that a pump requires one shot every few days when you change your infusion set and I'm certain it can't be as bad as taking those shots after a few hours.

The whole day I keep checking on my phone hoping she called or sent a text but there's absolutely nothing from her and that is upsetting for some reason.

Makhosini: "Hey!"

I look at him as he snaps his fingers on my face.

Me: "What is it?"

Makhosini: "You keep checking on your phone that you didn't even hear me come in."

Me: "I'm sorry bafo."

Makhosini: "Are you expecting a call?"

I nod. He stares at the pump in my hand.

Makhosini: "An advanced Insulin pump Bukhosi, this must cost a fortune bro."

Me: "It does cost a lot of money."

Makhosini: "And I know the medical aid didn't cover for half since it's not really yours."

Me: "I paid for it cash."

He widens his eyes.

Me: "Please don't lecture me I'm not ok."

I get up walking to my room, I'm so down I think I even have a little headache.

I wake up in the morning and the first thing I do is check my phone thinking maybe I didn't hear it ring at night but there is just a good morning text from mom. I call her back.

Thabsie: "Hey baby."

Me: "Nkosikazi kaBaba."(Dad's wifey)

She giggles, this woman loves my father and she can't even pretend.

Me: "Are you blushing mam'Gumede?"

Thabsie: "No I'm not!"

I laugh.

Thabsie: "Come back home this weekend I miss you and I want to see that you guys are eating!"

I smile.

Me: "Yes ma'am and I did miss you..Uhm..so about our licences. You haven't received any feedback?"

She clears her throat.

Thabsie: "Not yet baby."

I sigh. I really want to start driving freely.

Me: "But the four to six weeks is long over ma..they should tell us if they don't want us to have licences."

She chuckles.

Thabsie: "See you on Saturday."

Me: "Love you."

Thabsie: "Love you too, I will call Khosini now."

Me: "Ok bye."

I drop the call and drag my ass to the bathroom because I have my first class in an hour. I bath and wear my grey sweatpants with a white t-shirt and white sneakers, I just don't feel like dressing up today.

I attend all my classes then call my driver to come pick me up and tell him to drive me to Sesona's house this silence from her is worrying me.

I am allowed in and I can see two cars in the driveway. I knock on the already opened door since I can't just let myself in.

Mrs Sondzaba smiles as soon as she gets to the door I can hear Sesona's laughter inside the house.

Me: "Sanibonani ma."(Greetings ma.)

She smiles and take my hand leading me inside the house.

Sesona is with an old man in the kitchen they are both covered in flour looks like they are baking and having fun. I believe this is her dad.

I greet them with my hands together as a sign of respect only her dad greets back she has her eyes all out looking at me.

Me: "Uh..I came to check on you I was worried when I didn't hear from you since yesterday. I have been trying to call."

I ask avoiding her parents eyes they keep eyeing each other then look back from me to Sesona.

Sesona: "My phone is in my school bag and it's on silent."

MrsSondzaba: "Hawu Sesona you didn't even think of checking on your friend?"

She drops her eyes.

MrSondzaba: "So what's your name? I only know Kumkani because he is older and always close to his father in these media things but since you guys look like the same age with the others I can't really tell who is who."

I smile as Mrs Sondzaba offers me a barstool then she sits next to me. I thought maybe the father will be hostile but no, he sounds cool.

Me: "I'm Bukhosi.."

MrSondzaba: "One of the triplets?"

I nod.

Me: "I saw the sun first."

They both giggle Sesona is just concentrating on the flour mixture. I am offered a drink. After putting everything in the oven, her mom and dad walk away leaving us in the kitchen. She is washing her hands quietly.

Me: "Why do I feel like you ignored me on purpose since yesterday? Did I do or said something that hurt you?"

She shakes her head.

Sesona: "I just wanted to spend time with my dad I didn't have time for the phone I'm sorry."

I nod.

Me: "I got you something."

I take out the box inside my backpack and give it to her. She widens her eyes and shake her head.

Sesona: "Bukhosi I can't take this."

Me: "Why not? I saw that it's more accurate and precise."

Sesona: "No! This costs a lot of money this thing is over 70 thousand especially if it's out of pocket without any insurance!"

She is shouting and I don't like it.

Me: "My sister's husband helped me get a huge discount Esona..and this is not about money I want you to stop with using injections!"

I shout back, I can't help it.

Sesona: "I don't want it, take it back!"

Her mom and dad rush in the room.

MrsSondzaba: "Why are you two shouting?"

Sesona: "Ask him why he is making me a charity case mom! Like I am one of his projects as a Prince."

I am disappointed, she is even sweating and one tear drops on her cheek.

Her mom stares at the box in shock and the father also takes it from her staring at it.

Me: "I'm sorry..I have to go."

I walk out the door my driver is waiting outside the gate. Mr Sondzaba calls out my name I turn to him.

MrSondzaba: "Why would you buy something so expensive for my daughter?"

Me: "I saw how she injects herself and I thought I could make it easier for her, I'm sorry if it was wrong."

MrSondzaba: "You are not wrong."

I look at him.

MrSondzaba: "I long wanted to buy it for her but it was too costly and our medical aid isn't covering all her medication and check-ups so I have to use cash, and there are bills to pay and her tuition fees."

He sighs.

Me: "I am not making this about me or am I saying you're failing as a father I just wanted to do something nice out of the goodness of my heart, I don't see her as any project I promise."

I am so upset I am holding back the tears.

MrSondzaba: "I know son, thank you. I will talk to her and you're right this pump will make everything easier for her."

Me: "Thank you."

We handshake and I get in the car it takes me back home. I cook, clean and go to bed early.

Another day of school work I attend my classes then go eat my lunch alone and end up with so many people sitting with me but today I'm quiet they are the ones talking.

"Aaawu Mjovo bafethu!"

The guys says and everyone cheers and some are laughing I don't even have energy to fight I just look up and her eyes lock with mine as she takes quick steps walking away.

I get up and walk towards the gate I find her standing there looking down at her phone, I stand a few steps away from her and call the driver to fetch me. She keeps stealing glances at me I just look ahead even though I can see her from the corner of my eye.

I badly want to talk to her but I want her to realize how her words hurt me yesterday.

The car stops in front of her and her dad step out, they hug, he is spinning her around you can tell they have a strong relationship. He notices me and greet me with a handshake Sesona looks away.

MrSondzaba: "Do you watch soccer? There is a game playing tonight can you and your brother join me I will take you back home early, watching the game alone can be boring, Sesona and my wife hate soccer."

I look at Sesona she is still looking away.

Me: "We will come sir thank you for the invite, our driver will drop us off."

They get in the car and drive away.

Makhosini and I dress up and our driver takes us to Sesona's house I can smell the aroma all the way from the gate.

We walk in just a few minutes before the game starts. We know soccer,, we grew up watching it with our father, his favourite sport.

We watch the game and his favourite team is leading he is making so much noise and I haven't seen Sesona but I can hear that she's in the kitchen with her mom.

During half time we are served with delicious food by Sesona and her mother. She greets and give me and my brother some food while her mom serves the father.

MrSondzaba: "I had a talk with her about the pump she still doesn't wanna use it and thinks you should take it back."

I see her walking away down the passage.

Me: "Can I go talk to her?"

He nods.

MrSondzaba: "Don't shout at each other have a conversation like adults."

He tells me which room is hers. I knock once and open the door I find her with her eyes closed injecting herself on her tummy. I sigh closing the door then sit next to her.

Me: "Hi."

Sesona: "Hi."

She plays with her fingers.

Sesona: "I'm sorry for the way I spoke to you yesterday it was uncalled for."

I nod.

Sesona: "I'm really sorry Bukhosi I know I hurt your feelings."

Me: "Does that mean you'll accept the pump?"

She shakes her head.

Sesona: "I can't.."

Me: "Please do it for me, please."

I give her those puppy eyes she smiles shyly looking away.

Me: "Pretty please.."

She slowly nods.

Sesona: "Ok I will ask dad to take me to my doctor so he can help me with it."

I nod smiling.

Me: "Can I get a hug?"

We hug.

Me: "Thank you."

Sesona: "But this is very expensive I know you're a Prince but you don't have to spend all your money at me, even your girlfriend wouldn't want that."

I chuckle.

Me: "Is that you asking if I do have a girlfriend or what?"

She giggles.

Sesona: "I know you have one, there's no way."

I chuckle.

Me: "Bye I have to go watch the rest of the game."

I hug her again and walk out.

MrsSondzaba: "How did it go? I was ready to run in there if you started shouting at each other again today."

I laugh.

Me: "Oh no we both acted mature today, and she agreed to use the pump after seeing her doctor."

Her parents are happy about that.

I sigh.

After the game her dad drives us back home.

When I get in bed my phone beeps I smile when her name pop up on the screen. "I appreciate what you did for me a lot, thank you, no one outside of my family has ever done something so big for me I'm really grateful."

I smile and send a text back. "Can you say that to my face tomorrow?"

"I will after my doctor's appointment."

I call her I can't stop smiling.

Me: "Hey.."

Her giggles makes my heart skip a beat.

Me: "Goodnight Sesi."

Sesona: "Goodnight Bukhosi."

I chuckle as she drops the call. I am smiling from ear to ear.

In the morning I am in a great mood. I am singing and I take out my best outfits so I can look good.

I attend all my classes in high spirits then after my last one I receive a text with the name of the restaurant I took her to last time my driver takes me there. I find her already sitting at the table she is dressed in short dress and a cardigan that is in the same size as the dress she looks so clean and her braids are tied up into a very neat bun. We hug then sit down.

Sesona: "Thank you for coming..I just wanted to take you out so you can see how much I appreciate what you did for me because honestly I would have preferred a pump more than the injection that gave me a nickname."

Me: "Everybody has got opinions but they have never been in your position they don't know that you fight everyday and only come out stronger that makes you way better than them and you should show them that by having your head held high and don't let them get to you."

She nods. She already ordered for us but was scared to ask for the manager to make her new favourite meal so she opt for a very light meal.

Me: "This weekend I'm going home I will come back on Monday morning."

Sesona: "You will leave on Friday?"

Me: "Yes."

We finish up eating and go to the car, she shows me the pump and how it works you can tell that it makes her so happy just the way she explains what the doctor said to her.

Me: "That's great, I'm glad this will make your life easier from now on."

I hold her hand over the table.

Friday after my classes my brother and our brother are already waiting for me at the gate I am walking with Sesona.

Me: "I will see you on Monday Princess."

We share a hug then I get in the car.

When we get home there are three brand-new Volkswagen in the yard. Makhosini and I step out, Mathenyoka parks as well and open the door for Thingo. We rush to do a group hug.

Me: "We've been missing you man."

Thingo: "Me too, but we will be in Durban for the whole month because of my exams."

I nod.

Thingo: "Damn! Who do they belong to."

We all stare at the cars as they flash some lights. We walk in as mom and dad step out of the house.

Thingo: "No way!"

She screams I move my eyes as I see a number plate with her name on it, THINGO-ZN and it's red in colour. I move my eyes and see BUKHO-ZN Grey in colour then a black one has KHOSIN-ZN. Mom and dad step closer to the three of us as we're standing there stunned. They hand us the keys together with Drivers license Cards.

Me: "What!? Mom you said they haven't contacted you!?"

Thabsie: "I lied I didn't want to ruin the surprise."

We take turns hugging them, this is crazy I take pictures of the three cars.

Nkosiyo: "You've made me a proud father all of you from birth till now going forward I know you will continue making me proud."

Thingo is now crying tears of joy in her husband's arms.

Makhosini: "Siyabonga Gumede."

Me: "Mnguni."

Thingo: "Qwabe."

The whole weekend we're happy celebrating as a family and there's never an hour that passes without checking up on Sesona and she makes sure she replies.

Monday I can't wait to see her I am in class but keep checking on my wristwatch. When the class is over I am the first one to step out of my class and I'm shocked to see her waiting by the door looking down.

Me: "Uhh hey were you waiting for me?"

She nods keeping her eyes down to avoid people's eyes. I can't help but hug her tight, she giggles hugging me back.

"Careful not to break her skeleton."

Sesona quickly move away from me. I turn and look at the group of guys passing by. I stand in front of them.

Me: "Who said that?"

They just burst in laughter so I grab one that is closer and punch him they are all shocked.

Me: "And I will ask again, who said that?"

They don't answer I grab the second one and knock him down they all step back.

"Aybo Bukhosi mfethu you're really fighting us because of her?"

Me: "Next time I will drag your asses down this hallway, try me!"

I hold Sesona's hand walking out. I open the door for her to my car and drive us to my place.

We go to my room and sit next to each other I feel her warm hand wiping my sweaty nose.

Sesona: "You can calm down now I can feel you're boiling inside."

I chuckle and walk out to drink some water, I am really angry.

I go back to her and find her playing with her phone. I'm calm now.

Sesona: "Are you okay?"

Me: "Yeah, I'm sorry but as long as they keep harassing you I will fuck up each and every last one of them, I just didn't want to fight in front of you."

She smiles.

Sesona: "I don't mind seeing you fight after how you punched those guys today, it was so fulfilling."

I laugh.

Me: "I need you to fetch your confidence wherever you kept it! You're not gonna squirm and cry every time someone says something about you."

Sesona: "What's there to be confident about Bukho? I mean look at me, I am a skeleton just like what that guy said."

Me: "Oh ayke ok cry every time people talk about you sis if that's what you want to do."

She raise her eyebrow.

Me: "I'm trying to be motivational but you're shooting me down."

She shakes her head. I make us a sandwich putting less of everything in hers so it can be healthy I think I should just buy things suitable for her health and keep them here just in case she visits me often.

We eat and she can't stop talking about my beautiful car.

Me: "Can you drive? We can take a ride."

She nods excitedly and we take a spin around the neighborhood until late because she doesn't wanna get off. We find outside parking at the beach front at night. We step out of the car and lean on the car looking at the waves and a beautiful full moon. I pull her to stand in front of me and wrap my arms around her.

Sesona: "This is beautiful I didn't know that this place it's this peaceful when it's late."

Me: "We can come here everyday if you want."

I turn her around and put her head on my chest. I close my eyes as she wraps her arms around me and inhale.

Sesona: "You smell good."

I chuckle.

Me: "Thank you."

I kiss the top of her head.

Sesona: " I have never had a friend before, I'm happy I have you."

Me: "And you will always have me."

She looks at me with those clear beautiful eyes I melt.

Sesona: "You mean it?"

Me: "I do.."

I hold her neck and bring my face closer to her and our lips lock, I can feel her lips shaking as I kiss her bottom lip, a believe a kiss goes with emotions that is why I'm not scared that it's my first time kissing a girl. I'm doing what I feel is right this moment.

She slowly move away looking down.

Sesona: "I'm scared of embarrassing myself, I have never kissed anyone before."

Me: "Its also my first time so it doesn't matter if we're not doing it right we gonna learn together."

I pull her closer again and I kiss her, I shiver as she moves her lips as well holding my shirt I hold her neck I am getting foreign feelings all over my body and it's worse on my dick. She breaks the kiss and drop her eyes I lift her chin up.

Me: "I enjoyed it."

Sesona: "You did?"

I take her hand and move it down to my hard dick she jumps in fright making me laugh so hard.

Me: "I was just showing you how much I enjoyed our first kiss."

Sesona: "I enjoyed it too."

I kiss her again and this time I think we're more relaxed so we are just going with the flow.

I look into her eyes and smile.

Me: "You're beautiful."

Sesona: "Thank you."

Her phone rings and it's her dad calling asking her whereabouts. I take her home and watch her as she get inside the house.

On Saturday I wake up early and go to the mall to buy everything I will need because Sesona is going to spend the whole day with me, my brother will be with us.

My brother and I prepare the meal without oil and mom is helping us make it taste and look good.

Thabsie: "Who are you trying so hard to impress you two?"

She ask we are on a video call.

Me: "Uhm..a friend ma."

Thabsie: "Just a friend?"

I laugh.

Me: "Yes mom a friend."

Thabsie: "Male or Female?"

Me: "Aybo!"

I am saved by a knock on the door I rush to open. I hug her we haven't seen each other ever since the first kiss.

I kiss her cheek then my brother also greets her with a hug and a kiss.

We have a great time, she eats and even ask for more I'm impressed with how my brother and I cooked the meal. I give her some healthy snacks and we go chill in my room. I learn about her low and high blood sugar levels and I am happy she's sharing everything with me I am really interested to know.

Sesona: "So Uhm..when am I meeting your girlfriend?"

Me: "You want to meet her?"

She nods.

Me: "Do you mind meeting yourself?"

Sesona: "I don't get it.."

I look down.

Me: "I don't have a girlfriend yet."

I am now scared to ask her to be one, I mean, what did she think the kiss was all about.

Sesona: "I don't think you're being truthful, You're a good guy, and a Prince I think you carry all the qualities of a great boyfriend."

Me: "Can I be your boyfriend then so you don't think but know I am a great boyfriend."

She looks away.

Sesona: "Can I think about it?"

I chuckle and kiss her cheek.

Me: "I will give you until tomorrow morning."

Ngiyabona ukuthi mhlampe wenqena ukungiqoma ngosuku Kodwa kmina useyintombi Yami vele.(I can see that she doesn't want to say yes on the first day but to me she's already my girlfriend.)

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CHAPTER 67

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BUKHOSI

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Sesona has been avoiding my calls since I told her that I am giving her until today to think about us dating. I want her to say yes I have been so nervous since yesterday.

I am sitting inside my car just near the gate of our campus. I see her coming out with iPods in her ears. I step out of my car and she jumps in fright seeing me in front of her. She looks like she wants the earth to open up and swallow her.

Me: "How long were you planning on ignoring me?"

Sesona: "I was.. wasn't ign...you."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "Why are you stuttering?"

She looks so nervous.

Me: "Do I scare you now?"

She tries to walk away but I gently pull her back and hug her with my hand pulling her head closer to my chest.

Me: "I want my answer."

Sesona: "Bukhosi..dad will be here any minute now."

Me: "Then I'm giving you a second, I just want a yes from you."

Sesona: "I'm scared..I don't know what it means being a girlfriend to someone."

Me: "Then we'll learn along the way, say yes."

Sesona: "What if you find someone?"

I chuckle. All this time she is sleeping on my chest.

Me: "I won't.."

Sesona: "Ok."

Me: "Ok what?"

Sesona: "I...will be your girlfriend."

I smile and kiss her forehead.

Me: "Thank you baby..I promise you'll be the only girl."

She smiles looking away.

Her dad parks next to my car I take a step back from her. She hug her dad. I greet him with a handshake.

Me: "Sanibonani baba."(Greetings father)

He greets me back and make small talk, I go to my car and drive home.

I do mine and my brother's laundry then cook before I shower and eat then go to bed but I call my girlfriend before I fall asleep.

Sesona: "Hello."

Me: "You can just say hello babe, love anything not just hello."

She laughs.

Sesona: "I can't do that, I'm not used to saying those words."

Me: "Well then get used to it, I'm here, I'm not imaginary, I exist."

She giggles.

Me: "What are you doing this weekend?"

Sesona: "Studying."

Me: "Can you visit me on Saturday, we will study together I just want to be in your presence."

Sesona: "Ok, mom and dad won't be home anyway."

Me: "I will cook your favorite meal."

Sesona: "Ok, Thank you."

Days flew by pretty fast and now it's Saturday early in the morning but I'm already at the mall buying flowers and snacks with some energy drinks, anything that's healthy. I go back home and cook food while listening to music. Makhosini went home for the weekend so today it will be just me and Sesona.

I take the flowers and open the door for her, her bright smile as I give her flowers warms my heart. She's blushing smelling them.

Sesona: "Thank you so much."

Me: "I would do anything for you."

I carry her school bag back and take it to my room.

I dish up for us then we go study, she is sleeping on her tummy in bed while I focus on my books in my little desk at the corner of my room. She is eating her snacks.

After a while I get us some drinks, I am also eating everything she is eating just to show that I am with her in this.

We've been quiet for a while now and I can feel her eyes on me so I slowly look up and catch her staring at me like she's lost in her thoughts.

Me: "Are you daydreaming about me?"

She drop her eyes but her smile doesn't leave her face.

Me: "What is it?"

Sesona: "It's just that..all this feels surreal, never in my life have I imagined myself visiting someone, going out everything you're doing for me I only thought maybe I'll experience it in my next life."

Me: "Nobody told you there is a Prince charming out there just waiting to meet you so he can sweep you off your feet."

She cover her eyes then start sniffing. I sit next to her in bed and remove her hands from her face but she just sleep in bed facing the other way.

Me: "Hey.."

Sesona: "It's not real."

She is crying.

Me: "I'm real baby..I promise I'm not going anywhere."

I am brushing her back.

Me: "It's okay."

My phone rings, it's mom calling.

Me: "Ma."

Thabsie: "Why aren't you home? Your brother is here."

Me: "I am studying mama."

Thabsie: "Are you okay? You don't sound fine."

Me: "I'm good MaKhumalo don't worry about me."

Thabsie: "How can I not worry Khosini you're my son."

She's getting worked up, she knows when we're not ok and yes I'm not ok now seeing Sesona crying breaks my heart.

Nkosiyo: "What is it? Is he okay? Bukhosi!"

I sigh rubbing my forehead.

Me: "Baba I'm good Gumede I'm just tired from studying."

Nkosiyo: "Ok, you'll tell me if something is bothering you right?"

Me: "Yes dad. Tell mom not to worry I'm fine."

Nkosiyabo: "Ok..I love you."

I smile.

Me: "I love you too baba."

He drops the call. And touch Sesona's back she's fast asleep. I take a fleece and cover her up then kiss her lips removing the braids on her face. As I stare at her I am getting an intense feeling, it's gotta be love that I feel for this girl and it is growing every time I spend time with her and look into her pretty face.

I check her Insulin pump on her shoulder and find out everything is fine with her.

She sleep for over an hour and her mom calls I answer the call because I don't want to disturb her sleep.

Me: "Mrs Sondzaba, it's Bukhosi, Sesona fell asleep."

MrsSondzaba: "Oh ok Uhm..tell her to call me, her dad and I are going to come back late."

Me: "Oh..I can keep her here for the night she's safe with me."

MrSondzaba: "Are you sure?"

Me: "Yes ma'am I'm sure."

MrSondzaba: "Ok thank you, but do tell her to call me back."

Me: "I will do that."

I put her phone down and kiss her lips, they are so soft I enjoy kissing them. She opens her eyes they are puffy. I brush her cheek.

Me: "Hey..."

Sesona: "Hi.."

Me: "You don't have to worry about anything I've got your back."

She sit up and hug me. I tell her a message from her mom she calls her and she's ok with staying here for the night.

I give her my t-shirt so she can sleep with it.

Me: "I will sleep on the couch, I don't want to leave you here alone since you're not used to the place maybe you'll feel unsafe if I'm in the other room."

She nods and go to the bathroom to change. She comes back with my t-shirt looking like a dress to her, but she is still pulling it down. I act like I'm not looking because I can tell she's uncomfortable I don't know why because it's a little above her knees showing less thighs.

She get under covers and I take another cover sitting on the couch.

Me: "You can be comfortable around me, I love you just the way you are."

She nods.

Me: "And I want that confidence Sesona because your boyfriend loves you! You gotta boost about it! Kufanele uzitshela ngaloko."(You have to be confident about that)

She nods wiping the tear falling on her cheek.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda."(I love you)

She is so emotional and I understand, having to grow up in a place where everyone have something to say about you yet they don't even give you a chance to get to know you better must be damn hard.

Me: "And I mean it!"

I tuck her in and kiss her lips.

Me: "Goodnight."

She bat her eyelashes I smile.

Sesona: "Is it a problem if we share a bed but use separate bed covers?"

Me: "You're ok with us sleeping in one bed?"

Sesona: "Yes."

I get in next to her I don't take another bed cover because it's already hot we can't sleep in one bed with two covers.

Her body against mine sends some signals very quickly into my manhood I groan moving, leaving a space between us. She is too quiet I look at her, she is looking at the ceiling.

Me: "Stop overthinking, you only need your mom, dad and me in this world, we have enough love to give you."

I take her hand putting it over my chest.

Me: "I will shower you with so much love you will have no room to store it."

She moves closer wrapping her arms around me. My hands touch her bare skin because the t-shirt has moved up, and my dick is acting up but I'm a man I can get over the temptation though the wet dream I had of her keeps flashing in my head.

Me: "Goodnight."

I kiss her forehead.

Sesona: "Goodnight."

She kiss mine and we both laugh.

I dose off real quick because I have been moving up and down the whole day.

I wake up in the morning with some fresh air coming from the window she's standing there looking outside. I get off bed and hug her from behind kissing her neck.

Me: "Wanuka njengendoda yakho?"(Why do you smell like your man?)

She giggles and hold the back of my neck still looking the other way, I love this position we're in.

Sesona: "I used your cosmetics from the bath soap, to your roll on and cologne I smell like a million bucks."

Me: "But I prefer your sweet scent all day everyday."

I kiss her neck again she laughs trying to move away but I hold her waist.

Sesona: "That tickles."

Me: "More than this?"

I tickle her she laughs removing my hands from her then run away I hold her by her waist and we both fall in bed I am on top of her. She is still laughing.

Sesona: "Don't tickle me again please.."

I kiss her instead, she kiss me back so good I find myself moving her legs apart with my knee then lift her thigh up getting in between them with my lower body. She's still in my t-shirt and I'm on my boxer shorts. My hands are wondering around her body I shiver when I touch the most softest part of her body. She is not wearing any panties. She hold my hand that is already in contact with her lady part I remove it then get off her clearing my throat. I am having hot flushes, sweating profusely.

Sesona: "Sorry.."

She says looking away pulling the t-shirt down.

Me: "For..."

I clear my throat.

Me: "For what?"

Sesona: "When I took a shower I washed my panty, it is wet."

Me: "That's ok, and I'm sorry for touching you inappropriately it wasn't my intention."

Sesona: "But isn't that what girlfriend and boyfriend do?"

Me: "Yes when they are both ready, I don't think you are anywhere near ready."

Sesona: "What about you? Are you ready?"

Me: "Uhm..no."

Sesona: "But your thing is always hard, even yesterday I ignored it but I could feel it was hard. Does that mean you just want to have sex with me?"

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "What are you implying Sesona because that last part doesn't sit well with me can you rephrase that please."

Sesona: "I just...I want..to..know."

She stutters.

Me: "Well just so you know my dick is up because I am human, a man with feelings, when I kiss you I am feeling you and as a normal man I get an erection! That doesn't mean I just want to have sex with you! That sounds wrong! Like I am just with you for sex!"

We're shouting.

Sesona: "but you didn't use "we" when talking about not being ready, you just mentioned me! Are you ready for sex? Is that what you want from me?"

Me: "Are you the only girl with a pussy?"

She gasps.

Me: "Answer me! If No, then you're out of your mind if you think I'm just with you for pussy!"

I get up from bed and go hit the shower frustrated as hell. I spend so much time there until I'm calm then I go back to the room and not find her there and so is her bag. I go crazy and rush to take my phone and call her number I am relieved when it rings just outside my door. She walks in wearing her clothes now.

Sesona: "I want to take my panty in the bathroom."

Me: "Are you leaving?"

Sesona: "Yes."

Me: "Why?"

Sesona: "I want to go home."

Me: "Angikhulumanga kahle and nawe awukhulumanga kahle. We should sit down and talk don't run away because I am not gonna do those back and forth, I am not breaking up with you."(I didn't speak the right way, you also didn't)

She continue to stand by the door.

Me: "Please sit down."

She sit, I stand in front of her.

Me: "I'm not with you because of your Vagina."

She punch my chest, I laugh holding her hand.

Me: "But you have a Vagina and that gets me excited just thinking about it not that I just want to fuck..dad used to sit us down and tell us how sacred sex is, you never do it just to release that's a bit demonic. You have to be fully committed, your mind, body and soul should be in it so I took that with me, I won't just have sex with anyone just because they have a Vagina, I have to feel you to get into

you! Get that? I'm not judging people who have sex just cause... but I won't do that because of the values and morals I was taught at home."

She nods.

Sesona: "I understand, I'm sorry for getting it all wrong, I'm new to this so please forgive me."

I smile.

Me: "Good. This is what we'll do each time we have a misunderstanding not these break ups and make ups..I'm too young to be traumatized like that."

She laughs.

Me: "But your Vagina feels so damn good..can I touch it again."

She push me away, I laugh so hard.

Me: "But seriously babe..never ever again think that I am with you because I want sex, no darling I want all of you."

Sesona: "There's not much to want then."

She says laughing.

Me: "Even if you'd lose more weight right now I'd still want all of you, bones and all."

She laughs so hard tears roll down her cheeks.

Sesona: "You're fucken crazy!"

I take her hands into mine.

Me: "I love you just the way you are baby..you don't have to be insecure about your body or anything, I fell for who you were then, what you are now and who you will be in the future..I won't limit myself with you because this can't be a short term thing, This is a lifetime race, I'm willing to run till the finish line."

Sesona: "You're lying to me there's no way I am your first girlfriend."

Me: "Oh but you are ...I just say what I feel in my heart right at that moment. My life is not scripted. I'm not trying to memorize a script here. I won't say things to you just because I have said it to someone else before, I am saying what I feel about you right here today."

I touch her cheeks.

Me: "I love your eyes."

She close them, I kiss the both of them one after the other she blinks then stare at me.

Me: "Beautiful."

Sesona: "Umuhle nawe."(You're also beautiful)

I laugh and we hug each other tight. I can feel that her body is a bit shaky. I look at her worried.

Me: "Are you shaking?"

Sesona: "Yeah..Uhm..I have my first early..I'm hungry."

I move away from her like lightning wearing my t-shirt the literally run to the kitchen. I warm up food from last night then go back to her in the room. I sit in front of her and feed her. I feel so bad that I forgot she has to eat before she can even get that hungry because she gets dizzy spells and get shaky.

Me: "I'm so sorry...I should have warmed up your food earlier. Ncese sthandwa Sami."(I'm sorry my love)

I continue to feed her until she finish. She put her hand over my cheek.

Sesona: "I'm fine now Bukhosi, stop worrying."

Me: "I almost got you sick."

Sesona: "But I'm not, you fed me and I'm good. Stop worrying."

I take my phone and book at great Granny Zama's Salon for my baby, I want her to change her hairstyle and maybe do her nails anything to make her feel good I know hair and nail makes my mom feel happy and beautiful, so I am doing that for my girl.

I take her to a salon and they start by unbraiding her braids, wash her hair then they do a gold long straight up, it matches with the colour of her skin, I am sitting behind her I keep looking at the mirror to see how pretty she looks and the girl doing her hair is making magic. She moves to her nails and do red nails and they are not that long.

She finally get up and look at me with a huge smile on her face I think she also can see how beautiful she is.

Me: "Wow! Fuck..."

She flips her hairstyle I laugh.

Me: "Yes darling! Own it!"

I snap my fingers the ladies at the salon laugh.

Me: "You look amazing, I love this colour on you.."

She just get in my arms. I pay the lady and even tip her a bit because, yhooh!

Later I take her home and walk her in just to greet the parents. Her mom rush to hug her tight like she has been missing her and her daddy do the same.

MrSondzaba: "Woah! Look at you."

She's so shy.

MrsSondzaba: "You look so beautiful!"

She kiss her shiny forehead from all the sprays and hair food they put on her head she's beautiful even her eyes went from big to huge I love them so much.

Me: "I have to go now, see you at campus."

We hug briefly then Mrs Sondzaba walks me out. She takes my hand and blink looking up.

MrSondzaba: "I have noticed changes in my daughter ever since you came into her life, all good things, she laughs often, she doesn't lock herself up anymore and I can tell she's slowly but surely gaining weight that means you're a good influence to her, you're a good friend please don't stop being good, I'm grateful for your parents for raising such a wonderful young man, thank you so much."

We hug and it warms my heart to hear that I have made a huge impact on Sesona's life with this little time I came into her life.

It's the week of our exams, we've written two already. Sesona and I still see each other everyday, we go home to study then I take her back to her house later.

I just came out of my exam room I hear loud noise people are shouting and some are even cheering. I go where the crowd is, they are standing in a circle obviously looking at something.

Me: "What's going on?"

The guys laughs first.

"Mjovo just fainted out of nowhere bro..we literally heard the bones cracking as she fell on the ground."

His laughter makes my head spin..is he really laughing at that? How can people be so cruel. I push through the crowd removing everyone out of my way I even leave my bag on the ground. I feel tears filling up my eyes as she lays there on the ground uncouncious and people

are only taking pictures of her, no one is helping her. I kneel down and lift her head up.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami." (my love)

I hear gasps. The flashlights are blinding my eyes more than my tears.

Me: "Sesi..open your eyes baby."

Her eyelids slowly move then she half opens her eyes.

Sesona: "Bu..khosi.."

Her voice is breaking. I lift her t-shirt up but I don't find her insulin pump there I check her arm it's not there.

Sesona: "I...I.."

She close her eyes again. I pick her up and run to my car driving in high speed to the hospital where Sboniso works because I am panicking I keep wiping my tears all the way there.

I leave her in the car and run to Sbo's office pushing the door open. I am not thinking straight I know I shouldn't have left her in the car but my mind is only registering that now.

Me: "Please..I need help... she's not ok."

Sboniso: "Hey..hey hey hey..calm down, breathe and tell me what's going on."

I shake my head, there's no calming down.

Me: "Sesona.. she's in my car, she's dying.."

I break down sitting on my butt on the floor with my hands above my head.

Sboniso: "Hey! Duncan tell the porter to come to the parking lot right now."

I hear him running out, I feel like I am losing my mind.

After a few minutes of sitting there Sboniso walks in and help me sit on a chair. Malaika throws the bag on the table and pull me up hugging me. I start crying all over again.

Malaika: "I'm so sorry little bro I came as fast as I could..Sboniso called and told me you're not ok."

I wipe my face.

Me: "Is she okay?"

Sboniso: "The doctors are still with her. Just try to calm down she will be fine."

I stay in his office for hours with Malaika she keeps telling me to keep calm but the doctors are not saying anything.

"Bukhosi! Where is my son?"

I get up when I hear mom's voice outside. I rush to her and we hug tight.

Thabsie: "Oh..my baby...Kumkani saw some videos circulating on Facebook, Malaika called and told us you're here."

She wipe my tears and pull me into a hug again, dad's hand is on my back.

Me: "I don't care about the video, I want to know that Sesona is ok."

Her mom and dad rush in. They walk up to me and Mrs Sondzaba hugs me, she's already in tears.

MrsSondzaba: "My husband's friend told us my daughter was admitted here, what happened?"

I shrug my shoulders, I don't have a voice.

She scans the room then look at my mom and dad.

MrSondzaba: "I'm so sorry..Uhm..Hi. I'm the girl's mother I..."

Thabsie: "It's okay..I understand you're upset about your daughter..have a seat."

She sit down and mom brush her back.

The doctor comes in with Sboniso. They tell us that she's dehydrated and her blood sugar levels are really low. They tell us it looks like she didn't take her insulin and that she haven't eaten anything for quite some time.

Me: "Can I see her, please?"

Sboniso: "She's still unconscious for now.."

Me: "That's fine I just want to see she's ok."

They allow me in her ward. She has oxygen mask and a drip then an insulin pump on her tummy, she's just in her sport bra they must have taken the shirt off. I kiss her forehead and hold her hand tight. She slowly open her eyes. I smile.

Me: "You scared me."

She tightly hold my hand closing her eyes again.

The doctors tell us to come back the next day. I am sitting in my bed watching the pictures and videos on every social media platform things they are saying about Sesona are so inhumane but on Twitter its worse. I sigh tossing the phone away from me.

Dad walks in and sit next to me.

Nkosiyabo: "Uzizwa unjani?"(How are you feeling?)

Me: "I don't know.."

He hold my shoulder.

Nkosiyabo: "Who is she to you?"

Me: "My..my girlfriend."

Nkosiyo: "When are you formally introducing her to us?"

He says wiggling his eyebrows. I smile.

Me: "It hasn't been long baba..and she's shy."

Nkosiyo: "Your mom was shy but she gave me not one, not two, not three, not four, definitely not five but six children. Do you catch my drift?"

I laugh.

Me: "Dad come on.."

Nkosiyo: "I'm just saying."

I chuckle.

Nkosiyo: "If she's so important to you, you gonna be there for her, she might not be the same because of the things she will see on these social networks but your love can bring her back."

I nod.

Me: "I think I really do love her dad."

He chuckles.

Nkosiyo: "You think? Dude you were literally losing your mind. You love that girl."

I smile wide.

Me: "So everyone can see it?"

Nkosiyo: "Yes but not better than me because uphuma kwawami amasende."(You come from my testicles!)

I cringe. He push me playfully.

Nkosiyabo: "Raw undiluted Zulu.. Phakathwayo."

I laugh.

Nkosiyabo: "I hope she get better, umubi kanjani mowuphatheke kabi."(You're so ugly when you're sad.)

Me: "Aybo baba!"

He hugs me and we do our handshake.

Nkosiyabo: "I'm going to bed with your shy mother."

I laugh so hard as he walk out whistling, dad can be crazy.

In the morning I'm allowed in before visiting hours because I came in with Sboniso. I rush to her ward and find the nurse changing her drip. I sit down and hold her hand. She opens her eyes and Sboniso removes the oxygen mask and they give us some space.

Me: "Hey.."

Sesona: "Hey.."

Me: "What happened, why did you starve yourself?"

Sesona: "I... didn't..I was late for my exam and I left my insulin pump and didn't have a meal in the morning."

Me: "But why would you risk your life like that."

Sesona: "I'm so..sorry."

Me: "I was really scared."

I stay with her the whole day, luckily I wasn't writing today.

Three days later she's being discharged I just got to the hospital.

I stop at the door and find her staring at her phone with tears in her eyes. Her mom and dad are with her.

"The trauma the Prince is dealing with by being with this girl is beyond, imagine when she dies how will he survive, he needs to get out of this situation as soon as possible. He deserves better."

She is reading on her phone her lower lip is quivering. It's all over those social networks we are the hot topic at the moment.

Sesona: "They are right, I will die and he will be left traumatized for life..he should move on with his life now."

Me: "Move on to where?"

I ask stepping inside the room they all turn to look at me.

Me: "So you want me to allow miserable, low lives people hiding behind the keyboard to dictate my life as if their lives are perfect?"

I ask calmly with my hands in my pockets.

Me: "Until it comes from you not those Dr Phill, Steve Harvey wannabes, I am moving nowhere."

I don't even look at her parents. The cat is out of the bag anyway, everyone knows we're dating now.

Sesona: "Bukhosi..this is ruining your image, I am ruining your reputation!"

Me: "I'm just a student, what reputation?"

Sesona: "You're a Prince!"

Me: "oh that? I am my father's Prince and he always taught me to fight for what I want regardless of what people say..and that's what I am gonna do with and for you."

I chuckle shaking my head.

Me: "A reputation? You think I'd compromise my love for a reputation, an image baby?"

I hear a chuckle from Mr Sondzaba.

Me: "Your favourite meal will be delivered to your house in an hour. I love you."

I walk out and get in my car driving home. Me choosing a "reputation" over Sesona? You'll never see it!

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CHAPTER 68

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BUKHOSI

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My brothers and I have been invited to some red carpet event in a week and I have been telling them that I don't want to attend the event but they insist we all go since it's the holidays. My older brothers and Thingo are bringing their partners along even Makhosini said he will be bringing a girl from his class with whom he says is a "friend".

I take my phone and call Sesona as I am parking outside her gate, mom asked me and Makhosini to try some new recipes for her that she read online. They want to meet her so bad but I don't think it's time yet, she's still very much in her fragile state and I don't wanna put any pressure on her.

She step out of the house wearing tracksuits and a beanie, it's a bit chilly today. She get in the driver's seat.

Sesona: "Hey.."

Me: "Can I get a kiss?"

She giggles and lean over, we kiss briefly, I hold her hand.

Me: "How are you doing?"

Sesona: "I feel fine.."

I give her the lunchbox.

Me: "Mom asked us to try this new recipe out for you, maybe you'll like it."

She smiles wide.

Sesona: "The Queen asked that you prepare a meal for me?"

I nod as she looks excited.

Me: "And they can't wait to meet you."

Sesona: "Uhm...I .."

Me: "Have you had your first meal?"

She shakes her head.

Me: "Why not?"

Sesona: "I woke up late and mom was about to make a sandwich for me."

I look for a spoon and wash it with the bottled water I keep here. I take the lunchbox and feed her, I can tell she's enjoying it and I'm happy.

I give her some water after she's done eating.

Sesona: "That tasted so good, thank you."

Me: "Can you visit me for a day please I will bring you back later."

Sesona: "Ok, mom has her friends coming over anyway."

She walk in to talk to her mom then come back with a bag. She get in and I drive us home.

We go to my room and lie on our backs next to each other looking up.

Me: "Uyangithanda?"(Do you love me?)

Sesona: "Mmh?"

I turn my body facing her.

Me: "Do you love me?"

Sesona: "Yes I do love you."

She says shyly.

Me: "Uhm...my siblings and I are attending a red carpet event next week and they are all bringing their partners with, Uhm...I don't have a partner."

She clears her throat.

Me: "Please, I want to go with you."

Sesona: "No."

Me: "Ses.."

Sesona: "No Bukhosi, that's like setting me up! I will be the talk of the whole world and a laughing stock in these social networks again."

Me: "Oh ok."

Sesona: "I'm sorry I can't and won't."

I nod.

Me: "I hear you."

I am disappointed but I get where she's coming from so I will attend the event alone.

The whole day is just dull, I'm upset that I won't get to flaunt her in these event because her insecurities and listening to people's opinions about herself is on the way. I want to flaunt her so bad, I'm not ashamed to be with her.

Sesona: "Bukhosi.."

I open my eyes and look at her. Her bright eyes are looking into my soul I feel chills down my spine.

Me: "Baby.."

Sesona: "Are you upset that I don't want to go to this event with you."

Me: "Yeah I'm upset but I just wish you'd compromise for me, just this one time."

Sesona: "That will mean I will be compromising my mental health, they will be bashing me while saying you're the Prince that deserves better."

Me: "Why do you care? You are better for me that's why I'm with you, I don't listen to what other people say so why do you care so much? Don't you want me to have a two way relationship, I do things to make you happy and you do the same? Can't you do that for me Sesona?"

Sesona: "I have been subjected to insults all my life, I didn't have friend and didn't go out much and that worked out for me because that meant I get less insults just by keeping to myself now you want me to be out there for a whole world to judge."

I nod.

Me: "I see."

Sesona: "What do you see?"

Me: "The way you see life is different from mine. In my world it's only my circle's opinions that matter but you care what everyone says about you even people you don't know."

Sesona: "Yeah you won't know how I feel because you guys are just perfect Princes in everyone's eyes while I'm a girl dying of AIDS because I am skinny, I'm a skeleton! Have anyone says that about you? No!"

She is blinking rapidly that's how I know she's so upset with me right now.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

She get off bed and walk inside the bathroom banging the door. I hear her sobbing loud I quickly get off and try to open the door but she locked it inside.

Me: "Baby, open the door please."

She is crying right close to the door I can hear her and it's killing me.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa sthandwa Sami."(I'm sorry my love.)

She finally opens I pull her into my arms.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

Sesona: "I want to go home."

Me: "Ok..I will take you home."

I take my car keys and go down to help her wear her sneakers then drive her to her house. She get off and don't even say goodbye. I just drive straight home to the village.

When I get home everyone is here including Thingo and her husband. I just go to the kids room and stay there with them just to remain calm.

Thingo: "Hey.."

She says sitting next to a double bed I'm sleeping in with Mthiya on my chest.

Me: "Yeah.."

Thingo: "You're not ok."

I sigh.

Me: "I'll be fine."

Thingo: "Is it about Sesona?"

They all know her name but haven't seen her besides those pictures people took when she fainted.

Me: "I will be going to this event without her, she doesn't wanna go."

Thingo: "But you get where she's coming from right? It hasn't been long people were making fun of her, so she still feels somehow."

Me: "I get that, I understand but it still hurts me that I won't be able to attend any event with her."

She put her hand over mine that is holding Mthiya.

Thingo: "I feel that you're going through a lot but maybe one day she will ignore all the hate and just appreciate life as it is."

I nod.

Me: "Might never happen but I will keep hoping."

Later she calls me.

Me: "Hello."

Sesona: "Bukhosi."

Me: "Baby.."

Sesona: "Uhm..you can find another date for the event I won't mind."

I chuckle.

Me: "I can go alone, my self confidence is insane, I will be fine going alone."

Sesona: "Oh.."

Me: "Yeah, don't worry about me."

Sesona: "Uphi?"(Where are you?)

Me: "I'm at home at the Palace."

Sesona: "Ok. We're going home in the Eastern Cape tomorrow there's a ceremony my father wants to do, we will stay there for the rest of the holidays."

Me: "You're only telling me now huh.."

I say with a chuckle.

Sesona: "I was going to tell you earlier today but you know how things ended."

So there's no changing of mind. She won't attend this event with me period.

Me: "Uhambe kahle."(Go well)

Sesona: "Thank you."

Silence.

Sesona: "Bukhosi."

Me: "Yeah?"

Sesona: "Ndiyakuthanda."(I love you.)

I smile. She says it hesitantly but the fact that she said it first and in her language hits different.

Me: "Ndiyakuthanda nami."(I love you too.)

She drops the call..I sigh. Ngizomcothozisa kuyoze kulunge.(I will help her, one step at a time till we get there)

The next day we go back to Durban with all my brothers to fetch our tailored suits mine is navy in colour will be wearing it with a white shirt and black shoes, Kumkani is Maroon, Ngcebo also agreed to come after a lot of begging from his twin brother Mcebisi, so he opted for an all white suit, Mcebisi decided to do the same then Makhosini will be wearing a blue suit. We all get the same haircut, we all keep our hair short and trimmed on the side then we trim the sideburn, mustache and beard, we all look the same just different ages, mom would be going crazy should she see us right now, she always says we look like the father of her kids.

A day before the event I receive a call from the unsaved number.

Me: "Hello."

"Hello, is this Bukhosi?"

Me: "Yes."

"It's Sesona's mother."

Me: "Oh Mrs Sondzaba hello ma'am."

MrsSondzaba: "I heard about the event you guys are attending I want to get a glimpse of the way you will be looking like."

I frown, I don't understand what she's saying.

Me: "I don't get it."

MrsSondzaba: "Like the colour of your suit maybe.."

Me: "Oh..I will be wearing a Navy suit ma'am "

MrsSondzaba: "Ok Thank you."

And she drops the call just like that, I shrug my shoulders.

The day of the event my brothers and I are all wearing our suits, Ngcebo is in that white suit and has ibhayi placed neatly on his shoulder. We all look super clean even I say so myself.

The cars pull up outside we all walk out, Kumkani leading the way. Their wives are here wearing dresses matching their husband's suit. Mcebisi's partner also step out of the car, a beautiful dark skinned lady, they smile at each other hugging briefly like how friends would normally hug. So I am Just standing there watching everyone get in their cars with their partners then I get in my own car alone. I play music on my car while driving to the event.

I get to Durban ICC arena, I can already see the spotlight on my brothers and their wives journalists are going crazy some interviewing them and taking picture. I huff and step out my car fixing my suit. Some journalists rush to me and ask questions but I'm not really in the mood for interviews. My phone vibrates in my pocket it's the number Mrs Sondzaba called me with yesterday sending a text "come to the entrance, Sesona is waiting for you."

Me: "what?"

I look around and spot her mother's car. I run there and open the back seat of a car. She's wearing a short Navy dress, the sleeves are lace and it shows her back. She is holding a little purse. She is even wearing heels and has a new hairstyle with make up.

Me: "You're here?"

I take her hand and she step out of the car. She is wearing heels so she's not that short today. She is looking down like she wants to hide her face and I notice that her mom was right, she is picking up some weight.

Sesona: "You talked about compromise, so this is me compromising for you."

I pull her chin up and kiss her lips.

Me: "I can't believe you came just for me."

Sesona: "I want to see you happy too."

I thank Mrs Sondzaba and take my baby's hand, I'm happy now I can answer any question they wanna ask me.

They stop me before we could even enter.

"Prince Bukhosi Gumede, who is the lady next to you." The journalist ask.

I smile looking at Sesona she looks so scared I can feel her shaking, my hand is on waist.

Me: "She's my future. Her name is Sesona Sondzaba."

"Is it the same lady that fainted at UKZN, what's wrong with her?" She ask further.

Me: "It is the same lady but what is wrong with her is none of your business, and I am saying that respectfully."

I walk away holding her closer to me. They take as much pictures as they want, I am making her look at me often just to get her to relax I am the only familiar face to her here.

Thinggo walks in with her husband looking pretty as hell and the attention moves to her. My brothers, Thinggo and I take Pictures together then the event starts with long ass speeches. I hold Sesona's hand.

Me: "Thank you so much for coming, you did great today and remember I will be with you every step of the way, people will have something to say but know that when you want to shout, cry or vent you can come to me, I will take everything."

She smiles and sleep on my shoulder closing her eyes.

Later the couples booked hotels so I just take Sesona home because this was a surprise I didn't know she was coming. I prepare food for us then we go to my room. I go down to take off her heels.

Sesona: "Can you untie me, on my back please."

I help her up then turn her around, I untie the little string of her dress that was tied on her back then help her remove the whole dress leaving her thong only. She turns covering her breast. I won't lie and say I don't want her because my dick is already hard.

Sesona: "You will borrow me your t-shirt?"

Her voices comes out breaking.

Me: "Why are you hiding your body from me?"

Sesona: "I'm not."

She keeps her head down. I take the t-shirt from my wardrobe. When I try to help her wear it our eyes lock. I pull her by her waist instead and I smash my lips into hers. Her hands are on my bare chest. I groan deepening the kiss throwing the t-shirt in the bed then hold her waist picking her up on then carefully lay her in bed getting on top of her.

Me: "Baby.."

She doesn't break the kiss but just say "mmmh" on my lips.

Me: "Shit... let's stop baby."

I can feel my shorts getting wet, my dick twitching so hard.

I get off her and wipe my face.

Me: My body wants you so bad."

Sesona: "Mine too."

I widen my eyes looking at her but she shyly moves her eyes away from me.

I get on top of her again and we start kissing all over again. I am shaking a bit as I take off her panty, she is letting me. I'm so nervous..is this it? Our first time together is right here today?"

My hand are moving all over her body lips not leaving hers I reach that part, her pussy my dick twitches uncontrollable.

Me: "Mmm.."

I groan. I can feel her hole with my finger, it is moist.

Me: "I don't know if it's ok to do it now baby."

Sesona: "I..I want to do it."

I am having doubts because of nerves, what I hurt her, or do it wrong. I am shaking as I pull down my shorts I notice that she feels the same. I get in between her thighs and the tip of my dick comes into contact with her clit I go insane breathing heavily, my left hand grabbing on the sheets hard as I stroke my dick and try to find my way to her hole but it's hard getting in so I do what I have watched before, going down on her and lick her like I always see on these videos, she moans opening her eyes wide then quickly close them. I take my time there then go back kissing her. I keep trying to thrust in her until my tip is in. I put my hand under her butt cheeks and lift her up while pushing my dick in, she screams I feel a little pain in my dick from the friction that just happened right now. Her knees are shaking.

Me: "Does it hurt?"

She nods but I can't stop now something wants to come out and right now. I start moving my waist balancing my hands on her either side staring at my dick as it moves in and out of her, she is so tight and it's definitely hurting me too. I move faster my dick starts twitching hard I tense up.

Me: "Sesona...aaah baby...aaah.."

I groan as I shoot my sperms deep in her pussy, I couldn't hold it. I pull out and stare at her face.

Me: "Are you ok?"

She smiles, my heart does pitter patter.

Sesona: "It was painful but I wouldn't have it any other way than like this, with you."

Me: "Thank you so much, I will always remember this day, it will be engraved in my heart forever. Thank you."

I kiss her lips then get off her. She tries to sit up and flinch.

Me: "I'm sorry."

We look at the blood stain on my bed sheets then I hold my dick looking at it, I am a little hurt on the skin around the tip.

Sesona: "Does it hurt too since it's also your first time?"

I nod.

Me: "Yeah but no much, I enjoyed every moment of it, pain and pleasure is fine as long as it's with you."

I hold her hand.

Me: "I hope you understand what this means."

She blinks staring at me.

Me: "I owe your mom and dad so much but I will talk to my father about it."

She nods.

Me: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu."(Thank you so much)

We take a shower together and just thinking about that moment we shared makes me love her even more. We sleep in bed I am holding her tight and I keep kissing her.

In the morning I keep having flashbacks of last night while making breakfast. My eyes shoots open when I remember that we didn't use protection and I know damn well that a baby now is not what she needs. I rush to my room and give her breakfast then quickly wear my clothes.

Me: "I'm coming back soon baby."

Sesona: "What's wrong?"

Me: "Nothing I am just rushing to the pharmacy nearby to get morning after pills so you don't get pregnant."

She widen her eyes as well.

Sesona: "I can get pregnant?"

Me: "I am a Gumede, and usually we don't miss but right now me and you are still in Varsity doing our first year. So I am getting the pills.

She nods.

I drive to the pharmacy and explain to the lady what I want she gives me the pill and I drive back home.

I give her water, she take the pill."

During the day I drive her home because their house help asked for the key, her mom only dropped her off for the event and went back to her husband in the Eastern Cape.

Later I am with my siblings and their partners at home, talking and laughing my phone rings. I get up already smiling going to my room.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."(My love)

Sesona: "Hey. I just called to say thank you for making me try out new things, the love and support you've shown me is amazing, thank you."

I smile rubbing my chin.

Me: "Kubonga mina ngokuba sempilweni yakho nje."(I'm the one who is grateful just for being in your life)

She giggles.

Me: "Do you still feel pain?"

Sesona: "A little."

Me: "kusho ukuthi kmele ngikuphinde eduze yabo.(That means I should do it again soon.)

She laughs.

Me: "Ngizokubona ksasa ekuseni. I want us to go out for lunch and go watch movies."(I will see you tomorrow morning)

Sesona: "Ok..I can't wait to see you."

Me: "Me too baby."

I just sleep in bed facing up smiling to myself. This is it, this is the love I grew up seeing between mom and dad you can't tell me nothing! I love that girl and I know damn well she loves me too.

CHAPTER 69

*

BUKHOSI

*

Two months later..

We've started our final semester of the year, I want to achieve great marks so I can make my parents proud.

Sesona and I are still going strong, she spends most of her time with me and her parents allows it, they like me, I am one of those guys mothers would die to have as a son in-law.

My baby is healthy and gaining weight and that's not the only thing she is gaining but her confidence too. If someone loves you right you even change the way you walk and the way you talk, I am saying if you're loved the right way your whole attitude change and I see that with my girl even though some things still get to her but she's been doing great ignoring the negativity.

I am sitting outside, my books in front of me while listening to her iPods I took yesterday. I see her walking past the group of guys, they don't like me anymore just because I won't let them walk all over my girl, well they can go to hell.

They start making those remarks I remove the iPods and collect my books I want to go over there but Sesona stops walking and stand right next to them, usually she rush off or run away but I guess not today.

I get up as the crowd laughs out loud.

Sesona: "Oh the "Mjovo" joke is getting old, it doesn't stick anymore be creative try something new and catchy."

I raise my eyebrow in shock as I witness so much silence from the group.

Sesona: "I thought you'd have a comeback but you're just a bunch of fools, ridiculous piece of shit!"

I am stunned, my mouth hang open. She walk up to me with a smile and give me a mind blowing kiss then sit down crossing her legs.

Me: "What was that?"

Sesona: "I'm tired of crying over one and the same thing over and over so I decided that you know what! I'm gonna be a big girl and stand up for myself."

I want to take her right here, right now but we're surrounded by a bunch of people that are also still amazed by what she just did.

Me: "Do you think we can rush home right now..usuvuse uGumede ebekade ezilalele."(You've woken up Gumede while he was sleeping.)

She moves her eyes I hear a silent gasp as she looks at my dick print it's hard. We've been having sex using protection after that first time to make sure she doesn't fall pregnant. We enjoy each other so much but we still haven't done much, like, different styles because she is still shy, so for now it's always missionary and I always initiate sex. I don't mind because I always say we take things a step at a time.

She is blushing now, I don't know if it's me or my dick print that's making her blush.

I take her hand and we go to my car. We get home and I always make sure we eat before anything else.

I take a shower, dry my body then wrap a towel around my waist stepping out. When I get in my room she jumps in fright and her phone slip from her hand falling on the fluffy carpet on the floor. I pick it up for her confused of what is making her so jumpy. I stare at the phone in shock, she is watching porn and it's still playing, a woman is doing things on top of that dick. I slowly look at her she is biting her nails tears streaming down her cheeks.

Me: "Why are you crying?"

Sesona: "I'm sorry..I wanted to learn how...how...I didn't mean..."

She is crying real tears apologizing none stop. I look at her phone then increase the volume because it was silent. She cries more when she hear the screams and groans from her phone.

I chuckle.

Me: "When did you start watching porn?"

Sesona: "I...I searched for it when you were in the shower."

I move back on her phone and check her search history and it really is the first time she searched for porn and she was very specific on her search "a woman pleasing a man sexually sex videos."

I stop playing the video and toss her phone on top of the bed. She is still crying.

Me: "Ukhalelani ngempela?"(Why are you crying?)

She is shaking.

Me: "Why are you so scared?"

I ask amused, this reaction is funny to me she is crying because of the embarrassment she's feeling.

She wipes her tears.

Me: "Come here baby."

I pull her hand and hug her.

Me: "Stop crying, this is not a bad thing."

Sesona: "It's not?"

I nod.

Me: "I'm actually pleased that you want to learn to give me that kind of pleasure."

I sit in bed and pull her to my lap.

Me: "We're still young we have a lifetime to learn new things so don't put pressure on yourself."

She touch my shoulder like she's massage it then kiss my lips, the kiss is different, she's even using her tongue and that gets me excited.

She push me back in bed and remove the towel around my waist my dick is so hard and up. She bite her bottom lip then take off her dress then her panty. I am looking at her as she strips naked I am still on my back. She get on top of me and she tries to insert my dick.

Me: "Haaa.."

I cry out as my dick slowly fills her up. Her hands are on my chest I can feel her inner walls clenching on my dick.

Sesona: "I love you."

Me: "I lo...."

I don't finish talking because she starts moving her waist.

Me: "Sesona!"

The amount of pleasure I'm feeling as she continues to move her waist is out of this world, I am groaning like crazy. She has her eyes closed now playing with her nipples I think she is driven by pleasure too now because this is not my shy girlfriend anymore but a freak and I love it. She shakes opening her eyes and her walls clench on my dick again, she's cuming so I flip us over and look down at her, she has a little smile on her face.

Me: "Ungowami wena."(You're mine.)

She nods biting her lower lip.

I flip her again making her lie on her tummy flat then grab her butt cheeks going in with my tongue I lick her for a while then slowly shove my dick in. She grabs on the sheets, I make love to her so good and looking at her ass as I thrust in her makes the pleasure I'm feeling even more intense. I grab on her ass tight and groan as I cum so hard with my knees shaking.

Me: "Fuck.."

I pull out and go to the bathroom to wipe myself then go back to wipe her. I pull her closer and kiss her.

Sesona: "That was amazing."

Me: "Yeah I enjoyed the first part of it all most."

She hides her face on my chest.

Sesona: "Don't embarrass me I don't even know what I was doing."

Me: "You did great, you drove yourself straight to orgasm, loved watching you own me like that."

She smiles.

Sesona: "I was so nervous to try but I wanted to, you've been so good to me."

Me: "You've been good to me."

Sesona: "We didn't use protection."

Me: "I will buy the pill."

She nods and sit up rubbing the side of her head.

Me: "Are you ok?"

Sesona: "I have a little headache."

Me: "I will take you to Sboniso."

I always make sure that whenever she feels sick I take her to a doctor for the recommended medication she can take, I don't want her to just take anything.

Sesona: "It's not that serious."

I nod and take her snacks.

Sesona: "Bukhosi!"

I hear her shouting in the bedroom while I'm in the kitchen I rush to the room and find her sitting in bed. She's wearing my t-shirt only.

Me: "What is it?"

Sesona: "Ndiyakuthanda."(I love you)

Me: "Really Sona? You shouted like you have seen a snake just to tell me that you love me?"

She blinks slowly staring at me I end up smiling.

Me: "You can go to hell, uyezwa yin?"(do you hear me?)

She giggles. She's been happy the past months together and I love it even her parents are happy about her progress. I want to talk to my father this coming festive season about doing things the right way, I need advice on so many things. I haven't even told him I broke Sesona's virginity I know it's long overdue but it has to be done because we follow customs and do things right at home.

We go to the kitchen together and she helps me clean the house. She keeps rubbing her eyes.

Me: "Are you okay?"

She nods and continue to clean next thing I know she lets go of her body on the floor, I rush to her.

Me: "Baby.. what's wrong?"

She looks so tired.

Me: "Hold on ok, let me take you to a Doctor."

I take her to my room first and help her wear her dress and shoes then wear my own.

I get to the hospital and they take her in. I am trying to keep it together and not go crazy like the last time. I am still pacing around Sboniso's office.

I sit there for over 15 minutes then the doctor that was doing check ups walk in.

Me: 'Is everything fine with her?'

Doctor: "Let's go, this way sir."

We walk in Sesona's ward and find her with an oxygen mask on but she's awake. She slowly removes it and sit up.

Me: "Uhm..is everything ok?"

The doctor looks at his file then at Sesona.

Doctor: "She's 9 weeks pregnant and I understand she's diabetic, she's insulin dependent?"

We are both quiet staring at each other.

Me: "She's what?"

Doctor: "She's 9 weeks pregnant sir and have high blood pressure which can mean a lot of things so for now we took her blood to a lab to check if there is no risk of her having Gestational diabetes."

We are both quiet now just looking down. I'm in shit! How can I be so careless, she's already going through diabetes and now there's more complications she's gonna face and it's all my fault.

Me: "I need to take you home. I have to talk to my father."

I am shaking. The doctor writes a date for us to come back for more check-ups and the blood test results.

I take her to her house, we haven't said much to each other, I think she's so scared and so I am.

I get home around 12 pm it's lunch time there's mom and dad's cars only in the yard. I huff and step out of my car greeting the security at the gate then drag my feet to the main door. I knock and mom opens the door and frown looking at me.

Thabsie: "Why are you knocking?"

Me: "I don't know..I forgot."

She is so confused.

Thabsie: "You forgot what? Are you okay?"

She pulls me inside and we take a seat, dad walk in and look at me.

Me: "Baba."

Nkosiyabo: "What's wrong?"

See, this man saw that I am not ok with just a single glance, that's how well he knows us, a present father he is.

Me: "Uhm...I...I."

He sits next to me and hold my hand.

Nkosiyabo: "Why are you so nervous? What happened talk to me."

Me: "I got Sesona pregnant."

I shut my eyes, that's how scared I am.

Nkosiyabo: "Open your eyes."

I shake my head and tears starts rolling down my cheeks.

Me: "I risked her life, the doctor said she has high blood pressure now and I know there are more complications coming baba, how can I do this to her?"

He sighs.

Nkosiyabo: "It's ok..go and calm down then come back we gonna wait here for you."

I go to my room and start by washing my face in the bathroom. When I look at my phone I see a message from her "I'm scared." I wipe my face and sigh, what have I done.

I go back to my parents and sit down with my eyes glued on the floor.

Nkosiyabo: "So, how is she taking all this?"

Me: "She's scared baba. I really didn't mean for all this to happen."

He sighs.

Nkosiyabo: "Don't worry, we will get the best care for her, I will ask Sboniso for a recommended Gynaecologist and we gonna get a doctor that will monitor her closely with her diabetes for the rest of the pregnancy."

I look at him then go on my knees holding his hand.

Me: "You will do all that for me baba?"

Nkosiyabo: "Yebo Gumede, She is carrying my grandchild, your first pride so yes I will do anything to make sure that the baby and the mother are well taken care off."

Me: "Thank you so much, thank you."

I now feel a lot better so I rush to my room and call her.

Sesona: "Bukhosi."

Me: "Hey, how are you? Uhm...is everything okay?"

Sesona: "You need to come here and explain to my parents what you did to me Bukhosi! I won't do it..I won't tell them you should come and do it."

I can hear panic in her voice.

Sesona: "Uyandiva?"(You hear me?)

She screams.

Me: "I hear you..I will do it. I promise I will come and do it."

She drops the call just like that. I take my car keys and tell my parents I am going back.

Thabsie: "Right now?"

I nod.

Me: "Yes mom, she is panicking and ufuna ngiyoziceba kubazali bakhe."(She wants me to go tell her parents what I did.)

Mom looks at dad.

Nkosiyo: "I will go with you."

I nod. We drive to Durban, straight to Sesona's home.

We are welcomed in by her mother and walk inside. She quickly get up when she sees me and starts biting her nails nervously.

Mr Sondzaba joins us in the living room.

MrSondzaba: "King Gumede..to what do I owe this pleasure of you coming into my home."

He says with a genuine smile on his face.

Nkosiyo: "Uhm..I am here because of my son."

I look at Sesona, I can see tear drops on her thighs as she keeps her head down.

Dad clears his throat.

Nkosiyo: "Uhm..Mr Sondzaba my son impregnated your daughter and I..."

Sesona's mother stares at her daughter in shock, actually her parents are both shocked.

Me: "I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to disrespect your home by getting her pregnant I'm really sorry."

MrSondzaba: "My daughter is pregnant?"

Me: "We found out earlier today."

He sighs wiping his face.

MrSondzaba: "You do know that she has been battling with diabetes all her life why would you take such a huge risk? Both of you! Sesona."

He shouts like any other parent would if her daughter got pregnant while she's still fighting diabetes.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu baba."(I'm really sorry father.)

MrSondzaba: "I had so much trust in you two that you will play it safe, I don't have a problem with your relationship I actually admired you from day one but this was a careless move from you two."

Me: "I know...and I feel so bad about it."

Nkosiyo: "Yes please forgive us, we will do everything to make sure she is well taken off medically sir also we will follow customs and pay damages."

Mrs Sondzaba is quiet looking at her daughter.

MrSondzaba: "My love, are you ok?"

She chuckles.

MrsSondzaba: "Is it wrong of me to be happy about my unborn grandchild?"

I slowly look at her, she's smiling with glassy eyes.

Nkosiyabo: "It's not wrong, I know how it feels to have a grandchildren, yes you do feel old but other than that it's the best feeling ever."

MrSondzaba: "Gumede, thank you for coming to us, I know some would never admit to impregnating a girl but here you showed up and stepped up."

Mr Sondzaba walk us out.

Nkosiyabo: "We will communicate with cellphone Sondzaba, again I'm really sorry for what my son did they are still young so that was a careless move."

MrSondzaba: "Thank you so much for going down to our level and humbled yourself, you're a great role model to your kids no wonder they turn out so well."

Nkosiyabo: "I try.."

MrSondzaba: "Modest much.."

They laugh shaking hands then we go home.

When we walk in the house we find Ngcebo standing in the middle of the room wearing just white pants no tshirt or shoes, he is staring in one direction not blinking I almost fall, the room is cold! So cold.

Nkosiyabo: "Ngcebo."

He moves his eyes to me I tremble.

Me: "Is everything ok Bhuti?"

He shakes his head and walk out the door. I run after him and find him walking so fast already out of the gate.

Me: "Bhuti wait!"

He doesn't even turn, he looks like someone who is sleep walking.

I just sit down, something is not right, I just know something is not right and it scares the hell out of me.

CHAPTER 70

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BUKHOSI

*

I am in my room trying to figure out what might be the problem, Ngcebo won't just show up in Durban out of nowhere then leave without saying a word. There must be something very wrong.

My phone rings, my heart smiles. I love this girl with all my heart.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

Sesona: "Uhm...your brother is here at our gate Bukhosi."

I frown.

Me: "Which brother?"

I know which brother It's just me hoping that it's not him because this definitely confirms something is wrong.

Sesona: "I think it's the one that is a Traditional healer."

I grab my keys and run to my car driving to her place. I find Ngcebo walking inside the gate with his hands on his back, you can see the family is stunned. I follow behind him and he stands at the centre of the room looking at Sesona, she looks so scared.

Ngcebo starts grunting and growling scaring all of them.

I kneel in front of him and start clapping my hands.

Me: "Mntwana weDlozi..Sitshele abadala bakubonisani?"(Tell us what the ancestors are showing you)

Ngcebo: "Kumele nithelelane amanzi emagcekeni oSondzaba nakoGumede ukugeza konke akusho ngomlomo wakhe ngembewu yakho."(You have to cleanse at the Sondzaba yard and Gumede clan, we are cleansing what was said by her mouth about your seed.)

I look at him confused.

Me: "But she apologized."

Ngcebo: "The ancestors wants this cleansing for this baby Bukhosi baNkosiyo.""

I nod looking down.

Me: "What do we need to do?"

Ngcebo: "Uzothenga inkukhu emhlophe uyilethe la sifuna inyonyo yayo sigeze ngayo izandla, bese siya ekhaya ithengwe uye inkukhu senze okufanayo."(You will buy white chicken we want a gall to wash our hands then we will go home she will buy a chicken and we will do the same there.)

Me: "Ok, I will do that."

Ngcebo: "Go now and bring incense for me."

I nod and get up rushing out. I drive to the market to buy chicken and incense with matches and three pink candles, I know he doesn't do anything without his pink candles he might have not included them because he knows I know.

I go back to Sesona's house and find her pacing around the yard I park and rush to her.

Me: "Baby.."

Sesona: "Do you think what I said will affect your baby?"

Me: "It won't.. that's what my brother is fixing right now, don't worry ok."

She nods.

Me: "I love you so much Sesona and God knows I pray for him to keep us together forever."

She hugs me tight. Ngcebo clears his throat I move away from her.

Ngcebo: "Did you get everything I asked?"

Me: "I did."

Ngcebo: "Ok let's get started."

We slaughter the chicken just by the gate and he takes the gall putting it inside the 2 litre bucket and then burn incense and candles calling Sondzaba ancestors to gather and see us making peace..I pour water on Sesona's hands and she does the same to me. We drive home and Sesona already bought the white Chicken we do the same process all over again then Ngcebo calls the bought of us in his hut. We take off our shoes and sit on the floor.

He heaves a deep sigh.

Ngcebo: "Live your life to the fullest, enjoy each other's company and love hard like you already do."

When I look at him he just looks away.

Me: "Everything is fine right?"

He nods and sigh getting up.

Ngcebo: "You can go now."

He walks out first, I hold Sesona's hand and pull her up.

We go back to Durban and I take her out first, we eat our food then walk around the mall. She stops walking and stare at the baby store in front of us.

Me: "Hey what is it?"

Sesona: "Let's go in."

She takes my hand and we walk in. She starts looking at the baby items.

Sesona: "Do you think it's a boy or a girl?"

I smile.

Me: "A girl, she's gonna be my princess."

She smiles and start picking up pink clothes.

Me: "Are we buying the clothes now?"

She giggles.

Sesona: "Yes."

Me: "But what if I'm wrong? What if it's a boy?"

Sesona: "Then you'll buy new clothes once he is born and give these away."

I nod.

Me: "Ok."

She buys so many clothes and she insists on paying.

Me: "But these are a lot of clothes baby let me pay."

Sesona: "No, let me pay for these because once she's here you will be the only one buying."

I laugh.

Me: "But why?"

She smiles and take out her card paying for the clothes.

We start by going home and she keeps looking at the baby items then she starts moving things from my closet making space then pack our baby's clothes there.

I smile.

Me: "Is she going to stay here full time?"

Sesona: "Yes."

Me: "You have all this figured out huh?"

She smiles and sit in front of me.

Sesona: "I don't ever want to fight nor argue with you these months, they should be memorable so that when you tell the story to our daughter she will know that her parents were happy to have her."

I become emotional instantly.

Me: "Why are you talking like this?"

I hold her hand.

Sesona: "Because that's what a child should grow up knowing, mom and dad love each other and happy to have our bundle of joy."

She takes my hand and put it over her tummy.

Sesona: "Love the way you love me Bukhosi, I appreciate you for showing the other side of this world I didn't know exist."

I pull her into my arms as I start getting teary.

I take her home later then go back home to sleep.

In the morning dad calls and tell me he found a Gynaecologist for Sesona and everything is paid up. He tells me to call so we I can take

her to her doctor for check-ups. We will continue using the same doctor she was using but dad will take over the payments from her parents because now she will see the doctor regularly.

In the morning I pick her up and take her to a doctor we find everything is ok with the baby, growing well but they are still worried about her blood pressure, so she is diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes which is said she will need medication because her blood pressure gets too high at times.

We go home and she opens my school bag and come back with a pen and book. She smiles sitting in front of me. She doesn't look much stressed like I do about her health.

Me: "Why do I feel like I'm the only one worried Sesona?"

She giggles.

Sesona: "I have been worried all my life Gumedede but now I have you, you will worry for me while I remain calm and happy."

I smile shaking my head, she really does look happy and that gives me so much relief that she's not stressing so the baby and herself won't be at much risk because stress is not good for the pregnancy.

Sesona: "So I want you to give me three baby names and we will choose one for our baby."

I frown.

Me: "Isn't it too soon to name the baby though?"

Sesona: "I just don't want us to call it the baby as it grows on my tummy."

Me: "I only have one name in mind and whether a girl or boy, my baby's name will be Khazimula(Shine bright) I will name him or her after her mom, she is the light that shines bright in my life."

She writes down the name.

Me: "You can give him or her a second name."

Sesona: "Well since you believe it's a girl her second name will be Aisha, and it's biblical meaning is 'she who lives' daddy's girl."

I smile.

Me: "I love it.. Khazimula Aisha Gumede."

I lift up her t-shirt and kiss her tummy.

She let me sleep on her lap with my hand on her tummy, she's brushing my head and I am feeling sleepy.

I wake up minutes later, she is not here anymore. So I go to the bathroom and find her sitting there deep in thoughts. I kneel in front of her.

Me: "Are you good?"

She nods.

Sesona: "I'm good."

The weekend I visit home because I miss mom and dad, also my brothers.

I walk in and find Ngcebo standing under a tree with his hands on his back.

Me: "Bhuti hey."

I smile walking up to him trying to shoulder hug him but he just turns his body and walk away.

Me: "Ngcebo.."

He walk out the gate so fast I am so disappointed I was just trying to greet him.

I greet everyone inside and we have lunch together.

After a few minutes I go check on Ngcebo in his hut and find him there. I take off my shoes and walk in.

Me: "Phakathwayo."

He just drops his eyes.

Me: "Did I do something wrong?"

Ngcebo: "No."

Me: "Then what is it? I tried to greet you earlier but you totally ignored me like I stink or something."

Ngcebo: "It's nothing like that Mnguni."

Me: "You keep moving your eyes around Ngcebo, you can't look at me in the eye, what did I do?"

I am now getting upset.

Ngcebo: "Uhm... December holidays Sesona will be five months pregnant, I will pay for a vacation of that whole month just for the two of you to relax and enjoy your time together."

Me: "Oh..is that why you were so jumpy when you saw me? You wanted to keep this a secret and make it a surprise?"

I ask smiling wide.

Ngcebo: "Yes."

He is still not smiling or even looking my way.

Me: "Oh thank you so much bafo."

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It's December and we just wrote the last paper with my baby. Our bags are already packed we are leaving this afternoon to a vacation home in South Coast Margate near uVongo beach.

I pick up Sesona, her baby bump is showing, she looks so beautiful in her short floral dress, a straw hat and flip flops. I get off my car and hug her tight. I kiss her then kiss her baby bump.

Me: "I can't wait to meet this person."

I am warming up to being a father in a couple of months to come, I can't wait to hold our little girl in my arms, we did confirm a month ago that indeed our baby is a girl.

I drive to our vacation home and buy food on the way there.

We reach our destination around 8 pm, we eat, take a shower then go to bed because we had a long day.

I am brushing her belly in bed. Everything has been easier having doctors who takes care of her health and that of our baby I am grateful to my father, there hasn't been much complications because they are always monitoring her closely and she gets the best medication.

I am still worried though, I feel like brother Ngcebo has been ignoring being in my presence and this holiday feels like he wanted to get rid of me, I love him, I love all my siblings so this is heavy on me even though I try not to look sad most of the time but it still hurts.

CHAPTER 71

*

BUKHOSI

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I have been at my happiest, Sesona moved in with me when she turned 7 months, she begged her parents to come stay with me and they finally agreed after a lot of begging.

Today Sbani and Lethu are going to Sesona's home to pay damages so she has to go back home, Kumkani and Mcebisi are also going. She has been crying because she doesn't wanna leave today.

Me: "Sthandwa Sam, it will only be for a few hours then you'll come back."

She shakes her head brushing her tummy.

Me: "Ok..what if I also come with but I will park at the gate and wait for you there."

She quickly nods with a giggle, I laugh.

Me: "You don't ever want to be away from me huh?"

She shakes her head.

Sesona: "No..your love is greater I want to experience it for the rest of my life."

I smile and hold her hand tight.

Me: "A lifetime with you baby."

She smiles but it just doesn't reach her eyes.

Me: "I love you."

Sesona: "I love you too."

I drive her home it's still dark outside.

Sesona: "You said you won't leave right?"

I nod.

Me: "I will park here and sleep a little until they come."

Sesona: "Ok, ngiyakuthanda kakhulu."(I love you so much.)

She imitating me I laugh kissing her lips.

Me: "Don't be that person my love."

I open the door for her and brush her tummy once, my baby girl starts kicking like crazy.

Me: "Aw Sthandwa saBaba, ngelosi yami."(Daddy's love, my angel)

Sesona walks in. I get in my car and sleep a little.

I wake up to a knock on my window I wipe my face and step out of my car.

Me: "boGumede."

I greet Sbani, Letho, Mcebisi and Kumkani with hugs then I hear someone clearing their throat, it's my brother Ngcebo who has been avoiding me since forever I finally gave up trying to be in his space.

Me: "Sanibonani Mntwana."(Greetings Mntwana)

He nods and bow his head a little.

Me: "I didn't know you were gonna come too."

Ngcebo: "You're my brother and I love you so I had to be here, you wanted me to be here."

I nod, he pulls me into a tight hug, the hug he has been avoiding giving me for months now. It's a bit awkward on my side.

Ngcebo: "Don't be angry at me Gumede, please."

Me: "I'm not angry."

They nod and they all look at Ngcebo, he clears his throat.

Ngcebo: "I understand you want to pay damages and lobolo for her "

I nod, but it was gonna be a surprise to her I know she loves me so I want to make her my wife today.

Ngcebo: "I'm sorry but we can't do that."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "Why?"

Ngcebo: "We didn't burn the incense for the cows."

Me: "Ngobani Ngcebo!"(Why Ngcebo)

I'm getting worked up, I gave them all my money I have been saving all my life for them to do this for me.

Ngcebo: "The ancestors don't approve."

Me: "You or the ancestors?"

Ngcebo: "What do you mean?"

Me: "you've been moving strange the past few months so I don't know if it's my happiness you're against or what!"

I don't like my tone but I am upset.

Sbani: "Boys! Not now ."

I shut my mouth, they are older and are my father's cousin brothers I have to listen.

Me: "I'm sorry.. it's fine I will marry Sesona on Ngcebo's terms, when he approves."

Ngcebo: "It's not me Bukhosi it's the ancestors."

Me: "Yeah it's probably those ancestors that told you to be cold and ignore me for months!"

I am really upset.

Kumkani: "Bukhosi fix your tone, uNgcebo mdala kunawe!"(Ngcebo is older than you)

Me: "Have it your way Gumede, you're the only one who can communicate with the ancestors anyway so have it your way it's fine!"

I get in my car and drive back home. I find Makhosini home.

Makhosini: "Oh you're back. Have they arrived already?"

I nod and go to my room.

After an hour I can hear noise in the house. I sit up as my phone rings.

Me: "Baby."

Sesona: "You left! Can you fetch me?"

Me: "I'm coming now."

I wear my shoes and walk out.

Me: "Kumkani..how did it go?"

Kumkani: "Everything went well."

Me: "Can I have my money back, the money that was supposed to be a lobola for my girlfriend."

He takes out the brown envelope, Sbani gives me another one and the last one is with Ngcebo. I take all of it and toss it on the table walking out.

I fetch my woman and drive back.

Sesona: "You seem upset tata kaKhazimula."

Me: "I'm fine."

I walk in the room with her and everyone keeps quiet, she greets everyone with a shy smile.

Sesona: "Uhm..thank you for coming home and paying damages, it means a lot to me that my baby is going to be a Gumedede fully."

Kumkani get up and bow his head first then hug her.

Kumkani: "Nkosazana."(Princess.)

They all hug her complimenting her beauty except for Ngcebo who is just sitting there looking down.

His grunt startle all of us in the room, I see him making eye contact with Sesona who just look away.

I take her to our room and we get in bed fully dressed, I am brushing her tummy.

Me: "We're a week away from making 8 months baby, I can't wait."

Sesona: "Mmm."

I look at her, her eyes are red I quickly sit up.

Me: "Baby..your eyes are red."

Sesona: "I have a very strong headache."

Me: "Why didn't you tell me."

I widen my eyes as blood comes out of her nose. I rush to the machine to check her Bp and find the numbers shooting sky high. I pick her up and rush out with her, everyone is on their feet as I walk in the room.

Kumkani: "What's going on?"

Me: "Her blood pressure is too high bhuti I am taking her to the hospital."

Kumkani: "Ok take her to my car, I will drive."

He drives to the hospital and she's taken in immediately for monitoring. I am pacing all around the room, anxiety is killing me.

The doctors rush out of the room I stop them.

Doctor: "We need to perform an emergency C-section, Call Dr Modise for me please."

He says answering me and shout at the nurse passing by.

Me: "Is she going to be ok?"

Doctor: "Yes sir...we will do everything we can to save them."

He walks away. They come back with more doctors and nurses wearing scrubs now and they wheel my love out of the ward I rush to her holding her hand she has an oxygen mask on.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

She slowly removes the mask.

Sesona: "Kiss me."

I wipe my sweat first, she gives me a long deep kiss holding the back on my neck.

Sesona: "I love you Gumede."

Me: "I love you too, you gonna be ok I will see you soon."

Sesona: "I love you."

They rush away leaving me with my heart beating so fast, I'm so scared but I trust the doctors, Sboniso is with them, that is what gives me relief I know he will do everything he can in there, he is family.

An hour pass, now her parents are here I called them, mom and dad are on their way.

They finally get here and the doctors are still not out of that theatre room I am getting very impatient but mom keeps me calm, she keeps brushing my back.

After a long waiting Sboniso and her doctor walk out of the room instead of talking to me they ask to talk to my father and older brother.

Me: "Mom.. why aren't they telling me something? Why are they whispering with dad?"

Thabsie: "Just calm down, they will let us know what's happening."

I see Kumkani shaking his head then walk past me without saying a word. Dad slowly turns walking my way then he pull me under his wing. Sboniso and the doctor comes to us.

Sboniso: "Uhm..Mr and Mrs Sondzaba."

MrSondzaba: "Is everything alright? Is my daughter and grandchild ok?"

He ask, you can sense nervousness on his voice.

Sboniso: "Uhm..we delivered a bouncing baby girl sir, but she has a problem breathing since she is a bit early but she is in NICU."

I smile.

Me: "Khazimula is here?"

They nod.

Me: "And Sesona is she okay?"

He slowly give me a nod.

Sboniso: "She's asking for you."

I nod and rush in the room I find her already cleaned but the oxygen mask is still on. I stand next to her and take her hand.

Me: "My love..they said our baby is here, I can't wait to see her."

Her eyes keeps rolling back.

Me: "You gonna be fine, you're so strong."

I can see she wants to say something so I remove the mask.

Sesona: "Not strong enough.."

Me: "But you are baby, you just gave me a daughter."

Sesona: "Please love her enough for the both of us Bukhosi."

Me: "What do you mean? We both love our daughter."

Sesona: "Thank you so much for loving me at my worst, for loving me back to life but I have to go now."

Me: "Go where Sesona?"

She close her eyes and open them again.

Me: "Go where?"

Sesona: "I...love..you..so..much."

She draws a long breath, I put the oxygen mask back on. I hear a loud grunt from outside I know it's my brother, I feel Sesona's grip on my hand getting less tighter.

Me: "Sesona."

She opens her big beautiful bright eyes and there's a little smile on her face.

Sesona: "I love you."

She then close her eyes, I stare at her hand she is not holding me anymore.

Me: "Sesona.."

Sboniso walk in and stand next to me, he put his hand on her neck and shake his head.

Me: "Is she sleeping? She must be tired."

Her parents walk in and stand next to her. I hear a loud wail from her mother it startle me so hard I step back and sit on a chair behind me.

MrsSondzaba: "No..Sesona! No! Umntanami."(My child)

It takes a while to register what is happening I quickly get up and shake her.

Me: "Sesona..baby...wake up my love."

Mr Sondzaba is in tears holding his wailing wife into his arms.

Me: "Sesona...our daughter Sthandwa Sami.. she's here wake up."

Sboniso: "Time of death...11:15 am"

I feel the room spinning as he informs other nurses and doctors that I didn't even see around us.

Me: "It can't be..no..you must be joking!"

I laugh really hard, they are joking! Sesona is not dead! She wouldn't leave me and our daughter she loves me! She loves us!

Me: "Sesona open your eyes baby..these people are trippin! They are fucken crazy! Open your eyes please."

I touch her cheeks and I feel goosebump all over my body I scream, I can't control it so I scream really hard. She's no more I can feel it.

Dad pull me outside, I think I am losing my mind.

Me: "How can you do this to me!?"

I can't control my emotions, I am angry and so upset.

Nkosiyabo: "It's ok son.. it's ok!"

He is holding me tight I feel like I can't really breathe.

Me: "I'm calm..let go of me dad."

I move away from him and wipe my face with my t-shirt. I look around the room people are looking at me with pity eyes. I look at Ngcebo he is sitting on the chair so I charge at him and grab him by his shirt and punch him so hard I see blood on his nose.

Me: "You knew! You knew something but didn't tell me!"

I punch him again dad grabs me and slap me so hard I lose all my senses and turn going back to Ngcebo and throw another punch at him. Kumkani rush in and stand in between us looking at me with his eyes bloodshot red.

Kumkani: "I understand ok, I understand but this... it's not anyone's fault, I know you want to blame someone but it's not anyone's fault! It was time!"

Me: "Time for what Kumkani! Time for Sesona to hurt me by leaving me! Ngimuthanda kanje wakhetha ukufa yena!(Loving her like this she chose to die!)

I look at Ngcebo, mom is crying wiping blood on his face with her scarf.

Me: "Bengingazi ukuthi ungizonda kangaka. Mfowethu."(I didn't know you hated me like this brother)

Ngcebo: "Bukhosi I..."

Me: "Uyangizonda wena!"(You hate me)

I walk out of the hospital and mom is shouting my name.

Thabsie: "Bukhosi wait.. please I understand..."

Me: "No you don't, the love of your life is right there, mine is cold! She left our daughter without even holding her in her arms, without even knowing how her face looks like!"

I walk and walk and walk until I can't no more so I sit on the pavement and cry.

Me: "You can't do me like this Sesona! You can't, ngiyakucela."(Please)

"Bhuti are you okay?"

A voice of a woman says.

Me: "How can I be ok!"

I scream at her. She sit next to me.

"Pain..anger..I can feel it through you but don't let it consume you because you will end up missing out on a lot in life."

Me: "I want to die! She left me! I love her so much but she left me! She left me! How can she hurt me like"

I shake my head.

"It's okay..let me take you back home so you can be with people close to you."

She pull my hand taking me to the car, I give her directions to my home. Tears are still streaming down my face. I want someone to wake me up from this nightmare.

She drops me at the gate and drive away. I walk in and take a bottle of whiskey that we never drink but belongs to my father when he comes here with babomncane Nqobasi and go to my room and lock myself up. I start drinking it's burning my mouth and chest, I have never drank even a cider in my life. I drink half without any breaks then sit in bed.

Me: "No..they are wrong Sesona..you can't be dead..you are still gonna wake up and come back to me."

I drink the whole bottle and take my car keys driving back to the hospital I feel a bit fuzzy and dizzy and I can't walk up straight.

Me: "Sesona..I want to see Sesona."

I shout at the first nurse I see in sight, I know I'm not drunk, I'm not.

Kumkani rush to me.

Kumkani: "You were drinking?"

Me: "Yes why?"

Kumkani: "Bukhosi let me take you home."

Me: "Ay for what? I want to see Sesona I know she will wake up soon and want to see me, she has been clingy lately but I like it, she's my life!"

He drags me out I so badly want to cuss at him.

Me: "Why are you doing this to me Kumkani I am your brother, you're supposed to look out for me!"

Kumkani: "That's what I have always done for you and will still do brother, I'm sorry for your loss, I feel your pain Bukhosi and I wish I can carry it for you but it's yours you have to find a way to deal with it, you have a little girl in there who needs her dad."

Me: "A little girl huh?"

I laugh.

Me: "A little girl took away the woman that I love from me. That little girl has hurt me so much!"

Kumkani: "Don't say that."

Me: "Oh but it's true! She came and complicated everything, Sesona was doing just fine with just her diabetes then she came and used her as just an incubator then left her body only for my woman to die! What a selfish baby she is!"

Kumkani: "Stop it ok! Stop! That's your blood you were looking forward to seeing her."

Me: "Well...not anymore!"

They take me home. I fall asleep immediately.

In the morning the first thing I do when I wake up is call Sesona's name thinking she's in the bathroom but minutes later I remember what happened I start crying all over again.

Me: "No..God what have I done to deserve this. Why did you have to hurt me like this! Couldn't you find another way, this is cruel!"

My head hurts, I remember drinking and I remember everything I said after that drink.

I sit there looking around the room, I have no tears anymore I am just numb.

My door opens, mom and dad walk in and sit in my bed.

Thabsie: "How are you feeling?"

I shrug my shoulders.

Thabsie: "We're going to the hospital to see Aisha."

Me: "I hate that name, I don't wanna hear it."

Thabsie: "Oh..Uhm..do you wanna come with us?"

Me: "No."

Nkosiyabo: "Bukhosi."

Me: "Baba."

Nkosiyo: "We're going to the hospital to see your baby girl."

Me: "Ok but I'm not going."

Nkosiyo: "Why?"

I just shake my head.

Nkosiyo: "I know you probably need time to process everything that happened but that little girl needs you."

Me: "I can't, I'm sorry."

Nkosiyo: "Was I ever absent to you Bukhosi or any of your siblings?"

Me: "No."

Nkosiyo: "Then why do you want to do that to your little girl?"

Me: "Mom is here baba and Sesona is not."

Nkosiyo: "So you gonna abandon your baby?"

Me: "You can take her."

They look at each other.

Nkosiyo: "Do you think that's what Sesona would want? You turning your back on your daughter?"

I look down and tears fill my eyes again.

Nkosiyo: "Let's go see your daughter son please."

I go to the bathroom and spend time in there crying, it hurts I keep punching the wall hoping the pain in my heart will go away.

I step out of the shower and find clothes in bed already picked out for me. I wear them then bandage my fist because I hurt myself and it's bleeding.

We walk in the hospital and go to where the babies are. They show us the big beautiful baby girl, the nurse allows me to hold her just for a couple of minutes. I groan and she opens one eye, I shake my head and give her to mom walking out.

I wait for them outside, they come out and drive me home.

We sit in the lounge but my mind is not here, I have a lump in my throat and I want to scream it out.

Thabsie: "Did you see how strong she is? The doctors said we will be taking her home soon."

I sigh and look at her.

Me: "You will take her home to the Palace, I don't want her here."

Thabsie: "I thought you and Sesona already concluded that she's gonna stay with you."

Me: "She knew she was leaving me."

I smile but my heart is breaking.

Me: "Told me she is buying her clothes because after she's born I am the only one buying them. She excluded herself in everything for after our daughter is born and I was too blind to see."

I wipe my tears.

Me: "She should have at least broke up with me maybe it wasn't going to hurt this much."

I look at Ngcebo.

Me: "That Vacation, you already new that I was just wasting my time loving a woman who is going to leave me with an infant."

Ngcebo: "There was nothing I could do, I wanted to make you remember her with good memories Bukhosi, I wanted you to be happy with her and your unborn baby."

Me: "So now does it hurt any less? Does it?"

Ngcebo: "It's not supposed to hurt any less, but you bonded, you spent as much time with her, you loved each other that's what you will tell your daughter when she grows up and ask about her mom, you loved her."

I wipe my tears shaking my head.

Me: "I don't know how I will go through this, it hurts so bad."

Ngcebo: "We're here, we will help you walk through it, it won't be easy, it's never easy I know this but it will get better with time."

Two days later, Mrs Sondzaba calls me.

Me: "Hello."

MrsSondzaba: "Hi Uhm..do you want us to put you in the programme?"

I chuckle.

Me: "No.."

MrsSondzaba: "Bukhosi..."

Me: "No.."

I drop the call. They are making funeral arrangements I don't even think I wanna go to that funeral. It's on Saturday and today it's Tuesday.

Friday morning I feel something moving next to me I open my eyes and look I am shocked to see a big baby girl next to me moving her hands, she was born before time but she looks so strong and big. I get off bed, she starts crying I just look at her then walk out.

Me: "Mom, who brought the baby in my room?"

Thabsie: "Uhm..I did, kuzomele umuhlebele ukuthi umama wakhe akasekho khona engezukuhlupha."(You have to whisper to her that her mother is no more so she won't trouble you)

I sigh and start in my father's room and take his gun then go to my room. I lock the door and sit next to my daughter.

Me: "I'm sorry princess, I'm so sorry."

I hold the gun tight and close my eyes cocking the gun.

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CHAPTER 72

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BUKHOSI

*

I am looking at my baby girl holding her in my arms a gun is on my hand, her face is wet with my tears that falls on her face. I wanted to kill myself but looking at her now I see I would be a very selfish man to this Princess.

Me: "MaGumede.."

I smile wiping the tears with the back of my hand that is holding a gun.

Me: "You're so chubby for an infant."

She starts crying, I get up with her and pace around the room, she is on my chest so I speak on her ear.

Me: "Mom is gone, she left you with me, she trusted that I will love you enough for the both of us so I will honor her last wish."

I whisper in her ear, tears haven't stopped rolling down my cheeks.

Me: "I did this to mom, I should have been careful, she would still be here with us, I'm sorry you have to grow up without a mother."

I wipe my tears.

Me: "But I'm here I promise I will be here, it's gonna be me and you Princess, just me and you Sthandwa sa Baba."

I put the gun down and hold her tight in my chest and weep for the lover that I lost, the mother of my child, my first love.

I walk out with my daughter in my arms and the gun in my hand. When I step in the room everyone gasp but I go straight to my father and give him the gun.

Me: "I'm sorry for the way I reacted for the past few days."

I look at Ngcebo then go kneel in front of him.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu Gumede, I'm sorry for fighting you."(I'm really sorry Gumede)

He touch my shoulder.

Ngcebo: "I am sorry too for what you're going through just know we're all here for you."

Me: "I Know.."

He smiles and look at my daughter in my arms wrapped up in a pink blanket.

Ngcebo: "Introduce us to this little girl."

I smile, her mouth is slightly open.

Me: "Her name is Khazimula Aisha Gumede, I named her Khazimula and her mom named her Aisha."

I chuckle.

Me: "She said the name means "she who lives", it shows that she wanted to at least keep our daughter alive even if she dies, she fought for her when she couldn't fight for herself."

Ngcebo: "She left you with something precious, a part of her, she loved you."

I nod looking down.

Me: "I will never find love like that ever again, I don't want to fall in love again."

My daughter starts crying all over again. Mom gives me her bottle of milk so I feed her. I am smiling with tears falling down my cheeks I don't think the pain will ever go away, she would be sucking her mother's breast right now.

Today it's Sesona's funeral I am already wearing my black suit, my daughter is sleeping peaceful next to me in her pink clothes her mom bought for her.

Me: "We are laying your mother to rest today, I can't believe I have lost her so soon, I love that girl but now I will give all that love to you."

I take her and walk out. All my brothers are wearing black even Ngcebo, I know how much he hates this colour but he is wearing it anyway, I know he is doing it for me.

Me: "Thank you for coming with me."

They bow their heads.

I get in Kumkani's car and drive to her home first. We get there just as the family is viewing the body. I am wearing shades to hide my puffy eyes I have been crying since she left me.

I walk in with my daughter in my arms and Mr Sondzaba ask if I want to see her for the last time I nod.

Ngcebo: "You have to break up with her, tell her you want to move on some day and you don't want her to hold you back."

I nod and walk up to the coffin, it's opened she looks so beautiful and peaceful.

Me: "You didn't have to leave me Sthandwa Sami."

I hold back my tears.

Me: "It's over now, we're from different worlds now, I will always love you but we have to part ways, I wish you didn't leave me, I wish we got the chance to raise our daughter together but we weren't given the chance, Rest Sthandwa Sam, Sondzaba omuhle, Wushe."

My eyes are blinded by tears, Ngcebo is quick to hold my daughter as I go on my knees and cry my soul out. Makhosini kneels in front of me.

Makhosini: "You have to be strong Bhuti, try! Find it somewhere in there...to be strong for that little girl."

He points in my chest.

Me: "I can't.."

I feel hands on my shoulders, I know it's Thingo. I get up and hold her tight crying.

Thingo: "I'm so sorry Khosini...I'm sorry."

I go to her room and look around.

Me: "Just give me a sign that you will watch over me and our daughter that you will be our Guardian angel."

It's quiet then wind starts blowing and no windows are opened I can feel her spirit in here I smile.

Me: "Thank you so much my love, I will always love you."

I look under her bed and see a book, I kneel and take it out.

"Khazimula kaTata, I have a picture of you with your dad already as best friends, he will take care of you, he already took care of mommy."

I page through I can see these are letters to our daughter mostly. My baby was fighting but seemed so strong the couple of months and was only doing this for me to have great memories together.

MrsSondzaba: "Uhm..I haven't got time to clean."

She says behind me with a shaky voice.

Me: "I understand it must be so hard to accept that your daughter is gone."

I can't even bring myself to look at her so I speak facing the other way.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

I try to swallow a lump in my throat.

Me: "She was doing just fine then I came along and ruined her life.'

MrsSondzaba: "No, you gave her the best life she never thought she would ever have, you gave her hope, she left something for us to remember her with, Khazimula is a gift she left for all of us."

Me: "How do I move on? How do I take care of my daughter without breaking down?"

MrsSondzaba: "You will learn to live with the pain some day, I haven't gotten enough sleep but the way she was happy on her last days gives

me so much comfort, you loved my daughter Bukhosi and I will always be grateful for that.”

I nod..

Me: “Can I keep this? She wrote letters for our daughter.”

MrsSondzaba: “Yes you can keep it.”

I finally turn and notice that she has lost weight massively, I don’t know her like this.

Me: “My daughter will want a relationship with her maternal grandmother, please live for her.”

She brush her arms with her hands blinking the tears away.

MrsSondzaba: “God knows I am trying to keep it together but I don’t know what I am holding on to, she was my only daughter.”

I hug her as she breaks down, this woman loved her daughter so much and this is draining her and I blame myself for all of it.

We go to the cemetery her final home. I am sitting under a tent between my mom and dad I am having hot flushes as the coffin is in front of me I remove the tie on my neck and unbutton the shirt. Mom holds my hand tight as the coffin lowers down my whole body is trembling, this is it! She’s really gone. Dad helps me up, I throw soil in there and squat down holding my head. I feel like I am suffocating. I slowly get up my head is spinning then it’s lights out.

I wake up and look around, I am in my room alone I realize that I might have fainted in the cemetery. I drag my body to the shower. I am so tired my eyes are heavy.

I wear my clothes and walk out of my room, my daughter is in Ngcebo’s arms. Everyone is here so I take a seat next to Ngcebo and peek on my sleeping baby girl she moves a bit.

Ngcebo: "She feels your presence when you step in the room, she is in deep sleep but is moving because she wants to be in your arms."

I smile.

Me: "Really?"

He nods and give me my baby, no one understands baby's more than him. I am holding her little hand.

Nkosiyo: "So we were talking with your mother and want to hear what you want."

He looks at me.

Nkosiyo: "We can take Khazimula home with us or we can hire a nanny that will stay here with you, Khazimula and your brother full time."

I sigh staring at my beautiful daughter.

Me: "I don't want her to be away from me so yes, we can hire a nanny but she doesn't have to stay with us full time, she can just look after her during the day when I have classes then leave later if she's close and if home is a bit far then she can stay and leave on weekends, I don't have friends, I lost my best friend I don't have any hobby so I am dedicating my whole life to her."

They nod.

Nkosiyo: "I think we should talk to her maternal grandparents whenever we make decisions regarding her, she is their granddaughter."

I nod.

Me: "Yes, we should."

Thabsie: "I will call Mrs Sondzaba."

She says getting up and walk away.

I go put my daughter to sleep and go to Ngcebo.

Me: "Bhuti can you please help me with something."

He nods.

Me: "Can you help me communicate with Sesona just this once, I just want to say goodbye."

He huffs.

Ngcebo: "Let's go outside."

We walk out, he kneels on the ground and start calling on oGumede first then oSondzaba. He grabs my hand and I feel like I am floating I blink when I see her standing there looking at me wearing a white dress she is holding a white flower in her hand.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

She giggles and I feel so sad.

Me: "Why?"

Sesona: "It was time baby."

She wipes my tears and smile looking at me.

Sesona: "Live your life to the fullest Khosini, I want you to find love again."

I shake my head.

Sesona: "It will find you someday."

Me: "Never, Aisha will be the centre of my world and no one will ever replace you in my life."

Sesona: "A stubborn man you are..I love you."

She kiss my lips then wave at me.

Sesona: "I lived, I loved and I was loved, Goodbye my love"

I bow my head.

Me: "Nkosazana."(Princess)

She fades away, I blink looking around I am in our yard and Ngcebo is looking at me with a smile on his face.

Ngcebo: "Your bond was strong it's a pity that she died, I have never seen so much love from a young couple like you, uzokuthanda nangale kwethuna."(She will love you even in the after life)

I smile feeling better now that we have said our goodbyes.

It's been a month with my baby girl, we go for regular check-ups because I know diabetes can be inherited so I want to make sure I find out sooner should she have it and take it from there.

She is wearing like a princess, she is getting big, I am obsessed with her, even when I am at campus I call her granny every hour so check up on her. Mrs Sondzaba offered to look after her during the day so we didn't have to hire a nanny.

I hold her in my arms then carry her bag walking out. I am taking her for immunization and check-up.

I drive to the hospital and they do everything, she is a strong little girl I love her to death.

After the hospital I decide to go to the mall. I put her in a stroller and we go from shop to shop I am buying her clothes because some don't even fit anymore at first I was worried about her weight thought maybe she might be obese but the doctors said she's just a healthy baby.

I sit down at her mom and I favourite restaurant then order.

I wait for my order while playing with her little hand she is smiling showing her toothless gums, she has her mother's features which makes her absolutely gorgeous.

A very clumsy comes out of nowhere and trip she almost fall on top of my baby's stroller but she find her balance but the tray slipped from her hand juice spills on the stroller some even get to my daughter's face which makes her scream I go off, I fucken go off!

Me: "What if this drink was hot huh! Are you trying to kill my daughter? What the fuck is wrong with you?"

"I'm so sorry, it's my first time I didn't mean to...I didn't..."

Yhoo..I'm so angry my armpits are itchy I want to slap the hell out of her but I wasn't raised like that.

The manager rush to us but I am ready to leave this place after wiping my daughter's face and I am trying to calm her down, that drink was cold.

I hold her in my arms and push the stroller out.

"Sir...sir I'm so sorry please forgive me."

The girl shouts behind me, I sigh and turn to look her way, she looks young, have tears in her eyes.

"It was my first time, I am still training please forgive me."

Me: "It's fine but next time be careful."

She nods wiping her tears.

"I'm sorry little one."

My daughter is just sucking her thumb with her eyes moving all over the place.

"Uhm..can I help you with her I am already fired anyway so I might as well go home."

I shake my head.

Me: "You can help with a stroller instead I don't like strangers touching my daughter."

"I understand sir."

I nod, and we walk out in silence I put my baby on her seat then put a stroller in the trunk.

Me: "Thank you."

She nods and walk away, looking like she is carrying the whole world on her shoulder. I sigh when an image of Sesona flashes in my eyes the first day we met, I still miss her terrible but some days are worse, maybe it will take years for me to actually try to move on from her.

In loving memory of Sesona Sondzaba. A mother, a daughter and a lover, my lover..

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CHAPTER 73

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BUKHOSI

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I have been having this nagging feeling. I want to go back to that restaurant and ask the manager to call that clumsy girl again and give her a second chance I can't help but feel like I am the reason she got fired and I don't like taking away someone's bread, she might need that job with the way she was so sad.

I just finished bathing my daughter it's Saturday her feet are up in the air, she's a happy baby.

Me: "Sthandwa sa Baba..Khazimula ka Bukhosi..Aisha ka Mamakhe."

I pick her up and play with her, I love my daughter man she gives me this warm feeling inside whenever I think about her and that's all the time, she is always what I think of when I wake up in the morning, the whole day and before I fall asleep.

Me: "Do you want to go see Granny today or you want to go with daddy? Huh princess."

She eats her palm I get up with her going to the car then drive to Sesona's house. It still feels like I will see her coming out of the house and get in my car whenever I come here. I will never forget her and the love that we shared.

Mr Sondzaba takes her with a wide smile on his face, they love her I think she reminds them of their daughter.

MrsSondzaba: "I still can't believe I am a whole grandfather, thank you Gumede."

I bow my head in respect.

Me: "I will fetch her later today."

He nods, his focus is on his grandchild.

I drive to the mall and walk in the restaurant people still gossip about me, The news about Sesona's broke the internet, some said they "saw it coming" some were sympathetic, I still see pity in most people's eyes and that's ok people should feel what they wanna feel I can't keep focusing on them.

I ask for the manager and he rush to me and greet.

Me: "Uhm..I don't know if you remember me from a few days ago, I came..."

He doesn't even let me finish..

"I remember you sir, I'm so sorry about what happened, really sorry."

I nod.

Me: "Uhm...so where is the girl?"

"We had to let her go, she was bad for business a very clumsy girl."

Me: "But you didn't give her a chance, wasn't it her first day?"

"Sir we can't afford to lose customers because of her."

I chuckle.

Me: "Were you perfect on your first day here? No nerves, nothing?"

He looks down, he is a young man older than me but young.

Me: "Do you still have her phone numbers, I need you to call her and give her another chance."

He sighs.

"We already found a replacement for her sir, I'm sorry."

I huff.

Me: "Ok, give me her numbers then so I can maybe find something for her, it was my fault that she got fired I blew things out of proportion."

He doesn't argue but just go around the back to find the number for me then gives me a piece of paper written Nelile and a number underneath the name.

Me: "Thank you."

"Would you like to stay for lunch sir, it's on the house."

I smile.

Me: "I will never say no to free food thank you."

I sit down and they give me my food, I keep looking at the empty chair in front of me I quickly wipe my tears, this was our favourite spot. I only tip the waiter and leave the place. I buy a teddy for my daughter then go to my car.

I dial the number and call it. It rings for a while then someone picks up.

"Hello."

Me: "Hi, is this Nelile?"

"Yes..who am I speaking to?"

Me: "My name is Bukhosi Gumede. Uhm...I want to ask if you have already found a job?"

"No, I haven't sir."

I nod looking up.

Me: "Ok I will look for a job for you since you lost the previous one because of me."

"But sir it wasn't your fault, I poured drink on your daughter I'm sorry."

Me: "It's ok, Uhm..what are you good at? Beside being clumsy?"

I chuckle.

"Uhm...I am only good with hair, Uhm..and make-up."

I nod.

Me: "Ok,so anything that has to do with beauty. Let me make a call I will call you back now."

I drop the call and call Granny Zama's assistant asking if they can hire her and she agrees to take her in, it's a family business so she couldn't really say no to me.

I call the girl back.

"Hello."

Me: "I got the job for you, let's meet at the market 7:00 am sharp, the salon opens at 7:30 am."

"Oh Uhm...I..ok."

Me: "Is everything okay?"

"Uhm...I will see what I can do."

Me: "What do you mean by that? Do you want the job or not?"

"I do...I need the job I just don't have money for transport but I will make a plan."

I sigh.

Me: "Where do you live?"

"Uhm..Umlazi.."

I huff rubbing my forehead, I really don't like townships we've heard a lot of stories about crimes going on there.

Me: "You will send your location on WhatsApp I will pick you up."

"You don't have to sir, I will borrow money from my neighbor."

Me: "Ok..let me know when you get here then."

I drop the call and drive back to Sesona's home to fetch my daughter I find her sleeping so I stay a little then once she's up I take her home with me.

In the morning I wake up to my phone ringing, it's 5:00 am I am pissed, who calls this early?

Me: "Mmmmh?"

"I'm so sorry for waking you up, Uhm..I...I didn't get the money to come to town I..."

I sit up rubbing my eyes.

Me: "See I told you to send your location but you said you gonna ask your neighbor! What now!"

I shout at her because if she didn't act smart with me I was gonna let my daughter sleep over at her granny's house knowing I will be waking up early but now even Makhosini is not here so I have to go with her this early.

"I'm sorry...I didn't wanna bother you."

Me: "Just send the location ntombazane."(girly)

I shower then carefully pick up my daughter taking her to the car and buckle her up. I drive to her location I keep yawning because I don't wake up this early.

I call her when I see a lot of shacks.

Me: "I'm here, where are you?"

"I'm coming."

My lights are on, I see her coming out of one of the shack. She stands next to my car without opening it I am really getting annoyed with her. I roll down my passenger window.

Me: "Why are you standing there? My daughter will wake up any minute from now and cry, get in the car please."

I say in a low voice because I don't want to shout anymore.

"Sorry.."

She get in next to my daughter at the back, she wakes up and start crying.

"Uhm...can I hold her?"

Me: "No..."

I drive for a few minutes she doesn't stop crying. So I park on the side and step out of the car taking her from her seat calming her down I didn't even bring her bottle with me.

Me: "I'm sorry Princess, shhhh calm down maGumede omuhle."

She sucks her palm and stop crying I put her back in her seat and she starts crying all over again. I drive home my heart hurts as she continues to cry.

"Let me try to calm her down."

Me: "No, I'm almost home."

We finally get home I just park anyhow and rush to my daughter taking her then walk inside the house. I warm up her bottle and feed her, her face is red she's been screaming for a while and I feel so emotional, whenever she cries I just feel like if her mom was around she wouldn't be crying.

Me: "I'm sorry Sthandwa saBaba."

She finally falls asleep I take her to my bed, it's still 6:06 am when I check in my watch and the girl is not inside the house. I walk out and find her standing outside looking around like she's scared, it's winter so its still dark outside and cold too.

Me: "Is everything ok with you? Why are you standing here?"

"I didn't know whether I am allowed in or not! You let your daughter cry her lungs out just because you couldn't allow me to hold her!"

She shouts I frown.

Me: "Why would I let you hold my daughter? I don't even know you!"

"Exactly, I wouldn't come inside your house uninvited because you don't even know me."

I shake my head.

Me: "Get inside, it's cold here and we are only leaving at 7 o'clock."

I walk in first, she follows behind me and I ask her to sit because maybe she will remain standing until I tell her to. I go to my room and get a blanket for her.

Me: "I am going back to bed, I will wake up at 7 o'clock."

She nods.

I sleep next to my daughter and pull her closer to me, I have tears in my eyes I guess today it's one of those days where I would wake up in a bad mood because I miss my daughter's mom.

I wake up to a light knock on my door I open my eyes and step out of bed opening the door, it's the girl.

"Uh... it's 7 o'clock already."

I nod.

Me: "I'm coming."

I wash my face then hear Makhosini talking in the lounge so I go to him and we shoulder hug.

Me: "Thank God you're here, I will leave Aisha with you I will be back soon."

He looks at me with questioning eyes, he keeps glaring at the girl.

Me: "Just the girl I'm helping, she lost her job because of me so I found one for her at Zama's beauty salon."

He nods.

Makhosini: "Is the princess still sleeping?"

I nod.

Makhosini: "Ok let me go join her then I don't wanna move her she might just wake up and you know when she wants you, she wants only you, not even your photocopy."

I laugh and walk out. I drive the girl to a salon I find the Assistant already opening so I introduce Nelile.

Phindy: "What can you do sweetheart?"

That's the manager/assistant's name, Phindy.

Nelile: "I can do braids, conrows and I can do nails as well, oh and make-up."

Phindy: "Oh that's great, you are ok with starting today right?"

She nods with a polite smile. She has long silky natural hair pushed on her back and wearing black skirt and white shirt with pumps, she is a simple girl really.

Me: "I will see you when you knock off Nelly, bye sis Phindile."

I go back home and find Makhosini with my baby on his back and he is cooking porridge, he is singing to her I take out my phone and make a video he haven't seen me here.

He finally turns I laugh.

Makhosini: "You're really spoiling our daddy-daughter bond here Khosini."

Me: "I'm jealous."

He feeds her while I go prepare for my class that is at 9 o'clock.

Makhosini: "You can go, I will drop her off at her granny's house should she start giving me trouble, I am not going anywhere today."

Me: "Ok thank you, bye daddy's girl."

I kiss her wet lips and walk out.

I attend all my classes and I call Makhosini inbetween and he tells me they are still good with the princess.

I drive home at 3 o'clock and find him sleeping on the couch with my daughter on his chest I take a snap of them, I love how everyone loves my daughter, she won't ever feel the void of not having a mother with all this support coming from everyone, it makes me feel better.

I try to take her but Makhosini tighten the grip on her, so protectively I smile.

Me: "Hey brother it's me, I'm back."

I whisper in his ear, he opens his eyes and smile a little.

Makhosini: "I did great didn't I?"

I smile.

Me: "You did, thank you."

Makhosini: "She is also my baby girl, I would do anything for her and today we really got along."

I smile and take her to bed. 4 o'clock I go pick up the girl from the salon.

Me: "So where do you take taxis to your place?"

She tells me the name of the street I nod and drive her there.

Before I drop her off I give her 200 note for transport and when she declines I draw a long deep breath, she really is getting on my last nerve.

Me: "Do you want to lose this job again sisi?"

She shakes her head.

Me: "Then just take the money."

Nelile: "I can't sir you've already done enough for me."

I let her step out of the car and walk to a taxi, I drive back home I keep clicking my tongue.

The next morning I drop my daughter at her mom's home then attend all my morning classes then have lunch alone.

"Hey B.."

A girl says standing next to me, the first girl that called Sesona 'Mjovo'.

Me: "Hi."

"Do you mind if we hang out again, We've been missing you and now that Mjovo is gone you can actually find the right girl...."

She says biting her lower lip.

I just get up and pack my books and food in my backpack.

"B come on, you know she wasn't your type anyway, you deserve a real deal, I'm the real deal."

She is very curvy but I hate her, I know gate is a big word but how dare she speaks about my baby's mother like that, how dare she still calls her Mjovo in my presence!

Me: "My name is Bukhosi, next time address me as that or better yet if you see me look the other way. I am not your friend."

My phone rings it's Sis Phindy from the salon.

Me: "Hello sis."

Phindy: "Bukhosi where is the girl? She didn't come in today and I hate incompetent people!"

She screams in my ear with her hoarse voice I quickly remove it as she continues to shout.

Me: "I'm sorry, I will call and find out why she didn't come to work..I'm sorry."

She continues to shout I just drop the call before she burst my eardrums. I call the girl fuming.

Nelile: "Hello."

Me: "WeeNelile."

She clears her throat and say "Sir." In a low tone.

Me: "Why didn't you go to work ngempela?"(really?)

Nelile: "I have flue sir."

I chuckle.

Me: "Yazi mfethu awukho serious and ngizokuyeka mina."(You know you're not serious and I will leave you like that.)

I know she is acting, I heard from that "sir" that she blocked her nose by her fingers, I wasn't born yesterday I have a child for fucks sake.

Me: "So again, why didn't you go to work Nelile!"

Nelile: "Uhm...I didn't get the money for transport."

I put my head on the steering wheel, frustrated as hell, what the hell! I'm done with this.

Me: "Ok sure then, I'm done trying to help you, you're not really my responsibility, my responsibility is my daughter, and her mother who was my number one priority then is gone so I don't have time to beg

you, it's clear you're not desperate for a job and I was just wasting my time."

I drop the call clicking my tongue. I mean I tried to be a good human being.

I fetch my daughter then we go home.

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It's in the middle of the night I just woke up from a beautiful dream. I dreamt of Sesona holding our baby girl and we were having a picnic next to some waterfall, she was smiling at me throughout and only said "Live Bukhosi." That's it.

I pull up my knees and bury my face on my thighs I let my tears fall, I don't know how long it will take for me to feel this way, I want the pain to go away right now.

I check the time on my phone and notice a message from this Nelile girl.

"Please forgive me, I really thought I was gonna get money for transport I didn't wanna bother you, I really need the job please give me another chance I won't mess it up."

I sigh and call her.

Nelile: "Mmm.."

She sounds asleep.

Me: "Do you have money for transport now?"

Nelile: "No."

Her voice comes out low.

Me: "Ok, I will be there around 6:30 am."

Nelile: "Ok thank you."

I check on my daughter and kiss her cheek and cover her up then go back to sleep.

In the morning I leave my daughter with Makhosini and by 6:30 am I am already packing in front of the shacks. She comes out wearing black jeans and a white t-shirt I guess she likes black and white.

She get in today without being told but she doesn't greet.

Me: "Sawubona."(hello)

Nelile: "Hi, Uhm..will sis Phindy shout at me for not coming to work yesterday?"

Me: "Yes she will, you will take it like a big girl but do humble yourself and apologise."

She nods.

We drive in silence all the way to town, I drop her off at work then go home.

I spend the whole day with my brother and daughter then later I pick up the girl again and try to give her money I can tell she's hesitant.

Me: "If you really need help, you let go of pride and receive it with both hands some people hope for this chance and here you are letting pride get in the way. Pride won't take you anywhere."

She slowly put her hands together as I give her the money.

Nelile: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu."(Thank you so much.)

I bow my head. "Blessed is the hand that gives" I am not expecting anything in return, I just want to lend a helping hand to a who needs it, as long as I have the means to do it I will continue.

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CHAPTER 74

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NELILE

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I am just a young girl trying to make ends meet for my family back home in South Coast a place called Malangeni under a small town called Umzinto. I finished matric last year but my results were bad in a way that I didn't even appear on the paper. When I fetched my statement I saw that I failed three subjects and I knew it was over for me. No one was gonna help me go back to school, my mother is just an alcoholic but what I have always admired about her is being able to put food on the table for me and my little sister and even taking us to school but our home is not safe since she sometimes never sleep home, now I am hoping I get to find a place where I will take my little sister and stay with her, she is doing Grade 6 and I want a better life for her.

I met a guy and I happened to pour drink on his daughter and he was angry at me, that's how I lost the first job I got here in Durban but again he found me another job and I almost messed it up with my pride. I am staying in the shacks with my mother's friend, she has 6 kids and it's only one small room , there is no privacy but it is what it is, beggars can't be choosers anyway.

I am standing at the bus stop in the morning, I am going to work. Yesterday he gave me money for transport and gave me a lecture of not letting pride mess up my chances of getting help I need and I heard him, from now on I will accept any help because I want a better life for myself and my sister and maybe my mother should she maybe want to change her lifestyle.

As I am standing there it's still a bit dark, an old man stands next to me and greet, I know him, we know each other because the shacks are close together, he usually plays loud Maskandi music here.

He greets me then suddenly spanks my ass so hard I jump in fright, my heart almost stops.

Me: "What are you doing?"

I ask in a shaky voice, he just laughs.

"you're a beautiful girl, I can take you out of that squatter camp you live in."

I move away from him but he grabs my waist pulling me closer to him.

Me: "Let go of me!"

He laughs in my face.

"I won't force you to anything but I know you will come to me begging, they all have that's how they got to have their own place around here."

When the bus stops in front of me I quickly rush in and sigh as it drives away. My heart is on my throat, I am so scared.

I get to work early, my hands are shaking I don't even know what I'm doing the client I am working on keeps flinching.

Me: "Sorry sisi."

She screams startling me I step back. She removes the towel on her shoulder and throw it on my face.

"I can't stand for this, you keep pulling my hair like a mad person, futsek!"

She storms out. I shiver as SisPhindy stands in front of me, the lady can shout. When I missed work she shouted at me for an hour straight, you'd think she's done then she starts all over again.

Phindy: "I think I should call Bukhosi, I can't deal with this anymore, if you don't miss work you hurt the clients, I can't! We will have a bad review! Something we've never had ever since we started here!"

I just take a seat and cry as she shouts on the phone, this is the second time I am messing up.

I see the man who found this job for me standing by the entrance with his hand on his pocket looking around. I just hide my face with my hands.

"SisPhindy please, I heard you on the phone, don't shout at me again, please."

He is begging. I wipe my tears. He stands in front of me and point at the door with his head. I take my bag and walk out. He opens the passenger door.

"Get in."

I get in, he drives to his house, I have seen his identical twin, he looks exactly like him even the way they talk.

We walk in the house, he tells me to sit on the couch while he leans on the wall with his eyes closed looking up, his hands are buried deep in his pockets.

Me: "I'm sorry."

I break the long silence. He finally opens his eyes and stares at me.

Me: "I'm so sorry, I know I messed up."

"What do you want in life?"

I shrug my shoulders.

"Exactly what I thought! You don't know! In life you set up goals! You give yourself estimations on when you will become successful and if it

doesn't happen you continue to give yourself estimated time until you reach that goal!"

He huffs.

Me: "I didn't mean to mess up."

He shakes his head.

"I don't know anymore."

His phone rings, a very expensive phone, and even this house is huge I have never been inside a house like this before. He looks young to have such connections, getting my numbers, finding me a job, it means he is well connected.

"I'm coming."

He step out of the house. After a few minute he walks back in holding his daughter and a bag. He walks to his room, I have been here before so I remember the room I found him at when I was waking him up.

He comes back and sit on the couch opposite me. He has his eyes closed again resting his head on the couch. He seems troubled but I am not a good judge of character.

Me: "Uhm...I don't remember your name."

He opens his eyes and they are bloodshot red, He chuckle a little.

"My name is Bukhosi Gumede, it feels weird that you don't know who I am."

His voice is a bit shaky.

Me: "I'm not from here I just came to look for a job."

He nods.

Me: "Are you hurting?"

He frowns.

Me: "I can tell you want to cry."

He get up and walks away just like that, I feel sorry for him without even knowing what he's going through. I take my phone and search for his name on the internet since he said something about feeling weird that I don't know him, he must be someone famous.

I am shocked to see that he is the son of the whole King! He's a prince. I scroll down and see that he recently lost the mother of his child, I cover my mouth, maybe that's why he snaps and becomes emotional most of the time I have seen him.

He comes back after a while and I can't help but pity him. He breaks into a smile.

Bukhosi: "Let me guess, you googled me?"

I look down.

Bukhosi: "What did you see in there that makes you look at me like you want to cry?"

He says laughing but there's so much pain behind that laughter.

Me: "Uhm..you lost someone you loved, your daughter's mom."

He nods with a smile on his face.

Me: "I'm so sorry."

Bukhosi: "It's fine, I'm fine."

Me: "But you're not, I can see."

He laughs but then tears fall him, they start streaming down so fast I don't even know how to react.

His daughter cries in his room, he just bury his face on his hands.

Me: "Uhm...I can...can I take her?"

He doesn't answer, so I get up and rush to his room, it has a huge bed and a little cot bed next to it. I pick up the chubby beautiful baby and rock her back and forth calming her down.

Me: "Sorry..."

I raised my little sister so I know how to calm a baby down also I stay with a lot of them in those shacks. I look for her bottle and give it to her. She sucks on it then I pace around the room with her until she falls asleep. I put her back in her bed then turn I almost scream when I see him standing by the door quietly.

Me: "I didn't see you standing there."

He nods, his eyes are a bit puffy and still red.

Bukhosi: "you have a baby?"

I shake my head.

Bukhosi: "Ok."

He sighs.

Bukhosi: "Manje sizomisa kanjani ngalamatata akho!"(So what are we going to do with your clumsiness?)

I look down in shame.

Bukhosi: "I will ask for one last chance from SisPhindy please try to make it work this time."

Me: "Ok, I will try my best."

Bukhosi: "Good. Let me drive you back home."

I nod. He leaves the baby with his brother who just came in.

I am holding my breath all the way there, afraid of that uncle that spanked me this morning, he really scared the hell out of me.

When he drops me off I see that uncle puffing smoke staring at the car.

Me: "Please park around the corner."

He looks around.

Bukhosi: "Why? Your boyfriend might see you here?"

He says laughing. I chuckle nervously.

Me: "Please."

He does as I asked and tells me not to be late tomorrow he will personally take me to work.

At night I am sleeping on the floor with three kids, I hear a very loud bang on the door. My mom's friend go open the door, I hear whispers on the door then she calls my name. I wake up and go to her I sleep with my phone on my gown because when the kids wake up and see it they play with it and I don't like that so it's always with me. She's with that uncle by the door.

"Go with Uncle M'bo, he will give you something."

I follow him hesitantly, maybe she wants cooking oil, he always have everything because he sells this place to people and everyone who wants help with something they ask him.

We walk in his shack and it's beautiful inside.

"You can have a seat."

I sit down but something tells me that this man is up to something so I call the last dialed number on my phone while it's in my pocket so he won't see it.

He moves like lightening I hear the key turning, I feel myself getting ice cold.

Me: "Why...why are you locking the door?"

Uncle: "So we can give each other a nice time."

Me: "I have to go, please unlock the door."

I am trying not to panic but it's hard.

Uncle: "No one stays in my place for free, I wasn't told about you so that means you should pay me."

Me: "I will pay month end I am working now."

He laughs.

Uncle: "Oh no baby girl you pay right here today."

He grabs my neck and kiss me with his stinking breath I want to puke.

Me: "Stop...I will get money and pay you."

He keeps kissing me and licking my face, it is wet now with a stinking saliva, I scream as he grabs my thigh tight even my neck hurts from the bites he is doing. After a while I push him as hard as I can and jump over the couch running to the door and luckily I manage to open before he gets to me and run. I run in the road a car almost knocks me off because I am running while looking behind, I fall on my butt right in front of it. The lights are blinding me.

"Come here."

I look up, he is giving me his hand. So he answered my call. I hold his hand, he pulls me up, the force makes me collide with his hard chest I wrap my arms around him in relief but when he doesn't hug me back I die from embarrassment I step back from him.

Bukhosi: "We are going back to that man right now."

Me: "No."

Bukhosi: "I'm not asking you, we're going back and you gonna show me his face."

He gently push me inside the car and drive back to the shacks. I see him loading bullets in the gun I widen my eyes.

Me: "You have a gun?"

He chuckles and tell me to step out. I do as he says and he ask me to point at his shack, the gun in his hand makes me oblige. He push the door once and walk in I am behind him hiding myself.

Bukhosi: "A dirty old man you are."

He says already pointing a gun at him. He jumps up on his feet.

Uncle: "What!? Prince Gumede?"

Oh so he knows him.

Bukhosi: "I am just here to send a warning that's all."

He starts shooting all over the room and Uncle is down with his hands above his head mine are on my ears I don't think they are working anymore. He didn't shoot him but his house is a mess. He grabs my hand and we walk out. He drives on a high speed my ears are still ringing.

We walk in his house and he shows me the room I will sleep in.

Me: "Thank you for saving me today."

Bukhosi: "Nginengane yentombazane engingeke ngivume umuntu ayihlukumeze so what I did is what I would want someone else to do should my daughter face something like this and I am no longer around."(I have a baby girl that I wouldn't allow someone to hurt her)

I nod.

Bukhosi: "Get some sleep and don't think too much about it, you're safe here."

Me: "Thank you."

In the morning I wake up early and look around It looks like the whole house have ensuite bathrooms, so I take a shower but I don't know what I will wear I left everything that belongs to me.

I sit in bed wearing my gown. I hear a knock on my door, I get up and open. It's Bukhosi holding folded clothes.

Bukhosi: "Wear this, they belonged to my sister before she got married I think they will fit."

I nod. I wear the black sweatpant and a white round neck t-shirt. He comes in again and ask my shoes size I tell him I'm a size 5, he give me white sneakers.

Bukhosi: "I figured you like these colours more."

I laugh when I think that he has always met me wearing black and white but I do wear other colours.

He drives me to work and Phindy locks us in the office and shout so hard and today it's better because I am not alone and she is shouting at the both of us back and forth.

Bukhosi: "I hear you sis if she mess up I will personally drag her out of here."

She tells me to get to work, Bukhosi walk out of the office laughing. I rush behind him.

Me: "I'm sorry for getting you into trouble with sis Phindy."

Bukhosi: "Oh it's okay, I am used to her loud voice, just don't disappoint me today."

Me: "I will do my best.."

He nods and get in his car driving away. I start working braiding a girl's hair and once I'm done everyone is happy with my work that even the workers wants me to braid their hair.

I wait outside in the shelter and Bukhosi step out of his big car already laughing clapping hands.

Bukhosi: "SisPhindy called and was talking so highly of you like she wasn't shouting at us this morning."

I smile.

Me: "She was happy?"

Bukhosi: "Yes keep it up."

He drives back to the shacks and my anxiety is kicking in. He parks and look at me.

Bukhosi: "I'm not leaving you here I just want you to get everything that belongs to you."

Me: "Really? I thought you're bringing me back."

Bukhosi: "You think I will give you to that man on a silver platter? He won't hesitate to have his way with you and kill you, I know men like him, we read about their Shenanigans everyday on the internet."

He let me step out, I am so scared as I knock on the door. Aunty opens the door and frown.

Me: "Hey aunty I came to fetch my stuff."

She chuckles and shout for M'bo I am so scared, I jump in fright when I feel a hand around my waist.

Bukhosi: "It's me, he won't do shit to you. Back up old man."

I look back and see M'bo stepping back.

Bukhosi: "Take everything then we'll go."

I take my things, I don't have much anyway. I finally sigh when we're out of sight.

Bukhosi: "I will get you a place over the weekend because that is a family house, my father's house so you can't stay there."

Me: "Thank you for helping me."

I don't even know what to say, I thank my ancestors and God for sending this guy my way.

Weekend we are with his daughter, she's on a stroller while the lady shows us a one bedroom apartment, there's an open plan kitchen and a lounge it's beautiful.

Bukhosi: "I will pay it six months in advance hoping that you will be able to save and be able to pay for it yourself in the next coming months."

I can't believe I have a place like this, it feels like a dream. He ask to take a call outside I take his daughter, she is a beautiful baby you can't help but smile when she looks into your eyes.

Me: "Sawubona muntu omuhle."(Hello beautiful person.)

I smile.

Me: "You will grow up and have a big heart like your dad right? I know you will."

He clears his throat, I look at him, he ask to take his daughter, looks like he really doesn't like strangers touching his daughter, I can feel him tensing up whenever I am close to her.

Bukhosi: "Now you will be able to get to work even by foot, it's super close now and you don't have to wake up early."

Me: "Yes everything will be easy."

He counts money that makes up R1500 and give it to me.

Bukhosi: "I don't know if it's enough for grocery that will last you till month end, that's the only cash I have."

Me: "This is more than enough thank you so much sir."

Bukhosi: "Call me Bukhosi."

I nod, I will be able to go home this weekend to check on my little sister and even buy her a new uniform not torn ups uniform she gets from the neighbors, grocery can wait.

Weekend comes I am given only the Saturday off since I just started so early in the morning I am already in a taxi home. Once I reach my town it's already 8 o'clock that means shops are opened. So I buy a uniform and shoes for my little sister and get in a taxi home. She sees me the minute I step out of a taxi she was sitting outside beating drums, she loves 'ukusina' (Zulu traditional dance) we hug tight it's been a while.

Me: "I missed you, where is mom?"

She giggles.

Hloni: "She's inside with Uncle stickx."

I frown, that's mom's boyfriend but she never brought him to the house when I was around. We walk in and find them in the kitchen giggling, it's a three room house, a bedroom, kitchen and an outside second bedroom where Hloniphile and I used to sleep.

I greet mom and uncle stickx. She is happy to see me and when she sees the uniform she breaks down and cry, she's not drunk today because it's still early, bra stickx sells alcohol he probably gives her for free.

I stay for two hour then leave pocket money for Hloni and give her those cheap phone in our bedroom telling her she should hide it I know she's a clever little girl, very smart so she will be able to use the phone to call me.

I say my goodbye after giving mom R100 for bread, I know she will buy it but should there be a change she will just drink it up.

I take a taxi back to Durban, I get there around 1 pm. So I clean the flat then sit there looking outside the window, I stay on the second floors.

I have this nagging feeling that wants to call Bukhosi and ask how he's doing, now that I know he lost someone he loved dearly I just feel sorry for him, I know it's still fresh so he is bound to break down from time to time.

I finally find the courage to call, I am scared of him, he has this dominance aura without fail, commands respect without saying it out loud so he scares me I have never seen a young man like him, we are probably the same age but I feel like a little girl compared to how he is, the way he is built, the way he carries himself I am definitely younger!

Bukhosi: "Hello."

He clears his throat, he's not ok, his voice is low.

Me: "Uhm....I...I..."

I just drop the damn call because what is that "Uhm...I...I" that comes out of my mouth? I am stuttering for no reason. He calls me back.

Me: "He..hello."

Bukhosi: "Hi, Do you need help with something?"

Me: "No, I wanted to hear if you're ok?"

Bukhosi: "Huh?"

I look down, I shouldn't have called him.

Me: "I know we're not friends but you helped me, that means a lot to me so I just wanted to know if you're ok."

Bukhosi: "Why wouldn't I be?"

Me: "Uhm...sorry."

I drop the phone and switch it off putting it on a charger, it's a bit old so I have to switch it off for it to be fully charged.

I fell asleep on the couch because right now I just woke up because of the persistent knock on the door. I open the door and quickly wipe my face as he stands there staring down at me.

He looks around.

Bukhosi: "Was someone bothering you? You sounded scared over the phone."

I shake my head and let her in leaving the door opened we sit on the couch.

Me: "I was scared of talking to you."

Words just comes out of my mouth. He raise his eyebrow.

Bukhosi: "Haybo Ngobani?"(Why?)

I shrug my shoulders, I keep wiping my face.

Bukhosi: "You can just go and wash your face instead of doing that, there is nothing wrong with it really."

I go to the bathroom and wash my face. When I come back he is at the kitchen opening the fridge and cupboards, he turns to me with a frown.

Bukhosi: "I wanted water but I got shocked when I found the fridge empty, even the cupboards."

I look down.

Bukhosi: "You don't eat? Are you a vampire living off human blood?"

Me: "No."

Bukhosi: "What do you eat then? Umoya oyingcwele?"(The holly spirit?)

I can't help but laugh but he just has a frown on his face so I stop laughing.

Bukhosi: "Sesona used to eat every chance she got and I made sure of it! Why aren't you eating ke Nelile? Do you want to get sick!"

His voice is stern, I know Sesona is his baby's mom that passed.

Me: "I just came from home I was gonna buy grocery today."

He squints his eyes.

Me: "Sorry... don't look at me like that."

Bukhosi: "Like what?"

Me: "Like that! Ay you're scaring me."

Bukhosi: "Mxhm.. let's go."

We go to the mall, he tells me to push the trolley while he packs a lot of food in there, even junk food, the trolley is full I want to stop him.

He takes out his card at the till, I was holding my breath thinking he will ask that I pay with the money he gave to me, I used it but even if I didn't, this grocery is way over R1,500.

He drives back to the apartment and he ask that we pack grocery, I have never seen so much food, good food, I am used to buying 12,5Kg of mealie meal and 5kg of beans then 2 kg of meat that's it.

We sit down and eat the takeaways he bought, I am looking down at my food the whole time.

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

He nods.

Me: "How was she?"

He looks at me with questioning eyes.

Me: "Sesona."

Bukhosi: "I'd rather we not go there."

Me: "But I heard talking about it helps heal faster."

He shakes his head.

Bukhosi: "I'm different, nothing will heal faster, she left with a huge part of me, I wasn't with her to pass time, I wanted a lifetime."

I can see him getting emotional, he get up and throws his whole food at the dustbin and stand by the door I get up putting my food on top of the table.

Me: "Askies...I didn't mean to upset you."

Bukhosi: "I'm fine. Bye."

He walks out the door. The wound is still fresh or he doesn't see himself moving on from the pain, it happens, maybe he will stay single forever I have seen people who lost their partners back home who just chose to dedicate their whole lives to their children and forgot about relationships and there is nothing wrong with that but I think there's everything wrong if you raise a child with pain, like him, he breaks down out of nowhere and the child is growing she will see that and won't be good for her.

I am back at work, it's Monday and only two clients came in so far.

SisPhindy: "Ok listen up! Someone needs a makeover!"

She screams, the lady is always in the mood, her voice is naturally big. They all look at me, I frown.

Me: "What makeover?"

SisPhindy: "Sis you dine with royalty so you have to look the part, You look ridiculous."

I look at myself and I feel like crying, did she have to say it like that.

Me: "Am I that ugly?"

SisPhindy: "You're a beautiful girl, love your plumpy cheeks and round face, but we don't see it because who still does a push back in this day and age."

I look down. She push me to sit down and wash my hair. She tells another girl to do gold braids in my hair then they put silver rings to decorate it. They shape my eyebrows then she tells me to go with her to her car and drive to the mall. She ask for my size and pick up so many clothing items for me the force me to change right there at the mall, I am wearing a very short dress I keep pulling it down until she slaps my hand. We finally settle at the restaurant, I keep looking at myself in my phone and looking at the dress I am wearing I won't lie I look good but different but change is good I guess.

I look around as we wait for our order, Bukhosi is taking his order holding his baby girl, he loves his daughter and that is beautiful.

SisPhindy: "Bukhosi! Over here!"

I just drop my eyes as everyone's eyes are on us.

SisPhindy: "Yeey futsek! What are you looking at!"

I want the earth to open up and swallow me right this moment.

Bukhosi stands next to our table my head is down.

Bukhosi: "SisPhindy.."

SisPhindy: "Letha umntanami."(Give me my child)

He gives him the child.

Bukhosi: "Sawubona."(Hello)

I slowly look up, I see his eyes widening then he laughs.

Bukhosi: "Shit! I didn't even for a second think it's you, you look different, you look good."

I smile.

Me: "Thank you."

SisPhindy: "You will pay me every cent."

We both stare at her, she is looking at Bukhosi without blinking.

Bukhosi: "For what?"

SisPhindy: "Her makeover."

Me: "Aybo why is he paying? You can take my salary end of the month SisPhindy."

SisPhindy: "No, he will pay me."

Bukhosi sit down and sigh.

Bukhosi: "I need to know why? 5 marks, just state one good reason."

SisPhindy: "You're the one who introduced a girl that looked like she wakes up late everyday and just wear whatever she can put her hands on and push her hair back with water."

Bukhosi's laughter fills the entire mall and it makes me cry. He even have tears in his eyes.

Bukhosi: "Ok Uhm...I get your point, the girls at your salon sure does the most with their looks and that's what attracts business so how much do I owe you."

I wipes tears as they tell each other the figures which makes up to R3,500. He press his phone for a while then SisPhindy's phone beeps,

she giggles and kiss his cheeks making him start laughing all over again.

I ask to hold the baby as they continue to laugh at my “no” sense of style. SisPhindy gives me the baby, I play with her hand she is just looking at me then she slowly smiles showing her gums.

Me: “You’re even more cute when you smile, yes you are.”

I feel eyes on me, I slowly look up, Bukhosi is staring at me, SisPhindy is not here.

Me: “Uhm..where is SisPhindy?”

He blinks rapidly then drop his eyes.

Bukhosi: “She went to the bathroom, you didn’t even hear her because of her.”

He says moving his chair closer and look at his baby girl holding her palm.

Me: “What’s her name?”

Bukhosi: “Khazimula Aisha.”

I smile.

Me: “Hey Khazii..hey baby girl.”

She smiles again.

Me: “Just so you know, you and your friend SisPhindy hurt my feelings.”

He laughs.

Bukhosi: “I’m sorry but ay nawe girl.”

I chuckle.

Me: “You’re so pretty..”

SisPhindy comes back and Bukhosi leaves with his daughter.

SisPhindy: "Oh man..what a good Boy, it's a pity he lost a mother of his child at such a young age, but I believe he will be ok some day."

I look at him until he disappears with his daughter.

I am Nelisa Mayeza, just an ordinary girl from the village life navigating my way to a city life.

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CHAPTER 75

*

NELILE

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I have been trying my best not to mess up, I need this job and it pays well. I was so shocked at the end of the month when I got a bank notification I am used to salons paying cash and it's not the amount I got, that notification was a huge amount of money. I went home and bought grocery for my little sister I want her to finish the year so she can come stay with me.

I haven't seen Bukhosi for the whole month, I still take my phone and look at his number but I stop myself from calling. He was just helping me not looking for a friend that's why he hasn't called.

I press 'yes' by mistake my heart almost stops as I hear it ringing it slips from my hand and falls on the floor going blank immediately.

I pick it up and try to open it but looks like it's broken I sigh putting it on top of the table.

I go to the kitchen and cook, there's a knock on the door. I open and it's Bukhosi holding Khazimula in his arms, my palms are sweaty.

Me: "Uhm...hey."

My eyes moves to a bouncing little girl.

Me: "You look big and grown than the last time I saw you."

I say holding her hand.

Me: "She's growing up so fast."

I look at Bukhosi, he is too quiet, I have been talking to myself.

Me: "Can I hold her?"

He gives me the baby.

Me: "Ooh you're so heavy, what is daddy feeding you!"

My focus is on her I even forgot that I was cooking I look up and Bukhosi is standing in the kitchen stirring the pot.

Me: "Thank you, I forgot that I cooked."

He nods.

I look at the baby's bag there's her bottle, looks like he was picking her up from somewhere. I give her the bottle then walk around the room with her. She finally sleeps and I take her to my room then go back to the kitchen. I find Bukhosi looking down with his hands balancing on the counter, I can see his muscles from the shirt he's wearing.

Me: "Are you ok?"

He nods.

Me: "Should I dish up for you?"

Bukhosi: "Yeah, but I need a bathroom."

He walks into the bedroom, I dish up eating my food, he comes back after a while and take his food. We eat in silence. I take the dishes to the kitchen to wash them but the plate slips from my hands and shatter on the floor. I hear him chuckling. I pick up the pieces throwing it in the bin then get up.

Bukhosi: "You're really clumsy."

I sigh and sit down on the couch.

Bukhosi: "You called and kept quiet."

I look at my phone on the table, he takes it and have a look at it.

Bukhosi: "I have an old phone that I stopped using, I will give it to you."

Me: "Oh..ok thank you."

He nods.

Me: "I haven't seen you for a whole month."

Bukhosi: "Why were you counting?"

I keep quiet.

Bukhosi: "I was busy with my exams and I spent as much time I got with my daughter."

I nod.

Bukhosi: "Where is home and your family?"

Me: "Umzinto, and I have a younger sister she stays with my mom."

He nods.

Bukhosi: "So you're working for them?"

Me: "Yes."

I look at his phone.

Me: "Uhm..do you have airtime on your phone?"

He laughs like I just said a big joke.

Bukhosi: "You want to make a call?"

I nod. He gives me his phone but I can't really use it so I give it back to him and he dials the number and put it on speaker.

Bukhosi: "It's not a boyfriend right? I don't want to hear phone sex or anything like that."

I gasp staring at him.

Me: "Why would you say something like that?"

He shrug as my little sister picks up.

Hloni: "Hello"

She says in a low tone and that's unlike her, she is always jolly.

Me: "Hloni what's going on why are you whispering?"

Hloni: "I am hiding under the bed, someone is trying to unlock my room."

I stand on my feet immediately, Bukhosi's eyes are moving with me.

Me: "What? Where is mom?"

Hloni: "I came back from school and she wasn't around."

I can hear a banging sound, it's around 5 pm and our houses are far apart from the neighbors people won't even hear her scream. I already have tears in my eyes.

Bukhosi grabs the phone from my shaky hands.

Bukhosi: "Sis Omncane."(Little sister)

Hloni: "Hello."

Bukhosi: "I want you to drop the call right now and switch off the phone, uyangizwa?it doesn't have a sound when you switch it off right?" (Do you hear me?)

Hloni: "Yes, it was already on silent when you called."

Bukhosi: "Good, I will try to drive as fast as I can to get to you okay."

Hloni: "Ok."

I hear a beep sound, she dropped the call.

Me: "My little sister is in trouble."

He huffs.

Bukhosi: "Stay with my daughter and lock the door I will come back with your sister soon."

Me: "But how? You don't know where home is."

Bukhosi: "You clearly don't know who I am."

He chuckles.

Bukhosi: "Just do me one favour?"

Me: "What?"

Bukhosi: "Ungayiwisi ingane Yami."(Don't drop my baby.)

He smiles walking out. He comes back in again and look at me.

Bukhosi: "I will come back with her, trust me."

I sit down biting my nails, I am so scared, who would want to break into our home and why? There is nothing much in there.

After an hour, I hear a cry coming from my room I rush in there and pick her up.

Me: "Hey Aisha..hey baby.. don't cry, I'm here you're not alone at all."

She smiles like she wasn't crying a while ago. I laugh.

Me: "I don't know if your daddy feeds you soft porridge but I think you're hungry so I will make one for you."

I take my towel that I use when I get out of the shower and wrap her with it, on my back.

I cook the porridge making it as soft as possible for her to be able to swallow. Once it's warm I feed her slowly giving her time to swallow all of it so she won't vomit it out, she's still a baby. She finish all of it then I give her a bottle. I go to bed with her and I keep talking to her in a baby language, she is calming my nerves down.

Me: "I'm so sorry about your mom, I'm sure she would have loved seeing you grow, I hate death. My mom changed after our dad died, she started drinking alcohol but your dad isn't like that, he literally lives for you. We both lost people who matter to us, you lost your mom and I lost my dad, we gonna be fine though, such is life but we have to push through."

I wipe her cheek.

Me: "You're so adorable, your mom was sure beautiful, even your dad looks great."

I smile and pull her closer to my chest and kiss her forehead.

I watch her fall asleep while I'm also feeling sleepy.

I wake up to a knock on the main door. I open the door, my sister jumps in my arms I hold her tight, she's crying. I sit down while holding her she's sitting on my lap with her head on my chest. I keep rocking her, she finally falls asleep. I let her sleep on the couch then get up looking at Bukhosi.

Me: "Thank you. Thank you so much."

I hug him but once again, he's not hugging me back so I step back.

Me: "Uhm..."

I wipe my tears.

Me: "Did you find anyone there?"

Bukhosi: "Yes, he already managed to unlock by using a stone but I got there just in time, he ran away as soon as he saw my car."

Me: "Thank you so much."

Bukhosi: "She's gonna be fine, she's a smart little girl the fact that she thought of locking the door, hide under the bed and put the phone on silent shows she is brave."

I nod.

Bukhosi: "I'm leaving."

He follows me to my room and take his baby.

Bukhosi: "Bye.."

I nod

Me: "I'm grateful for everything you have done for me."

He nods and walk out. I huff and sit next to my little sister brushing her hair. She almost got hurt and I feel bad, I should have took her with me long time ago.

She wakes up later and she looks better than I thought.

Me: "Hey.."

She smiles and hug me tight.

Me: "You're so brave, I'm proud of you."

Hloni: "Can I tell you something? Don't tell mom."

I nod.

Hloni: "The person who was trying to open our door is uncle stickx, he threatened to kick the door if I don't open, I heard his voice, the reason why it took too long for him to open is because someone came and asked what he was doing there he said he lost the key so a person said he is helping him look for a key then after some time he left, that's why Uncle found him still trying to open."

Me: "I won't tell mom, I'm glad you're safe."

She looks around.

Hloni: "Is this your house?"

I laugh nodding.

Hloni: "Yhoo kuhle."(it's beautiful)

Me: "You gonna stay with me."

She screams happily.

Hloni: "So, who fetched me? He said he is your friend."

Me: "Yeah he is my friend who helped me get this place."

She nods.

Hloni: "Unuka kahle Yhoo nemoto yakhe yinhle."(He smells good Yhoo and his car is nice)

I laugh and make her something to eat, she has her backpack with documents, it's probably Bukhosi who told her to pack these things. May God shower him with more blessings, he is a good man goes out of his way to help a stranger.

She takes a shower then get in bed, she falls asleep again.

There's a knock again on the door. I open, he just hands me the phone.

Bukhosi: "This is the phone you can use."

It is still those expensive phones but the one he is using is more advanced.

Me: "Thanks."

Bukhosi: "How is she?"

Me: "She's fine and was able to pick up who it was."

Bukhosi: "Really?"

Me: "Yes, my mom's boyfriend. She's an alcoholic they probably drank together and she fell asleep so he went home to do something bad to Hloni because he knew she was alone."

Bukhosi: "She's gonna stay here?"

I nod.

Bukhosi: "I will try to enroll her into a school close by even though the year is so close to ending."

I nod.

Bukhosi: "Goodnight. I will check on her tomorrow."

Me: "Ok."

He turns to walk away.

Me: "Bukhosi.."

He turns around again.

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you.)

He nods and walk away but I hold his hand, he turns and look at me with his eyebrow raised.

Me: "Are you afraid to make friends because it will feel like you're betraying Sesona?"

Bukhosi: "Sesona? Do you know her?"

I shake my head looking down.

Bukhosi: "Then please never mention her again."

Me: "I understand."

He get in his car and drive out.

In the morning I open the door still wearing my gown, I don't know what I'll do because I have work but afraid to leave my little sister alone after what happened.

Me: Oh..."

It's Bukhosi I wasn't expecting to see him this early so I fix my gown since it almost exposed my breast.

Bukhosi: "I called Phindy and explained to her why you can't go to work today."

Me: "I was still going crazy thinking what I should do."

He walks in carrying paper bags and plastic bags.

Bukhosi: "This is breakfast."

My little sister walk in the room and rush to throw herself into Bukhosi's arms, he spins her around like they are best friends, oh so it's just me he doesn't wanna hug.

Hloni: "You're my superhero."

Bukhosi: "Spider man or superman?"

Hloni: "Spiderman!"

They fist bump, I smile shaking my head, they got along so fast? Then something must be wrong with me then.

Bukhosi: "Do you want to attend a new school and make new friends?"

Hloni: "Yeah! At my school no one wanted to be friends with me they made fun of my mother! I had to fight everytime."

Bukhosi: "In this new school they will treat you like a princess because you are friends with me."

Hloni: "Really?"

Bukhosi: "Yes "

She is so happy, Bukhosi gives her a burger then she ask to eat it in my room to give us "privacy" I widen my eyes when she says that leaving Bukhosi in stitches laughing.

Me: "She's so happy."

Bukhosi: "Yeah she's a bubble little girl, I like her personality."

Me: "I have a feeling you were just like her before you lost....Uhm..."

I look down.

Bukhosi: "Uhm..well yeah a lot of things changed when I met her and also when I lost her."

Me: "That happens, my mother turned into an alcoholic when dad died so I understand perfectly."

Bukhosi: "I'm so sorry for your loss."

Me: "I'm sorry for yours too."

Bukhosi's phone rings.

Bukhosi: "Hello SisPhindy, you're here already? Sure.."

He opens the door and Sis Phindy walk in.

Phindy: "Hello.. hello oh baby I'm sorry Bukhosi told me what happened."

She pulls me into a very tight squeeze I almost drop dead.

SisPhindy: "So Uhm I was thinking, how about you wait here and I will take the little girl for fittings myself, I will find you two here."

Bukhosi: "But why? I said we will all go together nje."

SisPhindy: "I just think it's better if we go just the two of us."

Bukhosi sighs and calls Hloni and give her the plastic bag that has new clothes, she go to the room to change they fit her perfectly I don't even know how he got her sizes right. He introduce them and they click, they are both loud mouths anyway. So they leave me with Bukhosi in a very awkward silence.

Me: "You don't have a problem giving everyone hugs except for me huh?"

He raise his eyebrow.

Bukhosi: "You want a hug?"

Me: "I didn't say that, it's just that you have made it a little too obvious that you don't like hugging me, do I smell bad?"

Bukhosi: "What? No..."

Me: "You just don't like me?"

He chuckles.

Bukhosi: "I don't like this conversation we're having."

Me: "Ok."

I look at him, he is biting the side of his inner cheek.

Me: "Where is Khazi?"

Bukhosi: "With her martenal grandma."

I nod..

Silence again.

Me: "I'm sorry but I need to know really! Why do you hug everyone except me?"

I ask again staring at me, this is really upsetting.

Bukhosi: "I asked you if you want a hug?"

Me: "You're not answering me?"

Bukhosi: "I don't have to."

Me: "Wow..Ok."

Bukhosi: "Go and wear something decent your boobs are exposed."

Me: "Why are you looking at my boobs?"

Bukhosi: "You're sitting right in front of me, if I didn't know better I'd say you want to seduce me."

Me: "Not everyone is cheap! Why would I seduce you, you're not my type."

Bukhosi: "You have a type?"

Me: "No but you're definitely not what I would order."

He raise his eyebrow, I do the same.

Me: "Are you trying to intimidate me? It's not working uyabona?"(Do you see?)

Bukhosi: "A little makeover makes you think you're all that I see."

Me: "You just had to take you there, I know I'm pretty, so, does my looks upset you?"

Bukhosi: "I've seen better."

Me: "That's a shame, you clearly haven't given yourself time to look at me."

He get up.

Bukhosi: "I'm leaving."

Me: "Ubikela bani?"(Who are you reporting to?)

He quickly put his hands on my either side I sit back on the couch as he moves his face closer, his fresh cold breath hits my face.

Bukhosi: "You don't wanna to do that with me baby, so don't try me."

My heart is beating out of my chest, I trust him, I know he wouldn't hurt me but he is making me nervous, he is so close.

Bukhosi: "Cat got your tongue smart mouth?"

I don't answer, I feel tears filling my eyes then they fall.

Bukhosi: "Ungisukela ngizithulele wangidelela(you start with me while I'm quiet) now you're playing the tears card, Really Nelile? You want to make me to feel like a bad person?"

I shake my head, his hand goes to my face and wipe my tears.

Me: 'Sorry, I am really not ungrateful for the things you have done for me, A hug means nothing, what you have done for me I am grateful for it.'

Bukhosi: "You're crying because you want my hug so bad?"

He ask chuckling.

Bukhosi: "Come here."

He pulls me up and when I feel his arms around me I feel weak on my knees, I don't know what's happening.

Bukhosi: "So is this payback? You won't hug me back?"

I quickly wrap my arms around him and inhale his scent my little sister was right, he does smell devine. We hug a little too long it's getting awkward. I let go first and he follows, we both clear our throats the same time.

Me: "Uhm..thank you."

He nods and sit down getting busy with his phone.

Bukhosi: "I tried to call you this morning but your phone didn't go through, you don't like the phone I gave you?"

Me: "I like it, I just don't know how to use it."

He laughs and ask me to bring it. I give him the phone then sit on the couch. He moves and sit next to me showing me how to use the phone. He raise his hand up with a phone in it.

Bukhosi: "Smile, we're taking a selfie angithi Umuhle wena."(You're beautiful right?)

I laugh because he is using my words against me. He takes a photo while I'm laughing. He shows it to me and it's actually a beautiful picture.

Me: "Wow, it has amazing picks."

Bukhosi: "Yeah..."

He shows me the basics really then make the picture my home screen.

Bukhosi: "Now you get to see this handsome face everytime you wake up."

I laugh shaking my head.

Bukhosi: "Look, I'm sorry that I switch up out of nowhere, I am going through a lot but I shouldn't take it out on you, I'm so sorry, I am working on myself."

Me: "I'm sorry too for being so annoying."

He gives me a side smile I can't help but smile back.

The door opens, he clears his throat and move away from me on the couch.

Hloni walks in with Sis Phindy carrying a lot of plastic bags, different shops.

Bukhosi: "Let me guess I have to pay?"

Phindy: "Oh not this time baby, you will just only pay for the uniform but the rest was on me."

She even did the blocks hairstyle and she looks beautiful. I am grateful for these kind hearted people, it's literally the first meeting such people.

Later I walk Bukhosi out and he hugs me without even me asking, I laugh hugging him back.

Bukhosi: "Kazi uhlekani?(I wonder why you're laughing)

I smile as he let go. Then out of nowhere I feel his lips on mine, I am so shocked I don't even know what I'm supposed to do. He steps back and get in his car driving out just like that. I go back in my room and find my little sis already asleep, she had a long day with SisPhindy, that was a lot of shopping.

I am sitting in bed with my finger on my lips, I am still shocked that he kissed me, I don't even know what to think of it. The phone beeps I view the message, that part is easy. My heart drops as I read "That kiss was a mistake, it shouldn't have happened I'm sorry, I was caught up in a moment I don't wanna go that route again, I never will."

It's from Bukhosi, I just sleep in bed and snuggle closer to my sis.

It's two days later without hearing or seeing Bukhosi and I'm good with that after that text he sent.

Today he sent a text telling me he is fetching Hloni and taking her to school. I get us ready then we walk out when he sends another one telling us he is outside. I take my bag and Hloni takes hers and we walk out. Bukhosi opens the door for her and buckle her seatbelt up.

Bukhosi: "I will drop you off, get in."

I shake my head.

Me: "No thank you, I'd rather not."

I say goodbye to Hloni and walk to work. I don't know why that message hurts me. What did I think will happen? That he will declare the undying love for me? That man is clearly still in love with a person that passed on, no one can match that also he is way out of my league. He is Thee Prince Bukhosi Gumede.

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CHAPTER 76

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BUKHOSI

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My baby Aisha is turning 3 months today, she is growing and getting prettier and heavier everyday, she smiles more now and can recognize faces. Now, it also marks three months since I lost her mother, it still feels pretty fresh.

I feel bad for the kiss I gave to Nelile few weeks ago, we never talked or mentioned it, I only go there to pick up Hloni for school and drop

her off. Nelile avoids me at all cost and I stay clear of her, I don't want her to catch feeling for a broken man, She is a good girl.

I am parking at her apartment waiting for Hloni to come out, Nelile doesn't even show her face anymore, Hloni comes alone.

I see her slowly walking towards my car, I haven't seen her in a while so now I am feeling some type of way, I don't know how to explain it. She looks so beautiful she has black braid on now, wearing a black short and a sports bra, she is walking barefoot. I step out of the car, she stands in front of me, it feels like forever since I last saw her.

Me: "Sawubona."(Hello.)

Nelile: "Unjani?"(How are you?)

Me: "I'm ok, you?"

Nelile: "I'm good."

I nod and look down failing to keep eye contact with her.

Nelile: "Hloni is coming, she slept late because of the phone you bought for her."

Me: "Can I talk to her?"

Nelile: "Sure."

She walks in front of her, she has gained some weight for sure, her ass is popping in those shorts I can see her back has two dimples right above her buttcheeks, I shake my head looking away.

We walk inside and she calls her little sister. She giggles and hug me as soon as she sees me, we get along so well because she is a good listener, respectful and smart.

Me: "Unjani Nkosazana Yami?"(How are you my princess?)

She giggles.

Hloni: "Ngiyaphila."(I'm fine.)

Me: "That's good, why did you sleep late?"

She look down.

Me: "Do you want me to take back the phone if you're not going to keep to your schedule? Sleeping at 8 o'clock?"

Hloni: "I'm sorry I was just a little too excited I wanted to learn everything. I won't do it again."

I nod.

Me: "Good, You will have all the time with your phone on a weekend after doing your homework."

Hloni: "I'm sorry sisi and I'm sorry Uncle."

I nod and take her hand walking out. I drive her to school then drop her off.

I am parking at her apartment again, I know she is off today. I huff and step out of the car. I knock on her door. She opens and frown.

Nelile: "Did Hloni forget something?"

Me: "No."

Nelile: "Then what are you doing here?"

I clear my throat.

Me: "I haven't been seeing you, are you avoiding me?"

Nelile: "No."

She says and walk back in going to the kitchen, she is making breakfast. I sit on the barstool and watch her as she avoids my gaze at all cost.

Me: "Nelile."

"Mmmh." She says without giving me a glance.

Me: "I'm sorry for the kiss, it just made things very awkward between us, I didn't mean to."

Nelile: "It's all good."

I sigh and walk around the counter holding both her hands.

Me: "Nelly listen I.."

Her phone rings disturbing the apology speech I keep repeating in my head

Nelile: "SisPhindy.."

Silence.

Nelile: "What parcel?...Ok I'm coming."

She looks at me and step back.

Nelile: "SisPhindy is calling me to a salon."

Me: "You won't eat first?"

Nelile: "I will eat when I come back."

She goes to her room, doesn't close the door. She takes off her shorts leaving a white panty, then she wears her dress I just walk out because I think I have seen enough.

She walk past my car I quickly hold her hand.

Me: "Come on, I am waiting for you here, I will take you to the Salon."

She get in at the back, I drive her to her work place. We both walk in and SisPhindy attacks us with tight hugs.

SisPhindy: "I knew it!"

We both look at her wondering what she is on about.

She rush to the office and comes back with a bouquet of red roses and a box of chocolate. She keeps winking at me I have no idea what's happening.

She gives the flowers and a box to Nelile.

SisPhindy: "Looks like someone has a secret admirer."

Nelile takes the card from the roses and read "I was taken by your beauty the first day I came for my haircut and now I come here often just so I can see your face, please will you go out with me this evening, just text 'yes' on the number at the back of the card I will know it's you."

I feel hot and cold at the same time, I don't know what's going on. Nelile is smiling as the girls cheer, SisPhindy keeps eyeing me now, she grabs my hand taking me to the office and close the door.

SisPhindy: "So those huge roses aren't from you?"

Me: "No, why would you think it was from me?"

SisPhindy: "I just...I thought you two got along."

I keep quiet. She walks out of the office, I follow her and looks like she loves the roses, she keeps smelling them with a smile on her face.

Me: "Uhm...I am going to fetch my daughter from her martenal family, mom and dad are here in Durban and they want to see her."

I don't even know why I am sharing that with her.

Me: "Uhm..so should I leave you here?"

Nelile: "No, I am going back to the apartment."

I drive her back to the apartment and walk her in. She offers me breakfast so we eat in silence.

Me: "So you're going to say yes to the date?"

Nelile: "No."

Me: "Oh, why not?"

Nelile: "I wouldn't go out with a stranger, What if he's a serial killer."

My heart is at ease I didn't know I was holding my breath for so long, I just exhaled silently.

Me: "Ok."

I smile looking down at my food.

Me: "Uhm..can I join you and Hloni for dinner today, I want to look at her school work."

Nelile: "Yeah it's fine, thanks."

I leave her while she is busy with the dishes. I fetch my daughter and take her to mom and dad. They come to see her often, sometimes they take her home for the weekend and bring her back on Monday, I can't stay away for long that's why she is always with me most of the time.

Mom jumps up on her feet and hold her.

Thabsie: "This pretty girl grows bigger every second, last week you weren't this big, Babakhe look she is smiling like she can hear grandma."

She says showing her to dad and he smiles and take her from mom.

Nkosiyo: "Intombi enhle efana noMkhulu wayo."(A beautiful girl that looks like her grandpa.)

We all laugh.

Nkosiyo: " Uhm son, your mom and I are going kwaLukhele for a cleansing ceremony, we're leaving early to help out where we can."

Grandpa Lukhele passed on at 106 years old, he wasn't sick but just slept and didn't wake up, he was really old so he is resting, he lived his life to the fullest and I admire him for the family he built, we are all here today because of him and GreatGrandma Ziyanda who is also getting really old but very resistant, they are aging very slow yet they have so many generations after them, maybe it's getting children at a very young age.

They leave after a while, so I fetch Hloni from school and she's happy to see my baby girl, she has seen her a couple of times and she loves her.

I am walking closer to her as she insists on holding the baby.

We walk inside the apartment and Nelile swiftly get up from the couch and rush to take Khazimula from Hloni. She hasn't seen her after that kiss since she has been avoiding me.

Nelile: "Khazii khaziii..I have missed you so much, look at you!"

She is playing with her I find myself smiling.

Nelile: "I'm sure you have forgotten about me."

Me: "I don't think so, who would forget such a pretty face."

She just focus on Khazimula and it's like I don't exist in their world. Hloni comes back wearing casual clothes we immediately start with her homework. Her sister thinks she isn't that smart so she asked me to help Hloni with homeworks. We did them in the car the past few weeks because of the tension between us.

We have dinner then Hloni joins Khazimula in the room. We are left alone sitting in opposite couches. She has a cushion on her lap playing with it.

Me: "Nelly.."

She looks at me.

Me: "Can things go back to how they were before?"

Nelile: "Before what?"

Me: "Before...Uhm..before the kiss."

She chuckles.

Nelile: "Were you testing me? You wanted to see if I will run after you?"

Me: "No, it wasn't like that I promise you."

She chuckles again.

Nelile: "I'm over it so yeah things can go back to how they were before."

I nod.

Me: "Uhm..I have to go now."

Nelile: "But Khazimula is sleeping, are you gonna wake her up from her last nap of the day? They tend to be fussy if you wake them up around this time."

Me: "But it's getting late."

Nelile: "You can take her then."

She switch on the TV and fetch her fleece blanket, she watch those shows women love the most, I don't even know the name. I watch her as she concentrate on the show, she is so beautiful.

Me: "Can I sit next to you?"

She nods. I take off my shoes and sit leaning on the armrest and let her get in-between my legs and sleep on my chest facing the TV then I pull the fleece over her.

I wake up when I feel her moving, I open my eyes and we look at each other.

Nelile: "Khazii is crying, I think she needs a nappy change and a bottle."

Me: "I will go check on her."

Nelile: "No, I will do it."

Looks like we both fell asleep. She comes back after a while and sleep where she was sleeping, I was almost dozing of again. I hold her and close my eyes.

***I am standing on a very green grass and there is a breeze hitting my skin. I feel soft hands holding me from behind. I laugh turning around and hug her happily.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami, it's been so long."

She giggles and rest her head on my chest.

Sesona: "Just know I am happy when you're happy, and right now being with you makes me so happy!"

I smile and kiss her forehead.

Me: "I miss you."

Sesona: "But your happiness is right here."

She put her hand over my chest.

.....
I open my eyes and look around, I am still on the couch, Nelile is still sleeping peacefully on my chest. I remove the braids on her face and kiss her forehead then fall back into sleep again.

I don't know the last time I slept this peacefully. I open my eyes and Nelile is no longer on my chest but moving around the kitchen with my daughter strapped on her back.

Hloni is already wearing her uniform eating breakfast.

I sit up wiping my face.

Me: "Morning."

They greet me back. Nelile gives me a porridge on a small dish.

Nelile: "It's hot, I want to feed Khazii, can you cool it for me while I make lunch for Hloni, Ngiseliwe namhlanje."(I overslept today.)

I smile taking the porridge from her. I leave her feeding Aisha while I take Hloni to school.

I go back to the house and find her already dressed for work, my baby girl is sleeping on the couch.

Me: "Uhm...so should I take you to work?"

Nelile: "Yes."

She says smiling looking down. We keep stealing glances at each other I can't explain what is going on.

I buckle my little girl up , then hold Nelly's hand as she hop on my car, I buckle her seatbelt, I am too close to her face, we are staring at each other but she clears her throat. I move and get in the driver's seat driving her to work.

I park in front of the salon, she looks at the back of the seat and we find Khazii wide awake just looking around.

Nelile: "So you woke up and didn't even make a sound baby girl? Who's a big girl."

My daughter smiles and stretch her hand, Nelile holds it.

Nelile: "I will see you, ok. Bye baby."

I step out of the car as they continue to play. I open the passenger seat and remove her seatbelt.

Nelile: "Thank you."

She get off and open the back, she kiss my daughter who makes the loud baby nose I chuckle, she's so responsive towards Nelile it's amazing.

Nelile: "I don't wanna leave you.."

She is kissing her all over her face and hearing my daughter giggle, all happily makes me so happy.

Me: "Ok! You should go inside now."

Nelile: "Your daddy is so jealous. Come walk me in princess."

She unbuckle Aisha and walk in with her I follow shortly behind them holding her bag that she left just like that since her attention is just on her Khazii.

I find them standing in front of a man, he looks so sharp in a nice suit, looks like those black African Americans that every woman go crazy over, even the girls here at the salon are staring at him.

"You have a baby?"

He ask with a smile. I am just standing by the door watching, even SisPhindy is staring at the guy.

Nelile: "Yes...I mean...no...I.."

She stutters a man just let out a chuckle, the girls starts fanning their faces.

"I was hurt when you didn't reply to my message from the roses yesterday, I am rushing to work, can I see you before you knock off."

I don't hear a response from Nelile. He looks at his watch then smile looking back at her.

"I'll take that as a yes, see you later baby."

He walks towards me smiling, I don't move by the exit door, that's when everyone notice I am around.

"Can you please make way for me?"

I chuckle and step out of the way, he walks out.

"I guess today is handsome black men day, God we're blessed!"

One lady shouts as they all fix their eyes on me, Nelile turns around I think she forgot about me for a minute. I walk up to her and give her the bag then take my daughter. She looks flushed, her cheeks are turning red I don't know why.

Nelile: "Uhm..."

Me: "Should I pick you up after work?"

"What a lucky girl!"

Another lady exclaims.

She nods.

Nelile: "Yes."

I kiss her cheek then look at her pretty face, she has her eyes closed then she slowly opens them, she is looking at me differently and it gives me a very unusual feeling.

Me: "See you later."

Nelile: "Ok."

She says in a low tone. I smile and wave at SisPhindy walking out.

I drive my daughter to his grandma then go home. I have finished my year exams so I am just chilling at home.

Around 3 pm I fetch Hloni and drop her off leaving her eating then fetch her sister. I find the man here again sitting on a chair behind

Nelile as she finish up doing a client's hair, he keeps turning the chair in circles biting his lower lips staring at Nelile's behind. I stand next to her and snake my hand around her waist.

Me: "I'm here."

She gets startled and look behind her. The man get up, now we are looking at Nelile.

Me: "I left Hloni eating, let's go home."

She nods and take her bag.

Me: "Let me hold it for you."

She gives me her bag and when we are about to walk out the man grabs her hand, I move swiftly and pull her by her waist towards me.

"I thought I told you we gonna meet earlier."

I don't like his tone.

Nelile: "And what was my response?"

He doesn't say anything, I chuckle.

Nelile: "Exactly, now let go of my hand."

The man frowns and step closer and I don't like it.

"I drove all the way from my house in Ballito to come see you."

I laugh, really? He wanna do that right now?

Nelile: "Ooh...I thought you drove from Sandton."

I smile..I can tell she's being sarcastic and I love it!

His ego is bruised I can see him shaking in anger.

Nelile: "Let's go.."

We turn, he grabs her again.

Me: "Ok now you're really testing my patience. Let go!"

He let go but walk closer to me, he's a little taller. SisPhindy is quick to get in between us I just take Nelly to my car, buckle her seatbelt then get on my side driving home.

We find Hloni sleeping on the couch with her book on her chest, the girl loves her sleep. I check her book and find out she did all her homework herself and they are all correct. I pick her up as a big girl she is and take her to bed. I go back to Nelile who is already busy at the kitchen.

Me: "Uhm...after 6 months I think you should move out and find a bigger apartment, maybe a two bedroom apartment since there is Hloni here, you both need your own space."

She nods.

Nelile: "I have been thinking about it."

Me: "So your mom has never called?"

She shakes her head.

Nelile: "It's really shocking that she hasn't even looked for Hloniphile all this long..I know she is an alcoholic but she cared about us."

Me: "Maybe I should take you home this coming weekend."

Nelile: "I'd appreciate that, thank you."

She keeps stealing glances at me.

Me: "You have something to say?"

Nelile: "Uhm.. you're staying over again today?"

Me: "You want me to stay over?"

She looks down and nod slowly.

Me: "I will stay over."

We eat, I wake Hloni up to eat then she goes back to bed. We sleep on the couch again just like yesterday but today I am wearing jeans and they are a bit uncomfortable.

Me: "Can I take off my jeans?"

She nods. I take them off and my t-shirt leaving my boxer shorts on. She takes off her gown leaving her little silky nightie on. She sleeps on top of me and the fabric between us is too little it's making me feel uncomfortable. I know she feels it but just ignoring it, my boner is growing underneath her and it's embarrassing since we're not really an item, makes me look like a pervert.

Nelile: "Maybe I should go sleep with Hloni."

Me: "Uhm... don't mind it, it just responding to the heat of your body, I won't do anything and it will sleep soon."

She nods.

In the morning I wake up to another hell of a morning erection, believe it or not I haven't had a boner since Sesona, so last night was my first time getting it after I lost my baby.

She get off me and walk away to the room. I sit up and look at my boxers, I'm hard it is really upsetting because Nelile might read this all wrong, that maybe I want sex from her. I use the bathroom after her and Hloni. I take a long shower and masturbate in there just to release a bit. Then I walk out of the shower feeling way better. I wear my clothes then drive them to their different stops. I walk Nelile in again today and she has roses again waiting for her. She reads the card out loud rolling her eyes.

"I'm sorry about my behavior yesterday, I lost a million dollar contract I was just frustrated, please forgive me and give me another chance."

She clicks her tongue and throw the roses at the dustbin then follows the card. Another girl picks them up saying she will say they are from her boyfriend.

Me: "Bye, I will see you later."

Nelile: "You don't have to pick me up everyday Bukhosi."

Me: "But I am done with my exams I get bored all day so I want to do it."

She giggles and wrap her arms around my neck absent mindedly, people are watching but the funny thing is I don't care about anyone around us but her right this moment.

Nelile: "See you soon."

She kiss my cheek then walk away leaving me smiling like a fool.

I get in the car and my phone has missed calls from Ngcebo, I shiver..what did I do wrong? That's the first question I am asking myself, Mntwana doesn't just call.

Me: "Mntwana weDlozi.."

I answer nervously, he chuckles.

Ngcebo: "I just wanted to greet you, you didn't do anything wrong Gumede."

Me: "You wanted to greet me? That's it?"

He laughs.

Ngcebo: "Am I not allowed to call my little brother and greet?"

Me: "Ay Ngcebo.."

He laughs so hard and drop the call, he seems unusually happy.

The Weekend is here, I am driving to Umzinto, eMalangeni.

I park in their yard and find the house opened, the yard is clean. Hloni rush inside and we follow her. We find her mom with a man sitting around the table full of beer bottles, they are clearly drunk.

Nelile: "Mama."

The man has his eyes all out staring at Hloni, she moves closer to me I put my hand over her shoulder.

Nelile: "You never looked for Hloniphile, where did you think she was at?"

"Stickx told me you fetched her, I was angry that you didn't have the decency to tell me you're taking my child! Did I raise you like that?"

Her speech is slurred, she is so drunk but at least she can recognize her children.

Nelile: "Did you see me taking Hloni stickx and where were you when I was taking her huh?"

She's angry but stickx doesn't respond.

Nelile: "Mom you need to stop! We all felt pain when dad died but we didn't neglect the people we love..losing a loved one doesn't mean you should throw your life away."

I feel like she is talking to me.

Nelile: "Learn to move on from the pain mama, please do it for us."

"Ay you're old now Nelile, live your own life and leave me to live mine, Take Hloni with you I have nothing to offer her."

Hloni: "Mama."

She walks up to her mom trying to hug her but she push her away I am quick to hold her before she falls on her butt. She sobs so loud storming out.

Nelile: "Hloni..."

She calls after her. I shake my head, I am not judging her drinking because we deal with pain differently but my problem is when she wants to abandon her children, that's not right.

I go to my car and look for a pen and paper I write my number and write my name under it then walk back in. I take her hand and put the piece of paper on her palm.

Me: "Call this number when you're ready to get help, I will wait for your call no matter how long it takes for you to be ready, I will answer your call and we will take it from there."

I walk out and find Nelile and Hloni comforting each other behind the car.

Me: "Let's go home."

I open the doors for them, buckle them up then I drive us back to Durban. Hloni run to the room and close it behind her. I hug Nelile tight.

Me: "It's okay...I know she will come around, trust me, she will come around just don't hold a grudge against her, ok."

She nods and wipe her tears.

Nelile: "Thank you for everything."

Me: "Don't mention it."

Out of nowhere, she kiss me wrapping her arms around my neck, I kiss her back, she starts rushing the kiss trying to take off my jacket but I hold her hands and break the kiss.

Me: "You're hurting so we can't go there."

She tries to kiss me again I step back shaking my head.

Me: "This is not a rejection because I don't want you, You're a beautiful girl and your touch makes my blood hot but you're driven by

pain and anger, mixed emotions and I can't take advantage of that. I will let you sleep on my chest, cry if you have to but we won't use sex to mask off that pain, I can't do that to you."

I take off my clothes and sleep on the couch. She also takes off everything leaving just a panty and sleep between my legs I cover her body up, she is so upset she doesn't even care about wearing her sleepwear. I run my fingers on her scalp I feel my chest getting wet with tears.

Me: "It's ok, let it all out, you will feel better."

She sobs holding me too tight, her nails are digging on my skin I let her be.

Me: "I'm here for you..ok...you will never be alone."

She cries until she falls asleep. I kiss the top of her head then hold her tight. I can't imagine how they are both feeling, I live for my mom and dad's love and one of them rejecting me would kill me so their pain is justified.

In the morning I can feel that she's awake, she is drawing circles on my chest.

Me: "Morning."

She giggles, music to my ears.

Me: "How are you feeling?"

Nelile: "I feel better, thank you for being here."

Me: "I think I am always where I should be."

It's Sunday so there isn't much to do except me fetching my daughter from Granny I miss her. I fetch her and Nelile ask me to come back with her and I honor her request. Hloni and I are watching TV she also looks better than yesterday. Nelile is in the bedroom with Khazii making their noises. I leave Hloni dosing off and walk out calling the

owner of this building. I ask if she has at least a two bedroom apartment available in this exact building I will take it for Nelile and add money in that six months advance I had already paid. She shows me a three bedroom apartment instead just across their apartment so it won't be hard to move, we didn't even know the apartment opposite is empty I would have long taken it for them.

Today I am helping them move, Nelile shouted at me for this because it costs a lot of money "for an extra bedroom she doesn't even need" that's her exact word I apologized and she was grateful, and that's what I always like about her, she might complain but always shows gratitude.

Hloni is excited having her own bedroom, the other one we just make the bed and leave it like that. Then we both clean and make the bed in the main bedroom it's bigger. Hloni is sleeping with Khazii just after we finished eating dinner and feeding baby Aisha.

Nelile and I are sitting in bed I am playing with her soft hands.

Nelile: "It has been a long as day huh?"

I nod. She looks around and smile.

Nelile: "I still want to pinch myself I can't believe I have work, an apartment where I live with my little sister and it's all because of you."

I smile.

Me: "I guess you can call me a dream come true."

She laughs and hold my hands tight.

Nelile: "You know I wake up everyday and pray, sometimes in silence and I always mention you, I always pray for your healing."

Me: "Thank you.."

I pull her too my chest and next thing you know clothes fly across the room, I am on top of her kissing her deep, we are both naked but I can tell she's tense.

Me: "You're not sure about this huh?"

Nelile: "I'm just...I...I'm nervous."

Me: "Don't be, I won't hurt you."

I kiss her neck going down to her nipples one after the other then go to her belly button while pulling her legs up and apart. My tongue comes into contact with her clit she arches her back giving me more access to her hotpot, I suck and lick all of her then try to finger her she moves back uncomfortable.

Me: "Relax for me nana ok....I promise it won't hurt."

I try to slide my finger in but she's too tight. So I stroke my dick and rub her clit with it and tease her hole again until she is so wet so I try to slide my dick in, it's proving to be difficult as well.

Me: "Are you still sealed baby?"

She bite her lower lip.

Me: "Talk to me.."

She nods looking so ashamed. I get up and pull her to my lap holding her tight. What are the odds of getting a virgin again? What are these ancestors playing at? Are they setting me up for another heartbreak? These questions are running wild in my head..

Me: "Why do you look ashamed?"

Nelile: "Maybe I will be boring, I am too old to be a virgin."

I smile and kiss her lips.

Me: "I'm proud of you for keeping your innocence up to this far and no you're not too old for keeping yourself pure until you feel ready."

Nelile: "I feel ready right now..."

She sleep on her back and she gives me access to all her body, I explore every part with my tongue and her moans drive me crazy. I finally position myself on her entrance and slowly thrust with only the tip of my dick she is moaning in pleasure then I push half of my dick in, she frowns biting her lower lip hard.

Me: "Relax okay, relax baby I'm almost there.."

She arches her back I push all of it in , she let out a loud moan out of pain.

Me: "Askies nana..ncese neh."(Sorry hey)

I move slow and gentle, she arches her back a lot and that is killing me because it takes me straight to her gspot where I find my own pleasure. I hit it so fast as I feel the pleasure building up...I groan quickly pulling out and cum right above her clit stroking my dick. I catch my breath then roll up a tissue next to us and wipe myself then wipe my sperms then her pussy gentle.

I kiss her lips and stare at her face, she covers her face giggling.

Me: "You're so beautiful.."

She is blushing.

Me: "I already know what the best part is when we get intimate."

Nelile: "What is it?"

Me: "You arching your back, gives me so much pleasure, I love it...I love seeing you doing it..angenelanga."(I didn't have enough of it)

I get on top of her and touch the right places again to get her in the mood then she gives me all of it again. I take her to the bathroom and we shower I am all over her, she is making me feel sane again, like I am human again and I don't feel like I am betraying the woman who gave me my whole world (Aisha) anymore, Sesona is still pretty much

in my heart but Nelile is in there too I tried fighting it but I'm here now, we're both here and I want to pursue this relationship and see where it takes us.

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CHAPTER 77

*

NELILE

*

I just woke up in the arms of the man I love, yes, I love him, if I didn't I wouldn't have given myself over to him last night, I let him work his magic on my body. The way he handled me made me fall deep in love with him, I don't wanna let go.

He opens his eyes and chuckle pulling me closer than I already am.

Bukhosi: "Morning nana." His voice is shallow and hoarse, it's like that when he wakes up.

I smile, he's been calling me like that ever since the saga that happened with that "secret admirer". That evening he was just different, more open about his pain, he shared how his girlfriend died and how he has been feeling. I got to know him on a deeper level.

Me: "Morning."

Bukhosi: "Are you still feeling sore down there?"

I nod.

Me: "Just a little."

Bukhosi: "What time is it? I don't want you to be late for work."

I am the only one waking up now since it's the holidays. He get on top of me and do things with his tongue, on my breast down to my belly button and eat me up in my pussy I am grabbing on the sheets as he gentle slides his dick in, I arche my back, he groans I think he likes it when I do that.

Bukhosi: "Fuck...Yes nana..give it to me."

When I arch my back again he put his hand under it and move faster, I am going crazy because there is something that he keeps poking with the tip of his penis.

Me: "Bukhosi...Aaaah baby...yes.."

I have no control of whatever comes out of my mouth right now, I'm in cloud nine! He hit it again repeatedly I let go sinking my nails on his back. He cums too and get up with me, just when I thought he is done, he pins me against the wall and make love to me all over again. Once we're done I rest my forehead on his shoulder feeling so tired. He kiss my neck and walk in the bathroom with me in his arms.

He switch the shower on and the water falls on my braids.

Me: "Baby..my hair!"

He smiles and pull me by my waist.

Bukhosi: "I will transfer money for your hair."

Me: "But it will take long for it to dry ."

Bukhosi: "Then I guess you're not going to work."

Me: "SisPhindy would kill me. I have clients who have my personal number they made appointments already, they are coming in around 11 am."

Bukhosi: "Then I will undo your braids, you will go to work after I'm done."

We take a shower then step out. I wrap a towel around my body and sit down on the carpet while he sits in bed and undo my braids. I wear a straw hat that SisPhindy bought when she bought a whole store for me.

Bukhosi drives me to work and walk me in so we can face Phindile together, Hloni and Khazii are with us sitting on the couches, Hloni is holding her

As soon as we walk in, she frowns and call us in her office.

Bukhosi: "Not today Phindile, not today satan I won't let you spoil my good mood."

SisPhindy: "What good mood Bukhosi, she's late!"

I sigh as they go back and forth, Bukhosi is not backing down today.

I just leave them arguing and start doing the first client's hair. Bukhosi walks out and kiss my cheek.

Bukhosi: "Call me, I am taking my girls out then we will go back home and watch cartoons."

Me: "Ok.."

He kiss my cheek again, I go to Khazii and kiss her lips, Hloni is holding her. I kiss my little sister too.

Me: "I will see you guys later."

They walk out, I do my work. My phone beeps after an hour Bukhosi left, it's a bank notification with a reference "Nana yami."

I smile until SisPhindy shouts my name.

Me: "Sisi."

SisPhindy: "Indoda le ekwenza ungezwa?"(Is it a man that makes you deaf?)

Me: "Indoda yani SisPhindy?(What man?)

She chuckles.

Me: "Can you do my hair please, I want you specifically."

She raise her eyebrow.

SisPhindy: "You know I don't come cheap baby because I make sure."

Me: "I know..."

She widens her eyes.

SisPhindy: "Did you finally say yes to Mr Ballito?"

I roll my eyes.

Me: "No.."

She pulls me to sit on a chair then do my hair, styled straight up cornrows , it's long and she's doing the lord's work in my head. After she's done doing my hair, she shape my eyebrows. I look beautiful man you can never go wrong with this hairstyle, I believe it suits everyone especially if you do have a hairline.

Me: "Thank you so much sis."

I transfer her money, she screams and pull me to her office closing it. We sit down and she is staring at me.

SisPhindy: "Spill ntombazane."(Girly)

Me: "Spill what?"

SisPhindy's: "Ubhontshisi!(Beans)

I laugh so hard, this woman is a mental case but I love her so much, behind that big personality is a very big heart.

SisPhindy: "Who is he? Is he treating you right? But honestly I would have preferred you end up with Bukhosi."

Me: "Aybooo why?"

SisPhindy: "He's a good boy, I trust him with you."

I smile looking down.

SisPhindy: "It's him isn't it?"

She screams coming to hug me around my shoulders.

SisPhindy: "It's him!"

She looks so happy.

SisPhindy: "I have been trying to make you see that you guys are meant to be together."

I laugh.

Me: "What makes you say that?"

SisPhindy: "The chemistry ever since you both walked through those doors, he pulled me to my office and asked that I look after you and he trusts me with you, he meant every word."

Me: "He did that?"

SisPhindy nods.

SisPhindy: "So tell me have you given up the honey pot?"

I know what she means so I just look away I gain another scream from her.

Me: "Uhm...can I ask you something?"

She nods.

Me: "I want birth control, I feel like getting pregnant now would mess things up, Khazimula is still young, she needs her father more in this tender age and I feel getting pregnant now would somehow ruin things."

She nods.

SisPhindy: "I hear you, Uhm..I can take you to my doctor today so he can give you options of different methods of prevention."

Me: "I would appreciate that."

SisPhindy: "I'm happy that you're thinking about baby Aisha too. Do you want to build a strong relationship with her?"

Me: "I love her, she's a beautiful baby but I will let Bukhosi decide if he wants us to have that kind of relationship, we already get along, I love having her around."

SisPhindy: "A man who is a single dad wants to see effort before he can allow you to be fully there in his baby's life."

I nod. She hold my hand tight.

SisPhindy: "That little girl have everything, her dad is giving her all the love you can imagine she just needs one thing from you, one thing her father can't give her, a mother's love."

I look down and nod, this is deep stuff, I never thought she could talk about things so serious. She cares about Bukhosi but who wouldn't, he is a kind hearted man.

SisPhindy: "Let's go see that doctor."

We go to her doctor, he starts by checking if I'm not pregnant and asked when I was sexually active so he gives me morning after pills then I chose an implant on my arm, a three year contraceptive then we go back to the Salon.

Me: "Can I go home SisPhindy, there is no work anymore."

She laughs.

SisPhindy: "Uzifunela Indoda wena."(You just want a man)

I laugh taking my bag and take a walk home. When I get there I find the three of them sleeping on the fluffy mat on the floor with a fleece over them, there are toys everywhere and plastic bags on the kitchen counter. I check what he bought, it's everything I use for Hloni's lunch box and some groceries and junk food.

I unpack then start cooking, they must have been playing for a while for them not to even hear me cooking in the kitchen. After I'm done cooking I take a shower and wear my shorts and a t-shirt he was wearing this morning, I guess now he is just wearing a hoodie with nothing underneath.

I am now bored so I dish up for all of us then make Porridge for Khazii. I shake Bukhosi first, he get up stretching himself.

Bukhosi: "Nana, you're back? I said I will fetch you. Umuhle kanjani."(you're so beautiful)

I smile and peck his lips.

Me: "Thank you, I cooked."

Bukhosi: "You cooked? How long was I sleeping? When did you come back."

I take Khazi who is awake because of her father's broad voice, he wakes Hloni up and we all sit down. I start by feeding Khazi then eat my own food.

Hloni go to her room, and we take Khazi with us because she's not asleep yet. She is sleeping between us she keeps looking from her dad to me.

Bukhosiv "Uzothanda izindaba maGumede."(You will be a gossip monger MaGumede.)

I laugh as baby Khazii makes a lot of baby noise.

She is actually sleepy but just doesn't wanna sleep.

Me: "Uhm.. SisPhindy and I went to a doctor today for birth control."

He is playing with my hand.

Bukhosi: "Oh.."

Me: "I took a three year contraceptive method, I got a loop on my arm."

Bukhosi: "Three years?"

I nod.

Me: "Yes, Aisha is still a baby she needs all the attention from her dad and I feel another sibling now will kinda shift the attention from her and I don't want that."

He nods.

Bukhosi: "I hear you."

I look at him. He seems like he is thinking.

Bukhosi: "I also feel like I now have a Phobia, I lost Sesona because I got her pregnant while she was already fighting her sickness of many years.. I don't want to lose you too."

He seems emotional now.

Me: You won't lose me, just that Aisha is still enough for now."

He smiles and pull me into his warm embrace.

Bukhosi: "I love you."

Hearing him saying those words for the first time makes me tear up, what have I done so right to deserve such a man?

Me: "I love you too."

His phone rings, he answers it and talk for a while then he get off bed and walk out of the bedroom leaving me wondering that maybe he has another woman, why did he feel the need to walk out. He comes back after a while and get on top of me.

Bukhosi: "Are you ok?"

I nod. He smiles.

Bukhosi: "Are you questioning my faithfulness?"

Me: "No."

Bukhosi: "Don't worry baby, one woman is enough for me, you're enough."

I melt under him as he gives me some good loving, I love his touch, his strokes and most of all his love, I have a feeling that he really loves me.

In the morning I wake up alone in bed, he comes out of a shower with a towel around his waist, I am staring at this walking and breathing piece of art, God really is creative.

Bukhosi: "Ay Sthandwa Sami, you're looking at me like you want to eat me for breakfast."

I blush as he step closer and remove his towel around his waist showing his already hard veins popping dick. He pulls me to the edge of the bed by my foot, I laugh. I am standing in front of him looking up at his handsome face. He moves his face closer I close my eyes expecting his lips but he swiftly turns me around and bend me over on the bed, I release an involuntary moan. He slides his dick from behind and start thrusting in a very slow pace. He push me down to lie flat on my tummy then continue to shove his dick in and out, I am moaning like crazy the pleasure is unexplainable.

Bukhosi: "I love you nana, I love you Sthandwa Sami."

He moves even faster I grab on the sheets tight as he goes hard.

Me: "B..khosi..baby..."

I moan out loud as I cum my knees are shaking, he groans loud and slam into me once more. I can feel his cum sliding down my inner thighs. He pulls me up and turn me around giving me a kiss that leaves me breathless I hold on to his shoulders, I want more of it but he steps back.

Bukhosi: "I have to go."

Me: "Go where? I'm not going to work today."

Bukhosi: "I have a very important meeting."

My mind takes me straight to the phone call he had last night, I look down..he probably have a lot of girls hitting on him maybe I won't be the only one.

Bukhosi: "Hey.."

His finger is under my chin as he peck my lips.

Bukhosi: "I can read your mind like, I'm not cheating Nana yami, you're enough for me."

I nod.

He wears his clothes.

Me: "You can leave Aisha here with me and Hloni."

He looks at me then shake his head.

Bukhosi: "Her grandma is expecting her."

Me: "Ok."

He sighs.

Bukhosi: "I don't mind leaving her with you baby, it's just that today they are expecting her honestly."

Me: "Why do I feel like you can read my mind Bukhosi?"

He chuckles.

Bukhosi: "I think we're meant to be together."

I laugh but he looks serious.

Bukhosi: "I'm not joking, you're making me feel things I can't explain. I won't lose a good thing just because I wanna look like a player out there, I value you, I appreciate you, you made me want to give love a second chance."

I hug him tight, then wake Aisha up which is something I don't like, I don't like disturbing a baby's nap, but I wanted to bath her even though Bukhosi said I didn't have to.

I bath her then help her wear her warm clothes. They walk out.

Hloni and I clean the house together then I teach her to cook, we are having a great day together.

Around 4 pm I hear a knock on the door, I should give Bukhosi a spare key so he won't have to knock when coming in, he is my man and is the reason why I have this beautiful apartment.

Me: "Baby..I.."

I stop talking when I see my mother standing next to Bukhosi, he is holding the bags.

Me: "Mama.."

Hloni: "Mama?"

She says standing next to me. Mom looks sober which is something I haven't seen for years now.

Me: "Ma wami?"

She opens her arms, Hloni and I hug her crying. After a while Bukhosi pulls me to him and wipe my tears, he has put the bags down.

Me: "How is she here?"

Bukhosi: "Last time we went to your house I left my number and told her to call me should she need help. Last night she called and told me she is ready to get help and I went to fetch her today."

I fall into his arms again, whoever sent this man my way, bless him or her!

Bukhosi: "Tomorrow she is going to rehab, she promised to fight baby and I will help her with everything because I know she means so much to you, the only parent you have left."

Me: "I don't even know what to say."

Bukhosi: "You don't have to say anything for I know what's in your heart right now."

I smile wiping my tears.

We walk in, Hloni is in mom's arms, this is the mother I know, who cared for us from day 1.

Bukhosi ask to speak to me outside.

Bukhosi: "I won't sleep here tonight to respect your mother, I will see you tomorrow morning when I drive her to rehab."

Me: "Gumede..."

I bow a little, he pat my shoulder.

Bukhosi: "Bless you."

We laugh as I jump into his arms and kiss him.

Me: "I love you B."

Bukhosi: "Love you too baby."

I watch as he drives away then walk in. I stop by the door when mom gives me a very sharp stare I look down.

Mama: "He's a good boy."

I nod.

Mama: "I'm proud of you Zenelile wami."

I smile and go join them on the couch, we talk about old times, I think we will get our mother back very soon.

The next day we say goodbye as Bukhosi is about to drive mom to rehab I'm happy she wants to do this.

Two weeks later, Bukhosi and I are still going strong but I didn't see much of him because he had to go home for holidays with Khazimula. Speaking of Khazimula, Bukhosi doesn't bring her over anymore when he comes here and it's upsetting because I have grown to love her so much even Hloni ask about her all the time.

We're in our room I am fixing his clothes in the closet, he has clothes here because when he sleeps over he usually has a bag with clothes and he leaves them here when I do laundry.

Bukhosi: "Nana.."

I look at him.

Bukhosi: "What's wrong? You look upset."

Me: "I'm not."

Bukhosi: "How are we going to fix things if you keep them from me Sthandwa Sami?"

I sit next to him, he takes my hand.

Me: "Where is Aisha?"

Bukhosi: "He is at home with mom and dad, they are around."

Me: "Did I do something to her that you didn't like?"

He frowns.

Bukhosi: "No, why?"

: "I noticed that you suddenly stopped coming over with her, you would rather call her nanny even when she's off if you want to come here. What did I do?"

He looks away.

Me: "What is it?"

Bukhosi: "I just realized that it was wrong to introduce my baby so early in our relationship, what if we break up? I will have to introduce her to another woman again, a woman that is not her mother."

I nod.

Me: "Ok.."

I get up and continue with what I'm doing."

Me: "It's upsetting that you already see our relationship failing and you moving on to another woman."

Bukhosi: "But people break up everyday."

Me: "Ok.."

I nod.

Bukhosi: "Why are you so upset Nelile?"

Me: "I'm over it, I'm not upset anymore, you can keep your daughter as far away from me as possible."

He widens his eyes.

Me: "Isn't that what you're saying? Keeping her away from me because we will break up and you will move on to another woman!"

Bukhosi: "Ok I think I should just go because I don't understand why you want to cling on my daughter, she's mine and mine alone! Her mother left her to me, only I can love her better, no one else!"

He says wearing his shoes, he storms out slamming the door shut leaving me jumping and blinking rapidly. Maybe I shouldn't have talked about him keeping his daughter away. We just met two minutes ago and now I am acting desperate to being a step mom.

I sit down and send a text to him "I'm sorry, please come back."

I wait for him to come back till I fall asleep. In the morning I wake up and look next to me, he is not there.

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CHAPTER 78

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NELILE

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I am not coping, things were going so well in our relationship with Bukhosi but now it looks like I have completely lost him, he doesn't call or even reply to my texts. When I tell you it's been a week since I last saw him you won't believe me, the day he slammed the door and left, he never called ever since.

I was wrong for mentioning his daughter, I am in a relationship with him and there's no need to involve his baby I guess.

It's Friday I just finished doing my last client's hair and it's already late, SisPhindy left the key so I can lock up.

I take my bag and step out locking the Salon then take a walk to my apartment, there's a car that keeps hooting but my mind is not here I don't even see a need to look behind. Now it is driving slowly next to me then it stops. That "secret admirer" is standing in front of me with a smile on his face.

"it's been a while."

I try to walk away but he blocks me, I am so tired.

"You hurt my feelings the last time baby."

I sigh, I am going through a lot right now, my boyfriend is ignoring me and I am tired from a long day at work so I don't need this so I just let the tears fall. He pulls me to his chest I don't even have the energy to push him away.

"Shhh it's ok.."

I slowly move away from him wiping my tears.

"If he is making you cry like this then he doesn't deserve you."

Me: "I have to go."

I try to walk away but he pulls me back and smash his lips on mine, I see a car next to his with the corner of my eye I quickly push him back. Bukhosi drives away in speed. I get to my apartment and he is parking there and opening the door for Hloni. She told me this morning that Bukhosi said he will fetch her and they will be going out with Khazii, so he does communicate with Hloni and let her see Khazii just not me.

Hloni runs inside I try to go to him but he just get in his car without saying a word. I rush to his window and bang it, he rolls it down and stare at me, I want to smile, I missed his handsome face but the look he is giving me scares me.

Me: "Hi."

He doesn't reply.

Me: "Be a man and just break up with me, don't ghost me, it's childish."

He opens his door I move away, he stands in front of me with his hands on his pockets, he is so intimidating right now.

Bukhosi: "It's over."

My heart almost stops, but I take it like a big girl and just nod.

Me: "Ok thank you."

I keep taking deep breath as I walk to my apartment, I don't want him to see me cry. But when I close the door that's where I fail and just sob sliding down the wall till I sit on the floor.

Hloni: "Sisi! Sisi why are you crying? Did someone hurt you?"

I try to keep it together but I am failing tears don't stop falling. I want to tell her to stop the phone call she is making but I have a lump in my throat.

Hloni: "Uncle.. please come back uNelly is crying."

I just sit there with my head buried on my thighs.

I hear the door opening but I don't even raise my head.

Bukhosi: "Why are crying in front of a child Nelile?"

Me: "Leave me alone wena."

I say without even looking at him, I have stopped crying.

Bukhosi: "What did you want me to say! I saw you kissing a man and then you asked me to break up with you!"

He is speaking through his teeth to avoid shouting because of Hloni.

Me: "He kissed me, he caught me off guard I was upset and crying I wasn't expecting what he did!"

I answer him with the same energy he is giving me.

Me: "It's been a week, I just wanted you to put me out of my misery, now get out!"

He doesn't say anything to me but talk to Hloni telling her I am just tired from work then he leaves.

I take a shower then sit in bed, Hloni joins me and we sleep together.

Me: "Did you see Khazii?"

She nods happily.

Hloni: "She is growing big and now she can laugh out loud when I play with her."

I nod, I miss the little girl so much.

Hloni: "Why is Uncle not coming here with her anymore?"

Me: "Uhm..she is always with her grandparents."

She nods. And we fall asleep.

*I am standing near the beach, it's peaceful here. I hear voice of a woman shouting my name. I look behind, there is a woman holding a baby, she is wearing all white her face is covered with something that looks like a veil.

"Come closer." She says and I can just tell she is smiling by just hearing her voice so I walk closer and take the baby that is covered by a white blanket. I remove the blanket and I smile when I see that the baby is Khazii I'm so happy that tears start rolling down my cheeks.

Me: "Hey baby, I missed you so much." She opens her eyes and giggles. When I look up the woman is not here.**

I sit up and look around, Hloni is sleeping and even snoring, maybe I miss Khazii that's why I just had a dream about her. I get off bed and go to the bathroom then go back to sleep because it's not even 12 am yet.

I wake up again when the same dream returns. I just decide to go sit at the kitchen and drink coffee thinking about Bukhosi, maybe I gave him my heart too soon, I shouldn't have fallen for him so early. I keep looking at my phone hoping it rings but it doesn't.

I wake up when a little hand touch my back I raise my head, I fell asleep in the kitchen with my head buried on a kitchen counter.

Hloni: "Sisi Uncle B called and told me he will come take me in 30 minutes, I already took a bath."

I nod. He is helping babysit Hloni since the school are closed and I am going to work, he offered to stay with her and bring her back later before our fight, he didn't stop even after that fight.

Her phone rings, she jumps happily taking her backpack.

Hloni: "He is here, come walk me out."

She hold my hand and pull me outside, he already opened the door for Hloni, she get in the he buckle put her seatbelt on, I can see Khazii on her carseat. I want to cry when he get in his car and drive away. I go back inside and get ready for work.

The whole day I am just doing my best not to break down in front of my clients.

SisPhindy: "Nelly."

I look at her, everyone is eating their lunch but I am not hungry so I just sit there quietly.

SisPhindy: "Are you ok sisi?"

I nod.

Me: "Yeah I'm fine."

SisPhindy: "But you have tears in your eyes."

I chuckle.

Me: "No I don't.."

SisPhindy: "Chwayiza phela ngibone."(Blink so I can see)

I just walk away going to her office and bury my head on the desk. She walk in and brush my back.

SisPhindy: "what's wrong baby? What happened?"

Me: "Bukhosi broke up with me."

SisPhindy: "He did what? For what?"

Me: "I guess he got what he wanted, to sleep with me then leave me."

SisPhindy clicks her tongue and call him.

SisPhindy: "Boy you better get here right now if you know what's good for you!"

She shouts and toss the phone on the table. She sit on her chair, she keeps tapping her heel in the floor clicking her tongue and chuckling.

After a few minutes Bukhosi walk in the room calmly and stop by the door, I'm no longer crying just looking down on the floor.

Bukhosi: "SisPhindy you called."

SisPhindy: "So you use people's kids for sex now?"

Bukhosi: "Who did I use?"

SisPhindy: "The girl has been crying because of you!"

Bukhosi: "So that means I am using her for sex Phindile?"

SisPhindy: "Uthi Phindile ngilingana nonyoko?"(You're saying Phindile am I your mother's peer?)

She screams looking so pissed. She get up and they are facing each other.

Bukhosi: "I'm sorry.."

SisPhindy: "You shouldn't have started anything with her if you gonna make her cry every fucken day! You don't do that to women Bukhosi."

She is disturbed by her phone ringing so she step out shouting at whoever is calling her. We are silent for a while until I get up and try to walk out but is blocking my way.

Me: "What did I do so wrong?"

He looks away.

Me: "I am sorry for talking about your child, I shouldn't have ok! I was in a relationship with you and it should have remained like that not involving Khazii, I'm sorry."

He is not saying anything.

Me: "It's funny how you told me you treated Sesona like an egg, you made sure you didn't do anything to hurt her yet with me you don't seem moved even by my tears, I am not trying to compare and I am not saying love me like you loved her but do consider my feelings, I am human too."

The door opens SisPhindy is back.

SisPhindy: "You need to solve this issue."

I shake my head.

Me: "There is nothing to solve SisPhindy, he doesn't love me, he was just testing if he can move on but he is failing, he is still hung up on the mother of his child, in his eyes no one can love him like she did, he was looking for her in me and when he didn't find her he left."

I stare at him.

Me: "I'm not Sesona, no one will ever be her, if you're searching for her I guess you will keep hurting different women, I hope it makes you feel and sleep better."

I walk out and grab my bag going home it's still early but I just want to be alone.

I lock the door and get in bed closing my eyes.

I wake up from the same dream, the woman keeps giving me Khazii and when I wake up I always miss her more, I am yearning to see her smile and it hurts.

I call my little sister and she answers the phone, there is so much noise where she is.

Hloni: "Sisi."

Me: "Hey, what's going on there?"

Hloni: "There is a braai celebrating the Triplets first birthday."

Me: "Oh..Uhm the triplets?"

Hloni: "Auntie Thingo's children, Shlangu, Sihle and Mthiya I met them today we are in their home here in Durban, akuve kumnandi I met the King and Queen."(It's so much fun.)

Me: "Ok that's great."

She drops the call, I wonder what he told his family about Hloni.

I cook food. Later I receive a call from an unsaved number.

Me: "Hello."

"Hi Nelile."

I widen my eyes, Bukhosi is calling.

"It's Makhosini, Bukhosi's twin brother."

I really thought it's him, their voices sound the same on the phone, it's shocking.

Me: "Oh..hi."

Makhosini: "I got your number from my brother, he is too drunk to make a call, I wanted to let you know we are keeping Hloni for the night if that's ok with you, she is having fun with her peers."

Me: "Oh..Uhm... that's okay, is she close?"

Makhosini: "Yes, Hloni woza nangu uNelly ocingweni."(Hloni come here's Nelly on the phone.)

He shouts and I smile, I guess they are all good people, why would they want to keep a child they don't know.

Hloni: "Sisi please say yes that I sleep over, I am having fun here."

Me: "It's okay, uziphathe kahle uyezwa ungaziphoxi."(Behave ok don't embarrass yourself.)

Hloni: "I won't Sisi."

I smile.

Me: "I love you."

Hloni: "I love you too."

They drop the call. I just sit there and think that if I was so petty I was also gonna stop Bukhosi from taking Hloni but I know that would hurt my little sister, he is so find of him and Khazii. Everytime I think of Khazii my heart hurts.

I call the number again.

"Hello."

My heart skips a beat but I quickly remember their voices sounds the same, it's not Bukhosi on the phone.

Me: "Uhm I'm sorry for bothering you, I want to ask where is Bukhosi?"

Makhosini: "He fell asleep after having a lot to drink."

Me: "And Aisha is she awake?"

Makhosini: "Yes."

Me: "I would like to see her please, if that's ok."

Makhosini: "But how?"

Me: "Uhm..I will call a cab to your location and you can tell Hloni to bring her to the car when I get there."

Makhosini: "Uhm...but why? Why do I feel like you're sneaking around?"

Me: "Uhm...I'm...I'm not it's ok if you can't do..."

He stops me by saying he will send his driver to pick me up I should send my location instead. I do that then quickly wear my tracksuits.

When the driver calls saying he is outside I run out and get in the car. I greet him and he drives off.

When we get to this huge house I ask him to stop by the gate and not drive in then call Makhosini again informing him I am here. I see him

coming with Hloni, he is the one holding baby Khazii. I can't help but step out of the car and meet them halfway. I greet then take her from him.

Me: "Khazii! I missed you so much."

I kiss her all over her face she is giggling none stop. I look at her, she stares at me for a while with a frown of her face then he starts making loud baby noise I laugh and pull her to my chest I thought she wanted to cry.

Me: "Why do I feel like you remember me?"

Hloni: "Sisi come in, Uncle Bukhosi was throwing up, he is sick. He kept asking for uNana wakhe."

I ignore her and focus on Khazii, Makhosini is busy apologizing on the phone a few feet away from us.

Me: "Goodnight ok."

I kiss her lips then kiss Hloni. I give the baby back to Makhosini. I bow my head a little.

Me: 'Ngiyabonga kakhulu.'"(Thank you so much."

Makhosini: "Ok, Kade igula Indoda yakho la.'"(Your man was sick here)

I widen my eyes, he just chuckles.

Makhosini: "We're Triplets, I can feel that you're the one he has been blabbering about in his drunk state, even Thingo can feel that should she come close to you."

Me: "Uhm.."

He smiles.

Makhosini: "Goodnight nana kaBukhosi. Jase, you can drive her back to her place, thank you."

I get in the car and he take me back to my place.

I get in bed and doze off.

In the morning I wake up without that dream about a woman giving me Khazimula.

Maybe I was indeed missing her that's why I kept dreaming of her.

In the afternoon I hear the key turning and Hloni walk in with Bukhosi behind her, his eyes are puffy and red like he didn't sleep, I guess it's the alcohol.

Hloni: "Sisi, SisThingo said I should give you this."

She gives me a lunchbox, I open it and there is a huge slice of cake, I am wondering how big it was to give me such a big slice.

Me: "Oh thank you so much."

Hloni: "I had so much fun sis I wish you did come in yesterday."

She runs to her room, I am holding my breath I didn't want Bukhosi to know, I shouldn't have involved the loud mouth in that plan to see Khazii yesterday.

Bukhosi: "You should have came in."

He says and lean on the wall crossing his legs then put his hands on his pocket.

Bukhosi: "You see my child behind my back now Nelile?"

Me: "I'm sorry, I kept dreaming about her and last night I didn't have that dream, Askies.."

He chuckles.

Me: "Sorry.."

Bukhosi: "Next time don't involve a child when you want to sneak around because you gonna teach her to lie."

I look down in guilt.

Me: "I won't do it again."

He removes his hands on his pocket and go sit on the barstool.

Bukhosi: "Uhm..my whole family loved Hloni and mom asked if they can take her to a family trip in two days, they will be going for the rest of the remaining holidays."

I nod.

Me: "If she wants to go then she..."

Hloni: "I do, Sisi please..I do."

Bukhosi: "You are eavesdropping on adults conversation Hloniphile?"

He yells and Hloni quickly apologies then close her bedroom door.

Me: "Do you think you're better?"

He glare at me.

Me: "You don't want me to see your child but you want me to allow Hloniphile to be around you and your family, is it because you're rich?"

Bukhosi: "What?"

Me: "You know, I changed my mind, she is not going to any trip."

Bukhosi: "Don't be petty, she's already excited about this."

Me: "The way I hate you right now Bukhosi if that kettle was close I was gonna boil water and pour it on your whole face."

He raise his eyebrow. I just click my tongue and walk away. His phone rings, he answers the call.

Bukhosi: "Hello.."

He quickly get up.

Bukhosi: "What's wrong with her? I'm on my way!"

He rush out.

Me: "What's wrong?"

I ask behind him.

Bukhosi: "My daughter..."

He get in his car and speed off and his car is out of sight in a second. I walk back in and walk around back and forth biting my nails praying that nothing is wrong with her.

After 30 minutes I can't hold myself anymore so I try to call Bukhosi but he doesn't pick up, I keep trying till I get tired. I try his brother and he picks up on the third ring.

Makhosini: "Hello."

Me: "Hey I'm sorry for bothering you, is Aisha ok?"

Makhosini: "Ey we don't know, we're at the hospital right now she was hysterical and turning red so she was rushed to the ER, they sedated her, she only slept for 10 minutes and she woke up again and started again now the doctors can't sedate her again.

Me: "Where is the hospital?"

He tells me the name of the private hospital in town. I call Hloni so we can leave. I lock then run down the stairs. We get in a local taxi then it takes us straight there, we told the taxi conductor where we're going so he shows us that we're already there.

I call and ask the floor number, we take a lift, when we step out of the lift I want earth to swallow me, there are a lot of faces here, faces that look so much alike, like someone has been reborn over and over girls

and boys they all look alike. I clear my throat and greet, Hloni runs to Makhosini's arms.

Me: "Uhm...where is she?"

He shows me the room close by I can hear the baby screaming lungs out.

Me: "Can I go? Can I go in?"

He nods. I slowly walk in there and there's his mom and dad there, another two couple that looks like their his parents age, the doctors and Bukhosi is holding his baby in his arms, his face is full of tears, Even his parents are emotional.

Me: "Bukhosi.."

Everyone turns to look at me, Khazii haven't stopped screaming.

Mee: "Can...can I hold her."

He shakes his head holding her closer to his chest.

Me: "Please just let me try..."

He keeps shaking his head tears streaming down his face, this sight breaks my heart so bad. I hold Khazii, he slowly let go then he scream with his forehead on the wall.

Me: "Khazii..."

She screams once then keeps quiet everyone is staring at me widening their eyes even Bukhosi turned.

Me: "Why are you crying Princess...what made Khazii so angry huh..."

I am taking off her clothes because she is wet with tears, saliva and sweat, I even take off her nappy and hold her naked like that walking around the room with her, she is only hiccuping now.

Bukhosi: "Khazimula.."

He wipes his tears off then walk closer to us.

Bukhosi: "Khazii waBaba. Come to daddy baby."

He takes her and she doesn't cry but just place her small little arms on her daddy's neck.

When everyone is excited and wanting to take turns holding her I just quietly exit the room and call Hloni.

Me: "We should go back home now."

She gives me a puppy look and hold Makhosini's hand.

Makhosini: "I will bring her back."

I nod and walk out taking a taxi back to my apartment, I thought I have seen Hloni getting along with Bukhosi but I think she is worse with Makhosini.

I sleep alone again today because Hloni slept over again.

I wake up to a knock, it's around 10 am I didn't go to work and SisPhindy knows I haven't been ok. I wear my gown then go open the door. I am shocked to see Bukhosi standing by my door holding a smiling Khazi on my door.

Bukhosi: "Hi."

Me: "Hi."

Bukhosi: "Uhm..they kept her for the night at the hospital then I went to fetch her today, I thought maybe you'd like to see her."

I look down and shake my head.

Me: "No."

Bukhosi: "Nelile, look I...I was.."

Me: "No Bukhosi, go."

Bukhosi: "But..."

Me: "Go, now."

The minute he turns Khazii starts crying, he looks back at me with pleading eyes. I slowly take Khazii who just hold on to my gown.

I sit on the couch with her and we start playing. I am ignoring Bukhosi who has his eyes on his face sniffing, he must have been so traumatized yesterday when he saw Khazii crying like that so I get why he is so emotional but it's not my place to comfort him.

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CHAPTER 79

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BUKHOSI

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Lord knows I am so ashamed right now, I can't even look her in the eye after the things I said to her, after breaking up with her, breaking her heart. I wasn't raised like that, mom and dad would be so disappointed should they hear what I did to this woman in front of me.

My daughter is fast asleep in her lap, sleeping on her tummy while she brushes her back slowly it must be so soothing because she fell asleep so fast when she did that.

Nelile: "She's sleeping, you can take her and leave."

Her face shows no emotions.

Me: "Nana..I want...."

Nelile: "Don't call me that."

I look down.

Me: "Ngiyakucela, ngicela ungilalele bandla."(Please, please listen to me.)

I plead with my hands joined together then go on my knees.

Me: "I hurt you and there is nothing that justifies that, Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu, ngicela ungixolele."(I'm really sorry, please forgive me.)

She shakes her head.

Nelile: "I want you to leave, take your daughter and leave please."

I have a lump in my throat. I slowly get up and carefully take Khazii from her.

Me: "Thank you for managing to calm her down yesterday, I am grateful for that I thought I was losing her too."

She just gives me a blank stare. I clear my throat.

Me: "Uhm..mom asked for your numbers, should I give them to her?"

She widens her eyes a little.

Nelile: "Yeah uh.. it's fine."

Me: "Nana.. please I want us to talk, can I come back again later.*"

Nelile: "No, I am going out."

My heart almost beat out of my chest.

Me: "Uhm..is it..is it with a man you were kissing?"

Nelile: "That shouldn't worry you."

I walk out shaking I almost miss a step. When she calls out my name I quickly turn to look at her.

Nelile: "You left your phone."

She shoves it in my pocket then walk up the stairs.

I get to Thingo's home where my whole family is and sit down without saying a word.

Makhosini: "I thought you gonna come back with Hloni."

I chuckle. He feels exactly how I feel about that little girl, she's so easy to love, a free spirited clever child, who wouldn't want that around them.

Thabsie: "You don't look ok."

I don't say anything.

Thabsie: "Uhm...Did Hloni's sister allow you to give me her number? I want her to join us for lunch today."

I nod and look at Makhosini, he gives mom her number, I know he has Nelile's number because they both went behind my back and showed each other my child and I'm ok with that now.

Mom walks out with a phone on her ear.

Dinner time mom's phone rings she get up cheerfully and rush to the door. She hugs Nelile for some time then Kiss her cheek then she moves to Hloni.

Thabsie: "Thank you for honoring my invitation.I don't know what you did yesterday to calm my grandchild down but I am grateful for it, thank you so much."

They hug again.

I look down as she settles on a seat in front of me, I can't keep eye contact with her at all.

She greets everyone very polite and respectfully. They tell her about the trip and that if she wants to tag along she can come and she tells them she still have to talk to her boss, they will be staying for two full weeks and a couple of days there so if she agrees without forgiving me that means I might lose her forever.

Later the family driver takes her back to her apartment. I leave Khazii sleeping with mom and take a leap of faith going there. I knock on the door for some time Hloni opens the door.

Me: "Hey Hloni, is your sister around?"

She looks back then nod.

Hloni: "She said if it's you I should tell you she's not here."

She whispers, I nod and walk in. I find Nelile sleeping in her bed with her phone on her hand. When she turns she looks at me with a face full of hate and I did all that.

Me: "Nana yami."

She's not moved, she just stares at me blankly and slowly sit up. I sit on the edge of the bed.

Me: "I want to explain myself Nana."

Nelile: "I don't wanna hear it."

I huff.

Me: "I was scared ok, I was scared that you will get close then one day you will leave me and Khazii picking up the pieces, I know it was wrong of me to be always thinking of the worst but you should understand where I am coming from. She went to the theatre room to give birth to our baby girl but she never made it out that's how quick you can lose a person you love."

I rub my knuckles.

Me: "I'm scared that I will lose you Nana."

Nelile: "Well you already lost me Bukhosi, you said it's over right in my face."

My heart is throbbing.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry)

She shakes her head and I love how she stands her ground even though it hurts I know I have to work hard to earn her trust again, to make her see the man she saw before, I have hurt her so bad and it's not fair so I understand her hostility against her. She felt like I used her for sex, I took her virginity and ghosted her and that's painful.

Me: "Uhm..you said you're going out."

She doesn't even look my way but just sleep back in bed. I get up and stand next to her I try to kiss her cheek but she moves her face away.

I walk out hurt and disappointed, maybe she doesn't love me anymore, but what we shared can't just vanish maybe she masked the love off with hate for the things I said to her.

I go back home and sleep next to my daughter.

**I am at the beach I can see Khazii and Nelile playing with sand I want to take Khazii and go home, I take a few steps until Sesona stands in front of me looking beautiful as hell in her white dress and a veil that is blown by the sea breeze.

Me: "Hey baby."

She chuckles.

Me: "It's getting cold I want to take my daughter and leave."

Sesona: "You can't take her she's happy there."

I look at her and Neli they are laughing their lungs out.

Sesona: "You're the only one that feels like it's cold but look around people are enjoying themselves."

I look around, I only see Neli and Khazii everywhere playing and laughing.

Sesona: "Don't deny our child happiness, don't deny yourself that."

Me: "You're my happiness."

She giggles and remove the veil from her face, I want to kiss her.

Sesona: "You see this veil? Ngishade nokufa kanti futhi ngijabule, ngikhululekile ngaloko."(I married death, I am happy I have made peace with it.)

I look at her with tears in my eyes she steps closer and put her hands on my cheeks.

Sesona: "Unconditional love is what you gave to me but I didn't die with it, it was left here in your heart don't be jealous with it, give it to someone who deserves it."

Nelile shouts my name, I look at her, she is holding Khazii in her arms, I look back at Sesona she is smiling so wide.

Nelile: "Come join us."

Sesona: "You are capable of loving someone else unconditionally."

Nelile: "Daddy.."

I smile as Khazii waves at me, I run to them and pull them into my arms laughing, when I look back Sesona bows her head with her hands joined together. I look back at Nelile and Khazii and we start playing together.**

I wake up from that long dream and sit up looking around. I take my phone and call Nelile but she's not answering, the time is 2 am but I want to speak to her. I keep trying until she answers the call.

Nelile: "Mmmm?"

Me: "Nana...Sthandwa sami I'm sorry, I'm so sorry please forgive me.."

The phone beeps, she dropped the call I can't stop the tears that roll down my face.

I still hurting holding on to the fear of losing Nelile too like I lost Sesona, I forgot to love and cherish her for that moment.

I call her again.

Nelile: "Bukhosi it's 2 am for fucks sake!"

Me: "I can't sleep Nana, I can't sleep I needs to see you, please.."

Nelile: "You are not gonna come and go as you please in my life Bukhosi, forget it!"

She drops the call and when I try to call again she already switched it off.

In the morning I bath my daughter and myself then we wear warm clothes going to see Nelile, they are probably packing for the trip, today they will sleep at a hotel the tomorrow they are leaving for Cape Town, mom is leaving with her daughters Thingo and Malaika and her daughters in-law together with all her grandchildren, now Hloni and Nelile are joining them.

I knock on the door she opens and Khazii clap her hands once and stretch her arms. Nelile smiles and take her, my own heart is smiling.

Nelile: "My baby girl..."

My daughter is laughing out loud as they walk away to the bedroom leaving me standing there alone not knowing if I should follow or not.

I finally find it in me to go to Where they are and stand by the door.

Nelile: "I strongly believe I have met your mom through my dreams baby girl, a woman in a white dress and a veil, I can't really see her face clearly but her voice is sweet, she always give you to me with an open heart, like she has so much trust in me with you."

She's rocking her back and forth I am just standing by the door listening. So she also dream about Sesona.

Nelile: "I'm scared of getting attached, your father might keep you away again and I will be left heart broken and missing you."

She kiss her forehead.

Nelile: "I want to love you.."

She chuckles.

Nelile: "I already do but..."

She looks up and see me standing there, she focus back on Khazii.

Nelile: "Is she also leaving for the trip?"

I smile seeing that she is making a conversation with me, that means a lot to me.

Me: "I am sceptical, I have never been away from her for long."

She nods.

Me: "But..Uhm... since you're also going, she can go with you guys."

Nelile: "Really?"

Her face lights up, I smile.

Me: "Yes."

Nelile: "Then let's go buy things she will need."

She says getting up with her carefully and walk out calling Hloni to wake up. She walks out rubbing her eyes still in her pyjamas.

Nelile: "Let's go..."

Hloni: "Go where, angigezanga nobuso Sisi."(I didn't even wash my face.)

Nelile is already out the door with Khazii in her arms.

Me: "Go wash your face and change, we will wait for you."

I open the car and buckle my daughter up, then Hloni. And when I try to fasten Nelile's seatbelt like I used to, she does it herself then look away, I thought we are getting somewhere but I guess this is just about Khazimula not me.

She takes everything Khazi will need, from bath soaps to Vaseline, baby oils, very expensive nappies which she already have at home but I won't say anything at all, I let her take clothes and we meet with my brother at the store, he is alone. We shoulder hug then he picks Hloni up.

Makhosini: "Ntombi encane."(little lady)

They hug each other excitedly.

Makhosini: "Sanibonani Nelile."(Greetings Nelile)

Nelly greets back and we continue with our shopping, Makhosini offers to buy clothes for Hloni they are holding hands talking and laughing like best friends.

We go back to the apartment together and Nelile starts cooking while Hloni fits her new clothes.

Hloni: "Thank you so much."

She hugs Makhosini, Nelile is multitasking, she is cooking and packing her clothes and Khazii's clothes in their purple suitcases she bought today.

Makhosini: "So you finally decided Khazii should go?"

I nod.

Me: "It will make Nelile happy."

He nods.

Makhosini: "Did you fix things?"

I shake my head.

Makhosini: "Why not?"

Me: "She's still hurt, I broke up with her for no reason at all, But I hope she will come around."

We eat the food Nelile cooked then Makhosini leaves with Hloni and her bags to the hotel they will sleep in. I drive Nelile and Khazimula there. They have their own hotel room, Khazi is sleeping so Nelly lay her in bed gentle and stand by the door holding it, waiting for me to walk out.

Me: "Uhm... please send me a lot of pictures of the activities you'll be doing there."

She nods.

Me: "I will see you guys when you come back."

Nelile: "Ok."

I kiss her lips but she push me away. I pull her waist and kiss her again, this time she allows me. She wraps her arms around my neck I lift her up and pin her on the door. She breaks the kiss while I was so enjoying it, she removes my hands from her ass and get off me. I am so hard I miss being buried deep in her.

Nelile: "Goodnight Bukhosi, we will call you before we leave."

I nod and fix my bulge, I see her staring down at my dick print, I try to walk out but she gentle pull my hand and pin me on the door kissing me hard, she takes off my t-shirt and unzips my pants so fast.

I Swiftly pick her up her dress rolls up I only move her panty to the side and slide in my dick her pussy grips on my dick I lose all my senses moving faster, she is also trying to meet my thrust.

Me: "I'm sorry for everything Sthandwa Sami... Please forgive me."

We are covered in sweat I remove her dress she is holding onto my shoulders for balance, I throw the dress across the room and continue with my not so gentle strokes, her pussy clench on my dick hard, she is cuming, there's a knock on the door and mom's voice calls out Nelile's name, she tries to push me away but I am so close to cuming so I don't stop till I cum.

Thabsie: "Nelile, are you in there."

She quickly get off me and rush to pick up her dress then run to the bathroom I hear the shower running. I fix my pants and open the door. Mom stares at me.

Me: "Mama...Uhm...Nelile is in the bathroom Uhm.... She'll be here shortly."

She squints her eyes I just chuckle looking down.

Thabsie: "What were you up to?"

Me: "Nothing mom, I was looking after Khazi while Nelile shower."

She doesn't believe me, so when Nelile step in the room with a towel wrapped around her body, she signals me to leave.

Me: "Uhm..Mama, I am leaving have a nice trip I love you guys and I will see you when you come back."

I kiss her cheek then walk out before she could say anything.

In the morning I wake up to my phone beeping none stop. I take it and check my WhatsApp, it's the pictures of Nelile with Khazi at the airport, they are both wearing pink tracksuits with white beanies, some of them Nelile is standing alone, but most of them she's holding

my daughter. I smile sending a message to her, "I miss your guys already, have fun I love you." I make their picture where they are kissing each other my profile picture and write the caption " Abantu bami."(My people) I think we will fix things eventually. She also change her profile picture putting Khazimula she is smiling with her eyes closed, she's in a trolley, my daughter looks so happy.

I wake up take a bath then get in my car driving home.

We are all alone as men no ladies around, we are cooking the sheep meat dad slaughtered for us.

Ngcebo: "How as everything been for you Gumede?"

I look at him, he is looking at me.

Me: "Oh I'm good I just dream of Sesona a lot lately and I think she visits Nelile's dream too."

He smiles nodding.

Ngcebo: "Ngakutshela ukuthi uzokuthanda nangale kwethuna, ukufunela okuhle Kodwa uze ungamphoxi."(I told you she will love you even in the after life, she wants only the best for you, don't disappoint her.)

I nod looking down.

Ngcebo: "Never allow fear to get in the way of your happiness, your daughter's happiness."

He chuckles.

Ngcebo: "Deep down you know she's in good hands that's why you're here having dinner with us without being on the phone all the time calling to check if she's ok."

Everyone laughs, that's what I do when she's not around but today it's different she's with Nelile.

Me: "But I am worried about one thing."

Ngcebo: "And that is?"

Me: "The Sondzaba's, they kind of hinted that they wouldn't want me to introduce a woman I'm with to Aisha because it will confuse her."

Nkosiyabo: "That child is a Gumede, we paid damages and if they want us to pay Lobola for her to be fully ours we will do that, if you feel it's right to introduce the woman in your life then you will do it, they can't interfere with that, yes we respect their wishes but they should also respect yours."

I nod. At least I have people in my corner who will always have my back now matter what...that's family.

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CHAPTER 80

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BUKHOSI

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Nelile really did send pictures of everything they did together with my daughter, I have never seen Khazimula so happy, Nelile told me she is even sitting on her own now without falling I am a happy father. One thing is troubling me though, Nelile only send pictures of them but never replies to my text, I confess my love for her and tell her I miss her but she ignores all that, maybe she just doesn't love me anymore.

They are coming back tomorrow, I miss my daughter so much but she's in good hands.

It's the day they are coming back I am so excited, my brothers and our dad are here we are standing outside the airport waiting. Everyone missed their partners Mathenyoka was worse he kept complaining everyday and we would laugh at him, we stayed together at home for the rest of the holidays even Malaika's husband was with us, dad Nqobasi as well because Tamia also left with mom.

Mom and Aunt Tamia step out first wheeling their suitcases laughing out loud, their husbands rush to them so fast leaving us laughing. Sboniso and Mathenyoka calmly walk up to their wives and pick them up spinning them around. Ngcebo and Wenzile the weird couple just clap hands first before they hug and kiss, I am just leaning on my car waiting for my babies turn. Hloni run out first calling Uncle M, Makhosini meet her half way and they hug she is laughing so loud as Makhosini spins her around.

I blink as my babies show up, they are smiling at each other, Khazimula's hand is on Nelile's cheek like they are communicating, she doesn't have their suitcases with them but a security is walking behind them wheeling them, She's just holding a teddy with her other hand while holding Aisha on her hip with the other. I slowly walk up to them.

Nelile: "Aisha look, here's daddy!"

My daughter claps her hands looking at me. I take her from Nelile then pull to my arms, we hug for some time not letting go until Khazi decides she's had enough and starts making noise.

Me: "You look so beautiful..both of you."

My daughter has two buns on her hair while Nelile has a new curled weave on, it suits her, she is glowing in those white high waist pants and a loose white top that shows off her figure so well.

Me: "You look so amazing."

She is blushing.

Me: "Can I kiss you, Please."

I don't wait for her to answer but just pull her chin and smooch her until everyone clears their throat.

Nelile: "Shit!"

She says in a low tone closing her eyes.

I look at everyone they are smiling looking our way.

Thabsie: "So this is the way you're introducing my future daughter in-law?"

I smile.

Me: "Yes ma'am."

They all laugh and we get in different cars and drive home. The house is full and we are having another braai at my father's house. I see a car parking in our yard, Mr and Mrs Sondzaba step out of the car, Nelile is sitting on a chair with Khazimula in her arms it's late but she doesn't wanna sleep.

Mom meet Mrs Sondzaba half way and they hug.

MrsSondzaba: "Where is the princess we missed her."

She looks around then her eyes stops at Nelile who has Aisha in her arms. I think she realizes who they are cause she slowly get up and give me the baby.

MrsSondzaba: "Hi."

Nelile nods looking down.

MrsSondzaba: "I don't think I have seen you here before."

Me: "Uhm... she's with me."

MrsSondzaba: "With you?"

Me: "Yes, She's my girlfriend."

MrsSondzaba: "What business does she have with Sesona's baby?"

Mom stares at her.

Nelile: "Uhm...I should get going now...I will call a cab."

Mom hold her hand.

Thabsie: "No, don't leave baby let's go dish up."

She follows mom, leaving MrsSondzaba staring at me, her husband is conversing with my dad.

MrsSondzaba: "I told you I don't have a problem with you moving on but don't involve my daughter's child in it."

Me: "And if I see a future with that woman? Obviously she will have a relationship with her."

MrsSondzaba: "No she won't because I will take my grandchild and she will live with me full time."

I look at her, I have so much respect for this woman I loved her daughter but now she is really trying me.

Me: "This child is a Gumede Incase you forgot, I signed her birth certificate so what rights do you think you have over her?"

Everyone is quiet now, looks like they are listening.

MrsSondzaba: "I will tell them you're not fit to be a parent, you're an alcoholic! I knew this day was gonna come, that night you kept blabbering about wanting your "Nana" I took a video of you throwing up and acting like a fool!"

I widen my eyes and slowly look up, Nelile and mom are standing by the door also listening in.

MrsSondzaba: "I have been watching you, you moved on so soon like my daughter didn't give up her life for you! She died because of you!"

She screams in my face, my daughter starts crying. Nelile put down the plates and rush to take her from me but the woman is so angry with that act.

MrsSondzaba: "Give me my granddaughter."

Nelile ignores her and walk inside with her.

MrSondzaba: "What is going on Love? Why are you shouting at the boy?"

MrsSondzaba: "He is introducing my grandchild to his hoes, the girl has no morals to move on with a man who recently lost a mother of his child!"

Me: "My hoes? I know you're not calling iSthandwa Sami a hoe."

She is so angry but I am even angrier.

Me: "That's my daughter and no matter what you do she will remain with me! Take me to court if you want and see if I care."

I walk inside and find Nelile hushing Khazimula.

Nelile: "She's sleeping, I am leaving."

Me: "Don't leave my love please, I'm sorry."

Nelile: "I don't want to cause trouble for you, I know these kind of battles hurt the child the most, if she takes you to court saying you're not fit to be a parent they might take Aisha away until the case is over and that's not what you want, I am leaving."

She gives me the baby but I follow her out. She stops in front of the Sondzaba's.

Nelile: "I crossed the line, I shouldn't have involved myself with Bukhosi's baby, I am just a girlfriend, I won't do it again please don't take him to court I will stay in my lane."

MrSondzaba looks so confused holding his angry wife.

Nelile: "Thank you for inviting me ma I enjoyed the trip, thank you so much you're all good people."

Mom ask Mondli to drive her to her place because she insists on leaving. They drive out and we see smoke from afar, Ngcebo grunts I almost drop my child.

Ngcebo: "Letha ingane Uhambe."(Give me the child and go.)

I give him my daughter then run out of the gate. I stop on my tracks when I see Mondli's car and another one crashed., It obviously was a collision.

Me: "Nelile...Baby.."

The smoke is too much I am coughing and there's a strong smell of petrol.

Me: "Nelile.."

I look at Mondli's car all the doors are opened and only Mondli is in there, he looks dizzy so I help him out.

Me: "Where is Nelile?"

He can't speak I think it's trauma. I run around calling Nelile's name.

Nelile: "I'm here.."

She says in a low voice I run to where she is, she is sitting on the ground she has no single scratch on her body..I hug her tight I am thinking of the worst, what if I lost her.

Me: "What happened baby?"

Nelile: "That car came out of nowhere and came straight to our direction, I promise you I dozed off for a minute and I had a dream of that woman who is wearing a veil telling me not to give up on my daughter, she kept repeating those words then I woke up to this."

Me: "She is stopping you from leaving Khazii..please don't leave her, don't leave us."

She looks at me with pitiful eyes.

Me: "Nelile please.."

She smiles.

Nelile: "I won't leave you."

Makhosini, dad and my other brothers call for help because the other driver was badly injured but Mondli is fine. I take Nelile to the apartment myself and we go to bed, I am not ok my whole body is trembling thinking about what would have happened to her if that was a big crash, I would have lost her.

Nelile: "Hey..."

I look at her.

Nelile: "I'm not gonna leave you, I'm not gonna die."

I hold her in my arms as I fail to control my tears.

Nelile: "It's ok baby, I love you and Aisha I am not going anywhere."

We fall asleep in each other's arms, I don't wanna let go.

In the morning I open my eyes and she is staring at me with a huge smile on her face then she starts singing "happy birthday baby" I look at her confused then it hits me, it's the Triplets birthday today but how did she know. I laugh as she starts doing the count..

Me: "I'm 17 baby stop."

She laughs and literally licks my face, she smells fresh like she just took a shower.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami.."

She takes off my t-shirt and get on top of me. She pulls down my shorts then starts kissing my lips while massaging my dick.

Me: "Baby.."

She goes to my neck then down to my torso, I grab on the cheeks when her moult covers my whole dick I have never been in this position before.

Me: "Fuck.. Nelly!"

She doesn't lose eye contact with me as she sucks my dick so good I am cussing and confessing all my sins even the ones I haven't done yet. When I'm so close she stops sucking me and get on top of me slowly and gentle inserting my dick on her tight pussy..it grips so fast and it clenches on my dick I grab her waist, her nipples are so erect the woman is a goddess, body and soul..I flip us over and place her legs on my shoulders.

Nelile: "Don't make love to me, just fuck me."

The rush I feel on my body as she finish off that sentence by licking her lips, I go totally insane having her in all positions by every minute that passes, I keep turning her around and her body allows it after a while she pins me on the bed with my hands above my head, my dick is still buried deep in her pussy.

Nelile: "Don't touch me.."

Me: "But...Nana...I want to..."

Her hands goes to both her nipples and she starts moving her waist I try to grab on her thigh she stops moving.

Me: "Ahhh Nelile..."

Nelile: "You don't listen baby.."

She turns around and her whole ass is right on my face, she starts twerking on y dick in reverse all I see is her ass bouncing a beautiful sight to see, I fail to control it my hand goes hard on her ass, she screams in total pleasure and give me a riding of a lifetime until we both reach our climax, we're sweating and breathing heavily..I pull her to me with her back arched and kiss her while her body is still in that position my dick is still deep in her after filling her up with cum, her body is so flexible I love it.

Me: "Thank you for such a great morning glory baby, it was really glorious."

She giggles and get off me, Get yourself a partner who will turn into a freak just for you, I know I am the first to hit it and no one else has hit it but she just became one hot freak for me today and hell I don't mind at all.

She get off bed and slowly bend over picking up the towel on the floor.

Me: "Are you tempting me Nana?"

She giggles and walk to the bathroom Oh hell I join her in there and we have a one steamy session with her back against the wall. I step out first then wear my shorts I want cold water from all that working out. I stop on my tracks when I see white rose petals right on the door leading to a picnic setup in the middle of the lounge, I pick up the card on the floor.

"I am changing the narrative, Indoda meyikunika kahle uthando uyayispoila."(When a man gives you enough love you spoil him)

I run my eyes in disbelief, when did she even do this, I know I am a deep sleeper but how..I pick up another card.."Happy birthday Sthandwa Sami)

I laugh happily, I have had birthday parties before with my brother and sister but this is insane. The other card is blank then there is a last one "You're probably asking why that card was blank huh? Well that's because I want us to start over clean like that blank chapter, remove all the wrongs we've done to each other, I love you.)

I cover my mouth, I have tears in my eyes man, no one has ever done something like this for me and I don't think anyone will ever!

Nelile: "Happy birthday baby."

She says coming in holding a bottle of champagne, she is wearing my t-shirt again and it's making her more sexier. I get up and hug her tight.

Me: "How did you do this?"

Nelile: "Your mom told us about your birthday while we were away on a trip so I bought everything day and came back prepared."

She wraps her arms around my neck and look into my eyes.

Nelile: "I know you love me and I appreciate you for that."

She kiss my lips, I am out for words. She pops the bottle of champagne and I give her our glasses she pours it then we click them.

Nelile: "To more years baby.."

Me: "More years loving you."

We have so much fun together for the whole morning, we are drinking champagne and eating then have a lot of sex if she wasn't on any prevention I was gonna give her maybe quadruplets.

After lunch, we take a cab home because mom called, we always celebrate our birthdays together as triplets. So we have lunch as a family and mom with her cakes like we are still toddlers, it's funny and fun.

Later we're now indoors with my whole family and there's a doorbell ringing and I happen to be sitting close to the door with Nelile and Khazii on a couch with me. I open the door, there's a man standing there holding a brown envelope.

Me: "Can I help you?"

"I am looking for Mr Bukhosi Gumede."

Me: "That's me."

"Please sign this sir, you've been served."

I sign then he walks away after giving me an envelope from Durban high court I stare at the papers, Mrs Linda Sondzaba is fighting me for Custody of Khazimula Aisha Gumede she has proof that I am unfit so I am summoned in court in two days to come conduct a DNA test first.

Me: "A fucken DNA test!?"

I am so angry my armpits are itchy. Dad rush to me and take the papers I hear him chuckling in disbelief.

Thabsie: "What's going on?"

Me: "Mrs Sondzaba is taking me to court, she wants to fight for Custody..she has proof that I am unfit to be my daughter's father."

My heart beat faster I can't control it, I just go on my knees, it hurts.

Nkosiyabo: "Bukhosi..hey don't let this get you down, we won't let anyone take our blood away son, No one will take your daughter away from you, not when I'm still alive."

Those words are supposed to make me feel better but I feel a sharp stab in my heart I groan and let go of my body closing my eyes.

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NELILE

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I am trying to hush a screaming baby as her father is taken away with a private ambulance to the hospital, he just fell on the ground after getting the summon to court, that's how much his daughter means to him, she is his life and that woman is hurting him beyond.

Ngcebo: "Hey..hey it's okay, he is gonna be fine stop crying, I think Khazimula can also feel your energy right now, try to be strong for her."

He wipes my tears.

Ngcebo: "He is gonna be fine, he will come back soon."

He takes us to Bukhosi's room after I have managed to calm Khazii down, we get in bed, I close my eyes and pray for him silently, I love that man and I don't want him to lose anything he loves and that's me, his family and most of all Khazimula.

In the morning I wake up and bath the baby then take a shower changing my t-shirt wearing my baby's t-shirt then walk out of the room I find the King cussing on the phone.

Nkosiyo: "Find the lawyer for what? That's my son's daughter and no one is taking her away from him! Ay Cha umthetho wenu niyanya vele."(you're really shitting on me.)

He's roaring like an animal I just stand there scared as hell looking at Khazi is my arms, she's just quiet staring at my face. He slowly turns and notice me there he just drops the call.

Nkosiyo: "Oh Nkosazana."(Princess)

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

His presence scares me.

Nkosiyo: "I am going to the hospital, maybe they will discharge him today he just had a shock and the doctors said it's nothing major."

I nod. His brothers leave with their dad I am left with his mother. We just had breakfast and I fed Khazii she is sleeping on the couch.

There is a knock on the door Mrs Gumede opens it and two male and two females walk in and sit on the couch saying they are Social workers from child welfare, They sure their licenses and Mrs Gumede confirms they are legit and they are here to take Khazimula until the Custody battle is over since they saw a video of Bukhosi in his drunk state.

Thabsie: "You can't take my granddaughter."

One of them get up and take Khazimula on the couch. I am in panic mode this will definitely kill uBukhosi.

Thabsie: "Ok if he's unfit my husband and I can take the baby home with us please, she is a sick child she can't stay away from home for too long."

They just up and leave just like that, Mrs Gumede takes her phone shaking trying to call her husband, tears are streaming down her cheeks.

Thabsie: "Baba kaUuka come home right now, they just took Khazimula."

I am looking down blaming myself for all this, I should have stayed away from Khazimula and had a relationship with Bukhosi far from her.

Me Gumede walk in with his sons with him, Makhosini is holding Bukhosi's arm for support, he is walking slowly. I get up and hug him tight.

Bukhosi: "Where is my daughter?"

I let go of him and look at his mother, she has tears in her eyes, we all know this might send him back to the hospital.

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CHAPTER 81

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NELILE

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Things are really critical with Bukhosi. When he heard about his daughter being taken away he was sent back to the ER and he had a heart attack and it's bad because he has been in a coma for the whole week. His father is going crazy calling everyone to help search for his granddaughter because no one knows where she was taken to and who is handling the case, he even threatened to kill Mrs Sondzaba and his wife stopped him.

I am in his ward there are still no changes in his condition, he is still not responding to anything. I feel a cold breeze in the room and it makes me shiver. Bukhosi starts breathing with his chest rising like he is drawing in oxygen then he falls back in bed and open his eyes.

Me: "Baby...hey you're awake...Doctor!"

I call out, he stares in one position.

Bukhosi: "Sesona.."

He says in a very low tone I look around and my heart almost stops when I see the woman I always dream off standing there, she looks upset today, she removes the veil I fell like I am in a dream I keep blinking to look if I'm seeing clearly, she's beautiful, she looks like an angel.

Bukhosi: "Sthandwa Sami.."

I see tears rolling down the corner of his eyes.

Sesona: "I gave you my daughter.."

She is looking my way.

Me: "I..."

Sesona: "I gave you my daughter, where is she?"

Me: "Your...your mother..."

I have heard about ghosts but I never really thought they exist..

Sesona: "You keep failing her I am starting to doubt you."

I look down as tears fill my eyes, it hurts hearing her say that because in my dreams she always give me her daughter with an open heart.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

Sesona: "There is a reason why I am giving you my daughter not anyone else! People change! I didn't die only for my daughter to be sold all because my parents went bankrupt because of my health! She shouldn't pay for that! I suffered enough."

Bukhosi starts convulsing and it's scaring the hell out of me I run out calling the doctors, they don't allow me back in the room. I run out of the hospital and cry at the man I don't even know at the parking lot begging him to take me to King Gumedede's house. He agrees and drives me there. I thank him and run inside I find everyone there like they are having a meeting. Nkosiyo quickly get up and rush to me.

Nkosiyo: "What is it? Is my son ok?"

Me: "No, Sesona...she said something about Khazi being sold, her parents are bankrupt from paying for her health, Aisha is not safe...she is not ok where ever she is."

Everyone looks at Ngcebo, he is staring in one position like he is seeing a ghost then he grunts loud, after a second he starts convulsing the same way Bukhosi did at the hospital, I just wail.

Me: "We need to find her!"

Nkosiyabo: "Kumkani.. Let's go, Mcebisi and you Makhosini stay with your brother and mother."

Me: "I'm coming with you."

Nkosiyabo: "No, stay here with your mother."

I shake my head.

Me: "I want to come with you, Please.."

I beg him till he agrees, We get in his car and it speeds off on the road, he doesn't even stop at the Robot. Kumkani step out of the car outside a huge gate then punch the buzzer so hard it breaks and the alarm inside go off. We see a man rushing towards the gate looking like he was asleep wearing a gown.

MrSondzaba: "Gumede? What is happening?"

Kumkani: "I want my daughter right now, you better open this gate."

He looks so confused.

MrSondzaba: "Your daughter?"

Kumkani: "Open this gate right now I won't repeat myself!"

His voice is bold and scary, I have never seen this side in any of them, they are always soft spoken.

The man tries to talk Kumkani takes out the gun on his waist I gasp silently, the man raises his hands up.

MrSondzaba: "I will open the gate."

He takes out the remote on his pocket and it slides open. I see a shadow just behind the house, I run there while they are still questioning Mr Sondzaba.

I find the woman just about to open the gate holding Khazimula in her arms with a bag on her shoulder.

Me: "Mama.."

She slowly turns and her face is full of anger.

MrsSondzaba: "Maybe you've always been there! Maybe you had a hand in my daughter's death! Moving on so fast is unacceptable!"

Me: "I wasn't with Bukhosi and I didn't even know who he was until I googled him."

Khazii starts crying so hard, I hear running footsteps.

Me: "Sesona told us your plan, you want to sell her daughter because you guys are bankrupt, why would you do that? Isn't she the only precious thing your daughter left so you can remember her with?"

MrSondzaba: "What is she talking about? Isn't Khazimula supposed to be at the children's home, how is she here?"

He looks very clueless staring at his wife with so much confusion.

MrsSondzaba: "My daughter was fine until that boy came into her life! He got her pregnant knowing very well she had health issues! Now I see my Sesona was just a vessel to carry his baby then he will take her and raise her with someone else, You! I won't allow that."

"Mama.."

I look around but I don't see her, I only can recognize the voice from my dreams.

"I gave them my blessings, at least they have good intentions about my daughter unlike you who only see her as a cash cow! Let her take her daughter!"

MrsSondzaba: "Her daughter? Her daughter Sesona?"

She keeps looking around and the child is still restless crying her lungs out in her arms as she keeps rocking her.

A light shines so bright in front of us it almost blinds our eyes.

Sesona: "Give my daughter to her mother, I gave her to her, Nelile is her mother now."

I am looking down thinking to myself how can a woman trust me so much with her daughter, what does she see in me to be worthy of raising a beautiful baby as Khazimula.

Me: "Why me?"

I ask looking at the light that shines so bright before my eyes.

Sesona: "Because you love my Bukhosi deeply, When my own life flashed before my eyes, you also showed up in a form of an angel and I knew then who you will be for my daughter and Bukhosi, you are the reason I am at peace, you being in his life brings me peace."

I wipe my tears, I am honoured.

Sesona: "A humble soul you are."

She is praising me and I don't even see what she sees in me.

Sesona: "Take your daughter and go back to your man, he wants to give up on life and it's not fair on your daughter to lose a father so soon."

I walk towards Mrs Sondzaba but she raise her hand up stopping me.

Me: "Please give me the baby."

Mrs Sondzaba: "Never! This is my granddaughter!"

MrSondzaba: "My love, this is our daughter's wish, you heard her voice, it's her please do this in her memory, she was a peaceful child."

MrsSondzaba: "No!"

I keep stepping closer then I manage to hold Khazi but she also doesn't let go, Aisha starts grasping for air like she is having a panic attack.

Me: "Baby...hey...I'm here ok..Mama please let go of the baby can't you see she's dying!"

I grab Khazi away from her by force and rush away with her, her husband stop her from coming after me. I get in the back of the car and calm my baby down by blowing some air on her face. She widens her eyes the minute she stops gasping then her face breaks into a beautiful smile I smile pulling her to my chest.

Me: "I will never fail you again Princess, I'll always be there, that's what your mother wants from me, to always be there."

The Gumede's get back in the car and drive to the hospital, they can't stop thanking me for saving their daughter.

I walk in Bukhosi's ward carrying Khazi in my arms, he is sleeping with an oxygen mask on, his family went to talk to a doctor and gave me and Khazi some space with him.

Me: "Baby.. Bukhosi..wake up..I miss you."

I see his eyelids moving a bit then he opens his charming lazy eyes I can't help but blush.

Me: "Sawubona Sthandwa Sami noKhazi."(Hello my love with Khazi)

He close his eyes and opens them again, I remove the oxygen mask, he looks my way and I see joy in his face as his daughter claps her hands once, she wants him to take her. I put her on the chair and help

her daddy sit up, they hug each other tight and it's a beautiful sight to see.

Her father and the brothers walk in and they are happy to see him awake and alive.

Nkosiyabo: "I raised warriors! All the boys and my only girl are undefeated strong warriors, I deserve some round of applause for this."

His sons starts clapping for him and we all laugh.

Nkosiyabo: "We owe you so much Nelile, thank you Nkosazana."

I smile as my baby holds my hand tight.

Bukhosi: "I love you and I will never ever take you for granted like I did before, I value you, you and Khazi are my life, all of you are.. Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

We leave him fighting the doctors because they didn't wanna discharge him yet to see if he's ok, he was so angry and wanted to go home with us right there but his father told him to calm the hell down and listen to doctors.

I go to my apartment with Khazi, the Gumedes allowed me.

I bath her then we go to bed.

In the morning I wake up and cook Porridge for us, Hloni stayed over at the Gumedes that's where she's mostly at these days, Makhosini drives her to school.

Just as I'm about to go back to bed with Khazi I hear a knock on the door. I open and find Bukhosi standing by the door with flowers in his hands I jump on him forgetting that he just came out from the hospital, I feel so emotional I hold him tight with my head buried on his neck.

Bukhosi: "It's ok Sthandwa Sam...I'm back now and I am not going anywhere."

I kiss him then I get off him picking my flowers on the floor because when I jumped on him he had to let go of them and hold me.

We sit on the couch, he is holding a sleeping Khazi and I am holding his arm, I just want to be close to him.

Bukhosi: "I want us to stay together now, you, Hloni and Khazi."

He says staring down at our daughter.

Bukhosi: "Life is too short, I have to start living and keep everything I love closer."

He dips his hand in the pocket and come back with a little red box, I widen my eyes..

Me: "This is not what I think it is."

He opens the box and yep! It's the ring! The most beautiful ring I have ever seen.

Bukhosi: "Will you marry me so we can raise our daughter and Hloni together."

I stare at the ring.

Bukhosi: "Please say yes my love, my heart chose you."

Me: "Yes."

He breaks into a beautiful smile, I give him my left hand, he slips the ring on my finger and this feels like a fairytale.

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you.)

Bukhosi: "Kubonga mina."(I thank you)

I take Khazi to bed then go back in the lounge, I sit on him riding him like my life depends on it, I live for his groans, the face he makes, the strokes from underneath, the confession of his undying love for me. As I put my hands on his strong shoulders I can't help but admire my ring, holding him like this with a ring on my finger feels so damn good. He kiss my cheek, I am still sitting on his dick we are naked and sweaty.

Bukhosi: "I love you Nelile."

Me: "I love you too baby."

Some may say it's too soon but I know he is what I always wished for in a man, a man who knows what he wants and not afraid to take it, he wants me and he is taking me making me his wife now that's something I Nelile should boost about. Who would have thought a girl like me would end up with a Prince. Indeed love knows no status.

CHAPTER 82

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MAKHOSINI

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I am smiling watching as my brother exchange his vows with Nelile, he told us first before he went to propose to her a month ago I am happy that he found a woman who is so humble and takes care of Khazimula as if she carried her in her womb, she loves her you can even see it in her eyes, that's her daughter the bond they share is so strong.

Nelile's mother is back from the rehab and we got to meet her before we went to pay Lobola and damages since Bukhosi. She wants to go back to stay at Umzinto and wants to take Hloni with her. Speaking of

Hloni, I have grown so attached to that little girl that I even feel like she is my own daughter I am even sad that she will leave soon, they were waiting for her to finish the year then go back to her previous school next year and now their mom will wait for Neli and Bukhosi to come back from their honeymoon

At the reception I am sitting opposite my girlfriend Zakhona, we've been together for a year now but I haven't introduced her to my family yet, it's actually the first time she's around my family today but I am not ready to introduce her as yet, I told them she's just a friend here, there are some habits she have that I wish she would some day change, I am not the controlling type but it becomes a problem when she would call me at 3 am to fetch her at the club, I don't even go to clubs but because she's my girlfriend and I want her safe all the time I go there and pick her up I don't talk about how much it is bothering me but I keep hoping as she grows up she will tone it down a bit.

Hloni comes and sit on my lap she looks so pretty in her white princess dress. I hug her.

Hloni: "I'm sad that I am leaving you in a two weeks."

Me: "I am sad too Princess."

She takes a deep sigh, I chuckle, a dramatic little girl she is.

Hloni: "I will miss you, Nelile always say you're spoiling me, who are you going to spoil when I leave?"

I laugh, she have a lot of questions.

Me: "You're my favorite girl I love spoiling you so I will visit often even when you're that side, I won't stop spoiling you."

Hloni: "I wish you are my dad."

My heart skips a beat when she says that.

She get up and walk away leaving me trying to figure out why do I feel so attached to her, I feel so sad that she's leaving.

Zakhona: "Baby..are you ok?"

I nod looking at her, she's beautiful and love looking nice, she's doing her final year.

After the reception We go for a photoshoot then I take Hloni and her mother to the apartment. Bukhosi and Nelile are going away for two weeks to their honeymoon.

I am home alone thinking about the statement Hloniphile made about wishing I was her dad, the feeling is mutual, I wish she is my daughter too I don't get how we got so close but she has become a very important part of my life these couple of months I've met her.

In the morning I wake up early and call her.

Hloni: "Hello Malume."

Me: "Hey can I speak to your mother?"

"Hello."

That's her mom on the line, I clear my throat.

Me: "Niyaphila ma?"(Are you good ma?)

"Siyaphila ninjani?"(We're well, how are you?)

Me: "I'm well thank you, Uhm..I am asking to come take Hloniphile so we can go out, there are a few things I want to buy for her."

"Oh, that's not a problem, you and your family have been taking care of my daughters and I am grateful for that."

I drop the call and get ready for our date with Hloni.

I drive there and find her already dressed, I hug her and open the car for her at the back then make sure she fasten her seatbelt.

I drive us to the mall and we go from shop to shop holding hands she is picking up everything she loves.

"Your daughter is beautiful."

Says a young cashier as I pay for Hloni's items.

Me: "Oh...uh...Uhm."

I don't know why this feels so awkward I should just say thank you. I look at Hloni next to me she is just looking down playing with my phone.

Me: "Uhm..thank you."

"What's her name?"

Me: "Hloniphile."

"Oh hey Phile."

The cashier waves her hand and Hloni looks up and smile waving back, I chuckle..the girl is pretty and so down to earth, a beautiful bright smile you can just tell she has a good heart.

I finish up paying then walk out, we start by putting our shopping bags in the car then we go grab lunch.

Me: "So are you happy about going back to Umzinto?"

She shakes her head and take a huge bite of her burger I give her the juice.

Me: "You will choke...slow down."

She drinks her juice then look down.

Hloni: "A lot of things have happened back home, Izingane bezingibiza ngengane yesidakwa ngiyazi basazoqhubeka."(People called me a drunkard's child I know they will continue.)

Me: "But what they are saying shouldn't take anything away from you, not your happiness or confidence, you're a beautiful and smart little girl, people always have something to say but you don't have to take it or even react to it. Anyone would be happy to have you as a daughter."

Hloni: "Including you?"

I smile.

Me: "Including me."

She smiles and continue to eat her food slowly this time.

After our lunch we go watch some movies then later drive home, she's tired, she fell asleep so I pick her up and take her inside in Thingo's bedroom. I go to my room and find Zakhona here snoring, she is in her panty and bra sleeping on top of the bed, she's drunk and the smell of alcohol here in my room is so strong I want to puke, that's something I don't even want to try out. I cover her body then go sleep in Bukhosi's room.

In the morning I wake up and go check on Hloni, she's still fast asleep I let her be and go make breakfast, Zakhona walk in wearing only my t-shirt, she looks sick.

Zakhona: "Morning baby."

Me: "Morning."

Zakhona: "What time did you come back yesterday?"

Me: "Early and I slept in Bukhosi's room."

She frowns.

Zakhona: "Why?"

Me: "You know I can't stand the smell of alcohol."

She rolls her eyes. I just continue making breakfast, once I'm done I dish up for her and give her the plate, I dish up for Hloni and I then cover her food she will eat when she wakes up. We eat in silence then she sit on my lap out of nowhere.

Zakhona: "I missed you yesterday."

She says dry humping me but I grab her waist making her stop moving.

Me: "We can't do this here, there's a child in this house."

Zakhona: "A child? Your brother's daughter is with you?"

Me: "No, Hloniphile is here."

She have met her a few times but I figured they just don't like each other because Hloni completely switch up when Zakhona is around ever since I left them alone once and went to the store I found Hloni upset but she didn't wanna tell me what's wrong.

Zakhona: "Why is that child always here with you? Doesn't she have a family?"

Me: "She does but I love spending time with her, also her sister is married to my brother doesn't that make her family?."

I don't get an answer from her.

Hloni walk in the room rubbing her eyes I swiftly move Zakhona away from me and get up.

Me: "Hey.. morning."

She looks around and frown looking at Zakhona.

Hloni: "Hi Auntie Zakhona."

Zakhona rolls her eyes and walk away without greeting the child back and that is very upsetting for me.

I take her food and make tea for her then leave her to eat going to my room.

Me: "Zah."

She looks at me.

Me: "Why didn't you greet back the child?"

She shrug her shoulders.

Zakhona: "Did you see how she looked at me when she walked in the room?"

Me: "What did you do to her the last time I left you guys together?"

Zakhona: "I didn't do anything I just told her she needs to know her place, I feel like I am competing with a child, she's always around, you take her out more than you do to me."

Me: "She's a child for heavens sake, what competition?"

She looks away.

Me: "She's 9 years old.."

Zakhona: "And you're not related to her so I don't understand all this attention she's getting from you."

Me: "You don't even need to understand that, it's not your business."

Zakhona: "It is my business if a little girl takes up all my man's time!"

I sigh, there is no winning with her when she raises her voice I can't do that, my voice can't argue for long because I stutter so I just leave her there going back to Hloni I find her kneeling on the chair washing the dishes on the sink I laugh and help her.

Me: "Why didn't you tell me Zakhona was rude to you the last time I left you with her?"

Hloni: "I don't want to be the reason old people fight."

Me: "You're too clever for your age."

Hloni: "I think it's better I stay home and not come here anymore I heard you shouting and arguing about me."

She get off the chair and walk away, I sigh and finish up the dishes. She comes back wearing some of her new clothes we bought yesterday and her bags

Hloni: "Please take me home."

Me: "Are you mad at me?"

She shakes her head.

Me: "I will talk to Zakhona and ask her to apologize for what she said to you."

Hloni: "An apology should come from the heart Uncle M, you can't force it out on people. Even if she does apologize it won't be genuine."

I am defeated, what kind of a 9 year old speak like that?

Hloni: "I won't be coming here anymore if it will make her happy and you guys stop fighting because of me."

My heart hurts hearing her say that.

Me: "Hloni come on, this is not Zakhona's house."

Zakhona walk in the room already with her arms folded.

Zakhona: "You should go home to your mother little girl."

Hloni: "Ok."

Me: "Zakhona, I told you this is a child! When you give her a bad attitude she will think that's the way to handle situations, she's young,

this is a learning stage for her and she will take all this nonsense of an attitude you have thinking it's right!"

I shout blinking rapidly I can't help it, that's what happens when I raise my voice, I stutter and have a hard time getting the words out of my mouth and I blink a lot because of frustration.

Hloni: "I don't want you to fight, I will leave and stay in my lane."

She slowly walk out, I shake my head and run after her.

Me: "Come get in the car Hloniphile."

Hloni: "I know how to take a taxi."

Me: "Get in the car right now! You've never acted like a spoilt brat all this time and you won't start that with me right now."

She comes back and get in the car. I drive her to Nelly's apartment. We find her mother cleaning the house I greet her and Hloni greets and go to her room closing it behind her.

Mama: "Looks like someone is upset, what happened?"

Me: "She doesn't get along with my girlfriend."

She widens her eyes.

Mama: "Oh that's unlike her to not get along with people, usually she act out if someone hurt her feelings first, she's not a bad child."

Me: "I know ma, I will try to talk to Zakhona so she can apologize to her."

She nods and offers me tea but I decline politely because I already had breakfast. I drive back home and find Zakhona already dressed.

Zakhona: "I should just get off the injection so I can give you the baby if you want a child so bad."

I chuckle going to my room and sleep in bed facing up. She walks in.

Zakhona: "Aren't you going to drive me home?"

Me: "No, you came here on your own."

She sighs and sit next to me.

Zakhona: "Why do you look so angry?"

Me: "I'm not angry, trust me you'd be long gone by now if I was angry."

Zakhona: "All because of that litt..."

Me: "Her name is Hloni..Hloniphile, you lack so much self esteem to even fight with a child, you're embarrassing yourself."

Zakhona: "That's not what I was doing, you're just exaggerating."

Me: "Ok."

Zakhona: "Ok..Uhm..I'm sorry for what I did to Hloni, I just hated the fact that you always cancel on me everytime something come up with her."

Me: "Her mom was in a rehab, her sister is working, my brother has a demanding course also there's Khazimula, I am free most of the time."

Zakhona: "Then why not spend that free time with me?"

I sigh, there's no winning here so I won't explain any further and look like a fool repeating the same shit over and over.

I ignore her ranting until she leaves me in peace and quiet.

Around 12 pm I try to call Hloni but her phone is off which is unlike her, if she's not at school she is always on her phone playing games so I don't get why is it off.

I drive to the apartment and find her playing a ball alone outside, the apartment is in a safe neighborhood.

Me: "Hi."

She just sit down holding her ball, I sit next to her.

Me: "I tried calling you."

She's just quiet and that's unlike her.

Me: "I'm sorry about Zakhona."

I see tears in her eyes and they roll down her cheeks.

I didn't think it was that deep.

Hloni: "I don't want to go back home, there are mean people like Zakhona there!"

My heart is breaking as she cries and even end up having hiccups from crying that hard.

Me: "You will visit me often."

Hloni: "I don't want to visit!"

She shouts getting up then run inside. I call Bukhosi still sitting outside.

Bukhosi: "Bafo."

Me: "Are you guys enjoying your honeymoon?"

He laughs, he sounds happy.

Bukhosi: "I want to stay here forever."

Me: "You wouldn't survive being away from me for long."

Bukhosi: "There's a new sheriff in town, my wife drives me crazy now, not you."

We laugh so hard, even Nelile is laughing.

Me: "Makoti wami."(My wife)

She giggles.

Nelile: "Bhuti."(Brother)

Me: "Unjani?"(Are you good?)

Nelile: "Yeah I'm good, you?"

Me: "I'm fine."

Bukhosi: "That's not convincing."

Me: "Uh... it's Hloni."

Nelile: "Is something wrong with her?"

Me: "She's been acting up ever since she heard that she's going back home and today she cried so hard about it."

Nelile: "So that's why her phone is off, I tried calling."

Me: "Yeah..and I feel like we shouldn't make her do something she doesn't wanna do."

Bukhosi: "What do you mean? Her mom is clean now, she wants to take her with, she's her daughter."

Me: "But that's not what the child wants Bukhosi and we might lose her if we really force her to go."

Bukhosi: "Is this about you or the child Makhosini?"

Me: "What do you mean by that?"

Bukhosi: "I have seen how attached you have been with Hloni, I think you're the one who doesn't want her to go."

Me: "She was crying! Did you hear that part?"

Bukhosi: "Ok don't shout, I understand what you're saying but don't you think she is just sad that she's leaving the people she found here,

and maybe that she will adjust to going back home like she did when she came here.”

I drop the call, looks like they don’t understand what I am saying. So I walk inside and find Nelile’s mom sitting on the couch drinking some tea.

Me: “Where is she?”

Mama: “In her room, she doesn’t want to talk.”

Me: “She said she doesn’t wanna go back to Umzinto and I think we shouldn’t force her to go.”

She frowns.

Mama: “So going back home with my daughter means I am forcing her to go?”

Me: “That’s not what I am saying but...”

Mama: “Or maybe just because I can’t afford all the fancy things you buy for her makes you a better choice for her?”

Now that feels like an attack.

Mama: “So you’re trying to buy my daughter’s love with all of this? You know she will choose all these flashy stuff because she’s just a child.”

I raise my eyebrow.

Mama: “I am going back home with my daughter, I am grateful for what you and your brother did but you can’t take away my daughter from me using money and expensive items.”

Me: “I will leave now, thank you.”

I always try to remove myself from situations where I feel attacked. I drive to my place and just chill alone watching soccer.

Two weeks later, my brother and Nelile are back from their honeymoon, they are glowing and they went straight home to fetch Khazimula and today they are coming back. I have decided to step back from the Hloni situation because my intentions are questioned by her mother so I haven't seen her in two weeks, I don't call and neither does she and I think it's better that way, maybe now she will be fine with leaving.

My phone rings, it's Bukhosi.

Me: "Hello."

Bukhosi: "We are back from home and at the apartment, Hloni and her mother are leaving, don't you want to say goodbye?"

Me: "No, I'd rather not."

Bukhosi: "Makhosini..."

Me: "I'm not coming, you can go."

I drop the call and close my eyes, I think it's better I don't even show face there, I am still sad that she's leaving so I don't wanna see her leave, I don't even know what I was thinking getting attached to some stranger's child like that, I have attachment issues for sure!

My name is Prince Makhosini Gumede, the almost last born until the grand entrance of Princess ThingolamaQwabe Gumede. I am identical to my brother Bukhosi but I am sure our journey in this life will never be the same that's why I am telling my side of the story.

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CHAPTER 83

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MAKHOSINI

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I have been having sleepless nights since the day Hloni left, I regret not going to say goodbye to her now she probably hates me. It's 9pm and I am alone in this house, Nelile and Bukhosi are staying at her apartment, they have already found a site since they want to build their dream house from scratch, Thingo and Mathenyoka will be helping them with that.

I am looking at the pictures of Hloni on my phone, she loved taking selfies with it, my phone is full of her photos, I smile shaking my head at the video she forced me into doing these new trends dance moves she started by teaching me but I still sucked at it, I am what you call ibhimbi, I am always out of tune whether it's singing or dancing, so sometimes she would become so frustrated with me when I don't get it right, I really miss her.

I dial her number and call her, it rings unanswered for a while I keep trying then I hear her sweet little voice saying "Hello". I can't help but smile.

Me: "Hloni, hey sweetheart how are you?"

Hloni: "Who's this?"

I feel a stab in my heart.

Me: "Uhm...so you don't have my number anymore? You don't even recognize my voice?"

I hear the beep sound, she dropped the call on me, I get up and drink some water, I didn't think it would come to her deleting my number.

Just when I'm about to go to my room I hear a loud bang on the door then Zakhona's voice shouting "baby!" I sigh opening the door. She's so drunk she was wearing white pants and now they are brown from the dust it's like the girl was crawling.

Me: "I hate what you're doing Zah, I have told you countless times that if you wanna get drunk you can do that but don't let it affect my peace! Stay in that club or go home this is fucken disrespectful, this is my father's house."

I shout stuttering and she puts me off by laughing so hard at me. I grab my keys and her hand and drag her to my car throwing her at the backseat then drive her home, she lives with her mom and dad that's why she always want to end up in my father's house when drunk to run away from her parents but today I am dragging her there. I don't know them I have never met them and I don't even wish to while their daughter is still behaving like that. I hit the buzzer at the gate and when it slides open I get off my car and get her out of my car pushing her inside her gate then drive away going back home, I am not in the mood today definitely not for a drunk woman.

I go to bed and try to get some sleep which is a struggle.

In the morning I wake and go for a jog for almost an hour then go back home. I call Bukhosi while I drink water.

Bukhosi: "Bafo.."

Me: "Hi, you good?"

Bukhosi: "Yeah you?"

Me: "I'm fine, Uhm..is Hloni ok I tried calling but she's not answering my calls."

Bukhosi: "We called her mom and she said she's ok just have been sulking."

I sigh.

Me: "Ok."

Bukhosi: "Why don't you go and see her Makhosini?"

Me: "No."

I go take a bath then drive to the mall to have breakfast, But I start at the store where we usually buy clothes for Hloni because I saw a summer dress I know she'd love it.

I look at her favourite colour purple and I can't find it so I greet the girl that is close to me packing clothes in the shelves.

Me: "Hi."

She turns with a huge smile on her face.

"Oh hi baba kaPhile."

I raise my eyebrow and quickly remember the cashier that said my daughter is beautiful, I smile awkwardly.

Me: "Oh hey..Uhm..I want to know if you have purple on these dresses."

She rush to look at the dresses for me then sigh.

"Unfortunately we don't have that colour anymore sir I'm sorry."

I nod disappointed but then again I remember that "daughter" wants nothing to do with me and she's actually not my daughter.

"Uhm..I can help you look for something else that she may like."

I shake my head.

Me: "No it's fine, I'm just gonna go."

She nods looking disappointed. I walk out of the store and order my breakfast then sit down. I can't really eat I keep playing with the food in front of me.

Someone is standing in front of me I look up it's the Cashier, she is carrying a plastic bag from a different store from the one she is working at.

Me: "Can I help you?"

She takes out the dress and shows it to me.

"I went to another store and asked if they have the colour you wanted and I found it, I saw you walking in here, I am not stalking you at all."

I widen my eyes.

Me: "Really?"

She smiles and nod putting it back in the plastic.

"I really hope she is around 8 and 9 years old, I was just guessing her age."

I smile.

Me: "She's 9 years old."

"Oh really? I have a 7 year old boy."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "You look around 21 or 22 years so how old were you when you had your baby?"

I see her face changing, I think I offended her with that question.

Me: "Uhm...I'm sorry..sorry about that."

She nods and give me the plastic, she's smiling again now.

"I hope your daughter likes the dress."

She tries to walk away but I get up and stop her.

Me: "Why aren't you asking for your money?"

She laughs.

"You were quiet about it, and that was my lunch and transport money."

Me: "So you were willing to go hungry and walk by foot because you were afraid to ask for your money?"

She look down smiling.

"I was gonna borrow it."

I take out my wallet and take out R300 giving it to her.

"Uhm...the dress is R180 sir."

Me: "Your lunch is on me, thank you."

She nods and take the money.

"Thank you."

She walks away.

Me: "Hey..I didn't catch your name."

She doesn't hear me until she disappears from my eyes. I sigh and finish up my food, I feel a bit better now.

I get in my car and take a different route home because there is morning traffic where I usually drive, I am driving in the fast lane but I see a car driving behind me it keeps hooting so I move my car driving to the side thinking maybe he is rushing somewhere, his car moves so fast and it hits my drivers side making mine move out of the road completely luckily I manage to stop the car and step out of my car angry as hell. Three guys step out of that car and walk up to me, they look ready to fight and I don't understand because they are at fault. Another car stops behind us and two guys step out, looks like they are together.

"Remove the number plate now!"

One of them shouts, I am so confused, am I getting hijacked on a such a busy road? I grab the guy who is busy with my car, they all come at me I am outnumbered they even have knives, I feel a stab on my

shoulder then another stab right below my belly button I am sure it even messed up my bladder, And shockingly I am still standing I manage to grab a knife from the guy holding me from behind, I stab the one in front of me straight on his face. One of them stab me on my chest I breathe out loud once as the pain shoots all over my body they let go of me as I go down on the ground with so much force. I am still breathing I can hear sirens and people talking around me but I can't seem to open my eyes.

"This is the Prince! This is King Nkosiyo's son!"

Someone screams and I feel like telling her to stop shouting.

I open my eyes and I am in a white room, there is a machine beeping next to me, I keep moving my eyes around and I conclude that I am at the hospital but I don't really know why.

I see my Mother and father walking in the room, my brothers and Thingo follow, they look devastated.

Thabsie: "Nkosi.. she's awake! My son is awake."

She holds my hand.

Nkosiyo: "Kumkani, go call the doctor."

I try to move but feel so much pain I groan.

Me: "What... happened to me?"

They all look at me confused.

Thingo: "Makhosini, you don't remember what happened to you?"

I shake my head.

Thingo: "You were hijacked a week ago, they stabbed you and took your car."

I really don't remember that.

Ngcebo: "I tried calling you that morning to warn you about the route you were going to take but your phone wasn't going through, When I got here it was too late, you were already taken to the hospital."

I slowly nod.

Mcebisi: "Do you even know who we are if you don't remember something that happened a week ago?"

Kumkani comes back with the doctor.

Me: "How can I forget my family?"

They all have smiles on their faces.

"Welcome back Mr Gumede, we almost lost you when you slipped in a coma the day you were admitted here."

Me: "I wasn't gonna give up like that, I have kids."

Everyone stares at me.

Me: "What is it? Was I with them in the car?"

Nkosiyo: "Makhosini, you don't have kids."

I laugh but stop when pain hits my chest.

Me: "Baba what do you mean?"

They all laugh but I don't get it.

Kumkani: "You almost got us there little bro."

Me: "Kumkani I am not joking, where is my daughter and my son?"

Bukhosi: "He is not joking, look at that frown on his face, he's serious."

Nkosiyo: "Serious how Bukhosi, your brother doesn't have any daughter nor son."

Me: "So I am crazy baba?"

Nkosiyo: "No, that's not what I am saying but..."

Bukhosi: "Tell us your children's names?"

I try to remember their names but nothing, I feel like a fool right now, how can I not remember my children's names?

Nkosiyo: "Doctor, what is going on?"

The doctor looks just as confused.

"The only explanation to this is that maybe before the incident he pictured himself as a family man with two kids, I don't know if I should call it amnesia or what but we will get him checked out."

They keep talking but all I am thinking about are my two children, where are they? Is it possible that I am going crazy making things up in my head.

Me: "Bukhosi..."

He looks my way.

Me: "Do I at least have a girlfriend you know off?"

Bukhosi: "Zakhona but you introduced her as a friend."

The name does ring a bell.

Me: "She doesn't have any babies?"

He shakes his head.

Bukhosi: "No."

Me: "And she's the only girlfriend I have?"

He nods.

Me: "Then I am going crazy for real."

I close my eyes and try to think of any memories I have with my kids but I don't have any but I just know they are there.

Later my family leaves promising to come back tomorrow, they stayed with me the whole day asking me questions about our family and I answer all of them, they are really worried about me.

In the morning I wake up feeling so much pain in my bladder I try to sit up but I can't so I just lay there looking up. I hear the door opening, Zakhona step in, I remember her now that I see her, she is my girlfriend but I know she is not the mother of my two kids, but what kids? Nobody from my family knows about any of my children.

Zakhona: "Baby, I heard on the news and I contacted your brother, I'm so sorry for what those monsters did you you!"

She is crying.

Zakhona: "How are you feeling?"

Me: "I'm in pain, get me a doctor."

She walks out and minutes later she comes back with a doctor, he gives me something for the pain and check my stitches out then walk out.

My family comes in and Zakhona leaves saying she is rushing somewhere, she must have been uncomfortable being around so many people.

Bukhosi: "How is the pain?"

Me: "The doctor gave me something for it."

He nods.

Nkosiyo: "Your car was recovered and three guys have been arrested, they were behind your hijacking but I don't want them behind bars, I want them dead."

I know he means it, I can see anger in his eyes, we are the younger versions of him after all.

Nkosiyo: "I went with the police where they recovered your car and I got this inside it."

He gives me a plastic bag, I open it and see a little purple dress, I smile.

Me: "See I told you! I must have bought this dress for my daughter!"

I am so happy, I am not crazy after all, this is a little girl's dress, it must be my little girl's, who else?

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CHAPTER 84

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MAKHOSINI

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Apparently when I was in a coma I had a dream of having a family of my own, I dreamt of a baby girl and a boy, none of it is real I don't have any children, it's sinking in now even though I had hoped to see my children and their mom walk through those doors but it's not real, I was dreaming while in a coma that what made it feel real when I woke up, it was a long dream I guess for me to even feel that it's real. My psychologist is really helping me out after a week of hoping my children walk in dad saw it best I see a psychologist that's where we figured out that it was all a dream, it happens to a lot of people some even wake up from the coma with different accents, languages they've never spoke before I was shocked to hear this, it was new to me, we learn everyday.

Now I can move on with my life. I am still at the hospital. The first time I used the bathroom I peed blood I was so traumatized, those people messed me up real bad but the second time I went to pee there was just a little bit of blood there and eventually it was all clear, I was stabbed just bellow the bladder the doctor said it did affect some nerves but hopefully I will recover soon.

Dad is fetching me today, it has been depressing being here, I want to go out there and live my not so outgoing life in peace, I love it that way.

Mom hugs me tight the minute I walk through the door, she only stops when I groan from the pain I feel on my chest.

Nkosiyabo: "Mamabo go easy on him, the doctor said we still need to look after those wounds."

Thabsie: "I'm sorry, it's just that I hate seeing any of my children in pain, it's not right, we went through hell for all of them, From Kumkani, to the twins and the triplets it wasn't easy and people just think it's okay to hurt my children!"

She is now shouting with tears streaming down her cheeks, dad pulls her into his arms we all group hug she end up laughing happily, having a lot of children isn't a bad thing, I have seen how much support we have for each other, it makes it easier if it comes from so many people, I love my siblings.

I walk in my room and notice that there are some books in my dressing table, I take them and they all have purple covers outside, I collect them and walk out.

Me: "Who does these things belong to?"

Bukhosi: "Uhm..my wife's little sister Hloni."

Me: "Hloni?"

The name does ring a bell but I notice that it makes me feel sad.

Me: "Where is she?"

Bukhosi: "She went home, she was always around, you guys were super close."

Me: "Is it possible to talk to her?"

He nods and take out his phone.

Bukhosi: "Hello ma, is Hloni around?"

"Yes she's here, Hloni!"

A woman speaks on the line,

"Hello." I hear a little girl's voice I am sure I have heard it before, this is my daughter's voice, Was I dreaming of this Hloni as my daughter since my psychologist told me I was dreaming? I clear my throat as Bukhosi walks out where my family is doing a braai outside, I am alone in my room sitting in bed with her books on my hands.

Me: "Hi Hloni."

Hloni: "Uncle M.. You're back home I saw the accident and I was so scared, are you hurt?"

She's crying and that warms my heart.

Me: "I'm healing."

She starts sobbing.

Me: "What's wrong?"

She doesn't wanna say anything but just continue to cry. I rush out going to Bukhosi.

: "Uhm...do you know where her home is?"

He nods.

Me: "Can you take me there? Something is wrong with her I can feel it."

He sighs and nod taking the keys inside.

He goes to his wife who is playing with their daughter on the porch swing. They kiss then and talk for a while, I see her getting up but he gentle help her sit back down I can't really hear them because I am a bit far from them. He finally gets in the car, I get in the passenger seat.

We reach this house and there is noise inside, Bukhosi frowns and quickly step out of the car. I follow him as he barge in the room. I stand next to him he looks angry the house is full of drunk men and women.

Bukhosi: "So you went back to drinking huh?"

"No, I am only selling it now believe me, It's the only way I can take care of my daughter."

The music is so loud but there is a scream I hear, I don't know if it's just me.

I walk out and look around, there is a door of the outside bedroom I believe I walk there slowly and try to push the door open but it seems locked from the inside, now the scream sounds pretty close, it's inside. I sweat immediately and bang the door.

Me: 'Hloni!"

I kick the door countless times I feel the stitches on my lower part breaking but I don't stop even when I feel the wetness of blood. I kick it one more time it swings open and I find the little girl naked in bed and a man with his pants right on his knees, I ignore all the pain I feel in my body and jump on him pushing him against the wall, I use everything, my forehead to bump his face, blood oozes from his nose, I beat him up so bad that the only thing he does once I'm done with

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him is groan like a wounded cat. Bukhosi is here now and everyone else, the music has stopped playing. I get up and look at Hloni people are just staring in shock even her so called "mother" I look around the room and notice the suitcases I bought for her, I remember her now and everything we did together. I grab it and open it up. I gently help her wear her clothes, she's not sobbing or anything just tears streaming down her cheeks, I clench my jaws the pain is getting too much.

Me: "Bukhosi, help me with her bags and take them to the car."

"Where are you taking my daughter?"

I chuckle.

Me: "You don't want me to tell you shit woman so you better not do that with me right now, I will fuck you up with all these drunkards you're with!"

She tries to stop Bukhosi with the bags on the door.

Bukhosi: "Right now I am trying so hard to keep it together because you're my mother in law but if you keep making this hard you will end up in jail with your boyfriend!"

He pushes her out of the way and walks out with the bags. I slowly get up and pull Hloni up and hold her in my arms and it is making the pain worse. I limp all the way to the car, I am losing so much blood.

Me: "You need to drive to the nearest hospital bafo."

I say almost out of breath, I already put Hloni inside the car.

Bukhosi: "Are you hurt? I called the police they should be here now to take a statement."

Me: "My stitches opened up."

He widens his eyes and stares down at my torso, I am wearing blue jeans and a white t-shirt so blood is visible.

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Bukhosi: "Oh my God! I...ok..Uhm..Yhoo."

He is panicking.

Me: "Call an ambulance instead, they will do everything here if they agree."

He nods and make a call.

The police arrive first and take a statement, I tell them everything I saw and did, I am not ashamed that I beat him up, I should have killed him. Hloni tries to tell them what happened but she is not ok so I ask them to give her some time.

The ambulance arrive and I ask them to at least stitch me up right here and luckily they recognize me and my brother so they do everything peacefully without any drama. The man is awake now and in his bad state the police take him away. I get in next to Hloni at the back, she moves closer to me I hold her closing my eyes, at least I was given something for the pain, I will take Hloni to a private doctor once we get to Durban but I believe he didn't get the chance to rape her, I want to believe I got there at the right time and saved her. She fall asleep along the way. We start at home so I can change, Nelile is losing it when she hears what happened.

Nelile: "I will kill that stickx! I will kill him!"

Bukhosi calms her down as she breaks down.

Bukhosi and I take Hloni to a doctor after I took a bath and changed my clothes. Luckily I did get there in time as the doctor reports back, there is no sign of penetration however she does have bruises on her body, some are dark marks that means it wasn't just today but this started probably the day she left and I am so angry that I let her go and wasn't even in contact with her, she would have trusted me enough to tell me she's not ok there.

We take pictures of her bruises as evidence and take the copy of the medical reports I want that man behind bars.

When we get home she goes to my room and sleep in my bed, I sit next to her and cover her up.

Me: "I'm sorry I wasn't there."

She is too quiet.

Me: "Are you still mad at me?"

Hloni: "Yes."

I nod.

Me: "I understand."

Hloni: "But thank you for saving me, you and uncle B are my heroes."

I smile brushing her cheek.

Hloni: "Where will I stay? At Uncle B's house?"

Me: "Where do you want to stay?"

Hloni: "With you but your girlfriend doesn't like me and I don't want to cause problems."

Me: "I promise she won't be rude to you anymore, I won't let her, from now on you're my number one priority."

Hloni: "Thank you."

We talk until she falls asleep, I sleep at Bukhosi's room but I keep waking up to check on her. I walk in the room and find her screaming for her dad to help her, I sit in bed and shake her. She jumps up sweating.

Hloni: "Uncle stickx I saw him, he will come back..."

She is shaken, I hold her.

Me: "You're safe here baby, I promise you he won't ever come here."

I stay with her until she calms down.

Me: "You were screaming for your dad to help you.."

Hloni: "He was there in a dream, I saw him standing there not doing anything then you came.."

I nod.

Me: "Maybe he was just standing there because he is not of this world anymore, he can't protect you physically now."

She sighs and close her eyes.

Hloni: "I want a dad."

She says slowly, I think she is falling asleep. I kiss her forehead and let her rest. Zakhona again, she's here drunk and my parents are home I am so angry and embarrassed. It's 3 am and everyone woke up to the banging of the door, this is so embarrassing, mom is just out for words as Zakhona stands there calling my name none stop, he is referring to my father as Nkosiyabo I have never been embarrassed in my life, this is probably the first time ever.

Thabsie: "Makhosini take your girl and get her out of here, there's a child here, Hloni doesn't have to see this behavior, also I don't appreciate how she keeps calling my husband's name like he's her mate!"

She walks away going back to their room, dad just gives me a look and follow his wife. I lead her out of the house.

Me: "I have been patient enough Zakhona but this is the last nail, I'm done with you, it's over between us, I want nothing to do with you, I kept hoping you'd change but no you just got worse, get out and give me back my access card."

I gave her the access card to the main gate because I thought since she's my girlfriend and usually I'm alone here she could come anytime but no, I don't want her here anymore. I grab her bag and take out my card then ask for her phone I use it to call a cab. I walk her to the cab, she keeps begging but I don't wanna hear it! It's over. A cab drives away I go back to bed but I can't sleep.

In the morning the first person I check is Hloni, I find her sitting in bed wearing her purple gown, I sit next to her and hold her hand.

Hloni: "I cried when I saw you on the internet being taken away in an ambulance, I missed you and I thought you gonna die without talking to me."

Me: "But you're the one who left angry Hloni and when I tried to call you dropped the call on me."

She look down.

Hloni: "Mom let Uncle Stickx beat me up that day because I didn't put their beers in the fridge, so when you called that's when he entered the room."

Me: "Why didn't you tell me or your sister?"

Hloni: "I couldn't, Stickx said he will kill me if I did."

Me: "I'm sorry ok but trust me nobody will kill you, I'm always here I will protect you don't ever be afraid to tell me if someone is hurting you or threatening you."

She nods.

Me: "I have a dress I bought and I think it will fit you perfectly, we will go out to our favourite spot for breakfast."

I am still very much in pain but I want to cheer her up after what happened. I give her the dress and she is screaming happily jumping

all around the room. I take out my black jeans and purple t-shirt so I can match her dress and black sneakers she's gonna be wearing.

After we're done, I call a cab, I don't think I want to drive anytime soon, also sitting in a upright position hurts.

We order our breakfast and start eating once it's served.

"Hloni!"

A little voice shouts from the door causing Hloni to get up and rush towards the entrance, I look back and see her hugging a little boy, he is a bit shorter than her.

"Is that your dad? The one who always bring you to school?"

He ask as they walk to my table, I smile.

Hloni: "Yes!"

She replies happily.

Hloni: "This is my friend Samkelo, we always arrived early at my school when you dropped me off and we will hang out together."

Me: "Oh hey Samkelo."

I give him my fist but he looks clueless so Hloni shows him that he should fist bump me and he does that happily.

Me: "Are you alone? Where are your parents?"

Samkelo: "Mom is over there ordering food for us."

He points at his mom who is facing the other way, she is wearing high waist jeans and a white top, she has bowlegs, heck she even have thigh gap, she has hips and ass, I am brought back to the conversation when Hloni ask me to look. I look at her, she is showing me Samkelo's watch and she is giving me a puppy look, I know she wants it.

Me: "I will ask his mom where she bought it baby."

Samkelo laughs so hard.

Samkelo: "Your dad also calls you baby like my mother does to me, I told her to stop doing that in front of my friends but she doesn't."

They laugh so hard, I just shake my head. The woman walk to our table, swaying her hips from side to side I am amazed. Her smile, I have seen it before.

"Oh hey.."

She waves at me then look at Hloni.

"Phile, hey."

Hloni get up and give her the hand respectfully they shake hands, I am smiling at that, she really just didn't like Zakhona but she gets along with people, very respectful.

"Uhm..Samkelo we should go."

Samkelo: "Mom can we please eat here instead, Hloni is my friend we go to the same school."

He ask with his hands together begging her mom. She looks at me, I nod and she sit down next to me. They eat their food chatting up a storm. The lady looks like she is afraid of eating.

Me: "Aren't you eating?"

She shakes her head.

"I'm not hungry, Uhm I heard you were stabbed three times, are you healing?"

I nod.

Me: "Yeah.."

She smiles looking at Hloni.

“So the dress fitted her huh?”

Now I remember her, a cashier who helped me with the dress the other day, the lady who complimented Hloni, “your daughter is beautiful.”

I smile.

Me: “Thank you, she loved the dress so much.”

I look at Hloni, they are bragging differently and respectfully, Hloni is bragging about things we do together and Samkelo is also bragging about his mom and the things they do, we are just listening to them going crazy on the table. After a long wait for them to finish their food and talks we all get up and walk out together.

Hloni: “Are we gonna use a cab again? Samkelo’s mom have a car, she can drop us off please.”

I look next to me, the lady is just out for words but smiling.

“I will drive you, it’s ok.”

We get into her car, it’s a classic car but it looks fresh.

She drives out of the mall, I am sitting on the passenger seat and the chatterboxes are at the back.

Me: “So I didn’t catch your name.”

“Thobeka Zondo.”

I smile.

Me: “Mthiyane..”

Thobeka: “uNdaba..”

I raise my hands up she laughs.

Me: "Ok! I am Makhosini Gumede."

Thobeka: "I like your names, your dad sure knows meaningful names and looking at it, they all reflect on him mostly, he's a Kumkani, he have riches and wealth, Ngcebo and Mcebisi, there's Kingship, uBukhosi, eMakhosini then there's a Princess I read when she was born there was a rainbow in your kingdom so the name Thingo lamaQwabe."

I am staring at her as she speaks, never heard anyone analysing our names and their meanings like this, I am in awe.

Me: "Wow.."

She smiles.

Thobeka: "I'm a huge fan of your mother, she once came to UNIZULU when I was still a student there, I wanted to give up so bad because of financial aid delays but she gave us motivations and also gave some of us bursaries I was one of them who got it till I finished last year."

Me: "Wow, so you are a graduate?"

She smiles.

Thobeka: "Yes and it's all thanks to the Queen."

I smile.

Me: "Yeah hey.. congratulations."

Thobeka: "Thank you. Now I am job hunting but with this high rate of unemployment I took the cashier job while waiting, I have a son to take care off."

Me: "I understand."

She stops at our gate, I sigh when I see Zakhona standing there. I look at Hloni she doesn't look ok now.

Me: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu Thobeka."(Thank you so much Thobeka.)

She nods and look at Zakhona who is standing there watching us. I step out and open the door for Hloni but she doesn't come out.

Me: "Come on baby..she won't say a word to you I promise."

I take her hand.

Samkelo: "Bye Hloni."

Hloni: "Bye Sam."

Thobeka drives away. I sigh and hold Hloni's hand tight.

Zakhona: "Baby.."

Me: "I meant every word I said Zakhona or you want me to repeat them for you? It's over you embarrassed me in front of my family! My mom and dad."

I am stammering and Hloni squeeze my hand, I calm down instantly.

Me: "Please leave, I don't want you anymore Zah.."

I walk in leaving her crying and shouting again! This girl is just crazy and I am happy I saw it sooner.

We walk in my room, then she sits in my bad, I sit in front of her.

Me: "Hloniphile."

She smiles raising her eyebrows.

Hloni: "What did I do?"

Me: "Why didn't you correct your friend when he said I an your dad?"

She look down.

Hloni: "I'm sorry, I just...please I am sorry. I know you told me lying is bad I won't do it ever again."

She wipes her tears I don't even know why she's crying I wasn't shouting or anything.

Hloni: "But..I..want to call you dad instead of uncle."

I widen my eyes.

Me: "You do?"

Hloni: "Please...It won't be a lie if you allow me to call you dad now."

I laugh so hard.

Me: "You're crazy.."

Hloni: "Please...pretty please."

Me: "Ok you can call me dad, I see you as my daughter anyway."

She hugs me tight but quickly let go checking me out, I chuckle.

Hloni: "I didn't hurt you right? Sorry I shouldn't have squeezed you."

Me: "I'm fine baby."

Hloni: "You promise?"

I smile.

Me: "I promise Nkosazana."(Princess.)

She hugs me again less tight this time.

Hloni: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu."(Thank you so much)

She says doing the hand gestures.

Hloni: "Oh and dad, I gave Samkelo your number, I know it by heart he will call you using her mom's phone for our playdate."

She walk out whistling leaving me stunned,. So when I called and she asked who it was she was just playing with me, she knows my number

by heart, what? But when she said "and dad" my heart warmed up, I loved it.

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CHAPTER 85

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MAKHOSINI

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My baby girl is slowly but surely going back to her old bubble self again and there has never been one single day she stopped calling me dad ever since she started. It's been a week now and I am surely healing the pain isn't that much anymore I just wish I can heal completely so I can make Hloni enjoy the rest of the holidays by taking her out often like I used to.

I am in bed looking up and there she is, the princess walk in looking so grumpy, she comes and sleep next to me, she doesn't even greet.

Me: "What's wrong?"

She takes a deep breath, I laugh.

Hloni: "Samkelo hasn't called dad, and he promised he was gonna talk to his mom about us going for a playdate this weekend."

Me: "Maybe he will call, just be patient ok."

My phone rings, she pass it to me, It's an unsaved number, I answer.

Me: "Hello."

"Hi, Uhm... Hello it's Thobeka I'm sorry, Samkelo gave me this number to call Hloni for their playdate today, I wasn't sure about it but he hasn't been ok ever since I refused, are you guys busy?"

I chuckle and look at my angry daughter.

Me: "She's been acting up too, I think we should just give them what they want."

Thobeka: "I didn't know kids can be this controlling."

I laugh.

Me: "They are bullies."

Thobeka: "So Uhm..where does the princess wants to go?"

I look at Hloni and remove the phone from my ear, she is minding her business humming a song.

Me: "Baby..."

She smiles looking my way.

Me: "Where do you and Samkelo want to go?"

Hloni: "Ice-skating, Samkelo said he wants went there I want to go please dad."

Thobeka is laughing on the phone.

Me: "You heard that?"

Thobeka: "Yeah the place is at North Beach, Durban Ice Arena."

Me: "But we haven't had breakfast, will we start by eating?"

Thobeka: "Sure, We're getting ready now."

Me: "We will be doing the same then call, you will fetch us because I still can't drive."

Thobeka: "That's ok."

I drop the call and look at Hloni, she is staring at me with her hands on her cheeks waiting patiently on what I'm gonna say.

Me: "What is it?"

Hloni: "Are we going daddy?"

I nod, she jumps out of bed and run out of the room. I get ready then I call Thobeka telling her we're ready.

We are standing outside the gate, Thobeka's car stops in front of us. Samkelo step out and run to Hloni and they hug happily. I smile as Thobeka step out as well, she is wearing a black leather skirt with those thigh boots and a white top that shows a little of her belly button, she's young and dressed well for her body I am watching that thigh gap as she walks up to me already smiling.

Thobeka: "Hi."

I smile back.

Me: "Hey, we can hug as well, the kids did it."

She laughs and allows me to hug her, she smells so damn good.

Samkelo: "Mom we gonna be late."

He whispers standing next to us I let go of her mom and we get in the car.

We start by eating first then we go sit around the arena and watch Samkelo teaching Hloni to skate, he is holding her carefully. Thobeka and I are silent she is busy on her phone.

Me: "So Uhm...who do you live with at home?"

Thobeka: "My mom, dad is in jail."

Me: "Oh..for what?"

She looks back on the phone and I see that she doesn't want to talk about it and I understand we're strangers.

"Dad look I am doing it!"

Hloni shouts I get up and walk closer cheering for her, Samkelo looks so proud as Hloni skates away from him. Thobeka is next to me cheering for Hloni too.

Thobeka: "They are having so much fun."

I look around, parents are here cheering for their children, mostly moms and dads together. I see Samkelo taking off his skating boots and walk out leaving Hloni confused.

He goes and sit on the chairs looking down. Thobeka rush to him.

Thobeka: "Hey, are you hurt?"

Samkelo: "No."

Thobeka: "Then what's wrong baby?"

Samkelo: "Hloni is here with her dad mom, and everyone is with both her mom and dad but me, where is my dad mom?"

I see that caught Thobeka off guard but the boy seems so sad, Hloni is here as well worried about her friend.

Samkelo: "You always keep quiet and find ways to make me forgot I asked about dad."

The boy says painfully and I feel every word he says, he is not shouting or anything.

I look at Thobeka as she goes down to his level.

Thobeka: "But you don't need to know him, you and me are fine."

The boy just runs off, Hloni calls after him, Thobeka just bury her face on her hands and cry. I follow the kids I am still limping. I find them outside the building comforting each other.

Me: "Hloni, Samkelo."

They look at me.

Me: "Come here."

I open my arms for them, I hold both of them.

Me: "Don't cry boy, just be patient with mom ok, she will tell you when she's ready."

Hloni: "And for now we can share a dad, right daddy? He can call you dad too right?"

They are both looking at me waiting for me to answer so bad, but how do I say yes to that? What would his mom feel.

Samkelo: "I can call you dad too?"

He ask blinking the tears roll down his cheeks, I nod.

Me: "Yes, you can call me dad it's okay."

He wraps his arms around my arms.

Hloni: "Careful, don't hold him too tight, the bad guys hurt him."

Samkelo: "Ohk..sorry dad."

I nod nervously, what is happening?

Thobeka walks out, the way she walks always gets my attention.

Samkelo meet his mom before she could get to us.

Samkelo: "It's ok mom I will be patient and wait for you until you're ready to tell me about my dad, Hloni's dad allowed me to call him dad for now."

I look down as Thobeka stares at me, I don't know if she's angry or what.

Thobeka: "Go inside and order ice cream for yourself and Hloni, here's money."

The boy hold Hloni's hand, they take the money and walk in.

Thobeka: "You said he can call you dad?"

I have never seen this look on her face before, she is always smiling but right now there is no smile just her raised eyebrow and she looks upset.

Me: "I..Hloni suggested it and he was so hopeful I'd say yes, I didn't have a choice you know how kids are."

Thobeka: "You always have a choice to say NO!"

She is really upset and that statement sounds so personal.

Me: "I know, but it was the only way he could calm down, I'm sorry."

She is so angry but trying so hard not to show it because she is a good person by nature but I can see right through her.

Thobeka: "He is fine with just me! I don't want him calling you dad, or anyone for that matter."

I nod.

Me: "I get it, now you can go in there and tell him that, disappoint him further while he agreed to be patient and give you time so you can be ready to tell him about his dad."

Thobeka: "I'm gonna take my son and leave."

She walks back inside, I hate that she's angry and I can't stop being fascinated by her body structure, the way she walks and her pretty face.

I walk back in and find her sitting with the kids on the table they are enjoying their ice cream.

Samkelo: "Dad, Hloni tells me you guys do almost everything together at home, like washing dishes, making the beds.."

I look at Thobeka she is uncomfortable, hell I am just like her, I don't know what's her story and the fact that I know she doesn't want her son to call me dad is really uncomfortable, I wouldn't mind if she was ok with it.

Me: "Uhm...yeah we do that, we even clean the house together."

Samkelo: "That's so cool! Can I see inside your house when mom drops you off? Your house is big!"

I nod with a smile.

We eat lunch then Thobeka drives home, I am just looking out the window because she is too quiet I am just listening to the kids at the back.

I open the gate and they walk in, mom and dad went back home but they keep coming to check on me. Thobeka remains standing there looking around.

Me: "You can come inside while they take a tour around the house."

She is still angry but she walks in anyway.

We can hear noise all around the house, We are sitting in the opposite couches quietly.

Me: "Why can't you tell him where his dad is?"

Thobeka: "He won't understand, he is too young."

Me: "Did he die?"

She shakes her head and I see her eyes getting glassy.

Me: "It's ok, you don't have to talk about it."

She get up and look at the pictures on the wall, when we were babies, there's Kumkani first, Ngcebo and Mcebisi then me, my brother and sister. She chuckles.

Thobeka: "Your head is bigger than your brother's."

I laugh.

Me: "That's a lie, we are identical I am sure even our sizes are the same."

Thobeka: "The shoe sizes?"

I laugh so hard.

Me: "Yeah that."

I know we wear the same shoe size so why would I talk about shoes, we're talking about heads so it have to be the size of something in my body I am referring to but looks like she missed it.

Me: "Can you help me start with dinner, it looks like they will be in there for long."

She sighs.

Thobeka: "I might as well."

We go around the kitchen counter and wash our hands first. I open the fridge and take out everything we will need to make beef curry, we will cook it with rice.

Me: "Can you chop with those nails?"

She giggles.

Thobeka: "I do everything."

I like her style, I don't know how she does it but her nail colour seems to always go with the clothes she's wearing, and she has fashion sense, she really dress nice, she has twisted braids on her head and her eyebrows are nicely done, she has two piercings on each ear, she is wearing whoop earrings and smaller ones she looks really good.

Thobeka: "Help me with the pots."

I take the pots and give them to her.

Thobeka: "So you gonna just watch me? Thought you said I should help you."

I smile and do something too.

Me: "So..Uhm...I assume you don't have a boyfriend."

Thobeka: "Why would you assume that? Am I that ugly?"

Me: "Ugly? You?"

She laughs.

Me: "I am saying that because your kid is really desperate for a father, you would have introduced him to your boyfriend."

That always changes her mood I guess.

Me: "You can't always get angry if someone is showing interest in getting to know you Thobeka."

Thobeka: "So I should talk about something I don't want to talk about?"

Me: "No you don't have to do that, but communicate don't just get angry."

Thobeka: "I'm not angry. I don't get angry."

Me: "You do, you're just good at hiding it but I can see it. Everyone gets angry."

I look at her.

Me: "You can't always hide some emotions, you need to let it out, if you're angry show it express it, and so if you're sad or happy, learn to express your feelings."

Thobeka: "Will expressing it change anything about my past? No."

Me: "But talking about it helps in a way."

She shakes her head and continue to mind the pots.

I go check on the two rascals, they have been too quiet which is unlike them. I find them in my bed sleeping, I laugh and call Thobeka to come and see. She can't stop laughing at them.

Thobeka: "They are tired from all the skating and the food they ate it was too much."

I take off their shoes then cover them. We go back in the lounge and I open the TV, music is playing. She is singing along those RNB songs, love songs.

Me: "Do you drink alcohol?"

I ask randomly.

Thobeka: "No, I drank once with my friends in Varsity and I woke up not feeling my head I thought I was dead and that's when I noticed I was still drunk and became really sick I was admitted to the hospital, I stopped, I hate it."

I smile.

Me: "I have never tasted it in my life and I don't even wish to, some people take it too far when they drink."

She nods.

Me: "How old are you?"

She smiles.

Thobeka: "I'm 21 and you?"

I laugh.

Me: "Turning 20 next year."

She laughs so hard.

Thobeka: "You are so young, yet you look like a fully grown man."

Me: "I am grown man, everything a grown man can do I do it 10 times better."

Thobeka: "I'm older than you though."

Me: "Age ain't nothing but the number that's why if someone would walk in here and we ask who's older they will clearly say it's me."

Thobeka: "But I'm still older."

I laugh.

Me: "So you had your baby when you were 14?"

She looks down.

Me: "What happened to you? I refuse to believe you were sexually active at 14."

She get up.

Thobeka: "I'm gonna wake Samkelo up so we can go."

I get up as well and hold her hand.

Me: "I can tell you don't trust me and that's ok, you don't have to leave I will stop asking personal questions I promise. Let them sleep, they will wake up and eat then you can go."

She sit down and look away.

After a while I can see that she is sleepy.

Me: "You can use Hloni's room to rest I will wake you up for dinner."

She nods I take her hand and lead her to the room. She sit in bed I squat down and take off her shoes.

Thobeka: "You didn't have to do that, you're still in pain."

Me: "I have to start working out to heal completely so this is part of it."

She nods with that sweet smile. I walk out and rest on the couch just watching TV, I hear the buzzer at the gate, it keeps going on and on I even get irritated and it will wake the kids up. I get up and walk out.

Me: "You don't give up do you."

Zakhona: "Baby..look I'm sorry I know I messed up I want to apologize even to your parents if you give me a chance, I don't drink anymore."

I chuckle.

Me: "Yeah right!"

Zakhona: "I am sorry Makhosini, I promise to change my lifestyle, I know you've been patient enough."

I shake my head.

Me: "I'm sorry I can't deal with you anymore, I always thought if you see how I behave you'll also want to do better but no, you got worse. How do I carry on with you already my parents saw the worst, you kept calling my father by his name and ticked off my mother, sorry sis but you have to go."

She nods wiping her tears, I just go back inside and chill again, she is really irritating me now or maybe I just didn't love her at enough, she did came onto me and asked me out and I agreed because I saw a

very pretty girl and I thought we could be something but no, not with that constant behavior.

Later around 7pm I hear the kids talking in my room, I go check on them.

Me: "You guys are awake, hey."

Hloni: "Hey dad."

Samkelo: "Hi dad."

I smile, thought he'd forget about that because his mom doesn't like it at all.

Me: "Let's go wake mom up so she can dish up for us."

Samkelo: "She's also sleeping?"

I nod. And we walk out. They jump in bed and kiss Thobeka all over her face I am laughing as she sits up. She looks around and smile.

Thobeka: "You guys are awake?"

Samkelo: "Yes and we're hungry, dad said you will dish up for us."

I see her tensing up, it's probably of that "dad"

They keep talking to her and I think I am having an episode, I can see the dream I had when I was in a coma, my two kids A boy and a girl, their mother. I shake my head and look at Thobeka, she's also looking at me, no, that was just a dream I accepted that.

We eat together on the table, I am looking at the three of them in front of me talking and laughing and I hate these ideas I have in my head, she probably does have a man in her life, this woman is gorgeous with a banging body and a good heart, if she doesn't have a boyfriend then these men out there are surely blind.

Hloni: "Baba.."

I look at her, it's the first time she says it in vernacular and damn my heart, it sounds even better in IsiZulu.

Me: "Nkosazana."(Princess)

Hloni: "You've been quiet."

Me: "I'm just thinking that's all."

She nods.

Samkelo: "Mangabe eyiNkosazana uHloni mina ngiyini Baba?"

He asks curiosity all over his face.

Me: "Wena uyiNkosana yaBaba."(You're daddy's Prince.)

He smiles looking at his mom who is staring down at her plate now.

Samkelo: "Did you hear what dad said mom, he said I am iNkosana."

Thobeka smiles but I can see she's just doing it for her son.

Thobeka: "That's great baby."

Later Hloni and I accompany them to the car outside then they all hug.

Samkelo: "You can hug mom, baba."

I clear my throat and hug Thobeka but it is so brief because she quickly moved away.

Hloni: "Goodnight."

Thobeka: "Goodnight Phile..and you Makhosini."

She bows her head a little then get in the car. I buckle Samkelo up at the back and we wave at them as they drive out. I pick my daughter up and walk in with her. We watch cartoons until she falls asleep.

The next morning I sit up in my bed and look at my crotch, usually I wake up with an erection but ever since the accident I have never felt

it move at all and this worries me, I need to see the doctor, if I have a problem then no woman will want to be with me ever..I pray to God everything is well.

CHAPTER 86

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MAKHOSINI

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I just visited my doctor, he checked my healing wounds then I asked him to check if my penis is working and he told me everything is fine with it just that I am still cautious because of pain that is still there and I can't get it up when I'm in that state, I am relieved.

I am back home and Hloni is playing with her dolls on the floor, she's talking to them like they are human beings I am laughing at her but she doesn't mind me at all but keep glancing at me.

My phone rings it's Thobeka's number, I haven't talked to her since the date three days ago.

Me: "Hello."

Samkelo: "Dad.."

I frown, is he crying.

Me: "Are you ok boy?"

Samkelo: "No, mom was shouting at me because I asked who I looked like between him and dad she started shouting for me to leave her alone then she locked herself up in the room, I can hear her cry even now I think she hates me."

I sigh, kids of today are different, they ask questions, they demand to know everything.

Me: "Uhm...is your grandmother around?"

I heard she stays with her mother but seems like they are not really close, she hates talking about her like she hates the topic about Samkelo's father.

Samkelo: "No, she went to town."

Me: "Do you know how to send the location on WhatsApp?"

Samkelo: "No."

Me: "Hloni will explain it to you now, stop crying so you can hear her."

Samkelo: "Ok."

I give Hloni the phone explaining to her that she needs to tell Sam how to send Location via WhatsApp, I know she knows how to.

I go to my room and change to my sweatpants and a black t-shirt then wear black sneakers. I take Hloni's sneakers and walk out. I help her wear them, she was just wearing socks around the house.

Hloni: "Baba, why was Sam crying?"

Me: "We're going to see him now, did he manage to send that location."

She shows it to me.

Me: "You should be a teacher, come on high five!"

We high five and go to the car, I still don't like driving yet but this is an emergency.

I stop by the gate and call Thobeka's phone.

Samkelo: "Baba.."

I smile.

Me: "Come open the gate, I'm here."

I see him running out, the gate has a chain so it takes some time for him to finally open.

We step out of the car I pick him up, he has been crying for a while I can tell by the puffy eyes.

Me: "Where is she?"

Samkelo: "She still doesn't want to open for me."

He cries sleeping on my shoulder, Hloni is now crying as well. I hold her hand and we walk inside.

I stand by her locked bedroom door.

Me: "Thobeka.."

Silence.

Me: "Thobeka open this door, you can't do this to your son! Open up."

She opens the door and widens her eyes, she wipes her tears and fixes her very short gown.

Thobeka: "How..how did you get here? How did you know where I live?"

Me: "I told Samkelo to send me your location. Hloni, take Sam and go sit in the lounge I am coming."

They walk away, I pull Thobeka's hand inside her bedroom and close the door. We sit in bed.

Me: "Do you know how your son feels right now?"

She is quiet.

Me: "He feels like you hate him."

I look at her.

Me: "I can see you're going through something but I will ask one favour from you."

I take her hand and hold it with both hands.

Me: "If you feel like it's getting too much for you and you want to be alone make up an excuse that you have to go somewhere then bring him home to me ok, I won't mind, I know sometimes you might want to have time to yourself and just cry but please just don't do that in front of him, it might traumatize him his whole life."

She sobs covering her mouth, I pull her to my chest holding her, I let her cry and I am just brushing her back.

She stops crying and wipe her tears.

Me: "Please don't ever tell him to leave you alone again Thobeka, that hurt his feelings he is just a child he won't know what you're going through until you tell him."

She nods.

Thobeka: "I'm sorry.."

Me: "Don't be..everyone is going through something it's just that some are worse some are just normal."

She nods.

Thobeka: "Let me go talk to him."

We walk out, she sit on the couch and ask Sam to come to her, he sit on her lap then they hug.

Thobeka: "I'm sorry for shouting at you baby, mom is so sorry I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, I love you I, I would never hate you I promise."

Samkelo: "Ok I'm sorry mom if I said something you didn't like."

Thobeka: "It's ok, we're ok."

Me: "We have to go now before your mother comes back."

She nods.

Me: "When are you going back to work?"

Thobeka: "Tomorrow."

I nod.

Me: "Sam can come tomorrow and be with me and Hloni during the day."

She looks at Sam, him and Hloni looks excited.

Thobeka: "Can we talk outside for a minute."

I nod and follow her out, we stand next to my car.

Thobeka: "I'm sorry but you have to stay away from me and my son."

I look at her confused.

Me: "I don't understand."

Thobeka: "You being here, my son calling you dad, baba, it's triggering me and I hate it, I was doing just fine then you came and my son started asking questions, You have to leave us alone."

Me: "I know this is what you want but have you thought about what he wants?"

Thobeka: "I think I know my son better Makhosini, he will be fine."

I nod.

Me: "I respect that, Uhm..let me say goodbye then."

I call them outside.

Me: "Uhm..boy we will see you, ok?"

Samkelo: "Tomorrow baba right? You asked that I come stay with you tomorrow."

I look at Thobeka, she is looking away.

Me: "Hloni, say goodbye."

Hloni: "Bye Sam, I will see you tomorrow."

I hate disappointing them so I won't tell them what their mother said.

Me: "Bye Mthiyane."

I buckle my daughter up and drive out going home.

We eat dinner then go to bed.

In the morning I wake up to my phone ringing, I sit up and answer wiping my face.

Me: "Thobeka, why are you calling so early."

Thobeka: "My son Makhosini, he just ran off when I told him he won't be coming to your house anymore, I can't find him."

I get out of bed and quickly wear my clothes.

Thobeka: "You complicated our lives so bad! You and your daughter complicated our lives!"

I just drop the call, she keeps calling I don't answer, I don't know what more does she want to say.

I check on Hloni, she is still sound asleep and the Auntie that cleans two days a week will be here any minute now so I leave her sleeping and go to my car and Auntie is already here I greet and tell her Hloni is sleeping, I drive out in speed I keep looking around hoping to see him.

I stop the car when I see him on the pavement running to the opposite direction, he is sweating, running barefoot. I stop the car and call out

his name. The minute he sees me he runs to cross the road and throws his body at me I hold him.

Me: "Don't ever do this to your mom, never run off again, you hear me?"

Samkelo: "But she..."

Me: "Samkelo."

My voice is stern.

Samkelo: "I won't do it again baba."

Thobeka's car stops on the side then she step out and rush to us, she grabs Sam and smack his face so hard, I get so angry and push her away from the child.

Me: "Ungafuni sixabane Thobeka!"(You don't want to fight with me Thobeka.)

Thobeka: "Let's go home Samkelo!"

She grabs his hand but the boy screams holding my hand tight.

Me: "Thobeka..come on man, calm down ok, calm down let's talk, you and me, leave him alone you're angry and you can't discipline a child while you're angry, uzomulimaza."(you will hurt him.)

Thobeka: "Samkelo let's go home now!"

Samkelo: "No mama, no."

Thobeka: "I have been protecting you your whole life and now you want to trust a stranger over me!"

Me: "Sometimes you might think you're protecting him while you're hurting him, just like what you're doing right now, you're angry and you want to beat him up in the name of protection and that's not right, please listen to me MaMthiyane, Ngiyacela Ndaba."(Please Ndaba)

I am calling her with her clan names and she seems to be calming down.

Me: "Come here, I want you to calm down."

I hug her, she let it all out, I pull Sam as well who is now crying because he sees her mom in this state.

Me: "Let's go see Hloni."

I ask for her car keys and ask that they wait inside my car. I drive her car to my house first then come back with a taxi to fetch them, people are looking at me weirdly I haven't really used a taxi in years.

We are home now, Hloni and Sam are playing.

Me: "What are you protecting him from?"

She looks at me.

Thobeka: "Anything and anyone including my family! I even hate leaving him with mom when I go to work but I have no choice there."

The way she is speaking shows she has so much anger inside of her.

Me: "What happened to you?"

Thobeka: "I was hurt by someone I trusted, for three years, he'd do it over and over and over and over....and..."

She's not ok, so I hold her hand tight. She smirks.

Thobeka: "Do you know why I don't want to tell my son about his so called father?"

She chuckles and tears roll down her cheeks.

Thobeka: "We share the same father! He is my brother and my son!"

My heart almost stops when I actually understand what she's saying. I don't even know what to say to her.

Thobeka: "Now you understand why I want you to stay away from me and my son!"

Samkelo: "Mom..."

They are standing by the passage, we don't even know how much they heard.

Samkelo: "Mom, what do you mean I am your brother and your son? And why are you saying dad should stay away from us?"

I look at Thobeka, her body is shaking, there is so much fear in her eyes. Even if we find a lie these kids are too clever they might see that we're lying, they will find out the truth on their own, these 7 year olds knows too much already.

Samkelo: "Mom...How am I your brother and your son? Where is your dad?"

See what I mean, he is asking the right questions already.

Samkelo: "Mom..where is your father?"

Thobeka: "In..in Prison."

Samkelo: "And where is mine?"

Thobeka: "In Prison."

Her voice is low..

He looks down like he is thinking then stare at his mother.

Samkelo: "It's the same father?"

Thobeka nods a little, this is killing her I can feel her pain.

Samkelo: "How? How can we have the same father, isn't he supposed to be my grandpa?"

Thobeka doesn't say anything, Hloni sits next to Thobeka and hold her hand.

Hloni: "Did he do what Uncle stickx wanted to do to me?"

Thobeka just sobs, Hloni hugs her, Samkelo just throw away the toy he was playing with and walk out.

Me: "Samkelo."

He sit down and stare in one position for a long time.

Samkelo: "I don't get it."

Me: "Your grandfather hurt your mother, that's all you need to understand, that is why your mom couldn't tell you, she didn't want you to know the vile actions that was done by this man to her, she only wants you to know her as a strong woman that raised you, you should always see her like that."

He nods and walk inside. I walk back in and find him on her mother's lap hugging her.

Samkelo: "I love you mom."

Thobeka: "I love you too."

They go to my room to sleep, I don't even know why they use my room when they want to sleep. I give Thobeka my hand, she's not crying anymore.

Me: "You should also rest."

She nods getting up then look at me. I get lost in her eyes, I touch her cheek and move my face closer to hers, I kiss her shaky lips pulling her waist closer to me, I want to smile when I feel uGumede twitching a little(my penis)

I break the kiss that was one sided then take her to Hloni's room, that was Thingo's. I take off her shoes and mine then I get in behind her and spoon her from behind.

I kiss her cheek and close my eyes.

I wake up to voices whispering. I open my eyes it's Hloni and Samkelo tiptoeing out of the room I guess they wanted to check on us and saw us sleeping.

Thobeka moves and slowly remove my arm around her turning around.

Me: "Hey.."

Thobeka: Hey.."

Me: "Do you feel better?"

She nods.

Thobeka: "Thank you so much."

I smile.

Me: "My pleasure.."

I pull her waist closer and kiss her, she doesn't stop me but doesn't kiss me back either I break the kiss.

Thobeka: "Why do you keep doing that?"

Me: "Doing what?"

Thobeka: "Kissing me."

Me: "I find you very attractive and when I'm with you I get wild thoughts, like really wild."

She frowns.

Me: "Not just sexually MaMthiyane but yhoou if I tell you, you might think I'm crazy."

Thobeka: "Tell me."

I smile.

Me: "I see you and me together raising our kids together."

Thobeka: "That's really wild."

She says laughing.

Me: "I know right but man, I even dreamt about it I'm not lying, everyone thought I was crazy for waking up asking about my two kids A boy and a girl, and their mother, It was you."

She shakes her head. She doesn't believe me.

Me: "Uhm...Can we try this out and see where it goes."

Thobeka: "No."

Me: "Why not?"

Thobeka: "Can't be with a girl like me."

Me: "Can't? But I am asking to be with you Thobeka, and I will take your son as mine, I will be a father to him as long as you want me to."

She keeps shaking her head, I think she's scared.

Me: "We won't rush into anything, I just want us to try it out and just..see if it works out."

Thobeka: "I'm scared of dating, I have never dated all my life, I always feel like they will know what I went through and reject me."

Me: "But I already know and I want you scarred, I want your imperfections, I want to see you go crazy but most of all I want you to

heal with me by your side, and maybe one day we will tell the story to our kids about the things we went through together.”

She drops her eyes.

Me: “Come on, you can’t tell me I don’t charm you.”

She giggles.

Thobeka: “You don’t!”

Me: “You’re hurting my feelings.”

She smiles.

Thobeka: “Sorry.”

Me: “Give me a kiss, I want to see if you’re really sorry.”

She kiss my cheek I shake my head laughing.

Me: “Uyangirobha.”(You’re robbing me)

I kiss her lips and I see she won’t be kissing me back anytime soon but well I’m not in a rush, she can take all the time she needs I’ll be here.

CHAPTER 87

*

MAKHOSINI

*

Thobeka and I are still in bed, we're just talking about her life after the sexual assault, she is sceptical about opening up to me but I am not rushing her I just want her to open up bit by bit so I don't overwhelm her.

Me: "So Uhm..I know a lot of women would want to abort in that situation but you kept the baby, I'm proud of you."

Thobeka: "My mother..."

She sighs closing her eyes.

Thobeka: "When she found out I was pregnant she took me to the clinic to do an abortion and made up a lie that I was a "little slut" who slept around with boys."

She rubs her eyes.

Thobeka: "She signed the consent form for them to abort the baby because she was afraid it was the evidence against her husband, the nurse could see I was scared so she asked mom to step out for a minute, she did some counseling, told me the baby is innocent but it

was my choice to keep the baby I didn't have to take the pressure from my mother."

I keep brushing her cheek, I can't help it she's just amazing and the more she tells me her story I become more interested in her.

Thobeka: "I told the nurse I want to keep the baby and told her that my own father was responsible, she took the matter to the social workers, my mom stood by her husband fought that he doesn't go to jail."

She sit up and stare at her hands.

Thobeka: "Woke up when I was four months, she had made breakfast for me, and that was the first, next thing I was bleeding so bad, I asked her to call the ambulance but she delayed and when she felt that it was over she finally called them."

She's not crying anymore as she narrates her story.

Thobeka: "At the hospital they told me I drank the abortion pill, I asked for the nurse that was helping with my case, I was scared that I was losing the only evidence I have to get justice! That day we found the heartbeat of my baby boy I was so happy that I fell in love instantly with my fighter, all along he was just evidence but that fateful day, he became part of my life, my best friend."

She turns and look my way and damn her body structure maarn! That drives me crazy but I am listening to her.

Thobeka: "The nurse to me to childrens home that day told my mom they won't be discharging me for some time, I stayed there till I gave birth to my baby boy I was so happy, the Nurse then took me to the police I re-opened the case because now there was evidence, they were gonna do a DNA test and he was charged for Statutory rape , intimidation and physical assaults. I didn't stop going to school until I was 17 years then I was done with school, mom "reached out" I had only one year left to leave the Children's home, you don't live there when you're 18 years, I was already doing my first year then, I went back home I had no other choice."

She comes back to bed and sit down.

Thobeka: "Still hate my mother, we live in the same house but we spend days without talking, she tries making small talks but there are days I get so angry I would break every single thing, I want her to feel the pain I felt for three years under her watch, she would shout at my father to stop! Stop what!? Stop what!? Why didn't she report it? Because he was a breadwinner! She wanted to eat with my innocence! Food was more important than her own daughter!"

She is shouting now, she's getting angry. I wonder how she keeps it together staying in the same house with that woman, I am sure everytime she looks at her she thinks of ways to kill her. Thobeka's mom and Hloni's mother have one thing in common, they just don't care, that's it!

Me: "Come here.."

She rest her head on my lap.

Me: "I don't want you and Samkelo to live with that woman anymore, You might end up doing something you'll regret and I don't know how you managed to keep it together for so long."

Thobeka: "My son, I always think about my son, what will he be if I go to jail but there are so many times I will stand in her bedroom door with a knife on my hand wanting to finish her off but my..my son Makhosini...he only has me."

Her voice breaks.

Me: "And you both have me now, there is Hloni."

She brush my legs my blood heat up instantly in arousal.

Me: "So..I was thinking you guys can come stay close to me, I'd say here but this is my father's house I will find a commune flat right next to me for you and my son."

Words roll off my tongue.

Thobeka: "You'd do that for me?"

Me: "Yes."

Thobeka: "Ok thank you, I really hope I get a job so I can buy a house for me and my son, I want to have something on my name, relying on people sometimes put your life in danger."

Me: "I understand where you're coming from but I can assure you I will never hurt you."

She nods.

Me: "We will go and pack your staff tomorrow, today you will sleep here with me."

Thobeka: "But I don't have anything to change in."

Me: "You can always get naked."

She tenses up. I brush her shoulder.

Me: "That's a joke, we will go out to buy a few things for you and Sam."

I hear a scream outside I swiftly move her away from my lap and jump out of bed running out. My daughter is laying on the ground with blood coming out of her thigh, Samkelo is pressing where she's bleeding they are both crying, I squint my eyes looking at the devil getting in the car and it drives away.

Me: "Hloni...Baby.."

I crouch in front of her, she is shivering, this is a bullet wound, on a baby! Shooting a baby? Really?"

Thobeka walks out and stand in front of us, she screams I quickly shake my head.

Me: "You gonna cause them to panic, don't do that, they are already scared.."

I am sweating, someone is gonna die.

I take her to my car.

Me: "Thobeka...ey ey ey.."

I call my brother.

Bukhosi: "Makhosini.."

Me: "Hloni just got shot.."

Bukhosi: "What!? Where!? Who the fuck would shoot a child, Tell me she's ok!"

Me: "She's shot on the thigh I am taking her to the hospital."

I look at Sam, his hands are full of blood he is shaking and so is his mother."

Me: "Love...listen to me ok..get inside the house and clean him up, I will come back."

Thobeka: "No, we can't stay here without you."

Me: "I will come back MaMthiyane just trust me, I will come back soon."

She nods and wrap her arms around me, I kiss her forehead.

Me: "I am coming back."

She walk in with Sam, I get in the car and drive like a maniac to the hospital.

Once I get there I hold Hloni in my arms and shout for help.

Me: "Baby...you gonna be ok."

Hloni: "Am I gonna die baba?"

Me: "No Princess, they gonna get you help now, you trust your dad right?"

Hloni: "I trust you..you saved me before, you gonna save me again."

Her eyes keeps rolling back I think she is doing great but her body is tiny she can't stand the pain.

Me: "I love you, ok, I love you so much."

She smiles a little closing her eyes.

Hloni: "I love you too baba."

I smile and kiss her forehead as they take her away to theatre, I know she's gonna be ok, that's my daughter I know my ancestors gave her to me for a reason and that is definitely not to take her away from me.

Bukhosi and Nelile rush in the waiting area.

Nelile: "What happened to her? Is she ok?"

She's panicking.

Me: "I know who shot her I am gonna deal with it, she's gonna be ok."

I sit down as they pace all around the room, I left my phone I should be calling Thobeka.

After a long wait the doctor finally comes to us and tells us the surgery was successful but my baby needs blood because of excessive bleeding during surgery.

Me: "What's her blood type?"

Doctor: "AB+"

Me: "I'm an A+ I will Donate for her."

I complete a donor questionnaire and then draw some blood, we always know our blood type since there are too many of us if one gets hurt we should know immediately who will donate for who, luckily in our family we're all a match believe it or not, there is only blood type A+ my dad, me and my brothers then Thingo and mom are AB+ we're all good.

After a while they tell us we can see her but she's still asleep. I kiss her forehead and brush her hair.

Me: "My little soldier. I'm happy you're ok I will see you tomorrow. I love you."

Hloni: "I love you too dad."

She mumbles I smile and leave Bukhosi and Nelile with her I left a traumatized baby and a woman in there.

I get home and walk in. I find them in my bed Thobeka is holding a sleeping Sam. She jumps to hug me.

Me: "It's okay.."

Thobeka: "Is she okay? Who would want to hurt kids?"

Me: "Uhm I know who it it and I will find them."

She nods.

Me: "How is he?"

I walk over to bed and kiss his cheek, he is wearing Hloni's purple gown.

Thobeka: "He cried until he fell asleep."

Me: "I'm gonna fix this, they are both going to be ok. And how are you?"

Thobeka: "I'm just worried about Hloni."

Me: "She's gonna be fine believe me."

I hold her waist.

Me: "I will order in for us, you can freshen up and wear any of my t-shirt or a gown in the bathroom."

She nods. I walk out with my phone and order some food for us. Then dial the number.

Me: "So it's a dare? You want to see how dangerous I can be?"

No reply. I chuckle.

Me: "Very well then, I dare you to run!"

I drop the call and click my tongue, some people just wanna see that other side of you, this one is provoking me, poking the snake resting on its hole. I want the person who gave this fool a gun to use on broad daylight on my daughter! I want the owner of that car! I want anyone involved even their ancestors!

Later we eat then start talking to Samkelo assuring him he is safe and Hloni will be back home soon and he gets it, he seems calm now.

Samkelo: "Can I sleep with both of you so I can feel safe?"

I look at Thobeka, she just drops her eyes.

Me: "We will sleep together."

We go to my room, Thobeka sleep with a gown on and my t-shirt underneath, I only take off my t-shirt and leave the sweatpants on, Sam is sleeping in between us.

After a while he starts snoring, his mom is so quiet.

Me: "Thobeka."

Thobeka: "Mmm."

Me: "Ay ngiyakufuna mntanomuntu angizukufihlela nje."(I want you I won't hide that from you)

She's quiet.

Me: "You need to say something, into ezojabulisa inhliziyo yami."(Something that will make my heart happy)

Thobeka: "Ufuna ngithini?"(What do you want me to say?)

I chuckle and raise my head looking at her.

Me: "Isho ukuthi uyasivuma iscelo Sami."(say you accept my request)

Thobeka: "What's your request?"

Me: "Ngifuna ke sizame nje ukuthandana."(I want us to try being in a relationship)

Thobeka: "Ok, ngiyasivuma isicelo sakho."(I accept your request.)

My heart jumps for joy I smile.

Me: "Ngiyabonga Zondo, Ndaba, Mthiyane.(Thank you)

She smiles covering her face.

Thobeka: "Usikhuluma kahle IsiZulu."(You speak IsiZulu so well.)

Me: "I grew up in the village even though we went to Multi-racial schools but we would never leave our cultural background, who we are, we're proud Zulu men, oGumede, oPhakathwayo, oQwabe, OYeyeye oMnguni!"

She is melting, her smile is priceless.

Thobeka: "You're showing off now, Mina ngiwuZondo, uNdaba uMthiyane, USokhulu, uNqoboka, Skhangane esakhanga amadoda."

I shake my head, did I not just fall in love!

Me: "Ungikhangile ngempela maMthiyane."(You really captured me MaMthiyane)

She giggles.

Me: "Weee ngiyakuthanda ngempela ke manje."(I really love you now)

She laughs so hard but quickly stop when Samkelo moves a bit.

Me: "Usungowami qobo."(You're really mine now.)

She blush facing the other way, I sleep facing up smiling to myself, awu ngadla mina kaBaba! (Oh this one mine!)

In the morning I wake up first and take a shower, I wear my clothes and check on my people they are still asleep. I kiss Thobeka's cheek.

Me: "Love.."

She slowly opens her eyelids.

Thobeka: "Morning."

Me: "Hey..I'm going to see Hloni then I will hurry back home so I can make a call about that commune."

She nods.

Thobeka: "So we should stay here until you come back."

Me: "Yebo."(Yes)

She nods again and yawn covering her mouth.

Me: "I'm sorry for waking you up, go back to sleep."

I kiss her forehead and walk out.

I start at the mall to buy my daughter's favourites food then drive to the hospital.

I walk in and find her awake a nurse is changing a patch on her thigh.

I kiss her cheek.

Me: "Daddy's angel."

She looks so happy like she wasn't shot just yesterday.

Me: "You look beautiful."

She blush.

Me: "I'm sorry for what happened I will find those bad guys."

Hloni: "I know you will daddy."

I stay with her for a while then rush back home, I call about the commune and luckily the one I was talking about is empty so they will move in anytime, they will be my neighbors I will see everything. 4 pm I am sitting in front of my computer memorizing the number plate I saw yesterday when Hloni was shot. I squint my eyes and I see that bastard getting in the car and the number plate comes crashing in my head because that's what my eyes stared at after.

I work on my computer for a while then chuckle. I go to my father's safe and take out the gun and bullets, I wear my gloves beanie and shades then walk out making sure Thobeka and Sam don't see me. You're an accomplice to my daughter's shooting in broad daylight, rest

assured that you will die in broad daylight, an eye for an eye the only difference is that your eye won't ever see light again

CHAPTER 88

*

MAKHOSINI

*

I just walked inside the complex, that man's registration number led me here, I am studying IT, I have always been fascinated by computers growing up, I learned how to hack phones from a very young age, I learnt different things everyday all by myself and dad didn't hesitate to buy me the gadgets because he could see how much I was interested in computers.

I can hear noise from the inside, people are having fun. I stand by the door.

Zakhona: "And you know what? I'm just waiting for the news that the brat is gone!"

They are taking shots cheering, it's only men in here I wonder if they don't sleep with her afterwards when she's drunk, I think I saved myself from a lot when I dumped this girl, I really dodged a bullet.

Zakhona: "She deserved it! Ever since she came here Makhosini stopped having time for me, it was always Hloni this and Hloni that, maybe he is grooming her to have sex with her...."

I think I have heard enough so I clear my throat they all turn stunned.

Me: "I know..."

I take off my shades and put them in my pocket.

Me: "So that little girl intimidated you so bad huh?"

Zakhona: "Baby.. it's not... it's not what..."

"How did he find my place?"

One of the guys mumble, I just take out my gun and make sure I aim somewhere between the neck so they just die like flies. Zakhona is the only one standing now, I think she just became sober immediately. I add two bullets then look at her.

Zakhona: "Makhosini, baby I can explain, they put me up to this I didn't want to kill her, I know how much she means to you."

Me: "Save your explanations to someone who actually gives a fuck."

She goes on her knees and raise her hands up.

Me: "You almost killed my daughter Zakhona!"

Zakhona: "Your daughter?"

I chuckle and cock my gun, she shuts her eyes.

Me: "No, open your eyes baby girl, I want you to see death coming like you wanted my little girl to see it."

Zakhona: "Makhosini, this is not you baby.."

I smile..

Me: "You're right, it's not."

I clean the gun then give it to her, I know it's not registered by my father, he took it from the guys who hijacking me and now it has come in handy. She stares at the gun then at me.

Me: "Now you will explain this to the police and trust me no one will believe you it's me and you know why? There's no motive, I don't even know you like that you just happened to attend my brother's funeral no one have seen us together."

Zakhona: "NO, Makhosini don't do this to me!"

Me: "You were going to jail anyway for attempted murder because I wasn't gonna let you go free for that but I just thought why not make it a murder charge huh?"

She is shaking I just walk out, my car is parked a distance away from the house. I drive back home and sneak in to change before Thobeka and Sam see me.

I join them in the lounge, they are eating the food I came back with in the morning. I kiss her cheek and pull Sam to my lap.

Me: "Mfana wami."(My boy)

He smiles, I look at his mom, she is smiling staring at us.

Me: "We can go pack up your stuff today, I want you close to me."

Thobeka: "We can do it."

Just then my phone rings, an unsaved number.

Me: "Hello."

"Baba mina ngiyakukhumbula ngicela uzongilanda angifuni ukuba la."(Dad please come fetch me I don't want to be here.)

That's Hloni crying over the phone.

Me: "But my love the doctors should discharge you first once you're ok."

She just cries and drop the call, I sigh.

Thobeka: "It's Hloni?"

I nod.

Me: "She's crying, she doesn't want to stay there anymore she misses me."

She smiles.

Thobeka: "You're the best dad."

I smile.

Me: "I know.."

Thobeka: "So..Uhm...what happened to her mom? Is it the lady that was here the last time I dropped you off."

That question catch me off guard.

Thobeka: "You don't have to talk about it, seems like you guys are still together but having problems."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "Then why would I ask you out?"

Thobeka: "To pass time I guess."

Me: "Ay MaMthiyane that's not true, I wouldn't do that, I broke up with her and she's not going to get me back, sengithathiwe ke."(I'm taken?)

Thobeka: "Ubani?"(By who?)

I laugh.

Me: "Awazi wena ukuthi ngizizwa kanjani njengoba wena noSamkelo nila NAMI."(You don't know how I feel having you and Samkelo here with me.)

Thobeka: "Tell me."

Her eyes tell a story, I think she is falling for me, the look she is giving me is intense. She is staring at me waiting for me to speak, she is so close I want to kiss her.

Me: "I guess you like a man who is vocal about his feelings huh?"

Thobeka: "I wouldn't know, this is my first time doing this."

Me: "Well, having you and Samkelo here makes me feel complete, like I have my whole family under one roof, I dreamt of this, I thought I had lost my mind because of this but it turned to be a reality, you are real."

Thobeka: "Do you really want to be with me?"

I smile.

Me: "More than anything in this world. I'm glad we're not rushing to anything because I am still recovering so some things we won't be doing for now."

She stares at me confused.

Thobeka: "What are some things?"

Me: "Sex.."

She chokes on her saliva, I smile shaking my head.

Thobeka: "But I think sex is just overacted in a relationship, not everything is about it."

Me: "You're right about one thing, not everything is about it but about being overacted that's not right, sex is more than just penetration, it is about intimacy, sharing deep conversations with just our bodies, connect your souls, that is why I always refuse sex if I am angry, you can walk around naked and I won't touch you at all because I want to be in my right mind to do it."

She looks down shyly.

Thobeka: "I'm scared of sex you know, my friends at Varsity once hooked me up with a guy, when we were alone in the room I screamed so hard he thought I was possessed."

Me: "But we slept the whole night together in one room."

Thobeka: "I'm not scared of you."

She says with a very charming attitude.

Me: "Oh it's like that?"

I get up, she get up and move back.

Me: "I thought you said you're not scared of me."

Thobeka: "Ay vele."

I laugh, Samkelo walk in the room so we can go and pack their clothes.

I open the passenger seat for my lady then buckle my son at the back, he is excited about moving.

I park outside their gate.

Thobeka: "Are you staying here?"

I nod.

Me: "If your mother is around it will be disrespectful if I come in."

She sighs and take Samkelo, they walk inside. I close my eyes and lean on the seat. I hear banging on my window I quickly open and step out.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Samkelo: "Grandma and mom are fighting."

I hear glasses shattering, I rush in and find Thobeka and her mom staring at each other like their ready to kill one another. Her mom is a middle aged woman, not old at all so I don't get why she would want to sweep rape under the carpet, old people from the past did that, they would hide rape and ask the rapist to pay damages and that was wrong, it wasn't punishment enough.

Me: "Thobeka.."

"Buka! Ufaka amadoda emzini wami bese uthi urayishiwe sake sarayshwa isfebe?"(Look! You bring boys inside my house and say you were raped, who would rape a hoe!)

Her words makes me flinch.

Thobeka grab a glass on the table and throws it her mother's way luckily it hits her on her chest not her face.

Thobeka: "Uzosazi isifebe namhlanje."(You'll know a hoe today!)"

She grabs a mop and break it so fast I don't even know how she did it.

"Ingakho amadoda abezitika ngawe awunasmilo wena."(That's why men were playing with you, you don't have discipline.)

These are not words of a mother, there's no way.

Thobeka charges at her but I grab her waist she tries to move but I hold her tight.

Me: "Nimubukisani umntwana?"(What do you want the child to see?)

Thobeka: "Let go, I want to get out of here."

She sounds calm. I let her go she walks away to her bedroom.

I look at this woman and shake my head.

"Uthembeke kangaka Nkosana ufuna isfebe ukhulise ihlongandlebe."(You're a well respected Prince yet you want a hoe and to raise an illegitimate child?"

Me: "Uyayazi lento ekuthiwa inimba?"(Do you know something called compassion.)

She just looks at me blankly.

Me: "A pain of childbirth, some mothers protect their children because they know the pain they went through for that child to be in this world they'll do anything! But then there is you! You don't have any of empathy I even doubt that you're a woman."

She clicks her tongue. I go to Thobeka and find her sitting at the corner like a little child, she is hugging her knees rocking herself back and forth. I kneel in front of her and stretch out my hands, she gives me a little smile and hold them.

Me: "I'm here now, no one will ever hurt you or our children again."

Thobeka: "Help me pack up."

Me: "Can I kiss you first?"

She nods nervously. I kiss her passionately until Sam clears his throat Thobeka jumps up on her feet.

Thobeka: "Uhm...he..hey baby."

I get up and look at Sam, he is smiling.

Samkelo: "Are you guys going to get married like people do on TV?"

I chuckle as Thobeka looks at me.

Me: "One day we will boy."

We pack up their stuff and I tell her to leave bedding and other things, we will buy them tomorrow during her lunch time.

When we are about to walk out, her mom stops us by the door.

"I hope you didn't take anything that belongs to me."

Thobeka: "You don't have much yourself why would I take something from you?"

"From today ngizigezile ezami izandla ngawe."(I give up on you)

Thobeka: "That's like doing me a huge favour."

"Uzongidinga ngelinye ilanga."(You will need me one day.)

Thobeka chuckles.

Thobeka: "Now you're reaching but keep telling yourself that if it will make you sleep better at night."

I take Samkelo out of the room as they have verbal arguments saying vile things to each other and I don't want my son to be subjected to such.

I drive to their place and we just unpack what's in the boxes then we go back to my place because there are a lot of things we should buy for the house.

I fetch my daughter from the hospital, she is clinging on me for dear life, I love her.

Hloni: "Baba.."

I am walking to the car.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami?"

She giggles.

Hloni: "You and Zakhona won't be together anymore right? She shot me that day, she is the one who held the gun pointed at me."

I hold her tight.

Me: "I will never be with someone who hurt you, I will always choose you."

I look at her and remove hair from her face, she has a lot of hair just like Nelile, their afros are big and pitch black. She smiles and wrap her arms around my neck.

Hloni: "Thank you baba."

We get in the car and I drive us home. Samkelo runs to us and they hug tight. My daughter is limping so she can't stand for long. Thobeka get up and hug her as well.

Thobeka: "Come take a seat, I cooked I hope I didn't overstep."

Me: "No you didn't love, thank you."

Hloni: "Love?"

I just ignore her and go with Thobeka to the kitchen as she dish up. We eat then we let the kids sleep first before we go to bed together.

Me: "Are you always gonna sleep with me wearing a gown?"

She shakes her head.

Me: "Take it off my love I won't do anything."

She takes it off sleeping with only my t-shirt, I can see her buttcheeks.

She get in bed, I pull her leg and put it on top of me then she sleeps in my arms.

In the morning I wake up to someone buzzing none stop at the gate. I kiss Thobeka's cheek and wear my pants walking out. I sigh and open the gate for the two detectives I know with Hloni's mom. I allow them in my lounge they sit down.

Me: "What can I do for you Detectives?"

"Uh...Gumede this woman told us you took her daughter without her consent, she wanted to press charges against you for kidnapping but we asked this to be a civil matter."

Me: "You should have let her press those charges you know."

Hloni and Sam step in the room, I can see my daughter wants to run away.

Me: "Come here you two, sit here next to me."

They sit next to each other closer to me.

"Which one is your child ma'am?"

She points at Hloni.

"Your mother is here to fetch you little girl."

Hloni: "I'm not leaving with her."

Me: "You heard the child detectives now if you'll excuse me I have things to do."

Thobeka walk in the room wearing jeans and her work golf t-shirt and white sneakers this girl is killing me with those jeans. She stands there looking around, I am just looking at her whole body, when I look at the detectives they are also staring.

Me: "Ok I think it's time for you to leave detectives."

"I am here to fetch my daughter and I am not leaving without you."

Thobeka is so confused. I get up and go over to her.

Me: "You gonna be late for work, I will drive you ok."

Thobeka: "What's going on?"

I sigh.

Me: "That's Hloni's mother."

She widens her eyes out.

Me: "It's definitely not what it looks like baby, come on."

I want to laugh because I know what she's thinking.

Me: "Uhm..Hloni is not my biological daughter."

She is shocked.

Thobeka: "What?"

I chuckle.

Me: "She is Nelile's little sister, my brothers wife."

Thobeka: "You're lying but...no man she's your daughter."

Me: "Yes she is my daughter but... not biologically."

I can tell she doesn't believe me. Hloni and Sam comes to me and they both hold my hands I smile looking at Thobeka.

Me: "And I will love your son to a point where people don't believe he's not mine like you don't believe Hloni isn't."

I kiss her lips.

Me: "I can see you're out for words, let me take you to work we will speak during lunch time."

She nods and pass the detectives.

Me: "You are still here?"

I walk them out.

Me: "Detectives Uhm..there is a court case pending and it involves that woman, Social workers are also involved I am a temporary guardian for Hloniphile but I am working on adopting her."

The mother lose it and tries to grab on Hloni.

Me: "If you fail to love your child, someone will love her better, just know that and make peace with it."

I take Thobeka to work then I do some shopping for my kids,they want same colours for everything and I don't mind. We then have breakfast.

Hloni: "Baba?"

I look at her.

Hloni: "Do you think Sam's mom will have a problem if I call her mom too?"

Me: "I don't think she will have a problem at all."

Hloni: "Ok, you guys kissed this morning."

Me: "So what? Why were you even looking?"

They both laugh so hard.

Hloni: "Are we gonna be a family?"

Me: "We already are a family."

Samkelo: "Mom is so free at your house she even cooks but at home we will eat take aways almost everyday."

Me: "Then how did she leave you with your granny?"

Samkelo: "She would leave me with instructions not to eat anything she cooked, stay in my room, a lot of things."

I shake my head, that environment wasn't healthy for a little boy like him.

Me: "She didn't leave any instructions today?"

He laughs.

Samkelo: "No daddy."

Me: "That's cool."

Samkelo: "I have never seen anyone kiss mom before!"

Me: "Isishimane umama wakho." (Your mother is unlucky in love.)

They laugh like they know what I mean.

Me: "But I'm gonna kiss her now and you will have to look away."

Lunch time, me and their mother do some shopping after our lunch together.

I make sure people see that she's with me because wow the way men look at her irritates the hell out of me.

.....
It's been a month since Thobeka and I made things official but we haven't been intimate, she is still afraid of physical touch even though she doesn't mind being kissed but when it comes to taking off off clothes she always stop me and It's all good, I understand her.

I just woke up alone in bed I am at the Commune. I go to the bathroom to pee, I shut my eyes when I feel so much pain right on my groin. I stop peeing and balance my hands on the sink, I think I need to see a doctor, this pain comes and goes from time to time but it's worrying me.

I leave Sam and Hloni with their mother because she's off at work. I go to the doctor.

He conclude that I have prostate problems judging from the symptoms I told him about.

Me: "But I have been masturbating a few times and I do ejaculate."

He nods and ask to check my sperms and all, I have to take an injection on my balls and I allow it because I want to know if I'm ok. I spend the whole day waiting for the results, I keep calling my kids to check on them.

After a long waiting period the doctor walks in with a file. He speaks a lot of things but what almost stopped my heart is that I may never have kids of my own, that injury cost me my ability to make any woman pregnant I don't even know the term he used because I walked out of that room and left him calling my name.

I drive back home and not to my kids and Thobeka.

Every men want to expand his family, the legacy, I am in the process of adopting Hloniphile but what if the woman I'm with want more kids, should I even tell her about this now or should I keep it to myself? Maybe that's what that dream was all about? I will never have kids of my own and my ancestors gave me two, a son and a daughter.

My phone has been ringing none stop but I can't answer it, it beeps indicating a text message **You should have told the kids you won't be coming back, they waited for you till they fell asleep because you promised to watch a movie with them.**

I toss the phone on the side and wipe my face, I wasn't expecting this at all and I don't want to lie, it hurts.

CHAPTER 89

*

MAKHOSINI

*

I went to bed very early last night and I switched off my phone, I couldn't go back to my kids and act normal I didn't want them to be worried about me, kids can feel it if someone is not ok I didn't wanna bring that energy to them.

It's morning I just woke up and made tea but I can't drink it. I hear keys turning then my father walk in, He stares at me I walk over to him then we shoulder hug.

Nkosiyo: "Your mother and I have been trying to call you since yesterday."

Me: "I switched off my phone."

Nkosiyabo: "Why?"

I just sit down, he sit next to me.

Nkosiyabo: "Where is Hloni?"

Me: "She's next door with a lady called Thobeka."

He nods.

Nkosiyabo: "What's wrong?"

I swallow a painful lump in my throat.

Me: "I have been feeling pain whenever I pee so yesterday I went to see a doctor, he did some tests, even took my semen and..."

He put his hand on my shoulder.

Me: "Uhm...so he found out I won't be able to have kids."

He blinks.

Me: "You won't have any bloodline coming from me baba."

Nkosiyabo: "I'm sorry to hear this son, I know how much you love children and I know you had hope that one day you will have more kids."

He sighs.

Nkosiyabo: "But you have Hloni, blood doesn't matter, you guys share this amazing bond even some biological parents don't have with their own flesh and blood, you have been an amazing father to that little girl, so this is not the end of the world."

Me: "But why do I feel like it is? What will a person I'm with feel about this?"

Nkosiyabo: "If she doesn't accept you as you are then I guess she was never meant to be with you, a woman that loves you will show support

in this situation, she will assure you that she's there and you will find ways around this."

I wipe my face.

Me: "I've never felt like this my entire life, I feel like my life is over."

Nkosiyo: "But it's not if anything it's about to begin, in a few days you will be signing documents making Hloni yours officially, we will go home and tell our ancestors about our Princess."

I smile a little.

Me: "That gives me hope baba, thank you for coming."

Nkosiyo: "If one of you is not ok I feel it, we're one, remember?"

I smile.

Me: "I remember."

We hug tight then he leaves to check on Bukhosi, he will then go check on Thingo, when he comes to Durban he doesn't leave without seeing all of us here, It's better he lives fulltime with my other brothers and their wives.

I am standing outside the commune yard, I can hear noise inside, I take a deep breath and walk in. I can see Thobeka sitting on the floor with them playing something with their hands, they are having fun.

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

Sam jumps up first and rush to me wrapping his arms around my waist, I pick him up.

Me: "How are you?"

Samkelo: "I'm well baba and you?"

Me: "I'm fine champ.."

I look at Hloni and Thobeka, they just continue to play, I think they are angry at me and I understand.

Me: "Love.."

They both look at me.

Me: "Come to dad princess."

She get up and come to me I hang my arm on her shoulder. Thobeka get up and go to the kitchen. I can see she was waiting for a kettle to boil so she can make tea, they are having breakfast.

I put Sam down and go to her.

Me: "Thobeka.."

Thobeka: "Should I make breakfast for you or you're leaving soon?"

She's really angry.

Me: "Uhm...It took long with the doctor."

I did tell her where I'm going.

Thobeka: "How did it go?"

Me: "Uhm..he gave me some medication, they will help with the pain."

She nods.

Thobeka: "So you couldn't drive back?"

I slowly nod.

Thobeka: "Or answer any of my calls?"

I sigh.

Thobeka: "Then you thought it was best to switch it off because I was becoming a nuisance, or you were with that lady fixing things?"

I shake my head.

Me: "No, Thobeka don't go there, I am not cheating love."

She shrug her shoulder like she don't care.

Thobeka: "They both cried because you promised to watch the Lion King with them, they have never watched it and we're excited to watch it with their dad but you disappointed, you disappointed me Makhosini."

Me: "I'm sorry Sthandwa Sami, I made a mistake, I was drowsy from the medication and I slept home thinking I will wake up early and come back."

She serves me and the kids breakfast then go sit on the couch.

Me: "Awudli wena?"(You're not eating?)

Thobeka: "No, I will eat some other time."

I nod and eat but food isn't going down I am thinking, it's too early in our relationship if I tell her this she might leave me, she hasn't gotten attached to me that way, she can still move on with her life like I never existed.

Thobeka: "You don't like your food?"

I look at her.

Thobeka: "You're not eating."

Me: "I..I think I am coming down with flu I don't know."

She nods and get up taking the plate from me.

I call Hloni and Samkelo, they both stand in front of me.

Me: "I'm really sorry for ruining our plans yesterday I got held up at hospital, I will never do that again, do you forgive me?"

Samkelo: "Are we gonna watch today?"

Me: "Yes, we can even watch it right now, we will watch it at Mom's room, she will close the curtains for us and we will sit in her bed."

They jump in excitement. I bought two TV screens for Thobeka which she said one is fine but I insisted we buy two and keep one in her room because sometimes I watch soccer and the kids don't care about that but cartoons. It's huge and we will be comfortable in her huge bed that she insisted to contribute at least a quarter to it and I agreed so be bought it.

We leave Thobeka to make Popcorns and drinks for us then I set up everything so we can watch. We are leaning on the headboard covered in a fleece they are both sleeping on my chest. Thobeka joins us and sit next to Hloni so she moves and let Thobeka sit next to me so she can sleep on Thobeka's chest.

We watch the movie, they are so amazed, this is the best movie ever made I must say, it can be watched children and old people it's amazing. Towards the end they are sleepy but trying so hard not to fall asleep. By the time it's over they are gone, fell asleep just like that. I smile and look next to me, Thobeka is awake just quiet.

Me: "Angithandi ukukubona ungajabulile ngenxa yami, Ngiyaxolisa."(I hate seeing you unhappy because of me, I'm sorry)

Thobeka: "I'm fine, it's ok."

I can see that "it's ok" is not genuine.

Me: "MaMthiyane.."

Thobeka: "Maybe it's because I haven't given you sex you're becoming impatient, I understand."

Me: "That's not it I promise you, I was also healing the time we started dating I wasn't in any rush to have sex."

Thobeka: "But now you're ok, I have seen your thing getting big everytime you kiss me."

Me: "That doesn't mean I will go out and stick my dick to any hole I find out there."

There's a silent gasp from her maybe it's the choice of words I used that makes her act like that.

Me: "I'm sorry about yesterday, I really am."

She nods.

Thobeka: "Are you going to take them to their beds?"

I nod and get off bed. I take Sam first and take him to his room, it has two beds one for Hloni and one is his. I put them in bed then go back to Thobeka, I can hear the shower running I sit there and wait for her. My phone rings, it's my eldest brother.

Me: "Uuka."

Kumkani: "Unjani?"(How are you?)

I sigh, dad must have told them I am going through something, we don't keep secrets from each other but I know he didn't tell him the whole thing because he wants me to tell them myself when I'm ready, that's how he does it to all of us, he tells them so they can check up on me then I will decide when I want to tell them.

Me: "Kuyabheda mfowethu."(It's hard brother)

Kumkani: "Talk to me."

Me: "I..I just found out I can't have kids of my own."

Kumkani: "But you have Hloni."

I smile, I know these are words of comfort, they want me to know that not all is lost, Hloni is there, they don't know about Thobeka and Sam for now.

Me: "I know brother.."

Kumkani: "Look, no matter what you're going through know that we're there to support you as your siblings, we love you."

I smile.

Me: "Phakathwayo."

My phone is buzzing and those are the pecks of having many siblings the last call is from Ngcebo now Thobeka has stepped out of the shower she has a towel wrapped around her body. I walk out with my phone on my hand.

Me: "Mntwana."

Ngcebo: "Gumede."

We are both quiet for a while, most of my family members are emotional beings I know that the reason he is quiet it's because he is crying, Mom, Bukhosi and Thingo cried too.

Me: "I'm fine Bhuti."

Ngcebo: "You know I should have tried harder to reach you that day, I'm so sorry Gumede.."

I look down at my feet, that's confirmation enough that all of this is real, I was waiting for Ngcebo to say something I had that little hope that he will tell me Naaa those Doctors are lying but no, he is crying feeling pain for his fellow brother.

Me: "It's okay."

Ngcebo: "Be strong ok, I will try to plead with the ancestors they have to do something."

Me: "Thank you Mnguni."

I drop the call and go back to the room and find Thobeka in her bra and panties and this is the first time I see her like this, looks like she

is looking for something to wear, she takes the towel and wrap it back around her body.

Me: "I will just go out."

Thobeka: "You're leaving?"

Me: "I just... there's something I need to do."

Thobeka: "Oh..ok."

Me: "I will come back later."

She sit in bed and hold the corner of the towel.

Thobeka: "Are you really going to come back, I want to know what to tell the kids when they wake up and you're not here."

Me: "I am coming back Love."

Thobeka: "There's another thing I was afraid of introducing people to my son, inconsistency, coming and going in and out of his life I..."

Me: "So I'm inconsistent? I'm not the ideal man to father your son?"

She looks at me with so much pain in her eyes, I shouldn't have said that and the tone I used wasn't right, I'm just not ok.

Me: "I..."

Thobeka: "I guess what I said came out wrong, I just hate the way they were yesterday, the disappointment when you didn't show up, failing to calm them down because I didn't even know if you're still coming or not, I was....I...I got angry, I asked myself why did I let my son get this close."

She wipes her tears.

Thobeka: "I know it was wrong of me to think that way about you, it was just once that you didn't show up but seeing them cry for you was too much for me."

I open my mouth to say something but words gets stuck in my throat, this is the woman I want to build a solid relationship with, I don't want to lose her so soon, I feel like telling her the truth now will ruin things for me, I will wait just a little bit.

I walk out, but I feel a hand grabbing my arm, I turn only for her to fall into my arms holding me tight.

Thobeka: "What's wrong? I know you hate disappointing them so much, what went wrong?"

Hearing her cry hurts me, I hold her.

Thobeka: "Don't leave please, I will leave you alone if that's what you want, just stay at least until they wake up please."

What kind of father am I then? Having to be begged to stay for the kids? What am I? A selfish human being, that's what I am right now.

Me: "I will stay.."

I wipe her tears.

Me: "I'm sorry, I will stay for you and the kids."

She walks away wiping her tears, I sit on the couch and I have so many things running through my head. Maybe that's why I won't t have kids of my own blood, I am judging myself now, I'm going through it! I feel all the pain, I keep tapping my foot down, maybe I should cancel the adoption, maybe I should leave and go back to my parents at the village, I should let Thobeka go.

My kids walk in the room holding each other and now my tune is changing now, seeing them makes me want to stay and do better for them, I can't let my emotions make me lose these little human beings.

Hloni: "Baba we fell asleep, we didn't see the end!"

She says whining.

Samkelo: "Me too, dad can we watch it again please."

I smile and pull them to me holding both of them.

Me: "I love you guys."

The smiles on their faces bring back the hope that I had lost.

Samkelo: "We love you too dad."

We go back in the room and we watch the whole movie all over again but Thobeka just packed her laundry and walked out.

I leave them eating the lunch I made and go check on their mom, I find her leaning on the wall staring at the washing machine, I think her mind is not here.

Me: "You've been in here for a while."

I stand in front of her and brush her arms.

Me: "Are you working on Thursday?"

Thobeka: "I think so."

Her tone is low.

Me: "Then I will have to take Samkelo with, Hloni and I are going to court to sign all the parental rights."

She smiles.

Thobeka: "Congratulations though I still find it hard to believe Hloni is not your biological daughter, even with my son, are you sure you're not his biological father?"

She is making a joke out of this? That means there is light at the end of the tunnel for real, she sure is letting go of the past little by little.

Me: "Well I am not their biological father but I am their real father."

She gives me that giggle.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda MaMthiyane futhi nguwe wedwa empilweni yami."(I love you MaMthiyane and you're the only one in my life)

Thobeka: "Really?"

Me: "I will never cheat on all of this, beauty with brain, hot body, beautiful face and a good heart, into engiyishoyo ukuthi unakho konke. The whole package"(What I mean is you have everything.)

She bite her lower lip.

Thobeka: "Ngiyezwa Phakathwayo."(I hear you Phakathwayo.)

If I was a phone charging I would be 100% full right now, that's the love I have for her this moment, there is not even a little percentage left.

I hold her waist and kiss her and today it doesn't take long to kiss me back, she just do it I get aroused right there and then.

I look at her, her eyes are smaller her smile is telling me something, I just don't know what.

Me: "What's going on?"

She drops her eyes shyly.

Me: "Talk to me."

Thobeka: "Uhm...I..Did the doctor say you're ok?"

I squint my eyes, I think I know where this is going.

Me: "Yeah I'm fine."

I decided to just put my situation at the back of my mind and try to live in the moment.

She nods.

Thobeka: "You will set up their kiddies swimming pool outside, right?"

I give her a side smile, what is she up to, I can sense the nerves though.

Me: "I will go and do it while you finish up here."

I set up the pool that we bought a few weeks ago because I don't want them to use the pool at the back until they get swimming classes. I help them wear their swimming costumes then give them the water guns, I got the whole set.

Me: "Mom and I have some adult talk to discuss ok, you can play here and mom will bring you your snacks and drinks ok."

"ok!" They are not even looking at me but already jumping on the pool, water stops by their knees for their safety. Thobeka comes with their snacks and walk back in. I make sure the gate is locked and they are playing on the side no one can see them there, I am still cautious ever since Hloni's shooting.

I walk inside the room and find the windows closed, it's dark and there's music playing on her small speaker on the bedside. She's not here. I sit in bed and take off my shoes, she comes in wearing a white silk gown, she looks nervous but her walk is still the same I think she is trying to be confident about this.

She stands in front of me, I get up and look down at her.

She put her hand on the back of my neck pulling me closer and I am shook, is she initiating the kiss?

I kiss her back holding her waist, usually I would grab her ass but she would quickly remove my hands there but now she slowly takes my hands there and I get startled by her moans but I quickly compose myself.

I am so hard, my dick is even leaking, I push her to bed making her slowly lie down on her back the get on top of her not breaking the kiss but instead she breaks it.

Thobeka: "I'm scared but I want to do it with you, I trust you."

Her voice is shaky, that's how nervous she is.

Me: "Just keep your eyes on me baby, you can call my name to remind yourself this is the man you love, we're making love, ok love?"

She nods vigorously.

Me: "I won't hurt you."

I untie her gown and find her with just a white matching bra and panty underneath I curse under my breath. I pull down the strings of her bra not removing the bra, her breasts are firm clearly she has never breastfed before.

Me: "awuphakamise isinqa kancane baby."(Can you move your ass up a bit baby)

She do as I say and I slowly remove her panty, the bra is still all just that her breasts are exposed. I then let her watch me take off all the clothes I have on, she gasp looking away when she sees my dick it keeps twitching. I start at her neck leaving wet kisses and bites all the way down to her clit, I am looking at her as she bites her lower lip.

Me: "Don't be scared, I am making love to you, we won't fuck just yet.. it's too early for that."

I lick her clit once she starts shaking closing her eyes.

Me: "Don't close your eyes, uyangizwa angithi?"(You hear me, right?)

Thobeka: "Yes."

I lick her again, she moans out loud, I put my hand on the flat tummy and the other one goes under her ass squeezing her butt cheeks, I start sucking all over her pussy while trying to keep her in one position with my hand on her tummy..

Thobeka: "Oooh..."

She shakes once again tensing up as I feel her muscles on the thighs, I stare at her pussy giving it time until I see juices comes out, I smile and go back to her lips.

Me: "Ngizoyifaka kancane unganyakazi khona ngeke kube bhlungu kakhulu."(I will put it just a little, don't move so that it won't hurt much)

7 years and a couple of months without sex is something I am definitely sure she will feel pain, also it was taken from her by force so this is like the first time, to me it feels like that.

I rub my dick in her juices so it serves as a lubricant, it will be less painful.

I rub her until she lose her mind grabbing on the sheets then I give it time sliding it slowly, she bites her lower lip even tighter as I fit it all in.

Me: "You're amazing Sthandwa Sam.."

I shake my head and pull out, she opens her eyes only for me to slide it in again.

Me: "Ungawavali amehlo, lalela Indoda yakho phela."(Don't close your eyes, listen to your man)

She giggles and I feel goosebumps all over my skin I up my pace a bit her hands are now on my shoulders sinking her nails to it.

Me: "Fuck..."

I cuss as her pussy clench hard on my dick then let go.

Me: "Shit.."

Thobeka: "Babe...Aaaah..."

Her moans gives me motivation, I go in hard while pinching her nipples, her pussy clench on my dick again I fail to hold it in I cum hard my whole body becomes stiff for a few seconds.

Me: "Fuck!"

I look at her smiling, she smiles back, I pull her up and hug her tight kissing her forehead.

Me: "That was amazing, I loved every minute of it."

Thobeka: "Really?"

I chuckle.

Me: "Tell me to send all my money to your account now and see if I won't do it."

She laughs sweetly, oh man!

Me: "Ungiphe kamnandi."(You gave it to me good)

She look down.

Thobeka: "I was worried about you not finding me...you know..."

Me: "I loved every minute of this with you baby."

I go to the bathroom and take my towel wiping myself then go wipe her. I wear my pants and leave her in bed and go check on my babies, they are still having fun.

Me: "Are you guys doing ok here?"

"yes!" They say in unison, I go back inside and get in next to my beautiful woman, she snuggles closer.

Thobeka: "I feel good, I feel like a real woman."

Me: "I'm happy to hear that, I love you."

Thobeka: "I love you."

She blinks a bit.

Thobeka: "Uhm...I have heard people talking about contraceptives, do you think I should get one?"

I swallow, my heart skips a beat.

Me: "uhm...yeah...yes I will take you over the weekend."

She nods closing her eyes then hold my hand on my chest. What can I do? It's too soon to be dropping bombs on her, I can't, on other things I am not a coward but when it comes to Thobeka and those two amazing kids I am damn scared of losing them, I admit, I am a coward when it comes to losing them.

CHAPTER 90

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MAKHOSINI

*

Being here with these three amazing people gives me to much joy and comfort, makes me want to be better in life than I ever was before, I want to be a great man for Thobeka and a great father to these children.

I am getting them dressed so we can go to court, Thobeka already left for work.

Samkelo: "Where are we going again Baba?"

He's been asking about this ever since we woke up, I have to explain to him over and over the reason why we're going to court.

Me: "We're going to court son, for Hloni to be a Gumede."

Samkelo: "So she's going to use your surname?"

Me: "Yes."

Samkelo: "Then what about me?"

Oh I wasn't expecting that.

Me: "Me and mommy will change yours once we get married."

Samkelo: "Then why are you changing Hloni's now?"

Me: "You won't understand boy but I have to change Hloni because there are bad guys that wants to take her from me so if we use the same surname they can't take her."

He seems to be understanding a bit, the princess is so happy today, moving all around the house singing. I pick Sam up then hold my daughter's hand going to my car, I buckle them up then drive out.

We get to court before 9 o'clock so we sit outside the court, I see Hloni's mother walking in, she didn't wanna do this but the Social workers helped her see the bigger picture and told her about the open adoption, that means she can ask to see Hloni and speak to her I think that made her feel better, also I had a talk with her after Stickx verdict where he was sentenced for child abuse and other criminal offences that surfaced during his trial. I assured her of taking care of Hloni and protecting her with everything, she understood a bit.

I get up and we shake hands, Hloni just hold Samkelo, she hasn't forgiven her mother and we decided not to push her, she's a smart little girl we will let her be until she decides she is ok to talk to her mother again.

We walk in court and we're asked questions especially Hloni, the judge wants to see if she's really happy, and Hloni's mom is only asked if she wasn't bribed or intimidated into agreeing to this and we get a no from her. We sign all the documentations and also get a go ahead for changing my daughter's surname. We walk out of court and I drive straight to Home Affairs, there's a long line so I ask to talk to a Security, and he makes things faster for me I fill all the documents and give them a letter from the court and everything is well, they tell me they will contact me once the new certificate is issued, it won't be taking a day but a couple of weeks, by the time she goes back to school she will be Hloniphile Gumede.

When I drive home Samkelo is too quiet he even fall asleep and Hloni is just too excited, my mom and dad call first to congratulate me and so are my siblings, Ngcebo suggest we introduce Hloni to the ancestors over the weekend, so we will leave tomorrow.

I pick Sam up and take him to bed, then Hloni and I start cooking before mommy comes back home.

She walks in looking so tired, I take her bag and kiss her.

Me: "Hello love."

Thobeka: "I was moving up and down the whole day, I'm so tired!"

I help her sit down then take off her shoes massaging her feet.

Me: "I cooked, you can go take a bath and get in bed, I will bring your food in bed."

She smiles.

Thobeka: "Do men really do that?"

Me: "This man does"

Thobeka: "Oh..you know my father at home always demanded things, he would just come home and ask where is his food, I was always scared even before the rape."

I look down at her feet, she is able to talk about her life without crying and that is a sign of healing.

Me: "Uhm.. Tomorrow we have to go down to the Palace with Hloni, Saturday is her ceremony."

She nods and smile.

Thobeka: "Again, Congratulations Gumedede."

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you.)

I scoop her up she screams like a baby, I smile and take her to our room. I help her take off her clothes then massage her a bit which leads to a pussy massage with my dick buried in it and she loves it, she is responding to it verbally, she is cussing and calling my name. Once we cum we take a shower together then I step out first and wear my clothes. I dish up dinner for the four of us then set it up on the table. I go call the kids, I help Samkelo with bathing, Hloni already took the bath, the princess can bath even nine times a day.

We all sit around the table chatting but Sam is quiet.

Thobeka: "Is everything ok sweetie?"

She asks looking at Sam.

Samkelo: "Dad went to court with us today mommy."

Thobeka nods.

Samkelo: "He changed Hloni's surname but not mine."

I look down I thought I explained enough but he doesn't get it and I understand, they both call me dad I do things for both of them so this must be confusing for him, why is this one thing I am only doing for

Hloni and not him. Hloni brushes his back as tears start falling on his cheeks I feel so bad. I get up and hold him tight.

Me: "I'm sorry that you feel this way boy, but when the time comes I promise to change yours too."

Samkelo: "But tomorrow you will only take Hloni with you, you didn't talk about me!"

He cries harder on my shoulder I look at Thobeka, she shrug her shoulders looking concerned.

Me: "We won't leave you, we will go, all three of us, we will leave mom because she is working."

Samkelo: "I will go?"

Me: "Yes, I won't leave you."

Samkelo: "Ok."

I put him down and wipe his tears.

Me: "I'm sorry ok."

Samkelo: "I heard you talking to your dad, will he like me?"

I smile.

Me: "Yes! He will sure like you."

We leave them eating because I asked their mom to help me pack their clothes for the weekend.

Thobeka: "So I will be alone without you guys the whole weekend?"

Me: "I will call Auntie Connie to come stay with you if that's ok."

Connie is the lady that cleans at home, I know she won't mind. She's sweet and used to help mom and dad when they had Mcebisi and

Ngcebo because dad was still a Soccer star then and was travelling a lot.

Thobeka: "That will be better, thank you baby."

She gives me a kiss, I love random kisses from her.

Thobeka: "Maybe you should leave Sam and call Connie to come tomorrow so he can stay with her while I'm at work."

Me: "Why should I leave him?"

Thobeka: "Your family...what will they say? Who will you say he is?"

Me: "He's my son."

Thobeka: "They won't have a problem?"

Me: "Why would they, if they had a problem they wouldn't be holding this ceremony for Hloniphile."

She nods.

Me: "I'm from a very supportive and welcoming family, Sam will be fine don't worry."

Thobeka: "Ok, Uhm..then tomorrow morning you'll be able to take me to a doctor right?"

I nod looking down. I had promised that Friday I will take her to a doctor for contraceptive. We take the kids to bed then go to our bed.

Me: "Awungiphe nje futhi."(Please give me again)

Thobeka: "Uphiwani Gumede?"(What do you want Gumede)

I smile kissing her lips.

Me: "Uke ube ngaphezulu nje Sthandwa Sam uzenzele umathanda endodeni yakho."(Just get on top my love and do as you please with your man)

She gives me her lazy smile.

Thobeka: "You'll guide me?"

Oh she agrees, a lot of women often put up a fight when they have to do woman on top but my woman is just asking me to guide her, find yourself a right partner people!

She nervously sit on top of me.

Me: "Hold your joystick my love, don't be afraid."

She hold it, I smile at how scared she is, I love her so much.

Me: "Slowly slide it in baby so you don't hurt yourself."

She does that and she slowly goes down until it's fully in, I groan and she moans closing her eyes in total pleasure I love what I'm seeing.

Me: "Nyakazisa isinqa mama."(Move your waist my love)

She put her hands on my chest pressing me hard and she bites her lips, she hasn't moved much but I can tell she's cuming already.

Me: "Uyangirobha Thobeka."(You're robbing me Thobeka.)

She finally opens her eyes and give me a sly smile I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "Does cuming makes you cocky?"

She moves her waist once I groan.

Me: "Fuck...are you teasing me?"

She giggles.

Oh she's still horny as fuck and that gets my adrenalin pumping, my dick must be good, she just came but want more.

I hold her waist tight and show her the rhythm then she takes it from there moving her waist making sure my penis hits the right spot. Once

she ups the pace I am gone, done for, my hand goes hard on her thigh tapping it she screams throwing her head back, come on now! What is this girl doing to me.

Her hands goes on my knees then she rides me so good, I am on cloud nine.

Thobeka: "Oh...it feels so good...Ooh.."

I can tell she's getting tired so I flip us over she's underneath.

Me: "I want to make love to you from the back, I want to give you those fast strokes while tapping your ass, turn around baby."

She obeys, I position her to put her chest down on the bed and her ass up. I slide my dick grabbing her buttcheeks, she grabs the sheets tight.

Thobeka: "Aaah...."

Me: "You still think sex is overacted Sthandwa Sami?"

I ask while I give her fast strokes while tapping her ass here and there.

Thobeka: "No..yes... Khosi...baby."

I untie her braid and grab a fistful of it, I go in hard and when she meets my thrust I look up and go all in.

Me: "Thobeka...shit... don't stop baby come on..."

We are meeting each other's thrusts it's magical, I cum hard grabbing her ass tight, she is also going through her orgasm, I pull out and watch as both our cum come out of her tight pussy, this is getting me excited all over again. I turn her around and have her missionary style, she looks shocked I give her a wink which makes her blush underneath me, the eye contact is intense, it's like she is hypnotizing me I am getting a bit emotional, I love this woman.

Me: "I love you."

I pull her leg to my shoulder and go in faster, this round takes longer, I keep changing positions.

Thobeka: "Baba please chama phela sengikhathele."(Baby please cum I'm tired.)

That soft begging voice makes me cum instantly. I kiss her lips and pull her to my chest.

Thobeka: "Wenelile?"(Did you get enough)

I widen my eyes as she giggles hiding her face on my chest.

Me: "You're getting naughty, what if I say no?"

Thobeka: "Ngizokunika phela."(I will give it to you)

Me: "But you were begging me to finish because you're tired."

She smiles.

Thobeka: "Ay that took long I can't feel my cookie anymore."

I laugh so hard.

Thobeka: "I love you so much, you make me feel good about myself, I'm not afraid anymore I want to try out everything with you, I don't want to limit myself, I want to please you as much as you do."

Me: "Do please me Sthandwa Sami."

I am startled when she moves away from me and get on top of me tying her braids up, Gumede is already up. Did I just create a freak? I am asking myself as she smiles with my dick buried in her, I think sitting on it is her new favourite thing and I know why, she cums by just feeling it inside of her first before we can even start moving, I found myself a woman and I am not letting go.

She is sleeping on my chest, she looks so tired, she keeps opening and closing her eyes.

Me: "Sleep my love."

She close her eyes and pout her lips, I kiss her.

In the morning she goes to the bathroom first then come back sleeping on top of me.

Me: "Hey."

Thobeka: "We should wake up so we can go to a doctor, My shift start at 10 o'clock today."

This doctor topic upsets me, I wish I can find courage to tell her but I can't..not yet.

We get ready, I call Connie to come here instead of our house because she's supposed to go in today. I explain to her everything and that she's gonna stay with Thobeka I'm gonna pay her for this and they get along with Thobeka instantly.

Thobeka is with us as we get in the car.

Thobeka: "Are you guys going to miss me?"

Hloni: "Yes mommy, we will miss you but we will come back soon don't be sad."

Me: "Mutshela ukuthi somuphathela inyama yembuzi neyenkomo."(Tell her we will bring her cow and goat meat.)

Samkelo: "Kukhona izinkomo baba?"(There are cows dad?)

Me: "Yes umkhulu unezinkomo namagusha amaningi."(Yes Grandpa have many cows and sheep)

He is so excited, he was born and raised here so livestock will definitely fascinate him.

I stop my car at the gate and look around, there is a frame tent , the yard is packed people are moving around, the cars are parked outside standing in line, there are a lot of them.

I look at my kids at the back, they are amazed their mouth hung opened.

Samkelo: "WOW Dad is this your home?"

Me: "Yes."

Hloni: "It looks like a mall."

She haven't been here but to all the houses in Durban.

The security notices me and quickly walk over to me taking off his hat and bow his head a little.

"Nkosana, we have a space inside strictly for your car, you can drive in."

Me: "Thank you."

I drive in the yard and he shows me a parking spot, it wasn't here the last time I came home so it's still new. I step out and open the door for my kids to step out. They keep looking around I am smiling.

I see my dad walking up to us, Hloni runs to him, he picks her up spinning her around.

Hloni: "Kunjani Mkhulu wami."(How are you Grandpa.)

Nkosiyabo: "Ngiyaphila Nkosazana kaMkhulu, unjani wena?"(I'm well Grandpa's princess, how are you?)

Hloni: "Ngiyaphila, Kade ngikukhumbula mina."(I'm good, I was missing you)

Dad laughs and walk over to us, Samkelo is standing next to me holding my hand, he looks nervous.

Dad put down Hloni, he stands in front of Samkelo and stretch out his hand, Samkelo slowly give him his hand, they do a handshake.

Nkosiyo: "Why do you look nervous, uyamsaba yini umkhulu?"(Are you scared of Grandpa?)

Samkelo: "No, uthe ubaba wami uzongithanda nami njengoba uthanda uHloni."(My dad said you gonna love me like you love Hloni.)

Dad looks at me, I haven't told him about Thobeka and Samkelo, he knows that I'm with someone though, maybe they still think it's Zakhona.

Nkosiyo: "Your father was right I love you already, come get a hug.)

He picks him up and hug him.

Samkelo: "Umawethu simshiye ekhaya."(We left our mother at home)

I think he is relaxing a bit.

Nkosiyo: "Why didn't she come with you?"

Samkelo: "She's working and was sad that we're leaving her behind."

Dad is smiling.

All my brothers and Thingo comes to us and they bow their heads I do the same. Samkelo has his eyes all out, it's the first time he's seeing my siblings.

Samkelo: "Nonke nifana noBabam."(You all look like my dad)

Laughter fills the whole yard, the little man is so shocked.

Thingo: "Who is this little guy?"

Samkelo: "NgiyiNkosana yaBaba."(I am my father's Prince.)

I smile shaking my head.

Thingo takes him from dad.

Thingo: "Ubani igama laBaba?"(What's his name.)"

Samkelo: "uMakhosini."

He whispers they all burst in laughter once again.

They usher us in like we are VIPs of some sort. I dash out for a minute when I realise that Thobeka is calling.

Me: "Love."

Thobeka: "Hey, are you guys ok? Have you arrived home?"

Me: "Yeah we're good, the kids are inside with the whole family."

Thobeka: "Uhm..and...and Samkelo is he fine, do they like him?"

Me: "Sthandwa Sami, Samkelo is fine and having the time of our lives, everyone likes him."

She sighs.

Thobeka: "That's good. I miss you."

Me: "I miss you too but we will be back soon."

Thobeka: "I love you."

She drops the call without waiting for me to reply I smile and walk back in. Hloni is on Kumkani's lap and Samkelo is still sitting with Thingo, they are so welcoming to my kids and that warms my heart, they didn't know about Samkelo but they welcomed him with open arms. Mom takes them to the kitchen so they will eat then the wives serve all of us in the lounge.

Nkosiyabo: "So, Samkelo?"

Me: "I'm with his mother, it's been a month and a few weeks together."

Nkosiyabo: "And that drunk lady from the other day?"

Me: "I broke up with her after that day."

He nods.

Nkosiyabo: "What's her name? Does she love Hloni?"

I smile.

Me: "Her name is Thobeka Zondo."

Thingo: "uMthiyane.."

She says so loud we all stare at her.

Thingo: "What? That's my baby's name."

I laugh, they share the clan name.

Me: "And yes Baba Hloni loves her, she calls her mom."

He nods.

Nkosana: "I'm happy for you son I can see that you're genuinely happy."

I nod.

Me: "Thank you."

The following day the mood is great my kids are wearing matching outfits as mine, the first time I walk in the tent I am shocked to see how beautiful it is, my family really went all out for this ceremony, it looks like someone is getting married. My phone rings, it's my woman asking for pictures and I do a video for her instead. When it's time to go to the ancestral hut Samkelo refuse to be separated from Hloni so I have not choice but to walk in with both of them. My father is holding a white goat by it's horn Ngcebo burns the incense, just then another goat walk in by itself it's stands right in front of us staring at Samkelo.

Me: "Ngcebo.."

He smiles.

Ngcebo: "These are your children Gumede, introduce them.."

I kneel down and my kids kneel on my either side.

Me: "BoGumede, boPhakathwayo, oKhondo, NinaBoMnguni kaYeyeyez, Khondlo, ngilethe abantwana bami ekhaya, ngethemba ngibaphiwe yini ngicela nibamukele nibavike, uHloniphile noSamkelo." (I have brought my kids home, I believe I was given to them by you)

We slaughter the goats and put the animal skins on their left wrists, I didn't even tell Thobeka about this because I didn't think I will have to do this for Samkelo too but the goat just came in by itself, I wasn't gonna turn it back, the ancestors had already planned.

We slaughter the goat, dad ask Samkelo to hold it, he is a bit scared but willing to do it.

This ceremony is huge, it has gathered my family, they are all happy for me mostly because of my situation, they all know I won't be able to have kids of my own.

My children are happy and their happiness is what matters to me most.

I am a father to Hloniphile and Samkelo Gumede as recognized by my ancestors.

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CHAPTER 91

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MAKHOSINI

1209

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I have already taken our bags to the car I am just waiting for mom to finish dishing up meat to take to Durban, Samkelo and Hloni told her they promised their mom they will bring meat for her so that's why mom is packing so much food, scones, meat and a 6 pack of cold drink, she is over doing it.

Thabsie: "Makhosini I want to find my dishes when I get home in Durban."

I laugh.

Me: "Don't worry mom, you'll find everything."

She nods and give me the containers.

Thabsie: "And don't cohabit with that poor child for long, make things right for your children to grow up in a normal home."

Me: "Ma I'm not cohabiting."

Thabsie: "Keep telling yourself that but I'm serious, cohabiting is ungodly and if you do it for long without making things clear to her where this thing is going she'll lose interest, women know their worth baby."

I nod. She pull my neck and kiss my cheek.

Thabsie: "I love you and I'm proud of the man you're becoming, those two little kids are lucky to have a dad like you."

Me: "Ngiyabonga Ndlovukazi."(Thank you Queen.)

I bow my head a little then she walks me out.

I find my whole family waiting outside laughing at what Hloni and Sam are saying, people are always laughing when they are around my kids, they are funny.

Ngcebo: "When the time is right you will come back and consult with our ancestors, they will give you a sign."

Me: "Consult about what?"

Ngcebo: "Go home Gumede, and let me tell you, the sooner you open up to her the better."

I swallow looking away, I am just not ready.

Me: "Thank you everyone for what you did for me and my kids, I'm grateful."

Thabsie: "Nimuvakashela ugogo weHloniphile noSamkelo "(Do visit grandpma Hloniphile and Samkelo.)

Hloni: "We will visit grandma, bye everyone."

They wave as I drive out of the yard, and it hits me I don't know how Thobeka will react seeing iziphandla around Samkelo's wrist, I know it might be shocking for her but I hope she will understand.

I just drove inside the commune, her car is here which means she is home. The kids help me with the food and rush in to give it to their mom, I take the bags and draw in some deep breath. I walk in and find my kids chatting to their mother telling her everything that happened back home but Thobeka is just staring at Samkelo's wrist.

Me: "Sawubona Sthandwa Sami."(Hello my love)

I greet nervously, she raises her head up and stare at me.

Me: "Uhm...can..we talk in our bedroom please."

She smiles at the kids and give them the meat she was warming up, they are excited they loved all the meat, cow, goat and sheep they ate everything.

She walks away first, I walk in the room and close the door, she is already seated in bed I stand in front of her and smile nervously.

Me: "Can I..Can I at least get a hug, I missed you."

Thobeka: "I am freaking out right now but I'm trying to calm down because I have so much respect for you as a man."

I nod.

Thobeka: "I can see Hloni have Iziphandla around her left wrist and so it Sam, why?"

Me: "Because he is my son Thobeka."

Thobeka: "You're patronizing me Makhosini and I don't like it."

Me: "That is not my intention baby, but...Samkelo is my son and I had..."

I don't finish because she just get up and go open the drawer taking a scissor.

Me: "What are you going to do with that?"

Thobeka: "You want to make my son sick, Uhambe ufaka ingane yami iziphandla zemizi yabantu ufuna igule Makhosini!?"(You go around putting Iziphandla from different home, you want him to get sick Makhosini?)

She screams, I hold her hand.

Me: "Listen to me Thobeka.."

Thobeka: "No!"

She moves away then rush out, I run behind her as she takes Sam's wrist and attempt to cut Isiphandla, Samkelo screams for her to stop.

Me: "Thobeka stop! You're the one who is going to make him sick if you continue to do that, just give me some time to explain my love please!"

She tries again and a small piece falls on the floor, Samkelo starts shaking with his eyes rolling back I push Thobeka from him and hold him before he hits the ground.

I walk away with him going to my room, I remove his t-shirt.

Me: "Phakathwayo..uwuGumede wena, Meseni kaMusi..Qwabe.."

I recite the clan names, he slowly opens his eyelids.

Samkelo: "Baba.."

Me: "Nkosana."(Prince).

I help him sit up, Thobeka walk in the room, she has tears in her eyes.

Thobeka: "Baby.."

Samkelo: "Mama.."

Thobeka: "I didn't mean to hurt you."

He nods.

Samkelo: "Inyama Yami isekhona?"(Is my meat still there?)

Thobeka chuckles wiping her tears.

Thobeka: "Yes, go eat with your sister."

I help him get up because he is a bit dizzy, he walks out.

I can't even look at Thobeka, her eyes are piercing through my skin.

Me: "I'm really sorry, I know I should have called you first but everything happened so fast, It was out of my control."

Thobeka: "How Makhosini? How?"

Me: "We were already in the room with Hloni, her goat was there, I was ready to speak to my ancestors but another goat came in and

stared at Samkelo, I had to introduce the both of them Sthandwa Sami, that's what my ancestors wanted, I'm really sorry."

Thobeka: "I don't understand."

Me: "I guess they know my heart, they know how much I love those two kids, I love your son."

She sit down.

Me: "I know what I did was wrong.."

I look at her, she has her hands covering her face.

Me: "I'm so sorry."

Thobeka: "I still don't get it."

I take my phone and show her the video Mcebisi took when we were in that hut, none of us were aware he only showed us after the ceremony, he loves capturing important and beautiful moments at home. She sees everything as it happened.

Me: "We didn't even know he was taking the video, as you can see the goat came in by itself."

She is out for words staring at the screen.

Me: "I didn't mean to upset you my love."

She takes my phone and watch all the videos, she is crying, I think seeing her son this happy makes her emotional. Her shaky hand is on her mouth. She laughs through the tears as she sees a video of Kumkani teaching Hloni and Samkelo the Zulu traditional dance, they both got the hang of it very fast.

She toss the phone on the bed and wrap her arms around my neck sobbing. I hold her tight pulling her to my lap.

Me: "I love you so much.. ngiyakuthanda Thobeka."(I love you Thobeka)

I wipe her tears and kiss her lips she deepens the kiss holding onto my shoulders tight. I break the kiss and clear my throat.

Me: "Uhm..let me go check on the kids."

She nods getting off me, I walk out and find my kids eating so I just walk out getting some fresh air.

After a while Thobeka comes and sit next to me.

Thobeka: "I'm sorry for overreacting, I know you wouldn't do anything to hurt them I was just shocked and confused, thank you for being there for him Makhosini, I didn't know my son needed a father figure so bad until we met you."

I nod looking down.

Thobeka: "Please forgive me."

Me: "It's ok."

She nods.

Me: "Can I take the kids with me tomorrow?"

Thobeka: "To where?"

Me: "I need to go back home, I'm...I.."

Thobeka: "What's wrong, you just came back today?"

I brush my head.

Me: "Just promise me you won't ever break up with me and leave with my son Thobeka, no matter what."

Thobeka: "Why are you talking like this, did something happen?"

Me: "I don't know how to tell you this."

She stares at me.

Me: "Uhm...when I went to the doctor that day I found out something, I was scared to tell you...I know you gonna leave me."

Thobeka: "You're scaring me, are you dying?"

I shake my head.

Me: "I found out that I won't ever have children of my own, I only have Hloni and Samkelo, please I am begging you, don't take him away from me."

Thobeka: "What?"

She ask in almost a whisper.

Me: "I was scared of losing you. You, Hloni and Samkelo mean everything to me."

I look down.

Me: "That injury..."

I don't finish talking she just get up and walk back inside the house.

She walks out with her car keys I try to stop her but she raise her hand up.

Thobeka: "I need some air.."

Me: "Oak."

I wait for her till midnight, I'm scared I want to go look for her but I can't leave my kids alone . I hear the door opening, I rush to her and try to hug her but she steps back, I swallow looking down.

Me: "Where were you? I was worried."

Thobeka: "I just took a drive around then ended up at the beach, I needed some air."

I nod.

Thobeka : "Use the guest room."

She walks away and close the door.

I stay awake till morning, I am sitting in the dark in the lounge, I couldn't go to bed.

She walks in and switch on the lights already dressed for work but it's still early I think she wants to avoid me. She gets startled when she sees me.

Thobeka: "Hi."

Me: "Where are you going?"

Thobeka: "To work."

Me: "You never leave this early MaMthiyane."

She doesn't say anything, but pack her lunch.

Me: "Can we talk Mama ka Samkelo, Ngiyakucela."(please)

She walks out without saying another word.

During the day I pack my kids clothes and take them to the car, I drive us back to the Palace. My parents are shocked to see me back here.

Nkosiyabo: "Makhosini.."

Me: "Baba."

Nkosiyabo: "How are you back here again? Is everything ok."

Me: "I told Thobeka the truth baba, she is ignoring me, she left yesterday and came back at midnight. She will leave me."

Nkosiyabo: "Did you tell her you're coming here Khosini?"

I shake my head.

Me: "I know she is thinking of leaving me, I want to see her leaving without Samkelo, she doesn't even want me to explain myself!"

He stares at me with a frown on his face.

Nkosiyo: "Are you saying you are going to keep them away from their mother?"

Me: "Yes, Unless she allows us to talk."

Nkosiyo: "Makhosini I know what loving a woman do to you, but what you want to do is wrong, go back to Thobeka right now."

I shake my head.

Me: "I will wait for her to call me and allow me to explain myself."

It's 4 o'clock I know she just got home, my phone has been ringing none stop, I don't know how to answer her. Mom grabs it from my hand and answer it on speaker.

Thobeka: "Makhosini, you packed the kids clothes, where did you go!?"

Thabsie: "Sawubona Sisi."

Thobeka: "He..hello."

Thabsie: "I am Makhosini's mother."

I hear the beep sound, she dropped the call.

Thabsie: "Unlock this phone wena!"

She says with a stern voice, I unlock my phone, she makes a call.

"Hello".

Thabsie: "Thobeka don't be scared, I'm Makhosini's mom and I am against what he did leaving with the kids without telling you, ok?"

I can hear Thobeka crying on the phone and that hurts me, now I regret what I did.

Thobeka: "He just left, I was scared when I found the kids wardrobe upside down, how can he do this to me."

Thabsie: "He will bring them back don't worry."

Thobeka: "Ok."

Mom drops the call and stares at me squinting her eyes I think she got that from dad, you know when people have been together for so long they end up looking alike and even acting just the same, that's my mom and dad.

Thabsie: "What you did was very low!"

I look down in shame.

Thabsie: "You don't use kids to fight your battles no matter what!"

I nod. She clicks her tongue and walk away shouting for "Baba ka Uuka."

I sleep with my kids in my room. Samkelo is sleeping next to me and Hloni is next to him.

Me: "I don't know how you will feel when your mother decide to take you away from me, but when that happens know that I will be hurting."

I kiss his forehead and sleep facing up.

My phone beeps, it's a text message **I already found a place to stay with my son, please bring him back tomorrow morning.**

I swallow a lump in my throat. I try to call her but her number is not going through.

In the morning my father literally drags me out of bed, my kids are not here.

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Nkosiyabo: "Go back with the kids and if Thobeka wants to take her son allow her because what you did was disgusting!"

I nod and go take a shower. I drive back to Durban and the kids walk in happily, they don't know anything.

I walk in after a while and find Thobeka hugging both of them then she tells them to go to their room.

Me: "MaMthiyane.."

She nods.

Thobeka: "I once told you that I hope that one day I find a job because when you depend on someone they become so entitled to you they start doing vile things! That's what you did Makhosini, you pay for this place so you think you can just do whatever you want because you have the power."

Me: "I didn't mean.."

Thobeka: "I'm leaving, not because of your situation but..."

Me: "It's fine, you don't have to explain I understand."

She nods.

Thobeka: "I'm gonna pack Samkelo's clothes."

Me: "Ok, don't remove iziphandla, they will fall on their own."

She nods and walk away. I follow her and pack Hloni's clothes, I think it's time to go back home with my daughter.

I take her clothes to my car and fetch her, Thobeka is also fetching Samkelo.

Thobeka: "Samkelo, let's go."

The kids are so confused.

Me: "Uhm..if he gets sick you can call me, I will take him home, they know him as my son."

Samkelo: "Dad are you and Hloni coming with us?"

Me: "No boy, you can go with your mom son, I will see you, ok?"

I sit on the bed and hug him tight.

Me: "I love you."

amkelo: "I love you too dad."

He walks out with his mother.

Me: "Let's go home baby."

Hloni: "Where is Sam and mom going dad?"

Me: "Uhm..they are visiting a family friend."

She nods.

I pick her up and take her to the car, Thobeka is already out of the gate driving away.

I drive home and let my daughter go to her room while I go to my room. I send a text to mom **she left me** the sleep in bed with my eyes closed my heart is aching.

I don't even know if she left me because of my situation or because I left with her son without telling her but all in all I understand her and I accept it.

CHAPTER 92

*

THOBEKA

*

Samkelo have been crying none stop we are at the empty flat, there is no bed or anything, I am just sitting on the floor with my son on my lap rocking him back and forth but he's not stopping.

Samkelo: "Mom let's go back to dad, I don't want to stay here!"

Me: "No, we will stay here, we gonna be ok."

Samkelo: "No Thobeka I want to go!"

Me: "Samkelo stop, you've only met these people few days ago, stop getting attached to people you don't know."

He get off me and go to the door, he starts banging it hard like he's crazy I'm afraid the neighbours will be irritated so I quickly get up and pull him away from the door.

Me: "Wenzani Samkelo?"(What are you doing Samkelo?)

Samkelo: "Uke ungishaye ngizomtshela uBaba."(Dare hit me I will tell dad)

He is covering his face and that breaks my heart, the past month I have been acting crazy especially towards him, I get angry and hit him like the time he ran off because I didn't allow him to go to Makhosini, now he's scared of me whenever I get angry.

Me: "Angeke ngikushaye."(I won't hit you)

I ask him to come sit with me but he refuse and continue to bang on the door harder this time, I hear a knock on the door , I move him away from the door and open up.

"Miss what's going on? I have been hearing this banging on the door, it's irritating really, some of us were working night shift we want to sleep."

Me: "I'm so sorry sis, it's the child I will watch him."

She walks away looking so irritated.

I sit down at the corner and look at Samkelo as he stares in one place for a long time I even get worried. I get up and go to him, I start shaking him but he's not blinking at all, blood starts coming out of his nose, I take the towel on my bags and wipe him then help him lie down on top of the gown I placed on the floor.

Me: "Are you ok baby? Do you feel any pain."

Samkelo: "Ngifuna ubaba mina."(I want dad)

Me: "It's just the two of us baby, just like old times."

Samkelo: "Ngifuna ubaba!"

He is crying so hard then he stops suddenly and starts convulsing like he did when I tried to break Isiphandla sakhe.

Me: "Sam, please don't do this to me baby.."

I don't even know what to do when foam comes out of his mouth he haven't stopped shaking. I quickly take my phone and call Makhosini, I'm a mess crying so hard.

Makhosini: "MaMthiyane."

I wipe my tears but they keep falling, no one has ever called me like that ever in my life, he was the first and I loved it, it made me feel good.

Me: "Sam...Sam is sick."

Makhosini: "Where are you?"

Me: "I'm...I..I s..."

I don't even know what I'm saying.

Makhosini: "Send your location now."

I send the location and toss the phone on the floor, Sam is now not moving at all, his temperature is too high.

After a few minutes my phone rings, it's Makhosini asking for a room number, I tell him then there is a knock on the door I open for him and try to hug him but he push me away lightly and walk over to Sam. He kneels next to him. He put his hand over Sam's forehead.

Makhosini: "boPhakathwayo angizange ngimulahle Uhambe nonina, muovumeleni ahambe akunankinga."(I didn't neglect him he left with his mother, allow him to go there's no problem)

I can hear pain in those words. Instead of Sam getting better he starts convulsing all over again, Makhosini sit on the floor and pull him to his lap rocking him.

Makhosini: "Gumede..I'm here ok, I will take you home."

He wipes his face with a towel on the floor.

Samkelo: "Baba.."

His voice comes out low.

Makhosini: "I'm here."

Samkelo: "I want to go home, I want Hloni."

Makhosini: "We will go home. Just sleep a little."

Sam nods and snuggle on his chest. Makhosini looks around and shake his head.

Makhosini: "I will take him with me until you find what you're looking for, I can't let him stay in a place like this."

I look down.

Makhosini: "I respect your decision on leaving me Thobeka but this is about the best interest of my son, he won't stay here go back to your place, I got it for you and him, that's his home, I won't come to your space ever, we broke up and I understand but take my son to his home."

I slowly nod, I don't have much here and I won't be having much anytime soon.

He get up with Sam in his arms and walk out. I gather my stuff and walk out too. He is already driving out as I put my bags in the car.

I drive back to the commune. He is sitting in the lounge with his eyes closed, I sit opposite him.

Makhosini: "If you keep running away uzokuhlupha.(He will get fussy)

I nod.

Makhosini: "I'm waiting for him to wake up and check if he's ok, if that's ok with you."

Me: "It's ok."

I am looking at him, he is not saying anything about me, not even begging me.

Me: "Makhosini.."

He opens his eyes, they are bloodshot red.

Me: "Why didn't you tell me about this, you even let me get an injection, why?"

Makhosini: "I was scared of the same reaction you gave me, it was so easy for you to leave me like I did this on purpose, I am hurting and just because I am not crying and being dramatic about it doesn't mean I am not feeling pain."

I look down, he is really hurting.

Makhosini: "But I won't beg you, Maybe I would do the same if I was in your position, what's the use of staying with a person who won't be able to give you more kids."

His words are like a dagger in my heart.

Me: "I told you I didn't leave you because of that, I hate that you didn't trust me enough, I was scared of how much you're keeping from me, how many more secrets do you have."

Makhosini: "I understand but that was the only secret I had, I was still finding ways to tell you."

Me: "By taking the kids and going to the Palace with them knowing very well I don't even know where the place is."

Makhosini: "I admit that I was wrong, I'm sorry."

Me: "I'm sorry for my reaction."

He nods.

Makhosini: "Ok, but we can't be together anymore."

Me: "Why?"

Makhosini: "Relationships are not always rosey, when the going gets tough you gonna run and leave me picking up the pieces, I don't want that especially for my daughter, I want a woman who'll stand by me, yes we gonna fight but leaving and making my son live in a dump is not what I'm looking for in a woman."

Now that's a hard pill to swallow, I nod.

Makhosini: "But I won't neglect Samkelo, my ancestors accepted him and if it was up to me I was gonna change his surname as well."

Samkelo walk in rubbing his eyes then sit on his dad's lap, I never thought I will ever say those words in my life, a dad, for my son, I

thought I was gonna hide the rape my entire life and let him know that his dad died.

Makhosini: "Ubaba kuzomele ahambe, ngishiye uHloni."(Dad has to go, I left Hloni)

Samkelo: "Ungangishiyi phela, uMama uzongithatha angiyise kuleyandawo esabekayo"(Don't leave me, mom will take me to that scary place.)

I look down.

Makhosini: "Can I leave with him?"

I nod, what can I say? Samkelo will throw tantrums here giving me more headache than I already have.

They leave me all alone. I slowly slide down the door and sit on my butt on the floor and wail, what have I done? I just lost one of the things that made sense in my life, Makhosini, a loving man he is. I always mess up that's why I got that punishment from dad in the first place.

The first time it all happened I was 11 years coming from school, Mom was nextdoor gossiping, dad came in and found me sweeping the floor cause I have spilled uncooked rice on the floor when mom told me I should put rice on the stove for her. Dad got angry telling me I am throwing away his money I apologized but he just grabbed me and took me to my room, he told me to take off my clothes and I did it, my mind didn't register that moment what he was about to do. And when he was on top of me having his way with me all I did was shut my eyes I was in so much pain and when he was done he told me I am paying all his hard earned money that I spilled on the floor, told me to take a bath before he left the room but I couldn't move, mom walked in while I was still in bed naked with my knees up like the way dad left me, she screamed and shut the door coming to me, she helped me up and when I saw much blood in bed I cried so hard, I told her what

happened repeatedly but she only brushed by back and also told me to go bath, I was expecting more from her but that day we had dinner like we normally do, dad shouted at me to sit properly on the chair knowing very well I was in pain.

I look at the time, it's 2 am, I have been sitting on the floor since Makhosini left with Sam I didn't even realize it was thing long.

I get up and go to my room, I take off all my clothes and look at my left side of my tummy, the scar I have from my mother the second time dad raped me, instead of talking to her husband she let him finish what he was doing and used a mop hitting me until it broke, she continued I got scratched there and blood came out, she beat me up because "she knew I had messed up again, I did something" funny that she saw that punishment was suitable for me whenever I mess up .

I take a shower then go to bed. In the morning I get ready for work then walk out. I can see him at his gate talking to a girl wearing a very short dress, she's just outside the gate and Makhosini is inside, he is wearing shorts and nothing on his upper body. I get in my car and drive out blinking the tears away.

At work I keep zoning out from time to time until I can't do it anymore I just go at the back and take everything that belongs to me then go tell the manager I quit, I'm tired, he tries to reason with me but I'm done.

I get in my car and drive back home. He is now playing with the kids outside, I park my car and step out going over to them, I hug the children then look at him.

Makhosini: "Why are you back so early?"

Me: "I couldn't do it anymore, I quit."

Makhosini: "Why?"

Me: "I think it's time I step out of my comfort zone, I want to knock on all those doors I didn't get a qualification just for decoration, I will get the job by the end of this month."

I see him smiling a little.

Me: "Can we talk just for a minute."

He nods and tell the kids to come inside with us but we proceed to his room leaving them in the lounge.

Me: "I'm not proud of what I did, I'm the last person to act the way I did, you didn't judge me even once, I'm sorry and I understand why you said you don't want me back I acted stupid, I hurt your feelings, you love kids so much and this must be very hurtful to you, I'm really sorry."

He nods.

Me: "Uhm.. thank you for loving my son so much, I'm happy he have someone who will teach him how to be a better man."

He is staring at me, I turn to walk away but he pull my arm I collide with his chest.

Makhosini: "I'm a strong man, I don't get emotional easily, but this is one thing that kills me, I want a woman who will be strong for me just in this one thing."

I blink looking into his eyes that's when I realize I don't wanna lose him.

Me: "Can I be that woman? I was wrong and I won't repeat the same mistake twice, I promise."

Makhosini: "I need you to be that woman baby, I won't introduce another woman to my kids."

I stand on my toes and kiss him wrapping my arms around his neck, he picks me up so easily and grabs my ass.

Makhosini: "I want you to meet my family this coming weekend."

He says in between the kisses.

Me: "Uhm...Where?"

Makhosini: "Back home at the Palace."

I wasn't expecting that. He push me to bed and he makes love to me, he has his way with my body the way he touches me, the kisses and the sucking, those are the things I never thought I would enjoy until I met him.

Days go by pretty fast and I'm nervous about today, we are going to his home, I don't even know what to wear, I am just in my panty and bra, he was in the kids room helping them dress up. He comes back in the room carrying a plastic bag.

Makhosini: "Wear this."

I take the dress and stare at it, he takes it from my hand and put it on me, there is slit on my thigh, my thigh is out in the open and he thinks this is the dress I should wear for the first time going to meet his family.

Me: "Are you okay?"

Makhosini: "Yes why?"

Me: "A dress with a slit?"

He smiles.

Makhosini: "I want you to look presentable and this is presentable to me, but you have to put on a head wrap because you're the mother of my kids."

Me: "How does that make sense Makhosini, you rather I show a thigh than my hair."

He laughs.

Makhosini: "Come on, I love this dress, when I saw it at the store yesterday I asked the kids if you'd like it and they said yes, look it suits you."

Me: "Niphuphisene ninabantabakho ke Bhuti."(You and your kids are crazy)

He takes out the black and red scarf and ask I wrap it on my head then he gives me red high heeled shoes.

Me: "So you actually went shopping with your kids without me?"

He smiles.

Makhosini: "Don't be jealous next time it will be just you and me, I needed them to choose this outfit for you."

Me: "I think I have better taste than all of you combined."

He laughs and hold my waist.

Makhosini: "Don't be nervous ok, they already know and love you this is just a formality."

I nod and kiss his lips.

Me: "We can go."

He is in black jeans and red t-shirt that hugs his muscles on his arms so perfectly. We walk out and I roll my eyes when I see that his kids are wearing just the same, black and red.

Me: "Really?"

Hloni: "Mom we chose that dress for you, you look beautiful."

Me: "Thank you baby, I really love it and you guys look amazing too."

We all walk out.

He just drove inside the Palace, I have only seen it through pictures, it's more beautiful when you see it before your eyes, it's huge, now I am getting worse, there are knots on my tummy I'm getting nauseous.

He opens the door for me the kids are already inside, there are so many cars in the yard.

Me: "You want to kill me Makhosini, how many people are in there?"

Makhosini: "Uhm...maybe 15, Baba Omncane is here too with his family."

Me: "No, I'm not going in, I can't.."

Makhosini: "You gonna be fine, I will hold your hand the whole time."

He takes my hand and I step out of the car and we walk in I feel like dragging my feet and not reach inside where there is loud laughter.

Makhosini: "It's ok."

Everyone turns the minute we step in the room I feel like crying, so many eyes staring at me but their faces are friendly they are smiling but it's a lot, Makhosini squeeze my hand tight.

Makhosini: "Sanibonani."(Greetings.)

They all greet back and their sister get up first I have seen pictures of her with them, she guys me then kiss my cheek.

Thingo: "I knew he is bringing a hot girl home, I love your dress sis."

I drop my eyes.

Me: "Thank you."

His mom also get up hugging me tight.

Thabsie: "You look beautiful, you guys look good together."

Makhosini: "I wouldn't choose someone who is not gonna match my looks and personality."

His dad clears his throat and everyone laughs, I think there is an inside joke I don't know.

Makhosini: "Oh come on, Zakhona was just accompanying me to my true love."

The laughter fills the room once again, these people are happy.

We sit down and they are very welcoming I relax a bit. We spend the whole day there, the wives takes me to the room to gossip but it's a good gossip nothing shady, most of them are bragging about how these men love and none of them has ever been cheated on.

They then ask me about work and I'm glad I came here because I have scored myself a job, apparently there is a teacher who will be retiring soon at one of the schools under the Gumede fund and they will pull some strings for me, I am so excited, this is what I always wanted, being independent and have my own money.

In the afternoon Hloni calls me telling me that her father is asking for me outside. I go to him.

Me: "Are we leaving already?"

He smirks.

Makhosini: "Are you having fun?"

Me: "Well, yeah your family is nice."

Makhosini: "My brother is calling us."

I look at him confused.

Makhosini: "The one who is a Sangoma."

I nod and we go to his hut, he removes his shoes then mine. We kneel down in front of him.

Makhosini: "You called for us Mntwana."

He nods and starts yawning loud.

Ngcebo: "The ancestors have a solution."

Makhosini: "What solution?"

He looks at me.

Ngcebo: "They want to know if she will stick with you through thick and thin, they chose her for you but they need to be sure."

Makhosini: "How?"

I am so confused, what is he talking about?"

Ngcebo: "You can't have more kids but your brothers can."

We just stare at him so he can continue, where is this going?"

Ngcebo: "When you're ready, you will choose one brother that will give you children."

Makhosini: "Uthini Ngcebo?"(What are you saying Ngcebo?)

Ngcebo: "I am saying, you can still have a baby of your own blood through one of your brothers."

Makhosini chuckles.

Makhosini: "I think I'm good with just two that I already have Mntwana thank you for trying, I'm leaving."

Ngcebo: "Makhosini.."

Makhosini: "No Bhuti.."

He get up first then pull me up, we walk out. He takes the kids and we go back to Durban, he didn't even say goodbye.

He put the kids to bed then we go to our room, he is not ok, he is sleeping facing the other way.

Me: "Are you ok?"

Makhosini: "Sekuhlekiswa ngami manje, amadlozi afuna ukubukisa ngami."(They are making me a laughing stock, the ancestors want to show off)

His voice is low yet deep, he is angry yet calm, I don't even know if that makes sense.

Me: "I don't think your brother meant any harm, they just.."

Makhosini: "Uzolala naye uNgcebo?"(Are you going to sleep with Ngcebo?)

Me: "What?"

He turns looking at me, anger written all over his face.

Makhosini: "Ngibuza ukuthi uyena yini ozolala naye in the name of giving me babies of my own blood."(I am asking if it's him you gonna sleep with..)

I'm tongue tied I don't even know what to say.

Makhosini: "Hloni and Samkelo are enough, we will never have this conversation ever again, angibafuni abanye abantwana if it means having my woman carry my brothers baby for me."(I don't want more kids)

He sleeps facing the other way, I keep quiet too, he is so upset and I understand his brother dropped the bomb but he didn't give him enough chance to explain everything he was saying like what he said about the ancestors wanting to see if I'm right for him, what should I do to prove myself, I don't get it.

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CHAPTER 93

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MAKHOSINI

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I have been having sleepless nights ever since that baby topic with Ngcebo I don't wanna hear anything about kids, my two children are enough.

Thobeka is starting her work she's qualified for next month which is in two weeks and I am also going back to varsity for my third year. I think I should enroll both our kids to where Thobeka will be working so it will be easier for us, she will leave with them in the morning and come back home with them later, this year I will have many classes.

She walks in our room, she was putting the kids to bed, she get in next to me.

Thobeka: "Do you have plans tomorrow?"

I shake my head.

Thobeka: "I want us to go out, just the two of us, we will leave the kids with Connie, they are ok with it because the last time she was here she promised to bake cookies for them."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "You want to take me out?"

She nods with a smile.

Thobeka: "It's all on me."

Me: "Wow, I have never had a woman take me out before, it has always been me."

Thobeka: "I just want you to feel a little better, we don't even have sex anymore."

I look away, to me now sex feels pointless I know we've never spoken about babies but now that I know I can't have one and Ngcebo said what he said I am just not keen on having any sex.

Me: "Let's sleep Sthandwa Sami."

I can tell she's disappointed, I mean two weeks without sex while you sleep next to someone you love everyday, it's better for me because I am going through a lot but it must be hard for her, but I did tell her once that I don't have sex when I'm not ok.

The next day we leave the kids with Connie she drives to this hotel along the beach and she orders food, we eat over some light conversation then we walk in and I realise it's actually a Spa, we get those massage and it's my first time ever, I never thought of getting a massage before, didn't even see the need but here we are and my woman is paying for it.

She drives to the mall but I stay behind because she said she won't take time. She comes back and drive home, she bought some burgers for the kids. We release Connie then leave the Children eating while we change to comfortable clothes.

Thobeka: "I bought you this."

She gives me a watch, it's manly and beautiful.

Thobeka: "I know it's nothing compared to your expensive taste in watches but it's what I could afford just to show how much I appreciate you, what you have been doing for me and our kids, I love you and I'm here to support you in any way."

She says with a smile but there are tears in her eyes, I pull her between my legs and chuckle.

Me: "I love you and I love what you did for me today, you went all out I appreciate every single moment I spent with you, I love the watch and how much it costs doesn't really matter, it comes from you."

She takes off the watch I'm wearing and put the one she bought it does look expensive though.

Me: "Thank you MaMthiyane."

She hugs me tight.

Me: "Awusho ke Sthandwa Sami, uyithathaphi imali engaka?"(Now tell me my love, where did you get so much money?)

She laughs.

Thobeka: "It's not really much to spend on a man as people makes it seem, but I used my savings, I know how to save that is why I have that car even though it's an old model but I bought it with my own money, before I became a cashier I worked at the club and the tips were amazing and at home I only had to pay Sam's school fees , I saved a lot there but I stopped working because clubs can be triggering, men think it's ok to just touch you especially if you work there."

Me: "So bebethinta izinto zami."(So they touched my things)

Thobeka: "Cabanga nje baby."(Imagine baby)

I laugh so hard.

Me: "Can tomorrow be my turn to look after you?"

Thobeka: "How?"

Me: "I want to pamper you."

Thobeka: "But it will feel like you're paying back."

Me: "No it won't baby."

She nods and kiss my lips, I stop her when she tries taking off my t-shirt. I can see she's a little disappointed but she mask it off with a smile.

Thobeka: "Uhm...let me go cook dinner."

Me: "No don't worry about it, I'm gonna order in and we will watch a late night movie with the kids."

She nods moving back from me.

Thobeka: "I'm gonna do some laundry."

I nod. I think she just wants to be away from me.

I make a call to book a photoshoot, it will be the four of us as a family.

We watch a movie together till they all fall asleep, I pick them up one by one taking them to their bed then get in next to my woman.

My phone rings and I stare at it not answering, it's Ngcebo.

He keeps calling until he gives up.

The next day I start by taking Thobeka to a beauty salon she does the hairstyle of her choice they do some make-up, Hloni does a similar hairstyle too then me and Samkelo get a haircut. We go to the studio where we will have our photoshoot. I made sure we are dressed in matching outfits, I am the one who buys the kids clothes so I make sure I buy similar things everytime. We have the best time of our lives there, my children are happy and so is my woman.

We go back home late and everyone is in a jolly mood.

We are together in the living room eating pizza, Thobeka's phone rings, she takes it.

Thobeka: "Hello."

She widens her eyes but quickly compose herself. She clears her throat and keeps nodding.

Thobeka: "Tomorrow?"

I look at her, she is now avoiding my gaze.

Thobeka: "Ok, thank you."

She drops the call and start talking to the kids, I don't wanna jump into conclusion, I really thought she will share what was the call about but it seems like she won't bother.

We go to our room then we sleep.

Me: "MaMthiyane.."

She looks at me.

Me: "Are you happy with me?"

Thobeka: "Yes."

Me: "Are you sure?"

Thobeka: "Yes I'm just not happy about our sex life, we are like the old couple now sleeping facing the other way, I don't like that."

I am happy she is vocal about this so I can explain it to her before she cheats on me.

Me: "Uhm...the problem is when I am going through something I don't have sex to avoid being too rough and taking out all my stress on you, please understand this."

She nods and sleep facing the other way, she is still upset and that scares me especially when I think about that call she received.

In the morning she wake up early and ask to use my car she has to go somewhere, her car doesn't have fuel I don't even know why she didn't tell me and chose to spend all her money on me. She leave without telling me where she's going.

My kids and I get busy with cutting flowers in the yard, they are always happy with any activities as long as we're doing them together.

It's 2 pm and Thobeka is not back yet so I take the kids inside and have our late lunch because they have been eating snacks the whole day, I thought Thobeka would be back by now.

They eat and take their nap, I go to my room and stare at my computer my heart is beating so fast when I see my car is on it's way back from the Palace, I hack her phone so easily and see she received a call from Ngcebo last night. My hands are shaking my vision is blur but I keep blinking.

I slowly get up and the door seems to be far away, My head is buzzing! So that's it! She went there to sleep with my brother so "they can give me a baby" I have already concluded everything in my head and it's spinning.

When she opens the door I am already standing there staring at her, she gets startled and drop something that is in the plastic bag she was carrying. She has a head wrap on her head and wearing a long dress. I chuckle.

Thobeka: "Hi."

Me: "Get out of my father's house Thobeka."

Thobeka: "Makhosini..."

Me: "I said get the fuck out."

I lightly shove her back and try to close the door but she push it back.

Me: "Why...why..is..."

I stutter, words can't come out.

Thobeka: "Listen to me baby, Just listen ok, I w..."

I punch the wall next to her she jumps in fright stepping back.

Me: "Ulale nobani kubafowethu Thobeka."(Who did you sleep with from my brothers?)

Thobeka: "Makhosini calm down the kids are in the room."

Me: "You're not telling me what I want to hear right now."

Thobeka: "I didn't...I wasn't..I..."

Me: "I want you to get out right now before I throw you out."

Thobeka: "I didn't do anything your..."

Me: "Why Thobeka, ngikuthanda kangaka mfethu."(While I love you so much)

Thobeka: "Your brothers would never do that to you, I would never do that to you Makhosini, I love you, I promise you, Ngcebo gave me this..."

She is shaking with tears rolling down her cheeks.

Hloni: "Baba why are you angry? Why is mom crying."

She speaks behind me sounding like she's crying and for the first time in a long time I feel tears burning my eyes but I keep blinking to stop them from Falling, there are a lot of things I'm going through so I won't cry for a woman!

Me: "Just go, please."

Samkelo: "Baba..are you guys fighting?"

I just walk away first going to my room and call my father with my hands shaking.

Nkosiyabo: "Nkosana."(Prince)

Me: "Uyamubona uNgcebo wenzeni baba?(Do you see what Ngcebo did dad?)

Nkosiyabo: "What did he do? I saw Thobeka here."

I just drop the call and sit down shaking my head.

Thobeka walks in and kneel in front of me.

Thobeka: "He told me he tried calling you but you didn't answer so he figured that you won't let me go to him, he gave us something, he has hope that it might help us conceive, it's a traditional medicine, he..."

I shake my head.

Me: "This is too much for me Thobeka, I want a break, I don't know what to think right now, I hate the picture I have in my head, I can't be with you anymore, loving a woman can drive one to the grave I don't wanna do that to my kids."

Thobeka: "No, please, I'm sorry for not telling you baby, I'm sorry."

I look down a part of me knows Ngcebo wouldn't do that to me, but his last words when we were in his hut and the phone call behind my back is messing with my head.

Me: "I'm sorry but you need to go, the kids will visit back and forth."

Thobeka: "You know they will want to be with you Makhosini, they want to be where you are, you're not being fair. I followed your brothers instructions because he wants to help you, he is worried about you, we all are."

Me: "Don't worry about me, I just don't want you here anymore."

She nods and get up from the floor wiping her tears. She walk up to the door then stop and turn staring at me fiercely.

Thobeka: "I'm not leaving you."

I look at her, she raise her eyebrow like she wants to see my reaction.

Thobeka: "We gonna drink that concoction Ngcebo made together and finish it, we gonna sleep in the same bed everyday and we gonna eat on the same table, you're stuck with me I'm not going anywhere!"

Me: "Tho..be..ka."

Thobeka: "I'm not leaving!"

I get up and go to the guest room, I take off my clothes and get in bed, my heart is aching I'm not okay, my chest is painful I don't know what it will take for me to move on and accept that I'm infertile I just wish they can stop talking about babies! I have had enough.

After a few minutes I feel her getting in bed, I sigh as she snuggles closer to me.

Thobeka: "I love you."

I sigh.

In the morning, I sit up and look next to me but she's not here anymore, she walks through the door carrying a cup, she gives it to me I can see it's green and smells funny.

Thobeka: "Come on drink up, I will go take my cup as well."

She force me to take the cup then walk out. She comes back and sit next to me, I am still staring at the cup. She starts drinking and her body shakes she makes a face but continue to drink, I am staring at her as she drinks the whole cup while she's not the one with a problem, she's doing all this for me. I drink it up it's tastes so bad I want to puke.

Thobeka: "We will drink it every morning before we eat anything."

She says wiping her mouth with the back of her hand.

Me: "Why are you doing this? You are not the one with the problem here but I am."

She doesn't answer but get up and walk out. She comes back with a tray full of English breakfast and two cups of tea. We eat in silence.

Me: "Thobeka."

She doesn't look at me but stare down at her cup.

Me: "The things I said yesterday some I don't remember I was too angry but I'm sorry for every single thing I said, I said hurtful things for sure I don't even know how you're still here."

Thobeka: "You gave me a home, you gave my son a father and a sister, you gave me hope that I had lost long time ago, the list is endless."

She huffs.

Thobeka: "I feel like vomiting, that thing tastes bad.."

I smile kissing her lips. I put the tray on the floor then get on top of her, she looks at me with loving eyes. I take off her gown and the short nightie she has underneath then I pull down my shorts. I slide my dick in she sinks her nails on my back.

Me: "Fuck..."

Her pussy clench on my dick without me even moving I cum same time but I'm not about to embarrass myself like that so I get up with her not pulling out, I pin her on the wall and start moving slowly until my dick gets hard again, she is screaming so loud as I bite her neck giving her fast and deep strokes.

Thobeka: "I missed you so much...I love you baby...Aaah yes..."

I put her down and turn her around, I spank her ass hard she giggles, her thigh gap gives me easy asses with this position that's why it is driving me crazy so much. I go hard on her back until we both cum a few seconds apart I slowly pull out then pick her up taking her to the

bathroom, we brush our teeth then go under the shower she jumps on me.

Me: "How am I supposed to bath with you in my arms Thobeka."

Thobeka: "You'll make a plan."

I just find my way to her pussy and give her what she wants, it's been a while I guess that's why she is clinging on me for dear life.

I force her to get off once we're done so we can take a bath.

Me: "I don't know why you're sulking because we both can't bath with you in my arms."

She rolls her eyes, I smile kissing her lips, I can't believe I was ready to let this go, our relationship might be rocky but I know for sure this woman loves me.

We step out of the shower and she keeps dancing in front of the mirror naked, she is really testing me.

Me: "What are you doing?"

She giggles and hold on to the dressing table then shake her ass I quickly remove the towel around my waist and thrust in so hard she almost lose balance but I am quick to hold her around her waist, we have a very long round then sleep in bed facing up catching our breath.

Me: "You need to stop teasing me, we can't be having sex like some horny rabbits here."

She laughs.

Thobeka: "You've been stingy with it so I am making you pay for all these nights I slept next to you horny as fuck and you just gave me your back."

I laugh pulling her to my chest.

Me: "I'm sorry MaMthiyane."

Thobeka: "It's ok."

I watch her as she moves around the kitchen cooking our lunch, the kids are playing with their toys on the floor.

Me: "Do you think it will work? I don't want to have hope only to be disappointed all over again."

Thobeka: "We can only hope it works baby."

I nod.

I look at my kids playing on the floor and smile when this idea of them having a sibling fills my head but I quickly brush it off, it might never happen. I look back at her again, it's unfair that she is in this kitchen with no ring on. She is singing happily I'm glad she didn't give up yesterday I would be so ugly right now regretting chasing her out because I know for sure I don't wanna lose her.

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CHAPTER 94

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MAKHOSINI

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It's been two months since Thobeka started working and I went back to Varsity, my kids attend the same school where their mom teaches and they are happy there and are both very protective of each other, they love their mom and dad, they don't like hanging out with just one of us, they want us to be always together.

We finished the concoction in that two weeks before Thobeka even started working but nothing has been happened I have accepted my

life just the way it is, we waited for so long for Thobeka to at least show some signs but there was nothing so I now am going to make things right with my brother and be more calm this time so I can let him explain what he meant to say the last time, I haven't been talking to him and he also stopped calling me.

I am on the phone with my baby while I am driving home.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

Thobeka: "Baby, are you driving?"

Her voice fills the entire car I shiver, that's the effect she has on me, I love her way too deep and it gets better everyday.

Me: "Yebo, I'm driving home Sthandwa Sami but I will come back before you get off from work."

Thobeka: "Ok, Uhm...I wanted to call you because Hloni and Samkelo might get suspended from school today."

I quickly park the car on the side.

Me: "Ay for what?"

Thobeka: "Apparently some white boy kept saying Hloni is too dark and not that pretty for a princess, Hloni was crying then your son fought that boy, the boy is older than him Makhosini, he's a senior."

Their school is a secondary, that means that boy is doing Grade 9.

I sigh. Hloni and Samkelo's pictures got leaked on the internet, they were taken when I was out with them doing some shopping so people know that they are my kids, A prince and a princess.

Thobeka: "We will check our emails once we get home, I think they called parents meeting."

Me: "So Samkelo will fight everytime Hloni cries?"

I chuckle because that's what Bukhosi and I did whenever Thingo cries, we would turn the entire school upside down, that's what we do, we protect our siblings with our all.

Thobeka: "Your son hates seeing Hloni cry you'd swear he is older."

I smiles rubbing my beard, I think I am doing great as a father.

Me: "That's natural, we fight for our siblings baby, but I will talk to him later, not everything should be fixed by violence."

Thobeka: "Please.."

She yawns.

Me: "You're tired?"

Thobeka: "Yes, I just had one class then went back to the office and slept I just woke up now when Mr Khambule came into my office and told me my son and daughter will be suspended from school."

Me: "Why was he the one who saw the need to come to your office and tell you that?"

I am getting a little jealous, what is he doing in my woman's office.

Thobeka: "I don't know baby, let me go and get something to eat."

Me: "You didn't carry lunch?"

Thobeka: "No, we ran out of chicken burgers and I didn't want anything else."

Me: "I will send money right now so you can maybe buy a few things we don't have at home."

I can say we're officially cohabiting, I hardly go home now because like I said, our kids always want us under one roof, they can't really choose who they wanna live with.

Thobeka: "Send it to Aunt Connie Makhosini, I'm tired I can't go to the shops after school I want to sleep."

She says and start crying.

Me: "Aybo manje Ukhalela ukuthi awufuni ukuya ezitolo?"(So now you're crying because you don't wanna go to the shops?)

The phone beeps, she just dropped the call on me. I sigh and continue with my drive home.

I can see him sitting under the tree with Aqua in front of him. When Aqua sees me stepping out of the car, he runs so fast and I pick him up throwing him in the air then catch him, he is laughing his lungs out, he still goes under water from time to time, a very peaceful child he is.

Me: "Unjani Nkosana."(How are you Prince)

Aqua: "Yaphiya baba."(I'm good baba)

His speech is still a bit off because he just turned three a few days ago.

I sit down with him in my arms on a chair opposite Ngcebo, he is sitting on a straw mat mixing some herbs.

Me: "Ngcebo kaNkosiyabo."

He smiles staring at me.

Ngcebo: "What took you so long, I missed you, I wanted to come to you but I had to give you time to calm down."

Me: "I'm sorry for overreacting the last time we were here."

Ngcebo: "It's understandable, I would freak out too should someone suggest one of my brothers give my wife a baby."

He chuckles.

Ngcebo: "In ancient times a brother would step in and sleep with his brother's wife to get her pregnant if the brother has a problem but that's not what I meant."

I listen to him attentively.

Ngcebo: "We are living in the 21st century, the world is advanced now, we were gonna do those inseminations, or In-vitro I don't know but no intimacy was gonna be shared with any of our brothers and your woman, asidlelani abafazi thina."(We don't chow each other's wives)

My heart is at ease hearing him say this.

Me: "Oh thank you, I was overreacting for nothing, I'm sorry Gumedede."

He nods.

Aqua: "Bafazi."(women)

I laugh so hard as he claps his hands.

Me: "Kuzothanda abafazi loku."(This one will love women)

Ngcebo: "Uzobe efuze bani ke ngoba sonke sizishimele nje sima kumuntu oyedwa."(Who will he be taking after because we hold on to just one person)

I laugh.

Me: "Uhm...so we finished the concoction but nothing happened so I was thinking of just giving up but..now that you've explained this, who do you think can be best to give me his seeds to get my woman pregnant?"

He laughs clapping his hands.

Me: "What?"

Ngcebo: "The last time Thobeka came here she told me straight in the eye that she won't ever carry someone else's child in her womb except

yours, she said if a miracle doesn't happen then you will live with just the two children you already have."

I blink a little.

Ngcebo: "She gave me a chance to explain this In-vitro and Inseminations but she didn't wanna hear it, so she won't ever do that even if it's me willing to give you my sperms but she won't do it, she made that very clear."

Me: "Oh...Uhm...wow."

I'm happy to hear this even though I would have tried this option but I am glad she made it clear she won't do it, that shows how much she respects me and love me as her man.

Ngcebo: "The room shook that day Makhosini, the ancestors were proud."

He says looking so proud himself, the smile on his face shows how happy he is with what he is telling me.

Ngcebo: "Go home Gumede, all shall be well."

I smile and get up bowing my head, I guess I just have to fully accept everything now. I walk in and greet my mom and dad, I eat with them and they shout at me for cohabiting I try to explain myself but they don't wanna hear it.

I drive back home feeling lighter now that I spoke to my brother, all is well, I am gonna focus on raising my children and loving their mother.

We get home at the same time, I help her take out the plastics on her boots, when I was at home after dropping the call on me she sent a text telling me to send the money she will go.

Me: "How was your day my love."

Thobeka: "I was sleepy I think I slept late."

Me: "But baby you slept before the movie we were watching started and that was 7 o'clock."

Thobeka: "Then I will sleep around past 6 today."

I laugh as we walk inside the house, I am ignoring these two on purpose they are looking down the whole time. When they are about to go to their room I call them back.

Me: "Sit down, over there."

They sit next to each other holding hands.

I sit opposite them.

Me: "What happened?"

Samkelo: "He called my sister ugly dad, he was rude and said her skin is dark I was angry and..and he said he can beat me up so I beat him up first. Hloni was crying I don't want her to cry."

He is speaking so fast he is almost out of breath.

Me: "Oh so he threatened to beat you up first?"

Samkelo: "Yes."

Me: "But not every action deserve a reaction Nkosaza, sometimes you just have to walk away, when you walk away the other person loses all the power he thought he had over you, he might end up being laughed at for being a fool alone and you chose peace."

Samkelo: "Oh, so next time I should just take Hloni and walk away?"

Me: "Yes, you get it Nkosazana?"

She nods.

Me: "And you're so pretty that boy said you're ugly because he doesn't know what Melanin is, your skin colour is beautiful, black don't crack!"

While he melts in the sun you walk in it like a goddess in no rush, he is just jealous, you're beautiful, you hear me?"

She nods with a beautiful smile on her face, my daughter is beautiful with her dark skin.

Me: "Next time someone tells you you're too dark and ugly just chin up and walk like mommy, show me how mommy walks baby."

She stands up giggling then start doing the cat walk Thobeka does swaying her hips side to side, I am laughing so hard looking at Thobeka smiling with a mouthful of food.

Me: "Yes! That's what you gonna give to haters baby, just give them the face and walk away like a goddess that you are."

Hloni: "I will do that."

Me: "Samkelo I'm proud of you for standing up for your sister but remember what I said.."

Samkelo: "Not every action deserves a reaction."

Me: "Good, high five."

I high five both of them then they go change. My kids won't be suspended, they will know me tomorrow in that meeting.

I go change in the room and go back in the kitchen I find the stew on the stove burning I switch it off and go over to my woman, she is sleeping, I guess she was serious when she said she's tired. I pick her up and take her to our room then go back to cook dinner while I make sandwiches for my kids.

Later I wake her up so she can eat, she widens her eyes when she sees the food.

Thobeka: "I was cooking beef stew earlier baby, why are you giving me chicken?"

Me: "Uhm..you fell asleep on the couch and the stew got burnt."

I can see a frown on her face the tears roll down, I sit down in front of her.

Me: "Baby come on it's not that deep calm down."

Thobeka: "I don't want to eat this Makhosini, I want beef."

Me: "But I..."

She gives me the plate then take off her clothes walking around butt naked I am getting hard but she must be hungry so I go back in the kitchen and cook her beef, she comes in the kitchen after a few minutes wearing her gown my mouth hang open when I see her taking the plate of food she said she doesn't want, she starts eating while standing there.

Me: "Thobeka.."

Thobeka: "Mmm baby?"

I sigh and continue to cook.

After I'm done she is the first one to dish up and eat again. Maybe this new job is tiring her and making her change habits, Thobeka didn't eat this much and she seems to forget things a lot just like she didn't want chicken then after a few minutes she came in and ate the damn chicken. We go to bed and she get on top of me and take her dick shoving it deep in her pussy then she rides me so good till we cum, then she sleeps like a baby after that I smile kissing her cheek.

The next morning I wake up first and help my kids into their uniform I saw the email saying they will be suspended for a week that's not gonna happen they will attend school today. I have classes today but I won't attend because I am a parent. I make their lunch boxes and Thobeka's then prepare a bubble bath for her since it's still early I left the kids eating cereal.

I wake her up with a kiss on her cheek she moans opening her eyes.

Thobeka: "Morning baby."

Me: "Hey.."

She is sleeping on her tummy so I just remove the bed covers and have her in that position then I take her to the bathroom, she relaxes in the bathtub I take her cereal and feed her while she's still in there.

Me: "I am taking the kids with to that meeting, they won't be suspended I am paying a lot of money for them to just ask them to stay home for the whole week while the brats were bullying my daughter and her brother retaliated, I won't have that."

She giggles.

Thobeka: "Kumnandi ukuba noBaba."(It's nice having a dad)

I chuckle.

Thobeka: "Nokuba nendoda ekuthandayo."(And having a man that loves you.)

I chuckle.

She step out of the shower seeing her naked always turns me on.

Me: "Do you think we can do just one round before you get dressed my love?"

She pulls me to bed and she takes the initiative, she hardly say no to sex no matter how tired she says she is.

She go back to the bathroom again then comes back to wear her clothes. I take a quick shower and get dressed, wearing my white shirt and black chino pants with black formal shoes, I want them to take me seriously in the school also my woman works there so I have to be clean just like her, she always looks dazzling just like right now, she is wearing an off shoulder black dress that is a little below the knees her

bowlegs looks even more charming in this dress, she is wearing back heels.

Me: "We will use one car and I will fetch you guys after school."

She nods.

I drive to that school and open the car for my woman, the entire school is watching even some teachers. I open for my nervous kids then go down to their level.

Me: "Don't be scared, dad is here and no one will hurt you or say bad things to you guys."

They nod and we walk in the office, Thobeka won't be attending the meeting with me they won't allow her since she works here.

I am sitting opposite the white couple they look angry with so much attitude and there is a boy way older than my children and that makes me so angry, how can they get suspended for this big bully.

The principal clears his throat, he is a white old man.

Principal: "Mr Gamede we are here because of your kids violent behavior and..."

Me: "It's Gumedede, Gumedede.."

I can see he is irritated by me, well too bad I also paid the same amount in this school.

Principal: "So since they started it we are suspending them with immediate effect for two weeks."

I laugh in disbelief, the email said a week and now they two because they already held the meeting before I came here and that irks me so bad.

Me: "What about that white boy?"

I can see that gets to them.

Me: "Does it hurt that I am addressing him as a white boy while we are here because he was busy running his mouth calling my daughter black and too dark."

"Sir we weren't there so we..."

I raise my hand up as that woman with an attitude address me.

Me: "If he is not suspended I'm afraid you'll have to let my kids go to class right now, there won't be any white privilege here, not with my kids."

They talk all at once.

Me: "So you really think a 7 year old would just pick a fight with a senior out of nowhere? Make it make sense please."

They keep talking but I stand my ground.

Me: "My kids won't be subjected to bullying and then get suspended when they react, I am not saying he was right for fighting but that is his sister he is bound to fight for her when someone makes her cry."

They are so angry they are even turning pink I don't care.

They allow them to go to classes after apologizing to each other but I know that boy will still cause problems for my kids with the way he looked at them, I will really catch a case here.

Me: "You should have left the apartheid in the past, we are not powerless and voiceless like we were, tell your son to stop because he will be a very white boy in juvenile."

I get up and walk out I don't think they know this school is under the Gumedu fund. I go check on my wife in her office and find this Khambule standing by the door with his hands on his pockets while Thobeka looks very irritated.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

The guy widens his eyes staring at me, he is clearly shocked. My woman smiles and walk over to me wrapping her arms around my neck.

Thobeka: "I didn't think you'd come see me after the meeting but I was hoping you'll come. How did it go?"

I hold her waist and peck her lips.

Me: "No one will be suspending our kids baby, they went to their classes."

Thobeka: "That's a relief, I was so worried about them."

Me: "You don't have to worry about anything love, I'm here to take care of the three of you."

I kiss her again then the man clears his throat I don't even know why he's still here.

Thobeka: "Khambule, can I help you with anything?"

He shakes his head and walk out.

Me: "He wants you."

Thobeka: "I have a man."

I smile and kiss her lips once again.

Me: "I have to go, maybe I can still attend the last two classes it's still early."

She nods. I walk out and drive to the mall instead. I walk in the jewellery store and ask they help me choose an engagement ring, I don't know the size but I ask the girl at the store to try her size then give me a different ring but with the size she got on the other ring. I walk around buying roses, this was long overdue I really stayed with for too long without proposing her, mom and dad were right to be angry at that.

I go back home and cook then I wait for them to come back home.

2:23 pm I hear the car parking in the yard, I smile and take a bunch of roses and a box and meet them by the door.

Me: "Hey.."

I give her the roses, she is smiling and so are my kids you can see excitement on their faces, all three of them.

I slowly go down on my knee and open the box, Hloni and Samkelo jumps up and down screaming like this is their ring.

Me: "MaMthiyane, Ndaba will you marry me? You've been with me at my worst but you stood your ground when I asked you to leave and told me to you're not leaving and that made me realize how much you're in love with me as much as I do, so let's make this official so you and Samkelo can take my last name."

She is out for words, tears falling on her pretty face.

Samkelo: "Mom, dad want you to get married, you will wear a white dress!"

I laugh looking down.

Hloni: "Mom say something."

She giggles.

Thobeka: "Sorry..I wasn't expecting this baby, I will marry you Makhosini."

I take her hand and put the ring on her finger and it's a little loose but it suits her and she says it's perfect.

I get up and pick her up spinning her around, she is giggling in joy and that's my purpose, to keep all these people happy."

We eat together and my kids are excited about this, Samkelo can't wait to be a Gumede.

Just then I hear a buzz at the gate, Hloni checks who it is then scream running out. I get up and go check it's Ngcebo.

Me: "Bhuti is everything ok?"

He nods with a smile on his face. She is holding Hloni's hand

Ngcebo: "I'm not staying, I came to give Thobeka this, she must drink it in the morning and before she goes to bed."

Me: "What is it for Ngcebo? Thobeka doesn't have any problem."

Ngcebo: "I know she doesn't, bye Makhosini."

He bows his head and walk way. I pick the plastic up and looks like it's another concoction but now he only mentioned Thobeka.

I walk in and tell Thobeka what Ngcebo said, she's also confused but agrees to drink it, I feel bad for her all this because she chose to be with me.

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CHAPTER 95

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MAKHOSINI

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It's the weekend and we are having an outdoor picnic with the kids, the sun is up and it's a beautiful day, Thobeka does everything with her left hand ever since I gave her the ring and we are always gossiping about her with my kids laughing about it but I am happy that she loves the ring and she does want to get married to me.

The kids are playing a few feet away from us, I am sitting on top of the fleece Thobeka is between my legs and her head on my tummy.

Me: "Baby.."

Thobeka: "Yebo baby."

Me: "I am thinking of going to my father and tell him about the engagement, but we have a problem my love, your family, what will happen on your side?"

She sighs.

Thobeka: "I don't know."

Me: "Maybe we can ask my elders to go talk to your mother and maybe find your father's family so they can talk to them before the lobola negotiations."

Thobeka: "Honestly, if it was up to me we would just skip the whole lobola, I don't want your family to be subjected to the insults my father's side of the family might say to them because this involves me, they hate me because according to them I lied on their brother."

Me: "I will talk to my father maybe he will find a way baby."

Thobeka: "Ok."

Me: "So how is the concoction?"

Thobeka: "Very bitter but it's better than the last one."

I nod.

Me: "Askies neh."

Thobeka: "I'm not complaining at all baby, that concoction always leaves me feeling clean in my tummy."

I nod.

Me: "That's good."

Her phone rings next to me, it's an unsaved number.

Thobeka: "Can you answer it for me?"

I answer it on speaker but let her speak.

Thobeka: "Hello."

"Hey Miss Zondo, it's Lungelo."

Thobeka: "Lungelo? Lungelo who?"

"Uhm.. it's Khambule, I got the number when we were filling the forms two days ago."

I feel my armpits getting itchy same time, I try to move but Thobeka moves to sleep on her tummy and unzip my shorts, I stare at her like she's crazy, what is she doing, the kids are chasing each other a bit far from us now..

Me: "Thobeka Wenzani?"(what are you doing?)

"Hello, Miss Zondo uyangizwa?(Can you hear me?)

Thobeka: "Soon to be Mrs Gumede, yes I hear you."

I groan as she starts stroking my dick slowly while staring into my eyes I don't even know how to react as my dick gets hard instantly.

Me: "Thobeka...baby.. fuck.."

"Hello?"

Thobeka: "I love how you groan baby, the faces you make..."

She keeps stroking my dick I grab on the fleece tight and groan hard.

Me: "Fuck..I'm so close baby...shit don't stop...do it faster Sthandwa Sami.."

She does exactly that.

Me: "Shit..I'm cuming baby...fuck.."

My body tenses up I cum throwing my head back I am trying so hard not to be loud. I look down at her, she is smiling looking at me with naughty eyes I chuckle in disbelief.

Me: "What the fuck did you just do to me?"

She wipes her hands with the corner of the fleece then wipe my dick, my shorts are also wet so she tries to clean it a bit. Just then we hear a beep sound, I look at Thobeka then we both burst in laughter as we realize the fool was still on the phone the whole time, he heard me calling Thobeka's name in total pleasure, he is crazy and I really don't like him, and now he wants to start something he won't be able to finish.

Thobeka: "Ouch..."

She frowns.

Me: "What is it?"

Thobeka: "My tummy hurts from sleeping like this."

I help her turn around and sleep facing up instead then kiss her.

Me: "That was low down dirty but I loved it, thank you."

She giggles.

Thobeka: "You always look hot when you're in the zone, I can't get enough of the faces you make, it always turns me on."

I raise my eyebrow with a side smile.

Me: "You're getting really naughty baby."

Thobeka: "I'm just free around you."

I kiss her once again then her phone rings again, I sigh when I see that it's the same number that called earlier.

Me: "My wife's phone hello."

He chuckles.

“You moan like a bitch.”

Me: “I bet you haven’t had that pleasure in a very long time and that explains your ugly oily face.”

He clicks his tongue.”

“Ngifuna umnikazi wephone.”(I want the owner of the phone.)

Me: “Ngeze uze umthole.”(You won’t find her)

“Small boy, you might be from a very rich family but best believe I can take that girl right under your nose.”

Me: “You’re used to prostitutes then, unfortunately for you Miss Zondo is not your type.”

He chuckles.

“Ubonakala ngokubamba iphone yomfazi ukuthi usayintwana.”(I can see by answering a woman’s phone that you’re still a little boy.)

Thobeka grabs the phone from my hand and press it for a while, I can see she is blocking the number.

Thobeka: “Calm down, I can feel you shaking, we belong together and no one will separate us.”

I am really getting worked up but usekhulumile uMama wabantwana.(But the mother of my kids have spoken.)

We spend the entire weekend having so much fun as a family.

It’s Monday again, back to campus I wake up first and get kids and I ready, I then wake their mom up, she used to wake up earlier than all of us but now I have to wake her up.

Me: “Wake up sleepy head.”

She opens her eyes and starts crying covering her head.

Me: "What's wrong? Did you have a bad dream?"

Thobeka: "You woke me up! Ngiyezela mina."(I'm still sleepy)

Me: "I'm sorry Sthandwa but you have work."

She get off bed and walk to the bathroom sobbing. I take out the clothes she's gonna wear. She comes back from the shower and get dressed quietly.

Me: "Why are you angry?"

Thobeka: "Mxhm.."

Me: "Uneconsi Kodwa Thobeka kulezinsuku."(You're really dramatic these days)

If looks could kill I would be dead right now.

I carry her bag for her when we walk out. I kiss my kids and her by force then go to my car driving to campus.

I attend three classes then go eat my lunch, my phone rings and it's Thobeka.

Me: "Hell..."

I don't get to finish talking I hear her crying so hard.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami, khuluma nami kwenzakalani?(Talk to me what is going on?)

I'm already packing my things in my bag then look for my car keys, I rush in the car and drive out, she hasn't dropped the call I can hear someone comforting her telling her to calm down and breath, I am driving like a maniac all the way to her school. I park at the gate and walk in the premises ignoring the security that is asking me to sign, I will sign once I know my woman is ok.

I push the door to her office and find her surrounded by female teachers looks like she is having a hard time breathing and they are trying to give her the pattern some are fanning her face.

One of them moves away, I squat in front of her.

Me: "Thobeka.."

She draws a long breath then starts crying all over again, I hold her hand tight, she is scaring me.

Me: "Please calm down and tell your man what's going on."

I hear the "Owh and Wow" from the women in the room.

I wipe her tears.

Thobeka: "He..he came in my office and closed the door behind him locking it I don't even know where he got the key, I was so...I was so scared.."

I frown.

Me: "Who did that?"

"Khambule."

One teacher says. I knew it's that bastard I just needed a confirmation.

Me: "Where is he?"

"He was called in the Principal's office, I am the one who heard Zondo shouting inside this office for Khambule to let her out and I knocked from the outside that's when he opened and started laughing, I reported the matter to the principal."

She is teary.

"I know what he wanted to do, Thobeka wasn't gonna be his first victim."

I am boiling in anger. I get up and kiss Thobeka's forehead.

Me: "You wanna go home right now?"

She nods. I pick up her stuff, I'm trying to keep it together for everyone's sake because if I lose it, this school might just shut down!

I take her to my car then go to Hloni's class and ask for her, I take Samkelo as well then I take them all to the car.

I look back and see the white wrinkled principal laughing with Khambule and that upsets me more.

Me: "Close your eyes and count to 200 ok, don't open them until you get to 200."

I say to my kids and they do as I say. I walk up to this Khambule, I don't have much to say to him so I just get straight to business, I beat him up so bad the entire staff is outside watching, I beat him until he falls on the ground I press his neck with my foot hard I can hear the bones cracking.

Thobeka: "Gumede.... Let's go baby."

I remove my foot on his neck, he is just groaning unable to move. I take Thobeka's hand and look around to see if someone wants to say something but the Old man is trying to make a call with his hands shaking. I can see most women are happy about this judging from the look on their faces, I guess he has been a problem for a while now but he reached the stop sign here! Not my woman!

Principal: "I'm calling the police, don't leave you barbarian!"

Me: "They know where to find me if they really want me."

I walk away holding Thobeka's hand. I open the back seat checking if my kids are ok I find them still with their eyes closed but they aren't counting anymore.

Me: "You can open your eyes now."

I am relieved that they didn't see me in that state, dad didn't practice what he always preach about walking away, not with my family.

I get in the car and once I'm by the gate the police car stops in front of me then an ambulance.

I step out of the car, they do the same. The principal is here running his mouth telling them to arrest me and an officer actually attempt to come close to me, I chuckle.

Me: "Imagine arresting me and I clean your bank account for the next 20 years suing you for unlawful arrest."

Principal: "How is it unlawful when you almo..."

Me: "Shut it old man. Officer let me ask you something, how would you feel should your wife call you crying right now because a man just came in your house, closed the door and locked himself inside with her, just tell me honestly right now that wouldn't you use that gun to blow his brains out?"

They stare at me.

Me: "That is the scenario here so I was helping my woman we don't know what he would've done if another teacher didn't hear my woman screaming for that bastard to open the door for her, if you want to arrest me it will be baseless until he wakes up and press charges against me then I can listen to you."

They look at each other and go back to their car moving out of the way, I get in my car and drive home.

I am massaging her shoulders, we just finished taking a shower.

Thobeka: "Maybe I should apply to a different school, if he has gotten away with this what makes you think he will stop coming at me."

Me: "One of you has to go and it's definitely not you."

Thobeka: "Makhosini looks like the principal doesn't have a problem with his behavior."

Me: "That's exactly who I'm gonna deal with first, of course he won't have a problem as long as that fool is degrading innocent black women, I know his type he still sees blacks as slaves and that Khambule is doing exactly what he wants."

She sigh and moan a bit.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Thobeka: "My tummy hurts, I forgot to drink that concoction in the morning, can you take it for me."

I pour it for her and I always feel bad when she drinks it up, I know it tastes really bad.

The next day I ask a meeting with grewt grandfather twin brother Nkanyezi, I explain to him everything that happened and he immediately calls a meeting with board members and all the teachers where Thobeka works. His wife Miyalo is with him looking gorgeous as usual, talk about aging gracefully.

He address the issue and 4 female teachers come out about many times Khambule has made them uncomfortable and two of them were actually raped by him but he acted like they were the ones flirting with him so he saw it ok to take it by force I wish he was still here to beat him up again but he is hospitalized. They all have reported to the principal but the Old man just didn't care he just wanted them to narrate everything just the way it happened, a sick old man.

Nkanyezi force him to retire, he is old anyway but it wasn't his time yet and Khambule is fired effective immediately and he already have a bad record no school with want to touch him.

I walk out of that meeting feeling lighter, my wife will feel safe again in this school without these two here, I told them not to mess with me but they didn't listen.

I get home my kids and their mom didn't go to school today until daddy fixed things.

I find Thobeka sleeping on the cold tiles on the floor and I get the shock of my life rushing to her.

Me: "Thobeka? Mama..."

She opens her lazy eyes and slowly sit up, I sigh in relief I thought she collapsed or something.

Me: "Why are you sleeping on the floor?"

Thobeka: "I feel hot the aircon is making the room stuffy."

I am so confused, since when did the aircon do that.

I help her up.

Thobeka: "How did it go?"

Me: "Your head master was forced into retirement and they terminated Khambule's contract, he won't be coming back anymore."

She jumps in my arms holding me tight then she starts crying.

Thobeka: "Thank you, thank you so much."

Me: "Can we all go home tomorrow, you won't go to school for this remaining days you guys will start off on Monday."

Thobeka: "We will leave with the kids?"

Me: "You know wherever I go, they are with me."

Thobeka: "Ok I will go pack for us, go help your kids bangicasule kabi ubone bengekho la."(They irritated me so bad that's why you don't see them here)

She walks away. I go to my kids room and find them whispering and laughing.

Me: "Hey you two, what did you do to mommy?"

They burst in laughter.

Hloni: "uMama ucasulwa into encane nje baba, Sam and I were dancing on top of the couch with our socks on and she screamed so loud I bet the neighbors heard her when we laughed at her she cried baba."(Mom is being irritated by a small thing)

I chuckle.

Me: "Why were you laughing at your mom?"

Hloni: "She is always crying dad and it's funny because the things she cries for don't make sense."

I hear her and I feel the same so we just start laughing as they tell me about the time their mom cried for no reason.

The next day we are on our way home, Thobeka asked to sleep at the back because she's tired so Hloni sat next to me.

We get home and I carry Samkelo inside because he is sleeping, all of us were sleepy in the car opening windows helped.

I try to wake Thobeka up she gets to irritated that she starts crying.

Me: "Yazi Thobeka ngizoyeka ukukuvusa noma usuya emsebenzini ngoba sowuvele ukhale nje ngizizwa engath ngiyakuhlukumeza mina manje."(I will stop waking you up even when you go to work because you start crying and I even feel like I am abusing you now.)

This worries me now.

She continues to cry until I leave her there and go inside.

Me: "We Mah."

I shout for her since she's in the kitchen, she walks in wiping her hands on her apron.

Thabsie: "Khosini."

Me: "ay nangu UThobeka ekhala emotweni angimazi Ukhalelani."(There's Thobeka crying in the car I don't know why she's crying)

She rush out, I just proceed to my room to put our bags there.

We go to my hut with my brothers and dad.

Nkosiyo: "Nkosana."(Prince)

Me: "I proposed dad."

I say with a smile and they all cheer and whistle, they are happy for me and clearly proud.

Me: "Uhm..so I need you guys to help me fix things with her and her family so they can accept Lobola."

Ngcebo: "We will do that soon, next weekend we will have to go there."

I nod.

Me: "Thank you, dad do you know what we can do for these people to welcome us."

Nkosiyo: "I think we should go there with inhlawulo for cohabiting with their daughter."

He raise his eyebrow like he is challenging me.

Me: "Oh..ok dad."

Nkosiyabo: "So you admit that you are cohabiting with Thobeka?"

Me: "It's the kids dad, they don't want us to live separately because they can't choose who they wanna stay with."

Nkosiyabo: "Then you should have married her sooner."

I look down.

Me: "We were still going through a lot dad but now I can tell She's willing to fight every obstacle with me."

He nods.

Nkosiyabo: "We will have to go with something and we can't really pay for Samkelo yet before we talk to them."

I nod.

Ngcebo: "Sizomulobola naye ukuze Abe uGumede ngokuphelele."(We will pay Lobola for him too so he can be a Gumede fully.)

Me: "That's fine by me."

Nkosiyabo: "How much do you have?"

I smirk.

Me: "I think I have enough baba."

My brothers cheer.

Nkosiyabo: "Are you that confident?"

Me: "Yes I am."

Kumkani: "But I can give you a portion towards the first lobola for Samkelo if that's ok."

Me: "Having enough doesn't mean I won't accept any help, thank you."

I feel better now that my family will do this for me, I believe all will be well with Thobeka's family.

I go back inside the house and find mom with her daughter in-laws in the kitchen, my woman is also in there some are cooking and some are baking.

Me: "Mama ka Samkelo, can we talk?"

I see her face changing.

Me: "Aybo usadiniwe yini?(Are you still angry)

She walks out first and I follow her, we lean on my car but she's looking away.

Me: "I'm sorry for waking you up Sthandwa Sami."

Thobeka: "It's fine."

Me: "Ay Thobeka don't do that, we have things to talk about and we won't talk when you're angry at me."

She looks my way I can see she is still irritated.

Me: "We want to go to your family next weekend, we will go with damages, how far does your father's family live?"

Thobeka: "They live in the same area."

Me: "That's good, we will all go just to know if they are willing to hear us out, we will go with inhlawulo for cohabiting with you because in our culture you don't live with someone's daughter without making your intentions known to her family, then if they accept us we will pay Lobola for Samkelo first then you'll follow."

Thobeka: "You want to pay for Samkelo?"

Me: "Yes, he's my son."

She nods looking down.

Thobeka: "I'm just worried, they might not accept this."

Me: "We'll find a way, you will be Mrs Gumede soon."

I hug her and she relaxes in my arms like she wasn't angry at me a while ago.

The weekend comes, Kumkani is driving a van with a trailer, we decided that Inhlawulo should be a cow and two goats then if they want more we will give it to them. Samkelo and Hloni are with us since this is not formal but we are trying to gather the family together and talk.

We walk in the yard and stop at the door, dad calls the clan names without knocking then Thobeka's mom open the door and gasp staring at my father.

Nkosiyo: "Mama, we came in peace please we just need a little time to talk to you."

She opens the door wide for us I think she is mesmerized by our dad but she shouldn't mom is not someone to mess with when it comes to her man.

Dad talks to Thobeka's mother and she seems to be understanding, she calls her husband's family immediately maybe she is trying to impress dad but she hasn't spared a single glance at Thobeka who is sitting next to me.

The room is full now, people were introduced as Thobeka's aunts and great fathers. Looks like they are not happy to see Thobeka at all but happy to see my father in their home.

Nkosiyo: "The cow and goats outside is damages that my son did an unacceptable thing in our culture, he cohabited with your daughter."

I can see them looking at each other with smiles on their faces, maybe they are happy about the cows and goats more.

"Aw Gumede uyindoda."(You're a man.)

Nkosiyo: "So now we want to talk about Samkelo, my son would like to lobola him and make him his son when he takes his mother."

"Never!"

Thobeka's mother says loudly, I frown I knew all that good behavior at first was an act.

"What do you mean never mfazi ka mfowethu? Thobeka should live with her child."(My brother's wife?)

One of Thobeka's great father ask.

"That is my husband's son and this is his home, he is not going anywhere!"

I can see shock in Thobeka's family faces, the aunts exclaims.

Auntie: "What do you mean he is your husband's son, isn't Thobeka your daughter? Didn't you come to us and told us Thobeka lied on your husband saying he raped her and we ended up hating that child for lying on her father getting him arrested?"

The aunt ask concerned.

Auntie: "So you knew!?"

She shouts getting up like she's ready to attack.

Auntie: "You made us hate the poor child while you knew the truth that our brother raped his own child!?"

The house is in turmoil everyone is angry, these people were misled by the same mother who gave birth to Thobeka, she made them turn their backs on her. I pull Thobeka to my chest as she cries painfully.

Auntie: "How can you be so cruel, protecting a man who did this to his own flesh and blood, how did you look at this poor child all these years

knowing what her father did to her, your own grandchild is your husband's son!"

Hloni: "Baba!"

She shouts I look at her, they were sitting in the kitchen, I swiftly move Thobeka away from me and run to where Samkelo is laying lifeless on the floor. When I look at his wrists iziphandla are on the floor. Ngcebo kneels next to me.

Ngcebo: "Our ancestors are angry, they keep addressing this child as if he belongs to them, he is a Gumede and we should get him out of here."

I pick my son up and rush out with him. I get him in the car and drive out of their yard with him. I guess I will have to do another ceremony for him but this will be after I paid what is due to that family for them to release him but nonetheless he is still my son and he is under my ancestors protection no matter what.

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CHAPTER 96

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MAKHOSINI

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We are still at Thobeka's house but I am with Samkelo in the car waiting for my father and brothers to come out. Thobeka walks out looking so tired, she is even dragging her feet. I step out and hold her in my arms, she is not crying anymore I think she ran out of tears, she has been crying since we came in here. I touch her cheeks and kiss her lips.

Me: "Are you tired?"

She nods.

Thobeka: "How is Samkelo?"

Me: "He is ok, just sleeping now."

She nods.

Thobeka: "I need my bed."

Everyone comes out of the house except for Thobeka's mother.

Auntie: "Thobeka mntanami."(My child)

They stand before us and she pulls Thobeka into a hug.

Auntie: "I'm sorry, we should have believed you, your mother made us believe you were sleeping with different boys and pinned the rape on your father, that's why we distanced ourselves from you, we thought you are a bad daughter that lied on her father."

Thobeka: "I was only 14 years when I got him arrested, where did you think I was busy with boys auntie?"

Auntie: "Remember you left home, your mother said you were staying with a boy."

Thobeka: "The social workers took me to a children's home so I can be safe there because she once gave me abortion pills, she knew dad was gonna be arrested once Sam because of the DNA test."

They are so devastated to hear all this, Thobeka's mother lied about everything to make her daughter look bad and her husband the good guy who was arrested unlawfully.

"Don't worry we will do every ceremony needed for you my child, we want to start by apologizing to the ancestors for neglecting you then we will let the Gumedes come with all that is due to us, we will also free Samkelo."

Her great father says and open his arms for Thobeka, they hug.

Thobeka: "Ngiyabonga Mthiyane."(Thank you Mthiyane)

Auntie: "Kodwa ke mase nizokhokhela uSamkelo niyobese niphathe nenhlawulo yalo ozayo."(But when you come to pay for Samkelo you will also bring damages for the one that is coming.)

I look at Thobeka confused, she looks confused as well.

Ngcebo: "We will do that."

Looks like Ngcebo and the aunt are the only ones getting it.

We go home and find mom and her daughter in-laws cooking, we eat dinner then I go check on Ngcebo.

Me: "Bhuti.."

He nods.

Me: "I want to get some clarity on what Thobeka's aunt said about paying for Samkelo and " lol ozayo."

Ngcebo: "What's there to explain Makhosini?"

He ask with his eyebrow raised.

Me: "I don't get it Bhuti."

He chuckles.

Ngcebo: "Ay.."

He shakes his head smiling, I widen my eyes staring at him.

Me: "Unamanga!"(You are lying!)

I exclaim and he just grins. I literally run to where the wives and my mother are, Thobeka is sitting on a chair eating, she's the only one that is eating while the others are busy going up and down dishing up for the whole family.

Me: "Baby.."

Everyone looks my way, I am sweating already I don't even know if it's the nerves of thinking maybe I got it all wrong.

Me: "Please can you stand up for a minute Sthandwa Sami."

She slowly get up looking at me confused. I stare at her tummy but I don't see anything out of the ordinary her dress is tight so her tummy is not giving away anything. I slowly put my hand over her tummy she screams when we both feel something moving.

Me: "Jesus!"

I step back from her and we both stare at each other like we're crazy.

Thabsie: "What is going on?"

Thobeka: "What was that Makhosini?"

She ask looking shaken.

I go back to her again and put my hand over her tummy again and no I wasn't crazy something is definitely moving in there. She starts crying.

Thobeka: "Makhosini what is happening to me?"

Me: "Your aunt...did you hear what she said? She said when we come to pay for Samkelo we should come pay for the one ozayo. She meant this."

Thobeka: "This what? What is this?"

Me: "A...a baby Sthandwa Sami... you're pregnant."

Her eyes are all out and the women are smiling and clapping hands.

Thobeka: "What do you mean?"

Me: "Those movements, it's the baby."

I pull her to my arms hugging her, I am feeling things I can't explain.

Thabsie: "Makhosini.."

I look at her, she stands in front of me and wipe my sweaty forehead.

Thabsie: "You're going to be a father, I'm so happy for you."

She have tears in her eyes, I still find it hard to believe it.

Me: "Is it real though?"

She smiles as one tear drops from her eye.

Thabsie: "Go and find out."

She gives me her car keys, I take Thobeka's hand.

Thobeka: "Ukudla kwami?"(And my food?)

Everyone laughs at her. I take the plate and mom offers to dish up more for her then we walk out. She sit at the back and start eating, I can see she is enjoying the meat it's chicken and I don't understand because today it might be chicken and tomorrow it's beef.

I drive inside the Private practice of Doctor Moosa he is new here and asked dad for land to start his practice and dad gave it to him because that meant another service delivery for his community.

He is happy to see me and he complements my woman's beauty.

Moosa: "You all took after your father, you have a good eye when it comes to choosing beautiful women."

I laugh.

Me: "Thank you."

He ask my woman to go change into a gown then come back.

She sleep on her back only her tummy is exposed the lower body is covered in a towel.

Me: "Is it possible for her to get pregnant and still have a flat tummy like this?"

He laughs.

Moosa: "I can see you're nervous, well, it depends on how far along is the pregnancy and also the babies are not the same, some are tiny and some are big."

I nod vigorously, I really am nervous I feel that maybe this is a false alarm.

He smears gel on Thobeka's tummy she flinch.

Thobeka: "It's too cold."

I hold her hand tight.

Me: "Sorry Sthandwa Sami."

He starts moving something that looks like the mouse of the computer in my baby's tummy, we hear loud noise.

Moosa: "Look at that.."

My heart is beating so fast.

Me: "What is it? Is there a baby there?"

Moosa: "I'm just asking myself how is this tummy still flat like this."

Me: "What is happening?"

Moosa: "She's a week away from three months."

Me: "So there is a baby?"

I am shit scared, what is going on? I think I have lost my mind a bit.

Moosa: "Yes there is a baby right there sir, look closely."

I squint my eyes and all I see it something moving around.

Moosa: "That is your baby sir, it's moving around mommy's tummy right now."

I wipe the gel on her tummy at place my hand there, I can't believe it, she is looking away the whole time.

I pull her up and hug her tight, she's so emotional I am brushing her back.

I kiss her lips and wipe her tears.

Me: "Thank you so much baby, Ngiyabonga kakhulu MaMthiyane."

Thobeka: "Seeing what a great father you are I am happy to give you this precious miracle, I love you and thank you so much for always being here and this time I am not doing this alone, you're here and I know you'll be here the whole time."

Me: "This is huge baby, I thought it's impossible but God and my Ancestors made it possible, trying traditional herbs is not bad after all, thank you for forcing me to take that concoction, this is it."

We hug once again.

Me: "So this explains why you're always crying, eating and sleeping."

She frowns.

Thobeka: "So that's all I do?"

She asks angrily.

Me: "And mood swings too."

She clicks her tongue and get off bed. She sit on the chair as we wait for the doctor, he went out telling us to wait a bit.

Me: "Baby.."

She looks away, I smile, that's my baby that is making her act up like this so I am not gonna take it to heart I actually enjoy it now that I know the reason, she is carrying our miracle.

The doctor comes back with scan pictures and a card.

Moosa: "I would really be honoured if you'd choose me to be your doctor throughout your pregnancy my Prince."

He says bowing his head, he looks like he grew up in an African cultured community, the way he carries himself the respect he has, he is a great man.

Me: "But we live in Durban."

He nods.

Moosa: "I understand."

Me: "But if we do monthly check ups then I guess we can come back every month on the day of a check up."

He bows his head again.

Moosa: "Thank you."

Me: "No, thank you so much for this you don't know how happy I am to discover that me and my wife are about to have a baby."

Moosa: "It's a great feeling, my wife is due next month and it's our first baby."

Me: "Oh Congratulations man."

Moosa: "Congratulations to you too Prince and you ma'am."

We go back home, Thobeka is still quiet I just let her be grumpy because I am the reason she is like that.

We get home and she walks in first. I take her bag and follow her, I find her crying on my mother's lap, I widen my eyes.

Me: "What happened to her?"

Thabsie: "You happened Makhosini, you called her names."

Me: "What names?"

Thabsie: "You said all she does is cry, eat and sleep!"

I laugh really hard and that makes her sob even louder. Dad get up and hit the back of my head.

Me: "Uhm...oh..I'm sorry Mama wezingane zami, awu ngixolele Ndaba, Ngixolele Sokhulu."(I'm sorry mother of my kids, forgive me Ndaba, Forgive me Sokhulu."

I sing her clan praises mom starts ululating, dad married a very forward woman!

Thobeka sit up and wipe her tears with a smile on her face.

Me: "Uyangixolela makaOzayo?"(Do you forgive me mother of the one coming)

There's uncontrollable cheer and whistles in the house.

Nkosiyabo: "You did it Nkosana yaBaba."

I smile as we shoulder hug, they are all happy for us dad ask my brothers and I to slaughter a sheep, we video call our sister and tell her the good news, she screams on her phone and Mathenyoka also congratulate me, I am so happy.

We go back to Durban because Thobeka have to go home for cleansing, I take her there and the ceremony takes place at her great father's house, I'm happy she won't be around her mother in this state she's in, I don't want anything that will stress her. The family is so welcoming to me, Bukhosi came with me for support, we came with the kids so Samkelo can get cleansed too by this family. They make peace and it's beautiful to watch they even got a blanket and a new

dress for Thobeka it's all peace offering, my woman is happy and that what matters to me.

Hloni and Samkelo run in the room me and Bukhosi were given to relax in, they keep giving us drinks and food, we are so full, and Thobeka's cousin brothers keep coming in to offer alcohol and talk to us about the days when our father was still a Soccer star, apparently they were fans.

Me: "Why are running?"

Samkelo: "Uyakubiza umkhulu, shesha baba!"(Grandpa is calling you, be fast dad)

He grabs my hand pulling my hand, Bukhosi and I swiftly get up and run out. We find Thobeka screaming in agony, there is a man in front of her, a spitting image of Samkelo, my stomach turns immediately when my mind register who this is, how is he here? How did he get out? Was he even arrested in this lawless country.

"I heard you want to take my son and give her to some boy Thobeka."

His family exclaims.

Auntie: "You're saying your son! Your son Mbhekiseni! How did your daughter get to carry your son!"

The aunt is livid and so is everyone else. I am holding Samkelo's shoulders, Thobeka is in her great father's arms still crying so hard my heart is aching now, that painful cry hits deep, how can one do this to his own flesh and blood, what kind of animal are some of our fellow men are?

"Wavula amathanga sahlala isisu."(She opened her thighs and got pregnant!"

He answers the aunt with so much attitude, one of Thobeka's cousin throws a beer bottle at him it hits right on his forehead he stumbles back with blood coming out.

He looks our way and stare at my little boy, Samkelo put his hands over mine on his shoulders.

Me: "Don't be scared, dad is here."

I squeeze his shoulders.

"Woza kubaba wakho Mfana wami."(Come to your father my son.)

And that causes Thobeka to scream once and I see her great father going down holding her, she fainted and my heart is beating abnormally, Bukhosi stands closer to me and his skin brushes over mine, I look at him, I feel fine instantly.

Bukhosi: "It's ok, I'm here."

He is holding Hloni's hand.

Bukhosi: "Take your wife so we can go. Give me Samkelo."

He hold Samkelo's hand and walk away with my kids. I go to Thobeka as they fan her face.

Me: "Can I take her, I will rush her to the hospital."

They allow me, I pick her up and put her at the backseat.

"Give me my son young man."

He says behind me and my brother. Bukhosi quicky buckle up the kids, we are using dad's SUV. We both turn looking at him. His eyes keep moving from me to my brother.

"So which one of you is sleeping with my daughter.

Bukhosi&I: "It's me."

We say in unison, he chuckles angrily.

"Do you think I'm a fool!? Which one of you wants to take my son huh!?"

He shouts and I can see the cheap tattoos on his neck, this man did go to jail but how is he here, that's what I am dying to know.

Bukhosi & I: "It's me."

We say once again at the same time and he charge at us but we move out of the way and then turn to look at him, he frowns staring at us, he looks shaken and so are people watching us.

"How do they do that? They are acting just the same."

One of the girls in the crowd ask in horror.

He takes out the gun, people scream moving back, his brother keeps telling him to stop what he is doing, that's Thobeka's great father.

I am shocked to see my kids both standing in front of me and my brother in a protective manner, I don't even know when they got out of the car.

Me: "Get back in the car!"

Samkelo: "No daddy! No one will shoot my dad!"

He says crying.

Hloni: "Daddy let's go home."

I quickly open the car and put them inside forcefully, they are kicking and screaming then Bukhosi locks the doors with the key, they keep banging on the windows.

Bukhosi & I: "Are you gonna shoot or what?"

I usually hate it when our minds think alike but today it's confusing the enemy so I really don't mind

He cocks it then points at me, I count seconds in my head and count the steps I'm gonna take to get to him. I take one step away from Bukhosi and we get to him at the same time, he punch on the left while I punch him on the right, he let go of the gun and Bukhosi

catches it and points at him as he moves back with his butt on the ground.

“Let me talk to him boys, take Thobeka to the hospital then go home, Protect your family with your all.”

He says looking from me to Bukhosi, they also can't tell who is who. Bukhosi get in the driver's seat I get in next to Thobeka and put her head on my lap, She is still uncouncious but her pulse is there stronger than ever. I brush her tummy.

Me: “Hloniphile no Samkelo.”

“Daddy..”

They say at the same time.

Me: “We gonna be ok, don't worry about anything ok, Grandpa and all my brothers will come home today and we will fix this, Don't be scared.”

They say “Ok.”

The things my kids have been subjected to these days are so cruel, I don't want this for them, I want a normal life and that's what I vow to give to them, this dust will settle and we will be happy together as a family. I will find help for them then we will move on with our lives on a clean slate.

CHAPTER 97

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MAKHOSINI

*

I am sitting next to Thobeka's bed at the hospital, she is still unconscious and I am holding her hand tight, I told the doctors that she's pregnant and they had to check the baby's heartbeat, they found out that it's faint I'm devastated I can't lose my miracle, I keep saying a short prayer to God and My ancestors to protect my unborn baby. I told Bukhosi to drive home to the Palace with Samkelo and Hloni, they will be safe there no one will there step foot on those grounds to do something malicious, we are protected by the spirits of the great kings that lives within cheetahs, no one will touch my son and daughter in my ancestral land.

I hear a moan, her eyes shoots open as she starts calling for Samkelo.

Thobeka: "Samkelo! Where is my son! I want my son!"

Me: "Baby...hey, my love I'm here, Samkelo is at home nothing happened to him ok, calm down."

She looks my way and tears roll down the side of her eyes.

Thobeka: "He didn't take him?"

Me: "I wouldn't have let him have our son baby, Samkelo is safe."

She close her eyes and heave the sigh of relief.

I take out my phone and video call Bukhosi, he shows up on the screen.

Bukhosi: "Bhuti, is Thobeka awake now, we will be driving back to Durban right now, I will leave the kids with mom and our wives."

Me: "She's awake, but the doctors said the heartbeat of a baby is faint so I don't know maybe now that she's awake it might start picking up."

Bukhosi: "Ok we will see you soon."

Me: "Can I talk to my kids please."

He moves the phone and I see Samkelo's face first, he has tears in his eyes then Hloni shows up as well.

Me: "Wipe your brothers tears Hloni."

I see her wiping him, I smile.

Me: "You guys were brave today, thank you for protecting me ok I appreciate it."

Hloni: "The bad guy had a gun!"

Me: "And you stood in front of it because you didn't want anyone hurting your dad, I love you guys."

That was a very bold and brave move they did, they are kids but they already know we protect each other, they will grow up with it even though I don't ever want to put them in a position like that ever again.

Hloni: "We love you too daddy."

Me: "You want to say hi to mommy."

I give Thobeka the phone and help her sit up, she giggles looking at the screen.

Thobeka: "I miss you guys so much."

Hloni: "We miss you too mommy, get well soon we love you."

Samkelo: "Yeah we love you mommy, and don't worry about the bad guy, dad will deal with him!"

I chuckle shaking my head.

Thobeka: "I know he will, daddy will always protect us from bad guys."

They have so much trust in me and I won't disappoint them this time, their safety comes first.

Thobeka: "Ningamuhluphi ugogo neh?"(Don't give Gogo a hard time ok)

Samkelo: "We won't mommy, she is taking us to the Qwabe waterfalls today for a picnic, we will go with Phezukonke and Aqua, the twins slept because they were crying for dad Mcebisi so we will leave them behind."

I smile.

Thobeka: "Ok tell everyone I said hi."

Hloni: "Bye mom, bye dad."

The phone beeps, they dropped the call.

Me: "See, they will be fine, no one can come near them there."

I sit in bed and brush her tummy kissing her, she hold on to me and give me a tongue kiss then her hand squeeze my dick I groan.

Me: "We are at the hospital baby, a nurse or a doctor might walk in."

Thobeka: "So awufuni?"(You don't want to?)

Me: "Thobeka we..."

Thobeka: "It's fine..maybe you don't find me attractive enough."

Me: "It's not like that I.."

Thobeka: "It's fine!"

I move away from bed and sit on the chair.

Me: "Your attitude is rubbing me off the wrong way."

Thobeka: "Too bad cause you're stuck with me for life!"

Me: "I don't have to."

She widens her eyes.

Thobeka: "So you don't want me anymore?"

Me: "Did I say that?"

Thobeka: "I want to be alone."

Me: "Too bad I'm not going anywhere."

She takes the glass of water on her bedside and throws water in my face. I slowly wipe myself then get up.

Thobeka: "Where are you going?"

Me: "Out.."

I walk out to find a doctor I want them to check if the heartbeat has picked up. We go back in the room and find Thobeka crying looking the other way.

Me: "Thobeka.."

She turns and look at me, I step closer and hug her, this baby is making her crazy and I know when she wants some loving.

Me: "I love you, the doctor is here so they can monitor the baby's heartbeat."

I help her get in bed that is closer to the scan, he keeps moving the wand around then I hear the heartbeat picking up, I now know how it sounds like, I smile holding her hand tight.

Me: "Can you hear that Sthandwa Sami, our baby is fine."

She get up and throws herself at me I hold her tight.

Me: "Now you need to stop stressing ok, you will go join the kids back home and stay with my mother until we sort everything out."

Thobeka: "I will stay without you?"

Me: "Just for a few days my love just until I deal with your father and your mother because I know she is the one who was updating him about everything."

She nods and brush her tummy.

Me: "You're hungry?"

She nods with a shy smile, I smile.

Me: "Doctor I am taking my wife, she will be monitored by a family doctor that side, thank you."

We shake hands then I hold her hand walking out.

When we reach the parking lot I see my father's car driving in and so are my brothers they are speeding. They step out of the car and rush to us.

Nkosiyo: "Take Thobeka to the car and drive out now! That man is a leader of the gang in and out of prison, he has been out of prison for a month now, they are here."

He moves his blazer away and take out two guns Thobeka covers her mouth in shock I rush to the car and help her in.

Jason and Mondli drive in as well, their cars are all parking in line and that draws people's attention because the plate numbers are all personalized.

I help Thobeka in the car and fasten her seatbelt then rush to the driver's seat and drive out. I part at a distance I can see so many Golf 7s cars flooding the hospital's parking lot, journalists are here within a second I'm afraid my family is outnumbered here. I quickly take my phone and call Bab'Omncane.

Nqobasi: "Nkosana encane I'm on the way your father called me, I am coming with Hero, Sboniso and Isisekelo."

I sigh in relief but still there are too many of these gang.

I drive for a while then stop the car again shaking my head, my heart won't let me leave my family fighting my battle without me.

Thobeka: "I'm so sorry, this is all my fault, your family was doing just fine until you met me."

Me: "I wouldn't have it any other way, I want you in my life and if I have to fight to keep you then so be it."

She removes her seatbelt and give me a deep kiss.

Thobeka: "Go fight with your family, I will get home."

Me: "Are you sure baby?"

She nods, I trust her driving skills she is perfect but I am worried about her condition even though she is still not showing but there is still a baby in there.

I set the GPS in my car to the Palace then connect it with my watch so I can know if she takes a different route or make any stops.

Me: "I love you, don't stop just drive straight home ok."

I help her jump over to my seat and we kiss for a while, she is grinding on me, I pull her dress up and unzip my pants, once my dick is buried in her she starts moving with her hands on my shoulders, she cums pretty fast and I thrust from underneath and also cum that was the quickest quickie I have ever had. I wipe myself with the tissue then she gives me space to step out and I fix my pants taking off my blazer. I throw it at the back seat.

Me: "Please get up a bit."

I look under the driver's seat chair and take out two empty guns with bullets, I load them she is looking at me strangely.

Me: "What is it?"

Thobeka: "This turns me on, you are that Jason Statham type, the way you are handling those guns."

I give her a side smile then kiss her lips once and close the car. She drives away in speed I smile looking at my watch as she takes N2, she will get home.

I walk down the stairs and go join my family as they are gathered together, looks like the gang haven't stepped out of their Golfs yet I bet their discussing the next move from here through phones maybe.

Nqobasi, Sboniso, Isisekelo and her husband Daniel joins us, I feel better when I see them Daniel is well trained he own security companies all over KZN and Gauteng Province.

Nkosiyo: "Where is Thobeka?"

I look at my watch and see she haven't taken any turn she's still on her way home.

Me: "She's driving to the Palace, I couldn't leave you all alone here."

Nkosiyo: "Let's take this away from innocent people."

I get in the car with him and he drives out First everyone else follows behind. I look at my watch and heave a sigh of relief when I see that Thobeka had entered the Qwabe Kingdom, nothing will happen to her now.

Dad leads everyone to the upper part of the mountain in our land, the houses are far away and also they won't be able to enter even if they tried. We step out of the car and the ground shakes, this is our home, our land, we will never allow defeat our ancestors won't allow that.

We hear the pipes of Golf7s from a distance everyone has their guns on their hands already. One car approach us in high speed, I see Daniel aiming at it then he pulls a trigger the car turns upside down, Isi wraps her arms around him and give him a brief kiss, I look away, that's my dad's twin sister.

More cars stop around that car then they all step out carrying big guns.

Nkosiyabo: "Everyone take cover!"

We all hide behind cars some behind trees, they start shooting. Someone is shooting close I look at Hero next to me, he nods and we both rise at the same time and start shooting in different directions, maybe it's not a bad thing to teach your children to shoot at a young age and actually get them guns in this lawless country, you need to protect yourself, our father had to do that because when you're a high profiled man in as much as you're loved by many people, there will be people who will hate you for absolutely no reason. This right here is the man who raped his daughter instead of paying for his sins he picks up a fight with the most well known family that stands together and fight enemies and defeat them too so I must say he picked a wrong fight this time.

I haven't seen him anywhere, so we keep shooting to kill then after a while I see another car driving towards us then the man himself step out looking around. Bukhosi and I get to him first, I look at Bukhosi he is also looking at me.

Me: "You need to stop doing that."

I say through my teeth I can see Thobeka's father is trying to figure us out but this is freaking him out.

Bukhosi just smiles and shrug his shoulders, he is enjoying this so much, we are the mirror image twins so imagine how creepy it is when we act the same like someone is using remote control on both of us.

"Are you even real?"

He ask scratching his beard.

Nkosiyabo: "Who is asking?"

He says coming behind us then he stands between me and my brother.

"I really don't wanna do this to your family Nkosiyo, I just want what belongs to me, that's my daughter and my son!"

Everytime he says that I want to grab his heart out of his chest because how does that make sense to him.

Nkosiyo: "You violated your daughter, she lived in fear for years the least you could have done is stay away! What kind of man are you?"

"The boys were gonna eat it anyway so why not start by feeling her first."

I take a step and punch him so hard he steps back laughing while wiping his blood on his lower lip.

"So it's you, I knew you gonna stop that shit you were doing with your brother when I press the right buttons."

He is fast to shoot me in my arm I groan and dad is right on him immediately, he beat him up then shoot him until his gun is empty, Bukhosi is attending to my arm pressing it, but blood is slipping through his fingers and it drops on the ground we feel the ground shaking, dad looks around as we hear a stampede from afar then we see a lion first looking our way, the cheetahs are here surrounding all of us, looks like the lion is looking for a fight and it's looking straight into dad's eye, he chuckles and go on one knee, he comes back with his short spear he use it for hunting then he walk up straight to the lion..there is dust as he fights the lion, it smelled royal blood on the ground and it came to pick a fight but my dad is here, Uuka's father a man who has had many fights and never lost even one.

We hear a loud growl then dad get up and spit on the floor, he has dust all over him and his clothes are torn, we all rush to him, he hold me first then we all do a group hug, the lion is still moving on the floor but it's not long till it accepts defeats and die, the cheetahs pur is loud

causing the villagers to come out of their houses and walk up the mountain until they get to where we are, they all go down on their knees and bow, the cheetahs remove all the bodies of these guys from the scene. Hero looks around and go straight to a girl on the crowd.

Hero: "Can you borrow me that hair clipper."

The girl removes it looking shaken, Hero takes it and come to me, I am seated on the ground, he kneels in front of me and press me on my arm I groan in pain, he keeps pressing trying to find the bullet.

Hero: "That's it..close your eyes."

I shut my eyes as the clipper digs on my skin.

Me: "Mmm fuck...qeda phela!"(Finish up)

I feel a sharp sting I open my eyes the bullet pops out and fall on his hand, then he tears his white t-shirt and wrap it around my arm.

"Nkosiyo! Kumkani!... where....Izingane zami!(my children)..
Bukhosi! Mcebisi!"

Mom shows up screaming our names almost out of breath, she is walking barefoot holding her long dress up, sweat and tears all over her face but she's still beautiful as ever.

Nkosiyo: "Sthandwa Sami."

She runs to his arms, dad holds her tight as she sobs.

Nkosiyo: "We are all ok my love, our kids are fine."

He wipes her tears and kiss her. She looks around then see me on the ground, she rush to me and kneel down looking at my arm.

Thabsie: "Are you ok?"

Me: "I'm fine now that you're here."

She hugs me tight.

Thabsie: "I lost my mind when I saw the gatekeeper guarding my house then saw people walking up the mountain I knew something is wrong with all of you."

I smile and hug her again, I love my parents so much I wouldn't trade them for anything.

After a while a series of Traditional healers come out from the mountains followed by the king of kings, our great grandfather Ntsika, he bows before my father, they must have fetched him at his house in Durban, he has his lion skin around his neck falling on his shoulders.

Ntsika: "You've fought so many good fights and came out victorious, I still remember where you come from, the hardships you went through so I am honoured to pass down this title to you, King Nkosiyo, you now lead all the kings of all nations, all hail King Nkosiyo Gumedede."

Everyone bows once again, and the traditional healers slaughter the lion and give my father its skin, mom is standing beside him holding his hand and the way he looks at her you can tell how much they love each other six kids later, that's the kind of love I pray for myself and Thobeka till eternity.

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CHAPTER 98

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MAKHOSINI

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I am in my room Thobeka is cleaning up my gunshot wound gentle, she keeps biting her lower lip absent mindedly I am getting turned on, the pain in my arm is not much because mom already gave me something for the pain.

Me: "My love."

She looks at me and I can't help but smile.

Me: "You're so beautiful."

She blush shaking her head.

Thobeka: "Come on, don't lie."

Me: "Umhle futhi ngiyazi uzongizalela ingane enhle efana nawe."(You're beautiful and I know you will give birth to a very beautiful baby that will look like you)

Thobeka: "I doubt, with all the wives in this family none of them has given birth to children that looks like them, you all look the same from girls to boys."

I smile.

Me: "I guess we're strong, but I wouldn't mind my baby taking your eyes at least, just to see you whenever I look into his or her eyes."

She giggles.

Thobeka: "You should be a poet."

Me: "I can be just for you."

She smiles and pout her lips, I kiss her and gentle push her to bed to lie on her back, she takes off my pants and her clothes since I am doing everything with one arm because the other one is numb.

I slide in my dick and she hold me tight looking straight into my eyes.

Me: "I love you."

Thobeka: "I...aaah..I love you..yes baby.."

She meets my thrust halfway, we are making slow passionate love, pouring our souls to each other, I know how she feels about me and so

does she. We cum seconds apart then I sleep facing up she get on top of me and ride me once again I guess she didn't have enough of me.

She is now sleeping on my chest quietly.

Me: "Are you ok?"

Thobeka: "I'm glad he is dead, I didn't wanna tell you this but I have always felt unsafe, like I am being watched, I know it was just fear that he might come back one day and finish me off but now I don't have to worry, the dog is dead, I bet his wife will blame me when she can't reach him."

She chuckles bitterly.

Thobeka: "I still can't believe they kept contact after everything he did to me, I guess the money she maintained herself with came from him, I don't know Makhosini, how can a woman stay with a man who did such a thing? How do you continue to love and protect such?"

Me: "I guess some people just don't care my love, they only care about themselves, your mother thought it's ok for your father to rape you just because he put food on the table, she only cared about herself, how I wish people with this kind of heart don't get to have children at all or just give them up for adoption, there is someone out there who is always ready to step up and be a parent."

She smiles looking at me.

Thobeka: "Someone like you, you did it for Hloniphile and Samkelo."

Me: "Maybe it's how it's supposed to be, we're all Born with a purpose, guess mine was to rescue Hloni and take her under my care then Samkelo and be a father figure he never had, then God and my ancestors gave me you, a woman who will be by my side and help me be a better man for myself and my family."

Thobeka: "You're already a better man, you're actually the best man I have ever known in my entire life."

Me: "Well I guess I am the only best man then, you only know me."

She smiles sweetly.

I let her sleep on my chest the whole night, This is it, our clean slate is near I can feel it.

The next day I am woken up by the banging on my door, Thobeka moves away from me and get up rushing to the door, she opens it angrily.

Thobeka: "I knew it! I knew it's you two banging on the door!"

She shouts at my kids they just look at her with smiles on their faces.

Hloni: "Mom, we slept early without seeing dad, we miss him."

Thobeka clicks her tongue and go to the bathroom. My kids jump on bed I hug them.

Samkelo: "Did you sort out the bad guy?"

Me: "Yes, he will never bother you and mom again."

Samkelo: "Uhlezi uzigcina izethembiso baba."(You always keep your promises dad.)

I smile.

Me: "That's what a father do to set up a good example for you, you always make promises you can keep so your children can trust you."

They nod and sit on my either side.

Hloni: "Uzobuya uMah athethe futhi."(Mom will come back and shout again.)

They laugh, I don't understand why they don't take her seriously because they don't know about the baby yet, we are waiting for it to at least show then we will sit them down and tell them there is another sibling coming.

Thobeka comes back and frowns looking at my babies, they just smile back at her, she end up smiling too.

Thobeka: "Did you eat anything?"

Samkelo: "MaDintle warmed up last night's left overs for us because she is still busy with breakfast."

Thobeka: "Ok."

She sit down and look at me.

Me: "Uhm...How would you guys feel about having a little sister or brother in a few months to come?"

Samkelo looks at Hloni."

Hloni: "A little sister would be nice, I would play dolls with her and do her hair, if it's a boy I would carry him on my back, I did it with Aqua yesterday he didn't wanna get off."

She says laughing sweetly, my beautiful daughter.

Me: "Sam?"

Samkelo: "Babies are cute I would like to have a brother or a sister."

I nod.

Me: "So, mom will be giving us a baby soon that is why she is always shouting and crying."

They laugh happily clapping hands.

Hloni: "I'm gonna be a big sister times two dad!"

Samkelo: "And I am gonna be a big brother."

He says goofing around I laugh.

Samkelo: "I'm gonna protect him or her, no one will touch him."

I laugh pulling him with my other arms to my chest brushing his head.

Me: "That's what big brothers do to their siblings, Uuka did that to all of us so you and Hloni should do it to your younger sibling."

They are happy and that gives me relief that none of them feel like they will be replaced because that won't be happening I love them just the same.

Weekend of the lobola for Sam and damages for the one Thobeka is pregnant with comes but dad asked to just pay everything in one day so we can get married before Thobeka shows and her family agreed, they still haven't heard about their brother's passing and I don't intend on telling them, they can even find him rotten I don't really give a shit about his body, you live like a dog you die like one.

I'm not ok with her going alone to sleep at her family house so I go to my brother Mcebisi.

Me: "Bhuti."

He nods sitting down on his chair I sit opposite him, we're in his hut.

Mcebisi: "Bhut'omncane." (Little brother)

Me: "Uhm...I don't know if I am overstepping or anything but can I ask your wife to accompany Thobeka to her home, I'm worried about her at least she is more close to Didintle I would feel better if she's there with her, Ngiyacela Gumede." (Please Gumede)

He nods and take out his phone calling his wife.

Dintle: "Baba wethu." (Our daddy)

That's how their twins call him.

Mcebisi: "Sthandwa Sami, awuvele kancane la endlini." (Can you come to the house for a moment)

Dintle: "Ok."

After a minute she comes in, wearing a long dress and a matching doek, they really chose beautiful women with nice bodies and so did I.

Mcebisi: "Baby, my brother is worried about Thobeka leaving alone to her family house, can you go with her just for a day, please mama."

Dintle: "Oh I don't mind but I am not leaving with your naughty twins, they are staying with you, bazongibukisa kabatho."(they will draw people's attention to me)

She mixes IsiZulu and SeTswana so beautifully)

Mcebisi: "They are not that bad baby."

Dintle: "They are the naughtiest twins in this family!"

I laugh because it's true they are so tiny yet the things they do are shocking, one day we looked for them all around the yard we even thought someone took them but we finally found them inside their mom's walk in wardrobe eating all the sweets their mother keep in their room, they opened each and every sweet there first before eating them, their mom gave them a beating with a towel.

She agrees to go with Thobeka and I feel better, she packs a little bag, I walk out and tell Thobeka she will be leaving with Didintle and that gives her a relief too because she is not close with any of her cousins since they all looked at her with those frowns because of what her mom made them to believe so now they are keeping their distance from her and I think it's out of guilt from their side.

I kiss her as they get in Mcebisi's car Didi is driving.

I walk back inside and we stay together as the whole family talking and laughing but I keep checking up on my wife to be through texts and phone calls.

My phone rings and it's her, I get up and walk out.

Me: "Mama wabantwana bami."(Mother of my kids)

Thobeka: "Mom is here Makhosini and I need you to calm me down before I cause a scene."

I am glad she's not crying or panicking, I can take this furiousness over everything right now, she is furious!

Me: "In everything you do just think of our baby ok."

"I will deal with her myself then since I am not pregnant!"

I can hear Dintle talking on the background sounding livid.

Me: "Dintle...Mcebisi will kill me if something happens to you, just stay where you are guys and don't give her any attention."

Dintle: "It's hard Bhuti, this woman is shouting calling Thobeka names, can you believe that she says Thobeka seduced her husband! The nerve of this woman!"

The girl is so angry I think I need my brother to calm her down right now. I rush in the room and call Mcebisi. We both walk out I tell him what's going on.

Mcebisi: "Didi, you went there to be Thobeka's support system so if someone needs a slap give it to her sthandwa Sami ngeke akwenze nix ngizofika Lapho ngibulale umuntu."(My love, they won't do anything to you I will come there and kill someone)

I am defeated, I thought he will calm his wife down only for him to add fuel into the fire, he is literally telling his wife it's ok to slap Thobeka's mom.

Me: "Bhuti what are you doing?"

Didintle: "This woman have no respect baby! No respect and I have had it with her ever since we came in here!"

Mcebisi: "And I am giving you a go ahead to slap her and see if she dares touch you, I would like to see her try me!"

What kind of couple is this?

Mcebisi: "Ngiyakuthanda yezwa, that's what a Gumede wife do, if one of you seems weak then you gotta be strong for her ok."

Didintle: "I love you."

Mcebisi: "I love you too."

We hear commotion, I am scared for my pregnant wife here.

Mcebisi: "Don't worry, Dintle won't let anything happen to her."

I nod, but I am still worried just waiting for her to call me and tell me she's ok.

After a few minutes she calls me.

Me: "My love, are you and the baby ok?"

She giggles.

Thobeka: "I'm fine, I'm actually eating right now."

Me: "Thobeka I'm serious.."

Thobeka: "Me too baby, Dintle dealt with my mother real good, so now I'm just relaxing in bed eating my food."

Me: "Oh that's a relief."

Thobeka: "Are you coming tomorrow?"

Me: "Yes but I won't get in, I am just going to see your beautiful face and say hi to my baby."

Thobeka: "I miss all of you."

I smile.

Me: "And so do I baby."

We say our goodbyes then I go back inside the house and try to get some sleep, my kids join me in bed and we sleep together.

Early around 4: 30am my father is already burning the incense for the "cows" which is in the form of money telling them where they are going and to do what, he won't be going, Bab'Omncane will go with Uuka and Mcebisi, I will also go with them just to see my baby.

We drive to her house and they stand outside their yard and start reciting the clan names, oMthiyane, oNdaba oSokhulu oSkhangane, I am smiling to myself, this is it! She's going to be my wife after all the pain and suffering we've been through.

I wait in the car while they are finally allowed inside the yard going to the rondavel I know everything will go well.

I see her sneaking out around the rondavel and get in the car, I laugh kissing her happily.

Me: "It's like I haven't seen you in days."

She hold my hand tight.

Thobeka: "Finally we are going to be official."

Me: "I just can't wait to see you walking down the isle in a white dress."

She giggles.

Thobeka: "I have to go, I am helping with cooking, Dintle will shout at me, she already shouted me saying I am lazy."

I laugh, they get along real good I'm glad she will find sisters in my brothers wives, she won't ever feel alone again.

She walks in and I can see Bab'Omncane keep walking out with my brothers to talk outside and finally the youngest from the five boys is going to get married.

I see Dintle walking up to my car carrying a tray, I step out of the car and kiss her cheek.

Me: "Thank you so much for what you did for my wife, I appreciate you so much."

Didintle: "She's a sweet girl I like her and she's gonna fit in perfectly in our circle as the Princes wives."

I laugh and take the tray from her.

Me: "Is everything ok now?"

Didintle: "Yes everything went well Bhuti, but your wife is feeling some light cramps, we will take her to the doctor when we leave."

Me: "Uhm...is it serious?"

I am getting worried now.

Didintle: "It happens when her tummy is expanding to accommodate the baby don't worry."

I nod and eat food but I need to see her so food isn't really going down well.

They all walk out with her, she is in a long dress and a head wrap. I hug her as soon as I get to her and brush her tummy.

Me: "How is the baby?"

Thobeka: "I feel some cramps but they are not that bad."

Me: "We need to see a doctor."

I thank my brothers and dad then drive away with her and Didintle. The doctor do some check ups and just like Didi suspected her womb is expanding a bit to accommodate the baby, he does a scan.

Moosa: "What is going on?"

He has his eyes all out.

Moosa: "Where were they hiding all along?"

I am looking at him so confused.

Me: "Who? What are you talking about?"

Moosa: "I can see two more babies but I am still worried about the weight this is not normal."

Me: "Can you talk slowly please."

Moosa: "there are two more babies that were obviously hiding."

Me: "So...so there are three babies in there and her tummy is like this?"

He nods worried and that kills me.

Moosa: "But the heartbeats are there Gumedede, I think they will be naturally tiny."

I take my wife home, I am driving quietly on the way, this can't be normal.

I take my wife to Ngcebo's hut and ask him to plead with my ancestors to keep my children safe if there is something wrong with them they must find a way to heal them. I can't even be happy I am having three kids as a triplet myself because their weight is scaring me, she is five months pregnant with three kids but nothing shows.

CHAPTER 99

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MAKHOSINI

1312

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'Oh I'll stay with you through the ups and the downs

Oh I'll stay with you when no one else is around

And when the dark clouds arise

I will stay by your side

I know we'll be alright

I will stay with you'

John Legend's song 'stay with you' chorus is playing in the background as Thobeka stands there at the entrance with a veil over her face but I can see her beauty underneath, We are getting married today and she is eight months pregnant but still these babies haven't popped her stomach up, I have decided not to stress myself as long as I still hear their heartbeats I will just wait for their arrival. We've done a traditional wedding, Thobeka's family did umbondo (the gift ceremony) we did every ceremony that was needed that is why we are only getting married now, I didn't want us to skip ceremonies, traditional ceremonies are more important than the white wedding.

She is standing there like she's nervous to walk down the aisle, she is holding a bouquet, it's been over two minutes with her just standing there like she wants to run away, I am getting really nervous but Bukhosi keeps wiping my sweat with his handkerchief. I am standing with all my brothers and Thobeka's bridesmaids are my brothers wives and Thingo.

Thobeka's family came except for her mother I made it clear that she shouldn't step foot here ever, we are getting married at the Qwabe waterfalls, there is a setup there and it's beautiful, my mom went all out for us, she always do for her children.

Dad get up from the front seat and walk to where Thobeka is standing, he whisper something to her ear she nods and wipe her left eye under

the veil she's crying. He stands next to her and give him his arm, she hooks hers in it then start walking down the isle, I don't know why his great father just sat there and didn't do this for her or maybe it didn't register in his head I don't know but he has been helpful with the ceremonies throughout.

Dad hands her over to me I hold her hand tight.

Me: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu baba."(Thank you so much dad.)

I look at her under the veil then take out my own handkerchief and wipe her tears making sure I don't ruin her make-up.

Me: "What's wrong baby?"

Thobeka: "I was scared of walking down the isle by myself."

Me: "I'm sorry baby, I should have talked to your great father to walk you down the isle."

Thobeka: "It's ok, we didn't think of it, I thought I will be ok."

The pastor clears his throat as we were whispering. We turn to look his way, he starts by praying then open a verse, then comes the time to say our vows. We keep it brief because we always confess our love for each other everyday.

He ask for the rings and my son walks in wearing a tuxedo that looks exactly like mine its olive green and a white t-shirt, that's the colour of the day.

He gives the pastor the rings then Hloni walks in with another one and give it to the pastor. He blesses our rings and say our vows as we put them on to each other's fingers we seal everything with a kiss as husband and wife. We sign the papers then go for photoshoots, the reception is at home so we go there and the tent looks like heaven on earth I have never seen anything like this. We seat on our chairs like the King and Queen. I try to give her something to eat but she shakes her head, she keeps shifting uncomfortable on her chair.

Me: "Are you ok? Is your dress tight?"

Thobeka: "No, but I feel hot."

I remove the whole veil on her head and start fanning her with my hand. Didi rush to us as her maid of honor.

Dintle: "Is everything ok?"

Me: "I think we need cold water."

She walks away and come back with bottled water I help her drink up, she drinks the whole bottle in one go. People are saying their speeches but I don't hear anything I am attending my sweating baby.

When it's time to do our dance, she tries to stand up the sit back down again shaking her head.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami, kanti yini?"(What's wrong?)

Thobeka: "My tummy hurts and I am wet, I think I peed on myself."

I frown looking at her, I signal Dintle to come to us.

Me: "What happens when someone is in labour?"

Dintle: "She feels light cramps at first then water breaking... wait..."

I stare at Thobeka she is frowning brushing her tummy, it's still not out there.

Me: "I think we need to take her to the hospital."

Dintle takes the mic from the MC.

Dintle: "Uhm...everyone I'm so sorry but our couple and the whole family have to go to the hospital, looks like those babies couldn't wait for another month to be born, they wanted this day specifically so they will remember it as their wedding day and their babies birthday."

People clap their hands and cheer, some are already saying congratulations but I'm so nervous. I scoop her up and walk out with her driving to the hospital.

They take her to the ward, I help her change into a hospital gown then she lies in bed with her knees up, she looks in pain but she wants to act strong.

Me: "Baby, you're not alone anymore, you don't have to pretend like it doesn't hurt, I'm here to hold your hand and tell you everything is gonna be ok."

She burst into tears.

Thobeka: "It hurts so bad Makhosini, I can't do this."

I hold her to my chest.

Me: "I'm here Sthandwa Sami, I am not leaving your side."

The nurses keep checking her and tell us it's not time yet, Thobeka keeps sleeping on her knees and tell me to rub her back, now she's sitting on the floor moaning in pain, tears fill my eyes but I keep blinking them away, I have to be strong for the four of them right now. I walk out and go straight to Ngcebo.

Me: "Can't you do something please Bhuti.."

Ngcebo: "Everything is gonna be fine Gumede, go back to your wife."

I go back and kneel in front of her.

Me: "I'm sorry my love, I'm so sorry."

Thobeka: "Help me up.."

She is breathing heavily now, I am so scared. I get up and pull her up, she falls into my arms and hold me tight, I am scared for what my twin brother went through with Khazimula's mom what if I lose her too.

Thobeka: "I can do this."

She smiles and kiss my lips.

Thobeka: "I will do it."

She holds me tight I can see her clenching her jaws.

Me: "Maybe we should ask for a C-section."

Thobeka: "No, I will do it baby, we just have to hold on just a little longer, you're here with me and I am not doing this alone so it can't be as bad as it was with Sam, you're here with me Sthandwa Sami, I love you."

The nurse comes back again and check her down there, she gives us a smiles.

Nurse: "I'm gonna call your doctor."

She walks out and come back with three more nurse and a doctor. I am holding her hand tight.

Doctor: "Can you breath, draw a deep breath then exhale."

She does as she is told.

Doctor: "You're doing good now I am gonna count to three then you gonna push ok, then when I say stop you stop, you hear me."

She nods squeezing my hand tight.

The doctor starts counting then tell her to push, she do it.

Doctor: "Yes keep going I can see the head.."

They keep using a gel for the baby to come out a bit easier, she keeps pushing until a baby falls on a Doctors hands, they allow me to cut the cord, and I do it a loud cry fills the entire room I look down saying a prayer.

Thobeka: "Makhosini..."

She screams, the doctor quickly pass the baby to a nurse and ask Thobeka to give him a hard push and my baby does exactly that making the second baby to come out. I cut the cord.

Doctor: "Two boys, we're doing good."

I am smiling through the tears.

Me: "You're doing great baby, you're doing great my love."

I kiss her sweaty forehead.

She screams again arching her back but they push her to lie down..

Me: "You can do this Sthandwa Sam, just one more time baby."

She push one last time till my third baby boy is here, I cut his cord and hold him in my arms closing my eyes.

Me: "Abafana baBaba."(Daddy's boys)

He screams in my arms I walk around the room with him on my shoulder, he is so tiny and naked but they are crying and that is enough proof of life.

The nurses take him as well then they bring the other two putting them on Thobeka's chest, one after the other. They are so little but they alive that's all that matters to me.

Me: "Is everything ok with them?"

Doctor: "Yes, we just checked their vitals everything is fine, 8 months baby boys but stronger than ever, and don't worry about their weight it might pick up pretty fast now they are out of the womb, I guess they thought of mommy and didn't wanna give her trouble."

I smile watching them clean them up the they put them down the one who came first, the middle boy and the last in that order. I smile and

go back to my wife kissing her deeply she push me away laughing a little.

Thobeka: "I'm so tired."

Me: "It's understandable! You deserve something big baby."

Thobeka: "But I just gave birth, you can't give me something big."

I hear gasps from the nurses cleaning her up I widen my eyes when I realize what she's saying. She close her eyes laughing silently.

Me: "That's nasty baby!"

Thobeka: "I know. You gonna name them?"

Me: "Senzelwe Isimangaliso Inkosi.(God has done a miracle for us)

I hold my first boy..

Me: "Your name is Senzelwe."

He starts crying so hard, a nurse walks in with a baby bag my mother bought a month ago full of baby clothes. They take him to dress him up, then I take the second baby boy.

Me: "You guys are a miracle so I am naming you Smangaliso."

They dress him up as well, then the last one who is just sucking the back of his fist not bothering anyone.

Me: "Your name is Senkosi, Phakathwayo."

I kiss his forehead and they dress him up too. They move all four of them to another ward, Thobeka is breastfeeding Senzelwe."

I am holding Smangaliso and dad is here holding Senkosi.

The entire family flood the room and ask to take turns holding the babies.

Thabsie: "I can see the tags on their arms already have their names on it, so beautiful and meaningful, congratulations baby."

Hloni and Samkelo are ushered in by Dintle, they stand in front of me.

Hloni: "So they are all boys?"

Me "Yes Princess."

She giggles.

Hloni: "I'm the only Princess!"

Everyone laughs as she says happily.

Samkelo: "Can I hold him."

I give him the baby, they ask for another one then the last one.

Samkelo: "Why do you keep giving me the same baby? I was holding this one before."

I laugh so hard.

Me: "It's not, they are like Bab'uNgcebo and Mcebisi, me and Bukhosi, dad and Kumkani."

Everyone laughs at the last part, but you could say dad and Kumkani are twins the way they are so inseparable and act alike.

Samkelo: "Wow, so how will they eat? What if you don't know which one you fed first and end up feeding him again and leave the other one hungry thinking you fed both of them."

I laugh so hard I even get up from my chair.

Thabsie: "What he is asking makes sense, we have three identical boys, what if we feed one of them twice thinking it's the other one."

Mom says looking at Samkelo amused, she knows very well that you do find that slight different somewhere, I already know the last born is

always sucking his fist. I know which one came out first and second then last I am their father I was there to cut their ambilical cords.

Mom ask some formula because there are too many of them so the two are getting impatient from waiting to be fed, Smangaliso is still sucking for dear life on his mother's breast.

Later everyone leaves, we left the food like that at the reception.

There is so much peace and quiet in the room, they are sleeping on their beds I am just standing there watching them sleep.

Me: "You did it Sthandwa, Ngiyabonga MaMthiyane wami omuhle."

She giggles.

Thobeka: "I wish you didn't have to leave me here."

Me: "Don't worry it's just one night then we will be together for the rest of our lives with our five kids."

Thobeka: "They were so excited to have baby brothers."

Me: "Especially Hloni, she's the only Princess."

We both chuckle.

Me: "We've really come a long way, you were made for me."

I look at our wedding rings and smile.

"We made it." We both say, I sit next to her in bed and let her sleep on my chest, after a few minutes she is fast asleep and it's understandable she's been through a lot in one day.

Early in the morning I asked Kumkani to go to Durban for me and get a car for my wife and I was specific about it, I signed a cheque for him to get it transported today before we come back from the hospital, so he left a few hours ago, I am going to pick them up, they are all good to come back home.

I get to the hospital with Dintle and Mcebisi to help me with the babies.

Me: "How did you guys sleep without me?"

She giggles.

Thobeka: "They woke up once and nurses helped with feeding them."

Me: "That's great, daddy will be here today to help."

I help her get up, she hooks her arm on mine while I hold the baby in my arms. Dintle and Mcebisi are holding the other two.

We get home and the car is already parked in our yard with a red ribbon in it and flowers. Thingo and mom rush to us then take the babies. Kumkani throws the car key at me. I smile and look at Thobeka.

Me: "I know this is not much for what you have given me baby but this is your push gift, thank you for our miracles."

She covers her mouth, she looks so excited as she starts screaming taking the key from me and open her car getting inside smiling then she step out and walk up to me.

Thobeka: "Ngiyabonga Gumede, wangenza umuntu ebantwini."(You've made me human amongst humans)

I kiss her lips and smile as she goes back to her car. We're finally here married and welcomed our miracles.

Let me re introduce myself, I am Prince Makhosini Gumede, a father of 5, Hloniphile, Samkelo, Senzelwe, Smangaliso and Senkosi Gumede and this have been a rollercoaster ride but we made it, finally!

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CHAPTER 100

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HERO

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“Indlela ibuzwa kwabaphambili” Which is an African proverb loosely translated to ‘those who have gone through it before are the ones who can show you the path’ and I have different context to this, I learned things the hard way when I didn’t listen to my father telling me not to do something and I did it anyway, the consequences were brutal it almost costed me and my sister’s lives, he knew better but I chose my own path which was a big mistake on my side, so I listen to those who came before me because they have walked that path before.

I am Hero Gumede, few years ago I found out I was adopted when I was just an infant, and I grew up with my little sister, nothing made me feel like I didn’t belong, mom and dad love us just the same, so finding out I wasn’t really theirs messed with my head I was really going through a lot, but I went for therapy, this is the only family I’ve ever known, when I am with them I never feel like an outsider at all.

I am still staying with my parents with no intentions of moving out anytime soon since my sister is now married and staying with her husband Sboniso I am just glad that I get to see her anytime because they live just next door and we still work together.

I am in my room late for work, mom and dad left an hour ago so I am gonna get a written warning again, it’s the second time, the first time I got the verbal warning for being late, then the first written warning, today I know I’m gonna be suspended, dad doesn’t play when it comes to business.

Something falls on the floor, I bend down picking it up, it’s a hair clipper I frown staring at it. I remember few months ago when Makhosini got shot in a war with the gang at the Qwabe mountain, I

asked a girl to give me her hair clipper to take out the bullet on my brother's arm. I chuckle when I remember how scared she looked when I talked to her, I didn't throw it away that day because it had my brother's blood, people use royal blood for power so I didn't want that so I put the clipper in my pocket, I got home and cleaned the blood I thought I threw it away after that but I guess not. I put it in my dresser and rush out. I drive to work then sneak into my office.

I hear a loud bang on the door then dad push it open, I act busy with my computer.

Nqobasi: "Just get your ass up and go back home if you wanna be a housekeeper so bad, you're setting a bad example to my employees, they will see you coming in late everyday and think that's ok!"

Me: "It will never happen again baba, I'm sorry."

Nqobasi: "It better not or you will be looking after the house and the garden at home or better yet I will send you to uBabomdala wakho back home."(Your great father)

That's Bab'Nkosiyo, he gives a mean punishment if you do wrong and you had to be sent to him for discipline so I just wanna go home on my own not because of punishment.

Me: "I will do better dad, forgive me Gumedede."

He clicks his tongue.

Nqobasi: "Send me those files I asked for yesterday, we have a board meeting in 30 minutes."

I nod and gather the files immediately, I am looking after the financial side of the business so they will be looking if the money is used appropriately, are they making profit is business going well all that stuff.

I call Phumie into my office so she can take the files to the boardroom and set up for the meeting. She walks in with what is supposed to be a

decent skirt but it looks like it rolled up, I don't even know why she's not pulling it down. Phumie is our new receptionist, she has been here for just two months, our old receptionist left because she finished studying and found a job.

Me: "Phumie, there is a meeting in thirty minutes in the boardroom please set it up."

She giggles and take the files from me.

Me: "And please do pull your skirt down, this is not a strip club."

She frowns and grab the files angrily from the table and storm out, I chuckle shaking my head I wonder who she is trying to seduce, it better not be my father because mom would kill her if I don't do it first, I don't want anything that would upset that woman.

We attend the meeting, my glowing sister is here too, I suspect she's pregnant with some Sbo Junior but she always denies it.

The meeting takes longer than expected I am even feeling sleepy, there is a white gentleman here Greg he always wants to analyze everything his voice is soft it's like he is singing you a lullaby.

Me: "I'm sorry but Greg can I at least do a summary for you sir, I have a pile of files I need to work on and what you're asking is all in that file, please."

I see Malaika smiling, Greg annoys us really bad sometimws, we don't get used to his voice yet he has been here even before us, dad likes him because he does his work perfectly in the HR department, a nerd he is.

Grey: "Ok, Uhm..sir I wanted to run this by you. Two of our cleaning ladies are leaving the company they didn't state the reason but already gave us their resignation letters."

Phumie: "Oh, they are leaving the country, they found work, Au pair or something."

I look at Malaika, she rolls her eyes looks like she doesn't like her one bit.

Dad rubs his beard.

Nqobasi: "So what do we do?"

Grey: "Send out posts so people can apply."

Phumie: "Oh Uhm I have a cousin who...."

Me: "She will apply like everyone else Phumie, we don't do nepotism here."

Phumie: "Says the bosses baby boy."

Me: "I actually went to school obtained my degree then applied in this company like everyone else, I did an interview so don't compare baby girl."

She looks away angrily. This girl is always on my case really yet I don't have anything to do with her at all, I am just busy with figures that side.

Meeting adjourned, I get up and go back to my office doing my work. When I do my work I always make sure I leave everything balanced because dad hates having to start everything from scratch and our CEO wants things done! That's my mother.

After work I am tired, I was a little behind from work because I was always late.

I get home and take off my shoes and jeans then throw myself in bed.

I don't really have a life, I meet a girl today then lose interest very quick and move on so now I am tired I would like to have a stable relationship but haven't met a girl that I would want to have something serious with yet.

It's morning I wake up early because I set the alarm clock. I take a shower and wear my formal clothes walking out of the room with my laptop bag. I take my lunch box that mom always makes early in the morning, yes she still makes lunch for me. I walk out and find their cars still here, I am early today it's time I stop disappointing my dad.

I go straight to my office and start working. Around 8 o'clock I go get my coffee and dad is shocked to see me walking out of my office.

Me: "Shame the devil!"

Mom burst in laughter, they just came in.

Nqobasi: "Who is the devil?"

He tries to come to me but I run out laughing, I love my parents so much I don't even wish to meet the woman who gave birth to me if she's still alive, I don't know her I never ask about her.

I take my tea then go back to my office and proceed with my work.

Greg knocks into my office then walk in.

Me: "Sir yes sir!"

He laughs fixing his glasses, Weeee!

Me: "What can I do for you?"

Grey: "I want to ask if this post is ok?"

I have a look at his laptop screen and nod.

Me: "Yeah it's all good man, do they send emails or we do hand deliveries?"

Grey: "Sending CVs via emails is easier for us then we will select and make calls."

I nod.

Me: "Great then."

He walks out feeling himself, look like he grew up with a low self esteem he always wants validation, always want to be praised, he always wants to look perfect.

I go to my father's office and walk in, she's with mom eating lunch.

Me: "Hey rents, I am going to the Palace to see my brothers, it's Friday anyway so can I take this half day please."

Dad nods.

Nqobasi: "You really surprised me this week, you were always late but none of your work is behind, also you came in early today so yeah you can go."

Me: "Thank you."

I kiss mom's cheek then fist bump dad and walk out. I say goodbye to my sister and drive back home to pack first.

I drive to the mall and start buying baby items for Makhosini's boys, we always buy things for the older ones.

I see hair clippers and decide to buy them just in case I see that girl who gave me her clipper.

I get home and greet the kids playing in the yard and walk inside, I greet the King and Queen. I hold Senzelwe who is the only one awake, they are growing pretty fast.

After a while just sitting at home, I take Phezukonke and Samkelo going to the store just a little distance away from home.

Samkelo: "Wena baba umdala kunoBaba wami Kodwa awushadile, yinindaba?"(You dad are older than my dad but you're not married, why?)

I laugh shaking my head.

Me: "I will get married once I find a beautiful girl like your dad did find your mom."

Samkelo: "Yes, mom is beautiful."

Phezukonke: "My mom is beautiful too!"

I laugh as they say sweet things about their moms, they almost make me wish to have a baby soon, I am getting older and all the youngest are already married.

We get to the store and buy sweets and chips for every children at home. Then when we head back I see two girls walking together carrying some newspapers they are coming to the store.

They bow their head bending their knees a bit.

"Sanibonani Nkosana."(Greetings Prince)

Me: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

They keep their heads down until I tell the boys that we should leave but when I turn I find them looking our way, I notice the girl I took the clipper from.

Me: "Ngicela usondele la Sisi."(Please come closer sister)

She shakes her head nervously I frown.

Me: "Hawu.."

I don't understand why she's scared of coming to me.

Me: "I just remember I took your clipper and so I bought a new one for you."

"You didn't have to Prince."

Me: "You can call me Hero, Qhawe in Zulu."

She just nods, the other girl leave her and walk in the store after giving her the pile of newspaper she was holding.

Me: "So uzoyilanda Nini lento? Zinhle izinwele zakho."(So when are you fetching this? Your hair is nice)

"Ngiyabonga, ngizoza."(Thank you, I'll come.)

Me: "I know you won't so let's go now."

She nods hesitantly, shame man, royalty can be intimidating I understand.

Phezukonke: "Auntie sengikhathele cela ungiqukule."(Auntie I'm tired please pick me up.)

Samkelo and I stare at him.

Smakelo: "Why didn't you tell dad you're tired?"

He shrug his shoulder and stop walking looking at the girl, she slowly picks him up.

Me: "You didn't have to do that, usile lo."(This one is naughty)

"Akunankinga Nkosana."(There's no problem Prince)

I chuckle.

When we get to the gate, I take a sleeping Phezukonke from her I guess he was really tired.

Me: "Ngicela ungilinde la ngiyabuya."(Please wait for me here I am coming back)

She nods. I walk in and lay PK in his bed then go to my room taking the hair clippers. When I walk out the girl is already walking away.

Me: "Aybo wentombi!"(Hey lady!)

I shout for her, she turns and drops her head. I go to her.

Me: "I didn't stay long why are you leaving?"

"I don't want you to pay for the clipper."

Me: "Please take it, you helped my brother that day with that clipper, I appreciate it."

She slowly takes them then gasp.

"They are so many and cost a lot of money!"

Me: "Sorry I didn't see any with less prize."

She nods.

Me: "So what's your name?"

"Snakho Dlamini."

I smile nodding.

Me: "Nice to know you. Can I walk you home?"

Snakho: "Aybo abantu bazothini?"(What will people say?)

Me: "I don't really care what people think."

She allows me to walk her home, but she is walking a little behind from me, so I just pull her hand and hold it making her walk closer to me.

Me: "So what are you doing here?"

Snakho: "I just finished school two years ago."

Me: "Oh let me guess, and your parents already have a husband for you who will make you a housewife and leave home to work only for him to cheat and come back to you with a side chick wanting to make her a second wife?"

She chuckles.

Snakho: "No, that's not it."

Me: "Then why aren't you studying?"

Snakho: "I didn't pass well."

Me: "You know people upgrade these days right?"

Snakho: "Yes but doesn't it require money?"

Me: "You just don't want to study because the queen always help out fund people who want to further their education especially young girls like you."

Snakho: "I never thought of that. I am just raising money from deliveries newspapers to the shops nearby, we go to town every morning to buy newspaper with a less price then sell it to the local shops, there is profit not much but it's something."

I widen my eyes looking at her.

Me: "That's clever, it's better than sitting at home doing nothing, who thought of that idea?"

Snakho: "I did and told my friend about it."

I smile.

Me: "You're clever huh?"

She looks away smiling, she is able to talk to me now without sounding nervous.

Me: "Uhm you know I just thought of something, there is a job in my company, they are looking for cleaning ladies for our offices, I know it might not be an ideal job for you but it pays good money, you can save to upgrade."

Snakho: "I don't get to choose jobs, but I don't really have a CV."

She says looking down.

Me: "You can just take your documents now and we can turn back and go home, to do your CV."

She nods and run inside her home, a decent house, she comes back with a brown envelope then we go back home. She's scared of walking in.

Me: "We are going straight to my hut, no one will see you if that's what scares you."

She nods and follow me.

I close the door and ask her to sit in bed while I sit on my dresser and get busy with the company.

Me: "Aw Snakhokonke Pretty-Girl Dlamini."

She laughs for the first time ever, I chuckle.

Snakho: "My names are nice!"

I laugh.

Me: "Kusho bani?"(Says who?)

She giggles.

She stands behind me and look at the screen hanging her arm on my shoulder, her warm fresh breath hits my face, I think she was eating mint sweets.

Me: "So Uhm...I will write my home address in Durban because sometimes they want someone close who will be able to get to work early easily."

She sighs.

Snakho: "Let's say I get the job, where will I stay, I don't have any relatives in Durban, only in Jorbug."

Me: "We will look for accommodations around the area, they are affordable, you can use the money you already saved then pay it back with your first paycheck."

She nods, I know most women don't like to be helped financially by a stranger because they always think you want something in return so I will just help her here and there.

Once I'm done with her CV I send it to her phone then she send it via email to our HR department.

Snakho: "Thank you."

I smile and take her home once again, with a car this time around.

The next day around 11 am Hloni walks in my hut and greet respectfully.

Hloni: "Baba kukhona umuntu okucelayo egatin uyesaba ukungena."(Dad Someone is asking for you at the gate scared of coming in.)

I nod and wear my flip flops walking out, it's Snako, I stand by the gate looking at her.

Snako: "Sawubona."(Hello)

Me: "Hi."

Snakho: "Uhm..look I got the call already."

She shows me the phone and I can tell it's from the company, Greg is really doing the lord's work, trying too hard to impress but if it benefits the company I am all for it.

Me: "How many days did they give you to prepare for the interview?"

Snakho: "The interview is on Wednesday."

Me: "I'm leaving tomorrow, I don't know if it's possible to come with me."

Snakho: "But, what about a place to stay?"

Me: "We will find it, I will make calls today then prepare you for the possible questions of the interview."

Snakho: "Ngiyabonga, Gumede."(Thank you Gumede.)

I bow my head, I can tell she's excited yet nervous at the same time, it happens to the best of us.

The next day I drive by her house, she walks out carrying a small bag and get in at the backseat.

Me: "Why such a small bag?"

Snakho: "This is just an interview I might not even get the job."

Me: "Wow.. negative much?"

Snakho: "It's the truth, I know many people applied for that job, the unemployment rate is insane."

Me: "You're right, but I just have to prepare you then you will nail it."

She nods, I drive to Durban and take her to the place where those two workers who resigned stayed, most people who stay here are from our company because it's fairly close, I managed to get this space for her.

We walk in and I show her around, it's a nice flat with everything inside you just have to come with your clothes, beddings, food, just necessities.

Me: "We should start doing this today because tomorrow I have work and I knock off late."

She nods, I start with the basics, the "tell us about yourself" kinda question and she nails it she just lacks confidence she speaks very low but I will polish that soon. I walk out of her flat promising to come back later with a blanket and sheets to use just for the time being.

I bump into someone at the passage, I sigh when I realise who it is, she looks shocked to see me here.

Phumie: "Hero? What are you doing here?"

Me: "Came to see someone, bye Phumie."

I walk away. Now usually if I meet a girl I ask her out immediately and I always smash but Snakho is not my type so I will just help her, that's it.

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CHAPTER 101

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HERO

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I've spent two of my afternoons with Snakho preparing her for the interview tomorrow at 9 o'clock, the nerves are still there but she's better than the first day we did this.

Me: "Don't worry about anything, you gonna nail that interview."

She huffs.

Snakho: "I just want this interview to be over so I can know my fate."

Me: "Just walk in there and ace that thing!"

She nods.

Snakho: "Thank you for this."

Me: "It's all cool."

She dish up for me, delicious food man, I know girls from our village are thoroughly domesticated, they know everything that has to do with home life and housework.

I eat her food then get up.

Me: "I'm leaving now, break a leg."

She smiles brushing her arms.

Me: " Are you feeling cold or it's just nerves?"

I ask pulling her into a tight hug, she takes a deep sigh.

Snakho: "Nerves."

Me: "Tomorrow all this will be over and you will have a job."

She smiles.

Snakho: "You have so much faith in me Prince."

Me: "You can't always be calling me Prince, I am Hero or translate it into IsiZulu."

She nods, I know she will call me Prince once again.

She walks me out and I wish I didn't allow her to walk me to my car because now Phumie is coming out of her room, I look behind me, she's just quiet looking down.

Phumie: "Oh hey Hero, who is the girl?"

I just take Snakho's hand and take her back to her room.

Me: "If that girl ask anything just ignore her ok."

Snakho: "Is she your ex? She's beautiful Yhoo."

Me: "Why did you think of that?"

Snakho: "She looks like the type you would go out with, she looks beautiful, smells nice and have a nice body."

I frown..

Me: "So you know my type?"

She drops her eyes, shaking her head.

Me: "Bye."

I walk out and get in my car driving home, honestly I usually go out with girls like Phumie, easy girls, the ones who would throw themselves at you but Phumie is definitely not my cup of coffee she is too much, there is nothing I respect more than my office, I don't want any distraction there, I don't want any office affairs especially with a girl like her, she would run her mouth for everyone to know that we're up to something, I am a 'no kiss and tell' type until I find my wife, there's nothing humiliating as exes popping out of nowhere in these social medias while you have a wife, people comparing her body or beauty to the exes that's why I want to keep the relationships private until I am sure about the possible future between us.

The next morning I can see people from the HR department gathering in the boardroom but I don't see Snakho amongst people sitting at the reception area ready to be interviewed. I quickly take out my phone and call her but she's not picking up, I am getting really worried. I try to call again she's really not answering. I put my coffee down and rush out, I get in my car and drive out, I find her already walking out looking like a mess, she's wearing a white shirt and a blue shirt, the shirt is not even tucked in the right way I don't wanna mention her hair. I step out and rush to her, she just cries.

Me: "What happened?"

I wipe her tears then fix her shirt and a skirt.

Snakho: "I am not going anymore."

Me: "Why?"

Snakho: "Phumie came to ask my name and I don't know how she found out I am going to that interview! She came in early this morning and told me not to bother and...and.."

She is hysterical, she's just a child compared to Phumie so she must have threatened her.

I check my wrist watch.

Me: "You still have a few minutes, let's go inside so I can fix your hair."

We walk in, I tell her to give me her hair clippers then ask her to sit down. I stand in front of her.

Me: "Do you have a styling gel."

She nods and give it to me, I style her hair up into a bun and use clippers to make it neat, I grew up with my sister she has so much hair so I would watch how mom do her hair then when we're alone or with a nanny I'll do it, she's my best friend.

I use a hairdryer. And look at her face.

Me: "You need to wipe the tears now or go wash your face."

She go to the bathroom then come back looking better.

Me: "Let's get going, we're late."

I drive to work. We walk in just as Phumie calls out Snakhokonke Dlamini.

Me: "To the boardroom, that way, good luck."

She nods walking away I can see how nervous she is by just her walk. I go to my office and start my work the time I walk out everyone is gone. I go to Phumie.

Me: "You don't wanna be on my bad side Phumie."

She rolls her eyes.

Phumie: "You thought I am gonna keep quiet? You wanted them to hire your rural girlfriend, I know you gave her questions that would be possible asked during that interview."

Me: "And what has that got anything to do with you?"

Phumie: "It has everything to do with me, we also have friends and family that are looking for jobs!"

Me: "How is that my problem?"

She clicks her tongue and walk away.

After work I go check on Snakho to see how it went.

She opens the door for me and we hug briefly.

Me: "What happened?"

Snakho: "I tried, I already started my day bad so I don't know, I'm just hoping for the best now."

Me: "Sorry neh, for what Phumie did."

She nods.

Snakho: "She said I am not your type, I should crawl back to where I come from."

I frown.

Me: "What?"

Snakho: "Yeah.."

Me: "So that's the part that made you cry?"

She grabs the pillow and throws it at me, I laugh

Snakho: "But she's right though, I am definitely not the Cinderella type."

We both start laughing so hard.

Me: "The fairytale should remain just that."

Her phone rings just before 4 o'clock, she answers it and speaks for a while.

Once she is done she toss the phone on the bed and scream jumping to hug me, I laugh holding her and I think I know what it is.

Me: "Congratulations."

She laughs.

Snakho: "I wouldn't have done it without you, thank you."

Me: "It's ok."

Snakho: "They said I must fetch the uniform tomorrow but I am starting next week Monday."

I nod.

Me: "Don't be late and don't let anyone discourage you."

She nods and sit next to me.

Me: "I will leave now."

Snakho: "Ok, thank you neh."

Me: "Yeah.."

I get home and sleep.

There is a sound of the kettle boiling and when I try to switch it off it burns my whole arm.

I quickly sit up and look at my arm, I feel some pain the dream felt so real.

I look at my bedside and see the phone, I take it and see some missed calls from Snakho the time was 10:50pm when she called, I call her back now it's 11:41pm.

Snakho: "Hero.."

Me: "Are you ok? Why were you calling so late?"

Snakho: "I'm sorry to bother you but I felt like someone was trying to unlock my door from the inside."

Me: "What? Did you ask who it is?"

Snakho: "I was already asleep I just woke up to someone trying to put the key but I didn't remove mine from the inside."

I rub my eyes because I am still sleepy.

Me: "Should I come check on you now?"

Snakho: "No, you don't have to, I think whoever it was left."

I nod, but I have this feeling that someone is trying to scare her off.

Me: "Ok, go to sleep, I will see you early in the morning."

Snakho: "Oh...who is it!"

She says nervously, I just get off bed and wear my clothes. I rush out and drive to her flat and knock on the door and tell her it's just me. She opens looking shaken.

Me: "Who was at the door?"

Snakho: "I think there are ghosts here, someone was knocking without saying anything when I asked who it is they kept knocking, and when I opened nobody was there."

Me: "If you're so scared then we can just look for another flat."

Snakho: "No, maybe it's all in my head, I'll be fine."

I nod, I am so sleepy even when I was driving I was busy yawning.

Snakho: "Sorry for making you drive all this way here for nothing."

Me: "It wasn't Nothing, you heard something."

She nods.

Me: "Do you maybe wanna come home with me so we can leave together in the morning, to save time."

Snakho: "No, what about your parents?"

Me: "They won't see you, everyone is sleeping now and we will leave early in the morning."

Snakho: "Ok."

She packs her little bag, I take her home. She sleeps in my bed in her long pyjamas and I use the couch.

In the morning I wake her up first to use a shower because I can be messy and a lady deserves a clean bathroom.

We both walk out before mom and dad, I drive us to work and ask her to walk in first I don't want sick rumours here already Phumie is talking shit I don't want more.

I go to my office and start working. I hear a light knock on my door.

Me: "Come in."

She walks in carrying a plastic bag, I smile getting up then walk around the table sitting in front of her on my desk.

Snakho: "I got my uniform, I don't understand why they give out uniforms without checking the size."

Me: "It's just small, medium and large I'm sorry about that I guess they don't really pay attention."

Snakho: "Jaa, nginemicondo mina so the pants doesn't really fit me well there."(I have thin legs.)

I laugh.

Me: "I can fix it for you, I usually design my own pants the way I like it, I would buy a jean and make it a skinny jean if I want, with my own hands."

She take it out and show me.

Me: "Let me fix it now."

I open my drawer and take a thread, I cut it then sew it without asking her to fit it first.

Me: "Now you can try it out."

Snakho: "Right here?"

I nod and go lock the door. I sit down again and watch her as she takes off her skirt I don't see anything other than thighs because her shirt is covering her up, not that I wanted to see anything. She widen her eyes.

Snakho: "It fits! How did you know where to cut?"

Me: "You're right in front of me. If I wasn't into Accounting so much I was gonna go for fashion design."

Snakho: "Wow you're so good."

Me: "There's no problem if you wanna adjust it as long as it's still a uniform."

She nods and giggle taking out her shirt.

Snakho: "Can you look at it?"

I laugh.

Me: "I am still at work you know."

She laughs.

Snakho: "Sorry."

There's a knock on the door, I open because really I have nothing to hide to whoever that is.

Greg walk in and his eyes moves to Snakho, their eyes lock and I don't know if it's what they call chemistry or I am reading too much into it but their stare last for over a minute, I clear my throat they both look away quickly.

Me: "Uhm...Greg can I help you?"

Grey: "Uh..you know each other? I was here to tell you we already got our two cleaners."

I nod looking at Snakho, she is looking down now, maybe she is into white boys because she is definitely blushing.

Grey: "Do you know each other?"

Me: "Yeah, we come from the same village."

He nods and fix his glasses.

Grey: "See you on Monday Snakhokonke."

I chuckle and sit down on my chair brushing my beard.

Snakho: "Ok sir."

Grey walk out, I stare at Snakho.

Me: "You like him?"

Snakho: "Who?"

Me: "Greg?"

Snakho: "What? No! It's just that he was patient with me on my interview while others didn't wanna give me a chance."

Me: "Oh that's the only reason you're blushing?"

Snakho: "I didn't blush!"

Me: "Oh cool."

I walk her out, she's already hired so I don't have to hide that I know her to anyone.

When we get to the reception area, we find Grey gossiping with Phumie with the way he is leaning over speaking to her ear.

They move away from each other as soon as they see us.

Me: "I will see you on Monday Nakho.."

She nods and walk out. Greg walks away and Phumie giggles as I pass by.

Phumie: "Aw Greg!"

She says laughing, and Greg just waves at her without looking at her.

I go back to her desk.

Me: "What is going on?"

Phumie: "I have never seen Greg this smitten, the new cleaner makes him feel things."

Me: "Oh that's great."

Phumie: "It is?"

Me: "Yeah, I think they are both single so it won't hurt anyone."

She says a long "Mmmmmh'."

When I knock off I just drive straight home, I need to go out it's been a while.

It's Friday night, the club is buzzing people are having fun. I go straight to the bar area and ask for a shot, I take a cider and go to some girl sitting all alone.

Me: "Mind if I join you?"

She chuckles and show me a seat in front of her. I sit down.

Me: "Why are you here alone?"

"Why are you here alone?"

We both laugh.

Me: "Uhm..so I have been single and my sister who is my best friend is now married so she can't go out with me anymore like we used to."

She nods.

"Well I just broke up with my baby's dad after 6 years so yeah... apparently he found his soulmate."

I chuckle.

Me: "Sorry about that."

We talk and end up in a hotel room kissing but for the first time ever I don't feel like fucking with her, so I just walk out as if I am answering the call and go straight to Snakho's place to check on her.

She opens the door for me and smile awkwardly.

Me: "Hey."

I hear Phumie's laughter inside, I frown and push the door open, there is Phumie in here with Greg, there are pizza boxes and drinks on the table.

Grey: "Oh hey boss."

I nod and look at Snakho.

Me: "Can we talk for a minute."

We step out.

Me: "So you're friends with Phumie now?"

Snakho: "No, she just knocked and asked for forgiveness and that we start over, she called Greg to visit since it's Friday, we're hanging out and they are welcoming me into a new building and congratulate me for my new job."

I chuckle.

Me: "The same Phumie who wanted to sabotage you? Hope you know what you're doing."

Snakho: "You can join us.."

Me: "No thank you. Goodnight."

I walk away and get in my car driving home.

In the middle of the night I wake up to a persistent call. I sit up and answer the damn phone.

Me: "Hello."

"Hero, Snakho is at the hospital I swear it was an accident I was boiling water to make tea and when I was about to pour water on my cup she was too close and I..it spilled right on her arm."

That's Phumie speaking almost out of breath.

Me: "Is she okay?"

Phumie: "They are looking into it right now."

Me: "Was it really an accident Phumeza? A tea in the middle of the night? Why didn't you go to your place and make the damn tea?"

Phumie: "Yes it was an accident! Greg was still there, he saw everything."

I drop the call and just get my sleep, they are her new friends and they are there for her and with her so I'm just gonna let them be, She found a job that I promised her so that's it, I don't owe her anything.

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CHAPTER 103

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HERO

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Snakho is recovering well at her new flat that I found for her not far from home and work, it's been a week since she came back from the hospital and mom asked her to stay home for another week and they will hire one more cleaner to make things easier for the other one who started on the same day as her, so when she feels better she will go back to her work.

I just got off work so I am driving to her place because she called and asked if we could have dinner together because she is bored.

I walk in her clean flat, she greets me with a hug then we go sit on the same couch facing each other.

Me: "So what were you up to the whole day?"

Snakho: "I cleaned and did my laundry."

I nod and check out her arm, she doesn't put a bandage anymore and it's healing pretty fast because I asked for a traditional ointment from

Ngcebo and I apply it to her every day before she sleeps, I can say we're getting close as friends I don't wanna seem like I am taking advantage because I helped her by asking her out right now.

I have noticed that I feel different whenever I'm around her, I care deeply and I don't feel lonely like most of the time ever since Malaika got married.

Snakho: "Uhm...so is Uhm.. is Greg ok?"

My mood just drops I look down shaking my head.

Me: "You called me here just to ask about Greg?"

Snakho: "No, I'm just asking."

Me: "I can give you his number so you can call him."

She nods and I feel like leaving this place right this moment and never talk to her again.

I call out Greg's number and she is typing on her phone, I just get up and go get some water in the fridge.

Snakho: "Hey Greg it's Snakho I.."

I click my tongue and grab my car keys walking out.

I get in my car and drive home mad as hell, my phone keeps ringing but I don't answer.

I take a shower then go eat with mom and dad.

Tamia: "How is Konke doing now?"

Me: "She's getting better, that ointment Ngcebo gave me worked."

She nods.

Tamia: "So you have never introduced any girl to us your whole life, are you even dating anyone?"

Me: "I'm not dating anyone mom."

They look at each other.

Me: "I have been dating but it never gets to a point of introductions mama."

She nods.

Tamia: "I was getting worried you're not getting any younger, we want grandchildren."

I laugh.

Me: "You will get them soon mom don't worry."

Nqobasi: "But don't just impregnate anyone, make sure it's someone you see a future with, make yourself clear to her where your relationship is going so that if you're not compatible you'll move on and find the right one."

I nod.

Me: "I will do that dad, thanks for the advice."

I go to my room and find almost 50 missed calls from Snakho I just switch off my phone and get in bed sleeping.

The next morning I block her numbers and go to work, I find Greg with Phumie at the reception giving her files, I just pass without greeting them, I am ashamed, I told him that I am with Snakho now the same Snakho asked for his numbers and called him, that makes me look like a crazy liar.

I walk out of my office and see Phumie rushing to me with the widest smile on her face.

Phumie: "Did you know Snakho left the flat?"

I ignore him going my way but she keeps walking beside me.

Phumie: "And she agreed to go on a date with Greg tonight, I didn't think she's still here in Durban thought she went back to the village."

I buy a drink, I was actually coming here to buy food but I don't want it anymore.

Phumie: "You know what I think? Greg is the one who helped her move out because there is no way she would just leave in the middle of the month without getting her money back or even working."

I sigh.

Me: "You're really getting on my last nerve Phumeza and one of these days I will actually give you a written warning."

Phumie: "On what grounds baby?"

I smile but I'm so angry.

Me: "You will know just keep annoying me."

I go back to my work but I can't concentrate anymore, I am having some chest pains literally..so I just pack up and leave my office.

I get in my car and take off my tie trying to breath in and out calming myself down.

I find myself parking in front of her flat, I knock on the door and she opens looking so beautiful.

Me: "Hey.."

Snakho: "Hi."

Me: "Are you going somewhere?"

Snakho: "Uhm..yeah Greg asked if we could go out after he get off from work."

Me: "Before you go, I have something to tell you."

She makes way for me, I walk in and sit on the couch, she sit next to me.

Me: "So Uhm...I want to let you know that I have feelings for you. I kept making excuses that you aren't the type I usually go out with and that you're young but all those things doesn't stop me from falling for you. It hurts that you have interest in someone else and not me but If he is everything you want you can go for it I won't hold it against you."

She blinks rapidly like she can't believe what I'm saying.

Snakho: "Please..please leave."

Me: "Nakho.."

Snakho: "I want you to go Hero."

I nod and get up fixing my pants.

Me: "Uhm... enjoy your date."

I walk out and go home. I take a shower then sit in bed calling Malaika.

Malaika: "Hello."

Me: "Hey sis, are you good?"

Malaika: "Yeah I'm fine."

My heart shifts a bit, why is she not asking about me?

Me: "Malaika..did I call at a bad time?"

Malaika: "Yeah I'm busy."

Me: "Oh..Uhm..ok."

She drops the call just like that, I stare at the phone, I think I have lost my sister, looks like I am annoying her.

I just wear my casual clothes and drive home.

I find Ngcebo and Mcebisi sitting outside talking, I walk up to them and we greet each other shoulder hugging.

Ngcebo: "What's wrong?"

Me: "I got rejected by the girl I think I love, and I think Malaika doesn't care about our relationship anymore."

I wipe my face.

Me: "Maybe it's starting to sink in that I'm not her blood brother anymore."

Ngcebo: "Don't ever say that with your mouth ever again or the wrath of the ancestors will befall you so bad you won't even recognize yourself, you're a Gumede."

Me: "I'm sorry I just...I have been feeling lonely these days even mom and dad hang out more together now without me."

Mcebisi: "Or maybe you are just tired of being a bachelor that's why you keep feeling this way."

Me: "You might be right, I have been dying to have a baby these days but I don't have a woman who will carry my child."

Mcebisi: "When you want something Hero you don't run away but you face it head on and fight for it!"

I nod but I don't have any fighting spirit in me right now.

I spend the entire weekend here at home and being with my brothers makes me feel better.

I go back to Durban early Monday morning already dressed for work so I drive straight there. I walk in and find Snakho in my office, so she's back at work.

Me: "Sawubona."(Hello)

She gets startled and let go of the bucket she was holding, water splash all over the floor even on my shoes.

Snakho: "I'm so..sorry sir I didn't mean...I."

I take her hand.

Me: "It's ok."

She cleans up everything in a hurry like she can't wait to get the hell out of my sight.

I clear my throat.

Me: "Uhm how was your date with Greg?"

Snakho: "I didn't go."

I look at her confused.

Me: "Why?"

Snakho: "I realized something."

Me: "And that is?"

Snakho: "You..you confessed your feelings for me and I realized that I also do feel something for you."

Me: "But what about Greg?"

She looks down.

Me: "You have feelings for him too?"

Snakho: "I don't know, I just like him."

I nod.

Me: "Then you can go ahead and be with him."

I say smiling but my heart is breaking into pieces.

Snakho: "I won't be with neither one of you until I'm sure of my feelings."

I nod looking down, I have never been rejected by a lady before if anything they beg me to date them but here I am now rejected by someone I truly want in my life and it hurts, it's clear she's in love with Greg I might just be the other guy and I don't think I can ever handle being someone's second option. I don't even understand what the ancestors are doing, are they setting me up for a heartbreak here? Why are they giving me a girl who is unsure about her feelings like this, she's so young, why her?

Just then Greg walk in and I chuckle silently.

Greg: "Uh..uh hey..Boss hi."

I nod and sit on my chair looking at them, I can't handle the way they are looking at each other, the pain I have been feeling in my chest keeps coming back I hit my chest lightly coughing but I feel like it's getting worse, I am start sweating so I get and my head is spinning, I balance my hands on the table.

As I try to go over to the mini bar fridge here in my office, I don't even get there because my knees fail me I just slip and my body hits the floor so hard all I hear is a scream then it's lights off.

I wake up and look around I am at the hospital and I am wearing nothing on my upper body and I have a drip on my arm. I try to move but my back hurts. The door opens mom and dad rush to stand next to my bed.

Tamia: "Boy.. What happened? What's wrong? Snakho came in our office hysterical when you collapsed."

Me: "I'm fine mom."

She nods.

Me: "Uhm...does Malaika know I'm here?"

Tamia: "Yes."

Me: "Where is she?"

Tamia: "She went to check on Sboniso in his office, she'll be here soon."

Me: "And Snakho?"

She walk in right there and stand by the door nervous to get close.

Me: "Hey.."

Snakho: "Hi."

She is looking down.

Nqobasi: "We will give you some space."

They both walk out, Snakho sit next to my bed.

Snakho: "What's wrong with you?"

Me: "I don't know, maybe it's heartbreak."

She stares at me.

Me: "How I wish you'd just kiss me and tell me you want us to try things out."

She drops her eyes.

Me: "You don't even want to try with me Nakho, is there something wrong with me?"

Snakho: "No."

I chuckle.

Me: "But I don't blame you, people have been rejecting me a lot these days even my own sister."

"Hero."

My sister says standing by the door.

Me: "You are ok to talk to me today?"

She walk in and sit on the other side, she tries to hold my hand but I move it away.

Me: "Don't do that.."

Malaika: "Hero I.."

Me: "Don't explain, even at home things changed when you got married, mom and dad only have time for each other now, I don't exist, we used to have nights where we will just be together as a family but that doesn't happen anymore, it's like after you left they made peace that they don't have children anymore."

Tamia: "Hero.."

They are standing by the door, both of them.

They walk in and stand on my either side, Malaika is now crying. Snakho get up and leave the room.

Tamia: "We didn't mean for you to feel that way baby, why didn't you communicate and tell us how you feel?"

Me: "People's lives shouldn't stop just because I feel lonely, I guess I should go out there and find my soulmate so I will also stop bothering people seeking their attention."

Nqobasi: "Don't talk like that son, we weren't aware that we were neglecting you."

I chuckle.

Me: "Of course you weren't because you just stopped caring the day Malaika left."

Nqobasi: "I don't like what you make all this seem like Hero, so please don't go there because ngeke sizwane."(We're not gonna get along right now.)

I nod and just close my eyes.

They keep talking but I just remain quiet.

I don't know when they left but I just woke up alone in my room.

The doctor walks in and explain that I am under a lot of stress and it has caused inflammation but thank God it's not chronic so I am gonna get some medication and try not to stress.

Snakho walk in the room carrying a plastic bag, she takes out some take aways and it smells really good.

Snakho: "You should eat.."

I eat her food in silence till I finish it.

Me: "Thank you."

I look at her.

Me: "Does Greg know that you're here?"

She stares at me.

Snakho: "Do I report to him?"

Me: "I don't know."

She chuckles.

Me: "I want to focus on my work now and not stress about anything else, so I want you to do that as well, Our relationship will strictly be in a work place and it will end there."

She looks at me confused.

Me: "Forget I said anything about feelings I might have for you."

Snakho: "Oh.."

Me: "Yeah please."

She collects her things and get up.

Snakho: "I'm sorry for what you're going through."

I nod and watch her as she walks out, maybe I shouldn't have survived that time Malaika and I were kidnapped, I feel like my life took a huge turn the day I found out Tamia and Nqobasi weren't my biological parents, I started looking at things differently and that was the biggest mistake on my part because I think that's exactly what led me to this hospital bed today.

CHAPTER 104

*

NQOBASI

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The hardest part about being a parent is when your child or children feel alone while you're still breathing, how they feel neglected even by you, that's the worst kind of pain. I went through that stage before and trust me that feeling paralyze your mind, body and soul, it kills your spirit no matter how tough you think you are you're bound to reach a breaking point.

Hearing my son speak like that I sat down alone yesterday and reflected back from the day Malaika got married and everything he said is true, we changed, we stopped giving him the attention him and his sister used to get from us.

On weekends we used to go out for lunch as a family but now I usually take just my wife out, I get why he feels left out, the blame is on me, he is not delusional or being dramatic we have really changed how we do things around here and it's not fair on him, now it seems like we did all of the things for Malaika and we just took him along just because he is there, I love my son so much, I lived for him the day Candice gave her to me then Malaika came they both became my world and their mother was my universe, there's not even a single day I felt like he isn't my son, he is my heir, he was given to me by my Ancestors because I think they knew me and my wife will only have one biological child.

My wife walk in the room carrying a tray full of breakfast, I hold it as she sits next to me, I kiss her cheek and we eat silently.

Tamia: "He was right Nqobasi."

She says after a long silence, she has stopped eating.

Tamia: "His feelings are justified, what we have been doing is horrible."

Me: "But it wasn't on purpose, we didn't mean to do all that to him, we love our son Londeka."

Tamia: "How will he know that when we just ignored him after Malaika left, how did it even get to that?"

I shrug my shoulders.

Me: "Maybe we thought since now that Maliaka had gotten married they are older they don't need us anymore, they are not emotionally dependent on us."

Tamia: "But Hero has always been a mommy and Daddy's boy more than Malaika so what we did was so wrong, I feel so bad I don't even know what I will say to him to make this all ok."

Me: "We will talk to him together baby. I can't believe our actions led our son to the hospital bed, We neglected him to that point he feels we aren't his biological parents."

I am so mad at myself I don't want to lie, my ancestors would be so disappointed in me right now.

Tamia: "I am not going to work today, I want to spend the whole day with him and assure him that we still love him just the same."

Me: "We will go together baby."

We take a shower together and years later I still enjoy having her giving herself to me, I still get to explore her beautiful body.

We get dressed and go to my car, I drive to the hospital and walk in his ward.

We find him staring at the ceiling, Tamia kiss his forehead and sit down holding his hand, he is looking at us blankly.

Me: "How are feeling today?"

He shrug his shoulders and slowly sit up.

Hero: "The doctor will discharge me today so I guess I'm fine."

He speaks in a low tone.

Me: "Uhm...we want to apologize son for the way we've been doing things lately, we're really sorry Gumedede."

Hero: "It's ok baba."

I can tell he is just saying that, I know this boy like the back of my hand, he is my son!

Tamia: "When we get home I will cook your favourite dish ok."

He nods but doesn't even smile. The doctor walk in and greet us, he explains how he should take his medication and when he should come

back for some check ups on his health, he even suggest therapy for him but he tells the doctor he is fine he attended therapy long time ago, and they did after the kidnapping with Malaika.

We walk out of the ward, he is wearing tracksuits now we brought them for him.

We stop walking when we hear some noise on the hallway and someone who is badly injured is wheeled in.

"Call Doctor Smith for me right now, this patient was involved in a car accident and she's pregnant we need to take her to theatre!"

A doctor in front of us shouts and "thee doctor Smith" step in the room in her white coat, I widen my eyes staring at Tamia, and she is also looking at me, we both look like we've seen a ghost. She is staring at Hero emotionless then her eyes moves to me and Tamia.

"To the theatre room!"

She shouts and walk past us, right in front of Hero and she doesn't even look back.

Me: "Let's go son."

We drive home and Tamia starts with the pots while we sit quietly in the lounge, I can't believe we met his bi Itological mom, she was right in front of him, with the same eyes he have, a lighter shade of brown. I didn't even think she was still alive.

We eat together then he excuse himself first going to his room, I don't know how we will fix this, my son is broken.

Tamia: "Candice...when did she come back?"

I shrug my shoulders, now that's something else that stresses me out.

Me: "What if she reach out while our relationship with our son is this rocky? We might lose him to her."

She shakes her head.

Tamia: "I'm never losing my son over that woman Junior, that's never gonna happen."

Me: "Do you think we should even tell him about his mother?"

Tamia: "I am his mother."

She get up and walk away, I guess that's a no.

On Monday we get ready for work and I go knock on Hero's room. He opens his door looking sharp, my son can dress well, all he does is buy anything that changes it into something else he even have a sewing machine here at home, I really thought when he grew up he will go into fashion but I guess he loved Accounting more.

Me: "You're going to work? I thought you could take a week off."

Hero: "Work is the only thing that makes sense to me right now, so I'm going."

I nod.

Me: "You don't want to ride with me and your mother?"

He nods.

Hero: "I will go with you but I'm driving."

He grabs the key on my hand and walk out, I smile because just maybe we will get him back, he knows his mother and I hates his driving but now he is taking advantage of the situation and I don't mind, we did him bad now it's time to show him we still care about him.

He drives us to work and we walk in, Snakho walk up to us and bow her head a bit, she's wearing her work uniform and it looks different.

We have stopped walking but Hero just walk past her I can tell she's hurt.

Me: "Hi MaDlamini."

She smiles a little, we know her father a very loyal man to our family.

Snakho: "Uhm..is he okay now?"

Tamia: "He is getting there."

She nods, her hand is healing but you can still see the skin was badly burnt I still don't even know the story there.

She get back to work and my wife and I go to our office and start working.

Minutes before lunch I go grab lunch for me, my wife and son, Malaika is not at work today she called in sick. I drive back to work. We go to his office and find him still busy on his computer.

Me: "It's lunch time."

He gives us a faint smile and welcome us to his office. We sit on the couches and eat together.

Me: "How is your relationship with your sister?"

Hero: "I don't know, we don't talk anymore."

Me: "We will talk to her maybe she's going through something, she called in sick today."

Hero: "I don't wanna force my way into people's lives dad, let her talk when she wants to."

We hear a knock on the door and Phumie step in the room.

Phumie: "Sir someone is here saying she needs to see the Accountant here, I told her that this is not an Accounting firm but she said the two Accountants here we're recommended."

Two Accountants are my son and daughter.

Me: "Let's hear her."

Phumie nods and walk out, she comes back with this woman, Tamia is on her feet staring at her, looks like she is also shocked to see us here.

Tamia: "Candice.."

Her eyes moves to Hero then back at me.

Candice: "I'm sorry I thought the receptionist was just being petty, I saw the HR department and then Accounting department I thought it's a building with different companies."

Tamia: "You didn't see the biggest billboard written Phakathwayo Oils?"

She doesn't say anything.

Candice: "I really came here because I need accountants, I am starting my Private practice soon so I wanted to look at my finances because I have other businesses."

Tamia: "Go somewhere else, those accountants are my son and daughter and they work under this company."

She nods.

Candice: "I'm sorry."

Hero is staring at her squinting his eyes.

Hero: "You have a history with this woman? I am sensing some hostility from you two."

I clear my throat looking at Tamia.

Tamia: "Uhm..she..is from our past."

Hero: "Your past?"

Tamia: "Yeah."

He nods.

Me: "She is actually your biological mother."

I know what secrets did to us before, I almost lost both my children so I am not gonna repeat the same mistake twice.

Hero: "Oh she is?"

I nod.

Hero: "Mmm, Uhm..so what's your name again Miss, Ma'am?"

"I'm Candice Smith."

Hero: "Ok Miss Smith I don't do Finances for anyone except this company and so is my sister."

Candice nods.

Candice: "I'm sorry for wasting your time I really didn't know."

I nod.

Tamia: "I hope you didn't come back looking for trouble."

Candice: "I have been back for years, if I wanted trouble I knew where to find you, I have no interest in your family Tamia, I know Junior won't let anything happen to his family."

Tamia: "I'm glad you know that."

She clears her throat and walk out.

Tamia: "So you think it was a coincidence that she came in here after seeing her at the hospital."

Me: "I will call one of my guys to watch her every move, I don't trust her one bit."

Hero clears his throat, I look at him.

Me: "You don't want to talk to her?"

Hero: "For what Baba?"

Me: "I don't know, maybe you have questions to ask her."

He shakes his head.

Hero: "No, I'm good."

I nod, that makes me happy, I thought maybe he will want to meet up with her and maybe they get close, I don't want to lose him to Candice, we've been through a lot with him, she left and never looked back.

Later we go back home together but he said he won't be having dinner with us because he is not hungry. So at the table it's just me and my wife.

I feel hair at the back of my neck standing up I shiver as I feel the presence of a very strong man in the history of the Gemede resting ancestors.

Me: "Phakathwayo."

Tamia quickly leaves the room and come back after a few minutes with a scarf, she wraps it around her head.

"Where's your son Nqobasi? We can't find him, he detached himself from us and it's your fault."

Me: "Baba I don't understand.."

"Ukuphi uQhawe?"(Where's Hero?)

Me: "In his room."

He chuckles and it's not a good chuckle so I get up and walk up the stairs going to his room, I knock for a while but he doesn't open. I

slowly turn the handle and walk in and what I see leaves me shaking, he is convulsing on the floor and there are empty containers of his medication.

Me: "Londeka!"

I shout my wife's name, I kneel in front of him putting his head on my lap, foam coming out of his mouth.

Me: "What did you do!?"

His eyes keeps rolling back. Tamia walk in I turn Hero's head so she won't see his face.

Tamia: "What happened?"

Me: "Call an ambulance please."

I say in a low tone, there is no hope in me, I might be losing my son and it's fault.

Tamia rush to take her phone and make a call. I wipe the foam on his mouth with my hand, he is now shivering his eyes are closed.

Me: "Please don't do this to me son, I'm sorry."

Tamia leaves the room and come back with paramedics pushing a stretcher. They wheel him out.

Tamia: "I am leaving with the ambulance, You gonna follow us?"

I nod. They rush out I just remain on my knees.

"Dad! Baba...I just saw an ambulance driving out."

Malaika run in almost out of breath.

Malaika: "What's going on dad?"

Me: "Your brother, he overdosed his medication."

Malaika: "No.."

She sit in bed and starts sobbing.

Me: "Why did you ignore Malaika, you guys have always been close, what made you ignore him? You would have known how he feels."

She wipes her tears.

Malaika: "Sboniso and I are going through a lot Baba, I am pregnant but there is no heartbeat We keep hoping that the doctors will find it but there's nothing, They want to remove the fetus but I can't..."

I get up and hold her in my arms as she sobs once again.

Me: "Why can't you talk to us? Why are you guys not communicating anymore Malaika?"

Malaika: "I..I don't know dad."

Me: "Am I a bad father? Maybe I don't make time for you anymore thinking you guys are older now?"

I feel bad, there is no point in life where you just don't need your parents, I still go to my father, I know I need him and Grandma who has been like a mother to me I still go and cry to them even now that I have grown children, everyone needs a parent.

Malaika: "It's not your fault dad."

I wipe my face.

Malaika: "I didn't mean to ignore him please believe me."

We go together to the hospital and find Tamia pacing all around the waiting area, I pull her into my arms..

Me: "Have you seen a doctor?"

Tamia: "They took him in busy draining the pills out of his system."

I nod and sit down with my hands above my head.

Just then Ngcebo walks in walking barefoot, he bows his head a bit I do the same and we sit down for hours, he doesn't say anything and I don't push maybe he is just here to talk to Hero.

The doctors finally walk out of his ward and tell us he got here just in time and they managed to drain the pills out of his system, also he is awake but a little drowsy.

Ngcebo: "Can we see him?"

The doctor allows us in, we stand on the side, he only keeps his lazy eyes on Ngcebo.

Ngcebo: "Do you want me to break the bond you and Snakho share? I can see it's draining you, you will start over and stop feeling sorry for yourself, you're smart and good looking one woman who is sure of her feelings will come your way and you will find what you're looking for."

He close his eyes and open them again.

Hero: "Break it."

His voice comes out stronger, he is sure of what he is saying. Ngcebo takes his hand and starts praying so hard I sit down as he stops the prayer and now he starts talking to the ancestors asking them to break the bond they created between him and Snakho, he ask them to free him from the one chosen by them because of how it is affecting him.

Once he is done he is sweating, he wipes his face with ibhayi then look at Hero with a smile on his face.

Ngcebo: "Get well soon Gumede, my brothers and our wives with the kids will be coming over these holidays to spend time with all of you ka Bab'Omncane."

I smile.

Me: "That's good, he needs to know that he is not alone, we're all here for him."

Hero smiles a bit then close his eyes.

Me: "Is he going to be ok?"

Ngcebo: "Yeah, he just needs us to be there for him, unalo idlozi eliphila kute Kodwa akulona ubizo."(He does have an an ancestor living in him but it's not a calling.)

I nod.

Ngcebo: "So if Hero detaches from us, he detach from one person who makes him whole that's our Great ancestor, uQwabe."

I nod, only our grandfathers were blessed to meet that great ancestor, when we were all born he was gone but he has always protected us even beyond the grave.

I hold my son's hand, it's warm and that's a proof of life, he will live and I need all the help from our family to show him how much we love him and that he will always be one of us.

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CHAPTER 105

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HERO

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It's been two weeks since I overdosed on the pills, I wanted to end my life because I felt like I was becoming a burden to my parents I expected a lot of emotional support from them while they were busy with their own lives, I think I just couldn't handle my life anymore.

Dad suggester a sick leave and I have been home ever since I got discharged, I see a Therapist, she comes in here at home two times a week and I think I am making progress I now understand that people have a lot on their plate too so I shouldn't be this needy, I should just find the available person that moment and talk to them.

I am making a sandwich in the kitchen when I hear cars pulling up in the yard then I hear so much noise. I step out of the house and laugh in disbelief, so they really came, my whole family from the Palace is here like Ngcebo promised. MaThabsie is the first one to pull me into a hug, I smile.

Me: "Sawubona mah unjani."(Hello mom how are you?)

Thabsie: "I'm good, you always look so handsome I just can't get over it!"

Everyone laughs, she always compliments my looks in a very dramatic way.

I hug Bab'Omdala then everyone else follows.

Phezukonke: "Baba, We got you something."

He opens his father's car then come back holding something in his palm.

Phezukonke: "Give me your hand."

I give him my hand, he put beautiful stones in my palm with different colours.

Phezukonke: "We asked Aqua to bring us these stones when he went under water to bring these for you and we will make a bracelet for you."

I smile as he takes it and put it around my wrist.

Me: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu Phakathwayo."(Thank you so much Phakathwayo)

He bows his head I smile and pick Aqua up.

Me: "Hello little one."

Aqua: "Baba ninjani wena?"(How are you?)

I laugh.

Me: "Ngiyaphila wena?"(I'm good you)

Aqua: "Saphila."(I'm fine)

We all walk in and I'm so happy to be around them, the wives are already cooking up a storm, while we have cold drinks watching a game of soccer. Mom and dad come back and they are happy to see everyone here, we have a good time we're laughing I even forgot about my problems.

We have great holidays together, going out and we did everything as a family I now know they will always be there for me I should stop doubting them, they are genuine I am part of this family, I am one of them I am a Gumedede.

We spent two weeks together and today they are leaving I'm sad but they have promised we will do this family gathering thing often, even on weekends. I haven't been to work ever since the suicide attempt.

I walk inside the house after saying goodbye to all of them and sit with mom and dad, they also played a huge part in making me feel sure I feel loved again.

Nqobasi: "So are you ready to go back to work tomorrow or you need more time?"

Me: "I am ready dad, I feel fine now, I know you guys will always love me I don't have to feel alone and having the rest of the family here helped me realize all of that.

Nqobasi: "I'm proud of you son, you were vocal about your feelings and made us realize our mistakes and how much it affected you,

Thank you Gumede we love you and you're still our precious gift that brought me and Tamia closer when we were just teens till the day we got married."

I smile, I am part of their love story that shows how deep their love is for you."

Me: "Thank you for always being there for me mom and dad I appreciate you guys."

Later I go to bed, I am now content and at peace with my life I am Hero kaNqobasi Gumede nothing will ever change that.

It's morning already so I wake up and get ready for work, I'm ready to go back and do what I'm good at.

I pack my bag and walk out I find my lunch ready, I chuckle, guess she will never stop making a lunchbox for me. She usually wakes up early to make our lunch then go back to bed.

I walk in the building and most people are happy to see me.

Me: "Sawubona Sisi."(Hello lady)

I greet Snakho who is sweeping the floor at the reception. She looks up and our eyes meet, I just pass her going to my office, I wanted to greet only nothing else.

I find files already piled up in my office, there's a knock then Malaika walk in. When our family visited she also came from time to time to spend time with us and Ngcebo consulted for her, they had to go back to Sboniso's home and do a ceremony after that she came back and they found the baby's heartbeat I'm happy for her.

I get up and hug her, she is showing a little maybe that's why she didn't really have time to talk to me, she was going through a lot and also pregnant women can be moody sometimes.

Me: "You look good Princess."

She giggles flipping her hair, I laugh.

Malaika: "I came to help you with that."

She points at the files I smile.

Me: "I'd appreciate that."

We sit down and get busy with work while talking and laughing.

Someone knocks, I ask them to come in and Snakho walk in carrying two cup of coffee and a paper bag.

Snakho: "Uhm..morning, Mr Gumede asked that I bring this to both of you."

I go over to her and take it.

Me: "Thank you."

She nods and stares at me before walking out.

I sit down, Malaika and I call our dad while we know very well he is in the building.

Nqobasi: "Hello."

Malaika: "Thank you for breakfast dad."

Nqobasi: "I heard you guys are working together and I figured you won't even get out of that office so I thought of buying you guys breakfast, you're doing amazing."

Me: "Thank you dad."

Nqobasi: "Do take lunch you two, don't overwork ok!"

Malaika: "Yes sir!"

We drop.the call and continue to eat and work.

Lunch time I walk out to buy drinks since we both have our lunch.

I buy drinks and bump into someone when I turn, it's Snakho. I try to move out of the way but we keep going in the same direction I end up standing in the same position and show her she can pass.

Snakho: "Sorry.."

I nod and walk away.

My sister and I have our lunch and then I let her rest on the couch since she's sleepy, I use my coat to cover her up.

Snakho knocks and walk in, she looks at Malaika on the couch then walk closer to my desk and sit down, she looks nervous.

Me: "What can I do for you?"

She slowly look up and our eyes lock I quickly move my eyes away.

Snakho: "Uhm..I came to give you this, it's not all of it because I used some of it to buy grocery."

I look at her, she's giving me a brown envelope, I open it and see that it's money, I look at her confused.

Me: "What is it for?"

Snakho: "I called the landlord and asked him about rent for this month and he said you paid three months in advance but I'm working now I got paid so I am paying it back, I hope you don't mind that I will pay it bit by bit."

She stares into my eyes I don't know why she is so tense and nervous.

Me: "You don't have to pay me back, go and treat yourself with this money."

I give her back the money, she hesitantly take it back.

Me: "Also you need to save some of it for registration, remember you still need to fix your grades."

She nods.

Snakho: "Thank you."

She get up and I feel like this is the girl that gave me the hair clipper, the girl I met in the village before coming with her to Durban and she got so confused by the big city life.

Me: "Snakho.."

She looks at me.

Me: "No one is bothering you right?"

She shakes her head.

Snakho: "No."

I nod. She walks out and close the door behind her.

Malaika wakes up to her husband's call and he tells her he is already outside to fetch her, I smile as she walk out excitedly, I'm happy that she's happy now.

I collect my stuff and walk out. I get in my car and drive out, I can see Snakho walking slowly by the roadside, I stop the car and step out. I stand in front of her, she drops her eyes.

Me: "Would you like a lift?"

She nods, I open the door for her, I drive to her flat and park in the yard then step out first to open the door for her again.

She step out almost falling but I hold her by her waist.

Me: "Why are you so nervous around me?"

Snakho: "I..I haven't been seeing you and when you landed in hospital I couldn't help but blame myself, I'm sorry."

Me: "What are you sorry for?"

Snakho: "I don't know..I.."

Me: "Maybe I did need that rejection to love myself before I can give love to someone else."

She starts tearing up, I hug her then wipe her tears.

Me: "Don't cry."

She nods and step back a little.

Snakho: "Thank you for the lift."

I nod. She walks away I get in my car and drive home, I feel better now that I've seen her and we talked a bit, I can't really say I don't have feelings for her anymore but what I know is that I don't feel like I depend on her accepting my love like I did before, I love myself better to handle any rejection now I know my worth.

I decide to cook since mom and dad are still not back, and by the time they get back I have already set up the table for the three of us and they are excited to find that I already cooked. They had a meeting after work and it's all business.

I just walked in my office and Phumie whom I have been ignoring walk in, I sit on my chair and look at her as she stands opposite me, her boobs are pointy she is not wearing a bra on, I don't even think the dress she's wearing is appropriate for a work place.

Me: "Can I help you?"

She walks around the table pushing my chair then sit on my lap her dress rolls up showing the white lace underwear.

Me: "Get off me Phumie."

Phumie: "You can't tell me you don't want this Hero."

The door open and Snakho walk in pushing her cleaning machine. I quickly push Phumie off me and get up

Snakho: "Uhm...I...I didn't know there was people in here I'm sorry I will come back."

She walks out.

Me: "Snakho.."

She is already out the door.

Me: "You'll be lucky if this month end with you still working here Phumeza."

Phumie: "You wouldn't fire me for finding you attractive."

I chuckle, this girl wants to know the other side of me so bad, she is pressing really wrong buttons.

I walk out and look all around the building. I find her cleaning dad's office.

Me: "Uh..Hey.. Morning."

Snakho: "Hi."

Me: "What you saw there, Uhm... it's not what it looked like I.."

She giggles.

Snakho: "You don't have to explain anything to me Hero, Phumie is attractive so I understand."

I swallow looking down.

Me: "But I don't find her attractive."

She chuckles and continue to clean.

Me: "Uhm..you are still gonna clean my office?"

She shakes her head.

Snakho: "I asked Zenande to do it and I will take other offices she usually cleans."

Me: "Why would you do that?"

Snakho: "I just...I think it's better I don't see you Hero, I don't know, you make me nervous and I don't like feeling that way."

Me: "Oh..so I make you uncomfortable?"

She nods.

Me: "I get it."

I go back to my office, I take my phone and call my brother.

Ngcebo: "Gumede how are you."

Me: "I'm good, how are you?"

Ngcebo: "I'm fine."

Me: "I want to ask you something."

Ngcebo: "Ok."

Me: "You prayed that the bond between Snakho and I break but I am confused why are my feelings still there?"

He laughs like really hard.

Ngcebo: "I asked the ancestors to step back and they did, so what you feel is all you brother and I have no power to control how you feel."

Me: "But you said you will break the bond because it was draining me Mntwana."

Ngcebo: "The bond the ancestors created was broken, let me ask you something? Are you still feeling drained?"

Me: "No, but my feelings are still there Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "All I can say is that the ancestors have nothing to do with your feelings anymore. Maybe you just had to learn to love yourself better before you can love someone else."

Me: "Are you reading my mind right now?"

He laughs.

Ngcebo: "I wasn't given that ability unfortunately."

I sigh, he is always playful even when you're serious.

Ngcebo: "It's all you brother, remember that, no ancestors are involved now."

He drops the call, I rub my forehead and go to my father.

Me: "Do you have a minute?"

He nods and ask me to take a seat.

Me: "I have a complaint Sir, someone is making me uncomfortable in this office."

Nqobasi: "In what sense?"

Me: "Phumie came to my office today and sat on my lap I could see everything and that made me feel really uncomfortable."

He widens his eyes.

Me: "And I know if it was the other way around I would be gone by now or even suspended for sexual harassment."

I look at my father as he get up furiously and walk out. I follow him and he calls Phumie, Phumie walk up to him he is scanning the way she is dressed.

Nqobasi: "Is this the right way to come to work dressing like? Everyone can see your breasts and thighs."

His voice is stern.

Phumie: "I didn't think there's anything wrong with the dress sir."

Dad is always with his wife working so I guess he never saw how Phumie usually dresses like.

Nqobasi: "In my office right now, Hero come with me."

We both walk in his office, he calls mom and the goddess walk in and stand next to him. Dad narrates everything I told him to mom, her face changes immediately.

Tamia: "You did what Phumie? And what kind of dress is that?"

Phumie: "Ma'am I'm sorry I didn't mean to make him uncomfortable I was just playing with him."

Tamia: "Did he say he wanted to play with you?"

Phumie: "No."

She is crying and I am not moved by her tears at all.

Dad ask a meeting with the HR so they can take action. I go back to my office, Phumie comes in crying.

Me: "Phumeza I have been rejecting your advances for over 3 years, don't you give up? Can't you see I'm not interested?"

Phumie: "Please talk to your parents Hero, tell them I made a mistake."

I shake my head.

Me: "Men let so many things go because they are afraid to speak out, afraid they will be judged and laughed at, I'm not that type, I won't be a victim of any sexual misconduct just because I am scared of what people may think of me, if a woman comes at me and I say no and she persist I won't hesitate to report the matter like I did to you."

Phumie: "Hero I'm sorry."

Me: "Leave my office Phumeza."

She slowly get up and walk out. After an hour we are called in the boardroom and I tell my side of the story and Phumie stick to the "I was just playing with him" story. They give her a suspension letter for four weeks and she cries so hard I just walk out, she should be glad it's just a suspension if it was up to me, she would be gone forever.

The whole day the reception phone has been ringing none stop. I step out of my office and find Snakho answering the phone at the reception and writing something down.

Snakho: "Uhm...that was Mr Gertze from Europe, he asked for a meeting with your father, apparently he has truck businesses here and he would like to meet your father."

I widen my eyes and take the paper from her, it has everything from the name of Me Gomez, his company name and his phone number.

Me: "Wow thank you, we almost missed this important call, let me go give this to my father."

I walk in his office and show him what Snakho wrote down, dad is shocked, we didn't get to pitch our ideas to him last time he was in the country Phumeza there didn't write down any information from him so that's how we lost the chance, now we have it and dad is over the moon.

Me: "Snakho answered the call, we almost missed this chance again."

Nqobasi: "We should find a new receptionist that will stand in until Phumie comes back."

Me: "Uhm..I was thinking why not give Snakho a chance, that will save us time to work on how we market ourselves to Mr Gertze instead of spending so much time finding the receptionist."

He nods.

Nqobasi: "Tell her not to leave that desk while I inform the management."

I nod and rush out. I find her cleaning around the reception area, I take the mop from her hands.

Me: "You should be behind that desk."

Snakho: "what do you mean?"

Me: "You will be our new receptionist until Phumeza comes back."

She widens her eyes then laugh.

Snakho: "You are joking right?"

Dad walk out of his office.

Nqobasi: "Snakhokonke, I expect the calls to be answered and information of potential clients drafted down in a diary or something, you did great earlier I owe you one!"

He speaks walking in the lift.

Snakho: "You were serious?"

Me: "The man himself said it."

She screams happily clapping her hands like a baby I smile shaking my head, she goes around the desk, I wipe the wet floor and call Zenande to come continue with cleaning.

I keep checking on Snakho and she's doing great I'm happy for her, this means she will be getting more money this month as a receptionist.

Just as I'm about to go back to my office I see Greg going to Snakho's desk and he bang the table making Snakho jump in fright, I stand by the door of my office watching him.

Greg: "So you and the boss set up Phumie so you can have her job?"

I frown, since when does he act this way?

Snakho: "I don't know what you're talking about, Mr Gumede asked me to stand in for Phumie until she comes back."

Greg: "I'm glad I didn't persue anything with a vindictive person like you."

Snakho raise her eyebrow.

Snakho: "Don't pretend like you were doing me a favour, I know Phumie pushed you to ask me out because you were a scared little cat, I like men not boys, you are a stupid boy."

Greg: "And you're a hoe sleeping your way up."

Me: "What did you just say?"

I walk towards him and turn him around, he looks shocked to see me here.

Me: "What did you say?"

Greg: "Sir I'm sorry I was just..."

Me: "You want to follow your friend?"

Greg: "No."

Me: "You have grown some wings huh?"

Greg: "No sir, Snakho I'm sorry I didn't mean to call you a..."

He is now afraid to say it.

Me: "Get out of my face."

He rush away he even uses staircases instead of a lift.

Me: "Are you ok?"

She giggles.

Snakho: "Why wouldn't I be? We can't control people's point of view about us so I can't always get upset when someone says negative things about me."

I smile.

Me: "Uhm..wow ok."

She look down at the papers in front of her.

Snakho: "These are all the people that called."

She says giving me the papers, I guess she is a good listener because she wrote down everything about the caller in each paper. I go to my office and get a diary, I have never used it, my mother gave it to me when I started working here but then my sister Thingo and Malaika also got me one they all have my name on them.

I go back to to Snakho and hand it to her, she reads it.

Me: "I would like you to have it, for your new schedule and also to keep everything safe, sometimes we want to dart back to remember who called I want you to be able to remind everyone."

Snakho: "But this looks like a gift to you."

Me: "And I am passing it to you, I want you to have it."

She takes it.

Snakho: "Thank you, now you're making it seem this is a permanent position."

She says giggling.

Me: "It might not be but this will go down as one of your work experiences."

She nods.

Snakho: "Thank you."

I nod and turn to walk back to my office.

Snakho: "Uhm..Hero."

I look at her.

Snakho: "Uh...I..Would you like to have dinner with me tonight?"

Me: "Are you sure?"

Snakho: "Yes, Eating alone everyday is depressing."

I smile.

Me: "I'll be there."

She smiles, I work until late then walk out, looks like Snakho already knocked off, I'm proud of her she was ambushed but she did that like a pro.

I go home and freshen up wearing casual clothes then drive to Snakho's flat for dinner after informing my parents that I won't join them for dinner, they are happy that I am going out.

Snakho opens the door for me wearing a short red dress I think it's new. We hug and she smells really good, I let go. The small table is already set, she went all out, there are different types of salads a steak and pap. She dish up for the both of us we start eating.

Me: "This is good."

She smiles. I don't even know how she got to prepare everything after work.

We eat and she gets us cold drink then we sit on the couch watching some TV, she is sitting next to me quietly. She slowly rests her head on my shoulder, I look at her.

Me: "Is it ok if I ask what happened between you and Greg?"

She removes her head on my shoulder.

Snakho: "After you got hospitalized the second time I went to him and told him we can't be anything except being friends, I had already made up my mind about who I wanted to be with but I was too late."

Me: "Too late?"

Snakho: "I just don't think he would want me anymore after rejecting him because I was interested in him and there was the other guy, nobody deserves to feel like a second option."

Me: "Would he still be a second option now?"

She shakes her head.

Snakho: "I am completely over the other guy, I want nothing to do with him, I think it was just a stupid crush."

I smile.

Me: "That's what all teenagers go through though being indecisive and all."

Snakho: "So you understand?"

Me: "I do now."

She nods.

Snakho: "Uhm...so..so you don't have feelings for me anymore?"

Me: "I wouldn't be here if I didn't."

Snakho: "But what do you see in me, I'm just an average village girl."

Me: "I see more than that, you're smart, you have a good heart, you're beautiful."

She look down blushing.

I touch her cheek and move my face closer to her. Our lips lock we share a very slow kiss then she breaks it clearing her throat while looking down.

Me: "I guess I have to go now, it's getting late."

She nods and we both get up at the same time. We end up kissing and I pick her up going to her bedroom with her, I put her down, her eyes are more beautiful now and very sexy.

Me: "I have to go."

Snakho: "Can't you spend the night? We won't do anything."

I chuckle, usually that's every guys like but now she just said it.

We sleep next to each other fully dressed.

Snakho: "You are not gonna leave me when I fall asleep, right?"

I smile.

Me: "I won't leave without letting you know."

She nods and close her eyes, I kiss her forehead.

Trying again won't hurt me as long as she is still the same Snakho I developed feelings for, I just don't want this city life to change her.

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CHAPTER 106

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HERO

1390

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I just woke up and take my phone next to me checking the time it's 4:50 am, and it's still dark outside. I look next to me, she is sleeping peacefully like a baby. I kiss her pouted lips. She moves a bit then open her eyes, she covers her face giggling I smile.

Me: "Morning."

Snakho: "Hey."

Me: "Why are you hiding your face from me?"

Snakho: "I am ugly when I wake up."

Me: "You will never be ugly in my eyes."

I remove her hands and peck her lips.

Me: "I have to go now."

Snakho: "Can't you bath here? I will make breakfast then you will go home to get dressed then go to work."

Me: "Just tell me if you want me to move in."

We both laugh. She get up and remove her dress, she was wearing a panty underneath so she wraps a towel around her waist and look at me.

Snakho: "I will shower first."

Me: "You don't want me to join you?"

Snakho: "Uhm...I.."

She keeps moving her eyes around.

Me: "I won't do anything."

She nods and walk away. I remove my clothes leaving my briefs then join her in the shower, she is already wet and still has her panty on,

her hands are covering her breasts. I stand behind her and remove her hands from her breasts. I take the bathing sponge and move it slowly all over her upper body. I put the sponge down and start playing with her nipples soft moans escape her lips.

I slowly pull down her panty removing it then push her to the wall, I bath her from her waist down then get up, our lips lock as my hand go down to her pussy, I rub her clit she hold on to my shoulders tight. I keep rubbing until her knees shakes I hold her in one position. She lightly push me away from her and let water remove all the soap on her body, she cleans her pussy looking the other way I think she is a bit shy now. She quickly step out of the shower. I shower then step out. I use Vaseline instead of all these cosmetics I see here, Women and having a lot of cosmetics, we men have cologne, lotion and roll on that's it. I wear only my pants then join her in the lounge. She has already made breakfast so I sit down. She serves me and sit opposite me, she is failing to keep eye contact.

Me: "Can we bless the food first."

She nods looking down, I take her hand.

Me: "God bless our food and the hands that made it, Amen."

Snakho: "Amen."

We eat in silence until I can't handle it.

Me: "Are you ok?"

She nods.

Me: "Did I make you uncomfortable in the shower?"

Snakho: "No, I'm fine."

I nod.

Me: "I don't drink milk."

She widens her eyes.

Snakho: "Oh I'm sorry I didn't know."

Me: "It's ok."

She get up and make another cup of tea for me, her short gown is killing me. She sit down and put the tea in front of me.

Me: "Thank you."

We finish our breakfast and go to the bedroom, I put on my t-shirt and my shoes then pull her between my legs my hand goes under her gown.

Me: "You are going to work without wearing a panty?"

Snakho: "I'm wearing it."

I move my hand to her waist and really get hold of the strings of her panty.

Me: "Oh..can you show me the dress you gonna wear."

She nods and go to her wardrobe and come back with a black dress.

Me: "Can you wear it for me."

She takes off her gown then wear her dress, it is a one arm dress and it's just a little above her knees.

Me: "You look great, the dress suits you and it looks decent. The reason why I am asking you to show me your dress It's because I don't want to look like a hypocrite I always judged Phumie's style of dressing because it was inappropriate for a work place so I want you to look appropriate, I hope you don't mind."

She nods.

Snakho: "I understand, I also couldn't understand the way she dressed and I wouldn't want to look that way in the office "

Me: "That's good, thank you for dinner and breakfast."

She smiles.

Snakho: "Thank you for keeping me company, I really enjoyed being with you."

Me: "I'm happy to hear that."

I look at her.

Me: "Do you want me to style your hair?"

She giggles.

Snakho: "Please."

Me: "After work you have to go and do your hair, maintaining natural hair while you have to go to work in the morning and come back late tired is hard so braiding it is better."

She smiles.

Snakho: "Uzongipha yini imali?"(Are you gonna give me money?)

Me: "Ufuna Malini?"(How much do you need?)

She put her finger under her chin like she is thinking then smiles looking at me.

Snakho: "I think R350 will be enough for my hair."

I nod.

Me: "You want cash or I should send it to your account."

Snakho: "Anything convenient for you."

She sit down and let me do her hair, I do two lines cornrows and put a styling gel to make it look neat.

Me: "Now you look even great."

She looks at herself in the mirror and smile wide.

Snakho: "Thank you, you really know everything about hair."

Me: "My best friend is a girl, I grew up with her, she's my sister so I grew up doing her hair."

Snakho: "That's beautiful."

Me: "I have to go now."

I get up and kiss her lips.

Me: "See you at work or I can pick you up."

She shakes her head.

Snakho: "Already there are people who think I got Phumie fired by sleeping with you so I don't want that to be office rumors."

I nod.

Me: "Bye."

Snakho: "Bye."

I kiss her again and walk out. I drive home listening to Gagasi FM. I walk in and find mom and dad in the kitchen making breakfast, they eye each other smiling.

Nqobasi: "You didn't sleep home."

I kiss mom's cheek and take bacon from her plate.

Nqobasi: "Is there a potential girlfriend?"

Me: "I can't say much yet dad."

He smiles.

Nqobasi: "I'm glad you're going out there and meeting people or "someone".

I laugh walking away. I get dressed in a black suit I have that dress Snakho was wearing in mind.

I walk in and see her in her desk and it's like I am seeing her for the first time. She hasn't seen me so I see her holding some files going in my office, she has the perfect shape that dress shows it all.

I walk in the office and close the door she gets startled and turn looking at me then her face relaxes a bit.

Snakho: "Hey..you look good."

I smile.

Me: "Thank you, you look pretty."

She giggles.

Snakho: "You saw me this morning."

I smile.

Me: "I know I just can't get over it."

She walks up to me.

Snakho: "I was bringing those two files for you."

I nod.

Snakho: "Can I pass?"

Me: "Can I get a proper kiss first?"

She shakes her head smiling.

Me: "Why not?"

Snakho: "No."

She push me out of her way I grab her hand and we kiss.

Me: "I wish to just take off those panties you have on."

Snakho: "So I should work with no panties on?"

Me: "Only I will know."

She giggles, I pull up her dress kissing her then slowly remove her panty I put it in my pocket then fix her dress.

Me: "You can go back to work."

Snakho: "Yes boss."

She giggles walking away, I am staring at her ass. I chuckle and start my work.

I hear noise outside my office, I get up and rush out I find Snakho standing there in horror everyone is here watching Phumie throwing tantrums.

Phumie: "I knew that you wanted to give this low life village girl my job! I knew it!"

Nqobasi: "Zenzele call Security right now, Phumeza you are officially fired and banned from my company, we did you a favour and only suspended you but now you just gave me enough reason to fire you for good!"

Dad is angry and so is mom. Zenzele who is in management calls security, they drag Phumie out of the building. I rush to Snakho.

Me: "Are you okay? She didn't do anything to you right?"

Snakho: "No, just the threats, she said I must sleep with one eye open."

Me: "I will ensure your safety."

Snakho: "Ok."

Me: "Do your work and if you make mom and dad proud this position will be yours permanently, Phumeza is not coming back anymore."

She nods. I go back to my office and finish up my work a little early than usual.

So I pack my bags and walk out.

Snakho: "You're knocking off already?"

Me: "Yes, I finished early today."

Snakho: "Uhm...are you busy today?"

I smile.

Me: "You want me to keep you company again?"

She look down.

Me: "I will see you later."

I walk out whistling.

I drive home and clean around the house then cook for mom and dad.
I go get some rest.

I wake up around 7 pm when mom knocks in my room, I asked her the time.

I freshen up and take my car keys and phone walking out. I find mom and dad already sitting around the table.

Me: "I'm sorry but I won't be joining you again today."

Tamia: "Who is the lucky girl?"

I laugh.

Me: "Bye Mom and Dad."

I drive to Snakho's flat and knock, She opens the door looking upset.

Me: "Hey."

I notice she has a new hairstyle on, she looks amazing I did send the money she asked I added a few hundreds of course in case it cost a little more than what she said.

Snakho: "I tried calling you, you didn't pick up I thought you weren't coming anymore."

I look at my phone and it's only now I see the missed calls.

Me: "I'm so sorry I was tired so I went to bed I only woke up when mom came to my room."

She just leaves me by the door, I walk in and find her in her bed.

Me: "Snakho I didn't eat at home."

Snakho: "I didn't eat as well, I was waiting for you."

Me: "Then let's go and eat, stop being angry at me."

We eat together then go to bed, I take my clothes off today because yesterday it was really hard sleeping wearing jeans today she will have to forgive me cause I can't.

I sleep in bed, she also takes off her clothes and get in bed in her panties only.

Me: "Are you trying to get me in trouble?"

Snakho: "With what?"

Me: "Sleeping naked?"

Snakho: "I thought it's underwear day today."

I laugh pulling her close and our lips lock, I hold the string of her panty and pull it down getting between her thighs. Her pussy is shaved and it feels fresh, I lick her clit she shifts moving back.

Me: "Don't run away from me baby, ok?"

Snakho: "Oh...ok."

I suck her until I feel my dick twitching, it feels so good, I flip us over and let her sit on my face I keep licking her until she starts moving her waist holding on to the headboard, she screams and let go of her juices I keep licking her then let her sleep next to me. I kiss her but she moves away.

Me: "You don't want to know how you taste like?"

Snakho: "Hell No."

I laugh and go to the bathroom rinsing mouth with her mouthwash.

Snakho: "Hero.."

Me: "Yes baby."

Snakho: "You won't say anything?"

Me: "About what?"

Snakho: "Whatever is happening between us."

Me: "I still feel the same way about you Snakho, I love you."

I look at her.

Me: "If you're still not ready you can tell me."

Snakho: "I...I think I am, I love you too I realized that when you were hospitalized then I didn't see you for the whole month I wasn't coping I wanted to tell you how sorry I am for being childish, for thinking I have feelings for Greg."

Me: "So you're ok with being in a relationship with me?"

Snakho: "Yes."

I smile.

Me: "Thank you."

Snakho: "Uhm... So in the morning and right now I thought after making me feel that good you will also want me to return the favour."

Me: "Made you feel good?"

She drops her eyes shyly.

Snakho: "What you did in the shower in the morning and what you just did right now it felt so good, you don't want sex?"

I chuckle.

Me: "You're still a virgin Snakho I can't just decide I want sex then have it anyway I want, you have to be ready, you have to let me have you. You have to be sure about us, also we are not in a rush we haven't even labeled our relationship then."

Snakho: "How did you know I'm still a virgin?"

Me: "I'm older than you Nakho, and I can tell the things I'm doing to you are foreign to your body no man has ever done them to you, you have probably been kissed before and that's where it ended."

She nods suddenly so shy.

Snakho: "I had two boyfriends in high school, the first one I was still in Grade 10 and he was doing matric, then the second one we both were doing Grade 12."

Me: "So he never even tried sleeping with you?"

Snakho: "He did, he tried on our Matric Dance night but the teachers caught us before we could do anything, we were behind her car."

Me: "I'm glad he didn't do it."

Snakho: "We broke up after that because apparently all his friends slept with their girls that night and mina ngamushwebisa."(I made him miss out)

I chuckle.

Me: "Childish mother fucker, he wasn't gonna handle you anyway, a hot girl like you should be handled with care."

She giggles.

Me: "And that's what I wanna do right now?"

Snakho: "You want us to have sex?"

I shake my head.

Me: "Just foreplay baby, I don't think you're ready for sex."

Snakho: "Why?"

Me: "Are you gonna give it to me everyday?"

Her eyes pop out I laugh.

Me: "I'm just kidding babe but yes I will want it everyday once we start."

She shakes her head laughing.

Me: "So where do you see yourself in three years time?"

Snakho: "I want to be doing maybe my first year in Varsity since I am still going to fix my grades, I still want to work at your company because it pays well."

I nod.

Snakho: "What about you?"

Me: "I see myself married with kids or at least one."

Snakho: "Oh.."

Me: "You don't want any babies in future?"

Snakho: "I do but not in three years."

I nod.

Me: "That's one thing I want so bad."

I can see this topic is making her uncomfortable so I clear my throat and open my mouth to change the subject but she talks first.

Snakho: "So if I'm not ready in this three years you gonna get someone else pregnant?"

Me: "No."

Snakho: "But you just said that's one thing you want so bad."

Me: "That doesn't mean I will shove my dick to every girl hoping she gets pregnant with my baby, not every woman can be a mother baby some of them are just meant to be surrogates."

She nods.

Snakho: "Let's make a baby."

She whispers in my ear I widen my eyes, she burst out in laughter.

Snakho: "You should have seen your face, I'm joking."

I laugh awkwardly.

Snakho: "Oh Uhm...I'm sorry if it was a bad joke, sorry."

Me: "Its really not."

I kiss her getting on top of her again then go down to her nipples licking them one after the other.

Snakho: "Hero.."

Me: "Yes baby."

Snakho: "It feels so good."

Me: "It does."

She nods moaning out loud, I go down on her once again she is now screaming my name so beautifully once she cums she pulls me and kiss me so good I thought she didn't wanna taste herself.

Me: "Baby.."

Snakho: "Mmmm."

She is in the world of her own, the way she kisses me is turning me on so bad and her legs are locking me in wrapped around my waist.

Me: "Snakho.."

I pull out my dick from my underwear and start stroking it faster, she breaks the kiss as I groan and look down at my hand that is handling my dick, I keep stroking it, she lock eyes with me and bite her lower lip.

Me: "You're so beautiful.."

I am now kneeling in bed staring at her, she kneels too and start kissing me all over again, she keeps going until I groan and cum hard, she looks at my dick as cum shoots out of my dick I stroke it till the very last drop then look at her smiling, she is squeezing her thighs together, she's horny.

Me: "Are you ok baby?"

I look at her nipples they are so erect.

Me: "Let's get some sleep baby."

She quickly nods and rush to the bathroom, she comes back with two towels a small one and the big one. I wipe myself with the small towel then she use the other one in bed where my cum is, we will sleep on top of it.

I sleep holding her in my arms.

In the morning I wake up to her humming a song, she is walking around naked her room smells of her perfumes and lotions I guess she just finished bathing.

Me: "Morning."

She turns around and walk up to me in bed, she gives me a kiss then go to the wardrobe, she opens it and bend over I can see her little kitten I don't know how long we gonna hold ourselves here, there is too much temptations and it doesn't help that I haven't had sex in a long time, I miss the warmness of a woman.

She comes back holding two dresses red and navy.

Snakho: "Which one should I wear today babe?"

I smile at that "babe" I love it.

Me: "I think Navy is great, you will wear red tomorrow since it's Friday and I want to take you out."

Snakho: "Oh really?"

She looks excited.

Me: "Yes baby."

I take a shower as well and rush home to get dressed then drive to work. I make plans for a picnic setup near the beach for tomorrow I call one of the ladies who is well known for her amazing decorations for picnics and weddings.

After work I go to her desk and find Greg there asking to talk to her over dinner.

Me: "Hello."

Greg looks at me.

Me: "If a lady says No then take it like a man and leave her alone don't be a simp."

He just walk away.

Snakho: "I'm starting to feel harassed baby, he has been here for over 15 minutes."

Me: "I'm sorry, I will talk to him."

She nods.

Me: "I'm not coming today."

Snakho: "Oh.."

Me: "Come on Nakho, I can't do this everyday."

Snakho: "Ok."

Me: "Baby I don't want you to be angry at me."

Snakho: "It's ok Hero, I'm not angry."

Me: "I love you."

Snakho: "I love you too."

I go home.

We are on the phone and it's 9 o'clock she is still sulking because I didn't sleep over today.

Snakho: "I miss you."

Me: "I will see you tomorrow morning."

She screams.

Me: "Baby stop playing."

Silence.

Me: "Snakhokonke."

Snakho: "Hero! Phumeza... she's here.. she's..."

The phone cuts, I almost fall because of the way I jumped out of bed. I wear my clothes and run out barefoot I didn't have time to look for shoes.

I get in my car and drive to her place, I keep pushing the steering wheel because how can I be so careless I promised to ensure her safety but didn't do a follow up on that I really wanted her to change a flat and find a more safe apartment with high security but I was a fool to forget everything about that.

I run inside and bang the door because it's locked I can see the key inside.

Me: "Snakho.."

She is crying so hard inside.

Me: "Phumeza if you do something to her I promise you I will kill you!"

Phumie: "Hero I have been here the whole time and you never spared me a glance then you bring this village girl and you let her take my job!"

She screams inside.

Me: "Snakho...baby are you ok?"

Snakho: "Hero..she is cutting my...aaaaah!"

She screams so hard.

I bang the door that even the neighbors wake up and some call the police.

Me: "Phumeza ngizokubulala uyezwa?"(I will kill you, you hear me?)

I am sweating.

Me: "Snakho..Sthandwa Sami."(My love)

She doesn't answer.

The police are here, they ask Phumeza to open the door and they start counting, I can hear the key turning she opens the door her clothes are full of blood, she raise her hands up I run inside and find Snakho passed out in a chair, she have huge cuts around both her wrists I guess she wanted to kill her but she didn't get to the veins because Snakho is still breathing.

The police tell me not to move her because paramedics are on their way. They push me out of the room I am so angry myself.

I get in my car and drive home. I go to mom and dad's room and sit in their bed looking away.

Tamia: "Hero is everything ok?"

Me: "It's Phumeza, she tried to kill Snakho, she is at the hospital."

Mom jumps out of bed and wear her gown, she gasp at the sight of blood in my hands.

Tamia: "Nqobasi!"

Dad shakes his head.

Nqobasi: "And we wonder why some application forms have a part where they ask about any mental illness issues, this is all the reasons, you sometimes hire people with bipolar and they don't even want to take their medication. I don't have a problem with people battling with mental issues hell we all have mental issues but man do something about it, don't let it get to this point!"

He is pacing all around the room.

Nqobasi: "Ingane kaDlamini Nkosi Yami!"(Dlamini's child my God!)

He sighs.

Nqobasi: "Let's go see her, we will pay if we have to."

I let them change into their clothes while I go wash out blood.

We walk in her ward and her wrists are bandaged, she is sleeping. I kiss her forehead and sit down holding her hand.

Tamia: "You should call her father Nqobasi, he deserves to know if his child is not well."

Nqobasi: "Let me call him."

He step out, Snakho opens her eyes and close them again.

Snakho: "Hero.."

Me: "Hey baby..hey Sthandwa Sami."

Snakho: "Ngikuphi? Amalights ayangixhophu."(Where am I? The lights are blinding my eyes)

Me: "I'm sorry..sorry baby just open your eyes slowly they will adjust to the light."

She do as I say then moves her eyes around, she clears her throat when she sees mom, she tries to remove my hand from hers but looks like she doesn't have enough energy.

Tamia: "Hey baby, do you feel any pain?"

Snakho: "A little."

Tamia: "I'm so sorry for what that lunatic did to you, she is gonna pay I'm gonna make sure of it."

Snakho: "Thank you."

Tamia: "Let me check on your father."

I nod, she walks out.

Me: "I'm so sorry I didn't keep my promise, I'm sorry."

Snakho: "It's ok, I also forgot about her threats."

Me: "I almost lost my mind Snakho! Why did you open the door Sthandwa Sami?"

Snakho: "Honestly since we were talking on the phone I thought I can guilt trip you into coming so when I heard the knock I thought you wanted to surprise me."

Me: "I should have been there, I should have listened to you when you begged me to come."

Snakho: "It's ok, I'm fine now."

Me: "She almost killed you if she got the wrong vein on your wrist."

Snakho: "Your father is calling my dad?"

I nod.

Snakho: "He will force me to go back home, he hates the city, he said it changes people and it's dangerous now this proves him right."

Me: "But he can't do that, dad will talk to him, you can even stay at home with us just so you can be safe. You can't go back home we just started our relationship baby."

Snakho: "I also don't want to go back Hero, I wanna stay here close to you."

I smile holding her hand tight.

Mom and dad comes back and we wait for Dlamini who just told dad he is driving to Durban right now.

After an hour and 45 minutes we can hear man asking for Snakhokonke's ward his voice is big and bold.

He walks in and rush to hold her daughter's hand.

"We are going home Snakhokonke today, baphi oNurse bakhiphe lento."(Where are the nurses they should remove this)

He says pointing at the IV on Snakho's arm.

Me: "Please don't take her, I will keep her safe, she will stay with me please baba I know this is scary but I won't let anything happen to her again please."

He doesn't wanna hear anything. The nurses are forced to remove the drip and her father picks her up and walk out with her. I sigh looking down I feel dad's hand on my shoulder.

Nqobasi: "Don't worry, his emotions are still high and all over the place, I will talk to him, Snakho will come back."

I nod.

I drive home and get in bed.

My phone rings in the morning it's Snakho.

Me: "Hey baby.."

She giggles.

Me: "Love?"

Snakho: "We didn't leave, we slept at my flat and your father called me early in the morning and came here to talk to him, he allowed me to stay."

Me: "That's great news baby, I can't wait to see you."

Snakho: "Your father suggested I go back to the hospital because I am still feeling a bit weak and the pain gets too much."

I nod.

Me: "Ok baby, I will come see you."

Snakho: "And uh...they suggested I stay with you guys until I find a flat with tight security system."

Me: "That's also what I was thinking my love."

Snakho: "Can you stand in for me at work I don't want your father having to worry about the reception."

Me: "I will do that for you baby I guess I will have to see you later."

I bath then go to the kitchen I find mom there, I greet and kiss her cheek.

Tamia: "Baby I hired three girls to go pack Snakho's stuff and bring it here today so I will be coming in late today."

Me: "Thank you for agreeing to her staying with us mom."

Tamia: "Anything for you baby, just don't get nasty under my room ok."

Me: "Mom!"

She laughs walking away.

I go to work and like my baby asked I do my work at the reception today so I can multitask doing her work as well.

Greg walk in with some files and look around.

Greg: "Where is Snakho?"

Me: "At the hospital."

Greg: "People should just tell us if they don't want to work so we can hire qualifying people who really want to work."

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: "You should really start staying in your lane bro."

This one is another mental case I want to get rid of soon, they seem to be obsessed with my woman and I don't like that at all.

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CHAPTER 107

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HERO

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I just got home from work and I can hear mom and dad talking inside one of the rooms upstairs. It's opened so I just knock once and open there are two people here setting up the room, I think it will be Snakho's room.

Tamia: "Hey boy, do you think she will like it? I want it to be comfortable for her for the rest of her stay with us."

Me: "Yeah it's beautiful how did you know her favourite colours?"

She chuckles.

Tamia: "I went to her place when they were packing and I saw how she decorated her room."

Me: "I'm gonna go and see her now."

Tamia: "No need, she is on her way back from the hospital with her dad."

I nod and go to my room to freshen up then go make a snack for myself.

I can hear the car pulling up outside I open the door for them, I am fighting the urge to hold her in my arms.

Me: "Jama kaSjadu."

I handshake her father, he is smiling proudly old people love being called by their clan names.

"Nkosana."(Prince)

Me: "Ningangena baba."(You can come in father)

I make way for them and they sit in the lounge, Snakho and I keep stealing glances at each other, she really is the woman I see a future with.

Mom and dad walk in and greet Baby'Dlamini.

Tamia: "Go and show Snakho her room Hero so she can freshen up, I am dishing up for everyone."

I leave dad talking to Dlamini and mom going to the kitchen.

We walk in her room and she's the first one to hold and start kissing me.

Me: "Baby.."

Snakho: "I missed you."

I smile and kiss her again moving her to bed, I help her sit down then take off her dress and pull down her panty, she is staring at me biting her lower lip.

Me: "Will you be able to bath?"

She nods.

Snakho: "But I will need help changing my bandages after."

Me: "Then I will wait for you here."

She nods and walk away but naked, her ass is so tight, she has never been touched and that is turning me on more.

She comes back after a while still naked, I help her lotion her body she keeps moaning especially when my hand moves on her nipples. I look at all the drawers and find where her panties are, I take the red G-string and go down on my knees, she wears it and I put it up.

Me: "What are you going to wear?"

Snakho: "My...my pyjamas and a gown."

She stammers. I look for her pyjamas and a gown, she wears them then I help her clean up her wrists and bandage her.

I walk out first going to my room. I join them around the table as they bless the food.

"Gumede I trust you with my daughter let nothing harm her as you promised."

Nqobasi: "Nobody will touch her under my care that I can promise you."

"And thank you for the opportunity you have given to her Qwabe I appreciate it."

Nqobasi: "She's a smart girl, she has so much potential I just hope she will study further and get a better position I could use someone with her brains in my company."

Me: "You are making it sound like I am not there baba."

Everyone laughs.

Nqobasi: "Oh I should have said beauty and brains, Umuhle wena ndoda?"(Are you beautiful man?)

I laugh so hard.

"Thank you for the hospitality but I have to go no one is looking after my livestock, Snakhokonke uziphathe kahle."(behave yourself)

Snakho: "I will dad, thank you for coming."

They hug and he kiss her forehead, dad walk him out.

We sit together in the lounge while mom and dad call it a night. I am brushing her thighs under the blanket, she yawns.

Me: "You want to go to bed?"

She nods. I get up and pick her up. I walk up the stairs with her in my arms, we are staring at each other I think the sexual tension is getting too much.

I help her get in bed, she moves and pat a space next to her.

Me: "We can't sleep in one room, maybe mom will want to check up on you and she can't find me here."

She nods.

Me: "Goodnight, I love you."

She just nods and sleep facing the other way. I walk out and sleep in my room I also wish I could hold her in my arms but I know how mom is, She's gonna check up on her since she just came from the hospital, she is so caring, she will want to know if she isn't feeling any pain.

In the morning mom knocks and walk in my room, she kiss my cheek and open my curtains.

Me: "Am I late Mama?"

Tamia: "No, you won't be going to work today vele it's Friday so you will look after Snakho, your dad and I will handle the reception and you are not behind any work."

Me: "Oh thank you."

Tamia: "So I want you to wake up and make breakfast, your father and I have an early meeting then we will go to the office."

I nod.

Me: "Ok mom."

Tamia: "Bye, have a great day."

She kiss my cheek and walk out. I go to the bathroom and take a shower. I wear my sweatpants, socks and my vest with a hoodie it's a bit cold outside.

I make breakfast, mom and dad are long gone. I put everything in a tray and see a note reminding me of Snakho's medication, I take everything to her room and wake her up.

Me: "Hey sleepy head."

She opens her eyes and sit up.

Me: "I made us breakfast."

She nods and get off bed going to the bathroom. She comes back naked once again, she loves being naked I don't mind her body is hot. She wears her grey sweatpants as well and her sweater, she is wearing exactly like me, I chuckle with a side smile.

Me: "You don't have Sox? It's cold."

She shakes her head.

Snakho: "I only have secret socks."

I go to my room and get her my socks. I help her wear them then we sit under covers and start eating our breakfast I am feeding her here and there.

Me: "Why are you so quiet?"

Snakho: "You never listen to me that's why I have my wrists bandaged like this, I asked you to come that day but you refused, I couldn't sleep last night I only slept in the early hours of the morning because I kept having nightmares about Phumie, if you were here I was gonna feel better."

Me: "Aw Sthandwa Sami I'm sorry I didn't know you're struggling to sleep."

She looks away angrily.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry)

Snakho: "It's fine, you don't love me like you say you do."

Me: "When did it get to that Snakho? Come on baby."

I enjoy this little fight we are having I believe they sometimes make the love stronger.

After I did the dishes I go back to bed and sleep next to her holding her tight.

Me: "Don't be angry at me my love, today I will try to sneak in and sleep with you."

Snakho: "Ok."

She looks at me for a while then starts kissing me. She's too close to my body and I know she can feel my dick growing, she stares at me again and I feel her hand on my tummy then it goes down to my dick, she grabs it.

Me: "Fuck.."

She let go and move even close and put her head under my chin, she wants to do something but I can tell she is shy but there's nothing wrong with being all touchy with your partner even when you're still a virgin some people's love language is physical touch even without intimacy also virgins have sexual feelings too that's why they give it up once they feel ready to take it all the way there.

Me: "Love.."

Snakho: "Mmm."

Me: "What do you want Sthandwa Sami?"

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Snakho: "I..want to feel your body on mine."

See what I mean. I let her take off my sweater and my t-shirt then she takes of hers we leave the pants on. I hold her and her nipples are touching my bare chest, I can tell she loves this and I am even glad that even though she is shy and nervous she can still voice out what she wants. Her hands are moving so slow on my back I can even feel her nails, I keep groaning.

Me: "Baby.. you're killing me."

I get on top of her and kiss her lips, My hand goes to her neck as I lick her nipple.

Snakho: "Baby..."

I quickly pull down her pants and make love to her pussy with my tongue until she cums grabbing on the sheets tight. I hear the door swings open I get off Snakho and quickly cover her with a bed cover.

Malaika: "Sorry I'm so sorry..I have been knocking to all the rooms, Askies, I called out your name several times."

She is standing by the door with her eyes closed, she look so innocent.

Me: "I'm coming sis."

She rush out, I smile, she is married but she still respects me as her older brother.

I kiss Snakho who looks a bit shaken. I wear my t-shirt and walk out. I find her in the kitchen eating I hug her from behind kissing her neck, she push me away.

Malaika: "With the same mouth you were getting dirty with?"

She whispers angrily I laugh.

Malaika: "I came to check on you and Snakho, I didn't know you guys are together after you asked Ngcebo to break the bond."

Me: "I still love her, I guess him breaking the bond didn't erase my feelings for her and we decided to make our relationship official."

Malaika: "Are you happy?"

Me: "Yes I am sis, I love her."

Malaika: "I'm happy for you but next time lock the door you don't want mom and dad to see you in that position."

Me: "I will do that."

She giggles.

Malaika: "Why are we whispering?"

We both laugh, we've been whispering the whole time.

Me: "So how is the baby?"

She laughs and touch her belly, the baby bump is visible, I touch it and the baby is kicking.

Me: "Woah that is a very strong kick!"

She giggles with tears in her eyes.

Malaika: "This makes me happy, Kgosi is over the moon and that's what I always wanted for him, genuine happiness."

Me: "I'm happy for you sis, seeing how far Sboniso has come because of having you by his side and he always let people know he is where he is today because he met you, I'm proud of both of you."

I hug her as she gets emotional.

Me: "I love you."

Malaika: "I love you too."

Snakho walk down the stairs and greet Malaika, she pulls her into a hug then Snakho quickly moves away from her causing Malaika to giggle.

Malaika: "It's just a baby kicking."

Snakho: "Wow can I feel it?"

Malaika nods, I smile when Snakho screams in excitement.

Snakho: "That's so amazing! Is it a girl or a boy?"

Malaika: "It's a boy."

Snakho touch Malaika's belly again and she keeps laughing.

Snakho: "It's like he is showing off in there."

Malaika: "Oh he is a show off."

I look at Snakho, how I wish she could give me this special gift too, a baby.

Malaika leaves for work and we go back to bed.

Snakho: "Hero.."

Me: "Mmm."

Snakho: "I saw the way you looked at me when Malaika was here, you really want a baby."

Me: "Uhm... whenever you're ready my love."

She looks away, the baby topic doesn't sit well with her.

Me: "Don't worry baby I will wait till you're ready, we haven't even started having sex yet so the baby topic is closed until you're ready."

She nods.

Snakho: "I want to achieve a lot of things just like you, you're a graduate, you have a job you studied for, 1your life is amazing."

I nod.

Me: "I hear you."

Snakho: "Khumula phela."(Take off your clothes."

I laugh and take off my clothes. She get on top of me.

Snakho: "Can you teach me how to please you."

I chuckle and flip us over getting on top of her. I pull down my briefs, she let out a silent gasp looking away.

Me: "How do you want to please me when you can't even look at it?"

She bite her lower lip and force herself to stare at my dick.

Me: "You're not ready for any of this baby. You're too young."

I pull up my underwear and sleep next to her. I hold her in my arms and she is too quiet.

Me: "You're ok?"

Snakho: "Ungenza ingane kakhulu angiyifuni leyonto."(You're making me a child and I don't like that.)

Me: "Hawu baby."

Snakho: "So you think it is ok for you to get between my legs and shove your tongue in there but you can't let me do the same to you because "I'm too young".

Me: "Shove my tongue? Uyazizwa ukuthi ukhuluma kanjani nami Snakho?"(Can you hear the way you're talking to me Snakho?)

Snakho: "Yes."

Me: "You can't even look at my dick what do you wanna do with it."

She keeps quiet. I just get off bed and wear my clothes.

Snakho: "Manje uyaphi?"(Now where are you going?)

I ignore her and go to the kitchen to cook lunch because mom would kill me if I starve Snakho here while she asked me to look after her.

Once I'm done I only take her food to her room, she is sleeping like a baby, I love her so much. I brush her cheek, she opens her eyes.

Me: "There's your food."

I walk out and eat mine in the kitchen.

She comes in after a while with a plate, she didn't finish her food.

Snakho: "Hi."

Me: "Woza la."(Come here).

She comes holding her plate, I take it and feed her the rest of the food while she keeps complaining that she is full. I wash the plates.

Me: "I'm going to my bedroom."

Snakho: "I'm sorry for the way I talked to you earlier."

Me: "It's fine."

I walk away and sleep in my bed.

She walk in and stand by the door.

Snakho: "I don't want us to be upset with each other so I'm sorry for what I said."

I get off bed and help her sit down, I stand in front of her and pull down my pants with my briefs, I can tell she is nervous.

Me: "This is what you wanna do right?"

She bite her lower lip and nod a little.

Me: "You can touch it."

She does exactly that my body tenses up at her warm hand touching my dick, I don't know when was the last time I had a woman touch my dick.

I put my hand over hers and make her stroke my dick.

Me: "Open your mouth baby."

She slowly does so, I slowly shove my dick in, she gags closing her eyes I pull out and stare at her, she stares right back then put my dick back in her mouth.

Me: "No teeth ok baby."

She flaps her eyelashes that's she hears me. I hold the back of her neck and gentle make her gag on my dick, she finally gets the hang of it and do it herself without my help, Once I'm close I quickly pull out stroking my dick hard, she moves closer and my cum shoots in her boobs, I am looking at her wondering where have she been all of my life.

She stares down at her breasts and slowly wipe my cum with her fingers and what she is doing is turning me on even though she is doing it so absent mindedly, I think she is definitely my type right now forget what I said in the beginning.

She chuckles when she stares at my dick again.

Me: "What is it?"

Snakho: "Why is it still big?"

Me: "Because you're here in front of me naked, let's go take a bath baby."

I pick her up kissing her all the way to the bathroom, we take a very dirty shower, you'd swear she's already tasted my dick or any dick the way she allows me to suck her and rub her pussy, her blood is hot she

gets horny faster maybe her periods are pretty close or our bodies are just connecting.

We go back to bed, she stands behind me and wrap her arms around my waist, we are still naked.

Snakho: "I want to do it, I love you."

Me: "You want to do what?"

Snakho: "I want to have sex with you."

I slowly turn to look at her, she stares into my eyes.

Me: "Are you serious?"

She nods.

Snakho: "Yes."

She stands on her toes and kiss me. I break the kiss when I remember the picnic I had to cancel when she was at the hospital because of Phumie.

Me: "Not today love."

She widen her eyes but quickly nods looking away. She picks up her clothes on the floor and wear them.

Snakho: "Uhm..I'll be in my room."

She walks out. Mom and dad will be home soon so I go down in the kitchen and start making dinner, Snakho walk in.

Snakho: "Can I help you with anything."

I nod and we cook together quietly. Mom and dad walk in and greet us.

Tamia: "How was your day Snakho?"

Snakho: "It was great ma'am thank you and your house is beautiful, I love my room."

Tamia: "That's wonderful, I want you to enjoy your stay here."

They walk away, Snakho and I set up the table and wait for mom and dad.

Me: "You're always quick to get angry Snakho and I hate that."

Snakho: "It's crazy because I know you have been sleeping with a lot of women before me and I know damn well they didn't have to beg you. Shuthi imi lo ongamfuni."(It's me you don't want.)

She speaks in a low tone.

Me: "They weren't unsure virgins like you."

Snakho: "Did you see hesitation when I asked you?"

Me: "Yeey Snakho stop wanting to feed me your pussy ngenkani."(By force)

She gasp.

Snakho: "Is it that bad that you don't even want to have sex with me?"

I can see she is upset.

Me: "I told you we can't because it's still early in our relationship, I'm not just with you for sex but it's clear with you that's exactly why you're with me, I am the closest thing to a white man."

She widens her eyes.

Snakho: "What is that supposed to mean?"

Me: "Figure it out."

Her eyes pop out she takes the juice on the table and throws it at me it looks spills on my face and neck.

Tamia: "What is going on?"

Snakho: "I'm sorry ...I...I.."

She get up and walk up the stairs running.

Tamia: "Hero what did you do to her?"

I keep quiet looking down.

She hit the back of my head.

Tamia: "Ngikhuluma nawe!"(I'm talking to you)

Me: "Uhm...it wasn't that serious mom."

I wipe my face with my t-shirt. Mom walk up the stairs.

Nqobasi: "Hawu where is your mother and Snakho?"

Me: "Upstairs."

He sit down and mom comes back with Snakho. I go to the bathroom close by and wash my sticky face.

I go back to the table and eat, mom and dad are talking about business.

I go to my room and sleep.

In the morning I wake up and go check on Snakho I find her sitting in bed in only her panties.

Me: "Hi."

Snakho: "Hi."

Me: "I'm tired of these childish fights, it was all cute and shit in the beginning but now it's not cute at all, I want you to show me you're a

woman and not a child then maybe I might try treating you like a woman.”

She chuckles.

Snakho: “Why did you say what you said Hero? You were actually saying I am with you because you’re coloured and I didn’t get the white man, why would you say that?”

She sounds defeated, I swallow when I think about the shit I also said yesterday.

Me: “I didn’t mean...”

Snakho: “If I wanted a white man I was gonna go out there and find one, Greg isn’t the only white guy in the world.”

Me: “I’m sorry.”

Snakho: “You’re so petty for a grown up.”

Me: “Ok now you’re insulting me.”

She shrug her shoulders, I chuckle.

Me: “Get up and come here.”

Snakho: “I’m not gonna do that.”

Me: “Snakhokonke!”

She slowly get up and walk up to me.

Me: “I’m gonna give you what you want, maybe then you will start respecting me.”

I kiss her pinning her down in bed with her hands above her head.

I take off her panty and all my clothes then go lock the door. I go back to her in bed and pull up her knees staring at her pussy before licking and sucking it.

I go back to her mouth while I rub my dick on her pussy.

Me: "Are you sure you want this baby?"

Snakho: "Yes...I want you."

I struggle to put my tip in because she keeps moving back now she is scared after all the things she said to me.

Me: "Don't move Sthandwa Sami."

She nods and bite her lower lip I stare at her smiling.

Me: "Don't make this hard for me ok baby?"

She nods returning the smile. I insert my dick while we stare into each other's eyes, she frowns and moan in pain.

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda, uyezwa?"(I love you, you hear me?)

I keep going until I am all in, she is biting her lower lip hard.

Me: "Is it painful?"

Snakho: "A little."

I pull out and I can see blood on my dick, I gentle slide it in again she grabs the sheets tight aching her back.

Me: "Should I stop baby?"

Snakho: "No.. don't stop.."

I thrust slowly and gentle while rubbing her clit with my thumb, she starts moaning in pleasure but there is a frown of pain here and there.

Me: "Shit..."

It has been long man, I pull out and turn her around so I can see her tight pussy. She kneels down I slide it in again and watch as my dick slides in and out of her pussy it's an amazing feeling knowing I am her first in here. I move faster grabbing her butt cheeks then thrust all the

way deep in and cum hard, my whole body is shaking I am sweating I swear I look like a junkie.

I slowly pull out, she sleeps on her tummy I go to the bathroom and take a towel and take cold water with a basin. I go to her and ask her to get in the basin and squat I slowly wash her pussy with cold water hoping she feels better, she keeps flinching.

Me: "I love you, I enjoyed this with you so much and I appreciate you trusting me."

She nods and take my hand guiding it to her pussy again.

Snakho: "It feels better when you touch it with your cold hand."

Me: "Uyigwala Kodwa Kade uyifuna."(You're a coward yet you long wanted it.)

Snakho: "I didn't think it was this big and was gonna hurt."

Me: "So you didn't enjoy it even a little?"

She smiles looking down.

Snakho: "I did but man your thing is too big."

I laugh and help her out of the water. I take the basin to the bathroom then change the bed sheets.

We get in bed, I kiss her cheek.

Me: "Thank you MaDlamini."

Snakho: "Goodnight Gumede."

She close her eyes and sleep on my chest, I hold her tight. I will never let anyone hurt her ever again, she's mine now and always will be no one will ever get in-between us I will never let them.

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CHAPTER 108

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HERO

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Snakho and I are still together going stronger everyday, she went back to work two weeks ago the week after we started having sex, it has been amazing I am getting to learn the person she is everyday, what makes her happy and what makes her upset I have gathered that she's jealous too hates it when I seem to be giving another woman attention. She was hired permanently in Phumie's position.

Speaking about Phumie, she will be in jail for a long time for attempted murder mom helped with speeding her trial so she will be staying in jail for a while. Greg he is still here but I made it clear to him that should he try anything with me or my woman he will be sorry and he apologized and actually revealed to us that he thought Phumeza was a good friend, they are just gullible human beings, he showed me proof of Phumie's texts telling him about how me and Snakho set her up and a whole lot of bullshit, but he has been staying in his lane.

I just walked in the building and find Snakho laughing so hard with Zenzele at the reception, I have seen how much they give Snakho attention these days, the girl is glowing I think it's because she is in a better place, she knows she is safe also she got the dick, they glow once they get this thing real good and I give it to her everyday she doesn't complain at all.

I stand next to Zen and greet.

Snakho: "Hey.."

She blush looking down, we have been keeping our relationship on the low but I don't think I want that anymore these guys are thirsty for my woman. We don't even come to work together she is always with mom and dad.

Me: "Are you good?"

She tucks her hair behind her ear, she is in those expensive weaves, she had it installed two days ago I paid a very large amount of money for it because my baby wanted it, I love that she gets to ask me for money even though now she can afford certain things, She does eat my money and I am not complaining at all it feels good actually, she is wearing another black dress that shows off her body, she is getting curvier and her tummy is so flat, she hits the gym on weekends with my mother, they get along like best friends.

Me: "Have Mr Gumede sent the files yet?"

Snakho: "Oh no sir uhm...he said you should start in his office when you come in."

I nod and look at Zenzele he is staring at Snakho with a very big smile on his face.

Me: "Shouldn't you be working?"

He clears his throat fixing his tie.

Zenzele: "Yes sir but I love to start here every morning to witness this beauty."

Me: "I guess we pay you to be a witness of Snakho's beauty huh?"

He lifts his hands up and walk away. I look at Snakho.

Me: "You are enjoying these guy's attention so bad aren't you?"

Snakho: "No I'm not but I can't not laugh when someone says a joke Hero, being with you doesn't mean I shouldn't have a sense of humor."

Me: "Oh..but if it's me in this position you fight me and get angry Snakhokonke."

She keeps quiet.

The next morning the first time we had sex I got her a morning after pill and now she has been on the pill ever since, I took her to a doctor and she prefers pills than any other birth control, I wanted to trick her into getting pregnant but I remember how sincere she was when she told me she has a lot to achieve before having a baby.

Me: "Have a nice day MaDlamini."

I go to dad's office, he shows me what I have to do for him today and I go start my day. During lunch time Snakho walk in my office with a paper bag, she push the door closed with her heel then turns to lock it, I raise my eyebrow.

She put the paper bag down then walk around the table and push my chair back sitting in front of me on the table.

Snakho: "I want to apologize Phakathwayo, for the way I behaved earlier today, I wasn't flirting with Zenzele or anything, I told him I have a man at home and we stay together since they don't know I am staying with you guys, so I was really laughing at his joke not because I was flirting."

The way she is speaking is so polite my heart is dancing at the way she called me by my clan name.

Snakho: "Uyangixolela angithi?"(You forgive me right?)

Me: "It depends baby."

Snakho: "On what?"

Me: "I want you to show me how sorry you are MaDlamini."

She giggles and pull up her dress and take off her panty and throws it at me, she knows me very well, I like it when she gives me her

panties, sometimes she would come in with the files and I will find a panty on top of them, and she will leave without saying a word, I just have a panty fetish ever since I met her.

I move my chair closer.

Me: "You know what to do Sthandwa Sami."

She opens her thighs for me I suck her pussy so good she is whispering my name. I pull out my dick and turn her around making her hold on the table, I go hard from behind spanking her ass.

Me: "Don't be loud baby."

We fuck real good once we cum I turn her around and kiss her lips with my hand on her neck squeezing her a little.

Snakho: "I love you."

Me: "I love you too baby."

We clean ourselves up then she sit on my lap, we eat our food.

Me: "So baby, how long do you think a man should show his intentions when she is with a woman."

Snakho: "Uh...the first day."

She says shrugging her shoulders.

Me: "I'm talking about marriage baby or engagement."

Snakho: "Uhm..I don't know I believe if people love each other and they are sure they want a future together then time frame doesn't matter."

Sometimes having a conversation with her you can think she is old. She always gives sensible and matured answers.

Me: "What about us? Are you sure about your future with me?"

She giggles.

Snakho: "Well, I don't see myself with any other man other than you so...yeah I do see a future with you."

I smile to myself.

Me: "At least we're on the same page."

Snakho: "So baby do you really think people haven't noticed how we're always wearing matching clothes here at work that we might be together."

Me: "People only see you these days, ay Umuhle kakhulu baby."(You're too beautiful baby)

She giggles.

Me: "My sperms makes you glow."

She laughs getting up from me then she cleans the table, now this is the kind of wife I want for myself, kind hearted, banging body and clean, her beauty is just cherry on top.

Snakho: "I will see you later baby, I love you."

Me: "Come give your man a kiss phela."

She rush to me and kiss my lips.

Snakho: "Lunch time is over, bye babe."

She rush out leaving me smiling like I'm crazy. I call my older brother Kumkani.

Kumkani: "Qhawe kaNqobasi."

Me: "Bhuti..is your laptop close by I want a video call with you and the brothers, it's been a while."

Kumkani: "Let me fetch it."

I connect my laptop and the three brothers shows up on my screen, it's Mcebisi, Ngcebo and Kumkani. Makhosini and Bukhosi stays here in Durban with their families.

Mcebisi: "Ay we are thankful for Snakho look at how good you look, she must be treating you well."

I laugh moving my chair back.

Kumkani: "Ay uyamupha ngempela."(Ay she gives it to him real good.)

We all laugh.

Me: "I guess I really needed her in my life man."

Ngcebo: "Of course you do, you have been doing ungodly things before you met her."

Me: "Ay like what?"

Ngcebo: "Sleeping with different women even though it has been a while since you left that life but you still did it and masturbating."

He says and spit on the floor, the brothers are in tears with laughter, I didn't know I missed them so much there's never a dull moment with them it's worse when there are younger brothers, Makhosini and Bukhosi are the worst!

Me: "Uhm..so do you guys think it's too soon to buy an engagement ring for her?"

Mcebisi: "It's never too soon to propose to someone you love Hero, as long as you're not planning to put a ring on it only to keep the boys away because it's wrong and it doesn't work someone was asking my wife out last night while she has a huge rock on her finger, I went there like I am crazy and beat the living shit out of him, he doesn't rate me mos, that's the mother of my kids man."

I smile, this guy is crazy about his wife you can't do shit, they all are.

Kumkani: "I know how you feel brother, a month ago Bonolo was in a similar situation with our son's school Principal I went crazy, I was literally crying, she laughed at me so hard I was so embarrassed, I hate that piece of shit!"

Ngcebo: "Some people are just naturally disrespectful how do you ask someone's wife out knowing damn well she's happily married, people always sees us with our wives there aren't even rumours of divorce or anything yet they still want to ask them out mina owami angeke ngiyoshaya umuntu ngezulu kabi!"(no one will dare me with my wife I will hit them with thunder so bad.)

We all laugh at him.

Ngcebo: "Angifuni lutho ngoMakoti wakithi mina."(I don't want anything with the wife of our home)

I smile shaking my head, I guess I will go crazy like this for Snakho or maybe I already am.

Kumkani: "I'm still just waiting for that Principal to try me again, I will shoot his balls."

I chuckle, I know he would no one touch his Bonolo ever.

Kumkani: "I'm just glad my wife managed to put him in his place by telling him that she will tell me and I won't hesitate to kill him if she tells me to."

Mcebisi: "Bayasicontrolla benjalo nje."(They do control us)

I laugh.

Ngcebo: "But we wouldn't have it any other way, dad still follows mom around when she's upset about something no matter how little it is because he knows he can't live without her."

Me: "When are you coming back here again?"

Ngcebo: "I did think you miss us so much shame."

I laugh. We all look at him as he takes the bowl next to him and eat something from it.

Me: "Let me guess you're eating sweets."

He chuckles.

Ngcebo: "Of course I am."

Me: "I'm sure you and Aqua fight over them."

Ngcebo: "Wee lowo uthanda amanzi, inhlanzi namaVege ingane embi kabi."(That one loves water, fish and vegetables, he's an ugly child."

Our conversation is full of laughter and I really miss them. I end the conversation after they told me this coming weekend they will be coming.

I am nervous about what I want to do, I know what she said was positive but man she can still say no, sometimes people spot red flags from us that we don't even know we have.

I knock off early and find her busy on a computer.

Me: "Hey baby."

She get up and look at my bag.

Snakho: "You are going home already?"

Me: "I want to go by the mall first.

Snakho: "Oh Good, let me write you a list of things I will need."

Me: "Ay Snakhokonke I'm not doing any shopping."

Snakho: "It's just a few things I will give you R100."

I laugh as she writes the list of her many cosmetics that I will never understand in this lifetime.

Me: "Do you have those strings you usually tie your hair with in your bag."

She nods.

Snakho: "Look over there."

She shows me her bag, I look for it and find it. I go back to her.

Me: "Can you give me your left hand."

She gives me looking confused. I put the string around her ring finger and tie it I am actually trying to get the size of her ring.

Snakho: "What are you doing baby?"

Me: "Uhm..I just want to see something."

She nods still confused as hell.

I kiss her cheek and walk out. I drive to the mall and start buying her cosmetics first then I go to the jewellery shop I look for one of the most expensive diamond ring then buy it. I head home and call her.

Snakho: "Sthandwa Sami."

My heart skips a beat.

Me: "Can we have dinner tonight? I will take you out please."

Snakho: "Oh that's exciting, I am outside I can see your car, I hope you bought everything I wrote."

Me: "I did."

I call mom and dad informing them what I'm about to do tonight and they are happy for me.

I am dressing up in my room and my baby is doing the same in her room.

I walk out first and go downstairs, mom and dad went to eat dinner with Makhosini and Thobeka, Bukhosi and Nelile will also join them.

I hear heels clicking I look up, she walks down the stairs looking so beautiful, she's perfect and it's the first time seeing this red dress, they usually go shopping with mom often now.

Me: "Wow."

I'm out for words, I have never seen such beauty.

She giggles and peck my lips I hold her waist.

Me: "You're so beautiful Sthandwa."

Snakho: "Thank you."

I hold her hand, we walk out. I drive to one of the most classy restaurant and walk in, we find it with just less than 10 people mostly couples. We are ushered to our decorated table that I called and asked to book.

I pull out a chair for her, she sit down and I am opposite her.

Snakho: "I have never been treated like this before I only see this in movies."

I smile.

The waiter comes to us and give us the menus. We place our order while she have a glass of non alcoholic wine I am having Orange juice because of nerves I can't have a beer or anything alcoholic, she usually have it with mom at home especially on weekends when they are baking.

We are eating our food but I ask for the restroom in the middle of our dinner, she nods. I get up and walk around the back, I give the waiter my phone to take a video of her reaction, then a waitress walk to our table with a board written will you marry me, she reads it and I can see her looking around confused, Music starts playing, Llyoyiso's song

'what I would say' it fills the entire restaurant and it grabs people's attentions.. I walk out when the song is at its peak...

'What do I do when you get me the way you do?

What do I say? Baby I can't keep my breathing straight..

What do I pray for? I've been praying , I've been praying , I've been praying

If we were in a movie scene , living in the Hollywood screen ..

I'd say I love you till the morning comes

I love you till my heart runs out of blood

I'd say let me hold your baggage , lemme take your little burden , so that's what I would say'

She gasp when she sees me walking back and kneel in front of her opening a little red box that has her ring, she get up and cover her face.

Me: "I love you, that's what I would say if someone were to ask me questions about you, it doesn't matter what question but my answer will always start with I love you."

She is wiping her tears looking at me with a beautiful smile ever.

Me: "Will you marry me so I can answer all the questions people may have about you."

Snakho: "Guys what!?"

The waiters are all here, they are filming everything with the smiles on their faces.

She looks at me again then scream YES so loud everyone claps their hands for us as I slid the ring on her finger and it fits perfectly. She wraps her arms around my neck I hold her waist as she cries tears of joy on my shoulder.

Snakho: "I can't believe this, I wasn't expecting it at all, baby I'm so happy, Aaahh.."

She waves her ring finger in the air, I laugh shaking my head, I love her. She can't stop looking at her ring.

We have desert while I send the video to Kumkani, he calls me immediately.

Kumkani: "You did it!"

There is so much noise in the background they are congratulating me, Bab'Omdala speaks before I drop the call.

Nkosiyo: "Siyabonga Gumede, you're turning a new page in life as a man who is responsible for another human being, that is Snakho, take care of her, love her and protect her."

Me: "I will do that dad, thank you."

I sent it to mom and dad as well, mom calls and just cry, women and drama, she is sobbing but I know it's all happiness, they are all happy for us.

I take Snakho's hands and hold them tight.

Me: "We are starting a new journey Sthandwa Sami, thank you for saying yes I promise to always be a better man for you."

Snakho: "You already are, Ngiyabonga Gumede, Yeyeye, Mnguni.. Phakathwayo."

I get up and pull her up hugging her again, Come on man she is my fiancée and I have been happier in my life.

We go home and I take off her shoes and we just sleep in bed still fully dressed, she is laying on my chest, I hold her hand and play with her ring.

Snakho: "This still feels surreal, you asked me to marry you out of all other girls in this world, you chose me."

Me: "I will always choose you Sthandwa, you have no competition you'll never have one, it's just you."

She kiss me, we take each other's clothes off and I let her make love to me, she is staring at me as she moves her waist on top of me, the way her hands move on my body and the cold ring sends shivers down my spine, no she deserves this.

She rides me so good till we both cum, I kiss her and hold as she cries again hugging me tight, she still can't believe this so I understand her tears.

I take her to the bathroom and we make love once again with water falling down our skin, she's amazing I am holding her thigh tight as I can feel that I am so close.

We finally finish our session then take a proper shower. We step out of the shower and we can't really keep our hands away from each other.

I watch her sleep peacefully with her left hand on her cheek, I kiss her cheek.

I'm proud of you Gumede, now the journey of you as a man starts.

A voice says and it feels like it comes deep within me, I chuckle when I remember that I have an ancestor living inside of me, a greatest man only the Generation of King Ntsika had an honour to meet. I am a Gumede.

In the morning I wake up alone in bed. She walks through those doors with a tray wearing a white gown. She put the tray in front of me and kiss my lips.

Snakho: "Morning Fiancé."

I smile and kiss her.

Me: "Morning, I hope you know I am not planning to make you the lord of the rings, I want to honour your father for raising a wife for me."

She is blushing.

Snakho: "Your mom couldn't stop screaming when I was in the kitchen, she is so happy."

I smile.

Me: "They are happy I am finally getting what I always wanted, a steady relationship with a right woman."

I hold her hand.

Me: "That's why you have never seen me with any woman in these tabloids because I was waiting for the right one, now I can show you off to the world."

Snakho: "Thank you. I think my dad will be happy that I found a man with good intentions like you, he was always preaching about not allowing boys to take my pride before I see what they really want from me except getting in my pants."

We get ready for work and today she allows me to drive with her, we won't hide our relationship anymore I know it will piss off a lot of people because they thought they had a chance with my baby but nope, I'm here to stay.

People stare at us as we walk in the building holding hands. She smiles and greets everyone by waving her left hand, I laugh at how dramatic and spicy she is, she is more than happy to show it mostly to ladies who she didn't like around me.

"What is happening are they together? I didn't see it coming? When did they even start dating to be engaged."

I can hear a girl not far from us whispering, she is standing with a pissed off Zenzele and another girl from their department.

"But I won't lie, they look good together I have been shipping them ever since uGirl joined us here as a cleaner."

The same girl carries on talking about us being good together I see Zenzele walk in his office and bang the door closed, I chuckle.

Me: "I will see you during lunch time."

Snakho: "Ok babe, love you."

She sits on her desk while I walk away to my office. As I am busy cleaning my desk my door swings open Zenzele and Greg walk in at the same time.

Me: "Gentlemen, what can I do for you?"

Zenzele: "You're taking advantage of that little girl Hero just because you're a boss's son, you are trapping her with that ring so she can keep up with your bullshit."

I raise my eyebrows.

Me: "Kukhona ongazela Kona mfethu uze usebenzise amagama amakhulu kangaka oTrapping?" (Do you know something about me brother for you to even use such big words as trapping?)

Zenzele: "I know your type, I know you fuck around! I don't trust this good boy behavior! Daddy must be cleaning up your mess somewhere."

I am getting really confused, what did I do to these people they have been working for my dad's company for years but I can see they never really liked me, I am seeing how they really feel about me now.

Me: "Did I do something that pissed you off before Zenzele, you can tell me so I can apologize I really thought we're cool bro but clearly I have been wrong."

Zenzele: "Angiyena umngani namaCheese boy afana nawe."(I'm not friends with cheese boys like you)

He is really going off at me and I am still dumbstruck I don't know what's happening right now, Greg is also staring at me like he wants to kill me but he just clicks his tongue and walk out.

Zenzele: "I hope Snakho wake up before it's too late and see you for who you really are."

Snakho: "Do I look asleep?"

She says walking in and push Zenzele out of her way coming to me. She kiss my lips and wipe her lipstick off my lips, I just sit down defeated.

So it's true what they say, when you are making progress in life with anything people will show you how they really feel about you. Right now you're not doing great in your life, there are a lot of people pretending to feel sorry for you but see when you start breaking those chains you will be left with just one or no one at all, I guess my life right now is a testimony.

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CHAPTER 109

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HERO

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I have been feeling some kind of way about how Zenzele went off at me earlier today, did he want Snakho that much that he got so verbally aggressive after finding out she's with me and we're actually

angaged, I can still see him spitting while talking the dude was really not having it.

Snakho knocks and walk in holding her bag.

Snakho: "Are you working late today?"

I shake my head. She walks closer to the table and put my things in my bag then he walks around the table and take my hand.

Snakho: "Let's go home baby."

I get up and take her bag and mine. We get in the car but I feel so down like something bad is gonna happen.

Me: "Snakho.."

She looks at me and brush the back of my head.

Snakho: "You don't look to good baby, what's wrong?"

Me: "I don't know."

I rub my eyes and look for my phone.

Me: "Babe did you put my phone in my bag?"

She shakes her head.

Snakho: "Uhm.. I thought you took it I guess we left it in the office, let me go get it for you."

She step out and rush inside. I remove my tie and unbutton my shirt.

She opens the door and ask me to step out of the car, I can see panic on her face.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Snakho: "Your brother Umntwana uNgcebo called, he said we mustn't use this car, he is coming with Kumkani, they are already here in Durban."

It's Friday I even forgot they said they will be coming for the weekend.

I step out and take out my things and hers out of the car.

I can see Kumkani's car driving in the premises then they both quickly step out and rush to us. Ngcebo hold Snakho's hand and take her to Kumkani's car. Kumkani is walking around my car then he goes down and come back with a very sharp object, he takes out at least four of those things just near my tyres.

Me: "What is that?"

Kumkani: "I don't know but what I know is that had you driven this car it was gonna end up making flat tyres because it was gonna keep poking the tyre until it's flat while you're driving, you and Snakho were gonna get into an accident."

I nod and sit down on the ground, I guess me feeling tired was a warning, I don't think I was gonna be able to drive.

Kumkani: "Come on let's go home."

He help me up and we go to the car. Snakho put her hands on my cheeks and kiss my lips we are at the backseat of the car.

Snakho: "Are you okay? You're worrying me."

I nod, I feel like this car is too hot yet all the windows are opened.

Ngcebo keeps grunting in the passenger seat, Kumkani is driving in speed taking a route home. Snakho keeps kissing me and wiping my sweat I love that she cares but I can't even smile or tell her.

When we get home Kumkani hooks his arm on mine and support me inside. The house is full, the kids, the wives all my brothers and sisters Thingo and Malaika.

I force a smile and wave a little.

Malaika rush to me.

Malaika: "What's wrong with him?"

Ngcebo: "Trauma..uGumede saw an accident before it happened so Hero's body is drained because of how the person in him is feeling."

They take me to my room, I sleep on my tummy and let my body relax.

Snakho sleep next to me.

Snakho: "I wanted to ask to go home tomorrow but you're not ok I can't leave you."

Me: "I'm..gonna be fine, the house is full they will take care of me."

She shakes her head.

Snakho: "I don't wanna leave you when you're sick."

Her phone rings, she sighs.

Snakho: "It's my dad tomorrow it's payday and I know he is expecting me home."

Me: "You can go Sthandwa Sami."

I kiss her lips and close my eyes.

Snakho: "Hello Dlamini."

"Snakhokonke are you on your way home?"

His voice is bold.

Snakho: "Uhm...I..no baba I will come home tomorrow."

"Oh...ok."

I can hear disappointment in his voice.

Snakho: "I'm sorry, I will come back early."

"Ok Ntombi yaBaba."(Daddy's girl.)

She huffs, I open my eyes she is playing with her phone.

Me: "Don't stress, you will come back and find me here waiting."

Snakho: "Ok, so should I tell him about our engagement?"

Me: "I don't know love, won't he figured it out that you're not a virgin anymore and get angry, maybe you should go with my father and brothers with Inhlawulo tomorrow."(Damages)

She rubs her forehead in frustration.

I hold her hand.

Me: "I will talk to my father and brothers.

Snakho: "Let me call them for you then go help out with dinner."

She kiss my cheek and walk out.

Dad, Bab'Omdala and all my brothers walk in the room.

I slowly sit up Ngcebo burns the incense asking Mkhulu to calm down I am fine and I feel a little better after that.

Nkosiyo: "Are you okay?"

Me: "I feel better, Uhm I need help."

They nod.

Me: "Snakho is going home and we're afraid when her father learns about our engagement he will want to check if she's still a virgin, she's not I took it, so Uhm...I don't know what I should do."

Mcebisi: "Ey uzokubulala uDlamini, uqale ngokugcinwa ngako boy."(Dlamini will kill you, you began with what should have been the last thing you do.)

Me: "That's why I need your help please, I want to pay inhlawulo."(I want to pay damages)

Nqobasi: "That stubborn old man will give us a really hard time..but..."

He looks at Bab'Omdala.

Nqobasi: "What should we do Bhuti?"(Brother)

Nkosiyo: "We will leave with Snakho tomorrow, and he might even ask for cattles not money, that's Dlamini he doesn't play when it comes to his daughter."

Me: "Nizothatha izinkomo zami ezikekhaya baba Ngiyacela."(You will take my cattles at home dad please)

Nkosiyo: "Don't worry we will do it for you."

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

Snakho comes back with a tray of food for me once everyone walks out.

Snakho: "Are you feeling better?"

Me: "Yes baby, and my fathers agreed to go with you to your dad tomorrow."

Snakho: "He is a difficult man he might just not accept this."

Me: "But he have to Snakho, I love you."

We eat together, after we are done she walks out with plates.

She comes back a little later and sleep next to me with her hand on top of my chest.

Snakho: "Your heart is racing."

Me: "I'm scared of your father's reaction tomorrow baby, I don't want to lose you, he might force you to stay at home."

Snakho: "Let's hope for the best."

In the morning someone knocks on the door I get up and open the door, I feel really better I think ikhehla liwehlisile umoya.”(I think the old man did calm down)

Nqobasi: “You and Snakho should get ready, we’re leaving in an hour, we don’t want Dlamini to fault us with everything, even coming late.”

Me: “I’m also going?”

Nqobasi: “Yes, he might want to ask questions only you can answer, angithi sowuright manje?”(You’re feeling better now, right?)

I nod.

Nqobasi: “Good, Everyone is getting ready.”

I nod and close the door. I wake my baby up we take a shower together, we are both quiet I am just washing her body then she leaves me in there as I bath myself.

I step out and find her already dressed in a white dress and heels then put on her straw hat over her weave, I hold her waist and kiss her.

Snakho: “I’m so nervous.”

Me: “It’s gonna be ok.”

I wear a black shirt and black pants with black shoes then I put on my silver watch, she is leaning on the dressing table playing with her rings.

Me: “Let’s go baby.”

I take her hand and we walk out. Everyone is standing outside it’s still a bit dark but the lights are on where we are standing.

Kumkani: “Let’s go. Can you drive?”

I nod and open the door for my girl. I am driving my mom’s car since I left mine at work.

I drive home, she takes off her shoes and curls herself into a ball closing her eyes.

We get home just when the sun is starting to rise.

Bab'Omdala ask Snakho to walk in first and inform her father that we are here to see him.

He rushes out looking so worried, he wasn't sleeping anymore, we know he is an early bird because he takes out his livestock early in the morning we can already see them all over his yard.

Dlamini: "Nkosiyami ngabe kukhona okubi okwenziwe indodakazi Yami?"(My King is there something bad my daughter did?)

Nkosiyabo: "Cha baba sicela ukuhlala phansi sikhulume."(Can we sit down and have a talk please.)

He nods still looking worried. We walk in his rondavel and Snakho is nowhere to be seen.

We see two other Dlamini men walk in I guess Snakho went to call them, they live fairly close to each other and they are blood brothers.

Dlamini clears his throat.

Dlamini: "Ngilalele Nkosi."(I'm listening King)

Bab'Omdala clears his throat.

Nkosiyabo: "Uh...silethe inhlawulo."(We brought damages)

I think there is no easy or right way to break these news.

There is a frown on all Dlamini men.

Dlamini: "Eyani?"(For what?)

Nkosiyabo: "Our son asked your daughter to marry him."

They all look at each other.

Dlamini: "What are the damages for Gumede? We've asked girls to marry us before but we've never paid damages for that."

He is getting worked up.

Nkosiyabo: "He broke her virginity so we thought it's better he comes here and pay before women take Snakho to us because he acknowledge his mistake but he want to do right."

He chuckles.

Dlamini: "Ngiyalingwa, omuphi lowomfana?"(I am being tested, which was is that boy?)

Nkosiyabo: "Lo wamfowethu Omncane."(My little brother's)

He doesn't even wanna point at me. Dlamini chuckles again.

Dlamini: "So you begged me to let Snakho stay with you Nkosana kanti umnikela kumfana wakho ukuthi amlale?"(you wanted to hand her to your son to sleep with her.)

Me: "Baba it's not like that, when she came to stay with us we were already in a relationship."

The man is furious.

Dlamini: "Snakhokonke!"

He shouts and Snakho walk in and sit on the straw mat looking down.

Dlamini: "What is this that I am hearing? Didn't I tell you that you don't give your pride to a boy until he makes his intentions known?"

Snakho: "You did baba, he told me his intentions I have a ring to show for it."

Dlamini's brothers exclaim with smiles on their faces but Dlamini ain't having none of it!

Dlamini: "I'm sorry I can't accept any damages, this boy has disrespected my house!"

Nkosiyabo: "That's what we're trying to fix baba please, these children have the intentions of getting married."

Dlamini: "No."

Snakho kneels in front of her dad and put her head on his lap, I can see him softening up a little.

Snakho: "Siyazixolisela JamaKaSjadu besingaqondile ukukuphoxa."(We apologise JamaKaSjadu we didn't mean to disrespect you.)

Dlamini: "Iphi Yona leyonhlawulo?"(Where are those damages?)

He says brushing Snakho's head, she is a daddy's girl.

Nkosiyabo: "Just name it my boys will go and fetch whatever you want."

He chuckles.

Dlamini: "I want two cattles and a sheep and a goat."

I nod, I have all those things at home, we all have our own livestock, Bab'Omdala taught us to once in a while buy a sheep, a goat or a cattle because it comes in handy when we want to do ceremonies also people buy from us, he usually says when you have livestock working is just a hobby because that is wealth of a lifetime, and he is right they grow in numbers and more people come to buy, our pockets will never run dry even when business is not doing well in Durban.

All my brothers walk out with Bab'Omdala. I feel like Dlamini was just angry as any parent but was low-key happy, he is holding her daughter's left hand and he keeps looking at her ring with a little smile, his brothers just can't hide it, they are over the moon saying their daughter is in good hands, they want to gloat to the community

that their daughter is marrying the Gumede Prince, Abafana abakhuliswe ngenhlonipho.(Boys that were raised with respect)

Snakho's father whispers something to her ear then she nods and get up walking out.

Dlamini: "So when should I expect a letter young Prince?"

I look at my father, he nods with a smile.

Me: "Uhm...We will write it today when we get home baba."

"So soon!"

The youngest brother exclaims with a huge smile on his face, this one is happier than everyone, I guess people really admire how well we were all raised and everyone would be happy to have a son or a daughter in-law from our family.

We hear noise outside there women ululating, we all walk out, there are Dlamini women ululating outside as my brothers bring livestock inside the yard, I can see that only one cattle is mine here the other one eyaBab'Omdala even the goat and the sheep are his.

Nkosiyo: "Nakhuke obukucelike JamaKaSjadu."(Here is what you asked for)

Dlamini is hiding the smile, he just nods looking away pretending to be still angry I go to him and give him my hand.

Me: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu baba ngiyathembisa ngizomuphatha kahle uSnakho ngiyamthanda kakhulu."(I'm really sorry father and I promise I will treat Snakho right, I love her so much)

We shake hands. The woman of the Dlamini family serve us tea and bread, Snakho is amongst them, I am smiling looking at her.

Dlamini clears his throat once we are done eating.

Dlamini: "My daughter is not going back to Durban."

Everyone exclaim we thought everything went right.

I look at Snakho she is also looking at me with her glassy eyes.

Nqobasi: "Awu Dlamini."

Dlamini: "Just until you come back and pay full lobola for her like you promised to."

Me: "Baba can we write a letter right now and go back home having an answer please."

I beg my dad and Bab'Omdala. They ask one of the girls to come with a paper and the pen, people are standing there amazed by all this, I am guessing this has never happened in history, coming to pay damages and end up writing a a letter to request a negotiations date right there in the girl's yard. Bab'Omdala writes a letter and give it to Dlamini.

Nkosiyabo: "Can I have a date now?"

He says smirking.

Dlamini: "Come next Saturday."

I feel better I thought he will delay it but still I won't be seeing Snakho for the whole week.

Nqobasi: "But what about work Dlamini."

Dlamini: "Your son will figure it out, he is the one who did me wrong here."

He says and walk away.

Me: "Can we talk for a minute Sthandwa Sami."

We go to my car, I am the only one who parked outside the yard.

I hold her hands.

Snakho: "I hope my dad isn't putting pressure on you. I can talk to him and..."

Me: "No baby, I was also hoping he gives us the date that is close, I want you to be my wife sooner."

She smiles.

Snakho: "Ngiyabonga(Thank you) I think I just earned so much respect from my family and the whole community, Ngibonga kakhulu Mnguni."(Thank you so much Mnguni.)

I peck her lips.

Me: "Ngizolala ngedwa isonto lonke."(I will sleep alone the whole week)

Snakho: "I don't think I will cope, unless you promise to call every night before I sleep."

Me: "I will do that baby, I love you."

Snakho: "Ngiyakuthanda nami."(I love you too)

She says looking down, blushing.

We drive back home.

Me: "Uhm.. guys thank you for always availing yourself to me when I need you, thank you so much for what each and everyone of you did for me today."

Nkosiyabo: " That's what family do Qwabe."

I bow my head then walk away to my room. I do my research and find out application for fixing matric results are open, I quickly take Snakhokonke's documents and apply for her. My phone calls just as I finish applying.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

Snakho: "Ngathi ngilahliwe mengingekho nawe."(I am so lost without you)

Me: "I feel the same way but I have some good news to cheer you up."

Snakho: "What is it baby?"

Me: "I already applied for you to fix your Matric results baby, I can hire a tutor for you or you can attend classes it will all be up to you."

She screams calling her daddy, I can her shuffling that she is running.

Dlamini: "Kwenzekeni?"(What happened?)

Snakho: "Dad I'm gonna fix my matric results and I will be able to enroll into the University next year!"

Dlamini: "Oh Umntanami, your mom would be so proud."

I smile as my baby cries, she lost her mother when she was doing her matric I think that's why she didn't do well that year.

Snakho: "Thank you so much Gumede."

Me: "Don't cry baby, I can't hold you in my arms right now, I love you."

She just drops the call, I guess she still wants to cry.

I sleep but in the middle of the night she calls me and tells me she can't sleep, we talk till 3 am after we both run out of airtime and I am lazy to buy it so we say goodbye.

It's Sunday morning I rush out after taking a quick shower and drive to my workplace. I take a lift to the 5th floor where our security system is, I find the head of security just about to head out, on weekend he just comes in to check if everything has been going good then go back home.

Me: "Hey man, I need a footage of Friday after lunch time or during lunch time.

We shoulder hug then we both sit down, he is a very old family friend and works closely with Daniel, Aunt Isi's husband.

We look at the footages.

"Whoa how did I miss this?"

He says staring at the footage showing Zenzele walking around my car putting somethings in it.

Me: "Maybe you looked at the cameras from this angle, where Greg is just standing there looking around, he is standing guard."

"Fuck...they wanted to kill you mos!"

He looks more angrier than me, I guess because he is paid to watch anything out of the ordinary in this building and he missed all of this but I don't fault him, there are a lot of angles here and they only thought of one camera while there are plenty all over this building.

Me: "I need these right now."

I give him the USB, he copies everything then give it back to me.

Me: "Thank you."

"I'm so sorry for what almost happened to you and your girl."

Me: "It's okay, we're alive that's all that matters."

I go back home and I keep watching the footage over and over rubbing my palms together, my brothers joins me in my room and they are livid Kumkani wants to deal with them.

Me: "I just want to see their faces tomorrow I will call everyone to watch this."

Mcebisi: "I am coming with you, I want to Punch Zenzele's face."

They all want to come to work with me tomorrow.

The next day we all drive to work and mom and dad are confused as to why.

Bukhosi sits at the reception and answer calls for me while I go set up in the boardroom since we will be watching a movie scene here.

Everyone walks in the boardroom some are standing because there is not enough chairs to accommodate everyone.

Nqobasi: "What are we watching son?"

Me: "Oh you'll see."

Zenzele is here looking uninterested and he is sitting in the middle, exactly where I want him to be and Greg is also bored he keeps fixing his glasses.

I connect my USB and when the two sees that it's a footage the shift uncomfortable.

Me: "Do you guys see who this is?"

"that's Zenzele mos, Zenzele that's you."

The always talkative Namhla from his department shouts for everyone to hear, dad is frowning as he slowly get up from his seat.

Nqobasi: "Can you start that footage from the beginning again son."

I do as he says.

Zenzele: "Sir I..."

Nqobasi: "Shut up!"

He roars and everyone bows their heads and there is silence in the room.

Dad grabs him first since he is closer to him and pin him down on the boardroom table everyone moves away.

Nqobasi: "You wanted to kill my son?"

He speaks through his teeth, a punch lands on his cheek I think he swallowed all this teeth.

He pull him up and throws him across the room he hit the wall first before falling down on the couch.

Mcebisi squats next to him.

Mcebisi: "Get the fuck up!"

He get up in so much struggle only to be knocked back down with a punch.

Mcebisi: "You messed with the wrong one, now get the fuck up!"

He tries to get up but he falls back down again as he punch him.

Makhosini: "Oh no you're not going anywhere."

He says pushing back Greg who was already out the door.

Greg: "I'm sorry...I...I'm sorry."

Makhosini grabs his neck and his spectacles flies across the room.

He is gasping for air can't even talk. Bukhosi walk in with the police and ask to look at the footage first then tell Zenzele he is arrested for attempted murder and Greg is taken for being an accomplice to crime, I will deal with them one by one lawfully and if that doesn't work I will have to eliminate them from the face of this earth like they wanted to do to me.

"Good riddance to bad rubbish shame, Zenzele was a pain in my small behind he acted like he owned this place."

Everyone is laughing at Namhla, she has that chipmunk voice sometimes it's annoying but she is a tiny and funny girl so we get used to it.

My brothers stay the whole day here helping out, Bukhosi is handling the reception like a pro. It's like lunch time and we are wearing at the reception.

Me: "Hey don't take my woman's job bro."

We laugh.

Kumkani: "Everyone listen up!"

Everyone looks our way.

Kumkani: "I hope you guys all learned the lesson from that Phumie, to Zenzele and Greg, never mess with one of us if you're not happy here the doors are wide open you can always leave or else you gonna come up missing."

Ngcebo: "Batshela bayeke ukuthatha amachance Bhuti wethu omdala."(Tell them not to try taking chances our older brother)

He says sitting in the corner eating his ice cream everyone burst in laughter, I didn't even think he will want to be in the middle of this drama but he is here, eating everything that is sold in that cafeteria and that's why he is called uMntwana uNgcebo, he is a child, the spirit of amanono lives within him.

Ngcebo: "Thokoza."

He says clapping his hands and continue to lick that ice cream, people are in tears with laughter.

Later we all go home and have some more fun, those two are always going away for a very long time.

Days flew by pretty fast but it felt like forever because Snakho wasn't home with me.

Today my brothers and King Nkosiyoabo just drove out of the premises to bring my wife back home, they will be paying full Lobola, I have been waiting for this my whole life so I am prepared I gave them money from my savings and told them they can even take cattles as long as Snakho becomes my wife today.

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CHAPTER 110

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HERO

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I just woke up to a very long text message from my wife to be, it's an appreciation text, she tells me how much I have changed her life, how proud she is that she's marrying a man like me, and how much she loves me. I don't know how many times I have read this message I haven't even went to the bathroom because I keep reading it over and over, I love her so much.

My phone rings and it's Bab'Omdala, they left about two hours ago to pay Lobola for my woman.

Me: "Baba."

Nkosiyoabo: "Awuvuse ubaba wakho noMama, UThabsile usendleleni eza Lapho Kumele bathenge izinto zeskhwehlela."(Wake your mom and dad up, Thabsile is on her way there they have to buy things for iSkhwehlela.)

That is the first gifting ceremony after the lobola to the girl's family.

Me: "Oh but isn't that short notice baba."

Nkosiyabo: "Qhawe you are in no position to ask all those questions, angithi ufuna uSnakho Abe Umfazi wakho ngokuphelele namhlanje?"(You want Snakho to become your wife fully, today right?)

Me: "Yebo, I will wake my dad up."

I go to the bathroom first to pee and wash my face then rush to mom and dad's room. I knock for a while, he opens the door looking irritated, we all woke up early before Bab'Omdala and my brothers had to leave because we had to inform the ancestors about this journey.

Nqobasi: "What is it?"

Me: "Dad have been trying to call you and mom, uMamdala usendleleni bazothenga izinto zeskhwehlela."(Great mother is on her way to buy things for iSkhwehlela ceremony.)

He rubs his forehead.

Nqobasi: "Ok eish, we should have done that during the week but we didn't wanna put pressure on everyone now it's all short notice. Let me wake your mother up."

My phone beeps, it's the photo of the handwritten list of izibizo(gifts) I should buy for her entire family even her resting mom.

I go back to my room calling Snakho.

Snakhokonke: "Baby..I'm so sorry that all this is happening at once but my dad said if they want to leave with me as a wife today at least one ceremony should be done after the lobola."

Me: "That's ok my love, don't worry about it, I just want to ask do you have everything there to prepare for my family since we will be there around maybe 11 to twelve."

She sighs.

Snakho: "I am sending my two cousins to town right now I gave them money from my salary, I think it will be enough."

Me: "I will send some right now."

Snakho: "No..no..no I will do this, you don't know how much dad demanded for a single cow here, baby no."

Me: "Like I said Snakho, I have waited for you all my life, I started saving towards Lobolo way before I even met you, I think I was doing Grade 12 when I started so don't worry about it."

She just cries.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

Snakho: "I just wish mom was here."

Me: "It's ok, I'm sorry. I know she is not with you physically but in spirit she is with you just find comfort in that my love."

Snakho: "Ok thank you."

Me: "Ngiyakuthanda."(I love you)

Snakho: "I love you too."

I take a shower and step out wearing my casual clothes, it's gonna be a long busy day.

I walk out and there is laughter downstairs Mamdala is here already with all her daughter in-laws. I rush to hug her.

Thabsie: "Look at you glowing already before you even become a husband."

I smile looking down.

Thabsie: "We are just waiting for relevant shops to be opened, your younger brothers are on their way to help you buying gifts for men, shirts and towels, we gonna handle the blanket situation, I have the list."

Me: "Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

Bukhosi and Makhosini joins us, we eat breakfast together then we head to town going shop to shop buying everything that is asked of us.

My phone rings MaMdala is calling we went our separate ways when we got to town.

Me: "Yebo mah."

Thabsie: "Buy shirts from Markham I will send money right now, Kusho uBabomdala wakho."(Your great father said that)

Me: "Ok mama."

I see a bank notification, we walk in at Markham and buy 13 shirts different colours but some are the same, it's better because we are buying for those who have rested when we gift, we also gift them because they are always with us in spirit especially in celebrations that brings family together like this one.

I call Mama again.

Thabsie: "Yes boy."

Me: "Amathawula siwathenga kuphi"(Where do we buy the towels)

Thabsie: "Anikawathengi?"(You haven't bought them.)

Makhosini: "Weee uzothetha ke uMah."(Mom will start shouting ke)

He says rubbing his forehead.

Makhosini: "Mom don't shout we're trying our best here and we don't really know which bottles of whiskey to buy, we don't really like alcohol like that."

Thabsie: "Don't start with me smarty, You can buy the towels at PEP then I will ask your father the type of whiskey, he is already here shouting as well saying we are doing everything slow."

She is talking about my dad, he went to hire a trailer to transport these to the village I guess he is back now and he thought by miracle

he will come and find us done with everything, this is stressful but I am doing it with my family.

We buy the towels and dad calls telling us he already bought four bottles of whiskey now what is left for us is cases of beer and drinks.

Bukhosi: "I have never been so tired in my life, this should be done a week or two prior so you can just buy two shirts in a day and go home to rest then buy another two the following day, that's what I did for my Nelly's family."

We laugh because that's a lie, it was exactly like this with him, Makhosini was better it was all a week apart.

We meet with everyone and load everything in a trailer some of them in the cars then Makhosini drives us home because I really need my sleep. I sleep all the way home.

We start at home because UMntwana should burn incense for all these things informing the ancestors what is it for, the goat and a sheep is already outside.

Thabsie: "Baba kaUuka."

Nkosiyo: "Ay Mama siphelile iskhathi kanti nikuphi?"(Time has run out where are you?)

Thabsie: "Aw ehlisa umoya sisuka ekhaya manje siza lapho."(Calm down we're on our way there right now)

Nkosiyo: "Ok, Ngiyakuthanda."(I love you)

We all stare at her as she giggles like a teenager.

Thabsie: "I love you too."

She drops the call.

Thabsie: "What are you looking at!"

She shouts, we just laugh at her. They are all in matching traditional dresses and white scarfs with her daughters in law and my mother, my sisters are wearing differently from them but also theirs matches with one another.

Thabsie: "You will just help unload these things, you won't walk inside unless they ask you to, you will wait in the car, ok baby?"

Me: "Yebo mama."

We drive to Snakho's home and the yard is full, Dlamini's are a big family. I see Bab'Omdala rushing to his wife, they hug and kiss this man can't live without his wife that's it.

We unload everything then I get in the car and close my eyes as everyone walks inside with the gifts, MaMdala is singing joyfully and everyone joins in. I smile, Candice did me a favour after all, she left me with a family, she left me with people that would move mountains for me, she left me with people with so much love to give, that's the only thing she did right in my life, no part of me even wishes to meet with her, I am where I am supposed to be, this is my family.

The door opens on the passenger seat, it's Ngcebo.

Ngcebo: "I am here to keep your bored self company."

I chuckle.

Me: "Mntwana."

Ngcebo: "Thokoza."

Me: "What are we eating? I could do with your sweets right now."

He opens his bag across his chest and take out chocolates, I laugh so hard, I knew it, he can't go about his day without having sweets.

We eat that chocolate.

Ngcebo: "I'm proud of you Gumede. I am happy you didn't give up on family even after finding out the truth."

Me: "You're the only family that I have known all my life, anikaze nangilahla."(You have never neglected me)

Ngcebo: "And we will all be together till eternity."

We join our hands for a while then I close my eyes again smiling to myself, I have come a long way.

I hear noise in the yard, I open my eyes people are standing there looking at my car, a young girl knocks on my window I open the door.

"Bacela ukubona umkhwenyana."(They are asking to see the groom)

I widen my eyes, all these eyes and I am not even dressed like a groom. Ngcebo chuckles looking away.

Ngcebo: "They are putting you on the spot, at least Uyabukeka."(At least you're good looking)

I fail to hold myself I just laugh, people have crazy brothers out here. I step out of the car, he does the same and walk beside me.

Ngcebo: "Moral support."

I laugh looking down there's no way I can keep a straight face when he keeps throwing peanuts in his mouth, he is always chewing something.

Everyone's eyes are on me, I slowly look up and my eyes are met with my new bride, she is wearing like all the Gumede wives a white scarf is around her shoulders, she's beautiful I can't believe my eyes. Our eyes lock for a second then she drops hers first with a beautiful smile on her face.

Ngcebo: "Ukhethe kahle."(You chose well)

Me: "Sanibonani Zizi, OJamaKaSjadu, Nina enangizalela iNkosazana ukuthi izokhulisa isbongo sakithi koGumede."(Those who have raised a Princess to raise my own family name oGumede.)

I am singing them my own made up clan praises they go crazy ululating, cheering some are walking around showing happiness. Snakho's eyes are glowing there's this twinkle in her eye, she's happy, I make her happy.

They do another ceremony so we can take her to our ancestral home.

Ngcebo leads the ceremony of welcoming her home, she is now traditionally my wife, though we will still have a traditional wedding after the white wedding but my ancestors already accepted her as my wife.

We drive back to Durban it's been amazing but everyone is tired. I take a different route driving to a nearby hotel. We check in and as soon as we step in the room, she push me to the door and take off my t-shirt while kissing me.

Snakho: "I missed you so much, baby."

She pulls down my pants and kneel, she suck my dick so good I almost scream.

Me: "Fuck...Snakho."

I pull her up and remove everything she is wearing, the new bride attire can wait for now.

I push her to bed and fill her up immediately.

Snakho: "Aaaaah."

She screams scratching my back, I go in hard pounding on her, she push me away and turn around giving me her back, I guess she wants to have me in all positions, I grab her ass and watch my dick go all the way in.

Snakho: "Yes babe....aaah don't stop, yes..."

She is shaking I pull out and turn her around kissing her again.

She push me to bed and get on top of me, she put my dick in her pussy and start moving her waist with my help until she gets the hang of it.

Me: "Snakho...baby...Ooh fuck..."

My hands grab on her hips and I move underneath, she screams my name so loud and I feel wet all over my torso, I think she just squirted. I flip us over and take her legs to my shoulders, I can feel all of her pussy, its so good. We finally cum and catch our breath sleeping next to each other, we are both covered in sweat.

Snakho: "I guess we really missed each other, we almost broke the bed."

I laugh.

Me: "That's why I didn't wanna drive home the house is full they were gonna hear us."

She giggles drawing circles on my chest.

Me: "Thank you for being my wife."

Snakho: "Thank you for making me your wife."

She says kissing me then get on top of me again.

Me: "Look the other way baby."

She does as I say, it's the first time she is doing this in reverse. Her ass is making my dick even harder as she moves on top of me my dick buried deep in her.

Me: "Ooh yes baby...aah shit...I love you.."

I cum hard with my hands grabbing on her ass tight. She moves slowly as she also cums.

We take a shower then go back to bed.

Me: "I love you MaDlamini."

Snakho: "I love you too Phakathwayo."

I smile kissing her lips and her forehead.

Early in the morning we go back home and I leave her in the kitchen with all the wives,.they start with breakfast, she changed into a dress but the scarf and doek is till there.

I get some rest until she wakes me up for breakfast.

It has been a stressful but fruitful week for our family, they have gained another Makoti.(wife)

Everyone went back home two weeks ago, we have decided that we will officially get married after her exams, she is only fixing three subjects so it's not that bad.

I hired a female tutor for her, she takes her classes here at home after work in dad's office, she is so stressed.

I walk in the bathroom and find three pregnancy tests in the bin, they are all negative, she didn't even tell me she is suspecting anything.

She walks in coming from work I didn't go today I just worked from home because I didn't have much work to do.

She takes off her heels, I sit next to her.

Me: "Hey.."

She kiss my cheek.

Snakho: "Hey love."

She has been happy with me and that makes me happy as well.

Me: "Uhm...I saw pregnancy tests in the bathroom."

She widens her eyes but quickly compose herself.

Me: "You didn't tell me you suspect anything."

Snakho: "Uh...I was with Namhla at Clicks yesterday after work and she was buying hers and I thought of buying them as well just to check, I am still on the pill I just wanted to see if it will be accurate."

Me: "Oh.. I was shocked on why you didn't think of telling me you're suspecting something."

Snakho: "I am not suspecting anything at all, my eyes are on these coming exams and you."

I nod.

Me: "Ok. So how long are we gonna be using that pill?"

Snakho: "If I pass these three subject that means I will be able to enroll into University and that will require a lot from me, I want to study part time I want HR, so my hands will be full."

Me: "So we will try for a baby after maybe 4 years?"

She doesn't say anything.

Me: "Uhm...or maybe more because then you will start telling me about starting your career."

Snakho: "So what Hero? Should I not study? Must I give you a baby right now? It's right when you're the only one who achieved your goals in this relationship and I can't do that for myself?"

She ask as polite as she can but I can tell she's upset.

Me: "That's not what I'm saying baby, I was just asking."

Snakho: "We both know you weren't "just" asking, don't be selfish please, I promised my late mother that I will graduate and be something one day, she believed in me as young as I was then, she told me never to stop until I wear that gown."

She is now crying and I feel bad. She walks away going into the bathroom. I just sit in bed playing with my knuckles.

I don't wanna continue to be selfish trying to make reference using my brothers wives, as they are career women and mothers, Dintle and Bonolo work at our hospital back home on different fields even though they are not always there but they still get to work when needed, there's Thobeka and Nelile is also studying part time. But people are different if she feels like she can't do it then she can't, maybe it will put her in so much pressure and I don't want that, I don't want her to resent me for maybe delaying her dreams in future.

She comes back in just her panty, she wears her short gown and get in bed facing the other way. I sit next to her.

Me: "I'm sorry for upsetting you."

She sit up playing with her hands.

Snakho: "Am I being selfish to you for wanting to achieve my dreams first before having a baby?"

I shake my head.

Me: "No, no you're not Sthandwa Sami I understand where you're coming from, you made it clear to me from day one that you have been working so you can further your studies."

She wipes her tears.

Me: "I'm sorry I shouldn't even have brought up the baby topic."

Snakho: "I'm sorry that you had to see those pregnancy tests."

I nod and sleep next to her pulling her head to my chest. Today we sleep without even having sex for the first time since she became my wife traditionally.

I wake up in the morning, I'm alone in bed, she walk in with breakfast and sit next to me.

Snakho: "Morning.."

Her eyes are a bit puffy she didn't sleep well last night, I also didn't I felt like we are fighting and that hurts me.

Me: "Hey, thank you for breakfast."

We eat together but she's not eating much so I feed her myself until we're done.

Snakho: "Are we going to the office today?"

Me: "Yes."

She nods. We take an innocent shower together then get dressed.

We drive to work I go straight to my office, my father walk in and tell me he wants to take all our employees for a psychiatric evaluation but they will sign the consent forms no one will force them, mental health is real and it can be deadly if not taken serious that's why we want to raise awareness to our employees, we will also go for this evaluation. We found replacements for Greg and Zenzele, they were denied bail and now we are waiting for their trial.

Namhla walk in my office carrying flowers and an envelope she greets and smiles putting the flowers on top of my desk before rushing out.

I take the flowers confused then open the envelope there is a card written "I miss my husband, please forgive me." I take out a red thong inside the envelope and chuckle a bit. She walk in and stand by the door with those puppy eyes.

She lock the door and take the flowers putting them in an empty vase that I didn't see in this office.

Snakho: "I'm sorry for the way I spoke last night, I think I was a bit condescending."

Me: "I'm sorry too baby. We won't ever talk about the baby until you're ready I don't want to put pressure on you, you have a lot going on right now the exams, work, our wedding preparations that's a lot."

She sit on my lap and hug me.

Snakho: "Thank you for always putting me first, Ngiyabonga."(Thank you)

We have sex like we always do and I enjoy it as usual, I made peace with the fact that we will have a baby later in our marriage and I'm good with that, she's young and she have dreams, she won't stop dreaming just because she is married to me, I don't want that, I will help make things easier for her in any way I can.

It's the day of her first exams, she is moving all around the room cussing. I sit up.

Me: "Hey come here."

She rush to me and hug me tight.

Me: "Don't stress you gonna nail it, I spoke to your tutor she said you've been doing great."

Snakho: "She did?"

Me: "Yes, I will drive you there myself."

She put everything she will need in her bag and I drive her to the school where she will be writing her exam.

Me: "Goodluck baby, I will be back after your exam to fetch you."

She nods and step out of the car I can see she is nervous as hell but she will be fine.

I just drive around and buy lunch for her then drive back to the venue waiting for her.

I step out of the car as I see her approaching, she is crying. I open my arms for her, she cries so hard.

Me: "What's wrong?"

Snakho: "I think I will fail it was so hard."

Me: "Don't say that, I know you did well ok."

I hold her cheeks and kiss her.

Me: "Stop crying."

I wipe her tears.

Me: "Even if you didn't do well, there's always a next time, you are still young."

She nods and call her dad, she cries again telling him how much the exam was hard, I really think she did great its just nerves.

We go back home, I let her sleep because she was feeling down, she didn't even eat the lunch I bought for her but I will warm it up when she wakes up.

She writes all her exams and she keeps saying one and the same thing, they are all hard she doesn't see herself making it.

And today is the day of the results, we have to go to the school to fetch the statement of results for the three subjects she wrote.

We are parking outside the school, she is not stepping out of the car.

Me: "You want me to walk in with you."

Snakho: "Yes!"

She says so fast like she has been waiting for that offer.

We walk in and everyone screams when they see us, they are also here for the results I guess they already have their pass with the screams they are doing some are even touching me, I am holding my wife's hand tight.

We walk in the office first, she takes the statement but doesn't even look at it. We walk out, she looks like she wants to pass out. I help her inside the car then take her statement. I stare at it in shock, she has been acting up, this girl has been playing with me.

Me: "What the fuck baby?"

She sobs covering her eyes.

Snakho: "I knew it, I failed."

Me: "Cha ngishade uhlanya."(I married a crazy one)

I stare at her statement again and smile proudly.

Me: "Get off and come give me a hug, I'm proud of you."

Snakho: "Hhee?"

She removes her hands from her face and step out, she takes the statement from me and scream once, and again and the third time I laugh and catch her as she throws her body at me.

Snakho: "I did it!"

Me: "I told you, you will!"

She calls her dad and tell him the good news, she gives me the phone.

Me: "Yebo Baba."

Dlamini: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu Gumede, this is what she have always wanted son, thank you for what you did for my daughter, may God continue to bless you and your family."

Me: "Thank you baba, I love your daughter and I will do anything to make her happy."

Dlamini: "Ngicela ungiboleke yena usuku olulodwa ngifuna ukubonga umkami ngokuba idlozi elihle enganeni yethu."(Please allow her to come home for one day I want to thank my wife for being a good ancestor to our daughter."

Me: "I will drive her home myself, thank you."

I drive home so she can pack then I take her to her father's house. I stop outside the gate and kiss her lips.

Me: "I'm proud of you."

Snakho: "Thank you."

She walk in and I drive to the Palace.

She just taught me that no matter how much life has knocked you down but with determination you can still get back up dust yourself and achieve everything you've always wanted for yourself, it is not over until God says so and if he hasn't, just keep fighting. I am proud of My wife Snakhokonke Dlamini soon to be Gumede I know she will continue achieving great things.

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CHAPTER 111

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SNAKHOKONKE

1480

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I am getting married tomorrow I have been nervous all week and it doesn't help that I haven't seen Hero this whole time because I am at home with my dad and the whole family. My cousins will be my bridesmaids, we are pretty close it's just distance, most of them are studying in the Eastern Cape Umthatha.

I am on the phone with Hero, there is a baby crying in the background.

Me: "Is that your sister's baby?"

Hero: "Yes baby, and the boy can scream Yhoo."

Malaika gave birth two weeks ago to her bouncing baby boy, I saw him before I came here I was with Hero, I think he fell in love with the baby, I watched the way he was holding him in his arms and made sure he is safe.

Hero: "Awu KJ mfethu don't scream like this I'm almost done."

Me: "What's going on Love?"

Hero: "I was warming up his milk baby Malaika is taking a shower."

The boy is now quiet I guess he is now feeding him.

Hero: "So baby, are you ready for tomorrow?"

Me: "I can't wait to be your lawful wedded wife."

He chuckles.

Hero: "I miss you, these days have been crazy without you."

Me: "I know, My mind have just been all over the place I need you to calm me down."

Hero: "At least I have this little man to keep me company. Say hey mommy."

Malaika: "He is feeding again?"

Hero: "Yes he was hungry."

Malaika: "Ooh you gonna be a great dad brother, I can't wait for you to have a Mini you."

I can hear Hero clearing his throat.

Hero: "Uhm babe I will call you later."

Me: "Ok."

Namhla walk in, she is also one of my bridesmaids, we have grown close ever since Hero got rid of Zenzele and Namhla had to step in and be in charge of their department, she's a great person I like her personality more even her annoying voice is okay to me.

Namhla: "Are you ok?"

I nod and sleep in bed facing up.

Namhla: "What's wrong?"

Me: "It's Hero, he has been having this baby fever since forever."

Namhla: "Let me guess, you're not ready?"

Me: "I thought I will finish my studies first and maybe work before getting pregnant."

Namhla: "Why? Your man have cash you can hire a nanny to look after the baby whenever you're not around."

I sigh.

Me: "We can't hire the nanny to carry the baby for me now can we? I think pregnancy requires a lot of patience, energy and a lot of other things."

Namhla: "Yes but you're married and you know what is expected of you in that Gumedede household, you will give them grandchildren."

Me: "I know that.."

Namhla: "What if Hero runs out of patience and go out there and get someone else pregnant, would you be angry at him for getting what he wants somewhere else because he can't get it from you?"

My heart beats faster when she says that.

Me: "He wouldn't do that to me."

I take my phone with my shaky hand and call him.

Hero: "Mkami."(My wife)

Me: "Hero..you won't cheat on me right?"

Hero: "What?"

I am so upset about Namhla just said, she is also engaged.

Me: "I love you."

Hero: "Snakho kwenzakalani?"(What's going on?)

Me: "I just..I want to know if you won't ever cheat on me."

Hero: "I won't baby."

Me: "Even when I'm can't give you a baby right now?"

Namhla: "Can't or won't?"

She whispers, I just cry.

Hero: "Ok, I'm driving there right now."

Me: "No you can't, my father said I am not allowed to go outside today."

Hero: "But you're crying and I don't know what's going on."

Me: "I'm fine, sorry for worrying you."

Hero: "I love you and I will never cheat on you."

Me: "Ok Thank you."

I drop the call and look at Namhla.

Me: "You are a bad friend making me cry a night before my wedding."

She giggles and sleep next to me.

Namhla: "I'm just opening your eyes, that's what a good friend do"

I smile and hold her hand, she has been amazing.

Early in the morning we have a make-up artist, she is already done with my face now doing my bridesmaids.

I call my husband.

Hero: "Babe.."

Me: "Hey, I can't wait to see you."

Hero: "I will see you soon, can you send me a picture I want to see how you look."

I smile.

Me: "Can't you wait a little to see me at the alter."

Hero: "No I can't, please."

I take a selfie then send it to him, he calls me back immediately.

Hero: "Yhoo Sthandwa Sami, Umuhle kanje!(you're this beautiful.)"

I giggle.

Me: "See you soon."

I drop the call and they help me get into my wedding gown. Dad walks in after knocking. He stands in front of me shaking his head he is so emotional.

Dlamini: "You look just like your mother the day we got married."

He takes out his wedding picture from his pocket and stares at it, mom was so young then but she was beautiful I do look like her.

Dlamini: "She would be so happy and proud of you today."

He wipes his wet eyes with his handkerchief, I hug him tight I still miss my mother everyday she was an amazing woman she loved us so much.

We all walk out and get in the cars, we are getting married at the Qwabe waterfalls I don't know how the venue looks like because Hero's mom and the Queen wanted it to be a surprise for us.

When we get there I am amazed by the set up, everything is white and Gold from the chairs to the flowers. There is a white carpet in the aisle, I am standing at the entrance I can see Hero through the veil standing at the altar with his brothers, he is smiling looking my way. Dad stands next to me and I hook my arm on his, he walks me down the aisle I am blinking the tears away, this is it, I never thought I would marry let alone marry a Prince.

Dad hands me to Hero.

Dlamini: "I trust you with her."

Hero: "Ngiyabonga kakhulu Baba."(Thank you so much father.)

The pastor leads us in prayer then he starts preaching about the word of God, I keep giggling because I can feel Hero's eyes on me as he stands next to me, they are on me the entire time.

We say our beautiful vows that we wrote to each other then the pastor bless our wedding ring as we say our vows once again giving each

other our wedding rings. We are pronounced husband and wife, I am taking his last name, I am Mrs Gumede.

We get in the cars to take pictures then we go our separate ways so we can change into traditional attires for a Zulu traditional wedding, the venue have changed we are at the Gumede homestead now.

We do all the necessary ceremonies, we go for a photoshoot once again then go to our honeymoon which is in La-Lucia he went all out, there are rose petals from the door to the bedroom there is a beautiful set up in bed a basket full of all yummy things that I like to eat.

He first help me take off my traditional attire then he makes love to me on the floor, I am feeling things I have never felt before today, he is taking his time with my body, the slow strokes, eye contact, hands intertwined telling me he loves me with every gentle stroke he is giving me I am losing my mind.

Me: "Baby.."

Hero: "Yes Sthandwa Sami."

Me: "I want you to get me pregnant?"

I don't know if I'm saying this because of this great sex or I really do want to do this with him.

Hero: "What?"

Me: "I want to have your baby."

I scream in pleasure scratching his back with my manicured nails.

Me: "Please...Aaah"

He starts giving me fast strokes my toes curl I arch my back feeling it going all the way deep inside my pussy, I am cuming and he does the same then get up, he help me up and take me to the bathroom. We have a shower quietly then go to bed. We eat together, he keeps

feeding me I don't know why he isn't saying anything about what I said.

Me: "Gumede."

He looks at me, I love that he have a ring on now, he is my husband, no lady have a chance with him now, he is mine.

Me: "Uhm..Are you okay?"

Hero: "Yes, I am with the love of my life, my soulmate."

I smile a little. I guess he is ignoring what I said because I said it while he was giving me those amazing strokes.

Our honeymoon has been great, it has been a week since we got here, but we have to go back home, we have work waiting for us and I have registration at the University. He helped me get my Matric Certificate re-issued with the good marks I obtained when I wrote those three subjects, I can now show off my Matric Certificate without being embarrassed, I did it.

Hero: "Snakhokonke, we are going to be late baby, what's taking you so long?"

Me: "I'm done babe."

He has taken our bags to the car so now he came to fetch me because I have been slow and he hates it when I don't keep the time we agreed on, we should have checked out thirty minutes ago. He scoop me up I giggle wrapping my arms around his neck.

He walks out with me in his arms, people are watching us in admiration, I love the way he loves me.

We get home and they do a celebration braai for us, this family is everything one would hope for, so united, so loving and welcoming, they all literally live for each other.

I go to our room and open the drawer where I keep my contraceptive pills, I take all of them going to the bathroom. I empty all of it in the toilet and flush then I throw the containers in the dustbin.

I join everyone in the party outside, I am happy he chose me.

After a while he comes out of the house and whisper that I come with him. I follow him inside the house. I find him already sitting in bed.

Me: "What's going on?"

Hero: "What changed your mind?"

Me: "With what?"

Hero: "About a baby?"

Me: "Oh...Uhm...I think since we're husband and wife now that makes us a team so one baby won't be a problem because I will have a partner that will help me with everything."

He raise his eyebrow.

Hero: "Baby, are you sure?"

Me: "I've never been so sure in my life."

Hero: "Please give me my pussy."

I chuckle and take off my dress, I slowly take off my panty he smirks, he keeps biting his lower lip his eyes are smaller. He pulls me closer to him by my waist then his mouth covers my nipples.

Me: "Shit.."

He takes off his clothes while staring at me, I am still standing in front of him, his dick is hard with veins popping. He pins me against the wall my legs are wrapped around his waist.

Hero: "Do you want it slow or rough?"

He whispers while biting my ear I sink my nails on his shoulders, I am so turned on right now.

Me: "I think rough is better."

Hero: "You think so?"

I nod kissing him, he slides his dick in then start fucking me my back keeps hitting the wall, I am so enjoying this, I am obsessed with him and his dick, I can't live without it ever since we started having sex.

He is so rough but it's not hurting me instead I feel immense pleasure.

He put me down and point at the bed with his head. I walk to the bed but stand there looking the other way.

Hero: "You want me to tell you what to do my love?"

Me: "No.."

Hero: "Then just do what I want."

He is a great teacher when it comes to sex because he loves it so much and he can do it really good. I bend over in bed with my chest flat in it and my ass is up. I feel his wet cold tongue on my clit, I shiver.

Me: "Hero.."

I feel it in my whole I grab on the sheets.

Me: "Baby...I want to feel you."

Hero: "You're not gonna beg me?"

Me: "Please.."

He shoves his dick in I feel like peeing immediately.

Hero: "Don't hold it in, your walls are clenching on my dick, I know you want to let go, do it.."

I hold it in.

Hero: "Snakho I don't want to cum right now so let go!"

I don't do it, he spans my butt and thrust once I let go, he pull out and I can't hold myself I can feel it gushing out of my pussy I can't stop shaking.

Hero: "Fuck.."

He shoves his dick in and give it to me real rough he keeps spanking me then he pull out and tell me to sleep facing up, my legs are in the air I am giving it all to him. We are both watching his dick going in and out of my pussy until he cums deep in my pussy then pull out.

I haven't drank those contraceptive pills since our honeymoon so If I don't get pregnant today then we will have to do sex every hour, I want to give my husband that baby.

Three months later, my hips are wider, my stomach is so flat and that ticks off Hero everytime I get dressed in front of him, we do home pregnancy tests everyday but they come out negative.

He is helping me into my jeans, they all don't fit, we are going to PhezuKonke's soccer match, he is almost 7 years old now but he plays soccer like an adult I guess he took it from his Grandpa Nkosiyo, we are going to his school to support him, his School takes sports seriously no matter how young they are, they want to kids to be aware of their skills at a very young age and I love them.

Hero: "Nxx! Your hips are getting wider instead of your tummy growing, I don't get this shit."

He is so annoyed as he tries to pull up my jeans.

Hero: "Snakho throw away all these damn jeans and buy new ones!"

He is shouting and I want to laugh so bad, he is always annoyed with this, he doesn't get why I am gaining in just my his and ass and not this "fucken tummy".

He pulls my jean down and throws it across the room.

Hero: "Wear a dress instead, yey I can't do this, sengize ngajuluka!"(I am even sweating!)

He shouts walking out and bang the door closed, I laugh while I look for a dress that might fit me, we shop often now because I am really getting bigger on my lower body even I don't understand it, on tabloids they said I did some work on my ass and hips after I got married, I married Hero for his money just so I can fix my body.

I walk out and find him waiting in the car. I get in next to him and he drives to PhezuKonke's school. We find everyone there already. We greet them.

Bonolo: "Ok I think I am getting jealous of your body right now."

I laugh sitting next to her.

The King is so proud, he is on his feet even though the teams haven't come in the soccer field, by the time they run in he is screaming PhezuKonke's name clapping hands. We all get up and cheer for him he is smiling, what a beautiful baby boy.

Bonolo: "That's my baby! Let's do this KJ!"

His mom screams loud enough for him to hear, he runs our way, his mom meets him halfway and they hug and kiss, he do it to his dad and Grandpa, then he fists bump all of us and run back to his teammates, this is beautiful to see.

Ngcebo: "Awufuni ukudla nami?"(You don't want to eat with me?)

He asks sitting where Bonolo was seated because she is now standing with Kumkani and The King.

I look at him, he has fried chips with a lot of sauce I want to throw them in my mouth immediately. He gives me the fork and we both dig in, I am eating so fast.

Me: "Where did you buy them? I need more."

He chuckles and give me what is left then walk away. He comes back with more fried and I feel like dancing, I have never tasted anything like this.

Ngcebo: "I figured you must be hungry and craving for this, as soon as you passed by me."

I look at him confused, he just smiles looking away.

Hero: "Ngcebo stop giving my wife fried chips, I have a problem at home, I have to help her everytime she wants to wear jeans."

Everyone laughs.

Ngcebo: "The wider the hips the easier it will be to...YES!"

He shouts standing up as our boy scores, we all get up and cheer, he didn't even finish his sentence.

We go back home and I am so tired all I want is to sleep in my husband's arms. When I walk in our room I find him carrying a black plastic bag full of clothes, my clothes.

Me: "What are you doing?"

Hero: "Setting them alight, they are annoying me especially the jeans."

Me: "These are my clothes!"

I shout trying to take the bag but he moves away.

Me: "Hero... don't start with me."

He walks out and I follow yelling at him, how can he want to burn my clothes.

I am fighting him to give me back my clothes but he is not having it, his dad pulls us apart I am so angry I want to kill him.

Nqobasi: "Take her clothes back inside the house Hero."

Hero: "No, these clothes are really irritating the shit out of me!"

Me: "Uhlanganaphi?"(What is that got anything to do with you)

He chuckles.

Hero: "I keep hearing same thing everyday Snakho, "my jeans don't fit I think I gained again on my hips or ass."

He says imitating me I frown.

Nqobasi: "Take her clothes back inside, she will burn her own clothes when she feels like it, you can't do it for her."

He sulks walking back in with a plastic bag.

Me: "Useyahlanya lo."(This on is crazy)

I walk in and I can't find him in our room anymore. I look for him everywhere and he is in a guestroom.

Me: "What are you doing here?"

Hero: "I will sleep here tonight."

Me: "Why?"

He doesn't say anything.

Me: "I am giving you an hour to come back to our bedroom or else...."

I walk out and get in bed, 5 minutes later I hear the door opening, he walk in and I feel him warm behind me. I lift my leg up because I slept naked he shoves his dick deep in my pussy. We sleep in each other's

arms forgetting about the drama he did earlier on, I love him. I am Snakhokonke Gumedede.

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CHAPTER 112

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HERO

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I love my wife's body so much but now that she is gaining mostly on her hips and ass it kind of puts me off because I am expecting a baby bump, we've been trying for that baby for over three months now but the tests keeps coming out negative, it irks the shit out of me. And then there are these jeans! I hate them so much because I have to sweat when she wants to wear them because she can't pull them up herself, she should just stop wearing those damn jeans, that's it!

She walks in the room coming from the bathroom, she is naked I get hard immediately, I won't lie her body is even hotter, I notice that her nipples and areola are darker and her breasts are firmer and a bit bigger, there is this faint dark line from her belly button all the way down.

Me: "Why are you staring at me?"

Snakho: "Why are you staring at my body?"

Me: "I wasn't."

Snakho: "Yes you are, kusele ukuthi uconse amathe."(the only thing left is for your saliva to drop)

I squint my eyes.

Me: "Uyangidelela uyazibona?"(You're insulting me, do you see that?)

She shrug her body and open her panties drawer.

Snakho: " I know I'm hot."

Me: "Mxm.."

Snakho: "Are you going somewhere today?"

Me: "No, why?"

Snakho: "I want you to make me feel good all day long, I just want your dick to knock me out."

Me: "No thank you."

She stares at me in shock.

Snakho: "You're saying no."

Me: "Yep, my dick my rules."

She nods and sit in bed, I see her opening her thighs one leg is on top of bed and the other is down. I see her hand going down to her pussy and she rubs her clit, I frown.

Me: "What the hell are you doing Snakhokonke?"

Snakho: "I am horny and if you can't help me with your precious dick I will help myself."

She licks her middle finger and start fingering herself, I'm shook! She has never done this before I can't stop watching, my dick is twitching and leaking, I grab it giving it a squeeze.

Snakho: "Aaah...fuck..yes."

Me: "Snakho.."

I try to walk up to her but she raise her free hand up to stop me and continue to close her eyes, her screams are getting louder. I take out my dick and start stroking it.

Me: "Snakho please baby...can you let me..."

She balance with her other hand and lift her butt up a little I am getting a full view of everything, she's so wet.

Me: "Baby.. please."

She takes out her finger and squeeze her thighs together breathing heavily, she is shaking, she reached her orgasm without me. I look at my dick it looks like it's about to burst.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

She opens her thighs and stare at her wet pussy biting her lower lip, I try to get close again she just get up and walk to the bathroom, I just decide to masturbate and it doesn't take that long, I cum because I can't get that whole scene out of my mind, that was so hot to watch.

I go to the bathroom and find her sitting on a closed toilet seat. I grab the towel and wipe my cum from my hand and pants, I clean my dick. I look at the dustbin and see that there are pregnancy tests again yet we decided that we will stop with these tests, we will have a baby when the time is right I guess.

Me: "You did the tests again? Why Snakho I thought we agreed to stop."

Snakho: "Awungiyeye."(Leave me alone)

Me: "You can't tell me to leave you alone, you don't listen to me now? Angisayona Indoda mina la?"(I'm not a man anymore?)

Snakho: "Uyiyona phela naku phela unepipi onomona nalo."(You're a man, you have a penis you're stingy with.)

Me: "But I wanted to give it to you but you stopped me."

Snakho: "My pussy my rules."

I take the four tests in the dustbin.

Snakho: "They are all negative."

Me: "I didn't ask you."

She grabs a toilet paper roll next to her and throws it at me, I ignore her and throw the first negative one back in the dustbin, then the second one, and the third one, I widen my eyes when the fourth one has a different result.

Me: "Snakho, when you checked were they all negative?"

Snakho: "Yes."

Me: "But baby, look at this one, it's positive."

She nods.

Snakho: "It might be faulty, all the other three are negative."

Me: "No baby."

She get up from the toilet seat and I see the bloodstain, it is very light and it's small.

Me: "Oh..Uhm yeah it is faulty you're on your periods."

She quickly turns and look at the seat.

Snakho: "Baby.."

She stares at me in horror then pull my hand to our room. She opens the drawer and shows me a lot of pads and tampons.

Snakho: "I haven't been on my periods in months!"

I look at her confused.

Snakho: "When we kept getting negative results I thought the reason why my periods stopped is because I stopped using the pill."

Me: "What's going on baby?"

She shrug her shoulders looking stressed.

Me: "Can we have sex before we go to the doctor?"

She just sits in bed and open her legs for me, I gladly have her, her pussy seems to be getting even hotter and tighter everytime we have sex, I don't think I will ever get over fucking her she's amazing.

We wear our clothes quietly and go to the car, we drive to the private doctor close by and she tries to move over to my lap until she manage, she pulls her dress up and move her panty to the side and unzip my pants, she massages my dick a bit and it doesn't disappoint.

Snakho: "I'm so nervous I need this."

She speaks on my mouth and put all of my dick in her hot pussy, we are having sex in the parking lot thank God for my tinted windows or we would be seen having sex in public.

We step out and walk inside. We tell the doctor everything that has been going on and he does the tests himself.

Doctor: "It's positive."

Me: "Uhm..how, we've been getting negatives?"

He chuckles.

Doctor: "It happens, Ma'am please wear this for me in there then come back."

She walks back in and sleep in bed as the doctor instructed. He smears some gel on her tummy and does the scan..I widen my eyes.

Me: "That's definitely a baby mos!"

Doctor: "A full grown baby."

Me: "No way!"

Doctor: "She's 5 months pregnant."

"What!?" We shout in unison, that means she got pregnant before we got married, so she stopped using the pill but she was pregnant already.

Me: "But why is her tummy not showing?"

Doctor: "They say it's a first pregnancy thing, most moms don't show on their first pregnancy until later say maybe 6 to 7 months.

I literally go crazy, I am screaming like hell and Snakho is laughing happily looking at me.

Me: "Uhm..and the gender, can we know the Gender?"

He chuckles.

Doctor: "Thought you'd never ask, It's a baby girl."

Yhoo, I shout, I call on all my resting ancestors thanking them for this gift.

Me: "Awu intombi yaBaba."(Daddy girl)

I wipe the gel on Snakho's tummy and brush it.

Me: "Baby, you don't know how happy I am! Let me call my mom."

I take my phone and call mom, I can't wait till I get home, I have to tell her right now.

Tamia: "Hey boy."

Me: "Mama! Snakho is pregnant! I am having a baby ma."

She screams and shout calling my father, she tells him I can hear just how happy she is.

Nqobasi: "That explains your childish fights and weight gain, congratulations son I'm happy for you."

I sit down and bow my head letting my tears fall, this is all I have ever wanted , having a loving wife and a baby.”

She wraps her arms around my shoulders from behind and kiss my neck, I put my hand over hers as I wipe my tears with the other.

Me: “You don’t know how much I have wanted this, you don’t know how happy you have made me right now.”

Snakho: “I’m happy when you’re happy my love.”

He gives her supplements, checks her blood pressure and do some other important tests.

I am so emotional man, I have always wanted to have a baby but like I said before, I was waiting for my wife.

I drive to the mall, I buy food for her, she prefers fried chips ever since Ngcebo bought them for her at Phezukonke’s soccer game.

I make sure I feed them till she’s full.

Snakho: “Can we buy more for later Daddy?”

She’s after my own heart, well she can have it, actually she hold all of it together with my baby girl.

I buy more food for her and we shop for a few clothes and go back in the car. She calls her dad.

Dlamini: “MaDlamini.”

Snakho: “Dad, usuzoba umkhulu.”(You’re going to be a grandfather)

Dlamini: “Ngempela.”(Really?)

Snakho: “Yebo.”

Dlamini: “Oh ngiyabonga JamaKaSjadu, Ngiyabonga Zizi, Lusibalukhulu, Nkomo zidla ekhaya ngoba ziswele abelusi...”

He keeps saying the clan names, his voice is shaky Snakho has her eyes covered with her hands.

Dlamini: "Umzukulu wami wokuqala."(My first grandchild)

You can just tell how proud and happy he is.

Dlamini: "Ngizovakashela iliba lamama wakho ngimutshele izindaba ezimnandi."(I will visit your mother's grave and tell her the good news.)

Snakho just sobs, they miss this woman so much you can tell how emotional they get whenever they talk about her, it is heartbreaking.

Snakho: "Please wait till Friday, I will come home and we will visit her together."

Dlamini: "Thank you so much Snakhokonke, you've made me a happy old man."

She giggles and they say their goodbyes. I step out of the car and open the passenger seat, I help her step out and hold her in my arms.

Snakho: "It's days like this when I just wish she's alive, I know she would be so proud of me, she has always been proud of every little achievement."

Me: "It's okay baby."

We get home and the yard is full of cars, my whole family is here. When we walk in they all shout "Congratulations" I am smiling from ear to ear. I hug everyone, they came all this way just to congratulate us, that's my family.

Ngcebo: "Maybe we can all go to Dlamini's house, Mathenyoka and Thingo will help so that Dlamini and Snakho will be able to have a conversation with MamDlamini."

Snakho stares at him.

Snakho: "How?"

Ngcebo: "Mathenyoka and Thingo together are able to help you communicate with your late loved ones, you get to see them and speak to them, you will know how your mom feels about you because even though she's gone, she has never stopped watching over you and your father."

Nqobasi: "We can all go."

We get in our cars and drive to the village. Dlamini stands on his doorstep watching as we park our cars.

We greet and Ngcebo ask him to show us his wife's grave. We all go there but we give Snakho and her dad a chance to first clean it. Then Mathenyoka and Thingo kneel holding hands, they beg MaDlamini to show up for her daughter and husband, Ngcebo grunts loud, a very warm breeze hits our faces and a beautiful woman who looks so much like my baby shows up in her white dress smiling.

Snakho: "Mom!"

She screams in pure joy, I smile, she is so happy.

Snakho: "Mama."

Dlamini: "MaNgema...oh Sthandwa Sami siyakukhumbula."(Oh my love, we miss you)

The woman smiles.

"You don't know how proud I am of the both of you, I have always been watching the two of you, thank you for raising our daughter to a woman she is today Dlamini."

Dlamini: "Snakho is carrying our first grandchild Sthandwa."

You can tell the man is still so in love with his late wife.

She giggles and walk closer to Snakho, she put her hand over her tummy Snakho giggles and look my way.

Snakho: "She is kicking for the first time ever, woza uzozwa."(Come feel it)

I go to her and touch her tummy, the kicks are crazy, I am so in love.

"Thank you for taking care of my daughter, a girl's first love is her father and I'm glad she found the right man apart from her first love."

I smile.

Me: "Thank you for giving me a wife, she was raised right."

She smiles and wave.

"I'm proud of you Snakhokonke kaMama and you JamaKaSjadu I am at peace because of you."

Snakho and her dad hug each other as Mam'Dlamini fades away, Mathenyoka and Ngcebo grunts and open their eyes, that was a beautiful moment.

Dlamini: "I wasn't expecting this at all, Ngiyabonga boGumede, Ngibonga ngokuphatha kahle indodakazi Yami."(Thank you Gumede, Thank you for treating my daughter right)

He slaughter two sheep and call his family, we all have a feast, it's a joyous moment for the whole family, I've never been happier.

Snakho: "Gumede please help me tie my apron."

Her hands are bloody because they have been washing the meat. I tie her apron, she kiss my lips.

Snakho: "Thank you Babakhe."

I smile as she walks away, I scored there! That's all mine hips and all.

Ngcebo: "She's an amazing woman, took it from her mother."

Me: "She is everything I always wanted in a woman."

Ngcebo: "You never even gave the other girls a chance, it was all about sex with you."

Me: "Don't make me a bad person Mntwana."

Ngcebo: "But I'm proud that you made things clear when you saw that they are not what you're looking for, and the world will only know Snakho as your woman, no exes to be compared to in that vile world called the internet."

I nod.

Me: "That's what I have been careful about, I didn't want to have my woman being compared to, and people being bitter because they liked me better with someone else, no."

Ngcebo: "Kufanele uhlezi unamazambane ke."(You must always have potatoes.)

Me: "Why?"

She points at Snakho as two kids run to her with takeaways.

Ngcebo: "Those are fried chips, the princess likes them."

I laugh.

Me: "So you knew! That's why you kept feeding her fried chips."

Ngcebo: "I always know when it comes to babies, I am one with them."

Me: "You're a very talkative baby."

He laughs.

Ngcebo: "That's what makes Wenzile love me, she would listen to me talk none stop and just smile saying, Ngiyakuthanda Ngcebo."(I love you Ngcebo)

I laugh so hard.

Ngcebo: "Uyazifela ngami ke yena."(She loves me too much)

I can't stop laughing.

Ngcebo: "Ngifuna nokulamanisa uAqua usile kakhulu manje."(I want another baby, Aqua is too clever now)

Him and his son are like best friends even though they fight a lot, it's all love.

My baby comes back to me again.

Me: "Usuthi manje?" (Are you full now?)

Snakho: "Yes baby but my feet are killing me, I need flat shoes now."

She is whining.

Me: "Oh I will quickly drive home now and get you morning shoes."

Snakho: "Ngingabonga kakhulu."(I would be very grateful)

She kiss my cheek and walk away.

Ngcebo: "Wee ave etetema ke."(She's such a cry baby)

Me: "Hey don't say that about my wife"

He laughs.

Ngcebo: "Asambe siyolanda lezozicathulo."(Let's go fetch those shoes)

We drive home and get the shoes. She sit down, I remove her heels and help her wear flat shoes.

Snakho: "Ngiyabonga Mnguni."

When sit in the kraal, each and every one of is served by their own wives, it's amazing to watch as they kneel in front of us giving us the plates, I think they are just showing off now but this is just beautiful.

Ngcebo: "Ongenamfazi uyaphuthelwa!"(Those who don't have wives are missing out)

Everyone burst in laughter, Wenzile is looking at him with loving eyes, she understands this playful side better, she loves it and Ngcebo knows that.

Mcebisi: "He who finds the wife finds a good thing and obtains favour from God."

Makhosini: "Proverbs 18:22"

Kumkani: "I guess we are blessed and highly favoured then."

Bukhosi: "Of course we are, just look at them."

We watch as our wives walk away laughing their lungs out, yep! We are indeed blessed.

This is the happiest moment of my life, I can't wait to hold my precious baby girl in my arms, can't wait to hold her hands as she takes her first step, I can't wait for those sleepless nights, her cries, the first word. I am looking forward to everything, I am ready for anything I will be there every step of the way. I will pass down all the values my mom and dad taught me and Malaika to her, I will be a father my dad is to me.

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CHAPTER 113

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HERO

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I don't know how much we've fought with my wife for the last three months after we found out about her pregnancy, we love each other so much then out of nowhere we fight over very little things, it's draining because I have to fetch her from hotels crying saying I should fetch her, I am usually the one who tells her to leave and she does, my emotions are always high now and I hate that.

Right now she is in the bathroom taking a shower I am wearing my shoes going to work. She walks in naked, the baby bump is there now, it started growing after 6 months and I couldn't be happier, I play with my daughter while she's still in her mom's tummy, you should hear her kicks whenever I touch her mom's tummy I feel like we are connecting and it always gives me this warm and fuzzy feeling inside.

She's 8 months pregnant and very stubborn.

I can see her taking out her clothes.

Me: "Are you going somewhere?"

She rolls her eyes, I hate that shit.

Snakho: "I have work, remember?"

Me: "We talked about this last night! Stop working."

Snakho: "You stop working!"

Me: "I'm not pregnant!"

Snakho: "And I'm not sick, I'm just pregnant!"

Me: "You don't know me Wena Snakho, I will have your contract terminated."

Snakho: "You wouldn't do that!"

Me: "Watch me! I want to see your face when you have to pack your things at work because you're fired, everyone will be watching."

She sit down in bed and widen her eyes, we're getting somewhere.

Snakho: "So I must stay at home alone the whole day and just do nothing!"

Me: "Yes, that's what my beautiful pregnant wife should do, I want you to relax baby, we're a few weeks away from meeting our daughter and I don't want that to happen while you're at work, please."

She seems to be getting it.

Snakho: "Ok, leave your card then I want to do some shopping."

I sigh.

Me: "You will never understand the concept of staying home huh?"

Snakho: "I still have to eat something Hero come on."

I sigh and take out my card giving it to her. She giggles and get up. The card falls on the floor she bends over making sure I see everything, I think she threw it on purpose to tempt me. She takes her sweet time there I have never seen an energetic pregnant woman like this one.

I find myself grabbing on her ass with my dick buried in her, she is screaming my name so good, I am having a time of my life.

Me: "Fuck.. you're so hot."

Snakho: "Faster baby..."

I give it to her the way she wants it until she cums, I keep going chasing my own orgasm, I cum and pull out. I wipe myself then wear my pants fixing myself up.

Me: "Thank you baby, I'll see you later."

We kiss and she hold to me.

Snakho: "I will see you later."

I kiss her again and rush out, I'm so late because of that morning glory.

I start working and there is a new girl here who will be standing in for Snakho until her maternity leave is over.

I walk out of the office going to my dad's office but I can see Namhla arguing with the new girl, she's pretty young maybe my wife's age or younger.

Me: "Hey!"

I shout walking up to them.

Me: "Why are you guys arguing so loud huh? Namhla?"

Namhla: "Uhm..I'm so sorry sir, it will never happen again."

I nod.

She stares at the girl and walk away.

Me: "You just got here two days ago yet you're already fighting your seniors?"

"I'm sorry, but she started it."

I just walk away, I don't wanna hear who started it and what not, I am not interested.

I give my dad the file and go back to my office, I find a note on my table written "The heart wants what it wants and mine wants you, I love you Hero." And there is a heart at the end of that sentence, I am confused maybe Snakho wrote it and put it amongst my things in my bag when she packed it for me.

Just then my gorgeous pregnant wife walk in with a paper bag, lunch time is a few minutes away.

I get up and we meet halfway, I give her a kiss.

Snakho: "I bought lunch for you and I was really missing you."

I smile brushing her belly and my daughter starts kicking.

Me: "Hey daddy's Princess."

The new receptionist walk in but quickly stops at the door and turn to walk away.

Snakho: "Who is that?"

Me: "The new girl."

Snakho: "Oh.."

We start eating then after we're done she cleans up, I can see her stop Everything she's doing, I look at her, she is frowning staring at that note I found in the morning.

Me: "Did you write that baby?"

She turns to me and slap me so hard I put my hand over my cheek.

Me: "Snakho.."

Tears rolls down her cheeks and she starts breathing heavily.

Me: "Baby..."

She hold on to the table and I see the floor getting wet where she is standing.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."(My love)

She moans in pain shaking her head.

Snakho: "Don't touch me!"

She slowly walks around the table and take her phone making a call.

Snakho: "Baba, I'm in Hero's office and I found a note, he is cheating on me!"

She screams and throws the phone at me it hits my nose and I start bleeding immediately.

Me: "Snakho stop baby, I'm not cheating on you...I.."

I take a tissue and put it over my nose as mom and dad walk in my office.

Tamia: "Hero, what is going on?"

I am angry now, why can't she talk to me like an adult and stop throwing things at me, slapping me.

Snakho: "I found a note here again! Two days ago I found it at home in his bags and I ignored it."

I look at her confused, why didn't she ask me.

She takes out a note in her bag and mom reads it with a frown "If I could just have you for one night, you won't ever go back to her again."

She reads it out loud and Snakho starts screaming again.

Nqobasi: "What is going on Hero?"

Me: "I don't know dad, she never told me about any note."

Tamia: "And what about this one?"

She picks it up on the table, that's the one we both found in this office.

Me: "Angazi lutho Ma bengicabanga ukuthi uyena uSnakho oyibhalile."(I don't know anything Ma, I thought it is Snakho who wrote it."

She moans and go down on her knees, Mom quickly hold her, I am just standing in one position.

She looks at my dad.

Tamia: "I think she is experiencing labour pains."

Me: "What? We're a month away."

She ignores me.

Nqobasi: "Let's take her to the hospital."

I wipe my nose and throw the tissue down, now I am panicking what is going on, the note she found in my office led her to early labour, I am so upset I feel like it's my fault maybe I should have threw it away but I really thought it's her because it was written carelessly you can't really tell the handwriting, I know my wife's handwriting.

Dad helps her up and they walk out, I just sit looking down.

Tamia: "Drive home and get the baby's bag."

I nod and take my car keys. I walk out and meet Namhla.

Namhla: "What's wrong with Nakho?"

Me: "She is in labour."

Namhla: "What how?"

I sigh.

Me: "She found notes, I don't know what's going on Namhla."

She chuckles and look at the new girl, I just rush out and drive home. I take my daughter's bag and drive to the hospital.

Mom walks out of her ward.

Me: "Can I see her?"

She nods, I rush in and stand next to her holding her hand tight.

Me: "I didn't do anything baby, believe me there is no one else, Please."

She is now in a hospital gown, she is sweating and shaking.

Snakho: "I don't want to see you!"

Me: "Please Snakho, remember you said you wanted me here when you go into labour, holding your hand."

Snakho: "I didn't say early labour because of you!"

Me: "I'm sorry but please believe me I don't know anything about those notes, you know if I'm not at work I am always home with you."

Snakho: "Maybe it's an office affair, how will I know?"

Me: "I wouldn't do that to you."

Snakho: "Get out!"

Me: "Please."

Snakho: "Get out Hero! Get out!"

I walk out and sit down at the waiting area. Namhla rush in and ask where she is. I show her the ward and sit with mom and dad. I was really hoping she would let me be there for her when we welcome our daughter, that's has always been our plan, to be together when it happens, why did things turn out this way? How?

After a while a nurse walk in her ward then walk out rushing away.

Namhla comes to me.

Namhla: "She is asking for you."

I quickly walk in there and stand next to her.

Me: "Baby.."

Snakho: "Our baby will be here soon."

I nod.

Me: "I swear I don't know anything about those notes."

She nods.

Snakho: "It's ok.."

She hold my hand tight and scream in pain.

Me: "I'm sorry baby... please let me be here Snakho."

She nods. Nurses and her doctor walk in and they help her with breathing first.

Snakho: "I love you "

She says looking at me, her face is wet with sweat.

Me: "I love you too and you're the only one, I promise you."

Snakho: "I know..."

She screams and the doctor tells her to start pushing, she is trying her best after a while of trying to push, our baby is finally here screaming her lungs out and they ask me to cut the cord. I can't stop my tears as I hold her in my arms after taking her from Snakho's chest.

Me: "Nkosazana kaBaba."(Daddy's princess)

She has her eyes closed moving her hands and legs, she is so big and beautiful.

They take the baby and I feel like screaming at them, I am so connected to her I don't even wanna leave her sight.

They clean her up and give her back to me while attending to Snakho.

Me: "Hey baby...hey mntomuhle.(Beautiful person, I love you already."

The newborn baby clothes fit her like a glove and I don't think they will be fitting her in the next two weeks.

Doctor: "She is perfectly fine and weighs about 3,9 kg."

I smile and kiss her forehead.

Doctor: "We will need the names, we will give you time to discuss it with your wife."

They change her to another ward. I give the baby to Snakho to feed her, mom walks in and show her how to do it, she is sucking for dear life we can all hear it.

Tamia: "This one will love eating a lot, and she's so big for a newborn."

The whole family walk in with gifts and balloons, this is the happiest time of my life man, a baby I have always wanted.

Ngcebo: "So ubani igama lakhe uMazambane?"(So what's her name, is it potatoes?)

Everyone laughs their lungs out. I smile looking at Snakho, she looks away, she haven't been keeping eye contact with me at all and that hurts me, maybe she's still angry.

Me: "Her name is Milisuthando Sbahle Gumede, our love will grow through her, she will bring us together no matter what."

I say looking at her mother, I am not losing the love of my life over some stupid notes, there is no way!

Everyone leaves and I stay for a few minutes before visiting hours are over.

Me: "I'm sorry that you had to give birth earlier, I didn't mean for this to happen, please don't leave me, I don't know anything about those notes, please baby."

She looks at our daughter who is sucking on her breast for dear life.

Snakho: "I'm not gonna leave, no one will make me leave you, you're my husband and the father of my child, the three of us belong together."

I am happy and emotional to hear her say those words.

Me: "Thank you so much."

Snakho: "I'm sorry about your nose."

Me: "It's ok, you're ok and our daughter is here, you're all that matters to me right now."

She gives me my daughter, and I gladly take her securely into my arms.

Me: "I love you, MaMnguni omuhle."

I kiss her forehead and put her in her bed next to her mother. I kiss Snakho's lips and her forehead.

Me: "I love you so much."

Snakho: "Call my dad when you get home, and tell him the good news."

Me: "I will do that, Ngiyabonga kakhulu MaDlamini."(Thank you so much MaDlamini)

Snakho: "I love you."

Leaving them is hard but I have to go, so I check on my baby girl one more time and walk out.

I get home and sit in bed calling Dlamini.

Dlamini: "Ndodana."(Son)

Me: "Yebo, ninjani baba?"(How are you dad)

Dlamini: "Siyaphila."(We're well.)

Me: "uSnakho usezalile indodakazi yethu namhlanje."(Snakho gave birth to our daughter today.)

Dlamini: "Aw Siyabonga Phakathwayo."(Thank you Phakathwayo)

He is happy.

Dlamini: "I will drive to Durban first thing tomorrow morning, aw angisalali nokulala."(I'm not going to sleep anymore)

I laugh and drop the call, a man who loves his daughter, I am cutting the pattern, I will also do the same for my daughter.

In the morning I am the first to wake up and rush to the hospital. I find them awake smelling fresh, and my daughter is feeding, I kiss the both of them.

Me: "Nilale kahle?"(Did you sleep well)

Snakho: "Yes, she only woke up twice and she only wanted to suck my boob, it hurts Yhoo but they said I'm gonna get used to it and it won't hurt anymore."

Me: "That's better."

Snakho: "And we might be going home today."

Me: "I can't wait to have you two all to myself."

Snakho: "My stitches hurt, maybe I won't heal, imagine not having good sex for the rest of my life."

I laugh.

Me: "That's all you think about Nakho?"

She smiles.

Snakho: "I'm just saying that I will miss sex the next coming months, they said we wait 6 months."

Me: "No way! Once you heal we will be back at it."

We both laugh, no one will break my marriage, they can try but they will never win.

After 12 pm the doctor discharge them I drive home. I am holding my child in my arms and Snakho is walking slowly in front of me. We walk in and they scream "surprise" the whole lounge is decorated in pink and white, there is even a cake, "Welcome home Milisuthando and Mommy"

Snakho is crying, overwhelmed by this love. Her dad is right here, he is the first one to hold Milisuthando and the old man is so emotional.

Our family stays with us for the whole week, helping with the baby, teaching Snakho everything about the baby, I'm so grateful for the support. I also took a week from work but today I am back at the office, I miss my baby terrible I can't cope, I love her I wish I had to stay at home longer.

I take my phone and call Snakho.

Snakho: "Dear husband."

I frown, it's like I am hearing her talk outside and on the phone.

Me: "Hey, where are you?"

Snakho: "I just have a few things to do then I will go home."

I get up and rush out. I find her here at the reception standing in front of the new girl.

Me: "Snakho where is my baby? Why are you here?"

Snakho: "She is with Malaika in the car."

Me: "Why are you here Snakhokonke?"

Snakho: "To deal with this little wanna be homewrecker."

Me: "I don't understand."

Snakho: "She's the one who has been sending those notes."

She stares at the girl for a longest time then chuckle.

Snakho: "You have no chance baby girl, he only have eyes for me."

The girl looks so embarrassed.

Snakho: "Your days here are numbered and next time you try something like this, you'll know what I'm made off, yini yona le."(What is this?)

"At least I don't have a fake ass and hips!"

She finds the courage to speak and Snakho smack her face so hard she steps back.

Snakho: "Does this look fake to you?"

She unties her wrap around dress, I quickly look around hoping there is no man here seeing my things, she is showing off my assets here but luckily it's just the three of us.

She ties her dress and chuckle.

Snakho: "Let me see you sending stupid notes again with wrong spelling to my husband, uzonya."(You will shit yourself)

I am stunned, I have never thought she would do anything like this but to be honest it makes me happy and proud.

Snakho: "Bye Baba kaMili."

She kiss my lips and cat walk out, her body is still pretty much the same, all the curves and ass still there.

I look at the girl and frown.

Me: "Don't ever do that shit you did again, even if I was a cheater I wouldn't cheat with someone like you, stay in your lane nx!"

I click my tongue and walk away, Lord knows anything would have gone wrong that day with our baby girl and it was all because of this young lady who doesn't respect married men.

After work I go straight home and the first person I hold in my arms is my wife then I take my baby girl kissing her chubby face. Being a father is just amazing I love every second of it. I am a Husband to Snakhokonke Gumede and a father to Milisuthando Sbahle Gumede but I love calling her 'Mntomuhle' because she is just so beautiful.

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CHAPTER 114

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DIDINTLE

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My husband didn't join me in bed last night, after locking ourselves up in Snakho's room we finally decided it's better to face these men but they didn't come back, I don't even know if it's my husband only or all of them.

I wear my gown and walk downstairs because I'm hungry, I find mAh there I try to step back but she already saw me.

Tamia: "Ubalekani?"(Why are you running away?)

I giggle nervously and walk down the stairs and hug her.

Tamia: "I'm not gonna say anything, I will just let my sons deal with you."

Me: "Mah please we..."

She shakes her head and walk away. They all join me in the kitchen we're wearing gowns.

Me: "Did Uuka come back yesterday?"

She shakes her head.

Wenzile: "Ngcebo slept in the guestroom."

Thobeka: "So they planned to ignore us."

We are whispering in the kitchen but we stop as soon as the door opens, they all walk in looking like the same person, the fathers in-law walk up the stairs and our husbands just stand there staring at us.

Snakho: "Uhm...how is Hero?"

Kumkani: "We will fetch him today during visiting hours."

She nods.

Kumkani: "So care to explain the stunt you pulled yesterday? Kidnapping people, shooting people?"

We all keep quiet.

Kumkani: "Someone better answer me!"

Bonolo: "Uuka...Uhm...Snakho was in a bad space and we knew where to start helping her so we said why not."

He chuckles in disbelief.

Kumkani: "You said why not B?"

Bonolo: "It was safe ok, we got all the information before we went there."

Kumkani: "You're gangsters now Didintle?"

Me: "No, but you have taught us to stick together no matter what, you taught us to fight for each other against the enemies and that's exactly what we did."

Kumkani: "We've never said walk into the lion's den with your eyes opened!"

Bonolo: "But you always do it for each other so why can't we do the same to one another huh? Didn't you make us sisters?"

Kumkani: "You should have called us, we would have went there Bonolo!"

They are so angry, I keep looking at my husband with puppy eyes but he's not interested at all.

Ngcebo: "Ningabayeki oClever ebebesele layindlini besenza izilima."(Don't forget the clever ones who stayed at home making us fools.)

He says walking down the stairs in his white pants and white shirt with just two buttons, his chest is all out, these men sure look good, especially my man as he keeps biting his lower lip.

Makhosini: "So what if something bad happened to you, Izingane bezizosala zingenamama ngoba ningamagintsakazi Nina huh?"(The children were gonna be left motherless because y'all are gangsters.)

Thobeka: "But it didn't come to that Gumede, we actually did a very good job."

That puts all of them off, they start shouting all at once, I giggle looking away.

Mcebisi: "Can I talk to you in our room right now, I know damn well you started it."

He walks up the stairs first and I follow him. When I walk in, he locks the door and sit in bed taking off his t-shirt.

Me: "Baby I'm sorry."

Mcebisi: "I don't mind that you went there and dealt with that man."

I smile, that's my baby daddy.

Mcebisi: "What I hate is that you wanted to give us loose ends, that girl was gonna talk and it was gonna come back to us."

Me: "But I did great right?"

He smiles and give me his hand, we high five.

Mcebisi: "Ngiyacela awungiphe ingane phela Dintle, the twins are old now."(Please give me a baby Dintle)

I laugh, he has been begging me for a baby for years now.

I sit on his lap straddling him, we kiss, he unties my gown while kissing my neck.

Mcebisi: "I feel like you have been spiraling out of control, I need to tame you a bit."

Me: "But I did just this one thing."

Mcebisi: "You almost killed someone."

He rips my panty off, his dick fills me up so good I hold on to his shoulders throwing my head back.

I move my waist, he get up and pin me down in bed, moving faster and faster I arch my back letting him have all of me.

He turns me around and have me from behind, he keeps spanking my butt, this man really wants to get me pregnant today I don't know how many times we've cum but he keeps going on and on, I am even tired so I am just laying there letting him have me. He cums once again and finally stops and pull me up, he picks me up taking me to the bathroom. He lets water fall on our bodies while I'm in his arms.

Mcebisi: "I love you."

Me: "I love you too."

We take a shower then he dries my body up and tuck me in bed, he kiss my lips.

Mcebisi: "Sleep baby."

I nod and close my eyes, he fucked me real good I'm so tired I don't think I can even make it out of bed anytime soon.

He wakes me up and give me a very scrumptious breakfast, I sit up and he feeds me, he is a very loving man, they all love unconditionally that's why I am so crazy about him. I wouldn't let any woman have him like he won't let any man have me.

Mcebisi: "I don't wanna see you going to a doctor any day from today Dintle ok."

I nod, I missed my shot a week ago and we have been abstaining but I guess there's no need for a shot anymore since I am told not to see any doctor.

Mcebisi: "I missed seeing you pregnant, With aboAlwande and Awande you were so attached to me, very clingy I loved it."

I smile, he is right, with our twins I never wanted to be away from him even for a day, I would cry till I fall asleep if I'm not around him.

He brush my cheek and kiss my lips.

Mcebisi: "I still feel the crush I had for you the first time I saw you."

I laugh.

Me: "I feel it too, I still can't believe that you're mine."

He shows me his wedding ring.

Mcebisi: "Till eternity."

He kiss me once again and walk out, he looks so damn hot.

I rush out and go to Wenzile's room I find her sitting in bed like she just woke up.

Me: "Where's your husband?"

Wenzile: "They all went to fetch Hero."

Me: "And why do you look so tired?"

She giggles.

Me: "Oh I know that giggle."

Wenzile: "I will never double cross my husband ever again, I almost lost my breath, he just kept going telling me ukuthi sengisile kakhulu manje."(I'm too clever now)

I laugh at her. We sleep in bed, I am so tired.

Bonolo joins us looking just as tired. Thobeka and Nelile too, so sex is their punishment language, we're enjoying it nje how can it be punishment, Snakho is the last one to walk in with snacks, we sleep in bed talking and laughing.

Nelile: "Kuthiwa ayisekho leyo yokuthi sikhulisa uKhazi sekumele ngimithe manje."(He said there's no such thing of raising Khazi anymore I should get pregnant now.)

We burst in laughter.

Thobeka: "So they really think pregnancy is the only way to stop us for fighting for each other, these men are tripping."

Me: "Like, I don't understand! We saw it in them, they are always for each other what's wrong if we do the same."

Bonolo: "I mean, we're just as clever just more beautiful than them."

We all laugh.

Bonolo: "He was shouting because"ubezoyitholaphi enye indlovukazi" his words."(Where was he gonna find another Queen)

Me: "That one was really angry, I'm sure he broke the bed earlier."

Bonolo: "He almost did."

The room is full of laughter.

Snakho: "Let's go make lunch, they will be back soon."

We all go to the kitchen after changing to our dresses, it's good that we married men who never tried changing us, they still love the way we dress but we watch it when we're at the Palace, we have to be on full Makoti mode there.

It's always nice when we're together, there is no one younger or better, we're all the same and we have mutual respect for one another.

They all walk in just as we finish making lunch, Snakho rush to her husband's arms, they hold each other for the longest of time, it's so beautiful to watch as she cries on his chest and he keeps telling her everything will be fine.

Mom walk down the stairs with Mntomuhle, he let go of his wife and hold his daughter securely into his arms, they have everything in common, they love their wives and kids so much.

They sit in the lounge and we serve them then sit next to our husbands.

The fathers in-laws walk in following each other, Bonolo serves them their own food as well. They have never said a word about what we did but they have been giving us looks that shows they didn't approve I think they know we got the lecture of the year from Uuka.

Nkosiyabo: "I'm proud of all of you."

He finally speaks up, we all look at each other shocked.

Nkosiyabo: "It showed me that even if we happen not to be around and one of you is in trouble, you will always find a way to help her out of any situation now that's how I raised all these siblings and I'm happy you can all see it, you guys are sisters, siblings and those people fight tooth and nail for each other."

Nqobasi: "Yes and that's what makes us unique from every family out there, we are united, a family that fights together."

"Stays together..."

We all say in unison, that has always been their family motto way before we even came into the picture, they have been doing this for years and it worked for them, look at them now, no one has ever defeated them, many have tried but it was all in vein.

Our Queen mother step in the room with all the children, they all run to their fathers before greeting us, it's s beautiful sight, I look up and my husband is looking at me with eyes full of love, he has our twins in his lap, I should just give him the baby, it's long overdue.

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BONOLO

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We're in our room getting ready for bed after he had me in all positions earlier because he was mad after "the stunt" we pulled yesterday, I know why they are angry, they love us so much that the thought of losing us makes them go crazy so I get it, all the shouting Uuka has been doing is very much understandable.

Kumkani: "Awuqedi yini Lapho Bonolo?"(Aren't you finish there Bonolo?)

I join him in bed.

Kumkani: "Are you ok? Did I hurt you earlier?"

Me: "No, you didn't."

Kumkani: "Then why do you seem so down?"

Me: "I am just putting myself in Snakho's position, I don't know how I would handle feeling like I am losing you, my son Uuka, what he would be without you."

Kumkani: "Come here."

I sleep on his chest, my tears fall.

Kumkani: "Nothing will happen to any of us. Don't cry."

He wipes my tears.

Kumkani: "I know I didn't tell you this but I am proud of what you did for Snakho apart from going to that man's house but the support you gave her was amazing, that's what sisters do, thank you for what you did MaModise."

I smile.

Me: "So why were you shouting?"

Kumkani: "For putting your life in possible danger."

I giggle as he pull me on top of him and we make love to each other, he loves me.

His phone keeps beeping next to us, I try to take it but he gets to it first like he doesn't want me to see something.

Me: "Are you hiding something from me Uuka?"

Kumkani: "No."

Me: "Then give me your phone."

Kumkani: "Baby it's..."

I grab it from his hands and run to the bathroom locking myself inside. My heart is pounding when I see that he is talking to his drunkard ex from the village, she is begging him to get back with her because she

has changed, she is telling my man that in his culture polygamy is allowed and he should try and convince me to agree.

He keeps banging on the door, I wash my face and step out of the bathroom. I give him back the phone and sleep angry as hell, why didn't he tell me he has been talking to his ex if he has nothing to hide!

Kumkani: "Bonolo.."

Me: "Mmm.."

I'm trying not to show him that I'm crying but it's so damn hard.

Kumkani: "It's not what it looks like, I will never ever cheat on you baby, I didn't even know how to tell you about this."

Me: "Ok."

Kumkani: "B please."

Me: "I said ok, what else do you want from me?"

Kumkani: "Tell me you understand Sthandwa Sam, I didn't even know she still had my number."

I just get off bed and walk out going downstairs, I sit on the couch and cry.

Nkosiyabo: "Makoti."

I quickly wipe my tears and get up clearing my throat.

Me: "Baba."

Nkosiyabo: "Why are you sitting here so late, are you crying?"

Me: "No, Uhm..I just..Uhm.."

Nkosiyabo: "What did he do?"

Me: "He is talking to Funeka, they are discussing polygamy, I will leave if he ever try that with me, I will leave and never look back."

Nkosiyabo: "I'm sure it won't have to come to that, Kumkani will never agree to polygamy, I know my son..he will never!"

He takes my hand and walk up the stairs with me then open our room, I walk in finding Kumkani on his feet pacing all around the room.

Nkosiyabo: "In all the years in my marriage your mother has never doubted or questioned my loyalty to her but there is you creating the doubts in your marriage, 8 years later Kumkani, do you want to lose that? Do you want Phezukonke to grow up in a broken home?"

Kumkani: "No baba, I will never do that to my son, I will never allow that to happen."

He is speaking so fast, they look like brothers or even twins, that have always fascinated me but not today, I don't care about anything

Nkosiyabo: "Fix yourself!"

He walks out. I get in bed and close my eyes with my heart beating out of my chest. I am 7 weeks pregnant, I haven't told him I don't even think he would be happy if he still have polygamy to think about.

I wake up in the middle of the night and rush to the bathroom to throw up, first time feeling morning sicknesses ever since I found out about this pregnancy.

I feel his hand on my back I just cry, I love him so much I don't ever want to lose him to another woman, I sit on the floor leaning on the wall pushing my hair back.

He kneels in front of me and help me drink some water, I am so upset I don't even know what to say to him right now.

Kumkani: "I will never cheat on you let alone bringing another woman in our relationship, you're enough, you will always be enough."

Me: "Why were you hiding it from me, that another woman wants you to take her as a second wife?"

Kumkani: "I didn't want you to doubt me like you do now, I didn't want us to fight."

Me: "Well I won't fight you but tell that bitch to run when she sees me coming because I will kill her."

I get up and leave him kneeling there, I'm sorry but I will fight for me and my children when it comes their father, I am not gonna let another woman take my husband away from us.

We go back to bed, I can't sleep I keep tossing and turning and I know he is now asleep. I take his phone and take the girl's number saving it on my phone, I know she works here in Durban.

In the morning I take a shower and wear my blue jeans and Kumkani's white t-shirt and white sneakers.

Kumkani: "Where are you going?"

He says stretching his muscles as he yawns.

Me: "To town."

Kumkani: "Oh.."

I take my bag and walk out. When I get to town I make a call to her.

"Hello."

Me: "I'm here at KFC next to where you work, I am waiting for you."

I have seen her uniform back at home when she's galavanting on the street with it so I know she can't be too far from where I am and I know she must be curious to know who it is that is calling. I can see Jason and Mondli trying to hide themselves with hoodies, Kumkani must have told them to follow me.

Funeka walk in and look around, I chuckle and raise my hand up, she hesitantly walk up to my table and sit down..

“What do you want?”

Me: “My husband told me you want to be in a polygamous marriage with me.”

She chuckles.

“You took him from me so I’m only trying to get back what has always been mine, Uuka and I grew up together, he fell in love with me out of all other girls then you came and ruined things for me.”

I raise my eyebrow.

Me: “You can’t find your mates in a Tarven anymore?”

She chuckles.

“I really don’t care what you think of me but Uuka knows I have changed that is why he agreed to meet with me so we can talk.”

I smile, I see what she’s trying to do, she wants me to get angry and think that my husband is meeting her behind my back.

Me: “Tired of being a village bicycle?”

She smirks.

“Yes like you got tired of fucking your brother bitch!”

I grab the cold drink and get up pouring it all on her, she gasp. I don’t know how that got out but everyone knows about my past in the village Kumkani told me never to care about that, it’s not like I did it on purpose.

She wipes her face and get up pushing me back, I see Jason rushing to us and pull us apart, I see Uuka walking in and grab my hand and drag me to his car driving off, he is so angry.

We get home and he doesn't even wait for us to go upstairs to our room.

Kumkani: "I won't have a wife who go out looking for a fight Bonolo, I was gonna put Funeka in her place not you fighting in public."

Me: "If you wanted to put her in her place you would have done that the first day she sent a text! But you were enjoying the attention she was giving you!"

Kumkani: "Musa ukungiphakamisela izwi Bonolo."(Don't raise your voice at me Bonolo.)

Me: "But you're talking to me like I'm crazy! And I don't like that! I hate you so much for putting me in a position where I have to feel like I'm gonna lose you, it's all your fault! You were even planning on hiding this from me like you guys were having an affair!"

"Mama.."

AwandeAmaQwabe says holding her pink teddybear that's one of Didi and Mcebisi's twins, she's a girl, his twin brother Alwande is standing behind her and Phezukonke has his hands on his back staring at us.

Kumkani: "I'm still talking to your mom, you guys should go to Grandma ok."

Phezukonke: "They can leave baba, but I think I deserve to be here, I'm older and I would want to know if my parents are fighting, I want to know where I stand."

Kumkani raise his eyebrow at him.

Kumkani: "Where you stand with what?"

He walk over to the couch and sit down.

Phezukonke: "Where I will go if mom decide to leave because you're making her cry baba."

Kumkani looks defeated, our son acts exactly like him so I don't know why he is shocked he is speaking like this, a very calm tone but stern because he means what he says.

Kumkani: "Your mom is not leaving, now go I will talk to you later."

He nods and get up bowing his head a little before his father then walk away with his hands still on his back.

I have been standing for too long and I feel light headed so I sit down and blink for a while. He sits next to me.

Kumkani: "I don't like what you did, that girl likes fighting she would have hurt you if Jason wasn't close by."

I'm all for what people say about dealing with your man and leave the other woman but in this case the other woman is the one begging for polygamy to my husband so I had to have a talk with her, or maybe I am just too dramatic but I have an unborn baby and a son with this man, who would want to lose all that for the woman who ruined her chances before and now she wants to ruin my marriage.

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CHAPTER 115

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BONOLO

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I am sitting in bed with my eyes closed just brushing my tummy, there is no baby bump yet but it is hard on my lower part, my baby is in there and I'm happy, we did discuss having another baby but we never

planned when, I guess the time is now, we are giving our son a sibling.

I can hear the door opening I just sit up and take my sleep wears, he blocks my way and I am getting really irritated by him.

Kumkani: "B please can we talk, you can't keep avoiding me, we need to talk."

I shake my head.

Me: "I don't wanna talk to you Kumkani."

I try to walk out again but he hold my waist and start kissing me I push him back.

Me: "Stop it, angikufuni eduze kwami!"(I don't want you close to me.)

He widens his eyes, I push him out of my way and go sleep in the next spareroom.

In the morning I wake up when I smell his strong cologne I want to inhale it right from him. I sit up, he is sitting in bed playing with his wedding ring.

Me: "Can you take off your t-shirt."

He stares at me weirdly but slowly take it off. I sniff his scent.

Kumkani: "What is going on?"

I toss the t-shirt next to me and sit on his lap his hands automatically goes to my ass, I just rest my head on his shoulder, he smells so good I want to stay like this forever. He caress my butt I can feel his bulge growing underneath. I let him pull my panty to the side and put his middle finger in my pussy, I start breathing heavily while pushing him to lie on his back, I pull out his hard dick and watch as I guide it inside of me, I bend a little with my hands on his chest then bounce on him.

Kumkani: "Fuck..."

It is hitting the right spot so I don't stop until he starts sweating and shaking I know he is pretty close and so am I..

Kumkani: "Oh fuck don't stop baby....I'm cuming Bonolo... don't stop.."

I move faster he grabs my butt tighter sinking his nails on it I do the same to his chest and it leaves the scratch marks. I get off him and take his t-shirt going to the bathroom. I lock and take a shower ignoring his knock outside. I wear his t-shirt then step out I find him sitting in bed staring down on the floor.

Kumkani: "What is going on?"

Me: "You don't know?"

Kumkani: "Are you using me for sex Bonolo? Because I am sensing you're still angry at me but you do want sex from me."

Me: "Where should I get it if I don't want it from you Uuka?"

Kumkani: "Bonolo listen to me baby ok, I don't want Funeka I will never want her."

Me: "Then why hide this shit from me? Why did you let it go on for this long?"

Kumkani: "I didn't mean to Sthandwa Sami, I was so worried about you that I didn't even want you to find out but I realize now that hiding it made me look guilty."

Me: "I don't want you anymore."

He chuckles.

Kumkani: "Ay ngingamane ngife ke, angeke!"(I'd rather die, never!)

Me: "Can you be honest with me?"

He nods.

Me: "Do you like the idea of polygamy? Were you considering it?"

Kumkani: "Hell No! I don't even love that girl Bonolo, you're the only woman for me, please Sthandwa Sami Believe me."

I sigh and sit in bed next to him, he hold my hand.

Kumkani: "It will always be just you B I promise you."

I nod.

Me: "I have something to tell you."

Kumkani: "What is it?"

Me: "I'm pregnant."

He widens his eyes.

Kumkani: "Baby, don't play like that."

Me: "I'm not playing, I found out not so long ago, I'm 7 weeks pregnant."

He kneels in front of me and put his hand over my tummy.

Kumkani: "And all this stress I put you through Bonolo, ingane yami."(My child)

He seems so upset.

Kumkani: "Ngiyaxolisa kakhulu MaModise, I'm really sorry for what I put you through, please don't stress yourself and our baby I will make sure I fix this Funeka issue believe me, I will just... don't stress the baby ok."

I nod.

Kumkani: "Yhoo!"

He sit on his butt and put his hands about his head then quickly kneels again brushing my tummy.

Kumkani: "I'm sorry baby, I'm so sorry."

He is genuine and looks really worried.

Kumkani: "Uhm...do you need anything? Maybe we should go to the doctor and check if everything is ok, stress is not good for the baby, I have been stressing you."

Seeing him this caring warms my heart, I don't think I want to be angry at him anymore.

Me: "The baby is fine."

Kumkani: "No, come let's go."

He get up and take my hand, he is walking like he is teaching me how to walk, he is too careful yet it's just 7 weeks.

We go to our room and he helps me wear my clothes and shoes then he rush to the bathroom, he takes a less than 3 minutes shower and rush out to get dressed, he only lotion his face. He drives to a doctor and ask for an ultrasound, and he is happy when he hears the heartbeat, his eyes are teary he is stressing over this issue with Funeka so bad.

We go back in the car after finding out everything is well with the baby. He makes a call.

Kumkani: "Can we meet?"

Silence..

Kumkani: "Send me the location."

I don't ask anything I just let him drive around for a while then stop at some flat then makes a call again.

Kumkani: "I'm outside."

I can see Funeka walking towards our car with the shortest skirt ever. Kumkani step out of the car and open the door for me and help me out. Funeka frowns staring at me, I stand next to my husband.

Funeka: "What is she doing here?"

Kumkani: "She's my wife and I came to make things clear, I will never ever in my life hurt her by bringing another woman in our marriage, I love only her and no one else so please stop sending me stupid messages, I am married to the love of my life, a person chosen by my heart and not just only that but my ancestors too."

Funeka: "Nidonswa abafazi ngamakhala Uuka."(Your wife is pulling you by the nose Uuka.)

She says with a chuckle.

Kumkani: "Stay away from me and my wife or I'll make you."

Funeka: "I'm not gonna stay away I guess you gonna have to make me."

I remove my hand from Uuka and smack her face, she tries to get closer but Uuka stands before her.

Kumkani: "I'm warning you Funeka, stay away from me and my wife."

When Uuka turns to face I make sure to slap her again and this time it counts because it made her stumble back.

Me: "Have some pride, stop showing us how cheap you can be."

Funeka: "Usazonya wena sfebe."(You're still gonna shit your self you hoe.)

Kumkani takes me to the car, he get in his side and drive home, he is really not ok.

Kumkani: "It shouldn't have come to this Sthandwa Sami, please forgive me."

Me: "It's okay."

We get home and I go to my room, all the wives join me in my bed, we left men downstairs.

Dintle: "Sis why are you so quiet?"

Me: "I'm pregnant."

They all cheer happily but stop when they don't see me smiling.

Snakho: "You didn't want the baby? Why do you look upset."

I just sleep on my tummy and cry holding the pillow.

Dintle: "Bonolo, what's wrong? Why are you crying?"

She's also crying now, they all look upset. I sit up and wipe my tears giggling.

Me: "Why are you guys crying?"

Wenzile: "Because you're crying."

We all laugh.

She hold my hand.

Wenzile: "Now tell us what's wrong?"

Me: "Kumkani's ex is back."

Wenzile: "The Funeka bitch?"

Dintle: "Aybo Gogo! Thokoza."

We all burst in laughter, my sister can be crazy.

Wenzile: "Even my ancestors can recognize a bitch."

I can't stop laughing I even forgot I was crying.

Me: "She was busy sending messages telling Kumkani to consider telling me he wants to take her as a second wife."

Thobeka: "Udakiwe ke lowoFuneka."(That Thobeka is drunk)

I chuckle.

Me: "What upsets me is that Uuka wanted to hide it from me, we went to her together and he made things clear to her but I don't know, I still feel somehow."

Dintle: "I hope you beat the shit out of that bitch Bonolo, you can't disappoint me like that."

Me: "I only got a chance to slap her."

Dintle: "Did you make it count?"

I laugh at her.

Dintle: "I know I would have dragged that bitch to the pit!"

Me: "Kumkani wouldn't let me, he has been worried about the baby."

Nelile: "I hate it when I have to doubt a man, asking myself questions so I'm so sorry I know that's what you're going through right now."

I nod.

Snakho: "But we're here for you and we will never let anyone come and destroy something that was built for years, you're the next Queen and no one will fight you for that throne, we'll be here ready to kill whoever tries some shit here."

I smile, at least I have sisters who are ready to fight with me should it gets to that.

I stay with them till I fall asleep.

Kumkani: "Where is my wife?"

I can hear him talking but my eyes are heavy I'm still sleepy.

Dintle: "She's sleeping."

Kumkani: "Can I take her?"

There's no response.

Kumkani: "Uhm..."

I can feel him picking me up, I open my eyes and wrap my arms around his neck inhaling his scent.

He lays me in bed and kiss my lips sleeping next to me.

Kumkani: "I love only you."

His hand goes to my belly.

Kumkani: "And thank you for giving me this precious gift."

He kiss me again, I move closer to him and hold him tight.

I wake up in the middle of the night going to the bathroom, I feel sick on my tummy.

Kumkani: "Sthandwa Sami, isn't it too early for you to be this sick?"

Me: "I don't know..."

I rinse my mouth and drink water going back to bed.

Kumkani: "I will talk to Ngcebo, maybe he can do something for you."

I nod. We are quiet for some time.

Kumkani: "Don't drift away from me my love, I'm sorry please."

Me: "I don't wanna talk about this anymore Uuka, let it go."

He nods and hold me in his arms, I want to move away but his cologne is driving me crazy, I find myself taking off his underwear and my nightwear then do all the work until we cum.

In the morning I wake up when I am told by the hospital that I have a patient that needs my help, apparently she is suicidal and in high school, that's what I deal with, I give psychological evaluation to students going through mental health issues, I have been there so I always try to get them all the help they need.

Me: "I have to go back home today."

Kumkani: "Why?"

Me: "I was called in, I have an appointment for tomorrow morning with a student."

He nods.

Kumkani: "Hero is back home so I can go back home with you."

Me: "Ok."

Later he drives home with me, everyone stayed in Durban because after this appointment we will also be going back since the holidays are near and we always want to spend them together as a family.

In the morning I am woken up by a call, it's the hospital confirming an appointment and they tell me the student will be accompanied by the sister and I don't mind, we all need support from family when we go through mental breakdowns.

I leave Kumkani taking out livestock with the boys who look after them.

When I get to the hospital I am told they are already waiting in my office. So I walk in and I am greeted by a pipe on my belly I let go of my bag, I am face to face with Funeka and her older sister, they are ready to fight.

Her sister pulls me inside with so much force then I hear the door closing behind me, the pipe hits my back I turn and grab it from her hand and start hitting her with it but her sister grabs both my arms from behind and let Funeka beat the crap out of me, I am so angry that I don't feel any pain.

Me: "So you had to get your sister because you couldn't face me alone huh."

She hits me once on my belly and I feel it deep inside me, I step forward causing her sister to let go of my arms, I push her to the wall and bang her head hard on it, I grab the pipe from her and start beating both of them up, I am so angry I don't even know where I get all this energy from, the door swings open it's the security saying he heard some noise when passing by. I grab Funeka one more time and punch her on her face she is bleeding I don't know from where I just see blood on my shirt, it's her blood.

Me: "Drive me home!"

I scream to the security throwing my bag and the car keys at him then walk out first, people are looking at me weirdly as I pass by, I sure look a mess, my white shirt has Funeka's blood. The security opens the door for me and drive me home. The securities at home are confused when they see me being driven by a hospital security, they know each other, we make sure we hire people from this community more, so they are all from here. I step out and walk inside, Uuka jumps up when he sees me walking in.

Kumkani: "Baby, What happened? Why do you have blood? Bonolo what happened?"

I take off my clothes and he gasp staring at my body, I have red marks all over my body from that pipe but they sure felt it too.

I can hear Kumkani groaning as he sits in bed looking down.

Kumkani: "Who did this to you Bonolo?"

His voice is deep and scary.

Me: "Funeka and her sister, they are the ones who did an appointment, they lied saying one of them is a student and that hospital didn't care to find out the name of the school."

He chuckles and stares at me, his eyes are bloodshot red.

Kumkani: "They did that to you?"

I chuckle and walk in the bathroom, I let water fall on my skin I have my eyes closed pushing my wet hair back. I can feel him coming in he hold me from behind with his hands on my tummy I just keep my eyes closed.

Kumkani: "Shit! Bonolo.."

I don't say anything because I know why he is panicking I can feel warm liquid between my thighs, it's warmer than the water so that's how I know it's not just water.

Kumkani: "No..no..no."

He turns me around I can't bring myself to open my eyes, I just don't wanna see it.

Kumkani: "Baby No..Bonolo open your eyes baby..."

Me: "No."

I step out of the shower going to the bedroom with my eyes closed I am finding my way out with my hands. I finally open my eyes I can feel the pain now. I take my panty and sanitary pad putting it on then wear my gown, I can hear him sobbing in the bathroom, I just get in bed and close my eyes.

I wake up to my phone ringing, I slowly sit up the pain is getting worse on my abdomen. I don't know if Kumkani is still here or not, I want to pee so bad but I don't know the state I will find the bathroom in.

I slowly get up and limp to the bathroom, I find Kumkani still in there scrubbing the tiles, it's clean now but he keeps going, he is sweating. I sit on the toilet sit and moan as pain shoots through my abdomen hard as I pee, I am feeling so cold, I am shivering. I wipe myself and flush the toilet, he still hasn't looked by way, he keeps doing the same thing over and over. I go to back and take my bag, I am packing. I wear warm clothes because I am really trembling.

I drive to Durban and walk in the front door they are all here, there is so much noise but Ngcebo's loud grunt stops everyone from talking, there is silence.

Nkosiyo: "Is everything ok Ngcebo Yami?"

He slowly looks up and stares at me.

Ngcebo: "I'm so sorry for your loss."

Dintle: "What loss?"

They all get up and walk up to me as I stand there my whole body shaking but there are no tears, none.

Dintle: "What happened? Where is Kumkani?"

Me: "I won't have a baby anymore."

Snakho: "I don't understand, you just told us yesterday that you're pregnant."

I pull up my jersey showing them the bruises on my body, they gasp in shock.

Me: "Funeka and her sister ambushed me in my office, they are the ones that made an appointment."

Dintle: "Oh Hell no! There's no fucken way!"

She is going crazy, walking around the room like a lunatic, Mcebisi hold her calming her down. I just walk away to my room and sit in bed, I feel light headed.

Mom walk in and take my hand.

Thabsie: "Let me take you to a doctor."

I am holding on to her tight as we walk down the stairs, I am feeling so tired I feel like just letting my body go.

Thabsie: "Mcebisi, help me take her to the car."

They help me to the car and it drives off, I am looking out the window, there's no baby, I won't be giving my husband another child.

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CHAPTER 116

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KUMKANI

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I have been sitting on the bathroom floor for hours now, I wanted to clean the blood, my blood, I cleaned it but I can still smell it and it hurts me deep inside, this is all my fault, I know what it is, Bonolo lost my baby, before I could even feel her kicks, before I couldn't even give her a name, Funeka killed me alive I should have put her in her place the first day she sent a text to me but I didn't. Even if Bonolo leaves me after this I wont stop her, I understand.

I finally get up from the cold tiled floor my knees are wobbly.

Me: "Bonolo.."

I call out for her but she's not in our room. I walk all around the house stumbling all over like I'm drunk, she's not here even her car is not here, so she left, my wife left me.

I sit in bed and scream out loud, how can they do this to me and my wife? Why hurt her like this, they beat up whose wife?

I slowly wear my sweatpants and t-shirt then wear boots. I take a beer and gulp it all down in one go then walk out. I get in my car and drive around the neighborhood, a car blocks me it's Dintle the bright lights are facing me, she is pressing on the clutches the pipe is making so much noise, it's like she wants to run me over. I step out of the car and open the door for her, she step out wearing high heeled boots, they are too high she is almost my height.

Me: "What are you doing here?"

Dintle: "To do what you fail to do bhuti, putting that bitch in her place."

Me: "Let me handle this D."

She clicks her tongue and get in the car speeding off, I make a turn and drive behind her, the girl can drive my brother married a crazy girl here.

We both stop at Funeka's gate, she step out and bang on my window.

Dintle: "Call the bitch out before I go in there and drag her out myself."

I take my phone and call Funeka.

Funeka: "Kumkani.."

The anger I feel when she calls my name is unmatched.

Me: "I want to talk to you and your sister before I set your backroom alight, I am giving you 10 seconds."

I drop the call, I wait for over 2 minutes they haven't come out, an impatient Dintle Open the boot of her car and take out the petrol in a 2 litre bottle. They stay with their mother, she is a few years older than mom.

Just when Dintle takes a step forward I see the both of them stepping out wearing gowns. I step out of my car, they are staring at me and Dintle with their arms folded their attitude makes me angrier.

Me: "You attacked my wife Funeka?"

She chuckles.

Funeka: "I wanted to land her in the hospital, how dare she put her hands on me?"

Dintle moves so fast and knees her tummy and as she bends she uses her elbow on the back of her neck, she falls on her knees.

Dintle: "Try me, I want you to try me right now."

Dintle went through training with my brother Mcebisi, The self defense classes for years because my brother wanted to know she can at least protect herself when he's not around, Bonolo did go but I couldn't let her go on after she came back one day bruised.

Funeka's sister is bigger and taller but Dintle doesn't seem to care she is ready for anything.

She kicks her on her knee, Fezeka goes down and she uses a paper pray on both of them, they scream in pain.

I grab Funeka first and throw her in the boot of my car, and her sister follows.

I get in my car and drive to the mountains it's dark but there is a full moon.

As I park, Dintle parks right next to me. I literally throw them out of my car.

Funeka: "Kumkani, why are you doing this?"

They can't see because of the spray in their eyes, that shit hurts.

Me: "Where is my wife?"

Dintle: "Mcebisi and Mom took her to a doctor."

Me: "Do you think she will ever forgive me?"

Dintle: "If it was me I wouldn't but she's not me."

Me: "So you're angry at me?"

Dintle: "Of course I am! You put my sister in this position by entertaining the bitch."

Me: "But I didn't, I told her countless times that my wife is enough I am not looking for another woman."

Dintle: "Well, here we are K, that means words didn't work you should have took actions. Look at the damage this has done to Bonolo."

She sit on her butt and sob.

Dintle: "I don't want to see her hurting! She went through hell before she met you."

Me: "I know...I'm so sorry for this Dintle It wasn't my intention."

She wipes her tears and get up picking up woods, she pours petrol and throws a matches, there is a big fire that lights up almost every corner of this mountain.

She whistle once and I hear loud pur the ground shakes, she's the wife man, the gatekeepers are here instantly and that makes Funeka and Fezeka shake in fear, they can see now but their eyes are so puffy.

Mcebisi: "I know my wife's whistle from anywhere."

He emerges in between the trees with guns hanging on his sides of his jacket. They hug and kiss.

Kumkani: "You are about to have a feast."

He says brushing the fur of a cheetah it growls stepping closer to Funeka.

Funeka: "Kumkani, you can't let them do this to me, you once loved me I know you still do, what we had was special, please."

Me: "You killed my unborn baby Funeka, how dare you lay your hands on my wife? Who gave you the right to do that huh!?"

I shout and my voice echoes making more cheetahs to come out, they won't make it out alive even if they tried.

Fezeka: "You're not God, you can't take people's lives."

Dintle: "My sister is at the hospital because you killed her unborn baby, so does that make you a God?"

She doesn't wait for her to answer but kicks her with her heel, she winces her whole body falls on the ground.

Funeka: "I'm not scared of you bitch! I can do to you what I did to your sister."

She says staring at Dintle.

Dintle: "Oh she was gonna show you flames that's why you needed backup. But baby girl let me give you a chance to do what you did to Bonolo."

Funeka get up and wipe her eyes, Mcebisi holds Dintle's waist from behind and whisper something in her ear then step back.

Me: "You need to stop encouraging your wife to fight brother."

Mcebisi: "I don't want people to think they can mess with her, whether I'm around or far away from her."

Funeka charges at Dintle and she just giggles and grab her neck as soon as she gets to her, Funeka tries kicking and moving away but Dintle is holding her in one place. She let her go and Funeka stumbles back only to try to charge at her again, I cuss as her boot collide with the side of Funeka's face, she falls hard on the ground.

Dintle: "You're still singing the same tune?"

Funeka tries to wake up but it's hard.

The cheetahs are sitting down watching our every move.

She goes back to Mcebisi, he wraps his arm around her neck.

Me: "Can you leave me with them, I'm coming."

They walk away. I sit down in front of Funeka and chuckle.

Me: "You don't know what you have done to my marriage Funeka and I don't even understand why? We broke up years ago even before I met Bonolo, why did you have to hurt me like this? I lost a baby while I didn't even gave you an idea that we might still have a chance. Why did you do this to me?"

I won't lie, I'm hurting so bad more than I am angry, my wife man, I know she's going through hell right now.

Funeka: "You..I have changed Kumkani and I did it for you."

Me: "I have a wife! You should have changed for yourself, I never wanted you, I never saw you as my potential wife even when we were dating."

Funeka: "Uuka please..."

She is in pain but mine is deeper, she killed my child.

I get up wiping my sweat and tears then pour petrol all around them, they scream.

Funeka: "Kumkani no, let my sister go! I did this I'm the one who deserves this punishment."

I throw the lighter and flames are all around them, they are on their feet begging, the cheetahs get up and move closer.

I whistle like Didi did when she called them, they jump the fire and attack them ripping them apart, I watch as they dissolve to absolute nothing, their bones turns to ashes as the cheetahs are done feasting on their flesh and their bones were thrown into the fire, I don't feel any remorse, they deserve it after what they did, no sin is better than the other, they killed my baby and I killed them, we will all answer to God nobody has the right to judge me in this world! Not after what they did to me.

I walk away and get in my car, I drive to Durban, Dintle and Mcebisi are driving in separate cars behind me. I get home and just ignore everyone going to my room. I stand under the shower and let water fall on my skin, I need to face my wife.

In the morning I wake up early and take a shower, I wear my clothes and go to my car.

I walk into her ward and find her with a bag next to her.

Me: "Hey.."

She only nods.

Me: "Uhm..are they discharging you?"

Bonolo: "Yes."

Her eyes are puffy, she hasn't slept a wink, I know her.

Me: "Ok, Are we waiting for a doctor?"

Bonolo: "I am waiting for a doctor but I am not coming home to you."

Me: "What...what do you mean?"

Bonolo: "I need some time, I want to be alone."

Me: "Baby..no..don't do this to me please."

Bonolo: "Don't beg me, I have already made up my mind, I am leaving."

Me: "I'm sorry."

She takes off her wedding ring, my heart is pounding.

Me: "What are you doing MaModise?"

She grabs my hand and put it on my palm making me hold it.

I go on my knee.

Me: "Ngiyacela, ungahamba Bonolo kodwa iring eyezifungo esazenza awukwazi ukuyikhumula, Sathi sohlukani swa ukufa."(Please, you can go Bonolo but the ring is for the vows we took you can't take it off, we said till death do us part)

Bonolo: "Yes, death did us part Kumkani, the death of my baby!"

I swallow a painful lump in my throat staring at the ring in my hand.

Me: "Our son is still here."

I can't even recognize my voice anymore, I'm hurting and trying my best not to breakdown my voice is shaky.

Bonolo: "We will talk to him before I leave."

Me: "And say what?"

Bonolo: "That I need some time away."

Me: "Then why did you take off the wedding ring?"

Bonolo: "Because I don't know if I'll ever come back to you again."

I feel my chest closing in, I slowly get up.

Bonolo: "We will meet at the restaurant with Phezukonke."

I walk out going to my car. After a while I see her getting in a cab then I receive a text from her, the name of the restaurant we should meet at.

I walk in and find them already seated with juices in front of them, I sit down, they are both quiet.

Phezukonke: "What is going on Baba?"

Me: "Uhm..your mom is..Uhm..will be staying some place else for a while."

Phezukonke: "Why?"

Me: "Because I..I let another woman talk to me about marrying her and your mom felt disrespected, the woman hurt her and she lost our unborn baby, you were going to be a big brother but she lost the baby."

Phezukonke: "I was going to be a big brother?"

I nod.

Phezukonke: "And mom lost the baby?"

Me: "Yes."

He stares in the same direction not blinking then tears fall down his cheeks, Bonolo looks down.

Me: "I'm sorry boy."

Phezukonke: "I won't ever have a sibling from you and mom again?"

I can't answer that, his mother is leaving me and there's a possibility of her never coming back to me again.

Bonolo: "You gonna stay with dad while mom try to heal from this ok."

Phezukonke: "Can't you do it at home?"

Bonolo: "I can't, I need to go."

He nods and get up from the table. I quickly hold him and make him sit down.

Me: "Mom will come back son, I promise you she will come back."

Bonolo: "And I'll call you and we can meet anytime you want us to."

Phezukonke: "Really?"

Bonolo: "Yes.."

He get up and hug his mom.

Me: "Who drove you here?"

Phezukonke: "Uncle Jason."

Me: "We will go back home together then." We order for our son only because I don't think either of us can eat anything right now.

I get in the car with my son and make a call.

Jason: "Uuka.."

Me: "Please make sure she is safe."

Jason: "I will do that."

I sigh and look at my son, he is just looking out the window quietly, I take his hand, he smiles a little.

Me: "Mom will come back to us."

Phezukonke: "You Promise?"

Me: "I promise."

I drive home and Jason calls.

Me: "Is she okay?"

Jason: "Yes, she just signed herself in a mental institution."

I sit down brushing my head, I know how much she is scared of having a mental breakdown that's why she is quick to seek help if she feels she's not doing ok, I hate that it has come to that now.

I try calling her number but she keeps dropping my calls.

'Please just answer this one call, I won't bother you again.'

I send the text and try to call again and luckily she answers.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

She sniffs.

Me: "Can I come just to hold you, please."

Bonolo: "No."

Me: "I'm sorry Bonolo just please let me..."

Bonolo: "Stop saying sorry! I don't wanna hear it!"

She shouts and drop the call. I look at her ring and shake my head, she is the woman my ancestors saw fit to be my Queen I won't give up until she comes back to her rightful place, right next to me.

It's been a week and I think she has blocked my calls. I drive straight to that institution I can't have my wife not talking to me for the whole week.

I walk in and I am shown her room. I find her sitting by the window looking outside with a book in her hand.

Me: "Mam'Gumede."(Mrs Gumede)

She looks at me.

Me: "I couldn't do it, I couldn't stay away for long I love you and I'm sorry."

She just shrug her shoulders and just sob.

I rush to her and hold her in my arms letting her hit my chest with her fist, we both go down on the floor, she is still crying in my arms.

Me: "Please forgive me."

She is not crying anymore just sleeping on my chest.

Me: "Just please accept my ring and tell me you will come home to me and our son please."

She cries all over again as she hold my t-shirt tight.

She calms down after a while.

Bonolo: "No matter how angry I was, I wanted you close just to smell your cologne."

She chuckles.

Bonolo: "I guess the baby made me love your scent even more than I already do."

I hold her tight.

Me: "I don't even know what to say, nothing will ever ease this pain I feel in my heart, guilt is eating me up everyday, my son has been distant he doesn't wanna talk to anyone, this is affecting him we can't break up Bonolo."

Her phone rings, she answers it and it's on speaker.

Bonolo: "Baba.."

Phezukonke: "Mom please come back."

He is crying and that breaks my heart.

Phezukonke: "Please, I want you and dad to be together forever."

Bonolo: "Phakathwayo I..."

Phezukonke: "Mama please..please."

I hold Bonolo's hand.

Me: "Let's go home please, we'll go through this together."

She nods, she signed herself in so she can sign herself out. I am waiting in the car for her. She walks out I step out and help her with her bags. She get in, I drive home.

When we step out of the car, Phezukonke rush to his mom and they hug each other for the longest time.

Phezukonke: "You came back mama."

Bonolo: "I would do anything for you."

He hugs me then we do our handshake.

Phezukonke: "Thank you mom and dad."

Later we go to our room, I give her wedding ring back, she takes it and put it back in the drawer, I guess she still needs some time, I won't push I am partly at fault for letting it get that far, for even hiding it from her so her being here is still okay, I will take anything even if she came back just for our son I'll take it.

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CHAPTER 117

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BONOLO

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We are strangers sleeping in the same bed, I don't even know why we are still sharing this bed, the spark is gone we can't even pretend, I am here for my son if it wasn't for him I wouldn't be back here it hurts so much that I had to lose my baby just for an ex who felt entitled to my husband.

I just woke up checking the time on my phone it's 7 am, I look next to me Uuka is facing the other way but I know he is not sleeping, he is an early bird but we're in Durban there's nothing much to do here. I go to the bathroom and take a shower then step out. I wear a dress and stand in front of the mirror brushing my belly, it was growing so well I was so in love with my baby already now I have lost weight and there's no baby. I lift my eyes up and see Uuka looking at me through the mirror, he is brushing his arm, his eyes shows so much pain.

Me: "Hi."

Kumkani: "Hi."

That's it, no one says anything after that and we've been here for two weeks, I just can't bring myself to make a conversation with him, I think he also got tired of trying so that's why we're here.

We hear a knock on the door. I open because Uuka was sleeping wearing his sweatpants, that's what he does now ever since I came back from the institution I think we have set boundaries for each other without even talking about them.

My son Phezukonke walks in and bow his head, I pull him close hugging him, he is growing taller everyday, I love him so much.

Phezukonke: "Mama no Baba, nisakhumbula nginemtatch namhlanje?"(DMom and dad , do you remember I have a match today?)

Kumkani nods smiling awkwardly, I think we both forgot about his match today.

Phezukonke: "So nisahamba nami angithi?"(You're still coming with me right?)

He says looking from his dad to me, I nod.

Me: "I'm coming.."

Kumkani: "Yeah we're coming boy."

We see his potential, he is gonna be the next big thing, he took after his Grandfather he plays soccer like he is trained but he does his training with a former soccer star so I guess he does get professional training and we did well by enrolling him to a school that focuses more on skills but still give them the best education.

Phezukonke: "Thank you mom and you daddy, you're the best parents ever!"

He says and rush out.

Kumkani: "I can't believe I forgot my son's match, if he didn't remind us I wasn't gonna show up, he was gonna be so disappointed."

He rubs his eyes, looks like he is also losing weight with me.

Kumkani: "I am bad father, I got my unborn baby killed now I forgot about Mbusi's important game."

He get up and walk to the bathroom, it's like he is having a conversation with himself just louder, I feel bad for him.

I change into jeans that could still fit and a t-shirt that matches his soccer jersey.

Everyone is ready to leave, They often come with us when they are not busy.

I sit in-between Dintle and Snakho instead of sitting next to Kumkani, I think we're just not a good company to each other. He keeps looking at me until Hero sits where I usually sit next to him.

Dintle: "Bonolo.."

Me: "Mmmh."

Dintle: "You're still not wearing your wedding ring."

I clear my throat looking away.

Dintle: "Why don't you divorce him?"

I stare at her like she's crazy.

Dintle: "Exactly! Why are you doing this to your husband? Just look at him, he keeps stealing glances at you hoping you come sit next to him, I think it's enough now, he also lost a baby B, he is going through pain and to him it's for losing his unborn baby and losing you, come on it's enough."

I look down as tears fill my eyes, I feel her hand brushing my back.

Dintle: "I think Phezukonke deserves more than what you guys want to give him now, he will see that something is wrong and that will affect him."

"Mom!!"

He waves at me standing where he usually stands so me and his dad can wish him luck and give him a kiss while they do their complicated handshake with his dad. I see Kumkani getting up going to him. I get up and go to them. I kiss his forehead and cheek.

Me: "Goodluck baba...I love you."

Phezukonke: "I love you too mom."

Kumkani: "Make me proud like you always do son, I love you Phakathwayo."

Phezukonke: "I love you guys."

He runs back to the field I go back to my seat, Uuka does the same.

He scores the first goal, that's how good he is we all get up and cheer clapping hands for him, he looks around after hugging his team mates, they start playing again.

After a while he scores another goal and we cheer once again, I see him throwing the ball away in frustration and run out of the field I can

tell he is not ok. So I run to the direction he is taking. Uuka and I get to him at the same time, he is sitting behind the tree next to a parking lot crying. We both kneel in front of him.

Me: "What's wrong? Why are you crying?"

Phezukonke: "What's going on mom and dad? I scored two goals and you didn't do what you always do for me."

Usually whenever he scores, we run inside the field and his dad would pick him up and we would show him how proud we are of him, but we didn't do that today, twice in a row we just stood there and cheered like everyone else.

Me: "I'm sorry baby..we just..."

I look at Uuka, he is looking down.

Phezukonke: "You're still upset about the baby you lost mom and dad?"

He ask with his voice breaking, I swallow blinking the tears away.

Me: "No...Uhm...no baby.."

I look at Uuka he is just looking down not saying anything. Our son will start feeling like the second best, like only that unborn baby matters now more than him, we can't be happy and proud of him because we lost the baby?

Me: "We're proud of you, I'm sorry daddy and I were just upset about something, I'm sorry but we're fine now."

Phezukonke: "So should I go back and play?"

I smile and hug him, I kiss his forehead and nod.

Me: "Yes go back and play and mom and dad will cheer for you like they always do."

He smiles wide and look at his dad, he tries to smile too. He get up and kiss both our cheeks and run back to the field. We both get up and look at each other, I give Uuka my hand and we walk back together holding hands our son waves at us as soon as he sees us back, Hero is now sitting next to his wife where I was sitting, so I seat where I always sit, next to the father of my children and this time as he scores just as the game is about to end I am the first one to run to him and we hug tight, he laughs as his dad lifts him up and and they all shout "GUMEDE" I smile clapping my hands that's all he was asking for, mom and dad to do what they always do, he deserves the same version he has always known of his mom and dad not this pain and guilt driven parents, that's not fair on him.

We're in our room I think everyone has gone to bed. I see him coming from the bathroom carrying his towels and underwear, he put everything in bed then collect his lotions I am just watching him as I lotion my hands after wearing my pyjamas, we haven't talked ever since we came back from our son's soccer match.

Me: "What are you doing?"

Kumkani: "I think it's best if I move out of this room and sleep in the spareroom."

Me: "Why?"

Kumkani: "What's the use Bonolo, I tried but everything has been in vain, you still don't have your wedding ring on, we don't talk and today my son felt that we're not okay so I think it's better if we just tell him the truth."

Me: "And what good will that do for him?"

Kumkani: "He will learn to get used to this, I don't know what I have to do anymore."

Me: "You saw how broken he was today, we can't add to that."

Kumkani: "So you want us to keep pretending to him?"

I look down.

Kumkani: "Ufuna ngenzeni Bonolo? Ngitshele ngizoyenza, noma yini ngizoyenza."(What do you want me to do Bonolo? Tell me I will do it, anything I will do it.)

The shakiness in his voice makes me tear up immediately.

Kumkani: "Ngixolisile Sthandwa Sami, yini enye ekumele ngiyenze?"(I apologized my love, what else do you want me to do?)

I cover my eyes face and cry so hard.

Kumkani: "Ngiyaxolisa ngengane yethu, Ngiyaxolisa."(I'm sorry about our child, I'm sorry.)

I hear him opening the door.

Me: "Uuka.."

He turns looking my way, his eyes are bloodshot red.

Me: "Don't go..."

He stands there not moving.

Me: "Let's try and fix our marriage."

Kumkani: "You mean that? Or we're doing it for Mbusi?"

Me: "We're doing it for him and for us, I'm miserable without you and I don't want to blame you for the lost our child anymore, you just didn't try enough keeping Funeka out of your life but it wasn't your fault that she did what she did."

He let go of everything he was carrying I hear him heaving a deep sigh before his body hits the floor hard, I scream his name rushing to him.

Me: "Ngcebo! Dintle...Help..."

I scream their names, I never address the brothers with their names, I call them "Bhuti" unless I am talking to the wives but now I just shouted Ngcebo's name our loud.

Ngcebo rush in and kneels next to his brother.

Ngcebo: "He's gonna be ok, he has been thinking a lot and that took a toll on his body."

Makhosini rush in and help get him in bed, Ngcebo ask for his towel and cold water, he starts with his forehead wetting it with a towel. He finally opens his eyes, Dintle rush out and come back with home made glucose, we help him drink up then he close his eyes, I know he is awake just avoiding to talk.

Ngcebo: "We will see him in the morning but don't be scared, he is gonna be fine."

I nod as they walk out.

Me: "Kumkani.."

I sleep next to him holding his hand tight.

Me: "I'm sorry it had to come to this, I didn't mean to add on your stress please forgive me."

He keeps quiet, I just sleep facing the other way and hold a pillow with tears streaming down the corner of my eyes, I feel his hand on my waist pulling me closer.

Kumkani: "I'm sorry."

His voice is breaking and that shoots straight in my heart.

I turn to him and he pulls me closer, I cry on his chest.

Kumkani: "I love you, I will always love only you."

I sleep in his arms and I realize I have missed being here, this is the only place I feel safe and loved.

In the morning I sit up, he smells good and looks nice, he is putting on his watch.

Me: "What are you doing out of bed, shouldn't you be resting?"

Kumkani: "I will rest when I come back."

His voice comes out stronger and there is a hopeful and colorful smile on his face.

Me: "Uya kuphi?"(Where to?)

Kumkani: "I will tell you when I come back."

I nod. He hesitantly perk my lips then stares at me for a while.

Me: "What is it?"

I'm feeling all shy and shit as he gaze into my eyes with his loving eyes, I missed him, I missed us.

Kumkani: "I'm coming back soon."

Me: "Are you going to drive?"

Kumkani: "Bukhosi will drive me."

I nod.

Kumkani: "Don't worry about me, I'm fine."

He walks out, I just sleep back in bed I don't wish to wake up today I want to sleep here and think about all that I went through in just a short space of time.

I wake up to someone lightly shaking me, I turn and see Kumkani sitting in bed.

Me: "Hey, you're back."

I wipe my face and sit up looking at him, he is looking down at his hands.

Kumkani: "I still love you the same way I did years ago when I first met you, the white dress you were wearing when you came to Ngcebo's wedding and the red one you left wearing."

I chuckle when I think of that day, it was first time meeting him in person and Funeka poured drink on my white dress I had to go to his room to change while he went out to buy a similar dress but this one was red in colour.

He reach inside his pocket and comes back with a beautiful litte red box. He press something on it and it opens up I gasp at the six Carats Diamond ring.

Kumkani: "Bonolo Gumede will you please allow me to renew my vows to you in front of the whole world, please."

I slowly give him my hand, he slides the ring on my finger, It's more beautiful and surely more expensive than the last one.

Kumkani: "Say something."

Me: "I will marry you again."

He laughs as I throw my whole body at him, he hold me like a baby, I am his baby, we might fight but I will always love him, he has been there for me since day one, have been patient with me when I was suicidal my child was just a few hours born not even a day but he took me back and stayed with me right through all those ups and downs.

Kumkani: "Call the planners and tell them everything you want for our day, But I want you in a red dress."

Me: "What about now, you don't want me naked?"

He gives me one of his side smiles I feel butterflies in my tummy.

After he took off every little clothing we had on, he lays me in bed and stares at my body like he is seeing some art, he licks his bottom lip

and slowly go down on me his tongue is doing things to me I grab on the sheets arching my back.

Me: "Kumk...fuck.."

He flips his tongue and lick me till this wave of pleasure hits me so hard I let go losing all my senses but he doesn't let me go but feel the tip of his dick entering me slowly then all his shaft is deep inside of me.

Kumkani: "Fuck...I still fucken enjoy you.."

He kneels and hold my waist..

Kumkani: "Move for me baby.."

I move my waist so fast I end up holding on to his neck fucking him, he likes it he lets me take control and cum as many times as I want before he takes full control of my body and make it his. He turns me around and spank my butt I giggle I know he is about to rock my world, he fuck me so good I end up sleeping flat on my tummy and he doesn't stop having me like he has been waiting for this day for years. I giggle as he slams into me once and his dick twitches deep inside my pussy, it feels good as he fills me up with his cum I missed him a lot. He pulls out and lay me on my back and get on top of me, I gasp as he thrust once again I thought he was done.

Kumkani: "Fuck..I like the sound your pussy makes when I have just filled my cum in there...oh shit.."

We are both watching his dick moving in and out of my pussy it is wet as fuck, the chemistry is intense as he keeps eye contact with me.

Kumkani: "Come on..."

I know what he wants, so he lies on his back and I get on top of him, I don't kneel but stand on my toes and pull all his hard shaft in, I am bouncing up and down and move my waist in circles and that is driving him nuts.

Kumkani: "Shit..fuck..B.. don't stop baby..ooh fuck.."

I shake my head and stop moving I see him smiling a little biting his lower lip, I turn around and ride him in reverse he is getting a full view of my ass bouncing on top of him, he loves this more. My toes curl up as I cum he starts moving faster underneath and slam into me one more time then groan loud, cussing. I get off him and cum is just dripping out of my pussy.

He laughs at me as I almost lose balance getting off bed. He hold me from behind.

Kumkani: "I got you.."

I smile.

We shower together, I hug him tight under the shower, I missed him I will always love my husband.

I wear my warm tracksuits walking down the stairs feeling good, he is my happy place, my escape.

Me: "Morning everyone."

Everyone stares at me in shock, Dintle even spits her coffee I roll my eyes smiling.

I make coffee and join them around the table. Kumkani walks down the stairs too with his hand on his pocket and the other one holding his phone.

Kumkani: "Sanibonani."(Greetings)

Dintle spits her coffee again Mcebisi stares at her frowning, she grins staring back at him.

Kumkani: "Uh.. you're not going to greet back?"

Thabsie: "What is happening?"

Kumkani: "With what Mama?"

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He asks wrapping his arms around her shoulders from behind and kiss her cheek.

Thabsie: "You and Bonolo?"

I smile and get up dishing up for my husband, I haven't been doing that for a while.

Phezukonke: "Mom! You have a new ring!"

He shouts happily everyone stares at my hand as I am holding a jug pouring orange juice for my hubby.

Dintle: "God Damn!"

They all take turns admiring my new ring.

Me: "Me and Baba kaPhezukonke are renewing our vows."

The cheers are crazy, his mom hold my hand tight.

Thabsie: "I'm glad you sort out your issues and decided to try again and fix your marriage, I was worried about the two of you but I didn't wanna get involved yet, thank you, all of you for loving my babies unconditionally, they found right women in you like their dad found me."

Everyone laughs at the last part.

Bukhosi: "Bowuza kahle but you just had to make it about you at the end mama."(you were coming along great..)

Thabsie: "Of course I had to make it about me I gave birth to all your big heads, I'm the Queen!"

Nkosiyabo: "Yes you are."

They kiss.

Makhosini: "Dad don't encourage her."

The table is full of laughter, I look up and catch my husband looking at me smiling. I give him his breakfast then sit next to him.

Kumkani: "So Snakho, Thobeka, Nelile please help Bonolo with organizing everything."

Dintle: "What about me?"

Uuka chuckles.

Kumkani: "Just wait for anyone to mess up so you can deal with them."

We all laugh, Dintle sulk Mcebisi pull her under his wing kissing her while laughing his lungs out.

Mcebisi: "I don't like what you're doing to my wife Uuka."

My husband shrug his shoulders smiling looking at Dintle.

Kumkani: "She knows I love her."

They get along and fight a lot they just understand each other and there is mutual respect from the both of them, they are more like siblings.

Dintle: "We have a great celebration to plan so ladies let's go."

Nelile: "Uhm..ngeke sisaqeda nokudla mama ka Awande?"(So we won't even finish up eating Awande's mom.)

Dintle: "Eating is temporary but celebrations are forever, a lifetime thing kind of thing."

Mcebisi is laughing, this man is fascinated by everything his wife does, it's so beautiful I don't even think Dintle ever does wrong in his eyes.

Nkosiyabo: "Sinomunye umakoti la."(We have another wife here.)

He says shaking his head smiling, Dintle quickly sit down and compose herself.

Mcebisi: "Too late baby, they have already seen you exactly for who you are."

I smile. I am not losing this family they have been a part of my life for over 7 years, you just can't throw that away like it meant nothing.

Hloni: "Your mom and dad are getting married again?"

Phezukonke: "Yes, dad loves mom a lot!"

He brags, I laugh.

Hloni: "My mom and dad love each other a lot too."

Alwande: "Mine too."

He says throwing his hands in the air.

Mcebisi: "Oh yes we do Mfana ka Baba."

Khazi is sitting on Nelile's lap, her head on her chest, she is just sucking her thumb, a beautiful quiet baby girl that just loves her mom. Hero is staring at Snakho with loving eyes holding their beautiful baby girl.

Lunchtime me and the wives decide to eat lunch out so we can discuss some ideas about this beautiful ceremony my husband and I are about to have. Wenzile keeps sneezing.

Dintle: "Thokoza Gogo."

She claps her hands together causing Wenzile to laugh.

Wenzile: "Someone is watching me, can you guys look around?"

We look around and only see a boy looking our way, he seems like a junkie.

She grunts loud and people stares at us and start taking pictures, I hold Dintle's hand I know she wants to tell them where to get off.

She rush to the boy and kneels in front of him clapping her hands. She takes her gift seriously no matter where she is, right now she is looking classy in her grey long sleeved off shoulder dress beads around her ankles and wrists looks good on her, she makes being Sangoma look hot and cute. She is in heels but now she is doing her duties the ancestors are calling and she must answer, she always answers and never cares what the public think of her especially after they had a lot to say when Serena was born, shared her video so after that day she stopped caring about people she does even know and focused on what's more important, her marriage, son, family and her gift and it has been working out for her.

She get up and rush to us.

Wenzile: "I'm sorry I have to go, the boy needs my help."

Me: "We understand, let Mondli drive you he will come back to fetch us."

She nods and clap her hands rushing away, I love her aura everything about her is just beautiful. She takes the boy and walk away.

Dintle: "I feel so attached to her maybe it's because we married twin brothers and that makes us twins."

She just speaks randomly, I giggle.

Thobeka: "Are you attached to me?"

She ask looking at Nelile and they just laugh hugging each other, these women are everything one would need in a friend.

We plan everything and call the big events organizers, my husband wants a big thing and that's what we gonna do.

I call Thingo.

Thingo: "Sisi I am on my way home."

Me: "Oh ok, we will meet there."

We finish up everything and drive home. We greet her and her husband with their three baby boys. The youngest self made billionaire couple, they were even featured on the cover of the Forbes magazine, they are a big deal.

We talk as ladies and I ask her to design my dress I know dresses or fashion isn't her focus but I know she can design anything you just have to give her a clear picture of everything you want and she agrees to help me. I am marrying the love of my life again, I wanna say I do all over again. It was written in the stars.

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CHAPTER 118

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KUMKANI

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I slaughtered two white goats at home after doing the ceremony of my unborn baby, those white goats were for appeasing to my ancestors for hurting the wife they gave to me and the other goat was for for apologizing straight to her for the pain I caused her, the doubts I created in our marriage.

Uwumfazi woGumede ufake Isiphandla sayo imbuzi emhlophe yoxolo phakathi kwethu wafakwa ubaba ongizalayo Inkosi uqobo lwayo.(She is a Gumede wife she has Isiphandla around her wrist of the white goat that is meant for peace between us, my own father the King himself put it on around her wrist.

We are getting married again today, renewing our vows that may have been broken when we lost our baby and she took off our wedding ring.

I love that woman and she means the world to me losing her would mean losing myself, I was lost without her I don't want a life where she is not in it.

I am standing at the alter with my son next to me wearing the same tuxedo like me, people are dressed for the occasion, she slept at the hotel for two days with her sister wives because they wanted to d

Throw a party for her, she got drunk and called me crying confessing her love for me when I tried to go see her Dintle called and cussed at me telling me not to dare come to their party so I had to sit there wondering how my wife is, they called later and told me she fell asleep, she doesn't even like drinking so that's why she got that drunk so early she is not used to it.

Ed Sheeran's 'Perfect' starts playing, she emerges in her red dress showing her perfect cleavage it has a long slit on her thigh down, it's not that different from the one I bought her the first time we met but it's more beautiful it is sparkling, her weave is nicely styled with diamond earrings and necklace I sent to a hotel yesterday as a gift, she's amazing. Sboniso stands next to her and they smile at each other, they have come a long way but it is a clean slate, we let the past be just that, a past.

Sboniso walk her down the isle they take their time.

"Now I know I have met an angel in person darling you look perfect tonight.." I sing that part to her as Sboniso gives me her hand, I hold her waist kissing her causing the crowd to cheer. The pastor clears his throat I laugh stepping back from her but still holding her hand.

We say our vows to each other, confessing our love for each other, telling each other that things will be different this time, we will communicate more, and we will be patient with each other.

My son take out his mother's ring, she begged me not to change her ring I gave her when I proposed to renew our vows because she loves

it so much, so I took it back and now the pastor is about to bless our rings, I took off mine so he can bless the two of them.

Bonolo: "Uhm...I also have a new ring."

I look at her confused, she didn't tell me about buying a new ring for me. She smiles looking at our son, he smiles and take out another ring from his blazer I laugh, why didn't he tell me he has two rings with him?

The pastor bless our rings, she gives me a most beautiful manly ring I have ever seen I am sure it costs a lot of money I can't stop looking at it.

I wasn't expecting a new ring at all.

Bonolo: "This was not just about me but it was about us, I love you."

She says smiling I must have said it out loud.

Phezukonke: "Mah umuhle kakhulu namhlanje."(Mom you're too beautiful today.)

They hug each other tight.

Phezukonke: "And thank you for fixing things between you two, I was scared that I was gonna lose one of you."

This is a mini me, I made myself I was exactly like him when I was younger, he is amazing that's how I know I am a man! My first born son.

Me: "I love you son."

Phezukonke: "I love you too mom and dad."

I hug the both of them and kiss his forehead then kiss his mother's lips.

I have my family right here with me and all around us, they are happy for us. I got my Queen back.

We go to our car for our mini vacation for the rest of the holidays with our son, just the three of us since we didn't get a chance to give him a sibling.

We wave at our family and get in the car driving to the airport. We board a flight to Johannesburg but our destination is Cape Town where we will spend time there as a family.

Our son is sitting in between us, he is so happy he can't stop smiling. He lays his head on my chest I hold him and look at Bonolo, she takes my hand and hold it tight, we did it again and I will do it over and over again if it means having to keep her forever.

Two weeks later...

Cape Town has been amazing, we make sure we have a great stay here, we booked a holiday house to make things easier, Phezukonke even made a new friend with people next door, a boy his age they are always playing video games.

My wife walk out of the house in a bikini with our drinks in her hands. We are alone Mbusi is right next door.

I am wearing shorts and I have my shades on, she sit next to me and give me a beer, I drink it while she have a cocktail.

Me: "Do you think I'm reaching when I say you have gained weight in just this four weeks we got back together."

She laughs.

Bonolo: "You are reaching Baba."

She says laughing and get up, she dives into the water, I sit down and dip only my legs in it. She swims towards me and stand between my legs. I kiss her lips.

Bonolo: "I have always wondered how sex in the pool feels like."

I chuckle.

Me: "You want me to fuck you right here?"

She giggles with a nod.

Me: "Make me.."

She raise her eyebrow then chuckles and takes out my dick from my shorts I breathe out as she puts all of it in her mouth staring into my eyes.

Me: "Fuck.."

She pull it out and goes under water for a while, she comes back up and throw her bikini at me I squeeze my dick as I can see her pecky breasts in front of me.

Bonolo: "Are you gonna come in or I'm gonna have to finger myself."

I get in the pool after taking off my shorts, we share a very deep kiss, I pin her in the walls of the pool she wraps her legs around my waist as I guide my dick into her pussy.

Bonolo: "This is so much fun...Fuck.."

She speaks into my lips while kissing me so good. I groan as her walls keep clenching hard on my dick and that is killing me. We share a very intimate moment in the pool it feels so good, we're still young so we are letting loose, that's what I liked about getting married young, we are growing up together.

She step out of the pool first butt naked and bend over picking her up her wet bikini I am just staring at her body in admiration, she's hot!

Me: "You are provoking me."

Bonolo: "With what baby?"

I chuckle and get out of the pool following her inside naked. I find her wrapping a towel around her body I remove it and bend her over in

bed, I am pounding on her from behind so hard, we go on until we both cum and sleep in bed facing up catching our breath.

Bonolo: "It's so good to marry young, I can have you all the time because you're mine, and mine alone."

I chuckle and we make love again this time she takes the lead.

My son come back with her friend, his mom and I are already cooking in the kitchen, he is white but was raised by a black couple, they adopted him like Grandpa Nkanyezi and Miyalo did to Sage, I love and admire people who adopt babies and treat them right, it's special and a blessing those kids need love and if someone is willing then why not.

They are talking fluent IsiZulu in the lounge, he is telling him about his history how he is gonna be King one day and the friend is fascinated and hopes to visit his home one day, I smile.

Me: "I have never seen him making friends besides his team mates."

Bonolo: "Sometimes he is closed off, he wants to see how you are first before opening up."

Me: " I wonder who he took that from."

I say squinting my eyes, she laughs.

Bonolo: "But I'm not like that."

Me: "Show me your friends without your sister wives, I'll wait."

She just laughs and walk away with our son's food with his friend.

We go back to bed and fall asleep holding each other.

**We are back home with Bonolo in the forest she is carrying a basket and I am picking up different fruits and putting them inside the basket, she keeps eating them and I keep running after her and we both fall on the green grass laughing, I kiss her lips."

I wake up with a smile on my face, I look next to me she is sleeping peacefully, that was a beautiful dream in a way that I even woke up smiling, maybe this new start is what we needed, our genuine happiness is the life we're starting over together.

I am Kumkani Uuka and my journey continues and I raise my son with my beautiful wife.

*

DIDINTLE

*

Today marks two months since my husband told me never to visit a doctor for shots or anything, he wants a baby from me and I don't mind giving it to him, the twins are older now and very naughty so why the hell not.

He walks in looking so perfect, he has his own style of dressing, often wears cargo like pants that always matches with a jacket he is wearing that is why he always have guns hanging on his jacket showing off that he can carry them in public, he has his own personal designer making clothes for him, his bow legs are just cherry on because it just completes the look. You must be wondering how and why he is always carrying guns, well my man is a Detective not because he have to but because he wants to serve and protect the community. After he graduated from varsity he lost interest in the course he was doing and he went where his heart was, nobody saw it coming he just woke up one day and told me he will not use his certificate anymore because he found a different interest and I supported him, I still do as the father of my kids and my husband.

Mcebisi: "Hey mommy.."

He kiss my cheek and remove his guns from his jackets putting them in a safe, we are back at the Palace but all his rooms be it in Durban

his father's house or Nqobasi's house they all have a safe where he put his guns.

I stand on my toes and kiss him, his hands goes to my bare ass caressing it then he takes off his t-shirt I was only wearing because I was getting ready to sleep after putting the kids to bed. He always have time for me and the kids, if he won't be home he makes sure to tell us early and he calls us whenever he gets a chance and he always does get it.

We are kissing and taking off his clothes, then he pins me on the wall and have me for dinner before he can have an actual dinner, sex with him always feels new and exciting, he always makes love to me even when we are having rough sex, the love and intensity is always there.

We end up in bed after our steamy romance. He is holding me to his chest and he keeps kissing my forehead.

Mcebisi: "I love you."

I smile.

Me: "I love you too."

Mcebisi: "Tomorrow we are going to see a doctor to check if there is no mini Mcebisi here."

He says brushing my tummy.

Me: "Ok."

Mcebisi: "If there is a baby are you going to be excited baby? I feel like I did put pressure on you."

I smile and sleep on top of him looking into his beautiful eyes.

Me: "There was no pressure baby, I want to give you more kids, you're a great father."

He smiles.

Mcebisi: "I'm happy to hear that."

I feel like he wants to tell me something but he is dragging it. I know him like the back of my hand.

Me: "Is there something you wanna tell me babe?"

He sighs rubbing his eyes.

Mcebisi: "I need to be in Cape Town the day after tomorrow for some time."

Me: "Why?"

Mcebisi: "Human trafficking rate is increasing that side, ever since Nadia retired nobody looked into it, so they chose me and other guys from other Police Stations who have a good record."

Me: "Oh..Uhm ok that's great I always tell you you're the GOAT."

He laughs a bit.

Mcebisi: "But if I find out you're pregnant tomorrow I won't go."

Me: "What but why not?"

Mcebisi: "I won't leave you Dintle."

He lays me on his chest, I know he doesn't want me to ask any more questions so I just close my eyes.

In the morning he wakes me up with breakfast in bed then we take a bath together. The kids have already ate, when he it is his days off he is always hands on with the kids and me, he treats me like an egg I love it.

We are with the doctor, he told him he doesn't trust this urine test so he demanded an ultrasound. I am sleeping in bed facing up and the doctor smears some gel on my tummy. As soon as he starts moving the wand the loud sound starts picking up immediately, he has this smile on his face, he is so happy, he doesn't even wait for a doctor to

confirm but he quickly clean my tummy and pull me up, we hug with my legs around his waist, we always hug like this anywhere because he always complain about me being too short so this position is better for the both of us.

Mcebisi: "Oh fuck...thank you baby, I wanted this so bad, thank you MaModise wami."

I laugh kissing him all over his face.

Mcebisi: "You're doing too much baby, stop."

He is blushing I don't even know why.

We finally sit down and the doctor is looking at us smiling.

Mcebisi: "So my wife is pregnant right?"

The doctor giggles.

Doctor: "You know she is Mr Gumede."

Mcebisi: "YES!"

Doctor: "She's only 5 weeks pregnant."

He nods.

Mcebisi: "That's like a month and a few days right?"

The doctor nods.

Mcebisi: "Oh is it one baby? I have this ability to shoot double."

I laugh punching his arm.

Doctor: "I only saw one sir maybe we'll find different results on her next appointment."

Mcebisi: "I don't mind even if its Quads you know."

Me: "You're crazy."

We go back home after buying some food from his favourite restaurant. I haven't felt any changes on my body.

We get home and take our kids to our room, they are playing with their dad's phone taking turns with the game.

Me: "So Uhm...about what we spoke about yesterday, you are really considering not going to Cape Town?"

Mcebisi: "I'm not considering Didi, I'm not going, I didn't get you pregnant only to leave you."

Me: "You're not leaving for good mos."

Mcebisi: "I won't put my life in danger, D I have kids to raise, an unborn baby and there's you, I can't leave you to do this alone."

Me: "Ok now that you have those thoughts you are definitely not leaving, I won't have you in the field while you are thinking you won't be coming back to us, no."

He smiles.

Mcebisi: "We are going to do this together."

Me: "Thank you for being the best husband ever."

He chuckles.

Mcebisi: "I'm crazy about you baby."

His phone rings, it's his captain, he answers it on speaker, he keeps kissing my forehead.

Mcebisi: "Captain."

"Have you made a decision yet?"

Mcebisi: "I have sir, I am not leaving I just found out that my wife is pregnant."

"Oh..so what about those kids trafficked everyday, do you think about them?"

He frowns.

Mcebisi: "You will find someone else who will take my place sir, there are so many great guys who can do a better job than me."

"Oh ok I hope this doesn't happen to any of your family members or children Mr Gumede."

He widens his eyes as the captain drops the call, he swiftly get up and wear his clothes so fast the kids are looking at him.

Mcebisi: "I know this mother fucker isn't threatening me using my kids."

He keeps chuckling in disbelief, I jump out of bed and stand in front of him. I am calming him down because I know what he wants to do, he wants to go to the captain and I know it won't end well.

Me: "Baby please calm down, calm down Phakathwayo, you're scaring the kids."

He looks over to them and quickly sit down with them.

Mcebisi: "Uhm..sorry about that guys it's just that daddy just heard some bad news. But everything is fine now ok."

They both nod and continue fighting over his phone and that forces me to give the other twin mine which is something I hate so much because they delete everything they come across on the phone.

In the morning he wakes up early going to work I know he wants to have a word with that captain he didn't sleep last night he kept tossing and turning.

I am taking my kids to school, they go to a different school from Phezukonke. I drive for a while then I see the car driving behind me. Out of nowhee I hear a gun going off my car spins around but I am

very quick to manage it before it moves out of the road, my kids are screaming their lungs out. I stop the car and lock the doors calling my husband trying so hard not to panic.

Mcebisi: "Babe...Dintle why are my kids screaming?"

Me: "Someone shot the tyre of my car Mcebisi.."

I look at the side mirror and see a man carrying a gun then he bangs on my window.

Me: "He is here with a gun baby...The kids can see him."

Mcebisi: "Dintle I'm on my way baby just...damnit! Don't drop the call please."

I can hear he is running.

The guy punch the window hard, I hold my breath as it shatters some piece hit my face. I look behind me Alwande is not screaming anymore just has his eyes tightly closed only my baby girl is still crying.

Awande: "Mommy, we want daddy! Daddy!"

Mcebisi: "Baby...Awande daddy is coming ok I'm coming. Move the fuck out of the way shlama!"(piece of shit)

He cuss.

"Get the fuck out."

I nod and lower my hand to the side of the passenger seat where my husband usually put his gun, I find it and shoot the guy right on his tummy and chest because I have no where else to go I have to shoot to kill him.

But I see another car stopping right in front of me and another one on the side I just lose all hope and step out of the car. I unbuckle my kids and make sure they stand in front of me I have my hands on their shoulders they are holding my hands tight.

Me: "What do you want?"

They stare at the kids, it's about four of them and some are in the other car that came last.

"Which one is a girl here?"

They stare at my twins back and forth , they are both wearing school tracksuits and have short hair, they both look like their dad.

One of them snatch Alwande I don't know what to do, if I move here they will then take my daughter.

Alwande: "Mom help me!"

Me: "Mcebisi please baby..."

I say in a low tone hoping he comes sooner. I hear tyres screeching, Kumkani comes out of his car already holding a gun, my husband's car parks a few seconds after and he comes out holding two guns, he is already sweating he keeps spitting that's how angry he is.

Mcebisi: "You better put my son down right now!"

He tries to walk to the car with him.

Mcebisi: "Dintle!"

He shouts at me I push Awande to Kumkani as he starts shooting the other guys, he continues to shoot while holding Awande around her neck. I take calculated steps towards the man that have my son, I grab him from him and move on the side going down covering my son, my husband shoots him in the head I am sure he is already dead.

I can't hear anything as they keep firing shots, my husband is not even taking cover he is walking straight towards them and he is so angry. The gunshots finally stops I look at my son he just let go of his body closing him eyes..

Mcebisi takes him from me and grab my hand walking to the car with us. Kumkani is already driving away with Awande. I am shaking on the way holding my son, he is still breathing but not responding when I call out his name.

We get to the hospital and they are both taken to the same ward.

Mcebisi: "Fuck!"

He says holding me tight.

Mcebisi: "Let's check on the baby."

He shouts for the nurses to check on our baby and we find out that I'm fine even my blood pressure is stable.

We sit in the waiting area in silence, I can't help but worry that this may be the beginning of a world war because I know damn well my husband is still gonna turn this city upside down to find whoever did this to me and our kids, I think he already has an idea who it is.

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CHAPTER 119

*

MCEBISI

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I am in my kids' ward they are sleeping in one bed, I am holding both their hands, they are awake now, they fainted because of trauma, they are too young and they saw too much, the guns and everything else was just too much for them.

I look at my wife she is sitting next to me quietly and she is never quiet so this messed her up too I am so angry that someone saw it fit to attack my wife and kids, this is very provocative and when I react people will think I'm crazy.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

She looks at me and blink, tears fall down her plumpy cheeks but she quickly wipes them off.

Me: "I'm sorry.."

She nods and look away wiping off the tears, she knows I don't like it when she cries in front of the kids but today I really don't mind, I understand what she is feeling.

Alwande: "Daddy.."

Me: "Yes boy.."

Alwande: "Don't leave us please, the bad man will hurt mommy and us."

I sigh.

Me: I won't allow the bad man to hurt you."

Alwande: "You won't leave?"

Me: "I won't leave, I am waiting for a doctor so I can take you home."

Alwande: "Ok."

My baby girl is quiet and I feel like shit, my kids didn't have to witness that.

Me: "Princess..."

She turns her head looking away.

Me: "Baby..hey look at daddy."

She looks at me.

Me: "I'm sorry, ok."

Awande: "You always promised to protect us but you were not there, they almost took my brother."

Her voice is hoarse, I am the one with a hoarse voice with Mntwana uNgcebo I guess they took after us with everything even with the bow legs, my kids are identical even though they are of difference gender I don't even know how it happened, maybe it will be better once Awande starts keeping her hair and braid it like most girls but for now her mother keeps it short because she hates being touched in the head even with cutting its only me who does it and no one else.

Me: "Daddy was at work, I came as soon as I could baby wami but I'm sorry I wasn't there."

She nods, they are my angels, they brought me back to life after almost giving up, when I heard their mom was pregnant I wanted to fight so I could raise them.

The doctor comes and give us some syrups to help them fall asleep better.

Dintle carries Awande and I pick up my son. We drive back home and mom rush to check on them, they cry to their Granny and Grandpa telling them everything that happened. I go to our room with Dintle. I let her rest her head on my chest and I wrap my arms around her.

Me: "How are you feeling?"

Dintle: "I was scared for my children, they wanted to take them away."

Me: "It's ok, no one will do that to our kids baby, I won't let it happen."

I wipe her tears and kiss her lips.

Me: "Just relax here at home for a few days, don't take the kids to school until I sort this out."

She nods.

Me: "You trust me, right?"

She looks at me with her gorgeous eyes, my wife is beautiful that's why I never ever even think on cheating, she is everything I want in a woman, career driven, hot, classy yet ghetto she was made for me.

Me: "I will protect you with my life."

Dintle: "I know that, you always do."

I kiss her taking off her clothes, I want her to relax a bit she is so tense. I make love to her then she falls asleep, I keep kissing her I love this woman.

In the morning I wake up early so I can leave before my kids wake up. I am wearing my clothes and Dintle is sitting in our bed looking at me.

Me: "You're staring."

Dintle: "I'd kill a woman who'd try me with you without thinking twice."

I chuckle. She speaks anything that comes to mind. I took her to Defense classes a few years ago after I joined the South African Police Service because I knew in that field you make enemies so I needed to make sure she can at least defend herself just until I get there myself and kill whoever messes with her and she did the best, I would take it too far with those classes, I would organize fights with two or three guys and she would come out perfect, I wanted it to be men so she knows how to handle them, they usually are the ones with a huge problem with us, so a woman ain't shit when it comes to my wife she can kill her with just one kick.

Me: "I wouldn't even let them try to take what's yours, I don't have a death wish baby I know you'd kill me."

She giggles, this is the woman I trust with my life and I know she feels the same about me.

I kiss her lips but the door opens I cuss under my breath as my kids follow each other and get on top of their mom's bed, I look at Dintle.

Awande: "Daddy, you promised not to go!"

Me: "Princess, daddy have to work so the bad guys won't come back again."

Awande: "No daddy! No!"

I sigh and sit in bed pulling her to my lap, I don't even know why they woke up so early, and the Princess has some spoilt brat tendencies, she's still young but one of these days I have to sit down with her and her brother and talk to them about the behavior a child shouldn't have towards people and parents, this screaming doesn't fly with me but I won't do it now because they are still not ok.

Me: "Listen, the bad guys are still out there and daddy has to stop them from coming back."

She gasp opening her eyes wide.

Awande: "They will come back? Daddy don't leave me please."

She wraps her arms around my neck and cry, I sigh.

Me: "D, take her I have to go."

Dintle: "Take her to her grandma I don't wanna handle her because I will beat the shit out of her."

Me: "Dintle, mom and dad slept with them I think she is asleep."

I give her our daughter but she starts kicking and screaming I hear a loud clap she shut up immediately, Dintle hit her leg hard I hold my

breath, I hate that so much but sometimes you just gotta do it,
Awande is now quiet she gets scared easily.

Me: "Boy come give daddy a kiss."

Alwande get up and kiss my cheek, he is quiet we even thought he
won't speak but he started late, he is just like Makhosini he prefers
speaking slower because when they try to be faster or they get angry
they stutter and that frustrates them.

Me: "Baby..."

She doesn't even wanna look at me.

Dintle: "Go daddy, she's gonna be alright."

I kiss her lips then kiss an angry Awande's forehead.

Me: "I will try to come back early, I'm not really working but I have
someone I want to meet."

She nods and tuck the kids in bed next to her.

I walk out and find mom in the kitchen making a cup of tea.

Me: "Mama thank you for sleeping with them last night."

Thabsie: "It's ok, you also had to make sure Dintle is ok."

I nod.

Thabsie: "I think you should take a few days off and stay home with
the kids just to assure them they are safe and they might slowly forget
about what happened."

I look at her, she sit down in a barstool and flap her eyelids I
understand why dad is still crazy about her, she's just amazing.

Thabsie: "Me and your father didn't really get some sleep last night,
they were kicking and screaming, what happened scared them that's

why I am saying you need to be here for a few days they will calm down.”

I sigh.

Me: “But I need to deal with whoever did this to my children.”

Thabsie: “Angimfuni umuntu ongangilaleli mina, ngithe hlala nezingane zakho izinsukwana angisho ukuthi unomphelo.”(I don’t want someone who doesn’t listen to me, I said stay home with your children for a few days I didn’t say forever.)

She shouts banging the cup on the table.

Thabsie: “You put your children’s lives first and revenge later, you hear me? Assure them they are safe first!”

I nod and go back to my room, she is right I have to be here for a few days they will eventually put this at the back of their minds and maybe forget about it.

Dintle opens her eyes, they are falling asleep. I take off my clothes and get in next to my daughter, she turns to me.

Awande: “Daddy..”

She snuggles closer I hold her looking at my wife.

Dintle: “You didn’t go?”

Me: “No, I should be here with you.”

She nods and close her eyes.

I wake up to Alwande screaming “Mommy! Daddy! Help me!” I quickly sit up and take him rocking him.

Me: “Hey..boy open your eyes, daddy is here ok, I’m here.”

His eyes shoots open, he was dreaming. He holds on to me tight crying.

Me: "Daddy is here."

I look at Dintle she is sitting up with tears in her eyes.

Me: "It's ok, they will be fine mama don't cry."

I am scared, this is not good for our unborn baby, she will be stressing about our children not being ok.

During the day I go to my brothers and sit down with them.

Ngcebo: "Banjani abantwana?"(How are the children?)

I sigh.

Me: "They are not ok, they still have nightmares about what happened."

Kumkani: "Do you have a clue who might have done this to them?"

Me: "The captain, I declined leaving for Cape Town because my wife is pregnant."

Kumkani: "Wow D is pregnant that's amazing, congratulations."

Ngcebo: "How I wish my wife gets pregnant one of these days, I have been working hard."

We look at him as he rubs his eyes leaning back on the chair, he sure looks tired. He has a way to make a joke even about serious stuff, he feels like having babies will always be hard for him but he makes a joke out of it most of the time, I know it hurts him so much.

Me: "I'm sure that baby will make a grand entrance like Aqua."

Ngcebo: "I hope so, but I have been feeling weird hey..the mermaid that usually takes my son hasn't been coming but she send others to come take him it's never her, I don't know why."

Kumkani: "I think when it's time you will know what's going on."

He nods..

Kumkani: "So Mcebisi, how are we sorting out this issue with the Captain? We don't even know what's his deal, it can't be just because you declined going to Cape Town, there must be a reason why they wanted you to go to Cape Town."

I lean on my chair pulling my beard.

Me: "I think it was a set up, I think someone wants to take me out."

Ngcebo: "That would be a very big mistake for sure."

I rub my palms together.

Me: "But someone touched my kids man, they touched my wife."

Kumkani: "But we can't really take out the Captain we need a plan because he is not in this alone, we don't even know who we are dealing with here."

Me: "But someone needs to pay for what they put my children through, I don't care who I might have to go through first but someone needs to pay and he will."

I see Dintle walking out of the main house carrying our daughter, I get up and take her.

Me: "MaGumede."

She giggles and hugs me.

Me: "Uphi umfowenu?"(Where is your brother?)

Awande: "He is still sleeping, mina bengifuna wena."(I wanted you)

I laugh holding her tight.

I have been home for five days now with my kids full time, they even sleep with me and my wife, they don't get nightmares anymore and they have went back to their naughty and jolly selves.

I stare at the TV when I see a missing person alert, one after the other and it's kids about my twin's age or younger all this is happening in Durban and near by areas but not here, they wouldn't dare here, they only found my wife and kids because she was already out of our Kingdom going to our children's school.

The Reporter says there are 12 children reported missing and most of them are from my kids school.

Me: "Dintle!"

I shout running to their room, she was getting them ready for school and Mondli was gonna be on standby looking after them at school.

Dintle: "Baby, why are you shouting?"

Me: "They can't go to school, there are 12 children reported missing and most of them are from their school."

I speak in a low tone because I don't want them to hear this

Dintle: "No.."

Me: "I think they want my attention, I can't let this happen baby."

Dintle: "What do you want to do?"

Me: "I need to talk to the Captain so he can tell me what he wants or his acquaintances because I know he is involved somehow."

She nods.

Dintle: "I will look after them, you can go, be safe ok."

Me: "Ok."

I hold her waist and kiss her, my babies cover their faces laughing.

Me: "I love you, I won't say goodbye and don't remove their school uniform while I'm still here."

She nods. I rush out and wear my clothes then put my guns where they are easy to take out, my jacket designed for my guns and for me to look good in it.

I drive to work and go straight to his office, he has two guys with bullet proofs on holding big guns standing on his either side.

Captain: "Gumede, it's nice having you back, how is family?"

I chuckle and grab a chair sitting in front of him.

Me: "The family is doing great sir, you guys failed taking my daughter."

He grins.

Captain: "I'm happy they are ok."

Me: "You know I can shoot all three of you in cold blood and walk out of here like nothing happened, right?"

Captain: "Your over confidence will be your downfall."

He raise his hands up, I know he is sending a signal for them to shoot. I flip the table with my foot while taking out my gun that has a silencer on, I shoot both his guys on the head before they can pull triggers. He has his eyes out staring at me.

Me: "You didn't think I was that good huh?"

Captain: "What..."

He is stammering as he get up from his seat, he is pretty old, I sit back on the chair .

Me: "Now tell me who touched my kids."

Captain: "Just know if you touch me, you will have to run your whole life, this is bigger than you and your family!"

He chuckles.

Me: "I want to know why they wanted to take my kids."

Captain: "A daughter of the most prominent business man was one of the kids kidnapped in Cape Town, he believed you will be the one to save his daughter but you declined, he wants you to know how it feels to lose a daughter."

I look at him.

Captain: "He looked at your family history, he found out about Nadia and he believed you are the one.."

Me: "So what now? He wants to force me to help? I wouldn't after what he did to my children and their mother."

He chuckles shaking his head.

Me: "If he is that powerful to even find my children then why can't he use all the resources he has to find his daughter."

Captain: "He knows it because I gave it to him! They want me to step down and make you Captain! And there is nowhere in hell I would let that happen."

He takes out his gun and it hits my shoulder I fall on the chair and take out my gun shooting back at him but he takes cover on the table. I get up and walk around the table kicking him hard he groans blood comes out of his mouth.

Me: "Tell your friends to bring back those young girls, your story is just all over the place I don't trust you, you must be working with these guys."

Captain: "Shoot me and see what they do to you."

I shoot his leg.

Me: "I still want you alive so you can pass the message to your friends, I am coming for them one by one."

I leave him groaning in pain, my mind is all over the place as I speed home, my brother is not ok I can feel it.

I rush in his hut and find him shaking, I am holding my bleeding shoulder. Mom just cries when she sees blood on me, she is kneeling next to Ngcebo. Dad walk in and stares at me.

Me: "I think it's just a flesh wound baba."

He takes off my jacket and chuckle.

Nkosiyo: "The bullet is still in there, let me call your wife, the kids can't see this blood on you."

He walks out looking like he is carrying the whole world on his shoulders, he love's Ngcebo so much so when he is not ok he feels it, I am not saying he doesn't love us but Ngcebo is fragile so that's why he gives him more attention.

Dintle walk in and sit in front of me quietly.

Dintle: "You got shot?"

I nod.

Me: "And the bullet is still in here."

She sighs and walk out. She walks in after a while carrying a basin and towels with raizors, scissors and the first aid kit.

She takes out the bullet and press hard on my wound.

Me: "That hurts baby.."

Dintle: "I know.."

She squeeze me hard I stare at her in shock.

Me: "Are you trying to kill me?"

Dintle: "You promised never to come home with a gunshot wound."

Me: "Sorry. Dintle stop it! This shit hurts man."

Ngcebo grunts and starts shaking.

Ngcebo: "Umlilo."(Fire)

He says shivering with his teeth grazing each other and that makes me shiver too because I know something is coming.

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CHAPTER 120

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MCEBISI

*

My siblings are all home, Bab'Omncane Nqobasi just got home too with his whole family, Aunt Isisekelo is here too with her daughter and husband they always avail themselves when there is trouble and we do the same for everyone, it's a family thing to never let an enemy win so if we can fight together we have a better chance of defeating the enemy.

We are sitting outside, we just had lunch the kids are playing inside one of the huts in the yard.

Strong wind starts blowing hard, I look at Ngcebo he is grunting shaking his head, Wenzile stares at Mathenyoka it's like they know what's happening.

I look at my white jacket it has black spots from the fire. I see the community rushing in, My father is on his feet. One of them kneels before my father and bow his head.

"Great King, there is fire on the mountains and it started behind Qwabe waterfalls."

He says almost out of breath, we all get up and look at the sky it is getting darker by the minute.

Nkosiyabo: "No.."

He says almost whispering.

"Is there anything we can do your highness?"

He ask on behalf of the community and they look at my father for response but he looks defeated.

Nkosiyabo: "There's nothing we can do, there is not enough water uphill to stop the fire and I can't expect you to walk up there with buckets on your heads the fire has already done a lot of damage that would be risking your lives."

I look at my brother, he is speaking in tongues.

Ngcebo: "Call Aqua.."

I rush in and call Aqua to come with me and he obeys. He kneels in front of his dad.

Aqua: "Babam."(My dad)

Ngcebo: "Can you use your gift to protect the home of our great ancestors, the gatekeepers of this land."

Aqua nods a little.

Aqua: "But I don't know if I can control it Baba."

Ngcebo: "Uncle Mathenyoka is here and so is your mother, we are all here to guide you."

He nods and touch kneel with both his hands touching the ground.

Aqua: "I am Prince Aqua, I am from the sea I call on the water spirits to help me protect the land where I was born..."

He starts speaking a different language I have never heard before, they might have taught him underwater, he spends most of his time there he doesn't even attend any school and he is okay with that because he has never even tried for his sister's and brothers when they go to school.

His eyes changes to ocean blue, he stares at his father and nod.

Aqua: "Everyone get inside the Palace it is enough to accommodate you all."

We all help people rush inside the Palace and once we're all in he is with his father, Mathenyoka and Wenzu outside he is holding a beautiful stick looking up the sky, he came back with that stick inside on the sea. He points with it in the sky then heavy rain starts pouring, they all hold hands outside as it starts flooding. I see Ngcebo kneeling in front of Aqua and hold his hand, the rain is getting heavier and heavier, I look at my kids they are sitting with their mom on the floor. I sigh, what is happening in my father's kingdom? Why is this happening? These are the questions running through my mind.

The rain finally stops and the sun comes up, we all walk out, about 12 Cheetahs are standing outside our gate. Dad walks towards them.

Nkosiyabo: "You can't leave, the safety of our kingdom is in your hands please.."

He sighs and bows his head, the cheetahs run leaving dust behind, dad comes back to us.

Nkosiyabo: "The gate keepers are leaving the fire destroyed their only home, we are on our own now, the kingdom isn't as safe as before."

He walks away with his head hanging down, I hate seeing him like this, I know he feels like he failed all of us but this isn't his fault, someone is playing with forces beyond them.

I walk in the kitchen and find the wives quietly making dinner it's so unlike them to be this quiet when they are together.

Mom walk in and look at me, she looks tired.

Thabsie: "Call your brothers, your father wants to have a word with you, your sister's husband and Daniel too."

I nod and do as she says.

We all walk in dad's room we find him looking out the window that is facing the burnt forest that was once so beautiful with different fruits every season.

Kumkani: "Baba you called for us."

Nkosiyabo: "Can someone tell me how we can fix this? My grandchildren are here, my people are here, what if there is war coming, what then? What will I do to keep everyone safe?"

Nqobasi: "We will do what we always do Bhuti, we fight together."

He chuckles.

Nkosiyabo: "You think that will work?"

We hear a scream outside before Baba can even answer, we run out, the gate is down like a big truck ran it over.

Dintle keeps clenching her fists standing before everyone else, Mom out of nowhere faints, dad rush to her picking her up.

Me: "Didintle...what happened?"

I look around, all the children are here but mine.

Me: "Didintle ziphi Izingane zami?"(Where are my kids?)

She doesn't answer anything but just walk in, I rush behind her scared as fuck, where are my kids? What happened out there?"

I find her changing her clothes, she is wearing a black long sleeve turtleneck and black ripped skinny jeans, then she wears some black boots. I stop her when she takes my gun she push me away from her.

Me: "Tell me what happened."

Dintle: "They took my kids that's what happened!"

She is speaking through her teeth and I feel my world crashing.

Me: "You can't leave Dintle, let me handle this."

Dintle: "You won't stop me, I gave birth to those two babies, I felt the pain of childbirth so I am going out there to find them."

Me: "Dintle please baby you're pregnant."

She chuckles and put the gun around her waist then put on her leather gloves.

Me: "I won't let you leave here."

Dintle: "It's not like I will ask you and shit!"

Me: "Listen to me ok! Stay home I will go and get our kids!"

She tries to push me away but I stand still not moving, she knees my tummy so hard then push me out of the way rushing out. I huff shaking my head, this woman!

I rush behind her and manage to get in the driver's seat before she could drive out. In the way she is speeding not even looking at me. I look at the side mirror, I can see Uuka's car behind me and five more.

The tyres screech as she parks at my work place and bang the door closed. Now Uuka and my family parked out of the premises.

I rush behind my wife, she doesn't even look at the guys in the front desk but goes straight to the captain's office.

I stand by the door and walks around the table and turn the Captain's chair with her foot with so much force, the captain is staring at her stunned.

Dintle: "I want my kids, right now."

Her voice is stern.

Dintle: "You want me to repeat that for you?"

I grab his phone on the table as Dintle press down her knee right on his crotch and the man starts sweating.

I scroll down the phone and find the most recent number he just called.

Dintle: "Do you wanna give me an answer before or after I shoot your balls?"

I know my wife is capable of doing that. I quickly dial the number and someone answers.

"Captain we got them both because we were in a rush, we couldn't really tell which one of them is a girl."

Me: "Where are you taking them?"

I know they won't be able to recognize the voice, they are under pressure.

"Your house in Durban sir, you said you already told the guys that we are coming."

Me: "Yes thank you."

I throw the phone against the wall then hold my wife's waist. I take out my gun that has a silencer on and give it to her then I take the one she is holding and put it around my waist.

Dintle: "Where do you like it better? Your little balls or your tiny dick?"

Captain: "I was only doing this for my daughter! You killed her because you got this bitch pregnant! you chose her over my daughter so I was making you feel the pain of losing someone you love!"

I frown looking at Dintle.

Me: "Your daughter?"

He chuckles.

Captain: "Ndabezintle and her mother, you know what you and your family did to them. It's been over 5 years hoping they will come back home but they never did! Now I have your children and I gave them an order that if I don't contact them for two hours they can go ahead and kill them."

He chuckles.

Captain: "You don't know the pain of someone you love going missing and you know who is responsible but you can't do shit because they are coming from a well connected and powerful family but I finally got you where it hurts the most, your children."

Dintle looks at me then move away from the man.

Me: "Do you know what your daughter and her mother did to me? She stabbed me and they ordered a hit on me I was in the coma for months!"

Captain: "You had it coming! You destroyed her, she thought you guys had something special, she wanted to introduce you to us because she was proud of being with the Prince."

Me: "And that's all it was for her, just being with the Prince, status mattered more to her but I wanted love."

Captain: "You can kill me but know that your children are also dying today! They say revenge is best served cold, I bet you had even forgotten there was a person named Ndabezintle."

Me: "Look, my kids didn't do anything kill me instead and bring my kids back to their mother."

Dintle is busily pressing her phone looking so worried her hands are shaking.

Captain: "That was my plan when I wanted to send you to Cape Town I wanted you to die there away from your family and throw you away so they never get a chance to even bury you, just like what happened to my daughter and my wife but the plan changed, if I want you to feel the pain I felt I shouldn't kill you but kill your most precious children I know how much you love them."

He chuckles as his laptop has a beep sound, he turns the screen to me, my heart stops beating for a minute, my kids are screaming their lungs out, they are in a cage, they put my children in a cage like some little puppies. Dintle screams covering her mouth.

Me: "Ok..look..I'll do anything man please."

When it comes to my kids that's where I would rather lose it all just to keep them alive and safe, they are the most important people in our lives.

Dintle: "Noo!"

Two men are holding the cage shaking it and the bars are hurting them.

Dintle stands in front of me.

Dintle: "You better do something or I'll leave you Mcebisi I will leave and you'll never see me again."

I know she means it, tears are streaming down her cheeks but she is keeping a straight face on her bottom lip is quivering.

I heave a deep sigh and take the gun from her pointing at the Captain.

Captain: "What are you doing? If you kill me they are dead."

I shoot him straight where his heart is then look at my wife touching her cheeks.

Me: "He said he gave them two hours, do you think you can drive to Durban in less than an hour or at least an hour and thirty minutes?"

She nods, she is a perfect driver, more than me so she has to drive..

We rush out I lock Captains office and we get in the car, my family is still here standing next to their cars.

Me: "We're driving to Durban, Captain's house."

They nod and get in their cars.

I keep looking at my wrist watch as Dintle is stepping on it hard, the car is flying on the road, we all know his house in Durban. We get to Durban in an hour and 45 minutes instead I can tell she is holding her breath, maybe I shouldn't have came with her but knowing my wife she was gonna come here one way or the other, I married a very stubborn woman.

We press the buzzer and the gate slides open without any questions or anything, Dintle and I are the first ones here but I know my family is coming.

Dintle: "Let me walk in first."

I frown, Why?"

Dintle: "For distraction."

She takes off her turtleneck leaving her white sports bra, I stare at her sexy tummy, the dark line is visible just a little, her nipples are clearly erect on her bra.

Me: "No baby, you can't go in there like this."

Dintle: "I never asked you anything, this is not about you but my babies in there who are about to lose their lives any minute from now, it's not really the time to be insecure."

She step out and cat walk inside I cuss under my breath, those guys will be looking at my wife's body.

I step out and slowly walk towards the door but make sure I stand where they can't see me, I peep through and see that they are staring at my wife as she stands in the middle of the room talking about being a Captain long lost daughter, they are shocked. I run around the back and use the back door to get in, I slowly open each room looking for my kids, then I hear noise coming from one of the rooms, it's their little screams and the man shouting "It's time!"

"I think we should let the Captain call and tell us that."

Another one answers.

"But he said in 2 hours what more do you wanna hear?"

I push the door open and start shooting them easily because they weren't ready or even expecting me, I can see that one of the guys is an officer where I work. I try to open the cage but it has a huge lock I keep looking around trying to find the key but I can't find it.

Me: "Alwande?"

He stares at me, his eyes are dark for a young guy like him, he doesn't have any tears, just sitting there curled up, and there is Awande who is not moving, the cage is too small for them so they are squeezed in together.

Me: "Daddy will take you out of here ok."

He doesn't answer but just continue to stare at me, I don't even think he recognizes me.

I hear gunshots all around the house and I think my family is here, Dintle rushes in and look at our kids, she has a little cut on her cheek, I take off my jacket and help her wear it.

We look for the key together and finally find it on the corner of the window. I unlock the cage and take out Alwande first but he wiggles his body from my arms and run to his mother's arms. I take my daughter, she is sound asleep but looking so troubled, she has her thumb in her mouth.

We use the back door to walk out and I buckle them in the car then rush in to check on everyone I inform them that I found my kids so we walk out, all the other guys are in a pool of blood, there was too many of them guiding my little babies.

I drive home and Dintle is sitting at the back with our kids.

I keep wiping my face, I wish I had done things differently when I was younger, I wish I never met Ndabezintle or didn't cheat on her but I can't change the past even though it came back to haunt me and they really did touched where it hurts the most, my children.

When we get home they are both asleep we walk in our room and put them to bed. I watch the bruised on their little faces then look at my wife.

Me: "I'm sorry Dee."

Dintle: "It's okay, they are home now safe."

She sighs.

Dintle: "I'm tired of everything."

Me: "What's everything?"

Dintle: "Bad things keep happening to us whenever we get that glimpse of happiness, it is always snatched away."

I sigh.

Dintle: "Will we ever find peace in this family?"

Me: "I don't know baby, I really don't know."

We stay with our kids quietly. Alwande wakes up first and sit on his mom's lap.

Dintle: "You don't want to go to daddy?"

He shakes his head, he is not even looking my way.

Me: "Boy.."

I try to touch his back.

Alwande: "Don't... touch me...they said you are the reason they are hurting us, it's your fault daddy."

He is stuttering now staring at me like he knows what he is talking about.

Alwande: "You...you act like you don't know but you know daddy."

Dintle: "Lwande! Your dad wouldn't let people hurt you, those people lied baby!"

Alwande: "Di..did they lie about him killing a girl and his mother?"

Dintle: "Yes! They lied your dad never killed any girl!"

He chuckles and get off his mom.

Alwande: "Whe..when baba uMakhosini leaves for Durban I will go stay with him."

Me: "That's not gonna happen."

Alwande: "I will tell Grandma that I want to go!"

He shouts blinking rapidly, he is angry.

Me: "Well I am your father and I am telling you you're not leaving."

He runs out, Dintle just sighs and walk out behind him, I follow shortly and find him sitting on his Grandma's lap telling him he wants to go with Makhosini.

Thabsie: "Why do you want to go?"

Alwande: "I want to stay with Baba, I don't want to stay with dad."

Thabsie: "Tell me why is that."

Alwande: "The bad guys said he is the reason why we were taken away, I don't wanna stay here!"

The stammering is getting worse since he is crying.

Thabsie: "But the bad guys lied, that's what they do, they lie a lot."

He nods.

Alwande: "But I want to go, please."

He is having hiccups now, Makhosini takes him, they understand each other way better if he is not okay.

Makhosini: "Don't cry, big boys don't cry, Right?"

He nods as Khosini wipes his tears.

Makhosini: "I will leave with you."

I look at him.

Me: "No you're not."

He shakes his head.

Makhosini: "We will leave ok."

He nods and go to dad. Makhosini and I walk out.

Makhosini: "Let me go with him just for a week, he will come back, he will miss his mom and dad for sure, just let me go with him."

Me: "But his sister won't stay without him."

Makhosini: "They I will leave with the both of them, trust me they will want to come back running, you're the best father ever I think they were fed with so much toxic things about you and their young minds are quick to grasp on things."

I huff.

Me: "Why do I feel like I'm losing them."

Makhosini: "Don't feel that way, we are one, I will talk to them and they will come back to you."

I nod and we shoulder hug.

I walk to my room and take off my clothes then take a shower. I wear my shorts and a vest walking to their room, I find Dintle packing their clothes Awande is awake too, her forehead have lumps I feel like a failure of a father. She comes to me at least she is still okay with me.

Me: "You are okay with them leaving?"

She nods not looking at me.

Dintle: "I will also spend a few days there."

Me: "Oh."

Dintle: "Yeah, Bonolo, Snakho and Nelile will be there too, Wenzi can't go because she is busy. I just need to breath and relax a little I don't want to lose this baby."

Me: "Ok."

I look at my daughter, she is sleeping on my chest, I guess she didn't take everything the bad guys said about me like her brother did.

I take the bags to the car then kiss my wife.

Me: "I love you."

Dintle: "You have my heart."

I smile.

Me: "I will miss you."

I look at Alwande, he is just looking the other way. I kiss my daughter.

Me: "Take care of yourselves and don't be gone for long."

Dintle: "We will come back soon."

They drive out. I take a walk uphill and look around our kingdom, it's not the same anymore after that fire and I am the reason for all of this, it all started with my cheating. I sit down and take a deep breath I hear something coming. I look behind me and smile.

Me: "Mkhulu you didn't leave."

"I will never leave even those who left will come back one day."

A voice echoes around as the cheetah stares into my eyes, I brush its fur as it sleeps next to me, I really thought they all left but no, he won't ever leave, our Great-great ancestors spirit is here.

"Don't worry it will all go back to how it was before Prince."

I smile and get up.

Me: "Phakathwayo.."

I go back home and go straight to bed. I wake up late at night to my wife's call.

Me: "Sthandwa Sami."

"Daddy..."

He sniffs.

Me: "Gumede."

Alwande: "Please come get me, I miss you."

I smile I guess my brother did get through to him.

Me: "Why are you crying then?"

Alwande: "I don't wanna sleep without seeing you, please."

His mom takes the phone.

Dintle: "Don't come baby, this one is too much now he can't keep making you his puppet, no."

Me: "He is my son, he was just confused earlier on D, I can't take everything he said to heart."

Dintle: "So you're coming?"

Me: "Yes I am coming to fetch my kids, you can continue to stay with your sisters."

Dintle: "Ok sizoyikhulisa ingane mewufika?"(Are we going to help the baby grow when you get here?)

I chuckle.

Me: "Angeke ngingqabe ukuchelela imbewu yami."(I won't say no to watering my seed)

She giggles.

I get off bed and look at the news as it is reported that the captain was found dead in his office "the misterious death" I wanted them to find him rotten, I know people will talk about me going there but then so what? I work there and I'm sure a lot of people went to his office before I went there so even if I am the suspect I won't be the only one.

I drive to my kids and find them both awake waiting for me. When they see me by the door they get up and run to me, I smile.

Alwande: "Baba...Ngiyaxolisa."(Dad I'm sorry)

I smile picking him up.

Me: "I love you, both of you."

Awande: "I love my dad too."

Our past indeed has a way of catching up with us.

FINAL CHAPTER

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NKOSIYABO

*

My wife and I have raised our children to be better people, we taught them kindness, love and compassion. We love each other loudly and we are not afraid to show it that's why they love their partners just the same. There is nothing wrong in loving hard and being in love with that one person, I have been with my wife for years but I still love her just the same as the first time we met, the flame is still there and it will never end.

Her head is on my chest and she is brushing my chest, we just had our morning glory, I am happy I married young, I can just say we grew up together with each other and also with our kids, they became our best friends they are never afraid to talk to us about anything, we still go through a lot as a couple, we fight but we know what's important, our

love, our children even though they are all married but they are still our priority and their happiness is our peace.

My wife giggles, I smile.

Me: "What is it?"

Thabsie: "I can't believe I am the one who initiated the first kiss."

I laugh.

Me: "I'm glad you did, we were both very shy then I don't know if I was gonna be able to make the first move."

Thabsie: "Says a man who broke my virginity and got me pregnant all in one day."

I smile and kiss the top of her head.

Me: "I'm glad that I found you, you came into my life when I needed you the most, you became my family, maybe if I didn't meet you then and got you pregnant with our first son I would have killed myself because my life was a mess."

I move her to sleep on top of me then she looks into my eyes smiling.

Me: "Wadela abazali nekhaya ngoba ungithandile."(You left your parents and your home because you loved me.)

Thabsie: "You made me the center of your life from day one, I knew your intentions were pure before you even said it, so it was easy to love you."

I kiss her lips.

Me: "Nothing has changed, I still love you the same, you're still very hot."

I grab her butt, she straddle me and let my dick fill her up, she's still so amazing, I watch as her sweat drips down her dark skinned face,

she is riding me so good with her breast bouncing in front of me, I flip us over getting on top of her, I grab her hip going in hard.

Thabsie: "Nkosi.."

Me: "Yes baby.."

She moves underneath meeting my thrust until we both cum, I get off her and go to the bathroom. I take the towel going back to her then clean her up.

I am looking at her and she can't stop blushing.

Thabsie: "I'm glad we had children as young as we were, look now they are all married, we're just enjoying each other now because we have served our purpose in their lives."

Me: "And we did a good job as a team."

Thabsie: "And all our children all followed our footsteps, they all got married young."

Me: "I am happy they found love just like I did."

Thabsie: "And they are all happy and content with their lives it's so beautiful."

I nod.

Her phone rings, I pass it to her hoping it's not any man, I laugh as she looks at me answering her call, I am laughing because when she was giving out busaries for students at varsity, she mistakenly put out her personal phone numbers where she wrote her information on how they can contact her then after that she was getting messages from very young boys asking her out, I got angry at first but because of the trust I have for my wife I let it go and made a joke out of it but it irritated her that they thought she was that young to date them, a young looking grandma she is.

Thabsie: "I will see what I can do baby, I will talk to Grandpa."

She drops the call and look at me.

Me: "What is it?"

Thabsie: "That's your granddaughter Hloni, she wants an iPhone, Thobeka and Makhosini are not having it."

Me: "She won't be getting it MaKhumalo, I refused with Phezukonke and Samkelo they tried to make me "see a bigger picture" but I also wasn't having it."

Thabsie: "But she is older Baba."

Me: "No, I don't wanna fight with my son, he said no and I am going with that."

She sighs.

Thabsie: "I should just buy the same model for all of them."

Me: "I'm not getting involved mama."

I walk out and find Aqua playing alone outside, I sigh. When Alwande and Awande are at school he usually plays alone sometimes I feel bad that he doesn't go to school, because he usually spends most of his time in the sea, I think he does get bored but he is used to this.

Me: "Mfana kaMkhulu."(Grandpa's boy.)

He smiles dusting himself up and comes to me, he bows his head first then I pick him up and kiss his cheek, he's a beautiful boy, all my grandkids are just beautiful.

Me: "Can I play with you?"

He gives me a wide smile.

Aqua: "Yes Grandpa, let's play I am trying to make a car but I can't mix the sand right."

I smile.

Me: "That's because we use Clay not sand."

Aqua: "Oh where do we get the clay Grandpa?"

I smile, he speaks IsiZulu and English fluently even though he never even once went to school, PhezuKonke used to teach him everyday what he learnt from school and he is a very fast learner.

We take a walk to the stream with a bucket, we put clay in there, I think his mom and dad went somewhere with their initiate who is just young boy.

We go back home and we make different things with clay and I can see he is good at making things from clay.

Me: "Yini le?"(What is this?)

Aqua: "Ukhamba Mkhulu, Ngizohlaba imbuzi Yami le ebovu ngicele abomkhulu bethu babuye manje."(It's a clay pot, I will slaughter a goat and ask our grandfathers to come back now.)

I know he is referring to the cheetahs that left at the time of the fire, only one has been seen around, I am worried about the kingdom but I decided not to let it get to me, their home was burnt even though there was the other side that was saved from the fire but they chose to leave me and my kingdom and it's ok.

Me: "Oh, does your dad know that you want to do a ceremony?"

Aqua: "I will tell him when he comes back."

I smile and brush his head, I wish he was given a chance to mingle with the outside world I don't know how his life will be as he grow up, I even wish my granddaughter Serena was alive maybe they would have had a similar life that way he would have had someone in his age group to have around all the time.

Aqua: "Don't worry about me Grandpa, I am content with my life."

He says with a smile on his face.

Me: "I'm happy if you're happy."

I see my daughter Thingo driving in, I smile and take Aqua's hand walking towards her car as she parks. She step out smiling I open my arms for her, she jumps on me like a little girl she will always be to me.

Me: "I am so happy to see you, I missed you."

Thingo: "I missed you too dad, I dropped the kids off at school and thought of coming to see you guys."

She picks Aqua up and greet him. She is happily married and I don't regret blessing her marriage with Mathenyoka, he loves my daughter, she is big out there, they live a very high life but they are still so down to earth, We see the property they design and build to sell, we see those huge houses on TV I'm proud of the both of them. The car she is driving was a gift from her husband it is very expensive, the ring she has on is worth a fortune and this is the life I always dreamt for her, happiness and wealth, it works well together, take it from me there is nothing as fulfilling as being able to give your partner everything they desire. I still pay for trips Thabsile and the wives take maybe four times in a year, I pay for everything, she has her own money but she likes it better when I provide for her needs and wants.

She screams walking out of the house and they hug with her daughter happily.

Thabsie: "Look at how beautiful you look my baby girl, wow."

She giggles blushing.

Thingo: "Ngiyabonga mama, ungiphethe kahle umyeni wami."(Thank you mom, my husband is treating me well)

Thabsie: "I can see that!"

They are crazy about each other, they act like sisters just like she always say I act like my sons are my brothers, they can be, I got them

at a very young age so now with Kumkani people say we are like twins, he grew up very fast we are almost the same height now, Mcebisi and Ngcebo are a bit shorter than us, so is Makhosini and Bukhosi.

We walk inside and mom makes tea for us Wenzi and Ngcebo joins us, they went to find herbs a bit far outside our village since some herbs never grew after that fire.

We are having some great time, I love it when my daughter comes home because she hardly gets time, most of the time they travel because of their type of business.

I call all my children to come home with their families, Nqobasi and Isi as well, Aqua wants this ceremony done today so Ngcebo agreed to it so we all have to be together.

Later they all arrive and Aqua does a ceremony instructing his fathers on what to do, I am watching as my children work together.

Me: "Uuka.."

Kumkani: "Baba.."

Me: "Take two sheep and slaughter it, we are having a feast today."

He walks out with his brothers I am left alone at the ancestral alter looking at the incense burning in front of me, my wife walk in wearing her like a true Gumedede wife, she kneels next to me smiling. I smile looking down, I can't believe I have a beautiful wife like this.

Thabsie: "Why are you in here alone?"

Me: "I just wanna talk about you here to my ancestors.."

She looks at me with a smile on my wife.

Thabsie: "And say what Gumedede?"

Me: "Tell them how thankful I am for them to pair me with a person like you, I remember how scared I was to have another baby after Uuka we even ended up losing the pregnancy but you knew what you wanted so you helped me get over my fear that's when I realized that we actually wanted the same thing, those children made our home what it is today, Thank you so much for making me realize that I can actually be a great father to more than one child."

She is blushing looking down.

Me: "I love you."

Thabsie: "Thank you for being the best husband and father to our home, I love you."

Kumkani: "Maybe we should just get you married again."

They say walking in, their clothes are dirty and have blood from the sheep and goats they slaughtered, they are real men and they all have rings on their fingers, who wouldn't be proud.

Thabsie: "Angihambe ngiyosiza ngale."(Let me go help out that side.)

She walks out. And we go sit under the tree and watch them cooking in the fire, they are all wearing Zulu bride outfits and they sure look good in it. Mathenyoka drive in with his children and they run to me.

Mthiya: "Mkhulu.."(Grandpa)

He throws himself as me I pick him up and hug him.

Me: "Kunjani?"(How are you?)

Mthiya: "I'm ok, when mom and dad travel now, we don't wanna stay with Auntie we want to stay with you and Grandma, you can come to our house or we will come here."

Me: "Ok we will do that."

I take Shlangu then Sihle, they all look like their dad but there is a bit of my daughter there, handsome little boys, they talk a lot too.

Ngcebo: "So.."

He says very loud out of nowhere we all look at him, he have a big smile on his face.

Ngcebo: "Finally, I am going to be a father again."

Mcebisi: "What!"

He is the one to get up and hug his brother first, we all follow, I know how much he wanted another baby with his wife, he would complain in a joking manner that it is never easy for him to have a baby.

Me: "You must be thrilled!"

Ngcebo: "Baba you have no idea! I don't know how to react even now, the happiness inside of me is too much...I don't know baba...I want to scream to the world, it wasn't easy, it hasn't been, I would even think of letting Wenzi go and be with someone else and she would think the same because we both thought we might have a problem."

I hold his hand tight as his eyes glitters with tears a smile still there he is so happy and that warms my heart.

Bonolo: "Well..."

She says behind us, we all turn and look they are all here standing behind her as she brushes her tummy looking at Uuka, he slowly get up..

Bonolo: "Since it seems like it's announcement time, Uhm...I am also expecting a baby, you're going to be a dad again after we lost that pregnancy, you scored again Gumedede."

The noise the brothers make is insane I am just smiling looking at how my children are happy, this is it, all I ever since wanted for them.

I see Bukhosi chuckling as his wife sits on his lap.

Nelile: "Khazi deserves a sibling too now."

Bukhosi: "Really?"

She giggles.

Nelile: "Our babies will be just a few months apart."

Bukhosi: "Wait? Are you saying you are already pregnant baby?"

Nelile smiles.

Bukhosi: "You're not playing, angithi"(right?)

She shakes her head still smiling.

Nelile: "I'm not."

He put his wife down and get up showering her with kisses all over her face I laugh, I guess they all took from me with having as many children they can, I am having more grandchildren from Bonolo, Dintle, Wenzile and Nelile and they are all pregnant at the same time, I want them to show them flames, they mustn't make it smooth for them at all, I want them to feel the heat, I chuckle at my thoughts, Thabsile was in love with me throughout all the pregnancies.

Me: "I'm happy for all of you, you've made me so proud, you all became heroes of your own stories."

Ngcebo: "Yes we did Nkosi and I am not calling you by your name I mean King..king not King your name.."

Everyone laughs.

Me: "Ndoni Diamond.

She blinks looking at me with a smile, she is quiet with an out of this world beauty.

Ndoni: "Baba.."

Me: "We need a husband baby."

She giggles looking down.

Ndoni: "Dad said I am still young baba."

I laugh looking at Daniel, he loves his only daughter that he doesn't wanna hear anything about boys he loves her too much but one day he will have to let her live her life, he will have to let her go, I did it with my only daughter it wasn't easy but I had to let her have her own family.

I raised this New generation and I am proud of how they all turned out, I am patting myself on the back, I did this and they all called it their CLEAN SLATE.

I get up looking around, there are cheetahs standing outside my gate I smile and look at Aqua, he smiles back and nod his head proudly.

Me: "Welcome back boPhakathwayo, boQwabe, oMngunYeyeye, Khondlo, Amazala Nkosi oMakhanya.."

I bow my head, they all pur at once and run up the mountains.
Gumede.

*

THE END...

